

'FLYING TIGER' HOME IN WILSON BOROUGH

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George Walters Brings Stock of Tall Tales, Mementos of Asia, India.

George Walters, Wilson youth who fought with the "Flying Tigers" in China and Burma, is back in the borough after going to the other side of the world to fight for democracy.

Walters, who lives with his brother-in-law and sister, Mr. and Mrs. John W. Young of 2428 Forrest st., returned early Tuesday morning, loaded with three large suitcases filled with souvenirs and relics from China and India.

Walters was a yeoman 2nd class in the U. S. Navy stationed at Norfolk, Va., when the American Volunteer Group was organized. He received an honorable discharge July 27, 1941, and immediately joined up with the "Flying Tigers."

He arrived in Rangoon Oct. 9, 1941, and from then on he was "in it" up to his neck. He signed his contract

as a clerk but wanted more action and transferred to the ground crew, caring for the P40s used by General Chenuault and his Japanese "decimators."

Walters was assigned to the "prop shop." His work included assembling and checking the propellers used on the P40s. The fliers often brought their ships in with one of the prop blades damaged, and Walters had to install a new blade.

The work was very interesting but the hours were long. They worked from dawn to dusk each day, but there were no complaints. They had a job to do, a job which on paper was impossible. They did it, and how well they did it is now history.

The AVG consisted of three squadrons of P40s, and the Japs were almost frantic in their efforts to find the American base. When they got too warm, General Chenuault and his fledgelings simply moved. Walters admits that they were quite often raided by the Japs, but their

far-flung spotter system gave them plenty of warning.

Walters states that he wouldn't exchange the experience for a million dollars, but that he's glad it's over. He said the life of the AVG was fine. They were under a civilian contract, and there were not many regulations. They had no official uniform and red tape was at a minimum. He states that morale was very high, and that the boys all thought General Chenuault was "tops."

He states that they were treated well by the Chinese, and has a silk scarf which was presented to him, along with the rest of the AVG, by Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-Shek at Christmas. The scarf has the signatures of the Generalissimo and the Madame embroidered on it.

The boys had a more or less cramped social life while in China. First of all their work required most of their time, and when evening came they were tired and ready for bed. Besides this, Madame Chiang

Kai-Shek has set up a "New Life Movement," which is a reform campaign designed to raise the morale of the Chinese youth. The movement prohibits smoking, dancing, and drinking among young people, and consequently the Chinese people frown on the social activities which most interest American boys. The boys did have a bar at their base but had trouble keeping it supplied.

The AVG was disbanded July 4th, 1942. Walters was flown to India, and came home by boat from there. The "Tigers" had the choice of staying in India and being inducted in the U. S. Army there, or coming home and registering for the draft. Most of the boys came home. Walters states that he will go back in the Navy.

On the way home they had two submarine scares. A torpedo passed uncomfortably close to the bow of the ship on the second night out, and they later sighted a periscope, but by changing their course and speeding away they lost the sub.

Walters has an interesting display

of relics from the East, among them embroidered silks, hand-carved wooden trays and receptacles, and several unusually vicious-looking knives.

Walters graduated from Wilson high school in 1935, and worked at the Treadwell Engineering Co. until he enlisted in the Navy in December, 1936.