

You cannot believe just what a blessing your latest issue of Echoes was to me when I read the article about Jack C. Hubbard and his book. To give you a clear and thorough picture of what it's all about let me write this in the form of another article which, if you think it worthy, you may publish.

A Waffle Away from Home

by

Rogers D. Littlejohn, Lt. Col. USAF Retired

As was my usual routine when on pass to London, I was having a waffle and a coke, something that was in short supply in 1942 in the British Isles. A cup of tea could be had just about anywhere even when not wanted but a good old USA Coca Cola or a crisp hot waffle was a prize provided by a group of volunteer ladies to show their appreciation for the Yanks who had volunteered to fight for the survival of old England. Initially the Eagles Club where I was enjoying my repast was established for the sake of those American pilots known as the Eagle Squadron. It was quickly recognized that there were even more American flying with the RCAF, RAF, and Fleet Air Arm and quite a few serving with the ground forces of His Majesty as well, so the club was opened to them as well. That is how I came to be enjoying a bit of home away from home.

As I looked up from my meal I noticed a soldier in the British Army uniform reading an American magazine or newspaper, I don't remember which. After all that was 60 years ago and many of the little memory cells of my brain have gone the way of so many other abilities. Well anyway, this guy for some reason looked a bit familiar to me but I knew no one who was in the Royal Army. As it turns out he was in the Royal Canadian Army.

As I ate and peeked a look at him every now and then I noticed that he was doing the same toward me. Pretty soon we were looking straight into each others eyes something that one didn't do back then lest the intent might be misunderstood. Get it? The reasons for the familiarity was coming back to me and obviously to him as

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well. He smiled a smile of recognition so I got up and went over to him and addressed him, "Jack Hubbard!" He responded with, "Roger Littlejohn". We shook hands enthusiastically . We didn't hug as long lost but reunited friends would do today. After all I was an officer, a full blown second lieutenant, and he was an enlisted man. I was full blown alright, so puffed up with my own importance and military stuffiness.

Well this man was Jack C. Hubbard with whom I had played Cowboy and Indians, Robber and Police, Captain Blue Beard, Sir Lancelot and all the other games that kids played and imagined back in the days before TV, PCs, cellphones, and two cars in the garage. That was the days of the Great Depression of 1929. Those were the days when American children learned to invent games out in the street like we now see the kids of the third world doing. I shared this with the likes of Jack Hubbard.

We talked about those times there in the Eagles Club and enjoyed each other but in my mind I kept thinking that I must maintain the proper military protocol. "Officers do not fraternize with enlisted men." A good and proper concept for the sake of discipline and order but one which can be carried to the extreme, an example of which I have just related. Therefor Jack and I parted and wished each other good luck and never heard from or about each other again.

I went on to flying as co-pilot with Ed Hennessey until I was reassigned to the 415th Night Fighter Squadron which was short of experienced pilots. (I had been a night fighter pilot with the RAF prior to transferring to the USAAF in the UK whereupon I volunteered to fly B-17s) I went on to complete my tour in North Africa, Sicily, and Italy.

All these years I have wondered so many times, "What ever happened to my old buddy, So and So." Jack was one of those at the top of my list of wondering. I have tried to find him through the internet only to find that there are so many Jack Hubbards in the USA. What a surprise it was to read Russ's article about him in this last issue of Echoes. I thought that it was only coincidence that a Jack Hubbard was mentioned. But then there it was. He was in the Canadian Army. That was too much of a coincidence. I must call him but it's 9 PM here in Lynden, WA which means I would be waking him up at midnight in Bradenton. "And what if it isn't the same Jack Hubbard," I thought. Someone would really be infuriated if not. So I decided to wait till morning to pursue this further.

Now I ask you, anyone reading this if Russ is so hard pressed for something to publish, what is the probability of two kids from Spartanburg, South Carolina, enlisting one in the RCAF and the other in the RCA and ending up in the same bomb group but at different times? If that had not happened then Russ would not have written the article about him and his book. I would not have read the article.

But it did happen that way and now I am back in touch with my dear friend.

This morning I called him and talked for a long time. He remembered me and that meeting in London and all the fun days we had together as kids. Friends reunited once again.

What could be better? Thanks a million, Russ, you did it again.