

835 AERO SQUADRON

MISSION

LINEAGE

835 Aero Squadron

Organized, Feb 1918

Demobilized, Mar 1919

STATIONS

Waco, TX

Garden City, NY, Mar 1918

Port of Embarkation, Hoboken, NY, Apr 1918

AEF, Apr 1918

South Farnborough, England

Garden City, NY

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The 835th Aero Squadron, a "repair" squadron, was organized 1 Feb 1918, Camp McArthur, Waco, Texas, with one hundred and fifty enlisted men, commanded by 1Lt Thomas M. McLamore. A noteworthy feature of the squadron personnel at the time was that every enlisted in the organization was a Californian, and thus the organization had the initial advantage of being composed of men from the same section of the United States, resulting in a large amount of organization spirit immediately. Fredrick C. Morris, First Lieutenant, was assigned to the squadron on February 23rd, 1918, as Supply Officer, and Edwin P. Sanborn, First Lieutenant, was assigned to the squadron February 27, 1918, as Medical Officer completing the officer personnel of the organization.

In spite of the fact that the squadron was composed of men from the Pacific Slope and most of the unused to the rigorous weather of a Texas winter, the organization left on February 27th, 1918 for Garden City, Long Island, New York, with but few changes in the personnel on account of illness. Arriving in Garden City on March 4, 1918 after a winding trip through the south, the squadron went into Barracks at the Aeronautical General Supply Depot and Concentration Camp at that place, expecting to be sent overseas in a very short time, but it was not until April 18, 1918 that the organization left the camp for Hoboken, to board ship. About ten o'clock in the morning April 16 1918, the Armadale Castle, a British auxiliary cruiser left New York harbor, with the 835th, 838th and 839th Aero Squadrons for England.

The Armadale Castle was accompanied from New York harbor by a number other vessel and the convoy was increased in size off Halifax, more transport falling into line at that point. The United States cruiser Montana accompanied the convoy until it was met by the destroyers, two days from England. The passage as a quiet one, and uneventful except for brush with two submarines shortly after the convoy was met by the destroyers, one U-boat appearing but two hundred yards from the Armadale Castle. This submarine was destroyed, according to the British official report, through the quick use of depth bombs.

The convoy reached Liverpool, England on April 28th, 1918, bringing an added quota to the A. E. F. The 835th Aero Squadron entrained at Birkenhead the same day and arrived in Romsey, England late that night. The squadron stayed until May 4th, 1918 at this "rest camp" and then proceeded to South Farnborough, England, arriving the same date. On May 9th, 1918 the squadron started to work in the Southern Aircraft Repair Depot shops at South Farnborough, beginning its technical training under British guidance.

The squadron was composed mainly of men with mechanical experience, but the work at the airplane shops, among the largest in England, was of a nature entirely different in most respects, to any work they had ever under taken in civil life. They attacked their duties, however, with characteristic American aggressiveness and in a short time were showing their British instructors that they could be entrusted with delicate and important work. A careful record of the progress of each man in the organization was made, based on weekly reports by the various British officers in charge of the sections at the depot, and steady improvement in the grade of work done by the men was marked. Lieut McLamore and Lieut. Morris both donned overalls

and worked with the men in the shops, and so, besides receiving technical training themselves, were able to personally observe the work of the men and to judge the ability of the individuals. By the end of July the squadron was considered competent to perform the duties of a repair squadron in France, and on August 8th, 1918 the organization left South Farnborough for the Air Service Camp at Flower Down, Winchester, England, to get ready for the journey across the Channel.

The three months spent at south Farnborough were pleasant ones for the men of the 85th Aero Squadron. The barracks in which they were quartered, were of brick, permanent in construction, as the camp is one of the oldest in England. The barracks occupied by the squadron were near the Queen's Parade, a great turfed field used for military and athletic purposes, thus having opportunity to enjoy various sports. The squadron was present on June 8th, 1918 at the investiture held by King George on the Queen's Parade.

The ceremony of knighting two generals and of presenting numerous decorations for acts of gallantry and heroism, was watched with interest by the Americans, the spectacle being an unusual one to them. On June 12th, 1918 the squadron acted as a guard of honor to Queen Mary, when she inspected the Woman's Army Auxiliary Corps at the Army Athletic Grounds at Aldershot, a short distance from south Farnborough. The men were entertained frequently on Saturday and Sunday afternoons by the people of the vicinity, and left South Farnborough with a good acquaintance with English life and English people.

The squadron left Winchester on the afternoon of August 11th, 1918, arriving at Southampton an hour later, and that evening boarded the steamer Yale, a passenger vessel well known on the Atlantic and Pacific ports of the United States. The squadron disembarked at Le Havre, France the next morning and late that night entrained for Saint Maixent, France, reaching this point August 15th 1918.

The squadron remained at the American Air Service depot at Saint Maixent until August 20th, when it again entrained, this time for its permanent station at Courban Cote d' Or, France, arriving there August 28th, 1918.

The 1099th and 840th Aero (Repair) Squadrons were at Courban upon the arrival there of the 835th Aero Squadron, and these three squadrons, with the addition of the First British replacement Draft two months later, composed the American personnel at the No. 3 Aircraft Depot, Independent Air Force, RAF, located at Courban, until the armistice between the Allies and the Central Powers was signed November 11, 1918. These organizations were also the only American units connected with the Independent Air Force.

The American contingent at the British aircraft depot at Courban took a very prominent part in the work of the depot, and proved an important asset in the good work of the Independent Air Force. In two months and a half from the time the 835th Aero Squadron arrived at Courban, the output of the aircraft depot was trebled and the American enlisted men were holding a majority of the important non-commissioned officer positions at the depot. Of these

positions the non-commissioned personnel of the 835th Aero Squadron had a good share. American sergeants were in full charge of the Liberty and Rolls-Royce engine work, had important posts of supervision in the motor transport shops, and in the motor transport park, and in the other shops of the depot. Despite the comparative short training of the Americans, they were able to hold their own, and in some cases do even better in comparison with the work done by the English. In rigging that delicate and difficult branch of the airplane industry, the men of the 835th Aero Squadron made excellent records. Two 835th men had charge of the Liberty and Rolls-Royce engine production in the Installation Shop, and in the carpenter shops one of the 835th men proved so competent that he was recommended for a commission by the British. So it was that when General Trenchard, head of the Independent Air Force, complimented the No. 3 Aircraft Depot on its good work in keeping planes in the field, and expressed his thanks, the men of the 835th Aero Squadron felt that they had had a good share in this performance.

Lieut Sanborn was taken from the squadron in September and was sent to Base Hospital no 15 for duty, and his place was taken September 25, 1918 by 1Lt M. L. Cheney. On October 2nd 1918 Lieut. McLamore was relieved of the command of the squadron and was sent to the Second Air Depot, Zone of Advance at Latrency, eight and a half miles away, where he took up the duties of adjutant. Lieut. Morris succeeded to the command of the squadron. On October 19th, 1918 the squadron had its first and only casualty, Sergeant First Class Clifton J. Ross an aeroplane mechanic being instantly killed when a plane in which he was acting as mechanic, crashed.

At ten o'clock on the morning of November 11, 1918, Lieutenant Colonel R. H. Collier, Royal Air Force, commanding officer at the depot, informed the troops gathered in one of the huge hangars, that the armistice between the warring nation had been signed. A week later, November 18th, the squadron marched to Latrency, the location of the Second Air Depot AEF to wait for transportation back to the United States.

Air Force Lineage and Honors

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Sources

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