

1939: Distant Lightning – Overview

This book is about the impact of the Second World War on one community. Its focus is on veterans of the Greatest Generation, born between 1901 and 1927, and on the folks back home during the war.

Within this Chapter, **1939: Distant Lightning**, this **Overview** section provides background on the origins of the war in Europe as well as related community events of 1939.

Like the rest of northwestern Indiana, Pulaski County is flat – you can see the tornadoes coming. If you had the power to look even farther east, past Ohio, past the Allegheny Mountains, past Long Island, NY, to where the Atlantic Ocean meets the sky. Just on the horizon, there are flashes of lightning. That's not a storm on the Atlantic. That's Western Europe catching fire from sparks in Germany – halfway around the world to the east.

And, if you turned around to look far into the west, past Illinois, past the Rocky Mountains, past the Oregon coastline, to where the Pacific Ocean meets the sky, there, too, are flashes of lightning along the horizon. That's not a storm on the Pacific. That's Eastern Asia catching fire from sparks in Japan – a bit more than halfway around the world to the west.

While Pulaski County wasn't burning, its young men will soon be sent to help fight those faraway fires. Their elders knew what might be coming.

After four years, the Great War ended in 1918 after the United States had been fighting in Europe for just 20 months. By the 1930s, even with the "Noble Experiment" of Prohibition winding down and the Great Depression ramping up, routine had returned to Pulaski County – sort of. But significant change was underway, unnoticed by most.

At this point, most of the Greatest Generation had yet to know war, but if you were in high school, you knew your folks were stressed about money and more. There was new trouble brewing in Europe and Asia, but old folks were hoping that it wouldn't reach Pulaski County.

Two competing weeklies were published each Thursday, the *Pulaski County Democrat* and the *Winamac Republican*. For the most part, if news didn't happen within twenty miles or so, or affect farming, it wasn't reported. Each week, the small staff, numbering 5 or 6, did their own new-gathering as well as their other office duties. There was no money for dedicated reporters or subscriptions to national news services like the Associated Press. Readers of the dailies in nearby Logansport and larger cities beyond had larger circulations, and so there was much more detail about state, national, and international news.

While the United States did not enter the war until late 1941, much of Europe and Asia were in turmoil in 1939. Germany had been threatening its European neighbors since the mid-1930s, and Italy had invaded Ethiopia in East Africa in 1936. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (AKA "Britain") and France declared war on Germany when it invaded Poland in September 1939. There was also turmoil in the Far East. China and other countries had been threatened by Japan as far back as the mid-1890s, but the pace picked up in the late 1930s.

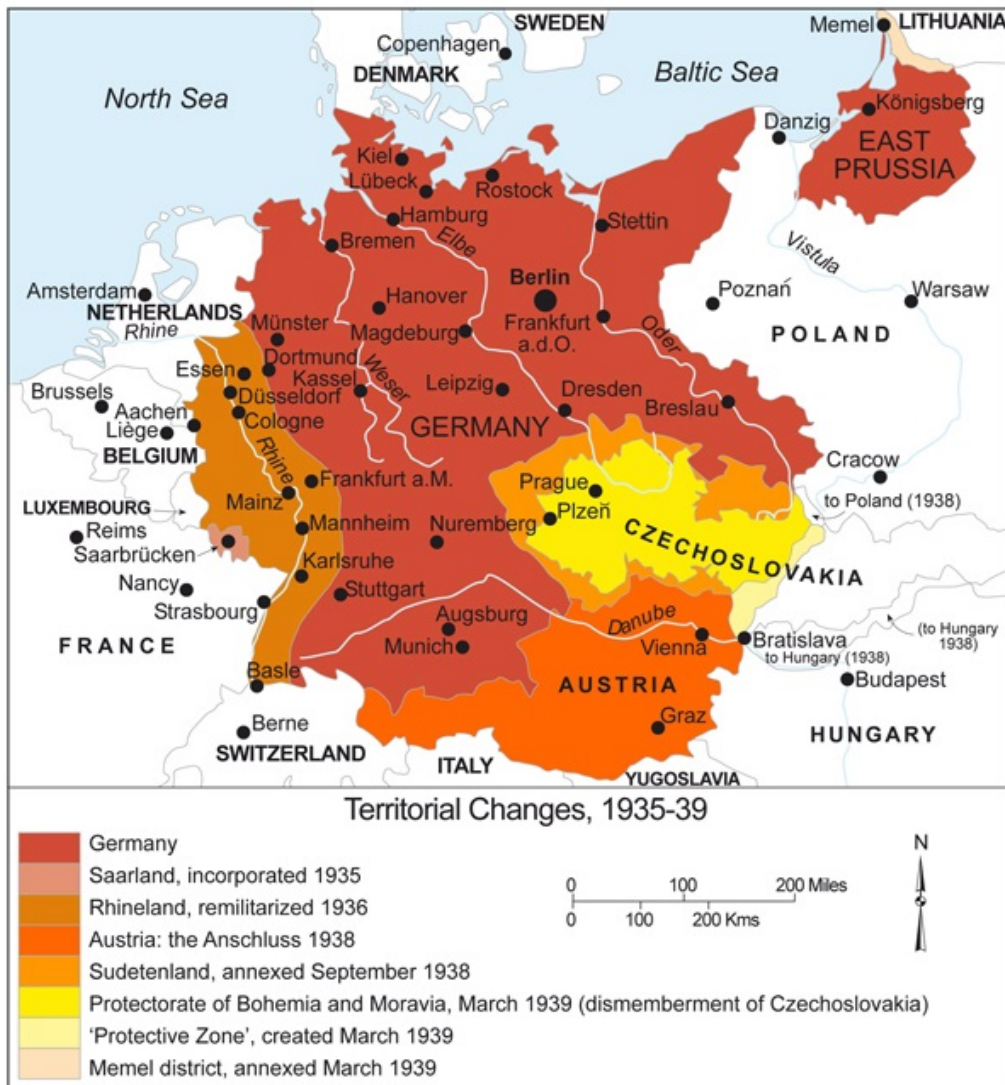
Our Boys: A Community During World War II

For several years, U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) was focused on addressing the effects of the Great Depression. Some attention now shifted to preparing to help Britain defend itself and our own European interests, as well as protect our own shipping lanes and coastline from Germany.

Turmoil in Europe was escalating. The primary root of the new war in Europe was the Treaty of Versailles, ending "The Great War". It was signed by Germany and most of the Allied Powers. Through it, Germany was punished in four ways: Blame, Reparations, Armed Forces, and Territory. Germany acknowledged the responsibility for the war. Additionally, it was held financially responsible for all war-related damage. The severe limitations were placed on its armed forces, likely leaving the Germans feeling vulnerable. Finally, Germany lost 13% of its land and 10% of its population, including iron and coal-producing regions. With its diminished self-image, war debt, reduced capacity to defend itself, and decreased capacity to rebuild its economy, Germany was vulnerable to exploitation. Adolf Hitler seized the opportunity.

Active in politics after the Great War, Hitler was briefly jailed for a failed attempt to overthrow the German government in 1923. By 1932, he controlled the majority of the legislature's seats. Two years later, Hitler was ruler. Initially, he had his eye on land adjacent to Germany, claiming a cultural connection. Between 1935 and 1938, the population of the Saar region of France voted to reunite with Germany; Hitler occupied the Rhineland region west of Germany; annexed the Sudetenland regions from Czechoslovakia, and annexed the entire country of Austria. In 1939, Germany invaded neighboring Poland, almost doubling Germany's territory. Subsequently, Britain and France declared war on Germany, starting the war in Europe.

1939: Distant Lightning – Overview



Cartography by [Mapping Solutions](#), Alaska.

Source: Map 1, "Territorial Changes, 1935-1939," in *Germany and the Second World War*, edited by the Research Institute for Military History, Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany. Volume I, *The Build-up of German Aggression*, by Wilhelm Deist, Manfred Messerschmidt, Hans-Erich Volkmann, and Wolfram Wette. Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1990.

Territorial Changes, 1935-39. https://ghdi.ghi-dc.org/map.cfm?map_id=2884/.

US President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) now had two priorities: economic recovery from the Great Depression and preparation for war.

There was still hope that the United States could remain neutral, rather than join Britain and France as it had in the prior Great War. Business leaders such as Henry Ford and Joseph Kennedy, and cultural leaders such as Charles Lindbergh, railed against FDR's efforts to prepare for war.

Our Boys: A Community During World War II

There were already many of “Our Boys” from the community in service in 1939. And others were preparing to join.

Many high school students were mindful of Hitler’s threat. Surely that included some of the 1939 Winamac High School basketball team and their friends.

And it was surely on the mind of Dick, a West Point graduate and Army Air Corps pilot, and George, a Navy Pilot.

Details are included in this chapter’s section, **War Stories**.

1939: Distant Lightning – Community Climate

This recurring section, **Community Climate**, summarizes international, national, state, and local news, as well as the community's entertainment.

In 1939 in Pulaski County, Indiana, except for an intermittent column, “War in Europe” in the *Democrat*, there was only one item every month or so in the two weeklies about the war in Europe. Folks likely knew about Germany threatening its neighbors and about President FDR’s declarations of neutrality while preparing for war, but little additional detail. The Kiwanis Service Club's weekly luncheon in Winamac that year featured three talks on the war in Europe. From those talks, word likely spread about bad conditions in Europe.

In the 1930s, many Pulaski County men were already in the service, including my maternal uncle, George, a Navy pilot. They were most likely seeking adventure, rather than for a patriotic purpose. Another pilot, Dick, was mentioned more frequently in the weeklies. In the late 1920s, Dick was attending West Point and playing on the football team. In the late 1930s, his flights were frequently chronicled in the local weeklies. The future is bright for Dick, a West Point graduate and Army Air Corps bomber pilot who once dined with Charles Lindbergh.

During World War II, there was no internet and no television. Television was more than a decade distant, and the internet was fifty years away. The primary news sources were the two competing local weeklies, two nearby daily newspapers, two national radio networks, and a short newsreel at the local movie theatre.

With every new movie appeared at the local theatre, came a newsreel of 9 minutes or less. Nearly all of the newsreel’s content would be about the war. Each night, there was 15 minutes of world and national news and commentary on the radio.

Of course, nearly every Pulaski County resident read one of the two competing local weeklies: Pulaski County (IN) *Democrat* and Winamac (IN) *Republican*. Those papers rarely included news beyond the county, unless it was of interest to the farm community or used as filler.

Many folks supplemented those local weeklies with one of two daily newspapers in Logansport, a large city about 20 miles to the south in a neighboring county. Those dailies, *Logansport Pharos-Tribune* and *Logansport Press*, were published six days each week. You could also subscribe to one of several Indianapolis daily newspapers. From those dailies, you got state, national, and international news.

In 1939, half of the daily headlines of the *Logansport Pharos-Tribune* were related to the wars in Japan and Europe, primarily German aggression. About 8% of the headlines were about FDR’s efforts to prepare for war, and about 4% related to the Depression.

By the end of 1939, folks in Pulaski County knew that Britain and France had declared war on Germany after it invaded Poland. And that the US was neutral, although sympathetic to Britain and France. Folks likely expected it to play out like the “Great War”, with the US neutral for some years, then joining in the fight with Germany and ending it within a year or so.

Our Boys: A Community During World War II

International News

In the spring of 1939, the Spanish Civil War ended with the monarchy's defeat. A fascist regime assumed control.

Throughout the spring, Britain challenged Germany's belligerent stance. Finally, in August, Britain declared that if Germany invaded Poland, it would declare war on Germany.

In August, the Polish port city of Danzig had been threatened by Germany. In September, Germany and Russia invaded and shared control of Poland. And, of course, Britain declared war on Germany. And the war in Europe had begun with Britain and France leading the fight against Germany and Italy. At the time, Russia had a nonaggression pact with Germany, allowing them to share Poland.

Throughout the year, FDR maintained neutrality. He also moved forward with increasing the US stockpile of weapons. When Germany invaded Poland, FDR successfully cancelled arms embargoes legislated by Congress and proceeded to sell arms to Britain.

After the invasion of Poland, France skirmished with Germany along the Rhine River.

By November, Atlantic and North Sea shipping was dangerous for all, whether ships carried weapons or commercial cargo. German submarines likely couldn't tell or care.

In late November, Russia invaded Finland, but the advance was slow.

National News

The US Federal Security Agency (FSA) was founded to oversee food and drug safety, education funding, public health programs, and Social Security. Additionally, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was established to provide work for young men.

FDR made progress on "stacking" the Supreme Court by appointing Justices Douglas and Frankfurter, and when another died at year's end, he was able to appoint a third. With more supportive Justices, FDR was able to execute his economic and international goals better.

National coal and auto strikes continued.

In Flushing, New York, the 1939 World's Fair opened.

State News

The Premarital Examination Law, which required a blood test for syphilis, was passed.

Soybeans had become a significant crop. Production was 1.3M acres, nearly a fivefold increase over 1929 acreage.

1939: Distant Lightning – Community Climate

Typhoid death rate further dropped over the past nine years from 3.7 per hundred thousand to 1.0 per hundred thousand.

Local News

This recurring subsection, **Local News**, includes selected war-related news appearing in the local weekly newspapers. Note that these two weeklies focused on local news; it was relentlessly local. The front page covered births, weddings, and deaths, as well as illnesses, accidents, courthouse news, and local government news. The paper included parties and visits from distant relatives and friends. Of some 12,000 county residents, over 2,000 names appeared in each issue. There was very little national or international news consistently published. That was the domain of daily newspapers in much larger cities to which some Pulaski County residents also subscribed.

Markets

In the local weeklies, any news beyond the county was more likely to be agriculture-related or just “filler”.

For 1939, to give a sense of the economy, here are the January market prices farmers earned. (Pearl Harbor was still almost three years away.)

The Markets	
(Thursday only.)	
Cattle —	
Steers	\$4.00-\$7.00
Stockers and feeders ..	\$3.00-\$5.00
Cows	\$2.00-\$5.00
Canners and cutters ..	\$1.00-\$2.00
Veal Calves	\$6.00 to \$8.00
Hogs	\$6.50-\$7.75
Sheep, per cwt.	\$2.50
Lambs, per cwt.	\$5.00-\$6.00
Wheat, bu. ....	.56
Oats, new .....	.24
Rye, new .....	.40
New Corn, No. 4, 70 lbs. ....	.45
Soybeans, seed class, bu. ....	.69
Buckwheat, No. 2, per cwt.	1.00
Hens	11-16
Old Roosters .....	.10
Eggs, per doz. ....	.19

Pulaski County (IN) Democrat 5 Jan 1939: 8.

THE MARKETS	
Choice Hogs	\$8.00
Choice Light Sows	\$6.15
Grass Steers & Heifers ..	5.50-6.50
Fed Steers & Heifers ..	8.00-9.00
Cows	4.00-5.50
Veal Calves	6.00-8.00
Lambs	7.00-7.50
Sheep	4.00
<hr/>	
Wheat, No. 2 .....	.59
Corn .....	.45
Oats, No. 2 .....	.24
Soybeans .....	.69
Rye, No. 2 .....	.40
Buckwheat, No. 2, cwt.	\$1.00
Eggs	19
Hens .....	.11 to .16
Roosters .....	.10

Winamac (IN) Republican 5 Jan 1939: 8

Our Boys: A Community During World War II

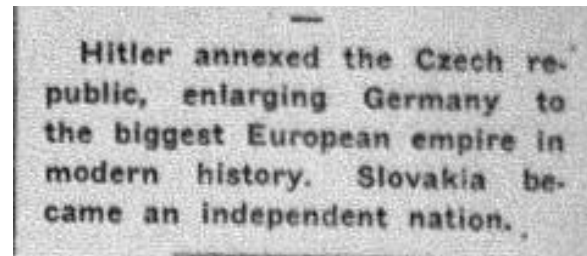
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The War in Europe

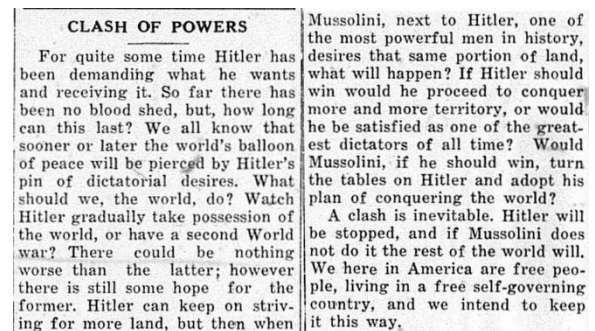
In Berlin, maps were being redrawn because Hitler invaded the Czech Republic. Back in Winamac, in the Student Section of a local newspaper, high school students were worried about Hitler and Mussolini.



Winamac (IN) Republican 2 Feb 1939: 3.



Pulaski County (IN) Democrat 16 Mar 1939: 3.



Winamac (IN) Republican 13 Apr 1939: 7.



Winamac (IN) Republican 28 Sep 1939: 1.

Our Boys: A Community During World War II



Winamac (IN) Republican 19 Oct 1939: 8.

SPARSE WAR NEWS HINTS BIG BATTLE

**SUBMARINES ARE WARNED
FROM U. S. WATERS;
NEUTRALITY
MEETING**

Paris: German troops clash with French main line of resistance all along 100-mile long northern wing of western front in big offensive.

Berlin: Germany claims huge gains on western front. Officers and crew of submarine which sank British battleship are decorated and feted.

London: British claim air victories over German planes that attempted second Scapa flow raid.

Istanbul: Turkey expected to sign mutual assistance pacts with Great Britain and France in day or two. German envoy leaves for home.

Moscow: Russia proceeds with Finnish negotiations, sends troops into Estonia under agreement.

Stockholm: Kings of Norway, Sweden, Denmark and President of Finland meeting to plan protection of neutrality.

Washington: President Roosevelt bars belligerent submarines from United States ports and territorial waters "to protect peace, commerce and security."

Winamac (IN) Republican 19 Oct 1939: 1.

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War News through the Kiwanis Club

The Kiwanis Club was a weekly luncheon of local businessmen. Guest speakers shared their perspectives on current issues with the membership. In 1939, they heard three individuals comment on Hitler and Germany.

Ex-German Soldier, Now Patriotic U. S. Citizen, Warns of Nazi-ism

Word pictures of conditions in Germany at the close of the World war, and again as he saw them on a visit two years ago, were drawn vividly by Philip Schelbert of Francesville in an interesting talk before the Winamac Kiwanis club Tuesday noon.

Mr. Schelbert, now thirty-six years of age, entered the German army as a lad of fifteen and served two years in the trenches. After the armistice the country was overrun by Bolshevistic mobs, as he relates it, partially as terrorists and partially in a sincere search for food.

The government was weak and unable to cope with conditions. It was then that Hitler came into prominence, with a program far more idealistic than more recent events have illustrated. He was pushed into power by a populace hoping to bring about better conditions, with no suspicion that abuse of such power would reach its present extent.

America His Choice.

Mr. Schelbert's father had been a judge for many years, socially prominent in his community. Fearful of the future, he urged his son to seek a home in another country. The young man chose America. For more than two years he worked on a dairy farm in Wisconsin, then for a time in Chicago, and later came to Pulaski county. He is a naturalized citizen of the United States and now lives on a farm in Salem township. His wife was formerly Miss Ethel Bird, a Beaver township teacher.

When, with his wife and children, he made a business trip back to Germany two years ago, he was amazed to note the number of soldiers in evidence everywhere. He relates difficulties in obtaining food, and confidential conversations that revealed infernal dissatisfaction with the Nazi rule.

But it was also explained to him that no leader had appeared to head a change. "With twenty-one political parties in this country before Hitler took charge, how could we expect a successful organization against him?" was the way one citizen put it.

No Use for Hitler.

Mr. Schelbert is bitter against Hitler's seizure of Czechoslovakia, which he characterizes as theft, and he berates collection of money for alleged "relief" but which he believes goes into the fund for war preparations. He expresses the opinion that Hitler is going so far that he will bring about his own ruin, but suspects that he has assistants prepared to step into his shoes.

Why America should permit Communists and Socialists to have a place on our tickets at election time are among the things which Mr. Schelbert cannot understand. He says he has already seen too much of the kind of government they propose. "And what is there," he asks, "to prevent us from having a Nazi ticket before long? You native American citizens had better be on your guard," he warns.

Source of Propaganda.

He also criticizes those in this country who make public statements finding fault with the U. S. government. He points out that folks who speak or print such fault-finding statements may only intend to criticize a political party, but that those statements are used in Germany as propaganda to convince the people there that wide dissatisfaction exists in America with its democratic form of government.

"Even in my school days," declares Mr. Schelbert, "we were not told of the opportunities that exists in America. I had to come here before I learned what it really means to live in a land of liberty."

GIRL TRAVELER IS 'SOLD' ON AMERICA

Miss Imogene Warder Tells Kiwanians and Ladies of European Trips.

"The poorest people in America are better off than the rich people of Europe," declared Miss Imogene Warder, traveler and lecturer, in an address at the Winamac Kiwanis club's autumn ladies' party Tuesday evening.

"If there are people in America who really believe that they would enjoy living in Europe more than they do here, or that any of the European systems of government are better than the American form, they should be compelled to go back to the country that they profess to think so much of," she further asserted, declaring that such persons will be quickly disillusioned on reaching any of the forty foreign countries that she has visited.

Miss Warder, a native of Peru, Ind., but now a resident of Hollywood, Calif., sketched the Spanish revolution as seen through the eyes of an American girl first hand, relating personal experiences which she and a girl companion had there previous to and during the early part of the recent civil war.

Taught from Childhood.

Other extensive travels of Miss Warder included a 2000-mile bicycle trip through Ireland, and visits of various length to practically all the European countries and some in the northern part of Africa.

In reply to a question often asked concerning the attitude of the German people toward Hitler, the speaker remarked that older people in that country do not say much to strangers, but that distinct support of Hitler can be

Strong for America



Miss Imogene Warder of Hollywood, Calif., who stressed the value of American institutions in an address before the Winamac Kiwanis club Tuesday evening, as she related to members and lady guests some of her experiences as a traveler in Europe.

sensed among the younger class. Children have been taught to believe, she said, that Hitler has been sent to Germany by God, and that the German people should be thankful he was sent to them rather than to some other country.

Miss Warder includes in her talk a warning to Americans against tolerating propaganda that comes from different parts of Europe, designed to create support for various sorts of "isms" fostered there.

Pulaski County (IN) Democrat 13 Apr 1939: 1.

Pulaski County (IN) Democrat 19 Oct 1939: 1&8.

Gripping Story of War-Torn Europe

Miss Imogene Warder of Hollywood, Cal., was the headliner at the Kiwanis Ladies night Tuesday in the Methodist dining room. Miss Warder, a native of Peru, has traveled extensively in Europe, having visited some 40 countries and principalities.

She described life in Andorra, a tiny country 18 miles wide and 25 miles long lying between France and Spain. This country has some 6,000 inhabitants and one improved road. Next to farming, she said, smuggling is the principal industry. During her stay there, when time hung heavy on her hands, she and her companion would spend the afternoons visiting with Andorra's president, who didn't seem to be a very busy man. On the whole the people were filthy and ignorant, but one learned one had heard of America and also that over here some people take baths as often as once a week.

The speaker's main topic was Spain, which she described as a country of great beauty and abject poverty. While she was in Andorra, the Spanish revolution broke and she was compelled to stay there for quite a while. She told of a Spanish friend who had an electric refrigerator, which was an object of curiosity and admiration by her friends. When Miss Warder, after hearing repeated raptures over this unusual machine, told her Spanish friends one day that many homes in the United States had electric refrigeration, they gave her the impression that she was exaggerating, to say the least. A Ford car in

Spain costs \$2,500 with taxes of \$250 a year and gasoline selling at 60c a gallon. Under these conditions, of course, only the rich have cars. When she mentioned to her Spanish friends that even working men in America owned cars, it was another case of lifted eyebrows and questioning looks.

Miss Warder told of miners in Spain working in water to their waists at 14c a day. When they struck for higher wages the government brutally suppressed the strike with Moroccan soldiery. Other instances were of men working for \$3 a year plus their board and room. A man in Spain with 2c in his pocket feels rich. She stated that far from being "reds," the Loyalists were only ordinary people who were striving to better their conditions of living and education, although under the poverty stricken conditions existing there, Communism was rapidly increasing. When she was finally able to get back into Spain the American consul immediately sent her to France on a British warship.

During the course of her two years and a half in Europe, she also traveled in Germany, Russia, Czecho-Slovakia, Italy, France and elsewhere. In Czecho-Slovakia she found the people proud of their new-found country and liberty, and failed entirely to note any yearning for union with Germany, which Hitler claimed when this country was recently swallowed up by him. In Russia several families live in one room, and six young men were delighted when they were able to get a room of

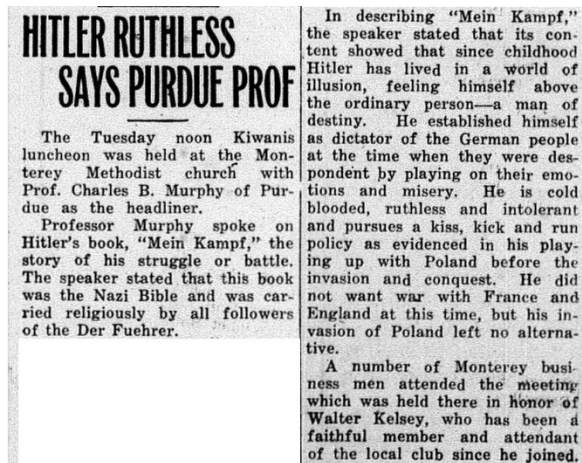
their own. For centuries, Europe has seen a revolution of some sort every year and a major war every 25 years.

In Berlin she admired a pocketbook in a store window and went in to purchase it. The store was operated by a Jew, and a German storm trooper followed her in. When she asked to see the purse with a view to purchasing it, the trooper eyed the old Jew, who then stated the pocketbook was not for sale. Apparently the young Germans were eager for war as they had been brought up on its glories. However, the older ones, who knew what war is, were not so keen for it, although they dared not say so. Everything in Germany starts and ends with "Heil Hitler." She returned to the United States on the famous German liner Bremen, and even the menus on this ship had "Heil Hitler" at the top and bottom. She got so tired of the continual repetition of this phrase that she could almost scream. Incidentally, she said a like condition exists in Italy where numerous attempts have been made on the life of Mussolini and it isn't safe to mention his name even in your hotel room. She and her friend, however, got around this by referring to Il Duce as Huey Long.

In closing her interesting talk, Miss Warder plead for this country to remain out of any European war. She told of the horrors of the Spanish revolution and of the terrible aftermath of war in the broken and diseased bodies of men to whom death would be a blessing.

Winamac (IN) Republican 19 Oct 1939: 1.

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Winamac (IN) Republican 30 Nov 1939: 1.

Our Boys: A Community During World War II

Food Prices and the War in Europe

A grocery chain and an agricultural expert allayed fears of food supply problems related to the war in Europe.

AN IMPORTANT STATEMENT FROM A&P ABOUT WAR DAYS AND FOOD PRICES

A & P's policy will remain unchanged—that policy is simply this: A & P will provide good food at the lowest prices possible. As always, we will operate our stores and markets with the interest of our customers constantly in mind. We know the hardships that increased food prices can bring to countless families, therefore, our prices will be adjusted only to the extent that it is absolutely necessary. If owing to the laws of supply and demand the prices for food we purchase move upward, obviously, we will have to pay the higher cost and change retail prices accordingly. You have our assurance, however, that A & P's margin of profit will continue to be very small and normal in every respect. Thus—we pledge to our six million loyal customers the best efforts of our wide-spread organization to keep our prices as low as sound business judgment will permit. We repeat—A & P's policy will be unchanged . . . Good Foods at the Lowest Prices Possible.

DOUGHNUTS		Fresh dz.	12c
Peaches	Iona 2 Lge. Cans	29c	Iona Peas 3 Cans 25c
Apricots	Iona 2 Lge. Cans	29c	Spinach 3 Cans 25c
Grapefruit	Med. Can	10c	Hominy Med. Can 5c
Cherries	New Pack Med. Can	10c	Sauer Kraut 3 Lge. Cans 25c
SALAD DRESSING		ANN PAGE Qt. Jar	29c
Tomato Juice	Lge. 2 For	15c	Peanut Butter 2 Lbs. For 23c
Grapefruit Juice	2 For	15c	Mustard Qt. Jar 10c
Pineapple Juice	No. 5 Can	29c	Pickles Sweet Qt. 25c
Karo Syrup	Blue Label 5 Lbs.	33c	Spry or Crisco Lb. 18c
PINEAPPLE		IONA Sliced or Crushed 2 Lge. Cans	37c
Sparkle	ANN PAGE Gelatin Dessert 5 Pkgs.	20c	French Dressing ANN PAGE 1/2-Pt. Jar 10c
Ajax Soap	Large 4 For	15c	Shredded Wheat Pkg. 10c
Super Suds	Red Label 2 Lge. Pkgs.	35c	Whitchose Milk 4 For 23c
Concentrated Super Suds			
2 Lge. Pkgs.		39c	
Palmolive SOAP			
4 Cakes		23c	
Crystal White SOAP			
7 Giant Bars		25c	
LARGE KALAMAZOO CELERY .....bunch 5c			
FANCY CALIFORNIA GRAPES .....2 lbs. 15c			
CAULIFLOWER .....per head 17c			
A&P FOOD STORES			

Pulaski County (IN) Democrat 14 Sep 1939: 2.

Says War May Stiffen Prices, But Sees Plenty

"In my opinion, the war in Europe will strengthen many farm prices here, but consumers need have no fear of shortage or runaway prices," U. C. Budd, chairman of the Pulaski County Agricultural Conservation Committee, stated in commenting on the effects the European war will have on the operations of the farmers in this county.

"Such advances in farm prices as may occur will tend to restore the balance between farm and city prices and help to bring about normal business and employment," he said.

Reminding Pulaski county farmers that this year's wheat carryover in the nation is estimated at 254 million bushels, in comparison to 115 million bushels average carryover for the five years from 1924 to 1928, Mr. Budd pointed out that the national wheat acreage allotment for 1940 is 62 million acres. This is seven million acres larger than this year, and the highest wheat acreage since 1915.

In the case of corn, the Chairman explained that the October 1 carryover is estimated at 470 million bushels and that the September crop report indicated a 1939 corn crop of about 2,523,000,000 bushels. The present large carryover of corn, he said, will undoubtedly make the total 1939-40 even larger than the 1938-39 supply.

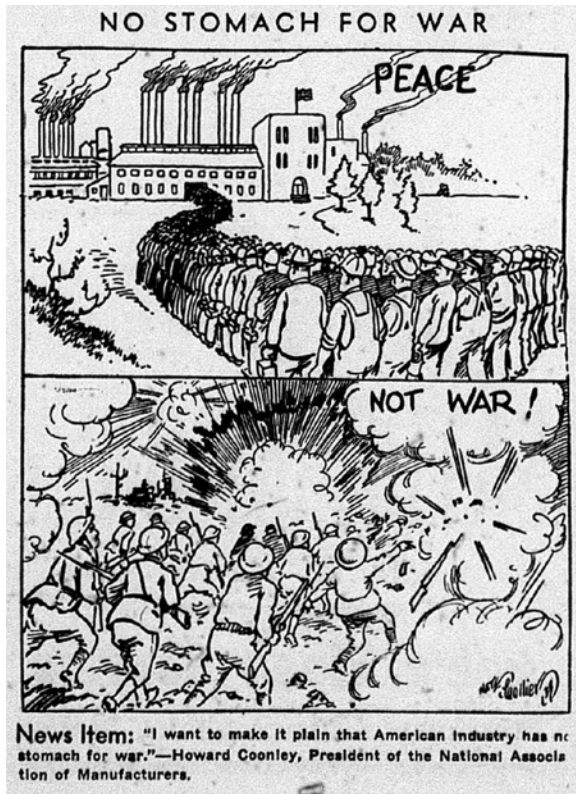
Comparing present farming conditions with conditions at the time of the World war, Mr. Budd stated that "we farmers are now in a better all-around position to meet emergencies than we were in 1917. From farm to kitchen, the whole system of producing, and distributing has been greatly improved and simplified," he explained.

Pulaski County (IN) Democrat 19 Oct 1939: 8.

1939: Distant Lightning – Community Climate

Resistance to joining the War in Europe

The *Winamac Republican* railed against joining the war in Europe.



Winamac (IN) Republican 1 Jun 1939: 6.



Winamac (IN) Republican 26 Oct 1939: 6.



Winamac (IN) Republican 9 Nov 1939: 1&5.

The millionaires, or so-called big-shots, are responsible for our wars. They see an opportunity to make more money by selling munitions to warring countries. And do their sons go to war? No! They do not! Their sons are at home, maybe in a recruiting station, where they never hear a gunshot and never see the boy next to him get his head shot off.

As citizens of the United States of America, it is your duty to keep the United States out of the present European conflict!

How can you do this? Well, there is very little you can do if the millionaires have their way. However, I say this: "Why should we send the best men of our country to war in Europe? Why should we send our boys over there to be slaughtered as so many rats?"

Truly, if you are an American, you will find some way to keep your own son home! If they must fight, and fight they will, because they have done so since the coming of man, why should we interfere? We are over 2,000 miles from Europe. What the mad-men like Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin do is none of our business.

Today, 21 years after the World War we are still paying taxes for the debts contracted in

(Continued on Page 5)

WAR AGAIN, 1939? (Continued From Page 1)

1914-1918! Some of the foreign countries have never paid back the money loaned them and never will!

The men who caused the great World War never had to pay for the debts contracted then. It was the generations to come that was to pay them. And so it is now. President Roosevelt will never have to pay the debts that will be contracted through the Arms Embargo Act! It will be you—and me! The citizens who are in their early teens. And the generations to come.

I say, take warning from the above picture—those thousands of white crosses. — **KEEP OUR BOYS HERE IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.** It is a great place to live.

If Hitler wants to fight let him come to the United States of America! He is afraid to do this as he knows the superiority of our defenses and equipment. Why should we be fools again and send a million young men to their deaths in Europe. Let them die in America if they must die at all.

How many veterans are there who will never walk again or see, and some will never talk as a result of the last war? There are hundreds of thousands of them. And what is more, how many of them would want to go again? Very few as they know now how foolish it was then, and it is now.

On November 11th and May 30th we pay tribute to our dead heroes. But if we had our heads it would not be necessary as we could have saved millions of lives by keeping our boys at home. Can these two days of mourning each year bring back to the gray-haired mother her long lost son?

The foregoing is written by a youth who will be one of the first to go to the front if war is declared. He is only 19 years of age and, like thousand of others, the government might send him to his death!

As citizens it is your duty to try to keep the United States out of the present, and future, European wars.

News for the Future

There were events in 1939 that were unknown to residents of Pulaski County but would become particularly important.

Germany and Italy signed the "Pact of Steel".

Physicists Alfred Einstein and Leo Szilárd advised FDR to construct an atom bomb.

Germany and Russia signed the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, which allowed the two countries to partition Poland after it was invaded. Two years later, Germany attacked Russia, which many scholars see as Germany's biggest mistake.

Our Boys: A Community During World War II

The popular music of 1939 included:

Over the Rainbow	Judy Garland	Body and Soul	Coleman Hawkins
Strange Fruit	Billie Holiday	If I Didn't Care	The Ink Spots
Three Little Fishies	Kay Kyser	Deep Purple	Larry Clinton
Back in the Saddle Again	Gene Autry	Beer Barrel Polka (Roll out the Barrel)	Will Glahe
Beer Barrel Polka (Roll out the Barrel)	The Andrews Sisters	And the Angels Sing	Martha Tilton
We'll Meet Again	Vera Lynn	South of the Border (Down Mexico Way)	Shep Fields
An Apple For The Teacher	Bing Crosby and Connee Boswell	Tea For Two	Art Tatum
Hold Tight, Hold Tight	The Andrews Sisters	At the Woodchopper's Ball	Woody Herman
Moonlight Serenade	Glenn Miller	San Antonio Rose	Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys
God Bless America	Kate Smith	Blue Orchids	Glenn Miller

The most popular movies of 1939 were:

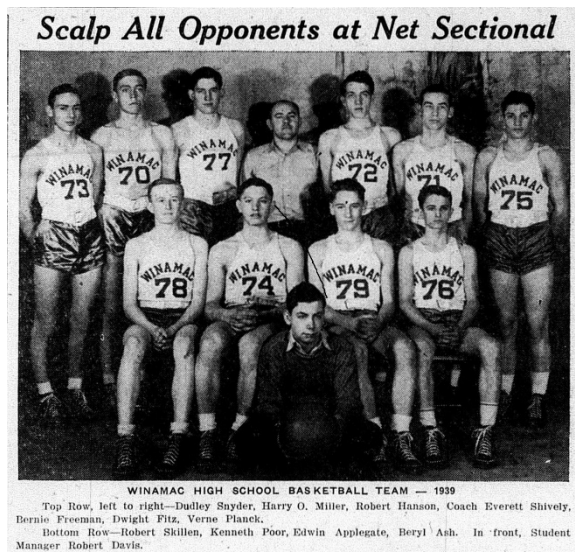
Gone with the Wind Clark Gable & Vivien Leigh
Mr. Smith Goes to Washington James Stewart & Jean Arthur
Jesse James Tyrone Power and Henry Fonda
Babes in Arms Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland
The Wizard of Oz Judy Garland & Frank Morgan
Goodbye, Mr. Chips Robert Donat & Greer Garson
Dodge City Errol Flynn
The Rains Came Myrna Loy, Tyrone Power, and George Brent
The Women Norma Shearer, Joan Crawford, and Rosalind Russell
Drums Along the Mohawk Claudette Colbert and Henry Fonda

1939: Distant Lightning – War Stories

This recurring section, **War Stories**, is about individuals who, during the year, had war-related stories.

1939 Winamac Indiana Basketball Team

All ten of the 1939 Basketball Team and their student manager, plus two buddies from Chapman's Double Dip Shop went to war. Three would not return.



Pulaski County (IN) Democrat 9 Mar 1939: 1.



Pulaski County Public Library

Yesterday at 7:04 AM · 🌐

Flashback Friday! Meet the Winamac Indians, 1939 Sectional Champions, shown here posing in front of Chapman's Double Dip Shop just south of the Isis Theatre.

Front: (l-r) Bob Shank, Edwin Applegate, Mary Thompson, Vern Planck, Betty Dilts, Bob Skillen, and Beryl Ash

Back: Harry O. Miller, Harold Lebo, Bob Hansen, Bernie Freeman, Dwight Fitz, Dudley Snyder, and Kenneth Poor.

[Source: Pulaski County Journal, Oct. 22, 1997]



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2 Comments 8 Shares

Pulaski County (IN) Journal 22 Oct 1997.

Nervous high schoolers react (from Student section)

CLASH OF POWERS

For quite some time Hitler has been demanding what he wants and receiving it. So far there has been no blood shed, but, how long can this last? We all know that sooner or later the world's balloon of peace will be pierced by Hitler's pin of dictatorial desires. What should we, the world, do? Watch Hitler gradually take possession of the world, or have a second World war? There could be nothing worse than the latter; however there is still some hope for the former. Hitler can keep on striving for more land, but then when

Mussolini, next to Hitler, one of the most powerful men in history, desires that same portion of land, what will happen? If Hitler should win would he proceed to conquer more and more territory, or would he be satisfied as one of the greatest dictators of all time? Would Mussolini, if he should win, turn the tables on Hitler and adopt his plan of conquering the world?

A clash is inevitable. Hitler will be stopped, and if Mussolini does not do it the rest of the world will. We here in America are free people, living in a free self-governing country, and we intend to keep it this way.

Winamac (IN) Republican 13 Apr 1939: 7.

Lost Year, Say Flier Now Dead

Reported missing a year ago while on a South Pacific flight, Lieut. Bernard G. Freeman was reported officially dead this week, according to a War Department letter received by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Edward D. Freeman.

Lieut. Freeman, 24 years old, enlisted in February, 1941, and had been overseas in the South Pacific area for 20 months. A graduate of Winamac high school, he was one of twins. His brother, Vernon, died at the age of 10 months.

He received his final training and was graduated a second lieutenant from the Douglas Airport, Douglas, Arizona, in January, 1944.

The letter to the parents said, in part:

"Since your son, Second Lieutenant Bernard G. Freeman, Air Corps, was reported missing January 4, 1945, the War Department has entertained the hope that he survived and that information would be revealed dispelling the uncertainty surrounding his absence. However, as in many cases, the conditions of warfare deny us such information. The record concerning your son shows that he departed in a B-24 (Liberator) bomber from Pitoe Air-drome, Morotai Island, for Carney Field, Gaudalcanal, Solomon Islands. Radio contact was made upon arrival at Momote, Los Negros Island, Admiralty Islands, after which no further contact with the plane was made. Extensive searches were conducted over the intended route, including an area twenty miles on each side of the route without finding any trace of the plane or personnel.

Full consideration has recently been given to all available information bearing on the absence of your son, including all records, reports and circumstances. These have been carefully reviewed and considered in view of the fact that twelve months have now expired without the receipt of evidence to support

Lost In Pacific



Lt. Bernard Freeman

Lt. Bernard Freeman, missing a year in the Pacific, was reported officially dead this week by the War Department.

a continued presumptive finding of death, accordingly an official finding of death has been recorded under the provisions of Public Law 490, 77th Congress, approved March 7, 1942, as amended.

The finding does not establish an actual or probable date of death; however, as required by law, it includes a presumptive date of death for the termination of pay and allowances, settlement of accounts and payment of death gratuities. In the case of your son this date has been set as January 5, 1945, the day following the expiration of twelve months' absence.

I regret the necessity for this message but trust that the ending of a long period of uncertainty may give at least some small measure of consolation. I hope you may find sustaining comfort in the thought that uncertainty with which war has surrounded the absence of your son has enhanced the honor of his service to his country and of his sacrifice.

Sincerely yours,

EDWARD F. WITSELL,

Major General, Acting the Adj. Gen. of the Army.

Missing Flyer Now Listed Among Dead

T/Sgt. Dudley Snyder's
Parents Receive Final
Word from Department

After having been missing a full year, T/Sgt. Dudley Snyder is now regarded by the War Department as dead, according to a letter received during the past week by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. O. G. Snyder of Winamac.

On duty as radio man on a bombing plane, the young sergeant was reported missing over Austria as of March 22, 1945. He was based in southern Italy, but was not with his regular crew at the time, having volunteered to take the place of the regular radio man in another crew who was unable to go. Only one of the group survived the crash that cost the others their lives. He was severely burned and is still in a hospital in this country, but has written to members of the Snyder family several times, telling them of Dudley's activities.

Other buddies of the lost flyer have corresponded with the family, and one recently made a special trip here from Findlay, Ohio, to tell parents and sisters of the esteem in which he was held. Buddies have also revealed that fire destroyed the outfit's tent a short time after Dudley was lost, and that but few of his effects could therefore be sent home.

Records Reveal Loss of Plane.

The official letter from the War Department carries the following: "The records concerning your son reveal that he was a crew member of a B-24 (Liberator) aircraft which departed from Pantaniella Air Base, Italy, 22 March 1945, on a bombing mission. As soon as the formation entered the target area, in the vicinity of Vienna, Austria, your son's aircraft received a direct hit by enemy antiaircraft fire, went into a spin, and blew up. Only one chute was seen leaving the plane. The

Shot Down in Plane



T/SGT. DUDLEY SNYDER

one crew member who is known to have survived stated that he had an impression of seeing your son apparently unconscious on the floor near the waist windows of the plane. He could not tell whether or not your son was wounded. However, this crew member stated that as he had been injured by flak, he suspected that your son may also have been wounded, as he and your son were standing near each other when the plane was hit."

Well Known in Native Town.

Dudley was born in Winamac on January 15, 1921, and spent his entire life here, popular among all acquaintances. He graduated from the local high school in 1939, and entered service less than two years later, in February of 1941, Bernard Freeman and James Hair enlisted in the Air Corps at the same time, and all three went to Rantoul, Ill., for training. Bernard became a lieutenant and was lost in the Pacific theater about two months before Dudley failed to come back. Hair has returned home following his discharge.

Besides his parents, Dudley leaves three sisters—Miss Bynice Snyder of Indianapolis, Mrs. Jeanette Stark of Chicago, and Mrs. Annabelle Mangold of Winamac.

A public memorial service in honor of the lost flyer are to be held at St. Peter's church in Winamac on Saturday of next week, April 13, at 9:00 a.m.

Pulaski County (IN) Democrat 4 Apr 1946: 1.

Winamac (IN) Republican 17 Jan 1946: 1.

Local Airman Killed in Action On Philippines

**Lt. Harold F. Lebo of
Winamac, Navigator,
Is War Casualty**

Second Lt. Harold F. Lebo was killed in action on Palawan Island on May 6, according to a telegram from the War Department received Wednesday afternoon by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Sam Lebo of Winamac. He was a navigator on a bombing plane. No further details were contained in the telegram.

The young officer entered the Air Corps a little more than two years ago, training in Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico. He received his wings and commission in January, 1944. He left for the southwest Pacific about five months ago.

Palawan Victim



LT. HAROLD F. LEBE

Lt. Lebo was born April 26, 1922, and spent all his life in this community prior to his enlistment. He graduated from the Winamac high school in 1940. He has two brothers in service—T/4 Stuart, home on furlough from the Philippines, and Petty Officer Kenneth in the Navy, based in Florida but now on sea duty. Other survivors include the parents, brother Cecil of Winamac, sisters, Lenora of South Bend, Mrs. Ruth Knarr of Winamac and Bernice, at home.

Pulaski County (IN) Democrat 24 May 1945: 1.

Our Boys: A Community During World War II

George Kruzick

My uncle, George Kruzick, was the oldest boy among eight children being raised by a hard-working widower father. He was likely ready for a change and adventure when he enlisted in 1936 at the age of 19.



ENSIGN GEORGE KRUIZICK

Ensign George Kruzick, who received his commission in the Navy Air Force this week came Wednesday for a six-day visit in the home of his father, John Kruzick. He is now stationed at Norfolk, Va., and for a time has been serving as test pilot for a certain type of bomber.

Pulaski County (IN) Democrat 4 Mar 1943: 1.

Winamac Lad Enlists in Uncle Sam's Navy

George Francis Kruzick, son of John Kruzick of Winamac, was enlisted in the U. S. navy yesterday at the navy recruiting station in Indianapolis. He left immediately for the naval training station at Great Lakes, Ill., for a twelve weeks period of training in infantry, seamanship and other naval fundamentals, after which he will be sent to a ship of the United States fleet.

Pulaski County (IN) Democrat 20 Feb 1936: 1.


1939: Distant Lightning – War Stories

Dick Freeman

Richard “Dick” Freeman graduated from West Point in 1930. He was the son of a prominent Winamac businessman who was active in real estate and insurance.

Upon graduation, Dick joined the Air Corps, then a branch of the Army. In 1934, after a brief stint flying U.S. mail for the Army, Dick was assigned to conduct aviation research in Alaska. In 1937, Dick married, and the couple dined with Charles Lindbergh. The following year, he flew bombers on goodwill missions to Argentina and Colombia. In 1939, he found himself delivering supplies to Chile after an earthquake. The future was bright for this local boy, West Point graduate, and bomber pilot.

Flyer on Way Back



Lieut. Richard S. Freeman of Winamac, one of the army airmen to make the non-stop goodwill trip to South America last week, is now on his way home, according to word received by his father, Ab Freeman. The six army planes left Santiago, Chili, this (Thursday) morning for northern Chile, and from there will continue the trip homeward by easy stages. They expect to arrive in the United States this Saturday.

Pulaski County (IN) Democrat 24 Feb 1938: 1.

Freeman Makes Good Will Flight In Army Plane

Lieut. Richard S. Freeman, son of Ab Freeman, was one of a group of army aviators from Langley Field, Va., who last week made a non-stop flight from Miami, Fla., to Bogota, Colombia, S. A. The flight of 1,400 miles was made in three B-17 planes, popularly known as “flying fortresses.” Lieut. Freeman was third in command of one of the planes, each of which carry nine officers and enlisted men.

The flight was made as a gesture of good will from the United States to the Republic of Colombia. The planes remained at Bogota for three days, during which they took part in the inauguration of President Eduardo Santos on Sunday.

Pulaski County (IN) Democrat 11 Aug 1938: 1.

Dick Freeman Flies to Chile

Brother of James Freeman of Local State Hospital Takes Food to Stricken Area

Richard Freeman of Winamac.

brother of James Freeman, assistant to James Jack, chief clerk of the Logansport state hospital, is returning from Chile in one of the U. S. navy's flying fortresses after having taken food to the stricken area there, according to word received here.

Richard, a Lieutenant in the aviation corps, is stationed at Langley field, Va. He landed Monday in the area in Chile which was recently damaged extensively by an earthquake with a heavy loss of lives.

Logansport (IN) Pharos-Tribune 8 Feb 1939: 3.

Website (newspapers.com).

Lieut. Freeman Helps Deliver Quake Supplies

Lieut. Richard Freeman of Winamac, stationed in the army air corps at Langley Field, Va., was a member of the crew of five officers and five enlisted mechanics who flew a giant U.S. bombing plane to South America with 3200 pounds of medical supplies donated by the American Red Cross for earthquake sufferers in Chile.

The craft used was a four-motored plane weighing thirty tons, according to word from Lieutenant Freeman to his father, Ab Freeman. The supplies, weighing more than a ton and a half, were loaded into the plane Friday night ready for the take-off at 6 o'clock Saturday morning.

The first leg of the trip was a 1000-mile flight to the Panama Canal zone; another of about the same length to Lima, Peru, and the last of 1700 miles to Santiago, Chili. The plane arrived there on schedule time Monday morning, and is now making the return trip.

This was not Lieut. Freeman's first trip to South America. A year ago this month he was on a good-will tour made by six American planes to the same point in Chile, and last August made a trip to Colombia.

Pulaski County (IN) Democrat 9 Feb 1939: 1.

(There'll be more about Dick in 1940...)