

ASC History Newsletter



This MONTH in military history...

**1777: Lafayette arrives
in South Carolina**

**1846: California's Bear
Flag revolt begins**

**1862: J.E.B. Stuart
rides around the Union
Army**

**1864: Grant pulls out
of Cold Harbor**

**1876: Journalist files
'modern' report on Lit-
tle Big Horn**

**1940: Edsel Ford
agrees to manufacture
Rolls-Royce engines for
war effort**

**1954: First nationwide
civil defense drill held**

**1973: Kissinger and Le
Duc Tho sign final Viet-
nam peace agreement**

**1987: Reagan chal-
lenges Gorbachev to
tear down Berlin Wall**

Member of the 108th Colored
Infantry Regiment



LAP in 2000-2003

In 2000, with the creation of the Operations Support Command (OSC) the Logistics Assistance Program (LAP) transitioned from AMC HQ and LOGSA to Rock Island. LAP was seen by the OSC as a key player in Army readiness and gathering logistics intelligence to extend AMC's face to the field. The LAP program was administered at Rock Island, while much of the day-to-day management was run by AMC CONUS in Atlanta, and executed by the Logistics Assistance Offices (LAOs) in the field.

In the period after OSC assumed responsibility for the program, staff at Rock Island and Atlanta continued ongoing work to improve the LAP program in terms of deployability. In August 2001 AMC received the first Multi-Media Communications Systems (MMCS) and Early Entry Life Support (EELS) systems. MMCS was a state of the art digital satellite comms suite providing unclassified and classified voice, computer, internet, and VTC. EELS provided tents and basic furniture for working and living space in a bare environment. While some of these items were on hand and more in the pipeline, the LAP pro-

gram still did not have power generation to run the sets or vehicles to transport them. As in Desert Storm and every operation and exercise before and since, the LAOs remained reliant on the supported unit for power and transportation. Unfortunately, GWOT did not wait until the LAOs were completely deployable.

Just six weeks after the 9/11 attacks, Special Operations Forces were spearheading the collapse of the Taliban government in Afghanistan. Their support base was at Karshi-Kanabad Airbase (K2), Uzbekistan. By December 2001 the LAO from Ft Drum had deployed to the base and the LAP, using a LSE Chief and LMS from OSC and LARS from across AMC, was ensuring support. (NOTE: At the time doctrine was that the term "LAO" would change to Logistic Support Element (LSE) when deployed to contingency operations.) Reachback to CONUS provided by the MMCS system was critical in supporting the force at K2 and in Afghanistan. By January 2002 LSEs were also in place in Bagram and Kandahar. In these cases, while life support was bare-base, tactical CSS units provided the LSEs with power and transportation. Essentially operating out of fixed bases, transportation was

not a major issue until the expansion of FOBs in 2003-2004 and by then some leased vehicles were in use.

With the assault into Iraq in May 2003 the situation for the LSEs was much more difficult. While provided with MMCS and EELS, the LSEs still did not have power or vehicles. The LSE SWA at Camp Arifjan was able to provide the 3ID LSE with vehicles, but as the APS fleet was drained, the follow on LSEs were destitute—essentially bumming rides from their customers. None of the LSEs had proper power. The LSEs were often driven to trading for support. The MMCS was, in fact, more advanced than the tactical comms in the CSS units, and DISCOM commanders relied on MMCS to talk and transmit data. When LSE Iraq was established in June 2003 the commander reached back to AMC Fwd Europe for vehicles and power. While this demonstrated the long reach of the LAP program, it also underscored the shortages and drove OSC to fix the problems for the future.



LSE Iraq living areas in Aug 2003

Guards of the Rock Island Prison Barracks

During the American Civil War, 1861-1865, the United States Army returned to Rock Island. This second period of federal occupation began on 11 July 1862 when the United States Congress passed an act which established an arsenal on Rock Island. The next year, the Army Ordnance Department started construction of a storehouse on the western tip of the island. Several months prior to initial construction of this building the U.S. Army Quartermaster Department began to build a prisoner of war camp on the north central section of the island. The barracks needed to accommodate 10,000 prisoners and construction began in August 1863.

The Confederate prisoners were guarded by troops of the 4th Regiment of the Veterans Reserve Corps, the 37th Iowa Regiment, various "100 day" volunteer regiments; and the 108th U.S. Colored

Infantry Regiment. The 4th Invalid Corps Regiment was a veteran reserve organization comprised of wounded soldiers who were no longer fit for regular military service. These men were the guards when the prison camp opened in December 1863 but would only stay for a little over one month.

Replacing the 4th Regiment was the 37th Iowa Volunteers, commonly known as the "Graybeard" regiment made up of men too old for conscription. The regiment of "graybeards" was exclusively comprised of men forty-five years of age or older; 428 men over the age of fifty, 145 of which were in their sixties, and one man who was eighty. The uniqueness of being the oldest regiment to serve in the U.S. Army initially earned the regiment celebrity status in the north, because among these troops were men who had prior military service dating back to the War of 1812. The "Graybeards"

would remain guards until September of 1864.

Finally, on 24 September 1864, the U.S. 108th Colored Infantry Regiment arrived by train to assume guard duty at the Rock Island Prison Barracks. The regiment's recruits, primarily from the slave population of north-west central Kentucky, enlisted for a three year term of service.

Confederate prisoners first expressed indignation, then anger, over the prospect of armed former slaves in uniform guarding over them. Prisoners accused the guards of firing without provocation into their barracks and shooting prisoners without cause. However, in at least one recorded instance, a committee reviewed all the evidence and the guard was acquitted of any blame. The 108th Colored Infantry Regiment remained at Rock Island until May 1865.