# HISTORY PENNSYLVANIA

#### We Can Do It!

TERN PENNSYLVANIA HISTORY



## SPECIAL ISSUE

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> Read more about a WWII poster come to life starting on page 36.





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# WE CAN DO IT! WWI

A Special Commemorative Issue of Western Pennsylvania History.

#### - SPRING 2015 -CONTENTS

WWII in Western Pennsylvania

#### **President's Message**

2

3

We Can Do It! WWII By Leslie A. Przybylek

- 14 Being Japanese American on December 7, 1941 By Frank Inouye, introduced by Brian Butko
- 19 A Child's View of World War II By Paul F. Roth
- 22 Bernie Queneau: Metallurgist By Brian Butko
- 24 Jeep: The Birth of an Icon By Leslie A. Przybylek
- 26 War Memories of the Henderson Brothers By Brian Butko
- **31** Supplying the Battlefront By Leslie A. Przybylek
- 36 A Poster Comes to Life By Brian Butko

38 La Generazione Più Grande: Italian American Veterans in WWII By Melissa E. Marinaro

54 Regards to All My Friends By Leslie A. Przybylek

68 Carrying the Flame: Zippo Lighters during the Depression, into WWII, and on the Beach at Normandy By Tim Ziaukas

82 The 1940s: The Best of Times By Larry Glasco

> A Pittsburgh Judge's Path to Nuremberg and Back By Thomas White

Information

92

104

1

# WWII IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

#### Leslie A. Przybylek, Curator of History

ecember 7, 1941. Pittsburgh's Oakland neighborhood. Bill Gruber was helping his father hang wallpaper in the family's dining room when a neighbor interrupted: the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor. Bill's father asked what many Pittsburghers were thinking: "Where the hell is Pearl Harbor?"<sup>1</sup>

He learned soon enough. World War II engulfed a generation of Americans in a conflict that scattered young men and women across the globe. It introduced strange new place names—Guadalcanal, Bataan, Casablanca, Anzio, Iwo Jima—and sent families searching for maps and atlases to identify where loved ones might be serving. The war changed Americans' understanding of their place in the world and catapulted the nation into global leadership.

It transformed life in Western Pennsylvania too, opening new doors of opportunity for many yet also highlighting inconsistencies in American society that had yet to be resolved. Wartime innovations inspired by military need brought exciting new technologies to the American public, including the iconic Jeep. Likewise, this industrial expansion sowed the seeds of what became Pittsburgh's Renaissance, and national defense projects changed towns forever.

The Senator John Heinz History Center's new exhibit *We Can Do It! WWII* immerses visitors in the dramatic events of the 1940s, exploring how multiple generations of Western Pennsylvanians contributed to the war effort by fighting overseas or working in the region's industries. Featuring rare artifacts from the Smithsonian and private collections, historic vehicles, life-like figures, photographs, oral histories, and interactive activities, *We Can Do It! WWII* brings to life the stories behind the real people and companies that sustained a remarkable collective effort in Pittsburgh for at least half a decade, fighting a war that began for many Western Pennsylvanians years before the attack on Pearl Harbor.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Joseph F. Rishel, *Pittsburgh Remembers World War II* (Charleston, South Carolina: The History Press, 2011), 81.



Mystery and myth surrounds J. Howard Miller's iconic "We Can Do It" poster, released by Westinghouse in February 1943 and posted on nearly 2,000 bulletin boards across the country (seen left behind the History Center's Rosie figure). Miller's "Rosie" was likely inspired by popular interest in the hit song "Rosie the Riveter" written by Redd Evans and John Jacob Loeb in 1942. A Jeep convoy outside of Kunming, China. At center is Beaver County native Eugene Donatelli. Byce Pack collection, in honor of Brother John (Eugene) Donatelli OM cap.



Sokoloff, Donatelli and Cart-



A ladle with 180 tons of molten steel, part of WWII production at the Edgar-Thompson Works, Carnegie-Illinois Steel Corp., Braddock, Pa. Smithsonia Institution, National Museum of American History, Archives Center, Russell Aiken U. S. Steel Collection.

#### **EXHIBIT OPENS APRIL 25, 2015**

#### President's Message Andrew E. Masich

As the keystone of the American "Arsenal of Democracy," Pennsylvania factories worked day and night producing equipment and supplies while Pittsburgh's men, women, and children earned a reputation for their "can do" spirit that helped win World War II.

In addition to ships, guns, and munitions, our region also played a role in creating one of the most iconic wartime figures—a no-nonsense worker named "Rosie the Riveter."

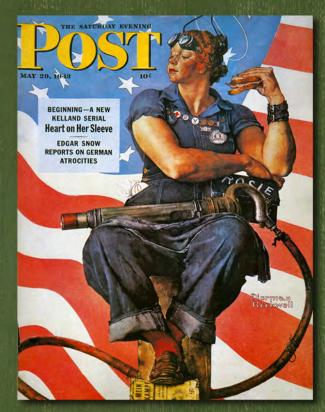
In 1943, Westinghouse artist J. Howard Miller developed a poster featuring a Westinghouse Electric worker rolling up her sleeves to help the Allied effort as part of the "We Can Do It" campaign. Miller's powerful imagery may have even inspired Norman Rockwell to create his own "Rosie the Riveter" for the cover of *The Saturday Evening Post*. At the same time, lyrics of a song titled "Rosie the Riveter" were spreading across the country.

Over time, Miller's "We Can Do It" image and "Rosie the Riveter" merged in the public's mind. His unforgettable poster of a working woman making a muscle remains a symbol of America's "We Can Do It" spirit to this day. Meanwhile, millions of real-life "Rosie the Riveters" were entering the workforce for the first time, including 30,000 women working at factories and mills in Pittsburgh.

Beginning April 25, the History Center's new exhibit *We Can Do It! WWII* will demonstrate Pittsburgh's and Western Pennsylvania's role on both the home front and the battlefield during this critical time in world history. So roll up your sleeves, make a muscle, and head down to the History Center to help us thank the greatest generation who reminds us that, working together, "We can do it!"

# ROSIE THE RIVETER





(TOP) Norman Rockwell portrayed Rosie in a painting that graced the cover of the May 29, 1943, issue of *The Saturday Evening Post.* Some believe this is a satirical take on Miller's poster while also bearing a striking resemblance to Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel Isaiah. The popularity of Rockwell's imagery helped cement the image of "Rosie the Riveter" making a muscle.



WAR PRODUCTION CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

J. Howard Miller produced dozens of posters for Westinghouse during World War II, including "It's a Tradition" in 1943 with a female war worker similar to "We Can Do It."

# WE CAN DO ITI WWI

By Leslie A. Przybylek, Curator of Histor

#### EVERY TIME I APPROACH PITTSBURGH, ESPECIALLY BY PLANE, I GET A SENSE OF TREMENDOUS POWER, A SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT. PITTSBURGH THRILLS YOU.

Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox

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Thousands of Westinghouse workers pledge to speed up production at this wartime rally, c. 1944. HKC Detre L&A, Melvin Seidenberg Oversize Photograph Collection, MSS 566.

OPPOSITE: A real-life Rosie, Julie Bodnar inspects 155 mm shell casings at the Christy Parks Works of National Tube Company in McKeesport.

Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of American History, Archives Center, Russell Aiken U. S. Steel Collection War worker identification badges illustrate just a few of the many thousands of area residents who contributed to the war effort through companies such as Dravo, Westinghouse, and Carnegie-Illinois Steel. HHC Collections, 96.1961, 2011 21.1. Photo by Liz Simpson.



The cover of this April 1944 issue of US Steel News reminded readers that the giant steel conglomerate played essential roles in building America's military machine during World War II, including the production of steel plate for battleships, LSTs, and tanks. HHC Detre L&A.

"We are living in a jittery world, wondering what is going to happen next. And in my judgment it looks like anarchy. Law and order is breaking down all over the world. The nations are sure of nothing."

Letter to the Editor, The Pittsburgh Press, October 6, 1938

s hostilities escalated in Europe in the late 1930s, Americans watched and debated. World War I had ended barely 20 years earlier, its millions of casualties and apocalyptic vision of trench warfare still vivid in many people's minds. Fathers who had served in battles such as the Meuse-Argonne and in the Marne now faced the prospect of sending their sons overseas to a similar fate. How could the United States be drawn so soon into another global conflict? Many Pittsburgh residents urged caution: America was officially neutral and needed to stay that way. Typical of such sentiments, a letter to the editor of The

Factories and mills throughout Pittsburgh produced an almost limitless variety of material for the war effort. The Scaife Company in Oakmont, Pa. produced defense-related armaments, including bomb casings and mortar shells. Ht Collections, 2006.19.7. Photo by Liz Simpson. *Pittsburgh Press* in October 1938 warned: "Now this subject of war. Are we to be tricked and blindfolded into another conflict? Are we going to be glorified soldiers of today and bullet riddled corpses of tomorrow?"<sup>2</sup>

Many agreed that staying out of the "European mess" was a wise decision.3 Others did not have the luxury of choice: they were already involved. Members of Pittsburgh's Jewish community sounded the alarm as early as 1933, when the first local campaign for the United Jewish Appeal raised \$50,000 to help German Jews and Jewish refugees fleeing Hitler's new Third Reich.<sup>4</sup> Fearing all such "isms"-Nazism, Communism, Socialism, and Fascism-one Donora resident advocated that the "steel center of the world" needed a National Defense Unit as early as 1938.5 Another, signed JUST AN AMERICAN, urged that all "isms ... pestilences ... should be annihilated entirely and completely."6

SCAIFE

Residents of Pittsburgh's Polish neighborhoods took to their churches and prayed when Hitler invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, officially igniting World War II. "Oh, God, Save Our Poland," pleaded an article in *The Pittsburgh Press*.<sup>7</sup> By May 1940, Germany's invasion of France and the Netherlands made it clear that the "European mess" wasn't going away, only getting worse. President Franklin D. Roosevelt called for a new level of defense spending, raising his request for the U.S. Army's 1940 federal appropriation from \$24 million to \$700 million. He put American industry on notice, saying: "I should like to see this nation geared up ... to turn out at least 50,000 planes a year."8 At the time, only one-hundredth of that was being produced.9

#### **Pittsburgh Blazes the Way**

To many people, "American Industry" meant Pittsburgh. While other cities proved equally crucial to the war effort, Pittsburgh's miles of steel mills, foundries, and other heavy manufacturers captured public imagination, the blazing nighttime skies along the Ohio and Monongahela rivers symbolizing American industrial capacity. Those mills and factories

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Pittsburgh produced an amazing array of goods and equipment for the war effort, including:



Airplane Propeller Blades





Electronic **Radio Systems** 



Anti-Aircraft Guns



**Breathing Equipment** 



Steel

Tank Landing Ship on Tryasion Beachhead





essentially began fighting World War II by 1940, ramping up for an industrial escalation over the next four years. While multiple key innovations were underway by early 1941, the attack on Pearl Harbor redoubled efforts. By January 1942, a *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* correspondent in Washington, D.C., stressed this in an article titled "Nation Looks to City for Industrial Needs":

> This is no peanut war. It demands a vast all-out effort to make the United States the mightiest military force in the world.

The Pittsburgh district arsenal, with its great steel mills, munitions manufacturing and food processing plants, coal mines and steel products concerns—in short, everything that goes into use in modern warfare—is expected to blaze the way.<sup>10</sup>

Blazing that way would require effort from every Pittsburgh worker, the reporter reminded readers. More than people had given before, more than they were already giving:

The eyes of the United States Govern-

ment are on the arsenal of Pittsburgh.... If you operate or man a war goods production plant and you think you're doing all right, you will be expected to do 100 per cent better. If you think you're doing fine, you will be expected to do half again as well. If you think you are getting along splendidly, you must do even better.<sup>11</sup>

From 1942 to 1945, thousands answered those expectations. Western Pennsylvania men and women waged war by producing crucial defense materials in the region's factories,



The oldest known surviving Jeep, Bantam Reconnaissance Car #1007 was made by the American Bantam Company in 1940 and was donated to the Smithsonian Institution in 1944. Nicknamed "Gramps," the vehicle appears on loan as a featured artifact in We Can Do It! WWII. Smithsonian Institution Photo by Liz Simpson.

In Butler, the nearly bankrupt American Bantam Car Company bravely rose to the challenge of an impossibly fast federal proposal deadline by developing a working prototype for a new small reconnaissance car in a mere 49 days.

foundries, and shipyards, helping to earn the state its keystone position in the nation's "Arsenal of Democracy." Factories idled by the Great Depression now ran day and night, producing an amazing array of goods and equipment including ships, airplane propeller blades, torpedoes, electronic radio systems, huge anti-aircraft guns, mortar guns, generators and breathing equipment, glass lenses and optical equipment, and, of course, steel-95 million tons of it for tank and aircraft armor, ship plates, and artillery shells. By the end of 1942, U. S. Steel and its subsidiaries smashed 1,000 previous production records. Westinghouse's Micarta Division produced 13 million helmet liners; millions more came from Westinghouse's Bryant Electric Division and from Mine Safety Appliances. Shipyards at Dravo and American Bridge launched more than 200 LSTs (Landing Ships, Tanks) for the U.S. Navy and Coast Guard, and Dravo produced multiple other types of ships, including destroyer escorts and gate vessels (used in harbor defense). The scale of this production made a lasting impact. Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox once said, "Every time I approach Pittsburgh, especially by plane, I get a sense of tremendous power, a sense of accomplishment. Pittsburgh thrills you."12

The war also spawned new innovations. Westinghouse's Research Laboratories



Members of the American Bantam Car Company design and engineering team pose with Bantam Number One, the world's first Jeep, outside the factory in Butler, Pa. on September 21, 1940.

engineered thousands of technological breakthroughs, including new developments in radar, atomic energy, and the creation of a gyro-controlled tank gun stabilizer that improved firing accuracy in moving armored vehicles.<sup>13</sup> In Butler, the nearly bankrupt American Bantam Car Company bravely rose to the challenge of an impossibly fast federal proposal deadline by developing a working prototype for a new small reconnaissance car in a mere 49 days. Delivered on time to Camp Holabird, Maryland, the rugged little prototype endured a bevy of tests to confirm that it met all of the Army's specifications. Although mass-production of the design eventually fell to the Willys-Overland Company, Bantam's odd-looking prototype introduced a new American icon. Eventually dubbed the "Jeep," it accompanied American troops across Europe and the Pacific, helping



to win World War II and ultimately winning over the American public as well.<sup>14</sup>

Pittsburgh's "all-out" industrial effort didn't come without challenges. As a generation of young men left to enter the military, the region's war industries faced crippling labor shortages. U. S. Steel's Carnegie-Illinois Steel operation estimated that it lost 32,000 employees to the war in May 1943.<sup>15</sup> Thousands of real-life "Rosie the Riveters" took up the slack as the region's wives, daughters, and mothers filled roles once held by men. Women signed on as mill workers, munitions inspectors, lift operators, welders, machine operators, and science lab technicians. By September 1943, more than 30,000 workers in U. S. Steel's record-breaking mills were women.<sup>16</sup> Gender roles were reversed in other occupations too, as women stepped up to help maintain vital transportation networks by serving as trolley drivers, railroad workers, airplane mechanics, and as pilots with the Civil Air Patrol and

Even at home and off the clock, the war was never far away. Businessmen, school children, and homemakers saved grease, collected tin and scrap iron, learned how to install blackout blinds, volunteered for local Civil Defense zone activities, and gathered around the radio to hear the latest wartime news. Women's Airforce Service Pilots (WASPS).

For other groups, all the wartime activity raised bigger questions. While more jobs were opening for women, many African Americans still found themselves shut out of higher-paying opportunities. The country's unified stance after Pearl Harbor didn't erase the discrimination that many black families faced every day. Just as in World War I, they were now being asked to serve a nation that had yet to regard them as fully equal. Why should African Americans wage war overseas yet remain second-class citizens in the United States? What meaning would be found in global victory if nothing changed at home? "Should I Sacrifice to Live 'Half American'?" asked a reader of the Pittsburgh Courier in a letter

Schools and neighborhood groups throughout Pittsburgh collected scrap metal and rubber for the war effort during World War II. This trove was gathered by students at Prospect Elementary and Junior High School, c. 1942-43. HttC Detre L&A, Pittsburgh Public Schools Photographs, 1880-1982.









LIEUT. 2ND UNCLE SAM'S Cannoneers

From Corporal to Colonel, school children earned different ranks of oil cloth ribbons in Uncle Sam's Tin Cannoneers based on the amount of material they collected during scrap drives. HHC Collections, 96.189.2-5. Photo by Liz Simpson.

published in January 1942.<sup>17</sup> The *Courier*, the nation's leading African American newspaper, had been a vocal advocate for equal rights and integrated service in the American military since World War I. Ever watchful, the paper had stationed reporters overseas to cover the escalating crisis in Europe and North Africa by the 1930s.<sup>18</sup> Now the *Courier* announced the "Double V" campaign, urging that victory overseas against the Axis be won in tandem with victory over discrimination within the United States. The *Courier's* campaign soon went nationwide, reminding both supporters and detractors there were still battles to be fought on American soil as well.<sup>19</sup>

Even at home and off the clock, the war was never far away. Businessmen, school children, and homemakers saved grease, collected tin and scrap iron, learned how to install blackout blinds, volunteered for local Civil Defense zone activities, and gathered around the radio to hear the latest wartime news. Department stores such as Kaufmann's offered floors of merchandise to be used in soldiers' care packages. Shoppers at the store's "Victory Center" could get maps and war news, sign up to volunteer for Civilian Defense and the Red Cross, and purchase defense stamps and war bonds. Even Kaufmann's famous display window at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Smithfield Street routinely featured warWestern Pennsylvania men and women waged war by producing crucial defense materials in the region's factories, foundries, and shipyards, helping to earn the state its keystone position in the nation's "Arsenal of Democracy."

related motifs such as factory scenes, women war workers, and displays of pilots and other military personnel.<sup>20</sup> Pittsburgh's position as a key industrial city brought air raid tests and military fly-overs as early as April 1941. A "dress rehearsal for a blitzkrieg" the *Pittsburgh Press* called that first test, as "the greatest audience ... ever assembled in Western Pennsylvania" crowded the hilltops around Pittsburgh to watch the city go partially dark while U.S. Army airplanes roared overhead.<sup>21</sup>

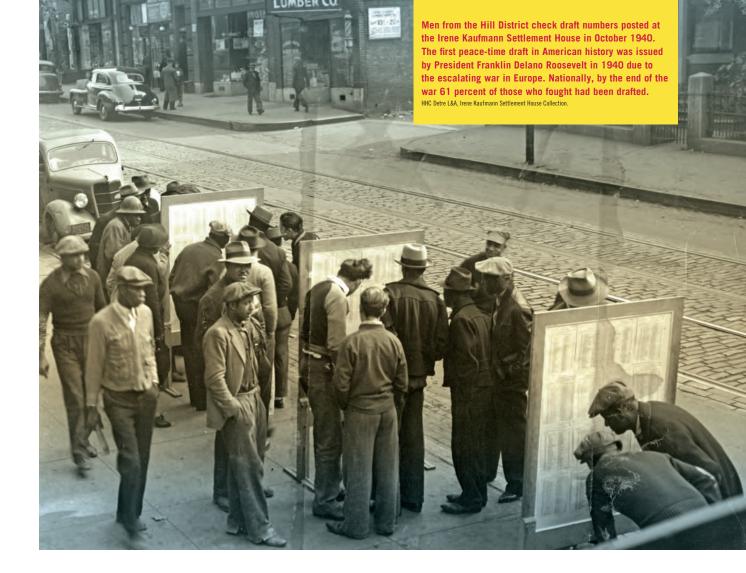
#### Serving with Distinction

Of all Pennsylvania's contributions to the war effort, none was more crucial than servicemen. Approximately 1.25 million Pennsylvanians entered the military during World War II. Only New York contributed more. They paid a price for that service—more than 33,000 Pennsylvania soldiers died on the battlefield or in a hospital.<sup>22</sup> Pennsylvanians also distinguished themselves in combat: 33 were awarded the Medal of Honor, the second highest total of any state in the nation. Among them were Pittsburgh native Corporal Charles E. ("Commando") Kelly for fighting off a German platoon near Altavilla, Italy, and Charleroi native and Marine Corps Platoon Sergeant Mitchell Paige, who fearlessly held off an entire Japanese regiment with machine guns during the Battle of Guadalcanal.<sup>23</sup>

Many other Western Pennsylvanians also served with distinction. Oscar-winning movie actor and Indiana, Pa., native Jimmy Stewart proved himself a hero in real life, joining the Army Air Corps and eventually flying 20 bombing raids over Germany. He received two Distinguished Flying Crosses and rose to the rank of colonel by the end of the war.<sup>24</sup> Oil City native Francis S. "Gabby" Gabreski also flew into the history books with the Air Corps as the leading American air ace in Europe, with 28 German "kills" to his credit.25 Czechborn Marine Corps Sergeant Michael Strank of Cambria County near Johnstown led the patrol that raised a flag on bloody Mt. Suribachi on Iwo Jima, an image immortalized by photographer James Rosenthal.26

A remarkable number of African American men from Western Pennsylvania





The country's unified stance after Pearl Harbor didn't erase the discrimination that many black families faced every day. Just as in World War I, they were now being asked to serve a nation that had yet to regard them as fully equal.

(plus one woman) made history as part of the legendary Tuskegee Airmen. Ninetyfive served, including the Hill District's Lieutenant Elmer Taylor and Lieutenant Carl Woods of Mars and Homewood, both killed in combat over Europe.<sup>27</sup> Approximately 22,000 Pennsylvania women officially joined the Armed Forces, serving with the WACS, WAVES, SPARS, or WASPS. Others contributed their services with the Medical Corps, including Bradford's Second Lieutenant Mary T. Sullivan, a nurse who ministered to wounded soldiers recovering in England after the D-Day invasion.<sup>28</sup> A notable number of Western Pennsylvania women distinguished themselves as pilots with the WASPS (Women's Airforce Service Pilots), ferrying planes between bases on the home front, towing gunnery targets, testing aircraft, and doing nearly every aviation job imaginable, freeing male pilots for combat overseas. Among the most famous was McKeesport's Helen Richey, a renowned aviator before the war, who first volunteered as a commander with the British Air Transportation Auxiliary before joining the WASPS in 1943.<sup>29</sup>

No one rose higher than Uniontown's General George C. Marshall. Appointed

Army Chief of Staff by President Roosevelt, Marshall oversaw the expansion of the U.S. Army into a modern fighting machine, engineering the transition of a small force of about 200,000 men into more than eight million by 1945. Marshall was also credited with skillfully maintaining the delicate relationship between American and British military forces during the war, a crucial but sometimes prickly Allied partnership. He was, according to Harry S. Truman, "the greatest military man America ever produced."<sup>30</sup>

Beyond the names and actions that garnered headlines, thousands of other Western

Pennsylvania men of every race and nationality headed offto war between 1941 and 1945, serving without fanfare aside from the dearest hopes of their families, neighborhoods, and communities. Some enlisted voluntarily, others were drafted. Nationally, the ratio was approximately 39 percent volunteers to 61 percent draftees. While some men remained stateside, 73 percent served overseas, many traveling away from home for the first time.<sup>31</sup> They built roads, bridges, and landing strips in the Pacific with the U.S. Navy Construction Battalion ("Seabees") and carved out the Ledo Road in the China-Burma-India Theater with the 1875th Engineer Aviation Battalion. They drove tanks for the U.S. Army and guarded coastal fortifications and ports with the Coastal Artillery. They served on U.S. Navy and Coast Guard ships, including LSTs built in Pittsburgh and Ambridge. They flew fighter planes off carriers in the Pacific and led bomber squadrons out of England and into the heart of Nazi Germany. They jumped behind enemy lines as paratroopers on D-Day, and fought with infantry divisions at the Battle of the Bulge. They survived German and Japanese POW Camps, fought with the Marines at Iwo Jima, and liberated Paris with Pennsylvania's own 28th Division, the "Keystone Division," or the "Bloody Bucket."

Many paid the ultimate sacrifice; many

Of all Pennsylvania's contributions to the war effort, none was more crucial than servicemen. Approximately 1.25 million Pennsylvanians entered the military during World War II.



Many Pittsburgh men served as aviators during the war. This flight jacket was worn by Fox Chapel's William C. Bickel, a Corsair fighter pilot with the U.S. Marine Corps Devil Dog Squadron in the Pacific. Bickel's exemplary service earned him a Distinguished Flying Cross, an Air Medal, and a Purple Heart. Today, he is listed in the Hall of Valor at Pittsburgh's Soldiers and Sailors Memorial. Courtesy of Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hall & Museum, L2014.37.1. Photo by Liz Simpson.

more endured and survived, although no one came back unchanged. Surviving veterans witnessed a side of humanity that most of us will never see. "We did what we had to do to save the world from evil," one later recalled.32 They mourned friends, counted themselves lucky, and returned home to move on with their lives-marriage, children, college through the G.I. Bill, a return to a factory job, or a new career made possible by skills mastered during the war. Many never spoke again of what they had seen and experienced in the service. Some waited nearly half a lifetime, only beginning to open up as a growing wave of oral history initiatives spread across the country prompted by the 50th anniversary of World War II in 1995.33 Today, a number of local veterans' stories, recorded through projects of the Senator John Heinz History Center and Veterans Voices of Pittsburgh, will be featured in We Can Do It! WWII. An article drawn from some of those oral histories can also be found elsewhere in this special issue of Western Pennsylvania History.

While some families waited a year or more to welcome home returning servicemen following the Japanese surrender in August 1945, other impacts were more immediate. A few companies such as Westinghouse continued their defense work related to atomic exploration and technology, but many mills and other large manufacturers saw their remaining federal contracts cancelled outright; most rapidly began the process of converting back to the production of civilian goods. Women returned home as men resumed their places in mills and factories, and the Pittsburgh Courier stopped using the Double V logo in September 1945. But like those who had served in the war, men and women on the home front had witnessed changes that could no longer be ignored. Expectations about new opportunities for better jobs, better education, and increasing demands for civil rights would remake the social landscape over the next generation, seeds planted in part by awareness born during the war years.



General George C. Marshall appeared regularly on magazine covers nationwide, such as these examples from 1943. The small version of *Newsweek* was a "Battle Baby" edition produced exclusively for the military. HHC Collections. Photo by Liz Simpson.

Uniontown's General George C. Marshall was, according to Harry S. Truman, "the greatest military man America ever produced."



### BEING JAPANESE AMERICAN ON DECEMBER 7, 1941

By Frank Inouye, introduced by Brian Butko

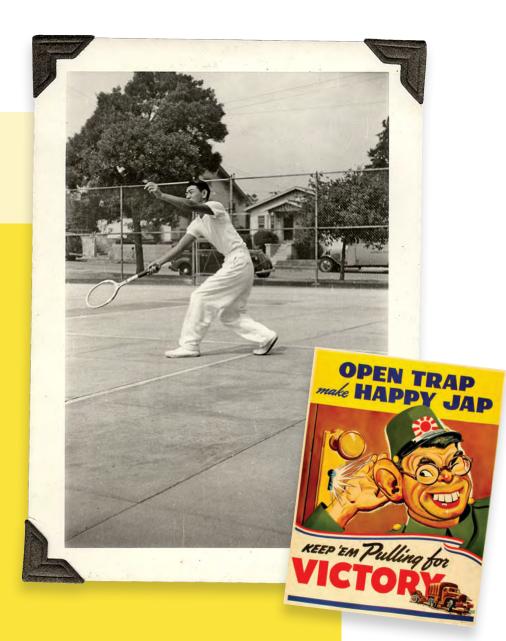
An unpublished memoir by Frank Inouye recalls growing up in Los Angeles in the 1930s as a typical American teen: playing baseball, attending Catholic school, watching cowboy movies, and lettering in tennis at college. Having Japanese parents, however, made the 1940s less than typical. His daughter Cookie, a Pittsburgh resident, shared her father's experiences after Pearl Harbor.

hen I heard on the radio the president's message to Congress and to the American people and later saw the dramatic scene on newsreel broadcasts in the theatres, I was incredulous and heartsick. I simply didn't want to believe my ears or my eyes, even as the newspaper headlines confirmed the truth—Japan and the U.S. were at war. My worst fears and those of all Japanese living on the West Coast were now realized.

The true significance of the Pearl Harbor attack did not strike home to us immediately, especially those of us attending colleges and universities. There, we were effectively insulated among well-educated young people of our own age and interests, young adults with whom we shared classes, sports, and a common loyalty to our schools. The professors continued their class lectures, gave exams, and rarely, if ever, referred to the Japanese attack or its aftermath....

Outside the protected walls of school there was a noticeable change in the community's behavior toward the Japanese. As the Japanese military forces actually fought against American troops in the Philippines and on some Pacific islands, with initial victories going to the Japanese, public opinion, fed by the media, turned against us. The many years of depicting the Japanese as ugly, bandy-legged, eyeglass-wearing, grinning yellow dwarfs in ill-fitting uniforms made it a simple matter to convert Americans' fears and ridicule of the Japanese into open hatred. And the media, especially the newspapers on the West Coast, made no attempt to distinguish between the Japanese armed forces and the Japanese immigrants and their children living in America. In the public's mind, the perception was allowed to grow that we were the same people responsible for the military actions and atrocities committed overseas.

After being sent to Heart Mountain internment camp in Wyoming, Frank returned to a normal life, marrying a girl he met at college who had also been in a camp. Frank earned a Ph.D. from the University of Southern California in 1951, and later was the founding director of the University of Hawai'i-Hilo. Even Pittsburgh itself would eventually be remade. The massive industrial effort spurred by defense manufacturing had benefitted many, but the long-term future of that same industrial base was in doubt. It also reinforced concerns about air quality and smoke control. Images taken of Pittsburgh by 1940 showed city streets and hills shrouded in dark fog, even in the middle of the day.<sup>34</sup> One national news service later described Pittsburgh as a "smoke-begrimed old girl" who looked like "she'll die of dirt and old-age."<sup>35</sup> The city actually passed a smoke ordinance in 1941, but critical war needs delayed its implementation. In 1946, following much debate, the new regulation finally went into effect—enabled by a compromise that staggered enforcement for industrial and home use.<sup>36</sup> The group that brokered the deal was a new player in town. The Allegheny Conference on Community Development was incorporated in 1944 by a small circle of business and education leaders concerned about the city's image and long-term economic prospects. Pittsburgh, they feared, would be a "dying city" unless proactive measures were taken to rewrite its future in the postwar world.<sup>37</sup> Their foresight created a model that would one day be studied by civic leaders across the country. The Allegheny Conference laid the foundation for



Pittsburgh's Renaissance—for the creation of Gateway Center, Point State Park, a thriving Cultural District, clean rivers, and a downtown that is now the envy of many mid-size cities. Once again, it was one collective effort born of another, an innovation that allowed the "industrial arsenal" of World War II to weather dark days ahead and emerge as the vibrant 21st century community we know today.

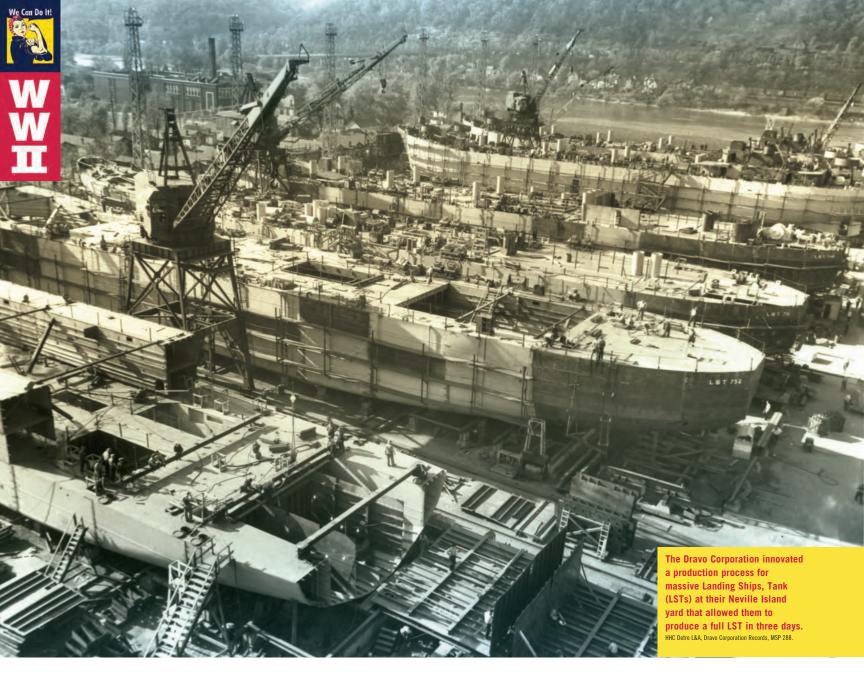
- <sup>2</sup> Joseph Stanson, (Morgan, Pa.), "Urges Retaining Loyalty to Peace at All Times," Letter to the Editor, *The Pittsburgh Press*, October 2, 1938.
- <sup>3</sup> Jen (no last name), "Agrees We Should Forget War," Letters to the Editor, *The Pittsburgh Press*, April 7, 1940.
- <sup>4</sup> The campaign started July 1933, see "Women Assist in Relief Drive" in "Organization Activities," *The Jewish Criterion*, July 21, 1933, 14; and "Pittsburgh Ranks High in Relief Campaign," *The Jewish Criterion*, August 11, 1933, both accessed via Carnegie Mellon University's Pittsburgh Jewish Newspaper Project: http://digitalcollections.library. cmu.edu/pjn/index.jsp ; and also: 1933 — Timeline, A Tradition of Giving, website for the Rauh Jewish Archives, http://www.jewishhistoryhhc.org/timeline. aspx#455ef6f1-cfca-40c3-b819-7fb9830d330b.
- <sup>5</sup> Dallas Wickerham (Donora, Pa.), "Need National Defense Unit," Letter to the Editor, *The Pittsburgh Press*, March 12, 1938.
- <sup>6</sup> JUST AN AMERICAN, "Naziism and All Isms Should Be Annihilated," Letter to the Editor, *The Pittsburgh Press*, October 14, 1938.
- <sup>7</sup> Edward J. Lally, Jr., "'Oh, God, Save Our Poland,' Herron Hill Women Wail," *The Pittsburgh Press*, September 1, 1939. Wide scholarly consensus typically identifies Hitler's invasion of Poland as the official start of World War II, since this act prompted both France and Great Britain to declare war on Germany.
- <sup>8</sup> Arthur Herman, Freedom's Forge, How American Business Produced Victory in World War II (New York: Random House, 2012), 9-10.
- <sup>9</sup> The number of planes produced per month in 1940 was 560, as cited in "Nation Looks to City for Industrial Needs," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, January 2, 1942.

<sup>12</sup> Men and Women of Wartime Pittsburgh and Environs: A War Production Epic (Pittsburgh: Frank C. Harper, 1945), 5. This comprehensive 1945 publication remains the primary source on Pittsburgh's industrial and corporate involvement during World War II. Individual volumes also explore the contributions of many local companies, including David Oakes Woodbury, Battlefronts of Industry, Westinghouse in World War II (New York: J. Wiley, 1948) and William

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mrs. L (no full name), "Nations Today Are Certain of Nothing," Letter to the Editor, *The Pittsburgh Press*, October 6, 1938.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.



- F. Trimble, *Pittsburgh's Dravo Corporation and naval shipbuilding in World War II* (Salem, Mass: Peabody Museum of Salem, 1978).
- <sup>13</sup> "Behind the Marker Westinghouse Electric Corporation," overview on ExplorePAhistory.com, accessed at: http://explorepahistory.com/hmarker. php?markerld=1-A-3A0; the tank gun stabilizer attracted a great deal of attention in popular scientific journals at the time, including: Gold V. Sanders, "Why Our Tanks Can Score Hits on the Run," *Popular Science* (September 1944), 82-85.
- <sup>14</sup> In fact, American Bantam, which, as its name implies, produced small automobiles as a subsidiary of the British Austin Car Company, had been exploring ideas for light military vehicles for years. Much of Bantam's role in the creation of the Jeep was originally forgotten when Willys-Overland was awarded the larger contract to put the design into mass production. Indicative of the popularity that the Jeep eventually enjoyed in the service, the story of the vehicle's origins involved such controversy that the Office of the U.S. Quartermaster General published a report outlining its creation. See:

Herbert R. Rifkind, *The Jeep—Its Development and Procurement under the Quartermaster Corps, 1940-1942* (Washington, DC: Office of the Quartermaster General, 1943).

<sup>15</sup> Men and Women of Wartime Pittsburgh, p. 11.

- <sup>17</sup> James G. Thompson, "Should I Sacrifice to Live 'Half American'?," letter in the *Pittsburgh Courier*, January 31, 1942.
- <sup>18</sup> The *Courier's* European correspondents included Joel A. Rogers, who also covered the Italian fascist invasion of Ethiopia. See: Samuel Black, "America's Best Weekly: 100 Years of the Pittsburgh Courier," *Western Pennsylvania History* (Spring 2010), 28.
- <sup>19</sup> The campaign officially launched in February. The logo debuted first, followed by an explanation of its meaning the following week, see: "Double V Campaign," *Pittsburgh Courier*, February 7, 1942; and "The Courier's Double 'V' for a double victory campaign gets country-wide support," *Pittsburgh Courier*, February 14, 1942.

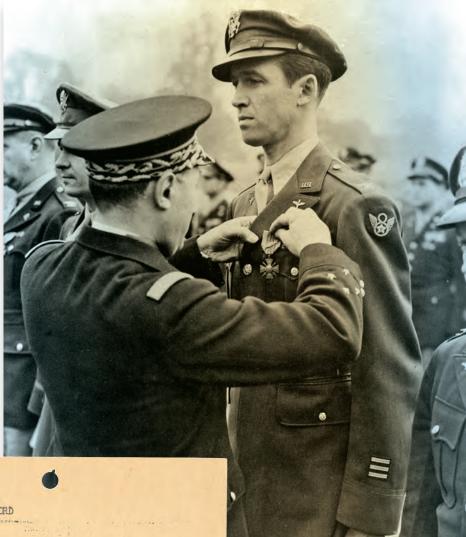
- <sup>20</sup> Examples can be seen at the Senator John Heinz History Center: Photographs of Kaufmann's Department Store, c. 1880-2001, MSP 371, Box 7 Folder 16, Detre Library & Archives.
- <sup>21</sup> "Thousands See Blackout 'Rehearsal'," *The Pittsburgh Press*, April 19, 1941, and "The Blackout" (Editorial Page), *The Pittsburgh Press*, April 19, 1941; for other examples, see also: "Blackout Here to Test Actual War Conditions," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, June 22, 1942, and "City's First Morning Air Raid Alarm Brings Hush to Streets and Schools," *The Pittsburgh Press*, November 16, 1942.
- <sup>22</sup> As found in "Chapter 2: Pennsylvanians at War" in *The Arsenal of America: Pennsylvania During the Second World War*, part of ExplorePAhistory, accessed at: http://explorepahistory.com/story. php?storyld=1-9-19&chapter=2. Casualty and death figures vary. Given the length of time it has taken to recover and identify some remains, the exact numbers will probably never be known. Different service branches maintained their own records, and some are more complete than others. According to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Ibid.

the Department of the Navy's 1946 publication, *State Summaries of War Casualties for the United States Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard*, Pennsylvania war dead from that service, via combat or prison camp losses, totaled 4,142. See: http://research.archives. gov/description/305222. By far the highest number of war dead came from the U.S. Army, in which nearly 9% of the Pennsylvanians who went to war failed to return. See: "Foreword I - The Honor List of Dead and Missing for the State of Pennsylvania, part of the National Archives portal – World War II Honor List of Dead and Missing Army Air Forces Personnel, accessed via: http://www.archives.gov/research/ military/ww2/army-casualties/pennsylvania.html.

- <sup>23</sup> Mitchell Paige's story is recounted in multiple articles both in books and online. A video oral history featuring Paige telling his own story can be found at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FA3jz6H3H0k; Marvine Howe, "Charles E. Kelly Dies at 64: A Winner of the Medal of Honor," *New York Times*, January 13, 1985, accessed via: http://ww.nytimes. com/1985/01/13/us/charles-e-kelly-dies-at-64-awinner-of-medal-of-honor.html.
- <sup>24</sup> Stewart's military contributions are well documented. See the photo profile done of him for *Life Magazine* when he returned to Indiana, Pa in 1945: "Life With Jimmy Stewart: A War Hero Comes Home," *Life Magazine* (cover story), September 24, 1945, as republished online at: http://life.time.com/culture/ jimmy-stewart-photos-of-a-world-war-ii-herohomecoming-1945/#12; also see, "James Stewart, the Hesitant Hero, Dies at 89," *New York Times*, July 3, 1997, accessed via: http://www.nytimes.com/ learning/general/onthisday/bday/0520.html.
- <sup>25</sup> Richard Goldstein, "Francis S. Gabreski, A World War II Air Ace, Dies at 83," *New York Times*, February 2, 2002; "Colonel Francis S. Gabreksi," on the official website of the U.S. Air Force, see: https://archive. today/20121212215350/http://www.af.mil/information/ heritage/person.asp?dec=&pid=123006456, accessed December 21, 2014.

Oscar-winning actor and Indiana, Pa. native Jimmy Stewart proved to be a hero in real life too. Here Colonel Stewart receives the Croix De Guerre for exceptional services in the liberation of France from Lt. Gen. Valin, Chief of Staff, French Air Force. National Museum of the U.S. Air Force.



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Jimmy Stewart's signature on this flight record as an Operations Officer training B-24 personnel in Idaho symbolized both his commitment to the U.S. Army Air Corps and his frustration. It took him two years to convince the Army to grant him an assignment that sent him into combat overseas. Courtey of Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hall & Museum, 12014.37.5 g.





A snapshot captures the impromptu V-J Day celebration of residents living on Goebel Street in the North Side. Neighborhoods across Pittsburgh erupted in celebration, prayers, and relief following the Japanese surrender in August 1945. HRC Detre L&A, Helen McNash Thomas Photographs, PFT 75.

- <sup>26</sup> Milan Simonich, "The Sister of a Marine in the famed Iwo Jima Photograph eagerly awaits the movie", *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, October 19, 2006; and "Sergeant Michael Strank," online article for the United States Marine Corps History Division, at http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/historydivision/Pages/ Who%27s%20Who/S-U/strank\_m.aspx.
- <sup>27</sup> Torston Ove, "Airport Exhibit Kicks off Honors for Pittsburgh's Tuskegee Airmen," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, September 13, 2013; and, Special Tribute, House of Representatives, *Congressional Record, Proceedings and Debates of the 113th Congress*, First Session, September 12, 2013, courtesy of Regis Bobonis and the Tuskegee Airmen Memorial of the Greater Pittsburgh Region, Inc.
- <sup>28</sup> Information based on artifacts and documents in the Mary T. Sullivan collection, courtesy of Betty M. Arenth.
- <sup>29</sup> Cindi Lash, "Fayette woman tells story of females flying on the WWII home front," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, November 11, 2002.
- <sup>30</sup> As quoted in "Meet George Marshall, The Man World War II (1939-1945)," online article from The George C. Marshall International Center in Leesburg, Va.: http://www.georgecmarshall.org/ World-War-II. The basic facts of George C. Marshall's

life and career are widely published, see for example: Ed Cray, *General of the Army: George C. Marshall, Soldier and Statesman* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 1990) and Kevin Baker, "America's Finest General," *Military History Magazine* (September 2011), available as a PDF through the website of the George C. Marshall Foundation, .org/ marshall/bibliography/.

- <sup>31</sup> "By the Numbers: The U.S. Military," online data compiled and maintained by the National WWII Museum, New Orleans, La., see: http://www. nationalww2museum.org/learn/education/for-students/ ww2-history/ww2-by-the-numbers/us-military.html.
- <sup>32</sup> As quoted on the "About Veterans Voices" page of the oral history website, Veterans Voices of Pittsburgh, http://veteranvoicesofpittsburgh.com/ about/, accessed January 26, 2015.
- <sup>33</sup> This wave ultimately included Tom Brokaw's book, which popularized the term now often associated with this group: Tom Brokaw, *The Greatest Generation* (New York: Random House, 1998).
- <sup>34</sup> Many of these images can be viewed online as part of the Smoke Control Lantern Slide Collection, ca. 1940-1950, AIS.1978.22, Archives Service

Center, University of Pittsburgh, see the entry portal at: http://digital.library.pitt.edu/images/pittsburgh/ smokecontrol.html.

- <sup>35</sup> Wade Jones (NEA service story), "Smoke Control Has Transformed Pittsburgh into a Beautiful City," *Sarasota Journal* (Florida), April 1, 1953; "Don't Call Pittsburgh 'Smoky' Now," *Fort Scott Tribune* (Kansas), March 28, 1953.
- <sup>36</sup> Industries and commercial fuel users would observe the new ordinance first, followed by homeowners in the fall of 1947, see: "Council to Get Smoke Control Compromise," *The Pittsburgh Press*, April 14, 1946.
- <sup>37</sup> For a brief overview of the organization's founding, see: "Conference History" at http:// alleghenyconference.org/ConferenceHistory.php; and the finding aid for the records of the Conference, http://digital.library.pitt.edu/cgi-bin/f/findaid/findaididx?c=hswpead;cc=hswpead;rgn=main;view=text;di dno=US-QQS-MSS285, now housed at the Senator John Heinz History Center: Allegheny Conference on Community Development (Pittsburgh, Pa.), Records, 1920-1993, MSS 285, Detre Library & Archives.

# A CHILD'S VIEW OF WORLD WAR II

by Paul Roth

had just returned home from a trip to the movies, most likely McKeesport's Liberty Theater. The Liberty played the Republic Studios' western stars such as Gene Autry and Roy Rogers, while the Capital Theater played Monogram films with Tex Ritter or Buck Jones. I don't remember if I took the bus or walked: either was acceptable for 9-year-old boy in those days.

When I arrived, my father said grimly, "The Japs have bombed Pearl Harbor" and returned to the radio. I'm not sure how this news registered with me, because at the I time didn't know what or where Pearl Harbor was.

Up to that time, the acknowledged enemy was Germany because of the media attention to the war in Europe. Who could ignore the exciting movies such as *A Yank in the RAF* or *One of Our Aircraft is Missing?* It didn't matter, as the U.S. was now "in it."

The country immediately went into "war mode," including air raid drills and rationing. From a kid's viewpoint, the first major effect was the disappearance of chocolate. We were given Horlick's Malted Milk but that was a poor substitute.

Gradually my friends and I switched our games and imaginations from fighting rustlers and stagecoach robbers in the West to killing Japanese on some island or bombing oil fields in Europe. "The Hollow," a brush-covered hillside at the end of Library Avenue, became our field of battle. At the top was a littleused row of garages, which we adapted into a military headquarters, a prison, or whatever source of concealment was required for the day's play.

The war quickly enveloped us kids. Besides hearing news broadcasts at home, the schools involved us in war-consciousness. They collected money for defense by selling War Stamps. They encouraged patriotic songs and plays. They had practice air raid drills. I particularly liked these because at Centennial School we huddled in the basement hall, and my position was always next to the little blonde girl upon whom I had a secret crush.

#### **Radio, Movies, and Music**

The children's radio serials were now slanted towards the war and patriotic subjects. Terry, of "Terry and the Pirates," was in-service overseas flying missions. Little Orphan Annie and even Gene Autry and his western comrades were all busy fighting spies and home front sabotage.

The Green Hornet's Japanese companion Kato suddenly became "Filipino." Comedian Bob Hope and bandleader Kay Kyser broadcast their shows from military bases, as did the "Victory Parade of Spotlight Bands."

Jack Benny's sponsor, Lucky Strike cigarettes (originally in a green package), were now sold in a white package as the ads proclaimed that "Lucky Strike Green has gone to War!"

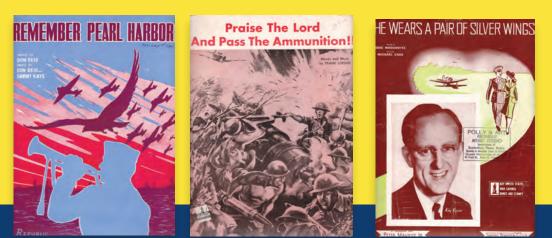
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The U.S. Navy requested 10,000 each of 50 different model fighting planes to help troops with aircraft recognition, range estimation in gunnery practice, and formation flying training.



Author Paul Roth has collected sheet music all his life, including these WWII tunes.



My in-service relatives were my heroes. They provided me with military souvenirs: insignia that became part of a comprehensive collection by the war's end, and WWII badges, below.



Movie serials almost exclusively featured plots involving fighting America's enemies. "Don Winslow of the Navy" fought the war overseas. Dick Tracy engaged villains who were spies or home front threats.

Feature movies were devoted to patriotic endeavors too. Already in 1941, Abbott and Costello were in *Buck Privates* and *In the Navy.* Soon, *Air Force, Bombardier,* and *Back to Bataan* were must-see attractions. Movie newsreels such as *The March of Time* (with Westbrook van Voorhees), provided visual documentation to the war's progress.

Looking back it almost seems as if the war was *predicted* by the popular songs of the day.

The war started for the U.S. in late 1941 but for a couple years before that we had been hearing "war-propaganda" songs. Irving Berlin published "Any Bonds Today?" and "Arms for the Love of America." The draft was commemorated by "Goodbye, Dear—I'll be Back in a Year." A British import—remember that England was in the war by 1940—became a Hit Parade favorite: "He Wears a Pair of Silver Wings."

The first pop song to be published and recorded after December 7, 1941, was bandleader Sammy Kaye's flag-waving "Remember Pearl Harbor," followed by "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition" and "Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree" (composed by Pittsburgh native Sam Stept). Tin Pan Alley was busy and the airwaves and jukeboxes were fill of patriotic tunes. However, by late 1943, the tone to the songs was changing from flag-waving to longing and repatriation as exemplified by "I'll Be Seeing You," "Just a Blue Serge Suit," and many others.

#### Toys, Photography, and Instruments

As the war progressed, many metallic toys became plastic or disappeared entirely.

For boys, toys such as the Hubley cap pistols ("Roy Rogers Frontier 44") and Daisy air rifles were no longer on the market. Erector Sets were gone too from the need for industrial metals. However, model airplane kits made from balsa or pinewood were plentiful, especially "solid" model warplane kits produced by Hawk (balsa) and Strombecker (pine). Kits for "flying" models, made of balsa strips and paper, propelled by rubber bands, were plentiful but not the "gas models" due to a scarcity of internal combustion engines made of metal. My model airplanes too transitioned from DC3s and Piper Cubs to P-40s and B-17s. Electric trains, also made primarily of metal, were out of the question: Lionel and American Flyer were busy turning out war supplies. But Strombecker made an attempt to fill the gap by manufacturing kits of non-operating "HO-gauge" trains made *entirely of wood*.

Plastic army helmets and wooden replica army rifles also filled the stores. Fine cameras made primarily of metal with high-quality optical glass were likewise unavailable. Low quality or beginners' cameras made of plastic were on the market. Even so, film was rarely available. When a store had a stock of film, the grapevine quickly diminished the supply. Movie cameras and film completely disappeared from the marketplace.

Musical instruments made of metal disappeared as well. Used horns and woodwinds were coveted. (My first instrument was an ancient Holton alto saxophone.) Pianos were "out for the duration." Manufacturers like Steinway (pianos), Conn (wind instruments), and others advertised in the trade papers that they had "gone to war."

#### What kids did

Our school started a weekly scrap drive, to which kids brought used tin cans. It was competitive because you were rewarded with points, which were totaled to award military-style chevrons: I made corporal (two stripes) but never quite made it to sergeant.

I seem to remember seeing an important politician drive by our school. He must have been visiting McKeesport's steel mill, which, like all the others, was going full tilt 24 hours a day. The skies over the Monongahela Valley were illuminated with orange light every night! My in-service relatives were my heroes. Uncle Jerry (Roth) was in the Transportation Corps in Belgium. Uncle Ben (Siegal) was an Air Corps navigator in the Pacific. Uncle Billy (Goldstein) was a Naval Officer at a training base in the U.S. Cousin Lester (Herrup) was in the Artillery. They provided me with military souvenirs: insignia that became part of a comprehensive collection by the war's end.

As the war went on, my media role models became the great radio journalists and war correspondents such as Edward R. Murrow, Eric Sevareid, and Howard K. Smith. On Pittsburgh radio, Beckley Smith reported the war news.

As the war progressed, it became part of daily life but it did not end with a bang. It dwindled. It was expected. The European war ended in April 1945. Almost simultaneously, chocolate and camera film came back. I was at the YMHA's Camp Laurel Y in the Laurel Highlands in August 1945 when the Pacific War ended. The news was celebrated, but did not much disturb our routine of softball, hikes, swimming, and socials.

By that time, due to my advancing age—I was 13!—the neighborhood war games had dwindled and were replaced by other interests. Library Avenue became a baseball field, and girls (who had been denied participation in our games) were now being welcomed into our lives. The soldiers and sailors returned, and the war was over for me.

**Paul Roth** has written about commuter trains, big bands, and Buffalo Soldiers for this magazine, often with co-author Pat Finkel. He is a retired professor of computer science, a railroad historian, and a researcher of mid-20th century Pittsburgh music.



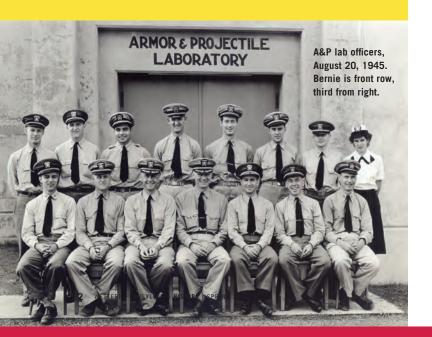
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Bernie in uniform, 1945. Both photos Bernie and Esther Queneau.

# BERNIE QUENEAU METALLURGIST

By Brian Butko



hen I first interviewed Bernard Queneau (keh-NO) in 1997, we talked about the Lincoln Highway. Bernie was one of four Eagle Scouts to travel the coast-to-coast road in 1928 to promote scouting, safety, and the highway itself. Our meeting was

arranged by Esther Oyster, then president of the Lincoln Highway Association. We all stayed in touch, and in June 2014 we met up again, just as Bernie was about to turn 102. In the interim, he and Esther got to know each other and eventually married. Bernie had spent the past 17 years talking a lot about the Lincoln Highway and so he was glad to talk about his work during WWII, which was a much bigger part of his life.

Bernie had gone from the 1928 Lincoln Highway tour straight to Columbia University, despite having just turned 16. In 1936 he earned a Ph.D. in metallurgical engineering from the University of Minnesota. He became a researcher for U.S. Steel, and in 1937, took a position at U. S. Steel's Duquesne Works to learn more about steel-making. The industry was booming; the company hired 1,000 engineers in 1936-37 at \$135 per month.

When a recession forced cutbacks in 1938, he went to Columbia to teach, and joined the Naval Reserves in 1939. Bernie was called to active duty in June 1941, sent to the Armor and Projectile Laboratory at the U.S. Naval Proving Ground in Dahlgren, Virginia. During our meeting last year, he recalled some of the accomplishments he and his colleagues made there:

I think I did my most useful work there because we solved a lot of problems that were involved in the armed forces in service. For instance, the oxygen tanks below the pilots were made of normalized steel and they were strong enough, but if a piece or fragment of a shell or piercing bullet broke into them, they exploded and would kill the pilot and knock the plane out of the air. When it was brought to attention at the lab, I immediately had those steel oxygen tanks normalized so when they were pierced they lost their oxygen but that was it, they didn't break. The pilot could dive down and get themselves some oxygen, so that he lived and the plane lived.

Bernie recalled the Allies' discovery of Japanese defense systems involving sand and palm trees, and the Navy's replication of these defenses to use as practice to win future battles:

When we came across the central Pacific, we first attacked Tarawa and Marines lost 50 percent of their men, it was a terrible blow. We dropped bombs on them for 30 days from B-17s and then our big Navy battleships shelled them for three days with 2700-pound shells from our 16-inch guns, and then we lost 50 percent of our Marines.

So the problem comes back to Dahlgren and how could they be so well prepared with all that bombing and shelling? It turns out they had been in dugouts that were made with palm trees, ten feet of sand, palm trees, ten feet of sand, and palm trees. So shells and bombs would all go off on that first bunch of palm trees and then lose their energy in the sand and they wouldn't even get down to the second palms. So we built the same thing without palm trees but with wooden logs in Dahlgren and then we tried different ammunition with different explosive timing and we found out that in 5/100th of a second the shell went from the palm tree through the 20 feet—which we calculated, we didn't spend much time experimenting—and sure enough [Bernie makes an explosion noise].

So when we went the next step to Kwajalein, we shelled them three days and we didn't lose anywhere near the manpower. We still had a margin of a fight because you don't know where all these bomb shelters are so that you missed some. Kwajalein is the biggest island in the Pacific and you don't get 100 percent, so we had some heavy losses but nothing like we had in Tarawa. We continued to do that all the way across until we got to Iwo Jima.... Even armor-piercing shells would not get in there and we had a real tough battle for Iwo. So I was daily in contact in effect with the Pacific even though I wasn't there and was not exposed to any gunfire.

Toward the end of the war, Bernie was sent to Europe to evaluate the German steel industry as Allies advanced into Germany "to see what they had and what they knew, what their shells were like, what their armor plates were like...":

When we were getting ahead in Europe, they wanted a metallurgist over there so they put me in an army uniform and went through a bomb disposal school so that I wouldn't blow myself up too quickly when I got over there. That was kind of scary! And put me on a plane and I got to Paris, which we had conquered by that time, and gave me a Jeep and off I went into the wild blue yonder all by myself and I went from army camp to army camp.

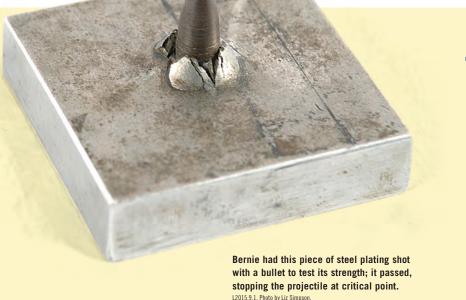
I was driving around Germany, I went up into Holland, they had a tank factory up there and they had a new tank called the Maus. They have a kind of rough humor, the Germans. M-A-U-S is "mouse" in German. It was the biggest tank ever built, a 200-ton tank. Our tanks were mostly 35-tonners, so you can see how big 200 tons is. When we were able to enter the Ruhr, by the way the Ruhr was a terrible situation. We had bombed it and bombed it and bombed it and talk about bombing civilians. The town there was 90 percent flattened, as far as I was concerned there wasn't anything left, it was terrible.

But we didn't learn very much in the Air Force. We were dropping bombs without any delay on the bombs right up till the end. So the bombs would go off on the steel sheet in the roofing and it was pretty tough on the individuals below, they didn't like it, but it didn't destroy the equipment so they were able to build tanks right up until the end. They put in some Poles and French to run the machinery and if they wanted to eat that night they better turn out a certain amount of stuff that they had to do, and if they actually destroy the equipment they would destroy them and somebody else. So I got a little taste of the war in Europe but I wasn't in any real danger. And I brought back to this country a new development they were doing — magnetic hardening of steel.

Bernie joined U. S. Steel as a chief metallurgist in 1946 and returned to Pittsburgh in 1951. By 1970, he had risen to general manager in charge of quality assurance, when the company was producing 25 million tons of steel annually. He retired in 1977 but remained a consulting engineer and technical editor of *Iron and Steel* magazine.

Bernie remained extremely active, spending many hours per week as a volunteer to multiple organizations. In December 2014, Bernie passed away just hours after receiving the Distinguished Eagle Scout Award. Fewer than 2,200 people have received that distinction since its inception in 1969, ranging from astronaut Neil Armstrong to locals such industrialist William S. Dietrich II, Judge Livingstone M. Johnson, and Westinghouse CEO Robert E. Kirby.

Special thanks to Sarina Johnston and Carrie Hadley for transcribing Bernie's oral history.



"I immediately had those steel oxygen tanks normalized so when they were pierced they lost their oxygen but that was it, they didn't break. The pilot could dive down and get themselves some oxygen, so that he lived and the plane lived."

# JEEP: The Birth of an Icon

eneral Dwight Eisenhower celebrated it as one of the most valuable weapons of World War II.<sup>1</sup> War correspondent Ernie Pyle called it "a divine instrument of military locomotion."<sup>2</sup> Soldiers personalized it with names such as "Gracie" or "Betty," reminiscent of the horses it replaced.<sup>3</sup>

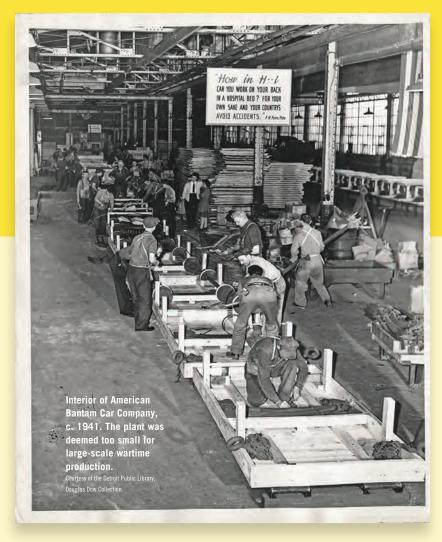
The Jeep went almost everywhere during World War II; it was an essential all-terrain vehicle that changed the way we moved men and equipment. Ernie Pyle summed it up: "Good Lord, I don't think we could continue the war without the jeep. It does everything. It goes everywhere. It's as faithful as a dog, strong as a mule, and as agile as a goat. It constantly carries twice what it was designed for, and keeps on going."<sup>4</sup>

It all started in Western Pennsylvania. Born out of a convergence of military necessity and corporate moxie, the prototype for the Jeep emerged from the American Bantam Car Company in Butler, Pa. Similar to many Pittsburgh companies, American Bantam's work predated U.S.

entry into World War II. The Army, recalling problems with the cavalry in World War I and realizing that modern warfare demanded a new approach, issued a call for proposals for a new lightweight all-terrain vehicle in 1940. Basing their specifications partly on previous models demonstrated by Bantam, the Army gave companies 25 days to develop a plan and 49 days to construct a prototype.

Bantam, after years of financial difficulty, was broke. The company had only a skeleton crew by the time the Army announced the bid. Nonetheless, Bantam gave the project everything it had and became the only company to successfully meet the





deadline with all specifications. After the prototype passed a series of rigorous Army tests, American Bantam received a contract for 70 more vehicles for further testing; another contract followed for 1,500 cars in 1941. A new military vehicle was born, one that eventually transformed the civilian automobile market as well.

Alas, Bantam's design was government property (as was the case with all U.S. military contracts). After 1941, they lost the larger production contracts to the Willys-Overland Company. To add insult to injury, the latter claimed that the design for the Jeep was theirs. Then in 1943, an official federal government investigation confirmed once and for all that the birth of the Jeep rested with the American Bantam Car Company.<sup>5</sup> Today, visitors can see this legacy first hand. The earliest surviving Bantam Reconnaissance Car, from that group of 70, is on loan courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution, in the Heinz History Center's exhibit *We Can Do It! WWII*.

<sup>1</sup> By one account, Eisenhower's selections were the Douglas C-47 Skytrain cargo plane, the bulldozer, and the 2-1/2 ton truck. See: Fred O. Newman, "On Keeping out of Jail," *Popular Science* (February 1949), 294. Another broadly repeated story has Eisenhower including the Jeep as one of four "Tools of Victory," along with, again, the C-47, as well as the bazooka and the atomic bomb, see: T. Rees Shapiro, "Edward Uhl, 92; helped invent bazooka, headed Fairchild Industries," *The Washington Post*, May 23, 2010, accessed at www.washingtonpost.com/ wp-dyn/content/article/2010/05/22/AR2010052203199.html.

"Good Lord, I don't think we could continue the war without the jeep. It does everything. It goes everywhere. It's as faithful as a dog, strong as a mule, and as agile as a goat. It constantly carries twice what it was designed for, and keeps on going."

Ernie Pyle

Field testing the Jeep, 1940. Courtesy of the Detroit Public Library, Douglas Dow Collection.

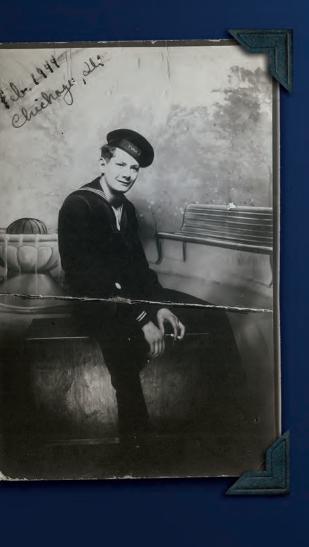
- <sup>2</sup> Pyle's comments about the Jeep are also widely quoted. See the account on the website of the UAW-Chrysler National Training Center: "War correspondent Ernie Pyle knew the value of the Jeep," at www.uaw-chrysler.com/images/news/earniepyle. htm, accessed February 10, 2015.
- <sup>3</sup> Robert Sonkin, "Bleeding Betty's Brakes; or, The Army Names a Jeep," *American Speech* (Vol. 29; No. 4; December 1954), 257-262.
- <sup>4</sup> "War correspondent Ernie Pyle knew the value of the Jeep," at http://www.uawchrysler.com/images/news/earniepyle.htm; the exact date for the quote is reported as June 4, 1943, in: "Behind the Marker," online feature about the State Historical Marker on the Jeep, posted at ExplorePAhistory.com: http://explorepahistory.com/ hmarker.php?markerId=1-A-2F1
- <sup>5</sup> See: Herbert R. Rifkind, *The Jeep—Its Development and Procurement under the Quartermaster Corps, 1940-1942* (Washington, DC: Office of the Quartermaster General, 1943).

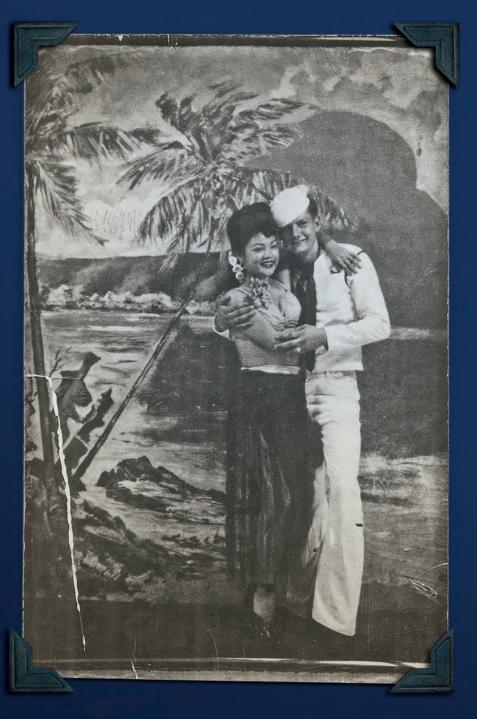


#### WAR MEMORIES OF THE HENDERSON BROTHERS

Don Henderson sent a note telling us about his two uncles who served in WWII. Included were these photos.

~ Editor





My uncle **Tommy Henderson** was a Navy Veteran of WWII. He grew up in Oakland on Dawson Street—my aunt went to school and was friends with Andy Warhola. Tommy lied about has age and joined the Navy at age 15, served on the USS Currier, DE-700 in the Atlantic and on LST 598 in the Pacific. Here are some photos of him in the Navy.









#### WAR MEMORIES OF THE HENDERSON BROTHERS



My Uncle Floyd Noble "Hink" Henderson, Tommy's older brother, was a gunner on a B-17 called the Wild Hare. He flew the last 22 missions of the war in Europe. Attached are some photos of him too. Tommy later worked at Kennywood then joined the Boiler Makers and worked every blast furnace and power plant in the tri-state area.









#### **READERS RESPOND**

The following letter references a 1981 article in this magazine about the housing of Japanese diplomats and their families (totaling 180) at the Bedford Springs Hotel near the end of World War II. It can be found online at journals.psu.edu/wph/article/view/3706/58432.

n an article by Arthur E. Barbeau, "The Japanese at Bedford," published in the April 1981 *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*, there is a serious error on the last page.

I was one of the children interned in Bedford Springs in 1945. My mother was French and my father Japanese, I am now an American citizen. I am writing my memoir and my French niece called me about "The Japanese at Bedford" that she had found on the internet. We were all appalled to read the last page where Arthur Barbeau writes: "At Cumberland, the party boarded a special Baltimore and Ohio train.... One sleeper was provided for the two stretcher cases and their mothers. These were a twelve-year-old boy with tuberculosis and a mentally ill ten-year-old girl" [citing the *Bedford Gazette*, Nov. 21, 1945, as his source of information]. Then the author proceeds to write in his footnote, referencing a National Archives document, that "The boy was probably Mituharu Makise and the girl Mitsuko Assada."

I was Mitsouko (or Mitsuko) Denise Assada and believe me I was never mentally ill nor did I leave Bedford Springs on a stretcher. In fact I have photos of me taken by the Associated Press in Seattle about to board *SS Randall* (one of them has me laughing and playing with other children). I also have numerous other photos of me taken in Bad Gastein [an Austrian resort town where the diplomats and families were first held]. When I left Bedford Springs I was not even aware that there were two sick children, nor that they left on stretchers.

The *Gazette* had cited a 12 year-old boy and it was easy for Barbeau to peruse the State Department list and pick the name of the only 12 year-old boy listed, but the *Gazette* never mentioned a 10 year-old girl, only "a mentally ill girl." I counted seven girls between the ages of 9-15 on my lists — why did Barbeau pick me?

I intend to finish my memoir this year and I don't want this inaccurate depiction of me to remain uncorrected.

Sincerely, Denise Liedquist North Bethesda, Maryland



"I was one of the children interned in Bedford Springs in 1945. My mother was French and my father Japanese, I am now an American citizen."



# **SUPPLYING THE BATTLEFRONT**

By Leslie A. Przybylek, Curator of History



A three-propeller version of the Curtiss SB2C-1 Helldiver, c. 1944. Early prototypes of the Helldiver date back to 1940, but the plane had a difficult birth. The U.S. Navy only accepted the aircraft after numerous modifications were made, and it first saw combat in November 1943 off of the carrier *Bunker Hill* in the Pacific. NASA Langler Research Center.

y 1940, Western Pennsylvania was already feeling the impact of the industrial wave that would transform the landscape and its people during World War II. Companies such as Westinghouse Electric Corporation, Carnegie-Illinois Steel, and Mine Safety Appliances searched for new products to fill unprecedented War Department needs. Aviation's expanded role in World War II engaged much of that focus. Westinghouse manufactured everything from aircraft radio tuning units and gear components to experimental new tracking systems involving radar. Carnegie-Illinois Steel worked with manufacturers testing specifications for aircraft armor. Mine Safety developed high altitude breathing equipment for pilots.<sup>1</sup>

The blades of an airplane propeller from the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum featured in *We Can Do It! WWII* illustrate how aviation's increased military role in World War II altered the life of one Western Pennsylvania community and symbolized a pattern of industrial expansion that played out across the region during the war years.

As the global conflict escalated in 1940, the Curtiss-Wright Corporation churned out hollow steel aircraft propeller blades on Pittsburgh's Neville Island as well as in Indianapolis, Indiana, and Caldwell, New Jersey. The blades—the legacy of earlier efforts by two Westinghouse tool designers to create hollow-steel propellers during World War I—powered World War II aircraft such as the U.S.



The Curtiss-Wright plant near Beaver was part of a large national network that produced propellers and other components for a wide variety of planes. As this advertisement from July 1943 illustrates, these ranged from small carrier-based fighters like the Helldiver to the massive Boeing B-17 "Flying Fortress." HC Dete Library & Archives.



According to Guy W. Vaughn, president of the Curtiss-Wright Corporation, the new \$5 million facility would be "the largest individual aircraft propeller manufacturing plant in the United States."

#### "I am the wrath of many men... I am the hope of all"

"My name is Wright Cyclone. My job, now, is war. "In every single pound of me is more power than in all the straining sinews of a work horse. "Hours ago my steels and my aluminum were ore in the earth, my magnesium was mingled with the salt in the sea. Hours from now you will see me, speeding more and ever more bombers to enemy targets all over the world. In 42 different types of my country's planes you indine today. "I am the result of 84 thousand separate and intricate manefacturing operations. I am judged and tested by 55 thousand individual inspections. And the materials that go into my creation are the product of the skills and the toil of many thouands of men and women in every part of America, "More thun a score of engineering sciences have contributed to my creation. In my cylinders 15-ton explosions create power at the rate of 16,800 blasts every minute — 280 every second during the two million miles of flight that is my life expectancy. "In the years of flight that is my life expectancy. "In the years of eace, my reliability and power ever developed and proved through more than one billion plane miles of commercialinineservice. "My name is Cyclone. I am the wrath of many

men, and my job just now is war. "But I carry hope, besides."







THN PRM-3 MARINER-roams over scenas of the world, serves as eyes there, factor submarines, carries

Yes, hopel For this is power to help the world. Today, beinging Victory closer, American men and materials are flying in a matter of hours to the farabest corners of the earth ... millions of toos of military cargoes are being moved through heady ... neurophy 100,000 milles of new air routes have been opened in the past two years alone. Weight Cyclone engines helped to make that possible ... just as they will helped to make the lay of this way the first in a great new age of air trade and transportation to come ... LOOK TO THE ISY, MERICAI

CURTISS

WRIGHT

CURTISS-WRIGHT AIRPLANE DIVISION WRIGHT AERONAUTICAL CORPORATION CURTISS-WRIGHT PROPELLER DIVISION

Navy Curtiss SB2C-1C "Helldiver" dive bomber and the Curtiss P-40 "Warhawk."<sup>2</sup>

Yet even with multiple plants operating at full capacity, Curtiss-Wright could not keep up with the demand. A search began for a new location that would employ nearly 4,000 people. In February 1941, the War Department announced that a site had been chosen—a farm in Borough (now Vanport) Township near Beaver, Pa.<sup>3</sup> The site, just to the west and north edge of town, was along Tuscarawas Road, a quiet area that had been part of the busy cross-country Lincoln Highway, 1913–1928.

According to Guy W. Vaughn, president of the Curtiss-Wright Corporation, the new \$5 million facility would be "the largest individual aircraft propeller manufacturing plant in the United States."<sup>4</sup> The factory brought thousands of new jobs to the region between 1942 and 1945, employing both men and women, especially as welders.<sup>5</sup> These workers eventually fabricated more than 100,000 new propeller blades for a wide variety of aircraft each year, including blades for the Curtiss Helldiver, a carrier-based dive bomber used in squadron raids against Japan, and the Martin Mars, at the time the largest air cargo transport plane in the world.<sup>6</sup>

The plant was promoted as a marvel of new technology. According to one advertisement, it was as "clean and cheerful as your own kitchen." Jobs were fully "mechanized so that they can be easily handled by women."<sup>7</sup> Curtiss-Wright offered transportation services and modern housing nearby, some within walking distance. So many workers desired to move to the area that housing shortages became a serious issue within months of the original site announcement.<sup>8</sup> By August 1941, Beaver County witnessed the federal approval of at least 1400 new defense homes.<sup>9</sup> This activity echoed a wider building boom across the Pittsburgh region, where at least sixteen war housing projects took shape from Clairton to Natrona Heights—the highest concentration of any defense district in Pennsylvania.<sup>10</sup>

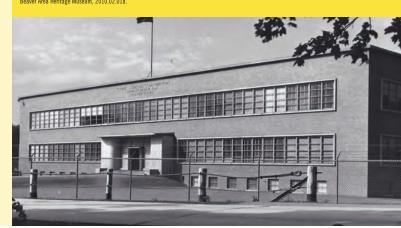
Alas, what wartime production spurred, it also took away. When nuclear bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki accelerated the Japanese surrender, the need for military aircraft plummeted. Curtiss-Wright consolidated many of its operations, and the "giant war plant" near Beaver shut its doors on August 22, 1945.<sup>11</sup>

Such meteoric lifespans marked the trajectories of other large War Department plants in Western Pennsylvania. In Greenwood Township, near Geneva and Meadville in Crawford County, the Keystone Ordnance Works once sprawled over 14,000 acres of farm and wetlands. Built by Fraser-Brace Manufacturing under contract to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer, the \$45 million plant manufactured TNT, a key explosive during the war. Construction began two days after Pearl Harbor, on December 9, 1941, and the plant began producing TNT by September 1942.<sup>12</sup> At its height it employed more than 2,500 people and actively advertised for workers in Pittsburgh.<sup>13</sup> But the facility and others like it were victims of their own success. By January 1944, the U.S. Army Ordinance Department's supply of high explosives exceeded its need. To minimize overproduction, multiple large munitions plants were closed. Pennsylvania lost two, including the plant in Geneva and another in Williamsport.<sup>14</sup> Keystone Ordnance Works ceased operation in February 1944, after little more than a year of full-scale production. The plant briefly reopened again in July, but its days were numbered.<sup>15</sup> Today, most of it is gone. A few rusted frames, ruined brick structures, and grassy hillocks barely hint at the extent of what once stood there.

Like the Curtiss-Wright propeller plant in Beaver, the very success of the Keystone Ordnance Works curtailed the need for what it produced. Similar stories played out across Pennsylvania and the nation between 1944 and 1945, as changing military tactics and technology followed by peacetime industrial retractions shuttered new factories, canceled federal contracts, and gave workers different challenges to address. At the Dravo Corporation, for example, employment numbers dropped precipitously in 1945; from a high of nearly 16,000 people at the company's massive Neville Island plant, the workforce shrank to 1,123.<sup>16</sup> By August 1945, the War Manpower Commission estimated that nearly 35,000 workers in the Pittsburgh District would be laid off as war contracts were canceled and munitions plants closed.<sup>17</sup>

So what became of that modern new propeller factory in Beaver County? The plant's closure threw thousands of people out of work, and a search for new buyers began almost immediately, a process complicated by the fact that the facility was government-owned. In March 1946, newspapers announced that Western Electric Co. had signed a lease and would begin manufacturing telephones and electronics equipment there.<sup>18</sup> But within months, the deal was vetoed by the War Assets Administration. In a legacy coming full circle, Pittsburgh's own Westinghouse Electric Corporation finally purchased the plant in March 1947.<sup>19</sup> Westinghouse

The Tuscarawas Road entrance of the Curtiss-Wright plant in Beaver, Pa. Beaver Area Heritage Museum, 2010.02.01a.





The Keystone Ordnance Works once sprawled over 14,000 acres of farm and wetlands. The \$45 million plant manufactured TNT, a key explosive during the war.

The Keystone Ordnance Works near Meadville, Pa. manufactured TNT for use in shells and other explosive devices. This U.S. Army Signal Corps photograph shows how the TNT, which was described as a powder that "looked like brown sugar," was loaded into waiting shells in March 1943. LoC 8b08264.



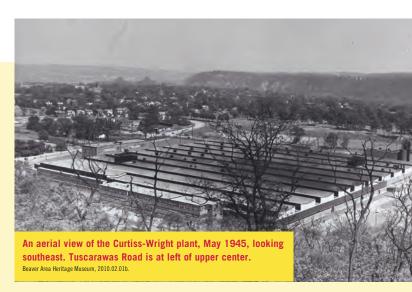


The factory brought thousands of new jobs to the region between 1942 and 1945, employing both men and women, especially as welders.

moved its Standard Control Division from East Pittsburgh to Vanport Township and operated the plant as part of its electronic distribution and control unit for more than four decades, before selling it to the Eaton Corporation in 1993-1994. The Vanport plant became part of Eaton's Cutler-Hammer Division, manufacturing electrical equipment such as circuit breakers.<sup>20</sup> Weathering the nation's economic roller coaster of recent years, the Vanport Township plant continues in operation today under the name of Eaton Electronics. It still employs some third-generation workers whose grandparents first walked into the factory during that rush of industrial expansion in the early days of World War II.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Examples are based on artifacts, photographs, and documents featured in *We Can Do It! WWII*, including a Westinghouse GP-7-2 radio tuning unit (for ship to air communication) on loan from the Smithsonian Institution, National Air and Space Museum; documentation of Carnegie-Illinois Steel wartime activities as found in the records of the William J. Gaughan Collection, Series II, Box 3, AIS.1994.03, Archives Service Center, University of Pittsburgh, and images from the files of Mine Safety Appliances Company (now MSA), see: *That Men & Women May Work in Safety, The First 100 Years of Mine Safety Appliances Company* (Echo Memoirs Co.: 2014), 116-117.

<sup>2</sup> The primary designer was Thomas A. Dicks, who reportedly developed early models out of a small shop in Homewood and became involved with multiple early propeller manufacturers in Pittsburgh. See: William F. Trimble, *High Frontier: A History of Aeronautics in Pennsylvania* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1982), 116; and "Work Started a year Ago on Curtiss-Wright Plant Here," *The Daily Times* (Beaver and Rochester, Pa.), April 21, 1942.



- <sup>3</sup> Some newspaper accounts at the time refer to the land selected as being in "Beaver Township," probably a corruption of the township's original name "Borough Township." The official designation was changed to Vanport Township in 1970. The name shift was recorded by the Beaver County Bicentennial Atlas (1976), as accessed online at: http://www.bchistory.org/beavercounty/ BeaverCountyCommunities/VanportTwp/VanportTownship.html, part of the Beaver County History Online project.
- <sup>4</sup> "Big Propeller Plant Will Be Built Near City, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, February 27, 1941.
- <sup>5</sup> A Beaver-area newspaper highlighted women welders in a photo feature in 1943, see: "Women Welders at Curtiss-Wright Propeller Plant," *The Daily Times* (Beaver and Rochester), October 30, 1943. The need for welders was also stressed in an article in early 1945: "Fighting Planes Grounded Waiting for Propellers," *The Pittsburgh Press*, January 17, 1945.

- <sup>6</sup> For a full listing of the propeller types produced at Beaver, see: "Army-Navy 'E' Won by Makers of Propellers," *The Pittsburgh Press*, June 18, 1943; and "A Message from Mars," (advertisement) *The Pittsburgh Press*, April 12, 1944.
- <sup>7</sup> "Look to the Sky, America!" (advertisement) The Pittsburgh Press, April 12, 1944.
- <sup>8</sup> "Housing Needs of County Stressed at Two Meetings," *The Daily Times* (Beaver and Rochester), May 24, 1941.
- <sup>9</sup> "Approval Given 900 New Homes Here for Defense Workers," *The Daily Times*, August 1, 1941.
- <sup>10</sup> Kristin Szylvian Bailey, "Defense Housing in Greater Pittsburgh," *Pittsburgh History* (Spring 1990), 18, 20. Pennsylvania had the fifth highest total among all states for new housing units. California was first, thanks in part to the state's prominence in the aviation industry.
- <sup>11</sup> "Curtiss-Wright Beaver Plant May Be Sold," The Pittsburgh Press, March 22, 1946.
- <sup>12</sup> The story and fate of the massive Keystone Ordnance Works compound was welldocumented in regional newspapers, see for example: "Powder Plant is Advanced," The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, November 18, 1941; "Output Drops at Meadville Powder Plant," *The Pittsburgh Press*, January 16, 1944; and " 'Tale of Two Cities' War Boom to End With Closing of Plant," *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, January 31, 1944.
- <sup>13</sup> For example, see: "Boost War Production / Keystone Ordnance Works," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, December 10, 1942. Interviews were scheduled at the Hotel Henry, on Fifth Avenue in downtown Pittsburgh.
- <sup>14</sup> The Williamsport facility was the Pennsylvania Ordnance Plant, see: "Output Drops at Meadville Powder Plant," *The Pittsburgh Press*, January 16, 1944; and also: "Big Explosives Plants Closing," *Toledo Blade*, January 15, 1944; John L. Edwards, "Tale of Two Cities War Boom to End with Closing of Plant, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, January 31, 1944.

- <sup>15</sup> "Ordnance Plant to Be Reopened," *The Daily Times* (Beaver), July 15, 1944.
- <sup>16</sup> "Behind the Marker; Dravo Corporation Historical Marker," online article at ExplorePAHistory.com, see: http://explorepahistory.com/hmarker.php?markerId=1-A-2F6.
- <sup>17</sup> "Plants Here to Lay Off 7,000 Workers Today," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, August 17, 1945; "Closing of War Plants Lets Out 400,000; Million More Out Soon," *The Evening Independent* (St. Petersburg, Fla., AP article), August 16, 1945.
- <sup>18</sup> "Beaver Plant Built for War to Run Again," *The Pittsburgh Press*, March 24, 1946.
- <sup>19</sup> "Large Firms Want to Buy Beaver Plant," *The Pittsburgh Press*, June 6, 1946; "Award Likely to Come Soon, Westinghouse Electric Prominently Mentioned as Prospective Buyer," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, August 21,1946; "Westinghouse Expansion," *The Pittsburgh Press*, August 23, 1946; "Westinghouse Buys Curtiss-Wright Plant," *Gettysburg Times*, March 13, 1947.
- <sup>20</sup> "Westinghouse Sells Unit to Raise Cash," *The Sunday Gazette* (Schenectady), August 11, 1993; Pamela Gaynor, "Westinghouse in deal to sell Green Tree-based Division," *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*, August 12, 1993. "Cutler-Hammer," *Allegheny Times*, February 6, 2001; Eaton Corporation, History Timeline, 1994: accessed via http://www.eaton.com/Eaton/OurCompany/AboutUs/HistoryTimeline/index.htm.
- <sup>21</sup> "Durability Defines Workforce at Eaton's W. Pa. Circuit Breaker Plant," *The Electrical Worker Online*, September 2014, as accessed at http://www.ibew.org/articles/14ElectricalWorker/EW1409/Eaton.0914.html on December 15, 2014; Bob Baulder, "Eaton Corp. to close Vanport Twp. plant for one week," *Ellwood City Register*, March 4, 2009; Kimberly K. Barlow, "Cutler-Hammer: Area job loss will be under 100," *Beaver County Times*, July 24, 2001; Vanport Township Business directory, http://www.vanporttwp.com/business-directory/. `

Special thanks to Christopher Moore and Jeremy Kinney at the National Air and Space Museum for information connected with this article."

The plant was promoted as a marvel of new technology. According to one advertisement, it was as "clean and cheerful as your own kitchen." Jobs were fully "mechanized so that they can be easily handled by women."





## MEN WORKING

YER

Sergeant French L. Vineyard, welder George Woolslayer, and aviation-radio chief John Marshall Evans pose before the poster that made their faces known nationally and brought them together.

## A POSTER COMES TO LIFE

By Brian Butko, Director of Publications



n 1941, the Office of War Information sent Alfred Palmer to photograph men who would serve as models for a patriotic poster. An artist selected three: Sgt. French L. Vineyard, U.S. Army; aviation-radio chief John Marshall Evans, U.S. Navy; and George Woolslayer, a welder at Allegheny Ludlum steel mill, 20 miles northeast of Pittsburgh in Brackenridge. The result was "Men Working Together," a poster showing that everyone contributed to the war effort in their own way.

Once the poster was out, Woolslayer wrote to the OWI to ask about his two colleagues: "I want to tell you that it makes me quite proud to be part of a war poster. Can you let me have the name of the soldier and sailor in the poster. I feel I'd like to know them, and would like to write to them."

The OWI went a step further by arranging for the men to visit each other at work and home. The first meeting was at Allegheny Ludlum. Speaking to a crowd of steelworkers, Navy man Evans told them, "I know now where we get the stuff for battleships and guns—and even radio parts. And with men like you producing this stuff we need and backing us up, we can't lose this war."

The three meetings were profiled in a 1942 magazine produced by Allegheny Ludlam, *Steel Horizons*. Most of the photos plus many others are now cared for by the Library of Congress.

"Never got so close to one of these babies before" said Woolslayer (right) when he was shown an army jeep at the post where Vineyard (center) was stationed.

> The trio watch as raw materials are added to the white-hot furnace.

Sailor John Marshall Evans, U.S.N, wore khaki in his daily job as an aviation-radio chief.

# LA GENERAZIONE PIÙ GRANDE TTALLANN AND ERICAN VETERANS IN WWW

By Melissa E. Marinaro, Curator, Italian American Program

ESTERN PENNSYLVANIA HISTORY | SPRING 2015

## "I WAS WALKING DOWN FIFTH AVENUE,"

remembers Joseph Pugliano of the 3rd Army's 5th Division. "I was walking and guys were coming out of Goldstein's Restaurant saying that they declared war and they bombed Pearl Harbor. I didn't know where Pearl Harbor was—just that it was a part of the United States. I never gave it a thought until they started drafting and most of my buddies were going. It seemed like a long time until they got to me so we went down to the draft office, me and my buddy next door, and said all our buddies are going except us and we thought maybe because we were Italian they wouldn't take us. [But] two days later we got a report—drafted. So he went to the Navy and I went to the Army. I was excited really. We thought it was a big deal to go into the Army. You're your own man."

Courtesy of the Argentine Family

From 1926 to 1937, boys between the ages of 8 and 14 participated in *Opera Nazionale Balilla*, a Fascist youth group intent on indoctrinating young Italians in the ideals of the Fascist party and preparing them for future service in the Italian Army. Italian Americans who spent their formative years in Italy had no choice but to be members of the mandatory organization, which was integrated into their primary education. United States Army P.F.C. Tony (Michelantonio) Vaccaro, who spent his childhood in Bonefro, Italy, recalls,

DIRET

"I didn't want to wear the Fascist uniform of *Balilla*, but they forced me to wear it. They wanted me to be a Fascist, you see."

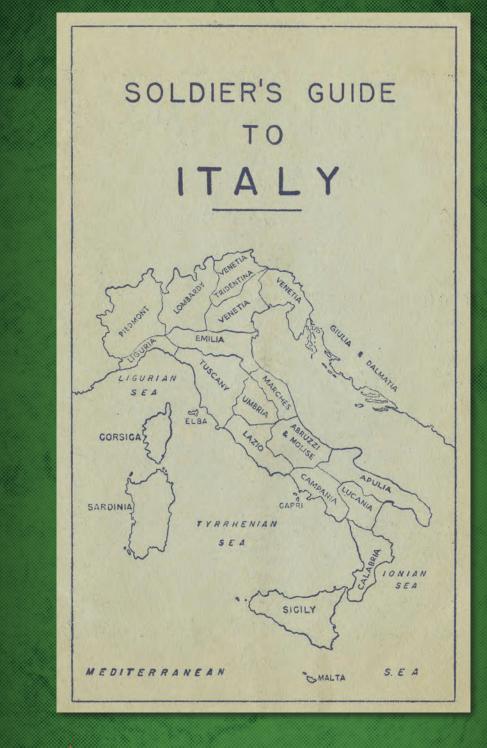
HHC Detre L&A, 1999.0244, Beneficial Society of North Italy Oral History Collection, gift of G. Edward Paraggio.

en years ago, former Heinz History Center curator Nicholas P. Ciotola launched an ambitious oral history project to document the Italian American experience during World War II. He planned to collect the stories of veterans living in southwestern Pennsylvania for inclusion in the History Center's Detre Library & Archives. Along with James M. Zanella, an oral historian specializing in Italian American history, plus a team of transcribers, they gathered what is now known as the Italian American World War II Veterans Oral History Collection. This diverse collection of more than 40 audio interviews features the stories of gentlemen who served during World War II in the United States Army, Navy, Air Corps, and Coast Guard in the European and Pacific theaters.

Ciotola developed a specialized questionnaire to assure that veterans were thoughtfully interviewed about their lives and wartime experiences; along with documenting World War II recollections, the questions investigated how Italian American identity informed their service. Themes explored in the collection include: childhood in Italy and Western Pennsylvania, civilian life prior to entering the armed forces, the call to duty, military training and deployment, overseas experiences, daily life in the military, stories from the front lines and combat, release from service, homecoming, and life after the war. Financed by a Culture and Heritage Grant from NIAF, the National Italian American Foundation of Washington, D.C., Ciotola's seminal project endures as a valuable part of the History Center's Italian American Collection and an incredible resource for scholars of World War II.

Why was it essential for the History Center to gather first-person accounts from Italian Americans when we are losing the stories of veterans from all ethnic backgrounds? While it's true that every community played a vital role in the American war effort, Italian Americans were in a unique position during the conflict: by the 1940s, Italians were the largest immigrant group in the United States with approximately 600,000 Italian nationals living in America. Italy's fascist dictator Benito Mussolini aligned his country with the Axis forces, who declared war against the United States in 1941, and, for the first time in history, made Italy an enemy of the U.S. This decision left American-born and naturalized Americans of Italian descent in a precarious state as they entered into a period of estrangement with their homeland. In Ralph Arlotti's oral history, he comments on his disappointment with Mussolini:

> I was very upset as an American, an Italian American, at Mussolini. Because I used to love Mussolini, I used to respect Mussolini.... I respected him as a great leader. I thought he was a savior of Italy. I thought all of this as a young kid.... then I come to this country and I still admired him for what he did. But when he got with Hitler and he being our enemy, I hated him. He betrayed me as an Italian and that fed me. I was very proud to be an American because I was fighting the lousy Mussolini that double crossed me, that let me down.



The *Soldier's Guide to Italy*, distributed to members of the 5th Army, begins by distinguishing the difference between Italians and Italian Americans, warning soldiers:

"you should remember that Italians in their own country, after 20 years of Fascism, are by no means the same as Italians you may have known in America."

HHC Detre L&A, MSS 0722, Virgil Cantini Papers and Photographs, gift of Jim & Lisa Seguin.

## "[IN] THE BEGINNING ... Mussolini was a gentleman.

He was a good one. My home town had no electricity, no water, and the streets were all dirt. When Mussolini came into power he got electricity, sewers, and the streets paved. Before, everyone was illiterate. But Mussolini came in and said, "You send your son and daughter to school or else. Then everyone started to learn.... when Mussolini declared war against the United States people started to turn against him. Not just me but everyone in my same position."

~ Sergeant Frank (Francesco) J. Genovese

Despite all his faults, Mussolini sanctioned several edicts that greatly improved life for Italians living in rural communities, chief among them the mandate that all schoolaged children receive a primary education. Arlotti—a first-generation American born in Savuto, Italy—immigrated to Blawnox in 1937 from impoverished conditions in the Calabrese countryside. He enlisted in the United States Navy in 1944 and worked as a military tailor at a Naval base in Guam.

Arlotti's feelings about Mussolini reflect what many Italians and Italian Americans felt at the time—by forming an allegiance with Hitler, Mussolini negated his positive policies and ultimately altered the way his countrymen viewed him. First-generation American Sergeant Frank (Francesco) J. Genovese of the United States Army's 4th Infantry Division, officially nicknamed the "Ivy" or "Iron Horse" Division, was also born in the Calabrian countryside and echoes the sentiment:

> [In] the beginning Mussolini was a gentleman. He was a good one. My home town had no electricity, no water, and the streets were all dirt. When Mussolini came into power he got electricity, sewers, and the streets paved. Before, everyone was illiterate. But Mussolini came in and said, "You send your son and daughter to school or else." Then everyone started to learn.... When Mussolini declared war against the United States people started to turn against him. Not just me but everyone in my same position.

Italian Americans experienced feelings of confusion towards their ancestral home amidst the changing world order. Many, whether they wanted to or not, took a hard look at how they identified themselves; if a family or individual had not made the effort to assimilate into American society, this was when they made the painful decision to shed aspects of their Italian culture.

World War II became a turning point in the history of Italian Americans in the United

States. As Philip J. Passaro of the United States Army, a second generation American from Pittsburgh's West End with roots in Nusco in the province of Avellino, notes:

When we were growing up and it wasn't until the Second World War that most of these Americans of Italian descent, they didn't even realize they were Americans. They were so reminded they were Italians because they were harassed and criticized so much.... It's a funny thing. When we got to Italy, the Italians were calling us Americans.... The Americans looked at you [as] Italian and the Italians looked at you, even though you were Italian, they looked at you as American because you're not Italian. You're of Italian parentage, I think, but you're not Italian.... When the war broke out never was there such a unified feeling among all the Americans. It was a great feeling because never I think were Americans so unified, I think, as they were in the Second World War.

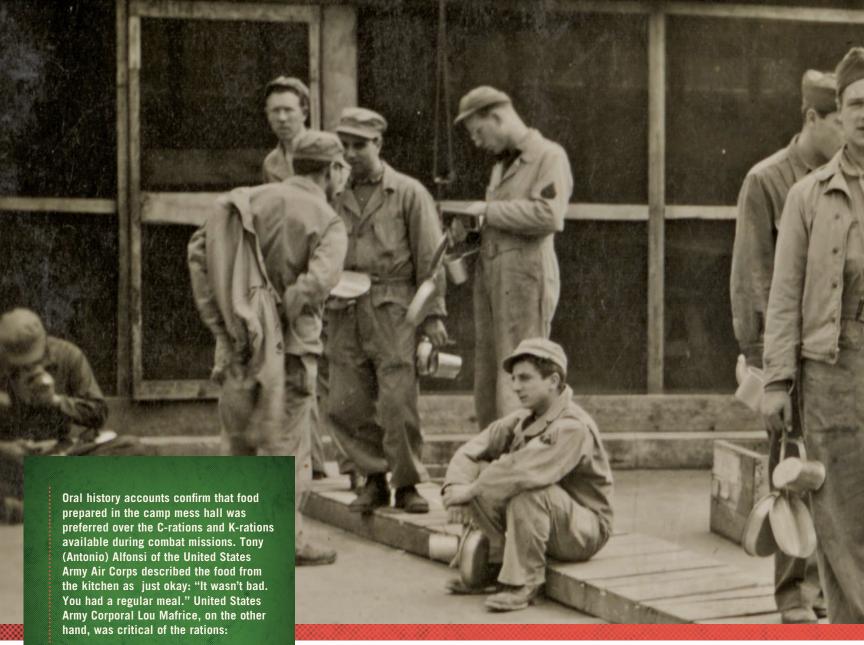
As Passaro suggests, the concept of being "American" wasn't ingrained in every Italian American at the onset of the war. American-born children of immigrants identified more with the birthplace of their parents than the country of their own birth. For a large contingent of first and second generation Americans, participating in the United States Armed Forces became a part of the assimilation process and altered their perceptions of their ethnic identity. While enlistment numbers were once believed to be much smaller, a 1961 speech by New York Governor and future Vice President Nelson Rockefeller addressing the Italian American War Veterans of America cited that more than 1.5 million Italian Americans served in the United States military during World War II, a number that constituted more than 10 percent of the armed forces.

The challenge of self-identification and integration became especially difficult for some drafted into the service who had no choice but to learn English in order to fulfill their military training. First Gunner Corporal



The blue mosque symbol in the United States 5th Army patch represents Oujda, Morocco, in North Africa, the location of the group's activation on January 5, 1943. Under the command of Lieutenant General Mark Clark, the soldiers in the 5th Army were the first Americans to see combat on the European mainland during Operation Avalanche in Salerno, Italy. In his oral history, United States Army Corporal Vincent Sirianni explained, "From Algiers we took a boat and went straight into Naples. By that time what happened was the Germans knew after we took Sicily that we were going to go into the mainland and they retreated all the way up to Naples and that's where they were going to make their next stand, actually in Salerno, which was very bloody. The sand was red that's how much blood we lost in Salerno."

Angelo Cestoni Jr. of the United States Army, an Italian immigrant from Belluno in the region of Veneto, had only been in America for two years when he was drafted into the service. He affirms, "I couldn't read or write. After I was in there for a while, I had to learn the language, because I couldn't speak to anybody unless I spoke English. I couldn't speak Italian to nobody in there." In fact, Cestoni wasn't an American citizen at the time of his basic training and he did not receive his citizenship papers until he was stationed at Camp Wallace in Texas. Another Italian immigrant who had not yet naturalized, Mario S. Iafolla of the United States Navy, received a letter calling him to serve in the Italian Army. He remembers, "I had gotten a summons from Mussolini to report for duty in Italy because military training was mandatory in Italy and when you reached a certain age or when you reached that year. I got a notice to that effect that I was to go back to Italy to serve my 18 months. My father read it and tore it up. [He] said a few choice words and that was it." Iafolla, a native of Villetta Barrea in the province of



#### "They started givin' it down to the C-rations, where you got a can thrown at you.

It started out with baked beans, and hash, and then they started to make it better for you. They would get vegetables, and maybe put wieners in with the beans this time, and maybe a little bit what they feed a dog right now.... That's what you got. You got a can, and that's it." HHC Detre L&A, MSS 0722, Virgil Cantini Papers and Photographs, gift of Jim & Usa Seguin. L'Aquila, enlisted in the Navy in 1939 with the permission of his father at the young age of 17. He spent 22 years in the Navy and retired with the rank of Master Chief Petty Officer.

World War II separated individuals from their immediate and extended families and placed them on opposite sides of the conflict. This was especially challenging for Italian American soldiers stationed in the Mediterranean. Pittsburgher Private First Class Robert P. Argentine Sr. of the 3rd Army's 400th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battalion entered the military in December 1942. He wanted to volunteer for the United States Air Corps, but at the request of his mother, he waited until the draft called him to serve. Son of an Italian immigrant from Messina province in Sicily, Argentine was one of many servicemen ordered to fight near his ancestral hometown. In his oral history he told Zanella how close he came to meeting his paternal grandfather for the first time:

> I felt bad about it because you don't know if you're killing one of your relations.... My father had always told me that he was from Messina and never went into details. Well, while we were waiting in Salerno I tried to get a pass so I could go see my grandfather in Messina. It was only 60 or 70 miles but there was no transportation so I never went. Here I

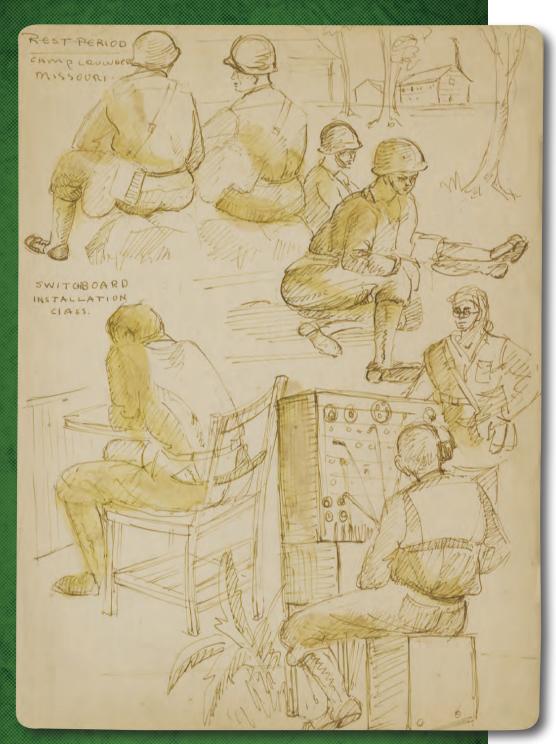


found out that my Dad had misstated [the city of] Messina, Piraino is right outside Termini Imerese of where we were and had I known it. But I didn't know that that's where he was I could have walked it. Maybe it was 10 miles away.

Argentine never had another opportunity to see his grandfather, though they conversed by letter. From these communications he learned his paternal uncles, who were fighting in the Italian Army, were missing in action and about the hardships his grandfather and the people of Sicily were suffering as a result of the war. Unlike Argentine, some Italian American soldiers stationed in Europe during World War II had the good fortune to reunite with their extended family. United States Army Private First Class Albert DeFazio Sr. of Verona, Pennsylvania, was one of those lucky individuals. His parents were immigrants from Altavilla Irpina in Avellino province. While DeFazio was stationed with the 36th Infantry Division, known as the "Arrowhead" or "Texas Division," in the region of Campania, he was discovered by one of his relatives. In his oral history he recalls, "This [American] soldier comes around and he says, 'Hey is there anybody here from around Pittsburgh?' I says, 'Yeah I'm from the outskirts.' He says, 'There's a little Italian guy over here that's been asking everybody if there's anybody here from Pittsburgh.' So I goes over and I starts talking to him in Italian. It was my mother's first cousin."

After learning how close his unit was to his ancestral hometown, DeFazio secured a two day pass from his commanding officer and was permitted to travel to the town of Altavilla Irpina:

> I knocked on the door and I told him I got relatives up there. I told him, "My name is Albert DeFazio." I said my mother was Giuseppina Galasso. Well he says, "Galasso? Oh my God." He said,



Renowned Pittsburgh artist and educator Virgil Cantini sketched military life while serving in the United States Army's 30th Engineer Base Topographic Battalion. His depiction of switchboard installation class at Camp Crowder in Missouri illustrates the type of training United States Army Buck Sergeant Eugene G. Frediani received as a radio operator. Frediani explained, "I went to radio school and they sent me a big transmitter out and I took over the transmitter. Ninety percent of the time after that I was [the] radio man by myself. I did give classes sometimes on radio just so they would understand how it works in case something happened to me. Other than that, I was strictly radio operator."

HHC Detre L&A, MSS 0722, Virgil Cantini Papers and Photographs, gift of Jim & Lisa Seguin.

"You're my sister's son!" I met his sister, which is my mother's sister. Then I went over and met my father's brother. I stayed with him overnight. Then I went and met my father's sister and she was a nice, beautiful woman. "You have to come over here and eat." She made homemade fusilli, you know, macaroni, and I had to go over her house and eat. And I also met my godfather that baptized me. 'Cause he was in this country way back .... he went back to Italy, cause he had a wife, kids, he had a farm back there below the town.... I still have the pocket watch he bought me when he baptized me, still have it.

DeFazio fought bravely in the Italian Campaign, participating in the battles at Anzio and Monte Cassino. The Allies efforts to break through the German military's Winter Line and capture Rome resulted in a reported 105,000 causalities over the course of the entire operation. DeFazio received two Purple Hearts and the Bronze Star, the fourth highest individual military honor, for his service.

While the oral history collection documents the unique position Italian American soldiers were in during World War II, it also details aspects of Army life. Nearly all interviewees discussed their military training, recounting the

specialized skills developed to prepare them for their branch of service. Private First Class Carmine A. Botti was a second generation American from Wilmerding with roots in Agropoli in the region of Campania. He was a member of the United States Army's 9th Infantry Division, dubbed the "Old Reliables," and received extensive training prior to being shipped to North Africa. Botti says: I went to the basic camp. That was in Camp Wheeling, Georgia. Then I went to Fort Bragg, North Carolina. They had the 9th Infantry Division there. The home base was there, and then there was the 82nd Airborne was based there. They showed you how to use your rifle, you know, how to be a soldier; in other words, no fooling around and all that. We ran every morning, did calisthenics in the morning, and went on the hikes, fifteen mile hikes. And then we went to Fort Bragg. They made us walk a quarter mile, run a quarter mile because somebody told us that the reason they was doing that was because the beach that we was gonna land on was a long beach, and they wanted us to be in shape.

Botti landed at Port Lyautey in Morocco and experienced immediate action upon arrival. While on an ammunitions delivery, he was injured by a German hand grenade and received multiple shrapnel wounds to the face, resulting in the loss of his left eye and nearly 20 operations. He managed to crawl to his company after the explosion and notify his sergeant of the location of the German patrol that had attacked his jeep before passing out. In 1944, while recovering in the hospital from the wounds he sustained in North Africa, Botti was presented with the military's second highest decoration, the Distinguished Service Cross, awarded for extreme heroism in action against enemy forces.

The collection also captures numerous overseas accounts, particularly of combat in the European Campaign. Staff Sergeant Walter J. Vicinelly was a second generation American born in Masontown, Pennsylvania, to parents from Bellagio and Castelnuovo in Northern Italy. Drafted in 1943 after graduating from high school, he was chosen to serve in the Medical Corps in the 9th Infantry Division. He witnessed the landings at Normandy on D-Day and deployed to Utah Beach the following day. He recalled how scared he was: "I remember my first day of combat hearing rifle shots, machine gun shots, you think everybody is shooting at you. Then as you went on, you got the attitude that you learned some with the experience you had, that you could get out of this. I can get out of this; I can do the best I can." As a medic, Vicinelly was stationed alongside the infantry in combat, ready to tend to the wounded:

If there was rifleman going up there and a sniper shot at him, he's wounded, you had to go get him. If that sniper, he could shoot at you. Generally what you did was get the infantry to come with you, they would be shooting at the direction of where that shot came from. There had been times when I picked a guy up and put him on my shoulder and took him out of there when he was bleeding because if I left him there then both of us would have been shot and I dragged him out of there.

Vicinelly was awarded a Silver Star Medal, the third highest military decoration, for gallantry in action against the enemy for his service during the war. His training as a medic allowed him to work in mine safety and rescue after the war and he held the post of Commissioner of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Office of Deep Mine Safety.

Like Vicinelly, Captain Ralph R. Cupelli also saw intense combat while stationed in Europe. A second-generation American born in Point Marion, Pennsylvania, he had roots in the Cosenza province of Calabria. A member of the ROTC at Penn State, Cupelli realized after the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor that he would be deployed into active duty in the United States Army. Cupelli joined the 10th Infantry Regiment of the 5th Division, known as "Red Diamond" or the "Red Devils," while stationed in England; he saw action in France and Germany, including the infamous Battle of the Bulge. Cupelli described to Zanella how his unit came to enter that conflict:

We were on the Sarthe River and the 95th Division was over there and we were up in Metz. They pulled us out and we were going to replace the 95th. We were in trucks going over there to



United States Army P.F.C. Robert P. Argentine, Sr. (on the left), like many soldiers, confronted his mortality during the war. He described one close call during the invasion of Sicily: "It was a tough landing. We were under fire. I was very lucky I had an angel on my shoulder from surviving the German dive bombers.... [The Germans] dropped a bomb and I saw it was a 500 pound bomb. When I saw it coming down I thought my mother is going to feel awful bad. I had three and a half tons of ammunition. Here it came down but it hit four feet on the side of the truck.

I was right by the water's edge and water came up and hit me but the bomb never went off. I was just soaking wet. I was very lucky."

Courtesy of the Argentine Family

United States Army Corporal Vincent J. Sirianni's hand-drawn map traces his journey through Germany. In his interview with Ciotola he described the anxiety of travelling through enemy terrain: "After we had liberated Paris we go to the Rhine River - that was the division line. Once " Mannheim we cross that Rhine River then all that fearlessness goes away and you can feel that creepy Ludwigshin 37 scaredness [sic] because we are in enemy territory now. We crossed over in Worms or Mannheim Hiedelberg where Luther's church is ... we went on a little further into Germany and it was scary because you aren't always riding in trucks, most of the time you are just traveling with your rifle." HHC Detre L&A. MSS 0610. Vincent Sirianni Papers, gift of Rosemary Sirianni. 47 rachesl 35 Breiton Stuttgart oppingen #10 #10 OAichach 71st Bn Davabe 21st #12 Landeberg Buchloe Vanie #12 64 Kaufbeuren - 3rd Bn

replace them and we got word right away to change direction, 90 degrees. We were going to go across the Sarthe River into Germany. We got orders to go up to Luxembourg, straight north. We were going to go east but we went north to Luxembourg. Really no sooner that we got off our trucks that we met Germans coming towards us. We had battle right there. That was the Bulge.... [The Germans] were damn good, the good ones. They got to the point where they had little rubbish around because they lost a million, million and a half men at that point. So anyhow from there we went through the Bulge and after the Bulge it was pretty rough all the

way up to the Rhine River. We crossed a lot of rivers and river crossings are tough. In fact, General Patton said we had webbed feet. I mean, he thought we were one of the best divisions around.

Cupelli received a Silver Star Medal and Purple Heart for his service in World War II and was retroactively given the Croix de Guerre in 2004, a French military decoration awarded to foreign military forces allied to France. He remained in the Army Reserve for 28 years, retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel, and worked at U. S. Steel's Homestead Steel Works as a cost accounting manager. There are also a few accounts in the collection of veterans directly involved with the liberation of concentration camps. Corporal Louis P. Mafrice of the United States Army was born in the Lawrenceville neighborhood of Pittsburgh to a father from the province of Reggio Calabria and a mother with roots in Lucca in Tuscany. Drafted in November 1942, he worked as a radio operator in the 13th Armored Division, nicknamed the "Black Cats," spending a portion of his service in Germany. In his oral history, he describes the reaction of the newly freed prisoners:

When we came, if I'm not mistaken, it was in Bonn, Germany. When we came in, those people came busting out of there. They were just so happy to be free, jumping up and down. They circled us, they were so thankful. They were hungry, and they wanted to leave. They took the Germans' food, and they were so happy that we were there that they just embraced us. But we had to continue on, we couldn't stop, like I told you, we were not permitted. But we felt so sorry for this one young fellow, that we said, "What the hell [have] we got to lose, get in." So we took him as far as we could until we got caught. He was a Polish Jew. He was always in a concealed area, he just came along, he couldn't do anything. Our communication was not that great, he was just happy to be with us.

After returning from the war, Mafrice entered the United States Postal Service in 1947 and worked for the organization for more than three decades. He was one of thousands of veterans who attended the National World War II Memorial dedication in Washington, D.C. in May 2004.

Oral history accounts from the Pacific Campaign, though not as numerous as accounts from the European Theater, do feature prominently in the collection. Buck Sergeant Eugene G. Frediani of the Mount Washington neighborhood of Pittsburgh was drafted in June 1941 and served as a radio operator in the South Pacific with the 70th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Regiment. A secondgeneration American whose parents were from Livorno in the region of Tuscany, his unit experienced heavy combat against the Japanese while relieving Marines at Guadalcanal:

> We went to Bougainville, which is an island north of the Guadalcanal. Bougainville was a horrible experience. We fired our guns many times before that but this was the first time I ever made a landing under fire. The naval vessels blasted the shores before we landed. They put tons and tons of ammuni-

## **"WE GOT ORDERS TO GO** UP TO LUXEMBOURG, STRAIGHT NORTH.

We were going to go east but we went north to Luxembourg. Really no sooner that we got off our trucks that we met Germans coming towards us. We had battle right there. That was the Bulge.... [The Germans] were damn good, the good ones. They got to the point where they had little rubbish around because they lost a million, million and a half men at that point. So anyhow from there we went through the Bulge and after the Bulge it was pretty rough all the way up to the Rhine River. We crossed a lot of rivers and river crossings are tough. In fact, General Patton said we had webbed feet. I mean, he thought we were one of the best divisions around."

~ Captain Ralph R. Cupelli

tion into the shores. Our planes divebombed the area where the Japanese were concentrated. They beat the Japanese back quite a few. The Marines went ahead of our battery. After all this bombardment that took place they suffered heavy causalities and we came onto the beach to set up our guns they were bringing the bodies of Marines out on stretchers. They had stretchers tied to the sides of jeeps transporting the Marines to shore to have them evacuated on hospital ships. Quite a few Marines were wounded plus a lot of them were dead.

Frediani's service took him north through the South Pacific to New Guinea and the Philippines, where he completed his stint after four years in the military. His discharge was a great relief to Frediani and his sweetheart as the draft forced them to postpone their nuptials (originally planned for June 25, 1941) until after his homecoming. Decades later, he became a chaplain for the South Hills Military Honor Guard Society, performing hundreds of military funerals for veterans.

A couple veterans of the Pacific Theater recounted close encounters with the atomic bomb in their oral history interviews. Staff Sergeant James Rodella, a second-generation American on his father's side, had roots in Vicenza in the region of Veneto. He joined the United States Army Air Corps and was trained as a top turret gunner, flying 42 missions in the South Pacific. Rodella returned from a mission to Nagasaki, Japan on August 9, 1945, when they received orders over the radio to clear out of the airspace:

> That morning we had hit Nagasaki. Coming back we listened to the command set and the one guy said, "All planes within a 50 mile radius of Nagasaki clear out." Then we heard the man say 'bomb away' and I'm thinking we just dropped 8,000-pounders on those people and now he's dropping another bomb. All of a sudden the sky lit up. We didn't know anything about it and when Japan surrendered they called us to all

report to operations with our weapon. We were issued .45 caliber pistols for the flying crew so we had to take them. When we got over there they told us to take the clips out and put them in a box and clear the weapon and put them in another box. Then we had to take a piece of coat hanger wire and dip it in to a preservative that gunked up the mechanism for storage. When the whole squad had done this they told us, 'Okay fellows now we can tell you that the war is over.' So we had nothing to celebrate with.... No, we didn't know they had dropped them. We didn't know what it was. They never informed us on anything. People in this country probably knew as much as we did.

Like Rodella, second-generation American Michael J. Pennetti also experienced the atomic bomb, as well as the secrecy surrounding it, but under different circumstances. He was a Photographer First Class in the United States Navy born to Neapolitan parents in Bridgeville, Pennsylvania. Pennetti was a part of the unit that recorded and studied the effects of the atomic bomb tests at Bikini Atoll in 1945 and 1946. In his interview Pennetti recounted his encounter with the bomb during Operation Crossroads:

I was shipped out to Bikini [on the USS Saidor] for the atomic bomb test. It was just going to be maneuvers. We didn't know about it until we were way out to the ocean and they told us what we were going to be doing .... We didn't see the bomb go off. We were ordered to turn our backs to the bomb area because the radiation and the light were so bright. I'd say about maybe five minutes afterwards we were allowed to turn around and look toward where the bomb blast was at.... You feel like a shockwave. You could feel it. It was very minor but it was there, in the water you could see the ripples.

As a result of his exposure to radiation during the testing in 1946, Pennetti lost his vision in one eye and subsequently had



it removed at the VA hospital in Aspinwall, Pennsylvania. He continued to work as a photographer after the war and eventually become the Chief Photographer for Allegheny County.

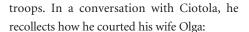
For many soldiers, their experiences in World War II yielded unexpected outcomes that set the stage for the rest of their adult lives. Yeoman First Class Vincent N. Lepidi of the United States Navy was one of several men interviewed who took advantage of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, known as the G.I. Bill. Upon return from his service in the South Pacific, he enrolled at St. Vincent College in Latrobe and earned his Bachelor of Science in Accounting. Lepidi explained the value of the bill: United States Army Staff Sergeant Walter J. Vicinelly recalled the Medical Corps equipment in his conversation with Zanella: "you had two packs and it had all the first aid equipment you needed, compresses. Generally in the Jeep we carried metal splints if a guy had a broken leg. We carried morphine, blood plasma. That was about it, when we got to the aid station, there

> That was the best bill that ever came out of Congress in my book-the G.I. Bill of Rights of 1944. It produced a couple hundred thousand accountants, couple hundred thousand lawyers. It produced a lot of professional people the country needed at the time-engineers, lawyers.... That whole program only cost about 7 or 8 billion dollars at that time. They got that 7 or 8 billion dollars back tenfold because by the time these professionals started paying their taxesthese better educated men, they started their businesses-the country benefited. That was an investment in people-in the veteran. You can't go wrong if you invest in a veteran.

Besides offering education at an affordable rate, the G.I. Bill extended to veterans one year of unemployment compensation, lowcost mortgages, and low-interest loans. This allowed a generation of Italian Americans, who had been unable to afford homes or small businesses or a higher education, entrée to the American middle class.

A number of soldiers married their sweethearts after the war. Little did Paul (Paolo) Trunzo of Glassport know that being drafted into the United States Army in 1943 would result in him meeting and marrying his wife. After the end of the war, he stayed on in France and was assigned the task of planning dances to entertain the remaining American

wasn't much they could do other than the first step to control bleeding. If he was in shock, treat him stat and get him an ambulance to get him to a field hospital as fast as you could." HHC Detre L&A, MSS 0753, Ralph V. Palermo Papers and Photographs, gift of Patty Onesta.



So, one of the girls I danced with was my wife. She wouldn't go out with me.... October there was a USO show coming to Met-the Rockettes. I persisted, I asked her again. And first she said no ... then I went into my little office, and I'm listening to Chicago Cubs-Detroit

di tuo fadre e le dice che io sono ansioso Constituto desisterato latera la portante solo piera e di tante desisterato latera la portante sata 6 felhaio non pues immagginore quelle fu la mia giora e di tuori Tiraino 7 - Morzo 1945 quere le sue notizie agui tonto d'pristerm almeno una sala rich, che quale contentera sarehe per un portero rechio 83 comi legere una lettera dapo torre tempo. tuoi zin genteredo che la possi berre di gelet come. pure la tua famiglia e all'entente ti nosse appiourere pure tu mi disi che tro pastre mi a monstato tei tuai zii meno di me che del 17 scembre un po di moneta io qui non oricento mente che sono stato a letto annualato con la bronce forge ancara non e grito to che si horto in polumite na ara grazia al Juan & Dio in travo traggio me la salute di stero cuare e le disi fin meglio ma non perfettomento quarito q percho che quello che fa per me Dio glielo monstia ancora faccio cura d' medicinali e riccome sono di berne e di salute ti ringrazio della fotografie entenzato deta d'aluni 83 figurate tu staziocome mi posso trastare. Malatia discoggi è dispuacere l'mando una latografia di tuo zio Borro l'hi bacia di cuare come pure bacia a tuo prodece e metre che di 3 figli non sopere persuna notizio che soreles e sarella e rijute come pure fa Bortolo tuo pastre tuo zio contano elle si trostoria a Bremana To to bacio di vero cuore quando servite a tuo mallitation for 2 chuni a Maggio che men 100 podre uni le saluto astretta la famiglion attendo di te una pronte risposto trava priggiomero in grunnia e lultima sua natizia e stata al 14 Maggio pario a & buone notizie e pure attendo una risposto di tuo padre dillo a nome mio ti bocio cosa si trestano bano e Bostal conce I mi serge segue the normo disocupato de lastaro : Bortolo Infortunato in per un postificio accadulagi la disgrazio che sie rotto il braccio destro a 3 porti al 1933 la c Laffidi Abergentino rimasto afezo che non que lavorare perio tu store que imagginare come a possiono tratos lippo com queste tempe così critici e molto dificili e prisento la tua fotagrafia e quello di tuo porbe-con suo nipote e poro rimasto molto contento che sono chiamato namar. disastrosi. farmi la cortezia mondanie linterizze

In a letter from Piraino, Italy dated March 7, 1945, Filippo Scaffidi Argentina detailed some of the family's misfortunes to his grandson, United States Army P.F.C. Robert P. Argentine, Sr. Argentina wrote, "I have an uncomfortable sickness of sorrow because I haven't heard any news from 3 of my children. Of your Uncle Antonio, who is in Cremona in north Italy two years ago in May, I haven't heard any news. And of your Uncle Angelo that was imprisoned in Germany, the last news of him was on May 14th, but Cono and Bartolo are at home. Cono is unemployed, and Bartolo unfortunately fell in a pasta shop and had the misfortune of breaking his right arm in three places in 1937 and is angry that he cannot work. So you can imagine how we are in these times so critical and very difficult and dreadful."

Tigers baseball game, World Series, this [is] October 9th, 10th. The 12th, she knocked on the door and said "*Voglio andare con te* [I want to go with you]." And from that day on we were together every day. She finally realized that I was a good guy. She liked to get married with a white gown. So we were going to get it. So finally someone came up and said there is a family that has one and they want money, they want sugar, they want coffee, they want.... So we traded.

Trunzo and his French wife married in December 1945. A reported 60,000 servicemen married women overseas during and shortly after World War II; the War Brides Act, enacted on December 28, 1945, gave passage to approximately 100,000 foreign women and children as non-quota immigrants.

One unparalleled result of wartime service belongs to Private First Class Tony (Michelantonio) Vaccaro of the 83rd Infantry Division. Born in Greensburg, he was raised in Bonefro in the region of Molise. When the war broke out in Europe in 1939, the United States government recalled all American citizens living abroad and Vaccaro returned to Greensburg. He reported to duty in September 1943 and, by chance, became the photographer for his division's paper after a lieutenant noticed that he knew how to operate a camera. He worked as a combat photographer in France and Germany, occasionally developing film in his helmet in the field when he couldn't find local darkrooms to process his negatives. Vaccaro remained in Germany after the war working for Weekend Magazine, a supplement of the Army's *Stars and Stripes* newspaper, to record what he called "a visual theory of how to attain peace." In a conversation with Ciotola, he explained: Sun Tsu, the Chinese philosopher who lived six, seven hundred years before the Advent of Christ, said in his book The Art of War, "If you want to win a war, make friends with the enemy." And I believed in that. So I remained in Germany to do this book [Entering Germany: Photographs 1944–1949]. I knew that the Americans were not going to make more enemies out of the Germans. I knew we were going to convince those people, "Hey, let's become friends, the war is over now. Let's not have another one 10 years from now." And that's what we did. So I remained in Europe to do this book, showing how we educated the children, how we intermarried fraulines, how we helped them with the Marshall Plan to start their factories again, the production. How we gave them packages, care packages. How we helped them at the Airlift of Berlin. And finally, after three years ... I have pictures here where you see Germans looking at us very ugly. And then a year later, with the help that we gave them during the Airlift to Berlin, they're smiling at us. We began with children, really. Then girls came next. We married them, we took them back to the States. And pretty soon they imitated to become Americans.... So I sacrificed my reputation. Because if I had come back in 1945 with these pictures, I could have become famous. But I felt that this was more important. To show how enemies during the time of peace should try to become friends with each other ... I show the intermarriage and how we helped them. How we rebuilt and helped them to rebuild, and that's the only way to do it. Do it with children. And with children, we can attain peace, anywhere.

Vaccaro returned to the United States in 1949 and worked for *Flair*, *Look*, and *LIFE* magazines, photographing famous personalities such as Marilyn Monroe, Pablo Picasso, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Sophia Loren. He published his images of Europe during and immediately after the war in two books, *Entering Germany: Photographs 1944– 1949* (Taschen, 2001) and *Shots of War—Tony Vaccaro* (Oehrli Editions, 2004).

The excerpts from the Italian American World War II Veterans Oral History Collection highlighted here are only a fraction of the incredible stories captured on tape. This assemblage of accounts is as unique as the individuals that were gracious enough to allow the History Center to interview them. As varied as each narrative is, there is one sentiment that is made clear in nearly all of the oral histories in the collection-each and every man is honored to have served their country and proud to be an American. Naval Second Class Petty Officer and first generation American Bruno Rodi reflected on his service, stating, "I was very proud to serve my country. When Pearl Harbor was bombed, kids got out of school, they enlisted ... a lot of people were volunteering then, they were very patriotic. The women went to work in ship yards, in factories, everyone chipped in. That's why I say this is a great country." This sentiment is reflected by Vincent Lepidi, who felt his service in the war was the "best thing that ever happened to me." His experience in World War II gave him a valuable life lesson: it "taught me how the other half of the world lives. How lucky it is to be an American." 

The Italian American World War II Veterans Oral History Collection is available for research in the Detre Library & Archives at the Heinz History Center. The archive is open to the public Wednesday–Saturday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

## **"I WAS VERY PROUD** TO SERVE MY COUNTRY...

When Pearl Harbor was bombed, kids got out of school, they enlisted ... a lot of people were volunteering then, they were very patriotic. The women went to work in ship yards, in factories, everyone chipped in. That's why I say this is a great country."

~ Bruno Rodi, Naval Second Class Petty Officer

## Regards... to All My Friends...

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By Leslie A. Przybylek, Curator of History

1944

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Mary and Lou Fuchs with their three sons, Louis ("Dickie"), Robert, and Ronald, c. 1940. HIC Detre L&A, Fuchs Family Papers.

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54 WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA HISTORY | SPRING 201

"A Gathering of Patrons at Mary's Tea Room." Tea room customers gathered in what had been the first floor living room of Lou and Mary's home. The Fuchs can be seen seated at far right, c. 1940. Http Date: LAA Fuchs Family Papers.



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#### Dear "Tea" Sippers...

"The impossible happened. At our first mail delivery I actually heard my name barked out three times. Those cards you so thoughtfully got off packed the lift of a tank of hydrogen."

- Pvt. Edward Carr in Fort Knox, Kentucky, writing to Mary and Lou Fuchs in Point Breeze, April 27, 1942

#### "Any kind of mail is good mental ammunition."

- Jackie Morton, "Will He Get My Letter?" Women's Home Companion, May 1943

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rivate Edward Carr probably never read Women's Home Companion. But he would have approved of the magazine's advice that letters from home were key ammunition in the battle to uphold morale during World War II. Many people agreed. The United States Post Office proclaimed in 1942: "frequent and rapid communication ... strengthens fortitude, enlivens patriotism, makes loneliness endurable, and inspires to even greater devotion the men and women who are carrying on our fight far from home and friends."1 Posters printed by the Army's Recruiting Publicity Bureau urged, "Be with him at every mail call." "He Lives for Your Letters," a civilian writer reminded her readers in American Magazine, while the philosopher Dr. Irwin Edman insisted in House Beautiful,"You Can't Be Too Busy to Write."2

Americans got the message. From the beginning to the end of World War

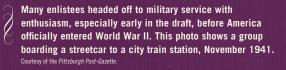
II, citizens of every age and background took up paper, pens, and pencils and answered the call to bolster troop morale. Soldiers returned the favor, writing to family and friends as often as their situation allowed. In the process, Americans unleashed a torrent of wartime correspondence nearly unprecedented in the nation's history. Between 1943 and 1945, letters and packages sent overseas from the United States jumped by 513%, increasing from 571 million pieces to 3.5 billion. The volume of mail dispatched in reply was almost as great. Between 1940 and 1945, the Post Office handled a total increase of 10 billion pieces of mail.<sup>3</sup>

Private Edward Carr's letter was one of those pieces, preserved today in the Fuchs Family papers and photographs in the History Center's Detre Library & Archives.<sup>4</sup> The Fuchs papers document a neighborhood writing circle initiated by Mary and Lou Fuchs in



Point Breeze, where their confectionary and tea room became a communication hub for locals away at war. The couple began setting out pencils, postcards, and paper every Thursday evening, encouraging the tea room's patrons to write to local servicemen. In return, the young men wrote back. Their letters and postcards trace the journeys of new soldiers from induction centers and basic training camps to more intensive facilities that prepared them for service and combat overseas. These responses form the heart of the Fuchs collection, documenting the experiences of a generation heading to war and illustrating how a gift of neighborhood generosity maintained a sense of connection in a world of almost constant change.<sup>5</sup> One of countless writing circles and servicemens' newsletters started by private individuals and civic groups across the country, the Fuchs family papers demonstrate how American civilians and soldiers sustained social bonds during World War II, representing the tip of a national trove of primary source material that remains largely unexplored by scholars today.<sup>6</sup>

The act of writing was a personal commitment to uphold fellowship with a generation shouldering the duty of military service in increasingly visible numbers. Between 1941 and 1945, Pennsylvania contributed more men to the Armed Forces during World War II than any state but New York. This included approximately



175,000 people from the Pittsburgh region.<sup>7</sup> Neighborhoods across the city watched and counted as house after house said farewell to multiple family members, sometimes as many as eight.<sup>8</sup> Throughout 1942, draft wards from East Liberty to Mount Lebanon routinely threw public send-offs each month for the hundreds of recruits and selectees, celebrating the "boys going off to war" with parades, speeches, and dances.<sup>9</sup> By 1943, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* announced what area residents already knew: that city blocks were being "cleaned out of soldiers." One block in Lawrenceville had 19 men from 15 houses "wearing khaki or navy blue." A photo showed three triple-star houses (each household contributed three members to the Armed Forces) along one block of 39th Street. That wasn't even the record: Larkins Way on the South Side had 26 men serving from 17 houses. "The crowd that used to hang out at the corner drug store" was gone, observed one father. He hoped that the sacrifice meant something: "We ought to be winning the war pretty soon with all the boys we've sent."<sup>10</sup>

This sense of loss—the impact of missing faces in familiar gathering spots—resonates in the story of the Fuchs Family papers. Mary and Lou Fuchs had owned and operated the Frick Park Confectionary and grocery on the corner of Reynolds Street and Le Roi Road in Point Breeze since 1930.<sup>11</sup> The store was an extension of their personal backgrounds. Most new inductees first stopped at an Army Reception Center such as this one at Fort George G. Meade. This is where men officially became soldiers, received uniforms, and were given their assignments. HHC Detre L&A, Fuchs Family Papers.

C 3 Reception Center—Final Inspection After Clothing Issue—Fort Geo. G. Meade, Md.

#### Dear Mary & Tea Room Ramblers...

Just received your card and Dorothy's letter, sure was glad to hear from you all.

How is everything going in your tea room? Boy! I sure do miss it and the gang, but I am so darn busy I don't get time to think.

We drill, drill and drill so[me] more. I am in the infantry and we march almost twenty miles a day.

The living conditions aren't so nice as home of course as we live in tents, and boy it sure gets darn cold at night. We of course don't have no hot weather.

I guess a lot of the boys are leaving or will be leaving soon from around there. Lou was a meat cutter for city markets; Mary's parents ran a confectionary in East Liberty. They met over the counter when he repeatedly visited her family's shop to buy cigarettes. The confectionary in Point Breeze was Mary's idea.

> Two years into their marriage, she found housekeeping "dreary" so she opened the store. Soon the gregarious hostess had started a tea room in the downstairs living room of their own adjacent home at 7113 Reynolds Street. At some point before 1940, the Fuchs obtained a liquor license and began selling beer.<sup>12</sup>

The tea room was known by various names, including Mary's Tea Garden, Mary's Tea Room and Social Club, and the Fuchs Emporium. The young men who became beneficiaries of Thursday evening mail referred to the group as the "tea sippers," the "Tea Room Ramblers," or the "Thursday Nighters," and in one

particularly literary flourish, "enjoyers of the brown fluid."13 Such names didn't convey the full story. Many of these men had grown up on the streets surrounding Mary's store. Their experience with the family's neighborhood commitment predated their days of drinking tea or beer. Private James "Leo" English, writing to Mary Fuchs from the 1083rd Guard Squadron, Army Air Force Basic Flying School in Greenwood, Mississippi in 1943 recalled: "I think of you & Lou often, and how swell you treated the gang. I remember how you used to be dying to go to bed & ready to close the store, and we'd come in from ice-skating or something, and you used to let us in and fix up hot-dogs and milk-shakes for us."14 Lou Fuchs also recalled that the store didn't follow regular 9-5 hours, often staving open from 7 a.m. until midnight. "In the Depression, there was no such thing as regular hours," he said. "Whenever anybody had a buck, we were ready to take it."<sup>15</sup> By whatever name it was known, the Fuchs' establishment became a neighborhood institution. Open practically from dawn until long after dark, people gathered there to buy necessities, socialize with friends, and find out what was going on in the community.

By 1941, the Fuchs had also added three young sons of their own: Louis "Dickie" Fuchs, age 9, Robert Rudolf, age 8, and Ronald Gilbert, age 5. All three attended St. Joseph's Junior Military School, a Catholic boarding school run by Divine Providence nuns with military components administered by the Marine Corps. A photo taken of the three young boys in their school uniforms, c. 1941-1942, hauntingly echoes the form of so many neighborhood men going off to war a generation ahead of them.<sup>16</sup>

Was it thinking of their own sons that prompted Mary and Lou to act? Or ties to the boys who had grown up around the Point Breeze store? In Mary's case, perhaps the memory of those earlier over-the-counter meetings with another young man came to mind. Whatever the reason, sometime in late 1941 or early 1942 Mary and Lou Fuchs began laying out pencils and paper in the tea room on Thursday evenings, convening a rotating group of at least 15 people whose names are recorded among the servicemen's replies. They acted quickly as neighborhood men were called up. Some of the earliest soldier replies came from inductees still waiting at the New Cumberland Army Reception Center near Harrisburg, where more than 500,000 Pennsylvanians, or nearly 90% of the young men from the state who entered the U.S. Army, were processed before being given their unit assignments.17

A brief postcard from Mike Adams, postmarked Co. H 1301st Service Unit R.C. New Cumberland, February 12, 1942, illustrated the speed of the transition and the uncertainty of what lay ahead:



Hello Folks,

Sorry I didn't get to see you the night I left, but just couldn't make it.

Hope everything is ok. Kenny & Lou are still with me but don't know for how long as we are going to leave here in a few days.

So Long, Mike Adams

P.S. Say Hello! to everyone for me.<sup>18</sup>

U.S. Army Enlistment Records show that Mike Adams wasn't officially processed until February 14, 1942, along with Kenneth "Kenny" Bookwalter.<sup>19</sup> By the end of the month, Adams was at Fort McClellan near Anniston, Alabama. As he feared, his friends Kenny and Lou did not accompany him, but mail from multiple members of the Tea Room followed him south. Part of his reply, postmarked February 28, 1942, captured the reality of Point Breeze's new soldiers: Mary and Lou's sons Ronald, Robert, and Dickie wear their student uniforms from St. Joseph's Junior Military School, c. 1941-1942. Ht Oberte L&A, Fuchs Family Papers.

Dear Mary & Tea Room Ramblers,

Just received your card and Dorothy's letter, sure was glad to hear from you all.

How is everything going in your tea room? Boy! I sure do miss it and the gang, but I am so darn busy I don't get time to think.

We drill, drill and drill so[me] more. I am in the infantry and we march almost twenty miles a day.

The living conditions aren't so nice as home of course as we live in tents, and boy it sure gets darn cold at night. We of course don't have no hot weather.

I guess a lot of the boys are leaving or will be leaving soon from around there.

Adams went on to thank the members of the "tea room ramblers" and finished with a P.S.: "Have a beer for me, Kenny & Lou did not come with me. We separated before coming and I don't know where they were sent."<sup>20</sup>

Mike's buddy Kenny Bookwalter posed the same question to Mary and Lou about a week and a half later. Bookwalter, like many young Pennsylvanians, found himself still at the New Cumberland Service Unit when his initial placement was delayed. He tried to get back to Pittsburgh during those early days, but knew he was operating on borrowed time. On March 11, 1942 he wrote:

Hello, Mary, Lou & Gang,

If I'm lucky enough to get a pass, I'll drop in and see all of you this Saturday. Thanks to everybody for the cards.

My time is getting short here, so if I get home this Saturday it will probably be the last for months. I haven't any idea where I go from here.

I'm anxious to find out what you've heard from Mike, Lou & Jack Goettman.

Be seeing you I hope, Yours, Ken.<sup>21</sup>

By September 1942, Bookwalter, now a Corporal, was assigned to the 93rd Evac Hospital, Fort George Meade, Maryland. His postcard of a rifle-toting G.I. demonstrated that he hadn't forgotten about the gang at Mary's. "A Rough Idea of how I Spend Dream My Time," it read, and included "Lunch on Beer at Mary's Tea Room."<sup>22</sup>

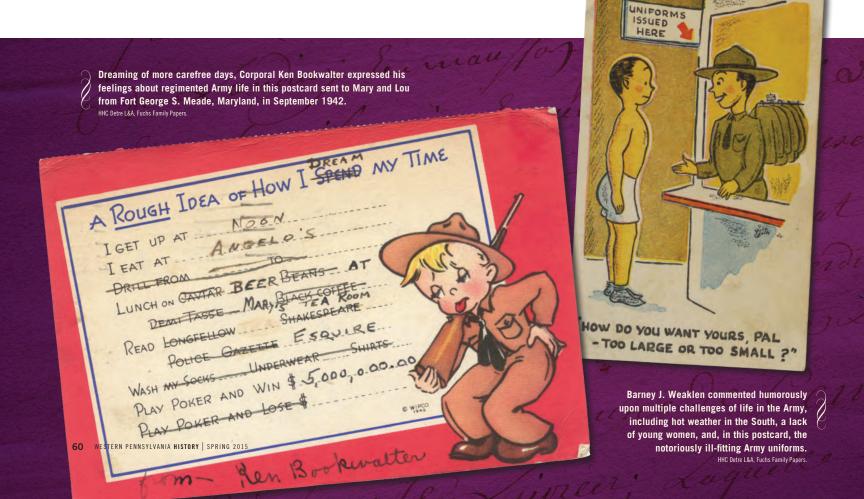
A single postcard in the collection also hints at the journey of Ken and Mike's lost friend "Lou" Fargel. Although undated, Lou's postcard from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, home of the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions, echoes Mike and Ken's correspondence, and probably likewise dates to the spring of 1942:

Sorry I didn't get to see you before I left & was taken from New Cumberland before Mike and Kenny and I don't know where they are. If you do, write and tell me or tell my Dad. I will write more when I have the time, Hope the family is well.

Lu Fargel23

This sequence of notes from three Point Breeze friends underlines the service provided by the tea room. In a world of strange new faces, with days spent in endless drill and cold February nights passed in tents, where friends ended up scattered from Maryland to Alabama without word from each other, letters from the neighborhood provided a touch of stability and a link with those left behind. As Seaman Second Class Dan Snyers put it, "Your letter writing nite I think is a swell idea. You know the 'tea room' is sort of a second home to us boys so a letter from there is just like getting one from home."<sup>24</sup>

The sense of dislocation expressed by Mike Adams, Ken Bookwalter, and Lou Fargel also appeared in letters from other Western Pennsylvanians, especially those stationed in camps throughout the American South. The region's climate, large tracts of open land, and dispersed population made states such as Alabama, Tennessee, Florida, North Carolina, and Missouri fertile ground for Army bases



and airfields. Of the U.S. Army's nine largest training camps during World War II, eight were in the south.<sup>25</sup> In 1943, the *Pittsburgh* 

*Post-Gazette* noted: "In 1939, the Army had only two air training fields.... now the whole southern half of the United States is dotted with fields to supply pilots and crews for the swarms of new combat planes taking to the air each month."<sup>26</sup> Men from Point Breeze, Homewood, and Wilkinsburg found themselves sharing space with unfamiliar accents from across the country, many with a distinct drawl. Private Ed Carr at Fort Knox, Kentucky, described the linguistic stew:

You have no doubt heard the army described and redescribed, praised and cussed, so I won't play echo. The boys in our Company hail from all over the country. In our platoon Penna. anthracite coal miners are still waging the Civil War with Tennessee hill-billies led by a very vocal Alabamian. The issue is still in some doubt but the Southern drawl is in the majority.<sup>27</sup>

Private John English, training with the 317th Infantry in Camp Forrest, Tennessee, resorted to comics characters to portray the situation:

Inform John O'Connor this [here?] business is hard to learn in so damn many dialects sometimes. I even think I'm a Southerner myself and sometimes a hill-billy of which there are quite a few down here. I bet quite a few are from Dog Patch although I haven't seen Lil Abner yet but think I've located a few of the Scraggs.<sup>28</sup>

Regional difference proved challenging in other ways as well. "Only one complaint," wrote Corporal William Lawton from the 565th Squadron School headquarters in Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, in February 1942. "Hill Billy music almost drives me nuts, and it's all these Arkansas & Missouri ridge runners play, even on the Radio."<sup>29</sup> Others lamented the weather and missed the amenities of a city, Many Western Pennsylvania soldiers found themselves experiencing the climate and culture of the American South for the first time. Sergeant Raymond E. Paulin from Mount Oliver and McKees Rocks sent this postcard to the McKees Rocks Maennerchor Club from Keesler Army Air Field in Biloxi, Mississippi. Htt Dette L&A. McKees Rocks Maennerchor Records.

# SURE MISS YOU FOLKS AT HOME UP THERE, WINDER OF A LIKE THIS 'SUTHIN' AIR!

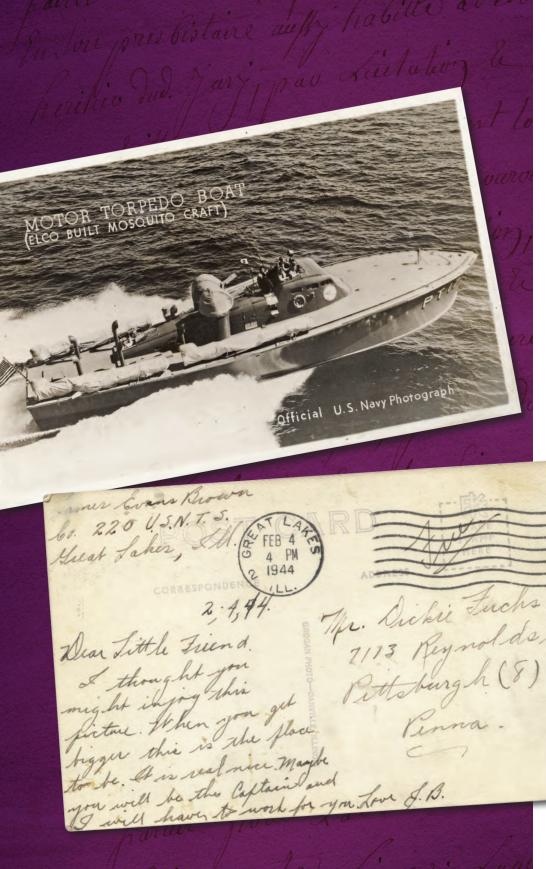
BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI, HOME OF AIR CORPS TECHNICAL SCHOOL, KEESLER FIELD

This Alabama climate doesn't suit me any too well as it has been to [sic] blasted hot. They tell me that July & August are the hotter months down here so I guess I got plenty of heat coming.

since many new bases were purposely located in rural areas. Private B. J. Weaklen, writing from the Advanced Flying School at Napier Field in Dothan, Alabama, liked his "regular job"—"This of course has to do with planes, and I enjoy that. I have two planes to look after and service and see that they are ready for flight at all times"—but found other aspects of his situation less tolerable:

This Alabama climate doesn't suit me any too well as it has been to [sic] blasted hot. They tell me that July & August are the hotter months down here so I guess I got plenty of heat coming.<sup>30</sup> The oppressive heat wasn't the only thing Weaklen disliked:

Our camp is not well situated for any one who has been used to a large city. We are about ten miles from town and the town has a population of fifteen thousand ... all the boys go to Dothan. That just makes it that about all one sees when he goes to town are soldiers and that also makes a scarcity of women or should I say girls. To make matters worse the only single girls around are mostly very young — maybe I am too damn particular but I like them out of the high school class.<sup>31</sup>



The men who benefitted from the writing circle developed a close relationship with the Fuchs family. This poignant card was sent by James Evans Brown from the Great Lakes U.S. Naval Training Station to young Dickie Fuchs: "When you get bigger.... Maybe you will be the Captain and I will have to work for you." It was sent two days before Dickie died of leukemia on February 6, 1944. Zone, Private called the be His solution whiskey thes he thanked to Kessler for on he didn't m

Besides girls, there was one something else that the men dearly missed: beer. They lamented its absence, decried the taste of other regional brews, and only grudgingly accepted the low-alcohol 3.2% beer available through military exchanges, especially in the historically dry south.<sup>32</sup> "The beer here, & at St. Louis," complained Corporal William Lawton, " tastes like dishwater."<sup>33</sup> To Private Bud Roberts at Camp Croft, South Carolina, it tasted "like hell."<sup>34</sup> Private Gene Liebler wrote from Camp Forrest, Tennessee, in August 1942:

I received your card yesterday they forwarded it from New Cumberland ... how is everything at Mary's Tea room sure wish we had one beer as I could use a good one all they have here is that 3 points beer and you can't drink enough of that to even feel good.<sup>35</sup>

Writing from the Panama Canal Zone, Private William ("Bill") Herold called the beer "terrible" and "rotten." His solution? "We drink mostly whiskey these days." In one postcard, he thanked tea room writer Mrs. Grace Kessler for offering cigarettes, but said he didn't need them: "we get them for 60 (cents) a carton. I should be sending them to you." What did he really want? "Save me a few Duquesne pilsners."36 Likewise, Private Warren Ringer, stationed at the 466th Air Base at Henley Field in Dallas, Texas, summed up what many were feeling:

> The thing I miss most is a bottle of Iron City Lager beer. The beer we have here is very light and doesn't taste a bit like the beer at home."<sup>37</sup>

Private Ringer's words express what was at the heart of the beer complaints: missing home. In a time when regional breweries created distinct local beers, strange flavors, weak brews, and limited access symbolized the dramatic changes that had taken place in The thing I miss most is a bottle of Iron City Lager beer. The beer we have here is very light and doesn't taste a bit like the beer at home.

the lives of all the tea room correspondents. Behind the humorous accounts of bad beer, hot weather, and "hill billy" music lay the sense of loss of a generation that signed up to do something big but nonetheless missed family, friends, and the sense of community at gathering spots like Mary's.

They all faced uncertain futures. This was vividly illustrated through one of the most descriptive set of letters in the collection. Private John C. ("Jack") Goettman had enlisted earlier than many of his fellow tea room "Last Callers."<sup>38</sup> By the time he sent his first documented response on March 11, 1942, Goettman, stationed with the 28th Division Artillery at Camp Livingston, Louisiana, was already reminiscing:

It will be a year that I have been in the Army in another two weeks, and I often think of the fine party you gave me last year....

Mary & Lou — Hope you and the kids are well. Sure am missing the store and the times we used to have. Hope this war is over soon and I can enjoy them again. Made quite a tour of New Orleans on a week end, but wish I was still back at the Tea Room.

Well Folks — thanks for remembering me and hope to be back with you all soon again. We are now in intensive training, and this has been made a Triangular Division, soon to be ready for combat.<sup>39</sup>

Goettman wrote three more times from Camp Livingston, in April, May, and July 1942. Then six months passed. Goettman's next letter came from Camp Gordon Johnston in Carrabelle, Florida, in February 1943. He apologized for the delay:

This is about the first chance I have had to drop you a line. Thanks a lot for your thoughts of me again.... It is the only chance I now have, as we are busy every other day and night. This is a real commando training, and just as tough as any training existing today. All we do is work, eat, and glad to fall into bed at nights. I am right on the Gulf. This place has few comforts or facilities as the training is made to be as much like actual warfare as possible. Especially the conditions which the marines are now encountering in Guadalcanal & the Solomons. I sure am glad I can still swim as much of the training is landing operations from boats. Also the firing of every weapon in the marines & army. We are the first Division to receive this new training.40

#### His letter also referenced some surprising news:

How do you like the Dairy Store, Mary? I supposed you get to bed much earlier without so many "last callers." I sure will hate to (see) the Tea Room closed up, when I return again to civilian life so see what you can do. It just wouldn't seem right. It's sort of part of home to me.<sup>41</sup>

Goettman was right about Camp Gordon Johnston: also known as "Hell-by-the-Sea," the crude, sprawling base had been created as an Army amphibious training unit, and the 28th Division was headed to combat. They deployed overseas in October 1943, and after further training in Southhampton, England, landed at Normandy in July 1944. The unit pushed into Germany by

early November. On December 16, 1944, they engaged the German army in what became known as the "Battle of the Bulge." As the 28th fought to hold the Ardennes region, Goettman was reported captured on December 17, 1944. According to the official record, he ended up at Stalag 2D, a German POW camp in Stargard, Pomerania (near the northern border between Germany and Poland).<sup>42</sup>



James "Leo" English was one of many Point Breeze soldiers who appreciated Mary and Lou Fuch's kindness to the neighborhood gang long before they were in the military. HHC Detre L&A, Fuchs Family Papers.

Richard J. Druss o. G 36th Infantry Ft. Sam Houston, Texas



DEFENSESAVINGS BONDSANDSTAMP

昆鹤林

To: The Gang o/o rary's Tea Room Reynolds Street Pittsburgh Pennsylvania

Addressed simply to "The Gang," this envelope sent by Private First Class **Richard J. Drass from Fort** Sam Houston near San Antonio, Texas, captures the closeness felt by the members on both sides of the tea room writing circle. HHC Detre L&A, Fuchs Family Papers

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By that time, as Goettman had worried, the tea room in Point Breeze had indeed closed. In 1942, Mary and Lou Fuchs had purchased a building at the opposite end of the block-7103 Reynolds Street. They eventually opened a new store and closed the tea room. Although some letters in the collection suggest that the writing circle continued, responses after early 1943 became far less frequent. Conflict with neighbors may have spurred the store change. Bill Herold alluded to this in a note to Mary and Lou:

I received a letter from Jim McShane and he was telling me you people were going to be forced to close in April. He said the people in Le Roi Road were complaining.... I hope everything turns out O.K43

Other factors may have intervened as well. The Fuchs' oldest son, "Dickie" became seriously ill, eventually succumbing to leukemia on February 6, 1944.44 Perhaps the uncertainty of illness and loss, coupled with long hours and changes in the neighborhood, persuaded Mary and Lou to return to their roots, operating a store rather than a drinking establishment. They retained their commitment to Point Breeze, running the new Frick Park Market until their sons took over in the 1970s.45

In 1978, Point Breeze gathered at the Frick Park Market to celebrate Mary and Lou's 50th wedding anniversary. They had been operating stores along Reynolds Street for 48 years.46 The year and a half of the writing circle in 1942-1943 may seem brief but the impact of Mary and Lou Fuchs' gesture is measured not in time but in the thanks of the men whose lives the tea room circle touched. As Corporal Charles Reber wrote in 1943 from a Coast Artillery base in the Pacific, "I sure was glad to hear from two of the swellest people in Pittsburgh."47 ۲

- <sup>1</sup> Annual Report of the Postmaster General, For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1942, as recounted in Judy Barrett Litoff and David C. Smith, "Will He Get My Letter? Popular Portrayals of Mail and Morale During World War II," The Journal of Popular Culture (Vol. 23, No. 4, 1990: 21-43), 22. Letter-writing as a force for maintaining morale is also explored in: Judy Barrett Litoff and David C. Smith, " 'Writing is Fighting, Too': The World War II Correspondence of Southern Women," The Georgie Historical Quarterly (Vol. 76, No. 2, Summer 1992: 436-457).
- This poster, from 1945, is widely reproduced. See: The object record from The Price of Freedom: Americans at War. Smithsonian Institution. National Museum of American History, at: http:// amhistory.si.edu/militaryhistory/collection/object. asp?ID=553&back=1. Mary K. Browne, "He Lives for Your Mail," American Magazine (October 1944: 102-107); Dr. Irwin Edman, "You Can't Be Too Busy To Write," House Beautiful (November 1943: 60-112).
- <sup>3</sup> Statistics are drawn from the Annual Reports of the Postmaster General. for the fiscal years ended from June 30, 1942 - June 30, 1946, as recounted in Litoff and Smith, "Will He Get My Letter?", 23-24.
- <sup>4</sup> Fuchs Family Papers and Photographs, 1933-1951, MSS 580, Detre Library & Archives, Senator John Heinz History Center. The collection includes 13 folders of material. Folders 1-5 hold news clippings, family photos, and scrapbook remnants. Folders 7-13 hold letters, postcards and ephemera sent by the soldiers back to Mary and Lou Fuchs or other members

of the writing circle, and are arranged in alphabetical order by last name of the correspondent. The collection was received as a gift from Ronald Fuchs in 2010.

- <sup>5</sup> Some of the letters in the collection were partially reprinted in an earlier article, see: Patricia Lowry, "The Next Page: War letters home-before the shooting started," Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, May 24, 2009.
- <sup>6</sup> Collections of World War II era servicemen newsletters and writing circles can be found in archives nationwide. Another example of a Pittsburgh initiative can be found in: Curtis Miner, "'Hi Butch': the World War II Letters of Everett Johns," Pittsburgh History (Holiday 1989: 178-191). For national examples, see: The Adeline King Papers (Smyrna Bulletin), bulk 1931-1989, Albert Gore Research Center, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, TN; The Ruth Baker Stephan Collection of World War II Letters, bulk 1941-1947, RG 069: 158, accession 2011-084, Connecticut State Library, Hartford, CT; and examples of The Soujourner, a student-run newsletter from Manitowoc County, Wisconsin, made available on-line through The Home Front: Manitowoc County in World War II, Manitowoc County Historical Society: http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/WI/ WI-idx?type=browse&scope=WI.SOJOURNER.
- <sup>7</sup> Miner, "Hi Butch," Pittsburgh History, p. 180.
- <sup>8</sup> Regular updates in city newspapers routinely mentioned the contributions of multiple family members. See, for example: "You're in the Army Now!," The Pittsburgh Press, April 27, 1942, which mentioned at least three sets of brothers, including twins; and "With Our Fighting Forces," Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, January 10, 1945, which noted one family with three sons serving, and a brother and sister combination, Private Dorothy M. and Sergeant John C. Vetter from Wilkinsburg. For a later remembrance of a larger contribution, see: Len Barcousky, "North Side family sent eight brothers to war," Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, November 11, 2014.
- <sup>9</sup> City newspapers reported the send offs through 1942: the practice diminished as the war went on. See, for example: "Pittsburgh Gives a Cheer for the Boys Going off to War," Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, April 3, 1942; "Aviation Cadets and Selectees Feted at Farewell Parties / Crowds Cheer 400 More Off to War Duty," Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, April 10, 1942;

and "Selectees Feted in East Liberty," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, July 20, 1942." One report in June suggested that some organizers eventually shortened the festivities because selectees requested more time to spend with families: "New Departure in Farewells / Carrick, Knoxville Selectees Honored," Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, June 19, 1942.

- <sup>10</sup> "Block in Lawrenceville 'Cleaned Out of Soldiers'," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette,* December 2, 1943, 6. The photo feature accompanying it appears under the headline: "Three Triple-Star Houses in Lawrenceville Block."
- <sup>11</sup> Alex M. Toner, Finding Aid: Guide to the Fuchs Family Papers and Photographs, pg. 2; Obituary, "In Memory ... Mary Fuchs," unidentified clipping, Box 1, Folder 1, Fuchs Family Papers; Mary Fuchs later recalled that the couple opened their first store on May 8, 1930. See: Kathy Kiely, "After 48 Years, City Market Still Their 'Baby'," *The Pittsburgh Press*, July 19, 1978.
- <sup>12</sup> The license was in Louis G. Fuchs' name, and he may have been the motivating force behind adding beer to the tea room. It wasn't always a smooth process. Louis had his liquor license at 7113 Reynolds Street revoked for five days in 1940, see: "Board Revokes Liquor License," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, February 9, 1940.
- <sup>13</sup> A/C McShane, Jas. F, postcard from Maxwell Field, Ala., August 20, 1942. Fuchs Family Papers.
- <sup>14</sup> English, Pvt James, L, letter from 1083rd Guard Squadron, Greenwood, Miss., 1943. Fuchs Family Papers.
- <sup>15</sup> Kiely, "After 48 Years," *Pittsburgh Press,* July 19, 1978.
- <sup>16</sup> Box 1, Folder 5, Fuchs Family Papers.

<sup>17</sup> The figure 500,000 is given in: "Chapter One: Mobilization and Opposition," *The Arsenal of America: Pennsylvania During the Second World War,* found on ExplorePAhistory.com: http://explorepahistory.com/ story.php?storyId=1-9-19&chapter=1, and; Barbara E. Hightower, "Written Historical and Descriptive Data, New Cumberland Army Depot," PA-80, report for the

Historic American Engineering Record, National Park Service, 1984, 18-20.

#### V-Mail is Speed Mail

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"The last few weeks the ladies were in their glory. Some of the boys have written to tell them they received their cards and letters. It has been a long time since so many smiles have been passed around. A few of the ladies were looking for a magnifying glass to read V-mail letters with."

The Mannerchor News, May 1944

Some people celebrated it. Others bemoaned its size and reached for their magnifying glasses. During World War II, V-Mail was a national experiment born out of challenges witnessed in World War I. Years before Pearl Harbor, the U.S. Postal Service anticipated that American involvement in another global war would increase mail usage and delay national communication. Planning began in 1938 for a mail system that would save space and time, no matter where a letter originated.

Also called "Tiny Mail" or "Funny Mail," V-mail debuted in June 1942. It relied on microfilm to condense and translate full size letters written on special stationary to film format. The film, shipped overseas or back to the United States, was reprinted in processing centers at one quarter of its original size and distributed to its intended recipients. The system saved thousands of tons of shipping spacean estimated 37 bags of regular mail could

be reduced to one bag of microfilmed V-mail.

Use of the new mail system was never required. But government officials encouraged it, and multiple advertising campaigns were launched to inspire civilians to use V-mail. The experiment lasted 41 months, until November 1945. While it was deemed a success, certain shortcomings, such as the reduced size of the final document, were never resolved. Microfilm technology has never again been used for personal military mail.

"My Dearest Husband: How V-Mail Changed War Communication," National World War II Museum, online article at www. nationalww2museum.org/learn/education/for-students/ww2-history/ take-a-closer-look/v-mail.html.

Victory Mail, online exhibition and resource list, National Postal Museum, Smithsonian Institution, at postalmuseum.si.edu/ victorymail/index.html.

V-Mail, or Victory Mail, was developed by Eastman Kodak as a secure way to communicate while making transport easier by transferring letters to microfilm and printing them at their destination. Whether Americans used regular mail or v-mail, this poster by the Army's Recruiting Bureau made clear that sending mail to those in uniform was a patriotic duty. Poster designed by Lejaren Hill University of North Texas Digital Library



WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA HISTORY | SPRING 2015 65

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Corporal Charles Reber was serving with the U.S. Army Coastal Artillery in Hawaii, but Reber's joking island wear was just about the only part of his image that got past the censor's cuts. HHC Detre L&A, Fuchs Family Papers.

- <sup>18</sup> Adams, Mike, postcard from Co. H, 1301st Service Unit, New Cumberland, Pa., February 12, 1942. Fuchs Family Papers.
- <sup>19</sup> Adams, Michael R, Army Serial Number 3315092, World War II Army Enlistment Records, Electronic Army Serial Number Merged File, ca. 1938-1946. U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, accessed July 22, 2014 ; and Bookwalter, Kenneth C., Army Serial Number 33150970, World War II Army Enlistment Records, Electronic Army Serial Number Merged File, ca. 1938-1946. U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, accessed July 22, 2014.
- <sup>20</sup> Adams, Mike, letter from Fort McClellan, Ala., February 28, 1942. Fuchs Family Papers.
- <sup>21</sup> Bookwalter, Pvt. K. (Ken) C., postcard from Co. H, 1301st Service Unit, New Cumberland, Pa., March 11, 1942. Fuchs Family Papers.
- <sup>22</sup> Bookwalter, Corp K. C., postcard from 93rd Evac Hospital, Fort George S. Meade, Md., September 1942. Fuchs Family Papers.
- <sup>23</sup> Fargel, Lou, postcard from Fort Bragg, Nc., no date. Fuchs Family Papers.
- <sup>24</sup> Snyers, Dan, letter from Seaman 2/C, U.S. Navy, Unknown location, May 1942. Fuchs Family Papers.
- <sup>25</sup> The exception was Fort Lewis in Washington State, see: Neil R. McMillen, *Remaking Dixie: The Impact* of World War II on the American South (University of

- <sup>26</sup> "Army Bombs Rome's Military Targets With Precision Learned at Air Training Fields," *The Pittsburgh Press*, August 4, 1943. The article includes a map showing the location of many of the new southern training fields. For a wider discussion of military bases in the south, see also: David J. Coles, "'Hell-by-the-Sea': Florida's Camp Gordon Johnson in World War II," *The Florida Historical Quarterly* (Vol. 73. No 1, July 1994: 1-22); and Dewey W. Grantham, *The South in Modern America: A Region at Odds* (Fayetteville University of Arkansas Press, 1994), 170, 172-173.
- <sup>27</sup> Carr, Pvt. Ed, letter from Co, B, 14th A. F. R. T. C., U.S. Army, Fort Know, Ky., April 27, 1942. Fuchs Family Papers.
- <sup>28</sup> English, Pvt. John V, letter from Co. I, 317th Infantry, 80th Div, A. P.O. 80, Cap Forrest, Tn., October 20, 1942. Fuchs Family Papers. English's references to the cartoon strip *Li'l Abner* would have conjured up a whole cast of mock southern characters for his Point Breeze readers. Published starting in 1934, AI Cap's *Li'l Abner* was one of the few American comic strips of the time read widely by adults, and it extended historically out of the humor of the mid-south region. See: Arthur Asa Berger, *Li'l Abner: a Study in American Satire* (University Press of Mississippi, 1970).
- <sup>29</sup> Lawton, Corp. Wm, post card from 565th sch. Sq. Hdq. Flt., Jefferson Barracks, Mo., February 12, 1942. Fuchs Family Papers.
- <sup>30</sup> Weaklen, Pvt. B. J., letter from 431st Sch. Sq. Napier Field, Dothan, Al., June 29, 1942. Fuchs Family Papers.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid.; A letter from Ray F. Eversman, Co. C, E. T. Btn 2nd, no date, Fuchs Family Papers, similarly noted the remote nature of Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. Eversman described the camp as "a big one," with 37,000 men in 2,000 buildings on 86,000 acres, and 40 miles from the nearest town.
- <sup>32</sup> Soldiers during World War II should have considered themselves lucky to have beer in camp; it was prohibited during World War I. In addition to accommodations made with national liquor laws, military beer supplies were also hindered by rationing, supply shortages, and sometimes difficult relationships between major brewers and the Army Exchange Service (PX). See: James J. Cooke, *Chewing Gum, Candy Bars, and Beer, The Army PX in World War II* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2009), 3, 5, and especially Chapter 5, "No Beer," 77-94.
- <sup>33</sup> Lawton, post card, Jefferson Barracks, Mo., February 12, 1942. Fuchs Family Papers.
- <sup>34</sup> Roberts, Pvt. Bud, postcard from Co. C, 38th BN, Camp Croft, S.C., October 16, 1942. Fuchs Family Papers.
- <sup>35</sup> Liebler, Pvt. Gene, letter from Btry A. 905th F.A., Camp Forrest, Tenn., APO #80, U.S. Army, August 15, 1942. Fuchs Family Papers.
- <sup>36</sup> Herold, P. F. C. Wm. C, postcard from 56th Ord Co. (AM), Ft. Clayton, CZ (Canal Zone), March 9, 1942; Herold, P. F. C. Wm. C, postcard from 56th Ord Co., Ft. Clayton, CZ to Mrs. Grace Kessler, April 28, 1942; and Herold, P. F. C. Wm. C, postcard from 56th Ord Co., Ft. Clayton, CZ, April 27, 1942. Fuchs Family Papers.

- <sup>37</sup> Ringer, Warren PFC, letter from 466th Hdq.
   & Air Base Sq., Henley Field, Dallas, Tx. Fuchs Family Papers.
- <sup>38</sup> Goettman officially enlisted on March 25, 1941, see: Goettman, John C, Jr, Army Serial Number 33034450, World War II Army Enlistment Records, Electronic Army Serial Number Merged File, ca. 1938-1946. U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, accessed June 5, 2014. The 28th Division, comprised of units of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard, was activated for World War II on February 17, 1941. It became known as the "Bloody Bucket" by German soldiers, due to the red of the Pennsylvania shield and the division's record in combat.
- <sup>39</sup> Goettman, Pvt. J.C. (Jack), letter from Headquarters Battery, 28th Division Artillery, A.P.O. 28, Camp Livingston, La., March 11, 1942. Fuchs Family Papers.
- <sup>40</sup> Goettman, Pvt. J.C. (Jack), letter from Headquarters Battery, 28th Division Artillery, Camp Gordon Johnson, Carrabelle, Fl., February 6, 1943. Fuchs Family Papers; Camp Gordon Johnston was established during World War II as an Amphibious Training Center. It opened on September 10,1942 and featured notoriously crude and dangerous conditions. Columnist Walter Winchell reputedly called it the "Alcatraz of the Army." Other soldiers simply called it "Hell-bythe-Sea." See: Coles, "Hell-by-the-Sea," *The Florida Historical Quarterly* (Vol. 73. No 1, July 1994: 1-22).
- 41 Ibid.
- <sup>42</sup> Goettman, John C., Jr., Army Serial Number 33034450, World War II Prisoner of War Data File, 12/7/1941 - 11/19/1946, U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, accessed June 5, 2014.
- <sup>43</sup> Herold, Bill, letter with no date or location, presumed to be P. F. C. William Herold, writing from Fort Clayton, CZ. Fuchs Family Papers; Le Roi Road intersected with Reynolds Street right at the point where Mary and Lou's home and business stood. A relatively new development of homes, c. 1929, the Le Roi Road community sat along a no-outlet cul-de-sac. The development welcomed a new Swedenborgian Church in 1930. See: "Congregation of 125, Subscribing to Beliefs of Famous Swedish Theologist, Will Carry Out Extensive Work in Handsome Structure," *The Pittsburgh Press*, December 13, 1930. It is possible that changing neighborhood demographics made the sale of beer and liquor more problematic than it was worth.
- <sup>44</sup> Toner, "Finding Aid: Guide to the Fuchs Family Papers," 2; Lowry, "The Next Page," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, May 24, 2009.
- <sup>45</sup> Obituary, "In Memory ... Mary Fuchs," unidentified clipping, Box 1, Folder 1, Fuchs Family Papers; Kiely, "After 48 Years," *Pittsburgh Press*, July 19, 1978; and Patricia Lowry, "Point Breeze mom and pop store carries on a tradition of quality and service," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, May 7, 2009.
- <sup>46</sup> Kiely, "After 48 Years," *Pittsburgh Press,* July 19, 1978.
- <sup>47</sup> Reber, Cpl. Charles, letter from A.P.O. 953, Bty K-97th CA AA 5 P.M. San Francisco, Calif. Fuchs Family Papers. Reber was writing from the 97th Coast Artillery base in Hawaii, although that information was censored out of the photographs he included with his letter.

#### "Hi Butch" and "Dear Jim"

By Leslie A. Przybylek, Curator of History

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Many Western Pennsylvanians took it upon themselves to maintain connections with soldiers serving during World War II. In addition to the Fuchs Family Papers, other collections in the Heinz History Center's Detre Library & Archives also document these efforts.

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The Everett Johns Collection includes 62 letters written between 1942 and 1945 by an Order Department employee at the American Standard Company in downtown Pittsburgh. Using office stationary and addressing most of the letters "Hi Butch," Mr. Johns wrote monthly updates about homefront news to about 75 former employees. Relaying information on everything from the latest rationing lists to the city's response to early Air Raid drills, Johns' letters provide a valuable glimpse into the realities of daily life on the homefront. As one example, Johns wrote on June 16, 1944:

Somber is the mood that gripped Pittsburgh when D-Day struck. There were few cheers, but many prayers. Throngs streamed in and out of churches all day long. Clergymen of all denominations held special services, ranging far into the night.

HHC Detre L&A, Everett Johns Collection, 1942–1945, MFF 2750. Selected letters from the Everett Johns Collection were published in: Curtis Miner, editor, "'Hi Butch': the World War II letters of Everett Johns," *Pittsburgh History* (Holiday 1989): 178–191.

The McKees Rocks Maennerchor Records document the efforts of a German social club that lost about 200 members to wartime service. To keep service members up-to-date and boost morale, Maennerchor Club Secretary James Petraitis published The Maennerchor News from 1943 through 1946. Petraitus solicited updates from servicemen and shared information about locations when possible. Sometimes he knew where members were located more clearly than someone serving in the same part of the globe. William E. Burgunder wrote to Petraitus in February 1945:

Can you tell me if there are any of the fellows from the club serving anywhere in these Islands. I don't know if I'll have an opportunity to see any of them, but if there are, I would like to try and locate them.

Befitting such a social organization, Maennerchor members serving overseas were encouraged to collect and send beer labels documenting their travels. They also received cards from the Maennerchor Ladies' Bowing League and enjoyed Vargas girl pin-up postcards. Electrician's Mate third class Bertrand Jean ("John") Lureau, serving in the Solomon Islands, celebrated the receipt of his "girlie" on December 24, 1944:

Allright allright what is this, a "tease"? Meaning, of course, that beauteous "Varga[s]" girlie! if she's a "sample on approval" like why send her along! But thanks this coral pile don't see any.

Many soldiers reiterated just how much the efforts of people such as Petraitus and *The Maennerchor News* bonded them to the community. Corporal Richard E. Sushansky summed it up well in comments in the November 1944 newsletter:

[I] was pleased as hell when I received your letter. In my three and one half years in the Army, I really learned how to long for my home town. Honestly, the way I feel, every girl in the Rox is my sweetheart and every gentleman my pal.

HHC Detre L&A, McKees Rocks Maennerchor Records, 1944-1946, MSS 928. The records were received in 2013 and are a rich source awaiting more detailed scholarly attention.

# CARRYING The FLAME

Zippo Lighters during the Depession, into World War II, and on the Beach at Normandy

By Tim Ziaukas



ike Hershey or Heinz, Zippo is an iconic Pennsylvania brand, an American institution with a global presence. Yet the family-owned Bradford lighter manufacturer, like America itself, rose to prominence after enduring the Great Depression and triumphing in World War II.<sup>1</sup> Despite the reduction of smokers in recent

decades, especially in the United States,<sup>2</sup> Zippo Manufacturing Company assembled its half*billionth* lighter in 2012.<sup>3</sup> The next four quarters saw the company's most profitable year ever. And 2014 topped that.<sup>4</sup> That's a half-billionplus affirmations by smokers, collectors, and fans from around the world who, with a flick of a finger, opened a rectangle of brass with a distinctive click, thumbed a



flint-wheel, sparked a flame, then shut the device, snuffing the light with a solidly reassuring snap.

Zippo was founded in 1932 by George G. Blaisdell. However, as his daughter Sarah B. Dorn recalled, it's not all been festive clicks and solid snaps. Two moments stood out as make-or-break events in family lore: one was the difficult lesson her father learned as a child about keeping

> a promise that he carried into his business plan, offering a life-time guarantee on his product. The other was the attachment Zippo lighters had for the men and women who carried them into World War II and, by doing so, helped make Zippo an American institution. "The war made us," Dorn said. "No question about it.... That guarantee—and the war—turned out to be the keys to it all."<sup>5</sup>



t began in darkness, at the worst of times for most Americans.<sup>6</sup> The year was 1932 when the United States was slipping into the bleakest days of the Great Depression. Wall Street's Dow Jones

Industrial Average slumped to 41.22, its all-time low. Wages fell, bread lines formed, and soup kitchens filled up all over America. That year, Franklin D. Roosevelt, on accepting the Democratic presidential nomination, said, "I pledge you, I pledge myself, to a new deal for the American people."<sup>7</sup> Hardly a time, it would seem, to produce and market a lighter for \$1.95 (about \$33 today) when eggs cost 29¢ a dozen, cigarettes 15¢ a pack, or a generic lighter could be bought for a quarter.

Blaisdell, born 1895 in Bradford, Pennsylvania, hardly seemed like someone who would find success in those brutal years. It was not the time or place to launch a novel, pricey product, much less by a man who, early on, showed neither distinction nor ambition. "He had very little formal education," Dorn said of her father. "In fact, he was what might be called today a discipline challenge.... My father hated school. Walked out of 5th grade and told his family he wasn't going back. That was it."

George's father bundled him off to a military academy to straighten him out, but he only lasted there for two years before he was summarily dismissed. Then his father put him to work in his business—the Blaisdell Machinery Company—where he learned metal work, a skill that would come in handy in the germination stages of the Zippo lighter nearly 30 years later. At that time, he earned 10¢ an hour in a 59-hour week. "He even made me punch the clock," George would often say about working for his dad.<sup>8</sup>

After World War I, 21-year-old George took over the family business, then in 1920 sold the machinery company and put the money in oil. But that didn't fit right either, Dorn said. "My father hated the oil business. He wasn't particularly good at it.... He didn't have the temperament for it."

Blaisdell rode the oil boom until it went bust. By the early 1930s, U.S. crude came in at 85 cents per barrel (that's about \$12 today).<sup>9</sup> In the spring of 1933, prices fell to half that and, soon after, the bottom fell out. Some producers touted a "dime-a-barrel" deal just to move product and make anything

(and maybe put some smaller competitors out of business). "The market was a mess," writes oil historian Philip Scranton, professor of the history of industry and technology at Rutgers University.<sup>10</sup>

Pennsylvania was in an even greater mess. By 1933, the Commonwealth's industrial production had

fallen by half and shed a quarter of a million jobs.<sup>11</sup> By the following year, voters elected the first Democratic governor of the 20th century, George Earle, who initiated his own "Little New Deal" out of Harrisburg—programs to support and reflect the big New Deal coming from Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Washington, D.C.

"They were hard times," Dorn said, "and [my father] was desperate." In Bradford, where the oil-boom had seemed limitless, the effects of the Depression were deeply felt. People collected pennies for the needy and, breaking a long taboo, Sunday evening movies were shown for the first time, with all the proceeds going to those hard hit by the Depression. "He needed to make this work. He had gambled on the oil industry and lost.... He had to make a go of something."

The Zippo story really begins in that milieu at a formal event at the Bradford Country Club, south of town on old Route 219, on a muggy night in summer 1931. "Although the Depression was casting its shadow on the Pennsylvania oil industry," lighter historian Kesaharu Imai writes, "many people in the area were still able to enjoy a formal dance. This country club in the woods, now a private home, was a favorite gathering place for the golf-loving luminaries of Bradford."<sup>12</sup> People stood around, probably talking about the upcoming presidential election or movies like *Dracula* featuring Bela Lugosi, or the hilarious

#### My father hated school. Walked out of 5th grade and told his family he wasn't going back. That was it. - Sarah B. Dorn

Marie Dressler in *Min and Bill*. It's likely the band played "I Don't Know Why I Love You Like I Do," "Life is Just a Bowl of Cherries," and Duke Ellington's "Mood Indigo."

At some point, Blaisdell, to escape the heat, the music, maybe even the talk, stepped out onto the terrace where he bumped into a friend who was lighting a cigarette with a 25-cent Austrian lighter.<sup>13</sup> The twopiece device was elliptically shaped, clumsy, and difficult to maneuver, especially with a pack a cigarettes or a drink in one hand. Its dull, metal surface was also ugly. In a tale now part of Zippo mythology, Blaisdell said to the friend, "You're all dressed up.... Why don't you get a lighter that looks decent?" "Well, George," he said, in words that would soon be etched in Blaisdell's company history, "it works."

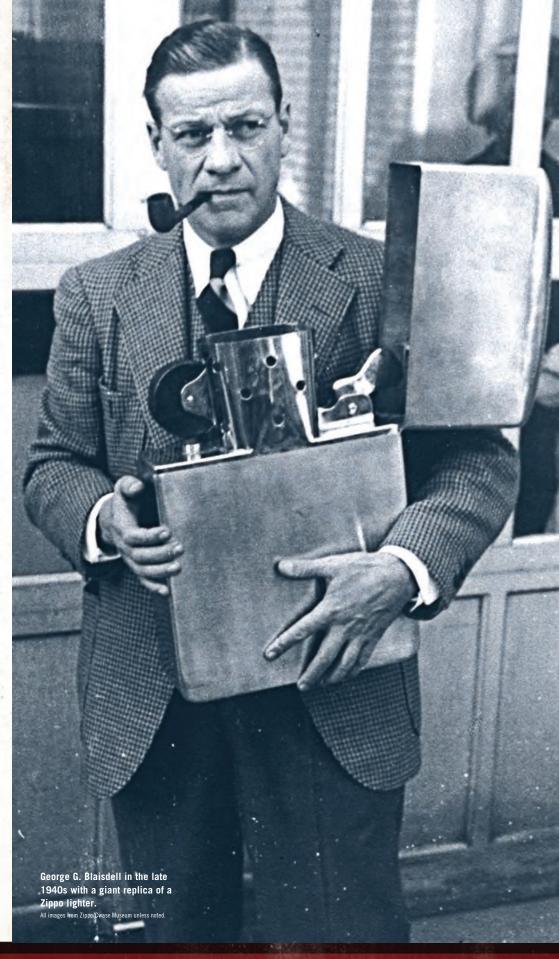
#### It works!

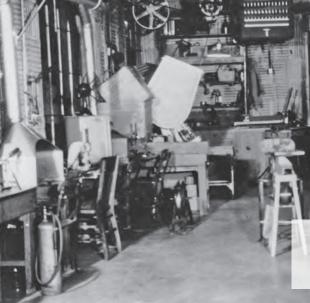
That simple sentence hit Blaisdell like flint on stone. There was a market that wasn't being fulfilled: an attractive lighter that worked every time. Blaisdell's mind raced: he would build a well-designed product with integrity, and success would follow. Soon after the party, he obtained the U.S. distribution rights for the foreign lighter and planned to retool, remarket, and distribute his lighter.

"There wasn't a lot of money lying about then, but he went to everybody to get the money to launch Zippo Manufacturing Company" and cobbled together \$800, Dorn said. "Nobody had any faith in it. It seemed like a foolish, harebrained idea. And it was. Imagine: manufacturing and marketing a lighter for \$1.95 when that amount of money fed a family.... What kept him going? I think whatever it was, it was tinged with desperation. He had to make this work. For him and his family, as they say now, there was no Plan B."

During those initial planning months, Blaisdell recalled an epiphany from his youth that was to challenge but seal his fate. As a child, young George had saved his pennieshis allowance was two cents a week-but finally he had enough to buy the dollar watch he had coveted at the general store. He poured his pennies out on the counter, a hundred of them, and said, "Give me one of these guaranteed dollar watches."14 George put the watch under his pillow that night and fell asleep to the sound of its reassuring tick-tick-tick. It ticked for ten months. And then it stopped. He went back to the general store and handed it over to the clerk. "It stopped," he said. "Please have it fixed for me."

"Just give me 25 cents, and I'll send the money and the watch back to the factory, and







Inside the first Zippo headquarters at the Rickerson and Pryde Building in the 1930s.

# It works or WE FIX IT FIRIEL



The "Famous Zippo Clinic" pictured here in the late 1940s. Customers sent their damaged lighters to the clinic for a free repair. The Zippo guarantee reads: "Any Zippo lighter, when returned to our factory, will be put in first-class mechanical condition free of charge, for we have yet to charge a cent for he repair of a Zippo product, regardless of age or condition. The finish, however, is not guaranteed." they'll fix it for you in no time at all." The clerk was cold.

"What?" George was horrified. "Where am I going to get 25 cents from?"

"That's your problem, young fellow," he said, "but that's what it costs."

"But they said the watch was guaranteed," said George, the lesson sinking in.

"Why sure it's guaranteed," said the clerk, "but you've got to send them a quarter if you want them to fix it or send you a new one." A quarter was three month's allowance, and a fourth of the initial cost of the watch. Ridiculous!

Blaisdell told this hagiographic tale to many people over the years, saying that he walked out of the store in tears, took the watch and smashed it on the ground, shrieking, "Damn no-good guarantee!" He never forgot that, even when he had more money, even when he was working for 10 cents an hour at his father's machine company, and even when he was running his own company. As a result, Blaisdell put a lifetime guarantee on Zippo lighters and the Zippo pledge still reads: "It Works or We Fix it Free."<sup>15</sup>

So in late 1932, while the nation's and commonwealth's economies were collapsing around him, George G. Blaisdell took his idea, a business philosophy, a staff of three, a kitchen hot plate, and a hand-solder, and he set up operation in an unplastered room above Rickerson and Pryde's garage on Boylston Street in Bradford. The space filled with the odor of burnt ozone (from his solder) and desperation (from his situation).

He reimagined that Austrian lighter, retooling and reshaping the problems out of it.<sup>16</sup> He refashioned that 25-center, putting it in a larger, rectangular brass case that would fit more comfortably and securely in the hand. Most significantly, he attached the lid of the lighter to the case with a hinge, retaining the chimney that would protect the flame and make the lighter work under the most adverse conditions. He also bathed the brass in a rich, luminous chrome finish. It retailed for \$1.95, big money in the early '30s, but it was attractive and it worked every time. Guaranteed. For life.

At one point, Blaisdell held the lighter in his hand and, with his work nearly done, moved a finger to open the device:

Click! Thumb! Grind! Flame! Snap!

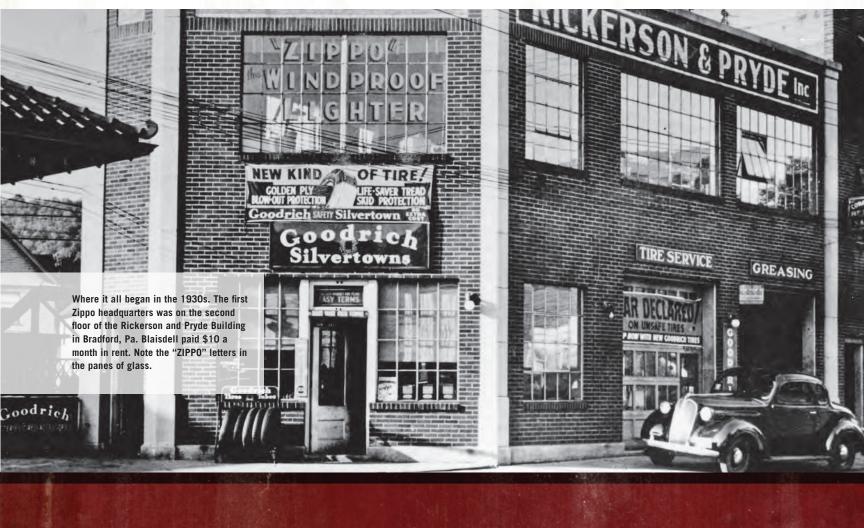
It worked! But he needed a name, something that sounded modern. His product combined the ancient need for fire with the modern desire for convenience. After all, his product would work with one hand, with that most modern of gestures—the flick of a finger. No muss; no fuss.

He liked the onomatopoeic quality of the word "Zip" ... it sounded snappy and quick, velocity being the characteristic of modernity, after all, so ...

> "Zippy?" he thought. No. "Zippa?" "Zippo!"<sup>17</sup> George G. Blaisdell was in business.

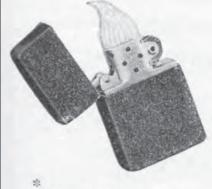
Nine years and a million Zippo lighters later in 1941, America was at war. Lighters had become invaluable to soldiers, not only for the reliability but because matches were in short supply: the sulfur used in match heads was needed as a war chemical, plus workers to make them were pulled to more critical jobs. Even more surprisingly, the matchbooks that were produced were being dropped from the air over Europe and used for propaganda.<sup>18</sup> Due to brass and chrome shortages, war-time Zippos were made of steel coated with thick black paint that was baked to a black-crackle finish. "It's the only lighter I've got that will light at all times," wrote General Dwight D. Eisenhower to Blaisdell on November 24, 1943.<sup>19</sup> Eisenhower, to alleviate the stress, was smoking four packs of Camels a day.<sup>20</sup>

The pressure on Eisenhower (and his Zippo) would only increase. In the summer of 1944, the greatest assemblage of ships and soldiers in history of humankind secretly gathered on the south coast of England for an invasion of the European continent. Operation Overlord, popularly now known as D-Day, not only changed the world, but added a page to Zippo lore.<sup>21</sup>



Vintage WWII-era Zippo lighter ad. Andy Handke.

# She gave me her ZIPPO



Sales limited to service men located outside continental U. S. or on high seas. "Pretty swell gal, to part with her precious ZIPPO—she can't buy a new one. I'll remember her every time I light up. In a nor'easter I'll know the ZIPPO will be as dependable as the gal who gave it."

You can't buy a new ZIPPO\*, so keep yours in good order. Use a fluid that won't gum up the wick—use ZIPPO Long Lasting Fluid—it burns clean. ZIPPO Hard Flints give a bigger spark, wear longer, and fit better (in most any lighter). Package of 4 for 10 cents.

Demand genuine ZIPPO accessories from your local dealer.

ZIPPO MFG. CO., 7 BARBOUR ST., BRADFORD, PA.







soldier palms his blackcrackle-covered rectangle of steel. It fits snugly in his moist palm. Comfort. Like

the lighter, his face has been darkened for the occasion. Soot, shoe polish, cocoa. He makes a fist and holds the lighter, holds it tight, holds this fire-maker, this thing from home, this talisman. His name is Walter Nadler. He is among the 21,000 men in 4th Division of the U.S. Army, under the command of Major General Raymond O. Barton.<sup>22</sup>

Walter is from Rahway, New Jersey, five miles from Staten Island. Back at home, where his wife is, his President prays on the radio:

"Almighty God: our sons, pride of our Nation, this day have set upon a mighty endeavor, a struggle to preserve our Republic, our religion, and our civilization."<sup>23</sup>



Walter begins to scratch markings into the black surface of the lighter, letting the metallic surface underneath shine through, like hope at night, to mark this moment, his moment, maybe his last moment.

He carves in cursive: "June 6, 1944, 0630. France."

D-Day. The greatest amphibious invasion in human history is to land at 6:30 a.m. on the beaches of Normandy, France, and Walter Nadler is one of 175,000 soldiers on, above, in, and under the English Channel.<sup>24</sup> He is on a transport-troop ship heading in with the other silent soldiers on 13,000 aircraft, readying to land.

Three American battleships—*Texas*, *Arkansas* and *Nevada*—fire their 14-inch guns simultaneously, a sound so big it feels like the beginning of the world or the end of it, noise that tastes, smells, crushes, preparing the landing site for the one hundred and fiftynine thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine soldiers.<sup>25</sup> And Walter.

His ship lurches towards shore, through five-foot waves.

"They will need Thy blessing. Their road will be long and hard. For the enemy is strong.... Some will never return. Embrace these, Father, and receive them, Thy heroic servants, into Thy kingdom."

> Walter blows one side clean, wipes the lighter on his sleeve and turns it over to engrave his

name. He doesn't know it, but weather delayed the invasion—General Eisenhower, got the report: "rough seas, winds up to force six and low cloud."<sup>26</sup> It's still rough and the winds push Walter's ship off course, a bit south. Still, he heads for Utah Beach.

Along with the rest of the 4th Division, Walter is among the first to land in Normandy. Drunk with fear, deaf to death that surrounds him, he runs out of the water and onto the beach.<sup>27</sup> And in that moment, in a mad juxtaposition of the great and the small, the tragic and the comic, his lighter falls from his pocket.

He runs on the beach, past the heroic dead and the dying, runs through sand, smoke, and screams.

"With Thy blessing, we shall prevail over the unholy forces of our enemy. Help us to conquer the apostles of greed and racial arrogance. Lead us to the saving of our country. Thy will be done, Almighty God."

Pulitzer Prize winning war correspondent Ernie Pyle reported on the immediate aftermath of the invasion on the beaches: "The wreckage was vast and startling. There were trucks tipped over and swamped ... tanks that had only just made the beach before being knocked out ... jeeps that had burned to a dull gray ... boats stacked on top of each other. On the beach lay expended sufficient men and mechanism for a small war. They were gone forever now.

## He carves in cursive: "June 6, 1944, 0630. France."

The Walter Nadler Zippo lighter, one of the most famous Zippo lighter among a half-billion lighters produced by the Bradford-based manufacturing company. Visitors to the History Center's WWII exhibit will see the lighter on display.



The boys fighting in the tropics know that the ever reliable ZIPPO Windproof LIGHTER means more than a sure light for pipe or fag.

Mid winds that blow and blow, and rains that never seem to cease, the windproof, waterproof ZIPPO comes in mighty useful, for lighting lanterns, fires, or as a "guiding light" in inky darkness.

Keep your ZIPPO in perfect order. Buy only ZIPPO Hard Flints (4 for 10¢)—they give a big spark, last longer, fit better . . . and ZIPPO Long Lasting FLUID—it goes farther and burns clean. The "asbestosized" wick should last a lifetime. Ask your dealer.



Vintage WWII-era Zippo lighter ad.

Andy Handke

"And yet, we could afford it.... We could afford it because we were on, we had our toehold, and behind us there were such enormous replacements for this wreckage on the beach that you could hardly conceive of the sum total. Men and equipment were flowing from England in such a gigantic stream that it made the waste on the beachhead seem like nothing at all, really nothing at all."<sup>28</sup>

More than 9,000 soldiers were killed or wounded on the beaches.<sup>29</sup>

But Walter Nadler did not die on Utah Beach that day. He contributed to getting that foothold on the continent that led to the taking of Berlin and victory in Europe. He made it back to New Jersey and to his wife and family and he lived his life ... but without his Zippo lighter.

Then in 1992, more than a half century after it was lost in the sands of Normandy, his lighter mysteriously turned up at Zippo headquarters in Bradford, Pennsylvania. Presumably found on the beach and miraculously sent to Zippo with no return address, the lighter apparently lingered in a holding batch of unclaimed lighters, a Zippo orphanage, until an alert employee, Pat Grandy, recognized its importance.

By then, a vintage Zippo lighter from World War II, much less from Normandy, much less engraved with trench art (that is, lighters that have been "theater-engraved"), could be worth perhaps thousands of dollars on the collectors' market.<sup>30</sup>

The staff at Zippo launched a nationwide search for the soldier who lost his Zippo lighter at Normandy only to discover that Walter D. Nadler had died. His son Bud recalled that his father had talked about D-Day and his Zippo lighter over the years. "If the German people are shooting at you," Walter would drolly say, "you think you'll stop at the beach looking for a lighter?"<sup>31</sup>

The Nadler Lighter is normally displayed in the Zippo/Case Museum in Bradford but is

# More than 9,0000 soldiers were KILLED Or WOUNDED on the beaches.

The Sands of Normandy Commemorative Zippo Lighter collection for the 60th anniversary of the epic invasion. Each collection contains a vial of sand from the beaches at Normandy.

> SANDS OF NORMANDY The Great American Lighter Salutes The Greatest Generation

coming on loan to the History Center for the *We Can Do It* exhibit.<sup>32</sup>

The incredible story of his lighter is just one of many World War II tales and artifacts that give insight into those who carried them and the company that made them.<sup>33</sup>

The soldiers of the Second World War took Zippo lighters around the world with them, Dorn said, because the lighters worked every time and sometimes even saved their lives. Commanders in high places agreed. In a letter to Blaisdell on Sept. 25, 1944, General Douglas MacArthur wrote that his Zippo "is a real work of art which I shall use constantly."<sup>34</sup> "That made my father proud," Dorn said.

MacArthur wasn't alone. From 1942 until the end of World War II, all of Zippo Manufacturing Company's production was shipped to the PXs for the soldiers in combat around the world. There were no civilian sales. The military bought the lighters in lots ranging between

a half-million to a

million. Marketing genius and companyfounder Blaisdell shrewdly sent hundreds of Zippo lighters overseas as gifts, not only to top-brass men and women in the service, but free to all enlistees from McKean County (where Bradford is located)—a little piece of home to take with them to war.

"He genuinely wanted to give the lighters to the soldiers," Dorn said, "but in doing so, by giving them such a personal and useful item at such a crucial time, he bonded them to it. And they remembered that when they came home." Patriotism marinated in business savyy.

Many soldiers—just like Walter Nadler—customized their Zippo lighters, scratching in names, places, images, and messages of all kinds that suggest their hopes, dreams, fears, fantasies and longings.

zippo

SAMOS OF NORMAN

Zippo D-Day 60th Anniversary

**Commemorative** Lighter

ZIPPQ

Windproof

Zippo D-Day 60<sup>th</sup>

Anniversary Commemorative Lighter

This "trench art" is among the most important and valued in the company's history, Dorn said.<sup>35</sup> Such intensity between product and customer makes for an iconic brand.

Blaisdell clearly had a knack for turning marketing into mythology. Back in 1943, he wrote to Ernie Pyle, "I don't suppose you ever heard of Zippo lighters but anyway I'm sending you one."<sup>36</sup> Pyle had heard of Zippo lighters.

Pyle wrote back, "If I were to tell you how much these Zippos are coveted at the front and the gratitude and delight with which the boys receive them, you would probably accuse

George G. Blaisdell greets an unidentified Bradford woman in the 1950s during one of his walks along Main Street. OSEPH MARK

me of exaggeration. There is truly nothing the average soldier would rather have."<sup>37</sup>

He may have been only slightly exaggerating. Just about every man and woman in World War II had a Zippo lighter, or so it seemed, Dorn said, and used it for a lot more than firing up smokes. The lighters also started campfires, cooked soup in helmets, and worked as a signal light. One Army pilot says he landed his disabled plane by using a Zippo lighter to illuminate his instrumental panel. Other GIs have had a Zippo lighter in a vest-pocket take a bullet and save their lives.

Pyle's columns about Zippo lighters were priceless PR gold for Blaisdell, a third-party endorsement that was syndicated around the world and into the heart of the country. Zippo lighters "burn in the wind, and pilots say they are the only kind that will light at extreme altitudes," Pyle wrote Blaisdell in 1944 after receiving a shipment of complimentary lighters to distribute to the troops. "Why, they're so popular I've had three of them stolen from me in the past year.... Thanks from all of us, Mr. Blaisdell."<sup>38</sup>

But that was not Pyle's greatest Zippo filing. One of his pieces was used as a handto-hand Teletype machine when Pyle wrote his shortest and most chilling war story on a Zippo lighter.<sup>39</sup> In March 1945, on board the USS Cabot in the South Pacific, Pyle was being pressured by a young officer, Donald Hyde, to reveal the ship's destination. He took the officer's lighter, opened his knife and scratched, "Tokyo."

"Stick this in your pocket and promise not to look until the orders are opened," Pyle said. When the order was given, Hyde pulled out the lighter, looked at the destination and then carried his Zippo around the ship and flashed it to the anxious crew, announcing the plan to head to the Japanese mainland. (The "Tokyo Zippo" is still owned by the family of Donald C. Hyde of Detroit.<sup>40</sup>)

When Pyle was killed in the Pacific in April 1945, Blaisdell had a special memorial lighter designed and delivered to the 900 men on USS Cabot, the ship that took Pyle to his final battle. The lighters were inscribed "In Memory of Ernie Pyle, 1945."

The war ended shortly thereafter. The soldiers returned with victory in their hearts, notions of integration in their heads, a wanderlust for the big world, and Zippo lighters in their pockets.

America got back to work on the home front and so did George Blaisdell. While the postwar boom began to kick in, he faced a serious and potentially fatal business problem for his company.

The striking wheel was defective. It required replacement too frequently, disillusioning customers and putting an expensive burden on his lifetime guarantee. "The problem with the striking wheel was extremely serious," Dorn said. "Think about it: he just thought that he had made it, finally, after all the problems in the '30s. With the enthusiasm that

the soldiers had for the lighter, it seemed like things were finally coming together. The post-war boom began to kick in everywhere. Then, we discover, the wheel didn't work! Oh sure, it worked most of the time, but my father had a product with a lifetime guarantee."

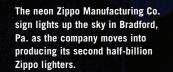
Blaisdell gathered his forces. He had some of the world's great metallurgists review the problem: some of the wheels simply burned out after too few turns. "The wheel wasn't good enough for a lifetime guarantee. It wasn't good enough for him. We cried. So he shut the plant down." Dorn said. "He continued to pay the employees and spent \$300,000 in 1946 dollars to fix the problem (about \$2.5 million today). That was expensive in every way something can be expensive-in time, in money, and in emotion. But he fixed it. He fixed it right." Blaisdell got the best striking wheel in the business-one that could be struck for nearly 75,000 times without needing replacement-and was able to further underscore his lifetime guarantee. Even today, the operations concerning the knurling of the flint wheel are a company secret.

By the 1950s, when he put the identifying marks on the lighters to see which lots were being returned for repair, he unknowingly helped to assure what would turn into today's thriving collectors' market. "My father would be dumbfounded to know the extent to which people go to acquire rare and vintage Zippo lighters," Dorn said, particularly mentioning World War II and Vietnam-era lighters. "He'd be speechless to see that there are about a dozen international organizations of lighter collectors, many of which specialize in Zippo lighters. I know he would be very proud." Indeed he would be proud of what emerged from a little boy's broken promise and a flame carried into war that refused to go out.

LEFT: One of only 900 Zippo lighters made to honor the death of war correspondent Ernie Pyle who was killed on April 18, 1945 by enemy machine-gun fire on a small island near Okinawa. Andy Handke.

War correspondent Ernie Pyle fires up a smoke with his Zippo lighter.

**Thank you** to MSG Steven G. Appleby, U.S. Army, Ret., director, Eldred World War II Museum, for his expertise. Also to Zippo's Snap-Crackle-Click team of Pat Grandy, marketing communications manager, Amanda J. DePrins, assistant marketing communications manager, and Linda Meabon, Zippo archivist and historian, as well as to Robert Bianco, Christopher McCarrick, David Poore, and James Salvo.



- <sup>1</sup> Linda L. Meabon, *Images of America: Zippo Manufacturing Company* (Charleston, S.C.: Arardia, 2003).
- <sup>2</sup> Abram Brown, "American Doesn't Smoke Much Anymore. So How is Zippo Manufacturing Co. Having Its Best Year Ever?" *Forbes*, September 8, 2014. http://www.forbes.com/sites/abrhambrown/ (Accessed September 10, 2014).
- <sup>3</sup> Marcie Schellhammer, "Zippo marks 500 millionth lighter," *The Bradford Era*, June 6, 2012, 1.
- <sup>4</sup> Interview with the author, Zippo Manufacturing Company's marketing communications manager, Pat Grandy, Nov. 18, 2014.
- <sup>5</sup> Sarah B. Dorn interview with the author, March 19, 1999. Much of the company history herein is derived from this interview, with material subsequently fact-checked by Zippo archivist and historian Linda Meabon.
- <sup>6</sup> Harold Evans, The American Century (New York: Knopf, 1998), 218-282. For the prices of the 1930s, see Loretta Britten and Sarah Brash, eds., Our American Century: Hard Times, the 1930s (Alexandria, Virginia: Time-Life Books, 1998), 29, except the price of a lighter is from Kesaharu Imai. Zippo Manual 1 (Tokyo: World Photo Press, 1992), 26.
- <sup>7</sup> The phrase is from FDR's address accepting the Democratic presidential nomination on July 2, 1932. See FDR Library, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ ws/?pid=75174
- for the complete speech (Accessed Nov. 16, 2014).
- <sup>8</sup> Material in the Zippo archives.
- <sup>9</sup> Philip Scranton, *Bloomberg View*, "When the Great Depression Hit the Oil Industry, May 6, 2013, http:// www.bloombergview.com/articles/2013-05-06/whenthe-great-depression-hit-the-oil-industry, (Accessed Dec. 5, 2014).
- <sup>10</sup> Pennsylvania and the Great Depression, http:// explorepahistory.com/story.php?storyId=1-9-1B (Accessed Dec. 5, 2014).
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>12</sup> Blaisdell's "It-works!" story is the foundational story of Zippo's corporate mythology and is reprinted and reproduced in a number of sources, including Imai, 24-29, Ed Kenny, A Guide to Zippo Lighter Collecting, (Springfield: Latenight Publishing, 1995), 6-8, and Tim Ziaukas, "Fired Up: After 63 Years, the Zippo Pocket Lighter Just Gets Hotter and Hotter," Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Sunday Magazine, July 16, 1995, section G. For an examination of the popular culture of the 1930s, see Morris Dickstein's Dancing in the Dark: A Cultural History of the Great Depression, (New York: Norton, 2009). The site of the former Bradford Club where the Zippo incident took place is now the private home of John Satterwhite, publisher of The Bradford Era.
- <sup>13</sup> The friend who inspired Blaisdell with the Austrian lighter has been identified as Dick Dresser, the son of Solomon Dresser, then one of Bradford's prominent business leaders and founder of Dresser Industries. See Imai, 26-27; Meabon, 11.
- <sup>14</sup> D. J. Cower, "Guaranteed," *Printer's Ink*, Nov. 14, 1947. All of the quotations from the broken watch episode are from this editorial in this advertising trade journal, clipping in Zippo archive.
- <sup>15</sup> The Zippo guarantee reads in full: "Any Zippo metal product, when returned to our factory, will be put in first class mechanical condition free of charge, for we have yet to charge a cent for the repair of a Zippo

metal product, regardless of age or condition. The finish, however, is not guaranteed."

- <sup>16</sup> Grandy said that while there have been improvements in the flint wheel and minor changes in the case and its hinges, Blaisdell's original design remains basically unchanged today. Interview with the author, Nov. 18, 2014.
- <sup>17</sup> Ubiquitous tales that Blaisdell admired The Talon Zipper Co. in nearby Meadville, Pennsylvania, where another modern miracle—the zipper—had been developed and thus he named his product to honor another Pennsylvanian industry, is, says Zippo historians, apocryphal. Interview with the author, Grandy, Nov. 18, 2014.
- <sup>18</sup> "Find Cigarets? Fine! Now, How About a Light?," Chicago Tribune, November 26, 1944, p. 23.
- <sup>19</sup> Eisenhower letter in Zippo archives.
- <sup>20</sup> Beevor, 2.
- <sup>21</sup> Jim Bishop, *FDR's Last Year: April 1944-April 1945*, (New York: Morrow, 1974), 68.
- <sup>22</sup> Gentlemen's Quarterly, http://www.gqindia.com/lookgood/style-fashion/finding-walter-nadler-promotion, (Accessed October, 14, 2014); Zippo Manufacturing Company, http://zippocollect.de/fileadmin/pdf/ sands\_of\_normandy\_booklet.pdf, (Accessed October 14, 2014), http://www.gqindia.com/look-good/stylefashion/finding-walter-nadler-promotion (Accessed Oct. 22, 2014).
- <sup>23</sup> FDR Library, http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/aboutfdr/ pdfs/dday\_prayerdraft.pdf (Accessed Oct. 22, 2014).
- <sup>24</sup> For background on Operation Overlord, popularly known as D-Day, see *D-Day: The Battle for Normandy.* Antony Beevor, (New York: Viking, 2009), especially chapter one, "The Decision," 1-14 and chapter eight,

"Utah and the Airborne," 114-125; Doris Kearns Goodwin, *No Ordinary Time: Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt: The Home Front inn World War II*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), 505-11; and U.S. Army, http://www.army.mil/d-day/ (Accessed Oct. 22, 2014).

<sup>25</sup> Beevor, 84.

<sup>27</sup> Joe Silkin, *The Penguin Book of First World War Poetry*, 2nd ed., (New York: Penguin, 1996). The phrase "an ecstasy of fumbling" is taken from Wilfred Owen's "Dulce et Decorum Est," 191-192, probably the best-known poem from World War I.

- <sup>29</sup> U.S. Army, http://www.army.mil/d-day/ (Accessed Oct. 22, 2014).
- <sup>30</sup> Zippo lighter collector, dealer, and historian David Poore wrote the comprehensive guide Zippo: The Great American Lighter, 2nd ed. (Atglen, Pa.: Schiffer, 2005) and has experience pricing the artifacts. In the 1990s, for example, he sold a 1932 Zippo prototype for a near-record \$60,000. The Nadler lighter is difficult to price, he said, not just in light of market fluctuation-collectibles are currently down-but because it is a one-of-a-kind item with a unique story. "It's a museum piece," he said. World War II blackcrackle Zippo lighters in general often sell for \$300-\$500. The Ernie Pyle memorial lighter, of which there were less than a thousand produced and inscribed "In Memory of Ernie Pyle, 1945" would be in the \$3,000-\$5.000 range, Poore said. The other one-of-a-kind Pyle "Tokyo" lighter, much more familiar than the Nadler piece in light of the correspondent's fame, is, in a sense, priceless, yet, Poore said, could fetch as much as \$15,000 on the market. Interview with the

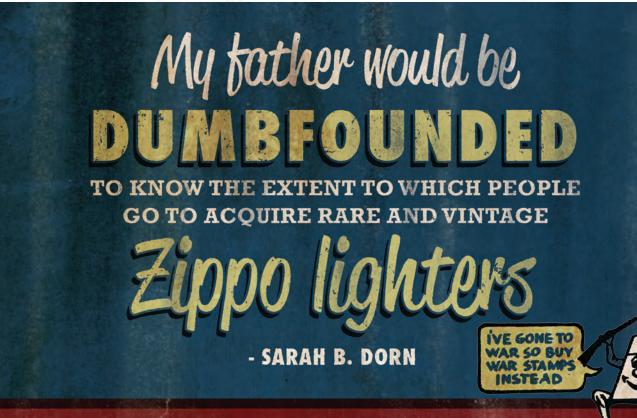
author, Nov. 16, 2014.

- <sup>31</sup> Finding Walter Nadler, http://www.gqindia.com/lookgood/style-fashion/finding-walter-nadler-promotion, (Accessed Oct. 22, 2014).
- <sup>32</sup> Zippo/Case Museum, http://studioshowroom.com/ zippo/museum.html, (Accessed Nov. 14, 2014).
- <sup>33</sup> Imai, 97-112; Meabon, 31-36.
- <sup>34</sup> Letter in Zippo archive.
- <sup>35</sup> Specifically, trench art, a term from World War I, refers to materials, including lighters, made from the rubble of war on the field of battle, in the trench. In recent years, however, lighters that have been "theater-engraved" or altered in the arena of war are considered trench art by some lighter historians. In any case, pieces of trench art are extremely valuable and historically important. See Jane A. Kimball, *Trench Art: An Illustrated History* (Davis, Ca.: Silverpenny Press, 2004).
- <sup>36</sup> Letter in Zippo archives.

37 Ibid.

- <sup>38</sup> Ernie Pyle, "Ernie Gets those 50 Zippos," London, May 30, 1944, clipping in Zippo archive.
- <sup>39</sup> Kesaharu Imai. *Zippo Manual 1*, (Tokyo: World Photo Press, 1992), 120-26. Meabon, 32-33.

40 Ibid., 124.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Ibid. 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Goodwin, 511.

# The Best of Times

THE 19405

By Larry Glasco, University of Pittsburgh

For black Pittsburghers, it was the best of times, or at least the best it had been until that time. It was a time when industries, without government prodding, posted job openings in the *Pittsburgh Courier* for skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled workers. A time when African Americans flocked to the region to secure some of those jobs. A time when newly opened, racially integrated housing projects thrilled local residents with their amenities. A time when flourishing businesses stayed open, sometimes all night, and dance halls brought in local as well as national bands. A time when the "Double V" campaign made fighting racism a patriotic act, and when churches, synagogues, radio stations, and schools sponsored campaigns for interracial and religious tolerance. And a time when picketing and marching forced downtown department stores to integrate their sales force.

# .....

African American workers were among the skilled employees who fabricated armor plate for Sherman tanks at Carnegie-Illinois Steel's Farrell Ordnance Plant in Farrell, Pennsylvania, near Sharon in Mercer County. Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of American History, Archives Center, Russell Aiken U. S. Steel Collection. The smiles on the faces of black Pittsburghers in the 1991 WQED documentary Wylie Avenue Days reflect this upbeat mood in the 1940s. Blacks were still struggling for equality, but now felt that they were making progress on two key fronts-jobs and racial discrimination. Their optimism was the by-product of an unprecedented war. America marketed its participation in World War II as part of a struggle for democracy abroad. Blacks rejoiced that the fight for democracy abroad softened public opinion toward the fight for racial democracy at home.

On February 7, 1942-just two months after Pearl Harbor-Pittsburgh's black newspaper, the Pittsburgh Courier (the largest circulation African American paper at the time) found a patriotic way to point out the contradiction of fighting a war for freedom abroad while denying freedom to some Americans at home. The Courier launched its famous "Double V" campaign linking those two struggles. The ingenious marketing strategy featured a logo consisting of an eagle, two interlocking V's, and the insignia "Democracy: Victory at Home — Abroad." Editorials, letters, telegrams, and photographs carried the message. Double V pins, Double V Clubs, Double V girls, Double V hats, Double V dresses, and even Double V hairstyles were sported by thousands of citizens-white and

Exchanged in a Beries of Articles on Arm By OLLIE STEWART FORT EUSTIS, Va.-This

Mills Need

Hundreds of

Fresh Men

black-as well as by mayors, movie stars, and even U.S. senators.

A key part of that struggle involved employment. During the war, job prospects for blacks, locally as well as nationally, improved markedly. One reason? In 1941, A. Philip Randolph, leader of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, had threatened a massive march on Washington over hiring bias, and forced President Roosevelt to issue an Executive Order banning racial discrimination in war-related hiring.

Roosevelt's executive order, and Courier protests, were important, but it was chronic labor shortages that caused local industries to advertise in the Pittsburgh Courier. "Essential War Industry Needs Unskilled Workers; 75¢ per Hour; Higher Rate Paid Experienced Furnace Men," read a 1943 ad from the Duquesne Smelting Corporation. "Wanted: Chippers and Molders. Apply at Union Steel Castings, 43rd and Butler Streets," read another.1

The prospect of full employment caused blacks to stream into the Pittsburgh region. Over the course of the decade, the city's African

PAGE 2

Mills Need

Hundreds of

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States Fighting

American population grew from 62,000 to 86,000, and neighboring

The Pittsburgh **Courier** found a patriotic way to point out the contradiction of fighting a war for freedom abroad while denying freedom to some Americans at home.

> The Afro-American was reporting on U.S. employment and military issues the day before the attack on Pearl Harbor. The Afro-American, December 6, 1941

They Saw Lincoln Defeat Howard in Philly

THE AFRO-AMERICAN, DECEMBER 6, 1941



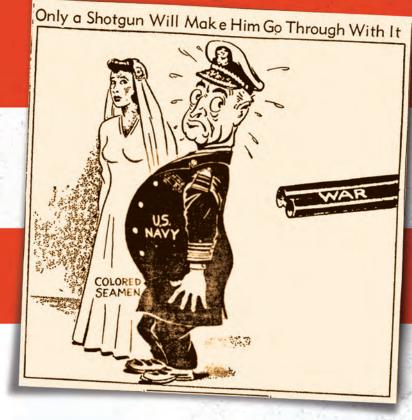
EXTRA

#### Colored, White Short of Men, Navy Still Won't Take Colored Men

**3 S.C. Election Officials Face** Vote-Ban Trial

### During the war, job prospects for blacks, locally as well as nationally, improved markedly.

Cartoon depicting the United States' entrance into WWII as the impetus for allowing African Americans to enter the Navy.



mill towns saw substantial growth in their population as well. Most of these migrants came from Alabama, Georgia, and North Carolina, the same states that furnished the bulk of black migrants during the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>2</sup>

As blacks settled into better jobs, federal programs provided new and better housing. In 1940, a massive, 3,000-unit housing project, Terrace Village, opened in the southern part of the Hill District; President Roosevelt himself attended the ceremonies. Hill residents saw Terrace Village as a hopeful sign. The Courier raved that "Children who had played in the alleys ... now played in properly supervised recreation rooms," and "The same dollars which had paid the rent in a house with no yard and an outside shanty for a bath was [sic] now paying for three and sometimes four clean, well-painted rooms with a bath."3 Terrace Village had both black and white residents, a feature that drew so much national attention that in 1947 it attracted a major study by Robert Merton of Columbia University.

With better jobs and better paychecks, black customers had money to spend. As a result, black businesses thrived in the 1940s as never before—or since. Wylie Avenue, the Hill's main commercial corridor, boasted Goode's Pharmacy, McEvoy's jewelry shop, Nelson's Cleaners, Trower's Tailoring, Pernell's Printing, Woogie Harris' Crystal Barber Shop, Nesbit's Pie Shoppe, Ma Pitts' restaurant, Payne's and

Poole's funeral homes, and the Colonial, Palace, and Avenue Hotel. Patrons flocked to dance halls and night clubs like the Musicians' Club, Gus Greenlee's two Crawford Grills, and Stanley's. Doctors, lawyers, and dentists opened offices on Wylie Avenue, along with tailors, dry cleaners, shoe repairers, shoe shine parlors, barber shops, pool rooms, sandwich shops, and barbeque places.

The Hill at that time was not the allblack ghetto it became later. In the war years, whites made up 40 percent of the residents, and white-owned businesses catered to an interracial clientele. Jim Crow prevailed downtown and in outlying neighborhoods but not in the Hill. Centre Avenue housed many Jewish-run businesses and institutions such as Fireman's Department Store, the Irene Kaufmann Settlement, Benkovitz Fish Market, Gordon's Shoes, and Center Builders Supply. Wylie Avenue boasted Yellins and Eisenberg's, while Logan Street (affectionately known as "Jew Town") had a plethora of Jewish stores and sidewalk vendors. When one includes the many Jewish businesses on Fifth Avenue, it becomes evident why residents bragged "You didn't have to leave the Hill to buy almost anything."

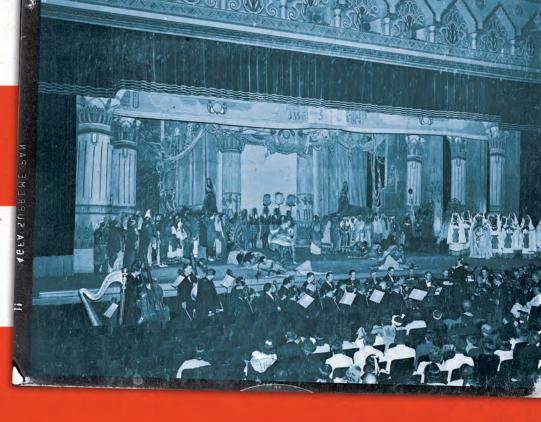
Music flourished in the 1940s like never before. In 1941, Mary Cardwell Dawson's National Negro Opera Company performed *Aida* at the Syria Mosque in Oakland, with funds raised by the local black community and an all-black cast. The quality was such that the director of New York's Metropolitan Opera conducted, and members of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra also performed. The local white press gave the opera rave reviews, and *Courier* editor Percival L. Prattis likened it to "the knockout punch of Joe Louis" in terms of what it meant for blacks' pride and self-image.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to classical music, the 1940s was black Pittsburgh's top decade for jazz, a time when national figures came through town in numbers never seen before or since. In 1946, the Savoy Ballroom, located over the New Granada Theater on Centre Avenue, brought in Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, Dizzy Gillespie, Roy Eldridge, Erskine Hawkins, Jimmie Lunceford, and Billy Eckstine. The Savoy ended the year with a Christmas performance by Ben Webster, Dinah Washington, and Mary Lou Williams.<sup>5</sup> Walt Harper reigned as the up-and-coming jazz star of the tri-state area, while Warren



## The 1940s was black Pittsburgh's top decade for jazz

Performance of *Aida* on stage of Syria Mosque, with orchestra playing in pit and audience in foreground, October 30, 1941. Detail. Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh: Heinz Family Fund, 2001.35.1384, ©2006 Carnegie Museum of Art, Charles "Teemie" Harris Archive.



Watson, the Honey Drippers, Leroy Brown, Honey Boy Minor, John Hughes, Joe Westray, and Ruby Young all enjoyed success.

Blacks made political gains in the 1940s, but these were more limited than gains in the cultural and economic spheres. In 1941, the Democratic Party appointed Wendell Stanton as assistant to the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania, the first black to hold such a position.<sup>6</sup> In 1942, Republicans named Oliver S. Johnson as Assistant District Attorney, also becoming the first black ever in this office.<sup>7</sup> The local Democratic Party made Harry Fitzgerald Hill District alderman and Robert "Pappy" Williams ward constable. But the local Democratic Party never endorsed blacks for more consequential positions, such as city council or the court of common pleas.

Black Pittsburghers also benefited from a softening of white attitudes toward racial bigotry as Jews, Catholics, and liberal whites began to join African Americans in opposing racial discrimination. In 1945, Pittsburgh's Interracial Action Council held an unprecedented interracial picnic that included swimming in South Park's traditionally white-only pool.<sup>8</sup> While many pools remained segregated, this interracial picnic heralded subsequent attacks on segregated swimming pools.

Before the 1940s, the fight against racial discrimination had been viewed as un-American, perhaps even Communistinspired. Once the fight was seen as patriotic and all-American, anti-discriminatory efforts continued, even accelerated. In 1946, Mayor David Lawrence established the Civic Unity Council to promote interracial understanding. KDKA, the city's leading radio station, promoted racial and religious harmony with broadcasts sponsored by the (African American) Centre Avenue YMCA.9 Local schools and churches organized "Brotherhood Week" programs.<sup>10</sup> The American Legion passed an anti-bias resolution and erected a "Tolerance" billboard downtown.11 Leading judicial and political figures, such as the highly regarded Judge Henry Ellenbogen, publicly expressed opposition to racial bias and segregation.12

Yet, life was not always easy for whites who supported integration. In 1949, Dr. Benjamin Arshans, an optometrist in suburban Mt. Lebanon, hosted an interracial party, and had to move after vandals pelted his home with tomatoes and plastered it with a sign reading "Commies live here."<sup>13</sup>

In the 1940s, blacks became ever more insistent in pressing their demands for racial justice. Troops serving overseas were the vanguard of this new attitude. They came home determined not to accept traditional race relations. Samuel Golden, who served in Burma, recalls fellow black troops telling him, "When we get home, we're not going to put up with that crap." A soldier wrote the Courier from "somewhere on Okinawa" asking the paper to notify its readers that "a different American is coming home from the one who left," one emboldened with "a new spirit" to fight for the "equalization for all men, regardless of race, color or creed."<sup>14</sup>

The war effort also changed the attitude of white troops toward race, as can be seen in a 1944 letter to the editor of *The Pittsburgh Press* by a white G.I., who wrote:

> The things that they [Americans] strike for are so damn insignificant: wage increases, hiring of Negroes (I'm refer-

Billy Eckstine and Lena Horne standing behind cake, with Miriam Sharpe Fountain in background on left, in Loendi Club, for reception in honor of Horne, October 1944. Detail. Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh: Heinz Family Fund, 2001.55.11056, e-2006 Carnegie Museum of Art, Charles "Teenie" Harris Archive.

ring to that little incident in Philadelphia [protesting Negro transit workers]). Too bad that some of those people back there couldn't have observed the landings over there on D-Day where they would have seen plenty of Negroes landing along with the rest of us. I wonder if their prayers included those colored boys? What are those people going to do when these colored fellows get back and demand some of the rights that they've been fighting for?<sup>15</sup>

Blacks on the home front protested Jim Crow practices in places of public accommodation. The *Courier* sent reporter/ photographer Edna Chappell (McKenzie) and Charles "Teenie" Harris to test service at eating establishments throughout the metropolitan area. They reported massive non-compliance with Pennsylvania's non-discriminatory public accommodations law.<sup>16</sup> Other *Courier* reporters exposed the "white only" policy of local automobile clubs, the existence of racially separate toilets at certain local plants, Isaly's practice of serving whites on china and blacks on paper plates, and the sad fact that the Salvation Army ran the only summer camp that accepted black children.<sup>17</sup>

Blacks in the 1940s increasingly spoke out against derogatory portrayals. Black students protested "darky" songs at Herron Hill Junior High School, walked out of a "black face" play at Penn Township High School, and forced the cancellation of a racially offensive school play at McKeesport High School.<sup>18</sup> Black adults took offence at a performance of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* at the Syria Mosque and forced its cancellation. They also forced the removal of "mammy" ads from the windows of local A&P grocery stores.<sup>19</sup>

The highlight of black job protests came against local department stores.<sup>20</sup> The downtown "big five"—Kaufmann's, Gimbel's, Horne's, Rosenbaum's, Frank & Seder's—refused to hire blacks for anything except janitors and elevator operators. No doubt they were aware that some places had witnessed fierce opposition to hiring black clerks. In 1947, the nearby town of Monaca suffered a cross burning by the KKK after a grocery hired two black clerks.<sup>21</sup> In Pittsburgh such fears proved unfounded, but stores still refused to budge. A survey by the Urban League showed that white patrons had no strong feelings one way or another about black clerks.<sup>22</sup> Nonetheless, when Urban League staffer K. Leroy Irvis sent pickets to protest discriminatory hiring practices, owners stalled until after the Christmas shopping season before reluctantly agreeing to hire black clerks.

To portray a brutal and bloody war—one characterized by a Holocaust and the use of atom bombs—as the best of times for anyone may, at first glance, appear ironic or even insensitive. Yet in context the war years were indeed that for many blacks, nationally as well as in Pittsburgh.



War-time advances continued after the war. Nationally, black patriotism and wartime service were rewarded in 1948 when President Truman signed Executive Order 9981, declaring "there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin." Locally, the city's first black radio station WHOD—the forerunner of WAMO—opened in 1948 in Homestead. The station captured the hearts of many white as well as black Pittsburghers' when it began carrying Porky Chedwick and Mary Dee, the latter spinning records and interviewing celebrities like Sarah Vaughn, Cab Calloway, and Jackie Robinson.<sup>23</sup> And in 1949, William Goode opened his second drug store. Located in the heart of the Hill at Wylie and Fullerton, Goode's well-appointed pharmacy boasted a handsome soda fountain where young people could gather and socialize. The opening drew so many patrons that it never closed that first night, and thereafter became a 24-hour store with free delivery.<sup>24</sup>

Some racial advances, ironically, had unanticipated, negative consequences. The ability of blacks to eat and shop in whiteowned stores undercut the viability of some

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and prosperity of the 1940s enabled black professionals to abandon the Lower and Middle Hill for other neighborhoods such as the Upper Hill ("Sugar Top") and Homewood. Whites benefiting from wartime prosperity also moved out, and at an even faster rate, such that the Hill's white population dropped from 40 percent in 1940 to 25 percent in 1950.<sup>25</sup>

black-owned establishments. And the jobs

By 1950, the boom times were drawing to a close. Employment gains made during the war years began to ebb, and job bias continued to be an intractable issue. During the war, gains had been made because of full employment and the impact of Roosevelt's order desegregating industries. When the war ended, war production contracted such that, between 1947 and 1954, the number of local steel workers declined by 20,000.<sup>26</sup> The contraction, combined with ongoing job discrimination, hit black workers especially hard.

The effects of these contrary moves would not be felt immediately. Indeed, in the 1950s and '60s, the struggle for racial justice gained momentum, both in Pittsburgh and nationally. Progress was made, particularly in the area of civil rights. But, unfortunately, no decade has yet matched the 1940s as a period of full employment as well as racial hope.

Larry Glasco is Associate Professor of History at the University of Pittsburgh. He focuses on the history of blacks in Pittsburgh, and on race and caste in world perspective. As he says, "It's either Pittsburgh or the world!" He is currently working on a biography of Pittsburgh playwright August Wilson.

- <sup>1</sup> Pittsburgh Courier, September 8, 1943.
- <sup>2</sup> See Celia R. Moss, "Social and Economic Factors Affecting the Health and Welfare of a Group of Migrant Families: A Study of 29 Negro Families Migrating to Aliquippa, Pennsylvania, from Americus, Georgia, in 1936, for the Purpose of Employment at the Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation," Master's Thesis, School of Applied Social Sciences, University of Pittsburgh, 1939. Moss shows that the migration patterns of World War I and the 1920s continued into the 1930s. Undoubtedly, those same patterns persisted into the 1940s.

#### <sup>3</sup> Pittsburgh Courier, December 20, 1947.

<sup>4</sup> *Pittsburgh Courier*, August 23, 1941; September 6, 1941. But Julia Bumry Jones, author of the gossip column "Talk O' Town," lambasted the black "elite" for being "conspicuous by their absence." Jones said: "We had hoped to see the intelligentsia, but we didn't. We had hoped to see the music lovers, but we didn't. We saw the dependable few who patronize everything in Pittsburgh ... while the supposed supporters of all things racial were sitting home ... or sumpin'. Even our professional men, who lambast us to no mean degree when we do not patronize them, were not present. Pittsburgh needs to wake up!" Pittsburgh Courier, September 6, 1941.

- Pittsburgh Courier, July 27, 1946.
- Pittsburgh Courier, October 18, 1941.
- 7 Pittsburgh Courier, February 28, 1942.
- <sup>8</sup> Pittsburgh Courier, July 28, 1945.
- <sup>9</sup> Pittsburgh Courier, February 10, 1945.
- <sup>10</sup> Pittsburgh Courier, February 23, 1946.
- <sup>11</sup> Pittsburgh Courier, April 13, 1946.
- <sup>12</sup> Pittsburgh Courier, August 30, 1947.
- <sup>13</sup> Pittsburgh Courier, September 3, 10, 17, and 24, 1949.
- <sup>14</sup> Pittsburgh Courier, May 19, 1945.
- <sup>15</sup> From the Letters to the Editor column, quoting an Army sergeant serving in France, The Pittsburgh Press, September 20, 1944.
- <sup>16</sup> For example, *Pittsburgh Courier*, December 25, 1943; August 30 and November 22, 1947.
- <sup>17</sup> Pittsburgh Courier, December 25, 1943; August 30, 1947; June 14, 1941; July 16, 1949.
- <sup>18</sup> Pittsburgh Courier, May 4, 1946; January 11, 1947.
- <sup>19</sup> Pittsburgh Courier, May 18 and July 6, 1946.
- <sup>20</sup> Pittsburgh Courier, November 2, 1946.
- <sup>21</sup> Pittsburgh Courier, January 4, 1947.
- <sup>22</sup> James O.F. Hackshaw, "The Committee for Fair Employment in Pittsburgh Department Stores," Master's Thesis, School of Social Work, University of Pittsburgh, 1949, p. 14.
- <sup>23</sup> Pittsburgh Courier, August 4, 1951. DJ Mary Dudley Goode was the daughter of William Goode, owner of the Hill's 24-hour pharmacy.
- <sup>24</sup> Pittsburgh Courier, July 16, 1949.
- <sup>25</sup> Jacqueline Welch Wolfe, "The Changing Pattern of Residence of the Negro in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, with Emphasis on the Period 1930-1960." Masters Thesis, Division of Social Sciences, University of Pittsburgh, 1964, Table 9, p. 63.
- <sup>26</sup> John Hinshaw, Steel and Steelworkers: Race and Class Struggle in Twentieth-Century Pittsburgh (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), p. 115.

WE KEEP THE MOBBLE HIGH PITTSBURG WE MUST BONDS & STA

Agnes Watson and Shirley Holmes (Allen) selling war bonds, September 1942. Behind them a poster advertises "The First Annual Double V Water Beauty Pageant." Detail. Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh: Heinz Family Fund, 2001.35.9782, ©2006 Carnegie Museum of Art, Charles Teenie" Harris Archive

WE CAN

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA 91 HISTORY

KEEP T

Musmanno at a makeshift desk among bombed-out structures in Italy, 1944. All photos Duquesne University Archives and Special Collections.

# A Pittsburgh Judge's Path to **UREADED BACK**

By Thomas White

uremberg, Germany. Twentyfour former officers of the SS Einsatzgruppen sat somberly in the defendant's dock in a large courtroom. Nearby were 24 defense attorneys, clad in the traditional black robes of the European courts. Behind them was a line of armed American soldiers, standing guard. It was September 29, 1947, and the former leaders of the Nazi mobile death squads were on trial by U.S. Military Courts in a second round of tribunals. Commonly known as the "Trials of War Criminals before the Nuremberg Military Tribunals" or the "Subsequent Nuremberg Trials," they prosecuted mid-level Nazi officials who carried out war crimes and implemented Nazi policies.

This particular trial (officially known as The United States of America vs. Otto

Ohlendorf, et al.) was only one of 12, but it had attracted substantial attention. Dubbed by the Associated Press "the biggest mass murder trial in history," the U.S. military was prosecuting the men who had carried out the Holocaust beyond the confines of the concentration camps.<sup>1</sup> The Einsatzgruppen, or Action Groups, of the SS operated just behind the main German lines, identifying Jewish communities and others considered "undesirable" by the Nazi high command. The commandos were ordered to control and often execute these populations, with much of the discretion left to the officers. From 1941 to 1943 alone it is estimated that the Einsatzgruppen, who ultimately answered to Adolf Eichmann (overseer of Jewish affairs), had murdered more than a million Jews, Gypsies, and other political enemies in a series of massacres throughout Nazi-occupied Europe.

Stripped of the trappings of power, the officers who once headed the commando units were now prisoners in their own land. Their fate was to be decided by a tribunal of American judges with military backgrounds who had been appointed by President Harry Truman. The presiding judge, who headed the tribunal, was a man of small stature and intense seriousness. He had served in the war in various capacities due to his combination of skills, academic and legal background, and seemingly ceaseless energy. Allegheny County Judge Michael A. Musmanno now had to address one of the darkest chapters of the war under the watchful eyes of the international community.

But how did a Pittsburgh native end up as head of a war crimes tribunal?

usmanno's personality always loomed larger than his physical size. Direct and outspoken, most people who had interactions

with the judge either loved and admired him or disliked him intensely. Few, though, ever forgot their encounters with the man whose life came to encapsulate so many political and social issues of the twentieth century.

Born in 1897 to a working class family of Italian immigrants in Stowe Township, Musmanno retained close ties to the community in which he was raised. His father was a laborer, but the family valued education and encouraged Michael's academic interests even though his family could not afford to pay for higher education. Michael worked in mines and in the steel industry to pay for college. As a result, the ambitious young man earned multiple degrees from George Washington University, Georgetown, National University, American University, and the University of Rome. When the majority of his education was finished in the early 1920s, Musmanno returned to the Pittsburgh area to practice law.2

Aside from his educational interests, Musmanno was fascinated with movies and film

in his youth. He gained an appreciation for the power of images, photos, and film and developed a flair for the theatrical in both his speeches and writings. It was an appreciation that would serve him well throughout his life. When he was just starting out as a lawyer and had trouble acquiring cases, Musmanno took the dramatic step of defending a man who had become intoxicated and assaulted him. The press coverage of the unusual case attracted more clients and launched his legal career.



Michael Musmanno enlisted in the Army after America's entry into World War I, but was never deployed in Europe.

Musmanno made a habit of launching himself into controversial and important cases. In the mid-1920s the young lawyer traveled to Boston to join the appeals team for Sacco and Vanzetti, the two Italian immigrant anarchists convicted of murder on what many considered flimsy evidence. Though he personally opposed the ideology of anarchism, Musmanno was convinced that the men received an unfair trial. The case grabbed national headlines, and Musmanno met and corresponded

> with many well-known writers and intellectuals of the time who supported the pair.<sup>3</sup> His involvement with the case made him prominent enough to enter the arena of politics, and in 1928 he was elected as a Democrat to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. He was the youngest member at the time.

> During his term in the state house, Musmanno came to the defense of Pennsylvania coal miners and vigorously pushed for the elimination of the Coal and Iron Police, which served as the private police force and sometimes extralegal enforcers for the mine owners and large corporations. He was re-elected in 1930, and served until he was elected as a Judge in the Allegheny County Court system in 1932. He continued to document the abuses of the Coal and Iron police and wrote a play (which was later turned into a Hollywood movie) and a book titled Black Fury. It brought significant attention to the issue, and the laws that enabled the Coal and Iron Police were soon repealed.<sup>4</sup> At this point, he had solidified his reputation as a crusader for labor and the public good.

As a judge, Musmanno continued to attract attention by issuing unusual and creative court decisions. He once wrote a decision in the form of a limerick. On another occasion, he sentenced himself to three days in prison so he could get a better sense of what life was like on the other side. He even issued



Michael Musmanno amid the ruins of an Italian town during the occupation of Italy, 1943.

Musmanno made a habit of launching himself into controversial and important cases.

Michael A. Musmanno in his Naval Reserve Uniform, 1942.

Musmanno stands atop rubble during his time as military governor of the Sorrentine Peninsula, 1944.

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an opinion in 1936 supporting the existence of Santa Claus. *The Bulletin Index* coined the term "Musmanntics" to describe his out-ofthe-ordinary courtroom proceedings.<sup>5</sup> Still, behind his light-hearted escapades, the judge continued to address serious issues, including drunk driving. After dealing with several tragic cases, Musmanno decided to send a strong message about the far-too-common practice. Throughout 1936 and 1937 the judge sentenced almost everyone convicted of drunk driving, even for a first offense, to 30 days in prison.

When the U.S. entered World War II, Musmanno sought a commission in the Navy. He entered at the rank of Lieutenant Commander, but quickly rose to the rank of Captain and later Rear Admiral. He had long desired to serve his country, possessing what some might consider a movie-like sense of heroism. During World War I he had enlisted in the Army, but just as he finished training the war had ended. As a young man he expressed disappointment in not being deployed in the "Great War."<sup>6</sup> He could not know then that he would eventually serve in a much higher position than infantryman.

After years of personal experience, education, and travel, Musmanno was now a great asset to the war effort. Being familiar with Italy and having fluency in Italian, Musmanno was selected to be part of the Italian campaign in 1943. When it came time for the ground invasion of Italy, the judge was assigned as the naval aide and liaison to Army General Mark Clark. He worked intimately with the general to coordinate efforts between their two branches. He participated in several of the major military actions and was present for the official surrender of Italy. He was wounded twice (receiving the Purple Heart with the Oak Leaf Cluster) and had several other close calls.



TOP: Military Governor Musmanno with a farmer on the Sorrentine Peninsula during the seasonal harvest in 1944.

INSET: General Mark Clark (left) and Musmanno touring the Coliseum in Rome in 1945. Musmanno served as the Naval liaison to Clark during the Italian campaign.



One of the more dramatic incidents in his service was later written about in *Argosy* magazine by Glenn Infield. In "The Captain and the Poison Gas," Infield described in detail the bombing and sinking of Musmanno's ship, the *Inaffondabile*, in the Adriatic Sea. On the night of December 2, 1943, Musmanno was on deck when he noticed tiny pieces of foil falling from the sky. The Germans were dropping it in an attempt to blind the allied radar, and within a few minutes the bombing started. Musmanno had just enough time to warn his crew, but his ship was hit and sunk along with other ships in the area.

After jumping into the water, the judge almost blacked out but remained conscious long enough to get back to the surface. Oil, fuel, and other chemicals were leaking from nearby ships, and the surface of the water was on fire in many areas. Musmanno and his men did not know it at the time, but the vessel *John Harvey* had been carrying a secret cargo of mustard gas. The military was transporting it to Italy after rumors had circulated that the Nazis might begin using chemical weapons. As the cloud of the toxic gas spread out, Musmanno managed to grab hold of a barrel of olive oil to use as a floatation device, and in the process became covered in the slippery substance. His men grabbed other barrels and tied them together. They made their way to shore coughing and suffering from eye irritation.

Almost 1,000 American sailors ended up in the water that night after the raid, and 617 suffered from symptoms of exposure to mustard gas. Since the doctors on shore were not initially aware of the gas, they did not wash it off the skin of the sailors right away, leaving it to cause further burns and damage. Most of Musmanno's exposed skin had been covered in olive oil, protecting it from the gas.<sup>7</sup>

Not all of Musmanno's assignments were as dangerous. After the fighting shifted further north, Musmanno was appointed Military Governor of the Sorrentine Peninsula for six months in 1944. It was the region that his own family had originated from, so he held a special affinity for its residents. Though there was comparatively little combat, Musmanno had to handle logistical operations and maintain the peace. The unexpected eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in March 1944 also made his job more complicated, and he found himself

Musmanno managed to grab hold of a barrel of olive oil to use as a floatation device, and in the process became covered in the slippery substance. coordinating relief efforts. Aside from the unexpected natural disaster, the area remained stable under Musmanno's watch.

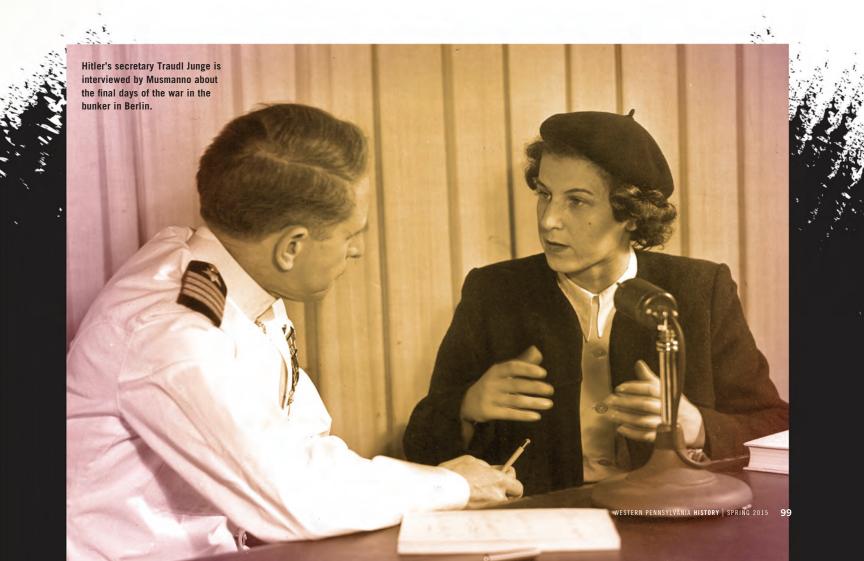
Even as the war was coming to a close, Michael Musmanno's work was just beginning. Due to his legal background, Musmanno was assigned to the Navy team that worked to determine the true fate of Adolf Hitler at the end of the European War.

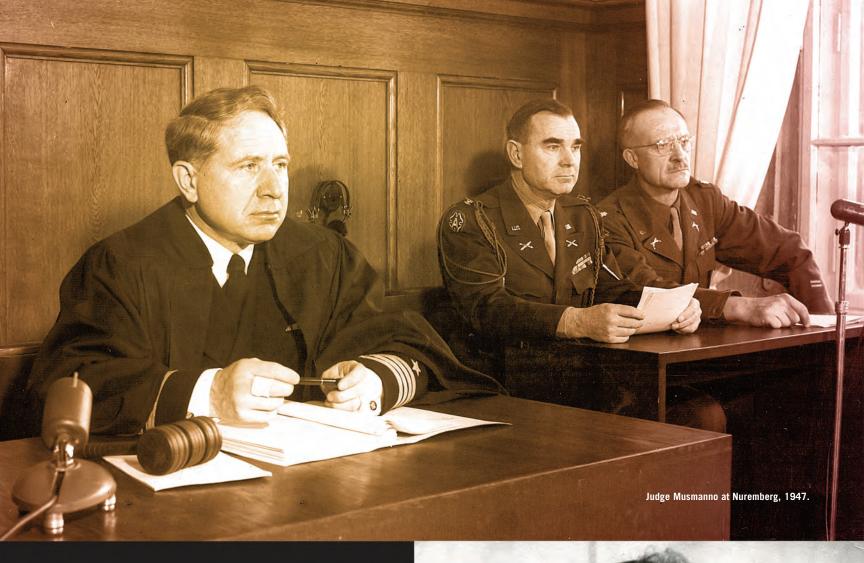
During the final days of fighting in Europe, conflicting accounts of Hitler's death circulated among the Allies. The lack of clarity as to exactly what happened to the dictator was compounded when the Soviets had reached Berlin first and seized control of the bunker. While U.S. military leaders generally believed that Hitler was dead, potentially dangerous rumors circulated on the ground in Germany that Hitler had in fact escaped. Musmanno suggested to his superiors that a detailed and accurate account of Hitler's final days should be made for both historical purposes and to prevent the Nazi guerillas from using rumors of his escape to rally resistance. The Navy appointed him to this task, authorizing him to interview anyone who might have relevant information.

Between 1945 and 1948, Musmanno and others conducted more than 200 interviews with associates of Adolf Hitler. The focus of the interviews was on the final 10 days in the bunker. Through the various personal accounts, the judge attempted to create a clear picture of Hitler's mental state as Germany fell and gather the details of his suicide. The subjects of his interviews ranged from Gertraud (Traudl) Junge, Hitler's secretary who typed his last will and testament, to Admiral Karl Doenitz, whom Hitler appointed as his successor. The judge also hired a cameraman and photographer to document the interviews. Together the accounts created a clear and personal picture of Hitler's downward spiral and the end of the Third Reich.<sup>8</sup>

After he returned from Europe, Musmanno used the information that he gathered from the interviews and at Nuremberg to write the book *Ten Days to Die.* Released in 1950, it was one of the earliest published accounts detailing the death of Hitler, and it gave Americans an inside look at the German collapse. In 1955 Columbia Studios adapted the book into a movie titled *The Last Ten Days* for release in Germany. It became a popular film as Germans still struggled with the aftermath of the war. For the rest of his life Musmanno would argue against accounts that Hitler had survived and escaped to South America or elsewhere.<sup>9</sup>

At the same time he was conducting the interviews, Musmanno had another job. In 1946 he was made president of the U.S. Board of Soviet Repatriation in Austria. During the war,





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The Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann at his trial in Israel in 1961. the U.S. and Great Britain had tentatively agreed to return displaced nationals to their home countries. In the years immediately following the war (at the dawn of the Cold War) the opinions of many Americans changed dramatically. Musmanno refused to send any of the more than 5,000 displaced Eastern Europeans that were brought before his commission back into Soviet occupied or controlled nations. He firmly believed that many of them would be killed or imprisoned for political differences. As reports of Soviet abuses in the occupied countries drifted west, Musmanno saw strong parallels between Communism and Nazism. In his eyes, both were systems that threatened freedom and liberty, abused power, and constituted a real military threat to America and the rest of the world.<sup>10</sup> For Musmanno, the difference was not great between the totalitarian regimes of the Nazis and the Soviets. Though the crusader in Musmanno was identifying the communists as his next enemy, he first had the somber task of bringing Nazis charged with war crimes to iustice.

Though all of his wartime experience had prepared him for Nuremberg, it was his legal background that really mattered. After he received his appointment, he served as a judge in three of the trials. The first was that of German Field Marshall Erhard Milch, who was charged with committing crimes against humanity, using slave labor, and conducting medical experiments on unwilling subjects, among other offenses. The trial lasted from January to April 1947. Milch was convicted and given a life sentence, though it was commuted to 15 years in 1951.

From April through November, Musmanno sat as a judge in the Pohl Trial. Oswald Pohl and 17 of his subordinates represented the leadership of the *SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt*, (Economic Administration Office) the branch of the SS charged with administering the Nazi concentration and extermination camp system. Pohl served as the head inspector



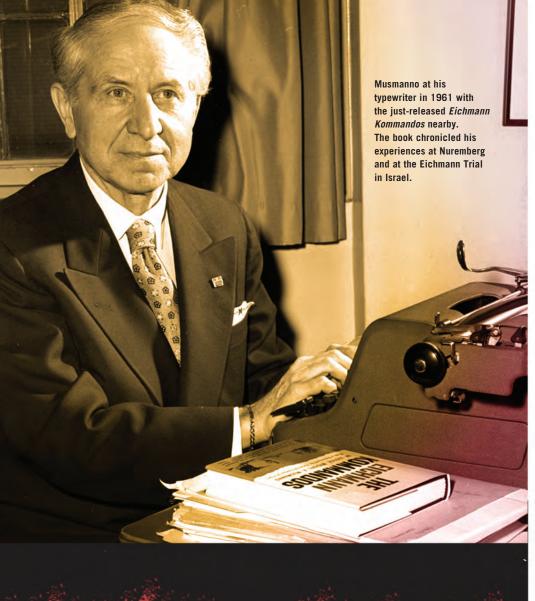
Musmanno (top row, third from left) listens to evidence at the Pohl Trial in Nuremberg in 1947.

for the camps and also sent out prisoners for forced labor. At the end of the trial Pohl and three others were sentenced to death; most of the other prisoners received lengthy sentences.

When it came time for the Einsatzgruppen Trial, it was Musmanno's turn to serve as the head judge. From September until April 1948, Musmanno and associate judges John J. Speight and Richard D. Dixon listened to the testimony of the men who had committed numerous atrocities during the war. As in the previous Nuremberg Trials, few of the defendants denied their actions, but rather defended themselves by saying that they were simply following orders. At one point during the trial, Otto Ohlendorf declared that he would have shot his own sister if he had been given the order from Hitler. He claimed, "I never hated an opponent or enemy, and I still do not do so today."11 Before the war such an argument might have served as a shield, but the war crimes of the Nazis were on too large a scale and too well documented for such detachment.

Musmanno later wrote that Ohlendorf and many of the other defendants never showed any signs of remorse, and often displayed cynicism and a sense of selfrighteousness. They genuinely believed that they were honest and honorable and that everything that they did was for the benefit of the German people. A decade and a half after the trials, Musmanno explained in his book, The Eichmann Kommandos, why he felt that the "just following orders" argument was invalid. He noted that there had in fact been ways to avoid participating in the massacres and other morally reprehensible acts if one had wished, and the evidence of such came from the officer's own testimony. If one did not wish to directly defy or refuse orders, it was clear that officers who were inefficient, drank alcohol regularly, or simply did not "have the stomach" to carry out the orders were reassigned. While pretending to be inefficient or an abuser of alcohol would result in an officer or soldier receiving a lower position, they would not participate in the massacre.12

In fact, Musmanno found little evidence that directly disobeying orders would result in any serious punishment. During one of his interviews with SS General Erich von dem Bach Zelewski, the judge asked him directly if not following such orders would result in execution or severe punishment. General Zelewski told him on more than one occasion that it would not, and there were SS officers who refused to take part in the executions. He



Though modern historians have been quick to label Musmanno another McCarthyite, his anticommunist efforts began immediately upon his return in 1948 and can also be viewed as an extension of his own vision of himself as a lifelong crusader against injustice, totalitarianism, and threats to the common man.

102 WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA HISTORY | SPRING 2015

knew of no instance where a German soldier was executed for being asked to be relieved of his duties.<sup>13</sup> It was clear to Musmanno and his fellow judges that the anti-Semitic zeal of the *Einsatzgruppen* had little to do with following orders. At least once, Otto Ohlendorf had actually carried out a massacre and retroactively sought orders to justify his actions.

All of the members of the *Einsatzgruppen* were found guilty, though their sentences varied. Musmanno had been opposed to the death penalty, and his personal writings reflected his struggle with applying such a sentence to anyone. Ultimately he decided that a statement had to be made at Nuremberg because of the scope and nature of the war crimes.<sup>14</sup> Thirteen of the officers, including Ohlendorf, were sentenced to death by hanging. Most showed little emotion when hearing their sentence. The rest received lengthy prison terms based on their level of involvement in the massacres.

Musmanno's time in Europe during the war strengthened his vision of a morally black and white world that required constant vigilance against forces of totalitarianism and corruption. He had investigated and heard disturbing first-hand accounts of slaughter and an unchecked and abusive government. So when he was handed a pro-communist pamphlet while walking on Grant Street in 1948, it drove him to action. He learned that the Communist Party headquarters in Pittsburgh was in the building directly across the street from the Allegheny County Courthouse where he worked every day, so he spent the next two years trying to convince local and state government officials to find a way to shut it down. Finally, in 1950, he took two Pittsburgh detectives with him to investigate the office for himself. The office was full of pro-communist pamphlets and books and posters critical of American foreign policy. He later described the experience in his book Across the Street from the Courthouse:

Suddenly I seemed to have been jetplaned across the Atlantic Ocean for I saw myself once again in Berlin, Vienna, Prague or Belgrade looking upon the familiar sights of hammer-and-sickle rendezvous I had known across the sea. Here was Russia with all of its ominous threats against the peace and tranquility of the world's population, including particularly the people walking self-assuredly on Grant and Diamond Streets four floors below.<sup>15</sup>

He spent the next decade railing against communism in America, trying to have the Communist Party outlawed and prosecuting its leaders. Though most convictions were overturned by the United States Supreme Court, he had widespread popular support. It was during his anti-communist crusade that he was elected to the Pennsylvania State Supreme Court. Though modern historians have been quick to label Musmanno another McCarthyite, his anti-communist efforts began immediately upon his return in 1948 and can also be viewed as an extension of his own vision of himself as a lifelong crusader against injustice, totalitarianism, and threats to the common man. There were certainly political motivations, as there had always been, but communists replaced the Nazis as the enemy of the day and Musmanno planned on doing everything he could to stop them.

Later in his life, Musmanno revisited his experiences at Nuremberg when he served as a witness for the prosecution in the 1961 trial of Adolf Eichmann in Israel. Israeli agents had captured the escaped Nazi in Argentina in 1960 and brought him to Israel to answer for his crimes against the Jewish people and crimes against humanity. Against the advice of some of his American colleagues, Musmanno made the journey to participate in the trial of the man who was ultimately responsible for the work of the Einsatzgruppen. The judge testified not only about information given to him by the defendants at Nuremberg, but also in the interviews that he conducted of Hitler's associates. When the five-week trial

was finished, the United Press International reported that of all the testimony, Musmanno's had been the most damaging to the defense.<sup>16</sup> Eichmann was convicted, and executed the following May.

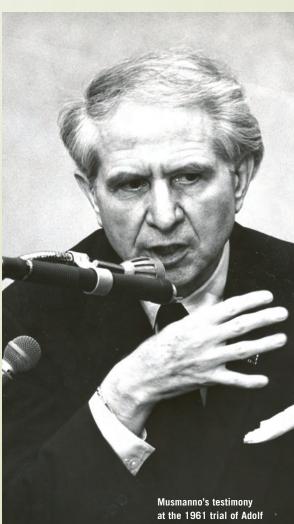
Musmanno later wrote that not trying Eichmann "would have been to commit an unforgivable offense against the sanctity of the human race."<sup>17</sup> It was a sentiment he held for all of the war criminals at Nuremberg. Until his death in 1968, he continued to support the idea of a World Court that delivered justice for the victims of barbaric atrocities in a civilized manner.

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- <sup>1</sup> Biographical Outline of Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice Michael A. Musmanno, Michael A. Musmanno Papers, University Archives and Special Collections, Gumberg Library, Duquesne University.
- <sup>2</sup> Biography Files. Michael A. Musmanno Papers, University Archives and Special Collections, Gumberg Library, Duquesne University.
- <sup>3</sup> Sacco and Vanzetti Record Group. Michael A. Musmanno Papers, University Archives and Special Collections, Gumberg Library, Duquesne University.
- <sup>4</sup> Coal and Iron Police Record Group. Michael A. Musmanno Papers, University Archives and Special Collections, Gumberg Library, Duquesne University.
- <sup>5</sup> Biography Files. Michael A. Musmanno Papers, University Archives and Special Collections, Gumberg Library, Duquesne University.
- <sup>6</sup> Personal Journal 1918. Michael A. Musmanno Papers, University Archives and Special Collections, Gumberg Library, Duquesne University.
- <sup>7</sup> Glenn Infield, "The Captain and the Poison Gas." Argosy. February, 1963.
- <sup>8</sup> Interviews of Hitler's Associates Record Group, Michael A. Musmanno Papers, University Archives and Special Collections, Gumberg Library, Duquesne University.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>10</sup> Soviet Repatriation Board Record Group. Michael A. Musmanno Papers, University Archives and Special Collections, Gumberg Library, Duquesne University.
- <sup>11</sup> *Einsatzgruppen* Trial Records. Michael A. Musmanno Papers, University Archives and Special Collections, Gumberg Library, Duquesne University.
- <sup>12</sup> Michael A. Musmanno. *The Eichmann Kommandos* (London: Peter Davies, 1962), 228-235.

#### <sup>13</sup> Ibid.

- <sup>14</sup> Nuremberg Record Group. Michael A. Musmanno Papers, University Archives and Special Collections, Gumberg Library, Duquesne University.
- <sup>15</sup> Michael A. Musmanno. Across the Street from the Courthouse (Philadelphia: Dorrance & Company, 1954), 54.
- <sup>16</sup> Eichmann Trial Record Group. Michael A. Musmanno Papers, University Archives and Special Collections, Gumberg Library, Duquesne University.
- <sup>17</sup> Albert Averbach and Charles Price, eds. *The Verdicts Were Just* (Rochester: The Lawyers Co-operative Publishing Company, 1966), 128.



at the 1961 trial of Adolf Eichmann helped secure a guilty verdict.

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