**In Re Cadets and Flying**

CAP’s performance of its wartime missions and success with the Cadet Program resulted in the War Department envisioning a permanent place for CAP in its establishment. So, on 29 April 1943 by order of President Franklin Roosevelt, command of the CAP was transferred from the Office of Civilian Defense to the War Department and given status as the auxiliary to the US Army Air Forces – truly a banner day for all those who worked to make CAP the success it had become.

Just a few days later, on 4 May 1943, the War Department issued Memorandum W95-12-43, assigning to the Army Air Forces the responsibility for supervising and directing operations of the Civil Air Patrol.

One of the more significant outcomes of this transfer of command jurisdiction was its impact on CAP’s Cadet recruiting mission – Army aviation cadets, that is. By this time, CAP had built up its membership to about 75,000 men and women located in over 1,000 communities across America. Moreover, the early wartime practice of training CAP members for operational missions had established an effective training corps ready to assume a larger Army aviation cadet training mission.

By December 1943, the Army Air Forces loaned 288 L-4 aircraft (civilian designated as the, “Piper Grasshopper”) to Civil Air Patrol for use in the aviation cadet recruiting program. CAP “took to the air,” and during 1944 flew 78,000 aviation cadets and prospective recruits for a total of 41,000 flying hours. Before the end of 1944, CAP had recruited an oversupply of cadets, and took over the responsibility of administering cadet mental screening tests and operating centers where cadets received preliminary medical evaluations.

The record established by CAP during the war years impressed the nation. It flew 500,000 hours of missions in support of the war effort; sunk two German U-boats; and saved countless lives – airplane crash survivors and survivors of disasters at sea – by efficiently directing rescue forces to them.

Members spent innumerable amounts of their own money in support of wartime missions, and volunteered thousands of hours of non-flying mission time to train or indoctrinate cadets. They had built their own airfields and pitched in to help when natural disasters occurred. No sacrifice was too great for these selfless men and women – and ultimately 57 members paid for it with their lives.

**In re beginning of CAP**

The advocates of a nationwide Civil Air Patrol made innumerable contacts in their effort to establish their proposed organization as an element of America’s defense. But first, the problem of how to best use Civil Air Patrol for military missions had to be solved through Federal government approval and direction.

To solidify the plan under the approval of the military establishment, General “Hap” Arnold – who had encouraged the plan from the beginning – convened a board of military officers to review the final plan presented by Gill Robb Wilson and his colleagues. General Arnold appointed General George E. Stratemeyer as presiding officer of the board, which included Colonel Harry H. Blee, Major Lucas P. Ordway, Jr., and Major A.B. McMullen. General Arnold asked the board to determine the potential of the Civil Air Patrol plan and to evaluate the role of the War Department in making CAP an agency of the new Office of Civilian Defense. The board approved the plan, while recommending that Army Air Forces (AAF) officers help to start up and administer the new organization.

Now with military approval, the Director of Civilian Defense (Mr. LaGuardia) signed the formal order creating the Civil Air Patrol on 1 December 1941.

On 8 December 1941, the day after the attack on Pearl Harbor by the Imperial Japanese Naval Air Forces, Director LaGuardia published a document called Administrative Order 9. This order outlined the proposed organization of Civil Air Patrol and designated its first national commander Major General John F. Curry, US Army Air Corps.\* Gill Robb Wilson officially became CAP’s first executive officer.