

36 BALLOON COMPANY

MISSION

LINEAGE

36 Balloon Co activated, 30 Mar 1918

Demobilized, Aug 1919

Inactivated, 17 Apr 1919

STATIONS

Camp John Wise, TX

Camp Morrison, VA, Sep 1918

Port of Embarkation, Newport News, VA, Oct 1918

Europe, Oct 1918

France 3 Nov 18

Mitchel Field, NY, Apr 1919

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

2nd Lt Fred D. Babcock

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

The 36 Balloon Company was organized on 30 Mar 1918 at Camp John Wise, TX with 25 enlisted men being assigned to the company under command of 2LT Fred D. Babcock. The Strength of the company was gradually increased and on 7 May 1918 the company had 130 men and on 16 Jul 1918 170 men.

For 5 months the company was at Camp John Wise, TX performing regular duties of a balloon company, assisting in the construction of balloon beds and other work about the camp and handling a balloon for the training of cadets in both the OT and the new BT observing courses. The Commanding officer was assisted in work by cadets who were attached to the company and later by 2LT Charles F. Baer and Robert E. Lum who were attached.

On 18 Aug 1918 the company left Camp John Wise and marched to the Missouri Aeronautical School, San Antonio, TX a distance of about four miles. The company remained at MAS until 27 Aug being quartered in barracks and participating in intensive drilling and night hiking. Just prior to leaving Camp John Wise the strength of the company was increased to 196 enlisted men bringing the company up to required strength with the exception of four radio mechanics.

The company left the MAS on 27 Aug and marched to Kelly Field approximately 3 miles where it pitched camp and remained one day. The company was to have pitched a large recruit camp but due to a change in orders, marched back to Camp John Wise on the evening of 28 Aug 1918 a distance of approximately 8 miles. On 1 Sep, 25 enlisted men were transferred but in order to form a nucleus for a new company.

On 3 Sep 1918 the company entrained from Camp John Wise for the Aeronautical General Supply depot and Concentration Camp, Morrison, VA, traveling the through Houston, TX, New Orleans, LA, Montgomery, AL; Atlanta, GA; and Richmond, VA, ending up at Morrison VA. Mr B. D. Beck formally YMCA director at Camp Wise accompanied the troops and made arrangements with the American Red Cross and the YMCA enroute. The Red Cross met the train at all stations feeding the men and giving them smokes and postal cards. At Baton Rouge, LA, the men were given a big watermelon feast and at Raleigh NC the red cross not only fed every man with hot biscuits cookies and coffee but also prepared to supply showers and baths. Company bathed at YMCA buildings at several points and were given the proper exercise every day.

The company detrained at Morrison VA on 8 Sep 1918 and was immediately quarantined for measles until 24 Sep. 2 days later the entire camp at Morrison VA was put into quarantine for Spanish Influenza. About 136 men of the company had the disease three of them dying from it.

Shortly after arrival of the Co at Morrison, four radio mechanics were assigned to the CO bringing the enlisted strength up to 200 men. 1LT William T. Gay and four enlisted men of the medical corps were attached to the co. Company drew its overseas equipment and while at this station did various construction work. 40 Enlisted men were transferred out of the company and 10 enlisted men transferred in making the enlisted strength 170 men.

On 20 Oct the company left the concentration camp for Newport News VA, and boarded the US Army transport Duca D' Aosta but did not leave port until the following day. One of the enlisted men jumped overboard before the boat had cleared the harbour and was picked up a US destroyer and evidently returned to be US during the voyage there was some very stormy weather and most of the men were seasick.

Arrived at Brest France on 3 Nov and debarked same day, marching from there to the Rest Camp at Pontonazen Barracks, Base Section No. 5 carrying full packs. Left Pontonazen Barracks, marched to Kermer Track at Brest and entrained for the US Balloon Field, La Teste DeBuch, Gironde, Base section No. 2 on 9 Nov. Detrained at La Teste DeBuch on 11 Nov 1918 and marched to camp which is the present station of the company.

The company drew its balloon equipment with the exception of a balloon and basket and has been operating the 45 Company balloon every other day weather permitting. The company is performing regular duties of a balloon company together with other camp duties such as construction and drainage work. On the days when the 45th Company is handling balloon the 36th company does intensive drilling signal practice and hiking.

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

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

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Sources

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