

A CAMERA TRIP THROUGH
STOCKTON FIELD



A PICTURE BOOK OF THE FIELD AND ITS ACTIVITIES

History of Stockton Field

ONE rainy winter day, the U. S. Army Air Forces arrived in Stockton to take over a small flying field flanked by a lone adobe hangar. It was December 5, 1940, that the first troops which formed the nucleus of the Air Forces Advanced Flying School at Stockton Field disembarked from a convoy of army trucks. They slithered through the mud and hastily set up tent shelters and other essentials for what was to be an amphibious three months.

Efforts to level the field and construct buildings for housing men and equipment progressed slowly under the rains, as machines bogged down in quagmires and rivulets of water literally swamped all attempts at improving facilities here. But by December 10, a headquarters was established and by January 2, 1941, 90 cadets and 25 second lieutenants had arrived. Flight instruction started on the same day with eight AT-6's.

From that muddy start, Stockton Field has mushroomed into one of the largest advanced flying schools in the West Coast Training Center. It has acquired an air of permanence and stability that foreshadows a still greater growth to come. The men of Stockton Field have faced many problems: rain, tule fogs and now the pressure of a global war. But as their first commanding officer used to say, "Stockton Field always comes through — on schedule!"

On January 11, 1941, the field was officially dedicated and a month later the former one-hangar municipal airport was designated by the War Department as Stockton Field. The first advanced flying school on the West Coast had become a reality, but the future still held many days of hard work.

Five weeks after the arrival of the first class of cadets, the population of Stockton Field had been raised to the 1,300 mark with 177 officers. Three Air Corps squadrons were organized, the 68th Air Base group to operate the post and school and to furnish the principal officers and all the flying instructors, and the 80th and 81st School Squadrons to provide men to overhaul and maintain the planes.

Once a start had been made, the job of making this an outstanding school in the Air Forces advanced rapidly. More planes arrived until a fleet of 62 ships stood on the stubby flight line. Carpenters, plumbers, electricians, craftsmen and artisans worked in unison to transform the once deserted airport into a "city of soldiers" with all the modern conveniences of a thriving metropolis.

At the same time, flight instruction continued steadily until the first graduation was held here on March 14, 1941, when a class of 25 second lieutenants and 90 cadets received their diplomas, and thus became charter members of the great fraternity of air heroes of this war who call Stockton Field their alma mater.

Still Stockton Field continued to grow. On April 28, 1941, it attained its full complement of commissioned officers, cadets, enlisted men and civilian employees. On November 5, twin-engined planes arrived from Barksdale, La., and

courses in the operation of medium bombers were added to the curriculum. By the end of the year, aerial traffic had outgrown the original capacity of the field and an 800 by 3,600-foot runway, costing about \$650,000, was completed, allowing eight times more traffic than when the school was established a year before.

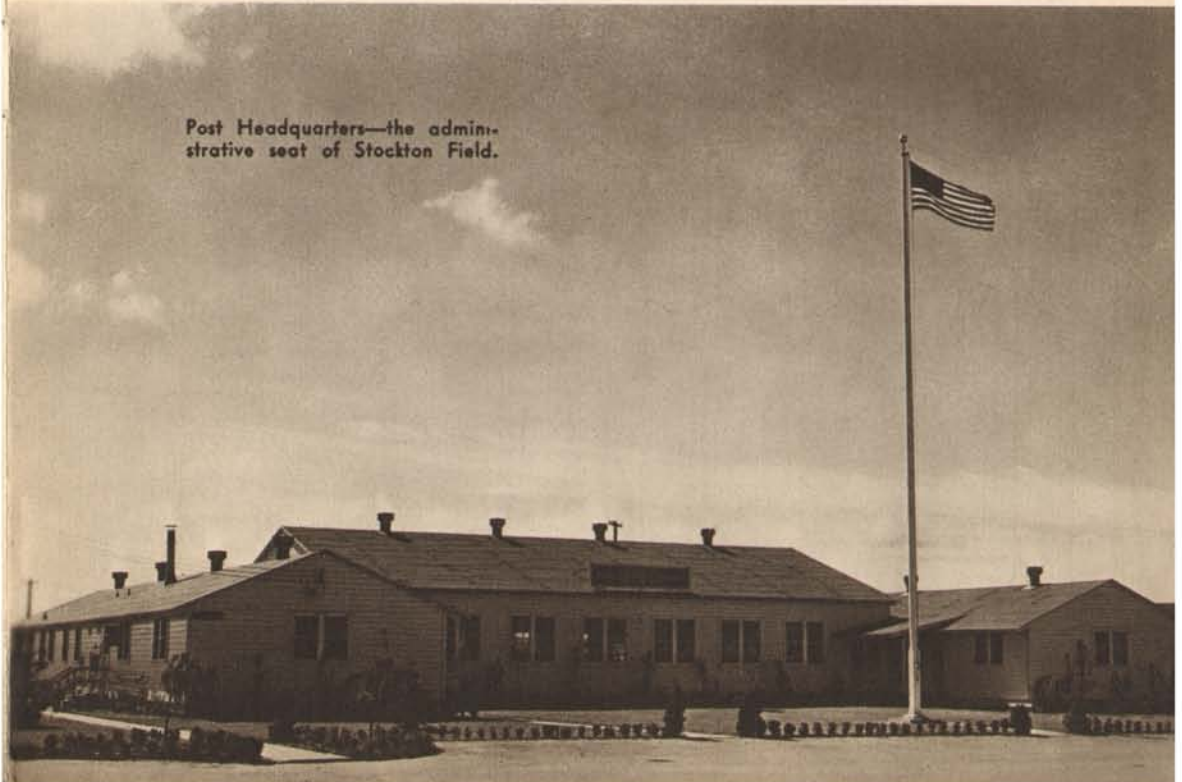
Today we find a vast training plant with some three-score buildings drawn up in neat, military lines, a huge fleet of slick planes, and a personnel of several thousand officers, cadets and enlisted men. In addition, Stockton Field has four satellite fields located in the general vicinity.

Today, the shadows of hundreds of Uncle Sam's silver or blue and gold training planes pass near the homes of Stockton's more than 80,000 air-minded inhabitants at most any time of the day or night. Twenty-four hours a day Stockton Field plays its vital role in making the United States Army Air Forces the greatest in the world.

The pictures in this book tell the story of a soldier's life at Stockton Field. The book tells part of each man's activities — whether he toils through the night with grease and oil to "keep 'em flying" or is one of the men who soar through the skies and do the flying. Between them there exists a strong, friendly bond. Each is just as important to the other as links in a sturdy chain.

And this book is for them: the men who clean the ships, repair and check the motors, man the radios, report the weather and plan the curriculum for study and the fellows who leave here with wings to add a new roar to America's air armada.

Post Headquarters—the administrative seat of Stockton Field.





The enlisted man's home . . . one of the barracks.

The day room, recreational center of a cadet's barracks. Here he can read, write, study, listen to the radio or phonograph or play checkers or chess.



A cadet's apartment is ready for inspection. The picture on the upper shelf, however, is not Government Issue.



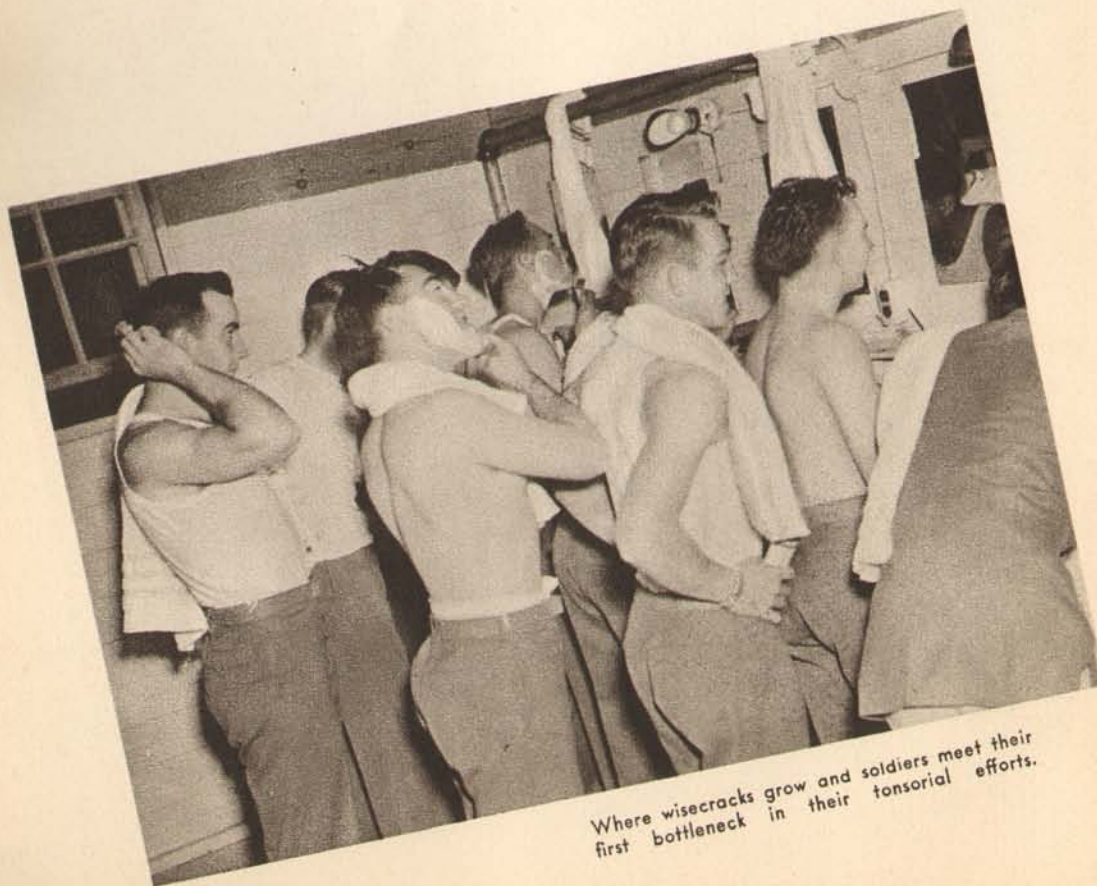
Home, clubhouse and study room, the cadet barracks present a severely neat appearance—especially just before daily inspection.

When their flying is done, cadets gather around in the barracks to discuss the war reports from the battlefronts. Topics of discussion during these bull sessions center around the war, sports, events during the day, news from home and—women.





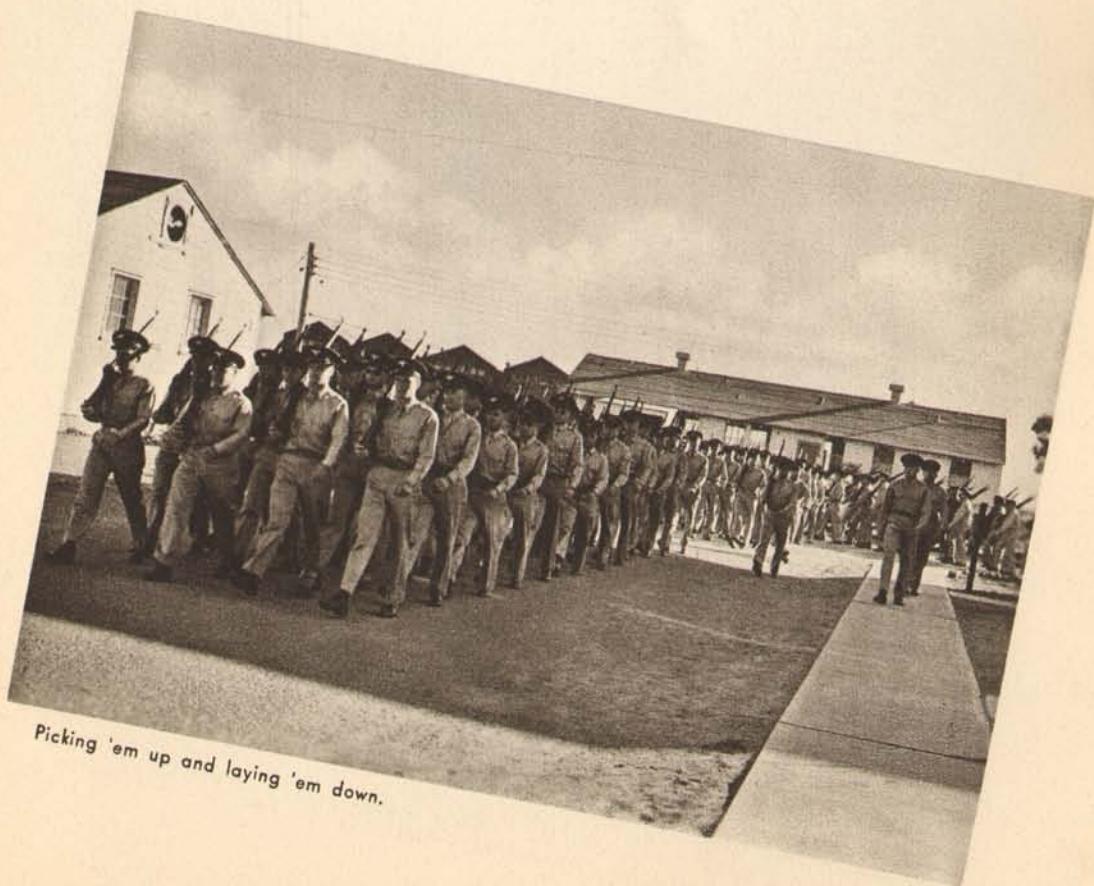
The correct time is now 5:45 A. M.



Where wisecracks grow and soldiers meet their first bottleneck in their tonsorial efforts.



Daily calisthenics build healthy bodies and ravenous appetites.



Picking 'em up and laying 'em down.



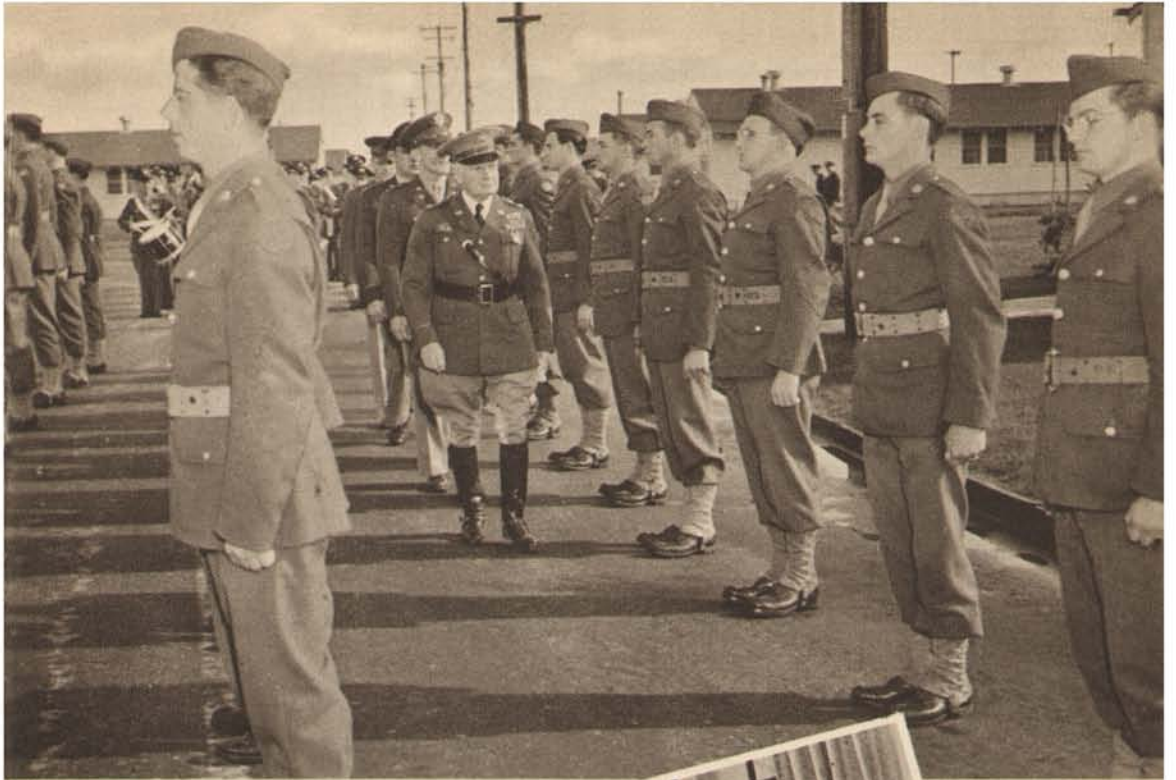
A guard checks an enlisted man's pass at the main gate.



A newly arrived officer is "mugged" at the photo section.

Dress right—dress!





A visiting general inspects his guard of honor.



The stentorian call of "Roger" heard during flight training throughout the day gives way to modern swing tunes as cadets gather around the combination phonograph and radio in the day room after duty hours.



The Waacs arrive.



G. I.'s learn first aid at a Red Cross class.



The end of the line.

The post library offers a wide selection for reading.



The corner counter in the PX, where merchandise and charm are dispensed.

(below) Remember the good ole days when a fella could walk into the PX and buy a pair of shoes without a lot of rationing red tape?



A cadet views with approval an officer in the making as he tries on his new uniform just before graduation.

You've gotta look your best for that date Saturday night, so the cleaners do a rush business.





In Stockton Field's modern dental clinic—where hopes and fears are realized.



The corner drugstore has nothing on the hospital supply room—except maybe a soda fountain.



A corporal finds out what goes on inside a cadet's head . . . with the aid of an X-Ray machine.



A fluoroscope and a surprised cadet.



A chemical laboratory in the post hospital.



Cadets receive orders while sitting at attention during dinner.

(below) Two Army "chefs" concoct a masterpiece for G. I. palates. Is it scrumptious? The gesture says "parfaitment!"



(above) Butchers are instructed in the proper methods of cutting meat at a school designed to make experts in the culinary arts.



Kitchen-to-table service.



Turkey Day at Stockton Field finds the mess kitchen ready.

Christmas Day at the 1000-man mess, where enlisted men dined bountifully.

Cadets enjoy a mid-night snack and a brief rest during a night flying session.



Kitchen Police—a G. I. soldier gets ready to load the "China Clipper" (dish-washing machine) with its cargo of dishes.

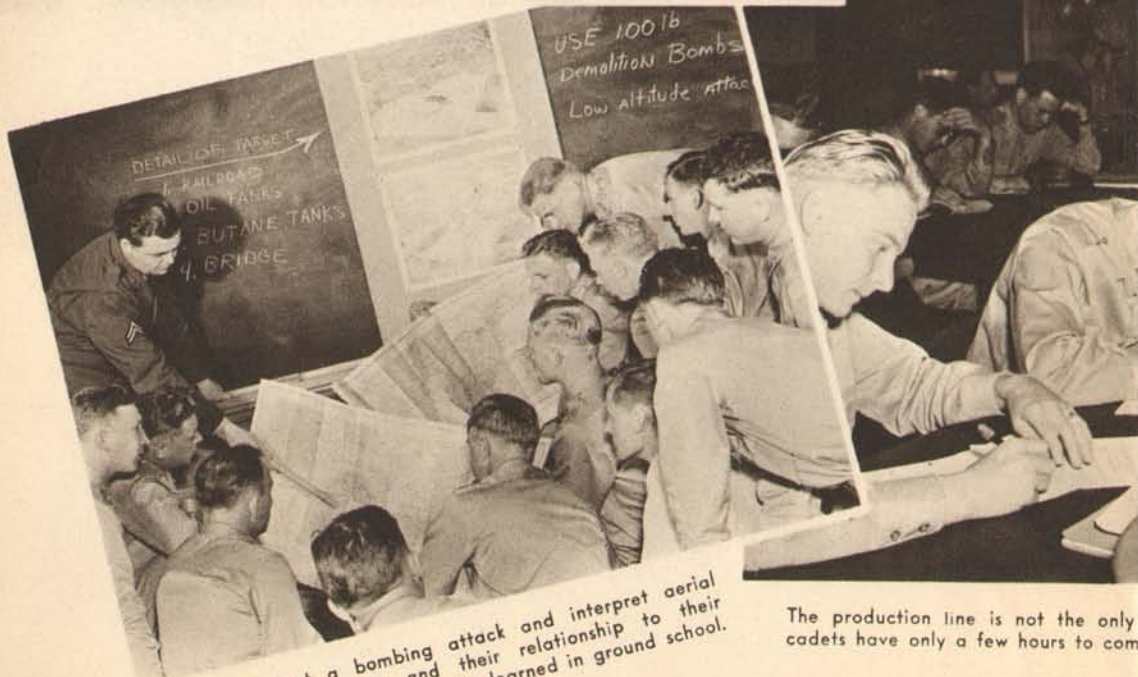
Two bakers complete work toward a D. D. (Dunker's Delight).



The 1000-man mess in action.

(right) Plane identification is aided with exact models of nearly every type of enemy and allied craft—from the largest to the smallest.

Map reading forms a vital part of a cadet's instruction in navigation.



How to conduct a bombing attack and interpret aerial photographs of targets and their relationship to their surroundings are among the topics learned in ground school.

The production line is not the only cadets have only a few hours to com



(below) Synoptic situations are explained to a class of cadets as a ground school instructor clarifies the mysteries of the code used in reporting weather conditions.



one to race against time. These
plete a comprehensive examination.

The intricacies of the machine gun
are explained to a class of cadets.



An instructor checks his students before they take off on a routine cross-country flight, pointing out their course and landmarks on a navigation chart.



Cadets advertise their mistakes with a "sandwichman" sign to impress themselves as well as others that carelessness and planes don't mix.



Traffic problems are aired out in a class room where an instructor diagrams the landing strips on a blackboard.



Vulnerable points of enemy aircraft are studied on cross-section views of Axis planes. Charts such as these play an important part in courses of plane identification given at ground school.



Eyes aloft! A group of cadets watches a fellow student go through his paces in a training plane.



Stockton Field's version of "suspended animation" is this cadet taking a practice jump in the parachute mock-up.



"Off we go into wild blue yonder . . ."



"If they don't open, bring 'em back and get another."



Cadets learn what makes their planes tick.



Powerful searchlights illuminate the landing strip at night.



Getting set to take off into the night.



"Climbing high into the sun!"



The blare of martial music and the cadence of marching feet lend a stirring atmosphere to cadet graduation exercises as troops, led by a color guard, march in formal review.



Col. Lloyd H. Tull, commanding officer, congratulates a class of cadets upon the successful completion of their flight training at Stockton Field as the newly commissioned officers are honored at graduation ceremonies.



Taking the oath of a commissioned officer before graduation ceremonies.

From now on, this cadet will be like the hero of that once popular ballad: "He wears a pair of silver wings."



A proud mother pins the coveted silver wings to the tunic of her smiling son.



Two distinguished guests, Governor Early Warren and Major General Ralph P. Cousins, inspect the Stockton Field Honor Roll plaque, erected in honor of former graduates who had been decorated for bravery.



A big moment—a newly commissioned flying officer receives his diploma from Col. Lloyd H. Tull during a high point of a graduation ceremony.



The Post Chapel, headquarters for all religious programs.



The altar in the post chapel where soldiers find spiritual rest in its quiet simplicity.



The lieutenant takes a wife. In many cases, graduation from Aviation Cadet to Second Lieutenant means more than getting a commission and winning a pair of silver wings.



A blinker light flashes out a signal to a pilot in the night.

On the alert day and night, the control tower operators guide Stockton Field's training planes in flight.

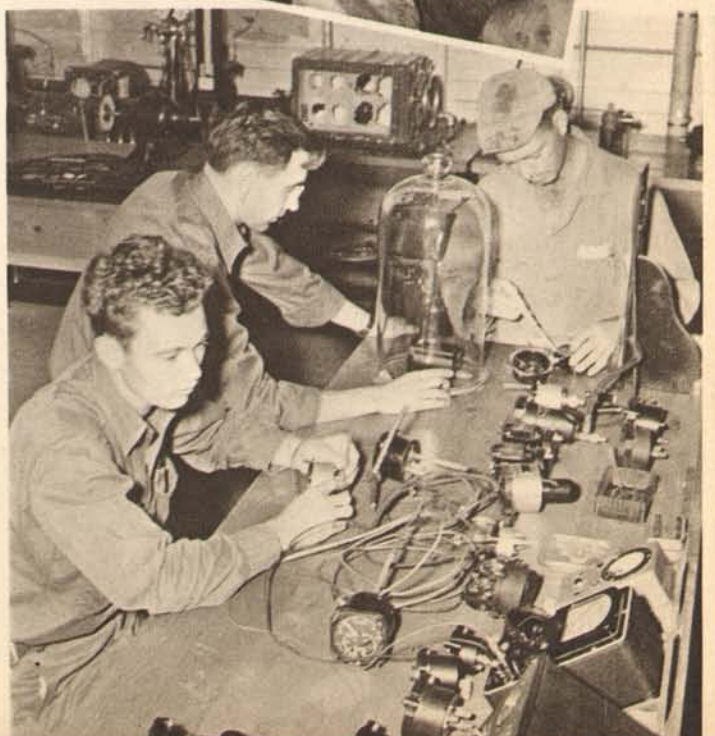




Even sergeants aren't above "pulling a few wires"—especially if they're in the radio section.



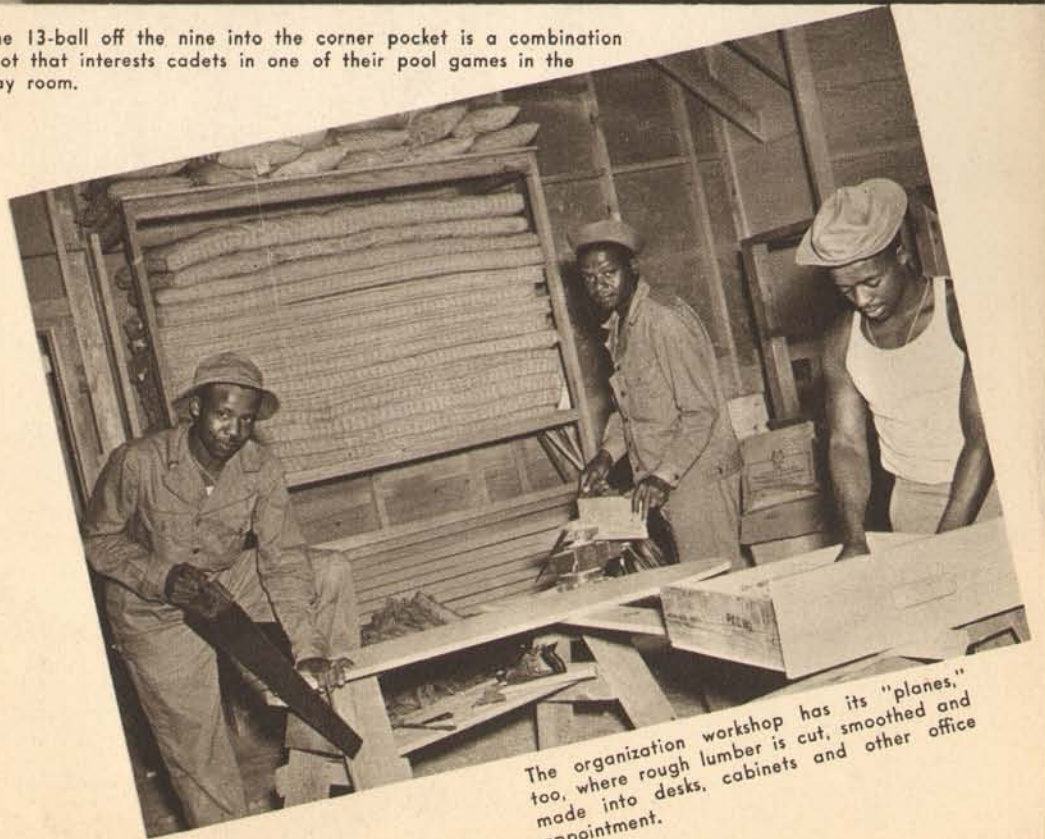
The flyer's best friend, the airplane mechanic, adjusts a plane engine to keep the ship ready for flight.



Instruments are checked for accuracy at regular intervals and only trained specialists are given this exacting task.



The 13-ball off the nine into the corner pocket is a combination shot that interests cadets in one of their pool games in the day room.



The organization workshop has its "planes," too, where rough lumber is cut, smoothed and made into desks, cabinets and other office appointment.



The Blue Network pays tribute to Stockton Field by presenting a radio show direct from the operations building on the ramp.



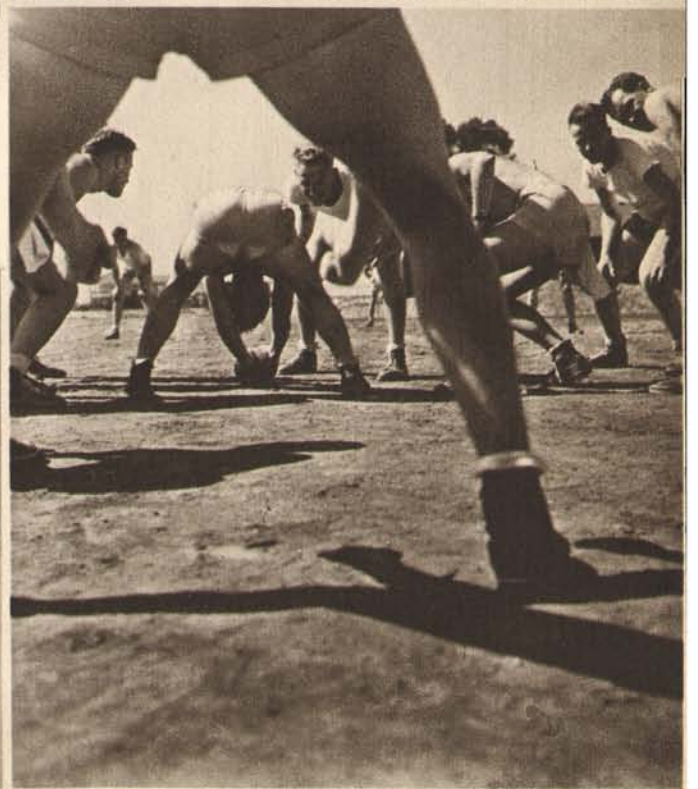
One of the entertainers who are featured in camp shows and who momentarily make the war seem a far-away matter. (Notice the lovely beads this artist is wearing).

A circuit clout in the making during a softball game.





Fast action during a volleyball game under the physical training program.



A worm's eye view of a touch football game during one of the daily physical training periods.



Hoopsters reach for a free ball during a basketball game on one of the outdoor courts.



Planned and printed in Gravure by The Ullman Company, Brooklyn, N. Y. We acknowledge with appreciation the cooperation of the Public Relations Office of Stockton Field.