

MEMOIRS OF M. PETER KEANE  
1910 – 2014

COVERING THE YEARS 1927 TO 2002



## M PETER KEANE'S MEMOIRS

Let's begin with Uncle Bennie in 1927. Having just finished high school at Townsend Harris Hall I was invited to go to New Mexico before entering college at Cornell University. I lived with Uncle Bennie and his wife on Camino del Monte Sol in Santa Fe. While in Santa Fe I also stayed in another building down the street and helped Paul Rutling, a jewelry importer, who was building a two-story adobe house. I have pictures of it during construction. In fact, many years later I took Beth to Santa Fe and we could find only one wall remaining. In 1928 during the annual Fiesta, a local camera shop loaned me a camera and gave me many rolls of film. From a rooftop at the corner of the town square I photographed the parade of floats and artists and writers who summered in Santa Fe. One evening Uncle Bennie and I attended a father and son event sponsored by some Catholic organization. There was a display of photos showing the crowded streets of big cities and children playing. One picture clearly showed some kids playing on 106th Street and Fifth Avenue in New York City [that is where my whole family lived at the time]. In the foreground of the group were my brother Irving and myself, clearly identifiable by the knitted sweaters my mother made for us. We also visited Santa Clara Pueblo during their Rain Dance. I have prints of this as well as the whole Fiesta.

Uncle Bennie was the grandson of Benjamin Babbitt, a soap manufacturer in the late 1800's. His father was a doctor named Hyde and there was a second son named Fred. Uncle Bennie's full name was Benjamin Talbot Babbitt Hyde. He retired as president of the Babbitt Soap Company around 1900. He and Fred became interested in archeology and visited the St. Louis Worlds Fair. There they saw exhibited artifacts taken from the Anasazi pueblos in southwestern Colorado where the finder, Richard Wetherill, lived.

Over the next several years Uncle Bennie financially backed Wetherill during many expeditions in the southwest. The best known was the Cliff House in Mesa Verde. Later, Uncle Bennie organized the Hyde Expeditionary Company setting up trading posts in northern Arizona and New Mexico. Uncle Bennie arranged for a staff member from the American Museum of Natural History in New York to work with Wetherill in professionally digging and identifying the many artifacts found in a number of sites.

When Wetherill died in 1910, the Expeditionary Company was slowly disbanded and Uncle Bennie began to devote more time to the newly-organized Boy Scouts. He had no children of his own. He started a nature museum at the headquarters building for a number of summer camps for Boy Scouts in Lake Kanawake in Harriman State Park. He got the governor of New York, Franklin Roosevelt, to sponsor a summer camp for older Scouts located near Sloatsburg, New York. In the summer of 1923 I was a camper at this Forestry Camp, so called because the counselors were teachers from the School of Forestry at Cornell University. There I met Uncle Bennie for the first time.

Uncle Bennie had taken a corner of the third floor of the Museum of Natural History at 8th Avenue and 77th Street and had set up cages for live animals to demonstrate and teach

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visiting children. The museum administration was not happy with the live crows, snakes, and other such exhibits, but Uncle Bennie had given so much support to the museum in the past that the third floor corner was permitted for awhile. One day there was a visit from the Mayor of New York and as he passed the live animal display I held out a small rodent and fed it some lettuce while telling about the animal. At that point the animal bit my finger and the Mayor, Jimmie Walker, made a remark to the effect that the ungrateful rat had just bitten the hand that fed him.

I spent several summers at Kanawake Boy Scout Headquarters Museum taking care of the birds and animals and working the mimeograph machine which we used to publish a weekly nature magazine. The staff there included Bill Carr, who later started the Nature Trails at Bear Mountain on the Hudson River; Les Dawson, who later joined Reader's Digest; Bill Sargent, who a few years later drove me up to Cornell University to register, Bill being a year ahead of me at Cornell.

Early in the winter of 1925, Uncle Bennie organized a group to observe and record technical aspects of the 1925 total eclipse of the sun. He brought the group to a farm near Pleasantville, New York, where we set up telescopes, thermometers, and drawing tables to record what we saw during the eclipse. I have a snapshot of two of the boys from Buckley School making temperature readings. They were Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., and his younger brother, John. Bill Sargent, Billy Alton, and I were the representative Boy Scouts.

After I completed high school (Townsend Harris Hall, part of the CCNY complex) I chose not to enter Cornell mid-year. Uncle Bennie sent me to Springfield, Vermont, where a group of men and others were hand grinding telescope mirrors. I stayed with a man named Palmer who I believe was the principal of the local high school. In his basement I hand ground a 7" mirror for a reflecting telescope. Mr. Palmer some time later went to California to work on the Palomar 200" telescope. It was just after this, in February 1928, that I went to New Mexico to join Uncle Bennie and his wife who had retired to Santa Fe. In fact, before leaving New York, Mrs. Hyde asked me to bring my Mother to her apartment to accept many linens and bedspreads that she did not want to take with her to New Mexico. My sister, Lee, may still have some of these items.

In the autumn of 1928 I registered in the Department of Ornithology under Doc Allen and met Albert Brand, an older man who had retired from the stock market in New York and wanted to study birds. Brand financed the acquiring of sound recording equipment and I found myself totally involved in the very beginnings of bird song recording for the next four years. During that time I built (with Paul Kellogg's help) the very first parabolic microphone for field use. With that new microphone we recorded many bird songs on 35mm film. Brand wrote a book on bird song recording and included small discs which could play on any phonograph.

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Graduating in 1932 I found my first job in New York as a darkroom assistant to Margaret Bourke-White. In 1933 I became a general assistant to Arthur O'Neil, a new fashion photographer. At O'Neil's studio I photographed a series of head shots for a New York model who needed them to send to Hollywood. Her name was Lucille Ball. Also at O'Neil's, I did a number of very posed shots of Margaret Bourke-White. Several years ago gave the negatives to the photo lab of TIME magazine.

In 1934 I joined Paul Hesse Studios in New York and shot many commercial ad photos. The specialty at that studio was the printing in color using the carbro process. After a year I took my first vacation visiting a college friend, Ralph Cohen, in Hollywood. On that visit I was offered a job with Technicolor, a motion picture laboratory that had just perfected the three color process. Early in 1935 I reported to J.A. Ball, Senior Vice President of Technicolor. He asked me to look into the terminology of the color dyes used by Technicolor in producing film prints. At that time, the common names were yellow, magenta, and blue-green. Bell thought "blue-green" was too indefinite. I told him that that printing of large cut out displays by lithographers had a number of inks including brown, black, yellow, magenta, and cyanotype. Mr. Ball settled on "cyan" for the blue-green dye used by Technicolor. Subsequently he wrote a technical paper on this subject for the SMPTE in August 1935. Cyan was and still is used in the color printing industry. As an assistant cameraman I worked on various movies for the next four years. Among these were God's Country and the Woman, for Warner Brothers; Typhoon, for Paramount; Kentucky, for Fox; and also Goldwyn Follies of 1938, A Star is Born (with Janet Gaynor — the remake with Judy Garland was years later); The Wizard of Oz; Gone with the Wind.

Before going to Hollywood in 1935, I once drove my cousin, Sam Jaffe, to visit his friend George Gershwin to (I think) Lakewood, New Jersey. During the visit, George sat down at a piano in the basement of his house and played the whole of "Rhapsody in Blue" for us. Quite a treat.

During my first working stay in Hollywood (before WW II), cousin Sam was acting in several big movies. From time to time Sam would ask me to drive him to visit his friends. One was Frank Capra. I was impressed by the row of Academy Awards Oscars on the mantel of his fireplace. Years later during World War II, I was assigned to help Colonel Capra in Fort Shafter, Honolulu, and he remembered me from the early visit with Sam.

At one time I was on vacation and drove up to Lone Pine, California, where Gunga Din was being shot. I spent the day with Sam and even had dinner with Victor Mclaughlin, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., and Cary Grant. Years later, in 1973, when I was working in New York at Berkeley Film Labs, I was able to make a 16mm print of Gunga Din for Sam who was unable to get one from the then-copyright-holder.

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The burning of Atlanta scene for *Gone With The Wind* was actually shot well before the start of regular production of the movie. I was assigned to a most unusual camera setup. I had two Technicolor cameras pointing toward two 45-degree front surfaced mirrors. The idea was to photograph the long shot of the burning with twice the normal width. This would have required two projectors in a theatre and was never used. The long shot scene included the wagon ride by Rhett and Scarlett, which was so rough that the stuntman, Yakima Canutt, fell out of his seat but was not hurt. Another scene, that of Scarlett running from the Union troops, drove in a small carriage under a bridge, while the mounted troops rode over the bridge. I was running the follow focus for the camera finder, required because the scene started on a close-up of Scarlett's face and then pulled back to reveal in the long shot the bridge and troops riding over it. Under the bridge there was a foot of water representing a stream. I, wearing high boots, had to walk backwards as the camera, on a crane, pulled back. The "stream" was in a low tank on the studio set and as I walked backward with my camera, my back hit the side of the tank and I went head over heels.

When working as an assistant on the Errol Flynn version of *Robin Hood*, I saw the shooting of the scenes of Robin confronting Prince John in the large banquet hall. Robin runs up the balcony as John's soldiers chase after him. Robin (actually Howard Hill, a famous archer) shoots the leading soldier (stuntman Buster Wiles) several times for several takes. After a few takes, Wiles shouted up to Hill, "Move over a few inches on your next shot. You've worn out the cork!" Cork pads were used to protect the stuntmen.

*God's Country and the Woman* was shot primarily in the State of Washington near the town of Longview. I was one of several assistant cameramen to accompany the camera equipment by train from Hollywood to Longview. We shot many production scenes along the Toutle River, but the most interesting was that of the log jam. The nearest camera to the log jam was placed on a 5' square platform built onto the side of a steep hill bordering the river. Around the platform small trees were nailed to conceal us from the other cameras further away from the log jam. On the platform (usually called a parallel) were Winton Hoch, who headed up the group of assistant cameramen and who was the camera operator, a grip (stagehand), and myself. My lens was focused at 60', the distance to the log jam.

A case of dynamite was placed among the logs by an expert from the DuPont Company. When the explosion took place, instead of merely releasing the jam so that the logs could float down the river, the logs were blown about a hundred feet into the air and started to rain down on us. Winton, who was facing forward, could see the coming danger but I had my back to it so that I could follow focus with the lens. One log had all its bark blown off and came tumbling down end over end, striking the camera magazine with such force that the platform collapsed. The camera and its tripod were thrown into the river and the log slid into the river. I ducked down but not far enough to avoid getting a deep scalp cut which still shows as a ridge on my head. As the log came to rest with one end in the river, it pinned my legs causing me to hang upside down and bleeding.

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The local loggers came running out of the forest, stepping on the moving logs in the river, and came to my aid while Winton was retrieving the camera from the river. Seven stitches and fully bandaged head done at Longview Hospital and a day's rest later, I was back at work. A friend of Dr. Kalmus, Raymond Wilson, with his partner, Mordaunt Pemberton, photographed the whole explosion with a hand-held 16mm camera. Eventually I obtained a black and white copy and since then I have made several video cassettes from the 16mm film. The incident was written up in the Hollywood Reporter and Daily Variety during the summer of 1936.

In 1998 I made available the film of the log jam and the articles Hollywood Reporter and Daily Variety to the Warner Brothers Studio archives department. No one now at Warner's had ever heard of the log jam incident.

Between the actual production of movies, as an assistant to Arthur Ball, the Senior Vice President of Technology at Technicolor, I produced the non-fading filter to correct the color temperature of the bluish carbon arc lamps to daylight because the Technicolor cameras were only balanced to record in daylight. That filter still is being produced commercially.

Also during my years with Technicolor, I assisted John Capstaff of the Eastman Kodak Company, who had been assigned to design new emulsions for the Technicolor 3-strip camera. These were used for the first time for the production of *Gone With The Wind*. Then I was assigned to a new project, testing Kodachrome recently offered by Kodak for still photography. With a Leica camera, I shot several exposures alongside Technicolor cameras during a number of feature productions at many studios. The Kodachrome was sent to Leopold Mannes who with Mr. Godowsky (who married Frankie Gershwin, sister of Ira and George) were the inventors of Kodachrome in Rochester, New York. After that film was processed, it was returned to me in Hollywood where I made separate red-green-blue negatives on panchromatic 35mm film. The printing department of Technicolor then made dye-transfer prints of my stills. Dr. Kalmus, Arthur Ball, Mr. Westcott of Technicolor, and John Capstaff and Kenneth Mees of Kodak viewed a comparison showing these prints and clips from prints of the actual movie production. Based on that show, Kodak agreed to manufacture a new camera film to be called Monopak, which could be used in any black and white camera and record scenes in color. Monopak would be used to record color movies to be separated and printed by Technicolor in their dye-transfer system.

I left Technicolor in 1939 to rejoin Paul Hesse who was moving his photography business to Hollywood from New York. Paul bought land on Sunset Boulevard about 50' east of La Cienega. He contracted builders to construct studios and apartments. I worked with architects and planned the darkrooms, and then supervised the actual construction including all payments for labor and materials. The building was still there when last I saw in it 1986.

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In 1940 I returned to New York and was hired by Nickolas Muray to start another small studio to handle jobs that Muray felt were below his normal price range. This was called The 44th Street Studio. There, I shot many fashion and other advertising photos. The color photos were done in the Carbro process, a system that was soon to be replaced by the materials made by Kodak using the dye-transfer system for all still pictures. While at 44th Street Studio I photographed Sanora Babb, author and wife of James Wong Howe, one of Hollywood's greatest cameramen. Sanora still has the Carbro print.

Around this time, Jack Clark, a friend I had made at Technicolor, had been promoted and was in New York as their representative. Not long after I joined Technicolor in 1935, an old Boy Scout friend, Bill Sargent, had written and told me about Jack Clark, son of writers of arithmetic textbooks at Lincoln School. While in New York Jack and I met many times often double-dating — Jack with Penny Gamage and I with Doris Volland. Early in 1941 Jack and Penny were married at the Little Church Around The Corner and I was one of the ushers.

Soon after Pearl Harbor, I went to Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, and offered my services in photography to the Army Signal Corps. Because of my photographic experience and the fact that I had taken ROTC at college, I was offered a direct commission in the Army. I had to fill out many forms and get information from Cornell. Also, I had to get letters of recommendation from “important” people. Margaret Bourke-White, Jerry Rackett of Technicolor, and Navy Commander Edward Steichen (the famous photographer) cooperated. In fact, Steichen wrote on his own Navy stationery. With all this sent to the Adjutant at Fort Monmouth, I was told to wait for a reply from Washington. After six weeks I phoned the Adjutant and obtained the phone number of the officer in Washington to whom he had sent all my papers. I called that number and spoke to an officer who actually looked up my file and told me that it would take several weeks more for an answer. I made that call around 5 or 6PM and I believe that there was a change of shift very soon after that. I think my file had been left at the top of the pile so that when the next shift officer came on duty he picked up my application and processed it, because the next morning I received a telegram addressed to Lt. M. P. Keane. With the telegram, I went as ordered to the new Signal Corps Photo Center occupying the old Lasky Famous Players Studio (Paramount) in Long Island City. (The building is still there and it is the present location of the Museum of the Moving Image.) Then I went to Saks Fifth Avenue and bought the complete uniform.

At the Signal Corps Photo Center I was, for eighteen months, the assistant officer in charge of training film production. That largely desk job required reporting progress of some 400 films in various stages of production to the General Chief Signal Officer of the Army in Washington. Every two weeks I would alternate with a Colonel delivering the completed films to Washington for final approval. While at SCPC I met a number of friends from Hollywood who had been drafted and others who because of professional film experience were given direct commissions: Jesse Lasky Jr., Franklyn Coen, Jerry Hopper, Garland Meisner. in fact, I supplied the names of other Hollywood friends who, after being drafted,

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contacted me for help in getting assigned to our photo unit. Our Personnel Officer took my list of such names and went to California with authorization to select them for SCPC. Fred Detmers and Charlie Benes of Technicolor were among those. Also, my job at SCPC was to prepare a monthly progress report of all of our training film projects. This took several stenographers many days to type up the constant changes in each subject. I designed a graph that would show each subject's progress with a line that would rise sharply if the progress from script writing to photography through editing and all the film laboratory stages occurred without delay. Years later I learned that the graph system still was in use.

After a year I was reassigned to expedite camera and developing equipment to be located and shipped overseas. This was done at a control center near Philadelphia. Also, I was assigned to prepare a table of equipment for a new unit to be sent to Australia to join Col. Bob Presnell who was assigned to General MacArthur. In fact, I was in charge of that unit even though there were officers of higher rank. My job was to assure the delivery of my 70 crates to Brisbane and not permit any confiscation enroute.

In Australia, I was assigned to select a motion picture processing laboratory to process all of the motion picture footage of our unit. In Sydney, I selected a lab called Cinesound, where I found they were not washing the film properly after the hypo and I had to get Revers Lendlease Funds for additional tanks for that lab. Under Col. Bob Presnell, we produced a 28-minute film of the action in New Britain, which was titled The Battle for New Britain and used to open the Fifth War Bond Drive in the U.S. Among the crew that produced this film were Jesse Lasky Jr., the son of one of the founders of the movie industry; Bud Small, son of a famous director; Jack Hively, son of a well-known movie editor; and others. After approval by MacArthur's Signal General, Stanley Akin, Presnell took the negative to Hollywood to prepare for release to the theatres. This film was re-released with the same title but with added footage from the Air Force and Navy. It was re-edited on videotape and released on TV. The credits on the tape were only for the people involved with the video tape and there was no mention of Presnell, Lasky, and Hively.

While in Sydney we had the good fortune of meeting a number of people. The first was Neal Ackland who had a job representing in Australia the American movie film producers and who was most helpful in advising us on the best ways to get cooperation from the local companies and government officials. I met Neal in New York when he was on a trip to meet the movie producers. I met him again about 30 years later when HBO sent me to Australia during the production of All Rivers Run. Neal was in contact with Cecelia Presnell, Col. Bob's wife. From her I learned a year or so later that Neal had died. Another local contact was American Consul Palmer and his wife, Eno, who had the great recipe for a party drink which was served to me on a very hot Christmas Eve: one quart of vanilla ice cream and one quart of gin.

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With that job done I was sent to Port Moresby in New Guinea and then to Finchhaven on the north coast. While there I took a still cameraman to Arawe at the south end of New Britain, recently captured from the Japanese. The Signal Officer there sent us immediately by small boat north to Gasmata where the Japanese had build an airfield and now had just retreated towards Rabaul at the northern end of the island. On arrival at Gasmata at dusk we found an Army unit reclaiming Japanese anti-aircraft guns and leaving at once. A coded radio message was received at that moment addressed to me ordering me back to Finchhaven. By coded reply I requested to be picked up by a PT boat, which I knew were making nightly raids on Rabaul. I needed one day to complete the picture assignment and then asked to be picked up the following morning. At the time I expected the PT boat I found we could not launch our own small craft because of low tide. Using pidgin English, I got the services of some natives in a dugout canoe. When, after hours of waiting in the open water, the PT boat did not come, we returned ashore and found we could now launch our own boat. We rode back toward Arawe, arriving at the large fuel tank for the PT boats late that day. The next morning we heard the arrival of the PT boat we had expected the day before. The commander of the PT boat called out my name and explained that Rabaul no longer had targets for PT torpedoes and so they had not run the day before. The commander was most courteous showing me the very powerful twin engines that moved the PT boat with great speed and speaking in a very broad Boston accent he offered me a meal in his tiny galley. I forgot his name.

Arriving at Finchhaven, I was told to attend a meeting with General Kruger at which he outlined the landing order for all photographers and newsmen for the next assault on Hollandia, about 100 miles west. This was to be a leapfrog operation bypassing Aitape, which was know to contain many Japanese soldiers.

Hollandia was not strongly defended and our landing was easy under the heavy bombardment from our Navy. However, after two days unloading tanks, fuel, ammo, and all other supplies, the Japanese sent one small plane at night and dropped a stick of their bombs right onto our fuel and ammo. The result was a "Fourth of July" explosion and fire for two days on the beach. Fortunately, I had moved my unit off the beach the afternoon before. We then set off following the infantry moving inland until we were stopped by a continuous barrage from the enemy who fired air-bursting shells ahead of us. It was late in the day when we were stopped by that barrage. Everyone watched the show but to get a better view I climbed up on one of our DUKS (amphibious wheeled trucks). Then the Japanese changed the timing on their fuses and shells burst right over us. Since I was exposed and heard the whizzing of a shell fragment, I started to get down from the deck of the DUK, which was about 8' off the ground. In doing so I put out my hand and touched the hot fragment burning my hand slightly. I still have that fragment. The next day we advanced by DUKS on Lake Santini, thus avoiding the road where we were halted the day before.

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The DUKS landed us at a dirt road leading to the airstrips. On the ground were many aluminum curved strips with larger lumps at each end. These were about 3" long. The infantrymen, seeing these, called out, "Mines!" left the road, and struggled in the swamp bordering the road. I had been told that these aluminum strips came off our own anti-personnel bombs. I took my crew with me along the road, not entirely trusting my information, and avoided stepping on or near the aluminum strips. With no resistance we reached the small airfields built by the enemy. The ground was full of holes caused by our bombs dropped in advance of our landing. Until the arrival of machines our troops filled in the holes with entrenching tools. A few days later, after we settled at the airfield, someone again came shouting, "The area was mined!" I went to look with the man who brought the alarm and saw that these again were the aluminum strips just lying on the surface. I took my knife and slowly slid it under the strip to make certain it was not being used as a booby trap. When my knife met no resistance, not being attached to a buried bomb, I picked up the aluminum strip and tossed it away. The people watching scattered and then later remarked that I was involved in the most dangerous service, bomb disposal. Little did they know that I was just a photographer. Our unit spent two weeks taking movies and still pictures by which time our own planes could land and I arranged to fly my men back to Finchhaven.

There I learned that Lenny Fields, an old family friend, was on an LST as Chief Petty Officer. His LST was one of the many supplying us at Hollandia. We had a fine reunion and I arranged the film showing on his LST of the movie that had just been completed in Sydney called *The Battle for New Britain*, the subject of this film having involved Lenny's LST only a few months earlier. The film print was made from a dupe 16mm negative made from the work print, since Col. Presnell had taken the 35mm negative to the States.

I was then ordered back to Sydney to organize a production unit to produce a newsreel for MacArthur's troops to be sent to the fronts every two weeks. I hired civilian film workers to assist the Army Signal Corps to develop, edit, narrate, and record sound for this project. I needed a standard opening sound fanfare to head each bi-monthly edition. I obtained the services of a soldier in Special Forces who was a graduate of Juilliard. He composed the fanfare with parts for all the instruments for the Sydney Symphony which I hired to record the piece. His name was Di Cong Lee.

After the second newsreel was finished, I had orders to fly to Honolulu to join Frank Capra who was planning a major film covering the Central Pacific action. By that time we had new personnel from the States. Col. Bob Presnell, who also was assigned to the Capra unit, and I laid out the disposition of our several units and went to the Navy for assignment of these units to various ships. As Bob was outlining our plan the rear Admiral he was talking to suddenly shouted, "You don't tell us, we tell you!" The several units went to sea presumably headed for the island of Truk. While enroute, the General Staff in Washington turned over the whole operation to MacArthur for his landing on Leyte in the Philippines.

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At that news, Bob asked me to drive him to Pearl Harbor for a meeting with Admiral Nimitz. I waited outside the Nimitz office and when Bob came out he quoted Nimitz's response: "What's the matter, son? Did they pull out the war from under you?"

With Capra's project eliminated he returned to the States and I was given the task of making a film for the local Army General since the negatives of actions under the Honolulu General were already at the Signal Corps Photo Lab in Long Island City. I took a large relief map of the island of Anguar and much written material back to New York to produce a film eventually titled Action on Anguar.

When it was completed I took the print back to Honolulu for General Richardson. The next month was spent organizing another special unit, which included Captains Charles Kaufman, Len Hammon, Cullen Landis, Lieutenants Wilfred Zogbaum, Bill Galloway, and Sargent Burt Reinhardt who many years later became president of CNN in Atlanta.

While I was finishing the production of Action on Anguar Col. Barrett, commanding officer of the SCPC, remembered that more than a year before he had proposed me for promotion to captain which was not approved only because of the standing rule that anyone on orders to another unit cannot be promoted. Now that I was back under his command he immediately prepared the papers for my promotion. However, by the time those papers got to Washington I had completed Anguar and was on orders to present the film to Gen. Richardson in Honolulu. Col. Barrett then gave me orders to go to Washington and present "my case" to Gen. Lyman Munson the CO of the Photo Division of the Signal Corps. In Washington, Gen. Munson reviewed the fact that there were already three captains in Honolulu assigned to this new unit although the unit was designed for only one captain. At that point I called to his attention that Capt. Kaufman was a professional Hollywood script writer and not best used at the front in combat photography. The same for Capt. Len Hammon, and the General agreed they should be brought back to the States. Gen. Munson thought that Capt. Landis seemed right for the job until I pointed out that Cullen was an old silent movie film star and was at least 10 years older than the General. Some time later Cullen also was recalled.

This time I was given sound recording equipment as well as professional movie cameras. The unit was most unusual: six specialist enlisted men and eight officers who were trained as directors, writers, and sound recording specialists. In the middle of April, 1945, we landed on Okinawa. We spent over four months shooting scenes for rough scripts on a variety of subjects. The films were to be used in the States to make completed movies.

On Okinawa there were nightly kamikaze raids including having our camp strafed by low-flying enemy planes. Bill Galloway, who was my executive officer, was reading a book in our light-proof tent and somehow turned the gas refill cap instead of turning off the light. The escaping gas under pressure blew up the tent. The ball of flame caught the attention of a

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Japanese plane who dipped down and strafed where the tent had been. The plane was flying from my right to my left and only his right wing gun was firing. I could clearly see bullets hitting the ground in front of me. When the tent blew up Bill ran out as I was running toward him. I kicked his legs out from under him throwing him to the ground, and rolled him in the dirt to put out his burning clothes. I then had Bill evacuated to a hospital on another island. He returned a few weeks later, all recovered.

At one point on Okinawa we ran low on photographic supplies. I learned that the Navy had a freighter anchored off our island as a supply ship. I got orders to obtain what we needed and took a small boat out to the supply ship. After selecting what we needed, I was invited to spend the night on board. I was given my first decent meal in weeks, a hot shower, and a comfortable bunk. I also was told that should an alert occur I was to move to a position underneath the raised forward gun platform. At dawn the next morning an alarm was given. I dressed and ran to my assigned post. Within a few minutes, a single enemy plane came toward us and all the guns on all the nearby ships started firing. The plane kept coming straight toward our ship but then turned, looking for a better target. As the plane passed to our right the ships to our left kept firing with their shells almost going through our rigging. Finally the plane was hit and went down into the water. As the gun above me was in action, the hot shell casings were dropped around my feet, something that really kept me dancing.

My unit also was supplied with a movie projector and except during raids, we ran a theatre for all the nearby troops showing entertainment films from Hollywood.

After a few weeks I received a wire from the Office of the Chief Signal Officer in the Pentagon promoting me to Captain. I had two previous promotions that were cancelled each time I was ordered to move to a new theatre of operations, first when I was ordered to Australia and then when I was ordered back to Honolulu after completing Action on Anguar.

On August 11, 1945, our Signal Corps monitoring station heard on Japanese radio the first information concerning the proposed surrender. The next day, a small Japanese plane landed on Kadena airfield (or perhaps Yonton airfield) and a tall Japanese officer carrying a bouquet of flowers approached one of our officers who was expecting the arrival. Our officer accepted the flowers, threw them to the ground, and then directed the Japanese officer to one of our larger planes to fly the officer to the Philippines to meet with General MacArthur. I believe that the actual surrender took place on the 14th.

President Truman sent a team of professional movietone cameramen to Okinawa to prepare for the signing of the formal surrender to take place on the battleship Missouri in Tokyo Bay. I sent several of my crew with the new team by plane to Yokohama airfield. Then I signed off a number of heavy motor units and a generator before I could move the rest of my unit up to Japan on September 4th. There I did an on-camera interview with

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pictures and sound of Iva Toguri, the infamous Tokyo Rose. After a few weeks I arranged to move my unit down to Nara. There I made up our photo assignments, forwarding the exposed film to the States. The local police assigned an interpreter to our unit. He was an older gentleman whose English was perfect, and in fact, he had graduated from Harvard, Class of 1922. At first the local police housed us in the best hotel but soon the arrival of generals to this historic city moved us out. We were relocated to a real Japanese inn where we were required to remove our heavy army boots before entering. My supply sergeant however, arranged exchanging food to have all of our meals at the main hotel. The people at the inn were most friendly, perhaps because I insisted that every one of us respect the property of the inn. I have pictures of the inn and my room there. At one point I was interviewed by a reporter from an Osaka newspaper. We sat Japanese style on our folded legs around a fine low table. I wanted to keep up the position as I answered his questions, but after about 20 minutes I gave up the pretense, rolled off my legs, and that concluded the interview. When I finally left Nara the inn owners gave me a sake serving bottle and a set of tiny porcelain cups and saucers.

About 1988 I went to Japan for HBO to make videotapes from some of our motion picture film in the new high definition system. At that time I visited Marc and Momoko in Kyoto and they drove me to Nara. There, we had lunch in the Nara Hotel and visited the Japanese inn where I had my photo unit stay 46 years earlier. The oldest employee of the completely updated inn had been with the inn for 36 years. When I told them (through Marc) about the sake serving bottle, a lady went to the storage room and found the saucer for the bottle and gave it to me in memory of my earlier stay there. Also, when I showed them pictures taken in 1945 they showed me to my old room (now updated with TV) and Marc took some snapshots of me in the same position as in the old pictures.

We were in Nara for about three months when I received orders to return to the States for separation from the military. I had been overseas a year longer than any of the others in my unit and had acquired many more discharge points. I was able to be home in time for Christmas, 1945.

In all, I spent two years in the Pacific area starting in Australia, then New Guinea, New Britain, Honolulu, several of the islands, Ulithi, Guadalcanal, Johnson, Guam, though some of these for only a short time. I am sure that Hollandia was the place where a special mosquito bit me. All of us took daily doses of Atabrine to ward off malaria and it worked as long as we continued taking the medicine. However, when I was transferred to Honolulu I was told that I could quit taking Atabrine. Just six weeks later I came down with a full blown case of malaria and was hospitalized at Kam Hospital which had been converted from a private boys school in the hills above Honolulu. I was given Atabrine after discharge from the hospital but again quit taking it when I returned to the States to make Action on Anguar. Again, about six weeks later I found myself back at Kam Hospital. At my discharge from the hospital I was given a very large supply of Atabrine which lasted through Okinawa and when

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I returned to the States for actual separation from the Army. The malaria has never returned but I was ordered never to participate in a blood donor drive.

After spending some months with family in New York I bought an old Ford and drove to Hollywood where I was expected by James Wong Howe and his wife, Sanora Babb. They put me up in their second bedroom in their house on Queens Road for about eight months while I looked in vain for a job in the movie industry. I spent a lot of time with old friends Frank Coen and his wife, Monique; Isobel Lennart and her husband, Jack Harding; Bunny Hess (Isobel's secretary); Jack and Penny Clark.

1947: After I left Jimmy and Sanora I took over a small cottage from Peter Meyer who was renting it from Julie Evans. Both these chaps were in the Army with me at the Signal Corps Photo Center in New York. The cottage, on Woodrow Wilson Drive up in the Hollywood Hills, was connected to a three-car garage. Evans suggested that we build an apartment over the garage. He hired a licensed construction person and I became the helper. I have pictures of the construction work in progress. After completion with its beautiful view of the San Fernando Valley, I lived in it for about three years. Rudy Vallee and Errol Flynn were nearby neighbors.

During those months I also met Irving Allen who had just won an award for producing a short called Climbing the Matterhorn using Ansco color film. He was about to start a new picture, again with Ansco, and he needed someone to supervise the processing and printing of the camera original film. That was my first job in the movies after World War II. The movie, a low budget film with Lon Chaney and a new young actor named Lloyd Bridges, was titled 16 Fathoms Deep and I was listed in the opening credits as Color Director. The color dyes have since so faded that the film is now only available in black and white.

The work on 16 Fathoms Deep completed, I was offered a job as the photographer at a small studio on La Cienega Boulevard owned by Valentino Sarra who had started in Chicago and then opened a studio in New York. The La Cienega studio was a very small operation mainly to serve the New York advertising agencies' branches in Los Angeles. For the next few years I took still pictures for such accounts as the Times Mirror newspaper, Eastman Kodak, Garrett Engineering, Blue Bonnet Margarine, Goodyear Tires, Simonize car wax, etc. Most important were the pictures I made with Val Sarra and Thayer of Kodak supervising for the big display in Grand Central Terminal in New York. Also at that time I worked with Sarra on the "Man of Distinction" series of ads for Schenley Whiskey. Erskine Caldwell, husband of Margaret Bourke-White, was among those I photographed. Part of the photography included shooting fashion pictures for the sales catalogues. One of the models was a pretty youngster from Los Angeles Junior College who asked me many questions about modeling work in New York. I gave her much information including the names of model agencies, rates of pay, and even where to stay. Her name was Tippi Hedren who later starred in Hitchcock's movie, The Birds.

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During the time at Sarra's studio I went on a vacation trip with Jack and Penny Clark. Jack was now a Vice President of Technicolor and he and Penny had three children. Their daughter, Barbara, was my godchild. The trip took us up to the Kings Canyon mountains where Jack and I fished for golden trout. Then we drove to Virginia City which was not much more than a ghost town still with dirt streets and wooden sidewalks. I noticed a storefront with an old fashioned telephone in the window. I entered the store and learned that this was the town's local telephone exchange. I asked if they could get New York on that old equipment and when they said yes I called Sarra's studio in New York. A Mr. Berend, business manager for Sarra was delighted that I called. It seems a New York advertising agency wanted to make a short film for Eastman Kodak on the new, not yet released color negative. Berend said the agency assured him that Technicolor would make the release prints for the theatre for Christmas showing. I said, "Hold on, I am traveling with the Vice President of Technicolor and let's hear what he has to say about this." After explaining to Jack, who knew all of Technicolor's contract obligations to many Hollywood studios he said, "Impossible, no matter what the agency claims." I was then ordered to New York where I worked out a plan for Sarra to photograph the advertising scenes on the new EK color negative. Eastman would develop the negative and make work prints which I edited, recorded and matched the negative to the edited work print. Then Eastman made the release prints for the theatre.

When Sarra decided to close the California studio I returned to New York and met, again, Ralph Cohn (son of Jack Cohn and nephew of Harry Cohn, owners of Columbia Pictures). At that time, 1951, the headquarters of all the movie companies were located in New York. Ralph was in the Cornell Dramatic Club in Ithaca when we were college students. I was the head electrician for all the performances at Willard Straight Theatre. Now, more than 18 years later, he was at the Columbia Pictures offices starting a new division for television. At a meeting in Ralph's office, Jules Bricken, who was director of Ralph's new division called Screen Gems, was explaining why he could not supervise and direct a simple TV commercial at a local New York studio the next morning. They both turned to me and asked if I would take care of that assignment. That began a 17 year job at Screen Gems and Columbia Pictures.

During the first year or so I bid on TV commercial jobs with the various ad agencies and directed many of them. At that time, all the movie companies were not friendly to any television since they thought TV to be the enemy. Later, one movie company released its older films to TV and Ralph asked me to prepare to do the same with the pre-1948 Columbia movies. This required certain technical procedures making new negatives with lower contrast than those made to produce prints for projection, since TV was very limited in its ability to handle picture contrast from light to dark. So my title was changed to Technical Director. In that position I devised systems and techniques for surface protection of the 16mm film which was used for distribution of the movies to various TV stations.

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Also, with the assistance of NBC, I prepared an accurate film chart describing the safe title area on the film so that advertising copy in commercials would not be cut off on viewers' TV sets.

In those early days of television, budgets were extremely limited. When we started to distribute to Mexico and then to many foreign countries, I devised a system to record the music and sound effects track to include all the effects that were on the dialogue track not covered by voices. We needed those music and sound effect tracks to ship with duplicate negatives to foreign countries so that they could dub our pictures in their own languages. All this distribution was done in 16mm. The foreign companies had experience in dubbing feature movies for their local theatres and so dubbing for TV was not very different.

The 16mm film prints used for distribution to the TV stations throughout the country were subject to physical surface damage when used, rewound, and used again by additional TV stations. Very soon after their first use the prints were badly scratched and presented a poor picture when transmitted. A number of companies developed products to harden and lubricate the emulsion surface of the prints. I ran tests of some of these products and with Howard Chin, then head engineer for CBS, devised procedures to increase the useful life of 16mm prints.

Screen Gems grew rapidly and produced, in California, many half-hour action and comedy series. *Father Knows Best*, *I Dream of Jeannie* and many others were shown on network TV and then distributed to foreign countries.

When the Technical Director of Columbia Pictures retired I was promoted to replace him. That involved me in the procedures of setting up road shows and opening nights of new films produced in Hollywood and overseas, and also overseeing the movement of the negatives to and from foreign countries.

In 1953 I took a long vacation in Europe with Ira and Vickie Genet. In 1946 I was best man at their wedding in San Diego, but by 1953 we both had settled, working in New York. The vacation was a re-visit for Ira and Vickie since they had met during the war in Europe, but it was my first trip to Europe.

Returning to work in New York, I met a fashion designer recently arrived from France. It was through my sister, Happy, who was then a professor at New York University teaching fashion history and marketing that I was introduced to Lucille Fouillet who had just left the firm of Pierre Cardin in Paris. Lucille was a friend of Rita Karolsen who, during her frequent trips to France, invited Lucille to come to the States. Lucille and I were married and Karin was born in June, 1955. We lived on Sutton Terrace for two years. After Marc was born, in January 1958, we bought a house in Rye, New York. We lived in Rye for almost 20 years during which time the children attended various schools and then went off to college.

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On vacations we traveled to Belgium, France, Canada, Jamaica, Maine, Hollywood, many national parks always by car and often camping out. During the year Lucille made clothes for individuals and for local shops, sometimes taking jobs in New York City with Pauline Trigere and Maximilian, but she really wanted her own design studio.

1967: After 17 years with Screen Gems and Columbia Pictures I was offered a great five-year contract with Pathe Film Labs in New York to function as Director of Quality Control. My picture was on the company brochure! I was the liaison between the Lab and the head cameramen on a number of movies shot around New York. My contract was not cancelable if the lab was sold. Thus, when Pathe sold to Berkey Labs and then sold to Moviellab, my employment went with those sales. Saul Jaffe, owner of Moviellab, having acquired property and personnel from the previous sales, had to retrench by selling equipment and firing people.

During the time that I was not actually employed, Bud Stone who ran a lab in New York gave me an office and helped my efforts to find a new position. Carlton Hunt, former owner of General Lab in California (which he sold to Twentieth Century Fox's Deluxe Lab, and also president of SMPTE) invited me to dinner after we both attended an IEEE show in New York. At the show, we saw a young Japanese man in the Sony booth insert a small flat box into a larger unit revealing a fine color picture on a TV set. This was a prototype video cassette player, later called "Umatic." Carleton suggested I write Sony and offer my services in exploring the market possibilities of this new concept for playing video tape. The letter to Sony was written at Bud Stone's lab.

At that time (1970), Shigeru Nakano, a cousin to Akio Morita the founder of the Sony Company had been sent to New York with an electronics engineer (Akira Saito) and a marketing man (Mike Tsurumi) to explore the possible market for the cassette device. Nakano got my letter and called me for an interview at which he invited me to go to California immediately to participate in Sony's first big show of the video cassette to the movie industry. This show took place at the Beverly Hills Hotel. No one at Sony knew any of the people they invited through some public relations company. During the show several cameramen and directors with whom I had worked previously spotted me and called out my name. I introduced them to Nakano and Morita and apparently so impressed the Japanese that I was hired and found myself the English language spokesman for Nakano's market study group. We attended and demonstrated the prototype machine at the convention of the record manufacturers, the Motion Picture Academy, and private demonstrations to automobile manufacturers (Ford and General Motors), and various government agencies. Most interesting was the show for Henry Kissinger. Before we arrived I recorded, off the air, a news segment in which President Nixon spoke. When Kissinger saw my recording he exclaimed, "We must get one of these in the White House." I also demonstrated for the board of directors of Time and for the management group of McGraw Hill.

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The problem for Sony was how to get people to use this new device. Sixteen millimeter film was so well established in schools and industrial training films there seemed to be no software for the cassette system. Having much experience in the film industry, both in Hollywood production and in 16mm distribution, I suggested that the company contact the very many 16mm film production companies and offer to convert one or more of their programs to video cassette, showing them the simplicity of playing a cassette rather than film projection in a darkened room. After getting a number of film to video cassette instructional programs Sony underwrote Knowledge Industries Publishing Company to print and distribute a large catalog. This was the beginning of the rapid growth of the video cassette business.

In 1972, after Sony closed out the Nakano department, I joined Cartridge Television, an American company offering a videotape player in a format called Cartrivision that was part of a large console TV set being presented by Sears and Montgomery Ward. The company was headed by Frank Stanton (not the CBS Stanton) with offices located at 57th Street and Park Avenue, operational offices in Palo Alto, and a factory in San Jose, California. Therefore, my work took me to California about once a month, during which time I convinced management that a drop-out compensator was absolutely necessary. They thought they could get by using blank videotape that was so perfect that there would be no drop-outs — impossible at that time. (Drop-outs are missing spots within the TV scanning line.)

Cartridge Television had an arrangement with Columbia Pictures to release many movies on their system. We actually had about 100 titles being sold in some TV shops. However, the skip field technology used by Cartridge Television could not compete with the quality offered by Sony's Betamax and soon the funding from the Avco Company stopped and Cartrivision ceased to exist.

At that point I was lucky and found a similar job with Norelco, a division of Philips of Eindhoven, Holland. The player/recorder they were planning to offer in America was based on their successful unit in Europe. However, the conversion of the electronics from 50 cycle to 60 cycle (our local current) was not successful and the unit never got wide distribution.

1974: My next job was with Reeves on 44th Street. I was hired to run their kinescope department. We made film from videotaped shows, just the opposite activity I was involved in with Sony, Cartrivision, and Norelco. The technology at that time was "state of the art" but soon was surpassed, leaving kinescope activity rarely needed.

1975: Through Russell Karp, who I knew at Screen Gems and who now was president of the Teleprompter company, I was introduced to Jerry Levin. Levin and Chuck Dolan were running a local TV cable company in New York and sold it to Time, Inc. who renamed it

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Home Box Office. After Dolan left the company, Levin was the head of HBO. He hired me on a temporary basis and sent me to the studio on East 23rd Street. The engineer of the studio was Furn Anderson who asked me to lay out the machine positions for an enlarged film-to-tape room. Furn had ordered and had taken delivery of the new equipment from RCA but somehow forgot to order a multiplexer which is needed to direct the picture source be it from 35mm film, 16mm film, or slides, to the new video camera. I contacted a friend, George Gould, who directed me to someone who had just acquired a lot of new, unused video equipment through an insurance situation. We had the multiplexer delivered the next day. I was made a permanent employee in August, 1975, as Director of Tape Quality Control.

Transfers from Hollywood movies were initially made at a place in Connecticut but trial jobs there were unsatisfactory. I then made an arrangement with DeLuxe Labs in Hollywood who had just installed film-to-tape equipment. They offered to receive, examine and clean prints and then transfer. After several movies we realized that their new equipment did not do a good job and I tried another shop in Hollywood with a print of Taxi Driver for which the DeLuxe transfer was so dark that we could not see the action in the night scenes. The new shop, STS run by Jim Songer, transferred that movie perfectly — we could see all the detail of the night scenes. From that time, all of HBO's transfers were done at STS. Soon, major studios came to STS for their film-to-tape transfers.

1976: By now, both children were in college, and Lucille wanted a divorce. We sold the house in Rye and returned to New York. Lucille found a studio on West 67th Street. I found a small apartment on Fifth Avenue at the corner of East 68th Street, overlooking Central Park. Within a year the divorce was final. Lucille started her own design business in her studio near the Fashion Institute of Technology. Getting started was very difficult for her and I did help her financially for several years. Her real success was getting a job as head of the evening wear workshop for Ralph Lauren. However, at the same time her cancer was discovered, requiring chemotherapy and several operations. Even a trip to France to consult with her sister and brother-in-law, both doctors, was in vain. Marc, who by this time was married and living in Japan, came to New York and with Karin made Lucille's last days more comfortable. Lucille died in the summer of 1993.

In April, 1984, I met Elisabeth Thompson. We were married on October 14, 1984 and lived in my small city apartment. Beth continued in her position in New Jersey, driving to and from the city and traveling many miles each week in the course of her business.

In September 1985 we went to England and in Bath stayed with Raymond and Dickie Wilson. From there, we went to their son Peter's home nearby and stayed with Peter and Lavinia for a few days. Peter Wilson then outlined a fine trip through the Cotswolds to several great old houses. We also drove down to Boxted to visit Mordaunt Pemberton. On

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the way back to London we stopped off in Ware to meet with David Fenton of the Rank Telecine Company. After several days in London visiting the sights, various museums, and going to theatre with friends of Beth's, we returned to New York.

In 1986 I took Beth to Santa Fe to show her where I had lived with Uncle Bennie Hyde. Beth researched the Hyde history through local church records and newspaper archives. I had been in touch with the archivist at the state museum located near the Governor's Palace. Art Olivas, the archivist, had expressed interest in seeing the photos I had taken so many years earlier. While we were there he brought out a file labeled "Unknown People." They had identified the Hydies but could not identify the other people in the photos. As we leafed through the photos, Beth turned to me and exclaimed, "Peter, that's you!" Sure enough, and the moment I saw it I remembered taking the photo. From there we went on to Hollywood and met with many business associates and friends, among them Frank and Monique Coen, Jerry and Dorothy Hopper, Bill and MaryAnn Galloway, Sanora Babb, and Bettye Ackerman.

By 1991 I had completed 15 years with HBO and felt it was time to retire from my day to day job as Director of Tape Quality Control. However, for the next three years I was involved in several projects. HBO kept me on as a consultant; I shared an office with Mal Albaum, a producer for HBO, until 2001 when I fully retired. In 2002, SMPTE did an interview at HBO studio getting me to recount my activities in the industry. We have a copy of that interview.