



THIS MONTH'S MILITARY HISTORY

- 1862 MG McClellan will be replaced in the Pennsylvania Campaign by President Lincoln.
- 1898 The U.S. Navy begins its occupation of Manila Bay as the Spanish-American War wanes.
- 1916 Germany suspends its unrestricted submarine warfare against American vessels.
- 1945 During Operation *CHOW HOUND*, 700 tons of food is air-dropped into Holland.
- 1954 The French are pushed out of Vietnam after their defeat at Dien Bien Phu.
- 1960 CPT Gary Powers is shot down over Soviet airspace in his U-2 spy plane.
- 1961 USN CDR Alan B. Shepard, Jr. is the first American in space.
- 1980 The first female cadets graduate from all branches of military academies in the U.S.
- 1994 The U.S. completes the decommissioning of targeted nuclear strike sites.
- 2011 Osama bin Laden is killed in an assault by the DEVGRU U.S. Navy SEALs.

TRIVIA

- 1 What two commands were merged to create the former Industrial Operations Command?
- 2 What was the air campaign that was launched in 1998 against Iraq after they had failed to comply with UNSC resolutions?
- 3 What was the weapon system fielded by the USMC during Vietnam featured six 106 mm recoilless guns?

ANSWERS FOR APRIL 2021 QUESTIONS

- 1 Of the two prototype atomic bombs used in 1945, which one saw production as an atomic device following World War II?
➡ **Fat Man**
- 2 What was the principle airfield used by B-29's in strikes against the Japanese in the Pacific Theater during World War II?
➡ **North Field, Tinian**
- 3 What conflict in Southeast Asia erupted shortly after World War II (1948) between British forces and communist forces?
➡ **Malayan Emergency**

VERY VERY FRIGHTENING



We at the ASC History Office would like to casually remind you all that Queen's *Bohemian Rhapsody* turns 46 this year. Here, we have a fine visual representation of lyrics turned to life. The Army Air Force may have been onto something!



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>



Operations Support Command (OSC)

The Operations Support Command (OSC) was developed as the successor to the Industrial Operations Command (IOC) in late 2000. The switch officially happened on 30 September 2000 under the leadership of Major General Joseph W. Arbuckle. Under this new command, the missions of OSC included force projection and sustainment, the provision of munitions, industrial operations, and to serve as the "Single Face to the Field" for the Army Materiel Command (AMC). In order to achieve these competencies, the OSC had two major parts functioning underneath it: Army Field Support Command (FSC) and Army Munitions and Armaments Command (MAC). Both of these subordinates to OSC were created on 31 October 2000, under the command of MG Wade H. McManus Jr. The primary duty of the FSC was to manage the Army Prepositioned Stocks Program (APS) in order to be prepared and ready to respond immediately to any contingency operation that would arise. In addition, OSC was now responsible for LOGCAP and the Logistics Assistance Program. In a complementary fashion, the duty of MAC was in ammunitions production, flexible manufacturing, and munitions outloading to support the Warfighter in peace and war. Each part of the OSC possessed capabilities that led to a great impact for soldiers involved in war; the OSC was able to outload the right kind of ammunition that was requested to the right place, at the right time, and in the right condition; provide combat equipment; and sustain our Soldiers in the fight.

The major test of the OSC and its capabilities was after the events of 9/11. As soon as news of the attacks occurred, the OSC shifted into round the clock operations within minutes; production, packaging, and shipping of ammunition was ready only eleven hours later.

In the aftermath of the attacks, the Army instituted Operation Noble Eagle to improve security at installations. The OSC was responsible for operations on 18 active installations but did not have enough security personnel to appropriately secure 14 of those installations. Operation Noble Eagle called for 750 National Guard soldiers to be placed on active duty in order to assist the OSC in the safety and security of the various arsenals, depots, and ammunition plants. These National Guard members were activated for just under 365 days.

The OSC was able to achieve its goals of unit readiness and ammunitions provider to the armed forces during the crisis of 9/11. Following these first few critical months, the OSC gradually began the transition into its next command. In January of 2003, OSC was no more as it became the Joint Munitions Command (JMC). This change occurred to better reflect the joint mission in the providing and supplying of conventional munitions to all of the service branches. This change was just a refinement of the OSC in order to assure even better unit readiness and ammunition production, if another national crisis were ever to arise again.

Rock Island Arsenal & The Mark VIII Tank

Technological advancements in war are a matter of fact. During the first World War, armies were grappling with the introduction of the airplane, machineguns, rapid fire artillery, flame thrower and gas warfare. Chief of these advancements however, was the tank. For the Americans, production of a tank of their own did not occur until 1919, during the war Americans used British and French designed tanks. When American production finally began the design was based on the British Mark V design. The American version would be officially labeled the Mark VIII tank.

Dubbed the "Liberty Tank," these forty ton monsters were nothing short of an industrial marvel. They boasted two 57mm guns on each side with five M1917 Browning machine guns situated elsewhere. The tank stood just over ten feet tall and had a 300-horsepower engine that propelled her across the battlefield at around five miles per hour.

The tank boasted a crew of eight and contained 200 57mm shells, and 20,000 rounds for the M1917's surrounded by metal plating. The armament and armor was provided by the British, while the engine and transmissions for the American produced tanks were made in the U.S. The tanks were assembled and completed at the Rock Island Arsenal from July of

1919 thru June of 1920. The arsenal produced 100 of these monolithic tanks in that time, and was the only American facility to do so.

Due to the rapid advancement in armor and artillery however, the Mark VIII was obsolete almost as soon as it entered service. None of these tanks ever saw combat, with the majority being used for training purposes. All but three have since been decommissioned, with only two being American produced (the other is a British specimen).

Around 100 years after the tank left the arsenal, one of these two remaining RIA Mark VIII tanks (shown in the featured photo) arrived back at the arsenal on 10 May 2021. The tank arrived from Fort Benning, and will eventually be on display at the Arsenal. This tank will serve as an example of the arsenal's ability to overcome obstacles in engineering and development. The other fully restored RIA Mark VIII tank is at Fort Meade, Maryland. The British specimen is at the Bovington Tank Museum, and can occasionally be seen operating on the tank track.

The new arrival at Rock Island Arsenal will be the feature in the Ordnance of Rock Island Arsenal tour and literature.

THE ASC HISTORY NEWSLETTER

Volume 11, Issue 8

May 2021

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

Kevin Braafladt, Command Historian
Mark Struve, Assistant Historian

kevin.d.braafladt.civ@mail.mil
mark.j.struve.civ@mail.mil