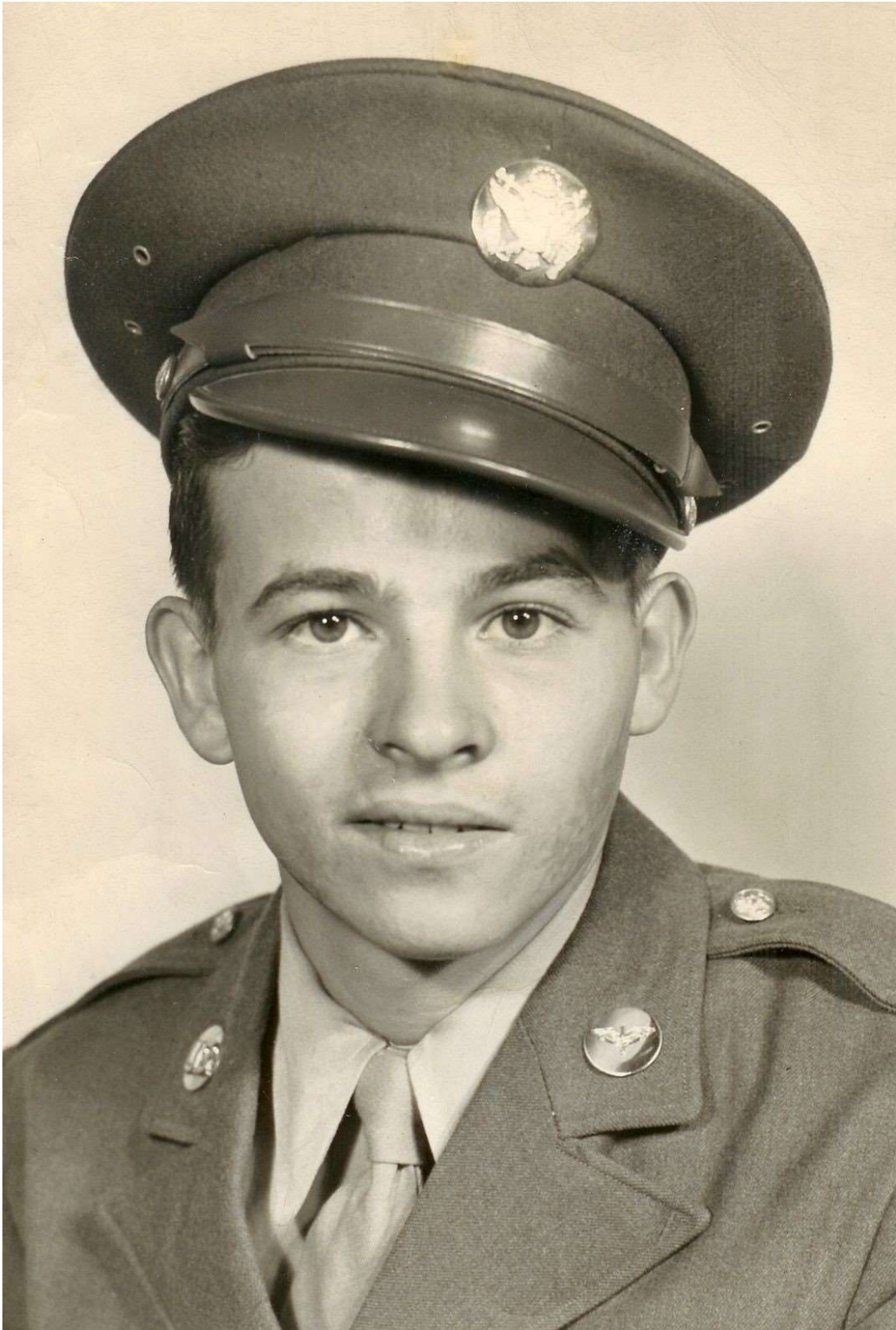


Eugene E. Clemons WWII Military Service

United States Army Air Force 1943 - 46





Home on Leave 1944



Nebraska Training 1944



Tinian Island 05.14.1945



Tinian Island 05.06.1945



Tinian Island 05.06.1945



Tinian Island 05.06.1945



Tinian Island 05.06.1945

R-E-S-T-R-I-C-T-E-D

HEADQUARTERS NINTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP
APO 536, c/o Postmaster
San Francisco, California

GENERAL ORDERS)

21 December 1945

NUMBER 32)

SECTION II

DISTINGUISHED UNIT BADGE -- Under the provisions of Section IV, Circular 333, WD, 1943, as amended by Section III, Circular 511, WD, 1945, the following Officers, Flight Officers and Enlisted Men, 1st Bomb Squadron, 9th Bomb Group, are awarded the Distinguished Unit Badge, pursuant to the following citation contained in Section III, General Orders No 115, Headquarters Twentieth Air Force, dated 28 November 1945:

The 9th Bombardment Group (VH) is cited for outstanding performance of duty in armed conflict with the enemy. This Group was directed to mobilize a maximum force to attack and destroy the industrial area of Kawasaki, Japan, on the night of 15-16 April 1945. The target represented a highly important link in the component productive capacity of the enemy upon which industries in Tokyo and Yokahama depended. Because of its strategic location between two heavily-defended areas, the objective was strongly guarded by masses of defenses both on the flanks and in the immediate target area, making the approach, the bomb run and the break-away from the target extremely hazardous. Through their efficient, coordinated, and unceasing efforts, the maintenance crews readied thirty-three B-29's for take-off. The flight to the Japanese Empire was made at night at low level by individual aircraft over long stretches of water remote from friendly bases, requiring the utmost in physical endurance and superior technical skill. All planes kept well on the course despite severe turbulence which interfered with the functioning of mechanical navigational equipment. The 9th Bombardment Group (VH) was last over the target, and the enemy defenses were fully alerted to the approximate bombing altitude and direction of attack. As a result, exceptionally close coordination between enemy searchlights and heavy and light anti-aircraft guns brought the bombers under powerful concentrations of continuously pointed fire on the route to the target, over the objective, and on the breakaway. Intense and extremely accurate fire from flak boats, on the flight to and away from the target added to the fierce opposition. The enemy air defenses were heaviest in the target area. Fifty-six hostile fighters, many of which made aggressive attacks, and a number of suicide planes were encountered. Two interceptors were shot down in flames, attesting to the accuracy of the Group's gunners. Four B-29's were lost and six received severe damage from enemy air and ground defenses while fighting their way through to strike the vital target. Through the great courage and unyielding determination of the combat crews in destroying this target, and the skill and devotion to duty of the ground personnel, the 9th Bombardment Group (VH) contributed to the ultimate defeat of the enemy, reflecting great credit on themselves and the Army Air Forces.

R-E-S-T-R-I-C-T-E-D

**ENLISTED RECORD AND REPORT OF SEPARATION
HONORABLE DISCHARGE**

15

1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL CLEMONS EUGENE E			2. ARMY SERIAL NO. 36 424 912		3. GRADE S Sgt	4. ARM OR SERVICE AAF	5. COMPONENT AUS
6. ORGANIZATION 1st B Sq 9th E Gp			7. DATE OF SEPARATION 2 Jan 46		8. PLACE OF SEPARATION SEPARATION CENTER Fort Sheridan Illinois		
9. PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES 21 Wren St Jackson Michigan				10. DATE OF BIRTH 10 Oct 23		11. PLACE OF BIRTH Jackson Michigan	
12. ADDRESS FROM WHICH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE SOUGHT See 9				13. COLOR EYES Brown	14. COLOR HAIR Brown	15. HEIGHT 5 7	16. WEIGHT 140 LBS
17. RACE X WHITE	18. MARITAL STATUS X SINGLE	19. U.S. CITIZEN X YES	20. CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND NO. Student College		21. NO. DEPENDENTS X-02		

MILITARY HISTORY

22. DATE OF INDUCTION 2 Feb 43		23. DATE OF ENLISTMENT 9 Feb 43		24. DATE OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE 9 Feb 43		25. PLACE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE Camp Grant Illinois	
SELECTIVE SERVICE DATA X YES	26. REGISTERED X YES	27. LOCAL S.S. BOARD NO. 4	28. COUNTY AND STATE Jackson Co Mich		29. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE See 9		
30. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY AND NO. Ammunition Supply Tech 505				31. MILITARY QUALIFICATION AND DATE (i.e., infantry, aviation and marksmanship badges, etc.) None			
32. BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS Eastern Mandates Western Pacific Air Offensive Japan							
33. DECORATIONS AND CITATIONS Victory Medal American Theater Ribbon Asiatic Pacific Theater Ribbon with 3 Bronze Battle Stars 2 Overseas Service Bars Good Conduct Medal							
34. WOUNDS RECEIVED IN ACTION None							
35. LATEST IMMUNIZATION DATES				36. SERVICE OUTSIDE CONTINENTAL U.S. AND RETURN			
SMALLPOX Nov 45	TYPHOID Nov 45	TETANUS Aug 44	OTHER (specify)	DATE OF DEPARTURE 29 Nov 44		DESTINATION PTO	DATE OF ARRIVAL 28 Dec 44
37. TOTAL LENGTH OF SERVICE			38. HIGHEST GRADE HELD				
CONTINENTAL SERVICE			FOREIGN SERVICE				
YEARS 1	MONTHS 10	DAYS 1	YEARS 1	MONTHS 0	DAYS 23	S Sgt	22 Nov 45
DESTINATION USA	DATE OF ARRIVAL 21 Dec 45						
39. PRIOR SERVICE None							
40. REASON AND AUTHORITY FOR SEPARATION Conv of Govt RR 1-1 Demobilization AR 615-365 15 Dec 44							
41. SERVICE SCHOOLS ATTENDED None						42. EDUCATION (Years) Grammar 8 High School 4 College 1	


PAY DATA VO 2544B

43. LONGEVITY FOR PAY PURPOSES			44. MUSTERING OUT PAY		45. SOLDIER DEPOSITS	46. TRAVEL PAY	47. TOTAL AMOUNT, NAME OF DISBURSING OFFICER
YEARS 2	MONTHS 11	DAYS 1	TOTAL \$ 300	THIS PAYMENT \$ 100		\$ 11.75	317.53 IRLAND E RICE CAPT ED

INSURANCE NOTICE

IMPORTANT IF PREMIUM IS NOT PAID WHEN DUE OR WITHIN THIRTY-ONE DAYS, HEREAFTER, INSURANCE WILL LAPSE. MAKE CHECKS OR MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO THE TREASURER OF THE U. S. AND FORWARD TO COLLECTIONS SUBDIVISION, VETERANS ADMINISTRATION, WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

48. KIND OF INSURANCE X Nat. Serv. X U.S. Govt. X None		49. HOW PAID X Allotment X Direct to V. A.		50. Effective Date of Allotment Discontinuance 31 Jan 46	51. Date of Next Premium Due (One month after 50) 28 Feb 46	52. PREMIUM DUE EACH MONTH \$ 6.50	53. INTENTION OF VETERAN TO X Continue X Continue Only X Discontinue
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54. 	55. REMARKS (This space for completion of above items or entry of other items specified in W. D. Directives) Lapel Button Issued ASR Score (2 Sep 45) 55 Inactive status SRC from 2 Feb 43 to 8 Feb 43						
56. SIGNATURE OF PERSON BEING SEPARATED Eugene E. Clemens	57. PERSONNEL OFFICER Type name, grade and organization - signature W B RISKDORPH 1st Lt. WAC						

Discharge



Armed Forces of the United States

This is to certify that

EUGENE E CLEMONS 36 424 912 Staff Sergeant

was discharged from the

Army of the United States

by Honorable Discharge
on 2 January 1946

at Fort Sheridan Illinois

Given at Washington, D. C., on 1 June 1956

John A. Klein
JOHN A. KLEIN
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

October 22, 1993 - A Drive to West Lafayette, IN

On a crisp, clear autumn day, I drove from Troy, MI to Flushing, MI to pick up my father (Gene Clemons) for our trip to West Lafayette, IN. My son, Gene's grandson Chad, was attending Purdue University. We had set aside this weekend for a trip to see him and to attend the Purdue-Ohio State football game. Dad had agreed to go even though Michigan was not playing. He would root with Chad for Purdue to win!!!

To say we were avid fans would be an understatement!! Great rivalry!! Dad was a University of Michigan graduate (1950) and I had graduated from Ohio State University in 1969. Chad was following in our footsteps in attending a great, Big Ten school Purdue. The trip to Indiana would take dad and me about 5 hours, a journey across the featureless, flat lands of the mid-west, gazing upon and passing an endless horizon of ready to be harvested corn fields. I wondered what we would talk about for all that distance. I soon found we had no trouble in finding topics to discuss.

We had not had much time in the prior years to really talk. Mom had died in December of 1991 and he had returned from Florida to be closer to family in Michigan. He spoke of how much he missed mom and was finding it difficult to make the adjustment, even at moments questioning whether he could even struggle any longer. He was sharing his deepest thoughts with me and I appreciated the moments.

As the conversation moved from one thing to another, I asked him about the war, WWII. He had never really spoken about it, and as a kid, I never thought to ask. Reluctantly, he started to tell of his experience. He had wanted to enlist, just as his father had done in WWI. I asked him why? He said he simply felt it was the right thing to do and he was proud to do so. He was 19 years old and had chosen the Army Air Corps. There was no such thing as a separate branch of service for the Air Force at that time. It was all combined as the Army. His military training in ordinances was at various stops across the country to Riverside, CA (the jumping off point for the southern Pacific theatre of war operations). He was to be stationed on Tinian, a small southern Pacific island in the Mariana Island group. He achieved Staff Sergeant rank in Ordinances. I asked him what this meant and he said, "I loaded bombs on the B-29's. We were very careful not to drop anything", he said with a snicker!!! Wow I thought....a dangerous job with no room for error!!!

Then I recalled that the B-29 was the bomber used to drop the atom bombs on Japan. The use of the bomb was, and still is, a very controversial issue. I asked him what he thought. He said, "We had to drop the bombs to save American lives. The Japanese would not have quit easily, they were too stubborn and proud." He continued, "In fact, even after Tinian was taken by the Marines, Japanese soldiers still remained on the island and would not surrender. All of us had to carry side arms when we went around the camp, or to the ocean for a swim just in case we were fired upon...which happened daily somewhere around the camp. Snipers would take pot shots from their hiding places in the surrounding hills. The Marines would go on patrol to root them out. Nasty little bastards!! The bomb was necessary!!!"

Being in ordinances, I asked if he had loaded the atom bomb onto the B-29. He quickly said, "No, they brought along a special crew for that purpose. The whole operation was setup at the end-of one of the outer runways. We could see through binoculars a lot of activity going on...like ants on an ant hill!!!" He stopped for a moment to rewind the memory and then continued, "Do you know how they loaded those bombs? They first had to dig deep pits into the ground. Then, they would wheel the bombs into the pit, move the B-29 over the pit, and gently hand crank with chains the bomb into the bay of the plane. Of course, all of this we learned after they dropped the bombs. Secrecy was so great. Hmmm...we were all very happy that they knew what they were doing and didn't blow us all up!!!" He just smiled and looked out the window. He was done talking about the War and we were almost to Purdue.

If not for this trip, I would not have known what my dad had done in WWII. He was a witness to history on a small island in the south pacific, far from his hometown of Jackson, MI... a humble member of the greatest generation. Proud of you dad!!!! Thanks!!!!!!

David Eugene Clemons

PS. From: "The Battle for Tinian" By William H. Stewart (used with permission)

"It is curious to speculate if there was a particular reason for the selection of Tinian as the site for assembling the final component, the firing mechanism, for the atomic bomb. One wonders if the island could have been selected rather than Saipan or Guam because it could be sacrificed in the event of an accidental detonation or aircraft accident involving the Enola Gay upon take-off. The fireball and flash created would have equaled the brilliance and heat of the sun's surface destroying the island completely. It was unthinkable that Guam should be destroyed since it was American territory and the people had already suffered so much. In addition, Guam's Apra Harbor was necessary to service the build-up for the possible invasion of the Japanese home islands. Saipan also had a deep-water harbor to accommodate the build-up of materiel necessary to support the invasion of Japan and there were thousands of U. S. troops on the island together with a large civilian population. Should an accidental explosion incinerate Tinian the more major military facilities on Saipan and Guam would be spared."

PSS. Oh....by the way.....Ohio State 45, Purdue 24!!! Go bucks!!!!



Woodland Cemetery, Jackson, Michigan (Front View)



Woodland Cemetery, Jackson, Michigan (Backside View)



*The United States of America
honors the memory of
Eugene E. Clemons*

*This certificate is awarded by a grateful
nation in recognition of devoted and
selfless consecration to the service
of our country in the Armed Forces
of the United States.*

President of the United States