

Air Force Academy Heritage

THE EARLY YEARS



George V. Fagan

Brigadier General, USAF (Ret.)



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Golden, Colorado

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*To Ernestine Hudak Fagan, my beloved wife for sixty-three years,
and one of the pioneering ladies who helped launch
the Air Force Academy.*

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Foreword



Since 2004, in conjunction with the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United States Air Force Academy, the members of the Executive Committee of The Friends of the Air Force Academy Library recognized the need for the publication of a history of the legislative origin, organization, and early operation of the Academy. At the urging of members of the committee, Brigadier General George V. Fagan, USAF, Ret. authorized The Friends to republish the segments of his history, *The Air Force Academy: An Illustrated History*. The history was published in 1988 and is now out of print. Serving with distinction as a member of the original cadre, permanent professor of the Academy's Department of History, and as the director of the Academy Libraries, General Fagan gained a unique perspective as he witnessed the evolution of the fledgling Academy from its temporary home at Lowry Air Force Base in Denver to a position of national prominence at its permanent site near Colorado Springs. In addition to his own personal recollections, General Fagan researched extensive series of official documents, oral histories, and photographs, which are housed within the Academy Library. He has produced a comprehensive scholarly history of the genesis of the Academy and the first ten years of its operation. This benchmark history will serve to acquaint cadets, faculty and staff, and members of the public with the rich heritage of the Air Force Academy.

—A. P. Clark

Lieutenant General, USAF, Ret.

Sixth Superintendent, USAF Academy, 1970–1974

President, The Friends of the Air Force Academy Library

Preface



For years my colleagues, friends, and Academy graduates have tried to persuade me to revise my book, *The Air Force Academy: An Illustrated History*, published in 1988 by Johnson Books of Boulder, Colorado (the book has been out of print for years). As I grew older and my health declined, I hesitated to embark on such a huge undertaking. But with July 11, 2005, looming as the fiftieth anniversary of the dedication of the Academy, I decided to accept the challenge. Since I am among a small number of people who have had a continuing association with the Academy over the entire five decades, I felt I should document the early years.

The cadets who lived through the initial years were unaware of the events that were taking place on the command level. The cadets were too busy trying to survive the rigorous program imposed upon them.

In concluding his dedication speech, chief of staff of the Air Force General Nathan F. Twining told the cadets:

From today on, the nation's interests will be in you cadets and those who follow. The Air Force Academy is not really important in itself. What is important is the product of the Academy. The graduates will be the measure of its success. In the final analysis, only you, the cadets, can make it a great school.

After fifty years, I feel the Academy has met General Twining's challenge and has fulfilled his vision. Today, the Academy's contribution to the nation is manifest. Many of the graduates have become general officers and have served as key commanders in the armed forces. The Academy's military scholars have also been proven leaders in war and peace. Hundreds of other graduates have had successful careers in non-military fields.

The Academy's curriculum innovations forced the older Military and Naval Academies to transform their instructional programs and add new dimension to military education. By providing officers with a well-rounded education, the nation has benefited and has been better prepared to meet the demands of the space age and the war on terror.

I am deeply appreciative to Lieutenant General A. P. Clark for his persistence and assistance. I wish to thank Duane J. Reed, retired archivist of the Academy, for assisting me in the research, as well as for his advice and many suggestions.

My good friend Colonel William Barrett Taylor III, by his visits and many telephone conversations over five decades, helped me to better understand and define my visions of the early days of the Academy.

I wish to acknowledge the stimulation and advice provided me by my colleagues on the Executive Committee of The Friends of the Air Force Academy Library. The members include Brigadier General Philip D. Caine, Colonel Henry A. Kortemeyer, Colonel Jock C. H. Schwank, Lieutenant Colonel Dona R. H. Hildebrand, Mr. Willis I. Ketterson, and former member Colonel William J. Mahon.

Special thanks to Colonel Schwank and Mr. Donald J. Barrett for furnishing me with statistical data.

Without the encouragement and assistance of Mr. Robert Baron and his staff, this book would never have been published.

My wife, Ernestine, as always, supported and sustained me in this undertaking as she has with every other.

—*George V. Fagan*

CHAPTER 1

The Struggle to Create an Air Academy



*Man's flight through life is sustained
by the power of his knowledge.*

—Air Training Command Statue, 1958
(located near Mitchell Hall)

The need for an air academy began with the first powered flight. Orville Wright and his brother, Wilbur, launched the age of flight on December 17, 1903, at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. Since earliest times, humankind has been fascinated by the idea of flying. Flight is the subject of many mythological stories, of which the most famous is that of Icarus. The great Leonardo da Vinci toyed with the idea and even left plans for a flying machine. Many people around the world worked on the technology of flight in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It was the Wright brothers in America who finally succeeded.

As with the Montgolfier balloon in 1783, the Wright brothers' flying machine was soon considered as a potential implement of war. By 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt had become aware of the potential of the airplane in the defense of the United States. As a result, on December 23, 1907, the Army Signal Corps issued Specification Number 486, which called for "... bids on the delivery of an air machine which could fly faster than forty miles an hour, which could remain aloft for at least one hour with a crew of two, and [probably the most onerous requirement of all] that it be able to transport in a four-wheel, mule-driven wagon."¹ By February 1, 1908, forty-one proposals had been received. Nine days later, the Army signed a contract with the Wright brothers to build the



Signal Corps, United States Army.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
RETURNS OFFICE
Rec'd APR 2 1908
Ack'd APR 2 1908
Series War Dept
No 18110

These Articles of Agreement entered into this -----tenth----- day of February--, nineteen hundred and -eight-, between ---Chas. S. Wallace---, Captain-----, Signal Corps, United States Army, of the first part, and Wilbur and Orville Wright, trading as Wright Brothers, of 1127 West Third Street, Dayton,

in the county of -----Montgomery-----, State of -----Ohio----- of the second part. WITNESSETH, that in conformity with copy of the advertisement, specifications, and proposal hereunto attached, and which, in so far as they relate to this contract, form a part of it, the said -----Chas. S. Wallace, Captain,----- Signal Corps, United States Army, for and in behalf of the United States of America, and the said -----Wright Brothers----- (hereinafter designated as the contractor) do covenant and agree to and with each other, as follows, viz:

ARTICLE I. That the said contractor shall manufacture for and deliver to the United States of America.

One (1) heavier-than-air flying machine, in accordance with Signal Corps Specification No. 486, dated December 23, 1907.

ART. II. That the deliveries of the supplies and materials herein contracted for shall be made in the manner, numbers, or quantities, and for each number or quantity, on or before the date specified therein, as follows, viz:

That complets delivery shall be made on or before August 28, 1908.

ART. III. All supplies and materials furnished and work done under this contract shall, before being accepted, be subject to a rigid inspection by an inspector appointed on the part of the Government, and such as do not conform to the specifications set forth in this contract shall be rejected. The decision of the Chief Signal Officer, United States Army, as to quality and quantity shall be final.

ART. IV. That for and in consideration of the faithful performance of the stipulations of this contract, the contractor shall be paid at the office of--the Chief Signal officer-- -----of the Army-----at-----Washington, D. C.-----for all supplies and materials delivered in conformity with the requirements of this contract, on or before the date above specified (Article II. supra) and accepted, the following price, viz:

One (1) heavier-than-air flying machine at a total cost of twenty-five thousand (25,000) dollars.

to be paid as soon as practicable after the acceptance of the same, in funds furnished by the United States for the purpose, reserving ----- per cent from each payment until final settlement, on completion of the contract or otherwise.

ART. V. It is further agreed that for all supplies and materials which shall not be delivered in conformity with the requirements of this contract on or before the date prescribed therein in Article II. above, but which shall be subsequently delivered and accepted, the price shall be as follows:

within the time and in the manner specified above. Articles I to III, including this said party of the first part may, instead of waiting further for deliveries under the provisions of the preceding article, supply the deficiency by purchase in open market or otherwise, at such price as may be selected (the article so purchased to be the kind herein specified, as near as practicable); and the said contractor shall be charged with the increased cost of the supplies and materials so purchased over what they would have cost if delivered by the contractor on the date they were received under such open market purchase.

ART. VII. It is further agreed by and between the parties hereto that upon final inspection and acceptance or, and payment for, all of the supplies and materials and work herein provided for, no price inspection, payment, or act is to be construed as a waiver of the right of the party of the first part to reject any defective articles or supplies or to require the fulfillment of any of the terms of the contract.

ART. VIII. The contractor further agrees to hold and save the United States harmless from and against all and every demand, or demands, of any nature or kind for, or on account of, the use of any patented invention, article, or process included in the materials hereby agreed to be furnished and work to be done under this contract.

ART. IX. Neither this contract nor any interest herein shall be transferred to any other party or parties, and in case of such transfer the United States may refuse to carry out this contract either with the transferee or the transferor, but all rights of action for any breach of this contract by said contractor are reserved to the United States.

ART. X. No Member of or Delegate to Congress, nor any person belonging to, or employed in, the military service of the United States, is or shall be admitted to any share or part of this contract, or to any benefit which may arise therefrom.

ART. XI. That it is expressly agreed and understood that this contract shall be non-effective until an appropriation adequate to its fulfillment is made by Congress and is available.

ART. XII. That this contract shall be subject to approval of the Chief Signal Officer, United States Army.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the parties aforesaid have hereunto placed their hands the date first hereinbefore written.

WITNESSES:

John J. Mullany, Albert L. Linnell, C. C. Taylor, H. G. Thompson, Chas. S. Wallace, Captain Signal Corps, U. S. Army, Wright Brothers, by Orville Wright

APPROVED: FEB 28 1908

James H. Lee, Brigadier General, Chief Signal Officer of the Army

*How add to any contract made with an incorporated company for its general benefit, the following words: "But this obligation, so far as it relates to Members or Delegates or Congress, is not to be construed to extend to the contract." See section 1744, Revised Statutes.

first American military aircraft. On August 20, 1908, within the 200 days specified in the contract proposal, Orville Wright delivered the "Flyer" to Fort Myer, Virginia. Meanwhile, Wilbur Wright had gone to France to try to sell more planes.

When Orville made the first flight test on September 9, only one person, Augustus Post, secretary of the Aero Club of America, was present to witness the record flight of fifty-seven minutes and thirty-one seconds.² A few days later, a number of Washington newspaper correspondents were at Fort Myer when Orville took his first military passenger, Lieutenant Frank P. Lahm, aloft. A number of successful test flights were conducted during the next two weeks. On September 17, however, tragedy struck. Lieutenant Thomas E. Selfridge, Orville's passenger, was killed in a crash that occurred after only three or four minutes of flight at an altitude of 125 feet. Orville Wright was badly injured, and the Army had to postpone its acceptance flights for almost a year.

In June 1909, the Wright brothers returned to Fort Myer with a rebuilt, improved plane. On July 27, Orville, with Lieutenant Lahm as his passenger, completed a flight of one hour, twelve minutes, and forty seconds, thereby complying with one of the major specifications demanded by the Army. Three days later, with Lieutenant Benjamin D. Foulois as his passenger and observer, Orville flew the first cross-country flight. With 7,000 cheering spectators on the Fort Myer parade ground, Orville flew five miles to Shuter's Hill in Alexandria, Virginia, circled a balloon set up as a marker, and returned to the parade ground. The plane had traveled "a blistering 42.583 miles per hour" and complied with the remaining specification. Since the aircraft could also be transported on a mule-driven wagon, the Army formally accepted the Flyer on August 2, 1909, and paid the Wrights \$30,000. (An interesting sidelight of these historic flights is that forty-six years later, Foulois, as a retired general officer, would be present at the dedication of the U.S. Air Force Academy on July 11, 1955.)

The years 1910 to 1917 were bleak ones for American military aviation. Top Army officers showed a distinct lack of interest in the new weapon. They viewed the airplane only as a limited tool to aid the Army's ground operations. Members of Congress were also apathetic and refused to vote the funds necessary to advance military aviation. Paradoxically, during this same period, civilian aviators and inventors in various parts of the world were busy designing, building, and flying aircraft and were setting records in doing so.

The impact of Louis Bleriot's flight across the English Channel was understood by some British, French, and German military leaders. But even after two years of World War I, American military aviation was insignificant. In 1916, "the entire Aviation Section of the Signal Corps consisted of only 29 officers, 155 enlisted men, and less than 20 planes."³ The participation of the Aviation Section in the Mexican expedition in 1916 resembled the episodes of a comic opera.

On April 6, 1917, when Congress declared war against Germany, the American Army and Navy Aviation Forces were still pitifully unready. Congress

inaugurated a crash program to spend \$640 million to build aircraft and to train aviators. Only a few American-built planes were ready for combat by Armistice Day, November 11, 1918. Obtaining and training the right kind of aviation personnel was not an easy task either. Most pilots had to be sent to France to receive their combat training. American aviators were engaged in the heavy combat on the Western Front in the closing months of the war, especially during the Saint Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne campaigns. Although American pilots had engaged in a variety of air efforts such as reconnaissance, support of ground troops, bombing of enemy targets behind the lines, and air combat, top-echelon Army commanders still insisted that the air arm was basically a support branch of land armies.

The challenge of dogfights and all the dangers encountered in such activities began to show that military pilots were really "a breed apart." Some of them, like Eddie Rickenbacker, became the heroes of song and story. Their life-threatening adventures were recounted in bars and at social gatherings. Out of their exploits came the fun and camaraderie of pilots and all those who kept them in the air. Bravery, aggression, and daring were traits that did not end with combat. They continued to motivate airmen and to spur them on to even greater things in the postwar years.

During World War I, some visionaries in the American armed forces began to comprehend the potential of airpower as a tactical and strategic force. Thwarted by some of their wartime experiences and the continuing lack of support from conservative, traditionalist military leaders, a hard core of Air Service career officers began planning for the future by formulating plans for a distinctive educational system. In their impatience, they sought to accomplish two primary objectives: to achieve an independent air arm and to establish an air academy to train future career officers. Both of these objectives were going to take decades and another world war to accomplish. Many more frustrations would be encountered. Yet the key Air Service officers persisted relentlessly in their efforts to achieve their major goals.

On June 6, 1918, Colonel H. H. Arnold, assistant director of Military Aeronautics, sent a memorandum to the newly appointed chief of the Air Service, Brigadier General William L. Kenly. In it, Colonel Arnold expressed the need for independence and identification of the air arm. He wrote:

In order that the pilots on the front may receive machines which they are satisfied with, of types which will give performance needed to equal or better the machines of the enemy, it is maintained that the Division of Military Aeronautics must control the determination of the design of the equipment with which it is to operate. Who provides the equipment is of no concern; but what it shall consist of is absolutely vital to the success of this Division. *We must have the final word on all matters pertaining to equipment.*

Arnold then went on to say boldly: "Our fliers on the Front must control the choice of types and equipment and guide the development of better types. This Division constitutes the proper channel of communication with the Front. *No other channel should exist.*"

While equipment was a vital concern, proper training of officers and ground crews was of utmost importance. The crash programs made necessary by the demands of the war effort to train aviation cadets and ground crews were far from satisfactory. For the long range, a better, more effective educational and training program had to be devised.

Lieutenant Colonel A. J. Hanlon, chief of the Mechanical Instruction Branch, in a letter dated November 26, 1918, to Lieutenant Colonel William C. Sherman, chief of training, sets forth the rationale for an air academy: "As the Military and Naval Academies are the backbone of the Army and Navy, so must the Aeronautical Academy be the backbone of the Air Service. No Service can flourish without some such institution to inculcate into its embryonic officers love of country, proper conception of duty, and highest regard for honor."

Hanlon then went on to state the goals and the objectives of the proposed institution. Concisely, an Air Services academy should be established to accomplish the following results:

1. To secure uniform initial training for all new officers
2. To make sure that initial training will be adequate and efficient
3. To inculcate proper ideas of discipline
4. To foster high ideals of honor

In his letter, Colonel Hanlon urged that congressional action be undertaken to establish the United States Aeronautical Academy and that a board of officers be appointed by the director of Military Aeronautics to recommend a site, to plan the curriculum, to provide all the details necessary for its operation, and to provide for the appointment of cadets.

In late December 1918, the president of the University of Texas, Robert E. Vinson, offered, at the request of the Texas legislature, to donate Camp Mabry, located near Austin, Texas, to the U.S. government as a site for an Air Service academy. During the war, Camp Mabry had been used as a training center. President Vinson offered the land with the provision that the proposed academy bear the same relationship to the Air Service that West Point did to the Army.⁴

Lieutenant Colonel H. A. Dargue was sent to inspect Camp Mabry on February 14, 1919. The site was located three miles northwest of Austin. In his trip report, Dargue wrote that "the proposition of establishing an Air Service academy ... had been presented to a large number of officers of the Air Service and received very favorable consideration and recommendation from them."⁵

Dargue recommended that the government accept the title to Camp Mabry but make no promises as to its ultimate use. He also recommended that a board of officers be established to consider the most suitable location for the proposed academy. The dilemma facing Colonel Dargue in 1919 was destined to be repeated many times in the future, and his course of action was echoed over and over again during the next four decades.

Meanwhile, *The New York Times* for January 8, 1919, reported on a dinner of the Manufacturers Aircraft Association held at the Waldorf Astoria the evening before. Mr. John D. Ryan, who had recently resigned as director of Aircraft Production, had proposed that the government establish an academy of aeronautics similar to West Point and Annapolis and devoted solely to the training of aviators and mechanics. Mr. Ryan stated that if his proposal were adopted, he was certain that within five years United States aeronautics would be developed to a point where no hostile fleet could come within 400 miles of American shores without being detected and destroyed. Air Service officers were naturally pleased with this new publicity for their cause.

On January 21, 1919, the director of Military Aeronautics received a detailed proposal for an Air Service academy from Lieutenant Colonel Barton K. Yount.⁶ Yount set forth the objectives for the projected school:

- (a) To instill discipline, *esprit de corps*, and high ideals of honor within the hearts of young men who are to become officers of the Air Service of the U.S. Army, and to fit them mentally, morally, and physically to perform the duties of flying officers.
- (b) To thoroughly train them, through practical work and classroom instruction, in drill regulations and other military subjects necessary to the proper handling of troops and a thorough understanding of the duties and obligations of an officer.
- (c) To thoroughly instruct them in all practical and theoretical work possible of accomplishment on the ground and necessary to a thorough knowledge of the subject of aviation. In other words, to so thoroughly train our flying cadets that they will be able upon graduation to immediately begin their flying instruction without undergoing any further ground work.

Yount pointed out that "aerial chauffeurs" could be trained in a comparatively short time, but during peacetime, the aim of the Air Service should be to train young pilots "in the highly technical and scientific work which they will be required to perform." He emphasized that "the Air Service above all others required that its officers should be so completely disciplined that it is a part of their very souls."

In spite of his rhetoric, Yount also tried to satisfy the need for austerity in the postwar period. He proposed that 2,000 men attend the Air Service

academy for eleven months, followed by a one-month furlough. Then the trainees would attend two months of primary flying school and two months of advanced flying school. The 1,600 graduates would be assigned to the reserve force. The remaining 400 men would be assigned to the regular service for three years and then revert to reserve status for two additional years. Yount concluded his proposal: "Thus we will continually have in the Regular service 1,200 young flying officers, none of whom will be too old to instruct and engage in the most active flying. In addition, it will return to the Reserve each year 2,000 flying officers, each of whom will remain for two years, thus maintaining a Reserve of 4,000 active young pilots, observers, bombers, etc." Although the defects of Colonel Yount's plan are obvious, aspects of his proposal were used during the 1920s and 1930s in training aviation cadets.

Lieutenant Colonel William C. Sherman, on April 19, 1919, submitted another proposal to Brigadier General William "Billy" Mitchell, head of the Training and Operations Group of the Air Service. He wrote:

Ideas as to the proper function of the Air Academy seem to differ widely. It is not intended in your training plan that the Air Academy be either a strictly technical school or that it be another West Point. It is intended to be a school for instructing young officers in the proper duties of command, in order that they might properly fill higher positions later on. It was recognized during the war that a serious deficiency of suitable squadron, group, and wing commanders would exist in the future, unless steps were taken to properly train young officers. With this goal in view, the Air Academy is designed to begin this instruction.

Sherman then described the proposed plan of instruction in detail:

- (a) Administrative instruction will be given great consideration. In this, the aim will be to turn out graduates who are competent to administer a squadron.
- (b) Tactical instruction will also be an important feature. Effort will be made to thoroughly ground the young officers in tactics, not alone Aerial Tactics, pure and simple, but also the Tactics of Ground Troops, and in particular the Tactics of Combined Ground and Air Fighting.
- (c) Technical instruction will be carried on also, but will be perhaps the least important feature of the work done at the Academy.

Sherman stressed that the student body would consist of men who had served a year in a service squadron and who had expressed a desire to remain in the regular service. He said the authors of the proposal considered it essential that the air academy be located in an area where troops from all branches

of the service were readily accessible. He and his colleagues also wanted a flying field to be nearby. Sherman "believed that the best location for the first air academy is Kelly Field Number 2," since it had a large flying field, equipment, school buildings, and troops of all branches were located nearby.

On the next day, April 16, General Mitchell himself sent a memorandum to the director of the Air Service, Major General Charles T. Menoher, who had assumed his duties on January 2, 1919. It contained all of the same information as that proposed by Colonel Sherman, with two exceptions. Mitchell wrote that "while it is desirable that the academy be located near a flying field, it is not essential that the students be able to fly to any great extent during their course of instruction." Instead of Kelly Field, General Mitchell recommended that the first academy be established at Dayton, Ohio.

On July 28, 1919, Charles F. Curry of California introduced H. R. 7925, 66th Congress, into the House of Representatives. Curry's bill provided for the creation of an aeronautical academy. Hearings on the bill were conducted by Congressman Fiorello La Guardia of New York City. La Guardia had served as a World War I aviator and was vitally interested in promoting civil as well as military aviation. Lacking substantial executive and congressional support, Curry's bill died at the end of the session.

As the air academy issue evolves, the reader will become increasingly aware that practically all of the controversial elements in the long struggle to establish the Academy had emerged by 1919. What should the mission of the Academy be? What goals and objectives should it have? Under what jurisdiction should it operate? How should its curriculum be determined? Should emphasis be placed on technical and scientific studies or on academic studies? Or both? What should be the role of military studies? Should flying be an essential part of the curriculum? Should all graduates become pilots? How much would it cost to establish and operate the Academy? Where would the Academy be located?

All of these questions are divisive ones. Solutions would be offered on all sides by a wide spectrum of officers. The answers would sow seeds of controversy among air leaders for decades and prevent them from presenting a common front to the various presidential administrations, to the members of Congress, and to the public. The question of the location of the Academy would especially become an explosive political football for members of Congress and civic groups, each fighting for the economic plum to be located in their specific area.

When it appeared that no legislative action was going to be taken on the Academy proposal in 1919, the Air Service leaders attempted another course of action. Colonel Oscar Westover wrote to the superintendent of the Military Academy, Colonel Samuel E. Tillman, and urged that lectures on military aviation be included in the curriculum.⁷ The superintendent, who had served on the West Point faculty for forty years and came out of retirement to serve as superintendent during the war years, replied that the curriculum was already full

and there was just no time available for such lectures. Westover, anxious to keep his proposal alive, then told the superintendent that, if in the future arrangements could be made for one or more aviation lectures, he would furnish qualified officers who could illustrate their lectures with slides. Meanwhile, the Air Service officials continued to formulate plans for their own educational system. But persistent efforts were continued to induce West Point officials to incorporate aviation subject matter into the Academy's curriculum. When Brigadier General Douglas MacArthur became superintendent in 1920, he continued the policy of ignoring the urgent requests of the Air Service officers.

On April 3, 1922, Senator David I. Walsh of Massachusetts introduced Senate Resolution 266, which read as follows:⁸

Resolved, that the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy are directed to report to Congress (1) whether or not it is feasible and advisable to establish a school for aeronautics, to be known as the United States Academy of Aeronautics, with buildings, grounds, and equipment necessary for instructing and training cadets; (2) whether or not it is practical to use part of the buildings and grounds of the United States Military Academy and of the United States Naval Academy for separate schools in aeronautics to the end that young men desirous of qualifying for commissions in the United States Air Service may be appointed as cadets to such separate aeronautical schools in the same manner as cadets are now appointed to qualify for commissions in the United States Army and the United States Navy.

Major General Mason M. Patrick, the director of the Air Service, sent a report to the adjutant general of the Army on May 1, 1922, urging that Senate Resolution 266 be fully supported by the Army. He explained:

The Air Service is a new and highly specialized combat arm whose officer personnel comprises its combat force, and, therefore, they should receive the very highest type of training, in order that they may be imbued with that sense of duty and high morale necessary to the successful accomplishment of important aerial missions to which they may be assigned. The present methods of obtaining commissioned personnel for the Air Service are not satisfactory in that much additional training is necessary before these officers become competent Air Service officers.

Then General Patrick went on to explain the real crux of the matter:

The present junior Air Service officers, who by virtue of their War-time service and experience are best qualified to fill responsible positions in the Air Service are junior in rank to those officers who are now being transferred to the Air Service from the Army. The condition not only is detrimental to the morale of the original Air Service junior

officers, but impairs the general efficiency of the Air Service in that the officers transferred into the Service must spend considerable time in obtaining their aeronautical training and it is several years at least before they can be as efficient as the officers junior to them who instruct them in their duties, while the latter, although more competent than the officers coming in from other Arms, had no future in view as long as such transfers continue and while they are outranked by junior officers of all other Arms.⁹

The conservative military hierarchy of the Army, however, was not impressed by the arguments advanced by General Patrick. In fact, they were annoyed by the persistent efforts of General Patrick, his assistant chief, General Mitchell, and a whole group of Air Service officers to spread airpower propaganda. The Army leaders were particularly disturbed by the attempts of the Air Service people to achieve their goals by exerting influence on members of Congress.

More important, the ultraconservative members of the Harding administration, aware of the isolationist mood of the country and the Republican Party's emphasis on economy in government, were not about to entertain any military actions that threatened to open a new military Pandora's box that could possibly lead to vast new military expenditures.

On May 17, the secretary of war, John W. Weeks, sent an official response to Senate Resolution 266 to the president of the Senate. Secretary Weeks said that while it was feasible to establish an academy of aeronautics, it was the responsibility of the Congress to provide proper appropriations for its establishment and maintenance. "However," Secretary Weeks continued, "it is not considered advisable to establish such a school since the War Department already provides for the instruction and training of flyers in the military service and other governmental agencies make similar provisions for their services." Secretary Weeks pointed out that it was "not practical to use a part of the buildings and grounds of the United States Military Academy for a separate school in aeronautics." He strongly emphasized that "The Air Service of the United States Army, as prescribed in the Act of June 1920, is sufficient for military purposes."¹⁰ Consequently, the Congress took no further action on Senate Resolution 266.

General Billy Mitchell, in his capacity as assistant chief of the Air Service, mounted a personal crusade to enhance the significance of aviation as the first line of defense for the nation. He attempted to influence public opinion through his speeches and writings. He argued for a unified Air Service with a status equal to that of the Army and the Navy. Being impetuous and emotional, Mitchell began to make bitter denunciations of his foes in the Army and Navy whom he felt were blocking his goals. Increasingly, he was unable or unwilling to comprehend why the Army, the Navy, and all of the departments of the government could not see his vision of the potential of aviation.

When words failed, Mitchell decided to try a more dramatic approach. He sought to validate his strategic bombing concepts by the aerial bombardment of the captured German battleship *Ostfriesland*. Yet his Army and Navy press critics remained unimpressed. Among Mitchell's many opponents was General John J. Pershing, the chief of the general staff. The time was not right, however, for punitive action against Mitchell. During 1923 and 1924, Air Service officers continued to carry out a series of record flights that clearly demonstrated to the public the increasing potential of military aircraft.

In 1925, the Coolidge administration illustrated its displeasure with Mitchell by refusing to extend his appointment as assistant chief of the Air Service. Mitchell was infuriated by being reverted to his permanent rank of lieutenant colonel and by being assigned to a low-level position in Texas. A few months later, the disaster involving the Navy dirigible *Sbenandoah* provided the occasion for Mitchell to make inflammatory statements to the press about incompetence and negligence in the Navy and in the government as a whole. President Calvin Coolidge, in spite of his reputation for taciturnity, could act quickly when issues of law and order were concerned. Angered by Mitchell's allegations in the press, President Coolidge ordered Secretary of War Weeks to prefer court martial charges against him.

Mitchell was charged with violating the 96th Article of War in that he allegedly behaved in a manner unbecoming an officer and a gentleman. After seven weeks of a highly publicized trial, Mitchell was found guilty as charged and was ordered suspended from the service for five years. Mitchell, instead, decided to abandon his twenty-eight years of service and tendered his resignation. He was determined to continue his fight for airpower as a civilian.

All of this controversy had a serious effect on the morale of the officers of the Air Service and influenced their course of action over the next decade. Among other things, advocacy for an air academy took low priority even after 1926 when the Air Service was renamed the Air Corps and given expanded responsibilities following the recommendations of the Morrow Board appointed by President Coolidge.¹¹

By 1925, the Air Service had already established a series of training schools for its officers and enlisted personnel. Primary pilot training was given at Brooks Field and advanced training at Kelly Field, both located near San Antonio, Texas.



Brigadier General William L. "Billy" Mitchell, exponent of air power and advocate of an air academy.

Scott Field, Illinois, offered balloon training. Technical training was given at Chanute Field, Illinois, while the Engineering School was operated at McCook Field, Ohio. The Air Tactical School at Langley Field, Virginia, became the center for the development of air doctrine. Here, and later at Maxwell Field, Alabama, the writings of airpower visionaries such as General Giulio Douhet of Italy and Air Marshall Sir Hugh Trenchard were studied. As a result, concepts of precision, daylight, and strategic bombing were developed. Tactical School instructors became the leading combat commanders and planners for World War II.

In 1930, Randolph Field, San Antonio, Texas, was dedicated and soon was dubbed the "West Point of the Air." Randolph became the Air Corps Training Center, as well as the site of the primary training school. Kelly Field became the advanced training school. Many of the air leaders of World War II were graduates of these schools.

In 1934, the Baker Board, headed by Newton D. Baker, who had been Woodrow Wilson's secretary of war, among other recommendations suggested that cadets at West Point be given twenty hours of flying training. The officials at the Military Academy, however, were reluctant to follow out this recommendation. They argued that it would take several years to redistribute time in the other subjects in order to fit the twenty hours into the curriculum with a minimum of disruption to the Academy's course of instruction.

It was not until the summer of 1936 that the new first class at West Point began its flying training, which consisted of twenty-five hours (ten and one-half hours of ground instruction and fourteen and one-half hours in the air). The instruction was conducted by Air Corps officers. The cadets were transported to Mitchel Field, Long Island, New York, for one week to undergo familiarization flights and other aerial instruction.¹² Disturbed by the time lost in transporting the cadets, West Point officials now expressed the need for a flying field closer to the Academy. On May 13, 1936, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the legislation authorizing the acquisition of Stewart Field. Stewart Field, however, did not become operational until after the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor.

By mid-1942, following legislative action by Congress, the Military Academy expanded its flying training program, and an advanced flying training program was inaugurated at Stewart Field. Sixty percent of the first and second classes, all volunteers, were involved in the program when Stewart Field was formally dedicated on August 25, 1942. By September 30, 1945, 657 cadets from the Military Academy had been graduated with pilot training. By way of contrast, between July 1939 and August 1945, 193,443 pilots had been commissioned from the Army Air Forces advanced flying schools.

In the European and Asian theaters, airpower proved to be the decisive factor in World War II. Early in the war, it became evident that air superiority, if not air supremacy, was a primary requisite for victory and, perhaps, for survival. Transport, reconnaissance, close air support, and strategic bombing all demonstrated the

strength and versatility of airpower. The technological development of aircraft, as well as the evolving tactical and strategic doctrine, accentuated the enormous importance of providing the air arm with the proper number of devoted, efficient, and properly trained professional officers.

In a letter to General Arnold, dated October 9, 1944, Lieutenant General Ira C. Eaker stressed the importance of keeping outstanding officers in the postwar regular Air Force and for training future competent officers. He urged General Arnold to take some decisive action toward this end. Eaker wrote: "Would it not be possible for you to propose legislation to authorize an Air Academy? ... I would like to see your name, as the wartime Chief, connected with the establishment of such an institution and I feel in that capacity you might be remembered long after your efforts in the war have dimmed."

In the postwar period, however, air leaders were faced with problems similar to those experienced following World War I. How to keep airpower as a decisive force in the defense of the nation? How to maintain a highly qualified officer personnel to meet the technological and intellectual challenges of the future atomic age? Top-echelon leaders were concerned that the average Air Force career officer lacked the educational background of his peers in the Army and Navy.

Military planners of the postwar armed forces again turned their attention to the education of future junior officers. Again, divergent opinions were offered. Some planners wanted to expand the existing service academies. Others urged combining the academies to produce officers for a unified service. Some planners urged the creation of an Air Force academy to augment the Military and Naval Academies. Others believed that all service academies should be abolished and that the problem could be best solved by expanding the Reserve Officer Training Corps and allowing the American colleges and universities to provide future military leaders. Still other planners urged a combination of these various options. The debate went on and on in the military, and no decision was forthcoming.

In the years following the end of World War II, various congressmen and senators often introduced bills providing for an air academy to be established and located in their respective states and even in their congressional districts. The first of these postwar bills was H.R. 3405, introduced by James G. Fulton of Pennsylvania on June 7, 1945, which stated that an air academy be established "at an appropriate place in the United States to be chosen by the Secretary of War." John D. Dingell of Michigan introduced H.R. 4184 on September 25, 1945, which provided for the Academy to be located at "such place in the State of Colorado as the Secretary of War shall determine to be suitable." On November 24, 1945, Paul Kilday of Texas introduced H.R. 4547 to establish the Academy at Randolph Field, Texas.

On December 12, 1947, Senator Tom Connally of Texas introduced S. 1868 to establish the Academy at Randolph Field. In January 1948, Senator Homer Capehart of Indiana introduced S. 1974 for the Academy "to be located

at such Air Force installation within the continental limits of the United States as the Secretary of the Air Force will direct." H.R. 6536, introduced by Marion T. Bennett of Missouri on May 12, 1948, would have established the Academy at Sedalia Air Field, Missouri. On April 2, 1949, the two senators from Colorado, Edwin C. Johnson and Eugene D. Milliken, introduced S. 1495, which stated that "the Academy shall be located in the State of Colorado." On January 3, 1949, Paul Kilday of Texas introduced H.R. 200, which would have established the Academy at Randolph Field. On the same day, Gordon L. McDonough of California introduced H.R. 80, which stated "The Academy shall be located in the southern district of California."

None of these bills was acted upon by the committees on the armed services because the secretary of war and, later, the secretary of defense did not agree to sanction them because there was no agreement within the department itself nor even among the top echelon of military leaders.

The air academy problem was interlaced with service rivalries and with the cause of unification of the armed services, which was at the forefront during the period. A group of Pentagon officials hoped that one important aspect of unification could be achieved through the combination of the service academies. Both the Army and the Navy were united in their opposition to this line of reasoning. But until the larger problem of the creation of a separate Air Force was resolved, the preparation of legislation by the Air Staff to create an Air Force academy had to be postponed. The time did not become ripe until Congress enacted the National Security Act of 1947.

CHAPTER 2

The Legislative Maze



*Ability is of little account
without opportunity.*

—Napoleon Bonaparte

The National Security Act of 1947 was approved by Congress after many months of bitter interservice opposition and wrangling by members of Congress. As is usual in such instances, a series of compromises had to be worked out. On July 26, 1947, President Harry S. Truman signed three documents. First was the National Security Act, which created the Department of Defense and a separate Air Force. The second was Executive Order Number 9877, which defined the missions and roles of the armed forces. The third document nominated the secretary of the Navy, James V. Forrestal, as the first secretary of defense.

The Air Force began functioning as a separate co-equal service on September 18, 1947. The dream of the Air Service pioneers—Menoher, Patrick, Mitchell, Foulois, Westover, Arnold, Yount, and others—had finally been realized. The other part of the dream, the creation of an air academy, was still in the future.

As an implementation of the National Security Act, the new secretary of the Air Force, W. Stuart Symington, tried to work out an agreement with the Army and the Navy to allocate a portion of the graduating classes of West Point and Annapolis to the Air Force. Symington wanted 40 percent of the Military Academy graduates and 33.3 percent of the Naval Academy graduates.¹ After months of debate, conferences, and exchanges of numerous memoranda, letters, and phone calls, a compromise was reached. Starting with the class of 1949, 25 percent of the members of the graduating classes of the Military and Naval Academies could volunteer to join the Air Force. At least half of the volunteers had

to be pilot qualified on the basis of their medical records. The Air Force, in turn, had to provide qualified Air Force officers to teach subjects required in the curriculum at West Point and Annapolis.

The Air Force officers were to make up 25 percent of the faculty at both service academies. This requirement proved to be a very valuable one for the Air Force, especially in 1955 and the years following. It forced the Air Force to identify all its members with doctoral degrees and master's degrees in specific subject areas. It also made the Air Force provide a pipeline of eligible officers ear-marked to attend military and civilian educational institutions in order to qualify for master's and doctoral degrees. The outbreak of the Korean War enabled the Air Force to identify reserve Air Force officers with advanced degrees and teaching experience in civilian institutions of higher learning and assign these officers to the service academies. The real bonus came in 1955. The original cadre of Air Force Academy instructors was drawn largely from those who had had two or more years of teaching experience at the other service academies. Since many of these officers had doctoral degrees as well as civilian teaching experience, their presence on the faculty was an important factor in the North Central Association's decision to grant the Air Force Academy accreditation prior to the graduation of its first class in 1959.

Secretary Symington still did not feel that receiving a portion of the graduates of West Point and Annapolis was a valid solution to the Air Force's personnel problem. He initiated cost studies to determine if it would be more economical to expand the existing academies rather than to establish a new one. When the studies were submitted to the Army and Navy for comment and coordination, there was widespread disagreement on the cost factors and on the number of graduates who could be furnished to the Air Force. Because of the impasse, in 1949 the secretary of defense established the Service Academy Board to study the whole matter of service academy education and its role in the defense of the nation.

Meanwhile, General Hoyt S. Vandenberg, the Air Force chief of staff, along with his advisors, decided that the Air Force itself should become involved in the detailed planning of the Air Force Academy as well as the preparation of legislation to be introduced into Congress when the opportune moment arose. Responsibility for carrying out these tasks was placed on the deputy chief of staff, personnel, and administration, Lieutenant General Idwal H. Edwards. Edwards and his staff reviewed all the bills relating to the Academy that had been previously introduced into Congress. They rejected all of them and set about devising their own bill.

The Air Staff's bill proposed that the Academy be located at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas. Although cleared through the various Air Force staff agencies, the draft bill never entered the legislative process. The director of the budget, James E. Webb, objected to submitting the bill to Congress. Instead, Mr. Webb recommended that the Air Force conduct a detailed study of the goals, organization, cost factors, and related data before drafting a new bill.

At this time, Air Training Command at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, submitted to Headquarters, United States Air Force, its plan for an air academy. The foreword of the plan stated that it represented "a compilation of the best ideas and methods in operation at the various service academies, the Air Force Aviation Cadet Training Program, and civilian education institutions." Under this plan, the academic part of the curriculum would include 703 contact hours in social-humanistic studies, 1,612 contact hours in scientific-engineering studies, 524 contact hours in professional studies, and 2,401 contact hours of military instruction, for a total of 5,240 contact hours. All cadets would be required to take pilot training during the third and fourth years. Cadets unable to complete the flying training would receive additional technical and academic courses to prepare them for a non-rated career in the Air Force. The secretary of the Air Force would be authorized to select upper classmen from the Military and Naval Academies to serve in this same capacity during the first three years of the Academy. The operational control of the Academy would be the responsibility of the commanding general, Air Training Command, and the superintendent would report to him.

Events took a sudden turn when on August 8, 1948, at the direction of the secretary of the Air Force, a board of fifteen civilian educators and key military officers were assembled at Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, for the purpose of discussing plans for the establishment of an Air Force academy. General Muir S. Fairchild, vice chief of the Air Force, served as the chairman. After several days of intensive discussion, two plans emerged. The first plan was designated as "the composite plan." This plan proposed a five-year program of instruction. The first two years would be spent at a civilian institution with the tuition paid by the Air Force, followed by three years at a military institution. The second plan, or "the conventional plan," provided for four years at a military institution. The pros and cons of each plan were discussed and summarized. There also was considerable discussion about the role of flying training in the programs. When the conference attendees were polled, eight voted in favor of the composite plan, five voted for the conventional plan, and two members reserved their opinions.

The report of the Fairchild Board was forwarded to General Vandenberg by the commander of Air University, Major General Robert W. Harper. General Harper recommended that two suggestions of the board be adopted by the Air Force. These were:

1. The Air Force Academy should be established as an undergraduate institution with a course of instruction of five years, divided between civilian and military institutions.
2. Pilot training should not be accomplished at the Air Force Academy.

In reviewing the report of the Fairchild Board, General Vandenberg disapproved the composite plan. He did, however, concur with the board's

recommendation that no pilot training should be included in the Academy's instructional program. Vandenberg reaffirmed his formal designation of the Air University as the official planning agency for the Academy. Further, he instructed General Harper to base the planning on a four-year course of instruction generally following the pattern of the Military and Naval Academies.

General Harper then proceeded to create a full-time Air Force Academy Planning Board of active duty officers. The board was mandated to examine all pertinent information and to determine the best plan possible for the projected Academy. In order to accomplish its work, the board created five task forces: Project Office, Site and Construction Group, Legislative and Interim Group, Administration and Organization Group, and the Curriculum Group. The groups were empowered to call upon as consultants leading civilian educators and outstanding military leaders, as well as the members of the staff and faculty of the Military and Naval Academies. The groups concluded their comprehensive study and in January 1949 published the three-volume report called *The Air Force Academy Planning Board Study: A Plan for the Air Force Academy*.

In its report, the planning board reiterated many of the same reasons for the establishment of a separate academy as were advocated by General Patrick in 1922. The board envisioned that the Academy would provide the Air Force with about 50 percent of its annual officer input. The Academy graduates were to be broadly educated in the humanities, the sciences, military studies, and Air Force principles, practices, and procedures. Cadets would be trained to become the hard core of career Air Force officers with a high sense of duty, loyalty, and dedication to the nation. To develop these attributes, the Academy would provide a program that included inspiration and indoctrination, as well as a broad-based education. As at the Military and Naval Academies, all cadets would take the same basic courses. As at the other academies, cadets would be assigned to class sections on the basis of their ability in a particular subject. This type of sectioning was designed to meet the needs of individual cadets, particularly the able ones ("savvy") and the dull ones ("goats"). The design that evolved at Air University is remarkable for its close resemblance to the traditional pattern of training and education at the older academies, especially West Point.

The curriculum was to be concentrated into three areas of studies: the Division of Humanities, the Division of the Sciences, and the Division of Military Studies. The program consisted of 195 hours of credit distributed as follows: sixty-six hours of humanities (33.8 percent); seventy-six hours of science (39 percent); and fifty-three hours of military studies (27.2 percent). Whenever possible, efforts would be made to integrate and coordinate the subject matter to prevent overlapping and at the same time present related materials in a more meaningful way. The humanities were to cover typical liberal arts courses. The science courses were to provide a general engineering background and basic scientific knowledge needed for an understanding of the technical duties required of career Air Force officers.

Military courses would stress leadership training to prepare cadets for the exercise of command. Further, in the words of the study, the main purpose was "not only to educate the Air Cadet, but to develop in him deep-rooted habits of learning, an unswerving sense of honesty, and a definite and constructive loyalty to his country and to the Air Force."²

During the time the Air Force Academy Planning Board was conducting its study, other governmental agencies were also investigating the whole matter of military education. One of these agencies was the Commission on Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government appointed by President Truman and headed by ex-President Herbert C. Hoover. The commission had a subcommittee on national security, which, among other things, was investigating the service academy system as a possible means of achieving unification of the armed services.

The Hoover Commission and similar other studies motivated Secretary of Defense Forrestal on March 4, 1949, to establish the Service Academy Board (popularly known as the Stearns-Eisenhower Board).³ This board was headed by Dr. Robert E. Stearns, president of the University of Colorado, and by General Dwight D. Eisenhower, then president of Columbia University. Its members included nationally recognized civilian educators as well as three military officers, including the superintendents of the Military and Naval Academies. The board was charged by Secretary Forrestal to study all aspects of service academy education and to make any recommendations necessary for improvement. The board was also instructed to examine the ROTC programs, because civilian institutions of higher learning were providing many more officers to the Regular Officer Corps than all the service academies combined.

On April 4, the Service Academy Board submitted its first report to the secretary of defense, recommending the establishment of an Air Force academy, including provisions for an interim operation.

In its final *Report* in January 1950, the Service Academy Board strongly recommended the retention of the service academy system and urged the establishment of an Air Force academy of equal status to the Military and Naval Academies. The report set forth the philosophy under which the service academies should operate. Great emphasis should be placed on the moral qualities required for leadership, including a high sense of duty, honor, and self-reliance. Cadets should develop a high degree of mental alertness and the capacity for analytical thought. The need for initiative, good judgement, and common sense should be stressed. The physical attributes of stamina and endurance should be developed as significant aspects of leadership. To solve the complex problems of modern warfare, Academy graduates would need a broad background of knowledge in the liberal arts and sciences as well as knowledge and understanding of professional military subjects. Whenever possible, cadets should be given the opportunity to supplement theoretical instruction with practical experience. The academic

instruction should not only impart knowledge but should motivate the graduates toward a lifetime career of leadership and service to the nation.

The Stearns-Eisenhower *Report* became a landmark document. It revolutionized all aspects of military education. Its impact is still being felt more than three decades after its publication.

In its concluding portion, the Stearns-Eisenhower *Report* spelled out in detail the rationale for the establishment of an Air Force academy. It reads: "A separate Air Force Academy should provide an opportunity to develop the morale and spirit found in the existing Academies. It should give the students the basic tools of work and thought that necessarily precede any successful attempt to integrate experience among the Services."

At long last, the *Report* gave national recognition to the dreams and aspirations of the host of Air Service pioneers. Now it appeared that the only thing lacking was the appropriate legislation to transform the dream into reality. This, however, was not an easy task and would involve much bickering and posturing on the part of the Defense Department, the Air Force, the Bureau of the Budget, the White House, and the congressional leadership. The difficult legislative struggle was exacerbated by other pressing events such as the outbreak of the Korean Conflict and the presidential elections of 1948 and 1952.

Before the election of 1952, members of the Democratic Party had held control of both houses of Congress for most of the time since 1933. Because committee chairmanships were based on seniority, southern Democrats were in control of most of the key legislative committees. One of the most powerful chairmen was Representative Carl Vinson of Georgia.

During the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, Carl Vinson had served as the chairman of the House Naval Affairs Committee. In this capacity, Vinson had played a prominent role in Franklin D. Roosevelt's efforts in building a two-ocean Navy after 1936 and in escalating the tremendous buildup of the Navy during World War II. Following the National Defense Act of 1947, the House Armed Forces Committee was established with Carl Vinson as its chairman. Consequently, Mr. Vinson exerted great influence over the proposed Air Force Academy legislation. The secretaries of defense and Air Force and their staffs were careful to keep Mr. Vinson apprised of their actions and to consult with him whenever necessary. Without Mr. Vinson's cooperation and assistance, no Air Force Academy legislation could even be debated on the floor of Congress.

From 1948 on, the essential elements of the Academy legislation began to evolve. For example, on January 12, 1949, Senator Homer E. Capehart of Indiana introduced S. 1974, which would have established the Academy "at such installation . . . as the Secretary of the Air Force shall direct." The bill provided that the instruction and training over a four-year period be conducted by Air Force officers. The course of instruction was "to provide a balanced and liberal education in the arts and sciences and a broad basic military education and to develop sound skills in the field

of military aviation." The superintendent was to be selected by the secretary of the Air Force from among active duty Air Force officers. A board of visitors and an academic advisory board were to be created. In many other respects, the Capehart bill resembled the legislation finally approved by Congress in 1954. But 1948 was not the appropriate time to enact the Capehart bill. The Bureau of the Budget again raised serious objections to the bill, and it died in committee.

In the spring of 1949, Secretary Symington convinced the new secretary of defense, Louis Johnson, that a third major service academy was essential if the Air Force was going to meet its requirements for career junior officers. A new proposal and draft legislation were prepared jointly by Johnson and Symington and were sent to the Bureau of the Budget for comment and approval. Frank Pace Jr., the director of the Bureau of the Budget, raised strong objections and would not agree to transmit the documents to Congress. Mr. Pace, however, suggested that the bureau would offer no objections if the new legislation proposed establishing an Air Force academy with control vested in the secretary of defense.

At the direction of Secretary Symington, the Air Staff quickly processed the coordination of an Academy bill designed to meet the guidelines suggested by Mr. Pace. While all of the members of the Air Staff were not completely satisfied with the revised bill, coordination was completed and the bill was sent to the secretary of defense for final approval. On July 29, 1949, Mr. Johnson sent the proposed bill to the chairmen of the Senate and House Armed Service Committees with a strong recommendation to secure favorable congressional action.

On August 1, Chairman Vinson introduced H.R. 5834, even though he was not enthusiastic about all aspects of the bill. On August 12, Mr. Vinson appeared before the Service Academy Board and informed the board that his committee would not hold hearings on the bill during the current session of Congress. Vinson then instructed his own professional legal staff to draft a new Academy bill that would parallel existing laws pertaining to the Military and Naval Academies. Mr. Vinson then informed the secretary of defense that he planned to introduce his own bill when Congress convened in January 1950.

Mr. Vinson's proposal to modernize and codify all existing service academy legislation had wide support among the members of Congress, the Bureau of the Budget, and even among members of the Stearns-Eisenhower Board. Attempts at "omnibus" legislation, as it was called, however, were not going to be successful because the Navy refused to accept the compromise proposals.

Meanwhile, members of the Air Staff were busily engaged during the fall of 1949 in the preparation of legislation to replace H.R. 5834 and to incorporate the recommendations of the Service Academy Board. This bill contained specific provisions relating to the selection of cadets, their pay, and uniforms. The draft bill also provided for the appointment of qualified civilian educators as well as Air Force officers as "permanent professors." All persons appointed as permanent professors would be commissioned in the regular Air Force. The bill also stipulated

that the strength of the cadet corps would be in addition to the overall strength authorized for the Air Force. It also included the provision suggested to the secretary of defense by Mr. Vinson that "when appropriate, all existing laws pertaining to the other Service Academies apply also to the proposed Air Force Academy." The secretary of the Air Force was granted broad authority to activate the Academy, to select the superintendent, the dean of the faculty, and the commandant of cadets; to establish procedures for the nomination and selection of Air Force cadets; and to perform all other acts necessary for the supervision and control of the Academy. In effect, this bill contained virtually all of the provisions ultimately contained in Public Law 325, which was approved by President Eisenhower on April 1, 1954.

In September 1949, Secretary Symington was informed by his director of legislation and liaison that Chairman Vinson desired that a site location be specified in any Air Force Academy bill submitted to the Congress. Immediately, Mr. Symington requested authority from the secretary of defense to establish an Air Force Academy site selection board. With Mr. Johnson's approval, Secretary Symington proceeded in late November to establish the board and to appoint its members. Retired General Carl Spaatz was designated as chairman. Lieutenant General Hubert R. Harmon, Brigadier General Harold L. Clark, and Dr. Bruce Hopper of Harvard University were the members.

During the summer of 1949, the members of the Air Staff had instructed the director of installations to investigate existing governmental installations for possible sites for a temporary location for the Academy. The Naval Training Center at Bainbridge, Maryland, appeared available, suitable, and capable of being renovated at a reasonable cost. It was also a short distance from Washington. Senator Millard Tydings of Maryland, a powerful leader in the Senate, was also interested in keeping Bainbridge as an operational base. Talks with the Navy Department officials revealed no Navy objections to having the Air Force assume jurisdiction over the Bainbridge facility. Nothing further could be done, however, until Congress passed the Academy bill providing for an interim site.

Because Academy planning appeared to be moving into its legislative phases, General Vandenberg believed that full responsibility should be assigned to a special staff agency. Accordingly, on December 19, 1949, the chief of staff established the office of special assistant for Air Force Academy matters with General Harmon at its head. For administrative support, Harmon's new office and staff were attached to the deputy chief of staff, personnel. Since the new office was an additional duty, General Harmon continued to function as the U.S. representative on the United Nations Military Staff Committee.

Hubert R. Harmon seemed admirably suited for the new Academy assignment. His tact, vision, humaneness, and devotion to duty soon gained the respect and cooperation of civilian and military leaders. His patience and understanding made General Harmon a key factor in the complex and oftentimes frustrating

legislative process. At this time, prospects for the passage of an Academy bill appeared very bright. It appeared that H.R. 5834, Eightieth Congress, Second Session would be enacted into law during the 1950–51 fiscal year. These hopes were dashed, however, by the outbreak of the Korean Conflict in late June.

General Harmon and members of his staff were not discouraged by the changing events. They continued to refine drafted legislation so that it could be submitted to Congress at the appropriate time. Meanwhile, Harmon and his staff investigated the possibility of establishing an academy without congressional authorization. The Air Force staff judge advocate general, however, strongly objected to this proposed course of action. Some senior Air Force generals then proposed to Harmon that an experimental academy be established under the auspices of the Air University. General Harmon rejected this idea because he felt that this type of facility would not have the legal and traditional status attributed to the nationally recognized Military and Naval Academies.

The Department of Defense officials were still insistent on an omnibus Academy bill instead of one creating a new Air Force academy. As noted above, the omnibus concept was filled with potential controversy and interservice rivalries. The Bureau of the Budget continued to raise obstacles to all of the draft proposals. Mr. Vinson continued to find objections to the draft proposals, which did not coincide with his personal and political desires.

Finally, on June 22, 1951, Mr. Vinson agreed to introduce a revised H.R. 4574. After months of haggling, this version had been successfully coordinated by the Air Staff, the Air Force chief of staff, the secretaries of the Air Force, Army, and Navy, and by the Bureau of the Budget. A companion bill to H.R. 4574, designated as S. 1760, was introduced by Senator Styles Bridges and Senator Richard B. Russell on June 27. During the same session, a number of bills had been introduced by members of Congress to establish an air academy at specific locations in their respective districts. But for a variety of reasons, Mr. Vinson decided not to schedule any hearings on H.R. 4574 during 1951.

In early 1952, the Academy planners tried to move Congress into acting on the Academy bill by proposing an interim site on an Air Force installation. With Air Force Secretary Thomas K. Finletter's blessing, General Harmon selected Mitchel Air Force Base, Long Island, New York, as the most appropriate interim site. Harmon's staff completed budget estimates for fiscal year 1952–53, based on the assumption that Mitchel would become the authorized interim site. The projected cost of preparing Mitchel for the opening of the Academy was set at \$9,195,000. March 1, 1953, was established as the date for the activation of the Mitchel site. Air Force officers were screened as potential faculty members. It was contemplated that July 1, 1953, would be the opening date with an initial class of 225 cadets.

The election of 1952, however, changed the whole picture. The Republicans won the presidency as well as control of the House of Representatives. President Dwight D. Eisenhower appointed Charles E. Wilson as his secretary of defense

and Harold E. Talbott as his secretary of the Air Force. Joseph W. Martin Jr. became the speaker of the House. Dewey Short of Missouri replaced Carl Vinson as chairman of the House Armed Forces Committee. With a whole new team of Republican leaders, now General Harmon and his staff had to undertake a program of indoctrination to acquaint the new executive team with the importance of enacting Academy legislation and to organize new congressional support to achieve that goal.

On January 29, 1953, Dewey Short introduced H.R. 2328, a bill "To Provide for the Establishment of a United States Air Force Academy, and for Other Purposes." This bill was almost identical to the old H.R. 4574 previously introduced by Carl Vinson in 1951. This bill had been reviewed and coordinated by all the new Republican officials including Mr. Hyde, the acting director of the Bureau of the Budget, who suggested only some minor alterations. President Eisenhower gave his approval to initiate congressional action. On May 21, Mr. Short reintroduced the revised version of his bill, which was now designated as H.R. 5337. Because of other pressing legislative matters, however, Mr. Short delayed scheduling hearings on the bill until January 1954, when it became the number-one item on the agenda of the House Armed Services Committee.

General Harmon and his staff utilized the waiting period to develop strategy and to win Secretary Talbott's full and enthusiastic support for the Academy legislation. Since the Eisenhower administration was pledged to cutting the cost of government, ways had to be devised to keep the initial costs of establishing the Academy to an absolute minimum. It was of the utmost importance that the right officials be selected to present testimony at the hearings on H.R. 5337. General Harmon had to give great consideration to the matter of which officials he would recommend to testify. The impact of their statements would be vital to the whole process.

On January 13, 1954, the full House Armed Services Committee, with Dewey Short presiding, began to hear testimony on the bill.⁴ The first witness was the Deputy Secretary of Defense Roger M. Kyes, who characterized the bill as "one of the most important items in the Department of Defense legislative program. It is a long-range project which is of great importance to our National Security."

The next witness was Dr. John Hannah, the assistant secretary of defense. Dr. Hannah reiterated the points stressed by Mr. Kyes and then went on to reinforce the need for an Air Force academy. As a distinguished civilian educator who had previously served as president of Michigan State College, Dr. Hannah's words took on added significance. "The continuing quality and effectiveness of the Air Force," Hannah stressed, "will be largely dependent upon the quality of its professional leadership." He then went on to say: "Airpower is the keystone of our military strength. We are spending billions of dollars on aircraft and related equipment. ... It is no less essential that our officer personnel be of the highest type one can produce."



Dr. Hannah then explained to the committee that since becoming assistant secretary of defense he had opportunities to visit the Military and Naval Academies and to become acquainted with and work with Academy graduates firsthand. As a result, he had changed his mind completely about military education. "I am now strongly convinced of the wisdom of establishing an Air Force Academy," he said, "believing it to be necessary from the standpoint of national defense, and wholly desirable from an educational point of view." He then stated that in his opinion few professions, if any, could "match the success of the Service Academies in inspiring their members to live up to such high standards of integrity and ethical conduct." Dr. Hannah concluded his testimony by stating that "long years ahead, historians may well record that one of the most significant accomplishments of this Eighty-third Congress was the authorization for the establishment of this Air Force Academy."

Next to testify were Lieutenant General Charles L. Bolte, vice chief of staff of the Army and Rear Admiral Murr E. Arnold, deputy chief of naval personnel. Both services strongly supported the legislation, especially since the establishment of an Air Force academy would mean more junior officers for their respective arms. Next, Secretary Talbott read a prepared statement to the committee. Talbott

President Eisenhower, after signing the Academy Bill on April 1, 1954, congratulates Secretary Talbott. Looking on are Congressman Vinson, General Twining, Congressman Short, Undersecretary of the Air Force Douglas, and General Harmon.

concluded his testimony by saying: "I might add that I have discussed this bill thoroughly with President Eisenhower. He is familiar with the contents and I am authorized to say, it has his personal approval."

When the hearings resumed on January 14, Secretary Talbott was asked questions by members of the committee about the selection of a permanent site versus an interim site. He was also asked about the projected size of the property and its estimated cost. In reply to a question regarding location, Mr. Talbott answered: "We would certainly not want to locate the Academy in any community which objected to our locating the Academy there. We must be in a position where the community will want us and want us badly."

General Harmon followed Mr. Talbott as a witness. He, too, read a formal statement and then answered questions. In his statement, Harmon stressed that the Air Force Academy in its initial stages would look for guidance to the Military and Naval Academies, but he emphasized that the Air Force Academy did not intend "to follow either of them blindly." He went on to say that graduates of the Air Force Academy should be "air-faring men in the fullest sense; air-minded and thoroughly indoctrinated in all aspects of air operations." The general, in reply to a question regarding instructional planning, emphatically stated that the planners were not hampered by such things as traditions, established customs, preconceived ideas, or vested interests. Instead, he said that the planners had "enjoyed a free hand and an open mind."

Harmon was then asked to explain the rationale behind starting the Academy with small classes and gradually increasing the enrollment. He stated that "the justification of an Academy is in the high caliber of its graduates. If we are to fulfill that premise, we must get off to the best possible start. We consider it essential in the critical formative years to stress quality and not quantity."

In answering a question about the selection of cadets for the first few classes, General Harmon replied that H.R. 5337 authorized the secretary of the Air Force to limit by competitive examination the number of cadets to be admitted annually. Initial competitions would be held in each state rather than on a national basis. In each state congressional nominees would compete among themselves for the vacancies allotted to the state. The other nominees—those nominated by the president and the vice president, the sons of members of the regular service, and sons of Medal of Honor recipients—would be chosen through competition among themselves.

Not all members of the committee were pleased with Harmon's reply, since they believed that they were going to lose some of their prerogative of appointing a principal candidate. General Harmon went on to stress that the new selection system would be in effect only until the Academy reached full strength. Then, the usual nomination system employed at the other service academies would be used.

Representative Kilday of Texas then queried General Harmon about flight training at the Academy, since the Fairchild Board had recommended that there would be no flying program. Harmon said that the Air Force position was that there would be a minimum air-training program during the cadet's four years at the Academy. He said that flight training would be integrated into the academic program. Mr. Kilday went on to say, "I think it is very important that we get into the record that there is to be that minimum of flying instruction because there has been a strong feeling in some quarters that there should not be purely academic education in this Academy." Mr. Kilday then asked Secretary Talbott if this was the policy from the policymaking level of the Air Force. Mr. Talbott replied that it was the policy.

The Air Force director of installations, Major General L. B. Washbourne, then testified regarding construction costs and related matters. When asked how much would be requested for site preparation, the general replied that the Air Force should have "funding available now on the order of \$25 million."

On the final day of the hearings, January 15, General Nathan F. Twining, chief of staff of the Air Force, read a formal statement into the record. He stressed that the Air Force needed a constant source of educated, trained, motivated junior officers with leadership potential. He told the committee, "We feel that an Air Force Academy which will provide us with a constant supply of high caliber, air-motivated, and air-trained young officers is the only answer to this problem."

The Senate Armed Forces Committee began its hearings on February 18, with the chairman, Senator Leverett S. Saltonstall of Massachusetts, presiding. Dr. Hannah was the first witness and reiterated similar arguments to those presented to the House committee. Dr. Hannah then asked the chairman to accept formal written statements from General Bolte and from Rear Admiral James L. Holloway, superintendent of the Naval Academy, and have them placed in the record.

Secretary Talbott next presented a formal statement similar to that given before the House committee. Senator Lyndon Johnson of Texas asked Talbott several pointed questions about the selection of the permanent site. Senator Johnson wanted assurance that all the Texas sites would receive full consideration.

General Harmon then appeared before the committee to deliver a formal statement and to present a written statement on behalf of General Twining. Former Secretary of the Air Force W. Stuart Symington, now the senator from Missouri, asked General Harmon what he thought about allowing an interchange among the services after graduation. Harmon replied that he strongly favored such an interchange, providing it was done on a mutual basis.

On February 19, Secretary Talbott and General Washbourne appeared before the committee to answer some questions regarding construction costs. Asked to furnish additional information, Washbourne advised the committee that in writing he had estimated the overall cost of building on an unknown site in the continental United States would be about \$145 million.

In open session, both the House and the Senate amended H.R. 5337. The House took final action on January 21, and the Senate on March 8. The bill was passed in both houses by a voice vote. On March 29, a conference committee agreed on the two versions of the bill, and final approval was given by Congress on the same date. On April 1, 1954, President Eisenhower signed the act as Public Law 325, Eighty-third Congress, Second Session.

After thirty-five long years, the struggle to establish an air academy finally resulted in victory. The next hurdle was to locate a permanent home for the new institution.

CHAPTER 3

Site Selection



The only real problem in this whole Academy project is where to put it. It reminds me of the centipede which lay distracted in the ditch considering how to run. It begins to look as though we will never have an Academy because of inability to resolve this question.

—Lieutenant General H. R. Harmon to
General Frederick H. Smith Jr.
February 10, 1954

Since 1919, the permanent location of the projected air academy had been a crucial question. Political leaders in and out of Congress, as well as air officers, had differing opinions and motives for the siting of the Academy. Locations in Texas, especially Randolph Field, attracted favorable attention for many years. Locations in the Midwest and along the Pacific coast had many supporters, including many senior air officers. Chambers of commerce spearheaded the drives from time to time to promote the attributes of their own particular location by producing vast quantities of brochures, statistical tables, and diagrams. Over the years, nearly 600 locations were offered as proposed homes for the Air Force Academy.

In November 1949, when it appeared that Congress was going to act favorably upon the Academy legislation before it, Secretary of the Air Force Symington decided that the time had come for the appointment of an Air Force Academy Site Selection Board. The chairman of the House Armed Forces Committee, Carl Vinson, strongly believed that the enactment of the legislation would be enhanced if the thorny question of location were solved, or even if positive efforts were being made in that direction. Secretary Symington, acting on that assumption, appointed recently retired Chief of Staff Carl Spaatz as the

chairman of the board. Other members included General Harmon, Brigadier General Harold L. Clark, and Dr. Bruce Hopper of Harvard University. Lieutenant Colonel Arthur E. Boudreau was appointed as recorder for the Site Selection Board.

The board studied the advantages and disadvantages of 354 possible sites in twenty-two states. These sites had been proposed by members of Congress, by chambers of commerce, and by interested individual citizens. The board used as standards many of the criteria developed by the Air Force Academy Planning Board. The primary factors to be considered included acreage, topography, community aspects, climate, water supply, utilities, transportation, cost, and flying training. The board was free to call upon the advisory services offered by the chief of engineers of the U.S. Army, the office of the director of installations of the Air Force, and other governmental agencies. It also obtained detailed reports from a leading Chicago architectural firm, Holabird, Rout, and Burger, which had been hired by the Air Force previously to survey the sites and to recommend an order of priority. This rigorous process of selection eliminated all of the sites except for twenty-nine.

The members of the board personally visited the remaining sites. As a result of their inspection visits, the board soon narrowed the list to eight sites. These were Camp Beale, California; Colorado Springs, Colorado; Charlotte and Salisbury, North Carolina; Grapevine, Texas; Madison, Indiana; Randolph Air Force Base, Texas; and Grayson County, Texas.

While the board did not officially announce a top choice, the Colorado Springs area was the place members of the board believed was most suitable. A memorandum to this effect was drawn up and placed in the sealed file of the secretary of the Air Force by General Harmon. Several years later, in 1954, at General Harmon's suggestion, this memorandum was removed from the file and shown to Secretary of the Air Force Harold E. Talbott. Possibly this document was a crucial factor in his final decision, as will be discussed later on.

The Site Selection Board was dissolved on December 16, 1952. The board's preliminary surveys and related data, however, were utilized in 1954 when the Site Selection Commission was appointed by Secretary Talbott.

During an oral interview on October 10 and 11, 1956, conducted by Lieutenant Colonel Edgar A. Holt, command historian for the U.S. Air Force Academy, Colonel Boudreau shed some very interesting light on the activities of the Site Selection Board while inspecting the Colorado Springs site. It appears that the Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce had proposed two different sites for the board's consideration. One of these sites was adjacent to Camp Carson, south of the city and east of the Broadmoor area. The other area was north of the city and directly east of U.S. Highway 85-87. (Today, this proposed site is known as Falcon Estates, Chapel Hills, and the Briargate subdivision.) At this time, Camp Carson was in the process of being deactivated, and the chamber of commerce members thought that the Camp Carson area would be

favorably received by the board. But as pointed out by Boudreau, neither of these sites impressed the members of the board because the sites failed to meet the aesthetic scenic beauty requirement.

The members of the board spent the weekend at the Broadmoor Hotel while waiting for an Air Force plane to return them to Washington on Monday morning. Boudreau, however, decided to drive north to Boulder to visit with Dr. Stearns at the University of Colorado. While driving north of Colorado Springs, Boudreau said he became "impressed by the beauty and grandeur of the area on the west side of the highway south of Husted and Monument." He went on to tell Colonel Holt, "On the same day, I informed representatives of the chamber of commerce of my favorable impressions of the Pikes Peak site area and stated to them that there might be a chance that this would be acceptable to the Site Selection Board."

The officials of the chamber of commerce made a hasty survey of the area on Sunday. The officials contacted General Spaatz and urged him to delay the departure of the board on Monday until they had an opportunity to visit the area west of the highway. Boudreau said, "Representatives of the Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce were, at first, reluctant to change their sponsorship of sites from those first considered to that suggested by me, but I pointed out that if they adopted it as their choice, it might stand a chance of adoption by the Air Force." The chamber people respected Bud Boudreau's opinions because they knew that he was a key member of General Harmon's staff and that he had handled most of the correspondence dealing with sites all over the country.

In a document entitled *Brochure of the History and Experience of the Air Force Academy Site Selection Board*, General Harmon himself contributes some additional information on the Colorado Springs sites. He wrote:

During the inspection of these sites, the board was impressed by the many advantages of the immediate area but not with either of the particular sites offered. Of the two, the South Site [the Carson-Broadmoor site] was to be preferred. However, the Chamber of Commerce indicated that boundaries of the North Site [later referred to as the Pike View Site] could be redrawn ... to include much more desirable terrain and to exclude the less desirable portions. For these reasons, the Broadmoor Site was retained ... and the Chamber of Commerce was given the opportunity to redefine the North Site and submit supporting data thereon.

Because of national circumstances, however, nothing positive resulted from the Spaatz Site Selection Board activities. Projected air academy legislation was also hampered by the Bureau of the Budget's insistence on omnibus revision of service academy legislation. The most damaging blow to any Academy legislation, however, was the outbreak of the Korean Conflict in June of 1950. Congress

was in no mood to enact Academy legislation involving several hundred millions of dollars while the country was in a crisis.

When on April 1, 1954, President Eisenhower signed Public Law 325, commonly known as the "Air Force Academy Act," he set into motion the machinery necessary to make the Academy a physical reality. The act stipulated that the secretary of the Air Force would determine the location of the Academy by establishing a commission of five members "to advise him in connection with the selection of a permanent location for the Academy." Further, the act stated: "The Secretary shall accept the unanimous decision for a permanent location by such Commission. In the event such recommendation is not unanimous, the commission by a majority vote shall submit to the Secretary three sites from which the Secretary shall select one as the permanent location."

On April 6, 1954, Secretary Talbott exercised the authority granted him by Public Law 325 and established the Air Force Academy Site Selection Commission. He then appointed the following as members: Generals Spaatz and Harmon; Dr. Virgil M. Hancher, president of the State University of Iowa; Reserve Brigadier General Charles A. Lindbergh; and Mr. Merrill C. Meigs, vice president of the Hearst Corporation. As previously pointed out, Spaatz and Harmon had served on the original Site Selection Board appointed in 1949. The appointment of Charles A. Lindbergh, America's most famous aviator, was well received by the press.¹

Secretary Talbott considered the task of selecting a site so urgent that he asked the members to meet in his Washington office on April 5, one day before the official document establishing the commission was published. Talbott briefed the members on the task before them, then reviewed the work of the Spaatz Board. Talbott instructed the members of the board to begin their task immediately and to complete the job as soon as possible.² The members of the commission left the secretary's office and were escorted by General Harmon to a meeting room on the fourth floor of the Pentagon. Here they discussed their plan of action and drew up a schedule of visits to proposed sites that seemed to require on-site inspections. Quickly, the members agreed to dispense with the election of a chairman. Instead, the commissioners agreed they would work as a committee of the whole and reach decisions by consensus. It was agreed, however, that the final recommendations would reflect the opinion of each member. In this way, the commissioners believed that their ultimate responsibility was to give a fair and honest appraisal of all possible locations.

To help focus their attention upon pertinent data, the commissioners drafted a statement of factors to be considered in the selection of a permanent location for the Air Force Academy. They then decided to establish April 21 as the cutoff date for receiving new proposals. This information was released to the press by the Air Force office of public information on April 6.



By April 21, the commission had to consider 580 proposed locations in forty-five different states, with California leading with fifty-seven and Texas with fifty-one sites. Following their own guidelines, the commissioners gave consideration to each of these proposals, often taking advantage of the reports, evaluations, and other records of the Site Selection Board. The commissioners themselves visited and inspected on the ground thirty-four sites in twenty-one states. While en route between these sites, the members inspected from the air thirty-three additional sites in seventeen states. In all, sixty-seven sites were inspected.

A gradual process of elimination and evaluation developed as the commissioners extended their travels, their technical information, and their own collective discussions. The members made five different air trips covering a total period of eighteen days. During this time the commissioners covered 18,852 miles and accumulated over eighty-eight hours of flying time. In addition to visiting sites, the commissioners spent one full day at the Military Academy and another one at the Naval Academy talking with staff, faculty, and senior class cadets and midshipmen.

To expedite matters, the commissioners laid down some ground rules. In an oral interview, General Spaatz explained:

The Site Selection Commission lands at Strategic Air Command Headquarters in Omaha, Nebraska. General Spaatz talks with General LeMay. Dr. Hancher, General Harmon, General Lindbergh, and Mr. Meigs look on.

Well, in the first place, we didn't allow ourselves to be pressured. We tried to conduct our operations so that we were under no obligation whatever to any community. In other words, we frowned on dinners, or anything of that kind. We couldn't avoid them sometimes. We just had to go to avoid hurt feelings. You just couldn't be rude about it. Of course, we had the typical Chamber of Commerce approach from every community—their place was the best place in the world and they didn't hesitate to tell you that.³

Handling the press was another critical question. All of the commissioners agreed that since Mr. Meigs was a veteran newspaperman, he should serve as their spokesman. This solution also satisfied General Lindbergh, who was very sensitive about publicity and who had avoided the limelight since the tragic kidnapping of his first son in 1932. At each site, only one group photograph was to be permitted. No individual interviews were to be given. Mr. Meigs, assisted by Colonel Boudreau and by Colonel Max Boyd, the Pentagon Information Officer, was to handle all contacts with local authorities and the press. Mr. Meigs recalled:

Colonel Boudreau would establish contact with the civilian authorities and Colonel Boyd with the press, stating that I was designated to speak for the Commission. Boyd would then introduce me to the press, whereupon I would explain General Lindbergh's reluctance to be interviewed. I explained that he was only one member of the five-man Commission to evaluate sites and that his personal background would be forgotten completely.⁴

After each inspection, Mr. Meigs would again meet with the press and try to make it clear that the members of the commission could not commit themselves while still examining sites. He would reiterate that a decision was not going to be forthcoming until all of the sites had been inspected.

The commission functioned smoothly and performed its task without friction among its members. "We discussed things," said Mr. Meigs, "and in all of the discussions there was never a display of acrimony because of differences of opinion—although, naturally, there were differences of opinion." The members worked out a routine that was effective and efficient for them. After each inspection of a site, the members returned to their plane where files of available data on each site were kept. Meigs recalled: "We would then discuss, point by point, the site we had just inspected. Many locations were quickly eliminated because they did not meet the criteria." In spite of some sharp differences of opinion regarding the merits of specific sites, the members kept their sense of humor. This is best illustrated by the remark made by General Spaatz at one meeting when he said, "We are just five old mules that can't get together."

Using the experiences of the Spaatz Board as well as their own understanding of the problem, the members of the commission established a set of criteria to be

followed in selecting a site. The ideal area, they agreed, should not be less than 15,000 acres so that there could be ample space for building areas, maneuver areas, athletic fields, staff housing, a modern flying field, and enough room for possible future expansion. During their visits to the Military and Naval Academies, the commissioners heard these factors stressed repeatedly. The Naval Academy, in particular, was severely landlocked, and future expansion of the Academy's physical plant could be accomplished only by the costly process of filling in water areas.

Other criteria included natural beauty and proximity of cities within a fifty-mile radius, so that cadets could have access to a variety of social, educational, cultural, religious, and recreational facilities. Climate was another significant factor. The commissioners wanted to select a site without extremes of heat or cold. The site had to be accessible to rail, air, and highway systems. The commissioners were also concerned with studies showing health problems as well as climatological factors such as precipitation, depth and direction of snow, temperature, humidity, fog, wind, and dust conditions.

On May 27, with all of the sites surveyed, the commissioners met in General Harmon's Pentagon office to summarize their findings. Generals Spaatz, Lindbergh, and Harmon were in favor of the Colorado Springs site. Mr. Meigs, on the other hand, was very negative toward it. Dr. Hancher was undecided. At this point, Harmon went to the office of the secretary of the Air Force and returned with the December 1952 memorandum, which the Spaatz Board had ordered to be sealed and placed in the secretary's safe.

After Harmon read the memorandum aloud to the group, Mr. Meigs stated that he still was not convinced that Colorado Springs should be selected as the permanent site. He said he would like to go to Colorado Springs and reexamine the area. Dr. Hancher and General Lindbergh said they would agree to return to Colorado Springs and reinspect the site. Mr. Meigs later wrote:

We agreed that after we had inspected Colorado Springs, we would do one of two things: either vote for three or make it unanimous for Colorado Springs. By ballot we selected the three sites, Colorado Springs, Alton, Illinois, and Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. If the decision were to be unanimous, it would be Colorado Springs. We signed two letters to the Air Secretary, Talbott, one making it unanimously Colorado Springs, the other selecting the three sites, so that we could vote by wire after further study of the potentialities.

The members of the commission then called on Secretary Talbott and informed him of their decisions. He seemed to agree with their reasoning. Talbott then offered the three commissioners the use of his Constellation to fly them to Colorado Springs the next morning.

After arriving at Peterson Field, Hancher, Meigs, and Lindbergh got into a staff car and rode off to inspect the terrain of the so-called Pike View site. They paid

particular attention to the areas designated for the proposed runways. All agreed that an aerial survey would prove most helpful. They then drove to the nearby Pine Valley Airport, where a small flying school was being operated. Lindbergh wanted to rent a Stinson 90 and take Meigs and Hancher along as passengers.

Since Lindbergh was wearing civilian clothes, the old-time, hard-boiled pilot who was the manager of the airport did not recognize him. Meigs gleefully described the scene:

"Do you know how to fly?" asked the airport manager.

"I think I can fly," Lindbergh answered quietly.

"Do you have a license?" was the next query.

"Yes, I have a license," said Lindbergh.

"Well," said the manager, "I'll have to see your license. If you will come into my office, I'll look over your papers."

We walked into the little office with its broken-down furniture and cracked walls. The manager seated himself importantly at a desk, got out some papers, and said to Lindbergh, "Let's see your license."

Lindbergh, of course, has about a dozen licenses from all over the world. Each bears his photograph. When he laid them out on the desk, the airport manager's neck began to redden. The color mounted to his face as he stared incredulously at Lindbergh, then back at the licenses.

"You ain't Charles Lindbergh, be you?" he stammered.

"Yes, I am," said Lindbergh.

"My God!" exclaimed the manager and almost collapsed on the desk in embarrassment.⁵

After his flight over the Colorado Springs site, General Lindbergh concluded that the area was suitable for flying training. This positive pronouncement by one of the world's most famous aviators put to rest the many objections that had been raised both in and out of the Air Force about the Colorado Springs site.

When the three commissioners returned to their homes, they conducted a series of telephone conversations with Generals Spaatz and Harmon. Spaatz had had some second thoughts. He now felt that it would be unwise to impose one site on the secretary. That would mean that competition among the sites would cease and that at the selected site, real estate would immediately skyrocket and community interest elsewhere would lag. More phone calls, however, failed to solve the dilemma of the commissioners.

On June 3, Mr. Meigs flew to Washington to confer with Secretary Talbott once more.⁶ When he arrived in the secretary's office, he found General Twining, the chief of staff, along with Spaatz and Harmon. After several hours

of intense discussion, Meigs finally told General Spaatz that he would join him in voting for three sites. Harmon then said that he, too, would go along with that decision. The three commissioners shook hands and then went to tell Talbott of their decision. The secretary replied, "Good. I am glad you have reached a decision." Meigs quoted Talbott as then saying, "I don't like to assume the responsibility of selecting the site, but I know I can do much better if I do have a choice."

In its official report, dated June 3, 1954, the commission recommended that the Academy be permanently established at one of the following sites listed here-with without preference or priority:

1. A site on the north (left) bank of the Mississippi River about 10 miles west of Alton, Illinois.
2. A site about 8 miles north of Colorado Springs, Colorado, on one or both sides of U.S. Highway 85-87.
3. A site on the south shore of Lake Geneva, Wisconsin.

When the Site Selection Commission's *Report* was released to the press, it was received with mixed feelings in many communities, even among the finalists, as the experiences of Alton and Lake Geneva will show.

Alton, Illinois, is on the eastern side of the Mississippi River, opposite Saint Louis. The area is rich in historical lore. Alton is located strategically at the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers and once was known as the "Gateway to the West." The Joliet-Marquette Expedition passed here in 1673. Lewis and Clark set up a winter camp nearby in 1804. Alton was the scene of the final Lincoln-Douglas debate in 1858. During the Civil War, Alton was the location of an important Union prison for captured Confederates. Alton is the trade center for Saint Louis, and the site received strong support from the chamber of commerce of that city.

The proposed site was in the Elsau-Chautauque section of Jersey County in West Central Illinois. While many local and state officials were strongly in favor of locating the Academy near Alton, there was active local opposition to the proposal. Most of the opponents were taxpayers who were afraid that the government was going to take their land without providing adequate compensation. One angry group of landowners warned Secretary Talbott, "To confiscate it would deprive us of our constitutional right to hold property which is legally ours."

The landowners quickly formed associations that spearheaded the drive to keep the Academy from being located in their neighborhood. Mass meetings were announced through large advertisements in the *Alton Evening Telegraph*. Over a three-day period, mass meetings were scheduled in all of the townships in the district. The ads warned:

Please attend!!! These meetings are for you. Do you want your county bankrupted? If not, let your Supervisor know and urge him to resolve not to allow the Air Academy to locate here.

In addition to the mass meetings, the opposition leaders urged their supporters to deluge their local officials, state officials, congressmen, and senators, the secretary of the Air Force, and even President Eisenhower with letters, telegrams, and angry phone calls. Residents also circulated petitions, which were intended to exert extreme political pressure on elected officials. Protest signs were posted and group protest demonstrations were staged. One group of letter writers even resorted to scare tactics when they wrote to Secretary Talbott that the Alton area, "because of its proximity to the Alton and Great Western Cartridge and Ammunition Company and the huge adjoining oil industries is a top atomic bomb target site. The area is extremely vulnerable to attack."

The alumni group of Principia College, a small liberal arts school sponsored by the Christian Science Church in Elsah, Illinois, took up the battle cry against locating the Academy in their neighborhood. The alumni's chief concern was that the government would take over the Principia campus through eminent domain and cause Principia to cease operating. A small, highly organized band of alumni zealots urged Principia students and graduates to launch a campaign "to save" their institution.

The alumni flooded elected officials with a deluge of postcards, letters, telegrams, and phone calls. Melvin Price, the Republican Congressman in whose district Principia College was located, received 1,700 telegrams in two days. Secretary Talbott, in a letter to a friend in Saint Louis, wrote: "So far, we have had 5,800 telegrams and something like 3,000 letters generated by Principia College. It burns me up that these people took this attitude—Congressmen, Senators, and every other pressure that they could bring on me."⁷

Powerful political leaders such as Senator Everett Dirksen, Republican from Illinois, and Senator W. Stuart Symington, the former secretary of the Air Force and now the Democratic senator from Missouri, strongly supported the Alton site. Along with the governor of Illinois, William Stratton, the senators tried to show the protesters that they had been badly misinformed about the nature of the Academy and its projected impact on the community. To help counter the arguments of the taxpayers' associations, the Greater Alton Association of Commerce published in the *Alton Evening Telegraph* a full-page public letter addressed to Secretary Talbott. In bold inch-high letters the statement proclaimed:

THE TRUTH COMES HOME
TO WEST CENTRAL ILLINOIS PEOPLE.
WE WELCOME
THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY.

After explaining that after checking more than 400 sites, Alton has emerged as one of the three probable sites, the letter continued, "This school will be one of the most famous military colleges in the world and will rebound to our everlasting glory if our community is ultimately selected." Then, coming directly to the point, the letter read in big, black letters:

THE RIGHTS OF OUR CITIZENS
WILL BE PROTECTED!
PROPERTY AND RELOCATION COSTS
WILL BE PAID!

The letter went on to explain:

Our government officials have REPEATEDLY promised this Association that all land purchases will be paid for at a fair market value, plus up to 25% for relocation expenses. Our Association of Commerce will set up a special committee of experts who will see that no injustices are allowed to go unchallenged. We believe our government men are honest and will protect the financial rights of any citizen affected by this program.

The letter went on to list eleven effects that the establishment of the Academy would have on the citizens of Jersey and Madison Counties. The arguments included some of the following:

4. The Air Force Academy will bring into our community the best people in the nation working in the educational, technical and cultural fields ...
6. The Air Force Academy will provide permanent year-round employment to approximately 6,000 people and be an economic stabilizer for all of West Central Illinois ...
9. People from every state in the Union will visit our community to visit with cadets, staff personnel, and officers and come to our area to watch national sporting events that will be a regular part of the Academy program.
10. From the commercial point of view, this school will mean at least \$25 million new money each year which will provide a vast number of new enterprises and jobs for men and women in Jersey and Madison Counties.

After reflecting on this public letter, many people began to reevaluate their stands on the Academy issue. Sentiment favoring the Academy began to mount, especially among the building trades, businessmen, and some property owners.

But it was too late to influence the final solution. As the editor of the *Alton Evening Telegraph* informed his readers, "'Grotesque' is the word to describe some of the accusations and attitudes growing out of the current controversy over selection of the Academy site."

On June 25, after the public announcement had been made that Colorado Springs was to be the home of the Academy, the editor probably expressed the thoughts of many people in Alton when he wrote, "Most people in this area feel like they missed the bus, probably."

The next site, Lake Geneva, in southeastern Wisconsin, prided itself on being called the "Switzerland of America." Others called it the "Newport of the Midwest." Lake Geneva itself is a beautiful body of water with a wooded shoreline covered with fine homes. Many of these homes are the resort residences of people from Chicago, Milwaukee, and other cities of Middle America. The city of Lake Geneva is located on the northeastern corner of the lake. The famous Yerkes Observatory, owned by the University of Chicago, is located about nine miles away at the opposite side of the lake near Williams Bay. Several resort communities surround the lake. One of these, Linn, on the south shore, was the proposed site for the Academy. Most of the land in the district was under cultivation, since dairying was the principal type of agriculture.

The Lake Geneva Chamber of Commerce proposed and supported the area around Linn as the home of the Academy. As in Alton, the chamber was joined by city and county officials, civic interests, and businessmen. Both of the United States senators from Wisconsin, Alexander Wiley and Joseph McCarthy, as well as Governor Walter J. Kohler strongly advocated the Linn site. Senator Joe McCarthy was at the zenith of his power in attacking the Eisenhower administration and the Army. Some political leaders seriously believed that the Eisenhower administration might use the Academy site as a bargaining chip to get McCarthy off their backs.

As at Alton, the property owners were violently opposed to being forced to give up their land. They decided to organize and to undertake every means possible to prevent the government from encroaching on their territory and invading their privacy. One angry homeowner reflected the sentiment of many of his compatriots when he wrote to the Pentagon, "The responsible people surrounding the lake area are very much disturbed over the possibility of seeing this beautiful lake converted into a mere landing strip for a bedlam of roaring planes."

An editorial writer for the *West Bend Pilot* (Wisconsin) told his readers: "If the Air Force Academy were established here ... the town instead of being a quiet community would be filled with brass from morning 'til night. And every morning when I get up and go out to the lake, instead of seeing wildlife and woodland creatures, I'd see a second lieutenant."

The Lake Geneva opposition became more vociferous in its complaints. Mass meetings were held. Supporters were urged to shower public officials

with letters and telegrams of protest. Protest posters were nailed to trees, posts, and utility poles. Protest banners were strung across the road of the south shore. When the members of the Site Selection Commission came to inspect the Lake Geneva site, they were greeted by an angry mob of protesters waving anti-Academy slogans. Some of the signs even said "Go to Colorado."

Secretary Talbott received a similar reception when he came for his final inspection tour. In a letter to Governor Kohler, written on June 14, the day after he toured the area, Talbott wrote: "I have been terribly disturbed by the letters and telegrams in opposition to the possible location of the Air Force Academy on the south shore of Lake Geneva. It is possible that this is an organized minority. . . ."

The *Lake Geneva Regional News*, in an editorial entitled "Here is our Future," attempted to highlight the advantages of having the Academy. It read, "Stability such as this area never before has experienced would replace our present unpredictable and fluctuating economy which now is largely dependent on the tourist trade."

The editorial went on to explode a myth about the nature of the proposed military school. It said: "The Academy, contrary to the mistaken belief of a minority, will be a university of distinction. To falsely label it as an 'Army Camp' is as preposterous and misleading as to describe Yerkes Observatory as a headquarters for an interplanetary space patrol."

Public opinion, however, remained divided. When some public officials and citizens began to change their views, others became more adamant against the Academy. For example, one letter to Secretary Talbott from an anguished, irate property owner asked "What might be done to avert this catastrophe? It would spell disaster for all of us." A telegram from a civic leader to Mr. Talbott pleaded "Why not locate the Academy in a place where it is really wanted rather than in an area that definitely does not wish to have it?"

Opposition sentiment in Wisconsin did not appear confined to the Lake Geneva area. On June 12, a thousand delegates to the State Republican Convention meeting in Milwaukee voted down a resolution urging that the Academy be established in the Lake Geneva area. On June 19, the city attorney of Lake Geneva filed a suit in the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., to restrain Secretary Talbott from selecting Lake Geneva as the site for the Academy. The city attorney was quoted in the *Rocky Mountain News* (Colorado) as having said that 73 percent of the more than 2,000 residents of Lake Geneva did not want the Academy.

Several days later, when the selection of Colorado Springs was announced publicly, the editor of the *Lake Geneva Regional News* commented on this legal maneuver. He wrote: "Opponents of the Air College resorted to many measures, the most distasteful being the injunction proceedings against the Honorable Harold Talbott, secretary of the Air Force. Washington circles likened that legal action to the lowest type of a Chicago ward political trick."

In this same editorial, entitled "Opportunity Knocked but the Door Was Closed," the editor lamented: "Getting the Academy would have meant year around economic stability for the entire area. International prestige and publicity would have come for the city and the state. It would have heralded community growth and progress. No wonder so many said it was 'too good a thing.'"

Another interesting reaction to the news that the Colorado Springs site had been chosen was that about 100 citizens of Linn township gathered in the Presbyterian Church to offer prayers of gratitude that the Academy would not be built on their land. *The Denver Post* (June 25, 1954) quotes the minister as having told his congregation, "We must not be puffed up. We must be considerate of everyone. The day may come when we were wrong."

CHAPTER 4

The Academy Finds a Home



*A fairy tale now let us tell
Of Colorado Springs,
While over all a mystic spell
Of wonderment she flings.*

*The scenes sublime surround us here,
Pure air and sunshine bright,
Famed soda waters bubble near
At foot of mountain height.*

.

*At foot of great Pikes Peak these lie—
Famed mountain of this land—
Where Rocky ranges tower on high,
Mid grandeur on each hand!*

—from “Colorado Springs”
by Laura S. Duvall

*U*nlike Alton and Lake Geneva, the Colorado Springs pursuit of the Academy was carried out with consummate precision and determination. With the exception of the weather station on the top of Pikes Peak operated

by the Signal Corps until World War II, Colorado Springs had virtually no contact with the military. The establishment in 1942 of Camp Carson, just south of the city, marked the beginning of a transformation that by 1985 would make Colorado Springs into one of the nation's foremost military-aerospace centers.

The quest for the Academy began suddenly on a quiet morning in the spring of 1949 when Joseph A. Reich, owner of the Swiss Chalet Restaurant on Pikes Peak Avenue, was seated in a barber chair reading *The Denver Post*. He saw a brief paragraph explaining that the secretary of defense was appointing a committee to determine the need for an air academy similar to the Military and Naval Academies. Reich thought, "Why not try to have the new school located in Colorado Springs?" Reich, along with many others, had been concerned with the postwar slump in the city.

With demobilization, Camp Carson had been reduced to a shadow of its former self. Despite the efforts to have Camp Carson designated as a permanent fort, Army officials were now in the process of terminating marginal installations. The population of the city had rapidly declined, and houses, apartments, and other property had "for sale" signs on them. It was particularly distressing to see the number of empty stores along the downtown streets. Unemployment was very high.

Following World War II, increased automobile travel had drastically changed travel and vacation habits. People no longer came to resort areas like Colorado Springs to spend the entire season. Instead, if tourists did come, they remained only a few days and then drove to other resort areas. Even the famous Broadmoor Hotel was experiencing bad times. With the introduction of the new miracle drugs, even tuberculosis patients were declining, and sanitariums, which had attracted ill people from all over the country to Colorado Springs for nearly fifty years, were closing down. The trustees of Colorado College, one of the city's largest employers, were so alarmed at the economic plight of their institution that they were thinking of closing its doors. The future, indeed, looked very bleak for General Palmer's dream city at the foot of Pikes Peak.

Joe Reich and others believed only a miracle could turn the tide. After pointing out the article to his friend, J. Douglas Crouch, co-owner of a leading men's clothing store, the two decided to discuss the article with other officials of the chamber of commerce. The top officials, however, did not seem too enthusiastic, but promised to raise the issue at the next meeting of the Executive Committee. Joe Reich kept saying to himself, "It is a long shot, but, nevertheless, there will be no harm in trying." The effort itself, Joe reasoned, might give Colorado Springs some much-needed publicity. From this small beginning, however, erupted a dynamic program of selling Colorado Springs to the Air Force as the home of the new Academy.

Some of the members of the Citizens Committee established by the chamber of commerce in 1954 had served together in 1942 when Camp Carson had been established. They cut their teeth on that project and learned the subtle

technique of dealing with political and military leaders on a huge project involving millions of dollars. They also learned the importance of total community involvement. In 1942, these civic leaders had also realized that in attracting a large military installation they were going to be responsible for a social, cultural, and economic transformation of Colorado Springs. No longer was it going to be a quiet little resort community of about 45,000 people. Instead of having a tourist season of about four months during the spring and summer, Colorado Springs would be changed into a busy center for military contractors, businessmen, and families of servicemen and visiting relatives from all over the country.

The building of Camp Carson launched a boom era for all kinds of commercial activities in the Springs. Everyone seemed to have profited by the exciting experience of the war years. Many of the servicemen stationed at Camp Carson and many of their visitors would return to Colorado Springs in the 1950s and 1960s to establish permanent residence in the Pikes Peak region and become zealous boosters of the area.

During World War II, some members of the Colorado Springs committee had learned some of the secrets of handling politicians and high-ranking military officials. They learned the importance of background data, statistics, charts, graphs, diagrams, maps, and other briefing materials. They learned the significance of having well-prepared photographic presentations as well as having professionally designed brochures. They also learned the effectiveness of having articulate and persuasive spokesmen with ready access to all the essential data so that the project could be "sold" with a sense of sincerity and commitment.

They also learned not to neglect the social aspects of the task. Wining, dining, and entertaining the dignitaries were important aspects. Even a round of golf or a friendly game of cards could set the mood for a more amiable discussion of a project. Social activities in the spacious homes of committee members were important. But even more important was the ambiance provided by the famous Broadmoor Hotel, operated by the genial Charles Leaming Tutt. During the war, a whole new generation had become acquainted with the fabulous Broadmoor, and they helped spread reputation for fine hospitality among people in all parts of the United States. In fact, in the minds of many people, especially military people, Colorado Springs and the Broadmoor were synonymous.

In 1954, there were, however, three underlying problems to be resolved before Colorado Springs could emerge as the victor. These were the altitude, health factors, and the availability of sufficient water.

Many military and civilian aviation authorities doubted the wisdom of conducting flying training at an altitude of over 6,000 feet above sea level.¹ Others had serious reservations imposed by approach and take-off limitations because of the nearby mountain ranges and the treacherous air currents. Even though pilot training was not to be the primary function of the Academy, most Air Force officials and many of the political leaders felt that sooner or later, some flying training

would become an essential part of the curriculum. As indicated in an earlier chapter, the question was settled only after Charles A. Lindbergh rented the small plane and flew over the site with Dr. Hancher and Mr. Meigs as his passengers. With Lindbergh's pronouncement that he was of the opinion that the Colorado Springs area was suitable for flying training, the altitude problem became moot.

Reports of respiratory troubles at Camp Carson and at Fort Warren, Wyoming, during World War II had disturbed top level military medical leaders. The incidence of streptococcal infections at these two installations was reported by the Army surgeon general to be the highest in the United States. The effects of the infections were reflected in many cases of crippling rheumatic fever and a high rate of deaths. Overcrowding in the barracks buildings and the open bay sleeping facilities seemed to be contributory factors in spreading the disease among the soldiers.

Colorado medical officials studied the military reports carefully. They began to gather medical data among the high school and college populations of Colorado. Military surgeons at Lowry Air Force Base monitored all cases of respiratory infections. Dr. Ward Darley, president of the University of Colorado and former dean of the medical school, had his medical staff conduct studies of respiratory infections among his students with special attention to out-of-state students. Careful analysis and examination of all the various medical studies finally convinced the top medical authorities, civilian and military, that respiratory problems would not constitute a serious health factor if it were decided to locate the Academy in Colorado. Actual experience with cadets in Denver and at the permanent site over the past thirty years has proven the wisdom of this decision. With cadets living two to a room, hospitalizing those who were ill, and treating them with antibiotics, respiratory infections have been kept to a minimum.

The critical water situation was improved by long-range planning by Colorado Springs city officials.² They arranged to purchase water from the Blue River on the Western Slope of Colorado and have it piped into Colorado Springs for use by the Academy and for the expansion of the city's population. It took several years to accomplish this remarkable feat. Without this vast new supply of water, Colorado Springs would not have been able to grow to a population of more than 300,000 in less than a quarter of a century. A key feature of this water supply system was the creation, adjacent to the air academy site, of the Pine Valley water treatment plant for the City of Colorado Springs.

The officials of the Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce were astute in obtaining the cooperation of the Denver Chamber of Commerce as well as the chambers of other Colorado cities. Since there was no real competition, local, state, and federal officials worked in harmony to bring the Academy to Colorado Springs. The newspapers throughout the state also aided the Colorado Springs papers in highlighting Colorado as the best home for the Academy. It was a very favorable lobbying campaign. All was peace, harmony, and unanimity. Only on

rare occasions would a dissenting letter to the editor appear in a newspaper. Businessmen, bankers, professional people, educators, union officials, radio officials, clergymen, and even private citizens thought that bringing the Academy to Colorado Springs was a great idea.

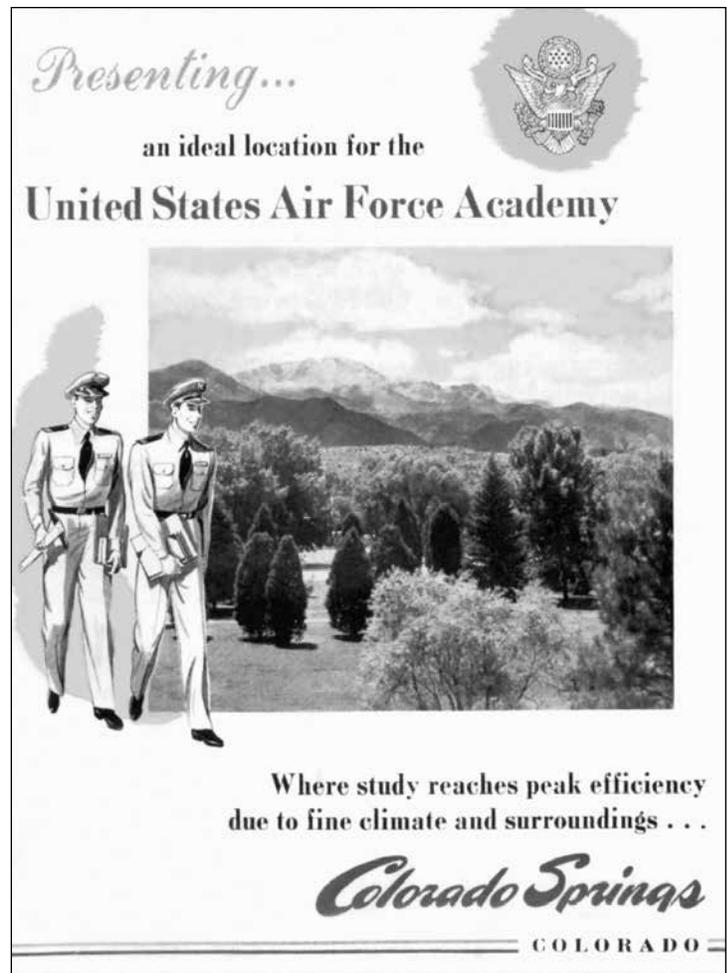
Civic pride was the order of the day. Unlike Alton and Lake Geneva, there were no irate taxpayers flooding state and federal officials with indignant letters and telegrams. There were no pickets and no noisy demonstrators at the airport. Only welcome signs, warm greetings, and banner headlines of joy were visible to the Site Selection Commission and to the secretary of the Air Force, as well as to the technical and engineering groups when they visited Colorado Springs.

The committee established by the chamber of commerce to make Colorado Springs the home of the Air Force Academy was well organized and orchestrated to accomplish its mission. Each

member had the talents and persistence to fulfill his area of responsibility. All members were highly motivated by patriotism and civic pride as well as economics. Collectively, the members made a fine team and were capable of working harmoniously toward a common goal.

The Colorado Springs committee consisted of some remarkable men who would have a significant influence for the next quarter of a century, not only on Colorado Springs but on the state of Colorado as well. Key members of the Citizens Committee included John Love, Russell Law, Thayer Tutt, Chase Stone, William H. Gill, J. Douglas Crouch, R. Soland Doenges, and Joseph A. Reich. Others whose specialized talents were needed included retired Army General Oscar W. Griswold; Reserve Admiral Douglas Jardine, who was a building contractor; retired Air Force Chaplain Paul Potter, who was serving as chaplain of Saint Francis Hospital; Robert D. Newman, an investment broker; Vernon Hallenbeck, a lumber dealer; and Charles O'Toole, general manager of the Broadmoor Hotel. While not actually members of the committee, Governor Dan Thornton and Congressman Edgar J. Chenoweth played significant roles.

John Love, as president of the Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce, directed and coordinated the activities of the Citizens Committee. He later served



The cover of the 1954 brochure prepared by the Colorado Springs committee to bring the Academy to the city. Representatives of 580 proposed locations in forty-five states presented similar materials for consideration by the Site Selection Commission.

twelve years as governor of Colorado and, as an industrialist, continues to play a significant part in the economic expansion of the state.

Russell Law was the head of the largest funeral directorship in the city. He was a genial person with a great flare for diplomacy. He was an astute businessman and an excellent student of human psychology. His maturity and air of self-confidence enabled him to deal calmly with political and military officials on the top levels. No one ever ruffled Mr. Law's feathers. In addition to being level headed, he had endless patience and endured the lengthy discussions and meetings with great fortitude.

Thayer Tutt was son and grandson of partners of Spencer Penrose, the multimillionaire patron of Colorado Springs. The crowning achievements of Penrose were his building of the Broadmoor Hotel and the creation of El Pomar Foundation, dedicated to philanthropic causes for Colorado Springs. Charles Leaming Tutt managed the lavish Broadmoor enterprise for more than fifty years. His sons, Thayer and Russell, would administer the Broadmoor and El Pomar Foundation for another quarter of a century.

During World War II, Thayer Tutt had served as an Air Force lieutenant colonel in the Pentagon. Here he got to know many of the top military and civilian leaders. After the war, he continued these relationships, especially while the leaders were guests at the Broadmoor Hotel. Thayer was very interested in promoting sports, especially ice hockey and figure skating. Over the years, Thayer Tutt was chiefly responsible for enhancing the reputation of Colorado Springs as one of the leading sports centers in the nation. This movement culminated in establishing the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs as well as in hosting several Olympic sports festivals in the city.

Participation on the committee to bring the Academy to Colorado Springs was only the beginning of Thayer Tutt's close association with the Academy, which spanned more than thirty years. For many years, Thayer served as the president of the Air Force Academy Foundation. Among other things, the foundation was responsible for obtaining private funds to build Falcon Stadium and the Eisenhower Golf Course. Thayer also spearheaded the financial drive to create an aerospace educational center and a new visitors' center on the Academy grounds.

Chase Stone was another key member of the Academy committee. As the president of the First National Bank, the largest bank in Colorado Springs, he played a dominant role in the economic life of the city. He also served as the president of El Pomar Foundation, which was responsible for dispensing millions of dollars for philanthropic purposes to educational and civic projects in the community. Chase Stone was a man of great vision and was thoroughly dedicated to improving the quality of life in Colorado Springs.

Mr. Stone was a brilliant organizer. He was also a perfectionist and was satisfied only when everything was done in a first-class manner. As a banker, Mr. Stone was vitally concerned with precision and clarity, especially in the

preparation of brochures and briefing materials. Chase Stone was a gentle man who always spoke in a quiet way, yet those with whom he came in contact were ever aware of his authority and power. He played a major role in 1942 in the negotiations that resulted in the creation of Camp Carson. Likewise, Chase Stone was a tower of strength on the committee that worked so diligently to bring the Academy to the Colorado Springs area. After Mr. Stone's sudden death from leukemia in 1966, the newly constructed downtown complex, consisting of the Antler's Plaza Hotel, the fourteen-story Holly Sugar Building, and a series of shops, was named the Chase Stone Center.

General William H. Gill was a highly respected member of the Colorado Springs community. After retiring as commander of Camp Carson, General Gill became president of Colorado College. Like General Eisenhower, who had become president of Columbia University, Gill made no pretense about being an academician. He was a manager and an administrator at a difficult period in the history of this venerable liberal arts college, which prided itself on being called "The Harvard of the West."

The postwar period found most private institutions of higher learning suffering financial distress. In addition, private as well as public colleges and universities were being attacked by Senator Joseph McCarthy and others as being havens for communists and communist sympathizers among the faculty and staff. During this troubled period, it is ironic that a doughty old soldier and staunch conservative like William Gill would emerge as the champion of academic freedom and defend the liberal faculty members of Colorado College from the wrath of the senator from Wisconsin and his zealous staff. As a result, Gill's stature as a leader of American higher education was enhanced. Consequently, his advocacy of the Academy proved very significant.

As a proud graduate of the Virginia Military Institute, Gill firmly believed that an Air Force academy would further strengthen the nation by providing more career officers with a commitment to excellence. Gill was a strong supporter of the honor code. As a cadet at V.M.I., he had lived under the honor system. In 1948, under his influence, Colorado College adopted an honor system, which still continues.

When the Academy became operational, President Gill offered to share the resources of Colorado College with the new institution. He arranged for the freshmen Academy Falcons to use Washburn Field for their 1955 home games with Colorado A & M (now Colorado State University) on October 15 and the University of Utah on November 5. He was also responsible for scheduling the Academy's first varsity game against Colorado College on October 6, 1956. The Falcons won the game.

Because of President Gill's personal interest in athletics, Colorado College expanded its intercollegiate athletic program. During the 1950s, the college was able to have strong nationally ranked ice hockey teams. By the 1960s, the

Academy began to challenge its neighboring institution in hockey, soccer, and other sports.

J. Douglas Crouch was the co-owner of Perkins-Shearer, one of the top men's stores in town. Since he traveled back and forth to the East in the course of his business, Mr. Crouch was able to make frequent trips to Washington. He served an important liaison role with the Pentagon and with the legislators on the Hill. His principal contact in Washington was Colonel Boudreau, who, in turn, put Douglas Crouch in touch with the right people. Boudreau also kept him informed about the status of the competition sites.

Crouch was mild mannered and always gave the appearance of operating at a low key. He had a natural knack for dealing with people. He was very systematic and kept notes on all the conversations he held on Academy matters. He made regular phone calls to key members of the committee, imparting information or raising questions. Afterwards, he would send telegrams. Years later, Mr. Crouch turned over his neatly assembled files to the Special Collections of the Academy Library. The files document what an effective person Doug Crouch was for the essential task assigned to him.

R. Soland Doenges, the local Ford dealer since 1945, played a unique and courageous role.³ He had come to Colorado Springs from Oklahoma and immediately got involved in civic affairs. By the late 1940s, he had become the president of the chamber of commerce. When planning for the Academy got underway, he became a member of the small core group.

In 1954, when the committee, through its grapevine in Washington, received word that the Alton site was receiving very favorable consideration and had strong political backing, the members became greatly disturbed. Since Doenges was the only member who had a personal contact in Alton, John Love asked him to go as an undercover agent and check out the situation.

Doenges let his beard grow for several days, wore sunglasses, and dressed in rough clothing. Doenges appeared incognito at several of the protest meetings. He shouted out provocative questions that served to stir up the angry landowners even more. He participated in gatherings of the Principia College alumni and encouraged them to send more letters and telegrams to governmental officials. He even talked with some of the Alton newspaper reporters. Fortunately, no one in Alton recognized him as a Colorado Springs infiltrator. When Doenges returned, the members of the committee had hearty laughs over some of his adventures among the Alton people whose actions practically guaranteed that Colorado Springs would be selected as the home of the Academy.

In the early 1960s, Mr. Doenges moved to Denver and opened a very successful Ford dealership in Aurora, Colorado. In 1983, he was named the Time-Life Automobile Dealer of the Year. He is an avid book collector. He is also an active Methodist lay leader in the Rocky Mountain Conference and is a recognized authority on the history of Methodism.

From 1950 until 1984, Doenges was a trustee of the Iliff School of Theology in Denver and served as president of the board from 1967 until 1984. For many years, he also served on the board of trustees for the University of Denver. In 1984, Mr. Doenges retired from his dealership, and he and Mrs. Doenges moved back to Colorado Springs.

Joseph Reich, who first conceived the idea of trying to obtain the Academy for Colorado Springs, was the wheelhorse of the committee. In addition to being an ardent booster for the city, Joe had the rare talent of being able to select the right people to get a job done. With his geniality and enthusiasm, no one could refuse a request from Joe. Consequently, Joe was assigned to a variety of tasks and performed them all well. Because of his deep involvement in social, fraternal, and religious groups, Joe was able to influence a wide spectrum of people in the community. As the longtime chairman of the Military Affairs Committee, Joe Reich made a real contribution in promoting good working relations between the military and the Colorado Springs community. He probably had more friends among the top military and civilian leaders in the Pentagon than any other single person in the state of Colorado.

For a half century, Joe Reich has given his time and talents in making Colorado Springs a more economically sound community and a better place in which to live. He is a positive thinker and an eternal optimist. Fund-raising for worthy causes has always been a special interest for him.

Over the years, Joe Reich has received many awards and decorations for his devoted services. The Army, Navy, and Air Force have bestowed awards and highest recognition upon him. Even the pope recognized Joe Reich by making him a Knight of Saint Gregory and a Knight of Saint George. In 1980, the Cadet Wing gave him the coveted Cadet Saber Award.

In 1983, in honor of Joe's eightieth birthday, the Colorado Springs community held a testimonial dinner at the Broadmoor Hotel. Present were local civic leaders, state and national officials, as well as his many personal friends.

In August 1984, history was made when the Cadet Wing honored Joe Reich with a parade of 4,000 cadets. Many people have called Joe Reich the "Father of the Academy." Joe promptly rejected the title by saying, "The Academy had many fathers."

To help achieve their goal, the members of the Colorado Springs committee were able to establish a "listening post" right on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. The office of J. Edgar Chenoweth, congressman from the Colorado Springs District, served as the headquarters. Judge Chenoweth and members of his staff kept the Colorado Springs committee aware of all the happenings in Congress, the White House, and the Pentagon. Telephone calls and telegrams provided instant communications directly to the chamber of commerce office. Through this network, vital information could be relayed to Governor Dan Thornton and other state officials. Some committee members made frequent business trips to

Washington. During these occasions, they would also find time to check into Mr. Chenoweth's office, to visit with other congressmen and senators, and to contact friends in the Pentagon. Several had friends in the White House. Being good, influential Republicans, other key members of the committee had direct access to the top officials of the Eisenhower administration. One or two could even pick up the telephone and talk to President Eisenhower himself.

Earlier in 1953, the members of the chamber of commerce of Colorado Springs had learned through their Washington contacts that the pending Academy legislation was being modified to authorize the secretary of the Air Force to acquire donated land as a site for the Academy. Members of the committee quickly discussed the new question with Governor Dan Thornton and leaders of the state legislature. The governor decided to call a special session of the legislature for the sole purpose of establishing a Colorado Land Acquisitions Commission. Both houses quickly passed the authorizing legislation and appropriated \$1 million to be used as a revolving fund to purchase the land required for the Academy. The state of Colorado planned to deed the land to the federal government and be reimbursed at actual cost. This legislative action was a dramatic affirmation of the strong support for the Academy at the highest levels of the Colorado state government.

Governor Thornton appointed the three members of the Land Acquisitions Commission and made plans to purchase land as soon as possible, if and when a Colorado site was selected. When Secretary Talbott made the official announcement, the commissioners were ready to set up operations and to engage three appraisers to evaluate each parcel of land. Since the appraisers were required to use 1954 land values, this fact was going to disturb some landowners because, after the official announcement, land speculators attempted to drastically increase land values. This situation was intensified when the federal agencies responsible for processing land sales were slow in reimbursing the Colorado Land Acquisition Commission. The commission, having spent its \$1 million appropriation, could not acquire additional parcels until it had received reimbursement from the federal government. The delay upset many landowners whose property was within the designated boundaries of the site. Meanwhile, land prices in the neighborhood of the Academy site started to skyrocket.

In retrospect, Governor Thornton and the Colorado legislature showed great foresight in establishing the Land Acquisitions Commission. Otherwise, the land speculators would have driven up the cost of the land so that, perhaps, the government would have had to pay exorbitant amounts or would have had to suffer great criticism for being forced to use its right of eminent domain.

On June 24, 1954, Secretary Talbott made the momentous announcement that Colorado Springs would become the permanent site of the Air Force Academy and that Denver would serve as the temporary site. The newspapers in Denver and Colorado Springs and elsewhere carried banner headlines of the



joyful news. Doug Crouch was in Washington with Secretary Talbott when he made the official announcement. Crouch sent a telegram to the Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce stating, "It is the end of a long and memorable trail." Governor Thornton proudly told the press, "This is the greatest day in the history of Colorado." *The Denver Post* quoted Senator Ed Johnson's reaction as "This is the greatest thing that has happened to Colorado since Pikes Peak was discovered by Zebulon Pike."

The editorial writers were lavish in their praise of having the Academy in the state of Colorado. But none were more jubilant than the handful of businessmen who comprised the Colorado Springs committee. For almost six years they had begged, badgered, and wheedled Washington with their sales pitch. Members of the committee had made more than thirty trips to the nation's capital, and the chamber of commerce had expended more than \$40,000 on the venture. Proudly, Russell Law told his fellow committee members, "If ever there was a community victory, this is it." Charles Tutt told a reporter for the *Rocky Mountain News*: "You know what was the deciding factor? Just that we had the best location. That is what sold it."

Similar sentiments were expressed by Roscoe Fleming, special correspondent for the *Christian Science Monitor*, when he wrote on July 10, 1954, "It was neither politics nor propaganda that brought the United States Air Force Academy to Colorado, but the excellence of the site and the quiet persistence of Colorado Springs leaders who had been working on the project for six years."

The successful Colorado Springs Committee.

Seated Left to Right: Major General William H. Gill, U.S.A. (Ret.), Robert D. Newman, J. Douglas Crouch, Dan Thornton, then governor of Colorado, Reverend Paul Potter, Lieutenant General Oscar W. Griswold, U.S.A. (Ret.), Co-Chairman Russell D. Law, Vernon Hallenbeck. **Standing:** Chairman W. Thayer Tutt, H. Chase Stone, Charles L. Tutt, Rear Admiral Douglas Jardine, U.S.N.R.-cec (Ret.), R. Soland Doenges, Charles O'Toole, Joseph A. Reich.

Picture was taken concluding "The Victory Dinner" of this Chamber of Commerce Committee in the fifth room suite, Broadmoor Hotel, June 1954, by Robert McIntyre.)

Yet, there was another important factor in the selection, President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Eisenhower had a longtime warm affection for Colorado. He loved to visit, play golf, and to fish in the Colorado streams and lakes. During his presidency, the Eisenhowers enjoyed vacationing in Colorado and staying with Mamie's mother in the Dowd family home in Denver. The Headquarters Building at Lowry Air Force Base served as the "Summer White House" for President Eisenhower and his staff. When President Eisenhower had his heart attack in 1955, he was rushed to Fitzsimons Army Hospital, and Denver practically replaced Washington as the capital while the nation anxiously awaited word of the president's recovery.

After President Eisenhower's recuperation, his physicians frowned on his traveling to Colorado or anywhere else with a high altitude. Even though the Academy officials were very anxious for the president to deliver the address at the graduation of the first class, the White House announced that instead the president would make a brief, informal visit to the Academy on May 16, 1959. After making a quick motor tour of the Academy grounds, President Eisenhower was escorted to Mitchell Hall to have lunch with the cadets.

The Cadet Wing commander, Herbert Adamson, presented President Eisenhower with the first Academy diploma and enrolled him as an honorary member of the class of 1959. Moved by this gesture, President Eisenhower told the Cadet Wing: "I was on the Board, as a matter of fact, when they decided that there should be an air academy, and behind the scenes and clandestinely and not saying anything about it, I was very anxious that the Academy be in the state I love so much."⁴

Again in 1961, when former President Eisenhower came to the Academy to dedicate the golf course named in his honor, he told the crowd of spectators that he always favored Colorado Springs as the home of the Academy.

Now that the thorny question of site selection was completed, the real work of bringing the Academy into existence was to begin.

CHAPTER 5

Settling in at Lowry



*The Air Force Academy is built upon a proud foundation
and so it should be. For the Academy is a bridge to the future,
gleaming with promise of peace in a stable, sane world. . . .*

*Our airpower has kept the peace . . . it is keeping the peace,
God willing, it will keep on doing so. This Academy, we are founding
today, will carry forward that great effort.*

—Harold E. Talbott
July 11, 1955

*J*une 24, 1954, Secretary Talbot announced that Denver, Colorado, would be the interim location of the Academy while the permanent facilities were being constructed north of Colorado Springs. Acting under instructions from Secretary Talbott, General Harmon went to the Denver area to inspect possible locations. First, he examined Fort Logan, in west Denver. It had been a World War II facility and had been deactivated. Later, it became the site of a national cemetery. Next, Harmon conferred with Chancellor Chester Alter of the University of Denver. The chancellor agreed to have Harmon make a survey of university property that might be temporarily suitable for the Academy. General Harmon then made a careful examination of the facilities of Lowry Air Force Base in east Denver. He soon concluded that a portion of Lowry #2 at the extreme eastern edge of the base would constitute the best temporary site. The World War II wooden barracks and other buildings could be rehabilitated, and the surrounding areas could be landscaped to present a creditable appearance and a suitable academic environment. On July 19, General Harmon recommended to Secretary Talbott that Lowry Air Force Base be designated as the interim location. On the same day, Mr. Talbott

made the official announcement. Plans for the necessary rehabilitation of the buildings and facilities got underway immediately.

As early as January 1949, the Air University Planning Board had recommended that "upon authorization ... an interim Academy be established with a relatively small group of Air Cadets."¹ Public Law 325, popularly known as the Air Force Academy Act, authorized the secretary of the Air Force "to construct and equip temporary or permanent Public Works including buildings, facilities, appurtenances, and utilities at such location." The same law authorized the expenditure of \$1 million for the purposes of providing temporary facilities.

In a letter dated July 27, 1954, Secretary Talbott advised General Harmon that "The United States Air Force Academy is established [at Lowry Air Force Base] and will operate as a separate operating agency ... under the direct control of the Chief of Staff, United States Air Force, with the procedural functions as a major air command." The secretary also stated in his letter that the Academy would be attached to the Air Training Command for statistical reporting, administration, and logistical support until such time as the Academy was capable of performing these functions itself.

General Harmon proceeded to assume command and to function as the Academy's first superintendent. Accordingly, General Order Number 1 was published on August 14, 1954, announcing the official establishment of the Academy at Lowry Air Force Base effective July 27.² Upon signing General Order Number 1, General Harmon was relieved of his duties as special assistant for Air Force Academy matters, and the office continued to function in the Pentagon.

Preparations were made for the key officers of the Academy to assemble as soon as possible. These included the dean of the faculty, the commandant of cadets, and the staff officers reporting to the superintendent through the chief of staff, the heads of the staff elements of the office of commandant of cadets, and the heads of the academic departments. Selection of qualified personnel to fill these positions was an awesome, time-consuming task. Hundreds of records had to be screened by the office of the deputy chief of staff, personnel. Qualified individuals had to be identified, interviewed, and then recommended to General Harmon. Most of the key officers were personally interviewed by Harmon before he would give his stamp of approval.

Harmon was a very meticulous person, and, in the initial stages of the Academy, he wished to be involved in all major aspects of the new institution. This meant long hours and arduous attention to details often under great emotional stress. Undoubtedly, these traumatic experiences contributed to the deterioration of his health and his death from cancer.

On August 14, the activation date, Academy personnel consisted of only three individuals—General Harmon, Lieutenant Colonel Gilbert Cooke, personnel officer and acting adjutant, and Sergeant Major Harry Parnell. Cooke and Parnell had been assigned to General Harmon's office of special assistant for Air

Force Academy matters. Within the next few weeks, other members of Harmon's Pentagon staff reported for duty at Lowry Air Force Base.

Major James Hunter had worked as plans officer and was responsible for working out procedures for cadet selection and recruiting. He wrote the information bulletin for the Academy, and with some revisions, this became the catalogue for 1955–56. Hunter also served as the first Academy registrar.

Major Arthur J. Witters had been involved in Academy planning since 1948 as the installations officer. Witters played an important role in working with the Lowry people in the rehabilitation of barracks and other buildings at the interim site. Later, he served as the Academy's first director of installations and in this capacity served as liaison with both the Air Force Academy Construction Agency and with Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill, the architect-engineers for the permanent site.

Major Ralph Hutto was assigned as the supply officer and was responsible for procuring supplies and equipment for the interim Academy.

Because Air Training Command was in the process of phasing out some of its technical training schools at Lowry to make room for the cadets and Academy personnel, space and equipment were in short supply. By late September 1954, all of the Academy personnel had to work out of two rooms in Building 905, part of the three-building complex scheduled to become the administration and instructional area. It was not until after January 1955 that more office space became available for the ever-growing staff of military and civilian personnel. Even then, essential equipment such as typewriters, desks, and chairs was in short supply.

Logistical and financial problems plagued the Academy during the early months of its existence in Denver. Headquarters U.S. Air Force had directed that Air Training Command, through its subordinate commands, Technical Training and Lowry Air Force Base, should furnish logistical support. Although Lowry Base Commander Major General John T. Sprague was eager to fulfill his duties toward the Academy, his support activity officers felt that their primary responsibility was to the base. To add to the difficulty, there was a long delay in transferring Academy funds to Lowry Air Force Base. Consequently, Lowry officers did not want to jeopardize their own mission by expending their funds to satisfy Academy needs. Because of this frustrating situation, Generals Harmon and Sprague spent a lot of their time on the telephone trying to get resolutions of their problems from the chief of staff and other Pentagon officials.

Logistical support matters were not formalized until after the joint tenancy agreement was signed on August 15, 1955. Meanwhile, the day-to-day piecemeal procedure led to many disagreements and misunderstandings between Academy and base personnel. The problems of the first operating year set a bad pattern for Academy staff officers. For years afterward, many staff officers, when frustrated by Air Force regulations that deterred an action which they desired, would not hesitate to go directly to their friends in the Pentagon and ask for an exception. Their

chief argument continued to be that unless an exception was granted, the Academy's mission would be jeopardized. Since no one in the Pentagon wanted to assume responsibility for impeding the progress of the Academy, exceptions were graciously granted. It was not until after General William Stone left the superintendency to become the Headquarters U.S. Air Force deputy chief of staff, personnel, that this practice was curbed, but it was not entirely eliminated.

In spite of the financial problems, the rehabilitation of fifty buildings went steadily forward. Twenty-four buildings were converted from two-story open-bay barracks to twenty-eight two-man rooms to accommodate twenty-four cadets and four junior officers (ATOs). Other buildings were modernized to serve as academic buildings, dining hall, chapel, theater, library, dispensary, gym, cadet club, cadet store, and other miscellaneous functions. The whole area was landscaped. Playing fields were constructed. These included six standard football fields, seven tennis courts, five softball fields, and a large cadet parade ground.

The academic complex consisted of three brick buildings arranged in a "U" formation. The grassed quadrangle had a red "Matador" guided self-propelled missile in the center. Building 905, which housed the administration, bore the name Patrick Hall, in honor of General Mason Patrick, staunch advocate of the Academy. Building 903, where the library was located on the ground floor and the social sciences and humanities offices and classrooms were on the second floor, was called Polifka Hall by the Lowry people. Building 901, which housed the science faculty, was called South Hall. The complex had originally been built to serve Lowry's technical training schools, which offered comptroller, intelligence, and flexible gunnery courses.

While the Academy officials made no effort to rename the temporary administrative and academic buildings, they promptly attached the names of famous airmen to the buildings serving major cadet functions. The dining hall became General Billy Mitchell Hall. The cadet social center was called General H. H. Arnold Hall. These names would be transferred to buildings with the same functions at the permanent site in 1958.

July 11, 1955, was designated as the dedication day of the new Academy. But many plans and decisions had to be made before that day could become reality. First and foremost, procedures had to be finalized so that prospective cadets could be identified, nominated, selected, and, finally, appointed. Section 6 of Public Law 325 provided for a different appointment system for the first four years of the Air Force Academy than that used traditionally in appointing cadets to the Military Academy and midshipmen to the Naval Academy.

Under the Academy Act, each senator and representative could nominate ten persons who would take a competitive examination. Appointments from each state would be made from qualified candidates from that state in order of merit established by the examination. In each state, all congressional nominees would compete among themselves for vacancies allocated to the state. Eighty-five



Secretary of the Air Force Harold E. Talbott and Superintendent Harmon survey the new Academy sign at Lowry Air Force Base, Denver.

percent of the appointments would be allocated to members of Congress for nomination purposes. The other 15 percent would be allocated to all other nominating authorities including the president, the vice president, members of regular and reserve components, sons of Medal of Honor winners, sons of deceased or disabled veterans, etc. In all of the categories, the successful candidates would be chosen through competition among themselves.

The officials of the Air Force believed that this method of nomination would provide the most democratic means of procuring cadets with high qualifications without precluding those young men who were financially unable to complete college. Some congressmen, however, were afraid that their districts would not be represented in the new Academy. They would have preferred the West Point and Annapolis system of appointing a principal candidate and an alternate.

Under the Air Force Academy system, the actual selection of candidates would be made by small committees of senior Academy officers who would review all of the applicants' records. Those selection committees would use a judgement factor, based on the "whole-person" concept, to determine the best-qualified candidates in each congressional district. The composite ranking arrived at by the selection committee would then be submitted to the Academy Board for a final vote. Then the official appointment would be confirmed.

While highly competitive, the Academy system proved very successful and after 1959 has continued to be used in the admission process. Congressmen soon learned that the Academy system allowed them to nominate ten candidates, thus satisfying more of their constituents. At the same time, the onus of non-selection of the other nine candidates is removed from the shoulders of the congressman.

If he or she so desires, the member of Congress can still exercise the prerogative of designating a principal candidate from among those recommended by the Academy selection committees.

Since all of the incoming cadets would be freshmen, some provision had to be made for upperclassmen who could serve as role models and help to indoctrinate the neophytes to the cadet way of life. The early planners had wrestled with this complex question and made all sorts of proposals. The most common proposal was to transfer a small number of upperclassmen from the Military and Naval Academies.

Early in January 1954, the Air Staff, however, decided against this option. Instead, young Air Force second lieutenants, right out of flying school, would be used as surrogate upperclassmen. Graduates of the service academies as well as graduates of civilian colleges and universities were selected for this important duty. As General Harmon stated, "such a mixture of talent will contribute, we believe, in a broader viewpoint in our student body." These young officers were called air training officers, or, more popularly, "ATOs."

The ATOs had a strong influence on the early classes of cadets. After their assignment at the Academy, many ATOs went on to distinguished military careers and several became general officers. One ATO, Jerome O'Malley, became a four-star general as commander of Tactical Air Command.

The Cadet Wing, in honor and respect, dedicated their 1957 yearbook "to the Air Training Officers who started us on the way."

They gave us lockjaw...
and sweet advice ...
Even dressed us.
Some couldn't stand us
With us they suffered...
the slings ...
and hammers ...
of outrageous fortune.

In the air ...
on the land ...
and in the classroom ...
they ruled the roost.
They finally recognized us ...
and admitted humbly ...
That they had loved us all along.

The curriculum continued to be of great concern to General Harmon and his associates. He had never been satisfied with the curriculum devised by the Academy Planning Board. In 1950, Harmon, as special assistant for Academy matters, arranged to have Colonel William S. Stone head a committee of officers with specialized subject training to prepare a program of instruction for the projected Academy. Colonel Stone and his group utilized the Academy Planning Board's recommendations as the basis for their proposed curriculum.

The Stone Committee wrestled with a lot of tough questions. What does an Air Force officer need to know in an age of supersonic jets, long-range missiles, and nuclear weapons? What is the role of the Air Force in space? How does an Air Force officer face the problems of rapid social change and great political

decisions on a global scale? How can an officer be prepared to face an uncertain future? How can Air Force officers be trained for leadership of the non-communist world?

The Stone Committee proposal was studied, analyzed, revised, and refined, both by the planning staff and by civilian consultants from leading universities. The scientific courses were reviewed by faculty members of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the social science and humanities courses by the faculties of Stanford and Columbia Universities. In spite of all this preparatory work, the newly arrived staff and faculty of the Academy decided that they had to reexamine and reevaluate the curriculum prior to the opening of the academic year.

Meanwhile, the heads of the academic departments put their instructors to work constructing courses and writing syllabi and course outlines for each discipline to be taught. In order to accomplish their tasks, the instructors had to determine the aims and objectives that were to be achieved in the course before drawing up daily assignments. The preparation of the specifics raised questions of greater concern in the minds of the faculty members. For example, how did a particular discipline fit into the entire curriculum? How did that subject correlate with other similar subject matter? How could materials of related disciplines be integrated? How could theoretical matters be reinforced by the introduction of practical matters developed by actual experience in the Air Force? How did a particular discipline fit into the educational philosophy of the Academy as a whole? Should greater emphasis be placed on the sciences or the social science and humanities? How could one balance the curriculum fairly among academic, military, and athletic demands?

Individual departmental staffs spent hours and even days debating some of these questions. Members of related disciplines did likewise. Among the faculty there was much doubt and skepticism about how so much instruction could be accomplished in such a short time as four years. While many of the department heads shared the feelings of their colleagues, they had to face reality. Collectively, the department heads agreed that they and their staffs had to concentrate first on constructing courses that could be taught during the 1955–56 academic year. Further consideration of the curriculum as a whole would have to take secondary priority. The curriculum question, however, would continue to plague the dean and the faculty. All agreed that it was imperative to subject the curriculum to constant review and revision.

The first semester, however, soon made apparent the glaring deficiency of the pre-July 11 course preparation. The courses had been overplanned, the demands on the cadets were too great, and practically every minute of the cadet's day was scheduled, even his allocation of sleeping time. Consequently, there was too much competition for the cadet's time by all elements of the Academy. This dilemma, in varying degrees, was to cause much agony and discontent for the Academy over the next quarter of a century. Later, the competition would be

called "The Terrazzo Gap." But this is a misnomer because the situation first arose in the early days at Lowry.

In an oral history interview, one of the original department heads, Allen W. Rigsby of the Law Department, made an interesting observation on the curriculum problems. He said: "I think the curriculum will gradually settle down. Probably the problem itself will be resolved by experience. I don't think that the uncertainties, indecisions, and changes from time to time were any greater than you would encounter in any educational institution that sprang full blown from non-existence."³

One key staff member, Arthur J. Larsen, stated the problem in another way when he said: "So far as the staff itself was concerned, morale was terrifically high both before, after, and during the ceremony [July 11 dedication]. Most of us were convinced that the Air Force wanted the finest possible Academy and we were all prepared to give out everything we had in us in order to achieve the ideal that was expressed in the ceremonies."⁴

The plans for the dedication of the Academy had been developing for almost a year before the scheduled event. Early in January 1955, Colonel Max B. Boyd, chief of the Air Force Public Information Division, who had also worked with the Site Selection Commission, had pointed out to General Harmon that the dedication of the Academy would afford the Air Force an unrivaled opportunity to secure very extensive and favorable publicity.⁵ He urged General Harmon to make the historic occasion a formal ceremony to which distinguished guests and all forms of the news media would be invited. Boyd suggested that every effort should be made to secure the attendance of the president of the United States, who could possibly deliver a major policy address stressing the role of national defense. Boyd's ideas appealed to Hubert Harmon, who was a traditionalist favoring military ceremonies. Besides, President Eisenhower was Harmon's West Point classmate and had shown a keen interest in the formation of the Academy.

General Harmon appointed his assistant chief of staff, Colonel William B. Taylor, as the project officer for the dedication. Colonel Taylor, prior to reporting for duty at the Academy, had served as legislative liaison in the Pentagon and had played a significant role in getting the Academy legislation enacted by Congress. Taylor was a tall, handsome southerner with a flamboyant manner. He was a born showman and enjoyed the opportunity of putting on a production of great dimensions.

Taylor drew up a very detailed operations plan to cover the month through the eleventh of July. According to the plan, on Saturday, July 9, the general public would be invited to visit the Academy portion of Lowry Air Force Base. The Air Force Band from Washington, D.C., would give a concert, and the Air Force's jet acrobatic team, the Thunderbirds, would give a thrilling demonstration of airpower. An architectural exhibit featuring the buildings at the permanent site would be available. Conducted tours of the cadet dormitories and other cadet facilities were to be

held every half hour. In the Cadet Theater, briefings would be held on the Academy mission and the cadet instructional programs. On Sunday, July 10, the same kind of program was available for invited guests, Academy personnel, and their immediate families. The dedication ceremonies were scheduled to begin at 4 P.M.

Logistics for the dedication presented a number of problems. Most Air Force officers past and present would have liked to have been present. That, however, was impossible. General Twining, Air Force chief of staff, issued an order that neither "the Air Staff or the Field Commands should be depleted to attend the dedication ceremonies." As a result, the guest list of Air Force officers, outside of those assigned to the Academy, was limited to the chief of staff, the vice chief of staff, the deputy chief of staff, specified members of the Air Staff, forty-one Air Force major commanders worldwide, and all retired three- and four-star generals. Because the ailing President Eisenhower was not able to attend, other governmental officials were not invited. Since Congress was in session, only members of Congress from Colorado and the surrounding states were invited. Colorado civic officials, educators, business executives, members of the press, and friends of the Air Force were extended invitations. The Military and Naval Academies accepted invitations. West Point sent a contingent of sixty-five cadets, and the Naval Academy sent forty-five midshipmen. Six representatives of foreign air force academies as well as forty-six foreign military attachés attended the ceremony. One hundred ninety-three news media representatives also attended.

The ceremony was held on a runway adjacent to the Academy area. On the runway, 4,159 seats were set up for holders of special tickets. Columbia Broadcasting System covered the event on national television. The movie news-reel services were also represented. The Air Photographic and Charting Service from Orlando Air Force Base had a crew taking photographs, movies, and videotapes of the ceremonies for historical purposes.

The weather on dedication day was perfect. It was a typical Colorado summer day with hardly a cloud in the blue sky. The temperature hovered in the low eighties with pleasant, cool breezes. Climatic conditions were ideal for the massive aerial salute to the members of the historic first class. Giant B-36 bombers, B-47 medium jet bombers, and F-86 jet fighters roared across Lowry Air Force Base. Following the formal ceremonies, the Thunderbirds, flying their red, white, and blue F-84F Thunderstreak fighters, demonstrated the maneuverability of jet aircraft at speeds of more than 600 miles per hour. Among the thousands of spectators watching this mighty display of airpower was retired Major General Benjamin D. Foulois, who had flown with Orville Wright in the first military plane, the *Wright Flyer*, in 1909.

Valmore W. Bourque was the first of the 306 members of the class of 1959 who were scheduled to report for duty at 6 A.M. Several weeks before, the commandant of cadets had sent each candidate a summer dress uniform (shade 84)



New cadets arrive at 6 A.M., July 11, 1955. Air Training Officers supervise the check-in procedure.

with instructions to have the uniform tailored to fit and to bring it to the Academy at reporting time. After a routine medical examination, the candidates began the processing procedure under the direction of registration officials and noncommissioned officers. They then spent their time getting their khaki uniforms checked, shining their shoes, and getting their hair cut in the approved Air Force Academy manner—short.

At about 11 A.M., the new cadets experienced a dramatic transition in their lives that soon taxed their physical and emotional stamina. The air training officers took charge of the cadets and drilled them on the marching formations necessary for the dedication ceremonies. The new cadets were now confronted by the stern-visaged, ramrod-straight ATOs who subjected them to the most exacting and rigid discipline. After several hours of contin-

uous drilling in close order formations, the fledgling cadets were deemed ready to march to the dedication ceremonies to be held later in the afternoon.

When the flights of new cadets marched onto the ramp, many spectators were astonished to witness a military formation that appeared to be made up of veterans instead of young men who had been civilians only a few hours before. The audience stood up and applauded the marching cadets. It was a proud moment for the parents and for every one of the spectators.

The dedication ceremonies opened with a concert by the Air Force Band as guests arrived and were seated. Honor guards from the Military and Naval Academies passed in review while the aircraft passed overhead in aerial salute. The Chief of Air Force chaplains, Major General Charles I. Carpenter, then pronounced the invocation. Next, General Harmon introduced Secretary Talbott, who delivered the dedication address. The commandant of cadets, Colonel Robert M. Stillman, then administered the oath of allegiance to the cadets. Immediately following, the Thunderbirds quickly appeared out of the skies to welcome the cadets to the modern Air Force with a spectacular aerial demonstration. General Harmon then introduced General Twining, who addressed the cadets on their responsibilities as future Air Force officers. Chaplain Carpenter gave the benediction. The ceremonies were concluded with the playing of the national anthem and the cadets marching off the ramp. Secretary Talbott opened his remarks by reading a message from the president of the United States. The message was as follows:



Dear Mr. Secretary,

Please convey my greetings to those who are present with you at the foundation ceremony of the United States Air Force Academy. In taking its place beside West Point and Annapolis, the Air Force Academy joins a proud company. The honored histories of the two older institutions provide a peerless standard against which, in future years, the excellence of the new Academy will be measured and found worthy. The American people, I know, wish the Air Force Academy brilliant success.

Sincerely,
Dwight D. Eisenhower

Early morning, July 11, 1955, Lowry AFB. Newly arrived doolies carry their clothing issue in duffel bags. An Air Training Officer shouts orders.

After briefly reviewing the development of airpower over the past fifty years, Secretary Talbott said:

We now stand at the crest in that upward climb. At last, the uncertainties, the turmoil of the past have given way to a great national institution dedicated to the leadership of United States airpower. Yes, the Air Force Academy is built upon a proud foundation and so it should be. For the Academy is a bridge to the future, gleaming with promise of peace in a stable, sane world. ... Our airpower has kept the peace ... it

is keeping the peace, God willing, it will keep on doing so. This Academy we are founding today will carry forward that great effort.

Mr. Talbott continued to stress the importance of skilled leadership to the survival of the nation in its efforts to achieve world peace. He told the cadets:

Only the compulsion and discipline of duty drives a man to the completion of his task. So it is of the man and not the machine, we must think of when we speak of airpower. Thus, it is to the human element that the Air Force Academy is dedicated, and especially to the leadership we must have if our country is to survive. . . . Leadership like this, superb leadership is truly priceless.

Secretary Talbott concluded his remarks by saying:

I think it is right and proper to ask the blessings of God on the Air Force Academy. The purposes of this Academy is intended to serve—peace, freedom and the dignity of man—these surely are pleasing in the eyes of God. Under His blessing, the Air Force Academy now will begin its historic work. With feet planted firmly in the solid center of the United States and with eyes on the stars, the Air Force Academy will move onward to a rendezvous with destiny.

General Twining stood before the cadets as a brilliant example of American military leadership and the development of airpower. The Academy was the fulfillment of a long-envisioned dream for General Twining and his pioneer aviation associates. Remembering the many years of struggle to make the Academy a reality, General Twining cautioned the cadets by telling them: "Institutions such as ours are not built overnight. We must be patient and not press too hard for the early fulfillment of our dreams. We want to build slowly and surely." The chief of staff went on to impress upon the new cadets their responsibility in being members of the historic first class:

You will have a chance that nobody else ever will have again. You will set the pace. Both the big things and the little things you do will establish customs and traditions. . . . Although you are the finest we can select and will study at the very best school we can devise—your success will not be automatic. It is going to be tough getting through the four years at the Academy and when you graduate, you will find the competition is keen within the Air Force.

Then General Twining stressed the importance of discipline as one of the most important characteristics of a career military officer: "One mistake in the Air Force can cost . . . millions of lives. Because of the vast technological advances,



one man in a bomber today can deliver more explosive force than all of General Arnold's Air Force could in 1945.... This is why we must have a special kind of self-discipline."

Next he spoke of the importance of science and technology on modern warfare and the future. General Twining then boldly told the cadets: "If tradition and progress clash—tradition must give way. Departure from tradition, where necessary, is already an Air Force tradition. ... Therefore, you must be prepared and willing to accept the challenge and recognize the need for new concepts."

General Twining concluded his remarks by saying: "From today on, the nation's interests will be in you cadets and those who follow. The Air Force Academy is not really important in itself. What is important is the product of the Academy. The graduates will be the measure of its success ... In the final analysis only you, the cadets, can make it a great school."

Following the dedication ceremonies, many of the participants left Lowry Air Force Base by bus and cars to go to the huge, 10,000-seat Red Rocks Park Amphitheater west of Denver. The Denver Chamber of Commerce had extended an invitation to all to attend a real western "chuck-wagon" barbecue, complete with singing cowboys and the Koshare Indian Dancers. The amphitheater is built high on the hillside out of monolithic red sandstone, and beyond the stage at

The Academy's temporary home at Lowry AFB. The academic complex is in the foreground, the rehabilitated cadet dormitories at the right.



New cadets render a salute on dedication day, July 11, 1955. Only hours before, these members of the class of 1959 had been civilians. The spectators cheered as the cadets marched proudly onto the ramp at Lowry AFB.

night, one can see the thousands of glistening lights of the city of Denver in the distance. The Koshare Indian Dancers from La Junta, Colorado, are Boy Scouts wearing authentic Indian costumes with tiny bells on their legs. The boys danced to the beat of drums and the chants of traditional Indian songs. The Koshares have performed all over the United States and have appeared abroad. The entertainment in the enchanting atmosphere served as a fitting climax to a historic day.

CHAPTER 6

Academy Personalities



*Reason and judgement
are the qualities of a leader.*

—Tacitus

The first superintendent, Hubert Reilly Harmon, was born in Chester, Pennsylvania, and graduated from West Point in 1915. Of the 164 graduates in 1915, fifty-nine became general officers, including President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Omar N. Bradley, who became chief of staff of the Army during the Korean War. Harmon's father and two brothers were also graduates of the Military Academy. In 1917, Hubert Harmon graduated from the Air Service Flying School in San Diego. He served in France during the final months of World War I. In the early 1920s, Harmon was assigned to the office of the chief of the Air Service, with additional duty as a military aide to the White House. While on this assignment, Harmon met and married Rosa Mae Kendrick, the talented daughter of a senator from Wyoming. Mrs. Harmon soon became a loyal service wife and supported her husband in every assignment during his long military career.

After serving as aviation attaché in London, Harmon became an instructor at the Military Academy. In 1940, he was promoted to brigadier general and assumed command of the Advanced Flying School at Kelly Air Force Base. The following year, he became commanding general of the Gulf Coast Air Forces Training Center at Randolph Air Force Base. During World War II, Major General Harmon was commanding general of the Sixth Air Force in the Caribbean theater and the Thirteenth Air Force in the South Pacific.



Lieutenant General
Hubert R. Harmon, the
first superintendent.

In 1947, Harmon was appointed as the senior Air Force member of the Military and Naval Staff Committee of the United Nations. In 1948, Harmon was promoted to lieutenant general and given the additional duty of U.S. delegate to the Inter-American Defense Board. In December 1949, he was assigned an additional duty as special assistant for Air Force Academy matters at Headquarters, U.S. Air Force.

Reaching the mandatory period of thirty-eight years of service, Harmon officially retired on February 27, 1953. The next day, he was recalled to active duty with the same assignments. On June 30, 1953, he again reverted to retired status. At the personal request of President Eisenhower on November 8, 1953, General Harmon was recalled to active duty and became the special assistant to the chief of staff for Academy matters. He became the first superintendent of the Air Force Academy on August 14, 1954.

Hubert Harmon was an unusual man. The editors of the 1915 *Howitzer* (West Point's yearbook), quoting from Shakespeare, said of "Doodle" Harmon, "How far the little candle throws its beams." In spite of weighing only 130 pounds, Harmon became a scrappy quarterback. Of Harmon's participation on the football, baseball, and hockey squads, the editors wrote, "He was pretty small for the team, but his grit and perseverance finally won the coveted football 'A,' the class was mighty proud." Grit and perseverance were traits that were to characterize Hubert Harmon his entire life. Patience and diplomacy were among his other virtues.

Superintendent General Harmon was a short, bald, frail-looking man with boundless energy and enthusiasm. One officer on his staff, Gordon P. Culver, aptly described General Harmon as a "gentleman's gentleman."¹ He had a tremendous sense of humor and delighted in telling stories. He was very articulate and was a quick thinker when called upon to speak. He had a broad cultural background and his conversation often turned to art, music, and literature as readily as he discussed military or educational matters. His sense of sincerity impressed all those who met him and gave them a feeling of trust in him and his cause.

Harmon had an organized mind and could easily translate complicated issues into relatively simple terms. He was a skilled administrator and always surrounded himself with able assistants. He understood the importance of delegating authority to his subordinates. Yet he always remained in charge of things. For relaxation, he loved to play golf and chess. The first Air Force Academy yearbook was dedicated to General Harmon in these words: "He brought us through selfless example, to the true meaning of honor and devotion to country."

In his younger days, Harmon had been a heavy cigarette smoker. This habit resulted in lung cancer and death before he had an opportunity to see his beloved Academy fully launched and located at its permanent site.

Based on his own military career and his experiences in planning for the Air Force Academy, General Harmon evolved a distinct philosophy of education. While he admired the West Point model, he did not, as he asserted many times, intend to follow it slavishly. Instead, he wanted to create a more flexible program that could respond to the needs of Air Force officers of the future. His ultimate goal, he said repeatedly, was to produce not merely second lieutenants, but second lieutenants who had the potential to become general officers. His ideal product was to be a dedicated officer and cultured gentleman. He wanted to develop a young officer who would be as capable and comfortable in the drawing room as he would be in the cockpit. Consequently, Harmon wanted to embellish the Academy's curriculum to satisfy these special needs.

The general wanted his cadets to have a sense of history and of civilized values in addition to a sound understanding of science and technology. He wanted them to study philosophy, especially logic and ethics. He believed that the cadets needed an insight into other cultures, and especially non-Western civilizations. Harmon, therefore, placed great importance on attaining linguistic ability. He also felt it was of utmost importance that they gain an appreciation of art, music, literature, and the performing arts. General Harmon also wanted his cadets to acquire the ability to question, to analyze problems, and to think critically. Above all, Superintendent Harmon wanted them to read, write, and speak well.

With men with such qualifications, Harmon was convinced that he could furnish the nation with military leaders qualified to cope with the complex international problems of the second half of the twentieth century.

Harmon wanted his officers and cadets to understand that the Academy is both a military and an educational institution. He believed that the spirit of intellectual inquiry must be fused with a sense of duty and discipline. Cadets must be taught to understand why they must follow and enforce policies and regulations with which they might not personally agree. He insisted that the cadet chain of command should ever strive for improvement of Wing morale, for the development of a sense of duty, for good discipline, for motivation for service, and for an appreciation of the full dimensions of leadership. Each cadet should be challenged to use his talents to discover himself, to exercise and to expand his potential. Harmon wanted to reiterate over and over again that the philosophy underlying the Air Force Academy is one of challenge to the intellectual talent of the members of the Cadet Wing.

Unfortunately, not all other Air Force leaders shared Hubert Harmon's idealized vision of future military leadership. Secretary Talbott and many of the top-echelon Air Force officers had far different goals for the new Academy. Even the first dean of the faculty and the first commandant of cadets saw the mission of the Academy in a far less idealistic way. The first director of athletics certainly was not in harmony with General Harmon's thinking. While many of the original

faculty members understood and sympathized with Harmon's aspirations, a number of them dismissed his lofty ideals as impractical for a military institution.

Since most of the key faculty and staff officers were graduates of the Military Academy, consciously and subconsciously they preferred to see the new Academy repeat their own experiences at West Point. Even many of the non-Military Academy officers wanted to see the cadets relive their own World War II experiences as exemplified in physical prowess and in being "gung ho" fighter pilots or daring bomber pilots. Again, as in 1919, the 1955 Academy faculty and staff had divergent opinions about the educational philosophy that would guide the infant Academy during its formative years. The illness and death of General Harmon only postponed the problems of identification for the Academy.

It seems paradoxical that, while General Harmon was so meticulous in screening department heads, other faculty, and staff officers, he did not seem to have exercised the same care in choosing two of his top assistants, the dean of the faculty and the director of athletics. No historical documentation has yet emerged to explain the rationale behind their appointments. During the long planning period from 1948 on, many potential candidates were discussed, but the names of the selected appointees were never mentioned. Secretary Talbott and ranking members of the Air Staff must have played a prominent role in the selections, and Harmon, being the loyal officer he was, must have acquiesced.

Brigadier General Don Z. Zimmerman was appointed the first dean of the faculty on July 22, 1954. A native of Eugene, Oregon, Zimmerman received a B.A. degree from the University of Oregon before he entered the Military Academy's class of 1929. While at West Point, he lettered in three major sports. Zimmerman was an outstanding end on the football team, a forward on the basketball team, and a starter on the baseball team. He was awarded an M.A. degree in 1929 from Oregon and an M.S. degree from the California Institute of Technology in 1936.

Much of Zimmerman's Air Force career was spent at Randolph Field with the Weather Service. He became a recognized expert in the meteorological field and was the author of a widely used textbook called *The Weather Manual for Pilots*. During and after World War II, he served in the Far Eastern Air Force. Prior to being assigned to the Academy, Zimmerman was deputy chief of staff, intelligence, in Headquarters, U.S. Air Force. In an oral interview with the Academy historian, General Zimmerman stated that he was surprised when he was informed that he had been selected as dean.²

Don Zimmerman was a tall, handsome man with a full head of white hair. Many people remarked that he looked like the movie version of a general. Zimmerman had a reputation in the Air Force of being a real intellectual. At the Academy, however, his brief service was disappointing. As more and more faculty members reported for duty, General Zimmerman became the subject of increasing criticism. To many faculty members, the dean seemed ill at ease and

even uncomfortable when discussing educational problems. In the important area of general education, which was to serve as the core of the Academy's curriculum, Zimmerman's thinking appeared fuzzy and bewildered. When department heads and others pressed the dean for answers to key policy questions, he was indecisive or he procrastinated.

Aggressive department heads and chairmen of courses who frequently met with the dean on instructional matters soon were frustrated by his apparent lack of action and direction. Many officers claimed that they had communication problems with the dean. He did not seem to understand and appreciate the faculty's point of view, and the faculty, in turn, did not seem to understand him. The situation was probably not far different from that experienced by many deans and many faculties in civilian colleges and universities. But this was the handpicked faculty of the Air Force Academy during its historic first academic year. Most of the faculty members wanted to prove to the world that they were going to make educational history for themselves and for the Academy. Patience is not an academic virtue.

Rumblings and criticisms continued to mount after the 1955–56 academic year began. Many members of the faculty publicly voiced the opinion that General Zimmerman did not seem capable of providing the kind of educational leadership that was required to shape the evolving instructional program. Many of the same people also expressed dissatisfaction with the performance of the assistant dean, Colonel Boudreau. In an attempt to defuse the volatile situation, Dean Zimmerman appointed his West Point classmate, Colonel Ward T. Abbott, to serve as deputy dean as well as professor of mechanics and materials. But the controversy continued.

During the critical planning period and the site selection process, "Bud" Boudreau had played a vital role. He had a great facility for meeting people and selling them on the idea of the Academy. He enjoyed traveling and socializing. But having to put up with the daily demands of academic administration and dealing with pushy prima donna faculty members was another matter. Besides, trying to protect the dean from the rising stream of criticism was a heavy burden for a congenial person like Boudreau.

Although aware of the discontent with the dean's office, General Harmon, being the very sensitive person that he was, hesitated to relieve General Zimmerman of his duties. Because, however, of mounting difficulties within the Academy and because word had reached the Pentagon, General Zimmerman was reassigned on December 1, 1955.

The first major crisis in the Academy was over, and apparently the press was not aware of the problem. At least the story of Zimmerman's reassignment did not make headlines. With General Harmon's concurrence, a committee formed by the heads of the academic departments along with Colonel Abbott and Colonel Boudreau attempted to carry on the functions of the office of the dean during the

remainder of the academic year. A key member of this committee was the professor and head of the Economics Department, Colonel Robert F. McDermott. He was soon appointed secretary of the faculty and later vice dean.

Colonel Robert M. Stillman was appointed commandant of cadets on September 1, 1954. Born in Ohio, he grew up in Pueblo, Colorado. For two years, he had attended Colorado College in Colorado Springs before entering the Military Academy. "Moose" Stillman was a star football player at West Point and later served as a line coach under the legendary Colonel Earl "Red" Blaik. While serving as the commander of the 322nd Bomb Group in the Eighth Air Force, Stillman's bomber was shot down in 1943. He was interned for the rest of the war at the infamous Stalag Luft III near Sagan, Germany, now a part of Poland.

While serving in the Pentagon under the deputy chief of staff for personnel, General Emmett "Rosie" O'Donnell, Stillman became involved in some of the early planning of the Academy. During this time, Stillman also became acquainted with General Harmon and members of his staff in the office of the special assistant for Academy matters. With the strong support of General O'Donnell, General Harmon agreed to appoint Stillman as his commandant of cadets. Stillman was selected for brigadier general and received his promotion shortly after the July 11 dedication ceremony.

Moose Stillman, as he liked to be called by his fellow West Pointers and others, was a burly, genial man with a great sense of humor. He was an avid sports fan and took great pleasure in telling amusing stories about athletes and coaches he had known. He was a man's man and enjoyed hunting and fishing. Like General Harmon, Stillman was a military traditionalist and believed in following the Military Academy pattern as closely as possible. Later, he recalled, "I think the West Point mold was a good one to start with. ... It was a good foundation ... and it certainly had the approval of the Air Staff at the time."³

All of the senior officers assigned to the commandant's "shop" were West Pointers, as were many of the air officers commanding. Other AOCs were graduates of Virginia Military Institute, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, and the Citadel. "We were looking," said Stillman, "for military people with a combat record to be the AOCs." These air officers commanding were to be the commissioned cadet squadron commanders. Most of the AOCs had been jet fighter pilots during the Korean War. Many would go on to distinguished Air Force careers. The AOC of the Third Cadet Group, for example, was Kenneth L. Tallman, who, in 1977, would become the eighth superintendent of the Academy. The Twelfth Squadron AOC, Captain Charles A. Gabriel, would later serve as the chief of staff of the Air Force.

Basically, General Stillman and his staff imposed the West Point plebe system on the class of 1959 and succeeding classes. The chief difference was in terminology. Air Force terms were used for the basic training instead of the old Army language. The new cadets became known as "doolies." The origins of the

term are unknown, but in cadet lore, "doolie" is synonymous with the word "slave." The ATOs, as upperclassmen, applied the old plebe system and added their own variations. Like Beast Barracks at West Point, the idea was to eradicate all civilian characteristics and to remold the cadet into a new military creature. Doolies were constantly put into braces and were forced to do exhausting physical exercises and to humiliate themselves in various ways and were taught unquestioning and instant obedience. This was the way it was believed that boys were turned into men.

The military training, often-times, bordered on harassment and hazing. This was especially true at mealtimes in Mitchell Hall. Doolies had to sit at rigid attention while they tried to eat "square." Fourth classmen



were supposed to keep their eyes "caged and locked," that is, keep their eyes focused on the plate at all times, except to answer a question asked by a superior. Food was served family style, and fourth classmen were permitted to raise their eyes from the table only while they passed the plates. They laid down their fork after each bite and held their knives only when using them. Meanwhile, they were required to recite "Fourth Class Knowledge," which included memorized data, slogans, nonsensical songs, and other trivia. The psychic abuse was stressful and unnerving. Many times, the upperclassmen vented their personal frustrations on the hapless doolies. Upperclassmen rationalized the system by saying they had been exposed to the same hazards and had survived.

Even the cadet chaplain seemed to rationalize the system. For example, in one of his early Sunday sermons, the Catholic chaplain, Colonel Constantine E. Zielinski, told the cadets: "A cadet's life is not a bed of roses. It was never meant to be such. It is the kind of life that automatically separates men from boys simply because the purchase price for greatness of soul, heart, and body is sweat coupled with real guts and an occasional tear or two."

Once the doolie system was ingrained in the Cadet Wing, it was difficult, if not impossible, to modify or to eliminate it. The doolie system has been the bane of the Academy's existence for three decades. Superintendents and commandants have officially disapproved of the system, and yet it persists. Even the

Eating "square" during noon meal in Mitchell Hall.

addition of female cadets in 1976 has not brought about the full elimination of the doolie system. The system, with its emphasis on shoeshining, white glove inspections, repetitive formalities, and copious paperwork, consumed much of the cadets' time. Enforcement of the system clashed with the goals of the faculty as well as those of the Athletic Department and contributed to the tensions existing among the major elements of the Academy. It certainly was another of the principal causes of the so-called Terrazzo Gap.

The immediate professional and military aspects of the new cadets' training was the responsibility of the commandant of cadets and his staff. The training function as envisioned by General Stillman was divided into three main components: military training, flying training, and physical training. (In 1959, the Department of Physical Education was transferred to the director of athletics.) Ideally, the commandant and his deputy commandant, Colonel Ben Cassidy, hoped to exercise control of the Cadet Wing in such a manner that individual cadets experienced a four-year laboratory exercise in command and leadership.

As members of the fourth class, cadets had simple responsibilities in the Wing, but as they gained maturity, their responsibilities became more and more complex until, as first classmen, they might attain the top operational positions, including that of Cadet Wing commander. Each cadet was engaged in stiff competition with other cadets of equal or higher educational and leadership stature. They were also under the continuous close scrutiny by their classmates and by upperclassmen.

In preparation for their chosen profession, cadets lived under a military regime with its exacting discipline, attention to detail, great emphasis on both initiative and compliance, punctuality in everything, and the constant demand that their duties be performed well. Stress was placed on physical fitness and conditioning by means of mass drill and competitive athletics. The goal of this basic training was the full development of self-discipline to meet all challenges.

The deputy commandant for airmanship studies, Colonel Henry L. Hogan, supervised the courses of instruction offered by the Departments of Leadership Studies, Military Studies, Navigation, and Physical Education. He was responsible for curriculum development, examinations, instructional workloads, and standards. Like the academic instruction, the airmanship curriculum underwent continuous review, and changes were made to improve the content and methodology.

At all stages of the planning for the Academy, the philosophy of a "sound mind in a sound body" was recognized as a fundamental principle. The 1949 Service Academy Board visualized a physical education program that would complement the academic and military training programs and enhance the realization of the whole-man concept for each cadet. Physical education instruction, intramural and intercollegiate athletic programs were established to achieve a significant part of the Academy's overall mission. The development of muscular strength, physical endurance, agility, and coordination were considered essential



objectives. Self-confidence, emotional control, persistence, and courage were leadership attributes that participation in athletics would help to promote. Another objective was the attainment by the cadet of a sufficient number of skills that would enable him to participate in vigorous physical activity throughout his lifetime. From the inception of the Academy, physical education courses and intramurals have been integral parts of the academic program. They are considered part of the cadet's prescribed curriculum and carry equal academic weight.

The Department of Leadership Studies had overall responsibility for planning and presenting the Basic Cadet Training Program during fourth class summer. In addition to basic military training, cadets were indoctrinated in the military values of duty and honor. Throughout the remainder of the fourth class year, instruction continued to include military courtesy and discipline, drill and tactics, and related subjects. Cadets also received classroom instruction on the organization of the Air Force and the functions of Air Force units. In 1959, the Department of Leadership Studies was given responsibility for conducting training in survival, escape, and evasion as part of the summer program.

Through the formal instruction provided by the Department of Military Studies, the cadets learned about their own and foreign air forces. In third class summer, the cadets took field trips to air bases under the Strategic Air Command (SAC), Tactical Air Command (TAC), Air Defense Command (ADC), the Air Proving Ground and Air Force Systems Command. Cadets learned about the mission of each command on the squadron level by flying in crew positions in operational aircraft. In 1958 and 1959, the cadets flew in Air Defense Command F-102s, Tactical Air Command F-100s, and Strategic Air Command B-47s. Following the field trips to the various support commands, the cadets returned to formal instruction in staff procedures. Using a method employed by the Air Command and Staff College, a class of ten or twelve cadets under the direction

Basic cadet training at Lowry AFB. Cadets are wearing sun helmets of World War II vintage.

of an air officer attempted to work out problems in combat and support operations utilizing standard staff procedures. Next, the cadets studied advanced weapons systems, including missiles. By field visits to missile bases, the cadets added realism to their education in this area.

The Department of Navigation, under the direction of Colonel Carl Barthel, introduced each cadet to flying. Here the cadet learned the proper use and care of navigation equipment, personal flying equipment, and survival gear. The department gave orientation in operational techniques and in emergency procedures. Every fourth classman flew in the T-33 jet trainer and in the T-29 flying classroom (a twin engine Convair especially equipped with rows of navigation instruments). The navigation training included 171 hours in the air. Upon successful completion of the program, the cadet upon graduation qualified for the wings and rating of a navigator. In addition, the early cadets spent eleven hours in the air as an introduction to pilot training. The class of 1961 was the last class to graduate with the wings of a navigator.

The real payoff in the Airmanship Program came with the demonstrated ability of the graduates to exercise command. The last year of a cadet's life at the Academy was a climax of his leadership training, when, with a minimum of supervision, he planned and conducted formal and field instruction for the incoming fourth classmen's basic cadet training.

In 1959, the Academy established the Cadet Counseling Program under the deputy commandant of cadets to help cadets resolve their personal problems. The AOCs were used as central counselors, aided by the cadet officers who commanded the Wing. When a cadet officer discovered a cadet of his unit who was in difficulty, he attempted to solve the difficulty if possible. If not, the cadet officer referred the troubled cadet to the appropriate AOC. If the AOC could not help him, he sent him to an academic counselor if the problem were scholastic, to the cadet chaplain if it were a moral or religious question, to the flight surgeon if the problem related to health or, finally, to the cadet counselor's office where professional, trained psychologists might help the cadet think through his problems. In the unusual event that a cadet was seriously maladjusted, Academy officials took appropriate action to effect his separation from the institution and refer him, through his parents, to professional psychiatric or medical care.

Although not designated as a general officer, the director of athletics played a major role in the Academy. Colonel Robert V. Whitlow was assigned as the first director of athletics on June 29, 1954.⁴ A native of California, Bob Whitlow was a high school football star, and he played for three years at UCLA before being appointed to the Military Academy.

At West Point, Whitlow won major letters in three different sports: football, basketball, and track. As a tackle, he played on several of Red Blaik's great Army teams. After graduating in 1943, Whitlow became a pilot but retained his interest in sports. In 1947, he was assigned to the Collegio Militar, Mexico's West Point,



as an exchange English instructor and football coach. Before he left in 1949, the school had won the national championship.

Whitlow's next assignment was to the Air Defense Headquarters in Colorado Springs. Bob was an excellent golfer and played at the Broadmoor course with local generals as well as with visiting military and civilian Pentagon officials. Among his many golf partners were General Harmon, General O'Donnell, and Harold Talbott, who was soon to become the secretary of the Air Force. Whitlow also played golf with President Eisenhower whenever Denver served as the "Summer White House."

When Whitlow reported to the Academy, he brought along his deputy, Major Frank Merritt, who was also to play a leading role in the life of the Academy. Almost immediately, Bob Whitlow and his staff started selling the Academy to athletes throughout the country. His goal was to get fifty or sixty top-flight athletes into the Academy as soon as possible. In his oral interview, Whitlow said that he told Mr. Talbott, General Twining, and General Harmon, "Gentlemen, you can't have a circus without the wild animals." He also said that both Stillman and Zimmerman supported his idea of establishing a good athletic program with a high level of competition.

Whitlow firmly believed that football was the way to get the new Academy the widest publicity. He also believed that football would be the best way to raise money quickly so that an aggressive athletic program similar to those of Army and Navy could be launched. In recruiting players for his team, Whitlow insisted, "The whole man had to be physically courageous. He had to have a lot of macho."

A falcon, the Academy mascot, being displayed during a football game at Penrose Stadium across from the Broadmoor Hotel in Colorado Springs.



The first falcon mascots were delivered to Stapleton Field, Denver, October 6, 1955. Captain Harrison H. D. Heiberg Jr. accepts the carefully packaged falcons from an airline stewardess.

Reflecting back on the early days, Frank Merritt said, "I guess Bob Whitlow and I looked at it that all 300 [new cadets] were going to be football players."⁵

Whitlow was a very determined, intense man. When he went to work on a program, he pulled out all the stops. He scheduled the first Academy freshman football game for October 8, 1955, with the University of Denver at its home stadium. Whitlow served as coach, and Frank Merritt served as his assistant. A peregrine falcon named Mach I made its first appearance as the Academy mascot, but did not perform. The game drew 10,000 spectators. The Denver sportswriters highlighted the game. Even *Sports Illustrated* carried a feature article on it.

Encouraged by his first success, Whitlow wasted no time in scheduling games with many of the top schools in the nation. In his 1979 interview, General Stillman remarked: "I think we possibly set our goals a little too high for the caliber of athlete that we were able to attract and retain at the Academy. Our academic and military standards were too high to have a top-flight football team against the type of competition we scheduled." Nevertheless, Bob Whitlow and his ambitious football schedule would have a serious impact and would add increasing problems for the young military institution evolving in Colorado for almost a decade.

During the three years that the Academy was housed at Lowry, many things happened that were unobserved and not recorded. The air was filled with high

hopes and expectations for the newly established school. Everyone involved—administrators, faculty, and cadets—was ever conscious that he was engaged in a historic undertaking. All were in the limelight. Everyone was edgy and nervous. Each participant was striving for perfection and approval, yet no one really knew what these goals meant. Public approval of what was being done was consciously sought by the top officials, and this added to the existing anxieties.

Constant attention of the news media, reporters, and television teams did nothing to calm the existing tensions and feelings of frustration. Everyone had the feeling that he was swimming in a fishbowl flooded by high-intensity spotlights. For most people, this was not a comfortable situation. Reminiscing about the actions of the staff and faculty of this period, Colonel Larsen, first director of the Academy Library, seemed to have captured the prevailing spirit when he said:

Our early staff at the Academy ... was a dedicated group, highly idealistic, and, in some respects, altruistic in its viewpoint. Most of us were inbred with the ideal of self-abnegation in favor of a common good. We were all one big family, all working for the glory of the family name without much thought of individual glory, except as it came from the reputation of the institution and the recognition of our individual parts in its founding.

CHAPTER 7

Growing Pains



*There is nothing worth so much
as a mind well instructed.*

—Ecclesiastics

Although on more than one occasion General Harmon had told the press that he had no intention of turning the new Academy into a carbon copy of West Point, this transformation was actually taking place. While more true of the commandant's shop and the Athletic Department, it was also becoming apparent in the academic instructional program.

The Military Academy instructional program, initiated in the early nineteenth century by Sylvanus Thayer, was basically designed to turn Army officers into classroom teachers along highly structured lines. The aim was to produce a course of instruction that was standardized, uniform, consistent, and one that could be evaluated constantly through the use of daily quizzes and frequent graded reviews. Most of this uniformity was achieved through the intensive work of course committees.

The course committees created course outlines and daily lesson plans. They also constructed quizzes for each lesson, wrote questions for graded reviews and for the final examination. The committees also provided for the orientation and indoctrination of new instructors. The committees planned weekly instructor conferences to preview lessons to be taught during the coming week. The chairman or senior members of the course committee, or both, regularly observed the classroom techniques of new instructors and offered suggestions for improvement. The course committees were also responsible for putting together study materials for the cadets. These cadet notebooks contained course outlines, key questions, problems, exercises, and study suggestions. Sometimes the course committees put



together cadet books of readings, which included appropriate excerpts from pertinent articles and chapters from published works.

The idea behind these elaborate preparations by the instructors was to induce the cadets to use their allotted study time to learn the content of the lesson prior to reporting to class. The actual classroom time was to be used to answer cadet questions on points needing further clarification. Because, as at West Point and Annapolis, sections were small—twelve to fourteen cadets—all cadets were encouraged to participate actively in class discussions.

The highlight of each lesson was the evaluation phase. When a written quiz was administered, it was usually given during the final ten or fifteen minutes of the class period. Often in math or science courses, the technique of “manning the blackboard” was used at the beginning of the class period. For this exercise, the instructor usually held a handful of index cards containing questions or a math, chemistry, or physics problem. The cadet selected a card and went to a place at one of the many blackboards surrounding the room and wrote out his answer. After a given period of time, the cadets returned to their seats. The instructor then critiqued each cadet’s work and assigned a grade for at least two of every three lessons the cadet attended each week. These daily grades

History class in session at Lowry AFB. Cadets are wearing the modified Air Force winter dress uniform.

plus the periodical graded reviews plus the final examination constituted the final course grade.

As illustrated above, there was constant statistical data on the academic progress of the cadets. Based on their academic standing, cadets were sectioned by homogeneous groupings. The top cadets were usually assigned to the best-qualified instructor, who made greater demands on them. As at West Point, the lowest section was dubbed the "goat" section. The numerical grades were translated after 1960 into letter grades (A, B, C, D, and F) and recorded on the cadet's transcript. Each instructor was responsible for entering written comments on a cadet's record card kept in each department. If a cadet got involved in academic or disciplinary problems, the instructor's comments would often prove valuable to the members of the Academy Board in trying to decide the fate of the cadet.

For years, each cadet class was graduated in numerical order of merit, which was a composite of academic and military leadership grades. While the top men of the class were designated as distinguished graduates, oftentimes the last man in the Order of Merit, called "tail-end Charlie," received more recognition, applause, and monetary reward, since each graduate had to give him a dollar bill. It took until 1977 before the Air Force Academy saw the folly of this ridiculous procedure and ended the Order of Merit at graduation except for the distinguished cadets.

When rigidly followed, the structured course of instruction caused much frustration for instructors as well as for cadets. Reserve officers with prior college-level teaching experience disliked the procedure. It was also exasperating to gifted cadets whose previous educational experience had been with a less rigid, structured system.

At the service academies, every student took the same standard curriculum with the only elective course being the foreign language requirement. With the introduction at the Air Force Academy of the "Enrichment Program," and later the majors programs, this structured system had to be modified and transformed into a more flexible system with less and less centralized control.

Inherent, however, in this highly structured instructional system, were the elements that resulted in disaster and shame for the whole Academy program. The 1951 and 1976 cheating scandals at the Military Academy, as well as the 1965, 1967, 1972, and 1984 "incidents" at the Air Force Academy, demonstrated the fundamental weaknesses of the system. Recall that the course quizzes were prepared far in advance for the entire academic year and were stored in filing cabinets in the departmental areas. Also remember that the same quiz or graded review was given to all cadets enrolled in a course. For example, some cadets took the quiz on Monday and others took the same quiz on Tuesday. Theoretically, the honor system precluded the cadets from discussing the quiz or graded review with friends and roommates. For some young people, however, the temptation was too strong, especially when they were under great pressure to excel or to give the appearance of excelling. Add to this the requirement to be proficient academically to be



eligible to participate in varsity sports. The demands were overwhelming for some nineteen- and twenty-year-old cadets. More on this problem will be related later.

As pointed out in the first chapter, Air Staff planners had wrestled with the Academy curriculum since 1919. Yet, in 1955, the matter was still unsolved. General Harmon had said repeatedly that he desired that the Academy have a "balanced curriculum." But what did a balanced curriculum really mean? Balanced between the sciences and the social sciences, humanities on one hand and the military instruction program on the other hand? Balanced as far as academic credit hours are concerned or balanced as far as contact hours are concerned? Some of the planners sought to achieve balance by integrating each of the courses of instruction, both horizontally and vertically, in order to achieve a continuing learning pattern over the four years. Additionally, the advocates of each discipline wanted a representative share of the cadets' time. Consequently, elaborate schedules of lessons were drawn up and blocks of class and study time were set aside. The 1955 planners were so zealous in their projected schedules that they appropriated most of the cadets' twenty-four-hour day without allowing him adequate time to sleep or to perform other necessary bodily functions. So, it was back to the planning boards for more planning.

During the 1955–56 academic year, the course content was being revised constantly. Sometimes the materials even changed weekly. It was very frustrating to instructors, since they had to be able to change plans on a moment's notice.¹ The prevailing mood of the Academy was epitomized by the popular expression "let's play it by ear." Often the individual instructors felt like jugglers performing

Cadet retreat formation at Lowry AFB. The barracks had been modified to provide two-man rooms for cadets and a single room for each air training officer who served as an upperclassman.



The winning 1958–59 basketball team was captained by Bob Beckel (number 34). On the far left, front row, is Coach Bob Spear. Behind him are Assistant Coach Tony Cillo and veteran trainer Jim Conboy. In uniform at right is Colonel Tom Hanlon.

before the king and his court. More often, it was performing to visiting educators or members of the press who were brought in to observe the class by the head of the department or the course chairman. The frenzied instructors were often terrified by the thought that if they made a false move or uttered some rash words, they and their careers would be discredited. High blood pressure and ulcers became occupational hazards for more instructors, departmental heads, and course chairmen. Even the leaders often were unable to offer any logical explanation for the sudden shifts in schedules and the curriculum. All the chairmen would say was, "It was orders from the Head Shed," meaning from the superintendent's or the dean's office.

On the academic side, the faculty was being divided into two camps—the scientists and the non-scientists, or the social science-humanities people.² Within the first year of the Academy's existence, champions for each faction began to emerge. Colonel Archie Higdon became the champion of the science group, and Colonel Peter Moody became the champion of the non-science group.³ Each was a bitter partisan, and each refused to compromise. As heads of academic departments, they also were in a position to influence the debates in the professors' meetings, where academic policy was formulated. In general faculty meetings, they and their supporters freely expressed their opinions and overpowered the junior members, who hesitated to voice any opposition.

As members of the Academy Board, Higdon and Moody exerted great authority since they were so intimately aware of all aspects of the Academic problems. Often at Academy Board meetings, one or the other was able to sway the

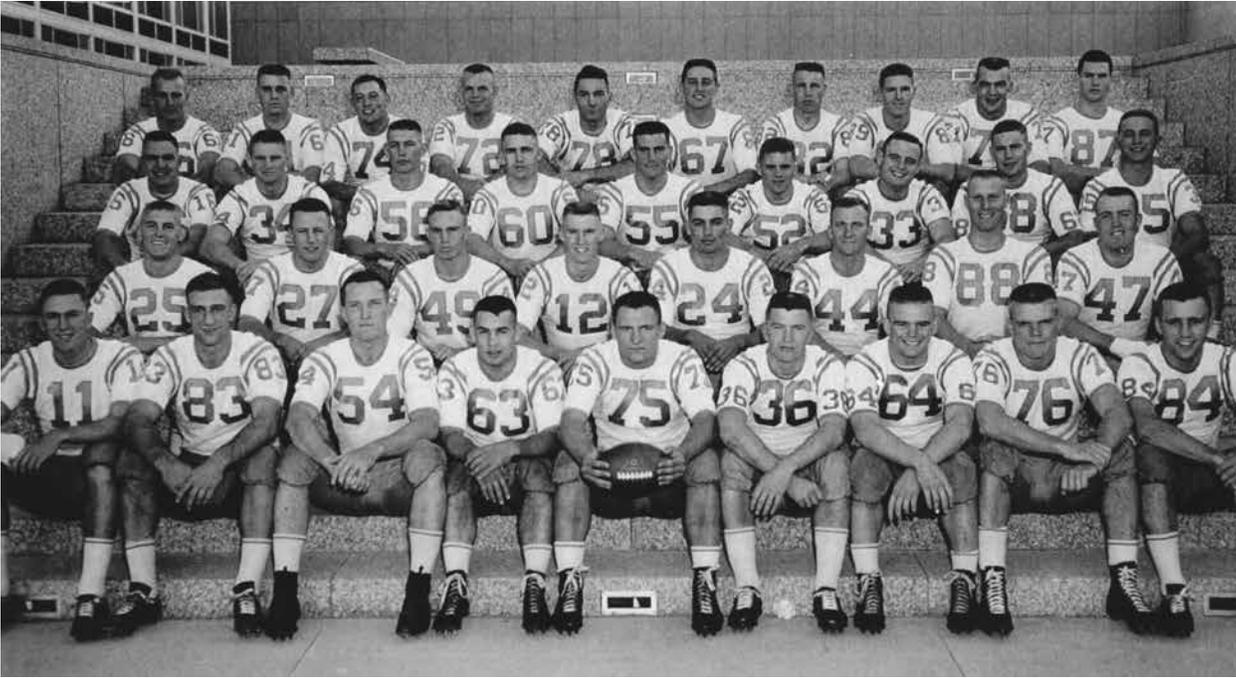
representatives of the commandant of cadets and the director of athletics. This was possible because those officers were usually far removed from the matter under discussion and were not fully aware of all the minute details and the real impact of their vote on the Academy as a whole. Since the superintendent presided over the Academy Board, the arguments of Higdon and Moody had a direct bearing on his ultimate decisions.

Higdon and Moody also exerted a powerful influence on the dean of the faculty. Zimmerman was overwhelmed. Often he just could not grasp the full weight of their arguments but was fascinated by their mastery of the nuances of the problems. When Robert McDermott became the dean, he soon learned how to control Higdon and Moody and to use them to promote his own causes. As a result, the dean of the faculty's power increased.

Archie Higdon had been a longtime professor of mathematics and mechanics at Iowa State University. He had graduated from South Dakota State University in 1928. He attended graduate school at Iowa State University, where he received his M.S. in 1930 and his Ph.D. in 1936. He served on the faculty of Iowa State until 1942, when he went on active duty with the Army Air Corps. After the war, he returned to Iowa State and was promoted to full professor. In 1951, his reserve unit was recalled for the Korean War. Colonel Higdon was assigned to the Department of Mechanics at the Military Academy. In 1954, he was selected as the professor and head of the Mathematics Department of the new Academy. Archie Higdon was the author of numerous articles on engineering education, published in professional journals. He was the co-author of two widely used engineering textbooks, *Engineering Mechanics* and *Mechanics of Materials*. He was active in many professional engineering societies, including the American Society for Engineering Education. Colonel Higdon's solid academic credentials won him the esteem and respect of many of his Air Force colleagues, even if they did not always agree with his points of view.

Peter R. Moody was born in Dillon, South Carolina. He received his A.B. degree from Wofford College when he was only twenty years old. He attended graduate school at Duke University and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the infantry in 1938. Shortly afterward, he was appointed to the Military Academy. He graduated in May 1942 and became a pilot. He flew sixty-nine combat missions in the European theater and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. Following the war, Moody was assigned to the Military Academy to teach English. In 1947, he completed his M.A. degree in English at Duke University. Promoted to full colonel in 1951, Moody was assigned to the Military Assistance Advisory Group in Paris. In 1954, he was appointed professor and head of the English Department at the new Academy. In 1961, he attended Cambridge University in England while on sabbatical leave for two years and was awarded his Ph.D. in 1963.

First as chairman of the Mathematics Department and later of the Mechanics Department, Colonel Higdon wanted every cadet to have a thorough



The 1958 Cotton Bowl team. Brock Strom (number 75) was the captain and an All American.

and intimate working knowledge of mathematics as a foundation for chemistry, physics, mechanics, and all of the engineering courses. He stressed the importance of training cadets to think logically and critically. He wanted to make the cadets knowledgeable about using the scientific method and show the cadets how to organize a problem in order to apply the principles they learned to all applications in the scientific and technical fields. Because of the increasing complexity of Air Force materiel—aircraft, radar, atomic energy, weapons systems, etc.—Higdon was of the opinion that future Air Force officers must have a deep understanding of scientific principles in great detail. Higdon believed that cadets should have a clear understanding of the history of science to gain a better perspective, since modern civilization was basically scientific. While Colonel Higdon did not rule out the importance of the social sciences and the humanities in the curriculum, he believed “that a person cannot be broadly educated without a considerable knowledge of the sciences.”

Colonel Moody, on the other hand, as the head of the English Department, wanted every cadet to have a firm grounding in grammar, syntax, composition, as well as reading and writing skills as foundations for literature, history, political science, economics, philosophy, and other related social science and humanities courses. One of his primary goals was to teach the cadet to appreciate and understand his heritage, its history, values, and cultural achievements. He wanted a cadet to develop his ability to think clearly, to make sound judgments, and to express himself effectively. He also thought it important that each cadet have some degree of fluency in a foreign language. In Colonel Moody's opinion, the Academy should aim “to produce not only a competent officer, knowledgeable in his trade, but also a broadly educated and intellectually mature man.” He also believed that



the Academy should prepare a cadet to fulfill his intellectual potential as a citizen and as a dedicated public servant in the Air Force—both through its general courses and through special courses designed to meet individual needs.⁴

External influences were also at work revising the curriculum. Various departments engaged civilian consultants to examine and criticize their respective curriculum proposals. The superintendent and the dean also called upon civilian educators and military leaders to advise them. Chief among General Harmon's military advisors was Colonel George Arthur Lincoln, the distinguished head of the Social Sciences Department at West Point.

Colonel Lincoln was affectionately dubbed "Abe Lincoln" by his friends and associates. He was highly respected throughout the military and civilian educational worlds. Graduating from the Military Academy in 1929 with distinction, Lincoln was selected as one of West Point's first Rhodes Scholars. He was the author of several books and had written many articles, which appeared in scholarly journals. "Abe" Lincoln was very articulate and was in great demand as a public speaker and as a participant in symposia and colloquia in various colleges and universities.

During World War II, Lincoln had served as a general officer. He served in the Operations Division of the War Department General Staff and as a member

General Harmon escorts President Eisenhower during his visit to the temporary Academy at Lowry AFB on September 11, 1955.

of the Joint Planners Committee of the Combined Chiefs of Staff. After the war, he accepted an appointment as a permanent professor at the Military Academy, even though it meant that he had to give up his star and again assume the rank of colonel. Lincoln was a highly organized person and had real talent for selecting outstanding young officers of great potential to serve on his staff and in his department. Among his Air Force protégés were Colonels Robert F. McDermott, Wesley Posvar, Peter Moody, Christopher Munch, Joseph Bowman, John Frisbee, and Thomas Crystal. All became department heads at the new Air Force Academy.

General Harmon had great respect and admiration for Lincoln. Furthermore, Harmon's classmate, President Eisenhower, also had great confidence in Lincoln and used him regularly as an advisor on military and international relations problems. Lincoln was also a close personal friend of both General Briggs and General Stone during their years as superintendent. Since Mrs. Lincoln's mother lived in Denver, Colonel and Mrs. Lincoln made many unofficial visits to the Academy. Lincoln often conferred with Academy officials by telephone or through private correspondence. Consequently, little evidence of his influence is reflected in documents now found in the Academy archives.

In February 1956, General Harmon requested the chief of staff of the Air Force to appoint a board of general officers to review the Academy's instructional program. Harmon wanted, he wrote, "to be sure as it is possible to be, that our views are in consonance with the best informed opinion of the Air Force as a whole." As a result, the Curriculum Review Board was convened at the Academy from February 13 to 18. The chairman of the board was Major General James E. Briggs, who in a few months would succeed General Harmon as superintendent. The board made only a few recommendations for changes in the curriculum but solved one controversial matter that was causing Academy personnel much concern. The board unanimously recommended that the Academy remain on the semester system, rather than changing to the quarter system, which many faculty members and civilian consultants had advocated.

General Harmon's first chief of staff, Colonel Robert R. Gideon, shed considerable light on the internal conflicts of the early Academy.⁵ He told Colonel Holt that "one of the major problems has been the blending of personalities to focus attention on the mission rather than on emotional prejudices." Continuing, Gideon stated: "It is characteristic of capable and aggressive people to step on each other's toes and to consider their shops and problems all important. I would say that keeping these people working together, and in an integrated fashion, has been my primary contribution."

During the initial year of the Academy's existence, several other controversial issues caused great concern for General Harmon and his staff. Chief among these was the matter of the cadet uniform. The first class of cadets wore a modified Air Force uniform, but everyone was of the opinion that, as at the other service academies, the cadets should have a distinctive set of uniforms. When various military



tailors had submitted samples of projected uniforms, Academy officials were appalled to see how outlandish the uniforms looked. Most of them were decorated with streaks of lightning and clouds because the designers thought this was what the officials wanted. After reviewing the samples submitted by professional tailors, Secretary Talbott arranged with Cecil B. DeMille of Paramount Studios in Hollywood to have his uniform experts design a set of cadet uniforms.

Mr. DeMille turned the task over to one of his staff members, A. B. Hilton. Mr. Hilton reviewed photographs of uniforms worn by students enrolled in American and foreign service academies. He then drew up some preliminary designs. Mr. DeMille asked General Harmon and Colonel Stillman to come to Hollywood and study the designs. They were impressed with what they saw. DeMille then engaged the Western Costume Company to tailor several sets of uniforms to be used as prototypes. The sample uniforms were sent to the Academy for study and criticism. Some of the young ATOs were selected to wear the uniforms that were then displayed to groups of Academy officers for their reaction. Photographs were made of the model uniforms and passed on to other people for comments. Modifications were made based on the comments received during the

The Cadet Wing marching down Pennsylvania Avenue during President Eisenhower's second inaugural on January 20, 1957.

demonstrations. The exercise was then repeated. After being satisfied with the modifications, General Harmon arranged to have the uniforms displayed before the Pentagon brass. Again, ATOs served as models, because it was still several months before the cadets were scheduled to report for duty. The top Air Force officials were duly impressed by the uniforms and particularly liked the distinctive blue color, soon to be known as cadet blue. Even though the cadet uniforms had received the official approbation of the Air Force, it would take several years before the complete set of uniforms would actually be worn.

Another source of extended debate was over the weapon the cadets would carry during parades and other ceremonial occasions. The rifle had been the symbol of American military men since the Battle of Lexington. In fact, the rifle had become almost synonymous with military pomp and ceremony. Soldiers, sailors, and marines had all been trained in the care and manual of the rifle. But many of the young Air Force officers were bitterly opposed to cadets carrying rifles with bayonets. The senior officers of the Air Staff, however, fondly remembering themselves marching across the Plain of West Point with rifles on their shoulders, insisted that the Air Force Academy cadets should bear the traditional weapons. During one of the heated debates in the Pentagon, General Stillman remembered hearing Secretary Talbott facetiously remarking: "Let them carry spears. That goes back even earlier than the rifle."

The result was that the cadets would be armed with M-1 rifles with bayonets. When bayonet training was opposed by some of his key officers as "a Revolutionary War anachronism," General Stillman replied, "... it is a fine conditioning exercise as well as encouraging aggressiveness." Later, another commandant ordered pugil sticks as a logical substitute for bayonet training. Once the battle of the rifle was won, the acceptance of other military accoutrements such as the sabre and the sash were adopted with little hesitation.

In the spring of 1955, the commandant of cadets appointed an ad hoc committee to recommend an Academy mascot and a symbol. The committee was chaired by Captain W. Harrison D. Heiberg Jr. All sorts of animals, including the lion, tiger, bear, and birds such as the eagle and falcon, were considered. The committee, in its June 29 report, favored the falcon but recommended that the cadets be allowed to select the mascot as part of their established Academy traditions.

What to do with the cadets over the 1955 Christmas period was another problem that gave rise to much debate and heated discussion. Traditionally, at the Military Academy, plebes were not allowed to go home for the Christmas holidays. The Naval Academy allowed its plebes to go home but insisted that they wear their uniforms when appearing in public. The Air Force Academy decision was that cadets would remain at the Academy and that parents and friends would be encouraged to visit them.

Mrs. Gail McComas, the newly appointed Cadet Wing hostess, was charged with the responsibility of arranging for parties, dances, and sightseeing

tours of the Denver area. This plan, reasoned the Academy officials, would not only keep the time of the doolies fully occupied but would also have the virtue of saving money for the cadet's budget so that payment for uniforms and other necessities could be handled. Like many logical plans, however, this one did not work out because one essential element, the Colorado weather, did not cooperate. Heavy snowstorms disrupted travel by air, rail, and by car and caused severe hardships on families and friends en route to Denver. Nevertheless, the policy persisted. The move to the permanent site in 1958 only compounded the problems of the Christmas holiday policy. It was not until 1963 that the decision was finally made to allow all cadets to go home for the holiday season.

General Harmon was able to cope with the multitude of problems confronting the Academy during its initial year in spite of his declining health. He was very distressed, however, by the stinging criticism arising from the presentation of the architectural models at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center from May 13 until 15, 1955. Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill Associates (SOM) had made extensive plans for the public showing. In the preparation of their exhibits, SOM had engaged the services of noted artists such as Herbert Beyer (exhibit design), George Rudolph (perspective renderings), Ansel Adams (land photography), and William Garnett (aerial photography).

Secretary Talbott's list of invited guests to the showing and to the July 11 dedication was extensive. Included were congressional leaders consisting of all of the members of the Senate and House Armed Services Committees and many of their key staff members. Both senators and all of the representatives from Colorado were included, as well as Colorado state officials and Denver and Colorado Springs city officials. Military guests included General Twining, his vice chief, General Thomas D. White, and the top Air Force architectural consultants Pietro Belluschi, Eero Saarinen, Welton Beckett, and Ellery S. Husted. Also invited were civic leaders from the Denver and Colorado Springs communities, as well as newspaper editors and representatives of the television and radio stations.



Cadets and their dates attend a social function in Arnold Hall, 1959.

National coverage was to be provided by a press corps flown out from Washington, representing the television and radio networks as well as the major news services of the country.

The initial reaction to the design exhibit was mixed. In most cases, it took several days for the adverse criticism to emerge. Many of the invited guests as well as the members of Congress were unprepared for what they saw at the exhibit. Most critics objected to the impact of the modular type of architecture, which they felt was too modernistic and unsuited for a national institution. The extensive use of glass, aluminum, steel, concrete, and other recently developed construction materials was received with apathy by many of the viewers. One congressman, Porter Hardy of Virginia, was quoted in the press as having heard one spectator saying, "It looks like a modernistic cigarette factory." Another viewer called the Academy model a "mammoth drug store on stilts." Others said the model reminded him of a "glorified supermarket." Frank Lloyd Wright, still miffed that he had not been selected as the master architect, told the press, "Secretary Talbott has built himself a factory of birdmen." When shown on national media, the architectural models elicited a similar negative response all over the country.

The model of the Cadet Chapel, designed by Walter A. Netsch, with its many spires, seemed to be a magnet for attracting disparaging comments, especially from congressional leaders. Senator A. Willis Robertson of Virginia seemed to express the general reaction of many of his colleagues when he told the press, "You don't seem to hear the rustling sound of angels' wings when you look at that chapel." Congressman John E. Fogarty of Rhode Island said, "This glass and metal creation was variously described as an accordion lying on its side and as a line of telescoped Indian tepees." Other unnamed congressmen described the chapel as a "hangar" and as "a pagan temple unworthy of Christian worship." Newspaper and television commentators as well as cartoonists had a field day poking fun at the architecture of the new Academy.

The firm of Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill defended its work by stating that "the architectural style of the Academy would be timeless." But public opinion still remained negative. In fact, Representative Errett P. Scrivner of Kansas, chairman of the subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, publicly stated that he was determined that the chapel would never be built. On July 12, the Appropriations Committee of the House of Representatives responded to public opinion when the committee announced that it would be "most unwise to provide funds for construction until the design is more firmly established." As a result of all the controversy, Secretary Talbott ordered Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill to reevaluate their concepts and to make some modifications to quiet the criticism.

The reaction of the professional architects of the country was interesting. With the notable exception of Frank Lloyd Wright, most of the American architects defended the Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill designs. Further, they believed that

the Air Force should be permitted to express the spirit of the air age in its new institution and at the same time accentuate the natural beauty of its Rocky Mountain setting. *Progressive Architecture Magazine* blasted the congressional critics and boldly stated that congressmen "were not qualified to judge suitability of design."

The editors sent a letter of protest to Secretary Talbott and to the members of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees. Along with the letter were statements of agreement from forty-two architects from all parts of the nation. John Lindstrom, a prominent Minneapolis architect, epitomized the sentiments of his colleagues when he stated, "Art and architecture cannot be legislated."

In mid-July, the American Institute of Architects released a statement in support of the disputed designs by proclaiming that the buildings were "among the most significant productions of American professionals ..." and characterized Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill as "among the most distinguished of American practitioners."

Because of the widespread criticism of the Academy designs, Secretary Talbott felt compelled to order Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill to make some revisions. The model of the Cadet Chapel was withdrawn while Mr. Netsch reevaluated its design. Netsch went on an extended trip to Europe to visit churches and cathedrals in order to find new inspiration. Years later, Walter Netsch recalled that he was most impressed by the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Chartres, France, and by the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris. He particularly liked the stained glass windows separated by buttresses to form the walls of the upper level. Netsch incorporated this concept into his new version of the Cadet Chapel with its seventeen aluminum spires, which served in lieu of flying buttresses.

The impressive structure was planned to serve as a multifaith chapel. The upper chapel would seat 1,500 worshippers and was intended to be used for Protestant services. On the lower or terrace level, the Catholic chapel would have a nave seating capacity of 500. The Jewish synagogue, also on the terrace level, would be circular and have a seating arrangement for 100. The circular design symbolizes the global mission of the Air Force and the monotheistic nature of Judaism. A fourth area on the terrace level would be used as an all-faith place of worship. All of the liturgical furnishings and special adornments were projected to be donated by individuals and by organizations. This decision was very significant. It not only reduced the cost of the chapel to the government, but it avoided the thorny issue of using public funds for sectarian purposes.

Walter Netsch's model of the new design was not shown to the Air Force top officials until March 1957. Next, it was shown to groups of architects and clergymen for their reactions. Meanwhile, Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill officials continued work on revising the design to further refine it and resolve all objections by those who had seen it. By August, the chapel design had been coordinated by all elements of the Air Force and was now deemed ready for submission to the members of Congress. After viewing the model, Scrivner's



Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Witters briefs President Eisenhower and General Harmon on the architectural model of the Academy.

subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee voted six to five to approve the new design. All was not calm, however. The chapel design controversy was renewed in Congress and in the press.

On August 6, the House of Representatives, acting on a supplemental appropriations bill with an amendment sponsored by Congressman Scrivner, voted 102 to 53 and approved the inclusion of \$5 million for the Academy chapel. The controversial issue then shifted to the Senate.

Until this time, no photograph of the revised design had been released to the press. On August 8, *The Washington Evening Star* published a photograph of the long-awaited chapel model. Newspapers and television stations spread the photograph throughout the country. Senators began to make scathing remarks about the revised design model. Senator Ralph E. Flanders of Vermont, for example, represented the vitriolic feeling of his associates when he uttered, "The proposed structure is a deliberate insult to God Almighty." Again, architects and churchmen rose to defend the unconventional structure.

While the issue was being aired in public, the new secretary of the Air Force, Donald A. Quarles, was taking action behind the scenes to keep down the cost of the chapel in an effort to appease the Senate critics. As a consequence, the



The early model of the Cadet Chapel (pictured in the upper right-hand corner) caused much controversy in Congress and the media.

number of spires was reduced from nineteen to seventeen. Finally, the Senate voted to approve the \$1.5 billion military public works program that included \$3 million for the chapel. The reduction in the number of spires gave rise to a standing Academy joke. When asked what the seventeen spires represented, Academy staff officers usually smiled and replied, "the twelve apostles and the five members of the Appropriations Committee."

The Cadet Chapel was dedicated on September 22, 1963, with some of America's leading churchmen, including Cardinal Francis Spellman, archbishop of New York and head of the military Ordinariat, participating in the ceremony coordinated by Cadet Chaplain Rossario L. Montcalm. Almost immediately, all criticism of the chapel and its novel design ceased. Instead, over the past forty-odd years, the all-faith Cadet Chapel has become the focal point for more than a million visitors each year. Most visitors are impressed by the majestic, inspirational quality of the structure. The chapel, with its seventeen spires soaring 150 feet into the Colorado sky, has become a photographer's delight. When flashed on the television screen, the Academy chapel gains instant recognition by millions of Americans who look upon the structure as a symbol of the Air Force Academy.

Even though he never made any public statements, privately General Harmon was irked at the way Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill officials were making important decisions without consulting him.⁶ Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill officials instead dealt directly with Secretary Talbott and his immediate advisors. In a memorandum to Mr. Nathaniel Owings, dated March 31, 1955,

General Harmon vented some of his feelings. He wrote: "As you know, the Secretary has definitely approved the Mesa Site (in spite of my apprehensions. Phidias has won out over the mere practical Harmon). Accordingly, all forces are now solidly mobilized on the Acropolis."

Harmon then went on to say, "While I am not empowered to make decisions or issue directives, the Secretary has authorized me to present to you the following comments, suggestions, and recommendations concerning the present layout." The superintendent was concerned that all facilities dealing with cadet functions, such as the dining hall, cadet store, barbershop, dispensary, and the headquarters of the commandant of cadets, be readily accessible and within walking distance for all cadets and, therefore, adjacent to the cadet barracks area.

Harmon also favored three separate academic buildings rather than one multistoried combined structure, such as Fairchild Hall, preferred by the architects. He would have preferred to have seen the science building, the social sciences-humanities building, and the library as separate structures. In opposing Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill's grand strategy for large buildings, General Harmon wrote, "However grand and imposing they may be, the large concourses with ramps, bridges, etc., seem to me totally unnecessary and must add tremendously to the cost of the building." Harmon also opposed all of the classrooms, faculty offices, and specialized rooms in the library as interior rooms with no exterior windows. "I personally," remarked the general, "like to be able to look out from a window and breathe God's fresh air."

Regarding the Academy Library proposed by Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill, General Harmon was even more emphatic. He wrote:

While I can stomach putting all strictly academic facilities under one roof, I very much dislike including the Library in the same building with them. I have always visualized that our Library would be a separate building and a very beautiful one—imposing rotunda, marble halls, beautiful reading rooms arranged around the outer walls with windows and fireplaces!!! We plan that in addition to books, our Library will contain works of art and historical acquisitions. Accordingly, it should be more readily accessible to visitors than as now located. Also, it seems to me that future expansion would be much more easily accomplished from a separate building especially designed to provide for expansion.

General Harmon was also critical of the projected parade ground. He said, "Arrangements for the reception of large crowds, i.e., access roads, parking spaces, vantage points from which to view the parade, etc., are in my opinion unsatisfactory and require a great deal of additional study." He also objected to the proposed road network of the site and was convinced that the whole problem needed more study. In retrospect, it is significant to note that many of these objections raised in Harmon's memorandum were not rectified by Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill.

Some of the problems foreseen by General Harmon, especially the parking situation, continue to plague the Academy three decades later.

In late April and early May 1956, General Harmon's health took a turn for the worse. The Academy surgeon, Colonel Levi Browning, urged the general to enter Fitzsimons Army Hospital for a series of tests and X-rays. The prognosis was grim. The tests confirmed that General Harmon had developed cancer in one of his lungs and that surgery was imperative. The surgery was to be performed at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington. Before submitting to the surgery, General Harmon, however, wanted several weeks to tie loose ends together and to make some pressing personnel decisions. The most important decision was to designate Colonel McDermott as the acting dean of the faculty. Another decision was to find the replacement for Lieutenant Colonel Larsen as director of the Academy Library.

The Pentagon had refused to grant General Harmon's request that Colonel Larsen's tour be extended and insisted that he had to face mandatory retirement because of his age. Arthur J. Larsen had been a veteran professor of history at the University of Minnesota. For years, he had also served as the executive director of the Minnesota Historical Society and was responsible for the supervision of the library and the museum. After serving in the Air Corps during World War II, Dr. Larsen was integrated in the regular Air Force and assigned to the historical office in the Pentagon. In 1950, Larsen was detailed to Harmon's office of special assistant for Academy matters. He and General Harmon soon became close friends because Harmon recognized Larsen's special talents. Larsen was a talented writer and assisted Harmon in preparing the many position papers he required for the secretary of the Air Force, the Air Staff, and the congressional leaders. Larsen also had many contacts in the academic world. He regularly consulted with experts in the field of librarianship as well as both museum directors.

Larsen recommended to General Harmon that Keyes Metcalf, director of libraries of Harvard University, be appointed as library consultant. Dr. Metcalf was recognized as the dean of American library consultants and had been responsible for planning some of the foremost academic libraries in the world. Since Harmon, Metcalf, and Larsen were about the same age and temperament, they got along very well together. As a result, General Harmon was very well pleased with the library planning and passed the data on to Walter Netsch, who was the Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill architect responsible for the academic complex.

Larsen had also set up a temporary library at Lowry and began to hire a civilian staff to operate it. The first professional staff reported for duty shortly before the July 11 dedication. Thelma Bayliss was the first civilian librarian to be hired. Donald J. Barrett was the first reference librarian on board. Forty years later, Mr. Barrett continued to serve the library as its assistant director. Another of the early employees was Dean Krakel, who was hired as the director of the Academy Museum. He resigned in 1961 to become director of the Gilcrease



Graduation for the class of 1959 was held in Arnold Hall. Dignitaries and members of the faculty and staff fill the stage. All future graduation ceremonies would be held outdoors on the parade ground or, from 1963 on, in Falcon Stadium.

Museum in Tulsa. Several years later, he became the founding director of the National Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City. Over the past quarter of a century, the National Cowboy Hall of Fame has developed one of the leading collections of western American art in the entire world. One of its chief benefactors is Jasper D. Ackerman of Colorado Springs. Until 1986, Mr. Ackerman also owned and was president of the Air Academy National Bank, located since 1966 in the Academy's community center. Mr. Ackerman hired two retired Academy staff members, Jack Webb and James Hargrove, to serve as top operating officers of the bank.

Shortly after it became apparent that Colonel Larsen would have to retire, a major change in the 1956–57 curriculum was announced. As a result, American history was shifted from third class year to second class year. This meant that the eight American history instructors would have to be assigned to other duties. The chairman of the American history course was Lieutenant Colonel George V. Fagan. Fagan was a graduate of Temple University and received his Ph.D. in history from the University of Pennsylvania. He taught at Temple University before serving in the Army Air Corps for five years during World War II, including two years with the 8th Air Force in Europe. After the war, he returned to Temple University and remained until 1951, when he was recalled to active duty and assigned to teach history at the U.S. Naval Academy. Following duty as associate editor of the Air University Press, Fagan joined the Air Force Academy in January 1955 as associate

professor of history. As an additional duty, he was responsible for selecting history titles for inclusion in the Academy Library collection. It therefore seemed logical for Larsen to recommend Fagan as his replacement. General Harmon agreed and, as one of his last official acts, appointed Fagan as acting director of the Academy Library effective June 1, 1956. Immediately, Fagan began working with Dr. Metcalf and Mr. Netsch on the planning of the Academy Library.

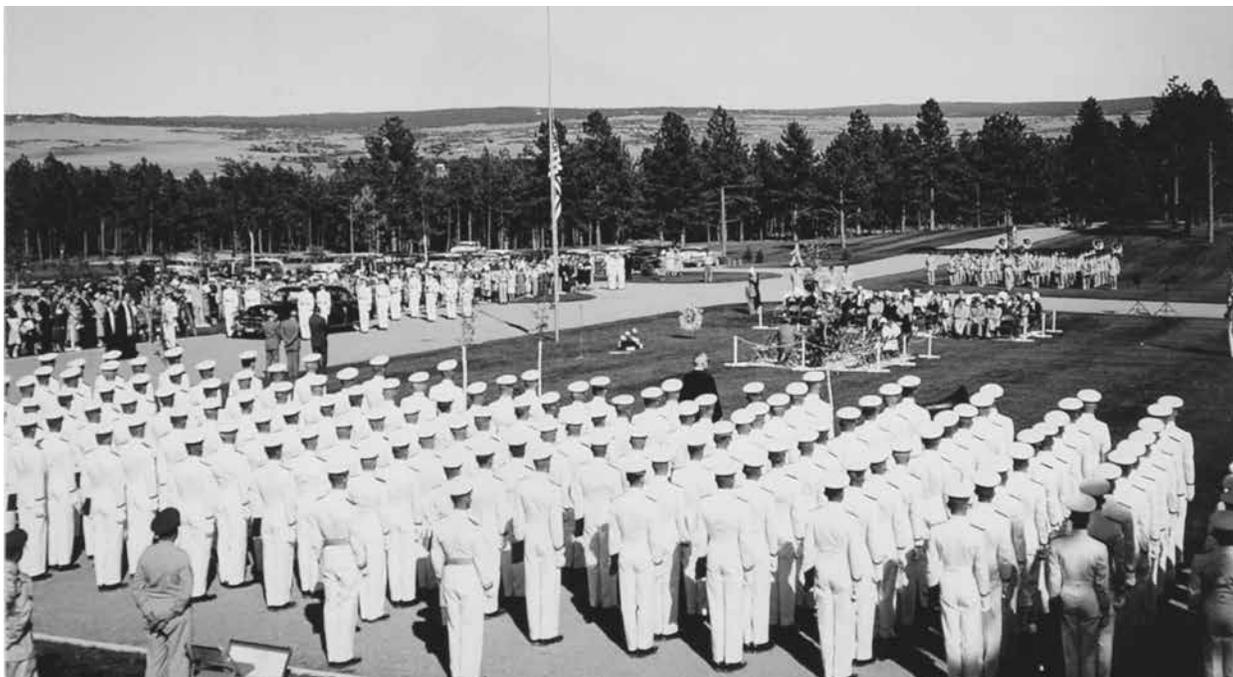
Major General James E. Briggs had been assigned the office of the deputy chief of staff for operations in the Pentagon. In mid-December 1955, Secretary Talbott called him into his office and asked him if he would like to become superintendent of the Academy when General Harmon retired.⁷ Just before Christmas, General Briggs notified the secretary that he would be pleased to accept the appointment. Mr. Talbott cautioned him to keep the matter quiet, since no one other than General Twining knew about the projected assignment. When Harold Talbott resigned under pressure, the acting secretary of the Air Force, James Douglas, confirmed the appointment in March 1956. General Briggs was scheduled to assume command on August 1. He was originally ordered to report to Denver on June 11; however, because General Harmon's condition was diagnosed as terminal soon after his surgery, General Briggs assumed duties immediately thereafter as assistant to the superintendent.

General Harmon's retirement and the official change of command ceremonies were scheduled for the afternoon of July 27 on the parade ground at Lowry. As General Harmon and a group of Air Force dignitaries gathered at the reviewing stand and the Cadet Wing prepared to march onto the field, the skies turned dark and massive clouds started to form. Before the brief ceremonies were completed, it started to rain and thunder, and large bolts of lightning flashed through the skies. General Harmon insisted that the review should be completed. The Air Force secretary handed General Harmon a raincoat, and he stood in the pouring rain while the Cadet Wing marched past him in salute. All of the spectators remained in their places and were drenched as torrents of rain poured down.

The Denver newspapers reported that four and a half inches of rain fell in less than an hour. The rain signaled the end of a five-year drought period for Colorado. Because the ground could not absorb so much moisture at one time, there was widespread flooding. The streets of Denver and Aurora flowed like



General Harmon at his 1956 retirement parade. Secretary of the Air Force Quarles, General Briggs, and General Stillman stand with General Harmon during the torrential rainstorm.



General Harmon's funeral service. His interment was the first in the Academy Cemetery. This was the first occasion at which the Cadet Wing wore the all-white parade uniform designed by Cecil B. DeMille.

YET that staunch old military leader, ill as he was, stood through the whole review and solemnly returned the salute of each cadet squadron. Meanwhile, as he related years later, General Briggs, standing at Harmon's side, was very apprehensive that the stress would kill the old general or that one of the young cadets marching with rifles and fixed bayonets would get struck by lightning.

General and Mrs. Harmon returned to their retirement home in San Antonio. His health continued to decline. On February 22, 1957, General Harmon died at Lackland Air Force Base Hospital. His remains were cremated and kept in a Colorado Springs mortuary pending burial at the Academy, as he had requested.

On September 28, 1958, a month following the move of the Cadet Wing to its permanent site, General Harmon's ashes were buried in the Academy Cemetery. His interment was the first in the new cemetery. The entire Cadet Wing as well as the whole Academy staff and hundreds of relatives and friends participated in the impressive ceremony. Full military honors were rendered to the late superintendent. The Cadet Choir and the Academy Band provided appropriate music. Chaplain John S. Bennett, the first Protestant chaplain, and his successor, Chaplain Charles I. Carpenter, conducted the service. Jets, in the missing man formation, flew over the grave. Cadets fired a final rifle salute, and the bugler in the distance sounded "Taps," which echoed sadly throughout the valley. As the Cadet Wing quietly left the cemetery to board the buses, an important epoch in the history of the young Academy had ended. In essence, the Air Force Academy is a living memorial to the courage, singleness of purpose, ideals, and integrity of Hubert Reilly Harmon.⁸

CHAPTER 8

The Academy Site



*O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!*

—Katharine Lee Bates, 1893

The Air Force Academy, like its sister academies at West Point and Annapolis, is located in an area dominated by the land rather than by human works. West Point lies at the bend of the Hudson River in a beautiful wooded valley with rolling hills as a background. Annapolis is near a point where the Severn River flows into the majestic Chesapeake Bay. Each location is in a magnificent natural setting, rich in American history and traditions. It is difficult even to attempt to compare the three sites, because each one is worthy to be the location of a national monument dedicated to insuring the national security of the United States.

The Air Force Academy site is located about eight miles north of downtown Colorado Springs.¹ As one drives north on I-25 and enters the cloverleaf of the south entrance, the view is striking. Very little in the world can compare to this inspiring scenery. On every side, there is evidence of the great natural forces that formed this spectacular setting. Snow-capped Pikes Peak rising to a height of more than 14,000 feet is visible in the distance. The Rampart Range, between



A view of the Academy site in 1954. The formation in the foreground is Cathedral Rock. The Air Force hired photographers including Ansel Adams to capture the site on film.

6,000 and 7,000 feet high, serves as the western boundary of the Academy property. The Pike National Forest is just beyond the range. Blodgett Peak and Eagle Peak, both about 9,000 feet high, tower above the ridge of the Rampart Range. Eagle Peak gets its name from early reports that eagles nested there. Today, prairie falcons nest in the crevices of the rocks and cadet falconers seek out the tiny falcons for their training program.

The slopes of the Rampart Range below timberline are covered with ponderosa pine, yellow pine, spruce, fir, and scrub oak. Far in the distance, about five miles north of the south entrance, the spires of the Academy chapel as well as some of the buildings in the academic area are visible. Beyond the academic area, near the northern border of the site, is the area's most distinguishing natural landmark. This is Cathedral Rock, a massive cluster of wind-eroded, grayish brown limestone more than a hundred feet high. Close examination of Cathedral Rock discloses many names and initials carved into the rock with dates in the 1870s and 1880s, when Cathedral Rock was a favorite picnic ground for the early settlers. Originally, Cathedral Rock was projected as a good place to locate the main cadet complex. Soil samples, however, showed that it would not be a good construction

area. The academic and cadet areas were, therefore, developed farther south in the Lehman Valley.

The 18,500-acre Academy property is roughly trapezoidal in shape. It includes the foothills and plains at the east base of the Rampart Range. The property runs for about seven miles north to south and is roughly four miles wide. It is located in El Paso County, one of the original counties when Colorado was established as a territory in 1861. The Academy property covers most of Township 12 South and Ranges 66 and 67 West.

In the Academy area, the change from plains to mountains is the most abrupt transition of the region, not only in topography, but also in underlying rock units and geologic structure. This phenomenon enhances the natural beauty of the site. Geologists describe most of the rock formations on the site as Dawson Arkose.

Monument Creek is the only continuous stream flowing within the site and cuts through the relatively flat terrain near the eastern boundary in a north to south course. Intersecting Monument Creek are several channels of tributaries with quaint western names such as Black Squirrel Creek and Kettle Creek, flowing from the east, and Deadman's Creek and West Monument Creek, flowing from the west. During most of the year these are dry, but during the spring runoff, these creeks flow between cut banks fifty to seventy-five feet high and eventually empty into Monument Creek. Partly as a result of these tributaries, the site has distinct landforms consisting of mesas and foothill ridges separated by broad valleys extending eastward from the base of the Rampart Range.

The site is split into five main valleys. The principal Academy installations have been located in the valleys and on top of the mesas. The northernmost valley is Jack Valley, named for Cleo Jack, who owned 480 acres of the land at one time. It is now used as a maneuver area for the Cadet Basic Summer Training Program. The cadets refer to it as "Jack's Valley," and since 1976, when the first women cadets arrived, it is often called "Jack and Jill Valley."

Beyond this is Lehman Valley, which was the location of the Cathedral Rock Ranch and today is the location of the academic and cadet areas as well as the chapel, the gym, field house, and the numerous athletic fields.

Next is South Lehman Mesa. Today, the heating plant, the Academy Hospital, the officers' club, the bachelor officers' quarters, Eisenhower Golf Course, and Falcon Stadium are located in this broad valley.

Beneath the mesa is Douglass Valley. Today, it contains the senior officers' quarters and about 800 houses for officers and enlisted personnel. Douglass Valley Elementary School is also here.

The final valley at the southern edge of the site is Pine Valley. In 1954, Pine Valley was the most populated area of the site. Today it is chiefly a large housing area for officers and enlisted personnel occupying more than 800 sets of quarters. Various coaches and athletic officials occupy about a dozen houses built and

maintained by the Academy Athletic Association. Pine Valley also contains Pine Valley Elementary School, the Air Academy High School, the riding stables, and quarters for the superintendent, the dean, and the commandant of cadets, as well as some indigenous houses, which are used for various base activities.

On a long mesa 250 feet above Pine Valley is the community center. Located here are structures providing important services to all who reside on the Academy reservation. Among these are the commissary, the base exchange, the base chapel, the Air Academy National Bank, the post office, the community center library, the noncommissioned officers' club, and the Academy Day Care Center. Also located in this area are the Airmen's Dining Hall, the barracks buildings for unmarried airmen, and the campus of the Air Force Academy Preparatory School.

The Services and Supply Area, as well as the airstrip, occupy the flat land near the southern boundary. This is the area one sees as he or she enters through the south entrance, which is used by most visitors to the Academy. Until 1986, the temporary visitors' center was located nearby. Orientation films were shown here, and visitors were given brochures directing them to pertinent parts of the Academy and showing the roads to be followed.

After June 24, 1954, when Secretary Talbott announced that Colorado Springs would become the permanent site, members of the Colorado Land Acquisition Commission began to negotiate with the owners of the land.² At the time, with the exception of Pine Valley, the area was thinly settled. Four or five large ranches, mostly used for raising Angus cattle, occupied the largest part of the site. There were about fifty residences along Monument Creek, with the largest concentration in the southern part of Pine Valley and in the section near Breed's Overpass, the southern boundary. Commercial development consisted of one small factory (long used as a temporary visitors' center), one tavern, three service stations, and several small motels along U.S. Highway 85–87. There also was the small Pine Valley Airport, which had a 4,000-foot gravel runway and an eighty-by-sixty-foot Butler metal hangar. Some commercial properties were located on the frontage of the highway, which transversed the site in a north-south direction. Other properties used the rail facilities of either the Denver and Rio Grande or the Atchinson, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroads, which passed the site in a north-south route.

Over the next several years, the Colorado Land Commission handled transactions on 140 parcels of land ranging in size from 0.08 of an acre to 4,630 acres. Each parcel was appraised by three independent appraisers hired by the land commission. The fair market value was determined by the commissioners, based upon the appraisal reports. Only eight appeals were submitted to the courts, and most of these were settled before the trial dates. Contrary to some local myths, it was never necessary for the State of Colorado to exercise its right of eminent domain on any of the Academy property. On May 19, 1959, the court settled the

last claim, parcel number 145, owned by the Standard Fire Brick Company of Pueblo. These seventy-one acres had been owned for more than fifty years and had been used as a clay pit for mining a special type of clay used for sewer pipe. The Rocky Mountain News reported that this parcel carried an average price of \$265 per acre. The same story stated that only 4 percent of all the tracts involved were taken to court and that the prices awarded by the juries were only 11 percent higher than the price originally offered by the Colorado Land Commission.

Lawrence P. Lehman's Cathedral Rock Ranch was the first parcel acquired by the land commission in 1954, and it was the largest. Its 4,630 acres were purchased for \$300,000, or an average of \$65 an acre. This sale set the general price for the rest of the parcels. Of course, buildings and other improvements on the land had to be taken into consideration. Some of the land was under lease for oil and minerals. For example, 3,900 acres of the Cathedral Rock Ranch were under lease to the British American Oil Producing Company for \$7,200.

During the negotiation period, the size of the site was increased by the Air Force from 12,500 acres to 18,500. Consequently, the permanent site covers an area of more than twenty-seven square miles, which is about one-third the size of the District of Columbia. Another means of comparison is that the 18,500 acres make the Academy property larger than New York's Manhattan Island. Few people realize that the combined U.S. Military Academy reservation and the adjacent Camp Bruckner maneuver area also contain 18,000 acres.

The increase in size of the site disturbed many people, especially the residents of Pine Valley. One disgruntled Pine Valley landowner remarked that the "Academy's 'rubber' boundaries were stretched to include more and more land." An editorial in the Colorado Springs Gazette-Telegraph stated: "We don't presume to know why the Air Force needs all that land. But we certainly hope that no one in the Air Force is planning to use that 9,000 acres as a private game preserve on which to hunt the King's deer." To allay fears of this nature, General Thomas White, vice chief of staff of the Air Force at the time, ordered that a wildlife preserve be established on the Academy property and that all hunting be banned.

Another question that disturbed many people was the designation of the post office for the Academy site. Many names were suggested. Among these were Cathedral Rock, Falcon, and Eagles Nest. Congressman Byron Rogers of Denver had suggested that the Academy's post office address be Wild Blue Yonder, Colorado. The American Legion Post of Denver wanted to memorialize Jerry Vasconcells, Colorado's lone ace of World War I (who died in 1950), and suggested that the post office designation be Vasconcells, Colorado. Finally, it was decided that the post office be called U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado, and the zip code was designated 80840. For many years, this designation led to much confusion on the part of many people. Some correspondents insisted that the Academy was located in Colorado Springs. Others were under the misapprehension that the Academy was located in one of the Denver suburbs and insisted upon

using Denver as the address of the Academy. Consequently, the post offices in Colorado Springs and Denver had to reroute large quantities of mail. By 1983, it was decided that the official designation should be changed to Colorado Springs 80840-5651.

In retrospect, it is very fortunate that the Air Force officials had the foresight to insist that the total acreage of the site be enlarged. In justifying the expansion, one key officer stated, "The Air Force has a responsibility to protect the campus from undesirable fringe encroachments." This officer's crystal ball was exceptionally clear. By 1984, land speculators and developers had built up the whole area immediately south and east of the Academy property. Thousands of homes have been built in developments such as Falcon Estates, Rockrimmon, Pine Grove Estates, and Briargate. The huge Chapel Hills Mall, hotels, office buildings, a technological center, as well as several aerospace and commercial enterprises have increased the density of use and complicated the traffic conditions in the area. Some critics of the apparently uncontrolled growth have charged that Academy Boulevard is lined for miles with some of the most indiscriminate and unregulated buildings in any area of the United States.

Unfortunately, when the old U.S. Highway 85-87, running north to Denver, was replaced in 1960 by the four-lane I-25, the roadbed was relocated about 500 feet to the east. This reduced the Academy's buffer zone to the east by less than 500 feet. Already one large commercial complex has been built along the eastern boundary. Others are being planned. Pressures were exerted to build a new cloverleaf to serve as another exit on I-25 between the north and south Academy exits. Not too far in the future, further expansion, north and east of the Academy, will cause critical problems for the Academy, especially in its flying operations.

CHAPTER 9

Links with the Past

*Bring me men to match my mountains,
Bring me men to match my plains,
Men with empires in their purpose,
And new eras in their brains ...*

—Sam Walter Foss,
“The Coming American,”
in his *Whiffs from Wild Meadows*
Published in 1895

Whenver one thinks of the U.S. Air Force Academy, an image of its ultramodern architectural features immediately emerges. An association is made linking the Academy with the unfolding aerospace age. Very seldom, if ever, does one think or write about the historical background of the site itself. Hardly anyone ever calls attention to the significant fact that the Pikes Peak region, already so rich in American history, has over the past three decades become the key location for the education of young air officers charged with the future security of the nation and the free world.

Many famous American names have been associated with the Pikes Peak region:¹ Zebulon Pike, who discovered the peak in 1806; Stephen Long, who with his small band of soldiers explored the area in 1820; Kit Carson, mountain man and guide in the 1830s; John Charles Fremont, the great path marker of the 1840s; Julia Archibald Holmes, one of America’s first liberated women, who, wearing her daring bloomer costume, climbed to the top of Pikes Peak in 1858; Helen Hunt Jackson, poet and literary champion of the American Indians, who lived in Colorado Springs in the 1870s and 1880s; and Katherine Lee Bates, who, while teaching a summer course in 1893 at Colorado College,



went to the top of Pikes Peak and was inspired to write the words for "America the Beautiful."

Among the many community leaders associated with the history and development of Colorado Springs are General William Jackson Palmer, Spencer and Julie Penrose, Albert and Ethel Carlton, Dr. and Mrs. Gerald E. Webb, and Charles Leaming Tutt, his son, and grandsons. All of these people, directly or indirectly, had a role in the history of the Academy site. This chapter, then, will

This cabin in the southern portion of Douglass Valley was built by William Burgess prior to 1870. Since 1975, it has been on the National Register of Historic Buildings.

attempt to link the historic past with the dynamic future of the Academy.

The oldest building now standing on the site is a crude one-room log cabin situated in the lower part of Douglass Valley. The hand-hewn structure is sixteen feet by eighteen feet and sits on a rock foundation. The exterior notched logs are filled with chinking, and the structure has a wood shingle roof. A rock chimney is located on the east side of the building. The cabin was built by William A. Burgess before 1870. During the Academy construction period, officials of the Air Force Academy Construction Agency wanted to move the cabin to a spot near the north entrance. Motivated as he was by a deep sense of history, General Harmon vetoed this idea. Instead, General Harmon wanted the cabin preserved.

In 1960, the Historical Society of the Pikes Peak region placed a marker in front of the cabin. The following year, the remains of five members of the Leonard Capps family, who were related to the Burgess family and who occupied a log cabin near the site of Falcon Stadium, were reinterred adjacent to the Burgess cabin. The Palmer Lake Historical Society placed a marker in the new cemetery location in memory of all the pioneer families who settled in the district. These settlers, as indicated on the marker, include the Burgess, Capps, Blodgett, Young, Pring, Teachout, McShane, Husted, Porter, and Kinner families. In 1975, the Burgess cabin was placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the Department of the Interior. In 1976, as a bicentennial project, the Boy Scout troops of the Academy constructed a Lincoln-type split rail wooden fence around the cabin. Unfortunately, the cabin is located in an isolated area without an access road, and few of the Academy's thousands of visitors ever have the opportunity to see it.

The old Pueblo, Colorado City, and Denver stagecoach road ran through the site along Monument Creek.² Prior to the coming of the railroad in 1871, this route was well used. According to the old newspaper advertisements, the stage-

coaches ran every week with the U.S. mail, express matter, freight, and passengers. The stage left Colorado City (now West Colorado Avenue in Colorado Springs) on Sunday morning and arrived in Denver Monday afternoon. The return trip left Denver Thursday morning and reached Colorado City Friday afternoon. The stagecoach depot was in what is now the 2800 block of West Colorado Avenue.



A stagecoach similar to this one ran twice a week between Colorado City and Denver. The stop at the Teachout Ranch was south of the Academy property. The stage went north along Monument Creek on its way to Denver.

The stage proceeded on Colorado Avenue to what is now Thirteenth Street. It went north past the Garden of the Gods and turned east along what today is Woodmen Valley Road. The first stopping place to change horses was the Harlow Teachout Ranch along Monument Creek. This was about one mile south of the Academy boundary line. The stage then continued northward along Monument Creek toward Denver. About ten miles north, just beyond the Academy property, was the next stopping place, which carried the picturesque western name of "Dirty Woman's Ranch" on Dirty Woman's Creek.

Portions of the old stage road and the original automobile road built during the World War I era were incorporated into U.S. Highway 85–87. As late as 1960, traces of the network of pioneer roads were still visible from the air. With the construction of Interstate Highway 25 and with housing developments, all of the traces of the old roads have been eradicated.

Between 1863 and 1869, Indian depredations were frequent in El Paso County.³ The lives of the settlers were often in jeopardy. The outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 threw the West into disorder and confusion, and this afforded the Indians an opportunity to retaliate against the settlers. Confederate forces under the command of General Henry H. Sibley invaded New Mexico in an attempt to capture the Colorado gold mines. In March 1862, at the Battle of Glorieta Pass, Sibley and his Texans were forced to withdraw from the area by volunteer forces from New Mexico and Colorado. Westerners proudly call Glorieta the "Gettysburg of the Southwest." One of the heroes of Glorieta was Colonel John Chivington, a Methodist preacher from Denver.

On November 29, 1864, the 3rd Regiment of the Colorado Territorial Militia, under the command of Colonel Chivington, made a surprise attack on the Cheyenne Indian encampment at Sand Creek, in southeastern Colorado, and killed almost 500 Indians, including many women and children. The Sand Creek Massacre is one of the most controversial subjects in Colorado history, as well as in the history of frontier Indian wars. Even after more than a century has passed, passions have not

cooled. Books, articles, movies, and television shows keep the incident alive. Chivington has been both damned and praised for his deed, which so enraged the Plains tribes that repercussions lasted for years. The report of a special congressional committee investigating the incident was a scathing denunciation of Chivington and the carnage his militiamen had inflicted. Participants in the Sand Creek affair, however, including leading Colorado Springs citizen Irving Howbert, staunchly defended him. As contemporary newspaper accounts demonstrate, many Colorado settlers heaped praise on Chivington and bitterly assailed any attempts at a "soft" Indian policy on the part of the federal government.

During the 1864 Indian war, the sawmill near the old town of Husted (now the north entrance to the Academy) was the scene of a murderous foray. As the *Rocky Mountain News* reported, conditions in El Paso County were so disturbed that no mail arrived by stagecoach from Denver for almost three months. The Sand Creek affair set off a new wave of marauding Indian attacks that lasted spasmodically for the next five years. In 1866, twenty-three settlers were killed within a radius of twenty miles of Colorado City.

During the fall of 1867, several small Indian raids occurred near the town of Edgerton (now in the vicinity of the Services and Supply Area near the south entrance to the Academy). In August 1868, a party of Arapahoes and Cheyennes attacked the Teachout Ranch and other nearby ranches. For protection, the settlers banded together at the Teachout Ranch and at the McShane Ranch, several miles north of the village of Monument. One local authority claims that on one occasion, forty-two people were "forted up" at the McShane Ranch for two weeks. As late as 1970, the remains of a large stone barn, with walls several feet thick with slots for rifles, were visible at the Teachout Ranch, about a mile south of the Academy property. In that year, the ruins were torn down so that a housing development could be built in the Pine Creek Estates subdivision.

In 1868 or 1869, Harlow Teachout built a hotel in the new town of Edgerton (near the present Services and Supply Area). The town had been named for David Edgerton, an early homesteader in Pine Valley. Because the hotel was only a short distance from the stage stop, it became a popular place for overnight travelers. During 1869, General Palmer made several trips by horseback from Denver to Colorado City and on to Pueblo, while exploring possible routes for his projected railroad. He probably stayed overnight at the Edgerton Hotel, since it furnished the best accommodations available in the area. By 1891, Edgerton had a population of fifty people. By 1902, the population had increased to 350. The inhabitants were involved in ranching, coal mining, and, during the winter months, ice cutting. A post office operated from 1890 to 1903, when it was moved to Pikeview, three miles south (near today's Corporate Centre Drive Interchange on I-25). Like so many tiny western towns, Edgerton gradually disintegrated as its people moved to more prosperous areas. By 1955, other than a few foundations, nothing remained, since most of the structures were built of wood.



Under the direction of the visionary General Palmer, the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad was incorporated in October 1870.⁴ Palmer, although only thirty-four years old, had years of experience building railroads. At age seventeen, he began working on a railroad that was being built through the central mountains of Pennsylvania. At nineteen, Palmer was sent to England to study railroads as well as the use of coal as possible fuel for locomotives. Upon his return to the United States in 1856, young Palmer was hired by J. E. Thompson, president of the Pennsylvania Railroad. This railroad was then being built across the state from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh. The Pennsylvania was one of the first railroads to experiment with the use of coal as fuel to produce steam and ran its lines into the coal mining districts of Pennsylvania. Building a railroad bed through mountainous terrain proved valuable experience for Palmer when later he built his own Denver and Rio Grande.

When the Civil War began in 1861, Palmer, a young Quaker of twenty-five, after serious religious and moral considerations, decided to join the Union Army

A view of the town of Edgerton in the 1890s. The site is now occupied by the Services and Supply Area near the south entrance of the Academy.

as a captain of cavalry. By 1864, he became colonel of the 15th Pennsylvania Cavalry Regiment. By the end of the war, he was promoted to brevet brigadier general. When released from the Army, Palmer again turned his attention to railroad building. He joined the Kansas Pacific Railroad, which was the eastern division of the Union Pacific, which in 1869 became the first of the transcontinental railroads to be completed.

In 1869, the Kansas Pacific was the first railroad to enter Denver. With this task completed, Palmer began to think of building his own dream railroad. Palmer projected a railroad running north and south along the eastern face of the Rocky Mountains.⁵ He hoped to build a line from Denver to Mexico City to serve the agricultural communities as well as the mining districts. In order to make the line profitable, he envisioned building model towns along the route. After protracted investigation in England and in parts of Europe, General Palmer became firmly convinced of the merits of three-foot-gauge rail for his railroad. A narrow-gauge railroad would be cheaper and far easier to build in the difficult terrain of the Rocky Mountains. Palmer's Denver and Rio Grande became the pioneer narrow-gauge railroad in the United States. The first division from Denver to the new town of Colorado Springs was constructed in 1871 and ran along the eastern edge of the Academy property.

Following the Civil War, it was unusual for a railroad to be constructed without state or federal grants. Palmer, however, was a strong advocate of free enterprise and financed his railroad with the financial assistance of Philadelphia, New York, and London capitalists. The cost of the first division was \$14,500 per mile, about three-fifths the cost of ordinary gauge construction in the days prior to the adoption of four-foot, eight-inch standard gauge. The thirty-pound rails were imported from England, Wales, and Belgium, while most of the ties and bridge timbers came from the Black Forest and the Palmer Lake regions north of Monument. Some of the railroad ties came from the slopes of the Rampart Range on the Academy property. The timbers were cut and skidded down the slopes. One of the "Skid Row" roads may still be seen high above Cathedral Rock.⁶

The first Denver and Rio Grande train passed through the site on October 23, 1871. The cars were hauled by a tiny steam engine named "Montezuma." One passenger coach bore the name "Denver" and the other one "El Paso." That trip set into motion a chain of events that led to the economic, social, and cultural transformation of the Pikes Peak region and the Rocky Mountain West.

Bitter rivalry soon developed between Palmer's Denver and Rio Grande and the Atchinson, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad. Pitched battles were fought over the right to build through the Royal Gorge and over Raton Pass. Palmer won Royal Gorge, and the Santa Fe secured the route through Raton Pass into New Mexico. In 1887, the Santa Fe extended its road north from Pueblo to Denver. Until 1965, the two railroads ran parallel to each other as they passed through the Academy property. After the big flood of 1965, portions of both railroad lines



between Colorado Springs and Castle Rock were washed out and rail service was interrupted for several months. Because of the huge repair costs, the companies decided to repair only one set of tracks and abandon the other line. As a result, the railroad bridge at Breed was removed along with the tracks. Today the Denver Rio Grande route is followed through the Academy property. The tracks can be seen running parallel to Stadium Boulevard.

As late as 1955, the little old Santa Fe Railroad station at Husted was still standing. Its weather-beaten sign read "Husted, Elevation 6596 feet, Denver 62 miles, Ogden (Utah) 720 miles." Nearby, a few frame shacks survived to mark the scene of a once busy lumbering center and cattle loading point. The ranches in the neighborhood were chiefly engaged in livestock raising, usually Hereford, Angus, and other breeds of beef cattle. The active sawmill had been operated by Calvin R. Husted for many years. The town also had a general store, a post office, a saloon, and a church. The north entrance cloverleaf is now located where the old town of Husted once stood.

Several miles north was Pring Station. At one time it was a busy cattle-loading point. In 1955, only a rusty water tank and the ruins of the section house walls could be seen. Today they have also disappeared, along with several wooden trestles, which bridged gulches in the northern section of the Academy property.

The William Bangs Young Ranch was located in the vicinity of Stadium Boulevard as it turns north toward Falcon Stadium. The Young family left Chicago in 1871 and made the long trip across the plains by wagon train. Mrs. Mary Eliza Young kept a diary and religiously recorded the events and hardships of the arduous journey, as well as her impressions of the infant town of Colorado

Husted station on the Santa Fe Railroad line in 1955. Two days after this picture was taken, the Academy Construction Agency demolished the station and the other Husted town buildings. The site of the station is now under the bridge just west of the north entrance to the Academy.

Springs. While the family was trying to get settled in their ranch, Mrs. Young recorded the progress of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad being built in their front yard.

Mrs. Young's diary has become one of the primary sources of information about the district. Ownership of that diary passed to Mrs. Young's granddaughter Marian McIntyre McDonough of Palmer Lake. Mrs. McDonough was a writer and history buff, and for many years wrote a weekly column in the *Colorado Springs Gazette-Telegraph*. Many of her columns contained data from Mrs. Young's diary as well as historical information about the Pikes Peak region. In 1960, Mrs. McDonough wrote a book entitled *Wagon Wheels to Denver*.⁷ It is a fictionalized version of the material contained in her grandmother's diary and is a fascinating story.

Located east of the Denver Rio Grande Railroad right of way was the Pine Valley Airport, begun in the late 1930s. Many pioneer Colorado aviators used the airstrip, which has now been incorporated into the runways used by the Academy for its flying operations. In 1939, Leo Schuth established a flying school here, which he called the Pine Valley Air Service. Like the proprietors of many similar airstrips of the period, Schuth offered passenger flights over the Garden of the Gods and other scenic areas, in his case for \$4 per person. These brief flights not only offered local residents and tourists their first ride in an open cockpit plane but served as an important source of revenue for the struggling flying school. Especially on Sundays, many young families used to come to the primitive grassed airstrip and watch the planes take off and land. It was a thrilling experience shared by many impressionable teenagers who would soon serve as pilots during World War II.

In 1942, the Pine Valley Airport became the headquarters for the Colorado Springs Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol. Soon the Pine Valley Air Service became the maintenance base for privately owned aircraft engaged in the Civil Air Patrol and Second Air Force Courier Service Flight network. Rescue missions as well as courier flights were conducted from the airport. By 1943, Robert Donner, a Colorado Springs industrialist, had purchased the airport and began to improve it. He constructed a 5,000-foot north-south runway and an east-west taxiway. After the war ended in 1945, the Pine Valley Airport attracted owners of private planes. One of these was Reginald Sinclair, who in World War I had served with the Lafayette Flying Corps and had three confirmed "kills" of German aircraft. In 1948, one of the largest air shows ever held in the Pikes Peak region was staged at Pine Valley. Later in 1948, Peterson Field, to the southeast of Colorado Springs, was opened for civilian and military aviation. With better facilities, most of the Colorado Springs aviation traffic shifted to Peterson Field.

As related in an earlier chapter, Charles A. Lindbergh had come to the Pine Valley Airport to rent a Stinson 90 to make an aerial inspection of the Academy site. His passengers were two other members of the Site Selection Commission, Dr. Hancher and Mr. Meigs. When Lindbergh spoke to the Academy cadets in 1970, he fondly recalled the memorable flight. He said: "I wanted to fly

Dr. Hancher and Mr. Meigs along the crest of the Rampart Range, to afford a good easterly view of the mesas and the intervening valley. But the little Stimson would not climb that high. I barely skimmed over the top of Cathedral Rock as we flew along the base of the mountains on a southerly heading."

In 1967, Congress appropriated \$76,700 for the construction of airmanship facilities on the Academy site. Additional funds were appropriated, and, by 1973, the old Pine Valley Airport area had become the center for all cadet airmanship programs, including T-41 student pilot training, soaring, parachuting, and Aero Club operations. Later, all cadets who were not scheduled to attend undergraduate pilot training were required to complete a course in aviation fundamentals using T-43 aircraft. The old Pine Valley Airport has become an important part of the Academy's aviation legacy.

Mineral resources in the vicinity of the site appeared rather limited. At one time, a gold mine called "Stanley Camp" supposedly flourished in the neighborhood of Stanley Creek, located west of the Academy land. Stanley Camp itself was thought to be located directly west of the Academy Hospital. This area can be approached from a precipitous road running up a canyon located south of the Pine Valley fire station. Local hikers have reported slight evidence of mining operations in the area. Experts on ghost towns and mining operations, however, make no reference to any mine in the vicinity. But the story remains a good one for local enthusiasts to relate and possibly explore. Old El Paso County records do show, however, that two placer claims were filed as late as 1901 on land that is now part of the terrazzo in the cadet formation area. Several uranium claims were also filed on Academy property between 1950 and 1954. There were also a few oil wells located near Beaver Creek on the Cathedral Rock Ranch property.

There is little recorded history relating to the Cathedral Rock Ranch or to Douglass Valley. Cathedral Rock Ranch was a big spread of more than 4,600 acres, mostly used as grazing land for purebred cattle. The ranch was purchased in 1942 by Lawrence B. Lehman, a member of the famous New York investment family. Mr. Lehman improved the ranch buildings and took great pride in exhibiting his cattle in various fairs throughout Colorado and New Mexico. The barns and large silo remained until 1960, when they were demolished so that the intramural playing fields could be laid out.

Douglass Valley was pastureland for grazing cattle. Parts of the grassy park were leased out. The 1,520-acre tract was purchased in 1929 by Leon H. Snyder, a prominent Colorado Springs attorney with a keen interest in local history. Mr. Snyder took appropriate action to preserve the Burgess cabin, which was on his property. He built himself a wooden lodge, which he used during the summer months. Later, he had three small wood cabins constructed nearby for use by overnight guests. The lodge and the cabins are now located on Community Center Drive, just west of the road that leads to Douglass Valley. The structures are now used for scouting activities.

Leon Snyder sold his property in 1945 to Frank H. Harrison. Mr. Harrison in turn sold the property in June 1949 to Earl R. Douglass and his wife, Nettie P. Douglass. Mr. and Mrs. Douglass tried to operate the property as a dude ranch and rented out the lodge and cabins during the summer months. One of the appraisers in 1954 wrote in his report that "the Douglass Ranch is in the 'station-wagon' belt of ranches located in the east foothills of the mountains." Mr. Douglass died before the official announcement had been made that his ranch was to be included in the Academy site. Mrs. Douglass agreed to sell her land to the Colorado Land Commission for \$125,000.

The Air Force Academy Construction Agency officials promptly started to use the designation "Douglass Valley" for this part of the site, just as previously they used the term "Lehman Valley" for the upper part. During the course of the past thirty years, the expression "Douglass Valley" has continued to be used, but no one at the Academy ever uses the Lehman name. Possibly this came about because of the Douglass Valley housing and the existence of the Douglass Valley Elementary School.

The expression "Pine Valley," on the other hand, had been in use for more than fifty years prior to 1954. This was the most heavily populated area of the site. Pine Valley was considered one of the most desirable residential areas in the Pikes Peak region. In the original discussions about the Colorado Springs area, the Site Selection Commissioners were talking about 12,000 to 15,000 acres, and no mention of including Pine Valley was made. In fact, some of the early supporters for the Pikeview-Monument Site, as it was called, lived in Pine Valley. One Pine Valley resident reported in an oral interview that General Spaatz met with a retired colonel and his family and solemnly assured them that neither their property nor any other Pine Valley property was going to be considered as part of the Academy property. When the official announcement came that the site was being enlarged to include Pine Valley, the residents protested bitterly and threatened to take legal action. They tried to pressure public officials to persuade the Air Force to look for the extra land north of the Cathedral Rock Ranch instead of Pine Valley.

A number of the Pine Valley supporters turned into hostile, bitter, unforgiving enemies. Pine Valley residents hired lawyers, sent delegations to call on the governor of Colorado, the United States senators, the local congressman, the secretary of the Air Force, the secretary of the defense, and even the president of the United States. Their wrath equaled that of the residents of Lake Geneva and Alton. Even after they begrudgingly sold their land, some former Pine Valley residents kept up their feud with the Air Force and the Air Force Academy. One of the largest landowners in Pine Valley told the author in the mid-1960s that he still refused to drive past the Academy on his way to Denver. Instead, he drove up Ute Pass and followed the Deckers Road to Denver.

The Lennox family were the earliest settlers in Monument Valley, the upper part of which later became known as Pine Valley. The family had moved from

Iowa and had arrived in Colorado Springs in 1872. The son, William Lennox, was only twenty-one years old and suffered from a severe case of asthma. Like so many early families, the Lennox family had been advised that the Colorado Springs climate would bring relief to their young son. William soon found employment in Colorado Springs by participating in General Palmer's beautification program. Young Lennox helped to plant the cottonwood trees along Cascade Avenue. By 1874, he had become an agent for Palmer's Colorado Fuel and Coal Company and handled the sales of coal. Meanwhile, he became interested in mining and did some prospecting around Fairplay. By 1892, William had purchased a claim in Cripple Creek. Soon Lennox became co-owner of the Strong and Gold King Mines as well as the Cripple Creek Short Line. Now a wealthy man, William Lennox started to develop his Pine Valley property by constructing a big house and new ranch buildings. He called his property Glenwood Ranch. He also built a beautiful big home in town across Nevada Avenue from the Colorado College campus. At his death in 1909, Mr. Lennox willed his Nevada Avenue home along with a large amount of money to Colorado College. He also left endowments for the First Methodist Church and the Beth-El Hospital. His widow sold the Pine Valley property to William A. Otis.

William A. Otis was born in Cleveland, Ohio. His father was one of the early iron and steel manufacturers in northern Ohio. While attending Yale University, young Otis became seriously ill with lung problems. On the advice of their physician, the Otis family sent their son to live in the Adirondacks in New York, and then in San Antonio, Texas. Still, his health remained poor. Finally in 1885, young Otis came to Colorado Springs. With marked improvement in his health, Otis got involved in the investment and brokerage business. He became a partner in the investment firm of Otis and Company, with its main office in Cleveland. William Otis managed the firm's branch offices in Colorado Springs, Denver, and Casper, Wyoming. He also became active in other business enterprises in Wyoming, Utah, and Oklahoma. For many years, Otis was a director of the First National Bank of Colorado Springs and participated in many civic affairs in the city. He built a home on Chelton Road on Austin Bluffs, next to Palmer Park, which he sold in 1901 to a sanitorium for tubercular patients.



The south entrance to the Academy in 1958. The sentry box is a former "Gardiner Sanitary Tent" relocated from the grounds of nearby Woodmen Sanitarium (now Mount Saint Francis). The inventor, Dr. Charles F. Gardiner of Colorado Springs, was one of the pioneer specialists in the treatment of tuberculosis.

William Otis was one of the early automobile enthusiasts in the Colorado Springs area. He loved to own and to drive big cars. Marshall Sprague, in his *Newport in the Rockies*, tells how, in 1906, Otis was driving some friends in his new big automobile when he found General Palmer lying on the ground after having been thrown from his horse. General Palmer was lifted into the Otis vehicle and driven to his home at Glen Eyrie. Palmer had broken his neck in the fall. He remained an invalid the rest of his life.

In 1909, William Otis married for the second time. At this time, he purchased the Pine Valley property. He and his new wife, Rowena Goddard, began to renovate the old Lennox home and transform it into one of the finest homes in the region. Mr. and Mrs. Otis also took a great interest in developing the ranch by diversifying its operations. Part of the ranch was now operated as a dairy farm. Another part was placed under cultivation, using irrigation ditches. Other parts were used for grazing cattle. Mr. Otis enjoyed experimenting with shorthorn cattle. Soon he and his wife became very interested in breeding and training fine horses. In later years, Mr. and Mrs. Otis sold parts of their property, but most of the activities they had started were continued by the new owners. William Otis died in the late 1940s, but Mrs. Otis continued to live in her home until her death in 1951.

In 1952, the administrators of Mrs. Otis's estate sold her property to Dr. and Mrs. Wilton W. Cogswell Jr. Dr. Cogswell was a well-known Colorado Springs dentist and oral surgeon. During an interview in 1980, Mrs. Cogswell recalled that the Otis house "was fully furnished with Oriental rugs, gorgeous furniture, silverware, and objects of art. An auction sale was held and all these furnishings were sold." Mrs. Cogswell said that the 8,900-square-foot house had seven bathrooms and nine fireplaces and many spacious rooms. Dr. Cogswell became one of the leaders of the Pine Valley opposition to the acquisition of the Academy land. The Cogswells occupied their home until they very reluctantly sold it for \$115,000 to the Colorado Land Commission.

When the Cogswell house was turned over to the Air Force Academy Construction Agency, one of its officers, Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Correll, and his family moved into the house and lived there for several years. In 1958 and 1959, the Correll House, as it was then known, was used by the Academy chaplains for services for Academy personnel and their dependents who were living in the senior officers' quarters and in the indigenous houses. (The Douglass and Pine Valley housing were not completed and ready for occupancy until the fall of 1959.) Chapel services were held in the huge, beautiful living room with a large picture window behind the temporary altar. There is some speculation as to whether this setting caused the Academy chaplains to persuade Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill to locate the altars of the Cadet Chapel and the Base Chapel behind large clear-glass windows. Sunday school classes were taught in the many bright rooms of the Correll House.

In 1959, Brigadier General Henry Sullivan, the commandant of cadets, and his family moved into the old Otis home. When General Sullivan was promoted and reassigned, his successor, Brigadier General William T. Seawell, and his family occupied the house. The next occupants were Brigadier General and Mrs. Robert F. McDermott and their large family. As the dean of the faculty, General McDermott used the beautiful house for the official entertaining of educators and other distinguished visitors to the Academy. When McDermott retired in 1968, Brigadier General and Mrs. Robin Olds, the commandant of cadets, moved into the house. Since then, the house continued to serve as the residence of all the later commandants of cadets.

In 1911, Mr. Otis gave a tract of his land to his friend and physician, Dr. Gerald E. Webb.⁸ The English-born physician was fast becoming one of America's specialists in the treatment of tuberculosis and a pioneer in the burgeoning science of immunology. Dr. Webb's second wife, Varina Howell Davis Hayes, was the granddaughter of Jefferson Davis, the president of the Confederacy. Mrs. Webb used part of her legacy from her mother's estate to build a cabin in the unspoiled wilderness. The Webbs, who lived in a large home at 1222 North Cascade Avenue, loved their summerhouse among the pine trees in Pine Valley. The Webbs had five children, and they grew up enjoying the freedom afforded by their rustic summer home where they kept horses and other pets.

Dr. and Mrs. Webb originally called their retreat "Ausflug," a German expression for a place to flee to. When World War I heralded a wave of anti-German sentiment, the Webbs renamed their property "Tall Timbers." Since Dr. Webb considered fresh air and sunshine as essential parts of treatment for his patients, Tall Timbers played an important role in preventative medicine for his own growing family.

Dr. Webb commuted daily to his office in the Burns Building on Pikes Peak Avenue in his big, open Locomobile. In 1909, he had become one of the first physicians in Colorado Springs to own one of the new conveyances. Being nature lovers, Dr. and Mrs. Webb enjoyed taking the children for long walks in the woods and teaching them about trees, plants, flowers, birds, and wild animals. Dr. Webb enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere away from his busy professional schedule and his research. He used much of his time at Tall Timbers to read, write articles for medical journals, and to write his books on medical history.

Over the years, Dr. Webb's reputation was enhanced by professional recognition. He was a founder and first president of the American Association of Immunologists. He later served as president of the National Tuberculosis Association and the Association of American Physicians.

The Webb property has been incorporated into that area of lower Pine Valley now occupied by the Capehart family housing, south of the road leading to the Academy stables.

Another leading resident of early Pine Valley was Lieutenant Colonel Henry Leonard, a veteran Marine officer who had lost his left arm during the Boxer Rebellion in 1900. In 1915, Colonel Leonard bought a large tract of land from William Otis and called his property the Elkhorn Ranch. He soon developed it into one of the best-known horse ranches in the West. The Leonards maintained a home in Washington, D.C., for the winter and spent the summers in Colorado. Colonel Leonard's stepdaughter, Ellen "Nell" MacVeagh, was an accomplished horsewoman. One elderly Colorado Springs resident recalled that Nell MacVeagh held practice steeplechases in Pine Valley and even held coyote hunts with hounds, riding habits—including scarlet coats, black helmets, and English riding boots—and all the other traditional paraphernalia. The old Leonard stone house, barns, corrals, and stables are still used today under the supervision of the Academy's Special Services. Academy personnel as well as cadets hire horses to ride on the many bridle paths on the Academy property. In fact, the stable area is one of the least changed parts of the Academy site.

In 1944, Mrs. Otis sold 2,718 acres of her land in the northern part of Pine Valley to Earl H. Schwab and his wife, Violet. The Schwabs established the Pine Valley Ranch Company, Inc., using the old Otis stone barn and other ranch buildings. In 1953, the Schwabs built a 3,600-square-foot ranch-style house. Earl Schwab joined Dr. Cogswell in opposing the acquisition of their properties by the Academy. After a bitter legal contest in 1956, the Schwabs agreed to accept \$322,000 for their property.

During the construction period for the Services and Supply Area, Colonel Jasper Westbrook and his family lived in the old Schwab home. Westbrook served as the superintendent's on-site agent while the main activities of the Academy were being operated from Lowry Air Force Base in Denver. When Dean McDermott was promoted to brigadier general in 1959, he and his family moved from the senior officers' quarters to the Schwab house. In 1963, the McDermott family moved into the old Otis house. The Schwab property was then occupied by three commandants of cadets, Generals Robert W. Strong Jr., Louis T. Seith, and Robin Olds. General and Mrs. Olds moved into the Otis house when McDermott retired in 1968. The new dean, Brigadier General William T. Woodyard, then occupied the Schwab house until his retirement in 1978. His successor, Brigadier General William A. Orth, resided there until he retired in 1983. The next dean of the faculty, Brigadier General Erwin Rokke, and his family occupied the old Schwab house until his reassignment in 1986.

In 1931, Mr. and Mrs. Otis sold another tract of their land to Mrs. Loulie Albee Mathews. Mrs. Mathews built a large summerhouse and filled it with art treasures. Mrs. Mathews wrote three books and became deeply involved in the Baha'i faith. In 1939, she began to allow the Baha'i Assembly to use her property as a summer school and camp. Soon, attendees from all over the world were coming to the school. To accommodate them, Mrs. Mathews built two cottages

on her property, which she named Patience Cottage and Temerity Cottage. In 1951, Mrs. Mathews transferred the deed to the property to the trustees of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada. When their property was needed for the Academy, the Baha'is refused to sell their land to the Colorado Land Commission. In 1955 and 1956, the Baha'is fought in the courts to keep their school and their land. After much publicity, an out-of-court settlement was reached in 1956, and the Baha'is were paid \$52,000 for their property. The buildings were torn down when the Pine Valley Road was built. The location was just north of the intersecting road, which leads to the Academy High School.

The final major property in Pine Valley is the Carlton home, which, since 1959, has been used as the superintendent's residence. In 1928, Mr. and Mrs. Otis sold another large tract of their land to Mr. and Mrs. Albert E. Carlton. The Carltons were among the wealthiest people in the Colorado Springs area. At age twenty-five, Carlton had come to Colorado because of lung trouble. But soon he became too busy to die. After a few years, Bert Carlton was called the "King of Cripple Creek." Through his Colorado Trading and Transport Company, he virtually controlled all the wagons transporting ore out of the district, as well as the wagons bringing supplies into Cripple Creek. When the Midland Terminal Railroad was built, Carlton was one of the major stockholders. In addition, Bert Carlton bought and sold gold mines. He also had interests in banks and many other enterprises.

In 1901, after a much-publicized divorce, Bert Carlton married Ethel Frizzell. The Carltons lived in Cripple Creek for more than twenty years. Then they moved to Colorado Springs and lived at the Broadmoor Hotel. Later, they purchased a large home at the northwest corner of Uintah and Wood Avenue. But Mrs. Carlton was not satisfied; she wanted to build a house on the scale of El Pomar, the fabulous Broadmoor residence of Spencer and Julie Penrose.

Ethel induced her husband to buy the Pine Valley property. Next, she engaged a nationally recognized San Diego architect, Richard Requa, to design a large Spanish-style house to be built on the twenty-eight acre estate.

Bert Carlton, in spite of his wealth, was a man of simple tastes and had little interest in the fine house that Ethel was having built. He much preferred living in an apartment at the Broadmoor Hotel. During one of his brief visits to the Pine Valley home, in September 1931, Bert became seriously ill and died within a few days. After her husband's death, Ethel carried on his many enterprises and continued to make even more money. She kept on expanding her splendid estate down through 1937. Over the years, she had as her guests many celebrities, especially movie stars. She also continued to travel extensively. When Mrs. Carlton's health began to decline, she sold the Pine Valley property in 1950 and moved into an apartment at the Broadmoor Hotel.

In May 1950, Jack Valentine of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, bought the Carlton estate for \$125,000. He turned the property into the Pine Valley Club. Valentine



Mrs. Ethel Carlton engaged San Diego architect Richard Requa to design her large Spanish-style house in Pine Valley. Starting with General Briggs in 1958, all Academy superintendents have lived there.

built a heated swimming pool and a nine-hole golf course. He also had six acres landscaped into a beautiful garden area. Valentine hoped to turn the club into a gambling casino. His plans never materialized because he could not obtain a gambling license. In 1955, Valentine did not hesitate to sell the property when the Colorado Land Commission offered him \$265,000.

During 1956 and 1957, the old Carlton house was leased by School District 20. About 140 pupils in grades seven to twelve attended the school. Howard Dunning, the district superintendent, also served as principal. He had a staff of nine teachers. In mid-1958, District 20 leased several of the newly built barracks buildings in the community center (now occupied by the Academy Preparatory School). All of the school district's operations were conducted there until the Pine and Douglass Valley Elementary Schools and the Academy High School buildings were completed.

As part of their master design of the Academy complex, Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill had designed houses for the superintendent, the dean, and the commandant of cadets. The superintendent's quarters were initially planned for construction on what was termed "Superintendent's Hill," an elevated area just east of Fairchild Hall overlooking the Cadet Parade Ground. The superintendent's house was to be about 7,000 square feet and was to have a spiral staircase. The design "was just God-awful," General Briggs recalled in an oral interview.⁹ *The Wall Street Journal* ran a story with the headline "\$85,000 House for Brass Hats." General Briggs said the actual cost of the house would have been closer to \$150,000. Briggs decided to disapprove all the houses and agreed that his family, as well as the families of the dean and the commandant of cadets, would live in indigenous houses and save the taxpayers' money.



The living room of the Carlton house in the 1930s when Mrs. Ethel Carlton occupied the present superintendent's quarters. Over the years, Mrs. Carlton had as her guests many celebrities, especially movie stars.

When General Briggs learned that one of the undersecretaries of the Air Force planned to use the Carlton House for a noncommissioned officers' club, he became disturbed. Briggs went to the Pentagon to see General Curtis LeMay, then vice chief of staff of the Air Force. When Briggs told LeMay the problem, Le May took his cigar out of his mouth and asked sarcastically, "Buster, why the hell aren't you in it?" Briggs moved into the Carlton House the next week.

One of the first social functions in the new superintendent's quarters was held on August 31, 1958. Mrs. Briggs hosted a luncheon to which Colorado Springs city officials were invited, as well as Academy staff officers and their wives. Mrs. Ethel Carlton was the guest of honor. Mildred Miller Posvar, a Metropolitan Opera star and the wife of the professor of political science, sang for the guests in the large living room.

This luncheon was only the beginning of many official functions that were held in the superintendent's quarters. The spacious house actually is the locale for ceremonial functions and for official entertaining of governmental and military officials, distinguished foreign visitors, including heads of state, and all sorts of famous people. The superintendent and his family occupy only a small portion of the huge house for their personal use.

The superintendent's quarters were to be the focal point for the many social functions that would take place during the first June Week marking the graduation of the historic class of 1959. Events like the superintendent's reception for graduates, their parents, friends, and relatives would become part of the Academy's tradition.

The unique aspect of the 1959 June Week was that, at the invitation of Mrs. Briggs, cadet weddings were held in the superintendent's quarters. The Cadet Chapel was still in the planning stage and there was no appropriate facility on the site in which to hold the weddings. Although the logistics of holding nineteen weddings in one place within two days were overwhelming, Mrs. Briggs had had plenty of experience. During World War II, while General Briggs was serving overseas, Mrs. Briggs had served as secretary to the chaplain at West Point and had handled all of the weddings held in the Cadet Chapel. In its article on the weddings, *The Denver Post* commented, "It is likely that only military minds could have accomplished such a delicate feat without at least one blushing bride being married to the wrong groom." It was Kay Briggs whose "military mind" planned the weddings and saw them to a happy conclusion.

CHAPTER 10

A Bridge to the Future



In taking its place beside West Point and Annapolis, the Air Force Academy joins a proud company. The honored histories of the two older institutions provide a peerless standard against which, in future years, the excellence of the new Academy will be measured and found worthy.

—President Dwight D. Eisenhower
July 11, 1955, Dedication Message

While the new Academy was being launched at its interim site in Denver, a miraculous transformation was occurring at its permanent home in the untamed cattle country wilderness north of Colorado Springs. The job was one of vast magnitude and complexity. Unlike most American campuses, which were built piecemeal, the Air Force Academy building complex was being constructed all at one time. The only other American institutions of higher learning to move into ready-built campuses were Stanford, Duke, and the University of Chicago. When ground was broken in 1955, the Academy project represented the largest single educational building program ever undertaken in the United States.

In order to monitor and coordinate the huge project, the Air Force established in June 1954 the Air Force Academy Construction Agency.¹ This, in itself, was an unusual procedure because normally all military construction is handled by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The agency was charged with full responsibility for the construction of all the Academy facilities at the permanent site. Organizationally, the agency was under the chief of staff, installations,



The Academy complex under construction. The contractors used old Cathedral Rock Ranch buildings that are visible in the upper left-hand corner of the photograph.

Headquarters, U.S. Air Force. The agency itself was physically located in Colorado Springs on North Stone Street. Colonel Albert E. Stoltz was assigned as the agency's director.

General Harmon appointed Major Witters, one of his longtime Pentagon staff members as Academy director of installations. In this capacity, Witters served as liaison between the Academy and the agency. He was primarily responsible for the development and programming of the Academy's building requirements and for establishing criteria for other command priorities. When Lieutenant Colonel Witters was reassigned in 1958, Lieutenant Colonel James L. Crossey became the new director of installations.

In July 1959, Colonel Crossey became the Academy's first deputy chief of staff of civil engineering and became responsible for the operation of the entire physical plant, as well as serving as liaison with the agency. A few months later, Mr. Charles H. Hammond transferred from the agency to the Academy and was named deputy director of civil engineering. Mr. Hammond served in that capacity until his retirement in 1975.

The statistics of the huge task performed by the Air Force Academy Construction Agency are impressive. More than 5,000 workers were employed by

twenty major construction firms. Nineteen million cubic yards of dirt were excavated from the academic complex alone. Eight hundred thousand cubic yards of concrete were poured, and 250,000 square feet of tile were installed. The academic complex buildings cover 4 million square feet of floor area.

The buildings contain more than a million square feet of glass. One observer pointed out that this was four times the amount of glass contained in the Empire State Building in New York City. General Harmon had opposed the extensive use of glass in all of the major buildings because of the high winds in the area. The architects, Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill, however, refused to modify their design. Massive glass breakage in subsequent years tended to substantiate General Harmon's wisdom.

The classrooms in Fairchild Hall, the main academic building, had more than 100,000 square feet of blackboard space so that cadets could write out their exercises. The miles of corridor space in Fairchild Hall were built wide enough so that cadets could march four abreast.

The site itself contained almost a hundred miles of paved roads, many with steep grades, which were to present special problems keeping them passable during heavy snowstorms.

The Academy is one of the nation's highest campuses. The altitude varies from 6,380 to 8,040 feet. The academic area is located 7,163 feet above sea level. During the Academy's early days of sports competition, many coaches and athletes had fears that playing in such a high altitude would have adverse effects on the performance of their teams. Experience has shown, however, that the effects appear to be minimal.

The Academy, with its 18,500 acres, is one of the largest collegiate campuses in the world. The architects employed the natural landforms to enhance the impressiveness of the design of the entire academic area. In addition to the academic complex, the Academy property contains housing and other essential facilities for a population of 10,000, including the support personnel and their families. It has an airstrip to support its flying training program. The site also has a hospital complex, Falcon Stadium, Eisenhower Golf Course, a field house, a community center (comparable to a shopping center in an urban community), as well as two public elementary schools and the Air Academy High School. A Services and Supply Area provides logistical support, transportation, and the civil engineering function.

As the second superintendent, General Briggs had some formidable goals to accomplish in a limited time. He had to develop a good working relationship with the construction agency, since it was essential that the Academy should be able to move to its permanent location at the earliest possible time, preferably before June 1959, when the first class was scheduled to graduate. He also had to cooperate



Lieutenant General James E. Briggs served as superintendent from July 1956 until August 1959.

and coordinate with Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill officials all of the multitude of design features for the construction, the equipment, and the furnishings for which the architects were responsible. Next, in order to operate the Academy effectively and efficiently, General Briggs had to stabilize his administration and surround himself with people whom he could mold into a harmonious team to operate the Academy as a complex educational institution.

Finally, on direct orders from the Pentagon, General Briggs had to pave the way for the accreditation of the Academy by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, which had its main office in Chicago. Without accreditation, the degrees granted would be meaningless and the opportunity for cadet graduates to be admitted to post-graduate schools would be limited. Besides, accreditation was an important prestige item for the new school.

Accreditation is a difficult process at best. For a new institution, it meant attaining very high standards in a short time. Every aspect of the institution was to be subject to examination and evaluation—the quality of the instructional program, the degrees and teaching experience of the faculty, the quality and coverage of the library collections, the laboratory equipment, the administration, the philosophy of the school, and hundreds of other related items.

For the accreditation team's inspection visit, the Academy would have to prepare an intense self-survey, setting forth its strengths and weaknesses and making specific proposals for intended corrections within a limited time period. If all these goals were to be achieved by June 1959, less than three years remained for General Briggs and his staff. The realization of the requisite goals would mean a heroic effort on the part of General Briggs and all the members of the Academy community.

Since the dean, as the director of the academic instructional program, was the key factor in the accreditation process, one of General Briggs's first decisions was to reconfirm Colonel Robert F. McDermott as the acting dean of the faculty on August 1, 1956. Strengthening the faculty by selecting more officers with doctoral and master's degrees, revising and refining the curriculum, and introducing innovations into the learning process were just a few of Dean McDermott's accomplishments in preparation for the North Central Accreditation team's crucial inspection. For the next several years, practically everything at the Academy was focused on accreditation. In his oral history interview, General Briggs recalled,² "McDermott, Stillman, and I went to Chicago a thousand times, and *everything* they wanted us to do, we did, anything within possibility to get that accreditation."

James E. Briggs had embarked on his challenging assignment with excellent credentials. He was born in Rochester, New York, and was an honor graduate of the New York Military Academy. He was an outstanding member of the class of 1928 at the Military Academy. During his final year at West Point, "Buster" Briggs, as his classmates and close friends always called him, served as the captain of the

soccer team and as first captain, the highest rank in the Cadet Corps. In 1930, he received his wings as an Air Corps pilot and during the next ten years served in a variety of flying duties. In 1940, he was assigned to the Military Academy as an instructor in the Mathematics Department.

In March 1942, Briggs was promoted to full colonel and assigned as assistant chief of staff of Eighth Fighter Command in England. From 1943 until 1945, he served as air officer for the European Section of the War Department General Staff. Then he served as commander of the North Atlantic Division of Air Transport Command.

The post-war assignments of General Briggs included duty with the Central Intelligence Group in Washington and a tour as chief of staff for the Fifteenth Air Force in Colorado Springs. He was promoted to brigadier general in 1948 and to major general in 1951. Following the outbreak of the Korean War, Briggs was assigned as deputy commander, Far East Air Forces Bomber Command. In May 1954, he was assigned duty in the Pentagon as assistant deputy chief of staff for development with additional duty as the Air Force member of the Joint Board of Defense for the United States and Canada.

During his tour of duty with the Fifteenth Air Force in Colorado Springs in 1947 and 1948, General Briggs had become acquainted with many of the local civic leaders. He knew personally most of the band of Colorado Springs businessmen who had spearheaded the drive to bring the Academy to the city. General Briggs recalled,³ "They had fought, bled, and died and had done the damndest lobby operation you had ever seen to get the Academy out there." He also knew many of the Denver and Colorado state civic leaders on a personal basis.

All of these contacts were to prove very significant to General Briggs during his years as superintendent. It was vital that the superintendent and his staff maintain excellent rapport with the local community for a variety of reasons. Political, financial, and public relations support, and support for athletic programs are just a few of the by-products of close ties with the community. By ignoring the importance of local ties, some later superintendents were going to complicate and embarrass their administrations.

The superintendent's responsibilities are varied and complex. He fills a wide range of roles within the Academy—manager, diplomat, politician, coach, Sun King, and Roman god. He is not just an obscure, behind-the-scenes coordinator. He has to worry simultaneously about several vastly divergent constituencies. As a military commander, the superintendent is, in the final analysis, responsible for everything and everybody at the Academy. As the equivalent of a president of a civilian college or university, he is responsible for the efficient operation of the institution and for administering the instructional program. He must orchestrate the divergent activities of the dean of the faculty, the commandant of cadets, and the director of athletics. By law, he is also responsible for the general supervision and direction of running an air base with all of its support activities.

The superintendent's tightly scheduled daily routine alone represents a job of protean proportions. Much of his time is spent in public relations, both at the Academy and elsewhere throughout the nation. He has to be the chief flag-bearer of the Academy to the cadets, the staff, and faculty, to the parents, to the Pentagon brass, to the Congress, to the press and media, and to the American public. The superintendent has to cope with both crises and appalling trivia. He must be able to reflect a full spectrum of moods—testy at times, jovial at others.

The superintendent and his wife play host to hundreds of visitors each year. Many are distinguished foreign dignitaries, some are even heads of state. Others are high-ranking military leaders from allied countries as well as the United States. Others are congressional leaders, members of the presidential administration, as well as state and local officials of all types. These official chores, in addition to the normal day-to-day duties, are demanding, emotionally exhausting, and time-consuming, both for the superintendent and his wife. Over the years, there have been many proposals to create a position of vice superintendent to handle most of the ceremonial functions, as well as some of the routine, mundane ones. But nothing positive has ever resulted. To be a successful superintendent, one must almost be endowed with the wisdom of Solomon, the physique of Atlas, and the patience and endurance of Job. Yet the superintendent does not enjoy a Croesian salary.

The mission of the Academy reflects the traditional service academy emphasis on the development of career officers. The official statement reads as follows: "The Mission of the Air Force Academy is to provide instruction and experience to all cadets so that they may graduate with the knowledge and character essential to leadership and the motivation to become career officers in the United States Air Force." In other words, the Academy is to provide the nation with the hard core of young professional officers dedicated and motivated to serve during a lifetime career of twenty or more years. This emphasis on career motivation explains the special features of the Academy and the cadet way of life. It is also the rationale behind the all-military faculty concept. In essence, the purpose of the Academy is to provide a combination of academic education, professional orientation, and skill training in an environment conducive to motivating a cadet to devote his career to the service of the United States and the Air Force.

The Academy curriculum includes a program of professional military training and an athletic program as well as the academic program usually found in civilian colleges and universities.⁴ By law, cadets in American service academies must complete the requirements of a prescribed curriculum before they can graduate and receive degrees and commissions.

During the first decade of the Academy, the prescribed academic courses added up to a total of 146.5 semester hours. In addition, the military training program consisted of twenty-seven semester hours and the intensive athletic program of thirteen semester hours, along with a first class option of two and one-half semester hours. The program, with an overall weight of 189 semester hours,

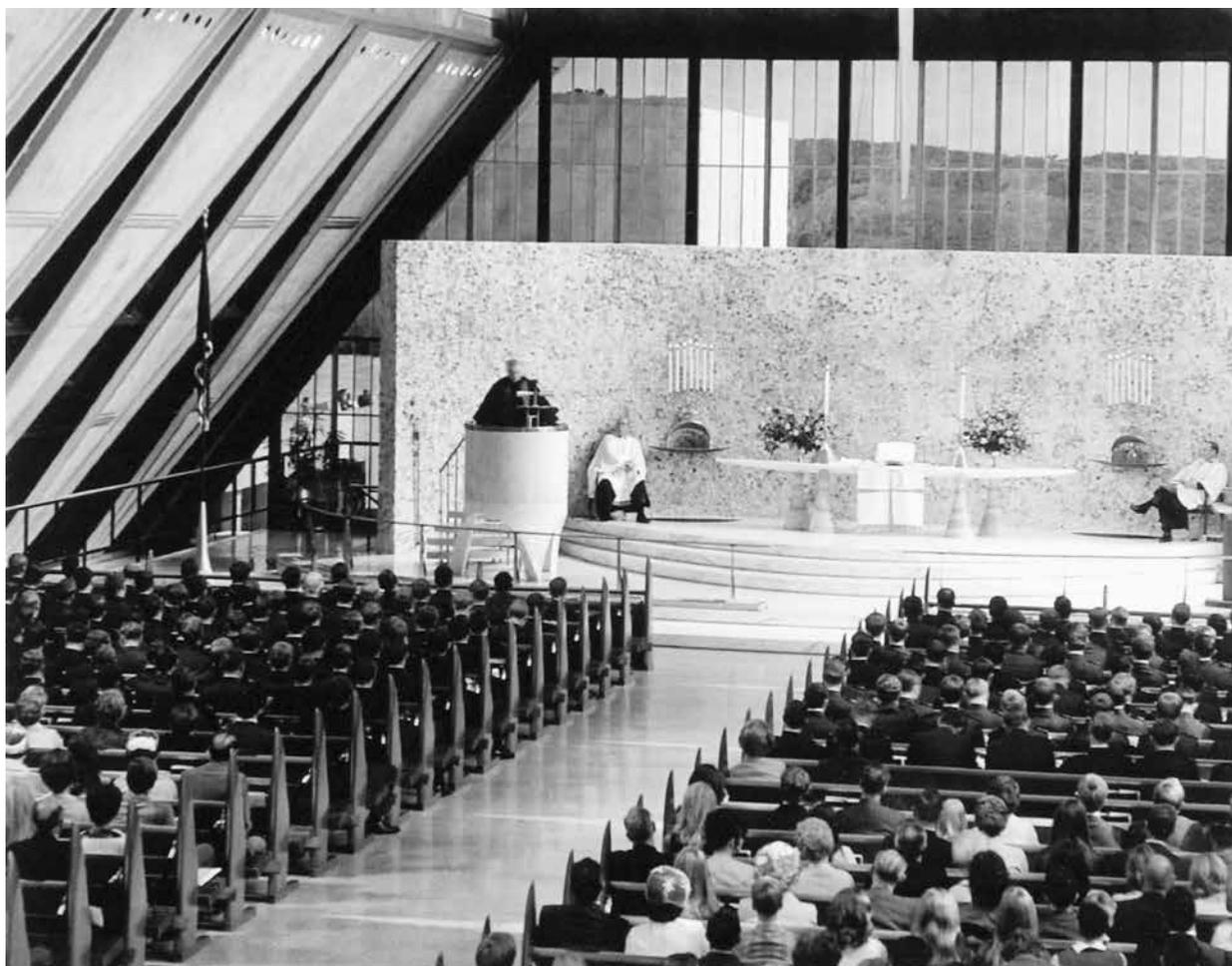


was far different from the usual 120 to 130 semester hours required to graduate from a typical liberal arts college or the 140 to 145 hours usually required by engineering schools. The higher requirement at the Academy can be explained by the fact that the cadets attend for eleven months of the year, or the equivalent of a five-year program.

The prescribed academic program is administered by the dean of the faculty. The core curriculum, about two-thirds of the academic graduation requirement, consists of general or basic education courses in the humanities, the social sciences, and the basic and engineering sciences. These are the seminal courses that the faculty believes every future Air Force officer should experience. The remaining courses are in an academic major of the cadet's choice. The curriculum must test the cadet's mettle. The program must be vigorous, tough, and demanding. The military virtue of discipline must be developed in all phases of the instructional program so that each cadet will accept the responsibility not only of self-discipline but of group discipline. General Harmon liked to repeat an old West Point dictum that says, "duty and honor are the warp and woof of integrity."

Under the dynamic leadership of General McDermott, the Air Force Academy inaugurated instructional changes that transformed all service academy programs more than any innovation since those of Sylvanus Thayer at West Point during the early part of the nineteenth century. Like Douglas MacArthur's reforms

A rare photograph of the Cadet Chapel under construction. Seven of the seventeen spires have not yet been covered by aluminum. The stained glass windows have not yet been installed in the Protestant Chapel on the top level. The Catholic and Jewish Chapels are located on the lower, or terrace, levels.



Sunday services in the 1,500-seat Protestant Chapel. The ends of the pews are shaped like the blades of a propeller. The tops of the pews have a metal strip like the leading edge of an airplane wing.

at West Point in the 1920s, McDermott's were intended to change the orientation of the Air Force Academy so that its graduates could better meet the educational and technological challenges demanded by the needs of the United States as the leader of the free world. His major thrusts were the enrichment program and the majors for all programs.

The enrichment program was developed in the 1956–57 academic year. The program was designed for the gifted cadets and those who had completed college-level courses with acceptable grades at other institutions. The prime objective was to challenge the cadet to advance academically as far and as fast as he was able. The program broadens the fields of study and affords the cadet an opportunity to concentrate in areas of special interest and usefulness to the Air Force.⁵

The enrichment program is entirely voluntary. Cadets participate in it through transfer of credit from civilian institutions previously attended. This is done in a number of ways: by validation through examination; by acceleration, that is, by taking basic prescribed courses at a faster rate; and by carrying extra elective courses over and above the normal load. Eligibility for this privilege is based on college entrance examination board scores or by demonstrated prior academic achievement. In all these ways, cadets can build up free time that may



be used for substitute courses. By participating in the enrichment program, cadets can acquire additional learning and, at the same time, develop self-discipline and the desire to reach higher goals. The cadets responded enthusiastically to the many opportunities offered by the enrichment program.

A logical evolution of the enrichment program led to the development of majors in fields of concentration. At first, cadets were given an opportunity to major in one of four areas: basic sciences, engineering sciences, military affairs, and international affairs. The majors were designed so that, in most instances, gifted cadets with no prior college-level work could complete them by the extra elective method alone. Later, the majors were expanded to include disciplinary majors, interdisciplinary majors, and divisional majors.

Under the new enrichment and majors programs, it was possible that a select group of cadets could have completed the requirements for a master's degree in the four years that, by law, they must remain at the Academy. The granting of a master's degree would, however, require specific approval from Congress as well as accreditation by the North Central Association.

The master's degree concept was to become the subject of much heated debate in many different arenas such as the Military and Naval Academies, the

Francis Cardinal Spellman celebrates mass in Our Lady of the Air Chapel on September 22, 1963, during the dedication ceremonies of the Cadet Chapel. In addition to being archbishop of New York, Cardinal Spellman served as bishop for all Catholic military chaplains in the U.S. The Catholic Chapel is on the terrace level and has seats for 500 worshippers.

American Council on Education, civilian educational circles, and congressional and governmental circles.

Meanwhile, in mid-1962, General McDermott opened discussion with Purdue University about establishing a cooperative master's program in astronautics. Selected graduates would attend Purdue for seven months and complete the graduate training program already begun at the Academy. Pilot training would be deferred until after the completion of the graduate study.

A similar program in international relations and international economics was created with Georgetown University. Over the next two years, cooperative programs in business administration were established with the University of California at Los Angeles and the State University of North Carolina at Raleigh. In 1967, arrangements were made with Ohio State University for a cooperative program in physics and with Indiana University in history.

The introduction of the curriculum enrichment program was the first major departure from the traditional service academy philosophy that all students should pursue and be limited to a prescribed course of study. Officials at the Military Academy were very skeptical of the proposal and adopted a cautious attitude while the Air Force Academy proceeded with the experiment. The Naval Academy, with its many civilian instructors, was much more sympathetic to the concept, but the Navy officials also decided to withhold any change until the plan was proven effective.

Soon, Dean McDermott was able to document that the enrichment concept was more than mere academic philosophy. By the fall of 1961, reports showed that 63 percent of the cadets had participated in the program. When the class of 1962 graduated, 80 percent of the 297 graduates had completed one or more courses beyond the prescribed curriculum requirements, 35 percent had completed the equivalent of one semester of extra work and earned one or more majors, and 5 percent had completed the equivalent of two semesters of extra work and had carried two majors. One cadet had carried three majors.

With these impressive statistics, it was inevitable that the Military and Naval Academies would have to agree to adopt the enrichment and majors concepts. In developing the enrichment program and by his guidance of total curriculum development, General McDermott had anticipated by several years many of the new developments in American higher education in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when highly structured curricula were either abolished or radically modified.

As dean of the faculty, General McDermott guided the academic development of the Academy from August 1, 1956, until his retirement on July 31, 1968. McDermott represented a new breed of military officer. He sought to combine academic statesmanship with dynamic, energetic leadership. He was a remarkable leader and won much approbation for his revolutionary educational innovations. He also had many severe critics because of his mode of operation.

McDermott, or McD, as he was generally called by his close associates, was born in Boston on July 31, 1920. He graduated from the venerable Boston Latin School in 1937 and attended Norwich University for two years. In 1939, he was appointed to the Military Academy. His class was one of the first to take flying training, and he received his pilot's rating while still a cadet. Under the wartime acceleration program, his class graduated in January 1943. During World War II, he served in the European theater with a fighter bomber group. Following the war, McDermott served as a personnel staff officer in the Pentagon. He then attended the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration and received his M.B.A. in 1950.

From 1950 until 1954, McDermott was assigned to the Military Academy as an instructor in the Department of Social Sciences under the tutelage of two distinguished military educators, Colonel Herman Beukema and Colonel George A. Lincoln. While serving as an assistant professor and as director of courses in economics, personal finance, and insurance, McDermott wrote two books: *Principles of Insurance and Related Government Benefits for Service Personnel* and *Principles of Personal Finance for Service Personnel*. He edited another book, *Readings in Personal Finance*, and was a contributing author to a fourth book, *Economics of National Security*. He was promoted to full colonel in 1954.

Colonel Beukema recommended McDermott to his 1915 classmate, General Harmon, as an outstanding prospect for the faculty of the new Academy. Beukema wrote, "In my 25 years of service at the Military Academy, I have had no officer in this Department surpassing Colonel McDermott in quantity and quality of his input, in dependance and balance of judgement, initiative, devotion to duty, and loyalty to superiors."⁶ From the Academy's inception in 1954, McDermott served as professor and head of the Department of Economics, with additional duties as faculty secretary, vice dean, and acting dean.

In 1956, Dean McDermott introduced several innovations in the service academy system of education. The enrichment and major programs have already been discussed. He also introduced the "whole man" concept in selecting cadet candidates for appointment. For the first time in any academy, McDermott devised a system which gave weighted recognition to the physical, athletic, moral, and leadership attributes of a candidate as well as his academic potential and his registered scholastic achievements. This innovation soon became standard admissions policy of all service academies and earned McDermott the award of the Legion of Merit.

As pointed out previously, General Briggs reconfirmed General Harmon's appointment of McDermott as acting dean. In 1957, Briggs nominated McDermott to the president of the United States for appointment as the first permanent professor at the Air Force Academy. His nomination was quickly confirmed in the U.S. Senate. General Briggs and the third superintendent, Major General William S. Stone, jointly recommended McDermott to the president for position of the first permanent dean of the faculty. McDermott's promotion to brigadier general at age thirty-nine made him the youngest general or flag officer on duty

In late August 1958, in conjunction with the move of members of the Cadet Wing to the permanent site from Lowry AFB, basic cadets climb the steep ramp leading to the terrazzo level of the academic complex. The cadets are completing a march from the Academy's north gate.



with the U.S. armed services. Soon Robert McDermott emerged as a recognized leader in American higher education and as a pioneer on the leading edge of military education.

Under General McDermott's leadership, the Academy experienced unprecedented academic achievements. By the time of his retirement in 1968, graduates had won nine Rhodes Scholarships, twenty Fulbright Fellowships, and a total of seventy-three other fellowships and scholarships. No other institution of higher learning in the United States could rival such a record in that short span of time. It was not surprising that the new institution was the subject of envy as well as emulation.

General McDermott was a staunch supporter of the all-military faculty concept. He felt that the Academy had a responsibility to motivate cadets as well as to educate them. There is no better way, he believed, than to have faculty members demonstrate professionalism by their own precept and example. He wanted as faculty members career officers, fully qualified "to teach by what they are as well as by what they say." Besides having master's and doctoral degrees from civilian universities, Academy military scholars have had practical professional experience in the Air Force during war and peace. They have served in strategic and tactical commands, performed attaché and intelligence duties, participated in the development of weapons systems, were involved in top-level national defense planning, and had discharged the multitude of duties that Air Force officers are engaged in fulfilling throughout the world. These were the kinds of officers General McDermott wanted not only to train and educate the cadets but to orient them towards a permanent career as Air Force officers.

To obtain further continuity, selected members of the faculty were scheduled by the dean and the heads of departments to return to teaching duties after having served intervening tours elsewhere in the Air Force. The twenty-one permanent professors and heads of departments provide stability as well as continuity in the educational process. Even the permanent professors during their sabbaticals are renewed and recharged by serving in appropriate operational duties in various commands of the Air Force.

During his long tenure as dean, Robert McDermott established programs and policies that four decades later still influence the quality of faculty performance. He created a tenure associate professor program designed to keep the Academy's doctoral level comparable to that in civilian universities by placing 10 percent of the best-qualified faculty members on tenure status. These tenure associate professors are in addition to the twenty-one statutory permanent professors. He established a sabbatical leave program for all tenure people. He introduced a summer consultant program to keep faculty members abreast of Air Force problems and developments relating to their academic disciplines. He started a faculty research program in support of graduate-level teaching and related Air Force research requirements.

Dean McDermott obtained accreditation of the Academy's undergraduate science majors from the Engineer's Council for Professional Development. He also established a policy of obtaining foreign exchange officers for instructional duty. He arranged with the Department of State to detail a civilian Foreign Service officer to teach political science for a tour of one or more years. He also laid the groundwork for a program where distinguished American scholars would teach at the Academy as visiting professors for a semester or for an academic year.

Robert McDermott was an extraordinary individual. His educational background, with its vigorous training and grueling workload, had given him confidence in his ability to achieve his goals. He was a doer, a tough-minded, strong, decisive person. His influence came from hard work, mastery of detail, including the labyrinth minutiae of the complex curriculum, and from his remarkable ability to express his ideas and expound his proposals in a forceful way. One veteran Academy observer said: "The dean was a tough fighter. He was dogmatic, but he was smart and his verbal skills were second to none."⁷

McDermott used all of the management techniques of the Harvard Business School to sell his propositions. He often confused and bewildered his opponents. One of his adversaries described him as "far-sighted and analytical as hell." He was a master politician and strategist. His antagonists called him "autocratic, domineering, and grasping." Others described him as "devious, unscrupulous, and an iron-fisted tyrant who intimidates lots of people."

Since many of McDermott's proposals had a direct effect upon the office of the commandant of cadets, this gave rise to what has been characterized as "the Terrazzo Gap." General Briggs had a good explanation of this phenomenon: "The dean was a much better salesman. He prepared his lessons. Before every presentation,

you could just tell he knew what he was talking about and that he had thought it out. He had an answer to every objection and, of course, the Commandants [Stillman and Sullivan] got up and fumbled and stumbled around."⁸

Speaking of the interplay among the dean, the commandant, and the director of athletics (Colonel Whitlow), General Briggs recalled:

The problem was ... bringing these three men together—three strong characters fighting for that ten minutes of cadet time, without much mutual respect between them. They respected each other as successful people, but not in their own areas of responsibility ... I don't believe that Stillman and Sullivan really believed in teaching academic work and they couldn't see why all the furor about being accredited. I was hell bent that we were going to be accredited.⁹

In his interview, General Stillman had some interesting observations to make about Dean McDermott. Asked to compare Zimmerman and McDermott, Stillman replied to the interviewer: "Well, I think you know the answer to that one. McD is a hustling, brilliant organizer, manager, and an ambitious guy. Zimmerman is a quiet, reserved, scholarly type, but I don't think he is a great organizer or manager."¹⁰

Asked if McDermott was not intimidated by Stillman's rank and seniority, Stillman answered: "I think McD would tangle with old Saint Peter himself if he thought that Peter was standing in his way. I don't think—no—McDermott is not afraid of rank."

Asked to characterize his opponent more fully, General Stillman responded: "McDermott, as you know, is a strong, ambitious, brilliant organizer. He uses people well. He manipulates people. He is ambitious, and whatever friction we had was a result of my trying to defend the frontier and keep him from stealing Military Studies." Stillman elaborated: "Well, he is very personable, and our normal relationships were fine, but he is a brilliant, ambitious man who wants things his way and he wanted some of the areas of instruction that I felt were the Commandant's responsibility. I didn't want him to have them and we did some head butting in this area ... What he wants and goes after, he usually gets."

McDermott was a paragon of efficiency and organization. He gathered about him a small staff of young officers with remarkable intellectual endowments, intense loyalty, and great industry. They served as systems and operations analysts to study faculty problems, arrive at solutions, and to prepare position papers. They had demonstrated ability to collect and analyze data, formulate conclusions, and to present recommendations as well as suggest strategy and tactics. This small inner circle of brain trusters served almost as a war council, pursuing complicated strategy against internal "enemies" such as the commandant and the director of athletics or external "enemies" such as Admiral Hyman Rickover¹¹ and journalistic critics such as David Boroff.¹²

Foremost among Dean McDermott's trusted lieutenants was Major John S. Pustay, who later became one of the Pentagon's top strategic planners and who eventually attained the rank of lieutenant general. Another was Captain Richard T. Matthews of the class of 1960, whose brilliant career was suddenly ended by Hodgkin's disease. Lieutenant Colonel Robert G. Volpe, Lieutenant Colonel Harold Hitchens, Lieutenant Colonel James Banks, and Lieutenant Colonel Michael Mendelsohn were other important staff members. Other dedicated people with unusual administrative skills included Faculty Executive Officers, Lieutenant Colonel Harrold S. Shipps, Lieutenant Colonel Jean Hempstead, and Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Wade; Sergeant Major Don Lacey and Sergeant Major John Dill; and General McDermott's devoted and longtime secretaries, Joan Witty and Dorothy Claire. Colonel Victor J. Ferrari was the dean's right-hand man and served in a number of important faculty roles. Vic Ferrari later served as the deputy commandant of cadets under General Seawell and General Strong.

General McDermott's style was dogged and tenacious. He was a workaholic and an intense perfectionist who ran his staff ragged. He made dozens of phone calls every day. He maintained a dizzying schedule of meetings and briefings. Buttressed by articulate issue papers, he pushed his various causes. He was a skillful user of audio-visual aids such as slides, diagrams, charts, statistical tables, and similar devices. He often used lengthy meetings of the permanent professors to test his ideas and proposals. Sometimes, he would play the devil's advocate just to get all the issues on the table. He honed his arguments so that he would be better able to confront his opponents in verbal combat.

As a result of all his careful planning, McDermott developed into an undisputed master of all aspects of the Academy. His rivals became more and more reluctant to challenge him and his proposals. General Briggs and his successors, Major General William S. Stone and Major General Robert H. Warren, became more and more dependent upon General McDermott to serve as their spokesman in all matters pertaining to the academic progress of the Academy. The longer McDermott served, the more his influence increased and his role as an authority on all phases of Academy activities was enhanced. Consequently, he developed a certain hard-to-define intellectual arrogance reflecting the belief that everything on the leading edge of military education was being done at the Air Force Academy. Even the shocking cheating scandal of 1965 did not shatter his sense of confidence. He still displayed an amazing capacity for survival.

General McDermott made a conscious effort to maintain good rapport with the cadets. He was never too busy to find time to meet with groups of cadets or even individual cadets. He would discuss various proposals with them and elicit their reactions and suggestions. To him, cadet opinion was of prime importance.

McDermott would always attend athletic events and encourage the team members in their struggle for group excellence. With Colonel Alphonse Miele, head of the Foreign Language Department, McDermott often appeared at cadet football



General McDermott stands in front of an academic curriculum calendar while giving a briefing to a group of visiting educators in February 1962.

rallies and on several occasions, bolstered cadet spirit by playing his trombone.

Cadets generally felt good about the dean and bestowed upon him various cadet awards, including the Saber Award, which he proudly displayed in his office. The dean regularly appeared before cadet audiences to discuss new academic policies or procedures. As General McDermott stood before the cadets, they saw a handsome, charismatic role model. He appeared youthful in his immaculate uniform with his chest covered with decorations. He had a bearing of self-confidence and assurance. Even before McDermott spoke, cadets were drawn to him, and many envisioned him as the type of officer they wished to become.

Invariably, the cadets were impressed by the dean's skillful presentation, by his articulation, and by his optimism and enthusiasm. His positive attitude appealed to the young, impressionable cadets in

sharp contrast to the negative attitude of the commandant and his staff with their deterrent system of gigs, demerits, and punishments.

In his drive for excellence, Dean McDermott did not always take into consideration the fact that some cadets were not really interested in academic achievement or athletic accomplishments. Instead, like many adolescents of their own age, some cadets were satisfied with mediocrity and with enjoying themselves by reaping the benefits and basking in the glamour provided by their unusual status. In both academics and athletics, these cadets would try to beat the system, ride the curve, and manage to survive with a minimum of effort. They would prefer to have fun and devote their time and energies to chasing girls. These were the types of cadets who would become intermeshed in the cheating rings that developed in the mid-1960s.

On August 1, 1958, General Stillman formally turned over command of the Cadet Wing to his successor, Major General Henry R. Sullivan Jr. Sullivan was a native of Kentucky and a 1939 graduate of the Military Academy. He had served as a cadet captain and company commander during his senior year. Sullivan had played football and basketball all four years. For two years, he played on the lacrosse team. Scholastically, Sullivan was in the upper part of his class. He became a bomber pilot and served with distinction during World War II in the

China-Burma-India theater. After the war, most of his assignments were with Strategic Air Command. At the time of his appointment as commandant of cadets, Sullivan was serving as commander of the 72nd Bomb Wing at Ramey Air Force Base, Puerto Rico.

Sullivan reported to the Academy in July and had a three-week overlap with Stillman prior to the change of command ceremony. The men had much in common. They were well-built athletic types and more than six feet tall. Stillman briefed Sullivan on many of the problems in the Cadet Wing and especially on his disagreements with McDermott over the military training courses. As General Sullivan later recalled, Stillman had warned him that "I must be careful or my job would disappear and it would all be vested in the dean of the faculty."¹³ Sullivan, however, was not too concerned because he had known General Briggs for years and was looking forward to working under him.

During the early part of Sullivan's tenure, the Academy was engrossed in the effort to obtain accreditation, and academics took the spotlight. On the athletic front, Ben Martin had just replaced Buck Shaw as head football coach, and the Academy people were looking forward to a promising season. Few ever dreamed that the team would wind up playing in the Cotton Bowl.

The activities of the new Academy were highlighted in the press on a regular basis. Sports writers were especially active in covering every aspect of athletic news. Millions of other readers were introduced to the affairs of the Academy by the distinguished cartoonist Milton Caniff. After spending several weeks visiting the Academy at Lowry and making a comprehensive study of the Colorado Springs location, Mr. Caniff developed a series of cartoons featuring his famous character, the dashing Air Force Colonel Steve Canyon, and his "kissing cousin," Poteet, becoming involved in Academy activities. For two months, readers were exposed to many aspects of the Academy and its exciting new environment. Caniff's popular syndicated series appeared daily and on Sunday in *The Denver Post* and in more than 600 other newspapers throughout the United States. No other educational institution in America had ever enjoyed such unique free media exposure.

More attention was focused on the Academy when Congressman Jamie L. Whitten of Mississippi accused the Air Force of using Caniff's comic strip to justify the high construction costs of the Academy. Whitten called the Steve Canyon series more Air Force "high priced propaganda." *The Washington Post* quoted Milton Canniff as saying, "Mr. Whitten's attention is very flattering." But he continued to state, "nobody ever told me what to say or not to say. The Air Force answered my questions but never once tried to influence my work."

In late August 1958, under the direction of General Sullivan, the Cadet Wing moved from Lowry to the permanent site. To emphasize the importance of the event, the Academy officials decided to mark the occasion with a flare of dramatics. The cadets rode from Denver in buses until they reached the north entrance of the Academy. Then they left the buses and fell into formation. With



Dr. Keyes D. Metcalf, librarian emeritus of Harvard University, consults with Dean McDermott and Lieutenant Colonel Fagan, March 1960.

flags and guidons waving and the band playing, the doolies and the BCT cadre, wearing battle dress with rifles on their shoulders, proudly marched the five miles from the north entrance gate to the academic area. Faculty, staff members and their families, relatives and friends of cadets, and other spectators cheered the cadets as they paraded along the road to their new home. That march would become one of the Academy's proud tradition and would be repeated each summer as the new doolies completed their basic cadet training.

Much of the move of the Cadet Wing, however, was symbolic. A large part of the academic complex was still under construction. Only specified areas of Fairchild Hall could be used for instructional purposes. The cadet quarters, Vandenberg Hall, was mostly completed and the cadets were made comfortable. Mitchell Hall, the dining area, was also mostly finished, so that the cadets were assured of being properly fed. The upper floors of Fairchild Hall, however, would not be completed for another year, so the dean and the faculty members had to make do with whatever office space they could find. The north wing housing the commandant of cadets complex and the Academy Library were to be the last parts of Fairchild Hall to be completed in late 1958. The senior officers' quarters in Douglass Valley were completed, and the families moved from the Denver area in

mid-August 1958. Other family housing in Pine and Douglass Valleys would not be completed for another year.

During the 1958–59 academic year, the faculty and junior staff members had to be transported from Denver each day. A tandem German-built bus nicknamed “the Green Worm” was used for this purpose. Because of the vibrations produced by the bus and the rough road, it was almost impossible for most officers to read. They, therefore, chiefly occupied their time playing cards. Even though that winter was filled with heavy snowstorms, the faculty members never missed an hour of instruction. Fortunately, the Green Worm never had an accident, although there were many near misses on the old, narrow two-lane Highway 85–87 (popularly called the “Ribbon of Death”). Construction of Interstate 25 was still several years in the future.

Ironically, General Briggs and all his senior staff officers, as well as many of the professors and heads of the academic departments, had to drive by staff cars to Lowry each day. The staff cars left the Academy site at 6 A.M. daily and returned from Lowry at 6 P.M. The headquarters of the Academy remained at Lowry until it was officially transferred to the permanent site shortly before June 1959, when the first class graduated.

At this point, it is appropriate to mention some of the difficulties experienced by families living at the Academy from 1958 until 1960. This was a stressful time for the nearly seventy families living in the senior officers' quarters and those occupying the indigenous houses scattered throughout the site. Many of the wives were frustrated by the grim isolation of the huge reservation. Getting around the site was complicated by the fact that the roads were unpaved, unmarked, and unlighted. The south entrance to the Academy was close to six miles from the senior officers' area. The nearest gas station was more than ten miles from the housing areas. The closest grocery and shopping center was nearly twelve miles away. The closest hospital, Glockner-Penrose, was almost as far. The only banks were in downtown Colorado Springs.

Severe snowstorms made things much worse for everyone. For example, on September 29, 1959, a raging blizzard dropped thirty inches of snow on the Colorado Springs area. Since the trees were still in full leaf, the weight of the snow broke large branches and even toppled entire trees. Many power lines were knocked down by falling trees and heavy snow and ice. Electrical power was not restored to many parts of the Colorado Springs neighborhood for three or four days. Loss of electrical power turned the Academy into a disaster area, since practically everything was dependent upon electricity. No provision had been made for auxiliary generators even in the academic area. Adding to the problem was the fact that the telephone wires had been also knocked down, and there was no communication system.

Families living in the senior officers' quarters were in very bad straits. All of the appliances were electric. Even the gas furnaces could not operate without the

electrical fans. Mothers had to improvise to keep the children warm and fed. They used blankets to close off the house and concentrated everybody into one room. Fortunately, most families had firewood and were able to light their fireplaces. The mothers cooked the meals over the open fires. Others used camping equipment. Children were dressed in their warmest clothing and wrapped in blankets. Some families found candles and others used camp lanterns and flashlights. Many of the younger children were frightened and bewildered and cried at the unfamiliar situation. Some fathers were stranded in the academic area and had to walk eight or more miles through deep snow to reach their homes. Other fathers were away on temporary duty in various parts of the country and unable to contact their families. Everyone learned a few lessons from the blizzard. In the future, families made certain that they had on hand ample emergency supplies of food, firewood, candles, flashlights, blankets, and other necessities.

Because of the distances involved, reliable transportation was important. In fact, most families had to have at least two cars equipped with snow tires or chains. Chauffeuring became one of the principal tasks undertaken by the Academy wives. Mothers often had to form car pools to meet the needs of their children. Driving was an everyday chore for mothers whose children attended private or parochial schools in Colorado Springs. Usually this meant a round trip of forty miles a day. Children involved in sports activities, band, scouting, and social events had to be transported, usually by mothers.

There was always work to be done around the quarters. Since the government contractors were slow in providing furniture and drapes for the living rooms and dining rooms, the wives had to cover the windows with sheets or with brown craft paper supplied by the housing office. Upkeep of the lawns and areas surrounding the houses were the responsibilities of the occupants. Nurturing a new lawn and watering it often fell to the wives and children. In a semiarid area like the Academy, these tasks can be demanding.

The women of the Academy banded together and formed their own support groups. The Officers' Wives Club and the Non-Commissioned Officers' Wives Club were very important organizations. The Protestant Ladies of the Chapel and the Catholic Sodality sponsored a number of religious and social functions. Families enjoyed attending chapel services on Sunday in the spacious Correll House in Pine Valley.

The stress and strain of the early days on the Academy site often created tension in family relationships. Children particularly missed the companionship of their fathers. Mothers were overworked and overburdened with responsibility. Some men and women experienced difficulty trying to adjust to the situation. Some divorces and separations resulted. A few turned to alcohol. Others eased their tensions by heavy smoking.

Most families, however, persevered and rode out the bad times. They continued to try to live as normal lives as possible. Gradually things began to improve

as the roads were paved, the commissary and base exchange complex in the community center was completed, the Academy Hospital was opened, and the schools in Douglass and Pine Valleys became operational.

Among the academic problems, one of the prime concerns in the late summer of 1958 was providing library service to the cadets and faculty members. A temporary library was established in classrooms and laboratories in the north part of the lower floor of Fairchild Hall. About 10,000 books were transported from Lowry to serve as a core collection. Temporary stacks were set up in the classrooms, several of which were under the air gardens on the terrazzo level. When the heavy snows came, the melting water cascaded down the walls and drenched the books. The rooms had to be hastily vacated and new ones assigned. Each day, phone messages were sent to the main library in Denver for books and other materials needed. These would be sent by truck the following day, and unneeded materials would be returned to Lowry.

Trying to meet the North Central Association's requirements for accreditation was a serious challenge for the Air Force as well as the Academy officials. A key factor was that the Academy had to have a library collection of sufficient quantity and quality to meet the instructional needs of the faculty and the students. The minimum requirement set by the North Central Association was for a basic core collection of at least 50,000 volumes. The Academy officials, in an added effort to attain the much-desired early accreditation, had decided that the Academy Library should have at least 100,000 volumes by June 1959.

When Lieutenant Colonel Fagan became director in June 1956, the holdings were fewer than 20,000 volumes, mostly surplus books from the Air University Library and other libraries throughout the Air Force. The quality and relevance of many of these books to the Academy curriculum were questionable. It was, therefore, imperative to check these titles against standard reference works. At the suggestion of Dr. Metcalf, the library consultant, the printed catalogue of the Lamont Undergraduate Library at Harvard was used as the standard. Unfortunately, many of the books listed in the published Lamont catalogue were out of print, and this presented a new dilemma.

The next major obstacle was that the procurement system of the Air Force was geared to purchasing \$5 million bombers and not \$5 books. Local procurement officials had no choice but to follow regulations, which required advertising for bids. Mountains of paper were sent to publishers inviting bids. After several months, the bid opening was scheduled and not a single bid was returned. Publishers were not interested in furnishing single copies of many titles but preferred to sell many copies of a single title. Traditionally, libraries buy books from book jobbers, not publishers.

The Academy procurement people, Colonel Wingate Jones and Lieutenant Colonel Ambrose Winter, were frantic and hesitated to face General Briggs with their dilemma. General Briggs informed them in angry tones that he wanted books

and not excuses. The story of the frenzied efforts of Academy procurement officers to buy books through local purchase methods over the next year would fill a book itself and sound like a comic opera.

Fortunately, the story had a happy ending, because one of the top-level procurement officials in the Pentagon came up with the solution. He found that the Air Force purchased fuel for its planes and vehicles using a blanket purchase system. The Air Force buys fuel against a contract until the money allocated is used up and a new contract is issued. Why not try to buy books in a similar fashion? Book vendors were offered open-ended contracts with a fixed amount of money. The eastern book jobbers were skeptical at first, but they were pleased to get blanket purchase agreements for \$10,000 or more. Soon, books began to flow to the Academy Library. The Pentagon officials were so pleased with the new system that they soon extended it to all Air Force libraries.

The Academy Library was formally dedicated by General Briggs on January 5, 1959. The ceremony took place on the first landing of the beautiful cantilevered marble spiral stairway that General Harmon had insisted be built. The walls surrounding the staircase were paneled in koa wood, a special form of Hawaiian mahogany. A Plexiglas dome bathes the stairway in natural light. The distinctive staircase soon attracted photographers who shot the staircase from many interesting angles. Soon, their pictures won awards in national photography shows.

By the spring of 1959, when the North Central team inspected and evaluated the Academy Library, the members were impressed by the spacious facility. In their report, the team especially commented on the quality and quantity of the collections, which now numbered close to 100,000 volumes.

With the library procurement problem solved, and with the innovations of its curriculum highly publicized and favorably received by the educational world, the Academy was ready to make a formal request for accreditation from the North Central Association. The Self Survey was completed and forwarded to Chicago. The inspection team came to the Academy and spent three days checking out every aspect of the institution and talking with faculty, staff, and cadets. Several weeks later, General Briggs received word that the North Central Association had decided to take an action without precedent. The Academy was going to be accredited prior to the graduation of its first class. This unusual recognition served to mark the Academy as having been accepted as a peer in American higher education. Another important landmark had been passed in record time.

With accreditation assured, General Briggs now went ahead with finalizing the diplomas for the new graduates. Instead of traditional parchment diplomas such as those issued by the Military and the Naval Academies, the Air Force Academy wanted something different. Both Briggs and McDermott were impressed by the sterling silver diplomas issued by the Colorado School of Mines in Golden. When Briggs raised the diploma issue with the top brass at the Pentagon, they were interested in the idea but were reluctant to approve a sterling



silver diploma because of the economy-minded Eisenhower administration. When General Briggs submitted a sample diploma made of aluminum placed on a wooden plaque, the Washington people immediately approved. Briggs was very pleased, not only because the diploma represented another innovation, but, as he said in his oral interview, he had not looked forward to having to sign several hundred standard diplomas.

June 3, 1959, was a historic day. Two hundred and seven members of the class of 1959 received their diplomas and commissions. Secretary of the Air Force James Douglas was the principal speaker. The graduation was held in Arnold Hall before 3,000 proud parents, relatives, and Air Force leaders. Tears of joy filled the eyes of many of the spectators. It was the culmination of a long dream come true, not only for the graduates and their parents but for the many aviation pioneers who had struggled for a half of a century to see that happy day. The members of the class of 1959 did not need a motto. They were history personified. They marched at the head of a long line of blue-suited Air Force Academy graduates destined to provide leadership in the aerospace age.

As was pointed out in an earlier chapter, since the Cadet Chapel was still in the planning stage, and because there was no other appropriate facility on the Academy site to hold weddings, General and Mrs. Briggs graciously offered the use of the superintendent's quarters.¹⁴ The furniture was cleared out of the large living room. A temporary altar was set up, and chairs were provided for 100

A view of the Air Gardens showing the Air Training Command's statue inscribed with the Academy's motto.

guests. A rigid time schedule had to be established. Mrs. Briggs personally supervised each of the nineteen weddings, which took place over the two-day period. She was assisted by a group of officers' wives who acted as hostesses.

After each ceremony, Mrs. Briggs related, some of the hostesses "shoed" the guests out of the French doors onto the lawn to watch the bride and groom walk beneath an archway of sabers. Meanwhile, the other women were busy making the necessary preparations for the next bridal party to enter the living room through the main entrance. Everything had to work with great precision; otherwise, chaos would have resulted.

The chief cadet chaplain, Charles I. Carpenter, performed all of the Protestant services. (The Catholic weddings were held in churches in Colorado Springs and in Denver.) Without Mrs. Briggs, this unusual feat could never have been accomplished.

Shortly after the graduation, General Briggs was informed that he was being promoted to lieutenant general and was being assigned as commander of Air Training Command. His successor would be Major General William S. Stone.

CHAPTER 11

The Academy Triumphant



*Quality is never an accident,
it is always the result of intelligent effort.*

—John Ruskin



William Sebastian Stone was no stranger to the Academy. General Stone had played a leading role as chairman of the Stone Committee in developing and refining the curriculum following the publications of the *Air Force Academy Planning Board Study* in 1949. In 1951, General Harmon had recommended Stone to the Air Force chief of staff as his personal preference as dean of the faculty.

A native of Missouri, Stone graduated from the Military Academy in the class of 1934. He had played football and lacrosse and had served as cadet captain of Company E. He was also elected as the senior class president. He received his pilot's wings and served in a variety of meteorology duties before and during World War II. He was awarded an M.S. degree in meteorology from Cal Tech in 1938 and an M.A. in economics from Columbia University in 1949. From 1940 until 1942, Stone taught economics at the Military Academy. During World War II, he served as director of weather services for the Pacific theater. From 1947 until 1950, he was assigned to the Department of Social Sciences at West Point and served with distinction under Colonel Beukema.

In 1948, Colonel Stone was assigned, as an additional duty, to assist the Air Force Academy Planning Board in curriculum planning. He attended the National War College in 1950 and 1951 and then served a tour in Europe. After being promoted to brigadier general, his next assignment was in the Pentagon in the



Major General William S. Stone is remembered as "one of the best superintendents."

office of the deputy chief of staff, personnel. Prior to his appointment as superintendent, General Stone was the commander of the Eastern Division of the Military Air Transport Service. He was the author of several books: *Meteorology for Pilots*, 1938, and *Strategic and Critical Raw Materials*, 1950. He was the co-author of *Contemporary Foreign Governments*, 1940, and *Economics of National Security*, 1950.

General Stone reported to the Academy with a definite set of marching orders. He was instructed by the Pentagon to reduce the cost of operating the Academy and to tighten up the organization by reducing personnel. These objectives seemed to fit his personality perfectly. Basically, Stone was a solid, careful managerial type. He had determination, self-confidence, and a keen sense of organization. He was a positive, decisive person who did not shrink from making tough decisions. Gordon Culver, the

veteran protocol officer, who worked very closely with all of the early superintendents, remembered:

General Stone was a mild-mannered, soft-spoken, dynamic leader. He had an innate ability to plan and to visualize and to perceive what had to be done and how to do it, and what the net effect would be at the end. ... He had a great ability to see things and their effect. He was a fun loving guy. He loved to party. He loved people. He had a mustache and was very distinguished looking. He was a good spokesman and he demanded results.¹

General Stone and his wife, Myra, performed their protocol and social functions with great skill and fitness. He promoted excellent relations with the civic leaders of Colorado Springs and is still remembered by them as being "one of the best superintendents the Academy ever had."

Publicly, austerity seemed to be Stone's middle name. He especially concentrated on reducing the cost of running the base activities. One of his first acts was to order the reduction of the amount of electricity and other utilities being used throughout the Academy. Next, he turned to the reduction of personnel. He instructed the officer in charge of manpower and organization to make a study of Academy staffing and to recommend logical areas to reduce the number of military and civilian spaces. After making the study, the manpower officer reported to the superintendent that he was unable to find any spaces to eliminate. General Stone then sharply asked the officer how many spaces were allotted to the manpower and organization section. The officer replied, "twenty-three." General Stone then said,

"Start by eliminating your twenty-three spaces and then find two or three times that many spaces elsewhere in the Academy." As a result of General Stone's cost reduction process, his administration was soon dubbed, "the Stone Age."

As part of General Stone's personnel policies, in July 1960, the commandant of cadets' function was reorganized. One of the principal changes was the deletion of the position of deputy commandant of airmanship. The deputy commandant of cadets now became responsible to General Sullivan for the implementation of the entire airmanship instructional program. This action was significant, because now all of the elements of the office of the commandant of cadets pursued a common professional objective of training and educating young cadets to meet the rigid professional requirements of an Air Force officer.

In the spring of 1961, General Stone directed a transfer of functions between the commandant of cadets and the dean of the faculty. The superintendent said he believed "that the academic, military training, and athletic program should be an integrated whole." Under this new organization, all academic instruction, including classroom instruction in military subjects, was assigned to the dean. A new academic division, the Division of Military Affairs, was created to integrate military-oriented subjects during the academic week, Monday through Friday. Saturday mornings were to be reserved for military training, inspections, parades, and other requirements of the commandant of cadets.

General Stone created a whole new program designed to strengthen the fourth-class system. The program called for a change of emphasis rather than a change of concept. As General Stone described the new program: "Physically, it is just as tough, if not tougher, than it ever was. The upper classmen have been challenged to train, encourage, and show real positive leadership rather than to pre-judge, harass, and degrade." The new concept for the fourth-class system was implemented in the summer of 1962.

In December 1961, General Stone received a letter from former President Eisenhower praising the proposed new system. General Eisenhower wrote: "Since I have long believed that we were following antiquated methods in our plebe system, I want to congratulate you on your move and to tell you of my gratification that you have started something that I believe will take hold in all of our Services."

The new fourth-class system was subjected to the closest scrutiny during the 1962–63 academic year. Great efforts were made by the new commandant of cadets, General Seawell, and his staff to eliminate all practices that did not contribute directly to the training of cadets in command and leadership. Upperclassmen were encouraged to adopt a policy of leadership by example. Some cadets participated in a number of activities to improve their professional proficiency. Some volunteered to give up part of their summer leave to attend the Army's parachute training program at Fort Benning, Georgia. Others participated in a counterinsurgency program.



Basic cadets learn how to arrange room items properly. Note that the cadet is using a ruler to ensure uniform measurements of issued items.

Some cadets worked with members of the commandant's staff and members of the faculty in planning "Operation Third Lieutenant." This program was designed to give new first classmen an opportunity to serve with an Air Force operational unit as a junior officer ("third lieutenant") for a period of three weeks. It gave the cadets an excellent opportunity to observe the concept of life in the everyday Air Force. It also brought the cadets into a close working relationship with noncommissioned officers and with enlisted airmen. This training program made the cadets more aware of the type of responsibilities that would be expected of them upon graduation. Operation Third Lieutenant soon became one of the Academy's major contributions to military education. The cadet publication *The Dodo* said it all: "The best way to sell the Air Force to the cadet it seems is to allow the Air Force to sell itself."

There is a devilish side to the cadet as well as the serious one usually presented. Cadets perform their share of high jinks and shenanigans and play a variety of pranks on themselves, other cadets, and on officers. The cadet mind is active and imaginative and mischievous. Cadets enjoy challenges and are excited by "mission impossible" situations.

Cadets have strong loves and—especially for the officers in positions of authority over them—strong hates. One great exception was Master Sergeant William H. Coltrin, the NCO in charge of cadet ceremonies such as parades, formal dances, and balls.² Coltrin, who came to the Academy in 1958, soon

became the "father confessor" to the whole Cadet Wing. Coltrin seemed to know more about the cadets and the psychology of cadets than any other person at the Academy. Through Coltrin's influence, the role of noncommissioned officers was enhanced among the Cadet Wing. To show their esteem, the cadets dedicated the 1962 *Polaris* yearbook to Sergeant Coltrin for "his complete embodiment of the spirit of the military professional."

The way was soon opened for increased contact between the cadets and other personnel assigned to the Academy. "Project Dine Out" was begun in July 1961. This innovation permitted fourth classmen a Sunday break in the midst of their vigorous basic cadet training program and afforded them an opportunity to share dinner with an officer or an NCO and his family. Soon, a similar privilege was extended to upperclassmen through the Squadron Sponsorship Program. These attempts to bridge the gap between cadets and other members of the Academy community were very popular. They not only gave cadets an insight into Air Force family living, but they helped form strong bonds of friendship. Many cadets found a home away from home. The children of military families were especially attracted to their new cadet "brothers." Romances developed, and many of the young women of the military families eventually married cadets.

In 1963, efforts were begun by the superintendent to strengthen the bonds between fourth classmen and their own families. Parents' Weekend was created for the weekend of Labor Day. Cadet parents and their families were encouraged to come to Colorado Springs to visit with their new cadets who had just completed BCT and had embarked on their academic program. Proud families were able to see their cadet in his uniform and to witness his transformation from civilian life. Once again, for a long weekend, the families were able to enjoy themselves in a relaxed atmosphere and to spend time touring the Academy and the many attractions of the Pikes Peak region. Local hotel and motel owners as well as restaurants also enjoyed the business generated by thousands of visitors. Soon, the tradition of Parents' Weekend would also spread to West Point and Annapolis.

In spite of their harried lives, cadets found time to play many pranks. For example, cadets delighted in hanging AOCs trousers from the top of the 150-foot flagpole and from the top of the spires of the chapel. The civil engineers were unable to retrieve the trousers and had to employ professional steeplejacks. Cadets were ingenious about moving AOCs' cars and static display planes into the strangest and most unusual places, even into the reflecting pools of the Air Gardens. Once, when some cadets put their AOC's small foreign car on the top of the loading dock of Mitchell Hall, the AOC retaliated by replacing the cadets' dining table with his car and putting a tablecloth over it. Cadets filled the Army exchange officer's office with wadded paper on the day of the Army-Navy game. Other cadets painted the cannons in front of Fort Carson's headquarters building Air Force blue.

In 1960, before the football game with the University of Denver, the cadets painted the locker room and all of the DU helmets blue. The cadets burned large

AFA letters with lime on Folsom Stadium grass at the University of Colorado in Boulder and also painted parts of the stadium blue. After howls of protest by university officials, the cadets were forced by the commandant to return to Boulder to resod the grass and to scrape off the paint. The lesson that the cadets learned was in the future to use only water-based paints so as to make the clean-up job easier.

During June Week, the cadets started a tradition of throwing upperclassmen into the terrazzo pools. Other cadet antics in Vandenberg Hall included hallway bowling (rolling a tennis ball at a small pill bottle), dorm handball in the hallways, coins-up (throwing coins at the ceiling and trying to get them to stick), and other games and stunts like "Saints and Sinners."

By 1962, first classmen had adopted an old West Point tradition going back to the Civil War. This was Hundredth Night—the countdown to graduation day in ninety-nine days. Each class at the Academy had something to celebrate when they reached this memorable occasion. The thoughts of the seniors now turned from academics and athletics to buying new officers' uniforms, graduation, assignment to duty, marriage, and appointment to graduate school. At this Academy, Hundredth Night began as a beer call and a time to reflect on the memories of the class's three and a half years at the Academy.

Starting in 1966, the celebration of Hundredth Night became a more formal and controlled affair. It is now the occasion for a formal dinner with a distinguished speaker and a slide presentation full of remembered events and people. Following the dinner, some cadets go for a night on the town and play various drinking games.

Other traditions adapted from the Military and Naval Academies include class rings, the Ring Dinner, and the Ring Dance.³

Each class designs its own silver ring. All rings have common features such as a saber, the class year, the class motto, usually in Latin, the star Polaris, the class number in Roman numerals, the class crest, the Academy crest, and an eagle. Some optional ring features include the Colorado mountains, the American flag, the Cadet Chapel, and the type and color of the stone. Tradition holds that a cadet cannot wear the ring until it has been "christened" in champagne. This is done at the Ring Dinner. By custom, the wife of the commandant of cadets presents the junior class president with his ring.

There is some protocol about the wearing of rings. Before graduation, the class crest is worn toward the heart, representing class loyalty. After graduation, the Academy crest is worn toward the heart to symbolize dedication to the Air Force.

The first Ring Dinner and Dance was held on May 29, 1958. The dinner is held in Mitchell Hall and features a prominent speaker. The cadet's immediate family and a special guest are invited to attend the festive occasion.

The Ring Dance is held in Arnold Hall following the dinner. A huge ring cake is on display in the ballroom. By tradition, the Wing Sergeant cuts the cake and gives the first piece to the wife of the commandant. The cadets and their

dates pose for pictures in the giant model of the class ring that occupies a prominent position off the dance floor.

Cadets are among the most outspoken group of complainers known to mankind. Cadets are always complaining and griping. Some of the complaints are valid, most are not. Often the complaints serve as a safety valve to relieve some of the day-to-day pressures. Cadets generally enjoy the status quo and are stubbornly resistant to any changes that may disturb their present condition.

Cadet morale is cyclical. A cadet's life by its very nature is ordered and full of routines that may become boring. Deviations from the routine are few for the average cadet, and life can become dull. Like many college students, cadets are prone to fritter away spare moments and wait until the last minute to frantically complete their research papers or write up their experiments. Extracurricular activities, athletic, military, and academic, provide a welcome change of pace.

Cadets attempt to escape from "the system" by leaving the Academy at every opportunity possible. This is why weekend and other off-base privileges are so important to cadets. Morale is also high when field trips are in the offing or there is a big football game coming up, especially when the team is having a winning season.

Cadets have to learn to use a whole new language. Much of their everyday life is expressed in the terminology of aircraft and the flight line. In Mitchell Hall, a table is called a ramp, and the cadet who puts ice in the glass is called the "cold pilot" while the one who pours coffee is the "hot pilot." Other cadet jargon is used in an effort to streamline longer expressions. Examples are ASAP (as soon as possible), OIC (officer in charge), CCQ (cadet charge of quarters), TDY (temporary duty), and AOC (air officer commanding). Cadet language also includes colorful expressions for the Academy like "The Blue Zoo," "Aluminum U," "Fantasy Land," "Disney Land East," "The Rocky Mountain Monster," and "The Hole."

Cadets are distinctive people. Most are doers and achievers. Most are ambitious. They possess a lot of personal motivation, which not only drives them during their four years at the Academy but endures throughout their military careers and beyond. As a result of their common experiences, a special bond of comradeship and fraternity develops between cadets. They make friendships at the Academy that last their entire lifetimes.

The December 1960 issue of *The Dodo*, the cadet humor magazine, contained the following delightful description of "The Typical Cadet by a Girl":

Cadets are found everywhere: in bars, on bars, under bars, and behind bars; in Denver, in trouble, in debt, and in the air (usually air sick), on the ground and in line. Cadets come in assorted sizes, weights, and states of misery, confusion and solemnness. They are always dreaming of the places they will fly, the faraway places they will go, the good officer

they will become and the Playboy Bachelor they will always be. Mothers worry about them, girls love them, the Air Force supports them and somehow they manage to graduate. They are a composite animal: as crafty as a Thanksgiving turkey, with the energy of a turtle, the brains of a dodo, the dexterity of a bunny, the appetite of an elephant and a camel's capacity for liquor. A cadet is a magical creature. You can lock him out of your house, but not out of your heart. You can take him off your mailing list, but not off your mind. Oh, pity the unsuspecting girls lurking in some hidden corner... .

When on September 25, 1955, the members of the class of 1959 selected the falcon as the mascot of the Cadet Wing, they established one of the Academy's unique symbols and traditions. Cadets from several generations have proudly served as the twelve official falcon handlers. The proper training of falcons demands a great deal of time, patience, skill, and understanding. The reward comes from the pleasure of sports audiences intrigued and delighted by the aerobatics of the falcon soaring and diving over the heads of the spectators. Originally, the falcons made public appearances only at football and basketball games. Later, the mascot appeared at other athletic contests in which cadet teams played. All Academy varsity sports teams are proudly called the Falcons.

Mr. Harold M. Webster of Denver and Professor Robert M. Stabler of Colorado College played important roles in establishing the falconry program at the Academy. Mr. Webster donated some of his young falcons and assisted the cadets in establishing proper training methods. Dr. Stabler was an internationally recognized authority on the diseases of falcons and extended his expertise to the Academy for more than three decades. Captain W. Harrison D. Heiberg served as the original officer-in-charge of the falconry program. He was succeeded by Major William L. Richardson of the History Department and then by Lieutenant Colonel Donald J. Galvin of the Political Science Department. In 1965, Colonel James C. McIntyre, the Academy veterinarian, became the officer-in-charge. After ten years, Dr. McIntyre retired and was succeeded by veterinarians Dr. Manuel Thomas, Dr. Gerry Henninson, and by Dr. Lawrence Schoad.

Since no specific species was specified, a variety of falcons have been used by the cadets. Prairie falcons are used in most of the public performances. On October 5, 1955, one of the early peregrine falcons was named Mach I, for the speed of sound. This is still the official name of the performing falcon, although each bird receives an individual name from the cadet handlers. The largest and most regal of the species, the white gyrfalcon, found in the Arctic, is portrayed as the official Academy mascot. These beautiful, graceful gyrfalcons are shown at sports events but do not perform. Over the years, the official mascot has been given a variety of names including Atholl, Pegasus, Baffin, and Glacier.

The Academy falcon is the only performing mascot in the NCAA. The cadet falconers first flew the falcon in 1956 in a stadium during halftime. In 1957,

the falcon was first flown indoors at a basketball game.

By 1958, the cadet falconers flew a flight of two falcons at a football game. The falcon flew its first night performance at the George Washington University game with President Dwight D. Eisenhower present. A feather of one of the Academy's prairie falcons, Hungary, was carried to the moon aboard Apollo XV by Colonel David R. Scott.



Since falconry was practiced as a privilege of ancient Egyptian, Persian, and Chinese royalty and medieval European aristocracy, a huge collection of literature has developed over the ages. It was therefore deemed important that the Academy Library develop a specialized falconry collection. Over the years, this collection has grown by gifts, donations, and memorial funds into one of the most comprehensive falconry collections in existence.

A variety of Academy facilities were established in the 1960s. In late November 1960, the Academy Hospital was completed and opened for use. Like most buildings at the Academy, the hospital was the topic of lengthy controversy by members of Congress. Air Force officials originally projected a facility with a 250-bed capacity. The members of the various congressional committees objected to the construction of such a large facility, estimated to cost close to \$5 million. The surgeon general of the Air Force, Major General Oliver Niess, however, insisted that the larger facility was needed to provide adequate medical care for the cadets, as well as the military staff of the Academy and their dependents and for the growing number of Air Force retirees residing in the vicinity of Colorado Springs. Finally, a compromise was reached, with Congress appropriating \$3.5 million for a 135-bed facility.

Colonel Richard S. Fixott was appointed the first hospital commander. Dr. Fixott, who later retired in Colorado Springs, enjoys telling the story about the first baby born in the Academy Hospital. The hospital became operational on November 21, and two days later a baby girl was born to Major and Mrs. Donald A. Reeves of the finance and accounting section. Dr. Richard Dinsmoore, who delivered the baby, remarked to Colonel Fixott, "It was too bad the baby wasn't a boy so that he could have become a cadet." As it turned out, the baby, Deanna Jean Reeves, graduated with the class of 1983.

In May 1961, the USAF Academy Preparatory School was activated upon the recommendation of the General Officer Advisory Committee. Previously, Air

The gyrfalcon, the largest and most noble of the falcons, is the official mascot of the Air Force Academy.

Force enlisted and reserve personnel had attended the Army Prep School at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, and the Navy Prep School at Bainbridge, Maryland. The new school was located in the community center area, using existing barracks buildings for housing and classrooms. (Public School District 20 had previously used these same buildings while awaiting completion of their permanent buildings in Douglass and Pine Valleys.) The prep school also used an existing gymnasium, complete with an Olympic-size swimming pool, a parade ground, and athletic fields. General Stone named Colonel Lee C. Black as the first commander.

The mission of the prep school is to prepare and motivate selected regular and reserve enlisted personnel for entrance into the Cadet Wing and to eliminate candidates who obviously lack academic potential for work at the Academy. The school also provides selected candidates, such as recruited athletes, an opportunity to improve their test scores before reapplying to the Academy. The prep school provides intensive instruction in mathematics, English, and chemistry. It also develops military knowledge and skills as well as a high level of physical fitness and athletic skills by participation in a variety of sports. The school also encourages the candidates to adopt moral and ethical codes, which help to develop character and a strong sense of responsibility.

An assignment to the prep school in no way guarantees an appointment to the Academy. Each prep school candidate must apply for a nomination in the category or categories for which he is eligible. Prep school graduates, along with all other candidates, must complete all of the required entrance examinations for the Academy including the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB), the Physical Aptitude Examination (PAE), and the Qualifying Medical Examination (QME).

During the first nine years of the Academy Prep School's existence, 1,199 students were graduated. Of these, 1,081 were appointed to the Academy.

During General Stone's tenure as superintendent, the major emphasis of the Academy was on academics. General McDermott had the full confidence and support of Stone. McDermott continued to develop and refine his innovations in the curriculum, especially the expansion of the majors program and the drive to obtain congressional approval for the projected master's program. General Stone, with the ardent reinforcement of McDermott, sought to convince the superintendents of the Military and Naval Academies that it was inevitable that their institutions would have to follow suit in adopting the Air Force Academy's curriculum innovations. Stone also tried to persuade congressional leaders that the Academy's system was the wave of the future. With more graduates receiving Rhodes Scholarships and other prestigious academic awards, the Academy's stature as a leading educational institution was being further enhanced.

Internally, however, things were not as rosy. The rift between the dean and the commandant broadened. General Sullivan believed that he no longer had the superintendent's support, which he had experienced under General Briggs. In his interview, Sullivan said:

General Stone tended to be a person who knew what he wanted to do before a subject was discussed. He was a smart man and he generally was logical in his own analyses, but I thought he frequently failed to hear both sides of a question before he made a decision. ... I think General Stone was more inclined to support the dean. ... General Stone was inclined on the side, I think, that the academic side was important and that the military studies and military training side was a necessary evil.⁴

Sullivan resented the mounting cadet criticism of his AOCs and other members of his staff. The AOCs were criticized by the cadets for oversupervision and for failing to allow the cadets to develop direct leadership talents and to exercise initiative in running the Cadet Wing. The cadets also resented the vacillation in policy by the commandant and members of his staff. Cadets believed that the stability of the Wing was upset by deviations from the status quo without any logical or rational explanations for the changes. Each new commandant wanted to make drastic changes in the system, and the fluctuations disturbed the cadets as well as many officers assigned to the Com Shop. The AOCs naturally felt the full impact of the changes and, oftentimes, were held responsible for the changes by cadets under their control.

Sullivan believed that General Stone was being prejudiced against his activity by cadets who were dating the superintendent's daughter. Susan Stone was a beautiful, vivacious young lady who was a student at the University of Colorado in Boulder. On weekends and during holiday periods, Susan entertained a number of cadets and their girlfriends in the superintendent's quarters. Naturally, much of the conversation involved the Academy and the cadet way of life. Sullivan said that Susan "fed a lot of information to General Stone that was straight from the cadets' mouths." Consequently, Stone wanted to change the role of the AOCs so that instead of being disciplinarians and martinets, the AOCs would become advisors and counselors. Sullivan was opposed to this concept. He was also opposed to reorganizing the Cadet Counseling Service. But finally, he very reluctantly agreed to the transfer of Lieutenant Colonel Gabriel Ofeish from the faculty to serve as the head of the Cadet Counseling Service.

Years later, General Sullivan, in his interview, acknowledged that he was sensitive because, unlike the officers assigned to the faculty, Com Shop officers did not have the academic credentials or expertise to do a first-rate job teaching the military subjects.

Relations between General Stone and Sullivan continued to deteriorate. General Sullivan told his interviewer:

When I left the Academy, I was in very bad spirits, and the superintendent hadn't spoken to me for three months and I hadn't spoken to him for three months. The superintendent would not permit me to have an

overlap with Seawell, my successor. He wouldn't permit it; he wanted me to clear out before Seawell showed up. Seawell couldn't report for about a month after I left, so actually the Com's position was not occupied for about a month and I understand they in that period changed the whole concept of the AOC.⁵

When Brigadier General William T. Seawell became commandant of cadets on June 16, 1961, everyone at the Academy began to joke about the fact that an officer would have to have a name beginning with the letter "S" in order to be appointed commandant. Stillman, Sullivan, and Seawell were to be succeeded by Strong and Seith. The appointment of Robin Olds in 1967 broke up the apparent monopoly of coms with names starting with "S."

General Seawell, a native of Arkansas, was very friendly and personable. The 1941 *Howitzer* described him as "tall, dark and handsome," and he was. He graduated twenty-eighth in a class of 424. During World War II, he served as a bomber pilot in the European theater. In 1949, he received a degree from Harvard University Law School. He then served in the Strategic Air Command as a wing commander. After graduating from the Air War College in 1956, Seawell was assigned to the Pentagon in the office of the deputy chief of staff, operations. Prior to being named commandant of cadets, Seawell had served as military assistant to the secretary of the Air Force and to the deputy secretary of defense.

Seawell had demonstrated executive talents and had an air of self-assurance. Unlike Sullivan, Seawell's charm and charisma appealed to the cadets. Like Dean McDermott, Seawell was an eloquent speaker and greatly impressed his listeners. Seawell increased his popularity with the cadets when he granted them more privileges. He made a special effort to appear cooperative with all of the elements of the Academy. Everything seemed to be going smoothly until Seawell learned that he had been passed over for promotion to major general. Within a short time, in February 1963, he announced his retirement and his acceptance of a position as vice president of the Air Transport Association. In 1965, he became vice president for operations of American Airlines. The Cadet Wing and the Academy as a whole were shocked to learn of the sudden departure of General Seawell in the midst of the academic year.

The graduation ceremony for the class of 1962 was the last one held on the Cadet Parade Ground. All future graduations would be held in Falcon Stadium. The speaker for the occasion was Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson. The chief of staff of the Air Force, General Curtis Lemay, presented the commissions to the graduates. At the end of the formal graduation ceremonies, the class of 1962 followed tradition with a difference. Instead of an eruption of white-topped hats, a shower of red caps filled the air. The members of the class, while the chaplain was offering the benediction, had hastily pulled red plastic covers over their caps before sailing them aloft. The "Red Devils" had lived up to their name.



In June, General Stone received his third star and was assigned as deputy chief of staff, personnel, in the Pentagon. His successor was Major General Robert H. Warren. He was born in Yankton, South Dakota, and had attended Yankton College for two years before entering the Military Academy's class of 1940. During his senior year, Warren served as the chairman of the Honor Committee, one of the most prestigious positions in the Corps of Cadets. He received his pilot's wings in 1941. During World War II, Warren served as operations officer and commanding officer of several bomb groups assigned to the European theater. He flew thirty-eight combat missions with the Fifteenth Air Force. Following the war, he served in the Pentagon. During the first three years of the Korean War, he served in the Far East Air Forces. In 1956, Warren became the executive assistant to the secretary of the Air Force. From 1957 until 1959, he was the military assistant to the deputy secretary of the defense.

Prior to his assignment as superintendent, General Warren was the commander of the Air Proving Ground Center in Elgin, Florida. His diversified career had brought Warren to the leading edge of weapons development in the Air Force. This experience plus his operational and administrative experience seemed to make him an ideal candidate for the challenging position of superintendent.

Senior Master Sergeant William H. Coltrin reviewing "orders of the day" with fourth class cadets. Because of Coltrin's dedication to the Cadet Wing, the class of 1962 dedicated their yearbook, *The Polaris*, to him.

Lacking educational experience of his own, Warren believed he could depend on McDermott for guidance and support in the educational aspects of his new position. In his oral history interview in 1980, General Warren recalled:

I had a lot of dealings with General McDermott because he was a very industrious and productive dean. While I was superintendent, McDermott initiated the whole series of progressive changes in the academic program, which in my opinion were superior to those of the other Service Academies. ... We secured approval, and this was McDermott's idea which I supported, that all cadets graduate with a major in some field. We initiated a program of cooperative master's degrees. ... We had Air Force approval to encourage cadets to compete for scholarships like Rhodes, Fulbright, and others. As a result, I believe the Cadet Wing obtained more scholarships during the three years I was there than any other Service Academies did. Most of this is to McDermott's credit because the programs originated and were designed in the dean's department.⁶

As a hardworking, conscientious individual, General Warren soon familiarized himself with the complexities of the superintendent's role. He was very fortunate in having inherited a loyal, dedicated executive secretary, Marguerite McCullough. McCullough had been hired by General Harmon soon after he arrived in Denver in 1954 and had continued to serve Generals Briggs and Stone. She was a brilliant organizer, and she had a remarkable memory for all aspects of the Academy. In fact, McCullough served as the Academy's institutional memory for many years.

Basically, General Warren was a shy person and did not project a good image as a public speaker. He was at his best when meeting with small groups. His sincerity and warmth made people aware of his earnestness and cordiality. He tried hard to reconcile the various factions in the Academy and to keep the focus of their attention on the primary mission of educating cadets. Warren's chief of staff, Colonel Ralph Hallenbeck, did a superb job of keeping the Academy operating in an effective, efficient manner.

General Warren recommended that his West Point classmate, Brigadier General Robert W. Strong Jr., be appointed as successor to Seawell as commandant of cadets. Strong reported to the Academy on March 3, 1963. He was a native of Ohio, had attended Valley Forge Military Academy, and had graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1940. During World War II, Strong had served with the 21st Bomber Command in the Pacific theater and logged 200 combat hours flying the B-29 Superfortress in raids against Japan. After the war, he served as a tactical officer (like a squadron AOC) at West Point for two years. Then he attended the Air Staff and Command College and the Naval War College. He served as a member of the Air Staff in the Pentagon from 1953 until 1956. From 1956 until 1963, he was assigned to the Strategic Air Command as wing commander and as division commander at Little Rock, Arkansas. He received his star early in 1963.



Strong was not pleased with the way he found the office of the commandant of cadets operating.⁷ During Seawell's tour, two AOCs had been assigned to each cadet squadron. In order to enhance their advisory and counseling role, the AOCs had maintained their offices in the squadron area. Strong quickly got rid of the assistant AOC and sent the other AOC back to the offices in Fairchild Hall. In this way, the commandant believed that the cadets would have to assume greater responsibility for running the Wing. Strong was convinced that cadet discipline was lax and ordered immediate improvement. He favored more inspections, more drill, and more parades.

Shortly after Strong arrived at the Academy, he made an inspection tour of the cadet quarters accompanied by his deputy, Colonel Victor Ferrari. Strong was irritated when he saw many pictures of nude women displayed in the cadet rooms. He ordered Ferrari to get things cleaned up and to enforce the cadet regulation limiting two pictures to a room. The next time Strong inspected Vandenberg Hall, he found two pictures in every room. But this time, one picture was of the commandant with long, fake hair. Strong was not amused and saw this incident as a challenge to his authority.

General Strong was of the opinion that the commandant of cadets should exercise his command responsibilities in the same fashion as the commander of the Strategic Air Command. No one should question his authority. He wanted to

Early military training included bayonet training in hand-to-hand combat for all cadets.

use the wing-squadron organization common to active duty units in the field. The cadets would represent the squadron command, and the group and squadron AOCs would represent the Wing Command and be directly responsible to the commandant of cadets. In this way, Strong reasoned, the cadet chain of command would have the freedom of a tactical squadron. Cadet officers would have full responsibility for command and leadership as well as for daily operations. The group and squadron AOCs would monitor the entire operation and give advice and direction whenever necessary.

Under Strong's new system, greater emphasis would be placed on higher standards of basic discipline and more standardization of disciplinary procedures, especially uniform use of the Report of Offense (Form 10) as a mark in conduct. Strong's plan also called for a closer supervision of cadet squadrons by the AOCs and more standardization of procedures within each of the twenty-four cadet squadrons. The plan envisioned less use of the Cadet Wing chain of command in routine daily operations such as squadron charge of quarters, security flight, and similar duties. This would enable the cadets to find more time to attend classes and to have more study time.

In general, there was a shift of supervision and coordination to chain of command staff officers. There was also less emphasis on the counseling function of the AOCs and an added emphasis on the command function. The cadets, meanwhile, had their own ideas as to how the Cadet Wing should function. They also had their own ways of resisting the changes General Strong was attempting to impose upon them.

As with previous commandants, Strong and McDermott began to clash over the matter of their respective responsibilities. As usual, the basic issue was one of the organization of the Academy. The fundamental question was, who is second in command to the superintendent? The dean has responsibility for 76 percent of the cadet's time and the commandant only 14 percent. The dean is in a position to advise the superintendent on most educational matters. The dean is permanent, while the commandant, like the superintendent, serves a relatively short tour. Yet, as a line officer, the commandant of cadets becomes the acting superintendent during the absence of the superintendent. By virtue of his status as a permanent professor, the dean is not considered a line officer and is, therefore, ineligible to exercise command.

This ambiguous situation was raised by the Air Force Academy Academic Advisory Committee on several occasions because of its impact on the overall effectiveness of the academic program. In its 1964 Report, the Advisory Committee highlighted the problem.⁸ The committee reiterated that the commandant has three roles. As dean of students, he is responsible for housing, feeding, and clothing the cadets and is responsible for cadet behavior and discipline. As a guidance counselor, the commandant is responsible for developing "in each cadet the moral character and qualities of leadership required of an Air Force



Officer." And, the commandant is a departmental chairman responsible for instruction in the military training courses.

An early class in military studies. Note the heavy use of the blackboard.

After studying the matter in depth, the Advisory Committee concluded: "In general, we believe in terms of the logic of educational administration, the dean should be recognized as the superintendent's chief subordinate. More particularly, we believe that the commandant of cadets should function primarily as dean of students and guidance director and that his responsibilities as departmental chairman should be transferred to the academic department."

The fundamental question itself was not resolved that simply and would continue to cause concerns far into the future. In this same *Report*, the Advisory Committee stated, "Many of the considerations which have led us to recommend that the military affairs courses be placed under the dean also apply to instruction in physical education."

The eyes of the nation were focused on the Air Force Academy on June 5, 1963, when President John F. Kennedy gave the graduation address. He was the first president ever to attend a graduation ceremony. Four months of planning had preceded the visit. The Secret Service seemed especially concerned over the security of the president. The Air Force had to allocate \$13,000 to cover added expenses arising from the presidential visit.



President John F. Kennedy congratulates a distinguished graduate following his commencement address to the class of 1963.

The day was sunny and clear. People began to appear at Falcon Stadium at 6:30 A.M., though the ceremony was not scheduled to begin until 8:30 A.M. More than 35,000 spectators filled the west stands. The graduates, 493 strong, marched into the stadium and took their places. A hush came over the large audience as Chaplain Stephen J. O'Connor delivered the invocation. General McDermott then briefly greeted the audience and introduced the chief of staff, General LeMay, who would present the commissions while the dean would present the diplomas.

For the next forty-five minutes, the sonorous voice of the cadet registrar, Colonel Virgil J. O'Connor, rang out as he called the names of 467 graduates. The individual cadets walked to the podium, saluted the dean and the chief of staff, and received their diplomas and commissions. The remaining members of the class, the distinguished graduates, would receive their diplomas directly from President Kennedy after he arrived at the stadium.

Meanwhile, the presidential party was deplaning at Peterson Field, about twelve miles away. General Warren was joined by Governor John Love and the members of the Colorado congressional delegation in welcoming the president and his party. The officials then boarded two Marine helicopters for the short

flight to Falcon Stadium. The helicopters set down outside the Talbott Portal of the stadium shortly before 10 A.M.

Soon the huge crowd saw the president's big black open limousine appearing through the Talbott Portal and entering the stadium grounds. President Kennedy was standing up, bareheaded, smiling, and waving to the enthusiastically cheering audience. The limousine slowly circled the stadium. The spectators applauded, shouted, and waved flags at the president as he rode by. After the car stopped in front of the podium, General Warren escorted the president between the cadet honor guard and they made their way to the speaker's stand. The Academy Band played "Ruffles and Flourishes" and "Hail to the Chief." At the conclusion, the crowd roared once more.

General Warren raised his hands in an effort to quiet the audience and then greeted the distinguished guests. Next, the superintendent introduced the secretary of the Air Force, Eugene M. Zuckert. Mr. Zuckert presented the president with the flag of the U.S. Air Force with its fifty-nine battle streamers. Mr. Zuckert told the president: "The fifty-nine battle streamers you see attest to the combined history of this, the Air Arm of our country."

Then, General Warren introduced Michael. J. Roth, the Cadet Wing commander, who handed the president a diploma, saying, "Mr. President, by acclamation of the Cadet Wing, I award you this diploma attesting to your membership in the class of 1963 of the U.S. Air Force Academy." Smiling, the president replied, "I want to express my appreciation for becoming an instant graduate of the Academy and consider it a high honor."

The president then read a letter sent by Cadet Marvin B. Hopkins of the class of 1964 to Pierre E. G. Salinger, the press secretary of the White House. The cadet urged Mr. Salinger to use his influence with the president to grant amnesty to "countless numbers of our group who are oppressed by Class III punishments, the bane of cadets everywhere." Hopkins told Mr. Salinger that his reward for such intercession would be to have his name "become more hallowed and revered than the combined names of Generals Mitchell, Arnold and Doolittle." Noticeably amused by the letter, President Kennedy said, "As Mr. Salinger wants to be honored with Generals Mitchell, Arnold and Doolittle, I, therefore, take great pleasure in granting amnesty to all of those who do not only desire it, but need it."

In a more serious vein, President Kennedy told the class of 1963 that a service career more varied and demanding than that in the history of any country awaited them. He went on to say:

It is this onrush of technology which demands an expanding role for the nation's Air Force and for Air Force officers and which guarantees that an Air Force career in the next forty years will be even more changing and more challenging than the careers of the last forty years. For some of you will travel where no man has ever traveled before. Some of you

will fly the fastest planes that have ever been built, reach the highest altitude that man has ever gone, and lift the heaviest payloads of any aviator in history. Some of you will help develop new planes that spread their wings in flight, detect other planes at an unheard-of distance, deliver new weapons with unprecedented accuracy, and survey the ground from incredible heights.

At this point, President Kennedy chose the moment to reveal a decision of national significance. Departing from his prepared text, the president told his audience:

As a testament to our strong faith in the future of airpower and the manned airplane, I am announcing today that the United States will commit itself to an important new program in civilian aviation. ... At the earliest practical date, the prototype of a commercially successful supersonic transport, superior to that being built in any other country in the world, will be initiated immediately among American air firms and power plant manufacturers. This commitment, I believe, is essential to a strong and forward-looking nation and indicates the future of the manned aircraft as we move into a Missile Age as well.⁹

Returning to his prepared text, President Kennedy praised the cadets for their scholastic records and lauded the quality of the faculty. He stressed the role of military men in the art of statesmanship. He concluded his address by saying that the nation needs: "military commanders who are conscious of the enormous stakes in the Nuclear Age of every decision that they make—and who are aware of the fact that there are no purely political decisions or purely military decisions ... Men who know the difference between vital interests and peripheral interests ... Men who can foresee the effects of military actions on political policy."

When the president concluded his speech, General Strong administered the oath of office to the cadets. After the Academy Band played the National Anthem, Chaplain George Cameron pronounced the benediction. As Commandant Strong dismissed the cadets, the white caps flew into the air.

During this period of jubilation, the presidential party left the stadium by motorcade and headed for a visit to North American Air Defense Command. Before leaving the Academy grounds, President Kennedy was taken to see the Cadet Chapel, which was in the final stages of construction. Gordon Culver, the Academy protocol officer, remembered that President Kennedy refused to allow the photographers to take any pictures of him visiting the Catholic Chapel. Instead, all media pictures were shot while the president was touring the unique, circular Jewish synagogue. Meanwhile, the spectators were not permitted to leave the stadium until the Air Force flyover was completed. The Thunderbirds did not perform since they were participating in the Paris Air Show.



Following the graduation, significant progress was made toward expanding the research capability of the Academy. Air Force Systems Command agreed to sponsor a laboratory on the site. In October 1963, the Frank J. Seiler Research Laboratory was dedicated on the northern part of the second floor of Fairchild Hall. The mission of the laboratory was to do basic research in chemistry, aerospace mechanics, and applied mathematics. The facility was also to support faculty and cadet research projects. Since most of the officers assigned to the laboratory had doctoral degrees, they were recognized as adjunct faculty members and were able to teach some of the advanced scientific courses offered in the majors programs and the cooperative master's programs.

Instead of establishing a separate technical library, Air Force Systems Command agreed to furnish the Academy Library with funds to support the Seiler Laboratory with scientific books and journals. Seiler Laboratory also brought to the Academy a large mainframe scientific digital computer. Colonel Richard Gibson, professor and head of the Astronautics Department, was reassigned as the first commander of Seiler Research Laboratory.

While attending the 1962 Army-Navy game in Philadelphia, President Kennedy had asked the superintendent of the Military Academy, General William Westmoreland, why Navy is usually able to beat Army. Westmoreland replied, "Well, they have got a bigger school." The president told Generals Westmoreland and Warren, who was also present, that he was unaware of that and would ask the Department of Defense to study the matter and come up with a plan to make all

Mrs. Gail McComas with cadets in Arnold Hall. "Mrs. Mac" served as cadet hostess from 1955 until 1977. She taught social graces and decorum to generations of cadets.

three major service academies have the same enrollment. Out of this chance conversation, legislation was enacted which would not only enlarge the Cadet Wing, but would change fundamentally many aspects of the Academy. The Academy, with almost twice as many cadets, would become much more impersonal and more difficult to administer.

On March 3 1964, President Johnson signed Public Law 88-276 authorizing the expansion of the Air Force Cadet Wing and the Army Corps of Cadets from 2,529 to 4,417, the strength of the Brigade of Midshipmen at Annapolis. Because of space limitations at both academies, the new strength figure could not be realized until 1972. During 1964 and 1965, each member of Congress was allocated a fifth appointment to the Air Force and Military Academies. The new law also provided for a five-year active duty obligation for all service academy graduates, regardless of post-graduate flying training.

The design of facilities needed to accommodate the expanded Cadet Wing were included in the fiscal 1965 Military Construction Authorization Bill. The facilities to be constructed or enlarged consisted of the cadet quarters, Mitchell Hall dining facility, Fairchild academic building, a social center for Arnold Hall, a new field house, and enlargement of the Cadet Gymnasium, the Academy Library, and the Academy Hospital. Additional parking areas and extended utilities were also included in the funded authorization of \$3.5 million.

One of the major buildings, the new cadet quarters, built to the south, completed the cadet area quadrangle. On May 31, 1976, the structure was dedicated as Sijan Hall. Captain Lance P. Sijan, class of 1965, was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously for his conspicuous gallantry and heroism during the Vietnam War.

Provisions were made for an orderly expansion of the Cadet Wing to match the expansion of the facilities. The class of 1968 would be increased to 1,002 cadets while the class of 1974 would number 1,437 cadets. The personnel strength of the military and civilian support staff would be increased proportionately.

The decade from 1955 until 1965 for the Air Force Academy was one of unusual development, academic success, athletic triumphs, and very favorable press and media coverage. In a relatively short period, the Academy had become well known throughout the nation. Its striking, modernistic campus had become Colorado's chief tourist attraction and was toured by a million visitors each year. The Academy was admired because of its innovative spirit, its demonstrated performance, and the national recognition of its graduates who received prestigious scholarships and fellowships. Members of the Academy community could openly boast that in the span of a mere decade, they had achieved more than most educational institutions hoped to achieve in a century.

In Retrospect



The evolution and development of the Air Force Academy over its first fifty-year period has been remarkable. It has become a unique national institution. The true value of an educational institution is reflected in the quality of its graduates. They have left an impressive legacy for all future cadets.

As of 2004 (the latest figures available), the total number of graduates was 36,992. Of this number, 3,320 graduates were women. There were 35,341 living graduates. Nearly 70 percent have served or are serving on active duty.

Many graduates are heroes:

- 1 Medal of Honor
- 16 Air Force Crosses
- 266 Silver Stars
- 3,679 Distinguished Flying Crosses
- 36 POWs (Prisoners of War)
- 165 Listed on war memorials

The accomplishments of the first forty-six classes include:

- 389 Generals
- 18 Four Star Generals
- 2 Chiefs of Staff of the Air Force
- 1 Member of the U.S. Congress
- 38 Rhodes Scholars
- 36 Astronauts
- 727 Presidents and CEOs
- 500 Doctors
- 439 Attorneys
- Governmental Officers, State and Local
- Entrepreneurs
- Inventors
- Air Line Pilots
- Presidents of Colleges and Universities
- College Professors
- Teachers and School Administrators

Air Force Academy Heritage

Clergymen and -women

Community Leaders

Parents of Cadets

Bankers

Real Estate Brokers

Investment Brokers

World-Class Athletes

Coaches

Notes



Chapter 1

The Long Struggle to Create an Air Academy

1. The Special Collections section of the U.S. Air Force Academy Library owns a blown-up version of specification 486 copied from the original in the National Archives in Washington, D.C.
2. Carroll V. Glines Jr., *The Compact History of the United States Air Force*, New York, Hawthorn Books, 1963, p. 53.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 67.
4. Letter, President Robert E. Vinson to Lieutenant Colonel Barton K. Yount, Division of Military Aeronautics, 24 December 1918.
5. *Report on Site for Air Service Academy*, H. A. Dargue to the director of Military Aeronautics, 6 March 1919.
6. Quoted in Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Boudreau's "Growth of the Idea," 1948. Also see M. Hamlin Cannon and Henry S. Fellerman, *Quest for an Air Force Academy*, U.S. Air Force Academy, 1947, chapter 11.
7. Letter, office of director of the Air Service to superintendent, U.S. Military Academy, 1 November 1919.
8. *U.S. Congressional Record*, 67th Congress, 2nd Session, 1922, vol. 62, part 5, p. 5044.
9. General Patrick sent copies of his report to the field for comments and suggestions. It is interesting that on 22 April 1922, Major H. R. Harmon, the assistant executive in the office of the chief of the Air Service, sent a letter to the chief of the Engineering Division at McCook Field, Dayton, Ohio, asking about the reaction of his division to Senate Resolution 266. This is probably the first documented contact that the future first superintendent of the U.S. Air Force Academy had with the concept of an Academy.
10. Senate Document no. 202, 67th Congress, 2nd Session.
11. *Ibid.*
12. Mitchel Field was not named for General Billy Mitchell, as popularly believed. It was named for Congressman John Purroy Mitchel, a former mayor of New York City, who was killed in an aircraft accident in 1918 while training for the Army Aviation Corps.

Chapter 2

The Legislative Maze

1. At this time, the Military Academy had an authorized strength of 2,500 cadets; the Naval Academy had an authorized strength of 4,417 midshipmen. In 1965, all the major academies were authorized an increase to 4,417.
2. *Air Force Academy Planning Board Study: A Plan for an Air Force Academy*, Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, 1949, vol. 1, p. 115.
3. On 4 January 1949, Secretary Forrestall sent General Eisenhower a copy of his memorandum to the joint chiefs of staff on setting up the board. Forrestall asked Eisenhower for suggestions for members of the board. On January 13, Eisenhower

sent the secretary of the defense his list of names, including Dr. Stearns. See *Chronological Summary of Actions Affecting the Air Force Academy Project*, no date, Document 50.2:6, U.S. Air Force

Academy Special Collections.

4. Full Committee Hearings on H. R. 5337, *To Provide for the Establishment of a United States Air Force Academy* (no. 50), 13 January 1954.

Chapter 3 Site Selection

1. *The Orlando Sentinel* (Florida) for 11 April 1954 carried an interesting article that read as follows:
General Lindbergh's selection disposed of one set of ugly rumor, however, which have been prevalent here for weeks. It was being whispered that Texas had the inside track because the Lone Star State went for Eisenhower in 1952 and that contributions to the Republican Party by wealthy oil magnates were buying the Academy for Texas. The Lone Eagle's reputation for honesty and honor extinguished these rumors as soon as his appointment was announced.
2. Dr. Hancher and the others had not come prepared for an extended period. He told in his oral interview how he had to go shopping for additional clothing and personal supplies.
3. 13 June 1956, interview conducted by the command historian, U.S. Air Force Academy, Special Collections, U.S. Air Force Academy Library.
4. 21 May 1956, interview conducted by the command historian, U.S. Air Force Academy, Special Collections, U.S. Air Force Academy Library.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Meigs memorandum, 3 June 1954, included as a supplement to his 13 June 1954 interview with the U.S. Air Force Academy historian.
7. Talbott to Dr. Charles Thomas, president of the Monsanto Chemical Company, 28 June 1954. 124:9:67, U.S. Air Force Academy Library, Special Collections. The postcards, telegrams, letters, and newspapers are all included in the Special Collections of the Academy Library.

Chapter 4 The Academy Finds a Home

1. One of the pioneer aviators, retired Major General John F. Curry, lived in Denver. For many years, climatology had been his hobby. His studies of altitude and flying as well as his studies on the incidences of respiratory diseases at military installations in Colorado and Wyoming were invaluable to Air Force and medical authorities wrestling with these thorny questions.
2. It was ironic that the same issues of the Colorado Springs newspapers that had banner headlines heralding the Springs as the home of the Academy also contained news stories about the setting up of odd and even days for water rationing for the city dwellers. The new water from the Western Slope would take several more years before it began to arrive.
3. Interviews with Mr. R. S. Doenges, 15 September and 12 October 1985. Mr. Doenges presented a paper covering his Alton experiences to the Colorado Springs Round Table on 25 October 1985. The author deposited the paper with the Special Collections, U.S. Air Force Academy Library.
4. *History of the U.S. Air Force Academy, 1958 and 1959*, vol. III, p. 678.

Chapter 5 Settling in at Lowry

1. Air University, *Air Force Academy Planning Board Study: A Plan for an Air Force Academy*, vol. 1, January 1949, p. 160.
2. Lowry Air Force Base had been the Agnes Phipps Memorial Sanitarium for tuberculosis patients from 1904 until 1932. In 1937, the Army acquired the sanitarium grounds for a flying field. During World War II, more than 400,000 airmen were

- trained in Lowry's technical schools. The main Spanish-style stucco sanitarium buildings served as the headquarters. President Eisenhower used the structure as a summer White House during the first years of his presidency.
3. Oral interview, Brigadier General Allen W. Rigsby, professor of law, 7 February 1957, with the command historian, Lieutenant Colonel Edgar A. Holt.
 4. Oral interview, 27 September 1956, with the command historian, Lieutenant Colonel Eldgar A. Holt. Larsen was a Ph.D. in history from the University of Minnesota. He served as the first director of the Academy Library from 1954 until his retirement in 1956.
 5. Memorandum from Colonel Max B. Boyd to Lieutenant General Hubert R. Harmon, 13 January 1955, Special Collections, U.S. Air Force Academy Library.

Chapter 6 Academy Personalities

1. U.S. Air Force Academy oral history interview, no. 54, 16 January 1979. Gordon Culver was a longtime protocol officer for the Academy and was very close to all of the first five superintendents. Culver's characterizations of the superintendents and other key Academy figures were incorporated in this work. Colonel Culver after retirement served many years as the senior vice president of the First National Bank of Colorado Springs and as president of the Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce and in other civic roles.
2. U.S. Air Force Academy oral history interview, no. 271, 7 September 1979.
3. U.S. Air Force Academy oral history interview, no. 227, April 1979.
4. U.S. Air Force Academy oral history interview, no. 218, 5 April 1979.
5. U.S. Air Force Academy oral history interview, no. 32A, 30 December 1976.

Chapter 7 Growing Pains

1. The 1955–56 *Academy Catalog* listed the faculty as follows:

History: Professor: John L. Frisbee; Associate Professors: George V. Fagan, Walter J. Schweiger, Silas R. Molyneaux; Instructors: Donald D. Braden, Chauncy W. Meachan, Harold H. Hitchens, Arthur R. Kirkpatrick, and John G. Williams Jr.

Geography: Professor: Josephas A. Bowman; Associate Professor: Joseph E. Terry; Assistant Professors: Robert E. Showalter, Robert T. Ramsaur, and Raymond H. Stan.

Philosophy: Professor: Thomas L. Crystal; Associate Professor: Cornelius D. Sullivan; Assistant Professors: Gabriel D. Ofiesh, John S. Albright, and Fred A. Brockway.

Law: Professor: Allen W. Rigsby; Instructors: Christopher L. Munch, Alvin L. Berthelson, and Harold R. Vague.

Mathematics: Professor: Archie Higdon; Associate Professor: John W. Ault; Assistant Professors: Jean C. Hempstead, John W. Querry, Jacob F. Blackburn; Instructors: William R. Fuchs, Lawrence G. Campbell, William D. Marsland, and Stewart Young.

Graphics: Professor: James S. Barko; Associate Professors: Wyley L. Baxter, Theodore J. Michel; Assistant Professor: Franklin W. Taylor; Instructors: Lewis L. Browne, John W. Coffey, Donald R. Woods, and Donald S. Smith.

Chemistry-Physics: Professor: James V. G. Wilson; Associate Professor: William T. Woodyard; Assistant Professors: William H. Stephens, Julius L. Yucker, Ronald M. Howard, Robert W. Rowden; Instructors: John N. Robinson and Willis S. Anderson.

For some unexplained reason, the English Department was omitted from the original catalog. The members of the original English Department were as follows: Professor: Peter R. Moody; Associate Professors: Warren Thompson, James Jackson; Instructors: Walter Weese, Paul Briand, John Galt.
2. For an excellent overview of science teaching during the first years of the Academy, see "Meeting the Challenge of a New Age of Technology: A Panel Discussion," *Air Force Magazine*, June 1959, pp. 51–58.

3. *Permanent Professors Past and Present: Biographies*, U.S. Air Force Academy, 1982, pp. 51–52, 65–66. U.S. Air Force Academy Library, Special Collections.
4. Peter R. Moody, "Training the Whole Man," *Air Force Magazine*, June 1959, p. 61.
5. Quoted from Document no. 10, no date, *U.S. Air Force Academy History, 1954–56*, vol. 5.
6. Memorandum, H. R. Harmon to Mr. Nathaniel Owings, 31 March 1955, file number 126.2:142, U.S. Air Force Academy Library, Special Collections.
7. U.S. Air Force Academy oral history interview, no. H22-B, 27 February 1973, U.S. Air Force Academy Library, Special Collections.
8. As a tribute to the first superintendent, the Harmon Memorial Lecture Series was begun in 1959. For the past thirty years, a committee of nationally known civilian historians and representatives of the Academy select an outstanding military historian to present the lecture, which is then published and distributed to libraries and interested scholars and other individuals throughout the world. Plans are now underway at the Academy to publish a volume containing the first thirty Harmon Memorial Lectures.

Chapter 8

The Academy Site

1. For full details on the geology and topography of the site, see David J. Varnes and Glenn R. Scott, *General and Engineering Geology of the United States Air Force Academy Site Colorado*, Geological Survey Professional Paper 551, Washington, D.C., U. S. Government Printing Office, 1967. For a more popular account, see Thomas N. James, *These Beautiful Hills: A Natural History of the Air Force Academy*, Palmer Lake, Colorado, Filter Press, 1972. Also see George V. Fagan, "The Air Force Academy Site and Its History," in Nolie Mumey, ed., *1958 Brand Book of the Denver Westerners*, Boulder, Colorado, Johnson Publishing Company, 1959, pp. 211–222.
2. The records of the Colorado Land Commission are part of the archives of the State of Colorado. The Estate Section of the Academy Civil Engineering Office is the repository for the records pertaining to each parcel of land acquired. These records, arranged by parcel number, contain the deed abstract, appraisal reports, photographs, and other pertinent data. In the near future, microfilmed copies of all these records will be available in the Special Collections section of the United States Air Force Academy Library.

Chapter 9

Links with the Past

1. For the best introduction to the history of Colorado Springs and its colorful people, see Marshall Sprague, *Newport in the Rockies*, Chicago, Swallow Press, 1961 and 1971 (the Centennial Edition). Also see Marshall Sprague, *One Hundred Plus: A Centennial Story of Colorado Springs*, Colorado Springs, Colorado, Colorado Springs Centennial Inc., 1971; John Fetler, *The Pikes Peak People*, Caldwell, Idaho, Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1966; Manly D. Ormes and Eleanor R. Ormes, *The Book of Colorado Springs*, Colorado Springs, Colorado, Denton Printing Co., 1933; Harvey L. Carter, ed., *The Pikes Peak Region: A Sesquicentennial History*, Colorado Springs, Colorado, Historical Society of the Pikes Peak Region, 1956; and M. Hamlin Cannon and Henry S. Fellerman, *Quest For an Air Force Academy*, Colorado Springs, Colorado, U.S. Air Force Academy, 1974, pp. 235–268.
2. John I. Kitch Jr. and Betsy B. Kitch, *Woodmen Valley*, Palmer Lake, Colorado, Filter Press, 1971.
3. Irving Howbert, *Memories of a Lifetime in the Pikes Peak Region*, New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1925, pp. 95–114 and pp. 177–192. This book is a gold mine of information by one who lived in the area since 1860 and who was active in the civic, social, and economic aspects of the region. Also see his earlier book, *The Indians of the Pikes Peak Region*, New York, Knickerbocker Press, 1914.

4. John S. Fisher, *A Builder of the West: The Life of General William Jackson Palmer*, Caldwell, Idaho, Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1939; George L. Anderson, *General William J. Palmer: A Decade of Railroad Building, 1870–1880*, Colorado Springs, Colorado, Colorado College Studies no. 209, 1939; George Foster Peabody, *William Jackson Palmer: Pathfinder and Builder*, Saratoga Springs, New York, privately printed by author, 1931; Rhoda Davis Wilcox, *The Man on the Iron Horse*, Colorado Springs, Colorado, Denton Printing Co., 1959; Robert G. Athearn, *Rebel of the Rockies: The Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad*, New Haven, Connecticut, Yale University Press, 1962.
5. George L. Anderson, *General William Jackson Palmer: Man of Vision*, Colorado Springs, Colorado College Studies, Spring 1960, no. 4, pp. 10–15.
6. George V. Fagan, *The U.S. Air Force Academy Site and the Pikes Peak Region*, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado, 1962, p. 8.
7. Published by the Golden Bell Press, Denver, Colorado.
8. Helen Clapesattle, *Dr. Webb of Colorado Springs*, Boulder, Colorado, Colorado Associated University Press, 1984.
9. U.S. Air Force Academy oral history interview, no. H22-B, 24 February 1973.

Chapter 10

A Bridge to the Future

1. On May 27, 1954, the Department of the Air Force gave Headquarters, Command authority to create the Air Force Academy Construction Agency. See U.S. Air Force Academy, *Civil Engineering: A Technical History, 1955–1957*, no date, for full details on the activation and operation of the agency.
2. U.S. Air Force Academy oral history interview, no. H22-B, 24 February 1973.
3. *Ibid.*
4. The military training program under the commandant of cadets and the physical education program under the director of athletics were discussed in chapter seven.
5. Robert F. McDermott, "Educating Cadets for the Aerospace Age," *Air University Quarterly Review*, Summer 1961, pp. 3–17. The most comprehensive examination of the early curriculum is William T. Woodyard, *A Historical Study of the Development of the Academic Curriculum of the U.S. Air Force Academy*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Denver, 1965. Also see William E. Simons, *Liberal Education in the Service Academies*, Institute of Higher Education, Teacher's College, Columbia University, New York, 1965 ff.
6. Quoted from the Academy office of information, official press release on General McDermott's vita, no date. Unfortunately, the Official Archives of the Academy does not include General McDermott's personal papers while he served as dean of the faculty. Although an oral history interview of General McDermott exists, currently it is not available for use by researchers. Consequently, documentation is lacking to explain the theories and patterns that framed his thoughts. Hopefully, someday soon these materials will become available and scholars will be able to make a more complete evaluation of these critical days in the development of the Academy.
7. Gordon P. Culver, U.S. Air Force Academy oral history interview, no. 54, 16 June 1979.
8. U.S. Air Force Academy oral history interview, no. 22-B, *op. cit.*
9. *Ibid.*
10. U.S. Air Force Academy oral history interview, no. 224, 7 April 1979.
11. Irascible Admiral Rickover was critical of the Military and Naval Academies as well. He would often appear before congressional hearings and voice his opinions about service academy education. Usually the press and media would cover his remarks in great detail. Although Admiral Rickover had been quoted in the press as having made bitter remarks about the Air Force Academy, there is no documented evidence that he had ever visited the Academy and had ever observed its operation during its formative years. General McDermott and

- his staff put together a paper called "Answers to Our Critics" and in it refuted Rickover's criticisms point by point. This data also appeared in the cadet publication, *The Talon*.
12. David Boroff, "Air Force Academy: A Slight Gain in Altitude," *Harpers Magazine*, February 1963, pp. 86–98.
 13. U.S. Air Force Academy oral history interview, no. 194, 6 April 1979.
 14. In reply to questions put to her by the author in July 1985, Mrs. Briggs made a tape recording. Among other things, she told all the details of the weddings. Two months later, Mrs. Briggs died. The tape recording is now included in the Special Collections of the U.S. Air Force Academy Library.

Chapter 11

The Academy Triumphant

1. U.S. Air Force Academy oral history interview, no. 54, 16 January 1979.
2. The command historian conducted an interview with Sergeant Coltrin, which is included as Document COC-19 in the *History of the U.S. Air Force Academy, 1961–62*.
3. This section was based on Allison McKnight, "The Road to Graduation: The Ring Dance," *Aspen Leaves*, May 1987, pp. 6–7.
4. U.S. Air Force Academy oral history interview, no. 194, 6 April 1979.
5. Ibid.
6. U.S. Air Force Academy oral history interview, no. 278, 12 September 1980.
7. U.S. Air Force Academy oral history interview, no. 272, 7 April 1979. Also "Address to the Cadet Wing," by Brigadier General Robert Strong, 13 December 1963.
8. *U.S. Air Force Academy Advisory Committee Report*, 24 February 1964. Dr. Walter Wrigley, professor of aeronautical engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, served as chairman. The other members were Dr. James W. Green Jr., administrative vice president, University of Arkansas; Dr. Samuel P. Huntington, professor of government, Harvard University; and Dr. John W. Masland, provost of Dartmouth College.
9. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, Boeing Aircraft Company spent millions of dollars developing a 298-passenger wide-bodied supersonic transport (SST) that would fly at 1,800 miles per hour, to be known as the B 2707. It was scheduled to be operational by 1978. In March 1971, Congress, however, voted to abandon the project after strong protests from environmentalists who assailed the plane's potential for air and noise pollution and by others who attacked its high cost. A British-French consortium built the Concorde as the world's only supersonic passenger plane. The Concorde's first flight was on December 6, 1973, and its first commercial flight was on January 21, 1976, during which it cruised at Mach 2 (about 1350 mph) and flew at an altitude of more than 50,000 feet.

Bibliography



Much of the information in this book is based upon documents and other materials housed in the Special Collections of the Air Force Academy Library. Since the earliest days of the Academy, the Special Collections has served the traditional function of a college and university archives for significant historical documentation. The person responsible for originally developing Special Collections was Miss Mary Marinan. She was followed by Mrs. Alta Thompson. For the past twelve years, Special Collections has been under the supervision and direction of Mr. Duane J. Reed. Mr. Reed, a trained professional archivist, formerly served as the state archivist of Nebraska. Mr. Reed completely reorganized the Special Collections and applied new technology, including microfilming the documents and using computer technology in cataloging and classification.

From the extensive files of official documents and photographs to newspaper clippings and Academy-related publications, Mr. Reed and his staff provide service for the administrative and historical needs of the faculty, staff, and cadets. He is also able to provide reference and research assistance to visiting scholars.

The resources of the Special Collections are organized into eight functional areas: (1) official archives, (2) manuscripts, (3) oral histories, (4) photographs, (5) news clippings and press releases, (6) historical studies, (7) Academy publications, and (8) rare books, including the renowned Falconry Collection. The collection includes more than 2 million pages of official archives and more than 100,000 photographs.

The archives are organized into major numbered record groups. For this work, the most fruitful record groups were 50, 101, 102, 103, 105, 106, 120, 122, 124, 128, 129, 151, and 230.

During the past few years, the Special Collections have also become the depository of the Prisoner of War Experience in Stalag Luft III. Former superintendent General A. P. Clark was the motivating force behind the move to locate the prisoner of war materials at the Academy. He is now leading a movement to develop the POW Collection as the premier collection of its type.

The Special Collection also houses the volumes of the official *History of the U.S. Air Force Academy*, now covering the years 1954 to 1982. The annual narrative

volumes and the volumes containing pertinent documents now occupy sixty-six linear feet of shelf space. The first command historian was Lieutenant Colonel Edgar A. Holt. In 1956, he was joined by Dr. M. Hamlin Cannon. Dr. Cannon served as command historian until his retirement in 1973. His assistant, Mr. Henry Fellerman, succeeded Dr. Cannon and served until 1981. Dr. Elizabeth Muenger became the command historian in 1983. The official *History* is a treasure storehouse of facts and figures on the Academy's growth and development. Like all official histories, the *Academy History* avoids interpretation. Since there is no master index, using the *History* can present major locating difficulties. Perhaps in the near future the Academy will be able to plan a computer project to provide a comprehensive index to this invaluable research source.

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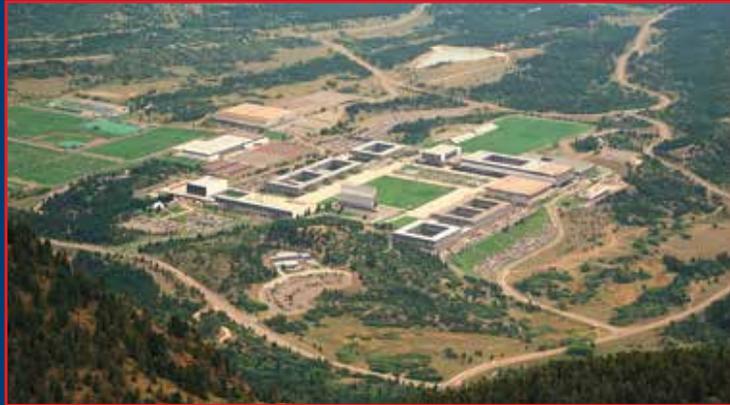
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The Air Force Academy under construction in the late 1950s (left) and a view of the Academy today (right). The Academy, with its 18,500 acres, is one of the largest collegiate campuses in the world.

The need for an air academy began with the first powered flight. Orville Wright and his brother, Wilbur, launched the age of flight on December 17, 1903, at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. But it wasn't until April 1, 1954, when President Eisenhower signed the Academy Bill, that the Air Force Academy became a reality.

Brigadier General George V. Fagan tells the story of the history of the Air Force Academy and how it went from just an idea in World War I to the military educational institution of today. General Fagan is well qualified to write such a book, as he was one of the original professors and director of the Academy Libraries.

The evolution and development of the Air Force Academy over its first fifty-year period has been remarkable. It has become a unique national institution. The true value of an educational institution is reflected in the quality of its graduates. They have left an impressive legacy for all future cadets.

As of 2004 (the latest figures available), the total number of graduates was 36,992. Of this number, 3,320 graduates were women. Nearly 70 percent have served or are serving on active duty.

Many graduates are heroes. Among them, they have earned 1 Medal of Honor, 16 Air Force Crosses, 266 Silver Stars, 3,679 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 36 POWs (Prisoners of War), and 165 are listed on war memorials.

The accomplishments of the first forty-six classes include: 389 generals, 18 four-star generals, 2 chiefs of staff of the Air Force, 1 member of the U.S. Congress, 38 Rhodes scholars, 36 astronauts, 727 presidents and CEOs, 500 doctors, 439 attorneys, plus governmental officers (state and local), entrepreneurs, inventors, airline pilots, presidents of colleges and universities, college professors, teachers and school administrators, clergymen and -women, community leaders, parents of cadets, bankers, investment brokers, world-class athletes, and coaches.

About the Author



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Serving with distinction as a member of the original cadre, permanent professor of the Academy's Department of History, and as the director of the Academy Libraries, General Fagan gained a unique perspective as he witnessed the evolution of the fledgling Academy from its temporary home at Lowry Air Force Base in Denver to a position of national prominence at its permanent site near Colorado Springs. In addition to his own personal recollections, General Fagan researched extensive series of official documents, oral histories, and photographs, which are housed within the Academy Library. He has produced a comprehensive scholarly history of the genesis of the Academy and the early years of its operation. This benchmark history will serve to acquaint cadets, faculty and staff, and members of the public with the rich heritage of the Air Force Academy.

