

The War Experience:

PERCEPTION VS. REALITY

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WORLD WAR II | U.S. ARMY AIR CORPS

LETTER TO A FRIEND, APRIL 15, 1944

Although most people think that they are War Conscious, are they really? So far removed from the battle fronts, can they be? You are really War Conscious when you see the airplanes, in formation, early in the morning...and see this same formation returning in the evenings. But the number is not the same! Twelve went out, nine returned...You wonder, what really did happen...You'd have to see the wounded streaming back from the front after a battle...above all, to see the light go out of men's eyes. Young men shaking from nervous exhaustion and crying like babies. When I was in the States, War was far away, unreal. I had read, I had seen pictures, but now I know.



Photo credit: U.S. Army Air Corps portrait of Major Oscar Mitchell, courtesy Andrew Carroll

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