



# *The United States Army*

## Camp Tyson

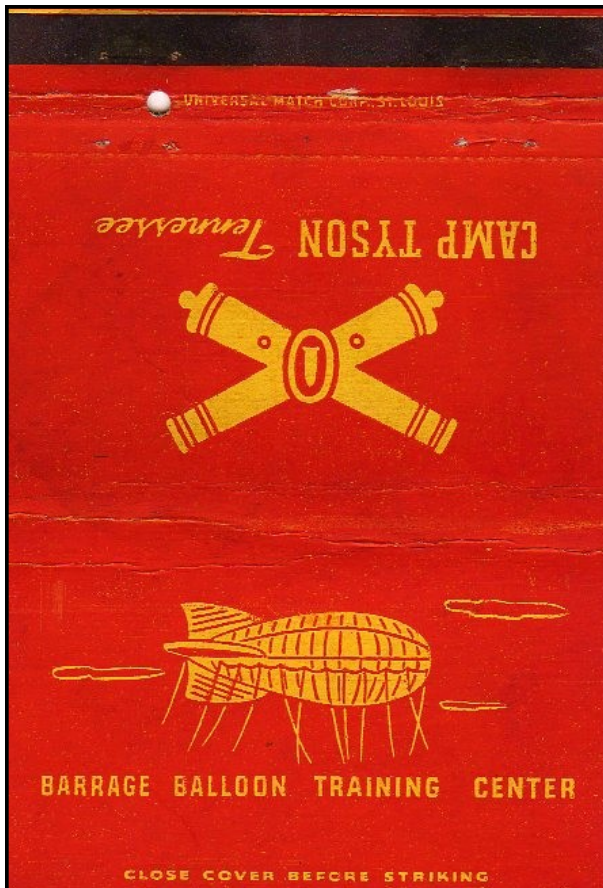
On August 15, 1941, Routon, Tennessee had been chosen as the site for the new barrage balloon training center, the only Army post of its kind in America. Construction began September 4, 1941.

### **Military Corner**

All of Henry County soon became jammed to capacity with workmen. At the peak of employment, a total of almost 8,000 persons were engaged in erecting the camp. Construction was completed, March 14, 1942. Not a single death was recorded in the construction of the camp and the loss of the arm of one worker was the only major accident that occurred on the project. Camp Tyson, Tennessee, home of the B.B.T.C., was named after Brig. General Lawrence David Tyson of Tennessee, World War I fame.

As finally developed, the cantonment area (housing, service and supply, hospital and training center facilities) utilized about 900 acres. Camp Tyson was developed primarily for the training of units of the Coast Artillery Corps assigned to activities connected with the use of barrage balloons, as an arm of defense against attack by enemy military aircraft.

The original camp provided quarters for 535 officers and 8,356 enlisted men. Total cost of the original Camp Tyson was \$11,708,640. The 75-foot flagpole on the parade ground was \$2,754.



On Friday, February 13, 1942, Company B, 302nd Battalion sent aloft the first balloon at Camp Tyson. Brig. General John B. Maynard, U. S. Army, former commander of Camp Wallace, Texas, arrived at Tyson, February 16, 1942, and assumed command.

As an arm of defense, the balloons were never successful. They had a very short life, and of no value what-so-ever. After high level bombing and the Nordon Bomb Site came into use, the balloons became obsolete. Camp Tyson then became a staging area for troops going overseas, and also as a prisoner of war camp for German prisoners captured in North Africa.

The Army Base came to an end May 1947 when it was purchased by H.C. Spinks Clay Company, a partnership company owned by R. B. Carothers, Sr., Harriett Carothers, R. B. Carothers, Jr., and Harry S. Carothers. They purchased approximately 1300 acres from War Assets. After the purchase of the property, H.C. Spinks' headquarters was moved from northern Kentucky to Spinks, Tennessee. [<http://www.spinksclay.com/aboutus/camp Tyson.html>]