9-1-1943

Take Off, Squadron 3, September 1943

Montana State University (Missoula, Mont.). Air Force Reserve Officers’ Training Corps.

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TAKE OFF
Montana State University
317th College Training Detachment
SEPTEMBER, 1943
Squadron Three
To the Aviation Students of Squadron No. 3.

You have completed your college training and are going to classification. Your record here has been good and I am sure you will be outstanding in your future training. You will never have as fine living facilities again in the Army and you may even find some of your training programs tough enough to discourage men with less courage and ambition than you have. But, you are all good soldiers and gentlemen and it will only serve as a fire to temper the steel in you and make you the tougher and stronger for it.

Keep your keen sense of humor, your ambition and sense of duty and nothing can stop you as you do your part in forming an invincible fighting force to choke the last breath of life out of the Axis.

GEORGE E. HEIKES, JR.
Major, Air Corps.
Commanding.
Congratulations to a fine group of men . . .

It hasn't been easy for any man in Squadron Three to meet the terrific pace, but you have. You've taken things in stride and have passed the first hurdle with flying colors . . . You are well prepared for the remaining hurdles that must be cleared. May each and every one of you wear the wings and bars of the finest Air Force in the World.

Good luck and happy landings.

1ST LT. RICHARD P. HELM,
Commanding Officer, Sqd. 3.
Classes . . . classes . . . classes. Through the deep pages of physics, mathematics, English, history, and geography the men of Squadron waded successfully. Too many nights have they spent wishing they could burn the midnight oil in preparation for the following day. Too many nights have they slaved over equations and map projections. Too many nights have they slept over the thoughts of a freely falling body, and whether it is velocity or acceleration that makes it go faster. How many times have they leaped to their feet at the command “Flight, tenhut?” How many times have they smiled politely at the civilian salutes of their teachers? The men worked hard in all their work, and they rightly deserve any laurels which may be placed on their heads. But it was all not without purpose. For these men Pre-flight will be just a continuation of what they absorbed here on the campus. But all must admit that they felt a little relieved after the last class on the last day. Believe-it-or-not, the schedule of these aviation students is double what the majority of college students have. One can
readily see how well-trained these future cadets are. Then, there was a special session in which the question, "How did I ever get in this bonehead class?" is asked so many times. A medal will be awarded to all those lucky ones who participated in this extra-curricular activity sponsored by the Army Air Forces. Believe me, they deserve it. But we shall pass over this subject lightly, though its influence has been widely emphasized. It doesn't matter whether a student was at the top of his class or not, but it does matter that he has comprehended the material in such a way that he can grasp the difficult problems in his coming training. Many started out the morning with three classes in physics. In the first two they rested, so that they could learn something in the third. The outstretched arms of Morpheus clasped all those who were snatched prematurely from their peaceful slumber in New Hall at 5:30 A. M. Ah! that dreaded physics test! How many legs have trembled on that savage day when the test papers were returned to the men. "How did I ever get 33% on this anyway. I had the material down cold." And so it went. Our English teachers should frame this famous quotation. "I realize, men, that you haven't much time for work outside of class, but nevertheless for Monday bring in a three page theme, double-spaced, on the 'Life of an Amoeba.'" Then, there was always this addition. "Oh, yes, I forgot. Prepare a five minute speech on some subject of interest." As if it would be interesting anyway . . . Good old mathematics! "What's the logarithm of 456?" Why does the symbol "x" have to mean so many things, from apples to the length of an airplane? Just about this time the misters were awakening. And just in time too! They almost missed a whole year of algebra . . . Then, there was Medical Aid. The misters accomplished more during that period than in any other. Yes, but it wasn't Medical Aid. After many hours of lecturing the men at last discovered how to administer to a cut received during the process of shaving . . . When we learned about the different map projections and the difficulties of plotting a course, some silently put aside any ideas of becoming navigators.

Night falls—lights dim, weary students crawl stealthily into their beds. Studies and life in class have faded into memory that will hug the mind of these men for time eternal . . . Time and tide will prove that academic life will bear the major brunt in their future work as officers of United States Air Corps. Absorb well what has been taught—you'll never regret or forget—"Class Attention!"

A/S Arthur F. Barkey.
The process of gathering information for this article was indeed an adventurous one. Without the benefit of a safari, a guide, or even a road map, I undertook to provide the outside world with a little information on that little known species of man, the North American "Ga-Dget" whose habitat is the forbidden Jungle of New Hall.

For the first few days after my arrival, the strange noises and weird surroundings kept me sticking close to the little cave I was using as living quarters. But soon I tired of this.

Finally, with a courage I had not known was there, I ventured out of the limitations of my abode, and proceeded towards my great adventure. Had I known then what I know now, it is doubtful whether I would have adhered to my original plan. I rather believe I would have done an about face and returned from whence I had come. This day was to mark my first encounter with this strange tribe in their native environment, and believe me, it was a day I shall not forget.

As it happened I was trudging my way slowly through a narrow pass with wall-like cliffs on each side of me. Spotting these cliffs for miles were little openings which I immediately recognized for what they were. I had finally come upon an entire village of the mysterious tribe of people called "Aviation Ga-Dgets." I immediately christened it "New Hall," and proceeded to make friends with the people.

They were a peculiar race as I could see, for they were continually running up and down these cliffs, seemingly with no purpose in view. As I later noticed, a lesser chief of the tribe called "See-Que" continually beat on a large bell, and this would be the signal for the mad race which I sometimes witnessed as much as ten times a day.

I made up my mind that at my first opportunity I would stop one of these wondrous creatures and perhaps engage him in conversation if I could understand his tongue.

At last my chance had come. Dashing by me was an unusually interesting looking native whom I quickly stopped by waving in front of him an opened bottle of Coca-Cola I happened to have with me. After much talk, I learned he was called Lu-Ther-Da-Vis, a name which no doubt had been
borrowed from a missionary who had passed through there at one time. He was not a native of this locality, but had migrated here from a place called Yokum, Texas, wherever that might be. For obvious reasons, I was soon calling him "Lil' Abner." When questioned as to his reasons for joining this tribe, he informed me, in his picturesque patter and not without the unrestricted use of his hands that he had heard from his elders of a tribe with the ability to soar like a bird through the air, and he, "Warrior Da-Vis" wanted to learn their secret. A peculiar race as you can see.

By this time I was immensely interested in these people and hurried onward in search of new discoveries. Hearing strange sounds from one of the little caves, I entered and came face to face with one of the tribal medicine men.

He had a peculiarly shaped instrument called, I believe, a "Trum-Pet" which he placed to his lips, and after getting red in the face for about a minute or so, he succeeded in producing a few notes of native music, called quaintly "jive." His name, I learned, was Wal-Lace Hut-Chens, and he too was not a native of New Hall, but hailed from a place in the West called "California." Before I left him to his music, he informed me that back in his own country the sun shone continuously and he had never known rain. But I was inclined to disbelieve him.

In the midst of this enlightening conversation I happened to see, by chance, a most interesting sight. It was one of the tribal dancers, probably practicing his weird gyrations for some coming festival. He danced as one possessed with arms wildly flailing the air, and his feet more off the ground than on. As I watched spellbound, my companion from California explained to me that this was in reality a visiting chief from the island Man-Hat-Tan, who had come to seek a wife from the nearby village of Mis-Soula. He was now in the midst of a dance called in his village the "Jit-Ter-Bug," and one that is used in proposing to a prospective spouse. His name I learned was Chief Bar-Land-Jack and for many hours I watched, entranced by his never ceasing energy.

Finally, the time had come to leave, but I was reluctant to do so, until I had met the actual chieftain of this tribe called "Ga-Dgets." It wasn't long before I had this delirious pleasure.

Walking down a slope at the end of the valley, I emerged upon a large clearing with a floor of velvety grass. This particular place was called by the natives a "Lounge." This is a fine example of their strange picturesque tongue.

All was peace and beauty, until coming towards me I beheld a scene which left me cold! There, in all his native splendor, preceeded by two lesser chieftains who were probably body guards was the king of all "Ga-Dgets," Chief Wis-Niew-Ski! Fire was dancing from his eyes, and men cowered before his advance. Upon his shoulders he wore the symbol of his power. Diamond-shaped pieces of silver, three on each shoulder, were held in place by large pins stuck directly through the skin. His henchmen wore two on each shoulder, and one had round instead of diamond-shaped ornaments.

I soon learned the names of the two companions of the big chief, who by the way, I later called "Steve," as I could not pronounce his true name. One of the chief's bodyguards was called "Al-Bert-I," and he was tall and savage looking. The other was of smaller stature, but none the less terrifying and was called "Christ-Sen-Son."

I soon learned that it was judgment day at New Hall, and this awesome trio was going around punishing those who were guilty of misdemeanors (however slight) during the week. They had a system of punishment which was crude, but effective. For each lesser offense the offender would receive one lash across the back, known as a "Gig." When he had gathered the total of six "gigs" in any one week, he was made to walk for one hour on a bed of hot coals. This punishment was called a "Tour."

In the short time I was there, I saw so many of these "Gigs" and "Tours" given to the poor mistreated subjects that, unable to stand the gruesome sight any longer, I decided to say farewell to this beautiful place.

And, as the sun slowly set over a measly mountain called the "Em," I said good-bye as I started my journey onward, knowing in my heart that I would never forget the enchanted isle of New Hall.

A/S CHARLES H. BORENSTEIN.
These, the pilots, bombadiers, and navigators of coming years, are now looking onward and upward to their chosen task of leading the planes of America against the belligerent forces of evil. For that they are pointing; for that they are trained. In them is the trust of millions. In full realization that they have but made the first few steps on that difficult road, the men of whom we speak raise together their common desire of ambition fulfilled. As if with one voice they shout their challenges to difficulties, hardships, and disappointments. Some want to pilot the planes; some to guide the ships; some to drop the bombs. Each sees his goal. Each knows what must be done to attain that goal. Their first victory will come on that day when they pin on their breasts the silver wings. Their second victory will come on that day they return surrounded by the fruits of a battle well-fought. Discipline, the word which forces brave men to shudder, has been branded on the minds of these future airmen. Discipline, the trained of armies, has begun to show its results in their poise, in their drill, and in their thinking. Without discipline a mass of men can be likened to a herd of cattle because of their confusion and unknowing. Upon leaving this campus the men of Squadron Three carry with them the lessons taught by discipline. That alone will make them better men and better officers. These men represent a part of the finest group in the fighting forces of America. They have been selected and approved from the man power of the nation because
of their high caliber in mind and body. The ability to cope with any difficulty, be it academic or physical, is with them. That is the reason why they have been given the opportunity of becoming fighting airmen. In the scholastic field every man has realized the importance of every subject. Being an intelligent person he places every stress on his academics because he knows that they will redown to his advantage in nearing months. On the physical side he has seen the importance of athletics. Coordinated with a strong mind and will, there must be present an equally strong body. Between mind and body he has formed an "Auream Mediocratem," the Golden Mean. These future airmen are in all respects gentlemen. They think as gentlemen; they act as gentlemen. They keep always before them Cardinal Newman's definition, "A gentleman is one who never inflicts pain." Having acted accordingly, they will continue in that same role. The men to whom this book is dedicated have made an excellent account of themselves during their stay on the campus. Their leaders have as much implicit faith in their future progress as the men have in themselves. With an unerring past, a well-trained present, and a hopeful future, they are eager to continue on. With them goes confidence, hope, and faith. How can they miss? The road ahead is adventure-full; the road is also deceiving. It is theirs to make of it what they will. It can be successful; it may be disastrous. Whatever the case may be, in them lie their own futures. They are the "masters of their fate."

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35
—the mad rush to the train windows at the cry, "There it is?" We very nearly wrecked the train in an effort to get a good glimpse of Missoula and old M. S. U.

—those two long weeks of quarantine when we had to sit sorrowfully by and watch the other more fortunate squadrons step out? Many an hour was spent at those front windows in New Hall, gazing out at the cool inviting green of the campus and emitting gentle sighs as each lovely female inhabitant of Missoula paraded tauntingly by.

—our first Saturday inspection? As we stood there stiff and still, silent prayers kept running through our minds that nothing would happen to mar the glory of this day. Our first "OPEN POST."

—that first week-end in town? In a ripple, then a stream, and finally a flood we stormed Missoula, eager to dine, dance and be merry. Nothing could stand in our way that day and nothing did.

—how we felt that afternoon as we entered the town? The friendly faces and cheery surroundings seemed to assure us of a good time.

—our first impression of Missoula girls? We were quite overcome by their beauty and number, but it wasn’t long before we had recovered sufficiently to enjoy their company.

—when at two o’clock that Saturday the bartenders flung wide their doors and dashed out of the way to avoid being trampled to death? There was so little room at the bars that we had to dispense with the traditional elbow bending and invent new ways to get it down, but down it we did.

—that Saturday night at nine o’clock when crowds started to gather on the Hotel Florence dance floor? There were rug-cutters and waltz kings but all had a swell time dancing to the music of Joshua Cornfritter and his Missoula Melody Makers.

—the fatal hour of one fifteen when all of us had to be signed in or else? We would come home by any available means, a cab, a jalopy, bicycle, roller skates, or at times, on our hands and knees. We knew that if we were one minute past the hour, Fairy God-father Page would turn us all back into bone-heads or tour-walkers.

—Sunday morning bright and early? We staggered out of bed, took a brisk walk to the wash room and dived back into bed. Later, we convinced ourselves that Sunday was too precious to waste and finally dragged the body over to the corral for a bit of equestrianism. The poor horses took one look at us in our condition and couldn’t be saddled for the rest of the day.

—a quiet Sunday evening when a few of the boys on the second floor went into the restaurant business? They had ordered a cab load of palatable confectioneries, but of course the powers-that-be objected to the competition with the mess hall. If all the tours handed out after that were laid end to end, well, it would be quite a ways.
—and I know you do, the mad pace we had to keep up with in order to derive some knowledge from the courses given here? Everyone knows, I am sure, the story of the Student who dropped his pencil on the floor and by the time he had recovered it he had missed two years of college physics!

—the ensuing evenings of “OPEN POST,” with sodas at the S. U., private little twosomes in the lounge, and those Wednesday night mixer dances?

—how wonderfully we marched in those Sunday retreat parades? Proud, determined, eager, with the eyes of the crowd upon us the beat of the music in our ears, and in our hearts imprinted forever a memory of M. S. U. and all it had meant to us These things we do remember, can they ever be forgotten?

A/S CHARLES H. BORENSTEIN.
One of the boys here whose friendship I once cherished but whom I have long since done away with, introduced me to the amusing pastime called equestrianism or horse-back riding. I must admit that it was mostly my own fault in the first place, for I see now that it was a grave mistake to go around mentioning the fact that I was a Brooklyn cowboy. Hearing this, and mistaking the term completely, my dear departed friend assumed that I was a second cousin of Gene Autry and henceforth proceeded to engage two fine animals for the coming Saturday. To all ye who read this, take heed and profit by my experience.

Let me state, that when I first started to ride I did not like it too well. However, after having rode a bit, I can truthfully say I learned to hate it!

Before I was introduced to my four legged friend, my two legged one had warned me that in order to assert myself in the eyes of the horse and show him who was the master, I must walk boldly up to him and look him square in the eye. This I did. I gazed into his large brown eyes with a feeling of friendliness but all I received in return was a glare of suspicion. After ten seconds of this I turned away, knowing beyond any shadow of a doubt who was boss. He was!

After looking him over with an ever growing feeling of apprehension, I named him "Tailspin." What names he called me later on I'll never know. Nevertheless I was determined to go through with the venture.

The first step in becoming an expert horeman is of course, to learn to mount your animal. This is comparatively simple as you will see. My horse was wearing a saddle, which I later learned was designed especially to make life miserable (and I don't mean for the horse), and leading up to this was a little step called a stirrup. You merely go to the left side of the horse, place your right foot in the stirrup and swing your left foot over his back. Let us now presume that the horse has not moved in all this time and you are actually on his back and not flat on your own.

Looking ahead you will no doubt be surprised to find that the horse's head is nowhere in sight. You are now sitting on the observation platform, and for people who would rather see where they've been instead of where they are going, this is preferable. By now you realize that this method of mounting is impractical, but how else are we to learn if not by our mistakes?

You finally right yourself and are now confronted with the problem of locomotion. I had been told that in order to make the horse move in a forward direction I must render him a solid kick in the ribs. Anxious to prove my ability in this direction, I lifted my feet high in the air and executed a beautiful blow to a region around his third rib. It worked! He was off like the wind, and what a beautiful sight it made! His tail waved straight out into the wind.
and his proud well-maned head was high. Of course, you understand that at this time I was no longer with him, but even as I lay there on the hard ground I couldn't help but feel a little pride and satisfaction in the successful exertion of my will upon a dumb animal.

When my horse had been retrieved I again climbed his back. Giving him a more gentle kick this time so as not to wear out his clutch, I went forward with a rolling motion that somehow reminded me of a camel on the high seas. I pitched and tossed and for variety, tossed and pitched, until somehow I was certain that the Army had sidetracked me into the Navy for reasons of their own.

Slowly I was getting accustomed to all this but I by no means felt capable of joining a posse or capturing Dangerous Dan single-handed as yet. After circling an area about the size of a hot-dog stand for an hour, I decided I had had enough, but not so the horse. I easily remembered the magic words I had heard in so many motion pictures, "Whoa pal, whoa," but it seemed that my horse had never seen any of those same pictures, for he kept right on going in a pre-determined direction.

Lowering my pride I went so far as to say, "Please horse, whoa," but all to no avail. He probably remembered the trouble I had gone through to get where I was and thought it foolish of me to want to leave so soon.

What happened in the next few hours is better left unsaid, but somewhere in the ensuing eternity I somehow managed to return to the vicinity of the corral where I was helped off by the sympathetic (?) owner of the horse.

Placing my hand behind me, I felt cautiously for something I knew must be there for I had started out with it only a short time before. To my great relief it was still intact although quite numb.

As I stand at my desk writing this little tale of woe, I do not in the least regret my sad adventure, if, in experiencing it, I have in some small way, helped some future Lone Ranger to better understand the noble horse.

A/S CHARLES H. BORENSTEIN.
Dear T. S.:

I have a problem which is one of the utmost importance to my future. It seems that the misters of Squadron Three give me the knife-in-the-back look every time that I gig them. What shall I do? I have always wanted to be popular with the boys.

Signed,

A/S Christenson.

Dear Mister Christenson:

All that you must do is to gig the student officers. They will steal into the Orderly Room in the dead of night, and tear up the gig sheet anyway.

T. S.
Dear T. S.:

I have twenty-four tours to do between, now and the time that I leave the CTD. But it seems that I won't be able to see the girls on Saturday night or anything. My social life is ruined. What shall I do?

Signed,
A/S Ruffalo.

Dear Mister Ruffalo:

I have made an appointment for 1300 Saturday, so that you can have an intimate talk with the post chaplain. He will relieve the burden from your shoulders.

T. S.
As we marched down the street, we were not at all surprised by a shrill, childlike voice counting cadence with a martial intonation that would be the envy of many a top sergeant. It was AVIATION STUDENT BILLY MYLES, serial number 0000½.

He's the size of a gig-tag and as sharp as an inspecting officer's eye. In his short three years of life is crowded perhaps more "servios" than many a STUDENT at M. S. U. His knowledge of military procedure is extraordinary and is manifest in his perfect marching rhythm, and clear brisk deliverance of military orders. Adorning his entire wardrobe is a conglomeration of AIRCADET insignias, AIR-CORPS shoulder patches, a STUDENT gig-tag, and the bright chevrons of a buck-sergeant. This excludes of course the four stars of a full general on his hat!

At times he may be seen carrying a set of books in approved C. T. D. manner and will frequently turn up in the physics class where the complicated apparatus enthralls him. As the teacher enters he will call a loud, "ATTENT-HUT" in a voice that breaks in as many places as a flight lieutenant's calling the roll with a hang-over.

When this formality is over, he delights in going to the front of the room and choosing the exact piece of chalk the instructor is using at the time, and covering the board with his own brand of hieroglyphics. As for me, these sometimes make more sense than most of the formulas in the book.

His salute is something to marvel at and he does not reserve it for officers alone but will use it at the least provocation on anyone in the vicinity. New men at the 317th may sometimes be observed scrutinizing his manner carefully to pick up any valuable pointers on military courtesy.

ALL in all he is quite a lad and king of the campus. WE have unanimously voted him the mascot of Squadron Three as must have all other Squadrons before us. In leaving, we present Billy to the succeeding squadron and hope they can learn as much from him as we. So long, BILLY, and good luck.

A/S CHARLES H. BORENSTEIN.
THANKS ...

—For the members of my Staff and myself we give humble thanks to Mr. Larrae Hayden and Miss Ellen McCrea for the bountless bits of advice and guidance. Without their aid this edition of "Take Off" could hardly have been made possible.

To Major Heikes and Lieutenant Helm we wish to acknowledge a gratitude that can't be expressed here. To First Sergeant Paige and Staff Sergeant Gibbons a warm round of applause for their understanding of how pressed we were for their aid.

To the Misters of the Staff and to the gentlemen of the Squadron—

You made the Book—it took fourteen days of sneaked, hard labor. Be proud—Thanks a million.

A/S J. SOKOLOFF, Editor.