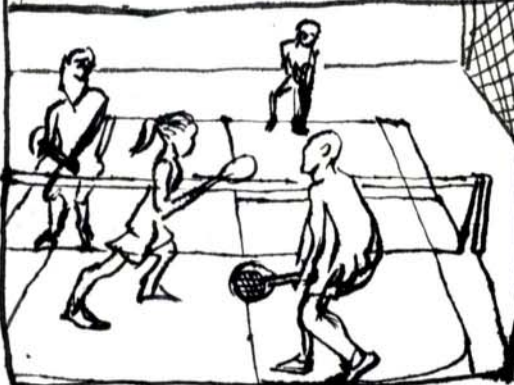


I think the other player was Errol Flynn.



They asked my father to join them for a set.



What did your dad make of them?

He thought they were very dowdy.



Being in Hollywood in the early 40's...



...must have been amazing!

Yes, but we are jumping ahead.



I want to tell the story...



...about Pierre's army life.



My father was a brilliant soldier.



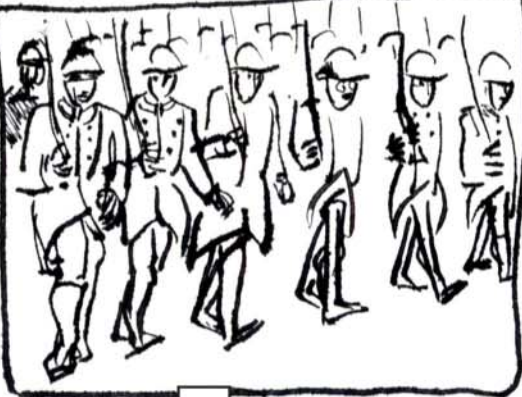
He started his army career as a first lieutenant.



The French Army...



...in the late 30's...



...was considered the strongest army in the world.





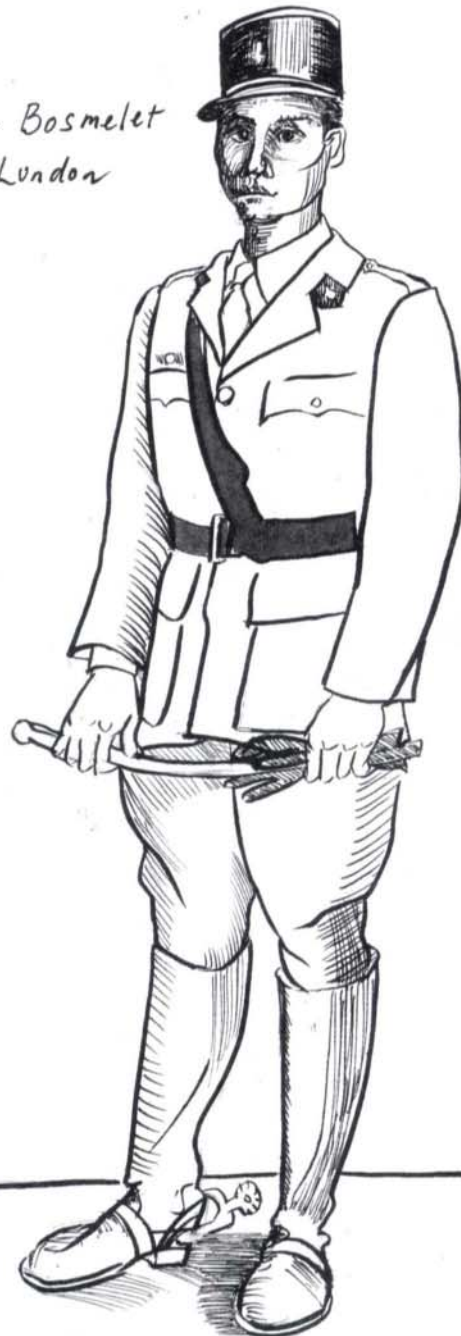


Captain N'Tchorere

Both Pierre & Diana wrote about the famous Captain N'Tchorere. Diana thought he was a "Witch Doctor", Pierre admired his understanding of the tribal complication among the Senegalese troops and that he could communicate fluently with almost all of the African troops because he could speak so many different languages.

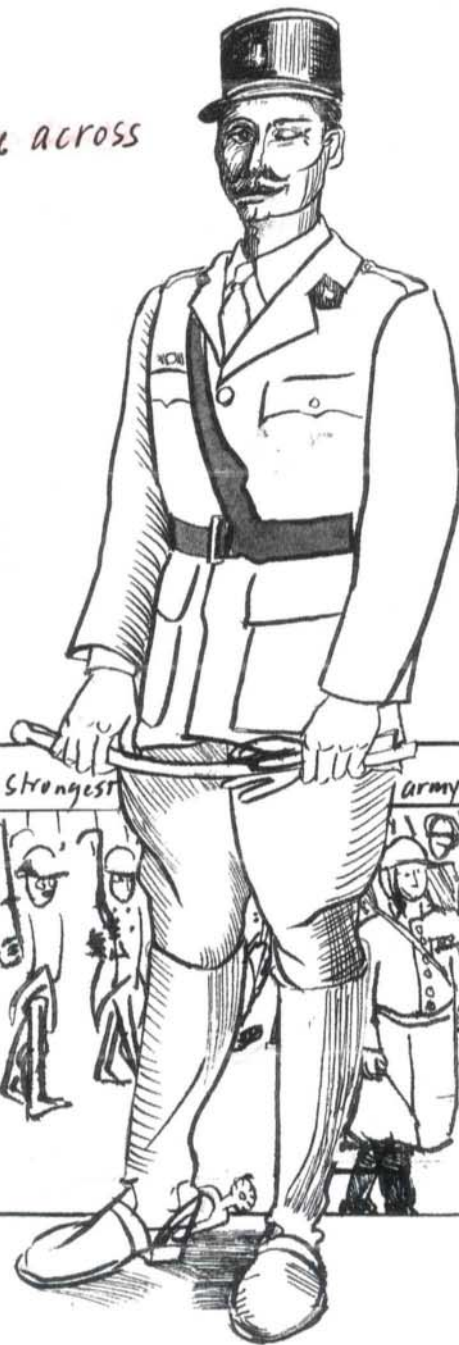


Captain Pierre Soyer de Bosmelet
in his uniform London
Nov 1941



During the first World War the Senegalese troops from French Colonial West Africa fought bravely against the Germans. Those who survived went back and became chiefs of their villages and were seen as great heroes of both France & Africa.

I feel my Grandfather winking at me across time, wanting me to tell this story, Just the way I see it.



My Uncle took up the story. I want to tell you about Pierre's army life.





Both Pierre and Diana were very fond of Lama Sountoura, Pierre's orderly.



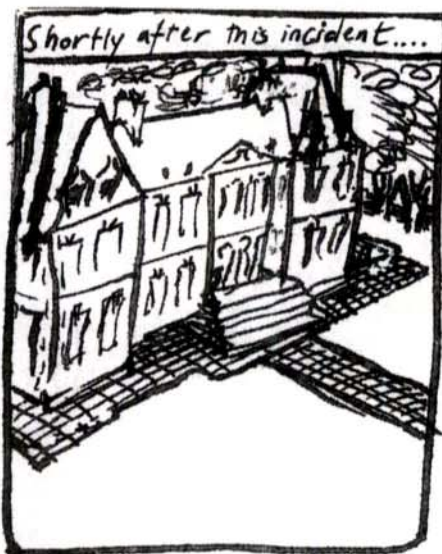
Diana taught Sountoura how to iron. He was so eager to help. He even practiced on her underwear.

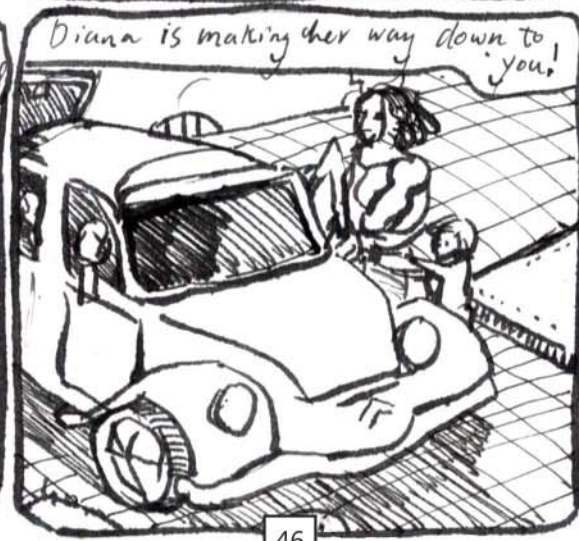


The Battle of Airaines
The French army although strong fell into German possession pitifully quickly.

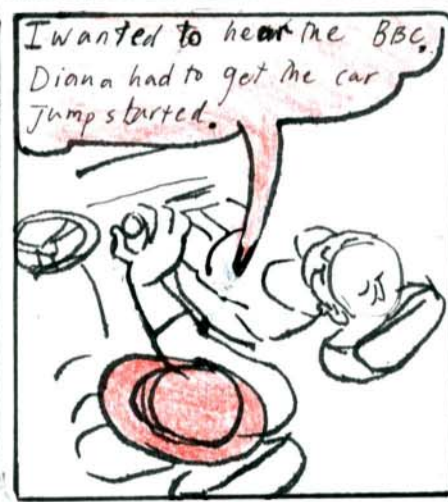
Many of the black soldiers died on the battle field others were shot rather than taken prisoners by the Germans.













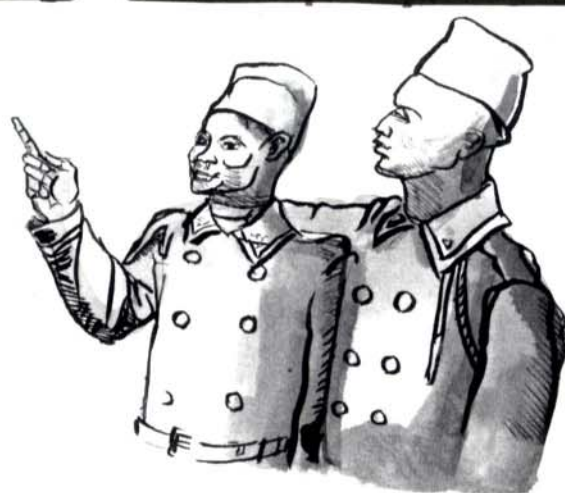


The last two months had been so intense. Pierre had been focused on looking after his men. Making sure they were ready to fight. He had difficulty feeding them. His Senegalese Troops needed Kola nuts.



My father had a secret source. A chemist in Paris who had many.

The chemist did a roaring trade in Heroin. Pierre only used the contact once, as within two months the African soldiers were wiped out.





All the armies of the Second World War were reacting to the mistakes that each had made during the 1914-1918 war. Instead of battalions being thrown in front of machine-guns, armies were divided into small units and given orders to hold a bridge or village until reinforcements could arrive. Pierre thrived in this thrilling environment.



He did things he did not enjoy. He had to get his men to bury a dead horse, and he lived in cramped quarters with his babies' dirty diapers. On the whole, however, the war was the most exciting time of his life.

