Learning to Fly: Military Aviation Training at Middle Tennessee State University and the Transformation of Southern Higher Education in World War II

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LEARNING TO FLY: MILITARY AVIATION TRAINING AT MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF SOUTHERN HIGHER EDUCATION IN WORLD WAR II

by

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A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Old Dominion University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

HISTORY

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
December 2007

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ABSTRACT

LEARNING TO FLY: MILITARY AVIATION TRAINING AT MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF SOUTHERN HIGHER EDUCATION IN WORLD WAR II

Christopher T. Crawford Jr.
Old Dominion University, 2007
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In December 1942 the Army Air Forces created the Army Air Forces College Training Program (AAFTP) to reduce the backlog of aviation recruits. This program, designed to provide recruits with basic flight instruction and education, established 153 units known as College Training Detachments (CTD) on college campuses throughout the U.S. This thesis provides a history of the AAFTP and examines the wartime role of universities and the effect of military training on colleges in the American South. The first chapter examines the AAFTP from the military perspective, the state of the AAF leading into WWII, and the forces that drove the AAF to look at colleges for training purposes. It argues the CTD provided a unique and relatively successful military training experience within the confines of a college campus and allowed thousands of men the opportunity for job training and formal higher education in universities that desperately sought students. The next chapter examines the military training program from the perspective of higher education in the South. For southern universities, the military training programs were part of both new social and demographic patterns and established southern traditions about the utility of professional military education. In these contexts, the military training programs created a new southern military school tradition—a support and training tradition—that reflected the nation's needs in mass industrial warfare and forever altered the historic pattern of irrelevance between colleges and war. The final chapter examines the 11th CTD.
at Middle Tennessee State University to demonstrate how the campus was used for
training, how the aviation students interacted with regular students and the surrounding
area, and how the school adapted to military training. It proves how the CTD program
fundamentally altered the university in the short term and served as the catalyst for the
long-term development of a small southern university.
This work is dedicated to those historians who have tread the path before me and to my friends who stimulate the best conversations.
I want to thank Dr. Lisa Pruitt, Director of the Albert Gore Research Center at Middle Tennessee State University, who suggested the topic and set me on the right path for my initial research and Dr. Ron Messier who encouraged me to begin this project in the first place. Special thanks to Dr. Jonathan Phillips for his invaluable guidance in the writing process and who showed me that writing military history is not always about planes and bombs. I am also appreciative to my committee members Drs. Michael Carhart and Austin Jersild who have influenced me both in and out of the classroom. Finally, I want to thank Brett Jerasa for his key suggestion and hearty laugh, Stephen Hebert for always hanging out, and Megan for everything else.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE MILITARY PERSPECTIVE</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE MOBILIZATION OF SOUTHERN HIGHER EDUCATION</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. MTSU AND THE 11TH COLLEGE TRAINING DETACHMENT</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

On the first of April 1944, the President of Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU), Q.M. Smith, received news that the 11th College Training Detachment would end after June 30. As the news spread over campus many people thought it was an April Fools Day joke, since the newest group of aviation students had just had a graduation ceremony. The school had spent the last fifteen months training aviation recruits for the Army Air Forces College Training Program (AAFTP). This program began in March 1942 and transformed the small regional southern MTSU campus into a military training facility for the war effort. Yet by mid-1944 the air force had acquired a sufficient number of personnel, and after three years of war, training facilities could handle all training requirements. In 1944, all this seemed natural, but it was a far cry from 1939, when the air force had inadequate facilities and few trained pilots. The wartime necessity for rapid expansion and qualified pilots brought important changes for the military, but amazingly, it also transformed small, southern regional colleges like MTSU.

The most important change resulted from the reversal of the university's traditional irrelevance in wartime. Colleges traditionally provided trained specialists and

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This paper follows the format requirements of *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations 6th edition* by Kate L. Turabian.

1“TSC Loses Aviation Cadet Unit,” *Murfreesboro The Daily News Journal*, 2 April 1944; Holly Barnett, Nancy Morgan, and Lisa Pruitt, *The College History Series: Middle Tennessee State University* (Murfreesboro, TN: The Albert Gore Research Center, MTSU, Tempus Publishing Inc. Charleston, SC, 2001), 7. The TN General Assembly created established MTSU in 1911 as Middle TN Normal School (MTN). The school served as one of three, two-year teacher-training facilities in the state. In 1925, MTN became a four-year institution and was renamed Middle TN State Teachers College. The name changed again in 1943 to Middle TN State College (TSC). The school did not become Middle TN State University until 1965. To avoid confusion the current name, or its abbreviation MTSU, is used throughout.
able bodies for conscription, but universities as institutions had little opportunity to participate directly in the war effort prior to WWII. This change affected southern universities in several ways. First, it reordered priorities as they adapted to the military curricula and the military training changed the aims of education. Second, it remade their institutional culture as the military programs democratized higher education and kept them financially dependent on the federal government. Finally, the new role altered their relationship with society at large as the schools became “instruments of national purpose,” that reflected the nation’s needs in mass industrial warfare.2

The U.S. Army Air Forces, or the Air Corps as it was known before June 1941, undertook a decade-long process to procure the planes and pilots necessary to wage a modern war.3 Between 1934 and 1939, the Air Corps grew from a maximum of 1,800 to 2,200 planes and trained only 300 pilots in 1938. Such a force could never defeat the Axis, so the AAF had to quickly mobilize to have any hope of gaining air superiority. Armament was in full swing after July 1940, and by 1942 the USAAF had the world’s largest and best-trained air force. To secure a percentage of available manpower, they


3Geoffrey Perret, Winged Victory: The Army Air Forces in World War II (New York: Random House, 1993), 289, 303-305; Gerhard L. Weinberg, A World at Arms: A Global History of World War II (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 650-652; Wilbur H. Morrison, Above & Beyond 1941-1945 (New York: Bantam Books, 1986), 231; Ronald H. Spector, Eagle Against the Sun: The American War With Japan (New York: The Free Press, 1985), 257, 306. As a comparison consider the events of 1944. Between January and April, the Germans lost 1,684 pilots. Remarkably, plane production continued to rise, as the problem was not producing planes but finding pilots to fly them. To compensate, the Luftwaffe shortened training and forced men into combat with half as much training as Americans. Geoffrey Perret points out these pilots were “more interested in avoiding American fighters than...attacking American bombers.” By D-Day the Germans had no operable airfields in Normandy and only 319 aircraft in France. Facing them was an Allied force of 3,500 heavy bombers, 1,500 medium bombers, and 5,500 fighters. The situation was similar in the Pacific, as American pilots had two years training and over 300 hours of flight time, as compared to the Japanese who had between two and six months training. The “Great Marianas Turkey Shoot,” for example, destroyed 243 out of 373 Japanese aircraft with a loss of twenty-nine U.S. planes.
decided in 1942 to recruit more cadets than necessary and hold them as inactive reservists until space opened at training facilities. By December, the problem was not recruiting, as approximately 93,000 men awaited classification, but placing them in the training infrastructure. To manage this backlog the AAF established the AAFTP at 153 colleges to provide basic flight instruction and education to trainees in College Training Detachments (CTD). Despite its brief existence, the AAFTP peaked at 66,322 trainees in May 1943 and enrolled 254,471 men, 223,231 of who went on to higher levels of training. This overlooked innovation in pilot training transformed higher education in the South as unprecedented amounts of federal dollars poured into the region.

This study provides a history of the AAFTP and examines the wartime role of universities and the effect of military training on small colleges in the American South. The second chapter examines the AAFTP from the military perspective, the state of the AAF leading into WWII, and the forces that drove the AAF to use colleges for training. The AAFTP essentially began in 1939 with the Civilian Pilot Training (CPT) Program, which set higher education and the Air Corps on a convergent course that ended with the CTD. Furthermore, the CTD was only one innovation in AAF pilot training and competed with similar programs of the Army and Navy. The Army saw the AAFTP as a failure, but the CTD fulfilled its role for the AAF as it reduced the recruit backlog. Thus, the CTD provided a unique and relatively successful military training experience within the confines of a college campus and allowed thousands of men the opportunity for job training and formal higher education in universities that desperately sought students.

Chapter three examines military training programs from the perspective of higher education in the South. Much has been written about large universities and their wartime role, but the military programs brought growth to small southern colleges. When federal funds poured into universities it brought anxiety over what to teach and how to educate students, but even small colleges adapted to wartime circumstances. The militarization of southern universities came relatively late as the CPT and vocational training programs had been underway since 1939. Still, the advent of the AAFTP culminated a two-year campaign to involve colleges directly in the war effort. Furthermore, the military programs made colleges a junior partner to the federal government that redefined higher education and its postwar role. For southern universities, military training was part of both new social and demographic patterns and established southern traditions about the utility of military education. Overall, the military training programs combined historical precedents, economics, and military necessity to create a new southern military school tradition—a support and training tradition—that reflected the nation’s wartime needs and signaled a departure from the previous tradition both in order of magnitude and intent.

The final chapter examines the 11th CTD at Middle Tennessee State University from March 1943 to June 1944 as a case study to explore military training at a southern university during WWII. Specifically, the chapter demonstrates how the campus was used for training, how the aviation students interacted with regular students and the surrounding area, and how the school adapted to military training. This last aspect is most important for several reasons. First, like the history of the AAFTP itself, the 11th CTD had prewar origins in establishment of the CPT program at MTSU. The early beginning of aviation training at the university allowed the school to more readily adapt

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5Mohr, “Transformation of Southern Higher Education,” 34.
not only to military training but also to the new role of the university as a junior partner to the federal government aimed at fulfilling the nation’s training and support needs in wartime. MTSU continued the aviation tradition that began in 1940 after termination of the CTD as it embraced the newfound importance of advanced technical skills. As a result, MTSU’s aeronautics department became one of the best programs in the country. This was not a coincidence, but resulted from an awareness of the importance aviation could play in the growth of MTSU. So the advent of the 11th CTD was unique in that it showed how military training fundamentally altered the university in the short term and served as the catalyst for long-term developments of a small southern university.

It is surprising how little scholarly attention the CTD program has received. The Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) and the Navy V-12 program are better studied, but even the official AAF history provides only two pages on the CTD under the section on individual flight training. This oversight traces back to the 1940s. “The College Training Programs of the Armed Services,” published in 1944, devoted less than one page to the CTD, yet extensively examined the Army and Navy programs. An article from 1954, “Wartime Role for Colleges and Universities,” failed to mention the AAF program. The program was also largely ignored in the press and educational journals. The semimonthly newsletter of the American Council on Education, for example, provided information on the ASTP and V-12 program, but virtually nothing on the AAFTP. Even Time and Newsweek devoted attention to the Army and Navy programs, but comparatively little over the AAFTP.6

The best analysis of the AAFTP comes from V.R. Cardozier in his book Colleges and Universities in World War II. His analysis stands out in his comparison of the
different military college programs, the examples he uses from various colleges, and the plethora of useful statistics. He also provides useful information on the use of colleges beyond military training, including defense extension programs, and the efforts to involve higher education directly in the war effort. Yet, Cardozier only generalizes the impact of military training programs on colleges and is more concerned with how the entire war affected higher education. His book is also exasperating for researchers in that he provides no notes within the text and only a selected bibliography.

In terms of the AAFTP and its importance to southern universities, historian Clarence Mohr’s chapter in *Remaking Dixie: The Impact of World War II on the American South*, titled “World War II and the Transformation of Southern Higher Education,” provides a basis for understanding the changing relationship between colleges and war and even includes a brief description of the CTD program. His description is relevant to the role military training programs had in democratizing depopulated campuses. Mohr said the huge number of students involved in the wartime programs planted “the seeds of change” for southern higher education. The democratization, however, had positive and negative effects. On the one hand, the military training allowed southern universities to move “from the periphery toward the center of national life in the postwar decades” as the government increased the importance of technical skills. On the other hand, the opening of higher education created unique problems for the colleges as they struggled to “accommodate egalitarian and modernizing influences within the context of a regional political culture that was remarkably impervious to both.”

Several other books provide context for examining

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6Cardozier, *Colleges and Universities*, 98.
military training at southern universities during WWII, including: George Tindall in *The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945* and Bruce Schulman in *From Cotton belt to Sunbelt: Federal Policy, Economic Development, and the Transformation of the South, 1938-1980*. Neither of these mentions the AAFTP, but they provide context for understanding the changes taking place in the South, including the expansion of military facilities and the influx of federal dollars into higher education.

Over the years, many people have written cursory examinations of individual CTD units, including the 87th CTD at St. John’s University in Minnesota, the 319th CTD at State College of Washington, and the 307th CTD in Columbia, Missouri. These studies, however, provide only brief descriptions of the overall program. Most important in a larger context, is the story of the 305th CTD in Fayetteville, Arkansas and the 32nd CTD at Dickinson College in Pennsylvania. The 305th CTD, like the 11th CTD at MTSU, had its origins in the earlier CPT program, and the author gave a brief history of the evolution of the CPT into the CTD. The study of the 32nd CTD is important in that it provided information on the larger wartime role of Dickinson College. What is surprising about the individual CTD studies is the lack of information for southern universities. Even histories of MTSU provide only brief descriptions of the 11th CTD and ignore its importance as a catalyst for long-term changes for the university. This thesis is relevant to the historical literature in that it brings together the administrative decisions that created the AAFTP and a detailed description of an individual detachment at work on a southern university. Examining the College Training Detachments in the context of

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southern universities shows the importance of the program was in the mobilization of
higher education and the changing role of the university during WWII.
CHAPTER II

THE MILITARY PERSPECTIVE

In examining the U.S. Army Air Forces (USAAF) in WWII, scholars have devoted significant attention to plane production, but the process of obtaining the pilots to fly those planes is often overlooked. While plane production was the job of U.S. manufacturing, pilot production was the job of the AAF. The AAF was unprepared to train pilots prior to WWII, just as U.S. manufacturing was unprepared to produce planes. From its inception, however, the Air Corps, known as the Air Service in 1918, considered itself a permanent branch of the military that required an education system with qualified instructors to teach specialized skills. In October 1919, the Director of the Air Service suggested creating an Air Service academy. In February 1920 the War Department authorized the activation of eleven special service schools. These schools established “a sound administrative and instructional system” that provided a basis for future expansion, but the lack of Air Service doctrine and training precedents severely hindered training.

This chapter examines the history of the AAFTP from the military perspective and shows the lack of preparedness was not new, but continued through 1930s as the Air Corps struggled to improve training and gain support. As the newest and smallest branch of the Army, the Air Corps was one of the first to see colleges as useful to expansion.

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1 R.J. Overy, “German Air Strength 1933 to 1939: A Note,” The Historical Journal 27, no. 2 (June 1984): 468; R.J. Overy, Why the Allies Won (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996), 331, 33; Elton C. Fay, “Air Strength of the United States,” Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 229, Air Power and National Security (May 1955): 32. Germany had the best air force in the world in 1939, with an operable air strength of 3,609 and production capacity of 8,295 aircraft. The U.S. on the other hand produced 5,856 aircraft, a far cry from the wartime peak of 96,318. When the U.S. did enter the war is had some 12,000 operable planes and produced 26,277 aircraft, compared to the 5,088 Japan produced the same year.
When Congress established the Civilian Pilot Training (CPT) Program in 1939 it set higher education and the Air Corps upon a convergent course and laid the foundation for the AAFTP. During WWII, colleges gained new significance as the AAF accumulated more recruits than it could train. With the AAF already using southern universities for aviation training through the CPT, it decided to fully utilize campuses in implementing College Training Detachments (CTD). The establishment of the AAFTP was part of both government efforts to use universities for the war effort and AAF desires to reduce its pool of idle manpower. From the military perspective, the AAF program was entangled with inter-service tension, but provided a unique and relatively successful military training experience within the confines of institutions of higher learning.

The process of expansion that led to the AAF-college relationship in WWII began when Congress passed the Army Reorganization Act of June 4, 1920, which organized the Air Service as an auxiliary combatant arm, and the Air Corps Act of July 2, 1926, which established a five-year plan for a separate offensive force. However, the funds never became available, and between 1927 and 1934 Congress enacted no legislation regarding administration and expansion of military aviation. Thus, opportunities for flight training were scarce. With planes scattered throughout the U.S., it was impossible to coordinate air exercises and the best chance at training came from flying airmail routes. To assist in training measures, in 1935 the War Department consolidated combat units under a General Headquarters (GHQ) Air Force and left training and supply functions under the Office of the Chief of the Air Corps (OCAC).³ This reorganization

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diminished GHQ control over personnel but allowed military planners to develop an offensive air strategy and created a separate command to focus on training.

Shortly thereafter, Army Chief of Staff Douglas MacArthur made coastal defense the Air Corps’ primary mission. With a clear goal now in mind, GHQ planned exercises involving the shift of hundreds of planes to areas theoretically under attack and negotiated contracts for new planes. Development might have continued, but the Navy argued airmen "would assume responsibility for coastal defense far out to sea," thereby eradicating the need for ships to protect the coastal border. Thus, in 1938 the government limited the Air Corps to two-engine bombers, ordered it not to fly more than 100 miles offshore, and trained only 300 pilots.4 While 19,000 Luftwaffe personnel gained actual combat experience and perfected blitzkrieg tactics during the Spanish Civil War, the U.S. Air Corps relied on "Air Parades" to garner support and further preparedness efforts.5

3 Edwin L. Williams, Jr., “Legislative History of the Air Arm,” Military Affairs 20, no. 2 (Summer 1956): 84, 86-89. The Air Corps Act of 1926 limited air strength to 1,800 serviceable planes. As late as June 1937, however, the Air Corps had only 842 aircraft, meaning the quota for personnel remained unfulfilled.

4 Perret, Winged Victory, 31. For GHQ AAF, coastal defense meant attacking the enemy far out to sea. The B-17 was sold to the War Department and Congress largely on this conception of coastal defense in that it could attack enemy fleets or island bases and protect such vulnerable as Alaska, the Philippines, and the Panama Canal. The Navy, on the other hand, argued coastal defense began on land, not over water, in the effort to keep the AAF out of the oceans.

5 James S. Corum, "The Spanish Civil War: Lessons Learned and Not Learned by the Great Powers," The Journal of Military History 62, no. 2 (April 1998): 324-325, 314, 318, 321. The Germans and Italians provided over 1,000 planes to the Nationalist, and even the U.S.S.R., though realistically the largest power, supplied the Republic forces with over 1,000 fighters and bombers. These aircraft alone more than doubled the total number of available U.S. Air Corps planes in 1937. The German Condor Legion, meanwhile, had more than 5,000 pilots, and combat tested the state-of-the-art Messerschmitt Me-109 fighter and Junkers Ju 52 transport/bomber. Surprisingly, the U.S. practically ignored events in Spain. If the debate over air power is any measure, as espoused by men like Billy Mitchell or as demonstrated by the sinking of the German battleship Ostfriesland in 1921, air forces view themselves as "the most technologically advanced, the most progressive, and certainly the most modern of the military services." Yet, James Corum described Air Corps interest in the major air war of the period as minimal, ignorant, and naïve. Assistant Chief of the Air Corps Brigadier General Henry "Hap" Arnold dismissed the conflict as irrelevant. Ironically, the Army offered the most detailed analysis of the air war, claiming strategic bombing of cities and industries had no decisive effect in Spain, a view the Air Corps rejected.
The Great Depression further limited expansion, but also resulted in a training program the Air Corps used to its advantage as the nation mobilized. The economic woes of the 1930s resulted in a decline in the entire air industry as commercial airlines floundered and manufacturers received few orders for planes. In the effort to reverse this trend congress established the Civil Aeronautics Authority (CAA) in 1938 to "regulate pilot licensing, aircraft maintenance, certification, and airlines operation." In December, President Roosevelt authorized $100,000 from the Nation Youth Administration budget for an "experimental program" as a precursor to a nationwide pilot training program. The program’s success spurred creation of the Civilian Pilot Training (CPT) Program on July 1, 1939, to increase the public’s interest in aviation. Most schools selected for the program were four-year institutions though some two-year junior colleges participated. The small, rural college in Martin, Tennessee, for example, (now the University of TN at Martin), trained some 500 pilots. The University of Michigan was more typical with a full-time professor teaching ground courses and a contracted flight school conducting flight training at a nearby airport. A few schools, like MTSU, conducted flight training at campus airports.

The CPT had many critics despite its claimed purpose and designation under the Department of Commerce. These criticisms increased when the program expanded to

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8Cardozier, *Colleges and Universities*, 179-180. All together 330 people participated at thirteen colleges, 313 of whom graduated and qualified for pilot licenses. The colleges were: Purdue, Michigan, New York University, MIT, University of North Carolina, Georgia Tech, North Texas Agricultural College
432 colleges in August 1940. Isolationist groups such as the Committee on Militarism in Education denounced the CAA as “another war-making government agency” and the CPT as a front to train military pilots.\(^9\) While the CPT was not under military jurisdiction, in retrospect it was a thinly veiled effort to train future military pilots that was in part modeled after similar ‘civilian’ programs in Italy and Germany. With the establishment of the CPT the needs of colleges and the AAF increasingly converged, a course that began as the Air Corps established new training goals but struggled to find the proper training facilities.

In April 1939 Congress made the first serious effort to increase personnel strength and raised the Air Corps from 2,200 to 5,500 planes, allocated $300 million to buy aircraft and build facilities, and set a pilot goal of 1,200. These numbers never met demands as existing facilities could not manage an increase in recruits and building new schools took time.\(^10\) To compensate, General Arnold authorized the use of nine civilian flying schools and reduced the training length from twelve to nine months.\(^11\) After July 1940 the pilot goal jumped to 30,000, but this did not reflect actual needs until July 1941 when Roosevelt asked Secretary of War Henry Stimson about the resources required to defeat the Axis. In the newly christened Army Air Forces the Air War Plans Division

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\(^11\) Perret, *Winged Victory*, 57-59; Craven, *Army Air Forces in World War II*, 454. Aviation cadets now received three months of primary instruction at civilian schools, flying a light aircraft of low horsepower; three months of basic from AAF instructors, where cadets advanced to heavier planes with more complex controls; and three months of advanced training at an AAF airfield, flying a plane approximate in characteristics to a combat plane. It was usually not until after the third stage a man flew the plane in which he would live or die.
(AWPD) recommended a manpower force of 2,160,000.\textsuperscript{12} To help reach that goal the AAF expanded the use of civilian training schools and reliance upon the CPT.\textsuperscript{13} By January 1942 the CPT graduated 100,000 pilots in over 700 universities. This created problems for the universities as most CPT trainees dropped out of college when they qualified for military aviation. After Pearl Harbor all civilian pilots transferred to military duty in fighters, bombers, or patrol aircraft, which created manpower shortages in air transport, ferry services, and instructors just when the AAF enacted the 70,000 pilot program. Thus, as the AAF increased in size, the availability of experienced instructors decreased. This fact, coupled with the AAF decision to create a backlog of 54,000 recruits, further increased the military importance of the CPT.\textsuperscript{14}

The expansion of the recruiting pool corresponded with an intense publicity campaign to help procure cadets, as the media glorified the courageous aviators and

\textsuperscript{12}Perret, \textit{Winged Victory}, 34, 44, 140; Fay, "Air Strength," 32. In terms of U.S. desires, President Roosevelt in 1938 envisioned an air force of 10,000 planes and production of 1,000 per month, while General Arnold sought a combat force of 3,750 planes, a reserve of 3,750, and an additional 2,500 trainers. The AWPD estimated that U.S. production rates were 33 percent of Germany's. Assuming Germany's would remain static, the U.S. would have to increase its airplane production by 500 percent in order to obtain the supposed 2:1 ratio needed to gain air superiority and produce the recommended 63,500 aircraft. Even more astonishing were the production goals: 60,000 in 1942 and 125,000 in 1943. Ultimately, American industry produced 47,000 in 1942 and 86,000 in 1943 with a peak strength of 13,000 combat ready planes. The number of planes reflects just how small the pilot force was as compared to the peak wartime personnel strength of over 2,411,000.

\textsuperscript{13}Craven, \textit{Army Air Forces in World War II}, 465; Perret, \textit{Winged Victory}, 61. By May 1943 the AAF contracted fifty-six civilian schools, though by the end of the war this training had returned to AAF establishments. The expansion of training facilities corresponded with a reorganized AAF structure in the spring of 1940. To streamline command the OCAC reorganized flight training under three geographic zones in May 1940, the Southeast Air Corps Training Center, at Maxwell Field, Alabama, the Gulf Coast Air Corps Training Center, Randolph Field, Texas, and the West Coast Air Corps Training Center at Moffett, California. Upon entering the war the AAF supervised forty-five civilian flying schools and operated 114 airfields.

\textsuperscript{14}Eckels, \textit{The Fayetteville Experience}, 4-8; Cardozier, \textit{Colleges and Universities}, 179-182. The CPT set basic standards for trainees, requiring students be between eighteen and twenty-five and have basic knowledge of physics, aviation, and mathematics. The initial program consisted of two main phases of training, elementary and secondary. The elementary phase required 72 hours of ground school and 35 to 45 hours of flight time. The secondary phase required 108 to 126 hours of ground training and 40 to 50 hours of flying. The program was open to both men and women until mid-1941.
recruiters roused college students to enlist. The public considered pilots the service elite, and the AAF cultivated that image. John Steinbeck’s nonfiction account of pilot training entitled *Bombs Away!* noted, “aviation cadets are drawn from a cross-section of America, but they are the top part of the cross-section.”\(^{15}\) This view was part of public perception and a pilot’s self image. Historian Michael Sherry described how “powerful factors of class, education, and policy” strengthened status as pilots were generally better educated and received specialized technical training. The high ratio of officers to enlisted men and the number of enlistees who reached higher ranks reinforced prestige.\(^{16}\) Yet the glorious depiction was only partly true, as thousands of young men’s dreams of flying went unfulfilled. Out of some 3,000,000 people in the wartime AAF only 190,000 were pilots. Not to say bombardiers, navigators, gunners, and mechanics played any less of a role, but “from start to finish the AAF was a pilot-led, pilot-oriented, pilot-fascinated service.”\(^{17}\)

Regardless, the AAF realized the best way to obtain the backlog and stem the loss of men to other armed forces was to create an Air Corps Enlisted Reserve (ACER). Since the Air Corps had only 6,500 eligible candidates in September 1941 the Secretary of War denied General Arnold’s first two requests, but as the pilot quota increased from 70,000 in December 1941 to 102,000 in October 1942 the existing backlog disappeared and cadets entered training faster than the recruitment rate. A third request was approved


\(^{17}\) Perret, *Winged Victory*, 376, 59. While certainly pilot oriented, it is also true the AAF rescinded its image to some extent out of military necessity. After Pearl Harbor, for example, the AAF dropped the two year college requirement and lowered the age limit from twenty to eighteen, this at a time when less than 10 percent of Americans had any college education.
on April 1, 1942. Thereafter, qualified aviation recruits were placed on inactive status and the CPT trainees joined either the ACER or the Navy V-5 (Aviation) Reserve.¹⁸

The backlog of cadets, however, created another problem as the AAF recruited 13,000 men a month but assigned only 10,000 to training. The AAF desired a six-month supply of men to compensate for further expansion so believed the growth rate was justified. To compound matters, in July 1942 the CPT became a full-time program to prepare men for military aviation and graduated 24,440 inactive reservists by September.¹⁹ By December some 93,000 men waited for classification and training. Many remained in limbo for six or seven months and had left school or jobs expecting active duty. Thereafter, recruiters pointed out activation was not immediate, but “the pool of idle manpower received increasing notice from selective service boards.” In the effort to reduce the backlog and eliminate the morale problem it caused, the AAF established its College Training Program (AAFTP) on 153 college campuses to provide basic flight instruction and education to trainees in units known as College Training Detachments (CTD). In public, the AAF claimed the program was “designed to make up educational deficiencies,” but in reality it was a way to eradicate the existing backlog.²⁰

Towards the end of 1942 events leading to the AAFTP accelerated. On October 15, President Roosevelt requested that the War and Navy Departments study the

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¹⁸Craven, *Army Air Forces in World War II*, 181, 494-495. Every man who passed the mental and physical examinations and joined the ACER had several options. First, a man could enlist for active duty as a private, but he would remain unassigned as a cadet until training facilities became available. Second, the recruit could enlist in the ACER and stay at his civilian job until called to active duty, at which time he went straight to cadet training. Finally, if enrolled fulltime in college, a man could continue until graduation, with the understanding that he could be called to active duty anytime. While the Navy and AAF had separate training programs, as far as the CPT was concerned, both drew from the same pool of applicants, and students had some choice as to which service they eventually joined.

¹⁹Cardozoier, *Colleges and Universities*, 181. In the new program men were no longer officially enrolled in college, though the programs continued to be administered on college campuses. All training was entirely financed by the military, which paid for trainees' food, lodging, instruction, and transportation.
possibility of utilizing universities. Historian V.R. Cardozier suggested Dr. George F. Zook, president of the American Council on Education, played a role in Roosevelt’s actions, but there is no clear evidence who suggested the idea. On the AAF side, General Arnold referenced the morale problem in the cadet backlog in a November 3 memo and directed Flight Training Command (FTC), the Director of Individual Training, and Office of the Chief of the Air Corps (OCAC) to discuss using colleges for a training program. The need became more urgent when the draft age was lowered from twenty-one to eighteen on November 13. On Monday, November 16, government, military, and civilian officials met to discuss a War Department College Training Program. Two men involved, Edward C. Elliott, director of training for the War Manpower Commission (WMC), and Edmund E. Day, chairman of the Committee on Relationships of Higher Education to the Federal Government, had advocated such a meeting for months.21

Elliot chaired a WMC committee in August that considered using colleges. The final report, however, stated the military had “responsibility for determining the specific training for” recruits, and any use of universities was up to the armed services. Day’s committee issued a report on October 14, advocating a “college training corps” to give cadets vital technical skills. The recommendations from the November 16 meeting followed Day’s committee, and called for activation of the reserves who received specialized training, with rations, tuition, and books furnished under government contract. Over the next week this plan became the Army Specialized Training Program

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(ASTP) under the Commanding General of the Service of Supply. The ASTP was limited to 150,000 at any given time, and the AAF received a quota from this number.\textsuperscript{22}

The AAF first implemented plans from the meeting on November 26, 1942. In a memo to the Director of Individual Training, the Chief of Air Staff, Major General George E. Stratemeyer, requested a study relative to the AAF quota of ASTP students, based upon immediate liquidation of the reserve corps backlog.\textsuperscript{23} General Stratemeyer passed the staff study to General Arnold on December 13, one day after joint announcement of the Army and Navy college training programs. The report mentioned three phases of training concerning the AAF's special needs: training of auxiliary personnel, which paralleled the Ground Forces College Training Program of the Arms and Services, and preliminary training for aircrew and ground crew cadets, which included basic academics, calisthenics, and military discipline. The last two aspects dealt specifically with AAF training, and the CTD was designed to fulfill these needs.\textsuperscript{24}

The fact that the report emphasized the educational aspect of the CTD showed the AAF efforts to justify the program. All previous evidence stressed the need to eliminate

\textsuperscript{22}Cardozier, \textit{Colleges and Universities}, 7; Lt. Col. E.Y. Blewett to Col. F. Trubee Davison, "Report of Conference on War Dept. College Training Program," 17 November 1942, File 353: Official Records of the Air Adjutant General Headquarters Army Air Forces, Folder 1: Nov. 16, 1942-March 31, 1942, The National Archives, College Park, MD. The activation of the ERC applied to all service branches. One exception was medical and premed students who were called to active duty but kept at their respective institutions to finish their studies.


\textsuperscript{24}Maj. Gen. George E. Stratemeyer, Chief of Air Staff to Lt. Gen. Henry Arnold, Commanding General AAF, "College Training for the AAF," 13 December 1942, File 353: Official Records of the Air Adjutant General Headquarters Army Air Forces, Folder 1: Nov. 16, 1942-March 31, 1942, The National Archives, College Park, MD. The Arms and Services describe military groupings that share a common area of expertise, the training of which was essentially the same across the separate branches. The AAF study expressed the desire to train cadets for the chemical warfare service (chemical, electrical, and mechanical engineers), quartermaster corps, finance dept., ordnance dept. (automotive, mechanical engineers), medical (dental, veterinary, sanitary), and the signal corps.
the ERC backlog, but this report emphasized the need for educated recruits and clarified the program’s educational purpose. AAF records indicated 80 percent of applicants with less than high school education and 41 percent of applicants with only high school education failed to pass the aviation qualifying examination. Thus, the obvious desire was to raise cadets closer to the 80 percent of applicants who had at least two years of college. The AAF envisioned the colleges designing a program of instruction “to reduce relative difference in proficiency in basic subjects...[and] operate an ‘educational clinic’ to insure greater uniformity of educational background prior” to classification.²⁵

Upon entering a CTD recruits ideally had thirteen weeks of basic training and took a screening test. Before July 1943, however, most trainees received no more than two weeks of basic, while some received none. The screening test, on the other hand, was part of the selection process for all aviation cadets after the AAF dropped the two-year college requirement. The few who passed went straight to preflight school. The students entered the colleges as privates and received fifty dollars a month and credit for the classes taken during the training.²⁶ CTD students were not classified as aviation cadets (A/C) but as aviation students (A/S), at this point it was unclear whether these men would even continue aviation training.

In terms of overall pilot training the CTD was essentially part of preflight training that focused on more academic aspects, thereby letting preflight schools increase the emphasis on military subjects. Preflight training was the first phase of individual training, which had the broad task of providing, “physical training, military training,

²⁵"College Training for the AAF,” 13 December 1942.

supervised athletics,” and any “additional instruction as may be practicable” to qualify trainees as pilots, bombardiers, or navigators. Preflight schools originated when the AAF phased out the prewar three-pronged approach of primary, basic, and advanced training, and rapid growth caused the two-sided problem of having to lower educational requirements while maintaining a minimum standard. The War Department established three “air corps replacement centers” to solve this problem in February 1941. The more appealing term preflight school was adopted in April 1942.27

After preflight school, the cadet entered a primary school as a pilot, navigator, or bombardier, which took place at the same facilities until the creation of separate specialized schools in late 1941. For pilots, primary training was largely under the direction of civilian schools, which required sixty hours of flight time in a light aircraft, acrobatic loops and rolls, and a minimum of 175 landings. After primary school, the cadet moved to basic training, run exclusively by the military, for seventy hours of flight in a nine-week period. Now a military pilot, the cadet mastered night flying, flying by instruments, and flying in formation in a heavier and more powerful plane. After basic the cadet was chosen for either single-engine or two-engine advanced training, which “stressed the handling of maneuverable, speedy training planes...the development of

27Craven, Army Air Forces in World War II, 477, 557-558. The military distinguished between individual training and crew training, which taught individuals to work effectively as a team and fell under the jurisdiction of the four continental air forces. Preflight schools were under direction of OCAC until February 1942 when it was placed under FTC, which answered to the Chief of the Air Corps. This reorganization was a necessary step in the decentralization of the expansion program. The preflight course required 175 hours; 110 of these devoted to military training, i.e. close-order drill, ceremonies, inspections, and physical conditioning, the remaining devoted to academic and military subjects. Military subjects included aircraft and naval vessel recognition, radio code instruction, and small-arms familiarization.
instantaneous control reactions," and high-altitude, close-order formations. Afterwards a cadet was assigned to transition training in combat planes before being sent to fight.28

The AAF administration had a clear idea about where the CTD fit within the aircrew training regimen, but the Army had other ideas over the place of the program within the military administration. This quickly led to a divergence between the Army and AAF college training programs, and eventually contributed to the success of the CTD program. Colonel Herman Beukema, director of the Army Specialized Training Division (ASTD), expressed his objections on December 19, 1942 claiming the Army would have no problem training AAF physical fitness personnel or technical specialists, but the 93,000-man backlog interfered with the ASTP maximum of 150,000 trainees and was a "special problem." The emphasis on education was again dropped, as he said the primary reason for absorbing the cadets into the ASTP was to correct a "moral situation resulting from the prolonged stay of these men on an inactive status after their enlistment...and the training or educational feature is incidental." Specifically, he claimed the ASTD could neither set up a curriculum based on the weekly inflow and outgo of AAF students nor prepare by the proposed start date of February 1, 1943.29 The Army, therefore, recommended the AAF carry out the program apart from the ASTP but still under the supervision and coordination of the ASTD. Secretary of War Henry Stimson agreed and

28Craven, *Army Air Forces in World War II*, 568-572. From single-engine school the cadet usually trained either as a fighter or escort in single engine planes or co-pilot for heavy and medium bombers. From two-engine school the cadet was trained to fly heavy, medium, or light bombers.

29Col. Herman Beukema to Director of Military Personnel Division, Service of Supply, "College Training for the Army Air Forces," 19 December 1942, File 353: Official Records of the Air Adjutant General Headquarters Army Air Forces, Folder 1: Nov. 16, 1942-March 31, 1942, The National Archives, College Park, MD. The main Army objection had to do with numbers. The AAG originally requested 30% of the 150,000 ASTP quota. As the ERC backlog became the focus of AAF concern, however, it sought to immediately place 70,000 men on active duty under the ASTP. This would have allotted the AAF 70% of the total ASTP personnel.
approved the revised plans in early January 1943. The AAF now had its own college training program, but had to handle all matters connected with training, housing, feeding, and control of students, whereas before the Services of Supply provided the funds.\(^{30}\)

Despite inter-service tension, the branches worked together to determine which schools received training programs. On December 24, the AAF sent out more than 1,700 letters of interest to colleges in conjunction with the ASTP and Navy V-12 program. The letters instructed each institution to provide a descriptive list of facilities for housing, feeding, and instructing military personnel. Over 1,600 schools replied and a Joint Committee for the Selection of Non-Federal Educational Institutions, “consisting of three Army officers, three Navy officers, and three members of the WMC,” evaluated the letters and earmarked 500 that appeared to meet the requirements for housing, feeding, and capability of instructing military personnel.\(^{31}\)

It was immediately agreed universities with Army ROTC received ASTP units, which included all land-grant universities. The AAF began with colleges running CPT programs, then ROTC institutions that did not offer the engineering and medical curricula the ASTP required. Finally, the Navy V-12 program was assigned to schools with Navy ROTC and schools already under contract to provide a variety of specialized programs. Since the Army emphasized engineering, many smaller colleges were ineligible for ASTP units. The AAF and the Navy, however, gave special consideration to small liberal arts


colleges and state teachers colleges. This meant the AAFTP was established at more southern colleges than either the ASTP or V-12 program, including: Birmingham-Southern, Centenary College in Louisiana, Southwestern in Memphis, Maryville College in Tennessee, Transylvania in Kentucky, Elon College in North Carolina, and Furman University in South Carolina, and state normal schools like Southwest Texas State Teachers College, and Western Kentucky State Teachers College. As the country mobilized for war, colleges lost students and competed for scarce funds. The establishment of military training programs meant these colleges managed some semblance of a normal student body, while the funding for the programs became vital to the continued existence of many universities.

The AAF preliminarily selected 230 colleges as possible sites and sent letters of intent. Once agreement was reached, the AAF moved more quickly than both Army and the Navy in undertaking the college training program, mostly due to the urgent need to eliminate the cadet backlog. Flight commands were given only ten days to inspect all the facilities, consequently, some schools received cursory inspections, a later problem

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32 Col. Herman Beukema to Director of Military Personnel Division, Service of Supply, Unnamed memo, 13 December 1942, File 353: Official Records of the Air Adjutant General Headquarters Army Air Forces, Folder 1: Nov. 16, 1942-March 31, 1942, The National Archives, College Park, MD; Cardozer, *Colleges and Universities*, 20; Mohr, “Transformation of Southern Higher Education,” 38. The Navy V-12 program and the ASTP were similar in design, but the Navy had less need for a large number of technically trained specialists. Consequently, the V-12 curriculum emphasized math, physics, and engineering, but it was primarily a mean for recruiting college educated Naval officers. This also meant the V-12 program, like the CTD, included so many smaller universities, but the Navy program functioned at a total of only 32 southern schools.

33 Col. W.F. Volandt, Asst. Chief of Staff Air Corps to District Supervisors, “Negotiation of AAF Training Unit Contracts for College Training,” 2 March 1943, File 353: Official Records of the Air Adjutant General Headquarters Army Air Forces, Folder 1: Nov. 16, 1942-March 31, 1942, The National Archives, College Park, MD. The schools responded to Army Material Command, who then forwarded the letters to respective district supervisors. In the case of the AAF, FTC “delegated responsibility for organizing and supervising” the program to training offices of the three regional flying commands who sent teams of officers to inspect individual institutions, though final approval rested with the joint WMC Committee. Once approved Central Procurement Districts negotiated contracts in coordination with Site Planning and Negotiating Committees.
for the AAF. The regional training offices received orders to proceed with college
training on January 18, 1943, final authorization came on January 23 when FTC
approved 102 universities for a CTD and the curriculum, designated 'Flight Table E,'
which was revised on February 11, 1943, bringing fifty-one additional schools into the
program. March 1 was set as the deadline for the arrival of the aviation students, but
some campuses received the first contingents in the middle of February. None of the
colleges had contracts when the first group of students arrived, a process not completed
until May 1. Regardless, by the first of March, 24,706 trainees had arrived on campuses,
and by April 3, the AAFTP had enrolled 62,065 aviation students.\footnote{34}

The program’s objective, according to Flight Table E, was to provide all
necessary academic, military, and physical preparations to “diminish individual
differences” among trainees and prepare them “both mentally and physically, for
intensive ground training in Preflight Schools.”\footnote{35} In the original curriculum two types of
faculty ideally provided 700 hours of instruction over 21 weeks. College personnel
provided the academic instruction, including: 80 hours of mathematics (arithmetic
review, algebra, plane and solid geometry, and fundamental trig), 180 hours of physics
(fundamentals of navigation, internal combustion engines, weather, and theory of flight),
60 hours each of current history (emphasis on geopolitics, role of aviation, and military
movements), geography (economic geography and use of maps), English (including
public speaking), 24 hours of civil air regulations, and one hour a day of physical
conditioning, totaling 120 hours, which included calisthenics, running, and competitive

\footnote{34} Cardozier, \textit{Colleges and Universities}, 84-85; Craven, \textit{Army Air Forces in World War II}, 563.
The rush to implement the AAFTP created some problems for the AAF. Notably, Elon College in North
Carolina proved to have inadequate mess and sanitation facilities that were missed in the initial inspection
and subsequently hindered implementation of the program there.
sports. The military personnel acted, "in an advisory capacity in regards to academics, [but had] direct supervision of the military indoctrination," which included eighty-four hours of infantry drill, forty hours in ceremonies and inspections, twenty hours of first aid, ten hours of military customs and courtesies, hygiene, and sanitation, and six hours of interior guard duty. Despite the civilian setting, the aviation students marched to and from class and conformed to military courtesies and honor code.36

In conjunction with the academics, civilian flight schools provided ten hours of flight training to each trainee as part of a reorganized CPT program. To the aviation students the flight training was the most important and exciting part of assignment to a CTD. Yet, the AAF did not request the training and it was probably unnecessary and too expensive.37 Later studies showed that the ten-hours of flight training was somewhat helpful during primary training, but any advantage disappeared in the next phase. Thus, the $1,1500,000 it cost the government each month for the training was hard to justify, but the War Department demanded it for "indoctrination and familiarization with flying." The AAF did manage to reduce significance of the CTD flight training. Original plans called for twenty hours of training and the elimination of trainees who did not pass.


37 Craven, Army Air Forces in World War II, 563-564; Murfreesboro The Daily News Journal, vol. 93, no. 266, 7 January 1943. In December 1942 the government reorganized the CAA and renamed the CPT the War Training Service (WTS). The WTS provided two training programs: courses for men who eventually qualified as transport pilots and instructors; generally speaking this was for men who failed to qualify as combat pilots for one reason or another. The second program was the ten hours of flight training for the CTD students, and a smaller contingent of Naval aviators. From the beginning the AAF did not like the idea of using the CPT. A secret report circulated in the AAF administration during late 1942 sharply
Instead, the AAF did not disqualify anyone from the program except for physical inability, "air sickness, fear of flying, or breaches of discipline and moral standards." Whether or not the flight time had value in later training, it certainly boosted student morale, and was favorable to the men who had waited months to begin training.38

The curriculum of Flight Table E created other problems as FTC withdrew trainees from the program as training space became available, meaning students usually completed anywhere between six and sixteen weeks. The result was "spasmodic exposure" to the designated curriculum and a morale problem as students did not receive promised training. Detachment commanders offered little clarification, and faculty became frustrated over vague objectives and complained the AAF "carelessly contracted for facilities which it has not used."39 Others complained the AAF should exert more


control over the curriculum. In a letter to General Arnold a member of Congress recommended the AAF specify its training objectives “in terms understood by the academic mind” that represent the precise needs of the trainees, and dispatch experienced academic officers “to observe the operations of the program, give the president help in interpreting the specifications to the faculty, and in general, to serve as liaison officer.”

Arnold replied the AAF would refrain “in every respect from changing the long established policies and standards of the institutions involved” and would provide only general objectives for the courses of study. Despite the rejection of good advice, the AAF recognized in late 1942 it was necessary to systematize the CTD courses. As a result, the program was reduced to 18-weeks, reducing geography and English by 20 hours, and civil air regulations by 12 hours. The AAF also eliminated “less essential courses” like hygiene, sanitation, military customs and courtesies, interior guard duty and any electives, because these subjects proved “difficult to administer in colleges and are otherwise repeated in subsequent phases of training.” The new curriculum allowed the AAF to better project training schedules and cadet spacing, thereby allowing for an almost seamless transition into the training pipeline. As a result, detachments soon graduated twenty percent of its students and received a new group every month.

The Army also considered the curriculum a failure in regards to the ASTP, and criticized the unpredictable length of terms and the fact the AAF did not differentiate between the students academic qualifications or the curricula objectives to account for


those differences. Consequently, the Deputy Director of Military Training recommended removing the AAFTP from the Army’s jurisdiction and placing it completely under the AAF on October 13.\textsuperscript{42} From the AAF perspective, the rush to implement the College Training Detachments created some problems, but many of the criticisms proved unjustified in light of the programs objective, to eliminate the cadet backlog.

Unlike the ASTP or the Navy V-12 program, the educational aspect of the AAFTP was incidental and the reduction of educational differences was a distant second objective. The AAF knew the students came from varied backgrounds so the academic courses were “designed and scheduled to permit and promote the greatest possible amount of individualized study and effort.” In other words, the AAF provided general objectives for each subject, leaving the colleges the flexibility to adapt to the trainees needs. Ideally, the students were assigned according to their math and physics abilities, but relying on an “every man is needed; no man is eliminated” mentality, it was not vital that each A/S reach the same level of education, only that he make an effort to fulfill his potential. This did not keep the college administrators and faculty from sensing the training was not as critical to the aviation students’ future as in the ASTP or V-12 program. This suggests students did not work as hard on aspects unrelated to their military goals, while others felt his time wasted. By and large, however, as one CTD faculty member suggested, the trainees “seem definitely impressed with the fact they are ‘going to college’ even when covering high-school subject matter.”\textsuperscript{43}


The Army and Navy programs, on the other hand, were designed with the immediate objectives of the services in mind and trainee selection was based upon an individual's unique ability that made them useful to the military. Unfortunately, the programs, and the ASTP in particular, did not match a requirement for such specially trained men upon their graduation but was based upon what “ought” to be needed. This resulted in disillusionment and in some cases death for many trainees as implied promises of commissions went unfulfilled and a shortage of combat replacements meant many suddenly found themselves shipped to the frontlines. By comparison the CTD was successful in that it met an urgent and specific wartime need to classify the backlog of aviation cadets. Overall, the AAF aimed at the ever-present U.S. ideal of efficiency in production. The CTD program would, “assist in meeting the demands for pilots...by direct training and increase the output” of pilots by decreasing the percentage of cadets eliminated in AAF schools, thereby increasing the work done at these schools.

At this point several things are clear. First, as compared to the other military branches the AAF began from a position of weakness in everything from equipment, training, money, and general support. This weakness allowed the AAF to latch onto the

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44Anson D. Marston, “Wartime Role for College and Universities,” Military Affairs 18, no. 3 (Autumn, 1954): 134-135; Malcolm M. Willey, “The College Training Programs of the Armed Services, Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 231, Higher Education and the War (Jan. 1944): 18-19. The ASTP and V-12 programs were similar, differing only in military procedure. The courses fell in two general levels, basic and advanced, and included medicine, engineering, languages, science, mathematics, psychology, dentistry, and veterinary. Kurt Vonnegut provides the most famous example of how the ASTP worked. While attending Cornell University, he enlisted in the Army in 1942. He attended Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Tennessee to study mechanical engineering in the ASTP. After termination of the program, he became a scout in the 106th Infantry Division during the Battle of the Bulge, was captured, and was one of seven U.S. POWs to survive the firebombing of Dresden.

idea of using college campuses from a very early point in its mobilization plans, as is evident from the development of the CPT. It is also clear how by the end of 1942 the idea of college training gained new significance as universities struggled to maintain student enrollment and the AAF accumulated more recruits than it could train. So, the establishment of military training programs on college campuses was part of both government efforts to utilize universities for the war effort and AAF desires to reduce its pool of idle manpower. From the military perspective the AAF program was entangled with inter-service tension, competed with the other military programs, and though originally part of the ASTP, it did not match the standards the Army expected. This basically resulted from the proposed CTD curriculum and the problems associated with implementing that curriculum. Despite these problems, the CTD fulfilled its necessary role for the AAF in placing thousands of aviation cadets on the path to become pilots. This is the role the CTD played for the military; it is now time to examine its role in the context of higher education in the South during WWII.
CHAPTER III
THE MOBILIZATION OF SOUTHERN HIGHER EDUCATION

When the Nazis invaded Poland in September 1939 there was little urgency in the U.S., and for the next eight months, a period known as "sitzkrieg" or "phony war," they largely went on with their lives as usual. When students returned to campuses in the fall of 1940 the mood was tenser as France had surrendered in June and the Selective Service Act passed in August. Yet, the war still barely penetrated colleges beyond Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) or the trickle of men who enlisted, but there was now a real basis for anxiety, despite the minimum age of twenty-one for the draft and one year deferment for college men. On a personal level though, the war was ever present, whether in the man who pondered the draft, the woman who wondered about her wartime role, or the professor who recalled the flood of Army cadets on campuses during WWI.

As southerners concerned themselves with their role in the looming war, southern universities as institutions had little opportunity to directly participate in war prior to WWII. Unlike the "historic pattern of incompatibility" historian Clarence Mohr describes between colleges and war, however, what really existed was a pattern of irrelevance that forever changed as the country mobilized for mass industrial warfare. Colleges traditionally provided able bodies or educated the military's technical specialists, thereby only peripherally contributing to overall military success.¹ This pattern abruptly changed after Pearl Harbor as the government recognized the growing

¹Cardozier, Colleges and Universities, 1-2; Mohr, "Transformation of Southern Higher Education," 34. The military indirectly relied upon universities as they trained specialized professionals and academics, especially physicians, chemists, engineers, and the psychologists who developed the military's standardized classification tests.
power of science and the necessity of advanced technical skills in modern societies, while colleges saw both a need and opportunity for increased participation in the war effort.

In the South, the change began when what little antiwar sentiment existed disappeared and created a unity of action mixed with anger and hysteria. At MTSU a group of students hung a Japanese effigy in front of the main academic hall while the school barber slit its throat with a razor. Yet, administrators like the president of Louisiana State University, a retired major general, urged students to focus on their studies and not make hasty decisions about enlistment. Similar messages resonated through the region as colleges hoped for a concerted government effort to fully utilize campuses. As discussed in chapter one, the November 1942 Conference on War Department College Training Program saw the government take those steps, but the militarization of southern universities in December came relatively late as Civilian Pilot Training (CPT) and vocational training programs had been underway since 1939 and 1940 respectively. Still, military training revitalized struggling southern universities, as they became “instruments of national purpose.”

This chapter examines the AAFTP from the perspective of southern colleges and demonstrates the role of the program in the mobilization of universities during WWII. In doing so, the College Training Detachments become important in two contexts. First, it contributed to a regional transformation that abruptly shifted the South away from traditional patterns of rural poverty and “perceptibly closer to the mainstream of national economic and social life.” Second, it challenged traditional notions about the utility of

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professional military education and a perceived responsibility of developing good American citizens, thereby forcing the South to rethink the very notion of a southern military school tradition. The advent of college military training programs was part of a new social and demographic pattern as it began an association with the federal government that permanently reordered university priorities, remade their institutional culture, and altered their relationship with society at large. The new role for colleges that emerged from these changes had significant consequences for southern universities in the postwar era. The military training programs also moved universities directly into the war effort as they fulfilled the Army and Navy’s need for trained specialists, or in the case of the AAF, eliminated a backlog of aviation cadets. In this context, WWII transformed the role of the southern university and created a new southern military school tradition—a support and training tradition—that reflected the nation’s needs in mass industrial warfare and signaled a departure from the previous military school tradition in the South both in order of magnitude and intent.

The southern military education tradition began with little federal encouragement with establishment of the Virginia Military Institute (VMI) in 1819 and The Citadel Military College of South Carolina in 1842. Historian Rod Andrew Jr. explained that many saw these schools as proof of the violent personalities and militaristic beliefs of southerners, but he argued the southern initiation of state-supported military schools was in touch with the dominant political and social trends of the mid-nineteenth century. In fact, the creation of these schools was an “enlightened innovation” that aimed to “expand

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the scope of higher education into the sciences,” democratize campuses through an aid program for poor students, increase the number of qualified school teachers, and produce a more public minded citizenry. These justifications proved successful “between 1845 and 1860 as every slave state except Texas had at least one fully state-supported military school.”4 These arguments reappeared during WWII as reasons to support military training programs on college campuses.

Most southern military schools closed during the Civil War, but the postwar period exploded with schools established under the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1861. The act gave states federal land for agricultural and mechanical schools to provide “inexpensive and practical education” and instruction in basic military tactics. Every state cooperated in the program, but southern land-grant colleges uniformly used the example of antebellum military schools to govern student life, and some even subjected students to constant military discipline. Andrew asserted such training became “fashionable” in the late 1800s because the confederate past and “powerful appeal of the Lost Cause” led southerners to equate military education with martial valor and cultural notions of “honor, patriotism, civic duty, and virtue.”5 When the ROTC was established in 1916, the federal government assumed responsibility from the states of training college students as military officers. The need to gather an American Expeditionary Force in

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4Cardozer, Colleges and Universities, 15; Rod Andrew Jr., Long Gray Lines: The Southern Military Tradition, 1839-1915 (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 9-10, 18-19, 24-25. Cardozer claimed, unlike other military schools of the era, like Norwich University in Vermont, the southern schools did not primarily intend graduates to become militia officers or serve in non-defense emergencies. Instead, VMI and the Citadel trained men “for good citizenship and self-discipline.” Andrew supports the military readiness notion, but insists it “was neither the sustaining force nor the overriding justification” for the number of private southern military schools that received some state assistance in the form of arms, funding, or tuition. His reference to science reflects the emphasis of engineering and science, while the democratizing aspect referred to the equalizing effect of uniforms.
WWI, however, resulted in suspension of the ROTC program. This allowed the
government to give some relevance to the use of colleges in war, and gave signs that the
university’s role would change in an era of prolonged mass industrial warfare.

In the spring and summer of 1918 the Army contracted with colleges to train
electricians, carpenters, metal workers, and repairmen. This vocational training involved
neither college students nor college faculty. In August the government established the
Students Army Training Corps (SATC), which began on October 1, when the Army
swore in 142,000 college men for training that ideally led to officer school or specialized
technical training. With the armistice of November 11, the program was abolished on
December 21. Overall, the program was a failure, and not simply because it lasted two
months. Many schools depended financially on the government contracts, yet most
payments terminated less than halfway through the contract period. To make matters
worse the military overran campuses, restricted academic freedom, and instituted
“dictatorial and insensitive” demands on college officials. Thus, “the SATC left a legacy
of bitterness and distrust” among college leaders, many of whom still worked in higher
education during WWII and did not remember the experience with pleasure.\(^5\)

The forceful way in which the Army disrupted university facilities during WWI
meant the mobilization of colleges as institutions still “manifested itself primarily
through the depopulation of campuses” as male faculty and students left to join the
military. Yet, many saw the utility of offering military training and some 200 colleges
requested ROTC after the war. Not every request was granted, but 137 universities

offered ROTC by 1937, even in the midst of antiwar sentiment found from congress to the college classroom. Isolationism, however, failed to garner enthusiasm in the South, as Roosevelt found key support from southern congressmen for his foreign policy initiatives, from revision of the neutrality laws in 1939, the peacetime draft in 1940, or the Lend-Lease Act and the seizure of belligerent merchant ships in 1941. Such support stemmed in part from concrete economic considerations, i.e. access to foreign markets for southern cotton and tobacco, but abstract factors also shaped the regions outlook.

Historian George Tindall, for example, claimed the southern experience “bred a psychology of danger and defense, while the military-patriotic tradition led southerners to proudly claim their region as the “most American” part of the country.” These feelings fit in well with the southern tradition of military education.

Andrew claimed the southern military school tradition faded after WWI, and some schools did drop ROTC and compulsory military training because of the antiwar movement, but “southern culture, educational beliefs, and political ideology” led others to support the program as a way to create “ideal republican citizens.”

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4Cardozier, Colleges and Universities, 9. It is worth noting the military, and the Army especially, took military education far more seriously in the early 20th century, and did not feel colleges could meet their needs. This contributed to the Army’s harsh demands and desire to directly control the training.

7George Brown Tindall, The Emergence of the New South 1913-1945, A History of the South, ed. Wendell Holmes Stephenson and E. Merton Coulter, vol. 10 (Louisiana State University Press, 1967), 687-689; Cardozier, Colleges and Universities, 2; Grantham, The South in Modern America, 171. President Roosevelt received thousands of letters urging peace and student newspapers consistently opposed war, but a regional dichotomy existed in American society as the country turned from domestic to foreign policy in the late 1930s. Liberals in the North and West remained isolationist, and a poll in autumn 1940 showed 90 percent of Americans opposed war. As late as August 1941 the isolationist America First Committee rallied against the Selective Service Act, which was renewed by one vote. In the South, however, a Gallup poll in October 1941 found 88 percent of southerners thought defeating Germany was more important than staying out of the war, as compared to 63-70 percent in other parts of the country.

8Mohr, “Transformation of Southern Higher Education,” 34-35; Andrew Jr. Long Gray Lines, 3, 107, 118. Tennessee, Auburn, North Carolina State, Mississippi State, and LSU were among the first to relax the mandatory military requirement. Hampton, South Carolina State, Savannah State, and Florida A&M dropped military training altogether, though they now have strong ROTC units. Clemson kept the
support of military training at southern universities did not keep groups like the Committee on Militarism in Education (CME) from influencing the antiwar movement until the draft passed in 1940. In pamphlets like "Military Training in Schools and Colleges" and "Militarizing Our Youth" the CME worked to eliminate compulsory military training. The CME was particularly critical of the ROTC and the southern notion military training developed students "physically, morally, and mentally into the best type of citizen." They argued the real purpose was to prepare students for victory in battle, which created "an educational tendency towards a psychology for war."⁹

The CME was not alone in its mission, yet as the war spread in Europe an increasing number of students and faculty felt war was inevitable and many institutions voluntarily took steps to involve themselves in the war effort. While southern cities did their part in running draft boards, civilian defense services, and rationing goods, some colleges created defense councils that served various functions, from providing information about the draft to cataloging school facilities for potential use in the war effort. Others, like the University of Texas, kept with the southern military school tradition and initiated an unofficial ROTC, providing drill, military discipline, and other physical activity to male students. Real ROTC programs also expanded throughout the military requirement (except for students who were veterans) until 1955, while Arkansas resisted until 1969; Texas A&M, until 1965. Virginia Tech dropped the military requirement for juniors and seniors as early as 1924 but kept it for freshmen and sophomores until 1964. The fact other schools strongly supported military training is buttressed by the fact some southern colleges boasted of their participation in the Spanish-American War in their official catalogs and pamphlets: VMI claimed some 100 officers, 29 NCOS and 4 privates, while Texas A&M claimed a total of 89 serving cadets by December 1898. These high numbers did not diminish the fact Clemson, the Citadel, Auburn, Mississippi State, and North Carolina State all provided students to the war. The same feelings gradually appeared as the ROTC expanded in the years leading to WWII. Texas A&M, for example, boasted of directly or indirectly training some 14,000 officers who served during WWII and is continually proud of their ROTC history.

South, from small junior colleges to the well-known program at Texas A&M University. The spread of the CPT program through southern universities like MTSU kept with the military training pattern, but proved important for future expansion as the military increasingly relied upon the program.

Several other aspects stand as unique to the southern experience. The opportunity for college students to seek part-time employment in war related jobs or on military installations, for example, readily presented itself. The military built sixty of the Army’s 100 new camps and allocated more than $4 billion to build new facilities or expand posts built during WWI that transformed traditionally rural areas. The disproportionate number of bases in the South was due in part to the lobbying of southern congressmen, and to a lesser extent the regions moderate climate and open spaces, which contributed to why the government chose MTSU and other southern universities to run both CPT and CTD programs. Probably most important was the government’s effort to “bring the South into the vanguard of world industrial progress” and keep southern Democrats happy.

Consequently, $5 billion went into building new defense industries, which increased the region’s industrial capacity nearly 40 percent. The South “remained more campground than arsenal” throughout the war and much of the defense industry downsized later, but as war production increasingly moved South it did more in the long run to stimulate the region than military bases.

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10 Grantham, South in Modern America, 172; Cardozier, Colleges and Universities, 10. In the autumn of 1940, according to one estimate, approximately 200 universities created defense councils under various names. In early 1941, a survey of 100 randomly selected schools found that 70 percent had a faculty committee on defense problems.

11 Grantham, South in Modern America, 172-173; Tindall, Emergence of the New South, 694-695, 700. The most important of these industries were shipyards on the East Coast; aircraft plants in Dallas-Fort Worth and Marietta, Georgia; ordnance plants; aluminum and metal fabrication plants; petroleum refineries; and synthetic rubber plants.
Often the aspects of military bases, training facilities, and economic growth combined in the southern experience as towns became “overrun by war boom” practically overnight. Starke, Florida, for example, went from a town of 1,500 in 1940 to the state’s fourth largest city when Camp Blanding opened. This example was more atypical, but overall, war mobilization accelerated urban growth and reduced rural farming population by twenty percent between 1940 and 1945. Coastal towns like Mobile and Norfolk thrived with both naval activity and “VD-girls,” and defense plants in larger cities like Dallas multiplied while population growth overwhelmed public services. This did not keep the overall population of the South from declining during WWII, but even rural Tennessee towns like Murfreesboro buzzed with news of Army maneuvers and the possibility of hosting a military oriented CPT program or the AAF college training program.12

In the midst of growth, southern colleges provided vital vocational training in the Engineering, Science, and Management War Training (ESMWT) Program, which was unique in several aspects. First, the ESMWT did not intend the courses for college students or college credit, and unlike military programs, offered classes to every race, sex, and color. Second, twenty-two offices constantly assessed regional defense needs and schools then submitted course proposals to meet a specific need, meaning there was no uniform curriculum. Finally, courses supposedly had direct application to industrial jobs and technical skill in contrast to the theoretical nature of most college classes.13

12Tindall, Emergence of the New South, 701-703.

13Cardozier, Colleges and Universities, 168-171, 173-174, 178; John W. Studebaker, “The United States Office of Education in Wartime,” Journal of Educational Sociology 15, no. 6, Schools and Colleges Service in Total War (Feb., 1942): 326. As the country mobilized the there was a shortage of engineers, chemists, physicists, and production supervisors for defense industries. Congress subsequently established the Engineering Defense Training (EDT) Program in October 1940, renamed the Engineering, Science, and
Colleges obviously played a vital role in these programs as they provided the facilities and faculty for the vocational training, but many college administrators lobbied for a greater military role in the war effort. It took years for their efforts to pay off, but the result was a new role for the university through formalized military programs like the AAFTP that transformed the southern military education tradition and fundamentally altered the importance of higher education in waging war.

College administrators found several reasons to advocate a larger role in the war and begin long-term planning of universities. First, the SATC experiment during WWI, when instead of asking for university assistance the military "virtually took control of campuses," left a legacy of bitterness. What many realized, however, was that to prosper and perhaps survive, universities had to fulfill the needs of the federal government, as was evident from the creation of vocational training programs and military-oriented ones like the CPT. These programs, along with increased female enrollment and the military's enlisted reserve, allowed many colleges to keep attendance near normal levels during the war's first year, but the activation of reservists created a potential crisis for southern universities. Historian John Morton Blum explained this crisis when he described U.S. political and economic life as a competing balance of forces for federal funds between "big agriculture, big labor, and big business." Colleges struggled for these same funds, and fewer students meant less money. So, it was in the university's best interest to pursue a larger wartime role and attract more federal dollars. Financial problems, therefore, combined with feelings of "frustration and uselessness," prompted universities

Management Defense Training (ESMDT) Program in July 1941, and the ESMWT in July 1942. Under the Office of Education, the ESMWT offered courses in engineering, geometry, mathematics, chemistry, physics, electricity, preflight aeronautics (under the CPT), and even radar. At its end on September 30, 1945 it had taught over 68,000 courses in 227 colleges to 1,795,716 individuals at a relatively light cost of
to overlook their WWI experience and place their full resources "at the disposal of the government" in the effort to reverse government apathy towards higher education.\textsuperscript{14}

Southern universities were ready, willing, and prepared to fight, but they lacked clear leadership or guidance. The American Council on Education (ACE) provided both when it met in late 1939 and appointed Francis J. Brown coordinator of matters related to education and national defense. Then, in August 1940, ACE and the National Education Association (NEA) met with fifty-five organizations to establish the National Committee on Education and Defense, which proved a crucial link between higher education, the government, and the military. Throughout 1941 the committee held conferences to coordinate defense efforts and convey the willingness to aid the war effort. In February, a conference in Washington D.C. titled "Organizing Higher Education for National Defense," involved 500 people representing 370 colleges from forty states." Another in July, titled "Higher Education in National Defense," lobbied for clear policy statements.\textsuperscript{15}

The most important conference, titled "Higher Education and the War," was held on January 3-4, 1942 when officials from the Office of Education, the Army, the Navy, and some 1000 colleges from forty-six states met in Baltimore, and issued a statement pledging the "total strength" of college facilities to the war effort. Specifically, they


\textsuperscript{15} Cardozier, \textit{Colleges and Universities}, 5; I.L. Kandel, \textit{The Impact of the War Upon American Education} (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1948), 128-129. ACE was the logical leader as it represented all colleges and universities while other organizations represent various segments of higher education. Established in 1918 as a coordinating agency for higher education, ACE gradually assumed "a strategic position in all matters concerning higher education." The NEA, on the other hand, spoke with authority for all branches of education. The National Committee on Education and Defense was made up
offered accelerated programs allowing graduation in three years, increased emphasis on physical training, gave credit for war-related services, and requested expansion of the ROTC. Southern universities expected a clear government response, especially when Roosevelt established the War Manpower Commission (WMC) to coordinate manpower "for military, industrial, governmental, and civilian uses" in April, but months passed with no action. Exasperated, another conference was held on July 15 and a report issued stating, colleges "deplored the 'lack of any adequate, coordinated plan for the most effective utilization of higher education towards the winning of the war.'" Ideally, they wanted a master plan that used campuses to train personnel for the military, war industry, and essential civilian services, but had to wait another five months for any actual plans.16

In the meantime, the WMC formed its own committee to study the matter under Edward C. Elliot, president of Purdue and part-time Director of the Division of Professional and Technical Training for the WMC. Unfortunately, in the report issued on August 19, the military representatives on the committee—the Undersecretary of the Navy, the assistant to the Secretary of War, and the head of Selective Service—overruled Elliot's recommendations. ACE formed a separate Committee on Relationships of Higher Education to the Federal Government, which met on August 30-31, with Edmund E. Day, president of Cornell, as chairman. The Day Committee issued its report on October 14, and recommended establishing a military college training corps, with uniformed candidates who received pay while pursuing training useful to the military.17

16Mohr, "Transformation of Southern Higher Education," 35; Cardozier, Colleges and Universities, 6-7; Kandel, Impact of the War Upon American Education, 152.

17Cardozier, Colleges and Universities, 7.
The Navy was somewhat sympathetic to the recommendations, but the Army less so. To the Army's credit, they had a war to run and did not feel overly concerned with the problems of higher education. Besides, the Army and Navy had several training programs already under way on colleges and at the time did not feel more expansion was necessary. The AAF, on the other hand, had already been using college facilities through the CPT, and soon realized the importance campuses could have in fulfilling its training needs. The change occurred when the draft age was lowered to eighteen and the AAF realized the problems its cadet backlog created.\(^{18}\)

When the military met at the Conference on War Department College Training Program on November 16, and announced its plans for college training programs in accordance with the Day Committee recommendations on December 12, higher education won a considerable achievement. Beginning in February 1943 and continuing for the next twelve to eighteen months, the majority of southern white colleges, "plus a smaller number of black schools" took part in the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP), the Navy College Training Program (V-12), or the AAF College Training Program (AAFTP).\(^ {19}\) Colleges now had a concrete plan that brought an acceptable amount of federal influence to the schools that provided both necessary funds to institutions and a catalyst for lasting changes in southern higher education.

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\(^{18}\)Cardozier, *Colleges and Universities*, 7, 136-151. Unlike the AAFTP, ASTP, or Navy V-12 program, which focused more on traditional college subjects, the military programs began on a piecemeal basis and dealt with specific military subjects. These program ranged from Army Signal Corps, School of Military Government, Japanese language schools, AAF meteorology, and Naval midshipmen's school. The largest military related program prior December 1942 was undoubtedly the Civilian Pilot Training (CPT) Program, which proved a vital component to military flight preparation for the AAF and Navy before creation of the AAFTP.

\(^{19}\)Mohr, "Transformation of Southern Higher Education," 35-36.
While less well known than the Army or Navy program, the AAFTP and the establishment of College Training Detachments had a direct effect on more southern universities than the other programs. To be considered, schools had to have the capacity to hold at least 500 students, though actual numbers on campus ranged from 200 to 2,100.\(^20\) A simple comparison reveals the importance southern colleges played in AAF training. Tennessee, for example, had twelve schools participating: Middle TN State University, (or Middle TN State College in 1943), Cumberland University, King College, Union University, Tennessee Tech, State Normal School in Johnson City (East TN State University), Memphis State, Southwestern, Lincoln Memorial College in Harrogate, University of Chattanooga, Maryville College, and the University of TN Knoxville. This left Tennessee tied second with Ohio in the number of detachments. Pennsylvania was first with eighteen, though this number dropped after the initial scaling down of the program, leaving the South to reign supreme in the battle of numbers.\(^21\)

More colleges participating in the South meant more men of all different faiths, races, and schools systems with every level of academic and life experience moved into

\(^{20}\)AAF Procurement Distribution to Commanding General of AAF Material Command, "List of Schools and Estimated costs to June 30, 1943," 19 March 1943, File 353: Official Records of the Air Adjutant General Headquarters Army Air Forces, Folder 1: Nov. 16, 1942-March 31, 1942, The National Archives, College Park, MD; Mohr, "Transformation of Southern Higher Education," 38. Syracuse was the only school to hold a full contingent of 2,100 trainees, though units with 1,000-1,200 trainees dotted the South. Texas Tech, Texas A&M, the University of Arkansas, NC State University, Mississippi State, the University of Alabama, the University of Florida, the University of West Virginia, and the University of Texas were some of the more notable schools.

the region. Many of these newcomers saw the region as the most backward and uneducated part of the country. This influx of students helped plant the “seeds of change in southern higher learning” and created a new role of the university that emerged with establishment of the AAFTP. No longer was the university simply a source of available manpower to the military, but was pushed to the forefront of the war effort as the federal government made higher education a national priority and provided thousands of ordinary citizens the “the means and incentive” to pursue advanced training.

The reversal of the university’s traditional irrelevance in war affected southern universities in several ways. First, it permanently reordered priorities as they adapted to the military curricula and the military training changed the aims of education. Second, it remade their institutional culture as the military programs democratized higher education and kept them financially dependent upon the federal government like never before. Finally, the new role altered their relationship with society at large as the schools became “instruments of national purpose,” which in essence created a new southern military school tradition that reflected the nation’s needs in mass industrial warfare.22

In terms of new priorities, the advent of the AAFTP was an experience unlike any previous undertaking. It required university faculty to adapt teaching methods and stimulated debate over how to educate, what subjects to teach, and the very function of education. James Cornette, professor of English for the 321st CTD at the State Teachers College, Bowling Green, KY, described the experience saying, “we were suddenly and forcibly ejected from a rather comfortable position in which we had been somnambulantly vegetating for too long a time and thrust into a new situation that brought us wide awake to many things.” Cornette quickly realized “that a training
program for war and an educational program for peace are two radically different things.” Before the war, college faculty had slipped into a routine, maybe using the same notes year after year, and as compared to the AAF’s “every man is needed; no man is eliminated” mentality, a “sink-or-swim” policy prevailed. The CTD, however, was a training program, “devised to develop as quickly as possible certain skills and techniques” necessary to wage a modern war. The college faculty had to recognize this fact and sacrifice everything else to achieve that one objective.23

Cornette clarified the general differences between educating college students and training aviation cadets, but adapting the AAF curriculum to a university setting created many specific problems and the teaching flexibility it required deeply affected southern colleges. It is not hard to imagine the teachers being warned that any interference or inadequacies in education would hinder further aviation training and potentially harm the war effort. To maximize the capacity to effectively train the students, schools hired teachers specifically for the CTD. New faculty received checks from the government rather than the university, and all taught CTD classes separate from the regular students. Once the faculty was hired, departments had to get together and work out a way to provide a teaching standard that ensured a uniform level of education to a variety of backgrounds. At the very least, faculty had to “interpret the functions of the program as a


23James P. Cornette, “No Magic Formulas,” Peabody Journal of Education 22, no. 2 (Sep., 1944), 75-76; Cronbach, “The College Training Detachment Previews Post-War Education,” 158. The “every man is needed; no man is eliminated” mentality describes the military’s need to maximize its training capacity and use every man according to his skills. For the AAF, it was vital no man was eliminated except for serious offenses or fear-of-flying. With every aviation student passing, teachers had to assess each man’s needs and attempt to raise the most deficient student closer to the level of a more advanced student. Anything less would have reflected badly on a teacher’s abilities. The “sink-or-swim” policy, on the other hand, meant the ability to either pass or fail was essentially on the student rather than the professor. The professor would do his job regardless and it was up to the student to prove his ability to succeed.
whole and of its various parts” and integrate individual subjects to AAF objectives.\textsuperscript{24} Since the AAF provided only general outlines for the curriculum, the CTD became a considerable source of contention between the military and the universities.

One of the biggest problems derived from sudden schedule changes, as men left campuses for classification and teachers realized they had half as much time to fulfill the same objectives. Conversely, the AAF reassigned men for further training who supposedly had finished a course. This required faculty to ask what is of most worth, constantly “compress, select, and reorganize” subjects, and efficiently focus on the most urgent needs. Faculty also had to remember the aviation students did not have regular college study habits. To account for this, many teachers organized lessons around clear and concise daily objectives. This made a subject appear meaningful both as a whole in term of AAF objectives and in each day’s work. Others found “assignments requiring reading and studying of textbooks” did not facilitate military training. Instead, assignments focused on “definite problems, work sheets, and exercises” that directly related to aviation training. Interestingly, teachers discovered the value of military instructional aids like charts, films, and models. Apparently teachers long overlooked the value of such aids, and they proved vital in fulfilling the AAF’s needs.\textsuperscript{25}

Each school adapted to military training in different ways, but efforts were made to coordinate methods and keep teachers in touch with what was occurring at other schools. In November 1943, for example, the president of MTSU and the commander of the 11\textsuperscript{th} CTD attended a meeting in Knoxville with thirteen other participating colleges to

\textsuperscript{24} Cornette, “No Magic Formula,” 75.

\textsuperscript{25} Cronbach, “The College Training Detachment Previews Post-War Education,” 162-164.
discuss problems with the AAFTP. Two articles also appeared in educational journals in 1944 on how to adapt individual subjects to the CTD curriculum. Frederic Weigle, an instructor of English at the Eastern Oregon College of Education explained that the department first had to determine clear objectives. After a careful analysis of the activities, the students would undertake as future air force officers the faculty decided upon six objectives, and then organized class content to fulfill those objectives. In some cases it was necessary to create original teaching materials. To account for student variety a detailed syllabus was kept for each lesson, and students progressed as their abilities permitted. This of course meant some did not progress as far as others, but also that whatever material the students completed was "thoroughly mastered."

In another article, James Zant, a math professor at Oklahoma A&M College, described a slightly different situation. For one, the AAF provided a slightly more detailed curriculum for math, which included arithmetic, algebra, geometry, and trigonometry, and a directive that subject matter be "college level." The variety of topics would have regularly required several semesters of college classes to cover all the material, but the faculty had to determine the text and content to cover every subject. Instead of choosing several textbooks, the math faculty kept in mind the military aspect

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27. Frederic H. Weigle, "Teaching English in an Army Air Force College Training Program," College English 5, no. 5 (Feb., 1944): 271. The department decided upon: 1. Development of speech techniques used in military situations, 2. Development of the ability to write military reports, instructions, directions, and surveys, 3. Development of correct grammatical usage in writing and speaking, 4. Development of reading skill and comprehension, 5. Development of vocabularies in all phases of preflight training, and 6. Development of note-taking techniques. As compared to pre-war English programs, the need to teach a variety of material to students with different goals meant objectives often became vague, indefinite, and all-inclusive. English also represents how the faculty could integrate the subjects to more efficiently meet AAF objectives. In teaching grammar for example, the students could work in correcting articles covering current history of the war. In building vocabulary the students learned many of the same words they would encounter in physics class or in flight training.
and chose *Basic Mathematics for Aviation*, and supplemented military technical manuals on aviation and navigation. Like the English curriculum, the students had weekly objectives clearly stated to help account for individual differences, and each objective applied to the types of problems they might encounter in later aviation training.\(^{28}\)

The AAFTP not only altered the college classroom, but also the institutions themselves. The program provided students to depopulated campuses, but more importantly, the start of military training brought millions of federal dollars to universities that needed tuition income. "Our economy is the Federal Government" William Faulkner later lamented, as the South transformed "from guardians against the federal government to suitors of it." Increasingly, federal intervention brought economic change to the region, a fact few southerners could ignore. For southern universities, the metamorphosis took place as the military became the vehicle of change not only in expanding campuses, but also in industry, research facilities, and restructuring the regional labor market.\(^{29}\) For the South’s leadership, university presidents included, federal spending brought income to the region that was socially and politically acceptable in the name of progress. Just how far they would let those funds alter the South’s traditional social and political structure became a postwar problem, but without a doubt military training programs had immediate consequences for southern universities.

It did not become apparent just how important the federal income was to the universities until after liquidation of the CTD, ASTP, and Navy V-12 program in 1944. A later survey of 216 colleges revealed the loss of federal funds for the military training

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\(^{28}\)James H. Zant, "Teaching Mathematics to the A.A.F. College Training Detachment (Air Crew)," *National Mathematics Magazine* 18, no. 6 (Mar., 1944): 236-239.
programs averaged 61.5 percent of the funding for higher education between 1943 and 1945. To make matters worse, the training programs ran on a cost basis, and any surplus funds went primarily towards general operation costs. Facility repair and upkeep, for example, virtually halted during the war “due to the unavailability of materials, shortage of labor, and in the recognition of the need to conserve resources.” In this case, many colleges ended up taking significant losses as they anticipated the military programs lasting on campuses longer than they did and began renovations for which they were never reimbursed. Despite the losses, colleges like MTSU saw the expansion of lab facilities or the campus airport as vital to postwar growth.

The variety of CTD students entering southern universities also went a long way in changing campus culture, as the influx of soldiers began a process of democratization that continued until the “massification of higher education” with the GI Bill of 1944. Dr. Lee Cronbach, a teacher for the 319th CTD at Washington State College and later professor of psychology at Stanford, noted in 1944 that most military students had at least

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30Cardozier, *Colleges and Universities*, 214. Between 1941-1943, 130 teachers colleges reported they had reduced expenditures for construction and equipment by 70 percent. Seventeen others reduced athletics by 98 percent, instructional salaries by 14 percent and library purchases by 21 percent. The government was aware of these problems; consequently, Rep. Graham Barden of North Carolina chaired a House Committee on Education in June 1944 to determine the effect of the reduction of military training programs on higher education. The report confirmed what most already knew; with three-fourths of their male students in the military many southern universities faced collapse. Overall, enrollment in 1944-1945 dropped to 64 percent of 1939-1940 levels, and from 1943-1944, military contracts accounted for at least half of the income of men’s colleges and a slightly smaller percentage at co-ed institutions.

31Mohr, “Transformation of Southern Higher Education,” 42; Cardozier, *Colleges and Universities*, x; Ralph W. Tyler, “What the Schools Can Learn from the Training Programs of the Armed Forces,” *The Elementary School Journal* 45, no. 9 (May, 1945): 501. The equalizing of education meant the government provided thousands of men the “means and incentive” to pursue formal college training regardless of family background or income bracket. This meant practically any man could attend college, at a time when less than 10% of Americans had any college experience at all. The GI Bill, on the other hand, meant the military no longer sent men to colleges for specific needs, but rather the government sent the mass of returning veterans to colleges to gain important training for the postwar world.
finished their junior year of high school, but their educational backgrounds ranged from advanced engineering degrees to completion of only the eighth grade and aged from seventeen to twenty-seven. Before the war colleges drew primarily from neighboring localities or at least home states, thus ensuring some uniformity in the knowledge and experience of high school graduates. Regional differences became apparent, however, as the military shipped thousands of men across the country that might have never ventured beyond their home county and certainly would never have attended college.32

Regardless, the educational democratization precedent the AAFTP and other military programs set "was significant from both a psychological and a political standpoint." On the one hand, colleges realized how important federal funds could play in continued operations so long as they adapted their priorities to the government’s needs and the government did not attempt to use the funds to alter traditional southern political culture. Simultaneously, the government raised the importance of higher education and moved colleges from the periphery and into the mainstream of southern society. The military students themselves, on the other hand, undoubtedly remembered the government paid the price of their education when it proved useful to society. For a government that increasingly worried about the eventual return of millions of veterans and feared the economic slump that followed WWI, these aspects profoundly affected postwar education and placed southern universities in a precarious position between further democratization and the defense of traditional political and social culture.33

32 Cronbach, "The College Training Detachment Previews Post-War Education," 157, 159; Cardozier, Colleges and Universities, 90. Student variety is discussed in chapter three as part of a complex North-South dialogue.

The emerging tension between southern universities and the government is evident in how the military training programs altered the university’s relationship with society at large as the new military training role only partially fit in with the traditional southern military schools. In terms of Andrew’s argument for southern military schools, the AAFTP opened higher education to practically any healthy young male, regardless of social status. The program also expanded the importance of science as faculty trained thousands of men in technical military skills that proved vital to in the postwar world, partly due to the growing power of science and the necessity of advanced technical skills in modern technological societies. The advent of military training programs, however, departed from the traditional southern military school in several ways.

The most obvious difference between the old and new tradition was that the states no longer controlled military training and disappearance of the Lost Cause. If anything, the influx of soldiers from other parts of the country lessened misconceptions about the South. Yet, the military training programs caused a resurgence of southern cultural notions of “honor, patriotism, civic duty, and virtue,” as is evident from the pride universities like MTSU took in hosting a CTD. In essence, national militarism replaced southern militarism. Thus, while traditional southern military education disappeared, universities in the South embraced the new support and training role, creating a new military education tradition that reflected both the nation’s needs in mass industrial warfare and the meaning of higher education in a technologically advanced society.

Just how well the new military education tradition fit in with southern college culture is evident in examining the importance of football during the war. In 1942,

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"conscription, ASTP regulations, wartime travel restrictions, and certain uneasiness with frivolity in the midst of death," led many southern universities to suspend football. While the ASTP forbade students from participating in extracurricular sports, the Navy preflight program and to a lesser extent the CTD, linked competitive sports with combat training. Flight trainees at the University of Georgia and North Carolina, for example, had eighty-three coaches for each group of 1500-2000 and learned football was analogous to war. The aviation students followed a strict syllabus that tried to strip the men "of socially acquired inhibitions against aggression, and to impress upon them that for 'ruthless determined competitors' there 'could be no substitute for winning' and that 'gracious defeat should be forgotten.'" The connection between sports and war was not as directly expressed at MTSU, but the 11th CTD did participate in football, which kept it within the same military tradition and helped build local support and pride for the program. From there, southern schools easily equated the CTD training with martial valor and cultural notions of honor in victory, patriotism, and civic duty.

The connection between military training and the southern military school tradition is obvious, but colleges worked in more subtle ways to adapt their new role to southern society, as is evident in the issue of postwar education. The closest thing to an official southern position on postwar education came from the Executive Committee of

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36Mohr, "Transformation of Southern Higher Education," 49-50; Donald W. Rominger, "From Playing Field to Battleground: The United States Navy V-5 Preflight Program in World War II," Journal of Sports History 12 (Winter, 1985): 256; Andrew, Long Gray Lines, 6. Advocates of sports suspension included small schools that found football burdensome and larger schools whose Army affiliations kept them from fielding competitive teams against schools with Navy or AAF players. Regardless, several schools instituted a ban, including: Auburn, the state universities of Alabama, Tennessee, and Kentucky, and publicly supported colleges of Louisiana and Mississippi. Less powerful competitors dropped the game, including: Vanderbilt, Washington and Lee, William and Mary, Mercer University, Howard College, the University of Tampa, Virginia Tech, and East Texas. Also of note was the fact such famed postwar coaches as Charles "Bud" Wilkinson and Paul "Bear" Bryant served as navy physical education instructors.
the Southern University Conference, “a forty-three member group that included virtually all of the region’s major universities and stronger liberal arts colleges.” A series of resolutions adopted in December 1943 did not suggest a specific amount of federal aid but urged that veterans receive benefits large enough to cover the “necessary cost of maintenance and education in the school of his choice.” Of distinct importance to the South was the position that stressed individual veterans rather than colleges contract with the government to provide the education. Behind the “seemingly straightforward” suggestion was the desire to “regain institutional equilibrium” and keep the government out of university affairs after the war. Also evident was an awareness of the challenges southern colleges faced as they accommodated “egalitarian and modernizing influences within the context of regional political culture that was remarkably impervious to both.”

Southern traditions made the relationship between higher education and the federal government a delicate matter, and showed that colleges embraced their new role to a point. Nevertheless, when Congress passed the “G.I. Bill” in late 1944 it incorporated practically all the principles southern universities favored. This allowed them to temporally avoid being caught in a clash between emerging political and social tendencies and southern traditions. Until the mid-1950s, southern schools had “space to maneuver in a fluid environment which allowed for the rapid expansion of higher education’s social base without direct or immediate legislative challenge to racial segregation (that would come from the courts).” So while the G.I. Bill continued the educational democratization process the AAFTP began, it did little to alter the racial or gender disparities in southern higher education. In fact, it allowed schools like North

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37 Mohr, “Transformation of Southern Higher Education,” 42-43. Several conservative groups supported this position on postwar education, including: the National Conference of Church-Related
Carolina and Vanderbilt to institute “Coed Quotas” that made room for more returning veterans and eroded any social gains women gained during the war.\(^3\)

As the war ended southern colleges still faced serious financial problems, but the influx of veterans through the GI Bill meant most rapidly recovered after 1944. This created a “prolonged identity crisis in which the purely utilitarian aspects of higher learning were weighed against more traditional conceptions of the university as a center of disinterested inquiry and independent social criticism.” This directly resulted from the military training programs, and is best summed by Robert M. Hutchins, President of the University of Chicago. Writing in 1943, Hutchins disagreed with what he saw as a dawning era of “education by contract,” and warned that “since the government is establishing in the public mind the doctrine that technical training is the only education for war, the public mind will eventually conclude that technical training is the only education for peace.” Southern universities and aviation students saw such notions in economic terms, as status and sophisticated technical training enhanced the airman’s drive for upward social mobility and better job opportunities. *Fortune* magazine even encouraged businesses to look to airmen as “the best source of postwar talent.”\(^1\) In such an atmosphere, southern universities adapted their curriculums to match the desire for technical skills, forever shifting the meaning of a traditional liberal education.

It is not the purpose here to discuss what constitutes a ‘proper’ education, but it is obvious from the perspective of southern higher education that the AAFTP and related military training programs began a process of democratization that transformed the role

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\(^3\) Mohr, “Transformation of Southern Higher Education,” 43-45.
of the university. What began as a two-year campaign to involve colleges in the war
effort eventually redefined the meaning of education and its postwar role. The new role
made southern universities a junior partner to the federal government aimed at fulfilling
the nation’s training and support needs in wartime. Furthermore, it helped bring growth
to the South on all fronts, as military training stimulated struggling universities and local
economies, and vocational training contributed to efficient defense plants that stimulated
economic growth for the whole region. This transformative process was not based upon
hasty decisions, but combined historical precedents, in the form of southern military
education traditions and the governments use of colleges in WWI; real-time economic
problems that plagued the South and severely affected colleges as the war continued; and
in the case of the AAF, the necessity to reduce the aviation cadet backlog. Overall, the
experience of military training on campuses reversed the historic pattern of irrelevance
between colleges and war. It is now time to understand just how the AAFTP played out
for its participants and how the program laid the groundwork for long-term changes to a
southern college through examining the 11th CTD at Middle Tennessee State University.

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39 Cardozier, Colleges and Universities, 215; Mohr, “Transformation of Southern Higher
Education,” 53; Sherry, Rise of American Air Power, 214.
CHAPTER IV
MTSU AND THE 11TH COLLEGE TRAINING DETACHMENT

Chapter three examined how WWII and the AAFTP brought profound changes to southern universities. Historian Morton Sosna, however, has suggested that much of the change taking place in the South during the war actually resulted from an intensification of prewar developments. His suggestion is evident in how the AAF began its mobilization efforts from a position of weakness in everything from equipment, training, money, and general support. This weakness, combined with the economic woes of the Great Depression, allowed the AAF to utilize college campuses in its mobilization plans as early as July 1939 when Congress established the Civilian Pilot Training Program (CPT). This program set higher education and the AAF upon a convergent course as the CPT became increasingly important in training military pilots and laid the foundation for the AAFTP. Likewise, the development of pilot training at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) began in the prewar period as the government established the CPT on campus in June 1940.¹

The history of the 11th CTD at MTSU demonstrates how the campus was used for training, how the aviation students interacted with civilian students and the locals, and how the school adapted to military training. This last aspect is most important for several reasons. First, like the history of the AAFTP itself, the 11th CTD had prewar origins in establishment of the CPT program at MTSU. The early beginning of aviation training allowed the college to more readily adapt not only to military training but also to the new

role of the university as a junior partner to the federal government aimed at fulfilling the nation’s wartime training and support needs. After termination of the CTD, Middle Tennessee State University continued the aviation tradition that began in 1940 as it embraced the newfound importance of advanced technical skills in the postwar. As a result, MTSU’s aeronautics program eventually emerged as one of the best programs in the country. This did not happen by coincidence, but resulted from a keen awareness of the importance aviation could play in the growth and expansion of MTSU. Thus, the advent of the 11th CTD demonstrated how military training at colleges fundamentally altered the university in the short term and served as the catalyst for long-term developments of a southern university.

Before the CPT program at MTSU, the town of Murfreesboro had only a minor connection to aviation. Sky Harbor airport, located seven miles north of town, was the area’s aviation hub through the 1930s until establishment of the CPT. Sky Harbor mainly provided a transition point for airmail routes. This gave the city its only military aviation connection before 1940, as Air Corps pilots landed there when flying mail routes in the early thirties. When the government chose MTSU for the CPT in June 1940 its connection to aviation was put on the “fast track” for expansion. To the public, the program was known as the Murfreesboro Flight School, for students it was the Civilian Pilot Training Club. Either way, it is evident President Q.M. Smith and Professor Horace Jones, the program’s main proponents, immediately realized the importance the CPT could play for the university. Within a year they managed to gain enough money and support to build a hanger and airstrip on university property. While most CPT universities contracted with local airports and flight schools to conduct the program,
MTSU had planes launching from its own landing strip and hired instructors that taught aviation related subjects including motor maintenance, theory of flight, and navigation.²

When the offer came for MTSU to host the CPT, the war was well underway. France had just surrendered and expansion of the program came just as the AAF raised the pilot goal to 30,000. Q.M. Smith had been president of the college since 1938, and had graduated with a degree in education from the school in 1913. Having witnessed the school grow, he knew if the U.S. entered the war it would have serious consequences for the university. Smith was also aware of the value of military training as he enlisted in Navy and later the Army Reserves, where he resigned his commission in 1942 with the rank of Major. When the opportunity came to offer pilot training he eagerly took the chance to bring something new to the university. Smith also knew he had to show vigorous leadership as his competency was under investigation in 1940.³ Offering the CPT program would therefore, bring federal funds into the university, give MTSU the opportunity to participate in the war effort, and prove he advocated a larger role for the university. By 1942 the school offered three war-related programs: the National Youth Administration, the Engineering, Science, and Management War Training Program, and aviation training under the CPT.⁴ As mobilization efforts increased, Smith recognized

³Biographical Sketch, Online, Available, http://janus.mtsu.edu/qms/qms_bio.htm, accessed 23 July 2007. In 1940, petitions with signatures of local citizens and MTSU faculty members circulated, eventually reaching the State Board of Education. The goal was to oust Smith as president because he had been involved in the dismissal of a popular English teacher. The state board formed an investigative committee, but dismissed all charges against him.

⁴Pittard, The First Fifty Years, 177; Barnett, The College History Series, 62. The Nation Youth Association gave work experience to college students, provided access for practice work in equipment production and war training in woodworking, sheet metal, electricity, and other technical subjects. This
the increased military importance of the CPT program, especially as students who earned pilots licenses dropped out of college to join the military.

Student enrollment increasingly became a problem after the AAF initiated plans to create a 54,000 cadet backlog in early 1942. This corresponded with a concentrated recruiting drive at colleges after establishment of the Air Corps Enlisted Reserve (ACER) in April. This gave the military first hand knowledge of the thriving CPT program at MTSU and students the opportunity to show their support for the Army Air Forces. In July the CPT program became fully devoted to prepare men for military aviation and any student enrolled in the program joined either the ACER or the Navy V-5 (Aviation) Reserve. After the draft age was lowered to eighteen in November, the male students on campus realized their call to active duty was imminent.⁵ So when the AAF announced plans for its college training program on December 12, MTSU already had an established aviation program that allowed it to embrace formal military training and use it for further expansion of the campus.

Plans for the 11th College Training Detachment in Murfreesboro began several months before the students actually arrived. As soon as the military announced the program, representatives from the War Manpower Commission (WMC) contacted Colonel Herbert Fox, director of the Tennessee Bureau of Aeronautics, and the State Board of Education about prospective training.⁶ MTSU was subsequently recommended and the AAF sent out a letter of interest on December 24. President Smith then sent a

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⁵Craven, *Army Air Forces in World War II*, 181, 494-495.

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work was done in the Voorhies Industrial Arts Building, which was completed in 1942, and "quickly became the focus of WWII support training." This provides a perfect example of how a southern university adapted its curriculum to provide technical skills. The building also provided facilities for ESMWT classes in sheet metal, welding, mathematics, and industrial relations, and still houses the engineering department.
report to the WMC on the industrial, housing, and feeding facilities available on campus. In the school newspaper, *Sidelines*, he claimed "that with a few minor adjustments, we can accommodate several hundred men and [it] could be done without serious handicaps to our regular programs now underway."7

The first public mention of Murfreesboro being considered for formalized military training came on Thursday, January 7, 1943. An article on the front page of the local paper, *The Daily News Journal*, mentioned that Governor Prentice Cooper had proposed a bill to increase state funding for MTSU from $110,000 to $120,000, with the stipulation that $15,000 would be spent on "training for war activities." Almost as an afterthought, the article mentioned the military was investigating the school for a military training program, though "no definite decision [had] been made as to whether the facilities [would] be utilized in this connection."8 News of the schools selection for the CTD program hit newsstands on January 22, but officials from the AAF Material Command still had to inspect the campus and negotiate details for a government contract. The AAF officials arrived on campus the first week of February to view the cafeteria, dorms, and science building. They must have liked what they saw and President Smith received a final confirmation notice by the end of the week. The telegram, dated Saturday, February 6, from Congressman Jim McCord stated, "Your institution has been approved by joint committee and referred to war department for placing of training program for army aviation cadets. Congratulations." McCord, a first term congressman, and later governor, did his share of lobbying for higher education. A

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7*Sidelines*, vol. 16, no. 7, 8 January 1943.
progressive Democrat, McCord ardently supported New Deal programs and the influx of federal dollars to the region. He was later known “as one of the strongest friends of education in the history of the state.” MTSU officially was now part of the AAFTP but President Smith pointed out he “had not received any further word on the local program, and that contracts with the various institutions would be made later.”

The contract was signed on February 18, one day after the AAF personnel arrived, and stipulated expenses for activating the program, the price the government paid to use campus facilities, maintenance fees of the program, medical services, manner of payment between the college and the government, and issues regarding the eventual termination of the program. Once the contract was finalized, the first class of 135 men was expected on March 1. Ideally, an additional 135 would arrive April 1, with a new class arriving each month afterward until the maximum strength of 500 aviation students (A/S) was present. Each class received five months of training, though the length was eventually shortened to three months. The need, however, to place recruits within the AAF training structure meant few students received the full complement of training. With the students on the way, the changes began around the campus almost immediately.

The first change came with the arrival of the AAF staff, which included twenty-one officers and noncommissioned officers; this included the commanding officer, 1st Lt. Eugene Blasdel. He was later transferred, but he commanded the 11th CTD the longest

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8May Allot TSC $10,000 Increase,” Murfreesboro The Daily News Journal, vol. 93, no. 266, 7 January 1943.

and was the guiding force behind the program for most of its existence.\footnote{11} Blasdel’s immediate staff consisted of several core officers who stayed in Murfreesboro for the entire length of the program. Many of these officers held a number of positions and responsibilities to help run the program. 1\textsuperscript{st} Lt. Lawrence Pattock, for example, was the Adjutant, Intelligence Officer, Personnel Officer, Public Relations Officer, Civilian Employment Officer, Rail Transportation Officer, and summary court officer. The remainder of the military personnel included eight administrative enlisted men, who made up the office staff, a medical officer, and two medical clerks.\footnote{12}

From the very beginning MTSU was proud of its aviation training, and with establishment of the 11\textsuperscript{th} CTD the local paper always stressed that fact. When President Smith found out about the possibility of the CTD program coming to campus he probably saw it as a logical step in a continued aviation program. The number of renovations and expansions taking place on campus proved he realized the possibilities a strong aviation


\footnote{11}{"Commander," Murfreesboro The Daily News Journal, vol. 93, no. 308, 25 February 1943. Lt. Blasdel was one of the educated men who realized the future he could have in the AAF. He graduated from Denison University, in Granville, Ohio in 1940, and worked as an investment banker and farmer in Texas prior to enlisting in January 1941. After initial training, he spent four months at the Air Corps Technical Supply School in Fort Logan, Colorado, before entering Officer Candidate School in April 1942. Before being transferred to Murfreesboro he was assistant post adjutant at Bainbridge Army Air Field once it opened as a basic flight school in July 1942.}

\footnote{12}{"Commander," Murfreesboro The Daily News Journal, vol. 93, no. 308, 25 February 1943; Sidelines, vol. 17, no. 1, 13 September, 1943; The Skylines vol. 1, no. 7, 1 October 1943; The Skylines, vol. 1, no. 6, 2 October 1943; "News Cadet Class Joins TSC Unit," Murfreesboro The Daily News Journal, vol. 94, no. 22, 15 March 1943. Several other staff members stand out as examples of the variety of men entering southern universities. There were two other main administrative officers with the program, 2\textsuperscript{nd} Lieutenants L.E. Blaylock and Philip Rivers. Blaylock came to Murfreesboro from Arkansas, and was the Tactical, Plans and Training Officer, Mess Officer, and Class ‘A’ Finance agent. Rivers, who was promoted to 1\textsuperscript{st} Lt. On October 12, 1943, was the Motor Transport Officer, Special Services Officer, Army Emergency Officer, and acting Quartermaster and Supply Officer. Staff Sgt. Charles Newton was the non-com in charge of supply and dispatching, and Sgt. Downing Nelson, Lt. Blaylock’s assistant, who was particularly popular with the aviation students because he handed out the overnight passes. Sgt. Nelson might actually have become famous in Hollywood if not for the AAF. He apparently was a handsome man, standing at 6’1”, and was in several films, including Queen Christina with Greta Garbo.}
program could have for the university in the future. Even while the program was under negotiation, he began plans to accommodate the A/S.

President Smith wrote Governor Prentice Cooper in the first week of February on the need to expand campus facilities saying, “it will be necessary to make improvements at the college within sixty days amounting to approximately $30,000.” Smith recognized the importance of expansion, as he pointed out, all new “equipment and repair [would] be permanent and useable for all time.” In a proposed budget, he appropriated $10,000 for physics lab equipment, $10,000 for dormitory repair, and $10,000 for the cafeteria, but no funds were available in the regular budget. Smith, therefore, requested a special allotment of funds through the State Budget Director, “which may be repaid later from receipts from the contract with the War Department or other funds allotted to the college.” On February 11, the state legislature granted Smith’s request for funds with a special “miscellaneous appropriations bill,” Representative Shelton Edwards of Johnson City introduced. This bill allowed MTSU to “take its proper place in the war training program.” The improvements began almost immediately.

Within the first week, work began on the cafeteria, in all, the cafeteria tripled in size between March and September 1943. Construction also began on a “post exchange” in Lyon Hall and a “day room” for the trainees and their wives in the Voorhies

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13Pittard, The First Fifty Years, 177; Sidelines, vol. 16, no. 15, 12 May 1943. In May 1943, MTSU proudly claimed seventy-three men in the AAF and another fifteen Naval aviators.

14Q.M. Smith to Prentice Cooper, 11 February 1943, Albert Gore Research Center at Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, TN.


Industrial Arts Building, both additions were complete by August. The day room got much use during the military’s stay. The CTD wives club met there twice a week, and the many dances organized for the A/S were moved to the day room from the gym. Besides the physical changes, the regular students endured several schedule changes to accommodate the 11th CTD. On Saturdays, the library was closed to regular students except to return books, and on Sunday the tennis courts were reserved for the trainees.17

The women were the first to feel the coming of the aviation students. On Saturday, February 20, a week before their arrival, the residents of Lyon Hall were told at 11:00 am that they had to move out by 4:00 pm. The news was a surprise since they thought they had another week to move all their things. The residents of Lyon hastily packed up their belongings and transferred to Rutledge Hall. A few unfortunates who had left town for the weekend returned on Sunday to find the dorm locked. Luckily their friends secured their belongings. Those not housed in Rutledge were put in Jones Hall, the men’s dormitory. The school newspaper claimed, the girls of Lyon “demonstrated a fine spirit in their willingness to cooperate with the powers that be in order to furnish Uncle Sam’s boys with a place to live.”18 That seems hard to believe as they resided three to a room in the women’s dormitory until July 1944. So, much like the GI Bill, the CTD program actually made life more difficult for women in higher education. Yet, the amount of attention the women gave the A/S in the school newspaper for the next year and a half, suggests that greatly appreciated the men appearing on campus.

17 "Library Hours for Civilian Students," The Sidelines, vol. 17, no. 1, 13 September 1943.

18 "Moving Day Hits Campus of Lyon, Girls ‘Evacuate,’” Sidelines, vol. 16, no. 11, 6 March 1943. Lyon Hall, built in 1933, was the second women’s dormitory on campus, after Rutledge Hall.
Most, however, considered the women’s plight as simply part of life during wartime, and for the next week the townsfolk and students patiently waited for the aviation students to arrive. The train bringing the first class to Murfreesboro arrived on Sunday, February 28; classes began the next day. Once off the train, the students marched two miles to campus. Walking up Main Street must have been an interesting experience. One can easily imagine local residents coming out their houses to watch and wave as the soldiers walked towards their campus barracks. The town had waited for this moment for almost two months, and when newspapers hit the stands on Monday morning they proudly welcomed Murfreesboro’s new residents. Townsfolk also felt one other effect of World War II on the home front. Following the article announcing the arrival of the aviation students was a plea from President Smith saying, “Need coat hangars—persons having hangars which they are willing to contribute are asked to send them to the school [with] students if possible, or to bring them to Room 50, [in the] Administration Building,” or to the downtown headquarters of the American Red Cross.” With that announcement, the 11th College Training Detachment was underway.19

The first group of 135 had been in the military for a little over two months. They came together from seventeen states, some having traveled as far as Michigan. Others went to basic training only to be sent back to Tennessee. Still others might have been neighbors, forty-four came from Wisconsin and forty-three from Illinois. Their ages varied as much as their home states, as is evident from the levels of education. Many had already received BA degrees, a few even held law degrees. Eight had not completed high school. Once on campus the men were divided into groups of twenty, organized in ten sections, and then confined to their barracks. The women inspected the military men as

they marched to their barracks and classes. The regular male students may have been in a more somber mood, as most soon left for the military. Men in the Army reserve received their orders on March 6 to report for active duty on March 30. These orders affected twenty-three men, leaving less than forty on campus. When the sixteen men in the ACER were activated a month later, it only left the naval reserve and fewer than twenty regular male students on campus. In the meantime, more trainees arrived, and MTSU felt the first democratization effects of the military training program.

To appreciate the significance of the process of democratization, it is important to keep in mind the notion of a "North-South Dialogue." Traditionally, this dialogue has consisted of "regional polemics over slavery, secession, the Civil War, and reconstruction." Morton Sosna, however, claimed WWII was a critical moment for the North-South Dialogue. The influx of military men into the area broke down regional barriers and diversified the South. This diversification worked on a regional scale, as a man from Texas might suddenly find himself stationed in Georgia. More importantly, however, were the men who entered the South from outside the region. Often the only thing these men brought with them was images from Gone With the Wind or stereotypes of "rednecks" and "uneducated country types." The one area of admiration northerners gave southerners was in the latter’s fighting abilities. All other areas were open to criticism, including the southern landscape, climate, language, and culture. In short, the military mobilization of the region unintentionally mobilized "an army of critics against the South." Simultaneously, the South was thrust into the mainstream of American

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20 Sidelines, vol. 16, no. 11, 6 March 1943; Sidelines, vol. 16, no. 13, 10 April 1943.
society and the North-South Dialogue reopened in the postwar on terms that guaranteed to show the region’s faults, particularly in race relations.21

Though the aviation students trained on campus among civilians, their days were far different from those of the regular students. Life began at 5:30 am and ended at 9:00 pm, a serious departure from the normal rhythms of a college campus. For the first few weeks on campus, they were confined to the barracks, except to march to and from class. All classes took place in the Wiser-Patton science building and Kirksey Old Main (KOM), the primary academic and administrative building. The actual physics classes were in the former building, but the lab was located on the first floor of KOM. Calisthenics took place on the various open spaces on campus or in the old gym, located behind KOM. Other buildings the A/S used included Murfree Hall, the old library that stood near the present site of Peck Hall, and the cafeteria, or what is now the Alumni Building. The latter building, described as “the merriest spot on campus from seven in the morning until six in the evening,” was a focal point where the aviation students, regular students, and townsfolk alike could commingle. Besides serving meals to the students, the cafeteria served Sunday lunch to the town throughout the war.22 Other than watching the aviation students march in formation around campus, however, the regular students and aviation students had no official interaction until the last week of March.

On Tuesday, March 23 the aviation students were finally allowed to roam from their barracks in Lyon Hall. This event marked a busy and exciting week on campus. The following day the second class arrived after completing basic training at Shepard

Field, TX. The original group now became the upper class and assisted in the drilling and instruction of the lower class.\textsuperscript{23} Friday the twenty-sixth marked the first official meeting between the aviation students and the regular students. The Home Economics Club had been planning a dance since the first week of March. A receiving line of coeds welcomed the A/S in the gym, “so the soldiers may get acquainted by formal introduction.” Lewis Brinkley and his Orchestra provided music and the groups had four hours to mingle.\textsuperscript{24} The A/S, at least the single ones, were undoubtedly excited about the dance, but they were probably equally excited about their ten hours of flight instruction which began the following Thursday, April 1.

The flight instruction was essentially a continuation of the CPT program and was still under the Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA). The CAA contracted with the Southern Aeronautics Corporation (SAC) for the flight instruction, which provides an example of how civilian aviation became militarized during mobilization. The SAC had a history in middle Tennessee and worked the airmail lines at Sky Harbor airport, as well as in 100 other towns in eight states. SAC owned and operated Sky Harbor until the war made it impossible to continue airmail operations, after which the airport was sold to Air Utilities Inc. SAC nearly collapsed until the CAA contracted it to perform flight training with the 11\textsuperscript{th} CTD. This shows how the federal government gave money to southern colleges while simultaneously supporting southern businesses. All flight training was conducted from the campus airport under direction of the flight coordinator, Clifford Radder. The campus airport made the 11\textsuperscript{th} CTD very unique as it was “possibly the only

\textsuperscript{23} Barnett, \textit{The College History Series}, 35.

\textsuperscript{24} News Cadet Class Joins TSC Unit," \textit{Murfreesboro The Daily News Journal}, vol. 94, no. 22, 15 March 1943.
[campus] in the nation in which soldiers can walk from the place where they are housed to where they receive their flight instruction; at some colleges a distance of eighteen miles separated the field and the college." 25 The number of planes and flight instructors provided to the 11th CTD increased as the number of students increased, but plans had long been underway for an expansion of the airport.

In early January 1942, the Chamber of Commerce announced the Tennessee Bureau of Aeronautics approved $10,000 from the sale of aviation fuel for an expansion of the campus airport, after WMC contacted them for possible training sites. The expansion planned for three runways, each over 3000 feet long, enough hangars for ten planes, and offices for seven instructors. The expansion required the use of 100 acres of campus property and fifty-five additional acres from W.B. Womack, whose land bordered the campus to the east in 1943. 26 When the soldiers arrived on campus the airport expansion was already underway as the city provided $250 to help tear down fences and clear the runways. Construction for the hangar began in June, with the contract going to Bell Brothers and Company of Murfreesboro. The hangar was completed in August, and built of concrete block, with a domed roof over steel frame. It was eighty feet long and sixty feet wide, but was “built so that it may be added to at a later date, if further construction is justified by an expanding training program at the school.” Here, was a clear sign of what aviation training could mean to the university in the future. The hangar opened to the east, with the runways running through where the

24 "School Treats Students ACS to Dance Fri," *The Sidelines*, vol. 16, no. 11, 6 March 1943.

Business and Aerospace Building is located today. The campus airport did not become “as necessary a part of a college’s equipment as a chemical department,” as some people claimed, but the airport provided a foundation for later aviation training at MTSU after the 11th CTD was deactivated.27

Besides the influx of men and the expansion of the airfield, the aviation students reinvigorated recreation and sports on campus. MTSU, like many other southern universities, cancelled all football, baseball, basketball, and pep rallies for the duration of the war, but it did not take long for the aviation students to form their own teams and clubs to provide a pastime for both themselves and the civilian students. As early as April the A/S had organized a band, under direction of another CTD student, which provided public entertainment in front of the administration building. The band performed everything from “classical compositions, popular numbers, [to] marches.”28 Before the year was out the CTD had organized a football team, baseball team, two basketball teams, and a softball team, all of which the detachment commanders probably saw as relevant to the competitiveness of war and helped build local support for the program. The school cheerleaders even cheered at their games. The A/S also organized a bimonthly detachment paper, known as Skylines, after A/S W.E. Ourant won a contest to name the paper. The first issue was printed in July, and immediately pointed out it was “not an official War Department publication and no article should be construed as

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representing the opinion of the War Department." Five issues appeared independently, until October, when it was printed in conjunction with the university newspaper. The combined paper consisted of six pages, with Skylines being the middle two pages.29

The first class had graduated from the detachment on May 8, after a little over two months of training, and left for the classification center in Nashville. The city newspaper mentioned that the next class to graduate would have four months of training and then each consecutive class would have five months, but the length of the training continually lessened as the program progressed. The shortened training period did not reflect inadequacies in the program, but rather the amount of space that became available in AAF schools as cadets graduated. The next class for example, graduated after only three months of training, “in answer to the need for aviation cadets.” As one class graduated another arrived on campus, and once the fifth class arrived on July 30, the 11th CTD was brought to full strength.30 By the beginning of August, the 11th CTD was in full swing, and Governor Cooper wrote President Smith, congratulating him on the successful activation and progression of the program.31

After leaving Murfreesboro, the students spent most of their time taking qualifying exams, undergoing evaluations, or on guard duty at the classification center.

After enduring the classification tests the men became navigators, bombardiers, or pilots,

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31Governor Prentice Cooper to Q.M. Smith, 15 July 1943, Albert Gore Research Center at Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, TN.
and left for their respective preflight schools. Many were sent to Maxwell Field in Montgomery, Alabama. Sometimes the newly christened aviation cadets found time to return to Murfreesboro for a visit. Two students who returned, Hebert Glasscock and Edgar Grindel, found the academic courses in preflight school almost the same as the ones taken at the college, but preflight added extensive aircraft identification and code courses. The returning cadets also warned the others to enjoy their free time while in the 11\textsuperscript{th} CTD, because “with the speeding up of training, free time [would] become a legend.” The A/S may have had lots of free time while on campus, but the instructors must have kept the men busy during class time. The physical fitness instructors also apparently worked the men hard, as two graduates set records for the physical fitness test at Maxwell Field.\textsuperscript{32}

Back at MTSU, the 11\textsuperscript{th} CTD became more organized as more trainees arrived. Once at full strength, the students were divided into five classes, named from A to E. Class A was the freshman class, Class E the senior class. The students did not receive their ten hours of flight training until they reached Class E. Members of classes A and B resided in the men’s dormitory, Jones Hall, while the upper classes resided in Lyon Hall. It was always interesting for the regular students to watch the former Class B migrate to the other side of campus to become Class C once they reached Lyon. The staff also implemented a new honor system as more classes arrived, which allowed the men to get used to military discipline and “eliminate any tendencies toward dishonorable conduct.”

The system had at its head a board of honor, composed of the group commander, the two

\textsuperscript{32}Former Students Return to Explain Cadet Life,” The Skyline, vol. 1, no. 7, 16 October 1943. A/C Jack Wray tied the record of 93%, while A/C Westbrook broke the old record by scoring 95% on the test.
squadron commanders, and two elected members of each class. If any man broke the honor code the board reviewed his actions, and if serious enough he was removed from the CTD. Any man who knew of another’s dishonesty was subject to the same punishment.\textsuperscript{33} Exactly how effective the system was at keeping high moral standards within the program is not known, but as the aviation students continued to collaborate cautiously with the campus coeds, the honor system was undoubtedly scrutinized.

With the start of the new school year in September, the presence of the A/S became routine. The newspapers ceased announcing the arrival and departure of each class, but always detailed any interaction between the aviation students and the regular students. The paper mentioned the first dance in the newly opened day room on Saturday, July 31, but only that “ping pong, coca cola, and cake added to the enjoyment.”\textsuperscript{34} The second dance on September 18 prompted more description. The day room was carefully decorated, with “blue and orange streamers hung from wires across the dance floor, [while] the outline of an airplane added needed color and had the effect of lowering the ceiling.” With Lt. Blaylock directing the Columbia-Decca Orchestra, and a continuous supply of soda, punch, doughnuts, and cookies, “an impressive number of girls had appeared” by 8:30. The most exciting part of the dance was an auction of lost and found items in return for War Bond pledges. The choice items included a pencil, which sold for a $25 bond, and a mysterious “rationed-item package that sold for over $100 in bonds.”\textsuperscript{35} The auction soon turned into a competition. Class A won, and pledged over $2,000, or more than $38 per man. A total of $6,825 was deducted from the

\textsuperscript{33}“Workings of Honor System revealed,” The Sky-Lines, vol. 1, no. 6, 2 October 1943.

\textsuperscript{34}Skylines, vol. 1, no. 4, 7 August 1943.
aviation students' payrolls for the month of September, which averaged out to $432 per man. Lt. Blasdel congratulated the 11th CTD, saying, "the spirit shown in buying these bonds is a very good indication of the spirit that prevails in this detachment, which shows you men are ready and willing to put out everything it takes to whip the axis."36

The regular students and aviation students also organized performances together. The first happened in November when a group performed "musical numbers, tumbling demonstrations, and humorous skits" for the student body. A larger program in February 1944 portrayed campus life during the war, moving from a calm scene representing dorm life before Pearl Harbor to a scene somberly describing life after the attack. "Maybe we didn’t ask for it," one actor proclaimed, "but we had it coming. We were so smug, so confident, so sure it couldn’t happen to us. And then the boys started leaving. At first one by one, and then in small groups...surely this couldn’t last forever." Subsequent scenes described the women when they heard the aviation students were coming to campus, the forced evacuation of Lyon Hall, and finally their arrival. Another scene described their feelings about the A/S. "No need for us to get all stirred up, it couldn’t happen to us...even if they come I won't pay attention to them. Course they won't come, but I’m just saying, if they do, I wouldn’t turn my head to look at them."37 This, however, understated the interest the women showed for the aviation students.

The social interaction between the A/S and coeds was a much-discussed topic on campus. In November, an article entitled "The Primrose Path" began appearing in Sidelines, which allowed the women to keep up with who was dating which aviation

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35"Second Formal Dance in Day-Room a Success," Skylines, vol. 1, no. 6, 2 October 1943.

36"Message from the C.O.," Skylines, vol. 1, no. 6, 2 October 1943.
student. The articles are filled with remarks that probably made some of the faculty raise their eyebrows in alarm and the military officers to scrutinize the honor code. One article said, “new [aviation students] are certainly showing enthusiasm over the ‘femmes fatale’ on campus...that’s the spirit we like boys, keep it up.” Another contained a prayer, “Please send us a cadet over eighteen [and] please send me a man who was trained in the 11th CTD.” Others asked, “Who is going to have the most dates with Harry Patton—Dorothy Belle or Snowball...and they are roommates, too,” or reminded the ladies to check out A/S Cooper, “the Frank Sinatra of Class C!”

Not every article was so scandalous, but the women could always keep up with any gossip involving an A/S and a regular student. Some of the coed interaction led to more than simply dating. Eight college girls and two other locals ended up marrying aviation students. This is not to say that some A/S didn’t marry non-local women. Lt. Pattock for example, married a Lt. Bangert from the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps in Nashville.

The 11th CTD also interacted with the citizens of Murfreesboro. The Girls Cotillion Club met in early February 1943 to plan a dance. A grand march was held at the beginning and each member read a poem, introducing themselves to the soldiers. Every Sunday, when townsfolk came to campus to eat lunch, they watched the students march in formation and perform the daily retreat ceremony. In conjunction with the Third War Loan drive in October 1943, a huge parade was organized with the A/S taking part. The parade followed Main St. to the courthouse where the 2nd Squadron of Class B

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37 “Military Talent is Shown in Program by Air Students,” The Sidelines, vol. 17, no. 6, 27 November 1943; Sidelines, vol. 17, no. 3 24 February 1944.

38 Sidelines, vol. 17, no. 5, 18 November 1943; Sidelines, vol. 17, no. 6, 27 November 1943; Sidelines, vol. 17, no. 12, February 5 1944.
gave a demonstration in marine drill and ju-jitsu and the detachment band provided music. For the Fourth War Loan drive in January 1944, the detachment conducted a basketball tournament, and there was an open house for the civilians, “designed to show the public the living quarters and respective activities of the detachment.” The popularity of the 11th CTD is evident from a mass “review of activities” the Kiwanis Club sponsored in August 1943. Over Eight Hundred people went to campus for a boxed lunch and to watch the A/S perform not only the usual group calisthenics and parade drills, but also a tug-of-war match, soccer game, tumbling exhibition, track meet, jiu jitsu demonstrations, and the detachment singing quartet. The townsfolk witnessed quite a show, considering everything was going on at the same time.

Interacting with the public provided a perfect recruiting opportunity. On June 26, 1943 the detachment held an open house for men between the ages of seventeen and twenty-six that wanted to learn about the CTD program. Lt. Blasdel said, “the purpose of the rally was to give young men a chance to see a pre-aviation cadet detachment at work and to investigate their chances of becoming an aviation cadet.” The men in attendance were shown aviation training films, entertained by the detachment band, and visited the airstrip to watch flight training. A later rally coincided with a similar event at the Smyrna Air Base, where over 300 people attended. The group from Murfreesboro was taken to Smyrna to visit the base, and then driven back to Murfreesboro for a retreat ceremony.


Afterwards, the detachment answered questions concerning enlistment and encouraged men under eighteen to choose a service before being drafted.42

Despite the fun and exciting opportunities the public had to interact with the 11th CTD, a few did complain. One complaint dealt with semantics, which clearly showed regional tensions. Locals found it difficult to explain to ‘foreign’ cadets about the use of the word ‘you-all.’ An article in the newspaper stressed to non-southerners that you-all is plural and not singular. A more serious protest appeared when several irate citizens, in “fear for the safety of their houses,” complained to the city manager. Apparently, some aviation student brought a plane in low over TN College for Women, then clipped and broke an electric line on East Lytle Street. After an investigation, “there was no evidence that the plane had hit the wire, [and] that it may have been broken by vibration.” Yet, the complaint worked. Two days later, Colonel Stanley Umstead, commanding officer of the AAF Pilot Transition School, said all cases of low flying planes should be documented and reported to the proper military authorities, since air traffic regulations stipulate all planes must fly 1,000 feet over cities, and never below 500 feet.43 This incident is more intriguing in that the aviation students had to fly with an instructor. Either the instructor allowed the student to fly that low, or the A/S was getting unapproved flight time.


After a year passed with soldiers coming and going at MTSU, people were no longer surprised at their presence and it seemed just another part of life during wartime. Consequently, many did not believe the April Fools Day news that the 11th CTD would end after June 30, 1944. Well before the public heard of the detachment’s deactivation, however, the AAF had acquired enough personnel. The huge backlog that existed in 1942 had disappeared and the AFF had sufficient aircrew personnel traveling through the training pipeline. The AAF also did not want to hold large numbers of combat-age men in colleges while the military drafted fathers. Subsequently, on January 29, 1944, the AAF sent termination letters to seventy colleges. In the South, the schools included: Cumberland and King College in Tennessee, Lynchburg in Virginia, Elon College in North Carolina, University of Tampa in Florida, and Transylvania in Kentucky. The AAF claimed termination was “based on geographical location, conservation of transportation” (distance from preflight schools), scarcity of travel funds, man hours lost in transit, and the specific needs of regional commands. Not everyone believed them, and one senator remarked, “the withdrawals are from states, which ordinarily vote Republican,” and any schools left in the North voted Democrat.

President Smith received the termination telegram on April 1, 1944. It simply stated that the government would not renew its contract and any students remaining on

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44Craven, 564; “AAF Training Unit Has Grown From War Baby to Giant,” Sidelines, vol. 17, no. 14, 11 March 1944; Termination of the Air Corp Program, Online, Available, http://chronicles.dickinson.edu/studentwork/fifer/termination.html, accessed 3 July 2007. As early as November 1943, the AAF numbered over 2,300,000 officers and enlisted men and had trained 100,799 pilots, 20,086 bombardiers, 18,805 navigators, as well as 107,218 flexible gunners and 555,891 ground and air combat crew technicians. The eliminated detachments included all those in Maine, Vermont, Massachusetts, New York, and sixteen in Pennsylvania.

campus on June 30 would be removed, whether their training was complete or not. Simultaneously, the War Department announced it would withdraw enlisted personnel “from eighty-one colleges at the rate of more than 40,000 a month between [April 1] and the close of June,” a total of 120,000 students would be involved in the shift. The downsizing included the elimination of aircrew detachments in eight other Tennessee schools. In the meantime, new cadets continued to arrive on campus, and changes continued to take place. Less than a month earlier, Captain Gregory H. Gardner, became the detachments new commanding officer. His first public statement announced the 11th CTD would become the 2149th Army Air Forces Base Unit, College Training Aircrew on May 1. The name was changed “to conform with a recent directive to reorganize the AAF numerical designation in order to ‘increase administrative efficiency.’”

Another change occurred on April 1, when the school held a graduation ceremony for the aviation students, complete with guest speakers, including Capt. Gardner, President Smith, and Class E Commander N.A. Nalven, and certificates of merit for scholarship and leadership. The ceremony ended with the Army Air Corps song and the national anthem. After the first graduation ceremony only two more classes completed training. At a later commencement, President Smith summarized his feelings for 11th CTD, saying: “We recognize in our group today our Army Air Corps student body. More


46“11th CTD will Change Name May 1,” Sidelines, vol. 17, no. 17. 29 April 1944; “11th CTD Get new Designation,” Murfreesboro The Daily News Journal, vol. 95, no. 54, 2 May 1944. Capt. Gardner replaced Lt. Blasdel who was transferred to a basic flight school in Greenville, Mississippi. Prior to arriving in Murfreesboro, Gardner was the commanding officer of the CTD at Niagara University in New York, before its termination in January. He enlisted in the AAF on January 15, 1941 at Fort Dix, New Jersey. His first assignment was as photographer for public relations and assistant Sgt. Major of a squadron at Lowry Field, Colorado. After graduating OCS in June 1942 he was assigned to Shaw Field in Sumpter, SC and then to Moody Field, GA before commanding the CTD at Niagara University.
than a year ago they marched across our educational threshold, [and] they have sung their way into our hearts. While here they have devoted themselves to physical and mental training to strengthen the fibers of their being for the trials that are to come.\textsuperscript{47}

The last class of aviation students graduated on Friday, June 16, at 4 pm. 1st Lt. John M. White gave the commencement speech. White was someone the aviation students could respect and many hoped to emulate his achievements. He recently returned from the Pacific Theater with a Silver Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross, and the Air Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters. Less than two weeks later the remaining students left with their training incomplete. In fifteen months, over 1,000 men in sixteen classes received training at MTSU. The AAF officers remained on campus for another month to finish their administrative duties. Captain Gardner gave a final remark regarding the campus, saying, “Our relations with MTSU have been most pleasant. President Q.M. Smith and his splendid faculty have been very kind to us, and it is with regret that we sever our ties here. I would also like to take this opportunity of thanking all of the city officials of Murfreesboro and the people of the city whose kindnesses to the personnel and students are things that we will never forget.”\textsuperscript{48} For MTSU, the college training detachment was over. The end, however, was another beginning for both the aviation students and the university.

\textsuperscript{47}“First Graduation Exercises for CTD are Set for Friday,” Sidelines, vol. 17, no. 15, 30 March 1944; Pittard, 177-179.

\textsuperscript{48}“Last Cadet Group Graduates Friday,” Murfreesboro The Daily News Journal, vol. 95, no. 92, 15 June 1944; “Army College Training Program Ends at MTSC,” Sidelines, vol. 18 no. 1, 5 September 1944; “TSC Loses Aviation Cadet Unit,” Murfreesboro The Daily News Journal, vol. 95, no. 28, 2 April 1944; “Last Unit of Aviation Students Leaves TSC,” Murfreesboro The Daily News Journal, vol. 95, No. 104, 29 June 1944. The Silver Star is the third highest award given to military personnel for bravery in combat. The Distinguished Flying Cross is given to aviators who distinguish themselves in aerial operations, not necessarily operations during wartime. The Air Medal was awarded to aviators for single acts of heroism during combat duty; the Oak Leaf Clusters meaning Lt. White won the award three times.
Replacing the CTD program was another AAF innovation, on-the-line training. As the war neared its end, the AAF reduced the number of both required aircrew personnel and cadets accepted into training, but this increased the available man pool from existing aviation candidates. Thus, the training had a dual objective: “to provide storage and training of delayed students and to alleviate the growing shortage of regularly assigned personnel at the airfields.” The students supposedly received on-site training in connection with aircraft maintenance and service. Many 11th CTD students ended up twenty minutes north of Murfreesboro at the Smyrna airfield, but as the need for air and ground crews diminished many found themselves doing administrative and non-technical duties. Some students eventually reached flight school. Others found themselves at various airfields for almost a year or moving further from cadet status, and being transferred to regular enlisted status.\(^{49}\) Coming after the CTD program, on-the-line-training was a failure, especially for those men who had dreams of becoming a pilot.

MTSU, on the other hand, was part of a unique and successful program for fifteen months during WWII. The CTD was one small innovation in U.S. mobilization and a single part of AAF expansion, but the 11th College Training Detachment brought the war right to campus. For the men of the 11th CTD, MTSU was just a step in the path to becoming aviation cadets, but for locals the aviation students represented the courage and sacrifice it was going to take to defeat Nazi Germany and Imperialist Japan. A/S Clarence Fuller might have had such thoughts in mind when he wrote “Kaydet March.”

From the Campus of MTSC  
Come the men who make history.  
The best trained men in any land,  
The 11th CTD.

Hirohito will surrender,
The day we fly overseas;
The Axis will remember
The 11th CTD.

When we fly home from the battle,
On the wings of victory,
We can proudly say the war was won
By the 11th CTD.\textsuperscript{50}

Whatever he was thinking the CTD played a unique role in the history of MTSU and set
the school on a clear path for postwar expansion.

The postwar plans for MTSU began immediately after termination of the CTD
program. President Smith looked upon the experience with pleasure, knowing the school
had fulfilled its wartime support and training role, and the program brought thousands of
socially and politically acceptable federal dollars to the university. The program also
caused numerous short-term changes to the campus, whether in the unprecedented
number of males on campus, cramped female dorms, or the excitement of a military
atmosphere. Facility upkeep and student enrollment was still low after the program
ended, but the school quickly embraced other options for postwar progress. After the GI
Bill passed in 1944, MTSU’s enrollment reached record levels with returning vets who
wanted a college education. The response to the GI Bill was so enormous that the
government approved $78 million to move housing from military bases onto campuses.
MTSU had its own “Vet Village” located where the Todd Art Building is today.\textsuperscript{51}

The revitalization of an aviation program proved the most significant long-term
change for MTSU. With the newly expanded campus airport, the university was more

\textsuperscript{50}“Kaydet March,” \textit{Skyline}, vol. 1, no. 7, 16 October 1943.

\textsuperscript{51}Barnett, \textit{College History Series}, 69.
than willing to continue flight training, and in the following decades built a strong aerospace program that in many ways directly resulted from the 11th CTD. In September 1944, the Tennessee Bureau of Aeronautics provided the university with forty flight-training scholarships for students and high school teachers. The training was reminiscent of the CTD program since it required ten hours of flight training and 200 hours of ground school. Regular faculty members taught the ground school while a flight instructor was hired for flight training. This program continued until 1948 when Major Elmour “Rock” Meriwether and Captain H. Miller Lanier started the Civil Air Patrol and later Lanier’s Flight School. The latter, was the precursor to the modern MTSU aerospace program. It was the CTD program, however, that brought the first expansion of the campus airport and allowed MTSU to continue an aviation tradition that began with the CPT program in 1940. The flight school had become so popular by 1954 that actual flight training moved from the campus airport to the Murfreesboro Municipal Airport, which opened in 1952. Over the next few years the airport sank into disuse and the hanger was turned into a rifle range for the ROTC. The hanger still exists as the rifle range and is the only clearly visible evidence of the 11th CTD on campus. The school eventually built over the airstrip, which ended were the current aerospace building is today. Thus, the CTD program continued one aviation program and created a solid foundation on which MTSU’s future aerospace program could flourish.

Overall, the case study of the 11th CTD at Middle TN State University demonstrates the revolution in military training and the transformation of southern universities during WWII. On the one hand, the success of the CTD program in regards

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52“Flying Courses Offered Teachers,” Sidelines, vol. 18, no. 1, 5 September 1944; McAfee, “Aviation at MTSU.”
to AAF needs proved colleges could fulfill the training and support functions of the military during wartime. With the start of the 11th CTD, MTSU received an unprecedented amount of federal funds that allowed it directly serve the needs of the government in waging mass, industrial warfare. Yet, the 11th CTD did not simply appear in early 1943, but resulted from a combination of two factors. First, AAF prewar efforts at expansion led it to consider using college campuses to fulfill its mobilization needs. Second, was the desire of competent administrators like President Q.M. Smith to support the Civilian Pilot Training Program as a way to advance a curriculum dedicated to technical training and recognize the importance of the program as a way to expand the university. The early beginning of aviation training through the CPT allowed MTSU to more readily adapt to both military training and the new role of the university as a junior partner of the federal government. After termination of the CTD, MTSU continued the aviation tradition that began in 1940 as it embraced the newfound importance of advanced technical skills in the postwar. As a result, MTSU’s aeronautics program eventually emerged as one of the best programs in the country. This was not a coincidence, but resulted from a keen awareness of the importance aviation could play in the growth and expansion of MTSU. Thus, the advent of the 11th CTD demonstrated how military training at colleges fundamentally altered the university in the short term and served as the catalyst for the long-term development of a southern university.
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I am originally from Tennessee and attended two of the universities mentioned in this study. After graduating high school in 2001 I went to the University of Tennessee at Martin for two years before transferring to Middle Tennessee State University in 2003. I graduated from MTSU in May 2005 with a BA in History and Philosophy. I began the Masters Program at Old Dominion University in the fall of 2005. I am currently working on my Ph.D. at The American University in Washington D.C. and researching German foreign policy in the Middle East.