

Gilmer F. Horton (as written by nephew Dean Brown)

United States Army and the US Air Force, T. Sergeant

Uncle Gilmer entered the US Army December 12, 1935. He was the First volunteer to enter Selective Service from Mount Airy and one of the first three from Surry County.

Uncle Gilmer trained for two years at Fort Bragg. He was involved in the African Campaign; Sicily, England, the French Campaign; Belgian Campaign, and the German Campaign. He continued in service and served in Korea. He served in a total of 17 foreign countries during his 20 years of service. He was awarded The Certificate of the Highest Honorable Class, signed by Gen. Curtis LeMay, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force. Uncle Gilmer earned 12 medals for his service to our country. From June 19th, 1946 through May 20, 1949, I have information of Uncle Gilmer's work in the US Army Intelligence Division.

My Uncle Gilmer was born January 15, 1917 in Max Meadows, Virginia and the family moved to Mount Airy and Surry County when he was at the age of 12. He attended Franklin High School and graduated. He had not been able to take Latin and French at Franklin High, so he petitioned Mount Airy City Schools to let him repeat the senior year at Mount Airy High School where he graduated in the spring of 1934. Now he had two high school diplomas and was ready to enter the U.S. Army. As far as I can tell, he is the only student to earn 2 high school diplomas.

While in service, he received the following medals:

- National Defense Service Medal
- Korean Service Medal
- United Nations Service Medal
- American Service Defense Medal
- Good Conduct Medal
- EAMET Campaign Medal 5 Bronze Stars
- World War II Victory Medal
- Army of Occupation Medal

In addition, he also received the following:

- 1941 Letter of Commendation from Headquarters 3rd Battalion, 60th
- 1943 Commendation Ribbon with Pendant for Meritorious Achievement in the Mediterranean Theater of Operations presented by Secretary of the Army
- 1950 Letter of Appreciation from Major Lloyd A Boatright for Military Work
- 1950 Personal letter from Harry S. Truman, President of the United States, praising him for carrying out a special task
- 1951 Letter of Accommodation from Brigadier General Robert O. Cork, Strategic Army Command, Omaha, Nebraska
- 1951 Letter from Brigadier General, USAF, Clearance for Top Secret references
- 1952 Commendation from Major Joseph L. Marvin, Headquarters Strategic Air Command
- 1952 Good Conduct Clasp, Lockbourne Air Force Base, Columbus, Ohio

- 1952 Personal letter from J. Edgar Hoover, discussing possible admission to the FBI National Academy
- 1957 Department of the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for exceptionally meritorious service of great national significance

In Uncle Gilmer's well-kept records is a 1957 Certificate of Discharge from the U.S. Armed Forces. He retired to Mount Airy, (the family home place on Short Town Hill) where he lived until his death in 1982. He was never honored or recognized for his life of service to our country by local governments or citizens. He never married and had no children; I took it on myself to look after him in his last years. He always carried two 45 automatic pistols and 2 Rottweiler dogs. We never knew why he was afraid and through he needed protection. But we never knew the whole story about his secret service activities during the war.