

Paul Masters, Captain Archie Kuntze and Madame Sun

On 7 December 1941 a surprise attack by the Empire of Japan on the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, Island of Oahu, Hawaii, and other Oahu military bases sank or heavily damaged 21 ships, destroyed or damaged 323 aircraft, killed 2,388 military personnel and civilians and wounded 1,178. On 8 December in Washington, D.C. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt asked Congress “to declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December seventh, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire.”

At 4:10 p.m. E.S.T., 8 December 1941 the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled resolved “That the state of war between the United States and the Imperial Government of Japan which has thus been thrust upon the United States is hereby formally declared; and the President is hereby authorized and directed to employ the entire naval and military forces of the United States and the resources of the Government to carry on war against the Imperial Government of Japan; and, to bring the conflict to a successful termination, all of the resources of the country are hereby pledged by the Congress of the United States.”

On the morning of 11 December the Government of Germany declared war against the United States. President Roosevelt immediately requested the Congress to recognize a state of war between the United States and Germany. That day the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled jointly resolved “that the state of war between the United States and the Government of

Germany which has thus been thrust upon the United States is hereby formally declared.”

Paul Masters was born 30 December 1908 in Stockdale, Ohio, the son of William and Stella Masters; Paul’s parents were well educated and several of their relatives were associated with colleges in the Midwest. By the late 1920s the family, including Paul’s brothers Omer and Miles, had moved to New Mexico where Paul attended and graduated from the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque. In 1936 Paul and his first wife Charlie were married; they had met while students together in a writing class at the university. Paul’s major had been history and Charlie had studied drama and creative writing. Paul and Charlie then moved to New York City where Paul took a Masters Degree in Public Health at Columbia University. Subsequently Paul enlisted in the U.S. Army and completed Officers Candidate School, but he was very quickly discharged from the Army because of asthma.

In a few pages of sketchy autobiographical notes that describe her life in Santa Fe and Los Alamos during the war, written in 1948 before she died of bone marrow cancer, Charlie accounts that before her arrival at Los Alamos she had developed what she described as “my Secret Service connection and my availability to State Department files.” Family members say that Charlie had been trained in counterespionage, but no details of the circumstances of her training are known. In the summer of 1943 the couple were in Chicago, Illinois. Five years later Charlie wrote in her autobiographical notes, “My orders, which had reached me in Chicago after months of anxious waiting on my Civil Service application, were short and non-enigmatic in the extreme. They merely told me to report to 109 E. Palace Ave. in Santa Fe on such-and-such a day.” She wrote that she first arrived in Santa Fe “on that fall day in 1943.” Presumably Paul was with her or soon followed, but Paul is not mentioned in that brief account of her life during the war years.

Charlie’s 1948 autobiographical notes reveal that she was not the counterespionage super-sleuth that the reader hopes those pages would reveal. She was afraid of heights, which she called claustrophobia rather than acrophobia, and she was suspicious of all men who didn’t

dress respectably, and especially she was suspicious of men who didn't dress respectably and who also appeared not to have shaven for several days or showed more advanced progress in the development of beards or moustaches. Those beards and moustaches Charlie determined were probably theatrical props donned to disguise the faces of the foreign agents she observed lurking in Santa Fe and subsequently on the Hill at Los Alamos. Sloppily dressed men with beards and moustaches would have marked as foreign agents many of the young scientists at Los Alamos.



Paul and Charlie Masters examining pot shards,
Los Alamos, NM, 1944

In her first days sleuthing around the Plaza area of Santa Fe and in the bar of La Fonda hotel she found cause to report to Los Alamos security a suspicious, slouching person in ill-fitting disreputable clothing who proved to be Los Alamos Laboratories Director J. Robert Oppenheimer. It seems that Charlie Masters soon found her apt calling at Los Alamos as a substitute teacher in the school established for the children of residents on the Hill.

Paul Masters had been discharged from the Army after a brief tour in the humid summer climate of the American southern states, which had provoked his asthma. After his Army discharge he went to Santa Fe to be with Charlie, and he was subsequently employed in the photographic laboratory at Los Alamos. The date Paul began employment at Los Alamos cannot be established without the onus of making a Freedom of Information Act request to Los Alamos to obtain that information, but Paul certainly had been hired at Los Alamos before the beginning of summer 1944; he continued in Los Alamos employment until the end of the war in the Pacific.

For many years before he went to Los Alamos Paul had been an avid amateur photographer, which meant in those days that he had developed skills in photographic darkroom processes. He was imaginative in that work and generally a man with a bright and inquisitive mind who quickly learned the often complex sciences including chemistry and optics that distinguish a master photographic technician from one who

is technically competent but not especially inventive or innovative in the work.

The nation collectively during the war urgently tried to assign persons to employment, duties and responsibilities in which their talents and experience, such as they may have had, would be most effectively utilized in the war effort. Many men, of course, had no unique experience, education or training and those men were sorted out by aptitude testing when they volunteered or were drafted into military service, and by that process all the personnel needs of the military services were filled. It was not always an efficient selection and assignment process; men who had been trained by the services for one particular rating or duty would find the duties they were assigned had no logical or practical association with the training they had received.

As example, twin brothers from Bennington, Vermont, were drafted into the Army and trained together for 5 months as motorcycle mechanics. Shortly after the 6 June 1944 Allied forces D-Day European invasion across the English Channel onto a 50-mile stretch of the French Normandy coast the brothers were posted to duty in France, where U.S. forces had few motorcycles to repair or maintain. An abrupt change of assignment found the twins, who were only 5 feet of physical stature, working together as driver and operator of one of the Army's enormously huge, heavily armored, wheeled tractor-trailer units used to retrieve and transport disabled combat tanks from battlefield areas to repair facilities and, on the way to retrieval assignments, to return repaired tanks to the front lines. The brothers' relatively small physical stature facilitated their movement within the interior wreckage of disabled tanks where entry was often necessary to disengage the tank's drive train so the massive bulk of those disabled fighting machines could be more easily winched onto the retriever trailer.

The photographic laboratories at Los Alamos were a very important component of the atomic bomb research and development work done at Los Alamos and Paul joined a team of photographic experts and technicians who were among the most accomplished in the world. New photographic equipment and techniques were developed there to record the sequence of events in the study of nuclear and bomb physics that

occurred and changed so quickly that existing photographic equipment could not record the changes. There has not yet been a thorough history written of the developments in equipment and photographic techniques adapted and invented at Los Alamos during the war to advance the weapons programs, but that is itself an extraordinary story in its own ways as significant as the development of the atomic bombs, and Paul Masters was at the center of those developments.

Paul and Charlie were employed at Los Alamos after the entire course of their lives to that time had been carefully reviewed by Army Intelligence inquiry and they were found to be satisfactory candidates to join the secret work at Los Alamos. Before his employment was effective Paul was required to sign a document by which, under penalty of law, he agreed not to disclose any of the secret or otherwise classified materials and information to which he would be privy in the course of his duties.

Paul was in no way a subversive of the nation's interests nor an enemy sympathizer, and he certainly would never have disclosed atomic secrets to anyone, but as a young man he was the type of guy who would take a signature cigarette ashtray from a hotel room where he had enjoyed a vacation stay; he collected a few souvenirs along the way to remind him of what he had done and where he had been. And so with the not-unusual propensity to abscond with a hotel or casino ashtray and other small appropriated souvenirs he did, with some frequency, take home unauthorized copies of Los Alamos documents during the war.

A part of Paul's duties in the photo laboratories at Los Alamos was to operate a large blueprint-like copying machine to make copies of all kinds of non-classified, confidential and secret documents too large for the then usual mimeograph copiers. During the war years Paul would sometimes make extra, unauthorized copies of documents as souvenirs. He would fold them neatly and carry them home in his shirt breast pocket. All but one of the known documents that Paul purloined from Los Alamos were copies of organizational charts that showed who was assigned to the different Los Alamos work divisions at various times during the war; laboratory personnel were shifted around between the

divisions as the bomb work progressed and different talents and scientific aptitudes were needed by different groups.

Every known unauthorized document copy that Paul made and removed from Los Alamos represented a very serious violation of the security oath he had signed when he was employed by the Manhattan Project; the actual employer of Los Alamos personnel was, and is, the University of California. At that time any information that named the scientists at Los Alamos and specified the work areas in which they were employed would have been of enormous benefit to foreign espionage intelligence gatherers, spies, interested in the details of the nation's atomic bomb program because the scientific expertise and research interests of those men were known internationally before the war, and knowledge of their work area assignments at Los Alamos would have provided useful information about the directions in which the work at Los Alamos was proceeding.

The Russians, notably, sought to obtain as many of the scientific and technical details of the atomic bombs in development at Los Alamos as possible in order that Russia could develop a workable atomic bomb at the earliest possible date; if the Russians knew who was working at Los Alamos, and the work they were assigned to do, a great deal could be known about the progress of the work and toward which persons Russian espionage efforts should be directed to obtain very specific information about the bombs, their science and technology. Russian interest in learning who was participant at Los Alamos is frequently noticed among the Venona files, as for example the New York to Moscow telegram No. 1699 of 2 December 1944:

BRIDE

~~TOP SECRET~~TO BE KEPT UNDER LOCK AND KEY:
NEVER TO BE REMOVED FROM THE OFFICE.

USSR

Ref No: [REDACTED]

Issued: [REDACTED]/21/5/1952

Copy No: 205

1. LIST OF SCIENTISTS ENGAGED ON THE PROBLEM OF ATOMIC ENERGY.
2. UNSUCCESSFUL EFFORTS OF AN UNIDENTIFIED PERSON (POSSIBLY "STAR") TO CONTACT NICHOLA NAPOLI AND "HELMSMAN".

From: NEW YORK

To: MOSCOW

No: 1699

2 Dec 1944

Conclusion of telegram No. 940 [sic]^[i].

Enumerates [the following]^[a] scientists who are working on the problem^[ii] - Hans BETHE, Niels BOHR, Enrico FERMI, John NEWMAN, Bruno ROSSI, George KISTIACKOVSKI, Emilio SEGRÉ, G.I. TAYLOR, WILLIAM PENNEY, ARTHUR COMPTON, ERNEST LAWRENCE, HAROLD UREY, HANS STANLUM, EDWARD TELLER, PERCY BRIDGEMAN, WERNER HEISENBERG, STRASSERMAN

[7 groups unrecoverable]
our country addressed himself to NAPOLI^[iii] and the latter, not wanting to listen to him, sent him to BECK^[iv] as military commentator of the paper. On attempting to visit HELMSMAN^[v] he was not admitted to him by the latter's secretary.

ANTON

[T.N. and Comments overleaf]

Distribution

This Venona document names scientists working on "the problem" including those prominent in the Manhattan Project: Hans Bethe, Niels Bohr, Enrico Fermi, John von Neumann, Bruno Rossi, George Kistiakowsky, Emilio Segré, Geoffrey I. Taylor, William Penney, Arthur Compton, Ernest Lawrence, Harold Urey, Edward Teller, Percy Bridgeman, and others. The organizational charts that Paul Masters

removed from Los Alamos would have been of enormous assistance to Russian espionage, but that was not Paul's intent nor purpose. The documents he copied were souvenirs to remind him of what he had done and where he had been.

Of even more significance, Paul made an unauthorized copy of the document "History of 10,000 ton gadget" and removed that copy from Los Alamos in his shirt pocket. The "History" that Paul copied and removed to his home is a comprehensive mathematical model of the progression and physical effects that were anticipated to be the consequences of the test detonation of an atomic bomb that would be, some months after the "History" was composed, conducted in the New Mexico desert at Trinity site, 16 July 1945. There is a great deal of very precise information that can be learned from this document about the specific design parameters and technology of the bomb described by this document and about the physical and military effects that would result from combat use of the bomb. By the date the "History" was composed any thoughtful person in possession of that document would have recognized that the Manhattan Project had evidently complete confidence that an atomic bomb of energy yield equal to the detonation of 10,000 tons of TNT was not only feasible but was anticipated to be tested and combat ready in the near term.

When Paul Masters removed the "History of 10,000 ton gadget" from Los Alamos he knew in a general way that the document was more historically significant than the laboratory organizational charts he had previously taken from the laboratory and that he would, thereafter, continue to add to his collection as the war progressed. This particular document, folded as it had been to fit his shirt pocket, he put in a white No. 10 letter envelope that he cached in a cardboard box in the garage of his home where, with a variety of insignificant photographic dark-room paraphernalia and a selection of unused mid-1940s photographic chemicals and enlarging papers, it remained 35 years until he moved with his second wife, Louise, to El Castillo retirement apartments in Santa Fe.

When Paul and Louise moved into El Castillo, Paul cleared out their former home, and the garage, and donated those possessions they no

longer wanted or needed to the church that Louise attended, Santa Fe's Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church, to be sold at the church's spring 1980 rummage sale. Among those donations was the World War II cardboard packing box that held the 1940s vintage photographic darkroom paraphernalia, chemicals and enlarging papers, an Army Air Forces 35 mm educational film strip entitled "The Properties of Photographic Lenses" in its original 1943 canister, and the "History of 10,000 ton gadget."

On that lovely spring Santa Fe Saturday morning when the church opened the doors of its parish hall to admit those who would rummage through the discards and junk offered for sale there I had been an amateur and sometimes professional photographer nearly 30 years, and in the immediate post-World War II years as an American boy in Paris I had spent many pleasant Sunday afternoons after dreary sermons in the American Church, located on the Quai d'Orsay, rummaging through the vast treasure trove of the Paris flea market. I had become an accomplished rummager and in later years I took particular interest in the discovery of out-of-date photo supplies with which I could make photographic prints of peculiar character and excellence.

As it happened that morning, my 10-year old son Carlo had taken a long, hot shower before breakfast and he had fainted after some 20 minutes in the shower, had fallen out of the shower stall and had struck his head a glancing blow on the toilet bowl, a sound that I detected from the living room as an alarming dull thud. He didn't seem to be seriously injured, and he wasn't, but as a precaution I took him nearby to the hospital emergency room for examination; on the way home from the hospital I passed the church and saw a rummage sale in progress. The emergency room physician had instructed the boy to lie quietly for awhile, which he willingly did in front of the television, entertained by the Saturday morning cartoons, while I went to the rummage sale.

In the center of the parish hall under a long folding table covered with rusted gardening hand tools, broken plumbing and automobile parts, decayed paperback books, broken children's toys, old shoes, and worn-out clothing I was delighted to find a cardboard packing box that, with

more old clothing and other discards, held some vintage photo materials. Those I removed and set aside to purchase and I continued to forage to the bottom of the box where I found a No. 10 letter envelope, somewhat yellowed with age, that obviously from its bulky distension had a substantially-sized folded paper within. I removed the paper from the envelope, carefully unfolded it, and I held a sheet of browning paper some 14 inches from the left to the right margin, 8.5 inches from top to bottom, and covered with columns and rows of cabalistic arithmetical notations.

The title of the document includes the term “gadget,” which I knew to have been a World War II code term that designated the Manhattan Project atomic bombs. The legend of the document that appears vertically along the left margin begins in Step 1 with the term “Detonation”; Step 8 introduces the term “Ball of fire,” which is repeated in Steps 10 and 11; and the legend includes the terms “Shock wave,” “Blast wave,” and “Radiation.” It was immediately apparent to me that the document pertained somehow to the history of the atomic bombs that had been developed during World War II at Los Alamos, 25 miles northwest from Santa Fe across the Rio Grande. As I looked quickly at the document before I purchased it that morning for \$0.25, I noted that the bottom line said the ball of fire of the 10,000 ton gadget would mushroom out at 18,000 feet in typical Port Chicago fashion. I was 41 years old that spring.

It is curious in retrospect that many years before 1980, when I began my study of the Port Chicago explosion, my life had several times intersected the Port Chicago history. My home during my high school years in the mid-1950s was within the gates of the Terminal Island Federal Prison where, by the end of 1944, the 50 Navy enlisted men who were convicted of mutiny by Navy court-martial following the Port Chicago explosion had been imprisoned. In the mid-1960s while I was a student at The University of California, Berkeley, I was prosecuted by Alameda District Attorney James Frank Coakley for offenses arising from my activities in the Berkeley Free Speech Movement; Lieutenant Commander Frank Coakley, a Navy lawyer in 1944, had led the mutiny court-martial prosecution of the Port Chicago 50. At Berkeley I participated in protest demonstrations at the gates of

the Port Chicago Naval Magazine, from which facility a major portion of the munitions employed by U.S. forces then foundering in the Vietnamese war were transshipped. In spring 1967 my career in investigative journalism and military history began at the Treasure Island Naval Station where the court-martial of the Port Chicago 50 had been held in 1944.

I become a newspaper reporter.

At the beginning of the year 1967 I recognized I would need an additional three units of academic credit to graduate that spring from the University of California, units that were not included in my scheduled classes. Journalism professor Pete Steffens, son of the American muckraking journalist Lincoln Steffens, assigned 3 units of independent study that required I compare the reporting of a news story of my choosing that had been reported by the local newspapers and by the national newspapers or news magazines. For reasons that I no longer definitely remember I chose for that assignment to compare local and national newspaper coverage of a very recently concluded San Francisco area Navy court-martial that had been reported by the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and nationally. Navy Captain Archie C. Kuntze had recently been convicted by court-martial convened at San Francisco's Treasure Island Naval Station of illegally importing one bolt of Thailand silk cloth into Vietnam on a military aircraft.

Probably the captain's offense seemed to me ludicrous in the context of the disasters of the then-current war in Vietnam, to which I had actively objected since my radicalization in the Free Speech Movement. The irony of Capt. Kuntze's charge and conviction of illegally importing one bolt of Thai silk into Vietnam quickly assumed preposterous proportions when I learned from newspaper accounts that prior to his court-martial Capt. Kuntze, in Saigon, had the assignment of contracting and supervising all the military construction associated with the buildup of U.S. forces in Vietnam, as well as overall responsibility for the supply of all U.S. troops in Vietnam.

News reports of the Kuntze court-martial provided the information that for a period of two years prior to his removal from those duties, one-

tenth of all the world's trade shipped on all the world's oceans had passed across Capt. Kuntze's desk; in the usual circumstances of business he had 5-6 million U.S. dollars cash in his office safe to cover incidental expenses. And the Navy prosecuted him for one bolt of contraband silk? It didn't make sense, and I decided I ought to have a conversation with the captain who was then resident in the Bachelor Officers Quarters (BOQ) at Treasure Island Naval Station waiting to be separated from the Navy.

A visit by a university journalism student with an officer at the BOQ at Treasure Island might seem an occurrence generating few complications, and it would have been routine if my wardrobe and appearance had not consisted of royal blue velvet pants, a tie-dyed dress shirt, complementing necktie, bare feet in hippie sandals, long hair halfway down my back, an Indian beaded headband, and a student's beard that was less than stylishly trimmed. The Marine guard at the Treasure Island base gate for some reason mistook me for a woman and cordially addressed me as Ma'am.

However, during the years I had lived on Terminal Island during high school and early college years my father wore the uniform of the United States Public Health Service (USPHS), which except the buttons is identical with an officer's uniform of the United States Navy. He had four stripes on his sleeves, the equivalent of a Navy captain, and it was impossible to distinguish a USPHS officer in uniform from a Navy officer in uniform without close inspection of the officer's buttons or the insignia on the officer's cap and sleeves. We had family privileges at the large Terminal Island Naval Station and Shipyard nearby our home on the island. On many hot southern California sunny summer days lounging by the outdoor pool of the base Officers Club I had become well acquainted with the charming daughters of the base admirals and through those daughters I knew their mothers and fathers.

During those years on Terminal Island I had pleasant and friendly relations with many Navy admirals and their families; my brother Lieutenant (jg) Victor Conrad Vogel—a Navy flyer who was killed ten years later when his plane went down in the Mediterranean during his final approach to a carrier landing—had married an admiral's daughter.

I was acquainted with the manner in which Marine guards respected Navy officers and respected the business of Navy officers. I knew that although I would take some insult from the Marine guard at Treasure Island because of my manner of dress I would be admitted to my prearranged business with Capt. Kuntze at the BOQ.

Also reported by the news accounts of Capt. Kuntze's court-martial was the information that in Saigon the captain had a flamboyant Chinese-Vietnamese mistress who frequently used the captain's staff car—which had shockingly wide whitewall tires—and the captain's driver for prodigal shopping trips around the city, passing brazenly through the crowded streets with the car's horn and siren blaring to carve a way through the congestion of Saigon's traffic jams with U.S. and Navy command flags flying from the front fenders. It was blatant, in the sense of being both offensively loud and insistent, as well as shameless. The Office of Naval Intelligence, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation had all tried to locate this woman, Madame Sun, in order to require her testimony at the captain's court-martial, but Madame Sun had not been found.

In my first interview with Capt. Kuntze he told stories of massive corruption in the process of military construction contracting in Vietnam that had favored the Texas construction firm Brown, Root and Jones, and he alleged that President Lyndon Johnson's wife Lady Bird Johnson had been the recipient of several million dollars in illegal kickbacks by the firm for the influence her husband had provided. The Browns of Houston, Texas were, in fact, LBJ political and financial supporters for many years. Once we started talking about President and Lady Bird Johnson and the corruption Capt. Kuntze alleged governed military construction contracts in Vietnam we didn't talk much about his one bolt of contraband silk. The more important information was so surprising that when I returned home I called the *San Francisco Chronicle* Military Affairs Correspondent Charlie Howe and told him what I had been told. Charlie had reported Capt. Kuntze's court-martial for the *Chronicle*. Charlie initially explained to me that Capt. Kuntze had been court-martialled on that silly charge as the quickest and least tangled way the Joint Chiefs of Staff had devised to remove the Navy from the principal role it then held in the military buildup in Vietnam

and transfer that role to the Army, which thereafter was the dominant service branch onshore.

In a meeting together a few days later Charlie challenged me to carry a concealed miniature tape recorder and a microphone, masked as a fountain pen, onto the Treasure Island base, into the BOQ and to secretly record Capt. Kuntze's statements as I walked him through a repeat of the conversation we had previously had concerning the alleged misdoings of Brown, Root and Jones, President Johnson and Lady Bird. I didn't hesitate to agree although Charlie warned of the legal consequences I would be subject to if I were discovered on the base with that concealed apparatus.

I had already run the Marine guard gauntlet of insults once at the Treasure Island base gate successfully and I had no doubt I could do it again. The tape recorder was a miniature reel-to-reel device about the size of two decks of playing cards back-to-back, and the microphone was in appearance a slightly oversized fountain pen; a thin black wire connected the two. It would be necessary that I cough loudly or make some other loud noise that would cover the noticeable, audible click when I activated the recorder by moving the machine's on/off switch to the operating position. And so one noontime in the spring of 1967 I entered the Treasure Island base with a tape recorder hidden in a top-opening leather satchel-type briefcase stuffed with an abundance of concealing papers and notepads, and with a microphone clipped upright on the top edge of one of the briefcase compartment separators.

All went well and I arrived in Capt. Kuntze's room on the third floor of the BOQ, put the opened briefcase on the floor between where we sat facing each other, managed to kick over a nearby desk chair and activated the recorder while I extracted a note pad and real ballpoint pen with which to take notes of our conversation, as I had previously done. I spoke the date, while making notes, and said I was glad to meet again with him, Captain Kuntze, in his room in the Treasure Island BOQ and I began a reconstruction of our prior conversation. About three minutes later a pneumatically operated jackhammer in the courtyard below the room's open window began breaking up a concrete slab. Capt. Kuntze rose and closed the window, but the racket was

essentially unabated and all but the first three minutes of the recording was inaudible. Those three minutes, however, were enough to win the small wager of dinner and drinks I had made with Charlie that I would succeed in that covert mission.

Charlie was an amazing guy who had spent three hideous years as a prisoner of war in North Korea; that experience made him interesting to know, because he had seen the world from a different perspective, but in the more usual interactions he was socially inept and often lived over-and-over in his dreams the horrors he had experienced in that North Korean prison. He was a superb military affairs analyst and reporter. After a few years he took an editorial position in New York City with McGraw-Hill; later he retired to a shack without running water on Cleopatra Hill in the mostly abandoned old copper mining town of Jerome, Arizona, and subsequently he just disappeared.

During my second meeting with Capt. Kuntze he had said several things in conversation that convinced me Madame Sun was then in the San Francisco Bay area and had been during the captain's court-martial. When I told Charlie I believed Madame Sun was living somewhere nearby we started a new adventure. Through the Department of Motor Vehicles we learned that Captain Kuntze owned a Cadillac automobile that was garaged in San Francisco. We followed him in his driving excursions for a week, but he made no contact with Madame Sun; from the telephone company we obtained records of the phone calls he had received and made from the BOQ. He had received nor made any off-base calls except to and from his mother in Southern California. I then decided that if Madame Sun were in the country she had probably come in on a Chinese passport, so I went to the Chinese consulate in the City's Chinatown and asked to see the records of all persons who had entered the West Coast with Chinese passports during the previous six months.

Those records covering several years were entered as manuscript notes on 3 x 5 inch index cards, many hundreds of them haphazardly thrown into a large storage box in a corner of the room behind the secretary's work area. The twelfth of those index cards that I extracted from the jumble of that box recorded that Madame Sun, using one of her known

aliases, had entered the United States at Seattle three months earlier on a student visa; the contact address provided for her was the retail establishment of a very expensive Chinese furrier on San Francisco's Union Square.

During my young boyhood my home had been a big white antebellum mansion on the high ground of the "Narcotics Farm"—the several thousand acres of the USPHS hospital and federal prison for narcotic addicts at Lexington, Kentucky, where my father was medical officer-in-charge and warden. Among the federal prisoners at Lexington were craven marijuana-smoking Negro musicians, pathetic heroin addicts of all races but always young, and recovering Chinese-American opium addicts; some of the latter had been granted "trustee" privileges and were the white-coated houseboys, cooks and laundry boys in our home. Those men had been in many ways my surrogate uncles, and they had taught me as much of their Cantonese language as I could absorb, but which I had never learned adequately to maintain an adult conversation. I had, however, thorough fluency in the Pidgin English spoken by those men and I could faultlessly front myself as a representative of the Chinese Students Association who wished to establish contact with the student Miss Sun. Her telephone number would not be given, but I could write to her at her home address in San Francisco. That's all Charlie and I needed. We had succeeded where the Office of Naval Intelligence had failed.

The rest of that story is short. Charlie had an old Volkswagen camper with curtains that could be drawn to cover all the rear windows. I borrowed my dad's 35 mm Leica camera and 135 mm telephoto lens; we parked across the street from the front entry to the very nice Nob Hill apartment house where she lived and, hopefully, I would photograph Madame Sun and Capt. Kuntze as they made an exit from that grand foyer arm-in-arm to the street. We sat there most of the day, eating stale Chinese food from soggy paper containers, drinking bottled beer and pissing into the empties. Madame Sun did not appear, but at day's end Charlie produced from his briefcase—the same briefcase I had carried onto the Treasure Island Naval Station—an application for employment with the *San Francisco Chronicle* and he asked if I would like a job with the paper when I graduated a month later.

I didn't have any other plans. I completed the employment application, submitted some journalism class papers as writing samples, was interviewed by the City Editor Abe Mellinkoff, was graduated from Berkeley, refused my diploma because it has been signed by Governor Ronald Reagan, took a week off to go camping in Yosemite, and started my first day as a city desk reporter with the paper, driving from home in Berkeley to work in my 1962 forest green Austin-Healey 3000 MK II sports car.

Photographs and illustrations credits.

Paul and Charlie Masters examining pot shards, Los Alamos, NM, 1944. Source: Courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Clark. Used with permission.

“History of 10,000 ton gadget.” Source: Author's files and Los Alamos National Laboratory.