

who has written the definitive history of the World War II military career of Hollywood-great Jimmy Stewart. Mr. Smith, who served with Stewart in WWII, wrote "A Retrospective of the World War II Military Career of Hollywood's James M. (Jimmy) Stewart" for the James M. Stewart Museum Foundation, located in Stewart's hometown—Indiana, PA. I believe excerpts from this article are a fitting tribute to both the life and legacy of a true American hero: Jimmy Stewart, as well as to one of Alabama's fine authors: Starr Smith. In compliance with the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD text-length rules, only excerpts of Mr. Smith's article could be placed in the RECORD; however, I encourage my colleagues and the American people to obtain a complete copy of this important article from either the James M. Stewart Museum or the September 1998 edition of *The Retired Officers Magazine*.

In addition to his many accomplishments, Smith is a travel columnist for the *Montgomery Advertiser* and is a retired Air Force Reserve colonel. He lives in Montgomery, AL.

Mr. President, the following are excerpts from "A Retrospective of the World War II Military Career of Hollywood's James M. (Jimmy) Stewart" by Starr Smith:

When the melancholy news came of Jimmy Stewart's death I was in Montreal, Canada. I thought it singular that I was out of my own country at the time because my relationship with this remarkable American had taken place on foreign soil—wartime England. Much has been said and written since Stewart's death about his extraordinary life and career as a film actor of the first rank, but little has been said about Stewart's brilliant and brave record as an Army Air Force combat pilot and commander in World War II.

I served with Stewart on a windswept and cold bomber station, called Old Buckingham, near the North Sea between Cambridge and Norwich in England's East Anglia in 1943–1944. Our outfit was the 453rd Bomb Group. The commander, Colonel Ramsay Potts, was a battle-tested B-24 specialist who had been on the historic and pivotal Ploesti mission and earned the Distinguished Service Cross. Stewart, then a major, was the group's operations officer and I was an intelligence officer who handled much of the briefings for the air crews prior to their mission over Nazi Germany. It was in this capacity that I worked with Stewart, night after night, preparing the details of the mission. I have never known a more intelligent, knowledgeable, hardworking, conscientious and dedicated officer.

In my book, "Only the Days Are Long: Reports of a Journalist and World Traveler," I wrote of Stewart: "At night, working with me preparing the mission, Stewart was crisp and business-like; reserved, but he knew his job and was a keen student of daylight precision bombing. (The Americans bombed in daylight, the RAF at night). It was interesting to see Stewart at the bar of the Officer's Club after a tough day and hear his discussion of the mission with the returning pilots. But even then he was always slightly aloof. He was never one of the boys. This is not to say Stewart was unfriendly. Rather, he went about his work with a cool professional detachment—a single purpose approach that did not allow for personal involvement. This, I think, was the reason for

this success in the war. He was determined to prove that he was more than an actor, more than a Hollywood star. He was determined to prove that now he could measure up as a man doing a really important job in the military crucible and not just a celluloid hero.

Almost a year before Pearl Harbor, Jimmy Stewart had a deep feeling that his country would soon be at war. Stewart also knew that if war came he wanted to be in uniform and overseas on combat duty.

At the beginning of the new year of 1941, Stewart was at the top of his career as a movie actor and international star. His 1939 picture, "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington," has made him a folk hero throughout America and he was destined for an Academy Award for his role as the reporter in "Philadelphia Story" later in the year. His life was blissful, romantic, flawless, and ahead was the golden promise of infinite stardom as one of the premier movie players of all time.

. . . but with England fighting Hitler since 1939, Edward R. Murrow's bleak broadcasts from London, the Pacific war against the Japanese going badly for the British . . . Jimmy Stewart decided to join the fight. But, he faced two major roadblocks: his boss and his country. Louis B. Mayer, the forceful and dictatorial head of MGM used every persuasive tactic at his command—choice roles, contract revisions, free time to help with the war effort as a civilian. The other matter was different.

In September of 1940, the Selective Service Act became law, and men between the ages of 21 and 36 were required to register. Being 32, Stewart registered . . . when he was called up for a physical in late 1940, he was turned down: underweight. That could have ended the whole affair. . . perhaps thinking of his father's fierce patriotism and his service in two wars, plus his own fervent love of country, Stewart favored the volunteer route. He appealed the Army's underweight decision, embarked on an eating binge, made the weight requirements and reported for induction on March 22, 1941 at Fort McArthur, California.

Stewart was among the very few officers in American military history to rise from private to full colonel in slightly over four years. Moreover, Stewart was actually on combat duty all the time he was overseas, performing vital, demanding and dangerous jobs: squadron operations officer, squadron commander, group operations officer, wing operations officer, and later at the end—Second Bomb Wing Commander. And, all the while, he was flying combat missions as a B-24 pilot and command pilot.

. . . Stewart spent all of his service in England assigned to the 2nd Combat Wing. . . in late August of 1945, he returned to New York on the *Queen Elizabeth*. And on September 29th of that year, Stewart was discharged at Andrews Air Force Base in Washington. He was immediately appointed a full colonel in the Air Force Reserve. In his war years, Stewart had flown 20 combat missions, among them the tough ones: Brunswick, Bremen, Frankfurt, Schweinfurt, and I recall that he was on Berlin twice—once leading the entire 1,000 plane 8th Air Force. His wartime decorations include: Distinguished Flying Cross, with Oak Leaf Cluster; four Air Medals, and the French Croix de Guerre with Palm. He was promoted to Brigadier General in the Air Force Reserve in 1959 and retired in 1968. After Stewart died in July of 1997, Air Power History published a memorial . . . (which) contained this little-known fact: "In 1966, during his annual two weeks of active duty, Stewart requested a combat assignment and participated in a bombing strike over Vietnam."

. . . With all the myriad honors of a celebrated and eclectic career, including the

highest in his profession—the Academy Award—it is not too much to believe that Jimmy Stewart reached the blue lawn of his life in those eventful and dangerous years of World War II. A small town boy who grew up with strong family values and a bed-rock foundation in honesty and integrity, intertwined with a fervent patriotism—Stewart served his country with dedication and distinction, and, like F. Scott Fitzgerald, his fellow Princetonian—he lived his life with an unbending determination, subtle style and a certain mystique.●

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF LA SALLE ACADEMY

● Mr. D'AMATO. Mr. President, I am honored to be invited to such a landmark event and I rise to offer my congratulations to the La Salle Academy in celebrating its 150th anniversary of educating New York City's youth. Founded in 1848, the Catholic, college-preparatory school of La Salle Academy currently serves more than 540 young men who represent over 60 nationalities. La Salle Academy seeks to educate young men of New York City from different cultural, racial, and social groups with special outreach programs for those most in need. This enables students to grow intellectually, morally, and physically in a racially diverse setting while encouraging them to contribute to their communities. This fine Academy consistently molds young men into valuable members of society and sends over 90% of its students to pursue higher education. Institutions, such as La Salle, are key assets for introducing our young adults to the many different aspects of our diverse society. Both the graduates and students of La Salle Academy act as model citizens for others to emulate and I praise this institution and other organizations of its kind for its countless contributions to society. We are fortunate to have such a valuable institution reside in New York State. I sincerely hope that La Salle Academy will continue to serve its students and the members of this community in such an important fashion.●

USE OF THE ROTUNDA FOR THE NELSON MANDELA CEREMONY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of H. Con. Res. 326, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (H. Con. Res. 326) permitting the use of the rotunda of the Capitol on September 23, 1998, for the presentation of the Congressional Gold Medal to Nelson Rohihlahla Mandela.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the immediate consideration of the concurrent resolution?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed