

PHILLIPS COUNTY
HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Membership Roster.....	Page 1
Charles Richard Shinault, M. D., by Albert A. Hornor, M. D.....	Page 5
The Lost Weapon Truth Or Legend, by Major James M. Massey USAR (ret.).....	Page 10
Make Way For The Major, by Louise B. Hollowell.....	Page 15
Remembrances of Miss Helena—A Personal Account, by Brig. General C. M. Young, Jr. USAF (ret.).....	Page 23
Personals from <u>Helena Weekly World</u> , 1898.....	Page 30

PHILLIPS COUNTY
HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

VOLUME 7

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CHARLES RICHARD SHINAULT, M. D.

by

Albert A. Hornor, M. D.
Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts

The pleasure of trying to give a biographical sketch of another member of the Phillips County Medical Society, as shown in a group picture made about 1897, is great. My boyhood memories of Dr. Charles Richard Shinault are warm.

He was tall, handsome and dressed with meticulous care. The stiff white collar and black tie shown in his picture was just what a professional man should have worn in the eighteen nineties. Doctor Shinault was careful always to greet everyone most cordially, - even a ten-year-old boy who by that time had begun to brag that he was to be a physician.

Charles R. Shinault was born November 14, 1867 near Booneville, Mississippi, where his father, William Shinault, was an extensive planter. Data about Doctor Shinault's early education seems to have been lost. Booneville has long been the County Seat of Prentiss County and probably had good schools. The county is in an agricultural area in the foothills of northeastern Mississippi, - not far from Blue Mountain, where the first college in Mississippi to give degrees to women was founded. Whether or not there were good schools in Booneville during Reconstruction days, Charles R. Shinault must have obtained great stimulation and education from his parents to be able to graduate from Tulane, the outstanding Medical School in the South in the nineteenth century. He obtained the degree of Doctor of Medicine from Tulane University in 1890. The Alumni Association of Tulane answered my query promptly but their record of nineteenth century graduates was no better than most Alumni records for that era, and could tell us nothing we did not already know.

Doctor Shinault's daughter Josephine (Mrs. Francis L. Thompson) regrets that she does not know what was her father's early education, nor have I been able to learn anything about nineteenth century schools in Booneville. Charles Richard Shinault may have obtained most of his early education at home.

After graduation from Tulane, Doctor Shinault spent two years doing postgraduate work in large hospitals in New York City, Philadelphia and Chicago before he considered his training sufficient. This fact is impressive because prior to 1910 most physicians and surgeons considered themselves ready for private practice after a single year of internship.

Shortly after he began to practice medicine in Helena he realized that if he wanted to take care of the sick and injured he needed more than an office and a horse-drawn buggy. This led to his establishment of an infirmary occupying the second floor of Thompson Hargraves' store at the corner of Porter and Cherry Streets, opposite the Post Office.

The infirmary I never visited but it was well thought of by Helena physicians. There was no other place to take care of a postoperative patient. Most of these were probably people who had been injured in a saw mill or by a runaway horse or mule. The only hospital in Helena at that time was a Pest House for smallpox.

Doctor Shinault, after being Secretary and later President of the Phillips County Medical Society, was elected President of the Arkansas Medical Society, 1902 to 1903, - at thirty-four the youngest man to be elected to that office and perhaps the youngest President of any State Medical Society.

Prior to his election as President of the Arkansas Medical Society he had been active in the management of its affairs. He worked several years to obtain a better medical law for Arkansas, and obtained a new constitution and new by-laws for the Society. He had served as President of the Allopathic State Medical Society.

While he was President of the Arkansas Medical Society he was Chairman of the Committee whose work resulted in state legislation for the licensing of physicians and surgeons. In 1903 he was appointed by Governor Davis to the first board for the examination and certification of such applicants.

Despite great activity in the medical profession, Doctor Shinault was a prominent Elk, having been the first Exalted Ruler of the Helena Lodge. Also he joined the Masons and became a Thirty-Second Degree Mason.

The last time the writer talked with Doctor Shinault was aboard a train bound for Washington, D. C. At that time I was returning to the University of Virginia at the end of a summer vacation in Helena. Even though I had not yet entered a Medical School I was interested in talking with Doctor Shinault and Doctor Runyon of Little Rock, and not particularly surprised to learn that Doctor Shinault was moving from Helena to Little Rock where he would have access to good hospitals. They also talked about starting an independent School of Medicine, The College of Physicians and Surgeons, in Little Rock so that they could have an opportunity to teach.

This was at the time of the revolution in Medical Schools due to The Flexner Report which showed that the older Medical Schools needed great improvement and that new schools should not be encouraged. The Rockefeller Institute promoted the survey by Dr. Abraham Flexner which resulted in consolidation and increased endowment for the fifty percent of schools that survived. After The College of Physicians and Surgeons in Little Rock closed, Doctor Shinault continued to teach gynecology and was the first to hold the Chair of Gynecology at the Medical Department of the University of Arkansas.

While in Little Rock, Doctor Shinault did much industrial surgery as well as gynecology. He was Division Surgeon of the Choctaw Oklahoma & Gulf Railroad. He was a member of The

Industrial Association of Railway Surgeons as well as the American Medical Association. Both before and after his election to the Presidency of the Arkansas Medical Society, he was very active in its affairs.

During his second year in Helena, Charles Richard Shinault on June 24, 1894 married Josephine Hargraves Pillow, a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jerome B. Pillow, well known and influential citizens of Phillips County. Until their removal to Little Rock, Doctor and Mrs. Shinault were active in Helena and Phillips County affairs.

The following copy of an article published in the Helena Weekly World April 27, 1898 should be interesting:

Disappointed Thief.

A nervy thief took Dr. Shinault's instrument case and medicine packet from his buggy last evening, as it was standing in front of Mr. J. B. Pillow's residence, and the doctor thought he was a permanent loser. He came down to The World office this morning to advertise for it, thinking he had lost it out of his buggy. As he was passing the store of C. L. Moore & Bros., however, Mr. Bob Moore called him in and gave him the lost articles. This morning early Mr. Moore found the packages opposite his front gate. They were lying on the ground alongside the rear fence of the Peabody School. The thief opened the case by breaking the lock, and had taken the contents out to make an examination. There were bottles of medicine, rubber tubes, bandages and all the paraphernalia that a physician carries with him habitually. The thief could not use any of them in his business and left them scattered around on the ground. There was a half pint of mighty good liquor in the case, but the thief either didn't examine it, or was afraid to use it, - for it was untouched. Mr. Moore brought the things down town with him, which caused The World to lose an advertisement.

Some time after removing to Little Rock the Shinaults were able to find and make their home at Trapnall Hall. This house dated from 1843 and was the recipient of the first Quapaw Quarter Historic Structure plaque. The house is now (1969) headquarters for the Junior League of Little Rock.

While living in Little Rock the Shinaults had a daughter Josephine, now Mrs. Francis L. Thompson. She is the only direct descendant of the physicians pictured in the Phillips County Historical Quarterly of September, 1968 who now lives in Helena. Mrs. Thompson has preserved several memorabilia of her father's career, - the most interesting is the gold headed cane made of ebony which was inscribed "From The Arkansas Medical Society." Gold headed canes have been given to the most esteemed physicians at least since 1689.

Doctor Shinault continued to practice medicine in Little Rock until poor eyesight required the removal of a cataract from each eye. Following this radical surgery he was anxious to continue to care for the sick but did not feel able to continue practicing in Little Rock.

July 29, 1925 he entered the employ of The United Fruit Company and was assigned as physician aboard S/S Coppenama. This boat plied between New Orleans and Honduras. He became ill aboard ship and on January 11, 1926 he was taken to the U. S. Marine Hospital in New Orleans, but it was too late. Doctor Shinault is buried in Maple Hill Cemetery at Helena.

This sketch could not have been written without the help of Doctor Shinault's daughter Josephine (Mrs. Francis L. Thompson) and I am most grateful to her for her patience and cooperation.

A native and former resident of Helena, Laurence W. Beilenson, has written a very scholarly book which was published recently, The Treaty Trap. Mr. Beilenson is a graduate of Phillips Andover Academy, Harvard University, and Harvard Law School, and is a prominent member of the Los Angeles bar.

He is a veteran of two wars, rising from private to lieutenant colonel. During World War II, he was an infantry officer in the China-Burma-India theatre and was an American liaison officer with the Chinese Army. He received the Silver Star for gallantry in action, the Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster, and the Combat Infantry Badge.

He has practiced every kind of law from trial work to corporation law, mainly in California. He has served as counsel of the Screen Actors Guild and the American Federation of Radio Artists.

The book took eight years to write. It is a very comprehensive account of treaties and their breach, and the author shows the unreliability of treaties from the time of the Greeks to modern times. The book is extremely well documented, and has an extensive bibliography. Besides material from leading libraries of the United States, Mr. Beilenson has used material found in the archives of several different countries of Europe. The Helena Public Library has a copy of The Treaty Trap.



THE LOST WEAPON

TRUTH OR LEGEND

by

Major James M. Massey, USAR (ret.)

I have heard many stories of a Civil War cannon being in the St. Francis National Forest, just north of the twin cities. I have been interested in these stories and particularly the story of Mr. Candy Delks, formerly of La Grange, Arkansas.

At the time of the story, Candy was an employee of the St. Francis Forest Service. Candy was checking and marking trees with the Chief Conservationist, Mr. N. W. Fisher, when they accidentally discovered an old cannon. This incident was said to have taken place during the year of 1952. Candy and Mr. Fisher had been working in thick underbrush and vines. They halted and sat down for a rest on a small moss covered log at the head of a deep ravine. Candy scraped his boot on the moss, uncovering a portion of the log. It seemed to be quite hard so he took his knife, tried to cut into it, and was astonished to find it was metal. Candy and Mr. Fisher scraped off more of the moss and dug around one end of the object, which they identified as the muzzle end of a large brass cannon. It was described as being approximately thirteen feet long and twelve inches in diameter at the muzzle. The description of such a weapon would probably be that of a 24 pounder (siege) howitzer. Mr. Fisher was said to have marked the coordinates of the cannon on a map. The map has never been located. Mr. Fisher passed away in 1966. Candy never returned to the location. He has since left Arkansas and now resides in California.

I visited with a friend of Candy's, Don Webb of La Grange. Don knew of the story and cooperated in trying to get all the facts. He knew the widow of Mr. Fisher, who lives in Marianna. Mrs. Fisher does not remember her husband mentioning such a find. She gave Don access to Mr. Fisher's personal diary and notes for the year of 1950 through 1955. Don searched for days for a clue, but to no avail. I also had the privilege to read these diaries. Don was able to get Candy's address and telephone number, and called him in the presence

of Butch McKinney and myself. Candy tried to give directions to the weapon over the phone. He also wrote Don a letter trying to explain the location. Mr. McKinney and I have read his letter. After much work and searching the hills and ravines, we have turned up with nothing but tired, aching feet from wading honeysuckle and buck vines.

Now the big question is why would such a large weapon be in such rugged terrain? I did much research and study of the attack on Helena. I studied the reports of Confederate and Union officers before and after the battle. I have found nowhere in the records of such a weapon left by the Confederates.

The following recorded facts may help the reader to draw his own conclusion as to the veracity of this story:

1. Lt. Gen. T. H. Holmes sent a dispatch dated June 14, 1863, to Brig. Gen. L. M. Walker, commanding a brigade of cavalry in the vicinity of Helena. Gen. Walker was given command of this brigade, composed of Col. Dobbins and Newtons cavalry, on June 2, 1863.
2. The records show Col. Dobbins Regt. to be near Helena, April 30, 1863, with 38 officers, 605 men.
3. Col. G. W. Carter, Comdr. Cavalry, Gen. Marmadukes Div., ordered Col. Dobbins cavalry to rendezvous near St. Francis on the Military Road, May 15, 1863-6 p. m. Col. Dobbins cavalry was under the command of Gen. Marmaduke before Gen. Walker assumed command. It was through the information of these forces that Gen. Marmaduke was able to give reported strength of the Union forces at Helena to Gen. Price, a month before the attack was to take place.
4. The records show Col. Dobbins had been trying to disrupt shipping down the Mississippi River by shelling Union transports at Island 63.
5. The report of Union Capt. DeHuff, May 1, 1863, of the La Grange skirmish was undoubtedly fought with some of Col. Dobbins or Newtons cavalry, bivouacked close to Helena within the natural fortress of the surrounding hills.
6. The (Unions) reported skirmish at Lick Creek, January 13, 1863, was with Confederate Capt. Cawley and Clifords units, probably part of Dobbins or Newtons forces. The names of the two officers have not been found elsewhere in the records to determine their respective units.
7. The records show that Gen. Walkers Div. remained in the Helena area until August 2, 1863.
8. The records show that Union Admiral David Porter received a report June 21, 1863, that Confederate Gen. Price was marching toward Mississippi armed with heavy artillery. It was through this information

that Admiral Porter assumed the Confederates were marching to Helena. He dispatched three gunboats to that area, which included the Tyler.

The above reports establish the fact that the Confederates were in this area for some time before and after the battle. Their exact bivouac area was never mentioned. The did, indeed, have artillery (caliber not mentioned). They were reported to have had heavy artillery on their march to Helena, again caliber not mentioned.

One purpose of capturing Helena was to block river traffic of the Union, giving relief to Vicksburg, Mississippi, which was under heavy attack. It is possible the Confederates brought in 24 pd. siege guns for the purpose of setting on a hill overlooking the river. This gun would give them more fire power than the 6 or 12 pd. cannon which were their favorite weapons. The 12 pdr. had a range of 1,680 yds. at an elevation of five degrees, slightly less than a mile. The diameter of the bore was 4.62 inches. The 12 pdr. and 24 pdr. howitzer gun carriage was similar in construction to the field carriage but joined to the limber in a different manner. The weight of the 24 pdr. ready to roll was 10,155 lbs. It was drawn by ten horses with five drivers. At an elevation of five degrees, with a 6 pd. charge, it had a range of 2,000 yds.

In the early table of organization, heavy artillery included siege guns and siege mortars, which were mobile. At the outbreak of the war, a six-gun, 6 pdr. battery would have four 6 pdr. guns and two 12 pdr. howitzers. A 12 pdr. battery had four 12 pdr. guns and two 24 pdr. howitzers. Later in the war, the Confederates reduced their artillery batteries from 6 to 4 weapons. I have found no record as to which weapons were eliminated. The 6 pdr. was used mostly by the South. It was later almost entirely replaced by 3 inch rifles and 12 pdr. smooth bores.

Gen Price advanced into Helena by way of Moro. It is not known if he continued through La Grange. In reading the reports, one is led to believe he did. One can see by this report it was possible they brought in large weapons. It would have been a slow, hard task to move such weapons across the hills and ravines of Crowley's Ridge. It is possible the larger weapons were left at a bivouac area until after the attack on Helena and the town secured. The Confederates would then have adequate time to reconnoiter the area for emplacement positions and move the guns forward by the best route.

After the failure of their attack, the Confederates withdrew in a state of fury, blaming each other. Each withdrew by the roads they advanced upon. A report of Union Col. T. H. Benton, Jr., 29th Iowa Inf., reports that during the battle, Dobbins abandoned 2 guns he had placed on a ridge above the Sterling Road. After several attempts Dobbins recovered them, withdrew, leaving one caisson (two-wheeled artillery ammunition vehicle) on the field. This is the only Union officer who mentions the capture of any artillery equipment. Col. Dobbins

does not mention in his report of losing any of his equipment. He does mention having a battery of four pieces. He crossed Crowley's Ridge by way of the Old Mills Road and advanced on Helena on the Sterling Road. Gen. Marmaduke stated in his report that his artillery commanded by Col. Jo Shelby was brought forward over the Union barricade. Col. Shelby played a very active part in this battle. He had his artillery brought up over the barriers of felled timber piece by piece and by hand. Soon after daylight they were blazing away at everything federal in sight, including a ship in the river. When Gen. Marmaduke got the order to retire, Shelby pale and weak from a wound received in his arm shouted, "Volunteers to save the battery! Fifty volunteers to save the battery, boys!" They man-handled the bullet-rent wheels and carriage off the ridge back over the barricade to safety. Fifteen of these brave men lost their lives. Never on any battlefield of the Civil War did Shelby leave his artillery behind or ever lose a battery. From this show of bravery and determination, we can see it is unlikely the Confederates would abandon a weapon. It is also evident the artillery brought forward was light. Col. Shelby turned in no report of his action at Helena. He was severely wounded and under the care of a physician for several weeks afterwards at Batesville.

The Confederates left a rear guard to check a pursuit by the Union Army, which they expected but never occurred. This rear guard was probably Gen. Walker's units, as reports show they remained in the area until August 2, 1863.

There could be several reasons why such a weapon would be left. The siege gun, being hard to control, could have been lost accidentally over the side of a ridge into a deep ravine, where it still remains. It could be because of carelessness caused by low morale of the men who, after defeat, faced the task of returning to Little Rock and Jacksonport. It could be a smaller weapon, the size exaggerated by the surprise of Candy. It could be one of their weapons was discarded because of extensive damage beyond repair during the battle, or in crossing the rugged terrain. Could such deductions mentioned be true? It could be.

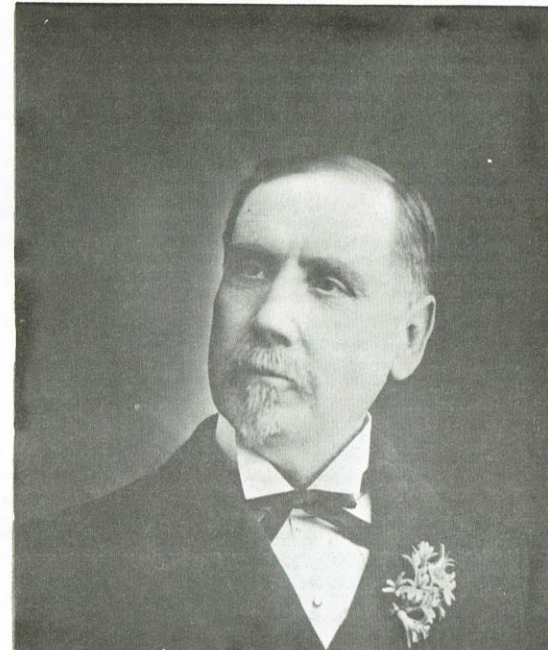
It is well for one to note, however, that weapons were hard to secure. It was almost an unpardonable sin to discard, vacate, or surrender such valuable and needed weapons. It was 1863 when both sides realized the moral value of artillery and a great need for centralization and control. It must also be brought out that the Confederates' march from Little Rock and Jacksonport was a difficult one. Those approaching by way of Cotton Plant to Moro and to La Grange crossed the Grand Prairie, a treeless level whose heavy wet flats were cut into miry roads. During this season millions of prairie flies and black gnats were distressing to man and beast. White River was to be crossed, the low swampy bottoms of Cache River and the soft bottomland of Bayou de View and Caney Creek. There was a four day rain that caused a rise in all these waters. The approach

by way of Clarendon, also plagued by high water, was described as wretched. Were such large heavy weapons moved through such conditions? It would certainly be an arduous task. One must not, however, underestimate the strength of horsepower, manpower, and determination.

Now the first question most people ask is what vicinity is this weapon reported to be? It was reported by Candy to be on the west ridge of the forest. The south end of this ridge runs almost into Fourth Street Road where the Storm Creek Road begins. It is on the north end of this ridge, on the east side in the deepest ravine in the area. Near the location, on the opposite side of the ridge, were a few cedar trees. Under these trees were some decaying log wagons. There are several cedar trees in this area, but no trace of any log wagons.

Someone who may know the old roadbeds that cut across from the La Grange road into and through where Storm Creek now is may provide a clue to the possible location. Someone who may have a map of the area before Storm Creek was made, which shows roads and trails, would provide even better clues.

Possible? Yes. Probable? Your guess would be as good as mine.



MAKE WAY FOR THE MAJOR

by

Louise B. Hollowell

Millions of words have been written about Helena's General Tappan, but so few about his younger cousin, Major James Alexander Tappan. He, too, played an important part in the Civil War, even though he was only fourteen when it started. He also played an important part in the growth and beautification of his chosen community, Helena. So, make way for the Major!

The Helena Journal called Major Tappan one of the central figures in the history of Helena, and the Helena Democrat said of him: "He was a potent and powerful influence, directing his efforts for the betterment and advancement of the community in which he passed the better part of his useful and deserving life."

James Alexander Tappan was born in Somerville, Fayette County, Tennessee, on January 16, 1847, to Captain Edmund S.

Tappan and Sarah E. (Williamson) Tappan. Captain Tappan was active in politics and served several terms in the Tennessee legislature. He was also a merchant. Captain E. S. Tappan was born in Newburyport, Mass., August 2, 1808, and died in Memphis, Tenn., July, 1868. His wife, Sarah, was born in Northhampton County, N. C., December 2, 1817, and died in Somerville, Tenn., January 11, 1849. They had been married in Somerville on July 4, 1832.

James Alexander Tappan joined the "rebellion" in 1863, at the age of sixteen, and was first assigned to Company "A", Sixth Tennessee Regiment, under General Hood. He was later transferred to the Ninth Tennessee, with which command he remained until the end of the war. He served in the cavalry division, attained the rank of major, and was awarded the Bronze Cross of Honor.

At the close of the Civil War, the eighteen year old major decided to take up civil engineering, come to Arkansas, and build railroads---in that order. There was not a mile of rails left in the state, since only the short strip---partly finished before the war---of the Memphis & Little Rock Railroad had been destroyed by Federal troops. Major Tappan was instrumental in building several railroads between 1868 and 1873.

It was in November, 1870, that Major Tappan began survey work for the Arkansas Central Railroad Company on a line from Helena to Clarendon. Both this railroad and the Major (mistakenly called James Alfred Tappan) are mentioned in the Fred Sheldon Diary in the Phillips County Historical Quarterlies for December, 1968, and June, 1969. The railroad was later called Arkansas Midland, and, still later, the Missouri-Pacific.

After the railroad was completed, Major Tappan decided to stay on in Helena. It was a wise decision, as far as the city was concerned. He served with distinction in commercial, industrial and social life, and for a short period in the political affairs of Helena and eastern Arkansas. It was on August 14, 1874, that the Major bought the piece of property on Columbia where he was to later build the home that is still standing.

Major Tappan's first wife---who lived less than a year after their marriage---was Fannie Dade. They had one child, Fannie D. Tappan, who was born December 25, 1876, but lived only two months. She died February 2, 1877. The mother died a few days after the baby was born. Cemetery records show her birth date as April 27, 1855, and the date of death as December 28, 1876.

It was two years later, on November 21, 1878, that James A. Tappan, age 30, and Maggie Lambert, age 18, were married by the Reverend C. A. Bruce, rector of St. John's Episcopal Church in Helena. Margaret Moore (Maggie) Lambert was born to Captain Robert B. and Mary Agnes (Moore) Lambert on March 22,

1860, in Helena. She died January 15, 1924, at the home on Columbia Street.

To Major Tappan and his second wife were born five children (it is said that there were two children who died in infancy, but I can find no records of their names, births, or deaths): three girls and two boys.

Margaret (Mrs. Francis Hubbard Merrifield), born September 30, 1879, died February 3, 1942. She lived in Helena and is buried here.

Martha (Mrs. Samuel H. Spragins) was born December 29, 1882, and died July 10, 1967. She moved to Baltimore, Maryland, some time after her marriage in 1903, and is buried there.

Sarah Elizabeth (Mrs. Elwyn T. Jones), was born December 13, 1885. She lived in Helena, and was affectionately known as "Miss Bessie." She was living in the old Tappan home, with Mrs. Moore Tappan, at the time of her death on April 23, 1962.

Robert Edmund Tappan was born October 11, 1895. He moved to Indianapolis, Indiana, and was living there when he died February 9, 1962.

Moore Tappan was born January 27, 1897. He and his wife Clare (Matthews) Tappan were living in the Tappan home when he passed away on February 25, 1959.

After the deaths of Moore Tappan and Mrs. Jones, Clare Tappan, who had lived there for forty years---and loved it for its beauty and memories---decided that the old home was just too large for one lone woman. Since all of the third-generation children had their own homes, it was decided to sell the house at 727 Columbia.

It was back in May, 1892, that the Major began this dream house of his. It is a two-and-a-half story white frame building, which originally had a formal garden around it. The Major loved flowers and the neighbors laughingly said that he combed his hair in the mornings before breakfast while he walked in the garden, admiring his roses. He was seldom seen without a flower in his buttonhole. He had one especially pretty Le Marechal Neil rose of which he was very proud. An old clipping from the Helena World tells that the Major clipped one of the large yellow roses and bore it proudly down town while the dew still glistened on its petals. He presented it to a World reporter who wrote, "Today it still sheds a rich perfume upon the not always sweet smelling printing office air."

The formal gardens are no more, but the old Tappan home is in very good repair. It is presently owned by Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Dew, who bought it from the Tappan family in July, 1966. They are preserving the grace and beauty of the old home, and Mr. Dew says he has the original plans for the formal garden. He is a history buff, so---who knows?---someday pretty yellow

roses may again catch the dew in a formal garden at Tappan House.

After completing the Arkansas Central (Midland) Railroad, Major Tappan left engineering and took over the management of the Helena Gas Company. At the time, the company was \$8,000 in debt. Mr. Tappan reconstructed the gas-works, set the company in good working order, and built an ice house. This was the second ice plant in the South, according to old records. When Major Tappan severed relations with the Gas Company about 1879, the company was out of debt and had a cash balance of \$2,500.

In 1882, Major Tappan became representative for W. H. Brown & Co., a coal dealer of Pittsburg, Pa. Steamboats had changed over from wood to coal, and many business houses, as well as homes, were being heated with coal. Major Tappan had a contract with the Mississippi River steamboats and packets to refuel at Helena. At first, he sold only river-coal from barges. Later, he leased a part of what is now Ohio Street and river levee, and built a huge office building with loading platforms, so that he could unload the coal direct to his place.

Besides the river-coal, he sold coal to the city and surrounding towns. At one time, Mr. Tappan had several small boats, a barge he called the "Maggie T.", and about sixteen wagons and teams to handle coal locally. He also shipped coal by rail and boat to other towns, selling about 20,000 tons annually.

About the turn of the century, Major Tappan sent in his resignation as river-coal agent, but continued in the local coal business. In fact, the original Tappan Coal Company is, today, the oldest firm in Helena. It has been handled by three generations of the same family. Moore Tappan succeeded his father as owner of the business. He had to retire, due to ill health, and his son, another James A. Tappan, is now managing the firm. The office still has the fancy coal-burning fireplace (what else?), and the gingerbread trim of a bygone era. The present J. A. Tappan also has Tappan Abstract Co., Inc. That is where I found the items about the purchase of the land and the time of the house-building on Columbia Street.

Major Tappan was also a planter, managing his farm until his death. He raised mostly cotton and corn, as did other Phillips County farmers at that time. Another enterprise of this versatile man was a hardware store, which he opened in 1888. It was one of the largest hardware firms in Arkansas at that time. He operated this business, along with the coal company, for about ten years. At the time of his death he still had a huge interest in the hardware firm and owned stock in several other businesses.

When Helena voted money to pave the streets, a Street Commission was set up. Major Tappan was one of the three men chosen to handle money for this important city improvement.

In August, 1897, he was nominated to serve as one of three on the Board of Improvement of the Helena Improvement District No. 1. This District group had been formed to build and maintain a five-mile stretch of the river levee from Helena to the south. Major Tappan had to decline this honor, due to other obligations at the time.

In 1898, Major Tappan was one of the original incorporators of the Maple Hill Cemetery Association. The cemetery had formerly been called Evergreen Cemetery, but had gone bankrupt. So a new association was formed and a new name was chosen. The Major served on this Association for many years.

It was said of him, and I can believe it, that the Major was a man of prodigious energy, undoubted integrity, and fine administrative and executive ability, and most of the citizens of Helena must have believed it, too. On February 23, 1899, Major Tappan was nominated for Mayor of Helena on a petition signed by 244 of the city's prominent men. Mr. Tappan's reply, dated February 25, 1899, read:

It is unnecessary for me to say to my friends, who on yesterday, through the columns of the World, requested me to become a candidate for Mayor of the City of Helena, that I regard their call as the greatest compliment tendered me during my long residence in Helena. As you all know, I have no liking for things political, except to discharge my duty as a private citizen. My life has so far been practically spent with you, and whatever success has come to me I attribute more to the ready assistance and cooperation of the signers of that nomination than to any other cause. I felt it my duty to defer to your wishes, rather than consult my own inclinations. If I can, in your judgment, advance the interests of Helena and her citizens in the position of Mayor, and I am elected to that position, I shall strive to perform the duties of the office to the best of my ability. Again I say to you that I feel deeply sensible of the compliment paid me.

Very sincerely,
Jas. A. Tappan

There was no opposition, and the Major was elected to the office of Mayor on April 4, 1899. But, only one and one-half months after taking office, Mayor Tappan resigned. He was asked to reconsider his action, but he replied that he had considered the matter carefully before he handed in his resignation. He was asked to serve until his successor could be selected. This he consented to do. The Helena World of that date (June 8, 1899), has this to say in an editorial:

...the World sincerely regrets that he (Major Tappan) has found the duties of the office incompatible with his tastes and training. It will be remembered that Major Tappan accepted the call of his fellow citizens with reluctance, while he appreciated their

friendship and confidence, that he said he would resign if he found the duties too exacting and not to his taste. The World believes the Major would have been an excellent Mayor, his short tenure showing that he appreciated the responsibilities devolving upon him and that he determined to discharge his duty as he saw it. However, he has kept his word, as he always has done heretofore, and has acted honestly with his constituents by giving back into their hands the office they saw fit, against his protests, to burden him with. He will carry with him into his retirement the entire respect and confidence of his friends and neighbors who all regret the step he has taken, while recognizing his right to do so.

His resignation as Mayor did not mean that Major Tappan was not interested in the welfare and advancement of his beloved city. He just could not bear the confinement to an office, and the petty trifles, that are part of a Mayor's duties. He said, after writing his resignation, "I feel like a bird released from a cage." But he worked for the interests of Helena until his death.

In September, 1901, Major Tappan was offered the position of chief of artillery, with the rank of colonel, on the staff of Major General W. H. Haynes, Commander of the new Arkansas State Guards, which he reorganized and equipped under the proclamation of Governor Jeff Davis.

Four years before, in 1897, Major Tappan had fractured a leg and had been unable to ride a horse since that time; therefore, he felt forced to decline Major General Haynes' offer. A telegram, found in the old Tappan scrapbook, and addressed to L. Andrews, reads as follows:

10:52 A. M. September 24, 1901
Jim Tappan letter received. Urge him to be my chief of artillery regardless of broken leg. He shall have automobile if necessary.

(signed) W. H. Haynes

But the Major did not accept. As in everything else he did, he would not accept an honor unless he could live up to the responsibilities that went with it.

Whether the Major didn't believe in putting all of his eggs in one basket, or whether he just wanted to prove his trust in all four banks in Helena, is a question, but on a vacation trip to New York, in 1907, Major Tappan took several letters of introduction and credit, and from these we learn that he was a stockholder in the First National Bank (of Helena), one of the directors of the Interstate Banking and Trust Company, and that he had accounts of a sizeable amount in the Bank of Helena, and the Peoples Savings Bank and Trust Company.

With all of his energy and interests, Mr. Tappan did not

believe in all work, with no play. His hobbies were his flower garden, mentioned earlier, and fishing. He usually fished at Old Town Lake with a friend, Charles E. Toney, who operated a store and plantation at Old Town. The Major would return from a fishing trip with a twinkle in his eye, and energy enough to tackle anything that he thought was right.

James A. Tappan was an active member of St. John's Episcopal Church, the Knights of Pythias, and I. O. O. F. Lodges, and the Sam Corley Camp No. 641, United Confederate Veterans. He was a longtime member of the State Board of Arkansas Chapter, American Red Cross. It was said of him that when donations to the Red Cross calls for help from other states and countries were not sufficient, he, unassumingly, and without blowing of trumpets, made up the shortage.

Major Tappan was strong in his likes and dislikes, and positive in his opinions. He would not quibble over trifles, yet, he was always considerate of his opponent, and forgiving, almost to a fault.

Watson was an old Negro man who worked for Major Tappan at the coal yard, and Watson would get drunk in spite of himself. Drunkenness was something the Major could not tolerate. One Saturday night Watson came reeling in for his pay. He stood swaying, hat in hand, before the Major.

"Watson," said Major Tappan, "You're drunk again!"

"Y'ssuh, Majo' Tappan," and Watson hung his head.

"You know I've warned you, time and again, about getting drunk. I told you I'd have to fire you the next time, so I guess I'll have to let you go."

"Y'ssuh, that's right," said Watson. "I'll go, Majo' Tappan, but I still loves yo'."

And Monday morning Watson was back on the payroll!

Major Tappan had a terrific temper, which he succeeded in keeping under control, his courteous demeanor never left him, and he was always the gentleman. His friends said, "He was a character of many sides, all of them excellent. If he had any faults, they were merely human, and in no way detracted from his sterling worth."

He was an indulgent, yet, strict father. Instead of giving his children the things they wanted, but did not need, he hired them to work for him, paying them a fair wage, and letting them buy what they wanted with money they had earned.

For instance, when Moore was just a teenager he worked for his father; he wanted a bicycle, so the Major sold his son the bike, and, instead of taking the payments out of the boy's pay check each week, he paid Moore his week's salary and let Moore hand back the three dollars for the bicycle installment. Major Tappan's children did not become juvenile delinquents; they were too busy living.

One of the last acts of the public-spirited Major was in the form of a voluntary subscription of five thousand dollars

to an emergency bond, which was to secure the levee contractors of the Helena Improvement District from risk in carrying out their contract. Mr. Tappan was unable to leave his home but he could use the telephone.

"Put me down on that bond for five thousand dollars," he told the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners. "That levee has got to be fixed."

That was the key to Major Tappan's character---promptness in facing a situation, then taking action without delay.

James Alexander Tappan passed from this life at 6:30 P. M., March 6, 1914. The funeral service was held from the home and a notable incident of the day was the line of "Shanty-boaters," more than a block long, who came to pay their respects, and bear testimony to the many deeds of a kind and generous man who never boasted of what he did for needy humanity. Old or young, black or white, rich or poor, when friends became involved in trouble, Major Tappan came to their rescue with encouragement and, if need be, with money to relieve their distress.

Information for this biography was given me by Major Tappan's daughter, Bessie T. Jones (when I wrote the original article), from an old scrapbook of the Major's; and later, talks with James Tappan (the Major's grandson), Mrs. Moore Tappan and J. E. Dew; newspaper files in the Helena Library, Maple Hill Cemetery records, marriage and probate records in the Phillips County Courthouse, abstract records, and the March, 1969 issue of National Genealogical Society Quarterly lent to me by Mrs. T. E. Wooten.

REMEMBRANCES OF MISS HELENA--A PERSONAL ACCOUNT

by

Brigadier General Charles M. Young, Jr.
USAF (ret.)
Rogers, Arkansas

Miss Helena was an airplane - a warplane of WW II. She no longer exists except in my fondest memories. Like thousands of her sister planes she no doubt was relegated to a scrap heap. Or perhaps she crashed, or burned. Before her fighting career ended she boldly roamed the flak-laden skies over Nazi Germany inflicting great damage upon her enemies. Though she carried her share of battle scars she was exceptionally blessed by Lady Luck. And so was her pilot. I was her pilot.

Miss Helena was paid for by war bonds pledged by the people of Helena for the specific purpose of purchasing her. She cost about \$125 thousand, not much considering the job she did for her country. She was built by the Lockheed Aircraft Corp. of Burbank, California. Her engines were Allison V-1710s manufactured by GM. That number, V-1710, means that her engines' cylinders were arranged in a Vee--two rows of six cylinders each, with a total piston displacement of 1710 cubic inches per engine.

She was a P-38. That number means "pursuit number 38." Her kind was the 38th designed for the Army Air Corps. She took the title "pursuit" from her forefathers of WW I. It is now an extinct term in aviation circles; her progeny are currently called "fighters."

Miss Helena and her sister P-38s were the pride of the Air Corps when her kind first appeared in 1940 in the skies over America. She had more power than any airplane with only a one-man crew ever designed. To get the performance needed for her mission it was necessary to install not one but two huge engines into her airframe. This in turn led to a unique and unusual body configuration which set her aside from all other airplanes. She had two tails, one for each engine, leading the Germans to refer to her with respect but fear as the "fork-tailed devil."

Her engines were liquid cooled, were supercharged by turbines in the exhaust manifolds, and were the source of innumerable mechanical problems. Her innards consisted of more electrical wiring and plumbing than an average American home. She needed these things, along with much radio equipment and other accessories, to perform her mission.

Miss Helena was a late model of the P-38, the product of improvement and evolution from earlier models. Her appearance, however, was almost the same as the first P-38 to be made. Hidden within her were hundreds of new and improved parts to make her safer, more reliable, and above all a better performer.

In war it is performance against the enemy that counts, and Miss Helena and her kind did things to her foes that her designers never dreamed of. She was conceived as an interceptor with the ability to take off and climb rapidly and to destroy high-flying enemy bombers. She seldom performed this mission, for it was quickly discovered that she could perform a number of other missions better than planes built for specialized purposes. For instance, with only the pilot for her crew she could carry as large a bomb load as the B-25 or B-26, both of which required a ten-man crew. Hence she became a fighter-bomber.

She could shoot down enemy fighters along with the best of the air-superiority fighters of that day. Dick Bong shot down over thirty Japanese Zeros in her. Her gun arrangement in her nose gave her accurate fire for air-to-air combat as well as for strafing. In short, she was a lady of all purposes.

My personal P-38, Miss Helena, seldom caused undue mechanical troubles, but this cannot be said of her sister P-38s. Mechanics hated her complicated engines and superchargers. Pilots distrusted her engines, for an engine failure during the takeoff was almost invariably fatal. At first the engines got too hot in the South Pacific operations. Therefore her cooling arrangements were changed to suit tropical conditions. This resulted in them getting too cold in European skies. In either case many engines failed, often with an explosion.

The P-38 was a large airplane. When loaded it weighed more than the Douglas DC-3 airliners of that day full of passengers. At first she wouldn't "turn on a dime" as required in air-to-air combat, causing Lockheed to design and install maneuvering flaps and hydraulic control boosters. After these modifications she no longer "felt like a truck" to her pilot. Also, after these changes many Japanese Zeros and German Messerschmitts went down for tangling with her.

She had the best gun arrangement of any fighter on earth. In her nose were a 20mm cannon and four 50 caliber machine guns. They seemed never to jam or fail. They needed no synchronization with the engines for they fired outside of the propeller arcs. The guns were housed in a compartment large enough for a sizable amount of ammunition. It was a fine arrangement, as many Germans learned from Miss Helena.

I first flew Miss Helena on a combat mission in April, 1944. We flew from East Anglica, in England, where the heavy bombers were based. They were regularly making long-range attacks on Germany. I flew on several escort missions, escorting the heavies over Germany, while learning the essentials of leading formations in combat.

P-38 pilots usually found little excitement on escort missions unless Jerry² came up to intercept the bomber stream. In this case it was the mission of the P-38s to engage and destroy the German fighters. I flew ten escort missions and never saw Jerry. Hitler had already ceased trying to impede our bombing missions by this time, and had transferred his

fighter efforts elsewhere. The Nazis were using, instead of fighters, massive concentrations of large-caliber anti-aircraft guns with telling effectiveness against the bomber streams.

One word comes to mind when I recall German flak: murderous. I saw bombers explode in midair when they were struck by flak. I saw many of them go out of control and fall crazily to earth. I saw them collide during the agony of all control being shot away. Though I saw plenty of action while escorting, and was under fire thousands of times, I was continually disappointed that Jerry would not come aloft to give us a chance at him.

On my first mission over Europe, in the cockpit of Miss Helena, I was flying as wingman for the group leader. We rendezvoused with the bombers deep in France approaching the German Ruhr. About a thousand U. S. bombers were in the formation. When I first saw them from a distance - perhaps twenty miles - they looked like a huge swarm of bees. When it occurred to me that what I was seeing was the bomber stream of the U. S. Eighth Air Force I was suddenly filled with a feeling of pride and patriotism. It was the greatest sight of my young life.

But my prideful feelings were quickly and rudely ended when I saw and heard thousands of rounds of tracer³ ammunition being fired at my formation by the bombers. We had been mistaken for the enemy by the nervous gunners in the bombers, causing them to pour out their deadly lead and steel towards us. Fortunately we were out of their firing range.

My formation leader quickly transmitted the proper radio identification, bringing the fire to an end. I learned a lesson from this; never approach the bomber stream without properly identifying your formation. In war, everyone is touchy - everyone has an itchy finger on the trigger of his gun.

Later in April, 1944, I began leading my own group into combat. We had been designated a fighter-bomber group, which meant that we performed mostly bombing and strafing missions, not bomber escort. We used several techniques when attacking targets. One of these was dive bombing. Another was skip bombing, and still another was glide bombing. The latter required a special sight, a bombing and gun sight combined. Most pilots didn't like to use this sight for it was a bit complicated, and inaccurate unless its complications were understood. I practiced with the sight until I had mastered it. As a result my glide bombing accuracy was quite good.

In June, 1944, our forces invaded Normandy. At this time, perhaps in support of the invasion, some 2000 lb. bombs were delivered to my base. No fighter plane had ever before carried such large bombs into combat insofar as I know. One afternoon an urgent field order arrived directing us to destroy an important bridge, of masonry-arch construction, being used by the Germans against the beachhead. I ordered my ground crew

to load Miss Helena with two of the 2000# bombs. It was quite a load for her, and her tires flattened and bulged somewhat under the weight.

I decided I would destroy this target personally and single-handedly, using the huge 2000# bombs. It was a decision which in retrospect was unnecessary and quite foolish. Before leaving the ground I made the necessary computations and adjusted the sight for the most accurate bombing approach. I set the sight for the glide angle of 45 degrees, and for quite a low flying speed. However, realizing that I might fail to destroy the bridge I decided to lead a full squadron of P-38s to the target, each carrying a normal bomb load of two 1000# bombs. The pilots were instructed to destroy the bridge by dive bombing should I fail with my larger bombs.

During the takeoff I could feel that Miss Helena was a bit more reluctant to fly than usual, but otherwise she hardly reacted to her burdensome task. I led the formation to the bridge, then circled to assess the problems confronting my planned attack. Numerous craters around the bridge attested to the unsuccessful attacks already made by our bombers, probably earlier in the day.

When we arrived at the target the squadron circled above while I maneuvered into position for the glide-bomb run. I slowed my aircraft to the computed speed, set the bullseye of the sight on the span of the bridge and carefully started down the flight path to perform my destructive task. But the Germans had different ideas. They had fortified the bridge - naturally - and were generously firing at me with tracers. In fright I broke off the approach and turned away.

I then made a brief but decisive examination of my inner Self. I asked myself whether or not I had the stuff it takes to attack this bridge in this manner, under heavy fire, or whether I had taken on a task beyond my inner resources. I did not arrive at a conscious decision. For reasons that no man can explain I turned again toward the target, got the bridge lined up with the bullseye of my sight, and power-glided down to the precomputed level. Then I pressed the button on the control wheel which was the bomb-release switch.

Miss Helena lurched as the heavy load dropped away, and as she absorbed direct hits of enemy small arms fire. I pushed the throttles full forward begging her to exert every ounce of energy she was capable of delivering, then banked out of range of the German guns. I looked back to see the bridge broken into a thousand pieces and flying through the air amid smoke and debris. It was a beautiful sight. But Miss Helena was a wounded war bird. She limped through the sky rather slowly and ungracefully. Nevertheless, bless her, she took me home safely.

General Hoyt Vandenburg, later Chief of Staff of the Air Force, awarded me the Distinguished Flying Cross for this action and personally pinned it upon my chest. Miss Helena got

nothing more than a hasty repair job, returning to combat within a few days.

This particular mission remains vivid in my mind, for it was the occasion of the first prolonged fright I experienced in life. There were to be more frightening experiences ahead, but none caused me to experience the emotional reaction of this one. No description of how a man feels when he is afraid can be accurate. Fright of the kind I felt that day, both while attacking the target and while nursing an ailing airplane back to friendly ground, cannot be described. I knew that a crash or the forced use of my parachute would put me into German hands, a situation which probably would have spelled death, considering the temper of the battle. Or a crash could cause an agonizing death by burning, a horror I had witnessed several times.

I believe that this mission was the first one in which a P-38 carried a 4000# bomb load. Later in the war bomb loads were increased beyond those which my group carried normally, for it was learned that the plane had weight-carrying capabilities far beyond its design criteria. (It should be mentioned that all bomb loads on this airplane were external, being slung on pylons beneath the wings.)

Though I recall most of my missions vividly, the one I have described was the first one for which I was decorated, and the first one for me that was beyond mere routine battle action, if any battle can be called routine. After that mission I always felt that Miss Helena was something more than a machine - she was a part of me, and always will be.

I flew fifty missions in Miss Helena. She appeared over Berlin and most other German cities. She bombed and strafed every conceivable kind of target from parked airplanes to freight trains. Toward the end of my tour my group lost so many aircraft to battle damage that I had to share Miss Helena's services with other pilots. So long as I commanded the 367th Group she brought them all home safely. She absorbed several heavy loads of flak, but always one of her engines continued to function.

She flew, I estimate, about 100 times against the enemy. Toward the end she grew weary, but not nearly so weary as I did. On the day when I was ordered out of combat duty I went out to the parking ramp and said goodbye to my faithful - but prematurely aged - old lady. I was sad; I knew she was proud.

Several weeks later, at a rest hotel in England, I met a pilot from the 367th. I asked him about Miss Helena and how she was getting along without her old master. He turned away, not wishing to answer my questions. Something terrible, apparently, had befallen her. I did not press the matter. Later in the evening we drank a toast to her. That was the last time I have discussed Miss Helena - until this day.

Footnotes

¹"Tangling" meant engaging in aerial combat with enemy fighters. The war produced its own vernacular among pilots. I find it difficult to recall this period of my life without resorting to the language habitually used among fighter pilots at war.

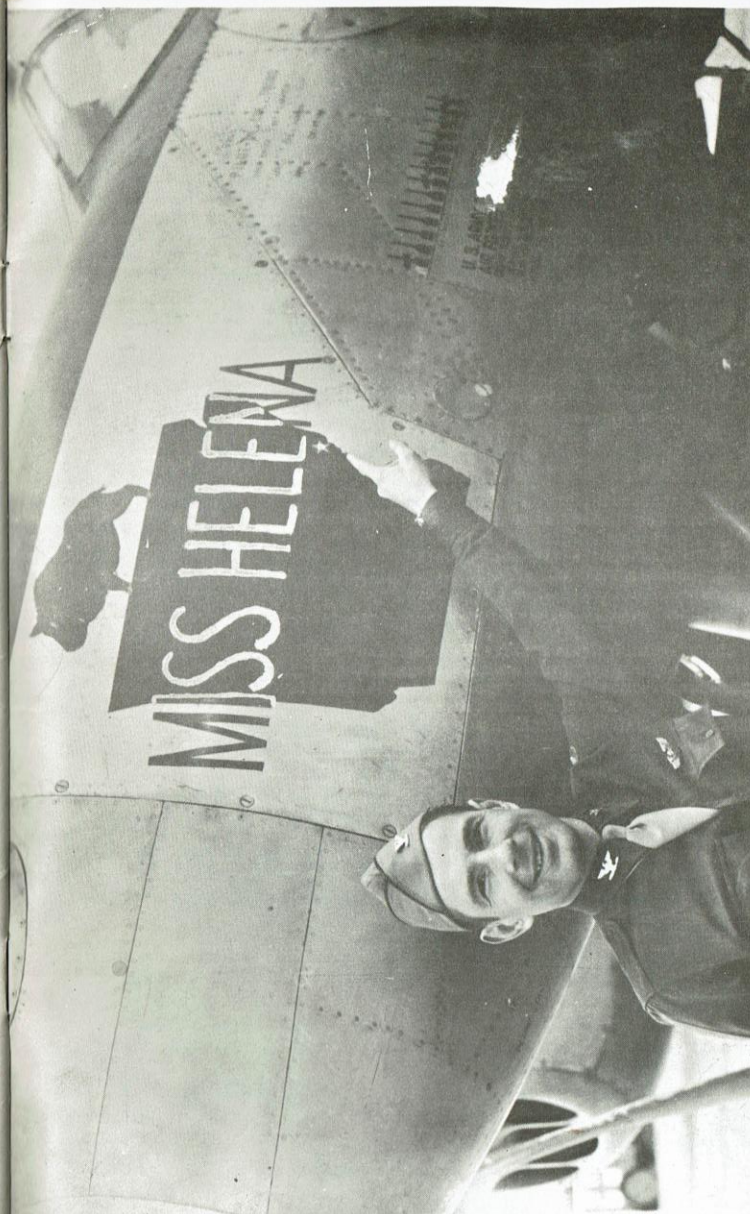
²"Jerry" means enemy fighters. Though it is a singular word its meaning could be either a single German fighter or many. Fighter pilots in the European theater habitually referred to German fighters as "Jerry," a respectful term though somewhat an odd admixture of hatred and camaraderie.

³Tracer ammunition has a burning chemical on the projectile which ignites as it is fired out of the gun barrel. This gives the gunner a visual pattern of fire. Tracers are usually mixed with regular ammunition, often on a ratio of 1:3. It is most unusual for a pilot to hear anything other than the noise of his engines and the airstream, except of course through his headphones. However, in the P-38 the engines were far enough removed from the cockpit that I actually could hear the massive fire pattern unloosed at the formation. This incident raised in my mind the question of how many friendly fighters were destroyed by our own gunners during the war.

Charles M. Young, Jr. is the son of the publisher of the Helena World. He graduated from West Point in 1938, went into the Army Air Corps, graduating from the Army Flying School in 1939. When World War II occurred he was promoted through the officer grades to Colonel. He organized, trained, and commanded the 367th Fighter-Bomber Group in California in 1943, and led it to the European Theater, flying out of England and France in 1944. He participated in the invasion of Normandy in June, 1944. He retired from the Air Force in 1963 after thirty years total service, in the grade of Brigadier General, and as a command pilot. His decorations include: two Distinguished Flying Crosses, the Bronze Star, eight Air Medals, the Commendation Medal, the French Croix de Guerre avec Palm, the Belgium Croix de Guerre avec Palm, and several service ribbons.

Legend for picture on following page:

At the time this picture was taken I had flown only fourteen missions, was still in England, and really hadn't suffered much fatigue yet. Our losses had been few - so far - and most of the original squadron commanders and flight leaders were still alive. Our airfield was called Stoney Cross - every spot in England has a name - and was on the king's land. Nottingham Forest was adjacent to the airfield.



PERSONALS

From Helena Weekly World, February 23, 1898

Mr. Andrew R. Govan came in from LaGrange and spent Saturday.

Hon. John B. Vineyard, of Marianna, was among the passengers on Saturday's incoming Mountain train.

Hon. John W. Keesee was in from Latour Saturday afternoon.

Rev. S. L. Rieves, of Clarendon, came in on today's Midland train, and is greeting his numerous Helena friends.

Messrs. Frank Garner, Louis Kahn, of Marvell; Alex Teb-elman, of Trenton; Charley E. Ferrell, of Poplar Grove, were among the passengers on today's incoming Midland train.

Squire Warren Holtzclaw, of Tyner, came in on the Mountain train yesterday, and is mingling with his friends.

Col. M. M. Carruth was in from Marvell spending yesterday. The Col. says campaign talk is beginning to warm up out his way.

Dr. M. L. Pearson, of Poplar Grove, was among the passengers coming to the city on today's Midland train.

Mr. and Mrs. Van Davidson came in from Marvell on today's Midland passenger train.

Mr. Nat Graves was in from Lexa yesterday afternoon.

Mr. J. T. Graves, one of the several candidates for County Assessor, was in Helena yesterday talking to the dear people.

Mrs. John T. Hicks, wife of Prosecuting Attorney Hicks, of Searcy, arrived yesterday afternoon, and is visiting Mrs. Lucy Binley, on Ohio and Miller streets.

Mrs. M. G. Petty, of Searcy, came in on the Mountain passenger train yesterday, and is the guest of her sister, Mrs. George S. Ellis on the highlands.

Miss Carrie Shuh, a very popular young lady of Marianna, after a charming visit to Miss Mary Fritzon in West Helena, left for Marianna via the Mountain train, yesterday afternoon.

March 2, 1898

Mr. Sam Jarman of Barton, spent today in the city.

Mr. H. R. Stirling of Barton was observed on our streets today.

Mr. Bert Hale, of Marvell, was among the visitors from this section to the Mardi Gras celebration at New Orleans. He is expected back today or tomorrow.

Messrs Walter and Jesse Bush, of Latour, are in the city today.