

JOHN HARVARD'S JOURNAL

tations (each side should “stop expecting automatic unity”) and rhetoric. The allies had to reestablish consultation: “Europe,” he said, “must relearn that ‘yes’ is sometimes an acceptable answer to a U.S. initiative” (should the U.S. actually solicit opinions before announcing a course of action). Postwar problems in Iraq would have to be solved (paraphrasing Churchill, “The U.S. always pursues the right policy, after trying all the others first”). Real progress must be made to resolve “corrosive” differences on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Shirley Williams lent a political perspective on whether it would be possible to relieve the “present discontents” even as the post-World War II architecture is “slowly falling apart.” The Kennedy School’s public service professor of electoral politics emerita, now leader of the Liberal Democrats in the House of Lords, emphasized the European Union’s effort to end continental wars “by the process of pooling sovereignty.” Because of that success, she discerned “deep suspicion of the assertion of national sovereignty itself,” especially as aggressively asserted by the United States of late. Iraq brought that difference to a head, she said, so England, in its traditional role of bridge between American and European interests, “is being torn apart.”

Alliances and true consultation matter, she insisted, because “military power alone cannot lead to nation-building and a change of heart”—a basic lesson the Bush

administration, blinded by a “fundamentalist streak of self righteousness,” has been able to learn “only from practice.”

The questions flew, from alumni participants from Turkey, Liberia, Bulgaria, Monaco, America, Britain, and Norway. At the concluding banquet, J. Dudley Fishburn ’68—former executive editor of the *Economist*, who in 1990 became the first Briton elected to the Board of Overseers since 1776—moderated even more questions, addressed to President Summers from the audience.

In dinner conversation, Carlos Iglesias García, a self-employed consultant from Barcelona, recapped his conference experiences. He had attended faculty-led symposiums on leadership and on business ethics, of professional interest. But he most valued two other opportunities. One was the chance to renew and make contacts at his first Harvard function since completing work at the Extension School in 1996. The other was hearing the analyses at the human-rights panel on “Implications for Intervention: Culture, Religion, and Politics”—especially the personal testimony of the School of Public Health’s Jennifer Leaning, professor of international health and director of the program on humanitarian crises, who has seen the world at its worst in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

García’s impressions recalled Stephen Walt’s observation that morning. In many nations, he had said, the public opposes U.S. foreign policy, yet retains a deep reservoir of admiration for America’s

economy, scientific expertise, and political system. At a troubled time, he reminded the international Harvardians present, people around the world “are not worried about Americans because of who we are, but because of what we do.”

War Stories

ROBERT T. TIMS ’47 found the transition between his two worlds in 1945 sudden, dramatic, and disconcerting. “One day I was a beribboned first lieutenant flying bombing missions over Germany and occupied France,” he writes in *The Harvard Class of 1947 and World War II*, a new collection of wartime memoirs. “The next day I was a lowly corduroyed undergraduate in Harvard Yard.”

His tale—among more than 125 compiled by class secretary Charles D. Thompson at the suggestion of classmate David F. Snow—sums up the experience of many in his generation in describing the difficulty of moving “from the moment of truth over Berlin to the moment of truth at exam time in Memorial Hall...from the making of history to the study of history...from the generous combat pay of \$400 a month to the meager support of the G.I. Bill.”

The 1,050 men who arrived in Cambridge in the fall of 1943 were, as Thompson puts it, “a war-fractured class.” Ninety-three percent of them saw military service, with dozens arriving or departing each semester. Some accelerated their

News from Harvard@Home

Harvard@Home, the University-wide initiative for putting learning on-line, offers several new programs for 2004. They include:

- Diana L. Eck, professor of comparative religion and Indian studies, introducing a major Hindu god in “Manifestations of Shiva.” The program has video of Eck’s course “Hindu Myth, Image, and Pilgrimage” and an interview with Eck, acting director of the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard Divinity School. For details, visit <http://athome.harvard.edu/dh/mos.html>.

- Florence professor of government Gary King exploring possible solutions for polling problems in “Improving Survey Research.” King describes “anchoring vignettes”—descriptions of hypothetical people or sit-

uations that researchers can use to correct survey responses that people from different backgrounds may interpret in different ways. For details, visit <http://athome.harvard.edu/dh/vsr.html>.

- “A New American Empire?” featuring a presentation by Stephen Peter Rosen, Kaneb professor of national security and military affairs. Rosen, also director of the Olin Institute for Strategic Studies, discusses whether the United States should use its military predominance to regulate interstate relations and to create domestic governments in other countries. For details, visit <http://athome.harvard.edu/dh/nae.html>.

Harvard@Home provides desktop access to lectures, speeches, presentations, performances, and other events. The Web-based project offers more than 30 edited programs on topics in the arts, the sciences, current affairs, history, literature, and math. Programs, which range from 45 minutes to three hours in length, are free and available to the public. For more information, visit <http://athome.harvard.edu>.



studies to graduate early; others interrupted their education, sometimes for years, to serve overseas. Nine died in action. Those who returned “graduated as early as 1944 and as late as 1956,” says Thompson, who served in the navy. “We hardly knew each other!”

Yet these classmates who were near-strangers share similar memories of a pivotal moment in history. Those memories—some humorous, many poignant, a few bitter—remain vivid enough, six decades later, to fill a 360-page book.

Some remind readers that the class of 1947 inhabited a different world. Clifton R. Wharton Jr., an African American and the son of a well-traveled Foreign Service officer, describes being interrogated by a white Southern sergeant while being processed for Army Air Cadet training. An officer interrupted the dispute:

“What seems to be the problem, sergeant?” he asked.

“Well, sir, this hyah Neegero has falsified his form. It says he has lived in all these foreign countries, speaks fluent Spanish and French, is eighteen years old, and already a junior at Harvard!”

The officer studied the form, then asked Wharton where he lived at Harvard.

“I was in Adams House, sir.”

He smiled and said, “And how is Dr. Little these days?”

“Still hasn’t missed a name,” I exulted. I could have hugged the officer because he obviously knew Dr. Little, the housemaster, and his legendary memory for people and faces. He turned to the sergeant, who by this time was apoplectic, and said, “This is obviously all right, Sergeant. There has been no falsification.”

Wharton later became president of Michigan State University, chancellor of the State University of New York, and a deputy secretary of state.

As an army private in Germany, Charles D. Champlin III once saw a medic struggling through deep snow to help a wounded soldier. “The Red Cross painted on his helmet was clearly visible, but he was dropped by a single shot from the village. Watching helplessly, I felt a surge of

rage unlike anything I had known before,” Champlin recalls. Later, after Champlin himself took a bullet in the hip, he lay for hours in the darkness and the rain, waiting for medics to find him. “The next events, like so many, are what the movies call jump cuts,” writes Champlin, who went on to become the arts editor of the *Los Angeles Times*. Rescued and moved to a field hospital, Champlin was airlifted to England for surgery. “Another quick cinematic moment. I’m on the operating table to have the shrapnel removed. I ask the surgeon where he went to med school. ‘Harvard,’ he says. ‘Perfect,’ I say, and surrender to the anesthesia.” By the time Champlin recovered, the war was over. “I’m proud of the Purple Heart, though I did nothing to earn it except lie still. But what I derived from the war was the consoling notion that as bad as things get in civilian life, I’ve seen worse.”

David F. Wheeler shares a letter that Lewis D. Sibley, his roommate at Exeter Academy and Harvard, sent from Germany in early 1945. Sibley, a combat soldier, quoted from an epic Thomas Babington Macaulay poem the pair had memorized at Exeter: “And how can man die better/ Than facing fearful odds/ For the ashes of his fathers/ And the temples of his gods?” Sibley answered the question with his own quatrain: “He could die ’mid friends and family/ With his thoughts turned up to Heaven/ On a soft inner-spring mattress/ At the age of eighty-seven.”

Sibley was killed by mortar fire on March 24, 1945, in Germany. Nearly 60 years later, Wheeler still feels the loss. Speculating about what Sibley, who earned a posthumous Silver Star, might have accomplished had he survived, Wheeler writes: “I know only that he would have created a unique, special life in a personal way...I cannot reconstruct my life without Lewis’s presence.”

One of the most succinct memoirs comes from John M.R. Bruner: “Within 18 months after graduation from high school, 10 percent

of my male cohorts were dead as a result of enemy action. Were it not for the A-bomb, I probably wouldn’t be here to write this.”

James W. Murphy speaks for many in expressing his ambivalence about military service. “I am proud to be able to say I contributed my part to the war effort. Also, there is no doubt in my mind that the experience was a major influence in directing me toward what has been a very satisfying life in medicine. [But] I learned firsthand that war is not an elegant thing, and it should only be joined for cause, just and real.”

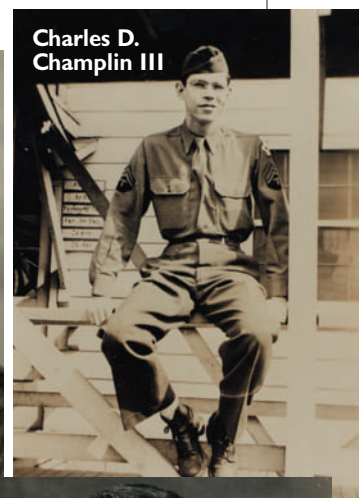
In his preface, Thompson notes that the memoir project attracted submissions from classmates who had never attended a class reunion or contributed to a class newsletter. “Our revolving-door education—the coming and going—hindered our getting to know each other,” he writes. “Now we know each other better.”

~ANNE STUART

To purchase the book, contact Charles Thompson at chuckt47@aol.com or call 781-461-0647. The \$50 price includes postage.



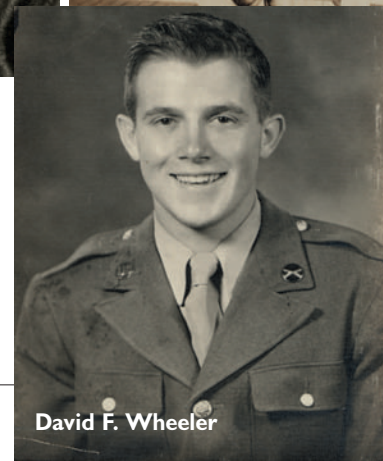
Clifton R. Wharton Jr.



Charles D. Champlin III



Lewis D. Sibley



David F. Wheeler