

RECEIVED

15 DEC 1918

During the latter part of July and the first of August 1917, recruits for the U. S. Regular Army, from the Central States were sent to Jefferson Barracks, MO. Then one of the largest receiving barracks in the United States. On arrival here the recruits were examined, sworn in to the service and given uniforms and assigned to different recruit companies. These companies were in charge of non-commissioned officers of this Post, who taught these men their first principles of drill and further gave them their soldier knowledge by lectures etc. On the morning of the 9th of August 1917, the much heralded shipping lists were placed on various company bulletin boards and contained among hundreds of men for the Infantry, Cavalry, Quartermaster Corps and also forth, 575 men for the Aviation Section Signal Corps. The two days following were taken up in obtaining equipment, inspections lectures etc. On the 11th of August the different detachments were assembled at their several concentration points, roll call taken and marched to the parade ground in front of post headquarters. Here we were inspected by the commanding Officer as to appearance and equipment and by the Medical department as to health. After a wait of about two or three hours we were marched to the Iron Mountain R.R. where we entrained for San Antonio, Texas. Our trip was made without instance except at Palestine Texas where we were taken for a hike thru two or three inches of red dust at the hottest time of the day. A hike every man will remember. We arrived at San Antonio, about 4.30 A.M. on the 13th of August, and after having breakfast consisting of hard tack and beans, were taken to Camp Kelly, now known as Kelly Field, on arrival at camp the non-commissioned officers from Jefferson Barracks, turned their men over to the waiting Officers and non-coms. from the camp, who escorted us to the Camp proper. Then nothing more than a large dusty field, dotted with a few rows of tents, a few barracks, and two or three ware houses, but destined to become one of the greatest Air Service camps in America.

The men were then formed into groups of 150 men each, and were designated as the 70th, 71st, 72nd and 73rd Aero Squadrons. This squadron, together with four others were placed under the command of second lieutenant John E. Steinbrenner, Infantry, who placed sergeant Joseph Piriczky, 23rd Infantry in direct charge of the 71st Squadron. To Sergeant Piriczky great credit is due for his untiring efforts in placing the organization on running basis. After being designated as the 71st Aero Squadron, we were marched to our row of tents or rather to the site for a row of tents, as we were required to draw and erect our own tents. The next and most important question was the feeding of the men. We were furnished with a field range and other cooking utensils and after a diligent search among the members of the Squadron 3 or 4 men volunteered to act as cooks and little by little we have kept improving our kitchen until today, we have one of the best in the camp.

Our next problem was to find men suitable to carry on the administration of the Squadron and to this our acting commanding officer picked those men who had some sort of military training together with certain others whom he considered to have the ability to manage the affairs of the squadron. This was a very difficult proposition due to the fact that not a single man had had the proper military training to suit him for the work, however after some few changes and several weeks of earnest work, on the part of every one things began to move smoothly.

On or about the 17th of September 1917, Lieut. Steinbrenner was relieved of the command of the squadron, and First Lieut. W.E. Engel, of San Antonio, Texas assumed Command. During the first month of our stay at Kelly Field, the men were drilled and later did fatigue and guard duty. The squadron continued to do guard duty, until the 15th of December when we entrained for Morrison Va. ~~Thru~~ The three months between the 15th of September and the 15th of December were very busy ones for all concerned as on numerous occasions we were instructed to be ready to move and that we must have all available equipment for foreign service. This naturally meant the transfer of many men thru sickness or otherwise that was deemed advisable to leave behind and up until ten hours before our departure new recruits were received to fill the squadron to war strength.

We entrained about ten A.M. the 15th December together with the 68th and 70th Squadrons. Lieut Engel being placed in charge of the train. The train consisted of tourist Pullman cars and was equipped with a kitchen car which made it possible to serve hot meals, that helped to make our trip an enjoyable one. This trip was devoid of incident except at Paris, Texas which a slight wreck occurred, injuring two or three of the soldiers. The time that it took to clear the wreck was well spent, as the people of Paris, Texas were very enthusiastic in their entertainments of the soldiers, taking them for automobile rides to their homes, and furnishing them with sweets and tobacco. The remainder of our journey took us thru Springfield, Mo. St. Louis, Louisville Ky. Richmond Va and where ever our train stopped we were furnished with candy, apples cakes and tobacco, these in addition to many other things that were very acceptable to the soldiers.

We arrived at Morrison Va. about 4 P.M. 20th December, 1917. to find the camp far from complete and a sea of mud and ice. This however could not dull the feelings of the boys, for they were that much nearer to France. Every one immediately went to work with a will, digging stumps, building walks, building warehouses, doing plumbing work, digging sewers etc. until in a short time we had made an ideal soldiers home.

As in Texas, Lieut. Engel, together with the help of the supply department, executive department, was kept busy in completing the Overseas equipment. On Jan. 10 1918, Lieut. Engel was relieved of the command of the squadron, much to the regret of every member of the organization, all of whom had learned to look upon him more as a father than as a commanding officer. On the 21st January 1918, 1st Lieut. Lucius B. McLeod, was assigned to the command of the squadron, after having had some five different commanding officers in the preceding 10 days. 1st Lieut. McLeod was to remain with us until relieved in October 1918, by 1st Lieut. Geo. O. White. Lieut. McLeod was transferred to the Corps of Engineers. Our first impression of Lieut. McLeod was that he would be very hard on his men, but we soon began to realize how bad we were mistaken. For some three weeks before embarking, Lieut. McLeod would come thru the barracks each night and lecture to the men on the many subjects that have proven to be of great help to us since coming to Europe.

After a long and an impatient wait, this squadron, with nine others, received orders to embark for foreign service, via Newport News Va. on the 4th of March 1918. After the usual many inspections we entrained at 2 o'clock P.M. on the 4th of March and immediately embarked upon our arrival at Newport News. We were very fortunate in having a former German ship, the Kroenig Wilhelm II, but rechristened the Madawaska. It was operated by the American Government with an American crew. We were told that this was formerly the Kaiser's favorite pleasure ship and had been renamed by the American Sailors "Rolling Bill", which name we found to have been well chosen. We did not leave port until 2 p.m. on the 5th of March and it was a pleasant sight indeed, as we sailed past the many American Battleships in the harbor, to see the thousands of sailors at the rail of their ships bidding us Godspeed on our journey. Our next stop was at the outer harbor of New York, where we were anchored until 6 p.m. 7th March 1918, the morning of the 8th saw us well out to sea, convoyed by the Battle Cruiser, North Carolina. The Madawaska acting as flagship for the convoy which consisted of 4 transports. The following is a complete roster of the squadron when we left the United States.

Officers

- 1st Lieut. Lucius B. McLeod
- 1st Lieut. Clinton C. Cady
- 2nd Lieut. Joseph F. Dixon
- 2nd Lieut. William T. Sturges
- 2nd Lieut. Curtis P. Snook

Enlisted men.

- Hudgens, Frederick H.
- Johnson, Stanley I.
- Christner, Harry C.
- Wall, Harold F.
- Connor, Edwin L.
- Marshall, Fred L.
- Deeds, Earl M.
- Moore, Everett E.
- Sorensen, Louie C.
- Good, John L.
- Corsberg, Alfred R.
- Laughlin, Micheal
- Spence, Robert R.
- Hoopingarner, Nat B.
- North, Roland W.
- Toms, David C.
- Hawkinson, Harold E.
- Hosler, Oscar H.
- Slattery, William
- McDowell, Harry P.
- Rummeler, August E.
- Long, Roy G.
- Freilinger, John M.
- Bills, Leslie
- Finberg, Herman D.
- Fockler, Mitchell S.
- Lane, Earnest E.
- Hagan, Leo A.
- Newland, Nathaniel J.
- Batten, Berd D.

Enlisted men.

- Thye, Edward J.
- Grant, Alexander D.
- Douglas, Charles O.
- Doyle, Walter E.
- Lehman, Arthur M.B.
- Stockemer, Otto C.
- McFarland, Curtis H.
- Brown, Jesse W.
- Dempsey, Jack
- Barner, Howard A.
- Isaacson, George T.
- Anderson, G. Albin
- Steenberg, August I.
- Campbell, Harry L.
- Lentz, Paul E.
- Blalock, Byrd
- Goodson, Ira E.
- Gavin, Walter A.
- Jones, George G.
- Robinson, George J.
- Morris, Charles V.
- Brown, Sam R.
- Ashby, Fulton W.
- Bloom, Al. G.
- Ripley, Jesse V.
- Schambony, Nicholas
- Batten, Rodney O.
- Campbell, Wilbur C.
- Hughes, Charles A.
- Barbee, Walter J.
- Murphy, Edward L.
- Coffey, Albert L.
- Calvert, Webster D.
- Bowker, Walter H.
- Evanson, Henry B.

Roster continued:

Enlisted men.

Monson, John F.  
Motzno, Nathan J.  
Page, Garnett E.  
Ingraham, Willie H.  
Waxcele, Emile  
Proctor, William V.  
Titus, Owen E.  
Bilodeaux, Albert S.  
Knowlton, Thomas  
Ranum, Bennie N.  
Ringer, Louie  
Smith, Clyde E.  
Wuescher, Rudolph  
Smith, Clark L.  
Strommes, Einar  
Phillips, Charles H.  
Merchant, Lawrence C.  
Burkhardt, Walter L.  
Jepsen, Edward C.  
Erickson, Melvin  
Zapf, John J.  
Sharrer, Roy T.  
Jones, Charles C.  
Carney, William C.  
Robinette, Raul S.  
Norris, Scott V.  
Tolve, Edward H.  
Root, Raymond M.  
Shaw, Ford W.  
Bonniwell, Clarence E.  
Kimball, George L.  
Young, John S.  
Peck, Loyd W.  
Babinger, Arthur H.  
Liston, Charles H.  
Trask, Olin W.  
Redfern, Walter  
Ratto, Fred  
Roth, Eldia A.  
Martin, Paul M.  
Van Leningham, Earl M.  
Prossor, Thomas M.  
Kennedy, Charles A.

Dale, LaVergne  
Yearwood, Teddy L.  
Wood, Earl A.  
Pollock, Rolland R.  
McKnight, Ben D.  
Borton, Joseph H.  
Patterson, Ralph W.  
Bonney, George A.  
Fairbanks, Robert A.  
Thomas, Arthur E.  
Schafer, Alfred  
Zier, John M.  
Brackelsberg, Mathias C.  
Steele, Harold T.  
Coleman, Wilson  
Witwer, Earl  
Miller, Henry L.  
Mullen, William E.  
Brainerd, Glenn R.  
Moore, Daniel G.  
Wilborn, Burl M.  
Combs, Ralph S.  
Rudolph, Henry  
Ryan, David L.  
Ruble, John B.  
Reed, William C.  
Gildersleeve, Earl E.  
McArthur, John A.  
Kelly, Percy W.  
Smith, James A.  
Stewart, George J.  
Vandenberg, Andrew  
Wild, Milton R.  
Lopez, Carlomagne S.  
Weger, Clarence O.  
Stein, Joseph S.  
Schirch, Harry  
Rowlands, Ernest  
Brehler, Carl H.  
Smith, Wilbur C.  
Medical Detachment  
Barlow, Tilford M.  
Calhoun, Everett Y.  
Green, Ozzie L.  
Yarian, Reuben D.

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After being on the water for several days, and coming to the danger zone, we were met by 9 American Destroyers, and altho a submarine was detected, little or no consideration was shown on the part of the soldiers as everyone was confident that our American destroyers and American Gunners were far superior to an German submarine.

On the morning of the 20th of March we obtained our first sight of land Belle Isle, and later that day steamed into the Loire River the following day we entered the locks of St. Naizaire and were greeted by a group of French People, consisting mostly of children. They looked very odd to us, dressed in wooden shoes and frocks. We were on the water 17 days. They were all very eager to scramble for the pennies and tobacco thrown to them from the boat by the American Soldiers.

We dis-embarked early in the afternoon and were marched to a rest camp, some 5 miles from St. Naizaire, arriving there we found that the camp had evidently been given the wrong name, for it was very little rest that any of the boys received, about all the rest we had was when we got a chance to lean on a shovel or a pick. We experienced our first night in A.E.F. beds, which consisted of wooden slats, about 1 and  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches apart and with three blankets and cold weather. It was impossible to get much sleep, we were fed at a casual mess for the first few meals, until we could set up a kitchen of our own. Our stay at St. Naizaire was limited. On the afternoon, of the 24th of March we entrained, for Air Service Production Center No. 2, the day was a beautiful one which gave everyone an opportunity to enjoy the scenery along the beautiful Loire river.

We arrived in Romorantin, France, a city of about 8 or 10 thousand on the 25th of March, 1918, were immediately detrained and hiked the five miles to Air Service

Production Center No. 2, which at this time was practically nothing more than a name, having but a few soldiers, a few barracks and one or two shop buildings under construction.

After arriving at this camp we were marched to the site of our barracks, which were to become our home for several months, and assisted in the erection of our barracks, kitchen and mess hall. The day details were furnished to different projects under way, and since that time until the present date the soldiers of this organization have been earnestly at work, altho at the time we left the United States, we all thot that we were coming to France to fight. We feel that we have done our bit as we have done all in our power to defeat the Hun.

To gain some idea of the task before us, when we arrived here, and the 8 other Construction Squadrons, and how well we have succeeded in this task, attention is called to the fact that we have erected over one and one-third million square feet of machine shops and plants, a quarter million square feet of storage warehouses, a third million square feet of Aero plane hangers, 30,000 square feet of balloon shops and plants, 21 acres of transportation parking space, cleared leveled and sown over 500 acres of Flying fields, erected over three hundred barracks, many of which have been manufactured by our men after falling the tress, erecting the saw mills and manufacturing the lumber. We have built approximately ten miles of roads, ten miles of railroads, dug twelve miles of drainage ditches, erected our own water plant including filtering system and laid over 7 miles of water pipe:

During this and all other times the morale of the men has been of the highest standard and the health the best possible, this squadron has not had a death since arriving in the A.E.F.

We have since the signing of the armistice worked towards completing our unfinished projects with the same energy that marked our progress when the fighting was going on. Shortly after arriving with the American E.F. we made friends with the French around us and that also has helped to make our stay in France more pleasant.

When our turn comes to go back to the good old United States, the most wonderful country on earth bar none, we will leave with a clear conscience, knowing that even tho we have no victories to our credit on the battlefield, we all have done our bit.

Several of our enlisted men have won commissions since arriving here but we have about one hundred and thirty of the original members of this organization yet. Our roster on this date, 11th December 1918, is as follows.

1st Lieut. Geo. O. White, Commanding Officer  
1st Lieut. Jared K. Morse

Enlisted men

Ashby, Fulton W.  
Babinger, Arthur H.  
Barbee, Walter J.  
Barner, Howard A.  
Batten, Rodney O.  
Bills, Leslie  
Bilodeaux, Albert S.  
Blalock, Byrd  
Bonney, George A.  
Bloom, Al. G.  
Borton, Joseph H.  
Bowker, Walter H.  
Bowman, Archie D.  
Brainerd, Glenn R.  
Brehler, Carl H.  
Douglas, Charles O.  
Jepsen, Edward C.  
Joergensen, Peter H.  
Johnson, Marshall P.  
Jones, George G.  
Kelly, Percy W.  
Kennedy, Charles H.  
Kennedy, Ogal B.  
Kimball, George L.  
Knowlton, Thomas  
Lane, Earnest E.  
Laughlin, Micheal  
Lehman, Arthur B.  
Lentz, Paul E.  
Long, Roy G.  
Lopez, Carlomagne, S.

Brown, Jesse W.  
Burkhardt, Walter L.  
Calvert, Webster D.  
Campbell, Harry L.  
Campbell, Wilbur C.  
Carney, William C.  
Christner, Harry C.  
Christner, Oscar D.  
Coffey, Albert L.  
Coleman, Wilson  
Combs, Ralph S.  
Corsberg, Alfred R.  
Crumlich, David L.  
Dale, Lavergne  
Deeds, Earl M.  
Dempsey, Jack  
Kelly, Percy W.  
McArthur, John A.  
McCarthy, Micheal J.  
McFarland, Curtis H.  
McGary, Percy E.  
Mallon, David J.  
Marshall, Fred L.  
Merritt, Willis H.  
Mullen, William E.  
Norris, Scott V.  
Patterson, Ralph W.  
Peterson, Warren F.  
Prosser, Thomas M.  
Ranum, Bennie N.  
Ratto, Fred

Doyle, Walter E.  
Erickson, Melvin  
Evanson, Henry B.  
Fairbanks, Robert A.  
Fockler, Mitchell, S.  
Freemire, J. Franklin  
Gavin, Walter A.  
Gildersleeve, Earl E.  
Goodson, Ira E.  
Grant, Alexander D.  
Hagan, Leo A.  
Hawkinson, Harold E.  
Hosler, Oscar H.  
Hughes, Charles A.  
Ingraham, Willie H.  
Isaacson, George T.  
Miller, Henry L.  
Miller, Walter R.  
Monson, John F.  
Moore, Daniel G.  
Moore, Everett E.  
Moore, Verne  
Morris, Charles V.  
Motzno, Nathan J.  
Murphy, Edward L.  
Page, Garnett E.  
Peck, Loyd W.  
Phillips, Charles H.  
Pollock, Rolland R.  
Price Paul P.  
Redfern, Walter

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Roster Continued.

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Reed, William C.  
Ringer, Louie C.  
Ripley, Jesse V.  
Ritzert, Elmer E.  
Ritzert, Vincent C.  
Robinette, Paul S.  
Robinson, George J.  
Rowlands, Ernest  
Ruble, John B.  
Rudolph, Henry  
Rumler, August E.  
Smith, Wilbur C.  
Sorensen, Louie C.  
Spence, Robert R.  
Steele, Harold T.  
Wild, Milton R.  
Wood, Earl A.  
Yearwood, Teddy L.  
Zdivorak, Edward A.

Ryan, David L.  
Schafer, Alfred  
Schambony, Nicholas  
Schirch, Harry  
Sexton, Francis  
Sharrer, Roy T.  
Shaw, Ford W.  
Shelton, Clinton N.  
Smith, Clark L.  
Smith, Clyde E.  
Smith, James A.  
Steenberg, August I.  
Stewart, George J.  
Stockemer, Otto C.  
Strommes, Einar  
Witwer, Earl  
Wood, Richard M.  
Young, John S.  
Zier, John M.

Thomas, Arthur L.  
Thornton, Allen  
Titus, Owen E.  
Tolve, Edward H.  
Toms, David C.  
Trask, Olin W.  
Turnepseed, Edwin B.  
Vandenberg, Andrew  
Van Lamingham, Earl M.  
Van Nattan, Bert D.  
Wall, Harold F.  
Waxcele, Emile  
Wegern Clarence O.  
Westlake, William MCK.  
White, Orley R.  
Withrow, Earl  
Wuescher, Rudolph  
Zapf, John J.

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