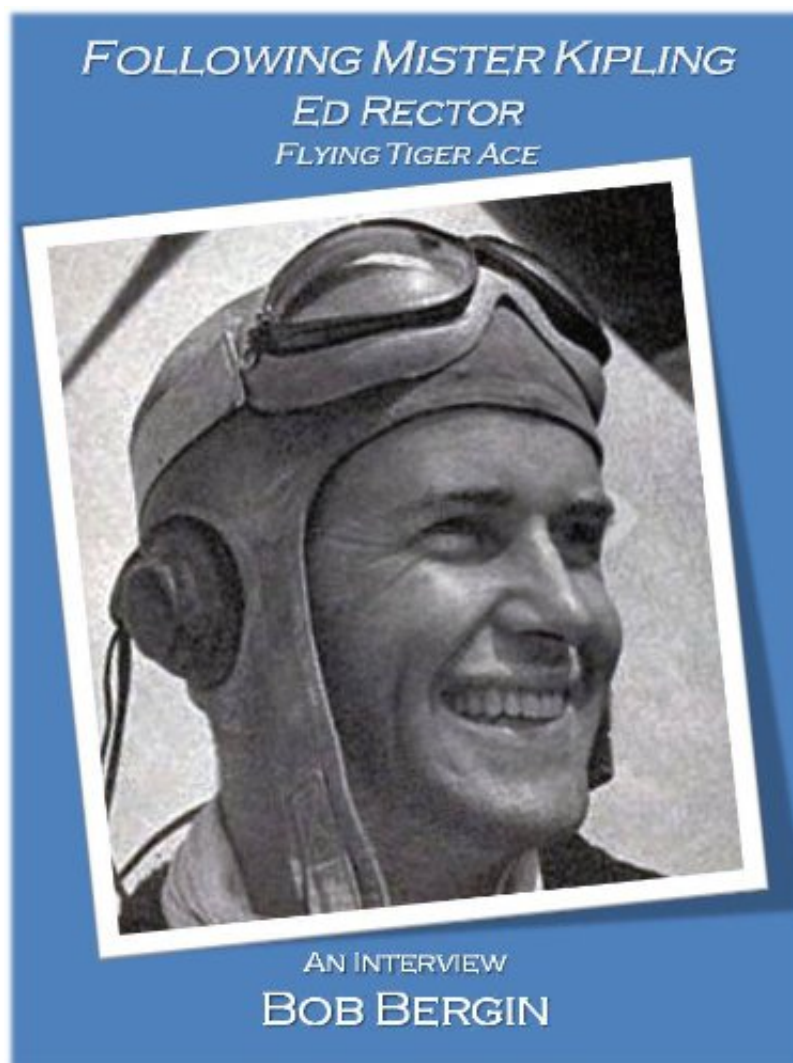


Following Mister Kipling: Ed Rector, Flying Tiger Ace, An Interview (Flying Tigers Book 7)

by

Bob Bergin



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Synopsis

"I had also read twice over everything that Rudyard Kipling had written, so this was right up my alley." Ed Rector was a dive-bomber pilot on the old USS Ranger when he heard that pilots were being recruited to go to the Far East to defend the Burma Road. He jumped at the chance. Rector joined the American Volunteer Group (AVG), a small band of aviators known to history as the "Flying Tigers," one of the most effective units in the history of aerial warfare. World War II China was an adventure. Rector participated in the AVG's most significant actions and after the group disbanded, he was one of five AVG pilots who stayed on in China. He was given command of the 76th Fighter Squadron, and later the 23rd Fighter Group.

Sort review

Robert Kohls' book is impressive in its depth of understanding of the ways in which cultural differences affect behavior, the ways we are not alike underneath.—Horace H. Underwood, executive director, Korean American Educational Commission, Seoul --This text refers to the paperback edition. About the Author L. Robert Kohls has thirty years' experience as an intercultural trainer and trainer of other trainers; he has worked, lived and traveled in more than eighty countries, with extensive stays in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East. He is a founding member of SIETAR International, and is also the author of Survival Kit for Overseas Living. --This text refers to the paperback edition.

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Look inside the book

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During the first seven months of World War II in the Pacific, when the Japanese war machine seemed unstoppable, a small band of American aviators, ostensibly flying for the Chinese Air Force, became one of the most effective units in the history of aerial warfare. Although it never had more than 50 fighters operational at a time, over those seven months, the American Volunteer Group (AVG) "Flying Tigers," under the leadership of Claire Lee Chennault, was credited with destroying 296 Japanese aircraft, with another 150 probably destroyed. Of the 80-odd pilots who served in the AVG, twenty-nine became aces, including Edward F. Rector. After graduating from North Carolina's Catawba College in 1938, Ed Rector became a U.S. Navy dive-bomber pilot in 1940. He joined the AVG in mid-1941, out of a sense of adventure. He saw it as a chance to go to Burma, to fight and to fly – and to be paid a fabulous salary to do it. I first met Ed in the early summer of 1992, while I was trying to establish the identity of airplane wreckage that had been found by tribal hunters in a remote area of North Thailand. Ed lived in Arlington, Virginia then, not far from where I lived. Charlie Mott, another former AVG pilot also lived nearby. The three of us got together for lunch from time to time and occasionally went to an air show: I was the designated driver; they the honored guests. There were also photo and print signings, and every Memorial Day, we went to Arlington National Cemetery, where the 14th Air Force had its annual roll call in the old amphitheater close to where Claire Chennault is buried. Every year Charlie Mott laid the AVG wreath at the ceremony. The time I spent with Ed and Charlie let me fill in a lot of gaps in my knowledge of the AVG. Ed was my best source. He was with the Tigers from the very beginning, participated in the AVG's most significant actions, and stayed in China after the AVG was disbanded. We talked about doing a formal interview for a long time, and finally did it in the summer of the year 2000. We would have lunch, and afterwards I would turn on my recorder. At the end of about six weeks I had over 16 hours of tape. I distilled that down for an article that first appeared in April 2001, "Military History". It's the story of the AVG in Ed's words, a good account of what the AVG was and what it did – and it gives a good picture of what Ed was like. I include it here with only a few minor changes.

Joining the AVGBob Bergin: What were you doing in the Navy before the AVG formed? Ed Rector: I was a carrier pilot on the old USS Ranger when we were sent home for the Christmas holidays in 1940. I heard of a person recruiting people to go to the Far East. "Tex" Hill had joined Ranger's air group from USS Saratoga, and the two of us went to a hotel in downtown Norfolk, Va., to find out what it was all about. A Reserve commander laid out the program that allowed Reserve officer pilots and ground crew to resign from their service and go out to defend the Burma Road. In June 1941, the Navy suddenly realized that it was going to lose some

experienced pilots. Rear Admiral Arthur H. Cook, the commander of aircraft, Atlantic Fleet, flew up to Washington to try to stop it. The navy told him to let us go, and that came from President Roosevelt's office. That was how we left the Navy and joined the AVG. BB: Why did you join the AVG? Rector: I was young and in my naivete had presumed that the isolationist trend in America would keep us from ever going to war. In my one year in the navy, where they measure you every way they can, I had gotten high marks. Two-thirds of our pilots got an "E" for excellence in dive-bombing, but only two of us, [Allen B.] "Bert" Christman and I, also got an "E" in aerial gunnery. When I heard about the AVG, I saw an opportunity to find out if I was as good as I thought. I had also read twice over everything that Rudyard Kipling had written, so this was right up my alley. It was a chance to go to Burma, to fight and fly Curtiss P-40 aircraft. And to be paid a fabulous salary and a bounty for each plane destroyed sounded heaven sent. I jumped at the chance.

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Following Mister orangutan zoo

China Legend: Flying Tiger Ace "Tex" Hill, An Interview (Flying Tigers Book 1) The Flying Tigers: The Untold Story of the American Pilots Who Waged a Secret War Against Japan

The book by Bob Bergin has a rating of 5 out of 5.0. 1 people have provided feedback.

Book Information

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