

DUPLIN COUNTY BOY PILOTS BOMBER TO AFRICA

Goes Off Course And Is Forced To Land; Forced To Land A Second Time In The Sahara Desert; Says He Likes Where He Is

Lt. H. D. Maxwell, Jr. (Hugh) former reporter and columnist of the Times has been in service several years. He enlisted in the air corps and was rapidly promoted. He is a first lieutenant and before going over did patrol work along the Atlantic Coast from New England to Virginia. Recently he took off from Miami for Africa, going via South America. Hugh pilots a bomber. About a year ago he wrote an article "I Pilot A Bomber" which was published in the American Magazine.

The first letter his parents received from him after going over relates some of his experiences in the Sahara Desert and other parts of Africa. The letter, in detail:

Somewhere in North Africa March 19, 1943

Dear Folks:

I'll tell you more about the scribbling just above in a minute. (Editor's note: the page evidently had been censored as some lines were clipped out.) Right now I guess I'd better bring you up to date. Believe the last time I wrote we were at our jumping off place in South America.

Well, we stayed there for two days and took off the second night. Got across OK, not without a bit of trouble, though. They underestimated a bit of weather, and we were forced off course and landed at a field 400 miles south of our course, almost out of gas. (Don't know just what this censorship permits but know I can't name any towns.) We stayed there over night. The British boys took pretty good care of us, but they didn't have much to offer. Finally dug up enough gas to get us up to the town we were heading for to begin with.

Stayed there over night and took off early next morning on a flight across part of the Sahara desert. Had to land at a field in the middle of the desert, because the pass through the mountains was closed. Boy, that was something. Just landed on the desert sand.

They have just a few fellows there with some gas, a radio set, one jeep, and some canned food. Living in a mud fort that belonged to the French foreign legion. No beds for us. Slept in the plane wrapped up in everything we had and damned near froze. Sun burnt you up during the day. Arab village, at foot of the big sand dune, which looks just like the movie versions of desert towns. Sure wish we had a camera. Most of the Arabs can speak French, and believe it or not I remember enough of my college French that I could talk with them fairly well. We went into the town with all the Arab children hanging onto us begging for cigarettes, and chewing gum, gave away all the cigs I had. Finally decided to open a package of emergency rations & distribute it. Damned near got swarmed under. They piled all over me. Incidentally I made a mistake that could have been fatal if there hadn't been a well-educated Arab there whom I had been talking to in French and struck up quite a friendship with. I opened the breakfast can of food and the kids almost had it when he grabbed it out of my hand, looked at it, and shoved it back at me quick. I caught on fairly fast. Hadn't thought of it, but the can contained pork and eggs, and their religion absolutely forbids their touching any hog meat. In fact, they won't get near one. If he hadn't stopped me, I would probably have my throat cut right now, because all those children would have been defiled by eating pork and eggs. However, they certainly appreciated the chewing gum, cigarettes and hard tack. We tried to buy some Arab knives (every one of them carries one), but money doesn't mean anything to them, because there isn't anything for them to buy with it.

The cheapest offer we had was 1000 francs, which is \$20 in American money. That brings us up to the scribbling at the top of this letter.

It turned out that one of the Arabs was very well educated and could write in Arabic or French. Arabic is written backward. The scribbling is his name. The first Arabic, the second French.

Well, next morning, the Captain in charge of the base (who was a very nice fellow), told me that he would do his damndest to get me out of there & started radioing the control field for this sector to find out what airport I could get in that was on my route. About noon, we got a message that I was to head for this one. We didn't even know where it was, but found it on the maps and took off. We couldn't find out a thing about the radio frequency, and later, lower frequency, or anything

for this field so did reckoning navigation until we hit it circled the field once and came in without contact. Imagine our surprise when we taxied up and stopped to find out that the squadron was here and this is our new home. We couldn't believe it.

Seems that they moved out from where they were, and came down here, so we don't have to go there at all. I know you're going to be tickled crapless to hear this, because patrolling out of here is just about like working out of Langley Field. We're well back from any active front, although we're where there was some fairly heavy fighting when the boys moved in here. We're living in pretty nice barracks that belonged to the French have a nice field, only three miles from a dined nice little coastal town, and very near a couple of very nice towns that you've heard a lot about in the war news, but which are all strictly under American control now. We don't wear our guns into town or anything any more, although they still have patrols with machine guns combing the town regularly just for absolute safety.

Right after we crossed the pass through the mountains coming up here, the fields started getting green, no more desert, we started seeing roads and rivers and towns again. We knew that the large towns near here are supposed to be damned nice. And we were generally bemoaning the fact that we couldn't stick around here a while. So we can hardly believe that we're stationed here. You just can't imagine how nice this country is compared to the seat & dirt and rain, negroes and insects and filth and desert that we've been going through ever since we left home. This is almost like the States. One of the things that tickles me to death is that everything is French, and I'll get a chance to really get onto the language. That's an awful lot of fun.

Only the air echelon is down here. The rest of the outfit is still on the way, so they haven't even got started here yet. We'll get off to an even start with the rest of the outfit. By the way, we're the first plane to get here out of the four that left Langley. The one that as ahead of us failed to make contact here and went on up. He's on his way back now. I left the others in South America. They should be here any day.

Going into town you see French ships all out in the river that were scuttled there when the place was invaded, and they haven't had a chance to salvage yet.

One thing that would amaze you is the way the natives in all of Africa that we've seen scramble for a bit of food. They have to burn all the garbage at the army camps, because otherwise the natives swarm around the garbage cans like hogs and fight over any rotten, filthy scraps they can find. That isn't normal. It's just what the war has done to them. Although most of them are far, far from being civilized. Thank God the natives of this section are Arabs, and not the Wogs (bush negroes) you find further south. They are the lowest form of human life I've ever come into contact with. Also this section has a much larger percentage of white people (mostly French) than any place further south on this coast.

Incidentally, our APO number here will be different, and I don't know when I'll ever get any letters you may have written to the number we had. I won't mail this until I find out what the address here will be, and will put it in the envelope. The day you get this shoot a letter to me at the address on the envelope in case I haven't heard from you before, and let me know what the score is with all of you, Ruby Mae and Miss Junior, etc. Haven't heard from you in a hell of a long time.

The mail service here is supposed to be particularly good from here to the States and fair from the States to here. Understand a clipper makes the run direct from Miami every week. Old Tarant, one of my classmates, is pilot on it, too. I'm going to try to get in touch with him and see if he'll bring some stuff over for me. If he will there are a few things I particularly want. Above all if you still have one around the house, I need one of those zippo cigarette lighters, or most any other kind I could get. Believe I told you I lost mine and it's impossible to get one. Also, if he can handle anything that big, if you aren't using it much, I'd give my left arm to have that portable record player and a few records. The boys over here picked up a few records in England at \$1 each, but don't have anything to play them on now.

Well, if I write much more now I'll never get it in one envelope, so I'll stop until a later date. Remind me to tell you about these French commodes. They're honkeys. Please don't work about me, because I'm well fixed right now. Just hope you're all doing fine. Still sort of like you people.

Love and kisses,
Hugh
Address:
H. D. Maxwell, Jr. 1st Lt.
A. C. 187 Antisub Sq.
APO 82421 New York City

Another Duplin Boy Writes About Service

Mr. Eddie Grady of near Kenansville received a letter from "Billie Hamp" Grady who is stationed somewhere off the New England Coast. Included in the letter was one he or some one in service composed. The letter reveals the high spirits of our boys in service. It reads:

MY DEAR BILL

My Dear Bill,
I'm one of the fellows who made the world safe for Democracy and what a crazy thing that was. I fought and fought but I had to go anyway. I was called class "A". The next time I want to be in class "B". B here when they go and B here when they get back. I can remember when I was registered. I went to the desk and my milkman was in charge. He said, "what is your name?" I said "young man you know what my name is." "What's your name?" he barked back at me so I told him, "August Childs". He said, "are you Alien?" "No" I said, "I feel fine." Then he said "when did you first see the light of day?" I said, "when I moved from Pittsburgh to Philadelphia." He asked me how old I was so I told him "23" the first of September. He said, "the first of September you'll be in Australia and that will be the last of August."

Some veterinarian started in to examine me. He asked if I ever had the measles, smallpox, St. Vitus dance or if I took fits. I said, "No, only when I stay in a saloon too long." Then he said, "can you see alright?" I said, "sure, but I'll be cock-eyed tonight if I pass this test." Then he listened around my chest and said, "I think you have a wart somewhere." I said, "wart, my neck, that's a button in your ear." The doctor said that he had examined 140,000 men and that I was the most imperfect physical wreck he ever examined. Then he handed me a card class "A".

Then I went to camp and I guess they didn't think I'd live long. The first fellow wrote on my card "Flying Corps". Then I went a little farther and some little guy said, "Look what the wind blew in." I said, "wind, nothing, the draft is doing it." On the second morning they put some clothes on me. What an outfit. As soon as you are in it you think you can lick anybody. They have two sizes — too long and too small. The pants are too tight, I can't sit down. The shoes are too big. I turned around three times and they didn't move. And, what a raincoat they gave me. It strained the rain. I passed the officer all dressed with a fancy belt and all that stuff. He said, calling after me, "didn't you notice what I have on?" I said, "yes, what are you kicking about, look what they gave me."

I landed in camp with \$75.00. In ten minutes I was broke. I never saw so many 3's and 12's on a pair of dice. No matter what I did I went broke. Something went wrong even in cards. One time I got five aces and I was afraid to bet. A good thing I didn't. The fellow next to me had six kings. Finally, I said, "this is a crooked poker game." The fellow next to me said, "we're playing pinochle." Everything was crazy. If you were a lively hand they put you in the Medical Dept. If you were a watchman they made you officer of the day. I saw a guy with a wooden leg and asked him what he was doing in the army. He said, "I'm here to mash the potatoes."

Oh, it was nice—five below zero one morning and they called us out for underwear inspection. You talk about scenery. Red flannels, bvd's—all kinds. The union suit I had on would fit Tony Galento. The lieutenant lined us up and told me to stand up. I said, "I am up. This underwear makes me look as though I was sitting down." He got so mad he put me out digging ditches. A little while later he passed me and said, "Don't throw that dirt up here." I said, "where do you want me to put it?" He said, "dig another hole and put it in there."

By that time I was pretty mad so another guy named Jones and myself drank a quart of whiskey. Finally Jones acted funny so I ran to the doctor and told him. He asked me if Jones saw pink elephants and I said, "No, that's the trouble, they are there and he can't see them."

The next day when we were in chapel, Jones said to me, "I think my can is asleep." "Yes" I answered, "I guess it is because I just heard it snoring."

Three days later we sailed for Australia. Marching along down the pier I had some more bad luck. I had a sergeant who stuttered and it took him so long to say "halt" that 27 of us marched overboard. They pulled us out and the captain came along and said, "fall in." I replied "I've just been in."

I was on the boat. 12 days

Seasick all the time. Nothing going down. Everything coming up. I leaned over the rail all the time. In the middle of one of my best leans, the captain rushed up and said, "what company are you in?" I said, "I'm all by myself". He asked me if the brigadier was up yet and I told him if I had swallowed it, it was up by this time. Talk about your dumb people. I said to one of the fellows, "I guess we've dropped anchor". He said, "I knew they would lose it, it's been hanging over the side ever since we left New York." We had a lifeboat drill and when the boat was being lowered over the side of the ship, it spilled the men out of the boat and they all fell in the ocean. Only the second lieutenant and I were left in the boat. The lieutenant gave orders to pull the men out of the water by the hair of their heads. I was struggling with the men when one fellow with a bald head yelled "pull me out." I said, "go down and come up the right way."

Well we landed in Australia and were immediately sent to the trenches. After three nights in the trenches all the cannons started to roar and the shells started to fall. I started shaking with patriotism. I tried to hide behind the trees but there weren't enough for the officers. The captain said, "five o'clock and we go over the top." I said, "I'd like a furlough." He said, "haven't you got any red blood?" I said, "yes, but I don't want to see it". He said, "where would you like to go?" I said, "anywhere it was warmer". He told me where to go.

Five o'clock and we went over the top. 10,000 Japs came at us and they looked at me as though I had started the war. Our captain yelled "Fire at Will". But I didn't know any of their names. I guess the fellow behind me thought I was Will, he fired and shot me in the excitement. On my way to the hospital I asked where they were taking me. They said, "You're going to the morgue." I said, "there's some mistake here, I'm not dead." "Lie down," they hollered, "do you want to make a fool out of the doctor."

Finally a pretty nurse came in and said "move over". Oh that was another story.

Summerlin's Crossroads

Several from this community attended the baccalaureate sermon at Kenansville School Sunday morning.

Mr. and Mrs. Elbert Whitman and children spent Saturday night with the latter's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Alonzo Jones.

Mr. and Mrs. D. F. Chambers of Pearall's Chapel visited relatives of this community Sunday afternoon.

Joseph H. Davis of the U. S. Navy who is now stationed at Balnebridge, Md. and whose home is in Raleigh visited relatives and friends of this community last week.

Cpl. Liston Summerlin who is now stationed in Virginia was home one day last week.

Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Outlaw of Dudley visited Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Outlaw Sunday.

Potter's Hill News

Mrs. Ida Rouse and Mrs. Frances Hinson and children of La Grange, visited Mr. and Mrs. William Gurley Sunday afternoon.

Mr. Frank Raynor accompanied Miss Frances Gurley to the dance at the Kenansville School gym Saturday night.

Mr. Hubert and Ashley Houston accompanied Misses Geraldine Futrel, Sadie and Mary Lou Thigpen to the Pink Hill School gym dance Saturday night.

Miss Beatrice Hall spent Saturday night with Miss Leatha Futrel.

Regular church services were held at the Advent Christian church Sunday.

Miss Geraldine Futrel spent Saturday night with Mary Lou and Sadie Thigpen.

Mr. Wilbur Holmes spent Sunday afternoon with Mr. and Mrs. William Gurley and also Mr. William Beamon.

Mrs. Ellis Quinn spent the week end with her mother, Mrs. Harriet Scott of Jacksonville.

Mr. Lloyd Rhodes was guest of Miss Christine Futrel Saturday night.

Mr. Sam Turner and Perry Edwards were guests of Misses Kathleen Futrel and Lettie Thompson Sunday afternoon.

We are glad to announce that Mrs. Eddie Rhodes is recovering from illness.

KENANSVILLE Society and Personals

W.S.O.S. MEETS

The Woman's Society of Christian Service met one afternoon recently in the local Methodist Church with Mrs. Harvey Botney as guest speaker. She reported the State meeting that she attended recently in Sanford. The Devotional for the afternoon was led by Mrs. Alton Newton and Mrs. C. E. Quinn had charge of the business session. The meeting was well attended.

JOINT HOSTESSES

Misses Elizabeth Sparlman and Mildred Pate were joint hostesses with Mrs. O. P. Johnson in the home of the latter on last Wednesday afternoon when they entertained about 40 guests. Bridge was played at six tables and hearts at three. Miss Martha Pickett won the high score in bridge and Mrs. L. F. Weeks carried home the traveling prize. Mrs. Alton Newton won the prize in hearts. Mrs. J. B. Stroud, the former Cella Mercer was given a piece of china in her pattern. The hostesses assisted by Miss Martha Fisher served an ice course carrying out a color scheme of yellow and white. Favors were Easter baskets filled with a yellow baby chick. Yellow and white spring flowers were used in the rooms for the occasion. Joaquins, Iris and Snap dragons predominated.

BRIDGE CLUB MEETS

Mrs. I. C. Burch was hostess to the Kenansville Contract Club on last Wednesday night at eight o'clock. Mrs. Woodrow Brinson and Miss Margaret Williams were additional guests. Purple and white Iris were used for decorations. Easter tallies and Easter doilies were used to carry out the Easter Motif. Club members high score as made by Mrs. N. B. Boney and visitors high score by Mrs. Brinson. Mrs. J. B. Wallace assisted the hostess in serving a sweet course to the guests.

MRS. JONES HOSTESS

Mrs. G. E. Jones was hostess to her bridge club on Monday night of this week at eight o'clock. There were two additional tables in play. Attractive spring tallies seated the guests at the four tables arranged in the living room. Candytuft and other spring flowers were used for decorations. Club members present were: Mesdames L. F. Weeks, V. B. Gavin, C. B. Guthrie, J. O. Stokes, J. R. Grady and J. B. Wallace also Miss Margaret Williams and Mrs. Mitchell Allen. Visitors included: Mesdames N. B. Boney, J. E. Jerritt, P. J. Dobson, John Currie and D. S. Williamson also Miss Martha Pickett and Mrs. Erma Williams Meadows & Mrs. Emory Sadler. High score for the club members present was won by Mrs. Allen and for the visitors by Miss Pickett. The hostess assisted by her mother, Mrs. Foster and by Mrs. L. F. Weeks and Mrs. Williamson served assorted sandwiches and cookies with iced tea.

Mrs. Perry J. Dobson spent several days recently with her son Arnold Dobson and his family in Wilmington.

Mesdames Harvey Boney and Norwood Boney attended the U. D. C. Meeting in Warsaw last Thursday afternoon.

Miss Juanita Bonita of Beaulieu spent the past week end here with her aunt, Mrs. W. M. Brinson.

Miss Lela McDonald of the local

school faculty, who has been in the Goldsboro Hospital for a couple months has returned to her home in South Carolina.

Miss Anne Dall of Pineland College spent Sunday here with her parents.

Mrs. Ralph Carlton has been confined to the bed for over a week now due to a recent fall from which she received an injury to her back.

Edward Sykes who is stationed at Tampa, Fla., has been visiting his parents Mr. and Mrs. R. L. Sykes. He also went to Washington N. C. to visit his sisters, Sarah and Mary Lee wife on his furlough.

Mrs. C. B. Sitterton had as her guests one night last week the following ladies for supper: Mrs. Lela M. Hinson, Mrs. J. E. Jussey and Mrs. J. E. Jerritt also Mrs. P. J. Dobson.

Mrs. G. R. Dall and Ms. Andrew Patterson accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Walter Stroud to Goldsboro one day last week.

Miss Lela M. Hinson and house guest, Mrs. J. E. Jussey were guests of Misses Faye and Sparkman at supper one night last week. Mrs. John Larkins of Kinross and Wilmington spent several days here recently with her sisters, Miss Mary Cooper and Mrs. Davis Farrior.

Miss Doris Brodie and friend of ETC spent last week end here with the J. M. Brocks.

The J. M. Brocks recently visited the A. J. Dicksons at Coats. Mr. and Mrs. John A. Gavin went to Wilmington Monday on business.

Dobson's Chapel

Mr. and Mrs. P. E. Rouse spent the week end in Wilmington.

Miss Cornelia Quinn of Kenansville spent Thursday night of last week with Miss Nannie Ruth Stroud.

Miss Olive Summerlin of Summerlin's Cross Roads visited Misses Kathryn and Virginia Kilpatrick over the week end.

Mrs. V. H. Simmons and Miss Georgia Rochelle spent Sunday with Mrs. Jim Newsome of Charity Cross Roads.

Mr. Kenneth Blanton attended the dance at Kenansville Saturday night.

Miss Shirley Morgan of E. Magnolia spent Thursday night of last week with Misses Julia and Lucy Pierce.

Mrs. Kenneth West and Mrs. Robert Simmons also Miss Martha Brock attended the dance at Kenansville Saturday night.

Mr. and Mrs. Hadley Brock went to Rose Hill Saturday to take their baby to Dr. Hawes for treatment.

Mr. Pete Hawes of Wilmington spent some time at his home here recently.

Mrs. Horace Jackson of Beaulieu visited the Simmons' Sunday. Mr. Elwood Brock and Mr. Daniel Fahcloth attended the dance at Kenansville Saturday night.

Miss Susie Lee Williamson of Kenansville spent Monday night with Miss Nannie Ruth Stroud.

Mr. and Mrs. Holmes Rouse went to Wallace Saturday.

Mr. Adrian Miller and Mr. Everette Miller of Hillsville also Mary Ellis Thomas of Cabin visited Miss Laurie Sandlin Saturday evening.

Mrs. Marcus Jones visited her mother, Mrs. Jimmie Gresham of Millertown on Friday of last week. Mr. Richard Starling is spending



MRS. ALDEN MADISON STROUD

of Kenansville, formerly Miss Edna Earle Kornegay who was married to Sgt. Stroud April 12th. Sgt. Stroud is from Clarksville, Texas and is now stationed at Seymour Johnson Field in Goldsboro.

some time with Mr. and Mrs. Jake More of Charity Cross Roads Mr. and Mrs. James Edwards of Cedar Fork were Sunday guests of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Simmons.

Mesdames Ralph Dixon and James Moore of Charity Cross Roads visited friends here Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Brock attended the show at Wallace Saturday night.

Mr. Maynard Hawes and Mr. Pete Hawes also Misses Laura Brock and Laurie Sandlin attended the show at Wallace on Wednesday night of last week.

Messrs. Lee Ezzell and Doris King attended the dance at Kenansville Saturday night.

Mr. Ivey Thornton of Rose Hill was in this section on business Friday.

Mr. Rivers Jones of Wilmington spent the week end at home here. Mr. Holmes Rouse made a business trip to Kenansville Friday.

Mr. T. N. Sandlin went to Rose Hill Sunday afternoon.

Messrs. Vance Bachelor, P. E. Rouse and D. A. Jones made a business trip to Clinton Monday.

Messrs. Nick King, Less Brock, Roy Rogers, and Rayford Jones made a business trip to Wallace on Friday of last week.

WILLIAMS Crossroads News

Mr. Levie and Andrew Grady called on Miss Virginia King Sunday night.

Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Summerlin of Grantham's Store visited Mr. and Mrs. B. D. Grady Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Ben Hobgood of Beaulieu visited Mr. Henry Hobgood and Mrs. Lou Davis Sunday. Mr. and Mrs. Ison Lanier of Bowden visited Mr. and Mrs. O. W. Wood, Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Francis Taylor visited Mrs. Taylor's mother, Mrs. Anderson.

Mr. Harry Pridden is now sick. We wish him a speedy recovery.

Miss Daisy Burnham made a business trip to Raleigh last week.

Mr. and Mrs. Albert Grady, Levie and Andrew Grady visited Mrs. John Allen of the B. F. Gady Community Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Stencil visited Mr. and Mrs. Henry Jones Sunday.

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