

# **34<sup>th</sup> BALLOON COMPANY**

## **MISSION**

## **LINEAGE**

Organized, 30 Mar 1918

Demobilized Sep 1919

## **STATIONS**

Camp John Wise, San Antonio, TX

Camp Morrison, VA, Sep 1918

Port of Embarkation, Newport News, VA, Oct 1918

Europe, Oct 1918

France, 3 Nov 1918

Langley Field, VA, Mar 1919

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

## **COMMANDERS**

1LT G.H. Sopp, 1 Jul 1918

## **HONORS**

**Service Streamers**

**Campaign Streamers**

**Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

**Decorations**

## **EMBLEM**

## **MOTTO**

## **NICKNAME**

## **OPERATIONS**

The company was organized on 30 Mar 1918 at Camp John Wise with 2LT Francis T. Barrington in command and 25 privates. This organization was the fifth to be organized at Camp John Wise for overseas duty and reached its full strength of 200 men 17 Jul 1918.

On 18 Aug this company received orders to move from their barracks to a wood located about one mile from the balloon camp at which place the co removed all debris and brush thereby arranging a suitable place for a temporary camp. Shelter tents were pitched and the company camped at above mentioned place for a period of 11 days. On 27 Aug 1LT G.S. Mikkelsen and two enlisted members of the Medical Corps were attached to the company for duty.

On 29 Aug the company was ordered to returned to their former barracks at Balloon School and again assumed their regular duties receiving instructions in Balloon and infantry drills.

On 1 Sep received orders to move to Morrison VA, Aeronautical General Supply Depot and Concentration Camp. On 3 Sep at 1600 the company entrained and departed for the above mentioned station. The trip consumed five days and enroute the officers and enlisted personnel were entertained royally and served with hot coffee, cakes, fruit and cigarettes at the various Red Cross Canteens along the route. We were accompanied on our trip by a Secretary of the YMCA who had carefully planned the trip and had arranged for swim enroute at New Orleans and Atlanta where the YMCA were thrown open to the men.

Arrived at Morrison, 9 Sep at 1700 and were temporarily assigned to barracks for the night. The next day permanent arrangements were made and the company began its regular duties and also made arrangements for procuring overseas equipment. During the company's stay at Morrison in the absence of a balloon, Company participated mostly in daily drills, the men carrying on their person the equipment already issued and adding to this each day, as it was issued in order to accustom them to their full packs.

On 24 Sep the company was placed in measles quarantine which was lifted 1 Oct and the CO was then placed in overseas quarantine on 3 Oct twenty members of the command developed influenza. The Co at this time was making preparations for departure overseas. On 5 Oct the overseas quarantines were lifted and the entire camp placed under quarantine due to the epidemic prevalent at that time. On 9 Oct the company was again placed in overseas quarantine which was lifted the following day and the company again placed in measles quarantine. On 16 Oct the company was again ordered to prepare for overseas and finally departed.

Sunday afternoon, 20 Oct, and were transported to the pier by trucks. The same day at about 1700 the company boarded the US Army Transport Duca D' Aosta, which left the pier on 21 Oct at 1615 the entire trip was uneventful and with the exception of three days enjoyed almost perfect weather. Reading matter was distributed by the YMCA representative on board and several reels of motion pictures were shown which did much to break the monotony of the trip. On 1 Nov at 1630 escort consisting of about 12 submarine chasers was sighted. Reached our port, Brest France

on Sunday morning, 3 Nov at 1100 and the company debarked at 1530 and almost immediately started on their march to the rest camp at Pontanezen Barracks. The following day we were fully settled in tents.

On 9 Nov the company left the Rest Camp and hike to Brest, and entrained at 1030 enroute to Camp de Meucon (Morbihan) and arrived at Vannes at 1030 from there we were transported to the Balloon Camp in motor trucks at which place we arrived at about 0100 and were temporarily assigned and were temporarily assigned to barracks. On 10 Nov all arrangements were completed and the company settled down to the regular camp duties and was instructed in the manual of arms infantry drill and received daily calisthenics. 11 Nov news of the signing of the armistice was received at Camp and those men who were not required for duty were transported in motor trucks to Vannes to participate in the general celebration.

On 13 Nov all camp and Air Service equipment was checked over with the 44<sup>th</sup> Balloon CO also stationed at this camp and the following day it was transferred to the 34<sup>th</sup> Balloon Co. The 44<sup>th</sup> Company left at 1030 being transported to the station. The same day the enlisted specialists of the command were assigned to their respective such as chauffeurs, cordage and fabric etc. Lt Adams and 22 enlisted specialists departed for the Balloon School, Souge for special instructions in their respective lines and returned on 7 Dec.

Owing to the fact that the Artillery Camp was ordered disbanded shortly after the signing of the armistice, flights were made merely for the purpose of observing the terrain. On 27 Dec in accordance with instructions from the chief of Air Service all air service equipment was convoyed by motor trucks to the balloon supply depot at Romarantin and since that time the company has been engaged in making preparations for their return to US.

Arrival in France 3 Nov 1918

Arrival at the front

Days ascensions made in S.O.S

Days ascensions made in Z.O.A

Total days ascensions made

Number of ascensions made in S.O.S.

Number of ascensions made in Z.O.A.

Total number of ascensions made

Total number of hours in air S.O.S.

Total number of hours in air Z.O.A.

Total number of hours in the air

Artillery adjustments in S.O.S.

Artillery adjustments in Z.O.A

Total number or artillery adjustments

Enemy shells observed

Enemy aircraft observed

Enemy balloons observed

Enemy artillery batteries observed

Enemy traffic on road and railroad observed  
Smoke, fires and flares observed  
Explosions observed  
Jumps from basket  
Balloons attacked  
Balloons burned  
Balloons destroyed  
Observers killed  
Observers captured

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Air Force Order of Battle  
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Sources

*US Army Order of Battle 1919-1941*. Steven E. Clay. Combat Studies Institute Press. US Army Combined Arms Center.  
Fort Leavenworth, KS. Nd.