



TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE
COMMISSIONER DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

1700 N. Congress Ave. • Austin, TX 78701-1495 • 512-463-5339 • FAX: 512-475-1415

PRESS RELEASE

Voices of Veterans: U.S. Army Air Corps Veteran Willie Green Shares His Story of Service During WWII and D-Day

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 03, 2024

Contact: Kimberly Hubbard
(512) 936-9582
media@glo.texas.gov

Austin — Today, Texas Land Commissioner Dawn Buckingham is proud to introduce the next installment of the series highlighting the VLB's Voices of Veterans oral history program. In this special episode, we highlight the service of Veterans who experienced D-Day. Today, we hear the story of U.S. Army Air Corps Veteran Willie Green, a mechanic and copilot in the CG4A combat glider program.

To listen to Mr. Green tell his story, visit VoicesofVeterans.org.

Born in Hamilton County, Texas, Willie Green was raised on his family farm with three brothers and two sisters. The family worked the farm to grow corn, cotton, and maze and produce livestock feed. Mr. Green admitted that he didn't realize he would one day join the military. However, when the war started while he was still in high school, he dropped out at barely 19 years old and volunteered to serve his country in WWII.

After basic training at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Mr. Green went to glider mechanics school. The CG4A glider took troops into combat towed by C-47 airplanes. Mr. Green recalled that the glider unit was "just like the paratroopers, that's what we were... they called us the Airborne Troop Carrier." When asked what flying in the gliders with no engines was like, Mr. Green chuckled and said, "Oh, you just had to go where the tow plane took you... they [the gliders] could land on a cow pasture or a cotton patch or anywhere else like that."

VOICES OF VETERANS



name Green, Willie		
military branch Army Air Corps	rank	conflict WWII
date interviewed 03/28/2012		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> interview available on voicesofveterans.org

Mr. Willie Green served in the U.S. Army Air Corps' glider corps during WWII. He practiced for many months before making a landing near Normandy a few days after the initial invasion.



Willie Green - Voices of Veterans

When Mr. Green completed his glider training in the States, his unit went to England to join the war. Unfortunately, shortly after arriving across the pond, the glider school was shut down in the States. This meant Mr. Green would not be flying combat missions in Europe, but he expressed that there was more than enough work on the ground to support the gliders and troops.

Mr. Green's experience of D-Day may have been from somewhere other than the air, but he was right in the thick of the action, ensuring the gliders were airworthy and ready

for this crucial mission. When asked about his and his unit's experience of D-Day, Mr. Green said, "Well, we were fully dressed, combat dressed, everybody. Just like we were part of it, but on the first mission... the initial Normandy D-Day mission my outfit flew, we flew the British Horsa Glider... and that glider would hold 40 men, fully equipped for combat."



Willie Green - Voices of Veterans

Preparing for the battle was hard, ceaseless work, but when the men took off to fight the Battle of Normandy, Mr. Green recalled a stirring of unique emotions. "I knew all the pilots, and I knew all the crews... and whenever you see them taking off like that on the Normandy D-Day initial invasion, it... it gives you a funny feeling. It was different." He also shared, "Whenever the time actually came, you know, some of the guys didn't come back, and that's what hurt too."

After his unit participated in the last invasion, where they "jumped the Rhine" and landed on German soil, Mr. Green said he was "ready to come back to Texas!" Though he was incredibly proud of the glider units and their part in WWII, Mr. Green admitted that it " kinda hurts me to realize there's a lot of people out there who don't know about the gliders program."

After the war and leaving the service, Mr. Green worked on his family farm for a year. He then moved to Midland, Texas, where he worked for the Texas-New Mexico Pipeline Company for 40 years. During these years, he and his wife had two sons. When asked what he would say to someone listening to his interview 100 years from now, Mr. Green let out his familiar chuckle and said, "Well...I don't know what that would be... other than I'm still a' kickin' right now, and luck to everybody."



Willie Green - Voices of Veterans

Veterans can email VoicesofVeterans@glo.texas.gov to tell their stories. Please note that the Veteran must be a resident of Texas at the time of their interview.

Voices of Veterans is a state agency's first Veteran oral history program. It records the stories of Texas Veterans through their time in service and after returning home from combat.

The VLB records interviews with veterans over the phone or in person. Their interviews are then permanently archived in the Office of Veterans Records at the GLO, where they join the historical documents of other Texas heroes such as Sam Houston, Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie, and William Barret Travis.

Veterans' interviews are also available to researchers, historians, genealogists, and the public. These precious records inspire future generations and remind us of our Veterans' sacrifices.

To listen to the over 500 archived stories of Veterans documented through the GLO's Voices of Veterans oral history program, visit VoicesofVeterans.org.