

BOOK REVIEW

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Aviation History magazine.

“This Book Is Remarkable...”
—AVIATION HISTORY

This book [*My New Guinea Diary*] is remarkable for a number of reasons. It is filled with detail—almost daily diary entries relating the wartime experiences of “Ernie” Ford. These are of particular interest because of the dearth of material on noncommissioned officer pilots. It also fills a gap in that it chronicles the adventures of transport pilots in combat. Ford, who flew 385 combat missions in two wars, was awarded no fewer than six distinguished Flying Crosses.

In a larger sense, *My New Guinea Diary* is significant because it highlights the value and quality provided by self-publishing presses such as White Stag Press, which target niche markets. I believe that such companies now constitute a worthwhile countermeasure to the trend toward fewer publishers and electronic publications.

Ford begins with the story of one of his early missions with the 6th Troop Carrier Squadron—at a time when a P-39 fighter pilot’s life expectancy was greater than that of a C-47 transport pilot. On October 13, 1942, he and 12 other C-47 pilots flew a 4 1/2 hour mission from Brisbane to Townsville, Australia. Once there, they were told to take on a full fuel load for an over-water flight at low level. They were to carry 29 mechanics with their tools, and no crew member was to wear either a parachute or a Mae West vest, as there were none for the passengers.

After landing on a pierced-steel plank strip, Ford found himself in an unfamiliar place, Port Moresby, New Guinea. From then on, he faced danger on a daily basis, from the enemy as well as the miserable climate and squalid living conditions. Stationed close to the front lines, Ford and his squadron mates flew resupply missions with no maps, no fighter cover and no means of self-defense. His sterling service was recognized with a battlefield commission in August 1943.

Ernie Ford’s book gives you a good idea of what it was like to be in the left seat of a C-47 during combat. It’s well work reading.

—Col Walter J. Boyne, USAF (Ret.), *AVIATION HISTORY*

My New Guinea Diary (ISBN: 978-097925839-8, 394 pages, paperback), by Staff Sergeant Pilot Ernest C. Ford. Includes 81 rare photos taken by the author, five maps, and eight charts, tables, and documents.

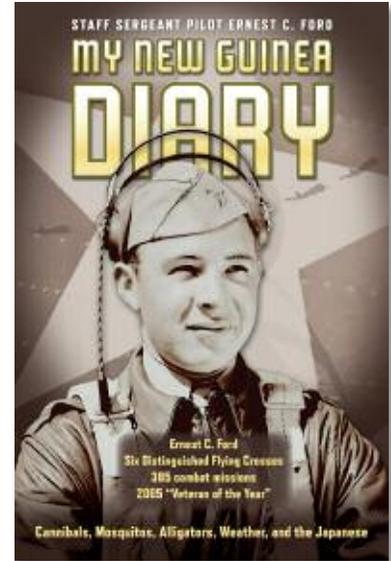
Copies available at book stores and Amazon.com. More publicity materials, images, and documents available at the publisher’s web site, www.PublishersDesign.com/books/NewGuinea, or by calling 916.784.0500. Suggested retail price: \$17.95.

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On the Bob Hope Show, 1943. Ford was also written about in numerous statewide publications, including, *National Geographic Magazine*.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WWII Pilot with 6 Distinguished Flying Crosses Writes Memoir Pilot Hero Writes a Compelling Account of the New Guinea Campaign

Roseville, CA, *My New Guinea Diary* (ISBN: 978-097925839-8, 394 pages, paperback), by Staff Sergeant Pilot Ernest C. Ford, brings the reader into the mind of a young, green pilot who had nothing going for him but guts, a desire to serve his country, and an uncanny instinct for making death-defying, split-second decisions when defeat seemed imminent. Ford's was the first American squadron to land on the island of Papua New Guinea. Only nineteen years old and having never flown in battle, he was soon (within hours) thoroughly initiated into a world where daily, he and his crew would be the recipients of enemy fire on the ground and in the air, where they were outnumbered by Japanese Zeros by up to 10 to 1. They were there to supply and reinforce Allied infantry and to evacuate wounded and dead Australian ground troops who were tragically, often outnumbered 200 to 1 on the Kokoda Trail. Within the first year, Ford's squadron suffered a 35% casualty rate—the highest in World War II.

None of the 6th Troop Carrier Squadron (6th TCS) pilots knew where they were when they landed in New Guinea on 13 October 1942, with their thirteen, unarmed C-47 aircraft. After parking their planes, the pilots were told, "If you survive after getting shot down, look out for sharks, be aware of alligators when crossing rivers, and yes, there are still many cannibals in New Guinea—if they catch you, they'll eat you. Don't forget the headhunters. If the Japs don't find you, the mosquitos certainly will. You'll have no radio or map—you'll be on your own. Good luck. Now get your trenches dug quickly. The enemy knows you've arrived, we'll be under a full-scale bombing attack in less than two hours."

The dedication of the 6th TCS, the most highly decorated air transport squadron in World War II, was crucial to the success of Allied efforts to stem the tide of Japanese aggression. Just five miles from enemy lines, with snipers in the traffic pattern, their daily mission was to fly over some of the most challenging terrain on earth, the Owen Stanley Mountains, while evading Japanese Zeros. The 6th TCS had no maps, charts, radios, roads, fire-power, and, at times, little or no fighter support.

This "Diary" is a first-hand testimony from the man who was awarded six Distinguished Flying Crosses and flew 385 combat missions in two wars—the most in any U.S. military career prior to the Vietnam Conflict. Major Ernest C. Ford writes this first-hand, blow-by-blow account delivers an overdose of adrenalin-laced battle scenes along with insightful reflections on war, Army-brass, enemies, survival strategy, flying, and faith.

Includes 81 rare photos taken by the author, five maps, and eight charts, tables, and documents.

Copies available at book stores and Amazon.com. More publicity materials, images, and documents available at the publisher's web site, www.PublishersDesign.com/books/NewGuinea, or by calling 916.784.0500. Suggested retail price: \$17.95.