

Flying Tigers Scholarship Essay

It is the year 1943 my grandpa Earl Strobeck is a seventeen year old high school senior. My grandpa had said that he always wanted to serve the country in some way. He had made the decision at seventeen to go into the military. A year later when he turned eighteen in December of 1944 he joined the military. Being a part of the military had been a dream of his since he was a young teenager. My grandpa decided to enlist himself into the military, so he could finish up high school and graduate instead of going in right away. He ended up graduating a semester early towards the end of January. On February 5th, 1944 he officially started his military service in Kessler, Mississippi where he was put through basic training. His enlistment number was #17147384. He spent a 4 ½ months there training because he knew that he would be going into World War II a few months later. A month later my grandpa was shipped out to Denver, Colorado to a tech school called Lowlery Field. During his time there he learned how assemble guns and turrets. My grandpa excelled at this job and was assigned to be a part of the 69th repair squad shortly after. My grandpa was only there for a month. Shortly after leaving Lowlery Field, he was sent to a training center in San Antonio, Texas where he went through more intense training. My grandpa wasn't at the Kellyfield Training Center for long. He was only in Kellyfield for a month. In October of 1944 my grandpa was sent to New York City, New York where he was sent to attend Sperry Jeryoscope School. After attending Sperry Jeryoscope School for a couple of months, he was sent home to spend time with his family until he was called to serve in the war. He spent a total of 3 months until he was called to serve in the war. In January of 1945 he was told to go to Las Angles, California because he would be traveling by ship to Bombay, India. The trip to

Bombay, India lasted for a month, and he arrived there with many other people towards the beginning of March 1945. Once he arrived in Bombay, India he had to take a train to Calcutta, India. The train ride was five days long. The group my grandpa had been traveling with was called the 14th air force, but the Chinese gave them the nickname of The Flying Tigers. Once in Calcutta, India, the a group of about 300 men plus my grandpa were put into groups and told to drive 6x6 trucks to China down a road called Burma Road. My grandpa was one of the many drivers for all the different groups. My grandpa recalls this being the scariest part of being a part of the Flying Tigers group. He says this because Burma Road was a long road with many sharp turns and he was in charge of his whole group since he was a driver. He told me that it took twenty-five days to get to China and that they drove 1,700 miles to get there. He was sent to Kunming, China when he first arrived. He was in Kunming, China from May 1945 to December 1945. When he was there he was a part of the China Burma India Theater of Operations. During his time there he also got a job as an office clerk secretary. This job included typing many documents, and issuing supplies such as guns. In January 1946 he was sent to Shanghai, China. Once he was in Shanghai, China he was given an executive job position of military policeman. His duties included patrolling other soldiers and keep a close look over military base operations. He had this job for the rest of his time in the war. As the war was coming closer to an end, my grandpa told me about how many people started to leave the war because they had enough points to get out. My grandpa told me that he was in China a little while longer than most of the people he was with because he didn't have enough points to get out of the war. He was one of fifty people still left in China. My grandpa had said that if you wanted to leave the war you had to

have forty points to get out, but he only had twenty-four points. My grandpa had said that many people started to get out of the war in May 1945. This was a very interesting fact to me because I didn't even know you had points in the war. He said that he earned points by helping tear down the base camp and returning weapons back to where they got their weapons from. It took only a month for my grandpa to finally get enough points to get out of the military. He was discharged on June 6, 1946. He took the ship ride back to San Francisco, California and took a plane ride back to his hometown of Denver, Colorado and spent time with family. My grandpa told me about how he was able to learn many of the things he did so quickly because he took engineering and electrical courses in high school which helped him with many of the jobs he had during the war. My grandpa finished telling me his story about his time in the war saying how glad he was that he decided to go into the military because it made him experience a lot of new things and he was able to take away a lot of good things from his time in the war.