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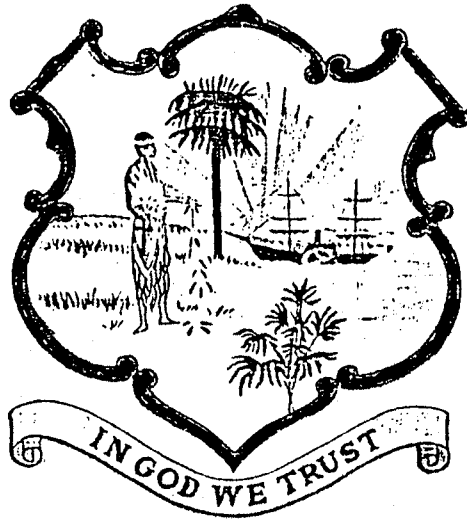
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Florida Department of Military Affairs



Special Archives Publication Number

17

A FLORIDA COUNTY'S WAR
ALACHUA COUNTY GOES TO WAR

State Arsenal
St. Francis
Barracks
St. Augustine,
Florida

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

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Robert Hawk
Director

THE FINAL MEASURE
A Brief History of Alachua County
1940 - 1945

by

Robert Hawk and Harlan Trofholz

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to the memory of all personnel who served in World War II and to all citizens who endured the agonizing months of waiting for their return.

The conclusion of this tragic period of time resulted in an allied military victory, but at a high cost in young lives. It is difficult to justify this cost. Perhaps the following letter by Navy Ensign Wallace M. Bonaporte can best explain why this cost had to be paid:

My dearest parents,

I had hoped never to have to write this, for over a long period, even after being sent overseas, I had been safe and secure, but lately I have been in some tight spots.

I do not expect to die in this war- no one does- but I am playing on my luck more and more. Only in the event it does not hold out will you get this letter.

It would not be written now, for I have no premonition of death, were it not that I know full well the place that I and my personal welfare play in your lives and in your hearts. This cannot ease your grief, but it may serve to convey my frame of mind at the prospects of losing my life, and my frame of mind may be of some importance to you.

At first when I knew I was in danger I thought of all the happiness I would miss in my married life that started out so wonderfully, and of how you, who have built your lives around my health and happiness and success, would feel.

After a while I ceased to think of dying. Now I never do- except in moments like this, when I do so for a definite purpose. I am inured to death. If it comes I am mentally and morally prepared. My primary thoughts out here are of life; of winning the war and returning someday to you and to my dear wife.

I am deeply conscious of what I am fighting for and would not sit at home during this war if I could. What I fight for is not an abstraction to me. It is not my vague ideal of freedom or democracy. I reduce it to the most elemental of emotions, that of man's instinctive, dominating, intense desire to protect those individuals whom he holds dearest. I don't claim that this is the reason for any other man's participation in the war. It is my own.

So the fact I may die while I am protecting you does not appall me in the least. If I do I shall be happy to have done what I have to preserve your lives and the way of life, and all of the sacrifice and effort on your part to rear me as a good citizen, educated and successful, are not wasted.

So although you will grieve, do not, please do not, be bitter. Know that I am smiling here as I write at sea -that I am content that I am doing what I want to do and must do. Be proud that you did a good job of rearing me to do what was my chief purpose. Live out your lives to the fullest, without loneliness or pain. Wherever I am, I will be at peace, and if there is a heaven, I have a clear conscience and clean soul. And know also that I love you above all and that to me you are the grandest, dearest people in the world.

love,

Your son, Wallace

(Ensign Bonaporte was killed in combat in the Pacific theatre. The letter was delivered after his death.)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors want to thank the many relatives, historians, and other individuals and organizations that willingly assisted and advised us in the preparation of this publication.

In Gainesville, the library staffs of the Alachua County Library, Santa Fe Community College Library, and University of Florida Library were always helpful.

Numerous articles from the Gainesville Daily Sun provided considerable valuable data. Our thanks to the "Sun."

Special appreciation and gratitude is extended to Ms. Carla Kemp, archivist at the University of Florida Library. Her cooperation and assistance increased our enthusiasm for this project.

In Washington D.C., many government archivists spent numerous hours helping us collect technical military data. Mr. Charles Sheraden of the Army Memorial Affairs Division and Mr. Richard Boylan with the National Archives (Modern Military Field Branch) deserve special commendation.

Our research locations also included Eisenhower's Library in Abilene, Kansas, and the Air Force Records Center in Montgomery, Alabama. Our gratitude is extended to all personnel at those centers.

Every effort has been made to insure accuracy in this document. The authors request the forgiveness of those persons whom we have not acknowledged and apologize for any documents or reports that were overlooked in the preparation of this memorial publication.

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PART I

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY REPORT

The beginning of the new decade in Alachua County was greeted with optimistic gaeity and hope for peace in America. The European war was now four months old, and most county folks felt that Europe's problems were not the concern of this nation. This time, the United States should not send its young men to die in foreign lands.

The population of Alachua County was not large in 1940. There were only 38,607 inhabitants in the entire county. Gainesville was the largest town with 13,757 citizens. High Springs was next with 2010, followed by Alachua 1081, Hawthorne 741, Newberry 735, Micanopy 720, Waldo 567, Archer 517, and LaCrosse with 192.

While Alachua County prayed for peace, the European continent was going beserk. On February 1st, Russia invaded Finland. Next, Germany was moving to occupy Denmark. On April 9th, Germany invaded Norway and the following month overran the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg. By June 20th, France had capitulated and within two months, Germany proclaimed that England was under a complete blockade. World hopes for peace had crumbled away.

On July 18, 1940, Franklin Roosevelt accepted his party's nomination for an unprecedented third term in office. He selected Henry Wallace as his vice presidential running mate. Wendell Wilke was to be his Republican opponent.

When election time arrived, Alachua County gave Mr. Roosevelt 6,609 votes, while Mr. Wilke received 1,366 votes. The county had again voted with the national majority and Roosevelt was reelected for a third term.

The Gainesville airport on Waldo Road was the first Alachua

County location to feel the effects of change necessitated by an impending war. The federal government provided \$52, 646 through a National Defence Project to update facilities. Work was completed by the Works Project Administration (WPA). Mr. J.B. Mobley, Jr., city manager, represented Gainesville in promoting completion of this project. The Gainesville airport complex would experience other changes in the future. Even the name would change from Gainesville Airdrome to Fairbanks Army Air Base to Alachua Army Air Base. Confusion with an airbase in Gainesville, Texas necessitated these changes. Alachua Army Air Base was the official name assigned by the United States government. The federal government took over operation of the airport in late 1941, expanded it and maintained control until early 1946.

The University of Florida was not indifferent to the needs of the country. A pilot training program was initiated in October, 1940, with 40 volunteer trainees per class. Other military clubs and programs were also undertaken. These programs contributed many trained personnel for the future war effort even though enrollment in the male designed university was only 3295 students that Fall. The university would not accept complete coed enrollment until 1946.

Nearby Camp Blanding was soon to have a major impact on Alachua County. The federal government initiated a \$7,000,000 construction project at the camp which reportedly added 30 new buildings per day. By October, 1940, over 25,000 troops were to make Blanding their temporary home. Many could be seen strolling up and down University Avenue in Gainesville on their off-duty hours.

Two county draft boards were established in October, 1940. (Draft Board Registry #1 and Draft Board Registry #2). All men between the ages 21-36 were required to register at that time. Precisely 5478 men from the county completed the necessary paperwork. Mr. E.C. Daniel of the board predicted that none would be required to serve that year. Jokingly, he offered 20-1 odds against such a happening.

With the obvious symptoms of a major military buildup pressing, the county passed through the fall months with the hope of continued peace. The University of Florida homecoming football game was joyously received by squashing Maryland 19-0. In excess of 10,000 loyal fans cheered the Gators. Local theatres did a booming business also. Brenda Joyce and George Murphy were two young stars appearing at the Florida Theatre in "Public Debutant # 1." It is ironic to note that three years later, Brenda Joyce, the upcoming star, would briefly curtail her acting career and be living in Gainesville as the wife of army lieutenant Owen Ward. Lt. Ward was stationed at Alachua Army Air Base.

1941

Alachua County welcomed in the year 1941 by supporting the election and inauguration of new governor Spessard L. Holland. Formal ceremonies took place in Tallahassee on January 7, 1941. Shortly thereafter, the High Springs Jaycees held an election of lesser magnitude, but with equally enthusiastic citizens. Roy Westmoreland was elected president of the club. Tom Millinor was

chosen 1st vice president, F. P. Stringer - 2nd vice president, and G. T. Alexander was selected as secretary-treasurer. Directors for the club were A.V. Venson, H.C. Dick, Miss Juanita Easterlin, Miss Joe Guy, W. H. Isbell, Dick McDowell, Will Phifer, and Jack Vause.

Gainesville Jaycees were also active. They endorsed a project to conduct an industrial survey to demonstrate to the city that there was a need for a municipal auditorium. At this writing in 1987, the discussion and need still persist.

A variety of events occurred early in 1941 which were promoted to relieve the ever-present worries of the threat of war. The Gainesville G-Men professional ball club (Florida State League) conducted a wide-reaching fund raising campaign to keep the team active in Gainesville. Dr. Gordon Tison, a director of the club, asked the Jaycees to help raise \$3500. The club was assured of a good future and business as usual followed. Mr. Parks Carmichael, business manager, signed Eddie Martin as new team manager. Mr. Fred Cone was president of the ball club. Contracts were held on the following players: Jimmy Pruitt - catcher; Don Ryan, Cecil McCann, George Lee, Bill Stevens, Doug Ivey, and Mike Mistovitch-pitchers, (Max Cantly, another pitcher was not expected to return); Bill Gobel-first base; Don Edward-left field; Earl Jackson-3rd base; Ike Livingston-catcher; and Pat Pasley-shortstop. It was a set-back for the team when it lost its most popular player- first baseman Whitey McMullin who signed a manager contract with Saginaw, Michigan of the Michigan State League. Subsequent war events would intervene and Captain Whitey McMullin, U.S. Army Air Corps, languished in a German prisoner of war camp until liberated on May 2, 1945. He was a

prisoner for approximately one year. He ultimately returned to Gainesville with eventual employment with WRUF radio station.

The Gainesville Golf and Country Club was also very active. The 2nd annual Gainesville Open was being planned under the leadership of Mr. W. L. Duke, tournament chairman. This was a very popular club event.

Several business leaders also conducted activities to promote public goodwill and business enrichment. Of a morbid nature, the bullet riddled "death car" (as it was called) used by Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker was displayed in Gainesville during mid February 1941. On a happier note, President J. A. Phifer of the Phifer State Bank remodeled his bank building extensively. He and his officer staff, J.B. Carmichael - vice president and cashier, W. Carlos Zetrouer and G.C. Banton - assistant cashiers, invited the county citizens to a grand reopening reception from 7:00 to 9:00PM on the evening of March 19, 1941.

Other business' also joined the activities. A full page ad appeared in the Gainesville Sun which announced the opening of a new Canova Drug Store at the corner of University and Main Street. Business' were doing quite well in Alachua County.

Of little note, was a back page article in the "Sun" informing the public that a son of a former ambassador to England would speak at the university. John F. Kennedy would explain his motivation for writing his book, WHY ENGLAND SLEPT.

The imminence of a future military action continued to create numerous events in early 1941. Nearby Camp Blanding received an ever increasing number of troops. Approximately 2300 additional officers

and men arrived from New England. Major General Morris Payne became the new commander over this sprawling military complex.

The county observed National Defense Week to learn the procedures to be taken in the event of war. Lt. Norman B. Flagg was in charge of this program. Local defense chairman, G.G. Kirkpatrick said, "Alachua county will be ready if war comes."

Not all young men were willing to wait for America to be involved in the European War. England, our future ally, was confronted with a possible Nazi invasion from the occupied French coast and called for American help. J.L. "Jimmy" Smith, Billy Cannon, and Stanley O. Kelley of Gainesville were early respondents to this call. Barely out of high school, the adventuresome young men earned pilot wings with the famous "few" of the British Royal Air Force.

J. L. "Jimmy" Smith was a very good athlete at Gainesville High School. He always boasted to his brothers, Harold, Glen, and Julian that he was pretty good and proved it by being named all-state and all-southern in football. He also excelled in basketball and baseball. His need for challenge ended upon graduation from high school, so he looked for new and exciting competition.

Jimmy found new excitement in Canada as a pilot trainee with the Royal Canadian Air Force. After a few short months, he was awarded the coveted wings of a pilot and transferred to the British Royal Air Force in England. "Smitty", as he was called by the British, flew spitfire and hurricane fighters for the RAF in England and North Africa. Much of his flight time in Africa was spent attempting to destroy German tanks in the vicious desert war.



J. L. "JIMMY" SMITH

Jimmy Smith survived the dangerous African campaign. In December, 1942, he transferred from the RAF to the U. S. Army Air Corps and continued his flying career for the remainder of the war.

William "Billy" Cannon started his flying career with the Royal Canadian Air Force at age 17. Prior to his departure from Gainesville, Billy lived with his mother, Mrs. W.E. Cannon at 1403 Seminole Avenue (In the 1940's, streets and avenues were usually named rather than given numbers). After reaching his 18th birthday, he transferred to the U.S. Marine Corps and continued his flying career. Within the next two years, he was credited with shooting down a two engine Japanese Mitsubishi bomber and three "zero" fighter aircraft. He was reported to be the youngest fighter pilot captain in the U.S. Marine Corps. He survived the war.

Stanley O. Kelley also began his career by flying with the British Royal Air Force. He also transferred to the U.S. Army Air Corps after America's entry into the war. His career was interrupted shortly thereafter when he was seriously wounded in North Africa. No information is known beyond this event. He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. S.C. Kelley of Gainesville.

The summer of 1941 was a rather quiet time in the county. It was hot and little activity took place during the heat of the day. Conversations that did take place concerned the progress of the European war with reasons why America should not get involved. Prayer meetings were held to seek the guidance to keep the United States out of that faraway conflict. At this time of prayer, the

Gainesville airport was being expanded under a National Preparedness Program. Additional major expansion was to be continued after December 1941.

With the coming of Fall, county activities revived. The newly remodeled Florida theatre ran a new hit movie entitled "Citizen Kane." Gainesville's largest retail store, Belk-Lindsey, made its debut at 116 West Main Street, South. The store opened October 29th with the boast that its storefront was 200 feet long with the west side opening on Garden Street. Mr. James Lindsey was manager and Colin Lindsey was secretary-treasurer. Belks was to become an extremely popular store with continual patriotic promotions directed toward war bond drives and salutes to Alachua County servicemen.

The county's best known citizen, authoress Majorie K. Rawlings, made the news by marrying Nortin Baskin in St. Augustine. Mr. Baskin operated the Castle Warden Hotel in St. Augustine which was to become their new home. He was a knowledgeable hotelier who also managed the Marion Hotel in Ocala.

Majorie Rawlings Baskin was not impressed with living in St. Augustine, and after a short time returned alone to her home at Cross Creek.

The University of Florida Gator football team provided exciting entertainment in the Fall of 1941. A young man named Harrison Ferguson provided the needed spark for a winning team. Referred to as Ferguson and Company, the team prepped for a December 20th match with the UCLA Bruins which would take place in Jacksonville. The Gators were confident of a victory in this match and hoped for an invitation to the Rose Bowl on January 1, 1942. Tragedy interrupted

the strained frivolity of late 1941. The Japanese attacked United States Military bases in Hawaii killing over 3000 Americans. Many activities were cancelled after this surprise attack. On December 8, 1941, the United States declared war on Japan. President Roosevelt, in his request for a declaration of war from the Congress, stated that, "December 7, 1941, is a day that will live in infamy." It was indeed a day that found the citizens of Alachua County in a stunned and saddened emotional state. After a short while, this condition was replaced by an angry determination to destroy any aggressor that attempted to disrupt the privileges of American living.

With mixed emotions the football game with UCLA was played. A talented UCLA quarterback named Bob Waterfield turned in a sparkling performance to defeat the Gators 30-27. Florida's season ended with no invitation to the upcoming Rose Bowl. The player disappointment in not getting a free trip to California was mitigated when it was announced that the Rose Bowl site for the January 1, 1942, game would be Durham, North Carolina. Duke University and Oregon State competed in that event (Oregon State 20 - Duke 16). Fear of a Japanese air attack necessitated this move from Pasadena, California.

Many county citizens refused to believe that we were now involved in a war. Due to their remote farm locations, many did not know that war had begun. Mr. Warren Torlay, Jr., circulation manager of the Gainesville Sun, reported that many rural folks were not aware of the war until an extra edition of the "Sun" was printed and circulated.

Rumors of sabotage and invasion were frequent. Mr. J.B. Mobley,

Jr., city manager of Gainesville, placed the city utility plant under heavy guard for fear of enemy sabotage.

The local theatres attempted to calm the distress of war news and rumors by encouraging movie attendance. The Florida theatre offered "The Shadow of the Thin Man" with William Powell and Myrna Loy to be followed the next week by a new movie entitled "The Maltese Falcon." The starring role was played by Humphrey Bogart. The State theatre promoted a musical entitled "The Chocolate Soldier" with Rise' Stevens and Nelson Eddy. The Lyric theatre made a comedy bid with "Double or Nothing" starring Bing Crosby and Martha Raye.

All efforts to ease the worry and terrorizing fear of war were destroyed when it was nationally announced on December 14th that Captain Colin B. Kelly, Jr. (from nearby Madison, Florida) had sacrificed his life by diving and crashing his B-17 bomber into a Japanese ship. The event brought the somber reality of war to the county with the horrible realization that many young men would soon die.

After the war, PFC Robert Altman of Sanford, Florida, told his version of the Colin Kelly death tragedy. Altman had been a crewmember on Kelly's plane, but was a prisoner of war until 1945. His report stated that they hastily took off early from Clark Field because of a surprise Japanese attack on the Philippine base. They only had three bombs and seven crew members on their plane, but did attack the Japanese ship Haruna. One major hit was made with the three bombs causing considerable damage. Upon attempting to return to Clark Field, they were attacked by two Japanese fighter planes.

Their bomber was immediately set aflame and five of the crew were able to parachute from the plane. Altman reported that the five made it back to their base which was now only five kilometers away. Captain Kelly and S/Sgt Delehanty (side gunner) were unable to escape the burning plane.

PFC Altman stated that he first heard the story of crashing the plane into the ship after he was a prisoner of the Japanese.

1942

The first days of 1942 found Alachua County making full preparations to support the war effort. Mr. R.B. Kyle of Gainesville was appointed County Commodity Rationing Officer. Four boards were established to control the sale of tires and other commodities. Their structure was as follows:

Board #11-1 -Chairman McL Grady, High Springs

Members - D.C. Kite and E.G. Baxter of Gainesville

Board #11-2 -Chairman Tom Roland, Newberry

Members - C.F. Nolder and J.E. Pierson of
Gainesville

Board #11-3 -Chairman DeWitt Hague, Alachua

Members - H. James and L.C. Pepper of Gainesville

Board #11-4 -Chairman F.N. Johnson, Hawthorne

Members - E. J. Shea and H.R. Stringfellow of

Gainesville

Air raid drills were planned for all school children. Gainesville installed four air raid sirens while the other towns made similar warning preparations. Although many believed the prospect of air raids were unlikely, Lt. Commander S. J. Singer, aide to Rear Admiral C. H. Woodward of the U.S. Office of Civil Defense, was detailed to speak in Alachua County to advise of the probability of hostile air raids.

Many citizens of Alachua County took an active part in promoting the defense of the county and support of the war effort. Mr. Morris E. Stults, cashier of the First National Bank, was active in promoting loyalty and patriotism. His future was saddened by the tragic loss of two of his three sons through military action. In April 1945, Morris Stults resigned his bank position and moved to St. Augustine to work for the Exchange Bank. His tragedy continued when his only remaining son died shortly after the war.

Mr. Latham Davis took a leadership role in establishing the air raid warden program. In February 1942, he made a public plea for volunteers to serve as wardens. His dedication created a successful air raid warning system and "black-out" (lights out) program.

Home front patriotism was not restricted to adults. The federal government originated an inexpensive defense stamp program. This fund raising program was targeted toward youngsters who were encouraged to save money by buying defense stamps. Accumulation of these stamps was used in purchasing interest bearing war bonds. Harold Stringer, a Gainesville Sun paper boy, was awarded a U.S.

Defense Agent badge for selling 461 defense stamps in the first four weeks they were available.

The county was not without its military hero. In March 1942, the expanded Gainesville airport was renamed the JOHN R. ALISON AIRPORT by city commission action.

John Alison was born in Micanopy. He was the son of Grover Alison who was in the oil and lumber business in Gainesville. John graduated from Gainesville High School and the University of Florida. His initial plan was to become a navy pilot. His short stature did not meet the minimum height requirement and he was rejected. John succeeded with the army when it was said that the examiner "looked the other way" when height was considered. His flying talents became apparent while training at various fields in Texas. He was selected to be a military observer in England after completing his flight program. Shortly thereafter, he was decorated by the British for his assistance and contributions to their training programs. Subsequently, he was selected by the U. S. government to accompany Harry Hopkins (President Roosevelt's personal advisor) to Russia. Here he advised the Russians on military flight tactics and American military aircraft. The Russians also recognized his unique abilities and awarded him additional military decorations.

It was in recognition of these accomplishments that the Gainesville commission named the airport in his honor. John Alison would perform many military feats as the war months progressed.

In April 1942, the county leaders established a committee to promote the sale of war bonds. The country was in dire need of funds



JOHN R. ALISON

to build and support a large military force. Alachua County responded. The committee was chaired by Mr. J. M. Butler with Mr. Ray Westmoreland of High Springs as sub-chairman. Other community participants were Mrs. E.F. Whitney of Melrose, Mrs. Frank N. Johnson of Hawthorne, Mrs. B.D. Franklin of Micanopy, Miss Mamie Anderson of Archer, Mrs. J. T. Rogers of Newberry, and Mrs. W. H. Ennis of Alachua. The drive raised over one half million dollars for the war effort. Subsequent drives were to raise increasingly larger amounts.

The early months of 1942 brought tragic experiences for the American military. The large American force in the Philippines was forced to surrender to the Japanese. The subsequent stories of the atrocities by the Japanese infuriated the American public. Morale was so low that an almost sacrificial air raid was carried out on Tokyo by a small group of American bombers under the leadership of Lt. Colonel Jimmy Doolittle. This historical raid contributed immensely in dissolving the public despair.

Alachua County also participated in a major effort to bolster citizen morale. Sam Harn, Secretary of the Gainesville Chamber of Commerce, proclaimed July 17, 1942, as National Hero's Day. With the assistance of Gainesville's newly appointed chief of police, William O. Joiner, an all out effort was made to promote recognition of county servicemen. Business establishments were asked to provide window space to display names and photos of local military personnel. Parents of service personnel proudly contributed to the project. Outcome was so positive that future patriotic projects were actively solicited.

As the summer months passed, more and more military personnel were stationed at Alachua Army Air Base. It was decided by the Gainesville city commission that these troops needed an off-duty recreation center. The federal government agreed to provide \$45,000 construction funds if the city would provide the site and agree to operate the facility. Land was provided on the "Boulevard and Second Avenue." Construction was later initiated with a planned completion date in July 1943.

The stunning horror of war shocked Gainesville in September 1942, when it was announced that Marine Corporal Milton Lewis had been killed in a Solomon Island battle. It was difficult to understand why this young "boy" who had been such a pleasant personality, good football player, swimmer, and athlete should die at such an early age. He was only twenty two years old. For his heroic action in that battle, the city of Gainesville later renamed the city municipal park, Milton Lewis Field. In 1944, his mother would christen a new warship named in honor of her son.

Milton Lewis was reported to be Gainesville's first war casualty. Sadly, many of the counties young men were to die in the months that followed.

John Alison again brightened the spirits of Alachua countians who eagerly followed his recent war exploits. He had received a transfer to China and was flying with General Clair L. Chenault's famous Flying Tigers. It was reported that he had shot down two Jap bombers and was listed in Chenault's roll of honor of top pilots.

In recognition of these new accomplishments, October 27, 1942, was designated as John R. Alison Day in Gainesville. The Gainesville

Chamber of Commerce promoted this day of patriotic speeches.

Dr. S. S. Morgan, veterinarian and city meat inspector of Gainesville also expressed his pride in son Corwin (Smiley) Morgna. Lt. Corwin Morgan was flying with Navy Torpedo Squadron 8 in the Pacific when he received word of a Japanese heavy cruiser in his vicinity. Without hesitation, he attacked with his torpedo plane and sank the enemy ship. He was awarded the Navy Cross by Admiral Chester Nimitz, Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Fleet.

By the end of the year 1942, the war with the Japanese in the Pacific had become controllable. The fierce battles of the Coral Sea and Midway Island had been costly, but drained Japan of much of its offensive strength. The American military had also invaded North Africa successfully in cooperation with British forces. The United States was on the offensive against both Japan and Germany.

1943

A clear, cold day escorted in the first day of the new year. Although January 1943 provided much cold weather, the spirits of the Alachua countians was warmed by the American military success in Africa and the Pacific. Unfortunately, this success could only come by paying a high cost in loss of life.

The dreaded telegrams which reported, "The War Department regrets to inform you that your son (husband)..." became a too frequent event in the county. 1st Lt. Virginus Murphree, a popular young man who had lived at 1120 W. Union Street in Gainesville, was reported killed in the Pacific. Lt. Louis Towson, another popular

young man, was reported missing in Africa with later confirmation of being killed in action.

With the continued arrival of reports of young men killed or wounded in action, the spirits of the county citizens deteriorated to sorrowful uncertainty. Mayor J.B. Carmichael realized the seriousness of this diminished morale situation and "ordered" that a "Victory Frolic" street dance be held in Gainesville on April 11, 1943. The countians were to throw out a warm welcome to all officer candidates at the university and all other personnel stationed at Alachua Army Air Base. The project was a big success.

Spirits were further bolstered when popular John R. Alison's photo appeared in the April 12, 1943, issue of Life magazine. He was now termed an air ace having downed five or more enemy aircraft and was considered one of the top pilots flying with the China Air Task Force.

Patriotism was also stimulated with a big war bond sales drive. The first day goal of \$75,000 was surpassed when sales of \$128,000 were accomplished. The Alachua County quota of \$685,000 was surpassed when Mr. C.A. Pound purchased a \$50,000 bond to stimulate renewed sales activity.

One of the major Spring activities was the early completion of the new service center built on the Boulevard. Costs were controlled and the final construction bill was \$36,991.48. The new staff for this city operated recreation center was Miss Thelma Boltin (former teacher at GHS) Director, and other staff memers: Mrs. Nell Hurst, Mrs. Gertrude McGill, Mrs. Dannie Hampton, Mrs. Mabel Bryant, and Mrs. Sarah Munson. Miss Rachael Seay was also an occasional

assistant.

The Center was an immediate hit and over 6000 servicemen were entertained at the center in April 1943, the initial operational month.

The culmination of the major Spring events was the University of Florida and the high school graduations. The university, drained of students by military needs, only graduated 252 students. Gainesville High School graduated 92 students. The list of high school graduates included 21 young men who were already in the service. During this era, it was an accepted practice to enlist in the military prior to graduation and receive your diploma in absentia.

The decreasing enrollment at the University of Florida was of concern to the staff and citizenry of Alachua County. The university was created for male enrollment only. War demands for personnel were taking priority over university studies leaving the campus somewhat deserted. The military did make substantial use of the campus by conducting training programs, but concerns for future utilization were paramount.

State Representative Carter of Alachua introduced a bill to the legislature which would place the university on coed status for the duration of the war plus two years. The legislation was not passed. Summer enrollment at the university dropped to 727 students.

In June, it was reported that the county had nearly lost its air ace, John Alison. His aircraft was damaged in air action and a Japanese fighter aircraft closed in behind his faltering plane for an easy "kill." Alison was spared by a saving Chinese pilot who

destroyed the enemy plane and escorted Alison to his home base. Lt. General Joe Stillwell, grateful for the salvation of one of his ace pilots, presented the Chinese pilot (Captain Tzany Hai-La) with the American Silver Star medal for bravery. This was the first American medal ever awarded to a Chinese Air Force officer.

The satisfaction of knowing that John Alison had survived was gratifying to many countians who followed his exploits. This joy was interrupted when Mrs. Verna P. Gordy of 200 Washington Street, Gainesville, received word that her son, Lt. Paul Gordy was missing after a bombing run on Hamburg, Germany. This was shocking to many people who knew Paul as the paper boy who delivered the Gainesville Sun to their homes in the so recent past. Ultimately, word was received that he parachuted from his damaged plane and was a prisoner of war. Within one year, misfortune again struck the Gordy family. The second son, bombardier Lt. Marion L. Gordy, was also shot down over Europe and became a prisoner of war. Fortunately, the two Gordy boys survived the war and were reunited in Atlanta, Georgia, in June 1945, while on the way home.

By Fall 1943, some of the attention to the military war activities had been switched to the legal war that was taking place between writer Majorie K. Rawlings (now Mrs. Norton Baskin) and Zelma Cason, a Gainesville social worker. Ms. Cason charged that her character had been defamed through a portrayed character in Majorie Rawling's book, "Cross Creek." Circuit Judge John A.H. Murphree ruled against Ms. Cason and the charge requesting \$100,000 damages was dismissed. An appeal was made to the Florida Supreme Court. The Court upheld Judge Murphree in part, but reversed him in part. The

Court decided that the book "portrays the plaintiff as a fine and attractive personality, it is nevertheless a rather vivid and intimate character sketch", and the allegations in the damage suit "if proven to be true would make out a prima facie case of an invasion of at least nominal damages"....

The case was remanded to the Alachua County Circuit Court for jury trial. After final justice had been served, Ms. Cason was given some consolation for invasion of her privacy, - an award of one dollar was made.

At this same period of time, the county lost one of its leading citizens. Mr. William Reuben Thomas, died at age 77. Mr. Thomas operated the Thomas and White House hotels in Gainesville. The 1888 graduate of Vanderbilt University spent most of his life in this area. He had contributed much to the city and served as chairman of the committee that secured state support for location of the university in Gainesville. Many countians mourned the tragic loss of this business and community leader.

In October, the Florida State Guard Unit, Company D, 2nd Battalion, used Olena State Park for a drill and encampment. This unit consisted primarily of Alachua county personnel. It was established for local assignment duty should any need arise. Captain G.A. Barber, Lt. Watt Kirkpatrick, and Lt. Clark Gourley were three key officer personnel assigned to this unit. Governor Spessard Holland visited the encampment and conducted a review of the troops present. Many of these young men eventually transferred to active duty units and served in different war theatres.

Tragically, a fatal accident awaited Lt. Clark Gourley shortly



CORWIN MORGAN

SPENCER BRADY

3



THOMAS POLLARD

6

after this encampment. The young attorney, who was employed by the firm Baxter and Clayton, visited the Alachua Army Air Base where a plane taxied into his unseen auto. His injuries were so severe that his wife, immediately summoned, was unable to arrive prior to his death. The county had lost a very talented young attorney and soldier.

The hearts of many young ladies from Alachua county were temporarily broken when it was announced that air ace John Alison had married Miss Louise Muncie of New York City. The pretty young lady's photo had appeared in the August 9, 1943, issue of Life magazine in the company of Alison's friend, Colonel Phil Cocheran. By September 5, 1943, her picture was in the Gainesville Sun as the wife of John Alison. Colonel Alison had won another victory.

In late October, Alison visited Gainesville while on leave from service. His parents had moved to Daytona Beach, but his brother, Grover Alison, Jr., was to be ordained at the Episcopal Church in Gainesville. The ordination took place on October 26, 1943.

At this time of war, so many acts of heroism and too much dying were taking place. A youthful marine lieutenant, Tommy Pollard, received much praise and admiration at this period of time. He was the son of Dr. and Mrs. C. B. Pollard. Dr. Pollard was a dean at the university. Tommy had demonstrated leadership ability in combat in the Solomon Islands. He was given a battlefield promotion from sergeant to lieutenant. His men admired him and referred to him as "the pirate." His nickname originated from his unorthodox combat dress and one particular combat experience. He wore the standard camouflage fatigue pants, no shirt, and a khaki handkerchief wrapped

around his forehead under his helmet. His squad was directed to capture a Japanese machine gun position. Upon attack, his men were quickly cut down by this machine gun position. Tommy was knocked down when a bullet struck his rifle. He immediately jumped back up, grabbed another rifle from a fallen squad member and overran the Japanese position killing all enemy therein. Having lost his helmet in the attack, his men said he looked like a pirate with the scarf tied around his forehead. The name reportedly stayed with him. He performed several additional feats of bravery in the islands which resulted in his receiving the Distinguished Service Cross and the Silver Star medals for bravery. Alachua County would prepare a special homecoming for him the following year.

As 1943 drew to a close, the university announced that its average monthly enrollment was 2173 students (1238 army trainees and 935 civilians). Approximately 7500 former University of Florida students were now in the service. An expression of hope was also made that former gator football captain (1936) Lt. Walter Mayberry may still be alive. A talented pilot, he had shot down three Japanese planes on his first mission, but was reported missing. Ultimately, it would be determined that he was in a prisoner of war camp. He would not survive the war. It is believed that he was killed in an air raid by American planes which unknowingly bombed the prisoner of war compound.

The short, wintery days of December culminated with some memorable moments of joy and sadness. On a happier note, the children of Findley Elementary School were delighted by the addition of a new second grader to their roles. Betty Lou Lawrence, a 7 year

old Hollywood starlet, enrolled in the school. She had recently completed a movie entitled "Mistress of the Melinda" and was now living with her parents in Gainesville while her father was stationed at Camp Blanding. Betty Lou's pet cat "Prince Nippo" was also of celebrity status and a joy to the school children. Prince Nippo, a white Persian cat, had previously made numerous catfood ads and enjoyed the extra attention his admiring audience provided.

The sorrow of late December struck heavily on the James Westmoreland family of High Springs. Their son, James, was reported missing at sea. Unfortunately, a rough sea off the coast of Iceland had claimed this young life.

After two long and costly years of United States involvement in the war, the end of the killing appeared to be many years in the future.

1944

January 1944, was the beginning a a very bad time for Alachua County. Many young countians were reported missing or lost to military action. Lt. Edward Vause of Williston and Gainesville was reported missing. His wife, the former Winifred Boyd of Gainesville, was working at the university. She had been saving part of her pay to buy a spercial birthday present for her husband's upcoming 25th birthday. Upon receiving notice that "little hope exists for his survival," Mrs. Vause donated her birthday savings to the American Red Cross.

Pvt. William F. Bennafield was reported missing in the Mediterranean area. His wife, Thelma, lived at 891 West Masonic Street, Gainesville. She waited with hope for her husband's survival. This was never to be.

Lt. Ewart Sconiers who lived a while in Gainesville had previously been reported missing and captured. At this time, it was reported that he had died in a German prisoner or war camp.

The agony of the loss of life was perpetuated in numerous ceremonies. The mothers of Milton Lewis and John Chapman received posthumous military decorations honoring their sons. This did little to mitigate the grief. The mother of Paul and Marion Gordy also received military decorations on behalf of her sons. Fortunately, Mrs. Gordy was able to present the medals to her sons upon their repatriation. Most of the award ceremonies took place at Alachua Army Air Base.

Other reported missing or captured at this time were Harry Simmons, Jr., Walter H. Chesser, and Charles Howell.

The morale of Alachua countians was badly in need of revitalization at this time. Loyalty was at its highest, but worry and consternation were primary. Something needed to be done to revive the spirit of the people. The United States government and county leaders responded to this need.

Captured German and Japanese military equipment was put on display in the county in conjunction with a major war bond drive. A German cannon (model 88) and airplane (ME 109) and a Japanese two man submarine were exhibited in Gainesville, Newberry, and High Springs. Gainesville resident and movie personality Brenda Joyce (wife of army lieutenant Owen Ward) took a major role in promoting bond sales. W. O. Boozer was chairman of the overall county drive which surpassed its quota of \$962,000. A special "War Service Certificate" was presented to the county for this exemplary accomplishment.

During the period of this drive, the well known and colorful Senator Harry Truman made a tour of Gainesville and the University of Florida. This public display did much to increase public morale.

At this time, a popular army general also chose to make Gainesville his home. General Norman D. "Dutch" Cota and wife lived at 836 Holly Street in Gainesville. Their son, Norman Jr., became a popular and decorated fighter pilot while his father was gaining popularity and ultimately fame for his leadership in the upcoming "Battle of the Bulge" campaign.

With the coming of Spring in 1944, activities at home and

military actions overseas increased. Alachua Army Air Base resumed full operational training activities after having previously diminished their programs.

The University of Florida proudly announced that six alumni had become fighter pilot aces (downing five or more enemy planes). They were Captain Sheldon Brinson of Bainbridge, Georgia - 7 planes, Lt. Don Fisher of Miami - 6 planes, Captain John F. Bolt, Jr. of Sanford - 6 planes, Colonel John Alison of Gainesville - 7 confirmed, 4 more probable, and 1 on the ground, Captain Herbert H. Long of Miami - 6 planes, and Captain Robert C. Miller (hometown unknown) - 7 planes.

The increased actions also had the saddening effect of increased casualty and missing in action reports. Fortunately, Corporal Horace Davis of Newberry was a survivor of one of these missing in action reports. His position with a tank destroyer outfit in Italy was overrun by the Germans. After three days, the trapped Corporal Davis returned to the allied lines bringing approximately 100 German prisoners in his group. Full details of this unusual accomplishment were never publicized nor made available.

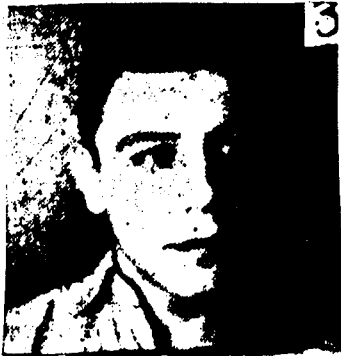
May 25, 1944, was a special celebration day in Gainesville. "Tom Pollard Day" was proclaimed and observed. The often decorated Lt. Pollard was home on leave and given special recognition by the Gainesville Jaycees. A special luncheon was held with a special Distinguished Service Award made to Lt. Pollard by the Jaycee chapter. That day and several following days were replete with recognition ceremonies and patriotic speeches. Tom Pollard soon returned to his military duties. He survived the war and now lives in Destin, Florida.



These Are Escaped German Prisoners

Search For Escaped Germans Continues Into Fifth Day

THE TWO PRISONER OF WAR
ESCAPEES FROM CAMP BLANDING



PAUL GORDY
as Sun Carrier

Lt. Paul Gordy Local Flier Is Missing

PAUL GORDY

Lt. Marion Gordy Reported Missing In European Area



Flier Is Second Son Down In Action

Lt. Marion Leonard Gordy, 26-year-old son of Mrs. Verna P. Gordy, 200 Washington Street, is reported missing in action since April 29 over the European area. His mother was informed by telegram from the War Department last week.

He is the second of Mrs. Gordy's sons to be reported missing over the European area. Lt. Paul Pate Gordy, a pilot, was shot down over Germany last August, and later was reported being held as a prisoner-of-war by Germany.

Lt. Marion Gordy was a bombardier. He was stationed in England since March 20, and had received his wings at Childress Field, Texas, December 18, 1943. He was employed as manager of the Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company in West Florida, prior to his entry into service.

MARION GORDY

At this time, the rumors of an upcoming European invasion by the allies was foremost in county conversations. Many newspapers, including the Gainesville Sun, reported stories of an upcoming military action. It is remarkable that the surprise June 6th "D-Day" invasion was so successful when all the media of this nation had so accurately speculated or predicted this event.

Within two days of this massive invasion, the patriotic fervor of the county instigated what was to become the biggest bond drive to date. On June 8th, the drive was initiated with a rally at the university's Florida Field. The Gainesville Sun, in cooperation with local merchants and townspeople, compiled a list of all county military personnel. This list was published in the June 27th issue of the "Sun." High Springs' quick participation raised \$39,485 for the cause by the end of that month. All County communities surpassed their goals and \$1,051,073 was collected.

The citizens of Gainesville were also pleased to learn that a victory ship (a type of troop and supply ship) was to be launched on June 10th in the city's honor. With the name Gainesville entered on the ship log, the citizens responded and supplied the small ship with its own library. The 10,500 ton vessel was ultimately used in the Pacific theatre of operations.

The patriotic activities of Summer 1944, experienced a most unusual event in July. Camp Blanding troop facilities were also being used as a German prisoner of war camp. County citizens were to experience the excitement and fear of two escaped prisoners. Germans, Herman Kunkel and Arno Klasen escaped from a work detail at a turpentine camp near LaCrosse. A recent Hollywood movie had

provided the citizenry with a profound notion of what to expect from the prisoners. Movie star Greer Garson had experienced terror from a downed Nazi flyer in the movie "Mrs Miniver". Many folks expected no less behavior from these two Nazis.

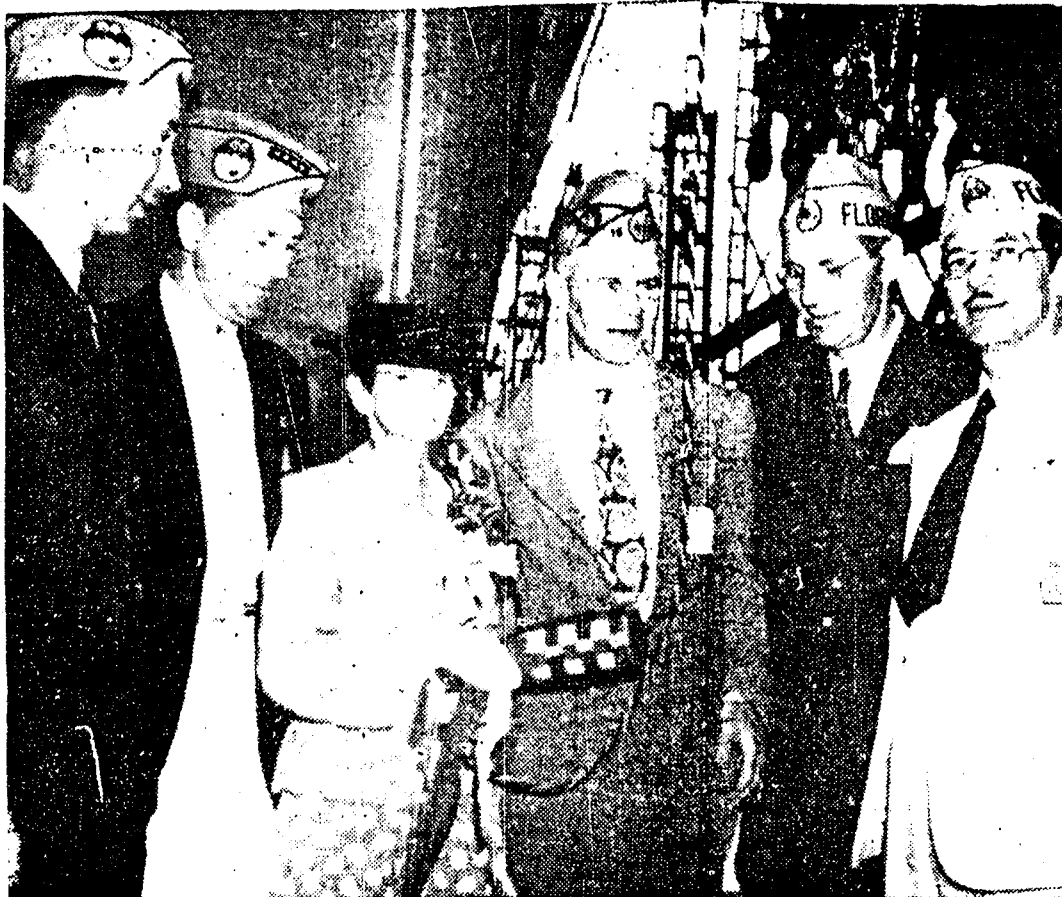
The hunt continued for five days. The Federal Bureau of Investigation urged the alertness of all countians which was eagerly given. The entire affair ended with little drama when the two tired and hungry fugitives were located on Highway 41 between Lake City and High Springs. Their submissive behavior provided considerable contrast to the intense perseverance depicted in the "Miniver" drama.

The increased military activity in Europe and the Pacific theatres gave rise to hopes of war's end by December 1944. In Europe, the invasion was completed and the allies were pushing the Germans back to Germany. Many Alachua countians participated in this major campaign. Robert A. Ballard had operated a small store in Gainesville which was named "Mark's Market". He had graduated from the university in 1937 and had been an active member of the Beta Theta Pi fraternity. In 1941, he gave up the market and joined the service. He was commissioned a lieutenant in the army. He served as an aide to General Frank Mahin of the 33rd Infantry Division. This job was not to his liking so he volunteered for paratroop service. As a lieutenant colonel, his performance on "D-Day" was so outstanding that he was awarded the Silver Star medal for bravery. It was reported that General Eisenhower made the medal presentation. He continued his military career and reportedly retired with the rank of general.

In the Pacific, the increased military activity also involved many Alachua countians. First Lt. Joe M. Forster of Route 4, Gainesville, became a well known pilot of the 5th Air Force and was entered in the record books of the 5th Air Force Hall of Fame. Forster was credited with downing three Japanese planes with a 35 minute time span. An unusual fete that was confirmed by Major Richard Bong, America's leading air ace at that time. Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Forster of rural Gainesville were proud to boast of a son who was flying with a group nown as "Satan's Angels".

It Forster was to experience a near tradegy the following March when his P-38 aircraft was badly damaged in combat. Miraculously, he was able to skillfully keep his plane aloft for over 800 miles and return to his home base. He continued his flight career throughout the remainder of the war which included the destruction of six additional enemy aircraft.

In a contrasting story, marine Private First Class William C. Hardee, brother to Kathleen Hardee of Gainesville, received the Navy and Marine Corps medal on Saipan Island for saving the lives of Japanese children. The fanatical Japanese chose to commit suicide rather than surrender. They would jump from cliffs into the ocean or rocks below. Children were thrown to their deaths by parents. Private Hardee witnessed a Japanese woman throwing four small children into the ocean. He jumped from the cliff into the water below and saved two of the four children. An unusual humanitarian fete between two races that bitterly despised each other. In September, the Board of Control (directing Florida's universities) again considered permitting coed enrollment at the University of



MRS. WILLIAM F. LEWIS HOLDS the bottle of champagne with which she christened the USS *Wm. Lewis*, destroyer escort named for her Marine hero son, launched at the Tampa Shipyards Sunday afternoon. Local legionnaires accompanying Mrs. Lewis to Tampa were from left to right: B. J. de Jess Davis, Mrs. Lewis, J. E. Hawkins, W. L. Lowry, and H. P. Constans.

MOTHER OF MILTON LEWIS CHRISTENING SHIP
NAMED IN HONOR OF HER SON. AUGUST 1944.



JOSEPH. M. FORSTER
(THIRD FROM LEFT)

✓
FIND INFORMATION ON THE SUBJECT OF THE ABOVE
APPROXIMATELY 1940-1945 IN THE FOLLOWING

Florida. This consideration had previously been rejected and J. Tom Watson, State Attorney General, opined that it was permissible to reject women under current laws. The Board of Control elected to continue the status quo indicating a preference of maintaining a 40 year tradition.

That Fall the University of Florida expected only 700-800 civilian students while the Florida State College for Women in Tallahassee anticipated enrollment of approximately 3000 young ladies. Even with small enrollment, the University of Florida fielded a football team that provided considerable excitement including a homecoming victory 14-6 over Maryland. Ms. Lillian Thorpe (in charge of alumni affairs) arranged a special homecoming ceremony to honor former students. This event took place on October 28, 1944. The solemn program announced the war deaths of 178 former students, 30 prisoners of war, and 58 missing in action. By war's end, the university would lose over 400 former students to military battles.

On November 11, 1944, the American Legion Chapter in Gainesville conducted a special ceremony honoring the county war casualties. Forty-one names were included in their Gold Star program. By war's end the number of county war deaths would triple.

Hopes for an end to the war by December 1944 were dashed when the German military unleashed a major offensive on the western front. American forces were to suffer 74,788 casualties on this front during the month of December. All feared that the damnable war would probably last another two years. Some military leaders feared that the allies could still lose the war. Since our D-Day landing on

June 6, the United States military had suffered 332,912 casualties (54,562 killed) on the western front alone. We could not long endure such heavy losses.

1945

The beginning of the new year witnessed a renewed dedication in the American people. The troops in Europe had been badly mauled by the enemy offensive, but they reorganized and stopped this advance which was later referred to as the "Battle of the Bulge."

In the Pacific, the troops were retaking island after island. These campaigns had been costly in human life, but the morale of the troops was high.

Hitler now stated that Germany would never capitulate. The allied military hardened to this statement with the determination to eradicate Germany from the map. Berlin, the final target, was only 301 miles away.

On the homefront, Alachua countians staunchly supported any patriotic cause and willingly made personal sacrifices to help end this war. A "brown-out" order was issued in the county. This order mandated that no outdoor advertising and promotion should be accomplished utilizing electricity. All coal and oil should be utilized in the war effort and not for commercial gain.

The new year also ushered in a new Florida governor. Millard Caldwell took office on January 2, 1945. The local guard, Company D of the Florida State Guard, participated in the inauguration ceremony. Lt. Bert Willard was platoon leader. Gainesville men in

the platoon were: C.W. Shaw, J.C. Adkins Jr., Dewey C. White, George R. Roland, R.E. Dixon, LaVaughn Bailey, Randall Dorsey, Byron M. Salter, Carlos Taylor, Richard Sykes, Arthur W. Hall, James Prince, R.W. Wheeler, Milfred McCallum, Sammy L. Hartman, W.R. Hartman, Ray Wright, Charles H. Parker, James Neiblack, James C. Poole, James Williams, and Franklin P. Fowler.

At the University of Florida student registration was again low. Many concerned citizens stated that the facilities should be more efficiently utilized. The coed issue again surfaced. The State Jaycees adopted a resolution in favor of making the University of Florida coed for the junior and senior years. This resolution was of interest to the new governor, Millard F. Caldwell, who requested that a coed study be accomplished. Senator Henry S. Baynard of St. Petersburg and G. Warren Sanchez of Live Oak introduced a bill which proposed that a study and survey be made to determine future higher education needs prior to admitting females into the university. This was interpreted as a move to block coed enrollment. This failed, but coed enrollment would not become a reality until 1946.

Several Gainesville High School students decided to extend the fraternity and sorority concept to their own campus - perhaps as a taunt to a non-coed yielding university. Unfortunately, Principal F.W. Buchholz at the high school proclaimed this a violation of state law and more than 40 students were suspended for 10 days. The movement ended.

At the State theatre, Humphrey Bogart's new movie was attracting large audiences. "To Have and to Have Not" was his new hit and the introduction of starlet Lauren Bacall was given

considerable publicity.

Additionally, it was announced that a large movie crew would be moving to the Gainesville-Ocala area to film Marjorie Rawling's "The Yearling" beginning April 1, 1945. Countians, sensing that the war may soon be won, responded warmly to this project that focused on a sad but gentle theme. After three long years of war's tragedy, the people were receptive to any activity that featured the pleasures of life rather than the grief of death.

The optimistic atmosphere was shattered when President Franklin D. Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945, at Warm Springs, Georgia. The grief that fell on the county, state, nation, and much of the world was cataclysmic. People sobbed openly with fears of collapse of allied leadership. President Roosevelt had been the cohesive force that held allied forces together. Vice President Harry S. Truman assumed the presidency. In his inaugural address he stated:

It is with a heavy heart that I stand before you, my friends and colleagues, in the Congress of the United States.

Only yesterday, we laid to rest the mortal remains of our beloved President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. At a time like this, words are inadequate. The most eloquent tribute would be a reverent silence. Yet, in this decisive hour when world events are moving so rapidly, our silence might be misunderstood and might give comfort to our enemies.

In His infinite wisdom, Almighty God has seen fit to take from us a great man who loved, and was beloved by all humanity. No man could possibly fill the tremendous void left by the passing of that noble soul. No words can ease the aching hearts of untold millions of every race, creed and color. The world knows it has lost a heroic champion of justice and freedom.

Tragic fate has thrust upon us grave responsibilities. We must carry on. Our departed leader never looked backward. He looked forward and moved forward. That is what he would

American Legion Gold Star Citation Awards

Alachua County Men Who Paid The Supreme
Sacrifice While In The Armed Service

Harmon P. Alderman	Milton Lewis
James Paul Banks	Hugh William McCain
James Beck	Grover Walter McCall
Ernest W. Bell	R. "Buddy" Miller
Plemon Benefield	Solomon DeBeau Moon
William F. Bennafield	Leo Dionisio Ramos
T. Harper Beville	James Rexall Robinson
Julian C. Cannon	*William Snowden
Lois T. Carr	Loren Prescott Stewart
John S. Chapman	Paul M. Stults
John G. Chappell	Charlie Gordon Tison
*Jesse W. Dixon	Samuel Davis Tonge
Samuel A. Eggers, Jr.	Louis Albert Towson
George Q. Halbrook	J. D. Westmoreland
*Arthur Holder	Julian B. Wilkerson
Raymond J. Hagan	Wilbur W. Willis
George P. Hendrix, Jr.	Howard T. Williams
Ira D. Keene	Orman R. Wimmer
B. W. "Jack" Kimmel	Joe Garrett Winston
James E. Eastmore	Emory C. Wooton
Robert A. Layne	

* Names not available in time for preparation of citations.

Gold Star Citation Awards Made At Armistice Program

Legion Sponsors
Observance Here
Saturday Morning

"A token of the high esteem in which the American Legion holds all who have given their lives in this war and a sincere expression of the sympathy the community holds out for their families."

With this thought uppermost, J. E. Hawkins, commander, Saturday led Haisley Lynch Post, American Legion, in awarding "Gold Star Citations" to the next of kin of 38 Alachua County men who have died in the service and three others who have died but whose names were not available for preparation of citations in time for the program.

GOLD STAR CEREMONY - NOVEMBER 11, 1944

want us to do. That is what America will do.

In Gainesville, Mayor-Commissioner Fred M. Cone proclaimed April 15, 1945, a day of public prayer in memory of the deceased president.

The capable leadership ability of the new president soon restored national and world confidence in America's strength. The allied armies continued their rapid advances. We would successfully continue the fight.

At this time, it was announced that a large horde of gold, coins, currency, and art treasures was located in a German mine shaft by the advancing Americans. This notice was released by Captain Cecil Durant, chief press censor for General Patton's Third Army. Cecil Durant was a former Gainesville resident and employee of the Gainesville Sun newspaper. Unfortunately and unknown to Captain Durant, General Omar Bradley had given the order to stop any information release about the treasure find. Upon notification to General Bradley that the story had been previously released, he withdrew his order to stop the release, but Captain Durant lost his job and was transferred to other duties. It was reported that release of this information may have provided "comfort to the enemy". No additional information was provided.

On April 27, 1945, it was announced the the East/West fronts (American/Russian armies) had been joined at Torgau, Germany on April 24. The end of the war in Europe was nearly over. On April 30, Adolph Hitler committed suicide in Berlin.

Victory in Europe was declared on May 8, 1945. This historic day was quietly observed in the county. All citizens knew there were



He's "Jimmy" Melton to the Folks At Home

Melton Concert Tuesday To Honor His First Sponsor

JAMES MELTON - FORMER UNIVERSITY OF
FLORIDA STUDENT - LEAD TENOR OF
METROPOLITAN OPERA ASSOCIATION

WPAI-TV, 1000 N. W. 17th St., Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. 33304

many military actions to be accomplished in the Pacific. Only when this was completed could the true celebrations begin.

James Melton, leading tenor of the Metropolitan Opera Association, was in Gainesville on May 1st to sing in a concert to raise funds for a Dr. Albert A. Murphree memorial. Dr. Murphree, while President of the University of Florida, encouraged student "Jimmy" Melton to pursue a singing career. At this time (which was 22 years after Dr. Murphree's motivational encouragement), singer Melton was regarded as America's favorite tenor.

Dr. Murphree died in 1927. His son, Judge John A. Murphree, was invited to speak at a university ceremony acknowledging James Melton's contributions as an outstanding alumnus while Dr. John J. Tigert bestowed an honorary Doctor of Music degree on the talented singer. James Melton acknowledged that Dr. Murphree was the first person to recognize his ability as a singer. Dr. Murphree had selected him from a college choir and called on him to sing solo at an upcoming university convocation.

With the war in Europe concluded, everyone was eager for a rapid conclusion of the Pacific war with Japan. It was announced that this final phase required an all out effort by all citizens. A new war savings bond drive was launched. Referred to as the "Mighty 7th", the county quota was \$1,003,000. In a very short while this quota was achieved and surpassed.

This bond drive included a popular promotional feature for all Floridians. The fighter plane of 1st Lt. Fred M. Varn, Jr., of Dade City was used throughout the country in connection with this national drive for funds. Lt. Varn was a member of the university class of

1942. On the side of his plane was painted the university's battle cry, "THE FIGHTIN' GATOR" (also the title of a university publication sent to all former students on military duty).

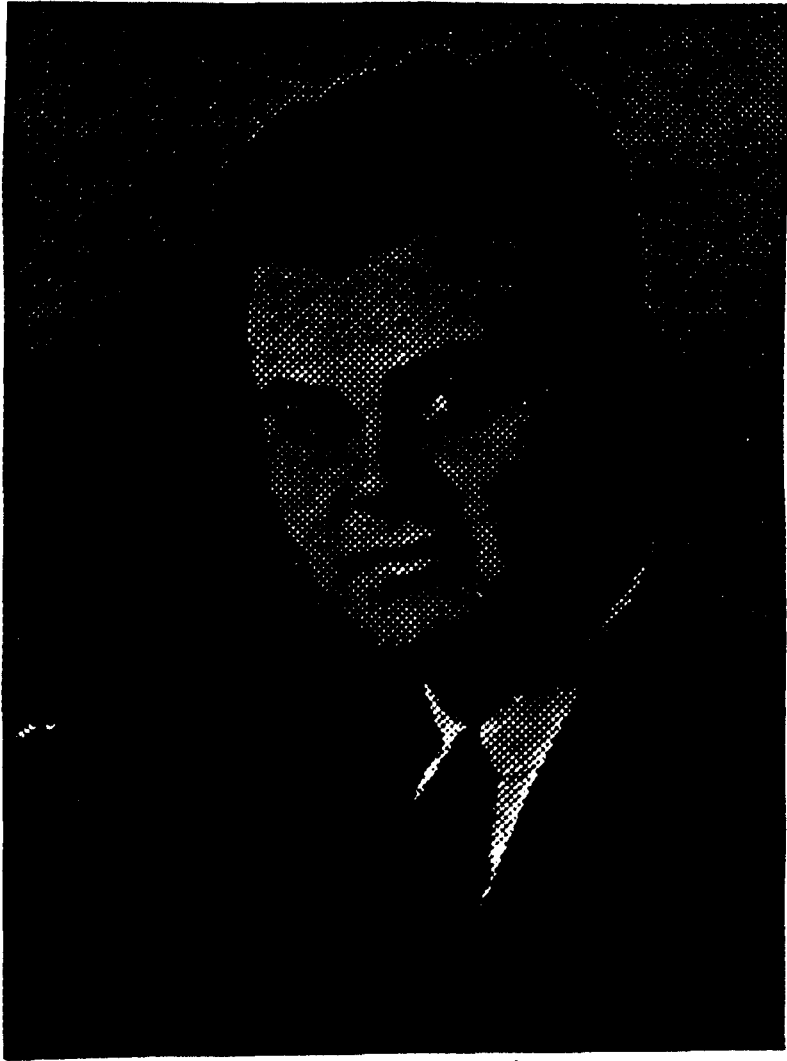
By July 1945, some military personnel were beginning to receive discharges from the service. Bankers indicated a willingness to help returning veterans by providing financial assistance. The First National Bank of Gainesville held deposits of \$9,192,547, but only had \$281,881 in personal loans. \$7,411,512 had been loaned to the government. It was obvious that these funds could soon be rerouted to returning veterans. The following bank officers and directors controlled the future actions at Gainesville's biggest bank:

Officers: Lee Graham-Chairman of the Board, W. O. Boozer-President, Charles D. Wynne-Vice President, G.T. Price and S.K. Carr- Assistant Cashiers.

Directors: C.I. Baird, W.O. Boozer, E. Finley Cannon, Lee Graham, P.C. Keeter, E. Mize, C.A. Pound, G. C. Tiliman, and Charles D. Wynne.

It was obvious that the returning numbers would also create an increased demand for homes. An example of a response to this need appeared in a large commercial newspaper ad. Eight acre tracts fronting on Newberry Road were available for \$700 (\$100 down and the balance at \$10 per month). Many promotions of this type followed.

More exploits by Colonel Alison were to make the news before war's end. He was given a major part in the planning of the invasion



PAUL TIBBETS

of Burma and ultimately command of his own fighter group on Luzon in the Philippines. He would survive the war.

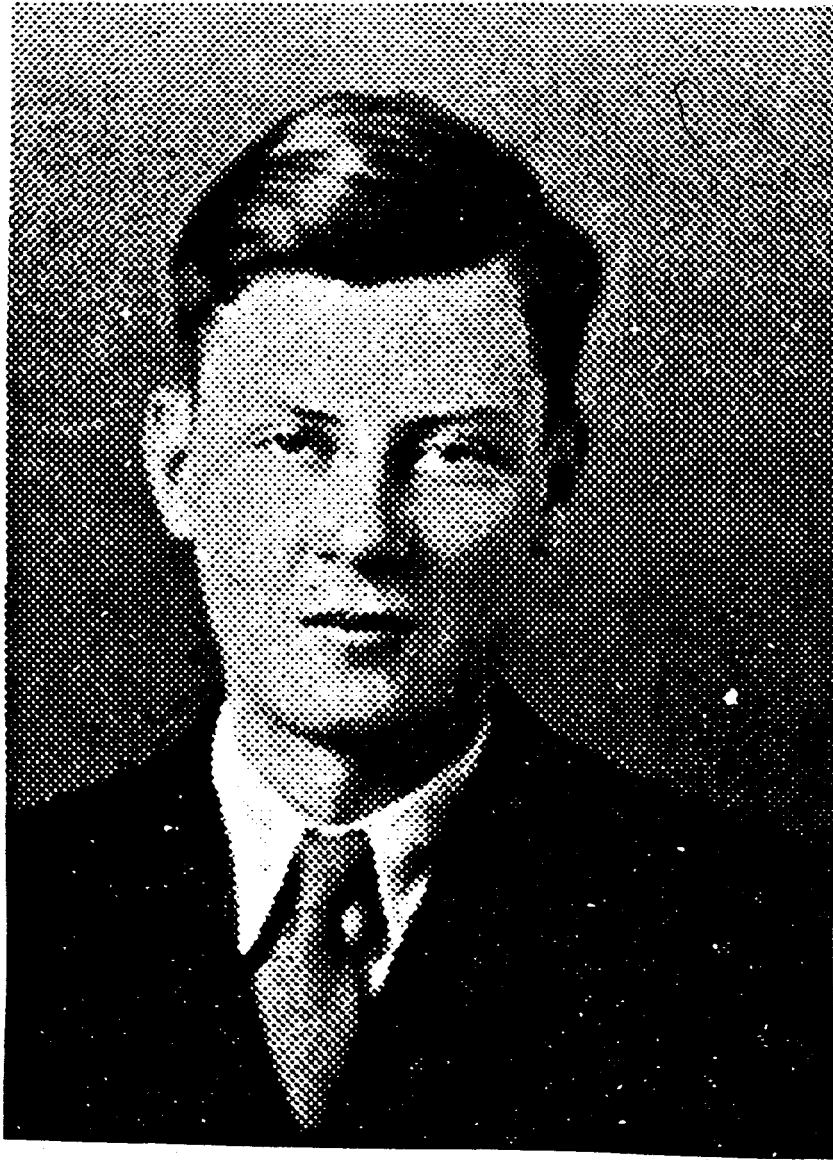
The optimism about war's end was hampered by the fact that everyone knew that Japan had vowed to fight on indefinitely or until they attained victory. Our military leaders knew that our forces would encounter very strong opposition from the fanatical and cruel Japanese. General MacArthur (Commander of Forces in the Pacific) estimated that we would experience approximately 1,000,000 casualties in the initial invasion of the Japanese homeland. There did not appear to be any method of avoiding this upcoming slaughter because Japan refused to capitulate.

The American warplanes conducted constant air raids on Japan in hope of breaking their will to fight. This was not successful until August 6, 1945. At the direction of President Harry Truman, the first atomic bomb was dropped on the city of Hiroshima, Japan by a B-29 bomber of the 509th Composite Group of the 20th Air Force. This historical flight, which has been both acclaimed and condemned, was piloted by Colonel Paul Tibbets, a former student of the University of Florida. The weapon exploded with the force of 20,000 tons of TNT. Two days later, a second bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, Japan. The empire of Japan finally capitulated and victory over Japan (VE-Day) was declared on August 15, 1945. The war had finally ended.

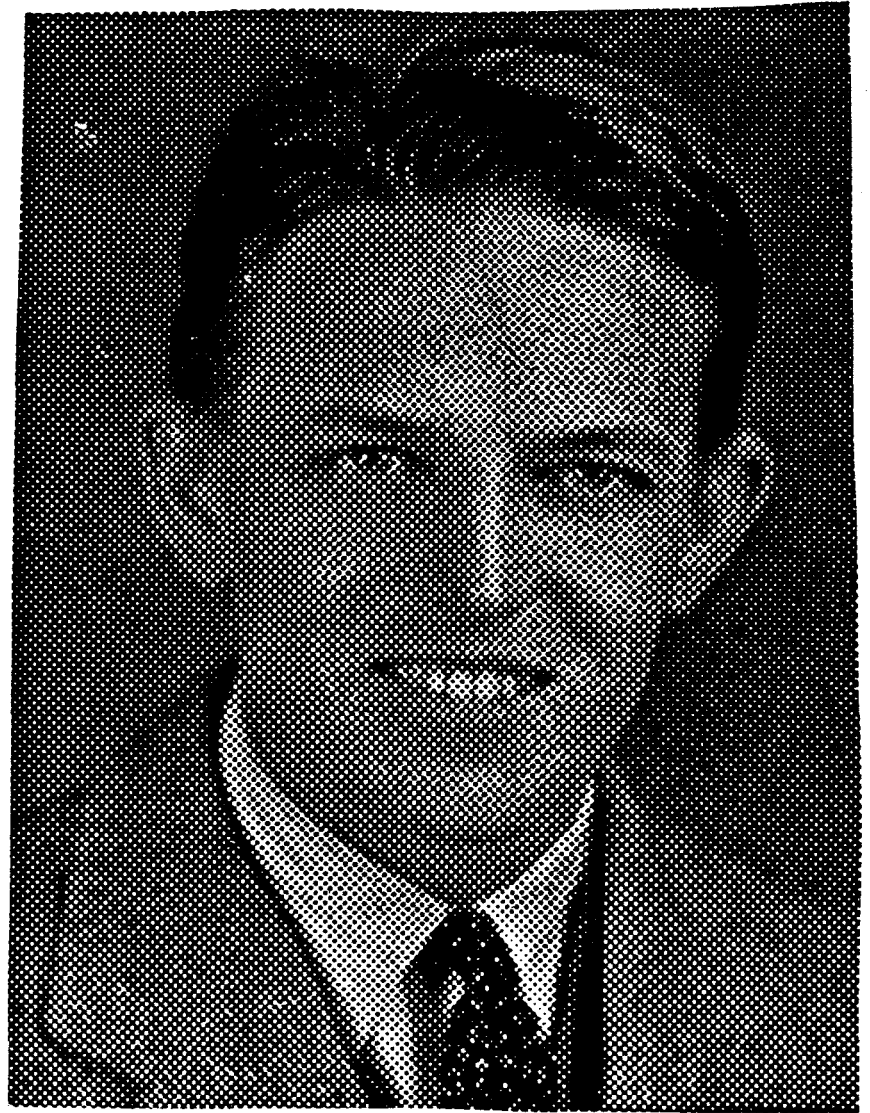
In Alachua county, grateful rejoicing was generally replaced by humble thanksgiving for victory and mourning for those who would never return.

PART II

PHOTO GALLERY



ROBERT T. BENTON



ERNEST W. BELL

**Cdr. G. D. Cady
Had Brilliant
Navy Career**



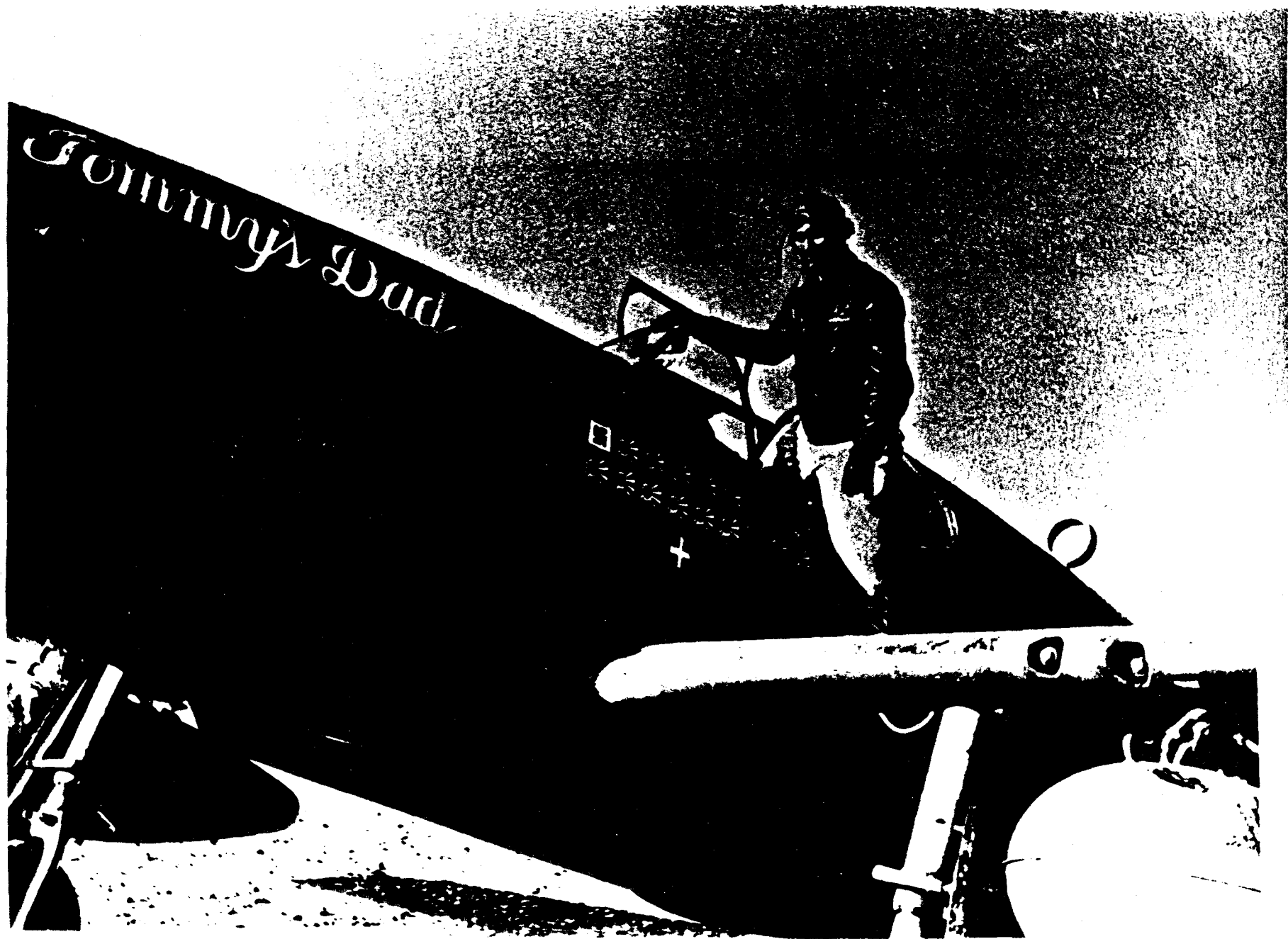
GORDON D. CADY

ERNEST

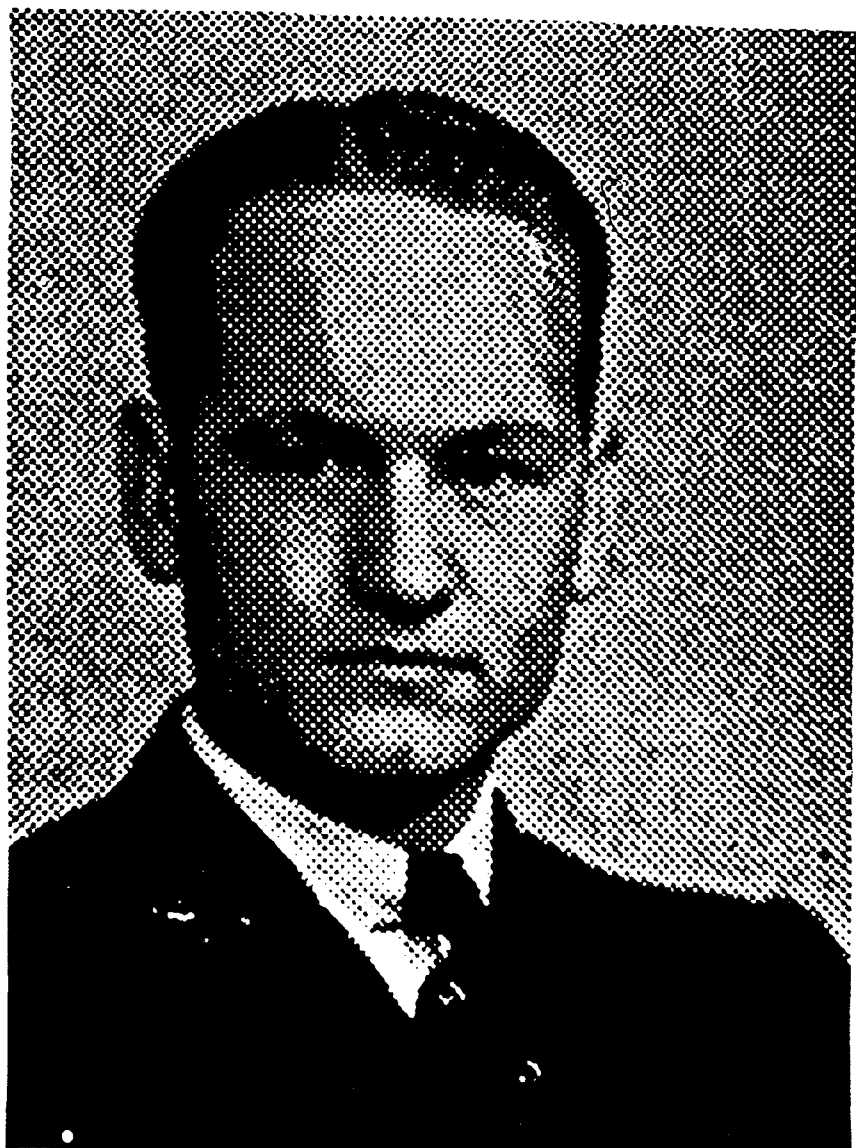


12 James L. Billington

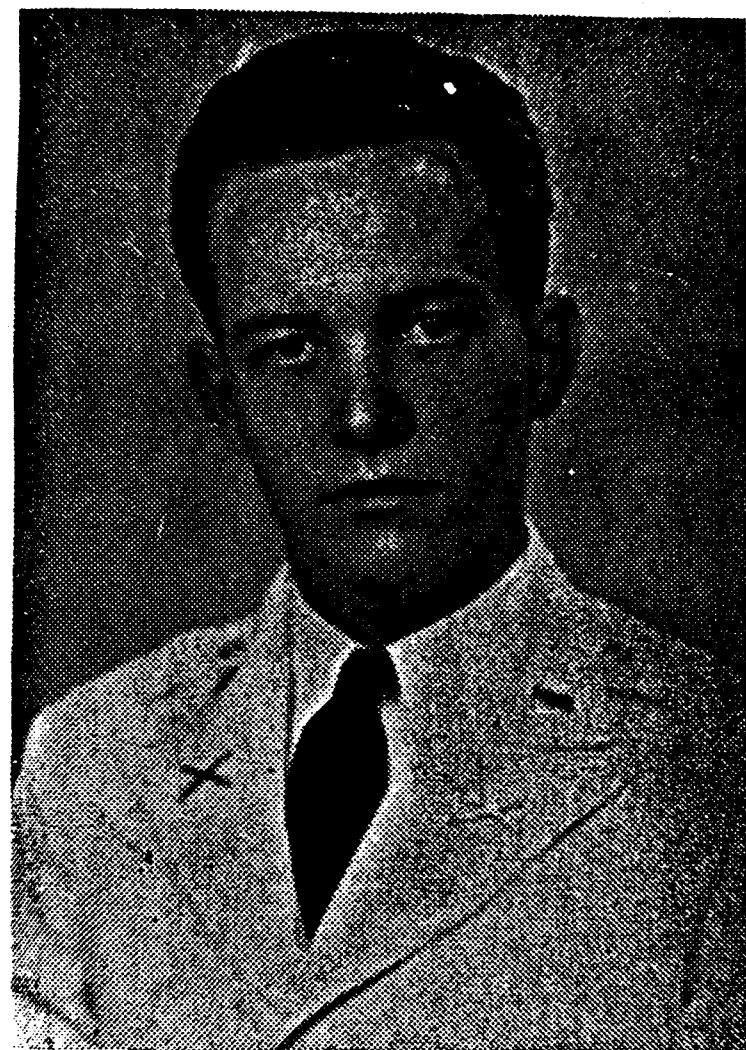
JAMES L. BILLINGTON



ROBERT E. BROWN



JOHN S. CHAPMAN



Captain George B. Clark

GEORGE B. CLARK



JOHN W. CULLEN, JR.

JOHN W. CULLEN JR.



Jesse W. Dixon

JESSE W. DIXON



SAMUEL A. EGGERS, JR.



ARTHUR M. HOLDER



Milton Lewis

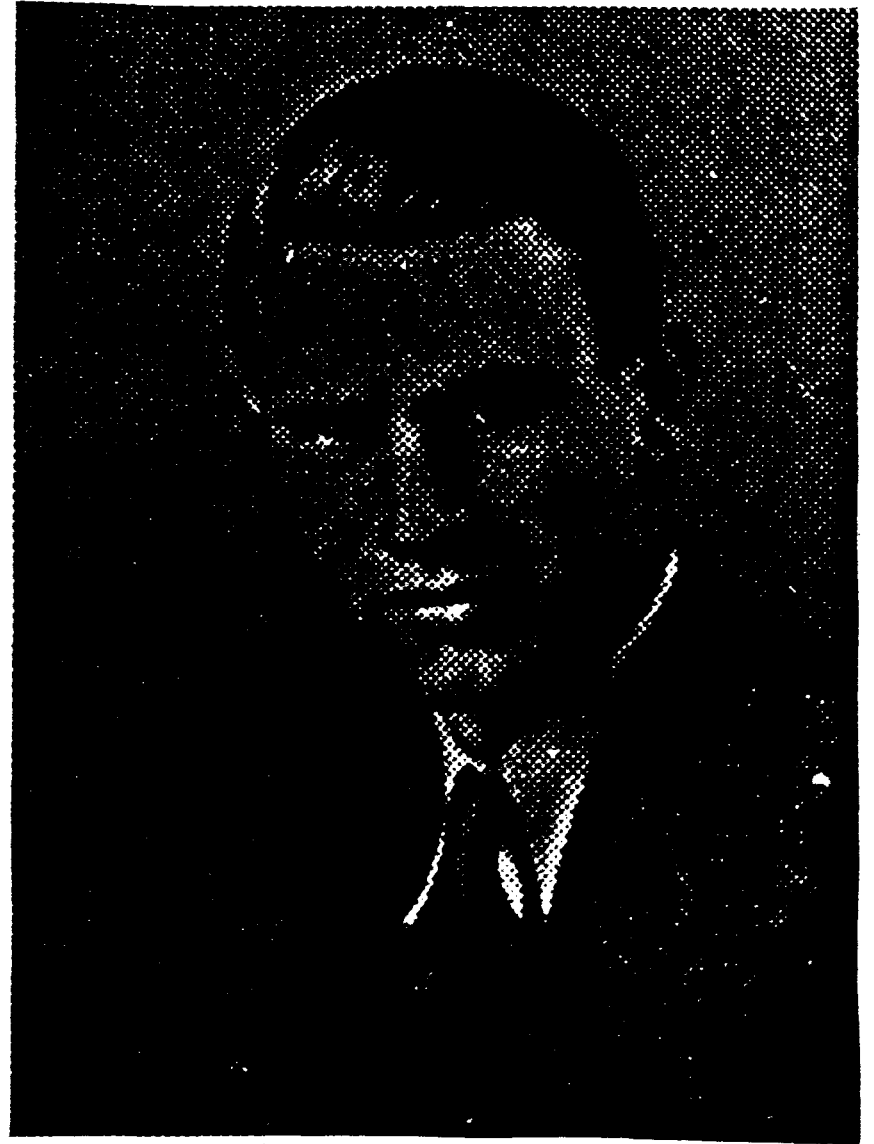
MILTON LEWIS



REGINALD HYMAN MILLER
"BUDDY"



VIRGINIUS C. MURPHREE

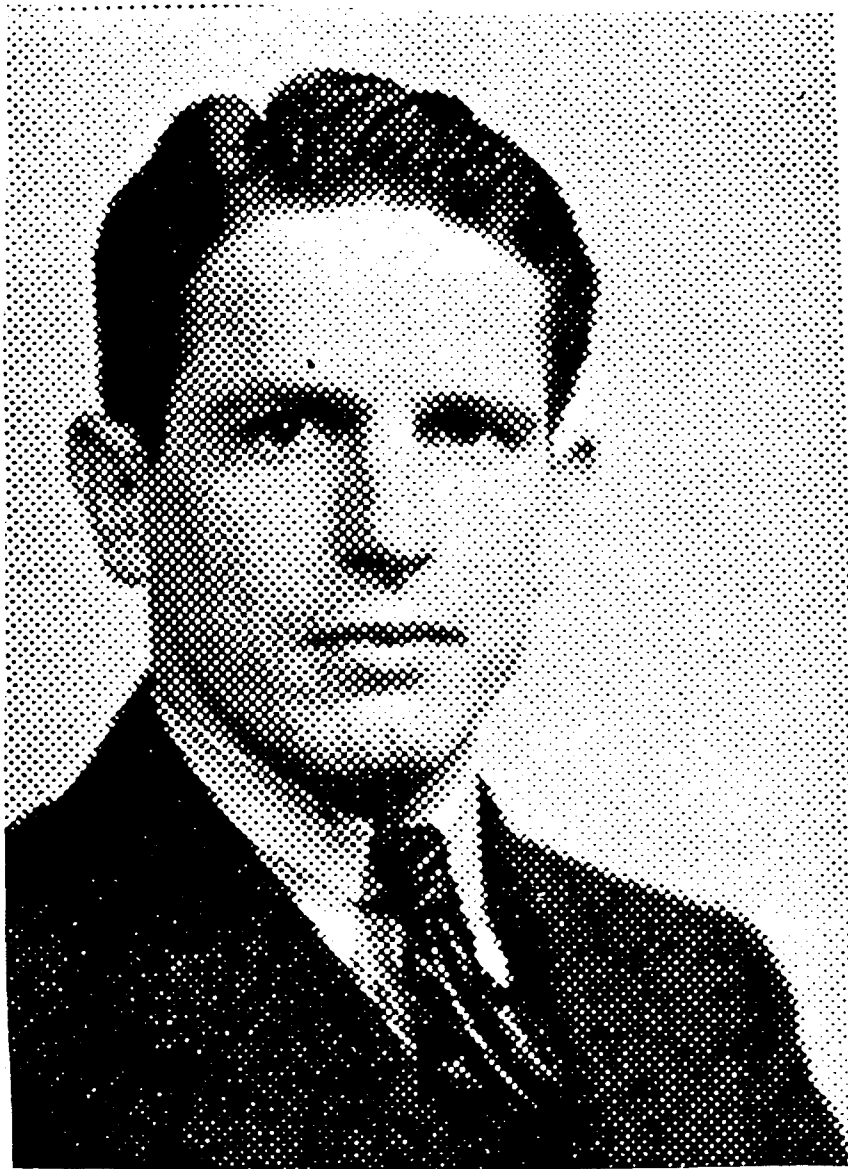


WILSON B. RIPPEY



LT. JACK C. RICHARDSON

JACK C. RICHARDSON



EWART T. SCONIERS

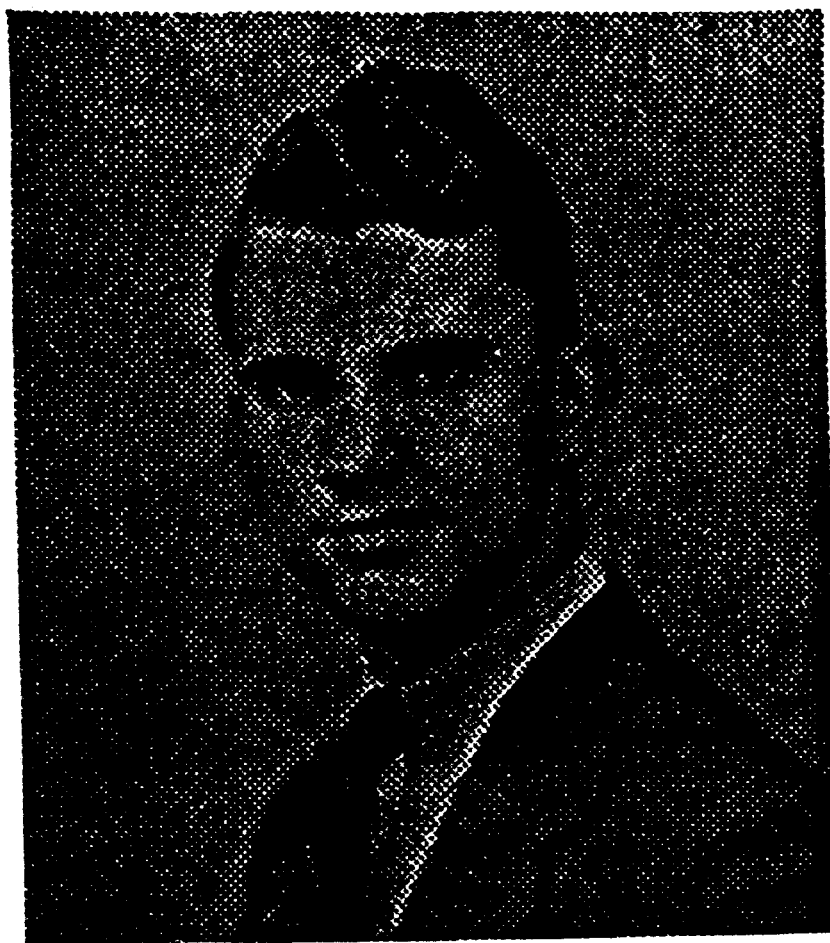


ALBERT LEE SNOWDEN

ALBERT L. SNOWDEN



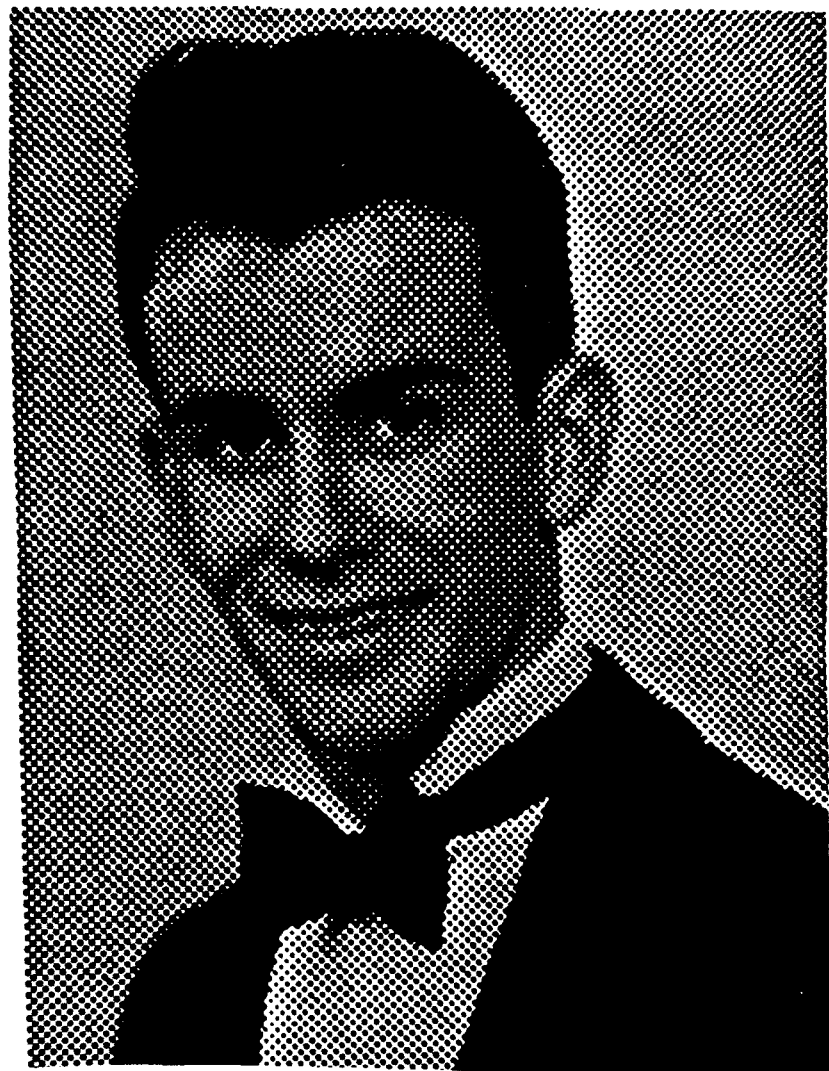
PAUL M. STULTS



RICHARD L. STULTS



RICHARD L. STULTS
(PHOTO TAKEN SHORTLY BEFORE FATAL FLIGHT)



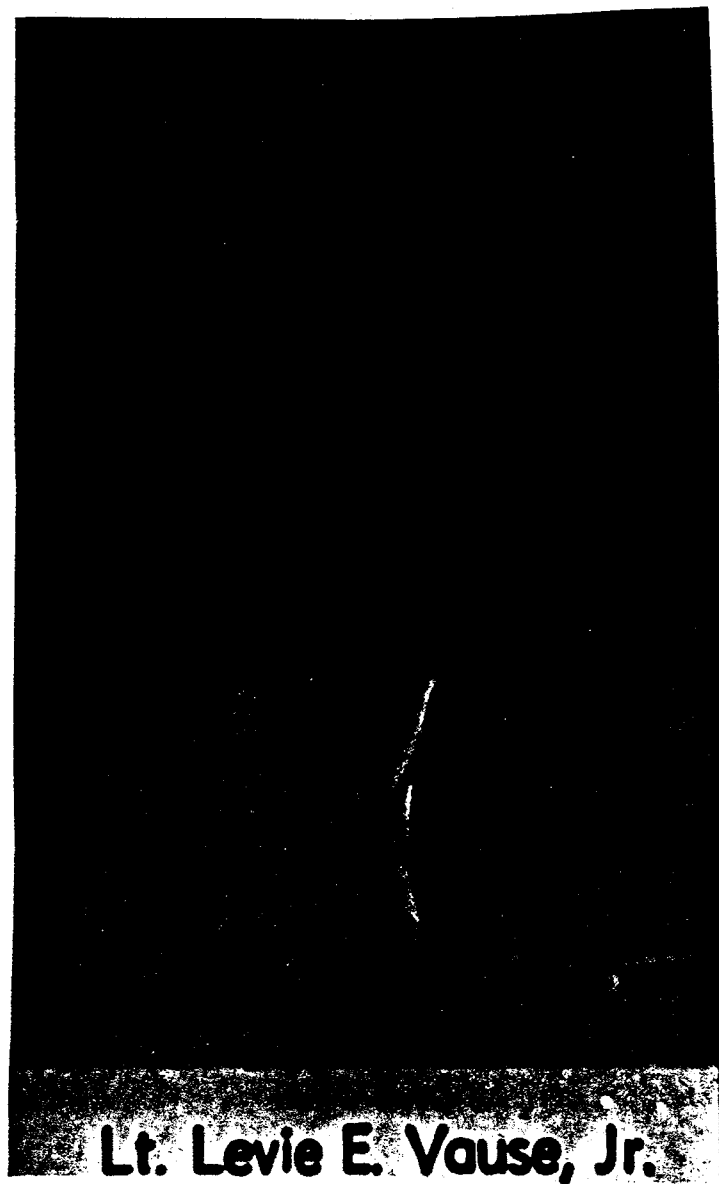
LOUIS A. TOWSON



CHARLES G. TISON



JOSEPH P. THOMPSON



Lt. Levie E. Vause, Jr.

LEVIE E. VAUSE, JR.

**Pfc. Emory Wooten Is Killed
In Action In Normandy War**



EMORY C. WOOTEN



Marion M. Zetrouer

MARION M. ZETROUER



UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA MEMORIAL SERVICE - OCTOBER 27, 1946



AT MEMORIAL SERVICE - PHOTO DISPLAY AT MEMORIAL SERVICE OCTOBER 29, 1944



ADDITIONAL PHOTO DISPLAY AT SAME MEMORIAL SERVICE



REGISTRATION AT UF. MEMORIAL SERVICE - OCTOBER 27, 1946.