June 2024 Newsletter

Dear Thirsty 13th relatives, and friends,

After the last newsletter, February 13, I received February 14 an email from Ray Bowden in the UK, who has written books about WWII nose art, and he identified the nose art in the last newsletter.

On February 19, the son, Craig, of 13th TCS photographer Bill Bond, called and said he found 82 large-format photo negatives. I asked him to please mail them directly to a scanning company, and I received a link to the images on April 5. Some were helpful.

Ewan Stevenson in New Zealand is part of Sealark Exploration, Inc., which searches the Pacific Area for service members MIA from WWII (see sealark.co.nz). In November 2023, Ewan emailed me that he was planning a trip to New Caledonia for December 26 to January 6. On February 24, I received from Ewan a USB drive with photos of sites related to 13th TCS history, including the famous "mountain with the white spot" which Ewan visited.

On February 26 and June 12, I worked on where our ground crew arrived in New Caledonia. Other activities are noted in Part 3. With best wishes,

Seth P. Washburne, Squadron Historian June 14, 2024

Contents

1. Additional History	2
a. 1942: The Klipfontein was Moored at Grand Quay	2
b. 1944: Nose Art for C-47 "Johnie"	4
c. 1945: Photos from Bill Bond, 13th TCS Photographer	4
2. History-related Activities	5
a. 1942: New Caledonia Photos from Ewan Stevenson	5
3. Members and Relatives	9
a. 1944: 403 rd Aircraft Inspector Master Sergeant Thomas W. Shade	9
b. 1944: Mess Sergeant Steele Aircraft Accident Mention	10
c. Other Activities	10
4. Conclusions and Thanks	10
Appendix: October 9, 1942, Marine Crash on the Mountain with the White	Spot A-1

This is the newsletter for the U.S. Army Air Corps 13th Troop Carrier Squadron, 1940-1946, nicknamed "The Thirsty 13th." This is prepared by Seth P. Washburne, the son of John C. Washburne, navigator 11/42-7/43. Please direct any comments to him at (212) 289-1506, sethpw1@gmail.com, or 5200 Meadowcreek Drive, Apt. 2060, Dallas, TX 75248.

Page numbers referred to are in the book "The Thirsty 13th" unless otherwise stated.

All contents are copyrighted and the property of the originator. No items may be reproduced without permission. To enlarge the PDF to fill the width of your screen, press the CTRL key and "+" at the same time.

Please click the hand symbol to make it easier to scroll down.



1. Additional History

November 25, 1942 - In Port

OGRE Weighed Ancher, Dumber Bay, New Caledonia

Got under way from Ancherage 12.

Ogoo Moored at Grand Quay Novmea, New Caledonia

alongside "MS "Pennant" for debarking troops

Pulled away from Grand Quay, Normea, New Caledonia

a. 1942: The Klipfontein was Moored at Grand Quay

0600

The 13th TCS ground echelon, the men listed on the next page, took the MS *Klipfontein* to New Caledonia. The ship's Guard Log for November 25, 1942, above, notes at 0900 it was "Moored at Grand Quay, Noumea, New Caledonia, alongside 'MS *Pennant*' for debarking troops." In the log entry below that, on December 4, 1942, at 0600 it "pulled away from Grand Quay."

On February 26, I Googled New Caledonia's capital, Nouméa, and Admiral Halsey's name, while looking for the location of his office in the photo on page 5. I found the photo above left, which I colorized. It was taken by a Navy sailor from the scenic spot, Le Semaphore, on November 28, 1942. It is in the direction of the red arrow below left and shows a dock with three berths. I always assumed the MS *Klipfontein* docked at one of these three berths.

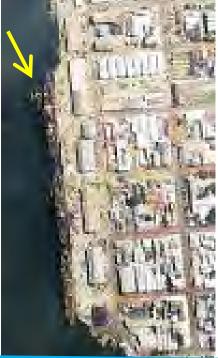
I hoped the above photo would reveal *Klipfontein*'s berth at the dock. On June 12, though, I found for the first time a photo of cargo ship MS *Pennant*, at right, which was "alongside" us, and it has a curved bow, different than the straight bows above. This, for the first time, confirmed we did not moor at the dock above.



I also realized June 12 that Grand Quay or Quai is in a different location, at the yellow arrows below, enlarged below center showing three berths in-line. <u>This</u> is where the *Klipfontein* docked.

Our men stayed aboard Thursday, November 26, for a Thanksgiving meal, and debarked November 27. They climbed down nets on the water side to a ferry which took them to a sandy beach, estimated along the orange line below left. Today, below right, landfill and a road along the water covers that go-ashore location. From the block at the blue arrow, Grand Quay is just as wide.







13th TCS Members Who Debarked the *Klipfontein* in Nouméa, November 27, 1942

If your relative is listed below, if you go to New Caledonia you can walk along Grand Quay and know that on November 25-27, 1942, he was in a ship moored here. He looked out over the town from here. He debarked by going down a net on the other side to a ferry, then to a beach.

ame	# Name	# Name	# Name
mert, E. R.	45 Franklin, L. E.	89 Moore, J. R.	133 Sodergren, E. W.
nderson, C. L.	46 Fuselier, C. R.	90 Morgan, S. W.	134 Souder, L. W.
ngle, W. E.	47 Gallagher, J. F.	91 Morin, R. A.	135 St. Pierre, R. L.
acon, E. O.	48 Gates, E. N.	92 Myers, R. S.	136 Stainback, A. M.
akken, M. O.	49 Gee, W. W.	93 Myres, D. L.	137 Stallings, D. C.
arker, O.	50 Germershausen, F.J.Jr.	94 Nelson, L. W.	138 Steele, D. H.
ass, W. H.	51 Geuther, W. J.	95 Nogaj, S. R.	139 Stiers, B. P.
eacorn, D. F.	52 Givens, R. E.	96 Norfleet, M. B.	140 Storbeck, H. W.
elto, E. D.	53 Goessl, M. E.	97 Norris, S. G.	141 Storms, C. W.
ernhard, J. J.	54 Goodwin, W. C.	98 O'Connor, W. J.	142 Strode, E.C.
iedenbach, C. J.	55 Gordon, F. R.	99 Oehm, E. R.	143 Sturgis, B. N.
ond, W. B.	56 Granger, G. E.	100 O'Shea, J. C.	144 Sydnor, K. W.
owen, H. G.	57 Harper, D. R.	101 Palmer, W. D. Jr.	145 Szafir, E. V.
oyko, W.	58 Hays, C. S.	102 Pasco, V. F.	146 Taylor, R. C.
radford, J. R. Jr.	59 Hladczuk, J. V.	103 Paucek, J. L.	147 Termini, R. L.
rouse, R. R.	60 Holbrook, J. V.	104 Persen, A. T.	148 Thaute, L.
urgess, M.	61 Hopkins, J. P.	105 Petricola, J.	149 Thompson, D. C.
yrd, W. W.	62 Kimball, M. E.	106 Petry, B. E.	150 Thweatt, O. D.
ameron, R. J.	63 Korty, E.	107 Phipps, W. A.	151 Tustin, W. W.
arruthers, W. E.	64 Kuhl, G. L.	108 Pierce, J. W.	152 Tutella, R.
hapman, W. H.	65 Labedz, C. A.	109 Podolsky (Parkett), E. H.	153 Uhl, D. C.
hristie, N. J.	66 Laine, C. O.	110 Powell, D. L.	154 Vallely, B. X.
oker, J. T. Jr.	67 Lamothe, W. W.	111 Power, J. K.	155 Van Ness, O. K.
ollart, H. A.	68 Larger, H. F.	112 Price, W. L.	156 Wade, W. C.
ummins, J.	69 Lawrence, E. F.	113 Rapp, A. C.	157 Wallace, J. T.
avis, C. E.	70 LeBlanc, N. J.	114 Reddick, R. H.	158 Wallace, K. D.
avis, W. D.	71 Lee, G. T.	115 Reynolds, G. E.	159 Waller, E. A.
awson, L. W.	72 Lord, F. M.	116 Riskey, J. E.	160 Weekley, R.B.
eHaan, J. G.	73 Lyle, J. R.	117 Robertson, D. C.	161 Wells, R. S.
elaney, J. A.	74 MacLeod, J. D.	118 Robertson, E. G.	162 White, W. C.
eppe, V. L.	75 Marks, K. G.	119 Samiran, A. R.	163 Whitehead, J. W.
ewey Jr., E. K.	76 Martinaga, J.	120 Schauer, J. R.	164 Wicks, R. M.
uffy, R. C.	77 Matela, F. R.	121 Schertz, C. W.	165 Wilkerson, H. F.
astburn, A.	78 Mazzone, G. J.	122 Schield, P. T.	166 Windham, E. T.
atmon, J.	79 McAllister, F.	123 Schmidt, C. L.	167 Wiseman, B. H.
aton (Eazln), W. L.	80 McDade, F. J.	124 Schmitz, J. D.	168 Wozniak, M. S.
lam, R. K.	81 McGill, C. C.	125 Schroth, A. K.	169 Yeager, E. E.
nfield, C. D.	°2 McNulty, J. P.	126 Scott, W. M. Jr.	170 Yeomans, W. C.
abish, M.	3 Mello, M. A.	127 Scruggs, J. T.	170 Teomans, VV. C.
erguson, J.B. Jr.	4 Melton, R. E.	128 Setliff, O. E.	
erguson, M. B.	5 Meyers, C. M.	129 Shearer, W. J.	
			ja.
41			
annin, L. H.	o Whyner, I . J.	132 Official, O. L.	
inelli, D. J., Jr. oster, R. C. ranklin, E. H.	6 Mika, J. F. 7 Miller, G. J., Jr. 8 Mlynek, F. J.	130 Sidelko, S. W. 131 Sinclair, R. D. 132 Smith, O. E.	- 0





b. 1944: Nose Art for C-47 "Johnie"

The February newsletter had the image above left of a C-47 our crew stood in front of 2/14/44 in Fiji after completing a two-week temporary duty.

On February 14, I received a reply from British author Ray Bowden, who has written six books (2012 to 2021), and created the USAAF Nose Art Research Project, with website usaaf-noseart.co.uk. He identified the image as from the Esquire magazine November 1943 issue, which included the calendar and painting above right, by Vargas. The woman holds a tag attached to the lion cub which says, "To Roxy Hanks, U.S.A."

The poem above the calendar says "November's swell for hunting, but this year it seems flat! The only men worth hunting for are hunting for a rat!," i.e., the men are away fighting the war.

Our crew was assigned C-47 #41-18499, which once had nose art *Risky II*, named by commanding officer, Cullum, after the first *Risky* crashed. Cullum went home in July 1943. The dark paint around the image above left suggests *Risky II* was painted over and this image added, in or after November 1943. The spelling suggest this was named for a wife or a female friend.

c. 1945: Photos from Bill Bond, 13th TCS Photographer

Below, on Biak, Bill Bond and a friend (left) took two nurses to the beach. Below center, one nurse set her overalls on the log behind Bond. At right at a Biak beach, a man wades on the right and others sail under a beautiful sky.





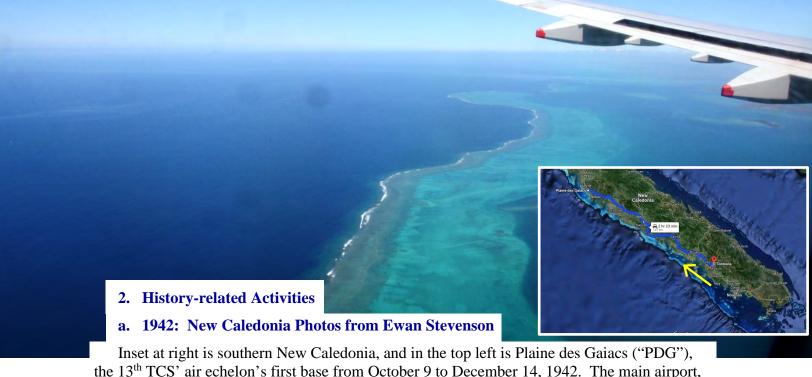


NOVEMBER

November's swell for hunting— But this year it seems flat!

The only men worth hunting for

Are hunting for a rat!



Inset at right is southern New Caledonia, and in the top left is Plaine des Gaiacs ("PDG"), the 13th TCS' air echelon's first base from October 9 to December 14, 1942. The main airport, Tontouta, is 120 miles south, at the red marker. As noted on page 1, our colleague Ewan Stevenson of Sealark Exploration in New Zealand visited New Caledonia December 26-January 6. Above is Ewan's view in the direction of the yellow arrow. 13th TCS air crews flew over this same reef when flying between PDG and Tontouta the first two months. The above image's upper left waterand-sky-only view represents what our aircrews faced on every flight.

In the capital, Nouméa, Ewan photographed St. Joseph Catholic Cathedral at the location below left. Many 13th TCS members visited here. At the red peg on the map is the building at the bottom, built in 1874. In December 1942, Adm. Halsey, Commander over all Allied military operations of the South Pacific Area, which included Guadalcanal, moved his office and staff off of a ship in the harbor to this building, which was unoccupied. He stayed until June 15, 1944.











In the satellite image at right, the 13th TCS main New Caledonia camp was in the green rectangle. North of this was Tontouta Air Base, now La Tontouta International Airport. West of these, in the yellow circle was "the mountain with the white spot."

Above, from the book *The Thirsty 13th*, page 252, is a photo, colorized, October 7, 1943, in the direction of the blue arrow. In the top right is our parking area with six C-47s. We are along a prior less-often used SW-facing runway. The mountain loomed over our work area below left, and our camp, below right.





On the book's page 185, Fuselier stated "One day I drove a jeep up to that mountain. When I returned to camp, Captain White wanted me to take him up there, too, so I drove back."

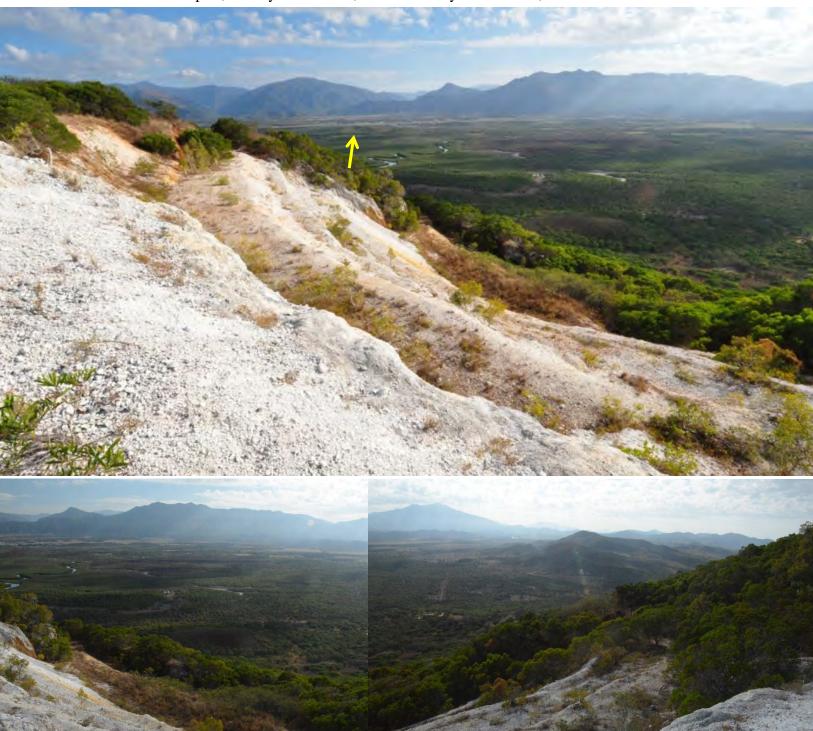
The road, then and now, is next to the red line above right in the satellite image.

In December, Ewan Stevenson flew from Auckland to Tontouta and took the photo below of this mountain. Below this are this road there January 5 at 6 a.m. and the trail near the white spot.





The white rock, above, is gypsum. This was previously a mine. Below is the view northeast to Tontouta Airport, at the yellow arrow, 3.7 miles away. Below this, are views east.





Auberge de Mi

L'auberge de Moindou. The *Thirsty 13th* book on page 246 quotes from the squadron yearbook *Two Years c/o Postmaster*, "Weekends were …usually spent up-island at the restaurant at Moindou." At right is a photo of this from perhaps the 1930s. The November 2015 newsletter had photos of the outside of this "Hotel Bray" in 2015 and of the then-still-living 1942-43 waitress Yvonne Bray, thanks to Marcel Claude in New Caledonia.

On January 1, 2024, Ewan took additional photos, including that above of this renamed hotel and restaurant. The near end is guest rooms.

The two photos below show the front and back doors and north end.



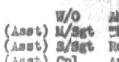




Below is the south end of the room, to the right upon entering. Thirsty 13th members were in this room. Ewan's wife, Patrea, in a green shirt, chats with current proprietor, Marie José Fayard. Ewan also visited the site of a crash of a Marine R4D near Tontouta October 8, 1942, and his photos are shared in an appendix. Thank you for all of these fantastic photos, Ewan!



(SPEEDY EVIE



3. Members and Relatives

a. 1944: 403rd Aircraft Inspector Master Sergeant Thomas W. Shade

Thomas Shade's name appears on 13th TCS reunion lists in 1957, 1979, 1983 (above left, after room numbers), 1991, 1995, and 1997, so I added him to the roster in the book. I contacted his son around 2010. In 2017, after I went to the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) in St. Louis and photographed the morning reports, I learned Shade was never in the 13th TCS, and removed him from our roster. His association with us has remained a Thirsty 13th mystery.

On January 6, 2024, I received an email from his son, also named Thomas Shade. This time I was able to look through 403rd orders I also photographed at the NPRC in 2017, and found his dad listed on nine orders. An order 2/14/44 has the part above right appointing him to Airplane Inspection as a Master Sergeant. He would have inspected the 13th TCS planes, too. I reread the 403rd history, Sandmen. Shade was with the 403rd at Alliance, Nebraska, and always with them.

It was good to determine his relation to the 13th TCS. His son, Thomas, appreciated my efforts, as he wrote "My Dad shared very little about his service experiences."

The 403rd Troop Carrier Group had their own reunions, and at one in Biloxi, Miss., in November 2000, a plaque had been prepared to give to Shade. This is shown below, with the text below. Every 13th TCS member would have been equally deserving of this commendation.

Commendation

Presented in Biloxi, Mississippi this 4th Day of November in the Year of 2000 on Behalf of a Greatful America to: THOMAS W. SHADE. For honorable service as a dedicated airman of the 403rd troop carrier group - World War II, South and Southwest Pacific, 1943-1945.

The 403rd was the first troop carrier group in the South Pacific and set the pace for others to follow. It established many records of performance never achieved again and served with distinction until victory was won. The 403rd leap-frogged island-to-island – Gudalcanal, Bougainville, Admiralties, New Guinea, Netherlands East Indies, Philippines, and Okinawa – as General Douglas MacArthur's Army, Naval Forces, and Air Forces battled the enemy, beachhead to beach-head, on the Victory Road to Tokyo.

You and your fellow dedicated Airmen lived, toiled, and flew combat missions under tortutous conditions, through jungles, rain forests, and tropical storms. Your patriotism, devotion to duty, and heroic achievements during World War II to save the Free World from the tyranny of cruel dictators has earned you and your peers the title of "The Greatest Generation."

Congratulations! You have earned it.

Stephen G. Yusem Rear Admiral, USNR (Ret)

President, Reserve Officers Association of the United States.

This presentation is being made during the "Year 2000 Reunion" of the 403rd Troop Carrier Group's Combined Reunion with its squadrons: 13th, 63rd, 64th, 65th, 66th Troop Carrier and 8th Combat Cargo flying squadrons (C-46 & C-47), 801st Medical Air Evacuation Squadron, 13th Cargo Resupply Squadron, 65th and 66th Glider Echelons (CG-4A) and 403rd Headquarters.



Exact 2 Different 1

b. 1944: Mess Sergeant Steele Aircraft Accident Mention

On October 3, 2018, I emailed the son, Mike, of our first overseas mess sergeant, Donald H. Steele, who is in a picture of the Dumbéa camp, and asked if he or his relatives had any photos or items. Mike replied May 2, 2024, typing up the information at right from Ancestry that his brother, Paul, found.

Steele joined the 13th TCS in March 1941. He went to the hospital in New Hebrides 11/11/43, as noted at right, for asthma and vivax tertian malaria (the most common). The 13th TCS released Steele on 11/26/43 to the Department of Patients. The hospital record says he was hospitalized until April 1944.

Mike shared with the me the newspaper clipping, at right, from the Lima (Ohio) News, January 27, 1944. It says that by this date Steele was in San Antonio and was recovering from injuries from a plane crash. Such a crash did not occur in the 13th TCS. Steele while overseas may have flown to another island to board a ship, or perhaps this was on a flight to San Antonio.

c. Other Activities

On January 7, 2024, I emailed the Sands Space History Center at Cape Canaveral photos of Col. Sands, head of the 13th TCS parent organization, the 403rd Troop Carrier Group, for whom that museum is named, to add to their museum's website. After WWII, Harry James Sands in 1961 was commander of the Air Force Missile Test Center at Patrick Air Force Base just south of Cocoa Beach and Cape Canaveral, Florida. Museum Director James W. Draper thanked me and plans to add my photos of Harry Sands to the Sands History Center website at some point.

On March 16-21, and again June 3, I came up with a theory about the crash of a Marine R4D. This is in the appendix here because not our history. Our members likely wondered about it.

On March 19, Marcel Claude in New Caledonia emailed me a link to his collection of photos of the 801st MAES, many with nurse Mae Olson. He shared many great photos of New Caledonia.

On March 26, someone named Nick in Chicago contacted me trying to identify a WWII officer, and I found the officer in the Steve Burris database I now maintain, and I shared details. On April 17, someone named Joe and another man, Ed, made similar requests and I responded.

On May 20, the grandson, Brian, of 63rd TCS pilot Russel Buzard, who died February 4, 1944, flying Tontouta to New Hebrides, when he flew into a cyclone, contacted me. I sent him 63rd items and his dad's camp location. Buzard fortunately had a daughter going off to war.

4. Conclusions and Thanks

Thank you to Ray Bowden for identifying the nose art on a C-47 our crew stood in front of in Fiji. Thank you to Craig Bond for sharing additional photo negatives. A BIG THANK YOU to Ewan Stevenson for visiting New Caledonia and taking and sharing with us amazing photos of the mountain with the white spot, L'auberge de Moindou, and downtown Nouméa.

With best wishes, - Seth (The Appendix is about a Marine Corps crash for those interested.)



Mr. and Mrs. Hubert I. Steele have been notified that their son. S. Sgt. Donald H. Steele has returned from the South Pacific and is in Brooke General hospital at San Antonio, Tex. He is recovering from injuries received in a plane crash.

On October 9, 1942, the 13th TCS air echelon completed its journey to the South Pacific when it flew from Fiji to Tontouta Army Air Base, above, in New Caledonia and continued upisland to Plaines de Gaiacs. Earlier this same day, at 1:15 a.m. here, Marine pilot Major Kimball of VMJ-253, a prior airline pilot with thousands of hours of flight time, took off for Guadalcanal with a five-man crew and three male passengers. Our pilot Sprout said visibility was 50-feet.

Kimball took off in the direction of the red arrow above on a SW-facing runway, perhaps to avoid waking us and others with camps below the other runway's centerline, or to make a 180° instead of a 270° turn to proceed on-course northeast, or the wind favored this. He hit Ouassio Hill above left, near the yellow arrow, and all died. Airmen then referred to this as Kimball Hill.

At right is a table from flight operating instructions handbook AN 01-40ND-1 for C-47Bs and R4D-6s, which were newer than the 1941 models but with probably similar performance. This shows that, for a range of weights, the Best Indicated Air Speed for climbing is 110 MPH, and this will achieve a Rate of Climb of at least 715 feet per minute. This table assumes a standard air temperature of 59°, and the 1:15 a.m. temperature here was likely similar.

The mountain top was exactly 3 miles from the runway's departure point. At 110 MPH, this would take 1 minute and 38 seconds. At 715 FPM – which is the lowest climb rate, assuming a gross weight of 33,000 lbs., Kimball after 1 minute and 38 seconds would have climbed 987 feet above Tontouta's 51-foot elevation, to 1,038 feet. The highest line on the topographical chart at left (in 10m lines) is 280 meters, 920 feet, and so Kimball should have cleared it by 108 ft.

I expect the control tower was not operating, or not built yet, to remind him of the mountain. I expect he forgot he was on this runway with this mountain or did not set his altimeter before takeoff and so thought he was higher than he was.

On March 16 to 21, I studied the accident. As shown above right, this SW runway was 98% to the main SE runway. In red below is a straight line from the runway departure to the estimated impact point and is 101° to the main runway, and so is 3° right of the runway center line.

It seems the outboard right wing hit trees and folded upward, and the plane rolled left.

The left wing hit terrain and broke off all the way to the center of the plane, and broke off the aft fuselage with it, and these flew together 750 feet along the yellow line at right.

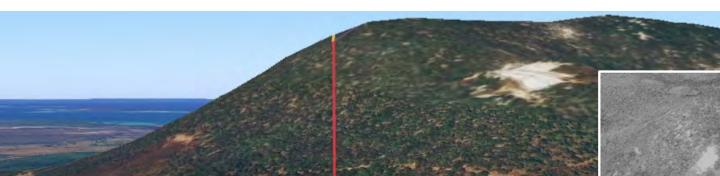
The forward fuselage yawed right, nosed over, further folded the right wing and hurled it 170 feet upside down along the purple line at right. The forward fuselage and engines followed the purple line toward the mountain top. The top now has a clearing, but not in 1943, inset below.

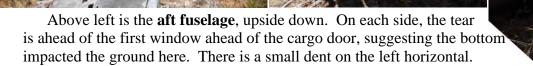
No.	AT SEA LEVEL				
GROSS WEIGHT LB.	BEST 1. A. S.		RATE	GAL.	
	МРН	KTS	OF CLIMB F. P. M.	OF FUEL USED	
33,000	110	95	715	45	
31,000	110	95	810	45	
26,000	110	95	1115	45	









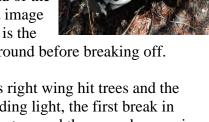


Next, the tail cone is in almost perfect shape. Along the ground, shadowed, is the vertical, bent when this hit the ground after flying through the air. At right, the right horizontal has little damage on the leading edge but the tip was smashed when this landed after flying through the air. This aft fuselage landed tail-first due to wind resistance.





Above left, next to the aft fuselage, right of the green line, is a big part, almost to the centerline, of the trailing edge wedge, upside down, which is the aft part of the center section. Outlined in purple is the attach angle where the wing bolts on. The photo at left shows scratch marks ahead of the cargo door estimated caused by the trailing edge wedge. The second image is that attach angle and the bottom of the inboard **left wing**. At right is the outboard left wing, upside down, showing it strongly impacted the ground before breaking off.



Below is a C-47 **right wing** (ignore the yellow crane). Kimball's right wing hit trees and the mountain and folded upward along the purple line, starting at the landing light, the first break in the leading edge. At the orange arrow are three holes for a deicing system and these can be seen in the image below left of Kimball's upside down right wing, at the arrow.

After the left wing and aft fuselage broke off, the forward fuselage yawed to the right, and nosed over. The inboard right wing, to the right of the purple line below, came up from the back and folded over the wing. It broke off and was hurled to where shown on the prior page and landed upside down as shown below.



One can fold a piece of paper to simulate the right wing. I conclude that Kimball never saw the mountain. Kimball Hill, seen daily from our camp and parking area, was probably a constant reminder to our men to be careful. May Kimball also be remembered for his good deeds.