

## War Stories (Cont.)

By 12:05 Milton was unsure himself but knew he had to do it now. Milton thought constantly about the punishment for insubordination and mutiny which could be execution.

He stood up from his desk and with shaking hands reached for his .45. He took a step forward. Then he removed it from its holster, raised it slowly and pushed the cold barrel into the pilot's neck. "This is it, friend. Make the turn now or I'll pull the trigger. Do it now."

For a few seconds no one said anything or made a move. From the corner of his eye Milton could see the copilot white knuckling the controls, desperately trying to avoid eye contact with the pilot, ready to counteract any sudden move by the pilot.

Finally the pilot spoke, "Holy cow, Red," calling Milton by his nickname, "you weren't kidding, were you?"

The pilot knew Milton wasn't kidding so he turned course and headed for Ascension. Milton held the gun until he was certain they were committed to Ascension then sat down at his desk and had a candy bar.

No one spoke for the rest of the way while Milton worried about what he had done. He had just committed mutiny, an armed insurrection against a superior officer and would certainly face a court martial, possibly jail or death.

By 5:25, the fuel gauges on empty, the B-25 was on final approach to Ascension. They landed with 30 gallons of fuel in the tanks. No one said a word on landing and the flight to Accra the next day was in virtual silence.

Later that day the copilot ventured a theory to Milton regarding the pilot's behavior. He had a buddy flying a B-17 to Accra that day and the pilot figured, with a 40-knot tail-wind, they might make it for some drinks. He, unfortunately, did not have any transoceanic experience.

Milton and this crew flew the remaining legs across Africa to its destination then deadheaded back in a C-54.

Many missions later, Milton asked a briefing officer if he had ever heard of a mutiny aboard an ATC plane. He said yes he had but never was able to determine if it was fact or fiction.

***Publisher's Note:** Our war stories are normally told from our own perspective. We thought it would be interesting to tell a story from a Chinese perspective. Following is a story submitted by a Chinese grandson who is very proud of what his grandfather was able to do to help a downed 14th Air Force crew in China in late 1944. If any of our members can provide any additional insight to this incident, the author has provided a telephone number and E-mail address at the end of the article where can be contacted. He presently lives in Charlotte, North Carolina.*

### My Grandfather and Three American Pilots

by Mark Li

In the Fall of 1944, the Japanese shot down an American bomber aircraft from 14th Air Force (Later called The Flying Tigers) in China on the border between southern Henan Province and northern Hubei Province. More specifically, it was around the areas of Shan Li Chen, Da Xin Dai and Yao Jia He. The three pilots were rescued by the Chinese Guo Ming Don troop and saved from capture by Japanese search parties.

A group of Chinese soldiers under direction of Mr. Jide Zhang (a relative of my grandfather) escorted the pilots to Xua Hua Dian, where the commander officer of the 4th Chinese infantry was located. Xua Hua Dian was in Luo Shan county, where my grandfather, Weiwen Zhang, was the county Mayor. Mr. Bang Xing Chen, who lived there and taught English in the city of Wuhan, served as a translator.

The pilots then walked approximately 12 miles to Zhang Ja Wan, escorted by soldiers under the command of Xudong Zhang, a relative of my grandfather. They stayed there overnight and the next day walked 10 miles to Dao Zuo Wan, which is also in Luo Shan County of Henan province. Except for the northern and southern entries, the community of Dao Zuo Wan was surrounded with walls and ponds. My grandfather lived there.

My grandfather invited the pilots to stay in his home in Dao Zuo Wan. The pilots interacted with the family during their three-day stay, even teaching the children to sing English songs. One of my uncles,