

# RAIDER REMEMBERS

PERSONAL ACCOUNT OF THE DOOLITTLE RAID BY THE PILOT OF RAIDER #13  
 BY E.E. MAC MCELROY, LT. COL. (USAF, RET.)



Crew #13 aboard the USS *Hornet*. Left to right: Lt. Richard A. "Knobby" Knobloch (later brigadier general), copilot; Lt. E.E. "Mac" McElroy (later lieutenant colonel), pilot; M/Sgt. Adam Ray Williamsar, engineer/gunner; Lt. Clayton J. Campbell (later lieutenant colonel), navigator; Sgt. Robert C. Bourgeois (later flying officer), bombardier. Aircraft was B-25B 40-2247 *The Avenger*, 37th Bomb Squadron.



The 17th BG would help pioneer the introduction of the Mitchell into Air Corps service. This early B-25A carries the insignia of the 37th Bomb Squadron as it sits at Felts Field in Oregon. (Boardman C. Reed)

I was born and raised in Ennis, Texas, as the youngest of five children and son of Harry and Jennie McElroy. Folks say that I was the quiet one. We lived at 609 North Dallas Street and attended the Presbyterian Church. My friends call me "Mac."

My dad had an auto mechanic's shop downtown close to the main fire station. My family was a hard-working bunch and I was expected to work at dad's garage after school and on Saturdays. I grew up in an atmosphere of machinery, oil, and grease. Occasionally, I would hear a lone aircraft fly overhead and would run out in the street and strain my eyes against the sun to watch it. Someday, that would be me up there!

I really like cars and I was always busy on some project and it wasn't long before I decided to build my very own Ford Model T out of spare parts. I got an engine from over here, a frame from over there, and wheels from someplace else, using only the good parts from cars that were otherwise shot. It wasn't very pretty but it was all mine and I enjoyed driving on the dirt roads around town along with the feeling of freedom and speed. That car of mine could really go fast — 40-mph!

In high school, I played football and tennis and was good enough at football to receive an athletic scholarship from Trinity University in Waxahachie. I have to admit that sometimes I day-dreamed in class and often I thought about flying

in my very own airplane and being up there in the clouds. That is when I decided to take a correspondence course in aircraft engines.

Whenever I got the chance, I would take my girl on a date up to Love Field in Dallas. We would watch the airplanes and listen to those mighty piston engines roar. I just loved it and if she didn't, well that was just too bad.

After my schooling, I operated a filling station with my brother, then drove a bus, and later had a job as a machinist in Longview, but I never lost my love of airplanes and my dream of flying. With what was going on in Europe and Asia, I figured our country would be drawn into war someday so I decided to join the Army Air Corps in November 1940. This way I could finally follow my dream.

I reported for primary training in California. The training was rigorous and frustrating at times. We trained at airfields all over



Insignia of the 17th Bomb Group.



The author during flight training.