

AAC & AAF Civil Primary Flying Schools 1939-1945

Part VI GLENDALE PRIMARY

by Robert F. Schirmer, Col. USAF (Ret.), Class of 40-A

Glendale, Calif. (Air Corps Training Detachment).
Grand Central Flying School, Grand Central Air Terminal (Estab. 1932).
Operator: Maj. C.C. (Mose) Moseley (1894-1974).
2nd AAF Flying Training Detachment (as of Aug. 41).

Preface—This school was one of the original nine civil contract primary schools in the Army's expansion program for pilots. The first class of 40-A had its start here with 37 students (all flying cadets) reporting for training on 1 July 1939.

Major Corliss C. Moseley, known as "Mose" to his friends, the civil operator of Grand Central Flying School in 1939, was the first airman to win the International Pulitzer Race trophy. That was in 1920, when he flew a plane sponsored by the late General Billy Mitchell and established a speed record of 176 mph.

Major Moseley had served in France during World War I with the U.S. Air Service; he was a member of the 27th Pursuit Squadron, of the first Pursuit Group, along with Rickenbacker, Luke, Quentin Roosevelt and other top pilots.

After the war and until his resignation from the Army in 1925, Moseley was in charge of all Air Service schools for a time and also served as a test pilot for all new types of Army planes developed and built at the Engineering Division, Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio.

He organized the original Western Air Express Corporation, one of the first commercial carriers of mail in the U.S. He was responsible for organizing the California Air National Guard.

John Underwood says in his *Madcaps, Millionaires and "Mose"*: "General Arnold and Major Moseley, having served together in the immediate post-World War I years, were the best of friends. Moseley's participation in the proposed civilian primary flying training program was not only desired, it was expected. Arnold needed administrators he could trust and count on to perform. The program was an experiment in the fullest sense.

"The contractors were being asked to throw in with Arnold, knowing full well that appropriations had yet to be voted on. There was no guarantee they would even recover their own not inconsequential investments."

Grand Central Flying School—Moseley supervised the Curtiss-Wright Technical Institute at the Grand Central Air Terminal, Glendale, California, in 1939, and had been the supervisor since 1929 when it was started.

But Moseley did not have a flying school at the time and could not be an Army contractor for the expanded pilot training program until he had one. Students desiring to fly who came to Curtiss-Wright Tech Institute, were sent across the field (Grand Central Air Terminal) to Joe Plosser whose

Grand Central Flying School had exclusive rights to conduct any flight training at Glendale. Plosser had formed his school in 1932.

The upshot of this situation was that Moseley worked out a joint venture with Plosser. The Air Corps contract was secured using Plosser's Grand Central Flying School as the base of operations.

The partnership never functioned as such. The school was to be staffed with Air Corps reservists, for one thing, and Plosser was not willing to let his non-military instructors go. They went their separate ways and Moseley ended up with the Grand Central Flying School. It was a takeover in name only. Plosser retained his staff, facilities, and equipment and simply changed the name of the business to the Joe Plosser Air College. (*Ed. note: I am indebted to John Underwood's book for the above explanation.*)

How Class 40-A Trained at Glendale, 1939—"I recall the day, July 1, 1939, that the bus picked up the cadets at the casino (where we lived) and hauled us across the field to the long row of training planes. The Stearman PT-13As, with Lycoming R-680-7 radial engines, were lined up with mathematical precision in the old Army Air Corps style. There couldn't have been less than 15. [*Actually there were 12; see accompanying photo. —Author*] The aircraft appeared to be new, and the sight of all identical ships with the blue and orange paint in spotless condition was enough to boggle the mind of any truly airplane-worshipful 20-year-old.

"Grand Central Air Terminal and its long concrete runway was our home field, but only the first takeoff and last landing of the training days were made there. The field was an airline airport and American Airways (now Airlines) and Compania Mexicana de Aviacion used it as a terminus. Each instructor took one cadet and each pair was assigned to a primary trainer. All the planes would be cranked up at one time and the long line would taxi out and take off at close intervals. In tandem, the line would thread a route out through the San Fernando Valley, avoiding another airline airport at Burbank, also at Van Nuys, and end up at the auxiliary field known as Chatsworth. This was about a mile square of thickly dust-covered earth, with high trees on three sides. All the training flying was done at Chatsworth with precisely drawn boundaries for the various zones. At the end of the day, with all cadets and instructors covered with dust, the 21-mile trek back to Grand Central would begin. Most of the instructors were ex-military pilots and would let off steam by flying formation and doing aerobatics on the trip home.

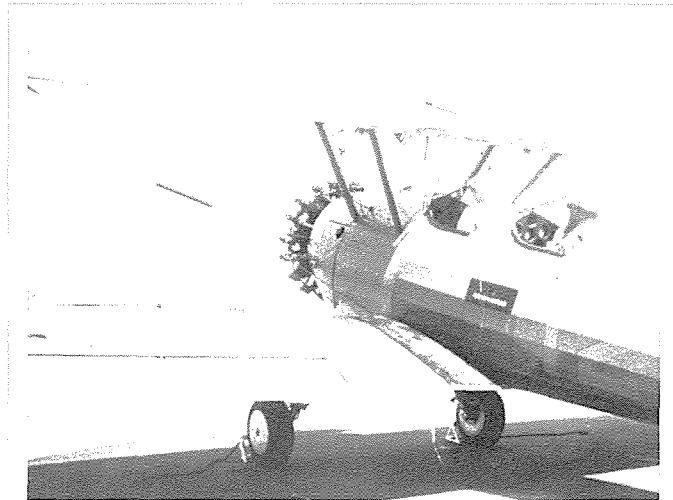
"Our cadet housing was a large building which had functioned as a gambling casino for many years. The main room



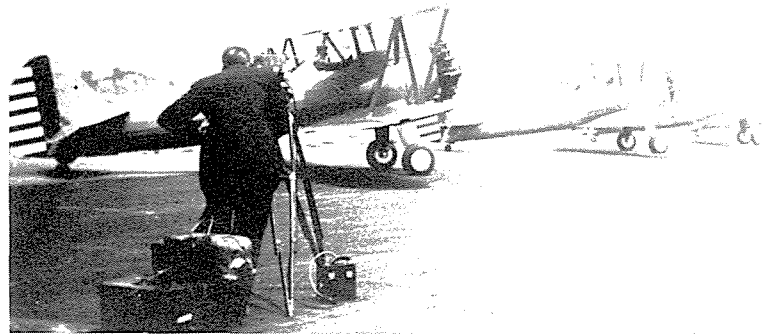
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- 1 Major C.C. Moseley, owner/operator, Grand Central Flying School, Glendale, California, 1939. (Photo from Glendale Community Book, 1957)
- 2 Our operations building at Grand Central Flying School, Glendale, California, 1939. (Photo from Getchel, 40-A)
- 3 Grand Central Flying School, Glendale Primary, California. Note camera crews, one left foreground and another on top of a car in right distance taking publicity shots for the Air Corps. (Photo from Getchel, 40-A)
- 4 Stearman PT-13 (No. 12) warming up on ramp, preparing for training flight. Photo taken in July-August 1939 of Class 40-A. (Photo from Getchel, 40-A)
- 5 This photo of George Cantello was taken by one of his 40-A classmates, Russell W. Getchel, a close friend while they were flying cadets at Grand Central Flying School, Glendale, California, in 1939.



Grand Central Flying School, Grand Central Air Terminal, Glendale, California, September 1939. Classes 40-A and 40-B lined up for inspection by A.C. Det. Officer. (Photo: Quinn, 40-A Collection)

which contained all the bunk beds for the cadets had a ceiling which we will all remember. It was covered with very artistic paintings of voluptuous and nude females, gamboling around the scenery. All the upper bunk occupants had an unobstructed view of these babes and as a result the last thought before sleep at night and the first one in the morning were of a very carnal nature.

"The food at Glendale was excellent, far above anything we had subsequently at Randolph or Kelly. Our flying commander was a Captain Edwin Day, a short and rotund individual, and very well liked by the cadets. He obviously liked to eat and he was often seen checking the kitchen at noon and ascertaining that everyone was getting all the food they could handle. The casino was across the runway from the airline terminal. It was at the foot of the Hollywood Hills and a few yards from the present Golden State Freeway. There was a swimming pool and all the blandishments of Southern California just around the corner. It was a sort of idyllic summer.

"Captain Day flew with all the cadets at one time or another. A check ride with him was something else. After determining whether or not the cadet was up to standard at that point, he would pat his head in the old 'I've got it' sign and give the cadet a real demonstration of what could be done with a Stearman by an expert. It was a linked series of maneuvers done so damn smoothly and without hardly any loss of altitude you couldn't help but be impressed to the utmost. And all the while he would have a big grin on his face.

"Captain Day's assistant in the flying department at Glendale was a dour, misanthropic loner by the name of Lieutenant Raybold. He would often buzz into Chatsworth in the detachment's BC-1 and give a number of check rides. It always seemed that the wash-out rides fell to this individual. When he would depart Chatsworth, he managed to churn up enough dust with the BC-1 to blot out the sun for a long time. The instructors used to cuss this guy loudly and longly.

"The prime contractor at Glendale was C.C. Moseley, and thereby hangs another tale. Major 'Mose' as he was popularly known was a famous aviation figure in his own right. He had been a well-known Army Air Service test pilot at McCook Field (presently Wright-Patterson AFB). Subsequently he, along with four other pilots, pioneered the Air Mail operation



Original nine Civil Primary Schools of 1939. Western District included Santa Maria, Glendale and San Diego. Central District included East St. Louis, Glenview (Illinois), and Lincoln, Nebraska. The other three schools at Tuscaloosa, Tulsa and Dallas were controlled by Hq. AC Training Center, Randolph Field, Texas.

between Los Angeles and Salt Lake City. They flew the big Douglas M-2 biplanes with open cockpits and liquid-cooled *Liberty* engines, through fair weather and foul, winter and summer. Major Moseley was a great guy. He was sincerely interested in the welfare and flying progress of all the cadets. It was tough to get him to talk about his own exploits, but we tried. Southern California was, and is now, the focal point for more aviation interest than all the other states combined. Our every move at Glendale made all the newspapers, and Major Moseley was a hero there to the day he died." (End of statement: 17 Apr. 1987.) (*According to our Class 40-A History, Hummel retired as an airline captain of Braniff Airways with 21,000 flying hours, six million miles, with 32 years of service to both Panagra/Pan Am and Braniff. —Author.*)

Instructor's School at Randolph Field, 1939—In February 1939, the Air Corps Training Center decided that approximately 125 student civilian instructors who had been selected to train the first class of flying cadets at the nine civil primary schools would be sent to Randolph Field for a special flying instructor course (called a "refresher"). Details of the results of this training course are set forth in the article including *Lincoln Primary*. Three classes were conducted. Certificates of Proficiency were granted to 138 students, while 75 students failed this refresher course.

Grand Central Flying School, July 1939—Summary of staff, cadets of 40-A, civilian school officials/staff and training aircraft:

Detachment Commander: Capt. Edwin M. Day, A.C.

Adjutant: 1st Lt. W.B. Offutt, A.C.

Commandant of Cadets: 1st Lt. Leslie Raybold, A.C.

Medical Officer: Lt. Col. Andrew W. Smith, M.C.

List of students, Class 40-A: Quota, 38 students (actually 37 for 40-A):

- 1) Brafford, Thomas B. 2) Brandon, Donald K. 3) Briggs, Loran D. 4) Brown, George E. 5) Burleigh, Alex E. 6) Campbell, Roland A. 7) Cantello, George. 8) Casey, Leroy V. 9) Frost, Frank W. 10) Gretchel, Russell W. 11) Hanson, Robert T. 12) Heath, Joe E. 13) Hummel, Ernest B. 14) Johnstone, Charles W. 15) Jones, Wilson T. 16) Lamothe, Charles J. 17) Lamson, Robert T. 18) Lebailly, Eugene B. 19) Mahony, Grant. 20) McLeod, Robert M. 21) Nims, Frank L. 22)

Quinn, Elwyn F. 23) Smith, Hall F. 24) Thomas, Jay P. 25) Thompson, John A. (Plus 12 others who were eliminated, 11 in Primary and 1 in Advanced.)

Flying Equipment: 12 Stearman PT-13s.

Operator/President: Maj. C.C. Moseley (1894-1974).

Head of Faculty: Capt. Harry C. Claiborne, ACR.

Head of Ground School: Lewis Holmes.

Director of Flying: Art Strunk, Lt. ACR.

Chief Instructor: Ralph Thorne.

Flying Instructors: Capt. L.S. Heral, ACR; Lts. George S. Sanford, W.H. Clark; W.S. Eliot, Arthur Strunk, John E. Nunn, Henry G. Reynolds, all ACR; Lts. Wm. Stansbury, R.S. Garrison, A.N. Kelly and W.F. Hausman (all Navy Reserve). Also Floyd E. Barlow (?).

Ground Course Instructors: Dr. Irving Krick, I. Gringerton, C.S. Williams, Charles A. Zweng, Merlin H. Gale, J.R. Roth, Anton Lygum, Rex Finney, L.L. Loomis, F.M. Cole and Ralph Thorne. (Data on Flight Instructors from Hummel, 40-A.)

The Army personnel consisted of all of two officers, Captain Edwin W. 'Bunky' Day and 1st Lieutenant Leslie Raybold. Also, making his headquarters here was Captain Kenneth D. McNaughton, who was Western District Supervisor for the Army and who, in addition to general supervision of the Air Corps Detachment at Grand Central, supervised the other two A.C. detachments at San Diego (Ryan) and Santa Maria (Hancock). He reported to Randolph Field, then the Air Corps' only training center.

Class 40-A—Of the 37 students who showed up for the first class at Grand Central (Class 40-A), 11 flying cadets were eliminated and 26 cadets went on to Randolph Field for Basic Flying. None was eliminated in Basic, but one more cadet was

lost in Advanced at Kelly, leaving 25 to graduate. Overall elimination rate for the entire nine months of training was 32.5 percent, or a graduation rate of 67.5 percent.

Glendale Primary, 1939-1941—When Major Moseley opened his first Army primary school at Glendale, California, the original instructors were Reserve officers in the Army or Navy. But, with the coming of war that was completely changed. Overage pilots who could pass the Army refresher course were recruited to teach the aviation cadets.

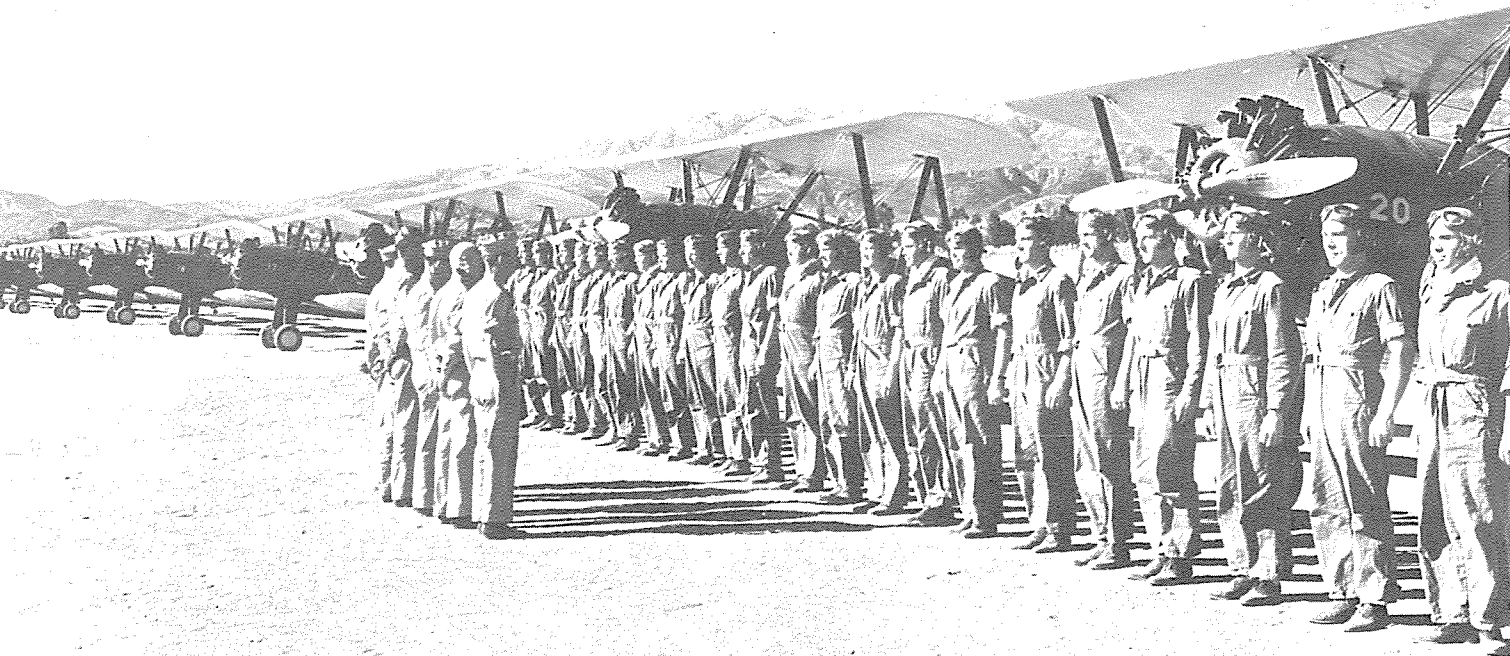
Many overage pilots tried without success to get into the AAF to fight in the air in World War II. They were told time and again that their experience would be far more valuable training younger men to fly. In every section of the country old veterans accepted jobs as flight instructors in the civilian contract schools. Some did it gladly, others with resignation. The idea of being "on the shelf" hurt, and was a natural feeling. Yet actually the vets were not on the shelf at all. Their work as instructors surpassed in importance the flying job of any one individual combat pilot. They were contributing not the skill of one pilot but the combined skills of many.

Noise Complaints—Frank B. Howe, an official of Grand Central Flying School, tells a story about civilian complaints about noise generated by the primary training planes in Southern California in 1939. (Class 40-A in training.)

"... We had established an auxiliary field near Northridge in the San Fernando Valley. In short order, a movie director started yelling to heaven that the 'deafening noise' of the training airplanes (actually the putt-putt of Boeing Kaydets) was distracting his blooded horses. He attracted quite a following among small ranchers who said their hens were being so frightened that they ceased to lay eggs.

"So we moved the auxiliary field to an isolated place south of Reseda. Again the howls came. We were making it impossible for a certain movie outfit to take pictures at its 'ranch.' We were scaring chickens. We were a menace to civilization.

Twelve Stearman PT-13s lined up behind Class 40-A (26 strong), July 1939, at Glendale, California. (Photo: Getchel, 40-A)





(That was before the days when it was patriotic or fashionable to support the Air Corps.)

"Despite a courageous pair of Valley editors, Jimmy Lintner of Canoga Park, who dared the wrath of the critics by running a banner line across the entire front page saying: 'Better the Star in the Circle Over San Fernando Valley than the Swastika; and John Hungerford of Reseda, a World War I veteran, who really took his neighbors to pieces editorially, we were hailed before the Los Angeles City Planning Commission.

"After a dozen hearings, the august commission passed the buck to the City Council which conducted an elaborate 'hearing' which was packed to the guards. We were supported in ringing speeches by numerous prominent American Legion commanders and others; the opposition, by a high-priced movie lawyer. We never had a chance. The City Council voted 12 to 3 to oust the Air Corps training from San Fernando Valley."

Here in part is the editorial from the Reseda (Calif.) *News* of October 6, 1939, in which editor and publisher John Hungerford "took his neighbors to pieces." It read:

"All that hollering about the Army planes being a nuisance was enough to make the ordinary citizen who has any respect for his country get hot under the collar. These complaints about the chickens being so scared they wouldn't lay and those stories about pure-blooded horses shivering from fright were too much to swallow. However, they were sufficient to make the Army hunt up another site rather than permit the squawks to go on.

"It's hard to see what difference it makes where the Army

field happens to be. People might as well make up their minds that the Army is going to train pilots in some place and regardless of where that place happens to be someone is going to be inconvenienced. . . ."

Such inconvenience, happily, was accepted without complaint by the great majority near whose localities the new airports were built. Sites for the training bases were selected for the most part in the isolated sections, in the desert, on the plains, away from towns.

Program Objectives—The new Air Corps Pilot Training Program was initially designed to graduate 2,134 pilots by 1 January 1941, and provided for new classes to be constituted at intervals of six weeks, starting 1 July 1939. Students who washed out would be given a second chance to qualify for flying as navigators and bombardiers. It was understood then that the contract program would last only as long as it took to bring the Air Corps up to strength. No one dreamed that it would not end until 240,000 pilots had been trained.

The CAA Civilian Pilot Training Program—In the meantime, the Civil Aeronautics Administration (now the FAA) had implemented an experiment of its own in the interest of national defense: namely, the Civilian Pilot Training Program (CPT). The idea was to create a pool of college-trained pilots, male and female, which could be drawn upon in a national emergency. The Air Corps and the Navy, of course, would have first call on their services. Thirteen colleges and universities were recruited to participate in the training of some 300 hand-picked students. This was carried out in the spring of 1939 with great success. The next step was to train 10,000 pilots and \$4 million was budgeted by the CAA for that

Dunking newly soloed flying cadet in the swimming pool at Glendale Primary, Grand Central Flying School, 1939. (Photo from Getchel, 40-A)

Grand Central Flying School (July-Sept. 1939). This truck and trailer was used to transport 40-A cadets from Grand Central Air Terminal in Glendale to an auxiliary field for flying training about 16 miles away near Chatsworth. All cadets who weren't scheduled to fly during the first flying period used this transportation, which the cadets dubbed "The Flying Fortress," to get to Chatsworth Auxiliary Field. No flying was done by students at Grand Central Air Terminal itself due to the large amount of air traffic; however, they were allowed to make some landings and takeoffs at the beginning and end of each flying period later when they reached a certain proficiency. This trailer was also used as their Field Operations Office while at Chatsworth. Shown in the picture are, left to right: Ben LeBaillly just getting out of the trailer, Alex Burleigh, and far right, Elwyn F. Quinn. (Photo Courtesy of Quinn, CyLaTour Photo)



purpose. Glendale Junior College was among the 300 schools picked to administer the program. Approximately 50,000 pilots were eventually trained under this CPT program, 10 percent of which were non-college. (*Ed. note: One of Class 40-A members, Robert B. Coen, who took his primary at Lincoln, Nebraska Primary, was in the CPT program before enlisting in the Air Corps.*)

History of Grand Central—Grand Central Air Terminal, which had been leased from Curtiss-Wright since 1934, was purchased outright by Major Moseley in June 1944. At that time, the "Air Terminal" was dropped in favor of "Airport." It had ceased to function as a terminal when Mexicana moved out some months earlier. Curtiss-Wright Technical Institute, having completed the training of the last class of Air Corps mechanics, became Cal-Aero Technical Institute. The name-changing was largely administrative and did not involve the contract flying schools. Pilot training had been greatly curtailed and was soon to be phased out altogether at Grand Central Airport. Also, war production was winding down in the fall of 1944.

The terminal had opened in 1923 and was used extensively for aviation scenes in early Hollywood films. In 1929, Charles Lindbergh piloted the first transcontinental flight from there, a trip to New York. On board that day were movie stars Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., among other celebrities. Amelia Earhart used the airport frequently. And Howard Hughes built his first plane, then the world's fastest, in Glendale in the early '30s.

The airport was busy then, but began to lose business later in the 1930s with the opening of Mines Field (now Los Ange-

les International Airport) and Union Air Terminal (now Burbank Airport). The Glendale airfield was a training site for thousands of Air Corps cadets and civilian recruits from Britain's Royal Air Force during World War II.

Reference is made here to the cover of the *AAHS Journal* for Summer 1983 (Vol. 28, No. 2) for the excellent color rendition by artist Neil Jacobs of Grand Central Air Terminal where Moseley's Grand Central Flying School first operated.

By 1955, "Mose" was a very rich man, having sold the Grand Central Air Terminal for \$16 million. Later in the 1970s, the terminal became an industrial center. But efforts were made to convert the old buildings of the terminal into an aviation museum to revive the memory of Grand Central which served as the main airport for the Los Angeles area during the '20s and '30s. John Underwood, the writer, says that Grand Central was the cradle of the airline industry.

Major Moseley's Schools, 1939-1945—In July 1939, when Class 40-A reported, American pilot training began at the Grand Central Air Terminal, Glendale, California.

In August 1940, the training of American cadets was shifted to the Ontario field, and Major Moseley began training volunteers for the American Eagle Squadron in November 1940 at Glendale (Grand Central Air Terminal).

On 4 June 1941, the first British RAF cadets began training at Glendale, which became No. 2 British Flying Training School.

On 20 August 1941, the first British RAF cadets were sent to War Eagle Field at Lancaster, California, and then that school site was designated Polaris Flight Academy.

In December 1941, the refresher training of recruits for the American Eagle Squadron was also moved from Glendale to War Eagle Field at Lancaster, California.

Grand Central Flying School, Grand Central Air Terminal, Glendale, California, produced a total of 467 pilots from 1939 to 1941, when it was discontinued.

Following Pearl Harbor, Major Moseley, at the request of the Hqs. Western Flying Training Command, started Basic Training of cadets at Ontario (Cal-Aero Academy) along with the Elementary Cadet Training on 22 March 1941. And the first American Cadets began arriving at Polaris Flight Academy, Lancaster, California, on 8 August 1942, for their Basic Flight Training, along with elementary training.

On 27 July 1944, the basic flight training program at Polaris Flight Academy was stopped and Polaris Flight Academy was closed. Then Mira Loma Flight Academy moved from Oxnard to Lancaster to provide primary flight training in the better facilities of War Eagle Field.

In October 1944, Cal-Aero Flight Academy at Ontario was closed, leaving only Mira Loma at War Eagle Field operating. On 4 August 1945, Mira Loma Flight Academy closed its doors, ending five years of flight training at War Eagle Field.

Ground School Instruction at Grand Central Flying School (Article from the Glendale Newspaper, dated September 12, 1939. George E. Brown Collection)

"Someday he may pilot a heavy bomber through anti-aircraft fire. Or, he may be playing around in a dogfight where much more is at stake than his life. So, he must have special preparation—plus. Sixty-four fledgling Army Air Corps pilots are finding this out today as they pursue their intensive training at the Grand Central Air School.

"Not only must they learn how to operate a plane but they must know how the engine is built, how to read maps for cross-country flying, how to wear parachutes scientifically without being conscious of their presence and how to do logarithms and operate a slide rule.

"The novelty of the adventure has worn off. Today they swing into the 6 A.M. to 8:30 P.M. routine hardened physically, alert mentally and with a serious realization that they are face to face with an unusual opportunity.

"An hour and a half a day they fly in the dual-controlled planes. Half of the faculty of 25 experts teaches flying. But 45 minutes each half day in the air is a small part of the strenuous program. An intensive system of thorough instruction is given by the other half of the faculty in classrooms of the Curtiss Technical Institute on the other side of the Grand Central Air Terminal from the barracks.

"Courses are being given in airplane engines, maps and air navigation, meteorology, airplane construction, federal aids to air navigation, personal hygiene, theory of flight, mathematics and parachute instruction.

"Major C.C. Moseley, head of the Grand Central School, has assembled in addition to the expert teachers of flying, a group of equally proficient instructors for the ground school courses.

Meteorology: Dr. Irving Krick of the California Institute of Technology; and Mr. Irving Gringorton, graduate of Mass. Institute of Tech.

Navigation: Mr. Clarence S. Williams, who plotted many of Amelia Earhart's flights; also, flights for Art Goebel and Roscoe Turner. He's a LCdr., USNR.

Theory of Flight: Mr. Charles A. Zweng of Grand Central Air Terminal; author of a book on aerodynamics.

Algebra, Trig and Math: Mr. Merlin H. Gale, graduate of University of Cincinnati; John R. Roth, of Curtiss Technical Institute.

Military Hygiene: Dr. Reynolds Smith, Capt., Calif. National Guard Reserve.

Federal Aids to Flying: Mr. Anton Lygum, Grand Central Air Terminal certified by the Civil Aeronautics Authority, who directs all air traffic for the student instruction at the airport.

Parachute Rigging: Mr. Rex Finney, who has made more than 120 parachute jumps since 1930.

Airplane Construction: Mr. Lester L. Lollis, former Army instructor in airplane maintenance.

Airplane Engines: Mr. F.M. Cole, eight years with the Curtiss Technical Institute.

Chief Instructor: Mr. Ralph Thorne of the Curtiss Technical Institute; formerly with Ryan Corp. of San Diego before and after the flight of Lindbergh.

Head of Ground School: Mr. Lewis Holmes, 10 years with the Curtiss Institute."

Contracts—The original contract between the Army Air Force and Grand Central Flying School at Glendale was dated 19 June 1939 (W535-ac-12875), which called for not more than 45 students and using no more than 15 PT-13s for flying training.

The second contract was awarded on 15 July 1940, and called for a maximum of 325 students for all three Moseley schools at Glendale, Ontario and Oxnard, California.

Changes in 1940—The Cal-Aero School at Glendale (for-

merly Grand Central Flying School) was transferred in August 1940 to Ontario which replaced Glendale. However, Glendale continued in operation training British cadets and also volunteers for the American Eagle Squadron until August and December 1941 respectively. The British cadets moved over to Lancaster in August 1941; the American Eagle Squadron moved there, too, in December.

First Cadets—From the April 1944 *BULAERO*, published by the Aviation Schools of Major C.C. Moseley of Glendale, an article by Frank B. Howe reads in part: ". . . On 1 July 1939, the first class of cadets arrived at Grand Central Flying School (subsequently renamed Cal-Aero and then moved to Ontario, California, in 1940). There were all of 37 men in '40-A', and they were housed in what had been the old Airport Garden Club on the west side of the airport."

British Award—For the training of RAF cadets during 1941–1944, the British Air Ministry awarded Major C.C. Moseley THE MOST EXCELLENT ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE—OFFICER GRADE. Photo of this decoration with description appears in the Summer 1991 issue of the *AAHS Journal*, page 145.

A total of 401 RAF cadets and 81 Eagle Squadron pilots was graduated from the two Moseley schools at Lancaster and Ontario, California.

Memorial to First Lieutenant Cantello—Lt. George Cantello, A.C. Reserve, Class of 40-A, was killed in June 1942 in a night takeoff crash of his P-400/P-39 *Airacobra* fighter plane while engaged in a mission against a Japanese submarine which was reported to be in the harbor at Sydney, Australia.

George is being honored by the Liverpool City Council of New South Wales, Australia (near Sydney) by having a new highway (Cantello Highway) named for him, and a newly developed area to be known as Cantello Reserve. A model of his plane is to be erected on a pedestal at the crash site in his memory sometime in 1985. He is now buried in the National Cemetery of the Pacific, Honolulu, Hawaii. He was first buried in Botany Cemetery, Sydney, Australia, on 10 June 1942, a few days after his fatal crash.

CLASS 40-A PROFILES

Replies to the question: "What Circumstances Led to Your Applying for Flying Cadet Training in the Army Air Corps?"

Lt. Col. Russell W. Getchel—"In the winter of 1938 I was enlisted in the Army Air Corps at Selfridge Field, Mt. Clemens, Michigan. Notices were posted on the various bulletin boards throughout the squadrons announcing the opportunity to take written and physical exams for entry into Flying Cadet training. I immediately applied and was very fortunate to pass and receive an appointment. I do not know how many at Selfridge took these exams at that time. However, George Cantello, Jerry Keenan and Tommy Beavers were among those who were appointed along with me. Tommy Beavers was washed out in Primary, but the rest of us made it." (End of statement.)

Airline Captain Ernest B. Hummel, Panagra/Braniff—"I graduated from South Dakota School of Mines and Technology in 1935. Since the Great Depression was hardly over and times were still tough, positions in the profession were scarce as hell; however, one did open up in a West Coast lead



Grand Central Flying School, ground school parachute rigging class, Class 40-A cadets, July-September 1939. Left to right: G.E. Brown, unknown, Rex Finney, instructor, R.M. McLeod, W.T. Jones, E.F. Quinn; (next three unidentified); Fred Shumacher; at extreme end in white sweater, G. Mahony; next right, T. Bafford; C.J. Lamothe (against wall); J.A. Thompson (in front of Bafford); J.P. Thomas; next full face, Loran D. Briggs; next two cadets unidentified; back next to wall, L.V. Casey; last four on right are, F. Frost, R.A. Campbell, B. Thomas and C.W. Johnstone, Instructor Rex C. Finney. (Photo from Quinn Collection)



Class 40-A cadets at flying training field (ex-grain field), Chatsworth, California, July 1939. Left to right: Russell W. Getchel, Instructor Clark (Lt. USNR), Gordon Shields, Fred L. Shumacher (immediately behind Shields), Instructor John Nuhn (Lt. ACR), Robert T. Lamson, Instructor Garrison (sitting on back of bench), Instructor Hausman (also sitting on bench back), Jerry H. Garfinkle (head turned, immediately back of Mr. Hausman), George E. Brown, Bert Thomas, Elwyn F. Quinn, Lawrence J. Perret, Wilson T. Jones, Hall F. Smith, two instructors sitting on bench in front are Lt. Sanford and Art Strunk (Lt. ACR). (Photo from Quinn Collection)

smelter. The plant and its associated chemistry laboratory were just about the unhealthiest places to work in all creation. OSHA would have shut them down in nothing flat! After four years and the contemplation of foreshortened longevity, a long-term interest in aviation began to erupt. The low overflight of formations of Martin B-9s from nearby Hamilton Field provided me with a continuous stimulus to do something, however wrong it might be. Changing professions at that point was a pretty heavy matter. The long line of prospective inductees entering the physical and psychological examining rooms at Hamilton looked ominous until it was noted that almost all of these healthy-looking individuals were leaving via a side door after having been busted for one reason or another. There was no choice of training school location offered, but Grand Central at Glendale turned out to be one of the best." (End of statement.)

Colonel Charles W. Johnstone—"I was graduated from the University of Nevada, May 1939, as the ROTC Honor Graduate, which stipulated a granting of a regular commission in the U.S. Army, Infantry. This program included being called to active duty, at the Presidio, San Francisco, late in the summer of 1939. During the latter part of May, a friend of mine indicated he was going to Hamilton Field to take the physical exam for Flying Cadet, and I agreed to help him drive there.

"At Hamilton Field, the friend reported to the hospital for his physical. I went to the hospital waiting room and there, during the waiting period, I was approached by a Colonel Smith, U.S. Army Medical Corps. Colonel Smith asked me

what I was doing there, and after my explanation, asked why I didn't take the physical too? He informed me if I passed the physical, I would be signed up for Flying Cadets; and when called to active duty, I would be transferred from Flying Cadet status to 2nd Lt., Infantry, USA; and then would be placed on flying training status. That seemed to be a great idea and I enthusiastically agreed.

"In summary: 1. My friend failed his physical. I passed mine. 2. Colonel Smith didn't have the slightest concept about Army administration (or the regulations about going through training in grade). 3. I remained a cadet throughout my flying training. 4. After a competitive examination in 1942, I received a Regular Commission in the Army Air Corps." (End of statement.)

Colonel Wilson T. Jones—"George E. Brown and I were attending the University of Utah when a team of Army Air Corps Flying Cadet recruiters flew in and over in two sexy-looking O-47s. It touched an adventuresome chord in both of us, and I drove 500 miles in an old beat-up Harley-Davidson motorcycle from Salt Lake City to Denver, Colorado, for my physical. I sent my application to Washington, D.C., and took private lessons in a puddle jumper airplane. Then I switched to mathematics as my college major. And then I left school before graduation to head for Glendale, California, and primary training at Grand Central Flying School." (End of statement.)

Mr. Robert T. Lamson—"In 1937/38, I was attending the Boeing School of Aeronautics in Oakland, California. During a class in aerodynamics a visitor, Eddie Allen, a noted experi-

mental test pilot, told of his experiences as a military aviator and test pilot. He was in Oakland at that time to do the initial tests on Alan Lockheed's *Alcor*. I got to know Eddie and dreamed of getting into test flying myself. It was he who suggested that I apply to the Army Air Corps for military flight training and point towards getting into the flight testing program at Wright Field. I first applied in the spring of 1938, but finally received orders to report to the Grand Central Flying School at Glendale, California, in July of 1939." (End of statement.)

Lt. Gen. Eugene B. LeBailly—"My interest in flying began in about 1922, when a World War I *Jenny* biplane landed on our baseball field at Shoshone, Idaho, a small town located on the Snake River plains of southern Idaho. The population was only about 2,000 people. This is where I was born and spent my early youth.

"This *Jenny* was the first aircraft I had ever seen and I still clearly remember how the young pilot wore a leather jacket and a leather helmet with a squirrel tail fastened to the top of it.

"What an impression that pilot and that airplane made on me! My desire to fly began there.

"During the next few years, although my interest in flying remained, I just did not have the opportunity to see airplanes or any flying people.

"The next time my interest was aroused was at the Southern Branch of the University of Idaho at Pocatello. In 1935, two of my classmates tried to talk me into going to the Navy Flying School at Pensacola. A person only needed two years of

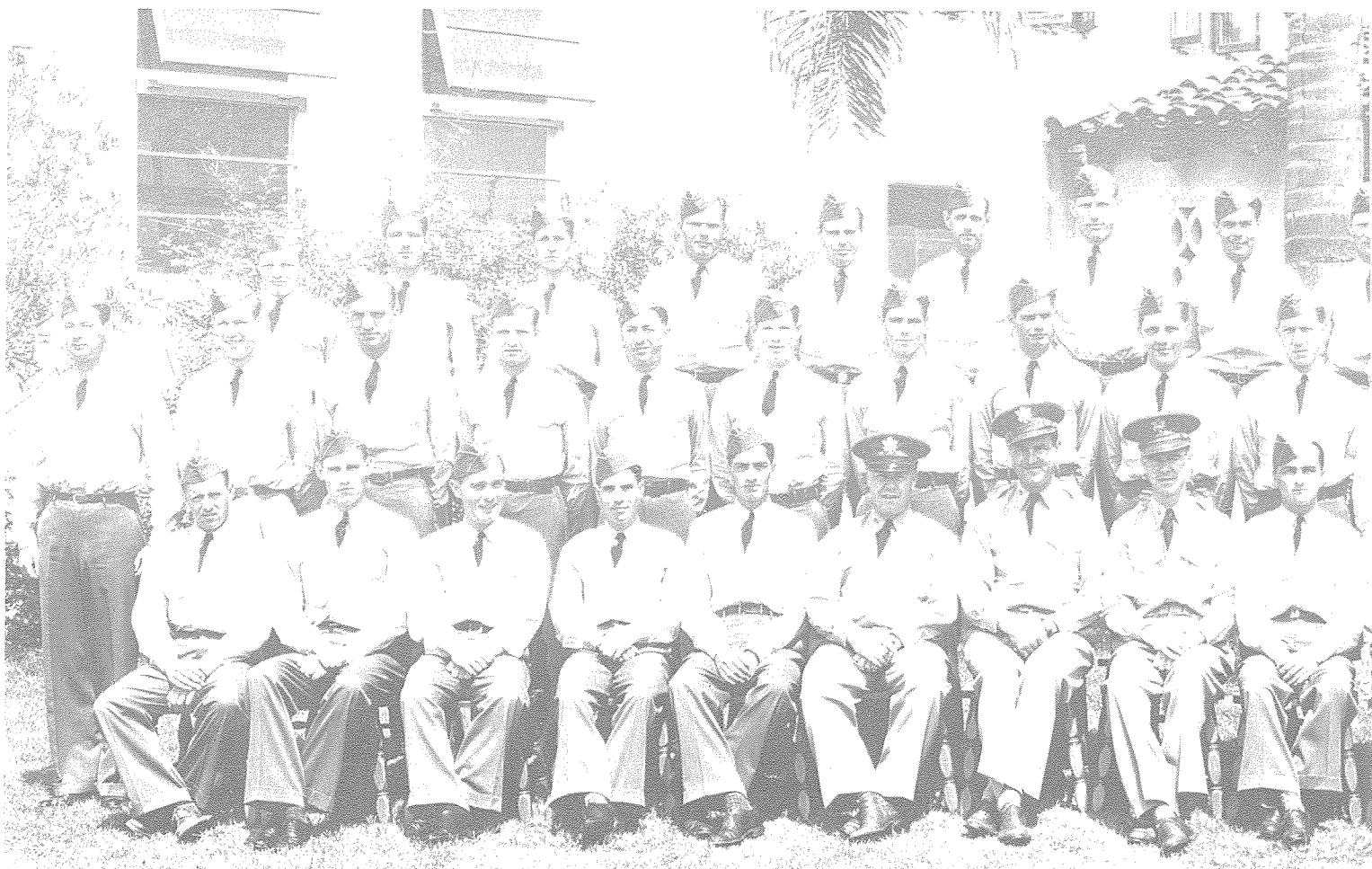
college to enter. But I decided to complete my work toward a degree first, especially after talking to Pan American personnel people. Pan American Airways was just beginning to receive considerable publicity with their proposed worldwide operations.

"In 1935, I had visited the Pan Am office at Treasure Island in San Francisco Bay. The advice I received from them in answer to my question, 'What background would be best for a young man to have in order to fly for Pan Am and then enter their management offices?' was: 'If a young man capable of passing a rigorous physical exam was to graduate from, for example, the University of California here at Berkeley, with a degree in Foreign Trade, then attended the Army or Navy flying school and received his wings, he would be just the kind of a man Pan Am prefers to hire.'

"That summer of '36 I transferred from Idaho to the University of California, changed my major from Geology to Foreign Trade and in 1939 I graduated from California with a B.S. in Foreign Trade, and enrolled in the U.S. Army Flying School with the Class of 40-A.

"Thirty-four years later I retired from the U.S. Air Force with over 8,000 pilot hours in 62 different types of aircraft after having lived in nine foreign countries.

"I have never regretted my decision to make flying my career and for staying in Military Aviation. I decided to stay in the Air Force because of three commanders I had during the World War II period. They were General Stuart P. Wright, who as a major was my first squadron commander; General John K. Gerhart, who was my immediate commander in



World War II; General John K. Gerhart, who was my immediate commander in World War II; and finally General Curtis LeMay, who was my 3rd Air Division Commander in the 8th Air Force in England. He personally led us on some of the toughest missions we flew.

"Until the final year of World War II, I still planned to fly with Pan Am when the war ended. It wasn't until World War II that I became interested in making my career in the U.S. Air Force.

"I have never regretted this decision—and am happy that I was lucky enough to join the Class of 40-A on that June day in 1939." (End of statement.)

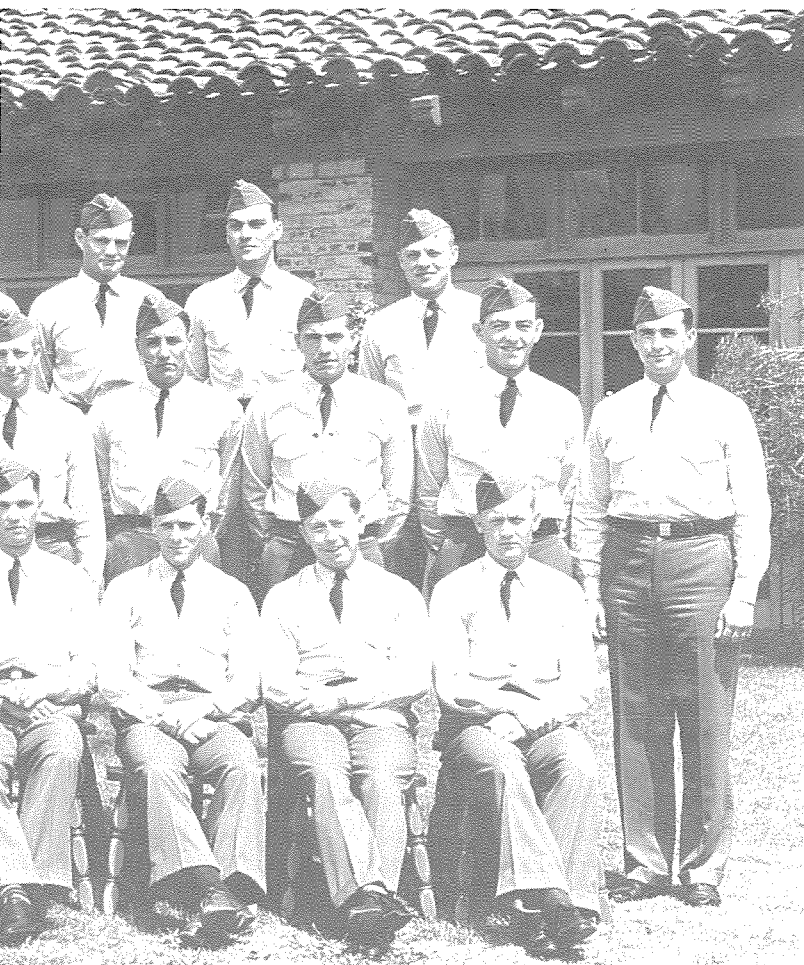
Colonel Robert M. McLeod—"While going to college (University of Nevada) in Reno, I worked evenings and all day Sundays at a Mobil gas service station. With that connection I became acquainted with the man who was the distributor of Mobil gas and related products in Reno. During summer vacations and Christmas vacations, I drove his gas truck delivering gasoline, etc., to service stations. We got along well and he offered me the job to run his distributorship after finishing college. He was going to install diesel power plants in some small town in Nevada to furnish the natives electric power, or cheaper power. I was agreeable.

"Meanwhile, I was friendly with a fellow student whose mother operated the Mt. Rose Arms, which was a Guest House catering generally to young women who would establish residence in Nevada preparatory to getting a divorce (six weeks was the required time). Besides meeting several of the young divorcees-to-be, I became acquainted with a gentle-

man from Oroville, California, who would come to Reno often to court a gal who was getting a divorce. I can't even remember his name right now, but his fiancée's name was Cuba, and she had a little boy about five years old. The man and I became quite friendly and got along well. He ran an accounting firm in Oroville, and since I was taking every accounting course at the University of Nevada, he offered me a job with him on graduation. That sounded like a good opportunity and I planned for it. I preferred that offer to the gas distribution offer.

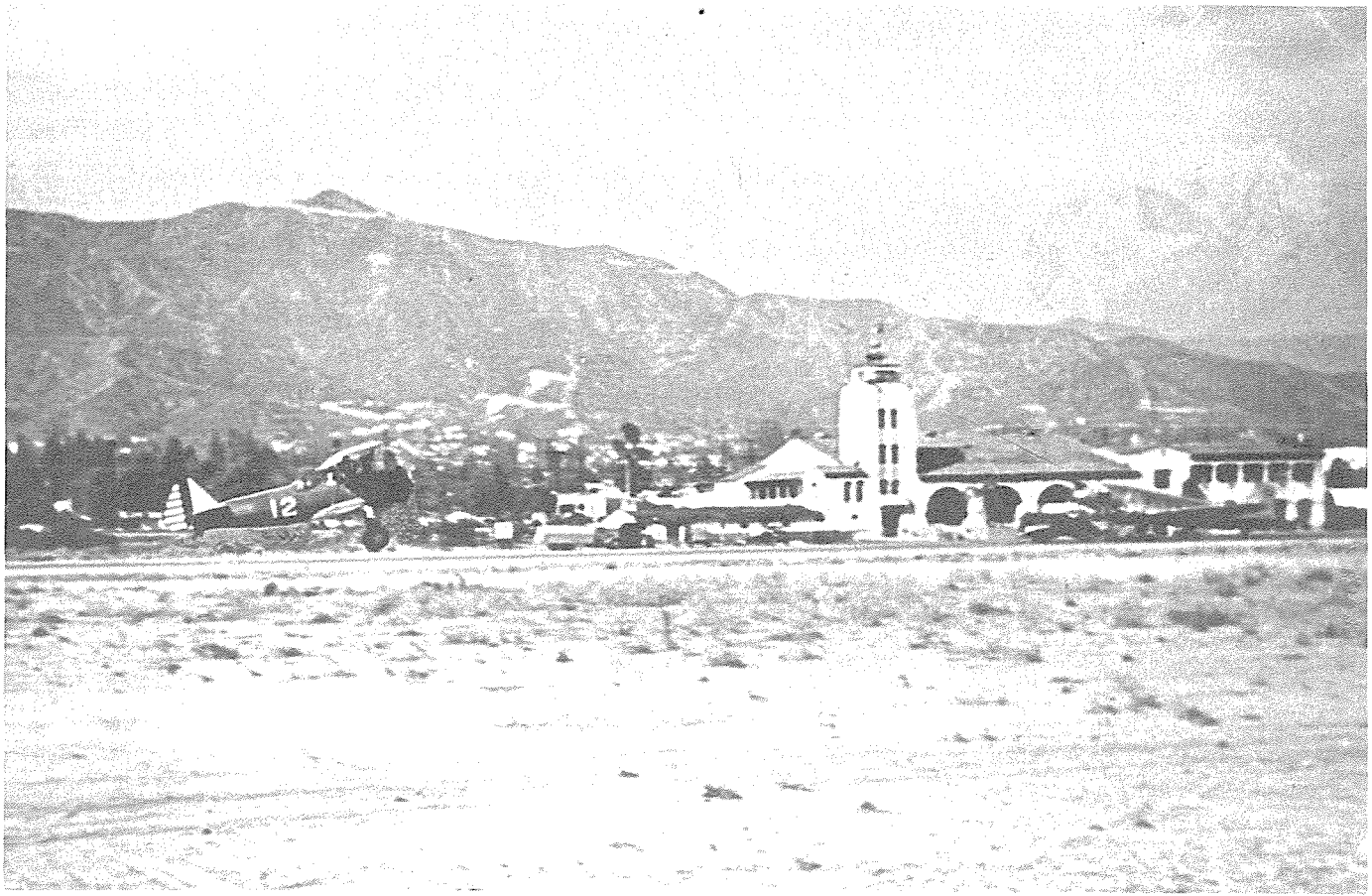
"The sheriff's office in Reno would buy gas and oil from the different companies: Shell, Standard, Richfield, etc., giving each a contract for a month at a time. During December 1938, Mobil had the sheriff's account, and I dumped a load of gasoline at the sheriff's office on my Christmas vacation. (In the meantime, Cuba got her divorce and she and my friend married and were doing well in Oroville.) After dumping the gas, I took the papers to the office for signature. While waiting in the sheriff's office, I looked around the room at all of the WANTED pictures. You know, bank robbers, rapists, etc., etc., and was very surprised to see the picture of my friend from Oroville and Cuba with a complete and good description of both, plus the five-year-old. It seems he (the accountant) had stolen some money from one of his clients. I told the officer that I knew the people and I was questioned at some length. But I never heard any more of them. Worst of all, there went my golden opportunity for a job.

"Shortly thereafter, the gas distributor job blew up because General Petroleum Corp. reduced my other friend's



Fortieth Anniversary Reunion, 21-23 March 1980, of the Grand Central Flying School. Left to right: Jones, McLeod, Lamothe, George Brown, Nims, Johnstone and Campbell (kneeling). Missing: John A. Thompson. Alive but not at reunion: Casey, Getchel, Heath, Hummel, Lamson, LeBailly, Edward Moore, Quinn and Hall F. Smith. (Class 40-A Photo)

Grand Central Flying School, Air Corps Training Detachment, Glendale, California, July-September 1939. Front row, left to right: Robert Peray, Tom R. Beavers, Lawrence J. Perret, Frank W. Frost, Bert Thomas, Capt. Edwin Day, commandant, Capt. Kenneth P. McNaughton, commandant of all three California Primary Training Schools, 1st Lt. Leslie Raybold, assistant to Capt. Day, Roland W. Bailey, LeRoy V. Casey, George E. Brown, Elwyn F. Quinn, Roland A. Campbell. Second row, left to right: James C. Hite, Fred L. Shumacher, Alex E. Burleigh, Wilson T. Jones, Thomas W. Bafford, Jerry H. Garfinkle, Grant Mahony, Robert W. Snyder, Jay P. Thomas, Kirk S. Fairhurst, Charles W. Johnstone, Charles J. Lamothe, Loran D. Briggs, Robert M. McLeod, Joe H. Heath. Back row, left to right: Gordon C. Shields, Robert T. Lamson, Robert T. Hanson, Donald K. Brandon, Hall F. Smith, Russell W. Getchel, Ernest B. Hummel, Eugene B. LeBailly, Frank L. Nims, Ray Oberhansley, George Cantello, John A. Thompson. (Photo from Quinn Collection)



"Dodo" landing No. 12, Stearman PT-13A at Glendale, California, Grand Central Flying School. Cadets lived behind the photographer, across the field from the terminal in 1939. (Photo from Hummel, 40-A)

markup of gas, etc., by about 25 percent, so he quit selling Mobil gas and there went that job, too!

"About Easter of 1939, a Flying Cadet examining team which was making the rounds of many universities visited the U. of Nev. campus for a week. I had heard of the team being there, but had no interest in applying. That is, until one day—a Friday and the last day of the team's visit in Reno—when a few of us were sitting around the fraternity house and the subject of Flying Cadet came up. One guy said something to the effect that there was no use in anyone taking the physical exam for cadets because no one could pass it. I thought I could and said so! Thus, on somewhat of a dare, I went for the exam. I was lucky because the team was almost packed up and nearly ready to go when I appeared. But they unpacked and examined me. I passed the exam! Early in June '39, I was invited to report to McClellan Field in Sacramento which I did. I was assigned to Grand Central Flying School for primary training. And you know the rest of the story.

"When in school I did not like the military. In fact, I took three years of ROTC in high school in order to be exempt from ROTC at the University of Nevada.

"It must seem unfair to some who had planned for years to fly and/or get into the Flying Cadet program and couldn't make it or if they did to later wash out. And then have some yard bum like me to literally fall into the program.

"It turned out to be a blessing for me because I liked every part of the Air Corps and Air Force. I have often told people

when asked if I liked the service, 'I never had a bad day in the service.' And I really and truly enjoyed flying. I was fortunate in that respect, too, because I was able to stay on flight status right up until I retired!" (End of statement.)

NOTABLE 40-A GRADUATES

(Then) 1st Lt. Grant Mahony—Won the Distinguished Service Cross. He volunteered to make a risky night reconnaissance flight in his P-40 in thick weather during a complete ground blackout and in the face of severe ground fire from strongly held positions. He secured information which was needed for a subsequent successful bombing attack. Again the following day, returning from a bombing mission near Legaspi in which he had destroyed an enemy flying boat and strafed an enemy-held radio station, he displayed exceptional courage, performing the highly dangerous feat of landing his airplane with bombs hanging from an improperly functioning bomb release in preference to bailing out. Grant had already shot down a Jap Navy *Zero* on 8 Dec. '41. He was awarded the DSC on 11 Dec. '41 by General MacArthur.

Later, Mahony shot down three Jap planes while stationed in Java, making a last-ditch stand against the invading Japanese. Then he went to India and China where on his second volunteered overseas combat tour of duty, he shot down his fifth enemy plane while assigned to the China Air Task Force. On 5 Jan. '45, he had been promoted to Lt. Col. and made Deputy Group Commander for the 8th Fighter Group, flying P-38s. He made a solo attack on an anchored Jap flying boat at Puerto Princessa, during the retaking of the Philippines (with MacArthur's forces). It was at this time that he was shot down and killed. His body was never recovered. Thus ended

the greatest saga of personal dedication to the defeat of the Japanese in Class 40-A!

Captain John A. Thompson—Commanded 67th Fighter Squadron; flying P-40s and P-39s on Guadalcanal attached to 1st Marine Air Wing there. Was awarded the Navy Cross for his heroic service over several months (Aug. '42–May '43). Also won Silver Star on Guadalcanal.

Captain Jay P. Thomas—Flew a B-27 on a long-range reconnaissance mission in late December 1942 in Southwest Pacific. His plane was attacked by enemy fighters and the B-17 was severely damaged in a running battle; however, Capt. Thomas managed to get his plane back to the home base, on less than four engines, and with several of his crew badly wounded. For his heroism and extraordinary achievement in accomplishing the mission, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. Source: *American Heroes of the War in the Air* by Howard Mingos, 1943. Published by Lancair, and 40-A records.

General Officers

Lt. Gen. Eugene B. LeBailly—three-star general as of 1970.

Maj. Gen. George E. Brown—two-star general as of 1964.

Maj. Gen. Roland A. Campbell—two-star general as of 1965.

Brig. Gen. Loran D. Briggs—one-star general as of 1958.

Brig. Gen. Frank W. Frost—one-star general as of 1960.

Decorations Won by Graduates of Glendale Primary

Distinguished Service Medal (Army)—Four: Brown, G.E., Campbell (2); LeBailly.

Distinguished Service Medal (AF)—One: LeBailly.

Silver Star Medal—Three: LeBailly; Thompson, J.A.;

Thomas, J.P.

Legion of Merit—11: Briggs (2); Brown, G.E.; Campbell (3); Johnstone (3); Jones (2).

Distinguished Flying Cross—18: Brandon; Briggs (3); Campbell; Casey (3); Hanson; LeBailly (3); McLeod; Mahony (4); Thomas, J.P.; Thompson, J.A.

Bronze Star—Two: Campbell; Quinn.

Air Medals—43: Briggs (4); Campbell (5); Jones; LeBailly (8); McLeod (11); Mahony (14).

Army Commendation Medal—Two: Briggs; Johnstone.

AF Commendation Medal—Four: Brown, G.E. (2); Johnstone; McLeod.

Purple Heart—Five: Brandon; Cantello; Hanson; Mahony; Thompson, J.A.

Distinguished Unit Citation—Four: Mahony (2); Thompson, J.A.; Brown, G.E.

AF Outstanding Unit Award—One: Brown, G.E.

Aerial Victories—14: Hanson; Thompson, J.A. (3); Mahony (5); Kittel (4); McCallum.

Graduates Killed in Action (KIA)—Four: Brandon, '44; Cantello, '42; Hanson, '41; Mahony, '45.

Prisoners of War (POWs)—None.

Airline Captains—Two: Heath, United Airlines; Hummel, Panagra/Braniff.

Korean Service—Four: Briggs, B-29s; LeBailly, CO, 3rd Bomb. Gp. (A-26s), 50 missions; Quinn, Base Cdr., K-16 Airfield, Seoul, Korea; Selman, DCS/Pers. 5th AF, Korea.

Vietnam Service—One: LeBailly, flew 20 combat missions on TDY, 1958–61. □

GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA PILOT PRODUCTION DATA — 40A TO 42C

Class	Date Entered	No.	H/O Prev. Class	H/O Next Class	Net Class	Eliminated Non-flying	Eliminated Flying	Number Graduated	Percentage Graduated	Date Graduated
40A	5 Jul 39	38	0	0	38	2(?)	9(?)	27		24 Sep 39
40B	21 Aug 39	38?				2(?)	9	27		9 Nov 39
40C	2 Oct 39	38?				2(?)	9	27		26 Dec 39
40D	18 Nov 39	37?				2(?)	9	27		9 Feb 40
40E	26 Dec 39	36?			36	2(?)	7	27		26 Mar 40
40F	9 Feb 40	36?			36	2(?)	7	27		12 May 40
40G	30 Mar 40	36?			36	2(?)	7	27		21 Jun 40
40H	17 May 40	36?			36	2(?)	7	27		26 Jul 40*
	Total	295*						216		
41A	1 Jul 40	0								8 Sep 40
41B	3 Aug 40	84	1	1	84	0	16	68	80.9	14 Oct 40
41C	14 Sep 40	32	1	1	32	1	9	22	68.7	23 Nov 40
41D	19 Oct 40	38	1	3	36	0	8	28	77.6	25 Dec 40
41E	30 Nov 40	37	3	0	40	0	9	31	77.5	9 Feb 41
41F	14 Jan 41	39	0	2	37	0	8	29	75.7	18 Mar 41
41G	15 Feb 41	37	2	0	39	0	7	32	82.0	27 Apr 41
	Total	267	8	7	268	1	57	210		
	Cum. Total	562						426		
42A	4 Jun 41	(Glendale trained these U/K students								
42B	10 Jul 41	from 4 Jun 41 to August 41)								U/K
42C	23 Aug 41	(U/K students sent to Lancaster, CA)								
	Total students trained at Glendale							467		

Notes: *School moved to Ontario, CA and renamed Cal/Aero Academy (3 Aug 40).

No. 2: American Eagle Squadron Volunteers started training at Glendale, Nov. '40 till Dec '41 when it too was moved to War Eagle Field, Lancaster, CA.

Glendale closed 29 May '41.