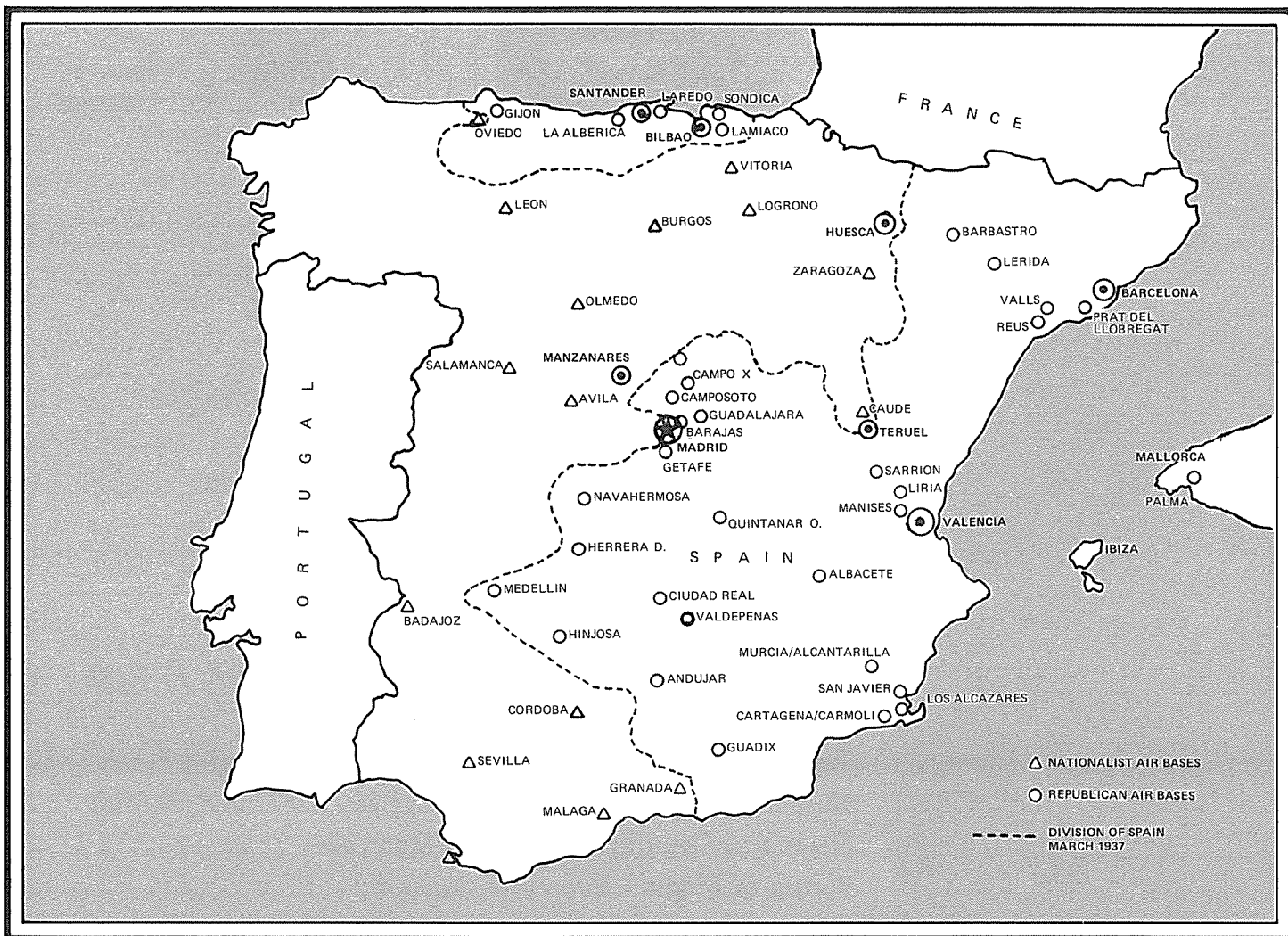




American Pilots In the Spanish Civil War

By Allen Herr

During the Spanish Civil War, which broke out in July, 1936, the critical months for the Government Air Force were August through December, 1936. It was during those months that the Government Air Force lost its aerial superiority to the rapidly growing rebel Nationalist Air Force. Eighty percent of the Spanish Air Force remained in Government hands at the outbreak of the rebellion; however, the Spanish Air Force Breguet bombers and Nieuport 52 fighters were quickly cut down by Franco's newly acquired Fiat CR 32s and Heinkel 51s.¹

The Spanish Republican Government appealed worldwide for assistance in the form of aircraft and experienced pilots to fly them.

Early in the war, the sympathetic French Government rushed a limited number of bombers and fighters to the Republicans. French pilots were also allowed to fly for the Spanish Air Force. It is well recognized that the Soviet Union

sent massive shipments of military aid to the Republicans. However, it must be noted that the Russian planes and pilots did not bring the Spanish Air Force up to adequate strength until the early months of 1937. In fact, the first Russian aircraft did not go into service until November, 1936.²

Many foreign pilots responded to the Spanish Government's pleas. During the critical months before the Russian aid took effect, foreign pilots came to Spain seeking flying positions with the seriously depleted Spanish Air Force. They came for various reasons. For some it was a flying job and during depression times such jobs were scarce. Others came to fight for the political and moral issues at stake. Some came for adventure. Experienced ex-military pilots came for the extraordinary salaries that the Government would pay.

The French, as already noted, were the first to fly for the Republicans. The French author, Andre Malraux, organized a squadron of pilots, mostly French, which he named *Escadre Espana*. The pilots, many of whom shared their leader's leftist political views, later renamed the squadron *Escadre Malraux*. The *Escadre Espana* began operations in August, 1936. Those pilots who believed as Malraux, fought for the pay of a Spanish lieutenant. Others in the squadron were paid as much as \$2,700 per month (50,000 francs).³

In August, 1936, many pilots from England began arriving in Spain. An English pilot with previous military experience could command a salary equivalent to \$720 per month plus a bonus of \$1200 for each enemy plane brought down. Andr s Lacelle, who flew with many of the foreign pilots in the opening months of the war, regarded the English pilots

highest qualified among the foreigners who came to fly for the Government.⁴

On September 24, 1936, the first group of volunteer pilots arrived from America. This group consisted of Joseph Rosemarin, Arthur Shapiro (Vasnit), Ed Lyons (Lebovitz), Eugene Finick, and Tom Goodwin, a mechanic. They were soon joined in Spain by Ben Leider.⁵ A second group of Americans arrived in Spain on November 20th, 1936. They were: Bert Acosta, Fredrick Lord, Gordon Berry, Edward Schneider, and Edwin Semons.⁶ Hilaire du Berrier, an American living in England, came to Spain to fly for the Government. He arrived on November 2nd, 1936.⁷ Vincent Schmidt also arrived in November.

The largest number of American pilots came to Spain in December, 1936. They are listed here according to the dates of their arrivals at the Spanish Ministry in Valencia. They were: Albert Edwards, a mechanic who arrived on the first; Charlie Koch and James Allison on the ninth; Derek Dickinson, Manuel Gomez, and Orrin Bell on the 21st; Albert Baumler on the 24th; Nold Caldwell and Sam Brenner on the 25th; Harold Dahl on the 28th; and lastly Frank Tinker on January third.⁸

The names listed above are the only Americans whose presence in Spain as pilots can be proven by more than one known Spanish or American source on the subject. It is doubtful that any Americans who came to Spain after January 3, 1937, served as pilots for the Government. Russian pilots rapidly bolstered the Republican Air Force and made it unnecessary to hire or enlist other foreign pilots after January, 1937.

James Peck claimed that he and a Paul Williams traveled to Spain in August, 1937, to fly for the Spanish Government.⁹

RECRUITMENT

The Americans who came in September, 1936, were recruited by the Communist Party in New York City. Many of the pilots who went to Spain were recruited by either the Communist Party or the Socialist Worker's Party in New York. It is not known if either political party had a hand in recruiting the Acosta group. They were recruited by Edwin Semons. Semons sent them to a New York lawyer, Sam Schacter, who, representing the Spanish Consulate, gave them steamship tickets and expense money to travel to Spain via France.¹⁰

Hilaire du Berrier, who came in November, 1936, was recruited in England by Olof DeWet. DeWet had been hired to fly for the Government by another Englishman, Vincent Doherty. Doherty, an outstanding pilot, had already fought in Spain and was acting as an agent for the Spanish Government in England while recovering from wounds. He paid DeWet a \$100 bonus for recruiting du Berrier.¹¹

Of those Americans who arrived in December, Dickinson, Bell, Brenner, Caldwell, and Koch were recruited in New York by the Socialist Worker's Party. Dickinson, Bell, and Manuel Gomez were escorted to Spain by Spaniard Augustin Sanz Sainz. Sainz would soon become the Sub-Secretary of Air for the Republican Government. Sainz made all the travel arrangements for the three pilots and paid their expenses to Spain via France.¹² It should not be assumed that any of the pilots who were recruited by the Communist Party or the Socialist Party were members of those political parties. The parties of the left were responsible for recruiting men for the International Brigade in Spain. Theirs was the only medium available for soldiers and pilots to get to Spain.¹³

Harold Dahl was recruited in Mexico by the Spanish Air Attaché to the Spanish Embassy in Mexico City, Jose



Dust jacket of the American Edition of Tinker's book. (Courtesy of Richard K. Smith)

Melandreas. Dahl, who was in trouble with the law in the U.S., sailed to France from Vera Cruz on December 8, 1936.¹⁴ Frank Tinker, unable to get a commitment out of the Spanish Embassy in Washington, D.C., was told that the embassy in Mexico City would respond favorably to his requests. In Mexico, Ambassador Ordas was so impressed with Tinker's qualifications, he allowed him to sign a contract before going to Spain. After signing, Tinker was sent back to New York where Sam Schacter arranged his travel to Spain.¹⁵ Albert Baumler set out for Spain on his own. He sailed on the Queen Mary for France in December, 1936. On the ship he met Hidalgo de Cisneros, who would soon become Commander-in-Chief of the Republican Air Force. Cisneros arranged for Baumler's travel to Spain once they landed in France.¹⁶

Jim Peck and Paul Williams are known to have traveled to France on the Queen Mary. Together with a dozen volunteers for the Abraham Lincoln Battalion, they sailed on August 11th, 1937. Once in France, they hiked over the Pyrenees Mountains into Spain. This was the method of travel used by International Brigade volunteers to enter Spain.¹⁷

FLIGHT CHECKS

Of the first group of American pilots to arrive in Spain in September, *all* were flight checked and found unsuitable for combat flying; however, they were hired by the Government to fly transports. Of this group, Finick, Leider, and possibly Lyons managed to eventually get into combat. A member of this group, Eugene Finick, was not impressed with the pilots



Hilaire du Berrier had traveled to Ethiopia with American Vincent Schmidt and Englishman, H. Olof DeWet to fly for Haile Selassie. Unfortunately Ethiopia had no combat aircraft with which to defend themselves from the Italians. When the Spanish Civil War broke out, du Berrier and DeWet tried to join Franco's air force. They were rejected when it was discovered they had been anti-Italian in Ethiopia. They then signed on with Vincent Doherty, a representative for the Spanish Government. They left England for Spain in November 1936. Du Berrier was arrested after serving one month. He was jailed when it was learned that he had tried to join Franco first. He was lucky, the Spanish government simply deported him instead of executing him, which was quite the fashion in those early months of the war. Du Berrier is still alive and was recently active in Gov. George Wallace's political campaign. Du Berrier is editor of two John Birch Society publications, "American Opinion" and "The Review of the News." (Richard S. Allen)

he came to Spain with in the fall of 1936. He told a journalist, "Some of the other Americans who came over that fall turned out pretty bad. . . . One of them beat it with 7000 pesetas he had taken from his outfit and some Spanish friends. Another turned yellow. When it was time for him to go to the front he got sick. He . . . asked for leave to go to Valencia to meet his wife . . . we never saw him again. The other American . . . was too old for combat flying . . . he's still active as chief navigator behind our lines. I'm the only one left out of the group I came with." Finick made this remark from his hospital bed after being shot down in June, 1937.¹⁸

The second group of pilots, led by Bert Acosta, were flight checked by Hilaire du Berrier and found proficient. They were hired as bomber pilots and sent immediately to the Basque Front.¹⁹

Those Americans who arrived in December were flight checked and sent to Manises Airfield, just outside Valencia, for further checks and operational training in Breguet 19s.²⁰

Many American pilots who came to Spain to fly for the Government were either unable to meet the basic flying qualifications or were unable to pass the required flight checks. Sam Brenner and Nold Caldwell made it into the operational training squadron at Manises, but were eventually washed out and their contracts cancelled. Some of those pilots who were unable to get flying jobs in Spain stayed on to join the Abraham Lincoln Battalion of the XV International Brigade. Rollin Dart and Sandy Land were given commissions in the A.L. Battalion. Thomas Malone, who came to fly but could not meet the requirements, became a commissar in the A.L. Battalion and later the Canadian Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion. Another pilot hopeful, Pierre Quiengnec,

became an ambulance driver with an American medical unit in Spain.²¹

CONTRACTS

The first group of pilots, Finick, Rosemarin, Lyons, Shapiro, and Leider were hired on October 1st, 1936, for \$100/week and 300 pesetas/month (\$1.00 U.S. equals 8 gold or 15 paper pesetas²²) with room and board under Government rule. The mechanic, Tom Goodwin, was hired for a salary of \$80/week and 230 pesetas/month. Eugene Finick enlisted in the Spanish Air Force on October 1st. He was paid less than 600 pesetas/month.²³ He was promoted to 2nd lieutenant on January 1st, 1937, and his salary was increased to 1331.66 pesetas/month.²⁴

The second group (Acosta) all signed contracts for \$1500/month. Ed Semons, who escorted this group to Spain, signed a contract for \$750/month on November 20th, 1936.²⁵ This was the approximate date that Acosta and the others signed their contracts.²⁶

The American pilots who came in December, 1936, signed contracts for \$1500/month and a bonus of \$1000 for each enemy plane brought down. Albert Edwards, an American mechanic, was hired for a salary of \$100/week and 1100 pesetas/month. Of those who signed the "big money" contracts, Derek Dickinson and Orrin Bell were both reduced to the salary of a 2nd lieutenant after their first month in Spain. It had been discovered that they did not have the flying ability to justify a salary of \$1500/month. Sam Brenner and Nold Caldwell may have been paid for a single month; however, their contracts had been cancelled by January 23, 1937. Manuel Gomez's contract was reduced to \$1000/month after his first month in Spain.²⁷

TRAINING

Eugene Finick and Arthur Shapiro were the only Americans of the first group to undergo additional training after being given flight checks.²⁸

The second group of pilots, Acosta and the others, were hired and sent to the Northern Front immediately after being given their flight checks.

The Americans who came in December were given flight checks at San Javier and then sent to Manises Airfield near Valencia. At Manises the Americans were given further flight checks and then formed into an Anglo-American squadron with several British pilots. They were to fly old Breguet 19 bombers.²⁹ The reasons for forming the English-speaking squadron were: coastal patrol, operational training, terrain familiarization, and the propaganda value of such a squadron. It was also a way to utilize the pilots until more modern Russian equipment became available.

There was much competition and quarreling between the English and American pilots. The Spanish Air Ministry eventually assigned the Americans to other units. Finick, who had recently been assigned to the Breguet squadron, was sent to a Russian bomber squadron. Brenner stayed on with the Breguet squadron as a machine-gunner. Nold Caldwell was most likely sent back to the States, and Bell and Dickinson's immediate assignments are to date unknown. Al Baumlner was sent to a Russian Chato squadron and Tinker, Dahl, Gomez, Koch, and Allison were assigned to the 1a Escuadrilla de Chatos, commanded by Captain (later Colonel) Andr s Lacalle. Those Americans assigned to Lacalle's 1a Escuadrilla de Chatos were sent to San Javier for training in the Polikarpov I-15 (see Frank Tinker—log of "La Patrulla Americana").³⁰

SERVICE IN SPAIN

The following are brief descriptions of each pilot's activities while serving in Spain. They are listed alphabetically according to the branch of the Spanish Air Force in which they served, those branches being: Bombardment, Maintenance, Observation, Pursuit, and Transport.

BOMBARDMENT

Bertram Blanchard Acosta

On November 28th, 1936, Bert Acosta, Fred Lord, Gordon Berry, Eddie Schneider, and two English pilots were sent to Sondica Airfield near the city of Bilbao in northern Spain. They had been assigned to a bombardment squadron commanded by Manuel Cascon Briega.³¹

The Americans were very disappointed when they reached Sondica. The airfield was still under construction, and the pilots were forced to use a very narrow and dangerous strip. The aircraft they were to fly were an odd assortment of French and English civil aircraft. Many of the planes were old and barely airworthy. All were unarmed. The Americans were forced to fly in their civilian clothes until a nearby Russian squadron gave them flying clothes and sidearms.

On one bombing mission the Americans witnessed the death of one of the English pilots, Sidney Holland. The squadron was flying in a five-plane formation, escorted by a squadron of Russian pursuits when it was attacked by Heinkel 51s. The bombers had just released their load from 8000 feet on a Nationalist airfield. The enemy fighters concentrated on Holland's aircraft, and he was shot down in flames. Acosta, flying an English Miles Hawk (sic), believed that he was not attacked because his plane resembled a pursuit plane.³²

Both Acosta and Lord told conflicting stories of their experiences in Spain. The information above was written by Acosta for a New York newspaper soon after his return from Spain. Holland's death has been corroborated by another source; therefore, Acosta's story is somewhat credible. The four Americans were hired together, they flew together, resigned together, and returned together. However, Acosta clouded actual fact with braggadocio, such as his later claims of downing four Heinkels with a sidearm.³³

Gordon King Berry (See Bert Acosta)

Samuel Brenner

Frank Tinker met Sam Brenner just after Brenner had failed his flight check in Spain. Brenner stayed on and flew as a gunner-mechanic. Brenner told Tinker that he was organizer of pilots before seeking his own flying contract in Spain. Brenner wrote his sister in January, 1937, that he was in the Spanish Air Force. He wrote that he was flying with a squadron of Englishmen and Americans out of Valencia.

Brenner was injured when the plane in which he was flying crashed into the ocean. After a stay in the hospital, Brenner wrote his sister in February, 1937, that he was on his way home. A later news item stated that Brenner "flew coast patrol and did bombing work over Teruel in the two months that he was with the Loyalists" (Government).³⁴

Eugene R. Finick

It was during the siege of the Alcazar at Toledo when Eugene Finick arrived in Spain. He claims to have taken part in the bombing of Nationalist troops as they marched to relieve the Alcazar. He stated that Ben Leider and he flew Breguets against the relief column. If he actually took part in the missions, it is doubtful that he did so as a pilot. He only

arrived in Spain on September 24th. The Alcazar was relieved on the 28th. By his own account Finick was not checked out in the Breguet 19 until October 2nd, 1936.³⁵

On November, 1st, 1936, Finick was sent to Murcia to await the arrival of new aircraft from Russia. While waiting he flew coastal patrol along the Mediterranean coast from Cartagena to Alicante. Towards the end of November, 1936, new aircraft arrived. Finick claimed, "It was like being mustered out of a suicide squad." Finick spent time as a pilot in training aircraft for bombardiers and gunners at Los Alcazares Airfield near Cartagena. At Los Alcazares he flew the same antiquated Breguets and occasionally an old Vickers Vildebeest and an "antiquated high-wing monoplane job." He stayed at Los Alcazares until January 10th, 1937.³⁶

Finick was promoted to 2nd lieutenant on January 1st. On January 10th, he was assigned to a ground-strafer squadron in Toledo Province. He was checked out in Polikarpov R-5's and R-7's, known in Spain as Rasantes or Natashas. Finick made his first combat flight on the central front in mid-January, 1937. He felt he was at last fighting Franco on equal terms. His squadron attacked the Nationalist offensive on the Jarma Front with 15 Rasantes and 25 Chatos. Finick also took part in the destruction of Italian armor on the Guadalajara Front.

It was during the first Government offensive that Finick was shot down. Finick was flying as many as five flights a day on the Guadarrama Front. On June 2nd, 1937, the weather turned sour, but Finick's squadron was ordered to attack artillery concentrations at La Revenga. Finick was flying a ground-strafer, one of four in the attacking formation. The ground attack planes were protected by 25 pursuits, which included 15 new pilots who were ordered not to engage. This was to be strictly an orientation flight. Finick estimated that his attacking force was hit by at least 50 enemy fighters. Finick's plane was hit and started burning, as fires were started in the fuel tanks near the cockpit. He was forced to bale out. He was badly burned about the face, wrists, and ankles. After fighting to get his chute open he landed in a tree. He was hanging 25 feet above the ground, his chute caught on the tree limbs. The limbs eventually broke and he fell, breaking his right leg. The Republican troops who found him thought he was a German pilot flying for Franco. They beat him severely before an officer, an American Indian named Morrison, stopped them and had Finick taken to an emergency field station.³⁷

Al Baumler and Frank Tinker visited Finick in the hospital, where Finick told them that his leg would have to be rebroken and set again as it had been set improperly at the frontline field station. He also told them that he had various burns caused by his burning clothes and parachute straps during his descent. They gave him some cigarettes, books, and a Victrola and returned to their base.³⁸ Finick spent many months in a Spanish hospital before returning to the United States.

Frederick Ives Lord (See Bert Acosta)

Vincent Minor Schmidt

On August 15th, 1937, several Vultee VIAs were flown out of Paris to Toulouse enroute to Republican Spain. At Toulouse the French impounded the aircraft, as they had once more closed the border and refused to allow materiel into Spain. However, only two VIAs were impounded. Two had crashed shortly after departing Le Bourget in Paris. On August 17th, four more VIAs disappeared from Le Bourget. An American, Vincent Schmidt, was the pilot of one of the four Vultees. Schmidt managed to fly the plane to Barcelona,



Tinker standing next to Chato No. 56 in which he brought down two (Fiats) of his eight victories in Spain. It is interesting to note that Tinker referred to the I-15 in his log book as "Mosca #56." Later when he transferred to I-16s, he referred to that aircraft as "Mono" rather than Mosca. (Lucille Tinker Carnahan)

Spain, where he turned it over to the Spanish Government.³⁹

Schmidt had been in Spain earlier in the war. He is said to have flown a Marcel Bloch 200 on the night bombing missions out of Alicante and Barcelona. Schmidt is remembered for flying in place of a Spanish officer on a mission. That officer indicated that take-off would be too dangerous with a load of bombs and inadequate runway lighting. Schmidt agreed to fly the mission and took off and later landed with only the aid of auto headlights.⁴⁰

Frank Tinker had a bad experience with Schmidt and had some unkind words for him. After Tinker left Spain, he was delayed in Paris while waiting for a passport to return to the United States. He ran into Schmidt in Harry's New York Bar during August, 1937. Schmidt asked Tinker to loan him some money, at which time Tinker told him in no uncertain terms to get lost. Frank explained to a friend at the bar that Schmidt had run from a fight. It is believed that Schmidt was flying Breguets with Tinker in January, 1937. On one mission a formation of Breguets turned tail and deserted Tinker's formation in the face of enemy fire. It is believed that Schmidt was leading the squadron that ran from the fight.

Edward August Schneider, Jr. (See Bert Acosta)

Edwin Lester Semons

Although Ed Semons helped recruit the Acosta group and journeyed to Spain with them, he did not go to the Northern Front with them. He had some previous flying experience and attempted to get into a bomber squadron based at Quintanar de la Zarga. Ed Lyons claims to have given Semons a flight check at Quintanar which he promptly failed. Lyons states that Semons was accepted as a gunner-bombardier with Lyon's bomber squadron—Grupo 15.⁴² Lyons said of Semons, "You couldn't deny his eagerness to fly. He tried to do a good job and doesn't deserve criticism. He had a lot of guts."⁴³

After a short time Semons became ill and had to be hospitalized in Paris, where Ed Lyons was to meet him again. Presumably Semons was serving as go-between for American pilots and the Spanish Air Ministry in Paris.⁴⁴

When Whitey Dahl was shot down and captured by the Nationalists, he signed a confession stating that United States Army Captain Townsend Griffiss, the Assistant Military Attaché in Spain, was working with Semons in aiding United States pilots who were flying for the Spanish Government. This charge of unneutral activities was embarrassing for the

U.S. Government and both the State and War Departments ordered Griffiss to explain his side of the story.

Griffiss made a written explanation to the War and State Departments. He stated that he was introduced to Semons by Associated Press representative Edward Knoblauch on January 20th, 1937. As Semons was sick at the time, the meeting took place in the latter's room at the Hotel Ingles in Valencia. Griffiss stated that while in the room several of the English and American pilots (from the nearby Anglo-American Breguet squadron) came to say good-bye, as they were being reassigned to other units and were leaving Valencia shortly. Griffiss stated that Semons could not meet even simple flying requirements for the Air Ministry and was leaving Spain soon. He also stated that Semons later served as a go-between for American pilots seeking contracts with the Spanish Government. His headquarters were in Paris.⁴⁵ It is not known when Semons returned to the U.S.

MAINTENANCE

Albert Edwards

Albert Edwards was assigned as a mechanic at an airfield near Barcelona. There is no information available on Edwards at this time.⁴⁶

Thomas H. Goodwin

Goodwin was assigned to duty as a mechanic at an airfield near Albacete. It is known that his wife joined him in Spain. It is believed that he used the *nom de guerre* Thomas Russell or Russell Power while in Spain.⁴⁷

OBSERVATION

Derek D. Dickinson

Frank Tinker first met "Dick" Dickinson at San Javier Airfield. He estimated Dickinson's age to be at least 40, which was no doubt a factor in Dickinson's failure to pass his check ride for pursuits at San Javier. He was accepted as an observation pilot. Dickinson renounced his U.S. citizenship and joined the Spanish Air Force. He was stationed near Barcelona.⁴⁸

Dickinson served the Spanish Government for approximately 14 months. Serving from December, 1936, until February, 1938, Dickinson served longer than any other American airman. It must be noted, however, that Dickinson did not serve in a flying position from July, 1937, to February, 1938. His principal services in Spain were on the ground, particularly in the field of aviation mechanics.⁴⁹

Little is known about Dickinson's activities in Spain. He told one story after another when he returned to the States, not one of which was true.

Dickinson and Eugene Finick did send a letter to the Secretary of State in January, 1937. The letter attempted to justify their presence in Spain and gain future aid for the Spanish Government. The letter had a very idealistic tone, undoubtedly the sentiments of Eugene Finick. It stated that the two of them asked only for the salary of a Spanish officer. This was true in Finick's case; he served as an enlisted pilot and was eventually promoted to lieutenant. Dickinson convinced the Air Ministry that his experience warranted a \$1500/month contract when he came to Spain. He was paid this salary for his first month and then reduced to the salary of a lieutenant when it was discovered that his actual capabilities did not match his claims. Justification was an important reason for them to send the letter, as the U.S. Government had recently announced that Americans in the military service of a foreign government would suffer loss of citizenship and a fine of \$1000 and/or three years in prison.⁵⁰

When interviewed by press or interrogated by U.S. intelligence, Dickinson made many extravagant claims as to his service in Spain. He claimed to have commanded a pursuit group, that he was at one time a test pilot, an instructor, commander of a night bombing squadron, and second in command of the entire Zaragoza front. Dickinson claimed to have instituted the "Barrier of Defense" of Madrid, successfully bombed Palma, Seville, and Burgos with SB-2s and lastly sunk submarine No. Z-R-27. He also claimed to have shot down 6 to 22 enemy planes during his stay in Spain!⁵¹

An officer from the Spanish Air Ministry told U.S. Military Attaché Fuqua that Dickinson had not flown a plane during his last eight months in Spain. Colonel Fuqua did state that Dickinson's work in the Spanish Air Force was of high order "marred by his braggadocio spirit of recounting air experiences which probably came to him with other fantasies in the land of dreams."⁵²

The first comment by United States Army G-2 officers interrogating Dickinson was "not considered reliable—prone to exaggerate."⁵³

Dickinson's greatest fantasy was first told to a reporter from the New York *Herald Tribune* upon Dickinson's return from Spain. The story was embellished later and sold to *For Men* magazine and eventually was published in *Readers Digest*.⁵⁴ Briefly, the story described an air duel between Derek Dickinson and Bruno Mussolini. The combat is said to have taken place on September 28th, 1937. In a prearranged

Derek Dickinson is shown here with his Spanish wife whose identity is unknown. Dickinson, according to Tinker, renounced his U.S. citizenship and joined the Republican Air Force. Dickinson served longer than any other American pilot. It must be noted that Dickinson did not serve as a fighter pilot and did not serve in the capacity of pilot during his last eight months in Spain. Dickinson has clouded his service in Spain with so many gross exaggerations that it will be some time before the truth of his actual service in Spain is known. (Richard K. Smith)



From left to right, standing: Tinker, Scapa, Riverola, Gil, Castaneda, Lacalle, Velasco. Sitting: Bastida, Dahl, Selles, Lecha. Andres Lacalle was a young, and able commander. He was known as a hero in Republican Spain. The Russian aviation commanders thought enough of him that he was assigned to head the first all "Spanish" I-15 squadron. (From Arthur H. Landis)

aerial duel Dickinson flew a Polikarpov I-16 and Mussolini a Fiat Romeo monoplane with a 1300hp Hispano-Suiza engine (sic). Each pilot had two observation planes accompany him as witnesses. One of Dickinson's witnesses was the Spanish Sub-Secretary of Air, Augustin Sanz Sainz. The battle was pretty much a draw until Dickinson got on the Fiat's tail, preparing to fire, when Mussolini threw his scarf overboard. This was the signal of surrender; Dickinson immediately broke off and returned to base.⁵⁵ In this fratricidal war in which quarter was rarely given, it was not uncommon for pilots to be killed in their parachutes. Such a conclusion of battle is inevitable. The facts which follow make Dickinson's air duel very improbable.

Bruno Mussolini arrived in Spain at the end of September, 1937; however, he was a bomber pilot. He flew 27 missions in a Savoia-Marchetti SM 79 and returned to Italy in March, 1938.⁵⁶

The Fiat G.50 was the only Italian monoplane fighter to fly in Spain. It did not arrive until January, 1939. At the time of the "duel," there were only two Fiat G.50s in existence. Both were prototypes and were undergoing testing in Italy. Piero Vergnano states in his book on Fiat fighters that the presence of a G.50 in Spain in September, 1937, is "out of the question."⁵⁷

Sanz Sainz, the Spanish Sub-Secretary of Air, was made commandant of the air base at Alcala de Heneares. He died in a bombing attack on that base on March 23rd, 1937.⁵⁸

The Dickinson-Mussolini duel is not corroborated in any known Italian, English or Spanish source on aviation in the Spanish Civil War. In fact, just the opposite has been written by Colonel Andrés Garcia Lacalle. Lacalle was at one time the head of pursuit aviation for the Government. He termed Dickinson's duel as "pure fantasy."⁵⁹

PURSUIT

James William Marion Allison

In January, 1937, "Tex" Allison was chosen to be a member of the first non-Russian I-15 pursuit squadron in Spain. He joined Tinker, Dahl, and the others in la Escuadrilla de Chatos, commanded by Andres Lacalle. Lacalle was the most well-known ace in Republican Spain. It is believed that he had 11 victories to his credit when he was



"Whitey" Dahl of Sidney, Illinois, was believed to be 28 years old when he set out for Spain. Dahl had been trained as an army pilot at Randolph and Kelly Fields. During the airmail emergency of 1934, Dahl flew the first run of army-carried mail into Atlanta, Georgia. Dahl was later thrown out of the army for a civil court conviction. In October 1936, Dahl ferried three aircraft to Vera Cruz, Mexico, for shipment to the Spanish Republicans. Dahl is shown here with Spaniard Ramon Castaneda, also a member of the Escuadrilla Lacalle. (From Mito Y. Verdades)

given command of the 1a Escuadrilla de Chatos.⁶⁰

Lacalle remembered Allison with a brief statement from his book, "Jim Allison . . . was the first loss that we had in the squadron. In the first or second attack that we carried out against the chemical factory, 'La Maranosa,' he was wounded by a bullet in the leg. He did not fly any more." Lacalle stated that the attacks took place either February 6th or 7th, 1937.⁶¹

Tinker's account in *Some Still Live* does not agree with Lacalle's recollection. Tinker stated that he was flying with Allison, Leider, and Dahl in what was known as La Patrulla Americana in the 1a Escuadrilla. Tinker claimed that on February 18th, 1937, the squadron was involved in a very large dogfight with Heinkel 51s. The Lacalle Squadron was greatly outnumbered so Lacalle signaled his pilots to form a defensive circle, also known as the Lufbery Circle. After the circle was formed Allison, Leider, and Dahl spotted some Heinkels cruising below them. The three of them took the bait and attacked. Allison brought down a Heinkel 51 and was hit immediately by a formation of Heinkels flying top cover. He was struck in the leg, but managed to elude the enemy planes and land at a Republican air base near Alcala de Henares. Tinker later visited Allison in the hospital, and Allison told him that he expected to be flying within 20 days. Unfortunately, according to Tinker, Allison's leg got worse and he returned to the United States in March.⁶²

Albert J. Baumler

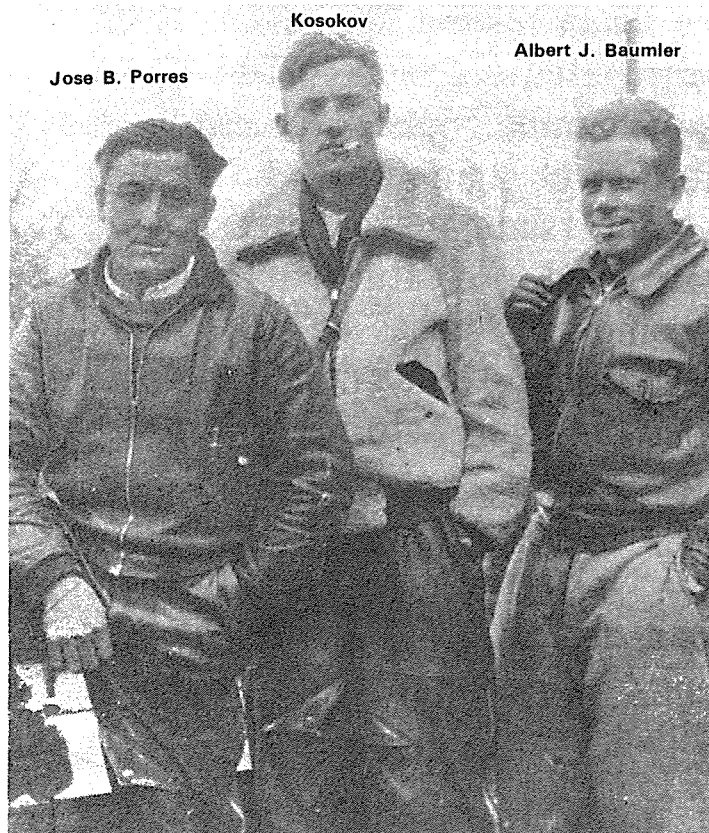
February 11th, 1937, was a memorable date for Al Baumler. It was on this date that he was involved in his first aerial combat. Baumler and Charlie Koch had just joined a Russian I-15 squadron on the Malaga Front the day before. The combat took place between Tabernas and Calohapas. Baumler was flying Chato number 73 on an escort mission for two Potez 54s. His formation was attacked by Fiat 32s which shot down both Potez 54s. Baumler engaged a Fiat with no results. He returned to his base with his engine running rough. The flight had lasted an hour and 45 minutes.⁶³

Later, on April 15th, the Lacalle Squadron moved to Sarrion on the Teruel Front. The Lacalle Squadron was combined with the Russian squadron that Baumler was flying with for the next nine days. On May 5th, Tinker was transferred to Baumler's squadron, which was commanded by a Russian officer named Kosokov.⁶⁴ From this point in time Baumler's movements in Spain are nearly identical to Tinker's.

Albert Baumler scored his first aerial victory on March 16th, 1937. He was flying I-15 number 23 on a flight out of Soto Madrid when his squadron engaged a formation of Fiat 32s. The Fiats were engaged in the Brihuega-Valdesor-Pajares sector. Baumler shared in the destruction of a Fiat 32 with Russian pilot A.N. Zeitsoff. On March 20th, Baumler, flying Chato number 22, attacked a formation of three Savoia-Marchetti escorted by five Fiat 32s. Baumler shot down a Fiat ten kilometers southeast of Brihuega. Baumler was again flying out of Soto Madrid; it was his fourth flight of the day. On April 17th, Baumler was on his second flight of the day out of Sarrion, Teruel. His patrol took off on an interception and went after a formation of Heinkel 51s. Baumler fired on one Heinkel which went down smoking. As Baumler did not see him crash, he was only given credit for a probable. Baumler brought down a second Heinkel which crashed in a neutral zone between the lines. Consequently, Baumler received credit for one kill.

On May 30th, Baumler and Tinker transitioned to Polikarpov I-16 monoplanes. While flying "Monos" as Baumler and Tinker called them, Baumler brought down a Fiat 32 over

Albert Baumler, later known as "Ajax" Baumler when he served with the Flying Tigers in China, is shown here with the Russian I-15 squadron commander, Kosokov. The other person in the photograph is Jose Bastida Porres who flew in the Lacalle Squadron with Tinker and Dahl and was later transferred to Kosokov's squadron and became a squadron mate of Albert Baumler's. Bastida survived the war and escaped to Mexico where he founded the Escuela de Aviacion Mexico. He is believed to be living in Mexico at this time. (From Mito Y. Verdades)



San Idelrviso-Segovia area. He was flying Mono number 65 out of Madrid. On June 14th, he brought down another Fiat over Huesca. On this mission he was flying Mono number 69 out of Castejon. Baumler's last victory was scored on July 8th, while flying Mono number 22 out of Chozas Madrid. On this last mission Baumler was escorting a formation of ten light bombers to Quejormas. His squadron spotted an enemy bomber formation escorted by Fiats. The decision was made to attack the enemy formation, and Baumler fired on a Fiat which stalled, rolled, and spiraled into the ground.⁶⁵

From December 27th, 1936, to July 15th, 1937, Al Baumler amassed a total of 174.35 flying hours while in the service of the Spanish Government. During this time he received credit for three and a half Fiat 32s, one Heinkel 51, and the probable destruction of a Fiat and a Heinkel.⁶⁶

Orrin Dwight Bell

Bell was signed for a "big money" contract for his first month in Spain and then reduced to a lieutenant's salary. At this time it is not known exactly what service Bell performed for the Government. Tinker stated in his book that Bell was unable to pass his flight checks as a pursuit pilot. Albert Baumler stated that Bell's claims of having shot down six planes are untrue. He stated that Bell wasn't able to sober up enough to fly a combat mission while in Spain.⁶⁷

Harold Evans Dahl

"Whitey" Dahl joined Lacalle's la Escuadrilla de Chatos on January 18th, 1937. Dahl, who flew under the *nom de guerre* "Hernando Diaz Evans," joined Allison, Tinker, and the others to form the first Spanish Chato squadron. Dahl went into action with the Lacalle Squadron in the second week of February. Dahl was shot down in the squadron's first major aerial combat on February 18th. He managed to bail out over friendly territory and return to his base that night. Dahl resumed his flying duties two days later. Dahl was considered an outstanding pursuit pilot by his squadron commander, Lacalle. Lacalle described Dahl as even "more aggressive than Tinker, but to me he inspired less confidence in assuming the responsibilities as head of a squadron. He was a very good pilot without a doubt."⁶⁸

On March 23rd, 1937, Dahl came down with severe stomach pains and was sent to Madrid for treatment. He obtained permission to go to Paris for an appendicitis operation from the Air Ministry and left for Paris on April 12th. He did not return to Spain until June 24th.⁶⁹ After two weeks the Air Ministry cancelled his contract as they had had no word from him explaining why he had overstayed his one week leave.⁷⁰ In June he returned to Spain for the purpose of collected his back pay. The Air Ministry refused to pay him for the two months he had been gone and nearly had him shot for desertion. He was able to convince the Air Ministry that there had been a misunderstanding and with a little help from Lacalle he was returned to flying duty.⁷¹

One of the main reasons for Dahl returning to flying duty was his new "wife." During his stay in Paris, Dahl claimed to have married an American entertainer, Edith Rogers. She had been living far above Dahl's resources, and he found it necessary to return to flying to support her expensive tastes.⁷²

Upon his return to flying, Dahl made it known that he would like to be reassigned to Lakeev's I-16 squadron so that he could be with his friends, Tinker and Baumler. However, the Air Ministry did not feel he was ready for the I-16 and assigned Dahl to a Russian Chato squadron.

On his second combat mission, July 12th, Dahl was again shot down. He managed to bail out, but this time he was



Albert Baumler is shown during his earlier service in the U.S. Army Air Corps. Baumler was washed out of his Air Corps training for taking off in a twin-engine trainer which had nearly empty tanks. He force landed with little damage to the aircraft, but was washed out for failure to show proper flying proficiency and because it was believed that he would never make a satisfactory combat pilot. Baumler who listed his home as Trenton, New Jersey, on his passport, was 22 years old when he sailed for Spain. (Richard K. Smith)

captured by enemy troops. He was tried by a military court and condemned to death in October, 1937. Due to intervention by the United States Government and his "wife," Dahl's sentence was commuted to life in prison. He was confined at a prison hospital in Salamanca.⁷³

Dahl's capture and initial death sentence caused the United States Government much embarrassment, as Dahl still claimed to hold a reserve commission in the United States Army Air Corps. (In actuality the commission was taken away in February, 1936, for reasons of a civil court conviction.⁷⁴) Also, Dahl signed a confession charging Captain Townsend Griffiss, the Assistant Military Attaché in Valencia, with unneutral activities. The United States State Department immediately dispatched an official to interrogate Dahl in Salamanca.

The State Department official, Mr. Graves, was told by a judge in Salamanca that Dahl had signed a confession which accused Captain Griffiss of intervening with the Air Ministry in Valencia on behalf of United States pilots to collect back pay and to repatriate them. Dahl also stated in his confession that Ed Semons, the American go-between for the Spanish Government in Paris, told American pilots leaving Paris to look up Captain Griffiss upon their arrival in Valencia. Dahl later retracted the confession, alleging that it was signed through a misunderstanding of the interpreter. He told Graves that he would be shot before making any statements against Griffiss. Dahl stated that Griffiss was innocent of any unneutral activities. He also stated that he had only heard of Ed Semons. He stated that when he arrived in Paris, the Spanish Embassy, not Ed Semons, told him to proceed to Valencia.

Captain Griffiss was ordered by both the United States War and State Departments to explain his relationship with Harold Dahl and Ed Semons. After lengthy statements by



Albert J. Baumler after Spain Circa 1939 (Courtesy of Richard K. Smith)

Griffiss, he was cleared of the charges and the matter was dropped.

After Dahl's sentence was reduced to life, the Nationalists wanted to trade Dahl for one of their pilots in a prisoner exchange. The Republicans indicated that they had no desire to exchange Dahl for a Nationalist pilot. Dahl had been transferred to a private room in a prison hospital and was allowed to walk around Salamanca in the company of a Nationalist officer. He was eventually returned to a jail cell because of repeatedly leaving the hospital at night without permission and visiting the local bars and dance halls.⁷⁵

Dahl had served the Republican Air Force well during the Civil War. He had four confirmed victories, by his own account, an He 51 and three CR 32s. Lacalle stated that Dahl had five confirmed victories in Spain.⁷⁶

Hilaire du Berrier

While serving the Spanish Government, Hilaire du Berrier worked as an interpreter, check pilot, and pursuit pilot. He checked the flying proficiency of many of the foreign pilots who came to Spain seeking flying contracts in November, 1936.⁷⁷

Du Berrier's service as a pursuit pilot has not been recorded; however, it is known that du Berrier was the Government pilot responsible for the attack on an Air France liner, November 29th, 1936. It was generally believed that either Wilson or Pickett, both English pilots flying for the Government, carried out the attack on the Air France Wibault 283-t12 trimotor.⁷⁸ Another source blamed the

attack on a Russian pilot who mistook the Wibault for a Junkers 52.⁷⁹

Du Berrier stated that he made the attack at approximately 10:20 A.M. on the 29th. The Government had just undergone an air raid by Italian trimotors based on the Balearic Islands, and du Berrier was up looking for enemy raiders. Through an opening in the clouds, about 12 miles off Alicante, du Berrier saw a trimotor and attacked. The pilot of the Air France plane, Perrichon, heard cracking sounds in one of the wings and realized he was being attacked. He turned toward Alicante and landed there. The Wibault had suffered a damaged aileron and contained some very frightened passengers. The Wibault was on its regular Toulouse-Tangiers-Casablanca run, when du Berrier attacked in his Nieuport 52, number 3-86.⁸⁰

Colonel Miguel Garcia Granados (*nom de guerre*)⁸¹ Manuel Gomez Garcia

Granados, known as Gomez to Tinker and the other members of the 1a Escuadrilla de Chatos, joined Lacalle's squadron as a replacement pilot on March 15th, 1937. During his first four days with the squadron, Gomez flew on Frank Tinker's wing as they patrolled the Guadalajara Front. On March 20th, Gomez was assigned to lead his own patrol (three to five planes), and during his first flight that day he was shot down and captured by the Nationalists. Gomez spent four months in the Salamanca prison. Like Dahl, he had been sentenced to death but later reprieved. He was more fortunate than Dahl as he was traded to the Republicans for an Italian pilot.

Tinker ran into Gomez in Valencia on August 12th, shortly before Tinker left Spain. Gomez told him that he had been starved while in prison and his badly-burned left hand had not received proper treatment. In fact, Tinker said later, Gomez's hand appeared useless. Gomez told Tinker that he hoped to return to combat flying.⁸²

Charles D. Koch

Charlie Koch was initially chosen to fly with the Lacalle Squadron. Lacalle was impressed with Koch's flying ability and made him patrol leader of "La Patrulla Americana" on January 23rd, 1937. "The American Patrol" as it was known by the other members of the squadron consisted initially of Koch, Frank Tinker, Tex Allison, and Whitey Dahl. If Koch and Allison were military pilots before going to Spain, it is doubtful that they were pursuit pilots. Tinker stated that "the American Patrol" carried out gunnery training on January 25th and that aerial gunnery was all new to Koch and Allison. However, Tinker stated that they did well. This leads one to believe that both pilots landed big money contracts without prior pursuit plane experience.⁸³

On January 28th, the squadron received orders to go to Murcia and pick up new Chatos to take to the front. That day Koch became severely ill with stomach pains. Tinker explained that the sudden shift from American to Spanish food had made Koch ill. Koch was sent to the base hospital. Allison was named leader of "the American Patrol" in Koch's place and the entire squadron left for Murcia on the 29th.⁸⁴

Koch recovered and was sent to the training base at Los Alazares with Al Baumler. Later they were assigned to a Russian Chato squadron on the Malaga Front where Koch claims to have downed a Fiat CR 32. Unfortunately, no proof of this claim has surfaced in any known Spanish or American source on aviation in the Spanish Civil War.⁸⁵

Benjamin David Leider

Ben Leider first served the Spanish Government as a transport pilot, ferrying various VIPs and cargo to the many airfields in the Government Zone. Leider's movements in Spain, from his arrival in late September, 1936, until he joined the Lacalle Squadron, are to date unknown.

Leider went into action with Lacalle's 1a Escuadrilla de Chatos on February 10th, 1937. Tinker claimed that Ben Leider scored the first aerial victory of the "Escuadrilla de Lacalle" on February 13th, when Leider brought down a Heinkel 51. Tinker described how the He 51 went down in flames. Tinker had to be describing the incident second-hand as he wasn't flying with the squadron that day. Tinker had been forced to abort the mission just after take-off with mechanical difficulties.⁸⁶

Leider described his victory in a letter home: "... yesterday, the 13th, was my lucky day! I had my first combat and downed my first Heinkel! Lacalle was with me when I got the dog down. I saw water leave his radiator in a streak as he made for his lines. Now, if anything happens, at least I haven't been a liability."⁸⁷ This would not have been a confirmed victory according to Spanish Air Force requirements for an aerial victory. Leider did not see any flames nor did he see the enemy aircraft crash.

Frank Tinker was kind to Leider and Allison when he mentioned them in his book, *Some Still Live*. For example, when describing Leider's demise, Tinker stated that Leider was shot down in the squadron's big air battle of February 18th. It was in this fight that Dahl and Allison were shot down. Tinker claimed that Leider followed Dahl and Allison when they dove for the bait. Tinker, "... saw his [Leider's] plane give sort of a jerk as the three Heinkels flashed past. Then he started wavering away toward our territory in a shallow dive. When he neared the ground he tried to land in a

From what appears to be the cockpit of a Nieuport 52, Ben Leider gives the clenched fist salute for the camera. Leider was the most political of the American pilots who went to Spain. He was proud of his membership in the Communist Party. Although Leider was not among the first group of American pilots to reach Spain, he arrived within two weeks of that initial group of American pilots. There are two conflicting reports of Ben Leider's death in Spain. Leider's body was returned to the U.S., the only deceased American to be returned from Spain. The American Communist Party held large memorial services for Leider in New York City. Leider was well known there as the flying newspaper reporter for the New York Journal. Leider, a commercial pilot since 1931, was 36 years old when he quit his job as a reporter and went to Spain. (Dr. Morris Leider, NYC 1972)



This is the only known photograph of Charles D. Koch, an early member of the Lacalle Squadron. Because of illness, Koch was unable to accompany the squadron into combat. He later served in a Russian Chato squadron with Albert Baumler. This photograph was taken in Pennsylvania in 1928. It depicts pilots and officials of the Keystone Aircraft Company at the trial flight of the Keystone Patrician. Koch is standing on the far left. Clarence Chamberlain is fourth from the left.

small field, but overshot. He turned and tried again. Again he overshot, but desperately tried to land anyway. We saw his plane crash into the side of a small hill with a terrific impact. American fighting plane pilots had given their first life in Spain."⁸⁸

Colonel Lacalle did not agree with Tinker on Leider's death. Lacalle stated that Leider did go after a Heinkel and was pursued by another Heinkel. At this point Lacalle went after the last Heinkel and managed to frighten him off Leider's tail with a burst of machine gun fire from long range. Lacalle pulled up high to protect Leider while the latter finished off the first Heinkel. Leider never fired. The Heinkel nearly got away twice when Lacalle intervened and drove the Heinkel further from his own lines, by firing a few bursts from his gun. Lacalle wanted Ben to bring down the Heinkel. He felt it would be good for his squadron's morale. The Heinkel made a third attempt to reach its lines. Lacalle fired again, this time sending the Heinkel down out of control. Lacalle joined up with Leider and signaled to return to base. Leider was flying slightly behind on Lacalle's wing. During the return to base, Lacalle looked back for Leider only to find that Leider was no longer with him. Upon landing Lacalle asked the other pilots in the squadron what they had seen of Leider. They had no answers; they saw Leider join up, but that was the last they saw of him. It wasn't until later that Leider's plane was found.⁸⁹

James Lincoln Holt Peck

Jim Peck flew his first mission, coastal patrol, out of La Ribera (La Riviera), also known as San Javier, in September, 1937. Peck stated that he flew in the Aragon offensive and during his two and a half months of combat duty in Spain, Peck claimed the destruction of five enemy fighters; two He 51s and three Fiat CR 32s. In November he flew his last missions with the Spanish Air Force. Peck stated that his last mission was escorting SB-2s to hit ship and aircraft installations on the Balearic Islands.⁹⁰ Little more information can be gleaned from Peck's two books or from several articles written by or about him.

In his book, *Armies with Wings*, Peck devoted little more than a chapter to his many air combats over unnamed territories with Spanish squadron mates who had no last names and Russian squadron mates who were never named.



Frank Tinker with his dog after Tinker's return from Spain. Tinker is wearing the uniform of the U.S. Navy. Tinker graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in June 1933, but was not commissioned until 29 May 1934. For financial reasons Tinker was sent to Randolph Field for flight training. The Navy solved its money problems and Tinker completed his advanced training at Pensacola. (Lucille Tinker Carnahan)

Squadron movements were also never mentioned by Peck.⁹¹ One of the last articles on Peck followed the same trend. The article, an interview with Jim Peck, gave one the impression that all of Peck's flights were made out of La Ribera (sic); not just training missions, but all of his combat missions. The article never mentioned another airfield, which is unusual, as Government pursuit squadrons were moving often to different bases to support the many different battle fronts of the Spanish Civil War. An outstanding error in this recent article on Peck (1972) was the statement that La Ribera (sic) Airfield was just outside Valencia.⁹² In actual fact La Ribera (sic) is 120 miles south of Valencia.⁹³ The error was stated twice in the article; however, in a followup statement Peck wrote that two mistakes were made transcribing the interview—a hotel name was misspelled as was the name of a type of parachute. No mention was made by Peck of the incorrect location of his fighter base. With the correction brief was a photo of Peck in a Spanish Air Force uniform unlike any Spanish Air Force uniform depicted in the available Spanish sources.⁹⁴

In his books and articles, Peck mentions four pilots who flew with him in Spain. They were Paul E. Williams, an American from Youngstown, Ohio; Carlos Brunswick, a Brazilian; Alberto Aybar and Justo Sully, both South Americans. Jim Peck tells us nothing about the South Americans and little about Paul Williams. He does describe in lengthy detail the flight maneuvers that they all carried out as a formation in both training and combat.⁹⁵

In 1968, Albert Baumler wrote Colonel Raymond F. Toliver, Historian for the American Fighter Aces Association, that he did not believe Peck's claim of flying in Spain. Colonel Toliver, who has spent some time in Spain, questioned many Spanish Air Force generals and colonels from both the Nationalist and Republican Air Forces about the presence of black Americans Peck and Williams in Spain during the Civil War. Only one officer remembered a black

American, who had something to do with transport aircraft; however, the officer stated that the American was not piloting the transports and was certainly not a pursuit pilot.⁹⁶ This Spanish officer's claim has not been authenticated. It must also be noted that Al Baumler left Spain before Peck arrived; therefore, he could not have known the validity of Peck's claims.

The stories written by Peck and about Peck are fraught with errors and are not corroborated by any known Spanish or American source on aviation in the Spanish Civil War.

Frank Glasgow Tinker, Jr.

The most successful American pursuit pilot to fly for the Spanish Government was, undoubtedly, Frank Tinker. Tinker flew for the Republicans for nearly seven months and was credited with the destruction of eight Nationalist pursuit planes. Tinker and Albert Baumler were the longest-serving American pursuit pilots to have flown in the Spanish Civil War.

The greatest tribute paid to Frank Tinker was the statement made by his favorite squadron commander in Spain, Captain (later Colonel) Andrés García Lacalle. In his book Lacalle stated, "When I was obligated to leave the squadron, I considered that Tinker was the most qualified to take my place, he had excellent behavior over the front, a good record and a great sense of responsibility, but I had to send the squadron to Northern Spain, precisely, to my hometown, Bilbao, and because of his bad Spanish it was not considered appropriate [to appoint him squadron leader]. If the squadron had remained on the same front, it is very possible that he would have been named head of the squadron."⁹⁷ Eventually, Tinker was named head of the squadron; however, only when the squadron was flying a mission. After Lacalle left the squadron, all of the pilots got together and made the request that Tinker be made air commander and Spanish officer Jimenez, Lacalle's replacement, be allowed to command the squadron only on the ground.⁹⁸

Frank Tinker flew the Polikarpov I-15 until May 30th, 1937. On this date Tinker and Al Baumler were assigned to a Russian I-16 squadron and checked out in the stubby monoplane fighter. In the last week of June, Tinker was given leave for rest and relaxation. It was during this time that Tinker had a misunderstanding with a civil guard and was slightly injured when the guard shot him. This incident put Tinker out of action until July 5th.⁹⁹

The following is a log of Frank Tinker's activities in Spain, derived from his book, *Some Still Live*. It is a chronicle of "La Patrulla Americana" of the 1a Escuadrilla de Chatos. The log traces the later movements of Tinker and Albert Baumler when they were flying with a Russian I-16 squadron commanded by Lakeev and later Ukov.

TINKER'S LOG

January, 1937

- 3-Tinker confirmed contract on arrival in Valencia
- 6-Tinker sent to Los Alcazares—no flights
- 7-Tinker met Dahl, Dickinson, Bell, Gomez at San Javier
- 8-Dahl, Tinker took their first check flight at San Javier in a DeHavilland Moth
- 10-Tinker was given a check flight by field commandant in a Koolhoven biplane
- 11-Tinker was checked out in a Breguet 19 at Manises, then joined formation practice with English pilots Loverseed and Papps
- 12-Tinker flew coastal patrol in Breguet 19 from Manises
- 13-Tinker flew bombing mission on target near Teruel. He did not complete the mission; his formation was attacked by Fiat 32s

- 14 and 18-Tinker flew a Breguet out of Manises on coastal patrol
- 20-Tinker, Allison, Koch, Dahl, Gomez sent to Los Alcazares
- 21-Tinker, Allison, Koch, Dahl, Gomez arrived Los Alcazares and bussed to San Javier
- 22-Tinker made a familiarization flight in a Nieuport 52 out of San Javier. Leider joins the squadron and flies with a patrol
- 23-Tinker, Koch, Dahl, Allison all made two familiarization flights in their Polikarpov I-15s out of Carmoli
- 24-Tinker, Koch, Dahl, Allison made formation training flights in I-15s out of Carmoli. They also met their new squadron commander, Captain Andrés Lacalle. With seven Spaniards they formed the first all Spanish Chato squadron
- 25-Tinker, Dahl, Koch, Allison all made formation practice flights out of Carmoli, flying I-15s
- 26, 27, and 28-Tinker, Koch, Dahl, Allison made gunnery flights out of Carmoli against a towed target sleeve
- 29-Tinker, Dahl, Allison, Leider made gunnery flights for practice in I-15s out of Carmoli. Leider flies with "American Patrol." Major Sampil also made final flight checks on same American pilots. Koch developed stomach pains and was replaced by Anglo-Japanese pilot Chang Selles. Lacalle takes over the newly formed squadron from the Russian instructors and the squadron moved to Alcantrilla on the 31st
- 30-Tinker, Dahl, Allison, Leider made flight with rest of squadron to Murcia. Squadron then motored to Alcantrilla
- 31-Tinker, Dahl, Allison, Leider made flights for formation training in new I-15s. Leider joins "the American Patrol"

February, 1937

- 2-Tinker, Dahl, Allison, Leider with Selles tried a five plane patrol, found it too difficult to maneuver. Flew I-15s out of Alcantrilla
- 3-Tinker, Dahl, Allison, Leider made a flight to Albacete in I-15s. An aerobatic demonstration was performed before landing
- 4-Tinker, Dahl, Allison put on a formation aerobatic display for VIPs at Albacete in I-15s
- 5-Escuadrilla de Lacalle (as it later became-known) had a mock dogfight with a Russian squadron. Flight out of Albacete
- 6-Squadron moved to Guadalajara. Leider had a mid-air with Castenado; both landed OK
- 10-Tinker, Dahl, Allison, Leider, and rest of squadron bombed a factory 15 miles southeast of Jarma River. Mission out of Guadalajara (Lacalle stated that Allison was wounded on the mission and never flew in Spain again). This was the first combat mission for the Lacalle Squadron
- 11-Tinker, Dahl, Allison Leider bombed artillery on Jarma River near Aranjuez, strafed troops and moved to Campo X (Azuqueca)
- 12-Tinker, Dahl, Allison, Leider bombed railroads, made two flights, returned to Guadalajara. All missions to May 30th flown in I-15s
- 13-Dahl, Allison, Leider made a bombing mission. Tinker stated that Leider shot down the squadron's first enemy plane on this mission (Lacalle stated that Leider did not shoot down an enemy this day or any other day)
- 14-Tinker, Dahl, Allison, Leider made return flight to Campo X
- 15-Tinker made test flights in his I-15 to try new propeller
- 16-Tinker made test flights with new prop. Squadron made interception, knocking down two Junkers 52s over Jarma River
- 17-Tinker, Dahl, Allison, Leider made routine patrol on Jarma Front
- 18-Tinker, Dahl, Allison, Leider, and rest of squadron involved in large dogfight with Heinkel 51s over the Jarma Front. Tinker stated that Ben Leider was shot down and killed. Dahl shot down but escaped by parachute. Allison wounded in leg and forced to land. Tinker was the only American to return to base from this mission (Lacalle claimed that nobody saw Leider go down and that the facts are not known as to what really happened to Leider)
- 20-Tinker, Dahl out of Campo X flew support for Government counterattack on Jarma Front. Dahl made flight leader with Tinker and Selles as wingmen
- 21-Tinker, Dahl made two flights. Second was top cover for Jose's (Ivan Kopets) I-15 squadron
- 24-March 5—Bad weather; no missions flown

March, 1937

- 6-Tinker, Dahl attempted the interception of two fast twin-engined bombers. Took off from Campo X, landed at Guadalajara
- 8-No mission. Replacement pilots for Leider and Allison arrived
- 9-Tinker, Dahl patrol over Brihuega out of Guadalajara
- 11-Tinker, Dahl strafed troops on Guadalajara Front. After making two flights, landed at Albacete where they met General Douglas (Smushkevich) and Mrs. Rosemarin
- 12-Tinker, Dahl escorted General Douglas to Guadalajara. Second flight escorted bombers to Brihuega. Third flight bombed and strafed Italians at Brihuega
- 13-Tinker, Dahl made one reconnaissance flight and one attempted interception. Squadron lost Spanish pilot Blanch

- 14-Tinker, Dahl made a patrol out of Albacete. Tinker shot down his first enemy plane, a Fiat 32, and landed at Manises. In Valencia that night Tinker saw Allison and Koch who were on their way back to the States
- 15-Tinker escorted a transport to Albacete, then returned to Guadalajara
- 16-Tinker, Dahl, Gomez, Baumler bombed Italians on the Guadalajara Front. Baumler, flying with Kosokov's I-15 squadron, shared in destruction of a Fiat 32 with Russian pilot, Zeitsoff
- 17-19—Tinker, Dahl, Gomez, patrolled the Guadalajara front
- 20-Tinker, Dahl, Gomez, Baumler escorted bombers to bomb near Cifuentes. Lacalle reorganized the squadron. Lacalle led one patrol (each patrol consisted of three I-15s), Dahl led one, Tinker led a patrol, and Gomez led one patrol. Gomez shot down and captured. Baumler, flying with Kosokov's squadron, brought down a Fiat 32. Frank Tinker downed a Fiat 32
- 21-April 2—No missions because of bad weather. Dahl went to Paris for an appendicitis operation; did not return for nearly three months. Selles called to Alcala never to return. Lacalle promoted to major. Squadron turned over to Captain Jimenez

April, 1937

- 3-Tinker made reconnaissance flight out of Guadalajara
- 4-Tinker bombed Baides railroad station from his base at Guadalajara
- 6-Tinker made reconnaissance flight out of Guadalajara, got lost, and landed near Villanueva de la Jara
- 7-Tinker returned to Guadalajara
- 8-Tinker made reconnaissance flight over Guadalajara Front
- 9-10—Tinker bombed and strafed troops on the Madrid Front
- 13-Tinker flew reconnaissance and bombing mission on Guadalajara Front. At Guadalajara Tinker met Joe Rosemarin who had just landed in a bright red Lockheed Orion
- 15-Tinker moved to Sarrion on the Teruel Front where his squadron flew side-by-side with Baumler's squadron (Kosokov commanding)
- 16-Tinker and Baumler escorted bombers. Argentinian Tuya shot down. He had been a new replacement with Kosokov's squadron
- 17-While on patrol, Tinker and Baumler engaged a large group of Heinkel 51s. They each shot down a Heinkel, Baumler credited with only a probable. Tinker made air commander of the squadron while Jimenez remained squadron commander on the ground
- 19-20—Tinker and Baumler escorted Rasantes bombers (Polikarpov R-5s)
- 22-Tinker, Baumler escorted R-5s to bomb Villarquemado
- 23-Tinker returned to Campo X
- 24-Tinker given leave for Madrid

May, 1937

- 3-Tinker transferred to Baumler's squadron commanded by Kosokov, based at Camposoto Airfield
- 5-Tinker, Baumler bombed the railroad station at Espinoza de Henares, flying out of Camposoto
- 10-Tinker made a reconnaissance flight west of the Sierra Guadarrama along the Madrid-Burgos Highway
- 11-Tinker, Baumler flew a reconnaissance to locate artillery battery firing on Madrid
- 13-Tinker and Baumler made a range test of the I-15s
- 14-All pilots driven to small airfield near Manzanres de la Sierra
- 15-Foreign pilots not allowed to accompany Spanish pilots of Kosokov's squadron to Santander on following day
- 16-Part of the squadron left for Santander. Americans and Russians stayed behind
- 17-29—Tinker and Baumler transferred to Alcala to join Lakeev's I-16 squadron
- 30-Tinker, Baumler made their first flights in the I-16
- 31-Tinker escorted Rasantes to bomb Segovia, flying out of Alcala

June, 1937

- 1-Tinker, Baumler escorted Rasantes to bomb Segovia
- 2-Tinker, Baumler made four flights escorting Rasantes to bomb Segovia. They each shot down one Fiat 32. They saw Finick in a Rasante shot down
- 4-Tinker, Baumler patrolled over the Sierra to Segovia
- 10-Tinker, Baumler attempted an interception, no results
- 11-Tinker, Baumler were transferred with the squadron to an airfield near Barbastro in Catalonia
- 12-Tinker, Baumler escorted Rasantes and Katiuskas (Tupolev SB-2s) to bomb near Huesca
- 14-Tinker, Baumler escorted SB-2s to bomb Ayerbe near Huesca. Baumler shot down a Fiat 32. Flying out of Barbastro
- 15-Tinker, Baumler escorted Rasantes to bomb trenches beyond Huesca
- 16-Tinker, Baumler made four flights escorting Rasantes. Tinker shot down a Fiat 32
- 18-Tinker, Baumler escorted 50 bombers, Rasantes and Katiuskas, to bomb the city of Huesca. Flying out of Barasto this was their last offensive flight on this front
- 19-Tinker, Baumler attempted an interception over Sarinena

20-Tinker, Baumler attempted an interception over Sarinena
 21-July 4—Tinker, Baumler given leave. Tinker was hospitalized in a shooting accident. Whitey Dahl back from Paris visited Tinker in the hospital, accompanied by Baumler

July, 1937

- 5-Tinker, Baumler were transferred to Barajas near Madrid. Dahl was sent back to a biplane (I-15) squadron
- 8-Tinker, Baumler escorted Rasantes to bomb trenches near Villa de Canada. Baumler shot down a Fiat 32
- 9-Tinker and Baumler made two flights escorting Rasantes to bomb Navalcarnero
- 10-Tinker, Baumler, out of Barajas, attempted an interception; also made an escort flight with Rasantes strafing trenches near Brunete
- 12-Tinker, Baumler made three flights, escorted Rasantes and Katiuskas. Tinker shot down an Me 109. Elsewhere, Dahl was shot down and captured
- 14-Tinker, Baumler made three flights escorting bombers
- 15-Tinker, Baumler made four flights, interception, escorted Rasantes and strafed Casa de Campo
- 16-No missions. Baumler left for Valencia with a bad throat infection
- 17-Tinker engaged and shot down an Me 109B
- 18-Tinker made three flights, escorted Rasantes and shot down a Fiat 32 near Brunete
- 19-Tinker made four flights, escorted Rasantes and attempted an interception. Moved from Barajas to Campo Real
- 20-Tinker, flying out of Campo Real, attempted an interception
- 21-Tinker strafed the trenches at Caso de Campo
- 23-Tinker attempted an interception then returned to Barajas
- 24-Tinker flew to Albacete then returned to Barajas
- 29-Tinker attempted an interception. He landed at Barajas after making his last flight for Spain. Tinker returned to the U.S. in August, 1937.

From Tinker's flight log we are able to get a brief description of the combats in which he brought down enemy aircraft. On March 20th, 1937, Tinker flew I-15 number CA-056 out of Guadalajara. He downed one Fiat CR 32 during the two hour flight and landed at Valencia. It is interesting to note that Tinker's log referred to the I-15 as a "Mosca." The I-16 is referred to in Tinker's log as a "Mono," short for monoplane. On March 20th, his mission was bomber escort and Tinker downed another Fiat. He flew the same plane from the same base as before. The mission lasted two hours. On April 17th, Tinker took off on his second flight of the day in CA-058. He intercepted and brought down one Heinkel 51. This mission was flown out of Teruel.

The following victories were accomplished by Tinker after his assignment to la Escuadrilla de Moscas (I-16s) commanded by Capt. Ivan A. Lakeev. It is also believed that Tinker flew in Ukov's Mosca squadron sometime in June or July, 1937. On June 2nd, Tinker became involved in a dogfight with Fiat 32s while flying a bomber escort mission. Tinker brought down one Fiat. He flew I-16 number CM-070. On June 16th, Tinker flew CM-023, in which he scored the remainder of his victories, on an escort mission. Tinker was again victorious over a Fiat CR 32. On July 13th, Tinker became the first American to bring down a Messerschmitt Bf 109. The mission was flown out of Madrid. Four days later, again out of Madrid, Tinker scored his last victory in Spain. The mission was escort for 19 bombers. During the flight the formation was attacked by Fiats and Messerschmitts; Tinker brought down one Fiat CR 32.¹⁰⁰

Explanation of Tinker log

Frank Tinker wrote his book, *Some Still Live*, from a daily calendar he kept while in Spain. Using his calendar as a reference he was able to elaborate on his activities in Spain. He was able also to refer to his flight log. This author has reduced his book back to a flight log, only this log has been written in the third-person to better define exactly which Americans took part in each individual mission. Any reference to the destruction of enemy aircraft came from Frank Tinker's flight log book. Any reference to the destruction of

enemy aircraft by Albert Baumler came from Baumler's flight log from Spain. The parenthetical reference to James Allison under the date February 10, came from Andrés Lacalle's book, *Mitos y Verdades*. The parenthetical reference to Ben Leider under the date February 18, also came from Lacalle's book.

On most of the missions mentioned above, Tinker and the other American pilots were accompanied by Spanish or Russian squadron mates. In an effort to conserve space those squadron members are not mentioned.

Tinker's flight log states that from January 7th to July 29th, 1937, the length of his service in Spain, Tinker flew a total of 191:20 hours.

TRANSPORT

Edwin Lyons (Lebovitz)

The first month in Spain Eddie Lyons spent flying transport aircraft to the various battle fronts in the Republican Zone. Lyons at one time flew a Lockheed Vega out of Quintanar de la Zarga. He flew it on transport duty between Quintanar and Madrid. He recalled that one Lockheed Orion was based at Barcelona. Both planes carried Republican markings.¹⁰¹

Lyons, known as Ed Lebovitz in Spain, later chose to fly bombers. He was assigned to Russian Rasantes Grupo 15 at Quintanar. He claimed to have been given a contract to fly bombers on November 11th, 1936. He was promoted to

Art Shapiro was utilized by the Spanish government as a transport pilot. Shapiro was a member of the initial group of American pilots to go to Spain. Both Shapiro and Eugene Finick were students of Edwin Lyons, a flight instructor from Floyd Bennett Field in New York. Lyons accompanied them to Spain. (From Victor Berch, ALB Archive, Brandeis Univ. Library)



Lieutenant Pilot on January 1st, 1937. Flying the Rasantes and Czech Aero 100s, Lyons carried out bombing and strafing missions. Mrs. Pearl Lyons traveled to Spain with Mrs. Rosemarin and Mrs. Thomas Goodwin, where they joined their husbands.¹⁰²

There is a possibility that Lyons did fly combat missions in Spain; however Col. Andrés Lacalle stated that foreign pilots without previous military experience were not accepted for combat duty. Civilian pilots, if they were retained, were used as transport pilots and occasionally reconnaissance pilots. They were rarely used as bomber pilots and never used in fighters with one fatal exception, Ben Leider.¹⁰³

Another fact, which makes Lyon's combat duty suspect, was his name on a contracts list from the Foreign Section of the Spanish Air Ministry. It listed him as being hired on October 1st, 1936, and being given the same salary as the other transport pilots. The only member of Lyon's group to be promoted to Lieutenant, according to the contracts list, was Eugene Finick, and Finick was promoted on January 1st, 1937. He was assigned to bombers. This contracts list was signed by the Government Sub-Secretary of Air, Augustin Sanz Sainz, and given to the U.S. Military Attaché in Valencia, Spain, on January 23rd, 1937.¹⁰⁴

Joe Rosemarin was a member of the first group of American civilian pilots who went to Spain in September 1936. This first group of pilots was the first group of American volunteers to travel to Spain to serve the Republican Government. They preceded the earliest volunteers to the Abraham Lincoln Battalion by more than three months. Rosemarin served as a transport pilot for the Republicans. Rosemarin flew for nearly 14 months in Spain, longer than any other American pilot. Rosemarin later served in Air Transport Command during WW II. (From Victor Berch, ALB Archive, Brandeis Univ. Library)



Joseph Rosemarin

It has been said that Joe Rosemarin was one of the hardest working pilots in Spain, at least in terms of total hours flown. Rosemarin, from Brooklyn, New York, amassed over 100 hours in one 15 day period, flying Republican General Staff officers to various bases in the Government Zone.¹⁰⁵ Rosemarin flew Vultee Vlas, Lockheed Orions, and a DC-2 out of Albacete. On one flight with VIPs aboard, Rosemarin was attacked and forced to belly land his Orion (Ex-Swissair HB-LAH registration still applied).¹⁰⁶

Frank Tinker was surprised on the afternoon of April 13th, 1937, when a "brilliant red Lockheed [Orion] transport came in and landed on the field [Alcala]. A few minutes later a car came over to my patrol with its pilot and to my great surprise he turned out to be an American. He was Lieutenant Rose-Marie [sic] . . ."¹⁰⁷ Tinker meant Rosemarin. He had a way of spelling names phonetically such as Mayser-Schmidt meaning Messerschmitt.

Earlier, on March 11th, Tinker and Dahl had met, "the American wife—Mrs. Rose-Marie—of an American pilot who was flying transport planes for the Government. She could also speak Russian, so our Russian friends were able to join in the conversation." This meeting took place at the headquarters of "General Douglas." Joe Rosemarin's wife, Pauline, came to Spain in 1937. Since she could speak English, French, Spanish, Russian, and Yiddish, she was able to get a job as interpreter for "General Douglas" (his real name was Jacob Smushkevich. He was the Russian commander of "Las batallas aereas de Madrid, Jarma y Guadalajara").¹⁰⁸

Rosemarin, who was also known by his *nom de guerre*, Jaime Field, returned from Spain in November, 1937.¹⁰⁹

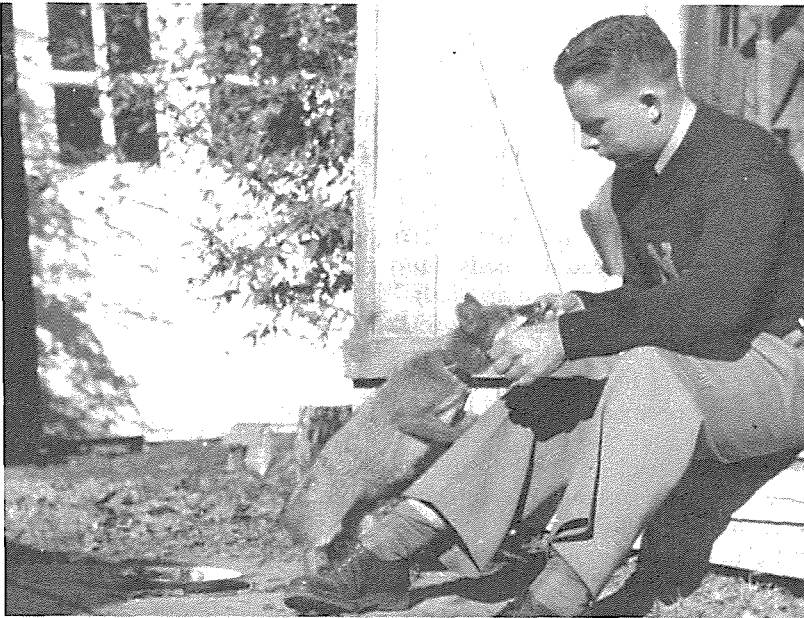
Arthur Shapiro (Vasnit)

Little is known at this time of Art Shapiro's duties in Spain. Shapiro, also known in Spain as Art Vasnit, told a news reporter that he had flown 18 different types of aircraft while in Spain and said he was "war weary." Shapiro, who was close to getting his commercial license before leaving for Spain, was utilized as a transport pilot by the Government.¹¹⁰

It is doubtful that any foreign pilots were hired by the Spanish Government after January, 1937. The Government found them too expensive and, with few exceptions, of dubious value to the war effort. There had been a critical need for such pilots in the autumn of 1936 when there weren't enough Government pilots to meet the growing Nationalist Air Force. However, once the Russian buildup began, the Republicans phased out the hiring of expensive mercenary pilots and the enlistment of untrained civilian pilots. Another factor which helped eliminate the Government's dependence upon all foreign pilots, including the Russians, was the return of the first Promocion of Spanish pilots from Soviet flight schools in Russia in May, 1937. The first Promocion consisted of 200 Spanish pilots as did both the second and third Promocions. The latter two groups of pilots returned to Spain in 1938.¹¹¹

FRINGE FLYERS

The names that follow are those Americans who claimed to have flown in Spain or were reported to have flown in Spain by a single account in a book, magazine, or newspaper. These men have been termed "Fringe Flyers" by one author/expert on the subject.¹¹² Their claims of service in Spain skirt the fringes of truth. It is possible that their claims are valid and such claims will be perpetuated in this report. It should be noted, however, that to date no information has surfaced to



Albert Baumler is shown here with Frank Tinker's pet fox. Baumler visited Frank and his family in Arkansas after Frank's return from Spain. Baumler attended New York University for a year upon his return from Spain. Baumler later helped Tinker in a lawsuit brought about by Orrin Dewight Bell. When Tinker's book condensation appeared in the Saturday Evening Post, Bell was infuriated. Tinker pulled no punches when he stated that Bell was found unable to pass his flight checks and was sent back to the U.S. Upon his return from Spain, Bell had sold a phony story of his heroics to various magazines and therefore brought suit against Tinker and the Saturday Evening Post. Bell had as an ally Derek Dickinson whom Tinker stated in his book was unable to pass his fighting plane check and was relegated to reconnaissance work. Dickinson also had sold some incredible stories to various magazines. Baumler came to Tinker's defense and the suit was dropped. It is interesting to note that after Tinker died Bell renewed the lawsuit and was awarded a very paltry sum. (Lucille Tinker Carnahan)

substantiate the claims of SCW service by the following American pilots:

Samuel Leon Daduk reported that he had flown with the Malraux *Escadre Espana* in October and November, 1936. After he was shot down and had recovered from his wounds, Daduk joined the Abraham Lincoln Battalion. His distinguished service with that battalion is a matter of record.¹¹³

Norman Driscoll claimed to have flown for the Republicans in Spain after flying in the Gran Chaco War in South America.¹¹⁴

Michael Hondorf died on May 30th, 1937, when the ship on which he was departing Spain was sunk by the Nationalists. The author who reported this fact stated that Hondorf had flown with the Malraux *Escadre Espana*.¹¹⁵

James Edward Hughes supposedly went to Spain to fly but was forced into an army company. He hijacked a plane and escaped to France.¹¹⁶

Robert Lather was reported to have flown in Spain under the command of Derek Dickinson.¹¹⁷

Anthony Impolitas Marozas made the claim of shooting down five aircraft while serving in Spain. It is not known whether Marozas flew for the Nationalists or the Republicans. Marozas is living at present in New York City and answers no queries on Spain.¹¹⁸

"Scotty" Nelson is mentioned in an early newspaper report as having gone to Spain to fly for the Republicans.¹¹⁹ This author believes the Nelson was either the creation of an imaginative newspaper reporter or one of Derek Dickinson's aliases, as was probably the above mentioned Robert Lather.

Petro C. "Pete" Peters was shot down and killed while flying with the RAF over Sicily on September 15, 1942.¹²⁰ It has been reported that he flew in Spain prior to his service in the RAF.¹²¹

George Weigle served as a member of the 14th Volunteer (bombardment) Squadron, also known as the International Squadron, in China in 1938. It is interesting to note that the 14th was commanded by Vincent Minor Schmidt, a veteran of the Spanish Civil War. Also in the squadron was James "Tex" Allison. Weigle was shot down and killed over Chungking, China on May 4th, 1938.¹²² Weigle's obituary in the Daily Worker claimed that he had flown for the Republican Government in Spain before going to China.¹²³

The following men have been mentioned briefly as having flown in Spain. Other than their names little is known about them. They are: **Free, Kohler, Martin** (ferry pilot), **Donald E. Newbold, Powell** (ferry pilot), and **Kenneth Walter Tyler**.¹²⁴

FRANCO'S AMERICAN PILOT

Vincent Joseph Patriarca (*nom de guerre*)
Vincenza Bocalare

Vincent Patriarca was in Spain barely two weeks when he was shot down on September 13th, 1936. On the mission of September 13th, Patriarca shared in the destruction of two Government fighter planes with Spanish Nationalist ace Morato and another Italian pilot named Baschiroto.¹²⁵ Patriarca's Fiat CR 32 was damaged and he was forced to bail out over Government lines. He was captured by Republican troops near the city of Talavera.¹²⁶

When it was learned that Patriarca, an American citizen flying for Franco, was captured and condemned to death, the Third Secretary of the U.S. Embassy, Eric Wendelin, was dispatched to interview the captured pilot.

In the United States, the Patriarca case caused an uproar for a short time, as the newspapers described the pilot's capture and coming fate. President Roosevelt and the State Department were bombarded with letters and telegrams asking that every effort be made to save Patriarca.

There was some talk that Patriarca would be traded for a Yugoslav pilot named Krissay on October 18th, 1936. The Yugoslav had been flying for the Government and was shot down west of Madrid and captured by the Nationalists. The trade for Patriarca never took place.

Finally, Del Vayo, Spanish Minister of State, decided that he could not insure Patriarca's safety and with the additional pressure from the U.S. State Department, Patriarca's release order was written on November 6th, 1936. Three weeks later Patriarca left Spain.

Patriarca returned to the U.S. after his release. After seven months in the U.S. he obtained a new Italian passport on July 20th, 1937, and sailed to Italy to rejoin the Italian Air Force. Later that year both the U.S. Ambassador to Spain, Claude G. Bowers, and Consul Walter C. Thurston in Barcelona reported that Patriarca had returned to Spain and was once again flying with the Italians for Franco.

Patriarca survived the Spanish Civil War and later fought for the Italians in North Africa during WWII. He is now, ironically, employed by the U.S. Navy in Naples, Italy. He has written a book about his life and has been trying to get it published. He will not divulge any of his book in advance of publication.¹²⁷

Patriarca was the only known American pilot to fly in both the Ethiopian War and the Spanish Civil War. In both cases he flew for the Italian Air Force.¹²⁸ Americans Vincent Schmidt and Hilaire du Berrier went to Ethiopia to fly for

Haile Selassie along with black Americans John Robinson and Hubert F. Julian; however, it is doubtful that any of them flew missions as Selassie possessed only a few unarmed civilian type aircraft.¹²⁹

POSTSCRIPT

One would have thought that after service in Ethiopia, then Spain and China, Vincent Schmidt should have been war weary. Not so, Schmidt turned up in Finland in 1939-40 to fly with an International Squadron against the attacking Russian forces. The war ended before the squadron was combat ready and all Schmidt got out of the experience was frostbitten feet.¹³⁰

Albert Baumler went to China in 1941 to obtain a flying contract. Unable to get one, he did manage to fly a few missions with Chennault's American Volunteer Group. When the AVG became the 23rd Fighter Group of the USAAF in 1942, Baumler was able to enlist as an officer pilot. He later served as GCA controller in Korea. It is interesting to note that if he had served as a pilot in Korea he might have flown against some of the same Russian pilots that were his squadron mates in Spain.¹³¹

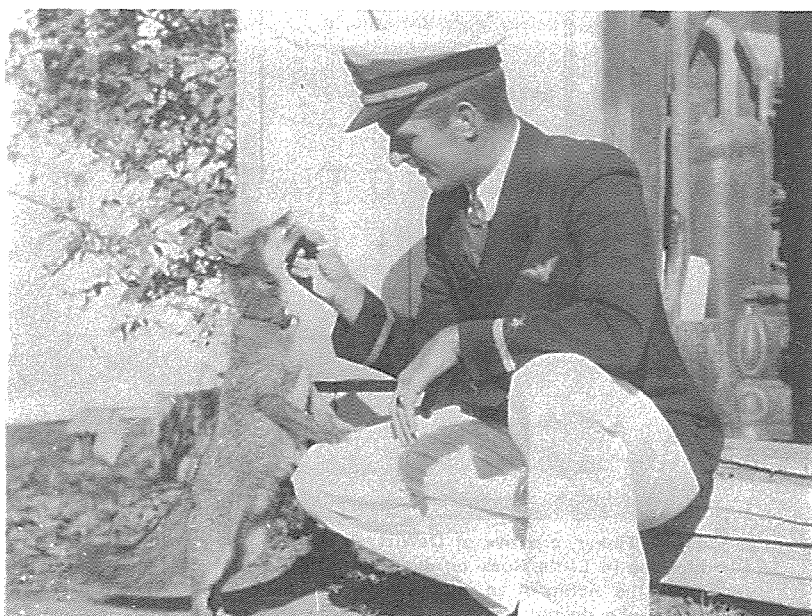
America's most successful fighter pilot in Spain, Frank Tinker, died as the result of a shooting incident, termed a suicide, in his hotel room in Little Rock, Arkansas, his home state. Tinker died on June 13th, 1939. He was 29 years old. Beside his body was a letter of acceptance from the Chinese Air Force.¹³²

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Much of the credit for researching the information in this report belongs to: Brewster C. Reynolds, archivist for the San Diego Aero-Space Museum; Victor A. Berch of the Brandeis University Library (Mr. Berch is also archivist for the Abraham Lincoln Battalion); Dr. Richard K. Smith, who presently is writing Frank Tinker's biography (Dr. Smith is also on the staff of Air International magazine); Dale Hopper; and Richard Sanders Allen, who has been most helpful and generous in supplying portions of his forthcoming book, **For Money and For Spain**. There are still many unanswered questions and misinformation on American pilots in Spain. The authors mentioned above request that any corrections and information, outside of that already mentioned, be sent to: H. Allen Herr, 2225 Chem Blvd., No. 14, Marysville, CA 95901.

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Tinker with his pet fox "Susie." In August 1938, after his book, "Some Still Live," was published, Frank took a canoe trip down the White River into the Arkansas River which eventually joins the Mississippi. His only company on this trip was his pet fox "Susie." En route, Frank wrote a series of articles for a Little Rock newspaper. (Lucille Tinker Carnahan)

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Frank Tinker, a native of DeWitt, Arkansas, checked into the Hotel Ben McGhee in Little Rock on June 5, 1939. Eight days later he was found dead, the victim of an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound. There are those who do not feel that Tinker shot himself, even though Tinker was suffering from what doctors termed shell shock. Engraved on Tinker's tombstone is the fitting Spanish inscription "Quien Sabe?" ("Who Knows?"). (Lucille Tinker Carnahan)

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129. Letter from RSA to Author, December 6, 1975; A.J. Barker, **The Rape of Ethiopia** (New York, 1971), p. 49.
130. Letter from RSA to Author, August 13, 1975.
131. Denison Herald (TX), May 19, 1968.
132. New York Times, June 14, 1939.

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Allen Herr is presently principal French hornist with the Sacramento Symphony. He also works as a free-lance musician in Northern California and teaches French horn privately in Sacramento, California. He and his wife, Kathe are both pilots and are the proud new owners of a Bellanca Decathlon. Allen is very interested in aviation history and has an extensive collection of aviation literature. His side interests are: aviation art, air racing, and aerobatics.

