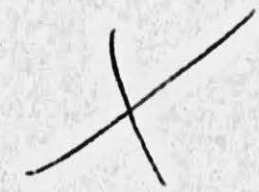


AIR SERVICE HISTORY

of

465 AERO SQUADRON.



PREPARED BY

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HISTORY OF 465th AERO SQUADRON

At Kelly Field, South San Antonio, Texas, on August 26, 1917, one hundred and fifty men, enlisted from all parts of the States during the month of July, were organized under the command of Major B.M. Atkinson and designated as the 53rd Aero Construction Squadron, later be known as the 465th Aero Squa dron. During the next three weeks the men received instruction in Infantry Drill; Interior Guard Duty and all work instrümental in the organization of an Aero Squadron.

The Squadron, under the temporary command of 1st Lieut. Edwin L. Thomas entrained September 17, 1917, for Aviation Camp, Mineola, L.I., arriving September 21, 1917. Here Capt-ain George D. Woolley assumed command of the Squadron Sept-ember 21, 1917, and preparations were quickly made for embar-kation. The Squadron lived in tents placed at the extreme end of Field No 2, with roughly constructed bathhouses at the end of the company streets.

At midnight October 12, 1917, in a blinding rainstorm, the Squadron proceeded by train and ferry to the Cunard Liner Pier, New York City and the following day boarded the Stea-mship Panonia.

The conditions aboard the ship were good with the exe-ption of the meals, which consisted chiefly of oxtail soup, soggy bread and black coffee. After a few days at sea it was arranged to take the English cooks out of the kitchen and allow the Squadron cooks to assume charge. After an even-ful, though very rough voyage land was sighted Oct 27, 1917.

The Squädrön debarked at Liverpool Oct. 29, 1917, and entrained for Rest Camp at Borden, England, arriving there Oct. 30. Instead of resting the Squadron was obliged to put up torn and threadbare tents which were lying in the mud. This camp offered very poor resting facilities.

On November 1, 1917, the Squadron entrained for South-hampton arriving the same day. Here the Squadron embarked on the S.S. Viper, for Le Havre, France. The trip across the Channel though extremely dangerous was eventful and the boat docked at Le Havre, November 2, 1917.

The Squadron then hiked to an English Rest Camp, which was similar in some respects to the Rest Camp at Borden, England. On Nov. 3, 1917, the Squadron pulled out of the Le e Havre Station in the celebrated box cars marked "40 Hommes or 8 Chevaux" for the third Aviation Instruction Center Issoudun (Indre) in central France.

Arriving at Issoudun November 4, 1917, the Squadron hiked through the town and along a highway leading Westward for a distance of eight kilometers. Here the Squadron was quartered in French Canvas Hangars.

There was very little sickness with the exeption of bron-chitis. In a few days the squädrön its first real work, in France of building the 3rd A.I.E. The tradesman were assign-ed to construction work clerks and others less fortunate

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by Wm. J. Rea. 2nd Lt. A.S.

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were introduced to the pick and shovel in the construction of railroads, roads and drainage systems. December 5, 1917, Squadron moved out of the hangars and into barracks.

On January 18, 1918, the Squadron number was changed from 53rd Aero Construction Squadron to 465th Aero Squadron.

March 2, 1918, after working all day in the rain and snow the squadron received orders to leave. Loading the supplies at night after fatigue the Squadron entrained, March 3, 1918, and left the 3rd A.I.C., better center known as. "The muddiest hole in France."

The Squadron arrived at St. Germain, (Meuse), March 5, 1918, and marched to the Village of Ourches-sur-Meuse where it billeted in barns until barracks be built.

The building erected consisted of twelve officers barracks, Swiss Type, and three officers mess halls, ten barracks used by the men for sleeping quarters and six mess halls, one photographic laboratory and one headquarters building. Near the flying field were located ten hangars well protected by camouflage netting. A well, dug by hand to a depth of forty feet, supplied the camp with water. The electric power for the lighting systems of the camp was obtained from a high tension line nearby.

The most difficult task on the field was the boring of four dugouts in solid rock at different points along the bottom of the hill for use should the Boche pay us a visit. Lumber and electrical supplies were purchased in the French market.

The Aviators nicknamed it "The Suicide Camp" as it could be seen for four miles in rear of the enemy lines. Although being close to the front there was only one occasion to use the dug-outs. On this particular day after the morning hours had passed away uneventfully except for the occasional bursting of shrapnel shells and the purring of aeroplane motors high in the air, the Squadron received orders that gas-masks would be carried all afternoon as the Germans were planing an air raid on the Camp.

They were expected about 3 O'clock. Every plane on the field was prepared for action, flyers were waiting in the hangars and at a minutes notice would have been in their machines and in the air to give the Boches the greatest surprise of their lives. Hour after hour passed, but no Boche were observed and when darkness had settle over the camp that night you could read the expression of disappointment on every face as we all knew that in a few days we would be leaving this camp and the journey would take us away from the front and excitement.

June 26, 1918, the Squadron was sent Observation Group, 1st Corps, to prepare a bombing field situated outside the town of Ribeaucourt (Meuse). The men lived in tents and the weather was ideal. The work accomplished was the leveling off of a large flying field. The most tedious job was the removing of small stones from the field as they had to be moved by hand.

At this Station the Squadron Commander, Captain George D. Wooley was relieved of the command and 1st Lieut. Charles J. Pankow was designated as commanding officer.

As there was only one squadron on this field the Y.M.C.A. furnished a large tent and the squadron was provided with various kinds of entertainment every night. Each Sunday the opportunity was given the forty men to visit by motor trucks the towns in the vicinity. On completing the flying field the Squadron was ordered to the Village of Latrecay, (Haute-Marne) August 21, 1918, to begin the construction of the 2nd Air Depot.

Arriving at Latrecay the first work of the Squadron was the erect tents in which in lived for about a month. A number of barracks were then erected to accommodate three hundred Chinese laborers. The Government being in urgent need of this depot, the Squadron worked long hours and Sundays and with supplies coming in, the work proceeded very rapidly. At This post the Squadron had its the first opportunity to erect steel hangars, but, some of the men having had previous experience with structural iron work, the hangars went up in record time. With one part off the Squadron engaged in erecting barracks and hangars, another part in handling transportation, the remainder of the Squadron, with the aid of tractors, scrapers, etc., leveled off a large flying field. Besides erecting barracks and Officershuts and forty steel hangars the Squadron erected a Y.M.C.A. hut which offered much needed entertainment. Although the 2nd Air Deppt was never used in the capacity for which it was intended due to the signing of the armistice, it was an excellent example of what an aero squadron can do in construction work.

December 11, 1918, orders were received to place the squadron in readiness for movement to a Base Port to prepare to embark for the United States. December 16, 1918, orders to preceeded to Brest.

ROSTER OF OFFICER OF 465th AERO SQUADRON
SINCE ITS ORGANIZATION.

Majot. B. M. Atkinson
Capt. George D. Woolley
1st Lieut. Edwin L. Thomas
" " Monte C. Comer
" " John D. Bailey
" " George E. Wright
" " William G. Morrow
" " Harvey B. Ramage
" " Frederick Nickerson
" " Charles J. Pankow
" " George E. Kirk
" " James M. Hammett
" " C. K. Clark
2nd Lieut. Eugene Catter

Officers Personnel of the 465 Aero Squadron.

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Major B. M. Atkinson, assigned to Squadron August 26th, 1917, Relieved of command Headquarters Kelly Field, Texas, September 4th, 1917.

1st Lieut. Edwin L. Thomas, assigned to Squadron September 4th, 1917, Transferred Headquarters 3rd Aviation Instruction Center, December 10th, 1917.

1st Lieut. Monte C. Comer, assigned to Squadron September 5th, 1917, Detached October 16th, 1917.

Captain George D. Woolley, assigned as commanding officer of Squadron September 24th, 1917, Relieved of command July 2nd, 1918.

1st Lieut. John W. Bailey, assigned to Squadron October 26th, 1917, transferred to 35th Aero Squadron, Headquarters 3rd Aviation Instruction Center, December 27th, 1917.

1st Lieut. George E. Wright, assigned to Squadron October 26th, 1917, Transferred on Detached Service to the Advance Section Engineer Office.

1st Lieut. William G. Morrow, assigned to Squadron October 26th, 1917, Transferred to Transportation Department, 3rd Aviation Instruction Center, December 27th, 1917.

1st Lieut. Harvey B. Ramage, assigned to Squadron October 26th, 1917, Transferred to 29th Aero Squadron, Headquarters 3rd Aviation Instruction Center January 19th, 1918.

1st Lieut. Frederick Nickerson, assigned to Squadron October 26th, 1917, Transferred to Headquarters Air Service, L.O.C., November 26th, 1917.

2nd Lieut, Eugene Cotter, assigned to Squadron December 25th, 1917, Transferred to Air Service Concentration Barracks, Base Section #1 December 26th, 1917.

1st Lieut, Charles J. Pankow, assigned to Squadron February 12th, 1918.

1st Lieut, George E. Kirk, assigned to Squadron February 6th, 1918.

1st Lieut. James M. Hammett, assigned to Squadron March 2nd, 1918.

1st Lieut. C. K. Clark, assigned to Squadron March 10th, 1918, Transferred December 9th, 1918.