



2008

Steven:

Senior year, or Firstie as we call it. It is hard to believe. These last four years have been filled with trials and challenges. But I have passed them all. I am looking forward to going out into the Army. Graduation and commissioning is May 23rd. Part of me wants it to hurry up and get here, yet another part wants me to enjoy these last few days of college I have. But when that day gets here, I'll be one of the happiest amongst my 1000 classmates. I hope your year has been as exciting and interesting as mine has been.

Ed:

Another year gone by and each one seems to go quicker than the last. I have really begun to feel the years. In January the 40+ year warranty on my left knee operation in college wore out. I had arthroscopic surgery on it. It feels a lot better than it did just before the operation, but nowhere near as good as it felt several years ago. I am now wearing a knee brace every time I go dancing, walk/hike extensively or work in the yard. I also bought some leather soled dancing shoes so that my foot doesn't stick when that leg has to pivot. The recovery from the operation was slower than I expected, probably because I tried to force myself back into dancing quicker than I should have.

I have been busy on the internet this year. While I was laid up by the operation I completed the last of the flyby albums from the summer of 2007 - the flight around Mt St Helens and Mt Rainier.

(ed.cragg.info/Albums/070811_StHelens-Rainier_Flyby_Album/album). Over the Memorial Day weekend I memorialized Dad and Porky with Wikipedia entries (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest_T._Cragg, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Porky_Cragg). I also started a memorial page for Porky (porky.cragg.info)

The year had three delightful surprises in my family history research. First, I discovered a two page biography of Porky at Ft McNair which included missing citations for most of his medals.

The next surprise was an email from a James Kunkle who had flown with Dad in the 401st during WWII. He was responding to one of many internet bulletin board postings I had put up the last couple of years looking for people who had known Dad "back when". He had several pictures from that time, including a couple of the two of them on R&R in Scotland with some Scottish lassies. Scott and I flew down for a delightful visit with him while I was in California during the summer.

(see back)

The final surprise started with an entry in the guestbook on Dad's memorial web site. It was from a Robin Evans, the granddaughter of my grandmother's sister. The two sisters had a falling out back before WWII - nobody seems to know exactly why. I had only a very vague knowledge of that side of the family and knew none of the individuals. I sent her a number of the old pictures which Dad had been unable to identify and she filled in some blanks. We plan to continue our collaboration on family history.

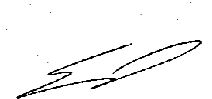
As I mentioned earlier, I went to visit Scott for a week. When the boys come home I am very clear about their position in the house: "slave labor". Well Scott turned the tables on me. He put me to work building a closet system for them - only this "slave" also had supply the materials (Merry Christmas Scott and Tiff :)

This card's picture shows the highlight of the year - Ring Weekend at West Point. Steven received his class ring. In the picture it is on his finger and I am holding Dad's June 1943 ring. On his death, Dad willed it to Steven. I took it up with me because we felt it was appropriate for it to be present at the ceremony. We also had hopes that someone there could identify the stone for me. Well when Steven put on his ring and showed me the stone we had a surprise - without knowing it, he had picked an identical one - a black star sapphire. A picture album of the event can be found at (steven.cragg.info/SWC_albums/WestPoint/RingWeekend/album).

**SEASON'S
GREETINGS**

And that was it for this year.

I hope everyone has a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Steven