

268th AERO SQUADRON

LINEAGE

Organized Jan 1918

Demobilized Dec 1918

STATIONS

Chanute Field, IL, Jan 1918-17 Jun 1918

Garden City, NY, Jun 1918

Commack Field, NY, Jun 1918

Garden City, NY, Jul 1918

Port of Embarkation, Boston, MA, Jul 1918

AEF, Jul 1918

Garden City, NY

ASSIGNMENTS

WEAPON SYSTEMS

ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT SERIAL NUMBERS

ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT TAIL/BASE CODES

UNIT COLORS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

268th Aero Squadron

Type: Service (Pursuit)

Service Period: July 31 to November 1918

Locations: Unknown

Between December 15 and April 1, flying ceased at Chanute Field, and all instructors and students were transferred to southern camps to continue training during the winter months. Instruction of ground crews and administrative personnel from various aero squadrons continued as before. The training planes, though unused, were serviced and maintained by student mechanics, riggers, and electricians just as they had been during the busy flying season. Early in January, the 153d and 210th Aero Squadrons received orders to prepare for overseas shipment, and two more squadrons left the Kelly Field depot to train at Rantoul. Before the end of that month, all but the 38th, the headquarters squadron, were alerted for shipment. In spite of the steady drain of units and personnel, the number of men at the field did not fall below 500. After the 83d, 268th, and 269th Aero Squadrons were organized in February and were followed to Chanute by the 831st and 832d Squadrons, the field reached its capacity of 1,500 men. In mid-March, the 83d Squadron, composed mostly of local recruits, reported to Langley Field, Virginia, to serve as school squadron; a new unit, the 203d Squadron, was recruited and organized to fill the vacancy. During the wartime program, 19 squadrons received training at the field; of this number, 12 served overseas, 10 in Europe.

The two squadrons finally left Rantoul on 10 February 1918, a full six weeks after having been ordered to be ready at a moment's notice. Two days later the 173rd and 174th squadrons also left for Garden City. Immediately after their departure, Chanute began recruitment for three new squadrons designated the 83rd, 267th, and the 268th Aero Squadrons. In mid-February 1918, 175 men came from Camp Custer, Michigan, and were divided between the 267th and the 268th. On 26 February, 150 men arrived from Jefferson Barracks, St. Louis, Missouri, to augment the 83rd. On the same day the 831st and the 832nd Aero Squadrons arrived from Kelly Field bringing the total number of squadrons at Chanute to six. The new squadrons prompted a flurry of activity as the field prepared for a resumption of flying training. Nearly 1,500 men were crowded into barracks built to house 1,000 men. A new wing was built on the hospital, and Chanute's first five nurses arrived on 9 March 1918. "Daily sick call . . . increased noticeably." The nurses arrived just in time to help prepare the 83rd, the 831st, and the 832nd for departure. Those going to France were given a series of six shots and had their teeth examined. Any teeth thought possible of giving any trouble in France were pulled. The camp dentist in March was pulling 25 to 50 teeth per day. The 83rd Aero Squadron left on 23 March 1918 for Langley Field, Hampton, Virginia, and the 831st and 832nd left the following day for Hempstead and Garden City, New York, respectively. While these three squadrons prepared to leave, Chanute began to organize its fifth new squadron. Designated the 203rd, it was to be a school squadron composed largely of

mechanics. On 19 March, it was augmented by 15 men from the Marmon Auto School in Indianapolis, Indiana. Three Rantoul ladies organized the mess for the new squadron.

Air Force Order of Battle

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Sources

AFHRA