

**HISTORICAL REPORT**

CML-863-HI  
15 May - 17 Aug  
1942

RETURN TO:

Director  
Research Studies Institute  
Attn: Arthur March  
Maxwell AFB, Alabama

HISTORY  
863d Chemical Co.

4-2068-3

HEADQUARTERS  
863RD CHEMICAL CO. , A.O.H.  
ETCUSA, A. P. O. 634

September 23, 1942

May 15, 1942 Unit activated at Pendleton Field, Oregon, U.S.A., without personnel.

May 20, 1942 Fifty-five enlisted men assigned to unit at Fort George Wright, Washington, U.S.A., and attached to 854th Chemical Co., Air Bombardment, Fort George Wright, Washington for administration and rations.

May 21, 1942 1st Lieutenant George A. Cornes attached to unit as Commanding Officer.

June 13, 1942 1st Lieutenant George A. Cornes assigned to unit and assumed command.

June 15, 1942 Unit left Spokane, Washington, by train at 9:00 P.M. for secret destination. Made a one-half hour stop at Pocatello, Idaho, where we had calisthenics and were given cookies by the U.S.O. on June 16, 1942.

June 17, 1942 While on the train, we had an eight hour stop at Denver, Colorado and the men were allowed to see the city in charge of an N.C.O. Even at this, one of the men left the train and later missed it.

June 18, 1942 We stopped at numerous small towns and finally arrived at our destination, Alamogordo, New Mexico at 7:45 P.M. Drew our food supplies and started off once again for another secret destination at 11:15 P.M.

June 19, 1942 Stopped today at Tucumcari, New Mexico; Amarillo, Texas; and Sayre, Oklahoma; for a few minutes at each stop.

June 20, 1942 Today we stopped at Bloomville, Arkansas; Little Rock, Arkansas; and Memphis, Tennessee.

June 21, 1942 Today we stopped at Atlanta, Georgia and later Augusta, Georgia.

June 22, 1942 Stopped at Rocky Mountain, North Carolina.

June 23, 1942 Arrived destination Richmond Army Air Base, Virginia, at 4:00 P.M.

June 30, 1942 The 119th Cml. Ptn. Adm and the 516th Cml. Ptn. A.F.S.C. attached to this unit for rations.

July 18, 1942 Fifty more enlisted men and two more officers assigned to unit.

July 19, 1942 Left Richmond at 8:30 P.M. for Fort Dix, N.J.

4-2068-3

DIARY OF UNIT SINCE ACTIVATION (CONT'D)

July 19, 1942 Arrived Fort Dix, N.J. at 9:50 A.M.

July 20, 1942 Eighteen enlisted men assigned to unit.

July 21, 1942 Two men assigned to unit. Seventy-two enlisted men of the 18th Weather Squadron attached for rations only.

July 22, 1942 Official designation of unit changed from present to that of 863rd Chemical Co., Air Operations, Heavy. Six more Enlisted men assigned to unit.

July 25, 1942 Two enlisted men transferred due to citizenship irregularities.

July 31, 1942 Two enlisted men assigned to unit.

August 4, 1942 Two men transferred from unit in preparation for foreign duty assignment.

August 6, 1942 Left U. S. proper on board ship for foreign duty at 5:30 A.M.

August 17, 1942 Arrived United Kingdom at 10:00 P.M.

*Geo. A. Cornes* (MCO)  
GEORGE A. CORNES  
Capt., 863rd Gnl. Co., A.O.H.  
Commanding

TO BE RETURNED  
TO THE ARCHIVES  
OF THE AAF  
HISTORICAL OFFICE

File No.

241  
CML-863-H1  
15 MAY 42 - OCT - 44

863<sup>RD</sup> Chemical Co.  
Activation (15 May 1942) thru Oct. 1944

MICROFILMED

6095-15



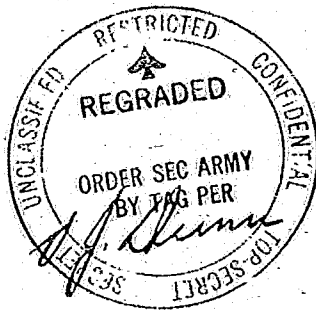
History

863rd Chemical Co

May 45

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TO BE RETURNED  
TO THE ARCHIVES  
OF THE AAF  
HISTORICAL OFFICE

File No.  
950  
-2863-1  
cop 1

EIGHTH AIR FORCE

FIRST BOMBARDMENT DIVISION

FIRST COMBAT BOMB WING

91ST BOMBARDMENT GROUP

863rd Chemical Co AO

Activation (15 May 1942) thru October 1944

SECRET

HISTORY OF 863rd CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (H)

SECRET
AUTH. CONTROL
Date <i>22 Dec 44</i>
Initials <i>JMS</i>

MAY- 1942 ---

The history of the "863rd" began with the activation on 15 May, 1942 of the 863rd Chemical Co., Air Bombardment per authority of G.O. # 62, HQ., Second A.F., Ft. George Wright, Washington. Station of activation was Pendleton Field, Pendleton, Oregon. Temporary station was Ft. George Wright, Washington. Designated Source Unit was 861st Chemical Co., A.B. T/O authorized was # 3-457, dated 28 February, 1942 which authorized 2 Officers and 55 Enlisted Men. Personnel was assigned on 19 May, 1942 by S.O. # 36, HQ., FT. George Wright. Source of personnel was as follows: 1 Enlisted Man from 119th Chemical Platoon Airdrome, 4 Enlisted Men from 861st Chemical Co., Air Bomb., 50 Enlisted Men from Air Force Chemical Training Center, 4th Chemical Co., Service Avn. First M.R. was on 20 May, 1942; no officers were present. The Company was still under the guidance of the 4th Chemical Co. Roster of the "Originals" was as follows:

- T/Sgt. Theodore Yankowski from 119th
- Cpl. Floyd Sloat from 861st
- T/5. Philip J. Lamonia from 861st
- Pvt. Dean D. Richards from 861st
- Pvt. Everett J. Murphy from 861st

From 4th Chemical Co., Service Avn the following 50 Privates:

- |                      |                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Robert D. Lawyer     | Oscar M. Swanson        |
| Roy C. Hiner         | Lucio Reynoso           |
| Harold A. Rothberg   | Benito Mirabal          |
| Michael F. O'Brien   | Elmer W. Jeschke        |
| James G. Spinetta    | Arro H. Cambi           |
| Herbert L. Marschark | Harold E. Yenny         |
| Vincent S. Engo      | Manfred P. Palombo      |
| Hyman Niedlich       | Leo Hasson              |
| Nicomedes L. Sanchez | John J. VanWycken       |
| Carl W. Clodius      | Keith Nosworthy         |
| Jess Sproul          | H. Dale Antles          |
| Richard G. Sharwood  | Robert J. Hatstrup      |
| Monroe J. Hotaling   | Grant F. Kenner         |
| George R. Wheeler    | Weldon J. Gardner       |
| Nick Kosack          | Ernest J. Gronberg, Jr. |
| Emerson S. Herbert   | Joseph Kochara          |
| Fernand N. Malouin   | Donald J. Sawyer        |
| William A. Shearer   | Jose E. Urioste         |
| Stanley Cichy        | Frank P. Cecilia        |
| Arthur H. Romito     | Stanley R. Speoner      |
| Dominick J. Pisaturo | Peter Simuk             |
| Glenn Livingston     | Rueben E. Herrera       |
| Fred E. Carstens     | Louis Kornblum          |
| Raymond J. Ogden     | Edmund M. Prorok        |
| John H. Reckas       | Armand J. Beausoleil    |

Most of the Enlisted Men had received their basic infantry training at other stations and had been transferred to the 4th Chemical Co. for specialized training in C.W.S.

21 May, 1942 -- 1st Lt. George A. Cornes attached.

Unit continued CWS training from activation date 15 May, 1942 to 31 May, 1942 under program of 4th Chemical Co. -1-

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- 2 -

HISTORICAL OF 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (H)

JUNE-1942--

SECRET
AUTH. CONF. 1SG
Date .....
Initials .....

1st to 15th June, 1942-

Unit continued CWS Training under 4th Chemical Co.  
Unit alerted for movement, requisitioned and acquired some supplies, personnel organized, adjusted, promoted, etc., prior to movement.

PROMOTIONS-

<p><u>Cpl. to S/Sgt.</u> Hotaling</p> <p style="text-align: center;">T/5</p> <p><u>Pvt to Cpl.</u> Rothberg Antles Hotaling Marschark Cledios Reckas Swanson Richards</p>	<p><u>T/Sgt to 1st/Sgt.</u> Yankowski</p> <p><u>Pvt. to Pfc.</u> Kenner O'Brien Falombo Spinetta Kornblum Hasson Ogden Prorok Spooner</p>	<p><u>T/5</u> Cpl. to Sgt. Sloat Swanson</p> <p><u>T/4</u></p> <p><u>T/6</u> Pfc. to Cpl. Alcorn</p>
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TRANSFERS IN-

Pfc. Alcorn - 1 June, 1942  
Pfc. Vodicka - 12 June, 1942  
Pfc. Chin - 12 June, 1942  
Pvt. Blennerhassett - 12 June, 1942  
Pvt. Greenhow - 12 June, 1942  
Pvt. Tucker - 13 June, 1942  
Sgt. Morrison - 15 June, 1942

TRANSFERS OUT-

Pvt. Hiner to 854th Chem.  
Pvt. Sproul to 861st Chem.  
Pvt. Engo to 861st Chem.  
Pvt. Cambi to 861st Chem.  
Pvt. Gardner to 861st Chem.  
Pvt. Kochera to 861st Chem.  
Cpl. Hotaling to O.C.S.

During this period of preparation for movement, the unit was assigned Officer personnel. On 12 June, 1942, 1st Lt. Geo. A. Cornes was changed from "attached" to "Assigned" and assumed command. Lt. Cornes is a Reserve Officer, a graduate of Chemical Warfare Service School at Edgewood Arsenal and has served as a Chemical Officer in numerous capacities at McChord Field, Wn, Gelger Field, Wn and Ft. Geo. Wright, Wn. On 15 June, 1942, 2nd Lt. Wayne A. Cupper was assigned. Lt. Cupper was commissioned direct from civil life and was transferred to the unit from the Officers Training School, HQ, 2nd A.F., Ft. George Wright, Wn.

15th June - 30th June, 1942.-

The night of 15 June, 1942 the 863rd began the traveling which eventually justified the self adopted title of "Roving Chemics". The outfit left for Alamogordo Field Training Station, Alamogordo, New Mexico together with the 119th Chem. Plat. Adm. and the 516th Chem. Plat. AFSC. Lt. Cornes was Train Commander.

HISTORY OF 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (H)

JUNE-1942-- (Cont).

15th to 30th June, 1942 -- cont.

The units were met with re-routing orders at Alamogordo station and remained on board the same train, finally arriving at Richmond Army Air Base, Richmond, Virginia on 23 June, 1942 at 4 P.M. The three units moved to the Chemical area, consisting of 3 double deck barracks, supply room, day room, office bldg, and mess hall.

The balance of the month was spent mostly in making the newly built area more presentable, acquiring additional supplies and getting limbered up after the long train journey.

HISTORICAL OF 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (H)

JULY-1942

AUTH. NO. 5136
Date
Initials

1st to 15th July, 1942-

Only one change occurred in personnel, Pvt. Murphy, who missed returning to the train during a lay over in Denver, Colorado was dropped from the records to Desertion on 8 July, 1942.

On 7 July, 1942 warning orders were received alerting the unit for overseas duty. The supply department became the center of activity, sending out requisitions, shortage lists, picking up supplies, issuing individual equipment, packing organizational equipment for overseas shipment, packing "B" Barracks bags etc. Personnel had a rush, with allotments, insurance, wills, powers of attorney, etc. On 11 July, 1942 the unit became only a number-- Shipment No. 5164-N.

15th to 31 July, 1942-

On 16 July, 1942 the 863rd Chemical Co., Air Bombardment was redesignated the 863rd Chemical Co., Air Operations per authority of G.O. # 69, par 1, HQ, Army Air Forces, Air Service Command, Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio. The new T/O required 130 E.M. and 4 Officers as against 55 E.M. and 2 Officers. Filler personnel was obtained from the 119th and 516th at Richmond to bring the outfit to 104 E.M. and 4 Officers, balance of E.M. arrived in small groups from various stations while the company was at Ft. Dix.

TRANSFERS IN- From the 119th Chemical Platoon (Airdrome) per SO # 18, para.2, HQ., Richmond Army Air Base, dated 15 July, 1942:

- Sgt. MILTON E. OESTREICH, 19075013
- Cpl. MERLE C. CAMPBELL, 19017618
- Cpl. MICHAEL MALANGONE, 32197617
- Cpl. DAVID M. WATKINS, 16053479
- Pvt 1cl TROY E. EAVENSON, 38072257
- Pvt 1cl IVAN D. GORDON, 36230113
- Pvt 1cl OLE LOKEN, 39088109
- Pvt 1cl LONNIE H. PADGETT, 38072412
- Pvt 1cl CARL E. STENWALL, 32198172
- Pvt HAROLD R. AEMMER, 39174368
- Pvt VERNON F. BECKMAN, 36318489
- Pvt HORACE E. BLAISDELL, 36318468
- Pvt DONALD L. MOCK, 38064056
- Pvt GILBERT W. PADGETT, 38072269
- Pvt ANDREW P. STEPHENS, 19072243
- Pvt PAUL J. VARGO, 36170739
- Pvt HAROLD G. WHITMAN, 39385562

- Cpl EMMANUEL H. BIRCHELL, 36318515
- Cpl EARL J. DUREY, 17042804
- Cpl. JOHN M. McCARTY, 36230136
- Pvt 1cl JOSE DEARO, 18015907
- Pvt 1cl PAUL M. GARCIA, 39088186
- Pvt 1cl ELMER B. HOGLUND, 39089187
- Pvt 1cl EUGENE J. NIEDZWIEDZ, 36314804
- Pvt 1cl FRANK P. POLIZZOTTI, 32198684
- Pvt 1cl GUSTAVE H. TILLMAN, 36169034
- Pvt WALTER W. ALSCHULER, 39239567
- Pvt DONALD H. BIRKHEAD, 36318510
- Pvt. WALTER F. MATTHEWS, 39239805
- Pvt. JOHN M. OSTIPOW, 36170398
- Pvt LESLEY J. PEIL, 36235395
- Pvt MANUEL A. SANCHEZ, 38071764
- Pvt GEORGE F. WALDHAUS, 19084268

TRANSFERS IN- From the 516th Chemical Platoon AFSC per SO # 18, para.3, HQ, Richmond Army Air Base, dated 15 July, 1942:

- Sgt. RAYMOND E. CALKINS, 36152230
- Cpl FREDERICK E. HUTCHINSON, 19052549
- Pvt 1cl JOHN B. HOWARD, JR, 19002468
- Pvt 1cl ARTHUR H. KRANZLER, 17047769
- Pvt ANDRES ALVARADO, 38090237
- Pvt ROBERT W. GILLMORE, 36054427
- Pvt. DOTCH HENSON, 34211885
- Pvt. HAROLD MULLEN, 36318832
- Pvt. GEORGE W. PEARSON, JR., 34211937

- Cpl ALLEN L. BATSON, 17052151
- T/5gr ARNOLD B. MUSUM, 19075873
- Pvt 1cl JIMMY HOWELL, 17042823
- Pvt 1cl HORACE E. GAMBILL, 38079707
- Pvt NICK C. ARMIJO, 38071872
- Pvt DANIEL MARGOLIS, 12057604
- Pvt GEORGE A. MYERS, 12057653
- Pvt HYMAN PHILLIPS, 17047814



HISTORY OF 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, ATK OPERATIONS (H)

JULY- 1942

SECRET
AUTH. CC, 91BG
Date .....
Initials .....

15th to 31st July, 1942- (Cont).

Two Officers were assigned per SO # 18, para. 1 and 4, HQ, Richmond Army Air Base on 15 July, 1942. "2nd Lt." David E. Grobe, Jr. came from the 119th Chemical Platoon Adrm. Lt. Grobe was commissioned directly from civil life and had attended the Officers Training School, HQ, 2nd A.F., Ft. Geo. Wright, Wn. before being assigned to the 119th on 15 June, 1942. "2nd Lt." Boyd F. Joyner received his Army training as an E.M. attending Edgewood Arsenal in 1941 and later training and instructing at McChord Field, Wn and with the 4th Chemical Co. at Ft. Geo. Wright, Wn. Lt. Joyner received his commission on 8 July, 1942 while serving as a Sgt. with the 516th Chemical Platoon, AFSC at Richmond.

On 18 July, 1942, 1st Lt. Geo. A. Cornes was promoted to the grade of Capt. per para. 2, SO # 182, HQ, War Dept., dated 9 July, 1942.

On 19 July, 1942 the 863rd bid farewell to the remaining cadre of the 516th and the 119th and entrained for Ft. Dix, N.J. at 2030 hours. Arrived at Ft. Dix, N.J. on 20 July, 1942 at 0950 hours. Capt. Cornes was train commander.

The 20th of July to 31st July, 1942 was engaged with receiving additional filler personnel, receiving more supplies, taking shots, securing passports, etc.

TRANSFERS IN--

S/Sgt. Blair - 20 July	from Langley Field, Va.
T/4. Roberts -20 July	" " " "
Cpl. Danyi - 20 July	" " " "
Cpl. Courbier - 20 July	" " " "
Pfc. Hill - 20 July	" " " "
Pvt. Baker - 20 July	Patterson Field, Ohio
Pvt. Sipper -20 July	" " " "
Pvt. Gallagher-20 July	" " " "
Pvt. Montaperto-20 July	" " " "
Pvt. Knutelsky -20 July	" " " "
Pvt. Pantaleo - 20 July	" " " "
Pvt. Williams - 20 July	" " " "
Pvt. DeLuca - 20 July	" " " "
Pvt. Hertzenson -20 July	" " " "
Pvt. Martin - 20 July	" " " "
Pvt. Morris - 20 July	" " " "
Pvt. Roth - 20 July	" " " "
Pvt. Strauss - 20 July	" " " "
Sgt. Mihalecik - 21 July	Mitchell Field, N.Y.
Cpl. Ferrara - 21 July	" " " "
Pvt. Andersen -22 July	Edgewood Arsenal, Md.
Pvt. Blass - 22 July	" " " "
Pvt. Boyer - 22 July	" " " "
Pvt. Graham - 22 July	" " " "
Pvt. Lott - 22 July	" " " "
Pvt. Dean S. Todt-22 July	" " " "
Pvt. Yards-29 July	Fort Dix, N.J.
Pvt. Ferzoco - 29 July	" " " "

TRANSFERS OUT--

Pfc. Polizzotti - 25 July - to Sta. Comp. for completion of citizenship papers.  
Pvt. Sinuk - 25 July - " " " " " " " "

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HISTORY OF 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (H)

JULY, 1942 - cont.

15th to 31st July, 1942 (cont.)

SECRET
AUTH. CO. 9150
Date .....
Initials .....

Official Designation of Unit changed to Air Operations (Heavy) per para. 1, SO # 69, HQ, Air Service Command, Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio, dated 16 July, 1942.

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HISTORY OF 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (H)

AUGUST-1942

1st to 20th August, 1942

SECRET  
 AUTH. COF 918G  
 Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Final changes in personnel had to be made in a hurry as time was drawing to a close. Interviews with newly acquired men had started in Richmond and continued on through until completed in late July. The following personnel changes occurred between 1 August, 1942 and 5 August, 1942:-

PROMOTIONS:

<u>T/4 and SGT. to S/Sgt.</u>	<u>Cpl. and T/4 &amp; T/5 to Sgt.</u>	<u>Pfc. to Cpl.</u>	<u>T/5 &amp; Pvt. to Cpl.</u>
Oestreich	Marschark	Ogden	Gallagher
Morrison	Rothberg	Chin	Sawyer
Calkins	Hutchinson	Kenner	Sharwood
Sloat	Reckas	Hoglund	Yenney
Swanson		L. Padgett	Shearer
		Spooner	Tucker
		Howell	Sipper
		Hasson	Hattrup
		Gordon	Whitman
			Myers

Pvt. to Pfc.

Kosach	Waldhaus	Pearson	Lawyer	Pell
Baker	Aemmer	Mock	Montaperto	Nosworthy
Alschuler	Van Wychen	Blaisdell	Martin	Vargo
Cecilia	Gronberg	Stephens	Williams	Weidich
Blennerhassett	Henson	Knutelsky	Herbert	
Pisaturo	N. Sanchez	Urioste	Birkhead	

Pvt. Sinuk was returned to the company, all citizenship papers completed in order. This made one extra man. Cpl. Clodius was dropped for incompatibility with other members. At the last moment Pvt. Hertzenson was rejected for failure to pass overseas examination, leaving the outfit one man short of T/O strength. The outfit had been gathered together quickly. This was the final organization and key men of each department:-

- Capt. George A. Cornes - Commanding Officer
- 2nd Lt. Wayne A. Cupper - Adjutant, Mess Officer, and Platoon C.O.
- 2nd Lt. David E. Grobe, Jr. - Supply Officer and Platoon Commander.
- 2nd Lt. Boyd F. Joyner - Training Officer and Platoon Commander.
- 1st Sgt. Theodore Yankowski
- Supply - Sgt. Reckas
- Mess - S/Sgt. Swanson
- Transportation - Sgt. Hutchinson
- Personnel - S/Sgt. Oestreich
- Training - Sgt. Marschark
- Platoon Sgts. - S/Sgt. Morrison
- S/Sgt. Sloat
- S/Sgt. Calkins
- S/Sgt. Blair

The Unit left Ft. Dix, N.J. for N.Y.P.E. at 1930 hours, 5 August, 1942 and was loaded aboard the Matson Liner "SS Monterey" by 0500 hours of 6 August, 1942. The boat pulled out from the dock at 0530 hours for foreign shores. Arrived at Glasgow, Scotland (Greenock) 17 August, 1942. Unloaded from boat in the dark, boarded train at 2300 hours. Arrived Huntingdon, England 1145 hrs, 18 August, 1942. Proceeded by GMV to Airdrome at Alconbury, Hunts., England.

HISTORY OF 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (H)

AUGUST- 1942-cont.

SECRET
AUTH. CO, 91BG
Date _____
Initials _____

20th August to 31st August, 1942 -

Getting settled and acquainted. Chemics run officer's mess, gas defense center, furnish motor transportation drivers to motor-pool for experience in left hand driving, get acquainted with English people and the money. Received our first transportation, a Canadian Recon. Supplies arriving slowly. Air Base still under R.A.F. command with several U.S. Army Service Units present.

HISTORY OF 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS. (H)

SECRET  
AUTH. CO, 51EG

Date

Initials

SEPTEMBER- 1942 -

Air Echelon of 93rd Bomb Group Heavy lands their B-24's on 6 September, 1942 at Alconbury. Ground echelon arrived during the night. All service units already on the station drew double and triple shifts at messes and on airplane guard during arrival and settling period. Moved office, Supply room, Officers Quarters, Enlisted Men's Quarters. Enlisted Men now in tents.

On 11 September, 1942 started bomb dump duties. During month received and stored 1280 - 30# Br. Inc. Bombs and 448 - 250# Br. Inc. Bombs. Bomb dump duties did not prevent the Chemics from furnishing large airplane guard details, a permanent Q.M. detail, motor pool drivers and mess personnel.

Lt. Joyner attended 28 day Course at R.A.F. Anti-Gas School, Rollestone.

Lt. Grobe attended 7 day Weapons Course at Rollestone.

Lt. Cupper attended 7 day Weapons Course at Rollestone.

Organizational equipment arriving much faster now.

HISTORY OF 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (H)

AU/...
Date .....

OCTOBER-1942 -

On 5 October, 1942 Lt. Grobe and Lt. Joyner and a Detachment of 60 E.M. are transferred to Molesworth to service the 303rd Bomb Group (H) per G.O. # 22, para. 1, HQ, 8th Bomber Command, dated 29 Sept. 1942. Lt. Grobe is in command of the Detachment. Separate history will be kept for detachment.

On 9 October, 1942 the following promotions were made:-

	T/5	T/5
<u>Sgt. to T/Sgt.</u>	<u>Pfc. to Cpl.</u>	<u>Pvt. to Cpl.</u>
Marschark	Neidich	Todt
	Kosach	G. Padgett
	Pearson	Greenhow
	Van Wychen	

On 9 October, 1942, following demotions were made for misconduct:

Tec 5. Hoglund to Pvt., Pfc. Birkhead to Pvt.

9 October. First combat mission by the 93rd Bomb Group and the first combat mission by the U.S. Army from Alconbury. Target: Lille. One bomber lost from 330th Squadron. Bomb load - High Explosives, no Incendiaries.

11 October, 1942 - 29 E.M. out of 69 put on permanent guard.

12 October, 1942 - 18 E.M. returned from SD with Q.M.

17 October, 1942 - Received 16 truckloads of 4# Inc. Clusters.

21 October, 1942 - Second mission went wrong. All of the 1600 # A.P. were jettisoned in Channel. During the month, Capt. Cornes attended 7 day Weapons Course at Rollestone.

The morale of the outfit was extremely low at the end of this month. They lived in tents without stoves for the first 10 days of the month, and the climate was extremely cold and damp. They drew guard duty and other details, when they were anxious to participate in the operational end of the field by loading incendiary bombs. Mess Hall facilities were completely inadequate and food poor. Considerable sickness resulted. Two E.M., Pvt. Matthews and Cpl. Ferrera were transferred to the 30th General Hospital.

31 October, 1942 - 29 E.M. returned from guard duty in anticipation of an additional company split.

HISTORY OF 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (H)

NOVEMBER-1942

1 Nov. 1942. - Sgt. Reckas, Supply, promoted to S/Sgt.

2 Nov. 1942 - Capt. Cornes, Lt. Cupper and 60 E.M., consisting of HQ, R.P. Section and one platoon moved from Alconbury, Hunts. to Bassingbourn, Cambs. per G.O. # 84, para. 2, HQ, VIII Bomber Command, dated 30 October, 1942. Lt. Joyner was returned from Molesworth to command the detachment left at Alconbury per Company Order # 8, dated 2 Nov. 1942. To accomplish the above transfer of 49 E.M., 42 were drawn from Alconbury and 7 from Molesworth per Company Order # 8, dated 2 Nov. 1942. Present strength and Stations:

2 Off.- 49 E.M. ----- HQ, R.P. Sec., 1st Platoon - With 91st Bomb Gp. at Bassingbourn.  
1 Off.- 26 E.M. ----- 2nd Platoon- with 93rd Bomb Gp. at Alconbury.  
1 Off.- 52 E.M. ----- 3rd & 4th Platoons- with 303rd Bomb Gp. at Molesworth.

During the month, Lt. Joyner attended 7 day Weapons course at Rolleston.

On 7th Nov. 1942 the 91st Bomb Gp completed first Combat Mission from Bassingbourn. Target: Brest. No losses, no incendiaries used.

4 Nov. 1942 - Pfc. Aemmer transferred to 357th Service Sqdn in exchange for Pfc. Miller.

12 Nov. 1942 - Pvt. Ono assigned to Company and joined at Station # 121.

14 Nov. 1942 - Pfc. Hill transferred to 30th General Hospital for return to Z of Int.

23 Nov. 1942 - Pfc. Spinetta, 2nd Platoon, reduced to Pvt. for mis-conduct.

In November, 1942 combat operations began in earnest. Operations were carried out at all three of the stations served by the 863rd Cml Co. Our units were in charge of the Incendiary Bombs at each station but only High Explosive bombs were used on the missions in Nov.

On 12th November, 1942- 2nd Lts. Grobe and Cupper promoted to 1st Lt. as of 29 October, 1942.

23 Nov. 1942 - 863rd was assigned to 12th A.F. HQ. of the 12th are in Africa. Unit is attached to 8th A.F. for Administration and Supply only. No movement orders received as yet.

The Air Echelon of the 93rd left Alconbury for D.S. in Africa right after Thanksgiving, leaving the ground echelon and the attached service units without a combat function.

At Bassingbourn, the 91st Bomb Group flew 8 combat missions in November.

HISTORY OF 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (H)

SECRET
AIR CO. 91BG
Date .....
Initials .....

DECEMBER- 1942

A C.W.S. Depot of supplies for VIII Bomber Command was established at Bassingbourn during the month. Three convoys of supplies were brought in as follows:

2 Dec. to 4 Dec. incl. - Lt. Cupper with 19 E.M. and 10 borrowed trucks brought supplies from General Depot at Aschurch.

9 Dec. to 11 Dec. incl. - Lt. Cupper with 11 E.M. and 6 borrowed trucks brought supplies from General Depot at Poynton.

18 Dec. to 19 Dec. incl. - Lt. Cupper with 15 E.M. and 8 borrowed trucks brought supplies from General Depot at Thatcham.

All supplies turned over to 39th Service Group for storage and issue.

14th and 15th Dec. 1942 - First meeting of CWS Officers at VIII Bomber Command Headquarters at High Wycombe. All officers of the 863rd Cml Co. were present.

On 12 Dec. 1942 the 2nd Platoon moved from Alconbury, Hunts to Hardwick, Norfolk per G.O. # 47, para. 1, HQ, VIII Bomber Command, dated 5 Dec. 1942.

On Thursday night, 10 Dec. 1942 participated in first loading. Loaded 6 - B-17's with 250# Br. Inc. but mission was scrubbed before take off.

On 16 Dec. 1942 first Air-Raid Alert, no bombs dropped.

29 Dec. 1942 - Pvt. Armijo of Molesworth Det. trfd to 30th Gen. Hospital.

30 Dec. 1942 - Tec 5. Sipper of Bassingbourn reduced to Pvt. for mis-conduct.

30 Dec. 1942 - First Airplane crash on station. A Wellington crashed and burned, crew killed.

At Bassingbourn, the 91st Bomb Group flew only 4 Combat Missions. After a starting month with 8 missions it is discouraging to see it drop. The cause is of course the Bad Weather.



HISTORY OF 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (H)

JANUARY- 1943 -

SECRET
AUTH. CO. 91BG
Date .....
Initials .....

In 2nd Platoon - Hardwick

Pfc. Stephens promoted to Tec 5.

2nd Lt. Joyner promoted to 1st Lt. as of 17 Dec. 1942.

Pfc. Waldhaus reduced to Pvt. for mis-conduct.

Worked at stocking both Hardwick and neighboring Station of Bungay with Inc. Bombs.

Air Echelon of 93rd still on D.S. in Africa so no alerts for bomb loadings. Plenty of enemy air raid alerts for them, they are near the east coast.

In H.Q. and 1st Platoon- Bassingbourn.

A change occurred in Officer personnel. Capt. Cornes was transferred to a new job as Chemical Officer of the 4th Bomb Wing. 2nd Lt. Alan S. Ariail was assigned to fill the shortage. 1st Lt. Wayne A. Cupper assumed command of the Company on 29 January, 1943. 2nd Lt. Ariail promoted to 1st Lt. on 19 January per SO # 19, para. 7, HQ., 8th A.F.

Following promotions occurred in the Enlisted Men:-

- Pvt. Wheeler to Pfc. - 1 Jan. 1943.
- Pfc. Blennerhassett to Cpl. - 2 Jan. 1943
- Pfc. Knutelsky to Tec 5. - 2 Jan. 1943
- Pfc. Howard to Tec 5 - 2 Jan. 1943

Following changes in enlisted personnel occurred:

- 15 Jan. 1943- Pvt. Armijo ret to Det. at Molesworth fr 30th Gen. Hosp.
- 15 Jan. 1943- Pvt. Matthews ret to HQ at Bassingbourn fr 30th Gen. Hosp.  
Pfc. Prorok transferred to 2nd Evac Hosp fr Det. at Molesworth.
- 31 Jan. 1943 • Pvt. Phillips transferred to 324th Bomb Sqdn, on his request, for purpose of becoming a combat aerial gunner.

During January the weather kept the air activities down. The 91st Group carried out only 4 Combat Missions: Jan. 3rd, Jan 13th, Jan. 23rd and Jan. 27th. Another was attempted on Jan. 25th but was recalled. Loaded Incendiaries on Jan. 30th but mission scrubbed. We average from 13 to 20 planes per raid from here. All of the missions on which bombs were expended they were using high explosive bombs.

HISTORY OF 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (H)

FEBRUARY- 1943

SECRET
AUTH. CO, 91BG
Date
Initials

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In the 2nd Platoon -

On 7 Feb. 1943 T/5 Pearson transferred to 2nd Gen. Hosp. Our platoon at Hardwick continued their work of stocking Hardwick and Bungay with Incendiary Bombs. This was not enough to keep them well occupied and they drew considerable housekeeping duties. Training in practice loadings was carried on. On 27 Feb. the Air Echelon of the 93rd Bomb Gp returned from D.S. to Africa so activities will pick up for the base.

In H.Q. and 1st Platoon-

On February 3rd another detachment was split away and sent to service the 92nd Bomb Gp which has moved to Alconbury. This detachment was placed in command of the newly arrived officer, Lt. Ariall. Twenty seven E.M. were sent from Molesworth on SO. # 30, para. 4, HQ, 1st Bomb Div, dated 1 Feb. 1943. (3rd Platoon)

On 7th of February - Pvt. Roth transferred to 324th Bomb Sqdn, 91st Bomb Group to become a combat aerial gunner.

On 9th of February Lt. Cupper, Lt. Grobe and Lt. Ariall were placed on D.S. to 8th A.F. for special duty to act as umpires in a special exercise known by the code "Allium" to test recognition, identification, reporting procedure on the first use of gas. The D.S. covered a period of 3 days.

17th Feb. 1943- Pfc. Prorok returned from 30th Gen. Hosp. to 4th Platoon at Molesworth.

On 23rd of February, 1943 all Officers of the Company attended a conference of Chemical Officers of Bomber Command.

During the month air activity was still held down because of weather. Only 5 combat missions were completed by the 91st group: Feb. 4, 14, 16, 26, and 27. Another flew on 2nd Feb. but had to be recalled. Missions still averaging 15 to 20 airplanes, all with H.E. Bombs. On 5 Feb. 1943 the first Combat Crew returned to the U.S. - Capt. Crum and crew of "Jack the Ripper".

13 Feb. 1943 - Alerted to lead incendiaries but was a "dry run", load changed to H.E.

17th Feb. 1943.- First truck transportation received - 2-1 $\frac{1}{2}$  Ton trucks as sub-standard to M-1 Chem. Trucks. Had to be pooled in Station pool as they were general purpose vehicles.

18 Feb. 1943.- Received some regular M-1 Trucks, total 8. Distributed them amongst the 1st, 3rd and 4th Platoons in 1st Bomb Wing.

28th Feb. 1943- Received first sample M-47 bombs for training purposes.

In 3rd Platoon

After a short settling period the 3rd platoon was interspersed amongst bomb squadrons ordnance crews for loading experience and to help out, whether H.E. or Incendiary.



HISTORY OF 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (H)

MARCH- 1943

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2ND PLATOON-

1 Mar. 1943- Pvts. Gillmore, Graham and Morris promoted to Pfc.

1 Mar. 1943- Four trucks transferred to 2nd Platoon from HQ. at AAF Sta.  
# 121.

20 Mar. 1943- Pfc. Morris transferred to 2nd Evac. Hospital.

25 Mar. 1943.- Tec 5. Stephens on D.S. to take test for Air Cadet training.

27 Mar. 1943- 1st Lt. Joyner on T.D. to London to attend school for week.  
(Course on Bomb Disposal)

Continued bomb dump work and training with emphasis on practice loadings.

3RD PLATOON-

15th and 16th March, 1943- First test loadings conducted on 500 # cluster with attendance from other stations of 1st Bomb Wing.

Lt. Ariail is made Station Gas Defense Officer and Station C.W.S. Officer in addition to his duties as Det. Commander.

22 Mar. 1943- 1st Court Martial, Sgt. Blair and Pvt. Dearo for mis-use of Government transportation.

HQ. AND 1st PLATOON-

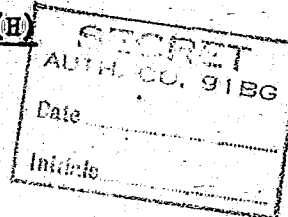
11 March, 1943- Tec 5. Pearson returned from 2nd Gen. Hosp.

During March emphasis was on training. Instructions on new M-47s, M-69s, and M-50, M-54 and M-52 in Clusters and 30# and 250# Br. Incendiaries. Also M-14 dest. Grenades received, tested and demonstrated to Group Operations Officer before installing in airplanes. Demonstration made with Inc., tracer and A.P. ammunition for safety.

On 29 March, 1943 received first shipment of M-47 stock. Air activity mounted due to better weather. The 91st Group flew 9 Combat Missions: March 1, 6, 8, 12, 13, 17, 18, 22 and 28th. Several load and "Scrub" jobs during the month also. Number of airplanes per mission remained at 15 to 20. All missions carried H.E. bombs. Lt. Grobe of the 4th Platoon flew as a gunner and observer on mission of the 13th March, 1943.

On 10 March, 1943 the 863rd Chem. Co. was relieved from assignment to the 12th A.F. and assigned to the 8th A.F. per "Secret" letter dated 10 Mar. 1943, HQ, ETOUSA. On 13 March the 863rd was assigned to 8th Bomber Command per "Secret" letter dated 13 Mar. 1943, HQ, 8th A.F. On 22 Mar. 1943 the 863rd was assigned to the 1st Bombardment Division or Wing per "Secret" G.O.# 17, par 1, dated 22 Mar. 43, HQ., 8th Bomber Command. Without making a move we had been in and out of the 12th A.F. and were now assigned to the 8th A.F. with which we had been serving. Our assignment to the 12th A.F. lasted from 23 Nov. 42 to 10 Mar. 43. During that time we were expecting shipment orders at any time but they never arrived.

HISTORY OF 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (H)



APRIL - 1943

2ND PLATOON-

8 Apr. 1943- Pvt. Bennett transferred in from 317th Service Gp.

28 Apr. 1943- First trailer received from H.Q. at Station # 121.

Duties were a continuation of receiving and storing Incendiaries and training on loadings.

3RD PLATOON -

25 April, 1943- Additional test loadings of Incendiaries carried on with Wing Chemical Officers in attendance.

H.Q. AND 1st PLATOON.-

1 April, 1943- Pvt. Reynoso promoted to Pfc.

11 April, 1943- Lt. Copper left to attend 7-day Bomb Recon. Course by British B.D.S. at Duke of York, HQ- London.

18 April, 1943- First trailers received and distributed.

25 April, 1943- Sgt. Hutchinson, T/5 Misum, , T/4 Roberts, Pvt. Blair and Pfc. Loken transferred to 324th Bomb Sqdn to become combat Aerial gunners.

Air activity reduced by bad weather again. The 91st flew 4 combat missions April 4, 5, 9, and 10th. All carried H.E. bombs. Number of airplanes on missions now improving to average 22 to 26 since more airplanes and more crews arrive as the build up gets under way.

Protective clothing received and distributed to Platoons during the month of April.

29 April - 500# Clusters of M-50s received, the first real stock of these to arrive.

On 21 April, 1943, Bassingbourn was taken over by the Americans from the R.A.F. and became AAF Station # 121 in an impressive Flag raising ceremony at mid-day on the parade ground.

HISTORY OF 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (H)

MAY- 1943

In 2ND PLATOON-

16 May, 1943- T/5 Shearer transferred to 330th Bomb Sqdn as driver for Sqdn Commander. Pvt. Brown transferred in from the 330th as exchange.

This was a busy month. Two trips of 2 days each were made to Sharnbrook for bombs. Then on the 21st the platoon moved from Hardwick to Kimbolton, placing them back on a 1st Bomb Wing Station. They are to serve the 379th Bomb Group which is due in from the U.S. The platoon takes over incendiary bomb stocks and bomb dump duties at the new station after getting settled.

In 3RD PLATOON-

10 May, 1943- Another M-1 truck received from company H.Q.

26 May, 1943- Another M-1 truck received from Depot direct.

On 18 May seven E.M. sent on temporary D.S. to Kimbolton to help stock bomb dump with incendiary Bombs.

On 27 May, 1943 a big explosion took place at night during bombing up. Several E.M. and Officers killed outright and many in the hospital. Our entire platoon was on the line at the time but only one was injured. Sgt. Rothberg was seriously injured with fragments of shrapnel through the back. Fortunately that none of the 863rd men were working on or too near the airplane that had its bomb load explode.

HQ. AND 1st PLATOON-

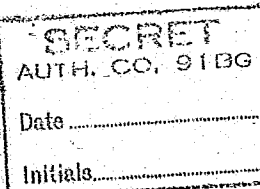
2 May, 1943- T/5 Hattrup promoted to Sgt.  
- Pfc. Pisaturo promoted to Cpl.

3 May, 1943- T/5 Courbier transferred from 4th Platoon to HQ to become Company Motor Sgt. T/5 Pearson transferred from HQ to 4th Platoon in exchange. S/Sgt. Oestreich transferred from H.Q. to 3rd Platoon to replace Blair who had been Court-Martialed.

8 May, 1943- T/5 Courbier and T/5 Yenney to Aschurch to pick-up M-1 Chemical Truck.

18 May, 1943- Seven E.M. to Kimbolton to help stock Bomb Dump with Incendiaries.

May was by far our busiest month so far. Defective Clusters of 4# Inc. were being sorted by lot numbers and returned and replaced at Sharnbrook. Six convoys was sent to Kimbolton to stock them with Inc. Bombs. Bombs were coming in and going out in a steady stream. Salvage became a problem and was solved through contact with the Regional Truck Transport.



HISTORY OF 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (H)

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MAY-1943 (cont)

On 3rd and 4th of May H.Q. moved from Hanger "C" to offices and supply room in the Gas Defense Center. Supplies from the VIII B.C. Depot stock were being sent out constantly to other stations. The 863rd started a separate training program on C.W.S. defense. The emphasis on defense was given an added zest by the increase in German air activity that occurred at this time. M-14 destruction grenades and British 1 1/2# dest. grenades were installed in all aircraft with the aid of the Group Equipment Officer.

On 20th and 21st of May several test combination loadings were made for 1st Bomb Wing, and pictures taken for record. These combinations were of Incendiaries and H.E.'s.

Lt. Grobe of the 4th Platoon flew on the mission of 19th May, looks as if he is bucking for an Air Medal.

Administrative matters were also active. A campaign to have every eligible man covered with \$10,000 Government Insurance resulted in huge sales and coverage almost 100%. Also several O.C.S. applications were submitted.

On 26 May, 1943 the King and Queen of England inspected the AAF Station of Bassingbourn.

During the month a Signal Unit was busy making a film on "Defense of an Airdrome". Members of the 863rd participated in demonstrating Gas Defense procedure before the movie camera. Air activity took a decided spurt. The 91st flew 9 combat missions: May 1, 4, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, and 29th. The Air Echelon of the 94th Bomb Gp was with the 91st for training and as they joined in the battle, aircraft from the field leaped to a new high of 48 from the 2 Groups.

The 863rd celebrated its first year anniversary by loading 16 airplanes with 10- 500# Clusters each and had the satisfaction of seeing its first load of Incendiaries leave the field. The 91st Bomb Group also celebrated its first year of activation on 15th May. The 91st was activated prior to 15 May but was actually assembled at McDill Field, Florida on 16 May, 1942.

HISTORY OF 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (H)

JUNE - 1943

2ND PLATOON

On 15th June the 2nd Platoon ceased to be a separate detachment. The 2nd Platoon moved from Kimbolton to join H.Q. at Bassingbourn per S.O. # 158, para. 4, H.Q., 1st Bomb Wing. The "Roving Chemics" of this Platoon had spent their first 13 months in England at Alconbury, Hardwick and Kimbolton before finally coming to their fourth Station - Bassingbourn. The Platoon had plenty of experience in bomb dump duties and handling bombs but had yet to load for an operational mission. Of the 25 E. M. in the Platoon, 18 came to Bassingbourn and 7 went to Molesworth to join the 4th Platoon.

3RD PLATOON-

Between receiving Inc. Bombs and helping ordnance load H.E. bombs for missions, 3rd Platoon is being worked over time. With new air operations companies arriving, they have prospect of re-uniting with 4th Platoon at Molesworth to look forward to.

H.Q. and 1st PLATOON-

2 June, 1943- Tec 5. Courbier promoted to Sgt.

17 June, 1943- Tec5. Hasson transferred to Molesworth to be supply Clerk for the 4th Platoon.

-Tec 5. Sawyer of the 4th Platoon promoted to Sgt.

18 June, 1943- Tec 5. Howard reduced to Pvt. for mis-conduct.

26 June, 1943- Pfc. Reynoso transferred to 2nd Evac. Hosp.

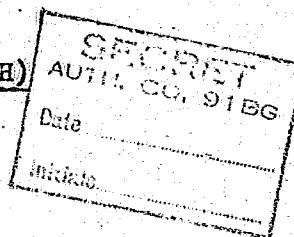
On 20 June, 1943 Lt. Copper promoted to Captain as of 14 June, 1943.

June marked the arrival of several new Air Operations Companies into the 1st Bomb Wing. As an older outfit with equipment and experience it fell to us to help them settle. We were receiving bombs and handling bombs for other stations almost steady during the month. On 14th and 15th June, Lt. O'Dell, C.O. of the newly arrived 881st Chemical Co., was given a "Check-Out" on Air Operations work in this theater. On 16 June the 863rd moved one half of the 881st from Ridgewell to Kimbolton.

During June our set up at Bassingbourn expanded. Acquired brick huts as additional storage space and an armament and fuze office. From 5 June to 10 June effected installation of overhead tracks on huts storing 500# Clusters. By using chain hoists from M-1 trucks, handling made much easier. On 17 June acquired a vacated dispersal area and nissen hut to use as Motor Park and shop.

Station # 121 received the 1st Station Complement Squadron on 7 June with one additional C.W.S. Officer and 4 additional C.W.S. defense men making 2 Gas Defense Officers and 8 E.M. now on the Station.

Air activity was slow in the first half of the month because of weather, but increased in the last half for a final score of 8 combat missions for the 91st Gp. All missions were with H.E. 11th June, 1943 marked the first mission carried out under the new Tactical Wing organizations.



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HISTORY OF 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (H)

JULY - 1943

3RD PLATOON-

On the 7th of July, 1943 the 3rd Platoon moved from Alconbury to join the 4th Platoon at Molesworth per SO # 178, par. 27, H.Q. 1st Bomb Wing, dated 5 July, 1943. This leaves the company finally split between 2 stations only and divided almost equally. Molesworth: 2 Officers and 58 E.M. Bassingbourn: 2 Officers and 63 E.M. The entire company 9 short of T/O strength due largely to transfers to combat by E.M. as aerial gunners.

H.Q., 1st & 2nd Platoons.

1 July, 1943- Pfc. Reynoso reassigned fr 2nd Evac. Hosp.  
Pvt. Krull assigned from Chelveston.

3 July, 1943- Pfc. Lawyer, Mook, Miller, O'Brien, and Pvt. Andersen promoted to Tec 5 Gr.

11 July, 1943- Pfc. French, Pvt. Dempsey and Pvt. Gorski assigned to Company.

12 July, 1943- Pfc. French, Pvt. Dempsey and Pvt. Gorski placed on D.S. to Molesworth to help make company split more even.

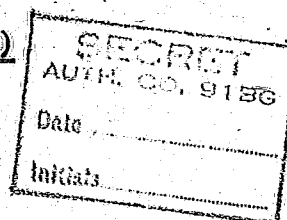
- Pvt. Lott from D.S. at Molesworth to H.Q. 1st Bomb Wing.

19 July, 1943- 1st Lt. Grobe transferred to 325th Service Group from Det. "A" (3rd & 4th Platoons).

- Pfc. Morris rejoined company after long seige in hospital.

During the month all personnel at Bassingbourn was given a 16 hour CWS training course. The 863rd contributed by lecturing on Incendiary Bombs. Considerable attention was directed during the month to ways and means of reciprocating in the event of enemy gas attacks. On 2 July an emergency storage site was picked for chemical bombs. On 8 July a test run was made from the Barnham Depot on one airplane load of bombs and times recorded from Depot straight through to take-off. This trial was as an alternate to stocking chemicals on an operational station. This was also a month of steady stock transfers between stations. Bomb stocks were not sufficient and it was necessary to continually switch stock to the spot where needed, even to transferring them at night in order to make a loading. This night transferring took place even while a loading was being handled by the station handling the shipment. For example: On 17 July, Bassingbourn shipped 9 truckloads of bombs using all of their transportation and at the same time loaded 26 Airplanes for a mission. All of this was accomplished at night, a good portion under black-out conditions. The fruits of all this work was a "scrubbed" mission which meant the work was for nothing. Again on the 27th, a mission loading of 26 airplanes and a convoy shipment of 8 trucks was handled between 1700 hours and 0130 hours of the following morning. This time the mission was not scrubbed.

On 11 July, received our first M-225 fuzes for M-47 bombs, training and lectures were given.



HISTORY OF 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (H)

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JULY - 1943 (cont)

Air activity was better during July. The 91st Bomb Group flew 10 combat missions and dropped 250 tons of bombs. Incendiary bombs seemed to be a jinx in their initial stages. The loading of 23 airplanes on the night of 16 July was only mildly successful. Twelve airplanes dropped bombs on a target other than the primary. The loading of 26 airplanes on the 17 July resulted in a "scrub" and unload with no airplanes taking off. The loading of 26 airplanes on the 27th of July resulted in disposing of only 6 airplane loads in an unsuccessful mission. However, it was heartening to all of the members of the 863rd HQ. to be "in the swim" of helping actively to fight the war.

On the 22 July a joint party to celebrate a years service overseas was held at St. Neots. This was a half way point for Molesworth and Bassingbourn. The party was a huge success.

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OF THE AAF  
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CM-L-863RD-H1  
5 OCT 42 - DEC 42  
c91

Det. A. 863rd Chemical Co. A.C. (71)

5 Oct 1942 - DECEMBER 1944

- 7195-92



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EIGHTH AIR FORCE  
1ST BOMBARDMENT DIVISION  
DETACHMENT "A" 863RD CHEMICAL CO.A.O.(H)  
ATTACHED THREE HUNDRED THIRD BOMB GROUP(H)

DETACHMENT "A"  
863RD CHEMICAL CO., A.O.(H)  
A.P.O. 634, ETUSA

October 5, 1942

2ND LIEUTENANTS

Grobe, David B., Jr., O-903337  
Joyner, Boyd E., O-482632

STAFF SERGEANTS

Blair, Robert S., 13001794  
Sloat, Floyd B., 17032641

SERGEANTS

Rothberg, Harold A., 32197828

TECHNICIAN GRADE 4

Roberts, Elwyn J., 13025136

CORPORALS

Batson, Allen L., 17052151  
Campbell, Merle C., 19017616  
Watkins, David M., 16053479

TECHNICIANS GRADE 5

Courbier, Clare E., 36117967  
Gordon, Ivan D., 36230113  
Hoglund, Elmer B., 39089187  
McCarty, John M., 36230136  
Ogden, Raymond J., 16044694  
Padgett, Lonnie H., 38072312  
Sawyer, Donald J., 33160177  
Sharwood, Richard G., 39236841  
Shipper, John, 33168009  
Whitman, Harold G., 39385562

PRIVATE FIRST CLASS

Alschuler, Walter W., 39239567  
Baker, Marshal D., 32265572  
Blaisdell, Horace W., 36318468  
Cecilia, Frank P., 36317516  
Dearo, Jose 18015907  
Garcia, Paul M., 39088185  
Gronberg, Ernest J., Jr., 33154324  
Hansen, Dotch, 34211885  
Herbert, Emerson S., 31066693  
Hill, John P., 13049654  
Knutelsky, Emil R., 32214484  
~~R~~ Kornblum, Louis, 32197979  
Mock, Donald L., 38064056  
Montaperto, John S., 32322563  
Niedziedz, Eugene J., 36314804  
Nosworthy, Kieth E., 32198328  
O'Brien, Michael E., 32198405  
Pell, Lesley J., 36235395  
Pisaturo, Dominick J., 32198405  
Prorok, Edmund M., 36314709  
Sanchez, Nicomedes L., 38071297  
Stenwall, Carl E., 32198172  
Vargo, Paul J., 36170739  
Vodicka, Leonard R., 16067957

PRIVATE

Armijo, Nick C., 38071672  
Blass, George (NMI), 32344749  
Boyar, Bernard 32342054  
Carstens, Fred E., 16067928  
Cichy, Stanley, 36317510  
Ferzoco, Felice A., 36300824  
Greenhow, Robert G., 39171840  
Herrera, Ruben E., 38071840  
Livingston, Glenn, 38071840  
Lott, William S. Jr., 32345889  
Malouin, Fernand N., 31071925  
Margolis, Daniel (NMI), 12057604

WAR DIARY OF DETACHMENT "A" 863RD CHEMICAL CO., A.O.(H)

- 14 Oct 42 Pfc Hill trfd to 30th Gen Hosp.  
 2 Nov 42 T/5 Padgett L., Padgett G., Sipper, Pfc Knutelsky, Noworthy, Hanson, Mock, trfd AAF Field 12.  
 26 Dec 42 Pvt Arnijs trfd Det of Pnts.  
 13 Jan 43 Pvt Arnijs jd.  
 17 Jan 43 Pfc Prorek trfd Det of Pnts.  
 25 Jan 43 T/4 Roberts and Pvt Blass trfd Det of Pnts.  
 3 Feb 43 27EM trfd Sta 102; S/Sgt Blair, Sgt Rothberg, Cpl Campbell, T/5s Gordon, McCarty, Ogden, Sharwood, Whitman, Pfc Baker, Cecilia, Garcia, Kornblum, Pisaturo, Montaperte, Stenwall, Pvt Cichy, Carstens, Deare, Ferzoco, Herrera, Heglund, Livingston, Malouin, Margolis, Romito, Sinuk and Arnijs.  
 7 Feb 43 T/4 Roberts jd.  
 15 Feb 43 Pfc Prorek jd.  
 26 Apr 43 T/4 Roberts trfd to 324th Bomb Sq.  
 3 May 43 T/5 Courbier trfd to Hq 863rd Cml. T/5 Pearson trfd Hq 863rd Cml.  
 16 Jun 43 S/Sgt Morrison, Sgt Mihalcik, Cpl Durey, T/5 Birchell, Chin, Gallagher, Van Wychen jd.  
 17 Jun 43 T/5 Hason jd.  
 7 Jul 43 27EM and 1 Off jd; 1st Lt ALAN S. ARIALL, S/Sgt Oestreich, Sgt Rothberg, Cpl Pisaturo, T/5 Gordon, McCarty, Ogden, Sharwood, Whitman, Pfc Baker, Cecilia, Garcia, Kornblum, Montaperte, Stenwall, Pvs Arnijs, Campbell, Carstens, Cichy, Deare, Ferzoco, Herrera, Heglund, Livingston, Malouin, Margolis, Romito, and Sinuk.  
 8 Jul 43 Pvt Lott trfd Hq 1st Bomb Wing.  
 12 Jul 43 Pfc French, Pvt Dempsey, Gorski jd.  
 16 Jul 43 1st Lt GIBBE trfd to 325th Sv Gp.  
 4 Sep 43 1st Lt THOMAS jd.  
 8 Oct 43 T/5 Chin trfd to Air Corp Unasgd.  
 13 Oct 43 Pfc Krasinsky jd.  
 15 Oct 43 Pfc Krasinsky trfd to Hq 863rd Cml Co.  
 7 Nov 43 Pvt Carstens trfd 360th Bomb Sq.  
 9 Nov 43 Pvt Harmon jd.  
 7 Dec 43 2nd Lt ANDELMAN jd.  
 25 Dec 43 1st Lt ZERESKY jd.  
 26 Dec 43 T/5 Boyar trfd to 3rd Sta Comp as of 13 Dec 43.  
 29 Jan 44 Pfc Vodicka trfd to 358th Bomb Sq.  
 5 Feb 44 1st Lt ARIALL trfd to IX Air Sv O.  
 11 Feb 44 2nd Lt ANDELMAN trfd VIII Air Force; 1st Lt CHESTER B. HOVEN jd.  
 12 Feb 44 Pfc Abrams & pvt Price jd; Pvt Harmon trfd 3rd Sta Comp Sq.  
 14 Feb 44 Pvt Hobbs jd.  
 24 Feb 44 Pvt Watkins trfd 359th Bomb Sq.  
 29 Feb 44 Pfc Stenwall trfd 303rd Sta Hosp Det of Pnts.

SECRET

WAR DIARY OF DETACHMENT "A" 863RD CHEMICAL CO., A.O.(H)

9 Mar 44 Cpl Batson trfd Det Pnts; 1st Lt ZERBSKY trfd 20th Repl Con Dep.  
20 Mar 44 Cpl Hester, Pfc Dempsey, Pvt Margolis trfd Hq Sq Det "5" ASC, USSTAT.  
30 Mar 44 Pfc Dempsey, Pvt Margolis jd.  
3 Apr 44 T/5 Tinsley, Pfc Moraga, Miller Pvt Crout jd.  
7 Apr 44 Cpl Batson jd.  
12 May 44 T/5 Tinsley trfd 358th Bomb Sq.  
20 May 44 Pfc Pantaleo trfd Det of Pnts .  
26 Jun 44 T/Sgt Brugger jd.  
12 Sep 44 Sgt Hanson trfd Hq 863rd Cml Co.  
18 Sep 44 Pfc Pantaleo jd.  
25 Sep 44 T/Sgt Brugger trfd 70th Repl Depot.  
30 Oct 44 Pfc Abrams trfd Det of Pnts 4203 US Army Hosp.  
8 Nov 44 T/5 Ogden trfd 303rd Sta Hosp.

**DETACHMENT "A"**  
**863RD CHEMICAL CO., A.O.(H)**  
**A.P.O. 557, U.S.ARMY**

(0 - A - 2)

17 December 1944

**ATTCHD 355TH BOMB SQ (12EM)**

SSN	RANK	N A M E	A. S. N.
870	S/Sgt	Sleat, Floyd B.,	17032641
822	Sgt	Vargo, Paul J.,	36170739
345	T/5	Gordon, Ivan D.,	36230113
786	T/5	Van Wychea, John J.,	36235319
786	Pfc	Cecilia, Frank P.,	36317516
786	Pfc	Garcia, Paul M.,	39088185
786	Pfc	Livingston, Glenn,	38071840
786	Pfc	McCarty, John M.,	36230136
786	Pvt	Campbell, Morle G.,	18017616
786	Pvt	Cichy, Stanley,	36313510
786	Pvt	Berite, Arthur H.,	36318628
786	Pvt	Sanchez, Manuel A.,	38071764

**ATTCHD 359TH BOMB SQ (10EM)**

SSN	RANK	N A M E	A. S. N.
870	S/Sgt	Morrison, James A.,	38053335
786	Cpl	Batson, Allen L.,	1705251
345	Cpl	Durey, Earl J.,	17042804
345	T/5	Birchell, Emmanuel M.,	36318515
786	T/5	Blaisdell, Horace E.,	36318468
786	T/5	Dampsey, Lewis A.,	32498386
786	Pfc	Arnije, Nick,	38071672
786	Pfc	Miller, Harvey H.,	19092514
345	Pvt	Deare, Jose,	18015907
786	Pvt	Heglund, Elmer B.,	39089187

**ATTCHD 360TH BOMB SQ (13)**

SSN	RANK	N A M E	A. S. N.
870	S/Sgt	Oestreich, Milton E.,	19075013
055	Sgt	Rothberg, Harold A.,	32197828
786	Cpl	Peil, Lesley J.,	36235395
345	T/5	Greenhow, Robert G.,	39174382
786	T/5	O'Brien, Michael F.,	32198379
835	T/5	Sharwood, Richard G.,	39236841
786	T/5	Whitman, Harold G.,	39285562
786	Pfc	Gorski, Stanley A.,	32488198
786	Pfc	Grenberg, Ernest J. Jr.,	33154324
786	Pfc	Moraga, Edward,	39568419
786	Pfc	Prorok, Edmund M.,	36314709
786	Pvt	Margolis, Daniel,	12057604
786	T/5	Skidmore, Terry W.,	34703737

**ATTCHD 427TH BOMB SQ (11 EM)**

SSN	RANK	N A M E	A. S. N.
786	Sgt	Mihalcik, Frank J.,	33021576
786	T/5	Herrera, Ruben E.,	38071869
786	T/5	Niedzwiedz, Eugene J.,	36314804
786	T/5	Pearson, George W Jr.,	34211937
786	Pfc	Baker, Marshall D.,	32265572
786	Pfc	Kerablun, Louis,	32197979
345	Pfc	Montaperte, John S.,	32322563
786	Pvt	Blass, George,	32344749
786	Pvt	Crout, Roy B.,	14124809
786	Pvt	Malouin, Fernand E. H.,	31071925
786	Pvt	Strauss, Elias J.,	12063418

**ATTCHD 1681 ORDNANCE S & M (10EM)**

SSN	RANK	N A M E	A. S. N.
835	Sgt	Sawyer, Donald J.,	33160177
786	T/5	Herbert, Emerson S.,	31066693
786	Pfc	Gonzales, Raymond E.,	39283979
786	Pfc	Yards, Frank,	6668568
786	Pvt	DiGregorio, Antonio,	32793384
786	Pvt	Free, Jehanie B Jr.,	38414401
786	Pvt	Garlew, Duane M.,	37341078
786	Pvt	Hobbs, Nathan H.,	39383825
786	Pvt	Price, Charles L.,	39826560
786	Pvt	Sinuk, Peter,	32197855

**DET "A" 863RD CML. CO., A.O.(H) (2OFF & 6 EM)**

SSN	RANK	N A M E	A. S. N.
	1st Lt	THOMAS, COSBY D.,	01037932
	1st Lt	HOVEN, CHESTER B.,	01036199
345	Cpl	Pisature, Dominick J.,	32198405
055	T/5	Alschmaler, Walter W.,	39239567
786	T/5	Gallagher, Edward L.,	32266010
786	T/5	Sanchez, Nicomedes L.,	38071297
786	Pfc	Fantaleo, Phillip J.,	12077643
822	Pvt	Forsoco, Felice A.,	36300824

TOTAL 62EM & 2OFF

SECRET

WAR DIARY OF DETACHMENT "A" 86<sup>TH</sup> CHEMICAL CO., A.O.(H)

FORWARD

This is the story of what happened to the men in one half of a Chemical Co., Air Operations (Heavy) after being detached from its parent organization, in a theatre of operations.

Just who thought up the idea of having a Chemical Co., A.O.(H) is not known at this time. One thing here at Molesworth is known however. That is, that the Detachment never fulfilled its original purpose.

The theory as we understood it was, that in the event of Gas Warfare a full Chemical Co. would be attached to a Bomb Group. The four platoons in the Company would each service a squadron. A Refilling Section of the Company would fill the necessary Chemical Bombs and deliver them to the planes. There the men in the various platoons would take the bombs and load them into the ships. This set up looks good on paper. However it was uncertain as to what the organization would do if gas warfare did not develop, as it is the storage, loading and hauling of incendiary bombs has been the assigned duty of the Chemical Co., Air Operations (Heavy).

At Molesworth an experiment was tried, which experiment is still going on. The Chemical Detachment was broken up and the men were assigned and physically moved to the four bomb squadrons and Ordnance Company. Supposedly, if this system proved satisfactory the whole Air Force would adopt this plan. While the Headquarters of this Bomb Group feels that the experiment has been satisfactory, no other station in England has copied this system. It is doubtful if any other station will do so.

To add to the uncertainty of the matter, the Air Force is considering combining into one organization all the service units of a station. That is of course all except the Chemical Detachment which will retain its identity. Such is the way the Army does things.

The chapters and monthly installments of this diary have been written by the enlisted men of this organization. Its purpose is to reflect the actions, feelings, thoughts and problems of the men themselves. As this is written most of the men have been overseas over two years.

Molesworth, Hunts.,  
England, 1 December 1944

COSBY D. THOMAS,  
1st Lt., OWS,  
Commanding.



WAR DIARY OF DETACHMENT "A" 863RD CHEMICAL CO., A.C.(H)

5 OCTOBER 1942 TO 1 DECEMBER 1944

LIFE AT MOLESWORTH

On 5 October 1942 a small convoy of troops under the command of Captain DAVID E. GROBE JR., (at that time 2nd Lt), arrived at Molesworth. This was part of the Chemical Company that was formed at Spokane, Washington and brought up to full strength by combining men of the 863rd, 516th and 119th Chemical Companies at Richmond Army Air Base before embarking for overseas.

These veterans of two months service in the E.T.O. known as the 3rd & 4th Platoons 863rd Chemical Co., A.C.(H), reported to Station # 107 Headquarters, later to be assigned barracks situated on Site 2. This was an advantage because at this time the Guard Post of the base did not extend past this particular site and therefore the local Pubs were quite easy to get to. This wasn't lasting however as a Detachment of Infantry arrived to take charge of all Base Guard Duty and at the same time erected a new guard post beyond Site 5, which took in our site just a little too well.

Just what our first impressions of Molesworth were, is hard to tell; some enjoyed the move and separation from the rest of the company; others didn't; just as divided were our ideas of Molesworth. It soon became a routine Army Life of Guard Duty, K.P., sweating out a line for chow, weekly Saturday Gas Mask Drill, sweating a line for weekly cigarette and candy rations and regular details.

The first several months of our life on the base were quite different from the present day. There wasn't any American Forces Network to listen to; no editions of Yank or Stars and Stripes to read; very few movies were shown. The pictures we did get a chance to see, if you were lucky enough to get a seat or a place to stand, were either English made or pictures everyone had seen before. An added attraction was the constant breaking down of the projector or electric power. The building nearly burned down one night when an old film that had been patched together once too often jammed, setting the film on fire, however it was extinguished in time. That was the last time we saw this picture, "Two in a Bed." This wasn't the right title for the picture, it was a new name to fool us into seeing the same picture for the fourth time.

We enjoyed no laundry nor dry cleaning service the first several months. This situation encouraged private enterprise. Four ambitious men of the outfit, taking advantage of an opportunity formed a partnership and hung out their shingle. It read: The Snowwhite Laundry Co. Ltd. The company was formed for the purpose of reimbursing a slight deficit in funds used for visiting Leicester and London to indulge in beer and scotch. Prices on each article were regulated but the Company collapsed pay day, the crisis was passed. Soon after our laundry was sent to a commercial laundry once a week. At first you sent nine pieces and were glad to get seven back.

The NAAFI, (Navy, Army, Air Force Institute - British), was one place that offered recreation for the type of fellow who didn't care how maddy or sour the beer was, or how large his head felt in the morning. The beer was strong enough to send some individuals back to the barracks by way of the drain ditch alongside the road. Others

WAR DIARY OF DETACHMENT "A" 867RD CHEMICAL CO., A.O.(H)

stayed to harmonize, if you could call it that, on the old standby ballads until the last glass of beer had disappeared.

The small but growing Bomber Force of that time was hitting at Submarine Pens, Marshalling Yards and other targets on which incendiaries had no effect. Therefore the work for which we were trained was not in demand. The personnel of Detachment was reduced to 23 men by sending the entire Third Platoon to Alconbury on 3 Feb 43. Capt GROBE remained in command of the Fourth Platoon. S/Sgt Sloat became Acting First Sergeant. You could tell by the inspections we had that we were kept busy. Col. KELLLOGG in questioning T/5 Alschuler, our clerk, during a surprise visit was told of 25 details being performed on the same day by 23 men. You just couldn't stop Al when he got started.

Sometimes we didn't have it very easy, for example, one night Capt GROBE received a call from Alconbury for 110 five hundred pound clusters. Most of the fellows had been to the NAFFI during the evening, having a few beers when the call came about nine PM. Eighteen men were available for work. The bombs which were stored in a Nissen hut in the old bomb dump had to be loaded onto a handcart, wheeled out to be loaded on a truck or trailer. Each bomb was still crated weighing about 700 pounds. This was the last good deed we expected to do, by the time we had loaded the last bomb on the truck it was four o'clock in the morning. But we were not to rest yet, we took the bombs to Alconbury where we found the 876th Chemical Co. also crating in bombs. The next order was to load as many planes as we could before take-off time. It was one grand mess. It ended by the Fourth Platoon and the 876th taking nearly half their loads back with them. The sack never looked so good before.

An increase in the use of incendiaries was at this time the turning point of our work schedule. The Third Platoon returned to Molesworth on 7 July 1943, our strength was now two officers and fifty eight enlisted men. Loadings of English 250lb bombs and our own M47 incendiaries were no longer a novelty but a regular occurrence. Rest periods came on the nights High Explosives were used. Our work also consisted of policing our bomb dump area and maintaining a fresh supply of uncrated bombs to be ready for loading. One lot of M47's gave us a little trouble, as we handled them so often you couldn't tell the color they were painted. First we clustered them; loaded them for a mission; unloaded them; unclustered them; hauled them to the old bomb dump; hauled them to the new bomb dump; the payoff came when we had to weigh each bomb to find about 15 bombs that weighed 61 instead of 62lbs they were supposed to weigh.

As operations against enemy objectives increased so did our living conditions improve accordingly. A radio in every barrack, was a necessity when the American Forces Network began broadcasting. At first only two hours a day gradually increasing their schedule. The Yank weekly magazine and daily edition of the Stars and Stripes brought home and world news as American as spearmint gum. The movies improved considerably when a building, known as the Roxy, on Site 7 was designated as the new theater building, a new projector was added, Twentieth Century Fox donated 450 upholstered theater seats. Some of the pictures shown are the very latest. A new bar was opened adjoining the theater. Beer and Coca Cola can be



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purchased from 6PM to 10PM daily. "Duffy's" or the "Gas House" as the place is commonly referred to by the regular customers is the place to make a fortune or lose your bankroll payday betting on the galloping dominos.

Sport highlights of the Company were provided by Pvt Peter Sinuk and Pvt Felice A. Fersoco. Talkative Pete appearing in several fights at the Rainbow Corner, London. After winning his first two fights he lost to the late Vince Kosak, who later became N.T.O. Heavyweight Champ. Pete also boxed in the 8th Air Force Boxing Tournament held recently. Pvt Fersoco played regular shortstop on the Hell's Angeles Baseball team that reached the final playoff in the First Bomber Division Championship, after completing a very successful schedule playing other American Forces teams throughout the U.K.

Now the men are scattered throughout the base. We no longer live together as a Detachment. However we assume that someday when the war is over, we will be brought back together and then proceed to the U.S.A, we hope.

LOADING OF BOMBS

The loading of aircraft with bombs to be dropped on enemy industries or anything that we could demolish or burn to hamper his war effort was the task of two groups, Ordnance and Chemical. These groups each separate were responsible for loading aircraft with fragmentation, high explosive and incendiary bombs. Of these three groups the incendiaries were handled by the Chemical Co., AO(H). As air power increased and personnel strength remained the same Ordnance and Chemical were combined, not officially but just on a detached service status. In my opinion the combining of these groups is much better than keeping them separate. My main reason is this; in the past if the aircraft load called for incendiaries, Chemical alone had a big job to shoulder, because the number of Chemical men was less than half the number of Ordnance men, yet the number of aircraft to be loaded was the same for each group. That was one way the Chemical men benefited when the groups were combined. At one stage of the war the percentage of chemical bombs used was considerably greater than the percentage of ordnance bombs. But at the present I would say the figures are reversed. The one thing I dislike about working with Ordnance is that we practically work every night, whereas if Chemical was separate we would be at work a few nights a week. But the fellows in armament had to be at their planes for every loading before and after the combining of Ordnance and Chemical. So they have it rough either way.

In summer the work is quite agreeable because we often load in daylight and get many a good nights sleep. But summer or winter we are subject to be called to load anytime of day or night. To me it was like an invisible hatchet constantly

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hanging over my head. I had a strong wish that the war would be over before winter set in. These loadings practically every night are far from being a pleasure. To leave that nice warm sack and get up and out in the dark cold night to load somebody's dirty old airplane, well that's what started me on my way of becoming an expert at swearing. I'm going to hate planes for the rest of my life. Gentlemen, if you want to hear a barracks full of swearing, bitching men just be around when the loading order comes in on any winter night just in the middle of their sleep about two A.M. But once they leave the barracks and start to work the griping ends. Every one wants to get it over with and get back to that little sack before it gets cold. The weights of the bombs varies from 20lbs to 200lbs. The 20lb fragmentation bombs are ready fused and in clusters of six making a total weight of approximately 120lbs. The biggest job with these bombs is to uncrate them, remove the fuse tapes plus a few miscellaneous jobs to prepare them for the actual loading. They are lifted by hand. Two men working up in the bay, and two men below. The lifting takes much less time than the preparing. Practically all the men dislike loading any bomb weighing less than 500lbs. The big stuff is easier with less work involved.

The 100lb G.P. or general purpose bomb is all right considering only the preparing such as fastening shackles, toggles, arming wire and safety wire. And the lifting done by hand is not too hard. But the amount of fuses used is high which makes the job nearly twice the work as required by the "big stuff". The toggles are used to sling the bombs double so two can be carried on one station, thereby the bomb load is increased considerably.

The 250lb G.P. can be either cranked up by hand or lifted. The cranking is slow because there are about 20 bombs per plane, each bomb requiring a couple of minutes cranking. Most crews lift by hand because it is quicker. If our planes were equipped with an electric hoist the loading job would be twice as easy.

The 260lb fragmentation bomb is the toughest load of all. Thirty of these for each plane which is just a couple of pounds less than four tons of bombs to each plane and the four man crew may have two or three planes to load.

The 500, 1000, and 2000lb bombs are our favorites. They are handled with hoists, which cuts down on the back-breaking work. The larger bombs take less time and work to load and fuse.

The two types of chemical bombs we have loaded are the M47 rubber and oil filled and the 500lb cluster bomb. The M47 weighs about 65lbs which makes it easy to lift while the 500lb cluster must be handled by the hoist. The tail fin on the 500lb cluster breaks off if tightened too much because it is spot welded. Of course we learn the hard way. The M47 can cause trouble in loading too if the ring inside is

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not removed before the burster is inserted. The burster will not go in far enough and the bomb cannot be fused.

On this job as in practically any job there are many problems a fellow runs into and as usual experience is the best teacher.

The first groups in the E.T.O. fused the bombs before hoisting them up in the plane and no doubt this was the cause of many an explosion. We have dropped bombs from several feet, but luckily our rule is to fuse when the plane is completely loaded. Although I have heard of RDX or Composition B and B2 explosives going off when dropped a few feet.

The revetments in the bomb dumps are open at one end with a four foot high brick and concret wall at either end. Probably this is a safety prequation but if it was possible to have both ends open the crews would not have to wait on each other to get their trailers loaded. Sometimes the "big brass" want the planes loaded in a hurry, we call this a ~~quickie~~ "quickie". That's when everybody is impatient waiting for the crew ahead to get their trailer loaded.

My A-1 morale breaker is the scrubbing of a mission after we load. Everyone is sore then. After working several hours at night to load, and lose a night of sleep, it means that we must unload the following day. Its just like digging a hole and then filling it up again.. We don't mind loading any time if they will always take them out and drop 'em.

I picture our loading crews as just another cog in the gigantic machine of war and wish that our civic leaders do their job well enough to keep us from any war in the future.

AN EVENING WITH THE BOYS

I've never been able to figure out why but it seems that after supper time things begin to pick up somewhat. Up to now we've been working for Uncle Sam, now that we're on our own, I notice a marked difference.

Liberty run tonight. Every one and his brother using the showers at the same time. Half an hour to eat undress, clean up, don the G.I. uniform, grab yourself a seat and to hell with the next man. These boys will boost the morale in town tonight.

Just a little deserted in the barracks now. Couple of the Yard Birds who think they've put in an honest day are stretched out in the sack. A Yogi still writing his gal back in the States as if he had a chance. Big inspection tomorrow. Plenty bitching about it. The war wont be won shinning shoes but the big shots don't

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know that. A few are busy preparing for the ordeal in the morning. There's not a damn thing open, so I think I'll amble not too slowly over to Duffy's.

A few Old Sweats already ahead of me this time. They must have helped the bartender put his apron on. I force a few easy like. Boys are coming in regular now. Must be a bad movie tonight. Some kind of an outlaw brand I'm told. Just about a full house now.

Here's your center of entertainment on the post. You'll see some odd ones here at the Horror House. Big card game in the corner with the combat boys. Pounds floating around free as beer. Half a dozen shaking dice for the best drink in the house-bitters. Far end is not crowded. Some one made a mistake and had a Coca Cola fountain installed there. The tables are full.

One Old Boy has a recruit in the corner giving him an all out snow. I see the recruit is the only one that is hitting the hammer. Looks like the old one will leech him till the joint closes.

Always a live one here at Duffy's. Topic tonight seems to be cigarette shortage. Gripes and groans all over the place. We've won this war months ago here but as yet are still fighting the Civil War. The Chaplain should set up a twenty-four hour service here at the schloge chamber.

I need a break so I guess I'll go over to the Red Cross. I thought that the dinner was bad but I find a few hours later they've moved it here.

Over here's a different type G.I. but a damn good one never the less. Some T Fives beating out some heavy stuff on the piano. He hits a few flat notes but it seems to fit in as it's Korsikeffs, "Flight of the Bumble Bee." Even at that he's got an audience. I don't follow it myself so I push on to the lounge. Reading and writing is the set up here. Couple of fellows making eyes at the Red Cross babe. All they are getting is a mother-in-law smile.

Rugged game of Bingo on tonight. The winner gets fresh eggs. Pays to hang around here some times.

Late chow on over at the messhall so I'll muzzel me a few pork chops, I figure.

The boys on-the line have just finished loading up a few presents for Adolf. I bat the breeze with my buddies a while. They give me the latest dope. You know, right from headquarters - the real stuff. I can always pick up a few Latrinegrams here. If they aint good enough I can always add a little color. I was mainly interested in chow. Since I've got what I wanted I'll move on to the barracks.

Lights will be out in a few minutes. Every one that's left hits the sack. We beat our guns till eleven o'clock, then the news. After that it's quiet.

The boys will stagger in at all hours but so it goes day by day. Same routine. We're all waiting for one day "Sadie Hawkins Day".

Lil Abner

WE LIVE FROM PASS TO PASS OR DO WE LIVE ?

We've been in England now for over two years and most of us are acclimatized, but we still run into new situations everywhere we go.

Most of the men in the outfit are now staying at homes where they are the "adopted son." Yes, the English have been very tolerant and hospitable. They had to be tolerant with us at first, as the braggardly nature of all the Yanks was rather offensive to the quiet and sedate Englishman. As proof of this I offer a few examples in our own company. When we first came over a number of men returned from pass in a slightly "bruised" condition, while others stated upon their return they had a swell time. Just goes to show you there's good and bad everywhere.

For a while, London was the favorite place for all on pass. It seemed to be the only place where all could enjoy themselves. There was one catch, however, and that was the problem of finance. London was probably the first place in England where everything sold at two prices, one for the English and another for the Yank. This was the reason that men began to look for greener and cheaper pastures to graze in.

We can't leave London without mentioning what every Yank termed the "Piccadilly Commandees." They were the girls that found they could make as much in one night walking Piccadilly as they could working a whole week in a war factory, and besides it was sort of patriotic, they were serving the Army. They weren't a bit backward about it either. They paraded their "wares" in every pub and street, and made no bones about what their price was. Not to be propositioned at least twice an evening was quite unusual. It was also interesting to watch the price rise as more and more Yanks entered the country. Yes, London was one place where anyone could be satisfied. There are any number of cinemas, theaters and dances to go to; and there seemed to be an abundance of "liquid refreshments" for those who got thirsty while on pass.

Now we come to those greener pastures I spoke of. Most of the men became tired of spending their month's pay on a 48 hour pass so consequently, they began to branch out into the smaller and more hospitable towns and villages. It was found that just about any place where there were only a few Yanks, you could have a good time on pass and much cheaper; which meant you could enjoy two passes where you could only afford one before. Because of this "branching out" we began to meet the ordinary people of England. Many were invited time and time again to homes on their passes. This has resulted in a better understanding between the Yanks and the English and did much to further Anglo-American relationship. Let me say here that there were times, many times, when the cement binding Anglo-American relationships was cracking, but fast. Most of the misunderstanding was due entirely to differences in language, customs and opinions. With the Yank going to places where he was wanted, such as these private homes, many of these difficulties were overcome.



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Then there were the sightseers and explorers of the outfit. They went to Scotland, and Ireland and long distances in search of the new and old. The one complaint they would make is, it takes so long to travel on the slow moving trains. After exploring these distant realms and being treated as kings and royal potentates they would return broke but happy.

So it goes until the present day, having a good time and making friends with our British Ally.



LML-863-NI  
DEC 1944

TO BE RETURNED TO THE ARCHIVES OF THE AAF HISTORICAL OFFICE	File No. 950 2863-18 cop 1
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SECRET

EIGHTH AIR FORCE  
1ST AIR DIVISION  
DETACHMENT "A" 863RD CHEMICAL CO. A.O. (H)

ATTACHED THREE HUNDRED THIRD BOMB GROUP (H)

HISTORY FOR MONTH OF DECEMBER 1944.

SECRET

597-111

Marriage in The E.T.O.

( Today 18% of the eligible bachelors of this Detachment, who marched down the gang-plank carrying full field-pack and rifle into the E.T.O., have acquired additional equipment, the British, M1, Ball and Chain. Some of the marriages in true military tradition have been of the " shot gun " variety. These marriages have been more than just a " dry-run " for 50% have resulted in an offspring.

The following has been written by one of our men who has enjoyed the holy bonds of matrimony for five months. (The marriage followed a courtship of about one year.)

As I sit here before the fire in my wife's Lancashire home, I cannot help wondering why so many people look upon the marriage of an American Soldier and an English girl as something strange and different from a marriage back in the States.

I cannot see anything strange or unnatural about such a domestic relationship.

Tomorrow I shall leave all this comfort and pleasant indolence of my own hearth and home and go back to the mud and dullness of camp life, but for forty-eight hours, like any married soldier on leave back in the States, I have been a family man, a king in my own castle.

Some men, who have been married over here, are fortunate enough to have their wives living near their camps, but most of us must be content with seeing them on a forty-eight hour pass or an occasional furlough, but we are able to crowd a great deal of real living and happiness into those brief hours together.

My wife and I attempt to live our lives as normally as the army and war will permit, and I don't believe our mode of living varies greatly in pattern from the majority of such marriages.

We spend our leisure hours in much the same way as we would if we were back home. Last night we attended Shaw's Caesar and Cleopatra at a Manchester theater. Today we are spending a lazy Sunday at home, while tonight we shall go dancing, or perhaps to a party at my wife's club, play cards with our friends, or go to a good movie.

We spend our days at the sea shore, in Wales, on Yorkshire moors, in London, or in visiting such places of interest as Stratford-on-Avon and Windsor Castle.

Some days we just lie around in blessed idleness and read, sleep, eat, and sit before the fire dreaming and planning our future in America.

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Marriage in the E.T.O. differs very little from a war marriage in the United States. It is the result of the same old pattern of love and courtship that has resulted in marriage ever since Eve captured Adam with an apple.

The differences, which are the chief headaches of getting married in Britain, lie not so much in English tradition and back ground etc. as in Army "red tape."

In the E.T.O. a man not only has to convince his girl on the advantages of becoming his wife, but must also sell his commanding officer, the station commander and the chaplain on the idea.

This process involves a "Sweating out" period of more than two months during which the soldier's application goes up through channels and back again. (The only exception to this "sweating out" period is the "shot gun" marriage which is not worthy of discussion here.)

Although I have presented my subject material here as largely seen through my own eyes, and there are many phases which I have overlooked, I hope that I have given at least an outline picture of married life in the E.T.O.

In conclusion I wish to emphasise again that we do not consider our marriages in England as something unique and apart from other marriages, and that we take them seriously, and not as a permanent and convenient shack job.

863rd Chemical Co.

GM-863-H1

Dec 1944

Feb 1945

SECRET

MICROFILMED

612-29

S E C R E T

EIGHTH AIR FORCE

FIRST AIR DIVISION

AAF STATION 107

863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, A.O. (H)

DETACHMENT "A"

HISTORY FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 1945

S E C R E T

SECRET

WAR DIARY OF DETACHMENT "A" 86<sup>TH</sup> CHEMICAL CO., A.O.(H) 12 Feb 1945

The History of Napalm as it Happened on AAF Station 107

The story begins in the first week of November, when we received some secret stuff among our regular distribution. Briefly, the project was to bomb bay tanks with an incendiary material, Napalm, and jettison the tanks on the target.

The first thing that took place after we received this secret information was to hold a meeting of C.W.S. Officers and H.C.O.s at Barnham. After this meeting everyone returned to their respective bases to pass on the information which they had received. Everyone was told that the information was "top secret" and not to be discussed with any one not directly connected with the loading. More teletype reports soon followed all still "top secret." Yes it must have been top secret, the first secret to be discussed over a beer, for twenty-four hours following the receipt of the first secret information, I was questioned over the dinner table about a new Fire Bomb.

A few days lapsed and plenty of preparations were being made to comply with the various teletypes and secret reports that we received. Just about this time we were told to go to Barnham and pick up two barrels of Napalm.

The following day we got started with our testing problem because reports were coming in that the Napalm was too heavy in some cases to flow freely. Also about this time ideas were starting to originate and although higher headquarters preferred using the A-6 pump many thought that using air pressure and various other means were better. All this was brought to the attention of 1st Bomb Division and I guess there was only one way to settle the matter and that was for another meeting of all Chemical Officers.

This time I had the opportunity to go along with my C.O. We asked Capt HILL, of this station along because he was qualified as an engineering officer. I want to take this opportunity to say that we had the full cooperation of Sub Depot and Air Corp. Supply to enable us to carry the preliminaries to completion.

By this time nearly everyone was aware of what C.W.S. had up their sleeves and I mean everyone on the base.

In the mean time the squadrons were informed as to what was expected of them in this coming operation. Just about then we received our first consignment of napalm and everyone including myself was on edge.

What ever was to take place from here on in we were prepared for and I might add that it took plenty of toil and sweat to meet the dead line. Speaking of the dead line, this was something else that set us on edge. However the dead line and date prescribed for this operation has come and gone and I can safely say it has been somewhat forgotten by most people connected with it.



WAR DIARY OF DETACHMENT "A" 561RD CHEMICAL CO., A.G.(M) 12 Feb 1945

Shortly after we had our second meeting another was called at Ohelvesten because it seemed they had a few new ideas that were to be discussed. The meeting was called for 1000 hours and as usual things didn't get started until almost noon. When it finally got started we were shown some new adapters, machine made. Then there we went to an aircraft and were shown how these new adapters and two inch hose would work. They ran off two barrels of napalm and the time involved was about 10 minutes. We returned to our respective stations and made all the necessary adjustments. Several days went by and we were relieved of our napalm because it was needed else where. When this happened we all felt sure that all our efforts were in vain. Several weeks later we received our full consignment of napalm which assured us that it might be used after all. This consignment has been in the bomb areas for at least two months and as yet there doesn't seem to be any signs of using it.

I for one would like to see it on its way over Germany preferably over Berlin where it would do its prescribed job instead of taking up space in the bomb areas.

In conclusion I would like to add that they claim that nazi's in Berlin are running short of fuel for their fires. I'm in favor of helping them out by consigning this project to them and delivering it to their front door steps. There should be enough fires and heat to make the Chicago fire of way back look like a small spark.

EIGHTH AIR FORCE  
1ST AIR DIVISION  
DETACHMENT "A" 863RD CHEMICAL CO. A.O. (H)  
ATTACHED THREE HUNDRED THIRD BOMB GROUP (H)

### The Use Of Skymarkers

As refinements and developments in bombing technique were made, an additional duty was absorbed by the Chemical Companies. This additional duty was the loading of skymarker bombs. As will be apparent later, for a considerable period of time, the acid liquid from these skymarkers splashed and splattered up a number of planes on each mission. When these planes returned, the job of cleaning up and washing down fell to the Gas Defense Section of the station. We take this opportunity of thanking our brother Chemics for their help over a long period of time.

The purpose of the skymarker is to leave a trail of smoke in the air so that all planes in the group or combat wing will automatically drop their bombs at the same point. Before skymarkers were used, cloth streamers attached to the fins of the bombs were tried. Because they could not be seen clearly, streamers proved unsatisfactory.

The first experimental use of skymarkers started in September 1943 and their use on a large scale began in October 1943. At first they were not too successful and a number of kinks had to be ironed out. For instance, glass enclosure plates with rubber washers, were found to be too delicate, so it was necessary after much trial and error to substitute bakelite enclosure plates. Another hitch developed, in that, when instantaneous detonation was used, rear planes in the formation were splattered with the acid contents of the skymarker. In many cases the plexiglass of the splattered planes was ruined. To overcome this defect, we used a British delayed fuze (two second delay) which helped considerably. Finally, the American ICC A1 fuze was modified with a delayed detonator which seemed to solve all problems.

The skymarker bomb is an empty M47A2 Incendiary bomb casing, 48.9 inches long, and holds six gallons of liquid. The present filling is Titanium Tetrachloride, better known as FM. At first we used Sulfur Trioxide and Chlorosulfonic Acid, which mixture is known as FS. Because it was so corrosive we discontinued the use of FS.

At this station we have probably used more skymarkers than at most fields, because at one time we were loading lead planes for other groups. The greatest number that we have used in any one given month is 200. The only ships which carry skymarkers are the lead and deputy lead each of which carry two skymarker bombs.

SECRET

EIGHTH AIR FORCE  
1ST BOMBARDMENT DIVISION  
DETACHMENT "A" 86TH CHEMICAL CO. A. C. (H)  
ATTACHED THREE HUNDRED THIRD BOMB GROUP (H)

DETACHMENT "A"  
663RD CHEMICAL CO., A.C.(H)  
A.P.O. 634, FPOUSA

October 5, 1942

2ND LIEUTENANTS

Grobe, David H., Jr., O-903337  
Joyner, Boyd E., O-482632

STAFF SERGEANTS

Blair, Robert H., 17001794  
Blest, Floyd B., 17032641

SERGEANTS

Rothberg, Harold A., 32197828

TECHNICIAN GRADE 4

Roberts, Elwyn J., 13025136

CORPORALS

Batson, Allen L., 17052151  
Campbell, Merle G., 19017616  
Watkins, David H., 16053479

TECHNICIAN GRADE 5

Courcier, Clara E., 36117967  
Gordon, Ivan D., 36230113  
Hoglund, Elmer H., 39089187  
McCarty, John H., 36230136  
Ogden, Raymond J., 16044694  
Padgett, Lonnie H., 38072312  
Sawyer, Donald J., 33160177  
Sharwood, Richard G., 39236841  
Stinner, John, 33168009  
Whitman, Harold G., 39385562

PRIVATE FIRST CLASS

Alschuler, Walter W., 39239567  
Baker, Marshal D., 32265572  
Blaisdell, Horace H., 36318468  
Cecilia, Frank P., 36317516  
Dearo, Jose 18015907  
Garcia, Paul H., 39088185  
Gronberg, Ernest J., Jr., 33194324  
Hansen, Dutch, 34211885  
Herbert, Emerson B., 31066693  
Hill, John P., 17049654  
Knutelsky, Emil R., 32214484  
Kra Kornblum, Louis, 32197979  
Kock, Donald H., 38064056  
Monteperto, John B., 32322563  
Meadswicks, Eugene J., 36314804  
Neworthy, Xiath H., 32198328  
O'Brien, Michael E., 32198405  
Pell, Lesley J., 36235395  
Piscuro, Dominick J., 32198405  
Prorok, Edmund H., 36314709  
Sanchez, Nicomedes L., 38071297  
Stenwall, Carl H., 32198172  
Vargo, Raul J., 36170739  
Vodicka, Leonard H., 16067957

PRIVATE

Ardjo, Nick G., 38071672  
Bliss, George (M.I.), 32344749  
Boyar, Bernard 32342054  
Carstene, Fred H., 16067928  
Cichy, Stanley, 36317510  
Fersoco, Felice A., 36300824  
Greenbow, Robert G., 39171840  
Herrera, Huben H., 38071840  
Livingston, Glenn, 38071840  
Lott, William S. Jr., 32345889  
Malouin, Fernand H., 31071925  
Margolis, Daniel (M.I.), 12057604



WAR DIARY OF DETACHMENT "A" 863RD CHEMICAL CO., A.O.(H)

- 14 Oct 42 Pfc Hill trfd to 30th Gen Hosp.  
 2 Nov 42 T/5 Padgett L., Padgett G., Sipper, Pfc Knutelsky, Howorthy, Hanson,  
 Hook, trfd AAF Field 12.  
 26 Dec 42 Pvt Arrijo trfd Det of Pnts.  
 13 Jan 43 Pvt Arrijo jd.  
 17 Jan 43 Pfc Prorok trfd Det of Pnts.  
 25 Jan 43 T/4 Roberts and Pvt Blass trfd Det of Pnts.  
 3 Feb 43 27th trfd Sta 102; S/Sgt Blair, Sgt Rothberg, Cpl Campbell, T/5s Gordon,  
 McCarty, Ogden, Sharwood, Whitman, Pfc Baker, Cecilia, Garcia, Kerablum,  
 Piscaturo, Montaparto, Stenwall, Pvt Gichy, Carstens, Deuro, Versoco,  
 Barrera, Hoglund, Livingston, Malouin, Margolis, Romito, Sinuk and Arrijo.  
 7 Feb 43 T/4 Roberts jd.  
 15 Feb 43 Pfc Prorok jd.  
 26 Apr 43 T/4 Roberts trfd to 324th Bomb Sq.  
 3 May 43 T/5 Courbier trfd to Hq 863rd Cal. T/5 Pearson trfd Hq 863rd Cal.  
 16 Jun 43 S/Sgt Morrison, Sgt Kinalcik, Cpl Durey, T/5 Birchell, Chin, Gallagher,  
 Van Nychan jd.  
 17 Jun 43 T/5 Hanson jd.  
 7 Jul 43 27th and 1 Ozz jd; 1st Lt ALAN B. ANIALL, S/Sgt Oestreich, Sgt Rothberg,  
 Cpl Piscaturo, T/5 Gordon, McCarty, Ogden, Sharwood, Whitman, Pfc Baker,  
 Cecilia, Garcia, Kerablum, Montaparto, Stenwall, Pvts Arrijo, Campbell,  
 Carstens, Gichy, Deuro, Versoco, Barrera, Hoglund, Livingston, Malouin,  
 Margolis, Romito, and Sinuk.  
 8 Jul 43 Pvt Lott trfd Hq 1st Bomb Wing.  
 12 Jul 43 Pfc French, Pvt Dempsey, Gorski jd.  
 16 Jul 43 1st Lt GROSS trfd to 325th Sv Sq.  
 4 Sep 43 1st Lt THOMAS jd.  
 8 Oct 43 T/5 Chin trfd to Air Corp Unasgd.  
 13 Oct 43 Pfc Krasinsky jd.  
 15 Oct 43 Pfc Krasinsky trfd to Hq 863rd Cal Co.  
 7 Nov 43 Pvt Carstens trfd 360th Bomb Sq.  
 9 Nov 43 Pvt Harmon jd.  
 7 Dec 43 2nd Lt ANDREMAN jd.  
 25 Dec 43 1st Lt ZARBSKY jd.  
 26 Dec 43 T/5 Boyar trfd to 3rd Sta Comp as of 13 Dec 43.  
 29 Jan 44 Pfc Vodicca trfd to 358th Bomb Sq.  
 5 Feb 44 1st Lt ANIALL trfd to IX Air Sv G.  
 11 Feb 44 2nd Lt ANDREMAN trfd VIII Air Force; 1st Lt CHRISTEN D. HOVIER jd.  
 12 Feb 44 Pfc Abrams & Pvt Price jd; Pvt Harmon trfd 3rd Sta Comp Sq.  
 14 Feb 44 Pvt Hobbs jd.  
 24 Feb 44 Pvt Watkins trfd 359th Bomb Sq.  
 29 Feb 44 Pfc Stenwall trfd 303rd Sta Hosp Det of Pnts.



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WAR DIARY OF DETACHMENT "A" 813RD CHEMICAL CO., A.C.(H)

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9 Mar 44 Cpl Batson trfd Det Pnts; 1st Lt ZERNISKY trfd 20th Repl Con Dep.  
20 Mar 44 Cpl Hester, Pfc Dempsey, Pvt Margolis trfd Hq Sq Det "G" ASC, USSTAF.  
30 Mar 44 Pfc Dempsey, Pvt Margolis jd.  
3 Apr 44 T/S Tinsley, Pfc Horaga, Miller Pvt Grout jd.  
7 Apr 44 Cpl Batson jd.  
12 May 44 T/S Tinsley trfd 368th Bomb Sq.  
20 May 44 Pfc Pantaleo trfd Det of Pnts.  
26 Jun 44 T/Sgt Brugger jd.  
12 Sep 44 Sgt Hanson trfd Hq 863rd Cal Co.  
18 Sep 44 Pfc Pantaleo jd.  
25 Sep 44 T/Sgt Brugger trfd 70th Repl Depot.  
30 Oct 44 Pfc Abrams trfd Det of Pnts 4203 US Army Hosp.  
8 Nov 44 T/S Ogdan trfd 303rd Sta Hosp.

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DETACHMENT "A"  
 863RD CHEMICAL CO., A.O.(H) (O - A - 2)  
 A.P.O. 557, U.S.ARMY

17 December 1944

ATQHD 756TH BOMB SQ. (12PM)

SSN	RANK	N A M E	A. S. N.
870	S/Sgt	Sloat, Floyd B.	17032641
822	Sgt	Vargo, Paul J.	36170739
345	T/5	Gordon, Ivan D.	36230113
786	T/5	Van Wychen, John J.	36235319
786	Pfc	Cecilia, Frank P.	36317516
786	Pfc	Garcia, Paul M.	39088185
786	Pfc	Livingston, Glenn	38071840
786	Pfc	McCarty, John M.	36230136
786	Pvt	Campbell, Merle G.	18017616
786	Pvt	Clahy, Stanley	36313510
786	Pvt	Romito, Arthur H.	36318628
786	Pvt	Sanches, Manuel A.	38071764

ATQHD 759TH BOMB SQ. (10PM)

SSN	RANK	N A M E	A. S. N.
870	S/Sgt	Morrison, James A.	38053335
786	Cpl	Batson, Allen L.	1705251
345	Cpl	Darcy, Earl J.	17042504
345	T/5	Birchell, Emmanuel M.	36318515
786	T/5	Blaisdell, Horace E.	36318468
786	T/5	Dempsey, Lewis A.	32498386
786	Pfc	Arnijo, Nick	38071672
786	Pfc	Miller, Harvey H.	19092514
345	Pvt	Dearo, Jose	18015907
786	Pvt	Hoglund, Elmer B.	39089187

ATQHD 760TH BOMB SQ. (13)

SSN	RANK	N A M E	A. S. N.
870	S/Sgt	Oestreich, Milton E.	19075013
055	Sgt	Rothberg, Harold A.	32197828
786	Cpl	Peil, Lesley J.	36235395
345	T/5	Greenow, Robert G.	39174382
786	T/5	O'Brien, Michael F.	32198379
835	T/5	Sharwood, Richard G.	39236841
786	T/5	Whitman, Harold G.	39285562
786	Pfc	Gorski, Stanley A.	32488198
786	Pfc	Gronberg, Ernest J. Jr.	33154324
786	Pfc	Horaga, Edward	39568419
786	Pfc	Prorok, Edmund M.	36314709
786	Pvt	Margolis, Daniel	12057604
786	T/5	Skidmore, Terry W.	34703737

ATQHD 427TH BOMB SQ. (11 PM)

SSN	RANK	N A M E	A. S. N.
786	Sgt	Mihalcik, Frank J.	33021576
786	T/5	Herrera, Ruben E.	38071869
786	T/5	Wiedawieds, Eugene J.	36314804
786	T/5	Pearson, George W. Jr.	34211937
786	Pfc	Baker, Marshall D.	32265572
786	Pfc	Korablun, Louis	32197979
345	Pfc	Montaperto, John B.	32322563
786	Pvt	Blass, George	32344749
786	Pvt	Grout, Roy B.	14124809
786	Pvt	Malouin, Fernand E. N.	31071925
786	Pvt	Strauss, Elias J.	12063418

ATQHD 7681 ORDNANCE S & M (10PM)

SSN	RANK	N A M E	A. S. N.
835	Sgt	Sawyer, Donald J.	33160177
786	T/5	Harbert, Emerson S.	31066693
786	Pfc	Conales, Raymond B.	39283979
786	Pfc	Yards, Frank	6668568
786	Pvt	DiGregario, Antonio	32793384
786	Pvt	Free, Johnis B. Jr.	38414401
786	Pvt	Carlow, Duane M.	37341078
786	Pvt	Hobbs, Nathan H.	39383825
786	Pvt	Price, Charles L.	39826560
786	Pvt	Sinuk, Peter	32197855

DET "A" 863RD CHEM. CO., A.O.(H) (2OFF & 6 PM)

SSN	RANK	N A M E	A. S. N.
1st Lt	THOMAS, COSBY D.	01037932	
1st Lt	HOVEN, CHESTER B.	01036199	
345	Cpl	Pisaturo, Dominick J.	32198405
055	T/5	Alschuler, Walter W.	39239567
786	T/5	Gallagher, Harvard L.	32266010
786	T/5	Sanches, Niconedes L.	38071297
786	Pfc	Pantaleo, Philip J.	12077643
822	Pvt	Fernoco, Felice A.	36300824

TOTAL 62PM & 2OFF

WAR DIARY OF DETACHMENT "A" 86TH CHEMICAL CO., A.O.(H)

FORWARD

This is the story of what happened to the men in one half of a Chemical Co., Air Operations (Heavy) after being detached from its parent organization, in a theatre of operations.

Just who thought up the idea of having a Chemical Co., A.O.(H) is not known at this time. One thing here at Holesworth is known however. That is, that the Detachment never fulfilled its original purpose.

The theory as we understood it was, that in the event of Gas Warfare a full Chemical Co. would be attached to a Bomb Group. The four platoons in the Company would each service a squadron. A Refilling Section of the Company would fill the necessary Chemical Bombs and deliver them to the planes. There the men in the various platoons would take the bombs and load them into the ships. This set up looks good on paper. However it was uncertain as to what the organization would do if gas warfare did not develop, as it is the storage, loading and hauling of incendiary bombs has been the assigned duty of the Chemical Co., Air Operations (Heavy).

At Holesworth an experiment was tried, which experiment is still going on. The Chemical Detachment was broken up and the men were assigned and physically moved to the four bomb squadrons and Ordnance Company. Supposedly, if this system proved satisfactory the whole Air Force would adopt this plan. While the Headquarters of this Bomb Group feels that the experiment has been satisfactory, no other station in England has copied this system. It is doubtful if any other station will do so.

To add to the uncertainty of the matter, the Air Force is considering combining into one organization all the service units of a station. That is of course all except the Chemical Detachment which will retain its identity. Such is the way the Army does things.

The chapters and monthly installments of this diary have been written by the enlisted men of this organization. Its purpose is to reflect the actions, feelings, thoughts and problems of the men themselves. As this is written most of the men have been overseas over two years.

Holesworth, Hunts.,  
England, 1 December 44

COSBY D. THOMAS,  
1st Lt., CWS,  
Commanding.

5 OCTOBER 1942 TO 1 DECEMBER 1944

LIFE AT MOLESWORTH

On 5 October 1942 a small convoy of troops under the command of Captain DAVID E. GROBS JR., (at that time 2nd Lt), arrived at Molesworth. This was part of the Chemical Company that was formed at Spokane, Washington and brought up to full strength by combining men of the 863rd, 516th and 119th Chemical Companies at Richmond Army Air Base before embarking for overseas.

These veterans of two months service in the E.T.O. known as the 3rd & 4th Platoons 863rd Chemical Co., A.C.(H), reported to Station # 107 Headquarters, later to be assigned barracks situated on Site 2. This was an advantage because at this time the Guard Post of the base did not extend past this particular site and therefore the local Pubs were quite easy to get to. This wasn't lasting however as a Detachment of Infantry arrived to take charge of all Base Guard Duty and at the same time erected a new guard post beyond Site 5, which took in our site just a little too well.

Just what our first impressions of Molesworth were, is hard to tell; some enjoyed the move and separation from the rest of the company; others didn't; just as divided were our ideas of Molesworth. It soon became a routine Army life of Guard Duty, K.P., sweating out a line for chow, weekly Saturday Gas Mask Drill, sweating a line for weekly cigarette and candy rations and regular details.

The first several months of our life on the base were quite different from the present day. There wasn't any American Forces Network to listen to; no editions of Yank or Stars and Stripes to read; very few movies were shown. The pictures we did get a chance to see, if you were lucky enough to get a seat or a place to stand, were either English made or pictures everyone had seen before. An added attraction was the constant breaking down of the projector or electric power. The building nearly burned down one night when an old film that had been patched together once too often jammed, setting the film on fire, however it was extinguished in time. That was the last time we saw this picture, "Two in a Bed." This wasn't the right title for the picture, it was a new name to fool us into seeing the same picture for the fourth time.

We enjoyed no laundry nor dry cleaning service the first several months. This situation encouraged private enterprise. Four ambitious men of the outfit, taking advantage of an opportunity formed a partnership and hung out their shingle. It read: The Snowwhite Laundry Co. Ltd. The company was formed for the purpose of reimbursing a slight deficit in funds used for visiting Leicester and London to indulge in beer and scotch. Prices on each article were regulated but the Company collapsed pay day, the crisis was passed. Soon after our laundry was sent to a commercial laundry once a week. At first you sent nine pieces and were glad to get seven back.

The NAAFI, (Navy, Army, Air Force Institute - British), was one place that offered recreation for the type of fellow who didn't care how muddy or sour the beer was, or how large his head felt in the morning. The beer was strong enough to send some individuals back to the barracks by way of the drain ditch alongside the road. Others



WAR DIARY OF DETACHMENT "A" 863RD CHEMICAL CO., A.O.(H)

stayed to harmonise, if you could call it that, on the old standby ballads until the last glass of beer had disappeared.

The small but growing Bomber Force of that time was hitting at Submarine Pens, Marshalling Yards and other targets on which incendiaries had no effect. Therefore the work for which we were trained was not in demand. The personnel of Detachment was reduced to 23 men by sending the entire Third Platoon to Alconbury on 3 Feb 43. Capt GROBE remained in command of the Fourth Platoon. S/Sgt Sloat became Acting First Sergeant. You could tell by the inspections we had that we were kept busy. Col. KILLGORE in questioning T/5 Alschmier, our clerk, during a surprise visit was told of 25 details being performed on the same day by 23 men. You just couldn't stop Al when he got started.

Sometimes we didn't have it very easy, for example, one night Capt GROBE received a call from Alconbury for 110 five hundred pound clusters. Most of the fellows had been to the WAFFI during the evening, having a few beers when the call came about nine PM. Eighteen men were available for work. The bombs which were stored in a Nissan hut in the old bomb dump had to be loaded onto a handcart, wheeled out to be loaded on a truck or trailer. Each bomb was still crated weighing about 700 pounds. This was the last good deed we expected to do, by the time we had loaded the last bomb on the truck it was four o'clock in the morning. But we were not to rest yet, we took the bombs to Alconbury where we found the 876th Chemical Co. also crating in bombs. The next order was to load as many planes as we could before take-off time. It was one grand mess. It ended by the Fourth Platoon and the 876th taking nearly half their loads back with them. The sack never looked so good before.

An increase in the use of incendiaries was at this time the turning point of our work schedule. The Third Platoon returned to Melesworth on 7 July 1943, our strength was now two officers and fifty eight enlisted men. Loadings of English 250lb bombs and our own M47 incendiaries were no longer a novelty but a regular occurrence. Rest periods came on the nights High Explosives were used. Our work also consisted of policing our bomb dump area and maintaining a fresh supply of uncrated bombs to be ready for loading. One lot of M47's gave us a little trouble, as we handled them so often you couldn't tell the color they were painted. First we clustered them; loaded them for a mission; unloaded them; unclustered them; hauled them to the old bomb dump; hauled them to the new bomb dump; the payoff came when we had to weigh each bomb to find about 15 bombs that weighed 61 instead of 62lbs they were supposed to weigh.

As operations against enemy objectives increased so did our living conditions improve accordingly. A radio in every barrack, was a necessity when the American Forces Network began broadcasting. At first only two hours a day gradually increasing their schedule. The Yank weekly magazine and daily edition of the Stars and Stripes brought home and world news as American as spearmint gum. The movies improved considerably when a building, known as the Boxy, on Site 7 was designated as a theater building, a new projector was added, Twentieth Century Fox installed 10 upholstered theater seats. Some of the pictures shown are the very latest. A new bar was opened adjoining the theater. Beer and Coca Cola can be

WAR DIARY OF DETACHMENT "A" 86TH CHEMICAL CO., A.O.(B)

purchased from 6PM to 10PM daily. "Duffy's" or the "Gas House" as the place is commonly referred to by the regular customers is the place to make a fortune or lose your bankroll payday betting on the galloping dominoes.

Sport highlights of the Company were provided by Pvt Peter Sinuk and Pvt Felice A. Ferrero. Talkative Pete appearing in several fights at the Rainbow Corner, London. After winning his first two fights he lost to the late Vince Kosak, who later became N.T.O. Heavyweight Champ. Pete also boxed in the 8th Air Force Boxing Tournament held recently. Pvt Ferrero played regular shortstop on the Hell's Angeles Baseball team that reached the final playoff in the First Bomber Division Championship, after completing a very successful schedule playing other American Forces teams throughout the U.K.

Now the men are scattered throughout the base. We no longer live together as a Detachment. However we assume that someday when the war is over, we will be brought back together and then proceed to the U.S.A. we hope.

LOADING OF BOMBS

The loading of aircraft with bombs to be dropped on enemy industries or anything that we could demolish or burn to hamper his war effort was the task of two groups, ORDNANCE and CHEMICAL. These groups each separate were responsible for loading aircraft with fragmentation, high explosive and incendiary bombs. Of these three groups the incendiaries were handled by the Chemical Co., A.O.(B). As air power increased and personnel strength remained the same Ordnance and Chemical were combined, not officialy but just on a detached service status. In my opinion the combining of these groups is much better than keeping them separate. My main reason is this; in the past if the aircraft load called for incendiaries, Chemical alone had a big job to shoulder, because the number of Chemical men was less than half the number of Ordnance men, yet the number of aircraft to be loaded was the same for each group. That was one way the Chemical men benefited when the groups were combined. At one stage of the war the percentage of chemical bombs used was considerably greater than the percentage of ordnance bombs. But at the present I would say the figures are reversed. The one thing I dislike about working with Ordnance is that we practically work every night, whereas if Chemical was separate we would be at work a few nights a week. But the fellows in Ordnance had to be at their planes for every loading before and after the combining of Ordnance and Chemical. So they have it rough either way.

In summer the work is quite agreeable because we often load in daylight and get many a good nights sleep. But summer or winter we are subject to be called to load anytime of day or night. To me it was like an invisible hatchet constantly



WAR DIARY OF DETACHMENT "A" 86TH CHEMICAL CO., A.O.(H)

hanging over my head. I had a strong wish that the war would be over before winter set in. These loadings practically every night are far from being a pleasure. To leave that nice warm sack and get up and out in the dark cold night to load somebody's dirty old airplane, well that's what started me on my way of becoming an expert at swearing. I'm going to hate planes for the rest of my life. Gentlemen, if you want to hear a barracks full of swearing, bitching men just be around when the loading order comes in on any winter night just in the middle of their sleep about two A.M. But once they leave the barracks and start to work the griping ends. Every one wants to get it over with and get back to that little sack before it gets cold. The weights of the bombs varies from 20lbs to 200lbs. The 20lb fragmentation bombs are ready fused and in clusters of six making a total weight of approximately 120lbs. The biggest job with these bombs is to uncrate them, remove the fuse tapes plus a few miscellaneous jobs to prepare them for the actual loading. They are lifted by hand. Two men working up in the bay, and two men below. The lifting takes much less time than the preparing. Practically all the men dislike loading any bomb weighing less than 500lbs. The big stuff is easier with less work involved.

The 100lb G.P. or general purpose bomb is all right considering only the preparing such as fastening shackles, toggles, arming wire and safety wire. And the lifting done by hand is not too hard. But the amount of fuses used is high which makes the job nearly twice the work as required by the "big stuff". The toggles are used to sling the bombs double so two can be carried on one station, thereby the bomb load is increased considerably.

The 250lb G.P. can be either cranked up by hand or lifted. The cranking is slow because there are about 20 bombs per plane, each bomb requiring a couple of minutes cranking. Most crews lift by hand because it is quicker. If our planes were equipped with an electric hoist the loading job would be twice as easy.

The 260lb fragmentation bomb is the toughest load of all. Thirty of these for each plane which is just a couple of pounds less than four tons of bombs to each plane and the four man crew may have two or three planes to load.

The 500, 1000, and 2000lb bombs are our favorites. They are handled with hoists, which cuts down on the back - breaking work. The larger bombs take less time and work to load and fuse.

The two types of chemical bombs we have loaded are the M47 rubber and oil filled and the 500lb cluster bomb. The M47 weighs about 65lbs which makes it easy to lift while the 500lb cluster must be handled by the hoist. The tail fin on the 500lb cluster breaks off if tightened too much because it is spot welded. Of course we learn the hard way. The M47 can cause trouble in loading too if the ring inside is

WAR DIARY OF DETACHMENT "A" 863RD CHEMICAL CO., A.O.(H)

not removed before the burster is inserted. The burster will not go in far enough and the bomb cannot be fused.

On this job as in practically any job there are many problems a fellow runs into and as usual experience is the best teacher.

The first groups in the B.T.O. fused the bombs before hoisting them up in the plane and no doubt this was the cause of many an explosion. We have dropped bombs from several feet, but luckily our rule is to fuse when the plane is completely loaded. Although I have heard of RDX or Composition B and B2 explosives going off when dropped a few feet.

The revetments in the bomb dumps are open at one end with a four foot high brick and concrete wall at either end. Probably this is a safety precaution but if it was possible to have both ends open the crews would not have to wait on each other to get their trailers loaded. Sometimes the "big brass" want the planes loaded in a hurry, we call this a "quickie". That's when everybody is impatient waiting for the crew ahead to get their trailer loaded.

My A-1 morale breaker is the scrubbing of a mission after we load. Everyone is sore then. After working several hours at night to load, and lose a night of sleep, it means that we must unload the following day. Its just like digging a hole and then filling it up again.. We don't mind loading any time if they will always take them out and drop 'em.

I picture our loading crews as just another cog in the gigantic machine of war and wish that our civic leaders do their job well enough to keep us from any war in the future.

AN EVENING WITH THE BOYS

I've never been able to figure out why but it seems that after supper time things begin to pick up somewhat. Up to now we've been working for Uncle Sam, now that we're on our own, I notice a marked difference.

Liberty run tonight. Every one and his brother using the showers at the same time. Half an hour to eat, undress, clean up, don the G.I. uniform, grab yourself a seat and to hell with the next man. These boys will boost the morale in town tonight.

Just a little deserted in the barracks now. Couple of the Yard Birds who think they've put in an honest day are stretched out in the sack. A Yogi still writing his gal back in the States as if he had a chance. Big inspection tomorrow. Plenty bitching about it. The war wont be won shining shoes but the big shots don't

WAR DIARY OF DETACHMENT "A" 87TH CHEMICAL CG., A.O.(M)

know that. A few are busy preparing for the ordeal in the morning. There's not a damn thing open, so I think I'll amble not too slowly over to Duffy's.

A few Old Sweats already ahead of me this time. They must have helped the bartender put his apron on. I force a few easy like. Boys are coming in regular now. Must be a bad movie tonight. Some kind of an outlaw brand I'm told. Just about a full house now.

Here's your center of entertainment on the post. You'll see some odd ones here at the Horror House. Big card game in the corner with the combat boys. Pounds floating around free as beer. Half a dozen shaking dice for the best drink in the house-bitters. Far end is not crowded. Some one made a mistake and had a Coca Cola fountain installed there. The tables are full.

One Old Boy has a recruit in the corner giving him an all out snow. I see the recruit is the only one that is hitting the hammer. Looks like the old one will leech him till the joint closes.

Always a live one here at Duffy's. Topic tonight seems to be cigarette shortage. Gripes and groans all over the place. We've won this war months ago here but as yet are still fighting the Civil War. The Chaplain should set up a twenty-four hour service here at the schlog chamber.

I need a break so I guess I'll go over to the Red Cross. I thought that the dinner was bad but I find a few hours later they've moved it here.

Over here's a different type G.I. but a damn good one never the less. Some Fives beating out some heavy stuff on the piano. He hits a few flat notes but it seems to fit in as it's Heretikoffa, "Flight of the Bumble Bee." Even at that he's got an audience. I don't follow it myself so I push on to the lounge. Reading and writing is the set up here. Couple of fellows making eyes at the Red Cross babe. All they are getting is a mother-in-law smile.

Rugged game of Bingo on tonight. The winner gets fresh eggs. Fays to hang around here some times.

Late chow on over at the messhall so I'll muzzel me a few pork chops, I figure.

The boys on the line have just finished loading up a few presents for Adolf. I bat the breeze with my buddies a while. They give me the latest dope. You know, right from headquarters - the real stuff. I can always pick up a few latrinograms here. If they aint good enough I can always add a little color. I was mainly interested in chow. Since I've got what I wanted I'll move on to the barracks.

Lights will be out in a few minutes. Every one that's left hits the sack. We beat our guns till eleven o'clock, then the news. After that it's quiet.

The boys will stagger in at all hours but so it goes day by day. Same routine. We're all waiting for one day "Sadie Hawkins Day".

WAR DIARY OF DETACHMENT "A" 663RD CHEMICAL CO. A.O.(H)

WE LIVE FROM PASS TO PASS OR DO WE LIVE ?

We've been in England now for over two years and most of us are acclimated, but we still run into new situations everywhere we go.

Most of the men in the outfit are now staying at homes where they are the "adopted son." Yes, the English have been very tolerant and hospitable. They had to be tolerant with us at first, as the braggardly nature of all the Yanks was rather offensive to the quiet and sedate Englishman. As proof of this I offer a few examples in our own company. When we first came over a number of men returned from pass in a slightly "bruised" condition, while others stated upon their return they had a swell time. Just goes to show you there's good and bad everywhere.

For a while, London was the favorite place for all on pass. It seemed to be the only place where all could enjoy themselves. There was one catch, however, and that was the problem of finance. London was probably the first place in England where everything sold at two prices, one for the English and another for the Yank. This was the reason that men began to look for greener and cheaper pastures to graze in.

We can't leave London without mentioning what every Yank termed the "Piccadilly Commandos." They were the girls that found they could make as much in one night walking Piccadilly as they could working a whole week in a war factory, and besides it was sort of patriotic, they were serving the Army. They weren't a bit backward about it either. They paraded their "wares" in every pub and street, and made no bones about what their price was. Not to be propositioned at least twice an evening was quite unusual. It was also interesting to watch the price rise as more and more Yanks entered the country. Yes, London was one place where anyone could be satisfied. There are any number of cinemas, theaters and dances to go to; and there seemed to be an abundance of "liquid refreshments" for those who got thirsty while on pass.

Now we come to those greener pastures I spoke of. Most of the men became tired of spending their months pay on a 48 hour pass so consequently, they began to branch out into the smaller and more hospitable towns and villages. It was found that just about any place where there were only a few Yanks, you could have a good time on pass and much cheaper; which meant you could enjoy two passes where you could only afford one before. Because of this "branching out" we began to meet the ordinary people of England. Many were invited time and time again to homes on their passes. This has resulted in a better understanding between the Yanks and the English and did much to further Anglo-American relationship. Let me say here that there were times many times, when the cement binding Anglo-American relationships was cracking, but fast. Most of the misunderstanding was due entirely to differences in language, customs and opinions. With the Yank going to places where he was wanted, such as these private homes, many of these difficulties were overcome.



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WAR DIARY OF DETACHMENT "A" 63RD CHEMICAL CO., A.C.(H)

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Then there were the sightseers and explorers of the outfit. They went to Scotland, and Ireland and long distances in search of the new and old. The one complaint they would make is, it takes so long to travel on the slow moving trains. After exploring these distant realms and being treated as kings and royal potentates they would return broke but happy.

So it goes until the present day, having a good time and making friends with our British Ally.

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HISTORICAL OFFICE

File No.

Dec. A  
863<sup>RD</sup> Chemical Co. Air Operations  
March 1945

CML-8632H1  
MAR 45  
991

**MICROFILMED**

6790-30



CML-863-41  
MAR 1945

S E C R E T

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EIGHTH AIR FORCE  
FIRST AIR DIVISION  
AAF STATION 107  
863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, A.O. (H)  
DETACHMENT "A"

HISTORY FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 1945

6990-30

S E C R E T

### The Brain Storm

Once upon a time an idea was born, and as all ideas are born in some one's fertile brain, this too, I suppose was bred in some primate's fetid brain. Now everything, reasoned the brain, is streamlined; airplanes, automobiles, furniture, dishes and even your toilet seat, so why not the Air Corps? Why not?

Det "A" 863rd Chemical Co AO(H) consisted of 65 trained enlisted men. The personnel had received through the Army special training in Chemical Warfare. They had been trained to perform their primary function: hauling, storage, and loading of Chemical Bombs. Det "A" was responsible with Base Ordnance for the maintenance of two bomb dumps. We did our own hauling of incendiary bombs. When a chemical mission was scheduled it was Det "A" that loaded every plane on AAF Station 107. It was Det "A" that fuzed every bomb in each bomb-bay. This then was the primary duty of Det "A": hauling - storage - loading, the complete process from manufacturer to consumer.

Secondly, we acted as a "Sword of Democles," a threat of retaliation should Germany ~~xxxxxx~~ resort to Gas Warfare. We had our plan of defense against gas attack and we were in a position to retaliate within twenty-four hours.

The "Idea" the "Brain" had was simply this: Det "A" as an operating organization should be dissolved; the personnel would be farmed-out to the Bomb Squadrons and Base Ordnance. In the Squadrons the men would form part of a Weapons Section, that would load both H.E. and I.E.'s; hauling would be done by Service of Supply; Base Ordnance would maintain the bomb dumps.

To put the "Idea" into effect the personnel were attached to the several Squadrons. The Headquarters of Det "A" continued to operate, but only as Base Gas Defense, with no control over any of its personnel. The trial was to last for no longer than two months, if it proved a success, the personnel of Det "A" would be assigned to the Squadrons. Det "A" would go pfft as would all Chemical Co.'s A.O.(H) in the European Theater of Operations.

The "Idea" was put into effect 1 March 1944, no decision has been reached to date, 15 March 1945 and Det "A" 863rd Chemical Co AO(H) is the only Chemical Co in the E.T.O. that occupies this unique position.

Today, 15 March 1945, there are 59 enlisted men assigned to Det "A" but still attached to the Squadrons. Of these 16 are doing base details; 27% are not doing the duties for which they have been trained. One man is a PX clerk, another an orderly in the YMCA, two are cooks, two are barbers, and ten are cook's helpers.

The men are orphans, they belong to no one. The Squadrons do not consider them as part of their organization, with a result that they get differential treatment. There is no opportunity for promotion as they are merely attached to the Squadrons, they are doing Squadron work with a Chemical Co. A.O.(H) T.O.

Base Ordnance finds it does not have sufficient men and so it calls on the Squadrons for help, but in so doing there is a decentralization of command and responsibility.

Thus operates an idea.....

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FILE NO.

E M L - 863 - H 1  
APR - 45  
29/1

Det "A"

863 Rd Chemical Co. Air Operations  
April 1945

MICROFILMED

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FILE NO.  
950  
2863-20  
9081

EIGHTH AIR FORCE  
1ST AIR DIVISION  
DETACHMENT "A" 863RD CHEMICAL CO. A.O. (H)  
ATTACHED THREE HUNDRED THIRD BOMB GROUP (H)

APRIL 43



### The Use Of Skymarkers

As refinements and developments in bombing technique were made, an additional duty was absorbed by the Chemical Companies. This additional duty was the loading of skymarker bombs. As will be apparent later, for a considerable period of time, the acid liquid from these skymarkers splashed and splattered up a number of planes on each mission. When these planes returned, the job of cleaning up and washing down fell to the Gas Defense Section of the station. We take this opportunity of thanking our brother Chemics for their help over a long period of time.

The purpose of the skymarker is to leave a trail of smoke in the air so that all planes in the group or combat wing will automatically drop their bombs at the same point. Before skymarkers were used, cloth streamers attached to the fins of the bombs were tried. Because they could not be seen clearly, streamers proved unsatisfactory.

The first experimental use of skymarkers started in September 1943 and their use on a large scale began in October 1943. At first they were not too successful and a number of kinks had to be ironed out. For instance, glass enclosure plates with rubber washers, were found to be too delicate, so it was necessary after much trial and error to substitute bakelite enclosure plates. Another hitch developed, in that, when instantaneous detonation was used, rear planes in the formation were splattered with the acid contents of the skymarker. In many cases the plexiglass of the splattered planes was ruined. To overcome this defect, we used a British delayed fuze (two second delay) which helped considerably. Finally, the American 100 Al fuze was modified with a delayed detonator which seemed to solve all problems.

The skymarker bomb is an empty M47A2 Incendiary bomb casing, 48.9 inches long, and holds six gallons of liquid. The present filling is Titanium Tetrachloride, better known as FM. At first we used Sulfur Trioxide and Chlorosulfonic Acid, which mixture is known as FS. Because it was so corrosive we discontinued the use of FS.

At this station we have probably used more skymarkers than at most fields, because at one time we were loading lead planes for other groups. The greatest number that we have used in any one given month is 200. The only ships which carry skymarkers are the lead and deputy lead each of which carry two skymarker bombs.

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FILE NO.

CML-863 RD-H1  
MAY 45

Det A.  
863<sup>RD</sup> Chemical Co. Air Operations  
May 1945

MICROFILMED



CMH-863-H1

MAY 1945

SECRET

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OF THE AAF  
HISTORICAL OFFICE

File No.  
950  
863-22B

EIGHTH AIR FORCE  
FIRST AIR DIVISION  
AAF STATION 107  
863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY A.O. (H)  
DETACHMENT "A"

HISTORY FOR THE MONTH OF ~~MAY~~ 1945

SECRET

7453-22B

Return to The Fold

The month of May has been a very eventful and merry one for the men of Detachment "A" 863rd Chemical Co (AO\*H). The big news of course was the end of the war in the European Theater of Operations; a lesser event was the return of the enlisted men to the Detachment and their relief from detached service with the squadrons on 1 May 1945. A roster of the present personnel follows:

3rd Platoon

1st Lt HOVEN, CHESTER B., 0103199

Staff Sergeant

Morrison, James A., 38053335

Sergeants

Mihalcik, Frank J., 33021576

Sawyer, Donald J., 33160177

Corporals

Aeschuler, Walter W., 39239567

Greenhow, Robert G., 39174382

Dempsey, Lewis A., 32488383

Durey, Earl J., 17042804

Technicians Grade Fifth

Blaisdell, Horace W., 36318468

Gallagher, Edward L., 32266010

Gordon, Ivan D., 36230113

Herbera, Ruben E., 38071869

O'Brien, Michael F., 32198379

Pearson, George W. Jr., 34211937

Sharwood, Richard G., 39236841

Privates First Class

Armijo, Nick 38071672

Baker, Marshall D., 32265572

Cichy, Stanley, 36317510

Dearo, Jose, 18015907

Ferzoco, Felice A., 36300824

Gorski, Stanley A., 32488198

Privates First Class

Hoglund, Elmer B., 39089187

Livingston, Glenn, 38071840

Margolis, Daniel, 12057604

Pantaleo, Philip J., 12077643

Romito, Arthur H., 36318628

Simuk, Peter, 32197855

Yards, Frank, 6668568

4th Platoon

1st Lt THOMAS, COSBY D., 01037932

Staff Sergeant

Sloat, Floyd B., 17032641

Sergeants

Rothberg, Harold A., 32197828

Vargo, Paul J., 36170739

Corporals

Marshall, Eugene C., 39397395

McCarty, John M., 36230136

Peil, Lesley J., 36235395

Pisaturo, Dominick J., 32198405

Van Wychen, John J., 36235319

Technicians Grade Fifth

Birchell, Emmanuel H., 36318515

DiGregario, Antonio, 32793384

Garlow, Duane M., 37341078

Herbert, Emerson S., 31066693

Niedzwiedz, Eugene J., 36314804

Technicians Grade Fifth cont.

Sanchez, Nicomedes L., 38071297  
Whitman, Harold G., 39285562

Privates First Class

Blass, George, 32344749  
Campbell, Merle C., 19017616  
Crout, Roy B., 14124809  
Failla, Frank A., 11103844  
Garcia, Paul M., 39088185  
Gronberg, Ernest J., 33154324  
Kornblum, Louis, 32197979  
Miller, Harvey H., 19092514  
Montaperto, John S., 32322563  
Prorok, Edmund M., 36314709  
Sanchez, Manuel A., 38071764  
Strauss, Elias J., 12063418

Acting First Sergeant

S/Sgt Milton E. Oestreich, 19075013

During the period 1 Jan 45 to 15 May 45 we lost eight of our men. Two were sent to the States, 26 Mar 45, Cpl Allen L. Batson, 17052151 and 16 Apr 45, Pfc Charles L. Price, 39826560. The other six enlisted men were reconverted into the Infantry: 23 Feb 45, Pfc's Raymond E. Gonzales, 39283979 and Nathan H. Hobbs, 39282825; 28 Mar, T/5 Terry W. Skidmore, 34703737 and Fernand N. Malouin, 31071925; 20 Apr, Pfc's Frank P. Cedilia, 36317516 and Johnnie B. Free, 38414401.

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HISTORICAL OFFICE

FILE NO.

CM L-86384 H1  
June 45

86384 Chemical, Air Operations  
June 1945

MICROFILMED

**SECRET**

CML-863-H1

JUNE 1945

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EIGHTH AIR FORCE  
1st AIR DIVISION(H)

863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY AO (H)

Period Covered: 1 June, 1945 to 30 June, 1945.

PREPARED BY:

*Wayne A. Cupper*  
WAYNE A. CUPPER,  
Captain, A.C.,  
Commanding, 863rd Cml Co.

74-53-23

**SECRET**



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UNIT HISTORY OF THE 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (C)

JUNE, 1945

- Hqtrs. 1st & 2nd Platoons

- 1 June, 1945 - Pfc's Edward J. Krasinski, Kinzy Lockart, Jr, Robert G. McQuide, Rollie E. Johnson and Louis C. Miller transferred to 872nd Chemical Co. (AO) at Station # 142 per para. 30, SO # 149, Hq. 1st Air Division, as amended by SO # 150, para. 37, Hq. 1st Air Division.
- 2 June, 1945 - S/Sgt. Harman E. Blennerhassett sent to 163rd General Hospital.
- 3 June, 1945 - Pfc. Manfred P. Palombo sick in quarters.
- 5 June, 1945 - Pfc. Manfred P. Palombo returned from sick in quarters.
- 6 June, 1945 - Cpl. Emil R. Knutelsky transferred to 1st Bombardment Wing (H) per para. 8, SO # 156, Hq. 1st Air Division.
- 8 June, 1945 - Pfc. Andres Alvarado A.W.O.L.
- 9 June, 1945 - Pfc. Andres Alvarado from A.W.O.L. to Duty.
- 10 June, 1945 - S/Sgt. Harman E. Blennerhassett returned from 163rd General Hospital.
- 12 June, 1945 - Capt. Wayne A. Cupper departed for DD at HQ. 8th Air Force per para. 9, SO # 158, Hq. 1st Air Division. Lt. Boyd F. Joyner assumed Temporary Command.
- 13 June, 1945 - Six Officers, 50 Enlisted Men attached to Company from 857th Bomb Squadron, per V.O.C.G., 1st Air Division. S/Sgt. Clare F. Courbier departed for Barry Glamorgan, Wales on TDY per para. 4, SO # 121, Hq. AAF Sta 121. T/5 Robert B. Wolfe and Pfc. Bernard Fogel attached to Company from Hq. Eastern Base Section per para. 1, SO # 122, Hq. AAF Station 121.
- 14 June, 1945 - Capt. Wayne A. Cupper returned from TDY at HQ. 8th Air Force. Lt. Boyd F. Joyner relieved from Temporary Command. Pfc. John Sipper transferred to 70th Reinforcement Depot, Station # 569, per para. 1, SO # 164, Hq. 1st Air Division.
- 15 June, 1945 - S/Sgt. Clare F. Courbier returned from Barry Glamorgan, Wales.
- 23 June, 1945 - Capt. Arthur G. Nugent, MC attached to Company for TDY from Hq. 1st Bomb Wing (H) per para. 9, SO # 172, Hq. 1st Air Division.
- 26 June, 1945 - S/Sgt. C.F. Courbier, Cpl. Michael Malangone, T/5's D.L. Mock, R.L. Tucker, S.J. Alcorn and Pfc. Gustave H. Tillman departed for Barry Glamorgan, Wales, per SO # 175, para. 4, Hq. 1st Air Div.
- 29 June, 1945 - S/Sgt. C.F. Courbier, Cpl. Malangone, T/5's Mock, Tucker, Alcorn, and Pfc. Tillman returned from Barry Glamorgan, Wales.

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UNIT HISTORY OF THE 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (HEAVY)

JUNE, 1945: Cont.

-- Hqtrs. 1st & 2nd Platoons--

The first of June gave us our first inkling as to what was to happen to our Company. We were alerted to move to AAF Station # 102 within 21 days after the departure of the Bomb Group. It certainly looks as if we shall finish our tour in the U.K. just as we started it -- at Alconbury.

On 2 Jun, Capt. Cupper was appointed, in addition to his countless other duties, the job of Station Mess Inspection Officer.

The 3rd of June brought the pealing of wedding bells for the ace driver of the Company. Cpl. Harold E. Yenny married the lovely W.A.A.F. he had been pursuing for some-time.

During the first week in June, and through until the 9th, all the A/C on the Station departed for the United States. Each ship had twenty men on board and all told there were 72 Fort's. Almost half of the Stations personnel were lucky enough to fly home.

Through all this excitement, we had completed reshipping all our C.W.S. munitions and cleaning up the Incendiary Bomb Dump thoroughly. At the same time the Bomb Squadrons and the Air Service Group were feverishly packing all their equipment and repairing for their return to the Zone of Interior. Once this was done they were set to leave. Starting on the 21st June the redeploying personnel started leaving for Greenock, Scotland where they were to board the Queen Elizabeth. By the 23rd the last of both groups had left. It was pretty bad for the morale of the men remaining to see all those men going home and we having to remain.

On the 25th of June, 1st Bombardment Wing departed for Station # 102 for eventual redeployment to the U.S. On the same day - 6 Officers and 50 Enlisted Men from the 857th Bomb Squadron were attached to the Company. These men were to make up the Holding Party.

Immediately after the departure of the 1st Bombardment Wing, we and the Holding Party proceeded to tackle the very irksome task of cleaning up the Station. The H.E. Bomb Dump had hardly been touched and a very rough job we had to grapple. All the barracks areas had to be policed up - a task that should have been done by the departing units but was left in our laps. Q.M. material had to be picked up and packed, and countless other jobs had to be done. The men to do the various jobs were indeed few, so every man was to put in long, hard hours getting the Station in shape.

This month was to culminate with our company's morale sinking as low as could possibly be imagined. Let us take a reading and see what had caused this: After working wide by side with the 91st Bomb Group for almost 3 years, we had hoped, and to some degree expected, that we would go wherever the Group went, however, this wasn't to be. They were 21'd and we remained behind. Can we be blamed for being disappointed? The next thing to lower our already falling morale was to be handed as a reward, for three years of operational duty handled efficiently and faithfully, the lowly and menial task of cleaning up the Station. What recognition for services rendered! Now add to that the news that we were in

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UNIT HISTORY OF THE 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (HEAVY)

JUNE, 1945: cont.

the category for occupation Air Force. Since the majority of our men had an average of 72 points, we could not be redeployed to the U.S. as the Group was. We had not received Battle Participation Stars as they had, notwithstanding the fact that we had worked along side them doing the same tasks for almost three years. Apparently we, a service unit, were to be classified as an Air Force unit with less than half our service overseas. Now to top all this we received notification that we were definitely to leave for the Occupation Air Force in Germany sometime in August. It seems that every effort is being made to have our organization attain some sort of record for overseas service without a return to the United States. We are like the old punching-bag. There is not much more that could be done to us that would hurt to any degree.

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UNIT HISTORY OF THE 863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY, AIR OPERATIONS (HEAVY)

JUNE, 1945: Cont.

AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Fursuant to authority contained in Executive Order No. 8809, as amended by Executive Order No. 9323, and under the provisions of AR 600-68, the GOOD-CONDUCT MEDAL was awarded to the following enlisted men for exemplary behavior, efficiency and fidelity:-

S/Sgt. Harman E. Blennerhassett  
S/Sgt. Clare F. Courbier  
Cpl. Philip J. LaMonica  
Tec 5. Walter F. Matthews  
Tec 5. Hyman Weidich  
Pfc. Robert W. Gillmore

This brings our Company as close as very few companies get to a perfect record in Good-Conduct Medal awards.

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