

# Five Years for Freedom

*... My Memories of the U.S. Army Air Corps,  
1940-1945*



**Staff Sergeant William J. Bodenschatz**

**384TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)**

**443RD SUB-DEPOT GROUND SUPPORT**

**WORLD WAR II**

## Five Years for Freedom

*My Memories of the U.S. Army Air Corps, 1940-1945*



### ON THE COVER

"Mad Money II 25838," a B-17 of the 384th Bomb Group (H), was lost to flak on Jan. 4, 1944, on the 384th's 50th mission, a bombing run to Kiel., Germany.

Of the crew of 10, one fell from the plane and survived by parachute, the remaining nine belly-landed in Denmark and set the plane on fire.

All were captured by the Germans, becoming POWs for the remainder of the war.

### The badges:

- |               |                                  |
|---------------|----------------------------------|
| Top left:     | US Army Air Force                |
| Top right:    | 8th Air Corps, U.S. Army         |
| Center:       | 384th Bombardment Group (H)      |
| Bottom left:  | 443rd Sub-Depot of the 384th (H) |
| Bottom right: | 6th Service Squadron             |



### Staff Sergeant William J. Bodenschatz

Sent home with a Valentine's Day Card to V. Lucile George, 1944

Photo by Helen M. Speight, Kettering, England

## **Five Years for Freedom**

... *My Memories of the U.S. Army Air Corps, 1940-1945*

Copyright © 2019 Rick Bodenschatz

Edited by Rick Bodenschatz

With Kim de Bourbon, contributing editor.

Front cover design by Rick Bodenschatz

Book design by BGA Studios | bgastudios.com

*Home for Graphic Imagination*

*All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, scanned, stored in a retrieval system, or distributed in any printed or electronic form or by any other means without written permission from the editor or the author and successors.*

For information, contact the editor at rick-boden@msn.com

Printed by Gillespie Printing, Inc.  
709 Roble Road  
Allentown, PA 18109 USA  
Gillespieprinting.com

ISBN 978-1-64516-460-9

Library of Congress Control Number 2019900771

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

## **About These Memories**

How does a surviving physical collection of memories get preserved and shared with all generations of an extended family, especially from such an important time in history?

This book is intended to share the box of photos, documents and memorabilia kept all of these years, so the memories can be appreciated by everyone. The short storyline is meant to fill in the gaps, and pass along some verbal stories told by Dad over the years.

This is not meant to be a history of the war or of the Army Air Corp. Your independent readings can satisfy that thirst. In a sense, this is a diary of Dad's five years of experiences for us all to cherish, and anyone else who is interested in the Greatest Generation's service to their country.

*Rick Bodenschatz, Son*

## **Editor's Note:**

*Where possible, this story is told in the first person by S/Sgt. Bodenschatz, through memories he shared and his written notes.*

*All photo captions are as he recorded on the back of each photo.*

*Many of the details originate from Bill's military diary, "My Life in the Service."*

**Contents**

Forward.....ii

My Time Line.....iii

Commendations.....iv

1. Early Influences..... 1

2. Enlistment..... 11

3. Langley Field, Virginia ..... 13

4. The War ..... 27

5. Muroc Air Field, California ..... 29

6. Wilmington Air Base, North Carolina ..... 41

7. Hattiesburg Air Field, Mississippi ..... 61

8. It's Time to Go..... 77

9. Grafton Underwood, England ..... 79

10. Combat ..... 91

11. The Plane News ..... 105

12. Rest & Relaxation ..... 109

13. Victory..... 119

14. Moving to France ..... 127

15. Buddies, Friends and Comrades ..... 129

16. Going Home and Discharge..... 133

17. After the War ..... 143

18. Leftovers ..... 157

19. Postscript..... 159

20. Debriefing..... 165

Sources..... 166

## Forward

I was told that I was born on January 14, 1917 at home, located at 602 Willow Street, Lilly, Pennsylvania. My parents were Michael and Annie (Beck) Bodenschatz. Lilly is a small town in the Alleghany Mountains located between Altoona and Johnstown. Coal mining was the major industry of the day, supporting a population that climbed at one point to almost 3,500 people within the town and Washington Township surrounding Lilly. The bustling four tracks of the Pennsylvania Railroad (Philadelphia to Chicago) ran through the town.

My father worked for the railroad as a ticket and mail agent, shifting location assignments as demands of the Great Depression changed. I had seven older sisters and one younger brother.

My youth was uneventful, doing all the normal things- attending school on a regular basis, helping with the family garden especially during the Great Depression, playing baseball, setting pins at the bowling alley and any other odd-jobs I could find.

A bad case of pneumonia curtailed my activities and delayed life for a while, as I was hospitalized, even having to have a rib removed to help with the breathing and to aid in the battle. I missed a year of school and it prevented further involvement in physical activities, so I stayed involved by being the Student Manager of our high school football team. I gradually brought my physical capabilities back to normal.

But enough, since I understand my family story is to be told another day. Instead, I am focusing on my military years in this book. I have fond memories of my time in the military from 1940 to 1945. Many friends and acquaintances were lost by accident from the very beginning and while we were together with the 384th Bomb Group in England during World War II. And being away from home "for the duration" caused some sad days. Fortunately, my positive experiences and friendships helped to counterbalance the tough times, even into the later years.

This book contains my collection of photographs, documents and personal memorabilia of my military years. Pre-and Post-military materials are shared for a better understanding of how and why those transitions occurred, as related to my five years of service. My brief narratives provide further explanations in support of my collection while additional information through editing has been provided for overview. Although I departed life in 2004, I tell my story through my "collection" and stories shared with my family.

*Bill*

## My Time Line

July, 1936	Civilian Military Training Camp, Fort Meade, MD
October 29, 1940	My enlistment into the U.S. Army Air Corps
October 29, 1940 - December 12, 1941	Stationed at Langley Field, Virginia
December 7, 1941	Japanese Attack of Pearl Harbor
December 8, 2018	Ordered for Immediate Departure to the West Coast (December 13th)
December 18, 1941	Arrived Muroc Air Base, California
February 16, 1942	Arrived Wilmington Air Base, North Carolina
August 19, 1942	Arrived Hattiesburg Army Air Field, MS
December 25, 1942	Departed Hattiesburg for Camp Kilmer, NJ
December 27, 1942	Arrived Camp Kilmer, NJ
January 5, 1943	Departed Camp Kilmer to Brooklyn, NY
January 6, 1943	Departed Brooklyn for England
January 14, 1943	Arrived Gurick, Scotland
January 16, 1943	Arrived Station 106, 384th Bomb Group Grafton Underwood, Northamptonshire, England
May 8, 1945	VE Day (Victory in Europe), Nazi's Surrender!
June 14, 1945	Departed Grafton Underwood for Istres, France Arrived in 3 hours, 25 minutes on a B-17
Mid-October, 1945	Return to England for transport to the States
October 20, 1945	Departed England for Home, arrived Oct. 27
October 31, 1945	Honorable Discharged

## I. Early Influences

### Commendations

Marksman Medal  
Civilian Military Training Camp, July, 1936  
Distinguished Unit Badge  
30 Caliber Rifle Marksman 1942  
Good Conduct Medal  
American Defense Service Medal  
American Theater Service Medal  
European Africa Middle East Service Medal  
**Service Stripes (Bars):**  
One year- December 7, 1941  
Three Years- October 24, 1943  
Five Years- Jan. 5, 1945  
Six Years- August, 1945  
384th Bombardment Group (H) Presidential Citation November 20 1944  
European Theater of Operations Ribbon, January 5, 1945

### Promotions

Private First Class, January 1, 1941  
Corporal, May 1, 1942  
Sergeant, November 15, 1942  
Staff Sergeant, January 29, 1943

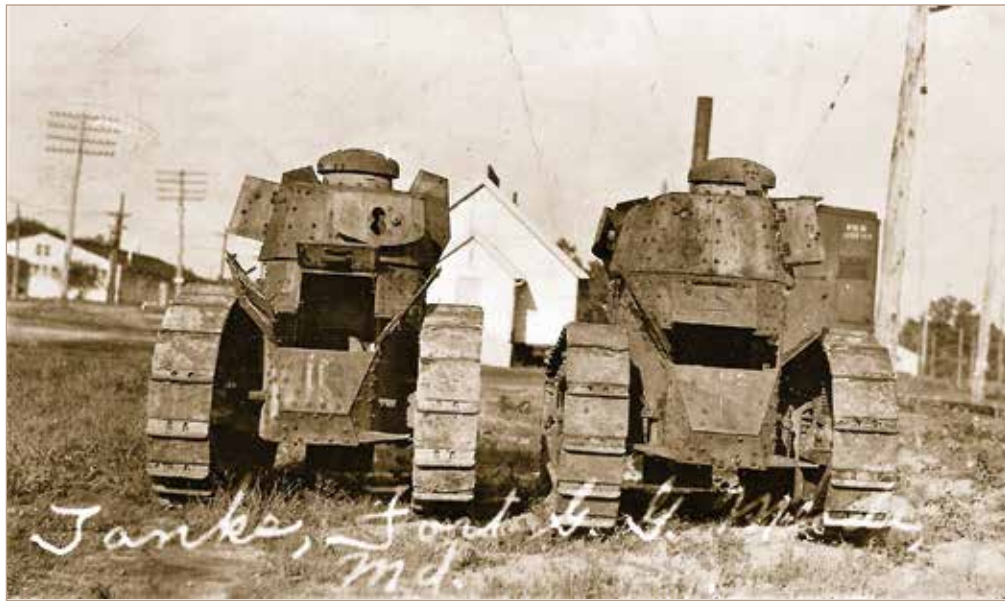
Childhood and adolescence life are influenced by so many factors ... family, school, church, community, social life and global affairs. As a teenager during the 1930s I was tuned into the radio — music, baseball games and the news. My father was an avid reader of the daily newspaper. Knowledge and impressions grew with me.

Our community and its social conscience had an impact. Celebrations on Decoration Day, 4th of July and Armistice Day formed a patriotic sense of pride and duty in our young lives. I watched Civil War, Spanish American War and The Great War veterans march in our local parades. And I heard my uncles and neighbors speak of the trenches and heroics of their experiences in Europe. With the simple, small town life of the 1920s and 1930s, it was not difficult to be influenced by service to our country.

We all remember the less than easy life during the Great Depression. One respite was the Civilian Military Training Camps held annually at about 50 military posts around the country. Each summer for one month, male youths were able to obtain basic military training to experience military life without any further obligations for duty. My good friend, Paul Dougherty, inspired me when he sent this photo and a postcard to me.



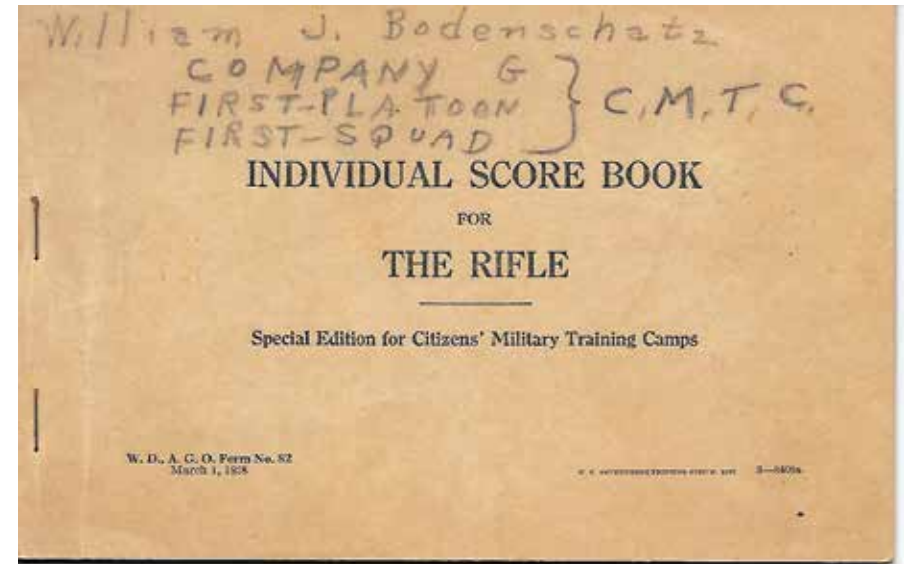
Paul Dougherty (center X) July 1935,  
Civilian Military Training Camp, Fort Meade, MD



Postcard from Paul Dougherty at Civilian Military Training Camp, Fort Mead, MD



Message side of postcard from Paul Dougherty, Fort Meade, MD July 16, 1935



### A Major Step

Wow! A month learning to be a soldier. Machine gun company!

Since Paul said he liked "it a good deal" and "Boy, this is the life," I couldn't miss a chance like this compared to the Depression. And Paul could show me the ropes to get enlisted for the summer of 1936.

So, I gave it a shot, and the next summer I was off to Fort Meade. I learned a lot, and about myself, too.

Here are some of my memories.

"Individual Score Book for the Rifle" cover, above, and back cover, right



200 and 300 yards, Slow Fire Recording Sheet

200 YARDS	PLACE MEADE	DATE 7/27/36	HOUR 3:15			
SLOW FIRE	RIFLE NO 327054	ZERO WINDAGE 0				
	AMMUNITION 30/30	POSITION PRONE				
WIND NONE MILES		OCLOCK				
LIGHT CLEAR		WEATHER LIGHT				
No	ELEV	W.G.	WIND V.D.	CALL	VAL	REMARKS.
1				o	4	
2				o	0	
3				o	3	
4				o	4	
5				o	4	
6				o		
7				o		
8				o		
9				o		
10				o		
SCORE 15					CORRECT ELEV.	

3-8408

200 and 300 yards, Slow Fire Recording Sheet

200 YARDS	PLACE MEADE	DATE 7/28/36	HOUR 2:45			
SLOW FIRE	RIFLE NO 130794	ZERO WINDAGE 0				
	AMMUNITION 30/30	POSITION SITTING				
WIND NONE MILES		OCLOCK				
LIGHT MEDIUM		WEATHER CLOUDY				
No	ELEV	W.G.	WIND V.D.	CALL	VAL	REMARKS.
1				o	3	
2				o	3	
3				o	4	
4				o	4	
5				o	4	
6				o		
7				o		
8				o		
9				o		
10				o		
SCORE 18					CORRECT ELEV.	

3-8408

200 and 300 yards, Slow Fire Recording Sheet

200 YARDS	PLACE MEADE	DATE 7/28/36	HOUR 9:30			
SLOW FIRE	RIFLE NO 13145	ZERO WINDAGE 0				
	AMMUNITION 30/30	POSITION PRONE				
WIND NONE MILES		OCLOCK				
LIGHT MEDIUM		WEATHER CLOUDY				
No	ELEV	W.G.	WIND V.D.	CALL	VAL	REMARKS.
1				o	4	
2				o	4	
3				o	4	
4				o	4	
5				o	4	
6				o	4	
7				o	3	
8				o	4	
9				o	4	
10				o	4	
SCORE 39					CORRECT ELEV.	

3-8408





FLASHBACKS

Patrick M. Reynolds

# SUMMER SOLDIERS

THEY LEARNED BASIC MILITARY SUBJECTS AT SUCH PLACES AS CAMP DU PONT, DELAWARE, CAMPS HOWARD, HOYLE, AND MEADE, MARYLAND, AND IN VIRGINIA AT FORTS MYER AND MONROE.

TWO FUTURE PRESIDENTS PARTICIPATED.

EVERY SUMMER FROM 1921 TO 1940 ABOUT 30,000 YOUNG MEN FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY VOLUNTEERED FOR A U.S. ARMY PROGRAM KNOWN AS THE CITIZENS' MILITARY TRAINING CAMPS (CMTC).



COLONEL HARRY TRUMAN WAS A CMTC COMMANDER AT CAMP PIKE, ARKANSAS FOR TWO WEEKS IN 1933.



RONALD REAGAN SIGNED UP FOR CAVALRY TRAINING AT FORT DES MOINES, IOWA IN THE 1930s AND EARNED HIS COMMISSION. LATER HE SAID "IT WAS THE SMARTEST THING I EVER DID"

For more information read *Forgotten Summers—The Story of the Citizens' Military Training Camps, 1921–1940*, a 238-page book available for \$21.45 from the Red Rose Studio, 668 Flintlock Dr., Willow Street, PA 17587 or call toll-free 1-888-839-5673.

I WAS AT FORT MEADE, VA. IN JULY (A MONTH) ~~1936~~ 1936 GOT 36 DOLLARS PAY WON A MARKSMAN MEDAL

Years later, I found this cartoon.

See my handwritten notes on it.

# MILITARY TRAINING CERTIFICATE



## Citizens' Military Training Camps

TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS, GREETING:

KNOW YE, THAT RODINSKATZ, WM. J.

HAS ATTENDED THE BASIC COURSE OF INSTRUCTION,

INFANTRY ARM, AT THE CITIZENS' MILITARY TRAINING

CAMP HELD UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE WAR DEPARTMENT OF THE UNITED STATES

AT FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, MARYLAND

FROM JULY EIGHTH TO AUGUST SIXTH, ONE THOUSAND

NINE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SIX

GIVEN AT FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, MD. THIS SIXTH

DAY OF AUGUST, IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND

NINE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SIX

REMARKS: FOR RETURN TO NEXT HIGHER COURSE

*Edgar H. Myer*

W. D., A. G. O. Form No. 124  
May 1, 1931

2-423

COLONEL, 34th INFANTRY,  
COMMANDING

Military Training Certificate, Side 1

Keep this Certificate and present it whenever you seek employment. It is valuable as a personal record and is evidence of your Military and Citizenship Training. In case you join any of the Military forces of the United States, show it to each Commanding Officer who may be placed over you.

## CERTIFICATE OF TRAINING

I hereby certify that the candidate whose name appears on this certificate has been given training and instruction in the BASIC Course, INFANTRY Arm, at this camp and

~~has~~ satisfactorily completed the course.

He is recommended

**FOR RETURN TO NEXT HIGHER COURSE**

He ~~does~~ possess the physical, moral, and general qualifications for appointment in the Officers' Reserve Corps as prescribed in paragraph 23, AR 140-5, and ~~is~~ <sup>is not</sup> recommended for examination for appointment as prescribed in the appropriate Army Regulations (AR 140-22 to 140-38, incl.).

He is entitled to exemption from the ability test and examination in the following subjects: Military Discipline, Court-martial and Customs of the Service; Interior Guard Duty; Military Sanitation and First Aid; ~~Loss of Artillery Ammunition and Weapons and Matériel.~~

Remarks:

*(Other regulations in case candidate is a member of the Regular Army, National Guard, Related Reserve Corps, or Reserve Officer)*

*Training Camp. Show workmanship and other qualifications, if any. Show property lost, if any.*

*Edgar H. Myer*

COLONEL, 34th INFANTRY,  
COMMANDING

*\*Strike out word or words not applicable.*

*(Applies to graduates of the Basic Course only.)*

**Only young men in good physical condition and of good moral character are accepted for attendance at Citizens' Military Training Camps.**

Those who complete the course have received the typhoid inoculation and smallpox vaccination.

A young man who attends a Citizens' Military Training Camp renders voluntary service to the United States Government and this certificate is evidence of his patriotism and loyalty.

Graduates of the Red, White, and Blue Courses are entitled to wear the insignia for service.

Citizens' Military Training Camps are conducted by the War Department under the National Defense Act. This is the basis for which authorities all military training. The Government pays the expenses of those attending, consisting of transportation to and from camp, uniforms, food, medical attendance and other necessary expenses.

The object of these camps is to bring together young men of high type from all sections of the country on a common basis of equality and under the most favorable conditions of outdoor life, to stimulate and practice citizenship, patriotism, and Americanism, and, through expert physical training, athletic contests, and military instruction, to teach the young men individually, and bring them to realize their obligations to their country.

There are four (4) courses of instruction: Basic, Red, White, and Blue. Each course lasts 10 days and only one course can be taken in any calendar year. No education for future service in any component of the Army of the United States entitles a citizen to attendance at any course.

Following are descriptions of the various courses:

1. The BASIC COURSE.—For physically fit male citizens of the United States, 17 to 24 years of age. Previous military training not required. Applicants must possess average general intelligence, be able to read and write English, and be of good moral character. This course provides preliminary military training, including physical development, drill, and company drill, rifle marksmanship, first aid, camp mechanics, personal hygiene, military courtesy, teaching of citizenship, and studies in citizenship. Those taking this course will be given an opportunity to qualify for the next higher, or Red Course.

2. The RED COURSE.—For physically fit male citizens of the United States, 17 to 24 years of age. Applicants must be graduates of the Basic Course or have had military training equivalent thereto, must possess average general intelligence, be able to read and write English, and be of good moral character. This course provides training in different arms of the Army: Infantry, Field Artillery, Cavalry, Coast Artillery Corps, and Signal Corps. Advanced instruction in the subjects covered in the Basic Course is included. Those who take this course will be given the opportunity to qualify in the same arm for the next higher, or White Course.

3. The WHITE COURSE.—For physically fit male citizens of the United States, 17 to 24 years of age, and selected men of the Army of the United States. Applicants must have a grade-school education or its equivalent, possess qualities of leadership, and be of good moral character. This course provides training in different arms of the Army: Infantry, Field Artillery, Cavalry, Coast Artillery Corps, and Signal Corps, for the purpose of qualifying candidates for commission and noncommissioned grades. This course is open to candidates who have completed the Red Course and who have been recommended to pass the White Course, to selected citizens who have had military training equivalent to the Red Course, and to selected military men of the Army of the United States.

Those who attend will be given the further opportunity to qualify in the same arm for the next higher, or Blue Course, but it will be required that they pass, or show that they later will pass, the mental and physical qualifications to become officers in the Officers' Reserve Corps. This requirement will be fully explained to all candidates before entering the White Course.

4. The BLUE COURSE.—Age limits, 19 to 29. Qualifications for admission are as follows: Applicants must be warrant officers, selected men, or selected civilian male citizens who are physically fit and who have completed the White Course or have had military training equivalent thereto. Applicants must have not less than a completed high-school education or its equivalent and, for technical arms, must have the necessary technical education. They must also possess the personality, experience, tact, bearing, and general adaptability which will fit them for further training to be officers of the Officers' Reserve Corps.

Applicants from warrant officers and selected men must receive the approval of immediate commanding officers.

Note.—Graduation from the Blue Course does not at itself confer legal eligibility for appointment in the Officers' Reserve Corps. Candidates for appointment in the Infantry, Field Artillery, Cavalry, and Coast Artillery branches of the Officers' Reserve Corps must at time of appointment be either warrant officers or selected men of the Regular Army or Related Reserve Corps.

The applicant's preference for training in Infantry, Field Artillery, Cavalry, Coast Artillery Corps, and Signal Corps will be granted when such training is available and practicable from an economic and military viewpoint.

Military Training Certificate, Side 2

## Back to the Future

I am breaking ranks from ancient history here for a story closely related to my high school days' experiences in the CMTC.

In 1987, my grandson, Danny Bowman, enlisted in the PA National Guard. He enlisted under a special program while still in high school, after which he immediately did his basic training. In return for his commitment for service, the U.S. Government paid for a good part of his college education.

Dan went into accounting and eventually became involved in finance, while continuing his service in the National Guard as a citizen soldier. When the time came, he re-enlisted; time and time again. For some time, he also served in the U.S. Army Reserves. While in service, he advanced in rank while serving in numerous posts such as planning in Kuwait, and later led a battalion in Iraq.

After starting as a citizen soldier just like me, in 2017 Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Bowman retired from the U.S. Army after 30 years of service.

Staff Sergeant  
William Bodenschatz  
and 2nd Lt. Daniel  
Bowman, 1993.



## 2. Enlistment

After high school graduation, finding a good job was not easy. We were still in the Great Depression. Although there was some improvement for jobs, it was still very tough. Especially in a small, rural town in the mountains. Since the first three choices were to work in the mines, work in the mines or work in the mines and develop lung disease or worse, I looked for other options.

I did consider joining the Army since I had my CMTC training. But it seemed as though the military was continuing its static pace with a lot of isolationism sentiment throughout the country

My sister Alice and her husband, Max "Hutch" Hutchinson, lived in Lewistown, Pennsylvania about 75 miles to the east. Job openings were available there, and she said I could live with her. I was able to land a job at a large food market in Lewistown, named The Giant Store. The company was from Carlisle, PA and this was their second store. They had aggressive plans to build several stores in Pennsylvania. Today, they are the mega-supermarket chain, Giant Food Stores.

By 1939, the world was changing. We heard Hitler invaded Poland on September 1 and the UK declared war on Germany two days later. Over the next year we heard of the British army being thrown out of Europe while Hitler invaded most of Europe and bombed England.

This made us mad, and we saw war coming. So did our government, as it began to ramp up military orders from factories and increase the size of the army and navy. Now a game-changer, events were making it more interesting to become part of the rapidly expanding army. We heard that Congress authorized the expansion of the army air corps combat groups from 29 to 54, and decided in October, 1940 that we should do our duty.

Davey, Bob and I enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps. My official enlistment was October 29, 1940. We were off to the army air corps at Langley Field, Virginia. We had expectations of adventure, fun, hard work, learning trades and war. Little did we know what to expect of the latter.

Published in  
The Sentinel  
Lewistown, PA  
October 24, 1940

### Trio of Store Employees Resigns To Enlist in Air Corps



WILLIAM BRODENSCHATZ



DAVID GOSS



Sentinel Photos and Engravings  
ROBERT KENNEDY

### QUIT POSITIONS AT CALL OF USA

#### Giant Shopping Food Centre Holds Party to Honor Volunteers

The management of the Giant Shopping Food Centre, 102 South Main Street, paid tribute and honored three employees, who have enlisted for the three-year period in the Air Corps of the United States Army, at a dinner Tuesday evening at Hotel Coleman. Twenty guests did full justice to a well rounded meal and bade farewell to their fellow workers.

The three young men who have answered the call of Uncle Sam are: Robert Kennedy, son of Mr. and Mrs. F. K. Kennedy, 728 South Wayne Street, who was graduated in 1937 from Lewistown High School; William Brodenschatz, son of Mr. and Mrs. M. J. Brodenschatz, Lilly, who was graduated in 1937 from his home town high school, and David Goss, son of Mr. and Mrs. William McK. Goss, 402 South Brown Street, who was graduated from Lewistown High School in 1939. William Brodenschatz was the only one who came within the age limit of the present peace-time draft. The others still were outside the draft age, but felt the urge to enlist. Consent of their parents was obtained.

Leonard Rosenblatt, manager of the local store, was in charge of arrangements for the farewell party. The young men are anticipating a call this week to report, as they were notified a week ago that the call would be in about 10 days.

# THE SENTINEL

LEWISTOWN, PA., THURSDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 24, 1940 TW

## 3.

### Langley Field, Virginia

Langley Field was opened in 1916 and is one of the oldest military air operations in the country. Today, it serves tactical fighter groups and a host of other critical operations for the U.S. Air Force, including research and development.

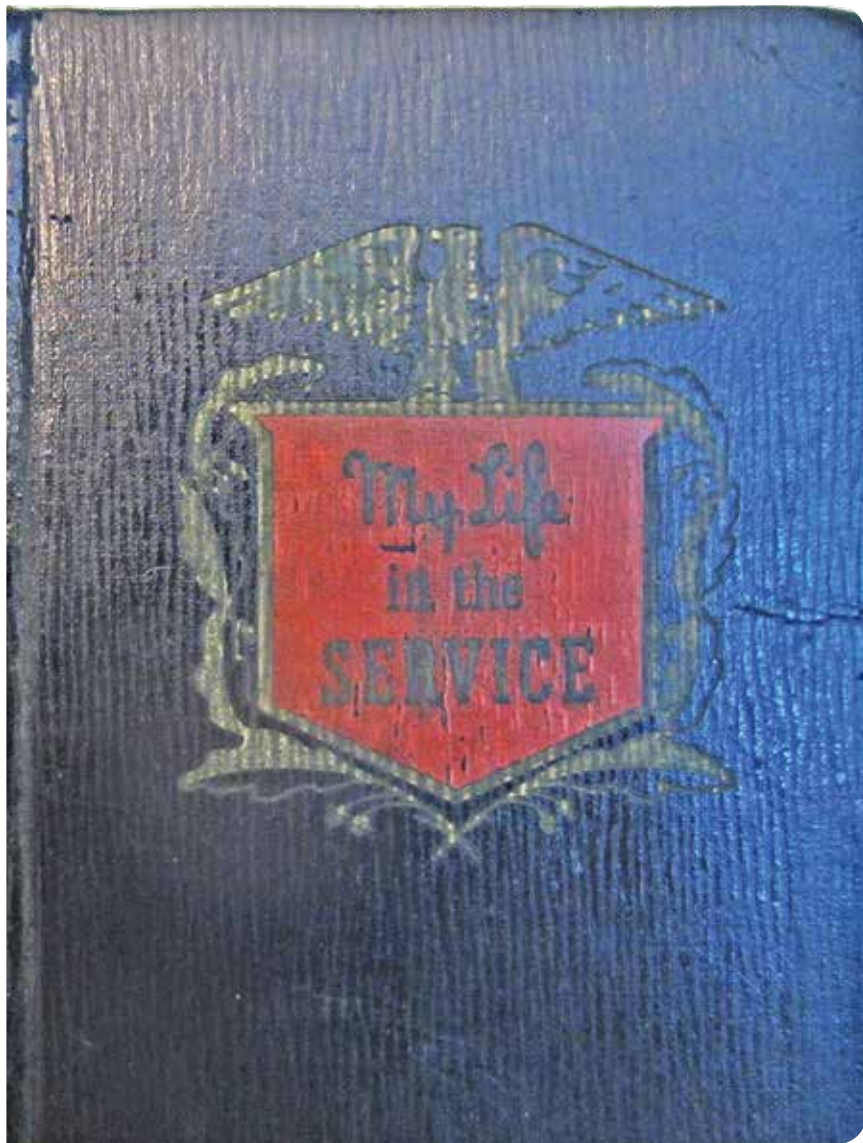
It wasn't long before I was assigned to the 2nd Material Squadron in the 1st Air Base Group at Langley. We were responsible for everything to support maintenance of aircraft and air crews.

The name of our squadron was changed and merged into the Sixth Material Squadron (M-6), then the Sixth Service Squadron. I was transferred from the sixth to the Fifth Material Squadron on July 18th, 1941, but quickly back to the Sixth Service Squadron — the *Fight'n' Sixth*, on August 13th. That's the Army!



My dog tags show my home address, mother's name my religion as Protestant (P) and blood type (O).

While at Langley I decided to keep a record of more important information about my service record. *My Life in the Service* was ideal for me to list so many things. Although it could also serve as a personal diary, I wasn't into that, but making notes of the highlights of my service seemed the right thing to do. I share a lot of that information throughout this story.



WAR DEPARTMENT—Q. M. C. Form 228 (Old No. 531)—Approved April 17, 1923

**UNITED STATES ARMY MOTOR VEHICLE**  
DATE 12/20/40 OPERATOR'S PERMIT No. 336730

QUARTERMASTER CORPS, TRANSPORTATION SERVICE  
MOTOR TRANSPORT DIVISION

THIS PERMIT, WHEN OFFICIALLY STAMPED AND DATED,  
AUTHORIZES THE UNDERSIGNED TO OPERATE U. S. A.  
No. truck OR ANY MOTOR VEHICLE IN THE ARMY.  
to which assigned Wm. J. Bodenschatz  
Wm. J. Bodenschatz  
SIGNATURE OF OPERATOR  
2nd Mat Sq 1st ABGp (R)  
ORGANIZATION  
Langley Field, Va.  
STATION  
Asst. Base M.T.O.  
Any violation of Motor Transport regulations or conviction by any court will be  
entered on reverse side of this card.

I quickly became proficient in operating the big rigs.



Lippincott, Steele & Cramer. Langley Field, August 1941

## Maneuvers

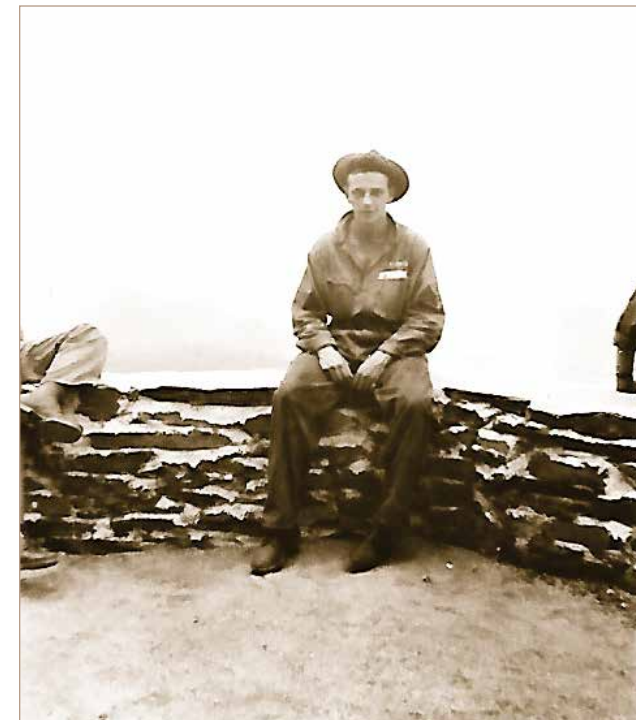
We went on extended 2-month maneuvers from August 15, 1941 through

October 15, 1941. Following is what I recorded in my diary:

- *Trip to Texas and return for fall maneuvers of 1941.*
- *Left Langley Field, VA on Sunday, Aug. 15th, 1941*
- *First stop was at Danville, VA on Aug. 15th, 1941*
- *Second stop was at Bristol, Tenn. on Aug. 16th, 1941*
- *Third stop was at Knoxville, Tenn. on Aug. 17th, 1941*
- *Fourth stop was at Nashville, Tenn. on Aug. 18th, 1941*
- *Fifth stop was at Brownsville, Tenn. on Aug. 19th, 1941*
- *Sixth stop was at Camp Robinson, Little Rock, Ark. on Aug. 20th, 1941*
- *Seventh stop was at Ruston, LA on Aug. 21st, 1941*
- *Eighth stop was at Beaumont Texas on August 22nd, 1941*
- *Arrived at Ellington Field, Houston, Texas on Aug. 23rd, 1941*
- *Maneuvers was from Sept. 1st to the 7th and 14th to the 21st.*
- *Trip from Ellington Field to our home base of Langley, VA.*
- *Left Ellington Field on the morning of Oct. 8th, 1941*
- *First Stop was at Lake Charles, LA. on Oct. 8th, 1941*
- *Second stop was at the Army Recreation Camp, New Orleans, LA on Oct. 9th, 1941*
- *Third stop was at the Army Recreation Camp, Mobile, AL on Oct. 10th, 1941*
- *Fourth stop was at Maxwell Field, Montgomery, AL on Oct. 11th, 1941*
- *Fifth stop was at Camp Wheeler, Macon, GA on Oct. 12, 1941*
- *Sixth stop was at Fort Jackson, Columbia, S.C. on Oct 13th, 1941*
- *Seventh stop was at Raleigh, N. Carolina on October 14th, 1941*
- *Arrived at Langley Field, VA on Oct. 15th, 1941*



Peters, Carter, Hollister, Blue Ridge Mountains Tenn..  
Aug. 1941 en route to Texas



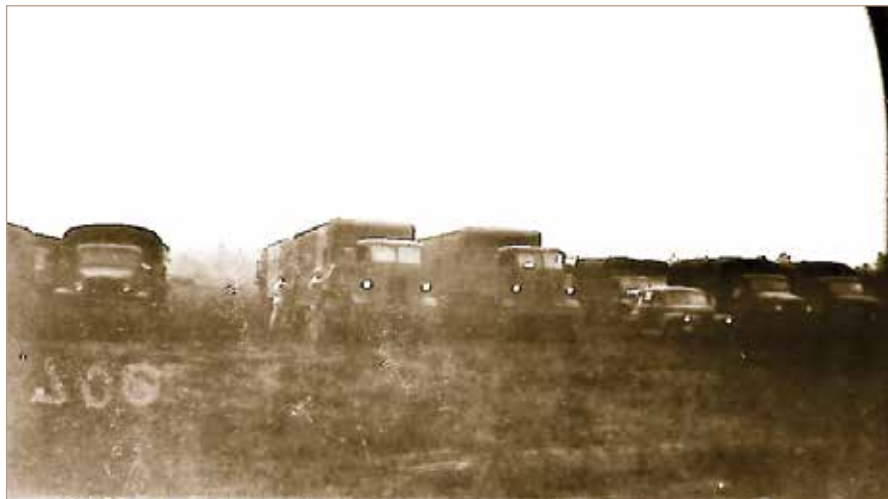
Sgt Faust Blue Ridge Mountains in Tenn. Aug. 1941



Picking cotton Arkansas, Aug. 1941 'The Fight'n 6th'.  
Bill is on left.



Ellington Field, Texas Aug. 1941



Convoy to Ellington Field, Texas 5:30 AM in Beaumont, Texas



Bill at Ellington Field, Texas September, 1941



Jones, Ellington Field, Texas September, 1941



Bill and Jones, Ellington Field, TX Sept. 1941



P-39 and Grumman Navy Fighter, Ellington Field, Texas Sept. 1942



Stewart Beach, Galveston, TX Gulf of Mexico Sept. 1941





Harry Kunkle, Ellington Field, Texas Oct. 1941



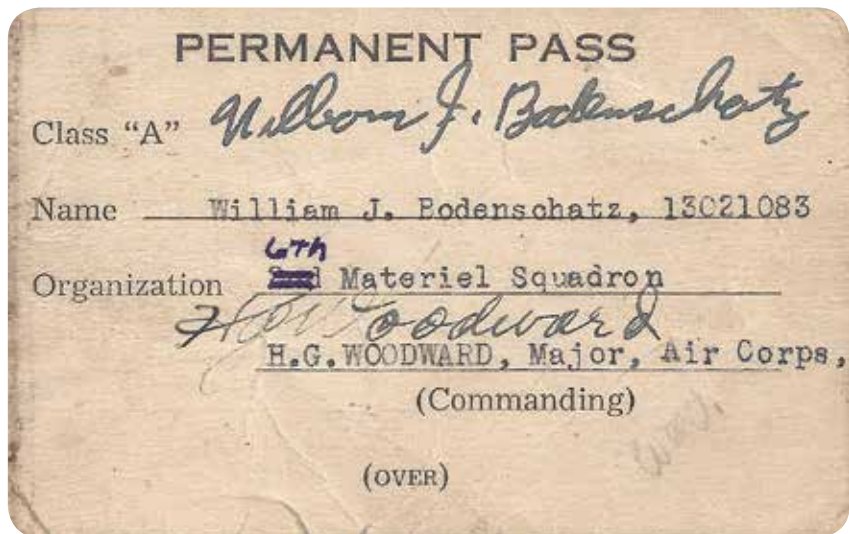
Convoy in Georgia, Oct. 1941



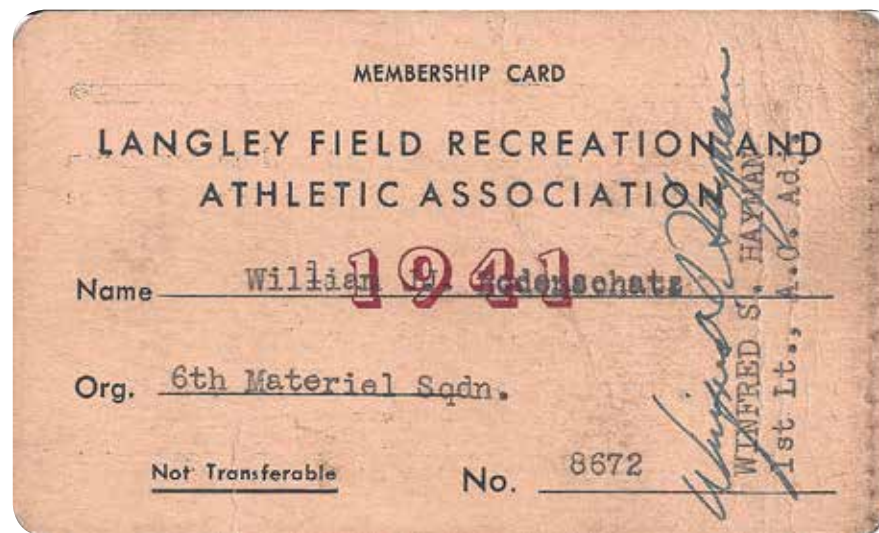
City Park, New Orleans, October



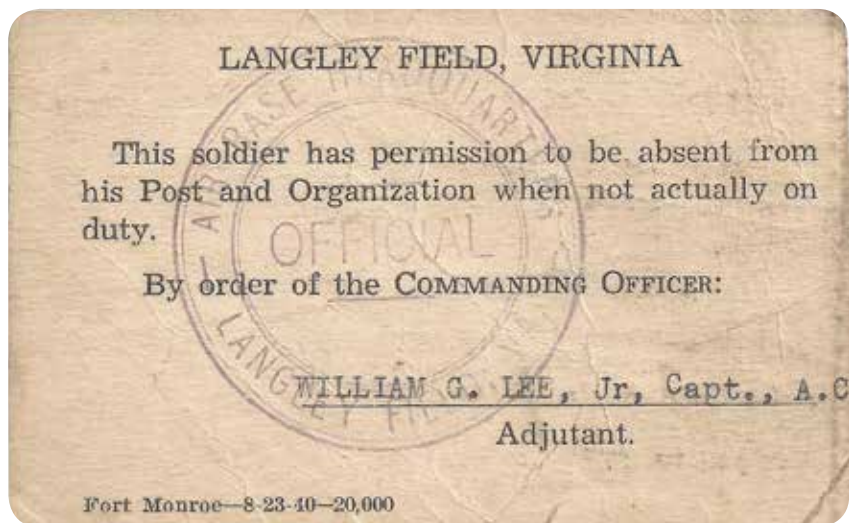
Rebel Wiseman N.C. Oct. 1941



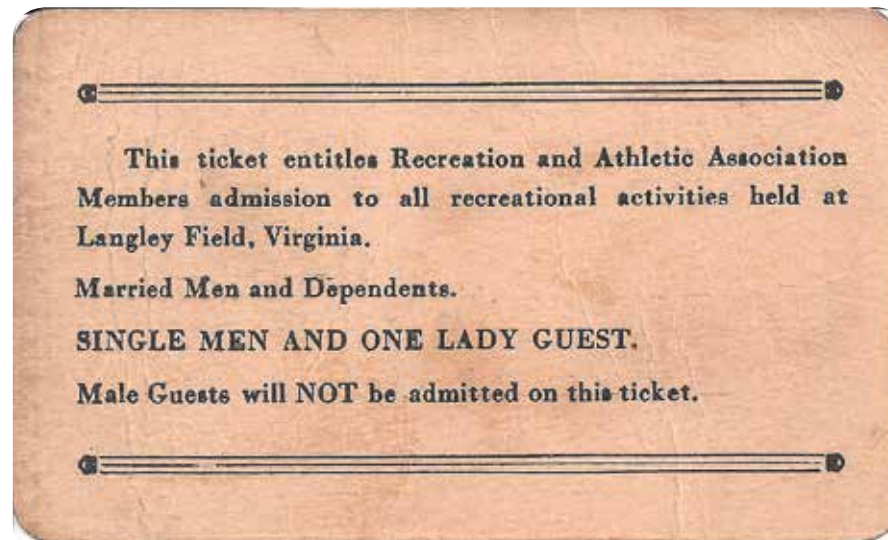
Side 1



Side 1



Side 2

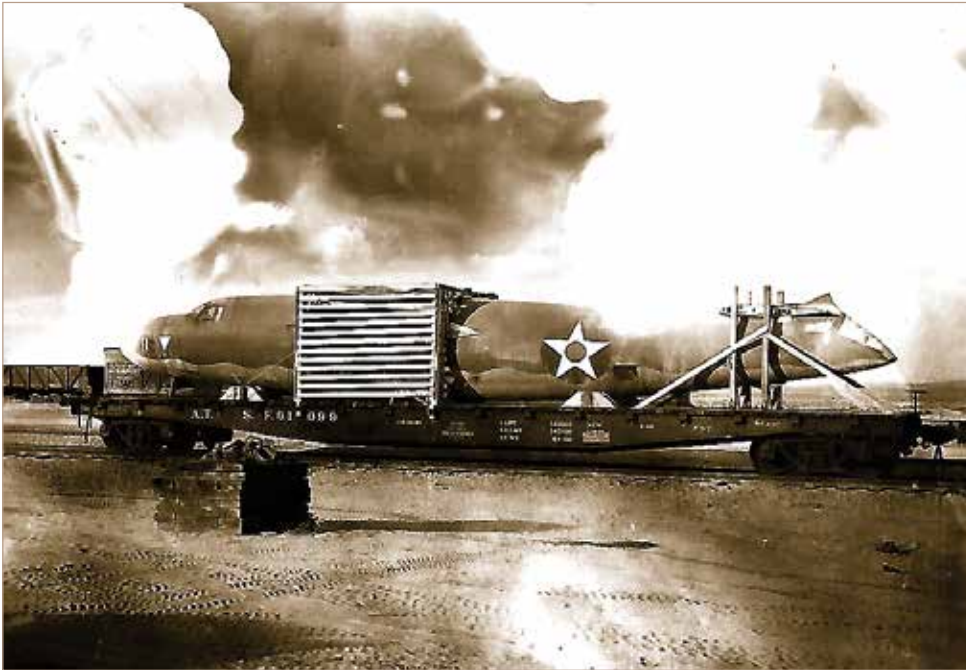


Side 2

Major Woodward issued a permanent pass to me as his driver, so I could drive him to anywhere, anytime when I was not on duty. And for my personal use, too. What an arrangement!

And time for personal R&R

## 4. The War



Rail Transport 1942 to Langley

My first year of service life settled into daily duties on and off base, with some fun in off-duty times. Then the day finally came for which we had been preparing. But the way it arrived caught the entire country by surprise that Sunday afternoon when we heard that the Japanese attacked our naval fleet at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

Since “The Fight’n Sixth” was an experienced service squadron with mobile abilities from recent maneuvers, it made sense that we were deployed to the west coast after Pearl Harbor.

The next day, December 8th, we received orders to pack up for the west coast. We departed on December 13th. There was considerable concern that the mainland could be attacked after losing huge resources in the Pacific Fleet, caused by a very capable enemy. Our air corps planes needed to be in position to defend our country, and the 6th was needed to support them.

I wrote in my diary the cities and states we passed through on the way to California:

*Richmond, VA, Petersburg, VA, Bristol, Tenn, Knoxville, Tenn, Nashville, Tenn, Memphis, Tenn, Little Rock, Ark, Amarillo, Texas, Santa Fe, New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico, Gallup, New Mexico, Winslow, Arizona, Flagstaff, Arizona, and Barstow, California.*

We didn’t waste any time getting to the west coast via train and convoy, arriving at Muroc, California, on December 18, 1941. We were assigned to the 1st Air Base.

## 5. Muroc Air Field, California

Muroc Air Field was built on a farm in the middle of the high Mojave Desert. The dry beds of the desert went on for miles, so it was a natural air field that eventually became the expansive, and famous, Edwards Air Force base.

We found little in the way of comforts, so life in the desert was lived in tents with field kitchens. Few buildings existed to house operations, so we had to make our own work sheds.

While at Muroc I was promoted to Private 1st Class on January 1, 1942. Our mission was to service two bombardment groups.



The Last Outpost, Muroc, Calif., Mojave Desert, Jan. 1942



Getting Base Engineering set up at Muroc Air Base, Calif. 1942



Engineering, Muroc, CA Jan. 1942



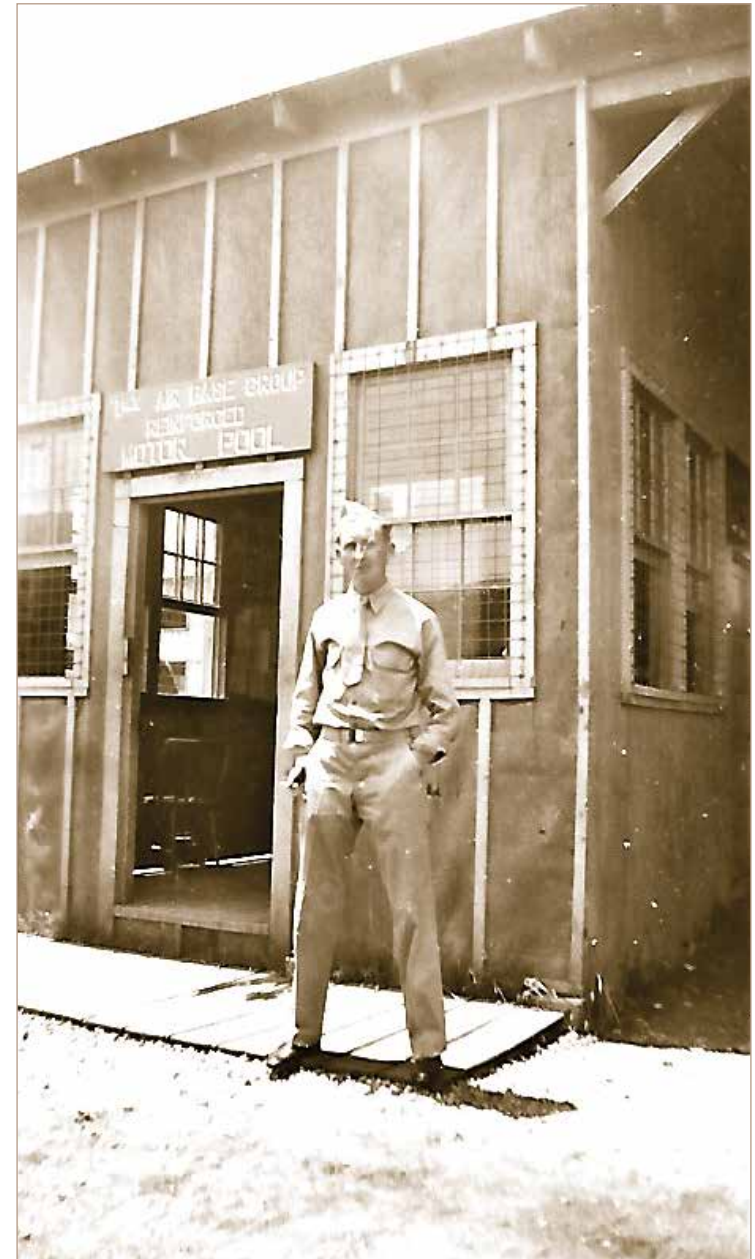
Engineering, Muroc, CA 1942



Muroc, Calif., Post Office, Jan. 1942



Dug Out Muroc, CA Jan. 1942



Bill at 1st Air Base Group Reinforced Motor Pool, Muroc, CA Jan-Feb 1942



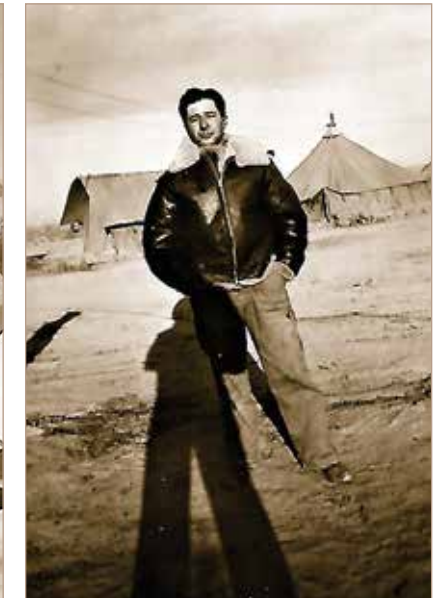
Cpl. Levy, Muroc CA Jan. 1942



Lucas, Dinuble, Hollister, Chapman, Muroc, CA Jan. 1942



Ferguson, Levy, Parator, Faust, Love, Hollister, Muroc, CA Jan. 1942



Sammy Kunkle, Muroc, CA Jan. 1942

Lockheed Hudson A-29,  
Muroc, CA Jan 1942



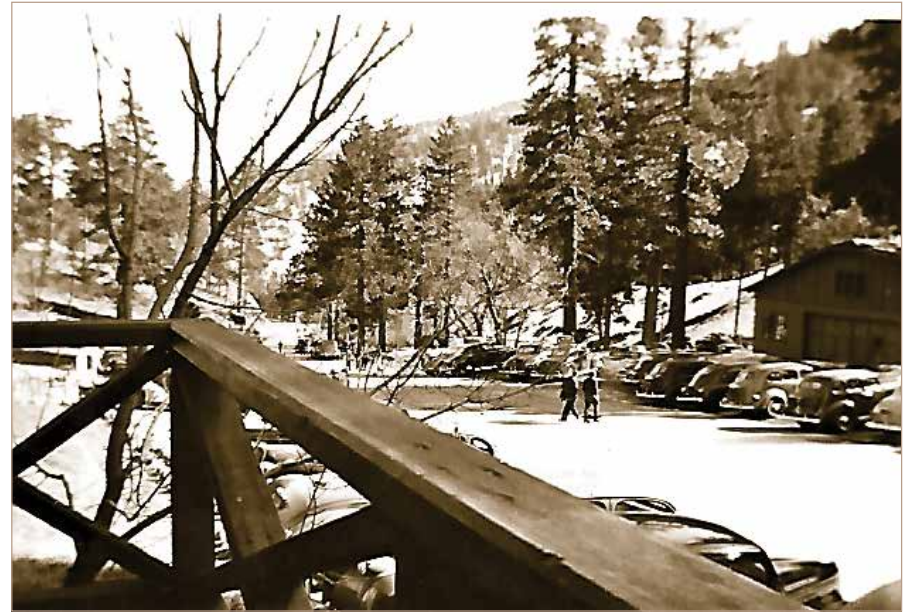
Cpl. Grassel, Muroc 1st Air Base, CA Jan. 1942



Sgt. Faust, Muroc, CA, January 1942



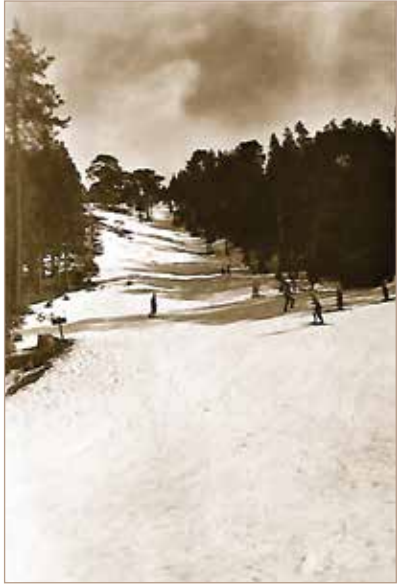
Cpl. Levy and Cpl. Parator, Ace Wright back left, Muroc, CA Jan. 1942



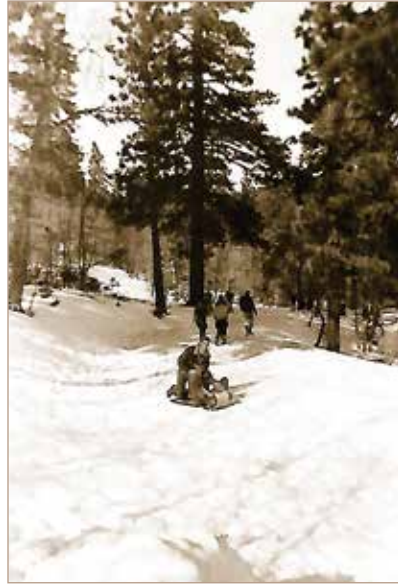
Big Pine Lodge, Great Sierras, CA Jan. 1942



"High Sierras" Calif. Jan. 1942



Ski trail Calif. Jan. 1942



Tobogon slide Calif., Jan. 1942



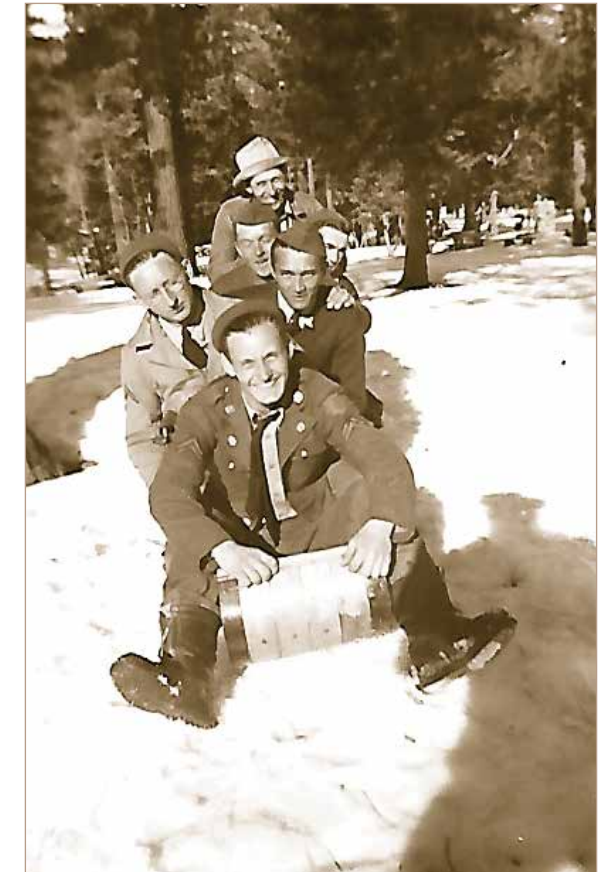
Grassel & Hollister Calif. 1942



Hollister & Kunkle  
Calif. Mts. Jan. 1942



Kunkle, Hugh Watson and Bill,  
Calif. 1942



"The Gang," California 1942 (Bill is second in row)





Frank Wiseman (Rebel)  
and Howard Austin,  
Muroc, CA Feb. 2, 1942



Base Engineering, Muroc, 1st Air Base, Calif. Feb. 1942

### **Off to Yuma**

While at Muroc we took a trip to Yuma, Arizona, with the Mobile Repair Unit. I recorded in my diary the places we stopped on the way to Yuma:

*Riverside, Calif.*

*March Field, Calif.*

*San Bernardino, Calif.*

*The Salton Sea*

*El Centro, Calif.*

*Palm Springs, Calif.*

*Twenty-Nine Palms, Calif.*

While at Yuma I crossed the border to Mexico for a stay of one evening.



P-40 Crackup, Muroc, CA Feb 1942

## The Next Deployment

The top brass was still feeling their way for the strategy and use of the Army Air Corp. What type of units should be used in the Pacific and what types in Europe?

After 2 months in Muroc, we were ordered to Wilmington Air Field, North Carolina, assigned to the 3rd Air Force Service Command.

I noted in my diary that we left Muroc on Feb. 10, 1942. I listed the cities we passed through:

*Flagstaff, Arizona*

*Albuquerque, New Mexico*

*Santa Fe, New Mexico*

*Amarillo, Texas*

*Wichita, Kansas*

*Topeka, Kansas*

*Kansas City, Missouri*

*Hannibal, Missouri*

*Springfield, Illinois*

*Rantoul, Illinois*

*Chicago, Illinois*

*South Bend, Indiana*

*Ft. Wayne, Indiana*

*Dayton, Ohio*

*Cincinnati, Ohio*

*Newport, Ohio*

*Bluefield, KY*

*Huntington, West VA*

*Lynchburg, VA*

*Petersburg, VA*

*Rocky Mount, N. Carolina*

*Arrived at Army Air Base Wilmington, N.C. on Feb. 16th, 1942*

## 6.

### Wilmington Air Base, North Carolina

Wilmington Airport was built in 1929 as a small public airport. In 1940 Wilmington Airport became an emergency landing field for the Civil Aeronautics Authority. Shortly after the beginning of the war, the army took control. It was named Wilmington County Army Air Field and was referred to as Wilmington Air Base.

During our six-month deployment there, we saw Wilmington Air Base grow and grow, with B-25's and fighter groups. But it was still tent city. Our training and support of air operations were getting more serious and diverse.



P-40 and control tower, Wilmington Air Base, Feb. 1942



Our camp, Wilmington Air Base, Feb. 1942

1. To be issued only after strict and practical examination.  
 2. Old original permit to be canceled and new one issued to include any new qualification.  
 3. Rule out and initial types of vehicles operator not qualified to drive.  
 4. List accidents below. If more than three are charged to the permit holder, his driving ability and mental attitude should be investigated before issuance of new permit.

**RECORD OF ACCIDENTS**  
 (List all in which permit holder is involved)

Date ..... (1)  
 Responsibility and cause .....

Estimated cost of damages .....

Officer's initials .....

Date ..... (2)  
 Responsibility and cause .....

Estimated cost of damages .....

Officer's initials .....

Date ..... (3)  
 Responsibility and cause .....

Estimated cost of damages .....

Officer's initials **NONE**

No. 2

**MOTOR VEHICLE OPERATOR'S PERMIT**

394973

.....  
 (ORGANIZATION)

Army Air Base,  
Wilmington, North Car.  
 (STATION)

16-22236

Motor Vehicle Operator's Permit, Wilmington Air Base – Outside (above) and Inside (right)

Q. M. C. Form 289  
 (App. Apr. 17, 1928)  
 (Rev. May 12, 1941)

Wilmington, North Car.  
 (Place)

April 4, 1942

Sgt.  
W. J.  
pl. William J. Bodenschatz, .....  
 (Name, rank and organization)

I CERTIFY THAT William J. Bodenschatz.  
 has demonstrated proficiency in driving (par. 16, A/R 850-15) the types of vehicles listed below as per signed authentication.

TYPE VEHICLE	AUTHENTICATION (Signed by a Commissioned Officer)
<del>Car, half-truck</del>	
Car, passenger	<u>W. D. Smith Jr. 1st Lt. A.C.</u>
<del>Motorcycle</del>	
<del>Tractor, tracked</del>	
<del>Truck, light</del>	
<del>Tractor, crawler</del>	
Tractor <u>wheeled</u>	<u>W. D. Smith Jr.</u>
Tractor-truck (semi-trailer)	<u>W. D. Smith Jr.</u>
Trucks, cargo, 1/2-1 1/2 ton	<u>W. D. Smith Jr.</u>
Trucks, cargo, 2 ton & larger	<u>W. D. Smith Jr.</u>
<del>Vehicle, wheel-to-wheel</del>	

16-22236



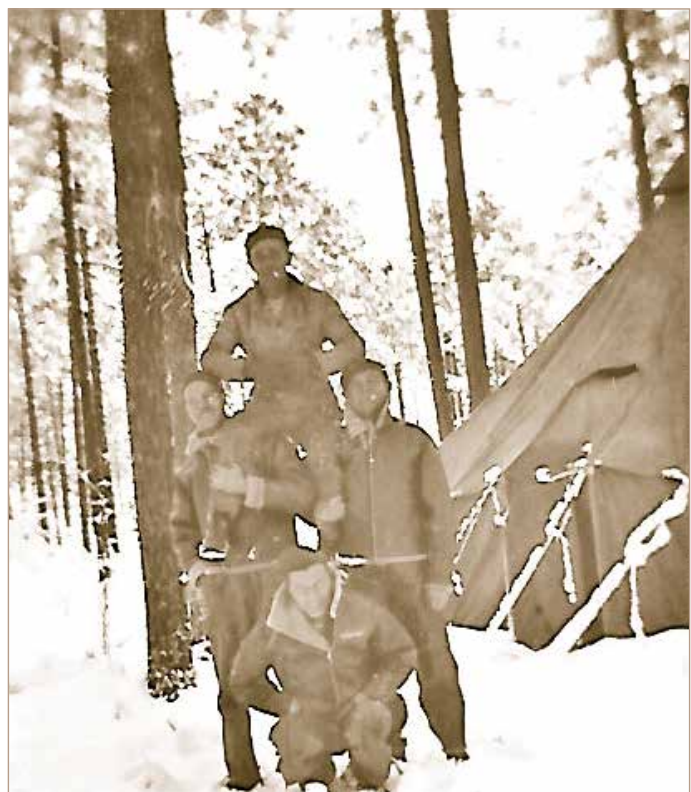
Gardecki on guard duty, Wilmington Air Base, Feb. 1942



Wilmington Air Base February 1942



Sgts Irwin, McClosay & Rachunas, Wilmington Air Base, February 1942



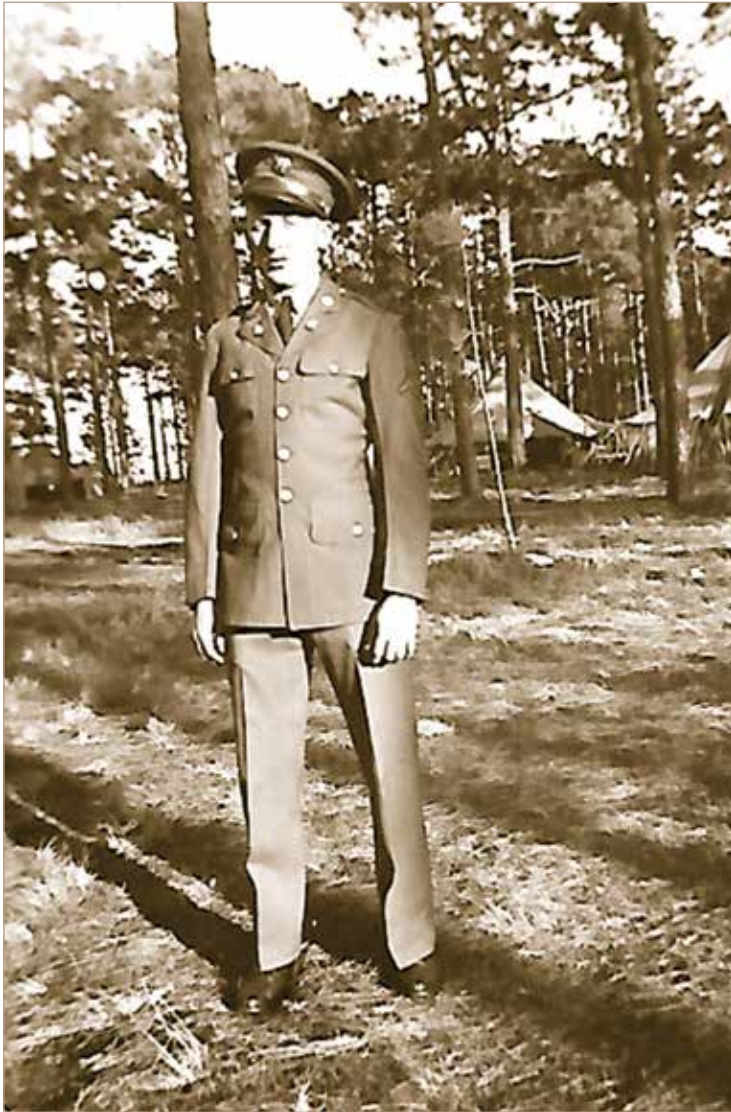
The Welders, McKnight, Klohe, Kish, Kuzak, February 1942



Wilmington Air Base, February 1942



P-39 with Cannon, Wilmington Air Base, March 1942



Bill. I need some sleep. Wilmington Air Base, March 1942



Peters, Siragusa, Hollister and Bill, Wilmington Air Base, March 1942



B-25 Bomber, Wilmington Air Base, March 1942



B-25 Wilmington Army Air Base, (NC) March 21, 1942.  
This crew and plane sunk a German sub off the East Coast.,



Dinuble and Russell Emergency Crew. Wilmington Air Base, March 1942



Bell Airacobra P-39, Wilmington Air Base, March 1942



Furlough or Stinky M-6's Chow Hound, Wilmington Air Base, April 1942



Transient Aircraft, Wilmington Air Base, April 1942



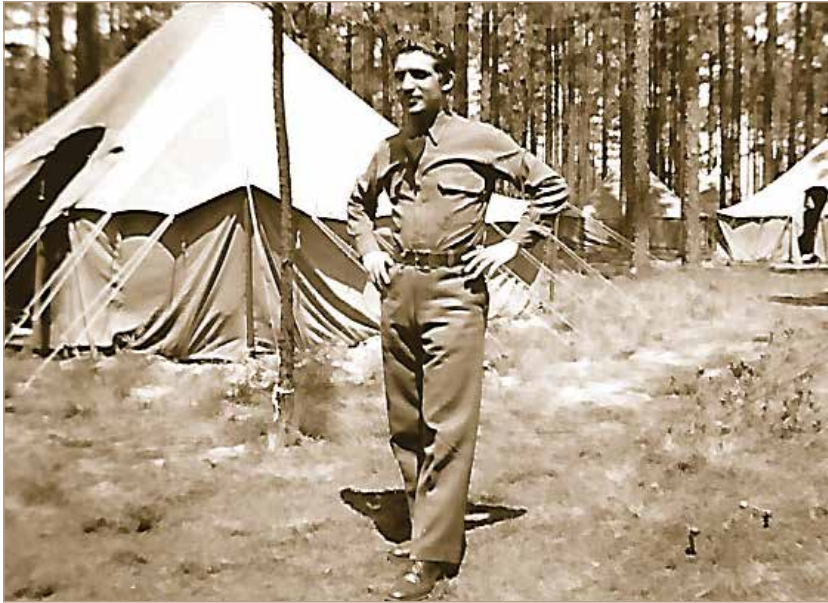
Bill at Wilmington Air Base, April 1942



The Crazy Sixth. Goldberg, Siragusa, Paratobe, Demad, Vuvaklyya, Love, Levy, Bodenschatz, Hollister, Carter. Wilmington Air Base, April 1942



1st Sargent George M. Perry, M-6, Wilmington Army Air Base, April 1942



C.B. Love of Philadelphia, Wilmington Air Base, April 1942



Camp Visitors, Carl and Bobby, Wilmington Air Base, June 24, 1942



Presentation of Soldier's Medal Wilmington Air Base, June 21, 1942



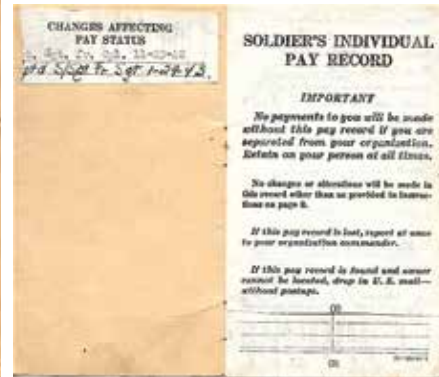
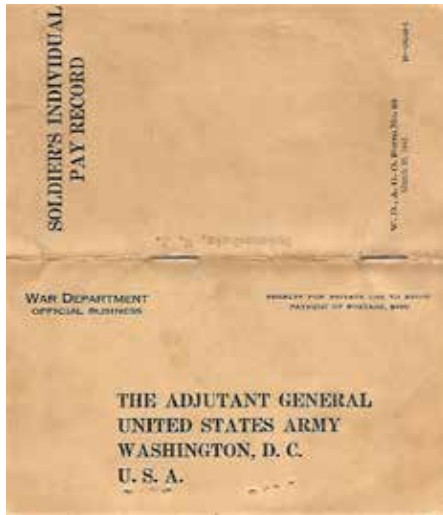
Sixth Service Sqdn, second platoon, Wilmington Air Base, June 21, 1942



The Colors, Cpl. Peters & Pfc. Piper, Honor Guards.  
Pfc. Rice, Color Bearer, Wilmington Air Base, June 21 1942



# My Pay Record



Name William J. Rodenschatz  
 Army serial No. 13021082  
 Grade 5/5gt.  
 Years of service 2  
 Insurance, amount and class \$ 5.000  
 Insurance premium, monthly \$ 3.35  
 Allotments, amount and class \$ 25.00  
 Compulsory allotments, amount and class \$  
 Pay reservation, class A \$  
 Technician grade 5 JAN 43  
 Additional pay for Foreign Service  
 Person to be notified in case of emergency:  
Mrs. Anne Rodenschatz  
 (Name)  
Mother  
 (Relationship, if friend, so state)  
602 Willow St.  
 (Number and street or rural route, if none, so state)  
1111 Pennsylvania  
 (City, town, or post office) (State or country)  
 Date of opening this book July 27/42  
William J. Rodenschatz  
 (Signature of enlisted man. Name, grade, and arm of organization. Do not enter organization)

Date reported or picked up. (Do not enter organization)	Name, grade, and arm or service only of personnel officer or commanding officer
<u>501 Camp 37th SV 28 Oct 43</u>	

**CASUAL DATA**

(3) 10-25141-1

Date from and to	DEDUCTION				Net amount paid	DISBURS	
	Government insurance class	Allotment class E	Compulsory allotment class	Pay reservation class A		Voucher No.	Month
7-1-42							
To 7-31-42	-	20.00	-	-	44.25		JULY
8-1-42							
To 8-31-42	-	35.00	-	-	31.00		AUG
9-1-42							
To 9-30-42	-	35.00	-	-	31.00		SEPT
10-1-42							
To 10-31-42	-	35.00	-	-	31.00		OCT
11-1-42							
To 11-30-42	-	35.00	-	-	37.00		NOV
12-1-42							
To 12-31-42	-	35.00	-	-	46.20		DEC
1-1-43							
To 1-31-43	-	45.00	-	-	78.60		JAN
2-1-43							
To 2-28-43	-	4.00	-	-	40.20		FEB
3-1-43							
To 3-31-43	-	4.00	-	-	70.20		MAR
4-1-43							
To 4-30-43	-	45.00	-	-	70.20		APR
5-1-43							
To 5-31-43	-	45.00	-	-	72.20		MAY
6-1-43							
To 6-30-43	-	6.70	45.00	-	63.50		JUNE

10-25141-1

Date from and to	DEDUCTION				Net amount paid	DISBURS	
	Government insurance class	Allotment class E	Compulsory allotment class	Pay reservation class A		Voucher No.	Month
1-7-43							
To 1-7-43	-	3.35	45.00	-	66.65		JULY
2-8-43							
To 2-8-43	-	3.65	45.00	-	66.65		AUG

10-25141-1

**INSTRUCTIONS GOVERNING THE ISSUANCE  
AND USE OF SOLDIER'S INDIVID-  
UAL PAY RECORD**

*When issued.*—Upon enlistment. Date of issue will be endorsed in soldier's service record on page 13.

*Preparation.*—Carefully complete all entries on page 2.

*Purpose.*—To identify and authorize payments to the soldier to whom issued and is to be kept by him in his personal possession at all times except when in the hands of personnel officers for preparation of pay rolls or vouchers, or verification with service record.

*Payments.*—Casual payments not in excess of amount due computed from the information contained in this book are authorized by AR 345-155, the provisions of which will be fully complied with. Entry of all amounts paid will be made on pages 4, 5, 6, or 7, together with complete information called for thereon. Amount due will be computed from and not in excess of amount earned since the first of the month prior to date shown in "Casual Data" on page 3; and collection will be made for all allotments, insurance premiums, and class A pay reservations. If again paid while absent from his organization, pay will be computed from date of last payment, in which event settlement should bring soldier's account to the end of the month, unless he is being returned to his organization, in which event he may be paid a partial payment, and entry made on pages 4, 5, 6, or 7. In exceptional cases where there is no Army Finance Officer available, this pay record may be presented to Navy, Marine, or State Department disbursing officers for pay.

*Changes.*—Any changes in status affecting the pay due will be entered on page 3.

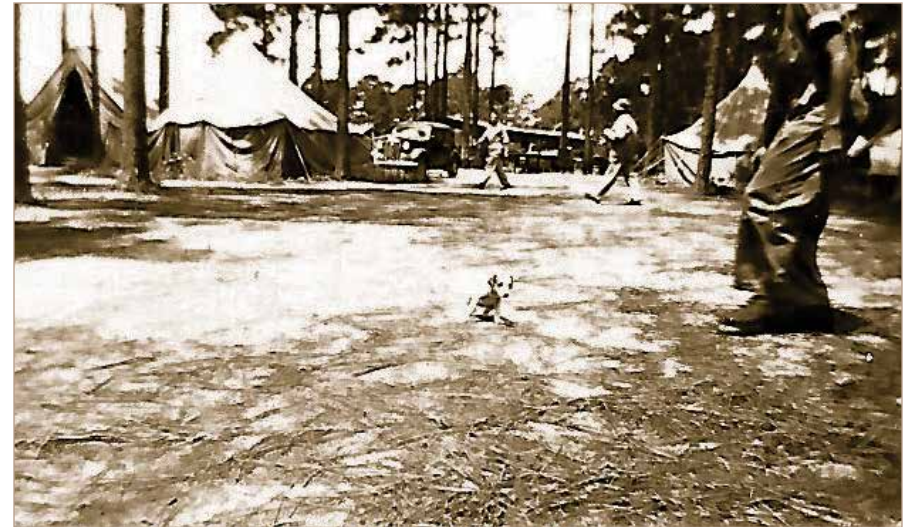
*Lost.*—If this pay record becomes lost, duplicate may be issued only by the personnel officer having custody of soldier's service record.

*All entries in this book will be authenticated by the signature (name, grade, and arm or service only) of commanding officer.*

(8)

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

16-28144-1



Prop Wash, Wilmington Air Base, August 1942





6th Material Squadron when part of the 41st Air Base Group— 1942.  
 Bill is second row from bottom, 7th from left. (circled)

SECOND PLATOON  
 FOURTH SQUAD

Cpl. W. Bodenschatz  
 Squad Leader  
 Cpl. W. Jones  
 Assist. S. Leader  
 Sgt. McMillen  
 Cpl. Cook  
 Cpl. Clark, J.  
 Cpl. Thomas  
 Pvt. Lines  
 Pvt. Keeton  
 Pvt. Lint  
 Pvt. Norris  
 Pvt. Oliver  
 Pvt. Ferguson

Pvt. Brickner  
 Pvt. Kishla  
 PVT. HEINLEBY  
 PVT. KORECAY

While at Wilmington  
 I was promoted  
 to Corporal and  
 became a squad  
 leader.

In August we learned that we were being assigned to Hattiesburg Army Air Field in Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

As written in my diary:

*Trip from Wilmington N. Carolina to Hattiesburg, Miss.  
 Left Wilmington August 17, 1942.*

*Cities and states we passed through enroute to Miss.*

*Florence, S. Carolina  
 Sumter, S. Carolina  
 Atlanta, Georgia  
 Anniston, Alabama  
 Birmingham, Alabama  
 Laurel, Miss.*

*Arrived at Hattiesburg Army Air Base on Aug. 19, 1942.*



Corporal William J. Bodenschatz, mid-1942

## 7.

### Hattiesburg Air Field, Mississippi

Hattiesburg opened in 1930 as a civilian airport. Due to the growing threat of war, the Army Air Corp leased Hattiesburg Airport in 1940, with construction of expanded facilities taking almost all of 1941. It opened on December 8, 1941 as Hattiesburg Army Air Field (the day after Pearl Harbor Day).

Its first assignment was antisubmarine patrols in the Gulf of Mexico. Then B-25s of the 21st Bombardment Group arrived, later replaced by O-29 Vigilants and O-52 Owls. Next, the 27th Bombardment Group and their A-20s arrived when we arrived, in mid-August. They were reforming after being mauled in New Guinea, flying A-24s. The original 27th became ground troops in the Philippines and were all captured, being forced into the Bataan Death March. Of the 880 airmen, less than half survived.

We were part of the Third Air Force, but that meant little as the army was playing a gigantic chess game, moving units all around the country. This was all in preparation for the eventual, gigantic army air corps build-up ... somewhere.

Training was wrenched up. Range target practice, training films and lectures and 15-mile hikes with full field equipment prepared us for Europe.



A-20 light Bombers, Hattiesburg Army Air Base, Sept. 1942



1st Sgt. Joe McAvoy, Hattiesburg Army Air Base, Miss.



Sgt. Nicborowicz from Gallitzin, PA (near Lilly),  
Hattiesburg Army Air Base, Sept., 1942



MSgt. Saunders, SSgt. Sabin, Hattiesburg Army Air Base, Sept. 1942



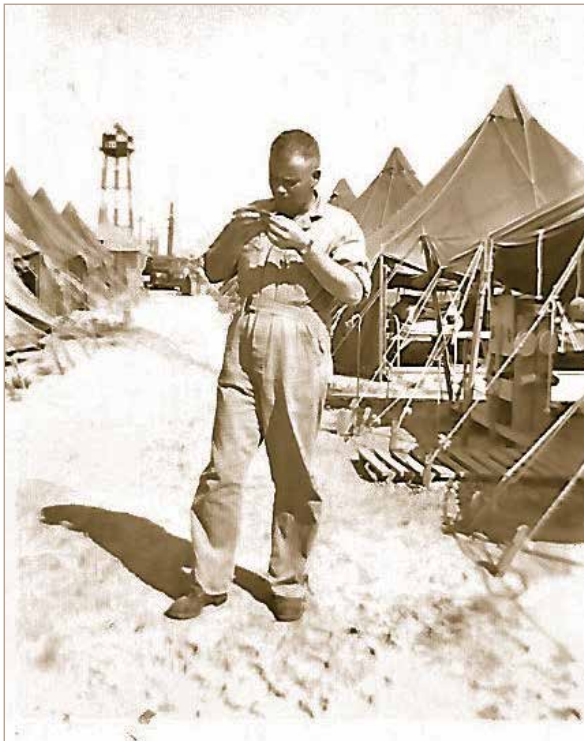
SSgt. Herman Molsky "Fat Boy," Hattiesburg Army Air Base, Sept. 1942



Blackjack Game, Hattiesburg Army Air Base, Sept. 1942



Connelly, Clark and Piper Hattiesburg Army Air Base, September 1942



Sgt. Jess Shelton, Hattiesburg Army Air Base, Sept. 1942



Cpl. Harry Kunkle, Coplay, PA Hattiesburg Army Air Base, Sept. 1942



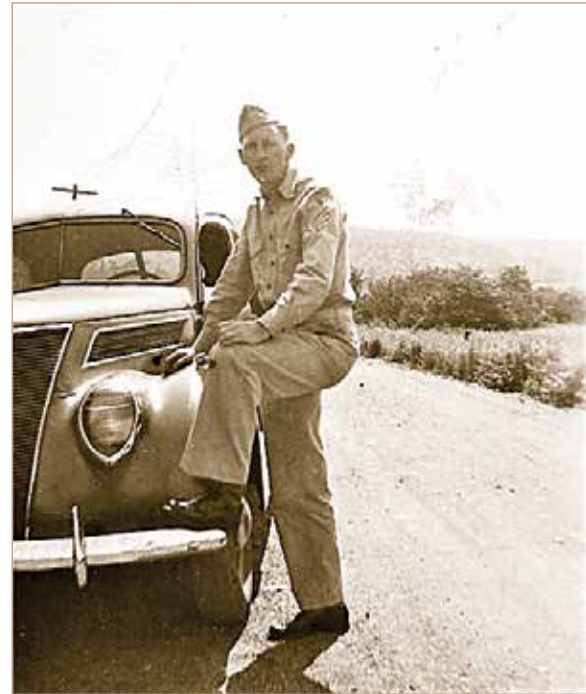
Sgt. Rebel Wiseman, Cpl. Call, Hattiesburg Army Air Base, Sept. 1942



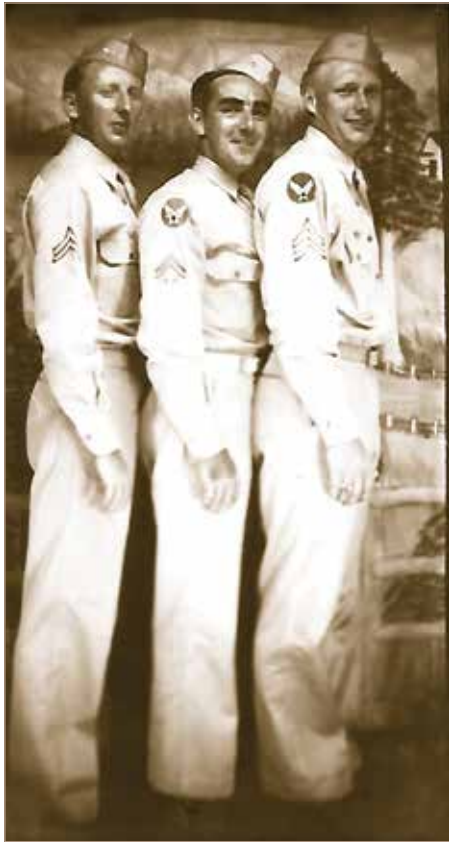
Sgt. McNamee, Cpl. Lyons- Pill Rollers, Hattiesburg Army Air Base, Sept. 1942



Thomas and Don Reed, The Cooks, Hattiesburg Army Air Base, Sept. 1942



Bill, Nov. 1942



Bill, Hollister and Cramer, Hattiesburg Army Air Base, Dec. 12, 1942



Hollister, Cramer and Bill, Hattiesburg Army Air Base, Dec. 12, 1942



Bill, Hattiesburg Army Air Base, Dec. 12, 1942

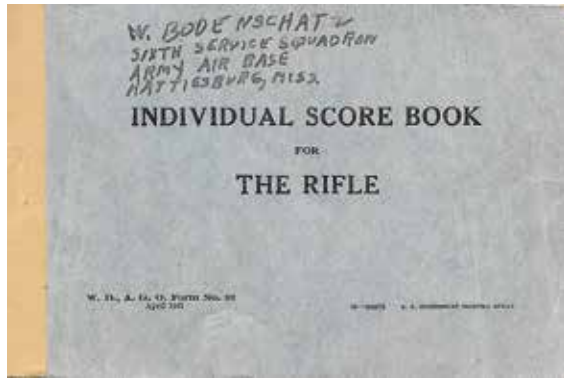


Irish Hollister, Hattiesburg Army Air Base, December 12, 1942



Brickner, Cramer, Bill, Hollister Hattiesburg Army Air Base, December 14, 1942





It was no military secret that we were headed to the action, somewhere.

We knew it was around the corner in November when we all had to qualify for shooting the 30-caliber rifle over at Camp Shelby. I received my Marksman badge.

**My scores:**

200 and 300 yards, Slow Fire Recording Sheet

200 YARDS Place *Camp Shelby* Date *11/19/42* Hour  
Rifle No. *1* Zero Windage  
Slow Fire Ammunition *2* Position *Prone*  
Wind Light Miles Weather  
O'Clock  
No Elev. W. G. Wind V. D. Cal. Val. Remarks

1					5	
2					4	
3					6	
4					4	
5					4	
6					2	
7					3	
8					3	
9					1	
10					4	

SCORE *17* Correct Elev.

Rapid Fire Recording Sheet

200 YARDS Place *Camp Shelby* Date *11/19/42* Hour  
Rifle No. *1* Zero Windage  
Rapid Fire Ammunition *2* Position *Prone*  
5's 3  
4's 7  
3's  
2's  
0's  
Wind Light Miles O'Clock  
Weather

SCORE *43* Correct Elev.

200 and 300 yards, Slow Fire Recording Sheet

200 YARDS Place *Camp Shelby* Date *11/11/42* Hour  
Rifle No. *1* Zero Windage  
Slow Fire Ammunition *2* Position *Prone*  
Wind Light Miles Weather  
O'Clock  
No Elev. W. G. Wind V. D. Cal. Val. Remarks

1					5	
2					4	
3					6	
4					4	
5					4	
6					2	
7					3	
8					3	
9					1	
10					4	

SCORE *39* Correct Elev.

200 and 300 yards, Slow Fire Recording Sheet

200 YARDS Place *Camp Shelby* Date *11/12/42* Hour  
Rifle No. *1* Zero Windage  
Slow Fire Ammunition *2* Position *Prone*  
Wind Light Miles Weather  
O'Clock  
No Elev. W. G. Wind V. D. Cal. Val. Remarks

1					5	
2					4	
3					6	
4					4	
5					4	
6					2	
7					3	
8					3	
9					1	
10					4	

SCORE *31* Correct Elev.

200 and 300 yards, Slow Fire Recording Sheet

200 YARDS Place *Camp Shelby* Date *11/12/42* Hour  
Rifle No. *1* Zero Windage  
Slow Fire Ammunition *2* Position *Prone*  
Wind Light Miles Weather  
O'Clock  
No Elev. W. G. Wind V. D. Cal. Val. Remarks

1					5	
2					4	
3					6	
4					4	
5					4	
6					2	
7					3	
8					3	
9					1	
10					4	

SCORE *20* Correct Elev.

Rapid Fire Recording Sheet

200 YARDS Place *Camp Shelby* Date *11/12/42* Hour  
Rifle No. *1* Zero Windage  
Rapid Fire Ammunition *2* Position *Prone*  
5's 1  
4's  
3's 1  
2's  
0's  
Wind Light Miles O'Clock  
Weather

SCORE *17* Correct Elev.

Rapid Fire Recording Sheet

200 YARDS Place *Camp Shelby* Date *11/19/42* Hour  
Rifle No. *1* Zero Windage  
Rapid Fire Ammunition *2* Position *Prone*  
5's 1111  
4's 11  
3's 11  
2's  
0's  
Wind Light Miles O'Clock  
Weather

SCORE *40* Correct Elev.

Rapid Fire Recording Sheet

200 YARDS Place *Camp Shelby* Date *11/19/42* Hour  
Rifle No. *1* Zero Windage  
Rapid Fire Ammunition *2* Position *Prone*  
5's 1111  
4's 1111  
3's 11  
2's 1  
0's  
Wind Light Miles O'Clock  
Weather

SCORE *39* Correct Elev.

Rapid Fire Recording Sheet

200 YARDS Place *Camp Shelby* Date *11/19/42* Hour  
Rifle No. *1* Zero Windage  
Rapid Fire Ammunition *2* Position *Prone*  
5's 1111  
4's 3  
3's 1  
2's 2  
0's  
Wind Light Miles O'Clock  
Weather

SCORE *30* Correct Elev.

Rapid Fire Recording Sheet

200 YARDS Place *Camp Shelby* Date *11/19/42* Hour  
Rifle No. *1* Zero Windage  
Rapid Fire Ammunition *2* Position *Prone*  
5's 1  
4's 1  
3's 3  
2's 2  
0's  
Wind Light Miles O'Clock  
Weather

SCORE *34* Correct Elev.



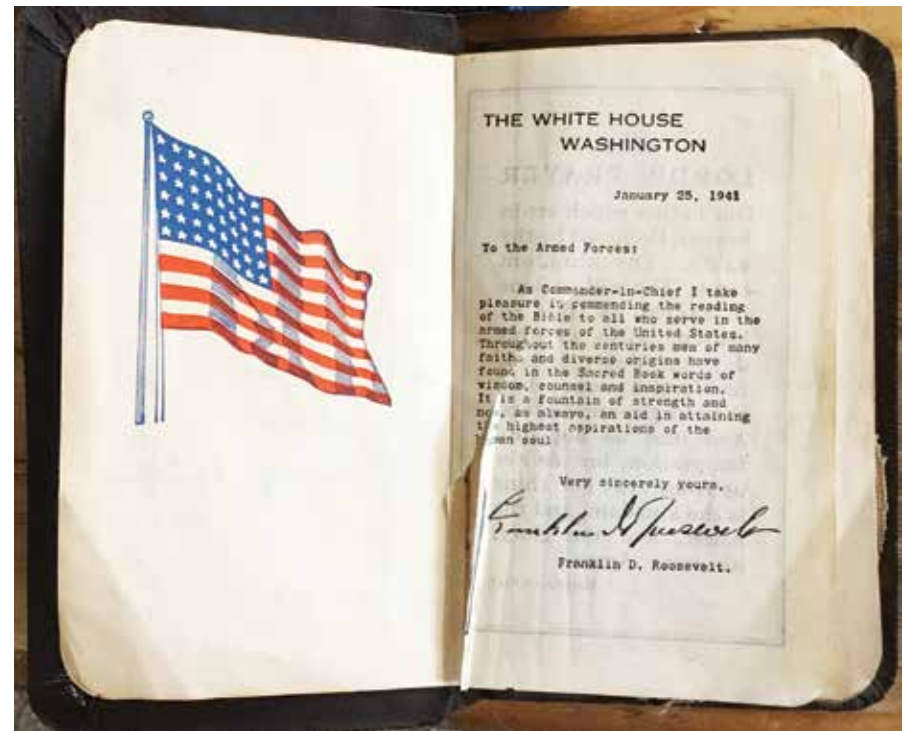
Cramer, Hattiesburg Army Air Base, Dec. 14, 1942



New Testament Bibles were issued to us at Hattiesburg Army Air Base.  
I gave this to my Grandson, Rob. (Rick's son.)  
At right, inside cover and first page, received September 3, 1942



Rear: Bill, Hollister-Pittsburgh, Cramer-Punxsutawney  
Front: Harper-Phila., Brickner-Beaver Falls,  
Hattiesburg Army Air Base, Miss. Dec. 15, 1942



A message from our President in my Bible



Football Game Program, Hattiesburg Army Air Base, October 23, 1942



Harper and Hollister,  
The uncertainty of Miss. Weather, Hattiesburg Army Air Base, December 1942

Name	Position	Number	Hand	Position
Robert B. Sullen	2.	-----	Grimes	1.0.
George B. Miller	2.	-----	Harrison	1.0.
George L. Wheeler	2.	-----	Boomer	1.0.
Barbara M. Gandy	2.	-----	Simons	0.
Thomas M. Miley	2.	-----	Insulin	2.2.
Leon F. Glantz	2.	-----	Stevens	2.2.
Thomas Clark	2.	-----	Wright	2.2.
Richard T. Fitzmorris	2.	-----	Wright	2.2.
Paul F. Rousseau	2.	-----	Wright	2.2.
Edwin Drapp	2.	-----	Dove	2.2.
Donald B. Harris, Jr.	2.	-----	Veterno	2.2.
Marvin A. Thompson	2.	-----	Carson	2.2.
Leona G. Woods	2.	-----	J. Lovell	2.2.
Lal. L. T. Keadling	2.	-----	Boyer	2.2.
Frank L. Johnson	2.	-----	Boyer	2.2.
Harold M. Smith	2.	-----	Boyer	2.2.
Carl L. Thompson	2.	-----	Boyer	2.2.
John E. Johnson	2.	-----	Boyer	2.2.
St. Leo Brown	2.	-----	Boyer	2.2.
Irvin E. Liger	2.	-----	Boyer	2.2.
James Burton	2.	-----	Boyer	2.2.
Paul F. Connolly	2.	-----	Boyer	2.2.
Harry L. Jones	2.	-----	Boyer	2.2.
Magnum G. Burford	2.	-----	Boyer	2.2.
William Taylor	2.	-----	Boyer	2.2.
Robert W. Roberts	2.	-----	Boyer	2.2.
John W. Miller	2.	-----	Boyer	2.2.
Edward Kish	2.	-----	Boyer	2.2.

Coach.....Hollister  
Trainer.....Doc Williams

Inside Football Game Program, Hattiesburg Army Air Base, October 23, 1942



While at Hattiesburg I got an eye exam and new glasses.  
We didn't have a base eye doctor, so they sent me into town.

## 8. It's Time to Go

Over the months, so many units shipped out. We heard rumor after rumor. And we were ready. Then the orders came. The Fight'n 6th was to convoy to New Jersey as our next step, but first all of our equipment was crated and prepared for shipment to . . . somewhere.

We were to leave Hattiesburg Air Base and get to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, as quickly as possible. We did it in a few days.

I wrote the following in my diary:

*Overseas movement. Left Hattiesburg Air Base Dec. 25, 1942. Arrived Camp Kilmer. New Jersey Dec. 27, 1942. I left Camp Kilmer Jan. 5, 1943 Arrived Brooklyn same day. Left Brooklyn Jan. 6, 1943. Arrived Gurick, Scotland Jan. 14, 1943, Left Scotland Jan. 15, 1943. Arrived Grafton-Underwood, England Air Base Jan. 16, 1943 (still here 3/12/45).*

Camp Kilmer was located in central New Jersey. Activated in June 1942, it was a staging area for embarkation of troops from the Port of New York. Troops were quartered there in preparation for transport to the European Theater of Operations.

Eventually, it became the largest processing center for troops heading overseas and returning from World War II, processing over 2.5 million soldiers.

9.  
**Grafton Underwood, Northamptonshire**

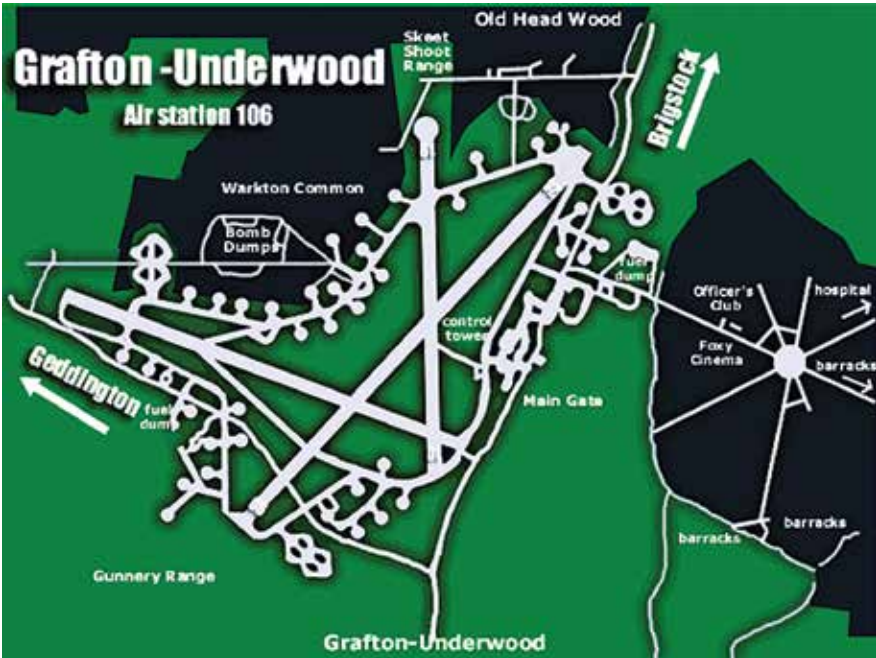
Station 106

Our Motto: "Keep The Show On The Road"

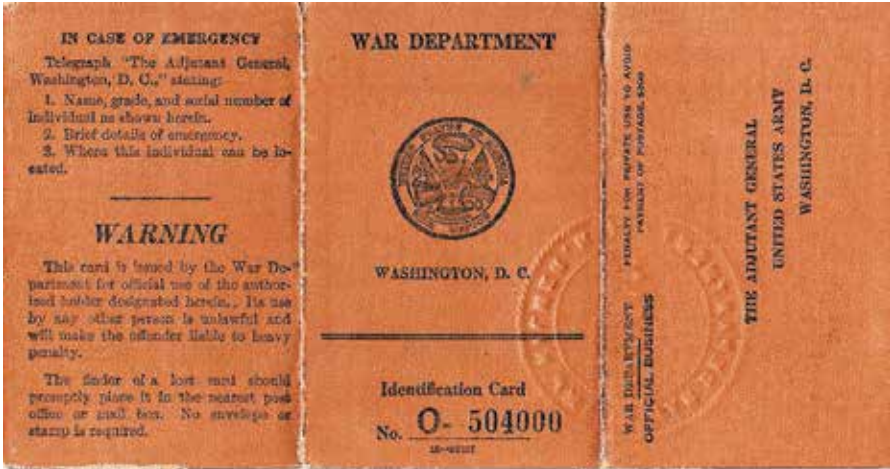


Built as a British airfield in 1941, Grafton Underwood is almost two hours north of London. It covered approximately 500 acres. The 97th(H) and 305th (H) Bomb Groups briefly occupied it during 1942 and early 1943. The 97th launched the first B-17 raid from Grafton Underwood on August 17, 1942. We briefly supported the 305th BG until they left and our birds arrived. The 384th was its longest tenant, occupying the base for over two years.

Remnants and skeletons of the 384th exist today, with part of the main runway sitting as a testimony to the heroes of the 384th. The village of Grafton Underwood has less than 200 residents, and is a picturesque, traditional English village with some homes having thatched roofs.



384th Bomb Group website (384thbombgroup.com)



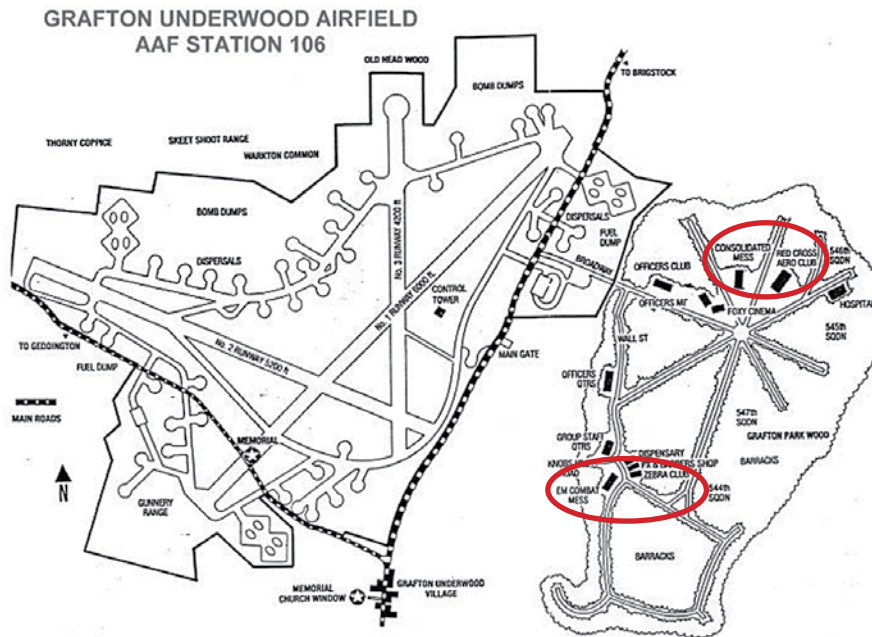
While at Camp Kilmer, we were issued new IDs.



Inside of new trifold ID card



384th Bomb Group website (384thbombgroup.com)



### Setting up Camp

When we arrived, we were told that we would become part of the 384th Bombardment Group (H) of B-17's. With one small problem. No Aircraft. And we had to become proficient in support of the B-17- something fairly new to our squadron. We learned a little in support of the 305th BG. Then our 6th Materials Squadron was renamed the 443rd Sub Depot.

Although our base was only a couple years old, it was never really finished with the final touches necessary to support a large permanent installation, since it had two short-term operational B-17 Bomb Groups in it for just a year or so.

Then we learned to expect our first contingent of B-17s in May. Although it sounded like a lot of time, we soon learned how quickly time was going to pass, to get everything ready to *"Keep the Show on the Road."* During that time, I was promoted to Staff Sergeant and eventually as section leader of the parachute shop.



The first 22 of our B-17s arrived on May 25th, and our ground support started to get acquainted with both their crews and the aircraft. Their first mission was on June 22nd. Of the 20 B-17s to hit the General Motors Truck Factory in Antwerp, Belgium that day, two failed to return, 10 crewmembers were killed in action, one was missing, nine became prisoners of war and four were wounded. One mission, 12% casualties. For the next year, this was the norm.

After arriving that January, we learned how to support our flyers, live together, recreate together, learn the customs of the English, do a lot of sightseeing and make many English friends, and in general, build a life for ourselves ... not knowing when this would all be over. And *if and when* we could head home.



Bill, August, 1944

## My Life in England

As published in *The Lewistown Sentinel*

### OUR FOLKS IN THE FIGHTING FORCES Letters From Those Who Are Serving in Uncle Sam's Outfit Both Here and Abroad

The following letter was received by Mrs. Max Hutchinson at ... West Fifth Street from her brother, Staff Sergeant William Bodenschatz, formerly of ... West Fifth Street, who is with the army air force, somewhere in England.

Dear Sis,

I'm censored and can't write a thing.  
Just that I'm well and live like a king.

Can't tell when it's sunny, can't tell when it rains.  
All military secrets must secrets remain.

Don't know where I'm going, don't know  
where I'll land.

Couldn't even inform you, if met by a band.

Can't tell where we sailed from, can't mention  
the date.

And can't even remember the meals that I ate.

Can't keep a diary, for which is a sin.

Can't keep the envelopes your letters come in.

Can't use a flashlight to guide me at night.

Can't light a cigarette, except out of sight.

Don't know for sure as what I can do.

Except sign this letter and mail it to you.

As ever,  
BILL

Some times I "doubled" in the motor pool. That gave me access to vehicles for those "official" not so official trips off base. Especially since I was approved for cars, in addition to trucks.

GIs are famous for working the system. I found out that I could get flight pay. I had the authority to flight-test parachutes, by throwing dummies wearing parachutes, out of a B-17 over Station 106. So, I earned flight pay!

NOTES

1. To be issued only after strict and practical examination.
2. Old original permit to be canceled and new one issued to include any new qualifications.
3. Make out and initial types of vehicles operator not qualified to drive.
4. List accidents below. If more than three are charged to the permit holder, his driving ability and general attitude should be investigated before issuance of new permit.

RECORD OF ACCIDENTS  
(List all in which permit holder is involved)

Date ..... (1)  
Responsibility .....  
and cause .....

Estimated cost of damages .....

Officer's initials .....

Date ..... (2)  
Responsibility .....  
and cause .....

Estimated cost of damages .....

Officer's initials .....

Date ..... (3)  
Responsibility .....  
and cause .....

Estimated cost of damages .....

Officer's initials .....

MOTOR VEHICLE OPERATOR'S PERMIT

No. 6-6

(ORGANIZATION)

Station #106  
(STATION)

10-2120 970

Q. M. C. Form 228  
(App. Apr. 17, 1943)  
(Rev. May 12, 1941)

Station #106  
(Place)

April 5, 1943

S/Sgt. Wm. J. Bodenschatz  
(Operator's signature)

Bodenschatz, Wm. J., S/Sgt.  
(Name, rank and organization)

I CERTIFY THAT S/Sgt. Wm. J. Bodenschatz  
has demonstrated proficiency in driving (par. 16, A/R 850-15)  
the types of vehicles listed below as per signed authentication.

TYPE VEHICLE	AUTHENTICATION (Signed by a Commissioned Officer)
Car, half-track	EBB
Car, passenger	X Eugene B. Rutledge, 1st Lt.
Motorcycle	EBB
Truck, heavy	EBB
Truck, light	EBB
Truck, medium	EBB
Tractor, wheeled	Eugene B. Rutledge, 1st Lt.
Tractor-truck (semi-trailer)	Eugene B. Rutledge, 1st Lt.
Trucks, cargo, 1/2-1 1/2 ton	X Eugene B. Rutledge, 1st Lt.
Trucks, cargo, 2 ton & larger	Eugene B. Rutledge, 1st Lt.
Vehicle, wheeled, combat	

10-2120





The 443rd Material Squadron (The Fight'n 6th)

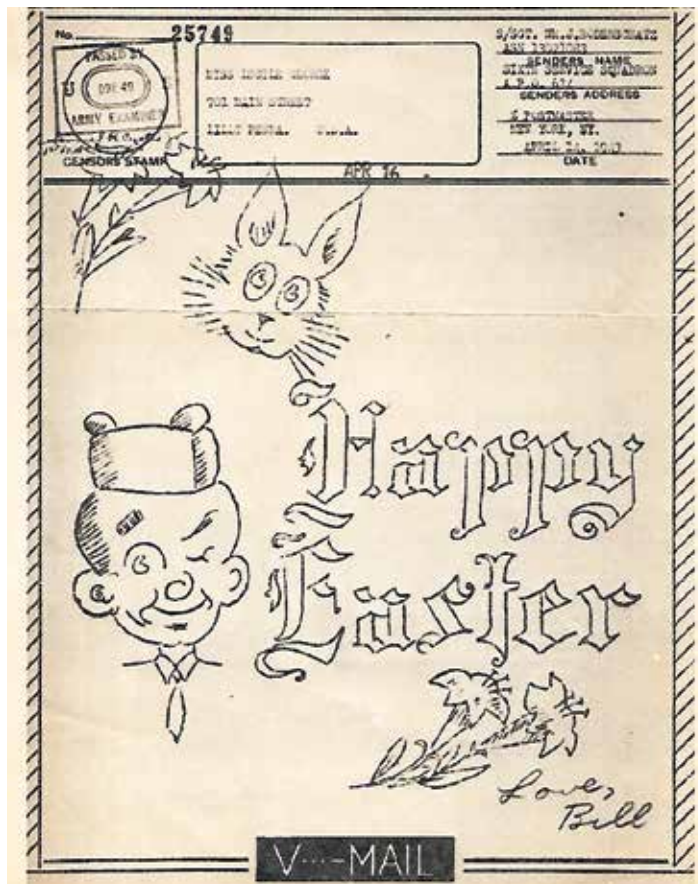
Bill is second row sitting, 17th from left. (circled)



Censorship and controls of materials were important for the security of our army.

This stamp (left) appears on the back of the squadron photo above.





Bill sent to Lucile for Easter, 1943

The V-Mail process, which originated in England, was the microfilming of specially designed letter sheets. Instead of using valuable cargo space to ship whole letters overseas, microfilmed copies were sent in their stead and then “blown up” and printed at an overseas destination before being delivered.

V-mail ensured that thousands of tons of shipping space could be reserved for war materials. The 37 mail bags required to carry 150,000 one-page letters could be replaced by a single mail sack. The weight of that same amount of mail was reduced dramatically from 2,575 pounds to a mere 45 pounds.

O. O. Form No. 7360  
(Approved Dec. 7, 1942)  
(Old O. M. C. Form No. 28)

May 30, 1944  
(Date of Issue)

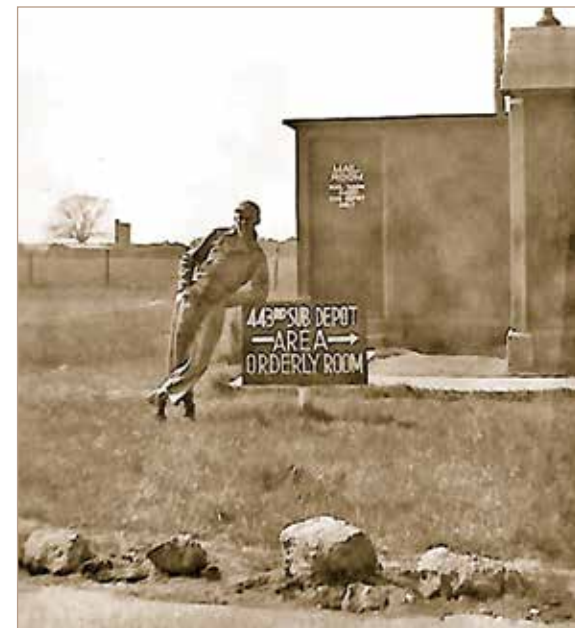
*Sgt. Wm. J. Bodenschick*  
(Operator's signature)

I CERTIFY THAT S/SGT. William J. Bodenschick  
(Name and rank)

has demonstrated proficiency in driving (par. 16, A/R 850-15) the types of vehicles listed below as per signed authentication.

TYPE VEHICLE	AUTHENTICATION (Signed by a commissioned officer)
Car, half-track	
Car, passenger	<i>RHB</i>
Motorcycle X	
Truck, heavy	
Truck, light	<i>Roland H. Bonnette</i>
Truck, medium X	ROLAND H. BONNETTE
Tractor	Capt., Air Corps,
Tractor (semitractor)	Trans. Officer.
Trucks, cargo, 1/2-3/4-ton	<i>RHB</i>
Trucks, cargo, 3/4-2 1/2-ton	<i>RHB</i>
Trucks, cargo, 4-ton and larger	
Trucks, amphibian (all) X	
Vehicles, wheeled, combat	
Special	

HQ 505 USAPP 715496



Bill, Mail Room 443rd Sub Depot Grafton Underwood May 1945



First Sergeant John H. Henkle, Capt. John C. Burke,  
Grafton Underwood, May, 1945



Moulthrop and Simmons, Grafton Underwood, May 1945

### 3 Area Boys At Bomber Repair Base

AN EIGHTH AIR FORCE SERVICE COMMAND STATION, England—Tech. Sgt. Andrew A. Demko, son of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Demko, 421 Power St., Johnstown, Pa., is stationed at this sub-depot bomber repair base. He is a sheet metal worker repairing the battle-damaged B-17 Flying Fortresses of the Eighth Air Force.

Tech. Sgt. Demko was graduated from the Johnstown Central High School in 1937. In civilian life he was employed at the American Stores Co., 139 Iron St., Johnstown. Tech. Sgt. Demko entered the Army Oct. 29, 1940, at Langley Field, Va., and has been stationed in the European theater of operations 29 months. His brother, Staff Sgt. Albert, is stationed in Italy.

#### Supply Sergeant

AN EIGHTH AIR FORCE SERVICE COMMAND STATION, England—Staff Sgt. William J. Bodenschatz, son of Mr. and Mrs. M. J. Bodenschatz, Lilly, Pa., is a supply sergeant in the air corps supply section at this sub-depot bomber-repair base where battle-damaged B-17 Flying Fortresses of the Eighth Air Force are repaired.

Staff Sgt. Bodenschatz was graduated from the Lilly High School in 1937 and prior to his entry into the military service Oct. 29, 1940, at Langley Field, Va., he was manager of a delicatessen department at the Giant Food Shopping Center, Lewistown, Pa. He has been stationed in the European theater of operations 19 months.

#### Serves as Welder

AN EIGHTH AIR FORCE SERVICE COMMAND STATION, England—Staff Sgt. Walter J. Nigborowicz, son of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Nigborowicz, Gallitain, Pa., is a welder at this sub-depot bomber repair base where battle-damaged B-17 Flying Fortresses of the Eighth Air Force are repaired.

Staff Sgt. Nigborowicz was graduated from the Gallitain High School in 1936, and prior to his entry into the military service Oct. 18, 1940, in Harrisburg, Pa., he was employed by C. A. Hughes Coal Co., Lilly, Pa., as a clerk and a miner. He has been stationed in the European theater of operations 18 months.

Staff Sgt. Nigborowicz has two brothers in the armed forces—John, is a staff sergeant in the Army, stationed somewhere overseas, and Joseph, is a sergeant in the Army, stationed at the Wilmington (N. C.) Army Airbase.

Probably from the *Johnstown Tribune-Democrat*. Somewhat in error.

Although technically a supply sergeant, I was section leader of the parachute shop, and we were a combat unit, not a repair facility.

But I appreciate the recognition, anyway.

*As published*

#### Supply Sergeant

AN EIGHTH AIR FORCE SERVICE COMMAND STATION, England — Staff Sgt. William J. Bodenschatz, son of Mr. and Mrs. M.J. Bodenschatz, Lilly, Pa., is a supply sergeant in the air corps supply section at this subdepot bomber repair base where battle-damaged B-17 Flying Fortresses of the Eighth Air Force are repaired.

Staff Sgt. Bodenschatz was graduated from the Lilly High School in 1937 and prior to his entry into the military service Oct. 29, 1940, at Langley Field, Va., he was manager of a delicatessen department at the Giant Food Shopping Center, Lewistown, Pa. He has been stationed in the European theater of operations 19 months.

## 10. Combat



Note the bombs painted on the front-side, denoting this B-17 as a seasoned veteran of at least 12 missions.



Bombs away!



A B-17 (lower right) surrounded by German anti-aircraft "flak"



Bomb drop over Cologne, Germany



A B-17 takes a direct hit from German flak as bombs are released to the target.



Cologne, Germany, bomb drop



Bomb drop over Hamburg, Germany.



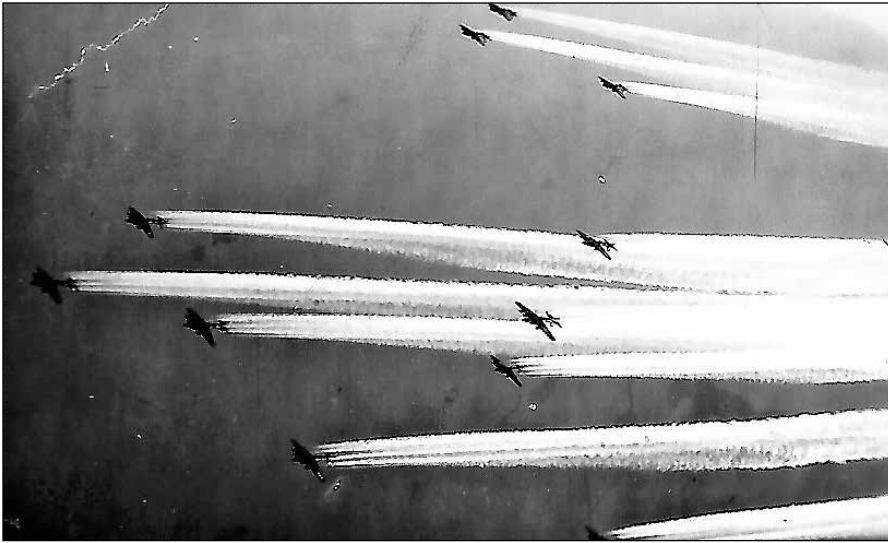
Bombs away.



Bombing raid to Bremen, Germany, 1944



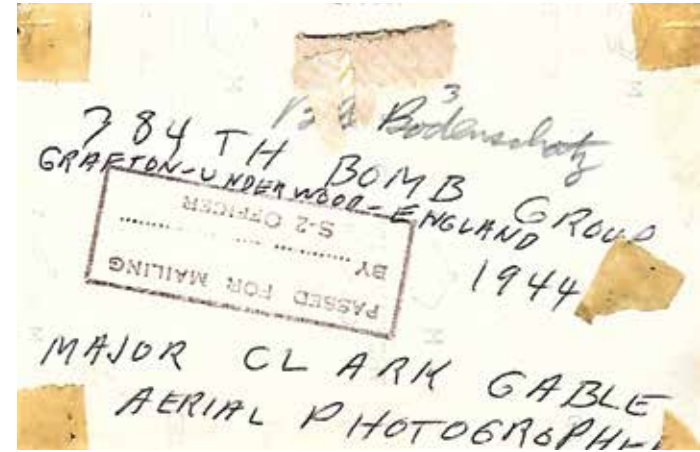
384th bomb drop, unknown target.



Contrails at 30,000 feet.



384th B17-G



### A note about Clark Gable

In 1943 I ran into Clark Gable in a pub sitting alone.

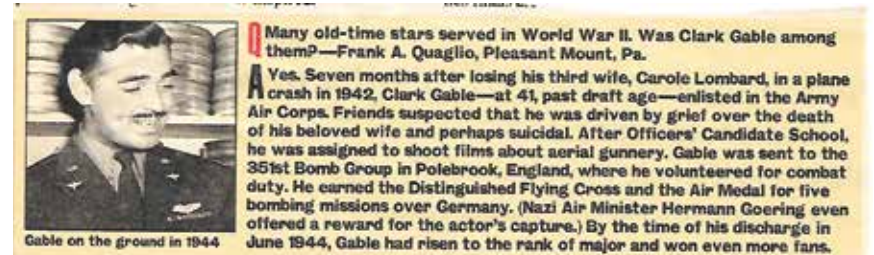
So, I approached him and he invited me to sit with him. I learned he had volunteered for the air corps and was an aerial photographer. I told him I was ground support and never got to see the action.

So, we arranged to meet over beers, at which time he shared with me some of his photographs. Quite a few of the aerial shots in this section are from his "collection" of originals that he shared with me.

Of course, these did not "clear" S-2 for security clearance, so they were accepted with the promise of being careful with them. I marked each photo on the back that they were taken by him, and the caption as he explained to me.

Above is a stamp he placed on the back of one, intending to turn it in for intelligence, but gave to me, instead.

Clark was a solid guy, who seriously volunteered for his country.



Years later, this news story I snipped brought up those memories.

	NUMBER OF MISSIONS	AIRCRAFT CREDIT SORTIES	TONS OF BOMBS ON TARGET	OUR PLANES LOST	PERSONNEL LOST	ENEMY AIRCRAFT		
						DESTROYED	PROBABLY DESTROYED	DAMAGED
JUNE 1943	5	72	92.7	10	100	5	3	7
JULY 1943	8	127	222.6	12	111	31	17	35
AUGUST 1943	6	102	119.3	11	111	20	2	12
SEPTEMBER 1943	7	111	264.3	9	80	15	1	5
OCTOBER 1943	7	116	220.5	9	80	39	2	15
NOVEMBER 1943	5	101	248.2	4	43	8	0	8
DECEMBER 1943	10	223	458.8	7	41	2	0	2
JANUARY 1944	8	139	383.8	6	66	26	3	4
FEBRUARY 1944	12	311	595.4	9	98	5	0	2
MARCH 1944	17	356	784.3	9	90	0	0	2
APRIL 1944	13	294	702.3	20	202	6	0	9
MAY 1944	23	537	1120.9	9	87	2	1	3
JUNE 1944	28	926	2094.0	2	20	1	0	2
JULY 1944	19	608	1337.2	7	81	4	5	8
AUGUST 1944	18	607	1397.0	1	30	0	0	1
SEPTEMBER 1944	16	549	1491.7	9	82	0	0	0
OCTOBER 1944	14	483	1253.0	4	40	0	0	0
NOVEMBER 1944	17	648	1735.7	4	47	0	0	0
DECEMBER 1944	14	527	1436.0	2	28	0	0	0
JANUARY 1945	15	473	1181.6	5	49	0	0	0
FEBRUARY 1945	15	544	1493.9	3	12	0	0	0
MARCH 1945	24	886	2378.5	4	49	0	0	0
APRIL 1945	15	558	1404.7	3	32	1	0	1
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>9348</b>	<b>22415.4</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>*1579</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>116</b>

\*This figure does not include men brought back dead with their planes or those killed in assembly crashes over England. The total would then be 1623.

This monthly mission recap is from "As briefed," my 384th leather-bound historical book produced by our unit and distributed to us after the war.

## Recognition

### 443rd Sub-Depot Wins 8th Air Force Stitt Trophy

Most proficient sub-depot ground support unit in the entire 8th Air Force, August 1944



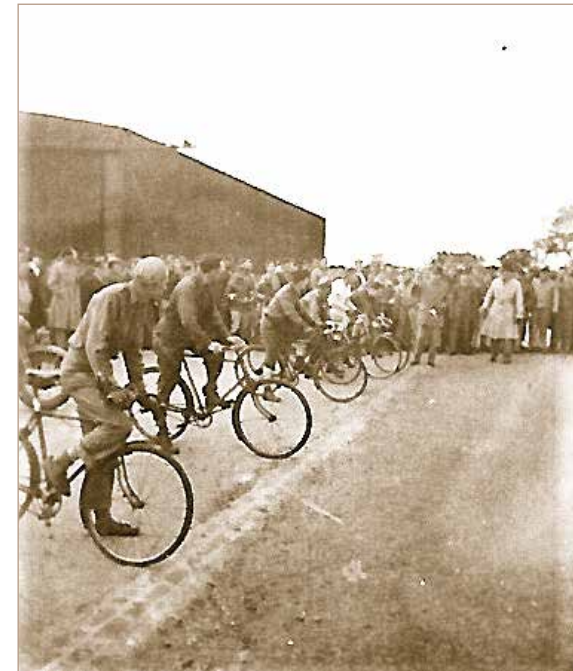
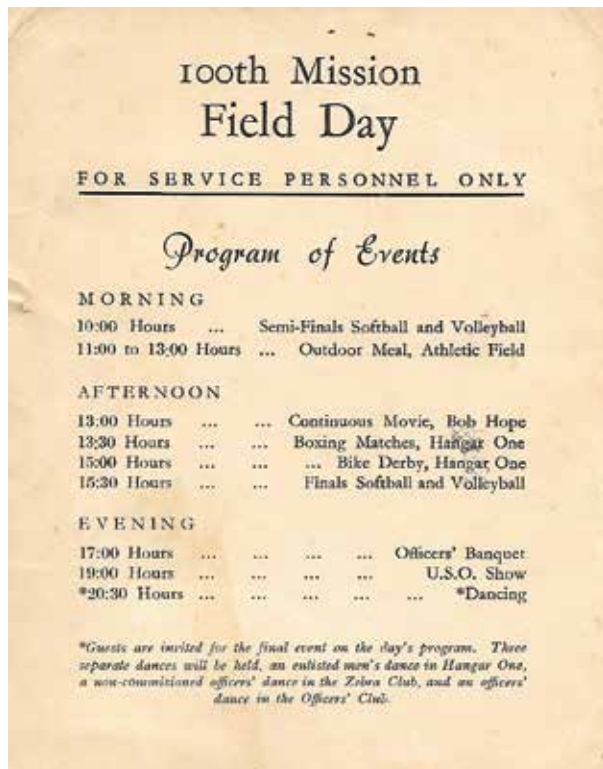
Section leaders representing the 443rd, Bill is front row, right, first person

STITT TROPHY AWARDED FOR MOST PROFICIENT SUB-DEPOT IN THE EIGHTH AIR FORCE SERVICE COMMAND ENGLAND, AUGUST 1944

1ST ROW	2ND ROW	3RD ROW	4TH ROW
L. TO R.	L. TO R.	L. TO R.	L. TO R.
MAY BECK	MCKNIGHT	DEMPK	SIMONSEN
WOODRING	GUILLES	STEELE	NEWHOUSE
AUSTIN	DEEP	JONES	LIPPINCOTT
VERNON	WOLF	LOWERY	SABIN
LT. SAUNDERS	HOLLISTER	POPALIS	ENGUSH
1ST SGT. HAWKLE	DIECK	CONNELLY	MABRY
STAUFFER	SLOMKA	KENNEWEG	ROLLISON
BODENSCHNEIDER	WELKER	CLOVER	
	FITZGERALD		



April 15, 1944, 100th Mission Party Defense Squad Sgt. Welky, Sgt. Watters



April 15, 1944 100th Mission Party Bike Race





General Williams, Colonel Smith,  
Major Humphries, Capt. Gaillard|  
(most likely April 15, 1944  
100th Mission Party)



Lt. Samuel Curtis, Sgt. Peters,  
April 15, 1944



Cpl. Gettle, Lebanon, PA, April 15, 1944



First Lt. Sam Curtis, Cleveland,  
April 15, 1944



Army Band 1944  
(probably April 15, 1944  
for the 100th Mission Party)

### **A Special Remembrance**

Inspection, repair and packing of parachutes was a very serious business. We knew lives depended on us.

Each time a crew bailed out, we were so happy to hear that so many chutes were counted as opened, by observing planes. Most of our guys were captured and rode out the war in Stalags as POWs. Some perished in unfortunate landings. It was rare that we ever heard of their fate.

But once in a great while, our boys would make it back with the help of civilians, resistance fighters and their underground network. Even more rare it was for any to make it back to Grafton Underwood.

So, such a special memory was when a pilot returned and presented our parachute shop with a bottle of French wine, to say, "Thank You!"



D-Day was June 6, 1944 but there was no news of the invasion in *Stars and Stripes*. It was printed in the early hours before the dawn surprise attack.



Here is the June 7th edition, covering the invasion. I kept both newspapers.

## II. The Plane News

I saved three issues of our 384th newspaper, *The Plane News*. I show the front page of those three here because these issues feature the 443rd, including the parachute shop, Christmas and New Year's 1945 and winning the Stitt Trophy as the best-rated sub depot squadron of the 8th Air Force.



Larger versions of these front pages are on the following pages.



OUT of the worn evening sun the heavy bombers come home again... home from another target hundreds of miles away. For the airmen that means food, relaxation, sleep. But to many who are fighting this world war from the ground, the return of a formation spells hours of intense activity, long night hours of stress and hardy-earned food.

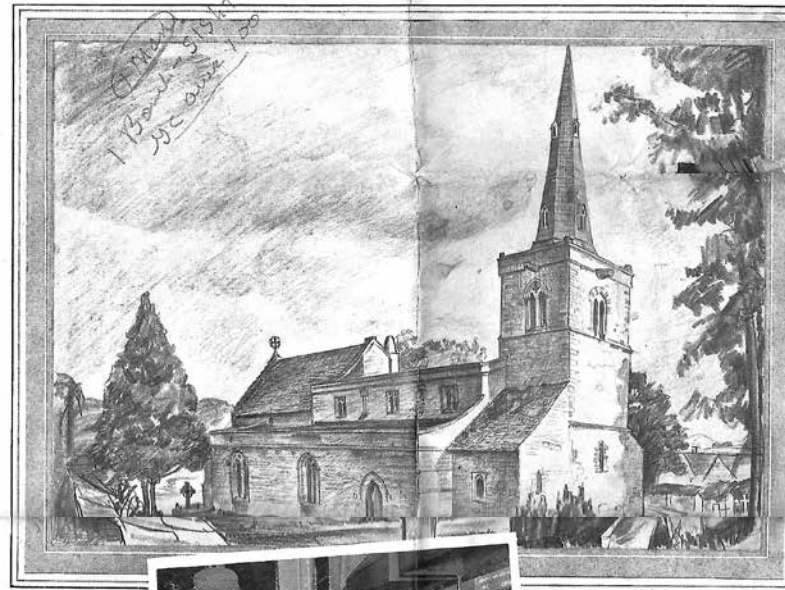
The success of the men who fly depends upon those who don't. A life may hinge on the careful fingers of a "tycoon mechanic" who adjusts the strands of a parachute (right). A life may hinge on the quick ear of a "ground stoker" who detects a faulty wire in the throat of an engine. A life may hinge on the sharp eyes of a propeller man watching the blades as the engine is run up.

These are the men who patch up the cut lips and wipe the sweat from the eyes and rub the aching shoulder muscles between rounds. As soon as the big bombers pull into their "cessna" the lights is taken up by these trimmers and maintainers and riggers. Maintenance occurs over the aircraft. Unserviceable parts are patched off and replaced by new ones, the old ones being sent to sub-depot for overhaul. These a propeller is made serviceable again (left below); damaged engines are repaired (center); wire are checked (right). Everything must be done at breakneck speed, so that life engines and propellers and instruments will not show signs of strain against the coming.

THIS is a man on the ground... in the carpenter, electric, engine, maintenance, instrument, metal work, tire, stenciler, welder, fuel, fighter, machine, mechanic, hydraulic, radio, shop and detail work, auto mechanics, and so on... the men on the ground who "keep the show."



I wrote the names of my friends on the 1944 issue. Morgan is showing in the parachute photo inset. Left to right, the others are: Smith, Dieck, Garner, Lindauer, Chistman and Wilds.



NEW Year's Day has a special significance for us. It marks the anniversary of this bombardment group, which matured in combat only a few months after its birth, two years ago. On this birthday celebration we can look back with pride on our achievements, and ahead with new confidence in what another year will bring.

SO far as possible, under war conditions, personnel of this base are starting the New Year in the traditional way. Throughout the holiday season there have been special services in the station chapel. Hundreds of turkeys have come out of the mess hall ovens. There have been holiday dances for officers and men. But the highlight of the season takes place on the other side of the English Channel, where a bunch of French war airplanes spend New Year's Day opening packages after packages of dolls and toys and candy sent them by the officers and men of this Group.



WHEN you start figuring how much fuel is required to keep our B-17s flying you're likely to forget some of the bigger items. They couldn't go to Germany and back, day after day, on gasoline alone. For instance, it also takes 1,500 pounds of potatoes a day. This high octane fuel flows so smoothly that one is barely aware of its address some of the ingredients are lacking. Then the engine may sputter just a little, as it did during the recent cigaret shortage. The mixture on this field includes such items as six tons of coffee each week, 58,000 feet of movie film, 2,100 pounds of incoming mail. Occasionally there is a dance (left), a football game (right). It's all a part of the relaxing assignments that help get our aircraft there and back.

# 1917 THE PLANE NEWS 1945

SPRING BULLETIN 1945

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN



**ATTACKED!** 300 TIMES SINCE  
.... 22 JUNE 1943



It has taken team-work. Many as are the faces appearing on these pages, you see only a few of those whose combined efforts made our achievements possible.  
Above: a few of the Sub-Depot boys.  
Below: the staffs of Operations and Intelligence and the sections identified with them.

It has been a long time since that little handful of Flying Fortresses set out for Antwerp and bravely challenged the Luftwaffe to battle. Since then your Group has returned day after day to Germany or German-occupied territory. It adds up to more than 300 missions now, missions that helped to pave the way for the invasion of the Continent and for the rush across France and for the crossing of the Rhine and for the steady, relentless march on Berlin. Sometimes the weather wouldn't be too good; sometimes the fighter opposition would be overwhelming; sometimes the flak would be next thing to unbearable. But despite any and all conditions, the Group went out day after day to add its weight to the Allied pressure. And now we look back over two years to that first mission . . . and we're proud of it . . . proud of the way a puny midgeet shook its fist at the Luftwaffe, proud that even in the face of terrific opposition we always went back to fight again. More than 300 times now.



In the 1945 issue, Bill is seen in the trophy picture, front row, right end.

## 12. Rest & Relaxation

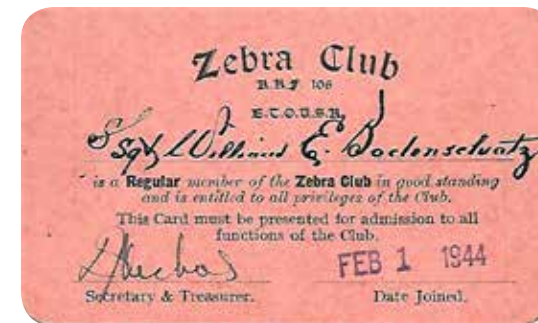
We had long work hours when the weather was good for bombing raids, so relief for rest and relaxation (R&R) was welcomed.

We caught up on writing letters home and reading. We played ball, weather permitting. Movies and some traveling shows at our own Roxy Theater kept us entertained. And libations, music and activities at our Zebra Club was popular. Civilian employees helped at these venues.

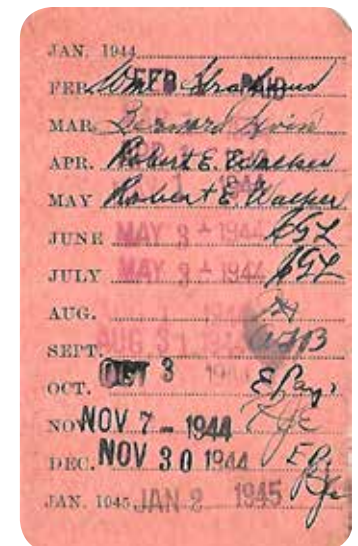
Then there were those big bash base sponsored dances held off-base! Of course, we learned the best pubs to visit.

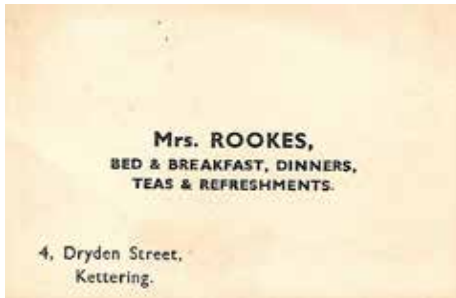
Very special to us were the relationships we developed with the Brits in Grafton Underwood, Geddington, Kettering and Corby, to name a few towns. Our government host encouraged Brit families to host GIs to make them feel at home, with some social warmth and home cooking. I have such fond memories of so many people.

We were even invited to "Tea." I was invited to one where they had food with the tea. I thought I was spooning sugar in my tea which I always did. The family looked at me strangely. When I tasted the tea, I found that it was salt. It seems that they did not use salt shakers, but put the salt into a bowl like a sugar bowl. And rarely did they use sugar or milk in their tea.



The non-com club at Grafton Underwood





Mrs. Gladys Barclay, Corby, England



Sammy Barclay, Corby England



Bill with James Wilson,  
1944, Corby, England



James Wilson, Scottish  
Highlander Regt., Corby, England

The agreement between Lucile and I was that we could “see” others during my service and deployment in England. I met Ruby and we saw each other as friends.

Ruby’s boyfriend was also deployed and I met him while the he was on leave.

As a remembrance, she gave me a signet ring. I eventually gave it to my grandson, Danny, which he has to this day.



Ruby, September 1944



Ruby (Date unknown)



Ruby’s neighbor



Bill, 1944 (possibly in Corby at Ruby’s)

Friend’s addresses  
recorded in my diary:

*Mr. & Mrs. Sam Barclay  
130 Rockingham Road  
Corby, Kett., Northhants. England*

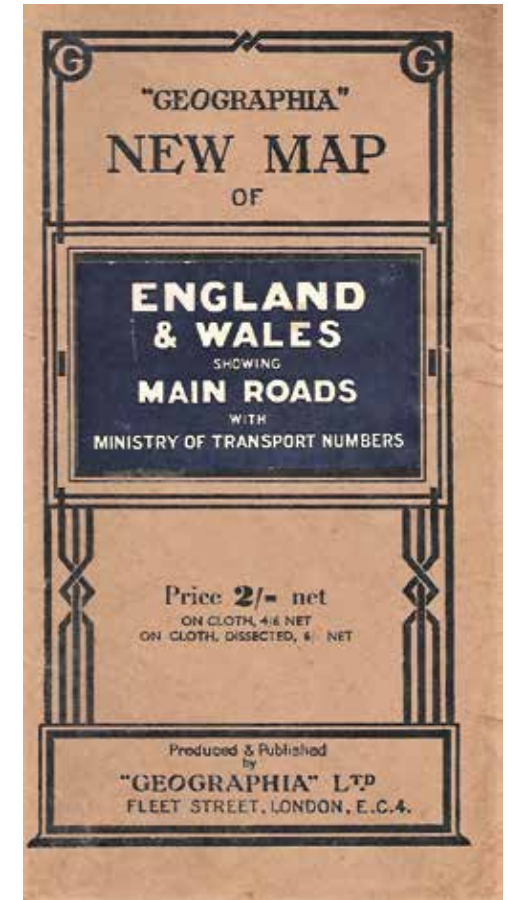
*Ruby Robson  
53 Pengreen Lane  
Corby, Kett. Northamts. England*

My sunglasses





Making 50 Caliber Salt and Pepper Shakers in the machine shop helped to pass the time. Adding British coins to the base of the shakers added value.



Right: My road map got me around to see a lot of England. I circled the towns and cities I visited.

The map is very large, approx. 29" x 39" unfolded

Below: My gloves, which I used post-war for years to shovel snow.



## I Say, Ole' Chap

THROUGH THE CONSIDERATION of two local boys now serving overseas, an English newspaper's account of an American football game played between two service teams, is published herewith.

Both service boys—Capt. John F. McGrath of Kernville, former Johnstown High gridder of about a decade ago, and Staff Sgt. William J. Bodenschatz, former student manager at Lilly High School, forward accounts of the game carried in the London Daily Express Monday, Nov. 13.

At last reports, Capt. McGrath, a salesman for Dowling & Co. before entering the service, was stationed at an air service supply depot in England, while Sgt. Bodenschatz is located at a submarine depot at some undisclosed spot.

The story, written by Vivien Batchelor, follows:

SIXTY THOUSAND Americans and their girls swarmed into the White City Stadium, London, yesterday to watch the U. S. Army vs. the U. S. Navy in what General Doolittle described during the interval as a "real old-fashioned American football game."

Girl-cheer leaders from the Services danced like dervishes in front of the crowd, waving megaphones and inciting yells of—

"A-r-m-y, Army, or N-a-v-y, Navy."

Meanwhile a free fight appeared to be going on in the centre of the stadium. Twenty-two enormous young men in yellow crash helmets were locked in deadly struggle for an oval orange football.

They wore spiked cleated in the word the Americans use—shoes, strange ginger shorts which cling closely to the thighs and end abruptly just below the knee, and padded jerseys red and white for the Navy and navy blue for the Army. They needed those pads and the crash helmets.

### SO DOWN HE GOES

THE OBJECT of the game seems to be to pass the ball to some unfortunate player and then for everyone else to fall on him. One of the rules is he must never leave go of the ball, so he goes down with a crash.

The only way the game moves towards the goalposts at all appears to be the instinct of self-preservation possessed by the man with the ball. He runs as far towards the posts as he can before he is maimed or killed by the other players.

The programme seemed sinister. After giving the names of the 11 members of each team it then gave a list of 15 substitutes for each side. The substitutes sat covered in blankets awaiting their call to battle. Many of them did not have long to wait.

As appeared in the local Pennsylvania news, possibly the *Johnstown Tribune-Democrat*, a story forwarded to them by Bill.

*First paragraphs, as published*

## I Say, Ole' Chap

THROUGH THE CONSIDERATION of two local boys now serving overseas, an English newspaper's account of an American football game played between two service teams, is published herewith.

Both service boys — Capt. John F. McGrath of Kernville, former Johnstown High gridder of about a decade ago, and Staff Sgt. William J. Bodenschatz, former student manager at Lilly High School, forward accounts of the game carried in the London Daily Express Monday, Nov. 13.

### FIRST BLOOD TO NAVY

FIRST CASUALTY went to the Navy. Horrified, I watched a G.I. scamper across the field with two buckets in his hands. It was not, as I thought, to mop up the blood. He avoided the prostrate player while the rest of the team fell on him.

The buckets contained towels and water for the players still left alive. Six times during the game the buckets are rushed out. If a team asks for them more often they are penalized.

The casualties are dealt with by a doctor, who rushes out with a black bag; the four umpires, splendid in white plus-fours and striped shirts; and the stretcher-bearers, if they are needed.

American football is played in four quarters, not two halves like ours. Each team has the ball for four "downs." If by that time they have not made enough ground the other side takes over.

Before each "down" the team which has the ball goes into a huddle while the captain decides who shall be the victim to receive the ball—and the subsequent assault.

Result—Army beat the Navy by 20 points to nil.

### THAT'S ENGLAND

WHERE THE HEAVENLY DEW WHIPS THROUGHOUT THE BREEZE  
AND YOU WALK THROUGH MUD UP TO YOUR KNEES,  
WHERE THE SUN DOESN'T SHINE, AND THE RAIN FLOWS FREE,  
AND THE FOG IS SO THICK, YOU CAN HARDLY SEE,  
THAT'S ENGLAND

WHERE YOU LIVE ON BRUSSEL SPROUTS AND SPAM,  
AND THE POWERED EGGS AIN'T WORTH A DAMM,  
IN TOWN YOU GET SOME FISH AND SPUDS,  
AND DOWN THE TASTE WITH A MUG OF SUDS,  
THAT'S ENGLAND

YOU HOLD YOUR NOSE, WHEN YOU GULP IT DOWN,  
IT HISS YOUR STOMACH AND THEN YOU FROWN,  
FOR IT BURNS YOUR TONGUE AND MAKES YOUR THROAT FEEL QUEER  
IT'S RIGHTLY NAMED BITTERS, FOR IT SURE AIN'T BEER,  
THAT'S ENGLAND

WHERE THE PRICES ARE HIGHER AND EVER SO LONG,  
AND THE AIR CORPS G.I.'S ARE ALWAYS WRONG,  
YOU GET WATERED SCOTCH FOR FOUR BITS A SNORT,  
AND THOSE LIMEY BABES SURE DON'T STAND SHORT,  
THAT'S ENGLAND

AND THOSE PITCH BLACK NIGHTS WHEN YOU ~~GO~~ <sup>GO</sup> OUT LATE,  
IT'S SO BLOODY DARK, YOU CAN'T NAVIGATE,  
THERE'S NO TRANSPORT ABOUT SO YOU HAVE TO HIKE,  
AND YOUR TAILS KNOCKED OFF BY A ~~BIKE~~ <sup>BIKE</sup> BIKE,  
THAT'S ENGLAND <sup>SPEEDING</sup>

WHERE MOST OF THE BABES ARE BLOND AND BOLD,  
AND THINK A YANK'S POCKET IS LINED WITH GOLD,  
THERE'S THE PICADILLY COMMANDOS PAINTED ALLURE,  
STAND CLEAR FOR THEM, OR YOU'LL BURN FOR SURE,  
THAT'S ENGLAND

THIS ISLAND ISN'T WORTH SAVING, I DON'T THINK,  
SO LET'S CUT LOOSE THE BALLONS AND LET IT SINK,  
I AIN'T COMPLAINING, BUT I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW,  
THAT' IT'S ROUGHER THAN HELL\*\*\*--IN THE E.T.O.



### 13.

# Victory



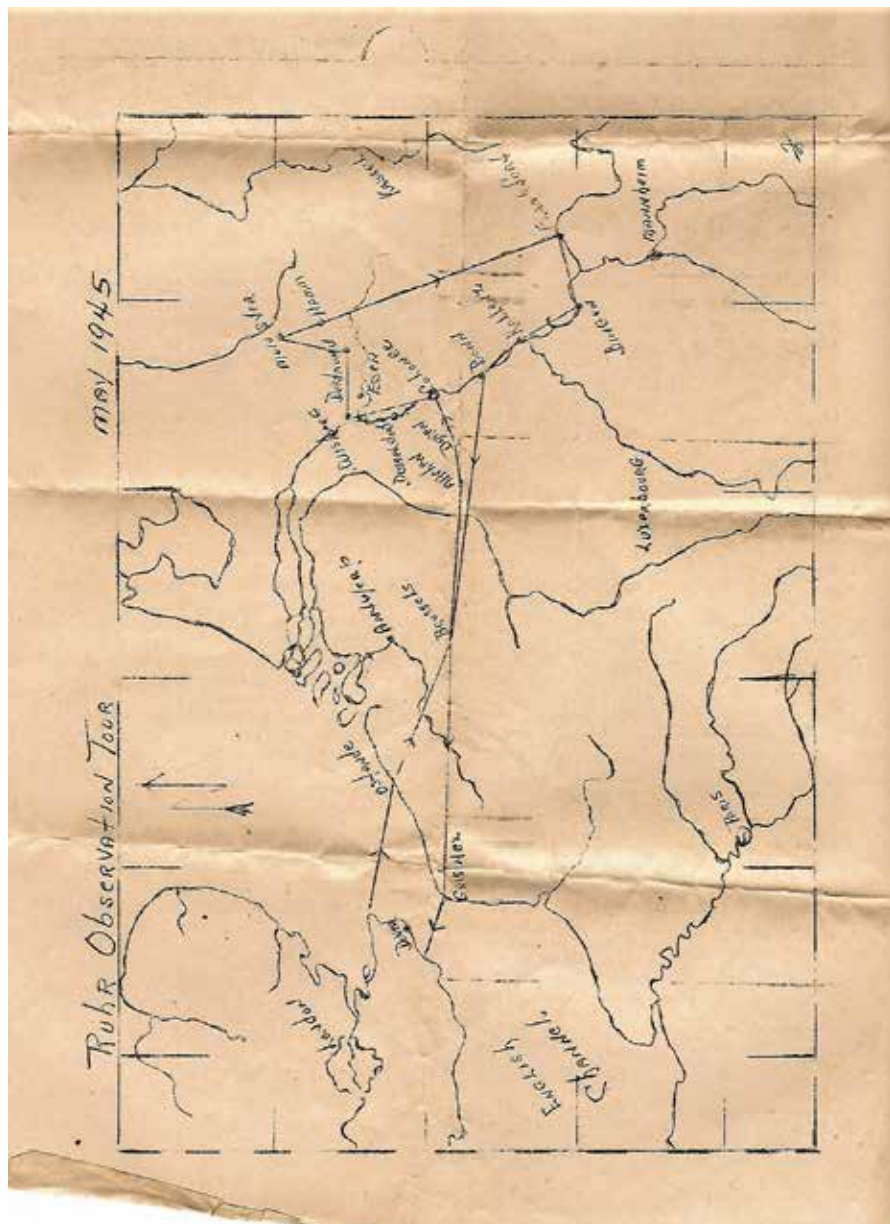
I kept my VE-Day issue of *Stars and Stripes*, May 8, 1945

*We Kept The Show On The Road* to total victory in Europe. Our celebrations were well-earned, but at the same time, hanging over our heads was the continuing war in the Pacific. None of us knew what our eventual fate would be.

But for now, enjoy the victory. Our high command saw it fit to reward us in the ground crew support units with victory flight tours of the European theater, to see what our boys did with their B-17s.

Two tours were designed, and we could take both. In addition to the written description provided with each, air crews gave us more insight. So, we packed our lunches and thermos bottles, and headed to Europe. So many observations to share, so I will limit it to one that is best descriptive. When flying over Cologne, Germany we saw a city totally destroyed by bombing. But still standing was the grand Cologne Cathedral above the landscape - a testimony to perseverance of man and his God, and target-bombing.

Years later, my son Rick called me from there when in Germany on business, to share our moments together, as he remembered my account of the flight.



### RUHR OBSERVATION TOUR - MAY 1945

THE OBSERVATION TOUR, BY AIR, OVER FRANCE, BELGIUM AND PART OF GERMANY IS TO SHOW YOU THE RESULTS, EITHER DIRECT OR INDIRECT, OF SOME STAGES OF THE LAST FIVE YEARS FOR VICTORY FOR THE ALLIES AND THE PROBLEMS THEY REPRESENT. DURING THE TOUR THE NAVIGATOR WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED AS TO THE AREA YOU ARE OVER. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS TO FURTHER ASSIST YOU IN IDENTIFYING THE NOT SO JOYOUS AREAS.

UPON ENTERING, AND LEAVING, THE CONTINENTAL COAST YOU WILL SEE MANY SITES THAT WERE ENEMY INSTALLATIONS AND WHICH WERE SPECIALLY FORMED TO "HIDE" THE WAY FOR THE GROUND FORCES. ON THE RETURN WILL BE MADE THE BARRIERS BUILT BY THE ENEMY. YOU WILL LEAVE THE ENGLISH COAST AT NORTH FORELAND AND ENTER THE CONTINENTAL COAST AT OSTERD, BELGIUM. THIS IS THE ROUTE THE LUFTWAFFE FOLLOWED DURING THE "DIESE" BLEIZ. SOUTH OF OSTERD IS DUNKERK.

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM: CAPITAL OF BELGIUM. ONE OF THE MOST MODERN AND COSMOPOLITAN CITIES IN THE WORLD. A LARGE MANUFACTURING CENTER. OBTAINED BY THE WEHRMAHR IN JUNE 1940. IMPORTANT AIRFIELDS WERE DESTROYED FROM THE AIR DURING THE OFFENSIVE BY THE ENEMY. AREA WAS INTENSELY BOMBED.

AACHEN, GERMANY: KNOWN TO THE GERMANS AS AACHEN-CHAPPELL. POPULATION 155,000. GREAT TRANSPORTATION AND MANUFACTURING CENTER. BARRIERS OF WEHRMAHR. ON 18 OCTOBER 1944 THE GERMAN GARRISON RECEIVED A SUBVERSIVE DISTURBANCE FROM THE U.S. ARMY. THIS WAS REJECTED. ON THE FOLLOWING DAY THIS AREA WAS BOMBED TO RUINS BY BOMBS FROM THE AIR AND GROUND FORCES.

DÜSSELDORF, GERMANY: IMPORTANT RAIL JUNCTION. POPULATION WAS 50,000.

COLOGNE, GERMANY: CENTER OF TRADE, TRAFFIC AND PORTION OF THE ENTIRE RUHR AREA. AN EXTENSIVE WAR MATERIALS PRODUCTION CENTER. WAS HEAVILY BOMBED AND THE AIRFIELD BATTERIES TOOK A HEAVY TOLL OF AIRCRAFT AND CANNONS. WAS BOMBED TO RUINS BY CONSTANT BOMBING FROM THE AIR WITH ALL WEAPONS OF BOMBS. AIRCRAFT TYPES OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS, RAIL, CANAL AND SUPER-HIGHWAYS (AUTOPHANS) ARE SEEN IN THIS AREA. DORTMUND, GERMANY: LARGEST CITY OF WESTPHALIA. POPULATION 550,000. ONE OF THE LARGEST INDUSTRIAL CENTERS IN GERMANY. OF THE WEHRMAHR, THE GERMANS BUILT STEEL PLANTS (ONE OF CITY) HAD AN ANNUAL CAPACITY OF OVER A MILLION TONS OF STEEL. ALL PLANTS AND INDUSTRIES OF THIS ARE ALSO DESTROYED TO THE PRODUCTION OF WAR MATERIALS. THIS AREA WAS HEAVILY BOMBED CONSTANTLY FROM THE AIR. FUEL WAS BOMBED ALWAYS PRECISE AND ACCURATE. AIRCRAFT WERE LOST HERE. WEHRMAHR LOST MORE THAN 100 AIRCRAFT. BOMBS: CONCRETE, A BULLDOZER, CEMENTAL AND BUILDING CODE IN CONSTRUCTION 1940-45. WEHRMAHR BUILT A HEAVY AIR-RESISTANCE NETWORK. WITH THE LARGEST AND BEST EQUIPPED AIR-RESISTANCE TOWNS IN GERMANY. HEAVILY BOMBED FROM THE AIR. OVER FOUR HUNDRED TONS OF BOMB OILS PRODUCED ANNUALLY IN THIS AREA. FUEL WAS INTENSELY TO THE WEHRMAHR.

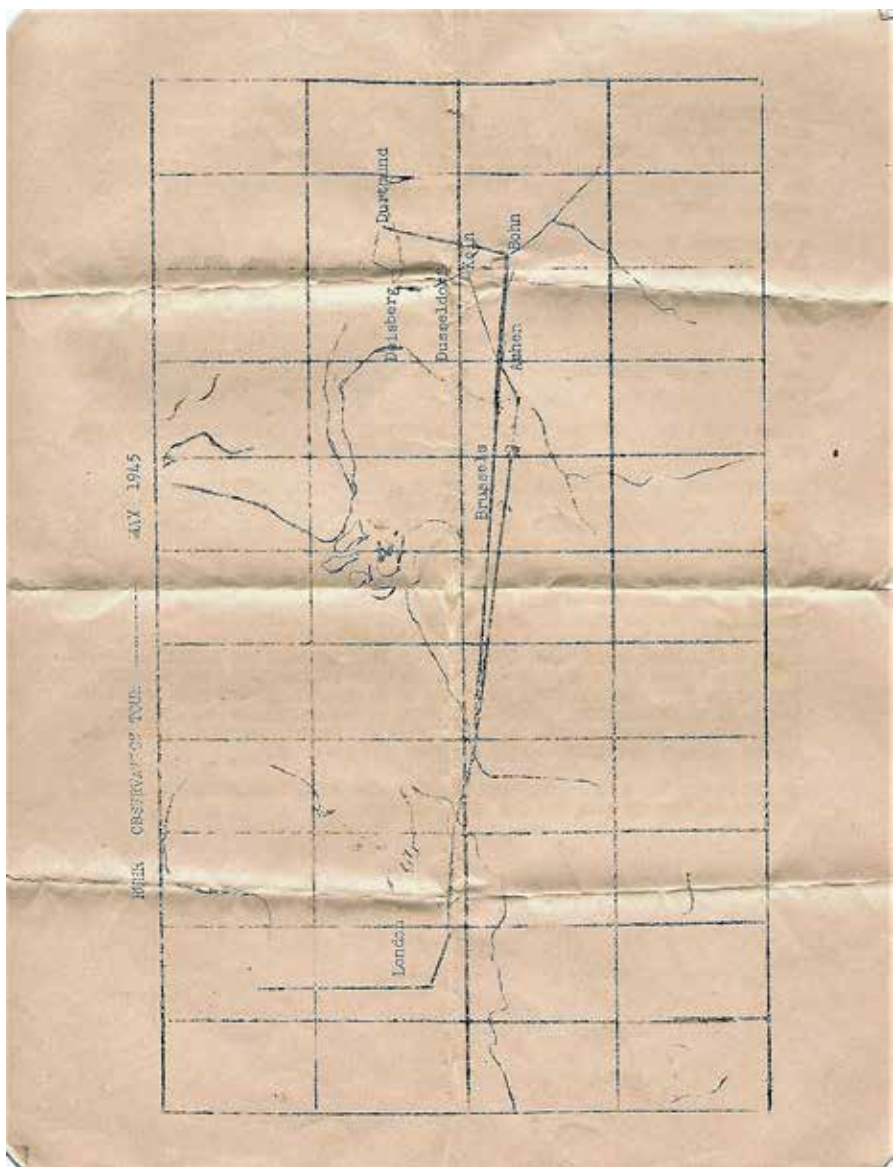
FRANKFURT/AM MAIN, GERMANY: ONCE A GREAT CULTURAL, MANUFACTURING AND MILITARY STRAITS AND CENTER OF THE WEHRMAHR. ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CITIES. THE L.G. PARKEN INDUSTRIES AND THE "DETROIT" OF THE WEHRMAHR. POPULATION 570,000.

ESSEN, GERMANY: AND OTHER, GERMANY: LOCATED ON THE RUHR AND CONTAINS A HEAVY CONCENTRATION OF WEHRMAHR. IMPORTANT TARGETS WERE THE SYMEXIA OIL PLANTS, COALING PLANTS, HYDROELECTRIC PLANTS, COMPRESSORS, STEEL MILLS, TRAIN AND ROAD WORKSHOPS, CANALS AND MANUFACTURING PLANTS.

"HAPPY VALLEY": THE NAME OF GERMANY COVERED ON THIS TOUR (THE RUHR) WAS ONCE KNOWN AS "HAPPY VALLEY". THROUGHOUT THE TOUR EXTENSIVELY DEFENSED AREA IN THE WORLD. AT ONE TIME THERE WERE MORE THAN 1,000 HEAVY AIRCRAFT BOMBS AND FORTIFY THAN MORE OR MORE STRONGER ONE. WEHRMAHR ATTEMPTED TO BUILD BARRIERS FOR HUNDREDS OF THE BOMBS AND THE BOMBS THAT CAME UP TO INTERRUPT OUR POSITIONS BUT WEHRMAHR TAKEN CARE OF BY OUR "MILITARY FRIENDS". A GREAT DEAL OF CREDIT FOR THE SUCCESSFUL OCCUPATION OF THE HEAVY BOMBER DIVISIONS IS DUE TO OUR "MILITARY FRIENDS".

THE RETURN IS BY AIR. YOU WILL LEAVE THE CONTINENTAL COAST AT CAPE GRIS AND RETURN TO THE ENGLISH COAST AT NORTH FORELAND. NOTE WEHRMAHR CASTLES AND THE BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY BARRIERS AS YOU GO TO BASE AROUND THE WEST OF LONDON.

DO NOT CARRY YOUR GUNTS BY THE RED HANDLE.



RHEIN OBSERVATION TOUR - MAY 1945

THE OBSERVATION TOUR, BY AIR, OVER FRANCE, BELGIUM AND PART OF GERMANY IS TO SHOW YOU THE RESULTS, EITHER DIRECT OR INDIRECT OF YOUR EFFORTS OF THE PAST MANY MONTHS FOR VICTORY FOR THE ALLIES AND THE PRISONERS THEY REPRESENT. DURING THE TOUR THE NAVIGATOR WILL KEEP YOU POSTED AS TO THE AREA YOU ARE OVER. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS TO FURTHER ASSIST YOU IN IDENTIFYING THE NOT-SO-LONG-AGO TARGETS.

UPON ENTERING THE FRENCH COAST YOU WILL SEE MANY SITES THAT WERE ENEMY INSTALLATIONS AND WHICH WERE GENERALLY POUNDED TO PAVE THE WAY FOR THE GROUND FORCES.

COLOGNE WAS THE CENTER OF TRADE, TRAFFIC AND POLITICS OF THE RHINE AREA. IT WAS MOST IMPORTANT AS A PAUL AND ISLAND PORT CENTER. IT'S PROXIMITY TO THE RHEIN COAL FIELD ENABLED IT TO ESCAPE AN ENEMY ALL MATERIALS PRODUCTION CENTER OF IRON, STEEL, AMMUNITION AND EXPLOSIVES. THE MARSHALLING YARDS, LOADED WITH GOODS AND WAGONS WERE CONSISTENTLY POUNDED BY BOMBS FROM THE AIR. WELL DEFENDED, THE ENEMY AND AGGREGATE FLEET TOOK A TOLL OF AIRCRAFT AND CREWS.

NEUSS: HAS A FAIR SIZED INLAND PORT. IMPORTANT AS A FLAX MILLING CENTER AND ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT STEEL MANUFACTURING CENTERS IN GERMANY.

DUISBURG-STEECKRADE-ESSEN-GLADBECK-GEISSENKIRCHEN-BOCHUM-DORTMUND: THIS VAST INDUSTRIAL AREA WAS ALMOST 100% CONVERTED TO THE PRODUCTION OF IMPLEMENTS OF WAR, THEREFORE IT WAS HEAVILY DEFENDED. IN THIS AREA WERE LARGE SYNTHETIC OIL PLANTS PRODUCING PETROL, GAS, OIL AND LUBRICANTS, LARGE HYDROELECTRIC PLANTS, LARGE COKING PLANTS, NUMEROUS COLLIERIES, THOUSANDS OF TONS OF PIG IRON, STEEL AND LEAD WERE PRODUCED ANNUALLY. THE BOESCH WORKS NORTHEAST OF DORTMUND ALONE HAD AN ANNUAL CAPACITY OF OVER MILLION TONS OF PIG IRON. LARGE AMOUNTS OF SULPHURIC ACID WERE PRODUCED IN THIS AREA. THERE WERE ALSO LARGE GRAIN AND FOOD WAREHOUSES IN THIS AREA. TO SERVE THE AREA WERE CANALS AND RAILWAYS WITH LARGE MARSHALLING YARDS. THE IMPORTANCE OF EACH INDUSTRY AND RAILWAY COMBINED TO MAKE A TARGET OF NO MEAN IMPORTANCE. TARGETS IN THIS AREA WERE ATTACKED TIME AFTER TIME WITH ALL TYPES AND SIZES OF BOMBS. AIMING WAS DONE BOTH VISUALLY AND BY INSTRUMENTS. THE RUINS ATTEST TO THE SUCCESS OF THE ATTACKS. BEING SUCH AN IMPORTANT AREA TO THE ENEMY IT WAS HEAVILY DEFENDED, AND A NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT WERE LOST, OTHERS RETURNED BADLY DAMAGED.

ON THE RETURN VIA BONN, AACHEN AND BRUSSELS MORE ENEMY INDUSTRIES AND INSTALLATIONS OBLITERATED FROM THE AIR ARE TO BE SEEN.

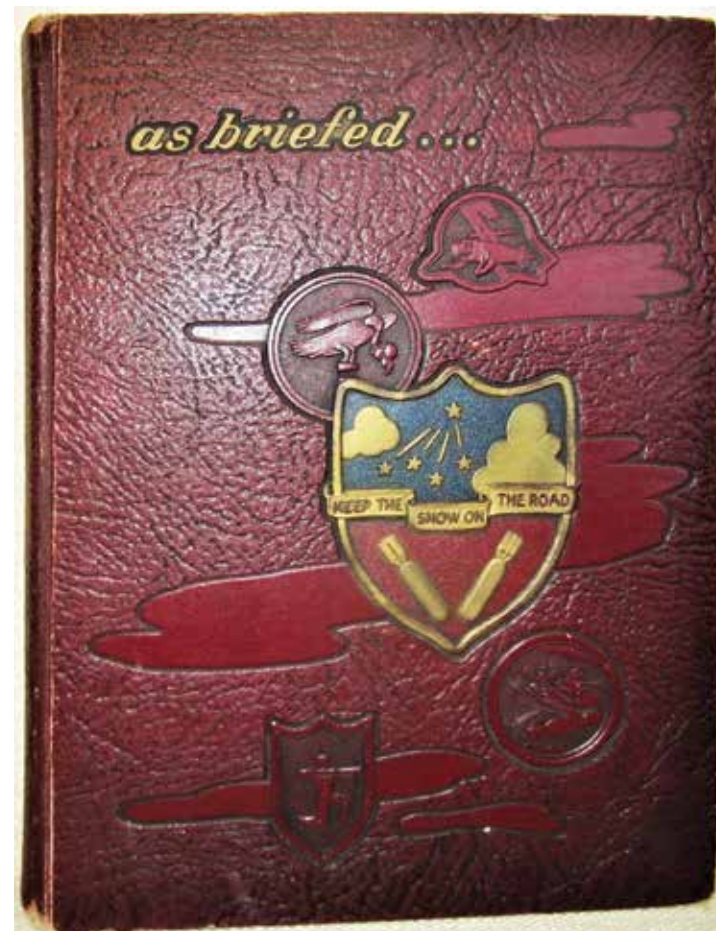
And time for relaxing and touring ...



Rockingham Castle, Corby England May 1945

### **As briefed ...**

Before VE-Day, some men were collecting money claiming they were going to publish an account of the 384th at Grafton Underwood after the war. I went along with it, but thought I would never see anything for my ten bucks. I was shocked in 1946 when I opened a package in the mail that contained the leather-bound book entitled, "*As briefed ...*" It has 210 pages of memories.



## 14. Moving to France

We had to crate everything up for shipment to our new base in Istress, France. Non-essentials couldn't go, so I gave my bicycle to the first boy I saw in Grafton Underwood. I hated to give it up. I never had a bike when I was a kid.

The last paragraph as written in "*As briefed ...*" sums it up:

*For occasionally, in the villages around Grafton Underwood, you'll still hear someone say "Okay, Joe!" instead of "Quite," and once in a while a native walks by humming "Take Me Out to the Ball Game."*

I wrote this account in my diary ...

*Left Grafton Underwood June 14, 1945 for Istress, France by Flying Fortress.  
Flying time 3 hrs. 25 min.*

Our mission at Istress (near Marseilles) was "... to play its part in flying the American army out of Europe. After that it might be the Pacific, where another war was still going on." (As written on Page 160 of "*As briefed ...*")

Our B-17's also took forced laborers home to Greece and other countries, from Berlin, Munich and other areas, who were captured and enslaved into the German war machine factories. These included infants born in Germany during the laborers' long stay.



US Army Hotel & Beach, Pavavas, France July 14, 1945



The Garden of  
Notre Dame,  
Marseilles, France,  
mostly spared,  
July 1946



The Orient Monument,  
Marseille, France  
July 1945



La Corniche,  
Le Prohete,  
Marseille, France  
July 1945

## 15.

### Buddies, Friends and Comrades

I recorded the following "Buddies In The Service" in my diary so I could always remember them:

Pfc. Edgar Hollister "Iggy"  
Mount Wolf, Penn.

Pfc. George Siragusa "Saggy"  
Bronx, New York City

Corporal Maurice Levy "Mush"  
40 and Girard Avenue  
Philadelphia, Penna.

Corporal George Phratore "Sayee"  
Wilkes-Barre, Penna.

S/Sgt. Herman Molsky  
Jeannette, Penna.

Corporal Kenneth Grassel  
Lancaster, Penna.

Pvt. Harry Kunkle "Von"  
Coplay, Penna.

Pvt. Charles B. Love "Charlie"  
Philadelphia, Penna.

First Sgt. George Ferry "Baldy"  
Forty Fort, Penna.

Sgt. John Hankle "Baldy"  
Hanover, Penna.

Pvt. David L. Goss "Gossie"  
Lewistown, Pa.

As shared earlier, I worked together with Gossie at the Giant. We volunteered together. We were fortunate to serve together until discharge.

We returned to Lewistown. Gossie married a nurse, Margie, and he worked for years as an upholsterer and detailer for Gano Motors, the Plymouth dealership in Lewistown. He was also known as Davey. We attended the same church and attended the reunion together.

Pvt. Wm. L. Jones "Jonesey"  
Suffolk, Virginia

Pfc. Irvin Gantz "Grants"  
Lewistown, Penna.

Pfc. Robert Roubaugh "Road"  
Johnstown, Penna.

Pvt. George Colwell "Fat"  
Blandburg, Penna.

Corporal Frank Wiseman "Rebel"  
Jackson, N. Carolina

Sgt. Joseph McAvoy "Mac"  
Philadelphia, Penna.

Pvt. Joseph Deskiwiecz "Desky"  
Conshohocken, Penna.

Pfc. Murray Gardner "Murphy"  
Suffolk, Virginia

Pfc. Sheldon Smith "Smitty"  
Johnstown, Penna.

Pfc. Albert Cook "Nigger"  
Roanoke, Virginia

Sgt. Wm. Lucas "Luke"  
Uniontown, Penna.

Sgt. Irvin Faust "Slim"  
Ringtown, Penna.

Pfc. Harry L. Peters "Pete (10 percent)"  
Harrisburg, Penna.

Pvt. Robert Holsinger "Human Parasite"  
Johnstown, Penna.

Pvt. Robert Martens "Budweiser"  
Trenton, New Jersey

S/Sgt. Andrew B. Sabin "Andy"  
Washington, D.C.

Sgt. Langston Shelton "Red"  
Pearsburg, Virginia

Pfc. Radford Worton "Hot Dog"  
Bristol, Virginia

Pfc. William Charles "Charlie"  
Philadelphia, Penna.

Sgt. Wm. Taylor "Bill"  
Ligonier, Penna.

M/Sgt. Henry Young "Hen"  
Langley Field, Virginia

Pfc. William Johnson "Bill"  
Philadelphia, Penna.

Pvt. Charles Chapman "Chappie"  
Washington, D.C.

Pfc. Roy Russell "Russ"  
Long Island, New York

Pfc. Daniel Silvere "Dan"  
Bryn Mawr, Penna.

Pvt. Lester Steele "Les"  
Uniontown, Penna.

Pvt. Joseph Nigborowitz "Nick"  
Gallitzin, Penna.

Cpl. Burton Cramer "Whitey"  
Punxsutawney, Penna.

Pvt. John Yoran "Johnnie"  
Pittsburgh, Penna.

Cpl. Paul Newhouse "Gashouse"  
Pittsburgh, Penna.

Pvt. Fred Piper "Pipe"  
Connellsville, Penna.

S/Sgt. Henry Nicks "Hennie"  
Six Mile Ford, Va.

S/Sgt. John Barley "Doc"  
Roaring Springs, Penna.

Pfc. Andrew Demko "Andy"  
Johnstown, Penna.

Pfc. John Carter "Hardhead"  
Berlin, Maryland

PFC Edward Foster "Ed"  
Lynchburg, Virginia

Pfc. George Spencer "Spence"  
Narrows, Virginia

Pfc. Donald Reed "Don"  
Philadelphia, Penna.

Pfc. George McGinley "Mac"  
Norfolk, Virginia

M/Sgt. Oppelt "Joe"  
Langley Field, Virginia

Corporal Herman Henry "Hennie"  
Pittsburgh, Penna.

Sgt. McNamee (Medical) "Mac"  
Philadelphia, Penna.

Pfc. Ted Calder "Ted"  
Philadelphia, Penna.

Pvt. John Dinuole "Dinube"  
Philadelphia, Penna.

Pfc. Raymond Leach "Midnight"  
Everette, Penna.

Pvt. William Over "Over there"  
Altoona, Penna.

S/Sgt. Joseph Popalis "Pop"  
Shenandoah, Penna.

Pvt. Thomas Harper "Harp"  
Philadelphia, Penna.

Cpl. Benjamin Needleman "Bennie"  
Philadelphia, Penna.

S/Sgt Joseph McCloskey "Mac"  
Pittsburgh, Penna.

Sgt. Jeffries "Jeff"  
Langley Field, VA

Pvt. Linus Cleveland "Zombie"  
Pittsburgh, Penna.

Cpl. Stephen Bokros "Shorty"  
Johnstown, Penna.

S/Sgt. Hiram Stauffer "Shorty"  
Newport News, Va.

Sgt. Wm. Vernon "Bill"  
Roanoke, Va.

Cpl. Joseph Marasco "Joe"  
Philadelphia, Penna

Cpl. Howard Austin "Wolf"  
Raytoul, Illinois

S/Sgt. Clyde Bradley "Gearie"  
Hampton, Virginia

S/Sgt. Donald Casey "Don"  
Philadelphia, Penna.

Cpl. John Determan "Johnnie"  
Washington, D.C.

Pfc. Joseph Friedman "Joe"  
Philadelphia, Penna.

Sgt. Frank Gerson "Geezel"  
Philadelphia, Penna.

Sgt. Howard Klome "Howdy"  
Front Royal, Va.

Sgt. William Diech "Bill"  
Sunbury, Penna.

Sgt. Ruben Loggins "Groggins"  
Tennessee

S/Sgt. Peter F. McKnight "Pete"  
Pittsburgh, Penna.

Pfc. Victor Pocarobh "Vic"  
Philadelphia, Penna.

Pfc. Thomas Thomas "Tom-Tom"  
Wheeling, West Va.

Pvt. John Stafurik "Slim" or "Stf"  
Trenton, New Jersey

S/Sgt. George Vest "King of the Mess Hall"  
Martinsburg, W. Va.

Cpl. Charles Wisener "Charlie"  
Lynchburg, VA

Cpl. Louis Lyons (Medical) "Lady-Killer"  
Philadelphia, Penna.

M/Sgt. Ted Leamon "Piggy"  
San Antonio, Texas

Pvt. Fred Sullivan "Sullie"  
Bridgeport, Conn.

Pvt. Cornelius Rice "Corny"  
Washington, D.C.

Cpl. Arthur Ferguson "Fergy"  
Baltimore, Maryland

Pvt. Harry Baker "Bake"  
Staunton, Va.

S/Sgt. Albert Caouette "Coyote"  
Fall River, Mass.

Sgt. Dominic Demaria "Dom"  
Philadelphia, Penna.

Sgt. Rufus Dotson "Rufe"  
Richmond, Va.

Cpl. Robert George "Bob"  
Utica, N. York

Pfc. Alvin Jackson "Jack"  
McKeesport, Penna.

Cpl. Steve Kuzak "Russian"  
Shamokin, Penna.

Pfc. Henry Snyder "Hennie"  
Lancaster, Penna.

Pvt. Ralph Masclenny "Mac"  
Philadelphia, Penna.

Sgt. William Miller "Wild Bill"  
Fredrick, Maryland

Pfc. George Rupp  
New Cumberland, Penna.

Pvt. Wm. Glassmyer "Glassie"  
Lemoine, Penna.

Sgt. Tony Valenta "Tony"  
Petersbug, Va.

Pfc. George Whalen  
Philadelphia, Penna.

Pfc. John Detwiler "Fat"  
State College, Penna.

S/Sgt. Richard Fitzmorris "Pitz"  
Boston, Mass.

Cpl. Francis Call "Brother"  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Pvt. James Brickner "Hairless"  
Beaver Falls, Penna.

Pvt. Alfred Herfort "Al"  
Green Bay, Wis.

Pvt. Paul Butler  
Roaring Springs, Pa.

Cpl. Joshua Briley "Josh"  
Pittsburg, Penna.

M/Sgt. George Guiles  
Lancaster, Penna.

T/Sgt. Wm. Mabry  
San Antonio, Texas

Pvt. Vernon Bray "Bray"  
Glouster, Va.

Pfc. Donovan Lines  
Boswell, Penna.

Pvt. Abe Sternick "Abe"  
Boston, Mass.

Cpl. Robert Simmons  
Memphis, Tenn.

## 16.

### Going Home and Discharge

With the Japanese surrender in August, it was clear our next big trip would be home. We hoped. We also knew more work was to be done in Europe, ferrying GIs for shipping out of Europe for home.

Then the orders came. With light at the end of the tunnel, we headed back to England so we could join up with thousands of others.

We boarded the USS Lake Champlain on October 20, 1945. It was a brand-new aircraft carrier. Transporting over three million troops home from the war was named Operation Magic Carpet.

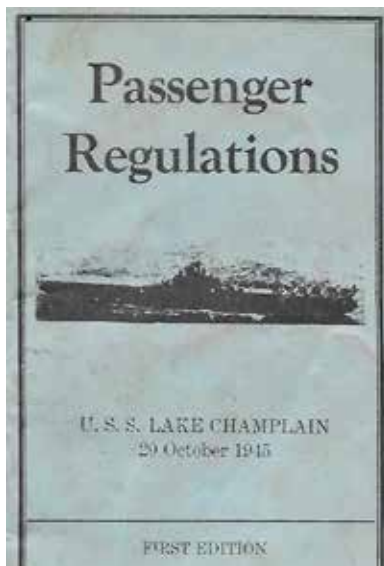
After landing in New York, I made my way to Fort Indiantown Gap, PA for processing and was discharged.



USS Lake Champlain (CV-39), 1945



Stamped on my boarding card (bottom) was the assignments of Hammock Mattress 143 and Mess Table No. 209



Name ..... 'A' D K AFT  
Emergency Station.....  
Lifeboat or Raft No. .... For RAFTS

Fill Emergency and Lifeboat Station in when Alloted by Officer in Charge.

Troop Space.....

MEAL HOURS  
(3rd. sitting)

Breakfast	8.30 a.m.
Dinner	1.00 p.m.
Supper	6.30 p.m.

Please retain this card and produce at Dining Room Entrance each meal.

Number 759--3

# Army of the United States

## SEPARATION QUALIFICATION RECORD

SAVE THIS FORM. IT WILL NOT BE REPLACED IF LOST

This record of job assignments and special training received in the Army is furnished to the soldier when he leaves the service. In its preparation, information is taken from available Army records and supplemented by personal interview. The information about civilian education and work experience is based on the individual's own statements. The veteran may present this document to former employers, prospective employers, representatives of schools or colleges, or use it in any other way that may prove beneficial to him.

1. LAST NAME—FIRST NAME—MIDDLE INITIAL <b>BODENSCHATZ WILLIAM J.</b>			MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS		
			10. MONTHS	11. GRADE	12. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY
2. ARMY SERIAL NO. <b>13 021 083</b>			3. GRADE <b>S-Sgt</b>		
4. SOCIAL SECURITY NO. <b>Unknown</b>			<b>3</b>	<b>Pvt.</b>	<b>Basic Training AC(521)</b>
			<b>54</b>	<b>S-Sgt</b>	<b>Supply NCO (831)</b>
5. PERMANENT MAILING ADDRESS (Street, City, County, State) <b>716 W. 57th. St. Mifflin County Lewistown, Pennsylvania</b>					
6. DATE OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE <b>29 Oct 1940</b>		7. DATE OF SEPARATION <b>31 Oct 1945</b>		8. DATE OF BIRTH <b>Jan 14 1917</b>	
9. PLACE OF SEPARATION <b>Unit "B" Separation Center Indiantown Gap M R Pa.</b>					
SUMMARY OF MILITARY OCCUPATIONS					
13. TITLE—DESCRIPTION—RELATED CIVILIAN OCCUPATION					
<b>SUPPLY NCO:--</b> Supervised the functions of procurement, receipt, storage issue and salvage of all supplies in an Army Air Force group. Supervised supply personnel in the estimating of stock requirements and in the preparation of requisitions, purchase orders, and various other forms and reports, peculiar to supply administration. Has knowledge of procurement regulations, warehousing procedures and regulations governing property accountability and responsibility.					

WD AGO FORM 100 1 JUL 1942 100

This form supersedes WD AGO Form 100, 15 July 1941, which will not be used.





Side One



Side Two

I received this base pass in the mail in 1946, and carried it in my wallet ever since. During a second trip with Rick to the Air Force Museum in Dayton, Ohio, in 1990, it came into use after 45 years. Waiting for the museum to open, we visited Wright Paterson Air Force Base.

While speaking with an air police gate guard, we learned he was from Carlisle, not far from Lewistown. Then Rick remembered the pass and asked if I still had it, so I took it from my wallet and presented it. The reaction was, "I never saw one of these before."

So, he called the officer of the day. He got off the phone, opened the airfield gate, approached us, snapped to attention and stated, "Go right in, Sir. Just stay off of the tarmac!"

This was during the beginning of Desert Shield, the air campaign leading up to Desert Storm of the Iraqi War. We could see several empty spaces where F-15's would normally park, already in action in the Gulf.



Side 1, Discharge, Wallet size, compliments of Bob Davis Men's Store in Lewistown



Side 2, Wallet size Discharge

**Home at Last!**



**My Uniform in 2018**



Each bar on left sleeve represents 6 months of overseas duty.



APPLICATION FOR SERVICEMEN'S READJUSTMENT ALLOWANCE  
STATE AGENCY

SERIAL OR SERVICE NUMBER  
Army } 13021083  
Navy }  
Marine Corps }  
Coast Guard }  
(Cross out Service not applicable)  
SOCIAL SECURITY No. \_\_\_\_\_

1. NAME IN FULL (Please print or type) (First) (Middle) (Last)  
William J. Bodenschatz  
2. HOME ADDRESS (Posterior) (Street or rural route) (County, city (name), town, or post office) (State)  
716 W. 5th St. Lawrenceville, Miller Co. Ga.  
3. I WAS BORN AT... (City, town, or post office) (State) (Day of month) (Month) (Year)  
Lilly, Pa. 14 January 1917

Periods of service in armed forces when separation is after September 16, 1940

Date of entrance upon active duty	Date of separation from active duty	Reason for separation
10-29-40	10-31-45	Honorable Discharge Drunk driving

I hereby make application for Readjustment Allowances under Title V of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944.

PENALTY PROVISION.—Title V, Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944: "Whoever shall obtain or receive any money, check, or allowance under this title, without being entitled thereto and with intent to defraud the United States, shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$1,000 or by imprisonment for not more than 1 year, or both."

Signed at Lawrenceville, Ga. on the 19th day of December, 1945

Witness: Helen E. Lewis  
APPLICANT SIGN HERE (Do not print) William J. Bodenschatz

Service listed above entitles veteran, if eligible, to 52 payments.  
(Number)

Information as to service and entitlement certified to by Helen E. Lewis  
(Signature of authorized State agency representative)

In connection with this application, I hereby certify that:

1. I am residing in the United States of America.
2. I am able to work and available for suitable work.
3. I have registered for work with the local public employment office.
4. I have not, during the past five (5) weeks; (a) failed, when referred, to apply for work or attend an available free training course, or (b) refused to accept work.
5. I am unemployed because: Discharge - U.S. Army

Last Employer:

Name: Unemployed since Discharge  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

William J. Bodenschatz  
Veteran's Signature



# THE SENTINEL

SECOND SECTION TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 1953 PAGE ELEVEN



## AFA Squadron Officers Are Installed

Randall Leopold, national vice president of the Air Force Association, congratulates George Speece, newly elected commander of Mifflin County Squadron 1, as squadron officers were installed at the March meeting of the organization in the new headquarters on West Fifth Street. Other new squadron officers in the photo are: (l. to r.) Harry Thatcher, executive council, William Bodenschatz, executive council; Robert Black, vice commander; Robert Nale, treasurer; Styron Reichenbach, executive council, and Paul Foss, secretary. Absent at the time was Rudolph Reynolds, squadron chaplain.

## Charter for Scouts Sponsored by AFA

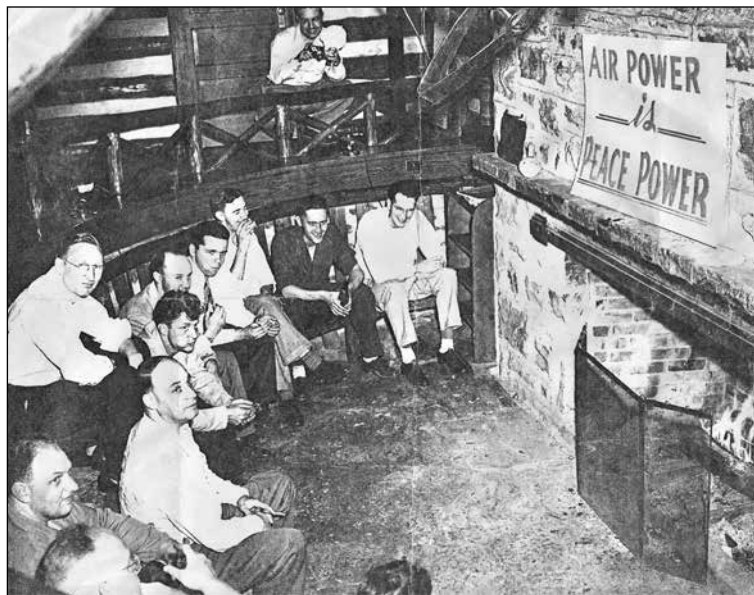


Boy Scout Troop 2, sponsored by the Air Force Association, received its charter in week-end ceremonies at the AFA headquarters. Scouts seated are Thomas Herbster, Terrance Gates, Harry Saxton, Gary Crisman and Joseph Bossinger. Standing, left to right: George Speece, William J. Bodenschatz, Alden Crisman, Scoutmaster; Styron Reichenbach, George Herbster, Anthony Simitski, William McClure, Neighborhood Commissioner.





Staying in touch.



Air Force Association meeting, 1950's, Bill on left, in front of balcony.

## Looking Back on a Sentimental Event

with KATEY and ROSS LEHMAN

I'm a man of sentiment, and my children tell me repeatedly that I'm always taking sentimental journeys.

There are haunting and indescribable moments that occur in our lives, and I — for one — always look to someone to understand that fleeting or enduring moment.

That's why Bill Bodenschatz stirred a Christmas memory within me recently when he told me he was a member of the 384th Bombardment Group in England during World War II, and we talked at some length about our mutual experiences with B-17s, Flying Fortresses.

It was then I recalled my Christmas as a prisoner of war in a German prison camp. It was in 1944. I was confined with a bunch of American and English wounded, men with arms and legs amputated or blind and maimed so they were no longer combative.

We prisoners decided to stage a Christmas show. I was selected to direct a glee club, because I was a passable tenor, which blossomed in the shower, over a shared scotch, or at the sign of a bird in flight.

We were a motley group. There were

Australians, South Africans, English with cockney and Yorkshire accents, Americans with southern drawls and Brooklyn accents, and an Irishman (from Ireland) who sang anything with characteristic abandon.

We rehearsed, under my faltering direction, songs not only with a Yuletide significance but also "Kentucky Babe," "Sweet Molly Malone," "Wait Till The Sun Shines, Nelly," some British melodies I can't recall, and all the sweet, communal tunes that we loved.

In the meantime, all of us in the prison compound saved our Red Cross rations of sugar and raisins. It was a secret maneuver. By Christmas, with the clandestine help of a few prisoners, all of us would have some "white lightnin'" to drink on Christmas Eve, the time for our concert. I never did find out where the concoction was brewed.

An hour or two before our Christmas show, the "Oh, Be Joyful" fluid was circulated, and it was the beginning of a memorable evening.

Various skits were presented to a fully appreciated and spirited crowd of prisoners. The jokes, some aimed subtly or broadly at our German captors, received exuberant guffaws. We were high, not only from the spirits, but also from just being there together and sharing our mutual humor and ourselves.

Our glee club was the final number. It was a ridiculous looking ensemble. Some blind glee members were led on stage, others crutched to their places, and some one-armed singers stood next to each other in order that one could change pages for the other. As the conductor, I shucked one crutch and stood one-legged with an arm free for my mid-directions.

We performed our repertoire. Then we sang the first verse and chorus of "Silent Night." I turned and asked the audience to join us. Suddenly, I noticed tears were rolling down my cheeks. I brushed them away. I wasn't alone. There in front of me were the soldiers singing and crying, tears symbolizing their wants, hopes, and yearnings. The whole place was one spirit, crying for peace and love.

Everyone rose, we joined full-hearted in "Auld Lang Syne," and the world in that small place, that moment, was us. We sang as we will never sing again, because we knew this moment was fragile but everlasting. It was a tender sentimental journey. — ross

PAGE FOUR—Thursday, December 26, 1979

Centre County's Own Daily Newspaper

### THE CENTRE DAILY TIMES

CLAUDE G. AIKENS, Publisher (1915-1980)  
Charles T. Akers, Chairman  
Eugene J. Reilly, Associate Publisher  
Steve Braver, Business Manager  
Jerome Weisman, Executive Editor  
Bill Welch, Editor

Published every evening except Sunday  
Second class postage paid at  
State College, Pa. 16801

MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. Box 83  
State College, Pa. 16801

POSTMASTER:  
Send address changes to above address.  
MAIN OFFICE: 3440 East College Avenue  
State College, Pa. 16801  
Phone 227-8964

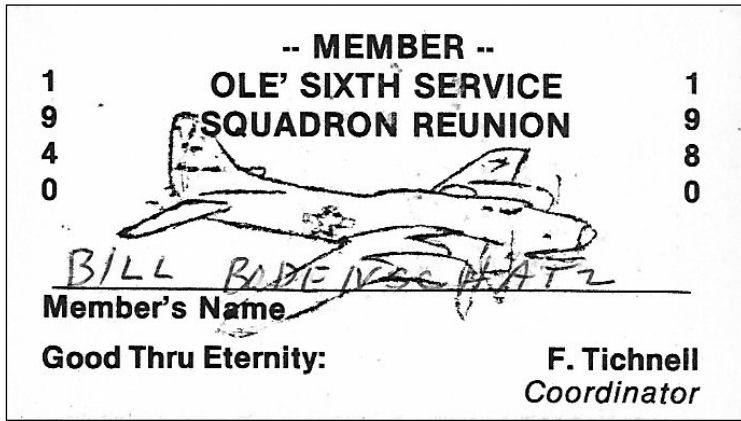
STATE COLLEGE OFFICE:  
119 South Fraser Street, Phone 234-0329  
BELLEROS OFFICE:  
138 West High Street, Phone 385-4366  
PHILIPSBURG OFFICE:  
220 E. Presque Isle St., Phone 342-6621

MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS  
The Associated Press is entitled to the use for reproduction of all the local news printed in this newspaper as well as all A.P. news dispatches.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICES—By carrier, 90 cents per week, \$42.35 per year. By mail in County (delivered day following publication), \$42.50. By mail out of county, depending on Postal Zone.

THE CENTRE DAILY TIMES (USPS 098-760)  
Is published by Betty's Printing & Publishing Co.  
State College, Pa. 16801





Bill and Lucile — 1980 Reunion



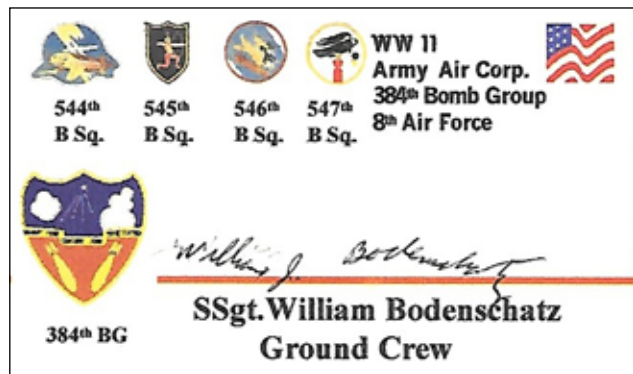
1980 Reunion



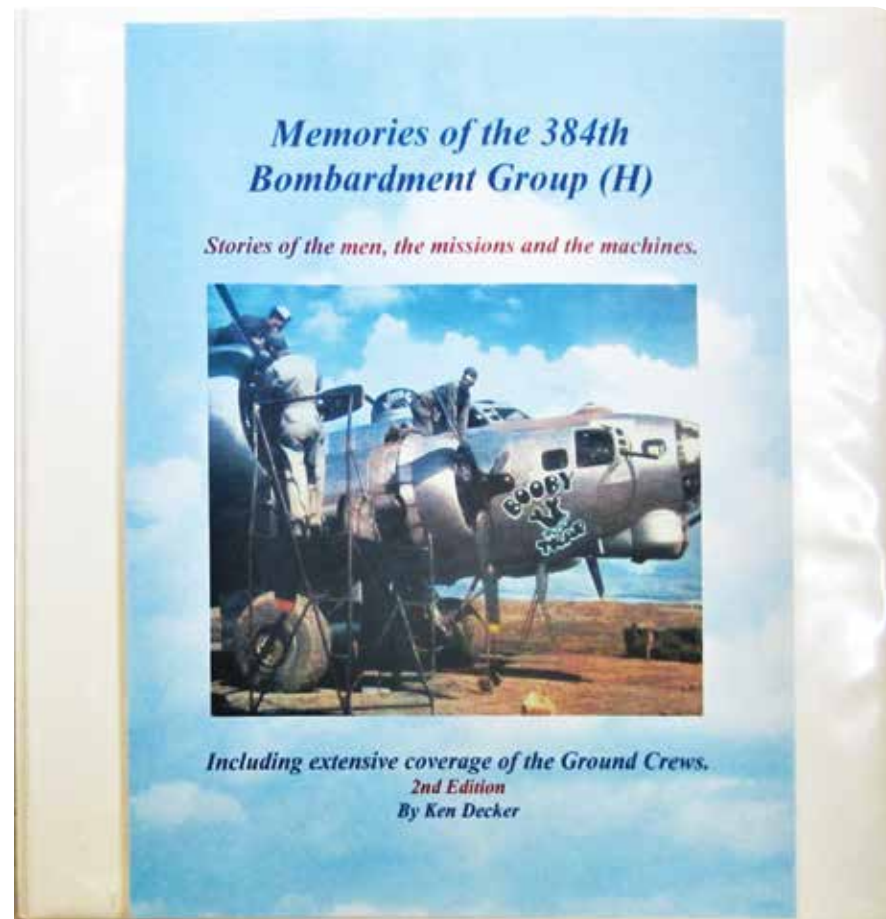
"Gossie"  
"Davey"  
Goss  
1980 Reunion

Hankles on left,  
person on right  
not labeled.  
1980 Reunion





Membership Card 1990s



In 2002 Ken Decker, historian of the 384th, published his 2nd edition *Memories of the 384th Bombardment Group (H)*. Rick was in contact with Ken and contributed a number of my photographs that now appear in it.

This edition featured a special section about the ground crews. It is in 3-ring binder form to allow additions along the way, and contains over 700 pages. It is a comprehensive history of the 384th in WWII.

## 18. Leftovers

I recorded my physical statistics in my diary:

Oct. 29, 1940	Weight: 133
1941:	Weight: 150, Color of hair: Light Height: 5 Ft., 10½ in., Color of eyes: Gray
Mar. 1942	Weight: 150
June 22, 1942	Weight: 143
Aug. 19, 1942	Weight: 143
Sept. 12, 1942	Weight: 140



In the 'Officers I have Met' section of my diary, I recorded the names and locations of 36 officers that I thought I wanted to remember.

I also recorded 14 'Civilians I Have Met' that I wanted to remember.

Not to forget 'The Folks Back Home' I recorded 20 relatives and friends.



The Autograph section of my diary is limited to those sentiments shared from Buddies in 1942. One in particular stands out, from "Dutch" H. Eugene Stauffer on September 6, 1943 at the Army Air Base in Hattiesburg, Miss.:

*One big happy family, filled with rumors and itchy feet.*





I tried to record as many of 'The Places I Have Been' in my diary, along with a few comments, during my time in the states:

*Ellington Field and Houston, Texas*

Sam Jancinto Memorial, oil wells, hospitable people.  
Hurricane of Sept. 23rd, 1941.  
Largest air base we stopped.  
In Blue-Army, which won the maneuvers.

*New Orleans, La.*

Near a large lake, French Quarter, Boulevard of the States.

*Galveston, Texas- Stewart*

Beach on the Gulf of Mexico, the sea wall and low built buildings

*Muroc, Calif.*

Center of Mojave Desert. Surrounded by snow-capped peaks.  
A dry lake which is 30 miles long and 7 miles wide.  
Sand storms on the average of three a week.

*Palm Springs, Calif.*

"Playground of the stars."  
Large swimming pool and beautiful terrain.

*Yuma, Arizona*

Quiet during the day but lively at night.  
The "16 Club" held my interest. Party at "The Cottage."

*Mexico*

Same landscape as Arizona.  
Drank some Mexican tequila, same as T.N.T.  
Visited an Indian reservation.

*Yorktown, VA.*

Battlefield and monuments.  
Large sandy beach.

*Hattiesburg, Miss.*

Town full of soldiers, cold shoulder from the civilians,  
the mud is terrible.

*Newport News, Va.*

Dirty city and no recreation for soldiers.

*Wilmington, N.C.*

Best camp site we ever had.  
Clean city.  
Had plenty of fun at Cap'n Ben's.

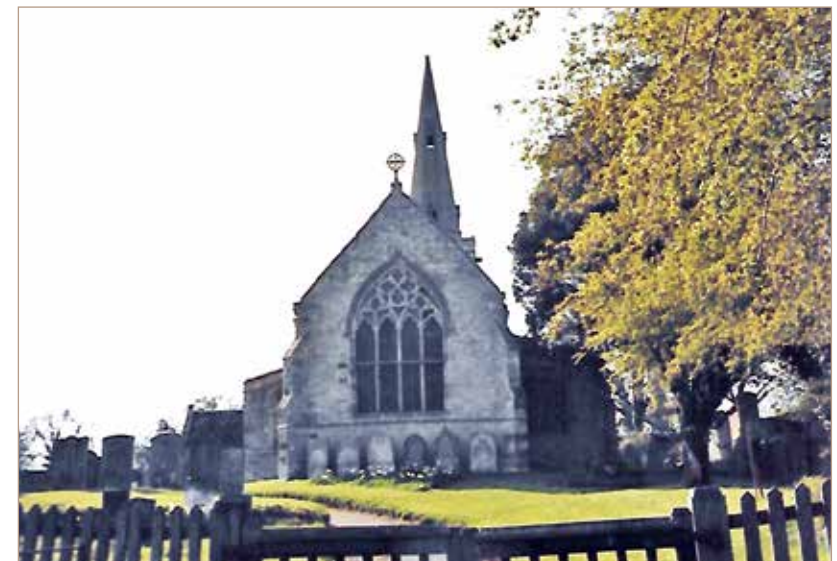
*March Field, Calif.*

Large runways, saw the B-19, very good chow.



## 19. Postscript

In 1992, Rick was able to vacation in London, so they went to Grafton Underwood. With his description and photos, little has changed since we arrived in 1943. Parts of Station 106 remain. Some buildings, and part of the main runway. (Of which he brought a chunk of it home for me.) Unfortunately, a month before his arrival, they tore down the building my parachute shop occupied. But it was wonderful to see the old place, through these photos.



The village church with a special stained-glass window.



This stained glass window in St. James the Apostle Church in Grafton Underwood is dedicated to those of the 384th who gave their lives for the freedom of England.

It depicts a B-17 flying over the white cliffs of Dover as it returns from a combat mission.

The memorial window, called "Coming Home," was dedicated May 21, 1983.



A replica of this window is a part of the chapel windows at the 8th Air Force Museum in Savannah, Ga., honoring those of the 384th lost in the war.



This memorial rests at the end of one of the old runways along a public road, for all to see the honors given to the 384th.

The front (right) reads: *The 384th Bombardment Group (H) – 8th Air Force of the United States of America Flew From This Airfield 1943-1945.*

Engraved on the based is: *544th Squadron.*



The back of the memorial reads: *The First And Last Bombs Dropped By the 8th Air Force Were From Airplanes Flying from Grafton Underwood.*

The monument was dedicated October 5, 1985.

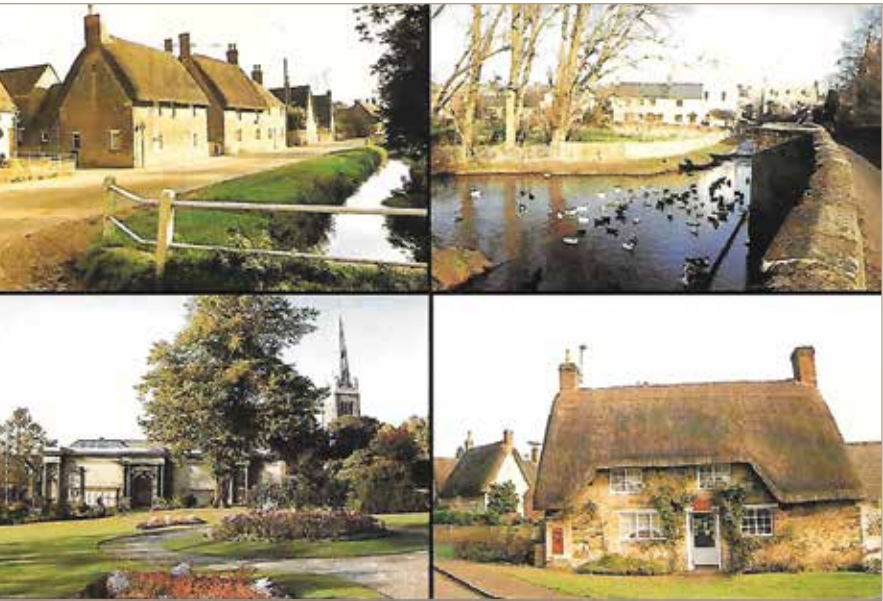


The traditional British phone booth has long been eliminated in England. However, this one survives in Grafton Underwood as Historically Registered, in honor of the American GIs who used it to call their English girlfriends.

Opposite page: Several buildings on the base were still standing in 1992, as a testament to the memories to the thousands of GIs in the 384th.



## 20. Debriefing



My box of “stuff” has been nicely organized in support of this mission, *“Five Years to Freedom.”*

If you ever want to see the real McCoy — my collection — just go to Rick’s house and ring the doorbell. You will hear it play, *“Take Me Out to the Ball Game.”*

Just like the Brits in Grafton Underwood are probably still singing today.





## Sources

The photographs, documents and memorabilia of S/Sgt. William J. Bodenschatz: the "Collection"

"As briefed..." The history of the 384th Bombardment Group(H) at Grafton Underwood, England

"Memories of the 384th Bombardment Group(H)," 2nd Edition, 2002 by Ken Decker

[www.384thbombgroup.com](http://www.384thbombgroup.com) | The website of the 384th Bombardment Group (H)

*A special thanks to Diane, Dan and Rob, for sharing their keepsakes and stories they experienced through the years.*



## Five Years for Freedom

*... My Memories of the U.S. Army Air Corps, 1940-1945*

Anticipating war, the U.S. Army Air Corp started an immense build-up of strength and force in 1940.

Recognizing the opportunity for learning, advancement and service to our country, William "Bill" Bodenschatz volunteered for service in the Army Air Corps. He moved from base to base, and then to England with the 384th Bombardment Group (H) of B-17's during World War II, then to France after

VE Day. His 443rd Sub-Depot ground support unit helped the 384th B-17 bombers to "Keep the Show on the Road."

This is a collection of his memories — photos, documents and memorabilia saved from his five years of military service.



Above: Section leaders of the 443rd Sub-Depot ground support unit of the 384th Bomb Group. In 1944, the 443rd won the Stitts Trophy for being the most proficient unit of the 8th Air Force. Front row, right end, is S/Sgt. William Bodenschatz.

From its base in Grafton Underwood, England, the 384th Bombardment Group (H) was the first, and the last, to bomb Germany in WW II. They flew 316 missions and dropped 22,415 tons of bombs. Killed in action during those missions were 1,625 men, with 159 B-17s lost in combat. During their bombing raids, they destroyed 199 attacking aircraft while defending themselves.



This stained glass window in St. James the Apostle Church in Grafton Underwood is dedicated to those of the 384th who gave their lives for the freedom of England.