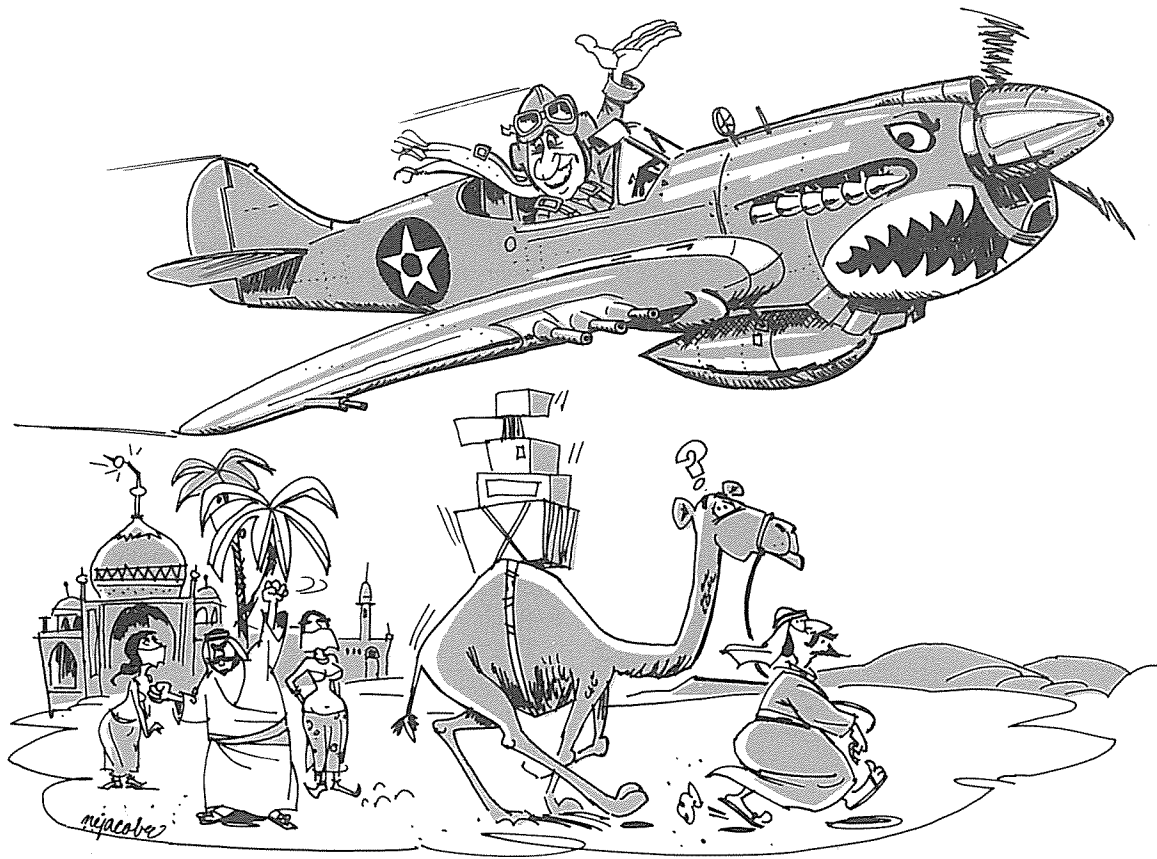




Ferry Flight by C.H. Laughlin

Illustrations by Neil Jacobs and Don Williams

In late January, 1942 the P-40 inventory of the American Volunteer Group (Flying Tigers), Chinese Air Force got down to a rock bottom "50-some" aircraft. Inasmuch as there were approximately 70 pilots on the payroll, the imbalance contributed to excessive nail biting and a degree of unrest. The Cossacks wanted equitable action.

The group (three squadrons) had started off in the fall of 1941 with a one-to-one ratio. One-hundred pilots and 100 P-40s. Military organizations will group decimated equipment under the heading, "attrition." This is a generalization and cover-up for equipment lost, missing, abandoned, damaged or misplaced. Sometimes it includes "worn-out," a category which does not apply to combat aircraft. Anyhow, it resolves the problem of personal responsibility.

"Attrition," in this instance, began in Toungoo, Burma, the training base. The Navy-trained majority of this volunteer conglomerate had no expertise with this product of Army Air Corps thinking. Naval Aviators and Marines are indoctrinated in the three-point carrier landing. It's an appropriate attitude for tail hooking the carrier deck cable and bringing the craft to a jarring halt. Should the attitude be improper, the plane soars the length of the deck and the red-faced pilot

goes back to the traffic circle. This is a black mark on his record of credibility.

Navy trained pilots take commendable pride on their ability to smash down on the "deck" in a full stall attitude. They consider it professional. It also accounts for the chipped teeth syndrome in carrier units. With this philosophy in mind they climbed into the P-40, confident of its excellent reputation and with teeth firmly clenched. Now the Army Air Corps product abhors a three point stall. For the beginner, anyhow. So, approximately a dozen fighters were inadvertently transferred to the spare parts category.

Other incidents related to weather and woolgathering contributed a few more, and out of the original issue of 100 this left approximately 80 available for a shooting war. The strenuous activity involved in the boisterous pursuit of aerial warfare knocked the inventory down to about 50 flyable P-40s including a number considered to be "dogs." This category was normally assigned to the "junior" element, considered expendable by the administration in power.

Friday, the 13th of February, Vice Squadron Leader George McMillan, Third Pursuit Squadron, deigned to confer with a member of the "junior" category. "Old buddy," he said,



C.H. (Link) Laughlin Jr. seated in an AVG Tomahawk fighter. He was credited with five kills. (Photo courtesy SDAM — AVG collection)

(he couldn't recall my name) "I've got a special job for you. You'll like it."

This is the way most of these missions begin. The "junior" element is about to get the shaft again. It could be another low level morale flight over the fractured Chinese line of defense to show the harassed troops that their Blue Star Air Force was right in there with them. We never considered these demonstrations as beneficial to the war effort. The High Command insisted the exhibition boosted the morale of the aggravated gravel crunchers. We insisted they shot at us. Out of ground fire range at 3,000 feet, but close enough to be identified, our sweaty little necks would swivel in nervous anticipation of a diving attack from a Japanese Zero patrol. We juniors got these jobs. I was, therefore, normally suspicious. "Yeah?" I said.

George grinned. "Ferry flight," he said. "We go to Accra in West Africa, pick up some new P-40Es and ferry them back here. Interested?"

Special Order No. 38 was posted on the squadron bulletin board on the 14th. It directed six pilots of the 3rd Pursuit Squadron, "to proceed from this station, on or about February 16, 1942, by air transport, to Cairo, Egypt, reporting on arrival to Brigadier General Elmer Adler, Commanding United States Ferry Command, for instructions:

Vice Squadron Leader.....	G.B. McMillan
Flight Leader.....	C.H. Older
Flight Leader.....	T.C. Haywood, Jr.
Flight Leader.....	R.T. Smith
Wing Man.....	P.J. Greene
Wing Man.....	C.H. Laughlin

At 0530 on the 16th we were at the China National Aviation Corp's field office packed and ready for Accra. The CNAC C-47 creaks into the field at noon. Rotten weather, we are told. This is no deterrent. We are in Calcutta that night. On the 18th we board British Overseas Airways Corp's Short "Sunderland" flying boat for Karachi. Wartime expediency has stripped this flying barn of its interior insulation. At 10,000 feet it whistles and bangs with a racket that makes conversation impossible. It is also colder than a well digger's you-know-what in the Klondike. From Karachi we go to Basrah, stop at the Sea of Galilee for lunch then on into Cairo. Pan American Air Ferries Command hauls us through Africa and finally to Accra.

Accra, Gold Coast, West Africa is a happily disturbed colony of khaki ants. Everybody is en route to a war. The eve of the big adventure. Vehicles of every description clutter the streets like boom time in Nevada City. We are directed to quarters in a big jerry built barracks labeled, 'Transit Air Crews.' McMillan goes off with a guide to find out about P-40Es.

The E is a bit bulkier than the B model we've been flying. Inasmuch as fighter pilots are not selected on the basis of IQ, cockpit instrumentation, dials, controls, knobs and switches are kept to a minimum to avoid confusion. The E model relocated a couple, added two or three and incorporated a reflector gun sight. A big improvement over the iron ring sights mounted on the nose of the B. The six fifties are wing mounted which should eliminate the problem of shooting a hole through the prop. The paint job is abstract camouflage and the cockpit is essence of new Buick.

The line chief looks us over. He has not, in his experience, seen a more diversified assortment of uniforms. "You guys from the Flying Tigers?" he asks suspiciously. We assure him we are. "Well, these planes are ready to go. Just remember, these are new engines and you got to slow time them for the

HEADQUARTERS AMERICAN VOLUNTEER GROUP Office of the Commanding Officer													
Kunming, Yunnan, China, February 16, 1942													
SPECIAL ORDERS) NUMBER 38)	EXTRACT												
1. Flight Leader NOEL R. BACON, 2nd Pursuit Squadron, is hereby granted an ordinary leave of absence for fifteen (15) days, effective February 15, 1942, and upon expiration thereof, he is further granted an emergency leave of absence of seventy-five (75) days, without pay. He will report to the Commanding Officer, American Volunteer Group for duty not later than Mar 15, 1942. 2. The following named pilots of the 3rd Pursuit Squadron are hereby directed to proceed from this station, on or about February 16, 1942, by air transport, to Cairo, Egypt, reporting upon arrival thereat to Brigadier General Elmer Adler, Commanding United States Ferry Command, for instructions: <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Vice Squadron Leader</td> <td>G. B. McMillan,</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Flight Leader</td> <td>C. H. Older,</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Flight Leader</td> <td>T. C. Haywood, Jr.,</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Flight Leader</td> <td>R. T. Smith,</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wing Man</td> <td>P. J. Greene,</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wing Man</td> <td>C. H. Laughlin.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> The travel directed is necessary, and all expenses incidental thereto are chargeable to the Group Revolving Fund. By order of the Commanding Officer: C. H. OLDER, Jr., Adjutant. OFFICIAL: C. D. SMITH, Jr., Adjutant. DISTRIBUTION "A"		Vice Squadron Leader	G. B. McMillan,	Flight Leader	C. H. Older,	Flight Leader	T. C. Haywood, Jr.,	Flight Leader	R. T. Smith,	Wing Man	P. J. Greene,	Wing Man	C. H. Laughlin.
Vice Squadron Leader	G. B. McMillan,												
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Wing Man	P. J. Greene,												
Wing Man	C. H. Laughlin.												

Hotel Tiberias
TIBERIAS
SEA OF GALILEE
Menu

Lunch 12.30/2.45.

02-14-11 1947

Polio. Fillet of fish
Sautéed sauce

Paulistack
Pommes Potatoes
Mixed Fruit
Cakes

Wine

Wine

Wine

Mr. Langier

Airport of Basrah

LOCAL TIME is 3 hours . . . mins. EAST on Greenwich

CURRENCY COUPONS (value 5/-) may be cashed
at Fils 250 each

ENQUIRIES of any kind will gladly be dealt with by the
company's representative:

Mr. R.M.C. Dobbs

ARRANGEMENTS FOR TO-MORROW

23/2/42

- (1) You will be called at 05.15 (local time)
- (2) Your baggage will be collected at 05.45 (local time)
- (3) The carter launch will leave The Pontoon
at 06.10 (local time)
- (4) The airmen are due to leave at 06.30 (local time)

MEALS will be served as follows:

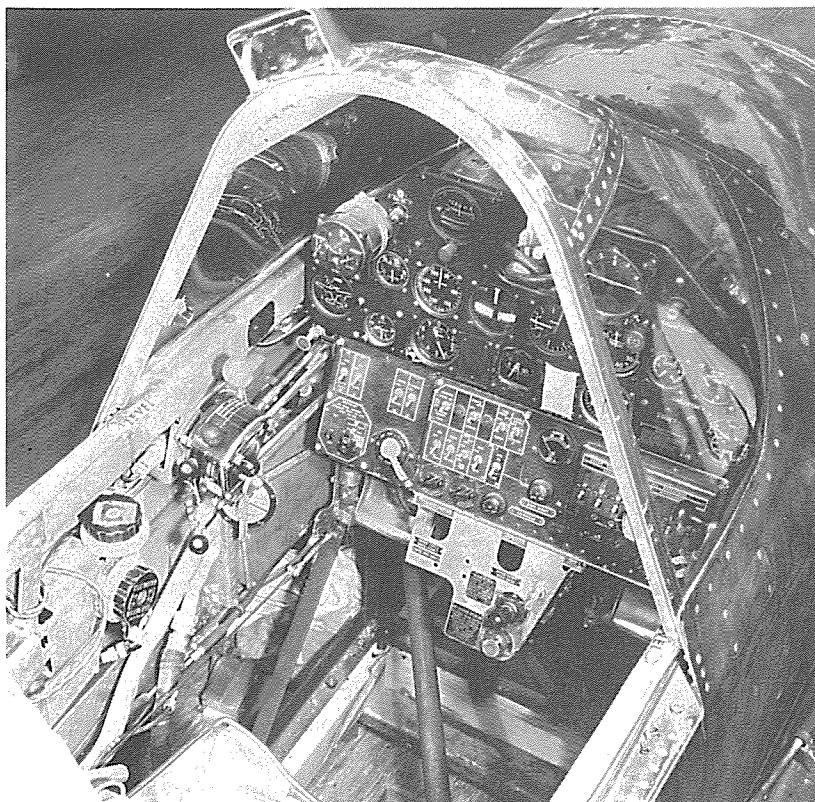
Breakfast Basrah 05.45

Lunch Tiberias

Tea Cairo

Dinner Cairo

please turn over



Cockpit of the P-40E (Salo collection).

first ten hours or so. Now where's your paperwork?" McMillan hands him a dogeared folder.

The first check flight around the area is slow and easy. The new E drives like a Mack truck. We conclude the introduction with the usual number of squawks about defective gauges and squeaks in the hydraulic system. The crew chief is condescending. "Have them ready for you in a couple of hours," he smirks. "Oh yeah," he says, "some of the fellows was asking me if you guys wouldn't like to put on a little air show for us before you leave." The invitation is bait for ego. "R.T." Smith and "P.J." Greene oblige. They do chandelles, loops, split S's and rolls in formation. They buzzed the runway, dusted the barracks and annoyed the Department of Flight Operations. The crew chief held his hands up in mock horror. "That's no goddam way to treat a brand new airplane," he groaned.

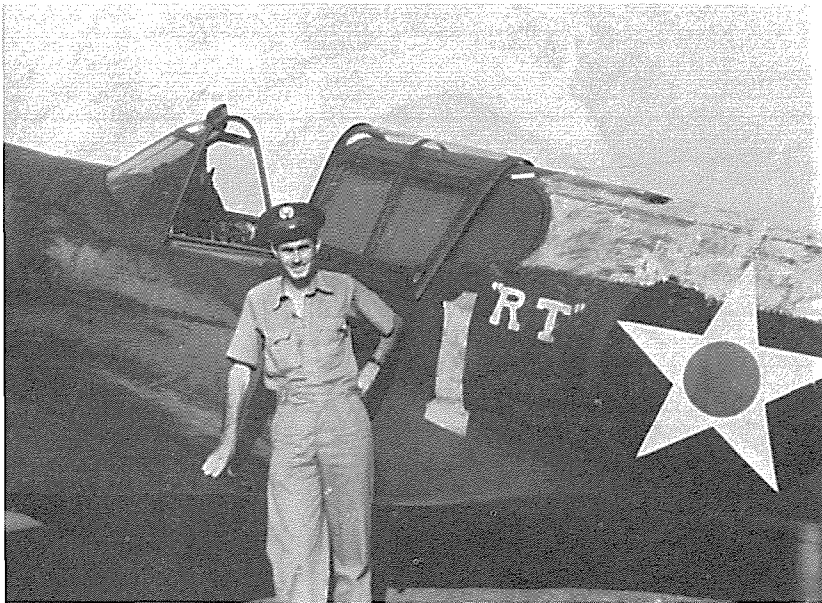
Early Monday, the 2nd of March, the belly tanks have been installed and McMillan outlines our positions and route. "We're being escorted across Africa by a British Blenheim," he says. "Regulations - it'll be a bit slow." Following the Blenheim, we chug off on a heading of about 60° paralleling the coast line. Oshogbo in Nigeria is about 315 miles. The Blenheim is flat out at 125 knots which creates a degree of exasperation in the P-40E cockpit and warms the Allison's up to a critical temperature. For the next two and one-half hours we do sweeping S turns to cool the engines and stay in back of our bleeping escort.

The Blenheim is piloted (solo) by a Lieutenant Love, South African Air Force. Love is a jovial character, but completely insensitive to the problems experienced by the irascible Americans. "I got the throttles right up against the firewall, mateys," he chortles. We are the victims of an African plot. At Oshogbo we have problems. Chuck Older's tires have developed a gangenous carbuncle and Tom Haywood's engine has

the hiccups. We leave them to catch up in Khartoum or Cairo. Kano is 340 miles on a heading of 40°. There we overnight, bushed from the dull, ceaseless routine of S turns and the monotonous sandy terrain. Central Africa is several million square miles of hot kitty litter.

Early, March 3rd, we take off for Fort Lamy in French Equatorial Africa (Chad). The 375 mile trip was ripped off at an average speed of 110 knots. The Allison's were hot. We were hot. En route we flathatted a wide, shallow river to alert thousands of hot crocodiles. Due consideration was given to the odds on a forced landing. We wheeled into Fort Lamy in a loose right echelon over the field, peeled off and plunked down. The flight line was abandoned. Nobody around to guide us into a refueling area. We cut engines and walk over to the OP shack. Not a living soul. An occasional sand devil spins off the paving. We walked to the solitary hangar skirting a gasoline truck en route. The hangar was empty. Finally somebody spotted a face peering around a corner of the building about 150 feet away. We hollered we wanted gasoline. A body materialized subsequently accompanied by three more coverall endowed characters.

They rattled back at us in nervous French. Then broken English. They were skittish until we were properly identified. Thereafter the servicing was enthusiastic and complete. The story they told us involved a horrendous air raid they had experienced a few days before. A lone German single engined plane had winged it s solitary way from a North African base, lined up in a conventional approach pattern, then proceeded to overfly the field at about 300 feet altitude dropping a half dozen bombs on their impeccable runway. This unpleasant little prank reminded them that their personal involvement in the shooting was at hand. They were understandably luke-warm at a potential reoccurrence.



Flight Leader R.T. Smith poses by his trusty P-40E. (R.T. Smith photo).

We were inclined to skepticism because Libya was 1,000 miles to the North where Rommel and his tanks were reworking the landscaping. Conceivably a light bomber could have refueled somewhere in the Sahara wasteland, but not likely. And if it happened, it could also have been any one of a dozen nationalities who might have been a bit hacked at getting sand and water with their gasoline.

Fort Lamy to El Geneina is 440 miles. The course, 78° takes us along the southern border of the Sahara. Sand to the north and spotty jungle on the south. A wide river dotted with sandbars twists along the route. About an hour out we can spot a massive cumulus build-up over a lake to the north and a 6,000 foot hump on our right. We tool into the El Geneina strip bushed and sweaty.

Wednesday the 4th of March comes early. We've been well fed and rested at the El Geneina Hilton. The course out is 85° to 10,000 feet to top the Jebel Marra bump. The Sudan scenery is admirable if one likes seclusion. The waste land is deceptive. Concealed in the jungle and camouflaged in the sand and rocks are churlish beasts and ravenous insects that do nothing but bite and eat. No place for hitch hiking. El Fasher is a fast downhill slide from the hilltops. Ground speed 128 knots. Goddam Blenheim.

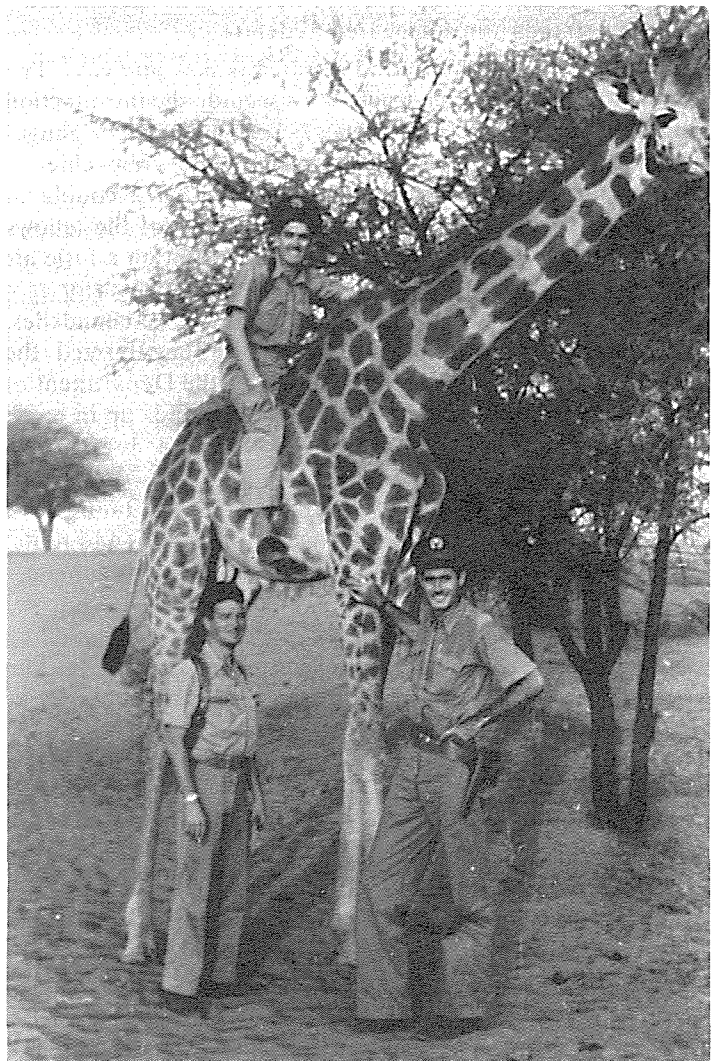
From El Fasher we head 73° on the 425 mile leg to Khartoum. From about an hour out we can spot the change in the Sudan real estate and pass up the sluggish Blenheim. Khartoum (Elephant's Trunk) sits in a peninsula at the junction of the Blue and White Nile Rivers. A sand colored metropolis about the size of Beaumont, Texas. We bang down on a sand colored runway. A sand colored ramp crew parks us in the service area. The biweekly sandstorm had just swept through. If one Khartoumian were to meet another in the Astor Bar in New York he could be immediately be identified by his permanently reddened eyes. The barracks are congested with about 50 transient aviation types milling around the mosquito netted bunks. We join the high decibel carnival where everybody talks about "the war." The big adventure.

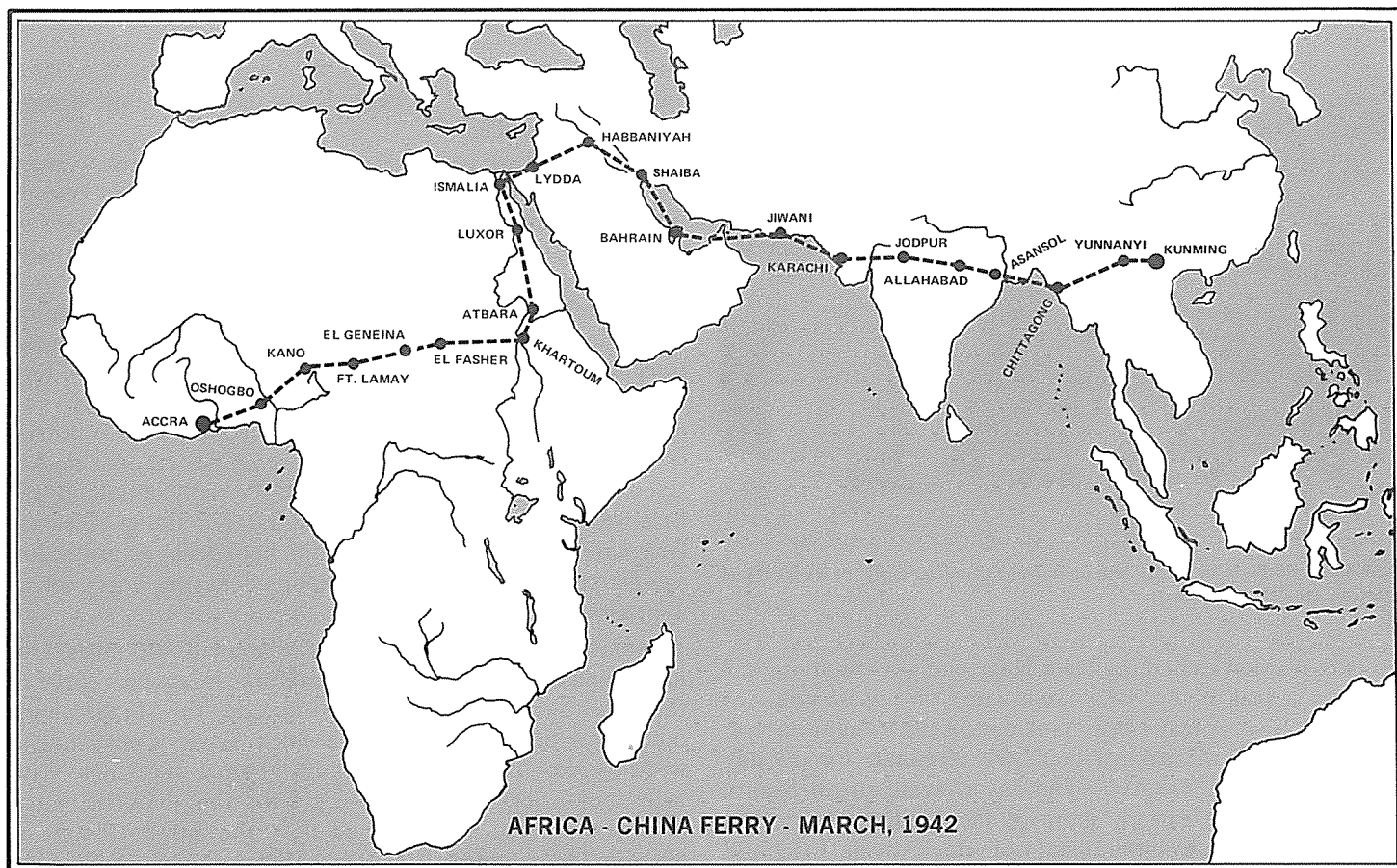
Breakfast early on the 5th was powdered egg flavored with sand. We take off headed north paralleling the big blue Nile. The world's longest river. Our refueling stop is Wadi Halfa. About two hours out I have a problem. A shimmy. The E shakes like a wet retriever on a cold November. This area is no place for a problem. I slow down to about 100 indicated. The instruments read normal. The Allison is smooth. The controls are steady, but the shimmy goes into high gear. I am moderately terrorized. The sandy expanse below is barren Sahara. A lonely railroad track breaks the monotony. The Nile has long since wandered off to the west. The area bordering the track looks flat, and there's always the possibility a train will come along. The E lands like a bird with sore feet. The Allison hisses to a stop and dead silence sets in.

McMillan is overhead in answer to my screams for help. "Goddam it," he hollers over his wireless, "We'll report you at Luxor. Don't worry. We'll forward your mail." Smart ass.

I look at the tracks about 100 yards away. Parts are covered with sand. There hasn't been a train down those tracks for weeks. The silence sets in. The horizon is monotonously ominous. Any second now a bunch of hostile Arabs are going to come galloping over those dunes hollering like Comanches on the warpath. I've heard about those characters. They

In Kenya three of the P-40E drivers take time off for some sight-seeing via local transport. Vice Squadron Leader G.B. McMillan is in the driver's seat with Laughlin on the left and R.T. Smith on the right. (R.T. Smith photo).





perform a painful operation on us infidels, bury us up to our neck in the hot sand and leave us for the vultures to peck at our squinty eyeballs.

The E looks normal - EXCEPT for the tail wheel doors, they're wide open. One is hanging down with hinges ripped and bent. The tool kit includes a pair of pliers. I rip the doors off and shove them in the baggage compartment. The horizon is still devoid of Arabs. The absolute silence is giving me ulcers. The Allison cranks up with a reassuring snarl and I abandon the area and head south for an emergency field. The chart identifies it as Station No. 10.

The uncovered tail wheel howls like a beserk train whistle. Station No. 10 is a whistle stop. They clean up the mess and tell me to go back to Atbara about 100 miles south. The Atbara characters tell me it will be an all day job - and besides there's another big sandstorm around Wadi Halfa. They find a leak in the belly tank fitting. Tell me they may have to send to Buffalo, New York for parts. They have a rotten sense of humor.

That afternoon McMillan, Greene and Smith wheeled in from Station No. 6. The Wadi Halfa sandstorm had forced their return. "R.T." Smith was experiencing gremlin problems in his electrical and hydraulic system. We're stuck at Atbara until the 7th. Smith longer.

At 0700 McMillan, Greene and I depart for Luxor, 465 miles north. Head 350°, keep the Erba Mountains and the Red Sea on the right. Landmarks are so obvious we stray far from the dogged Blenheim over the mountains where we can see a big body of water. Fifteen minutes after passing the Egyptian border we're over the Nile and follow it into Luxor,

landing at 10:30. The run to Ismalia, northeast of Cairo is ancient history and scenery. From 8,000 feet visibility is 50 miles and 5,000 years. The route of the camel caravans. The Gulf of Suez is on the right with bumper to bumper traffic like the Santa Ana freeway at quitting time. South of Cairo, and off to our left bordering the Nile are the Egyptian pyramids. Solitary, mysterious mansions for the dead. Five thousand year old tombs assembled from enormous blocks of limestone and granite by a knowledgeable and sophisticated society gone into ancient history. They told us how they did it, but we couldn't read the handwriting.

At Ismalia the E has accumulated 28.5 hours of flight time since our introduction. The line chief says it will take a week for the tune-up and installation of certain components necessary to the war effort. A week in Cairo? Man! This is a tough war. Cairo in March is a daytime 75°. The language is French and fractured English. Currently the city is loaded with British and Aussies. The atmosphere is carnival because their time is limited. German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel is a few miles outside of El Alamein about 175 miles west of Cairo. He is attempting to unhinge the Allied defense of Egypt. If he busts through, he could be in Cairo in time for lunch tomorrow. The local oddsmakers, however, are giving the edge to British Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery and the celebrating Aussies in Cairo.

By early Sunday morning the 15th, we were reassembled at Ismalia. "R.T." Smith and Tom Haywood had caught up. Haywood, at the last minute, uncovered another maintenance problem, and reluctantly had to go back to Cairo. We were loudly suspicious. At 0930 we take off for Lydda in Palestine.



At Khartoum the local gentry line-up in front of our aircraft for their official portrait. (R.T. Smith photo).

Having learned something from Haywood's crafty intrigue I discover a leak in the belly tank again. We land safely at Lydda at 1040. A leaky belly tank constitutes a flight hazard. It also pollutes the environment. We terminate for the day and overnight in Tel Aviv. The city is symmetrical beauty spread along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean. We walk in our cruising clutter down wide clean streets. Fruit and juice stands average one per block. The Palestinians welcome us with enthusiasm. A happy gregarious lot. "The Americans are coming for the war?" they ask. We agree. Dinner is a night club. The evening is loud, musical and entertaining. The locals refuse our money. We, the first Americans in Tel Aviv, were their privileged guests. A helluva evening.

Early on the 16th we blast off for Habbaniyah, 400 miles off in Iraq. But, first we have to buzz Jerusalem, a slight detour, to express our appreciation for Palestinian hospitality. Our destination is about 40 miles west of Bagdad on the Euphrates River. From Habbaniyah we head southeast 215 miles to Shaiba in the delta area of the Persian Gulf. From Shaiba we track out about 150° over Kuwait and down the western side of the Persian Gulf to Bahrain.

Bahrain island is a professional base. A dozen commercial and military airlines operate out of the big field. We check into the Imperial Airways Hotel for civilized dinner and comfortable sack. At dinner we facetiously discuss strategy for prolonging this tour. P.J. Greene contemplates incipient chicken pox. "R.T." Smith has contracted an exotic Arabian bug. I have hemorrhoids and a leaky gas tank. McMillan can be a blunt, abrasive character. He suggests that his report to Group Commander Claire Chennault will result in our appointment with a Chinese firing squad.

At 0730 on the 17th we shove off east to Sharja, 275 miles across the Persian Gulf. Our route, in the absence of flotation equipment, takes us along the curving coastline. Time, two hours. From Sharja we barreled across the Gulf of Oman to the Iranian shore line and followed it into Jiwani in Pakistan. Three-hundred and thirty miles in an hour and 50 minutes. From Jiwani we followed the bleak coast line of the Arabian

Sea into Karachi. Karachi tower singsongs us into a busy traffic pattern. "You're numbers six, seven, eight and nine to land. Follow the B-24," the tower intones. The line chief checks us in. We will be here a few days for a tune-up and checking the artillery.

On the 19th we test fly out over the Arabian Sea to see if the artillery works. The output is 3,600 rounds per minute into some inoffensive whitecaps. A lot of lead. The performance is an acceptable standard set by the U.S. Department of War. They bill the taxpayer.

Saturday morning early, the 21st, we abandon Karachi on a heading of 73° for Jodhpur, 325 miles. Picking up a railroad track west of the city we home in over the ancient walled fort. Back in the 19th century the locals battled with pikes and arrows. The P-40 gun platform represents the 20th century's technological tool helpful in furthering international understanding. One contribution, however, is worthy of note. It was here where the British invented the jodhpur riding breeches. Originally designed for hiking in the boondocks as protection against sneaky reptiles, it was adopted by the horsy set as appropriate riding equipment.

From Jodhpur we head east for Allahabad, 450 miles. Our navigational guide, the railroad, takes us in an easy curve to the north over Agra. From 8,000 feet the Taj Mahal stands out like a 500 watt bulb in a linen closet. Looks like a wedding cake. Ground speed into Alahabad, 180 knots. With belly tanks, yet. The closer we get to home base the more impatient we get. McMillan anyhow. Burmah-Shell tops us off with 383 gallons of 100 octane and 7 gallons of oil. Fuel consumption for the leg averaged 38 gallons per hour.

The 275 mile run to Asansol on a heading of 112° took an hour and 40 minutes. We overnighted and looked at the town. Standard India. Take China anytime.

We departed Asansol at 0800 for Chittagong. Mileage 300, ground speed 180 knots. We are pushing, and those belly tanks may get ripped off yet. From Chittagong we cross the Burma border at 10,000 feet on a heading of 65°. East of Myitkyina we go on up to 14,000 to top the China hump. This

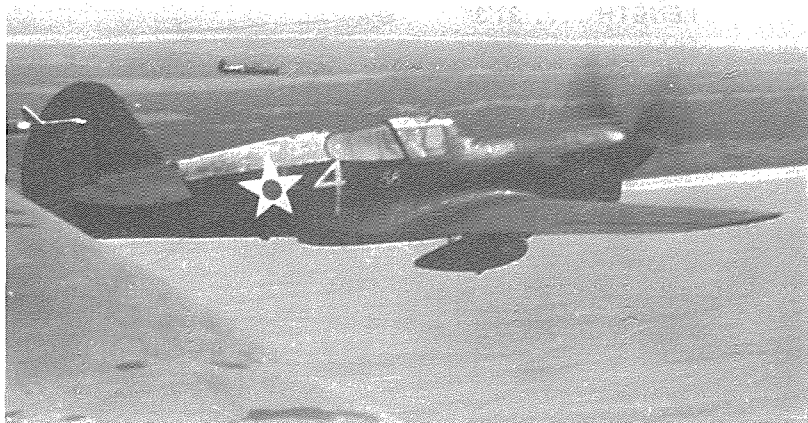
BURMAH-SHELL			No. 467
OIL STORAGE & DISTRIBUTING CO. OF INDIA, LTD.			
"Kitty Hawk"			
DELIVERY RECEIPT.			
SUPPLIED TO <u>The United States Army Air Corps</u>			
REGISTRATION NO. OF MACHINE <u>see below</u> SHELL CABINET No. _____			ISSUED BY _____
ARRIVED FROM <u>Jodhpur</u>			LEFT FOR _____
PARTICULARS	FUEL	OIL	
Grade supplied	<u>Aviat. Stock 100 oct</u>	<u>Aeroshell 120/14</u>	
Quantity in words	<u>Three Hundred & Eighty Three</u>	<u>Seven</u>	
" In figures	<u>383 gallons</u>	<u>7 gallons</u>	
Packages	<u>Bulk</u>	<u>Bulk</u>	
I CERTIFY THAT I HAVE RECEIVED THE ABOVE IN GOOD CONDITION.			
REMARKS BY COMPANY'S REPRESENTATIVE:-		REMARKS BY PILOT REGARDING AERODROME SERVICE:-	
<u>E. 715 = 103 gallons + 2 oil</u> <u>E. 732 = 88 gallons + 2 1/2 oil</u> <u>E. 681 = 97 gallons + 2 1/2 oil</u> <u>E. 738 = 95 gallons OIL NIL</u> <u>383</u>		<u>C. H. Laughlin</u> <u>Chief Pilot</u>	
Station <u>Banpauli (Allahabad)</u>		Date <u>21st March 1942</u>	
Date <u>21.3.42</u>		If delay has occurred in refuelling ask the Pilot to sign reason given	



Sight-seeing in Karachi. Laughlin (left), T.C. Haywood and Smith pose with their local cab driver. Auxiliary fuel is stored on the floor under the cabby's legs. (R.T. Smith photo).

is home territory. We're hilarious about rejoining the Chinese Air Force. Dinghow! We slide down the China slope like homing pigeons across the Salween and Mekong Rivers into Yunnanyi. Five hundred miles at 188 knots. To hell with the belly tanks. We get topped off, fed, and waved off royally. The 110 mile run to Kunming involves innumerable detours through rain squalls and thunderheads. Time, 40 minutes.

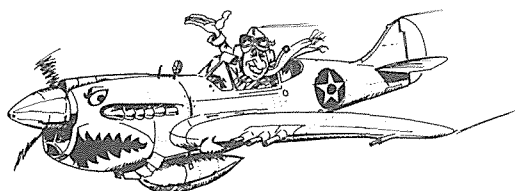
We crunch down happily on Kunming's long gravel strip. The sun blistered Sahara, the oven heat of El Fasher and the abrasive sand of Khartoum are past history. In front is the figurative red carpet and a motley segment of the menagerie of the American Volunteer Group. The warm camaraderie of a unique fellowship is as contagious as gonorrhea in a



The ferry flight approaching Bahrain Delta area. (R.T. Smith photo).

commune. We get handshook, backslapped and questioned. The E s get their tires kicked, fuselages patted and handled like the subject of an Irish wedding night.

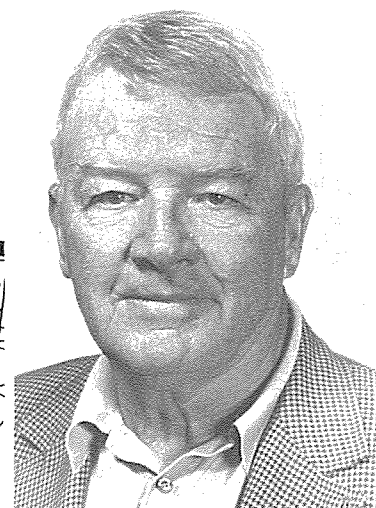
The ferry trip covered 7,000 miles. Flight time averaged out at an excessive 50 hours, BUT it included some extras for tail-gating a Blenheim, buzzing Jerusalem and touring the Persian Gulf area.



AFRICA - CHINA FERRY - MARCH 1942

Date	Route	Distance	Course	Time	Ground Speed
2	ACCRA, Gold Coast (Ghana)				
	· OSHOGBO, Nigeria	315	58°	2:35	122
2	OSHOGBO · KANO, Nigeria	340	40°	2:25	142
3	KANO · FORT LAMY,				
	French Equat Africa (Chad)	375	87°	3:25	110
3	FORT LAMY · EL GENEINA, Sudan	440	78°	3:25	130
4	EL GENEINA · EL FASHER, Sudan	170	85°	1:20	128
4	EL FASHER · KHARTOUM, Sudan	425	73°	2:55	147
5	KHARTOUM · KAFAYEB, Sudan			2:20	
5	KAFAYEB · STATION NO. 10, Sudan			1:15	
5	STATION NO. 10 · ATBARA, Sudan			:55	
7	ATBARA · LUXOR, Egypt	465	350°	3:25	137
7	LUXOR · ISMALIA, Egypt	275	350°	2:30	110
15	ISMALIA · LYDDA, Palestine (Israel)	175	54°	1:10	150
16	LYDDA · HABBANIYAH, Iraq	400	77°	2:30	160
16	HABBANIYAH · SHAIBA, Iraq	215	130°	1:30	144
16	SHAIBA · BAHRAIN, Saudi Arabia	210	150°	1:30	140
17	BAHRAIN · SHARJA, Saudi Arabia	275	95°	2:00	140
17	SHARJA · JIWANI, West Pakistan	330	92°	1:50	178
17	JIWANI · KARACHI, West Pakistan	275	92°	1:55	144
21	KARACHI · JODPHUR, India	325	73°	2:00	163
21	JODPHUR · ALLAHABAD, India	450	96°	2:30	180
21	ALLAHABAD · ASANSOL, India	275	112°	1:40	164
22	ASANSOL · CHITTAGONG, India	300	115°	1:40	180
	(Bangladesh)				
22	CHITTAGONG · YUNNANYI, China	500	65°	2:40	188
22	YUNNANYI · KUNMING, China	110	105°	:40	164

Log book entries certified by R.T. Smith, "Ass't. G-3"
Time enroute 50:05

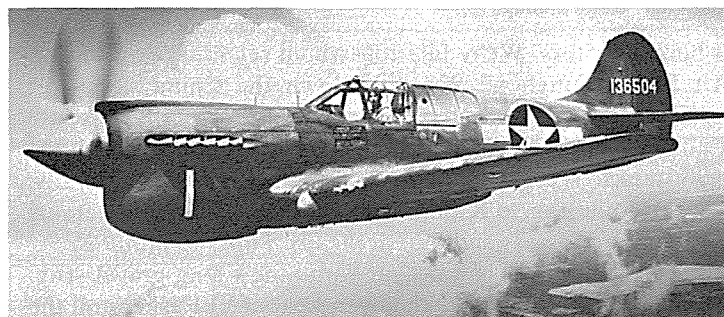
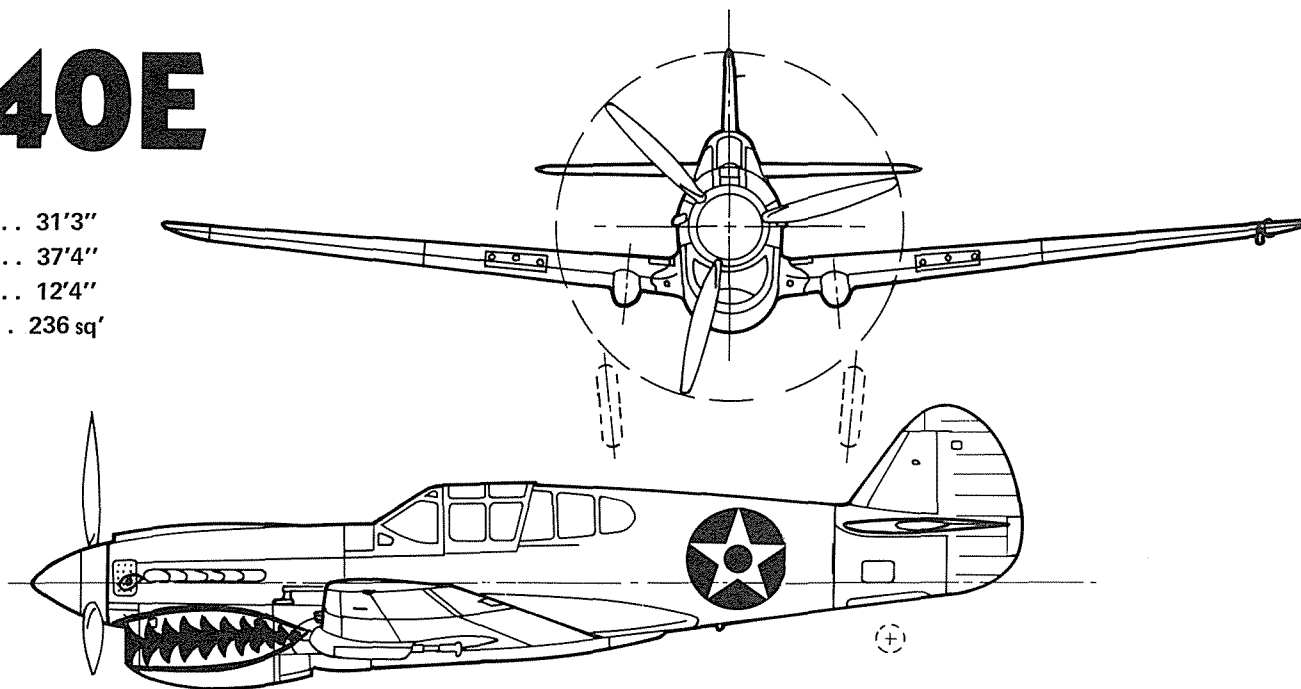


ABOUT THE AUTHOR

C.H. "Link" Laughlin knows of what he writes, for after graduating from Westminster College, Fulton, MO in 1939 he spent two years in the Marine Corps at NAS Pensacola, Florida, first as a Cadet, then a flight instructor. In 1941-42 he served with the American Volunteer Group in China; a wingman in the Third Pursuit Squadron. The next two years he was a pilot for China National Aviation Corp., Calcutta, India—then back to the Marines, as Chief Staff Pilot, 9th Marine Air Wing, Cherry Point, North Carolina. From 1945-50 Link was a pilot for Flying Tiger Line, after which he spent 17 years in the Marine Corps Reserve. He retired in 1967 as a colonel. Since then he has been a writer for a boating magazine—a job he considers dull. Small wonder. Link is a member of the Flying Tiger Association and the American Fighter Aces Association.

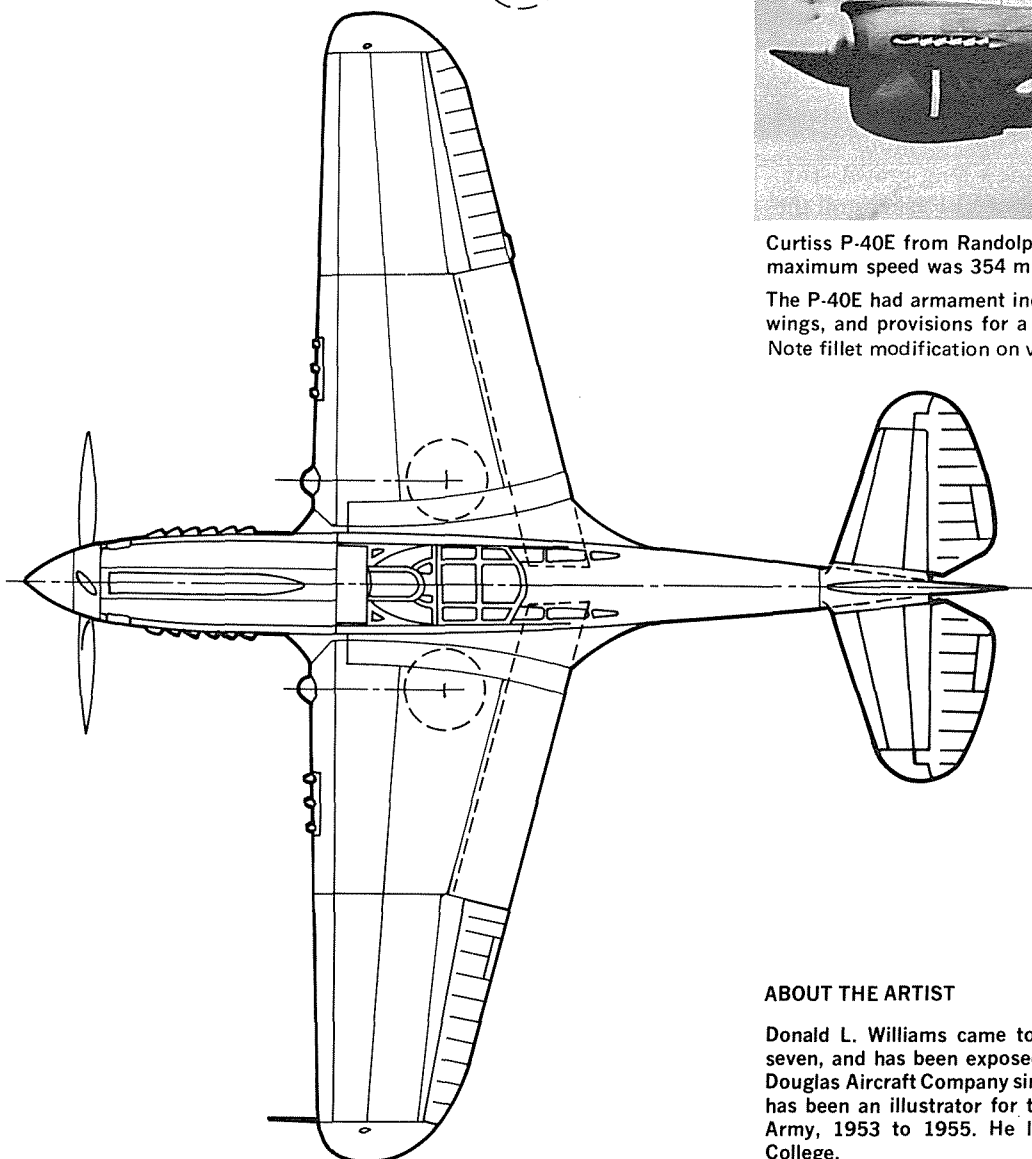
P-40E

LENGTH 31'3"
SPAN 37'4"
HEIGHT 12'4"
WING AREA . 236 sq'

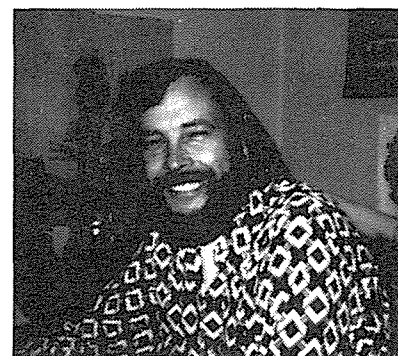


Curtiss P-40E from Randolph Field. With a gross weight of 8,840 lbs., its maximum speed was 354 mph. A total of 2,320 E's were produced.

The P-40E had armament increased to six .50 caliber guns mounted in the wings, and provisions for a 500 lb. bomb or 52-gallon external fuel tank. Note fillet modification on vertical stabilizer. (USAF photo)



P-40E SERIAL NUMBERS	QTY
40-358	1
40-382 - 681	300
41-5305 - 5744	440
41-13521 - 13599	79
41-24776 - 25195	420
41-35874 - 36953	1080
TOTAL PRODUCED	2320



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Donald L. Williams came to California from Ohio in 1940 at the age of seven, and has been exposed to aircraft ever since. He has worked for the Douglas Aircraft Company since graduation from Leuzinger High School and has been an illustrator for the past 18 years. Don spent two years in the Army, 1953 to 1955. He lives in Santa Ana and attends Golden West College.