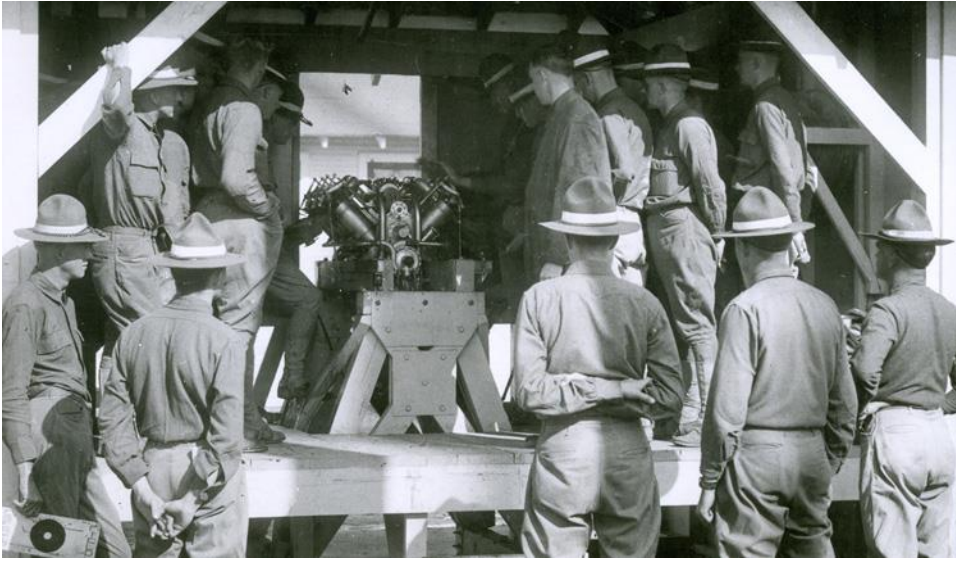


Flying Cadet & Aviation Cadet Uniforms

War I flying cadets were distinguished by “a white pique hat band, one and one-half inches wide, to be worn on the service cap and the service hat.” The first photo shows World War I flying cadets. They are



standing around an engine and all cadets have white bands around their hats. Another group picture has students at Ohio State University, on December 29, 1917. These men also have white strips around their hats.

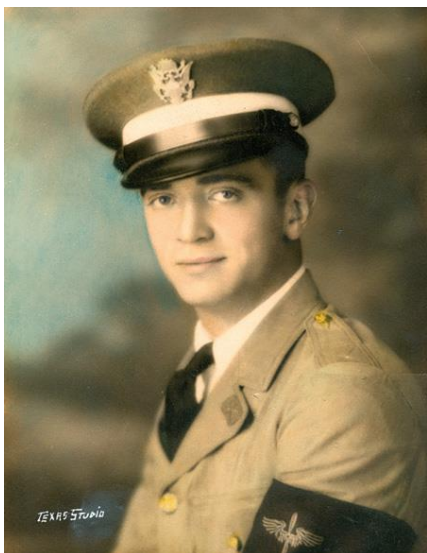
Seven soldiers in the second photo have a white four-blade propeller on navy blue cloth on their left sleeve. Others clearly do not, while one cannot determine if several men are wearing that insignia or not. The men clearly do wear a range of leggings and puttees.

In 1921 the white hat and cap bands were still in use, but regulations reduced them to one inch. During this post-war time flying cadet uniforms remained those for enlisted men. No special insignia were prescribed except for the white headgear bands. In the 1920s there was a growing movement in the Air Service for the cadets to move to officer-like uniforms. An opportunity



occurred with the introduction of the lapel coat that came in both olive drab and khaki when the Air Service adopted it in 1925. The rest of the army went to lapel coats the next year.

In March 1926 the War Department prescribed silk embroidered insignia for flying cadet coat lapels.



“U.S.” went on the right lapel and the winged propeller on the left. This was similar to the October 1925 regulation that directed Air Service officers to adopt embroidered lapel insignia, although most officers wore embroidery in bullion. While other branches wore metal insignia, embroidery was to prevent any snagging on parachute harnesses.

Flying cadets wore OD and khaki lapel coats only from early 1926 until early 1929. On the billed cap went an officer’s eagle and around the cap base the white cloth remained. Regulations called for a black silk armband that carried a yellow colored Air Service insignia for the left sleeve. In practice the armbands were wool with the insignia embroidered.



In late 1928 the Air Corps (the name changed from Air Service in 1926) changed lapel coats and matching trousers for flying cadets from OD and khaki to slate blue clothing. These special cadet uniforms lasted into 1940. Given the realities of supplying uniforms of a totally new color, it is reasonable to assume these were initially supplied in 1929. Collar and lapel insignia were embroidered in bullion, as was the device on the overseas cap.

The War Department renamed flying cadets "aviation cadets" in July 1939. Cadets wore the slate blue uniforms in two versions. One included a blouse with white shirt. For classroom and summer wear cadets wore slate blue shirts with no insignia on the lapels and slate blue trousers. Caps could be with a bill (the service cap) or an overseas



cap, now called a field cap.

The 1940-41 emergency force build-up put heavy demands on the army's small supply system. Accordingly the Air Corps transitions cadets to standard OD and khaki uniforms. An example of this is shown when the aviation cadets were increased



to a regiment in the summer of 1941.

During World War II aviation cadets expanded beyond their initial facility at Randolph Field, Texas, to locations across the south and west. Aviation cadets switched to standard army clothing with the addition of a dark blue band around the service cap and large winged propeller cap insignia, as at the right. On the field cap they wore a one inch high pinback Air Corps insignia, which was larger than the 3/4 inch metal insignia worn on the shirt or coat collar.

While cadets wore chevrons starting in the 1920s, two new styles were introduced at the start of World War II, then in 1943 some local schools introduced their own version of cadet chevrons, while a few schools used ROTC type officer insignia and other schools had cadets wear armbands.

On shirts and some other clothing cadets wore chevrons the size used by enlisted personnel, but with the designs that usually differed from standard army chevrons. An example for a first sergeant is shown at the right. It has two bars to represent a sergeant (corporals had one inverted V) and a solid lozenge. For overcoats and at many airfields, for wear on coats, large chevrons generally styled chevrons, were

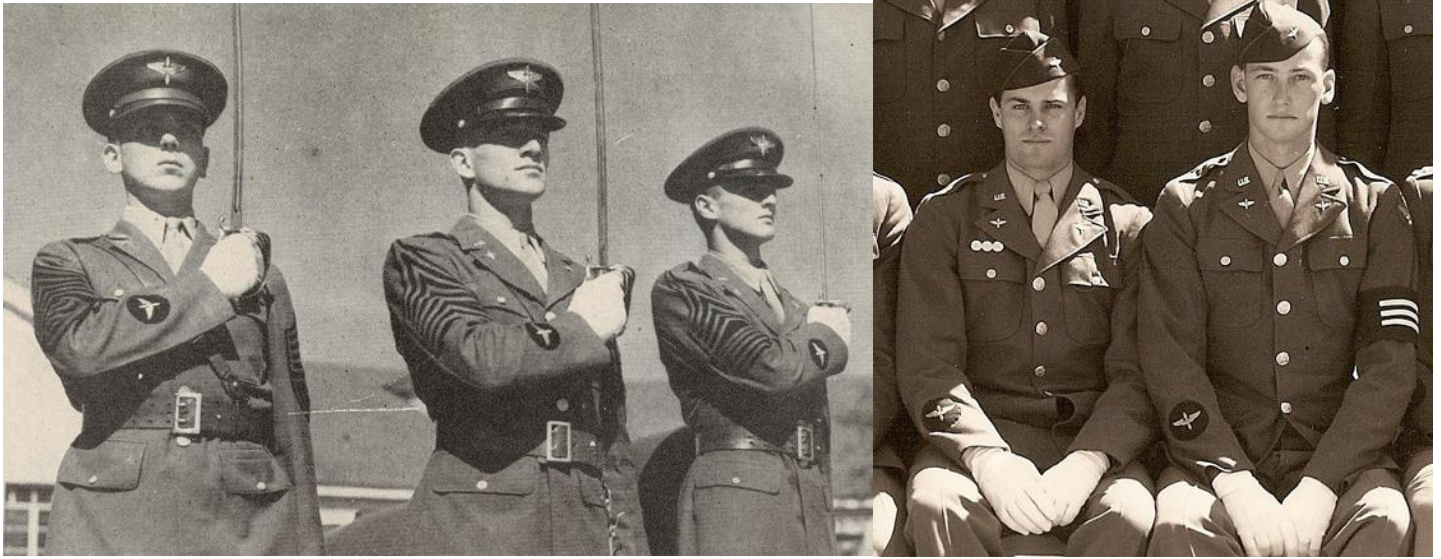


after West Point worn.

1943, some training Maxwell Field, Alabama, In this case chevrons were made with more stripes were made that prescribed by army regulations. Other bases had cadets wear armband as prescribed by army regulations for acting officers. In the last photo, below, two



cadet captains are shown, one wears an armband and the other with three silver colored circles, the ROTC insignia for a captain, above his right pocket.



Above left: cadets at Maxwell Airforce Base, 1943.

Above right, cadets in Kansas. L to R; a cadet captain's insignia is above the right pocket and an armband for a captain on the left sleeve.