

**LTCOL Jesse A. Marcel Sr USAAF W5CYI \*1907-1986\*** To Theodule (laborer oyster industry) and Adelaide Bergeron Marcel, of Bayou Blue, Houma, Terrebonne Parish, La. The Marcel children consisted of 4 brothers Jesse, Paul, Willey and Dennis Marcel - Sisters Laurentine, Lucy, Louise and Jennie.

It appears you are going to receive more material than you probably want to know, but bear with us. First we view the location Blue Bayou, it strikes me as a hit tune that was a national treasure written by Roy Orbison and Joe Melson in the early 60s and later a national hit by Linda Ronstadt in 1977. Many of our dear friends loved that song and our subject Jesse Marcel was born there. I could easily retire off the residuals that song still brings.

Jesse was a grad of Terrebonne High School Huoma Louisiana. After high school our subject worked as a draftsman for La Dept of Transportation. While there in Baton Rouge in the 30s Jesse attended State University specializing in physics.

In those days the physics department sponsored a ham radio club. For Jesse it was love at first sight and he remained an active ham (W5CYI) until his death in 1986. He also was employed by the Corps of Engineers and Shell Oil Company as a cartographer, specializing in map making from aerial photography. In a conversation Jesse had, we learned he did mention earning his ham radio ticket in 1930 and held it for the remainder.

Along the pathway he served two, three year enlistments in the National Guard, from 1925 to 28 in La, then in Texas 1936-1939. The Marcel's were living in Texas when WW2 broke out. He eventually earned a nuclear physics degree from George Washington, Univ Wisconsin, New York University and Ohio State Univ. Columbus, Ohio.

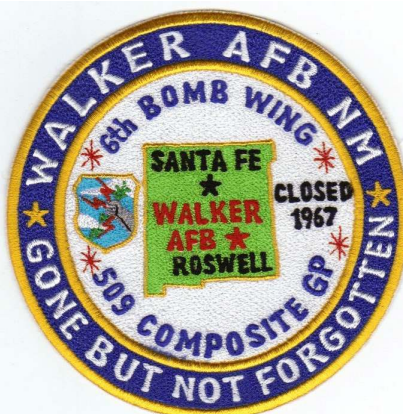
In March of 1942 at age 35 Jesse applied for a commission which was granted the rank of 2<sup>nd</sup> LT

in the U.S.A.A.F. This was based upon his experience analyzing aerial photography. He was sent to Harrisburg, Pa for training as a combat photograph interpreter/Intel Officer.

Our subject requested combat October of 1943 and was assigned to the 5<sup>th</sup> Bomber Group command in S.W. Pacific Theater New Guinea. For two years Marcel served first as a Squadron Intel Officer then Group Intel Officer, participating in several campaigns that resulted in the retaking of the Philippine Islands. Marcel had a total of 468 hours of combat time, was intelligence officer for bomb wing, flew as a pilot, waist gunner and bombardier at different times. Was downed one time, the third mission out of Port Moresby, his chest pack chute saved his life. His commander rewarded his dedication and abilities with 5 air medals, The Bronze Star and a promotion to Captain and then to Major in May 1945. He had commendations from U.S. Navy - Air Force Intelligence Office, for A-Bomb tests in South Pacific and Kwajalein.

Just before the 1945 Atomic Bomb initial incident over Japan Major Marcel was transferred to the States to receive training in the use of airborne terrain mapping radar systems. When the war was over, **Jesse Marcel was reassigned in January 1946 to the 509<sup>th</sup> Composite Group at Roswell Army Air Base (RAAB) which would shortly be known as Walker Air Force Base, Roswell, NM.** We have a 1948 U.S. Call Book and Jesse is listed as W5CYI Roswell Army Air Base, NM. The famous 509<sup>th</sup> held in esteem because of their preparation for the WW2 Atomic Bomb delivery project and association with Col. Paul Tibbets K4ZVZ pilot of the Enola Gay. Also not forgotten was the second delivery of the 509<sup>th</sup> Group Bockscar piloted by Maj C.W. Sweeney on 9 Aug 1945 over Nagasaki.

Life constantly changes; Continued on page two.



ROSWELL, NEW MEXICO. TUESDAY, JULY 8, 1947. 4 PER COPY.

# RAAF Captures Flying Saucer On Ranch in Roswell Region

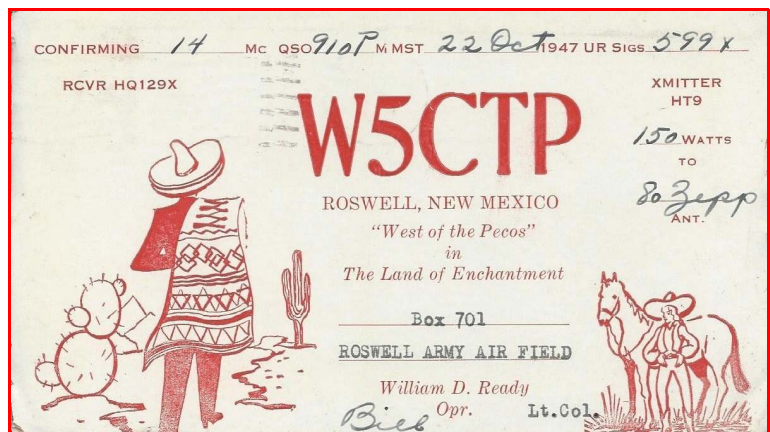
Major Marcel, Roswell Army Air Base Intelligence Officer is suddenly interrupted at lunch on the 7<sup>th</sup> of July 1947 - It was the Roswell Sheriffs Office on the phone conducting an interview at their office with a rancher Wm Brazel who was the foreman of the J.B. Foster Ranch, a 80 Square mile sheep and cattle operation. It was located a considerable distance north of Roswell. The rancher found a debris field of considerable size a few days prior. (There is a discrepancy when the material was first found) "This might be well worth your while since you are the Intelligence Officer." Said the Sheriff.

Marcel met the ranch foreman at the sheriffs office that afternoon. Major then informed his CO, Col Blanchard, Roswell Base Commander. Marcel was ordered to go out and investigate taking along who ever needed to assist pronto. Means just that, on the double. Marcel was noted in saying on the way, "It's a good thing we are following Brazel or we would never find the place."

On July 8h the RAAF (Roswell Army Air Field) P.I.O. Lt. Walter Haut issued a press release. It was revised in short order by the 8<sup>th</sup> A.F. General Ramey – Then Major Marcel was ordered to pose with staged material that he would regret for a life time. This was the start of a very difficult long enduring, highly volatile case.

It is now 2013 and not much more is known. The major players are gone now and Dr. Jesse Marcel Jr just expired and was noted to say in a recent interview, "I would hope that full disclosure will be made in my lifetime, but even if it isn't, I know what the truth is." The truth simply was, Major Marcel Sr brought part of the wreckage home before he returned to the Air Base, from the J.B Foster ranch. Marcel woke up his wife and young 11 year old son with the once in a lifetime chance to see wreckage they felt was not of this world.

We might add Dr. Jesse Marcel Jr., was highly educated and also a military officer. He graduated from LSU Med school in 1961 - Joined the Navy in 1962 and retired 9 years later, joined the Montana National guard, became a flight surgeon in 1981 - He was called back to active duty in Oct 2004 to Iraq for over a year having earned the rank of Colonel in the U.S. Army. Marcel Jr., expired unexpectedly at his home in Helena, Mont., 23 August 2013 at age 76. I believe our QSL sample is a Tony Ricicki W2VRK card.



I'm going back someday, Come what may, To Blue Bayou! W8SU 2013