

P R E F A C E

For reasons unknown to me, I found no original letters written by my father to my mother during the years he was an Associated Press war correspondent other than excerpts from his letters that my mother retyped and sent to my grandparents. My father's letters reflect the thoughts of a son who wanted his parents to be proud of him—perhaps shielding them from truths he might have shared only with my mother.

Sometimes my father repeated the same information in different letters to be certain he hadn't forgotten any crucial details. In most instances, I have omitted only those sections where redundancy detracted from the text.

I retyped my father's letters just as he wrote them, with only minor corrections in punctuation or format to avoid confusing readers. Dad frequently used a double hyphen or a shortened ellipsis instead of a comma or parentheses to indicate a pause in his thoughts. In his letters he liked to spell words phonetically and use slang phrases; I've clarified these "Tobyisms" with footnotes.

For historical accuracy I have retained my father's usage of terms such as "coolie," "Jerry," "Kraut," "Jap," and "nip," words that today are considered "politically incorrect" (at best) but that were commonly used during World War II. For easy reference I have included an abbreviated glossary and a list of prominent individuals cited in the book.

As my father explained to his parents, not all of his stories appeared in U.S. newspapers because of frequent "hold-downs" imposed on less-active war theaters to allow space for frontline coverage. I've included as many of his articles as were available and relevant.

Although the book focuses primarily on my father and his extraordinary life, it is also a tribute to my mother, Doris Elizabeth Green Wiant, whose enduring love and loyalty were indispensable to my father's growth—and to my own.

