

## **The Sey-Hey Kid Learns about the Carbine**

Anyone who knows anything about baseball recognizes the name, Willie Mays. Famous for a long career and “The Catch” while playing for the San Francisco Giants, many may not know that part of his baseball career was spent in the Army. Willie Mays spent a few years stationed at Ft. Eustis, Virginia where he played baseball and spent his time as an athletic instructor.

While at Ft. Eustis, Willie was always looking for ways to improve his game. During his stint at Ft. Eustis, he learned the "[basket catch](#)" from fellow outfielder and soldier, Al Fortunato.

Below is a picture of him standing in front of a Ft. Eustis Transportation Center sign. Note the carbine slung over his shoulder.



Unfortunately, we do not know the serial number of the carbine in the above photo.

The picture below shows Willie during his basic training at the Army's Transportation Center, Ft. Eustis, Va. Sgt. First Class Carl Brooks Jr. gives Private Mays his first lessons on carbine nomenclature.



Willie had quite the career in the Major Leagues. It has been speculated that if it were not for his military service, Willie would have broken Babe Ruth's home run record. Other sports figures, some well known and some not, served their country in the military. Whitey Ford served in Korea, Pee Wee Reese and Phil Rosuto served in WW2. Benny Huffman, a little known baseball player, and coach served in WW2 as part of a traveling baseball team. More on him can be found [here](#). Some of the documentation in the previously linked article contains some interesting names of those who also played ball for the military in WW2.

Willie's career stats can be found [here](#).

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