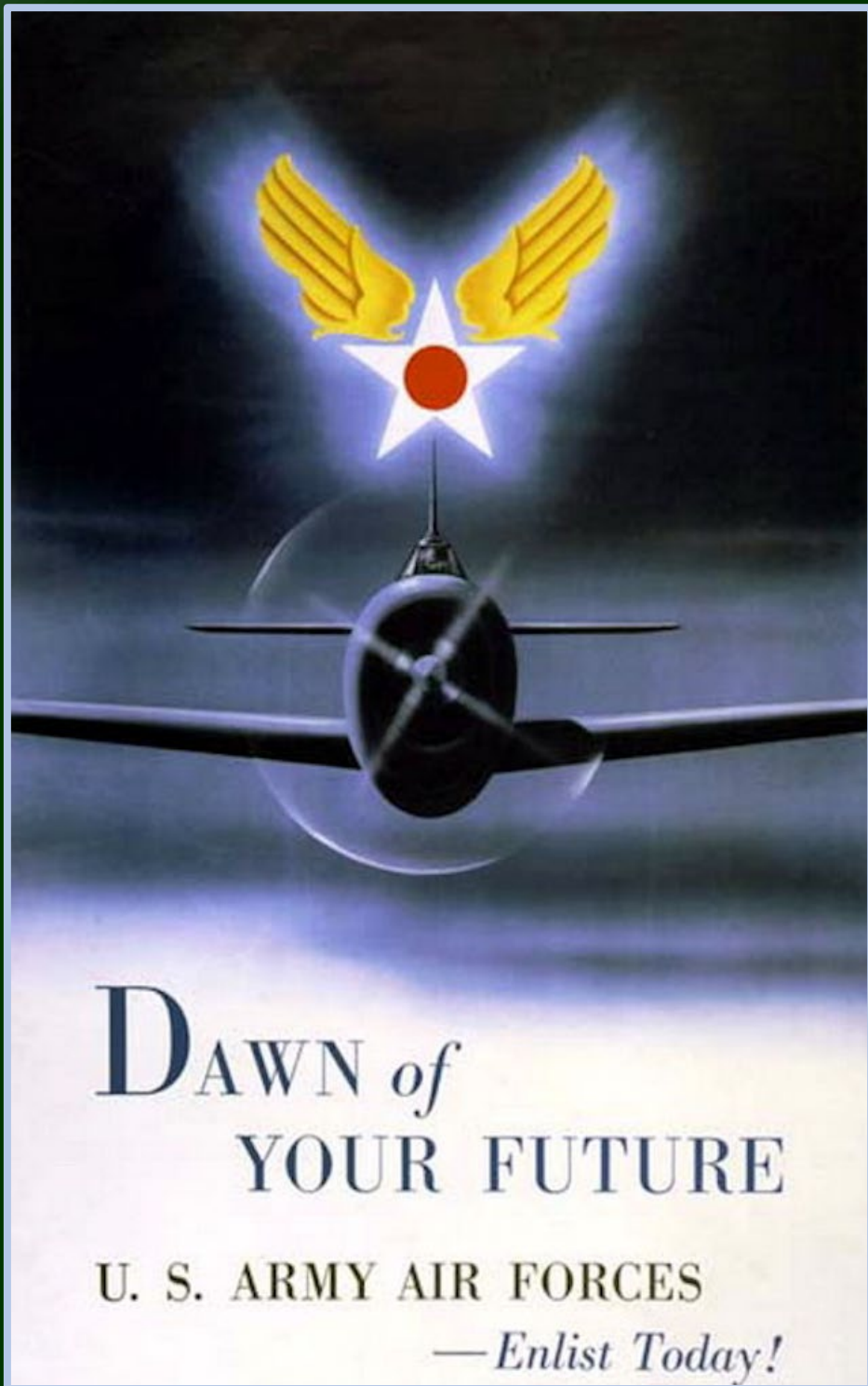


I SUSTAIN THE WINGS
MUSIC WITH WINGS

THE ARMY AIR FORCES ORCHESTRAS



GEN. H. H. ARNOLD

ARMY AIR FORCES



AN ASTUTE MEDIA STRATEGY TO SUPPORT A GLOBAL MISSION



- The visionary and dynamic AAF Commanding General "Hap" Arnold needed to sell the concept of an Air Force to the American people and to recruit young men and women. Arnold was very media savvy and had long standing relationships with broadcasting and motion picture industry leaders in Hollywood and New York.
- The AAF established Radio Production Units (RPU) and a Motion Picture Production Unit (MPU), working closely with the Broadcasting and Motion Picture Industries to develop the Air Force and meet the needs of its 2.4 million members.
- The AAF recruited top-notch talent, including Glenn Miller, whose resume, reputation and objectives matched the objectives of the AAF. Before Miller enlisted in 1942, the AAF Public Relations team of Maj. Howard Nussbaum and Capt. Sy Bartlett recruited musicians Eddie Dunstetter, Felix Slatkin and Harry Bluestone to launch the First AAF Radio Production Unit on the West Coast.

AAF RADIO PRODUCTION UNITS

OBJECTIVES

PUBLIC AWARENESS — RECRUITING — WAR BONDS

"Our American-built planes have undergone the acid test of war and proved their superiority over the enemy. The Army Air Forces congratulate you on your part in that achievement."

W. A. Arnold
GENERAL, U. S. ARMY
COMMANDING GENERAL
ARMY AIR FORCES



KEEP 'EM FLYING!

Woman's place in war!



Photographer
ARMY AIR FORCES

★ THE ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES
HAS 239 KINDS OF JOBS FOR WOMEN

Women's Army Corps



AVIATION CADET TRAINING

is the key to a brilliant future awaiting young men of 17 who can qualify now for the Air Corps Enlisted Reserve. After they are 18 they can begin training for careers as bombardiers, navigators and pilots.

U.S. ARMY AIR FORCES



no peace without power

BUY WAR BONDS

CAPT. GLENN MILLER

AMERICA'S NUMBER ONE BANDLEADER ENLISTS



SENSE OF DUTY FITS AAF PLANS



Capt. Miller at Maxwell Field

- Believing that he can do more to help the war effort, in September 1942, Glenn Miller, America's most popular dance band leader, walks away from an astonishingly lucrative career and business to enter the armed forces.
- Capt. Glenn Miller serves for six weeks in the Army Specialist Corps before the AAF requests his transfer on November 23, 1942. Miller would soon arrive at Maxwell Field, Montgomery, Alabama, HQ of the Southeastern Flying Training Command, for orientation into the AAF Training Command. By January 1943, Miller is moved to AAF Technical Training Command HQ in Southern Pines, North Carolina.
- Gen. Walter Weaver appointed Capt. Miller as Director of Bands. Miller submits a national plan for the modernization of music across all Army Air Forces commands and bases, with particular emphasis on the role of the existing Western RPU, development of a Central RPU based at the Flying Training Command HQ, Fort Worth, Texas, and an Eastern RPU in New York, where the national radio networks are located.

M/SGT. FELIX SLATKIN

HOLLYWOOD VIRTUOSO



Famous Cellist Eleanor Aller with husband Felix Slatkin



Felix Slatkin (1915-1963) was concertmaster for Twentieth Century Fox Studios when he enlisted in the Army Air Forces. The childhood violin virtuoso and St. Louis native studied under Efrem Zimbalist and Fritz Reiner and in 1939 co-founded the Hollywood String Quartet. He married the renown cellist Eleanor Aller, who was notably working for and prominent in Warner Brothers motion pictures. M/Sgt. Slatkin became Music Director of the First AAF Radio Production Unit and AAFTC Orchestra. He raised over \$100 million in War Bond sales.

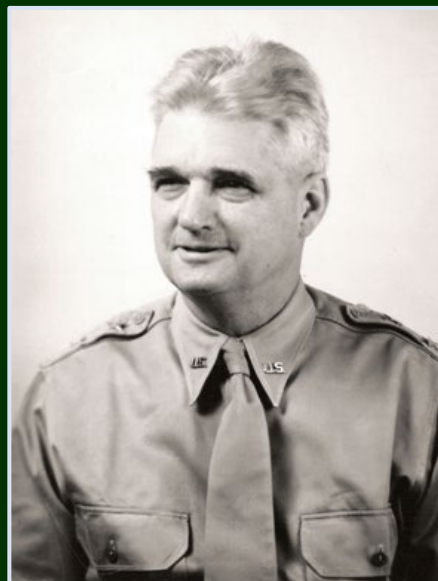
ARMY AIR FORCES TRAINING COMMAND



"THE WORLD'S BIGGEST UNIVERSITY"



GEN. BARTON K. YOUNT



GEN. WALTER WEAVER

- The AAF Training Command included Flying and Technical Training Divisions, which were merged in July 1943 under the command of Maj. Gen. Barton K. Yount, who was a West Point classmate of Gen. Arnold. Gen. Walter Weaver commanded the Technical Training Command.
- The HQ of the Flying Training Command and later the combined command was in Fort Worth, Texas. The Training Command was the largest branch of the Army Air Forces.
- Gen. Weaver and Gen. Yount gave Capt. Glenn Miller "carte blanche" authority to pull strings and cut red tape to recruit talented personnel and move musicians across the country. Men therefore transferred among the Radio Production Units, including singers Bob Houston and Bob Carroll. Miller and his associates were thus able to assemble and lead the most talented orchestras in existence, with superb jazz, popular and classical credentials.

MUSIC WITH WINGS

FIRST RADIO PRODUCTION UNIT

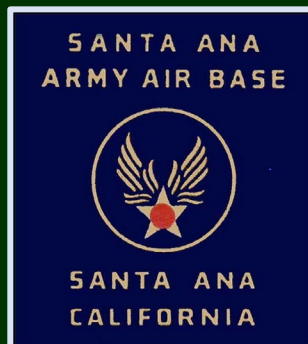
SANTA ANA



EDDIE



Air Crew



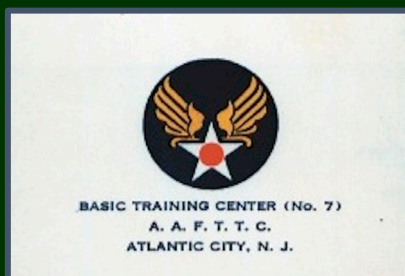
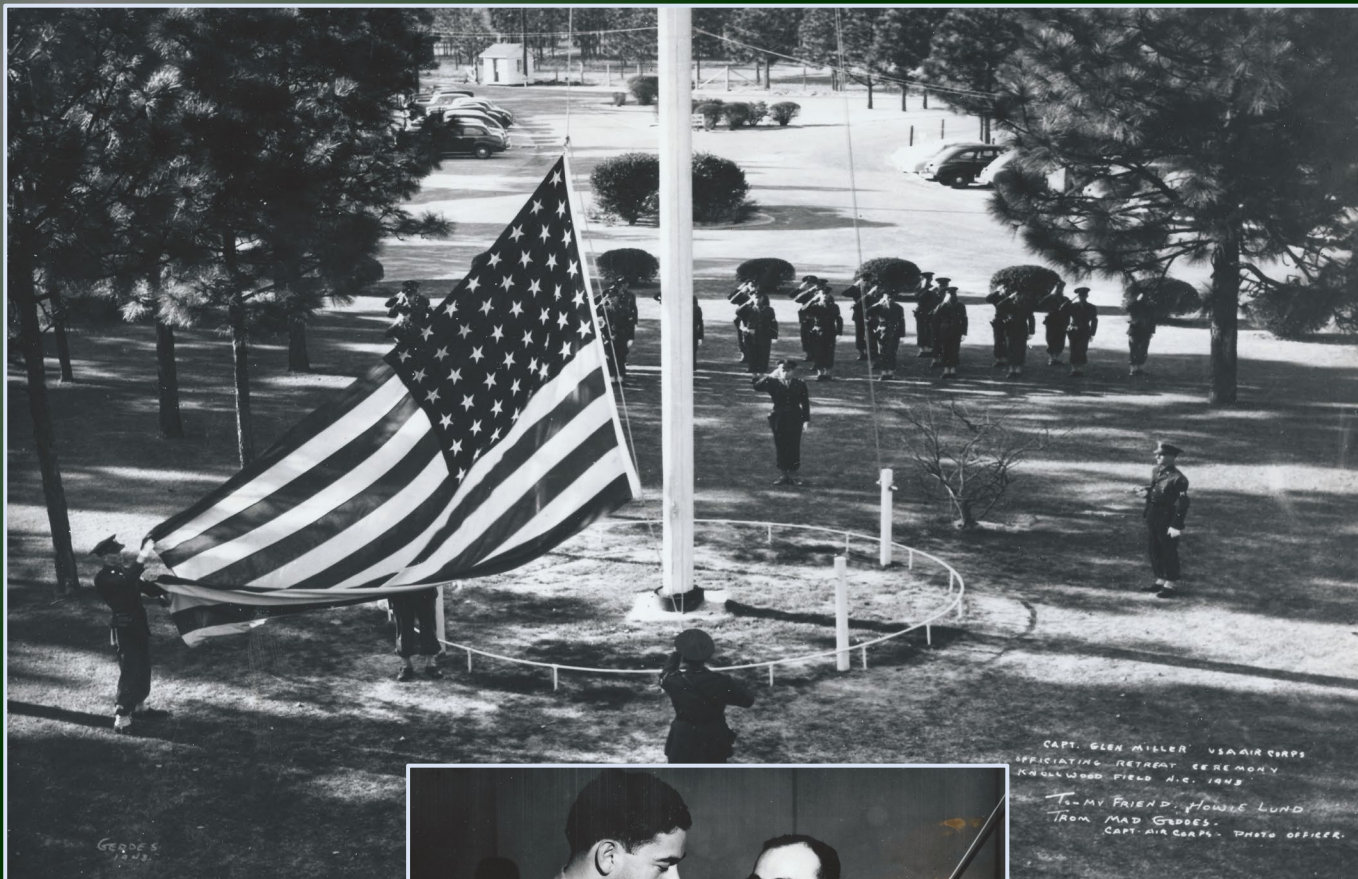
FELIX

- The Western RPU is housed at Santa Ana Army Air Base, HQ of the Western Flying Training Command. M/Sgt. Slatkin is Music Director, conductor and concertmaster for CO Lt. Col. Eddie Dunstedter, the famous prewar theater and concert organist. The RPU consists of a full concert orchestra and sub-groups, including the jazz-oriented *Swing Wing* and the vocal group the *Air Crew*, developed from the popular *Six Hits and a Miss*.
- The Western RPU rapidly becomes established on network radio programs on the Blue (ABC) and Mutual networks, with programs including *Hello Mom*, *Your AAF*, *The Fighting AAF*, *Wings Over the World* and many others. Musicians in the large unit represent an outstanding representation of jazz, popular and classical music traditions. The Western RPU also records the music for AAF First Motion Picture Unit productions.

DIRECTOR OF BANDS

SOUTHERN PINES & ATLANTIC CITY

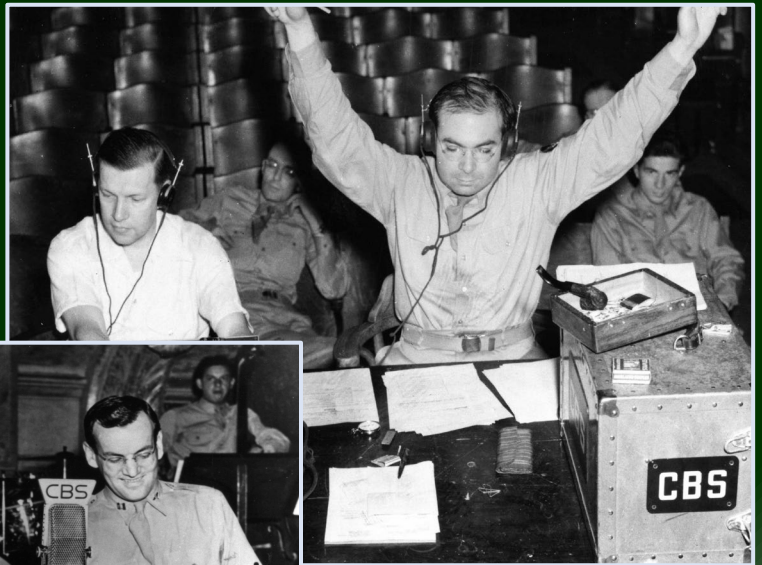
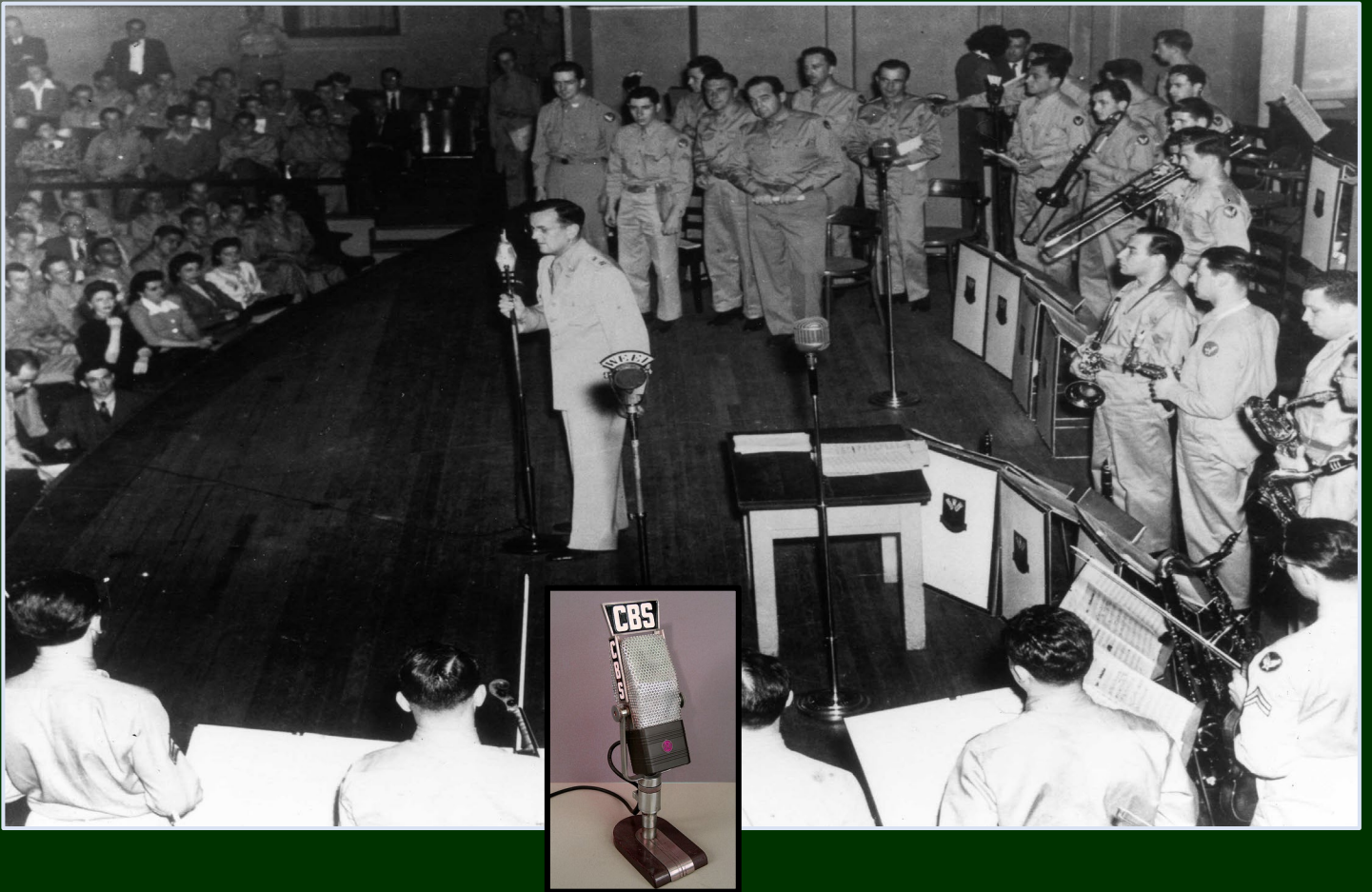
"IF FRANK SINATRA IS DRAFTED, I WILL GET HIM"



- Hundreds of airmen report to Atlantic City for assignment by Capt. Miller to AAF Bands across the United States and for his planned Eastern Radio Production Unit and AAFTC Orchestra
- Capt. Miller's new Eastern RPU and AAFTC Orchestra includes elite talent:
 - Jazz/big band stars Ray McKinley, Mel Powell, Hank Freeman, Herman "Trigger" Alpert, Carmen Mastren and Zeke Zarchy
 - Musical arrangers Jerry Gray (Glenn Miller) and Ralph Wilkinson (Andre Kostelanetz)
 - Virtuoso musicians from major symphonies, including concertmaster George Ockner
 - Vocalists including the prominent motion picture and recording star Tony Martin
 - Announcers, producers, motion picture actors and scriptwriters, including George Voutsas (NBC Symphony Orchestra)

NEW HAVEN

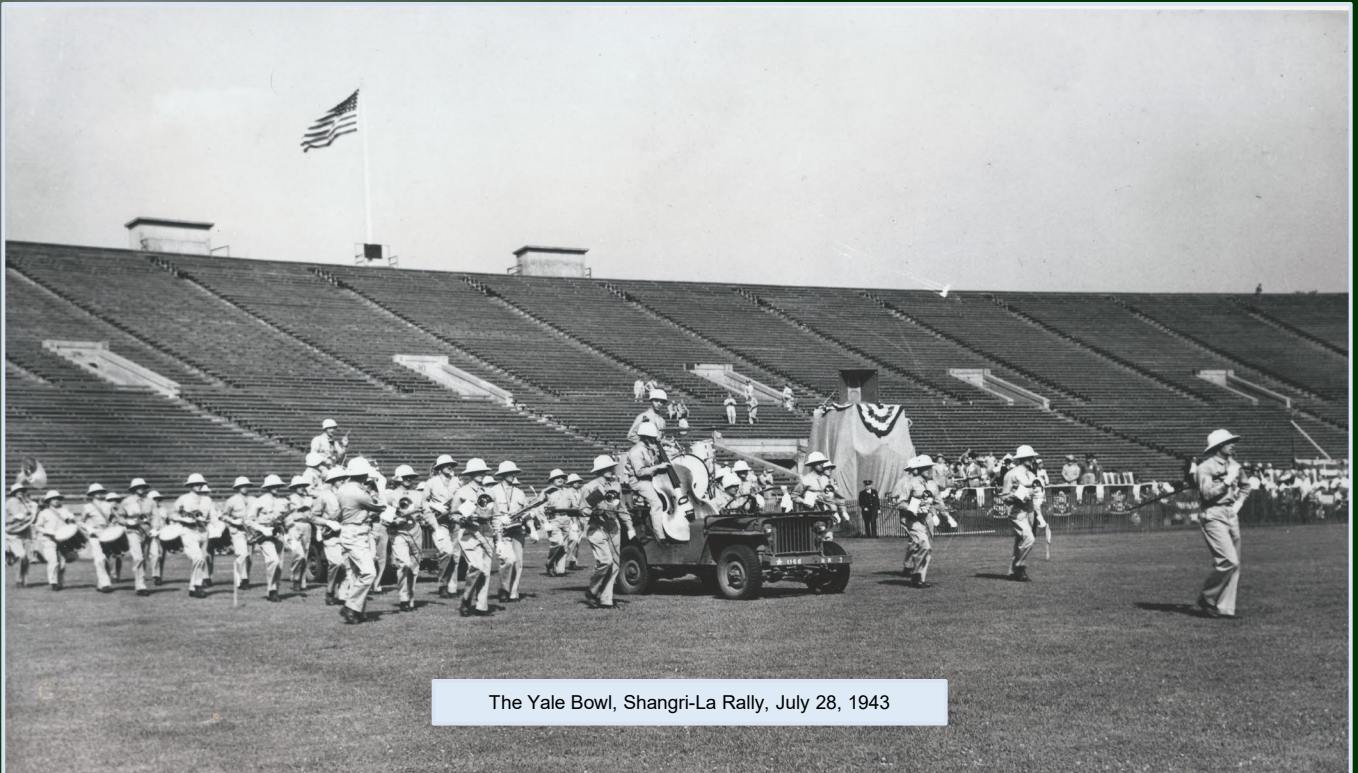
AAF TECHNICAL SCHOOL - YALE UNIVERSITY



- Capt. Miller establishes his Eastern Radio Production Unit and AAFTC Orchestra at the AAF Technical School at Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, which is the closest and best-equipped AAFTC facility to midtown Manhattan and the network radio and recording studios.
- A new AAF radio series is tested with CBS starting on May 29, 1943, using the facilities of WEEI, Boston and a New England regional network. Legendary radio engineer Marjorie Ochs produced and Sgt. George Voutsas directed the programs, broadcast Saturday afternoons from Woolsey Hall on the Yale campus. After six weeks, CBS upgrades the program to a national feed and production switches to CBS in New York.

YALE BOWL

THE MARCHING (JEEP) BAND



The Yale Bowl, Shangri-La Rally, July 28, 1943



Cpl. Ray McKinley

- The Eastern RPU and AATFC Orchestra were required to perform base duties including forming a marching band for retreat and cadet activities at Yale and on the New Haven Green. Jeeps were used to carry drum sets along with the marching musicians
- Arrangers crafted marching band scores of both traditional military marching music but also marching adaptations of jazz music, including St. Louis Blues, Blues in the Night, Buckle Down, Winsocki, *Jersey Bounce* and *Deep in the Heart of Texas*
- Mid-level music officers around the country were frustrated with Miller's extraordinary authority and jealous of him. The music officer at Yale complained, saying, among other things, "Blues! - My God!" Miller replied, "Tell me Major, are we still flying the same airplanes that we did in World War I?" The amused commanding officer supported Miller, as did the entire AAF Training Command and Washington hierarchy

I SUSTAIN THE WINGS

NEW YORK



- *I Sustain the Wings* moved from CBS to NBC on September 18, 1943, and is broadcast every Saturday at 6:00 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. Eastern War Time from the Vanderbilt Theater in New York. The program promoted AAF units, personnel and missions to a nationwide audience, Radio and film actor Lt. Donald Briggs became lead announcer for the series and executive officer of the Eastern RPU.
- On December 6, 1943, the duties of the Eastern RPU and AAFTC orchestra was separated from the AAF Technical School at Yale to focus strictly on radio production. The 418th AAF Band became the 718th AAF Band and included a different group of musicians. This mirrored the setup of the Western RPU and AAFTC orchestras, which had separate duties from the Santa Ana AAF Base Band.

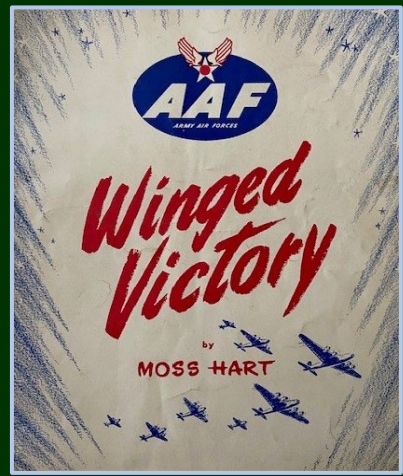
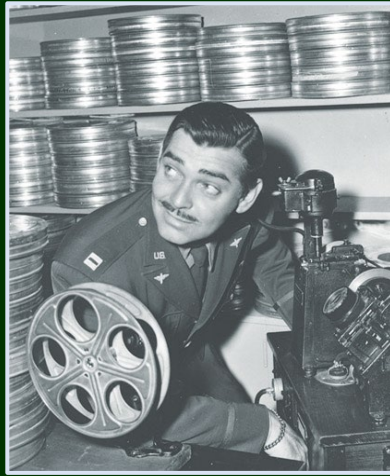
FIRST MOTION PICTURE UNIT

WINGED VICTORY

BROADWAY TO HOLLYWOOD



M/Sgt. Norman Leyden conducts the *Winged Victory* Orchestra



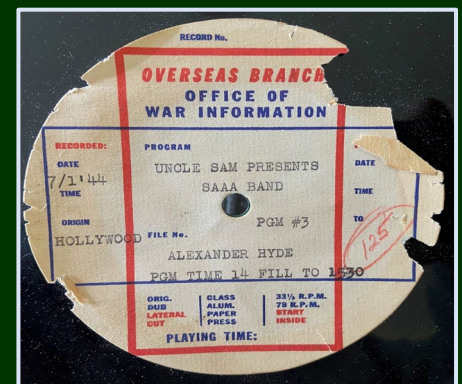
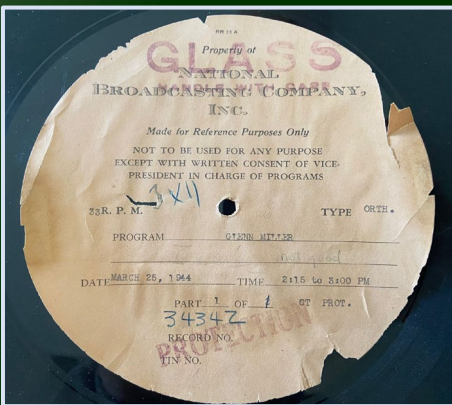
- The AAF established the First Motion Picture Unit in Hollywood to handle feature-length productions and a wide array of training films, including detailed flying training for various aircraft. The administrative officer is Capt. Ronald Reagan. 600 Motion Picture industry professionals including Maj. Clark Gable serve in the critically acclaimed unit.
- Meanwhile, the AAF engages renown playwright Moss Hart to produce *Winged Victory*, a splashy 1943 Broadway musical production about the Training Command and experiences of Air Cadets. Capt. Miller helps select musicians for the orchestra, including M/Sgt. Norman Leyden, Assistant Musical Director. Many future motion picture and television stars are in the cast. *Winged Victory* went on the road and in 1944 Twentieth Century Fox made it into a motion picture.

MUSIC FROM AMERICA

UNCLE SAM PRESENTS

OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION

VOICE OF AMERICA

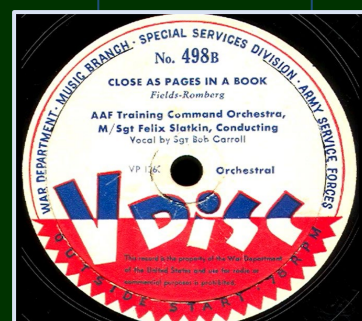
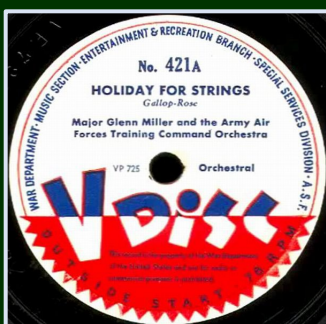


- The Office of War Information controlled American international broadcasting, taking over the commercial shortwave services of CBS and NBC in 1942. The OWI also beamed programs to Latin America for the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs. The OWI established the *Voice of America* to communicate American values to global audiences. The VOA European Service was known as the *American Broadcasting Station in Europe* (ABSIE).
- The fledgling War Department Special Services Radio Branch, soon to be the Armed Forces Radio Service, broadcast to the armed forces overseas via the OWI operated transmitters and local overseas stations
- *Uncle Sam Presents* was a program designed for the armed forces overseas featuring service bands. *Music From America* was a program designed for international audiences to be presented in multiple languages. The Eastern RPU recorded the programs at NBC Studio 6-A at Radio City in Rockefeller Center. The Western RPU recorded the programs from NBC Radio City in Hollywood.

ARMED FORCES RADIO SERVICE & V-DISCS



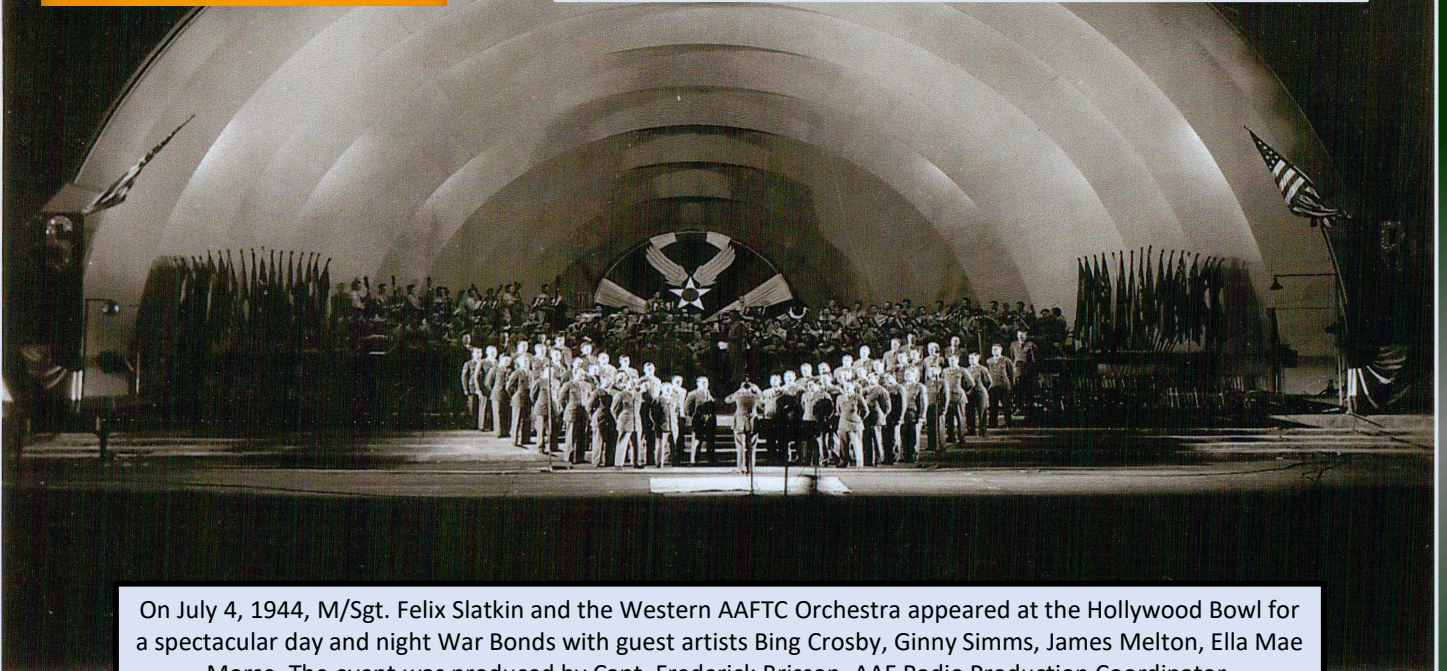
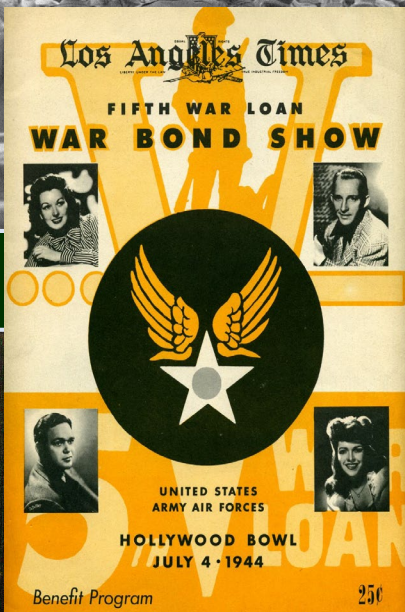
Col. Thomas Lewis



- The Eastern and Western RPU's and AAFTC Orchestras appear on programs produced by the Armed Forces Radio Service, including *Command Performance*, *G. I. Journal* and *Mail Call*. By 1944, AFRS was the largest radio network in the world. Other popular recorded AFRS series including *G.I. Jive* and *The Basic Music Library* included many AAFTC performances.
- The AAFTC Orchestras also appeared on *V-Discs*, a series of almost 900 records made by bands and singers for distribution to the members of the armed forces around the world. The AAFTC records were culled from the radio programs broadcast by the units as well as dedicated recording sessions at RCA and NBC in New York and Hollywood.

HOLLYWOOD BOWL

BUY WAR BONDS



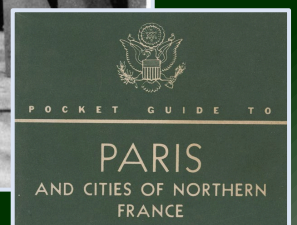
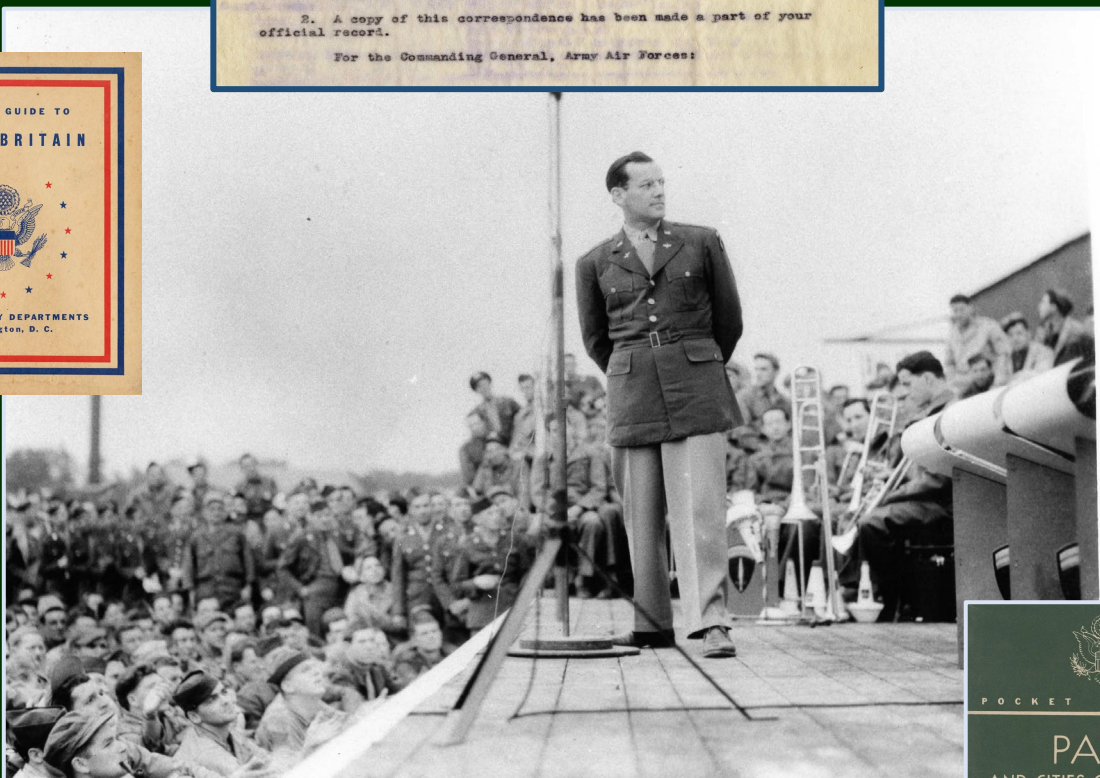
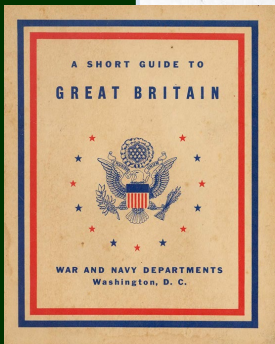
On July 4, 1944, M/Sgt. Felix Slatkin and the Western AAFTC Orchestra appeared at the Hollywood Bowl for a spectacular day and night War Bonds with guest artists Bing Crosby, Ginny Simms, James Melton, Ella Mae Morse. The event was produced by Capt. Frederick Brisson, AAF Radio Production Coordinator.

OVERSEAS

MAJOR GLENN MILLER



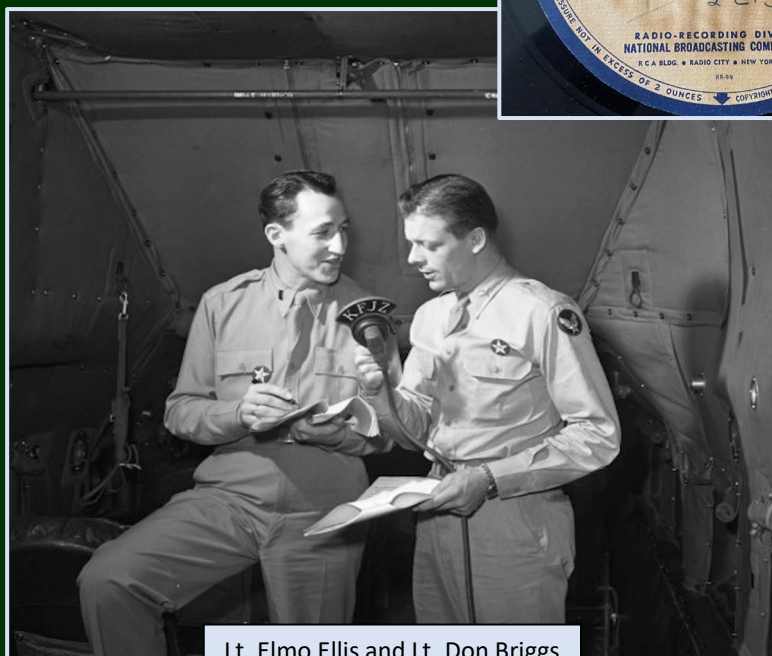
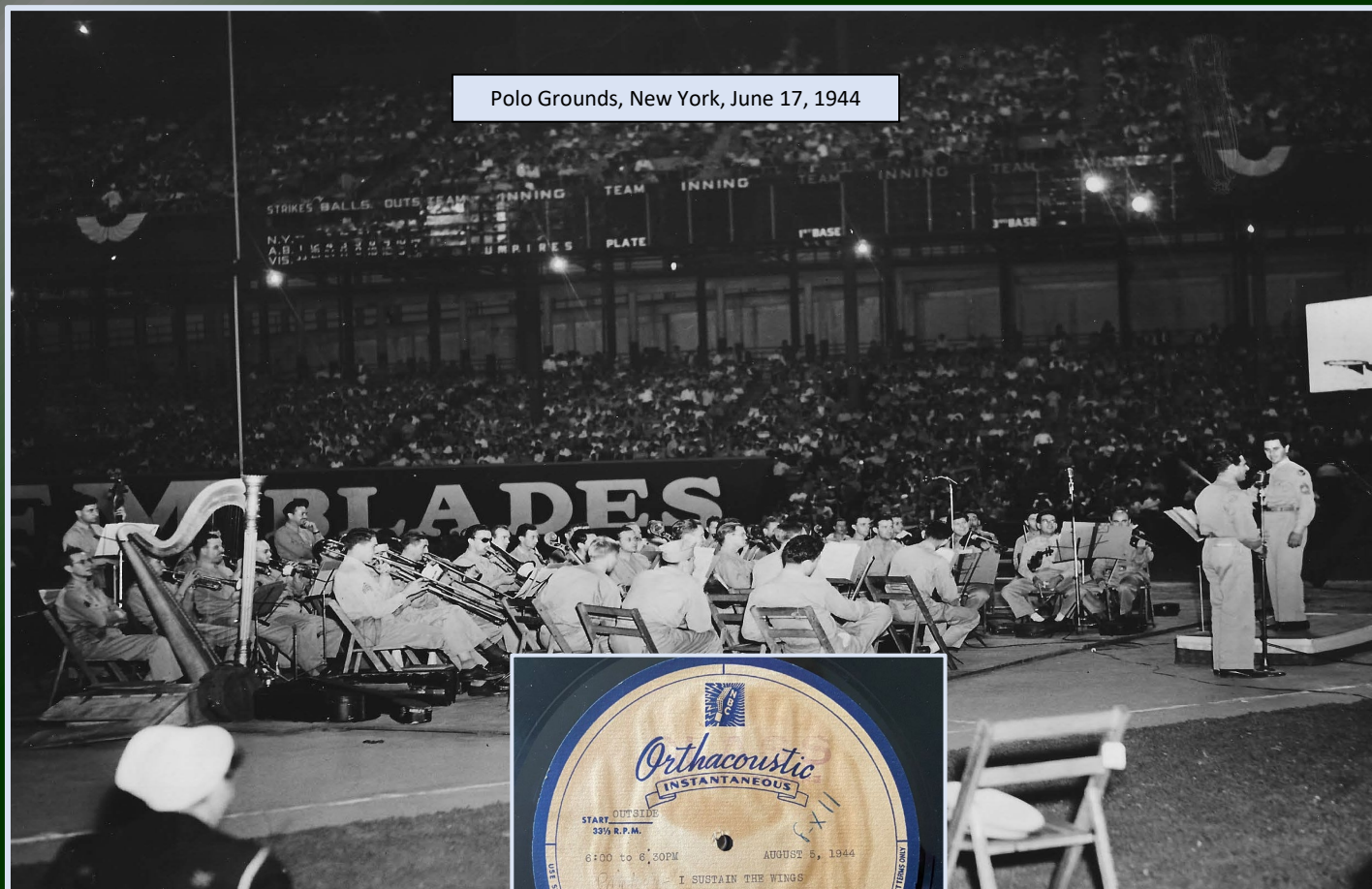
BASIC: Ltr Hq AAF Training Command, Fort Worth 2, Texas, 14 June 1944
201 Miller, Alton Glenn (Off) 1st Ind APPMP-3
Hq AAF, Washington 25, D. C., 3 July 1944
THRU: Commanding General, U. S. Army Air Forces, APO 634, c/o Postmaster,
New York, New York
TO: Captain Alton Glenn Miller, O-505273, Air Corps
1. It is with appreciation that the Commanding General, Army Air
Forces, has noted your able assistance in connection with the enter-
tainment program of the Army Air Forces.
2. A copy of this correspondence has been made a part of your
official record.
For the Commanding General, Army Air Forces:



- At the request of Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, the AAF loaned the Eastern RPU and AAFTC Orchestra to Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force, to serve in Europe as the broadcasting voice of the Allied Expeditionary Forces Radio Programme (AEFP), a combined BBC and America Forces Radio service. The unit also broadcast German-language programs for ABSIE.
- In addition to its backbreaking broadcasting schedule, the Army Air Forces Band (Special) made hundreds of appearances at military bases, receiving great praise, including a salute from Gen. James Doolittle, commander of the Eighth Air Force. Sadly, Major Glenn Miller disappeared aboard a routine flight from England to France on December 15, 1944. His beloved unit continued to serve in Europe until August 1945.

FORT WORTH TO NEW HAVEN

M/SGT. HARRY BLUESTONE



Lt. Elmo Ellis and Lt. Don Briggs



- When the Eastern RPU was deployed to Europe in June 1944, the Central RPU moved to New Haven and New York to take over its duties, including *I Sustain the Wings*. The Musical Director of the new Eastern RPU was M/Sgt. Harry Bluestone, who like M/Sgt. Slatkin, was a Hollywood virtuoso musician and concertmaster. Executive Officer Lt. Donald Briggs remained, joined by administrative officer Lt. Elmo Ellis and announcer Lt. William Holden.
- In March 1945, M/Sgt. Slatkin and M/Sgt. Bluestone exchanged duties, with Slatkin moving to New York and Bluestone to Hollywood. When the decorated Miller Overseas Unit returned to the USA, its personnel merged with the Slatkin personnel. The AAFTC RPUs and Orchestras continued to serve with distinction until the end of World War II.

LEGACY

A RICH TRADITION

