

# **VI CORPS OBSERVATION GROUP**

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This is a tale about the field at Saizerais and its merry mud-larks, the 6th Corps Observation Group.

G. H. Q. learned of a small drome that the English and French had been bombed out of and was subsequently condemned by them. So, with its customary alertness and solicitude for its Air Service it grabbed this one for the "Eyes of the Army" and gave us a home, Oct. 23, 1918, in a soft slough of mud. The 8th Aero Squadron's C.O. kindly consented to become an inhabitant thereof and his squadron came up on the 24th, in compliance with authority contained in Par. so and so, et cetera. The 354th also came, arriving from Autreville on the 25th with an adjutant 'n everything.

Then the work began. Pictures seemed to be the chief hobby of the General and we immediately set

out to satisfy what proved to be an insatiable aesthetic sense on the his part. We got the railroad from Pont-a-Mousson to Noveant because he expected to arrive there in a week or two; then we covered ground generally trying to pick out a good town for his billet, etc. We're sure he's got a good collection of our sector from Pont-a-Mousson to Eply. Then there was America's famous "Black Watch", the 92nd Division, which needed daily care. The General was never sure of them; so we had to do daily "contacts" to see that they were still there in the morning and stayed through the day. One time they put over a push—tres petite. We got them advancing through woods and played the part of ministering angel to them, but they came home that night and left there "no moah".

"Archie" had a terrible cold whenever we went over and flaming-onions and M. G. fire were there with Richthofen's Circus but we came thru with but 2 crews being lost and they came out of Germany soon after the Armistice. "Priceless" weather maliciously interfered at sundry times much to our regret.

The world's day of days, Nov. 11, found us all up at 11:01 doing reconnaissance. The General received one dropped message which tersely depicted the true state of affairs as far as the air was concerned, comme ca, "All serene. Nothing but Liberties above and cows below". That night we somehow had slight inclinations toward libations and entered upon a somewhat prolonged state of ethereal mellowness at Nancy by effecting a successful liaison with vin rouge et blanc. We returned to the mud with our heads in vrilles and spirals.

Then we were rudely awakened from our dreams by the bane of this man's army, to-wit, that school bell rang again. We found ourselves learning to keep the fingers "extended and joined" and to "hold that pivot" Imagine the reception this got with a lot of those brains of the army—those temperamental creatures known as pilots! But we weathered through and saw the purpose of Squads East and West for when we pulled off three reviews for four of our number who were decorated for work nobly done. Two got the Croix de Guerre (with a kiss) and two others the D. S. C.

Let it be known that the head school master at G. H. Q. finally succumbed to wisdom when he sent some Infantry and Artillery Officers to us to "learn a few things about the air". We didn't mind ragging them in school about a few "Hun" planes they shot at, their nullo wireless out-fits, the mythical liaison within their units and a few other pertinent lacks of theirs. Then too our pilots joy-rode a few of the higher-ups and if they didn't get anything out of it we know the Air Service did.

It is rather a bad job to tell a man his shortcomings when your only means of communication with him is an aerial wireless outfit, but when you can get the same man right across the table, all the accumulated thoughts break loose. So when, for once, we had 'em right at hand instead of ten or fifteen thousand feet below us, we made the best of our grand and glorious opportunity.

We continued to live with the mud hoping the guerre would soon be fini. Feb. 8th, the 8th Squadron got orders for home and started on it's circumvent passage Feb. 13. At this writing it is basking in the Atlantic sunlight while its personnel are undoubtedly playing poker with 2-bit pieces and Jewish flags. The 354th is to be in the 2nd Army Observation Group but has been at Saizerais two weeks, due to mud. Our Major is now comfortably ensconced in the C.O.s chair of the Toul Airdrome.

So ends the history of the 6th Corps Observation Group.

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Air Force Order of Battle

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Sources

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

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