

Sergeant Russell Irvin Ebel

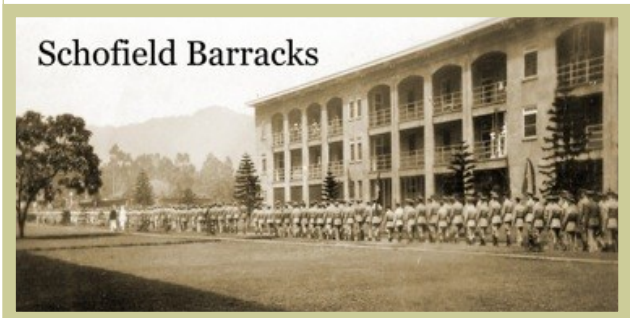
Army 8th Army -IX Corps



**Sergeant Russell I. Ebel
From Belleville, Illinois
Tokyo, Japan 1946**

I was inducted into service from Belleville Illinois on November 18, 1944 and sent to Chicago, Illinois. I was then sent to Fort Knox, Tennessee for 8 weeks of Basic Training. I then entered the Military Clerical School at Fort Knox and studied all phases of military correspondence. From March to April 1945 I was stationed at Fort Ord, California.

In April 1945, I was sent to Hawaii where I joined the IX Corps which was under the 8th Army. The IX Corps trained military division for combat. I was assigned to all types of clerical work. While stationed in Hawaii we were required to participate in 2-weeks of jungle training to learn how to survive in the jungle. As part of this training we would participate in mock attacks on Japanese villages and night patrolling. (At that time I was living in Schofield Barracks which was hit by Japanese planes on December 7, 1944.)

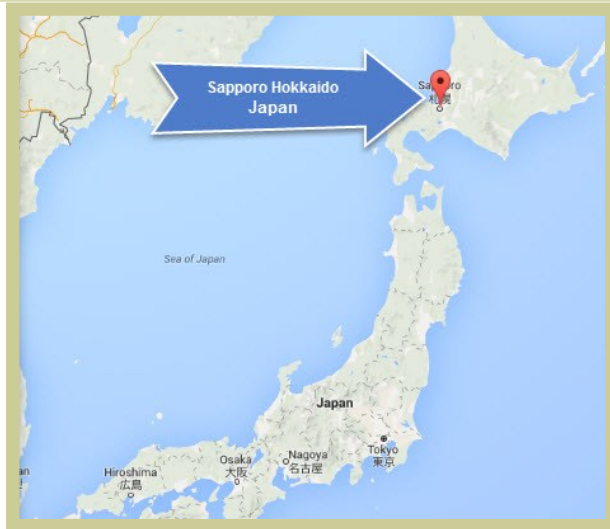


Schofield Barracks

In July 1945 we were moved to the Philippine Islands. We were sent there to help prepare for the invasion of Japan and were going to be part of the that invasion as a rear echelon making a feint attack in Southern Japan to draw the Japanese to that area while the main attack would be centered on Tokyo.

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In October 1945 I was sent to Japan for occupational duty. I served several months at Sapporo Hokkaido, Japan and were later moved to Sendai Honshu, Japan. Sendai had been severely bombed by American plans.



Sendai Honshu Japan after US Bombing

This was my first encounter with Japanese people. On the whole the people were friendly, smiling and bowing. When visiting their homes

we entered through a sliding door and took off our shoes. We sat crossed-legged on the floor by a small rectangular table. We were told not to eat or drink their food. Looking around I noticed no beds. The Japanese slept on cots and in the morning they rolled them up and stored them in the closet.

I had opportunities to visit many places in Japan especially Tokyo which had been heavily bombed by American planes, too. In Tokyo, I passed the home of Emperor Hirohito. At the end of the war he was influential in getting the Japan to surrender. He renounced his claim to imperial deity and had all his power taken away except for ceremonial duties. When Hirohito died he was buried with a list of sumo wrestlers, a microscope to reflect his interests in marine biology and a Mickey Mouse watch given to him on a visit to Disneyland.

I toured Tokyo Bay where on September 2, 1945 **General Douglas MacArthur** signed The Instrument of Surrender aboard the Battleship Missouri which ended WWII.



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I was given a pass to attend the war trails going on in Tokyo for many Japanese military person. At the time Japan's wartime prime minister, General Hideki Tojo was on trial. He had made the decision to attack the United States to get us involved in WWII. Tojo was nicknamed "The Razor" for his shrewd, decisive manner. When captured and tried as a war criminal for his aggressive atrocities against POWs, Tojo was executed in 1948.



**General Hideki Tojo
On Trial for Military Crimes**

Also on trial was Iva Toguri, better known as "Tokyo Rose." She worked for the Japanese and tried to arouse homesickness and lower American Troops' morale with radio broadcasts of American music and anti-American propaganda. The propaganda effort backfired because GIs came to like the Tokyo Rose broadcasts. She was captured by American troops..... During her trial she was convicted as a traitor

and sentenced to 10 years in prison.



Tokyo Rose in Prison

Each day I worked in the office with 11 officers and a few other military personnel. I became chief clerk and obtained the rank of Staff Sergeant.

I was fortunate in having my mother save all of my letters I wrote home during my 2-year in the Army and I have a running account from day one in the service to my discharge. (I have read them again many times.)

I received the following awards and ribbons: Good Conduct Medal, WWII Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, Philippine Citation for Service, and the Army Occupation Medal-Japan. I also received the Sharp-Shooters Medal.

In October 1946, I was order back to the USA for discharge. As we returning troops arrived in Seattle, Washington we were greeted by a reception ship which carried a sign, "Welcome Home. Thanks for a Job Well Done!" On November 20, 1946, I was dis-

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charged at Fort Sheridan at Chicago, Illinois.

As I reflect on my military service when I as 18-20 years old, I remember that I crossed the Pacific Ocean 5 times, crossed the International Dateline 2 times and spend 44 days on the ocean experiencing both calm and stormy seas—including the tail end of a typhoon. Counting all my travel on land and sea this would have been equal to 36,000 miles travel around the Earth.

I am proud to be a part of the 16 million people who served our country and proud to be a WWII Veteran from Belleville, Illinois.

Sincerely Submitted by
Russell Irvin Ebel
Baxley, Georgia



Tokyo, Japan after US Bombing