

BIOGRAPHY OF JEROME A. WATERMAN

Jerome A. Waterman was born on November 6, 1883 in Hawkinsville, Georgia. Two years later he moved with his family to Macon, Georgia. He graduated from Gresham High School in 1899 as Valedictorian with First Honor. He graduated from Mercer University, Macon, Georgia in 1902 with a B.S. Degree. Mr. Waterman was overage in World War I, but volunteered for service and became Priorities and Traffic Officer for Ordnance Department. He applied for Officers' Training Camp, Tank Corps and was ordered to Camp Polk, North Carolina. Armistice was signed and his orders to report were canceled. In 1922 he joined the 116th Field Artillery, 31st Division, which was being formed. He enlisted as a private and was immediately promoted to 1st Lieutenant. In 1924 he was promoted to Captain and was assigned to Aide to the Commanding General, 31st Division. From 1924 to late 1940 Mr. Waterman attended summer encampments and special assignments until the 31st Division was called out and he reported to Commanding General Persons at Birmingham, Alabama. In 1936 Mr. Waterman was instrumental in getting the Governor of Florida to set up an Aviation Division of the State Road Department. In 1938 he arranged for the Army Air Corps to hold air maneuvers in Tampa for 30 days. In 1939 he served as a member of the Tampa Citizens Committee which was successful in securing MacDill Field. In 1940 he was transferred from the Artillery to the Air Force and became Assistant Executive on the staff of Colonel Tinker's staff. Mr. Waterman worked out the details with city and county officials to secure Drew Field (now Tampa International) for use by the Air Corps. He served in various assignments at MacDill Field, Drew Field, Camp Hunter in Savannah, Georgia, Camp Homestead, Florida Air Base, and later was made Commanding Officer of the First Airport Embarkation at the 36th Street Airport, Miami, Florida for the Air Transport Command. He retired as Lt. Colonel in 1948, when he reached retirement age in the National Guard. From 1948 to his death on May 2, 1970, Mr. Waterman continued to be active in military affairs and activities. He founded the Florida West Coast Chapter of AFA (renamed in 1970 to Jerry Waterman), the first AFA chapter in Florida. He was a member of the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee, served on various military and civilian committees and councils for special programs such as Armed Forces Day, Air Force Birthday, and other causes that promote Air Force interests and objectives.

-- Reproduced from Jerry Waterman's book, "An Inspiration A Day"