

CHAPTER 17

SERVICE TO OUR NATION



UNITED STATES ARMY AIR FORCES

Aviation Cadet Program (1941–1961 / 1965)



On 20 June 1941, the air arm of the US Army became the "US Army Air Forces" (USAAF). The grade of Aviation Cadet was created for pilot candidates, and the program was renamed the Aviation Cadet Training Program (AvCad). The program was expanded to also cover training navigators and bombardiers and Moffett Field became the first center to give "pre-flight" training to navigators and bombardiers. Later non-rated specialties covered included communications, armament, meteorology, and radar operation.

From 1941 to 1961 Aviation Cadets wore the same uniform as Army officers, except they lacked the mohair cuffband of a full officer. The service cap differed in that it had a blue hatband (with Olive Drab uniform) or brown hatband (with Khaki uniform) and the General Issue eagle was replaced by the winged propeller insignia of the Army Air Force. They were paid \$75 a month – the same rate as Army Air Corps Privates with flight status. As junior officers, cadets were addressed as "Mister" by all ranks.

1940–1945

Cadet flight training was reduced in 1940 to seven months of training and only 200 Flight Hours to meet a potential demand for military pilots.

In August 1941 the minimum age for cadets was dropped from 21 to 18. The requirements for a 4-year college degree or at least 2 years of college was dropped to a high school diploma and graduating at the top of their class, later dropping to possession of a high school diploma in November 1942. After demand lifted in mid-1944, the requirements went back to college-educated or college-graduated candidates.

Graduating cadets who lacked a college education were graded as Flight Staff Sergeants, with cadets who graduated at the top of their class being graded as Flight Technical Sergeants; and nicknamed Flying Sergeants. They were usually assigned to flying transport and liaison aircraft. Their pilot status was only indicated by their pilot's wings, often leading to enlisted aviators being mistaken for air crew or harassed for impersonating a pilot. This caused a lot of bad feelings between the enlisted pilots (who had more dangerous jobs for lower pay and no privileges) and the officer pilots (who received the same pay, promotability, and privileges as officers). When the education requirements dropped in 1942, all enlisted pilots were promoted to the rank of Flight Officer and graduating enlisted cadets were graded as Flight Officers or Second Lieutenants depending on merit.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor and the United States entry into the war, the number of volunteers for pilot training was enormous. Fearing that they would lose them to the general draft, aviation cadet-applicants were given exemption from 1942 until 1944.

Demand for pilots meant that training had to be modified to accommodate the large numbers of pilot candidates. Training came in four stages (extended to five stages in April 1942 with the creation of the

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Pre-Flight stage). Classification lasted 1 week and the education and training stages were 9 weeks each. Each 9 week stage was divided into two 4.5 week (63 day) halves: a lower half and an upper half. The lower half was made up of students just beginning the stage and the upper half was made up of the students who were half-finished. The more experienced cadets would (hopefully) help the new cadets get through the section before they were promoted to the next stage.

- Classification stage processed the cadet and issued him his equipment. This was the stage where it would be decided whether the cadet would train as a navigator, bombardier, or pilot. Candidates who failed the advanced physical were returned to the regular Army.
- Pre-Flight stage was divided into two parts and was attended by pilots, navigators, and bombardiers. The first 6 weeks concentrated on athletics and military training. This was followed by 3 weeks of academics. They were taught the mechanics and physics of flight and required the cadets to pass refresher courses in mathematics and physics. Then the cadets were taught to apply their knowledge practically by teaching them aeronautics, deflection shooting, and thinking in three dimensions.

Pilot School

1. Primary Pilot Training taught basic flight using two-seater training aircraft. This was usually done by Contract Schools (civilian pilot training schools) through the *Civil Aeronautics Authority – War Training Service* (CAA-WTS). Cadets got around 60 to 65 Flight Hours in Stearman, Ryan, or Fairchild trainers before going to Basic.
2. Basic Pilot Training taught the cadets to fly in formation, fly by instruments or by aerial navigation, fly at night, and fly for long distances. Cadets got about 70 Flight Hours before being promoted to Advanced.
3. Advanced Pilot Training placed the graduates in two categories: single-engined and multi-engined. Single-engined pilots flew fighters and fighter-bombers. Multi-engined pilots learned to fly transports and bombers. First they flew Trainer aircraft, then transitioned to front-line aircraft. Cadets were supposed to get a total of about 75 to 80 Flight Hours before graduating.

Graduates were usually graded as Flight Officers (Warrant Officers). Cadets who graduated at the top of their class were graded as Second Lieutenants. Aviation Cadets who washed out of pilot training were sent to navigator or bombardier school. Aviation Cadets who washed out of navigator or bombardier training were usually sent to gunnery school.

Liaison Pilot School lasted 60 flight hours. It was an option for cadets who had passed Primary training, but had washed out of Basic or Advanced. They were trained to fly single-engined light aircraft similar to the light trainers they flew in Primary and were given training in takeoffs over obstacles, short-field landings, and low-altitude navigation. Their duties included transportation of troops and supplies, medical evacuation, aerial photography, and low-level reconnaissance. Graduates received Liaison Pilot wings. They were originally graded as Flight Staff Sergeants until 1942, when they were graded as Flight Officers.

Bombardier School lasted 18 weeks. It consisted of 425 hours of ground instruction in the proficiencies of a bombardier (plus familiarity with the tasks of the pilot, radioman, or navigator in case of an emergency). After 3 weeks this included 120 hours of air training in which the cadet began with practice runs and ended by performing bombing runs with live ordnance. Graduates received a Bombardier's wings.

Navigator School lasted 18 weeks. It consisted of 500 hours of ground instruction in the duties of a Navigator (charting, directional bearings, computed headings, airspeed, radio codes, celestial navigation,

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etc.). This was combined with familiarity with the tasks of a pilot or radioman in case of emergency. After 4 weeks the cadet acted as a navigator in day and night flights. Graduates received a Navigator's wings.

Flexible Gunnery School was a 6 week program that taught the cadet how to man a flexible-mount machinegun or a powered turret. All aircrew had to attend Gunnery School in case of emergencies and had to qualify before they could join an aircrew. Bombardiers and Navigators attended either before or after they attended their training school.

UNITED STATES ARMY AIR FORCES



The United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) was the military aviation arm of the United States of America during and immediately after World War II, and the direct predecessor of the United States Air Force.

The AAF was a component of the United States Army, which in 1942 was divided functionally by executive order into three autonomous forces: the Army Ground Forces, the Services of Supply (which in 1943 became the Army Service Forces), and the AAF. Each of these forces had a commanding general who reported directly to the Chief of Staff of the United States Army. The AAF controlled all parts of military aviation formerly distributed among the Air Corps, General

Headquarters Air Force, and ground forces corps area commanders, and thus became the first air organization of the U.S. Army to control its own installations.

The peak size of the AAF was over 2.4 million men and women in service and nearly 80,000 aircraft in 1944, and 783 domestic bases in December 1943. By VE Day it had 1.25 million men stationed overseas and operated from more than 1,600 airfields worldwide.

The Air Corps became the Army Air Forces in June 1941 to provide the air arm a greater autonomy in which to expand more efficiently, and to provide a structure for the additional command echelons required by a vastly increased force. Although other nations already had separate air forces independent of the army or navy (such as the British Royal Air Force and the German *Luftwaffe*), the USAAF remained a part of the United States Army until the United States Air Force came into being in September 1947.

TENTH AIR FORCE



The Tenth Air Force during World War II played a crucial role in the China-Burma-India (CBI) Theater, primarily focused on operations in India and Burma. Constituted as Tenth AF on 4 Feb 1942 and activated on 12 February. Moved to India, March-May 1942. Served in India, Burma, and China until Mar 1943 when Fourteenth AF was activated in China. Then the Tenth operated in India and Burma until it moved to China late in Jul 1945. Returned to the US, Dec 1945-Jan 1946.

The Tenth Air Force was tasked with controlling all USAAF combat operations in the CBI theater, initially under the command of Lt. Gen. Joseph Stilwell. Initial operations focused on supporting Allied forces in Burma and India, including strategic bombing of Japanese supply lines and close air support for ground troops.

It also oversaw the China Air Task Force, commanded by Brig. Gen. Claire Chennault, which replaced the American Volunteer Group.

Throughout this period, the Tenth Air Force flew B-24 Liberator bombers, B-25 Mitchell bombers, and various fighter aircraft like P-40 Warhawks, P-47 Thunderbolts, and P-51 Mustangs.

INSIGNE. Shield: a white shield with the numeral "10" on an ultramarine blue disc, surmounted by a white five-pointed star with a red disc center and golden-orange wings. The shield is a key element within the overall design, which was officially approved on January 25, 1944.

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7TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP



7th Bombardment Group - Organized as 1st Army Observation Group on 1 Oct 1919. Redesignated 7th Group (Observation) in Mar 1921. Inactivated on 30 Aug 1921.

Redesignated 7th Bombardment Group in 1923. Activated on 1 Jun 1928. Redesignated 7th Bombardment Group (Heavy) in 1939. Trained, participated in aerial reviews, dropped food and medical supplies to persons marooned or lost, and took part in maneuvers and experiments. Aircraft included B-12's, B-18's, and B-17's.

The group was on its way to the Philippines when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on 7 Dec 1941. The ground echelon, on board ship, was diverted to Australia and later sent to Java. Six of the group's B-17's, which had left the US on 6 Dec, reached Hawaii during the enemy attack but were able to land safely. Later in Dec the remainder of the air echelon flew B-17's from the US to Java. From 14 Jan to 1 Mar 1942, during the Japanese drive through the Philippines and Netherlands East Indies, the group operated from Java, being awarded a DUC for its action against enemy aircraft, ground installations, warships, and transports.

Moved to India in Mar 1942 and assigned to Tenth AF. Resumed combat with B-17's and LB-30's; converted to B-24's late in 1942. Operations were directed primarily against the Japanese in Burma, with attacks on airfields, fuel and supply dumps, locomotive works, railways, bridges, docks, warehouses, shipping, and other targets. Also bombed oil refineries and railways in Thailand, hit power plants in China, attacked enemy shipping in the Andaman Sea, and ferried gasoline over the Hump to China. Received second DUC for damaging the enemy's line of supply in southeast Asia with an attack against rail lines and bridges in Thailand on 19 Mar 1945. Returned to the US in Dec 1945. Inactivated on 6 Jan 1946.

Stations

Ft Douglas, Utah, 7 Sep 1940-13 Nov 1941
Brisbane, Australia, 22 Dec 1941-Feb 1942
Karachi, India, 12 Mar 1942
Dum-Dum, India, 30 May 1942
Karachi, India, 9 Sep 1942
Kurmitola, India, 17 Jan 1944
Pandaveswar, India, 6 Oct 1944
Tezpur, India, 7 Jun 1945
Dudhkundi, India, 31 Oct-7 Dec 1945
Pandaveswar, India, 12 Dec 1942

Commanders

Maj Stanley K Robinson, unkn-29 Jan 1942
Maj Austin A Straubel, c. 29 Jan-3 Feb 1942
Col Cecil E Combs, 22 Mar 1942
Col Conrad F Necrason, 1 Jul 1942
Col Aubrey K Dodson, 27 Mar 1944
Col Harvey T Alness, 6 Nov 1944
Col Howard F Bronson Jr, 24 Jun 1945-unkn.
Col John G Eriksen, 1 Oct 1946

Campaigns - Burma, 1942, East Indies, India-Burma, China Defensive, Central Burma, China Offensive

Insigne. Shield: Azure, on a bend or three crosses pattee sable. Crest: On a wreath of the colors (or and azure) a drop bomb palewise sable piercing a cloud proper. Motto: Mors Ab Alto - Death from Above. (Approved 30 Jan 1933. This insigne was modified 12 Sep 1952.)

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436TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON



Originally the 88th Photo Reconnaissance Squadron, the 436th became operational as a heavy bombardment squadron on June 4, 1942. At this time they were equipped with both B-17s and B-24s, but the group's complement of the former was stripped from them in late June, 1942 when the 7th Bombardment Group's 9th Bombardment Squadron was temporarily assigned to Middle East in order to bolster the 9th Air Force's offensive capability. This move temporarily left the 7th Bombardment Group with no offensive capability as the 436th transitioned to the B-24 (at this time the 492nd and 493rd Bombardment Groups existed on paper only having no personnel or aircraft assigned to them).

The squadron arrived in India in March 1942. It was redesignated the 436th Bombardment Squadron in April 1942. It flew its first mission in the China Burma India Theater on 4 June 1942. Later that month, the need for reinforcements against General Erwin Rommel's attacks in the Middle East resulted in the withdrawal of most of the 7th Bombardment Group's heavy bombers from the theater, and two of the group's squadrons converted to North American B-25 Mitchells, leaving the 436th as the only remaining squadron in the group flying B-17s. However, Clayton Bissell, commander of Tenth Air Force considered the B-17 unsuitable for the long range operations from India, and in August 1942, the decision was made to convert the group to a Consolidated B-24 Liberator unit.

The 436th staged its first mission as an all B-24 unit on 21 October 1942, staging through Chengtu airdrome, China, to attack the Lin-Hsi coal mines. This raid marked the first use of heavy bombers in China, the first operational use of B-24s in CBI, and the first USAAF bombing raid north of the Yellow and Yangtze rivers. Other milestones for the 436th were the destruction of the bridges on the Kwai-Wy river at Kanchanburi, Thailand ("The Bridge On The River Kwai" of book and movie fame), the use of B-24s in dive bombing attacks on railroad bridges, and participation in the longest bombing mission of the war.

Squadron operations were primarily directed against Japanese installations in Burma (Myanmar). The squadron attacked airfields, supply dumps, locomotive manufacturing facilities, and vulnerable sites in the Japanese line of communications, including docks, warehouses and shipping. Other targets included power plants in China oil refineries and railroads in Thailand, and shipping in the Andaman Sea.

SECOND LIEUTENANT



In the United States, Second Lieutenant is the normal entry-level rank for most commissioned officers.

In the Army and Marine Corps, a second lieutenant typically commands a platoon-size element (16 to 44 soldiers or Marines). In the Army, the rank bore no insignia other than a brown sleeve braid on blouses and an officer's cap device and hat cord until December 1917, when a gold bar similar to the silver bar of a first lieutenant was introduced.

Air Force ranks duties of the second lieutenant are mainly focused in the supervision of flights of different sizes depending on his field of career. He may also perform duties as a flight commander or as an assistant flight commander. He may work as well in different administrative positions in squadrons, groups or wing level.

BOMBARDIER



During the early 20th Century a bombardier or bomb aimer, was the crew member of a bomber aircraft responsible for the targeting of aerial bombs. "Bomb Aimer" was the preferred term in the military forces of the Commonwealth, while "Bombardier" (from the French word for "bomber thrower" and similar in meaning to "grenadier") was the equivalent position in the United States Armed Forces.

In many planes, the bombardier took control of the airplane during the bombing run, using a bombsight such as the Norden bombsight which was connected to the autopilot of the plane. Often stationed in the extreme front of the aircraft, on the way to the target and after releasing the bombs he could also serve as the front gunner in aircraft that had a front turret.

In the latter part of the 20th century, the title of bombardier fell into disuse, due largely to changes in technology, emanating from the replacement of this manual function with the development of computerized technology and smart bombs, that has given rise to terms like weapons systems officer or combat systems officer (CSO) to describe the modern role.

In the United States, the position of bombardier was originally held by a sergeant but they were commissioned as officers in 1941. In the Commonwealth, one could be an officer or (more frequently) a senior non-commissioned officer. During World War II, US Army Air Force bombardiers were recognized with the award of the Bombardier Badge.

The Bombardier Badge was a military badge of the United States military which was issued between the years of 1918 and 1949. The decoration was intended to recognize the military training and qualification required by those service members who were bombardiers on board military aircraft.

Originally known as the Bombing Aviator Badge, the Bombardier Badge was first issued by the United States Army Air Service during the First World War. The badge consisted of a standard observer badge, centered upon which was a downward facing bomb. The badge remained unchanged until the late 1930s, at which time it was redesignated the Bombardier Badge. This change was primarily made due to the rapid advances in aircraft (and aircraft bombing technology) that took place between 1920 and 1939.

During World War II, the Bombardier Badge was a common aeronautical badge of the United States Army Air Forces. The badge was issued to all military bombardiers upon completion of basic flight training and advanced bomber instruction.

With the creation of the United States Air Force in 1947, the Bombardier Badge was gradually phased out and none were issued after 1949. The modern-day Navigator Badge is considered the U.S. Air Force successor to the Bombardier Badge.

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1. Description: A Purple heart within a Gold border, 1 3/8 inches wide, containing a profile of General George Washington. Above the heart appears a shield of the Washington Coat of Arms (a White shield with two Red bars and three Red stars in chief) between sprays of Green leaves. The reverse consists of a raised Bronze heart with the words "FOR MILITARY MERIT" below the coat of arms and leaves.

2. Ribbon: The ribbon is 1 3/8 inches wide and consists of the following stripes: 1/8 inch White 67101; 1 1/8 inches Purple 67115; and 1/8 inch White 67101.

3. Criteria: a. The Purple Heart is awarded in the name of the President of the United States to any member of an Armed Force who, while serving with the U.S. Armed Services after 5 April 1917, has been wounded or killed, or who has died or may hereafter die after being wounded;

- (1) In any action against an enemy of the United States;
- (2) In any action with an opposing armed force of a foreign country in which the Armed Forces of the United States are or have been engaged;
- (3) While serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party;
- (4) As a result of an act of any such enemy of opposing armed forces;
- (5) As the result of an act of any hostile foreign force;
- (6) After 28 March 1973, as a result of an international terrorist attack against the United States or a foreign nation friendly to the United States, recognized as such an attack by the Secretary of the department concerned, or jointly by the Secretaries of the departments concerned if persons from more than one department are wounded in the attack; or,
- (7) After 28 March 1973, as a result of military operations, while serving outside the territory of the United States as part of a peacekeeping force.
- (8) After 7 December 1941, by weapon fire while directly engaged in armed conflict, regardless of the fire causing the wound.
- (9) While held as a prisoner of war or while being taken captive.

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b. A wound for which the award is made must have required treatment by a medical officer.

4. Components:

a. Decoration (regular size): MIL-D-3943/24; NSN for set 8455-00-269-5757; individual medal 8455-00-246-3833.

b. Decoration (miniature size): MIL-D-3943//24.

c. Ribbon: MIL-R-11589/126. NSN 8455-00-9948.

d. Lapel Button (metal replica of ribbon bar): MIL-L-11484/18. NSN 8455-00-253-0818.

5. Background: a. The original Purple Heart, designated as the Badge of Military Merit, was established by General George Washington by order from his headquarters at Newburgh, New York, August 7, 1782. The writings of General Washington quoted in part:

"The General ever desirous to cherish a virtuous ambition in his soldiers, as well as to foster and encourage every species of Military Merit, directs that whenever any singularly meritorious action is performed, the author of it shall be permitted to wear on his facings over the left breast, the figure of a heart in purple cloth or silk, edged with narrow lace or binding. Not only instances of unusual gallantry, but also of extraordinary fidelity and essential service in any way shall meet with a due reward".

b. So far as the known surviving records show, this honor badge was granted to only three men, all of them noncommissioned officers: Sergeant Daniel Bissell of the 2d Connecticut Regiment of the Continental Line; Sergeant William Brown of the 5th Connecticut Regiment of the Continental Line, and Sergeant Elijah Churchill of the 2d Continental Dragoons, which was also a Connecticut Regiment. The original Purple Heart depicted on the first page is a copy of the badge awarded to Sergeant Elijah Churchill and is now owned by the New Windsor Cantonment, National Temple Hill Association, PO Box 525, Vails Gate, NY 12584. The only other known original badge is the badge awarded to Sergeant William Brown and is in the possession of The Society of the Cincinnati, New Hampshire Branch but differs in design by not having any lettering embroidered on the heart and the leaves are at the top only with a larger spray of leaves at the base.

c. Subsequent to the Revolution, the Order of the Purple Heart had fallen into disuse and no further awards were made. By Order of the President of the United States, the Purple Heart was revived on the 200th Anniversary of George Washington's birth, out of respect to his memory and military achievements, by War Department General Orders No. 3, dated 22 February 1932. The criteria was announced in War Department Circular dated 22 February 1932 and authorized award to soldiers, upon their request, who had been awarded the Meritorious Service Citation Certificate or were authorized to wear wound chevrons subsequent to 5 April 1917.

d. During the early period of World War II (7 Dec 41 to 22 Sep 43), the Purple Heart was awarded both for wounds received in action against the enemy and for meritorious performance of duty. With the establishment of the Legion of Merit, by an Act of Congress, the practice of awarding the Purple Heart for meritorious service was discontinued. By Executive Order 9277, dated 3 December 1942, the decoration was extended to be applicable to all services and the order required that regulations of the Services be uniform in application as far as practicable. This executive order also authorized award only for wounds received.

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e. Executive Order 10409, dated 12 February 1952, revised authorizations to include the Service Secretaries subject to approval of the Secretary of Defense. Executive Order 11016, dated 25 April 1962, included provisions for posthumous award of the Purple Heart. Executive Order 12464, dated 23 February 1984, authorized award of the Purple Heart as a result of terrorist attacks or while serving as part of a peacekeeping force subsequent to 28 March 1973.

f. The Senate approved an amendment to the 1985 Defense Authorization Bill on 13 June 1985, which changed the precedent from immediately above the Good Conduct Medal to immediately above the Meritorious Service Medals. Public Law 99-145 authorized the award for wounds received as a result of "friendly fire". Public Law 104-106 expanded the eligibility date, authorizing award of the Purple Heart to a former prisoner of war who was wounded before 25 April 1962.

g. The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998 (Public Law 105-85) changed the criteria to delete authorization for award of the Purple Heart Medal to any civilian national of the United States while serving under competent authority in any capacity with the Armed Forces. This change was effective 18 May 1998.

h. Order of precedence and wear of decorations is contained in Army Regulation 670-1. Policy for awards, approving authority, supply, and issue of decorations is contained in AR 600-8-22.

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AIR MEDAL



1. Description: A bronze compass rose 1 11/16 inches circumscribing diameter and charged with an eagle volant carrying two lightning flashes in its talons. A fleur-de-lis at the top point holds the suspension ring. The points of the compass rose on the reverse are modeled with the central portion plain for engraving the name of the recipient.

2. Ribbon: The ribbon is 1 3/8 inches wide and consists of the following stripes: 1/8 inch ultramarine blue 67118; 1/4 inch golden orange 67109; center 5/8 inch ultramarine blue; 1/4 inch golden orange; and 1/8 inch ultramarine blue.

3. Criteria: The Air Medal is awarded to any person who, while serving in any capacity in or with the armed forces of the United States, shall have distinguished himself by meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight. Awards may be made to recognize single acts of merit or heroism or for meritorious service. Award of the Air Medal is primarily intended to recognize those personnel who are on current crew member or non-crew member flying status which requires them to participate in aerial flight on a regular and frequent basis in the performance of their primary duties. However, it may also be awarded to certain other individuals whose combat duties require regular and frequent flying in other than a passenger status or individuals who perform a particularly noteworthy act while performing the function of a crew member but who are not on flying status. These individuals must make a discernible contribution to the operational land combat mission or to the mission of the aircraft in flight. Examples of personnel whose combat duties require them to fly include those in the attack elements of units involved in air-land assaults against an armed enemy and those directly involved in airborne command and control of combat operations. Involvement in such activities, normally at the brigade/group level and below, serves only to establish eligibility for award of the Air Medal; the degree of heroism, meritorious achievement or exemplary service determines who should receive the award. Awards will not be made to individuals who use air transportation solely for the purpose of moving from point to point in a combat zone.

4. Components: The following are authorized components of the Air Medal and the applicable specifications for each:

a. Decoration (regular size): MIL-D-3943/23. NSN for decoration set is 8455-00-269-5747. For replacement medal NSN 8455-00-246-3837.

b. Decoration (miniature size): MIL-D-3943/23. NSN 8455-00-996-5002.

c. Ribbon: MIL-R-11589/7. NSN 8455-00-252-9963.

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d. Lapel Button: MIL-L-11484/17. NSN 8455-00-257-4308.

5. Background: a. In a letter from the Secretary of War to the Director, Bureau of Budget, dated 9 March 1942, the Secretary submitted a proposed executive order establishing the Air Medal for award to any person who, while serving in any capacity of the Army of the United States, distinguishes himself by meritorious achievement while participating in an aerial flight. The Secretary of War, in his request, stated "The Distinguished Flying Cross is available only for heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight...It is desired not to cheapen the Distinguished Flying Cross by awarding it for achievement not bordering on the heroic. It is, however, important to reward personnel for meritorious service."

b. The Air Medal was authorized by President Roosevelt by Executive Order 9158, dated 11 May 1942, and established the award for "any person who, while serving in any capacity in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps or Coast Guard of the United States subsequent to September 8, 1939, distinguishes, or has distinguished, himself by meritorious achievement while participating in an aerial flight." Authorization was announced in War Department Bulletin No. 25, dated 25 May 1942. Executive Order 9242-A, dated 11 September 1942 amended the previous Executive Order to read "in any capacity in or with the Army".

c. In July 1942, the Office of The Quartermaster General (OQMG), forwarded a letter to twenty-two artists offering an opportunity to submit designs for consideration. The design selected was submitted by Walker Hancock and approved by the Secretary of War on 31 December 1942. The designer, Walker Hancock, had been inducted into the Army and assigned to Camp Livingston, Louisiana. He was ordered to temporary duty effective 16 November 1942 to G1 War Department to work on the medal. The Chief of Staff approved the ribbon design prepared by OQMG on 26 August 1942.

d. Oak leaf clusters were initially used to denote subsequent awards of the Air Medal. The number of additional awards were so great that the oak leaf clusters did not fit on the ribbon. As a result, the policy was changed in September 1968 to require the use of numbers to indicate subsequent awards of the Air Medal.

e. The Air Medal may be awarded for service during peacetime; however, approval authority for peacetime awards is not delegated to field commanders.



f. Order of precedence and wear of decorations is contained in Army Regulation (AR) 670-1. Policy for awards, approving authority, supply, and issue of decorations is contained in AR 600-8-22.

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ASIATIC PACIFIC CAMPAIGN MEDAL

Authorized on November 6, 1942 and amended on March 15, 1946. Awarded to members of the U.S. Armed Forces for at least 30 consecutive (60 nonconsecutive) days service (less if in combat) within the Asiatic-Pacific Theater between December 7, 1941 and March 2, 1946.



The front of the medal shows a palm tree amidst troops with an aircraft overhead and an aircraft carrier, battleship and submarine in the background. The reverse has the American eagle, symbolizing power, on a rock, symbolizing stability, with the inscription, "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA" on the eagle's back. The orange yellow of the ribbon represents Asia while the white and red stripes toward each edge represent Japan. The center blue, white and red thin stripes are taken from the American Defense Service Medal, referring to America's continued defense preparedness after Pearl Harbor. A bronze star denoted participation in a campaign. A silver star attachment is used to represent five bronze stars. An arrowhead attachment is authorized by the Army and Air Force for participation in a combat parachute jump, combat glider landing or amphibious assault landing (only one arrowhead may be worn on the medal/ribbon despite the number of qualification events). The ribbon is worn with the center blue stripe on the wearer's right.

Designated Army & AAF campaigns for the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal are:

Burma, 1941-1942 ★

Philippine Islands, 1941-1942

Central Pacific, 1941-1943

East Indies, 1942

Aleutian Islands, 1942-1943

Guadalcanal, 1942-1943

Papua, 1942-1943

Air Offensive, Japan, 1942-1945

China Defensive, 1942-1945

India-Burma, 1942-1945 ★

Bismark Archipelago, 1943-1944

New Guinea, 1943-1944

Northern Solomons, 1943-1944

Eastern Mandates (Air), 1943-1944

Eastern Mandates (Ground), 1944

Leyte, 1944-1945

Luzon, 1944-1945

Western Pacific, 1944-1945

Central Burma, 1945

China Offensive, 1945

Ryukyus, 1945

Southern Philippines, 1945

Air Combat, 1941-1945

Antisubmarine, 1941-1945

Ground Combat, 1941-1945

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WWII Victory Medal



1. Description: The bronze medal is 1 3/8 inches in width. On the obverse is a figure of Liberation standing full length with head turned to dexter looking to the dawn of a new day, right foot resting on a war god's helmet with the hilt of a broken sword in the right hand and the broken blade in the left hand, the inscription "WORLD WAR II" placed immediately below the center. On the reverse are the inscriptions "FREEDOM FROM FEAR AND WANT" and "FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND RELIGION" separated by a palm branch, all within a circle composed of the words "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 1914 1945".

2. Ribbon: The ribbon is 1 3/8 inches wide and consists of the following stripes: 3/8 inch double rainbow in juxtaposition (blues, greens, yellows, reds (center), yellows greens and blues); 1/32 inch White 67101; center 9/16 inch Old Glory Red 67156; 1/32 inch White; and 3/8 inch double rainbow in juxtaposition. The rainbow on each side of the ribbon is a miniature of the pattern used in the WWI Victory Medal.

3. Criteria: The WW II Victory Medal was awarded to all military personnel for service between 7 December 1941 and 31 December 1946.

4. Components: The following are authorized components and related items:

a. Medal (regular size): MIL-DTL-3943/237. Medal set with full size medal and ribbon bar. NSN 8455-00-269-5782.

b. Medal (miniature): MIL-DTL-3943/237. Available commercially.

c. Ribbon: MIL-DTL-11589/149. NSN 8455-00-257-0577. Available commercially.

d. Streamer: The WW II Victory Medal ribbon is not used as a streamer by the Army. The Navy and Marine Corps does use the ribbon design for a streamer.

5. Background: a. The World War II Victory Medal was established by an Act of Congress on 6 July 1945 (Public Law 135, 79th Congress) and promulgated by Section V, War Department Bulletin 12, 1945.

b. The medal was designed by Mr. Thomas H. Jones and approved by the Secretary of War on 5 February 1946.

c. The Congressional authorization for the World War II Victory Medal included members of the Armed Forces of the Government of the Philippine Islands. It also specified the ending date would be the date of the termination of hostilities as proclaimed by the President. President Truman officially ended the state of hostilities on 31 December 1946.