

# 1 RECONNAISSANCE SQUADRON



## MISSION

The 1 Reconnaissance Squadron (1 RS) recruits all Air Force U-2 pilots. Pilots interested in the program are hand-picked from the various commands and sent to Beale for interviews followed by flight screening. After the initial interviews, orientation flights, and selection for the program, the new pilot undergoes approximately six months of extensive training, including twenty sorties in the U-2.

Upon graduation, the new crewmember is not only mission-ready in the U-2, but also checked out in the T-38 companion trainer. Flying abilities are evaluated in the U-2 two-seat trainer. If selected, applicants are assigned to the 1 RS for upgrade training. Initial training takes place in the two-seat U-2ST trainer aircraft. At completion of the initial qualification phase of five dual instructional flights and one dual evaluation flight, the pilot solos in a single-seat U-2. The pilot then continues to the high-altitude mission qualification phases, where all missions except three, are flown solo. At training completion, U-2 pilots are assigned to the 99th Reconnaissance Squadron.

The 1 also trains the mission planners. Mission planners have to know the wing's mission, the aircraft and sensors capabilities, plus detailed information on target and threat assessment at specific locations. After planners complete their training, they deploy to the overseas detachments and design flight tracks that allow the pilots to gather the best data with the least personal risk. The 1 Reconnaissance Squadron graduates about twelve pilots and two mission planners each year.

Reconnaissance complements surveillance in obtaining, by visual observation or other detection methods, specific information about the activities and resources of an enemy or potential enemy; or in securing data concerning the meteorological, hydrographic, or

geographic characteristics of a particular area. Reconnaissance generally has a time constraint associated with the tasking. Collection capabilities, including airborne and space-based systems that are manned and unmanned, and their associated support systems, are tailored to provide the flexibility, responsiveness, versatility, and mobility required by the strenuous demands of fluid, global taskings. Intelligence critical to the prosecution of current combat operations is evaluated and transmitted in near real time to those elements having a need for that information. Reconnaissance forces possess multiple and diverse capabilities. Because these capabilities are valuable across all levels of war, their specific employment at any one level should consider possible effects on other levels. Intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance must operate together, enabling commanders to preserve forces, achieve economies, and accomplish campaign objectives. They are integral to gaining and maintaining information superiority.

### **LINEAGE**

1 Provisional Aero Squadron organized, 5 Mar 1913  
Redesignated 1 Aero Squadron, 8 Dec 1913  
Redesignated 1 Squadron (Observation), 14 Mar 1921  
Redesignated 1 Observation Squadron, 25 Jan 1923  
Redesignated 1 Bombardment Squadron, 1 Mar 1935  
Redesignated 1 Bombardment Squadron (Medium), 6 Dec 1939  
Redesignated 1 Bombardment Squadron (Heavy), 20 Nov 1940  
Redesignated 1 Bombardment Squadron, Very Heavy, 28 Mar 1944  
Redesignated 1 Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, Photographic, 10 Oct 1948  
Redesignated 1 Bombardment Squadron, Heavy, 1 Apr 1950  
Redesignated 1 Bombardment Squadron, Medium, 2 Oct 1950  
Redesignated 1 Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, 25 Jun 1966  
Redesignated 1 Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron (Training), 1 Jul 1990  
Redesignated 1 Reconnaissance Squadron (Training), 1 Sep 1991  
Redesignated 1 Reconnaissance Squadron, 1 Jul 1994

### **STATIONS**

Texas City, TX, 5 Mar 1913  
San Diego, CA, 28 Nov 1913 (detachment operated from Ft Crockett, TX, 30 Apr–13 Jul 1914 from Brownsville, TX, 17 Apr–24 May 1915)  
Ft Sill, OK, 29 Jul 1915 (detachment operated from Brownsville, TX, 18 Aug–Dec 1915)  
Ft Sam Houston, TX, 26 Nov 1915  
Columbus, NM, 15 Mar 1916  
Casas Grandes, Mexico (operated from Colonia Dublan), 19 Mar 1916  
San Geronimo, Mexico, 5 Apr 1916  
San Antonio, Mexico, 9 Apr 1916  
Satevo, Mexico, 11 Apr 1916  
Namiquipa, Mexico, 17 Apr 1916  
Columbus, NM, 22 Apr 1916–5 Aug 1917 (detachments operated from Colonia Dublan and El Valle, Mexico, until Jan 1917)

Avord, France, 13 Sep 1917  
Issoudun, France, 20 Sep 1917  
Amanty, France, 19 Oct 1917  
Ourches, France, 4 Apr 1918  
Saints, France, 29 Jun 1918  
Francheville, France, 6 Jul 1918  
Moras Ferme (near La Ferte-sous-Jouarre), France, 22 Jul 1918  
May-en-Multien, France, 5 Aug 1918  
Coincy, France, 10 Aug 1918  
Chailly-en-Brie, France, 13 Aug 1918  
Toul, France, 22 Aug 1918  
Remicourt, France, 21 Sep 1918  
Julvecourt, France, 5 Nov 1918  
Mercy-le-Bas, France, 21 Nov 1918  
Trier, Germany, 6 Dec 1918  
Weissenthurm, Germany, 21 Jan–14 Jul 1919  
Park Field, TN, 4 Aug 1919  
Mitchel Field, NY, 10 Oct 1919–6 Nov 1940 (operated from Langley Field, VA, 6 May–26 Oct 1921)  
Rio Hato, Panama, 13 Nov 1940  
Piarco Aprt, Trinidad, 24 Apr 1941  
Waller Field, Trinidad, 29 Oct 1941  
Edinburgh Field, Trinidad, 23 Aug 1942  
Orlando AB, FL, 31 Oct 1942  
Brooksville, FL, 15 Dec 1942  
Orlando AB, FL, 25 Feb 1944  
Dalhart AAFld, TX, 3 Mar 1944  
McCook AAFld, NE, 19 May–18 Nov 1944  
North Field, Tinian, 28 Dec 1944–7 Mar 1946  
Clark Field, Luzon, 14 Mar 1946  
Harmon Field, Guam, 9 Jun 1947–10 Oct 1948  
Topeka AFB, KS, 10 Oct 1948  
Fairfield–Suisun (later, Travis) AFB, CA, 1 Jun 1949  
Mountain Home AFB, ID, 1 May 1953  
Beale AFB, CA, 25 Jun 1966

#### **DEPLOYED STATIONS**

Fairford RAF Station, England, 22 May–8 Jul 1955

#### **ASSIGNMENTS**

Unkn, 5 Mar 1913–Apr 1918  
I Corps Observation Group, Apr–Nov 1918  
Unkn, Nov 1918–1 Oct 1919  
1 Army Observation (later, 7 Observation) Group, 1 Oct 1919

2 Wing, 30 Aug 1921  
Second Corps Area, 30 Sep 1921  
9 Observation (later, 9 Bombardment) Group, assigned 1 Aug 1922, attached 24 Mar 1923,  
and assigned 15 Feb 1929  
311 Air Division, 10 Oct 1948  
9 Strategic Reconnaissance (later, 9 Bombardment) Group, 1 Jun 1949  
9 Bombardment (later, 9 Strategic Aerospace; 9 Strategic Reconnaissance) Wing, 16 Jun  
1952  
9 Operations Group, 1 Sep 1991

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

1 Provisional Air Brigade for operations, 6 May–3 Oct 1921  
55 Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, 10–26 Oct 1948  
55 Strategic Reconnaissance Group, 27 Oct 1948–31 May 1949  
9 Bombardment Wing, 10 Feb 1951–15 Jun 1952

#### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

Wright B, May 1913-1915  
Burgess-Wright, May 1913-1915  
Burgess-H, May 1913-1915  
Burgess I-Scout, 1913-1915  
Burgess J-Scout, 1913-1915  
Wright C, 1913-1914  
Wright D-Scout, 1913-1915  
Curtiss D, 1913-1915  
Curtiss E, 1913-1915  
Curtiss H, 1913-1915  
Martin TT, 1913-1915  
Curtiss JN-2 (JN-3), 1915-1916  
Curtiss N-8, 1916  
Curtiss R-2, 1916-1917  
Standard H-2, 1916-1917  
Standard H-3, 1916-1917  
Curtiss Twin JN, 1916-1917  
Martin R-Land, 1916-1917  
Sturtevant Adv Tr, 1916-1917  
Lowe, Willard, and Fowler V-1, 1916-1917  
Thomas D-5, 1916-1917  
Curtiss JN-4, 1916-1917  
A-R 1, 1917-1918  
Spad XI A.2, 1918  
Salmson 2, 1918-1919  
DeHavilland DH-4, 1919-1928  
Douglas O-2, 1919-1928

Curtiss O-1, 1928-1936  
Curtiss O-13, 1930-1936  
Douglass Y1O-31, 1930-1936  
Douglas Y1O-35, 1930-1936  
Curtiss O-39, 1930-1936  
Keystone B-6, 1930-1936  
Martin B-10, 1936-1938  
B-18, 1938-1942  
B-17, 1942-1944, 1948-1949  
B-29, 1944-1947, 1948-1949, 1950-1954  
RB-17, 1948-1949  
RB-29, 1948-1949  
RB-36, 1949-1950  
B-47, 1954-1966  
T-38, 1966  
SR-71, 1966-1990  
U-2R, 1990-1998  
U-2S, 1994  
RQ-4 2008

#### **COMMANDERS**

Capt Charles De Forest Chandler, 5 Mar 1913  
Capt Arthur S. Cowan, 1 Apr 1913  
Maj Benjamin D. Foulois, By Apr 1914  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt William L. Patterson, 26 Apr 1914  
Capt Arthur S. Cowan, By Jun 1914  
Unknown, 6 Aug 1914-Apr 1915  
Maj Benjamin D. Foulois, Apr 1915  
Unknown, 4 Nov-Dec 1916  
Capt Townsend F. Dodd, By Dec 1916  
Maj Ralph Royce, 16-31 Mar 1917  
Unknown, 1-2 Apr 1917  
Capt J. L. Dunsworth, 3 Apr 1917  
Maj Ralph Royce, 9 Aug 1917  
Capt Joseph T. Mcnarney, 3 Oct 1917  
Unknown, 15 Oct 1917-Aug 1918  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt Arthur J. Coyle, 18 Aug 1918  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt Paul Meyers, 26 Oct 1918  
Maj. Thomas G. Lanphier, Dec 1920  
Capt John J. Devery 28 Mar 1921  
Capt Truman W. Allen, 23 Jan 1922  
Maj Junius W. Jones, 12 Feb 1922  
Maj Davenport Johnson, 1 Aug 1922  
Capt Harry Drayton, 30 Jun 1925

1<sup>st</sup> Lt Newton Longfellow, 4 Nov 1925  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt Newman R. Laughinghouse, 27 Feb 1928  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt Charles Chauncey, 10 Mar 1929  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt John A. Case, 9 Dec 1929  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt John W. Mccullough, 3 Jul 1930  
Capt Earle J. Carpenter, 1 Jun 1932  
Capt Edward J. Raley, 5 Aug 1932  
Capt Earle J. Carpenter, 5 Jun 1934  
Maj William E. Lynd, 20 Aug 1934  
Maj Earle J. Carpenter, 1 Mar 1935  
Maj Charles P. Prime, 6 Jun 1935  
Maj Claude E. Duncan, 20 Jul 1936  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Lt B. E. Allen, Aug 1938**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Lt E. S. Wetzel, Jan 1939**  
Maj Arthur W. Meehan, 29 Jan 1939  
Capt Raymond L. Winn, 1 Jun 1939-Apr 1940  
Capt Stuart P. Wright, Jul 1940  
Maj Alvin N. Moore, Nov 1942  
Maj Mack Mckay, 16 Jun 1943  
Lt Col Thomas J. Classen, 27 Feb 1944  
Lt Col Ralph E. Settle, 1 May 1944  
Lt Col Henry Huglin, 24 Feb 1945  
Lt Col Leroy V. Casey, 27 Mar 1945  
Maj Alton P. Donnell, Aug 1945  
Unknown, Sep 1945-1949 (Not Manned, 25 Apr 1947-9 Oct 1948)  
Lt Col Harry L. Evans, 1 Jun 1949  
Maj John S. Mcintosh, May 1950  
Col G. H. Fulcher, 5 Jun 1950  
Maj Ellis W. Wright Jr., 27 Feb 1951  
Maj George Buckingham, May 1951  
Lt Col Frank E. Ferrell, May 1951  
Lt Col Boyd B. White, 23 Jul 1951  
Lt Col Frank E. Ferrell, 29 Dec 1951  
Lt Col Eugene Q. Steffes Jr., Nov 1953  
Lt Col Frank E. Ferrell, Jan 1954  
Lt Col Robert A. Weir, Oct 1954  
Lt Col Loren E. Buckey, Apr 1957  
Lt Col Herschel T. Pascoe, Aug 1959  
Maj Claude H. Bridges Jr., May 1960  
Lt Col Richard W. Edmonson, Jul 1962  
Lt Col James Mitchell, Jul 1964  
Lt Col John S. Harpster, Aug 1965  
Lt Col Harold E. Confer, 25 Jun 1966  
Col Raymond L. Haupt, Nov 1966

Lt Col Allan L. Hichew, Aug 1967  
Lt Col Patrick J. Halloran, Aug 1968  
Lt Col James L. Watkins, Dec 1969  
Lt Col Larry S. Devall, Jul 1971  
Lt Col George N. Bull, Jun 1972  
Lt Col Bryan K. Mccallum, Jul 1973  
Lt Col James H. Shelton, Jan 1974  
Lt Col Raphael S. Samay, Aug 1975  
Lt Col Adolphus H. Bledsoe Jr., Jul 1977  
Lt Col Randolph B. Hertzog, Dec 1978  
Lt Col Richard H. Graham, 2 Jan 1980  
Lt Col Eldon W. Joersz, 11 Aug 1981  
Lt Col Alan B. Cirino, 18 Jul 1983  
Lt Col Joseph Kinego, 2 Aug 1985  
Lt Col William D. Orcutt, 4 Aug 1987  
Lt Col William R. Dyckman, 10 Nov 1988  
Lt Col Kenneth W. Womack, 27 Dec 1990  
Lt Col Bobby L. Fairless, 2 Mar 1992  
Lt Col David J. Bonsi, 30 Apr 1993  
Lt Col David W. Wright, 20 May 1994  
Lt Col Joseph R. Muus, 23 Jun 1995  
Lt Col Mario Buda, 21 Jul 1997  
Lt Col Bryan K. Anderson, 26 Jul 1999  
Lt Col Domenick M. Eanniello, 23 Jul 2001  
Lt Col David E. Miller, 15 Oct 2002  
Lt Col Alan Marshall, 14 Jul 2003 (Temporary)  
Lt Col Walter Flint, 4 Sep 2003  
Lt Col Michael J, Masucci, 5 Aug 2005  
Lt Col Michael Glaccum 15 May 2007  
Lt Col Mark Williamson May 2009  
Lt Col Stephen Rodriguez 19 May 2011  
Lt Col Colby Kuhns

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

### **Campaign Streamers**

Mexico 1916–1917

World War I

Lorraine

Ile-de-France

Champagne

Champagne-Marne

Aisne-Marne  
St Mihiel  
Meuse-Argonne

***Champagne, 7-12 Aug 1918***  
***Chateau-Thierry, 29 Jun-14 Jul 1918***  
***Remicourt, 19-25 Sep 1918***  
***Toul, 5 Apr-27 Jun 1918; 11 Sep 1918***

World War II  
Antisubmarine, American Theater  
Air Offensive, Japan  
Eastern Mandates  
Western Pacific

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

#### **Decorations**

Distinguished Unit Citations  
Kawasaki, Japan, 15–16 Apr 1945  
Japan, 13–28 May 1945

Presidential Unit Citation  
31 Mar–31 Dec 1968

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat "V" Device  
1 Jul 1972–30 Jun 1973

#### Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jan 1957–31 Jan 1958  
1 Jul 1967–30 Jun 1968  
1 Jul 1970–30 Jun 1971  
1 Jul 1971–30 Jun 1972  
1 Jul 1975–30 Jun 1977  
1 Jul 1981–30 Jun 1982  
1 Jul 1983–30 Jun 1984  
1 Jul 1985–30 Jun 1986  
1 Jul 1986–30 Jun 1987  
1 Jul 1989–30 Jun 1990  
1 Sep 1991–30 Jun 1993  
1 Jul 1993-30 Jun 1994  
1 Jul 1994-30 Jun 1995  
1 Jun 1996-31 May 1998  
1 June 1998 – 31 May 2000



1 June 2000 – 31 May 2002  
1 June 2002 – 31 May 2004  
5 June 2005 – 31 May 2007  
1 June 2007 – 31 May 2009  
1 June 2009 – 31 May 2010

**EMBLEM**



1 Bombardment Squadron emblem



A Brown cave man wearing a Black breech clout standing on a Black mound, looking to dexter with right hand shielding his eyes, left hand holding a spear horizontally, in front of a rising sun, against a Blue background; all within a Black bordered Gold annulet bearing thirteen Black crosses patee. The insignia of the squadron has considerable historical significance in the symbolism representing World War I participation. Within a green bordered gold amulet bearing fifteen black crosses, patee, a brown cave man stands. He wears a black breech clout and stands on a black ridge in a posture indicating observation. In his right hand he carries a spear, indicating offensive power. In this position he symbolizes the original purpose of the squadron-observation. The rising sun which serves as a background for the figure of the cave man represents, as does the pre-historic figure itself, the fact that the squadron originated in the very beginning of United States military airpower. The five rays of the sun represents the five campaigns in which the squadron participated in World War I, while the crosses in the border stand for the confirmed victories of the squadron in that war. (Approved, 14 Jul 1931)

## **MOTTO**

## **OPERATIONS**

On 5 Mar 1913, Congress established the first air arm of the United States military services it was organized in response to Mexican Revolution of Feb 1913. It was the First Provisional Aero Squadron, organized in the field near Texas City, TX. It was a branch of the Army Signal Corps and the first time in history that airmen were together in a single group. The unit consisted of nine airplanes, nine officers and fifty-one enlisted men organized into two companies, and it spent much of its time practicing cross-country flying and operating from rough terrain. With Wright-B pushers this early air force flew reconnaissance for the Second Army Division, which was guarding the Texas border.

The 1 Aero Squadron was commanded by Captain A. Cowan and consisted of two companies, comprising 9 aircraft and 51 personnel. Among the 1 Aero Squadron's officers were Lt. Eric Lamar Ellington and Lt. Hugh M. Kelly. Flight conditions in south Texas were not ideal for the operation of Wright C Flyers. For optimal performance, Wright Flyers needed low wind conditions. Gusty winds near Texas City often presented problems for the pilots of the 1 Aero

Squadron. Though not much space was necessary to take off or land a Wright Flyer in 1913, pilots found their airfield surrounded on three sides by rows of tents and lines of high wires strung near the field. Because of crowded conditions at the Texas City camp, landings and takeoffs became hazardous for army aviators. Despite problems, the 1 Aero Squadron flew several record breaking cross-country flights from Texas City to Houston and San Antonio.

During their time in south Texas, the unit also flew many observation and mapping missions for the U.S. 2nd Infantry Division. Though army aviators gained valuable flight experience in Texas, the variable wind conditions and mechanical problems plagued the 1 Aero Squadron's aircraft throughout their stay at Texas City. By June, because the Mexican crisis had temporarily subsided, the War Department transferred the 1 Aero Squadron to San Diego, California, where the Signal Corps planned to establish a unified aviation school. While Captain Cowan moved most of the squadron west, Lt. Roy Kirtland and Lt. Loren H. Call remained in Texas City. Flights at Texas City continued but were limited in time and duration. In June 1913, Lt. Call was killed in an air crash. By November all flight operations in Texas were suspended.

Much of this training was conducted by Glenn Curtiss, early pilot and airplane builder. From this base in 1915 the squadron made the world's first massed cross-country flight. The trip was a round robin between San Diego and Los Angeles, Six planes attempted the flight, two reached the northern point, one other completed the route.

At Fort Sill, Okla, The First compiled the first aerial mosaic map, the foundation of aerial reconnaissance. This was completed after three attempts and forty-two photographs.

August 28, 1915, The first attempt to direct artillery fire from aeroplanes at Fort Sill, by Capt Foulous and an observer and line of 6in howitzers. Various problems aroused with locating and marking the artillery that was out in the open on the maps

Aerial photography was attempted on 22 Oct 1915. Once again problems aroused this timed with the plates and shutters few good photos were obtained on 22 Oct and Lt Milling took 42 photos on 6 Nov 1915

On 19 Nov 1915 the squadron left for San Antonio and arrived on 25 Nov. Six planes flew the entire distance, stopping in Wichita Falls, Fort Worth and Austin

In 1916 the First joined General John J. Pershing, who was campaigning against the bandit Pancho Villa in Mexico. On the first flight into Mexico was Captain Benjamin D Foulois, later the first Air Corps Chief of Staff, The reconnaissance, courier and communications flights in this campaign made it the first U.S. air unit to fly over foreign soil, the first to participate against an armed enemy, and the first to use "flying machines" in a military campaign. These "flying Machines" caused as much trouble as the enemy: Under the command of Captain Benjamin D. Foulois the 1 took eight Curtiss JN-3s into the field. On 16 March 1916 they made their first reconnaissance flight into Mexico, and on 19 March 1916, the entire unit moved across the border. The squadron operated in Mexico until February 1917. But this first tactical use of

aircraft was beset by problems: most noticeably the poor quality of these first air machines. The Curtiss Jennys could not climb over the 9,000 to 12,000-foot mountains that surrounded the area. The 1, therefore, could not carry out its reconnaissance mission. Also, high winds and dust storms frequently grounded the Jennys. But the unit did the best it could with these fragile machines. The squadron was cited for its excellent work, which largely consisted of carrying dispatches and mail, reconnaissance flights and communications with advanced troops.

While flying for General Pershing the First armed its ships with Lewis machine guns. At the same time the squadron conducted many experiments on a parachute, dropping bombs, and a periscope to enable the pilot to see all around him, above and below at the same time.

When the United States entered the Great War in April 1917, the 1 Aero Squadron was still at Columbus, New Mexico. The Army ordered the unit to New York to accompany the 1 Division to France.

On 5 Aug 1917 the squadron entrained at Columbus on troop train bound east arriving at Jersey City. Ground transportation problems caused the 1 to arrive too late to sail with the division. On 13 Aug it embarked on the steamship Lapland and arrived at Liverpool on 1 Sep. They crossed the channel the following day. After several stays at rest stops the squadron arrived at Avord at the French Aviation school for training they flew Bleriot Penguins, Nieport 30, 23 and 18s. Within two weeks all the officers completed the training.

At Amanty, real preparation was made for active service. Classes were held in radio and machine gun and lectures were delivered by French lectures. Ground liaison/panel work with 1 Division. Practice maneuvers were held with the division for training observers and ground units in observation work.

The squadron moved to Ourches on 4 Apr 1918 and began operations over the front assigned to 35th Division. Squadron's mission was visual reconnaissance, artillery surveillance, infantry contact patrol, adjustment of division artillery, alert planes for special missions and photo missions required by first arm corps. Keep two planes constantly on the alert thru out the hours of day light. To keep a liaison officer at div hq to keep a surv place constantly over its sector thru the hours of light to make infantry patrols as arranged with div cc each plane to drop messages to div and corp hq. Gather all info necessary for prep of attack during attack to obtain all possible info to enable infantry to make rapid progress.

On 12 April Lt Coyle returned from a recce mission and reported the first combat. He had been attached by three enemy planes but escaped with several bullets holes thru the wings.

During June the squadron was equipped with Salmon aircraft. Once the mechanics got familiar with the motors the aircraft gave excellent satisfaction

While at Amanty the squadron was given the honor of using the American flag as its insignia it being the first squadron on the front. This insignia was painted on all ships.

On 29 Jun the squadron moved to Saints to take part in the Chateau-Thierry offensive the first major operation on the American forces. Flying over the front began on the morning of 1 July by Lt Thaw and Lt Saunders as Observer.

From the beginning a great deal of hostile opposition was met in the air the Germans seem to give concentrated a large part of their aerial forces in their sector. Consequently casualties were high.

Also the squadron understrength of machines, crew and mechanics, with high casualties, replacements were very hard to come by.

The 1 Corps Observation Group, consisting of the 1 and 12th Aero Squadrons, reached the Marne sector during the first days of July 1918, and occupied an airdrome about 55 kilometers from the existing front line. It was assigned to duty with the 1 Army Corps, which at that time held the front extending from a short distance west of Chateau-Thierry to Cour-champs, with two divisions in the front line. Although the positions of the opposing forces had somewhat stabilized after the German offensive of May 27, 1918, conditions were quite different from those existing in the Toul area.

There were a number of strong points hastily organized rather than a continuous line of trenches. The enemy had also powerful artillery and by this time had massed the heavy guns that were intended to support his formidable attack Of July 15. A very powerful enemy air force had also been assembled, and our squadrons, accustomed to the lesser and not so highly trained air forces of the Toul sector, now daily encountered enemy patrols of some 7 to 20 machines of the latest Fokker type and flown by the best of German pilots, who were vigorous and aggressive and who showed a teamwork and persistency new to our experience. On July 1, 1918, the American attack on Vaux gave an opportunity to employ contact patrols and advantage was taken of this to give all our available teams the experience which cannot be gained otherwise.

At St Mihiel, standing orders to not fly below 500 meters, but many crews including one pilot who had a brother and several school mates in the infantry flew anywhere from 50 to 400 meters. The order was because anti-aircraft guns would make short order of the ships. Ground machine guns. The doughboys were going over the top and we intended to follow them through hell if necessary.

The work done by this squadron during the drive was in general the work of a divisional squadron. At first, infantry contact patrols were of the most importance since during the confusion of an advance the airplane was the only agent which could obtain for the divisional command the vital information as to where his front line elements actually were. The importance of this information can readily be seen his barrage lines must be laid in advance of his infantry. His planes for the disposal of his reserves were dependent of knowing how his attacking troops had advanced.

Many infantry units were unfamiliar with the duties and frequently it was necessary to fly low enough to see the men because they didn't display their panels.

The squadron was also fired on by doughboys. The infantry was never taught to identify or distinguish between allied and enemy aircraft. In fact one aircraft was brought down in this manner killing both crew members. After that, the infantry was instructed to not open fire on the aircraft unless ordered to do so by an officer or the aircraft fired on them

On 4 Oct the squadron shot down two aircraft. Lt Richardson pilot and Lt Corley and on 8 Oct Lt Erwin and Easterbrook shot down an aircraft.

When the armistice was signed the squadron dropped cigarettes and newspapers to the doughboys.

Although the squadron's primary duties were reconnaissance and artillery surveillance, occasionally unit pilots had to fight. Squadron pilots scored 13 aerial victories during the war. Thirteen Maltese crosses on the 1's emblem commemorate these victories. But the victories came at a price. Sixteen squadron officers lost their lives and three more were missing-in-action.

At the end of the Great War, the 1 Aero Squadron moved to Germany as part of the Army of Occupation. The unit stayed in Germany until July 1919. The squadron then returned to France sailed home aboard the SS Pocahontas, arriving in the United States on 1 August 1919. The 1 moved to Mitchel Field, New York, and remained active as an observation squadron.

Participated in demonstrations of effectiveness of aerial bombardment on warships, Jun-Sep 1921. During the 1920's and 1930's the unit conducted training, experimented with equipment, developed techniques and tactics, and participated in exercises and maneuvers.

Between world conflicts, the First performed routine duties, At Camp Mills (Mitchell Air Force Base) New York, it joined the Fifth and Ninety-Ninth Observation Squadrons in forming the Ninth Observation Group. The First participated in General William (Billy) Mitchell's bombing experiments, assisted in the first around-the-world flights by Army Air Corps aircraft, and advised Charles A. Lindbergh on navigational problems he should expect on his flight to Paris.

On February 19, 1935, the 1 Observation Squadron underwent a major change when the Army redesignated it as the 1 bombardment Squadron and replaced its old observation aircraft with new B-10 and B-18 bombers. With new planes, the 1 trained, experimented and developed different tactics and maneuvers. These operations included a field exercise at Aberdeen, Maryland, joint Army-Navy exercises, a 1937 cold weather test at Selfridge Field, Michigan, and bombing and gunnery practice at Langley Field, Virginia.

On 25 Feb 1935, a Curtiss Y10-40B Raven, 32-416, of the 1 Observation Squadron, 9th

Observation Group, Mitchel Field, Long Island, New York, piloted by Don W. Smith, suffers major damage when it force lands due to engine failure at Floyd Bennett Field, New York City, New York. Repaired.

Later it took part in the Field Exercises at Lakeland, Fla, flying B-10s and B-18s on the long range missions and for anti-aircraft and aircraft tests.

In 1940 the First moved to the Panama Canal Zone. On the day of Pearl Harbor it was flying anti-submarine patrol out of Trinidad, British West Indies.

After hostilities started in Europe in the 1939, the War Department sent the 1 to Panama in 1940 to strengthen U.S. defenses around the Panama Canal. In 1941, deadly German U-boat attacks off America's east coast prompted the 1's move to Trinidad to participate in the anti-submarine campaign.

By August 1941, the squadron was the proud operator of a B-17B 38-264 at Waller together with six Douglas B-18As. By January 1942, the B-17B was gone, and only five of the B-18A's were still airworthy at Waller. By mid-February 1942, with four airworthy B-18As still on hand, the squadron received a number of LB-30s. With these, the unit flew checks over the Caribbean approaches to the Panama Canal to test the newly sited radars emplaced there, as well as routine anti-submarine patrols. The unit was technically still based at Waller Field.

On 17 August 1942, a Squadron B-18A, piloted by Capt R. M. McLeod, sighted a sub some 20 miles from a convoy and dropped four depth charges after it crash dived. About 10 minutes after the last depth charge had been released, a patch of oil appeared on the surface where the now-submerged sub had been. The B-18A remained in the area a further 45 minutes but was then relieved by another aircraft. There was no further sign of this sub.

Two days later, another 1 Bomb Squadron B-18A, piloted by Capt James Barlow, sighted a completely surfaced sub at a distance of five miles, from an altitude of 1,800 feet. He released three depth charges, the third of which caused the sub to list away from the attack, sideslipping into the water. A fourth depth charge was believed to have hit the stern, then about 20 feet below the surface. Unfortunately, the results of these attacks have never been substantiated.

Returning to the States in 1942, the First trained bombardment cadres, tested new equipment, and flew special projects for the Army Air Force Board.

Antisubmarine patrols, and reconnaissance of Vichy French fleet in Martinique, Dec 1941–Oct 1942.

On 14 Jan 1942 A B-18A 37-619, returning from submarine patrol duties went off course due to high winds, darkness and poor radio contact. Instead of landing at Westover Field, later Westover AFB, in Massachusetts they crashed into Mount Waternomee in New Hampshire's White Mountains. 5 of the 7 crew members survived.

In October 1942, the 1 moved to the Army Air Force School of Applied Tactics (later the AAF Tactical Center), Orlando, Florida. The unit practiced formation flying and precision high-altitude bombing in B-17s. In March 1943 the 1 began training cadres of other units. The squadron also flew in maneuvers and experiments at Eglin Field, Florida.

On 14 Mar 1943 B-17F 42-9589 flown by Herbert A. Frank, Jr. crashed on takeoff at Eglin Field, FL.

Following its stint as a training unit, the 1 relocated to Dalhart, Texas in March 1944 and began combat training. In May 1944, the squadron moved again, to McCook, Nebraska, where they received B-29s. After finishing B-29 training in December 1944, the 1 transferred to North Field, Tinian, in the Marianas Islands, as part of 20th Air Force, XXI Bomber Command. On 9 February 1945, the squadron saw its first combat of World War II when it joined a B-29 raid on the Japanese seaplane base at Mouen, Truk Islands. Three days later, the 1 bombed gun emplacements on Iwo Jima preparing the way for the upcoming amphibious assault.

Following these missions, the 1 flew high-altitude, precision raids on Japanese aircraft engine plants on 25 February and 4 March 1945. On 9-10 March 1945, B-29s of the 1 were among the 334 bombers Major General Curtis E. LeMay dispatched on low-level, incendiary attacks, which devastated a 15-square mile area of Tokyo. Later, the squadron flew raids on Nagoya, Osaka, and Kobe.

After these attacks, the 1 mined the Shimonoseki Strait and bottled-up Japanese forces in the Inland Sea, preventing their joining defenders on Okinawa during the Allied assault. In April 1945, when not mining, the 1 also bombed Japanese airfields on Kyushu to reduce the Kamikaze attacks that hampered Allied naval operations at Okinawa.

The 1 Bombardment Squadron received a Distinguished Unit Citation for an attack on Kawasaki, as part of the 9th Bombardment Group. The unit succeeded despite heavy flak and fighter opposition. In May, the 1 resumed mining operations against the Shimonoseki Strait and won another Distinguished Unit Citation. From then to its last combat mission on 14 August 1945, the squadron flew incendiary raids on secondary targets throughout Japan.

After the war, the 1 stayed at Tinian until April 1946. The squadron moved, first, to Clark Field in the Philippines in 1946, then, to Harmon Field, Guam, in 1947. While at Guam the new Department of the Air Force issued orders to inactivate the 1 but rescinded the order to continue the 1's unbroken record of service. After the war the First was deactivated for a short period of time. Unmanned Apr 1947–10 Oct 1948.

In 1949 the squadron was reorganized as the First Reconnaissance Squadron at Fairfield-Suisun Air Force Base California. In this new capacity it originated the "Thousand Club" by completing non-stop high altitude flights of more than 4000 nautical miles. Originally, the First was scheduled to receive the first RB-36s for its reconnaissance work but before the conversion



could be completed, the squadron's primary mission was returned to bombing.

For the next several years, the 1 remained at the front of America's nuclear deterrent force, transitioning to the B-47 in 1954. The squadron later set a record for a non-stop flight flying B-47s from Idaho to New Zealand. But even as the 1 flew the B-47, Lockheed Aircraft Co. Was developing a new plane; cloaked in secrecy. This plane, publicly announced by President Lyndon B. Johnson as the SR-71, joined the Air Force inventory in 1966. The 1 moved to Beale AFB, California on 25 June 1966 to fly the SR-71. This new and advanced aircraft gave the strategic Air Command a reconnaissance capability far greater than any then available in terms of speed, altitude, and increased area coverage.

During the Vietnam era of the late sixties and early seventies, the 1 Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron gathered photographic and electronic intelligence products of the Southeast Asian nations involved in the conflict. SR-71 crews risked their lives each day to obtain the information that was vitally important for the American war effort's success. Photos taken from SR-71 missions flown over North Vietnam were used in planning the unsuccessful attempt to rescue American POWs from Son Tay prisoner-of-war camp.

Following the end of American involvement in Southeast Asia, the 1 turned to more peaceful accomplishment. The most spectacular of these were the SR-71 speed runs from New York to London and from London to Los Angeles. On 14 September 1974, Major James Sullivan, pilot and Major Noel Widdifield, RSO, flew their SR-71 from New York to London in 1 hour, 55 minutes, 42 seconds for an average speed of 1,817 mph. This bettered the old record set by a RAF F-4 Phantom jet of 4 hours, 46 minutes set in 1969. The SR-71 crew of Capt5 Harold Adams, pilot, and Major William Machorek, RSO, established a record for the London to Los Angeles route when they flew the 5,645 mile leg in 3 hours, 48 minutes on 13 September.

Because of budgetary reasons the Air Force retired the SR-71 in July 1990. But in March 1990, on its final journey from California to Washington D. where it became part of the collection at the Smithsonian Institution, an SR-71 flown by the 1 made the coast-to-coast trip in a record time of 68 minutes, 17 seconds—at a record speed of 2,242.48 mph. Although the Air Force Reactivated the SR-71 in 1995, the 1 SRS already had another mission. Following the retirement of the SR-71, on 1 July 1990 the unit became the 1 Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron (Training), harkening back to its roots as a training unit at San Diego and Orlando.

A U-2 surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft crashed in the United Arab Emirates on June 22, 2005. The pilot, Maj. Duane W. Dively, was killed. Dively was assigned to the 1 Reconnaissance Squadron at Beale AFB, Calif. The Air Force said the cause of the crash was still under investigation, and Pentagon officials reported that hostile fire was not involved. They also said the aircraft was supporting Operation Enduring Freedom in the Southwest Asia theater. Published reports say the accident occurred while the aircraft was landing at Al Dhafra Air Base.

The 1 Reconnaissance Squadron at Beale AFB, Calif, the U-2's formal training unit absorbed the mission of the 18th RS in August, Air Combat Command said. The 18th has been training

operators of the Global Hawk unmanned recce aircraft, which is to eventually replace the U-2. The merger of the two units is designed to build more understanding of both aircraft and increase mission capability of U-2 and Global Hawk pilots, ACC said. The old units did a good job, but there was not enough crossover, and squadron leaders are hoping to have more versatile intelligence-surveillance-reconnaissance aircrew members as a result. The consolidation comes as the Global Hawk training pipeline expands significantly. In October, students in the course increased 50 percent, from 24 to 36. Classes are also stepping up from six a year to 12. In 2009, the course is expanding to 48 students a year. 2007

One pilot died and another was injured Tuesday when an Air Force U-2 Dragon Lady crashed shortly after takeoff in northern California, the U.S. Air Force said. The crash occurred about 9:05 a.m. north of Sacramento in Sutter County; TV images showed a brush fire. The aircraft had been assigned to 1 Reconnaissance Squadron at Beale Air Force Base, east of Marysville, and was on a training mission. The crash occurred near the Sutter Buttes mountain range. The pilots ejected from the aircraft. The incident is under investigation. CNN affiliate KCRA-TV said people told the station's Mike Luery they saw two parachutes carrying people and a third with equipment. 20 Sep 2016 The pilot who was killed when a U-2 crashed shortly after takeoff Sept. 20 has been identified as Lt. Col. Ira S. Eadie.

---

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

Created: 14 Aug 2012

Updated: 5 Jun 2024

Sources

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

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.

Unit History. *1 Bombardment Squadron (M)*. 1953.

Unit History. *History of the 1 Reconnaissance Squadron, 5 Mar 1913-31 Aug 2012*. 9 RW History Office. Beale AFB, CA, 2012.