STAFF SERGEANT PILOT ERNEST C. FORD
MY NEW GUINEA DIARY

Ernest C. Ford
Six Distinguished Flying Crosses
385 combat missions
2005 "Veteran of the Year"

Cannibals, Mosquitos, Alligators, Weather, and the Japanese

**STAFF SERGEANT PILOT
ERNEST C. FORD**

Arrived at Port Moresby,
October 13, 1942

385 Combat Missions

1,400+ Flying Combat Hours

6 Distinguished Flying Crosses
(one with a "V")

Silver Star

2005 Veteran of the Year

2 Air Medals w Oak Leaf Cluster

Battle Field Commission

Air Force Commendation Medal

Combat in Korean Theatre,
June - July, 1950

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Secret Landing of the 6th TCS and the 1942 New Guinea Campaign

Ford brings the reader into the cockpit and 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. This first-hand, blow-by-blow account delivers an overdose of adrenalin-laced battle scenes along with insightful reflections about war, Army-brass, enemies, flying, God, and survival strategy. The 6th Troop Carrier Squadron, with only thirteen C-47s, was the first to be assigned to New Guinea—shortly after General MacArthur declared the island un-winnable.

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Pilot-hero's First-hand Account of the 1942 New Guinea Campaign

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

SECRECY, ALLIGATORS, CANNIBALS, HEADHUNTERS, MOSQUITOS, AND JAPS

Because of the high-level of secrecy, 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 get 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. You'll have no radio, map, or fire-power—you'll be on your own. Good luck."

THE UN-WINNABLE ISLAND

The 6th TCS was the first American squadron assigned to the island of Papua New Guinea. They landed shortly after the US military was pulling back in the Pacific Theater and MacArthur was regrouping in Australia—he declared New Guinea un-winnable. The 6th TCS was there to supply the courageous and fatigued Australian infantry who were fighting on the treacherous Kokoda Trail and to stall the progress of the Japanese in their quest for Port Moresby. The dedication of the 6th TCS, the most highly decorated air transport squadron in World War II, proved to be crucial to the success of Allied efforts to stem the tide of Japanese aggression in the Pacific.

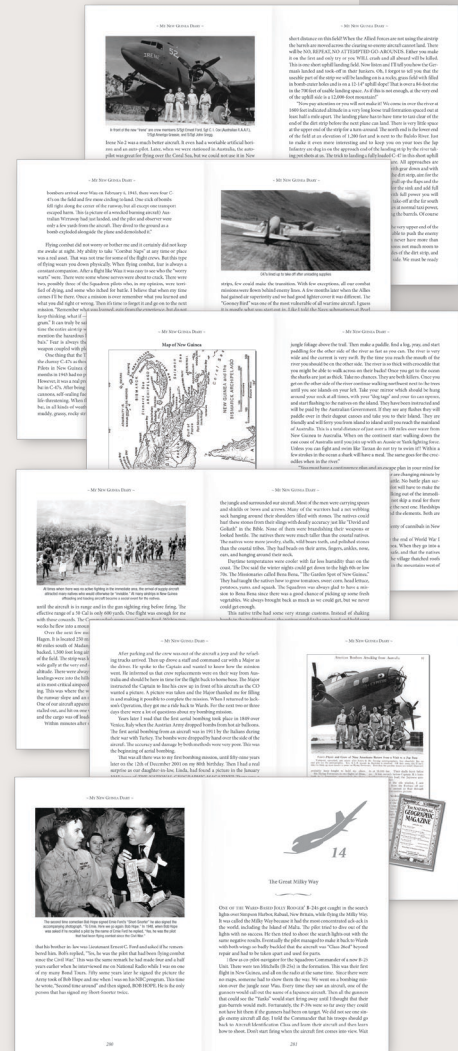### A HUMBLE STAFF SERGEANT PILOT BECAME A NATIONAL HERO

Ford was trained at Luke Air Force Base as a fighter pilot. However, his instinctive and "hot-shot" flying skills, when applied in a C-47, destined him for special assignment to fly under the most impossible conditions—in the Owen Stanley Mountains. Ford 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. He racked-up 1,244 combat hours in New Guinea alone, nominated for a Silver Star, was named "Veteran of the Year" in 2005, received two Air Medals with Oak Leaf Cluster, and was promoted in a Battle Field Commission. Military and stateside journals and magazines interviewed and wrote about him. Finally, the US Military had him fly around the world, showing the flag and raising money through sales of War Bonds.

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