

'Snake Eyes', Tulsa's First A-24, Leads Kiska Raid

Divebombers Fly 6200 Miles to Blast Japs

It was "Snake Eyes", the first Army A-24 of a new series produced by the Douglas Aircraft Company's Tulsa plant that led a formation of 32 Dauntless divebombers into the Aleutians to blast the Japs on Kiska.

The full formation of divebombers flew all of the way from Drew field, in Tampa, Florida, to the "top of the world" in order to participate in the Kiska rout.

"Snake Eyes" was piloted on the 6,200-mile flight by Lieut. Col. Marvin S. Zipp, commander of the group, and he and his rugged plane headed the divebombers' squadron on missions through fog and storms over the Bering sea, and back again to Tampa when the campaign was over.

Relating experiences recently, Colonel Zipp said that they flew north via Great Falls, Mont., and the Alcan highway, finally landing at Anchorage, Alaska. Here they were grounded four days by weather and had a chance to check the planes. The next hop was over active volcanoes to Cold Bay, then to Adak, and finally their base for bombing the Japs on Kiska Island.

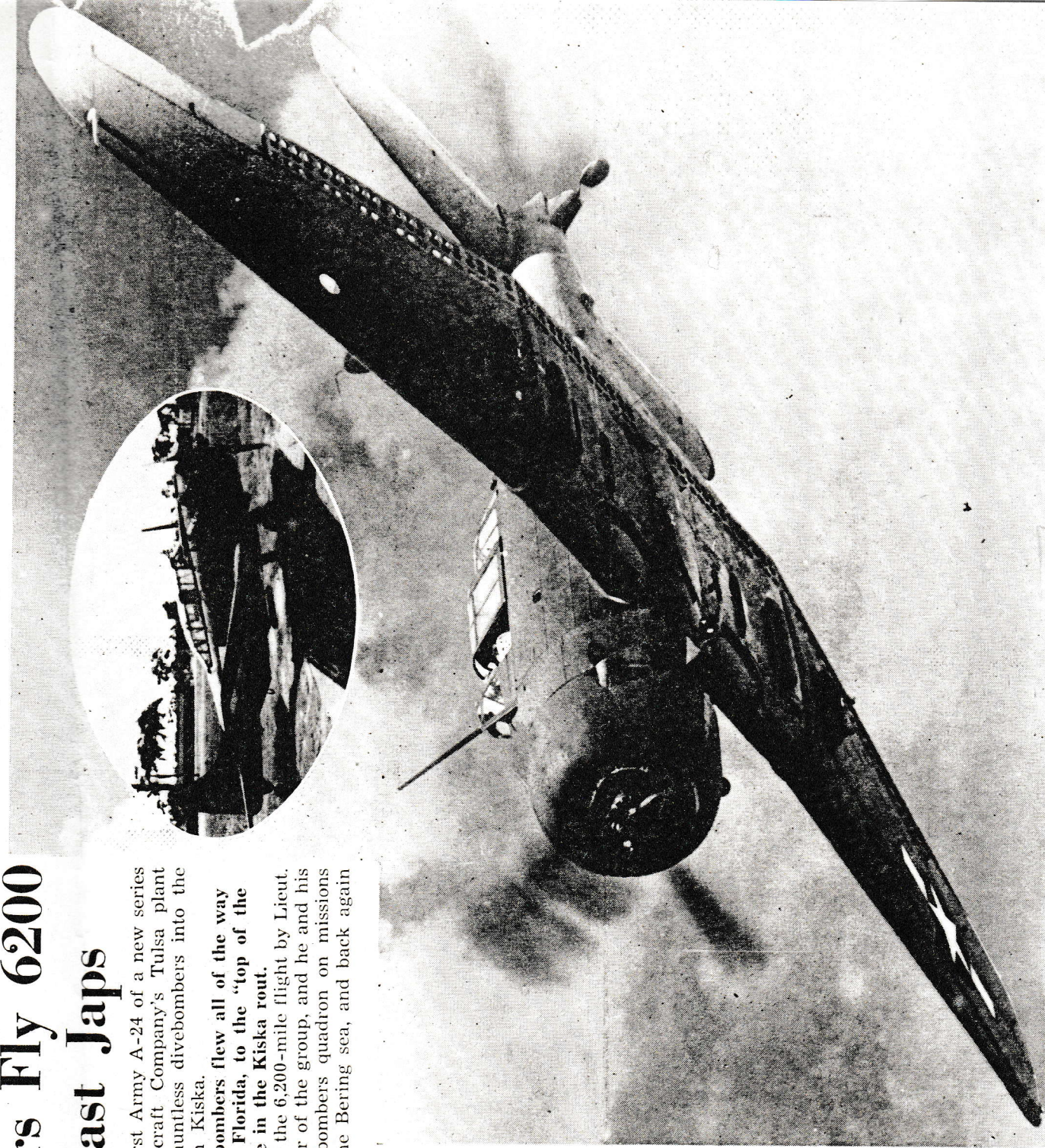
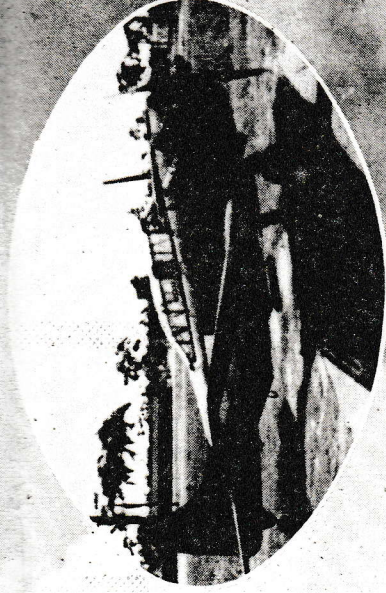
One of their first missions was to demolish a Jap coast artillery gun emplacement on Kiska. It was a large caliber gun, Colonel Zipp said, and had to be wrecked.

The A-24s swooped down on it from 10,000 feet and after the last bomb was dropped there was nothing left of the gun emplacement.

"The gun position was plumb reduced", Colonel Zipp said.

But just to make sure that there would not be any Japs around after a Dauntless attack, Colonel Zipp ordered a change in the bomb load.

"We had been carrying three 500-pound bombs in each ship", he explained. "Instead,



Douglas Photo by Wilnot Dahlen

'SNAKE EYES' SUCCESSOR—Every gun positions down on Jap-held Kiska.

Inset is a snapshot of "Snake Eyes".

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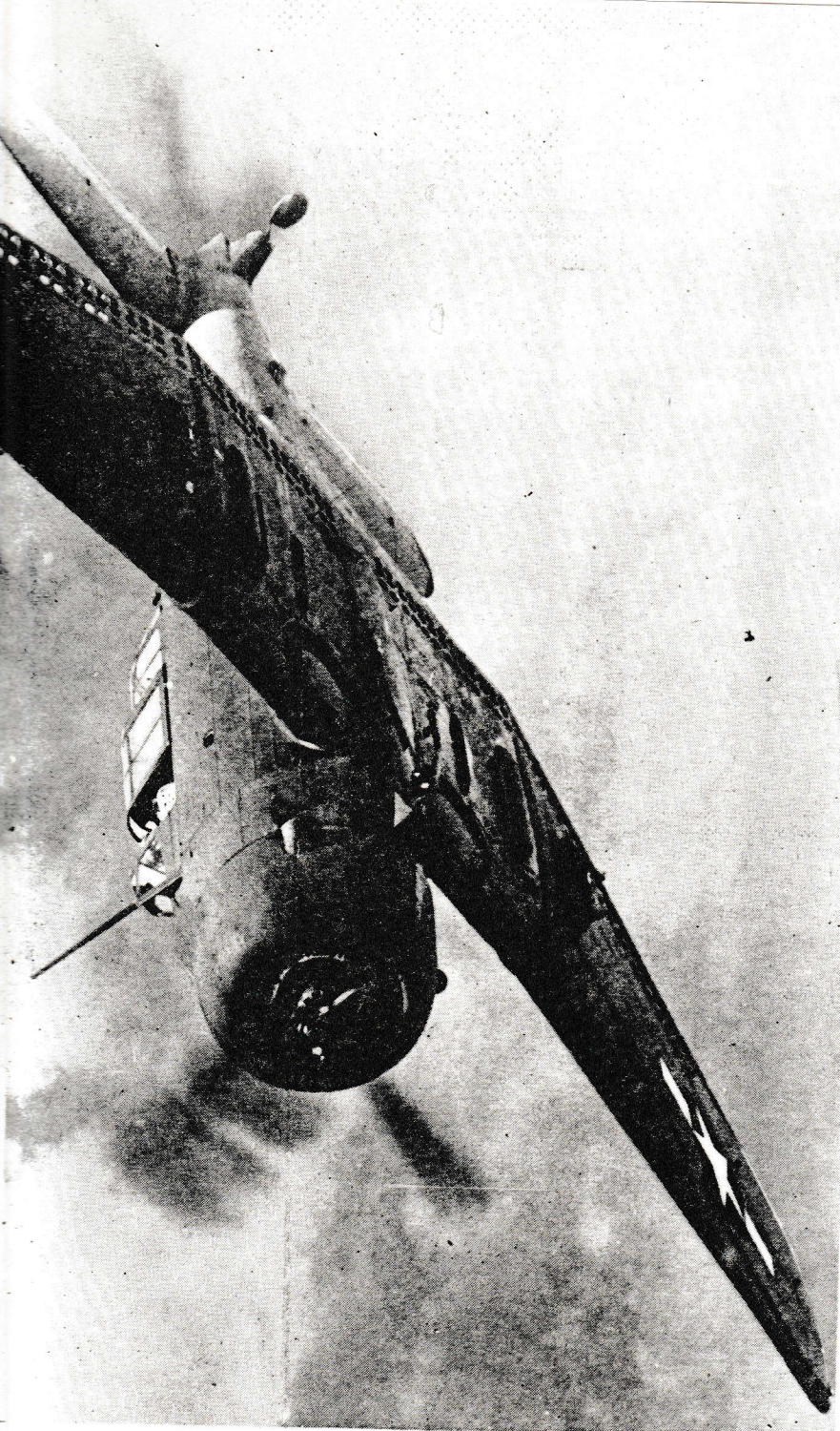
"We had been carrying three 500-pound bombs in each ship", he explained. "Instead, I ordered the planes loaded with one 500-pound bomb and two 300-pound bombs."

"With this load we would make one dive down on the target and drop the 500-pound bombs. Then we would come down again and smack everything left with the 300 pounders, one at a time. This gave us a triple chance to vaporize our aiming point."

On one mission, after flying over the sea for quite a distance they ran into a fog bank, so executed a 180-degree maneuver and started to return to their base.

"On the way back I began to wonder if we could land with a full load of bombs", Colonel Zipp said.

"Bombs were hard to get away out there and I wanted to save them if possible, in-



Douglas Photo by Wilmot Dahlem

down on Jap-held Kiska. Inset is a snapshot of "Snake Eyes" taken by Jack North, formerly of the Tulsa plant, shortly after the plane's return from the Aleutians. He sent it to W. O. Sherf, Customer Service.

'SNAKE EYES' SUCCESSOR—Every gun positions will be "plumb reduced" when this Tulsa-built Dauntless divebomber goes into combat, just as they were when "Snake Eyes", the plant's first A-24, swooped