

Impact Statement

John Crittendon, Grade 12.

Mad Jack, 2016.

Pencil and color pencil on paper, 13.5 x 16.5 Inches.

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Unsung Hero: Jack Churchill

Sketching late into the night with tears falling from my eyes, made me reflect on a deep-seated resentment, one I had to come to grips with. A resentment that came from being half-Japanese and half-American, with one part of my heritage destroying the other. First, I drew the American allied side feeling thankful, victorious, and proud. As I approached drawing the Japanese side, I felt depressed by the rejection I faced as a child. Much of my youth was encompassed with teachings from my mother about my Japanese heritage and from what I learned in school from WWII. After many tears and hours drawing, I realized that for the betterment of the world, Japan had to be defeated. What made it so real to me was the fact that my mother's family saw the black clouds, just miles from the explosion in Hiroshima.

Capturing the sense of eternal conflict I faced, I sought to uncover my unsung hero. An unsung hero set apart from typical heroes, not because of his lack of recognition, but his lack of expecting recognition. An unsung hero takes an initiative to do good deeds behind the eyes of his peers, promoting the spread of just actions, and expects nothing I but the betterment of society.

Lieutenant Colonel John Malcolm Thorpe Fleming Churchill's number of battle victories or enemies captured at war didn't inspire me to make my decision. The brute mentality and effort he brought forth on the battlefield as a leader earned my respect as a true inspiration. His bold achievements can be listed but the dedication he led with gave him the name "Mad Jack" from his comrades. For instance, the capturing of 136 Nazi soldiers in a single night raid when casualties were high and all the odds were against him exemplifies the confidence Churchill maintained. Shortly after, Churchill independently captured 42 more Nazi Germans with only the edge of a sword at hand. His unrelenting bravery inspired his own soldiers to follow in his every foot step and go the extra mile. Providing every means to motivate his troops, Churchill even played his bagpipes to rouse his troops before battle. Unfortunately, his triumphs ended as he stood alone on the battlefield refusing to surrender, playing his bagpipes as a grenade knocked him unconscious. Captured, Churchill soon escaped through the night after being spared, once earning the respect of the German captain. Never forgotten, Churchill later returned the favor, saving the German captain from execution. The insane behavior of Churchill, none the less, was rooted by dignity and honor. Courage, confidence, dignity, and honor all contributed to Churchill's heroic attributes, but his most substantial attribute was his influence. Mad Jack planted a want, a will in his troops to push forward and protect the freedom for the world. To his troops, Churchill wasn't only a leader but a true hero.

Mad Jack, Villain? Deciding to write about him made me deal with many emotions. First, much anger and compassion for my Japanese ancestors came to mind. Finally, through understanding and forgiveness, I chose Mad Jack as my unsung hero, though he was part of

the war effort against half of my ancestors, he was just the type of person the war needed. His courage and unselfish dedication to saving the free world was instrumental in bringing the war to an end. An instant connection was made with Lt. Col. Churchill as his involvement in WWII related to my Japanese-American heritage. Thus, I envisioned a personal approach with a realistic but abstract view to my life with my unsung hero. Using heavy contrast and detailing in my piece, I pictured myself there, a soldier, uplifted by the sounds Churchill produced from his bagpipes, but torn apart by the suffering that my other half faced because of war. Then, the explosion of the atomic bomb wreaked havoc on my world, instantly destroying everything. Consequently, that explosion united a world at peace once again, ending the reign of terror. Therefore, emphasizing the explosion in color provided a vital focal point in my composition along with the fading of the soldier representing the end of war between the Japanese. Understanding the outcome of WWII, I expressed Churchill playing in triumph but regretfully turning his face away from the bomb and innocent family. Likewise, I conveyed the pain and sorrow I felt through the faces of the mother and child. Ultimately, the two pieces of tape resemble my Japanese mother and American father who bonded my life as a whole, as well as, my work of art.