The photo album in this document was created by Harold Montgomery, an African American Battalion Head-Quarters file clerk with the 1873 Engineer Aviation Battalion on le Shima during World War II. He wrote, "I was a member of the 1873rd Aviation Engineer's stationed on le Shima at the time of the history making event". The 1873rd Engineer’s Aviation Battalion constructed the air strip on le Shima.

Images of the album were sent to the Department of History at The Ohio State University in July of 2015 by a donor who purchased the album in a sealed box at an auction in 2000. He wrote, “The album was headed for the dumpster when we made a bid for a box, it's contents marked kitchen items. I knew it's value. My father and four of his seven brothers served in WWII. For quite some time it has been on my mind how best to share the album. When I found the album I thought it was very special and unique; it should not be locked away hidden. ”

Background Information (written by our donor)

April 16, 1945, 70 years ago the U.S. Army's 77th Infantry Division landed on le Shima, a small island off Okinawa, to capture an airfield. When the Japanese had been defeated they were instructed to fly their peace delegation to IE Shima in planes painted white with green Christian crosses. Two white crosses were also painted on the run way. There the Japanese would be flown to sign surrender terms Sept.2, 1945.
The snapshots & photographs that appear on the following pages were taken on the Islands of Ie Shima & Okinawa (in the Ryukyu Islands) at the end of World War II, in the Pacific.

When the Japanese had been defeated, they were instructed to fly their Peace Delegation—in white planes, with green crosses—to the Island of Ie Shima. There, they would be met by U.S. Army officers and Air Force personnel and flown to Manila, Philippines Islands, in U.S. Air Force planes to sign surrender terms.

I was a member of the 1873rd Aviation Engineer's stationed on Ie Shima at the time of the history making events.

"Eye Witness to History"

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On the opposite page—are shown the Japanese Peace Delegation members, crossing the air strip to board the U.S. Air Force plane that flew them to Manila.

Significantly, the U.S. Army Officer, heading the American Army Delegation did not return the salute offered by the Japanese Officer heading their delegation. As a conquered soldier the Enemy General (Jap) did not rate such.
Shadow of C-54 falls upon Sons of the (setting) Sun on arrival at Ie Shima, 20 August, 1945, enroute to Manila.
The Japanese delegates receive instructions from U.S. Army Officer.

Lt. Gen. KAWABE (at right), Vice-Chief of Staff of Imperial General Staff, leads Japanese peace party of 16 officials.
[above text- clockwise from top left]
Natives of le Shima. Navy big guns cost them their home.
B-24 Bomber.
le Shima based Air Force planes.
P-51 Mustang Fighter Plane.
Squadron Insignia on B-25 Bomber Fighter.
P-40 Painted black for night patrol.
Right
An American Army Officer is shown giving instructions (in English) to the Japanese Air Force personnel and ground crew that stayed behind at Ie Shima, as Senior Officers proceeded to Manila.

Left
Japanese Airmen pose for Signal Corp & World News cameramen, on Ie Shima.
Headquarters shelter (1873rd E.A.B.) on Ie Shima.

Yours truly on wing of P-51 fighter plane.

B-24 Bomber

Urns & bones of Dead Jap(anes).
Japanese Airmen leave their white bomber on Ie Shima. By U.S. Army jeeps they were taken to their quarters and quarantined for their own protection, until the Jap(anese) emissaries returned from Manila.

One of the converted Jap Bombers. The Jap(anese) did not have luxury planes to transport staff brass.
3 fighter pilots who flew P-51s on Ie Shima.

Insignias on individual planes—B-24 bombers—at a Bomber Squadron.
Left
Japanese Peace Delegation Members line up for instructions from U.S. Army officers.

Right
Japanese Bomber Taxis down air strip after landing at Ie Shima. All Army, Air Force, Marine & Navy personnel were excused from duty to witness the Japanese landing.
Our area after the typhoon hit Ie Shima in 1945.
Destruction caused by U.S. Naval guns prior to the invasion in 1945.
The Ernie Pyle Monument on the island of Ie Shima.
[above text--clockwise from top left]

Left
The arrow on the snapshot at the right edge of the air strip--bears the words "Constructed by 1873 EAB." I was the Battalion Head-Quarters file clerk with the 1873 Engineer Aviation Battalion on Ie Shima.

Before return to Tokyo crew services--
Jap(anese) bomber being serviced by Japanese ground crew members.

24-hour guard-watch planes.
American MPs guard a Jap(anese) peace delegation bomber on Ie Shima.
1873rd Engineer’s area after the Typhoon.
Living Area of H & S Company
P-X and Mess
Look down on the island from the knoll.
If one ever had the idea that all Japanese were small—one look at the Jap(anese) pilot standing in the rear (right) will prove him wrong. He was over 6 feet.

Jap(anese) air personnel left behind in le Shima as their senior officers proceeded to Manila.

Japanese plane crew preparing for take-off after “Peace Delegation” had returned to le Shima from Manila.
B-29 Bomber (Okinawa Based) This shot made after the war ended in Aug. 1945.

[above text]
B-29 Bomber (Okinawa Based) This shot made after the war ended in 1945.
Left
Japanese Bomber taxis down air strip on Ie Shima, upon arrival—after completing first step in surrender instructions.

Right
Long, anxious moments
MPs and Army Brass wait near U.S. Air Force Luxury Liner that took the Jap(ane)se Peace members to Manila.
Japanese Peace Bomber — again.
Right
Gate to 77th Division Cemetery.

The 77th Division Cemetery on Ie Shima.
American fighter planes escorting the Japanese planes into Ie Shima.

--Taxiing into hardstand.
Okinawa
A portion of the rugged shore line at Ie Shima.

This photo was made just north of 1873 EAB Headquarters (where I labored) in 1945. An attempt was made to retake the island at this point the first week in August 1945.
3 views of positions occupied by the Japanese on le Shima.

The view at the left shows one of the many block burial houses used by Jap(ane)se soldiers as machine gun positions.

Before war came to the island, those places were used to store urns that contained the bones of dead relatives.
The Ernie Pyle Monument on Ie Shima. Mr. Pyle was killed on Ie Shima (the Monday after Easter) on Ie Shima while serving as a war correspondent with the 77th Infantry Army Division. He was killed by sniper fire after being warned by GI buddies to keep down. The monument was erected where he died, near the ocean front (waters edge).
The knoll at Ie Shima. Many Japanese soldiers were dug in on this knoll. American flags were placed at the top of this knoll three times before one would stay. As Japanese soldiers were still dug in around the knoll for some time after D-Day.

Tiny Ie Shima (2 miles wide -- 5 miles long) after the Japs had been defeated and debri cleared away. The photo at right was taken from 1/2 day's climb up the knoll above left. The other 1/2 day was spent in climbing back down to ground level.
Two block houses that were destroyed by 77th Division GI's in their advance on Ie Shima.

These homes were made from blocks similar to our cement blocks or cinder blocks.
Church destroyed
Note found attached to the back page of the photo album]

[Text from note above]

Pin-point Ie Shima on a map showing Ryukyu Island group

Show Okinawa and Ie Shima on Ryukyu Island group.

Information on Japanese-Personnel that composed Peace delegation and mission to Ie Shima.

Loses of 77th Division on Ie Shima.

Meaning of words “Ie Shima”. Ie Shima history & background
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