

# **245<sup>th</sup> AERO SQUADRON**

## **LINEAGE**

## **STATIONS**

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

## **COMMANDERS**

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

### **Campaign Streamers**

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## **Decorations**

## **EMBLEM**

## **EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE**

## **MOTTO**

## **NICKNAME**

## **MISHAPS**

## **OPERATIONS**

N ONE DAY. a squadron may undergo radical and most startling changes. The transition in reality may cover a period of months, but to those who have lived in the midst of it. the reality comes with a sense of shock and comes only at some time when for some reason it is desired to enumerate, in chronological order\_ the various events which went to effect the change.

The 245th Aero Squadron, created by virtue of Special Order No. 23, on April 2'a, 1918, was organized primarily with the idea that it was to be a Headquarters Squadron. A canvass was made of the various' squadrons at that time on this field and even Kelly Number One's manpower was drawn on in the endeavor to gather and assemble in one organization the necessary specialists of as high a grade as possible to carry on the Headquarters work. The men working in Plying Department Headquarters, the Office of the Officer in Charge of Flying and the Office of the Engineer Officer, at that time, were

transferred to the 245th Aero Squadron which was then ready, with the thirty-three men so assigned, to start upon its career. The little group, under the supervision of Lieutenant Charles E. Allen and Sergeant 1st Class Edward M. Britt. was installed in Barracks No. 75, situated opposite the Kelly Field No. 2 Water Tank and at the extreme Western End of the road running outside the field's barbed-wire fence. Shortly after the assignment of Lieut. Allen from, the 665th Aero Squadron, Lieutenant Joseph S. Carusi arrived at the 245th Aero Squadron as Supply Officer, but owing to the general rush and confusion which naturally accompanies the organization of new units, both officers were under the impression that each was himself the Commanding Officer and it was not until Lieutenant Edward C. Wagner\_ previously the Adjutant of the 180th Aero Squadron, was definitely assigned ;i& C. 0. of the 245th. that this chaotic condition of affairs was corrected. Inasmuch as the squadron was to be the headquarters organization the personnel officer immediately began assigning men fitted to be instructors, clerks and stenographers. Up to and including the months of June and July. 1918. every man, excepting the well-known cooks and K. P.s in the squadron, was assigned to some Special Duty and the 245th was supplying Headquarters with its Sergeant Major. M. S. E. Thomas Keenan, and most of its clerical force, to say nothing of the office of the Officer in Charge of Flying and the Engineer Office, both of which were manned almost exclusively by Special Duty men from the 245th.

Under the administration of Lieut. Wagner. Sergeant Major Fred Vaile and Sergeant Edward M. Britt were of great assistance in making the Army life of the men in the squadron a pleasant one. Numerous picnics, dances and dinners were arranged and on one occasion the whole squadron "Trucked" to New Braunfels and revelled in an aquatic meet. The Fourth of July Dinner and Dance and (he Victory House Warming were affairs that to do them justice an article would have to be devoted solely to their description. As to Athletics the 245th unquestionably won the Baseball Championship of Kelly Field No. 2 by defeating ihe 180th, the 235th. the 2nd, and on default, the 243rd. thus having never been defeated and having met most of the squadrons and returned victorious. This claim cannot be disputed. Headquarters squadrons, it presently came to light, could not be included in the organization of the Flying Department and the Personnel'of the old 245th. which by this time had of course been brought to full strength by ihe assignment of various enlisted men who acted as instructors and the like, underwent a change. Transfers in and out followed each other in quick succession until by July 20, 1918. when the "Powers that Be" decreed that Flying Department Squadrons should be lettered instead of numbered and the 245th became Kelly Field Squadron "I." In reality just a change of name, but the old 245th no longer existed. Kelly Field Squadron "I," with a personnel encompassing the innumerable trade tests of which only an Aero Squadron can boast, was occupying Barracks No. 75 with the old 245th's Officers and most of its men, but here was transition in reality. Transition readily recognized by the squadron's so-to-speak. "Charter-Members."

During this time the squadron had the usual procession of Supply Officers and Adjutants. Lieut. Caminetti, Lieut. McHale, Lieut. Streeter. Lieut. Reimann and Lieut Poste\_ all acted in one or the other of these capacities until today even a different C. 0. directs our administration, and a new Adjutant passes through the squadron rooms on Sunday morning inspection. Lieutenant Earl McDonald, an R. M. A., is now Commanding Officer. Lieutenant Glenn C. Waples performs the duties of Adjutant and Lieut. Ellsworth Poste as Supply Officer is the only old familiar face which remains among the officers. Sergeant Major Archibald L. Conklin now officiates in Fred Vaile's capacity and Sgt. Edward M. Britt still blows his whistle at 5:30 each and every morning, (SUNDAY excepted).

It is fitting at this time to devote a small bit of space to a few individuals—merely enlisted men, one of whom at least is deserving of more "pica" than can be devoted to him. in this history. Referring specifically to Theophile-Jean Mathieu. French Patriot. Poilu, Airman. Ace: arriving in this country with whatever the French equivalent Tor our S. C. D. may be. no longer able to be a soldier, but still very much of a patriot, he finally arrived in Kelly Field No. 2 and putting his twenty-seven months of experience as a French Flier to the best possible use. became a civilian instructor in Aeronautics and Airplane Engines at the modest salary of \$350.00 per month. After serving for some time as civilian in charge of Airplane Repair at this field, erstwhile Lieut. Theophile-Jean Mathieu of the French Air Service, having recovered his health, resigned his position as civilian instructor for the title of "BUCK PRIVATE" U. S. A. \_ salary, \$30.00 per j-ionth, less its many, many deductions. Private Mathieu \ould doubtless have soon been Lieut. Mathieu had not the Boche practically capitulated and the Armistice been signed, which in his case as in many others, prevented deserving recognition of service. There have been other men in Squadron "I" and there still are men well-worthy ol some personal mention, but after relating, even ever so briefly, the war career of Private Mathieu, their work palls to insignificance. Each man, it can be safely said. L,as at least tried to try to do his best.

Kelly Field Squadron "I" is no longer, for all squadrons ;ave become one Unit known as the Flying School Detachment. Flying School Detachment Squadron "I" is simply a subterfuge to prevent entire loss of identity. The old organization endeavoring to cling to its existence before de mobilization destroys even this fiction when each man, chameleon-like will revert to a number as in bygone Rookie Days for the last change—HOME.

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Sources