

**Subject:** For your records  
**From:** LCARROLLP@aol.com  
**Date:** Wed, 18 Apr 2007 11:26:33 -0400 (EDT)  
**To:** fairfieldmus@truvista.net

Your [continued donations](#) keep Wikipedia running!

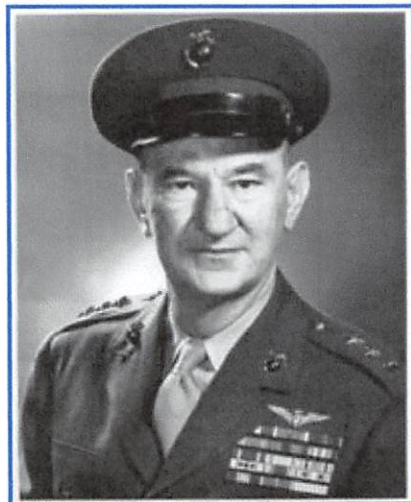
# William O. Brice

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Jump to: [navigation](#), [search](#)

**William Oscar Brice**

December 10, 1898 - January 30, 1972



William O. Brice

<b>Place of birth</b>	Columbia, South Carolina
<b>Place of death</b>	Ft. Jackson, South Carolina
<b>Allegiance</b>	United States of America
<b>Service/branch</b>	<a href="#">United States Marine Corps</a>
<b>Years of service</b>	1921-1956 (USMC)
<b>Rank</b>	General
<b>Commands</b>	Marine Corps Aviation (1952-1959) Assistant Commandant

	of the Marine Corps Assistant Chief of Naval Operations Fleet Marine Force Pacific
<b>Battles/wars</b>	<a href="#">World War I</a> (US Army) <a href="#">World War II</a> <a href="#">Korean War</a>
<b>Awards</b>	<a href="#">Distinguished Service Medal</a> <a href="#">Legion of Merit</a> <a href="#">Bronze Star Medal</a> <a href="#">Order of the British Empire</a>

General William Oscar Brice, [USMC](#) ([10 December 1898](#) - [30 January 1972](#)), a veteran of the [Korean conflict](#), the [World War II](#) fight for the [Solomon Islands](#) and pre-war expeditionary duty in [Haiti](#) and [China](#). He last served at Pearl Harbor as Commanding General, [Fleet Marine Force](#), Pacific, after more than three years at [Marine Corps Headquarters](#), Washington, D.C., as Director of Marine Aviation, Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps for Air and Assistant Chief of Naval Operations for Marine Aviation.

The general served in Korea as Assistant Commander of the [1st Marine Aircraft Wing](#) from April to October 1951. In World War II, when the Marines were [fighting at Guadalcanal](#) in America's first offensive against [Japan](#), he commanded all [U.S. Army](#), [Navy](#), Marine and [Royal New Zealand Air Force](#) search, bombing and torpedo planes based on that island. He also headed [Marine Aircraft Group 14](#) during its support of the [New Georgia](#) and [Bougainville invasions](#) and directed all Solomons-based Army, Navy, Marine and New Zealand fighter operations against [Rabaul](#), Japan's biggest base in the Southwest Pacific.

Brice was awarded the [Distinguished Service Medal](#) for actions at Guadalcanal, the [Legion of Merit](#) with Combat "V" as head of the Fighter Command, the [Air Medal](#) for combat flights in the Solomons between December 1942, and February 1944, and the [Order of the British Empire](#) (with rank of Honorary Commander, Military Division) for his service with the [New Zealand Air Force](#). In addition, he earned the [Bronze Star Medal](#) with Combat "V" in the final months of the war as Chief of Staff, Air, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific.



# Contents

[\[hide\]](#)

- [1 Biography](#)
- [2 Awards](#)
- [3 See also](#)
- [4 Notes](#)
- [5 References](#)
- [6 Further reading](#)
- [7 External links](#)

## [\[edit\]](#) Biography

William Brice was born on [10 December 1898](#), in [Columbia, South Carolina](#). He attended Mt. Zion Institute at Winnsboro, South Carolina from 1913 to 1917. He then served in the U.S. Army in the latter part of [World War I](#). After the war, he resumed his education, graduating from [The Citadel](#) at Charleston, South Carolina in 1921. <sup>[1]</sup> On September 25th of that year, he reported for active duty as a U.S. Marine second lieutenant and was assigned to the Company Officers School at Quantico, Virginia. Graduating from the school in July 1922, he was stationed at the Marine Barracks, [Parris Island](#), South Carolina until May 1923, when he joined the 1st Marine Brigade in Haiti. He returned from that country in February 1924, to enter flight training at Pensacola, Florida, where he was designated an [aviator](#) that August.

In June 1925, after further instruction at Pensacola and service with Observation Squadron 3 at Quantico, the Brice began another overseas tour of duty, this time with Scouting Squadron 1 on [Guam](#). From Guam he was ordered to China in April 1927, when most of the squadron was sent there to help protect Americans and other foreigners during the [Chinese Civil War](#). The squadron was withdrawn to the [Philippines](#) in May while arrangements for a flying field were made with the Chinese government, and the next month it returned to China to begin operating from Hsin Ho in support of the 3rd Marine Brigade.

Returning to the United States in December 1927, Brice was assigned the following month to Fighter Squadron 9-M at Quantico where he remained until October 1931. On November 2nd of that year, he reported aboard the aircraft carrier [Lexington](#) in command of Scouting Squadron 15-M, which thus began its service as one of the first two Marine squadrons to be based on [Navy](#) carriers. (The other unit, Scouting



Squadron 14-M, boarded the "Saratoga" the same day.)

Brice remained on the *Lexington* until January 1933. In June 1933, after six months at San Diego, he returned to Quantico. There, during the next three years, he served on aviation duty, completed the Junior Course and was a member of the War Plans Section. He entered the [Army Air Corps](#) Tactical School at [Maxwell Field](#), Montgomery, Alabama in August 1936, and upon graduation in June of the following year, returned to Quantico to serve as Executive Officer and later, Commander, of Scouting Squadron 1. After that he was an instructor at Pensacola from June 1939 to August 1941, when he returned to Quantico, this time as Operations Officer of [Marine Aircraft Group 11](#) (MAG-11).

Brice moved with MAG-11 to San Diego in December 1941, and there, in March 1942, he assumed command of [Marine Aircraft Group 12](#). He headed that unit until September 1942, when he rejoined Marine Aircraft Group 11 as its commander, and the following month he sailed with it (via New Caledonia) for the [New Hebrides Islands](#), where the group began feeding planes and pilots into [Guadalcanal](#). In December 1942, he moved to Guadalcanal to take command of [Marine Aircraft Group 14](#) and all the search, bombing and torpedo planes based there, remaining until April 1943, when he departed for [New Zealand](#) with the group.

Brice returned to the Solomons with MAG-14 in August 1943, to support the New Georgia and Bougainville operations. The group became the nucleus of the Solomons Fighter Command, and that October Brice was assigned additional duties as head of that organization. He relinquished his command of the group in January 1944, but continued to head the Fighter Command until he returned to the United States in March 1944.

In September 1944, after service in various capacities at the [Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point](#), North Carolina, General Brice reported to [Marine Corps Headquarters](#), where he served as Executive Officer of the Division of Plans and Policies until June 1945. The same year he was promoted to [brigadier general](#) at the age of 46, which made him the youngest general officer then in the Marine Corps, and that July he arrived in Hawaii to take over as Chief of Staff, Air, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific. He held that post until May 1947, and the following month, returned to Marine Corps Headquarters as Assistant Director of Marine Aviation.

Leaving Headquarters in May 1949, the general's next tour of duty was at Glenview, Illinois, as a Commander of Marine Air Reserve Training from that July until April 1951, when he left for Korea to become Assistant Commander of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. Promoted to major general that August, he returned to Hawaii in October as Deputy Commander, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, serving in that capacity until March 1952, when he returned to the United States. He became Director of

Aviation the following month, and in August 1953, when that post was elevated to a lieutenant general's billet, he was promoted to that rank. He left Washington, D.C. in July 1955, and assumed his final command on September 9th of that year. He retired in 1956 and was advanced to the rank of General. <sup>[2]</sup>

General Brice died on [30 January 1972](#) at the U.S. Army Hospital, Ft. Jackson, South Carolina.

## [\[edit\]](#) Awards

In addition to the Distinguished Service Medal, [Legion of Merit](#), [Bronze Star Medal](#), [Air Medal](#) and [Order of the British Empire](#), General Brice holds the [Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal](#) with one bronze star; the [World War I Victory Medal](#); the [Yangtze Service Medal](#); the [American Defense Service Medal](#); the [Asiatic-Pacific Area Campaign Medal](#) with three bronze stars; the [American Area Campaign Medal](#); the [World War II Medal](#); the [National Defense Service Medal](#); the [Korean Service Medal](#) with two bronze stars; the [United Nations Service Medal](#) and the [Korean Presidential Unit Citation](#) Ribbon.

## [\[edit\]](#) See also

 [United States Marine Corps Portal](#)

- [List of Korean War veterans who are recipients of the Bronze Star](#)

## [\[edit\]](#) Notes

1. <sup>^</sup> [Distinguished Citadel Alumni](#). The Citadel Alumni Association. Retrieved on [2007 February 12](#).
2. <sup>^</sup> [USMC 4 Star Generals](#). *The War Fighters Encyclopedia*. U.S. Navy. Retrieved on [2007 February 12](#).

## [\[edit\]](#) References

This article incorporates text in the [public domain](#) from the United States Marine Corps.

- [General William O. Brice, USMC](#). *Who's Who in Marine Corps History*. History Division, United States Marine Corps. Retrieved on [2006 October 6](#).



## [\[edit\]](#) Further reading

- Elizabeth L. Tierney (1962). [A Brief History of Marine Corps Aviation](#). Historical Branch, United States Marine Corps.

## [\[edit\]](#) External links

- [History of Marine Corps Aviation](#). AcePilots.com. Retrieved on [2006 October 6](#).

Retrieved from "[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_O.\\_Brice](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_O._Brice)"

**Categories:** [1898 births](#) | [1972 deaths](#) | [American military personnel of World War I](#) | [American military personnel of World War II](#) | [Military personnel of the Korean War](#) | [Naval aviators](#) | [Recipients of the Legion of Merit](#) | [The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina alumni](#) | [United States Marine Corps generals](#)

### Views

- [Article](#)
- [Discussion](#)
- [Edit this page](#)
- [History](#)

### Personal tools

- [Sign in / create account](#)

### Navigation

- [Main page](#)
- [Contents](#)
- [Featured content](#)
- [Current events](#)
- [Random article](#)

### interaction

- [About Wikipedia](#)
- [Community portal](#)
- [Recent changes](#)
- [Contact us](#)
- [Make a donation](#)

- [Help](#)

#### Search

#### Toolbox

- [What links here](#)
- [Related changes](#)
- [Upload file](#)
- [Special pages](#)
- [Printable version](#)
- [Permanent link](#)
- [Cite this article](#)



- This page was last modified 20:50, 4 April 2007.
- All text is available under the terms of the [GNU Free Documentation License](#). (See [Copyrights](#) for details.)  
Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the [Wikimedia Foundation, Inc.](#), a US-registered [501\(c\)\(3\) tax-deductible nonprofit charity](#).
- [Privacy policy](#)
- [About Wikipedia](#)
- [Disclaimers](#)

***SEMPER FI:  
CARROLL POPE***

***"Some people live an entire lifetime and wonder if they have made a difference in the world. Marines don't have that problem."  
President Ronald Reagan , 1985***

***"There are only two kinds of people that understand Marines: Marines and the enemy. Everyone else has a second-hand opinion."  
-- Gen. William Thornson, U.S. Army***

See what's free at [AOL.com](#).

No virus found in this incoming message.

Checked by AVG Free Edition.

Version: 7.5.446 / Virus Database: 269.5.2/766 - Release Date: 4/18/2007 7:39 AM

**Content-Description: "AVG certification"**

**Part 1.2 Content-Type: text/plain**

**Content-Encoding: quoted-printable**



**Information found on General William Oscar Brice:**

**General William Oscar Brice of the United States Marine Corps, Retired, was born in Columbia, South Carolina, December 10, 1898. He is the son of the late Doctor William Oscar Brice and Rachel Buchanan Thompson Brice, natives of Winnsboro, South Carolina. He is married to the former Rebecca Jennings and they have one child, Margaret (Mrs. Christopher Devan), and five grandchildren.**

**General Brice grew up in Winnsboro where he finished school at historic Mt. Zion Institute in 1917. He then matriculated at the Citadel in Charleston, South Carolina, receiving a degree in engineering from there in 1921.**

**An early honor given General Brice was the Order of the British Empire, signed by the Queen Mother (Mary) which gave him the rank of Honorary Commander Military Division.**

**He served in Haiti, Guam, the Philippines and China. In 1945 he became Brigadier General. He later served in the Korean conflict and was in Honolulu the last years of his active service.**

**Thirty-four of his 36 years of service were spent in the Marine Corps as an aviator. It was said authoritatively he knew more than any other man the use of air force in land battle. General Brice had 72,000 men in his last command, his title being "Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific."**

**In 1945 among the decorations awarded him were: Numbers of Distinguished Service Medals for duty of great responsibility as Commanding Officer of all search, bombing, and torpedo aircraft of the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and the Royal New Zealand Air Force operating in Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands; Legion of Merit for exceptionally meritorious conduct in performance of outstanding service as Fighter Commander of all Army, Navy, Marine and New Zealand fighter aircraft; the Air Medal for combat flights in the Solomon Islands; Bronze Star for meritorious Service as Chief of Staff, Aircraft, Fleet Marine.**

**His Alma Mater has shown him notable honors. He has been awarded the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Military Science. He has been speaker at the Citadel Commencement with a 17-gun salute. His oil portrait hangs in the Citadel Gallery of Distinguished Graduates.**

**On his return to Winnsboro, Mt. Zion Institute welcomed him with the celebration of a "William Oscar Brice Day." The city Chamber of Commerce toasted his career with a banquet. He has held prominent civic positions, serving in the capacity of President of the Fairfield County Chamber of Commerce, head of the United Fund Drive, member of the Fairfield Library Board and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Fairfield Memorial Hospital.**

General and Mrs. Brice are members of Sion Presbyterian Church. They are active in the social, cultural and religious life of the community.

## GENERAL WILLIAM OSCAR BRICE

General William Oscar Brice, USMC, was born December 10, 1898, in Columbia, S.C. General Brice attended Mt. Zion Institute in Winnsboro from 1913 to 1917, when he entered the U.S. Army during World War I. After the war he resumed his education, graduating from the Citadel in Charleston in 1921.

General Brice served on expeditionary duty in Haiti with the First Marine Brigade in 1923. In 1924, he became one of the country's first Marine aviators following flight training at Pensacola, Florida. In 1927, Brice served with Scouting Squadron 1 in China. General Brice was with one of the first two Marine squadrons to be based on an aircraft carrier while commanding Scouting Squadron 15-M on the USS Lexington.

During World War II, General Brice commanded Marine Aircraft Group 14 during the Guadalcanal, New Georgia and Bougainville campaigns. Brice became Brigadier General at the age of 46 in 1945, making him the youngest General in the Marine Corps. During the Korean War, General Brice served as Assistant Commander of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing from April to October 1951.

General Brice retired in 1959, receiving his fourth star after serving as Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific; Director of Marine Aviation; Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps for Air; and Assistant Chief of Naval Operations. He won the Distinguished Service Medal at Guadalcanal, the Legion of Merit with Combat "V" as head of fighter command, the Air Medal for combat flights in the Solomons, The Order of the British Empire for his service with the New Zealand Air Force and the Bronze Star with Combat "V" in the final months of World War II as Chief of Staff, Air, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific.



## General William Oscar Brice

(Information compiled for exhibit in Military Room when located on third floor)

General William Oscar Brice, USMC, was born December 10, 1898, in Columbia, SC. General Brice attended Mt. Zion Institute in Winnsboro from 1913 to 1917, when he entered the US Army during World War I. After the war he resumed his education, graduating from the Citadel in Charleston in 1921.

General Brice served on expeditionary duty in Haiti with the First Marine Brigade in 1923. In 1924, he became one of the country's first Marine aviators following flight training at Pensacola, Florida. In 1927, Brice served with Scouting Squadron 1 in China. General Brice was with one of the first two Marine squadrons to be based on an aircraft carrier while commanding Scouting Squadron 15-M on the USS Lexington.

During World War II, General Brice commanded Marine Aircraft Group 14 during the Guadalcanal, New Georgia and Bougainville campaigns. Brice became Brigadier General at the age of 46 in 1945, making him the youngest General in the Marine Corps. During the Korean War, General Brice served as Assistant Commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Aircraft Wing from April to October 1951.

General Brice retired in 1959, receiving his fourth star after serving as Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific; Director of Marine Aviation; Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps for Air; and Assistant Chief of Naval Operations. He won the Distinguished Service Medal at Guadalcanal, the Legion of Merit with Combat "V" as head of fighter command, the Air Medal for combat flights in the Solomons, the Order of the British Empire for his service in the New Zealand Air Force and the Bronze Star with Combat "V" in the final months of World War II as chief of Staff, Air, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific.

1898-1972

**Information found on General William Oscar Brice:**

**General William Oscar Brice of the United States Marine Corps, Retired, was born in Columbia, South Carolina, December 10, 1898. He is the son of the late Doctor William Oscar Brice and Rachel Buchanan Thompson Brice, natives of Winnsboro, South Carolina. He is married to the former Rebecca Jennings and they have one child, Margaret (Mrs. Christopher Devan), and five grandchildren.**

**General Brice grew up in Winnsboro where he finished school at historic Mt. Zion Institute in 1917. He then matriculated at the Citadel in Charleston, South Carolina, receiving a degree in engineering from there in 1921.**

**An early honor given General Brice was the Order of the British Empire, signed by the Queen Mother (Mary) which gave him the rank of Honorary Commander Military Division.**

**He served in Haiti, Guam, the Philippines and China. In 1945 he became Brigadier General. He later served in the Korean conflict and was in Honolulu the last years of his active service.**

**Thirty-four of his 36 years of service were spent in the Marine Corps as an aviator. It was said authoritatively he knew more than any other man the use of air force in land battle. General Brice had 72,000 men in his last command, his title being "Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific."**

**In 1945 among the decorations awarded him were: Numbers of Distinguished Service Medals for duty of great responsibility as Commanding Officer of all search, bombing, and torpedo aircraft of the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and the Royal New Zealand Air Force operating in Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands; Legion of Merit for exceptionally meritorious conduct in performance of outstanding service as Fighter Commander of all Army, Navy, Marine and New Zealand fighter aircraft; the Air Medal for combat flights in the Solomon Islands; Bronze Star for meritorious Service as Chief of Staff, Aircraft, Fleet Marine.**

**His Alma Mater has shown him notable honors. He has been awarded the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Military Science. He has been speaker at the Citadel Commencement with a 17-gun salute. His oil portrait hangs in the Citadel Gallery of Distinguished Graduates.**

**On his return to Winnsboro, Mt. Zion Institute welcomed him with the celebration of a "William Oscar Brice Day." The city Chamber of Commerce toasted his career with a banquet. He has held prominent civic positions, serving the in capacity of President of the Fairfield County Chamber of Commerce, head of the United Fund Drive, member of the Fairfield Library Board and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Fairfield Memorial Hospital.**

**General and Mrs. Brice are members of Sion Presbyterian Church. They are active in the social, cultural and religious life of the community.**





## UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS HISTORY AND MUSEUMS DIVISION

For Latest  
on this  
**What's**



[www.usmc.mil](http://www.usmc.mil)

[Home](#)

[What's New](#)

[Mission](#)

[Organization](#)

[Historical](#)

[Customs &  
Traditions](#)

[Frequently  
Requested](#)

[Who's Who in  
Marine Corps  
History](#)

[This Month In  
History](#)

[Museum Artifacts](#)

[Art Collection](#)

[General](#)

[Collections  
Management](#)

[Visitors /  
Researchers](#)

[Grants /  
Internships](#)

[Volunteers](#)

### Who's Who in Marine Corps History

[Who's Who in Marine Corps History](#)

[Previo](#)



**GENERAL  
WILLIAM O. BRICE, USMC  
(DECEASED)**

[CLICK HERE OR THUMBNAIL FOR LARGER IMAGE](#)

General William Oscar Brice, a veteran of the Korean conflict, the World War II, the Solomon Islands and pre-war expeditionary duty in Haiti and China, died 30 January 1972 at the U.S. Army Hospital, Ft. Jackson, South Carolina. He last served at Pearl Harbor as Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, after more than three years at Marine Corps Headquarters, Washington, D.C., as Director of Marine Aviation, Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps for Air and Assistant Chief of Naval Operations for Marine Aviation.

The general served in Korea as Assistant Commander of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing from April to October 1951. In World War II, when the Marines were fighting at Guadalcanal in America's first offensive against Japan, he commanded all U.S. Army, Navy, Marine and Royal New Zealand Air Force search, bombing and torpedo planes based on that island. He also headed Marine Aircraft Group 14 during its support of the New Georgia and Bougainville invasions and directed all Solomons-based Army, Navy, Marine and New Zealand fighter operations against Rabaul, Japan's biggest base in the Southwest Pacific.

He won the Distinguished Service Medal at Guadalcanal, the Legion of Merit with Combat "V" as head of the Fighter Command, the Air Medal for combat in the Solomons between December 1942, and February 1944, the Order of the British Empire (with rank of Honorary Commander, Military Division) for his service with the New Zealand Air Force. In addition, he won the Bronze Star Medal with Combat "V" in the final months of the war as Staff, Air, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific.

Born 10 December 1898, in Columbia, South Carolina, General Brice was a member of the Mt. Zion Institute at Winnsboro, South Carolina, from 1913 to 1917, the

[Publications](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Links](#)

[Special Interests](#)

[Marine Corps  
Heritage Center /  
National Museum  
of the Marine  
Corps](#)

[Marine Corps  
Heritage  
Foundation](#)

[Korean War  
Commemoration](#)

served in the Army in the latter part of World War I. After the war, he received his education, graduating from The Citadel at Charleston, South Carolina in 1921. On September 25th of that year, he reported for active duty as a second lieutenant and was assigned to the Company Officers School at Quantico, Virginia. Graduating from the school in July 1922, he was stationed at the Marine Barracks, Parris Island, South Carolina, until May 1923, when he joined the 1st Marine Brigade in Haiti. He returned from that country in February 1924, to enter flight training at Pensacola, Florida, where he was designated an aviator that August.

In June 1925, after further instruction at Pensacola and service with Observation Squadron 3 at Quantico, the general began another tour of overseas duty, this time with Scouting Squadron 1 on Guam. From Guam, he was ordered to China in April 1927, when most of the squadron was sent there to help protect Americans and other foreigners during the Chinese war. The squadron was withdrawn to the Philippines in May while arrangements for a flying field were made with the Chinese government. The next month it returned to China to begin operating from Hsin Ho in the 3rd Marine Brigade.

Returning to the United States in December 1927, General Brice was assigned the following month to Fighter Squadron 9-M at Quantico where he remained until October 1931. Then, on November 2nd of that year he was aboard the aircraft carrier Lexington in command of Scouting Squadron 14 which thus began its service as one of the first two Marine squadrons to be based on Navy carriers. (The other unit, Scouting Squadron 14-M, boarded the "Saratoga" the same day.)

The general remained on the Lexington until January 1933, and that June, after six months at San Diego, he returned to Quantico. There, during the next three years, he served on aviation duty, completed the Junior Course at Quantico as a member of the War Plans Section. He entered the Army Air Corps Training School at Maxwell Field, Montgomery, Alabama, in August 1936, and upon graduation in June of the following year, returned to Quantico to serve as Executive Officer and later, Commander, of Scouting Squadron 1. After he was an instructor at Pensacola from June 1939, until August 1941, when he went back to Quantico once more, this time as Operations Officer of Marine Aircraft Group 11.

With that group General Brice moved to San Diego in December 1941, and there, in March 1942, he assumed command of Marine Aircraft Group 11. He headed that unit until September 1942, when he rejoined Marine Aircraft Group 11 as its commander, and the following month he sailed with it (Marine Aircraft Group 11) for the New Hebrides Islands, where the group began feeding planes and pilots into Guadalcanal. In December 1942, he moved up to take command of Marine Aircraft Group 14 and all the Marine aircraft, bombing and torpedo planes based there, remaining until April 1943, when he departed for New Zealand with the group.

The general returned to the Solomons with that unit in August 1943, to the New Georgia and Bougainville operations. The group became the 1st of the Solomons Fighter Command, and that October General Brice was assigned additional duties as head of that organization. He relinquished command of the group in January 1944, but continued to head the Fighter Command until he returned to the United States that March.

In September 1944, after service in various capacities at the Marine Corps Station, Cherry Point, North Carolina, General Brice reported to Marine Headquarters, where he served as Executive Officer of the Division of Operations and Policies until June 1945. The same year he was promoted to brigadier general at the age of 46, which made him the youngest general officer in the Marine Corps, and that July he arrived in Hawaii to take over as Chief of Staff, Air, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific. He held that post until May 1947, the following month, returned to Marine Corps Headquarters as Assistant Director of Marine Aviation.

Leaving Headquarters in May 1949, the general's next tour of duty was at Glenview, Illinois, as a Commander of Marine Air Reserve Training from July until April 1951, when he left for Korea to become Assistant Commander of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. Promoted to major general that August, he returned to Hawaii in October as Deputy Commander, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, serving in that capacity until March 1952, when he returned to the United States. He became Director of Aviation the following month, and in August 1953, when that post was elevated to a lieutenant general's billet, he was promoted to his present rank. He left Washington in July 1955, and assumed his final command on September 9th of that year. He retired and was advanced to the rank of general.

In addition to the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Air Medal and Order of the British Empire, General Brice holds the Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal with one bronze star; the World War II Victory Medal; the Yangtze Service Medal; the American Defense Service Medal; the Asiatic-Pacific Area Campaign Medal with three bronze stars; the American Area Campaign Medal; the World War II Medal; the National Defense Service Medal; the Korean Service Medal with two bronze stars; the United Nations Service Medal and the Korean Presidential Unit Citation Ribbon.

---

[Who's Who in Marine Corps History](#)

[Previous](#)

[Back to Top](#)





# The Fairfield County Museum

will be celebrating

## Veteran's Day

with a reopening of

### The General W. Oscar Brice Military Hall

and a reception from 5:30 to 7:30 PM, Nov. 11, 2005

**Rev. Carroll Pope USMC / DAVPRM**

will speak on the

**Life and Service of Winnsboro's own**

**Four-Star General W. O. Brice**

**World War II Reenactors in uniform will be present during the afternoon and evening hours.**



231 South Congress St., Winnsboro, S.C.



Call (803)635-9811 for details



# Rededication Ceremony



**The General W. Oscar Brice**

**Military Hall**

**Veterans' Day, November 11  
2005**

Fairfield County  
*Museum*  
—  
—

# **PROGRAM**

**TWO TO FIVE:  
MUSEUM OPEN REENACTORS AND EXHIBIT**

**FIVE-THIRTY:  
OPENING REMARKS AND INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER,  
REVEREND CARROLL POPE,  
USMC/DAVPRM**

***THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF  
WINNSBORO'S OWN  
FOUR-STAR  
GENERAL WILLIAM OSCAR BRICE USMC***

**AFTERWARDS:  
REFRESHMENTS AND REOPENING OF THE MUSEUM AND  
MILITARY EXHIBITS**

**THE FAIRFIELD COUNTY MUSEUM, ESTABLISHED IN 1976, HAS BEEN THE RECIPIENT OVER THE YEARS OF MANY UNIFORMS, ACCOUTREMENTS, AND MILITARY WEAPONS. OVER THE YEARS, LIGHT WILL DAMAGE PERISHABLE MATERIALS SUCH AS PAPER AND FABRIC. THUS, THE THIRD FLOOR HAS BEEN REFITTED TO MAINTAIN PROPER STORAGE CONDITIONS. THE COLLECTION ON DISPLAY TODAY REPRESENTS A FEW OF THE COLLECTION ARTIFACTS. FUTURE EXHIBITS IN THE LARGE GLASS AND STEEL CASES ON THE FIRST FLOOR WILL EXHIBIT MORE OF THE COLLECTION. THIS WAY WE CAN ASSURE THE DURABILITY OF OUR WONDERFUL COLLECTION.**

**PLEASE ENJOY THE VINTAGE RADIO DISPLAY DOWNSTAIRS AND VISIT THE GENERAL W. O. BRICE MILITARY HALL AT THE TOP OF THE SECOND FLOOR STAIRS. ALSO, ENJOY OUR DOMESTIC EXHIBITS IN THE TWO ROOMS ACROSS THE HALL.**



# UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS HISTORY AND MUSEUMS DIVISION

For Latest  
on this  
**What's**



[www.usmc.mil](http://www.usmc.mil)

[Home](#)

[What's New](#)

[Mission](#)

[Organization](#)

## Historical

[Customs & Traditions](#)

[Frequently Requested](#)

[Who's Who in Marine  
Corps History](#)

[This Month In History](#)

[Museum Artifacts](#)

[Art Collection](#)

## General

[Collections  
Management](#)

[Visitors / Researchers](#)

[Grants / Internships](#)

[Volunteers](#)

[Publications](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Links](#)

## Special Interests

[Marine Corps](#)

## Who's Who in Marine Corps History

[Who's Who in Marine Corps History](#)

[Prev](#)



GENERAL  
WILLIAM O. BRICE, USMC  
(DECEASED)

[▶ CLICK HERE OR THUMBNAIL FOR LARGER IMAGE](#)

General William Oscar Brice, a veteran of the Korean conflict, the World War II fight at Guadalcanal, the Solomon Islands and pre-war expeditionary duty in Haiti and China, died 30 January 1951 at the U.S. Army Hospital, Ft. Jackson, South Carolina. He last served at Pearl Harbor as Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, after more than three years at Marine Corps Headquarters, Washington, D.C., as Director of Marine Aviation, Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps for Air and Assistant Chief of Naval Operations for Aviation.

The general served in Korea as Assistant Commander of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing from April to October 1951. In World War II, when the Marines were fighting at Guadalcanal, America's first offensive against Japan, he commanded all U.S. Army, Navy, Marine and Royal New Zealand Air Force search, bombing and torpedo planes based on that island. He also headed Marine Aircraft Group 14 during its support of the New Georgia and Bougainville invasions and directed all Solomons-based Army, Navy, Marine and New Zealand fighting operations against Rabaul, Japan's biggest base in the Southwest Pacific.

He won the Distinguished Service Medal at Guadalcanal, the Legion of Merit with Combat Distinction as head of the Fighter Command, the Air Medal for combat flights in the Solomons from December 1942, and February 1944, and the Order of the British Empire (with rank of Knight Commander, Military Division) for his service with the New Zealand Air Force. In addition, he earned the Bronze Star Medal with Combat "V" in the final months of the war as Chief of Staff, Air, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific.

Born 10 December 1898, in Columbia, South Carolina, General Brice attended Mt. Zion Institute at Winnsboro, South Carolina, from 1913 to 1917, then served in the Army in the latter part of World War I. After the war, he resumed his education, graduating from The Citadel at Charleston, South Carolina, in 1921. On September 25th of that year, he returned for active duty as a Marine second lieutenant and was assigned to the Company Officer School at Quantico, Virginia. Graduating from the school in July 1922, he was stationed at Marine Barracks, Parris Island, South Carolina, until May 1923, when he joined the 1st Marine Brigade in Haiti. He returned from that country in February 1924, to enter flight training at Pensacola, Florida, where he was designated an aviator that August.

In June 1925, after further instruction at Pensacola and service with Observation Squadron at Quantico, the general began another tour of overseas duty, this time with Scouting



Heritage Center /  
National Museum  
of the Marine Corps

---

Marine Corps  
Heritage Foundation

---

Korean War  
Commemoration

---

Squadron 1 on Guam. From Guam he was ordered to China in April 1927, when most of the squadron was sent there to help protect Americans and other foreigners during the Chinese civil war. The squadron was withdrawn to the Philippines in May while arrangements for a new flying field were made with the Chinese government, and the next month it returned to begin operating from Hsin Ho in support of the 3rd Marine Brigade.

Returning to the United States in December 1927, General Brice was assigned the following month to Fighter Squadron 9-M at Quantico where he remained until October 1931. On 1 November 2nd of that year he reported aboard the aircraft carrier Lexington in command of Scouting Squadron 15-M, which thus began its service as one of the first two Marine squadrons to be based on Navy carriers. (The other unit, Scouting Squadron 14-M, became the "Saratoga" the same day.)

The general remained on the Lexington until January 1933, and that June, after six months in San Diego, he returned to Quantico. There, during the next three years, he served on duty, completed the Junior Course and was a member of the War Plans Section. He then attended the Army Air Corps Tactical School at Maxwell Field, Montgomery, Alabama, in August and upon graduation in June of the following year, returned to Quantico to serve as Executive Officer and later, Commander, of Scouting Squadron 1. After that he was an instructor at Pensacola from June 1939, until August 1941, when he went back to Quantico once again this time as Operations Officer of Marine Aircraft Group 11.

With that group General Brice moved to San Diego in December 1941, and there, in January 1942, he assumed command of Marine Aircraft Group 12. He headed that unit until September 1942, when he rejoined Marine Aircraft Group 11 as its commander, and the following month he sailed with it (via New Caledonia) for the New Hebrides Islands, where the group began feeding planes and pilots into Guadalcanal. In December 1942, he moved to Guadalcanal to take command of Marine Aircraft Group 14 and all the search, bombing and torpedo planes based there, remaining until April 1943, when he departed for New Zealand with the group.

The general returned to the Solomons with that unit in August 1943, to support the New Georgia and Bougainville operations. The group became the nucleus of the Solomon Islands Command, and that October General Brice was assigned additional duties as head of the command organization. He relinquished his command of the group in January 1944, but continued to head the Fighter Command until he returned to the United States that March.

In September 1944, after service in various capacities at the Marine Corps Air Station, Point, North Carolina, General Brice reported to Marine Corps Headquarters, where he served as Executive Officer of the Division of Plans and Policies until June 1945. The same month he was promoted to brigadier general at the age of 46, which made him the youngest general officer then in the Marine Corps, and that July he arrived in Hawaii to take over as Chief of Staff, Air, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific. He held that post until May 1947, and the following month, returned to Marine Corps Headquarters as Assistant Director of Marine Aviation.

Leaving Headquarters in May 1949, the general's next tour of duty was at Glenview, Illinois, as a Commander of Marine Air Reserve Training from that July until April 1951, when he went to Korea to become Assistant Commander of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. Promoted to major general that August, he returned to Hawaii in October as Deputy Commander, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, serving in that capacity until March 1952, when he returned to the United States. He became Director of Aviation the following month, and in August 1953, when his post was elevated to a lieutenant general's billet, he was promoted to his present rank. He retired in Washington in July 1955, and assumed his final command on September 9th of that year. He retired in 1956 and was advanced to the rank of general.

In addition to the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, A

and Order of the British Empire, General Brice holds the Marine Corps Expeditionary with one bronze star; the World War I Victory Medal; the Yangtze Service Medal; the American Defense Service Medal; the Asiatic-Pacific Area Campaign Medal with three stars; the American Area Campaign Medal; the World War II Medal; the National Defense Service Medal; the Korean Service Medal with two bronze stars; the United Nations Service Medal and the Korean Presidential Unit Citation Ribbon.

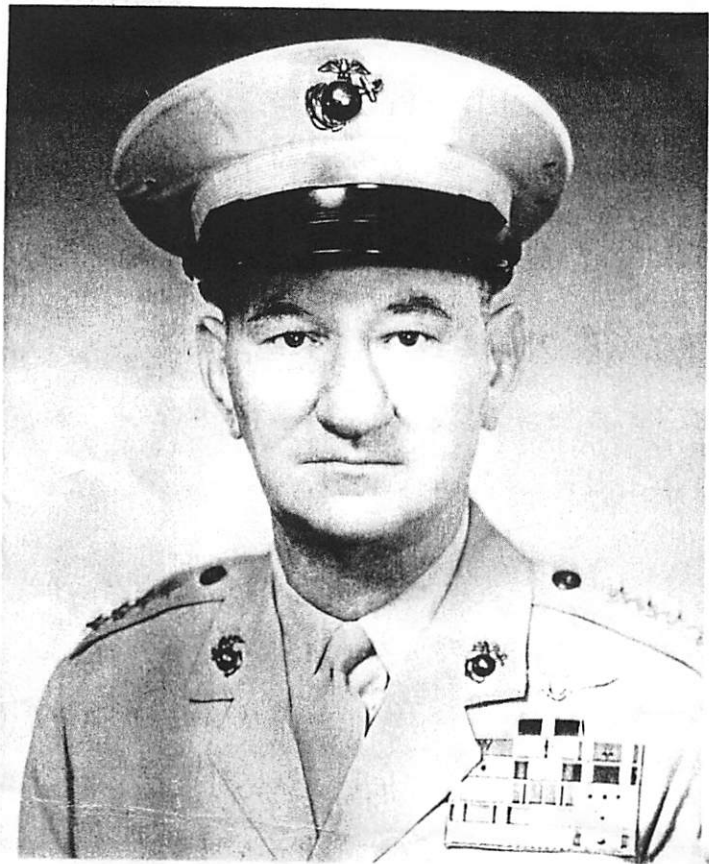
---

[Who's Who in Marine Corps History](#)

[Prev](#)

[Back to Top](#)

Sandlapper  
July 1968



# Winnsboro's Illustrious General Brice

By NANCY C. WYLIE

General William Oscar Brice.

"His life sounds like a history of the Marine Corps. . . He did as much to relate the airplane to land battle as any man alive," syndicated columnist Bob Considine wrote. His mild, genial manner belies the fact that for 36 years he was a tough marine.

This is Winnsboro's General William Oscar Brice, United States Marine Corps, Retired. His uniform displays four stars.

This is the general who received the Order of the British Empire (with rank of Honorary Commander, Military Division) for his service with the New Zealand Air Force.

The document of the Order of the British Empire is written in Elizabethan English. It grants General Brice the "Dignity of an Honorary Commander. . . together with all and singular the privileges thereunto belonging or appertaining."

Dated August 19, 1948, it is signed by the late Queen Mother:

Mary R.

By the Sovereign's Command  
Grand Master

Historic old Winnsboro lures home her sons, to spend their mellowing years at the scene of their boyhood. Of those who have retired here, no one has had more action-packed years than General Brice—most of them in far-distant countries.

The General's roots are embedded in Fairfield County. His parents were the late Dr. W. Oscar Brice and Rachel Buchanan Thompson Brice, natives of Winnsboro. He was born in Columbia, but spent most of his boyhood in Winnsboro. He says, "I came back here because of the people who are my neighbors. I wanted to spend these years with them."

Oscar Brice attended Mount Zion Institute, a school noted for its high academic standards and its long history. The school was founded in

1777; on its campus General Cornwallis once camped.

Football was the only sport the school offered, so that was Oscar's extra-curricula activity. When the M.Z.I. squad ran onto the gridiron, they were an impressive sight. They had bought what passed for uniforms, for which the General recalls, "We made shoulder pads, elbow pads, hip pads out of old horse collars and blankets. We bought tennis shoes and put cleats on them. We didn't have any helmets."

Oscar was graduated from Mount Zion in 1917, and entered The Citadel in September. On completion of his freshman year, he was commissioned a 2nd lieutenant and sent as an instructor for servicemen stationed at Army Barracks in Plattsburg, New York. He returned to The Citadel in the late fall of his sophomore year, and graduated

Miss Wylie is from Winnsboro.

Japs second. W.O. Brice, Col., CSA  
In 1945, Colonel Brice became a brigadier general. At that time, he was the youngest man in the Marine Corps to hold that rank.

During the Korean Conflict, General Brice's headquarters were first Korea and later Honolulu.

Thirty-four of his 36 years of service were spent in Marine Corps aviation. General Brice had 72,000 men in his last command. His title was "Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific."

Among the medals General Brice won are: the distinguished Service Medal at Guadalcanal, the Legion of Merit with Combat "V" as head of the Fighter Command, the Air Medal for combat flights in the Solomons, and the Bronze Star.

The General's study is the most interesting room in the house. A caller often finds him there at his desk, surrounded by mementos of his marine days.

Asked if he is writing his mem-

oirs, he said, "No. There are too many generals doing that. I don't want to be included in that group."

The flag in his study is his personal flag, and was presented to him on retirement. Indicating his rank and branch of service, it has four white stars on a red field.

On retirement, General Brice was also presented a portrait of himself, a crayon that a marine artist had been commissioned to do. It hangs close by the flag.

General Brice retired September 1, 1956, and he and Mrs. Brice came back to Winnsboro that fall. For several months, they lived at Fairfield Inn. This was once the spacious childhood home of the late South Carolina artist, Laura Douglas. It is now the Country Club, with a golf course the General enjoys.

Soon after his return, General Brice was honored with a banquet given by the Chamber of Commerce.

"Is it true that on that occasion you kissed all your old high school classmates?" he was asked.

"Only the females," he replied.

Mount Zion Institute declared February 1, 1957, Oscar Brice Day, and held a special assembly honoring General Brice.

The Brices are active in the civic, social and religious life of the community. General Brice has served as president of the Chamber of Commerce, as a director of the United Fund, on the Fairfield County Library Commission and is currently chairman of the Fairfield Memorial Hospital Board.

General Brice and his wife live at 400 Congress Street in an attractive remodeled home, the girlhood home of Mrs. Brice.

The General's favorite form of recreation is golf. "How is your golf game?" he was asked.

"Not good," he said, "but I don't expect improvement—I just hope for no regression."



Gen. E. A. Pollock who now lives at Beaufort pins four stars on Gen. Brice with Mrs. Brice's assistance as Gen. G. R. Shell looks on.



with his class in 1921. Two members of that class have become four-star marine generals: General Brice and General Edwin A. Pollock.

His alma mater has paid signal honor to General Brice. On March 16, 1957, he was the principal speaker at Corps Day at The Citadel. For General Brice there was an honor guard, a 17-gun salute, and the Marine Hymn was played as the Corps of Cadets passed in review.

In 1963 an oil portrait of General Brice was unveiled in a ceremony at The Citadel and later placed in the military college's Gallery of Distinguished Graduates. (The portrait was painted by Charleston artist Alicia Rhett.)

On May 28, 1966, at The Citadel's commencement exercises, General Brice was one of four prominent South Carolinians to receive an honorary degree, as "Americans who have made outstanding contributions in their own fields." General Brice was awarded a Doctor of Military Science degree.

Rebekah Jennings and Oscar Brice were married on June 1, 1925. The General says, "That's one date I remember. We were married at 8 o'clock and left at 10 for Guam."

"We were out of the States for 30 months," Mrs. Brice adds.

His lovely Beck was with him in Guam, later accompanying him to the Philippines and China. She says, "In China, I was mostly without Oscar."

After their return to the States, the Brices lived in Quantico, Virginia. Here their daughter, Margaret Elizabeth, was born. Peggy (Mrs. Christopher Bertram Devan) has five children; the family lives in Wilmington, Delaware.

During World War II, Oscar Brice was in places too numerous to mention; he was "in the Pacific."

"The Sword over the Mantel," by J. Bryan, III, has an interesting commentary on a phase of this war. During their 1943-44 stay in the Solomon Islands, servicemen from the South relieved boredom and

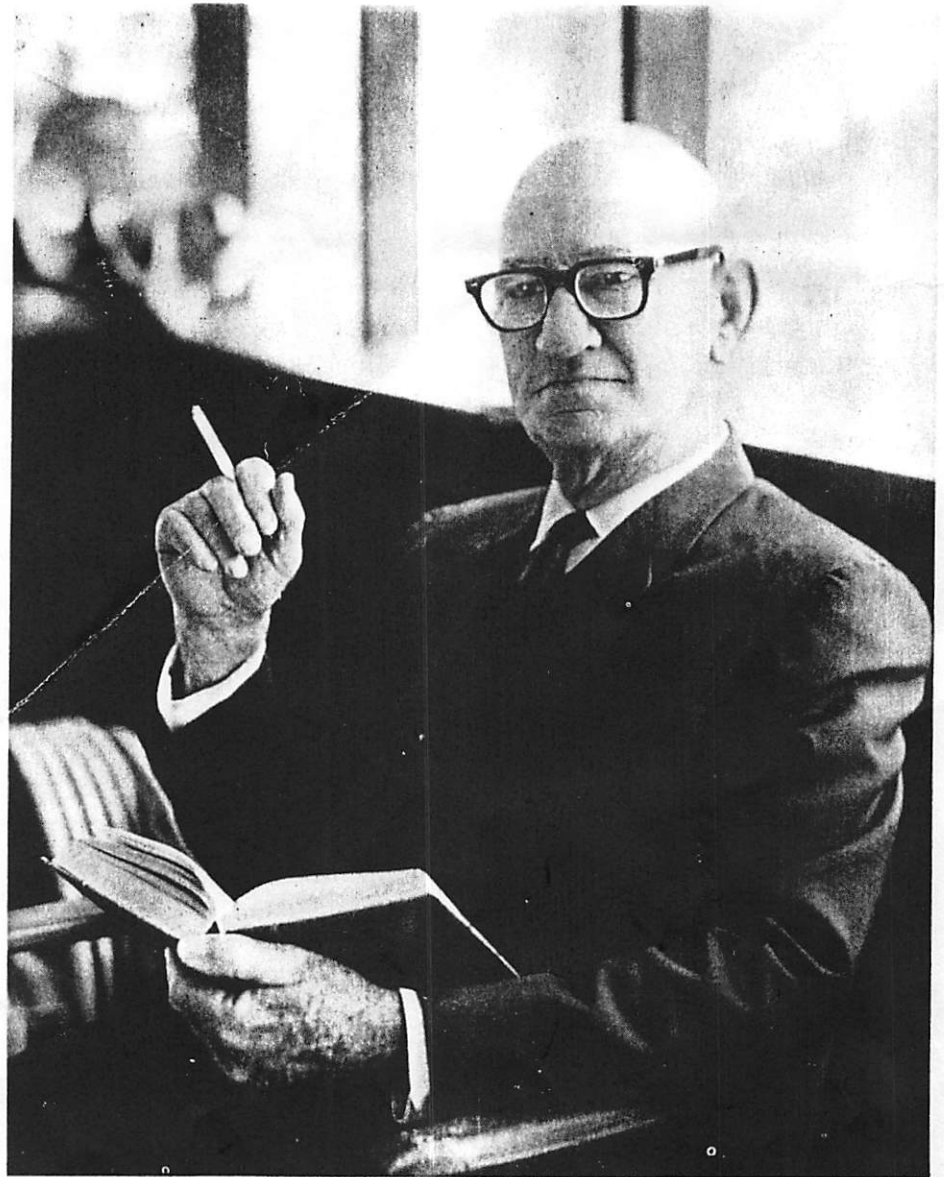
tension by assumed hostilities toward their Yankee companions. Bryan says that his skipper was a colonel, adding, "The colonel was a southerner: Colonel William Oscar Brice, USMC. . . Marine colonels are whalebone—and whipcord men. They are spare, Spartan, crisp. They have leathery faces and cropped gray hair and eyes like ramrods. This is the stencil all right, but whoever cut it forgot to show it to Colonel Brice. Roly-poly, pink and benign, he'd have been far better cast as some child's favorite uncle. Yet when Admiral Halsey, Commander of the South Pacific Area,

entrusted his precious few fighter planes to Colonel Brice, he knew he was entrusting them to a crack professional officer, a fearless fighting man, and a leader who could inspire a six shooter to yield seven shots."

The "cunnel" had been persuaded to let the men organize the "Confederate Forces of the Solomons" (conforsols) and agreed to be their commander. He sent out his first general order:

Confederate Forces Solomons  
Headquarters of the Commander

17 November 1943  
Effective at once, the following priorities are assigned: Yankees fust,



General Brice at home in Winnsboro.

—Photo by Ernest Ferguson.