

# Civil Air Patrol Historical Monograph

NUMBER FOUR

1984

UNIFORM PLATES



**NATIONAL HISTORICAL COMMITTEE**  
**Headquarters CAP**

UNIFORM PLATES

A STUDY OF SELECTED UNIFORMS WORN BY  
CIVIL AIR PATROL MEMBERS

by

Major Nelson "Lee" Ragan, CAP

CAP NATIONAL HISTORICAL COMMITTEE MONOGRAPH SERIES

NUMBER FOUR

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## FOREWORD

The author of this monograph, Major Nelson "Lee" Ragan, CAP, has been a mainstay on the Civil Air Patrol's National Historical Committee since its inception. A professional illustrator by vocation and an avid collector of militaria by avocation, he possesses many unique qualities necessary to illustrate the many and varied uniforms of Civil Air Patrol.

Working with Lee over the past several years has been a truly delightful experience for two primary reasons. First is his extensive depth of knowledge on the subject. This is more than adequately reinforced by his willingness to undertake the many projects relating to historical research, while remaining well involved in his normal CAP job as Group Commander for Group 16 of the Texas Wing.

The plates as reproduced herein along with the descriptive material represent many hours of hard work. In order to share with a larger number of people these fine illustrations, it was elected to publish them initially in the form of a monograph. In the event that sufficient demand is generated, it is planned to later reprint selected illustrations in such a manner and size as to make them suitable for more framing.

L. E. Hopper  
COL            CAP  
National Historian

## PREFACE

The idea to create this monograph was suggested by Col Les Hopper, after I had illustrated several uniforms for use as covers of the Historical Committee Newsletter. After much discussion, it was decided that this uniform monograph should be something other than an illustrated guide to what uniform regulations had spelled out during CAP's first twenty years. Instead, I chose to illustrate a broad cross-section of uniform combinations, some of which were typical, and some not so typical. Not all CAP uniforms used during the first twenty or so years of CAP are illustrated, but some are illustrated in both male and female versions.

The illustrations were made from many different research sources. Photographs, drawings, plus written and verbal descriptions were all used to compose the drawings. In many cases all of these sources were combined to produce any given illustration. Some "artistic license" was employed to make the drawings present a broader look at the different insignia worn on these uniforms.

One of the stated goals of the National Historical Committee is to foster "esprit-de-corps" within this organization. One of the reasons Civil Air Patrol continues to wear the uniform is to promote that ideal. Our organization and it's uniform have gone through many evolutionary changes since 1 December 1941, but the feeling of pride in our past and the spirit to add to our colorful history should never diminish.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

No project such as this can be a one-man show, and there are several people who helped me with this project that deserve a special "THANK YOU". Col Les Hopper who had the idea for the monograph in the beginning. Col Louisa S. Morse supplied reams of documentation on both the uniforms and insignia. Lt Col Allan Pogorzelski who kept me supplied with old photographs from the early days of CAP and it's uniforms. Mr. Clyde Osborn, a former postwar CAP member who supplied me with many written descriptions of what the uniforms really looked like "in the field". I would also like to thank Lt Col Elizabeth Sedita, Florida Wing Historian, and Capt Helenmerie Walker, Oregon Wing Historian, who during the 1983 National Board Meeting in Las Vegas, shared their wing scrapbooks with me, and gave me even more insight into what the CAP uniform was during our first twenty years.

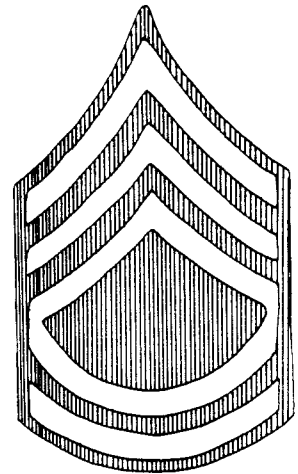
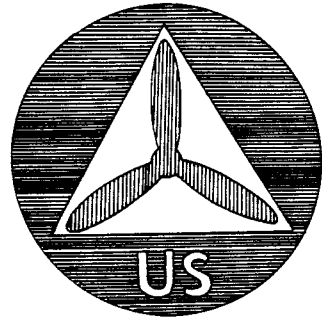
Nelson Lee Ragan  
Major CAP  
April 1984

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PLATE NUMBER ONE

Technical Sergeant, ----- 1943. This CAP NCO wears basically U. S. Army uniform items with Civil Air Patrol insignia. His khaki shirt has had red shoulder straps added, and his chevrons are khaki stripes on a red background. His cap is an officer's summer service type with a screw back CAP enlisted hat device. The cap has had the stiffener removed so headphones could be worn with the cap. This is the famous "50 mission crush". On his left shoulder, he wears the second type CAP National patch with the letters "US" below the triangle. He is a rated Observer as indicated by the half wing badge worn above the left breast pocket. A set of U. S. Army leggings are worn over his khaki trousers, and standard brown Army shoes.



Lee Pagan  
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Plate Number One



PLATE NUMBER TWO

Coastal Patrol debriefing, ----- 1943. The Sergeant wears a standard U. S. Army field jacket with red shoulder straps, and red background CAP chevrons. This was over a khaki shirt and trousers. Also worn is the khaki overseas cap piped in red. The Lieutenant wears the same khaki uniform but substitutes the A-2 leather flight jacket. The jacket also has red shoulder straps, with the CAP National patch on the left shoulder. Over his flight jacket, he wears a Mae West life preserver, which was usually painted yellow for greater visibility. This piece of equipment was something of a luxury for CAP Coastal Patrol crews since it was difficult to obtain. Most aircrews on Coastal Patrol used inner tubes as life preservers. Both men wore standard brown Army shoes or ankle high boots.

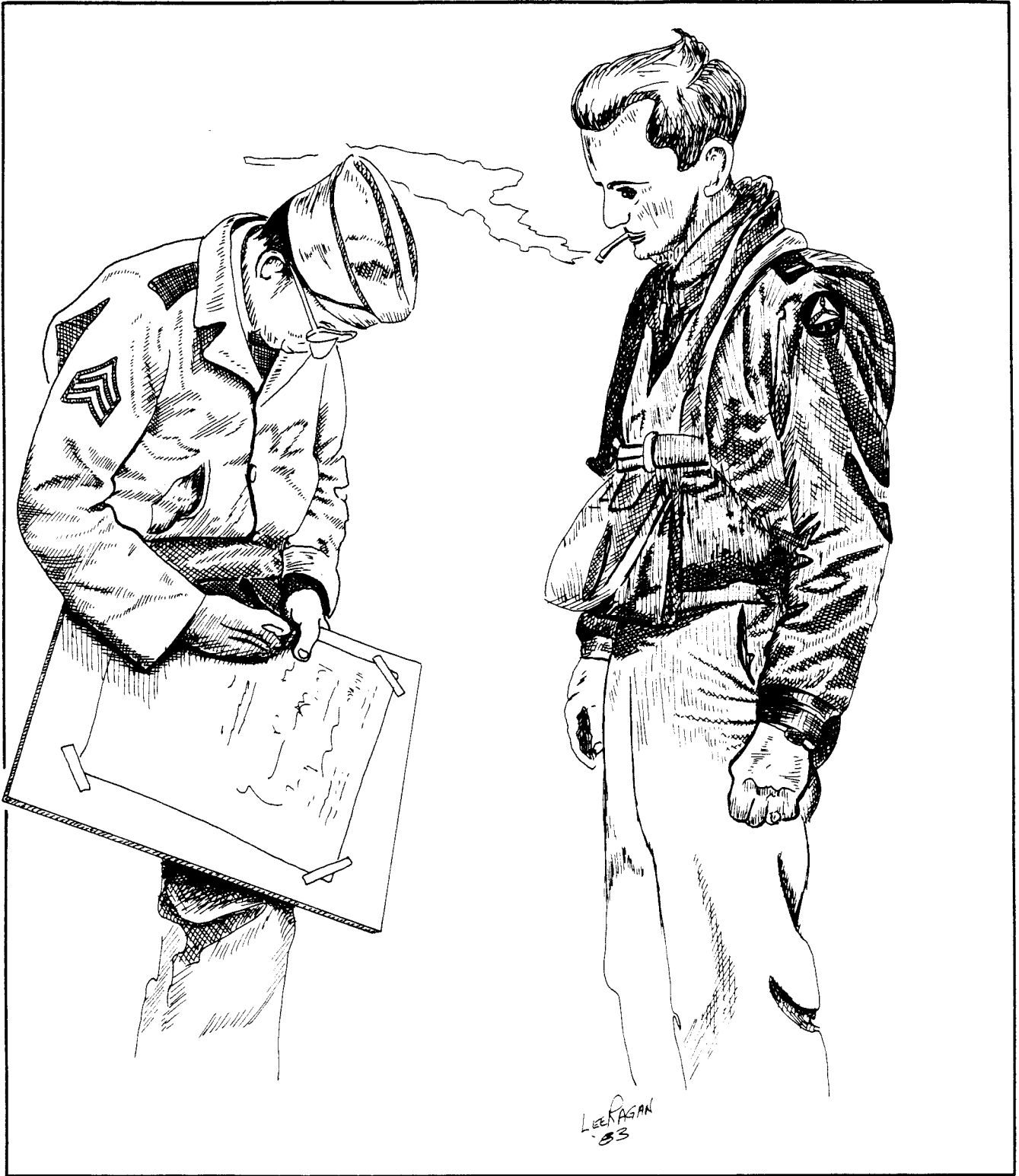


Plate Number Two

PLATE NUMBER THREE

Flight Officer, ----- 1944. This wartime F/O wears the U. S. Army officer's winter uniform known as "Pinks and Greens". This pet name is the result of the shade of the shirt and trousers which were of a khaki which had a distinct pinkish tint to them. The service coat and hat were dark olive green. The coat came with a waist belt made of the same fabric as the balance of the uniform. This fellow wears the standard CAP pilot's wings as a hat device which was quite common during World War Two. On his left breast above a service ribbon, he wears what was called in CAP bulletins, "Trick Insignia", or wings modified from Army Air Force wings. This was done by soldering the CAP colored disc over the AAF centerpiece. The wings were usually made from AAF Aircrew, Observer, or even Navigator wings because these wings had a round center. This badge was strictly unauthorized, but it seemed to make little difference to many wartime Civil Air Patrol pilots who were looking to wear something that looked more military than the authorized CAP badges.

His upper lapels each had the silver C.A.P. collar insignia, and the lower lapels each had the all silver winged propeller worn by CAP officers. The National patch is of the second type with US below the triangle. On his lower sleeve, is worn the gold and black active duty patch for Coastal Patrol. Below that, is worn one active duty service bar of the same color. Shoulder straps and the commission stripe, or officer's braid, was red on this very distinctive uniform. Shoes were brown russet leather.

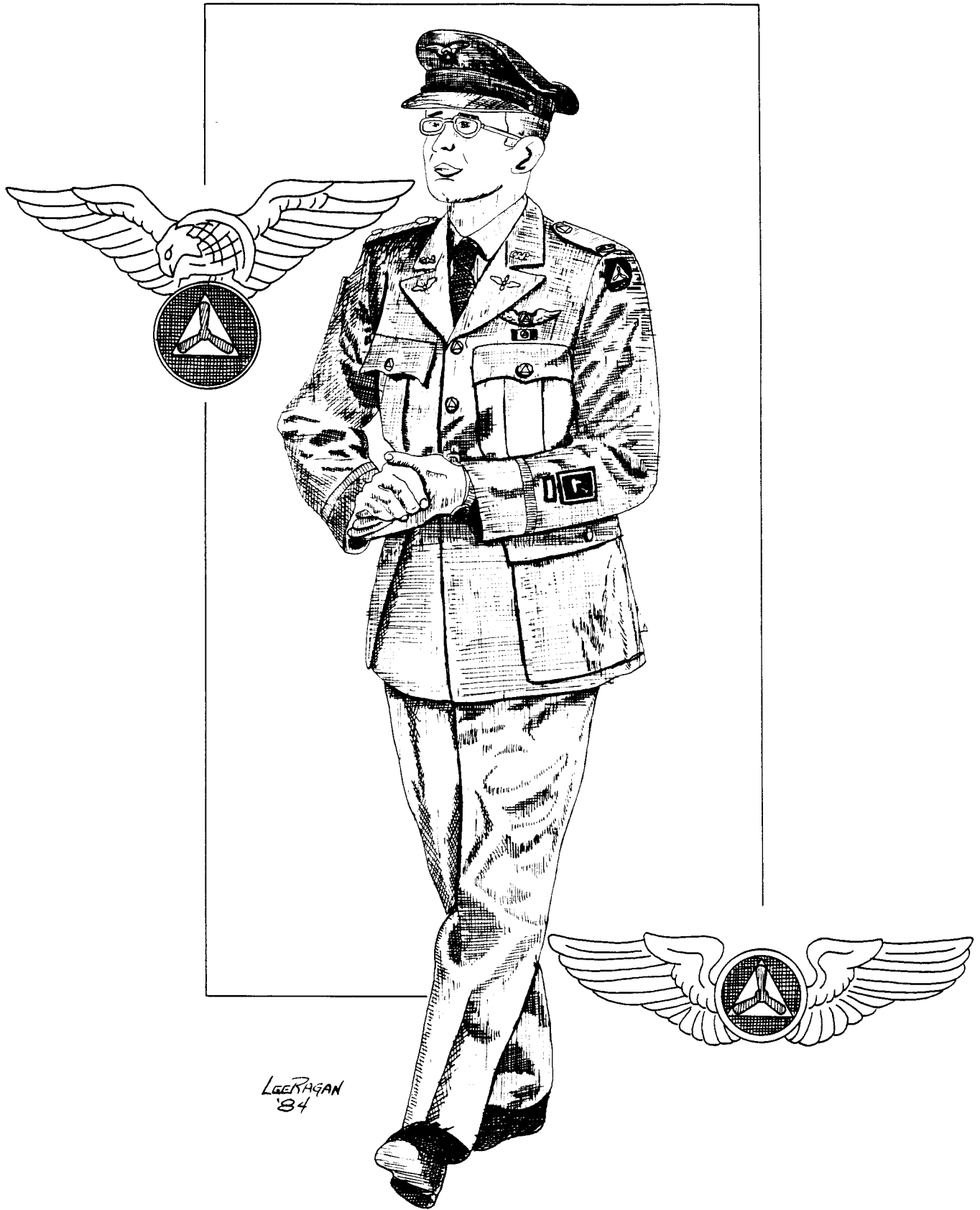


Plate Number Three

PLATE NUMBER FOUR

Instructor, ----- 1944. This female senior member without grade is wearing the ladies version of the officer's "Pinks and Greens". She holds no rank but is appointed as a CAP Instructor, which entitles her to wear the CAP officer's uniform. The braid on her lower sleeves, the shoulder straps and the piping on her overseas cap are all red. Collar insignia is of the all silver type worn by CAP officers, and the shoulder patch is the first design of the Instructor's patch. The Instructor's patch was a standard senior member patch with a white tab below the blue disc, and the word INSTRUCTOR in red. An Instructor could be someone who because of special qualifications, would be appointed in an Instructor status, but could also become a commissioned Officer at a later date. This basic uniform combination was the female winter counterpart of the male uniform described in Plate Number Three.

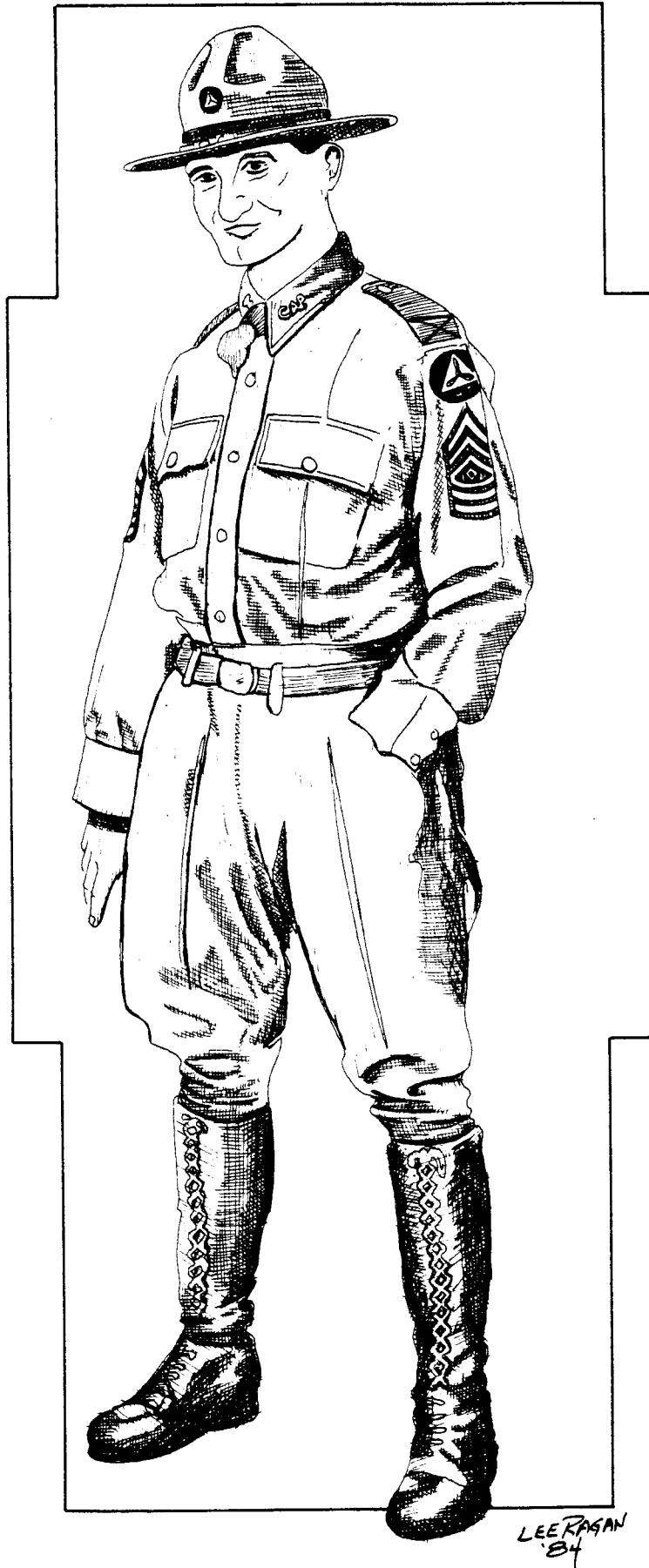


Plate Number Four

PLATE NUMBER FIVE

First Sergeant, CAP Mounted Unit, ----- 1945. This unusual uniform was typical of those worn by several horse mounted CAP units in the western United States during World War Two. They wore the basic U. S. Army cavalry uniform with CAP insignia added. The uniform consists of khaki shirt and riding breeches, campaign hat and cavalry lace up riding boots. To the front of the campaign hat is afixed the CAP enlisted cap device, and a red hat cord with acorns. An olive drab necktie, red shoulder straps and red background to the chevrons was also worn.

By 1945 this type of uniform was on its way out of service with the red trim to CAP uniforms was being phased out by early 1945. Even with the elimination of red trim on the uniform, it continued to be worn in some areas for several months. This is one of the most unusual uniforms to be used by Civil Air Patrol, and it appears that it was done on a local basis without any official sanction from National Headquarters. It is a good example of a practical uniform being adopted in the field when regulations did not allow for a uniform to meet all requirements.



LEE RASAN  
'84

Plate Number Five



PLATE NUMBER SIX

Warrant Officer, Female, ----- 1946. This lady wears the female officer's khaki summer service uniform of the period. Piping on the overseas cap is now black and gold, and the commission stripes on the lower sleeves are now the same color as the uniform coat. Gone too, are the red shoulder straps. The entire uniform is made of matching material, with the shoes being standard Army woman's russet brown. On the lower right sleeve, just above the commission stripe, is worn a technical specialty patch in black and gold. Note too, that the overseas cap is being worn incorrectly tilted to the right side of the head and not the left. Lapel insignias are the same as worn on officer's uniforms since the beginning. Insignia of grade was worn on the officer's overseas cap during this period.

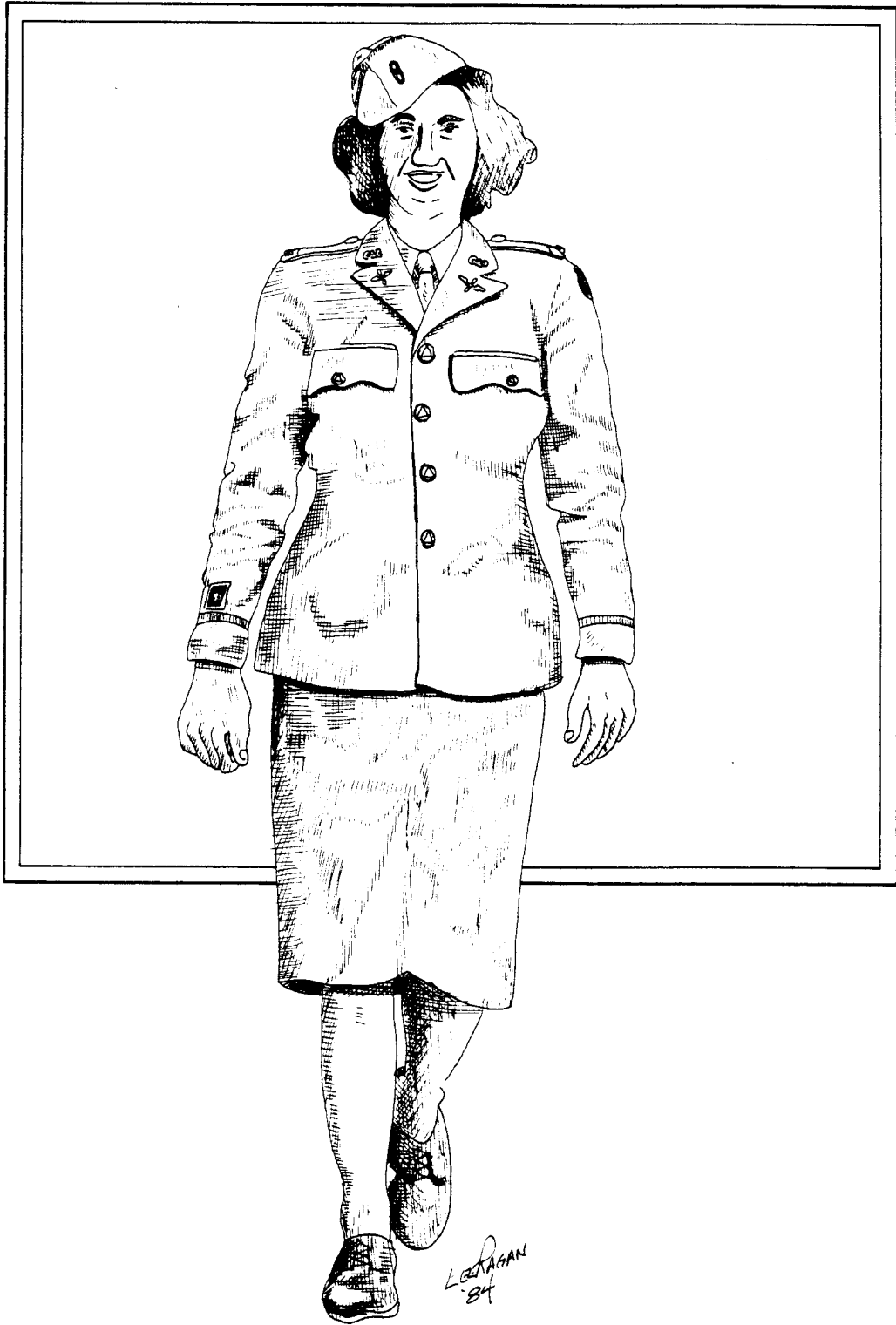


Plate Number Six

PLATE NUMBER SEVEN

Cadet Private First Class, female, ----- 1948. Early female uniforms did very little to make a young lady more attractive. This uniform serves well to illustrate that point. She is wearing a standard Army female summer khaki uniform which consisted of a khaki overseas cap, shirt and skirt. The cap is piped in khaki. She also wears a khaki tie. Insignia include the Cadet cap patch worn on the left side of the cap, and C.A.P.C. collar insignia. On her left shoulder would be the National patch for Cadets. Her rank insignia is the standard Army all purpose chevrons of tan/grey stripes woven on a dark blue background. Few Cadets in the enlisted grades during this time period wore any type of military jacket or service coat. Hence, civilian coats were commonly worn with this uniform. Her shoes could have been regulation military, but most likely were brown civilian type.



Plate Number Seven

PLATE NUMBER EIGHT

Major, ----- 1950. This officer wears the light khaki service dress introduced to the Army in 1943. His overseas cap bears the black and gold braid worn by officers during this time period, and a senior member overseas cap device. On his right shoulder is worn the Army Air Forces shoulder patch. It was common practice in those days for former servicemen to wear their old military units shoulder sleeve insignia on the right shoulder. Collar insignia include the old style CAP cutouts with period after each letter. On the lower lapel of his service coat, is worn the all silver wings and propeller of a Civil Air Patrol officer. Above his right breast pocket is the Air Force pilot's badge. His CAP rating of Command Pilot is worn above his ribbons over the left pocket. Ribbons include both military and Civil Air Patrol. The left shoulder bears the standard CAP national patch of the day which by now has the red and white tab across the top. On his lower left sleeve are four Army overseas bars indicating that he spent two years overseas during World War Two. The commission stripes worn on both lower sleeves are of the same color as the uniform, and the buttons are the first style CAP type in silver.

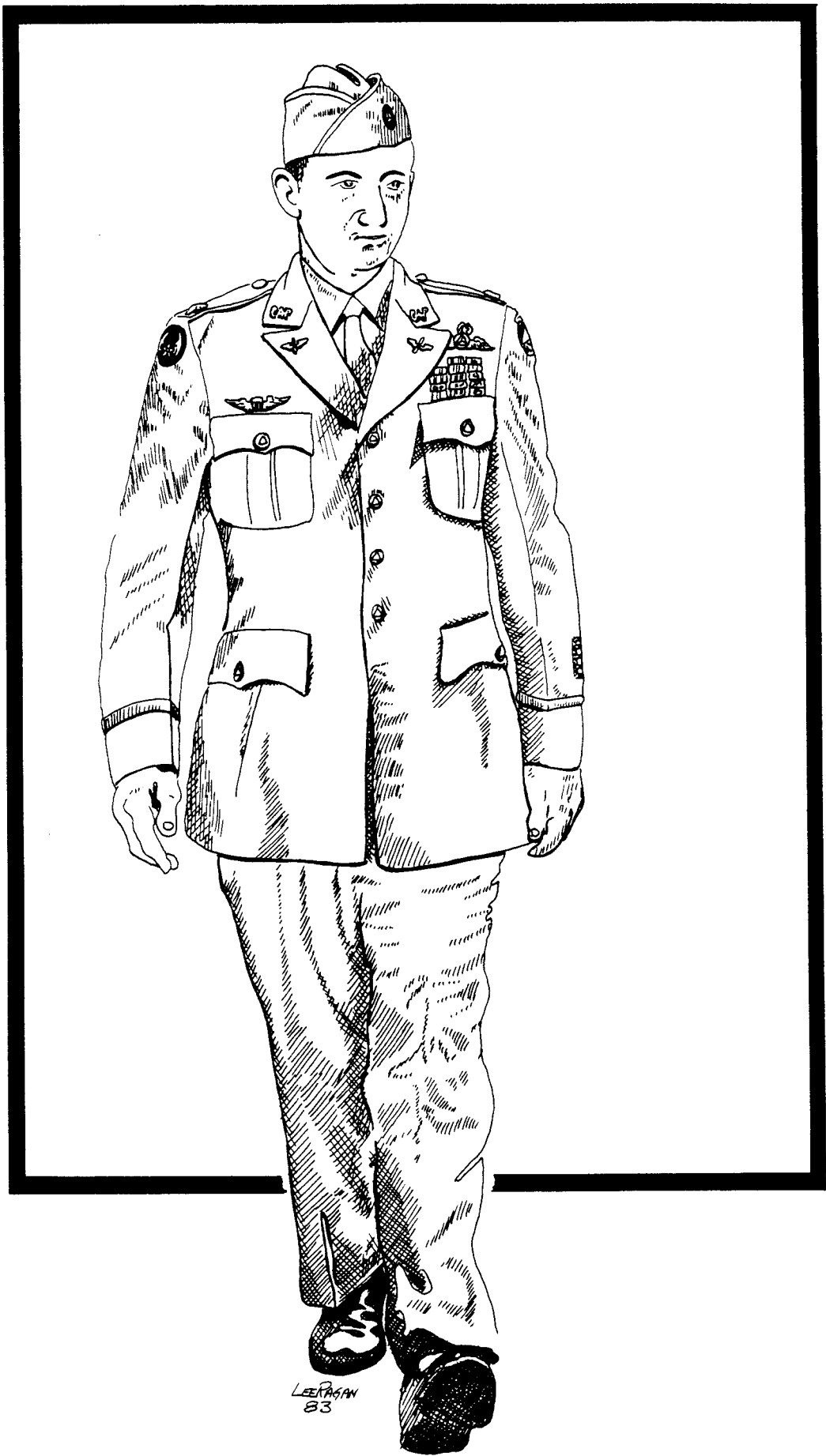


Plate Number Eight

PLATE NUMBER NINE

Cadet First Sergeant, ----- 1951. The young man pictured here wears the standard Army enlisted man's olive drab winter shirt and trousers. His overseas cap is also OD and is worn with the cadet hat patch on the left front of the cap. He wears a dark olive drab necktie and C.A.P.C. collar insignia. His left shoulder carries the last design of the Cadet National shoulder patch, which at this time was slowly being replaced as wing patches came into widespread use. He wears his rank badges on both sleeves. The First Sergeant rank was the highest enlisted cadet grade. His next promotion would be to 2nd Lt. There was only one First Sergeant in each squadron. The cadet chevrons he is wearing came into use in the late 1940's, and were worn points up until 1960. His shoes are standard Army brown.

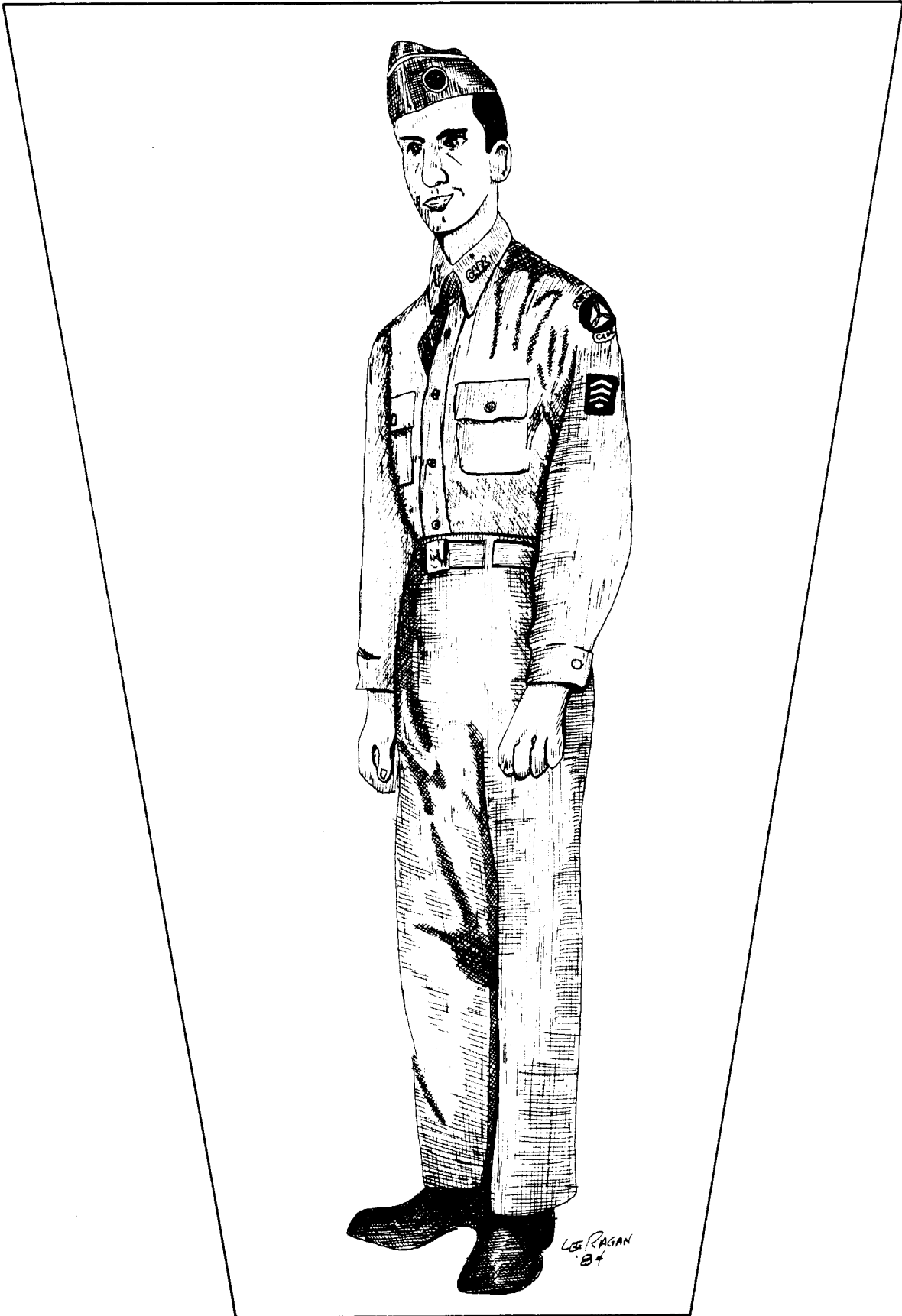


Plate Number Nine



PLATE NUMBER TEN

Cadet Corporal, ----- 1955. This Cadet is dressed in a special uniform as a member of a color guard. His uniform is the khaki Army or Air Force type of the period with certain modifications. The helmet liner is painted white. He also wears white gloves, web belt and leggings. Instead of the usual necktie, he wears a white neck scarf. The weapon is a wooden parade rifle commonly used by color guards and drill teams. His uniform also has the, then new, blue and white Cadet patch sewn above the right pocket. Collar insignia are C.A.P.C. He wears a white Cadet training ribbon and a wing patch. His shoes are black. Special units such as these often wore heavily starched khakis to prevent a very sharp appearance.

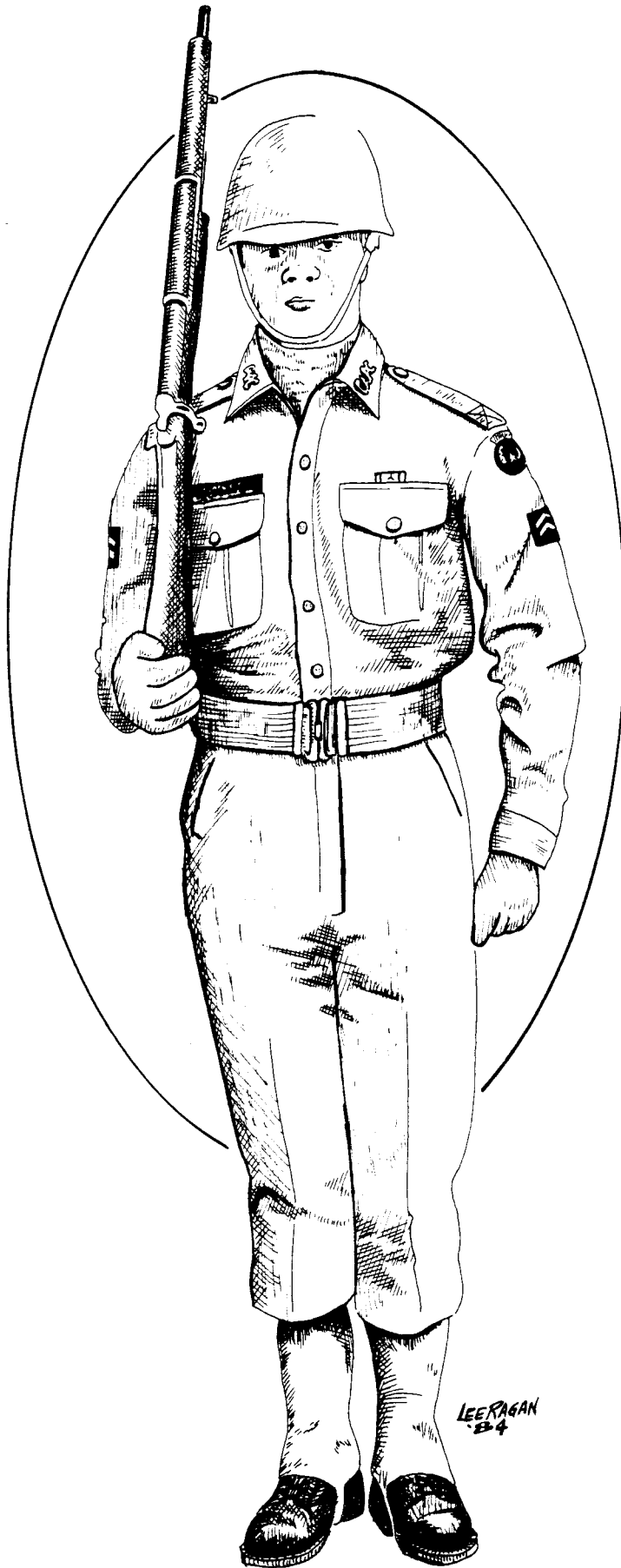


Plate Number Ten

PLATE NUMBER ELEVEN

Captain, ----- 1957. This officer wears the, then new, USAF style Ike Jacket, (shade 1084 blue), and matching trousers with flap style back pockets. He is rated a Senior Pilot and as indicated by the lower left sleeve patch, has flown search missions. Other period insignia include the old style C.A.P. cutouts, and on the right breast is the triangle-rectangle senior member breast patch, or as it was often called, the "Coca-Cola" patch. The Missouri Wing Patch is worn on the left shoulder. With the introduction of the Air Force blue uniforms, the older CAP National patches disappeared from all CAP uniforms. On his standard Air Force Officer's flight cap, he wears the CAP cutout. During the 1950's, CAP officers wore their rank on the flight cap. It was not until the 1960's that the CAP cutout was placed on the flight cap by regulations.

C.A.P.

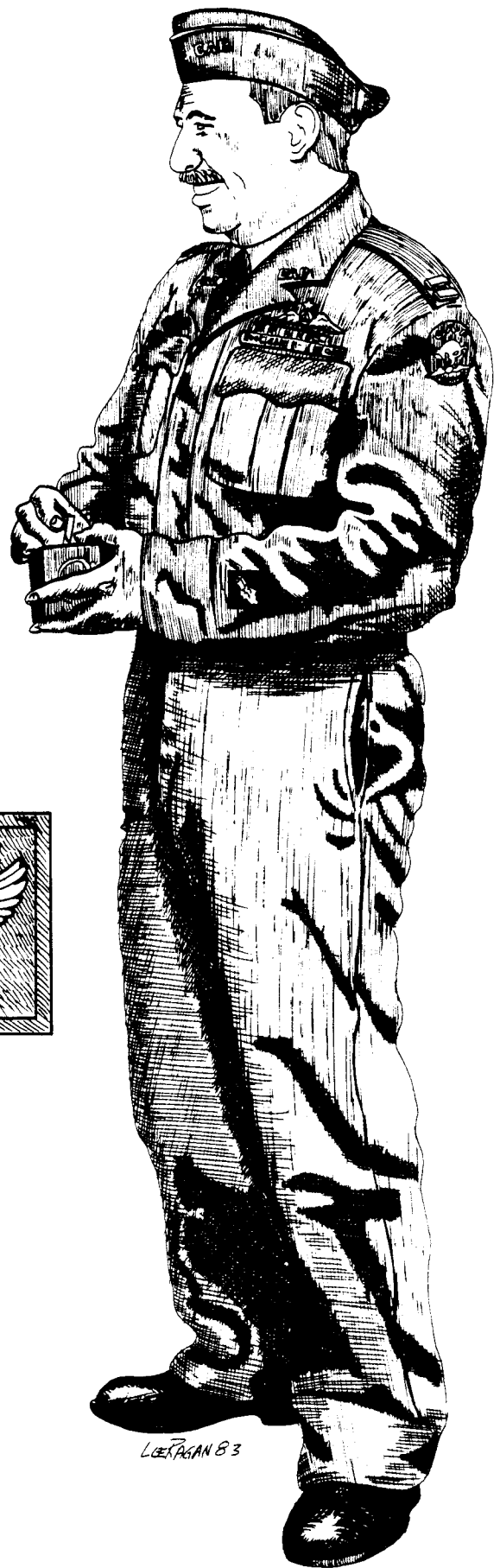
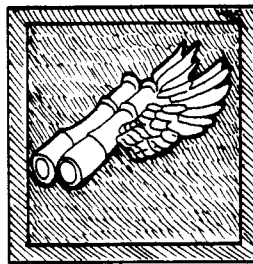


Plate Number Eleven

PLATE NUMBER TWELVE

Cadet First Lieutenant, ----- 1958. This young Cadet Officer is seen wearing the period military fatigues. Trousers are two pocket "cargo" type. A standard Air Force blue belt is worn with sunglasses case mounted at the side. Being a real snappy dresser, this Cadet wears a bib scarf and his olive green fatigues bloused inside his genuine Army paratrooper boots. The cap is the Ridgeway fatigue cap which was the standard fatigue headgear for the military during the days before Castro made it a symbol of the Communist takeover of Cuba. Since that time, the Ridgeway cap has also become known as the "Castro Cap", and was phased out of American military and CAP use in the early 1960's. Insignia on this uniform includes the blue and white Cadet breast patch of the period, full size metal rank badges worn on the right collar and on the cap, C.A.P.C. collar badge on the left collar, and a wing patch on the left shoulder.



LCE RAGAN  
03

Plate Number Twelve

PLATE NUMBER THIRTEEN

Second Lieutenant, ----- 1960. This officer serving on a ground team wears standard period U. S. Military fatigues, with an orange baseball cap. For field use, the uniform is very casual and functional, and looks very much the same over twenty years later. His trousers are the older style Army type with large cargo pockets which are worn bloused over standard Army combat boots. The senior member "Coca-Cola" patch is worn above the right pocket. Metal full size rank insignia is worn on the right collar of his shirt, and metal C.A.P. on the left collar. The Nevada wing patch is worn on the left shoulder. The web belt is military type with ammo pouches containing first aid supplies and food items, worn with a G. I. canteen.

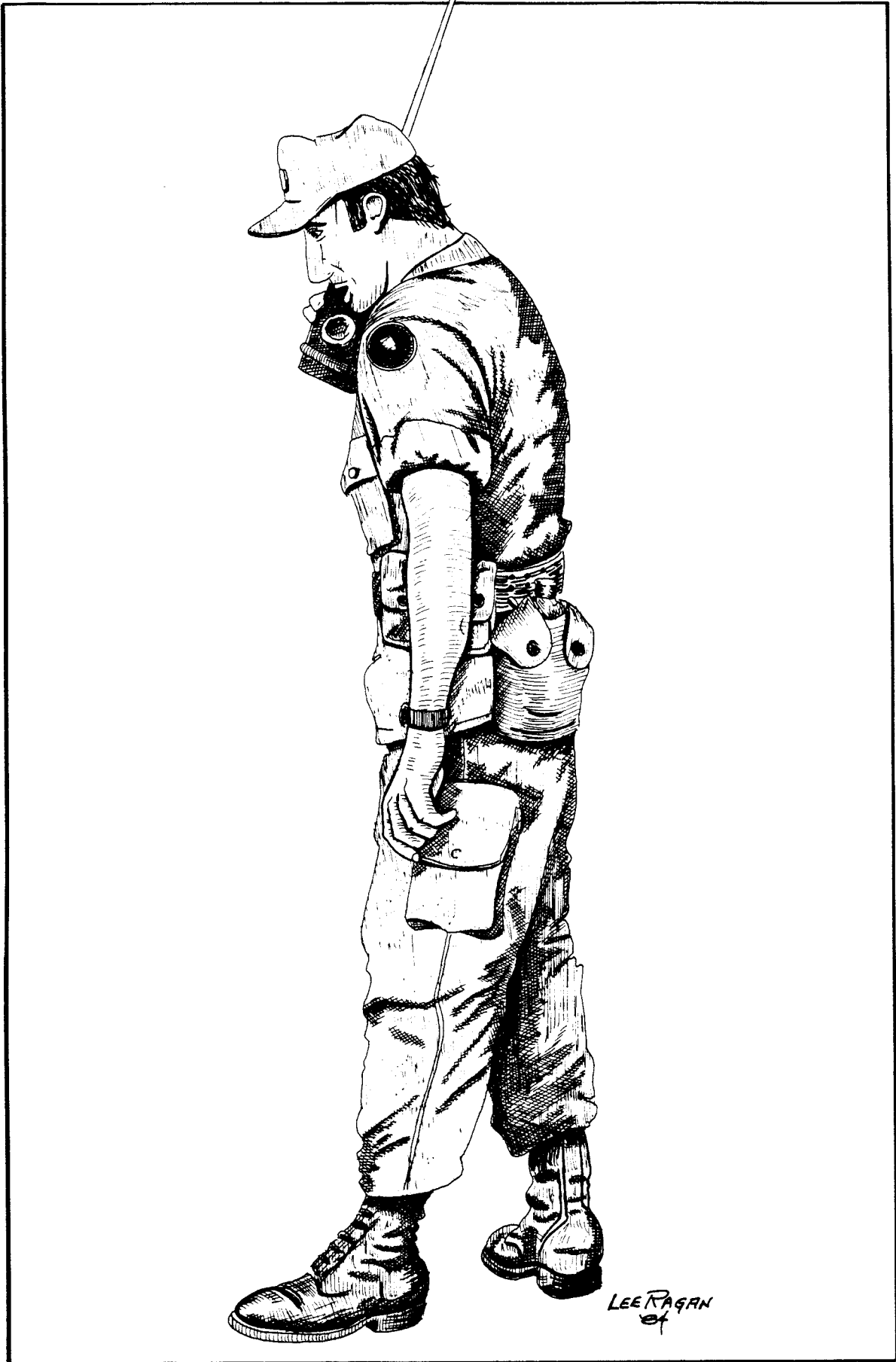


Plate Number Thirteen



