

No. 47-2)

PUBLIC RELATIONSTHE NEW YORK WING OF CAP IN WORLD WAR II

1. The following history of the activities of the New York Wing is for the general information of all personnel and for the guidance of Unit Public Relations Officers:

The New York Wing of Civil Air Patrol was activated in December 1941, under the command of Beckwith Havens of New York, later Lieutenant Commander U.S.N.R. Under Commander Havens, seven groups were established, based upon geographical and population distribution factors, with headquarters in New York City, Middletown, Albany, Syracuse, Rochester, Buffalo and Jamestown. A commander was appointed for each group, who in turn organized his territory into squadrons and flights, appointing commanders and leaders for each unit thus formed.

It will be recalled that at the outset, Civil Air Patrol was operating under the Office of Civilian Defense. From the start, however, a thorough F.B.I. check of all enrollments was made, and, in connection with applications for enrollment, all members were required to submit fingerprints, photographs, and to fill out a very complete questionnaire concerning their personal and business or professional activities, which was carefully scrutinized by National CAP Headquarters, then in Washington D.C., before acceptance. This system, which has remained unchanged, has in effect guaranteed the loyalty and trustworthiness of all Civil Air Patrol personnel in whatever assignments they received. It is a matter of record that in no case has this confidence been misplaced.

Early in 1942, Commander Havens resigned his leadership in order to join the Navy, and Garnet N. Hughes of New York, then Executive Officer, became Wing Commander. In July 1942, he joined the Army Air Forces with the rank of Major, and Stuart C. Welch, of Buffalo, was appointed Wing Commander, the position he now holds.

Under his command, an extensive program of military and technical training was undertaken in order to perfect the discipline and skill which were to characterize Civil Air Patrol operations throughout the United States and, which in April 1943, resulted in Civil Air Patrol being made an auxiliary of the Army Air Forces.

On 2 June 1943, the New York Wing of Civil Air Patrol became a member of the State War Council by which it was officially commended 25 July 1945.

Following is a brief account of the major activities of the New York Wing during the emergency period.

ANTI-SUBMARINE PATROL

Early in 1942, the menace of German submarines along the Atlantic Coast reached such proportions that the then available Army and Navy facilities were unable to cope with it, due to the necessity of their, at that time, slender resources being deployed in other theatres of war.

Early in March 1942, under the command of Major Wynant Farr, of New York, an experimental base was established at Atlantic City, N. J., known as Coastal Patrol Base No. 1, at which CAP pilots, observers, mechanics, etc, using their own light airplanes, undertook to patrol the coastal waters from New York Harbor to below Cape May. The unqualified success of this seeming unorthodox operation quickly led to the establishment of numerous other bases, so that within a few months, all shipping along the entire coast line of the United States from Canada to Mexico was protected by Civil Air Patrol pilots and planes bearing the familiar, and to sailors, welcome insignia of the white triangle in a blue circle.

On 1 July 1942, authority was granted to establish Coastal Air Patrol Base No. 17 at the Suffolk Airport, near West Hampton, L. I. This base, commanded by Major Ralph Earle of Pennsylvania, was staffed by personnel from the New York and Pennsylvania Wings of CAP. This unit functioned with exemplary efficiency, patrolling the approaches to New York Harbor until deactivated on 31 August 1943.

In July 1942, approval was given to arm the planes with bombs. This step, plus a perfected communications system, accounted for the destruction of a number of enemy submarines by bombing and the sinking of many more by Naval vessels led to the quarry by CAP airplanes.

In addition to submarines sunk, disabled, or driven off, many hundreds of seamen, while adrift after their ships had been sunk, were spotted and saved by surface vessels summoned to their assistance.

In the history of the war, there is no finer example of self-sacrifice, devotion of duty, and ability to hang on under adverse and discouraging circumstances than that set by the men of the Anti-Submarine Patrol. Over thirty lost their lives in this effort and many more were seriously injured.

While exact figures are not available, it is safe to assume the New York State Wing supplied as many, if not more, pilots, observers, mechanics, and technicians to this service as any other State. The citizens of New York have good reason to be proud of this contribution by their fellow citizens.

Anti-Submarine Patrol was carried on without interruption until August 1943, when the Anti-Submarine Command of the AAF was deactivated and the Navy took over.

INDUSTRIAL COURIER SERVICE

At the same time that Coastal Patrol was in service, another phase of CAP was organized, that of the Courier Service, which was to be a "first" with the New York Wing. This service which was to be known in New York State as the "First Courier Comman" was for the flying of key men and vitally needed materials between war production plants and their branches as well as with subcontractors.

Its home base was at the Aviation Country Club Airport, Hicksville, Long Island, under the command of J. Gordon Gibbs, with Paul Nagle, Acting Commander; Robert Rickson, Jr., Executive Officer; Beldon Bartlett, Operations Officer; and Robert Lehman, Finance Officer.

Pilots and planes were on duty from dawn till dusk and the command had flights under way on 10 minutes notice.

On July 10, 1943, CAP Courier Bases were set up in Albany, Utica Syracuse, Binghamton, Rochester, Buffalo and Jamestown.

At a time when the commercial airlines were greatly overburdened, due to vastly increased travel in the face of greatly curtailed equipment and facilities, CAP Courier Service, while in no sense competing with the airlines, was of positive assistance in keeping the production lines of our factories moving. Almost every major war industry in the State availed itself of this emergency service.

TOW TARGET AND TRACKING BASE

Immediately after the Anti-Submarine Bases were relieved, Army Authorities requested Civil Air Patrol to organize a number of bases throughout the country for the purpose of towing sleeve targets at which AAF pilots and gunners in service aircraft could fire under conditions more closely approximating those of actual combat and also to fly at stipulated heights over anti-aircraft artillery units, for the purpose of training them in accuracy in picking up moving targets, using such aids as searchlights, radar, etc.

One such base was established at the Flushing Airport, Flushing, L.I. where an outstanding record of day and night was made. This Base was manned almost entirely by New York State Personnel, one of whom, Captain Gordon McAlpine Pyle, of 216 East 64th St., New York City, lost his life on 18 September 1943, while on a night flying mission under extremely hazardous weather conditions. Lost with him at this time was Lt. R. A. Hammer of the U. S. Coast Artillery. Previous to this assignment, Capt. Pyle had served constantly on active duty with the Anti-Submarine Patrol.

Mention should also be made of excellent work performed at this Base by Captain Lyman S. Frasier of Amterdam, N. Y., and of Lieutenant Rickliffe Decker of Staten Island.

FOREST PATROL

The first official forest patrol by CAP in New York State was flown on 3 October 1943, when pilot Johnson Stewart and observer Phyllis K. Ingram inaugurated this vital State service. Arrangements for the patrol with the Conservation Commission had been made by Major Leslie A. Bryan of Syracuse, based on an exhaustive study and report made by Captains E. R. Vadeboncoeur and R. V. Green of the same city.

The test plane was in continuous radio-phone communication with the fire tower observers along the routes, and as a result of this test, an enlarged patrol was formed, which cooperated effectively with the Conservation Commission and the Department of Forest Fire Control during the balance of the season.

MILITARY INLAND SEARCH MISSIONS

Each of the local units throughout the New York Wing is set up to furnish a detail of airplanes at short notice to take off in search of missing aircraft and boats, and to render assistance in other emergencies or disasters.

In case of a missing military aircraft, a Civil Air Patrol Search Service was established under AAF Regulation No. 20-18. This service was available to the Commanding General of any Air Force or independent or subordinate AAF Command within the continental United States or to the Commanding Officer of any AAF Base within the continental United States.

This service was performed by the various CAP State Wings and was under the operational control of the AAF agency requesting the service. Reimbursement schedules were set up for the payment of per diem allowances to personnel engaged, and hourly rates for the use of aircraft assigned to such operations.

A number of such missions were performed, the latest of which in August 1945, covered the entire Adirondack area and succeeded, although not its primary object, in locating a large army transport, missing since the previous year.

In connection with other work done for the Army, mention should be made of a very large number of flights carried out for the U.S. Engineers to inspect from the air various factories, plants, and military installations in and around New York City in order to check on camouflage. All of these flights, carried out in spite of frequent adverse weather conditions, were flown most successfully by women pilots.

RECRUITING

In June 1943, Civil Air Patrol was requested by the Commanding General of the Army Air Forces to undertake an intensive campaign to recruit young men for the AAF. This important duty was carried out with conspicuous success. Meetings were held in every city and town, all school principals were contacted and arrangements made for speakers and interviewers, while the campaign was backed up by excellent local publicity through the cooperation of newspapers and radio station.

At a time when all available Air Corps personnel were badly needed overseas, the use of CAP personnel and facilities for recruiting purposes proved to be a valuable and satisfactory substitute. So much so, in fact, that in May 1944, CAP alone was authorized to administer the Aviation Cadet Qualifying Examinations to young men in high school. The giving of these mental screening tests imposed a heavy responsibility on all CAP officers assigned to this task, and it is gratifying to record that there is not a single instance of complaint or irregularity in the way this was handled in New York State. Liaison was maintained at all times with all Aviation Cadet Examining Boards and United States Army Recruiting Stations throughout the State, with whom the closest and most enthusiastic cooperation existed. The results of this recruiting activity are now history.

In May 1944, while recruiting and screening for the Air Corps was occupying much of the time of our personnel, by request of the War Department, Lieutenant General Barney M. Giles, Chief of Air Staff, directed CAP to undertake on a national basis the recruiting of applicants for the Woman's Army Corp.

In order not to impair the other important work then going on, this was set up as a separate operation under an officer known as CAP Director of WAC Recruiting. In New York State, Captain Mabel G. Clemson of Clemson Park, Middletown, a member of the Stewart Squadron, was appointed to that position.

As a further mark of confidence, Civil Air Patrol, was at this time granted a unique privilege by the War Department. Authorization was given for the recruitment of an entire WAC Company from CAP membership or from within its particular sphere of influence.

Captain Clemson immediately made a tour throughout the State, visiting all CAP units and organizing WAC recruiting committees of civilian and CAP membership. This WAC recruitment campaign was entirely successful and officially commended by the Commanding General, Army Air Forces.

MISCELLANEOUS AND EMERGENCY MISSIONS

A constantly increasing number of flying hours is being chalked up in connection with civilian missions of an emergency nature.

Over 600 hours alone were flown on observing practice blackouts throughout the State. Boats caught in the ice in Lake Erie without food have been supplied by CAP pilots. Other similar errands have been the flying of food and medical supplies to isolated farms and communities when snowbound, the flying of plasma to scenes of disaster as at the Wayland train wreck, and searches for escaped German prisoners. These, and many others, are typical of the service which CAP personnel offer to the citizens of the State.

In every War Bond Drive conducted throughout the emergency period, each CAP unit in the State assisted their local committee in every way possible. By taking part in parades, by giving air shows, and by giving free rides to bond purchasers in airplanes owned and maintained by CAP members, public interest was maintained and stimulated, and a large volume of bond purchases has been directly attributed and credited to their efforts.

COOPERATION WITH N.Y. STATE GUARD UNITS

It has been an honor and pleasure for many CAP units to cooperate with units of the State Guard on Field Maneuvers and in other ways. The use of CAP planes equipped with Plane-to-Ground communications has been valuable addition to the training; schedules during the summer encampments and on many other occasions, according to the testimony of many N. Y. State Guard Officers.

In this connection, mention must be made of the splendid spirit of cooperation which the N.Y. Wing has received from the State Guard. This

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has shown itself on innumerable occasions in the fine spirit displayed by so many N.Y.S.G. Officers in volunteering their services and advice to CAP units throughout the State.

It is believed that this mutual cooperation should be continued and strengthened in the future, not only as an exemplary form of teamwork, but as a source of added security to the citizens of the State.

TRAINING

One of the least understood, least publicized, and for that reason, least appreciated functions of Civil Air Patrol has been the training it has given to its members. This training, however, is very probably Civil Air Patrol's most important contribution.

When first established, it was believed that the personnel of CAP would consist almost exclusively of pilots; however, it soon became apparent that interest in the organization was not confined to one technically trained group, since it attracted to its ranks many persons of varied skills, and abilities who sincerely felt that in CAP they would find a means of putting their talents to the service of their country. Accordingly, training directives were devised to provide courses of study for all members on a large number of subjects allied to aviation, military and civilian. Such subjects as: Theory of Flight, Navigation, Meteorology, Airplane Engines, Radio Communication Systems, etc., were taught by volunteer authorities in each subject. Text books and other material were supplied by the AAF.

It must be borne in mind that courses in these and other subjects were required of all personnel in addition to military training in its various phases, attendance at which was compulsory to all desirous of maintaining membership in the organization, and, of course, essential to all seeking commissioned rank. The improvement of skills and the acquiring of new ones was a continuous process. The amount of highly technical training that has thus been given to a large section of the public is incalculable as is the value to the Nation as a whole of the improved ability of these people.

It soon became evident that this training program, however, excellent, was not wide enough in scope, so on 1 October 1942, the grade of Civil Air Patrol Cadets was authorized. Embracing boys and girls from the ages of 15 to 18, it was hoped that a sufficient number of cadets would be attracted to justify an extensive training program, implemented by training aids, manuals, etc., from the Army Air Forces. It was further hoped that this training would supply the AAF with a constant backlog of desirable young man ready to enlist in the Air Corps when they reached 18. These hopes were more than realized.

The excellent training which is now being given to all CAP cadets is based on a Preflight Study Manual devised by the AAF and other educational experts. It covers all phases of preflight training-military-physical-technical. Testimony as to the value of this training has been received from educational authorities throughout the State in volume. It is gratifying to know that our Cadets are being given this training at no cost to themselves by CAP, and that the skills and aptitudes they are obtaining will in many cases fit them for a useful and profitable career in aviation.

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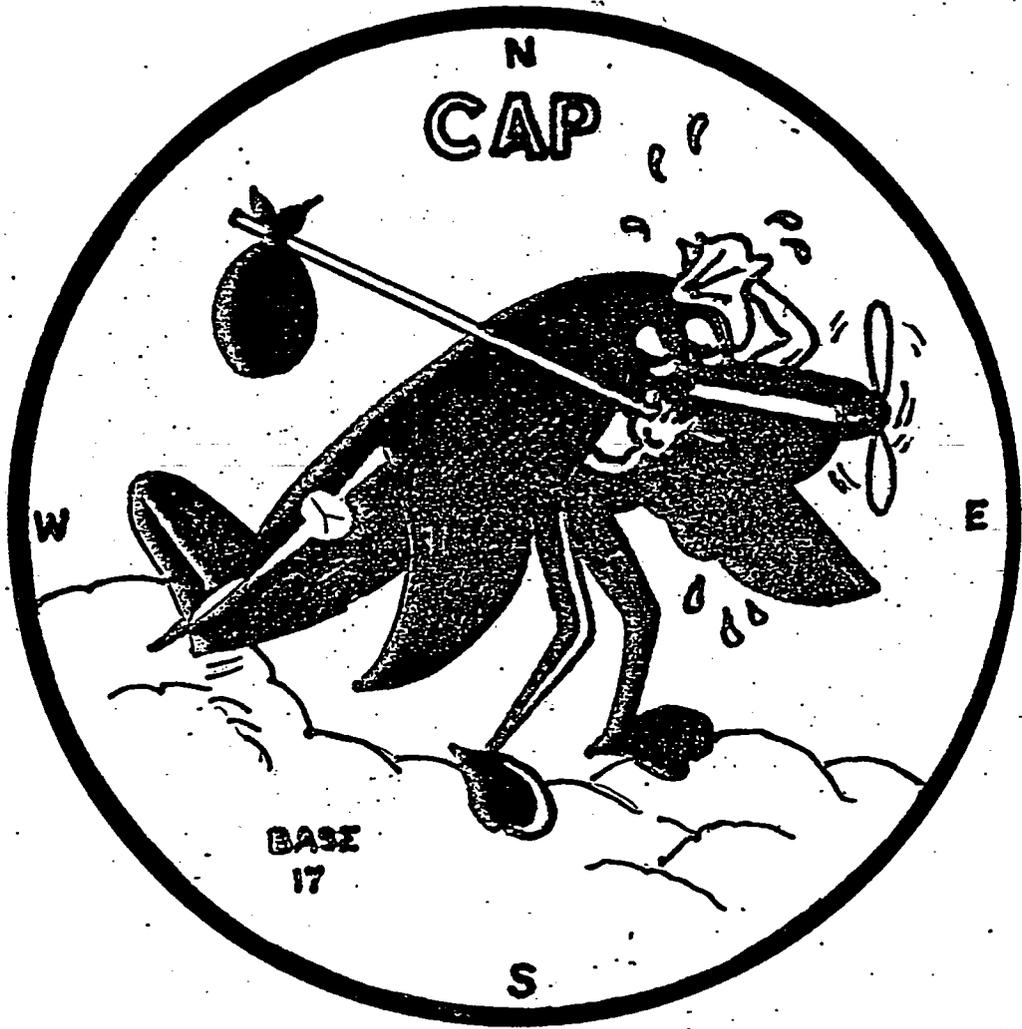
A record of CAP Cadet activities would be incomplete without reference to the excellent work done in this field by the Greater New York Cadet Training Group, commanded by Major Thomas F. Cooke, of New York. This Group was organized to enlist and train cadets exclusively in the Greater New York area. It has succeeded amazingly well in handling a difficult problem and has been able to establish a cadet unit in almost every school in this area. The services of a number of outstanding authorities in the aviation field were secured and these men have enthusiastically devoted many hours of their already busy lives to conducting classes and generally supervising training in the New York Schools.

Through cooperation of the AAF, a considerable number of cadets are sent each summer to Mitchell Field, and to the Rome Army Air Base. There they receive a week's indoctrination into Army life and are shown all the facilities these installations afford. The success of these camps in stimulating interest among the cadets is such that it is hoped that in the future all of the 7,000 cadets now enrolled in the New York Wing may have the privilege of attending.

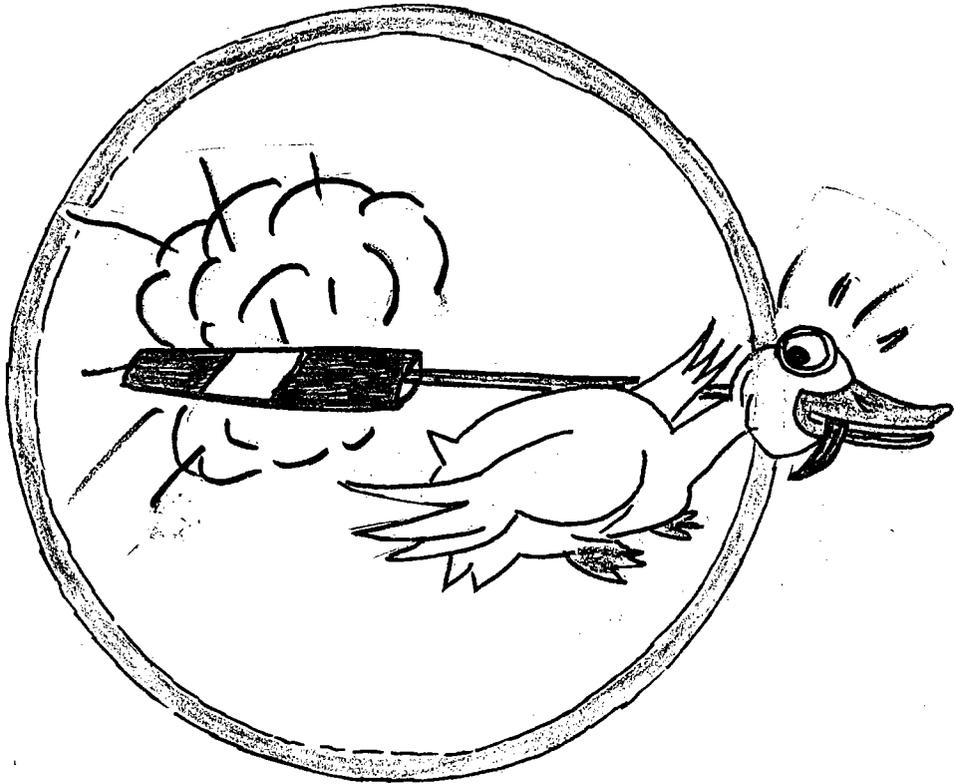
It may be appreciated from the foregoing summary of Civil Air Patrol activities in New York State during the war period that the membership of the New York Wing has not been idle and that their contribution to the war effort has not been inconsiderable. Space does not permit the mention by name of the many hundreds of individuals who deserve the thanks of their fellow citizens for outstanding performance of their duties, but it should be clearly realized that whatever the record of this group has been, it is due very largely to the magnificent spirit of friendly cooperation and a willingness to forego selfish aims for the common good which animated and held together the entire membership.

BY ORDER OF COLONEL WELCH:

JOHN T. FOSTER,
Major, CAP
Executive Officer,
New York Wing



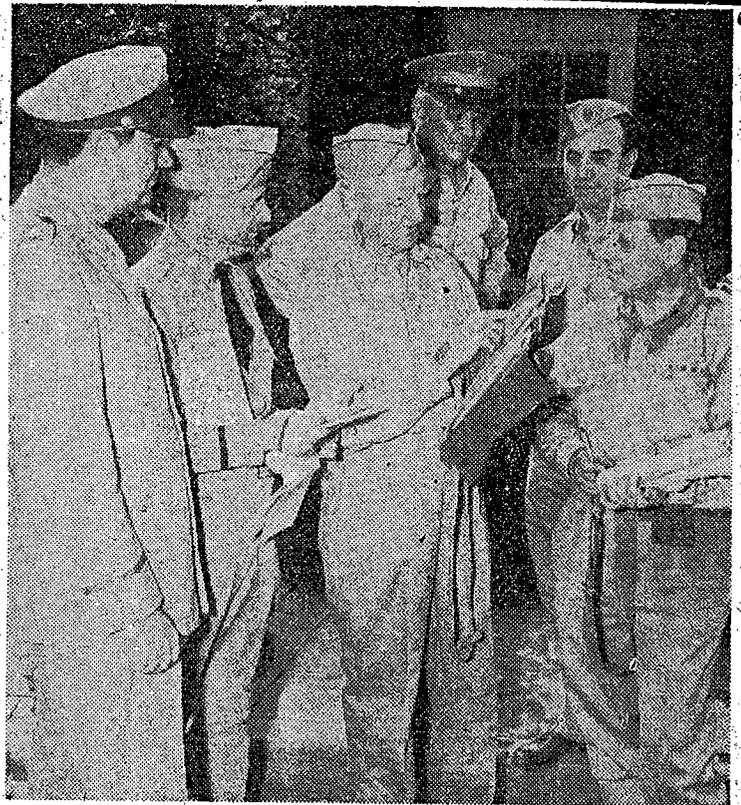
BASE 17
SUFFOLK, NEW YORK



FIRST AIR FORCE
SECOND TOW TARGET SQUADRON
Mitchell Field, New York

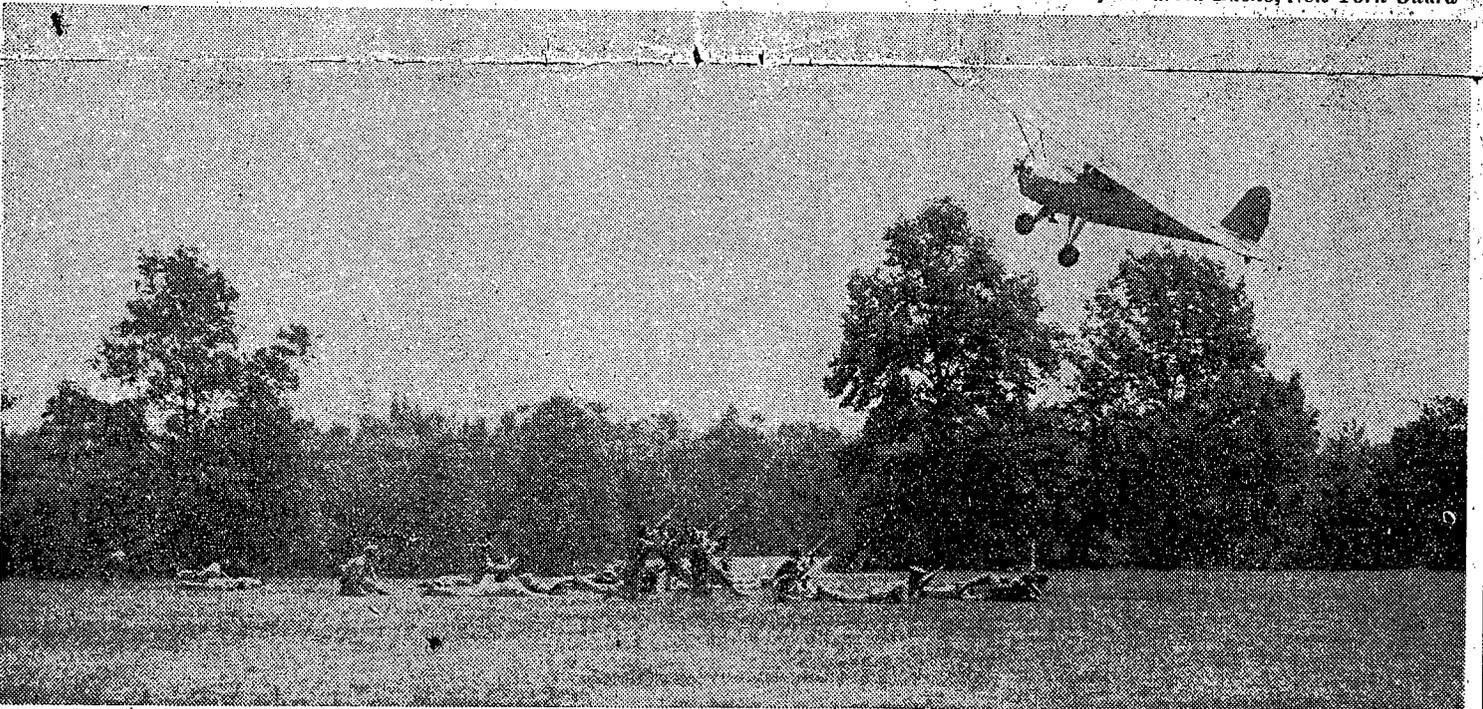
The 17th Regiment of the New York Guard

JUNE 1943



A Red sniper defending the airport has climbed a tree and is about to pick off an advancing Blue. Blank rifle ammunition and grenades of flour-filled paper bags added realism to the exercises conducted near where the Battle of White Plains was fought in 1776.

Among officers in charge, from left to right, were Captain Charles Bowey, Civil Air Patrol; Major E. J. W. Lang and Colonel A. Conger Goodyear, New York Guard; Lieutenant Colonel John Ruchek, U. S. A.; Major B. Y. William and Major Harold Bache, New York Guard.



A Civil Air Patrol plane of the Red army swoops low to attack advancing members of the victorious Blue forces.



The New York Wing Patch

The purpose of any unit insignia is to identify the unit and help build morale and Esprit de Corps. In the NY Wing, we should know the history and meaning of our wing insignia.

The patch, a 2½ inch circle which contains elements of CAP, USAF and NY state history was first authorized in 1948 and was first worn on the right sleeve of the olive drab army type uniforms worn by CAP at that time.

It was selected by the wing commander, Colonel Cord Meyer, from samples submitted by the membership in a wing wide contest. The chosen design was drawn by W/O Anthony Peters of the Brooklyn Detached Squadron, who chose the blue and gold colors of NY State, which parallel the USAF colors of ultramarine blue and golden yellow. The Letters "NY" and the outline shape represent our state and the silver droopy wing design along with the red and silver Wartime "official" CAP colors recognize CAP's history. The droopy wings were designed by LtCol C.B.Colby, CAP a new York wing staff member and adopted by national headquarters in 1948.

Today the patch is over 40 years old, yet it clearly identifies wing members, while they perform life saving tasks within the state or while they attend activities in any part of our country.

All members can be proud of the efforts of W/O Peters, LTCOL Colby and COL Meyer and be proud to be identified with this wing.