



THIS MONTH in MILITARY HISTORY

- 1775 American Revolution begins with the opening shots fired at Lexington and Concord.
- 1818 GEN Jackson seizes St. Marks, Florida from Seminole Indians.
- 1818 U.S. Army Medical Corps is formed.
- 1836 Battle of San Jacinto.
- 1846 Battle of Cerro Gordo.
- 1861 The American Civil War begins as Confederates fire upon Fort Sumter.
- 1865 Confederate capital at Richmond surrenders to Union Troops.
- 1917 U.S. Enters World War I on the side of the Entente.
- 1945 Nazi concentration camp Buchenwald is liberated.
- 1954 1st army helicopter battalion formed at Ft. Bragg.

TRIVIA

- 1 What 2001 battle included “the first American cavalry charge of the twenty-first century?”
- 2 What was the name of the U-2 pilot who was shot down by Soviet anti-air defenses while on a recon mission in 1960?
- 3 What year did fire destroy the power plant at Rock Island Arsenal?

ANSWERS FOR MARCH 2020 QUESTIONS

- 1 What was the Army depot established in 1918 that was subordinate to Rock Island Arsenal?
➤ Savanna Proving Ground
- 2 What year were atomic artillery rounds finally removed from U.S. military inventory?
➤ 1992
- 3 On what date did the last active German garrison surrender during World War II?
➤ 4 September 1945



A view of the towers that supplied telodynamic power to the stone shops south of Rodman Avenue (Arsenal Row).

For answers to trivia, information on this month’s artifact spotlight, digital copies of old newsletters and more, visit the ASC History Office website at:
<https://aschq.army.mil/About-Us/History>



The 404th Army Field Support Brigade

The 404th AFSB was activated as a MTOE unit on 16 October 2008. Her initial mission was to manage all LAP, ARFORGEN and RESET missions as the single point of entry to AMC for units on the Pacific Rim, excluding units in Korea. The mission stretch covered the Western seaboard as far inland at Ft Irwin and Ft Huachuca.

Like all other AFSBs, the 404th has a back history as a TDA unit. In FY2003 Logistics Support Element-Forward Stryker was established at Ft Lewis, WA as a subordinate of AMC CONUS. In FY2003 the LSE-Forward Stryker organized the first Stryker LSE and prepared to deploy to SWA. During FY04 LSE-Forward Stryker was reorganized as AMC Forward Stryker and assigned as a direct subordinate of the Army Field Support Command. AMC Forward Stryker was critical to developing doctrine, policy, and Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for the support of Stryker units.

In FY04 AMC Forward Stryker developed the OPTRAKS system to manage logistics actions and personnel accountability of the heavily contractor supported Stryker brigades. In FY2005 the mission of AMC Forward Stryker was expanded to provide C2 of the Logistics Assistance Program in the Pacific Rim. On 15 Aug. 2005 AMC Forward Stryker was renamed the Army Field Support Brigade Pacific.

The AFSB-Pacific’s new mission statement significantly expanded the area of responsibility and mission support requirements. The new command emphasis is Reset, Pre-

deployment Training and Preparation, and Transformation of the 25th Infantry Division, 45th Corps Support Group (now 8th TSC), and separate units of United States Army Hawaii. The AFSB-Pacific also continued to manage the generation and training of LSEs for new Stryker brigades.

During FY05 AFSB-Pacific began to create the first Brigade Logistics Support Teams to further meet the needs of the transforming Army to a brigade centric organization. In October 2007 the AFSB-Pacific was renamed the 404th Army Field Support Brigade-Pacific (Prov) in anticipation of the 2008 conversion to MTOE.

By 2007 the brigade was completely involved in RESET and ARFORGEN and had ‘expanded to include responsibility for the AFSBn’s in Hawaii, Alaska, and Ft Lewis and LSEs at Ft Irwin, Ft Huachuca and Ft Wainwright. On 1 Oct 2012 the 404th AFSB assumed C2 of 6 Logistics Readiness Centers (LRCs) and on 1 Oct 2013 assumed C2 of 3 additional LRCs, giving the 404th AFSB C2 over all LRCs within its footprint.

Today the brigade is aligned with I Corps, but operates from coast to coast From JBLM to APS3 at AFSBn-Charleston. The unit also controls LRCs across the Northern tier in the US including RIA, McCoy, Devens, Natick and others. Despite the many name changes and mission growth the 404th Army Field Support Brigade has remained true to its motto and continues to “Sustain to Win.”

The Telodynamic System

When the Arsenal was first being constructed one significant challenging was providing a power source to the ten stone workshops. When the stone workshops were constructed (1866-1892), electrical power was not yet feasible and a major obstacle to any power supply was the distance between the source of power (Sylvan Slough) and the buildings where the power was required. The Arsenal, therefore, adopted a concept by which power could be transmitted mechanically from the dam to the arsenal shops. This concept, known as the “telodynamic system,” would be economical to install and allow the Arsenal time to develop a more complicated rigid shaft system in future years. Using the telodynamic system to transmit power over a great distance had yet to be tried in the United States. Major Flagler, the 3rd Arsenal Commander, corresponded with several European firms that had manufactured wire-rope and had built telodynamic systems in Germany and other European countries to get a better understanding of how to properly construct a telodynamic system. Beginning in 1874, Major Flagler had all gear work and shafting for the power system manufactured at Rock Island Arsenal’s foundry and shops, and in conjunction with the power system, Major Flagler ordered metal to produce the castings needed for the power system. The telodynamic system was installed in 1878, and the first use of Arsenal water power in the shops occurred in February 1879.

The telodynamic system mechanically transmitted power to the Arsenal shops by using water, which passed through openings at the dam, to rotate turbines. The rotation of the turbines was transferred through gears which, in turn, rotated a large drive wheel. This wheel, fifteen feet in diameter, functioned as a large drive pulley from its location inside a power house adjacent to the dam. An endless cable loop extended from this ground station northward along First Avenue to a pulley at the top of a tower. From there, wire-

cables, one inch in diameter, formed loops which turned additional elevated wheels at the rear of the shop buildings situated south of Rodman Avenue. Long main drive shafts ran just below the ceilings of each shop area, constantly rotating when the telodynamic system was activated. Individual machines were powered by engaging a clutch drive belt connected to the overhead shaft. By 1890, the combination of wire-cable and rigid shafting to generate power was inefficient and obsolete. The Arsenal’s makeshift arrangement provided limited power to a portion of the Arsenal shops.

All the shops that comprised Arsenal Row on the south side of Rodman Avenue, with the exception of Shop A (102), had access to the power carried by the telodynamic system. However, only Shops C and E (Bldgs. 104 and 106) actually received power from the wire cable and tower arrangement. Power failures occurred frequently due to friction which jammed the shafts; and at times, due to cables which snapped or developed too much slack. Also by 1890, technology in the transmission of power had advanced to such a degree that it became feasible to update the Rock Island power system. While the telodynamic system did not provide the energy supply required for the Arsenal at the beginning of the twentieth century, the system remains an engineering marvel.



These are historic times, my friends...

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Presented to you by your friendly ASC History Office. Feel free to call or stop by our office for any of your history needs.

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