

Blackboards and Bomb Shelters

The Perilous Journey of Americans in
China during World War II

This riveting presentation follows four young Americans and their service at Yale-in-China during World War II. Three of the men volunteered to teach middle school students in Yuanling, Hunan. Their mission was inextricably linked with the broader Yale-in-China medical mission, headed by a young surgeon as the war sweeps through the city of Changsha.

The audience is quickly drawn into this engaging story about serving humanity through public service in a foreign land – a goal that that is suddenly turned on its head once the US enters the war. The diverging paths of these young men paint an intricate picture of the complicated social, military and political situation in Nationalist China and how life would never be the same for any of them. These fresh, unbiased observations about love and war, life and death, service to self and service to country presents us with this unique coming of age story set in wartime China.

Their collective journeys and first-hand accounts open our eyes to a behind the scenes look at how they adapted to life changing events during China's most horrific military conflict.

James P. Bevill is an independent historian and award winning author. His previous works focused on economic, financial, political and naval history. His love of history inspired him to read, organize and catalogue the voluminous papers of his father-in-law, Paul Springer, who taught at Yale-in-China in 1941-1942 before joining the US State Department in Chungking. Bevill is a Senior Vice President – Wealth Management in the River Oaks office of UBS Financial Services in Houston. He lives in Houston with his wife, Jodie Springer Bevill.

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