

61 SERVICE SQUADRON

MISSION

LINEAGE

822 Aero Squadron (Repair) organized, 24 Jan 1918
Redesignated 6 Air Park Company, Aug 1918
Redesignated 6 Air Park, Oct 1918
Demobilized, 21 Jul 1919

Air Park No. 6 constituted, 30 Aug 1921
Organized, 1 Oct 1921
Redesignated 61 Service Squadron, 25 Jan 1923

6 Air Park reconstituted and consolidated with 61 Service Squadron, 8 Apr 1924.
consolidated organization designated 61 Service Squadron.

***61 Service Squadron and HHS, 9 Bombardment Group consolidated, 1 Sep 1936
Disbanded, 20 April 1944***

STATIONS

Mitchel Field, Hempstead, LI, NY, 1921-1936

ASSIGNMENTS

9 Observation Group

WEAPON SYSTEMS

C-9
OA-2
O-39

COMMANDERS

Capt Harry M. Smith, 1 Oct 1921
Maj Junius V. Jones, 8 Jan 1922

1st Lt Alonzo M. Drake, 19 Apr 1922
1st Lt Francis B. Valentine, 1 Jul 1922
Capt Francis M. Brady, 1 Aug 1922
Capt Clyde V. Finter, 2 Sep 1922
1st Lt Alonzo M. Drake, 18 Nov 1922
Capt Harrison W. Flickenger, 5 Jul 1924
Capt Vernon L. Burge, 2 Jun 1925
Capt Arthur E. Simonin, 20 Aug 1929
Capt Leland W. Miller, 26 Jun 1933
Capt Leo F. Post, 1 Jul 1934
Capt Leland W. Miller, 24 Aug 1934
Capt Vernon L. Burge, 24 Jun 1935
Capt Milton M. Towner, 1 Feb 1936
Capt Joseph C. A. Denniston, 19 Feb 1936

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Constituted in the Regular Army on 30 August 1921 as Air Park No. 6, assigned to the 9th Observation Group, and allotted to the Second Corps Area. Organized on 1 October 1921 at Mitchel Field, NY, as Air Park No. 6. Redesignated as the 61st Service Squadron on 25 January 1923. Consolidated on 8 April 1924 with the 6th Air Park (a WWI unit organized on 24 January 1918 at Waco, TX, as the 822nd Aero Squadron; demobilized on 21 July 1919 at Garden City, NY, as the 6th Air Park; reconstituted on 8 April 1924). Consolidated on 1 September 1936 with HHS, 9th Bombardment Group. Disbanded on 20 April 1944.

The month of December is a time we'll all remember for in that month the government did say to every husky fellow, who had no streak of yellow, "Get in quick or be drafted right away." We all needed our vacations, so we left our occupations, and little cared how much the others laughed. We knew what we'd been told and as it was very cold we were anxious to get in "out of the draft". We were sent to Waco, Texas and we thought that wouldn't vex us for in Texas there would be a burning sun, but soon after we arrived each one thought if he survived that winter that the war would sure be won. Each morning when we rose we found our blankets

froze and sticking to an eye or to a mouth and as we scrambled out of bed, thought of all that Sherman said, for that war too had happened in the South.

So January twenty-four found none so very sore, as we wandered out the bulletins to view and our emancipation was the cause of our elation for we were all in Squadron eight-two-two. On March third, so clean and pretty, we arrived at Garden City and we certainly were thankful for the change, but they changed our humor quick when they gave us each a pick and we handled them as if they had the mange. It was useless here to grovel for that day with our shovel and every day as long as we did stay, we bent our new born whiskers, caring little for the blisters and gaily dug up half of U. S. A.

Now just on April first, things had reached their very worst, but the darkest hour is just before the day, for before that day was over we all thought we were in clover and when night came we were sailing on the bay. The ocean was sublime and some thought that it was fine, while others did not have so much to say, their minds were filled with wishes as they fed the little fishes, they would sooner be torpedoed any day. But soon their sea-legs came and they thought it all a game and the English crew sure had to stand the chaif, they certainly were worried and away from us they hurried, when their "bloody" language made the Yankees laugh.

On April eleven we saw what looked like heaven, for the shores of England loomed up on the bow. Thru its fair domain we traveled, at its beauty we all marveled, California's sons at last were silent now.

Our joy soon died of fright for even ere the night, we saw Romsey's Rest Camp and our journeys close. Should we remain here long, we'd forget the use of song and speech and even living, we suppose. We "served" our nine days stay and again were on our way, this time the town of Yates our destination. We landed there all right; we were getting near the fight, but the fight was with ourselves and aggravation. For here the British workers were made to look like shirkers and they couldn't keep up with our Yankee speed. They pleaded "Take it easy" until their throats were dry and wheezy and though we smiled it made us mad indeed.

Then on July the second, General Pershing said he reckoned he had better have our outfit on the line. From our English girls we parted and that same day we started on our final weary journey to the Rhine. To the coast and over the Channel, where our shirts of O.D. flannel were all stained with various and sundry things. The sea was rough and choppy and our legs were somewhat "floppy." Next time we'll cross the Channel under wings.

When on French soil we landed, our sense of humor stranded and all the men were thinking of their homes, there, right before our eyes, and much to our surprise were cars marked "8 Chevaux and 40 Hommes". But right inside we scrambled and over France we rambled to the place called A. S. P. C. number two. Romorantin was the place that we did daily grace, consuming much corned willie, beans, and stew. Our bunch had kept together but we all now wondered whether we would go up in the line or there would stay, for 822 was finished, though our zeal was undiminished and the title "Park" had surely come to stay. Soon came the

reconstruction and our numbers saw reduction and a number of our pals were transferred out. Other men could fill their places, from their caps down to their laces, but our hearts all wondered what it was about.

In September on the second, Colombey-les-Belles beckoned and noon saw us gaily on our way. For three days we rolled along—we had quite run out of song—and at last old Colombey hove into view. We crawled out of the train, in a great downpour of rain, and sneaked into our pup tents built for two. We had no chance to bridle for they didn't leave us idle but filled our hearts with sorrow, grief and pain; in the shops all day we'd slave, with nary chance to shave and spend our evenings sleeping in the rain.

After one week our commander, like the first great Alexander, went up to find out just what he could do to get us in a shack and smiling he came back and said, "The shack's there, boys, for all of you". But there was beaucoup kicking for the Kaiser needed licking and we couldn't see we were of any good.

Came Halloween and dark and the whole 6th Park were just aching to have some kind of a fuss but we got an awful fright for early in the night Huns came and dropped G. I. cans over us. We hadn't time to talk—he was a foolish man who'd walk—so to the trenches every man-jack ran. We fell in with a grunt for rocks both sharp and blunt don't cause you to go in the Red Cross Van. That night to Toul we went and not on pleasure bent for we went to be "Park" for the Fourth Pursuit; they changed our name again and our mothers wondered when we would stop this "foolish trying to be cute". In November fighting ceased then our Sunday pants we creased and started in to visit all thru France. Our enjoyment wasn't much for their language was as Dutch and the girls we found did not know how to dance. Now we're waiting to go home and never more we'll roam and forever in our own backyard we'll stay but if there's another fight we'll be fighting for the right and standing by the U. S. A.

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.