

C O N F I D E N T I A L

HEADQUARTERS
771ST CHEMICAL DEPOT COMPANY (AVN)

JLG/elk

APO 690, c/o PM
New York, N. Y.
3 May 1945

SUBJECT : Organization History for April 1945.

TO : Intelligence Section, Attention: Historical Officer, Headquarters,
Army Air Forces, India Burma Theater, APO 671.
(THRU: Intelligence Channels.)

The company's strength increased from 74 to 76 EM assigned during the month of April, one sergeant, 870, and one private, 256, though these two men are pending assignment to another organization. There was no change in officer strength, four officers assigned, one Major, one Captain and two First lieutenants.

A new work schedule for the base was placed in effect 2 April. Work Call was scheduled at 0550 and Recall 1300 hours. This work schedule appears to be excellent, since duty is performed during the coolest hours of the day. One afternoon a week each individual is required to work three hours to maintain a minimum of forty five hours a week. Stationed in India, it is necessary to work during early hours due to extreme heat. Seven one ton containers were noted to be leaking on this date, one requiring a new valve to be replaced.

Excavating equipment was obtained on 3 April for digging large holes to dispose M17A2 bomb casings. Prior to this, coolies were used to dig holes but since the decanting project is under way, more disposal pits are required and civilian personnel were unable to keep pace. Emptying bombs was halted for a few days due to the fact pits were not available. One wagon was loaded with FS and shipped to APO 487 accompanied by two train guards from this unit.

Two EM departed for APO 492 three days later to attend Chemical Munition School for a period of ten days.

The contents of the warehouses had to be removed for pouring concrete floors. CPWD started this project on the 9th, approximately ten days required to complete the job. Sufficient time had to pass permitting the cement to harden before material could be stored in the warehouses.

On 11 April, Headquarters, India Burma Air Service Command, APO 671 awarded the organization, The Meritorious Service Unit Plaque "for superior performance of duty in the execution of exceptionally difficult tasks and for achievement and maintenance of a high standard of discipline during the period of 6 June 1944 to 1 March 1945". All personnel of this unit are responsible for the citation resulting from cooperation and devotion to duty.

A large shipment of FS was made to Victoria Mills consisting of four Air Corps trailers on 11 April. It was necessary to make this shipment by motor because the shipping order was urgent.

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The following day the 400 mark had been attained for decanting bombs in one day. The weather was helpful being much cooler and personnel could work in protective clothing easier than while the temperature and humidity was so high. A number of men received burns from working in mustard, some serious enough for hospitalization. Sick call averaged fifteen and twenty men daily for the following two weeks. Working in impregnated suits and gas masks made working conditions nearly unbearable.

Two men were sent to Rest Camp on 13 April to Darjeeling located in the mountains. Additional coolies were obtained from civilian personnel to work the afternoon shift. These coolies were used for general details about the ACP.

A request was made to the Commanding Officer, 305th Air Service Group for additional military personnel, however the request wasn't fulfilled until 16 April when they reported for duty. It was necessary to call for outside assistance because of the number of men burned from vapors. Three days later 30 colored EM and one white officer reported for duty from 769th Chemical Depot Company of the 20th Bomber Command to assist in the project of decanting bombs. Their first day of duty, 510 bombs were emptied. This was a record for decanting project to date, however the following day 637 M47A2's were decanted.

Working nearly the entire month on decanting the M47's, the job terminated on 27 April, approximately 5000 bombs emptied filling nearly 1200 drums. The worse lot numbers were decanted and certain M47A2 bombs will be shipped to APO 671 and thence by boat to the Bay of Bengal for disposal. On the same day approximately 40 of the 80 coolies working at the ACP failed to report for work due to fear of war gases.

An incoming shipment of 33 wagons of M70 bombs arrived on 29 April and two more shipments were expected within the next few days. Preparations were made for 150 wagons of M70's for storage in the revetment area.

Looking back over the month of April, a great deal of work had been accomplished and more is expected for the coming month.

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