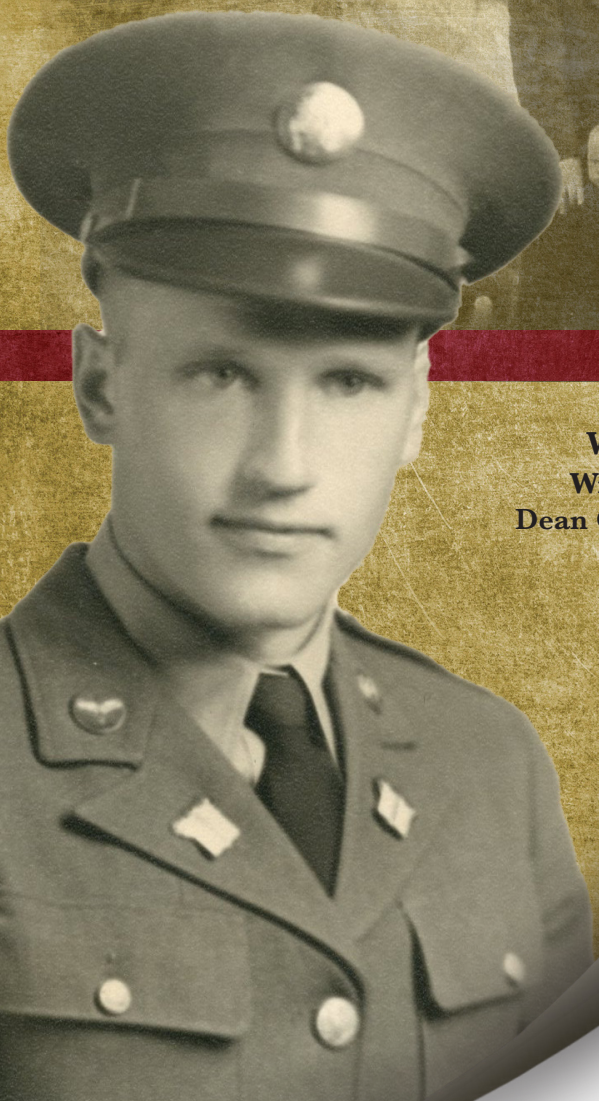


DeShazer

*Greatest story from the
greatest generation*



**Written by: Todd Cook,
With Input And Epilogue By:
Dean Cook, Chaplain, Captain, USN**



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**GREATEST STORY
OF THE
GREATEST GENERATION**

**By
Todd Cook**



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By Todd Cook

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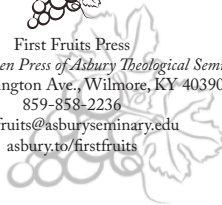
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INTRODUCTION

It's somewhat paradoxical that Jacob "Jake" DeShazer was never what you might call an "explosive" personality—neither in the sense of being hot tempered nor in the sense of possessing an impulsive, ultra-dynamic personality. Yet the story of Jacob DeShazer is undeniably explosive. When all is said and done, it's an *explosive* story of the miraculous—a story of how God parted the waters of war, hatred and conflict, and showed us the path of forgiveness and reconciliation. In the short term, however, the story literally begins with the *explosive*—as in violent, death-dealing explosions. These explosions so shook the world that they've been the subject of multiple cinematic treatments. If you're any kind of follower of Hollywood World War II movies, there's an excellent chance you're familiar with the 1970 flick, *Tora! Tora! Tora!* There's an even better chance you've seen the 2001 Jerry Bruckheimer and Michael Bay blockbuster, *Pearl Harbor*. So while we will indeed return to those epic cinematic productions, for now, we start with a scene—a real-life scene – that is hardly "explosive."

Our particular "movie" opens rather quietly, on a tranquil neighborhood street in Woodburn, Oregon. The year is 1964. A tall, 26 year-old local pastor (in actuality my father, E. Dean Cook) is walking the tree-lined sidewalks of this humble, working-class town in the company of a shorter, quite unimposing bespectacled man of middle-age. Dean Cook happens to be the pastor of Woodburn Free Methodist Church, a regular congregation of around 100 parishioners or so. Naturally, Sunday is a big deal in the Cook household,

especially with Dad being a pastor. However, that Sunday evening is going to be a bigger deal than usual. There will be a special guest preacher in the pulpit. A speaker who has recently returned from being a full-time missionary in Asia. The name of this speaker is Jacob “Jake” DeShazer.

Like our family, the DeShazers are Free Methodists. What’s more, as the Free Methodist Church (a branch that broke off from the Methodist Episcopal Church in the 1860’s) is rather small as church denominations go, the Free Methodist faithful tend to know each other, even on a national and international scale! They speak in each other’s churches, exchange news in church letters and bulletins, catch up with each other at church conferences. Consequently, Jake DeShazer is already an acquaintance of Dean’s extended family. Dean’s wife, Ruth, is the daughter of long-time Free Methodist pastor Edward Smiley, and the Ed Smiley family has been acquainted with Jake and his family for some time now. In short, it was hardly a miraculous chance encounter that led to Jake DeShazer meeting Pastor Dean Cook and agreeing to speak at his Woodburn Free Methodist Church. What *may* have been a bit more providential, is that Dean would be assigned a Free Methodist pastorate so close to Salem, Oregon during the years the DeShazers were taking their stateside missionary sabbatical.

But back to our Woodburn neighborhood scene: Dad (Pastor Dean Cook) is determined to get the word out to the community about his special guest preacher for the upcoming evening service. In fact, since Jake and family have already arrived at the parsonage, Dad thought it would be a great idea for Jake to come along and help promote his pulpit appearance! There is no social media in 1964, neither is there the technology to create eye-catching, graphics-heavy videos to promote Jake’s speaking engagement to the church, weeks in advance! In short, Dean is determined to get the word out the old-fashioned way:

by going door to door that afternoon. But when you've got a product this good, you've got to take it directly to the people!

Though Jake has graciously agreed to go out with Pastor Dean on his door-to-door calling walk, 52 year-old Jake is hardly a dazzling self-promoter. Even in his more daring, somewhat rebellious youthful days, Jake was typically a guy who shunned the limelight, was more apt to be self-effacing than a big talker. Dad, on the other hand, is a good deal younger—more brash and extroverted, personality traits recently groomed from his recent stints as a young sailor and air-crew navigator in the Navy.

They arrive at their first house. Dad knocks on the door.

A man opens the door and cautiously peers out. The puzzled-looking man maintains his position in the doorway, gazing out at Dean and Jake with the suspicion of a man who just knows he's about to be hit with a life insurance sales pitch. Dean assures the man that this is no sales call—at least not the kind that involves money. Dean proudly motions to Jake and says, “Let me introduce this man to you. He has a story you have just got to hear!”

With that, as Jake stands shyly off to the side, Dean recounts everything you are going to read about in the following chapters of this book—or at least *tries* to squeeze it all into a condensed sixty-second pitch! Finally drawing his story to a close, Pastor Dean concludes with: “Can I count on seeing you and your family tonight?” This is said with the confidence of one who knows they will not be refused.

However, the home-owner's response to this enthusiastic pitch is to slowly move back inside his house and gently close the door, without a word... Dean's jaw drops. After a story like

that how could he have been refused?! Jake simply smiles and chuckles softly.

“Don’t worry about it, Dean,” says Jake. “It’s happened before. Not everyone is anxious to go hear a missionary speak.”

Now cut to a scene from the 1970 mega-budget movie, *Tora! Tora! Tora!* It is pre-dawn aboard a Japanese aircraft carrier out in the Pacific. The date is December 7, 1941. It is just before dawn. Several bomber planes are ready to take off from the carrier. But just before the commander of the flight climbs into his aircraft, he is approached by a junior officer. The officer bows and hands the Commander a good luck scarf—white with the Japanese symbol of the Red Sun emblazoned on it. The respected leader smiles, a vaguely wicked smile mixed with undeniable confidence and bravado. The pilot ties the scarf tightly about the top of his head. Then, still with that determined smile on his face, he climbs into his aircraft and from that vantage point, observes the warriors under his command as they take off, one by one, from the carrier deck. Finally, he closes the hatch and his plane starts to scream down the flight deck. The nose gradually starts to lift. Finally, the plane sails into the clear morning skies to the cheers of carrier’s deck crew.

Cut to a *second* movie clip: This one from the 2001 flick, *Pearl Harbor*. This scene is actually quite similar to the previously-mentioned scene—only this time, the action takes place on an American carrier in April of 1942 and led by daring squadron commander, Lt. Colonel Jimmy Doolittle. Sixteen American B-25 bombers take off, one by one, from the crowded flight deck of the carrier, *U.S.S. Hornet*. Each plane takes off to the cheers of the U.S. crew watching from the cat walk of the ship flight deck. Just before the scene fades, four U.S. B-25 bombers have successfully cleared the flight deck and are zooming toward the

Japanese mainland. Keep an eye out for the very last plane up in the air, tailing just behind the others. That's Jake's plane—the last of the sixteen bombers to take off. Jake, like the other 80 Raider crewmen manning those planes, knows full well he will not be returning to the *Hornet*. The *Hornet* in fact, is even at that moment starting to turn around and head back east! The Doolittle bombers, on the other hand, are zooming towards the Japanese mainland with barely enough fuel to execute their mission, after which they will *hopefully* land somewhere in American-friendly Chinese territory.

Stepping out of the world of movie clips now, we can only imagine what is going through the mind of Jacob “Jake” DeShazer on that fateful day in April of 1942. *Many* things, no doubt. Focus on the mission, of course, is at the forefront of his mind. Still, Jake cannot possibly envision what the future has in store for him. Or more to the point, what God has in store for him, starting with this raid mission! How can Jake DeShazer—in even his wildest imaginings—project that, in a very real sense, he will not be making his final return home from Japan until 1978! God usually doesn't tell us exactly what our future holds for good reason: at certain points in our lives we simply cannot handle the truth! But now we're getting a bit ahead of the story.

The story of Jacob “Jake” DeShazer has been told before, particularly in the late 1940's to early 1950's when it was the subject of a flurry of secular human interest articles, Christian publications, even a TV movie! The time has come, however, for a new generation to discover the significance of this impactful story.

But here's the thing: Though his story is indeed worthy of multiple retellings, the fact is, the Jacob DeShazer story has been told before. In fact, I can add little to the core story of Jake

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DeShazer that has not already been covered in previous books (*though*, our family has several interesting connections to the Jake DeShazer story and these will be mentioned throughout the book). Why then am I so excited to pursue this project? Because there have been new developments—developments that stretch *beyond* the story of Jake DeShazer, yet provide a new and illuminating framework to the miraculous story of Jake DeShazer! The story has widened into something bigger, deeper, richer. In other words, the “simple” story of a POW war hero who answered the call to forgive and preach the gospel, may not have come about had God not spoken to the heart, and moved throughout the corridors of America’s most powerful movers and shakers of the World War II period. Granted, I am not providing specifics at this juncture, but, hopefully, all will be made clear in the coming chapters of this book. In short, while this work is primarily the story of one Jacob “Jake” DeShazer, the story has widened to include other important people of the World War II Pacific conflict—and added to them, a supporting cast of thousands. What I hope to demonstrate through all of this, is how God, even amidst the pain, mayhem, and violence of the Pacific conflict, was all the while moving the chess pieces to advance the cause of the gospel of Christ, the message of love and forgiveness.

Again, to be clear, this is not meant to be the definitive work on Jacob DeShazer. Other books illuminate DeShazer’s life, his World War II experiences, his missionary work, in greater depth. Recent examples would be *Return of the Raider*, (published in 2010) by Donald M. Goldstein and Jacob’s daughter, Carol Aiko DeShazer Dixon; *Forgive Your Enemies* by Janet and Geoff Benje came out a year earlier, in 2009. Other works on Jake came out in the 1950’s.

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As for the primary subject of this work, it is not enough to merely say that the life of Jake DeShazer (who died in 2008

at the age of 95) was extraordinary. The story of Jake DeShazer is quite possibly the most incredible story to come out of World War II. No writer should make that claim lightly. Indeed, some of the most amazing stories from the 20th century come out of that 1939 to 1945 worldwide conflict. But trust me, you haven't heard a "war" story like this one.



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CHAPTER 1

Christmas Eve at Pearl Harbor, 1986

There's nothing like Christmas Eve at Pearl Harbor. Not because Pearl Harbor is the most Christmas-y atmosphere one can experience on that blessed night of December 24, it's just that Christmas Eve at Pearl Harbor is just so ... different. Especially the way our family spent that Christmas Eve of 1986.

For those of you wholly unfamiliar with the name and place, Pearl Harbor is one of the handful of places in the United States associated with a very specific month, day, and year. Most of you know it: December 7, 1941. Pearl Harbor is also one of a handful of places in the United States associated with the warrior's cry of "Remember Pearl Harbor!" as well as one of history's most quoted phrases: "... A day that will live in infamy." As it was back in 1941, Pearl Harbor is still the command center of the United States Pacific Fleet. As for the actual location of Pearl Harbor, that would be the Hawaiian Islands, specifically on the island of Oahu.

I was home on Thanksgiving/Christmas break from college visiting my family who lived in Honolulu. At the time my father, Dean Cook, was assigned to the position of Pearl Harbor Naval Base and Naval Station Senior Chaplain. This meant that multiple church services—those which took place on Sundays or those which took place on *any* day—were under his jurisdiction. This also meant that on Christmas Eve of

1986, my father attended at least three different Christmas Eve services.

I attended two of those Christmas Eve services, the first of which took place at the newly-named Pearl Harbor Memorial Chapel, the main base chapel which was located right across the street from the ship's pier. When that candlelight service had ended, our family—Dad, Mom, two of my brothers and I—walked across the street to board a tarp-covered, open-sided Naval passenger vessel operated by a uniformed cockswain. Our destination: Ford Island. That is where we would attend our second Christmas Eve service.

Ford Island, for those of you not familiar with the Pearl Harbor Naval Base, is an island within an island. It's located on the island of Oahu, one of the seven main Hawaiian Islands. At the westward side of Oahu is Pearl Harbor, which hosts a large United States Naval Base. Within the water confines of Pearl Harbor is Ford Island. There's a large likelihood you are somewhat familiar with Ford Island, even if you've never been to Hawaii. But that's getting a little ahead of my story.

The boat ride across the darkened harbor waters took approximately fifteen minutes—not exactly a quick hop and skip. At any rate, we finally arrived at the Ford Island landing and proceeded from there to the “chapel” where the next Christmas Eve service was to take place. Only there was no church building. There was an old three-story Naval building, dating back to the 1930's, that served as part of the control tower complex for the small airfield and sea plane ramp. During World War II, the first floor had been where pilots would file their flight plans, which included weather charts and where they would be flying. On the second floor of that building was a large open room where once the meteorology or weather offices were located. In 1986, however, the space had been cleared out to function as

a make-shift chapel. In fact, it was my father and two chaplain subordinates, Chaplain Hansen and Chaplain Peters, who all worked to clear out that room so that it could serve as a chapel. I remember it as a low-ceiling room, walls painted an archaic blue-green color, steam pipes that crisscrossed overhead, with about fifty metal folding chairs set up on the open floor space. Some colorful chapel banners hung on the walls and a small wooden pulpit stood up front.

Chaplain Hansen, whom my father had assigned as Ford Island chaplain, was there to greet us as we had arrived a bit early that Christmas Eve. Most people would be surprised to know that the friendly, gentle-mannered Chaplain Hansen happened to be brother-in-law to one of rock's most notorious bad-boy legends: Rolling Stones guitarist, Keith Richards. An interesting pop culture footnote to be sure—especially for rock enthusiasts-- but also somewhat fitting. Keith Richards helped pen, as well as contributed classic slash-and-burn guitar riffs, to the rock classic, *Gimmie Shelter*. This track has often served as background music or to set the mood for, scenes of war and carnage. More on that later.

The service was pleasant enough, as Christmas Eve services are wont to be. Still, there was one notable interruption. Somewhere near the end of the candle-lighting service—I believe when the small gathering was sitting silently with candles lit—a rather jarring noise came wafting up through the opened windows (remember, Hawaii is humid year-round!) from the darkness outside. It was the sound of Christmas songs being sung, though these were hardly the sounds of an angelic choir; a choir of inebriated sailors was more like it. Later, Dad admitted that he thought about excusing himself to go outside and ask the men to be more respectfully quiet. But then, he thought, what night should one be singing Christmas songs if not on Christmas Eve!

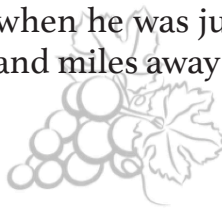
But I have another memory of that night, one that made a strong visual impression. As earlier noted, that aged military building where the Ford Island Chapel was housed, happened to be the utility building for the old, iconic Ford Island Control Tower. In my memory I can still see it: The faded red-and-white painted tower looming over our Ford Island “Chapel” building, standing tall against the Pacific night sky like a proud, silent sentinel. Back in 1986, that control tower (unlike today) had not been given a fresh coat of paint and restored as a historic site for tourists. On Christmas Eve of 1986, the tower was dark, seemingly long since abandoned. In truth, it was still in use, but only when a local flying club made use of it for its activities. That December night, it seemed as if that tower yearned to speak- that it had tales to tell of the historic, yet terrible sights it had witnessed forty-five Decembers earlier. Part of that story was visible on the fading, rusting red and white-painted metal exterior: a swath of bullet holes running up and down the length of the tower. No, those bullet holes were not the handiwork of some psychotic serviceman who’d gone berserk with an M-16 rifle. Those violent strafing marks came courtesy of low-flying Japanese fighter planes.

All this brings me to the subject of Ford Island itself. On that night of December 24, 1986, Ford Island was (with the exception of those soused carol singers) a quiet, peaceful slice of Oahu—likely one of the most quiet and peaceful spots on this side of the island of Oahu. The island boasted several medium-sized towns, military bases and the ever-bustling tourist city of Honolulu. But 45 years earlier, on the morning of December 7 1941, this little island within an island ... was the center of Hell.

If on that Christmas Eve I had suddenly been transported 45 years and 17 days back in time, the very spot on which I stood would be engorged in fuel-fed fire, black smoke and body-jarring bomb explosions. The cement ground around my feet

would be splattered with enemy warplane gunfire, pouring down like lethal hail pellets. There would be loud, frantic cries to take cover, to man the airplanes, to reach artillery stations. Mingled with those shouts of urgency and terror would be the anguished cries of men who had been shot, burned, and whose limbs had just been blown off; sailors aboard ships who just minutes before were sleeping in their bunks but were awakened by explosions, General Quarters calling them to battle. There would be the nightmarish sounds of men in their death throes—most of them young men. If I had been transported back in time *and* had remained visible to the attacking Japanese war planes, I can only guess how many seconds it would take for me to be shot or blown up into eternity. Indeed, if you’ve ever watched the 2001 movie, *Pearl Harbor*, just know that virtually all the scenes you saw of the December 7 carnage took place on or just off of Ford Island.

Jacob DeShazer wasn’t at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, however, he was serving in the Army at the time. Still, he hears of the unreal attack on U.S. soil from afar: via word of mouth, via the radio, via newspapers. In fact, he was peeling potatoes when the news came to him for the first time. But the life and legacy of Jacob DeShazer—who more often was called by his preferred name of “Jake”—would forever be linked to Pearl Harbor in ways he could not possibly have imagined on December 7, 1941, a day when he was just another G.I. peeling potatoes some six-thousand miles away in South Carolina.



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CHAPTER 2

Jake Before the Raid

This book is not going to be a psychoanalytic study of Jacob DeShazer, though this first paragraph may make it seem that way. Jacob DeShazer would land firmly on the INTP category of the Myer-Briggs Personality Indicator. INTP individuals are thinkers, they are quiet, analytical, they can enjoy interacting with small groups of people but they also enjoy times of solitude. Other traits of the INTP are that they like to think of solutions to problems and have a rich inner world. The INTP is not overly emotional—in fact, it may be hard for them to reveal emotions. They do not easily express themselves. The INTP is prone to be logical, objective, and flexible. One might surmise from all of the above traits, that INTP's tend to be shrinking violets. On a social level, perhaps. On a meeting-life-challenges level? Not so! The INTP tends to actually be quite adventurous! And as you go on to read about the life of Jacob DeShazer, all of the above traits may well present themselves quite clearly—and indeed, may well have helped him survive the trauma he would go on to face! But that comes later. For now, we'll start at the beginning.

It would appear the parents of Jacob DeShazer took two particular Bible verses to heart, the first being from the book of Proverbs: “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6). The second,

from the book of Joshua, is even more direct: “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15).

To say that Jake grew up in a Christian household would be an understatement. The family didn’t just say prayers at every meal, they knelt down at their chairs and in this position of reverence and humility, thanked the Lord for His bounty. In addition, family Bible readings and devotionals were a daily part of life. It hardly goes without saying that the entire family would attend Sunday services as well as Sunday School without fail. As for their denomination of choice, the DeShazers were devoted members of the local Free Methodist church.

Jacob “Jake” DeShazer was born in Salem, Oregon in the year of 1912, but he primarily spent his growing-up years in the vicinity of Madras, Oregon, a small town in north-central Oregon. Jake never knew his natural father—he died when Jake was only two years old. By the time Jake was five, his mother, Hulda DeShazer, had remarried. His name was Hiram Andrus and he was a devout Christian, as was Hulda. It was Hiram who set the tone for his now much-expanded family to daily and faithfully serve the Lord. Granted, the Andrus family was an early 1900’s version of *The Brady Bunch*, as Hiram and Hulda each found themselves step-parents to a whole new set of step-children. That is to say, young Jake now found himself the seventh of nine siblings, half of whom were step-siblings.

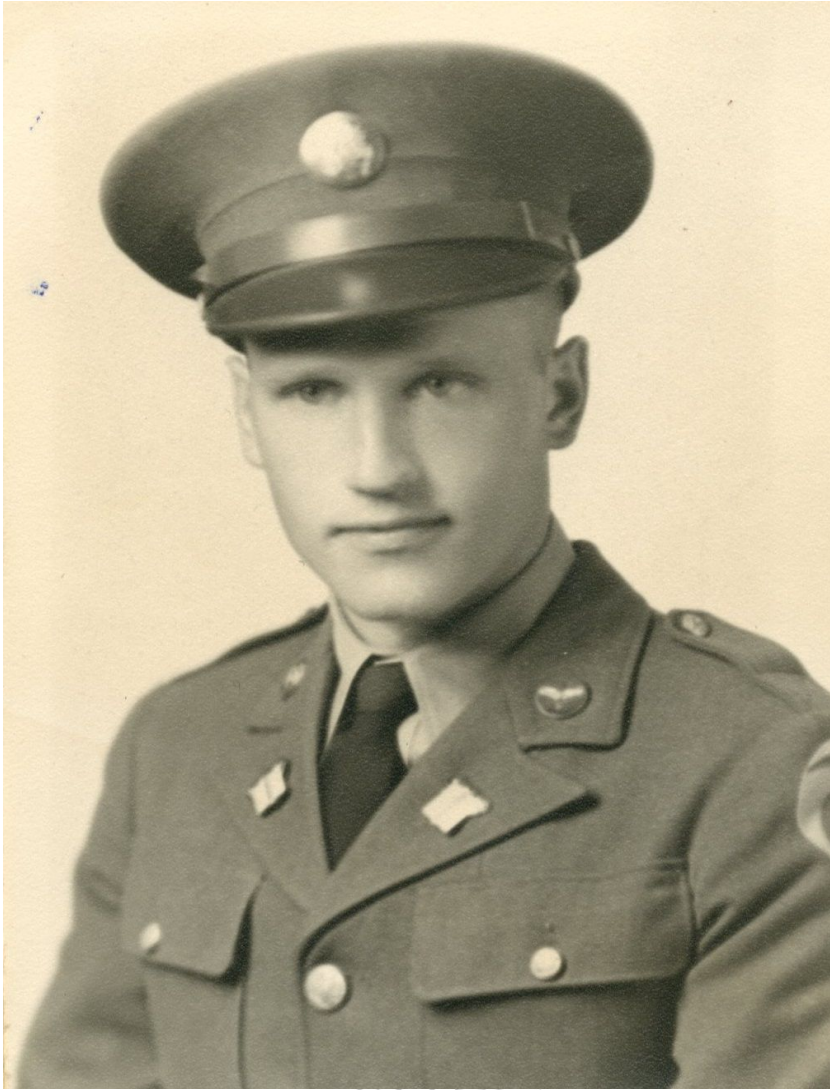
Jake loved his mother and step-father but he was not enamored with life in a strict Christian household. Like so many other young people who grow up in such environments, he rebelled. Not that he became a young hoodlum, but he bristled at the constant prayers and family devotions. What’s more, young Jake had soured considerably on Sunday School and church.

By the time Jake had reached his teenage years, he was still regularly attending church, but much to the embarrassment and displeasure of his parents, Jake would often bound out of the church sanctuary the moment the benediction was pronounced—there was baseball to be played with his buddies! Outside of church, Jake had developed the habit of smoking and occasionally skipping school. Then there was the humiliating episode where teenage Jake stole a local gentleman's suitcase, an act which was somehow discovered by his mother and step-father. Jake was compelled--- after first submitting to a significant time of prayer and confession with his parents—to not only return the suitcase, but to provide restitution.

Clearly, Jake welcomed his independence after coming of age. Initially, he tried turkey farming on a property not far from Salem. However, that particular line of work provided little in the way of monetary profit, nor did it provide much in the way of adventure and excitement. So Jake had another idea. He was good with tools. He enjoyed working on engines. Maybe there was an opportunity for him in the military.

Military Life

In 1940, Jake joined the Army Air Corps. He had long been fascinated with airplanes, and actually had a desire to be a pilot himself; thus he gravitated to this particular branch of the service. At 27 years of age, however, Jake was older than the typical young pilot and thought by his superiors to be too old to apply for pilot training. So instead, a somewhat disappointed Jake was sent to the Boeing School of Aeronautics in Oakland, California, to train as a plane mechanic. After that, he was stationed at McCord Field near Tacoma, Washington, where he received additional training as a B-25 bombardier. Now, at least, he could fly in the planes as a crewman.



**Official portrait of Jacob Jake DeShazer
from the 1940s.
(Courtesy of Seattle Pacific University
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Jake distinguished himself both as a mechanic and a bombardier. His superiors were clearly impressed with his abilities (as we shall soon see). Though Jake was no doubt eager to reach the rank of Sergeant, life in the Army Air Corps was clearly more exciting and satisfying than life on the Oregon farm. As far as life off-base, Jake's experience was not drastically different from that of other servicemen. As Jake himself would later remember: "I had been living the kind of life that most of the enlisted men lived. I would associate with certain fellows and we would go to dances and drinking places to pass away our spare time."

Then, one day, Jake's life --and world view--changed forever. Drastically. Suffice it to say, the events of December 7, 1941, changed the lives of *many* people! Jake was not doing anything daring or heroic when he first heard the news of Pearl Harbor—he was, as we have said, peeling potatoes while on K.P. duty at an air base in Columbia, South Carolina. Like most Americans, Jake reacted angrily upon hearing the news. Also, like most American servicemen, Jake yearned for the chance to somehow strike back—to inflict similar pain on Japan. The Japanese had attacked his homeland, killing more than 2,000 Americans, almost all of them young servicemen like himself. Jake would soon get his opportunity for revenge.

Jake Was Called to the Office

"The Captain wants to see you-- on the double!" he was told.

It was February of 1942, and this order was about to change Jake DeShazer's life. Upon hearing that the Captain wanted to see him, Jake didn't think, *All right! This is it! It's action time!* Instead, Jake's first hunch was that he was about to get

chewed out for some act of negligence—maybe a couple of bolts hadn't been properly secured.

Obedying orders, Jake went to the appointed building and found several other airmen waiting also. No one knew what was up. Then, the Captain appeared and made a startling announcement to the airmen: "You may be wondering why you've been called here today. If you're standing in this room it means you've distinguished yourself enough for your superiors to recommend you." Then came the most startling announcement: "An important mission is in the works. This mission is highly classified and will also be highly dangerous. I need volunteers."

At first the gathered men reacted the way anyone would: momentarily dumbfounded and waiting for more information. Information that wouldn't be coming. Not that a couple of airmen didn't try: "Sir, could you tell us approximately when this mission will take place?"

Another of the airmen chimed in: "Or ... where?"

The Captain repeated the refrain that the mission was highly classified, that it was extremely dangerous and that was all he could say about it for the time being. Then, he repeated his request for volunteers.

Despite the vague but ominous scenario placed before them, it didn't take long—nor did it take a lot of arm twisting. Especially after one of the young airmen spoke up and said, "Fellas, it's war. It's *all* going to be dangerous!" That's all it took. Every man in the room raised his hand to volunteer, including Jake DeShazer. Though the Captain had not divulged a single detail about the proposed mission, the airmen could only presume it had something to do with payback to Japan.

It soon became apparent that this would indeed be some kind of drastic strike mission, one utilizing sixteen B-25 Mitchell Bombers. Each B-25 carried a five-man crew: a pilot, a co-pilot, a navigator, a bombardier, and an engineer-gunner. Jake was assigned as bombardier to aircraft # 40-2268, or, as the crewmen had unofficially dubbed the plane, the “Bat Out Of Hell.” All 79 crewmen of the sixteen B-25 bombers planes would be under the command of notorious veteran flyer, Lt. Colonel James Doolittle.

In addition to Jake, also assigned to aircraft # 40-2268, were the following crewmen: There was the first pilot, First Lt. William “Bill” Glover Farrow, a tall religious-minded young man from the Carolinas. Serving as co-pilot was Lt. Robert Hite, a big-boned Texan. The navigator was Lt. George Barr, a tall red-head from Brooklyn, New York. The youngest of the crew was engineer-gunner, Sgt. Harold Spatz, who hailed from a small town in Kansas. Jake would get to know these four airmen intimately over the coming months and years, especially Lt. Robert Hite (Jake called him “Bobby”) with whom he bonded for life.

The B-25 crews trained exhaustively over the next several weeks for this covert mission, though it was not known exactly what their mission was to be or where it would take place. What was clear from their training was that they would be required to take off on a very short runway! Normally, at least 700 feet of runway would be optimum for safe takeoff. Jake and his fellow crewmen had to repeatedly practice taking off within 500 feet!

Another peculiar aspect of their training was that they were to practice—and master—flying low. *Very* low. As in just a bit higher than a fence post, low! Though the crewmen of those sixteen B-25’s must have wondered why they would be required to fly so close to the ground, they were also well aware that the



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**Official photo of Doolittle Raider Plane # 16 (“Bat Out of Hell”) and crew.
Left to Right: Navigator, Lt. George Barr; Pilot Lt. William Farrow; Engineer Gunner Sgt.
Harold Spatz; Lt. Robert Hite; Bombadier Cpl. Jake DeShazer.
(Courtesy of Seattle Pacific University Archives. Used with Permission.)**

Japanese fighter planes which swooped down on Pearl Harbor also flew at insanely low altitudes.

Finally, in the spring of 1942, the order came. All sixteen B-25 bombers were ordered to fly from their Florida training base to Alameda, California. There, they would land at the Alameda Naval Air Station in preparation for their actual mission. And the nature of that dangerous mission? They *still* didn't know! Nevertheless, Jake, along with the other air crewmen, climbed in their B-25's and took off for the West Coast. And, following their senior superior officer's admonition to continue practicing their low-fly skills, they cruised over the plains of Texas and New Mexico often at altitudes between ten and twenty feet! Years later, Jake could still recall the sight of the wild buffalo and cattle scattering before them "with their tails in the air."



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CHAPTER 3

The Enemy: Formation of a Leader

For the time being we'll just call him, Mitsuo. He grew up in Japan and from boyhood, he fostered fervent dreams of one day becoming a great Navy Admiral. However, while we will temporarily simply refer to him as Mitsuo, to Jake DeShazer, he would one day simply be “The Enemy” (hence the heading of this chapter). All that will come later, but for now, on with our story.

Mitsuo was born December 3, 1902 (the year of the Tiger) and spent his boyhood years in Nagao Village, a largely farming community in an agricultural region of Japan. Young Mitsuo probably inherited his military aspirations from his father, who as a young man was prepared to enter the military academy at Ichigaya. Just prior to his entering the academy, a baseball injury permanently ended any hopes Mitsuo's father might have harbored for a military career—so instead, Mitsuo's father became a school principal.

Mitsuo's mother boasted an even more illustrious military background: her father (Mitsuo's grandfather) was a highly-respected samurai of Nara Prefecture. During Japan's Imperial Civil War, Mitsuo's grandfather had fought in the defense of a castle, but when Emperor Meiji's forces prevailed, this fierce samurai warrior was forced into hiding. He left his daughter (Mitsuo's mother) with a prominent local merchant family, but due to her father's obvious credentials, Mitsuo's

mother was raised up in the ceremonial culture and traditions of the samurai class. Her adoptive family, as well as the villagers in the community where she was raised, were constantly mindful of her samurai chieftain bloodline.

Even though little Mitsuo was not raised to be a samurai, his mother would not have her son growing up with the manners of a commoner—therefore she would not tolerate any discourtesy from the boy. He was raised to be respectful and he was raised to be educated. Mitsuo’s father noticed that the boy did not seem to have any religious inclinations, so he tried to guide his son in a spiritual direction by having him study Buddhist scriptures. Young Mitsuo obediently memorized the written tenets of Buddhism, though there is little evidence that he reflected deeply upon these lessons, or that they resulted in any significant spiritual growth. Mitsuo was far more fond of outdoor activities such as gardening and hunting. He most enjoyed such activities when following along with his father.

As for his school studies, Mitsuo was a good student, but he was not an active participant in class. He was shy, lacking confidence to speak up. In fact, when called upon by the teacher to answer a question, his classmates would be amused at the extent to which Mitsuo would blush with embarrassment. So it’s paradoxical that young Mitsuo stood out from his peers in one unexpected area. Author/historian Gordon E. Prange writes: “Yet this thin, shy schoolboy had something that kings might envy, no money could buy, and no education could inculcate. His lucky tiger had given him the most unexpected of qualities, leadership.”¹ When Mitsuo and his fellow classmates would go out hunting hares, or when they would stage mock battles (much the way American boys would play “war”), it was inevitable that Mitsuo would be chosen leader.

Though Mitsuo's father encouraged his son to aim for a military career, young Mitsuo was so pale, so skinny, there seemed to be little hope of this. Even though Mitsuo's father did not believe the boy was physically up to the task of a military vocation, Mitsuo himself never wavered from his dream of entering the military. As it turned out, Mitsuo's natural-born determination was perhaps an even stronger personality characteristic than his leadership traits.

When Mitsuo was 15 years old, he visited the Ise Peninsula. This visit forever changed his life. Mitsuo constantly basked in wonder at the powerful presence of the ocean, which seemed to surround him on every side. Other than the awesome ever-present sea, however, another sight made a grand impression on Mitsuo: that of the Naval Academy cadets in his swimming class. Seeing how smart they looked in their pressed uniforms only made Mitsuo more determined to one day be like them. He resolved to enter the Academy himself, thus, he now clearly knew what path of military service he wanted to pursue. Now awakened to the truth that Japan was truly a *nation* of the sea, Mitsuo knew that he would become part of the Imperial Navy.

Though his will, desire, and determination were strong, young Mitsuo was still a slightly-built teenager, even despite his swimming prowess. In 1918 he traveled to Osaka to qualify for the Naval Academy. But he didn't pass his physical—too skinny! Briefly he thought he would try another route to a career at sea: he took the written exam for the Merchant Marine School at Kobe. He passed. Still, he could not bring himself to be satisfied with a Merchant Marine career, so the following May, Mitsuo returned to Osaka to try once again to qualify for the Naval Academy. This time he passed the physical... but he flunked the written exam! At this point, many young men would take this as a sign that they should pursue another career, but a year later Mitsuo returned yet again, and this time he passed the

written exam. That August, Mitsuo entered the Naval Academy at Eta Jima.

Life and studies at the Academy were eventful for Mitsuo. He met a classmate who would become a lifelong friend and shipmate. He excelled at math but also studied English: even at this early date, Mitsuo believed that the greatest threat to Japan's sea supremacy was the United States Navy. He maintained a position in the top 25 of his class *and* ... he became a champion swimmer. Still, it was one particular class session that forever changed his life.

“Is there any cadet here who aspires to be a flying officer?”

The question was put to Mitsuo's class of cadets by their 2nd Lieutenant instructor at a training exercise by the water. Immediately, Mitsuo's hand shot up. This may sound surprising given how reluctant Mitsuo was to assert himself in class as a young boy, but this reflex volunteer gesture by Mitsuo was no accident or sudden whim. In the weeks leading up to this training exercise class, Mitsuo had vowed to himself that he would no longer shirk from volunteering, from answering questions in class. He had determined to become more assertive so as to overcome his natural-born shyness-- a shyness that could only hold him back in his military career. So Mitsuo began to constantly, and quickly, raise his hand when a question was thrown out to the class. As he became more comfortable at it, Mitsuo would even raise his hand before he knew the answer to his instructor's question! In other words, it was no aberration that when the 2nd Lieutenant asked the cadets if anyone wanted to be a flying officer, Mitsuo's hand shot up almost by reflex.

With his young officer instructor, Mitsuo climbed inside an F-5 for the first flight of a Naval Academy cadet in Japan. One

has to remember that at this point in history, Japan's military troops were almost exclusively naval or land forces. Japan's adoption of aircraft into her armed forces was an endeavor still in its infancy. This being the case, Mitsuo could be excused for being terrified of this flight exercise, but that was not the case. Just the opposite. That day, an exhilarated Mitsuo knew he had found his true military calling!



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CHAPTER 4

Jake DeShazer: Doolittle Raider

“I do not know of any more gallant deed in history than that performed by your squadron... You have made history.”

Vice Admiral William Halsey, Fleet Admiral in the United States Navy during World War II, in a personal letter to Lt. Colonel Doolittle.

In April of 1942, all sixteen B-25 bomber aircraft had arrived at Alameda Naval Air Base in California and, almost immediately thereafter, were hoisted onto the flight deck of the new aircraft carrier, *U.S.S. Hornet*. Interestingly, the city of Alameda had also been the birthplace of squad commander, Lt. Colonel James Doolittle. Soon, Corporal Jake DeShazer, along with the rest of the 80 crewmen of the secret mission, also made their way aboard the *Hornet*. From Alameda, the *Hornet*, along with eleven other U.S. Navy warship escorts, would sail out under the Golden Gate Bridge and into the Pacific on their way to ... well, no one knew just yet. Or at least no one outside of a handful of top military brass. Every one of the 80 mission crewmen wondered where exactly they were headed. The Hawaiian Islands? Midway Island? The Philippines? Or perhaps even ...?

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After several days at sea, beyond the Hawaiian Islands, the announcement finally came over the carrier loudspeakers. The Task Force was to proceed to a position 400 miles east of

Japan. The planes would then be launched from the deck of the *Hornet*. Their ultimate mission: bomb Tokyo!

This announcement came while most of the sailors and airmen—Jake and his fellow crewmen included—were having lunch in the carrier mess hall. There was a mixture of reactions: war whoops, exuberant cheers, shouts announcing that it was time to get serious about battle. Finally, at least in Jake’s mess hall, many of the soldiers followed one crewmen’s lead in singing:

Heigh Ho

Heigh Ho

We’re off to bomb Tokyo!

We’ll bomb and blast

And come back fast

Heigh Ho!

Heigh Ho!

Of course many of the Doolittle crewman had earlier surmised that the Japanese homeland would be their target. Indeed, many had *hoped* this would be the case—and now this theory had proven to be correct. There was only one major detail no one knew at this point: After they delivered their strike bombs, was there a plan to get back to the *Hornet*? Or at least safely to an American base somewhere in the Pacific?

As the 80 crewmen were soon to find out in the briefings that followed, there was no such plan. The planes would have enough fuel to reach the Japanese homeland and hopefully, China, but not to an American base. A return to the *Hornet* was definitely out. The planes had no tail hook (to facilitate deceleration and landing on the deck of a carrier), and in fact, once they took off from the deck of the *Hornet*, the carrier

was then scheduled to make a U-turn and head *back* due east at full speed! The basic plan? Each B-25 would make bomb strikes on various appointed Japanese targets (military bases, factories) and then fly on to China. Once over Chinese territory (unfortunately, now widely patrolled by Japanese troops) the Doolittle crewmen would land on or bail out *over* American-friendly territory. From there, hopefully, the American crewmen could, with the help of the Chinese, make their way to an American embassy. In short, they would be taking off from the *Hornet*, but their final destination was uncertain.

There was another hitch: in order to have sufficient fuel to carry out the bomb strike and then continue on to friendly Chinese territory, the plan called for each B-25 bomber to take off within 400 miles of Japan. Also, to conserve fuel, each plane should fly as low as safety and prudence would allow.

Oh yes, and one more little hurdle: each B-25 bomber had to take off from a carrier deck that wasn't fit to accommodate a plane of their size and weight! Bear in mind, the deck was stacked closely with sixteen planes lined up to take off one after the other! Each plane would also have to contend with distracting winds blowing across the deck with waves and swells causing the giant carrier at times to bob and sway like a rowboat on a lake. At least, however, there had been all that training of the previous several weeks, repeated practice runs of taking off within uncomfortably short distances!

The *Hornet* and its escort ships were still heading west toward Japan on Easter Sunday morning of 1942. Given the danger of the approaching mission, one might assume that Jake would leap at the chance to reconnect with his family and childhood faith heritage by attending Easter Services with the crewmen. Not so. Even at the urging of faith-minded crewman William Farrow to attend services, DeShazer elected

to catch up on his sleep that Easter morning. Years later, Jake would remember this disappointing choice.

Remember Hitch # 1? *In order to make a strike on Japan and then make it safely to friendly Chinese territory, the bombers need to take off within 400 miles of Tokyo.* There was really only one way this could be accomplished. Simply put, hopefully the twelve-ship Naval force would go undetected by Japanese planes or ships at least until they had reached the desired 400 miles-off-the-Japanese-coast point. Unfortunately, the Task Force of eight war ships were spotted by Japanese spy boats some 620 miles out from the Japanese coastline! Doolittle had no choice but to launch the American raid *much* sooner than he wanted—and this meant the fuel each plane was carrying would *barely* be enough to drop their bombs on Japan and then make it to China. It didn't help matters that several gallons of extra fuel had to be jettisoned from each aircraft so the planes could be light enough to travel the additional 220 miles!

Well, history (as well as documentary footage and Hollywood movies) has told the tale many times. Lt. Col. Doolittle led the attack, climbing into the cockpit of the first B-25 bomber. Despite Doolittle's plane having the *least* amount of flight deck (due to the sixteen-plane stacking on the flight deck behind him) Plane # 1 waited for the right angle of ship bobbing and executed a near flawless takeoff. One by one, each B-25 zoomed down the flight deck for takeoff and, to the cheers of the Naval crew onlookers from the *Hornet* and accompanying ships, each successfully sailed up into the Pacific sky. There was one anxious moment when one B-25 zoomed down the carrier deck, then disappeared over the bow of the ship--- only to soon reappear, soaring perfectly upwards and on its way.

Jake DeShazer's Plane # 16 was, of course, the last to take off. Their greatest initial difficulty was simply keeping the

aircraft from falling backwards into the sea due to high winds! First Lt. Farrow and Lt. Hite had started the propellers moving when suddenly, the plane lurched backwards, starting to tilt backwards over the side of the ship! A swarm of sailors and crewmen—Jake included--rushed the plane and grabbed hold of the lines, securing the aircraft with ropes. In one horrifying moment, a sailor backed in to the propellor and his arm was sliced off. Jake helped drag the unfortunate sailor over to a side area. With this trauma fresh in his mind, Jake rushed back to join his plane. Once Jake and all the crewmen were aboard, Plane 16 took off down the flight deck and, to the final cheers of the watchers, it too soared up into the sky, on its way to complete a daring mission to Japan.

The Air Raid

The takeoff of Jake's plane from the *U.S.S. Hornet* had been a bit bumpy and risky, especially with the frantic struggle to keep the plane from flipping backwards off the carrier into the sea! Once in the air, however, a second problem presented itself in Jake's section of the plane—the plexiglass nose of the aircraft had been smashed and a large piece was missing. As a result of this dangerous rupture, a punishing wind current pelted Jake, distracting him from his duties. Co-pilot Lt. Hite crawled into Jake's compartment and tried to stuff an old jacket into the hole, but the wind sucked it right out and into the blue yonder! Forget the hole, they were on their mission and a tear in the nose wasn't going to stop them!

Other than these mishaps and miscues, the trip to Japan went relatively smoothly, save for entering into a curtain of thick fog out off the Japanese coast. They were flying low, so, while the fog helped to hide them, pilot First Lt. Farrow knew that they were going to have to get up above the fog in order to see their target city: Nagoya (other American bombers would



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Doolittle Raid B-25 bomber taking off from the deck of the USS Hornet. Though some have identified the plane in this photo as Jake's Plane #16, that has not been verified. (Courtesy of Seattle Pacific University Archives. Used with Permission.)

hit Tokyo itself). Soon, they were soaring above the clouds at an altitude just above 7,000 feet—and still they were virtually level with the slope of a mountainside! Even more startling to Jake was that the crew could see village huts with villagers moving about. One elderly Japanese man with a beard saw the American plane and, though using a cane, the old man dropped face first to the ground.

Once over the mountain range, however, the city of Nagoya lay spread out before them. They swooped down towards the industrial section of the city, dropping to an elevation of 500 feet. Once at that elevation, that was Jake's cue to ready the bomb drops—which he did. He initially released three, though the prior strike plan had only called for two. No matter, the bombs found their mark. Moments later, fire and black smoke could be seen enveloping the munitions factory that was the target. Two more bombs were dropped and their mission had successfully been met. They now veered back west towards China.

Nearing the shoreline at low altitude, Jake recalled seeing a Japanese man in a boat, waving to their plane. Clearly the poor man must have believed he was waving to a friendly Japanese plane, only to find out, when Jake fired upon him, that he had been trying to attract the attention of an enemy plane! This would not be the first Japanese individual Jake would fire at during the raid, though he initially vowed to himself that he would not fire on civilians. Still, when their B-25 came under fire by civilians below, Jake changed his mind about using his weapon. In later years Jake would recall that, "I wasn't a very good shot, however, and no harm was done."

As the sun began to sink in the distance, Jake and crew sped towards the mainland of China. As night fell, the mood inside Plane 16 grew ominously tense. It was so dark and foggy

that they could just make out the coastline of China, though they could not tell over what part of China they were flying. Lt. Barr, the navigator, was busily, desperately, studying his aerial chart and map: “We should be over Choo Choo Lishui.” The pilots continued to circle, continued to radio, but no one was answering. How would they ever find their appointed safe harbor of Choo Choo Lishui? Even when the fog did finally clear somewhat, they could see the lights of a town below, but no sign of an airstrip. Radio calls continued to be made, but still there was no answer.

Finally, First Pilot Lt. Farrow made the call that no one wanted to hear: “Fellas, we gotta jump.” As Jake would recall, the plane was at an altitude of about 3,000 feet. Barr was the first to throw on his parachute gear and jump. Jake followed after Barr.

The velocity of the plane, coupled with the high winds, prevented Jake from cleanly clearing the aircraft. For a few moments he found himself stuck to the bottom of the B-25 like a bug to a windshield! But finally, Jake gave a mighty kick against the lower fuselage and he was airborne, watching the B-25 streak safely over and past him in the night sky. Jake continued to watch as Plane 16 vanished into the blackness—never to be seen by Jake or any of the other crew again. Floating, falling in the night sky, Jake waited several seconds before finally tugging on his chute cord. Almost immediately, his body bounced sharply, bobbing in the inky darkness as his chute fully opened.

It was a surreal, eerily dreamlike feeling as Jake found himself drifting slowly down inside a cocoon of shadowy, yet slightly luminous fog. Or at least he *assumed* he was drifting downward—he couldn’t actually tell. For all he knew he was still hovering thousands of feet above ground—or he might

have already descended down to a mere few hundred feet above ground

There was a startling—and quite painful—jarring of his body as he suddenly crashed down upon terra-firma. Grabbing his ribs, Jake had no time to try and self-administer first aid. Instead, he pulled out his knife and immediately began slicing up his parachute. He saved a large chunk to be used as a head covering. Jake finally took a look at his shadowy surroundings. It took a little while for his eyes to adjust to the setting. Jake would remember: “I saw several mounds of dirt and noticed that I was on a knoll. Then I realized it was a Chinese graveyard. All around were rice fields that were under water at that time of year.”

At this point in the story, a slight detour back to my father’s (Pastor Dean Cook from the 1964 Woodburn, Oregon, story in the Introduction) flight crew training experience might shed some light on this part of the narrative. Specifically, my father (now-retired U.S. Naval Chaplain Dean Cook) recently compared his flight survival training with that of Jake Deshazer and the other Doolittle Raider crew members. As Dad recently shared, after Naval flight school, he began to fly as part of a three-man crew that would one day deploy at sea in support of America’s strategic defense. This was the late-1950’s and by this time, Naval flight crew members were required to attend survival school because of lessons learned from the Doolittle Raid! Indeed, Jake would later inform Dad that his squadron had *no* such training before setting out on the Tokyo raid! Now, back to our story!

Jake took shelter for the night in a farmer’s outbuilding, a tiny brick structure. A grouping of incense irons made it clear that the outbuilding was used primarily as a shrine. Jake curled up as best he could and fell asleep, exhausted from his day’s

ordeal. He tried to assure himself that it was over, that he had reached safe haven. Still, another part of him warned that he should not declare victory just yet. For Jake, this was definitely uncharted territory.

The next morning, at daylight, Jake awakened and immediately headed out from the farm property in search of a road. Splashing through the wetlands of surrounding rice fields, Jake at last found a country path that served as a roadway. He tried to blend in as best he could with other rural Chinese villagers and farm people. Surprisingly, no one shouted out with alarm at seeing (as they clearly did) a white military man hiking down the road.

Eventually, Jake came to a village of rude mud huts and poked his head inside one of them. There, inside the tiny room, Jake saw two uniformed Asian soldiers playing with a group of children. Nervous, but fearing he had little choice, Jake decided to take a chance. He pointed to one of the soldiers and called out: “China or Japan?”

The soldiers smiled, with one of them answering back, “China!” At hearing this, Jake let down his guard—just a bit. Still, he had already placed a bullet in the chamber of his .38 pistol, just in case of trouble. Turning to depart from the village hut, Jake was startled to see about ten other soldiers approaching him. Once again, Jake fingered the trigger of his pistol. He wanted to be ready, and yet he did not want to start firing on possibly friendly Chinese soldiers. What’s more, the approaching soldiers were not bearing arms. Furthermore, they appeared to be greeting Jake in a friendly, welcoming manner. In the next moment, the soldiers were surrounding Jake, smiling, patting him on the back. To Jake, this was a good sign indeed—he’d lucked into coming in contact with friendly

Chinese soldiers! *Being* Chinese soldiers, they would be on the side of the Americans as Japan was their common foe.

Soon, Jake was walking with the soldiers down the main road leading out of the village. It was Jake's fervent hope that his ordeal would soon be over. The soldiers would lead him to a friendly Chinese military outpost where he could then make contact with other Americans. He would then soon be reunited with his fellow B-25 airmen, possibly from his own plane and probably from some of the other B-25 bombers as well. By the next week or two there would be a wonderful homecoming on American soil where

It was then that Jake happened to glance around him at his soldier escorts. To his horror and dismay, Jake could now clearly see the guns trained on him. His "buddies" were not buddies at all.

Significantly, something else had taken place the night before, several thousand miles away—though Jake would not learn about it until years later: "I found out later that as I was coming down in the parachute, my mother was awakened from her sleep and was praying for me."

Before we leave this chapter, we should revisit the reality of what the American raiders were up against in the flying portion of their raid. It is tempting to presume that once the raiders reached the Japanese mainland, dropped their handful of bombs and zoomed away under cover of the sheer surprise of their appearance, the grave danger was mostly past. Now they just had to find an airfield in China on which to land. But even *making* the sea crossing to China was in doubt! In his 2004 work, *War Stories II: Heroism In the Pacific*, author Oliver North details the peril in which *all* the Doolittle crewmen found themselves—and the miracle that saved almost all of them:

For Doolittle and his raiders, escaping Japanese anti-aircraft batteries and fighters over land wasn't the end of their jeopardy. By the time they had cleared the west coast of Japan and headed over the East China Sea, the B-25's had enough fuel to fly about 800 miles. Unfortunately, the safe area in China was 1,000 miles away. But as the American aircrews began reviewing procedures for ditching at sea, something happened that seemed contrary to the laws of nature. A storm came up and the winds shifted. It seemed impossible to the navigators, who knew that the prevailing winds always blew from the China sea toward Japan. But that day, the headwinds that they had bucked all day turned into tailwinds, and began to blow them toward China... The winds were now helping the bombers to make up some of the hundreds of additional miles they had had to fly when they took off early from the Hornet. ²



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CHAPTER 5

The Day of Infamy

Finally, at 7:49 A.M... the signal to begin the attack was given: “To! To! To!” In English, this was the simple command to “charge!”

At once, 40 torpedo planes dropped earthward and did not cease their descent until they were a mere 50 feet above the waters of Pearl Harbor on the Hawaiian island of Oahu. At the same time, 51 Japanese dive planes zoomed up to 13,000 feet while 18 fighter planes dropped to 6,500 feet.

Mitsuo (now a Lieutenant Commander) had anticipated and waited for this moment for nearly twenty years. In fact, he had projected *himself* into this moment as far back as the early 1920's when he himself was a young cadet in his early twenties! And yet there was a momentary flash of alarm in his mind shortly after the “To! To! To!” message was radioed to all 353 Japanese planes in the attack armada. All their careful weeks and months of preparation for a sequential, tactical attack may already have blown up in their faces! All because there was confusion amongst the fighter planes as to whether the lead plane had shot one or two flares into the sky just prior to the “To! To! To!” signal. The difference between one or two fired flares was huge: One flare meant the squadron leader was signaling that there was no American resistance, thus the attack was a complete surprise. This being the case, the torpedo planes would zoom to the fore, as well as fighter planes to destroy American aircraft



**A massive Japanese bomb explodes the battleship, USS Arizona in the
December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor.**

(Image from the Library of Congress, in the Public Domain.)

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(which would just be sitting ducks) and bases. The dive and horizontal fighter planes would then follow.

But... if two flares were fired, that meant the American forces had clearly readied themselves for an attack, and if *this* was the case, the Japanese dive and fighter planes would approach first, hopefully taking out American ground troops and anti-aircraft defenders.

Unfortunately, with the confusion over one or two flares being fired, there was a disorganized rush of *all* the Japanese planes down into the attack. Mitsuo saw this and cursed to himself.

It didn't matter.

As far back as their approach towards the island of Oahu, there was no sign of American scout planes or fighter planes coming out to meet the 353-strong force of Japanese attack planes. The invading Japanese force would not be comprised exclusively of aircraft however: accompanying the 353 fighter planes were 2 heavy cruiser ships, 35 submarines (9 of which were midget subs), 2 light charger vessels, 9 oilers, 2 battleships and 11 destroyers. Though cloud cover and fog could be expected in the early December dawn over the islands, Mitsuo would always remember how the clouds had parted just as their planes arrived offshore and the full expanse of Oahu appeared before them. So, earlier than expected, the command was radioed to all the Japanese planes: "Tenaki!" This meant, "Prepare to attack!"

If Mitsuo's plane had been one of those flying closer to the ground, he would have seen families enjoying a morning on the beaches of Oahu's North Shore. These beachgoers would gaze up curiously at the over 100 planes flying overhead, but

while puzzled, there was no sense of fear. Oahu was teeming with military forces. No doubt this was simply another training exercise. Others were out doing other kinds of recreational activities—boys at the baseball fields, their fathers at the golf courses—while still others were getting ready for or making their way to church services. Still, the general attitude amongst the Oahu islanders was overall confusion, but no sense that anything was amiss. Until... a few souls noticed the different coloring on the wings and sides of the attacking planes. By then it was too late.

Lt. Commander Mitsuo's first sighting of Pearl Harbor and its famed "Battleship Row" filled him with adrenaline-pumping exhilaration, mixed with a sense of puzzlement (the Japanese consulate spies had assured them that there would be nine battleships harbored at Pearl, but Mitsuo could only see seven), as well as a flash of disappointment (not a single American aircraft carrier was in evidence). But there was no time to stew on momentary disappointments. At 7:53 A.M. the radioman in the lead plane was already tapping out "To Ra! To Ra! To Ra!" to all 353 Japanese attack planes. The two words together translated into "Charge!" or "Attack" while "ra" roughly translated to "torpedoes!" Indeed, this radioed message had gone out to the entire Japanese Navy, informing the Empire of the Sun that Operation Z was not only underway, but that the attack had succeeded in completely catching the Americans by surprise! This could be credited largely to two men: Admiral Yamamoto had conceived of this sort of attack while Captain Genda, Mitsuo's friend going back to his Academy days, wrote the operational orders; so intensely focused was Genda on orchestrating the operation on paper that he locked himself in a room on his Japanese carrier, not allowing anyone in to disturb him for days! The outrageous plan of Yamamoto and Genda had worked!

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An hour and fifteen minutes later, the attack was over. Mitsuo had survived to tell the tale. Still, 129 Japanese airmen had been killed in the course of the attack. In addition, the Japanese had lost 29 aircraft, as well as 5 midget submarines. The Americans suffered much worse.

Of the seven American ships lined up on Battleship Row, the final tally was thus: The *U.S.S. Arizona* had been completely destroyed; of the some 1,440 crewmen on board, 1,177 would lose their lives on the morning of December 7, 1941. The *Oklahoma* was hit by 5 torpedoes, capsized and was lost—a total of 429 souls perished. The *West Virginia* was hit by 2 bombs, 7 torpedoes and was sunk—a total of 106 men lost their lives. The *California* was hit by 2 bombs, 2 torpedoes and was sunk—100 men perished. The *Nevada* was hit by 6 bombs, 1 torpedo and was beached, with 60 lives lost. The *Tennessee* was hit by 2 bombs, killing five men on board. The *Maryland* was hit by 2 bombs, killing 4 on board.

The Japanese spies had not been entirely correct on the number of ships that were supposed to be on Battleship Row. The *U.S.S. Pennsylvania*, flagship of Battleship Row, was normally there, but at the time of the attack was in drydock. Even so, the *Pennsylvania* was hit by one bomb, resulting in 9 dead on board. As for the ninth battleship, that would be the *Utah*, and by the time of the attack it was no longer in regular service. By December 7, the *Utah* had been docked on the other side of Ford Island, away from Battleship Row—in fact, the Navy mainly used it for target practice! But even the *Utah*, and its skeleton crew, did not escape the attack: the *Utah* was hit by two torpedoes and capsized, killing 64 souls on board.

In all, 2,403 Americans died in the attack on Pearl Harbor, with 1,178 wounded. The U.S. Pacific Fleet had been virtually decimated. In addition, 188 American aircraft were

destroyed in the attack. Though he didn't know the actual numbers of ships and planes that had been destroyed, nor how many American troops had been killed, as Mitsuo and his crew flew away from the island of Oahu, he knew that the Empire of Japan had achieved a great victory. The Americans had been taken completely by surprise and their status as a Pacific military power had been dealt a devastating blow. Japan had proven to the world that the mighty Americans were vulnerable. Most of all, Mitsuo had the satisfaction of knowing that Japan was now an empire to be reckoned with on the world stage.

Mitsuo would go on to dodge death several more times during World War II as he took a prominent role in several subsequent battles.



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CHAPTER 6

A Flyer Turned Prisoner of War

From 1942 through most of 1945—a span of nearly 40 months—Jake DeShazer was a prisoner of Japan. In fact, during those forty months he bounced around from prison camp to prison camp: Nanking, China; Nagasaki, Japan; Shanghai, China; Tokyo, Japan, and, finally, Beijing, China. Some of these stints were extended stays. Other stints were fairly brief as in the case of Nagasaki, Japan (just a little over one day), Tokyo (a couple of months) and the Shanghai “Bridge House” (a total of some 70 days).

The one-day stay at the Nagasaki prison is worth mentioning in that it was the only time that Jake, along with six other American Doolittle Raider captives (three from Jake’s Plane 16 and three from Plane 6) were not only housed together in the same cell, but could also converse freely with each other. That is how Jake fully heard the stories of how his fellow crewmen were captured. Almost to a man, the stories were similar to Jake’s tale. All had parachuted out of their planes, almost all had been separated from their fellow airmen (at least for a time), and all had set off down roads in hopes of finding friendly Chinese, only to fall into the hands of the occupying Japanese soldiers.

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It was also in the cage at Nagasaki where Jake learned the tragic fate of two crewmen from Plane 6. Their B-25 had crash-landed in the ocean off the coast of China where, sadly,

bombardier Staff Sgt. William Dieter and engineer/gunner Corporal Donald Fitzmaurice both perished in the water. Co-pilot Lt. Robert Meder had tried to swim to shore towing Dieter, but Dieter died before reaching shore. Now, reunited in this cage-like cell in Nagasaki, were the eight survivors of the Doolittle Raid (at least that these men knew of at the time). From Jake's Plane 16, all five crewmen had survived but had been captured, and now were all captives together in the Nagasaki jail cell: Jake, pilot Lt. William "Bill" Farrow, navigator Lt. George Barr, co-pilot Lt. Robert Hite and engineer/gunner, Sgt. Harold Spatz. From Plane 6 there was pilot Lt. Dean Edward Hallmark, co-pilot Lt. Robert Meder, and navigator, Lt. Chase Jay Nielsen. These eight airmen would constitute the only POW's from the ranks of the Doolittle Raiders—though neither Jake nor any of his fellow captive crewmen would know this until after the war. Neither could any of these men have known that only four of them would return home when the war was over. Not that any of them harbored much hope of making it out of captivity alive.

The most unusual period of confinement for Jake and his fellow Doolittle captives, was probably their time at the "Bridge House" prison in Shanghai, China. Their "Bridge House" quarters turned out to be a 12 X 15 cell which housed 15 other prisoners, all of whom were Chinese. Two of those prisoners were women. The only "toilet" in this open cement cell was a box in the corner of the room. As Jake remembers, "Food consisted of a cup of boiled rice soup for breakfast, four ounces of bread for lunch and four ounces of bread again for dinner. Approximately two quarts of water were given each day..." [3]

By this time, all eight of the Americans were very weak from lack of protein-filled food, little water and from the physical toll of captivity. Lt. Hallmark was in the worst shape—he actually had to be laid out on a stretcher and helped to and

from the latrine box. The other seven Americans, their bodies covered with scabs and sores, were just able to stand. Jake further remembers, “The room was so small there was not enough space for all to lie down at one time. Bedbugs, lice and rice were all plentiful at the time. It was then midsummer of 1942. The weather was hot and the water available was inadequate.”^[4] In addition to the horrible sanitary conditions, poor food, lack of water and punishing heat, there was also physical abuse. Everyone received beatings for the most minor of infractions—even the women were treated harshly by the guards.

It was during their stay at the horrific “Bridge House” that the eight Americans awaited news of their fate as decided by the Japanese Military Tribunal. What were the possible outcomes? There was actually a possibility that the Americans would be given life sentences—that they would be held as prisoners until the end of the war. Naturally, death by execution was the other possibility. The American captives were aware of these possibilities because in the preceding weeks, they had themselves stood in the tribunal courtroom and heard the case laid out against them by the prosecutor. The charges brought against them were serious: the American raiders had broken every conceivable rule of international military law. Furthermore, according to the prosecutor, there was overwhelming evidence of “indiscriminate bombings” during the Doolittle raid on Japan, and that innocent Japanese non-combatants had been killed. There was no question, the prosecutor would argue, that the eight captured American airmen were deserving of the sentence of death!

As for the defense of the American airmen? There was none. When the prosecutor had finished laying out his case and making his recommendation for punishment, Jake and his fellow seven American airmen captives were led out of the courtroom. It was only after they had vacated the tribunal

chamber that the verdict was rendered: Death by execution for all eight Americans. The Americans would not learn of this verdict until several weeks later.

The fact is, Jake had expected to be executed even before he and his fellow Plane 16 captives were reunited with the crewmen from Plane 6 in Nagasaki. Shortly after being captured, Jake had been harshly interrogated by Japanese military officers who, oddly, used plenty of threatening American slang to try and pry secrets out of Jake:

“Where are your planes?”

“Who is your commanding officer?”

“Where are you hiding your gasoline?”

To all questions, Jake’s reply would always be along the lines of, “I don’t know” or “I won’t talk.” Like his fellow Plane 16 captives, he was struck, kicked, beaten if he did not reply respectfully, or if they simply did not like his answers. Jake was then turned over to a short, stocky, cigar-puffing Japanese official who proclaimed himself to be, “The kindest judge in China.” When this “kindest” judge failed to get any meaningful information from Jake, he ended the session by pulling out his sword and holding it up before Jake. With that, the judge glared at Jake with steely eyes and said, “Tomorrow morning when the sun comes up, I’m going to cut your head off.” The judge waited for a response from the prisoner, but Jake was silent. The judge pressed, “What do you think of that?”

“I think it would be a great honor to me if the kindest judge in China cut my head off,” said Jake. At these words that somehow tumbled out of his mouth, Jake braced for a harsh response—perhaps he would be beheaded right there on the

spot! Instead, the judge and the other men in the room broke into laughter. Jake was led back to his cell.

Jake was not sure what to make of the judge's jovial response to his defiance, but he did fully expect to be executed the next morning. He was not. Instead, he was removed from his solitary cell, taken out to an airplane where a Japanese military photographer snapped a picture of him. Then, Jake and the other Plane 16 airmen were flown via military transport plane to Nagasaki.

After seventy days in the house of horrors known as the Shanghai "Bridge House," it became clear to the Japanese captors that the eight Americans would need to be moved to different quarters if they were to survive at all. So they were moved. This time, each Doolittle airman captive was housed in his own cell. From that time until the end of the war, Jake would primarily know only solitary confinement. Also from this time until the end of the war, Jake would only see his fellow American captives when they were allowed their daily, and brief, walk-around exercise time in the prison yards.

Then, in October of 1942, there was an unsettling turn of events. Jake and his fellow captives one day noticed that three of their number did not appear in the prison yard during exercise time. Not just for one day, but for every day after. It would appear that Sgt. Harold Spatz and Lt. William Farrow from Jake's Plane 16, along with Lt. Dean Edward Hallmark from Plane 6, had been moved to another prison location. At least that was the fervent hope of Jake and the (now) four remaining airmen.

If you will recall, none of the eight Americans were in the tribunal courtroom to hear the verdict rendered by the Japanese Military Tribunal Court. Unbeknownst to Jake and

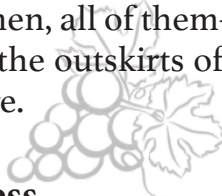
the other seven captive crewmen, that verdict had indeed been death by execution. But—also unbeknownst to the eight American captives—much discussion, debate and politicking had been taking place amongst the Japanese officials. This time, however, Emperor Hirohito weighed in on the fate of the American prisoners. Indeed, it was Emperor Hirohito to whom Jake would owe his earthly life!

The fateful day arrived. Jake DeShazer, George Barr, Robert Hite, Chase Nielsen and Robert Meder were called into a Shanghai courtroom. There, Japanese military officials informed them of their fate: their sentence would be life imprisonment with “special treatment” (whatever that meant). Yes, they had been earlier sentenced to death, but the Emperor had stepped in and commuted their sentences! As Jake remembered: “It was really a relief to know that they were now planning to let us remain alive. I could not help feeling a strange sense of joy, even though solitary confinement and a long war awaited any possible chance of freedom. At the same time it seemed almost hopeless to think of ever being free again, since the most probable thing would be that we would be executed when America did win the war.” [5]

Only after the war would Jake—and indeed the rest of the world—learn the fate of Sgt. Spatz, Lt. Farrow and Lt. Hallmark. These airmen—young men, all of them—were quietly taken to an old city cemetery on the outskirts of Shanghai. There, they were executed by rifle fire.

Tortures and Bitterness

For most of his forty-month war prisoner experience of 1942 to 1945, Jake utterly despised his Japanese captors. The attack on Pearl Harbor had been more than enough to kindle hatred in Jake’s heart for the Japanese, but it only grew during



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his years of captivity. One might wonder if Jake's all-consuming hatred actually overflowed towards the Japanese people, or was simply directed towards his cruel Japanese captors. Jake would later testify that, continually suffering as he did during those years, there was hardly any difference. Simply put, Jake hated the Japanese.

When it came to physical sufferings, Jake's experience in the Japanese POW camps can be succinctly summed up as follows: torture, humiliations, beatings, starvation. There were a few light moments, as when Jake and his fellow American captives managed to organize a kind of "food lottery" where the winner would get an extra small portion from each of the others—and which Jake seemed to win more often than appeared seemly (for which he often received a good-natured verbal torching from the other guys). But such moments of levity were by far the exception and not the rule.

Jake would recall a few specific physical tortures he and his fellow American captives suffered at the hands of the Japanese guards. In one case, a bucket of water was poured into their nostrils, followed by a splash of bucket water into their open mouths, causing their bodies to convulse in pain. Then there was the time Lt. Barr shoved a guard back in anger. Barr was swarmed by the other guards and placed in a strait jacket with his arms pulled so tightly behind his back that his shoulders nearly broke. All the while, Barr's cries of agony were terrible to hear. Such tortures were in addition to regular beatings—with fists, with bamboo poles, with metal sword scabbards. Jake and the other airmen would receive such beatings if they broke prison rules or did not sufficiently respond to the guard's commands.

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True, the "starvation" was not literal—the American prisoners did receive food and water. But the food was hardly

healthy, was often revolting, and there was little of it. Early on, one of the American prisoners pulled out some kind of disgusting bug from his rice—a cockroach perhaps—and hurled it onto the floor with disgust. It was Lt. Nielson who showed leadership at that moment by picking up the roach, holding it before the other men and saying, “Fellas, I know it’s disgusting, but this little thing is protein! And I’m eatin’ it!”⁶ Which he proceeded to do. It was a valuable lesson in perseverance for Jake and the other American prisoners.

Jake did not completely forget his faith upbringing. He thought back to that Easter Sunday on board the *U.S.S. Hornet*, how Lt. Farrow had urged him to come to services. Jake well remembered that he chose instead to catch up on his sleep—this despite knowing the mortal dangers that likely awaited him on his upcoming raid mission! No doubt Jake, at this point, was ready to inwardly concede that his decision of that Easter morning had been the wrong one. What Jake was *not* ready to do at this point of his POW experience, however, was to turn his life—and his hatred of the Japanese—over to God. In fact, if the Japanese were in his prayers during the lion’s share of his prison experience, it was probably something to the effect of, *God, give me just one chance to get one good shot at them!*



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CHAPTER 7

Living The Story 1971-74

This particular chapter is of a more personal account. The Cooks arrived in Honolulu, Hawaii, in April of 1971. That would be Chaplain Lt. Dean Cook (if you remember, the Woodburn, Oregon pastor from the Introduction, now a Navy Chaplain), his wife, Ruth, and their four sons: Scott, Todd, Kevin and Jonathan. Scott was the oldest of we boys at 9 years old, while Jonathan was only 16 months. We arrived on the island of Oahu 29 years after the attack on Pearl Harbor—the 30th anniversary would not be for another eight months. But for practical purposes, I'll say the Cooks arrived on Oahu thirty years after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

To most people, thirty years in the rear view mirror probably sounds like enough time to qualify as “a long time ago.” However, from my life perspective as a 58 year-old, I'm amazed at how very recent thirty years ago really is! As of this writing, 1991 was thirty years ago. Sure, automobiles have gotten sleeker, more computerized; smart phones have now taken over daily life and were not even in evidence back in 1991. The bulky, bulbous-screen TV sets of 1991 are now in dumpsters and have been replaced by the big, flat, wide-screens (on which you're just as apt to watch something streamed from the internet as you are to watch something broadcast from a network TV channel). EVEN SO... I still feel I can reach out and *touch* 1991! In short, I have reached the point where thirty years ago is not some unrelatable distant epoch, even *with* the advances in

technology we see now in our current time! Mind you, many of the pop radio hits of that year are still ringing in my head!

But that's the perspective of someone who has lived several decades, and I'm sure many people over 45 years of age can also relate to this phenomenon. To a child or young adult in their twenties, however, thirty years is an *Ice Age* ago—something wholly unrelatable, unimaginable. Yet somehow, I just *know* that 1941 seemed more distant to *anyone* in 1971, than 1991 seems to those of us living in 2021. In the case of the former, for instance, we're literally talking the difference between radio and television; all black and white photographs versus all color photographs; big band swing music versus hard rock, hip-hop and electronica!

That's why it's hard for me to comprehend the following truth: When I arrived in Honolulu as a kid, there were innumerable adults (and they were barely middle-aged then!) walking around who—in their minds—could still feel the terror of low-flying Japanese attack planes swarming their bucolic Pacific island home; who could still feel the ferocious quakes of bombs and torpedoes finding their target; who could still smell the oil-saturated smoke of Naval ships on fire; who could still see the faces of the attacking Japanese pilots in their cockpits! After all, in *April* of 1971, thirty years had not yet fully passed! Indeed, when the Cooks arrived on Oahu in 1971, the wreck of the *U.S.S. Arizona* had only been marked by a memorial for a mere ten years! In other words, only 11 years prior, one would have to go out in a boat and have that patch of water pointed out to you by a local sailor: *Right there, you can see a little of the oil drops still coming up. Below those drops is the wreckage of the U.S.S. Arizona.*

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One of those who personally remembered that morning attack of December 7, 1941, was my own fifth grade teacher, Ms.

Mansho. She was still a fairly young Asian-American woman, mid-to-late thirties or so. Yet she recounted to our class how she remembered seeing the planes flying in low. She told us how her brother had grabbed a broomstick and was pretending to fire back at the invaders. He was fired upon—or at least a few bullets landed beside or beyond him! I imagine the Japanese pilots were either just playing with him or were simply trying to put the fear of the Japanese Empire in him!

I also remember hearing a radio drama about Pearl Harbor on our car radio as we were touring the leeward side of the island. I have no doubt this was some 30th Year Anniversary of Pearl Harbor commemoration as this also took place in 1971. In any event, a woman narrator was recounting the Pearl Harbor attack in the personage of the *U.S.S. Arizona*—whether in poetry or prose, I cannot remember. What I do remember is her voice cracking with emotion as she recounted how at a critical moment, “A bomb went down my back...!”

But I should not mislead you: though 1971 was indeed the 30th anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attack, neither that event nor war in general seemed to be in vogue at the moment. Though I attended two different Pearl City elementary schools during those remaining nine months of 1971 (the latter part of my second grade year at one school, the start of my third grade year at another), I can’t recall any special Pearl Harbor school commemorations or remembrances. I’m sure there must have been some, at least in the history classes for the more upper grades. The fact was, by 1971 the United States was not only war-weary, but also in many quarters, war-*repulsed*.

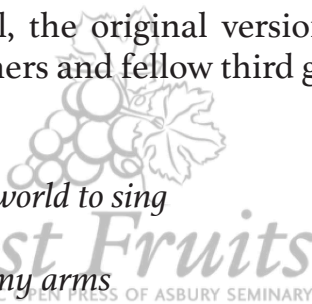
There was reason for the United States being war-weary by 1971: we were actually still at war in the Asian theater! Yes, Vietnam was still dragging on and young U.S. servicemen continued to be casualties. It must also be remembered that in

the previous 30 years, the U.S. had been embroiled in World War II (fighting both the Japanese and the Germans), in the Korean War (1950-53) and sloggng through the Vietnam War since the mid-1950's (though granted, things didn't truly escalate in Vietnam until around 1965). In short, I remember the early 1970's as a time when the military, war veterans and war heroics, were only mutely celebrated or promoted to young people. Still, to the eternal credit of *The Brady Bunch*, a popular TV sitcom at the time, the show took a quick detour from their usual light comedy to feature a solemn scene (during their Hawaii visit episode) where the family remembers the fallen servicemen at the U.S.S. Arizona Memorial.

That *Brady Bunch* episode notwithstanding, just what *were* the popular virtues, philosophies, ideologies promoted to young people in the schools, in pop songs, in TV shows, in the TV ads, in virtually all facets of popular culture? Two words: PEACE and LOVE! Yes, I know, the Summer of Love was back in 1967, but trust me, in 1971, PEACE and LOVE were everywhere!

To put 1971 popular culture into focus, I offer some remembrances. What kind of songs were we singing in my third grade classroom? Well, we often sang *I'd Like To Teach The World To Sing*. Yes, this was also used in a popular Coca-Cola TV commercial, but before the tune became associated with a soft drink commercial, the original version featured lyrics like this (which my teachers and fellow third graders sang with heartfelt passion):

*I'd like to teach the world to sing
 In perfect harmony
 I'd like to hold it in my arms
 And keep it company
 It's the real thing (Peace and Love)
 No room for G.I. Joe here!*



Also In 1971, TV ads were telling us that Canada Dry Ginger-Ale “tastes like love!” In the realm of fashion, young people were fond of wearing textile patches on their jeans and overalls; the most popular of the patches featured the “Peace” sign, while innumerable others simply blared out: “LOVE.” And in case you still weren’t getting the new vibe of the time, there was the music intro (super catchy, I must admit) to the popular TV comedy-romance series, LOVE AMERICAN STYLE:

Lo-o-ove, Love, LOVE!
Love, American Style
Truer than the red white and blue-ue-ue-UE
Love, American Style
That’s me and you
And on a star-spangled night my love
You can lay your head on my shoulder

You get the picture.

By the time 1974 rolled around, one would think young people would be walking around hugging, hand-holding and endlessly upholding one another in love. By 1974, every young person should have been seeing everyone else as their brother and sister—after all, the concepts of PEACE and LOVE had been drilled into them for at least five years now! Well, I guess perhaps some of those messages of 1967 to 1971 did get through, had been internalized by some. Personally, however, my observation is that by 1974, *my* peers were way more into doing Kung Fu on each other than expressing notions of Peace and Love.

But returning to 1971, didn’t we still love and revere the war hero? Well ... sure, if your father or other close family member was serving in the military, but even then, true respect wasn’t a given. For everyone else, love and respect for our war veterans and active military had cooled down to lukewarm

temperatures. In some cases there was only begrudging respect. In far too many other instances there was downright hostility! Indeed, this newfound contempt for our American servicemen in many quarters of U.S. society had become an alarming trend by 1971. Granted, such contempt wasn't yet actively promoted in popular culture—unless you counted some of the more hard-core rock musicians (for example, consider the 1971 John Lennon track, *I Don't Wanna Be A Soldier*) or anti-hero movies like M*A*S*H.

Yes, instead of overtly promoting anti-militarism, popular culture instead promoted the Anti-Hero. True, the Anti-Hero has been around in movies since the 1940's and 1950's (as in Marlon Brando's biker character in *The Wild One*). But by the late 1960's and early 1970's, the Anti-Hero came to include subtly anti-war, anti-military types who were instead peace-loving, love-loving. Now even *those* types had been around for a while—in fact, some pretty major World War I and World War II war heroes have been anti-fighting Quakers! But the Anti-Hero of the late 1960's to early 1970's went a step further: they weren't just anti-violence, they seemed to be anti-armed forces in general. I still vividly remember the quite popular 1970 TV movie, TRIBES. In that story, Jan Michael-Vincent plays a peace-loving, anti-military young man who is drafted into the Army, encounters brutally abusive drill Sergeants, only to have his unwavering anti-military sentiments treated with more begrudging respect in the end (even after he goes AWOL).

All that being said, Dad was sent to Hawaii as a Navy Chaplain in 1971, so none of that anti-military, anti-veteran sentiment for us! For those years of 1971 to 1974, Dad served as Protestant Chaplain to the Marines of Camp Smith. My father's description of his Hawaiian Island duty station as told in his 2005 book, *Salt of the Sea*:

Camp Smith was located on a dead-end street, high on the mountainside with a spectacular view of Pearl Harbor, Hickam Air Force Base, the International Airport, Honolulu and [natural landmark] Diamond Head. The Camp name came from the notorious general, “Howlin’ Mad” Smith who led his Marines across the Pacific during WW II... The Camp was not large, only a few acres, but its importance far surpassed its size. Its mission was to support two important headquarters located within its fence. The senior headquarters was the Pacific Command which encompassed everything military across the Pacific. Since the Navy is the dominant service in the Pacific, the commander of the region is always a four-star admiral. Headquarters Fleet Marine Force Pacific was second in importance. This command reached from California to Japan and was commanded by a three-star lieutenant general. The combined staff was comprised of 12 or so generals and admirals. The Army and Air Force were also represented. Staff officers of senior commands are normally senior officers, so Colonels and Navy captains and commanders were as plentiful as corporals and seamen on a typical base.⁷

As for the physical layout and general look of the base, the following is also Dad’s description, which from my own remembrances, is exactly how I remember it:

Originally, the main buildings housed the Naval Hospital, built during WW II, constructed in tiers on the mountainside, with all buildings connected by walkways. This was important since, at that altitude, it often rained. With the exception of a few termites that enjoyed eating things like the walls, the chapel piano, furniture and anything made of wood, the facilities were comfortable. The chapel

*was on the upper side of the complex along with the chaplain's office space, reception area, and Sunday School classrooms.*⁸

While serving at Camp Smith, Dad became well acquainted with two upper grade officers of note. The first was Admiral John McCain Sr., CINCPAC Commander at the time. His son, LCDR. John McCain Jr., —who was actually being held as a prisoner of war in Hanoi at the time—would become a famous Senator upon release and indeed, ran for President in 2008! Interestingly, the man who defeated McCain in the 2008 Presidential race, President Barrack Obama, was actually living and attending elementary school just down the hill from Camp Smith in 1971. For such a tiny island, a lot goes on at Oahu!

A second Senior Officer with whom Dad had become acquainted was a Marine on Admiral McCain's staff who seemed to enjoy dropping by Dad's office to talk about religion. This Colonel, and his wife, also came to our home for dinner one evening. I remember almost nothing about this man or his gracious southern wife (we often had guests for dinner) but he did turn up on my TV set years later. He was being played by Robert Duvall in a movie about the contentious relationships he had with the military, his family and his soon-to-be-a-famous-writer, son. That movie: *The Great Santini*.

So there we were—a young military family, stationed on the island of Oahu in 1971, with Dad serving at a strategic hillside military installation overlooking Pearl Harbor. Indeed, Camp Smith was part of the expansive Pearl Harbor military complex on Oahu. As a military family stationed at such a historically crucial locale, we were drawn in immediately to the island's significant World War II past. We certainly sought out the various historic military sites and sights during those 1971 to 1974 years on Oahu. There were actually several military bases on Oahu: Camp Smith (of course), the Pearl Harbor Naval

Station and Base, Hickam Air Force Base, Fort Shafter Army Base, Schofield Army Base, Wheeler AFB, Marine Corps Base Kaneohe—even the tiny little military installation inside the iconic Diamond Head volcano (long extinct).

Of course we visited the Arizona Memorial—that was absolutely essential. Then and now, families of the fallen, as well as those who simply wanted to pay their respects, would throw flower leis onto the waters covering the sunken *U.S.S. Arizona* wreckage. While driving around Ford Island, Dad pointed out the rusting wreckage of the scuttled *U.S.S. Utah* (most of the vessel visible above water), another casualty of December 7, 1941.

Then there was that eerie World War II war plane wreckage, half-hidden—yet still quite visible-- in a jungle-like gulley just off one of our favorite hiking spots near Camp Smith, on the Aiea Loop Trail. One of the trail entrance points was accessed from a picnic ground just above Camp Smith, so that's usually where we parked and started our trek. Of course, that plane wreckage site was an attraction and mid-hike landmark.

Now in the early 70's, there was an urban legend circulating around Oahu—or at least we talked about it at school with other military kids—that the wreckage along the Aiea Loop Trail was that of a Japanese fighter plane that had crashed, or had been downed by U.S. firepower, during the attack on Pearl Harbor. That made perfect sense to us! I remember climbing down to the plane wreckage and being nervous that I might find the remains of crewmen in the wreckage. Fortunately, there would be no such gruesome discoveries.

Back in the early 1970's, the plane was mostly intact. From what I understand, in the decades that have passed, the wreckage site has deteriorated, been picked over and is now

just visible in scattered bits and pieces. The wreckage has also fallen deeper into the gulley, thus, it is no longer safe to climb down to it. Also, it should be clarified: later, we discovered it was a U.S. B-24 bomber that crashed in 1944 while trying to land (thus, no connection to the Pearl Harbor attack).

All this to say that—unlike the American popular culture at large (particularly youth American popular culture) – our family at least felt an affinity with the December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor attack because...(1.) Dad was a Lieutenant in the U.S. Navy serving as a Chaplain at Camp Smith, which happened to be part of the Pearl Harbor Military Complex and ...(2.) We drove by and onto Pearl Harbor almost daily; in fact we *lived* in Pearl City which is adjacent to Pearl Harbor and ... (3.) Dad served with older military leaders who actually began their military service as young men moved by the Pearl Harbor attack to join the battle to save America. Add to that the fact that plenty of World War II era structures still survived and were still in use in 1971: military barracks, military office buildings, military air hangars and towers, old ball parks, hospitals, war ships, officer and enlisted housing.

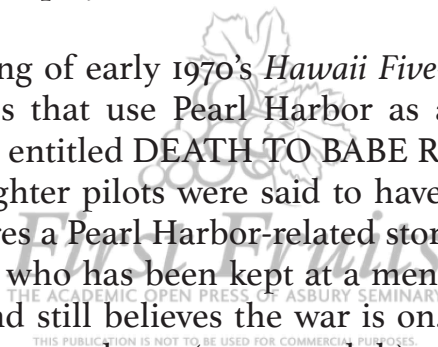
But though I wasn't really aware of it at the time, both my parents were quite cognizant of a family and emotional connection to December 7, 1941 that would startle many to know. Today, 50 years later, I still marvel that we have this connection to the Pearl Harbor story.

The years of 1971 to 1974 were a unique time to live in Hawaii, if only because that period in the islands is so well-documented on TV shows of the period! It seems everyone was coming to Hawaii in the early 1970's. In 1973, Elvis Presley was in Honolulu to perform his historic live and broadcast-around-the-world-via satellite TV concert, ALOHA FROM HAWAII. Incidentally, it is an earlier Elvis concert, given in Hawaii,

that demands mention in this book. In 1961, Elvis arrived on Oahu to begin filming *Blue Hawaii*. But also while he was in the islands, he agreed to play a concert at Pearl Harbor's Bloch Arena (our family went to see several basketball games there in the early 70's and mid-1980's). It was only his second concert in the previous three years, and due to the packed crowd of 4,000 screaming fans, the concert raised \$54,000 dollars, which at that time, was enough to fund the beginning of construction of the U.S.S. Arizona Memorial.

There were other notable celebrity visits to Hawaii while we were there in the 70's. Also in 1973, fresh off of defeating boxing legend Joe Frazier, Heavyweight Boxing Champion, George Foreman came to the islands. The local paper published a photograph of Big George paddling an outrigger canoe in the waters off Waikiki. As noted earlier, the Brady Bunch touched down in Oahu for a full three-episode story. Finally, if anyone wants a *really vivid* visual of Hawaii in the early 70's, simply check out Seasons Two through Five of *Hawaii Five-O* (the original series, not the 21st century reboot). For me, that show is like a Time Travel machine back to my elementary school years: the island locales, the cars, the dress, the hair, the mix of races and cultures, the generation gap, the military versus locals conflicts, even some of the local lingo—it's all there in living color, albeit played out in fictitious crime dramas.

Speaking of early 1970's *Hawaii Five-O*, yes, there are several episodes that use Pearl Harbor as a backdrop. One episode of 1970, entitled DEATH TO BABE RUTH (something the Japanese fighter pilots were said to have shouted as they attacked) features a Pearl Harbor-related story. A middle-aged Japanese ninja, who has been kept at a mental hospital since 1941, escapes and still believes the war is on. He tracks down the daughter he never knew (now an adult) and believes her to be his wife. The obsessed ninja plans to blow up the oil tanks



adjacent to Pearl Harbor once he sees the Japanese fighter planes swoop in for the attack—but they never show up. This distraction gives McGarrett and company the opening to tackle and book him. That episode came out in 1970. At the time, the episode may have been viewed by many as being quite far-fetched. Understandable, as 1970 was long before PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) had come to be widely understood as a common affliction suffered by war veterans. Sadly, the delusions of this fictitious *Hawaii Five-O* former ninja, were hardly more “bizarre” than those experienced by one of Jake DeShazer’s fellow American war captives once he returned home. That story will come later.

I suppose Mom and Dad dropped the name of Jake DeShazer from time to time during our 1971-74 tour of duty on Oahu. That would have been a natural thing to do considering all the aforementioned Pearl Harbor history surrounding us. But if they did, it didn’t take—at least not in my case. I was too preoccupied with baseball and collecting baseball cards at the time. Jake DeShazer wouldn’t truly move into my consciousness until a later year when we boys encountered a Christian comic book telling Jake’s story. My folks took the opportunity at that time to remind us that we actually knew the particular combat war crewman who was the subject of that dramatic comic book!

Again, Jake DeShazer was nowhere near Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Jake’s various military tours of duty never took him to the Hawaiian Islands. But as stated before, Jake’s undeniable connection to Pearl Harbor should, by now, be quite clear. It will become even *more* clear as you proceed through the chapters of this book. As for the Cooks, particularly my father, Chaplain Elmer Dean Cook, the Pearl Harbor connection would become even more acute with Dad’s second Hawaii tour of duty in the mid-1980’s.



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CHAPTER 8

A Prisoner Finds Grace

In spite of Jake having been raised in a strong and strict Christian household, it was not he but fellow captives who displayed an outward spiritual faith. Of course there was the head pilot of Jake's crew, the tall southerner who urged Jake to attend Easter services on board the *Hornet*. The other notable, outspoken Christian among the American prisoners was Lt. Robert Meder from Plane 6. Jake would remember a day when he and Meder had been assigned to pull weeds in the prison yard, and they had time to converse.

The subject came up of how long the war might go on. It was Meder's contention that the war would last "until Jesus caused it to stop." Meder was also outspoken over the fact that one day all nations and peoples would recognize that Jesus is Lord. While Jake was undoubtedly impressed at the faith of his fellow prisoner, Jake would not himself embrace true salvation until near the end. The tragedy that would set into motion Jake's conversion to Christianity would, sadly and ironically, be the death of Lt Meder in prison.

It was Winter of 1944. By this time, Jake and the other American airmen prisoners were housed at a Japanese prison camp in Nanking, China. Here, solitary confinement in narrow cement cells continued. Then, one day, Jake could hear the sawing and hammering of wood in the courtyard outside his window. As he had become talented at doing, Jake climbed up

the cement walls of his narrow 5 X 12 cell, using his hands and feet to scale the walls like an emaciated Spiderman. Reaching the window, Jake peered outside. There, in the courtyard, Jake could see the Japanese guards hammering together a large wooden box.

The next day, the door to Jake's cell opened and a guard urged him to come forth. In broken English, the guard told Jake that he was being taken to the cell of Lt. Meder, where Jake would be able to pay his last respects. As he stood there, gazing down at the body of his fellow airman prisoner, Jake remembered the previous days when Meder had clearly been in physical dire straits, complaining of pain in his heart. Jake also remembered Meder's words of faith that had bolstered his courage and inspired Jake and his fellow prisoners. Meder's death affected Jake deeply.

A short time after the loss of Lt. Meder, the remaining four American prisoners were brought before the Captain of the Nanking prison. The Captain told the men that the death of Lt. Meder was unacceptable, and that from now on, more attention would be paid to their well-being. The Captain got the ball rolling by asking the men what they would like to have for food. The Americans held nothing back: Steak and eggs! Bread and jam! Butter, milk—ANY American food! The Captain could not promise to meet all those requests, but he did promise to see what he could do. Shortly thereafter, the men began receiving bread with their daily rations of rice and soup. To Jake, this simple addition was manna from Heaven!

Then came the truly life-changing development. The guards began rolling a cart full of used books down the prison corridor. Each of the American prisoners were allowed to borrow a book to read. By the time the cart made it to Jake's

cell, Jake was thrilled that still amongst the selection of books, was a Bible. He eagerly grabbed hold of the Bible.

For the next three weeks, Jake immersed himself—hour after hour, day after day—in the reading of the Scriptures. A Bible had been a common fact of life in the DeShazer household when Jake was growing up, but he'd had taken little interest in it then. Besides, Bible verses were force fed to Jake in family devotionals, in addition to his parent's demands he memorize verses. But now, as a prisoner of war in Nanking, China, Jake could not get enough of God's Word.

In the dim light of his cell, Jake poured over chapters from the Old and New Testaments. He became fascinated with the many prophecies from the Old Testament (such as in the books of Isaiah and Daniel) that pointed to the coming of Christ—even though those books were written centuries before His birth! But in addition to the books of the Bible that illuminated his understanding of the prophetic nature of Biblical history, there were several other books and passages that seemed to speak directly to his heart.

There was Romans 10:9 which directly pointed the way to salvation: "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Another wonderful verse of promise came from John 1:12: "Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." Then, like a burst of sunlight into the dark and dankness of his prison cell came the words from 2 Peter 1:4 : "And because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises." But while promises of salvation and glimpses of God's glory were great thoughts on which to meditate, just how could one feel or achieve victory in a world of sin, painful setbacks and captivity, especially someone in

Jake's position? Well, the scriptures had directions for this too: "Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move'" (Matthew 17:20).

Then came the scripture verses—words that came from the mouth of Christ himself—that deeply convicted Jake regarding how far he fell short of following in the footsteps of Christ or being even a basic follower of Him. There were those pesky verses commanding the Christian to ... love. There was no getting around verses like John 13:34 where Jesus says, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." But then Matthew 5:43-44 takes this concept even further: "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven."

These verses struck Jake to the depths of his soul. Indeed, they were highly problematic. After all, Jake had spent the last three years actively hating his Japanese guards and despising the Japanese people. He had never prayed for them—if anything, he had prayed for a chance to wreak violence on them, as they had him. Jake knew what he had to do, knew which way he now wanted to go. The words of Mark 1:15 spoke louder and louder to him: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." That is when Jake knew that the "light had finally broke" on him. In that dark, cramped, solitary cell, Jake confessed his sins to Christ. Finally, he knew salvation was his, even his!

Considering his circumstances, and the stark prison confinement in which he continued to languish, one might think that Jake's "joy" at finding salvation would be muted at best—perhaps more a feeling of relief, of having taken care of

unfinished business. That was not the case. Jake would later testify that he'd never felt such joy in his life, *despite* the ongoing physical awfulness of his reality. In fact, his heart was flooded with joy! Now, neither prison nor death would be the final word in his life. If death was to come to him, he would merely pass through it and join Christ in his newfound eternal home of heaven!

In the years after being freed from prison, Jake most often quoted the following passage (using, as a rule, James Moffat's translation) I Corinthians 13: "Love is very patient, very kind. Love knows no jealousy; love makes no parade, gives itself no airs, is never rude, never selfish, never irritated, never resentful; love is never glad when others go wrong, love is gladdened by goodness, always slow to expose, always eager to believe the best, always hopeful, always patient. Love never disappears." It was a creed he would come to live by. But for now, though having finally found salvation in Jesus, he was still a Japanese prisoner of war. Even with his newfound joy at finding grace and salvation, memorizing scripture passages would still prove to be far easier than living by their precepts.



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CHAPTER 9

Release ... As War Comes to a Sudden Stop!

If this were a fictionalized Hollywood story, the remainder of Jake's story in prison would be one of unrelenting victory, vigor and an attitude of, *Nothing's gonna get me down!*

It wasn't quite like that. There was still plenty of suffering ahead. In fact, Jake's physical condition got so bad at one point, that he was reduced to crumpling to his knees, face to the floor and not moving from this position even when the angered guards demanded he sit up! Jake was too weak to comply. He felt great pain in his heart—a *physical pain!* This stirred up frightening memories of how Lt. Meder had likewise complained of physical pain in his heart shortly before he died. Now Jake truly believed that he would be the next to die, and that death would come at any time. As to what happened next... we'll come back to that.

Still, even while Jake continued to suffer, continued to be mistreated after his personal victory of accepting Christ, there were positive changes that took place. The best example is his relationships with the Japanese guards. Shortly after Jake's conversion, his obedience to "love thy enemies" was severely put to the test. One day, a particularly abusive guard was prodding Jake back to his cell, and when Jake didn't move sufficiently fast enough, the guard kicked at him, ramming his sharp, hob-nailed boot into the bottom of Jake's bare foot. Howling with pain, Jake tumbled onto the hard cement floor. The cell door

was closed behind him. The first thoughts that leaped to Jake's mind were ... *Surely Jesus doesn't expect me to love cruelty like this! I'm only human!* In other words, Jake's attitude towards that guard who'd shoved him into the cell... fell far short of love. But that night, recovering from the painful encounter on the floor of his narrow cell, Jake meditated on the scriptural words he had memorized the past few weeks. That night, Jake decided to try something new. Something radical.

The next morning, Jake looked out his cell door and saw the unkind, punishing guard from the previous day coming on duty. Jake decided to have some words with him. Finally, the guard came within earshot of Jake's cell.

“Ohivo Gozaimasu!” called out Jake.

The guard's head swiveled towards Jake's cell. Jake smiled back at the guard. Apparently not knowing what to think, the guard continued on, probably thinking that Jake was either crazy—or trying to provoke him in some way. The fact is, Jake had greeted him with “Good morning,” in Japanese.

This went on for several mornings. Jake attempted to be friendly with the guard—to love him, as Christ commanded Christians to love their enemies. The guard would not respond, at least for a time. Then, to Jake's surprise, the same “cruel” guard stopped by Jake's cell to engage in some friendly chat about their respective families—how they both came from families where there were many siblings and the challenges that came with that.

On another day, Jake noted that the guard had been walking down the corridor, his hands folded up as if in prayer. Jake asked the guard if he had been praying and the guard said that he had. The guard further added that he had seen Jake

pray before as well. To Jake's pleasant surprise, the guard took Jake into his confidence by explaining that he had been praying to an ancestor. And with that, the guard discreetly gave Jake a sweet potato! When this happened, Jake gave a prayer of thanks, for now he had clearly experienced a victory. He had made a friend from an enemy.

Despite making a new friend, DeShazer would still nearly succumb to the aforementioned illness—manifested by sharp pain in his heart-- that he feared would kill him. However, unlike the case of his fellow former captive, Lt. Meder, a physician was brought in to examine Jake. DeShazer was hoisted onto a straw mat and administered medications. Then, when mealtime came, Jake was given a virtual feast of hot soup, bread, boiled eggs and a pint of milk. In fact, from that point on, Jake's meals would prove to be likewise nourishing and filling. As he continued to recover, Jake's prayers were filled with profuse thanks to the God who had provided for his well-being and had brought him back from the cusp of death.

Then came the unexpected experience of August 10, 1945, a day Jake would remember for the rest of his life. He woke up that morning seeming to hear a voice telling him to "start praying."

"What shall I pray about?" asked Jake.

The voice replied, "Pray for peace and pray without ceasing." This seemed to be a peculiar directive; Jake had up to that time simply assumed God could stop the war whenever He felt like it. Still, Jake did as he felt directed by God that day. Here is how Jake remembered it:

"About seven o'clock in the morning I began to pray. It seemed very easy to pray on the subject of peace. I prayed

that God would put a great desire in the hearts of the Japanese leaders for peace. I thought about the days of peace that would follow. Japanese people would no doubt feel discouraged, and I felt sympathetic toward them. I prayed that God would not allow them to fall into persecution by victorious armies.”⁹

At two o'clock that same afternoon, Jake felt the Holy Spirit tell him: “You don't need to pray anymore. The victory is won.” Jake was amazed but still not quite sure what to make of the message. Of course, he had no radio, no access to newspapers. It would not be until several days later that Jake would finally learn just what had happened on August 10. That was the day the Japanese made overtures to sue for peace following the devastating atomic bomb hits on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Actually, the first true sign that freedom might be around the corner came as far back as Christmas, 1944. That day, while the American prisoners were out in the prison yard, they spotted American bombers flying overhead and dropping bombs in the distance. This was proof to Jake and the other American crewmen that their countrymen were still very much in the fight and doing so with aggression! While this would not surprise the Americans at home, Jake and his fellow captives had been constantly told by their guards that the Japanese were winning the war—handily! From 1942 through 1945, Jake and the other prisoners were fed a constant stream of propaganda that major American cities had been taken over by Japanese forces, that multiple U.S. aircraft carriers had been taken down, often by just one Japanese fighter plane! So when Jake and the other three prisoners saw the American fighter planes that Christmas Day of 1944, they were truly jubilant. Sadly, they would not be liberated at that time.

However, following August 10, 1945, signs of an imminent end to the war were everywhere. First, there was the news that Japan had sued for peace. A few days later, Jake and the other Americans noticed the guards decked out in new civilian clothes when they came on duty. Furthermore, they were discarding their old uniform attire and breaking into their supplies. Something was indeed up! A few nights later, Jake could not sleep. His health was improving but he was not “well” by any stretch of the imagination. He still felt in physical pain. The hunger pangs continued to torment him. He knew an ending of some sort was imminent. Perhaps it would be release. Perhaps it would be death through execution. Either way, Jake felt a peculiar elation. As DeShazer biographers Janet and Geoff Bengé write, “He [Jake] lifted up his hands and said, ‘Lord, take me. I just want to leave this suffering and be with you.’ Then he became aware of his hands. They were empty and Jake thought, ‘I can’t go like this... Lord, I don’t want to come to you with empty hands. Give me another chance and I’ll try.’”¹⁰

It is important to keep in mind that just because there seemed to be clear signs that the war was drawing to a close, the American POW’s did not feel assured of imminent release. In fact, since they were first taken captive in 1942, Jake and his fellow prisoners were largely convinced that if the Americans stormed into Japan as victors, all American prisoners might well be executed as a last act of vengeance by Japan! But since the prison guards seemed more concerned about vacating the premises than finishing off the prisoners, Jake finally allowed himself the luxury of seeing freedom as just around the corner.

Jake continued to regain his strength while lying on the straw mat. This gave him plenty of time to think of his future as a free man—a future that only weeks earlier did not seem to be in the offing. Jake became filled with joy, communing with the Holy Spirit and pondering how the Holy Spirit might use him

as a *former* prisoner of war. In Jake’s words: “I felt love towards the Japanese people and a deep interest in their welfare ... How I wished that I could tell the Japanese people about Jesus! I knew that my Savior would be their Savior too!”¹¹

Then came August 20, 1945. A Japanese official showed up and announced to the American prisoners: “The war is over! You can go home now.” And just like that, the cell doors were thrown open!

Even though the near-future would be a whirlwind of events as Jake and his fellow American captives adjusted to life as free men—not to mention being celebrity hero figures—Jake had few misgivings about what his future would entail. The Holy Spirit was clearly speaking to him: “You are called to go and teach the Japanese people and to go wherever I send you.”



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CHAPTER 10

Four Go Home

For Jake and his fellow prisoners, it seemed too good to be true. Release from prison. Freedom to walk out and leave. That they would return to their homeland of the United States, back to the arms of friends and loved ones. In fact, because it all seemed too good to be true—and even against what they believed would be their fate over the last forty months—some of the Doolittle prisoners didn't fully buy into it at first! One of the four, in particular, even believed it all to be a Japanese trick, but that comes later.

Of course the United States knew that American servicemen were being held as prisoners of war by the Japanese. But how could the United States have known that four of those prisoners were men who had flown with the Doolittle raiders back in 1942? And that these four had survived some three years as captives in Japanese prison camps? By 1945, it was presumed that any Doolittle raider who had not returned to the safety of a U.S. base, had probably perished in the raid or had died in captivity. In the end, it may have been a simple tin cup that alerted U.S. authorities to the existence of still-living Doolittle raider prisoners.

Jake could attest to the following: At one point during the war, fellow Doolittle prisoner, Lt. Nielsen, happened to look at the bottom of a tin cup in which soup was served to the prisoners. To his surprise, he saw “U.S. Marines” etched on the



**Jake DeShazer on his homecoming in 1945 after
being a Prisoner of War of the Japanese for almost
four years.**

**(Courtesy of Seattle Pacific University Archives.
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bottom of the cup! It suddenly occurred to Nielsen that there must be U.S. Marines being held in Nanking, perhaps at some nearby prison. *Would it be possible to communicate with them?* Nielsen scratched a brief message of his own on the bottom of the base metal cup, returning it then to the guards. With any luck, this cup would circulate back to the U.S. Marines in the event they were indeed being held nearby.

There were no immediate repercussions from the guards, so Nielsen felt assured that his message was not noticed—at least not by the Japanese guards. That being the case, Nielsen urged his fellow American prisoners to do the same whenever such tin cups or plates engraved with “U.S. Marines” might pass through. They all joined in, using nails scooped up from the prison yard to scratch in messages to their fellow—but unseen-- U.S. captives.

Later, Jake would swear that the plan must have worked, for it was Nanking U.S. Marines who, at the end of the war, had alerted U.S. paratroopers to the existence of the Doolittle raider prisoners. True, it was never officially corroborated that it was the messages scratched on the tin cups and plates that did the trick, but something surely alerted the Marines to the presence of Jake and his fellow airmen captives.

Probably the first significant benefit of freedom: Food!

It was constantly on Jake’s mind while being held prisoner. Rarely, in those 40 months of captivity, did he eat decently. A big chunk of bread added to his paltry ration of daily soup or rice was considered to be the makings of a feast! But from April of 1942 until August of 1945, the food Jake and his fellow captives were forced to eat was seldom nourishing. It was often disgusting, pockmarked with bugs and lice. Little wonder that Jake and his comrades gorged themselves on

Irish stew that first night of freedom at the fancy English-style hotel in Beijing. Food would be showered upon them for the foreseeable future—and at first, Jake could attest to not knowing how to adjust to this happy turn of events: “We would take the food that we couldn’t eat and store it away in case we became hungry before mealtime. It just seemed the natural thing to do. But after a while some of the people would laugh and ask us if we were getting ready for another famine. It seemed hard to realize that we were free and would not need to suffer from hunger pangs anymore.”¹²

On August 20, 1945, the world first learned that four missing Doolittle raiders had been found alive and had been released from captivity. The names of the four were announced over the radio. One can only imagine the tears, the prayers of praise, of profuse thanks from the DeShazer family when Jake’s name was announced over the radio. At the same time, four other families, each counting a loved one amongst their number who had flown on that Doolittle mission years earlier, would feel the sting of hearing four unfamiliar names announced over their radio loudspeaker.

“Looks like that one got religion!”

“Ah, he’s tryin’ to get some extra attention.”

“He won’t stay a Holy Joe long—not after he gets a gander at the booze and broads comin’ his way back in the states!”

These were not actual recorded quotes from U.S. press members, but they do reflect what some members of the news media were apparently thinking. After all, this was big—and surprising—news: Corporal Jacob DeShazer, one of the released Doolittle Raider POW’s, was now telling everyone that

he planned to *return* to Japan. As a *missionary*! What's more, a recent press photograph of DeShazer was being transmitted around the world: that of Jake on his knees, in a fervent posture of prayer and thanksgiving! *Hey, maybe for now the young guy is sincere. But it probably won't last.*

Upon their return to U.S. soil there was plenty of interest in Jake and the other released Raider POW's. Several newspapers were offering large sums of money for their stories. There were constant demands for interviews. Jake and the others traveled to New York City to speak on the "We the People" radio program. Jake was even amused to recall how he had received \$400 dollars for reading a single sentence over the radio, calling it the "most I have ever been paid to open my mouth."

Then there was the swanky soiree given at New York City's Stork Club in honor of the Doolittle Raiders—a story that would be recounted five years later by renowned U.S. commentator, Lowell Thomas. Jake was in attendance at the Stork Club that night, as were most of his fellow Raiders. Throughout the night, Jake happened to be seated next to a Colonel, a pilot who flew the eleventh B-25 bomber to take off from the *U.S.S. Hornet*. This Colonel couldn't help but notice that Jake had virtually not touched the alcoholic drink set before him that night. Jake agreed that the Colonel had observed correctly, and if he so desired, Jake would tell him why. The Colonel was indeed curious and boy, did Jake give him the whole story! So much so that the Colonel later talked with other raiders who knew Jake, and they confirmed not only Jake's story, but his heart for returning to Japan as a missionary. Consequently, when the surviving Doolittle Raiders reunited in 1950, one of the "main objectives" of the reunion was to throw their collective weight behind supporting the missionary work of Jake DeShazer!



First Fruits

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CHAPTER 11

A Fellow Prisoner Lost on his Way Home

Jake DeShazer's release from prison and his subsequent United States homecoming, was virtually one long blissful, glory parade. He and his fellow released prisoners were put up in luxury hotels in Beijing. For the first time in four years, they dined like kings. When they returned to U.S. soil, the press clamored for their stories and snapped pictures of the returning heroes. Then, as icing on the cake, Jake was able to reunite with his family in Oregon and share with them the wonderous and life transforming change he had experienced during his time in prison.

But Jake's return to his homeland was not without at least one significant hiccup. You see, once Jake returned home to Oregon, he was supposed to have 90 days of uninterrupted leave from the Army. However, Jake had only been home for two weeks when, for some unknown reason, Jake was contacted by military authorities. He was to report to Santa Ana Air Base in California. Though baffled to be called back to military duty so soon, Jake still assumed that his trip to Santa Ana would be a brief one. In Jake's mind, once he arrived at the base he would simply ask to be discharged from the Army- after all his enlistment contract was up. What's more he had just *served four years (and pretty bad duty) in a Japanese POW camp!*

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The joke was on Jake.

“We can’t honor your request for a discharge,” said the officer in charge. Jake could hardly believe what he was hearing, but the officer continued. “Giving you a discharge at this time is impossible. Do you have any idea how many soldiers are putting in discharge requests now that the war’s over?”

A stunned Jake DeShazer had no choice but to comply with his orders, so he tried to make the best of his time at Santa Ana Air Base. There was at least one positive: Jake had relatives in Southern California, thus he was invited to speak at a number of churches and youth services. These speaking engagements gave Jake an opportunity to sharpen his speaking and preaching skills. Jake was mightily encouraged at the overwhelming response he received wherever he spoke. Still, Jake would have preferred to sharpen his preaching and speaking skills up in Oregon while enjoying a time of leave with his family.

If it sounds like a huge, grievous mistake was made in calling Jake from convalescent leave to active duty, you would be right. In fact, the Santa Ana command made a major blunder involving not only Jake, but some fifty other former POW’s, all of whom were told to report to KP duty at the base! So there was Jake, a former Doolittle Raider, a man who had served four horrific years in a Japanese prison camp, a returning war hero who had been swarmed by the media upon his release—and who now was cleaning dishes in the mess hall! And this after only two weeks of leave from the Army after touching back down in his home country after four years! Jake must have thought to himself many times, *Is this the thanks I get?!*

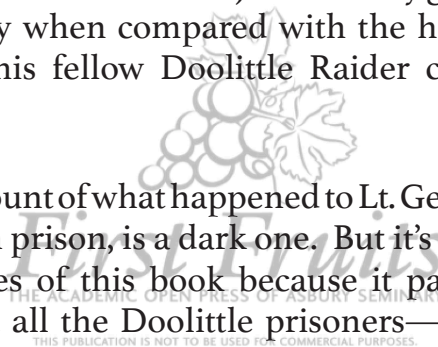
Fortunately, Jake’s KP stint was not to last long. A newspaper reporter showed up (he wasn’t actually invited by the base officers) and snapped a photo of Jake doing KP. Once the photo hit the Los Angeles papers, there was a great public outcry. The headline read: “War Prisoners Return: Put On KP

Duty.” And there, accompanying the article, was the startling photo of a still weak and emaciated Jake carrying heavy trays of dirty dishes!

The embarrassed commanding officer was compelled to offer an explanation, and he could only stammer out something to the effect of, “Well, we were short-handed and somebody has to stand KP.” The public at large didn’t buy it and there was quite a backlash against the military brass of the base. Finally, those in charge of the POW’s working KP were given a reprimand. Furthermore, this incident prompted the military officials to step up their efforts to give Jake his discharge! In the end, Jake was called in to see the Commanding Officer who flat-out admitted that putting Jake on KP had been a grievous error on their part.

At the time, especially when he was lugging around dirty dishes in the mess hall, it’s doubtful that Jake found his predicament to be humorous. But with the passing of time, this mind-boggling incident proved to be just a brief bump-in-the-road in his return to U.S. life. Jake might even have shaken his head and laughed when relating the story to audiences in subsequent years. There is little doubt, however, that Jake felt incredibly blessed that this Santa Ana detour had been the extent of his post-war “trauma.” Jake actually got off remarkably easy-- especially when compared with the horrific post-POW experience of his fellow Doolittle Raider crewman, George Barr.

The account of what happened to Lt. George Barr AFTER his release from prison, is a dark one. But it’s worth examining for the purposes of this book because it paints a horrifying picture of what all the Doolittle prisoners—including Jake—had to endure not just physically, but mentally.



First Things
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Let's return to late August of 1945. American parachutists land on the grounds of the Beijing prison where the four remaining Doolittle Raider prisoners--George Barr, Jake DeShazer, Chase Nielsen, and Robert Hite—are being held. On that day, it becomes official that the long four- year nightmare of captivity is over for the four U.S. airmen. They are soon to return stateside. It is a joyous moment. Only, for one of the Raider prisoners, release would not be immediate. In fact, for tall red-head George Barr, August 20 would not be a euphoric day of release. Instead, once the prison cell doors were opened, Barr began a second phase of nightmare that would rival his worst horrors in Japanese prison camp! Only this time, those horrors were mostly a product of his own mind.

Barr was not well. That much was clear even before release day arrived. In those last days of captivity in Beijing, Barr felt sure he was going to die. True, all of the Raider prisoners had a sense they were about to die at one time or other. Certainly, Jake had also felt that death was near in those final months of captivity. But unlike Jake, who recovered a sense that God's power was pulling him through, Barr remained convinced of his impending death all the way up to August of 1945. In fact, even when Barr heard the voices of his buddies, he thought he was hearing them in the afterlife!

Upon finally leaving the Beijing prison under the escort of the American rescuers, it did finally sink in—*somewhat*—for George Barr, that he was free. Still, for Barr, it was only a sense that he MIGHT be free—but then again, it could be a trick. And this fear, that his “release” was nothing more than an elaborate trick by his Japanese captors, would be a recurring theme for his foreseeable future.

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It quickly became clear to the U.S. military authorities in Beijing, that Barr was not well enough to go home. This came

as a great disappointment to DeShazer, Hite and Nielsen, who would have loved nothing more than to have all gone home together as the four remaining amigos, but they understood that their brother-in-arms needed time to recuperate. No doubt, the three released Raiders felt that after a time of rest and recuperation, Barr would be right as rain, and soon, he would be reuniting with them stateside. But this was the 1940's. The ravaging effects of PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) upon the human psyche was not widely understood at that time—neither was PTSD recognized as an all-too-common by-product of war, never mind four harrowing years in a POW camp.

Unfortunately for Barr, his being kept behind in Asia (albeit for his own good and under the recommendation of U.S. military doctors) even after supposedly having been “released,” only confirmed in Barr’s mind that he was actually still a prisoner. No, not a prisoner of U.S. doctors, but still literally a prisoner of the Japanese! This was nothing more than another Japanese torture—this time, a mental torture!

Barr was diagnosed as suffering from paranoia, delusions of persecution. He was deemed unstable, agitated, disturbed. Sadly, this proved to be an accurate diagnosis. Unless one has gone through such an extreme case of PTSD, it’s almost impossible to fathom the thoughts, the fears, and strange voices speaking to you.

At least when Barr was being held in the Japanese prison camps prior to August 20 of 1945, he understood where he was being held and who was holding him captive. What’s more, three of his fellow Raiders were in adjoining cells. They were all prisoners together. But now they were gone. They had vanished. Barr now found himself being held captive alone, and in an unfamiliar place. The fact that there were “U.S.” officials

around, did nothing to comfort Barr. These people “attending” to him might look like Americans, but it was clear he was still being held in Asia. It was all very clever—and sadistic—of the Japanese.

Barr believed the Japanese were trying to brainwash him. His mind began to wander: *If I'm not a prisoner why are there bars on my windows? ... If I'm not a prisoner why can't I leave my room?*

On September 12, Barr was conveyed, via stretcher, to a transport plane that flew him to Kunming, China. Upon arrival, he was transported to a hospital for further observation. The military authorities tried to get Barr to adjust by having him converse with enlisted personnel, nurses, doctors, other U.S. military patients. It seemed to work—for a while. Barr eventually calmed down and became more talkative. It was a positive step forward. But Barr’s “improvement” would prove to be an illusion.

At the beginning of October, Barr was taken to a local air strip where he was escorted across the tarmac to an awaiting C-47 transport plane, which would fly him to Calcutta, India. From Calcutta, Barr would be allowed to board a hospital ship that would take him home to the states. As he was making his way to the transport plane, Barr caught a glimpse of the sky and the distant mountains. For the first time in years, Barr was suddenly overwhelmed by a sense of freedom—and something in his mind screamed that this was the moment he had been waiting for over the last four torturous years! It was a twisted sense of freedom. You see, Barr was not basking in the knowledge that he would soon be on an airplane, bound for home and finally, free as a bird. Instead, Barr gazed out at the distant mountains—and saw this as the opportunity to escape his Japanese captors! The mountains were there before him,

and if he could just reach them, he would be free! Barr took off running across the air strip. He hadn't gone far when he was felled by a blow to the head.

When Barr came to, he was on board the C-47 bound for Calcutta. After a number of gas stops, the transport plane did indeed arrive in India. From there, Barr was taken to another hospital, where he remained a few more days under observation. There, the doctors told him what had happened. They assured him he was a free man and would soon be returning to the United States. Barr doubted what they were telling him. He *still* felt in the clutches of the Japanese!

A few days later, Barr was escorted onto yet another C-47, which for some mysterious reason returned to Kunming, China (perhaps to pick up an extra U.S. military officer who had missed the initial flight out). This, of course, did nothing to ease Barr's fears and suspicions despite the presence of three U.S. Lt. Colonels on the flight. This only served to make Barr wonder why so many American "escorts" had been taken in by the Japanese. Still, at Kunming, they all boarded a C-54 and flew directly to the following U.S. Pacific strongholds: Manila, Guam, Johnston Island. This Pacific island-hopping finally ended at Hickam Air Base in Hawaii (Hickam AFB is located right next to the Pearl Harbor Naval Base). Once in Hawaii—not yet a state, but still a strong U.S. territory—Barr was finally given the royal treatment. He was put up in comfortable officer's quarters, and then at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel. He was given a pass to the Outrigger Club in Honolulu for recreation. If there were doubts in Barr's mind as to whether he was finally free from Japanese captivity, this luxury vacation in Hawaii would surely erase them.

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That was not the case.

Even luxury accommodations and (what should have been) a glorious time of R and R on the tropical Hawaiian island of Oahu was still not enough to convince Barr that he was free of his Japanese captors. Barr's U.S. military escorts could never have suspected that placing Barr in Honolulu for an extended period of time, was actually doing more harm than good! You see, as anyone who has ever spent time on the island of Oahu—particularly in the city of Honolulu—can attest, Oahu is heavily populated not only with Pacific islanders, but with Asians. Even in the 1940's there was a significant Chinese and Japanese population on the island of Oahu. So when Barr walked the streets of Waikiki, in his mind, the Japanese were everywhere! They were watching him. And they still had him in their clutches.

Even so, the Americans who surrounded Barr were not aware of what was going on in his mind. Barr was at least aware enough to not give himself away; while others conversed cheerfully and joked with each other, Barr mostly kept quiet. He did more observing than talking, and he was trying his utmost to appear normal.

On October 12, Barr was flown to San Francisco, put on a bus with no escort and taken to the nearby base hospital. Incredibly, his only possessions were the clothes he wore. Somehow, he wasn't even carrying an ID, nor identifying papers or records of any kind! Consequently, when Barr arrived at the military hospital, he was hardly accorded a returning hero's welcome.

“Show the lieutenant to his room and get him some pajamas,” growled the hospital orderly to an underling. Not surprisingly, Barr once again felt like... a prisoner. True, he was in the United States. Or was he? The Japanese were incredibly clever, and who could say if this San Francisco military

hospital was ACTUALLY San Francisco? Perhaps he had been brainwashed to the point that he was only seeing what the Japanese wanted him to see. Anyone who's ever watched the 1962 thriller classic, *The Manchurian Candidate* (a movie made nearly 20 years after Barr went through what he believed was enemy "brainwashing") will remember the early scenes from that movie depicting captured American G.I.'s experiencing horrific brainwashing nightmares at the hands of Chinese Communists.

When Barr arrived at his hospital bed, he found someone else's belongings on the nightstand. This did nothing to calm his nerves, his agitation. It only took a few hours. Barr finally broke. He found a pocket-knife lying nearby. He eagerly grabbed it, even as he wondered why it had so conveniently been placed there within easy reach. He stabbed himself in his chest.

There was no blood. By now, Barr's mind was not just screaming, it was shrieking. Why was there no blood? Then he remembered how he had blood plasma taken from him back in Peking, shortly after his release from the Japanese prison. Now it was clear: The Japanese had removed his blood and replaced it all with plasma! Barr frantically looked for another way to do himself in and he soon found it. Like a man possessed, he ripped heavy wire from the base of a lamp, and from that wire, he fashioned a noose. Barr quickly moved a chair underneath the light fixture and he stepped up onto it. Then, he lifted himself slightly and kicked the chair out from beneath him. There was a violent snapping of his head. Electrical sparks flew out, followed by the shattering of glass and metal.

The next thing Barr remembered, he was surrounded by attendants. Barr later learned that the medical officer on duty had heard the mayhem taking place and had come running.

The attendants forcibly stripped Barr of the pajamas he'd been given, and he was taken bodily to the ward. He was put in a 6 by 9 foot cell with no windows. In other words, his new American accommodation was just like his old Japanese prison cell! His daily routine was much like it was when he was a POW in Japan. Now there was no doubt in Barr's mind that he was still a POW. And he was still a prisoner of Japan.

Despite the horror of his new reality (which terrifyingly resembled his OLD reality of the war years) there was one key difference in the treatment Barr received at the U.S. military hospital ward versus the treatment he received in Japanese prisons. The food. Barr was administered a diet that was filling and healthy. As the next few days passed, Barr began to regain his strength. He also regained some of his mental faculties, but not to the point where he could see things as they truly were.

Once again, Barr employed the strategy of becoming cooperative. Docile. He soon discovered that when he stopped resisting, stopped ranting, then he was given more freedom. As Barr figured it, eventually he would be given enough freedom to where he might be able to make his escape. But escaping the San Francisco military hospital was not to be. On October 19, Barr and other psychiatric ward patients were put in strait jackets and placed on board a train. To some of the patients, the transport train probably felt like freedom. But to Barr, the train was nothing more than a "moving prison." During his years as a POW, Barr had experienced endless shuttles between Japanese prisons via transport planes, busses and trains. Once more, this new reality looked an awful lot like the old horror show reality. Neither did it help for Barr to gaze out at the passing American scenery. The train passed through the Sierras and Rocky Mountains during a time of year when snow covered the slopes. To Barr, this passing scenery resembled nothing less than the mountain country of China! He had NEVER arrived

back in America. He was still in Asia—and probably being taken back to the Japanese prison camps!

In three day's time the train pulled into Clinton, Iowa. Barr's ability to reason was about gone by this time. He was taken to Schick General Hospital which was the nearest Army hospital facility. Nevertheless, George Barr was far from forgotten. By the time he arrived in Iowa, Mrs. Towns (his "adopted" mother) wrote to General Doolittle, expressing her concerns that she could not locate George. Now by this time, the former Lt. Colonel Jimmy Doolittle, heroic leader of the 1942 Doolittle Raid, was now a General. There was a lot on his plate. So how did Doolittle respond? Like the American hero he was: He dropped everything and began an official search for his missing Raider. "We who love George Barr will do everything we can for him," said the General.

There was a good reason Mrs. Town could not locate her missing "adopted" son. Barr was in no shape to respond to communiques, even if they did find their way to him. Upon his arrival in Clinton, Barr was immediately placed in a locked ward with seven other disturbed patients. The doctors did not stop by to evaluate him, thus his state of bewilderment continued. But help was on the way. While Doolittle was searching for Barr through official channels, it was actually Mrs. Towns who finally discovered where George was being held. She promptly put in a call to George's sister and the two women put together a plan whereby Bill Mass (husband of George's sister) would travel to Clinton, Iowa with his physician father. The two men arrived just in time.

They found Barr in a terrible state. Barr met them in the visitor lounge. He recognized his brother-in-law, his brother-in-law's father—just barely. To Barr, these men had a somewhat familiar look, he thought he remembered them, but they looked

strangely older. It could still be a trick of the Japanese. Still, the ice had been broken. For the first time in more than four years, Barr was conversing, in person, with family.

Later, Barr was visited by several friends from his college days. Then, at last, Mrs. Towns arrived to visit George in person. She too looked strangely older, thus Barr's suspicions remained. Nevertheless, the visits did seem to lift his spirits to some degree.

Eventually, George was transferred to an open ward, but he still was not being attended by a doctor. He still had no money or clothes of his own. With family and friends not able to be with him constantly, Barr once again began to fade mentally. His spirits continued to sink. At any moment, the Japanese were going to finish him off.

Then THE visitor arrived.

“Hi George! It's great to see you!”

Barr could hardly believe his eyes. There, standing before him, was his beloved commander: Lt. Colonel Jimmy Doolittle (Barr did not yet know Doolittle was now a general). It was a joyous reunion. The two men walked together outside and Barr poured out his story: his years of imprisonment in the Japanese prison camps, the horrors of what he went through after his “release,” how he had no doctoral visits, no clothes of his own, no money. Doolittle was shocked at what Barr was telling him. How could this happen?! Still, that day, more than any other, was the true turning point for George Barr. Now, in the presence of his commander, Lt. Col. Doolittle, Barr could finally be assured that the Japanese no longer had him in their clutches. Now at last, Barr was on the road to recovery.

The turnabout in Barr's fortunes were swift. He was soon promoted from Lieutenant to Captain. He received \$7,000 in back pay. He was even assigned a full-time psychiatrist. General Doolittle was not going to stand for his returning Raider POW being short-changed on anything he deserved. George Barr became a whole human being, though undoubtedly the nightmares still returned at times. No longer cleared to fly again, Barr chose to be discharged. Going back to school, he earned two degrees and lived out a useful life as a Management Analyst for the U. S. Army.¹³

Barr's experience could well have been Jake's. Why God allows each of us to be treated differently is known only to Him.



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CHAPTER 12

Alameda Revisited

From 2011 through 2015 I worked for a San Francisco Bay Area auction house operating out of an old Naval Air Station hangar on what was once a large Naval Base located in the Harbor of San Francisco. In fact, to drive onto the old Air Station Alameda, one would think (at first glance) it was still in operation. The official-looking front gates and guard kiosks were still there, though now they were unmanned. As soon as you entered through this particular gate (it wasn't the only base entrance) there was a large white chapel to your left (no longer in use), and several old golden-plaster-façade Naval office buildings surrounding the large grass flag commons directly before you. Many of these buildings were deserted at the time-- perhaps still are-- but a few were still in use by Alameda city officials. Just beyond this collection of some-deserted, and some semi-used Naval office buildings, and at the edge of the old Naval Base, were several large airplane hangars. There are no longer Naval planes in any of these hangars; rather, they now house civilian businesses: my auction house (Michaan's Auctions), a wine tasting company, various recreational businesses, etc. It's a fascinating experience to drive onto the old, historic Alameda Naval Air Station, for despite its abandonment by the military (save for a skeletal crew to oversee the grounds), it's half-ghost town, half living entity—though now, it's predominantly a civilian entity.

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For those of you not familiar with the *city* of Alameda (just outside the gates of the abandoned Naval Air Station), it's a small city that takes up most of the long, narrow island that juts out into San Francisco Bay, just across the water from the city of San Francisco. At the same time, Alameda lies so close to the city of Oakland, one can almost throw a baseball across the channel that separates the eastern edge of Alameda Island from downtown Oakland. The western tip of Alameda Island offers the viewer a spectacular view of the Bay Bridge, and just beyond, the San Francisco skyline. Though most of Alameda Island is dominated by the small city of Alameda, the western tip of Alameda Island is home to the former Alameda Naval Air Station. In summation, the old Air Station still looks very much like a military installation.

In the morning, prior to my auction shift, I enjoyed stopping to stroll around one particular Alameda Naval Air Station grass courtyard, surrounded on three sides by old military office buildings. The complex was located just a few yards inside the front gate to the base. The center building of the now-abandoned complex must have served some very important and official purpose, as the steps leading into it were flanked by two huge white stone eagles. During those meandering walks around the expansive grass commons of the complex, I pondered the history of this impressive former military installation. One hint of that history came courtesy of a brochure that often circulated around the auction facility where I worked.

The brochure read, "Come See the Historic U.S.S. Hornet" (or something to that effect). That's because the *U.S.S. Hornet* is actually docked—permanently—at the former Air Station! The vessel now serves as a museum/historic site for tourists. I must confess, I never made the short trip over to see the *Hornet*—I guess by the time I was done with my work shift, I

was anxious to get on the road and return home to Castro Valley. Still, at the time, I knew the *Hornet* was historic, that it served some major purpose during World War II, though it didn't sink in until years later as to just what role the *U.S.S. Hornet* played in World War II, much less the Jacob DeShazer story!

Indeed, it was only after my years of working at Michaan's Auction House that I learned the following facts about the *U.S.S. Hornet*. One, the *Hornet* was the aircraft carrier from which the sixteen Doolittle Raider planes took off to do their retaliatory raid on Japan—the first major U.S. counter-punch to Japan after Pearl Harbor. I well remembered the Doolittle Raider scenes from the 2001 movie, *Pearl Harbor*, but forgot that the *Hornet* was the carrier. Secondly, it was only after my Alameda auction house stint that Dad informed me how the current *U.S.S. Hornet* now docked at Alameda, is actually the second *U.S.S. Hornet*! The original *Hornet* (CV-8) of Doolittle Raider fame, did not survive long after its historic April 1942 mission to bomb Japan—that *Hornet*, in fact, was sunk by the Japanese during the Battle of the Santa Cruz Islands in the Pacific in October of 1942!

A new *U.S.S. Hornet* (CV-12) was launched in 1943, christened by the Chaplain of the first *Hornet*. Why was a new *Hornet* launched so quickly after the original had gone down in the Pacific? Dad's theory is this: "I think the Navy and the American government was trying to hide the fact that the original *Hornet* had been sunk by the Japanese so soon after the raid. That would have taken away from the positive publicity they had gotten from the Doolittle raid." Whatever the case may be, it is that second *Hornet* that now resides at the old Alameda Air Station and can be seen there.

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As we saw in the earlier chapters, it was here where the Doolittle B-25 bomber planes were loaded onto the *Hornet* and

from which the *Hornet* set sail for the covert mission to Japan that April of 1942. Later, the Alameda Naval Air Station would become the final home for the *U.S.S. Hornet* (albeit the second incarnation of the carrier). But the Alameda-Doolittle Raider connection does not even end there! As we've just learned, we cannot separate Alameda from the *U.S.S. Hornet*—neither can we separate the *U.S.S. Hornet* from the Doolittle Raiders. Amazingly, however, Alameda cannot be separated from General Jimmy Doolittle himself! In a head-shaking quirk of history, Jimmy Doolittle was actually born and raised on Alameda Island! How fitting is that?

As for my own family, we actually have our own Alameda/*U.S.S. Hornet* connection. For that we go back to Alameda in the 1950's where a young Navy aircrewman (i.e. my father) climbs on board an A3 D heavy attack bomber for his crew's carrier qualifications aboard the carrier *USS Bon Homme Richards, CVA31*. At the time, my father did not know he was actually tracing the footsteps of the Doolittle Raiders who, 17 years earlier, had flown to Alameda and boarded the carrier *Hornet* for their secret and now historic mission.



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CHAPTER 13

Pearl Harbor Revisited

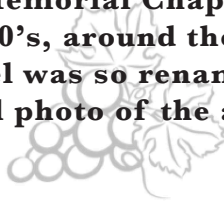
Our family returned to the island of Oahu in 1985. This time, things were just a bit different from our experience in the 1970's. One, the entire family did not return—my older brother, Scott, was now married and living in Virginia. My brother Kevin, and I, were full-time college students living on the mainland save for summer and/or Christmas Holiday breaks spent with the family. Only our youngest brother, Jonathan, who was still in high school, lived on Hawaii full-time with our parents.

This time around, Dad was not stationed with the Marines of Camp Smith. His duty was now as Senior Chaplain of the Pearl Harbor Naval Air Station and Naval Base. In that capacity my father, who was now a Navy Captain, would oversee the Protestant, Catholic and Jewish Chapels aboard the Naval Base. One of the first orders of business, and what Dad is quite proud of today, is that he led the effort to rename the main base chapel, The Pearl Harbor Memorial Chapel. Today, this striking, modern-style chapel still looks out over the ship piers of the Naval Base and across to the Arizona Memorial.

Also, it was now the 1980's, and these were different times. Though only 11 years had passed since our family left Oahu following Dad's first tour of duty in Hawaii, the Cooks returned in 1985 to a different atmosphere altogether. If you recall from the earlier chapter, the early 70's—even in Hawaii—was a time of Peace, Love and the Anti-Hero (which oftentimes



**The Pearl Harbor Memorial Chapel. This photo was taken in the mid-1980's, around the time the pier-side chapel was so renamed.
(Personal photo of the author.)**



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translated into *Anti-Military Hero*). Not in the mid-1980's. This was now the era of Ronald Reagan conservatism, of resurrected flag-waving patriotism, of big, iconic blockbuster movies like *Rambo: First Blood Part II* (1985) and *Top Gun* (1986)! Even in the realm of '80's pop music you had major pop hits like *Eye of the Tiger*, *Danger Zone*, *Born In The USA* and *Living In America*, which either extolled the virtues of American patriotism or the good old-fashioned fighting spirit. Then there was the uber-popular '80's wrestling superstar Hulk Hogan, whose trademark was stomping up to the ring while waving the American flag! Basically, by the 1980's, it was cool again to be proud of military vets, cool to be proud of your country, and cool to be a patriot!

Dad Enters the Pearl Harbor Story—45 Years Later

Dad's assignment at Pearl Harbor Naval Base came with far more responsibility than had his early 1970's duties at Camp Smith. Then again, by 1985, Dad had achieved the rank of Navy Captain as opposed to his previous Hawaii duty rank of Lt. Commander. In short, Dad's Pearl Harbor duties required him to wear many hats. First, as Chaplain, he was responsible to a Rear Admiral who oversaw the function of the various installations, including the bases at Kaneohe and Johnston Island (an atoll 750 miles southeast of Oahu) and the ships homeported there.

As Area Chaplain Coordinator, my father was also responsible for coordinating all chaplain activities on the island for the Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and Reserves. In this capacity, he scheduled chaplains to perform services at the National Cemetery at Punch Bowl, Honolulu. He planned and hosted the Chief of Chaplain's annual professional training for the area chaplains, as well as coordinating official visits for denominational representatives.

Several commands in Hawaii were assigned Navy chaplains. This included the nearby Submarine Base, the Naval Air Station, the Marine Brigade, the Coast Guard, as well as ships home based there. This totaled about 40 to 50 chaplains. Geographically, this chaplain coverage included the Hawaiian islands of Oahu, Kauai, Hawaii (aka the Big Island), and Johnston Island (an atoll near the Hawaii islands which was a high-security base, not open to the public). As far as the Pearl Harbor Naval Base, several chapel complexes were available for worship: the Pearl Harbor Memorial Chapel located adjacent to the piers and across the harbor from the Arizona Memorial; the Aloha Chapel (a synagogue); the Ford Island Chapel, and the Makalapa chapels which served the senior officers and their families living in the Makalapa housing area, as well as the Staff of the Pacific Fleet Commander.

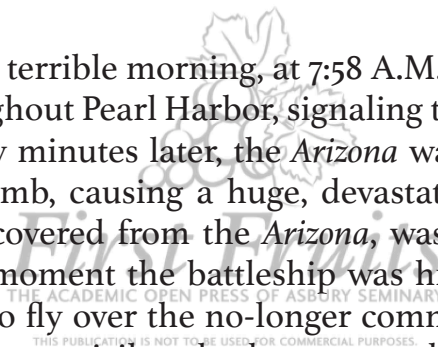
My father continues to be proud of his role in renaming the main base chapel, “The Pearl Harbor Memorial Chapel.” On that auspicious day in 1985, with appropriate ceremony and prayers of blessing, a large bronze plaque embossed with the new chapel name in English and Hawaiian was attached prominently on the front of the chapel. Indeed this chapel was (and still is) an architecturally-attractive house of worship; in fact the building actually won an architectural award for its beautiful design. Like the Arizona Memorial it rises sharply, symbolizing that spiritual victory too is also won. Visually it became a centerpiece of the harbor.

And how fitting that there *should* be a Pearl Harbor Memorial Chapel. How can it be forgotten that the December 7 attack took place on a *Sunday morning* as chapels ashore and on ships were preparing for worship? In fact, two chaplains were among those who lost their lives that morning. On the *USS Oklahoma* battleship was LTJG Aloysius H. Schmitt, CHC, USN, a Roman Catholic Priest. His body was not identified until 75

years after the attack although his remains, corroded chalice and prayer book were found in the wreckage. The body of Protestant Chaplain Capt. Thomas Kirkpatrick, from the state of Missouri, remains in the *USS Arizona* with his shipmates and parishioners.

Speaking of the *Arizona*, Dad was honored to actually meet Alfred Preis, designer of the Arizona Memorial, at one of the December 7th ceremonies at the memorial site. The *USS Arizona* Memorial, which opened to the public in 1962, was designed with a low dip in the middle signifying the defeat of our fleet that morning. But it also rises sharply on both sides, depicting final victory. Granted, now that World War II is some 80 years behind us, today's visitors probably react more with somber respect than visceral emotion. But in decades past, when there were far more World War II veterans and civilians who had personal memories of the World War II fallen, visitors to the Memorial typically expressed a grief that was more personal. That was certainly true during the '70's and '80's when our family was stationed in Hawaii and we took our trips out to the Memorial. It was much more common then for visitors to react emotionally when reading the names of the 1,177 sailors and Marines who remain submerged in the ship wreckage below the Memorial. Among those names are twelve pairs of brothers!

On that terrible morning, at 7:58 A.M., an air raid siren sounded throughout Pearl Harbor, signaling that an attack was imminent. Only minutes later, the *Arizona* was fatally hit by a 1,760 pound bomb, causing a huge, devastating explosion. A ship's clock, recovered from the *Arizona*, was found frozen at 8:05 A.M., the moment the battleship was hit. The American flag continues to fly over the no-longer commissioned *Arizona* to this day. Dad was privileged to be presented with one of those



flags at his retirement ceremony in 1988, and he still cherishes it to this day.

Occasionally my father was invited to participate in the December 7th observance at the Memorial: “On December 7, 1986, I was invited to accompany fifty Pearl Harbor survivors and a major TV network crew to the Memorial for a special ceremony commemorating the 45th anniversary of the attack. When the survivors entered the Memorial and began to read the names of those who had perished in the attack, they were overcome with grief. Many wept openly and loudly. This trip to the Memorial was scheduled just before the main ceremony was to take place outside the museum from which the Memorial shuttle boats departed. It became obvious that we were not going to be able to complete the ceremony on the Memorial and get the grieving survivors back on the boat in time for the main ceremony ashore. We did our best but were hopelessly off schedule, arriving back some twenty minutes after the scheduled start of the ceremony.

As I rushed to the platform to give the opening invocation, I spied on the front row the Honorable Senator Daniel Inoye, the movie star Ernest Borgnine and his wife, the mayor of Honolulu, and several high-ranking admirals and generals who had come to pay their respects. They had been waiting in the hot Hawaiian sun for the chaplain to arrive so the ceremony could begin. I never knew if the large crowd which had gathered were told why the chaplain was late.”¹⁴

During his years as Senior Chaplain at Pearl Harbor, my father would often arrive at Pearl Harbor Memorial Chapel during the seven o'clock hour on Sunday morning. He would often pause on the grassy lawn in front of the chapel, gazing out at the ship-filled harbor and the base that surrounded it. Dad would try to place himself, 45 years earlier, the morning

of December 7th, standing in exactly that same spot, He tried to imagine the Japanese fighter planes swooping in, dropping torpedoes and bombs, firing their guns at our ships, planes, and sailors. He imagined how horrible it would have been to witness the explosions, hear cries of the wounded and dying, or more likely, to be forced to flee for some kind of cover himself as low-flying Japanese planes swooped in for the kill!

More pertinently, he could see himself in the place of Chaplain Thomas L Kirpatrick. Chaplain Kirpatrick was the Protestant chaplain aboard the *U.S.S. Arizona*. On the morning of December 7th, 1941, he was up on the deck of the *Arizona*, setting up for morning services. His bulletin had already been printed up and he was probably getting ready to distribute it to the soon arriving worshippers. He never had that chance. Kirpatrick was still on the upper deck of the *Arizona* when the nearly 2,000 bomb hit the munitions magazine of the battleship, igniting the munitions and some 180,000 pounds of fuel. The devastating explosion that followed killed Chaplain Kirpatrick, the Captain and Admiral along with several hundred other servicemen. In the days that followed, the wife of Chaplain Kirpatrick received the Sunday, December 7 bulletin in the mail—the one prepared by her husband for the worship services on board the *Arizona* that morning. He had chosen two hymns to be sung by the worshippers that morning. The first, was *Eternal Father, Strong to Save* (the Navy hymn adopted from the British Navy). The second worship song chosen was a Christmas Carol: *Watchman, Tell Us of the Night*. It proved to be all too prophetic.

Also during my father's tour of duty at Pearl Harbor, he received permission to establish a Ford Island Chapel inside the old abandoned air control tower on Ford Island. And if you read Chapter One, then you know the rest of that story.



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CHAPTER 14

Experiencing Freedom, College, and Love

Once the ‘Welcome Home’ banquets had been enjoyed, the multiple rounds of media photographs, radio and print interviews were completed, it was time for Jake and his fellow Doolittle prisoners to make one more stop before they could rejoin loved ones at home: a medical checkup in Washington D.C. Donald Golstein and Carol Aiko Dixon recount:

“...the men were taken to Walter Reed Medical Hospital to be examined... They were immediately given a rehabilitation program designed to mitigate the negative effects of their time in prison and solitary confinement. The former prisoners told the doctors how they had been beaten and threatened with death by their captors. The flyers then underwent a series of physical checkups. Upon examination, doctors discovered that the men lost an average of thirty pounds each. The first treatment prescribed by the doctors was food. Their first meal consisted of tenderloin steak, fried chicken and milk.”¹⁵

As for the DeShazer family, they had suffered for four years as they awaited any news that Jake was still alive. The family had prayed for him continuously for nearly four years. This being the case, suffice it to say it was a joyous homecoming. Just to have their “Jake” return to them in the flesh was reason

enough for a celebration of thanksgiving. But to now learn that Jake had become (unlike his pre-military days) an enthusiastic believer, was even more cause for rejoicing! But it wasn't *just* that Jake had become a strong believer during his time in captivity, there was even more surprising news. Jake's sister Helen, who went home to Salem, Oregon to greet Jake, wrote this account: "My brother reached home about midnight last night. You can well imagine that there is not a happier home in the world than ours. He looks better than what we had feared—he has gained some fifteen pounds since being rescued. The most wonderful part of all, of course, is his experience with God and desire to return to Japan as a missionary after proper training."¹⁶

Meanwhile, the citizenry of the Salem-Madras area were not about to let the DeShazers have Jake all to themselves! The town of Madras, Oregon—where Jake had spent most of his formative years growing up—threw him a big 'WELCOME HOME' gala in the town plaza. A grandstand was set up, and Jake, as guest of honor, was to address the gathering, which he did. His message was sincere, though somewhat stiff, fairly mono-toned, and probably meandered a bit. Nevertheless, Jake's speech was well-received and he was much relieved to have it done. Afterwards, Jake laughed with a local reporter about this being the first time he had ever given a public speech! This experience would also highlight what could be a major area for growth considering his desire to enter the missionary/evangelist field: Jake wasn't a natural speaker. It would be a skill he would grow into, and it demonstrated his need to delve into formal missionary training.

The fact is, Jake was never one who enjoyed having all eyes trained on him. If he was to serve as a missionary, then rallies and speaking engagements would be a necessity in the years to come. Developing a comfort level with such activities would not come easy-- being an up and out-in-front personality

was not part of Jake's natural makeup. For those who doubt this, they need only gaze at the official Doolittle Plane # 16 crew photograph: In the photo, Jake seems to be hiding behind the taller, bulker Lt. Hite. Only Jake's eyes can be seen peeking over Hite's shoulder!

Seattle Pacific College

The campus of Seattle Pacific University is nestled at the base of a steep hill—North Queen Anne Hill to be exact— and adjacent to the Lake Washington Ship Canal. For the three years following his homecoming to the States, the lovely setting of Seattle Pacific College (now Seattle Pacific University), a Free Methodist-affiliated school, would be Jake's home and place of study. Amazingly, when Jake began his studies at SPC, he was only *one month* removed from walking out of a Japanese POW camp! This speaks volumes about his transition from near-death to life!

Like untold thousands of other servicemen, Jake attended college on the G.I. bill. Several Christian colleges had earlier contacted him once they heard of Jake's interest in continuing his formal education, as well as his desire to study at a Christian school. These institutions made it clear they would be honored to have the former Doolittle Raider as part of their student body. Still, there was little doubt in Jake's mind as to where he would attend. After all, his younger sister, Helen, already attended SPC and was actually secretary for the college president, Dr. C. Hoyt Watson.

Jake was a celebrity from the moment he set foot on the SPC campus. He would recall walking across the campus and regularly being greeted with, "Hi, Jake!" This could get a little embarrassing as Jake did not often know the names—or even the faces—of the fellow collegians greeting him. As a

notable incoming freshman, Jake often found himself speaking at various college meetings and functions—particularly those that had to do with evangelism and missions. An attractive co-ed who helped set up one such Campus Crusade meeting soon caught his attention.

Meeting Florence proved to be truly providential. Not only did her natural beauty immediately catch Jake’s eye, but he also found himself drawn to her spirited personality and—this was the best part—she also fostered a strong heart for missions! Jake and Florence hit it off almost immediately, and within a year they were engaged to be married! Florence truly completed Jake and in the years to come, her outgoing personality, her ease with people in social situations, would perfectly compliment Jake’s often shy, self-effacing manner. In short, Florence would prove to be an indispensable co-minister in Jake’s future missionary endeavors.



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CHAPTER 15

Fulfilling the Call to Return

After traveling the country by car and speaking at several churches and organized functions, the DeShazer family finally arrived in the city of San Francisco. From here, they would depart by ocean liner (the *General Meigs*) and sail across the Pacific to Japan. It was December 14, 1948, and Jake was finally making good on the promise he made to his Savior in prison, that one day he would return to Japan and share his testimony. Only now, he was returning to Japan with a lovely young wife and their firstborn son, Paul.

As the *General Meigs* pulled away from the pier at San Francisco, Jake, Florence and little Paul waved goodbye along with the other passengers on board the liner. A few minutes later, just as he had that fateful April of 1942, Jake gazed up at the towering Golden Gate Bridge. As the *Meigs* sailed directly underneath the iconic structure, Jake could not help but reflect on how the last time he had done this, he had been an air crewman with a military mission aboard the *U.S.S. Hornet*. That was the old Jake DeShazer—the one who couldn't be bothered to go up on deck for Easter Sunday services once the *Hornet* had put out to sea.

Some three weeks after leaving San Francisco, the *Meigs* finally steered her way into the docks at Yokohama, Japan. There, Jake and Florence were confronted with a startling sight: A large, cheering crowd of Japanese had gathered to welcome

the ship into port. The DeShazers could only guess that this was the typical welcome given *any* ocean liner that arrived from America- though given how only three years had elapsed since the U.S. and Japan ceased hostilities, this didn't quite seem logical!

As Jake and family descended the gangway, another loud cheer went up from the throng massed on the dock. Camera bulbs flashed in front of them. Jake was certainly startled. He turned to Florence and wondered, "Is this all for us?" It was.

Japanese reporters crowded around the DeShazer family, microphones held out to catch Jake's words. Now, finally, the mystery of the crowd's reception was cleared up: a reporter held up several small pamphlets. Jake and Florence recognized the pamphlet instantly. They were the ones entitled: "I WAS A PRISONER OF JAPAN" by "JAKE DESHAZER." Jake could hardly contain his joy. A stellar job had been done distributing the tracts ahead of their arrival.

The DeShazer's first year in Japan was a whirlwind of activity. They passed out tracts on city streets. Jake preached to packed out churches. An interpreter, Mr. Nishdi, translated Jake's words into Japanese for the attending congregations. With a tiny hotel room serving as their temporary living quarters, the DeShazers would spend their down time going over the many letters, tracts, and cards that spilled over their tabletops. They were struck by one particular letter from a young Japanese woman:

Before I was a Christian I must support my family who were in poor condition. I worked as a factory girl but I was very discouraged. I tried to kill myself three or four time but I couldn't go through with suicide. I always hated God. But then one day I

found a circular telling of your coming to our town to make a speech.¹⁷

On another occasion Jake was preaching to yet another large assembly. As he did so, he happened to glance over and meet the eyes of one particular Japanese girl. The young woman seemed to be transfixed, in an evil way. Her eyes seemed to be staring daggers at Jake. Thinking he was perhaps making too much of this girl's facial expression, Jake continued his preaching.

After the meeting, Jake and Florence engaged in a time of meet-and-greet. They would say quick prayers for the crush of Japanese who approached them after the talk. At one point the angry-looking young Japanese woman approached Jake, but now she seemed softened. She spoke softly, confidentially to Jake. Florence tried to listen in but could not hear the words. Later, a stunned Jake told Florence what the girl had said.

This angry-looking young Japanese woman had come to the meeting intending to kill Jake! Her heart was filled with murderous hatred because the man she was going to marry had been killed during an American bombing raid. Now, on this night, she would get her revenge on the American Doolittle Raider. But after listening to Jake's story of finding Jesus and receiving a spirit of forgiveness and love for the Japanese, the girl realized that it would be wrong for her to stab Jake. She felt that God had also given her the spirit of love on this night.

Jake and Florence did not only just minister in the cities and in the city churches. With the help of interpreter, Reverend Dr. Kaneo Oda, Jake and Florence also passed out gospel literature to coal miners in the hill country. There, Jake would speak via a mounted public address system to the gathered coal



**Jake preaching over car loudspeaker in Japan, c. 1952.
(Courtesy of Seattle Pacific University Archives. Used with Permission.)**

miners. All the while, Rev. Oda and Florence passed out gospel literature.

When the DeShazers finally did move into their own home, they wasted no time in opening up their tiny house for home Bible studies. It did not take long for crowds to fill up the miniscule living room area. In fact, the DeShazer home Bible study would turn out to be one of the most productive fruits of the DeShazer missionary efforts over their multiple decades of service in Japan. The home Bible study would prove to truly be a husband and wife team effort, as both Jake and Florence took turns leading the study.

By the early 1950's the DeShazers were broadening their Asia missionary efforts. In 1952 Jake was preaching to U.S. Air Force troops inside a large tent near the Korea battlefield. And by 1954, Jake was even sharing the gospel on his own radio program that went out over the air waves in Japan with the ever-faithful Reverend Oda sitting by his side as interpreter. With the end of his radio program, Jake announced that he would be taking the standard missionary sabbatical—a period to return to his homeland of the United States to resume his higher education. Still, Jake vowed to return to Japan. Those next three years (1955 to 1958) would be spent at Asbury Theological Seminary in Kentucky and will be discussed further in a subsequent chapter.

The Return

The year of 1958 saw Jake and Florence returning to their beloved field of Japan, this time with *five* small children in tow: Paul, John, Mark, Carol, and Ruth. Unlike their first arrival in 1948, however, the DeShazers alighted this time from an airplane, as opposed to an ocean liner.



There was another noticeable difference as well: Unlike the huge crowd that had greeted the DeShazers at the docks of Yokohama, there were only a few people waiting to greet them at the airport in 1958. Even these people were mostly friends—such as the Reverend Oda— from their church and missionary organization. Though the reception by this small crowd of well-wishers was hardly less enthusiastic than the reception from the Japanese civilians and news reporters ten years earlier, it was still an omen of what awaited them this time around. Jake would turn to Florence and smile, “It’s sure a lot quieter this time, isn’t it?”

Indeed it was, and it would continue to be so. World War II and the daring Doolittle Raid was 14 to 17 years in the rear view mirror by now. But it wasn’t just the passage of time that had changed the Japanese mindset from the late 1940’s to the late 1950’s. By 1959, Japan was in the midst of what is today known as the “Japanese Economic Miracle.”

In short, the Japanese Economic Miracle is the boom period of economic growth Japan experienced following the end of World War II and lasting through to the end of the Cold War in the early 1990’s. One reason it is called a “miracle” is because Japan was severely harmed, physically and economically, from its defeat in the war. No one could have projected, therefore, that Japan would enjoy the world’s third most prosperous economy by the end of the 1950’s (behind only the United States and the Soviet Union).

There are various reasons (and theories) for this “economic miracle” in Japan. One, is that Japan benefitted from the American Occupation of 1945 through 1952, a period where the U.S. government instituted reforms in Japanese society—reforms which touched Japanese politics (an important development being the introduction of democracy), civics and,

of course, the economy. Specifically, America involved itself in Japanese exports, did not interfere in Japanese trade practices, and also helped subsidize the Japanese economy.

What may have been an even bigger boost to the post-World War II Japanese economy, was the outbreak of the Korean War. As it turned out, this conflict was fought largely in territory that, prior to 1945, was under Japanese control. Because U.S. forces were engaged on the Korean Peninsula, the Americans soon discovered it was expensive, and impractical, to procure equipment and supplies from the distant United States. Therefore, it was Japan to whom American turned for munitions and supplies—consequently, Japanese industry exploded (in a good way, this time).

All this to say, a much-recovered and economically prosperous Japan, was now less “hungry” for the gospel message. This phenomenon is not unique to Japan—any nation tends to feel less of a “need” for the saving grace of Christ, the mercy of God, when prosperity is present. The Israelites of the Old Testament demonstrated this thousands of year before! Consequently, Jake’s testimony of his harrowing war years, while still drawing interest, was no longer the automatic draw it had once been. Jake and Florence had to work a good deal harder to fill the pews of the churches and meeting houses where they were invited to speak. But that’s getting a bit ahead of the story.

The first order of business would be finding a place to live. On the drive from the airport to the hotel, Reverend Oda turned to Jacob. “Have you given any thought as to where you might want to reside?”

“I have,” answered Jake. “Nagoya.”



**DeShazer family at a Japanese tent meeting in 1954.
(Courtesy of Seattle Pacific University Archives. Used with Permission.)**

Reverend Oda could not hide his surprise. “Nagoya?”

Jake smiled. “That’s what I said.”

“A brave choice,” replied Oda.

Indeed it was. Nagoya was the city Jake and his fellow crewmen had bombed in 1942! In the three years that followed, Nagoya had suffered even more bombing raids courtesy of U.S. war planes.

Jake nodded. “I look at it this way: Nagoya is still pretty bombed out. Why should we not go out where we can work and others cannot?” ^[18]

The DeShazers were true to their word. In short order they moved into their humble new home in Moriyama, a suburb of Nagoya. Even as they moved in their belongings there was no shortage of curious neighbors and townspeople hovering around, wondering why these Caucasian Americans were moving into their neighborhood. Naturally, Jake and Florence took breaks from their work to greet the people.

One of the smoothest transitions between their first stint as missionaries in Japan to their second, was re-establishing their home Bible study. It was not long before the DeShazers had their first regular congregation: a living room floor packed with Japanese children. The youngsters would listen in rapt attention as (usually) Florence presented a Bible lesson, utilizing the popular colorful “feltagram” visual aid illustrations.

As happens so often on the mission field, a strong ministry to the children often leads to a ministry involving the parents. Consequently, the DeShazer living room was soon

also crowded with adult Japanese neighbors. Jake and Florence would then proceed to lead a home Bible study in English.

In the days that followed, the DeShazers would be given another opportunity to share the love of Christ to their neighbors, though through an unfortunate circumstance. That opportunity came as a result of a typhoon. The Nagoya/Moriyama area was pelted with a vicious combination of rain and winds. Roofs were torn off, houses ripped apart. The home of the DeShazer family received its share of typhoon damage, but many of their neighbors suffered much worse. While Jake immediately had to spend several hours repairing the roof to their home, the DeShazers also went to work distributing food and blankets to neighbors hit hard by the typhoon.

As missionaries and ministers to the Japanese people, the DeShazers had become accustomed to all manner of visitors to their home. Many sought counsel, some requested prayer, others had stories to share. So Jake was not surprised when he answered a knock on the door and found a rather tough-looking young man bearing facial scars, standing there. Jake did not recognize the man, but neither was Jake surprised when the man told him in broken English, that he had fought in the service of Japan during the war. Indeed, Jake and Florence had encountered several former Japanese soldiers and military officers since arriving in 1948. Many had been led to the Lord through the ministry of the DeShazers. Jake was not prepared, however, for the man's jaw-dropping account of his military service during the war.

This man had been a kamikaze pilot. For the uninitiated, that means that it was his job— and solemn duty— to fly his plane directly into U.S. war ships, thus assuring maximum damage to the U.S. vessel. This also almost certainly assured that the pilot *himself* would be killed in the attack. But while it

was normal (even expected) for kamikaze pilots to die carrying out their missions, it did not always happen. Some kamikaze (or “suicide”) pilots survived—and this man was one of them. But that was not the half of it: *this* rough-faced Japanese man claimed to have survived *seven* crashes! But this man had not come to Jake’s home simply to share incredible war stories. He had something else on his mind.

“When the war is over, I heard of you,” shared this man in halting English. “I saw you speak. You are a minister and a good man. I am getting married. Would you perform the ceremony?”

This caught Jake slightly off guard, this abrupt and drastic shift from the subject of surviving seven suicide crashes, to matters of romance and a wedding ceremony! Still, as impressed as Jake was with the heart of this miraculous military veteran, he knew there was more that needed to be settled.

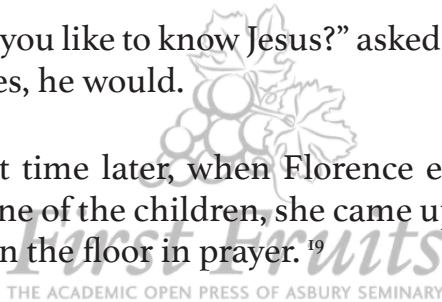
“Do you know Jesus?” asked Jake. “Is he your Savior?”

Now it was the turn of the suicide pilot to be caught off guard. He thought a moment, then, finally acknowledged that he wasn’t sure.

“Would you like to know Jesus?” asked Jake. The former pilot nodded. Yes, he would.

A short time later, when Florence entered the living room holding one of the children, she came upon Jake and this man kneeling on the floor in prayer.¹⁹

Still, even with the victories for Jesus that came from their home ministries, Jake noticed a downturn in the success of his public ministry. With each year, the Japanese people



were less and less enamored with stories of the great war with the United States. And that included the story of the former Doolittle Raider who returned to Japan as a missionary. This was old news by now, and this became clear when the DeShazers would rent meeting halls for a crusade. The halls would often only be partially filled. Admittedly, Jake's strength— and calling card— was his story, not his dynamic speaking style. But with the story not creating the draw it once did, Jake knew it was time to transition to a different form of ministry.

To that end, Jake decided to meet with several Japanese pastors and pick their brains. He needed guidance from the church leadership of Japan regarding his future role in their country. The Japanese pastors simply turned the question back to Jake: "What would you like your role to be?"

As it turned out, Jake has already been thinking about the direction he would like to go – IF, the Japanese church leadership approved. "I believe I'm being called to pioneer new churches here in Japan."

"And where would you like to plant these new churches?" asked one pastor.

Jake thought a moment. "I'm thinking it would not be just any one place. I'd like to start a church in one location, then leave the church in the hands of a capable Japanese pastor. After that, I would move on to a new place and start the process all over again." ²⁰

Yes, that was the plan, and the Japanese pastors gave Jake their blessing. However, the reality was that it would take much more than Jake's enthusiasm to plant several functional churches. As Jake would discover, planting even one church was a slow process. Land had to be purchased. After that, building

funds had to be raised. Then, there was the construction of the building, with all the unexpected hurdles and delays that come with such a project.

In the end, it took Jake four years to oversee the planting of just one church: The Nagoya Christian Church. Though he had wanted to plant more churches, he was still thankful and satisfied that the Lord had given him the strength and perseverance to shepherd through the establishment of a church in his adopted Japanese hometown. And true to his original plan, he left the church in the hands of a very capable young Japanese pastor, Iwao Shimida.

The establishment of the church in Nagoya brought an end-- with an exclamation point-- to a major period of the DeShazer ministry in Asia. They had been missionaries in Japan for the better part of 1948 through 1963 (a three-year U.S furlough excepted) but they would return again to Japan in 1967. For the next twelve years after that, they would establish 23 churches in Japan, as well as a school. With their last years in Japan spent ministering in Hitachi and Tokorozawa (Tokyo) the DeShazers would finally leave their Asia mission field in 1978. Still, they would return from time to time over the next few years to visit friends, look in on the churches they helped found, as well as make appearances at mission training schools. Upon their final return to the United States, Jake and Florence were not about to put up their feet and take life easy. In fact, Jake would accept speaking engagements up to the ripe old age of 90! As a result, the DeShazer scrapbook of pictures, letters and mementos—personal memories of God’s faithfulness and goodness to them during their years of ministry- would continue to be filled by Florence until just before her death in 2017.

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So this concludes our look back at the extraordinary ministry of Jake and Florence DeShazer. There were, however, two brief periods of stateside furloughs during their missionary years. These furloughs, though helpful in recharging their ministry batteries in various ways, did actually present unique challenges of their own. In later chapters we will take a look at those two furlough periods: the first taking place 1955 to 1959, the second, 1963 to 1967.



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CHAPTER 16

The Enemy: Post-War Disillusionment and Healing

Despite several harrowing close-calls while fighting the war, Mitsuo's most narrow escape from certain death probably came in early August of 1945. Literally the day *before* U.S. forces dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Mitsuo had been in that city to attend a military conference for a week. But then he received a call from Navy Headquarters calling him back to Tokyo. So Mitsuo departed Hiroshima on August 5, 1945. The very next day, Hiroshima was destroyed by the atomic bomb.

Incredibly, Mitsuo would return to the site of Hiroshima the day after the city was destroyed—he had been sent as part of the reconnaissance team to survey the damage, both by plane and on the ground! What he saw from the sky and on the ground was nothing less than total devastation. Bodies were piled up in the streets and canals. Not a single tree—or vegetation of any kind—was left standing. He could not even tell where the hotel he had stayed at only two days *before* had stood.

By the way, note that I said Mitsuo and the survey team of officials toured the city of Hiroshima *on the ground!* The day after the atomic bomb had exploded in that city! Surely they were all wearing radiation protection suits! No—they were not! The effects of radiation poisoning were not widely known at the time, so Mitsuo, like his fellow officials, was touring the



**Mitsuo Fuchida as a soldier.
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city streets of Hiroshima—the day after the *Enola Gay* dropped and exploded an atomic bomb—dressed only in plain clothes! Sadly, the tragic end result was (at least in hindsight) inevitable. Every member of that party who took part in that day-after survey of Hiroshima succumbed soon after to radiation poisoning. All except Mitsuo. In fact, Mitsuo would live out the remainder of his life for another 31 years without suffering any effects from radiation poisoning. To be sure, sometimes the term “miraculous” is bandied about and attached to situations that can more appropriately be deemed, “amazing.” That Mitsuo did not suffer a similar fate as his fellow Hiroshima survey team members is one of those rare cases where the term “miraculous” is actually an understatement! Nevertheless, considering the horrific sights that met his eyes as he toured Hiroshima that day, he had every reason to hate America *and* Americans even more.

With the formal surrender of the Empire of Japan to the United States in 1945, the people of Japan fell into a state of shock and disbelief. They suffered a collective sense of disillusionment and loss. This was a war where the idea of defeat had not been entertained. Their emperor was thought of as divine by much of the populace. In fact, so distant was the “divine” Emperor Hirohito from the common people, it is said that for many of the Japanese people, the first time they had heard their emperor speak was when he gave his surrender address. The early victories by the Japanese forces in the Pacific—including the one-sided bombardment of the U.S. fleet at Pearl Harbor—confirmed the superiority of not only their great Emperor Hirohito, but of the Japanese military machine.

Mitsuo was one of those deeply-discouraged, deeply-disillusioned Japanese. You see, he had played a prominent role in the air attack on Pearl Harbor—arguably, only his longtime friend, Captain Genda (who had meticulously drawn

up the attack plans on paper) had played a *greater* role. Mitsuo, in fact, was Captain Mitsuo Fuchida, the designated General Commander of the December 7th attack force. In short, Captain Fuchida was the man who led the attack on Pearl Harbor!

Captain Fuchida (who up to now, we have simply referred to as “Mitsuo”) and his once-esteemed fellow Japanese military fighters, now came to be seen as a symbol of a Japanese military superiority that, in the end, had proven to be an illusion. Instead, all the Pearl Harbor attack had accomplished, as reportedly uttered by one of Japan’s Senior officers, was to “awaken a sleeping lion.”

After the war, Fuchida felt compelled to fade from public view. He became a farmer. For a time, he wished he could simply melt, unnoticed, into the scenery. That wasn’t completely possible, however. He was a national hero of the war—remembered, but no longer revered. Even worse, his country was now occupied by the Americans!

As one historian wrote, “Before the GIs had arrived, the Japanese had braced themselves as if for an invasion of Goths and Vandals. Press and radio implored women to keep indoors as much as possible. When venturing out, they must make themselves unattractive..... After the horrendous buildup, the populace was pleasantly surprised to find GI Joe [the occupying American military troops] a rather simple soul, friendly and kindly, especially towards children. His drinking and womanizing didn’t scandalize the Japanese. They regarded these as part of life, nothing to make a fuss about.” ²¹

During the early years of Occupied Japan, however, Captain Fuchida (unlike many of his fellow countrymen) was not enamored with the American power structure in his homeland. Despite Fuchida’s desire to pull away from the

war-- as well as the public eye-- following Japan's defeat, he found himself called in to be a witness in Occupied Japan's war crime trials. He resented that the American prosecution was painting a narrative that Japan had planned the Pearl Harbor attack for years. Fuchida and his long-time friend and military colleague, Minoru Genda, however, consistently maintained that the attack had only been formulated less than a year before December 7, 1941.

Fuchida testified a number of times: three times in Yokohama, once in Manila and once in the Netherlands East Indies. In fact, his participation in the war crime trials lasted for several years. According to author Gordon Prange, "Long before they [the war crime trials] were over, he resolved to back up his beliefs with action. He didn't understand such concepts as courtesy and mercy toward a fallen foe and assumed that Japanese in American prison camps must have suffered atrocities equal to those for which Japanese were being tried and convicted. He made up his mind to collect evidence proving his contention. He would attend the next session of the tribunal and fling his documented charges into the American judge's faces. 'See, this what you have done!' he would cry triumphantly. 'You also have mistreated prisoners. You too should be tried!'"²²

Then, in 1947, at Uruga Harbor, Fuchida happened upon an officer with whom he had served: Sub-Lieutenant Kazu Kanegasaki. Though many believed Kanegasaki to be dead, he was among many former Japanese prisoners of war who had now been released to return to their homeland. Fuchida greeted his former comrade-in-arms and told Kanegasaki why he happened to be in Uruga. With bile in his voice, Fuchida complained to Kanegasaki about the war crime trials, that they were blatantly unfair. Surely the Japanese prisoners had also been treated cruelly in the United States! Kanegasaki's reply, however, caught Fuchida by surprise:

“Prisoner-of-war camps are much the same the world over... They aren’t nice hotels, there is no liberty and the guards exercise all-mighty power. At best they’re gloomy places. But I never experienced nor saw atrocities at American camps. No, I wasn’t always treated kindly. But most of my suffering was mental and spiritual.”²³

Upon being taken captive by the Americans, Kanegasaki had attempted to starve himself to death (suicide and attempted suicide was common among captured Japanese soldiers). But then something extraordinary happened at Kanegasaki’s prison camp-- something that changed his heart and attitude, as well as that of his fellow prisoners.

Her name was Peggy and she was an American girl, only about eighteen years old. She worked at the camp as a volunteer and in doing her rounds, she extended love, care and compassion to the Japanese prisoners. By asking after and seeing to their needs, to their comfort, she won the respect and even love, of many of the prisoners, including Kanegasaki. In fact, one Japanese prisoner flat-out asked her why she treated them so kindly. Her answer: “Because Japanese soldiers killed my parents.” Such an answer made no sense to the Japanese men—nor would it make sense to most Americans either—but there was a story behind it.

Peggy’s parents had served as missionaries in Yokohama, Japan, but when hostilities started in the early 1940’s, they had fled to Manila in the Philippines. Shortly thereafter the Japanese invaded and occupied Manila, so Peggy’s parents took refuge in the mountain city of Baguio to the north. Soon after that the Americans invaded the Philippines and the Japanese fled the coastal city of Manila, taking refuge in Baguio. One day, Japanese troops happened upon Peggy’s parents who were in possession of a portable radio. The Japanese assumed the

Americans were using this radio for spy purposes, so they arrested them and put them on trial. Peggy's parents were swiftly found guilty and executed.

Peggy was living back home in the States when she heard the news. Her first reaction was hardly that of love for the Japanese. In fact, she was most bitter, the very core of her being filled with hatred. But the more she meditated on the Christian precepts her parents had imparted to her as a child—that of love and forgiveness—the more Peggy became convinced that her parents would want her to forgive the Japanese.

Fuchida could hardly take in such a story. In his words, “This beautiful story overwhelmed me and made me ashamed.”²⁴ No, Fuchida did not fall to his knees and accept Jesus as his Savior at this point. He was still a few years away from taking such a foreign and drastic step in his life. But a seed had definitely been planted with that story.

Then came the crucial day and moment in the life of Captain Mitsuo Fuchida. It was October of 1948. The war crime trials in Occupied Japan were still ongoing, and still very much on his mind. At that very time, Fuchida happened upon an American who was standing beside a statue, passing out leaflets. The young man handed one of the leaflets to Fuchida. Now during this period in Japan, it was hardly unusual for someone on a city street to be passing out leaflets-- Japanese, American or otherwise. He took a quick glance at the pamphlet (no doubt expecting he would throw it away in a manner of seconds). The title of the leaflet, however, stopped Fuchida in his tracks: *WATAKUSHI: Wa Nippon No Horyo Deshita (I WAS A PRISONER OF JAPAN)*. Could any subject have been of more timely interest to him? With great interest, he read the pamphlet—right then and there. Amazingly, the story began with Pearl Harbor, followed by the author's participation in the

Doolittle Raid, and from there, the American sergeant's (one Jacob DeShazer) time in a Japanese prison camp. Indeed, this Sergeant Jacob DeShazer had not only become a Christian while in prison camp, but this DeShazer was even proclaiming his love and forgiveness towards the Japanese! It was a short pamphlet, only four pages, but it compelled Fuchida to want to learn more.

No, that American who handed Fuchida the pamphlet was not DeShazer himself—that would surely have been quite a Hollywood scenario! Still, imagine if you will how most people react when being handed a pamphlet on the street. Imagine how someone with as much on his mind as Fuchida would react to being handed a humble leaflet by a stranger! What would be the chances that someone like Fuchida would bother to carefully read a leaflet given him by some stranger—had not the subject (particularly that of ongoing war crime trials over prisoner treatment) been of such urgent importance to him?

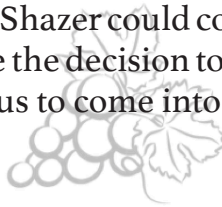
Again, this is not Hollywood. Fuchida did not drop to his knees and accept Jesus upon reading the pamphlet in full, fascinated as he was by the story found therein. In fact, Prange writes,

“He had no intention of investigating Christianity as such; he simply wanted to understand DeShazer. In fact, he later conceded that he probably wouldn't have pursued the matter had DeShazer been just any American prisoner; what secured his interest was DeShazer's being one of the Doolittle Raiders. Their exploits had excited his admiration.”²⁵

The “divine appointment” of this particular pamphlet finding its way into the hands of Captain Mitsuo Fuchida, at that particular point in time, is of no small importance. For even though Captain Fuchida found the pamphlet to be highly

interesting reading, he might still have moved on with his life, never bothering to fully investigate Christianity as a life choice. That is, had it not been for one tiny detail, which we've already mentioned: this Jacob DeShazer, author of the pamphlet, had been a Doolittle Raider. He felt an affinity with this American who was also a tough ex-warplane fighter. DeShazer had proven as much by taking part in that daring, if infamous, raid on Japan. So Fuchida resolved to meet this man, Jacob DeShazer—not so much to accept his faith, but to understand what made him tick.

While Fuchida resolved to meet this Sgt. Jacob DeShazer, in the meantime, Jake's pamphlet piqued Captain Fuchida's curiosity in the Bible as well. He had never owned a Bible before. In fact, Fuchida had not even heard the name of Jesus before reading DeShazer's pamphlet! In short order, Fuchida obtained a Bible, and eagerly, he began to read. He did not realize that the copy he'd bought was actually a New Testament only, but that turned out to be enough. When Fuchida reached the chapter of Luke, he was struck—and struck hard—by the passage from Luke 23:34. This is where Jesus, dying on the cross after suffering terrible physical tortures, looked down on his Roman and Jewish tormenters and prayed the words: "Father, forgive them. For they know not what they do." This message of love and forgiveness was so powerful that not only did Captain Fuchida now see how DeShazer could come to love his enemies, but he himself now made the decision to accept Christ! He knelt down and prayed for Jesus to come into his heart.



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CHAPTER 17

Meeting The Enemy

The 1950 book, *DeShazer*, is Jake's own account of his World War II ordeal, his conversion and his missionary work in Japan. The cover of that book features a highly interesting 1950 photograph: It shows Jake DeShazer and Mitsuo Fuchida, seated together, smiling as friends and fellow Christians, as they look over a Bible. What is striking about that photo is how thin and gaunt Jake appears. One might assume that the photo was taken right after Jake was released from the Japanese POW camp, which would account for his rather emaciated appearance.

Not so. Jake had been out of Japanese POW camps for five years now and had plenty of time to fill himself up with hearty American dinners. But at this point in time, Jake had taken it upon himself to go on a 40-day fast. During the course of this fast, Jake ate no food and only drank water. Recent events in Asia prompted Jake to go on this fast. In October of 1949, China fell to the communists and Jake feared that Japan could suffer the same fate. This was a period when Jake was still speaking to around 8,000 people a week in Japan—and yet Jake's fast made one of his strongest impacts in Japan since he had first come there as a Doolittle Raider-turned-missionary in 1948! You see, the Japanese people had never known ministers or religious leaders (even their own Buddhist priests) to fast—and in such an extreme manner—simply as an act of love and concern for



Perhaps the most famous photo of Jake DeShazer and Captain Mitsuo Fuchida together in Osaka in 1950, taken shortly after Fuchida converted to Christianity. The effects of a Jake's recent 40-day fast are evident. (Courtesy of Seattle Pacific University Archives. Used

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the Japanese people! This impressed Captain Mitsuo Fuchida as well!

Jake completed his forty-day fast, and it is at this point when he answered a knock at the front door of his home. There stood an American, Glenn Wagner, who represented Pocket Testament League in Japan, and... Mitsuo Fuchida (though at first sight, Jake did not know who this middle-aged Japanese man was). But when Wagner introduced his companion, Jake nearly stumbled backwards with surprise. Of course Jake had heard of Captain Mitsuo Fuchida! Yet never in Jake's wildest imaginings, could he have ever imagined that this formidable Japanese war hero, the man who literally led the attack on Pearl Harbor, would show up at his front door!

As stunned as Jake was that Captain Fuchida himself had come to his home, Jake was about to be even more astonished. Fuchida told Jake the whole story: how he had been disillusioned at Japan's war defeat; how he had been asked to testify in the Occupied Japan war crime trials while he himself escaped prosecution; how he had been given the DeShazer leaflet by the statue that day in 1948; how he had bought his first Bible and had come to the point of salvation from the story of Christ's suffering and heart of forgiveness on the cross! And to cap it off, Fuchida asked if DeShazer would pray with him! DeShazer would hardly refuse this request, and the two former enemies prayed together as brothers in Christ right then and there.

At Wagner's behest, the two men agreed to speak at an evangelical rally in May of 1950. The rally would take place at the Central Public Hall in Osaka. When Jake arrived at the Hall on the appointed day, once again he would be stunned: A huge crowd was clamoring to get in! In fact, so many were trying to cram into the 4,000-capacity auditorium, that the meeting

got off to a very late start as order was being restored. Even so, some 3,000 souls were compelled to listen from *outside* the hall! When Jake stepped up to the podium, the reception given him by the crowd was deafening—yet it was still only the *second* biggest ovation of the night. An even louder ovation took place when Captain Mitsuo Fuchida stepped up to the lectern. Over 500 people came forward to publicly accept Christ that night.

Jake and Fuchida remained lifelong friends. But while they would appear together at various rallies and church meetings from the 1950's through the 1970's, they were not a traveling team. Each man had his own special ministry that took up most of his time. Also-- and this was verified by Jake's daughter Carol in recent years—Jake did not wish for his friendship with Fuchida to become a kind of PR stunt (though, granted, it was a publicists' dream pairing!). Fuchida was a dear Christian brother to Jake, but so were many others. Jake would not push him into constant co-appearances for the sake of a “photo op” so to speak.

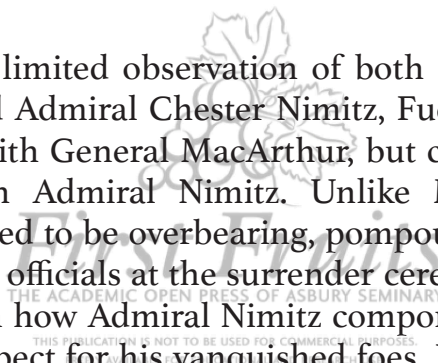
In addition to various speaking engagements where he would share his testimony, Fuchida was a devoted member of the Worldwide Christian Missionary Army of Sky Pilots. In fact, he toured the United States in 1952 as a prominent member of this organization. This meant that Fuchida's ministry leaned towards military and ex-military men. Though many of his converts in Japan were women—after all, when he spoke in churches and meeting halls, he spoke to everyone present—according to author Gordon Prange, Fuchida “took pride and interest in his male converts. This is understandable, for the average male of Fuchida's generation would have found it easier to confess to being Jack the Ripper than to openly avow a religious experience. Public displays of emotion were not considered masculine.”²⁶

It wasn't just the Japanese aversion to public displays of emotion that Fuchida had to overcome in winning his fellow countrymen to Christ. Prange also points out the tendency of Fuchida's generation to put their faith in science and intellect above all else: "He who professed a belief in anything that could not be analyzed, weighed, dissected, or reproduced at will in the laboratory was 'unscientific' and not to be taken seriously."

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It should be pointed out that while Jake DeShazer and Mitsuo Fuchida shared a friendship and common brotherhood in Christ, there were distinct differences between the two men—other than the obvious differences of rank, race and nationality. DeShazer and Fuchida were both war heroes. It must be remembered that DeShazer was a Corporal when he flew with the Doolittle Raiders and violated Japanese sacred air space. In the end, DeShazer would achieve the military rank of Staff Sergeant before departing the Army. Fuchida, on the other hand, was an established Naval Officer when he led the attack on Pearl Harbor and later rose to the rank of Navy Captain. Because of his notoriety, Fuchida had access to occasions and people of power and shared his opinions freely. Though Fuchida was not a member of the official Japanese delegation at the surrender, he spoke of being aboard the *USS Missouri* on that day of historical September 2 1945.

In his limited observation of both General Douglas MacArthur and Admiral Chester Nimitz, Fuchida came away unimpressed with General MacArthur, but conversely, highly impressed with Admiral Nimitz. Unlike MacArthur, who Fuchida observed to be overbearing, pompous and dismissive of the Japanese officials at the surrender ceremonies, Fuchida was struck with how Admiral Nimitz comported himself with dignity and respect for his vanquished foes. It should be said,



however, that MacArthur represented the U.S. President and our allies, while Nimitz was only an observer.

A few years later, when Fuchida first visited the United States, he had a strong desire to meet Admiral Nimitz in person—especially once Fuchida heard that Nimitz was then living in San Francisco. It was a Free Methodist pastor who contacted Nimitz on behalf of Fuchida, to arrange the meeting. Indeed, meeting Nimitz was everything Fuchida had thought and hoped it would be—the two got along famously. Fuchida would, to the end of his life, insist that it was Admiral Nimitz, not MacArthur, who was the greatest leader in the Pacific war.

Fuchida also had some quite thought-provoking viewpoints on the two atomic bomb drops on Japan, particularly as one of only a handful of officials who got a first-hand look at the early devastation of Hiroshima. In 1959, Fuchida actually had the opportunity to meet and speak with General Paul Tibbets, pilot of the *Enola Gay*, that had dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. One might think that Fuchida would resent this man and his actions of 1945. Not so. Fuchida told Tibbets that the United States actually did the right thing in dropping the bomb on Hiroshima at that time! Not that he wasn't horrified by what he saw at Hiroshima, but Fuchida was convinced that a far worse blood bath would have been Japan's fate had the U.S. been forced into a land invasion. As Fuchida told Tibbets: "You did the right thing... Every man, woman and child would have resisted that invasion with sticks and stones if necessary... Can you imagine what a slaughter it would be to invade Japan? It would have been terrible."²⁸

Conversely, Fuchida was highly critical of the United States in their dropping of a second atomic bomb on Nagasaki. It wasn't that Fuchida believed that a second atomic bomb attack was indefensible, but rather, untimely in its execution.

Japan had not been given sufficient time to formally proffer a surrender response to Hiroshima. Japan should have been given more time—at least a week to ten days—to formally respond to the United States. Instead, it was only three days after Hiroshima that the city of Nagasaki suffered a similar fate. Fuchida would always consider this an egregious action on the part of the United States. Looking back, perhaps Captain Fuchida had a point.



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CHAPTER 18

Post-Grad Student at Asbury Theological Seminary: Wilmore, Kentucky

Up until 1955, Jake DeShazer had lived in several different—and varied—environments. Of course he grew up in rural and small-town Oregon, followed by a few years serving on east coast and west coast military bases. Then there were the hellish four years at various Japanese POW camps in China and Japan. That was followed by three years at Seattle Pacific College, and then back to Japan as a missionary. Wilmore, Kentucky, differed so drastically from any of these previous places of residence that Jake must have felt like he was on another planet.

To the uninitiated, rural/small-town central Kentucky may seem hardly different at all from rural/small town Oregon. But as anyone who is familiar with both Oregon and Kentucky can attest, the two locales—the customs, the folkways, the mannerisms and methods of inter-acting with neighbors—are actually quite different, especially back in the 1950's! Add to that equation the fact that Wilmore is a unique town in *any* part of the country! The very first culture shock Jake and his family must have experienced, would have been the drastic transition from the busy, crowded cities of Japan to the tranquil, quiet streets of Wilmore.

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Indeed it was to Wilmore, Kentucky that Jake DeShazer moved his family in 1955, following seven whirlwind-like years as a missionary to Japan. Why had Jake chosen to come to this

very tiny town in the heart of the Bluegrass? Well yes, it was time for him and the family to take a stateside year, standard practice for overseas missionaries, but Jake’s primary purpose was to bolster his missionary education and credentials at Asbury Theological Seminary. The DeShazers would reside in Wilmore through 1958 as Jake pursued his post-graduate studies.

Wilmore was a small town in 1955, but as of this 2021 writing... Wilmore is *still* a very small town. The current population is only about 6,500. The town is pleasantly laid out over an expanse of rolling meadow-like hills, entirely surrounded by a rural landscape of pasture and horse farms. The closest city of size would be Lexington, a 25-minute drive from Wilmore if there’s no commuting traffic. There is only one major north-south avenue that runs through Wilmore, while there are only two east-west avenues, one of which passes through the two-block long Main Street of businesses and storefronts. Even with this “downtown” however, Wilmore boasts only one grocery store: Fitch’s IGA (it was the only grocery store in town when the DeShazers called Wilmore home nearly 70 years ago as well). Today, in addition to Fitch’s IGA, there is also a Dollar Store, a convenience store with gas pumps, a couple of coffee shops and a couple of eateries among the town businesses. There are no liquor stores in Wilmore at this writing (though there are rumblings that this will soon change). Up until the 1980’s there wasn’t any business in town that would even *consider* opening their doors on Sunday!

Wilmore has always been quite a patriotic little town, but there is nothing inherently “military” about Wilmore, Kentucky—though in the 1990’s the Thomson-Hood Veteran’s Center was established on the edge of town. Wilmore, like virtually every U.S. city or small town, has had its share of military veterans who hail from there, or who have retired there

after their stints of service. What Wilmore is most known for, and is actually dominated by, are its two Christian institutions of higher learning: Asbury University and, directly across the street, Asbury Theological Seminary. In fact, it is because of these two institutions, which have produced innumerable pastors, missionaries, chaplains, and teachers, *coupled* with the sheer density of churches within this tiny town, that Wilmore has for decades boasted the unofficial nickname of, The Holy City.

Granted, the few years the DeShazers spent in Wilmore, Kentucky may not be the stuff of which movies are made. In one sense, from 1955 to 1958, Jake's life was that of a typical seminary post-grad student: days spent in the classrooms, afternoons and early evenings spent researching in the seminary library, nights spent studying or working on papers. On the other hand, not many seminary students are in demand to speak across the Commonwealth on almost any given weekend (as was Jake)! As for church life, Wilmore did have a Free Methodist Church experience available to the DeShazers, though at the time it was mainly students and their families. A formally-organized Free Methodist church would not be established in Wilmore until a few years after the DeShazers left.

Their initial impressions of Wilmore (and Central Kentucky in general) are recorded in one of Florence's correspondence letters of 1955: "Kentucky is different from any place we've ever been; large mansion-like houses set back from the road with green grass growing around it, then the whole plantation surrounded by a white-board fence or an old stone stile. We saw a few cornfields but most of the fields are tobacco fields. We saw lots of tobacco leaves hanging up in long barns to dry. The weather has been very change-able." ²⁹



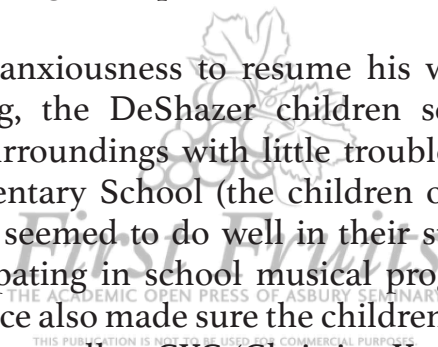
Jake and Florence DeShazer in front of their home in Wilmore, Kentucky, while at Asbury Theological Seminary 1955-58.

(Courtesy of Seattle Pacific University Archives. Used with Permission.)

One also gleaned from the DeShazer letters that there were certain things about living in Central Kentucky that they would have to adjust to: namely, the heat and humidity of summers, as well as pounding cloudburst rainstorms that turned yards and dirt side roads (much more common in Kentucky then, as opposed to the current time) into pits of mud.

Did Jake enjoy living in Wilmore, Kentucky? Well, it's probably a bit like when men or women of advanced years joke, "*At my age, I'm happy to be anywhere!*" Only in Jake's case it would be, *After four years in Japanese POW camps, I'm happy to be anywhere!* But the fact is, judging from the letters Jake and Florence wrote to family during those years, the DeShazer family seemed quite content in small-town Wilmore. In fact, Florence shared in one of her letters that her dyed-in-the-wool Oregon native husband had already picked up quite a southern drawl! Still, there was one certain aspect about living in Wilmore that stirred the restlessness in Jake's soul—and given what we know of Jake from 1945 through 1955, what he wrote should come as no surprise. Jake explained in a letter to his Oregon family: "I am enjoying the studies and it seems restful and peaceful to be here. I don't know how long I can feel this way since the world is dying in sin and needs us to tell the message of the Gospel of Jesus. I would like to be winning souls. I do get to go out nearly every Sunday though and preach."³⁰

Jake's anxiousness to resume his world evangelism notwithstanding, the DeShazer children seemed to adjust to their new surroundings with little trouble. They attended Wilmore Elementary School (the children old enough to do so) where they seemed to do well in their studies while also happily participating in school musical programs. Naturally, Jake and Florence also made sure the children were involved in Sunday School as well as CYC (Christian Youth Crusaders—a Christian children's program roughly akin to Boy/Girl Scouts).



Florence also discovered that taking the children on evening outings to the Asbury College swimming pool was a great way for the little ones to burn off excess energy.

Florence, meanwhile, in addition to involving herself at church (a given for the DeShazers) also regularly joined a seminary student wives circle. Clearly Florence was quite a lively woman at the time, for even after full days of looking after five little ones, she still had the energy to participate in softball games with the women of the seminary wives circle!

It's not surprising, given Jake's amazing story, that he arrived in Wilmore with considerably more in the way of reputation than the typical seminary student. Not only were the DeShazers entertained by seminary professors on more than one occasion, but (as seen earlier in one of Jake's letters) Jake was often invited to preach on weekends at area churches—and it would appear he rarely turned down such invitations. What's more, how many Asbury Seminary wives ever wrote something akin to the following about their student husbands: "Jake's story '*Bombadier Goes Back*' is to be on television... If you get this letter in time perhaps you can get it on Channel 9 Station WCRG Cedar Rapids 9:30 P.M. on Tuesday November 27th." ³¹

There was one encounter in particular for Jake at Asbury Seminary that proved to be quite providential. It came courtesy of a fellow seminary student who had recognized Jake and introduced himself. The man was Japanese and his name was Jundo Uzaki. Like Jake, he had come all the way from Japan to study at the Seminary.

To meet a fellow seminarian from Japan would, in itself, have been a worthwhile and a happy event for Jake. But Jake was amazed to discover that Jundo actually had his own

Doolittle Raider story to tell! In fact, this encounter with the Doolittle Raiders had started Uzaki on his path to Asbury!

As Jake was to learn, when Mr. Uzaki was just fifteen years old, he worked at the Kawasaki-Kaho factory in Tokyo. It was Uzaki's job to make bomb casings to be dropped from Japanese war planes. Consequently, this was exactly the kind of factory our American bombers would target for destruction—and such was the case that April day of 1942! All the workers inside the factory suddenly froze when they heard loud explosions outside the factory. Uzaki actually caught a glimpse of an American bomber flying over the factory, so he braced himself for the explosion that was about to follow. It never did. As related in the book, *Return of the Raider*: “When they left the factory [after the raid] they noticed a big crater in the distance. Apparently, a bomb had been dropped from an American plane that fell only five hundred feet from the factory where Uzaki was working. Had the bomb found its target, Uzaki surely would have been killed. Uzaki believed that God had spared him that day for a reason. He later converted to Christianity and believed that he was spared because God was calling him to preach to his Japanese brethren. He then decided to come to the United States to study theology where he found himself in Wilmore, Kentucky.”³²

So while their three-year stay in Wilmore proved to be the DeShazer family's first American homecoming in eight years, ironically, they may have felt most “at home” with their newfound Japanese friends. They would often entertain Japanese seminary students in their home. As Florence shared in one of her letters to family: “Did I tell you that one of the Japanese girls has been coming over several mornings a week and helping me with the work so that she can practice English? She just came from Japan but this is her husband's second year here. She was saved in one of Jake's meetings while we were in

Japan. I enjoy having her and it helps me too [speaking] some Japanese too.”³³



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CHAPTER 19

The DeShazers Back in Oregon: A Time of Readjustment

If it seems odd that a previous chapter plumbed the depths of Lt. George Barr's horrific post-POW experience—particularly in a work focused on the life and ministry of Jacob DeShazer—there is a reason for going down that road. Perhaps by shining a light on what Barr went through, both mentally and emotionally following his release from the POW camps, one can better understand the potential challenges Jake could have faced in his life. If there was ever a period where Jake might have struggled it was most likely during his 1963 to 1967 furlough years spent in the United States. It was a time of uncertainty and major transition, and all major transitions place us at emotional and spiritual risk.

That Jake DeShazer would experience some personal struggle during a transition furlough, would not be surprising. The aim of the furlough was for rest and a time for the family to reacclimate to the U.S. Here, on his farm in rural Oregon, not far from where he grew up, Jake should have enjoyed the full blessings of the early rural life he enjoyed. His only responsibilities would be to tend his farm, spend time with his family, and accept an occasional invitation to speak at churches. Compared to the forty months of hell-on-earth Jake had experienced in captivity, and the 15 years of pressure to evangelize Japan, this Oregon furlough should have been a blessed respite. But was it?



**The DeShazer family posing in front of their Nagoya, Japan home c. 1961. Left to Right: Jake, Ruth, John, Mark, Paul, Carol, and Florence.
(Courtesy of Seattle Pacific University Archives. Used with Permission.)**

This is not to say that Jake disengaged from his family and the Church—after all, he did fulfill several speaking engagements (my father’s church in Woodburn, Oregon, being one of them) and his testimony was as powerful as ever. But during those years of 1963 to 1967 there was evidence and the manifestation of distance and distraction on Jake’s part. There could have been a number of reasons for this. First, he was transitioning away from his long-time ministry in Japan. True, he would return after 1967, but at the beginning of his stateside furlough, he did not know for sure if he would be returning; the denominational missions department had yet to assure him that they would send him back to Japan. Secondly, he may have been experiencing missionary counter-culture shock (more on that later). Third, Jake and Florence were separated from the strong support network they enjoyed in Japan.

Beyond these factors, however, could some form of PTSD also have manifested during this time? Only God knows, but there is no shame in Christian people experiencing stress. We know this from scripture—all the prophets experienced it, as did Jesus. The message here, however, is that Jake never succumbed to it, but like the phoenix, rose to fly again.

Though never officially diagnosed at the time, one can only conclude that Lt. Barr suffered a swift and extreme case of PTSD towards the end of his time as a prisoner, which only worsened after his release. When Jake was released from captivity following the war, it would seem—by all appearances—that he had escaped the mental and emotional ravages of PTSD. The post-release Jacob DeShazer exhibited grace, humility, and good humor amidst his new-found celebrity as he met with the American public and press. After that he experienced a joyous reunion with his family in Oregon and then jumped right into college life at Seattle Pacific College where he immediately enjoyed popularity, not to mention

meeting the woman he would marry. After graduation from college, Jake married Florence and headed (almost) directly to Japan where he immersed himself into several years of fruitful missionary work. Given that kind of a track record, probably no one – not even his own family—expected that his 1960’s return to the states might be less of a time of rejuvenation, and more of a time of challenge and uncertainty.

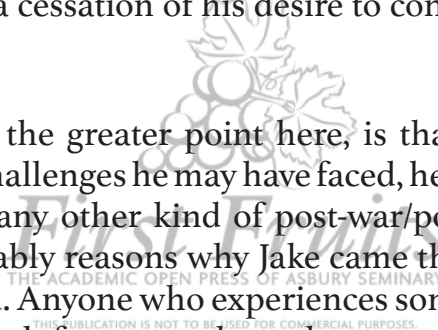
One must always remember the humanity of even heroic combat vets, especially those who have spent considerable time in an enemy POW camp. The mind does not so easily push aside horrors and images that were experienced and witnessed. Even if they’re pressed to the back of one’s mind and smothered by an active life filled with purposeful work, those experiences, those memories, those mental images may remain dormant like smoldering embers. They can resurface and burst into flame.

Earlier we mentioned “Missionary Counter-Culture Shock.” This is a phenomenon that often occurs when missionaries (from any country) return to their home country expecting a “simple” transition to their former life, as well as a “welcome” time of respite. Too frequently, however, what they experience instead is struggle. At first people welcome home the returning missionaries and are interested in their experiences overseas. But after that initial sharing of their experiences on the mission field, the missionary finds that his/her friends, family and neighbors don’t seem quite as interested in these stories, and, beyond listening, don’t quite know how to relate to the returning missionary. Friends, even family, have changed in the time their family member has been serving in another land. The missionary himself/herself has changed! The experiences of friends and family back home have all taken place in their home country. As for the missionaries, their experiences of the last few or several years have all taken place in another land.

There's more: Before going to another country, the missionary's primary focus is in preparing for this new overseas culture. They *brace* for a totally new culture, new people, ways with which they are unfamiliar. Coming home, just the opposite is true. The missionary is not braced for changes—they too often expect to return to their life and friends as they once were. Yet, as mentioned before, things have changed while they were away. What's more, on the mission field, the missionary receives financial support to do what needs to be done as it pertains to ministry, as well as for living expenses. Back home, however, they may discover that they actually have to find a job! The problem is, too often the experiences and skills that helped the missionary succeed on the mission field are not in demand back home. Odds are, *new* job skills are in demand back home, skills they did not need while overseas doing ministry work. To top it all off, the missionary's recent references are all people with whom they were acquainted on the mission field—praise and commendations from those people don't carry as much weight back in the missionary's homeland.

All this is to say that Jake, in that time span of 1963 to 1967, may well have been struggling not only with some form of delayed PTSD, but also a not uncommon case of returning missionary counter-culture shock as well. In the end, however, this period did not defeat Jake. He did not experience a loss of faith, nor even a cessation of his desire to continue missionary work.

Again, the greater point here, is that, in spite of the struggles and challenges he may have faced, he did not succumb to PTSD or to any other kind of post-war/post-POW trauma. There are probably reasons why Jake came through his ordeal as well as he did. Anyone who experiences something like what Jake went through from 1942 through 1945, needs some sort of rehabilitation in order to re-enter society with a healthy mind



and emotional well-being. It's far too simplistic to say that Jake simply had the inner fortitude to take the blows and come out smiling. Jake was human. He was not callous to human suffering—the suffering he experienced and the suffering he witnessed his fellow prisoners go through. Therefore, as to what helped Jake recover from those years of pain, brutality and depravation, I submit the following factors:

Jake's Personal Faith

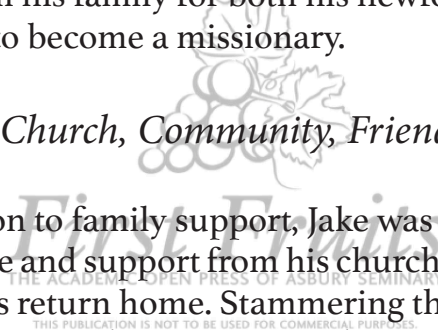
Clearly this would be first and foremost on the list. Jake found Christ in prison. He found grace and he found salvation. On the heels of grace and salvation, Jake also found the peace that comes with learning to love and forgive his enemies! This was such a life-transforming experience for him that he no longer feared death—in fact he even felt a joy about the prospect of going into an eternity to be forever with Jesus.

Support From Family

After his release from prison and upon his return home, Jake was immediately surrounded by the loving support of his family—and of course, they were strong believers (even before Jake himself was!). Jake found immediate and strong affirmation from his family for both his newfound faith as well as his decision to become a missionary.

Support From Church, Community, Friends

In addition to family support, Jake was also blessed with enthusiastic love and support from his church, community, and friends upon his return home. Stammering through his speech at the hometown “Welcome Home” thrown in his honor? It made no difference—his community loved him just the same.



Jake's Seattle Pacific College Experience

The importance of Jake's Seattle Pacific College experience cannot be overlooked in his post-POW rehabilitation. Not only did Jake receive immediate acceptance and encouragement from the President of Seattle Pacific College, but also from the entire student body! There was hardly time or space for Jake to brood alone in his dorm room, mulling over the horrors of what he had seen in China and Japan. Instead, Jake was surrounded by a student body who were thrilled to have him amongst their number—so much so, that Jake could hardly walk across the campus without being greeted by name! Mind you, he had just been released from Japanese prison, yet within a month, he was a full-fledged Joe College!

Honors and resources made available to Jake after the war

It must also be remembered that Jake would not have been able to travel as he did following his prison release, nor would he have been able to immediately enroll in college, had not honors and resources been made available to him after the war. After his release from prison in Asia, Jake was bumped up in rank by three pay grades, showered with honors by the media, and was able to enroll in college via the G.I. Bill. Perhaps one might be tempted to think “*Of course he received resources and honors—he was a Doolittle Raider!*” Remember, however, the story of fellow Doolittle Raider and POW George Barr, how he fell through the cracks and was actually lost by the military after his release from the POW camp!

Meeting Florence! **First Fruits**
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And then there is Jake meeting his future wife, Florence, at SPC. This lovely, vibrant, and God-fearing young woman was clearly a huge healing influence on Jake. She shared his faith and

she shared his passion for missions. Beyond the SPC years, she proved to be the perfect lifelong companion and compliment to Jake. Almost certainly Jake would not have succeeded as he did on the mission field in Asia had not Florence been by his side. In areas where Jake was weak, she was strong; in areas where he was awkward, she was graceful.

Invitations from the media, churches, and clubs to tell his story

It started from the time he returned home to Oregon in 1945 and continued nearly ten years into the 21st century! Jake was invited countless times, to countless venues, to tell his incredible story. Which he did, almost without fail. Over and over, again and again. Yet those who heard him near the end of his life testified to the fact that he was still passionate about relating how God had worked in his heart and had brought him through his POW experience. In fact, Florence would tell people that she had heard her husband's testimony so many times, she could virtually recount it word-for-word! Yet these innumerable opportunities to share his story might actually have been a source of healing for Jake. How could he *help* but be reminded of God's grace and goodness to him when he himself was constantly sharing, before the public, how Christ had pulled him out of darkness into light and out of hatred into love?

The Doolittle Raider Reunions

There were several Doolittle Raider reunions over the years and these were vital to the healing process—not only for Jake but for all the surviving Raiders. One of the painful elements the POW's experience is their separation from one another after dealing with hardship together. The POW experience actually bonds prisoners to the point where they

see each other as blood brothers. Separation brings a sense of grief that needs to be addressed. It is no mystery then, that Jake was faithful to attend as many Doolittle Raider reunions as he could. And at these reunions, his fellow Raiders were overwhelmingly supportive of Jake's missionary work.

It should be noted that by the time of the second World War, America had not prepared an effective program for the return and rehabilitation of our POW's. This, coupled with the chaos of the end of the war, undoubtedly led to the tragic circumstances of George Barr's return. Neither had the American Armed Forces settled on an effective return program by the time of the Korean War in the early 1950's. As a result, a number of our POW's chose to remain in China rather than return home. This was shocking to us. It was the first time our POW's had chosen the enemy over their country. As mentioned earlier, that the novel, *The Manchurian Candidate* appeared a few years after the Korean War (as did the acclaimed 1962 movie of the same name) was no accident.

As a result, more studies were done in our POW treatment and in the years that followed, not only was training provided to all military personnel regarding the POW experience, but more attention was given to how our troops returned home, that they would come back to their country with honor and undergoing excellent rehabilitation.

Finally, perhaps we can gain some final insight from the words of someone we have mentioned earlier in the book—a man whose father was *my* father's superior at Camp Smith in Hawaii. I speak of the late former Senator and 2008 Presidential-candidate, John McCain. McCain, as many already know, was a POW in Vietnam. In his 1999 biography, *Faith of My Fathers*, McCain speaks of the special kindredship he felt with the men who had served harsh years together as POW's in Vietnam: "I

flew to freedom in the company of many men who had suffered valiantly for their country's cause. Many of them had known greater terror than I had; resisted torture longer than I had held out, faced down more daunting challenges than I had confronted and sacrificed more than had been asked of me. They are a part of my time in Vietnam I won't forget."³⁴

As for the long-term effects of his years as a POW, McCain further writes: "Neither did we expect to soon forget the lost years of anguish we had suffered under our captor's 'humane and lenient' treatment. A few men never recovered. They were the last, tragic casualties in a long, bitter war. But most of us healed from our wounds, the physical and spiritual ones, and have lived happy and productive lives since."³⁵ Incidentally, McCain points to the unexpectedly warm reception he and his fellow POW's received upon landing in America, as a key factor that helped expedite the healing process. According to McCain, "A lot of us were overcome by our reception, and the affection we were shown helped us to begin putting the war behind us."³⁶



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CHAPTER 20

Why A Chapter on General MacArthur?

“Build me a son, O Lord, who will be strong enough to know when he is weak, and brave enough to face himself when he is afraid; one who will be proud and unbending in honest defeat, and humble and gentle in victory.

“Build me a son whose wishes will not take the place of deeds; a son who will know Thee—and that to know himself is the foundation-stone of knowledge.

“Lead him, I pray, not in the path of ease and comfort, but under the stress and spur of difficulties and challenge. Here let him learn to stand up in the storm; here let him learn compassion for those who fail.

“Build me a son whose heart will be clean, whose goal will be high, a son who will master himself before he seeks to master other men, one who will reach into the future, yet never forget the past.

“And after all these things are his, give him, I pray, enough of a sense of humor, so that he may always be serious, yet never take himself too seriously. Give him humility, so that he may always remember the simplicity of true greatness, the open mind of true wisdom, and the meekness of true strength.

“Then I, his father, will dare to whisper, ‘I have not lived in vain.’”

--- MacArthur’s Prayer For His Son

Though detractors attempt to paint a caricature-like portrait of General Douglas MacArthur as a powerful American military maverick with a flair for the dramatic (the ever-present sunglasses, the corn-cob pipe, the photo-ops), the fact is, one would be hard-pressed to single out an American military leader who surpasses this legendary war hero in military accomplishment and in sheer brilliance as a battle strategist. He is the George Washington of the Pacific Theater during World War II (though even the great Washington, while certainly a match for MacArthur in the realm of inspiring leadership, was clearly not MacArthur's equal in generalship).

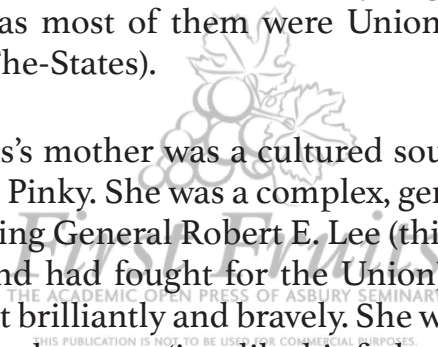
But exactly why does MacArthur merit a full chapter in a book such as this? More on that later. For now, let's take a brief look at the background of this extraordinary man. Do understand, however, that there is no way, particularly in a work such as this, to portray such a complex and legendary figure as MacArthur in full. For that, see *Suggested Reading* at the back of this book. So let's start at the beginning.

Douglas MacArthur was born in the year of 1880. His father, Arthur MacArthur, Jr., was himself an accomplished Lt. General in the Army of the United States. He fought for the Union in the Civil War and by age 20 he was dubbed, "The Boy Colonel" as by then he had reached the rank of Lt. Colonel. In 1899, he was stationed in the Philippines which the U.S. Army was attempting to occupy while also trying to pacify a country full of Filipino revolutionaries. By 1900 Major General Arthur MacArthur was chosen to become military governor of the Philippines military. Unfortunately it was his own request for "help" to American authorities back in Washington, that would prove to be his professional undoing in the years to come. What MacArthur asked for was an American representative to be sent to the Philippines, a man who could deal prudently and diplomatically with the Filipino rebels. That man turned

out to be William Taft, the future U.S. President. Not only did MacArthur and Taft butt heads in the Philippines (which led to MacArthur leaving the Philippines in 1901) but when Taft later became President of the United States, MacArthur resigned his commission at age 64—this though he was the senior general of the U.S. Army.

Suffice it to say that Douglas MacArthur benefitted from a ready-made U.S. military senior officer pedigree. Still, before Douglas' father reached the pinnacle of his career in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War, he served at several western U.S. forts. Though born in Little Rock, Arkansas, Douglas MacArthur grew up on the U.S. frontier of the 1880's, a world of cavalry soldiers, deserts, buttes, high country forts, and conflicts with marauding Indians. As General Douglas MacArthur would remember: "My first memory was the sound of bugles." It was a world that young Douglas loved and would continue to remember fondly all his life—so much so that even at the end of his life, General Douglas' MacArthur's favorite movies were mostly Westerns! Young Douglas (along with his older brother, Arthur) learned to ride and shoot at New Mexico fortresses such as Fort Shelden and Fort Wingate. When not riding or hunting out on the enchanted New Mexico gold and red-rocked landscape, Douglas and his brother would listen to the fort soldiers tell tales of their bloody engagements during the Civil War (as most of them were Union veterans of that War-Between-The-States).

Douglas's mother was a cultured southern belle from Virginia named Pinky. She was a complex, genteel woman, still prone to glorifying General Robert E. Lee (this, despite the fact that her husband had fought for the Union) and other great men who fought brilliantly and bravely. She wanted Douglas to grow up to be such a man (just like his father.... and Robert E. Lee). In fact, before he was put to bed each night, Pinky would



admonish him that he must do just that: grow up to be a great man. From his mother, Douglas would learn the virtues of good manners, how to comport himself at ceremonial soirees, the value of beautifully-stated words and phrases when addressing an audience. From his father, young Douglas (of course) learned military discipline, bearing, marching, and most definitely, the art and necessity of saluting any superior who entered the room.

MacArthur would recall other aspects of his early home training: “We were to do what was right no matter what the personal sacrifice might be. Our country was always to come first. Two things we must never do: never lie, never tattle.”³⁷ Also, it cannot be stated enough: both his parents stressed the virtues of past heroes to little Douglas. Consequently, there were always books on hand about great heroes who distinguished themselves in battle. To be a coward was the ultimate disgrace. So imperative was it for great men to show bravery no matter the horror or sorrow of their circumstance, that Pinky even admonished little Douglas that strong men do not cry! But Douglas knew better- he had seen his own father get somewhat teary-eyed at military ceremonies. Pinky had an answer for this: Such tears were allowable, because they were shed for love of country!

While it is clear that Arthur and Pinky imparted patriotic and Godly values to young Douglas, it would not appear they were strongly connected to or involved in regular church life. Generally raised as an Episcopalian, Douglas’s true spiritual awakening appears to have occurred after he left home to attend military academy. As a 13 year-old cadet at Texas Military Institute, MacArthur would, in later years, describe his first appearance on the school’s parade ground, “wearing a \$13.50 braided gray cadet uniform and carrying, as required, a Bible, a prayer book, and a hymnal.”³⁸ Though a military academy,

Texas Military Institute was founded by an Episcopalian bishop. That meant the cadets were to attend Chapel every morning at the schools' Church of Saint Paul. Again, as an aged general in later years, MacArthur would remember of his time at the Institute: "Biblical lessons began to open the spiritual portals of a growing faith."

On the more secular side of his character building at Texas Military Institute, Douglas learned the importance of two disciplines that would serve him well as a military officer throughout his illustrious career: study and preparation. Cadet Douglas MacArthur embraced these disciplines so vehemently that he soared past his classmates in academic accomplishment: his standing of 99 1/3 dwarfed even his next closest competitor's mark of 77.9. As MacArthur would later remember, "It was a lesson I never forgot. Preparedness is the key to success and victory."³⁹

What many may not realize is that in 1937, prior even to the beginning of World War II, MacArthur had actually retired from military service! By that time he had enjoyed a long and distinguished military career, having even attained the rank of brigadier general when he was only 38 years old (that was all the way back in 1918). It was only when the U.S. got involved with the European conflict overseas, and with tensions simultaneously brewing with Japan over in the Pacific, that MacArthur was recalled to active duty. He resumed his active generalship in July of 1941, only a few months before the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Over the course of the war, MacArthur would climb to the rank of four-star general, and would become supreme commander over U.S. military mobilizations and strategies in the Pacific theater during World War II. His titles also included that of General of the Army for the United States as well as Field Marshall to the Philippine Army. In short, he was Commander of the United States forces in the Southwest Pacific and Far

East—indeed, MacArthur was the counterpart to General Dwight Eisenhower who presided over the U.S military effort in the Atlantic theater.

What many will remember about MacArthur, is one of the most well-known soundbite quotes to come out of World War II -- second only, perhaps, to President Roosevelt's radio proclamation about December 7, 1941 being "...a day that will live in infamy." MacArthur's famous quote was short and to the point: "I shall return." It's a promise he made to the people of the Philippines shortly after he was forced to retreat from the Philippines due to the overwhelming advances of the invading Japanese forces in 1942. And indeed, MacArthur did return! He came back in 1944 with guns blazing (so to speak) with a powerful American fighting force that succeeded in wresting the Philippine Islands away from the Japanese and returning it once again to American-Filipino control. You can still see the famous photograph of MacArthur, wading ashore in his usual open-shirted khaki's, gold-embossed hat and sunglasses, looking the part of a working General. He is flanked by junior officers and soldiers, as he marches onto the sands of the Philippine island of Leyte. Like I said, MacArthur had a flair for the dramatic. Of course, shortly thereafter, MacArthur made sure to address the people of the Philippines with a radio announcement: "I have returned!" For his defense of the Philippines, MacArthur was awarded the Medal of Honor.

It can't be stated enough: No one prepared longer and more thoroughly for major battles than did General MacArthur, a discipline that he honed going back to his Texas Military Institute days. As a result, not only did he achieve huge military victories (the Battle of Midway in 1942, his Philippines Campaign of 1944-45), but he achieved these victories with amazingly minimal loss of American lives. MacArthur was never one to recklessly plunge his men into a bloodbath just

to gain a little ground against the enemy. In other words, MacArthur was the antithesis of Revolutionary War Brigadier General, “Mad” Anthony Wayne. The fact that MacArthur did take such care in minimizing loss of life in planning his battle strategies speaks to a Christian faith and worldview that he put into action, and not just in words (though as we will see, there is much in MacArthur’s words that speak strongly to his Christian faith as well).

After his great victory in the Philippines, General MacArthur would preside over the formal surrender of the Japanese on the deck of the *U.S.S. Missouri*.

MacArthur: The Surrender

Today, anyone who presides over an international ceremony as the lead representative of the United States, is expected to adhere to the principle of “separation of Church and State.” General Douglas MacArthur usually played fast and loose with that principle, if he didn’t ignore it completely. He certainly did on September 2, 1945, the day of the surrender ceremony aboard the *U.S.S. Missouri*. At 8:00 A.M. that morning-- one hour before the surrender ceremony was to begin—MacArthur had battleship Chaplain Roland F. Faulk deliver a prayer over the ship loudspeaker. The following is that prayer by Chaplain Faulk:

“Eternal God, Father of all living, we offer our sincere prayer of thanksgiving to Thee on this day, which we dedicate to peace among the nations, remembering another Sabbath day that was desecrated by the beginning of this brutal war. We are thankful that those who have loved peace have been rewarded with victory over those who have loved war. May it ever be so! On this day of deliverance we pray for those who, through long years, have been imprisoned, destitute, sick, and forsaken. Heal their bodies and their spirits, O

God, for their wounds are grievous and deep. May the scars which they bear remind us that victory is not bought without cost and peace is not without price. May we never forget those who have paid the cost of our victory and our peace. On this day of surrender we turn hopefully from war to peace, from destroying to building, from killing to saving. But peace without justice we know is hopeless and justice without mercy thou wilt surely despise. Help us, therefore, O God, to do justice and to love mercy and to walk humbly before thee. We pray for Thy servant, the President of the United States, and for all the leaders of all lands that they may be endowed with wisdom sufficient for their great tasks. Grant unto all the peoples of the earth knowledge of Thee with courage and faith to abide within the shelter of Thy sovereign law. Amen.”⁴⁰

In later years, Faulk would remember that the several U.S. admirals and generals who had gathered on board the *Missouri* seemed to be quite appreciative of the prayer (which Faulk himself had composed). All these high-powered men had stopped what they were doing to stand reverently at attention while Faulk delivered the prayer. Shortly thereafter, representatives of the Allied Powers began to gather for the surrender ceremony.

While the attack on Pearl Harbor had lasted one hour and fifteen minutes, the surrender signing on board the *Missouri* took only 18 minutes from start to finish. Japanese delegates Foreign Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu and General Yoshijiro Umezu signed the eight-paragraph document of surrender. Then, the Japanese envoys Foreign Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu and Gen. Yoshijiro Umezu signed their names on the Instrument of Surrender. This done, General MacArthur stepped up to the table, sat down and pulled five pens out of his pocket (four of which he gave away). The General then signed his name to the document and the ceremony was complete. At 9:25, MacArthur rose from his seat at the surrender table and announced, “These

proceedings are closed.” It had been a highly formal, dignified affair all around. The only nod to hostilities were the U.S. planes that were on standby in the event Japanese fighter planes might try and enact one final, go-out-with-glory kamikaze attack on the *USS Missouri*! Of course, that did not happen. It was a powerful moment, for this brought an end not just to hostilities between the United States and Japan, but to the entire World War II conflict, from Berlin to Pearl Harbor to Tokyo.⁴¹

What did happen, however, was a dramatic and celebratory fly-over by a squadron of Army Air Force B-29’s and Navy fighter planes shortly after MacArthur’s “proceedings are closed” announcement (these MacArthur had requested for effect). Now it was time for the great General of the Pacific Theater to address the American people via radio. He stepped up to the readied microphone and spoke these words:

“Today the guns are silent. A great tragedy has ended. A great victory has been won. The skies no longer rain death—the seas bear only commerce—men everywhere walk upright in the sunlight. The entire world is quietly at peace. The holy mission has been completed.....”⁴² (later in speech)..”Men since the beginning of time have sought peace....military alliances, balances of power, leagues of nations, all in turn failed, leaving the only path to be by the way of the crucible of war.... If we do not now devise some greater and more equitable system, Armageddon will be at our door. The problem basically is theological and involves spiritual recrudescence and improvement of human character that will synchronize with our almost matchless advances in science, art, literature and all material and cultural development of the past two thousand years. It must be of the spirit if we are to save the flesh.”⁴³

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Brilliant, four-star General though he was, MacArthur had not abandoned the Christian underpinnings of his youth



General Douglas MacArthur wading ashore on Lyte Island, the American invasion that was his famous “return” to the Philippines in October of 1944. (Image from the Library of Congress, in the Public Domain.)

during the Great War. His Christian leanings were evident in times of battle, as well as times of victory and peace. Upon his return to the Philippines in 1944, his message to the U.S. and Philippines troops was thus: “Strike...! ... Let no heart be faint. Let every arm be steeled. The guidance of Divine God points the way. Follow in his name to the Holy Grail of righteous victory!” MacArthur also had this to say on the matter of military leadership: “In war, when a commander become so bereft of reason and perspective that he fails to understand the dependence of arms on Divine guidance, he no longer deserves victory.”

Then there was the night of October 19, 1944, the eve of the American invasion to liberate the Philippines from Japanese forces. This was the “return” MacArthur had promised, but on the eve of the invasion, all aboard the *USS Nashville* looked out anxiously at the Leyte Island shoreline in the distance. That same night, MacArthur took a time of solitude in his cabin to “read again those passages from the Bible from which I have always gained inspiration and hope.” That evening the General also prayed that, “a merciful God would preserve each one of those men on the morrow.” And, as history would bear out, MacArthur’s prayers were answered. The Japanese invaders were beaten back and the American forces took control again of the Philippine Islands. Four months later, after the Philippine government had been re-established, MacArthur addressed the people with these words: “God has indeed blessed our arms. The girded and unleashed power of America, supported by our Allies, turned the tide of battle in the Pacific and resulted in an unbroken series of crushing defeats upon the enemy, culminating in the redemption of your soil and the liberation of your people.” At this point, a military leader who presided at the helm of such an historic victory—especially one said to have had an ego like MacArthur’s—might be expected to cap off his address with a paean to his own brilliance and accomplishment. Instead, MacArthur concluded his remarks

with this: “*In humble and devout manifestation of gratitude to Almighty God for bringing this decisive victory to our arms, I ask that all present rise and join me in reciting the Lord’s Prayer.*” [44]

MacArthur: The Occupation

After all his war heroics, General MacArthur did not shuffle off into a cushy retirement. Now he took on another monumental task: presiding over the U.S. occupation of Japan. He did just that for the entire duration of the occupation which lasted from late 1945 through 1952. In that time, MacArthur became not just a passive overseer, but a virtual sovereign over Japan. According to historian, Stanley Weintraub, “*In his showy, imperial way, MacArthur became a substitute emperor figure, ensconced mystically atop Tokyo’s Dai Ichi Building.*” [45]

During the occupation, MacArthur not only worked out of the Dai Ichi Building in Tokyo, he settled in. *Really* settled in. He was not prone to venturing out of Tokyo to make appearances around the country, nor to personally inspect his troops at their various stations throughout Japan. The general *did*, however, make a showy gesture of saluting his troops when they paraded below his window at the Dai Ichi Building (even during the occupation MacArthur did not lose his flair for the dramatic). Speaking of the dramatic, MacArthur also posed for a photo with Emperor Hirohito at the Dai Ichi Building headquarter. The photo caused a minor uproar throughout the country as it showed the new American overseer of Japan towering over conquered Emperor Hirohito. The people of Japan, already smarting from their defeat in the war, were said to have felt humiliated by this photo image. This controversial photo notwithstanding, the General and the Emperor actually fostered a friendly, mutually respectful relationship throughout the occupation years.

What's more, as the Allied Commander of the Japanese occupation, MacArthur proved to be a far more serious and conscientious leader than his shadow-wizard-behind-closed-curtains veneer seemed to suggest. Consider: For nearly seven years *following* his wartime heroics, MacArthur was responsible for overseeing the demobilization of Japan's military forces, as well as restoring the economy of Japan. It also fell to MacArthur and his occupation staff to draft a new constitution for Japan when Japan's initial 1946 constitution draft proved unacceptable to the Allied powers. But even beyond these major reforms, General MacArthur was determined that Japan should experience a major cultural shift in two very specific areas. First, was the hope to usher Japan into an age where their national values would align more with those of the West (which is why this part of MacArthur's legacy is looked upon less kindly by 21st century progressives than in past decades). To that end, Douglas MacArthur very much wanted Japan to embrace Western-style Democracy.

Understand, it wasn't as simple as MacArthur projecting, *Wouldn't it be great if the people of Japan embraced a democratic system where there would be free elections and the people would have a say in self-government?* In MacArthur's mind, Democracy was the ultimate aim, but the ultimate danger, at present, was the infiltration of communism into Asia. China had already embraced a Marxist brand of communism. Meanwhile, communism was already making major inroads into French Indo-China (which, in a few years, would become communist-saturated Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.) With the disillusionment in their defeated emperor—who just a few years before had been widely believed to have been divine—coupled with the widespread depression over the loss in the war and the spiritual vacuum resulting from that, MacArthur's concern was that Japan too could fall to communism. So, secondly, that's why MacArthur felt it imperative not just that the Japanese embrace democracy as a form of government, but that they

embrace something else for the spiritual disillusionment. That something, in MacArthur's view, should be Christianity.

In the early months of 1946, MacArthur invited four prominent American Christian leaders to Japan. These men were leaders of influence in their particular church denominations, but what really interested MacArthur were the missionary activities fostered by the churches and missionary organizations under these men. MacArthur asked these four church leaders to meet not only with Japanese Christian leaders, but with Emperor Hirohito as well! It was MacArthur's hope that the combined forces of the American and Japanese Churches could help spiritually and morally rebuild Japan.

Then, on December 17, 1946, MacArthur met with Chaplain Hudson Phillips (a Northern Baptist) and two other chaplains: William Nern (Roman Catholic) and Morris Adler (Jewish). These three men represented a Chaplains group that was to brainstorm on ways to spread Christianity or a God-centric world view, throughout Japan. Chaplain Phillips, in his report on MacArthur's commitment to religious influence in Japan, stated: "He [MacArthur] expressed conviction earnestly that there can be no hope for the world apart from the teachings of religion and the attitude it fosters."⁴⁶

Early on, MacArthur recognized that the collapse of Japan as a world power had created a spiritual vacuum. Though Shintoism had been the primary religion of Japan, it seemed not to be a force in the daily and moral life of the Japanese people (case in point: Shintoism was never a powerful force in the life of Mitsuo Fuchida even prior to his exploration of Christianity). Furthermore, MacArthur's intimate knowledge of the Philippines and Filipino history/culture led him to the conclusion that it was the Christianization and Democratization of the Filipinos over the last 400 years, that had saved them

as a people—especially in that this culture had kept them from embracing communism. MacArthur’s hope was that the Japanese would likewise be lifted up as a people through the embracement of Christianity and Democracy.

By the late 1940’s, General Douglas MacArthur was promoting a distribution of Bibles in Japan on a massive scale. Indeed, MacArthur called for the distribution of not one, not two, not three... but *43 million* Bibles to be distributed throughout Japan. This was to be, in MacArthur’s words, a “demonstration of practical Christianity’ which met the ‘heart-needs’ of the Japanese by giving them the Scriptures ‘which reveal the knowledge of God and his love through Jesus Christ.” [47]

Some historians have postulated that MacArthur’s brand of Christianity was simply—and cynically—a capitalization on the Christian faith/values of the American troops and the American public to whom he would spout off his Christian-leaning pep talks and prayers. Such perceptions ring hollow in light of MacArthur’s actions over the eleven-year period of the war and occupation. He was clearly consistent in promoting the faith in post-war Japan. Not only did MacArthur distribute Bibles on a massive scale, but he also put the call out to Youth for Christ and other ministry organizations: Some 10,000 Christian missionaries were needed in Japan! MacArthur welcomed both Catholic and Protestant missionaries (MacArthur is said to have preferred Catholic missionaries as he believed the Japanese people would transition easier to Catholicism). Also interesting is an account put forth by the late Reverend Billy Graham. According to Graham, Emperor Hirohito supposedly made quiet overtures to General MacArthur (during the time of the occupation) that he would be willing to make Christianity the state religion of Japan. After mulling this over for a bit, however, MacArthur allegedly turned down the offer, steadfastly insisting

that Christianity must be voluntarily accepted by the Japanese people.

Perhaps Chaplain Phillips sums it up best when, in later years, he would write, “It’s no wonder that one chaplain in Japan referred to the General in a letter saying, ‘He has done more than any other man to further Christianity in Japan.’” [48]

A General MacArthur-Jake DeShazer Connection

Now we come to the point where Jacob DeShazer enters the picture (after all, there had to be some reason for such a major chapter on General Douglas MacArthur in this book). Now perhaps the connection seems obvious: General MacArthur and Jake DeShazer both wanted to promote Christianity in Japan following the war. Both MacArthur and DeShazer were interested in missionary efforts to commence in post-war Japan. Granted, General MacArthur and Jake DeShazer never met in person, never spoke on the telephone or communicated by letter (at least that we know of). But they did have the aforementioned mutual interest in the Christianization of Japan. So that’s it.

But is it? Actually, such a quick conclusion is way too simple. If one delves deeper, there is more evidence of the divine in the way this all plays out. The following incident does not appear in the major history books on the Pacific War of 1941-1945, nor in substantial biographical works on General Douglas MacArthur. But it was recorded as thus:

“After World War II, the staff chaplain for General Douglas MacArthur’s Occupation Forces in Japan contacted my grandfather, Dr. Don Falkenberg, founder of Bible Literature International (BLI). He wanted to know if BLI would develop and publish a pamphlet to help heal the wounds between Japan

and the United States. Little did my grandfather know the pamphlet, *I Was a Prisoner of Japan*, would result in over 30 million copies printed in more than 20 languages. Written by American airman and P.O.W. Jacob DeShazer, the tract shares how God transformed his hatred for the “enemy” into a love for the lost, and led him to become a missionary in Japan.” [49]

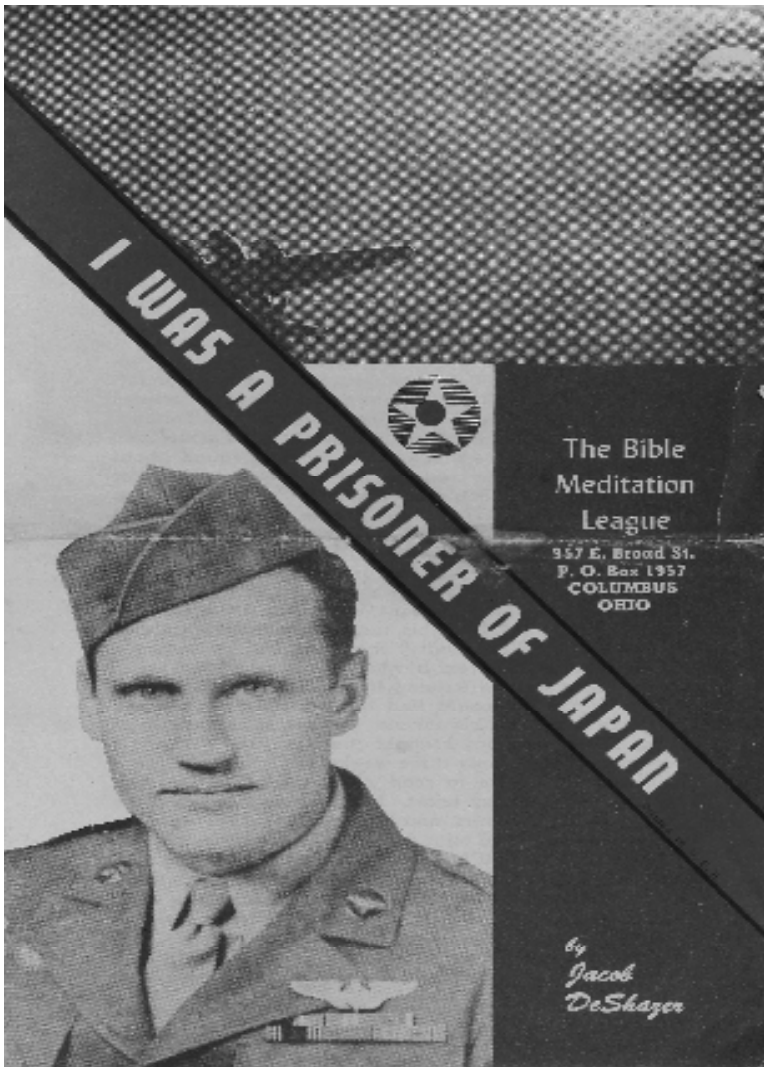
In other words, while it is widely recorded that General MacArthur promoted the distribution of millions of Bibles throughout Japan, put out a call for missionaries to come over to Japan, and promoted the distribution of Christian literature throughout Japan, there is only this one, brief account that one of the primary pieces of literature distributed in post-war Japan.... was Jake DeShazer’s, *I Was A Prisoner of Japan*. So while it was actually MacArthur’s staff Chaplain who met with Dr. Falkenberg in getting the leaflet printed up and distributed, it would seem very hard to believe that MacArthur himself would not have been aware of this tract written by the former Doolittle Raider. We can assume MacArthur would have been aware of his chaplain’s actions and approved of them. It’s just not something that’s recorded in the history books.

Yet even if MacArthur *did* manage to somehow not make note of a Jake DeShazer evangelical pamphlet done up specifically for the Japanese people, one could still make the following convincing argument: had there not been a General Douglas MacArthur to rule almost sovereignly over post-war Japan and who was intently interested in promoting Christianity in Japan... Jake DeShazer’s missionary efforts might never have known success.

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Consider the following: You may recall the story of the DeShazer family’s December, 1948 arrival in Yokohama,



Cover of Jake DeShazer's influential pamphlet, *I Was A Prisoner of Japan*, which MacArthur's team helped distribute in Japan.

(Courtesy of Asbury Theological Seminary, Archives and Special Collections.)

Japan aboard the ocean liner *U.S.S. Meigs*. Gazing down from the passenger deck, the DeShazer family were puzzled as to why such a large crowd had gathered at the docks waiting to greet the ship, never figuring that this large crowd of Japanese were waiting to get their first look at the DeShazers! Yet as they descended the gang plank, it soon became clear that it was not just a huge crowd of enthusiastic Japanese citizens awaiting someone's arrival, but also an army of news photographers, cameramen and media journalists. And in the next few moments it became clear to Jake and family just *who* the excited throng had come to see and swarm: *They* were the main event! The celebrities of honor!

You may also recall that Jake was thoroughly pleased, and astonished, at the bang-up advance job his missionary organization had done in distributing his leaflet tracts throughout Japan! Their efforts were already paying off in a *huge way*!

There is no doubt that Jake's missionary organization advance team had indeed worked hard in distributing Jake's "I Was A Prisoner of Japan" leaflets throughout Japan. But is that the full explanation for the welcome Jake and his family received at Yokohama harbor? According to authors Donald M. Goldstein and Carol DeShazer, "Before Jake even set foot in Japan, the Japanese people had been introduced to him through the more than one million tracts concerning the Doolittle raider who had become a missionary that had been distributed throughout the country." [50]

More than one million tracts. Let that sink in.

Now that we know of the meeting between BLI's Dr. Falkenberg and MacArthur's Chief Staff Chaplain, it seems just as likely that the powerful wind of DeShazer's Shadow

Benefactor, Douglas MacArthur, may well have been behind the promotional efforts prior to the arrival of the DeShazers in Japan. It would certainly make sense.

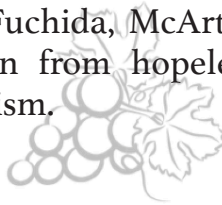
Lastly, the following must be acknowledged. Even if MacArthur was NOT behind the printing and distribution of Jake's one-million testimony pamphlets, one cannot overstate just how much Jake DeShazer owed to General MacArthur's Christianization influence in post-war Japan. We could look to a New Testament example. The Apostle Paul and early Christians were able to spread Christianity throughout the far-flung Roman Empire thanks in large part to... the well-built, well-maintained Roman roads. In other words, Paul and the early Christian missionaries owed much to Caesar Augustus and Tiberius Caesar (though these pagan emperors were completely unaware that they were helping spread Christianity). In the same way, Jake DeShazer was able to minister for decades in Japan as a Christian missionary without fear of official opposition or persecution. In fact, the same could be said of Mitsuo Fuchida's early Christian evangelistic efforts in his home country. This was unquestionably due to the influential and strong hand of General Douglas MacArthur as the nation's chief executive. It was MacArthur who set a Christian-friendly climate in post-war Japan—a climate from which DeShazer, Fuchida, Christ and the Japanese people would benefit!

Jake DeShazer's humble attitude and message, not of judgement but of love, forgiveness and reconciliation, fit perfectly with MacArthur's efforts to bring the two nations together. Certainly, Jake's 1948 welcome to Japan and the interest of the Japanese media would seem to suggest that there were powers at work that went far beyond the capabilities of the Church. Jake, being a former prisoner-of-war and yet coming

with a message of love and reconciliation, fit perfectly into McArthur's desire to place the best face on America's presence amongst the hurting populace.

In addition, McArthur also certainly knew about Capt. Fuchida and that he was a national hero to the Japanese. Remember, Fuchida was called to officially testify at hearings called by McArthur regarding the Japanese treatment of American prisoners of war. Therefore, when Fuchida read Jake's pamphlet and committed himself to Christianity, McArthur would almost certainly have known about this because of Fuchida's status. Though we don't have documented evidence, it would logically follow that MacArthur would also have known about Fuchida and DeShazer's relationship and its positive influence upon the nation.

So while MacArthur paved the way for the evangelistic efforts of DeShazer and Fuchida in post-war Japan, conversely, these two men, and others, so mightily used of God, were also key influences on the success of McArthur's leadership over the Japanese people. MacArthur's attempts to show the Japanese people respect and forgiveness gave them hope for the future. This may also answer why Fuchida was never tried as a war criminal but lived an honored life among the Japanese in the years following the War. Therefore, one cannot separate God's use of Jake DeShazer, Fuchida, McArthur, and the Japanese Church in saving Japan from hopelessness and ruin and perhaps, even Communism.



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CHAPTER 21

Mid-1960's: The Story Widens (on nationwide TV and in humble neighborhood churches)

It seems that the scope of influence of our story only continues to widen—from the seemingly trivial and mundane to the eternally significant. Such as the following anecdote I'm about to share. Or is it trivial? You be the judge. What I can tell you is that even as I was concluding the writing of this book, I was directed to a magazine article (courtesy of my mother) that took the reader on a brief time capsule trip back to 1965. Specifically, to a September 2, 1965 episode of the Merv Griffin Show. This particular installment featured the usual show business guests (case in point: comedienne Phyllis Diller was a performing guest on that episode). But there was also a different kind of featured guest that day—someone who was not the usual show business celebrity but rather a figure who had played a significant role in United States and world history. Beyond the fact that this particular thirteen and a half minute segment proved to work with viewing audiences, more importantly, it proved that daytime television talk shows could cover serious subjects. This was indeed groundbreaking, as for the next five decades, TV talk shows would no longer shirk from embracing serious subjects, topics and guest segments. In fact, they would go on to embrace them with a passion! To illustrate, David Letterman was fond of recounting the moment he knew his 1980 daytime comedy TV talk show debut was in trouble: He overheard a woman in the audience asking another woman, “What’s the topic today?”

But back to this particular 1965 Merv Griffin episode: it actually ranked number 25 in 2013's TV Guide Magazine's 60 Greatest Talk Show Moments. The guest in question that day? Captain Mitsuo Fuchida. Not surprisingly, Merv started right in with the questions about Pearl Harbor, as well as Fuchida's thoughts about Japan's part in the war. That part of the conversation is illuminating enough. But perhaps more surprisingly, Griffin allowed several minutes for Fuchida to discuss his conversion to Christianity—indeed, the Captain testifies how he found faith in Christ, and how a pamphlet's message of love and forgiveness had touched his heart. Captain Fuchida wraps up his testimony by telling the story of the pamphlet author, Sgt. Jacob DeShazer, a Doolittle Raider who participated in flying the first combat mission against Japan. He was captured, spent nearly four years in Japanese captivity only to discover salvation and love for the Japanese people while suffering in prison.

As for the reaction of the studio audience, were they bitter that the man who had led the devastating attack on Pearl Harbor was being given a warm and polite reception by host Merv Griffin? Were there boos, catcalls and protests because this Japanese officer who had led the infamous attack on Pearl Harbor, was now trying to pass himself off as a godly individual? Were they upset that they had attended a taping of the Merv Griffin Show expecting non-stop laughs and light entertainment, only to find themselves a captive audience to a Christian testimony? If this was the case there was no evidence of it by the reaction of the studio audience. In fact, the audience erupts into spontaneous and enthusiastic applause after Fuchida's testimony. This is why *Reminisce Magazine* spotlighted this particular Merv Griffin episode as groundbreaking, as it "proved that talk shows also had cultural weight."⁵¹

Hayward, California 1966

Fast forward just one year, and there is a special guest speaker at the Hayward (California) Free Methodist Church, pastored by my grandfather, Pastor Edward Smiley. Speaking in the pulpit that evening will be none other than Jake DeShazer. That Jake DeShazer, former Doolittle Raider, would speak in the pulpit of a humble Free Methodist Church was not out of character for this humble servant of God—for decades, he would consent to share his testimony anywhere from large auditoriums to tiny meeting houses.

The Hayward Free Methodist Church was one of those “humble” churches. Unlike many churches today, which are located in convenient, easily-accessible-to-major-roads-or-freeways locales, Hayward Free Methodist was located smack in the center of a lower-middle class suburban neighborhood. The city of Hayward itself, then as now, was simply a non-descript bedroom community to Oakland in the East Bay area of northern California.

Actually, Mom and we boys had lived with Grandpa and Grandma Smiley there in Hayward in 1966 while Dad was on naval ship duty, though we left before DeShazer’s visit to Hayward. I truly wish we had been there—though I would have been way too young to appreciate the significance of this particular evening service.

For you see, it would not just be Jake DeShazer speaking in the pulpit that evening. He had brought along a guest (who, in 1966, just happened to be living across the bay in San Francisco). It must be understood, Captain Mitsuo Fuchida did not normally tag along with Jake on speaking engagements, as the two men lived a great distance from each other. Each was busy with his own ministries. On this occasion, however,

Fuchida was close enough to reunite with his old friend in Christ.

One would think a church service as infused with as much dramatic impact as this one, would have taken place in a huge, mega-church – all the better to accommodate the massive crowds who would come out to witness a (perhaps) once-in-a-lifetime paring of two history-making individuals! It would be logical to presume that the major big-city newspapers of San Francisco and Oakland would be trumpeting this coming-together – on the same platform—of two figures who were at the forefront of one of the most epic conflicts in world history; two men who once served at the forefront of their respective world-power military forces as mortal enemies.

But it didn't happen like that.

Still, Captain Fuchida's very appearance in an American church pulpit, alongside the former American Doolittle Raider and Japanese P.O.W., was testimony to the incredible power of the Holy Spirit to change hearts; a testimony to the power of forgiveness; a testimony to the miracle of reconciliation with one's former enemy. Twenty-five years before, Captain Fuchida and Jake DeShazer would have been hated enemies: each man would happily kill the other on sight if the opportunity presented itself. On this Sunday in 1966, however, the two former enemies stood on the church platform – together, brothers in Christ.

It also should be noted that, even more than former war hero Jake DeShazer, Captain Fuchida had regularly received VIP treatment in Japan and in the U.S., while rubbing elbows with the notable and powerful. By the time Fuchida came to Hayward, he had visited Pearl Harbor as a dignitary and toured Island churches. He had visited Washington D.C. where he met (then) Vice President Richard Nixon and the Navy Chief

of Chaplains; he visited the United States Naval Academy and spoke to our midshipmen; he visited Admiral Chester Nimitz at Berkeley where he lived, as well as Admiral Raymond Spruance who was Captain of the first *Hornet* of Doolittle fame. Also by the time of the Hayward Free Methodist service, Fuchida had met and spoke at a Billy Graham rally and shortly thereafter, visited the Sky Pilot Office which was the organization he belonged to and which sponsored his ministry. Oh yes, *and* there was that guest appearance on the Merv Griffin show! In short, that both DeShazer and Fuchida would readily accept an invitation to speak before a fairly small crowd at a neighborhood church, speaks volumes about their humility.

Something else was quite fitting about that Hayward Free Methodist Church speaking engagement and reunion. Both DeShazer and Fuchida, on their drives down the freeway to Hayward, would have passed right by the Alameda Air Station—the place from which Jake and the rest of the Doolittle Raiders set out on their mission to Japan.



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CONCLUSION

In the previous chapter I noted how the audience at that 1965 taping of the Merv Griffin Show was highly appreciative of Fuchida's Christian testimony. The truth is, the story the audience heard that day was even more powerful and weighted with spiritual gravitas than they had time to hear—or could possibly imagine. They could not have known that neither Fuchida nor DeShazer had any right by earthly calculation, to see the year of 1965 as live men. In actuality, only by the grace of God did either man live to see the year of 1946! Jake DeShazer, as early as 1942, had been officially marked for execution by a military court and his Japanese captors. Later, in his last months as a POW, because of the years of starvation and depravation, he was so near death's door that he simply assumed he would soon be seeing Jesus in heaven. Instead, Jake lived until 2008 and died at a ripe old age of 95. As for Captain Fuchida, he survived several close calls during the War, but even more astonishingly, he should have perished instantly, along with several thousand others at Hiroshima, had he not been called away from his Hiroshima hotel on official business! Perhaps even more astonishing is that Fuchida literally walked into the fiery furnace the day-after-the-atomic-bomb-explosion fell on Hiroshima, all the while wearing not one stitch of anti-radiation protective clothing! There is no accounting for his being the only one of his Japanese inspection team to not catch radiation poisoning outside of the miraculous grace of God. Instead, Fuchida lived to be 73 years old.

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General MacArthur and Emperor Hirohito, two politically influential figures who influenced DeShazer's story and his mission in Japan. (Image in the Public Domain.)

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In keeping with the “fiery furnace” symbolism, like Shadrach, Meshack and Abendego of the Old Testament story (Daniel 3), both Jake DeShazer and Captain Fuchida found themselves in the fiery furnace. Unlike Shadrach, Meshack and Abendego, DeShazer and Fuchida both went voluntarily, though neither could have foreseen how perilously hot the furnace would get. Still, both men emerged safe, preserved, and stronger—only the miraculous grace of God can account for that. But God did not deliver these two men from the furnace in order to give them several more fulfilling years on earth; instead, both men came out of the fiery furnace to testify with power how Christ had changed their hearts from being gung-ho warriors fighting their earthly enemy to being enthusiastic foot soldiers for Christ and the gospel of love and forgiveness He proclaimed.

One of the key truths I have tried to emphasize throughout this work, is that the DeShazer-Fuchida drama also involved more than just these two principle players. To illustrate this fact, I have chosen a visual medium: a pair of old photographs. I believe they have lessons to impart. The first is a black-and-white photograph taken in 1950. It is the most well known photograph of Jake DeShazer and Captain Fuchida together. This photograph was taken shortly after Captain Fuchida had accepted Christ as his Savior and indeed, captured their first personal meeting together. In the picture, the two men are seated together, conversing and smiling over an open Bible. While this particular photograph is the perfect visual accompaniment to any re-telling of the DeShazer-Fuchida story, there is actually another photo that should broaden your understanding.

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Redirect your attention now to the second photograph: this one features two men who also played key roles in the Pacific World War II story. Actually that’s an understatement:

The two men in this photograph were (outside of, perhaps, only President Franklin D. Roosevelt) the two most powerful figures in the Pacific World War II conflict. This photograph was mentioned earlier in the book. It shows General Douglas MacArthur standing next to Japanese Emperor, Hirohito. Though he never personally met either of these giants, Jake DeShazer and his ministry owed much to both men. First and foremost, Jake would certainly have been executed as early as 1942 by his Japanese captors—had not Emperor Hirohito stepped in and commuted the death sentences of Jake and most of the other Doolittle Raider captives. As for MacArthur, you will recall the earlier chapter demonstrating how MacArthur was the earthly “wind” beneath Jake’s missionary “wings” at the outset of his ministry, for it was MacArthur who fostered an atmosphere in post-War Japan that was Christian friendly. On the same note, as discussed earlier, MacArthur’s wish to encourage Christian values into the new Japan also aided Captain Fuchida’s ministry in his country and the reception by his countrymen as well!

While we are on the subject of “power figures,” there is another individual whose influence in the DeShazer-Fuchida story cannot be overlooked. Who else but President Franklin D. Roosevelt would have enough power in 1942 to put pressure on the U.S. military brass to “find ways and means of carrying home to Japan proper, in the form of a bombing raid, the real meaning of war.” [52] From this pressing mandate, of course, came the Doolittle Raid on Japan, the raid which launched Jake on his lifelong Japanese odyssey. President Roosevelt died in office, in 1945. One can only imagine what he would have thought of the Doolittle Raider who went on to become a missionary in Japan, and later to actually lead to Christianity the man who led the “Day of Infamy” attack on Pearl Harbor! Sometimes we are so taken by the meek and humble whom God uses to do great things, that we overlook the instances where God uses (even

unwittingly) very powerful people to help spread the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We shouldn't be surprised that God uses the powerful and influential to achieve godly ends, even if these figures (in some cases) are not godly, Bible-reading, Spirit-filled people themselves. The Bible illustrates this phenomenon numerous times: the Pharaoh of Egypt made Joseph his Second-in-Command, and in that capacity, Joseph was able to bless his people and the Egyptians. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon protected Daniel from his enemies and promoted him to high office. This enabled Daniel to be used of God and write some of the most powerful and important prophecies of the Bible; it was the emperor of Persia who helped Nehemiah to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Why then should God not use General MacArthur, Emperor Hirohito and President Franklin D. Roosevelt (among others) to pave the way for the incredible story that is Jake DeShazer and Captain Mitsuo Fuchida?

Near the end of Jake DeShazer's life, he sat down with a writer who queried him about his war experiences and also his years as a missionary. Interestingly, by that time in his life, Jake could remember little about his POW experiences. In the end, we can rejoice with Jacob "Jake" DeShazer, that his post-war ministry was so fulfilling, so filled with the joy of seeing hearts won to Christ for eternal salvation, that those are the memories on which his heart chose to dwell. In his twilight years it would appear that the abuse and pain he suffered receded into unimportance, while his work for Christ grew in significance to him.

Those we have spoken to in the course of writing this book, who knew Jacob DeShazer at various points in the last few decades, offer incredibly consistent assessments of DeShazer, the man. For instance, there is Mrs. Priscilla Probst,

a fellow missionary to Japan who met Jacob and Florence back in the 1980's when they came back to look in on the Christian Academy where their children had once attended and where they had ministered as well. In addition to marveling over Jake and Florence's spirit of humility and authenticity, she recounted how "Jacob would always share his story and our kids were always spellbound by it. "

Then there is the personal memory of evangelist, Paul Blair, a man who Jake virtually took under his wing due to Paul's intense interest in Jake's story and the Doolittle Raiders. The following is a memory as shared by Mr. Blair:

In the early nineties I was preaching a series of meetings in Oregon at the Harmony Evangel Church pastored by Reverend Glen Boring. After reading Jacob DeShazer's conversion story as a Japanese prisoner of war in China, Reverend Boring suggested that I call Reverend DeShazer and see if I could have lunch with him. Reverend DeShazer and his wife were very gracious giving me their whole day. As a result of our first meeting, we became fast friends, and I began attending some meetings where Jake was sharing, and several of the annual Doolittle Reunions. I was astonished at how the highly decorated surviving Doolittle Raiders showed great respect for their brother in arms who went back to Japan as a missionary.

Several years before Jake passed away, we were together at the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs with two other Doolittle Raiders in the beautiful Chapel as Jake told the story of his conversion and being filled with The Spirit while he was in a Japanese prison camp. It was a unique moment of Grace: Jake, small of stature, a corporal in the old Army Air Corps, and addressing the cadets, and staff of the USAF Academy. Jake could fool you-- he was not an impressive figure, at least until you began to listen to the content of his words and story. That's one of the reasons I liked him. He didn't carry any of the normal religious trappings and pseudo-

spirituality that many ministers exude. There was a genuine veracity without any pretensions.

When Jake came to the part of his story where he was being regularly beaten and his internal reaction of hatred towards his tormentors—you could hear a pin drop in the Chapel. And then he shared about his prayer, “Jesus you have to do something more in my heart to make me ‘love my enemies’”. And HE did. Then Jake softly put this challenge to the congregation: “If God can change my heart towards my enemy from hatred to love and under those circumstances of torture, starvation, and alienation, then He can change your heart right here, right now. Just ask Christ to forgive you of your sins and come into your heart.”

I can’t quite remember everything as it actually happened when he prayed for the congregation. However, there was weeping and movement. The Holy Spirit was working right there transforming lives. It was a privilege in Grace to be there that day.

The circumstance of when and where these witnesses met Jake might differ, but the portrait of the man almost never wavers: Jake DeShazer was a humble, self-effacing individual, and never less than completely genuine. His heart for missions was an unwavering passion, as was his love for the Japanese people. And he was never too busy to share his testimony! As for outward signs of trauma from those four painful years as a POW, no one ever doubted that the painful memories were there, but Jake remained, to the end, virtually unbroken (yes, to echo the title of a recent cinematic movie about Louis Zamperini, another heroic U.S. POW in Japan who also found Christ).

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A mature Christian believer of our acquaintance went so far as to say that if the Jake DeShazer story took place in ancient times, it would be a biblical story! Granted, not everyone



**At age 76, Jacob DeShazer, along with other Doolittle Raiders, receives his POW/MIA medal for service in World War II at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California.
(Image in the Public Domain.)**

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would agree on that point (frankly, I find the assertion quite defensible) but I will even more wholeheartedly stand by the words of C. Hoyt Watson, former President of Seattle Pacific College and author of the 1950 book, *DeShazer*, who called Jake's story, "The most unbelievable story to come out of WW II." [53] The stories of Captain Fuchida and General McArthur would also justifiably fall under such a category. Consequently, the three men together form a human triad or trinity, used of God to help save post-war Japan. The work they began has no comparison in history and it is not finished. God's message to the world is still the message he gave DeShazer, Fuchida and McArthur nearly 75 years ago: The answer to hatred, war and conflict is still God's love, forgiveness and reconciliation through the power of Christ transforming hearts.



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POSTSCRIPT

The friendship of Christian brotherhood that existed between Jake DeShazer and Mitsuo Fuchida continued until Fuchida's death. Jake saw Fuchida just prior to his passing. In his typical understated way, DeShazer said of that final meeting, "We shared in that good, wonderful thing Christ has done." Fuchida died of complications from diabetes in 1976.

Jacob "Jake" DeShazer died in 2008 at the age of 95. He ended his life virtually where he began—in Salem, Oregon. To the end he was all too willing to share his story with anyone who would listen. Also to the end of his life, he participated in Doolittle Raider reunions as often as circumstances would allow. He never lost the immense respect of his fellow surviving Raiders.

Florence DeShazer also lived a long and full life, passing away in 2017 at the age of 96. It must be remembered that this extraordinary woman, in addition to being Jake's wife of 62 years and mother of his children, also served right beside him every step of the way for the entirety of Jake's more than 30 year missionary journey. At times she even took leadership in certain ministries!

Most of the children of Jake and Florence DeShazer—John, Mark, Carol and Ruth, survive their parents at this writing. Sadly, the oldest, Paul DeShazer, passed away in late 2021 during the writing of this book. Paul was lovingly and wonderfully eulogized in print by his sister Carol, who rejoiced

that the free-spirited Paul had, at the end of his life, strongly re-embraced the faith in which he was nurtured. In addition to the four surviving children of Jake and Florence, there are also, as of this writing, 10 grand-children and 12 great-grandchildren.

As for the aforementioned Carol DeShazer (now Carol Aiko DeShazer Dixon) she and I were close from the beginning—at least that’s what my parents share with me. Apparently, when the DeShazers were at our house in 1964, Carol kept pestering her mother, Florence, about “wanting to hold the baby” (me). I was all of one year old, and I guess to little Carol, I was appropriately doll-sized. But on a more serious—and current—note, Carol has proven to be an invaluable help in the writing of this book.

George Barr, the last of the Doolittle Raiders to be rescued from the Japanese POW camps in China, and who experienced such emotional torture following his release, retired from the Air Force in 1947 due to physical disability. Still, he went on to live twenty more productive years as a Management Analyst for the U.S. Army.

Retired Air Force Colonel, Robert L Hite, died in 2015 at age 95. Following his military service, he went into the hospitality field and managed several Holiday Inn hotels. He was also a member of Gideons International, the missionary organization responsible for placing Bibles in hotel rooms for benefit of their guests!

Chase Nielsen died in 2007 age 90 (it’s amazing how three of the four Doolittle Raiders released from Japanese prison camps lived into their 90’s!). Nielsen retired as an Air Force Lt. Colonel and was an advocate for American airpower over many years. At a Raider reunion ceremony near the end of his life, Nielsen said, “I hope and pray that our young men

and young women who are serving in the service today will be protected; that they will live their lives in accordance with the military rules and laws of war, that they will do their best and that they will appreciate their country and protect their flag as we tried to do ourselves.”⁵⁴



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EPILOGUE

It is a distinct honor and privilege to add a short epilogue to this exceptional story. The book is part of a greater project to increase the awareness of this little-known story that touches two nations who were former enemies but became best friends. How God attached me to this story and the story to me is a story in itself. When I was in high school I was touched when our small community of Lebanon, Missouri, welcomed home a Korean War POW by presenting him with the keys to a new car at our county fair. I wondered what he had suffered. The celebration took a turn when he soon wrecked the car and moved from the community. The word was that he had difficulty adjusting to a new life. I remember that this sadness imprinted itself in my mind.

After high school graduation I joined the Navy and in time became a navigator in a flight crew. We trained to fly off aircraft carriers on missions from which you had little hope of returning in time of war. Only later did I come to discover that our mission was not unlike the Doolittle Raiders of which Jacob DeShazer was a part. Sometime later I met Jacob when he came as a special speaker to the church I pastored, and I heard his story firsthand. This story captured me.

Later I became a Navy Chaplain and was assigned at and around Pearl Harbor twice. Here the December 7th attack imprinted itself upon my mind and I became aware of LCDR Mitsuo Fuchida who led the devastating air attack on our fleet. It was this attack that prompted President Roosevelt to approve

the Doolittle Raiders attack on Japan four months later. Now I began to see how it all was connected.

Meantime I was also coming to know some of our Vietnam POW's personally. One, Admiral Robert Shumacher who at six years was our second-longest-held prisoner, was my Commander at the Naval Post Graduate School at Monterey. As he shared with me his experience, I realized more and more that it is not easy for a POW to come home and pick up where they left off.

When I began to study DeShazer's story more in detail, I began to see things I had never seen before. For example, how God dealt with Jacob in prison and transformed his life and attitude toward himself, God, and the Japanese. This resulted in him returning to Japan as a missionary. Then I discovered the story of how Captain Fuchida, war hero in his country, was given Jacob DeShazer's story. This simple pamphlet was given to him on a street corner; he, read it and was converted to Christ. Then, to my amazement, I discovered how they met, became friends and sometimes together spoke to crowds about their conversions, forgiveness, and healing. Fuchida became an Evangelist, speaking in Japan and America. At one point he actually went to Pearl Harbor to honor those whose lives he had taken and to confess his grief over participating in the Pearl Harbor attack.

But how was God's work in these men's lives possible when Japan was still reeling from their humiliating defeat and surrender aboard the Battleship, *USS Missouri* in Tokyo Bay? Then I was led to the Pacific Commander General Douglas MacArthur. In the study of his life and leadership, I discovered how God had prepared him for this hour and used his bent toward Christianity to offer hope to Japan. MacArthur saw that the values offered by Christianity could be a healing balm for

a wounded nation. This attitude encouraged and welcomed those willing to share God's love and faith with the Japanese people. The respect MacArthur gave the Japanese people and his sensitivity to their great need no doubt saved Japan from atheistic Communism or worse. God's work is seldom on the shoulders of one man. He uses a team effort to fulfill his plan.

However, when I began to discuss my discoveries with people in and outside the church, I found that this great story had faded from the memories of even those who had known parts of it. It was then that I knew that God had placed me in a special time and place to capture this story and illuminate it again. I was delighted when Asbury Theological Seminary agreed to join me in this worthy effort.

E. Dean Cook, Captain, Naval Chaplain Corps, Retired



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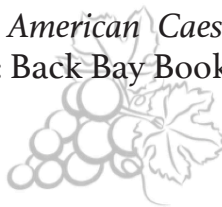
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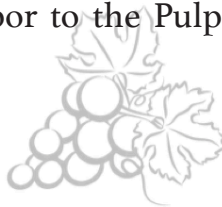
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Corporal Jacob “Jake” DeShazer was part of one of World War II’s most celebrated Band of Brothers: the daring 80-man air squad known as “Doolittle’s Raiders.” In a dangerous low-altitude night flight, they conducted the first bombing raid on Japanese soil from an aircraft carrier at sea, and then flew toward allied territory in China with little fuel remaining. DeShazer and his crew ran out of fuel and were captured by the Japanese. For nearly four years as a Prisoner of War, DeShazer experienced unfathomable deprivation and torture at the hands of his captors. He despised the Japanese, even hated them.

But one day, DeShazer got his hands on a Bible, and God’s message of love, redemption, and salvation got through to him. He accepted the salvation of Christ and in his heart forgave his Japanese tormentors. After his conversion, DeShazer felt God tell him that he would survive, that the war would end, and that he would return to Japan as a missionary! He not only survived, but returned to minister in Japan from 1948 through 1978!

His impact included the conversion of Captain Mitsuo Fuchida, the leader of the attack on Pearl Harbor and one of the most despised villains of the war from the American point of view. DeShazer and Fuchida would actually preach the shared Gospel of Jesus Christ together.

The soldier and prisoner filled with hate became part of God’s plan for peace and reconciliation on the islands of Japan. This is the incredible story of Jacob DeShazer and the mighty way God used events and even the highest power-brokers (including General Douglas MacArthur), to make his story possible!

