

Chinese salaried men in the country. American pilots receive from \$800 to \$1,600 a month, depending on the number of hours flown. For flying done in excess of seventy hours they receive \$20 an hour. This is higher than the average rate of pay on U.S. airlines but lower than the pay in the Atlantic Ferry Command, which is certainly no more hazardous.

To keep the planes in flying condition C.N.A.C. personnel has had to work miracles. One DC-3, trapped on the ground at Ipin (Suifu), was machine-gunned by the Japanese, and a wing demolished. The repair crew at Hong Kong strapped the spare wing of a DC-2, the only one available, to the belly of another DC-2, flew it to Ipin, and did a rough and ready patching job that enabled the "DC-2½" to fly to Hong Kong and safety. To keep their planes fueled C.N.A.C. executives have occasionally had to make a deal, as when they bribed the Japanese Navy and smuggled 30,000 gallons of high-octane gasoline through the Japanese lines into China.

All this meant blazing trails over the Himalayas to open new aerial "Burma Roads" over which all supplies now reach China. This involved flights over vast areas for which there were no charts, no landing fields, no radio or light facilities, where inhospitable mountains or soggy rice paddies awaited forced landings. It was essential to train hundreds of Chinese mechanics to handle the delicate precision instruments of repair and maintenance. C.N.A.C. claims it has never missed a day's schedule, nor refused an assignment.

When the Chinese armies were trapped in the mountains after the Burma disaster and slowly making their way out over the hills to safety, the Generalissimo called upon C.N.A.C. to supplement the R.A.F. and the U.S. Army Air Forces in feeding the troops by dropping food from the air. And when the A.V.G.'s were making history, C.N.A.C. pilots, because of their night-flying experience and vast knowledge of the country, acted as transport auxiliaries for Brigadier General Chennault, leading the squadron nightly to new hideouts, and moving them again after Japanese reconnaissance planes had discovered them during the day.

Last year when the A.V.G.'s disbanded, fifteen pilots went to work for C.N.A.C., and are now ferrying the lumbering transports over terrain that once echoed to the chatter of their guns.

These are the men who, together with their colleagues in the Air Transport Command, are flying their drab green-brown camouflaged Douglas transports from India through the mists and over the mountains to China, bringing her the military supplies she so bitterly needs. But not content with throwing out this one lifeline, C.N.A.C. is now operating a new transport service from Chungking to the Russian border, so that China, cut off from all but aerial communication, may have a second link with the outside world.

ONLY GOD KNEW THE WAY
By C. J. Rosbert
as told to William Clemons
Reprint Saturday Evening Post



C. J. Rosbert

They had one chance in a million. The story of an air crash three miles up in the Himalayas and the perilous descent of the two survivors.

In broad daylight, the flight over the hump of the Himalayas from India would be a magnificent experience. But while prey-hungry Jap Zeros ride the skies, we who fly the transports over China's areal Burma Road must hide from good weather and seek the bad for our very lives. On our last flight from India we took off into a pea-soup fog, and a few minutes out of our base the

monsoon rain was flooding down the windshield in torrents. At 12,000 feet the rain turned to snow. We couldn't see our wing tips. That meant we were safe. As well as the Japs like pot shots at our unarmed and always overloaded transports, no self-respecting combat pilot would fly in weather like that. With another few thousand feet, we'd be over the hump and the worst would be behind us.

My copilot, Charles (Ridge) Hammel, was a veteran of Pan American's famed "Africa Corps." A past master at desert flying, he distrusted this land of three-mile-high peaks. With seventeen other Flying Tigers, I had enlisted with Pan American Airways in the China National Aviation Corporation when the U. S. Army took over General Chennault's little squadrons. As our Douglas C-47 kept climbing with her heavy load, Ridge's face broken into a grin and he reached back to pat our Chinese radio operator, Li Wong, on the head.

"We're okay now," he reported. "Another thousand feet and we'll be clear of the hump. Another hour and you'll be home!"

But we couldn't get that last thousand feet. Even while Ridge had his back turned, I could see a thin layer of ice spreading over the windshield, then over the wings. In less time than it takes to tell it, that thin film grew into a layer six inches thick. We started to drop, not in a dive, but slowly. Then we lost the last slit of visibility. All the windows were frozen over solid from the inside. I pressed the palm of my bare hand up against the glass until I could feel the skin stick, then I switched palms. Just before both hands turned numb, I had managed to melt a little two-inch hole. I saw that we were passing through a cloud. Suddenly it opened and dead ahead loomed a jagged peak.

"Look out!" I yelled. "There's a mountain!" Grabbing the controls, with my eye still glued to the tiny opening, I swung the ship violently over into a bank. We missed the face of that cliff by inches. Then my heart stopped. A huge dark object swept by. A terrible scraping noise tore under the

cabin; an explosive crash struck right behind me; the engines raced into a violent roar. Something stabbed my ankle, an intense pain shot through my left leg. Then, suddenly, we were not moving. Only the falling snow broke the silence.

I don't know how long I sat there before I heard Ridge's voice. It seemed to come from far away. "Get out of that thing before it catches fire!"

I heard my own voice answer, "Come on back in. You'll freeze to death out there."

My shocked brain told me the ship wouldn't burn. Both engines had been torn off when we hit. The cabin was intact, except for the radio station, which was crumpled like tissue paper. Wong lay sprawled in the aisle behind the cockpit. I struggled out of my seat to reach him. I held his wrist; there was no pulse. I put my arm under him, and a broken neck dropped his head back between his shoulders.

Ridge huddled against the rear bulkhead. He was badly cut about the face and hands. Little rivers of blood dripped down on his flying jacket, and he was holding his left ankle. His right eye was closed and the swollen flesh around it was already discolored.

I struggled to stay conscious. Nothing seemed very real. I tried a step, but my left ankle turned under me. The pain almost took my breath away. I looked down. I seemed to be standing on my leg bone, and my foot was lying at a right angle to it. Holding on to the roof supports, I swung myself down beside Ridge. For several minutes we just lay there looking at each other.

Finally he spoke. "What happened?" "We hit a mountain."

This is certainly a crazy conversation, I thought. Things like this don't happen. You hit a mountain at 180 miles an hour, and that's that. Together, we thanked God for being alive, and all my life I will make deep and humble

acknowledgment to God that I do not take any credit for our rescue. The fact that we were the first white men to come out of that unknown section of the Himalayas has little to do with it; it is partly the knowledge that in any one of a hundred different instances death awaited a wrong decision, when we had neither the knowledge nor experience for our choice; and partly the marvelous chain of coincidences—or "miracles," as Ridge and I called them—that led us through forty-seven days and nights, into and out of another world and back to civilization again.

We took stock of our situation. The plane was lying at a thirty-degree angle. Outside, a zero wind drove the snow in swirling gusts, but, by huddling close together, we could keep from freezing at night. The first rule of a crash is to stay by the ship. It's much easier for searching parties to spot a plane than it is to sight a person. In our case, we were both in such bad shape that we had no other choice. My leg was continually throbbing and even the slightest movement would send shocks of sickening pain through my whole body.

Ridge was only slightly better off. His left ankle pained him—it proved to be badly sprained—but he managed to move about. Dragging himself over and about a jumbled cargo of machinery, he found our parachutes, which we spread out to lie on. He also found six tins of emergency rations, equivalent to three meals apiece. We figured we could stretch these out for six days, possibly longer. Because of his condition, the steep angle of the plane and the high altitude, the quickest trip Ridge was able to make over the twenty-five feet to the forward part of the ship and back again took nearly an hour. Just locating our parachutes and the rations took up the whole day, and we fell asleep from exhaustion—a sleep broken frequently by the pain from our injuries or a nightmarish awakening to our predicament.

By daylight, the snow had stopped. The scene almost took my breath away. Glistening, ice-encrusted peaks darted up all around us. Then I looked in the direction in which the plane had been headed, and yelled to Ridge. Together, we stared at the ugly, jagged peak. If we had gone another fifty

feet we should have been crushed against it like an eggshell. Our steep bank away from the peak had miraculously paralleled the slope angle of the mountain, so that, when we hit, the plane simply slid along the face of the cliff. One outcropping of dark rock, 100 feet back, had caught the left engine, forcing us to a stop. Had it not been for that one rock we should have catapulted directly into a second peak another fifty feet ahead.

We were perched 16,000 feet high, up against one of the peaks of the Himalayas somewhere in the Mishmi Mountains, on the frontier of Tibet. We did not know in what direction we should head to get out, what we should look for, how we should plan. The slim chance of our being sighted by searching planes was buried under the two feet of snow which had covered the plane in the night. That meant we'd have to manage our own escape. We studied the topography of the mountain, debated various courses and finally picked the side which we felt offered the best chance. Five thousand feet below, possibly five miles away, was the edge of timber line. A sharp crease in the mountain and a junction with another ridge suggested that there might be water there. If there was water, it might lead to a river, and a river might run beside a house or a village. It wasn't much of a promise, but it gave us hope.

In five days, we estimated, our ankles would have improved enough to allow us to move without blacking out every few steps. We considered for hours what we would take with us. We could afford to carry only what we absolutely had to have. In Wong's clothing we found a deck of cards. We would play gin rummy until we were exhausted, would sleep for a few hours, then start all over again. We discovered a gallon jar of soft-drink sirup, which we mixed with snow to drink. We recited navigation lessons, talked over our kid days, compared fighting in Burma with flying in Africa—anything to keep from thinking of the over-whelming odds against our ever getting out of this alive. By the end of the third day, we couldn't stand waiting any longer.

At dawn we started out. We knew we had to make it down to timber line before dark, because we could never live

through a night on that unprotected slope. Our injured ankles turned under at every step, and we began to flounder. The slope was so steep that we kept falling, and the struggle to get on our feet again would sap every ounce of strength we could muster. In four hours of almost superhuman effort we had covered scarcely 200 yards. It was hopeless. We just managed to get back to the shelter of the plane with the last streaks of daylight.

Gripped with despair, we lay awake most of that night. We had only one full emergency meal left between us. We had to get down the mountain. But how? Finally from sheer fatigue, we dozed off. I was awakened by Ridge, who was prying up one of the extra boards used to reinforce the floor. A sled! Now we were riding the crest of hopefulness again. Why hadn't we thought of that before? While it was still dark we pried braces off the side of the cabin and made splints. We tore our parachutes into strips, bandaged our ankles, then set the splints and wrapped yards of the silk around them until our injured legs were fairly stiff. What was left we wrapped around our hands and feet for protection from the cold, except for two long runners which we used to strap ourselves to the sleds. By daylight we were on our way.

We literally flew for the first 100 yards, but when the slope flattened out, the ends of the boards plowed deep into the soft snow. The struggle to get off, pull them out, set them flat, pile on and get started again was almost as difficult as our walking had been. We threw away everything we could possibly get along without. Even that didn't help enough. Finally, Ridge got his board sliding, only to have it hit a rock and send him sprawling down the slope. He rolled fifty yards before he was able to stop. Inspired, I started rolling after him. I rolled fifty yards too. Then we hit upon a technique. Lying on our backs, holding our injured feet in the air, we slid on the seat of our pants, rolled over on our sides—sometimes on our heads—ten, twenty, fifty yards at a time.

The slides grew steeper and steeper until, finally, within sight of timber line, we struck a slope that was almost 500

feet straight down. If getting out of the plane alive was a miracle, we both felt it would take another miracle to get down to the bottom alive. Because Ridge had a little better control with his sprained ankle than I had with my broken leg, he took the risk first. I watched him hurtle downward in a cloud of snow and suddenly disappear. I heard him scream. The most welcome sound I ever knew in my life was Ridge's voice, breaking that awful silence. It sounded weak and far away. "It's okay, but it's rough. Come on down." I slid over the edge, took a deep breath and shoved with my good foot. Finally, I hit solid earth with a crunching jolt. As I lay there, afraid my back was broken, I heard a sound of rushing water. Just before darkness settled, we reached a stream in a steep-walled gorge.

Soaking wet and so weary that we could scarcely move, we found a cave, so small that the two of us could only half fit into it. We tried to make a fire by kindling some twigs with what papers we had with us—our passports, photographs of my wife Marianne, my license cards, address book. In our anxiety to get a tiny bit of warmth, we destroyed every tangible bit of evidence we possessed to prove that we had a home, a family, a country. But the wood was soaked through and we gave up. We took off our wet outer clothes and hung them up, hoping they might dry during the night, and, with our arms around each other, we tried to get some rest.

Looking back on that ordeal now, I cannot see how we could have made it. With our bad ankles, the best we could manage was a painful hobble. We could not follow along the bank because, for the most part, the river flowed through walls of sheer solid rock. We could not use the river itself because it raced through boulder-strewn rapids and over deep falls. Our only chance was to climb over the rough, jungle-covered mountains, keeping the river in sight as best we could.

For three days we crawled up and down those tortuous hills, taking one half bite of our last remaining ration at daylight and dusk, huddling together on the ground at night. Near the end of the eighth day we had to turn back to the

river. The peaks were too steep to climb. We struggled over and around the boulders, half in, half out of the water, until suddenly, the river dropped off into a series of steep falls. It was impossible to go forward. On both sides the walls of the canyon were almost vertical. We were at the end of our strength. We had spread one day's normal emergency minimum over eight days, but had swallowed the last bit of it that morning.

Numb, unable to think it out, we sat down beside each other and stared at that solid rock wall. Suddenly, Ridge leaned forward. A long heavy wire or vine was hanging down the side of the cliff. We tried it for strength. It held. Someone had at least been up the river this far. Foot by foot, we pulled and clambered our way up the wall. At the top, we found another sign. Saplings had been notched as if to mark a trail. With lighter spirits than we had had in many days, we hobbled on, and for three days more we drove ourselves through the brush, over boulders, up and down the hills, looking for those all but indistinct marks.

Our first day without even a bite of food left us with an intense empty feeling. After twenty-four hours, the emptiness turned into a steady dull ache and a feeling of intense weakness which left us wondering, each night, how we could recover enough strength for the next day's march. We searched continually for anything we could get into our mouths. We tried most growing things with stalks or stems.

At the very peak of our hunger, however, another miracle befell us. I fished from the stream a piece of fruit which looked and smelled like a mango. The taste was indescribably vile; it seemed as if someone had struck me a blow in the mouth. I retched horribly and rolled on the ground in agony. But on the verge of starvation you will try anything. Ridge had to try a bite, too, and he went through the same torture. But there is some good in everything. Our stomachs were numb for the next three days. Even starving as we were, we could not bear the thought of food.

On the thirteenth day we reached the practical end of our endurance. The stream divided and went down two

valleys, exactly opposite. Which way should we turn? Because we were facing east, we took that direction. Had we had the strength to think, we would have chosen the westward valley, since in that direction lay Burma and our course from India. To the east, we realized afterward, lay only the wild mountain frontier of Tibet.

That turn to the east was the fourth in our chain of miracles. After an hour, we broke into a clearing. The hut had been burned to the ground, but it was a sign that human beings had lived here. Somehow, we found new strength. Later in the afternoon we found the prints of a child's bare feet in the mud, and then in the last few minutes of daylight, we dragged ourselves over a hill, and there was a thatched roof. The hut, made entirely of bamboo, stood on stilts about four feet above the ground. The door nearest us was securely latched. So was the center door. When we got no reply to our knock at the last door, Ridge threw himself against it and we sprawled inside. It was so dark and the air was so thick with smoke that we could scarcely see. A big pot was boiling over an open fire in the center of the room. Then we made out the huddled forms of two very old women to whom six nude, wild-looking children were clinging. At the sound of our voices, they appeared to be even more frightened. We tried our few words of Chinese. Finally, by gestures, we tried to tell them that we were fliers and only wanted food but the children kept pointing to the old ladies' eyes. One, we learned, was totally blind, the other almost so.

The children later gave us each a gourd. But instead of ladling out the food, one of the old women simply picked up the boiling-hot cooking pot in her bare hands and passed it around while each of us, and then the six children, scooped out a gourdful of the food. Ridge and I were so impressed with this witchery that, starving as we were, we momentarily forgot all about eating—until our gourds got so hot we had to set them on the floor. Almost immediately, with hot food inside and the hot fire outside, we rolled over on the hard bamboo floor and went sound asleep.

Eighteen hours later the hundreds of wood ticks we had attracted in our wanderings chewed us awake. Sunlight was

streaming through the open door and some of the smoke had cleared. The faces and bodies of the women—such as showed outside the aged, ragged blanket-like cloth they wore draped over one shoulder and around their middles—appeared to be encrusted with a lifetime's exposure to dirt and wood smoke. Their hair was long and coarse, and around their heads each wore a wide metal band.

It was on our third day there that the two oldest children disappeared. Late in the afternoon they returned with three men who stepped right out of the Stone Age. They had broad flat foreheads, cheekbones and noses, and mops of long shaggy hair. They did not even have sandals on their wide, strong feet, and their legs were bare to the thigh. Each wore a sleeveless leather jerkin that reached to a small loincloth, and carried a long swordlike knife on one hip and a fur-covered pouch on the other. These costumes were typical of all the Mishmi people we saw until we walked out of this strange world nearly a month later. Their long matted hair hung down over their shoulders, from each ear dangled an ornament made from silver coins, and chains of beads, animal teeth and coins were draped about their necks. They were cheerful, hospitable, interested little men.

By a carefully-thought-out sign language, we explained as best we could that we were flying men who had crashed into one of their mountains, and who very much wanted to return to the white man's country. They smiled continuously, nodding their heads in what appeared to be perfect understanding, but which we knew was complete bewilderment. Finally, they could resist no longer. They had to feel our clothes, try our shoes, run the zippers up and down the front of our flying jackets amid roars of gleeful laughter, blink their eyes in childlike amazement when we let them turn on our flashlight, listen with over-widening eyes to the ticking of our watches.

After a while they left us, but our act must have made a hit. That same night two others arrived, one a young boy. From their pouch they offered us two eggs, a sweet potato and a handful of boiled rice, and then invited us to come

with them. Because their food was better, and thinking they might be from a village from which we could send word to the outside, we decided to follow them. Apparently elated, they simply took off their knives, swung their fur-covered pouches around until they rested on their stomachs, and rolled over beside us to spend the night.

Next day, after eight hours of struggling with tortured and bleeding feet over a primitive mountain trail that would have been covered in two hours by our native friends alone, we managed to reach the door of another hut, a bigger one. We fell onto the floor, exhausted.

When we woke, we discovered that friendly hands had carried us inside to a pallet in one corner of the big room. The three men who had brought us were here, and four others, apparently all of the same family. Fifteen women also lived in the house. In the two weeks we were there Ridge and I never did get all the children counted.

WHERE TIME TURNS BACK

There, in that primitive smoke-filled hut, deep in the heart of the Himalayas, Ridge and I held court for two incredible weeks, receiving scores of these longhaired, leather-jerkined, bare-legged men of the Stone Age. Their implements were cut from wood or stone and, from what we could learn they had never heard of Chinese or Indians, let alone Americans. After days on the trail and in their smoke-filled huts, we were as dark-skinned as they. It was not until Ridge felt strong enough to walk and had gone out in the rain that the natives discovered we were white. It produced some awe, at first, and then a curiosity which expressed itself in sly, quizzical looks from all except the children.

To entertain them, Ridge and I repeated, over and over again, our gestured description of our flight, our crash and the display of our clothing and equipment. Not knowing how long we might have to stay in this strange land, we had tried to learn the language. We learned to count up to twenty and

mastered, altogether, about 200 words of their dialect. They had many peculiar customs, but their one characteristic which never ceased to startle us was their imperviousness to certain kinds of pain. The men would sort through the red-hot coals with their bare hands to find a tinder with which to light their pipes. One of them, trying to get us to unwrap the bandages from our ankles to see what was under them, rubbed his hand over his own ankle in a gesture. For the first time, apparently, he discovered a large round bump, like a cyst, on his ankle bone. He simply drew his knife, sliced off the bump with one deft blow and, with the blood streaming down his foot, returned the knife to the scabbard and kept right on talking to us as though he had simply brushed away a fly.

What work was done was managed by the women. The men, for the most part, sat about the fire, which the women tended, conversing with much raucous laughter, smoking their long bamboo pipes, into which they would stuff dark, stringy, home-cured tobacco. I had never smoked before, but I became an inveterate tobacco fiend with the pipe they made for me. We began to smoke opium, not only because it was expected of us but because we thought it might help us to sleep. It did not have the slightest effect on us. Later, we were told that, had we stopped smoking and then started again, we might have become addicts.

Late one evening an elderly trader from the Tibetan hills, wearing a great wide bamboo hat and carrying an ancient flintlock musket over his shoulder, appeared. Two bearers lugged huge bags of lumpy red sand, which, we learned, was salt. We told him our story, which by this time had become a mechanical routine. The trader, who told us he had known a white man once and had seen others in his lifetime, wanted us to go with him. We explained that in about five days more our ankles would be strong enough, and then we would follow him. He seemed disappointed, and several times that evening came back to us, motioned for our pencil, which we used for one of our stock demonstrations. We did not want to part with what might be our only means of getting word back to civilization, so we shook our heads.

Finally he gave up, signaled to his porters and disappeared into the night.

A few days later his son appeared, a fine-looking youngster wearing earrings and a necklace of large silver coins. With elaborate gestures he presented us with a chicken, a pinch of tea and a bowl of rice from his bag, and then he, too, evidenced a peculiar interest in the pencil. To keep in his good graces, since his father might be the one to get word to the outside, I tore off a corner of my flying map and wrote this note: We are two American pilots. We crashed into the mountain. We will come to your camp in five days.

He snatched the slip of paper from my hand and disappeared. We concluded that he wanted the note for a souvenir, and that in five days he would return to lead us to his father's hut. By noon on the fourth day he was back. Although obviously tired from a long, hurried march, he was beaming. He first sat crosslegged before us, took four eggs out of his pouch and presented them to us, then left the hut and returned with an envelope. It was a standard India state telegraph form sealed with wax. With hearts beating like trip hammers, Ridge and I clawed the envelope open. It contained a message from Lt. W. Hutchings, the commanding officer of a British scouting column then about four days' march away. He was sending rations by the messenger, and a medical officer with aid would follow shortly.

MOUNTAIN JUBILEE

Ridge and I were delirious at the good news. We hugged each other and cried like a couple of babies. The boy explained to our houseful of hosts and hostesses, and they, too, joined in our jubilation, heaping more wood on the fire, breaking out bamboo stocks of some alcoholic corn drink and dancing and shouting about the room. In an hour or so, the porters arrived with the supplies, and we shared cigarettes, matches, salt and tea with everyone in the hut. The matches and white salt they put in their personal treasure pouches, the tea they brewed, and the cigarettes they smoked with a religious ritual, deeply inhaling each little puff. It was

daylight before any of us in the hut slept. It was a night to celebrate.

It took Capt. C. E. Lax, the British medical officer, two days longer to make the trip than the native messengers had required—days that seemed hundreds of hours long—but never was anyone made more welcome. He told us that no white man had ever set foot in this country before and, had it not been that the British column, because of the war, had penetrated even as close as four days' march, we might never have been found. It was one chance in a million, and we had hit it. Another of our miracles.

Tired as he was, he got our clothes off immediately, gave us a thorough goingover and patched up more than twenty cuts and bruises and bumps on each of us. Ridge's ankle had been badly sprained, but was now in pretty good condition. Mine was fractured, but it had healed over, and this was no place to try to put it back in place. In the morning we would start for the nearest camp, with his native boys to help us over the rough spots. From that camp possibly they could get a plane in to pick us up.

THE ROCKY ROAD TO HOME

Long before dawn, Ridge and I were urging the doctor to start. Such a swift change of fortune had unsettled us a bit, and we both confessed to a heavy tug at leaving these strange people who had been so kind and so hospitable to a couple of strangers who, dropping suddenly out of another world, had been taken into their family and treated as brothers through these many days. We divided among them everything we had—the pencil, the flashlight, everything out of our pockets, and then borrowed all the silver coins the captain had, in an effort to express our appreciation. They, too, seemed to regret our going, and accompanied us to the edge of the clearing as Ridge and I, leaning on the shoulders of the two native messengers, followed the doctor down the rocky trail.

It took sixteen more days of hiking to get out of the mountains, but hiking on a full stomach, resting at night in

shelters on grass pallets, swathed in blankets. Over the toughest places, our little native helpers, who weighed fifty pounds less than either Ridge or I, carried us, resting in a sling swung from their foreheads. Up the sides of cliffs, along boulder-strewn river beds, on cable-slung bridges that Gurkha engineers built ahead of us over monsoon-fed raging torrents, these little men led or carried us until, finally, we reached the crest of the last mountain range. There, below us, in a lovely green valley on the banks of a great river, lay a little British frontier station, a sight as welcome as the sky line of New York.

A truck hurried us back to our India base to our friends. Ridge would be ready to fly again in a month. They wouldn't let me stay. Pan American had a plane waiting, and in five days I was home, and in the hands of a Seattle specialist who was to re-make my ankle. I found that my wife, Marianne, had never lost hope of my return. She was singing with a hotel orchestra a song written in her honor—I'll Be Waiting.



Charles (Ridge) Hammel

Before we left, they traced our course. The strange world we had come from was only ninety minutes—flying time—from our base. The doctors could not understand how, with one broken ankle and one badly sprained, we had lived through the hundreds of miles we walked. He called it a miracle.

THE LAST DAYS OF C.N.A.C. IN HONG KONG, 1941 By Z. Soldinski

The story about C.N.A.C.'s exodus from Hong Kong, must go back away to give credence and understanding of the awful nightmare facing us and cannot be told in one sentence.

