



1—Col. William Matheny and his copilot, Lt. Ernest Carey, after they returned from the successful raid on Wake island. Col. Matheny led the flight of big army bombers.



2—Getting dressed up for the Wake island raid are, left to right, Staff Sergeants R. J. Bislew, C. R. Kealey, T. E. Tedford; Col. Matheny, Lt. Don Manchester, Olen W. Clements, correspondent who covered the raid, and Lt. Ernest Carey.



3—Col. Matheny, center, receives congratulations after successfully leading the army bomber flight in a surprise raid against Wake island in which huge damage was done.



4—Col. Matheny talks to his bombardier, Lt. Manchester, left, as they don life vests and parachutes just before taking off. The man on the right, having difficulty with his paraphernalia, is Olen W. Clements.—Official 7th air force photos.

Last Edition
First And Fullest
War News

Honolulu Star-Bulletin

Late News
FINAL

ARMY'S AIRMEN SMASH WAKE

JAPANESE ARE CAUGHT ASLEEP BY RAIDERS

Huge Fires Started on Enemy Base, Famed In American History; All Our Planes Are Safe

By OLEN W. CLEMENTS

(Correspondent Olen W. Clements represented all press associations on this special assignment. He rode in the lead plane.)

ABOARD A BOMBER OVER WAKE ISLAND, Dec. 24. (AP)—Huge American bombers plunged from the high heavens today on unsuspecting Wake island and plastered the Japs with 76,000 pounds of bombs in the biggest raid of the Pacific war. Possibly more than half of the Japanese defenders were killed.

Intense fires were started on both Wake and Peale islands. The Japanese were caught in bed one minute after midnight.

Their anti-aircraft fire, which did not start until long after the first bombs exploded, was wild and the frightened Japs were seen running madly for their dugouts in the brilliant moonlight.

In a split second bombs crashed all over both islands. Fires crackled everywhere.

Precisely at midnight flight leader, Col. William A. Matheny of Carrington, N. D., flipped on his radio and called to the long line of planes behind him:

"This is it, boys; I'm going in and the engines roared. The nose of the bomber lay Wake island, where for 16 days a year ago American marines made one of the most gallant last stands in the world's history.

Faster and faster the bomber plunged down, its nose pointed at a long row of buildings on Peacock point. The island was blacked out. Copilot Lt. E. H. Carey of Gridley, Cal., was "pouring the coal" to the four engines and dropping out the increasing speed and the dropping altitude to Col. Matheny.

Down and down the plane sped, its occupants watching all sides for signs of anti-aircraft fire.

None came. Col. Matheny pulled her nose up. Suddenly brilliant red flashes were seen below. Then more and more. The bomber was streaking through the air at a terrific speed.

"When are you going to turn loose those incendiaries?" the colonel asked the bombardier, Lt. D. C. Manchester of Spokane, Wash.

"Gone, sir," replied Lt. Manchester. And at that moment a huge flash was seen.

The planes on each wing let theirs go at the same time. When the colonel turned the plane every building in that long row was afire. No Japanese was seen to run from any of them.

Still there was no anti-aircraft fire. Dozens more bombs began to hit all sections of both islands.

Finally, after what seemed an eternity, a few Japanese managed to reach two ack ack guns and let go wildly. The shells burst fully 6,000 feet above and two miles

away from the nearest American plane. Then lighter machine guns were unlimbered and tracers began to hunt the planes above.

Two searchlights popped on below. Their beams caught the leading plane but almost instantly they went out.

All Short of Target Tail Gunner Sergeant W. C. Hill of Lehigh, Pa., who was instructed to shoot out any light that caught the plane in its beam, did not begin to fire a shot at them. Nor did he return fire at the machine guns. Instead he just sat there and watched the tracers fall far short of their target.

More searchlight beams began to sweep the sky. The gunners of other bombers let go at them and started putting them out.

One Japanese plane started roll-turn to Page 4, Column 3

Olen Clements Newspaperman For 14 Years

Olen W. Clements, who covered the Wake island raid for all news services, came to the Pacific theater of war for the Associated Press in September. He was born at Indian Gap, Texas, in 1909 and began newspaper work on the Houston Post as a reporter. Later he served as city editor of the Texas newspaper for several years, joining the staff of the Associated Press in 1937.

He worked in Houston and Dallas before going to New York as night editor of Press Association, Inc., the radio subsidiary of the Associated Press. Subsequently he became chief of bureau in Atlanta, Ga., and came to the Pacific war area from the post of Western News Editor in San Francisco.

Mr. Clements has been a newspaperman since 1928.

Man Hurt In Tank Explosion Dies

Ernest Enoke Pipi, 31, of Makua St., Kailua, died at 6:10 p. m. Thursday in a Honolulu hospital of injuries he received when a gas tank which he was welding at Bellows field exploded earlier in the day. Services will be announced later by Borthwick's mortuary.

Born in Kailua on November 17, 1911, he was employed as a welder at Bellows field.

He is survived by the widow, Mrs. Eleanor Markham Pipi; two sons, Dutchy and Dodo; his mother, Mrs. Anna Pipi; two sisters, Mrs. Rose Hightower and Mrs. Hannah Kahahawai; and three brothers, Moses Jr., Edward and Terry.

Text Of The Communique From Admiral C. W. Nimitz

"Just after midnight, December 23-24 (east longitude time), a force of United States army aircraft conducted a bombing attack on enemy installations on Wake island.

"All of our participating aircraft returned, undamaged, to their bases. There were no injuries to our personnel.

"The enemy was apparently completely surprised by the attack, in which more than 75,000 pounds of bombs were dropped from low altitudes on designated target areas.

"Ineffective anti-aircraft fire was observed after the first bombs had been dropped on Wake and Peale islands.

"Two enemy aircraft approached two of our planes, but retired when fired upon, with no damage sustained by our planes.

FOUR

Wake Bombers Are Decorated

Continued from Page 1

ing before Christmas, the Japanese on Wake island were suddenly presented with 75,000 pounds of aerial bombs, most of which struck and damaged military targets.

"All of our planes attacked from low altitudes and returned to base on schedule, with neither planes nor personnel harmed by the enemy artillery which was finally awakened by the visitors.

"To me this operation epitomizes the complete unity with which all fighting forces in the Pacific—the army, the navy, the marine corps and the coast guard—are coordinating their strength and skill against the enemy.

"This raid, and others like it, will not alone eject the enemy from Wake.

"Such raids will, however, serve notice on the enemy, as well as give assurance to our own countrymen, that we have the men with the spirit, resolution and skill to handle the tools that are going to drive the Jap back to his own islands.

"To those of us in the theater of operations, there have been vexatious delays in getting ready.

"The building of bases, the transport of troops and material are but a few of the tasks that had to be done before we would undertake such an operation as this raid on Wake.

"Let the enemy take such consolation as he may from the thought that this raid is only a sample of things to come.

"For the preparation and planning of this operation Brig. Gen. Ramey deserves great credit.

"For its efficient execution we thank Col. Matheny and his flight crew.

"It is heartening to know that thousands of other young airmen of the armed services are eager and ready to carry out similar missions.

"The courage, determination and airmanship of Col. Matheny and his officers and men indicate the response which we can expect from the personnel of all services maintaining a common front against the enemy in the Pacific.

"Made of exactly the same stuff are two destroyer skippers and two submariners who are to receive awards this morning.

"One, Cmdr. Orville Gregor, took his destroyer, the Aaron Ward, under the very guns of an enemy battleship to deliver torpedo attack in the third battle of Savo island.

"His ship was hit by a salvo of 14 inch shells and raked by cruiser fire, but she lives to continue the fight.

"All of you know the story of the seaplane tender McFarland. The determination and resourceful tenacity of her captain, Lt. Cmdr. John Alderman, is an inspiration to the rest of us.

"It is the American way of life that produces such men as these. It is their individual enterprise, initiative and common courage that are our principal weapons for victory.

"We are thankful for the valorous devotion of our brothers in arms who have stopped the enemy during the precarious months of the past year.

"The New Year brings heartening assurance. We are now getting the trained personnel and the equipment for our tremendous task.

"We have the unity, the power and the will to destroy the enemy. I am happy to present these awards in the name of the president of the United States."

Following are the awards presented today:

NAVY CROSS
Cmdr. Orville F. Gregor, USN, of LaJolla, Cal., commanding offi-

HONOLULU STAR-BULLETIN,

Big U. S. Bombers Blast Wake Island

Continued from Page 1

ing down the airfield, which was bordered by flaming aircraft. As the enemy plane gained speed, Lt. Lou Zamperini of Torrance, Cal., famed USC miler, tried to hit it with a 500 pound bomb. It fell just behind the zero and the fighter got into the air.

"That was the only Jap plane seen to take the air, but the bomber crews saw three others flying around. One bomber and one Jap plane exchanged shots at a distance but the Japs didn't want to mix it at all and that was the nearest thing to an air fight in the whole raid.

One squadron leader, Maj. Glen R. Birchard of Bay City, Mich., dropped his bombs near some oil tanks and started huge fires. Peering out of his window he saw the Japs running for cover in their underwear. No fight was left in them.

A quick look around Wake and Peale islands showed fires at this time were burning between Peacock point and the east runway in the vicinity of an underground hangar; large fires in the area of the bachelor officers' quarters on Heel point; fires in the building area of the southeast bridge between Peale and Wake; a large building in that area hit directly; oil tanks afire in the middle of Peale island and more tanks afire near the south channel entrance to the harbor and columns of black smoke rising from Kuku point.

Start for Shangri-La Their bombs gone, the bombers started for their Shangri-La base. Forty miles from Wake that zero that got off timidly fired a burst at one bomber, which promptly replied. Apparently neither was hit.

The fires on Wake were visible for 75 miles.

As they faded in the distance top turret gunner Sergeant E. J. Bislew of Racine, Wis., climbed down to the flight deck.

"Hell," he said "what am I going

to tell my 6 year old son that I did in this raid. I just sat up there like a dummy and didn't fire a shot. I wish I could have gotten a shot at a zero."

The bombers flew in absolute radio silence toward the target, guided only by the moon and the stars. On the return trip they hit an intense weather front and visibility was reduced to a few feet. This was the first combat for all but two of the pilots and, despite the rain and fog, every plane found the base and landed safely.

Anxious Brig. Gen. Howard K. Ramey of Mississippi, bomber commander, stood waiting on the rain swept base. He rushed up to congratulate Col. Matheny and each of the men.

The general ordered each plane examined immediately and the report handed him later read:

"Two bullet holes in the wing flaps of one plane. No wounded or dead."

The tired crews whooped and hollered and went to bed.

When they awakened Gen. Ramey read them a congratulatory message from Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, Lt. Gen. Delos C. Emmons and Maj. Gen. Willis H. Hale. It said in effect:

"Congratulations on a job well done."

The raiding bombers flew the longest distance of any raid of this size in the history of the war. Their record is all the more amazing because all returned safely and no pilot or crewman was killed or wounded.

NORWEGIAN SHIP SUNK
WASHINGTON, Jan. 1. (AP)—The navy announced today that a medium Norwegian merchantman was torpedoed, shelled and sunk late in August off northern South America.

Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, commander in chief of the U. S. Pacific fleet and Pacific ocean areas, presented medals today at Hickam field to five army fliers who took part in the aerial attack on Wake island on the night of December 23-24, and to three officers and one chief petty officer of the navy.

Admiral Nimitz presented Distinguished Flying Crosses to Col. William A. Matheny, leader of the force of army bombers which attacked Wake, and to four subordinate leaders under his command.

Navy Crosses were awarded to the navy officers and a Silver Star medal to the chief petty officer.

All other participating officers and men of the army bomber crews who raided Wake recently received Air Medals, which were presented by Lt. Gen. Delos C. Emmons, commanding the Hawaiian department; Maj. Gen. Willis H. Hale of the 7th air force; Brig. Gen. Howard K. Ramey, whose bombers carried out the raid, and Brig. Gen. Robert W. Douglass, in charge of all army fighter plane units in the mid-Pacific.

In presenting the awards Admiral Nimitz said:

"Officers and men of the Pacific ocean areas:

"I am glad to have this opportunity of starting the New Year by making recognition of a splendidly executed mission by our army air forces.

"Without warning, on the morn-

Turn to Page 4, Column 1

ing down the airfield, which was bordered by flaming aircraft. As the enemy plane gained speed, Lt. Lou Zamperini of Torrance, Cal., famed USC miler, tried to hit it with a 500 pound bomb. It fell just behind the zero and the fighter got into the air.

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Raid Is Third Made By U. S. On Wake Isle

By WALTER B. CLAUSEN
PEARL HARBOR, Jan. 1. (AP)—

The third pulverizing American raid on Wake island was revealed today by Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, commander in chief of the Pacific ocean areas.

It was the largest mass army heavy bomber raid in the Pacific war.

It happened a few minutes after midnight on Dec. 24. The 75,000 pound and high explosive of was dropped, not in the ordinary high level attack, but at low level by huge four engine army bombers.

The bombs ripped apart installations on the Japanese held island.

All bombers returned safely to their bases. There were no American casualties.

The number of aircraft involved was not disclosed, but it can be said that there were many more than in the army's previous heavy bomber raid on Wake island June 27.

The first American raid on Wake was a navy carrier plane attack February 24 when two Japanese patrol boats were sunk, three large seaplanes demolished and runways, defense artillery positions and major shore installations destroyed.

That naval air raid was a daylight attack, while the two army bomber raids were night attacks.

Wake island was captured by the Japanese December 23, after a 16 day siege during which less than 400 heroic United States marines held out against a force more than 10 times their number. The marines sank seven Japanese warships and shot down many planes before they were overpowered.

Since that time no effort has been made by the American forces to recapture Wake island, but the successive raids have been carried out to destroy its usefulness to Japan as an advance base.

ESCAPEES STILL OUT
Believed hiding somewhere in Paoua valley, four convicts who escaped Monday from Oahu prison were still eluding searchers today. Rewards of \$50 for information leading to capture of any one prisoner have been posted.



Mr. Clausen



Mr. Clements