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**Research Materials/Source Documents
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On the sleeves the generals wore gold 6-pointed stars above an eagle in flight while the other officers had stripes below the eagle. The eagle was worn by flying personnel only. The four junior officers wore gold stripes 5 mm. in width while the senior officers had the same stripes but worn above a larger one, 15 mm. in width. Stripes and eagles were placed above a black background.

The Sergeant-Majors wore shoulder boards similar in shape to those of the officers but made of sky blue cloth; all had four gold pips, and three, two or one stripe, depending on the class of rank. The 1st Sergeant, Sergeant and Corporal wore shoulder straps, the former with blue piping.

Many Yugoslav airmen managed to escape to the Middle East and to Britain where eventually they manned two R.A.F. squadrons. At that time the Yugoslav government was reorganised in Britain and eventually new regulations were published in order to standardise the Yugoslav badges, by then worn on British uniforms.

The air force officers obtained new shoulder straps, made of grey-blue cloth on which the junior officers wore from one to four gold 6-pointed stars, the senior officers wore the stars, from one to three, below a crown and the generals had crossed swords between the crown and the stars. The Field-Marshal (Voivoda) wore the crowned White Eagle of Yugoslavia on the shoulder straps and a gold crown above the cuffs. Stripes, as before, were worn on the cuffs, but the generals wore from one to three large gold stripes below a 6-pointed gold crown. The officers of the Anti-Aircraft wore grey-blue uniforms with the usual pre-war air force cap badge on the peaked cap but also wore black facing on the collar, gold stripes on the shoulder straps and crossed cannons ensigned by the eagle in flight above the cuffs. Rows of gold leaves were embroidered on the peaked cap's visor as before the war.

Later, when Communist orientated Yugoslav forces were organised under the name of National Liberation Army, new rank badges were adopted for wearing on the sleeves. They consisted of a combination of 6-pointed stars and stripes, made of silver for N.C.O.s and gold for officers.

The United States of America

Plate 29. Historical Background

As early as the American Civil War balloons were used for tactical observation by the Union and Confederate armies and in 1892 a Balloon Section was attached to the telegraph branch of the Signal Corps. Balloons fitted with telegraph apparatus were used again during the Spanish-American War and in 1902 a balloon unit was formed at Fort Myer, Va.

On 1 August 1907 an Aeronautical Division was created in the Office of the Chief Signal Officer 'to study the flying machine and the possibility of adapting it to military purposes'. The new organisation was composed of one officer and two enlisted men.

The first successful flight took place at Fort Myer in 1909 in a Wright brothers' biplane piloted by Orville Wright, with Lieutenant (later Major General) Frank P. Lahm as a passenger; it lasted 1 hour, 20 minutes and 40 seconds. Lieutenants Lahm and F. E. Humphreys subsequently became the first qualified pilots.

On 18 July 1914 an Act of Congress created the Aviation Section of the Signal Corps and in the following September the 1st Aero Squadron was formed at San Diego, California, with a strength of sixteen officers and seventy-seven enlisted men.

The first badge of Military Aviator, which was instituted on 27 May 1913 depicts the American Eagle clutching the crossed flags of the Signal Corps, the whole suspended from a tablet; it is a reminder of the early association of the aviation with the corps. The badge was made of 14 kt. gold and was intended as an award compared to the marksmanship and gunnery badges, not as a qualification badge.

The aviators wore, of course, the collar badges of the Signal Corps, but by 1917 manufacturers added small wings to the original badges of the Signal Corps. These unofficial officers' badges became very popular with the result that many variations appeared on the market. In most cases the wings were made of silver and were attached to the centre of the bronze badges (A, B); small and larger variations of this pattern were in existence. Another variation of the aviators' collar badge shows the wings in bronze at the top of the badge, which has no torch (C). Officialdom had eventually to recognise the need for a special badge for aviators and on 27 April, 1918 a new collar badge was authorised showing the usual signal device with a winged hemisphere superimposed on its centre (D). A variation of this badge shows a smaller hemisphere and somewhat straighter wings. The enlisted men wore the same device but on a bronze disc.

When World War 1 broke out in 1914 the American military aviation had five aircraft while by the end of that war it had received no less than 2,500: these figures reflect the expansion of the Aviation Section, which in May 1918 was renamed the Air Service Branch of the Signal Corps. Later in 1926 it became the Air Corps and in 1941 Air Forces. Aviation broke its links with the Signal Corps in August 1915 and was under the General Staff until March 1942, when it became autonomous (U.S. Army Air Forces) as was the case with the Army Ground Forces and Army Service Forces.

The United States of America entered the first conflict on 6 April 1917 and sent an Army Expeditionary Force to Europe. Earlier many American volunteers had joined the Allied cause, for instance Major Raoul Lufbery, French by birth, who at the age of six in 1891 emigrated with his parents to the United States. Later he became the mechanic of a famous French stunt flyer. During the war he joined the Escadrille Lafayette, composed of American volunteers and in April 1918 became the commander of the U.S. 94th Aero Squadron. He was killed on 19 May 1918. Captain Eddie Rickenbacker, the American ace with 25 victories, became the squadron commander the following September. The 94th Aero Squadron's badge, painted on its planes, depicted a top hat, painted with stars and stripes, which flies through a ring.

The first qualification badges were authorised on 15 August 1917. The American Shield sided by wings was granted to the Military Aviator (1) and the shield with one wing only to the Junior Military Aviator (9). However, this ruling was changed on 27 October when a star was added to the wings of the Military Aviator (8) and the original badge, without star, was given to the Junior and Reserve Military Aviator.

The original badges were embroidered in silver wire, with gold initials 'US' on the shield, on dark blue cloth background. As each badge was individually hand embroidered many varied in style and shape (1, 3); by the summer of 1918 manufacturers had introduced metal badges, in three separate pieces mounted on a dark blue felt background (2, 4). Subsequently the three parts were attached together (6, 10) and finally the blue background was discarded and a pin was fixed at the back of the badge (7).

In the meantime, as has been already mentioned, in October 1917 the Junior and Reserve Military Aviator changed from the half-wing to the full-wing without star, and the half-wing became the badge of the Observer until 29 December 1918, when the letter 'O' with one wing was adopted as his badge (11) and the previous one was definitively discarded. Eventually metal 'O' badges appeared (12), then badges with the rounded 'O' were introduced (13) until finally, on 21 December 1918 a solid metal pattern was adopted (14).

On 29 December 1917 wings embroidered in white silk were authorised

for Military Aeronaut and Junior and Reserve Military Aeronaut, with and without star respectively. Such badges were also made in silver embroidery and later in metal also.

The Enlisted Pilot's wing and the large square sleeve patch illustrated at the bottom of this plate were also made of white silk and, as usual, variations exist of both: the latter is a 1918 specimen; early badges had numbers at the top to identify the squadron; enlisted airmen wore only the propeller below the number, mechanics wore a ring around the propeller and balloon mechanics had a balloon in place of the propeller.

An official badge depicting a bomb sided by wings was worn during the first war by Bombing Military Aviators.

A process of standardisation started after the end of World War 1: on 25 January 1919 the definitive qualification wings made of oxidised silver were introduced for Military Aviator and Junior and Reserve Military Aviator (see Plate 36, Pilot); for Military Aeronaut and Junior and Reserve Military Aeronaut (see Plate 36, Balloon Pilot); for Observer Qualified as Pilot and a half-wing was awarded for Observer.

On 12 November 1920 more changes took place: the winged American Shield became the badge of the Airplane Pilot and another badge, an airship superimposed on wings was created for the Airship Pilot, the Observer's half-wing was abolished and a round winged 'O' with blank centre was adopted for the Airplane Observer and the winged balloon (see Plate 36, Balloon Pilot) became the badge of the Balloon Observer. More changes took place later, as will be explained in connection with the wings illustrated on plate 36.

In 1926 embroidered badges were re-introduced for wearing on the wool service coat.

Plate 30. Cap Badges and Other Insignia

Various cap and collar devices worn by American aviators during World War 2 are illustrated in this plate. Although the U.S. Army Air Forces was the organisation that eventually became the modern U.S.A.F., the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard had their own aviations also. The personnel of these organisations wore the normal cap badges of their parent services, i.e. the U.S. Army, Navy, etc. but in the context of this book these technically become air force insignia.

All ranks of the U.S.A.A.F. wore appropriate cap badges as their counterparts of the U.S. Army. Aviation cadets wore the winged propeller instead. Towards the end of World War 1 the N.C.O.s of the Air Service used a bronze unofficial cap badge which depicted the winged propeller surrounded by a wreath similar to that of Warrant/Flight Officer illustrated.

The winged propeller was the branch of service badge of aviation and as such was worn by all ranks on the collar. The first development of this badge has been seen already in the historical background of this chapter. The actual winged propeller device was adopted on 17 July 1918, on its own for officers and on a disc for enlisted men. These badges were made of blackened bronze although the propeller was usually silvered. Many slightly different variations exist because these badges were manufactured in America, Britain and France. A smaller badge was worn by officers on the shirt's collar.

After that war gilded badges were introduced for officers and brass ones for enlisted men; the officers' propeller was still made of silver. Olive-drab plastic badges were used by enlisted men during World War 2. The branch of service badge was worn together with the 'U.S.' national insignia and during the last war the officers wore these badges in pairs on the service jacket, the 'U.S.' on the collar, the winged propeller on the lapels. The latter and the rank badge were worn on the shirt's collar. Enlisted men wore the 'U.S.' disc on the right and the branch badge on a disc on the left side of the collar. The arm-of-service colours of the Air Corps were ultramarine and orange.

The aviation personnel of the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard wore the cap badges of their parent services although naval aviation officers and aviation cadets of the U.S.M.C. had different badges attached on the left side of the garrison cap. The Naval Aviator and Naval Aviation Observer wore a miniature gold metal aviation insignia on the left side of the green winter working garrison cap until the spring of 1943 when they were obliged to follow naval regulations, and replaced it with a small replica of the usual cap device. Aviation Cadets of the U.S.M.C. wore a bronze winged propeller on the garrison cap and shoulder straps during the same period and a gold and silver device with the dress uniform. Eventually they became part of the U.S. Navy until commissioned and the above-mentioned badges were abolished.

All the officers and the Chief Warrant Officer of the U.S. Navy Aviation wore the normal naval cap badge made of metal or embroidery, the eagle of which faced left until May 1941, and right as its correct placing should be, from then on. The American Shield, below the eagle reappears on the cap badges of the U.S. Coast Guard of which it is the major insignia, and on its own is worn on the shoulder boards, above the cuff stripes. It is worn in white or blue version according to uniform, on the cuffs of enlisted men.

All ranks of the U.S. Marine Corps wore the Marine Corps emblem on the head-dress and collar. The larger badges were worn on the peaked cap in gilt and silver for officers' dress uniform, brass for enlisted men's dress uniform and bronze for all ranks' service uniform. The rope of the

officers' badges was free of the anchor while in the case of enlisted men the rope and the anchor were in one piece. There was no rope in the smaller badges worn on the garrison cap, and on the collar. In the latter case badges were worn in pairs.

Plate 31. Officers' and Warrant Officers' Rank Insignia

The aviation personnel used the rank insignia of their parent service, i.e. the U.S.A.A.F. had those of the U.S. Army, the U.S. Navy Aviation those of the U.S. Navy and so on, in accordance with dress regulations.

The metal badges illustrated in the centre of this plate were common to all. These rank badges were primarily used by the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps while the main rank insignia of the U.S. Navy and Coast Guard were worn in the form of stripes on the sleeves and on the shoulder boards. Their rank titles also differed from those of the first two services.

The rank of Flight Officer was instituted in the summer of 1942 as an opportunity for cadets who did not qualify for a commission in the U.S.A.A.F. The rank was equivalent to that of Warrant Officer, Junior Grade.

The marines' warrant titles and badges differed from those of their army counterparts: initially, during World War 2, the Chief (commissioned) Warrant Officer wore a gold and blue bar and had the title of Chief Marine Gunner, Chief Pay Clerk, Chief Quartermaster Clerk or Chief Quartermaster Clerk (A. and I.). The latter initials were added to distinguish this title of the Adjutant and Inspector's Department from that of the Quartermaster's Department. The Warrant Officers (not 'chief') wore their departmental insignia in lieu of a rank badge.

Later the titles were changed to Commissioned Warrant Officer and Warrant Officer, and different rank badges were adopted also.

The main uniforms of the U.S.M.C. were the blue dress, the green service uniform and light khaki shirt and trousers for summer wear; on the latter smaller rank badges were used, about five-eighths of the normal size for shoulder straps. Gold/Silver or bronze departmental badges were used according to uniform.

There were blue, green, grey, white and light khaki naval uniforms, with rank insignia on the sleeves, on the shoulder boards or on the collar accordingly. Both the sleeve stripes and shoulder boards were worn on the overcoat only, otherwise only one or the other type of insignia was used.

The flag officers wore stars and the fouled anchor on their shoulder boards or stripes on the cuffs, contrary to the other officers who had stripes only, on both.

There were stripes of 2 in. in width for the flag officers, $\frac{1}{2}$ in. and $\frac{1}{4}$ in.

for the other officers in gold and black variations, the latter for naval grey working uniform and the green working uniform of aviation officers.

The Chief (commissioned) Warrant Officer and the Warrant Officer were identified by broken stripes of different width as illustrated: gold and blue or black and grey, according to uniform. (See also Plate 34.) Small metal rank badges were worn by the officers on the light khaki summer shirt.

Plate 32. Army Aviation N.C.O.s' Rank Badges

The Non-commissioned Officers of the U.S.A.A.F. wore army pattern chevrons, consisting of actual chevrons and arcs, on both upper sleeves. Technicians' grades were introduced in January 1942 and they wore the initial 'T' below their chevrons. Some unauthorised versions were manufactured and worn by Line N.C.O.s before and during World War 2, with a small winged propeller in place of the Technicians' 'T'.

All chevrons were 80 mm. in width and were machine embroidered in khaki (O.D.) silk or woven in sandy grey silk (for summer shirt) on a dark blue background.

Oblique single khaki (O.D.) stripes on the left forearm identified each three years of honourable Federal service. Small yellow inverted chevrons on the left forearm each identified six months of World War 1 overseas service while yellow stripes were granted for World War 2 service. One yellow inverted chevron was worn on the right forearm for each wound received in combat before the introduction of the Purple Heart.

Plate 32/33. Army Aviation Cadets' Rank Badges

The Flying Cadets originally wore slate blue uniforms with black chevrons similar to those worn by the cadets of the U.S. Military Academy. Later they were re-designated Aviation Cadets and were given khaki uniforms with khaki chevrons on dark blue background. The chevrons worn on coats are 80 mm. in width while those worn on overcoats are 190 mm. wide and, as shown on Plate 33, they differed considerably from the former.

Plate 34. Petty Officers' Ratings—U.S. Navy and Coast Guard

Besides the more obvious similarity in dress between the U.S. Navy and the Coast Guard, the latter in peace-time depends from the Secretary of Treasury while in war-time it comes under the control of the Secretary of the Navy.

Both had the same rating badges, which consisted of the eagle, the arc

and chevrons and speciality mark that in the case of ordinary petty officers were blue on white background for white uniform, while for the blue uniform the eagle and speciality mark were white and the chevrons red, all on blue background.

The Chief Petty Officer wore officers' type uniforms, the arc above the chevrons and, on the blue coat, had the option of wearing silver or white eagle and speciality mark. The Chief Petty Officer of outstanding record, i.e. with not less than 12 years of service, three consecutive good conduct awards, or equivalent qualifications, wore gold chevrons with silver embroidered eagle and speciality mark.

Personnel of the Seaman Branch (Boatswain's Mate, Quartermaster, Fire Controlman, etc.) wore the rating badge on the right upper sleeve while the personnel of Aviation and other branches had the badge on the left sleeve. Initially the eagle always faced left as did the eagle of the officers' cap badge but during World War 2 some new regulations ordered that the eagle of the rating badges should always face towards the front of the wearer, regardless if placed on one or the other sleeve.

Only speciality marks were shown on rating badges, never distinguishing marks (Plate 37) which were proficiency badges.

Enlistment stripes of the same colour as the chevrons were worn one for every four years of service on the forearm, below the rating badge. White cuff markings were worn on blue and white dress jumpers and identify Fireman or Seaman class. They were 120 mm. long, made of a narrow white ribbon, 5 mm. in width, sewn on both cuffs.

The aviation cadets did not wear the line star on the cuffs and shoulder boards until 1943 and the winged propeller worn by U.S.M.C. cadets was abolished at about the same time.

The personnel of all branches of the U.S. Coast Guard wore their distinctive shield above the stripes both on the cuffs and shoulder boards or in the case of ratings and seamen on the right forearm. The shield was about 25 mm. in height and was embroidered in gold for officers and warrant officers; in silver for chief petty officers and white or blue for enlisted men, according to uniform. The shield was black on green winter aviation uniform.

Plate 35. N.C.O.s Rank Badges—U.S. Marine Corps

The U.S. marines used three types of chevrons: gold on red background for the dress blue uniform, green on red for green winter uniform and on light khaki for summer shirt.

The N.C.O.s of the Line have chevrons joined by arcs while those of the Staff had theirs joined by ties, i.e. straight bars. The marine advanced into the Line or Staff careers by becoming a Private 1st Class (6th Grade)

but only when he reached the 3rd Grade rank did the arc or the tie identify the branch to which he belonged. Aviation N.C.O.s wore ties under their chevrons as aviation was one of the seven specialisations of Staff.

The lozenge within the First Sergeant badge was adopted during World War 2 while the badge with three chevrons and three arcs was worn by the Sergeant Major and Master Gunnery Sergeant (1st Grade Line). The Master Technical, Paymaster and Quartermaster Sergeant wore the 1st Grade Staff badge. Two arcs were used by the Gunnery Sergeant and two ties by the Technical and Supply Sergeants and Drum Major, one arc by the Platoon Sergeant and one tie by the Staff Sergeant. The remaining ranks were those of Sergeant, Corporal and P.F.C.

Before September 1942 the rank badges were worn on both upper sleeves but new orders were issued on the 9th of that month, which prescribed the use of chevrons only on the left sleeve.

Enlistment, or service stripes, were worn one for each four years of service.

Civil Air Patrol

The Civil Air Patrol was a civilian volunteer organisation which became an auxiliary body of the U.S.A.A.F. by Executive Order of 29 April 1943.

The C.A.P.'s activities included patrolling the coastal water in an anti-submarine defence role, air courier and transport services, etc., as well as its pre-military training programme for youths between 15 and 18 years of age.

The organisation derived from the Office of Civilian Defence from which it adopted the basic blue disc and white triangle badge. A C.A.P. aviation wing existed in every State and its members wore military uniforms and ranks with the badges illustrated on this plate. All except cadets had red shoulder straps as further means of identification.

The officers wore army type rank badges and the N.C.O.s had chevrons but on red background. Qualification badges were worn by those entitled above the left breast pocket and one short gold stripe was worn on the left forearm for each period of six months service. Small blue, red and white triangles of cloth were worn above the left pocket in lieu of merit awards.

The Duck Club badge was worn by personnel who had made a forced landing at sea. Some shoulder sleeve insignia of C.A.P. have been illustrated in Plate 39.

Plate 36. Qualification Badges

The wings worn during World War 2 were made of sterling silver, as embroidered badges were finally abolished by the regulations issued on 16

March 1938. The appearance of the actual wings was standardised to a design by Herbert Adams, adopted in 1919.

On 10 November 1941, three classes of Pilot's wings were authorised thus distinguishing pilots with longer service and a higher average of flying hours.

The winged balloon was reinstated to the Balloon Pilot and a new badge was authorised for Balloon Observer, with an additional 'O' on the balloon. Balloon pilots with 10 years of service, who had piloted military airships or motorised balloons for 100 hours were granted a new badge with star and the qualification of Senior Balloon Pilot. A new badge was adopted on the same date for the Technical Observer.

More badges appeared in the following year: that of Navigator has an armillary in its centre and that of Bombardier depicts an aerial bomb on a target. The qualified Service, Liaison and Glider Pilot were granted new badges with the initials 'S', 'L' and 'G' in the central shield. The Liaison Pilot wings were worn regardless of rank by men assigned to organic air observation of the field artillery. Later the granting of this badge to enlisted men was discontinued.

The Aircrew Member wings were worn by men regularly assigned aircraft personnel who had shown proficiency in performing their duties. The centrepiece of the Aerial Gunner wings shows appropriately a flying bullet; was adopted on 29 April 1943 for qualified gunners if regular members of a combat aircrew.

The Flight Surgeon wings originally adopted were gold-plated and were changed to silver in September 1944. Smaller gold wings, 5 cm. in span, were adopted in 1943 for the Flight Nurse and subsequently were changed to silver.

The Flying Instructor badge was authorised in metal, in January 1919 and re-issued in March 1943 to be worn, now embroidered in gold colour, on the right sleeve at 10 cm. from the end.

The wings of the Women's Air Force Service Pilots (WASPS) illustrated belonged to the 319th Training Detachment and the 'W1' identified first class graduation. WASPS were engaged in non-combat flying missions and training duties under U.S.A.A.F. control. Earlier during the war women were engaged in ferrying aircraft under the organisation known as Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS), but later women were deployed in other fields of duty as well. Another pattern of women's badge depicts a plain diamond between the wings.

Wings were adopted by the U.S. Navy only at the beginning of 1919 although official approval to the project was stated in Change 12 to Uniform Regulations, issued on September 1917. A gold metal badge with a pin at the back was finally chosen as the Naval Aviator's device. The badge did not change a great deal although the

original pattern was solid, and later versions varied in style more than in design.

A Naval Observer's badge appeared in 1922: it consisted of a gold embroidered fouled anchor with the rope forming the shape of an 'O' in the centre, sided by one single wing. Five years later a similar badge, but made of gold metal and with the American Shield in place of the 'O' was authorised to identify the Balloon Observer. The aircraft Observer's badge used during World War 2 depicted an anchor within an 'O' in silver finish, sided by gold metal wings. The badges of Flight Surgeon and Combat Aircrewman were adopted during the course of the war.

The U.S. Marine Corps and Coast Guard used the same qualification badges as the U.S. Navy. Some smaller wings, approximately half size of the normal ones were worn by officers on the evening dress and the white mess jacket.

Plate 37. Naval Speciality and Distinguishing Marks

The speciality marks identified the specialisation or trade of a seaman and the badge eventually became part of his rating insignia, and was worn above the chevrons. The distinguishing marks were only proficiency badges and were worn usually on the sleeve if regulations did not prescribe otherwise. Dark blue badges were worn on white uniform and vice versa.

Air Carrier Contract Personnel—A.T.C., U.S.A.A.F.

The personnel of this organisation wore army uniforms with special bronze badges and one, two or three stripes on the sleeves of the service jacket, or short bars on the shoulder straps of the trench coat.

The National Memorial at Kitty Hawk, N.C., in remembrance of the first flight performed there by the Wright brothers in 1903 is the badge of the Air Transport Command (Plate 39) and is in the shape of a small round disc worn on the shoulder straps and by non-supervisory ground personnel on the service and garrison cap as well. A large version of the same badge was worn as a shoulder patch on the left sleeve with a number in a circle embroidered below.

Personnel sent on overseas duties wore the non-combatant patch on the right sleeve: it depicts the letters 'US' in black on a white equilateral triangle (side 9 cm.) on a black square background.

Plate 38. U.S. Army Air Forces Shoulder Sleeve Insignia

From 1921 to 1942 the fuselage marking of American aircraft depicted a white 5-pointed star with a round red centre set on a round blue back-

ground; the red disc was abolished in August 1942 and two white bars, one on each side of the emblem, were added in June 1943. Until the following September the emblem was outlined in orange, and later in blue. The star with red centre remained however the main emblem in all war-time insignia, except for the earlier patch of the U.S.A.A.F. authorised on 20 July 1937 for wear by personnel of GHQ Air Force. The badge symbolised a spinning propeller and was executed in the colours of the Air Corps, ultramarine blue and orange.

The U.S. Army Air Forces was created on 20 June 1941, following a decision to convert the existing Air Districts (Northeast, Northwest, Southeast and Southwest) into Air Forces, numbered from 1st to 4th respectively. The first two districts became Air Forces on 9 April, the SE Air District on 24 May and the SW Air District became the 4th Air Force on 31 March 1941.

A new shoulder patch was approved for personnel of the U.S.A.A.F. on 21 March 1942, and later for the continental Air Forces as well.

On 5 February 1942 the Far East Air Force was redesignated the 5th Air Force, the Caribbean Air Force the 6th, the Hawaiian Air Force the 7th and the Alaskan Air Force became the 11th Air Force. The re-organisation of the former, heavily engaged against the Japanese, was completed by the following September in Australia; its patch was authorised on 25 March 1943. The 6th Air Force was formed to protect the Canal Zone and the Caribbean area while the 7th and the 11th became engaged in active operations in the Pacific. The latter with headquarters in the Aleutians covered the northern Pacific theatre of operations. The badge of the 7th was approved on 21 May and that of the 11th on 13th August 1943.

The 8th Air Force was activated at Savannah, GA., on 28 January 1942 and by the following May some of its units were transferred to Britain from where, on 27 January 1943, it carried out its first bombing raid over Germany. The 8th's patch was officially approved on 20 May.

In the meantime, on 12 February 1942, the 10th Air Force was activated at Patterson Field, Ohio, and became operational in the India-Burma area, where soon afterwards it began ferrying supplies to China, across the Himalayas. This task developed into the setting up of the China Air Task Force which on 10 March 1943 gave birth to the 14th Air Force at Kunming, China. The latter's badge, approved on 6 August 1943, depicted a flying tiger in memory of the American Volunteer Group (The Flying Tigers) in China which had been taken over by the 23rd Fighter Group, 10th Air Force, in July 1942.

The U.S. Army Middle East Air Force was formed in the summer of 1942 in Egypt and on 12 November it was redesignated the 9th Air

Force, a tactical formation which was transferred to Britain in 1944. Its badge was approved on 16 September 1943. The 12th Air Force was raised at Bolling Field, D.C. in August 1942; during the following November it supported the invasion of North Africa and as a tactical formation it took part in the invasion of Italy. Another formation, the 15th Air Force, was activated on 1 November 1943 in the Mediterranean area for strategic operations. The 13th Air Force was raised already in January in the Southwest Pacific area.

After the raising of the 15th Air Force and the transfer of the 9th to Britain, the U.S.A.A.F. and R.A.F. achieved a perfect balance of strategic and tactical power and were able to co-ordinate strategic raids on central Europe from the west with the 8th and from the south with the 15th Air Force, thus the U.S. Strategic Air Force was formed as a supervisory headquarters. The 20th Air Force, with headquarters in Washington, D.C., directed the strategic air offensive against Japan. The Mediterranean Allied Air Force was a combined U.S. and British organisation.

Specialists' Cuff Insignia

The five triangular badges illustrated were authorised on 25 January 1943 to be worn by specialists of the U.S.A.A.F. on the right forearm 10 cm. above the end of the sleeve of all uniforms, except fatigue, on which the badge is worn on the left breast pocket.

The last two badges with the winged propeller were worn on the sleeve by cadets.

Plate 39. U.S. Marine Corps, Civil Air Patrol, etc. Shoulder Sleeve and Cuff Insignia

Cloth badges were very seldom granted to the marines and in March 1943 only, the commandant of the Corps authorised the wearing of a limited number of shoulder sleeve insignia by personnel of the first three marine divisions and of some other formations. The shield-shaped Aircraft Wing patches were adopted at that time but were later replaced by the kite-shaped patches with a winged Corps' emblem in the centre.

Personnel of the 1st Amphibious Corps were granted large blue patches with white stars symbolising the Southern Cross and different badges in the centre, on a red background. The Aviation Engineer's badge depicted a winged castle.

The Air Transport Command was formed from the conversion of the Ferrying Command on 20 June 1942 and was composed of a Ferrying and an Air Transportation Division. The original Air Transport Command was redesignated Troop Carrier Command. There were two patches of

Air Transport Command, one on light blue and the other on yellow background, the latter for ferrying formations.

The High School Victory Corps, as well as the C.A.P., ran programmes of training for youths and 'Air' was only one of the H.S.V.C.'s specialisations. Others were entitled Land, Sea, Community and Production, each represented by a badge. The basic badge of this organisation was a thick red 'V', for Victory, on which round specialisation badges were superimposed at the top.

During World War 2, the personnel of the Civil Air Patrol (see Plate 35) wore three main shoulder patches and rectangular patches on the left sleeve above the cuff. The latter identified personnel of Active Duty units or one's speciality. The Active Duty Units performed various tasks: the Forest Patrol, for instance, was basically concerned with fire prevention while the Coastal Patrol was engaged in coastal security duties and the Southern Liaison Patrol kept watch on the Rio Grande.

Most of these badges were worn until 1947 when a reorganisation took place; later blue patches with white emblem were worn on the forearm.

1913



72
19-4
USAF ENLISTED HERITAGE HALL
GUNTER AFB, AL 36114

FIFTY YEARS OF AIR FORCE WINGS



1963-1964

Even the most farsighted Signal Corps planner in 1913 couldn't be expected to know that those original 25 aviators' badges would be the start of a 1944 one-year requirement for 250,000 silver USAAF wings!

EARLIER BADGES AND WINGS



EMBROIDERED BADGE



SERVICE PILOT



FIRST METALLIC BADGE



GLIDER PILOT



SECOND METALLIC BADGE



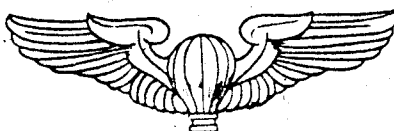
LIAISON PILOT



COMBAT OBSERVER



BOMBARDIER



BALLOON PILOT



NAVIGATOR



AERIAL GUNNER

"The Silver Wings of the Air Force pilot, observer, navigator and crew member are a symbol of the strength of the United States Air Force. The badge is the mark of professionals imbued with dedication to their country and to the mission to which they have been charged. It is a symbol attesting to the truth that they would defend to the death the principles of civil authority vested in the government of their country. More than that, it is a symbol of courage to look ahead and think beyond the limitations of the day . . . the courage to pursue knowledge, embrace new concepts, and exploit new technology. We are proud of the heritage passed on to us by former wearers of Silver Wings."—General Curtis E. LeMay, Air Force Chief of Staff, on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the authorization of the distinctive Silver Wings badge.

■ Last year marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Air Force's Silver Wings—the historic badge of flight.

Nineteen-sixty-three was doubly significant for three Air Force officers. These men — Majors Bob White, Gordon Cooper, and Bob Rushworth — received the coveted Astronaut Wings.

These wings are the latest in a series of distinctive aviation badges which were created in a vastly different form fifty years ago. Appropriately, a pilot must fly more than fifty miles high to qualify as an astronaut.

Major Cooper, as you remember, received his wings in May following his monumental 22 orbit flight

around the Earth. Air Force Chief of Staff LeMay made the presentation.

Major Rushworth, a later recipient of the Wings, flew the X-15 research aerospace craft to an altitude of more than fifty-four miles. Major White accepted his wings earlier for the July 1962 flight to an altitude of almost 59 miles, more than 314,000 feet, also in the X-15.

The Air Force's pioneer astronaut, Major Virgil "Gus" Grissom, received his wings in 1962 as the second man to make a sub-orbital Earth flight as part of Project Mercury. Navy commander Alan B. Shepard was the first American to journey into space back in 1961.

All four Air Force majors earned their standard wings many years ago. White and Rushworth flew combat in World War Two. Grissom flew in the Korean conflict and Cooper began flying in 1950. It is interesting to note that all four are former test-pilots.

The Silver Wings these men wear are but a part of the proud heritage of today's Air Force. It began back in 1907 when the Aeronautical Division of the Signal Corps was established. The memorandum which set up the first air arm of the War Department, later to become the most potent military force the world has ever known, read:

"WAR DEPARTMENT, OFFICE OF THE CHIEF SIGNAL OFFICER, Washington, Aug. 1, 1907; Office Memorandum No. 6.

"An Aeronautical Division of this office is hereby established to take effect this date. This Division will have charge of all matters pertaining to military ballooning, air machines, and all kindred subjects. All data on hand will be carefully classified and plans perfected for future tests and experiments.

"The operations of this Division are strictly confidential and no information will be given out by any party except through the Chief Signal Officer of the Army or his authorized representative."

The memo went on to assign Captain Charles De Forrest Chandler as head of the Division and named two enlisted men to assist him. But soon one of the enlisted men "went over the hill" so the air arm lost one-third of its authorized strength almost before it was organized!

Actually, President Theodore Roosevelt had to intervene to bring

(Continued on page 94)

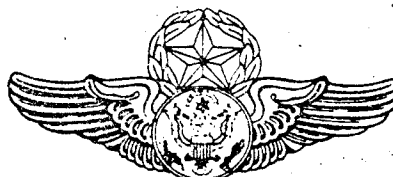
CURRENT AIR FORCE BADGES



AIRCREW MEMBER



NAVIGATOR OR
AIRCRAFT OBSERVER



CHIEF AIRCREW MEMBER



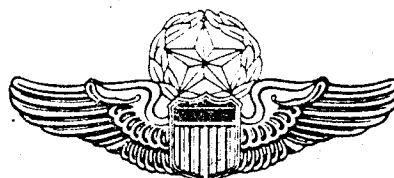
PILOT



CHIEF FLIGHT SURGEON



PILOT ASTRONAUT



COMMAND PILOT



SENIOR AIRCREW MEMBER



COMMAND PILOT ASTRONAUT



SENIOR FLIGHT SURGEON



FLIGHT NURSE



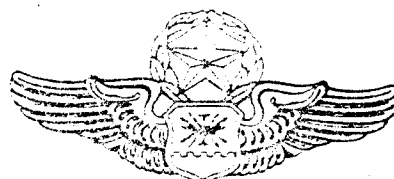
SENIOR NAVIGATOR OR
SENIOR AIRCRAFT OBSERVER



FLIGHT SURGEON



SENIOR PILOT



MASTER NAVIGATOR OR
MASTER AIRCRAFT OBSERVER



SENIOR PILOT ASTRONAUT

WINGS OF VALOR

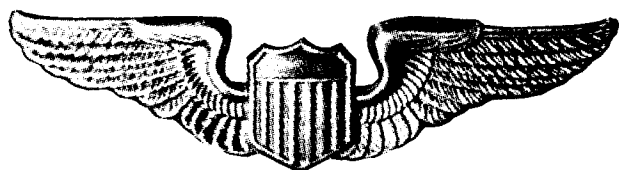
U.S. Army Air Force Flight Badges Of World War Two

By Mike Minnich

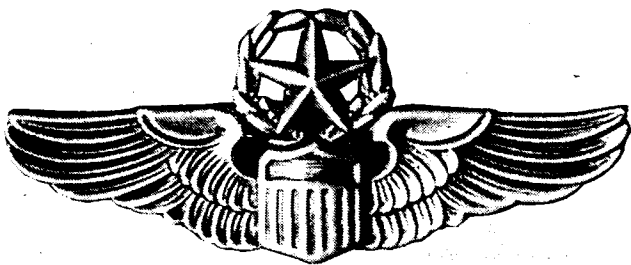
Symbol of achievement as well as a physical representation of what tens of thousands of American youths aspired to earn in World War Two, the silver pilot's wings of the Army Air Force were widely recognized during the war years, and even today the design remains basically unchanged.

But how many World War Two air historians or enthusiasts realize that there were *seventeen* different wing ratings authorized for the USAAF by the end of the war, or know what these long-discontinued badges looked like, and what it took to earn them?

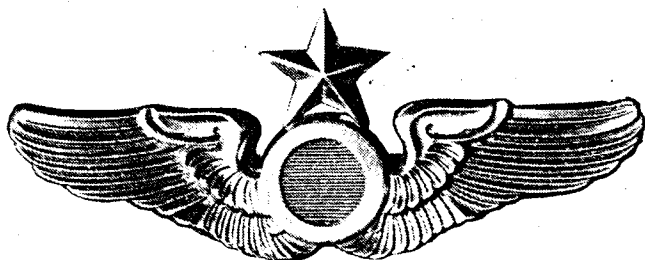
The illustrated guide that follows will answer those questions, and give a better appreciation of the many different ways that the men (and some women) of the Army Air Forces could be recognized for performing duties involving aerial flight.



1. *Pilot* This rating was typically awarded on completion of about 40 weeks of pre-flight and flying training. Badge design was established on 25 January 1919, and is still in effect today.



3. *Command Pilot* Awarded to pilots with various combinations of 10, 15 or 20 years' service and 2,000 to 3,000 hours of flying time. Rating established 23 March 1940, and still in effect (again, today's USAF criteria are somewhat different). Rarely seen on any officers below the rank of full colonel during WW II.



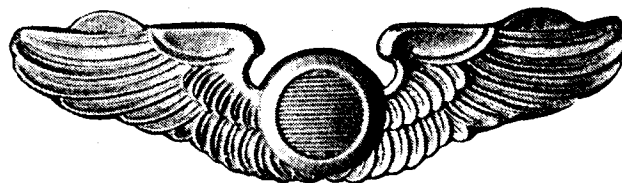
5. *Senior Aircraft Observer* Awarded to holders of No. 4 after five years' service as an observer and logging at least 500 flight hours as such. Established in late 1942 and reportedly finally discontinued in 1956 - long after it and No. 4 had fallen into disuse.



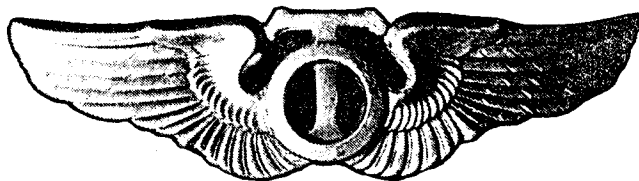
7. *Navigator* Awarded to graduates of the 20-week course in aerial navigation. The strange center device on the wings is a depiction of an 'armillary sphere', an ancient astronomical instrument. Badge established 4 September 1942, and, while this rating still exists in the USAF, the badge was re-designed to the current version in the early 1950s.



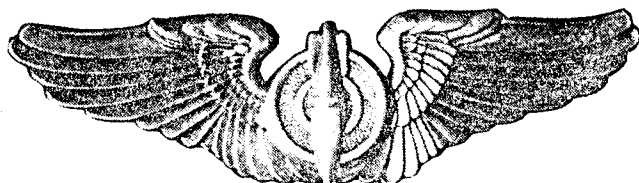
2. *Senior Pilot* Awarded after five years' service as a pilot, and a minimum of 1,500 flying hours logged. Rating established 23 December 1937, and is still in effect (the longevity and flight-time criteria have changed over the years). Only seen on fairly senior (some majors, and higher ranks) fliers during WW II.



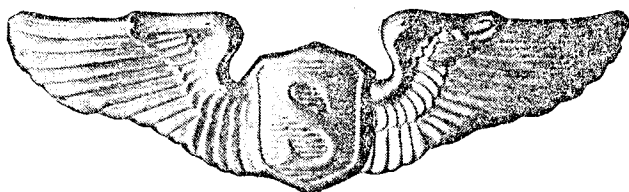
4. *Aircraft Observer* (briefly re-named 'Combat Observer' in 1940-42). Originally used to denote both non-pilot aircrew *and* those pilots who remustered as observers due to a medical or other condition that precluded their remaining as active pilots. By 1942, this badge carried a different distinction: it could be earned by a pilot (any of the three classes above) who also had qualifications as an aerial gunner (expert or sharpshooter), *plus* navigator or bombardier, and had served in an observation/reconnaissance unit; *or* was a graduate of the AAF Tactical School and had six years' service as a pilot. (Notwithstanding the special qualifications for this wing, it wasn't worn much, since persons so entitled would generally also be senior or command pilots, and preferred to wear those better-known wings.) Rating established 14 October 1921 and discontinued on 26 July 1949.



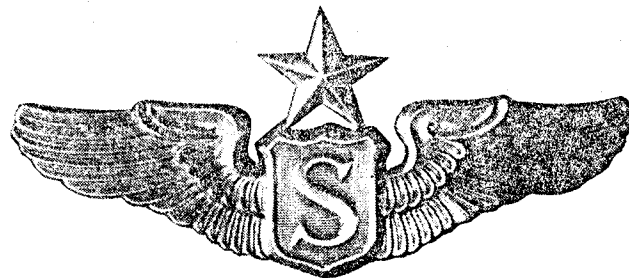
6. *Technical Observer* This unusual rating went to Army pilots who also had special qualifications/competence to make such technical observations in flight as the evaluation of air tactics; combat-crew performance of duty; function of aircraft equipment, weapons, etc. Established in late 1942 and reportedly officially discontinued in 1956.



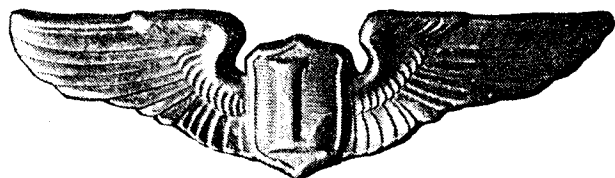
8. *Bombardier* Earned by graduates of the 20-week bombardier school. Rating established 4 September 1942, and discontinued as of 26 July 1949.



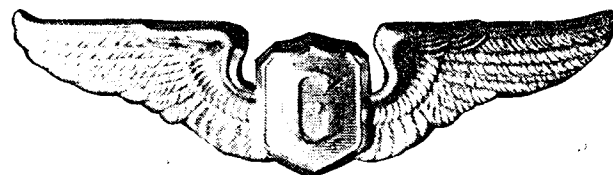
9. *Service Pilot* This rating was created to let over-age or otherwise marginally disqualified persons, who were already experienced civilian pilots, join the AAF and fly in just about every type of duty except combat. Flight instruction, cargo-carrying and ferrying of combat aircraft to overseas bases were typical duties. This wing was established 4 September 1942 and discontinued sometime in 1956 (although few if any service pilots were certified after 1944).



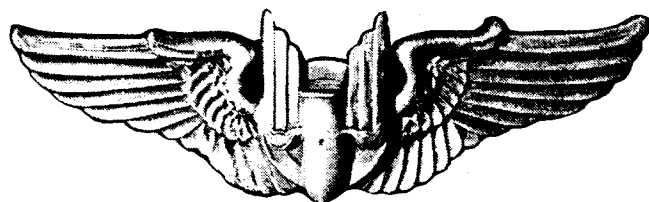
10. *Senior Service Pilot* Awarded to service pilots after they'd flown at least 1,500 hours for the military, if they also had at least five years' earlier experience as a civilian pilot. Established in late 1942, and officially abolished in 1956. (This was a rarely awarded wing.)



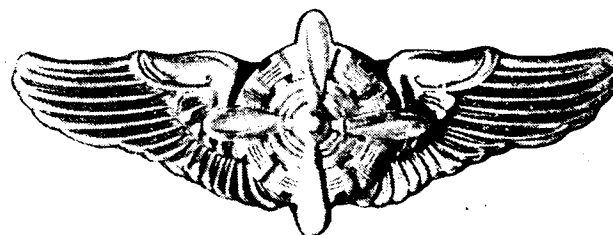
11. *Liaison Pilot* This wing was for the pilots who flew the tiny Piper, Taylorcraft and similar two-seat light aircraft used by the USAAF for artillery target-spotting, occasional casualty evacuation, and general utility chores like transporting VIPs behind the lines. These pilots - who were often sergeants instead of officers, until towards the end of the war - took a shorter training course, and were not qualified to fly the much heavier and more powerful combat or transport aircraft. Rating established 4 September 1942, and believed discontinued in 1956. (When the U.S. Army re-organized an aviation branch after the Air Force became a separate service in 1947, quite different wings were designed for Army aviators, starting in 1950.)



12. *Glider Pilot* Usually holding the rank of staff-sergeant or flight officer (a version of warrant officer), the men who flew the combat-assault gliders of World War Two had to be equally qualified as infantrymen - because once their one-way flight ended, they had to join with their passengers in ground combat until friendly forces caught up with them! Wing established 4 September 1942, and finally officially discontinued in 1956 (although glider units became extinct in the U.S. Army within a couple years of the end of WW II).



13. *Aerial Gunner* Graduates of the six-week course in 'flexible gunnery' usually went on to wear staff-sergeant stripes and sweat out their required missions from behind single or dual .50-cal machine-guns in two- or four-engined bombers. (But navigator and bombardier cadets - who ended-up as officers - also had to take this course.) Badge established 29 April 1943, and discontinued 26 July 1949.



14. *Flight Engineer* This rating recognized the key technicians who often also manned a gunner's position on bombers. On the B-29 Superfortress, the F/E - not the pilots - actually controlled the throttles. Wing authorized late in the war (19 June 1945), and believed abolished in 1956.



16. *Flight Surgeon* Aviation medical examiners (the ex-civilian physicians who entered the AAF) could become flight surgeons after one year's military experience and at least 50 hours of flying time. A flight surgeon was normally assigned to each squadron, and some who were with bomber outfits actually voluntarily flew a number of combat missions. These wings were gold-plated when established as of 11 February 1943, but were changed to silver as of 12 September 1944. (The rather different current USAF flight surgeon wing was created on 15 June 1955.)



15. *Air Crew Member* Originally the only badge available for gunners, flight engineers, radio operators, photographers and miscellaneous other aircrew, this rating was established 4 September 1942 and is still in use today by the USAF (where it represents all non-officer flying positions).



17. *Flight Nurse* Women in the Army Nurse Corps who were assigned to the Army Air Force could, after six months' duty at a AAF hospital, volunteer to serve aboard casualty evacuation aircraft. Following an eight-week specialized training course, they were awarded these wings, which were authorized in gold on 15 December 1943, and changed to silver as of 12 September 1944. (The current USAF flight nurse wing design was adopted 15 June 1955.)

Note: Almost all these sterling silver wings came in a standard size three inches wide, with a two-inch version designated for wear on the shirt when it was the outermost garment worn. The exception was the Flight Nurse wing, which only came in the two-inch size. All these wing designs were also manufactured in wire-bullion and silk-thread versions.)

The reader may have noticed the considerable variation in the feathering design and other details visible in these photographs. These were intentionally selected from the author's collection to show the vast array of styles offered by the roughly *thirty* companies - including some in England, Australia and India - that made or sold USAAF wings during World War Two. There existed, of course, fairly precise official government design specifications, but in the best 'air force' tradition, these firms largely ignored them!

Although, history of this unique group known as the Warrant Officer Corps dates back as early as 1775, it was 145 years later that Congress enacted the first legislation authorizing the appointment of 1,120 Army warrant officers and another 22 years followed before the War Department conducted a study proving that light aircraft organic to the artillery could enhance the overall mission of the Army.



Evolution of the Army Aviation Warrant Officer

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Aviation Career Management Division
Directorate of Training Developments
U.S. Army Aviation Center
Fort Rucker, AL

THE EVOLUTION of aviators with unusual shoulder bars and silver wings has been lost in the pages of history. Little attention has been paid to the existence of these individuals ex-

cept that they functioned in a twilight zone somewhere between enlisted and commissioned officer status. These individuals belong to an elite corps of officers known as the Warrant Officer Corps.

The warrant officer rank was considered a position of distinction by many countries throughout the world and dates back to early military history. Our country, still in its infancy, appointed its first warrant officer in 1775 when a Navy chief petty officer

was appointed to the rank on board the vessel *Andrea Doria*. Unfortunately, Army warrant officer history doesn't date back that far—and aviation warrant officer history dates back even less.

Nevertheless, Army historians have traced positions as far back as 1886. These positions were ultimately identified as warrant officer spaces even though they were held by civilian personnel. The Army Judge Advocate General determined

The wreathed air service branch insignia conforms to cap insignia for noncommissioned officers prescribed in 1908. These badges were made of blackened bronze metal. However, all such insignia were discarded in December 1917, a full 6 months before the wing and propeller device came into existence as a replacement collar device for the crossed signal flags.



This badge was embroidered on dark blue felt, in the center was a four-bladed propeller, and on either side were half wings embroidered in white silk. These wings were worn on the sleeve of the enlisted pilot. No wings were worn on the chest.



The collar device was the insignia of the Signal Corps upon which was superimposed, in silver, a conventionalized hemisphere showing the western continent. Top of hemisphere is on a line with top of flag staves at their junction with staff of torch attached to sides of hemisphere wings with a spread of 9 mm for each wing. The enlisted aviator collar device was the same as the officers except it was on a bronze disc. This device was approved by General John J. Pershing on 27 April 1918. It is excessively rare because few were produced in the short 80-day period before the new air service wing and propeller device was adopted.



Change 5 to Service Regulation No. 41, 17 July 1918, authorized new collar insignia for officers and enlisted members of the air service branch. The new insignia was similar to the enlisted pilot's cap insignia except for a few items; it didn't have the wreath around the wings and prop; the wing had a slight up-sweep at the tip of each wing; and the wings were unblackened bronze with a white metal prop. Enlisted members, including pilots, wore the same insignia on a bronze collar disc. In 1919 the air service began issuing the collar disks in bright metal.



This badge was authorized on 25 January 1919. The appearance was standardized to a design by Herbert Adams. It set a new pattern for wings and is still in use today by the USAF. The badge was made of oxidized silver. On 14 October 1921, the designation changed to "airplane pilot." It changed again on 10 November 1941 to "pilot badge."



This badge was authorized on 25 January 1919. The badge was made of oxidized silver. On 14 October 1921, the designation was changed to "balloon observer." On 10 November 1941, the designation was changed to "balloon pilot."



This badge was authorized on 14 October 1921 for qualified pilots of the lighter-than-air service and for military aeronauts. It was made of oxidized silver and had the standardized wings with a dirigible in the center.



Prior to 1942, enlisted men in the flight program were called "flight students" and those selected to become commissioned officers were called "cadets." After the flight officer legislation there was no distinction between the aviation cadet and the aviation student. All persons taking the course were called cadets with equal chance for advancement. Upon successful completion of the flight training, cadets would emerge as either a second lieutenant or a flight officer. The War Department seeking a proper description for the newly created FO stated this—"The FO is to be accepted in the nature of a third lieutenant."



these positions were the same as warrant officer positions because they held a status that was neither that of commissioned officer nor that of an enlisted person. However, it wasn't until 1918 that the Army actually used the term warrant officer positions when it appointed warrant officers to fill occupations established on mine-laying vessels.

Congress established the first comprehensive legislation for Army warrant officers in the Act of 4 June 1920. This act initially authorized the appointment of 1,120 warrant officers. A turn of events occurred in 1926 when Congress reduced the Army warrant officer strength to about 650. During the period between 1922 and 1935 no appointments were made other than for band leaders and mine planters. Unfortunately, during the 1930s the Army was uncertain of its need for warrant officers and used the grade, in many cases, as a transition to reduce commissioned officer overages.

In the 1930s, military aviation was in the rudimentary development stages. One path led toward development of Army Aviation, while the other led toward the formation of the U.S. Air Force. Disagreement grew in the 1930s between the Army Air Corps and the ground forces the Corps supported over the close support mission. The Air Corps was not satisfied with its commissioned officer aviators performing missions that appeared to make them airborne truck drivers and artillery spotters. On the other side of the coin, the ground forces became increasingly unsatisfied with the Air Corp's close support.

On 9 March 1942, the War Department established three

Warrant Officers

coequal commands: Army Ground Forces, Army Air Forces and Army Service Forces. About the same time a formal test of organic Field Artillery Aviation was ordered by the War Department. The test was a success, proving that light aircraft organic to the Artillery could enhance the overall Army mission. As a result, the Department of Air Training was formed on 6 June 1942, at the Artillery School, Ft. Sill, OK, to train observation pilots in the employment of artillery fire support. Basic flight training was conducted by the Air Corps.

The original plan provided by the Department of Air Training contained provisions for enlisted pilots with the rating of staff sergeant. Though the majority of the Army's liaison pilots were enlisted at that time, the Army Ground Forces found it difficult to find enough qualified enlisted volunteers. The Department of Air Training plan was revised to include qualified personnel from the grade of captain and below. Warrant officers were not included in this plan. Additionally, although enlisted members participated regularly and frequently in aerial flights, they were not entitled to flying pay. This existed to the time of the aviation warrant officer before it was corrected.

Warrant officers, at that time, were considered to be old, crusty technicians who gained their expertise from years of experience in technical or administrative fields. Initially, the warrant officer grade was used to reward enlisted personnel for their long service, and to reward World War II commissioned officers who lacked either the education or other eligibility requirements for continued commissioned status. Although

most of the World War II commissioned officers that reverted to warrant officer status were no longer in the Army, the "reward" concept was still maintained by the Army. As a matter of fact, warrant officers became largely interchangeable with junior commissioned officers. There was no clear-cut policy on warrant officers within the Army. With apparently little supervision by the War Department, appointments, assignments, promotions, usage and training were decentralized to major commanders.

During the postwar period several changes affected Army Aviation. First, the National Security Act of 1947 established the U.S. Air Force as an independent service. Second, joint Army and Air Force regulations were established as adjustment regulations which amounted to a basic agreement on the question of Army organic aviation. The agreement contained both good and bad

elements. The good news; the new status gave the Army an opportunity to fully develop the potential of its light aircraft. The bad news; the responsibility for basic flight training of Army personnel was with the Air Force.

Prior to the joint regulations the Army had been investigating the feasibility of adapting rotary wing aircraft to the Army Aviation mission and the first Army Aviation helicopter pilots were trained by the Air Corps under an informal agreement and on an individual basis. In 1947, Bell Helicopter Corporation, under contract with the Army, established the first formal Army helicopter training course at its factory. However, under the formal joint regulations agreed upon by the Army and Air Force, the Air Force claimed that it should conduct all basic helicopter flight training.

Graduates of the Air Force helicopter course came out with 25 hours of basic instruction under their belts. The Army felt



COLLAR DEVICE



CAP DEVICE



RANK INSIGNIA



PILOT'S BADGE

FLIGHT OFFICER INSIGNIA

1942

The flight officer was created by an act of Congress in 1942. The FO received the rank, pay and allowances provided for warrant officer junior grade (WOJG). The FO wore the warrant officer cap insignia on the garrison cap and a small branch insignia on the overseas cap. The rank in-

signia was similar to the WOJG except the bar was blue on gold instead of brown on gold. The collar device was the same collar device authorized for commissioned officers in 1941. The U.S. was on one side and the branch insignia on the other.



Evolution of Warrant Officers

this instruction was not sufficient; the students needed more than just the bare essentials of helicopter flying. As a result, the Army established the Army Helicopter Advanced Tactical Training Course at Ft. Sill on 1 November 1948. The rotary wing program was well on its way and expanded rapidly. Accordingly, this new trend would mean a need for more helicopter pilots. Unfortunately, the Army had exhausted its immediate supply of available commissioned officers for pilot duty.

The term "flight officer" fell by the wayside, but a new term emerged in its place—"warrant officer pilot." It appeared that you could kill the term—but not the concept. As a result, a separate field designed for aviation mechanics and aircraft maintenance specialists was considered. This would lead to a warrant officer rating as the top grade and would give a comparative career progression from enlisted aviation specialties similar to that of the existing warrant officers; but, these new warrant officers would be aviation warrant officers.

The Air Force said it was willing to teach anyone the Army sent to fly helicopters as long as they were officers already qualified as fixed wing pilots. The Air Force further stated that teaching enlisted students to fly was against its new policy. But, the Army considered warrant officer candidates as future officers and therefore the bulk of the helicopter pilot corps. The Army reasoned that a warrant officer was almost by definition a highly skilled specialist. The Army's present corps of nonaviation warrant officers were considered skilled technicians and administrators. So why not have aviation warrant officers as skilled specialists

with all of the commissioned officer privileges and pay the same as nonaviation warrant officers?

The aviation warrant officer would be more of a specialist than a technician. However, the operation of an aircraft was considered a technical function and therefore met the criteria for a warrant officer. The aviation warrant officer would spend his entire military career in this specialty—that of an aviator in aviation. This would ensure aviator stability and expertise that sometimes was diminished or lost due to commissioned officer rotation in and out of aviation assignments.

The Army felt that it would benefit in many ways with the aviation warrant officer program: first, the aviation warrant officer could become the capstone of the enlisted aviation career; second, the lack of enough commissioned officers to fill pilot positions could be augmented by aviation warrant officers; third, aviation warrant officers could carry a large portion of the commissioned officers' burdens, thus allowing them more freedom and a broader coverage of command; fourth, it would cost less to pay warrant officers than it would commissioned officers (base pay and flight pay); thus many commissioned officer positions from second lieutenant to major could be converted to warrant officer positions. The Army envisioned aviation warrant officers staying in aviation throughout their careers. This would give aviation the stability it requires. Effectiveness of aviation is dependent upon aviator proficiency and also dependent upon its tactical employment.

The Air Force claimed a training program similar to that

which trained aviation cadets during World War II would be a total failure. Fortunately, the Army didn't agree. The Army felt the way to establish such a corps of professional helicopter pilots was to solicit enlisted soldiers to go through flight school, such as the aviation cadet program did. Upon graduation they would become both aviators and warrant officers—aviation warrant officers at that.

The flight officers of the Army Air Corps era drew warrant officer junior grade pay, but they were not considered warrant officers in the true sense. Warrant officers were stereotyped at that time, and possibly to some extent today, as those old, crusty individuals who obtained their warrant after many long years of service in their particular enlisted field. On the other hand flight officers were solicited as either young enlisted men from a wide variety of specialties or as civilians from all walks of life. Apparently, the Army didn't want to resurrect the buried title of flight officer even though the concept was the same. Consequently, the Army decided to call its flight school entries "candidates" instead of "cadets." Candidates would graduate as aviation warrant officers. As you can see, although the titles had changed, the concept remained the same.

In 1949 a proposal was made for a new type warrant officer—the helicopter pilot. The proposal was approved and the transportation helicopter table of organization and equipment (TOE), TOE 55-57T, came out with positions for warrant officer helicopter pilots. Unfortunately, the then existing career fields did not provide for the integration of helicopter pilots.

Meanwhile, the Adjutant General felt that inclusion of the helicopter pilot into the Army aircraft maintenance career field was inappropriate. The reasoning was that there was no apparent relationship between aircraft maintenance (a technical trade) and the qualification necessary to pilot helicopters (a specialty). Technical knowledge in mechanics was not considered a prerequisite for helicopter pilots. The Adjutant General viewed the position of helicopter pilot as being somewhat analogous to that of the unit administrator.

The unit administrator was a warrant officer who performed the duties somewhat similar to that of the executive officer today. Furthermore, the unit administrator did not appear in any enlisted career field. The Adjutant General went on to say that, on an interim basis, the responsibility for monitoring the career management of helicopter pilots would go to the U.S. Army Transportation Corps. Moreover, action should be initiated at the earliest practicable date to establish the aviation warrant officer military occupational specialty (MOS). The aviation warrant officer MOS should be one that any enlisted soldier with proper qualifications could apply for.

The first warrant officer candidate class to train in helicopters was the Army Helicopter Pilot Course, Class 51A. The class started training in April 1951 with 28 students and was graduated in December 1951 with 25 students. Out of the three candidates that didn't graduate, one was eliminated due to a physical disability and the other two voluntarily requested release from the program. The reason for the low attrition rate was attributed by the



SERVICE PILOT BADGE

This badge was authorized on 4 September 1942 for service pilots. It was an oxidized silver badge of the usual style with spread wings, in the center of which appears a shield, and centered on it is the letter "S."



GLIDER PILOT BADGE

This badge was authorized on 4 September 1942 for trained glider pilots. This badge had standardized wings and was made of oxidized silver. In the center there was a shield with the letter "G" on it.



LIAISON PILOT BADGE

This badge was authorized on 4 September 1942 for trained liaison pilots. It was made of oxidized silver and in the center was a shield with the letter "L." These wings were worn by men assigned to organic air observation of the Field Artillery. Later the granting of this badge to enlisted men was discontinued.



ARMY AVIATOR BADGE

This badge was authorized on 2 August 1950 for qualified military pilots of the U.S. Army. The badge is made of oxidized silver with newly designed upswept wings and a presidential-like shield in the center of the wings. When the USAF became an independent service in 1947, Army aviators were allowed to wear the original style wings until the new Army aviator wings were available.

Army to the stiff requirements for acceptance into the program.

When the students initially began training, they were under the impression that after 12 months in grade as warrant officers they would receive commissions. Unfortunately, after 39 months in grade none of them received, or was offered, a commission. They all were still warrant officers (W1). In fact, it wasn't until February 1955 that warrant officers started being promoted comparable to commissioned officers. Flight pay was another inadequacy, and it wasn't until 1981 that aviation warrant officers drew flight pay equal to commissioned officers.

The first helicopter class trained more or less as a com-

pany and in fact formed the 6th Transportation Company (Helicopter) which departed for Korea on 7 December 1952. This, I might add, was the first Army helicopter company in combat. The pilots flew H-19 Chickasaw helicopters.

From the beginning, aviation warrant officers played an important role in both the Korean War and Army Aviation. They played a major role in evacuating the wounded, directing air and artillery strikes, and transporting troops and supplies throughout the battle area. There were other missions that perhaps many prefer to forget. These missions included locating lost units and finding safe routes for the withdrawing forces as the enemy swept



Evolution of Warrant Officers

south through Korea. The aviation warrant officers, although few in number, had the opportunity along with their commissioned counterparts to prove their worth in Army Aviation. Aviation warrant officers performed above and beyond what many conceived a warrant aviator could be.

A year after the Korean War was over the Army Aviation School moved from Ft. Sill to Camp Rucker, AL (later designated Ft. Rucker). The rotary wing course was a section of the flight department. However, with the increased emphasis on helicopter training it was elevated to a department of its own. Accordingly, the Army Cargo Helicopter Pilot Course, 55E, was redesignated 55F. As a result, the first helicopter class at Ft. Rucker, 55F, began training in October 1954 with 6 commissioned officers, 2 warrant officers and 17 warrant officer candidates. The class was graduated in April 1955.

The Department of Defense directed the Army to assume all aviation training in 1956. Wolters Air Force Base, later renamed Ft. Wolters, was transferred to the Army later that year. Ft. Wolters was designated as the Army's Primary Helicopter School. The first class of warrant officer candidates trained at Ft. Wolters was 57-6, Army Aviation Transport Pilot Course (rotary wing). This helicopter class got underway on 26 November 1956 and graduated 27 April 1957.

The Army determined aviation warrant officers to be an integral part of Army Aviation and the training of warrant officer candidates to be an important part of the overall Army Aviation effort. Little did anybody know that aviation warrant officers would have the opportunity to

once again maximize their talents and capitalize on their capabilities as professional Army aviators in Vietnam, the air war. The Vietnam War required a rapid buildup of aviators. The warrant officer strength swelled from about 3,000 in 1966 to more than 12,000 in 1970.

Warrant officer aviators flew through some of the heaviest flack in the history of the Indochinese war. There were times when aviation warrant officers encountered unexpected heavy North Vietnamese ground fire that resulted in heavy losses. Despite the losses, Army Aviation warrant officers were deeply involved in every aspect of the war. Helicopter pilots became the indelible symbol of the war; they were among the first to be killed in the war and were among the last to leave. The helicopter mobility and firepower added a radically new dimension to warfare and the daring warrant officer pilots earned their share of honors—Medals of Honor, Silver Stars, Distinguished Flying Crosses, Air Medals and Purple Hearts.

In addition to flying, many warrant officer aviators showed that they were fully capable of performing as aviation section leaders, platoon leaders, operations officers and liaison officers; positions that require the rank of company grade commissioned officer aviators.

Warrant officer aviators have come a long way since the earlier concepts. The stepping stones from enlisted pilots to aviation warrant officers stemmed from a need for pilots during a crucial period in Army history. Although there were other reasons, the need for the pilots was the dominant one. Aviation warrant officers have proven themselves to be a worthwhile investment to the Department

of the Army and especially to Army Aviation.

There are some 14,000 warrant officers serving in the Army today and about 5,000 of these are aviators. In fact, the Army's aviation combat arms force structure consists of more than 50 percent aviation warrant officers. Although aviation warrant officers represent a large number in both the warrant officer corps and in aviation they don't appear to receive an equal amount of attention in their role. It seems the Army still doesn't have a clear grasp of what to expect of the aviation warrant officers; they need to be further defined and recognized for the capabilities they have and will develop.

Aviation warrant officers represent the technical expertise of Army Aviation today. They are the large majority of the instructor pilots and the standardization instructor pilots. They are responsible for training in all areas to include tactics. Unfortunately, aviation warrant officers are not schooled in tactics, doctrine and leadership the way commissioned officers are in officer basic courses. Yet, aviation warrant officers are not expected to abort a mission when their commissioned aviator counterparts are not in a position to complete the mission. The aviation warrant officers are expected to successfully complete the mission as planned. In other words, the Army must take a closer look at how, when, where and why it trains its aviation warrant officers the way it does. Perhaps the Army needs to revise its training methods to meet the challenges of the 1990s.

Yes, AWOs have come a long way—but as you can see, they still have "some" to go. 