

= Roscoe Charles Wilson =

Roscoe Charles Wilson ( 11 June 1905 ? 21 August 1986 ) was a United States Air Force general who was Commandant of the Air War College from 1951 to 1954 and Deputy Chief of Staff , Development , from 1958 to 1961 .

A 1928 graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point , Wilson was commissioned into the United States Army as a second lieutenant in the field artillery but underwent flying training and , on receiving his pilot 's wings , transferred to the United States Army Air Corps in 1929 . He attended the Air Corps Engineering School at Wright @-@ Patterson Field , Ohio and was assigned to the Aircraft Design Section of the Aircraft Laboratory there , where he worked on the development of the XB @-@ 15 , B @-@ 17 and XB @-@ 19 .

During World War II , Wilson was Chief of Development Engineering at United States Army Air Forces ( USAAF ) headquarters , and was the USAAF liaison officer to the Manhattan Project . In December 1944 he became Chief of Staff of the 316th Bombardment Wing . Its B @-@ 29s deployed to Okinawa in June 1945 , and he participated in the last air raids on Japan . After the war ended he was involved in a survey of the damage done by the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki . In 1947 , he became one of the Deputy Chiefs of the Armed Forces Special Weapons Project .

From October 1951 to May 1954 Wilson was Commandant of the Air War College at Maxwell Air Force Base , Alabama . He then became commander of the Third Air Force in the United Kingdom . He was promoted to lieutenant general on 1 July 1958 when he became Deputy Chief of Staff , Development . He retired from the Air Force in 1961 and became President and Chairman of Allied Research .

= = Early life and career = =

Roscoe Charles Wilson was born in Centralia , Pennsylvania , on 11 June 1905 , the son of an Army officer , Colonel Everett R. Wilson . He entered the United States Military Academy at West Point as a cadet on 1 July 1924 and graduated 48th in the class of 1928 . He was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the field artillery on 9 June 1928 , but on 8 September he commenced flight training at Brooks Field , Texas . After further training at the Advanced Flying School at Kelly Field , Texas he received his pilot 's wings , and transferred to the United States Army Air Corps on 21 November 1929 .

Wilson 's first posting was to the 1st Observation Squadron at Mitchel Field , New York . In 1929 he married Elizabeth Robinson , a Vassar College graduate from Harrods Creek , Louisville , Kentucky in a ceremony at Christ Church Cathedral in Louisville . Their son Charles E. Wilson would also attend West Point , graduating with the class of 1954 .

Wilson attended the Air Corps Engineering School at Wright @-@ Patterson Field , Ohio from July 1932 to June 1933 . After graduating , he was assigned to the Aircraft Design Section of the Aircraft Laboratory there , where he worked on the development of the P @-@ 39 , XB @-@ 15 , B @-@ 17 and XB @-@ 19 . He was promoted to first lieutenant on 1 February 1934 , and was Director of the Special Research and Test Laboratory and Director of Accessory Design and Test Laboratory .

Wilson came back to West Point in July 1937 as an instructor in the Department of Natural and Experimental Philosophy , as the Science Department was then known . He was promoted to captain on 9 July 1938 . From May to August 1939 , he attended the Air Corps Tactical School , after which he returned to West Point as an assistant professor . While there he built a wind tunnel , and wrote a book , entitled Preliminary Airplane Design , which was published in 1941 .

= = World War II = =

In June 1940 , Wilson was posted back to Wright Field as Assistant Chief of the Air Laboratory of the Air Materiel Command , where he was promoted to major on 31 January 1941 , lieutenant colonel on 1 February 1942 , and colonel on 1 March 1942 . He became Assistant Chief of Development Engineering at United States Army Air Forces ( USAAF ) Headquarters in Washington

, DC , on 1 May 1942 , and then its Chief on 2 June 1943 . As such , he reported to Major General Oliver P. Echols , the head of the Air Material Command .

The Chief of USAAF , General Henry H. Arnold , designated Echols as the USAAF liaison with the Manhattan Project . In turn , Echols designated Wilson as his alternative , and it was Wilson who became Manhattan Project 's main USAAF contact . The director of the Manhattan Project , Major General Leslie Groves later wrote that :

[ Wilson ] was a most fortunate choice , for his personality and professional competence ensured the smooth co @-@ operation essential to our success . Through his efforts , the necessary air support was always provided by the subordinate Air Force commands , if not willingly , at least without delay .

While I can say the same of every other Air Force officer with whom I had any dealings in the project , I have always felt particularly grateful to Wilson , for he had to bear the brunt of all our many minor problems with the Air Force as well as a major responsibility for a number of our principal activities . I am sure that he must have had many difficult moments with his Air Force colleagues , as he denied them , for security reasons , information they considered essential to understand the reasons for his requests .

Wilson was posted to Britain from March to April 1944 , where he was involved in an exchange of technical information with the Royal Air Force . In December 1944 he became Chief of Staff of the 316th Bombardment Wing , which was then based at Colorado Springs , Colorado , but soon moved to Topeka , Kansas . Its B @-@ 29s deployed to Okinawa in June 1945 , and he participated in the last air raids on Japan . After the war ended he was involved in a survey of the damage done by the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki .

= = Cold War = =

After the war , Wilson served in the Office of the Assistant Chief of Air Staff for Materiel and Supply , the Office of the Deputy Commander of the Army Air Force , and Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Research and Development . On 26 July 1947 , he became one of the Deputy Chiefs of the Armed Forces Special Weapons Project , with the rank of brigadier general from April 1948 . He also served on the Military Liaison Committee of the United States Atomic Energy Commission . He became Deputy Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff , operations , for Atomic Energy , in July 1948 , and Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff , Operations , for Atomic Energy , in February 1950 , although he remained on the Military Liaison Committee . He was promoted to major general on 11 August 1950 .

From October 1951 to May 1954 Wilson was Commandant of the Air War College at Maxwell Air Force Base , Alabama . He then became commander of the Third Air Force in the United Kingdom , also becoming head of the Military Assistance Advisory Group for the United Kingdom on 1 November 1956 . At the time , the Third Air Force was responsible for the only tactical nuclear weapons in Europe , so Wilson was a logical choice as commander . After returning to the United States in July 1957 , he became the Air Force member of the Weapons Systems Evaluation Group in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Research and Development . He was promoted to lieutenant general on 1 July 1958 when he became Deputy Chief of Staff , Development . In a reorganization of the area on 1 July 1961 , he became Deputy Chief of Staff , Research and Technology .

Wilson retired from the Air Force on 1 November 1961 . His decorations included the Legion of Merit with two oak leaf clusters . He became President and Chairman of Allied Research in Concord , Massachusetts , a defense contractor , but retired in 1963 , and moved to Harrods Creek , Louisville , Kentucky . He died on 21 August 1986 , and was buried in Zachary Taylor National Cemetery in Louisville .