

223rd AERO SQUADRON

MISSION

LINEAGE

223rd Aero Squadron

Organized, Jan 1918

Demobilized, Jun 1919

STATIONS

Kelly Field, TX

Waco, TX, Mar 1918

Rich Field, TX, May 1918

Garden City, NY, Jul 1918

Port of Embarkation, Hoboken, NY, Aug 1918

AEF, Aug 1918

Mitchel Field, NY

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

223rd Aero Squadron Formerly 223rd Air Park

Picked from a pile of sunburned rookies in the state of Texas, sifted to one hundred and fifty men and arranged into two straight lines, we were named the Two Hundred and Twenty-third Aero Squadron [sic]. Our first lessons in Aviation were given among the clouds—formed by flying sand—at Kelly Field.

The lessons were regular. Rain or shine, we could be found on the flying field with picks and shovels. A few months of this and we were sent to an advanced training station at Waco, Texas, where the methods of instruction were about the same, with an additional course in rock-splitting.

Then we won our way to the airplanes and, for a few months, led a fast life chasing stray ships about the field. When we were deemed fit to fight we were moved to Garden City.

While waiting for our ships, in order to make life easier for us, we were permitted to take long strolls through the neighboring country studying the ways of the Doughboy. To make it more realistic we carried packs along and did ten or twelve miles at attention. In a month we had mastered our subject and when our ship came in we were not sorry to go aboard.

Our voyage was a very pleasant one. Some of the boys slept on the top deck insisting that the quality of air was purer there, but their precautions were unnecessary for no submarines were encountered.

We docked at Brest and, after a delightful march of ten kilometres, our good old packs were unslung at Pontanezen Barracks. These barracks might have been considered luxurious in Napoleon's day but our beds were very near the floor and the floor seemed unusually hard to the modern warriors of the 223rd.

The next stop was Colombey-les-Belles. It was there that we had our first taste of the enemy whom we had heard so much about. One evening about supper time Fritz appeared and, opening his tail-gate, dumped out ten G. I. cans, giving our discipline a severe test. When the dust settled men were found behind doors, under tables, in trenches and ditches, while others were AWOL. However, Reveille found all present but many carrying a tired look and covered with mud. We were just beginning to like air raids when the signing of the Armistice denied us forever the pleasure of leaving a warm bed to sit for a few hours in a trench.

Shortly after the last shot had been fired we moved to our present home, which is a French balloon hangar on the bank of the Moselle opposite the old city of Toul. The chief pastime now is demounting and erecting hangars wherever a place can be found that is muddy enough.

Just recently another great change has come to the 223rd. Orders from headquarters say that we are not to be known as the 223rd Air Park any longer, but as the 223rd Aero Squadron. So now we are a real aero squadron at last thus realizing all of our fondest ambitions. Of course we have no aeroplanes or pilots and some of the other unimportant properties that usually are issued to aero squadrons that have not been forthcoming to the 223rd but we do have several flying Fords which are used by officers from A.S. headquarters to earn their flying pay and it is believed likely that if there is ever another we may even get the aeroplanes that we've wishing for.

Air Force Lineage and Honors

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Sources

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