

Notes from William Stewart dated August 19, 1945. Courtesy of Alan Stewart

Sunday 19 August 1945

Since Trinity a lot has happened which has had world wide importance so I have decided to put some of my experiences down in writing.

After returning from Trinity and resting up a bit there was a spell of waiting for decisions and equipment. By the end of the week we were starting to work on the real thing, S site was delivering the HE castings for three charges and I went to work with the new fellows in the group preparing them. By Tuesday the 24th the blocks for the first set were well under way so I transferred over to assembly and the old crew went to work. We had quite a few difficulties but by working well into the night we finished the three gadgets on time Thursday night and set a new assembly record considering the constant inspections that were made. Two of the units were ready for the final work overseas and the third was a dummy pit for them to practice with. Friday morning we left for Albuquerque and arrived there a short while before the units; about 1300 Barney, Herb, and myself went to work loading the units into the pit then helping bomb up the planes. Due to some trouble with one of the bomb releases we had to work until about 2000, the planes were then ready to leave at sunrise the next morning on there way to Destination.

Friday night we all had a party in the Hilton, and what a party... Back on the Hill again we started getting ready for the next shipment and waited for the news. On Saturday, the 28th. we heard that the planes had been ready to go since Wednesday but that the weather was bad and holding them up. By this time we were well on the way with the next lot and getting ready to ship them. Monday morning we were working on the assembly when the news of the first drop came. That assembly was made in record time even though the radios that we soon had kept interrupting the work. By that night we had completed the work and had the batch on the trucks ready to go so held another party.....

The Little Boy was the first dropped but our Fat Man followed it by three days. I was at Trinity at the time of the second drop so I didn't hear of it until later. Since this time we have not had to work very hard and when the news of Japan's willingness to surrender came we were overjoyed, that was what we had been working for and I believe rightly we felt that a good bit of the credit was due to our effects (sic).

There has been a lot of criticism of our work as inhuman., I do not believe this since a continuation of the war would have meant millions more killed, wounded and disabled for life. According to the New York Times the number killed in this war to date has been 14 Million. Our bomb killed thousands at a single moment but, I firmly

believe that many more would have been killed if the war continued in the old method of bombing and fighting to say nothing of the other destruction which would have been inevitable.

As far as this war goes I believe that the Atomic Bomb has been justified; as to future uses I don't know. The present critics will be right if we do not control the future use of this weapon. However, I believe that the possession of this knowledge by the United States will prevent its misuse. We are no Angles (sic) when it comes to international politics but there are sufficient humanitarian forces at work to prevent the use of this bomb for destruction in the future and if it is held as a weapon subject to the use of the World Court it can, and I sincerely hope that it will, prevent any future war. We won the race to perfect it and the other countries who have the tremendous resources of Nature, Scientific knowledge and Engineering skill are no longer in a position to carry out their experiments, therefore if the world exercises the necessary control no one else will be able to perfect this weapon for their future personal gains.

Atomic power at present is not useful for the production of energy for peaceful use, but I have no doubt that the future will bring out methods of using it, probably not for years, tens of years but it is coming. It is now in the state that many inventions were once in . It requires the research and engineering of vast numbers of people, but in the end the "new and radical" means for using it will be found. This will be a direct outgrowth of the present bomb and as such must be considered a benefit of it.