

OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II

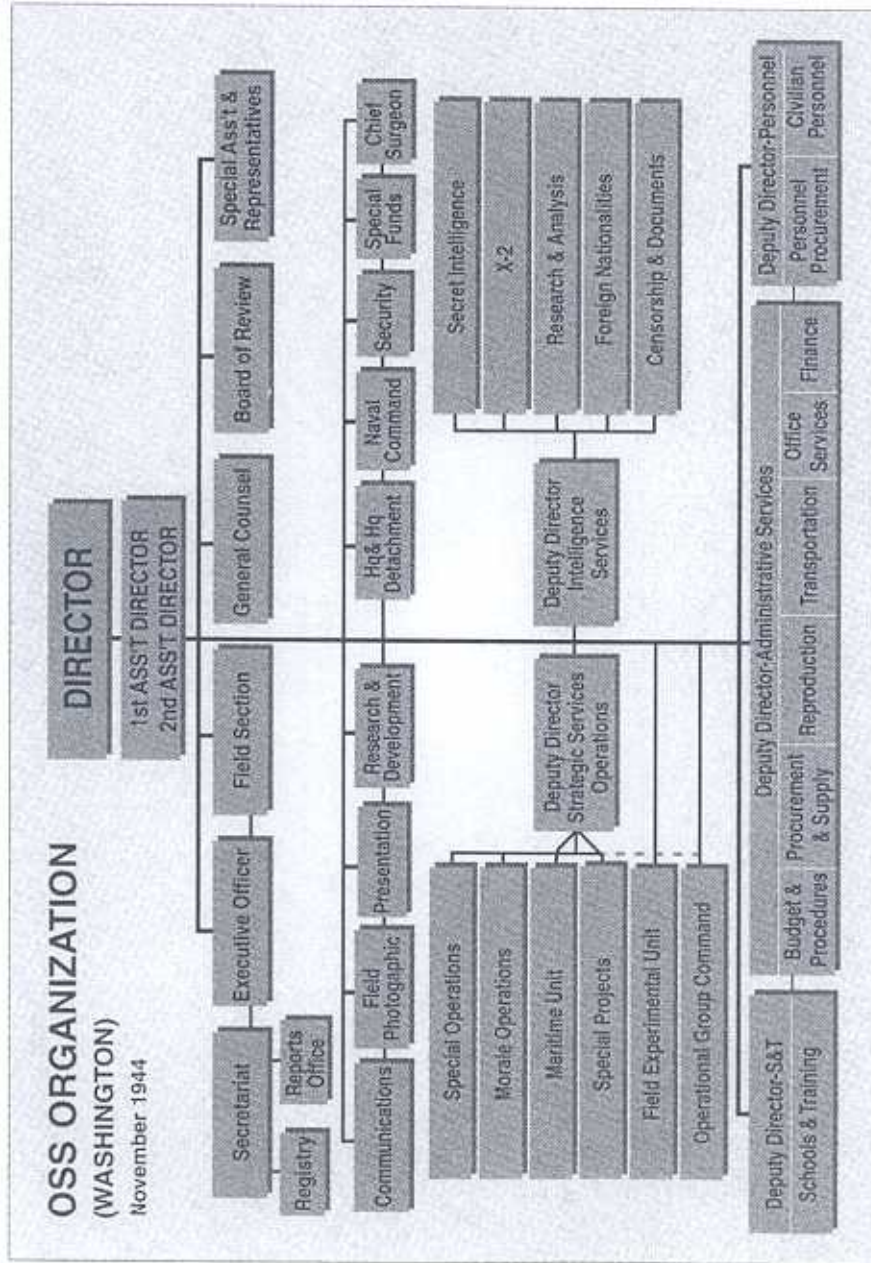
by

John Whiteclay Chambers II

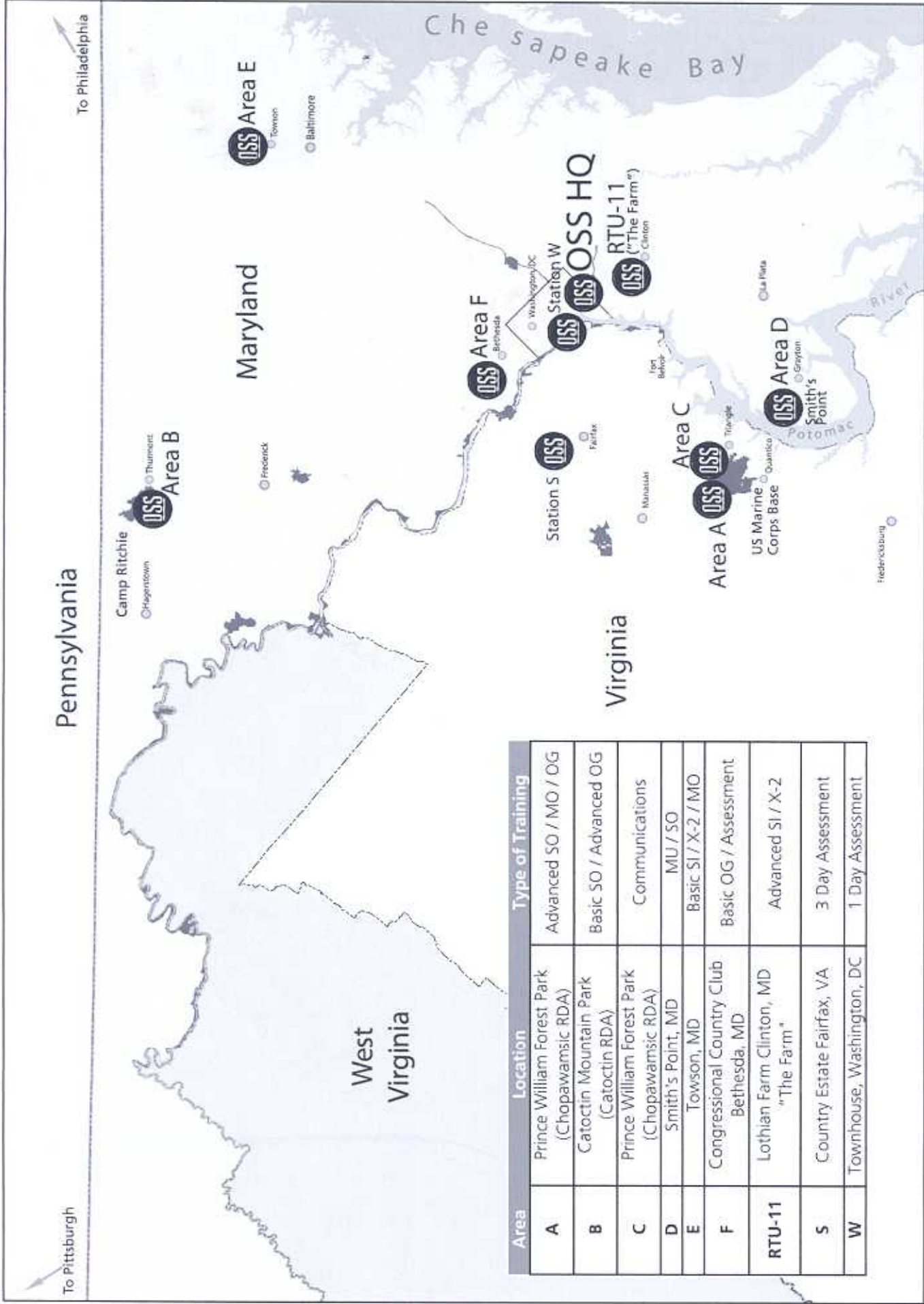
U.S. National Park Service
Washington, D.C.
2008



Major General William J. Donovan, Portrait of the Director of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). Courtesy of the Central Intelligence Agency



Organization of the OSS, Washington, D.C., November 1944. Courtesy of the Central Intelligence Agency from Michael Warner, *The Office of Strategic Services: America's First Intelligence Agency* (Washington, D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency, 2000)

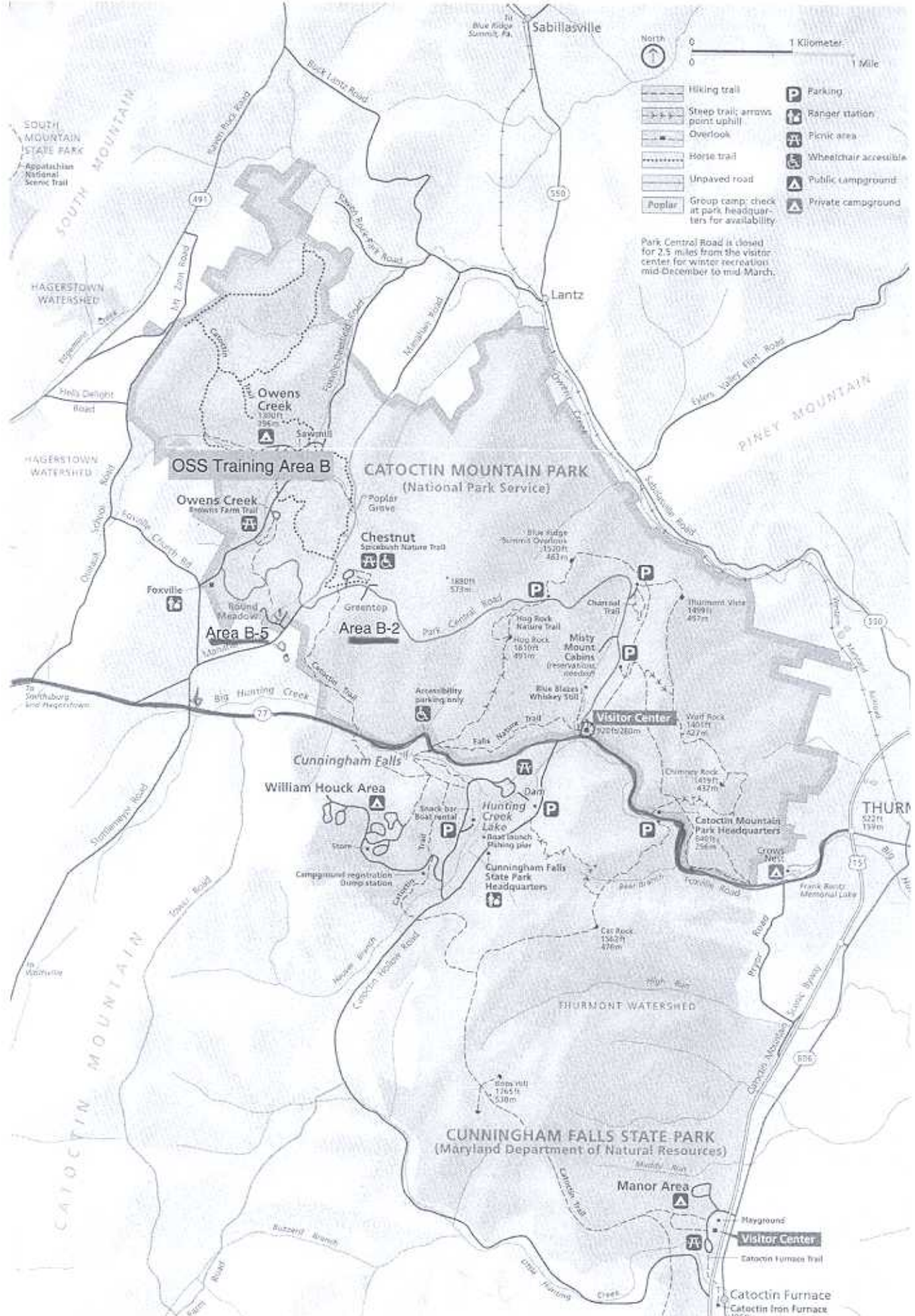


1:1,000,000
1 inch equals 15.8 miles
0 10 20
Miles

Location of OSS HQ, Training Areas, and Assessment Stations on the East Coast in WWII

Map by Tammy Statham, National Park Service

Area	Location	Type of Training
A	Prince William Forest Park (Chopawamsic RDA)	Advanced SO / MO / OG
B	Catoctin Mountain Park (Catoctin RDA)	Basic SO / Advanced OG
C	Prince William Forest Park (Chopawamsic RDA)	Communications
D	Smith's Point, MD	MU / SO
E	Towson, MD	Basic SI / X-2 / MO
F	Congressional Country Club Bethesda, MD	Basic OG / Assessment
RTU-11	Lothian Farm Clinton, MD "The Farm"	Advanced SI / X-2
S	Country Estate Fairfax, VA	3 Day Assessment
W	Townhouse, Washington, DC	1 Day Assessment

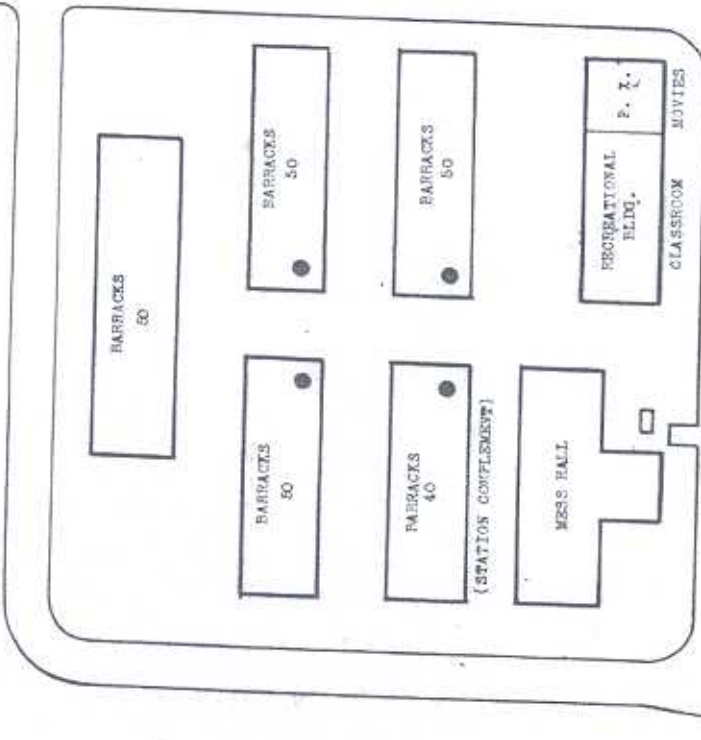


Current Map of Catoctin Mountain Park with locations of OSS Training Area B and Sub-Camps Area B-2 and Area B-5 superimposed
Catoctin Mountain Park

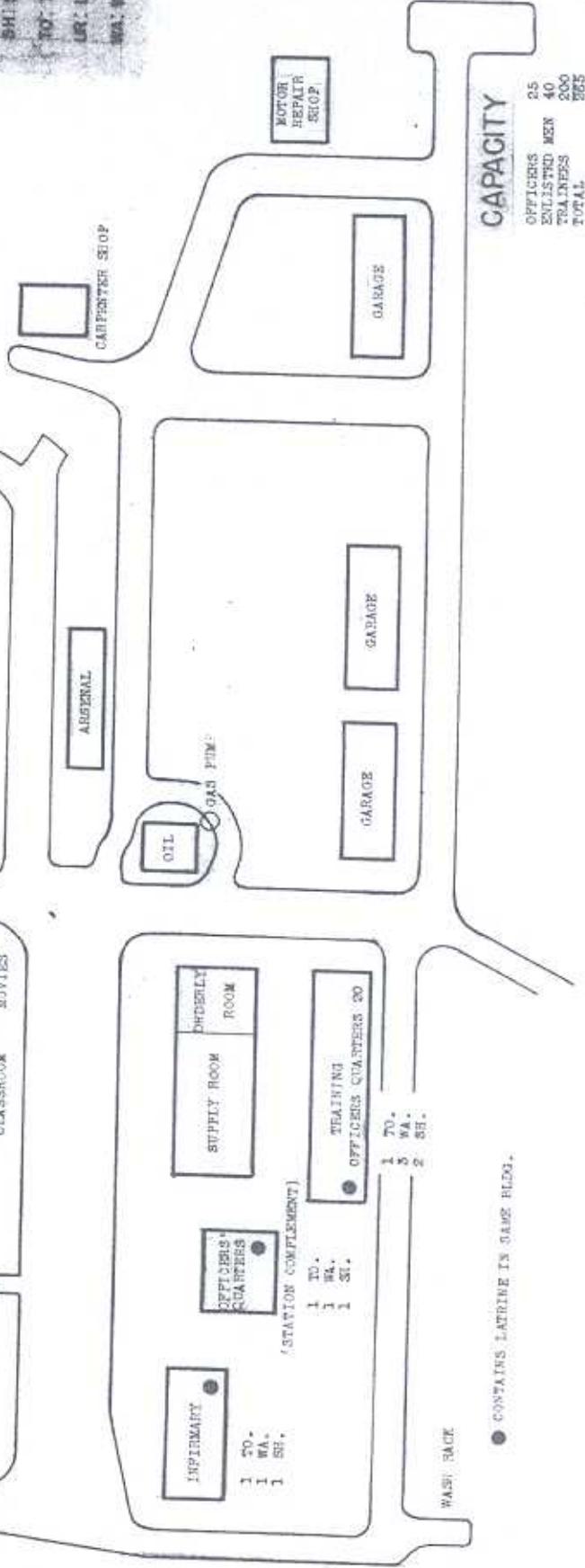
AREA B-5

BARRACKS LATRINES (4)
 4 TO.
 4 WA.
 4 SH.
 1 UR.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AREA

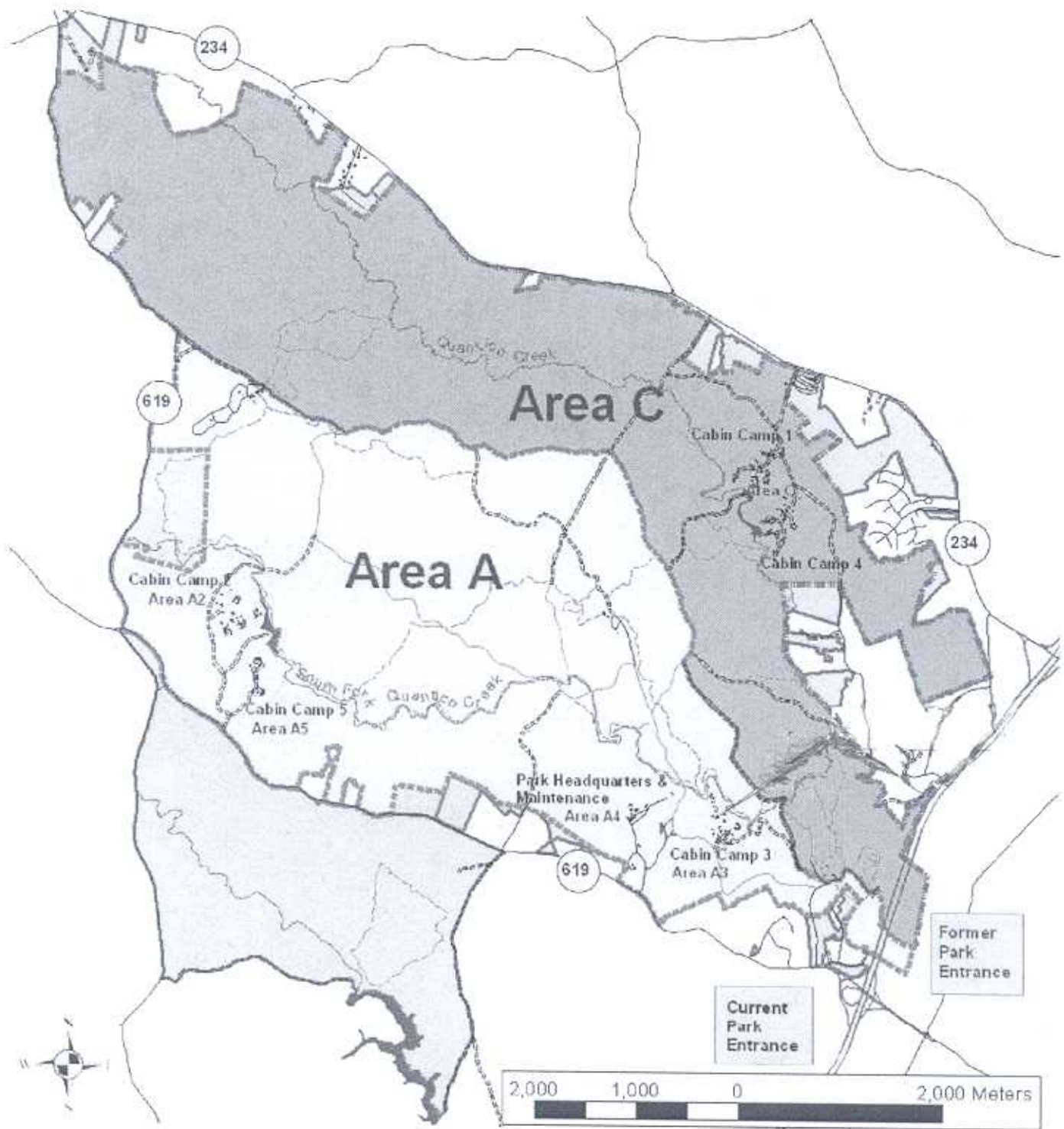


BA. BATHUS
 LA. LAVATORY
 SH. SHOWER
 TO. TOILET
 UR. URINAL
 WA. WASHBOWL



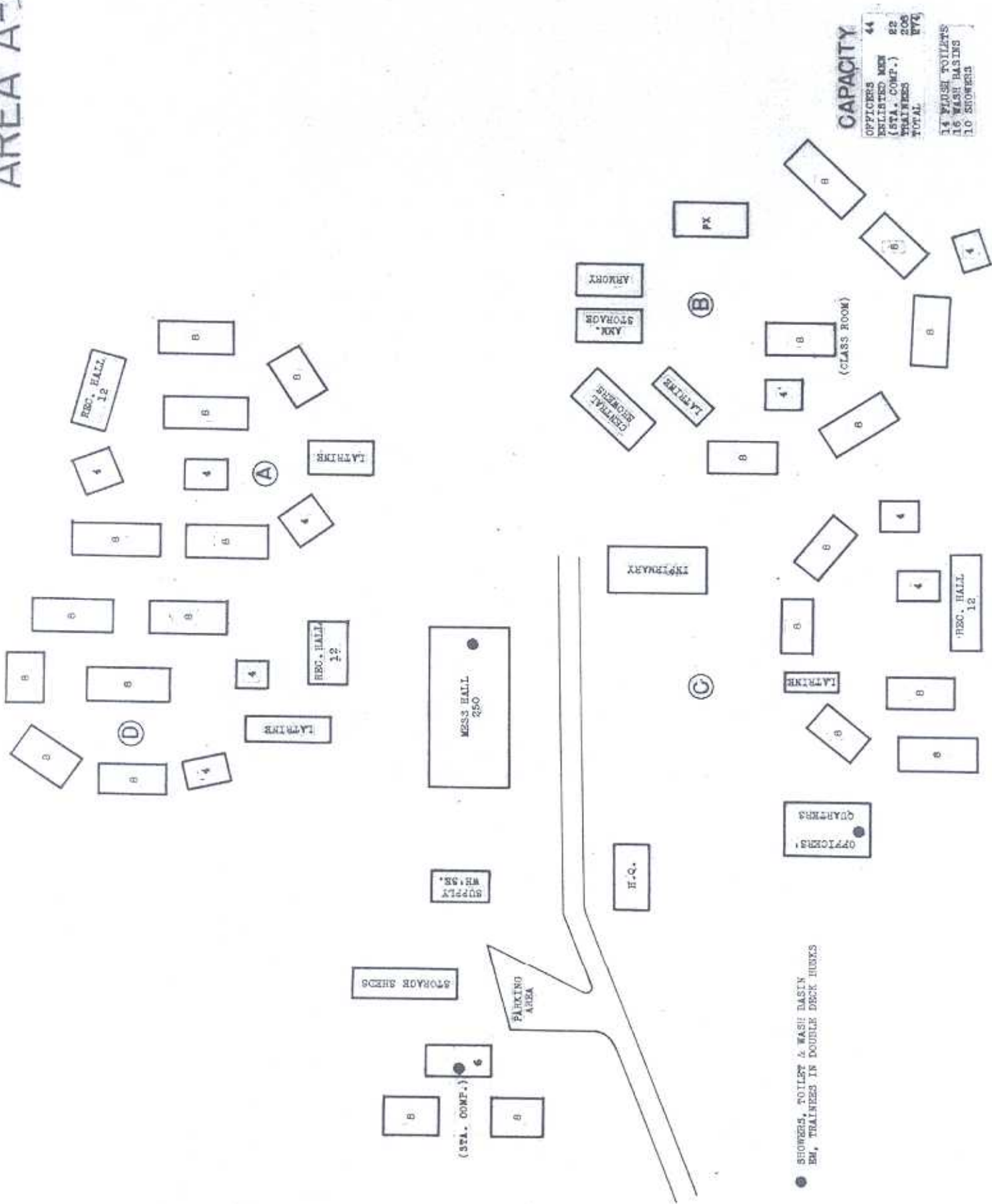
CAPACITY

OFFICERS	25
ENLISTED MEN	40
TRAINERS	2000
TOTAL	2065



Map of Prince William Forest Park with locations of OSS Training Areas A and C and Sub-Camps in Areas A-2, A-3, A-4, A-5, and C-1 and C-4 superimposed.
 Prince William Forest Park.

AREA A-2

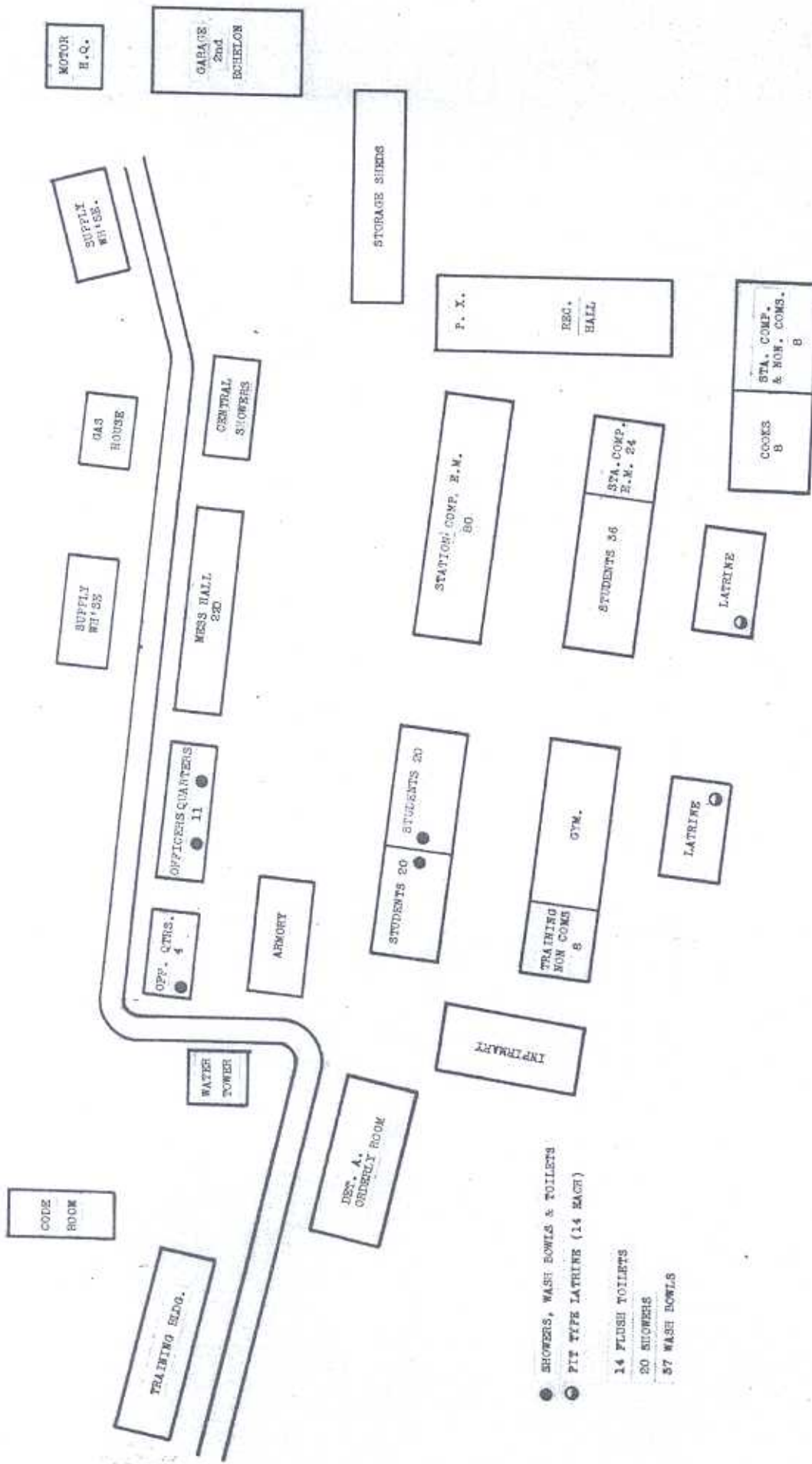


CAPACITY	
OFFICERS	44
ENLISTED MEN	82
(STA. COMP.)	206
TRAINERS	206
TOTAL	538

14 FLUSH TOILETS
16 WASH BASINS
10 SHOWERS

● SHOWERS, TOILET & WASH BASIN
● TRAINERS IN DOUBLE DECK BUNKS

AREA A-4

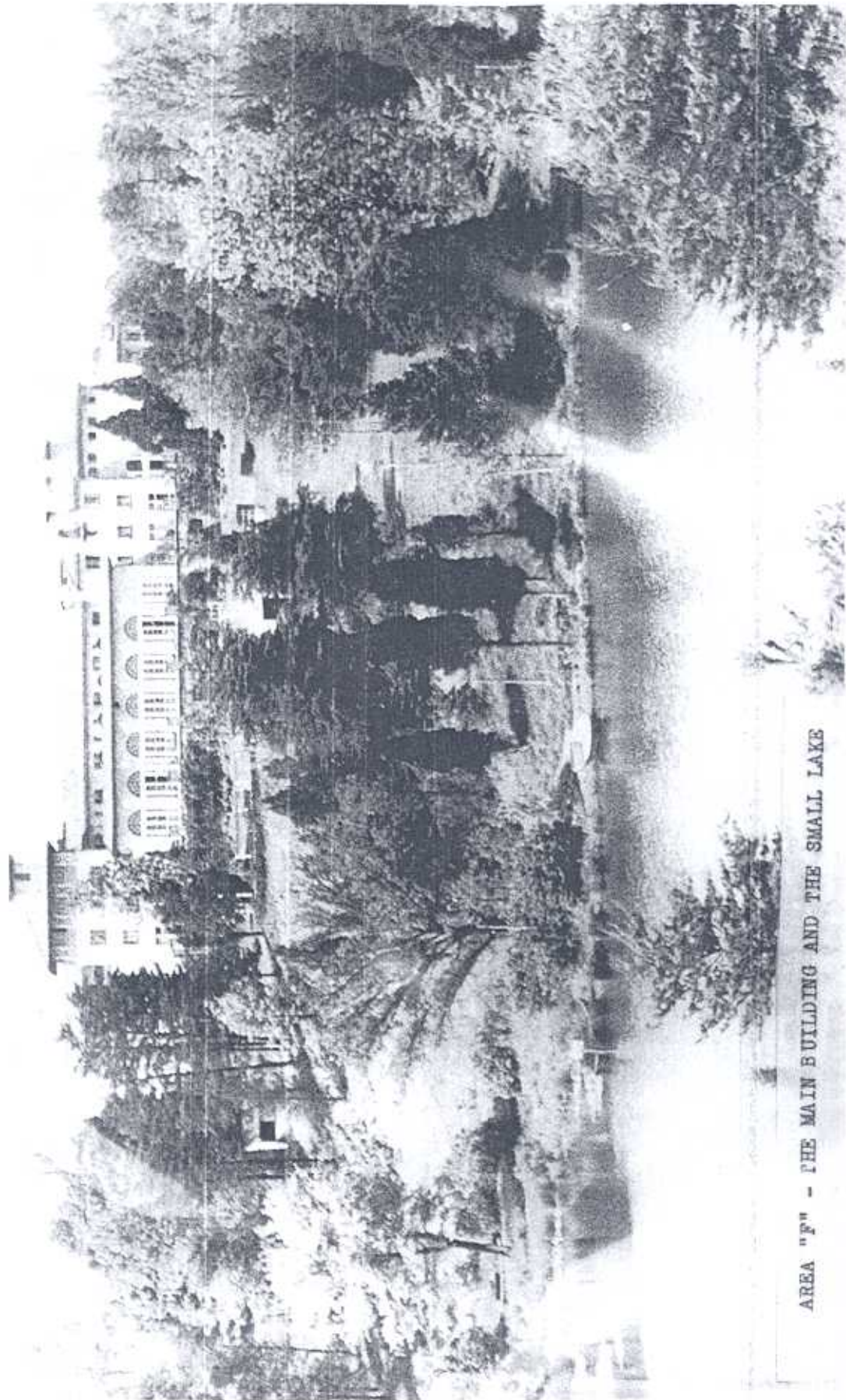


- SHOWERS, WASH BOWLS & TOILETS
- PIT TYPE LATRINE (14 EACH)

14 FLUSH TOILETS
 20 SHOWERS
 57 WASH BOWLS

CAPACITY

OFFICERS	16
ENLISTED MEN	120
TRAININGS	76
TOTAL	212
ENLISTED MEN ON DOUBLE DECK BOWLS	



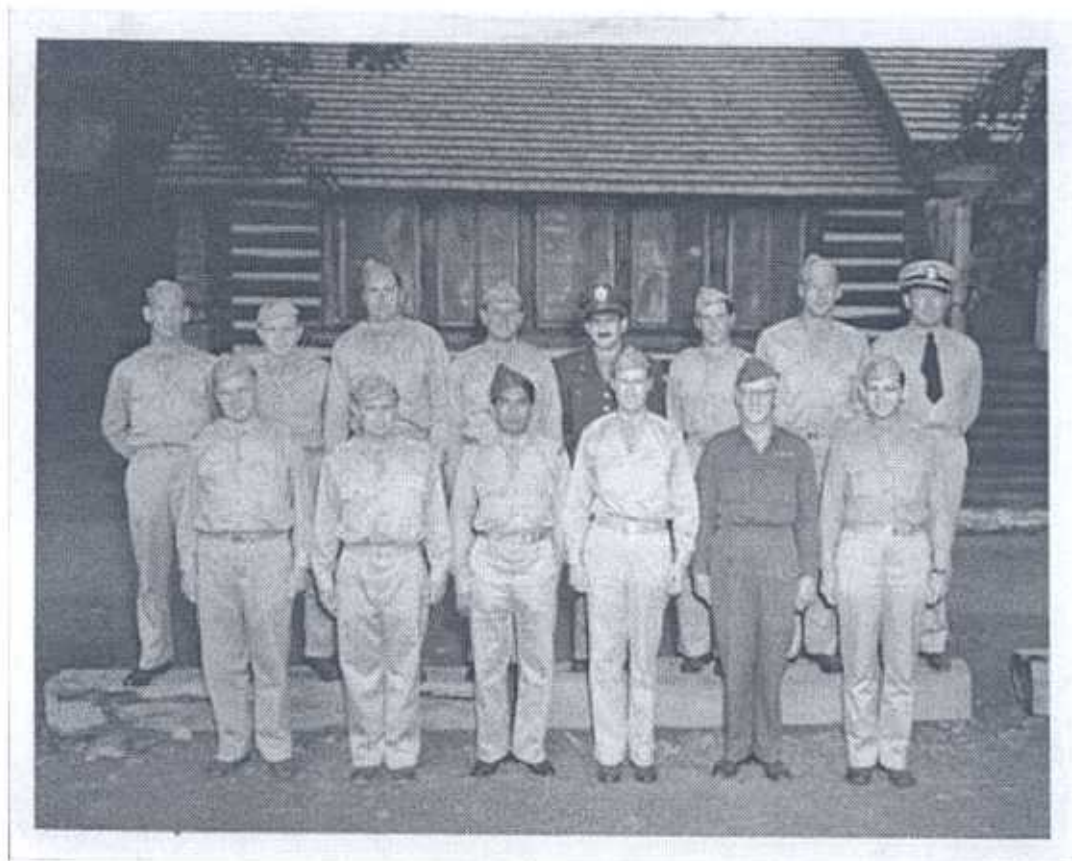
AREA "F" - THE MAIN BUILDING AND THE SMALL LAKE

Wartime Park Superintendents

Ira B. Lykes, right, Superintendent,
Prince William Forest Park
(then Chopawamsic Recreational Demonstration Area)
in a wartime photo. Courtesy of Dorothea Dow.



Garland B. ("Mike") Williams, left,
Superintendent, Catoctin Mountain Park
(then Catoctin Recreational Demonstration Area)
in a later photograph. National Park Service



Instructors, Staff and Visiting Officers at OSS Training Area B-2, Catoctin Mountain Park, Thurmont, Maryland in front of Administration Building, Aug-Sept. 1942

Back Row (left to right)

Capt.	Lt.	Lt.	Lt.	Capt.	Unknown	Capt.	Possibly Cmdr.
Charles	Frank	Rex	Elmer	Morris	officer	Jerry	William H.
Parkin	Gleason	Applegate	Harris	Kessler		Sage	Vanderbilt, USNR
Instructor	Instr	Instr	Instr	Med. Officer		Instr	SO & XO Branch
							Visitor

Front Row (left to right)

Capt.	Capt.	Lt. Col.	Maj.	Maj.	Unidentified
George	Joseph	Kharb	Ainsworth	William	officer
White	Collart	Kunjara	Blogg	("Dan")	
Instr	Instr	(attaché)	Camp	Fairbairn	
		(Free Thai)	Commander	(U.K.)	
		(Govt.)		Instructor	
		Visitor			

Photograph courtesy of Jonathan Clemente, M.D.; identifications by the author with the help of Frank A. Gleason, Joseph Lazarsky, and Dorothea D. (Mrs. Arden W.) Dow.

Lt. Arden W. and Dorothea D. Dow, right, in front of their rented cottage in Olympia, Washington, just back from their honeymoon after their marriage in March 1942. Courtesy of Dorothea Dow.



Below: Diary Entry, October 30, 1942,
Albert R. Guay Diary.
Courtesy of Albert R. Guay.

Friday OCTOBER 30 1942

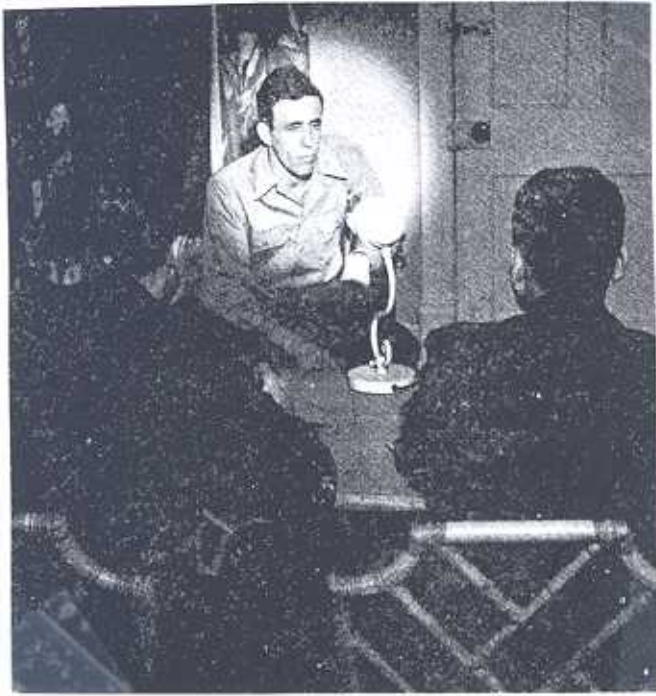
That my knife is in rough form; it's a dinger.

My first Army pay day. & I never got paid.

I think of my folks & Ellen a lot now; will never be not busy. I have never been really lonely for anyone before & I suppose I'm not nearly so lonely as those in A.E.F.'s, but it's bad enough. Last night at the dance I would have given a great deal to have Ellen there. There is nothing to do here when not working & sooner or later they pop into my mind. I get an especially empty feeling about Ellen. I feel the desire to try to write a poem about her.



Private Albert R. Guay,
Assistant Company Clerk, Area B,
October to December 1942.
Courtesy of Albert R. Guay.



Assessing trainee's ability to withstand hostile interrogation. OSS Photo.



Right: Learning to build and use rope bridge crossings. OSS Photo.



Left: Lt. Erasmus H. Kloman practice firing a German submachine gun on the beach. Courtesy of Erasmus H. Kloman.



William E. ("Dan") Fairbairn on the left, and Hans Tofte, instructors in close combat fighting. Courtesy of the Congressional Country Club.



William E. Fairbairn demonstrated a disarming technique at Area B. This is a still from an OSS training film shot under John Ford's direction at Area B in 1942. Both students and instructors wore masks during the filming to preclude identification. Courtesy of Lynn Philip Hodgson.



Left: Fairbairn, on right, accompanying a trainee firing at a mock-up German in one of Fairbairn's "Mystery Houses," or "House of Horrors." Courtesy of Lynn Philip Hodgson.



Lt. Robert E. Carter, one of the spirited parachute and glider trained paratroop officers, chosen for OSS Special Operations Teams and Operational Groups, which received their OSS training at Areas F, B, and A. Courtesy of Robert E. Carter, Jr.

Right: Film star, Sterling Hayden (also known as Capt. John Hamilton), far right, and the naval radio operator, Seaman Spiro Cappony, who Hayden trained with at Area B.
Courtesy of Spiro Cappony.



Joseph ("Jumping Joe") Savoldi when he was an All-American at Notre Dame a decade before joining the OSS and training at Area B.
Courtesy of J.G. Savoldi.



Above: Morris ("Moe") Berg, major league baseball catcher, linguist, and spy for the OSS.



Area A-4, the former Civilian Conservation Corps work camp in Prince William Forest Park, served as the OSS headquarters for Area A. Because there were barracks there, it also served as a training sub-camp as well. OSS Records, National Archives.



A summer scene at Area A around the water fountain with cabins in the background. Courtesy of Ronald Gonzalez.



AREA "C" - TYPICAL BUILDINGS IN BOTH THE "A" AND "C" AREAS



Area C classroom, typical of classroom buildings in Areas A and C, OSS Records,
National Archives



Above: Off duty trainees at Area A clowning around in 1943 on the dock on the lake on the south fork of Quantico Creek that was used for seaborne landings and drills. Louis J. Gonzalez is on the right in an arm lock hold. Courtesy of Ronald Gonzalez.



Overseas Duty. Staff Sergeant Louis J. Gonzalez, OSS Research and Analysis Branch, in Italy, 1944. Courtesy of Ronald Gonzalez.

Private Sidney L. Harrow, attorney who trained at Area A and then became an interrogator in the OSS Assessment Program at Station S.

Courtesy of Mary Harrow.



Col. Aaron Bank, who as a young OSS Jedburgh trained at Areas F and A, then served in France and Indochina, and in 1952 helped found the Army Special Forces. A 1952 U.S. Army Photo.



Naval Lt. Frank V. Huston, left, with unidentified Marine lieutenant, both OSS, in North Africa in December 1943. Huston trained at Area C. Courtesy of Steven A. Huston.



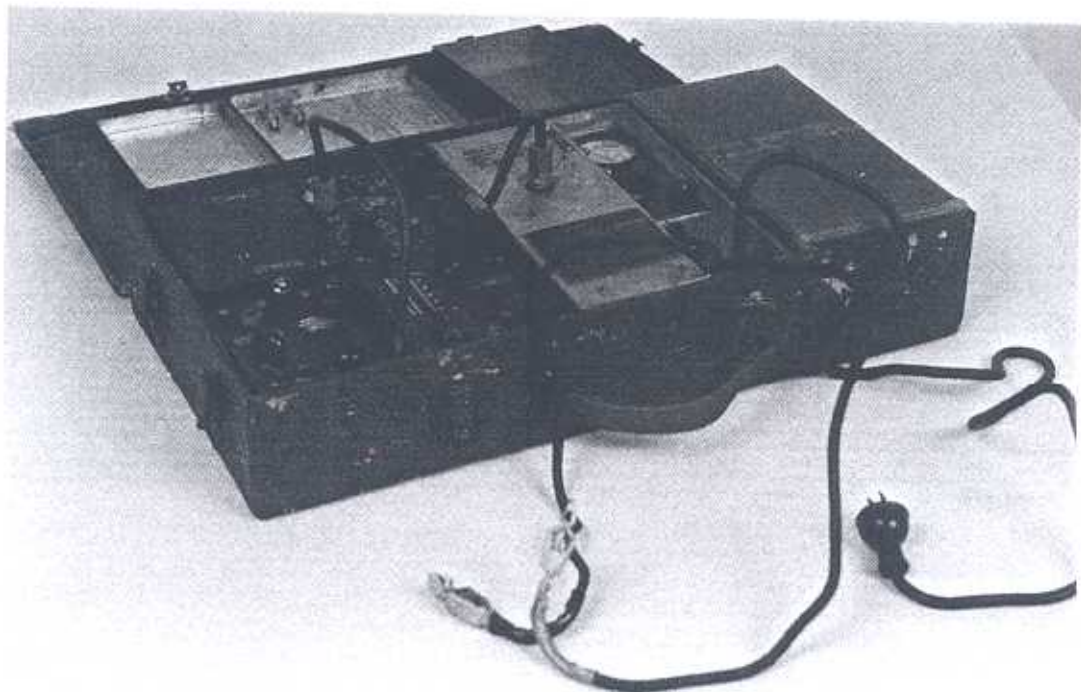
Area C served as the OSS Communications School. Civilian instructors like John Balsamo, front left, formerly a Wall Street telegrapher, and Timothy Marsh, front right, helped OSS "Commo" operators reach a minimum, accurate speed of at least 25 words per minute in OSS coded International Morse Code in classrooms like this. OSS Records.



Communications Branch trainees at Area C also learned how to set up various types of radio antennas for clandestine or base station wireless telegraphy transmitters and receivers. OSS Records, National Archives.



Instructors like Lt. F. Ralph Ward, left, and John Balsamo, right, demonstrated how the small, portable, suitcase-size SSTR-1, transmitter and receiver could be quickly set up by clandestine operators in the woods, its antenna wire, passing over Ward's shoulder, hung from a nearby tree branch. OSS Records, National Archives.



The SSTR-1 wireless telegraphy, short-wave radio transmitter and receiver in its suitcase carrying case complete with battery on the right and wires for connection to the battery and a plug for use with an electrical outlet. The battery was recharged by hand crank. Courtesy of John W. Brunner.



OSS Communications School graduates from Area C
Above (left to right) Roger L. Belanger, (unidentified), Chet Taylor, Robert Halvorson,
Martin Lubowsky, at OSS Radio Base Station "C" in Pouden Hill, England, 1944.
Courtesy of Roger Belanger.



Pvt. David A. Kenney on leave on
the family ranch in Wyoming
in December 1944, after graduation
from OSS Communications School.
Courtesy of David A. Kenney.



Lt. Marvin S. Flisser, after graduation
from Officer's Candidate School, 1944
and being reassigned from OSS
Communications to OSS Research
and Analysis Branch.
Courtesy of Marvin S. Flisser.



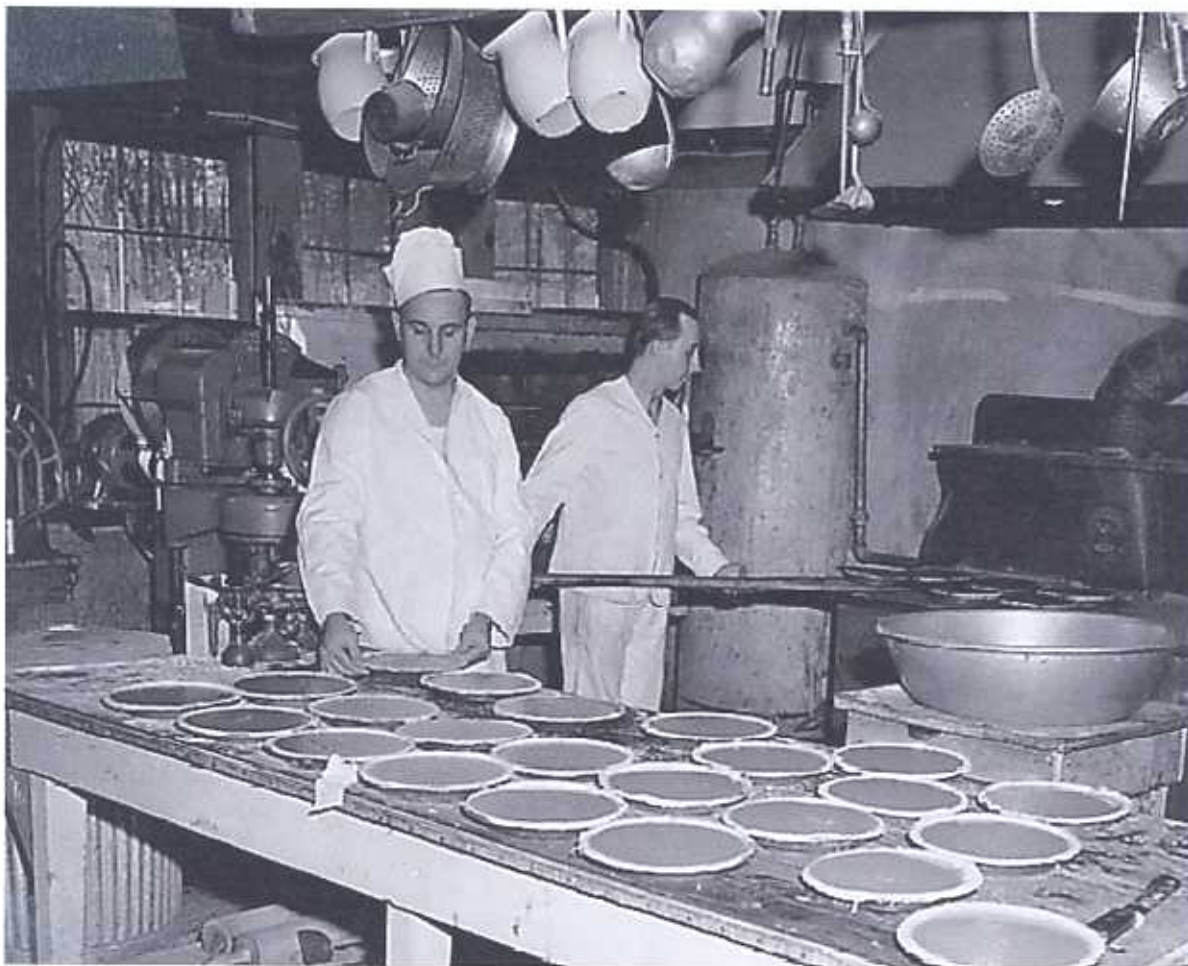
Maj. Albert Jenkins, USMCR, commanding officer of Area C for most of the war, sometimes personally instructed trainees in the use of the .45 caliber automatic pistol as he did here in December 1943. On the extreme left are Martin Lubowsky from Pittsburgh, half in the picture, James Bisaccia from the Bronx, holding up a pistol, and Corporal Mulford, weapons instructor. Identifications by Roger L. Belanger. OSS Photo.



A trainee is instructed in the use of the M-1 Garand semi-automatic rifle at the rifle target range at Area C. OSS Records, National Archives.



Although instruction was rigorous at the Training Camps, there was usually some time for outdoor recreation, softball, basketball, or volleyball. Here a volleyball game is held in front of the Recreation Building in Area C. OSS Records, National Archives.



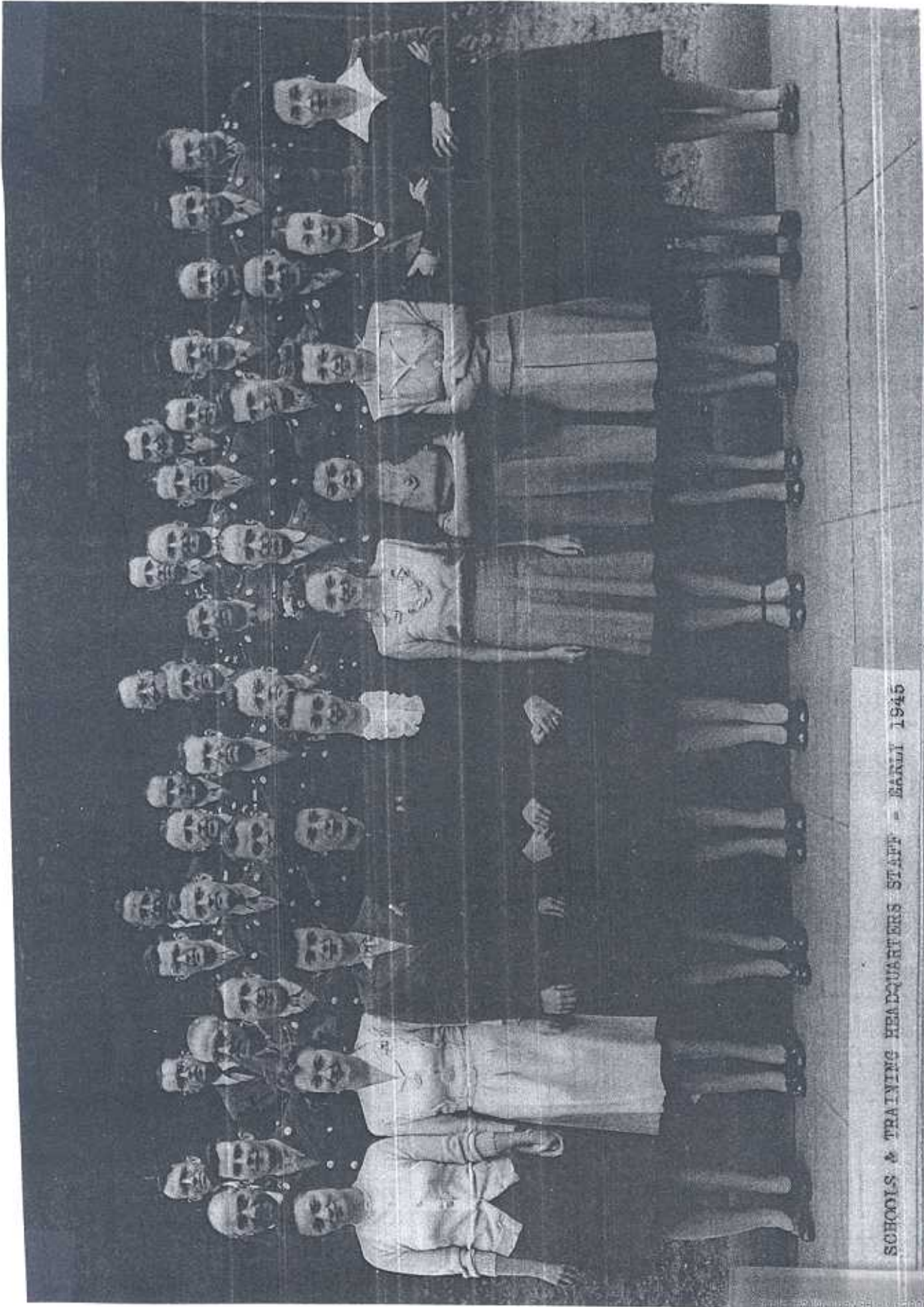
Since so much of the paramilitary training was so demanding physically, OSS tried to ensure that the quality of the food was better than standard Army chow. In Training Area C, former restaurant owner Capt. John Navarro obtained first class cooks. OSS Records.



Maj. Gen. William Donovan, OSS Director, center, at a breakfast meeting in winter of 1944-1945 with Maj. Howard Manning, left, who succeeded Albert Jenkins as head of Area C, and Manning's adjutant, Lt. Edward Katszka. Photo courtesy of Betty Manning.

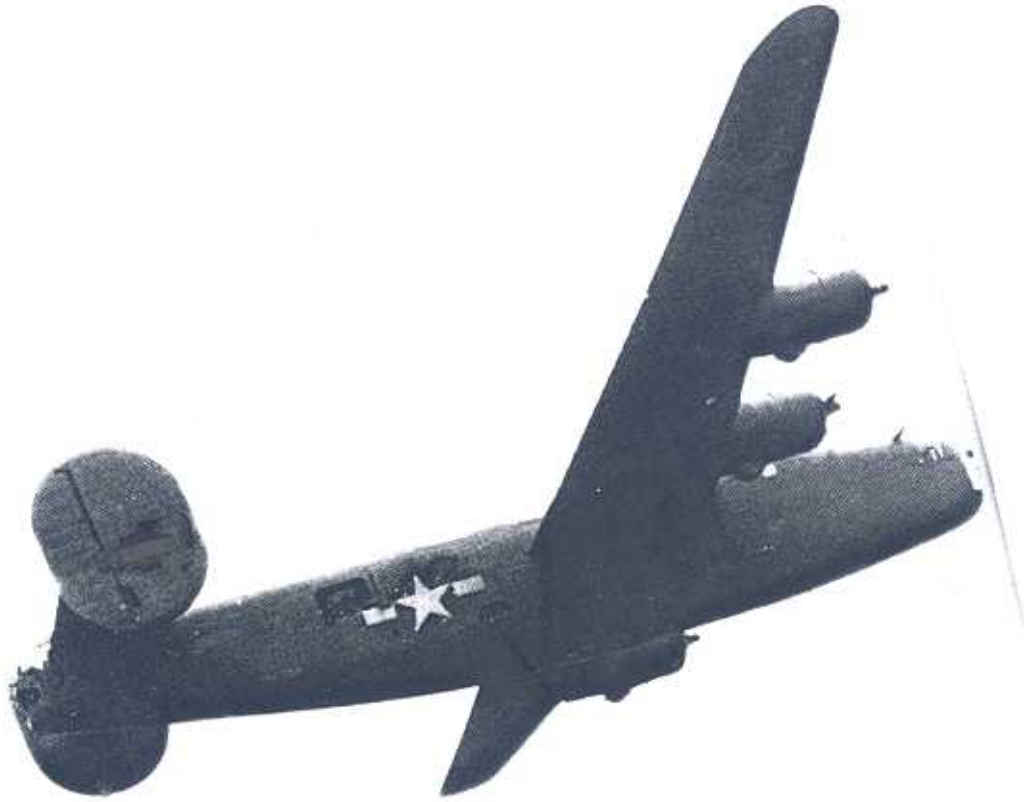


General Donovan addresses an audience of trainees, probably Special Operations or Operational Group members, as they are in military uniform with shoulder patches and the paratroopers among them are wearing jump boots. The setting is probably one of the recreation halls in Area A or Area C as the pool tables have been moved to the front of the room. A dummy used for bayonet, knife, or unarmed combat exercise has been moved to the left rear corner of the room. Photo courtesy of Betty Manning.



Official photograph of the men and women of the Schools and Training Branch's headquarters staff in Washington, D.C., at its peak strength in early 1945. OSS Records.

OSS in the European and Mediterranean Theaters of Operation



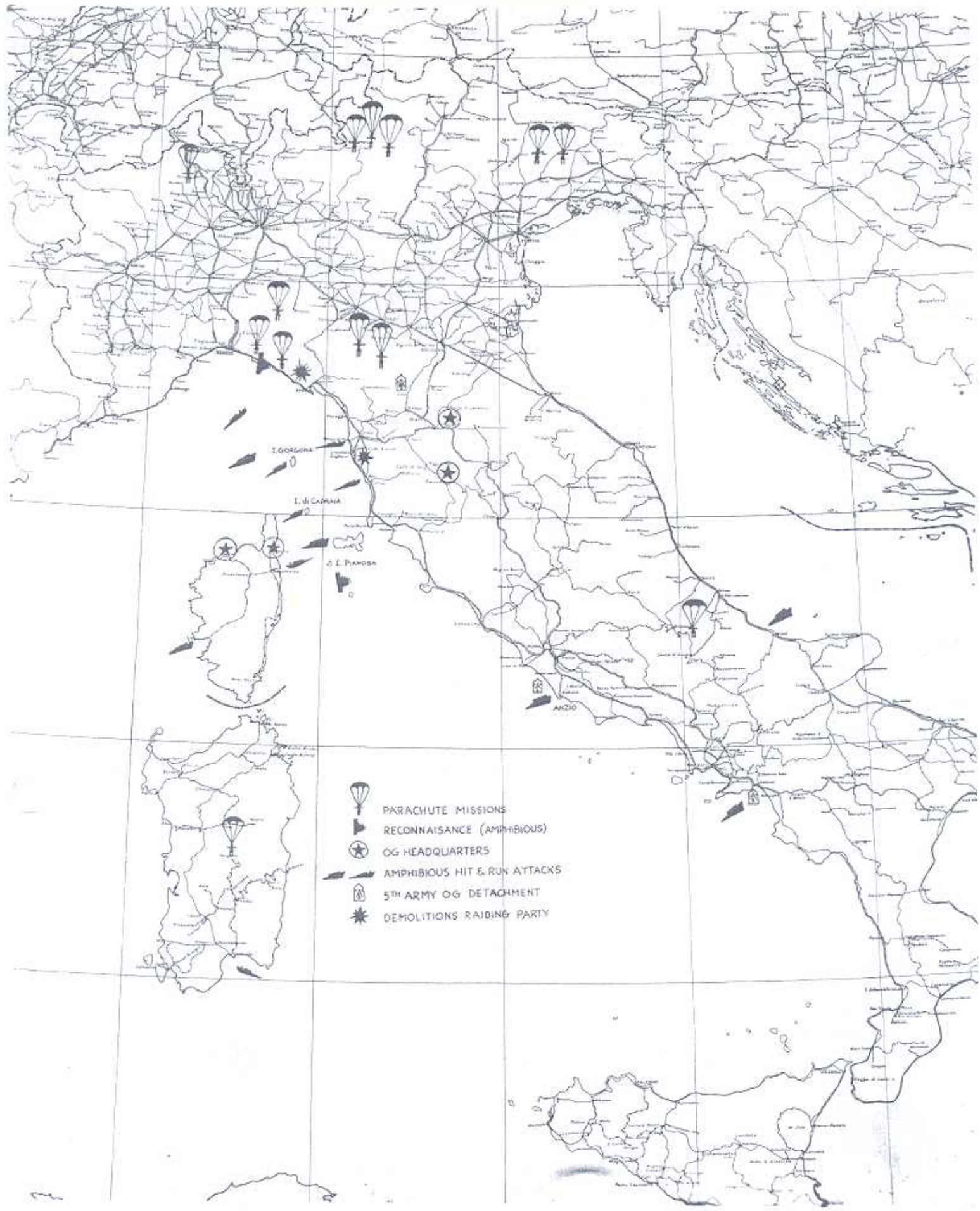
Specially modified, black-painted B-24 "Liberator" bombers flown by the U.S. Army Air Force's "Carpetbaggers," the 801st/492nd Bombardment Group of the Eighth Air Force, for low level airdrops of OSS personnel and supplies in enemy occupied territory in Europe. Courtesy of Rolf Herstad



An unidentified woman and man, members of OSS Secret Intelligence Branch, being suited up in British SOE jumpsuits and parachutes in preparation for airborne infiltration from England to France. Courtesy of John W. Brunner.



Members of an OSS Operational Group Mission, Percy Red, are trucked to a waiting plane to parachute them into central France in August 1944. Courtesy of Rolf Herstad.



Map of OSS Italian Operational Group operations in Italy 1943 to 1945. OSS Records, National Archives.

Lt. Col. Serge Obolensky, Russian prince, New York socialite, OSS officer, who trained at Areas B, A, and F, parachuted into Sardinia in 1943, becoming at age 52, the oldest combat paratrooper in the Army. In 1944, he led OSS French OG Mission Patrick into central France, fighting for a month behind enemy lines.





Capt. Albert Materazzi, who trained at Areas B, A, and F, and served as Operations Officer for the OSS Italian Operational Groups in Corsica and Italy, 1944-1945.



Private Caesar J. Civitella, paratrooper at Camp MacKall, North Carolina, in 1943 where he was recruited by OSS. Trained at Areas F and B, he was sent with the OSS Italian Operational Group on missions in southern France in 1944 and northern Italy in 1945.

Courtesy of Caesar J. Civitella.



Lt. Piero Boni (code-name "Coletti"), Rome born and a member of the Italian Resistance, received OSS training at Naples and Brindisi, and was parachuted behind German lines near Parma in 1944 in the OSS "Renata" and then "Cayuga" Missions to help coordinate activities of partisan groups against German and Italian fascist troops and provide intelligence information about the German forces to the OSS as the Allies advanced into northern Italy. He narrowly escaped capture and execution by the Germans.

Courtesy of Piero Boni.



Left: Greek-American members of the OSS Special Operations "Chicago" Mission in 1944 to northeastern Greece, where they destroyed two heavily-guarded railroad bridges that had provided an important supply route for Germany. l. to r. Spiro Cappony, Mike Angelos, James Kellis



Radioman George Psoinos with his suitcase radio and his bodyguard, a Greek guerrilla fighter



Greek guerrillas assemble packs of C-2 (plastic) composition explosives to blow up the bridges.

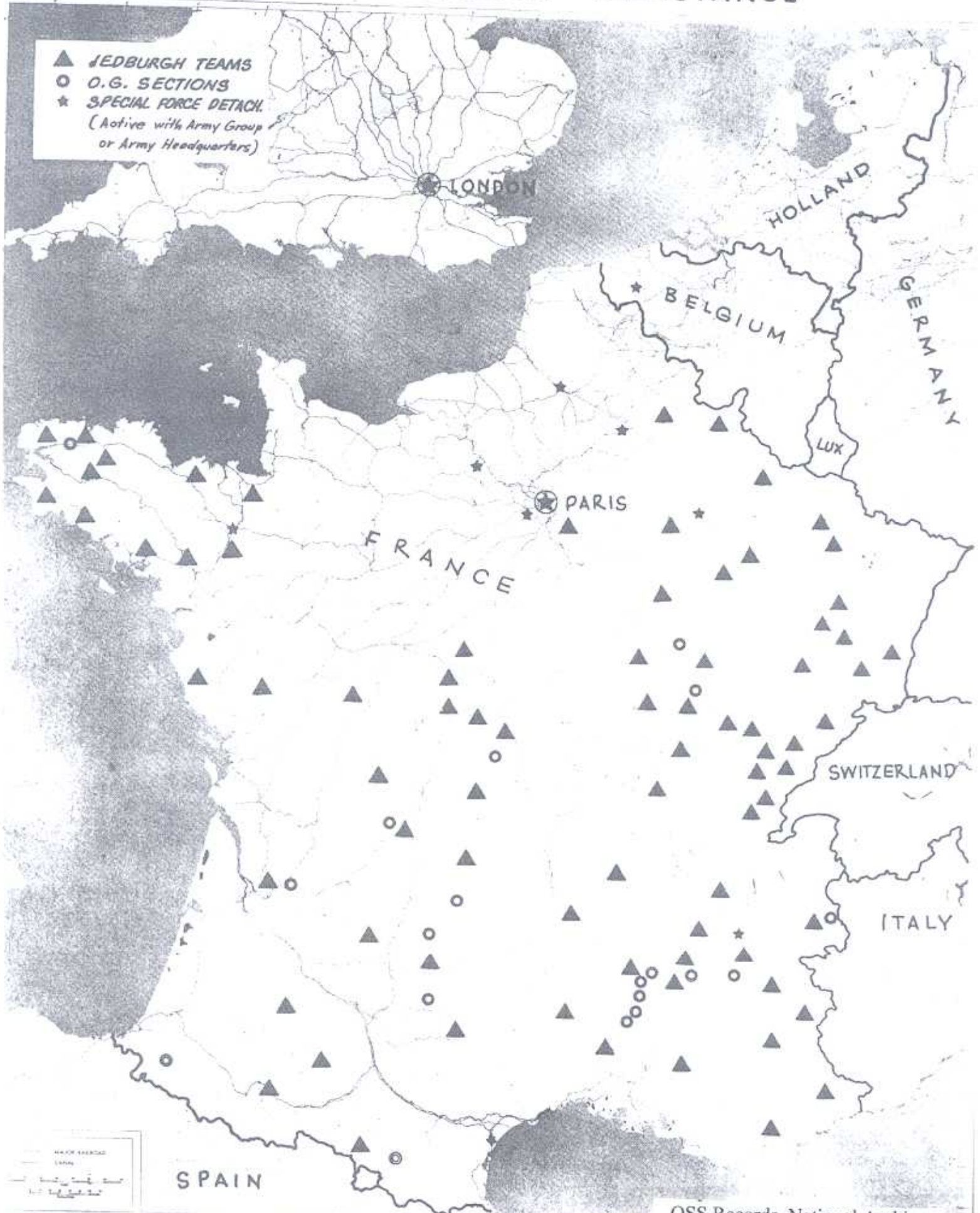
Photos courtesy of Spiro Cappony.

Right: Greek guerrilla fighters lead the way as the unit heads out on its mission.



OSS AID TO FRENCH RESISTANCE

- ▲ JEDBURGH TEAMS
- O.G. SECTIONS
- ★ SPECIAL FORCE DETACH.
(Active with Army Group
or Army Headquarters)

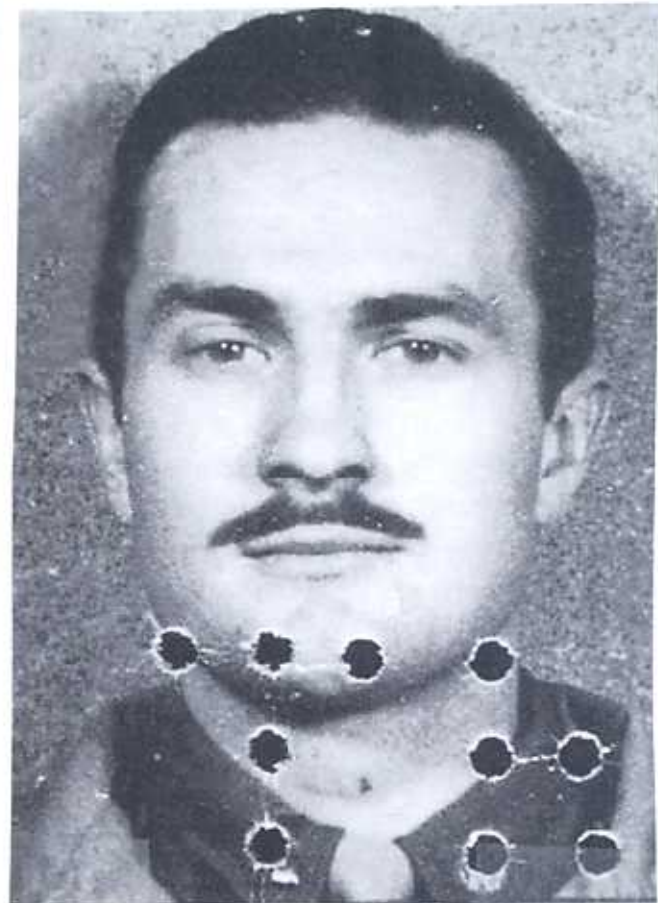


Lt. John K. ("Jack") Singlaub, left, who had trained at Areas F and B, commanded Jedburgh Team "James," which included a French executive officer, and an American radioman, Sgt. Anthony J. ("Tony") Denneau, right, and which spent seven weeks in the Correze region of France in August and September 1944. Courtesy of John K. Singlaub.



Maj. William E. Colby, above, who trained at Areas F and B, headed Jedburgh Team "Bruce" with two French assistants in the area southeast of Paris in August 1944. In 1945, Colby led an OSS Norso team which severed key railroad lines in Norway. He later headed the CIA under Presidents Nixon and Ford.

Right: Cancelled Identity Card for Jacques F. Snyder, French-raised American soldier, who trained at Areas F and A, and parachuted into the Grenoble area of France in 1944 on OSS missions for both Secret Intelligence and Special Operations. Courtesy of James Snyder.





OSS Jedburgh Team "James" with Lt. Jack Singlaub, second from left with hands on hip, interrogating a German soldier captured by *maquis* guerrillas directed by the OSS team. Courtesy of John K. Singlaub.



OSS men help celebrate the liberation of Castres, France, September 1944. Left to right: T/5 Raymond Picard, Cpl. Herbert Shapiro, and T/5 Marcel Landry armed with Marlin submachine guns and .45 caliber pistols. Courtesy of John W. Brunner.



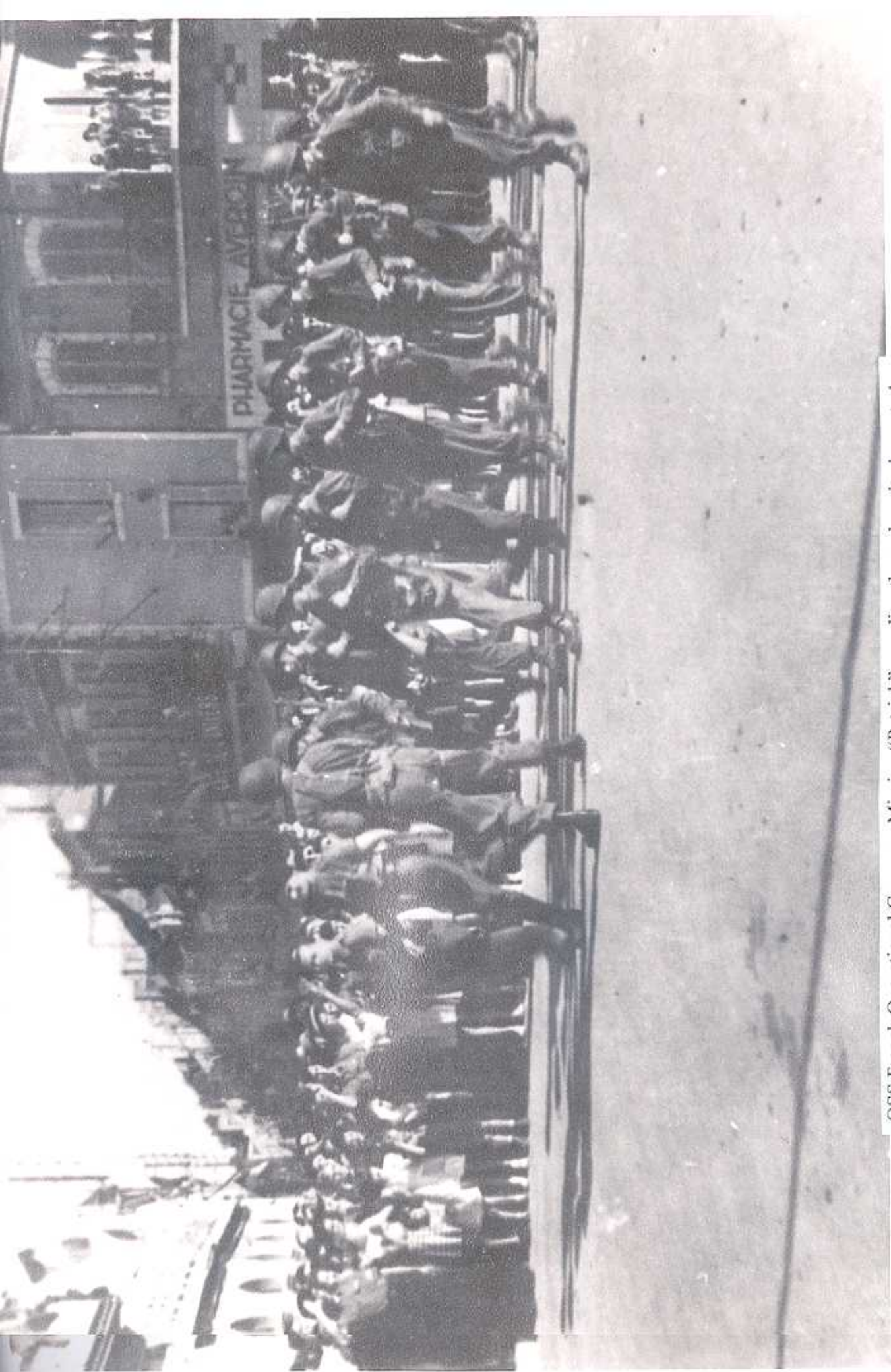
Left: Two members of the OSS Norway OG, who trained at Areas F and B, enjoy an evening out before leaving for Europe. Left to right: Leif Eide and his girlfriend, Margy; Andi Kindem and her fiancé, Arne I. Herstad.



Right: A group of buddies from the OSS Norway OG, who called themselves "The Unholy Four." (l. to r.) Cpl. Odd Aanonsen, Cpl. Kai Johansen, Pvt. Leif Eide, and T/5 Arne I. Herstad. Photo on "Percy Red" Mission in France 1944.



Above: A section of OSS Norway OG team being flown back to England in a C-47 transport plane after the successful "Percy Red" Mission in central France in 1944. All three pictures courtesy of Rolf Herstad.



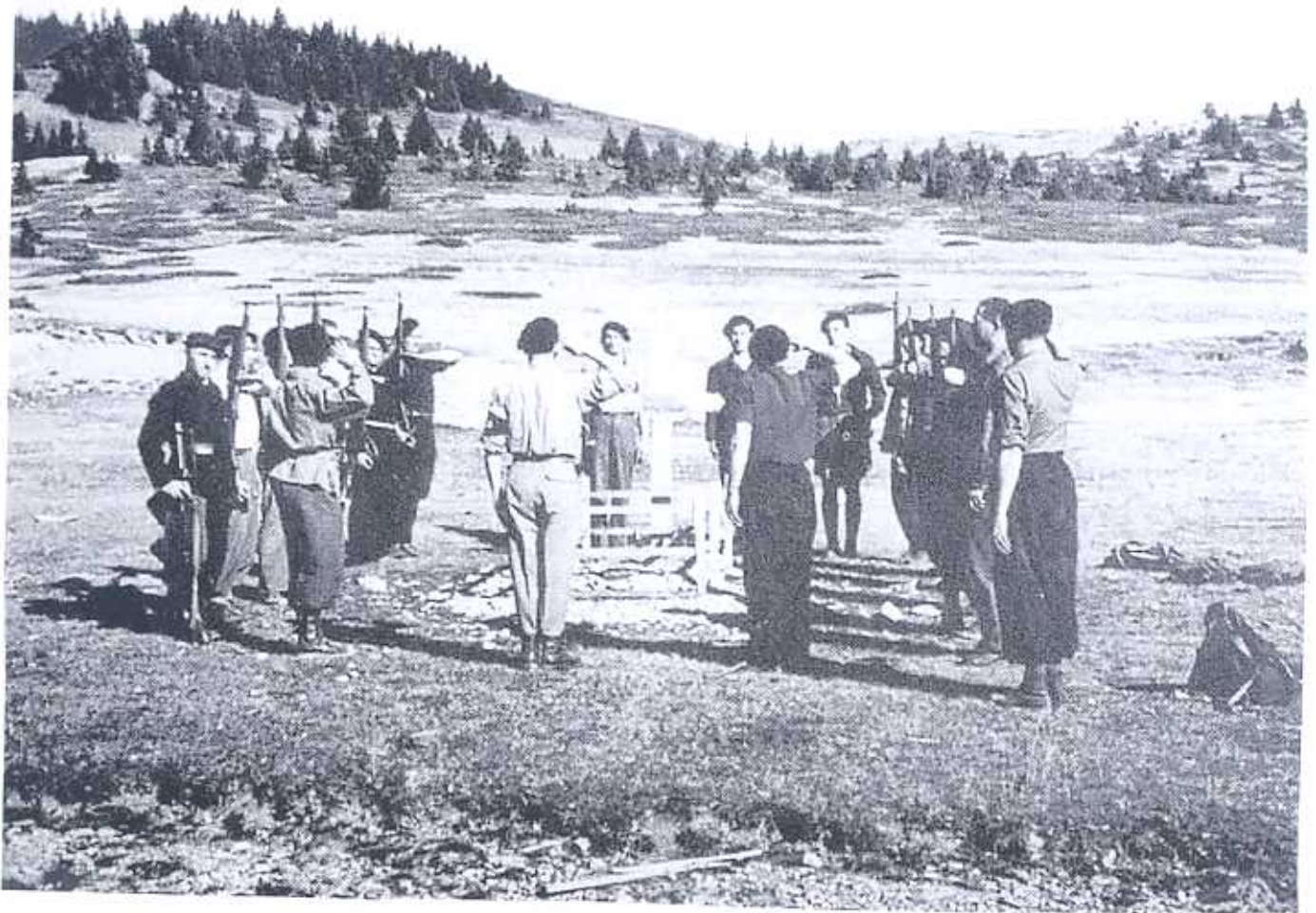
OSS French Operational Group on Mission "Patrick" parading through a city in central France after they helped liberate it in August 1944. The mission, which was led by Lt. Col. Serge Obolensky, included a number of OG members who would later transfer to China and lead Chinese Commando Units in 1945, among them Capt. James Cook, T/5 Ray Gallant, T/5 James Gardner, Pfc. Thomas McGuire, and Pfc. Ellsworth ("Al") Johnson. Photo taken by and courtesy of Ellsworth ("Al") Johnson.



Major Peter J. Ortiz and the others in OSS SO's Union II Mission team a few days after parachuting onto a plateau in the French Alps, Aug. 1, 1944, (l. to r.) Sgt. John Bodnar, Maj. Ortiz, Sgts. Robert Lasalle and Fred Brunner, Capt. Frank Coolidge, Sgt. Jack Risler, all Marines except Coolidge. Courtesy of the California State Military Museum.

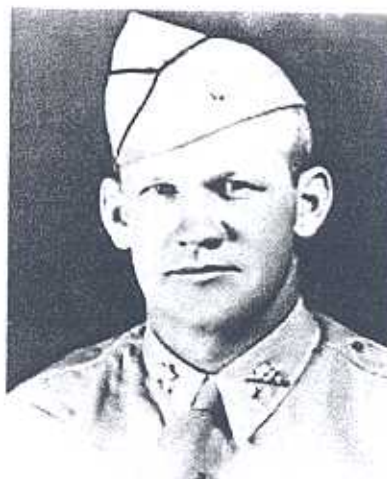


A week after his arrival near Albertville, Ortiz, in his Marine Corps service uniform, inspected guerrilla members of the French Forces of the Interior. The young man with glasses and beret, *Captaine* Bulle the local FFI commander and already a hero, was later killed in action liberating Albertville. Courtesy of the California State Military Museum.



Sgt. Charles R. Perry, USMC, a member of OSS's Union II Mission, was killed when his steel parachute cable snapped during the team's airborne infiltration into France on Aug. 1, 1944. He was buried with full military honors provided by guerrillas of the French Forces of the Interior and the surviving team members of the Union II Mission in a ceremony held in the drop zone itself. Courtesy of the California State Military Museum.

Chris Rumburg: An American Hero



Lieutenant Colonel Ira
"Chris" Rumburg

Ira Christopher ("Chris") Rumburg, who had been captain of the Washington State University football team, a champion wrestler, and president of the student body, had as a young lieutenant in OSS's SO Branch been an instructor at Area A in 1942-1943.

By 1944, Rumburg was a lieutenant colonel assigned to a regimental headquarters in the 66th ("Black Panther") Infantry Division, possibly as an OSS adviser. On Christmas Eve, Rumburg and 2,200 soldiers boarded a transport ship, the *SS Leopoldville*, which was to take them from Southampton, England to Cherbourg, France for the trip to the front. The ship was torpedoed six miles from France. Before the ship sank and he drowned, Rumburg was credited with saving the lives of more than one hundred of his fellow soldiers. He was one of the nearly 800 American soldiers who perished in the disaster. Rumburg was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star and Purple Heart, and commemorated by a Memorial Fund by the Washington State University. Photos courtesy of Washington State University Athletics.

Tragedy in Slovakia

In the fall of 1944, in an attempt to assist a Nationalist Uprising in Slovakia against Germany and also to establish information networks in central Europe, OSS flew two teams, including nearly two dozen Special Operations and Secret Intelligence personnel, into site of the uprising in central Slovakia. The SO "Dawes" Mission to aid the Slovak Resistance and rescue downed Allied fliers was headed by Navy Lieutenant J. Holt Green from Charleston and his deputy, Navy Lieutenant James Harwey Gaul from Pittsburgh. Many of the team members were Czech or Slovak immigrants, such as Jaroslav ("Jerry") G. Mican, the oldest team member at 42, a native of Prague, who had emigrated to Chicago in the 1920s and become a school teacher. Army Air Force Captain Edward V. Baranski, an ethnic Slovak from Illinois, headed the OSS SI "Day" Group, whose mission was to establish a ring of local spies in Czechoslovakia. B-17 bombers flew the teams into Slovakia in September 1944 and in early October, half a dozen B-17s landed on a grass-covered airfield at Tri Duby near Banská Bystrica with additional plane-loads of supplies for the 1st Czechoslovakian Army and the Slovak Resistance. But the uprising was crushed by the Germans. Although the OSS team, as well as British SOE members accompanying them, fled into the Tatra Mountains, most of them were captured, tortured and executed, many of them at Malthausen Concentration Camp near Linz, Austria. Of the twenty OSS team members, fourteen were killed, and only six survived. Most of the SOE team members were also captured and killed. Two of the OSS team members evaded capture with the help of 24-year-old Maria Gulovich, a Slovakian schoolteacher and partisan, who had been hired as an interpreter and guide by the OSS.



Slovakia, showing location of Banská Bystrica, the focal point of the Slovak National Uprising and site of OSS landings in nearby Tri Duby airfield, as well as the Tatra Mountains where most members of the OSS and SOE teams were captured by the Nazis.

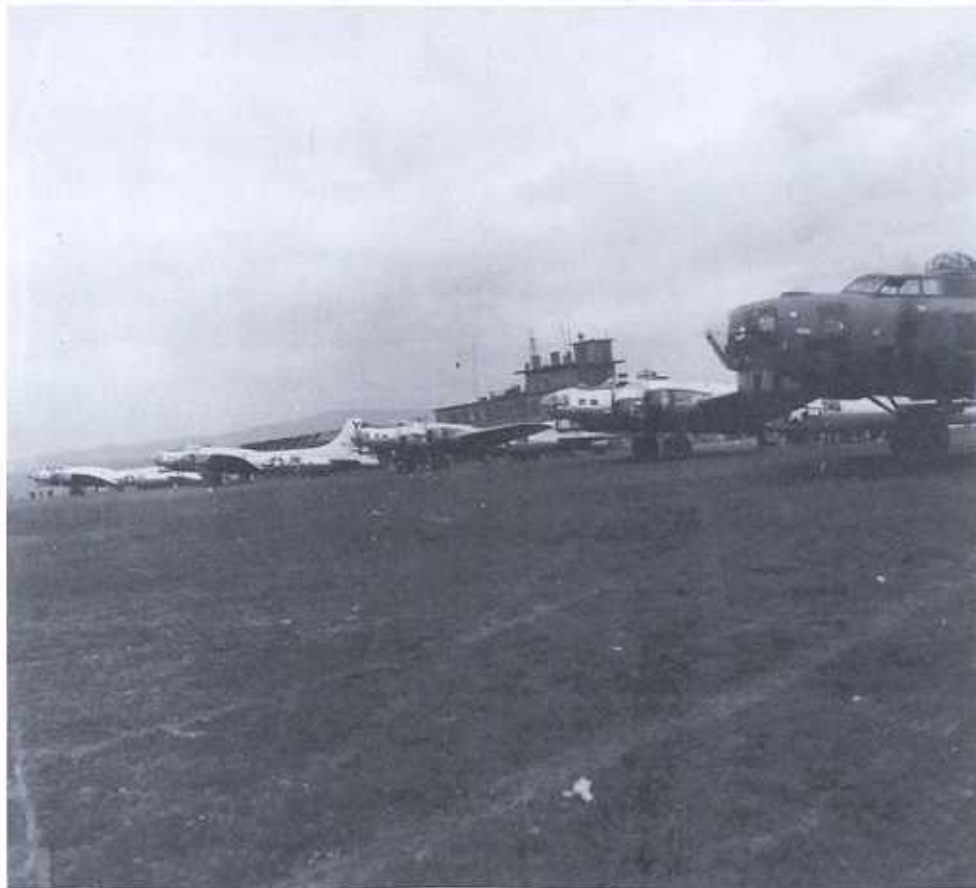
Unless otherwise noted, all of the following illustrations are courtesy of the *Múzeum Slovenského národného povstania*, Museum of the Slovak National Uprising Banská Bystrica, Slovakia (SNU Museum, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia).



Above: Navy Lieutenant, senior grade, J. Holt Green, Commander of Special Operations' "Dawes" Mission to Slovakia. Below: Navy Lieutenant James H. Gaul, his deputy commander. Both were among those later captured and executed by the Nazis. (SNU Museum, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia).



Army Air Force Captain Edward V. Baranski, Commander of SI's "Day" Group. Also captured and executed by the Nazis. U.S. National Archives



Six U.S. B-17G "Flying Fortress" Bombers from the 15th U.S. Army Air Force from Bari, Italy at the insurgent-held, Tri Duby Airfield near Banská Bystrica, on Oct. 7, 1944. (SNU Museum, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia).



Bazookas and other weapons as well as munitions, explosives, medical and other supplies for the Slovakian National Uprising unloaded from a B-17 by Slovakian soldiers and members of the OSS. (SNU Museum, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia).



During the air supply operation, Navy Lieutenant Holt Green, left, conferred with Sergeant Jerry Mican and British Major John Schmer, right, commander of the British SOE intelligence mission. All three were later captured and executed by the Germans. (SNU Museum, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia).

Three OSS enlisted men waited for the B-17 deliveries (left to right) Radioman Charles O. Heller, Czech-speaking Chicagoan; Slovakian native, Sergeant Joseph Horvath from Cleveland, Ohio; and radioman Robert Brown, who had previously served on OSS missions in Yugoslavia. All three were later captured and executed. (SNU Museum, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia).



In the shade of a B-17 wing, war correspondent Joseph Morton of the Associated Press typed a story on his portable typewriter perched atop a box of supplies. He too was executed by the Nazis. (SNU Museum, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia).



A month later fleeing into the Lower Tatra Mountains, the main OSS group stopped for a break on November 11, 1944. Team photographer, Navy Seaman Nelson Paris took a picture of Joe Morton, left, Lt. Holt Green center, and Sgt. Jerry Mican, right. They were captured December 26, 1944 and executed at Mauthausen Concentration Camp in early 1945. (SNU Museum, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia).



Above: OSS Photographer, Seaman Nelson Paris, was among those executed. U.S. National Archives.



Above: Margita Kocková, a 30-year-old Slovak-American, was assigned by the Czechoslovak Army HQ as an interpreter with the British SOE team in Slovakia headed by Major John Sehmer. Like him, she was captured and executed by the Nazis. (SNU Museum, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia).



Left: Maria Gulovich, 24, Slovakian schoolteacher, partisan, and interpreter for the "Dawes" Mission, led two OSS enlisted men to safety. Her Slovakian identity card, included her signature, Mária Gulovičová in Slovak, scrawled over part of her face. Following the escape, she continued to work for the OSS and was later brought to the United States where she received the Bronze Star Medal. (SNU Museum, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia).

Mauthausen Concentration Camp

Most of interrogations, torture and execution of at least seventeen members of the OSS and SOE Missions to Slovakia in 1944-1945 took place at Mauthausen Concentration Camp near Linz, Austria, one of the largest, oldest and most brutal of the Nazi concentration camps (at least 70,000 persons, mainly Jews perished there during the war). The camp commander at the time the OSS and SOE members were executed was SS Colonel Franz Ziereis, who personally supervised the torture and execution of the captives, often aided by deputy commandant Georg Bachmayer.

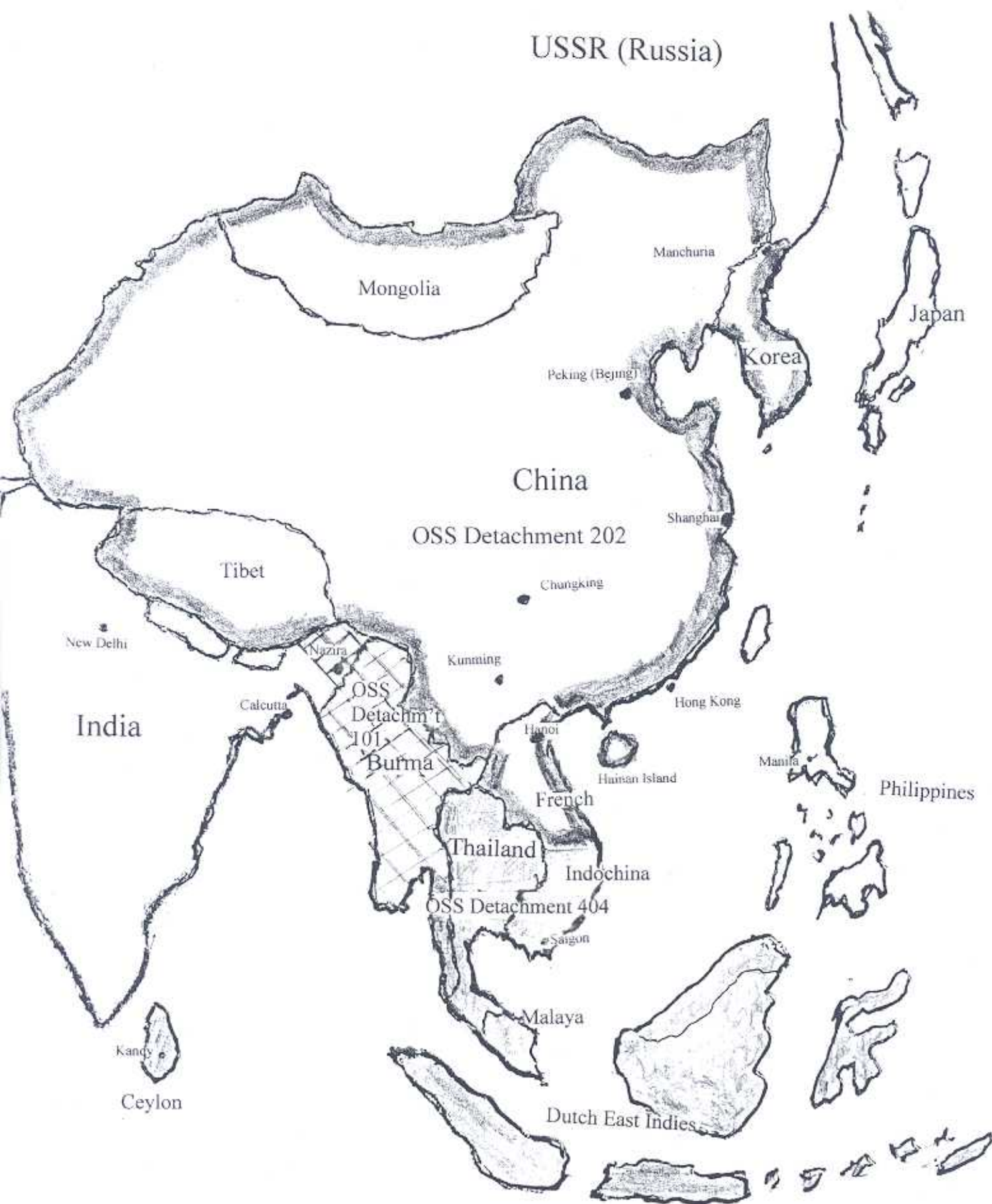
In 1941, after Ziereis had become the new commandant of Mauthausen, Nazi SS Chief Heinrich Himmler and his main subordinate Ernst Kaltenbrunner, who oversaw the SS, the secret police, and the management and the methods of liquidation in the camps, made an inspection tour of the Mauthausen camp.

The top photograph, shows, left to right in the front row, Kaltenbrunner, Ziereis, Himmler and August Eigruber, Nazi *Gauleiter* (administrative leader) for Upper Austria. At the far right in the second row is Georg Bachmayer.



The bottom photograph shows Himmler, Ziereis, and Kaltenbrunner. Photos courtesy of the *KZ-Gedenkstätte Mauthausen*, the Mauthausen Concentration Camp Memorial, Mauthausen, Austria.





OSS Detachment 101 operated in northern Burma from its headquarters in Nazira, India; Detachment 202 in China and northern French Indochina from Chungking and Kunming; Detachment 404 operated in southern Burma, Thailand, Malaya, and southern French Indochina from its main headquarters in Kandy, Ceylon (Sri Lanka). John W. Chambers.



One of the handful of OSS officers engaged in undercover operations in the Pacific was Lieutenant Reginald G. ("Reg") Spear, center, who trained at Area B, shown here in Hawaii with Admiral Chester Nimitz, right, commander-in-chief of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, and an aide, Commander Howell A. ("Hall") Lamar. Courtesy of Reginald G. Spear.



Lt. Richard T. Walsh, Detachment 101, prepares to jump into Japanese occupied Burma.
Photo courtesy of John W. Brunner.

Col. Carl Eifler, left, commander of Detachment 101, prepares to take Gen. William Donovan on a flight behind Japanese lines in Burma, Dec. 1943, while film director John Ford, with sun glasses, and Nicol Smith, who trained at Area B, watch.



Lt. Joseph Lazarsky, former Instructor at Area B, in Burma, where he commanded the 1st Kachin Ranger Battalion, 1944

OSS on the offensive in the jungle of northern Burma, 1944. Lt. Joe Lazarsky, right, CO of 1st Kachin Ranger Battalion, his deputy, a British officer, second from left, and two Anglo-Burmese agents accompanying the battalion and its elephant supply train south to Lashio before heading to Rangoon. Photo courtesy of Joseph Lazarsky



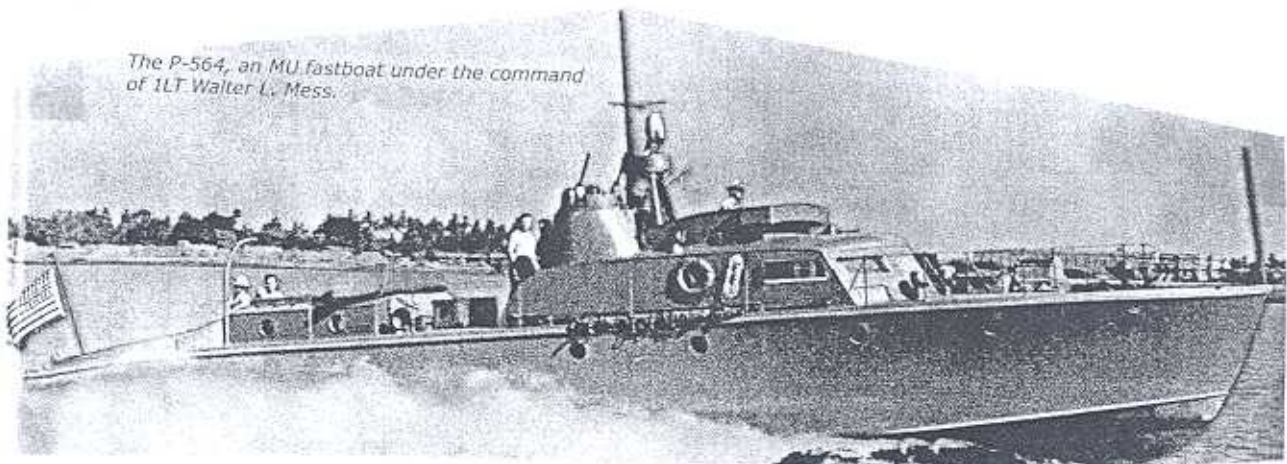


Lt. Roger Hilsman, West Point graduate, and former member of Merrill's Marauders, joined the OSS in 1944, serving with OSS Detachment 101 in Burma, where this picture was taken of him carrying a pistol and an OSS silenced M3 submachine gun. Later, serving with OSS Detachment 202, he would later help rescue his father and General Wainwright from a Japanese POW camp in China. Photo courtesy of John W. Brunner.



OSS Detachment 404 "War Room" in Kandy, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) with, left to right, British Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, Supreme Allied Commander of the Southeast Asia Command; Cora du Bois, chief of the Research & Analysis unit for Detachment 404; and Colonel John Coughlin, former deputy commander of Detachment 101, later head of OSS Detachment 202 in China in 1944. U.S. National Archives.

Major Lloyd E. Peddicord, left, OG section chief, and Captain George H. Bright, planning operations along the southern Burma coast in December 1944. Both officers, and the entire OG unit, trained at Areas F and A in 1944. Photo courtesy of Dr. Christian J. Lambertsen



The P-564, an MU fastboat under the command of 1LT Walter L. Mess.

Arakan Field Unit of Detachment 404 and later Detachment 101, was composed of OG, SI, and MU personnel, and engaged in operations along Burma's southern Arakan coast, inlets and rivers. They used Maritime Unit fastboats, including the P-564, shown here skippered by First Lieutenant Walter L. Mess of Arlington, Virginia. These U.S. Army Air-Sea Rescue Boats were similar to Navy PT (Patrol Torpedo) boats but shorter and without the torpedo tubes. Photo courtesy of Troy Sacquety.



Lieutenant John C. Hooker, Jr. was 20-year-old officer in the OG section of the Arakan Field Unit, in 1944. Like the others he had trained at Areas F and A. After service on MU fast boats along the Burma coast in 1944, he was sent to parachute school and deployed into jungle combat in northern Burma with Detachment 101. Subsequently, he served with Detachment 202 as an officer in the 10th Chinese Commando Group, which attacked a Japanese held airfield in China in 1945. Postwar photograph of Lieutenant Colonel John C. Hooker, Jr. in 1959, courtesy of John C. Hooker, Jr.

CHINA



OSS Map of China. Arrows show Japanese Offensive's penetration (May 1, 1945). Dotted lines and Roman Numerals indicate Chinese War Zones and the black dots denote War Zone Headquarters. OSS Records, National Archives.



OSS China Theater Headquarters Compound north of Kunming.
Photo courtesy of John W. Brunner



Left: OSSer Julia McWilliams later married Paul Child whom she met while she headed the OSS Registry for secret documents, first in Kandy, Ceylon and then in Kunming, China. Later, as his wife, Julia Child, she accompanied him to France, famously mastering the art of French cooking. Photo courtesy of the OSS Society.



Above: Elizabeth ("Betty") P. MacDonald (later McIntosh) former war correspondent, joined OSS, trained at Area F, and was sent to Ceylon and then China, to write material for the Morale Operations Branch.



Left: When the MO print shop in Kunming, China, was flooded in 1945, Betty P. MacDonald was carried to dry land by noted artist William A. Smith, also in MO, accompanied by Tong Ting, a famous China cartoonist. Photos courtesy of Elizabeth ("Betty") P. McIntosh.



Lt. Col. Charles M. Parkin in front of a pagoda in one of the joint Sino-American training camps in which American instructors trained Chinese soldiers to become Special Operations guerrillas. Parkin was chief instructor and eventually commanding officer of this camp in the mountains five miles south of Huizhou (Shexian), about 200 miles west of Shanghai. Later Parkin led a major reconnaissance mission, the "Akron" Mission, behind Japanese lines along the south China coast. Courtesy of Charles M. Parkin.

In China, Lt. Col. Arden W. Dow, right, former instructor at Area B and chief instructor at Area A, and Maj. Frank A. Gleason, left, former instructor at Area B, were commander and deputy commander respectively of a joint Sino-American training camp sixty miles southeast of Loyang to prepare Chinese Special Operations guerrilla teams to operate behind enemy lines. Courtesy of Frank A. Gleason.



Maj. Frank Gleason, OSS Special Operations and Army Corps of Engineers, instructs Chinese Special Operations trainees on the necessary amount and proper placement of modern explosives to destroy an industrial steel boiler. Courtesy of Frank A. Gleason.



Frank A. Gleason, 24, points to his jeep's windshield which was smashed by rock fragments from an explosive charge set by his Special Operations Team as they set out in late summer 1944 to impede the Japanese Army's advance. Courtesy Frank A. Gleason.

In late summer and early winter 1944, in an attempt to impede the Japanese Army's *Ichi-Gō* offensive toward Kweilin and Liuchow in southern China, Maj. Frank Gleason led an OSS Special Operations unit of nearly a dozen Americans to destroy the area's transportation net.



Above: Maj. Frank Gleason stands atop the ruins of a stone bridge blown up by his team.



Left: A river ferry burns near Pinglo, set fire by Gleason's men.

Right: Villagers survey the remains of a wooden bridge with stone supports destroyed by Gleason's team, which set off a 1,000 pound bomb there to delay the Japanese Army.

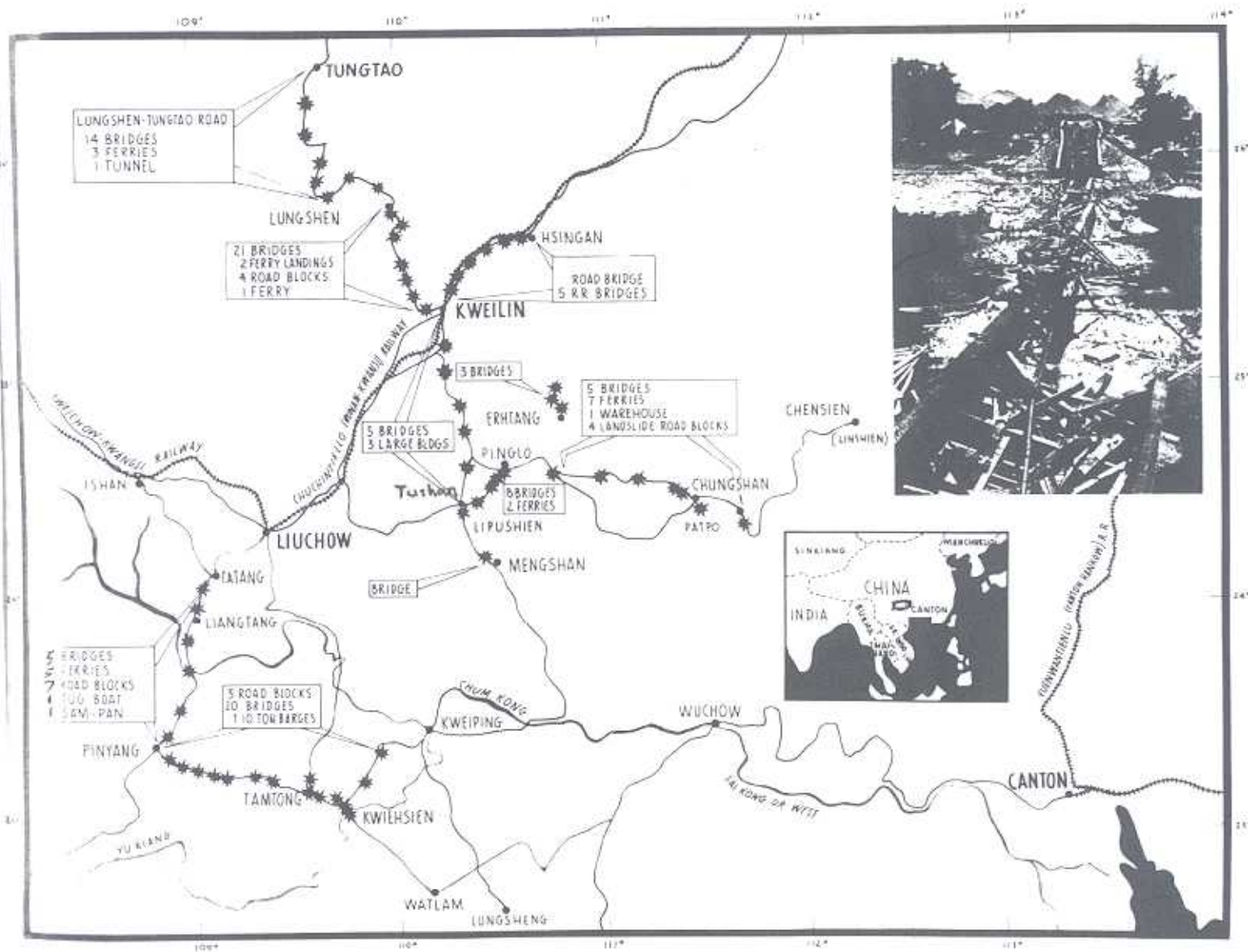


Photos from OSS Records,
National Archives.

Right: Capt. Leopold (“Leo”) Karwaski, on left, former instructor at Area B, and a Marine Major Benson, right, both members of Maj. Gleason’s SO team, take a roadside break near Kweilin, south China, late fall 1944. OSS Records, National Archives.



Below: Destruction achieved by Maj. Frank Gleason’s OSS team helping to stop the Japanese Army’s *Ichi-Gō* campaign toward Liuchow, Kweilin, and north toward Kunming and Chungking. The Japanese were halted. OSS Records, National Archives.





Corporal Conrad D. Beck, radio operator of Lieutenant Colonel Charles Parkin's "Akron" Mission to survey the south China coast behind Japanese lines, transmitting a message from the village of Tinting back to base headquarters, April 24, 1945, with an SSTR-1 to the fascination of Nationalist Chinese Army bodyguards and some local residents. Beck trained with Arthur Reinhardt at Area C. Photo courtesy John W. Brunner



The OSS communications room in Tientsin (Tianjin), China, southeast of Peking (Beijing) in 1945. John W. Brunner, left, who trained at Area C as well at the OSS coding center in Washington, D.C., encodes a message, while Guy E. Webb, right, transmits another message. Photo courtesy of John W. Brunner.

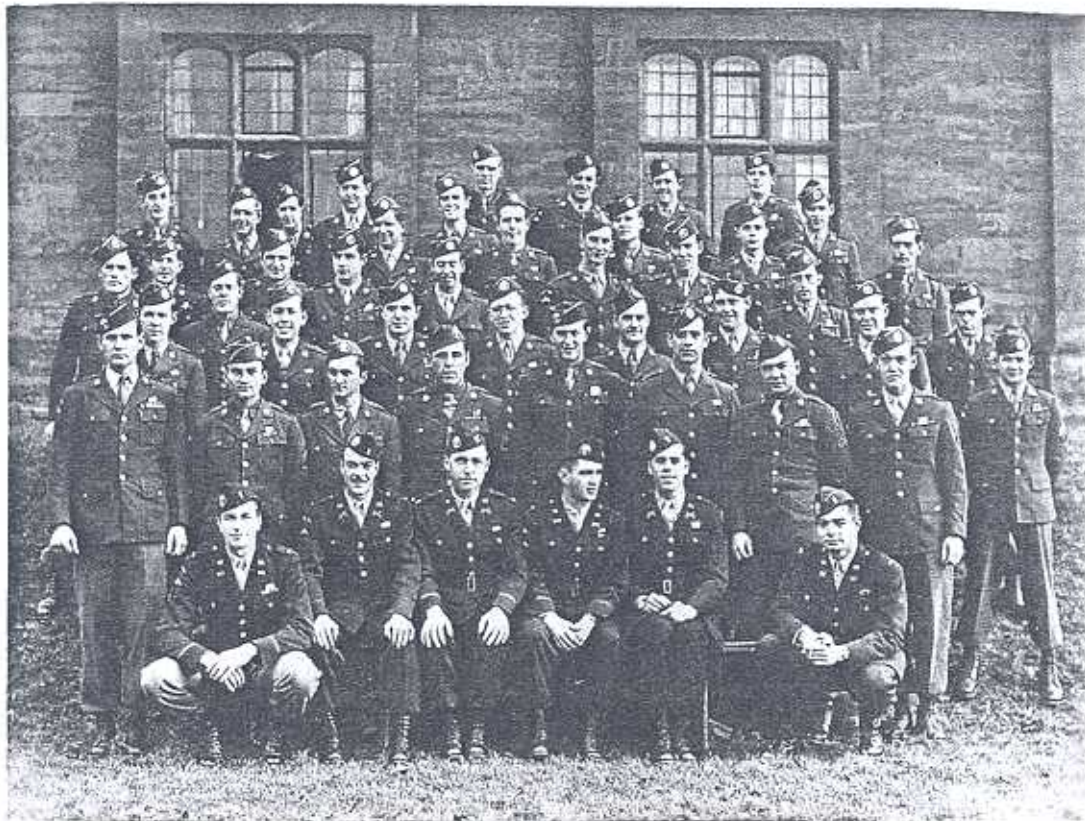


Pvt. Arthur F. ("Art") Reinhardt, 19, from near Buffalo, New York, a top graduate of the Army Air Corps' Communications School, was recruited by Donovan's organization and sent to the OSS Communications School at Area C in Prince William Forest Park in the summer of 1944. Subsequently, he was sent to China in October 1944 as an OSS radio operators/cryptographer. Initially, he was stationed in a forward base of the 14th U.S. Air Force, but once it was overrun by the Japanese Army in December 1944, Reinhardt spent most of 1945 with OSS teams working in the field behind enemy lines. He served both inland and along the seacoast, providing target and other information for the U.S. Army Air Force and the U.S. Navy. Courtesy of Arthur F. Reinhardt.



Two leaders of OSS SO Team "Ibex" in North China in 1945. Lt. Herbert R. Brucker, left, trained at Area E and probably C. An OSS radioman in France in 1944, Brucker had been promoted to lieutenant. In China, Brucker, with his Alsatian accent and beret, quickly became known as "Frenchy." He was executive officer of SO Team "Ibex" commanded by Capt. Leon Demers, right, which trained and led Chinese guerrillas behind Japanese lines in North China in 1945. Courtesy of Troy J. Sacquety.

From Trainees to Combat Veterans: A French OG from Europe to Asia



Portrait of part of a sizable part of the OSS French Operational Group in their Class-A uniforms at Brockhall training estate in England. They had previously trained at Areas F and B. In the summer of 1944, they would be parachuted behind German lines. After the liberation of France, these French OGs volunteered for service in Asia in 1945.



A section of this same OSS French Operational Group after their combat success in France and before being returned to England and then transferred to China. Rear row, left to right: Grant B. Hill, medic Ellsworth ("Al") Johnson, radioman Thomas F. McGuire, two unidentified OSSers, then Robert Anderson, and Capt. James E. Cook. Front row: two unidentified OSSers on the left, then J.L. DuBois, and with the cap, Roy Gallant
Photos courtesy of Ellsworth ("Al") Johnson.

Training Chinese Commandos

In 1945, Members of the OSS French OG section headed by Capt. John E. Cook and including Ellsworth ("Al") Johnson, Roy Gallant, and others, arrived in China and began training the 2nd OSS Chinese Commando unit near the OSS Theater headquarters north of Kunming.



Above: OSS rifle range targets for Chinese trainees on a hillside near Kunming.



Left: Chinese commando trainees participate in a field exercise to take over a Chinese village.



Above: OSS 2nd Chinese Commandos and their Chinese officer graduate after their OSS training in China.

Photos courtesy of Ellsworth ("Al") Johnson.

OSS Rescue Mission



Members of the OSS "Pigeon" Mission arrive at a Japanese camp for Allied prisoners of war on Hainan Island off the south China coast after parachuting in on 27 August 1945 with news of Tokyo's surrender. Maj. John K. ("Jack") Singlaub, center, commander of the mission, a Jedburgh in France who had trained at Areas F and B and in England, directs a Japanese Army captain to take them to the colonel in charge, as they hasten through the village where the guards resided toward the camp where the POWs were incarcerated.

Left to right: Lt. Ralph Yempuku, Japanese-American Nisei from Hawaii, the interpreter, with bandaged chin from the parachute drop; unidentified Japanese Army captain; Lt. John Bradley, Special Operations Branch; Major John K. Singlaub, SO, commander; Cpl. Jim Healey, medic; and Lt. Arnold Breakey, Secret Intelligence Branch. Photo courtesy of John K. Singlaub.

Starved Allied POWs

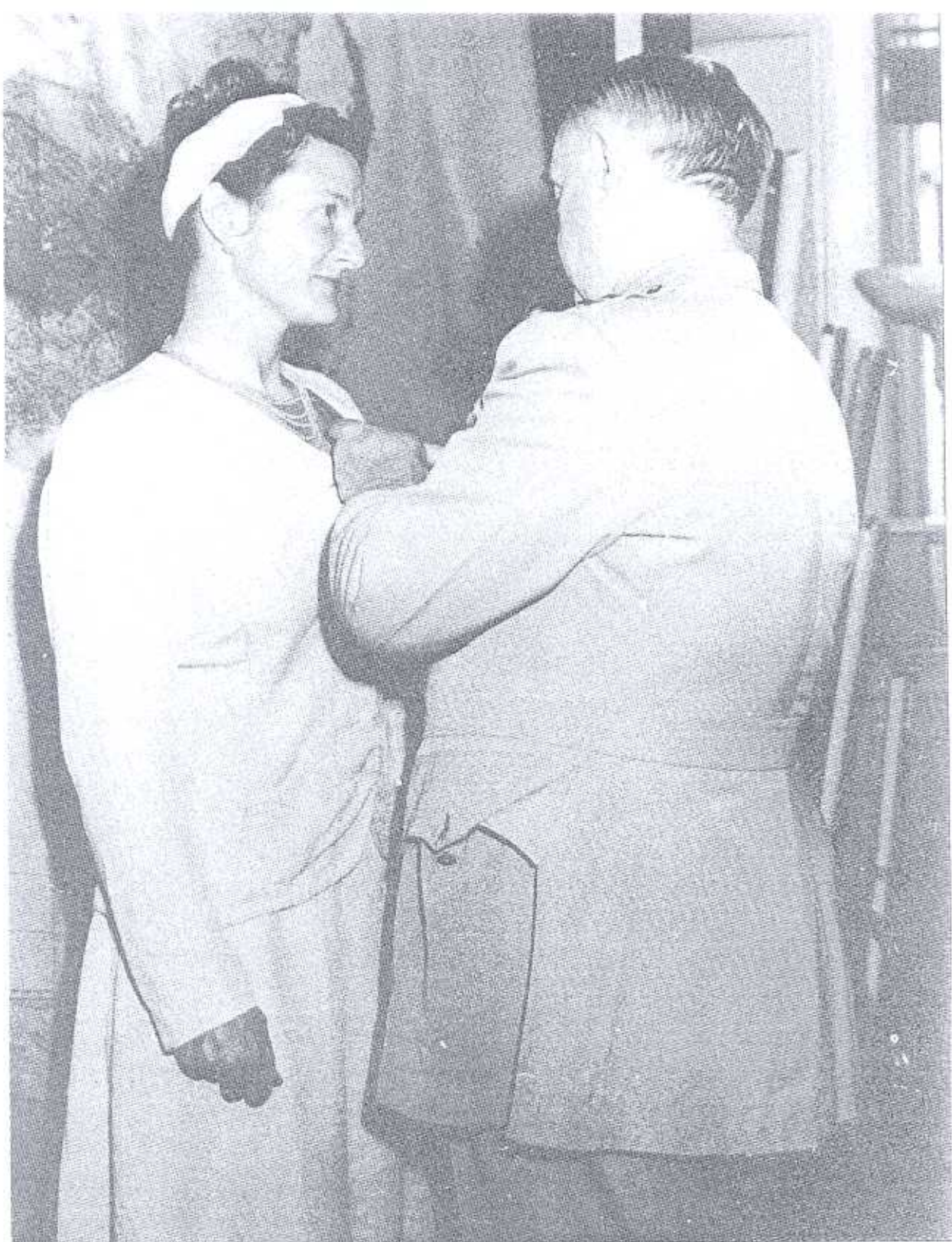


Some of the Allied prisoners of war rescued by the OSS "Pigeon" Mission on Hainan Island. The team rescued more than 500 in all. This group of Australian officers with their colonel, back row center, posed for an OSS photographer. Malnutrition, disease and brutal treatment had led to the deaths of 200 Australian and Dutch prisoners at the Hainan POW camp since their capture in 1942, but 500 were still alive. Eight American airmen had been captured in 1945, but only one was still alive. Aided by Singlaub's men and the medical team that arrived afterwards, the sick and starving prisoners were treated and put aboard ships for transportation to Allied hospitals. Photo courtesy of John K. Singlaub.

On the way home to the United States.



Five members of the OSS French Operational Group, who had trained at Areas F and B and then in England, had fought behind German lines in France in 1944 and Japanese lines in China in 1945, were on their way home from China via Calcutta, India, in September 1945. They were Nicholas Burke, from Chicago, sitting; others, from the left, Emil Roy from Kansas, Ellsworth ("Al") Johnson from Grand Rapids, Michigan; Gus (full name unknown), Robert Vernon from Idaho. Courtesy of Ellsworth ("Al") Johnson.



Virginia Hall, OSS Special Operations Branch, one of the most effective OSS spies and resistance leaders, operated behind enemy lines in German-occupied France. The Gestapo called her the limping lady because of her wooden leg and because of her effectiveness offered an enormous reward for her capture as one of the most dangerous Allied agents. This Maryland socialite turned clandestine operative eluded capture and provided valuable intelligence information as well as organizing, arming, and training French Resistance forces that demolished bridges, destroyed supply trains and disrupted enemy communications. Here, Virginia Hall receives the Distinguished Service Cross from Maj. Gen. William J. Donovan in September 1945. She was the only civilian woman to receive the Distinguished Service Cross in World War II. National Archives.



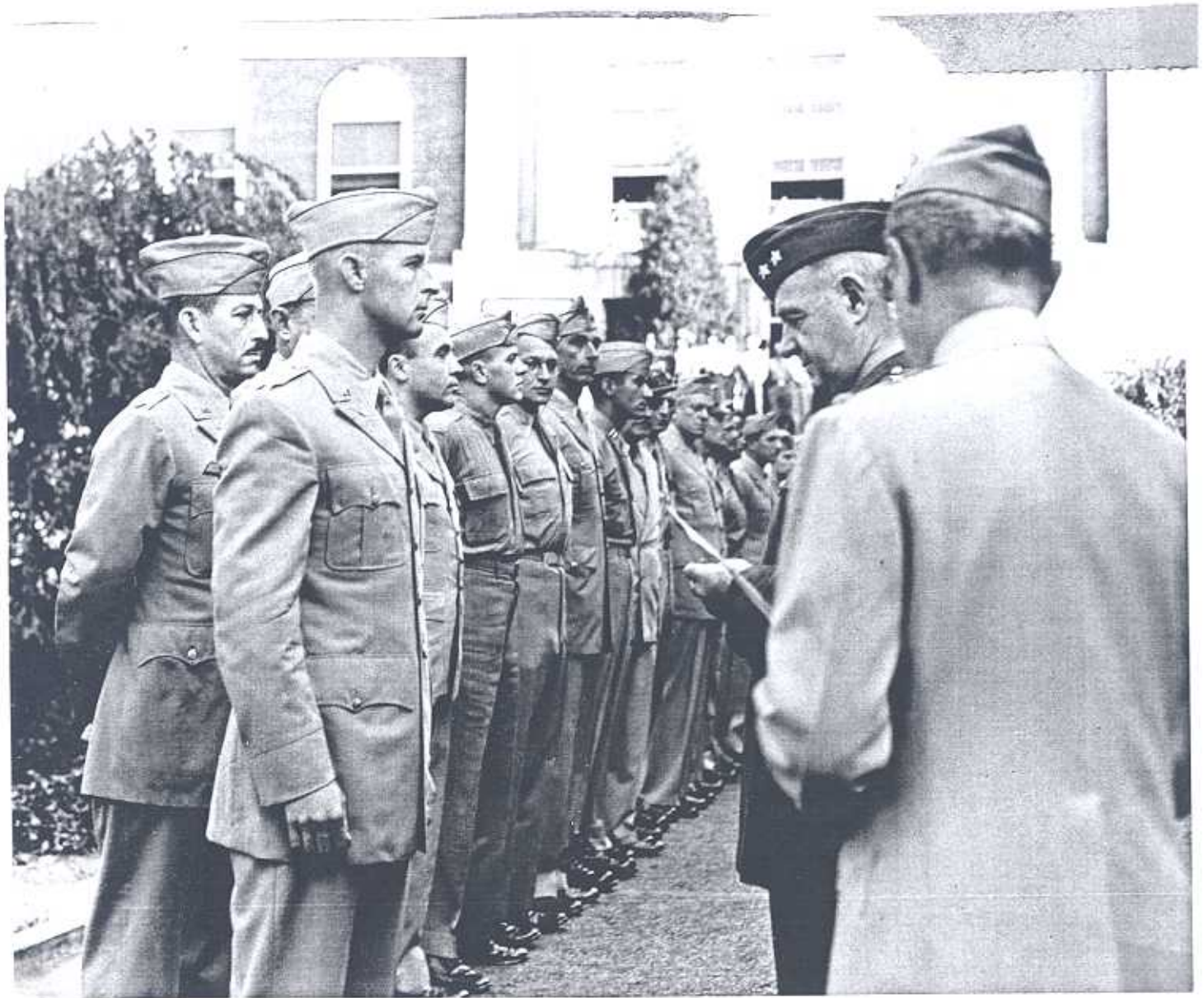
Private Barbara Lauwers, OSS Morale Operations Branch, a member of the U.S. Army's Women's Army Corps (WAC), was stationed with the MO unit in Rome. This Czech-born WAC, working with German Army prisoners of war in Italy, helped develop "Operation Sauerkraut," an innovative psychological program that sent disaffected German POWs back to persuade fellow soldiers to surrender. Many did. In addition, she personally created a program that induced 500 Czech soldiers conscripted into the Germany Army to give up to the Western Allies. Here Lauwers is shown in Rome receiving the Bronze Star Medal. National Archives.



Captain Howard W. Chappell, OSS German Operational Group, a paratrooper from Cleveland, Ohio, who had trained at Areas F and B, had, under direction of the OSS Italian Operational Group headquarters, commanded the "Tacoma" Mission against the German Army in the Italian Alps in 1944-1945. Here, Chappell receives the Silver Star Medal from Maj. Gen. William J. Donovan in front of OSS headquarters in Washington, D.C. in September 1945. He had already received a Purple Heart Medal for being wounded in action. Photo courtesy of Jack R. Chappell.



Sergeant Caesar J. Civitella, OSS Italian Operational Group, a paratrooper from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, who had trained at Areas F and B, had been sent first to North Africa. From there his OG section was parachuted behind German lines to assist the Allied invasion of southern France in 1944. The "Lafayette" Mission took the surrender of nearly 4,000 German soldiers. Subsequently, his section was part of the "Sewanee" Mission in northern Italy, arming and coordinating partisan forces and overwhelming German outposts and garrisons in the Italian Alps. Civitella, shown here, receives the Bronze Star Medal from General Donovan. Courtesy of Caesar J. Civitella.



In front of OSS headquarters in Washington, D.C., Major General William J. Donovan awards the Legion of Merit to a number of OSS officers who returned from the Far East in 1945. Among them in the front row are three OSS Special Operations officers, from the left, first, **Lieutenant Colonel Arden W. Dow**, OSS Special Operations, an infantry officer from Wenatachee, Washington, who had an instructor at Areas B and A, before being sent to China to head a joint Sino-American training camp for preparing Chinese soldiers as OSS Chinese Commando units to be parachuted behind Japanese lines; second, **Lieutenant Colonel Nicol Smith**, trained at Area B, who commanded OSS-trained Thai agents sent into Thailand from China; and third, **Major Frank A. Gleason** from Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, an Army Engineer and instructor in demolitions at Area B in Maryland and then, deputy commander of the Sino-American training camp headed by Arden W. Dow. Gleason also headed an OSS SO team in China in the fall of 1945 that helped impede and ultimate halt a Japanese Army advance by destroying parts of the transportation network and blowing up warehouses full of arms and munitions to prevent their capture and use by the Japanese. Photo courtesy of Dorothea D. Dow.



As part of the immediately postwar celebration of the O.S.S., Hollywood film studios produced a number of movies about the daring clandestine agents, men and women, who went through OSS training camps and risked their lives behind enemy lines in World War II. One of these was Paramount's feature film, *O.S.S.* starring Alan Ladd and Geraldine Fitzgerald. It was released in 1946 in America and globally, as indicated by this publicity poster from France. The poster shows Ladd using a 1945 Joan-Eleanor voice transmitter.

The Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the predecessor to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), was established by direction of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in June of 1942, and existed until September of 1945. Its Director was Major General William J. Donovan. The charter of the OSS was to conduct espionage and covert action against enemy forces during World War II.

This area in the Park, known as Area C, and surrounding buildings, was used by the OSS during that period to conduct communications training for approximately 1500 radio operators and technicians. They were trained in the use of Morse Code and various radio equipments. Following training, these personnel were assigned to overseas theaters of operation to provide communications links in support of clandestine operations conducted by the OSS, U.S. Military and Allied Forces.

This marker furnished by OSS Communications Veterans, 1997

There are several organizations of veterans of the OSS, including the OSS Society, the Detachment 101 Society, and others, but the OSS CommVets, whose members served in the Communications Branch, have maintained a special relationship with Prince William Forest Park, site of the main OSS Communications School at OSS Training Area C. In 1997, the CommVets association dedicated the bronze plaque shown here at Prince William Forest Park. It may be seen in the Visitor Center. Prince William Forest Park.