

in a storm. In Manchuria, he went to the coronation of Pu-Yi, the puppet emperor; then crossed Siberia on the peasants' train and worked for a while in the U. S. Embassy in Moscow. In 1937-38 he again went to the Far East: to Singapore; into Indo-China and Siam with a naturalist collecting zoological specimens; to Borneo, Sumatra, Java, the Philippines, Japan and China.

Commissioned Captain, U.S.M.C.R., in 1937, Wylie was called to active duty in July, 1940. From then until 1945, he served with the Division of Naval Intelligence, in Washington, D. C. During the last three years of the war, he was head of the Eastern European Section. He received two commendations and was awarded the Order of Polonia Restituta in the degree of Officer's Cross.

Promoted Lieutenant Colonel and appointed Naval Attaché to the U. S. Embassy in Warsaw, Wylie went overseas the day after V-J Day, arriving in Poland September 7.

On the night of December 26, 1945, he was travelling by motor, with a Polish chauffeur, ten miles from Stettin. The region had been heavily damaged: Stettin itself still had no telephone or telegraph services. At about ten o'clock they reached a bridge across the Oder. The night was very dark. A light rain was falling and fog was rising from the river, at that point a large stream, and still unfrozen. The approach to the bridge was partly blocked by a tank barrier, and, although Wylie and the chauffeur did not know it, the middle span of the bridge had been blown up. Wylie got out of the car to lead the way; as they reached the middle of the bridge, fifty feet above the water, he suddenly disappeared from view. The chauffeur, having stopped the car, was getting out of it, when he heard a splash, followed by cries for help and the Polish word *predko* (hurry); after returning to the river bank and there seeing no sign of Wylie, he went back one kilometer to a village and returned to the bridge with some Polish soldiers who searched for two hours. An investigation, in which the Assistant U. S. Military Attaché participated, resulted in the acceptance of the chauffeur's account as true, but a thorough search for Wylie's body was unsuccessful. Nearly two years later, a Polish tugboat captain belatedly reported that he had found a body in the Oder near the bridge early in 1946, and that he had buried it. The body was recovered and taken to Belgium, where positive identification was made December 18, 1947.



LESLIE BRADFORD COOPER

1912

Leslie Cooper, a pioneer in the development of autogiros and helicopters, was in the Air Corps in both world wars, a First Lieutenant in the first, and a Lieutenant Colonel in the second.

The son of Rear Admiral P. H. Cooper, Commandant at Annapolis, he came to St. Paul's in 1907, left at the end of his Fifth Form year, entered Princeton at 17, and graduated there in 1915. He served seventeen months in France as a pilot in the First Pursuit Group of the 27th Aero Squadron, took part in the Saint-Mihiel and Argonne-Meuse offensives and was cited for gallantry near Verdun: single-handed he attacked and destroyed an enemy observation balloon, 900 feet from the ground, moored, and defended by a ring of machine guns, which riddled his plane.

Between his discharge in 1919 and his return to military service at the age of 48, Cooper was engaged in rotary-wing aviation. He flew nearly three thousand hours as an auto-giro pilot, part of the time in the crop-dusting service of the Department of Agriculture. He was at one time sales manager of the Curtiss-Wright Flying Service, and, at another, of the Fairchild Engine Corporation. For nine years he was Vice President of Giro Associates. His last business connection was with the Kellett Autogiro Company, as engineer and test pilot, as editor of the company's publication, *Kellett News*, and finally with the added duty of organizing and setting up the defense system in the company's plants just before the United States entered the war.

In February, 1942, he was commissioned Major and assigned to

duty at Wright Field with the A.A.F. Technical Service Command as second in command of the Army's program for developing the helicopter, then still in the experimental stage. Cooper made the first long-distance helicopter flight, tested the new planes in landings on tankers, freighters and ships similarly inaccessible to other aircraft, and helped advance their use in rescue work. In November, 1943, he went to Alaska to test helicopters under conditions of extreme cold. He continued organizing and participating in this experimental work for two and a half years.

Then, in 1944, he was given command of the 5th Aircraft Repair Unit (Floating). Installed on board converted ships, such units were to go to the Pacific to repair and maintain B-29's until equivalent facilities could be set up on shore. Helicopters, as well as boats and "ducks," were to transport men, supplies and parts of planes to and fro between airfield and floating repair shop. Cooper's unit was organized at Brookley Field, Alabama. Just before it was to sail, he went to Philadelphia, said good-bye to members of his family, and started for the ship. On October 18, the plane in which he was a passenger crashed near Pennsville, New Jersey. He and four other Army men were killed.

Besides his lifelong interest in aviation, Cooper had many other interests and pursuits. He wrote verse, he loved hunting and fishing, and he was a very good tennis player, at one time ranking in the second ten in the country. He was keenly aware of the evil that led to the Second World War, and long before Pearl Harbor he wanted his country to take its place on the side of freedom.

Leslie Cooper was married in 1916 to Katharine Trumbull Thomas, who survived him with their two children, Katharine Bradford Cooper (Mrs. William H. Moorehouse), and Leslie Trumbull Cooper, at the time of his father's death a Staff Sergeant in the U.S.A.A.F.