

The James Jones Literary Society Newsletter

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The James Jones Society newsletter is published quarterly to keep members and interested parties apprised of activities, projects and upcoming events of the Society; to promote public interest and academic research in the works of James Jones; and to celebrate his memory and legacy.

Submissions of essays, features, anecdotes, photographs, etc., that pertain to author James Jones may be sent to the co-editors for publication consideration. Every attempt will be made to return material, if requested upon submission. Material may be edited for length, clarity and accuracy. Send submissions to R.R. 2, Box 401, Urbana, IL 61802 or tales@soltec.net .

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The James Jones Literary Society
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Film Prompts Intriguing Dialogue About Art Forms And Perspectives

After word started getting around that Terrence Malick was making his Hollywood return with a James Jones' novel, their work and names began showing up regularly in the media throughout the country.

With World War II fashionable again, Malick's return to the director's chair with a screenplay he'd written from Jones' novel, *The Thin Red Line*, the enigmatic, long-gone director who shuns publicity like the plague brought tons of press to the World War II novelist and his work.

And publicity increased dramatically after Malick took a host of stars on location in Australia to begin filming Jones' monumental story about the Guadalcanal campaign and how men handle the inhumaneness and insanity of war. Every newspaper from Malick's birthplace in Ottawa, Ill., and Jones' hometown of Robinson, Ill. to *The New York Times*, a wide range of magazines and radio and television shows worked in a story or two on the men and their works.

Now the still-shining stars of World War II novelists and others who were Jones' friends and contemporaries are coming together to talk about him, his work and their friendships with him at the James Jones Symposium at Long Island University's Southampton campus on June 26. Names like Mailer, Styron, Heller, Vonnegut, Schulberg, Mathiessen and Jones defined, with their writings, an important piece of the middle half of the century, and their work will be looked to for insight into the times for years to come.

With the artistic success of the movie and these literary giants coming together to celebrate James Jones, queries about the movie, the novels and the symposium have reached the Society from the Philippines, Germany and other countries around the world and all across the United States. Articles have appeared in foreign publications ranging from *The London Times* to Mexico's *Reforma*.

Before the movie opened in Germany, Michael Wiesling wrote, " finished *The Thin Red Line* a couple of days ago. It's really a good one and I found out a couple of things. (It) was published in Germany in the '60s. Its title was *Der tanzende Elephant*. I guess you can imagine what that means.

"If there's some money around, things seem to go quite fast. In December, the *The Thin Red Line* was not available here. Six weeks later, it is--under the stupid and bloodcurdling title, *Insel der Verdammten*--island of the damned.

"German translators are not very sensitive with their title translations. I read that *The Thin Red Line* was already set in motion in the '60s. So I took a look in my movie encyclopedia (at) what they wrote about the film. You know what was the title? *Sieben Tage Ohne Gnada*--seven days no mercy. That's not only ridiculous, it's a shame."

Mary Johnns saw the movie just after it opened in Malick's hometown of Austin, Texas. "Good God Almighty, what a movie," she wrote. "Beautiful. Peaceful. Frightening. Horrifying. Senseless. Loving. Glorious. And unbelievably, brutally, heartbreakingly sad. Total insanity gorgeously photographed. It blew my mind."

That's not to say that everybody liked the movie. Charlie Dukes, a European Theater World War II combat veteran with the 104th Timberwolf Division and former prisoner of war from Georgetown, Ill., who saw the movie at the press screening in Chicago, didn't like the psychological aspect.

"Too much of that," he said. "We had people who went nuts. But not many."

Charles Pfeiffer of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, wrote essentially the same thing after reading a piece on Jones and his 25th Infantry Division's experience on Guadalcanal and a review of the movie in *VFW*.

"As a fan of James Jones, and myself an ex-combat infantryman in the central Pacific WWII, I consider the film to be an insult to James Jones' writings," the 27th Infantry Division veteran wrote. "More than that, I consider portraying the combatants as incompetent borderline cowards with more than a normal share of 'Section Eight' prospects a gross defamation of surviving members of the 25th Infantry."

Considered together, though, Malick's vision and artistic maturity seem to match that of Jones and capture the essence of his work. "There's only a thin red line between the sane and the mad," Jones wrote, quoting an old Midwestern saying, and then showed, as Malick does in the movie, the truth in the saying as men struggle with their fear and fate while trying to stay alive.

How men and women react in battle and what the experience does to those who fight our wars are difficult to portray to everyone's satisfaction and understanding. Jones himself was critical of war movies and what they revealed about the reality of war as only those fighting can know it.

"I don't know anything about war," *New York Times* reporter Rick Bragg wrote in *All Over But the Shoutin'*, a memoir about growing up and dealing with his father's Korean War experience that destroyed him and made his family's life in small-town Alabama almost unbearable. "I don't think even the most erudite scholars do. I think you have to fight one, to know it."

James Jones did have to fight one. And you know that when you read his war novels or see *The Thin Red Line*. Malick said he hoped that "this (the movie) does something for Jim."

Judging from the media coverage and the mail generated, it has.

--Ray Elliott, President

Tourism Group Seeks Society's Help For Elderhostel Program

A program to promote tourism in southeastern Illinois is eager to enlist the cooperation of the James Jones Literary Society in sponsoring a writers' workshop as an offering to the Elderhostel organization late this year.

The Crossroads of Illiana Heritage Tourism Demonstration Area program, which encompasses 10 counties, including Crawford (James Jones' native county), has called for organizing a week-long workshop for aspiring authors as the first focus of the tourism program's Illiana Institute Crossroads effort.

According to Crossroads' program coordinator Diane Aherin, fall 1999 is the target date for the workshop. The effort is seen, ideally, as a collaboration of the tourism project, the Society and Lincoln Trail College in Robinson. If successful, the workshop would become an annual or semi-annual event. Crossroads will ask the assistance of the Society in booking speakers and instructors for the writing workshop, which also will include a focus on James Jones, his work and his history in Robinson. "We know that members of the Society have contacts with authors and teachers who might be willing to participate as instructors and speakers at the workshop," Aherin said. She pointed out that the major challenge for the organizers of the workshop would be arranging for meals, accommodations and in-town transportation for the Elderhostel participants. Elderhostel is a non-profit organization which offers several thousand educational programs each year in the United States and abroad to participants aged 55 and over. The average tuition per participant for programs in the United States is \$390, which covers all expenses except transportation to the site. Aherin said tuition fees would be expected to cover the speakers' and instructors' fees; and in the case of a shortfall, grant opportunities would be explored. She added, "We would expect to reimburse the Jones Society for any time spent helping to organize and operate the workshop." Jo Drennen, director of the Crawford County Bureau of Tourism, which is a part of the Crossroads program, said the county group is fully behind the effort to offer the workshop. "Our goal, of course, is to bring in tourists to benefit the county economically," she said, adding, "We have always thought of James Jones as an untapped asset." Drennen suggested that the workshop program might attract a sponsorship, either locally or in the publishing industry, to help with financing. "I think that the writers' workshop in Robinson would be an excellent way to focus more attention on James Jones and his work," Society president Ray Elliott said. "And I have no doubt that the Society would benefit by fully cooperating with this worthwhile program." --Margot Nightingale, Secretary

Malick's Screenplay Receives Rave

*The following are excerpts from George Khoury's script review of **The Thin Red Line** screenplay, which appeared in **Creative Screenwriting**:*

"This is more than a World War II story or a politically correct anti-war story--it's a deep trip into masculinity and a deeper insight into the human psyche. The screenplay challenges the moral necessity of being forced to fight because it is more substantive, brutal and direct than *Saving Private Ryan's* symbolic style and patriotic theme.... One of the biggest elements lost in the translation is Jones' powerful narrative style. But Malick's script has a vivid storytelling quality, reflected in his tight descriptions and insightful dialogue....

"Malick's imagery is deep and the result of his labors is a rich character study.... Malick lays it out flat--there is no compassion in war because it is senseless and never heroic. There are many great moments in this screenplay and, despite one flaw, it is an excellent piece of writing."

Book Review: Carter Book A Worthy Recipient Of Society's First George Hendrick Research Award

During a period of Jones' popularity but critical disdain and neglect, one young scholar chose to "boldly go" where no prospective English professor ought to have ventured. Rather than choosing an eminent name such as Henry James or Ezra Pound, Steven R. Carter chose to write his doctoral dissertation on an author far removed from the traditional American literary canon.

After much correspondence and several personal contacts, Carter discovered that this so-called macho war novelist was a humane, self-educated man and profound thinker interested in concepts few would associate with him. Certain ideas involved themes of karma and reincarnation, which he probably learned from someone else but soon made his own.

Carter wrote his dissertation on this subject, concentrating particularly on *Some Came Running*. Although Jones generously attempted to help Carter get his dissertation into print, it took some 20 years for the work to appear in its present form. Revised, extended and supported by key members of the James Jones Literary Society, the original dissertation is now a book, *James Jones: An American Literary Orientalist Master*, published by University of Illinois Press. It then was honored with the Society's first George Hendrick Research Award.

Carter believes that Jones' novels and short stories contain themes concerning reincarnation and spiritual evolution common not only to Eastern religion, but also to an American Orientalist tradition represented by figures such as Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, Pound, Kerouac and Ginsberg.

During 1954, Jones discussed significant ideas with Richard P. Adams, one of the few American literary critics who took the writer seriously. These ideas appeared explicitly in *Some Came Running* and involved the idea of an "'organic metaphor,' in which each soul is forced to discern its similarity to all other souls on earth, and its isolation from them." It is a system applicable to David Hirsch and articulated by Bob French in the novel.

The theme also appeared in Jones' unpublished novel, *They Shall Inherit The Laughter*. However, when Jones became concerned about "excessive didacticism in his writing," he soon moved towards a "less explicit enunciation" of his philosophy in his later work.

Carter's thesis is eloquently stated and supported by various sources, such as personal correspondence and the Handy Writers' Colony Collection at the University of Illinois at Springfield. His book is one which all serious Jones readers should read and consider carefully.

Undoubtedly, Jones was both interested in and knowledgeable about the material Carter carefully documents. But they have comprised just one aspect of the writer's interest in many aspects of the human condition. Those who begin excavating the voluminous archive material in the Harry

Ransom Humanities Collection at the University of Texas in Austin generally find many other diverse features which occupied Jones' attention.

Thus, the Orientalist factor really needs to be considered in relation with other ideas which also influenced the author. The Yale and Austin archives really deserved some attention.

However, Carter's book is stimulating reading and should spur future studies of a writer whose greatness will soon receive the general acclaim it really deserves.

--Tony Williams

Disliking 'Phony' War Films, Jones Was Advocate For Realism

*The following is from an article in the February 1999 issue of **Sight and Sound Magazine**. The cover featured Woody Harrelson in **The Thin Red Line**, with the title, "Terrence Malick Goes to War." This excerpt is from "Soldier Stories," by Geoffrey Macnab:*

"...James Jones was no fan of war movies. In 1963 he wrote an article in the *Saturday Evening Post* decrying the simple-minded, gun-ho approach that characterized such films as *The Guns of Navarone* and *Pork Chop Hill*.

"If our war films are any indication of our social maturity in an age when we have the capacity of destroying ourselves,' he chided, 'there is little hope for us.'

Jones knew about war better than any other American writer of his era. ...As an infantry corporal at Guadalcanal, he killed a man in hand-to-hand combat--an incident he recreated in fictional form in *The Thin Red Line*.

"...Jones' brand of vernacular realism did indeed break new barriers. As his friend William Styron observed, he brought swearing into American fiction. 'The dread f-word, among several others, so sedulously proscribed by the guardians of decency that even Norman Mailer, in his admirable *The Naked and the Dead* only three years before, had to fudge the issue with an absurd pseudo-spelling, was not inscribed in the printed page in the speech pattern of those who normally spoke it.'"

Getting To Know James Jones

I can't remember when I discovered James Jones. It wasn't in high school, when we read and treasured our Herman Hesse and our Tom Wolfe. Nor was it at college, after my tour in Vietnam, when we read Mann, Malraux and Gide, but not Jones, Hemingway or Mailer. It was probably after college, around 1977. I was working my first real job as a veterans' employment counselor.

Back then I didn't own a TV, but I had a nice brass floor lamp with a 100-watt bulb set right beside my Lay-Z-Boy, and I indulged my love of reading. I started with *From Here To Eternity*. Two scenes always come back to me.

One is where Prewitt gets on the roof with the others and sets up the 50-caliber machine gun to shoot at the circling Zeroes. That scene was so well written that for days I fancied I had been there in a previous life and was having a *deja vu* experience. (Well, I am a child of the Sixties/Seventies.)

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Thanks to James Cicman for pointing out that Prewitt actually was not present on the roof at this time. Author Paul Clayton was notified and agreed that Cicman was correct concerning this compelling scene.)

Such was the power of James Jones' writing.

The other scene is where Prew makes his way to Alma's after he's killed Fatso. Something about that really stuck with me, maybe the fact that all he could do once he got there was read and having a drink now and then. (When I was in Vietnam, I always had a paperback in my back pocket.)

Somehow that scene is tied to all the WWII memorabilia I'd seen in my parents' and others' houses growing up--the fringed satin pillows emblazoned with ships and planes, the framed black-and-white photos of young men in uniform sitting on mantles, the spent artillery shell door-stopper, the German bayonet and Japanese Samurai sword. James Jones' writing was connected with all of that and took me back to a world my parents knew, a world I otherwise, would never have known. Some time afterward, I began work on my own war novel. I worked on it for years, finishing in 1986. During that time, the one writer I often wished I could have met and talked with was James Jones. I never pursued it. Too shy, I guess. Of course, it wouldn't have mattered if I had.

Despite being told that my novel was good, I was never able to find a publisher for it. The publishing world I encountered was very different from the one young James Jones contacted back in the early Fifties.; It was no longer run by book lovers, but rather money lovers who read only spreadsheets and dollar signs. I did, however, manage to get other books published.

And I still read Jones' work, getting more of a sense of the man. I read *The Thin Red Line*, glad that my exposure to war had been limited to a tour in Vietnam. I loved *The Merry Month of May*. I feel like it enabled me to get to know James Jones a lot more, and it caused me to go to Paris.

And I especially loved *Viet Journal*. The hair on my neck stood on end as I read about Jones flying into the abandoned 4th Infantry Division base camp at Pleiku. My last look at the base had been from flat on my back on a litter, hot C0130 prop wash filling my lungs as they carried me up the ramp to be evacuated to Cam Ranh.

Finally, I read *Whistle*. I'd had no idea Jones had died until I started it, but thank goodness Willie Morris helped him get down those last few chapters.

Not I'm working on my sixth novel. Still no publisher for my war novel, *Where The Shadows Run From Themselves*. It really tells it like it was, not like some damn editor wants it to have

been. I'll never change it, and I'll never give up trying to find a publisher for it. I don't think James Jones would me to.

--Paul Clayton

Amazon.com To Give 5% Of All Sales Made Via Society's Web Site

A new fund-raising partnership between the James Jones Literary Society and Amazon.com will generate cash for the Society's treasury, if members buy their books, CDs and videos from the giant Internet bookstore through the Society's Web site, board member Richard King reported.

A link to Amazon.com can be found near the top of the Society's Web page at <http://rking.vinu.edu/j.htm> . The way this opportunity works is as follows:

1. If a member (or anyone else) wants to buy any item from Amazon.com, he or she should first type the address of the Society's Web site into a Web browser's (Netscape or Explorer) location bar. Then click on the link to Amazon.com from there.
2. Once in the Amazon.com site, use the search engine to locate any book, CD or video. It does not have to be a James Jones-related item.
3. After the order is processed by Amazon. the treasurer of the James Jones Literary Society will eventually receive a check for 5 percent of the total cost of the item.

Remember, for an order to be recorded and credited to the Society, access to Amazon.com must be through the Society's Web site.

Also, Amazon.com allows users to post their own reviews of books, etc. For example, here's what people have said about *Whistle*:

"It may be one of the best attempts to outline Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome, but Jones never dips so low as to call it some buzz phrase like that," a man from northern California wrote.

And about *The Thin Red Line*:

"With every line you read, it feels like you are getting closer and closer to really being a soldier," a reader in Chicago wrote.

"James Jones' amazing novel stands apart from many others in its brutality and realism. The darkest thoughts and fears of men in war are shown hand in hand with a photographic view of battle," a reader in Austin, Texas said.

Historic Details Not Lost In *Eternity*

In the book, *Understanding History Through Fiction* (1975), the editor asserts that "accuracy in his subject matter is as important to the writer of historical fiction as it is to the author of a

scholarly manuscript." Events portrayed in fictive works need not copy in sequence and dimension reality; but however compressed or fragmented, they must obtain the appearance or likelihood of truth.

In this context, we have looked at Chapter 50 in James Jones' renowned novel, *From Here To Eternity* (1951), a fictional account of an infantry company at Schofield Barracks in Oahu on the eve of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Jones, a member of Company F, 27th Regiment, 25th Division, and his company occupied one of the concrete barracks in the four quadrangles at Schofield. To the west toward Kolekole Pass was the upper post composed of stables, anti-aircraft batteries and the artillery range. In *Eternity*, Jones provided a wealth of dramatic detail on the Japanese attack as it reached beyond Pearl Harbor to Schofield, so much so that a reader may well ask, "Did it really happen this way?" Or did Jones gild the lily, as Ernest Hemingway, who detested him, suggested in calling his description of the attack a "musical comedy"?

To attempt to answer this question, we have used the testimony of men who were at Schofield on Dec. 7, official government records and secondary sources.

Chapter 50 opens on Dec. 7 at about 6:30 a.m. at the mess hall as some of the men of Company G, perhaps a third, are leisurely taking their breakfast after a raucous night in Honolulu. A third, Jones writes, "was still in bed asleep." Another third "was not at home," occupying instead beach positions stretching from Sand Island in Honolulu Harbor east to Makapuu Point. The company had built the positions during maneuvers beginning in October and had remained there, the men rotating to them, as the American-Japanese diplomatic crisis worsened.

Milt Warden, the company's cynical top sergeant, was returning to the chow line when he and the other men in the mess hall heard a blast and felt a shuddering under the floor. They assumed it was "some dynamitin" at Wheeler Field, the Army air field about two miles southeast of Schofield. But at the second blast, they realized that "this is it" and ran, coffeecups and half-pints of milk in hand, out of the mess hall, immediately seeing a red-headed boy running down the street toward them. As he shouted, "The Japs is bombing Wheeler Field," a Japanese airplane surrounded him with its fire and left him "sprawled out, floppy-haired, wild-eyed and silent in the middle of the pavement." Though suggesting that the boy has been killed, later, recounting the attack, Jones said the company suffered but one casualty, a man wounded in the leg.

Warden, acting almost instantly, ordered BAR men to the roof of the barracks with their weapons and directed a machine gun crew to join them. There they engaged Japanese airplanes on at least six occasions. usually their fire led the aircraft too far or not enough. Except in one instance, the Japanese pilots did not fire on the roofmen or the barracks. Using a BAR, Warden managed to hit nearly the entire length of one airplane, which crashed and burned on the football field of the 19th Regiment. Unfortunately, the gunners also knocked down an American plane. Warden merely remarked, "Tough. ... The son of a bitch didn't have no business there."

As Jones described the strafing at Schofield, it was desultory, a collateral result of a sustained attack on Wheeler. But did even such minimal strafing occur? At least one historian of Schofield has raised the question.

In 1990, Herbert Garcia, curator of the Tropic Lightning Division museum at Schofield, argued that no credible evidence exists to support Jones' account. Garcia had carefully examined buildings in the quadrangle that the Japanese supposedly struck. He found no damage attributable to strafing. In "Pearl Harbor Myths," an article in the booklet, *Remembrance 1941-1991* (1991), *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* reporter Burl Burlingame set forth views almost identical with Garcia's, saying that "not a single machine gun round or bomb was recorded hitting Schofield during the attack."

Lending a modicum of support to Garcia and Burlingame is the author of the typescript, *A Brief History of the 25th Division*. "In the Division Staff Duty Journal, with one exception," he wrote, "no mention is made of Schofield Barracks being fired upon. ..." He did not comment on the exception.

On Dec. 8, neither the *Honolulu Advertiser* nor *The New York Times* included Schofield in the list of military installations damaged. Donald Goldstein, who collaborated with Gordon Prange in writing *At Dawn We Slept* (1981), the *vade mecum* on the Pearl Harbor attack, has said that he "cannot find evidence--nothing, nothing" in his research indicate of Japanese strafing or bombing of Schofield.

The remembrance of enlisted men and officers tends to refute Garcia and validate Jones' narrative. Recently three enlisted shared their memory of the morning at Schofield. Joseph Scinto, a private in Headquarters Company of the 27th, recalled that Japanese aircraft coming from various directions strafed several barracks. Similarly, Joseph Kretzman, a corporal in the 35th Regiment, contended that two Japanese fighter planes strafed the street along the parade grounds near his barracks. The model for Friday Clark in *Eternity*, Frank Marshall, also could remember strafing, but could not specify its location.

Much closer in time to the attack is the testimony of men who appeared before the Roberts Commission. Headed by Owen Roberts, a Supreme Court justice, the commission began an investigation of the attack on Pearl Harbor only about two weeks later. Called from Schofield to testify were Maj. Gen. Maxwell Murray, commander of the 25th; Lt. Stephen Saltzman of the 98th Coast Artillery headquartered at the upper post; and Sgt. Lowell Vincent Klatt of the same unit.

Murray and Klatt offered testimony that gives credence to Jones' account of strafing. According to Murray, "the machine gun strafing was heavy," and American machine gunners on the roofs "were getting some strafing." Klatt spoke in a garbled way about strafing: "...we saw smoke...coming up from Wheeler Field and as these planes would tear over the barracks, why, we could see them cut loose with their machine guns, and numerous planes there was [sic] splinters flying and things like that." Five years later, testifying before the Joint Congressional Investigation of Pearl Harbor, Klatt declared that "probably" three different waves of planes "strafed upper Schofield that morning." One should note, though, that Klatt's vantage point was at the upper post and Jones' was at a quadrangle.

Saltzman gave no testimony about strafing. None referred to any casualties at Schofield, and none said anything about a Japanese aircraft's crashing at Schofield--Warden's kill. But giving at

least a shred of credence to Jones' account of Americans' shooting down one of their own, Klatt stated that he and Saltzman saw an American aircraft on the ground at nearby Wahiawa, apparently downed by friendly fire.

Though offering no documentation or specific detail, other sources have also spoken of Japanese attacks on Schofield. In contrast to the author of *Brief History*, the historian of the division, Melvin C. Walthall, has no doubt that the Japanese deliberately struck Schofield. In his book, *Lightning Forward: A History of the 25th Infantry Division* (1980), he wrote that the "regimental quadrangles were strafed by Japanese planes." Reporting no damage to Schofield in its first account of the Japanese attack, later *The New York Times* listed the base as one of the Japanese "objectives."

At no point in Chapter 50 does Jones have Japanese airplanes bombing Schofield. Murray and Col. Erle Wilson, the post commander, testified that the Japanese bombed the officers' houses just east of the quadrangles; "every high-ranking officer's house was either bombed or machine-gunned," said Wilson, who evidently believed Quad B turned out to be an American Navy 5-inch round "ending up as a dud in a barrel of flour in C Company's kitchen." Jones appears to be on fairly solid ground in respect to bombing at Schofield, if one considers only the quadrangles at Schofield.

Jones also seems to have used the facts fairly in his description of the Japanese aircraft coming over Schofield from the northeast and southeast. Saltzman believed that a "whole flight," Scinto a "Squadron," came from the west over or through Kolekole Pass. In his book, *Goodbye Darkness* (1980), William Manchester wrote that all manner of Japanese aircraft "howled through Kolekole Pass." But the chronicler of *Brief History* had no doubt about the question: "...the striking aircraft did not fly through Kolekole Pass, although it is possible that in the ensuing confusion, it might have seemed that way." Japanese pilots, moreover, did not describe their approach as coming through the pass. Ironically, the film version of *Eternity* has the Japanese aircraft coming through the pass, as does the movie, *Tora! Tora! Tora!*

Jones wrote of the distribution of live ammunition in a reasonably accurate, albeit dramatic, way. Having ordered the BAR men and the machine gun crew to the roof, Warden finds that the supply sergeant, one Malleaux, a new man in the company, will not issue any live ammunition from the supply room without a signed order from an officer. Grinning happily, Warden orders three men to break down the door. They do so and appropriate BAR clips and belt boxes for the machine gun.

Still, a question remains about Jones' description of the confrontation between Warden and Malleaux. Marshall does not recall that Company F had any trouble obtaining ammunition from the storeroom. Jones may have drawn his narrative from the experience of Headquarters Company and then embellished it. The men of that company, said Scinto, had to break down the door of the storeroom--but only because the charge of the quarters was not immediately on the scene. If Jones stretched the facts, his was a dramatic license admitting possibility: Some men always wish to carry out the letter of the law.

By his account of one Japanese pilot, Jones has raised a doubt about his observational abilities. "The plane flashed past," Jones wrote, "the helmeted head with the square goggles over the slant eyes and the long scarf rippling out behind it and the grin on his face as he waved, all clearly visible for the space of a wink." Scinto saw nothing of the sort--no Japanese aircraft permitting such a focused view--and believes that no one else in the company saw what Jones saw. He ascribes Jones' "remarkable" vision to a "wild imagination" born of the day's excitement.

But other soldiers at other points in the Pacific long remembered seeing Japanese pilots in cockpits. In his superb memoir of the Marines at Peleliu and Okinawa, *With the Old Breed* (1981), E.B. Sledge told of seeing a Japanese pilot in his plane at Okinawa in much the same way that Jones saw his: The pilot wore a leather flight helmet and a scarf around his neck, his face breaking out into a "fiendish grin" on flying over Sledge and his fellow Marines.

Altogether, perhaps with minor exceptions, Jones the novelist was an accurate historian. In no significant way did he depart from the facts that he and other men knew at Schofield. Surely, whether or not they believed they were attacking Wheeler, Japanese pilots did release fire on the quadrangles at Schofield. Readers of Chapter 50 can believe that what Jones wrote about Schofield on Dec. 7 did really happen--that Jones did not gild the lily.

--Robert Thobaben and Carl Becker, Board Members

Army Chaplain Compares Guadalcanal Memories To Jones'

*The following excerpts are from **But You Don't Look Like a Minister**, by Chaplain Gary Bousman, attached to the 25th Division. It was part of an online hyperlink, "Guadalcanal Online," from the Raging Bull Web site.*

"The next three days were days of action. [Footnote: James Jones, in his novel, *The Thin Red Line*, describes this battle very much the way I remember it. Lt. Burns appears in the novel as Lt. Brand. Capt. Davis and Lt. Sims appear in the novel as Capt. Gaff and Lt. Gray.]

"My notebook contains many of the details. Here are a few:

'Our medics were kept busy all day...Capt. Davis, with the aid of four men from G Company, wiped out a strongly fortified enemy position....

'By the end of three days of fighting, the Galloping Horse was in our hands, but 27 of our men were buried on its slopes.

'To add vexation to these emotional wounds, I was later ordered to supervise the disinterment, transportation and reburial of the bodies in the large island cemetery near Henderson Field. I did not want the job and when I asked why a graves registration officer from the Quartermaster Corps was not doing it, the answer came back, "You buried them, and you are the only one who knows where the graves are."

'The operation was so gruesome I asked that a different detail accompany me each day. I did not think it wise to ask a man to go out on such depressing work more than once. Often, upon opening the grave, the putrid odors forced the diggers to step aside and vomit. Several times, I had to grab a trenching tool and help roll what was left of the body onto one of the pieces of canvas we had brought along. [Footnote: For a detailed description of this assignment, see James Jones' *WWII*, p. 124. The author, at that time Cpl. Jones, was sent out on one of these details on Guadalcanal. He tells it as it was--"A pretty awful scene."]"