Chatham County Military Service in World War II

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"One World One War," drawn by Richard Edes Harrison, 1942.
Supplement to Fortune (Time Inc., March 1942).
Map available at http://history.sandiego.edu/gen/ww2Timeline/fortune-map.html (accessed 5 January 2009).

Research Summary

The following brief articles represent preliminary research into the service contributions of Chatham County through the various branches of the military. They include general discussion about each service branch's role in the various theaters of war, as well as information about local reserve units called up, local military installations, and the activities of local servicemen and women on the individual level. These articles should not be considered all inclusive accounts of Chatham Countians' World War II service; rather they are introductions that could be expanded through additional research. "Chatham County Military Service in World War II" was prepared as a companion document to "World War II on the Savannah Waterfront: Wartime Production and Service in Savannah" (City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, August 2008) which provides a general overview of the home front effort during World War II.

For this document, research was primarily limited to the library and archival collections of the City of Savannah, Research Library & Municipal Archives and the Bull Street Public Library, Kaye Kole Genealogy and Local History Room. Of particular use were the Thomas Gamble Collection, the Georgia Reference Collection, and the *Savannah Morning News* index and microfilm at the public library. Additional general information and images were pulled from various on-line sources. The most useful of these was the National World War II Memorial Registry (available online at http://www.wwiimemorial.com/). The entries in this registry represent the compilation of Federal records with submissions by veterans' organizations, individual veterans, and descendants, and should not be considered complete or in all cases completely accurate since it relies in large part on memory and stories passed down. However, it does provide a good, if brief, introduction to the personal experience and provides search capabilities to identify veterans by hometown. Possible sources for further research include: local historical/archival repositories; local veterans groups; and the National Archives and Records Administration.

The articles are all footnoted and can be used and distributed individually, as needed. Therefore, there is not a bibliography for the whole document. The photographs and maps provided in this document are for research and illustrative purposes only. Many are part of private collections and cannot be reproduced without permission of the holding repository. Please contact the Library & Archives before using or publishing images in any work.

Introduction

"Dedicated to the Men and Women of Chatham County, Georgia, Who Have Helped to Preserve Freedom by Service with Honor in Our Armed Forces."
Memorial erected 1956 by Georgia Hussars, Savannah Volunteer Guards, Savannah Chapter Military Order of the World Wars, Chatham Artillery, First Volunteer Regiment of Georgia, and Veterans Council of Chatham County, at Memorial Hospital, Savannah, Georgia.
Photograph by the author, January 2009.

320,000 Georgia men and women served in the armed forces during World War II. Over 6,700 of them never returned home, either dead or missing in action. As did all the communities in Georgia, Chatham County supplied, and lost, their fair share of manpower to the war effort. Chatham County men and women, of various ethnicities and races, served at home and abroad in all service branches. These individuals became part of a larger effort—Allied nations working together; armed services working together; and a world-wide chain of supply—to defeat an enemy spread to almost every corner of the globe.[1]

Many of these men and women returned home after peace was declared to a changed reality. Their lives, educations and careers had been disrupted. Their expectations of what they as an individual could do to impact the greater good had evolved. Their expectations of their government, and their role in it, grew. For most the road home began with "Operation Magic Carpet." With the surrender of Germany, the War Shipping Administration shifted its focus from supplying fighting forces to bringing American personnel home from the battlefields. A steady stream of all sorts of wartime vessels (including Liberty ships, Victory ships, aircraft carriers, hospital ships, and assault transports)
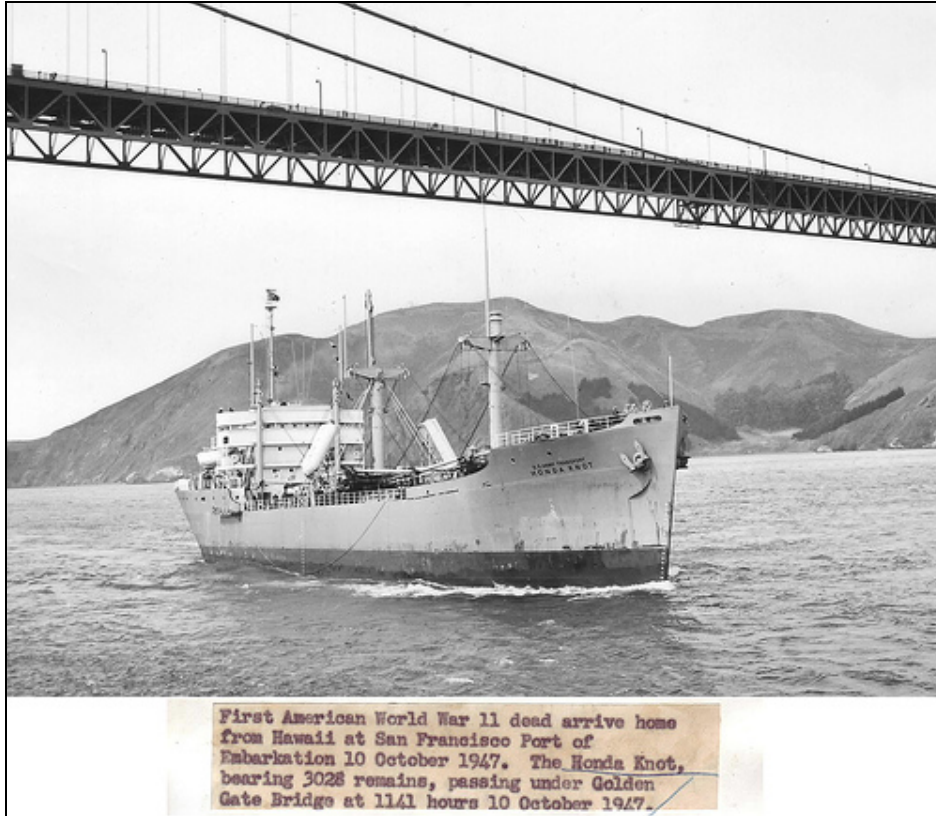
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[1] Ball, Lamar Q., Official World War Historian, State of Georgia, *Georgia in World War II: A Study of the Military and the Civilian Effort, Volume 1, 1939* (Atlanta: Department of Archives and History, State of Georgia, 1946), 9-10.

converted into troop transports carried over 8 million men and women safely stateside between June 1945 and September 1946.[2]

The* Honda Knot *arrives in San Francisco carrying the remains of 3,028 war dead, October 10, 1947.
Image available at http://farm2.static.flickr.com/1194/1384273716_94fc808d97.jpg?v=0
(accessed 18 February 2009).

Not all of Chatham County's heroes returned from the war. Over 450[3] died during the war, both from battle and non-battle related causes. The bodies of many of those lost at sea were never recovered. Some Chatham County dead are buried in American cemeteries overseas. Those remains that were returned home took a long-time in getting here, delaying for many families final closure. On October 26, 1947, the funeral of Joseph F. Colley, Jr., USMC, was held at Bonaventure Cemetery. Colley was killed over two years earlier in a plane crash in the southwest Pacific in January 1945. His body was returned to the states on the U.S. Army transport *Honda Knot* with 3,000 Pacific war dead (including 2nd Lt. R.M. Porter, of Avondale, an Army Air Forces officer killed on June 30, 1944 in a plane crash in China). Nineteen year old Colley was the "City's first returned

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[2] Gault, Owen, "OPERATION Magic Carpet" (Challenge Publications Inc., September 2005), available at http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa4442/is_200509/ai_n16064642 (accessed 3 February 2009); "Operation Magic Carpet (World War II)," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Magic_Carpet_(World_War_II) (accessed 3 February 2009).

[3] This number is based on compiling various accounts of local war dead including "Name of Chatham County Resedents [sic] Killed in Action in World War II" (undated list supplied by the Veterans Council of Chatham County), published reports in the *Savannah Morning News*, and official government casualty lists of the Department of the Army and the Department of the Navy (cited in articles pertaining to each specific branch).

hero of the Second World War." Colley's funeral was just the beginning of a period of reburial for Chatham County.[4]

> *The frightful toll of World War II is being brought closer home to Savannahians. The program for the reburial of the war dead in their home sod is now in full swing.[5]*

Employers, here's your lady veterans, and they want jobs! The telephone number at USES is 2-3144.

Young lady, 26 years of age, who was seaman 1/c, United States Navy, serving 17 months in the personnel department and doing typing. Before entering the service, she was sales clerk with one of Savannah's leading drygood stores for five years. In addition to being a high school graduate, she took special training in teletype while in the navy.

Another young lady, 25 years of age, widow of a Savannah man lost in service, was in the Women's Army Corps for eight months, doing drafting — prepared airplane and tank drawings, charts, lettering for administrative purposes. Before entering service, she was employed by a local concern for 16 months in the drafting department. She has one year college and a course in art. She is especially interested in art, drafting, or interior decorating.

Another Savannah girl was in the Women Army Corps for 19 months as clerk typist with some bookkeep-

USES advertises Savannah women veterans. Savannah Morning News (25 April 1946), 12:2.

Those returning home alive had to restart their lives. Some had jobs to return to, but many did not. The U.S. Employment Services (USES) established a local office to help place returning veterans in jobs in the greater Savannah area. 1946 was a busy year for the USES office. The *Savannah Morning News* reported that a new high of 3,341 unemployed veterans had been reached in April, even after the USES office had placed 375 veterans in jobs in March. USES held a "Vet Employment Week" drive in April, focusing on different veteran groups each day. On the third day of the drive, they focused on placing 117 women veterans representing all of the military branches. Many local companies showed returning veterans favor and even instituted special training programs, like that of the City of Savannah's Electrical Department.[6]

African Americans returning from war found themselves even more dissatisfied with the status quo then when they left. World War II had been a segregated war for most, even when far from the Jim Crow laws of the South. The armed forces of the time restricted black enlistments and placed men and women in segregated units. Because of this, the enlistment rate among African Americans was low, and the majority of those who served were drafted (approximately 11% of those drafted were African Americans, serving overwhelmingly in the U.S. Army). Enlistment restrictions also kept them from choosing which branch they wanted to serve in and what jobs they could perform. African Americans found

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[4] "Local War Dead Back in America from Pacific Area," *Savannah Morning News* (hereafter SMN) (11 October 1947), 10:5; "Savannah Honors Her Fallen Hero," SMN (27 October 1947), 10:3; "'Taps' Point Up Frightful Toll," SMN (19 November 1947), 16:6; *Savannah Morning News Index 1942* (21 November 1947), 22:5.

[5] "'Taps' Point Up Frightful Toll."

[6] "Vets Unemployment Reaches New High, USES Totals Show," SMN (5 April 1946), 14:2; *Savannah Morning News Index 1945-1946* (1 March 1946), 16:2 and (2 April 1946), 12:6; "Employment Office Seeks to Place 117 Women Veterans in Work Drive," SMN (25 April 1946), 12:2.

themselves fighting for freedoms for others which they could not even enjoy themselves at home.[7]

Local community leader W. W. Law was drafted out of college into the U.S. Army, and despite asking for frontline duty as an infantry soldier he was assigned like so many other African Americans to the Quartermaster Corps. How Law began his Army service was typical of many, but how his played out hinted at his future and the Civil Rights movement in Savannah. "I took it on myself while in the unit, when the elections came up, to get permission at formations to urge the soldiers to write home for absentee ballots…and to vote. That's as much as we could do at that time." While serving at an airbase in Coffeyville, Kansas, Law came up against his Mississippian company commander over the menial tasks African Americans were being given.[8]

> *We were being assigned chores on the base of picking up match stems and cigarette butts. And I objected and was called before my commander, and we had a discussion on leadership. Again, I was young; I told him that I felt that a leader, a proper leader, would be a person who could inspire his people into formation, and this was not inspirational work and that a leader was not a person who just necessarily ordered people to do but a person who could inspire and create a willingness and a desire on the part of the people to be a part of whatever the leader is leading off into. After the discussion, he found a way to transfer me out because I did not go with the proceedings.[9]*

Returning African Americans wanted to be represented by the government which they fought for, and decided the ballot was their strongest voice. On Memorial Day 1946, about 1,000 Chatham County African American veterans marched in a parade ending at Cann Park. Many carried banners calling for the use of the ballot to get streets paved, end police brutality, and employ black firemen and policemen. Savannah Mayor Peter R. Nugent spoke in the park "expressing appreciation of the work they [African American veterans] have done in uniform." Grover H. Eubanks, Jr., president of the new World War II-Veterans Association (WWII-VA), a group of black World War II veterans, countered appreciation was not enough, "describing the changed world the veterans had hoped to come back to and expressing the hope for improvement soon."[10]

Led by individuals like Law and Eubanks, the Savannah branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the WWII-VA mounted intensive voter registration drives in the black community in 1946. They

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[7] *Selective Service and Victory: The 4th Report of the Director of Selective Service* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1948), 187, 190, available at http://www.history.army.mil/documents/wwii/minst.htm (accessed 5 February 2009).
[8] "An Oral History Interview with W.W. Law," (15-16 November 1990) 57-61, interviewed by Cliff Kuhn and Tim Crimmins, Georgia Government Documentation Project, Special Collections and Archives, Pullen Library, Georgia State University.
[9] "An Oral History Interview with W.W. Law," 57-61.
[10] "1,000 Negro Vets March In Parade, Honor Their Dead," SMN (31 May 1946), 11:6.

were supported by the Citizens Progressive League (CPL), formed by white veterans, who campaigned to oust the entrenched corrupt political machine of Chatham County attorney John Bouhan. With white support divided between the Bouhan faction and the CPL, the black vote was in an historic position of power to sway the elections, and it did. CPL swept the elections and "black veterans, and the citizens and organizations that supported them, thus helped to overturn one of Georgia's longest-lived and strongest mossback political machines." The incoming City of Savannah administration, led by John G. Kennedy of the CPL, kept campaign promises made to the African American community including appointing a Negro Advisory Committee and hiring the City's first African American police officers (though the police department and the City's facilities remained segregated).[11]

Savannah's first nine African American police officers included several World War II veterans. Pictured left to right: John A. White, Leroy Wilson, William N. Malone, Frank B. Mullino, Howard J. Davis, Milton Hall, James Neely, Alexander Grant, Jr., Stephney Houston, shown with Lt. Truman F. Ward, May 3, 1947.
Image available at http://blackbluefilm.com/Site/Original%20Nine.html (accessed 18 February 2009).

White Chatham County veterans were as active as African American veterans in encouraging voter registration. Returning veterans, like John J. Sullivan of the CPL, called on veterans to fix the "politically sick" local government and "use your vote as a surgeon would use his scalpel to correct this illness." The Veterans Council Administration, a white veteran group organized in 1944, asked "after having served your country in time of war, are you going to sit idly by and let everyone else run it but you?" Local voter registration in 1946 "smashed to smithereens all existing records," peaking at almost 60,000 registrants. Service in World War II had brought about a greater public awareness and feeling of responsibility in the local community, among all races.[12]

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[11] Brooks, Jennifer E., *Defining the Peace: World War II Veterans, Race, and the Remaking of Southern Political Tradition* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 28, 30-31, 127, 136.
[12] Brooks, 128 [Brooks' endnotes indicate she quoted Sullivan from the *Savannah Evening Press* (10 May 1946), 9].

United States Merchant Marine (USMM)

United States Merchant Marine Flag
American Merchant Marine at War, www.USMM.org

During World War II, the United States Merchant Marines played a critical role in the Allies' success, providing the necessary link between "the production army at home and the fighting forces scattered around the globe." In the words of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, "they have delivered the goods when and where needed in every theater of operations and across every ocean in the biggest, the most difficult and dangerous job every undertaken."[13]

U.S. Maritime Service Seal
American Merchant Marine at War, www.USMM.org

Disney USMM Logo
American Merchant Marine at War, www.USMM.org

The Merchant Marines worked closely with other maritime-related agencies to support the war effort. The Merchant Marine Act of 1936 created the U.S. Maritime Commission "to further the development and maintenance of an adequate and well balanced American merchant marine, to promote the commerce of the United States, and to aid in the national defense." In 1938, the Commission established the U.S. Maritime Service to train merchant mariners. The Commission also embarked on an extensive shipbuilding program to beef-up the nation's merchant fleet, including Liberty and Victory ships. In 1942, the War Shipping Administration, an off-shoot of the Commission, was established to organize shipments and convoys of men and supplies. So, the Maritime Commission produced the ships, the Maritime Service trained the mariners who manned them, and the War Shipping Administration arranged the shipments, all links in the chain connecting the home front with the battlefront. Recruiting posters proclaiming "We Deliver the Goods" or "Soldiers of Supply" were appropriate labels.[14]

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[13] "U.S. Merchant Marine in World War II," available at http://www.usmm.org/ww2.html (last accessed 20 January 2009); "American Merchant Marine at War," available at http://www.usmm.org (last accessed 20 January 2009).

[14] "United States Maritime Service," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Maritime_Service (last accessed 21 January 2009); "U.S. Merchant Marine in World War II"; "Posters: Build Merchant Ships during in World War II," available at http://www.usmm.org/posterbuild2.html (last accessed 21 January 2009); "World War II Posters: Buy bonds, Importance of the Merchant Marine, Rules at Sea," available at http://www.usmm.org/postermisc2a.html (last accessed 21 January 2009).

***U.S. Maritime Service Poster, "Deliver the goods…"
(U.S. Maritime Service, Cleveland, Ohio, undated).***
American Merchant Marine at War, www.USMM.org

Steamship* City of Atlanta*, undated.
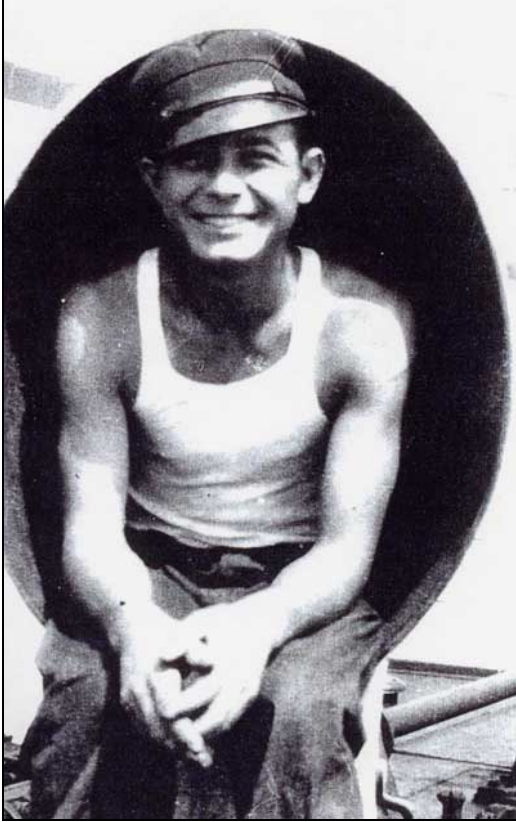Image available at
http://www.uboat.net/allies/merchants/ship/1268.html
(accessed 21 January 2009).

During World War II, the Merchant Marines suffered the highest percentage of casualties of all the U.S. military services. In 1946, the War Shipping Administration estimated that 243,000 Merchant Marines had served, with an approximate loss of 9,521 (3.9%). Many of those deaths were the results of submarine attacks in the North Atlantic where German U-boats preyed on convoys. The American Merchant Marine at War maintains a list of Merchant Marine casualties, available at www.usmm.org, which identifies 76 Merchant Marines from Savannah (home determined by next of kin) who were killed in World War II.* Of those 76, thirty-six perished when the *City of Atlanta* was sunk by a German torpedo off the coast of North Carolina, five lost their lives in an attack on the *City of Birmingham* off of Cape Hatteras, and sixteen mariners were killed when the Liberty ship *S. S. James Oglethorpe* was sunk in a trans-Atlantic convoy. Both the *City of Atlanta* and the *City of Birmingham* were vessels owned by the Ocean Steamship Company of Savannah taken over during the war by the Federal government to supplement the merchant fleet. The *S. S. James Oglethorpe* had been the first Liberty ship completed by the Southeastern Shipbuilding Corporation in Savannah under a Maritime Commission contract.[15]

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[15] "U.S. Merchant Marine in World War II"; "U.S. Merchant Marine during in World War II," available at http://www.usmm.org/casualty.html (last accessed 20 January 2009); "War Shipping Administration Reports on Merchant Marine Casualties," available at http://www.usmm.org/wsacasualty.html (last accessed 20 January 2009); "Where Deceased Mariners Made their Homes (WWII)," available at http://www.usmm.org/home.html (last accessed 20 January 2009); "Merchant Mariners killed on U.S. operated ships during in World War II," available at http://www.usmm.org/casualty.html (last accessed 21 January 2009); "City of Atlanta," available at http://www.uboat.net/allies/merchants/ship/1268.html (last accessed 21 January 2009); "City of Birmingham," available at http://www.uboat.net/allies/merchants/1878.html (last accessed 21 January 2009); "James Oglethorpe," available at http://www.uboat.net/allies/merchants/2795.html (last accessed 21 January 2009); "77 Names Compiled For Memorial Plaque In Honor of Seamen," *Savannah Morning News* (hereafter SMN) (9 May 1946), 9:1.

James Steven Galletta, undated.
Photograph published in The National World
War II Memorial Registry, available at
http://www.wwiimemorial.com/registry/
(accessed 22 January 2009).

During the early period of the war, local mariners made up for almost two-thirds of all Georgians dead or missing from the Merchant Marine. A report released by the Coast Guard in September 1942 identified 82 Georgians dead or missing, of which 56 were from the Savannah area. Savannah continued to be hard hit by mariner losses, as witnessed by contemporary headlines like "Merchant Marine Loss Heavy Here." Several local mariners were taken as prisoners of war, including Matthew Paul Days, E. K. Summerlin, and John Frank Monteverde. The contributions and lost lives of the Merchant Marines were among the first to be honored in Savannah through a memorial. On Maritime Day, May 22nd, 1946, a plaque bearing the names of the total eighty-three Savannahians lost during World War II was unveiled at the USS Savannah Seamen Club on East Julian Street.[16]

The American Merchant Marine at War points out that this list may be incomplete as the Merchant Marine did not have an official historian, an official list of war dead or missing in action was never published, and many ship disasters were not reported during the course of the war due to intelligence concerns.

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[16] "Many Local Men Lost in the War," SMN (30 September 1942), 2:8; "Merchant Marine Loss Heavy Here," SMN (6 July 1945), 12:1; "Seamen Lauded at Unveiling of New Plaque," SMN (23 May 1946), 14:6.

United States Navy (USN)

United States Navy Emblem
Image available http://www.americanlegionpost3.com/USN-Navy-emblem.gif
(accessed 12 February 2009).

During World War II, the United States Navy fulfilled an important offensive and supportive role in all the theaters of war. In the American Theater of Operation, the "Battle of the Atlantic" was "a life-and-death struggle against the German submarine offensive to choke off the sea passage between the United States and Europe." On the defense, the Navy patrolled the coastal waters of the continental United States through the Inshore Patrol and Blimp Squadrons, protecting the home front from attack. The Allied convoy system, carrying troops and supplies, crossing the Atlantic Ocean was particularly vulnerable to submarine attacks, and the Navy provided support along the route: [17]

> *The United States and Great Britain instituted a highly effective convoy control and routing system. The ever versatile destroyer was joined by the mass-produced destroyer-escorts; a new ship type designed specifically for convoy duty. Naval aircraft flying from the 19 small escort carrier in Hunter-Killer groups added long range offensive operations to the convoy's protective coverage, and naval armed guard crews on merchant ships discouraged attack by surfaced U-boats.[18]*

In the European, African and Middle Eastern campaigns, the Navy provided support for amphibious landings, including in Sicily and Normandy. Prior to landings, the Navy bombarded targets from carrier aircraft and offshore ships, swept for mines and removed obstacles, clearing the way for the landing of troops and supplies. It can be argued that those troops and supplies wouldn't have been available without the successful convoy system of the Atlantic.[19]

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[17] "World War II European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign" (Department of the Navy, Naval Historical Center, Washington, D.C., 1996), available at http://www.history.navy.mil/faqs/stream/faq45-22.htm (accessed 27 January 2009); "World War II—American Theater 1941-1946" (Department of the Navy, Naval Historical Center, Washington, D.C., 1996), available at http://www.history.navy.mil/faqs/stream/faq45-20.htm (27 January 2009).
[18] "World War II European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign."
[19] "World War II European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign."

The Allied victory in Europe hinged on preventing the submarines from cutting the sea lanes, on the amphibious capability to project powerful armies onto enemy-held territory, and on the ability to sustain them by sea once ashore.[20]

In the Asiatic-Pacific Theater, "The vital core of the American military effort was the contest for control of the seas, from which all the other operations—at sea, amphibious, on land, or in the air—branched and received their support." Naval seamen and aviators battled with Japanese ships and submarines to gain control of the air and water, and therefore the island bases.[21]

Armed Guard Insignia
Image available at
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/
United_States_Navy_Armed_Guard
(accessed 10 February 2009).

Men and women from Chatham County served along all these fronts, in the Navy, Naval Reserves, and Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES). Chatham County lost thirty-seven men from the Navy and Naval Reserve in World War II. Another twenty-four were listed on the Navy's official casualty list as wounded. Chatham County's fallen are buried around the globe, including C. J. "George" O'Connor in Normandy, and Jasper N. Davis in Cambridge, England. Armed guard Walford C. Tuten is memorialized in the Cambridge American Cemetery, but his body was never recovered from the Atlantic Ocean.[22]

Most of Chatham County's war dead are buried in the Pacific region, where the majority served. Ten found their final resting place in the "Punchbowl," the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, Hawaii. They join 11,597 identified and 2,079 unidentified U.S. war dead from Pacific battle sites like Guadalcanal, China, Burma, Saipan, Guam, Okinawa, and Iwo Jima. An additional 18,096 Americans are identified on the Honolulu Memorial as missing from the Pacific, including Lieutenant Charles Edward Traynor, Jr., lost with eighty-four other men when the submarine *USS Albacore* (SS-218) was sunk by a Japanese mine off the shore of Hokkaidō.[23]

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[20] "World War II European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign."

[21] "World War II—Asiatic-Pacific Theater 1941-1946" (Department of the Navy, Naval Historical Center, Washington, D.C., 2000), available at http://www.history.navy.mil/faqs/stream/faq45-21.htm (accessed 27 January 2009).

[22] *Combat Connected Naval Casualties World War II by States, 1946, U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Volume I Alabama through Missouri* (Casualty Section, Office of Public Information, Navy Department, compiled and revised 1946), "State Summary of War Casualties [Georgia]"; "American Battle Monuments Commission: Memorials," available at http://www.abmc.gov/memorials/index.php and "American Battle Monuments Commission: Cemeteries," available at http://www.abmc.gov/cemeteries/index.php (accessed 27 January 2009); "Acres of Honor: General History & Map of Punchbowl," available at http://acresofhonor.com/history.html (accessed 27 January 2009).

[23] "American Battle Monuments Commission: Memorials"; "Acres of Honor"; "USS Albacore (SS-218)," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Albacore_(SS-218) (accessed 27 January 2009); "On Eternal Patrol – USS Albacore (SS-218)," available at http://www.oneternalpatrol.com/uss-albacore-218.htm (accessed 27 January 2009); "Lost Submariners of World War II: Charles Edward Traynor, Jr.," available at http://www.oneternalpatrol.com/traynor-c-e.htm (27 January 2009).

A view of the Manila American Cemetery, the Philippines, undated.
Image available at http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Manila_American_Cemetery_and_Memorial.jpg
(accessed 10 February 2009).

The largest concentration of Chatham County burials is at the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial in the Philippines. Fourteen Chatham County men join over 17,000 Americans who lost their lives in military operations primarily in the Philippines and New Guinea. Here can be found Walter Charles Hendry, a fireman on the *USS Grampus* (SS-207). The *USS Grampus* was lost at sea, along with seventy-one lives, around March 5, 1943 in the vicinity of Blackett Strait. The cause of the submarine's disappearance is unknown, but it is suspected that she was sunk by Japanese destroyers.[24]
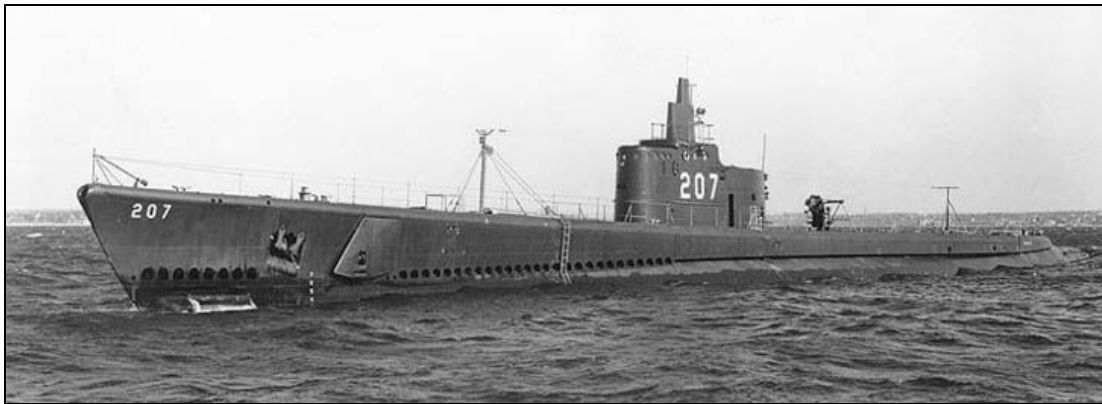
U.S.S. Grampus (SS-207), off Groton, Connecticut during trials, March 1941.
Image available at http://www.history.navy.mil/ (accessed 10 February 2009).

The National World War II Memorial Registry includes entries for 294 Navy veterans of World War II from Chatham County municipalities. Service notes for these men and women include a wide range of jobs that cover all areas of the Navy, including seagoing vessels, aircraft, construction, and support functions.

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[24] "American Battle Monuments Commission"; "Acres of Honor"; "USS Grampus (SS-207)," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Grampus_(SS-207) (accessed 27 January 2009); "On Eternal Patrol – USS Grampus (SS-207)," available at http://www.oneternalpatrol.com/uss-grampus-207.htm (accessed 27 January 2009); "Lost Submariners of World War II: Walter Charles Hendry," available at http://www.oneternalpatrol.com/hendry-w-c.htm (accessed 27 January 2009).

Individuals were identified as seamen, armed guards, firemen, radiomen, machinists, storekeepers, signalmen, ship and aircraft maintenance crew, pilots and aviators, metal smiths, engineers, air traffic controllers, and intelligence officers. They provided the necessities of life, including laundry service, food service, and even shoe cobbling. They trained and cared for their fellow sailors as instructors, nurses and medical corpsmen. They kept the bases and ships running with maintenance, accountants, communication officers and supply corpsmen. Many recalled sub-patrols, convoy escorts, amphibious landings, time on hospital ships, and shore patrol along the U.S. coastline. Their time was spent in Guam, the Philippine Islands, Okinawa, Pearl Harbor, Guadalcanal, Iwo Jima, North Africa, Italy, and France. Many were patrolling the North Atlantic waters. Several were stationed closer to home on Cockspur Island and in Charleston, South Carolina.[25]

After boot camp in 1943 at Pensacola Naval Air Station, Frank B. Arden was assigned to Naval Air Squadron 119 in the Philippines as a flight engineer on a PBY flying boat.
Photograph published in The National World War II Memorial Registry, available at http://www.wwiimemorial.com/registry/ (accessed 22 January 2009).

The backbone of the Navy is its naval fleet, composed of a variety of seagoing vessels to perform strategic and support functions. Local Chatham County veterans identified serving on sixty-four different naval ships during World War II. Only one ship was mentioned twice in service notes, highlighting how dispersed local men were during the war, rather than fighting alongside their neighbors in particulars units or platoons. Local men served on destroyers, destroyer escorts, aircraft carriers, troop transports, repair ships, landing crafts, cruisers, heavy cruisers, submarines, gasoline tankers, minesweepers, survey ships, hospital ships, and Victory ships. Several men mention witnessing Kamikaze attacks while stationed on aircraft carriers in the Pacific.[26]

Several Chatham Countians served with the Navy's air forces, many as pilots and crew in the Pacific. "For the first time in history, naval engagements were

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[25] "World War II Memorial Registry," available at www.wwiimemorial.com (accessed 22 January 2009).
[26] "World War II Memorial Registry."

fought entirely in the air without opposing surface forces sighting each other." Air striking power was essential to success in the Pacific.[27]

One often overlooked unit of the Navy's air forces was the Lighter-Than-Air (LTA) program utilizing blimps. During World War II, the Navy pursued an airship program, primarily along the United States' coastlines for patrol, convoy escort, and search and rescue missions. Fleet Airship Wings were established along the coasts, each comprised of Airship Squadrons (or Blimprons). Fleet Airship Wing One, comprised of the east coast, included a base of eight airships in Glynco, Georgia. Over 154 non-rigid airships, commonly called blimps, were produced by the Goodyear factory in Ohio, and about 1,400 airship pilots and 3,000 crew members were trained in the program.[28]

Airship Squadron ZP-21, Naval Air Station Richmond, Florida, 1943.
Image available at http://www.uboatarchives.net/U-134RichmondPhotos.htm (accessed 28 January 2009).

The airships were very effectively used to drive down the occurrence of German submarine strikes. They were able to spot submarines, drive them underwater and make them less effective, and in some cases sink them. Of the estimated 89,000 convoys escorted by airships, only one ship, the tanker *Persephone*, was sunk. Only one airship was ever shot down by a U-boat, the airship K-74 out of Airship Squadron ZP-21 based in Richmond, Florida. ZP-21 was commanded by Savannahian Alfred Lovell Cope. In July 1943, K-74 sighted and attempted to attack U-boat 134 off the coast of Florida. Before she could release her depth charges, the U-boat fired on her, causing severe damage. K-74 was able to safely land in the water without loss of life (though one crewman would later die

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[27] "Naval Aviation Chronology in World War II: World War II 1940-1945" (Department of the Navy, Navy Historical Center, Washington, D. C.), available at http://www.history.navy.mil/branches/avchr5.htm (accessed 27 January 2009).
[28] "U.S. Navy Aircraft Squadron Designations in WWII," taken from James C. Fahey's *Ships and Aircraft of the United States Fleet* (Victory Edition, 1945), available at http://rwebs.net/avhistory/acdesig/usnsqdrn.htm (accessed 28 January 2009); "Airship," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dirigible (accessed 28 January 2009); Nugent, Edward E., USN (Ret), "The Forgotten Blimps of World War II," taken from Foundation Magazine (Spring 1995, Naval Aviation Museum Foundation), available at http://www.bluejacket.com/usn_avi_ww2_blimps.html (accessed 28 January 2009).

from a shark attack), and the crew was rescued the following day. Cope received the Distinguished Flying Cross for his rescue of the K-74 crew.[29]

Several Chatham County Navy veterans served in the Navy Construction Battalions (CBs), known as the Seabees. The Seabees were formed in December 1941 to undertake the numerous construction projects needed by the military forces in the field, including bases, roads, airstrips, gasoline storage tanks, hospitals and housing. The force was initially recruited from the civilian construction trades. Over 325,000 men served in the Seabees during World War II, on all fronts, including four continents and over 300 islands. In the Pacific, Seabees were often the first group to come ashore, right after the Marines had landed, to set up the needed infrastructure on remote islands.[30]

Seabee insignia, designed in 1942 by Frank J. Iafrate.
Image available at
www.seabeesmuseum.com/
FightingBee.html
(accessed 10 February 2009).

"Navy corpsmen tend a Marine who was shot in the back by enemy sniper fire," Iwo Jima, undated.
Department of Defense Photo (USMC) 110902.
Image available at http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USMC/USMC-C-Iwo/index.html (accessed 10 February 2009).

Medicine along the battlefronts was another key ingredient to success, especially in the Pacific Theater where malaria and tropical diseases threatened troops. "The purpose of military medicine during World War II was the same as in previous wars: to conserve the strength and efficiency of the fighting forces so as to keep as many men at as many guns for as many days as possible." Navy medical corpsmen went in with the Marines and administered care in battle, including Chatham County naval physician Daniel J. McCarthy who was killed at Iwo Jima while attached to the Marines. Naval hospital ships served as

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[29] "Airship"; Nugent; "U-boat Archives – U-134," available at http://www.uboatarchive.net/U-134.htm (accessed 28 January 2009).
[30] "Seabee," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seabee (accessed 28 January 2009); "Seabees in World War II," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seabees_in_World_War_II (accessed 28 January 2009).

ambulances to provide first aid and carry the wounded back to base hospitals or the United States mainland. Rupert Heller, of Savannah, worked at the 10th General Hospital in Manila for seven months, before catching malaria himself. Rosalie Lorraine Kennedy worked as a nurse in several of those Navy hospitals treating the wounded returning from the Philippines and injured naval aviators.[31]

Kennedy is just one of the many local women that served with the Navy during World War II. The WAVES was created in 1942 to release men for sea duty. By 1945, "Almost every shore establishment had WAVES on active duty fulfilling necessary military work of every kind, from general office workers and supply accounts specialists to film projectionists and drivers to dental prosthetic technicians. Within the Navy Department headquarters at Washington, D. C., over half (55 percent) of all service personnel were WAVES," including Savannahian Mary Roessler Zipperer in the Bureau of Ships. Over 104,000 women served in the WAVES before the end of World War II. Since the formation of the WAVES was an emergency wartime measure, following the surrender of Japan no additional recruits were accepted and almost all of the WAVES were discharged by the end of 1946.[32]

**Enlisted WAVES
pin-on cap insignia**
Image available at
http://www.blitzkriegbaby.de/
waves/waves3.htm
(accessed 10 February 2009).

The Galletta Family in uniform, undated.
Photograph published in The National World War II Memorial Registry, available
at http://www.wwiimemorial.com/registry/ (accessed 22 January 2009).

Another example of the variety of naval service provided by Chatham County residents can be witnessed in the service of one family, the Galletta family. From this one family came four Navy veterans, each with a different service story: Anthony Lawrence Galletta served as a gasoline officer on the *USS Bennington*;

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[31] "Medicine, World War II," from *Americans at War* (Macmillan Reference USA, 2001-2006), available at http://www.bookrages.com/research/medicine-world-war-ii-aaw-03/ (accessed 27 January 2009); Frey, Valerie, Kaye Kole and Luciana Spracher, eds., *Voices of Savannah: Selections from the Oral History Collection of the Savannah Jewish Archives* (Savannah Jewish Archives, 2004), 81; "World War II Memorial Registry."
[32] "WAVES during World War II," available at http://www.blitzkreigbaby.de/waves/waves1ba.htm (accessed 21 January 2009); "Facts about the WAVES," available at http://www.blitzkreigbaby.de/waves/waves2.htm (accessed 21 January 2009); "World War II Memorial Registry."

Dominic Christopher Galletta, Jr. was an aircraft mechanic; Leo Thomas Galletta served on Saipan and Okinawa with the 7th Construction Battalion (Seabees); and Therese Marie Galletta was a secretary in the WAVES. In addition, Eugene Bernard Galletta served in the United States Coast Guard on patrol boats in the Pacific and James S. Galletta served in the United States Merchant Marines as a pumpman. James was the only one to lose his life; he was killed in May 1942 when the tanker *S.S. Munger T. Ball* was sunk in the Gulf of Mexico, off the coast of Florida.[33]

As part of the Sixth U.S. Naval District (headquartered in Charleston, South Carolina), Chatham County was also the site of several Navy facilities during World War II. The Navy maintained a Section Base of the Inshore Patrol on Cockspur Island in the Savannah River, had a presence at the Savannah Air Base (with the Army Air Forces), worked with the United States Coast Guard to fill the position of Captain of the Port, and oversaw the Navy's contracts with local shipbuilders at the Savannah Machine & Foundry Company. A Navy Cost Inspector was also placed at Rourke's Iron Works. The Navy continued to maintain the Branch Hydrographic Office, established in the 1890s and located in the U.S. Customs House, tasked with aiding shipmasters and mariners to navigate the waterways safely. During the war, an officer of the Naval Reserve manned this office.[34]
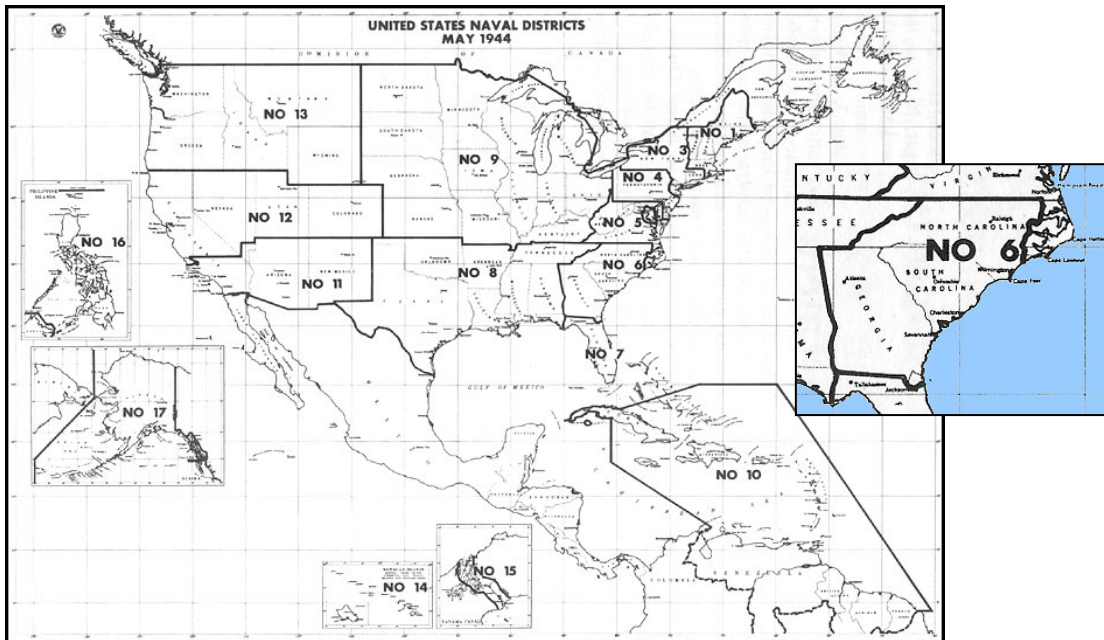
United States Naval Districts, 1944.
Map available at http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USN/ref/ND/index.html (accessed 20 February 2009).

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[33] "World War II Memorial Registry."

[34] "U.S. Naval Districts," HyperWar: U.S. Naval Districts-1944, available at http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USN/ref/ND/index.html (22 January 2009); *U.S. Naval Activities, World War Two, By State* (Department of the Navy, Washington D. C., 1945), manuscript provided by the U.S. Naval Historical Center, available at http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USN/ref/USN-Act/ (accessed 22 January 2009); "Navy Hydrographic Taken Over By Combat Veteran," *Savannah Morning News* (hereafter SMN) (18 December 1945), 3:1.

The Section Base on Cockspur Island was the most active Navy site. From here the Inshore Patrol launched its defense of the Georgia coastal waters with patrol vessels and minesweepers. During the Navy's demobilization period, the Section Base was turned over to the Coast Guard in July 1945 and Inshore Patrol offices were maintained at the County Police headquarters until June 1946. Several local veterans served on Cockspur Island during its Navy occupation or in the Inshore Patrol elsewhere in the U.S.[35]

Following World War II, steps were taken to set up Naval Reserve units around the state. Prior to World War II, only one Naval Reserve unit was active in Georgia, in the Atlanta area. In January 1946, Representative Carl Vinson, chairman of the House naval affairs committee, announced plans for units in Savannah, Macon, Atlanta, Augusta, and Columbus. In August, the organized Savannah Naval Reserve unit began taking applications.[36]

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[35] Erdman, Lt. Cmdr. Robert P., USN, "Navy Pushes Program to Protect Port; Naval Ships Be Built Here," *Savannah Evening Press* (19 November 1941); "Inshore Patrol Base Inactivated," SMN (4 June 1944), 24:6; "Navy Shore Patrol Here to Close July 1," SMN (16 June 1946), 28:5; "Cockspur Island's Status is Changed," SMN (3 July 1945), 14:4; "World War II Memorial Registry."

[36] "Vinson Says City to Get New Unit of Naval Reserve," SMN (31 January 1946), 14:2; "Navy Preparing to Activate Unit Here Immediately," SMN (25 August 1946), 28:1.

United States Coast Guard (USCG)

United States Coast Guard official Emblem
U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office.
Image available at http://www.uscg.mil/history/ (accessed 11 February 2009).

The United States Coast Guard (USCG) played a varied and unique role in World War II, fulfilling defense and support missions alongside the Navy, Army and Marines. Coast Guardsmen were present in every theater of war, manning both Coast Guard and Navy vessels carrying supplies, troops or providing escort, and maintaining a defensive watch on the home front. During the war, over 240,000 Coast Guardsmen (including regulars and reservists) served and 574 were killed in action (an additional 1,343 deaths occurred from accidents, drowning, disease, etc.).[37]

Earl Henry William Thornton, ship's cook.
Photograph published in The National World War II Memorial Registry, available at http://www.wwiimemorial.com/registry/ (accessed 22 January 2009).

USCG Port Security Specialist insignia
U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office.
Image available at http://www.uscg.mil/history/ (accessed 11 February 2009).

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[37] "Coast Guard History, Frequently Asked Questions: In what wars and conflicts did personnel from the Coast Guard (or its predecessors) serve and what were the Coast Guard's casualties in each?" available at http://www.uscg.mil/history/faqs/wars.asp (accessed 2 February 2009); Price, Scott, Deputy Historian, U.S. Coast Guard, "U.S. Coast Guard Combat Victories in World War II," available at http://www.uscg.mil/history/uscghist/CombatVictoriesWWII.asp (accessed 2 February 2009).

On November 1, 1941, the Coast Guard was transferred to the Department of the Navy for the duration of the war. This allowed the Coast Guard to become part of an integrated defense system with the Navy. The Coast Guard's most visible role during the war would be at home in the nation's valuable ports.* In June 1942, the Coast Guard assumed all responsibility from the Navy for port security, an essential duty in the wartime supply chain delivering goods and manpower around the world to Allied armies. Under the command of a Captain of the Port, a Coast Guard officer assigned to oversee port security in each U.S. port, the Coast Guard controlled the movements of all vessels in port, supervised access to all waterfront facilities and vessels, provided fire-prevention and fire-fighting services, supervised the movements of explosives and ammunition, and provided port patrols. "Allied victory during World War II depended upon the timely movement of supplies and the ability to plan for logistical buildups of supplies and men [in ports]." One Chatham County local, Byron H. Kennedy, was identified in the National World War II Memorial Registry as serving on a cutter on patrol in Cape Cod Canal, Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts, likely performing port security measures.[38]

Mounted Beach Patrol and Dog Training Center, Hilton Head, South Carolina, undated.
U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office.
Image available at http://www.uscg.mil/history/ (accessed 11 February 2009).

The Coast Guard also participated in an integrated Army-Navy-Coast Guard coastal patrol system that organized the United States' coastal areas into defense divisions known as Sea Frontiers. Sea Frontier defense relied on a variety of patrol systems to guard the coast against German attack and infiltration. The Army was responsible for the defense of land, the Navy patrolled the waters, and the Coast Guard patrolled the coastline and beaches using mounted, canine, foot, and boat patrols. The Coast Guard's beach patrols, under the local Captain of the Port, were designed to provide the Army and the Navy with the information they needed to react to situations and imminent danger; "it was a coastal information system." Many of the Army horses and dogs used for the beach patrol were trained on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. As the

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[38] Browning, Robert M., Jr., "Captains of the Port" (Coast Guard Historian's Office, 1993), available at http://www.uscg.mil/history/h_militaryindex.asp (accessed 2 February 2009), 6, 10-11, 17; "World War II Memorial Registry," available at www.wwiimemorial.com (accessed 22 January 2009).

threat of German submarine attack on the east coast lessened during the course of the war, the beach patrols were gradually reduced.[39]

One local who served in the Sea Frontier system was George Edward Oliver on board the USCG Cutter *Agassiz* in the Caribbean Sea Frontier (CARIBSEAFRON). The *Agassiz* was an active class patrol boat crewed by only twenty officers and men.[40]

USCG SPARS recruiting poster
U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office.
Image available at http://www.uscg.mil/history/ (accessed 11 February 2009).

The Coast Guard relied heavily on the Coast Guard Auxiliary, the Coast Guard Reserves (Temporary), and the SPARs to fulfill their port security mission, as well as to relieve regular Coast Guardsmen and reservists for sea duty. With 22 percent of the Coast Guard's regular manpower absorbed in port security duties, the establishment of the Temporary Reserves and the Volunteer Port Security Forces in 1942 was a welcomed addition. SPARs, the United States Coast Guard Women's Reserve, helped alleviate personnel shortages by taking on administrative duties, running transportation pools, and serving as messengers and mechanics.** Among local SPARs was Martha Elizabeth Lee who passed away in 2008 at the age of 90. Though a native of Gordon, Georgia who retired to Foley, Alabama, Lee was a long-time resident of Savannah and her service in the SPARs remained a source of pride as evidenced in her obituary. The use of these wartime pools of manpower freed up more than 8,000 Coast Guardsmen, nearly 20 percent of the regular Coast Guard, to man vessels at sea.[41]

Those regular Coast Guardsmen and regular reservists were then dispatched around the globe to assist the Navy where needed, though their participation was often overshadowed by the larger Navy. In the "Battle of the Atlantic," the longest campaign of the war, the Coast Guard provided escort to convoys crossing the Atlantic, performed rescue missions for downed ships and aircraft,

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[39] Noble, Dennis L., "The Beach Patrol and Corsair Fleet" (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, United States Coast Guard), available at http://www.uscg.mil/history/articles/h_beachpatrol.asp (accessed 2 February 2009).
[40] "World War II Memorial Registry"; "Agassiz, 1926" (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, United States Coast Guard), available at http://www.uscg.mil/history/webcutters/Agassiz1927.asp (accessed 2 February 2009).
[41] Browning, "Captains of the Port," 15-17; "Martha Elizabeth Lee," *Press-Register* (December 2008), available at http://www.al.com/baldwin/obits/index.ssf?/base/news/1229681727160640.xml&coll=3 (accessed 3 February 2009).

and continued weather patrols. "There was little rest for the cutters as they were desperately needed on the North Atlantic. Consequently there were constant breakdowns in equipment due to a lack of time for repairs."[42]

> *The Coast Guard's contribution to Allied victory over the U-boats went far beyond estimation. Although the majority of the Coast Guard units could not claim a U-boat "kill," this was not the only measure of success. Each escort helped to keep the U-boats at bay, ultimately ensuring the timely and safe arrival of personnel, food and military cargoes. Coast Guard units also rescued nearly 1,000 Allied and Axis survivors along the North Atlantic convoy routes, 1,600 along the American coast, and 200 in the Mediterranean, thereby carrying on one of the most historic of the Coast Guard's missions.[43]*

U.S. Coast Guardsmen on the USCG Cutter Spencer *watch explosion of a depth charge dropped on the German submarine U-175, April 17, 1943.*
U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office.
Image available at http://www.uscg.mil/history/ (accessed 11 February 2009).

Coast Guardsmen from Chatham County who served in the Atlantic included Ernest Morel, a fireman on the *USS Shreveport* (PF-23), and William Leroy Horton, on the *USS Peterson* (DE-152). The *Shreveport* was a Navy frigate manned by the Coast Guard as a weather patrol ship in the North Atlantic between Newfoundland and Iceland. The *Peterson*, a Navy destroyer escort also manned by a Coast Guard crew, ran convoy escorts between New York and British and French ports.[44]

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[42] Price, Scott T., "The Coast Guard and the North Atlantic Campaign" (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, United States Coast Guard), available at http://www.uscg.mil/history/articles/h_AtlWar.asp (accessed 2 February 2009); Johnson, Robert Erwin, "Coast Guard-Manned Naval Vessels in World War II" (Coast Guard Historian's Office, 1993), available at http://www.uscg.mil/history/h_militaryindex.asp (accessed 2 February 2009), 11.
[43] Price, "The Coast Guard and the North Atlantic Campaign."
[44] "World War II Memorial Registry"; "USS Shreveport (PF-23)," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Shreveport_(PF-23) (accessed 2 February 2009); "USS Peterson (DE-152)," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Peterson_(DE-152) (accessed 2 February 2009).

The Atlantic claimed Chatham County's only battle-related Coast Guard fatality, Officer's Steward 2c Pedro Abenoja Estocapio. Estocapio went down with the USCG Cutter *Escanaba* (WPG-77) on June 13, 1943. The *Escanaba* was originally designed for ice breaking, law enforcement and rescue work. With the outbreak of war in Europe, the *Escanaba*, like many Coast Guard vessels, was reassigned to perform wartime duty and fitted with additional armament and crew. The *Escanaba* was first sent to Greenland on patrol and then assigned to convoy merchant ships in the North Atlantic Ocean. The crew of the *Escanaba* was the first to utilize rescue swimmers dressed in rubber survival suits to pull victims from cold waters. On a convoy sailing from Narsarssuak, Greenland to St. John's, Newfoundland, the *Escanaba* apparently struck a drifting mine. The other ships in her convoy did not hear an explosion, and only three minutes after noticing smoke coming from the *Escanaba*, the ship had sunk underwater, without even signaling for help. Of the 105-man crew, only two survivors and one body were recovered. "It is likely that the sole reason that these two lived is that their clothing froze to the strongback [floating debris], keeping them from slipping into the water and sure death." Estocapio's body was never recovered and his name joins thousands lost to the Atlantic in World War II on the East Coast Memorial in New York City.[45]

USCG Cutter Escanaba (WPG-77), undated.
U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office.
Image available at http://www.uscg.mil/history/
(accessed 11 February 2009).

East Coast Memorial, New York City, undated.
Image available at
http://www.abmc.gov/images/ec1w.jpg
(accessed 11 February 2009).

In the Pacific, "the Coast Guard's participation in amphibious activity during World War II was perhaps the most important war-related job the service performed." The Coast Guard, along with the Army and Navy, was responsible for landing forces on the beaches and providing them reinforcements and supplies, as well as evacuating the wounded. To do this, the Coast Guard manned LSTs (Landing Ship, Tank), LCI(L) (Landing Craft, Infantry, Large),

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[45] *Combat Connected Naval Casualties World War II by States, 1946, U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Volume 1, Alabama through Missouri* (Casualty Section, Office of Public Information, Navy Department, 1946), Georgia 5; "World War II Missing in Action or Buried at Sea" registry available at www.wwiimemorial.com (accessed 22 January 2009); Browning, Robert M., Jr., "The Sinking of the USCGC Escanaba" (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, United States Coast Guard), available at http://www.uscg.mil/history/articles/Escanaba.asp (accessed 2 February 2009); "USCGC Escanaba (WPG-77)," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USCGC_Escanaba_(WPG-77) (accessed 2 February 2009).

cargo ships, frigates, and transports of the Navy and Army. When it came to small-amphibious vessels, the Coast Guard was indispensable.[46]

> *The handling of these small craft in the surf is a specialized skill, and it was not common among men in the Navy…. As only experienced men could successfully maneuver landing craft through strong currents, reefs, sand bars and heavy surf, their contributions to amphibious operations is immeasurable.[47]*
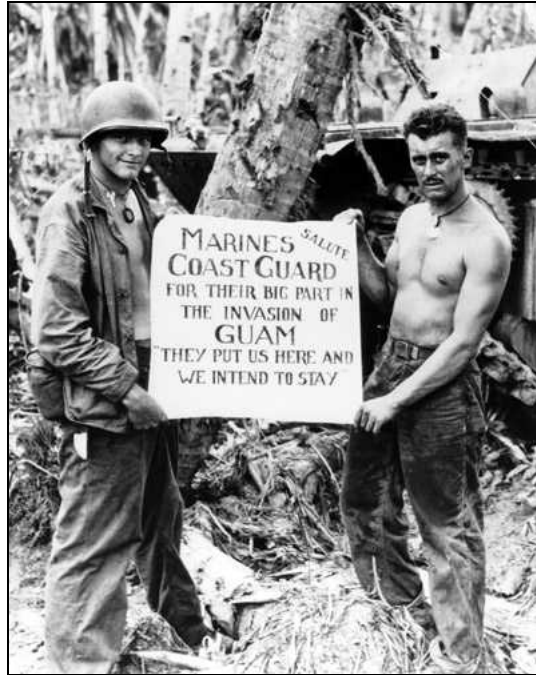
Marines show appreciation for Coast Guard support during the invasion of Guam, circa July 1944.
U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office.
Image available at http://www.uscg.mil/history/ (accessed 11 February 2009).

The Coast Guard's first major invasion in the Pacific was at Guadalcanal and Tulagi in August 1942. Here nineteen of the twenty-three naval transports were manned by the Coast Guard. Throughout the remainder of the war, the Coast Guard continued to support Allied landings. In the invasion of the Philippine Islands, ships manned by the Coast Guard participated in almost all amphibious actions. In the invasion of Leyte Island, 35 of the 738 vessels in the landing force were Coast Guard vessels, including five transports, two attack cargo vessels, ten frigates, and twelve LSTs. On Iwo Jima, the Coast Guard landed Marine divisions "with their gear, bulldozers, vehicles, rations, small arms, water, and virtually everything that would keep the landing forces moving inland."[48]

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[46] Browning, Robert M., Jr., "The Coast Guard and the Pacific War" (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, United States Coast Guard), available at http://www.uscg.mil/history/articles/h_pacwar.asp (accessed 2 February 2009); Johnson, 7.
[47] Browning, "The Coast Guard and the Pacific War."
[48] Browning, "The Coast Guard and the Pacific War"; Johnson, 4.

The Coast Guard's final major amphibious action in the Pacific was at Okinawa, where it contributed fifty-three ships to the invasion forces. Following the surrender of Japan, Coast Guard cutters continued to perform minesweeping and weather patrol duties and helped transport thousands of troops home to the United States as part of "Operation Magic Carpet."[49]

> *The Coast Guard made a tremendous contribution to the war effort as part of the amphibious forces in the Pacific. The men of this nation's smallest military service proved as heroic and valiant as the men in the other branches. When the Coast Guard was returned to its peacetime role in 1946, Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal stated that during the war the Coast Guard "earned the highest respect and deepest appreciation of the Navy and Marine Corps. Its performance of duty has been without exception in keeping with the highest traditions of the naval service.[50]*
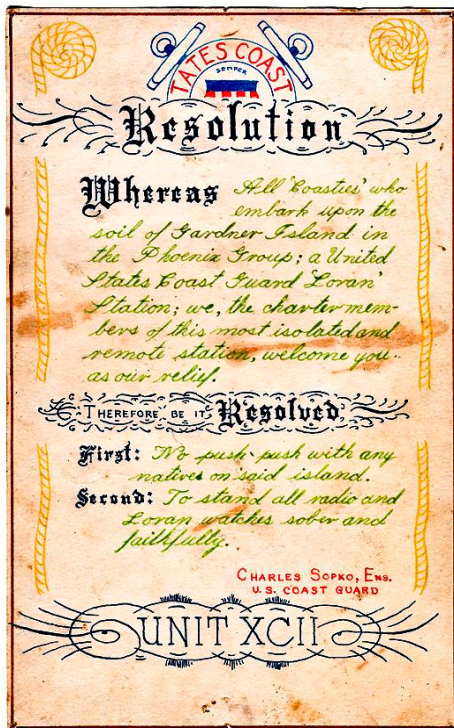
Loran Unit 92, Gardner Island transfer title, circa December 1945.
Image available at http://www.loran-history.info/Gardner_Island/gardner.htm (accessed 11 February 2009).

Several Chatham County Coast Guard veterans identified the Pacific Theater in their service notes in the National World War II Memorial Registry. One of particular interest was MOMM1c Eugene B. Galletta who was wounded on Gardner Island. In September 1944, the United States Coast Guard established a LORAN station on the remote and tiny Gardner Island. LORAN (LOng Range Aid to Navigation) "is a system whereby a vessel with suitable equipment, comparatively simple to operate, and with special charts may determine its position even when hundred of miles from shore…. It may be used with reliability, as far as approximately 800 miles from the transmitting station in daytime and 1,400 miles at night." The LORAN system helped sea vessels and aircraft calculate their exact position, critically important in the vast Pacific sparsely populated by remote islands. LORAN Unit 92, Gardner Island was manned by twenty-five Coast Guardsmen until July 1946, including for some time Galletta.[51]

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[49] Browning, "The Coast Guard and the Pacific War"; Johnson, 16.
[50] Browning, "The Coast Guard and the Pacific War."
[51] "World War II Memorial Registry"; "Loran Unit 92, Gardner Island," available at http://www.loran-history.info/Gardner_Island/gardner.htm (accessed 2 February 2009); "Gardner Island," available at http://knowledgerush.com/kr/encyclopedia/Gardner_Island/ (accessed 2 February 2009); *The Coast Guard at War, IV LORAN, Volume II* (Historical Section, Public Information Division, U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, August 1946), available at http://www.uscg.mil/history/STATIONS/loran_volume_2.pdf (accessed 3 February 2009); Thomson, Robin J,

Following the cessation of hostilities with Germany and Japan in 1945, the Coast Guard began the process of demobilization, including the discharge of Coast Guardsmen. A receiving and separation center was established by the Coast Guard, and manned in large part by SPARs, on Cockspur Island, near Savannah. The Cockspur Island station handled the discharges from the Sixth and Seventh Naval Districts (North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida), including many local men. By June 1946, the Coast Guard had finished using Cockspur Island as a separation center and decommissioned the base.[52]

*This article focuses on the contributions of the Coast Guard to overall military operations during World War II and those Coast Guardsmen from Chatham County who served away from home. For a discussion of the Coast Guard's presence in Savannah and Chatham County during World War II and its defense of the port of Savannah, see "World War II on the Savannah Waterfront: Wartime Production and Service in Savannah" (City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives, August 2008).

**The United States Coast Guard Women's Reserve was established on November 23, 1942 to release men for sea duty. "They were subject to assignment according to the needs of the service. This was one of the key factors in using women as part of the military force. The jobs they were filling could not have been done by civilians working for the armed forces because they were not as mobile and did not fall under military law and discipline." Women reservists were nicknamed SPARs by Commander Dorothy C. Stratton after the Coast Guard's motto "Semper Paratus, Always Ready." Between 1942 and 1946, over 10,000 women volunteered and filled positions in all district offices in the United States, including clerical work, air control-tower operators, boatswain's mates, radiomen, cooks, and drivers. Since the Women's Reserve was only established as an emergency wartime measure, all SPARs were discharged by June 30, 1946.[53]

USCG SPARS uniform
U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office.
Image available at http://www.uscg.mil/history/
(accessed 11 February 2009).

USCG, "SPARS: The Coast Guard & the Women's Reserve in World War II" (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, United States Coast Guard), available at http://www.uscg.mil/history/articles/h_wmnres.asp (accessed 2 February 2009).
[52] "Cockspur Island's Status is Changed," *Savannah Morning News* (hereafter SMN) (3 July 1945), 14:4; "New Commander of SPARS Named," SMN (12 August 1945), 28:1; "Coast Guard Set for Peace Status," SMN (22 August 1945), 12:4; "Lynch Commands Cockspur Center," SMN (26 August 1945), 32:2; "Coast Guard Set to Abandon Base," SMN (4 June 1946), 14:1.
[53] Thomson, "SPARS…"

United States Marine Corps (USMC)

United States Marine Corps Emblem
Image available at http://steinhauscasket.com/caskets/photos/insert-cap-
panels/us-marine-corps-emblem.jpg (accessed 12 February 2009).

During World War II, the United States Marine Corps (USMC) concentrated its efforts in the Pacific Theater of Operation, participating in air-sea-land offenses with the United States Army and the United States Navy to push closer and closer to the Japanese mainland islands. The Marines were often the first to land on the various islands of the Pacific. Twenty-four Chatham County Marines and Marine Reservists were killed during World War II. Another eighty are honored through the National World War II Memorial Registry.[54]

Most local Marines went through boot camp at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, near Beaufort, South Carolina, only about 45 miles northeast of Savannah. Parris Island trained all Marine recruits living east of the Mississippi River. All those west of the Mississippi trained at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego. From 1941 through 1945, over 204,000 recruits trained at Parris Island. After the cessation of hostilities, Parris Island served as a Separation Center from October through November 1945.[55]

In November 1942, local men were actively recruited to form a new Marine platoon consisting entirely of men from the Savannah area. On November 3rd, an entire fourteen-page section of the *Savannah Morning News* was dedicated to advertising and recruiting for the new "Savannah Platoon." The names of those who had already submitted applications was published in the newspaper, including Calvin S. Hodges, Joseph E. Morrison, George C. Donnelly, Talmadge L. Deason, Albert B. Beasley (Isle of Hope), Brooks L. Hamm, David E. Standstill (Lakeland, GA, Lanier County), James W. Bryant, Virgil L. Cobia, Dave

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[54] "World War II Memorial Registry," available at www.wwiimemorial.com (accessed 22 January 2009).

[55] "Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parris_Island (accessed 23 January 2009); Champie, Elmore A., "A Brief History of the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, South Carolina, 1891-1962" Marine Corps Historical Reference Series, Number 8 (Historical Branch, G-3 Division, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Washington, D. C., Revised 1962), available at http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awvgate/usmchist/parris.txt (accessed 23 January 2009), 11.

Scarborough, LeeRoy N. Crapse, Oscar L. Faulkner, George L. Harrell (Avondale), Henry O. Tiencken (White Bluff), John A. Horton, Francis M. Brady, Wilbur L. Brannen, James W. Kelley, and Hollis W. Bazemore. On November 9th, a successful drive was reported, the goal of sixty enlistments surpassed. The "Savannah Platoon" was sworn in as a group on November 10, 1942 in Wright Square. The new Marines reported to Parris Island the following day for eight weeks of boot camp.[56]

"Savannah Never Fails!" City of Savannah advertisement.
Savannah Morning News (3 November 1942), 17.

A large proportion of the Chatham County Marines identified in the National World War II Memorial Registry served with the 4th Marine Division (in addition to the 1st, 3rd and 6th divisions). The 4th Marine Division, nicknamed "The Fighting Fourth," is the ground combat element of the United States Marine Corps Reserves (USMCR). The 4th was formed in 1943 by the reorganization of several existing units from Camp LeJeune, North Carolina and Camp Pendleton, California (including the 14th, 20th, 23rd, 24th and 25th Marine regiments, Division Special Troops, and Division Service Troops). All of the units were brought together at Camp Pendleton where they were formally activated on August 16, 1943 under the command of Major General Harry Schmidt.[57]

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[56] "Plans for Marine Platoon Progress," *Savannah Morning News* (hereafter SMN) (14 October 1942), 14:1; "Join the U.S. Marines 'Savannah Platoon'," SMN (3 November 1942), 15-28; "Savannah Men Who Have Already Applied for Service in the 'Savannah Platoon'," SMN (3 November 1942), 19; "Over 60 Men Join Marine Platoon," SMN (10 November 1942), 14:4.

[57] "4th Marine Division (United States)," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/4th_Marine_Division_(United_States) (accessed 23 January 2009); "The Fighting Fourth of World War II, Division History, Stateside: Forming Up and Training," available at http://www.fightingfourth.com/stateside.htm (accessed 23 January 2009); "Marine Forces Reserve," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marine_Forces_Reserve (accessed 20 January 2009).

4th Marine Division Insignia
Image available at
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:
4th_MarDiv.png
(accessed 12 February 2009).

Following extensive training in California, including training in amphibious landings, the 4th Division shipped out for the Pacific on January 13, 1944. From their base/rest camp on the island of Maui, the 4th served twenty-one months and participated in four major amphibious assaults (battles of Kwajalein (Roi-Namur), Saipan, Tinian, and Iwo Jima). Before deactivation on November 28, 1945, the 4th Marine Division suffered over 17,700 casualties (killed, wounded or missing in action).[58]

Service notes are included with many of the registry entries for Chatham County veterans. One recalled helping construct a base at Midway, several were at Pearl Harbor at the time of the Japanese attack, and many mention their presence at specific, pivotal Pacific battles, especially Guadalcanal, Okinawa and Iwo Jima. Assignments included rifle sharpshooter, public information specialist, aviator (towing gliders and paratroopers), anti-aircraft officer, mortar man, runner, guard, and photograph interpreter.[59]

The Battle of Midway (June 4-7, 1942) put the United States and Japan on equal footing in the fight for the Pacific. The battle over the small U.S. base on the Midway atoll represented the turning point from Japanese dominance to eventual U.S. victory in the region. Following the U.S. success in this battle, the small airfield and base needed significant repairs, but it continued to be used throughout the remainder of the war.[60]

Midway Atoll, showing airfield, November 1941.
Photo #: 80-G-451086. Official U.S. Navy Photograph, now in the collections of the U.S. National Archives.
Image available at http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/events/wwii-pac/midway/midway.htm (accessed 12 February 2009).

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[58] "4th Marine Division (United States)"; "The Fighting Fourth of World War II, Division History, Stateside"; "The Fighting Fourth of World War II, Division History, Maui: Home Base," available at http://www.fightingfourth.com/Maui.htm (accessed 23 January 2009).
[59] "World War II Memorial Registry."
[60] "Battle of Midway, 4-7 June 1943, Overview and Special Image Selection" (Department of the Navy, Navy Historical Center, Washington, D. C., 1999), available at http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/events/wwii-pac/midway/midway.htm (accessed 23 January 2009); "Guadalcanal Campaign, August 1942-February 1943, Overview and Special Image Selection" (Department of the Navy, Navy Historical Center, Washington, D. C., 2001), available at http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/events/wwii-pac/guadlcnl/guadlcnl.htm (accessed 23 January 2009).

***U.S. Marines rest in the field on Guadalcanal,
circa August-December 1942.***
Photo #: 80-G-20683. Official U.S. Navy Photograph,
now in the collections of the National Archives.
Image available at http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/events/wwii-
pac/guadlcnl/guadlcnl.htm (accessed 12 February 2009).

The four-day fight for Midway was minor compared to the Guadalcanal Campaign, fought by the U.S. and the Allies over a six-month period (August 1942-February 1943). The air-sea-land campaign was the first major Allied offensive in the Pacific Theater of Operation. The 1st Marine Division was among the first to land on the Japanese occupied island in the Solomon Islands chain and efforts were directed at taking the Lunga Point airfield (renamed Henderson Field). Following a decisive Allied victory, the Japanese evacuated Guadalcanal on February 8, 1943.[61]

1944 battles which local Marines fought in include those on Tinian and Saipan, both islands in the Marianas Islands. The 4th Marine Division was instrumental in both, performing assault amphibious landings. In a citation to the 4th Marine Division, James Forrestal, Secretary of the Navy, stated:

> *For outstanding performance in combat during the seizure of the Japanese-held islands of Saipan and Tinian in the Marianas from June 15 to August, 1944. Valiantly storming the mighty fortifications of Saipan on June 15, the Fourth Division, Reinforced, blasted the stubborn defenses of the enemy in an undeviating advance over the perilously rugged terrain. Unflinching despite heavy casualties, this gallant group pursued the Japanese relentlessly across the entire length of the island, pressing on against bitter opposition for twenty-five days to crush all resistance in their zone of action.[62]*

The 4th Division also played a significant role in the Battle of Iwo Jima, from which came the iconic image of the Marines raising the American flag over Mount Suribachi (taken by Joe Rosenthal on February 23rd of five Marines and one Navy corpsman raising the second U.S. flag over the mountain). The Battle of Iwo Jima (February 19-March 26, 1945) was the first American attack on Japanese home islands. The 3rd, 4th and 5th Marine divisions (approximately 30,000 Marines) landed on the southern beaches of the island in amphibious vehicles and first secured Mount Suribachi and the southern airfields. The first

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[61] "Guadalcanal Campaign"; "Guadalcanal Campaign," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guadalcanal_Campaign (accessed 23 January 2009).
[62] "The Fighting Fourth of World War II, Division History, Tinian: Home of the Enola Gay," available at http://www.fightingfourth.com/tinian.htm (accessed 23 January 2009).

wave of Marines suffered heavy losses as they came upon Japanese bunkers (the Japanese did not fire on the Marines as they landed but caught them by surprise as the made their way inland). During the course of the battle, another 40,000 troops were brought in as reinforcements. Over 6,000 U.S. servicemen lost their lives during the fierce fighting, while over 21,000 Japanese were killed. The 4th Marine Division alone suffered 9,098 casualties (1,462 killed in action, 344 died of wounds, 7,292 wounded).[63]

4th Division Marines shell Japanese positions from the beaches, circa February 1945.
Photo 26-G-4122, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. Image available at http://www.archives.gov/ research/ww2/photos/#iwo (accessed 12 February 2009).

Of Iwo Jima, Lieutenant Jim G. Lucas, an Oklahoman Marine reporting from the frontlines, wrote:

> *It takes courage to stay at the front on Iwo Jima. It takes something which we can't tag or classify to push out ahead of those lines, against an unseen enemy who has survived two months of shell and shock, who lives beneath the rocks of the island, an enemy capable of suddenly appearing on your flanks or even at your rear, and of disappearing back into his hole.*
>
> *It takes courage for officers to send their men ahead, when many they've known since the Division came into existence have already gone.*
>
> *It takes courage to crawl ahead, 100 yards a day, and get up the next morning, count losses, and do it again.*
>
> *But that's the only way It can be done.[64]*

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[63] "Battle of Iwo Jima," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Iwo_Jima (accessed 23 January 2009); "The Fighting Fourth of World War II, Division History, Iwo Jima: Red Blood on Black Sand," available at http://www.fightingfourth.com/Iwo.htm (accessed 23 January 2009).
[64] "The Fighting Fourth of World War II, Division History, Iwo Jima".

Sgt. John Mooney Kirby,
killed at Iwo Jima, February 22, 1945.

The casualties of Guadalcanal and Iwo Jima combined would be surpassed by the Battle of Okinawa, the largest amphibious assault in the Pacific during World War II. The eighty-two day battle, fought between March and June 1945, resulted in over 48,000 Allied casualties (mostly U.S. casualties). The 1st, 2nd and 6th Marine divisions fought in what Winston Churchill called "among the most intense and famous [battles] in military history." The Allies succeeded in seizing the large island only 340 miles from the Japanese mainland, but the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, just weeks after fighting on Okinawa ended, made a springboard invasion from Okinawa unnecessary. [65]

Photograph published in The National World War II Memorial Registry. Image available at http://www.wwiimemorial.com/registry/ (accessed 22 January 2009).

Men of the 3rd Marine Division (including Sgt. Lennie Kramer of Savannah), April 1945.
Image available at http://flickr.com/photos/mckramer/40299224/ (accessed 12 February 2009).

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[65] "Battle of Okinawa," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Okinawa (accessed 23 January 2009).

The United States Marine Corps Women's Reserve (USMCWR) was established by the Navy Bill, Public Law 689 on July 30, 1942. This bill authorized women's reserves for the Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard to free men from shore duty for combat duty. Though 20,000 women joined the Women's Reserve, very few came from Georgia, most coming from the northeastern states. However, at least one woman from Chatham County served in the Women's Reserve. Ida E. Cory served as a Link Trainer, teaching instrument flights to pilots. Cory was likely trained at the Naval Air Station, Atlanta, Georgia where specialist training was offered for Link Training Instructor.[66]

Women's Reservists in the fuselage of a Link Trainer.
Department of Defense Photo (USMC) 7184.
Image available at
http://www.nps.gov/archive/wapa/indepth/extContent/usmc/pcn-190-003129-00/sec7.htm (accessed 12 February 2009).

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[66] Stremlow, Mary V., Colonel, USMCR (Ret.), "Introduction," taken from *Free a Marine to Fight: Women Marines in World War II* (Marine Corps Historical Center, 1994), available through "Marines in World War II Commemorative Series at http://www.nps.gov/archive/wapa/indepth/extContent/usmc/pcn-190-003129-00/sec1.htm (accessed 23 January 2009); Stremlow, "Specialist Schools," available at http://www.nps.gov/archive/wapa/indepth/extContent/usmc/pcn-190-003129-00/sec7.htm (accessed 23 January 2009); "United States Marine Corps Women's Reserve," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Marine_Corps_Women's_Reserve (accessed 23 January 2009); "World War II Memorial Registry."

United States Army

United States Army Emblem
Image available at http://www.emblematicco.com/art/emblems/army_lg.jpg (accessed 18 February 2009).

Chatham County contributed hundreds of men and women to the forces of the United States Army during World War II. 223 of them lost their lives while serving. A sampling of entries in the National World War II Memorial Registry indicates that Chatham Countians served in a variety of Army corps and filled numerous jobs (412 individuals were identified in the registry based on their identified hometown; of those, 86 were randomly reviewed for service notes). Our men served in the Corps of Engineers (overseeing an unprecedented construction program and serving in Combat Engineer Battalions to provide demolition, obstacle emplacement, fortification and bridge building in the field), the Ordnance Corps (tasked with the efficient and safe transport of ammunition to the field), the Signal Corps (responsible for communications and information support), and the Quartermaster Corps (supplying forces around the world), in addition to infantry and airborne divisions. Women served in the Army Nurse Corps and the Women's Army Corps. These individuals were dispersed in the United States, North Africa, Italy, England, Europe, the Pacific, China and Burma.[67]

Between World War I and the outbreak of World War II, the United States Army had been become "tiny and insular," focused on continental defense. As war escalated in Europe, the U.S. Army shifted its focus to hemispheric defense and began a massive expansion and mobilization effort, including induction of the National Guard into Federal service and the first peacetime draft in American

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[67] *World War II Honor List of Dead and Missing Army and Army Air Forces Personnel from Georgia, 1946* (War Department, The Adjutant General's Office, Administrative Services Division, Strength Accounting Branch, 1954), available online at http://www.archives.gov/research/arc/ww2/army-casualties/georgia.html (accessed 21 January 2009); "World War II Memorial Registry," available at www.wwiimemorial.com (accessed 22 January 2009); Anderson, Richard C., Jr., "US Army in World War II: Engineers and Logistics," available through Military History Online at http://www.militaryhistoryonline.com/wwii/usarmy/engineers.aspx (accessed 5 February 2009); Schubert, Frank N., "Mobilization; The U.S. Army in World War II, The 50th Anniversary" (CMH Pub 72-32, U.S. Army Center of Military History), 19, available at http://www.history.army.mil/documents/mobpam.htm (accessed 5 February 2009); "Signal Corps (United States Army)," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Army_Signal_Corps (accessed 5 February 2009).

history. Instead of continental defense posts, stateside Army installations refocused on raising, training and deploying the expanding Army around the world.[68]

National Guard Emblem
Image available at http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Army_National_Guard_logo.gif (accessed 18 February 2009).

The National Guard's 30th Infantry Division was composed of militia units from North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Tennessee. In Chatham County, this included the Savannah Volunteer Guards, the Chatham Artillery, the Georgia Hussars, the Irish Jasper Greens, the German Volunteers, and the Republican Blues [*see* Gordon B. Smith's "Savannah Area National Guard Units During World War II" (2009) for more information on the specific activities of each militia organization].

In September 1940, these units were among the first called up and inducted. "Upon mobilization, camp was pitched in Daffin Park where physical examinations and all preparations made for one year of active duty as specified in the War Department's call." The 30th Infantry Division then traveled to Fort Jackson, South Carolina for training [the Georgia Hussars trained at Camp Stewart in anti-aircraft artillery]. The training of Savannah's units echoes that of units from all over the United States, and their wartime duties and experiences are representative of many individuals. Though many of the local men originally inducted with the 30th Infantry Division were split off into other units and divisions around the world, several of Chatham County's soldiers served with the 30th until V-E Day.[69]

The Chatham Artillery, Irish Jasper Greens and German Volunteers were all part of the 118th Field Artillery Regiment, 30th Infantry Division. In the spring of 1942, the Army was reorganized into three major commands: the Army Air Forces; the Army Ground Forces (in charge of organizing, training and equipping all Army units other than the Air Forces); and the Army Service Forces (a logistical system set up to support supply and distribution). Lt. Gen. Lesley J. McNair, head of the Army Ground Forces, developed armored and airborne divisions, and restructured infantry divisions from a square with four regiments into a more flexible triangular division with three regiments. Triangularization of the 30th Infantry Division resulted in the splitting of the 118th Field Artillery (FA) Regiment

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[68] Dzwonchyk, Wayne M. and John Ray Skates, "A Brief History of the U.S. Army in World War II: The U.S. Army Campaigns of World War II" (Center of Military History, United States Army, Washington, D.C., 1992) 4-6, 8, available at http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USA/USA-C-WWII/index.html (accessed 5 February 2009); Anderson, Richard. C., Jr., "US Army in World War II: Introduction and Organization," available through *Military History Online* at http://www.militaryhistoryonline.com/wwii/usarmy/introduction.aspx (accessed 5 February 2009); Kirkpatrick, Charles E., "Defense of the Americas, The U.S. Army Campaigns of World War II" (U.S. Army Center of Military History), 3, 20-21, available at http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USA/USA-C-Americas/index.html (accessed 5 February 2009).

[69] "Georgia Army National Guard," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgia_Army_National_Guard (accessed 2 January 2009); "The 30th Infantry Division in World War II," available at http://www.30thinfantry.org/ (accessed 2 January 2009); Jacobs, John W., 1st Lt. (Historian), *On the Way: A historical narrative of the Two-Thirtieth Field Artillery Battalion Thirtieth Infantry Division, 16 February 1942 to 8 May 1945* (Printed by Fr. Gerold Verlag, Poessnecki. Thuer., Germany, no date), 1; Kennedy, Henry J., *History of the Savannah Volunteer Guards, Inc., 1802-1992* (Savannah Volunteer Guards, 1998), xiv, 159; Dzwonchyk and Skates, 9.

into the 118th FA Battalion (largely made up of the Savannah Volunteer Guards), the 230th FA Battalion (made up of men from the Chatham Artillery, Irish Jasper Greens, German Volunteers), and the 197th FA Battalion. During this period, the original rosters were broken up and men were used as cadre to form new units as recruits from around the country filled up the older battalions.[70]

During 1942, the 118th and 230th FA battalions undertook training at several installations. 26 weeks of basic training was completed at Camp Blanding, Florida. At Camp Gordon, Georgia they passed the Army Ground Forces tests. During combat team problems and maneuvers using wooden guns near Camp Forrest, Tennessee, the 118th became combat partners with the 117th Infantry Regiment, and the 230th with the 120th Infantry Regiment. Stateside training ended with testing at Camp Atterbury, Indiana. In February 1944, the 30th Infantry Division traveled by train to Boston to debark for England.[71]

Detraining on a Boston pier, the men "were loaded down like mountain artillery mules. We didn't quite know whether to be scared or excited. The Red Cross gave us hot coffee and doughnuts; a band was playing. We could see the slab-like grey side of a huge ship, tied up to the pier. Just like the movies, only we were going up the gangplank in the swirling snow." Traveling with their combat teams, the battalions sailed as part of a large convoy led by the *U.S.S. Nevada* (the 118th on the Motor Ship *John T. Erickson* and the 230th on the *S.S. Argentina*). Their final destination was southern England for intensive combat team training in preparation for the invasion of France.[72]

As the 30th Infantry Division was training in the United States and England, fighting in North Africa and Italy had progressed. In 1942, led by Lt. Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, American and British troops landed along the coasts of French Morocco and Algeria. Fighting in Africa ended in May 1943, followed by Allied campaigns in Sicily and Italy to push the Germans back. On June 4, 1944, just before the Normandy invasion, Allied troops entered Rome. Even though Italy now became a secondary theater, fighting continued there until German surrender in May 1945.[73]

Many of the soldiers identified in the World War II National Memorial Registry served in the Mediterranean Theater, most moving from Africa into Italy and on to Europe as the war progressed. Pfc. I. Hilton, of Savannah, received the Purple Heart Award after being wounded in action in Italy. Hilton served with the Colored 92nd Infantry Division. The U.S. Army of World War II was segregated,

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[70] Dzwonchyk and Skates, 8-9; Anderson, "Introduction and Organization…"; Schubert, "Mobilization…"; Smith, Gordon B., *The Chatham Artillery, 1786-1986* (1985), 44; "Irish Jasper Greens," *Savannah Evening Press* (hereafter SEP) (16 March 1942), taken from "Savannah Military Companies: A Scrapbook of Newspaper Clippings," Thomas Gamble Collection, Bull Street Library, Live Oak Public Libraries (hereafter Gamble Collection); "Bronze Plaque Memorializes German Volunteers' Service," *Savannah Morning News* (hereafter SMN) (4 May 1941), taken from "Savannah Military Companies: A Scrapbook of Newspaper Clippings," Gamble Collection; Kennedy, xiv, 165.
[71] Jacobs, 2-3; Kennedy, xiv, 161, 166-167.
[72] Jacobs, 3-4, 6-7, 9; Kennedy, 169-170, 174-175.
[73] Dzwonchyk and Skates, 10-14, 17, 72.

with African Americans serving in separate battalions from white soldiers. Most of these battalions served the Armed Service Forces in service and supply units. Only three African American combat divisions were formed, and only one, the 92nd, saw extensive combat. Nicknamed the "Buffalo Soldiers," the 92nd served in the Italian North Apennines and the Po Valley between September 1944 and May 1945. The "Buffalo Soldiers" participated in the crossing of the Arno River, the occupation of Lucca, the penetration of the Gothic Line, and took towns along the Ligurian coast until Germany's surrender. After suffering 3,200 casualties, including Pfc. Hilton, the 92nd "Buffalo Soldiers" returned to the United States where the division was inactivated in November 1945.[74]

*A 92nd Infantry Division mortar company in battle near Massa, Italy, circa November 1944.*
Image #208-AA-47U-6, National Archives and Records Administration. Image available at
http://www.archives.gov/research/african-americans/ww2-pictures/index.html (accessed 17 February 2009).

Planning for an Allied amphibious invasion of the coast of Normandy began in 1943. In preparation to cross the English Channel, American and British military leaders built up a force of approximately 1.6 million soldiers in southern England. Starting in the pre-dawn hours of June 6, 1944, British, American and Canadian troops landed on the beaches of Normandy (code-named UTAH and OMAHA) to begin the invasion of "fortress Europe." German opposition on OMAHA beach

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[74] "World War II Memorial Registry"; *Savannah Morning News Index 1944* (11 October 1944), 9:6; Anderson, Richard C., Jr., "US Army in World War II: Manpower, Replacements, and the Segregated Army," available through Military History Online at http://www.militaryhistoryonline.com/wwii/usarmy/manpower.aspx (accessed 5 February 2009); "92nd Infantry Division (United States)," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/92nd_Infantry_Division_(United_States) (accessed 5 February 2009); "Division History: 92nd Infantry Division," taken from *The Army Almanac: A Book of Facts Concerning the Army of the United States* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1950), available at http://www.lonesentry.com/usdivisions/history/infantry/division/92nd_infantry_division (accessed 5 February 2009).

was particularly fierce where the 1st and 29th infantry divisions and 2nd and 5th ranger battalions had landed. Allied forces from the two beachheads eventually linked up and seized the port city of Cherbourg. From the coast, "Allied troops advanced with agonizing slowness from hedgerow to hedgerow, in a seemingly endless series of small battles."[75]
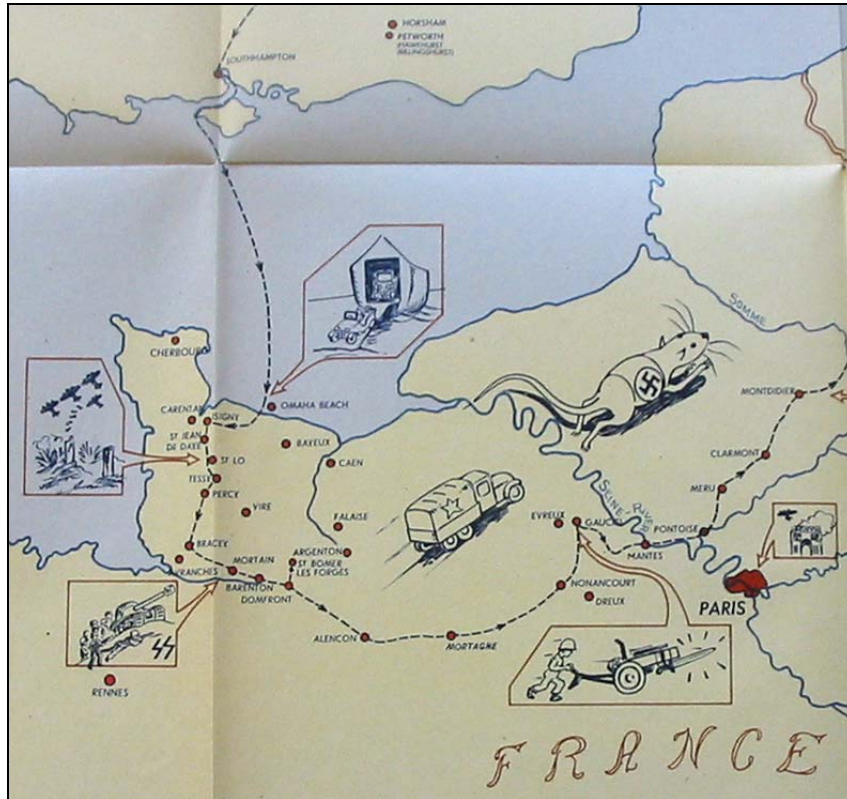
Detail of "230th Field Artillery Bn. (30th Old Hickory Inf. Div), Route of March Through France, Belgium, Holland and Germany," showing the 230th amphibious landing on OMAHA beach.
Taken from Jacobs, John W., *On the Way: A historical narrative of the Two-Thirtieth Field Artillery Battalion Thirtieth Infantry Division, 16 February 1942 to 8 May 1945* (Germany: Fr. Gerold Verlag, Poessnek, no date), available at the Bull Street Branch, Live Oak Public Libraries.

The 30th Infantry Division landed on OMAHA beach between June 10 and 15. On June 8th, the 230th FA Battalion received the order to "Load up—you've got forty-five minutes." The 230th was split from the division to replace a field artillery battalion of the 29th Infantry Division who had lost their howitzers during the initial landings. The battalion's trucks and guns were water-proofed and loaded on two LSTs (Landing Ship, Tank). The LSTs left on the 9th and crossed the channel to become part of a large invasion fleet; "as far as we could see, ships lay at anchor." The 230th was the first unit of the 30th Infantry Division to land on the beaches of Normandy on June 10th, D-Day Plus 4. The 118th FA Battalion arrived on June 13th, and the following day the 230th was released from its attachment to the 29th Infantry Division and returned to the 30th.[76]

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[75] Dzwonchyk and Skates, 18-20.
[76] Jacobs, 10-13; Smith, 45; Kennedy, 177-178.

Henry C. Walden was killed near Mortain, France on August 7, 1944.
Photograph published in The National World War II Memorial Registry. Image available at http://www.wwiimemorial.com/registry/ (accessed 22 January 2009).

The 30th Infantry Division pushed through Normandy and Northern France during the months of June, July and August, and played a major part in the decisive Battle of Mortain. "In the words of a German commander at the time, the situation at Mortain was more than desperate, it was 'completely unclear'." For part of the fighting, the 30th Infantry Division was cut off from its supply line. The Allied victory at Mortain was credited in large part to the rapid artillery fire of the 230th FA Battalion. Allied progress led to hope the war might end before winter and Eisenhower ordered Allied forces "to drive all-out for the German frontier." However, "as the Allies approached the frontiers of the Reich, they encountered a series of formidable terrain obstacles—major rivers, mountains, and forests—and the worst weather in over thirty years…. Battles of attrition followed throughout October and November, all along the front."[77]

In December 1944, the Germans launched their last major offensive in the Ardennes Mountains region of Belgium, France and Luxembourg, attempting to split the Allied line and force a negotiated peace. "Aided by bad weather, a variety of deceptive measures, and the failure of Allied intelligence to correctly interpret the signs of an impending attack, they achieved complete surprise," causing five infantry divisions to fall back in confusion. However, by the end of January, the Allies had retaken all the ground lost to the Germans in "a myriad of small defensive battles," where combat teams proved critical.[78]

The Ardennes Offensive (December 16, 1944-January 25, 1945) is commonly known as the Battle of the Bulge due to the protruding bulge the Germans created in the Allied line of advance on war maps. The Battle of the Bulge was one of the bloodiest battles of the European war. Official U.S. casualties were about 80,500 (19,000 dead, 47,500 wounded, 23,000 captured or missing), most of them occurring within the first three days of battle. Numerous Chatham County soldiers participated in the Normandy landings, the push towards Germany, and the Battle of the Bulge, several of them paying the ultimate price. Local Army soldiers and airmen were also taken as German prisoners of war. Most were released at the end of the war, but some died in captivity. Cpl. Horace G. Meisner, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, was taken as a POW while

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[77] Smith, 45-46; "The 30th Infantry Division in World War II"; Dzwonchyk and Skates, 20-21.
[78] Dzwonchyk and Skates, 22-23; "Battle of the Bulge," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_the_Bulge (accessed 5 February 2009); Cole, Hugh M., *The Ardennes: Battle of the Bulge* (Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C., 1965) vii-viii, available at http://www.history.army.mil/books/wwii/7-8/7-8_CONT.HTM (accessed 5 February 2009); Smith, 45-46; "The 30th Infantry Division in World War II."

serving in an Engineer Combat Battalion. Meisner died in the German prisoner camp Stalag 4B Muhlberg Sachsen 51-3.[79]
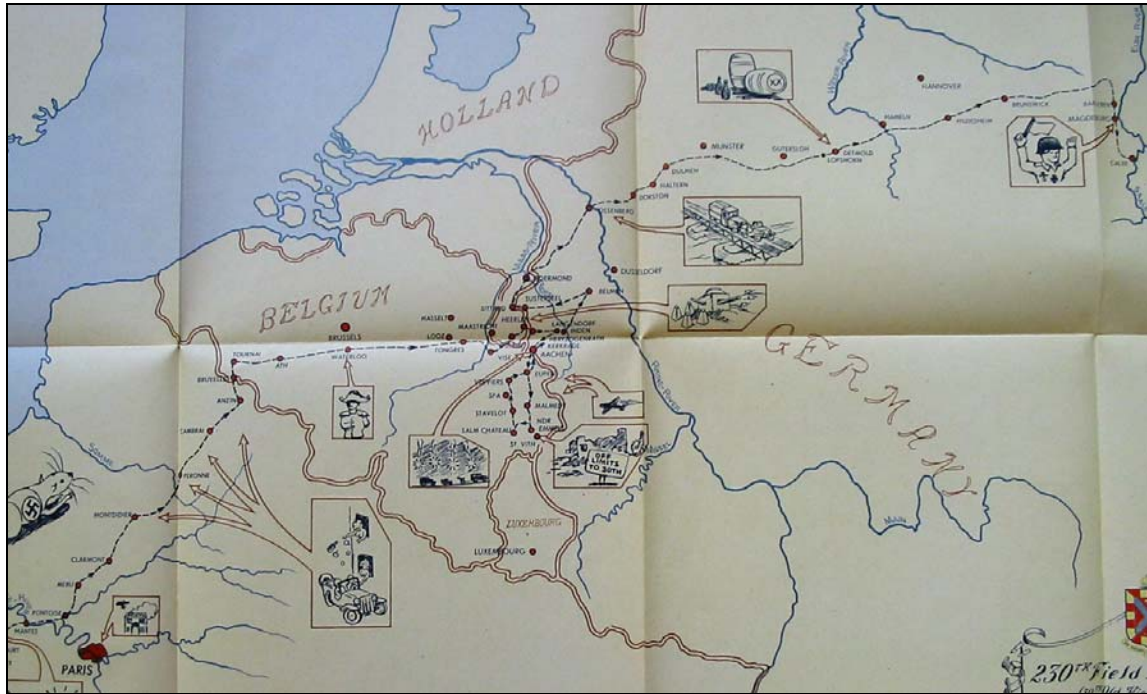
Detail of "230th Field Artillery Bn. (30th Old Hickory Inf. Div), Route of March Through France, Belgium, Holland and Germany."
Taken from Jacobs, John W., *On the Way: A historical narrative of the Two-Thirtieth Field Artillery Battalion Thirtieth Infantry Division, 16 February 1942 to 8 May 1945* (Germany: Fr. Gerold Verlag, Poessnek, no date), available at the Bull Street Branch, Live Oak Public Libraries.

Following the repulsion of the Ardennes Offensive, the Allied line continued to advance until crossing the Rhine and meeting Soviet forces coming in from the east. The 30th Infantry Division reached its terminus at Magdeburg on the Elbe River on April 17, 1945, the day after Soviets entered Berlin. The German High Command surrendered all forces unconditionally on May 7th. The 30th Infantry Division was deactivated at Fort Jackson on November 20, 1945. Only 33 of the 384 Chatham County soldiers who left Savannah in 1940 with the division still remained in the ranks of the 30th when deactivated.[80]

With victory in Europe, the U.S. could now focus on the war with Japan in the Pacific. Combat here differed greatly with a war defined by naval air and sea battles and island hopping by the Army and Marines. The Pacific Theater was divided into area commands, with Army General Douglas MacArthur commanding the Southwest Pacific Area (SWPA) and Navy Admiral Chester Nimitz the Pacific Ocean Areas (POA).[81]

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[79] Dzwonchyk and Skates, 22-23; "Battle of the Bulge"; Cole, vii-viii; "World War II Memorial Registry"; World War II Prisoners of War Data File, 12/7/1941 – 11/19/1946, U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, available at http://aad.archives.gov/ (accessed 5 February 2009).
[80] Dzwonchyk and Skates, 23, 25; "The 30th Infantry Division in World War II"; Smith, 46; Jacobs, 118; Kennedy, 383, 399, 407.
[81] Dzwonchyk and Skates, 26, 29-30.

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor marked the official entrance of the United States into World War II. At the same time they attacked the Navy's Pacific Fleet, Japanese targeted the U.S. garrison in the Philippines commanded by MacArthur. Lying only 200 miles from Japanese held Formosa, the Philippines were strategically located and the American-Filipino forces held on to the main island of Luzon until the spring of 1942. As the Japanese pushed towards the Luzon city of Manila, MacArthur withdrew to the Bataan Peninsula, hoping for U.S. reinforcements. With as many as 80,000 soldiers (15,000 American) and over 20,000 civilian refugees crowded on the peninsula, the situation grew desperate with lack of food and ammunition, disease and exhaustion. President Roosevelt ordered General MacArthur to evacuate to Australia and under Major General Edward P. King the American-Filipino forces on Bataan were forced to surrender on April 9, 1942 in "the single largest surrender of a military force in American history."[82]

Prisoners of war, with hands tied behind their backs, along the Bataan Dean March, May 1942.
Photo #NA 127-N-114541, National Archives and Records Administration.
Available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:NA_127-N-114541.jpg (accessed 17 February 2009).

What happened next outraged the American people and directly affected the Savannah community. 76,000 American and Filipino prisoners of war were marched sixty miles to Camp O'Donnell. The sick and starving men were denied food and water, and suffered "deliberate and arbitrary cruelty" by Japanese

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[82] Dzwonchyk and Skates, 32-33; "U.S. Army in World War II: Pictorial Record, The War Against Japan, Section I The Allied Defense," 37, available at http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperway/USA/USA-PR-Japan/USA-PR-Japan-1.html (accessed 5 February 2009); "Bataan Death March," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bataan_Death_March (accessed 30 January 2009).

guards during what became known as the Bataan Death March (later declared a Japanese war crime). Thousands (including an estimated 600 Americans and 10,000 Filipinos) died or were killed along the way. "The number of deaths that took place in the internment camps from delayed effects of the march is uncertain, but believed to be high." Several local soldiers were victims of the Bataan Death March. 2nd Lt. Jack W. Burkhalter, serving with the 42nd Infantry Regiment, 41st Division (Philippine Army), died in Fukuoka POW Camp #1 – Kashii (Pine Tree Camp) Kyushu Island 33-130. Cpl. Arthur J. Chandler, U.S. Army Air Corps, survived this same camp. Cpt. C. W. Delong survived the march, but died later on a Japanese ship. Pfc. Francis J. Cronk also survived the march to Camp O'Donnell, but died as a POW in Cabanatuan, Philippines on September 19, 1942. In 1946, Savannah Mayor Peter R. Nugent sought legislation to give Bataan Death March veterans preference in reemployment, and used Chandler, then back in Savannah, as an example.[83]

101st Separate Coast Artillery Battalion, A.A. (Anti-Aircraft), Camp Stewart, circa 1941.
Images taken from Henderson, Lindsey P., Jr., *Come What Will; A Military History of the 101st AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion, 15 October 1940 to VJ Day 1945* (US Army Occupied Berlin, Germany: Lindsey P. Henderson, Jr., circa 1966), available at the Bull Street Branch, Live Oak Public Libraries.

As part of its expansion, the U.S. Army undertook large-scale development of its anti-aircraft artillery (AAA) force. AAA battalions were established in 1941 and 1942, many training at the new anti-aircraft defense area at Camp Stewart (now Fort Stewart, outside of Hinesville). One such battalion grew out of the Georgia Hussars of Savannah. Prior to World War II, the Georgia Hussars was part of the 108th Cavalry, Georgia National Guard. On October 15, 1940, the 108th Cavalry was re-designated the 101st Separate Coast Artillery Battalion, A.A. (Anti-Aircraft) [after several reorganizations this battalion was known as the 101st Anti-Aircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion Air-Transportable at the end of the war]. The 101st was inducted into Federal service on February 10, 1941. After completing a special thirteen week mobilization training program at Camp Stewart, they undertook seven weeks of training attached to the First Army Corps

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[83] Dzwonchyk and Skates, 34; "Bataan Death March"; World War II Prisoners of War Data File…; World War II Prisoners of the Japanese File, 2007 Update, ca. 1941 – ca. 1945, U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, available at http://aad.archives.gov/ (accessed 5 February 2009); *Savannah Morning News Index 1945-1946* (13 August 1945), 10:6; "Mayor Seeks Legislation to Give Death-march Vets Choice of Post," SMN (22 August 1946), 14:4; "Raid at Cabanatuan," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raid_at_Cabanatuan (accessed 9 February 2009).

near Richberg Junction, South Carolina. On February 1, 1942, the 101st boarded trains and departed for Boston (with a quick stop at Savannah's Union Station on the way out of Georgia). On February 18th, the battalion, along with almost 12,000 soldiers, sailed out of Boston on the *Queen Mary*. While at sea, the 101st was assigned duty on the ship's anti-aircraft guns. Arriving in Port Jackson, Sydney, Australia, the 101st traveled by train "packed like sardine tins" for Brisbane, and then by boat to Port Moresby, New Guinea. They were the first complete unit of American ground combat troops to reach New Guinea and subsequently raised the first American flag on New Guinea. The 101st was also responsible for setting up the first American Post Office in New Guinea (May-July 1942) and its Chaplain buried the first American dead to be given a military funeral on New Guinea in "improvised coffins made from packing crates."[84]

Scenes of the 101st gun crews, undated.
Images taken from Henderson, Lindsey P., Jr., *Come What Will; A Military History of the 101st AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion, 15 October 1940 to VJ Day 1945* (US Army Occupied Berlin, Germany: Lindsey P. Henderson, Jr., circa 1966), available at the Bull Street Branch, Live Oak Public Libraries.

U.S. successes in the 1942 battles of the Coral Sea and Midway cleared the way for Allied counteroffensives. MacArthur (with Army and Australian forces) focused on New Guinea and Nimitz (with Marines and Army soldiers) on the Solomons. Pushing along the New Guinea coast was slow, as MacArthur advanced 2,000 miles back to the Philippines. Over the next three years, the 101st AAA battalion was part of this offensive. They participated in the East Indies, Papuan, New Guinea and Philippine Liberation campaigns, and arrived in Manila, Philippines on March 14, 1945. In Manila, they provided protection for the Quezon Air Field, the Novaliches Dam and Filter Plant, and the Manila Dock Area. During this time, the 101st did not lose any men in action. Though, several of their soldiers were wounded, including in the New Guinea Campaign at Port Moresby on April 12, 1943.[85]

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[84] Anderson, Richard C., Jr., "US Army in World War II: Artillery and AA Artillery," available through Military History Online at http://www.militaryhistoryonline.com/wwii/usarmy/artillery.aspx (accessed 5 February 2009); Henderson, Lindsey P., Jr., *Come What Will; A Military History of the 101st AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion, 15 October 1940 to VJ Day 1945* (Printed in US Army Occupied Berlin Germany, 1966), 1, 3-4, 6, 11-17, 77, 105-106; "Major Henderson Executive Officer," SEP (1 February 1941), taken from "Savannah Military Companies: A Scrapbook of Newspaper Clippings," Gamble Collection.
[85] Dzwonchyk and Skates, 34, 39, 41; Henderson, 55-56, 106-107.
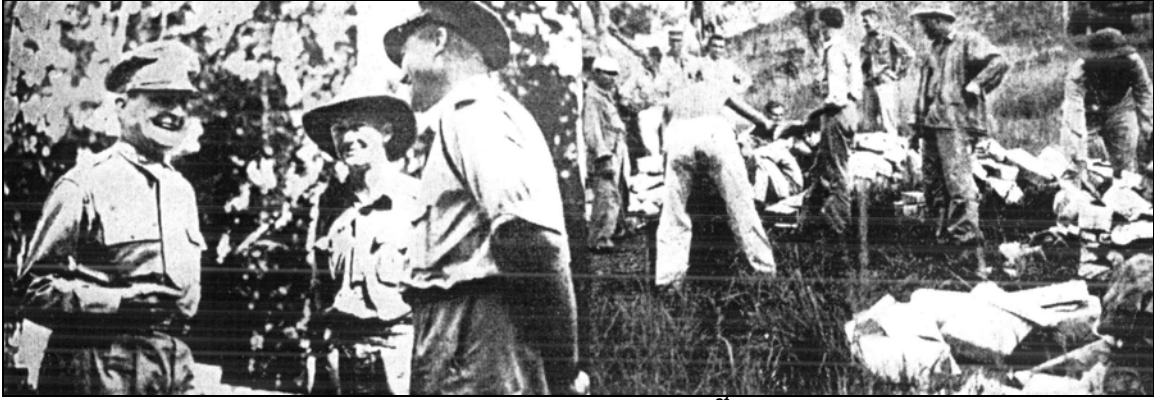
"General MacArthur visits our area. Christmas Mail, 101st Battalion Headquarters, 1942."
Images taken from Henderson, Lindsey P., Jr., *Come What Will; A Military History of the 101st AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion, 15 October 1940 to VJ Day 1945* (US Army Occupied Berlin, Germany: Lindsey P. Henderson, Jr., circa 1966), available at the Bull Street Branch, Live Oak Public Libraries.

As a whole, the battalion was recognized for their service in the Papuan Campaign by War Department Order 21 (May 6, 1943):

> *The Papuan Forces, United States Army, Southwest Pacific Area, are cited for outstanding performance of duty in action during the period July 23, 1942, to January 23, 1943. When a bold and aggressive enemy invaded Papua in strength, the combined action of ground and air units of these forces, in association with Allied units, checked the hostile advance, drove the enemy back to the seacoast and in a series of actions against a highly organized defensive zone, utterly destroyed him. Ground combat forces, operating over roadless jungle-covered mountains and swamps, demonstrated their courage and resourcefulness in closing with an enemy who took every advantage of the nearly impassible terrain, Air Forces, by repeatedly attacking the enemy ground forces and installations, by destroying his convoys attempting reinforcement and supply, and by transporting ground forces and supplies to areas for which land routes were nonexistent and so routes slow and hazardous, made possible the success of the ground operations. Service units, operating far forward of their normal positions and at times in advance of ground combat elements, built landing fields in the jungle, established and operated supply points, and provided for the hospitalization and evacuation of the wounded and sick. The courage, spirit, and devotion to duty of all elements of the command made possible the complete victory attained.*
> *By order of the Secretary of War:*
>
> > *G. C. Marshall*
> > *Chief of Staff[86]*

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[86] Henderson, 58.

The last two major campaigns in the Pacific were Luzon, led by MacArthur, and Okinawa, by Nimitz. Fighting in Luzon lasted almost seven months and cost 40,000 casualties. The Battle of Okinawa included Army infantry divisions and Marine divisions. Okinawa casualties "were staggering," with over 12,000 American deaths (including men from Chatham County). The atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August forced Japan to surrender on August 15, 1945, and World War II was over.[87]

William Howard Hicks was attached to the 27th Infantry Division and served in New Guinea and the Philippines. Photograph published in The National World War II Memorial Registry. Image available at http://www.wwiimemorial.com/registry/ (accessed 22 January 2009).

By the time V-E and V-J days were celebrated, the United States Army had deployed sixty-one divisions to the European Theater, seven to the Mediterranean, and twenty-one to the Pacific. Over 8 million soldiers were serving in far-flung corners of the world. Under great pressure, the Army undertook rapid demobilization to return soldiers home (by 1947 the Army was only about 700,000 soldiers strong). Not all of Chatham County's soldiers returned home quickly. "The United States emerged from the war with global military commitments that included the occupation of Germany and Japan and the oversight of Allied interests in liberated areas." Immediately following V-E Day, men of the 30th Infantry Division were placed in occupied areas along the Czech border and in Schonebeck, Germany where they "assumed the authority of a military government, operated several camps for displaced persons, and one large camp for allied prisoners of war released by the Russians." Additionally, Chatham County soldiers served in occupied Berlin and Japan after the war.[88]

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[87] Dzwonchyk and Skates, 42-43.
[88] Anderson, "Introduction and Organization…"; Dzwonchyk and Skates, 44; "World War II Memorial Registry"; Kennedy, 230.

Women's Army Corps (WAC)

Women's Army Corps "Pallas" Insignia
Image available at http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USA/USA-WAC/index.html (accessed 17 February 2009).

Like the other armed service branches faced with a manpower deficit, the U.S. Army established an emergency wartime unit for women to release men for combat duty. On May 14, 1942, the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) was established to work with the Army. The Army supplied WAACs with food, uniforms, living quarters, pay and medical care. However, since they were only an auxiliary unit, WAACs did not receive overseas pay, government life insurance, veteran's medical coverage, death benefits, or protection as prisoners of war. This oversight was corrected in July 1943 when the WAAC was converted to the Women's Army Corps (WAC), a part of the Army rather than just an auxiliary service to it. Over 150,000 women served in the WAAC/WAC during WWII, in all theaters of the war for the Army Air Forces (about 40%), Army Ground Forces (about 20%), and the Army Service Forces (about 40%). Most worked as file clerks, typists, stenographers, and motor pool drivers. Some served as radio operators, telephone switchboard operators, photograph and map analysts, and medical technicians. In October 1942, the *Savannah Morning News* reported that "the response of women and girls in Savannah and Chatham County to the call for enlistments in the Auxiliary Corps has been heavy." One of those women, Mrs. Gertie E. Lee (enlisted 1943), died while serving (non-battle cause).[89]

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[89] Bellafaire, Judith A., "The Women's Army Corps, A Commemoration of World War II Service" (CMH Pub 72-15, U.S. Army Center of Military History), 3-6, 9-14, 17-18, available at http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USA/USA-WAC/index.html (5 February 2009); "FACT SHEET: WAAC/WAC World War II Statistics," available at http://www.awm.lee.army.mil/research_pages/WAC_strength%20in%20WWII.htm (21 January 2009); "Barracks Will Be Built for Women," SMN (16 October 1942), 18:1; World War II Army Enlistment Records File, U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, available at http://aad.archives.gov/ (accessed 9 February 2009); "World War II Memorial Registry."

WAC Christmas Party for displaced children (Santa is played by T/4 Carol A. Darrcott, of Savannah), Frankfurt, Germany, photographed by Hans Reinhart, January 5, 1946.
Photograph from the Bettman/CORBIS Collection.
Image available at http://pro.corbis.com/search/Enlargement.aspx?CID=isg&mediauid=%7B19D056E7-8F0F-448B-99BD-758F632F98E9%7D (accessed 17 February 2009).

The first WAAC officers were trained in 1942 at Fort Des Moines, Iowa. These women were then used to train incoming officer candidates and enlistees at training centers in Daytona Beach, Florida, Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, and Fort Devens, Massachusetts. Among the first class of WAAC officer candidates was Charity Edna Adams, a black woman from Columbia, South Carolina. Like the rest of the Army, the WAAC/WAC was segregated. Adams was the first African American woman commissioned as an officer in the WAAC. She trained black platoons in the U.S. until assuming command of the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion. The 6888th, the only African American WAC unit stationed in Europe, was tasked with delivering mail to 7 million American personnel (including Army, Navy, Marine Corps, civilians, and Red Cross workers), a crucial job since "receiving mail was important for the morale of men on the front." The 6888th was comprised of over 800 women from all over the country, including several from Chatham County,[90] who had received training at Fort Oglethorpe. Lt. Col. Adams left the WAC in March 1946 as its highest ranking African American female officer. In the late 1940s, Adams took a position at Georgia State College (now Savannah State University) as director of student personnel and assistant professor of education. In 1996, she was honored in the National Postal Museum, and the Smithsonian Institute has included her on their list of the historically most important black women.[91]

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[90] For example, Sylvia E. Armstrong Benton, Wilma E. Barnes, Herlene R. Bradsher, Vernelle A. Hannah, and Annie M. Mason [as identified in the "World War II Memorial Registry"].
[91] Bellafaire, "The Women's Army Corps…," 7-9, 21; Moore, Jo Anne, "Black Women in WWII, A Forgotten Story: The Story of the 6888th Central Postal Directory WAC Battalion" (12 December 2008), available at http://americanhistory.suite101.com/article.cfm/black_women_in_wwii_a_forgotten_story (accessed 5 February 2009); Botsch, Carol Sears, "Charity Edna Adams Earley," available at http://www.usca.edu/aasc/earley.htm (accessed 5

Major Charity E. Adams inspects the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion, February 15, 1945.
Image #111-SC-20079, National Archives and Records Administration. Image available at
http://www.archives.gov/research/african-americans/ww2-pictures/index.html (accessed 17 February 2009).

February 2009); Goldstein, Richard, "Charity Adams Earley, Black Pioneer in Wacs, Dies at 83," *New York Times* (22 January 2002).

Army Nurse Corps

1st Lt. Florence Eleanor Gildea served at the 110th Station Hospital in Southampton, England
Photograph published in The National World War II Memorial Registry. Image available at http://www.wwiimemorial.com/registry/ (accessed 22 January 2009).

During World War II, over 59,000 American nurses served in the Army Nurse Corps in all theaters of war and closer to combat lines than ever before. The Army Nurse Corps worked with the Army Medical Corps to provide medical treatment for soldiers in the "chain of evacuation," including mobile field and evacuation hospitals following combat troops, and more permanent station and general hospitals. Army nurses traveled with patients on hospital trains, ships and aircraft. In addition to treating Allied soldiers, they cared for Allied prisoners of war, captured German POWs, and liberated concentration camp victims. Several women from Savannah served in the Army Nurse Corps in stateside and overseas hospitals and overseas.[92]

Due to the great demand for nurses, Congress passed the Bolton Act in June 1943 establishing the Cadet Nurse Corps program. Between 1943 and 1948, the Cadet Nurse Corps program provided subsidized education for over 150,000 nursing students who agreed to work in essential military or civilian posts after graduation for the duration of the war. In Savannah, two Cadet Nurse Corps programs were established in mid-1944 at St. Joseph's Hospital and Candler Hospital (in cooperation with Armstrong Junior College). The program was divided into pre-cadet, Junior-cadet, and Senior-cadet periods of coursework, hospital training and service in an essential hospital.[93]

St. Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing Cadet Nurses, March 1944.
Savannah Morning News (12 March 1944), 4:2.

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[92] Bellafaire, Judith A., "The Army Nurse Corps, A Commemoration of World War II Service" (U.S. Army Center of Military History), 3-4, 12-13, 23-24, available at http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USA/USA-Nurse/index.html (accessed 5 February 2009); "World War II Memorial Registry."
[93] Bellafaire, "The Army Nurse Corps...," 3, 7; "Cadet Nursing Course Mapped," SMN (6 June 1944), 14:5; "First Class of United States Cadet Nurses," SMN (12 March 1944), 4:2; *Savannah Morning News Index 1944* (13 May 1944), 10:4.

United States Army Air Forces (USAAF)

United States Army Air Forces Insignia
Image available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Army_Air_Forces
(accessed 18 February 2009).

In preparation for entry into World War II and at the request of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the United States Army Air Corps (USAAC), organized in 1926 as a branch of the United States Army, was expanded and new airbases established. By the end of 1940, it had doubled in size in terms of installations and manpower. As part of the expansion, in August 1940, Hunter Field, Savannah's municipal airport, was selected to serve as a light bomber training base. The Army Air Corps transferred 2,700 soldiers and personnel of the 3rd and 27th Bombardment Groups and the 35th Air Base Group from Barksdale Field, Louisiana to the newly designated Savannah Air Base. The bomb groups brought with them A-18 trainers, A-20 light bombers and B-18 medium bombers.[94]

Following the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, expansion of the Savannah Air Base accelerated. By the end of 1945, the base had grown to almost 3,000 acres (from 900) with 450 buildings, and a population of approximately 10,000. During the course of the war, ground support squadrons, bomber groups and fighter groups were trained at the base. "Units that trained at Hunter Field later saw active combat in all major theaters of war, including the China-Burma-India, the Pacific, and the European theaters."[95]

On June 20, 1941, the Army Air Corps was reorganized into the United States Army Air Forces (USAAF), a division of the Army. "In its expansion during World War II, the AAF became the world's most powerful air force. From the Air Corps of 1939, with 20,000 men and 2,400 planes, to the nearly autonomous AAF of 1944, with almost 2.4 million personnel and 80,000 aircraft, was a remarkable

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[94] Maggioni, Joseph P., "Hunter Army Airfield: A History," Fort Stewart Popular Report Series 6 (United States Department of Defense, Department of the Army, Fort Stewart, Directorate of Public Works, Environmental Division, Prevention and Compliance Branch, 2007), 5-6; "Hunter Army Airfield History," Fort Stewart Museum, available at http://www.stewart.army.mil/ima/sites/haaf/history-haaf.asp (accessed 2 January 2009).
[95] Maggioni, 5-6.

expansion. Robert A. Lovett, the Assistant Secretary of War for Air, together with [General Henry H.] Arnold, presided over an increase greater than for either the ground Army or the Navy, while at the same time dispatching combat air forces to the battlefronts."[96]
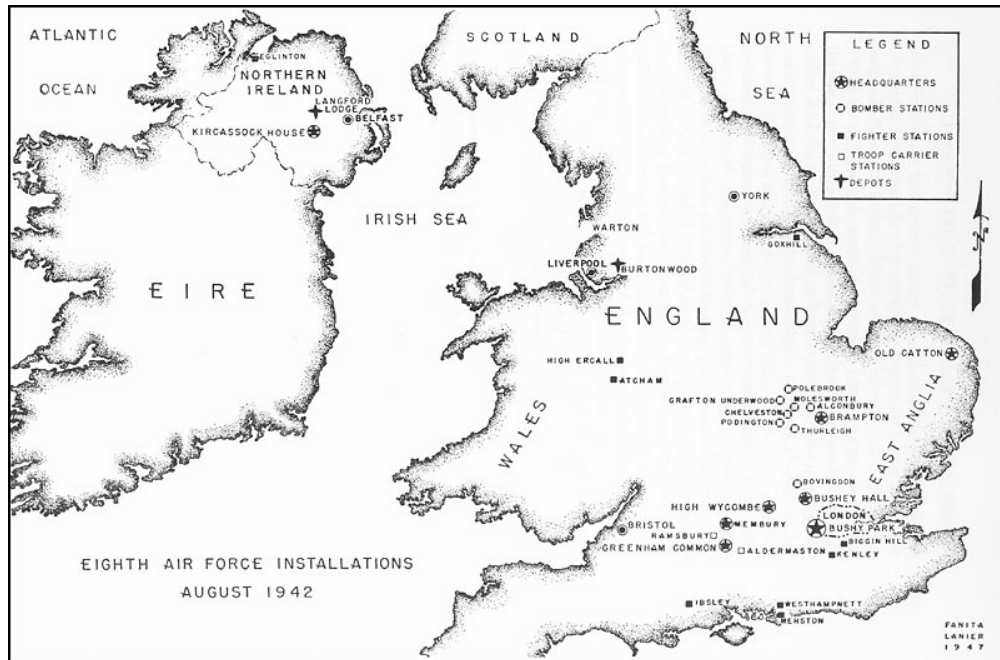

Eighth Air Force Insignia
Each of the numbered air forces used a variation of the Army Air Forces' winged star insignia incorporating the number of the specific air force.
Image available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Patch_8thUSAAF.png
(accessed 18 February 2009).

As the Army Air Forces grew during the war, it created sixteen numbered air forces that were sent to the various theaters of operation. The Eighth Air Force, originally designated VIII Bomber Command on January 19, 1942, found its first home at the Savannah Air Base. The Eighth Air Force, now commonly referred to by its nickname "The Mighty Eighth," was assigned to the United States Strategic Air Forces in Europe on February 1, 1942. An advanced detachment was sent to Royal Air Force (RAF) Bomber Command Headquarters in England in February while the rest of force trained and prepared in Savannah for three months before transferring overseas.[97]

Eighth Air Force Installations, August 1942.
Map available at http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/AAF/I/maps/AAF-I-29.jpg (accessed 17 February 2009).

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[96] Maggioni, 7; "United States Army Air Corps," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Army_Air_Corps (accessed 2 January 2009); Excerpted from "The Evolution of the Department of the Air Force," Air Force Historical Research Agency, taken from "United States Army Air Forces," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Army_Air_Forces (accessed 2 January 2009).
[97] "United States Army Air Forces"; "Eighth Air Force," available at www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eighth_Air_Force (accessed 2 January 2009).

Flying B-17s and B-24s, the Eighth Air Force performed strategic bombing missions against Germany sites in support of the RAF and "gained fame conducting daylight strategic bombing missions over western Europe" through the end of the European war. The Eighth Air Force was then reassigned to Okinawa in July 1945, though the cessation of war against the Japanese meant they did not see action in the Pacific Theater of Operation. The Eighth remained in Okinawa until June 7, 1946.[98]

Eighth Air Force in action, 1943.

Left: "The first big raid by the 8th Air Force was on a Focke Wulf plant at Marienburg. Coming back, the Germans were up in full force and we lost at least 80 ships-800 men, many of them pals," 1943. Image #208-YE-7, National Archives and Records Administration.

Right: "Photograph made from B-17 Flying Fortress of the 8th AAF Bomber Command on 31 Dec. when they attacked the vital CAM ball-bearing plant and the nearby Hispano Suiza aircraft engine repair depot in Paris," France, 1943. Image #208-EX-249A-27, National Archives and Records Administration.

Both images available at http://www.archives.gov/research/ww2/photos/ (accessed 16 February 2009).

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum, in Pooler, Georgia, maintains the 8th Air Force Veterans' Database. Of the approximately 250,000 airmen who served in the Eighth Air Force during World War II, approximately 102,000 names have been included in this database with the help of veterans and their descendants. Of those 102,000, 52 individuals are listed as natives of Savannah (this number does not include airmen from other Chatham County municipalities, and is considered incomplete since the database is not a complete listing of the Eighth Air Force).[99]

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[98] Maggioni, 7; "United States Army Air Corps"; "United States Army Air Forces"; "Eighth Air Force."
[99] Estimate provided to the City of Savannah, Research Library & Municipal Archives by the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum (2 January 2009).

In March 1943, the Third Air Force Staging Wing was moved to Savannah, and the basic mission of the Savannah Air Base shifted to focus on staging airmen and aircraft for transfer to combat areas overseas. Before the end of the war, an estimated 9,000 aircraft and 70,000 airmen were processed through the air base. Following the surrender of Germany, the base then served as a processing center for units returning from Europe and preparing to go to the Pacific. Following the surrender of Japan, the base became a separation center for the discharge of airmen. Ironically, the bombing of Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, which in part led to the surrender of Japan, was overseen by Colonel Paul Tibbetts who had trained at the Savannah Air Base in 1940 and 1941 with the 3rd Bomb Group. Tibbetts later remembered his time in Savannah, "the…months [training at Hunter Field] were the most important of my career from the standpoint of learning to become a precision pilot."[100]


The B-17 City of Savannah*, financed by Chatham County residents through a war-bond drive, was christened at Hunter Field on December 3, 1944. The* City of Savannah *flew thirteen missions with the 388th Bomb Group, Eighth Air Force, out of Knettishall Air Base in England.*
Image from the collections of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum, available online at http://www.savannahnow.com/node/652473 (accessed 17 February 2009).[101]

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[100] "Hunter Army Airfield," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hunter_Army_Airfield (accessed 2 January 2009); Maggioni, 6-9.
[101] Mobley, Chuck, "A proud name, legacy for WWII bomber," *Savannah Morning News* (hereafter SMN) (14 January 2009), available at http://www.savannahnow.com/node/652473 (accessed 17 February 2009).
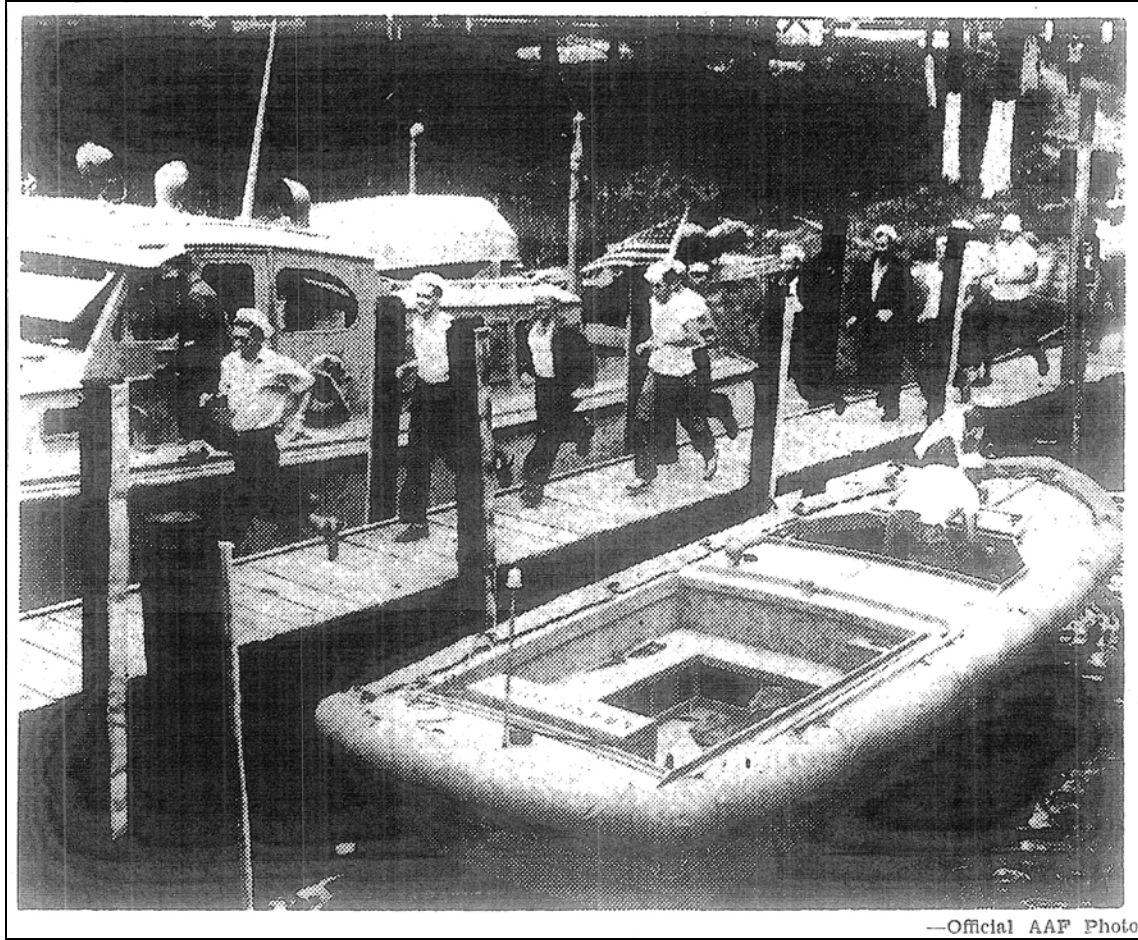
—Official AAF Photo

The Third Air Force Staging Wing also occupied the Thunderbolt Boat Basin as a sea rescue station from which they mounted operations to rescue downed airmen in the Atlantic.[102]
Savannah Morning News (13 November 1944), 8:3.

At this time, the number of airmen from Chatham County who died in World War II has not been clearly identified since the final war dead reported by the United States Army listed both regular United States Army and Army Air Forces together (the total for both was 223 individuals). 175 individuals from Savannah, Port Wentworth and Pooler have been identified as having served with the Army Air Forces through the National World War II Memorial Registry. Those identified from Chatham County include men from the Fifth, Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Twentieth air forces, serving in the Asiatic-Pacific, China-Burma-India, European and American theaters of operation. Specific functions and jobs identified in their service notes include radio operator, flight trainer, flight engineer, ground crew, radar, pilot, bombardier, combat photographer, gunner, intelligence, mechanic, navigator, communications, clerk, and photographic technician. Two women, probably serving with the WAC*, were identified: Louise M. Hadsell Bunger, a nurse; and Frances Burton Symes, with the Dietetic Corps.[103]

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[102] "AAF Soldiers are Sinking Jap Ships by Proxy," SMN (13 November 1944), 8:3.
[103] "World War II Memorial Registry," available at www.wwiimemorial.com (accessed 22 January 2009).

Chatham County airmen lost their lives in both the European and Pacific theaters of war, including Bryant L. Cramer (left), a P-47 fighter pilot with the Ninth Air Force, stationed in England, and Robert A. "Bobby" Fletcher, Jr. (right), killed in action while stationed on Tinian Island in the South Pacific.
Photographs published in The National World War II Memorial Registry.
Images available at http://www.wwiimemorial.com/registry/ (accessed 22 January 2009).

Several local airmen were shot down and taken as prisoners of war. Herman Cranman recounts his experiences as a German prisoner of war in his memoir *A Measure of Life: War, Captivity, Freedom* (Savannah: Herman L. Cranman, 2002). After training as a bombardier in the Aviation Cadet program, Cranman was stationed in Italy with the 376th Bomber Group flying missions over the Balkans, southern German, southern France and northern Italy. On his thirty-fourth mission he was shot down by a German fighter and forced to bail into the Hungarian countryside. Cranman was captured by the Germans and held in Stalag Luft III, near Sagan in the lower Silesia area of Germany, until the Battle of the Bulge during which the camp was evacuated. As the Allied armies advanced on Germany, he was moved on foot and by train to several other camps until he was liberated at Stalag VII in Moosburg along with 50,000 prisoners. As a reminder of how young many of Chatham County's servicemen were, Cranman celebrated his twenty-first birthday while a POW.[104]

William Hearn's liberation and evacuation from German prison camp Stalag Luft I, in Barth, Germany, is an interesting story. Hearn's camp was liberated by the Russians on May 1, 1945. Allied forces were unsure of what the Russians might do with the prisoners of war and staged a massive airlift called "Operation Revival" on May 12, 13 and 14 to get the 8,487 American and British prisoners out of the area as quickly as possible. The Eighth Air Force flew into Barth and airlifted the 7,700 American POWs, many from the Eighth and Fifteenth air

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[104] "World War II Memorial Registry"; Cranman, Herman L. *A Measure of Life: War, Captivity, Freedom* (Savannah: Herman L. Cranman, 2002); Frey, Valerie, Kaye Kole, and Luciana Spracher, eds., *Voices of Savannah: Selections from the Oral History Collection of the Savannah Jewish Archives* (Savannah: Savannah Jewish Archives, 2004), 80, 83-84.

forces, to Camp Lucky Strike in Le Havre, France where they were processed and awaited transport back to the United States.[105]

Loading liberated prisoners into B-17s during evacuation of Stalag Luft 1, Barth, Germany, May 1945.
Photographs taken by Evan Zillmer, 91st Bombardment Group.
Images available at http://www.merkki.com/rescue.htm (accessed 17 February 2009).

Staff Sergeant George Karam Gannam was Savannah's first casualty of war.
Photograph published in The National World War II Memorial Registry. Image available at http://www.wwiimemorial.com/registry/ (accessed 22 January 2009).

Several notable local individuals that served with the Army Air Forces include George K. Gannam and William H. "Bill" Kelly. Staff Sergeant Gannam was stationed at Wheeler Field in Honolulu, Hawaii and was killed during the attack on Pearl Harbor. Gannam has the unfortunate claim of being Savannah's first World War II casualty. At the end of World War II, Bill Kelly was honorably discharged from the Army Air Forces only to be recalled to help form the Georgia Air National Guard in Savannah with the 158th Fighter Bomber Squadron at Travis Field. In 1950, this unit was mobilized and stationed at Misawa Air Base to provide support to the United States Air Force during the Korean War.[106]

During World War II, the Savannah community was particularly proud of its connection to the Army Air Forces, due in large part to the local Savannah Air Base. On August 1945, Savannah celebrated Army Air Forces Day, designated as such by mayoral proclamation.[107]

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[105] "World War II – Prisoners of War – Stalag Luft I: Operation Revival," available at HYPERLINK http://www.merkki.com/rescue.htm (accessed 27 January 2009); "World War II – Prisoners of War – Stalag Luft I: The Roommates," available at HYPERLINK http://www.merkki.com/the_roommates.htm (accessed 27 January 2009).
[106] "World War II Memorial Registry"; "Mission from Taegu," National Guard Image Gallery, available at http://www.ngb.army.mil/resources/photo_gallery/heritage/taegu.html (accessed 23 January 2009).
[107] *Savannah Morning News Index 1945-1946* (29 July 1945), 24:3 and (2 August 1945), 12:2.

WACs assigned to the Eighth Air Force in England working on teletype machines, undated.
Department of Defense photograph. Image available at http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USA/USA-WAC/index.html (accessed 17 February 2009).

*The Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) and its successor the Women's Army Corps (WAC) provided much of the stateside personnel for the Army Air Forces, freeing up men for overseas duty. At the peak of the war, almost half of the WACs served with the Army Air Forces. WACs manned Aircraft Warning Service stations, filled clerical and administrative positions, and served as topographers, medical specialists, and even aircraft mechanics.[108]

At this time, no Chatham County natives have been identified as having served with the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP). Nationally, only 1,074 WASPs graduated from training and were assigned flight duty during the war.[109]

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[108] "U.S. Air Force Fact Sheet: Women in the AAF," National Museum of the USAF Fact Sheet, available at http://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/factsheets/factsheet.asp?id=1476 (accessed 21 January 2009).
[109] "U.S. Air Force Fact Sheet: Women in the AAF."