

101 BOMBARDMENT PHOTOGRAPHIC SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

39 Aero Squadron organized, 5 Jun 1917
Redesignated Squadron A, Rich Field, TX, 14 Jul 1918
Demobilized, 19 Nov 1918

39 School Squadron constituted, 6 Feb 1923
Activated, 1 Aug 1927

Squadron A, Rich Field, TX reconstituted and consolidated with 39 School Squadron constituted,
1933

Redesignated 39 Observation Squadron, 1 Mar 1935
Inactivated, 1 Sep 1936
Activated, 1 Feb 1940
Redesignated 39 Observation Squadron (Medium), 26 Feb 1942
Redesignated 39 Observation Squadron, 4 Jul 1942
Redesignated 39 Reconnaissance Squadron, 25 Jun 1943
Redesignated 101 Photographic Reconnaissance Squadron, 12 Jun 1944
Redesignated 101 Bombardment Photographic Squadron, 7 Feb 1945
Inactivated, 25 Dec 1945
Disbanded, 8 Oct 1948

STATIONS

San Antonio, TX, 5 Jun 1917
Chanute Field, IL, Aug 1917

Rich Field, TX, Dec 1917-19 Nov 1918
Kelly Field, TX, 1 Aug 1927-1 Sep 1936
France Field, CZ, 1 Feb 1940
Howard Field, CZ, 20 Mar 1942
Waller Field, Trinidad, 6 Aug 1942-26 Feb 1944
Dalhart AAFld, TX, 15 Mar 1944
Esler Field, LA, 1 May 1944
Stuttgart AAFld, AR, 6 Feb 1945
Brooks Field, TX, 5-25 Dec 1945

ASSIGNMENTS

Unkn, 1917-1918
10 School Group, 1 Aug 1927
Air Corps Advanced Flying School, 16 Jul 1931-1 Sep 1936
Panama Canal Department, 1 Feb 1940
Panama Canal (later Caribbean; Sixth) Air Force, 20 Nov 1940
72 Observation Group, 7 Mar 1942 (attached to Trinidad Sector and Base Command after 6 Aug 1942)
Antilles Air Command, 1 Jun 1943
Second Air Force, 15 Mar 1944
Third Air Force, 5 Apr 1944
69 Tactical Reconnaissance Group, 11 Apr 1944
74 Tactical Reconnaissance Group, 29 Jan 1945
XIX Tactical Air Command (attached to 69th Reconnaissance Group), 7 Nov-25 Dec 1945

WEAPON SYSTEMS

SJ-1
JN-4
O-2
O-19
O-11
O-25
O-38
C-14
BT-2
A-17, 1940
O-47, 1940-1944
O-49, 1941-1944
L-4, 1942-1944
B-18
P-39
C-45
B-25
C-60

O-52, 1943
UC-61
UC-78, 1943-1944
B-25/F-10, 1944-1945
A-25
L-5
A-26, 1945

COMMANDERS

1Lt Robert H. Finley, 1 Aug 1927
2Lt Harold A. Wheaton, 4 Nov 1928
Cpt Perry Wainer, 31 Jan 1929
1Lt Max F. Schneider, 1 Nov 1931
Maj Ulysses G. Jones, 28 Nov 1931
Cpt George A. Whatley, 11 Aug 1936
Inactive, 1 Sep 1936-25 Nov 1936
Cpt Edward V. Pettis, 25 Nov 1936
1Lt Graeme S. Bond, 1 Feb 1940
Cpt Donald N. Wackwitz, 5 Apr 1940
Unknown, Jun 1940-7 Dec 1941

HONORS

Service Streamers

American Theater

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

On a blue disc two checks in gold. (Approved, 16 Oct 1941)

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Flying training unit, 1917-1918. Air defense in Caribbean area, 1940-1944.

Chanute felt the hectic pace of the country to get men trained and over to France as soon as possible. On 25 August 1917, two additional aero squadrons, the 38th and the 39th, arrived by special train from Kelly Field, San Antonio, Texas. The 380 men arrived at 9:30 in the evening

and were met by over 1,000 people who hoped to see the soldiers. But to the disappointment of the townspeople, the men had already retired for the night, and did not march to Chanute until the following morning. The arrival of the two squadrons brought the complement of men at the field to nearly 1,000, the number for which the field had been built. Three weeks later, on 12 September 1917, Chanute's first 24 graduates left for the larger "aerial concentration camp" at San Antonio, Kelly Field, to complete their training. These men were the first cadets from the University of Illinois. Among them was Reed G. Landis, who later became an ace, downing nine enemy airplanes and one balloon. On 7 October 1917, Chanute received orders from the War Department ordering the 10th and the 16th Aero Squadrons to be ready to leave within 48 hours for Ft. Wood at Mineola, New York. The men, anxious to be off to fight the Hun, cheered the news. Chanute had expected to retain the squadrons through the winter, and had given them permanent assignments in camp. The news of a student departure required a certain amount of shuffling of personnel. All the field's best truck drivers and motorcycle riders were included in the order and several such men from the 38th and 39th squadrons were transferred to the 10th and 16th. These two squadrons were to become part of the 3rd Provisional Aero Squadron once they arrived in France.

The field hastened to ready the squadrons for a rapid departure. All members were forbidden to leave Rantoul, but it was an exercise in futility. The railroad companies did not have enough cars available to move the soldiers. The men waited for nearly a month. The bedding had been turned into the quartermaster, and the only bedding the men had was the blankets carried in their knapsacks. They slept on the bed springs of their old barracks. After five delays, the squadrons finally left early in the morning of 2 November 1917. Captain "Pop" Hinds was in charge of both companies. The squadrons went to Garden City, New York, rather than the expected Mineola destination to await transportation to Europe. The departure of the two squadrons cut Chanute's complement of men nearly in half. Only the 38th and 39th squadrons, two reservist squadrons and the medical corps in charge of the field hospital, less than 400 men, remained on the field. But even then three new squadrons were expected from Texas.

As winter approached, it became uncertain whether the field could be kept open. Colonel Jones traveled to Washington DC in early November 1917 to attend a special meeting of commanding officers of 15 aviation fields. He returned in mid-month with the news that the field would remain open, but flying would be suspended on 15 December. Actually bad weather prevented flying after 7 December and on the 13th the 39th Aero Squadron left for Rich Field at Waco, Texas, to continue flying training there. Later in the month, the field sent 20 Standard planes and 15 Hall-Scott motors to Wichita Falls and 39 Curtiss planes to Kelly Field. Only a few planes remained at Chanute for officers' winter flying. Until the 152nd, 153rd, 173rd, and 174th Aero Squadrons arrived from Kelly at Christmas time, the departure of the 39th left only the 38th squadron to man the field. In time, the 38th became the headquarters squadron with the nickname of "Home Guards."

Within three months after the opening of Chanute Field, trained squadrons, of about 150 men each, were transferred to depots in the East for overseas assignments. The 10th and 16th Aero Squadrons were the first to leave, followed closely by the 39th. The first two squadrons were

shipped overseas; the 39th was sent to Waco, Texas. In December, the 152d, 153d, 173d, and 174th Squadrons reported from Kelly Field, Texas, to fill vacancies in shops, hangars, and classrooms; the 210th Squadron was organized at Chanute Field from local recruits. Classes were conducted daily in every branch of aviation related to the maintenance and repair of airplanes, including specialized training for mechanics, carpenters, riggers, and hangar men.

Constituted in the Regular Army on 6 February 1923 as the 39th School Squadron and assigned to the 14th School Group. Designated Active Associate was the 40th School Squadron 1923-27. Allotted to the Eight Corps Area on 28 February 1927. Activated on 1 August 1927 at Kelly Field, TX, relieved from assignment to the 14th School Group and assigned to the 10th School Group. Relieved from assignment to the 10th School Group on 16 July 1931 and attached to the Air Corps Advanced Flying School. Consolidated in 1933 with the 39th Aero Squadron (a WWI unit organized in July 1917 at Kelly Field, TX; demobilized on 19 November 1918 at Rich Field, TX; reconstituted in 1933). Redesignated as the 39th Observation Squadron on 1 March 1935. Inactivated on 1 September 1936 at Kelly Field, TX, and allotted to the Eighth Corps Area. Organized on 25 November 1936 with Organized Reserve personnel as a RAI unit with headquarters at Fort Worth, TX.

Subordinate flights concurrently organized as: Flight A at Houston, TX; Flight B at El Paso, TX; Flight C at Raton, NM. Activated on 1 February 1940, less Reserve personnel, at France Field, CZ, and assigned to the Panama Canal Department. Further assigned to the Panama Canal Air Force 20 November 1940.

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources
Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.