JOHN GIZZIE

US ARMY 1917-1919

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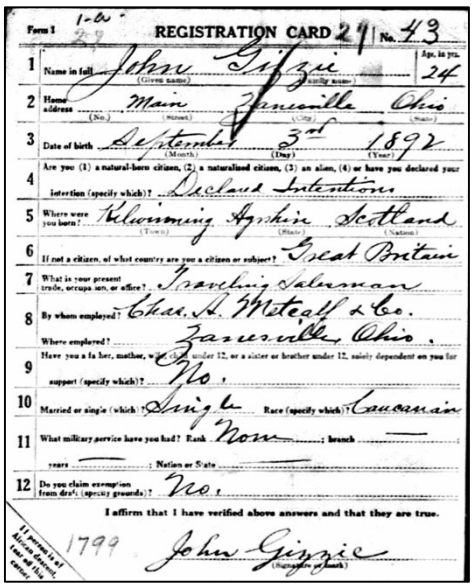
John Gizzie was born 3-SEP 1892 in Killwinning Scotland. His father was Peter Gizzie (1864-1937) and his mother was Mary Bogel Gizzie (1871-1955). John arrived from Scotland to Boston Massachusetts on the passenger liner "Murnidian" on 1-MAY 1912. He was 20. He was listed on the ship in the "Second Cabin" versus "Steerage". *Editor's note: Cabin class passengers were usually accommodated below the "poop deck", while steerage passengers were berthed below the main deck. Steerage passengers were further separated into single men, married couples, and children, while single women were strictly segregated from all other passengers.* John and the family settled in Zanesville, Ohio.



Form 1 REGISTRATION CARD 29 No. 43

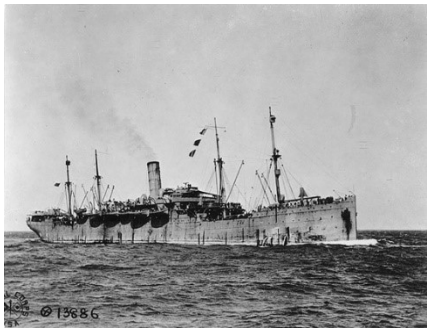
1 Name in full: John Gizzie (Given name / Family name) — Age in yrs.: 24
2 Home address: Main (No. / Street) Zanesville (City) Ohio (State)
3 Date of birth: September (Month) 3rd (Day) 1892 (Year)
4 Are you (1) a natural-born citizen, (2) a naturalized citizen, (3) an alien, (4) or have you declared your intention (specify which)? Declared Intentions
5 Where were you born? Kilwinning (Town) Ayrshire (State) Scotland (Nation)
6 If not a citizen, of what country are you a citizen or subject? Great Britain
7 What is your present trade, occupation, or office? Traveling Salesman
8 By whom employed? Chas. A. Metcalf & Co. Where employed? Zanesville Ohio.
9 Have you a father, mother, wife, child under 12, or a sister or brother under 12, solely dependent on you for support (specify which)? No.
10 Married or single (which)? Single Race (specify which)? Caucasian
11 What military service have you had? Rank None; branch —; years —; Nation or State —
12 Do you claim exemption from draft (specify grounds)? No.

I affirm that I have verified above answers and that they are true.

1799 John Gizzie (Sign in full)

John registered for the draft on 5-JUN 1917 and later enlisted on 7-OCT 1917 while living in Columbus Ohio. He attended "Provisional Recruit training" at Kelly Field Texas until 1-NOV 1917. Kelly Field traces back its roots to 1909, the year in witch the U.S. Army decided to relocate its first flying center from Virginia to Texas. The selected location was near San Antonio, away from large structures and population centers, to minimize the chances of aircraft accidents. Kelly Field was one of thirty-two Air Service training camps established after the United States entry into World War I, established on 27-MAR 1917. It was used as a flying field; primary flying school; school for adjutants, supply officers, and engineers; mechanics school, and as an aviation general supply depot.

After his training at Kelly Field, John was assigned to Company C 3rd Balloon Squadron School at Fort Omaha in Nebraska until 31-DEC 1917. John was listed as a Corporal on 10-DEC 1917. Hot air balloons and dirigibles were considered high tech during World War I. Never had flying equipment been used so effectively in war, and the United States was playing catch up. By World War I, artillery had developed to the point where it was capable of engaging targets beyond the visual range of ground-based observers. Positioning artillery observers on balloons, generally at altitude, a few miles behind the front lines, allowed them to see targets at greater distance allowing the artillery to take advantage of its increased range.



After a period at Fort Omaha, John was assigned to 7th Balloon Company AS (Aviation Section) until 8-MAY 1919. Corporal John Gizzie left for France from New York on 18-JAN 1918 aboard troopship No. 501. John was listed as Sergeant on 1-JULY 1918.

The US Army balloon squadrons and companies were organized under the Aviation Section, US Signal Corps and served overseas with the Army Air Service before and during World War I. There were also French, British, and German balloon corps. At the start of World War I, the organization of the Air Service of the American Expeditionary Force included observation balloon units organized into companies, squadrons, and wings. Each company was equipped with one balloon. Five companies comprised a squadron, and three squadrons made up a wing. By the end of the war 110 companies had been created. The balloons were called “sausages”, “drachen”, or “observation balloons”. They played an important, though now all-but-forgotten part in World War I. It required 180 enlisted men and seven officers to keep a single 35,000-cubic-foot balloon in the air! The balloons and crew had to be mobile. Motorized equipment consisted of a balloon winch and winch-tender, seven heavy-duty trucks, three light trucks, three motorcycles with sidecars, and a personal car.

Six men trained in identification of enemy and friendly aircraft, and they surveyed the skies. There were six machine gunners, with assistants to load the guns deployed on the perimeter. Hydrogen specialists ferried the heavy compression cylinders back and forth from supply dumps and supervised inflation. A maneuvering detail handled the balloon on the ground, including the building of balloon beds with windbreaks and camouflage. Other specialists were balloon maintenance men, parachute riggers and packers, a basket detail, and an “egghead section.” The egghead section was in a trailer chartroom that kept a log during every flight and processed all observations transmitted from the basket. This section also prepared tricky maps used in the basket with allowances for distortion of perspective. John Gizzie was in the egghead section. Additionally, normal administrative detail required company clerks for payrolls and requisitions, cooks, and quartermaster troops for supplies and clothing. Each balloon outfit had to be resourceful and able to make timely repairs.

In the field, balloon companies were allotted to the ground units they supported as needed. Only 35 balloon companies made it to France with the American Expeditionary Force (AEF), of which 17 companies served at the front. The balloons were attacked 89 times; 35 burned, 12 were shot down by enemy fire and one floated into enemy lines. Unlike pilots, balloon observers had parachutes. Of all 116 parachute jumps from balloons, the parachutes, made of silk, never failed to open.

Working in pairs, the work of a balloon observer was far from glamorous as they stood in a wicker basket for hours at a time. They were in direct contact with headquarters and artillery batteries, so could direct changes in artillery fire as well as reporting on moves made by the enemy, even miles beyond the enemy line.

Attached is an abridged version of the logbook written and preserved in Sergeant John Gizzie's personal logbook. ***Editor's note: Although earnest attempts were made to verify names, cities, spelling, and terms, some errors are likely.***

Definitions:
Avion: Plane
Ballast: Material which acts as stabilizer controlling the rate of gain of rise as well as the altitude.
D.C.A: Defensive Counter Air
Drachen: German name for the balloon.
Reglage: Adjustment or regulation.
Sausages: English and French name for balloons.
Tension: The stress on the steel cable measured in kilograms (kgs).

Standard Basket Equipment:

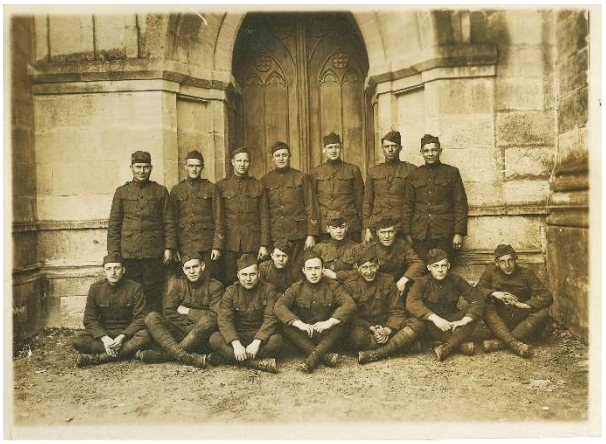
3 fur coats
3 combination suits
1 leather suit (coat and pants)
3 Jersey sweaters
4 Leather jackets
3 Pair Fur shoes
1 Anemometre (sic)
1 Barograph
1 Compass
3 Pr. Field Glasses 8 power
2 Pr. Field Glasses 12 power
1 Pr. Field Glasses 20 power
1 Thermos bottle
1 Straight edge
2 Duo decimetre (sic) Rules
1 Flashlight

Maneuvering Squad

1Telephone Wireless and Winch Details

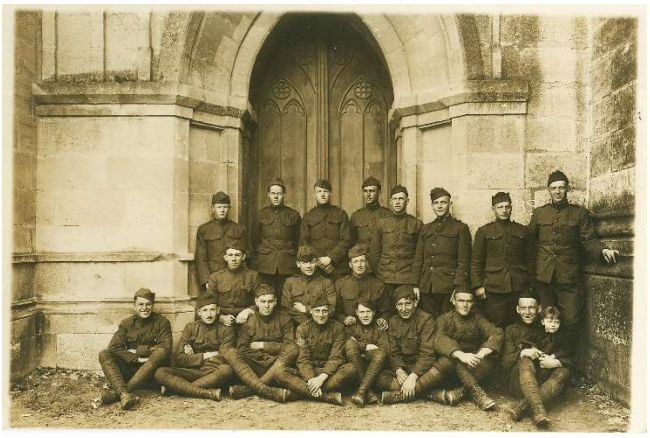
Transportation Gang

Balloon Mechanics



Cooks and KPs

Chart Room Orderly Room



Machine Gunners

Sergeant John Gizzie's Logbook.

July 25, 1918

First reported balloon ascension.

July 26, 1918

4:16 balloon ascends.

4:26 balloon descends to verify rigging.

4:30 ascends, Lt. Higgs and Lt. Carraire.

5:48 smoke of locomotive coming from Moselle towards Metz.

July 29, 1918

2:42 Balloon ascends, Lt. Bryan.

7:55 Two German planes seen approaching.

July 29, 1918

7:57 Balloon on ground and "Returned to Bed."

August 2, 1918

4:06 Balloon ascend to 500 meters. Lt. Smith and Lt. Higgs.

4:53 D.C.A reports approach of enemy plane from the west and balloon descends to 300 meters.

4:59 Balloon descends to ground. No indications of visibility improving.

5:00 Balloon returned to bed. Note: 14 patches put in rudder of balloon reported by Sgt. Bart.

August 4, 1918

3:53 Balloon ascends to 400 meters, Lt. Burt and French observer Aspt. Petit Jean.

3:59 French artillery active direction Flirey.

17:12 Balloon attacked by enemy avion. Pfalz with Rumpler tail (sic). *Editor's note: The Rumpler was a German single-engine, two-seat reconnaissance biplane.* Observer jumped with parachute from 650 meters and landed safely. Avion approached to within 400 meters and fired on balloon putting one hole in right fin but was driven off by our

machine gun and D.B.A batteries. Machine guns fired 526 rounds. The avion failed to set the balloon on fire.

17:14 Balloon on ground.

August 15, 1918

10:03 Balloon ascends, Lt. Higgs and Lt. Bair.

11:45 Balloon descends to 300 meters.

11:45 Balloon attacked by enemy avion D.C.A 167 fired six H.E. shells. D.C.A 126 fired nine. Lasting four minutes.

12:05 Balloon on ground and bed.

13:48 Balloon ascends Lt. Higgs and Lt. Bair.

13:58 Altitude 500 meters, visibility hazy. Lens 240 kgs. See only as far as 1st lines Reglage at this altitude impossible.

August 21, 1918

11:48 Balloon ascends Lt. Haight, Lt. Smith.

11:50 Descends enemy planes reported.

11:50 Balloon on ground and returned to bed.

13:40 Ascends. Lt. Haight and Lt. Higgs. Alt: 500 meters, Visibility: 18 kms for surveillance, 12 kms for reglage from balloon.

16:22 Balloon descends to 300 meters. D.C.A reports enemy avion over balloon.

17:21 Balloon attacked by enemy avion type Pfalz with rumpled tail thought to be one that attacked and burned balloon on Aug. 11. Avion fired rapidly. Both observers Capt. Arthur, C Battery, 1st Battalion 7th F.A. and Lt. Higgs jumped and landed safely. Balloon was also hauled down and on examination found to have about seventy -five holes in the fins, rudder, and diaphragm. D.C.A's and Battery 33 set up barrage and avion returned to his lines. D.C.A 126 fired 15 rounds. D.C.A. 167 fired (blank). Battery 33 fired 16 H.E. shells.

17:30 Balloon transcend with sandbags Alt. 500.

17:47 Balloon on ground and returned to bed.

September 12, 1918

6:41 Balloon ascends Lt. Burt, Smith.

6:44 Altitude: 200 meters. Tension: 550 kgs.

7:15 Vigies report that balloon #12 appears to break away from cable rising rapidly into the clouds. One parachute seen to descend. Other parachute or cable marker seems to be tangled in cable.

7:38 Visibility about 5 kms. Sun rising causes mist to rise over terrain.

17:38 Major Jovelt gives order to balloon to be hauled down if visibility shows no sign of improvement.

17:48 Balloon descends to ground.

18:55 Balloon ascends. Lt. Moore and Lt. Smith. Alt. 325. Tension 440 Kgs.

19:05 Balloon descends to 200 meters (3 enemy avions reported). Visibility poor 5 Kms from balloon. Too dark to see.

19:10 Balloon on ground.

September 14, 1918

8:52 Balloon ascends. Lts. Smith and Forlina. Alt. 300 meters, tension 400 kgs.

9:08 Balloon ascends. Alt. 550, tension 340. Visibility hazy.

9:30 Alt. 1000 meters.

9:50 Low clouds floating over sector making intermittent visibility.

10:20 Balloon descends to 600 meters on account of clouds. Tension 300 Kgs.

11:10 Shells firing Tresnes en Warve. Small caliber. Unable to locate battery.

11:15 Shells falling near balloon and Red Cross hospital. H.E. Med. Cal. Region 3470 x 5776.

11:25 Shells fall about 400 meters back of balloon. Passed balloon. Balloon being shelled.

11:30 Balloon maneuvered and communication.

September 15, 1918

6:30 Balloon ascends. Lt. Smith and Sgt. Nicholls. Alt. 860 meters, tension 160 kgs.

9:42 Descends to 200 m. Avion in vicinity.

9:50 Balloon ascends to 800 m. Tension: 160 Kgs. Enemy balloon burned in direction of Chambley 14 kms. Surveillance. Reglage impossible.

12:30 P. G McMillan. We call them and enquire if they would be interested in firing on balloon (enemy) located at 359.6 by 271.2 corner of woods. Also, if they wish any

reglage on Etain (Etain Meuse, France) or vicinity. They request us to reglage or confirm but observers unable to see it clearly. They are unable to fire on Etain or enemy balloons without orders.

12:44 20 shots fired, 17 observed, 3 lost. Train destroyed.

15:46 P. G. McMillan reports every battery in action on hill 229 near Pareid (Meuse) and enemy troops movements north of village. The ask us to observe same if possible.

17:12 Balloon in direction of Borinville burned. No observers were seen to jump.

September 16, 1918

5:45 Balloon ascends. Trail flight. Alt. 300 m. 400 kgs.

6:08 Balloon on ground.

6:09 Balloon ascends. Lt. Higgs and Lt. Burt. Alt. 500 m. Ten. 350 kgs. Heavy ground mist all over enemy territory obscuring visibility.

6:12 Two enemy balloons in ascension.

8:25 Alt. 800 meters, ten 300 kgs.

9:00 Shell passes balloon. balloon being shelled by enemy. H.E. 240 Cal. Timed percussion fuse.

9:14 Shell #2 arrives, landing same place.

9:25 Balloon descends to have valve adjusted. Order down by maneuvering officer.

9:28 Balloon ascends.

9:35 Alt. 800 m. Tension 320 Kgs.

9:37 Shell #3 passe balloon closer than the preceding two shots.

9:56 Balloon descends to 300 m.

9:57 Shell #4 lands same place as last.

10:05 Shell #5 lands near barracks.

10:13 Shell #6 lands in vicinity of camp.

10:14 Balloon alt. 750.

10:21 Shell #7 lands near camp. Vigies report that Rumpler plane with American insignia is regulating fire.

10:27 Shell #8 arrives.

10:32 Shell #9 arrives.

10:37 Shell #10 arrives.

10:45 Two enemy planes flying over region from which enemy battery is firing.

10:53 Balloon locates battery which is firing. Bois des Hayes near Marricort.

10:55 Balloon attacked. Observers ordered to jump.

10:59 Balloon on grounds safely. The enemy plane type Albatross D3 dived towards balloon from an altitude of about 2500 meters to 500 meters but our machine gun opened up and the plane was driven off returning towars own lines. He appeared to damaged. M.G.'s fired 3048 rounds. Both observers safe. Parachutes landed.

Editor's note: The Battle of the Meuse-Argonne was fought Sep 26, 1918 – Nov 11, 1918. When reviewing John's logbook beginning in early October (versus other days), there is a noticeable increase in entries and enemy activity. Much of the land that was fought over during the Meuse-Argonne campaign was located in the region of Alsace-Lorraine, which is located in northeastern modern-day France. Alsace-Lorraine borders the countries of Germany, Belgium, and Luxembourg. John and the 7th Balloon Company played an important role in Meuse-Argonne Battle that ended the war.

September 26, 1918

5:35 Balloon ascends. Lts. Burt and Smith. Alt. 750 meters. Tens. 220. Visibility general mist No visibility inclined to improve.

8:10 Mist in valley gradually dissipating but developing into a general mist.

8:15 Alt. 930 m. Tens. 220 Kgs.

8:20 Balloon descends to 800 m.

8:35 3 anti-aircraft batteries in action at 9777, 9776, 9976. Unable to regulate fire at present due to mist.

8:55 Enemy balloon is direct Samogneux.

8:58 Enemy balloon is direct Lisses.

9:02 Enemy balloon is direct in Diess sr. Meuse.

10:10 Visibility hazy 7 kms.

10:48 Visibility improving 10 kms. As line advanced about this distance, it is impossible to secure any work or regulation.

11:25 Balloon descends to lower altitude for purpose of maneuvering to advanced position. Telephone line temporarily severed.

12:00 Balloon descends to ground and reascends without observers.

12:10 Two enemy planes attack the two balloons on our left #8 and #39 both of which are burned. The French observer jumps in parachute. One observer in balloon #8 failed to jump quick enough and burning balloon drops on his parachute. The other is seen to get clear from our ground position. One of the planes is apparently brought down by A.A.A.

October 2, 1918

6:52 Balloon ascends Lt. Higgs. Alt. 500 Tens. 250. Visibility hazy. Reaches only as far as first lines. Impossible for reglage. Mist in all the valleys

7:10 Balloon descends to ground.

9:15 Balloon ascends. Lt. Moore. Alt. 500 m. Tens 280. Alt. 1000 m. Tens 220. In clouds.

9:40 Balloon ascends to 600 m. Tension 250. Visibility poor but shows signs of improving. Reaches only as far as 1st lines. Impossible for surveillance. Large cal. shells arriving. N.E. Corner of region Bois de Montfaucon m. 2466.

9:54 Balloon descends to 450 m. Enemy avion reported approaching.

9:55 Planes falling in flames in direction of Ellis Fontaine. Fell in region next of this town. Albatross D5.

10:00 Balloon ascends to 600 m. Tens. 250.

10:10 Balloon attacked. Eight Fokker approached balloon from NE. Five dived in direction of balloon to attack. One plane at which one fired and observed as he jumped and descended with parachute the others at balloon. Three planes hovered over head (sic). Balloon was hauled down safely. Planes were driven off by our machine gun fire. Bullet hole in basket. Bullet found in sandbag. Several holes in balloon.

10:15 Balloon on ground.

10:20 Balloon ascends in ballast to 400 m. Tens. 300 kgs.

10:35 Balloon on ground.

13:22 Balloon ascends Lt. Moore. Alt. 100 m. Tens. 300 kgs. Alt. 350 m. Tens. 340 kgs.

13:33 Visibility very poor. Very hazy as far as 1st lines. Nothing beyond. Alt 600 m. Tens. 220 Kgs.

13:40 Balloon on ground.

October 4, 1918

6:20 Balloon ascends. Lt. Higgs. Alt. 600 m. Tens. 200 kgs.

6:30 Visibility very poor. mist and general haze, impossible to make out first line.

6:35 Big explosion direction of Bantheville.

6:45 Much white smoke in direction of Romagne. Probably shell firing.

6:55 Visibility decreasing temporarily. Probably will improve when sun gets higher.

6:58 Aero plane signal, cluster rocket in direction of Nantillois.

7:03 Balloon descends to 200 m. Enemy avion in vicinity.

7:15 Balloon begins to ascend but enemy avion again approaches and balloon descends to 200 m.

7:16 Ten enemy planes circling above Montfaucon.

7:25 Unidentified plane fell in direction of Bois de Beuge.

7:30 Alt 600 m. Impossible to see beyond Bois de Beuge.

7:40 Balloon on ground.

13:12 Balloon ascends. Lt. Higgs. Alt 300 m. Tens 260 kgs. clouds. Visibility Poor. General haze and fog about 350 m thick. Impossible to see Montfaucon.

13:20 Alt. 600 m. Visibility Very Poor. Alt. 800 m. Tens. 200. Visibility does not improve with altitude.

13:27 Balloon is grounded and returned to bed.

October 5, 1918

7:40 Balloon ascends in ballast. Alt. 200. Tens. 200 Kgs.

7:52 Balloon on ground.

7:55 Ascends. Lt. Smith. Alt 500 m. Tens. 200 kgs.

8:02 Balloon Visibility Poor. Hazy for 6 kms. from balloon.

8:06 Balloon descends and is returned to bed.

9:07 Balloon ascends. Lt. Moore. Alt. 200 m. Balloon in the clouds. Visibility none.

9:17 Balloon on ground.

12:41 Balloon ascends. Lt. Smith. Alt 200 m. Tension 300 m. Alt. 500 m. Visibility very poor, hazy.

12:50 Balloon descends to 200 m. Tens. 380 kgs. Visibility Poor. 6 kms on right of sector.

13:00 Ammunition dump burning in region of M 2668 followed by a series of explosions. Med cal. shells on road at that point.

13:20 Enemy balloon in ascension in direction of Aincreville.

13:24 Enemy balloon in ascension direction of Gesnes.

13:30 Fire in region of m 2668 stops burning.

14:08 Balloon ascends Lt. Moore. Alt. 300 m. Tens. 300 kgs. Visibility poor.

14:17 Alt. 400 m. Tens. m. Visibility hazy as far as first lines. Balloon ascends to 500 m. But visibility does not improve because of higher mist.

14:20 Alt. 400 m. Tens. 300 m.

14:15 Med Cal shells falling m 2466.

14:21 Small Cal Shell falling m 2569.

14:22 Visibility shows no sign of improving.

14:25 Balloon on ground.

14:25 Balloon on right (6th Bal. Co.) attacked. Observer jumps. From smoke arising in that direction indications are that balloon was burned.

14:35 Alt. 200 m. Avion suspect.

14:40 Alt. 400 m. Tens 340 m.

14:44 3 large puff of smoke in region Bois de Gunel.

14:44 large puff of smoke in region Bois de Brieulles.

14:44 Many shells falling in direction in north edge of Bo de Brieulles. Unable to determine whether enemy or American.

14:48 Heavy barrage falling on road from Nantillois running east and through Bois de Brieulles.

14:50 Balloon on ground to change observer.

14:54 Balloon ascends. Lt. Higgs. Alt. 400 m. Tens. 300 kgs.

15:17 Continuous white smoke in direction of Briquenay. Appears to be a town burning.

15:46 Balloon descends. Enemy planes reported in the north.

15:56 Shells heavy cal. falling in region of North of Montfaucon.

15:58 Shells small cal. falling in Bois de Benge.

16:05 Enemy balloon ascension in direction of St. Georges.

16:08 Alt. 400 m. Tens 360 kgs.

16:08 Many shells, med. cal. falling in region of Gesnes.

16:15 Many shells, heavy cal. falling in region of Romagne.

16:20 Enemy planes approaching from N-W. Balloon descends.

18:05 Battery in action east of Bantheville (N.E. France) impossible to give exact location. Approx. location F7564.

October 6, 1918

6:44 Balloon ascends. Sgt. Nicholls observer. Alt. 500 m. Tens 420 kgs. Alt. 900 m. Tens. 420 kgs. Visibility poor. General haze. Survelliance possible for 7 kms. from balloon.

6:58 Big fire in region southwest of Brieules. Continuous white smoke in region west of Cunel.

7:00 Continuous bright light in direction of Écrainville. Altitude 1100 m. Visibility does not improve with altitude.

7:08 Balloon descends to ground.

8:30 Balloon ascends. Sgt. Nicholls. Altitude 300 m. Tens. 460 kgs.

8:35 Enemy balloon in ascension in direction of Bantheville (NE France).

8:42 Balloon on ground.

8:45 Balloon ascends. Alt 500 m. Tens. 420 kgs.

8:48 Enemy balloon in ascension direction Brieulles sur Meuse.

8:53 Balloon descends to 300 m. 10 Fokkers reported in the North.

9:33 Fourth balloon on right apparently attacked. An observer is seen to jump.

9:50 Fire, probably ammunition dump in region SW Brieulles burning vigorously.

10:15 Balloon descends to 350 m. Enemy plane.

10:22 Loco smoke NE Buzancy-Harricourt in the direction of Buzancy (Ardennes).

10:45 Observer in fourth balloon east of us, jumped again.

11:54 Balloon (enemy) in direction of Bois de Baulny.

12:00 Cierges (France) being heavily shelled. Also shelling Montfaucon.

12:31 Balloon on ground.

12:52 Balloon ascends.

12:57 Alt. 500 m.

13:00 Alt. 200 m.

13:05 Alt 600 m. 400 kgs. tension. Visibility hazy. Reglage possible for 9 kilo surveillance for 11 kilo.

13:12 Shells falling on road from Montfaucon (France) to Mantelleone (France) also Bois de Bouge (France) – med. caliber.

13:21 Heavy rain approaching from west.

13:27 Many shells falling in Bo des Ogons (sic).

13:38 Rain obscures visibility.

13: 53 Shells, med cal. falling on south edge of Bois Emont.

14:09 Small cal. shells falling on Cierges.

14:45 Single white star rocket in direction Gernes.

14:50 Small caliber shells falling in Loury France.

14:57 Med. Cal. shells falling in Bois de Beuge.

14:59 Balloon descends to 200 m.

15:03 Alt. 450 m. Tens. 400 m.

15:12 Many shells med. and small cal. falling in region south of Bois de Cunel to Bois de Beuge France.

15:27 Fire in region of S.W. Brieulles (sur Meuse) still burning. Alt. 450 m. Tens. 400 kgs.

15:40 Volume of smoke rising in the region of Cunel.

16:04 Observer third balloon east of us jumps.

16:05 Balloon descends to 400 m. enemy avion sighted.

16:10 Alt. 500 m.

16:15 Smoke from fire in direction of Hericourt.

16:24 Nantillois (France) and region north being shelled.

16:24 Bois de Fays, Bois de Cunel, Bois de Beuge undergoing heavy shelling.

16:27 series of single white star rockets in region of Bois De Fays.

16:35 Visibility diminished practically none.

16:48 Balloon on ground.

October 7, 1918

12:52 Balloon ascends in ballast. Alt. 200 m. Tens. 300 to 500.

Alt 300 m. Tens 300 to 500.

Alt 500 m. Tens 400 to 500.

Alt. 700 m. Tens 300 to 600 m.

Alt. 800 m. Tens 300 to 400 m.

13:10 Balloon on ground.

13:15 Balloon ascends. lt. Higgs. Alt. 750 m. Tens. 420.

13:23 Visibility fair 13 kms. General Haze and getting worse. Storms seems to be approaching from N. and N.W.

13:45 Alt. 1000 m. Tens 350 kgs. In the clouds. Necessary to descend on account of clouds. Alt. 560 m. Tens 280 m.

13:57 Many shells falling on Cunel.

13:58 Med. Cal. Shells falling in wood at F7062.

14:08 Hear large cal. shells falling in Cunel.

14:30 Two small cal. shells falling F9500 Bois de Beuge.

14:35 Visibility rapidly diminishing. Heavy rain in S. W.

14:40 Balloon descends to 400 m. Tens. 440 kgs. Visibility 4 kms. from balloon.

15:00 Enemy balloon ascension direction of Romonville.

15:05 Clouds closing in. Rain in S.W.

15:10 Alt. 300 m. Balloon descends out of storm. Visibility nil.

15:15 Balloon descends to ground. No visibility and rainy.

October 9, 1918

6:25 Balloon ascends in ballast. Alt. 200. Tens. 380 kgs. Balloon lost in thick fog. No visibility.

6:35 Balloon on ground.

12:25 Balloon ascends. Sgt. Nicholls – observer. Alt. 200 m. Tens. 320 kgs.

12:25 Visibility practically none. Balloon on level of clouds. Alt. 400 m. Tens. 360 kgs.

13:15 Balloon on ground.

16:10 Balloon ascends. Lt. Reeves. Sgt. Nicholls. Alt. 200 m. Tens. 250. Visibility poor. Hazy. 9 kms. for Survellience.

16:30 Balloon attacked and burned while ascending to 1000 m. Alt 700 m. when attacked. Observers jumped at 400 m. and the enemy shot at them, but they landed safely. The type of plane was Fokker D-7.

October 10, 1918

Our balloon having been burned on Oct 9 thus there were no ascensions that day. A detail of men went to Eppicourt France for new balloon. Company moves from 310.8 to 2739 southwest of Ivory. Balloon partly inflated the night of Oct. 10th.

October 11, 1918

No ascensions. Balloon fully inflated-visibility nil. At about 23:00 o'clock our position was shelled fragment shells injuring le Larg (sic) Steele and Priv. Bunk. M.S.E Gillespie was gassed. These men were removed to emergency hospital. Fragments of shells also pierced balloon deflating it to about one third its capacity. A truck sent to Eppicourt for hydrogen tubes.

October 14, 1918

14:10 Balloon ascends in ballast. Test trip. Alt. 250 kgs. Tens. 200 m.

14:17 Balloon on ground.

14:20 Balloon ascends. Lt. Higgs. Alt. 475 m. Tens. 180 kgs.

14:30 Visibility poor. 5 kms. from balloon. Impossible for Reglage. Clouds at 400 m. Also gassing over sector obscuring visibility.

14:38 Balloon on ground.

14:40 Balloon ascends. Lt. Higgs. Lt. Rivers. Alt. 300 m. Tens. 160 kgs.

14:55 Balloon on ground.

15:00 Balloon ascends. Lt. Higgs. Lt. Robinson. Alt. 300 m. Tens. 160 kgs.

15:05 Med. Cal. shells falling in region of L 8299.

15:07 Med. Cal. shells falling on road north of Cierges (France) in region of F 7925.

15:20 Visibility nil and shows no signs of improvement.

15:20 Balloon on ground and returned to bed.

October 18, 1918

9:10 Balloon ascends in ballast. Alt 300 m. Tens. 380 kgs.

9:20 Balloon on ground.

10:20 Balloon ascends. Lt. Higgs. Lt. Rivers.

10:30 Alt 450 m. Balloon in clouds. Clouds at same altitude all over terrain.

10:32 Alt. 375 m. Tens. 200 m. Visibility Poor. 5 kms. from balloon general haze. Impossible for reglage.

10:35 Alt. 300 m. Enemy planes in the vicinity.

10:45 Balloon descends because of poor visibility and is returned to bed.

13:48 Balloon ascends. Lt. Higgs. Lt. Quisenberry.

13:53 Ball. Alt. 300 tens 150. Medium Cal. shells falling in front of Bois Romagne. Ball Alt 450.

14:02 Shells falling in region of Le Carre Femme.

14:05 Vis good for 13 kils. for reglage. Alt. 500 m.

14:07 Much smoke in region of Landes St. George appears to be large shells falling in the region.

14:17 Enemy balloon reported in ascension in direction of Romagne almost due north of our position.

14:21 Balloon descending.

14:23 Ball at 500 tens. 200 change.

14:29 Balloon descends to attach parachute.

14:31 Balloon on grounds.

14:41 Balloon ascends. Lt. Higgs and Lt. Robinson.

14:47 Ball. Alt. 500. tens. 160.

15:18 Ball. ascends to 800 m. Tens. 90.

15:30 Reglage arranged with P.C. Nestor.

15:77 Shells falling vicinity Landes St. Georges.

15:48 Balloon coming down. Enemy avions reported.

15:58 Balloon ascending.

16:05 Ball. Alt. 800.

16:12 Med. Cal. shells falling on Le Carre France.

16:17 Med. Cal. shells falling region Cunel and Bois de Cunel.

16:25 Balloon descending.

16:27 Reglage with P.C. Nestor completed.

16:28 Ball. on ground and returned to bed.

October 19, 1918

8:33 Balloon ascends. Lieuts. (sic) Reeves, Quisenberry.

8:42 Alt. 800, Tens. 75. Visibility fair. Reglage possible at 11 Km.

9:00 Visibility improves. Possible for 13 km.

9:30 Clouds make reglage possible for only 11 Km.

9:36 Balloon down to 500 m.

9:38 Visibility diminished. Balloon hauled down. Impossible surveillance.

9:38 Balloon on ground and bed.

In the afternoon company moves from position at Loury to Gesnes. at X 306.30 y 281.60.

October 20, 1918

No ascensions on account of rainy weather and poor visibility.

October 21, 1918

12:45 Balloon ascends Lts. Quisenbury and Hammond. Alt. 300 m. Tens. 280 kgs. Visibility poor. 5 kms. for surveillance. Impossible for reglage.

12:50 Bantheville (France) being heavily shelled.

13:00 Shelling of Romague R.R. yds ceases.

13:05 Balloon on ground.

15:02 Balloon ascends. Lts. Robinson and Higgs.

15:12 Alt. 300 m. Tens. 300 kgs. Alt. 500 tens. 280.

15:20 Fires in Bantheville. and Aincreville.

15:22 Shells, med. Cal. falling in Bantheville. Visibility good. 10 kms. for reglage.

15:47 Reglage for A Bat. 121st Regt. A Bat at F 5626 on crossroad near Andevanne (France) x7.70-1.16. 4 salvos of 3 each. 12 shots total. 3 shots observed. 9 lost. Impossible to observe last three shells on account of haze.

16:10 Reglage for B Battery Ladysmill (sic) at 58.26 on building at 3.40-9.93. 12 shots fired. 12 observed. Building destroyed.

16:35 Visibility rapidly diminishing. balloon descends to 300 m.

16:40 Enemy avions in vicinity.

16:45 Balloon down and returned to bed.

October 22, 1918

14:50 Balloon ascends. Lt. Hammond, Lt. Rivers. Alt. 300 m. Tens. 220. Visibility nil. 3 kms from balloon.

14:58 Balloon ground and returned to bed.

October 23, 1918

7:03 Balloon ascends. Lt. Quisenberry and Reeves.

7:06 Alt. 300 m. Tens. 250 Visibility nil. less than 3 kms. Alt 400 m. Visibility does not improve with altitude.

7:10 Alt 300 m.

7:15 Balloon on ground.

10:35 Balloon ascends. Lt. Quisenberry and Reeves. Enemy balloon in ascension direction of Andevanne.

10:38 Alt. 300 m. Tension 420 kgs. Visibility 7 kms from balloon for reglage. Alt 800 m. 220 (Tens).

11:00 Balloon on ground. Telephone trouble.

11:05 Balloon ascends to ballast.

11:12 Balloon reascend. Telephone trouble adjusted. Alt 200 m. Enemy planes in vicinity. Enemy balloon down.

11:20 Balloon attacked. Both observers jump.

11:22 Balloon on ground.

11:35 Balloon ascends. Lt. Quisenberry, Lt. Reeves. Alt. 300 m.

12:10 Enemy balloon in direction of Andevannes (France) rear and left. Alt. 525.

12:15 Enemy Balloon in rear and right of Andevannes.

12:20 Enemy balloon in region of Dun sur Meuse (Meuse-Argonne).

12:20 Enemy balloon in direction line from B.P and through Bantheville.

12:24 Enemy balloon in direction of Dun sur Meuse (Meuse-Argonne) hauled down.

12:27 Fire in Jarvis.

12:43 Enemy planes in vicinity.

12:44 Balloon attacked and burned both observers jumped. Six Fokkers flew 1 1/2 kms N of Gesnes. One dived towards balloon to attack firing when about 300 m. away from balloon which was burned. Both observers landed safely. Baskets and contents totally destroyed. Balloon number #312.

October 24, 1918

14:41 Balloon ascends on trial trip. Alt. 300 m. Tens 380 kgs.

14:49 Balloon on ground.

14:50 Balloon ascends. Lt. Robinson, Sgt. Nicholls.

15:03 Alt 300 m. Tens. 340 kgs. Visibility 3 1/2 k. Very thick ground haze.

5:05 Balloon descends. Balloon did not ascend higher than 300 m. because it was impossible to see planes about 400 m.

5:08 Balloon on ground.

October 25, 1918

No ascensions because of poor visibility.

October 26, 1918

13:35 Balloon ascends. Capt. Reynolds, Lt. Moore. Alt. 300 m. Ten. 240 kgs.

13:42 Visibility for surveillance as far as Romagne.

15:59 Balloon on ground.

October 27, 1918

13:25 Balloon ascends. Lt. Rivers, Sgt. Nicholls. Alt. 300 m. Ten. 320 kgs.

13:35 Hazy surveillance 8 kilo. Reglage impossible.

13:43 Balloon ascends. lt. 600 m.

13:47 Surveillance 9 kilo but very hazy. Reglage impossible.

13:52 Balloon descends. Enemy avions in vicinity. Alt 200 m.

13:58 Balloon descends.

14:00 Balloon on ground. Balloon put to bed.

October 28, 1918

15:42 Balloon ascends. Lt. Higgs, Lt. Rivers. Alt. 300 m. Tens. 240. Visibility poor. 5 Kms from balloon. Impossible for reglage. Alt. 500 m. Visibility does not improve with altitude.

15:55 Balloon on ground and returned to bed.

In the course of the night 27th-28th the balloon was pierced by shell fragments and partially deflating same. In the day of the 28th balloon was again pierced by other shell fragments.

October 29, 1918

12:30 Balloon ascends. Observers Lt. Higgs and Lt. Rivers. Alt. 300 meters, Lens 280 Kgs.

Visibility Foggy, 10 kilometers for surveillance, 8 kilometers for Reglage (French for work adjustment or compensation).

13:52 two enemy planes approached balloon and one a Fokker D7 dove towards it firing when about 400 m. from balloon burning same. Both observers jumped and landed safe.

14:36 During this reglage, balloon was attacked and burned by enemy plane.

Memoirs from James Allen Higgs Jr., a "Frequent Flyer"

The 7th including James A. Higgs believed to be third from right.

James Allen Higgs Jr. was a native of Raleigh and a two-time graduate of the North Carolina College for Agriculture and Mechanic Arts (1906 and 1910). John signed up for duty at the mature age of 29, intent on going to war. James was a Lieutenant, company commander, and frequent passenger in John's balloon.

Being a 'balloon spy,' as he was often called, was a position unique to the Civil War and World War I. Every day, from sunrise to sunset, it was Higgs's assignment to crawl into a two-man basket tethered by cable to the front of a truck. Armed with binoculars, topographical maps, and a telephone, he would fly high (up to 5,000 feet) over the battlefield and report troop activity to his commanders on the ground. Usually, he was with a French or another observer who was relaying similar information to his superiors.

As if flying unprotected over the battlefield wasn't dangerous enough, the sausage-shaped gasbags were filled with highly flammable hydrogen, making them susceptible to fires started by the hot rounds coming from guns below. They were also sitting-duck targets for the biplanes that attacked from behind the clouds overhead. Four times over the course of four months, Higgs was shot down, jumping out of the basket, and praying that the parachute stuffed on the outside of the balloon basket and harnessed to his back automatically deployed after he cleared 300 feet.

In the Argonne, the 7th Company traversed some eighty miles in seven weeks from one position to another, keeping up with the infantry. Every move entailed laying and maintaining approximately twenty-five miles of telephone wire. Separate lines to divisional intelligence, and to such specialized artillery batteries as were assigned to counterbattery work, fugitive targets, and antiaircraft kept a signal section busy night and day.

James Higgs called the best day the 7th Company experienced was during the St. Mihiel offensive. "From our position at the left hinge of the salient between dawn and dusk we spotted and directed artillery fire to knock out seven enemy batteries. We also directed

fire to destroy a loaded ammunition train operating on a narrow-gauge railroad and gave continuous reports on tactical developments in the battle."

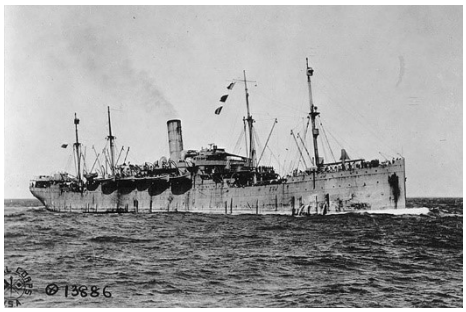
An observer's only compensation for jumping out of a falling balloon was that they were awarded 48 hours of leave in Paris to settle their nerves and get ready to go back up again. James Higgs had to jump out of the basket four times.

Armistice Day

On 11-NOV 1918, when the bells of Paris signaled the pre-arranged armistice between the warring forces. Weather did not allow the 7th to go up at the time of the ceasefire. But the next day the balloon went up to 5,000 feet with James Higgs in the basket. Observers were to confirm German forces were pulling out as promised. James Higgs recalls the war ending, "the end was an amazing thing. I had been hearing guns roaring around and under me, and sometimes, enemy shells and bombs bursting in our camp, for almost a year. At the stroke of 11, they all stopped. There were no birds or animals in the war zones to make the usual noises, and no machines moved. I found myself listening for just any sound, but there was none." The Great War, the war to end all wars, was over.

<u>John Gizzie returns home</u>

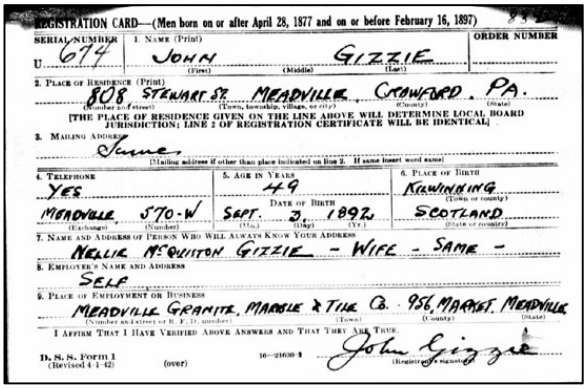
John Gizzie finished his service in 1st Company 1 Battalion 155 Depot Brigade to his Discharge Corporal 21-MAY 1919. John departed France from Bordeaux on the troopship Susquehanna for the United States on 20-APR 1919 arriving at Newport News, Virginia. He had attained the rank of sergeant. John had participated in the Battle of St Mihiel and the second Battle of the Meuse-Argonne. He was honorably discharged on 21-MAY 1919.



John married Nellie Blanche McQuiston Gizzie (1901-1981) on 19-FEB 1927. Nellie and John had four children: John McQuiston (1928–2001), William Bogie (1930–1975), Margaret Ann (1933–2007), and Robert (1943-2019). In 1930 through 1940, according to the Federal Census, the family lived at Meadville on 808 Stewart Street. By 1950, they lived at 259 on Jefferson Street. John was listed as Retail Granite Marble Tile Store owner and salesman, traveling abroad to the British Isles and Germany.

John, later registered for the mandatory “Old Man’s Draft” on 23-APR 1942 for World War II. The Old Man's Registration (sometimes called the “Old Man's Draft” or the “Fourth Registration”) was used during World War II as a way to gather data on the skills of men considered too old for active military duty but potentially useful to the war effort.

John Gizzie died 21 Jun 1958 and is buried in Greendale Cemetery in Meadville, Pennsylvania.



REGISTRATION CARD—(Men born on or after April 28, 1877 and on or before February 16, 1897)

SERIAL NUMBER U 674 — 1. NAME (Print): JOHN (First) GIZZIE (Middle) (Last) — ORDER NUMBER

2. PLACE OF RESIDENCE (Print): 808 STEWART ST. (Number or street) MEADVILLE (Town, township, village, or city) CRAWFORD (County) PA. (State)
[THE PLACE OF RESIDENCE GIVEN ON THE LINE ABOVE WILL DETERMINE LOCAL BOARD JURISDICTION; LINE 2 OF REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE WILL BE IDENTICAL]

3. MAILING ADDRESS: Same (Mailing address if other than place indicated on line 2. If same insert word same)

4. TELEPHONE: YES (Exchange) MEADVILLE (Number) 570-W
5. AGE IN YEARS: 49 — DATE OF BIRTH: (Mo.) SEPT. (Day) 2, (Yr.) 1892
6. PLACE OF BIRTH: KILWINNING (Town or county) SCOTLAND (State or country)

7. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS: NELLIE MCQUISTON GIZZIE - WIFE - SAME -

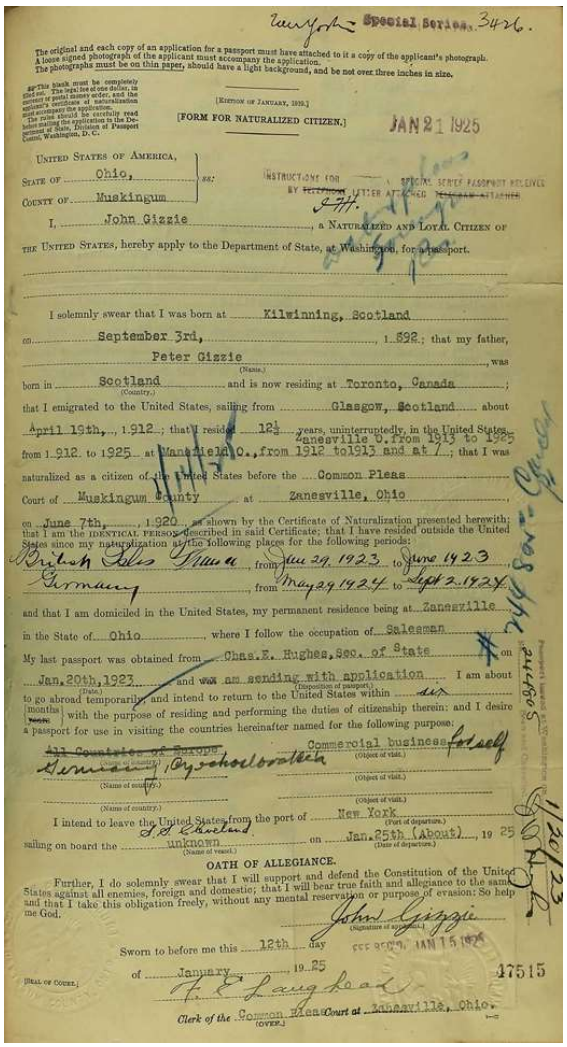
8. EMPLOYER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: SELF

9. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS: MEADVILLE GRANITE, MARBLE & TILE CO. 956 MARKET MEADVILLE (Number and street or R. F. D. number) (Town) (County) (State)

I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE.

John Gizzie (Registrant's signature)

D. S. S. Form 1 (Revised 4-1-42) (over) 16—21630-1



Special Series 3426.

The original and each copy of an application for a passport must have attached to it a copy of the applicant's photograph. A loose signed photograph of the applicant must accompany the application. The photographs must be on thin paper, should have a light background, and be not over three inches in size.

[EDITION OF JANUARY, 1919.]

[FORM FOR NATURALIZED CITIZEN.]

JAN 21 1925

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
STATE OF Ohio, } ss:
COUNTY OF Muskingum

INSTRUCTIONS FOR A SPECIAL SERIES PASSPORT RELIEVES BY LETTER ATTACHED

I, John Gizzie, a NATURALIZED AND LOYAL CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES, hereby apply to the Department of State, at Washington, for a passport.

I solemnly swear that I was born at Kilwinning, Scotland on September 3rd, 1892; that my father, Peter Gizzie (Name.), was born in Scotland (Country.) and is now residing at Toronto, Canada; that I emigrated to the United States, sailing from Glasgow, Scotland about April 19th, 1912; that I resided 12½ years, uninterruptedly, in the United States, from 1912 to 1925 at Mansfield O., Zanesville O. from 1913 to 1925 from 1912 to1913 and at /; that I was naturalized as a citizen of the United States before the Common Pleas Court of Muskingum County at Zanesville, Ohio on June 7th, 1920, as shown by the Certificate of Naturalization presented herewith; that I am the IDENTICAL PERSON described in said Certificate; that I have resided outside the United States since my naturalization at the following places for the following periods:

British Isles from Jan 29 1923 to June 14 23
Germany from May 29 1924 to Sept 3 1924

and that I am domiciled in the United States, my permanent residence being at Zanesville in the State of Ohio, where I follow the occupation of Salesman

My last passport was obtained from Chas. E. Hughes, Sec. of State on Jan. 20th, 1923 (Date.) and was am sending with application (Disposition of passport.) I am about to go abroad temporarily and intend to return to the United States within six months with the purpose of residing and performing the duties of citizenship therein: and I desire a passport for use in visiting the countries hereinafter named for the following purpose:

All Countries of Europe (Name of country.) Commercial business (Object of visit.) for self
Germany, Czechoslovakia (Name of country.) (Object of visit.)
(Name of country.) (Object of visit.)

I intend to leave the United States from the port of New York (Port of departure.) sailing on board the S S Cleveland unknown (Name of vessel.) on Jan. 25th (About) 19 25 (Date of departure.)

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE.

Further, I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion: So help me God.

John Gizzie (Signature of applicant.)

Sworn to before me this 12th day of January 19 25

[SEAL OF COURT.] F E Laughead

Clerk of the Common Pleas Court at Zanesville, Ohio.

(OVER.)

47515

More About the Balloon Service

Historically, observation balloons were filled with hydrogen. The balloons were fabric envelopes filled with hydrogen gas, the flammable nature of which led to the destruction of hundreds of balloons. Observers manning these observation balloons frequently had to use a parachute to evacuate their balloon when it came under attack. Observation balloons after World War I were often filled with non-flammable helium to avoid the potentially explosive consequences of hydrogen.

World War I observation crews were the first to use parachutes, long before they were adopted by fixed-wing aircrews. These were a primitive type. The main part was a bag suspended from the balloon, with the pilot only wearing a simple body harness around his waist, with lines from the harness attached to the main parachute in the bag. When the balloonist jumped, the main part of the parachute was pulled from the bag, with the shroud lines first, followed by the main canopy. This type of parachute was first adopted by the Germans, and then later by the British and French for their observation balloon crews. Observation balloons began to be used at sea for anti-submarine purposes towards the end of World War I.

The idiom "The balloon's going up!" as an expression for impending battle is derived from the very fact that an observation balloon's ascent likely signaled a preparatory bombardment for an offensive.

In the early days of the war, balloons were occasionally shot down by small-arms fire but generally it was difficult to shoot down a balloon with solid bullets, particularly at the distances and altitude involved. Ordinary bullets would pass relatively harmlessly through the hydrogen gas bag, merely putting a hole in the fabric. Hits on the wicker car, however, could kill the observer. It was not until special Pomeroy incendiary bullets and Buckingham flat-nosed incendiary bullets became available on the Western Front in 1917 that any consistent degree of success was achieved in shooting them down.

Battle of the Meuse-Argonne

The Battle of the Meuse-Argonne was fought Sep 26, 1918 – Nov 11, 1918. It was a major offensive and one of the attacks that brought an end to the War. The Meuse-Argonne Offensive was the largest operation of the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) in World War I, with over a million American soldiers participating. It was also the deadliest campaign in American history, resulting in over 26,000 soldiers being killed in action (KIA) and over 120,000 total casualties. The number of graves in the American military cemetery at Romagne is far larger than those in the more commonly known site at Omaha Beach in Normandy.

Battle of Saint-Mihiel

The Battle of Saint-Mihiel was a major World War I battle fought from 12–15 September 1918, involving the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) and 110,000 French troops under the command of General John J. Pershing of the United States against German positions. The U.S. Army Air Service (Balloon) played a significant role in this action.

The attack at the Saint-Mihiel salient was part of a plan by Pershing in which he hoped that the Americans would break through the German lines and capture the fortified city of Metz. It was the first large offensive launched mainly by the United States Army in World War I.