

261st AERO SQUADRON

MISSION

LINEAGE

261st Aero Squadron organized, Feb 1918
Demobilized, Dec 1918

STATIONS

Scott Field, IL
Garden City, NY, Mar 1918
Babylon, NY, Jun 1918
Garden City, NY, Jul 1918
Port of Embarkation, Boston, MA, Jul 1918
AEF, Jul 1918
Shotwick, Waddington, England
Garden City, NY

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

261st AERO SQUADRON. 262nd AERO SQUADRON 263rd AERO SQUADRON With the morning of February 7, came 450 recruits from Camp Grant, Illinois, who later formed the personnel of these three squadrons. No quarters being available to house the entire complement, the 262nd, in command of 1st Lieut. Walter A. Lorah, were placed in Hangar No. 10. Coming from an Infantry training camp, they showed the effect of disciplinary drill and were quite a contrast to the other squadrons. The members of the 261st, in command of 2nd Lieut. B. R. Kuss, were the first of the three to be enrolled in the Mechanics' Training School. Having received the necessary training, they were organized on a service basis and ordered out in March. The 262nd and 263rd, the latter in command of 1st Lieut. Wendell H. Kindred, maintained the flying field up to the time of their departure for England early in July.

The Unit Construction Company of St. Louis, the contractor for Scott Field, commenced work on the new two-squadron camp on June 27, 1917. As many as 3,000 workmen were employed at one time to push the construction of buildings and the clearing and leveling of the landing field. Within two months, 52 buildings, including quarters for students, officers, instructors, mechanics, and enlisted personnel, six large hangars, machine shops, offices, and mess halls were awaiting occupation by troops en route from Texas. Although the work was not completed until September 1, the date on which the War Department officially accepted the field, the 11th and 21st Aero Squadrons moved into the new barracks and quarters on August 12, and training commenced as of that date. Major J. W. Kurd assumed temporary command of Scott Field.

Other types of instruction developed apace with the flight-training program. Month after month aero squadrons received instruction and practical training in the various jobs related to the actual operations of a combat flying squadron. The 11th and 21st Aero Squadrons left the field before the end of 1917; the 86th departed in mid-February, followed by the 85th, 154th, and 222d, while the 155th, 261st, and 262d, and 263d remained until March. Eight squadrons served overseas, four in France, after advanced training with the Royal Flying Corps in England. Other squadrons were training in England at the close of hostilities. Several squadrons were transferred to camps in the United States.

Air Force Lineage and Honors
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Sources
Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.