

78th BALLOON COMPANY

MISSION

LINEAGE

78th Balloon Company
Organized Sep 1918
Demobilized Jun 1919

STATIONS

Camp John Wise, TX
Brooks Field, TX, May 1919

Camp John Wise, TX
Camp Travis CA, 20 Dec 1918
Brooks Field, TX

ASSIGNMENTS

WEAPON SYSTEMS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The 78th Balloon Company was organized September 17th, 1918, per pp. 1, S. O. 172, Hq. Camp John Wise, Texas, 2nd Lieut. C. N. Conzett, A. S., A., being assigned to command. The Company was established in tents in the second street from Headquarters Building. The membership of the command was added to gradually until its quota of 196 men was reached. Second Lieut. Larkin A. O'Neill, A. S., A., was attached on October 5th, 1918, and assigned to the duty of Maneuvering Officer, and 2nd Lieut. John W. Spencer Jr., A. S. A., was attached October 17th, 1918, and assigned to the duties of Supply Officer. The Company was organized as an Overseas Company, as it was desired to send it Overseas with a strength of 200 enlisted men.

On or about October 28th 1918, this Company took over the operation of a balloon at Field No. 3, Camp John Wise, being its first duties along these lines.

On November 1st, 1918, the organization was moved to Field No. 4, about three quarters of a mile from Camp John Wise, where it pitched camp, maneuvering a balloon from Camp John Wise to its bed at Field No. 4. At this camp the company underwent an exhaustive course of intensive training, fitting it for overseas duty. The camp was ideally situated and arranged and the men entered upon their hard course of training with the utmost enthusiasm. Their efforts were rewarded by the placing of the company in fit condition for the assumption of the duties to be performed overseas.

After the men had successfully completed their course of instruction, had sent their excess baggage home and completed all necessary preparations for their move to a point of embarkation, and a day or two before the receipt of orders to entrain, the armistice was signed and the men were doomed to wear silver instead of gold chevrons.

Notwithstanding the great disappointment, the men continued to work with a will, determined to keep the organization one of the best in camp. Too much cannot be said for the wonderful spirit shown by the men at all times, and for the high class of men in this command, as was reflected in the splendid record of every department, and a clean sheet showing no courts martial, no desertions and no A. W. O. L

On November 27th, 1918, the company moved back to the Recruit Lines, Camp John Wise, where it remained until December 16, 1918, on which date it was moved to Camp Travis, Texas, becoming a part of the Provisional Wing, which was under the command of Major H. Rogers, A. S., M. A. At Camp Travis the company operated a balloon and took an important part in the field maneuvers of the 18th Division, the excellent showing made being clearly and unmistakably evidenced in a letter of commendation and gratification from General Estes, Commanding General, Southern Department, to Lieutenant Colonel D. H. Bowers, Commanding Officer of Camp John Wise.

On January 23, 1919, the company returned to Camp John Wise, its duties being performed at Camp Trivas, and moved into barracks.

While at Camp Travis, the following named officers were attached to the command: Second Lieutenant Blodgett, A. S., A.; 2nd Lieutenant Harding, A. S., A.; 2nd Lieutenant Guerin, A. S. A.

This company was chosen as one of the four companies to retain its organization and its full quota of men.

On February 5th, 1919, Captain Elmo L. Davison, A. S. M. A., was assigned to the command of this company, vice 2nd Lieut. C. N. Conzett, relieved.

The company continues to be full of enthusiasm notwithstanding the fact that the war is over and during the trying times of demobilization, and is determined to keep up its splendid record and be first in all things.

The following is the present personnel of the officers of the organization: Captain Elmo L. Davison, A. S. M. S., Company Commander, 2nd Lieut. Larkin A. O'Neill, A. S. A., Executive Officer; 2nd Lieut. W. D. Washburn, A. S. A., Company Adjutant; 2nd Lieut. S. V. Guerrin, A. S. A., Company Supply Officer; 2nd Lieut. John W. Houghervant, A. S. A., Officer in Charge of Instruction.

Air Force Order of Battle

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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.