

The Holbrook Brothers
Major-Generals in the U.S. Army



Willard Ames Holbrook

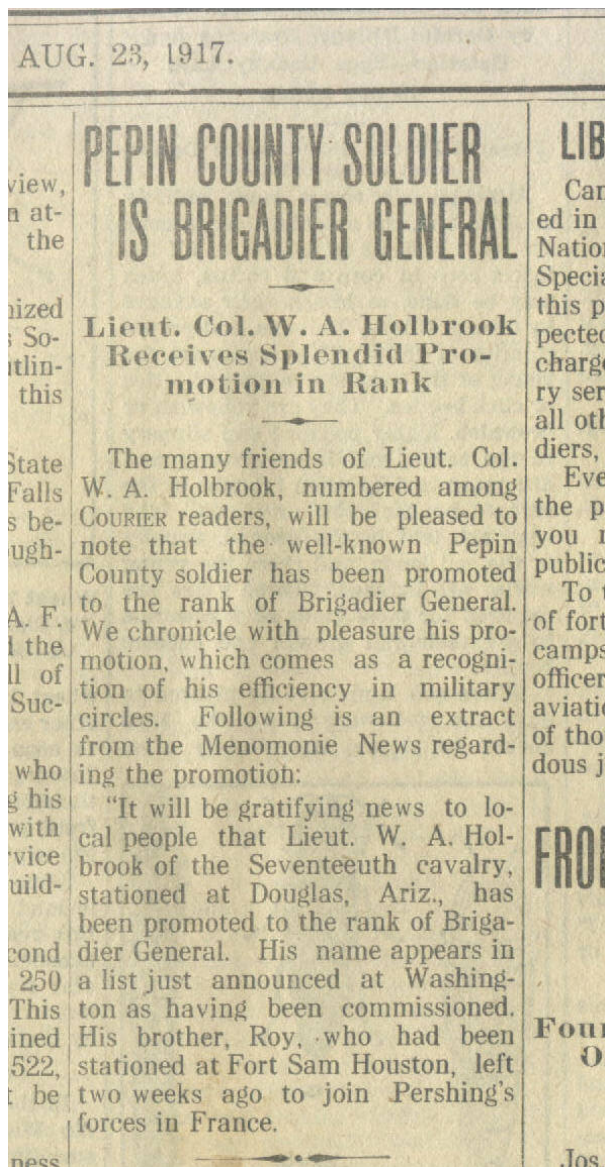


Lucius Roy Holbrook

Willard Ames Holbrook and Lucius Roy Holbrook were born in Arkansaw to their father and mother, Willard Francis Holbrook and Mary Ames Holbrook, who had arrived in Arkansaw, Wisconsin in 1854. The Holbrooks were among the original founders of Arkansaw. Willard Holbrook (General Holbrook's father) is said to have named Arkansaw, as the river reminded him of the Arkansas River.

Although their father was very well accomplished, he was only the beginning of what would be an ongoing and brilliant family history. Two of Willard's Holbrook's sons, Willard Ames and Lucius Roy, upheld the family name in excellent fashion. Willard Ames graduated from West Point with honors in 1885, and went

on to rise to the rank of Major General (2 Stars) and received the Distinguished Service Medal for his tact in handling a threatening situation at the Mexican border. Lucius Roy Holbrook also graduated from West Point (class of 1896) and served as a general with the 4th Cavalry at Fort Walla Walla . Not only did these brothers rise through the Army ranks to become generals, but each of them also had a son who became a general. These were only a small preview of all the things these men accomplished.



This webpage was created by Joel Longsdorf, with some help from LeeAnn Keeler in November of 2003, and has been modified

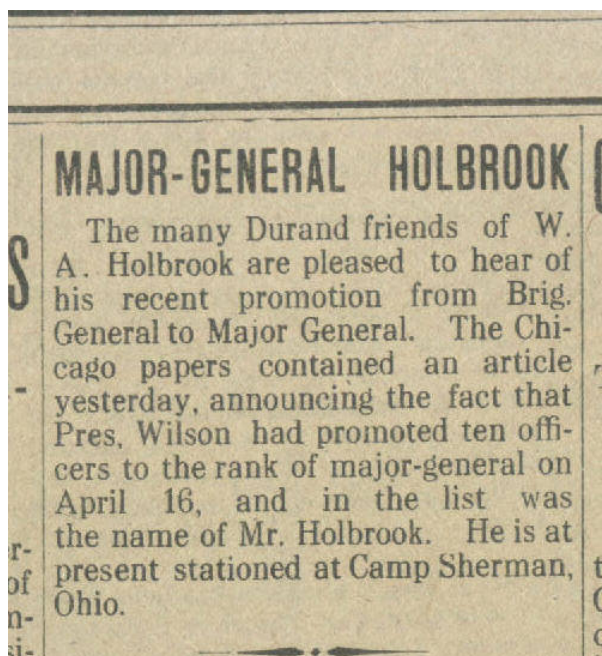
Will is promoted to Brigadier General
The Pepin County Courier
August 23, 1917

The Pepin County Courier in an article dated August 23rd, 1917 announce the promotion of Lieutenant Colonel Willard Ames Holbrook to Brigadier General. Two things are interesting about Will's promotion. First, he is promoted to Brigadier General bypassing the rank of Colonel. Obviously, his responsibilities and performance in his job were such that promotion to Brigadier General was appropriate. The second interesting things is that he was then promoted to Major General (two stars) less than a year later (in April of 1918).

Below you will find a scan of the article in the Pepin County Courier announcing Will's promotion to Brigadier General.

Will is promoted to Major General
The Pepin County Courier
April 18, 1918

Brigadier General Willard Ames Holbrook is promoted to the rank of Major General according to the following article in the Pepin County Courier, dated April 18, 1918. He was stationed at Camp Sherman, Ohio during World War I. According to a statement included in his brother, Roy's obituary, Will was considered for command of American forces in Europe, before the appointment of General Joseph Pershing to that position.



A letter from W.A. Holbrook
(the following is taken verbatim from...)

The Pepin County Courier
January 3, 1918

(any spelling or grammatical errors are part of the article)

BRIG.-GEN HOLBROOK
WRITES INTERESTINGLY

Following is in part a letter from Brigadier-General W.A. Holbrook of the U.S. army which was recently received by H.A. Miles of this city and we take great pleasure in publishing same for the benefit of our readers, as we feel that Mr. Holbrook expresses sentiments therein which should strike a responsive chord in their heart of every true American citizen.

165 Inf. Brigade, Camp Sherman O.
Dec. 29, 1917

Dear Bert:

The war is now the only question really worth while. We must win that to insure liberty to our country and security to our possessions. We are fighting our war right now and in so doing are defending our homes just as much as if the enemy had already invaded our land. So many people feel that we did not have to mix up in this war but we did. There was no dodging it and now it must be won at any cost. Every state should be thoroughly organized to stand behind their soldiers, to support the government in every way, to strike down treason wherever it may be found.

I dined with Teddy Roosevelt the other day (emphasis added) and while at one time I hated him for his behavior in a political way I must admit his conversation and public speeches are very much to the point since the war began. He says there can be no fifty-fifty allegiance. If a man is living under our flag and sympathizing with our enemies it is time for him to get out.

I hear from Roy quite often. He has been at the front and is in command of a regiment of artillery. He has had several very close calls from bursting shrapnel but at last reports had escaped harm. He has now gone with his regiment into winter billets not far back of the line. His men are in good health and spirits. My son, Willard, spent five days with me on Christmas leave. He is looking well and is a fine boy. Stanley being a plebe was not given a leave this year. Both boys are doing quite well and I think will graduate from the academy with credit.

The details of a company organization for trench warfare are rather complex as men are variously armed with rifle, automatic rifle, bombs, and rifle grenades.

The division is the large administrative unit as well as tactical unit. We are organizing between thirty and forty of them but before the war is over will probably require several times that number. We are dealing with huge numbers. Even the march past of one division is an impressive sight but when we realize that England's casualties average about that number per week it gives us an idea of what war means these days.

Sincerely yours
W.A. Holbrook

(Below is part of the original

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An article about the brothers in Arkansas

(the following was taken verbatim from...)

The Pepin County Courier
August 7th 1919

(any spelling or grammatical errors are part of the article)

TWO GENERALS VISIT DURAND

Former Pepin County Boys Renew Old Acquaintances in This City This Week

Two former Pepin county boys, Gen. W.A. Holbrook and Gen. Roy Holbrook, brothers, renewed old acquaintances in this city Tuesday and Wednesday in of this week.

The younger of the two Brigadier General Roy Holbrook, has been given an opportunity to see considerable service. Something like twenty years ago, or a little more, he saw service in the Philippines. In the recent war with Germany he was at the front for twenty-two months with the American troops. His branch of service was artillery and the troops under his command used more artillery ammunition against the Germans than had been used by the country in all its battles from the foundation of the government down to the time of the war with Germany. Gen Holbrook will likely be stationed at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., for a time.

Major General W.A. Holbrook, a West Pointer and every inch a soldier, like Gen. Leonard Wood, was not given an opportunity to go to Europe while the war was in progress, much as he would have been pleased to go. At different times he was in command of various military posts in this country and the troops drilled under his direction were among the best. A few months ago he asked for overseas service and his request was granted. He went to France and remained there a couple of months. Seeing that there was not much that he could do there hi asked to be again assigned to duty in this country and reached this land last week. While in Europe he had an opportunity to witness the devastations of war and was much impressed with what he saw. He also had an opportunity to witness the degree of efficiency manifested by our own country and that made a very favorable impression on him. He has no sympathy for those who criticize the conduct of the war. He is willing to admit that some mistakes were made but, considering the magnitude of

the task, the accomplishments of our soldiers were little short of marvelous. It was a gigantic task, civilization was at stake and things had to be done quickly. Considering all that was done, the American people should congratulate themselves that so few mistakes were made.

He will likely be stationed at Fort D.A. Russell, near Cheyenne, Wy, for a time.

A party was given Tuesday evening at the home of doctor J.J. Morgan, which was attended by a number of old friends of the Holbrook's. The occasion was much enjoyed by all present.

Wednesday the generals left for Cameron Wis, to visit another brother.

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Obituary of Willard Ames Holbrook

(the following was taken verbatim from...)

The Courier Wedge

August of 1932

(any spelling or grammatical errors are part of the article.)

ANSWERED HIS LAST ROLL CALL

Gen. Willard Ames Holbrook Passed Away in Walter Reed Hospital at Washington

Major General Willard Ames Holbrook, U.S.A. retired, died after a long illness Monday morning, July 18 at Walter Reed hospital, Washington, D.C. He was 72 years old. He had a long distinguished career in the regular army, from which he retired at the age of 64 on July 23, 1924, while holding the post of chief of Cavalry.

General Holbrook was born July 23, 1860 at Arkansas. He entered the Military Academy at West Point in 1881 and four years later was graduated as second lieutenant in the First United States Cavalry. He saw frontier service at Western and Mexican border posts of the Army. In 1891, he became aide de camp to General David S. Stanley, U.S.A. Mrs. Holbrook, whom General Holbrook married in 1902 was a daughter of General Stanley.

When the Spanish-American war began, he was sent to Cuba. Later as a Major in the Thirty-eighth United States infantry, he took part in quelling the Philippine insurrection. During 1901 and 1902, he was Civil Governor of the province of Antique Panay in the Philippines

After the United States entered the World War, General Holbrook, then a Colonel of Cavalry, was promoted to Brigadier General and first command the 165th Infantry Brigade at Camp Sherman, Ohio. He was promoted to Major General April 16, 1918 and placed in command of the Army's Southern department and in charge of the Mexican border. Assigned to command the the Ninth Division on Sept. 26, 1918, he was preparing his command for over seas duty when the armistice was signed. When the division was demobilized in February, 1919, General Holbrook was placed in command of the Camp Grant demobilization center in Illinois.

General Holbrook received the Distinguished Service Medal for his firmness and tact in handling a threatening situation on the Mexican border while he was in

command of the Southern Department during the World War, thereby materially improving relations between the United States and Mexico.

He is survived by his son Lieutenant W.A. Holbrook Jr., stationed at Fort Mammouth, N.J., three brothers, General Lucius R. Holbrook, U.S.A.,; Dr. J.S. Holbrook, Mankato, Minn, and B.F. Holbrook, Conrath; and four sisters, Mrs. C.K. Averill and Mrs. J.W. Barber, Menomonie; Mrs. William Van Alst, Williston, N.D., and Mrs. George M. Galloway, Hood River, Ore. His first wife, the former, Miss Josephine Stanley, who died some years ago.

Funeral services were held at the chapel of Walter Reed hospital July 20 at 2 p.m., Col. Julian E. Yates Chief of Chaplains officiating. Internment was at Arlington cemetery with full military honors.

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Obituary of Lucius Roy Holbrook

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The Courier Wedge
October 23, 1952

(and spelling or grammatical errors are part of the article)

Lucius Roy Obituary

A prominent retired army general and pioneer of Arkansas Maj. Gen. Lucius R. Holbrook, 77, died Sunday of a heart ailment at Letterman army hospital in San Francisco.

Gen. Holbrook was born Apr. 30, 1875 at Arkansas, where his father operated a furniture factory. The general was a son of Willard F. and Mary Ames Holbrook. He was a brother of Maj. General Willard A. Holbrook, who once was considered for the position of commander in chief of the Allied forces in Europe during World War 1. That job eventually fell to Gen. Pershing, however.

Gen. Holbrook was commander of the first American artillery regiment to enter the battle in France in World War 1. He also was originator of the army school for cooks and bakers.

Gen. Holbrook was graduated from Durand High School (my sources have shown that Lucius actually graduated from high school in Northfield, Minnesota. -Joel). He left Wisconsin to enter the United States military academy at West Point, N. Y., graduating in 1896 as a cavalry officer. It was after he attended the French school of supply in Paris that he returned to America to found the cooks and bakers school at Fort Riley, Ks., in 1910.

Appointed a major general in 1930, he assumed command of the 1st infantry division at Fort Hamilton, N.Y. From 1935 to 1938 he was commander of the department of the Philippines. He was retired because of his age in 1939. The general also served in China, Japan, Hawaii, on the Mexican border, in Canada and Alaska. He was an admirer of Gen. Douglas MacArthur and served on his staff at one time.

Because of his merit in combat, Gen. Holbrook won the distinguished service cross, the silver star with cluster, the French legion of honor, the croix de guerre

with two palms, the French fourragere and the Montenegrin distinguished service cross.

Surviving the officer are his widow, Henrietta, and three sons, Col. Frank C. Holbrook and Capt. John A. Holbrook, both of Washington, D. C., and Lt. Col. Lucius R. Holbrook jr., now in Formosa.

The father and mother of the general are buried in the Arkansaw cemetery. It was the father of the general who named the village after the state of Arkansaw.

Like his brother, Willard Holbrook was a distinguished officer. He became director of the command and general staff college at Fort Leavenworth, Ks. He was named chief of cavalry in 1920 and died in 1932.

Noted Soldier of Arkansaw Dies in West

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Ship named for Willard Ames Holbrook

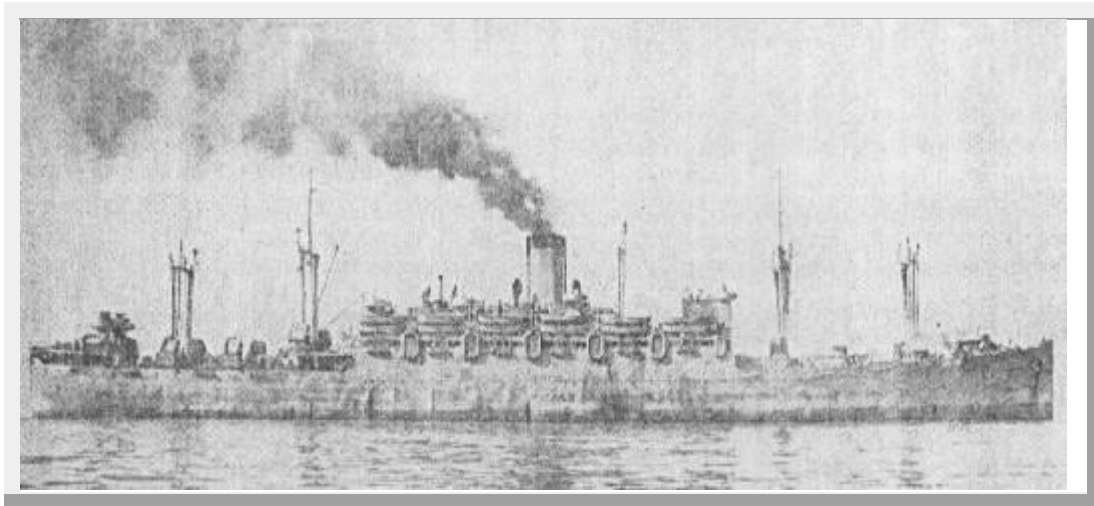
WILLARD A. HOLBROOK

BUILT: 1921	BEAM: 72'	DRAFT: 30'-7"
LENGTH: 535'	CARGO [cu ft]: 45,037	PASS [troop ship]: 1,890
PROP: Turbine 2	RADIUS [miles]: 19,000	TONS: 14,812
TYPE:	SPEED [knots]: 17	DEPENDENTS TO JAPAN: ?

Original names - BUCKEYE STATE, PRESIDENT TAFT - prior to WWII operated by American President Lines.

Received from owners in June 1941 and named in honor of Maj Gen Willard Ames Holbrook, former Chief of Calvary.

Selected to be come a hospital ship and be named the ARMIN W. LEUCHNER, but with the end of WW II the conversion was modified for carrying 763 dependents and she her Holbrook name restored.



Arkansaw Creek in the days of The Holbrook Brothers

Pages like this wouldn't be possible without the help of a lot of really nice people. We recognize Steve Knowlton and Bill Rouchelleau, owners of Easy Creek Restaurant for sharing these pictures with us, and Lindsey Lieffring, their waitress-supreme, for making contacts, borrowing the pictures, and even more importantly, returning them for us. The photos along with the words of the people involved

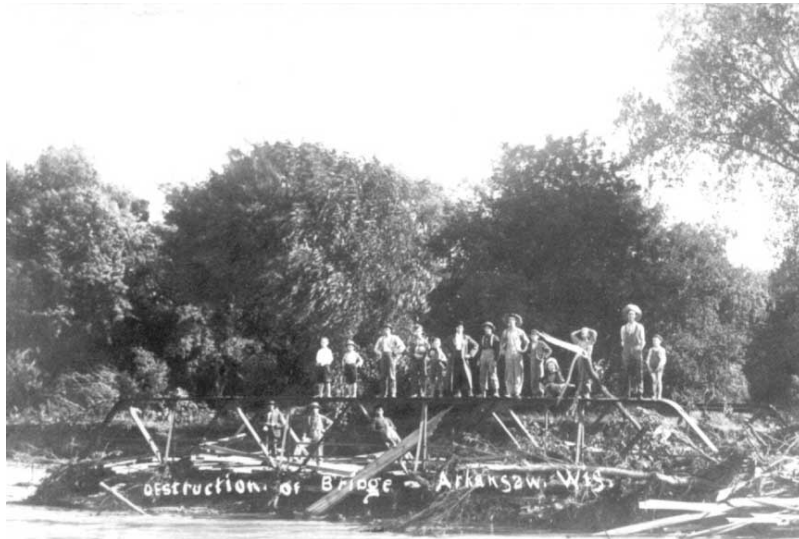
allow us to take a "virtual tour" of the Arkansaw Creek at about the time the Holbrook brothers left to attend West Point, around the turn of the 20th Century.



The is the Miles Dam which was upstream from the Holbrook Dam.



These are the remains of the Holbrook Dam.



Checking out the disaster....



The location of the bridge over the Arkansaw which was destroyed in the 1907 flood.

You can find the Holbrook property (owned by the Holbrook brothers' father and mother) located near the bottom of the map, where the Arkansaw Creek begins to flow East.

