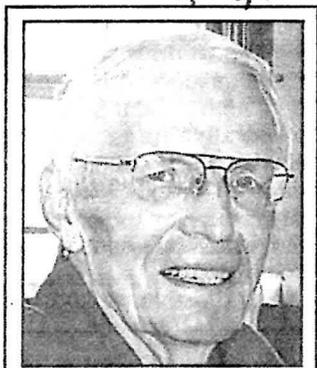


# Washburn During The War Years—The Boys At War -3

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James E. Morris Jr. wrote in July 1941: "I enlisted August 29, 1940, at Chanute Field, Illinois. While there I was attached to the 5th School Squadron. From there I was sent to the 90th School Squadron at Barksdale Field, Louisiana. On May 1st the entire squadron was transferred to Selma, Alabama. We went by motor convoy. It took two days to travel a distance of about 500 miles. The field here is a new field and was not opened officially until several days after we arrived. We have only advanced trainers in these squadrons. It is here that the flying cadets get their final training before receiving their commissions as second lieutenants in the Army Air Corps. It is very probable that we will train the English pilots who are now at various fields receiving their basic training. I graduated from Chanute Field as an airplane mechanic, but since then I've specialized in airplane engines and am now a crew chief on an AT-12. The biggest job of a crew chief is to keep his ship flying. Besides this he must keep a record of it. This includes the flying time of the ship, maintenance work on it, amount of fuel used, etc. It is very interesting work and it also gives a man a chance to be continually learning



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more."

Lloyd E. Laurion entered the army in July 1940, serving in Iceland, Northern Ireland and France. He received a Purple Heart for wounds while in combat in France in September 1944. In September 1941 he described his experiences during the Louisiana maneuvers that summer: "We started out at one o'clock in the morning, and marched until six in the evening, seventeen hours in all. The army routine is to march 50 minutes and rest for 10 minutes. We carried light packs, only 35 or 40 pounds, but every pack weighed about a ton by the time we finished that hike. Most of the way we hiked along railroad tracks and you know how hard that is. Each man had only a canteen and a half of water dur-

ing the march. We had no rations and we didn't pass any place where food could be bought. We were plenty hungry when we stopped but so tired that we flopped on the ground and fell asleep. The cooks had to wake us up to feed us. I can sleep anywhere now—anywhere. All good soldiers like to growl and grumble, but you don't have to worry about that. The boys who go 'over the hill' after payday are the silent ones. When a guy who beefs a lot suddenly becomes quiet, you can expect him to disappear."

Seven Washburn men were stationed at Pearl Harbor when the Japanese attacked the naval base on December 7, 1941: Howard G. Hale and Harry E. Homan at Hickam Field; Robert E. Neuman, Wilbur Bluhm and Donald W. Beaulieu on the battleship USS Nevada; Howard G. Kluge on the cruiser USS New Orleans; and Clarence Porter on the auxiliary ship USS Vestal. Harry E. Homan entered the Army Air Force in November 1940, serving in Hawaii and Asiatic Pacific Theater. On December 20 he wrote: "It's about 1:30 in the morning, but we have to 'keep them flying'. Working late as usual. Been going strong since 6:00 yesterday morning. No rest for the wicked,

is there? As yet we haven't moved out. Don't know for sure, but if things keep going the way they have with the Japs, we'll be going, that's for sure. Might just as well get in a little traveling, huh? We have no worries, though—they'll back down as usual. All transports are heading for the Philippines these days. We've been on an alert here for the last two weeks. Indefinite this time. At least until this Jap affair is over. Keeping us pretty busy."

Howard G. Hale entered the Army Air Force in November 1940, stationed as a photographer at Hickam Field, then returned to the United States for training as a glider and bomber pilot. On December 23rd he wrote: "Glad to hear the States are backing us up so strong. Makes you feel better. It is harder to get to town or get a pass now and not as much to do when you get there, either, so a lot of the fellows had their heads clipped off. Haven't been off the post yet except on duty but hope to get to town for a few hours Xmas day. The attitude of the people downtown made a quick reverse Sunday. Treat you pretty swell now. Kids that went to town in civilian clothes like to wear their uniforms to town now."