



# Freedom's Voice

The Monthly Newsletter of the  
Military History Center

112 N. Main ST  
Broken Arrow, OK 74012  
<http://www.okmhc.org/>



**"Promoting Patriotism through the Preservation of Military History"**

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April 2017

## World War I – April 6, 1917

### *The History Classic Golf Tournament*

**Benefitting**



**Military  
History Center**

**and**

**theMUSEUM**  
BROKEN ARROW

**Battle Creek Golf Club**

**Friday, May 5**

**\$75 per player, \$300 per four-person team**

**Play is limited to the first twenty-two teams  
that register and pay their entry fees.**

**Four Person Scramble  
Shotgun Start**

**For more information about participating as a player,  
sponsor or donor, contact BG Tom Mancino at 918-794-  
2712 or 918-277-2486.**

World War I began in Europe in 1914, with the German invasion of Luxembourg on August 2 and Belgium on August 3. By 1917, the opposing armies on the Western Front had been brutally killing each other for almost three years, yet the battle lines had barely moved. On the Eastern Front, the Germans had much greater success against the Russians, who by the beginning of 1917 were on the verge of collapse. Altogether, billions had been spent, and millions were dead.

President Woodrow Wilson and the American people wanted no part of Europe's war, even in the face of German provocation. German restoration of unrestricted submarine warfare in early 1917, and the British interception of the infamous Zimmermann telegram made Wilson's position of neutrality untenable. The Zimmermann telegram was a message from the German foreign office to the German ambassador in Mexico City, foolishly offering Mexico the restoration of Texas and the American Southwest if it would enter the war on the side of Germany. This inflamed the American people, and President Wilson had no choice but to ask Congress for a declaration of war on Germany, which he did on April 2, 1917. Congress passed the Declaration on April 6, one hundred years ago, this month. The President signed it immediately. (Related stories are on pages two – four.)

### **Important Date**

**June 10 – Flag Day Observance**

The MHC will host its annual Flag Day Observance on Saturday, June 10. The May newsletter will contain detailed information. In the meantime, please mark your calendars, and plan to attend this important, patriotic event.



World War I Memorial – Memorial Park Cemetery, Tulsa

## Oklahoma Goes to War

There has been a permanent military organization in Oklahoma since the formation of the Oklahoma Territorial Militia in 1890. On March 8, 1895, the Territorial Militia was officially renamed the Oklahoma Territorial National Guard. Although, the Oklahoma Territorial National Guard was mobilized during the Spanish-American War, it was not deployed to a combat area. However, several members enlisted in other units, such as the 1<sup>st</sup> United States Volunteer Cavalry – the Rough Riders – and saw service in Cuba.

As tensions between the United States and Germany increased in early 1917, the U.S. War Department began what preparations it could under current law. The Oklahoma National Guard's 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment (now the 179<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment of the 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team) was mobilized on March 31. It was sent to Camp Bowie, Texas, where it was combined with the Texas National Guard's 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment to form the 142<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment, which was assigned to the 71<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (Texas National Guard). The 36<sup>th</sup> arrived in France on July 31, 1918, where it became part of the large American army preparing for the Meuse-Argonne Offensive.

Company-size Oklahoma National Guard units were deployed to France as part of the all-National Guard 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry "Rainbow" Division. Among them was Ambulance Company No. 1, headquartered in Tulsa. The company was redesignated the 167<sup>th</sup> Ambulance Company of the 117<sup>th</sup> Sanitary Train. Other Oklahoma National Guard companies served in the 42<sup>nd</sup> as maintenance and support units. By World War II, several of the companies would be combined to form the 700<sup>th</sup> Support Battalion of the 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division.



FIG. 63.—Dressing station operated by Ambulance Company No. 167, 42d Division, at Essey, France

167<sup>th</sup> Ambulance Company – originally Tulsa Ambulance Company No. 1 – dressing station at Essey, France

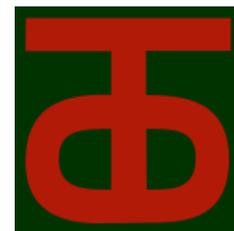
## 90<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division

The 90<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division began its 100-year history on August 25, 1917, when it was officially organized at Camp Travis, Texas. Camp Travis was a training cantonment at San Antonio adjacent to Fort Sam Houston. The first troops of the 90<sup>th</sup> were Texans and Oklahomans called to training following the first draft call for World War I.

The Division command tried as best as possible to follow geographical lines in assigning soldiers to the regiments and brigades. The 179<sup>th</sup> Brigade was designated the Oklahoma Brigade, with the 357<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment filled with soldiers from western Oklahoma, and the 358<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment with eastern Oklahomans. The 180<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade became the Texas Brigade with northern and western Texans assigned to the 359<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment and southern and eastern Texans to the 360<sup>th</sup>. Soldiers with previous relevant experience filled specialized units such as field artillery, engineers and field signal battalions.

The Division's shoulder sleeve insignia features a "T" overlaid with an "O", reflecting the origins of its first soldiers – Texans and Oklahomans. Due to the courage displayed during its many battles, along with the origin of its first soldiers, the TO came to be known as "Tough 'Ombres", a nickname that continues to be attached to the unit.

The 90<sup>th</sup> was deployed to France in June 1918, where it first saw action at St. Mihiel and then in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive.



90<sup>th</sup> Infantry "Tough Ombres" Division

## Choctaw Code Talkers



Choctaw Code Talkers of World War I

Colonel A. W. Bloor, 142<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment, 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, noticed one day in France that a number of American Indians serving in his regiment were speaking with each other in their native language. He could not understand them and realized that neither could the Germans, no matter how good their English skills. Most American Indian languages had never been written down, so there was no way to study them.

With the active cooperation of his Choctaw soldiers, he tested and deployed a code, using the Choctaw language in place of regular military code. The first combat test took place on October 26, 1918, when Colonel Bloor ordered a "delicate" withdrawal of two companies of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, from Chufilly to Chardeny. The movement was successful. "The enemy's complete surprise is evidence that he could not decipher the messages", Bloor observed. A captured German officer later confirmed they were "completely confused by the Indian language and gained no benefit whatsoever" from their wiretaps. Prior to the use of Choctaw code talkers, the Germans had broken every Allied code.

Altogether, there were eighteen World War I Choctaw code talkers. Sixteen were from the 142<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment: Solomon Bond Lewis, Ben Carterby, Mitchell Bobb, Robert Taylor, Calvin Wilson, Pete Maytubby, James M. Edwards, Jeff Nelson, Tobias William Frazier, Benjamin W. Hampton, Albert Billy, Walter Veach, Joseph Davenport, George Davenport, Noel Johnson and Otis Leader. Two were from the 143<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Regiment: Victor Brown and Joseph Oklahombi.

The success of the World War I Choctaw code talkers prompted the Army and Marine Corps to organize and train multiple Indian code-talking units during World War II. Not only Choctaws, but men from several tribes were trained as code talkers – Comanche, Navajo, Cherokee, Seminole and Lakota (Sioux).



Choctaw Nation Code Talkers Bronze Medal

## Citizen Soldier



Lt. General Raymond S. McLain

Raymond Stallings McLain was born in Washington County, Kentucky, on April 4, 1890. Early in his life, his family moved to Oklahoma City, where he graduated from Hill's Business College, in 1909. He joined the Oklahoma National Guard in 1912 as a private. He was commissioned a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in 1914, after he attended the School of Musketry at Fort Sill. In 1915, he was promoted to 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant. He was part of the 1916-17 Mexican border expedition with the 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. By 1917, he was a Captain and commander of one of the machine gun companies of the 142<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment of the 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division.

In 1938, while pursuing a career in business, McLain, rose to the rank of Brigadier General in the Oklahoma National Guard, and attended the Army's Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. After graduating he was posted to the 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division as assistant chief of staff. In September 1940, he was recalled to active duty with the 45<sup>th</sup>.

During World War II, he commanded the 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division artillery in Sicily, where he received the first of his two Distinguished Service Crosses. At Normandy in 1944, McLain took command of the troubled 90<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, transformed it into a first-class fighting formation, and led it across France. He then assumed command of the XIX Corps, becoming the only guardsman to command a corps in combat during the war.

For his distinguished service, he was commissioned a Regular Army Brigadier General. Later, he became Comptroller of the Army, and was appointed the Army's first statutory Comptroller General. At the time of his death, he was serving on President Dwight Eisenhower's National Security Training Commission.

General McLain died at Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, DC, on December 14, 1954. He is buried in Rose Hill Burial Park in Oklahoma City. McLain High School in Tulsa is named for him.

General George C. Marshall said of Raymond S. McLain that he "gave great distinction to the term 'citizen soldier'".

## This Month's Featured Artifacts



Part of the MHC's World War I exhibit features this German Maxim MG 08/15 machine gun (*Maschinengewehr*), which was the Imperial German Army's standard machine gun in World War I. It was an adaptation of British inventor Hiram Maxim's 1884 gun, the first portable, fully automatic machine gun. The original MG 08 was a larger weapon mounted on a heavy four-legged sled. The lighter MG 08/15 was designed to operate on a short bipod. It had a wooden gunstock with a pistol grip. It was water-cooled, with the water jacket holding about a gallon of water. The lighter MG 08/15 weighed about 17.6 pounds making it easy for the gunner to carry it when he had to change positions. The MG 08/15 used a 7.92 X 57 MM cartridge, fed by a 250-round fabric belt. It had an effective range of about 2,200 yards, considerably more than a mile. Its maximum range was about 3,900 yards, almost two and a third miles. During the course of the war, the Germans manufactured about 130,000 MG 08/15s. Harry Tucei donated this artifact to the MHC.

King Frederick William IV of Prussia introduced the *Pickelhaube* (a *pickel* is an ice axe; *haube*, depending on its use, is a bonnet, hood, cap or cover) into the Prussian army, in 1842. The *Pickelhaube* quickly spread to armies of other German states. Additionally, several other countries, including Russia, adopted the helmet. Beyond ornamentation, the spike, or ice axe, on top of the helmet had practical uses. When worn by cavalrymen, it was intended to deflect a saber swing. Infantrymen could use it as a weapon in close-in fighting by head-butting their opponents. Richard Gusé donated the *Pickelhaube* to the MHC.

### Museum Hours and Admission Fee

Tuesday – Friday: 10:00 – 4:00; Saturday: 10:00 – 2:00  
Closed Sunday and Monday and major Federal holidays

Adults – \$5.00

Members and Children under 18 – Free

For more information, call (918) 794-2712

[www.okmhc.org](http://www.okmhc.org)



On October 8, 1918, Samuel M. Sampler was a corporal in Co. H, 142<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment, 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (Texas-Oklahoma National Guard in World War I) engaged in fierce combat near Saint-Étienne-à-Arnes, France – Battle of Mont Blanc Ridge – during the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. His Medal of Honor Citation best describes his actions:

“His company having suffered severe casualties during an advance under machinegun fire, was finally stopped. Cpl. Sampler detected the position of the enemy machineguns on an elevation. Armed with German hand grenades, which he had picked up, he left the line and rushed forward in the face of heavy fire until he was near the hostile nest, where he grenaded the position. His third grenade landed among the enemy, killing two, silencing the machineguns, and causing the surrender of 28 Germans, whom he sent to the rear as prisoners. As a result of his act the company was immediately enabled to resume the advance”.

Samuel Sampler was born January 27, 1895, at Decatur, Texas. He was raised in New Jersey. At some point, he returned to Texas or Oklahoma. He entered the Army at Altus, Oklahoma. That may be his only connection to Oklahoma, but it was his military state of record for his Medal of Honor.

CPL Sampler was presented his Medal of Honor on April 22, 1919. He was also awarded the French Croix de Guerre and the Italian War Cross. Samuel Sampler died on November 19, 1979, at Fort Myers, Florida. He is buried in Fort Myers Memorial Gardens.



## General Pershing at Lafayette's Tomb



Lafayette's tomb in Picpus Cemetery, Paris: General Pershing is on the right facing the camera. Col. Charles E. Stanton is third from the left, also facing the camera.

Soon after his arrival in France in June 1917, General John J. Pershing, Commander of the American Expeditionary Force, and some of his staff, made a courtesy visit to the grave of the Marquis de Lafayette. He appropriately made the visit on July 4, an occasion that required a speech.

The speech was written and delivered by Colonel Charles E. Stanton, Pershing's speech writer and public spokesman. The last sentence of the approximately ten-minute speech was the famous exclamation "Lafayette, we are here!"

The obvious context of the famous sentence was meant to inform the French public that the United States had come to repay the French people for their nation's invaluable assistance during the American Revolution. The United States had come to help save France.

Pershing is sometimes erroneously credited for having uttered the famous sentence.

### Support the Military History Center

We believe the MHC provides a valuable service to the local community, especially to veterans and students. We ask for your financial support to help the MHC continue "Promoting Patriotism through the Preservation of Military History" and to recognize the sacrifices made by our veterans to keep America safe and free.

For more information, please contact the Military History Center at (918) 794-2712 to learn how you can be a financial supporter, or click on the link below to go to the MHC website at [www.okmhc.org/donate/](http://www.okmhc.org/donate/).

Monetary donations, as well as gifts in kind, are tax deductible, subject to IRS regulations.

## World War I Traveling Exhibit

Keith Myers of Tulsa has been collecting militaria – World War I to the present – for all service branches, since 1980. Since 1984, he has been presenting exhibits and giving presentations to all sorts of interested groups – schools, churches, assisted living centers, veterans' groups and so on. He very graciously placed a small part of his World War I collection on exhibit at the MHC from April 1 to April 8, in commemoration of the one-hundredth anniversary of the United States entry into World War I.



The mannequin displays German trench armor (*Sappenpanzer*). The armor was capable of stopping a pistol round but only superficially helpful against rifle fire. It also helped protect against bayonet and other edged weapons trusts. The German army issued about 500,000 sets of the armor to troops on the Western Front. The weight of the armor – 20-24 pounds – proved to be too heavy. In the end, it was only worn by troops who operated in static positions, such as sentries, machine gunners and anti-aircraft gunners.



Various World War I related documents and an American sailor's winter uniform jacket bearing the insignia of a Seaman Second Class

## World War II Veteran Presented with Quilt of Valor

The local chapter of the Quilts of Valor Foundation presented ninety-three-year-old, World War II veteran, Vernon Wilson, with a hand-made Quilt of Valor in a ceremony at the MHC on Saturday, April 8.

Mr. Wilson served as a portable power generator operator in Battery C, 233<sup>rd</sup> Anti-Aircraft Searchlight Battalion, in the southwest Pacific. During 1943-45, he served in the Fiji Islands, Wallis Island in Western Samoa, Guadalcanal, New Guinea and Luzon in the Philippines.



Vernon Wilson – 1943

Vernon Wilson was born at Ladoga, Indiana, on August 29, 1923. He entered the Army two months short of his twentieth birthday, on June 12, 1943, at Bloomington, Indiana. After the war, his employment took him to Texas, Georgia and Florida. His last position, in Florida, was head of maintenance at a large Southern Baptist Conference facility, for almost two decades. After retirement, he and his wife re-located to Tulsa, in 1991, to be close to their children and grandchildren.

MHC Docent Dennis Hoch coordinated the event with Quilts of Valor members, Norlene Grigsby, Lisa Rollins, Karen Hughes and Linda Rasure, who conducted the Quilt of Valor presentation.

Mr. Wilson's World War II photograph is courtesy of his grandson, John Doughty.



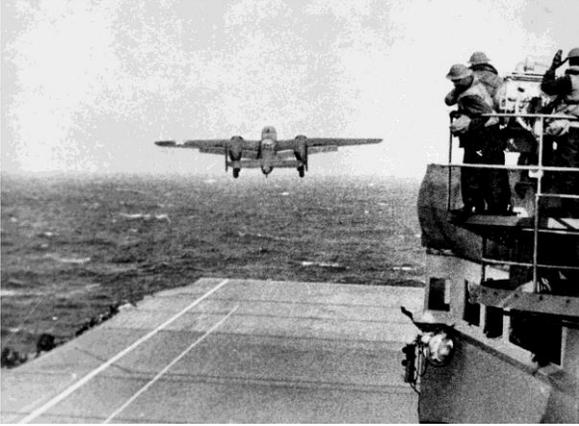
Vernon Wilson, wearing his World War II uniform, wrapped in his Quilt of Valor, with his great-grandson, Parker Doughty



Two old soldiers, Vernon Wilson and Oscar "Junior" Nipps, meet for the first time. In 1945, they served on Luzon at the same time, but in different units.

## The Doolittle Raid

Seventy-five years ago, this month, on April 18, 1942, USAAF Lt. Colonel James H. "Jimmy" Doolittle led a force of seventy-nine men, all volunteers, in sixteen B-25B Mitchell medium bombers from the deck of the aircraft carrier, USS *Hornet*, on a daring raid on Japan. Never before had bombers been launched from an aircraft carrier, but all made it into the air. They were tasked with bombing specific military and industrial targets in the cities of Tokyo, Yokohama, Osaka, Nagoya and Kobe.



A Doolittle raider taking off from USS *Hornet*

The first group of raiders, led by Col. Doolittle, arrived over Japan about noon after a six hour flight. They came in very low, completely surprising the Japanese, who had convinced themselves that Japan couldn't be attacked from the air. All the bombers, except Crew No. 4, dropped their bombs. The bombers were lightly armed in order to minimize weight. Crew No. 4's rear machine gun turret malfunctioned leaving the aircraft defenseless. When they were attacked by four Japanese fighters, LT Everett Wayne Holstrom, commanding the bomber, ordered the bombs jettisoned. He then flew from the area as quickly as possible.



B-25 bomber, *Avenger*, flown by 1LT Edgar McElroy of Ennis, Texas flying over Yokosuka naval base after he dropped his bombs. Tokyo Bay is in the background.

President Roosevelt had ordered the military to come up with some kind of attack on Japan to demonstrate that notwithstanding Pearl Harbor and the disaster in the Philippines, the United States was capable of striking back. The only feasible response was an air attack. The Army Air Force and Navy came up with the audacious Doolittle Raid. It exceeded all expectations. The Japanese were stunned, and American morale skyrocketed.

The crews of eleven bombers bailed out over or near China; one bomber made a wheels-up landing in a Chinese rice paddy; one crash landed on a beach; two bombers ditched in the sea off the Chinese coast; and one bomber flew to Vladivostok in the Soviet Union. Of the eighty crew members, three were killed bailing out of their aircraft, eight were captured by the Japanese and five were interned by the Soviet Union (later repatriated, disguised as an escape). The Japanese executed three of the POWs after a sham trial, and one died of malnutrition. The other four captives were repatriated at the end of the war.

Doolittle received the Medal of Honor and was promoted to Brigadier General. All other crew members were awarded Distinguished Flying Crosses. The Doolittle Raiders, as a unit, received the Congressional Gold Medal on April 15, 2015. The Doolittle Raiders were special, and always will be.

Three of the Doolittle Raiders were Oklahomans: Harry C. McCool, Robert J. Stephens and Bert Mervin Jordan. All three were part of Crew No. 4.



Harry Clayton McCool was born at La Junta, Colorado on April 19, 1918. His family later moved to Beaver in the Oklahoma Panhandle. He graduated from Beaver High School and received a Bachelor of Science degree from Institute of Technology (now Southwestern Oklahoma State University) at Weatherford, Oklahoma, in January, 1940. In the meantime, he had joined the Oklahoma National Guard in 1936 and served in the artillery before being discharged in 1940. Following college graduation, he enlisted in the Aviation Cadet Program of the U.S. Army Air Corps for navigator training. He was commissioned a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant and awarded his navigator wings on June 24, 1941.

2LT McCool was the navigator of Crew No. 4. After bailing out over China, he and the rest of the crew were rescued by the Chinese, at great risk to themselves, and eventually made their way to the Chinese wartime capital at Chungking. From there, they were flown to India. McCool remained in the China-Burma-India Theater and served as B-25 and B-17 naviga-

tors from May to August 1942. After India, he served in the European Theater of Operations as a navigator on B-24 and B-17 bombers from August 1942 until April 1945.

McCool went on to a career in the Air Force. He retired as a Lt. Colonel in 1966. Harry McCool died at San Antonio, Texas, on February 1, 2003. His body was cremated. His Decorations include a Distinguished Flying Cross, two Purple Hearts, five Air Medals and other American and Chinese awards.

Staff Sergeant Robert J. Stephens was the bombardier of Crew No. 4. After he jettisoned his bombs, the bomber flew on to China, where the crew bailed out after running out of fuel. SSGT Stephens remained in the China-Burma-India Theater and served as a B-25 bombardier with the 11<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron of the 341<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group from May 1942 to July 1943. After returning to the United States, Stephens was commissioned a flight officer in the U.S. Army Air Force, on February 11, 1944, and was rated as an aircraft observer. He was medically discharged from the Army Air Force on December 1, 1944.



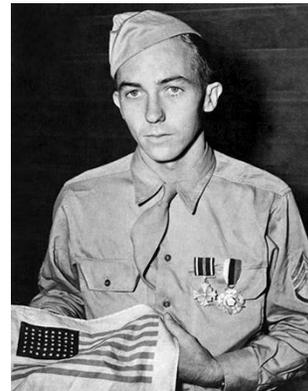
Robert J. Stephens was born on February 28, 1915, probably at Peggs (Cherokee County), Oklahoma. He was orphaned at age five when a tornado destroyed Peggs, on May 2, 1920, killing his entire family except for him and his baby sister. Stephens' grandmother raised him in Hobart, Oklahoma<sup>1</sup>. He enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps in November 1939 and completed enlisted bombardier school in June 1940.

Stephens died on April 13, 1959, and was buried in Rose Cemetery at Hobart. The Chaplain of Altus Air Force Base conducted the graveside service; the "Doolittle Gang" sent a floral spray; and a B-25 bomber flew low over his grave.

Bert Mervin Jordan was born at Covington (Garfield County), Oklahoma, on September 3, 1919. He enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps on November 17, 1939, the same month as Stephens. After basic training, Jordan completed aircraft and engine mechanic school, in December 1941.

CPL Jordan was the flight engineer/gunner of Crew No. 4. Jordan, like his crewmates, shared the same fate in so far as his rescue and repatriation to India. Also, like McCool and Stephens, Jordan remained in the China-Burma-India Theater. He served in the same squadron as Stephens.

After about a year and a half in India, Jordan, now a Tech Sergeant, returned to the United States, where he served at various bases and on Guam, in 1945. He separated from the active Air Force on October 30, 1945, but remained in the Air Force Reserve. He returned to active duty on December 29, 1947.



Jordan's first assignment after returning to active service was at Tinker Air Force Base, where he remained until August 1948. Jordan went on to a career in the Air Force. He served in numerous maintenance units in the U.S., England, Germany, Japan during the Korean War, and Thailand during the Vietnam War.

Bert Mervin Jordan retired as a Chief Master Sergeant, on August 1, 1971, after more than thirty years of Air Force service. He died on April 3, 2001, and was buried in Georgetown Cemetery, Pottsboro, Texas.

Except for personal details, all the crewmembers' Distinguished Flying Cross citations read exactly the same:

"... for extraordinary achievement while participating in a highly destructive raid on the Japanese mainland on April 18, 1942. Corporal Jordan volunteered for this mission knowing full well that the chances of survival were extremely remote, and executed his part in it with great skill and daring. This achievement reflects high credit on Corporal Jordan and the military service."



Crew No. 4: (L to R) 2LT Harry C. McCool, CPL Bert M. Jordan, 1LT Everett W. "Brick" Holstrom (pilot), SSGT Robert J. Stephens, and 2LT Lucian N. Youngblood (co-pilot) – Holstrom remained in the Air Force and retired as a Brigadier General.

<sup>1</sup> Most records show Stephens' birthplace to be Hobart. This is probably because knowledge of his earliest childhood is almost non-existent due to his birth family's near extinction in the tornado. Only within the past seven or eight years have Stephens' Hobart cousins made the connection with his deceased Peggs family.

## Admiral Marc Mitscher



LTC Jimmy Doolittle standing at the right talking with Rear Admiral Marc Mitscher, Commander of USS *Hornet*, with the Doolittle Raiders assembled behind them.

Freshly promoted Rear Admiral Marc Mitscher was given command of the Navy's newest aircraft carrier, USS *Hornet*, in October 1941. In March 1942, *Hornet* was selected as the carrier from which the Doolittle Raid would be launched.

Doolittle's sixteen B-25 Mitchel bombers were loaded on *Hornet* at Alameda Naval Air Station, California. She then sailed west and rendezvoused with the carrier *Enterprise* and Task Force 16 in the mid-Pacific, north of Hawaii. The task force, commanded by Vice Admiral William Halsey, steamed west in radio silence to within 650 miles of Japan, where they were spotted by Japanese picket boats. Thus, the B-25s were launched sooner than planned. Task Force 16 then turned around and headed back toward Hawaii. Doolittle and his raiders flew west to Japan and into a form of immortality.

Marc Andrew "Pete" Mitscher was born on March 26, 1887, at Hillsboro, Wisconsin. After Oklahoma's first land run on April 22, 1889, his family moved to the newly minted town of Oklahoma City. His father became a prominent businessman in town and Oklahoma City's second mayor (1892-94). Marc's uncle, Byron D. Shear (his mother's brother), would also become mayor of Oklahoma City. In 1900, President William McKinley appointed the elder Mitscher to serve as the Osage Agent, at Pawhuska. Marc's parents were dissatisfied with the quality of local education and sent their son to Washington, DC for his schooling.

After high school graduation, Oklahoma Territory's Congressional representative, Bird S. McGuire, appointed Mitscher to the U.S. Naval Academy. Mitscher entered the Academy in 1904, but he proved to be a dismal student and was frequently in trouble. With 159 demerits and poor grades, he received a forced resignation in 1906. Mitscher's father, with the assistance of McGuire, was able to obtain a second appointment for Marc, later that year. Re-entering Annapolis as a plebe, Mitscher's performance improved. Dubbed "Oklahoma Pete" in reference to the Territory's first midshipman (Peter C. M. Cade) who had washed out in 1903, the nickname stuck until his third year, when it was shortened to just

"Pete". Mitscher remained a marginal student, graduating in the Class of 1910 – 113<sup>th</sup> in a class of 131.

Midshipman Mitscher's first duty station was on USS *Colorado*, where he served two years. He was commissioned an Ensign on March 7, 1912. Early on, Mitscher became intensely interested in aviation. He recognized that somehow it would likely play an important role in future naval warfare. Mitscher learned to fly and was one of the first naval aviators, receiving License No. 33, on June 2, 1916.

The success of the Doolittle Raid led the Japanese to undertake a plan already being promoted by Admiral Yamamoto – a campaign to capture Midway Island. Mitscher, commanding *Hornet*, along with aircraft from the carriers, *Enterprise* and *Yorktown* sank four Japanese aircraft carriers, north of Midway Island, on June 4-5, 1942. The crushing defeat of the Japanese fleet proved to be the turning point of World War II in the Pacific.

By the summer of 1944, Mitscher, now a Vice Admiral, was given command of the newly created Fast Carrier Task Force. It was this Task Force that completed the destruction of Japanese naval air power in the Battle of the Philippine Sea, during the Marianas Campaign. Off Okinawa, in April 1945, Mitscher's flagship was struck by kamikazes, killing half his staff officers. He transferred his flag to *Enterprise*, which was also struck by kamikazes, which required him to transfer his flag again, this time to the carrier, USS *Randolph*.

After the war, Mitscher served a tour as Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, and on March 1, 1946, became Commander-in-Chief, U. S. Atlantic Fleet with the rank of Admiral (four stars). While serving in that capacity, Mitscher died at Norfolk, Virginia, on February 3, 1947. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.



Vice Admiral Mitscher in World War II

While Admiral Mitscher has only a tenuous connection to Oklahoma, having lived in the Territory only about ten years of his youth, it was his military territory/state of record. It was an Oklahoma Congressman who appointed him (twice) to the Naval Academy. And, his father and uncle were important to the early development of Oklahoma City.

## Last Surviving Doolittle Raider



The Doolittle Raiders executed a daring bombing raid in and around Tokyo on April 18, 1942, during America's darkest days of World War II. The last surviving Raider took center stage at the 2016 Air Force Association conference outside Washington, DC, on September 19.

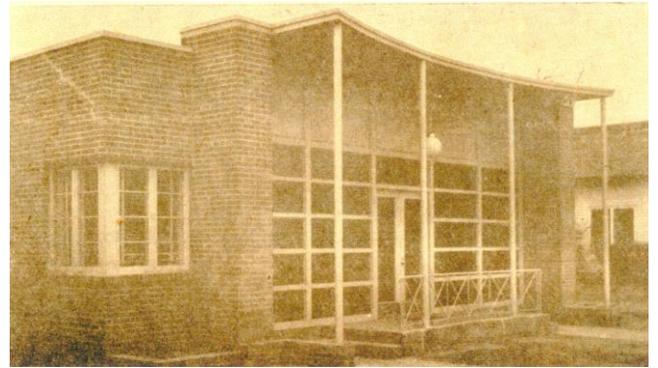
Secretary of the Air Force Secretary, Deborah Lee James, invited Richard E. Cole, a 101-year-old retired Lieutenant Colonel, to announce the name of the service's new Long Range Strike-Bomber, or LRS-B, to be known as the B-21 Raider, in homage of the historic mission. Cole was Col. Jimmy Doolittle's co-pilot on Crew No. 1.

Afterward, Cole appeared on the floor of the show, held at the Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center in National Harbor, Maryland, just south of Washington, D.C., to talk to, and pose for pictures, with attendees. He also agreed to participate in an on-camera interview with Military.com. TSGT Derek White is in the center of the photograph.



Crew No. 1 – LTC Jimmy Doolittle and 1LT Richard E. Cole are in the front row. Cole and 2LT Henry L. Potter (navigator) are wearing the insignia of the 34<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron, their regular unit. The Doolittle Raiders were an all-volunteer, provisional unit organized for a single mission. Because of strict secrecy, only a handful of people (not including the President or the secretaries of War and Navy) knew the details of the operation. Thus, the Doolittle Raiders were not given an official unit designation or insignia.

## Military History Center's Home



Franklin Hospital – 1942

Dr. Onis Franklin opened Broken Arrow's first stand-alone hospital in the building that is now home to the Military History Center, seventy-five years ago, in April 1942. When the hospital was opened, Broken Arrow was small, with only about 2,000 residents. The hospital included eighteen patient rooms, an operating room, an obstetrical delivery room, an emergency clinic, medical offices for Drs. Onis and S.E. Franklin (Dr. Onis Franklin's son) and a dental clinic for Dr. Earl Cunningham. Franklin Hospital eventually became part of Hillcrest Hospital, which operated the 112 N. Main Street facility as a satellite until 1971. The hospital building was later sold to the Broken Arrow Public School District.

The City of Broken Arrow eventually acquired the property, and in 2012, the City offered it to the Military History Center. After extensive renovations by the City of Broken Arrow, the MHC took occupancy on June 15, 2013. (Franklin Hospital research and photograph were contributed by Ms. Lori Lewis, Executive Director, The Museum Broken Arrow.)



Military History Center – 2016

# *“Lest We Forget”*



**General George S. Patton, Jr. at the liberation of Stalag VII-A, Moosburg, Germany – April 29, 1945**

“Daybreak brought the sound of shouting and gunfire at the front gate. From our barracks, we could see German troops near that gate, and they were firing in! We were ordered to stay inside as the Germans began fighting each other. We found out later when bodies were being loaded onto a truck that the Gestapo had attempted to take the camp from the Wehrmacht. Little did we know at that time, but Hitler had issued an order to kill all of the prisoners in the camp. The Gestapo and the SS troops attempted to carry out that Order, and the German army had saved our lives. Almost on cue after the fighting stopped, American troops backed by one tank and one jeep arrived at the front gate. The German army personnel surrendered immediately. The American flag was raised over Moosburg at 1240 hours, and it was a sight that brought tears to many eyes. At 1315, General Patton came through the gate, standing erect in his jeep behind his driver. Another jeep followed with four heavily armed soldiers. There, finally, was Old Blood and Guts in person with those famous pistols on his hips. Tears were rolling down hundreds of faces including mine. The memories and the visions of this day will live with me forever.” (Bill Ethridge: *Time Out. A Remembrance of World War II*, 1998, p. 137-143.)

As Germany evacuated POW camps further east, Stalag VII-A, located near Moosburg, northeast of Munich, had grown to about 80,000 prisoners, including about 27,000 Americans, when the 14<sup>th</sup> Armored Division liberated the camp, on April 29, 1945.

*Freedom is not free.*



**THANK YOU**