

# GOD IS MY CO-PILOT

Col. Robert L. Scott

WASH. RELEASE

The story thus far: After graduating from West Point as a second lieutenant, Robert Scott was assigned to Kelly Field and takes up pursuit flying. When the war breaks out he is an instructor in California and told he is too old for combat flying. He appeals to several Generals for a chance to fly a combat plane, and finally the opportunity comes. He says goodbye to his wife and child and flies a bomber to India, where he becomes a ferry pilot, which does not appeal to him. He visits General Chennault and is promised a Kittyhawk, and soon is flying the skies over Burma in a shiny Kittyhawk. He gets his first Jap bomber and goes out on many lone missions over enemy territory.

## CHAPTER XIV

But I had seen enough. Even though this bridge was being built of bamboo, they were making it very strong, for the abutments were of heavier lumber and of stone. The Japanese were evidently planning to transport trucks, tanks, or some other heavier equipment North. I went right back to Dinjan and had Sergeant Bonner strap on a nice 500-pound bomb with a delayed action fuse. At any rate, the armament men told him it was a ten-second delay fuse. This type of target had to be hit exactly, and if I were to be hit exactly, and if I were to glide in for a dead shot I'd surely get shot down by all the anti-aircraft. So I made up my mind long before I got there to turn it loose just as low as I could fly. Even if I missed the bridge by only fifty yards, which is close for dive-bombing in ships not made for that type of work, I'd knock a lot of leaves off the trees, make a big noise, and maybe kill some gunners. But the abutments of the bridge had to be hit just about dead center if I was to make the Japs stop work.

I came in to the target from the West, with the sun right at my back. I flew so low that I was afraid the little windmill on the nose of the bomb would get knocked off by the bushes. And then, as I saw the bridge, I let the bomb go. All hell broke loose.

When I got back home I looked at "Old Exterminator" and I couldn't see why it hadn't spun in right there over the N'umup. There were holes as big as footballs in the fabric flippers and in the metal stabilizers of the tail section. There was a hole in the fuselage and five holes in the wing. But I guess the hill just East of the target had saved me.

As the June days passed, Colonel Haynes was moved to China to head the Bomber Command under General Chennault, and I was left alone as Commanding Officer of the Ferrying Command. On the day the cheerful Haynes left, I felt as if I had lost my best and last friend. For this meant that I'd have to stay on the ground more, and work the administration as well as the operations of the ABC, which was getting tougher and tougher with all the rice we were having to drop and the passengers we were having to haul.

On the one day that I stayed on the ground, it seemed to me that every time I looked up from the desk that I was "flying," some long, lanky tea planter would be standing there in the door in sun-helmet and shorts. With his bony knees sticking out, he'd ask me in cold clipped accents: "I say old chap—do you have transportation for Calcutta?"

From over near Sadiya, we had gotten eight elephants, tame ones, and were working them to move some heavy timbers to be used on the warehouses of the new field. There was an old Southern sergeant who took good care of the pachyderms. He must have been a muleskinner in either the first World War or the border war with Mexico, for he did everything in his power to keep the eight elephants dry and well-fed and content. Even when he tied the chains to their legs at night, he would wrap the links with cloth to keep them from chafing the thick skin of the big beasts.

Another sergeant, from about the same section of the country that the old elephant caretaker hailed from, came by one day and looked the stalls over with a quizzical eye. "Say, Micky," he called back as he left, "you're taking too good care of those elephants. You're going to get 'em so comfortable that the Yankees will come down here and free 'em."

Bob Layher, one of the AVG pilots, came over for several days, and we drank good Scotch whiskey at night and flew our planes across into Burma in the day—when I didn't have to get passengers on the freight ships. I learned a lot, flying on his wing. We'd go over for a look at Myitkyina, and it would amaze me how effortlessly, without apparent forethought, Bob would get our ships into the sun before we came within sight of the field we were to observe. I picked up little things like that as I flew with him, and they helped me later.

On the twentieth of June, members of the Army Board that had been appointed to induct the AVG passed through Assam, and my hopes faded of ever getting over to work under General Chennault. I knew that out of those Colonels, the powers-that-be had surely picked some lucky one to get the greatest job in the world. This was of course that of commanding the AVG after it came into the Army, with its nucleus of old AVG personnel and the new pilots as replacements from home in the States. General Chen-

nault was to be the Task Force Commander and was to be over the Fighter Group and the Bomber Force.

If the Scotch hadn't given out, I would have got drunk that night. But instead I went on another strafing raid in the late afternoon, and had to land after dark.

So I took it out in action. I bombed Homalin and the railroad yards at Mogaung the next day, and strafed the field at Myitkyina coming back. During the ensuing days until the 26th of June, I carried out attacks on barges near Bhamo, and on one trip went to Shwebo and almost to Mandalay, making a round trip of nearly nine hundred miles. I strafed the field at Maymyo, caught a train on the railroad North of town, and set it on fire. It was anything for action—and the engine of "Old Exterminator" got pretty rough at times, for by then I had three hundred and sixty hours on it and my mechanics had had little experience with Allison's.

That night, when I got home from my trip into Burma, I was handed a radiogram that saved my life. As



Sergeant LaRue of the 23rd Fighter Group. Everything has happened fast in this war, and the organization of the 23rd Fighter Group was no exception. There was no holiday, even if it was activated on the Fourth of July.

I read it my face must have turned white; I know that tears came to my eyes, for I felt them burn. But I didn't care. I was ordered to report in Kunming, China, to General Chennault, as Commanding Officer of the 23rd Fighter Group which was to be activated from the AVG on July 4, 1942. I wiped the tears from my eyes and looked out on an improving world. I could hear the birds singing again, and people were laughing; I knew I was the luckiest man in all the world.

I carefully folded the radiogram to show my grandchildren when the war was over and went out to look at my ship. For I had something else on my mind too. I was going to go into Burma the next day on four of the damnest strafing and bombing raids the Japs had ever seen. It would be my swan-song from Assam and I had to celebrate in some way or another.

I told my crew to load a 500-pound HE on "Old Exterminator," and I walked around looking the old ship over. Somehow I figured that Kittyhawk had had a lot to do with getting me the greatest job in the war. It's not every man who finally gets what he has always wanted in the Army—after being pulled out of fighters for being too old, after being an instructor for four years, after being shanghaied into being a Burma-roadster, important as the job had been. Well, I had got what I wanted and I felt as though I could jump over the moon. I patted the leering shark's mouth on old 41-1456, and caressed the prop that had taken me in and out of many messes. Then I left, while they pulled the belly tank and put the big, fat, yellow bomb under the belly, and tightened the sway braces. The sight of that bomb made me feel pretty good.

Next morning before dawn I was in the air, my course set for Homalin. As I climbed out above the clouds I began to recite poetry in rhythm with the engine. To the verses of "Gunga Din" I dropped my first bomb of the day on the docks of Homalin. Then I flew back home with the words of the "Galley Slave" going out over the radio in a private broadcast to the world. On my next trip I dropped a five-hundred-pounder on a barge at Bhamo and came back and strafed the much-abused Myitkyina. My third attack was on the railroad station at Mogaung and I strafed the empty freight-cars in the yard. I had to use a belly tank on the fourth trip, and so I couldn't take a big bomb. But I loaded on six eighteen-pound frags and set sail for Lashio. I remembered to drop the belly tank before I went down into the anti-aircraft, and I dropped the six little frags in two of the big green warehouses by the railroad tracks. I shot up the field but saw no planes, and I finished my ammunition by strafing the main street of the town. Law two plate-glass windows spat across the street like artificial

snow from a Christmas tree, and I laughed hysterically as two figures ran from a pagoda.

That day I landed back home tired and happy. More orders had come for me: I was to go to Delhi before I went to China. I went there the next morning with "Long Johnny" Payne.

When I had received my official instructions from headquarters in Delhi, and had been wined and dined by good friends—war correspondents like Berrigan, Magoffin, and Briggs—I came on back to pack my things in Assam. I tried to take the old fighter ship with me, but my crew had chiselled a new Allison engine from somewhere—had probably stolen it from some ship, but I didn't know where. So I went on over in a transport, expecting to come back later and ferry "Old Exterminator" to his new home.

As we came down into the rain over the lake South of Kunming, I never have felt so good. This was another step to the East, towards Japan, and when I got out and saw all those sleek-looking fighting ships that my Group was going to receive from the AVG in five days, my spirits soared another mile in the air. I was through with all that lonesome "one-man war" stuff. From now on we'd be fighting as a team, with bombers escorted by fighter ships in a proper force to represent America.

I had already met most of the members of the First American Volunteer Group, but it was an even greater pleasure to meet them now. Some of them were men who were going to stay with the 23rd Fighter Group and fight under me. Of all the honors that I ever have received or ever will receive, the greatest to me will always be the honor of being given command of that great group of sky fighters under the Command of Gen. Claire L. Chennault.

During the four days that followed I took over the military equipment of the Group from the Commander of the squadron that was based at Kunming, and I got my headquarters staff organized. In this Army, Master Sergeants showing officers what to do have always been the backbone of a fighting force, and I will never forget Master Sergeant McNeven. I was certainly expecting to lead the group in its fight against the Japanese, and the administrative work that the Sergeant Major of the 23rd Fighter Group accomplished so efficiently made it possible for me to fly and have the paper-work go on at the same time.

Later in the week I heard that "Old Exterminator" was ready with a new engine. But with the report came another that some other Group was moving into Assam, and that the engineering officer had stated he knew nothing about that ship 41-1456 belonging to the Chinese Government. It would stay in India, he said. I went on and flew back to India in one of the P-40E's that we had just received from the factory that repairs them in China.

Landing at my old base, I waited until dark, and then had the numbers on the ship that I had flown in exchanged with those of my old fighter. For morale purposes alone, we had to have that ship in the 23rd Group. All this change involved was a stenciling operation to put 41-1456 on the ship that I had flown from China, and another to put "Old Exterminator" the serial number of the fighter that I was leaving in India.

So, early the next morning, July 3, 1942, "me and the old Kittyhawk" wended our happy way across the hills and jungles of Burma to Kunming and more adventures together. From that moment, we left the Air Corps number 41-1456 on that insignificant ship in India, and for all practical purposes the old P-40E that I had used for sixty-three days over Burma became another number, but it would always be "Old Exterminator" to me. In those two months we'd flown together 371 hours over enemy territory and we were more than friends. That is somewhat over eighty thousand miles, and in combat that's a long, long way.

Everything has happened fast in this war, and the organization of the 23rd Fighter Group was no exception. There was no holiday, even if it was activated on the Fourth of July. There was no time for celebration. Radio Tokyo started right off with a bang, and we definitely knew hard work was ahead. On the night of July 3, Radio Tokyo—the one program we could ever hear in China—warned the new American fighter group that they would quickly annihilate them, for it was common knowledge that the experienced AVG personnel were leaving for America. But Tokyo had reckoned without the strategic brain of the General, or the loyalty of those great pilots of the First American Volunteer Group.

The General was expecting an attack on Independence Day anyway, for the Japs had always shown an affinity for raids on our holidays. When the Japs arrived over Kweilin, expecting to find green and inexperienced fighter pilots, they found many American boys who for weeks had been flying with the AVG. (TO BE CONTINUED)

## IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

BY HAROLD L. LUNDQUIST, D. D. Of The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. Released by Western Newspaper Union.

### Lesson for February 11

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#### JESUS AND THE TWELVE

LESSON TEXT—Matthew, 10:1, 5-8; 11:1, 2-30.  
GOLDEN TEXT—Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.—John 15:14.

Service for Christ has not always been as impressive and effective as it should be because it has lacked conviction and spiritual power. God did not intend it to be the weak and faltering thing that it often is, because of our failure to go God's way.

The sending out of the twelve had special significance, and yet it brings forth principles which have a bearing on the service of every believer in Christ.

The Servants of Christ—  
I. Have a Divine Commission (10:1, 5-8).

The twelve disciples had already been called into the Lord's service. Now they were to be prepared for the service which was ahead. It was a time of commissioning and empowerment for service.

God calls men today to serve Him. In fact, there is a very real sense in which every Christian is called to serve. Let no one try to excuse himself from that responsibility and privilege.

To some comes a special call to leave their accustomed daily work and launch out into a broader service for Christ. When that time comes, we may go forth with the assurance that the power of a divine Saviour goes with us. The twelve disciples had some special powers which we do not have and do not need. God suits the power to the need, and that means that in every circumstance we may look to Him with assurance, and go on.

One of our difficulties in dealing with such matters as spiritual power is that we interpret the things of the realm of the spirit by physical standards and measurements. We are so quick to say "I cannot" on the basis of our logical human reasoning, when an appreciation of the power of God which is operative on our behalf would make us say with confidence, "I can." But, sadly enough, having left God out of our reckoning, we find that it is indeed true that we cannot.

Serving Christ means doing so in His power, and with His grace upon us. Nothing less will do! Nothing more is needed!

II. Declare a Divine Revelation (11:1, 25-27).  
The messenger's responsibility and importance are largely determined by the nature of the message he has to convey. Particularly is that true where the message must pass through his personality and thus be proclaimed. The nations of the earth choose their most able men to be their ambassadors and grant them full power.

The glorious thing about being a messenger for God is that we carry no ordinary communication. What we have to present is far above the most important message any earthly ambassador could possibly have to carry.

We, the children and servants of God through Jesus Christ, have something direct from the throne of God. He has revealed it (v. 25), and it seemed good in His sight to give it to those who had the childlike faith to believe Him.

God's revelation is hidden from those who are wise in their own conceits, who are too proud to come by way of humility and faith. Thank God, some of the wise and mighty of this world have been willing to become as little children and learn at the feet of Jesus.

The encouraging thing about it is that the door is open to the simplest believer to trust God, to take the revelation of God's truth in His word, and give it out with grace and power.

III. Extend a Divine Invitation (11:28-30).

"Come"—what a blessed word for the needy and sinful! They are not to be shut out by their sin, nor to be hindered by their weakness. The door is open, and the invitation is to come. Why not respond?

To whom are they to come? To Jesus. There are times when men can help us, when friends or church officers or the pastor can give us an uplifting word of counsel and encouragement. But for salvation, for a real lifting of the burden from the shoulders of those "that labor and are heavy laden," there is no one like Jesus.

We are privileged to invite people to Jesus, knowing that if they "learn" of Him (v. 29), they will not only have their loads lifted and find rest, but will enter into a blessed yoke, fellowship with Him in life and service.

His is a wholesome or a kindly yoke. That is the meaning of "easy" in verse 30. It is not always easy to serve Christ, but being yoked with Him in a kindly fellowship of service makes the burden light.

The world is full of tired and discouraged people. We who know Christ have the adequate answer to their need. Shall we not go in His name to present the truth to them and invite them to come to Christ?



SULFA, penicillin, quinine, morphine and blood plasma are vital in war medicine, but there's another great healer, too, on the battle front and the home front—the power of song.

The power of song has made this a top year for singers and composers, for war with its demand for more and more music has thrust them into the foreground of the entertainment field, with names that were doing well yesterday, like Frankie Boy Sinatra and Dick Haymes, for instance, now becoming stars.

Phil Regan recently brought this fact home to me. He made me understand that if you were to take the contribution of Hollywood's songsters to the boys overseas and lay it end to end it would reach



Bing Crosby

from here to the moon and back again. And Bing Crosby, Frankie, Phil, Dick, Dinah Shore, Judy Garland, Deanna Durbin, Frances Langford, Betty Grable, and all that magnificent list of entertainers whose talent has livened our fighting men have patched up many, many deep wounds of heart and mind.

#### There's a Reason

Let me tell you something of what Bing means to the boys. I've talked to some of them back from the invasion front who were there when old Bing, steel helmet on one side of his head, familiar pipe in the corner of his mouth, stood up in a jeep to sing for a detachment somewhere along the roads off Normandy. Howitzers were barking to his right, and a dull, persistent boom from the horizon indicated a barrage being laid down ahead. But at sight of the Old Groaner, boys who were halted on their grim forward march for a rest period straightened up and grinned.

"Bing! Hey, Bing! How about 'Pennies from Heaven'?" And when Bing grinned and raised his arm to indicate he was ready to begin, cheers and whistles split the skies. Then a silence more profound than Carnegie hall, for they didn't want to miss a single note. When an enemy plane circled uncomfortably near, Bing just cocked an eye at the sky and said, "Gee what that Frankie Sinatra won't do to steal a show!" and went right on singing. He'd give them all the old favorites until the order came through for the column to fall in. Those boys were marching up to the battle line, but their step was lighter, they had new courage with the echo of his music in their hearts—the courage that comes when danger is shared.

A Hit With the G.I.s  
Once a week, Dick Haymes puts on a radio show called "Everything for the Boys." They send in their requests, and they talk by short wave telephone from the battle fronts to the folks at home. You should read the mail that pours in from the soldiers.

Phil Regan, telling me of his experiences on his personal appearance tour, said: "Sometimes folks tell why they make certain requests. You see, the songs they want aren't always the smooth ones that are in the groove at the moment. They are the songs that remind them of home."

Another song the boys want is "Onward, Christian Soldiers," that fierce marching hymn, one of the greatest of all time. It's keen as a sword, that one, and mighty as eternity. It's for moments where nostalgic reminiscence won't do—moments when you want a lift as well as a boost forward.

On U.S.O. tours Betty Grable had to sing "Embraceable You" over and over and over again. And Alice Faye's "I'll Have My Love to Keep Me Warm" seemed to fill the same spot with homesick boys.

So after talking with Phil Regan my hat's off to the singers and song writers of the world for what they've done and are doing for our boys and for the civilians during this war.

Bing Crosby didn't need war to make him great, but war has brought him closer to the millions of fans who put him at the top and keep him there than any peace time years ever could.

#### Spilling the Beans

You'll be astounded when you see Lucille Bremer in "Yolanda and the Thief" coming out of a lake with her chiffon veils blowing 12 feet in the air and all her apparel dry, and I'm just the nasty gal who'll tell you how it was made. She, poor gal, or rather, her swimming double had a wind machine strapped to her back with pipes in which they put the wind pressure. She backs into the lake with her veils flying, falls in backwards and they reverse the camera and show her coming out.

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