

DEPOT, LITTLE ROCK, AR

LINEAGE

STATIONS

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

When World War I came to a close with the signing of the armistice on November 11, 1918, the Army Air Service was operating a number of supply depots in the continental United States. These depots were located at Americus, Georgia; Buffalo, New York; Detroit, Michigan; Fairfield, Ohio; Garden City, Long Island, New York; Houston, Texas; Little Rock, Arkansas; Los Angeles, California; Middletown, Pennsylvania; Morrison, Virginia; Richmond, Virginia; San Antonio, Texas; Sacramento, California; San Francisco, California; and Washington, D.C. The depots, with a complement of about a dozen officers and a few hundred enlisted men, received, stored, and issued all supplies and equipment to the airfields in the United States. Three aviation repair depots were responsible for the repair and maintenance of aircraft. These depots were at Dallas, Texas; Indianapolis, Indiana; and Montgomery, Alabama. The Air Service also operated an experimental

laboratory at McCook Field, Dayton, Ohio, and one at Langley Field, Virginia. At first, the laboratory at McCook Field was called the Airplane Engineering Division and, later, just the Engineering Division. Both laboratories reported directly to the Chief of the Air Service.

The Air Service consolidated its repair activities at three locations-Fairfield; San Antonio; and Rockwell Field, North Island, San Diego, California--in 1920 and 1921. In 1920, it transferred the repair facilities at Indianapolis to the depot at Fairfield, erected new repair facilities at Rockwell Field, and moved the supply depot at Los Angeles to Rockwell. It transferred the repair facilities at Dallas to San Antonio in the spring of 1921. Middletown did not become both a repair and supply depot until 1925.

In January 1921, the depots at San Antonio, Middletown, Rockwell Field, Fairfield, Little Rock, Richmond, Montgomery, and Americus became air intermediate depots. Seven months later, in July, the Air Service transferred control of the depot system from Washington, D.C., to Wilbur Wright Field, Ohio, and established a new organization consisting of six military and 55 civilian employees to supervise all supply and maintenance activities at the depots. This new organization was called the Property Maintenance and Cost Compilation Section and its first chief was Captain Elmer E. Adler.

The Air Service made a number of changes in its depot structure between 1921 and 1923. During this period, it established a depot at Scott Field, Illinois, and deactivated the depots at Richmond, Montgomery, and Americus. The depot at Scott Field became the air intermediate depot for airship and balloon equipment. On January 26, 1924, the Property, Maintenance and Cost Compilation Section became the Field Service Section (FSS).

The Materiel Division began to move its headquarters from McCook to Wright Field in early 1927. Six months later, in June, the air intermediate depots were renamed air depots, a designation they were to carry until 1943, and the Air Corps established three insular, or departmental, depots. One depot was established in Hawaii, another in Panama, and the third in the Philippines. The Air Corps made a number of other important changes in the depot structure during the 1930s. The depot at Little Rock was discontinued during Fiscal Year 1930; the depot at Scott Field was discontinued in the late 1930s; and the depot at Rockwell Field was transferred from North Island, which was turned over to the Navy, to Sacramento, California, in 1938 and 1939. In addition, the Chief of the Materiel Division was moved to Washington, D.C., on October 2, 1939. The division's staff remained at Wright Field under an Assistant Chief.

It started small in 1917. Little Rock's first airport was formally known as the Little Rock Intermediate Air Depot, operated by the U.S. Army Signal Corps.

Little Rock Aviation Supply Depot

During World War I, an air supply depot was constructed at Little Rock (Pulaski County) south of 12th Street near the Little Rock airport. Construction began in 1918 of the complex of structures encompassing fifty-five acres and designed to house up to 500 officers and men. The main warehouse was planned as an exact duplicate of the warehouse at Dayton, Ohio.

The depot acted as a distribution point, with raw materials necessary for the function of an air service being gathered and sent to production facilities, while finished products were stored and the parts distributed to flying fields as needed. At one point, approximately 13,000 motors were stored there. Although the depot mainly supplied equipment to flying fields in the southwest (Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas), on at least one occasion, motors from Little Rock were sent to the repair depot at Fairfield, Ohio. It was one of only six supply depots constructed around the country.

The depot remained open for a time after Ebert's Field in Lonoke (Lonoke County) was closed. It was shut down in the early 1920s. After the eastern airfields were shut down, the depot was moved to Texas to be closer to western airfields that remained open.

Air Force Order of Battle

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Sources