



HOOPER BAY GUARDSMEN—A contingent of Hooper Bay Eskimo Scouts, members of the Second Scout Battalion of the 297th Infantry, Alaska National Guard, is seen boarding a Wien

Consolidated F-27 in Bethel recently on the way to Camp Carroll near Anchorage to the annual encampment.

—WCA Photo by KAY KENNEDY

Eskimo Second Scout Battalion Flies to Carroll for Encampment

By KAY J. KENNEDY

"They're fine men and wonderful to work with," said Maj. Donald Shantz, commander of the Second Scout Battalion of the 297th Infantry, Alaska National Guard at Bethel.

I could believe it as I watched them—neat and proud in their uniforms with rifles and packs—quietly waiting to board a Wien

Consolidated F-27 that would take them to the annual encampment at Camp Carroll near Anchorage. Or when the time came, moving quickly, quietly and orderly aboard.

Sgt. Wassilie George, in charge of a group from Hooper Bay, taught me an easy lesson without uttering a word. I explained that I wanted to take a picture of the Guardsmen boarding.

The aircraft was on the ramp but not yet ready for boarding. He judged the situation, nodded and gave orders in Eskimo. The men went quickly to the plane and lined up as I ran to keep up and get the photos.

Sgt. George knew that there'd be no time for pictures when they really boarded—but I didn't until later when I saw them all get on the aircraft in a little more than a minute when the plane was ready.

This was just one group out of a total of approximately 700 Guardsmen from 31 villages in lower Yukon-Kuskowim area that were airlifted, primarily by Wien Consolidated Airlines, in a little more than two days.

They were flown by smaller aircraft to central pick-up points like Bethel and St. Mary's and then to larger aircraft bound for

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VETERAN SCOUTS—Three more members of the original Alaska Territorial Guard are posing at the Bethel Armory. They joined the ATG in 1940 and are now with the Alaska National Guard. Left to right: James Lott, fisherman-trapper; Peter Lott, storekeeper, both from Tuluksak; and Sgt. Carl Kawagley of Akiak.

—WCA Photo by KAY KENNEDY



PILOT-GUARDSMAN—Bill Hately, Wien Consolidated pilot out of Bethel is also a member of the Alaska National Guard. He helped to assemble some 700 Eskimo Scouts in Bethel by flying them to the central point where larger planes picked them up. When the last contingent left for Camp Carroll near Anchorage, Hately joined them for the annual encampment.

—WCA Photo by KAY KENNEDY



ORIGINAL ATG MEMBERS—Three members of the original Alaska Territorial Guard organized by Maj. M.R. Marsten are getting ready to go to Camp Carroll for the annual encampment. Left

to right: Sgt. Wassilie George, Sp/4 James Peter, and Sgt. Jacob Nelson. They are from the village of Akiachak.

—WCA Photo by KAY KENNEDY

Scout Battalion

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Elmendorf airbase.

Out of approximately 1,800 able-bodied men in this large district, one out of three belong to the Guard. Their average age is 34 years and average years of service is eight years.

They are trappers, fishermen, storekeepers. One is a cook in a BIA school. They are village councilmen or otherwise leaders in their communities where they are alert eyes and ears for the Alaska military establishment.

One, Bill Hately, is a Wien Consolidated pilot at Bethel. He ferried Guardsmen in Twin Otters and Skyvans from villages to Bethel, then donned his uniform and joined the last flight for camp.

Born in Bethel, Bill took a year of schooling at the University of Alaska, went to officer candidate school where he received a commission as an officer in the Guard, later took army flight training, received his wings and instrument rating.

Nearly 1,100 men were airlifted from northern and western Alaska to the encampment. Among them are still a few of the old original Alaska Territorial Guard members in the ranks.

The ATG was organized by Maj. M.R. (Muktuk) Marston before World War II. His book on the "Tundra Army" is being published and will be out March 25.