

212th AERO SQUADRON

MISSION

LINEAGE

212th Aero Squadron

Organized, Jun 1918

Demobilized, Aug 1919

STATIONS

Kelly Field, TX

ASSIGNMENTS

WEAPON SYSTEMS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

"Pursuant to instructions contained in telegram dated December 17, 1917, from the Chief Signal Officer, the 212th Aero Squadron is hereby organized." Like a plane in a nose dive, amid one

of the heaviest rainfalls of a Texas summer, came this order to Lieut. Thomas Murchison, who was assigned as Commanding Officer.

Planting the Squadron Guidon in front of Squadron Headquarters, Lieut. Murchison assembled his Staff, consisting of Lieut. Clarence R. O'Brien, Supply Officer, Lieut. Alexander Blum, Adjutant. Corp. Thomas J. Wilson and Pvt. Michael H. Prince, Jr. who worked out the details for receiving the enlisted personnel.

Pvt. 1st Class Rodman Law, known throughout the United States for his daring stunts in flying exhibitions and parachute jumping had the honor of being the first enlisted man to enter his name on the Squadron Roster. Not far behind, as always to formations, came Private John H. Reynolds, popular stage favorite who has lately won the title of the "Human Fly" by his wall scaling ability. These have been a loving pair ever since.

Sergeants George A. Moore, Lyle H. Scott, Privates Emil H. Komm and Charles H. Harman, exhibition flyers in civilian life, honored themselves and the Squadron by placing their names in the roster. Pvt. Sams, Wise Walker, Allen and Jandt arrived from the Armorers School at Wilbur Wright Field and to say the least, they were samples of what the 212th now contains within its folds.

The remainder of the enlisted personnel came from the 812th, 668th, 324th and 327th Squadrons. On June 19th, 1918, Lieut. O'Brien was relieved from duty with the Squadron and assigned elsewhere. His place as Supply Officer was taken by Lieut. T. J. Capron. On July 13th, 1918, Lieut. Blum was relieved and transferred elsewhere. His place as Adjutant was taken by Lieut. Rutherford Fleet, A. S. S. R. C. Sergeant Walter H. Reller then made his debut. He was assigned as Sergeant-Major and has successfully piloted the Squadron Ship through the pit-falls of army paper work.

Lieut. Will H. Lightfoot A. S. M. A. replaced Lieut. Murchison as Commanding Officer on November 7th, 1918, and the enlisted personnel soon recognized him a friend, every ready to look after their welfare. Lieut. Fleet, feeling that he could out-do the birds in their element, applied for instructions as a pilot and was transferred to the Cadet Wing on November 18th, 1918.

On December 2nd 1918, thirteen non-commissioned officers and Pvt. Johnnie Reynolds were transferred to the Flying School Detachment, leaving 123 men to represent the Squadron.

In glancing over the roster, one can remember "shining lights" who by their characteristic actions will bring back many interesting incidents of military life on Kelly Field. Among these are: Sergeant Allen, who was assigned to the Squadron as a machine gun instructor, became attached to the "Canteen Circuit" and ended up with a recommendation as a permanent K. P. by our esteemed Mess-Sergeant. Sergeant "Swede" Johnson, has written to all the leading Detroit papers of his promotion and intends to use this bit of advertisement in obtaining a position after demobilization.

Private 1st Class "Nugget" Cody, descendent of "Buffalo Bill" has held down the position of scout and mail—dispatch—orderly ever since the Squadron was organized.

Chauffeur Kaler, inventor of a valve-lifter, which has been the envy of the Transportation Department, claims to hold a clean record of never having had his truck stuck while on wood detail. Armistice signed. Vandeventer appears at 7 A. M. at Orderly Room for discharge while Chauffeur Knighton remains outside recruiting men for the Air Service as a Keeley Cure.

Chauffeur Wright has been assigned to give lectures on "Why is a fuselage."

Private 1st Class Orbell, famous gold-brick, has aroused suspicion by appearing each evening at 5 P. M. with grease on his hands.

Pvts. Dimon and Dixon have been recommended for transfer to the Medical Corps for conservation of ink and sick-books. A four-act drama by Private Dischinger. Act One—2:30 A. M. Guard Dischinger halts Officer of the Day. Act Two—Silence. More Silence. Act Three—Officer of the Day "Well, are you going to keep me at attention all night?" Act Four — Guard Dischinger "AT ease."

Private William Aeronautics Hendrick, by the aid of his international almanac, can tell you the types of airplanes that will be used in the next war.

Private R. Clarence Hogan and "Stub" Hamilton inseparable now and forever, represent the Squadron at the New Braunsfels Mothers Club Meetings

Private Kerns, the wrecker of wings, has started a squadron of his own, of which he is to be duty-sergeant for the rest of his life.

Private Cahill, after trying to serve as a mud-scraper for the rear wheel of Sergeant Scott's "Bug" was caught in the act of laying aside his crutches for Christmas and New Years Eve.

"Speed-Demon" Kissinger has signed up as a mechanic for Sergeant "Mickie" Conners on the speedways for next year.

Private Novak, backed up by a three-quarter vote of the Squadron, guarantees to grow hair on any smooth surface.

Now that "Dare-devil Human-Fly" Reynolds has left the Squadron. "Pyrene-Squeezer" Sarrazin, finds life lonely along the Squadron Street.

Corporal Michael H. Prince, Jr.. has completed plans for an annex to the Mess-Hall to be used as a private dining room so that he may enjoy his late breakfasts in peace.

Pvt. Roy Hendrix, ex-shoe-wizard of Denver, has applied for a patent on his Sunday morning inspection shoe-camouflage.

Private "Sweetie" Weeks, our beloved "down-town sergeant" has won distinction by bucking the entire Squadron when stag parties are suggested.

Corporal C. Percival Rayner wonders why the hotel mezzanine floor lights in town burn after 12 o'clock.

The balance of the Squadron is made up of no lesser lights but army paper-work is army paperwork. Place. Mess-Hall No. 30. Time. 5:40 A. M. Back-ground', Army kitchen range 988 feet by 1263 feet, kept hot by eighteen bucks of the wood detail. Scene. 519 cooks and 1700 K Ps rush to and fro under the watchful eyes of assistant mess-sergeants Gaboon. Kantner, Law, Root, Buckingham and Verschoore. Batter for flap-jacks was being prepared by twelve concrete mixers and a steam shovel was removing the debris. Ten Kitchen Police with bacon rinds strapped to their shoes, were skating back and forth over the griddle

Enter Mess-Sergeant Wolf After glancing over the scene, he mounts his trusty motor-cycle and riding around the Kitchen shouts his orders through a megaphone until chow is over.

Lieut. Lightfoot acting in the capacity of Commanding Officer, S. O. and Adjutant, kept the Squadron running as an essential link in the War machine until December 8 when Lieutenants Arthur A. Hardy, J. H. Gadbury, Marcus H. Cohen and Kenneth D. Brabson come to his assistance from the Cadet Wing. Although the 212th Squadron had men assigned to every essential department of the Flying Department, fate finally decided that the work of the Squadron was finished and today, Monday, January 6th, 1919, Taps is sounding and the enlisted personnel have passed over into other organizations. Peace and quiet once more floats over the skeleton organization which is still known as the 212th Aero Squadron.

Air Force Lineage and Honors

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Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.