

815 MEDICAL AIR EVACUATION SQUADRON

MEDICAL

LINEAGE

815 Medical Air Evacuation Squadron

STATIONS

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

815th Sqdn. Ardennes-Alsace; Normandy; Northern France; Rhineland.

Activated at Bowman Field, Louisville, Ky. Jan. 1944 with Clare Stanton as Chief Nurse. This squadron was forced to cut short its training as it was needed in the ETO for the invasion. They were sent to Camp Kilmer, NJ, remaining there for a month prior to leaving for Europe. Sailed on the ILE DE FRANCE

March 1944 a four day trip. Arrived in Gurock, Scotland, put on a train to Lamborun, England, from there went by GI truck to Boxford House. They were prepared to rough it and sleep in pup

tents but could not believe their eyes when they got off the truck and were to stay in a beautiful mansion. The furnishings were less than elegant; GI cots with stiff reused wool, blankets but there was a formal garden and lots of grass and trees about. The little 11th century church across the street was the locale of the wedding of Tina Forney and her RAF pilot, Bruce Ford Coates in July 1944. Evelyn Lamm and Tom Gannon were also married while at Boxford in a Catholic church.

The 815th was supposed to fly with the 75th TCS based at Welford Park about 5 miles away, but it more often than not flew with other squadron planes that came in with material for the war zone in France. Some of the nurses left for TDY Nov. 1944 in Istres, France as members of a composite squadron to evacuate the 7th Army from Strasboury back to Marseilles.

After D-Day, the planes flew in, picked up an air evac team and took off for France. Before D-Day, we had nothing to do as we could not work in the hospitals as nurses were AF and the hospitals were Army. They did roll plaster of paris bandages, got 12 hour passes to London, rode the bicycles issued to them and were generally bored. In April, there was a call for volunteers to go to a bomber base. No one seemed to know what was to be done but most volunteered for something to do. Four nurses went to Kimbolton, a B-17 base (others went to other bases). They were to attend briefings for the missions and be on the flight line when the planes returned to tend the casualties en route to a hospital. After the month of TDY, they returned to the 815th to await the invasion.

On two occasions, the air evac personnel were confined to quarters and the men were kept on base behind barbed wire to try and fool the Germans about the date of the invasion. The night the planes took off for Omaha Beach, the nurses watched from the roof of Boxford House this time everyone knew it was THE REAL THING!

Shortly after D-Day, one of the flights of nurses and technicians complete with flight surgeon went to Membury, England. They flew out of here with the 436th TCGp or any other outfits, which flew in to pick them up.

In July, a flight was sent to Prestwick, Scotland to fly the Trans-Atlantic route to the states with patients from the war zones.

The 815th never seemed to remain a complete squadron it was always being split up with personnel going on TDY. Due to this it is very difficult to give a complete history. The squadron was broken up and most of the personnel went with the 818th to Orly Field in Paris.

Air Force Lineage and Honors

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Sources

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