

## The History of Camp Atterbury

In 1942, a military installation took root in land that only months before had been home to more than 500 farm families. The camp was named for Indiana native, president of the Pennsylvania Railroad and World War I veteran Brigadier General William Wallace Atterbury, who served as a staff member to General John G. Pershing in World War I.

In just six months, from February to August 1942, Camp Atterbury rose from the once-fertile farmland in parts of Bartholomew, Brown, and Johnson Counties to prepare troops for service in World War II. Divisions and units from across the country, all of them with specialties ranging from artillery to engineering to tank battalions and chemical companies, arrived at Camp Atterbury for basic and advanced training that would prepare them for service overseas.

As World War II drew to a close, Atterbury took on a new mission: preparing Soldiers for life at home. Nearly 561,000 personnel were separated at Camp Atterbury from 1944 -1946, and thousands more were treated at Wakeman General Hospital. Wakeman Hospital, under the direction of Col. Truman G. Blocker, served thousands of soldiers over the course of the war and specialized in plastic, neuro-, and reconstructive surgery.

Camp Atterbury and its hospital were deactivated in December of 1946 and stood dormant until August 1950, when they were reactivated to support the Korean War. Atterbury was again deactivated in 1954 and remained almost dormant until the late 1960s, when change again came to Atterbury.

Camp Atterbury, once a premier installation of the U.S. military, was discontinued as a Department of the Army installation on December 31, 1968, and the Military Department of Indiana assumed control of the area on January 1, 1969. This transition marked the beginning of Indiana National Guard oversight at Camp Atterbury.

From the 1970s through the 1990s, the primary mission of Camp Atterbury was to support to the Indiana National Guard and its various missions, including providing support with conflicts in Vietnam, Desert Shield, and Desert Storm.

