

THE JOURNAL OF THE TEXAS STATE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY INC.

150th Anniversary

Stirpes



Commemorating
Our

WORLD WAR II

Ancestors



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Heritage

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NOVEMBER 13-14, 2020

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Why Name our Journal Stirpes? Pronounced “STÛR’PEZ,” it perfectly describes the core understanding of our passion in researching ancestry and family history: The phrase “. . . to my heirs, per stirpes” means that the legal heirs share their inheritance based on their relationship to the deceased.” (See full story in *Stirpes*, 2016, Volume 55, Number 3-4)



From the

Editors' Pen

In commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the 8 May 1945 end of WWII, this issue of *Stirpes* focuses on WWII veterans and military research. We pay tribute as genealogists to those brave women and men who served when we tell their stories and research their participation in this historic, world-altering conflict. The articles in this issue take a look at WWII, the home front, and armed forces personnel from a variety of perspectives.

Two articles discuss military research methodology, with a focus on online research. Irene B. Walters of the Houston Public Library's Clayton Library Center for Genealogical Research provides an overview of military records and research in "Researching Relatives in the American Military." "Fold3 Search Basics: Finding Military Records for Early Americans, Modern-Day Veterans, and Everyone In Between" by Jessica Horne Collins takes a look at researching in the online military database, Fold3.

In "From Pearl Harbor through WWII – Revealing an Untold Story," Jim Thornhill shares the leads he followed from a batch of letters and how he preserved those letters for future generations. Michael Ritchie describes a resource for WWII military service details that may not be available anywhere else in "Rescuing WWII 'Service Books.'" Another means of preserving a WWII military legacy is through a lineage application to the Society of Sons and Daughters of WWII Veterans. Savannah Brady of

the National Museum of the Pacific War describes this program in "Preserving Their Legacy One Member At A Time."

The effect of world-changing events on children can range from traumatic to barely noticed, depending on the child's circumstances. Through first-person interviews, Pat Gordon explores the experiences of rural and urban children during WWII in "The WWII Home Front: More than Victory Gardens."

Writing about the WWII experiences of parents or grandparents who served is a goal of many genealogists. L. Charles Westervelt shares stories of his father in "WWII Service of Lloyd H. Westervelt Jr." and his father-in-law in "WWII Service of William Charles Gdula." In both efforts, information provided by the subjects is supplemented with extensive research, showing new avenues for WWII investigations.

Following the WWII theme, William D. "Bill" Buckner reviews *For Us the Living*, a history of the US Army McCloskey General Hospital in Temple, Texas. Books such as this provide context for those family members who spent time in a VA or military hospital and point to new avenues for research. Regular contributor Russell A. Rahn uses military documents as the germination for his articles, "A Process of Elimination" and "Detailed Research Helps Separate Same Names."

COVID-19 has upended many aspects of our lives, including gathering

with our local genealogy society. This issue's "Volunteer Spotlight" salutes society leaders who are charting a way through COVID-19 restrictions and CDC guidelines. In response to mandated restrictions, many societies have become very creative. Read about their efforts to bring programs and events to society members in "Partner Society Roundup." *Stirpes* suggests that you take a few minutes and thank the leaders of your local society. This year has been more challenging than anything they could have imagined when they agreed to serve as officers or members of the board of directors.

TxSGS faced the challenge of social distancing and other meeting restrictions while planning the 2020 TxSGS Family History Conference to be held in Dallas. Instead of meeting in Dallas, TxSGS will host *TxSGS Live!* as a virtual two-day event on November 13-14. *TxSGS Live!* will feature ten presentations from nine of your favorite speakers, led by Judy Russell, who opens each day. Starting on November 15, participants will have access to an additional 22-plus recorded lectures, bonus content, and a virtual Expo Hall.

The December 2020 issue features preservation. If you have a technique, tip, website, or resource you'd like to share about preservation techniques and methods, including your tips for organizing the genealogy piles in your office, cubby, or closet, please contact us at stirpes@txsgs.org. ★

~ *Stirpes* Editors

Volunteer Spotlight:

Local Society Leadership

Since mid-March, genealogy society leaders across Texas have been scrambling, trying to determine whether their society will continue to meet while guidelines have fluidly changed from day to day and week to week. *Stirpes* salutes these volunteers, spotlighting their efforts to keep genealogy societies engaged with their members.

Twenty societies have opted to work with the TxSGS Partner Society Virtual Meeting Support Team to provide virtual platform and technical support. A few of the society leaders that TxSGS has worked with include:

Susie Ganch and Nick Cimino
Bay Area Genealogical Society;

Debbie Ferguson
Bosque County Genealogical Society;

Gordon Bennet
Cherokee County Genealogical Society;

Nick Cimino and Linda Collins
Clayton Library Friends;

Carlene Johnson
Fort Worth Genealogical Society;

Irene Garner and Lynn Schumaker
Grand Prairie Genealogical Society;

Rhonda Bechhold
Hopkins County Genealogical Society;

Steve Mabie
San Antonio Genealogical and Historical Society;

Sandra Lopez
Hispanic Genealogy Society of Houston;

Lucy Christiansen
Mid-Cities Genealogical Society; plus

Terry Bull
West Texas Genealogical Society.



These leaders are representative of the numerous volunteers working in those societies and many more throughout Texas. In addition, TxSGS Executive Committee members have worked with their own local societies to develop a virtual meeting presence.

Beyond the efforts of TxSGS, a number of societies have developed their organization's capabilities for virtual meetings and online gatherings. As seen in the "Partner Society Roundup" on pages 66-72, those meeting virtually include the Arlington Genealogical Society, Cedar Hills Genealogical Society, Central Texas Genealogical Society, Dallas Genealogical Society, Erath County Genealogical Society, Heritage Ranch Genealogical Society, Texas Czech Genealogical Society, and Texas Research Ramblers Genealogy Society. Other societies hosting their own virtual events include the Austin Genealogical Society, East Texas Genealogical Society, and Williamson County Genealogical Society.

Is your society meeting virtually? If they are not mentioned here, please let us know at memberinfo@txsgs.org. We'd like to keep up with how societies in Texas are responding to COVID-19 restrictions and CDC guidelines.

None of this would be possible without the hard work of society leaders who were willing to move outside their comfort zone and provide educational programming and events to their membership via virtual meeting and live-streaming platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Zoom, GoToMeeting, and GoToWebinar. It's been a challenging year, and TxSGS recognizes our society leaders for their persistence and creativity. ★

The World War II Service of William Charles Gdula

by L. Charles Westervelt

My father-in-law, William Charles Gdula, was born 29 November 1914 in Charleroi, Pennsylvania.¹ A first generation American, his parents, Andrej and Anna Gdula, immigrated in 1898 from Malcov, a small village located in what is now present-day Slovakia.² William was drafted on 24 January 1941 and sent to Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio for basic training.³

Afterwards, he was assigned to the 38th Infantry Regiment of the 2nd Infantry Division and eventually became the Personnel Sergeant Major, a position he held until the end of World War II.⁴

While assigned to Fort Sam Houston, he met a local girl, Margaret Cynthia Cass Gittinger, and on 22 December 1942, William and Margaret (Peggie) married in Ottawa, Illinois, the home of Margaret's grandmother and other family members.⁵ At the time, the division was stationed at Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, for winter combat training.

The division deployed overseas in October 1943, training in Ireland and Wales before taking part in the D-Day landings in France. Infantry units of the 2nd Infantry Division began landing on Omaha Beach on 7 June 1944.⁶ William came ashore on Omaha Beach with the "Administrative overhead (known as Phase IV)" on 22 June 1944.⁷

The division faced very tough fighting as it battled the Germans through the hedgerows of Normandy.⁸ These hedgerows, mounds of earth as wide as three feet and the height of a soldier, divided the fields. Behind and between these mounds were the Germans. It was the perfect cover for a defensive battle, and consequently casualties were high.⁹ The division liberated Trévières on 10 June, and then began the attack against the heavily fortified Hill 192, which was the main strongpoint to be assaulted before the city of St. Lo, a



*Wedding Day – 22 December 1942
(Photo courtesy of author.)*

vital communications center, could be attacked. The hill was taken on 11 July and St. Lo was liberated two weeks

later. The division advanced across the Vire River and liberated Tinchebray on 15 August.¹⁰ The next day, the division pulled back from the front for a well-deserved rest; its infantry units had been in the front lines for 70 straight days.¹¹

After their respite from the fighting, the division moved west to participate in the battle for the port city of Brest. The port housed the submarine pens of the German U-boats. To



*William at his desk at Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, in 1943.
(Photo courtesy of author.)*

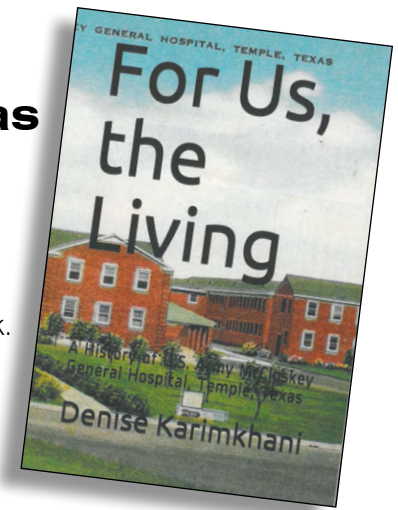
BOOK REVIEW:

For Us, the Living: A History of U.S. Army McCloskey General Hospital, Temple, Texas

by William D. "Bill" Buckner, TxSGS Awards Chair

For Us, the Living: A History of U.S. Army McCloskey General Hospital, Temple, Texas by Denise Karimkhani.

(Karimkhani, 2020). 279 pages, indexed. Available from Amazon, \$18.95 paperback.



I read a piece in the *Temple Daily Telegram* about author Denise Karimkhani's new book on the Army's McCloskey General Hospital in Temple, Texas, and decided I would give it a go. I am glad I did. I have lived in Temple for 20+ years and thought I knew something about the VA hospital. I was wrong!

Ms. Karimkhani's narrative merged the detail of countless hours of research into a highly readable, entertaining, and fact-filled story. I learned a lot!

As a family historian, you might be asking yourself, "What purpose is there in reading an institutional history? Is my ancestor's name in the book?" Histories of institutions, organizations, corporations, and communities associated with your ancestors can help fill in the gaps about their lives and their circumstances. Place or 'where' becomes important. The author starts her story by providing a sense of community and describes Temple, Texas, in those pre-war years.

Karimkhani's reminiscences of the activities of a community preparing for war brought back stories told by my elders about scrap metal and rubber drives, war bonds, and rationing. She introduced community and state leaders such as Mayborn, Poage, and Connally and described the efforts of the War Projects Committee of the Temple Chamber of Commerce in bringing McCloskey General Hospital to Temple. Temple's reputation as the

"Hospital Center of the South," the presence of a major hub for transportation (railroads / airport), and the proximity of Temple to the new Camp Hood sealed the deal.

Following this introduction, Karimkhani delved into every aspect of the building and the day-to-day operations of the second largest Army general hospital in the US with 94 permanent and 96 temporary buildings. She also addressed the hospital's impact, both economically and culturally, on Bell County and Temple. As the title of Chapter 4 proclaims, McCloskey General Hospital was "A City within a City." Karimkhani provided details as well as many names regarding land acquisition; construction; hospital design; staffing (nurses, aides, and doctors); uniforms; housing of labor and staff; staff training; transporting patients by plane and train; statistics; communication; logistics of feeding officers, patients, soldiers (seven kitchens); recreation; fire and police; and of course, the operating rooms and wards.

I enjoyed reading every chapter. Each was succinct in its topic and added to my understanding, giving me a clear picture of the activity within McCloskey Hospital. Karimkhani's lighthearted interjections such as the story of the hospital mascot, "Maggie McCloskey," a stray dog, made me smile. The addition of 43 pages of photos on pages 84 to 126 was a nice touch. Her writing style is a factual,

detailed narrative using selective quotes that add to the story at hand.

McCloskey Hospital was a place of innovation. It received many official designations because patient care came first. Polio patients were treated with the Sister Kenny method (hot packs and strenuous physical therapy), early ambulation following surgery and the use of elastic stockings became practice, tantalum wire was used in the Neurological Center, doctors fabricated a plastic eye, penicillin was used and experimented with to fight infection, and more.

If my ancestor worked or was a patient at McCloskey, I found many clues for where to search further. I learned the hospital had several in-house publications: *The Daily Bulletin*, a one to two page newsletter of official and unofficial information, and a weekly newspaper, *The Caducean*, written by the soldiers that included articles on sports, training, civilians, and fun.

The book closes out with chapter endnotes on pages 214 to 237; a nice bibliography on pages 237 to 264; and an every name index on pages 265 to 279.

In the preface, Karimkhani mentions that she "hopes of one day adding to Victor Schulze's short history of the hospital." I believe she more than succeeded. ★

A Process of Elimination

by Russell A. Rahn
russandmarionrahn@gmail.com

A well-known fictional detective is often quoted as saying “When all things that are impossible are eliminated, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.” Something of that sort became an important operating principle in this study project, for reasons that will become apparent.



An interesting coincidence (perhaps not a coincidence after all) is that the fictional associate of that detective was named “Watson,” and that just happens to be the main character here as well!

I recently obtained a check drawn on the War Fund of the State of Wisconsin, dated 24 July 1863. It carries the explanation of “extra pay for families of volunteers.” It was payable to someone named “David Watson” in the amount of \$89.92 – no small sum for those days – in Wisconsin currency. (Federally issued

banknotes had not yet come into widespread use in those days.) I thought it certainly could be interesting to learn what I could about this person named David Watson and work up some sort of family tree to see where he had come from and where some of his descendants went.

I believe the expression goes, “Easier said than done.”

I thought a reasonable approach would be to find persons named “David Watson” in the federal census records for Wisconsin for a time

period near the date of the check. I chose to begin in the year 1850, because from that point on, the census records are more useful for something like this. I also stopped with the year 1900 because after that, the persons with the needed name were just born too late for possible consideration. From this, I was able to generate the following table of relevant names (see next page).

Of these individuals, I made the assumption that the “David Watson” I was looking for needed to meet two additional requirements. First, he



Rescuing WWII “Service Books”

by Michael Ritchie

Disappointment. That is what I felt as I held the single piece of paper from the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) in St. Louis. You see, after re-creating much of the military history of my grandfather in Vietnam, I turned my attention to my great-grandfather Bernard. A WWII veteran that was loved and admired by all, there were scarce recollections of his time during the service.

From a great-uncle, I learned that Bernard was a B-29 mechanic during the war, but there was no one who could tell me anything more.

The desire to find out more about my great-grandfather’s military service was the start of a project that blossomed beyond my wildest dreams.

As with many of you, my first stop was to write to the NPRC in St. Louis and request a copy of his DD-214. Housing most of our nation’s military records, the NPRC is a vital resource to anyone wishing to document their ancestor’s military service. Weeks later, their response showed up in my mailbox in a thin letter-sized manila envelope. In the envelope was a single sheet of paper, my great-grandfather’s last paystub before discharge from the Army Air Corps. From this, I learned that he was discharged from an air base in Sioux City, Iowa; he was a Technical Sergeant; and he had five years of service.

Dumbfounded by the lack of information, I started digging online to learn why that’s all I received. Surely the US Government, which has forms and information for anything,

had more information than this. To my dismay, I learned that 80% of all Army (and Army Air Corps) records were lost in a devastating fire at the NPRC in 1973. Millions of priceless records documenting American heroes were forever lost, including Bernard’s. As it appeared that I was at an impasse, I pursued other genealogical work in the hopes that one day I might find a letter or picture that would tell me something new.

Several months later, my wife and I found ourselves in a small antique store in Taylor, Texas. With no particular interest, we walked through the trinkets and knick-knacks of yesteryear looking for anything that might catch our eye. On our way out of the store, I just happened to see a blue leatherette-covered book titled “The Men and Women in World War II from Williamson County.” I had never seen anything like this before, so I picked it up to give it a once over. The book itself was formatted in a yearbook style with a photo (most in uniform) and brief description of the individual’s service during World War II. Making a note to research the book later, I put it down, and we went on our way.



A couple of days later, I was reminded of that book after finding Bernard’s draft card from 1942. If there was a book recording the service of those in Williamson County, surely there could be more. Before the war, Bernard lived in Nocona, Texas, a small agrarian community north of Montague in Montague County. Searching for information about a WWII volume similar to the one for Williamson County, I reached out to the Montague County Historical Society. From there, I was directed to Max Brown, an extremely knowledgeable resource for Montague County History. Not only did he confirm that Montague County had produced a similar book, Max also had a copy in his possession. Within a day, I was looking at the WWII record of my great-grandfather Bernard.

Bernard joined the Army Air

The WWII Home Front: More than Victory Gardens

by Pat Gordon

The day after Japanese war planes bombed Pearl Harbor, killing 2,403 Americans and wounding 1,143, the United States declared war. That declaration changed the lives of millions of Americans. The men went marching off to fight. The women mostly stayed home, with a few exceptions, such as those who relocated to work in military factories or join the military.

While most of the people who were adults at that time are now dead, many who were children are still alive to tell their stories. What they remember, however, has much to do with whether they lived in a rural area or a city.

As one writer noted, before World War II, Texas was “agrarian in both employment and attitude, largely insulated from world events and still languishing in 19th century traditions in such important matters as gender and ethnicity.”¹

Those who lived in remote rural areas were more likely to fit that description than those who lived in urban areas. People in rural areas tended to be born and die without ever moving away. They were part of a close family network that were always there for each other.

When World War II started, Joreta Gwin, age 9, lived with her two sisters, Sylva, age 3, and Claudean, age 13, and their parents, Ernest and Oneda Atwood Gwin, on a family farm in Callahan County, about five miles from the farm community of Oplin. Her grandparents, Gordon and Anna Warren Gwin, lived in a house

nearby. About a mile away on a hill lived a cousin, Richard Johnson, age 4, with his parents, Leonard and Aleene Swor Johnson. Richard often rode his horse to play with Sylva when he grew older. Farther away, but still close to Oplin, lived another cousin, Maureen Gwin, 6, and her older brother, Hubert, with their parents, Euclid and Pauline Looney Gwin.

The cousins all recalled rationing and shortages of some items during the war. Since they all grew gardens as well as had cows for milk, chickens for eggs, and pigs, they had plenty to eat. Maureen said her mother canned and stored the goods in a cellar. One time, her parents cured hams and sent them to her aunt Coleta Lee Looney, who had gone to California to work in the factories. She never returned to Texas but married and stayed in the Golden State. Sugar was the only food shortage Maureen remembered.

“That’s when we started using saccharine for sugar. We’d put those little tablets in our tea to sweeten it,” she said, adding that her older brother Hubert, who was a



The Gwin sisters: Claudean, Joreta, and Sylva (left to right). (Photo courtesy of the author.)



Photo of Richard Johnson, age 5 or 6, taken during World War II. The Army uniform was given to him by his Uncle Glen Swor, who served in the Army during the war. (Photo courtesy of the author.)



TxSGS LIVE Q&A

with the
Speakers

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2020

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2020

**Dower and Dowry:
Women, Property, and Legal Records**
Judy G. Russell, CG®

Whose Estate Is It Anyway!
Kelvin Meyers

**Trustworthy Trees:
Using DNA Tools, Data, Evidence to
Form Credible Genealogical Links**
Debbie Parker Wayne, CG®

**Breaking New Ground:
Creating a Locality Guide**
Cari Taplin

**Digital Library on American Slavery —
Invaluable When Researching Formerly
Enslaved Ancestors**
Diane L. Richard

**Shootout at the Rhododendron Lodge:
Reconstructing Life Changing Events**
Judy G. Russell, CG®

**Decoding Social Security:
Providing Benefits to Our Ancestors**
Michael Strauss, AG®

**Shakin' Out the Smiths:
Researching a Common Surname**
Nancy Calhoun

**Key Online Record Collections for
Researching Your Mexican Ancestors**
Colleen Robledo Greene

**Researching Graphically —
Expand Your Research with Timelines,
Spreadsheets, and Diagrams**
Ari Wilkins



Visit our website for details and to register:

www.TxSGS.org

From Pearl Harbor through WWII – Revealing an Untold Story

by Jim Thornhill

My father served in World War II. Like many WWII veterans, he talked little of his service, and like many young people, I never asked. By the time I became interested in recording my family’s history, he was no longer with us.

I knew my father saw some exciting events when he was in the Army Air Corps. He was stationed at Pearl Harbor, a soldier’s dream assignment until 7 December 1941. He enlisted with his brother in December of 1939 for two years. They wanted to serve their country, but they also wanted to learn a trade; and, for two impoverished boys from southern Mississippi, the military must have seemed like the way to go. Just as they were getting ready to come home, well

... you know what happened.

We took a family vacation to Hawaii when I was in my late 20s. I remember touring Pearl Harbor, the Battleship Arizona Memorial, and my father actually got us onto the military base. I remember he told me that he and his friends were walking to breakfast on Sunday morning when their world changed forever.

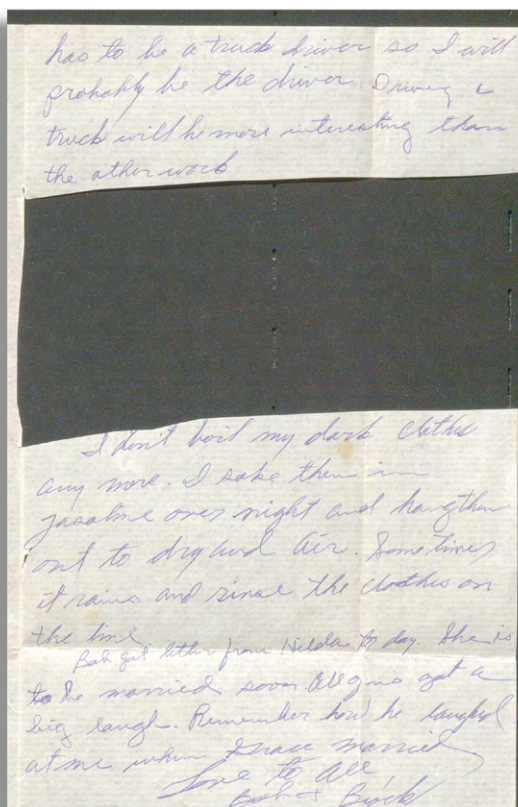
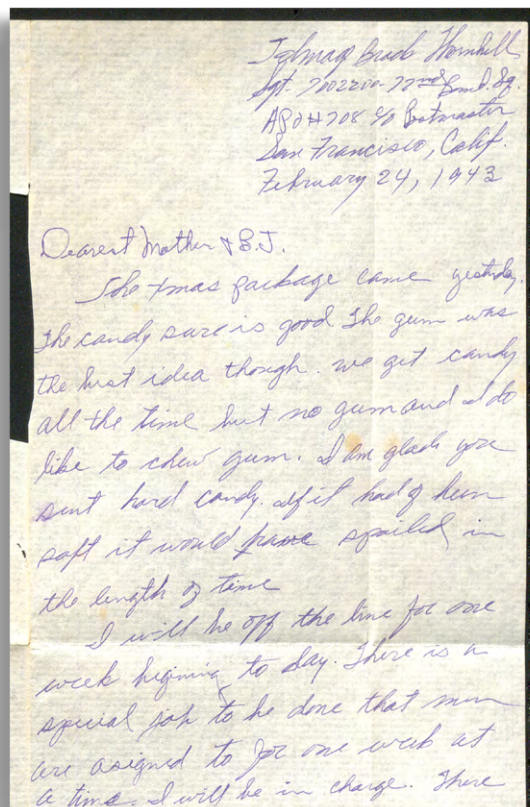
That is all I knew of the WWII service of my father and uncle until a few years ago when my sister called me

and told me about a box of letters she found in the top of her closet. I will never again complain about being the “Family Historian” who gets all the junk relatives do not want! The letters were exchanges between my father and uncle and the rest of the family back home! What a gold mine! One of the letters read, “Brock ran for his Post of Duty. I asked ‘What did you run in that direction for ... right into the path of danger?’ He said ‘it was my duty to help get those planes in the air.’” Boy, do I have a lot to live up to!

Many of you know, as I found out, that most records of WWII soldiers were lost in a fire at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis. This is why for many years I thought

the service of my relatives during WWII was something that I would never know. But as I poured over the letters, gleaning every bit of information I could about them, I began to notice the envelopes.

Not all the letters had envelopes with them, but many of them did. Upon examination, the return addresses were the same for most of the letters, HQ SQ 11th GP, Hickam Field, for my father and 72nd Bomb Sq. for my uncle. Hmmm, it’s time to turn to my genealogy buddy for help ... Hello, Google! After googling these return addresses, I learned they stood for Headquarters



Two-page letter home after being redacted by censors.

Fold3 Search Basics:

Finding Military Records for Early Americans, Modern-Day Veterans, and Everyone In Between

by Jessica Horne Collins

With a continually growing collection of over 500 million records, Fold3 is a “must check” repository for information about our military ancestors. Its collections cover all United States military conflicts and peacetime service and are expanding to international military records and non-military records as well.

Originally known as Footnote.com, this leading website for historical document research was acquired by Ancestry and rebranded as Fold3 in 2011. Its name reflects a focus on military records, as the third fold in many flag-folding ceremonies honors veterans and their sacrifices. Fold3 offers free basic memberships with access to some complimentary records. A paid subscription to Fold3 or to Ancestry All Access—which includes Ancestry, Newspapers.com Basic, and Fold3—is required for unrestricted access. However, Fold3 can be accessed in other ways without committing to a monthly or annual subscription. Many local libraries subscribe to Fold3 Library Edition, making these records available to patrons on-site and sometimes remotely with a library card. Fold3 also opens certain collections free-of-charge for holidays, often Memorial Day and Veterans Day, Revolutionary War collections around Independence Day, and its African American collections for Black History Month in February.



Search Basics

Unlike other websites with multiple search fields, Fold3 has a single search bar. Adding criteria to this search bar or selecting filters on the left sidebar narrows the results. As genealogists, our research focus is usually a specific person. Use known facts such as name, place of residence, or suspected participation in a certain conflict to locate records.

1. Enter a name you’re researching into the search bar. When you finish typing, click on the Name data type, represented by a silhouette icon, as shown in figure 1.
2. Enter a residence to narrow the search results. Click on the Place data type, represented by a pushpin icon, as shown in figure 2.

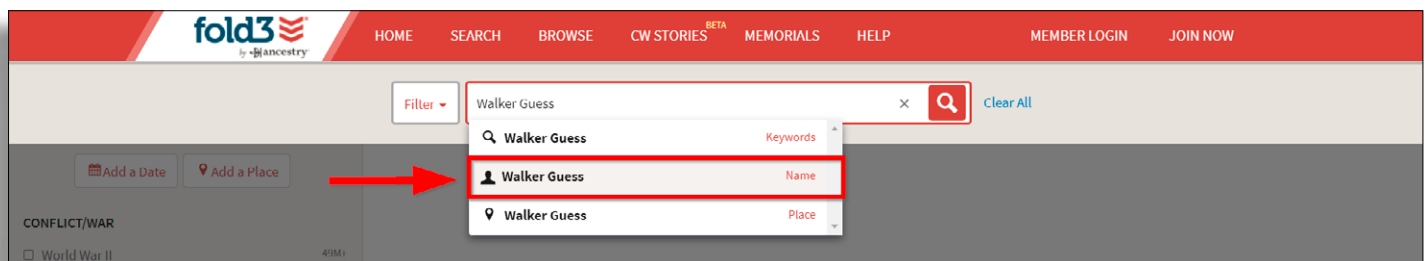


Figure 1

The World War II Service of Lloyd H. Westervelt Jr.

by L. Charles Westervelt

My father, a descendant of Dutch immigrants who arrived on our shores in 1662, was born 22 June 1921 in Southport, New York, a small town adjacent to the city of Elmira, New York.¹ From birth, his parents and siblings called him “Junior,” so he grew up using his father’s name—Lloyd Harrison Westervelt Jr. Only when he obtained his birth certificate in 1940 did he learn that his name was actually “Lloyd Junior Westervelt.”²

He figured it was too late for a name change, so he remained Lloyd Harrison Westervelt (LHW) Jr. for the rest of his life.

On 16 May 1942, Lloyd married Doris Jane Barber.³ On 26 September of that same year, he was drafted; and, on 10 October 1942, he was sent to Miami Beach, Florida, for basic training in the Army Air Force.⁴ Tough duty! My father was sent to “the most beautiful boot camp in America.” This was probably his first time to venture outside of New York State. The Army Air Forces Technical Training Command was established in Miami Beach, and over 300 hotels and buildings were being used to train Air Corps officers and enlisted men.⁵

The expansion of the Army Air Force (AAF) began before our entry into the war, but after Pearl Harbor, the buildup greatly increased. At the beginning of 1942, it was obvious that it would take considerable time before the full strength of the United States military could come to the aid of the Allies. Therefore, it was

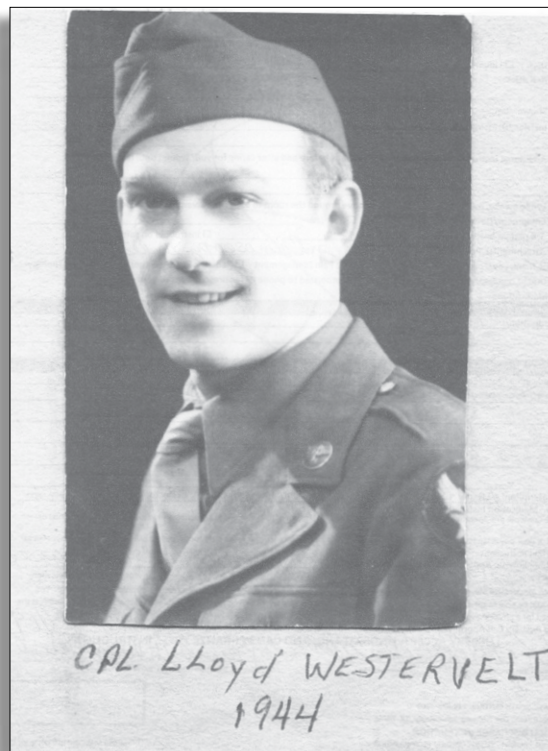
understood and generally accepted by the other military branches that the rapid expansion of the AAF was necessary to engage in the early defensive and offensive actions against the enemy.⁶

The draft came into law with the Selective Service Act of 1940. After the United States entered the war in

December of 1941, that act was modified several times to expand the age range at which men were required to register for the draft.⁷ Once a recruit reported for duty, he was given a battery of tests and interviewed to determine where he should be assigned: Army Air Force, ground forces, etc. The standard battery included the Army General Classification Test (AGCT) and a Mechanical Aptitude (MA) test.⁸

One aspect of the AAF expansion was the War Department rulings that the AAF was given preference over the other services in the recruitment of personnel. The nature of the AAF mission required a greater need for highly trained technicians than in the other military services. Starting 2 February 1942, 75% of all inductees assigned to the AAF would have an AGCT score of 100 or over.⁹

By the summer of 1942, in response to the very loud objections of the Army Ground Forces and the Services of Supply, the 75%-rule was rescinded. However, General Arnold of the AAF appealed directly to the



*LHW Jr. in England with the 401st Bomb Group.
(Photo courtesy of the author.)*

Preserving Their Legacy

One Member At A Time

by Savannah Brady, Assistant Director of Development/Membership
National Museum of the Pacific War

Sixteen million men and women served in the Armed Forces of the United States in World War II at home, at sea, and on battlefields from North Africa, to Europe, over to East Asia, across the islands of the Pacific, and down to Australia. They were ordinary Americans who went on to do extraordinary things in the name of freedom.

The Society of Sons and Daughters of WWII Veterans is a genealogy program dedicated to preserving the memory and stories of America's "Greatest Generation." This year marks the final year in the charter decade of the society, which represents over 500 familial and collateral relationships.

At the end of the war, the United States and the Allied Nations issued Victory Medals to service members. Stamped upon those medals were the pillars of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's State of the Union address on January 6, 1941—freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from want, freedom from fear. These pillars came to be known as the Four Freedoms and are desired by American citizens today just as they were 75 years ago. These four pillars grace the certificate that members receive upon entry, but it is up to all Americans to ensure that the bravery, courage, and sacrifice of these amazing

men and women will not be forgotten. There are several different levels of membership:

- Lineal Membership: For individuals demonstrating lineal

veteran for inclusion in the Sons and Daughters of WWII Veterans records as a friend, with no claim of family relationship.

Applications are available by

emailing membership@nimitzfoundation.org or calling (830) 997-9600 Ext. 242. Primary applicants are \$125. Supplemental applicants, such as children or other family members, are \$25 each and must be submitted with the primary applicant. Each applicant must supply the documentation applicable to the type of mem-



Jackson Cobb presents WWII Veteran, SSG Warren Milner, 34th Division, US Army, a flag during 2019 Flag Day Ceremony.

- descent through birth or adoption from a qualifying WWII veteran.
- Collateral Membership: For individuals demonstrating a collateral family relationship with a qualifying WWII veteran.
- Memorial Membership: For individuals presenting a qualifying

bership requested as well as service records demonstrating service between December 7, 1941, and December 31, 1946. Upon acceptance, each member will receive a numbered and dated certificate with the name of the qualifying WWII veteran and a lapel pin bearing the crest of the society.

Detailed Research Helps Separate Same Names

by Russell A. Rahn
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In many families from past generations, it was often considered proper to name their newborn children after important and well-known biblical figures. Even more desirable were the names of the “good guys” and those who were leading characters from well-known Bible stories.

It should come as no surprise, then, that the same names come up frequently. These naming customs for newborn children often cause problems for our generation as we struggle to correctly identify these persons and assign them to their rightful spot on the family tree.

This naming issue surfaced in the family addressed by this article. I recently received a parcel of military memorabilia that included items from several clearly different families. There was no indication of how these persons could have been related, so I proceeded to separate them into several different piles and work on each one in turn.

One of the more interesting (and challenging) projects involved someone named Frank Joseph Cressey. This person had evidently taken the proper training course and completed any required examinations to become a member of the United States Citizens Defense Corps. In this capacity, he served the citizens of Los Angeles, California, in the War Traffic Control Section of the Auxiliary Police Service. His certificate was dated 26 July 1943, as seen here.

There were two copies of this document, exactly the same in every way, but no additional items

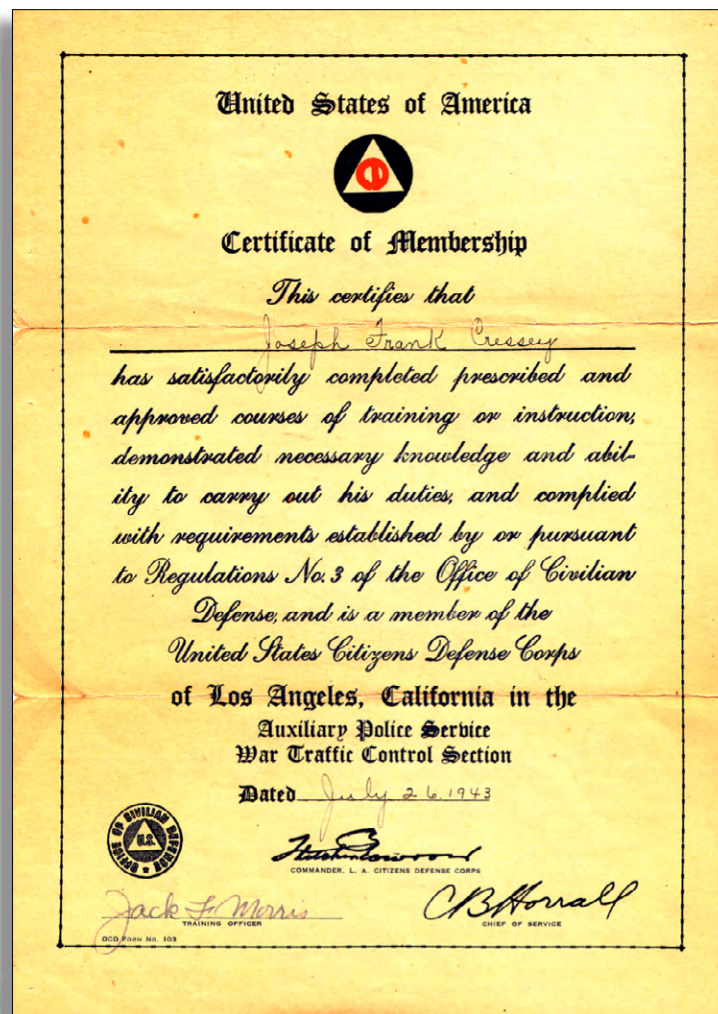
relating to this person were in the package of memorabilia. I had only one name, one date, and one locality to work with. It would be challenging to learn more.

Beginning with an assumption

that this person would probably have lived in California during the 1940 census, I quickly discovered that he had successfully avoided the census taker. He did not, however, avoid matrimony and the first record I

discovered gave information of his marriage in 1949, in Los Angeles County. Now I began to see how much that family loved the name “Joseph.” This Joseph was the fourth one in line with that name – a line reaching back to Cumberland County in Maine for about 200 years.

However, in some ways, the Josephs in this lineage helped separate themselves. The first of them just called himself “Joseph.” The second one often added the term “Jr.” to his name. This worked well until the third one came along, but he frequently called



US Citizens Defense Corps certificate of Frank Joseph Cressey, 1943.

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