

CURTIS HEWLETT
606 SEMINOLE
ALGONQUIN, IL. 60102

FEB. 22, 1994

HELLO CLYDE,

YES, I WAS IN THE 816th RHEM.
Co FROM THE BEGINNING & FORTY NINE
OF US FROM CAMP SIBERT, ALABAMA
WENT TO MERCED, CALIFORNIA AND FORMED
THE 816th. WE TRAINED 3 COMPANIES
& WENT OVERSEAS WITH THE THIRD Co -

AFTER A FEW MONTHS IN INDIA,
ASANOLE, GAYA & A FEW TRIPS
INTO CALCUTTA DELIVERING SUPPLIES,
I WAS SENT TO WHAT IS NOW
BANGLADESH, FORMERLY EAST PAKISTAN..
MY PLATOON WAS ATTACHED TO THE
54th AIR SERVICE GROUP & OUR DUTY

II

WAS MAINTAINING THE MUSTARD
Gas Dumps. WE HAD MANY REVERENTS
& EACH WAS LOADED WITH MUSTARD GAS
BOMBS. AND YES, LIKE YOU, WE
HAD TO CHECK THE DUMPS EVERY DAY
FOR LEAKERS AND WE FOUND LEAKERS
EVERY DAY. WE TOO, FOUND THESE
LEAKERS BY SNIFFING AROUND THE
BOMB. WHEN WE FOUND ONE, IT
WAS PICKED UP BY HOOKS & A POLE
WHICH WE LAID ON OUR SHOULDER &
WALKED IT TO THE PIT TO BURY.
WE HAD A LONG TRENCH PROBABLY
TEN FEET DEEP, TEN FEET WIDE &
APPROXIMATELY SIXTY YARDS LONG.
ONE END WAS SHOVED SO WE COULD
WALK DOWN INTO THE TRENCH &
GENTLY LAY THE BOMB DOWN. WE THEN
COVERED THE BOMB WITH A COUPLE INCHES
OF DIRT & ON TOP OF THE DIRT, WE
PUT CHLORIDE OF LIME & THEN MORE
DIRT.

II

AS YOU NO DOUBT KNOW, WATER
MUSTARD GAS & CHLORIDE OF LIME
COMES IN CONTACT, SPONTANEOUS
^(COMBUSTION)
EXPLOSION OCCURS & IT STARTS BURNING.
WE DIDNT WANT THAT FOR MORE
FUMES WOULD HAVE BEEN RELEASED IN
THE AIR. WHEN THE TRENCH WAS FILLED
IN COMPLETELY, EVENTUALLY WATER WOULD
SEEP THROUGH THE CHLORIDE OF LIME &
NEUTRALIZE THE GAS

IN THE HEAT OF INDIA (I SAW IT
135°) & THE CORROSIVE GAS EATING
ON THE BOMB CASING, THE BUILD UP
OF PRESSURE PRODUCES A LEAKING
BOMB CASE. ONE INCIDENT THAT HAPPENED
TO MY BUDDY, HE WAS SKIFFING
TO FIND A LEAKER & JUST AS HE
MOVED HIS HEAD TO THE RIGHT, A
LEAK OCCURED & SHOT A SMALL STREAM
OF GAS OUT & IT CAUGHT MY FRIENDS
LEFT EAR. TO MY KNOWLEDGE, THAT

IV

WAS THE WORST ANY OF US GOT
UNLESS IN LATER LIFE THE DAILY
SMOKING CREATED LUNG PROBLEMS.

I AM VERY SHORT OF BREATH,
THAT IS TO SAY, I CAN'T EXERT
MYSELF FOR IN A MINUTE OR
SO, I AM GASPING FOR AIR. ABOUT
SIX YEARS BACK I HAD TO QUIT
PUSHING A POWER LAWN MOWER FOR
I COULDN'T GET THE YARD MOVED
FOR SITTING DOWN TO CATCH MY BREATH.
I HAD NEVER THOUGHT OF THE
GAS CAUSING THE PROBLEM, I BLAMED
IT ON SMOKING FOR I SMOKEED
ALMOST 50 YEARS - TO DAY I'M GOING
ON 73 YEARS OLD & MY BREATHING
IS MY BIG PROBLEM - OTHERWISE I'M
STILL IN PRETTY GOOD SHAPE.

INCIDENTALLY, I WAS ONE OF THE OLDER
BOYS IN THE 816th CHEM. CO. & FROM MY
UNDERSTANDING, SOMEONE IN THE STATES

V

GOOFED & SENT A THIRD CHEMICAL
COMPANY TO C.B.I. & WHEN THEY
REALIZED THE GOOF UP, THE PORT OF
EMBARKATION WAS GOING TO SEND THE
COMPANY BACK TO THE STATES. OLD
JOE STILLWELL SAID NO, TAKE THE
ONES WITH MOST THE MOST POINTS FROM
THE TWO OTHER COMPANIES & SEND THEM
BACK TO THE STATES. I WAS ONE OF
THEM & WHEN I GOT MY DISCHARGE,
I WAS DISCHARGED WITH THE 900th
CHEMICAL CO. MAYBE WE CAME BACK
ON THE SAME SHIP, THE U.S.S.
GENERAL J. R. BROOK.

BEST OF LUCK WITH YOUR CLAIM.

Curtis Hewitt

P.S. I HOPE THE ENCLOSED WILL
HELP IN YOUR EFFORTS TO GET HELP
FROM THE VA. I WOULD APPRECIATE
THE RETURN OF THE PICTURE. THE WHITE
YOU SEE IS CHLORIDE OR LIME OVER DIRT.

CURTIS HEWLETT
606 SEMINOLE
ALCONQUIN, IL-60102

FEB. 22-1994

DEPT. OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

I, CURTIS HEWLETT - 36067201,
SPENT 38 MONTHS IN THE SERVICE
DURING WWII - MY BASIC TRAINING
WAS FOR THE INFANTRY ALONG WITH
CHEMICAL WARFARE TRAINING, SNIFFING
& LEARNING TO RECOGNIZE DIFFERENT
ODORS OF TOXIC GASES.

FROM BASIC TRAINING, I WAS ONE WHO
WAS PLACED IN THE 816 CHEMICAL COMPANY
& I REMAINED IN THE CHEMICAL

WARFARE SERVICE THE REMAINDER
OF MY SERVICE TIME.

I WAS IN INDIA & EAST PAKISTAN
ON DETACHED SERVICE AND WAS
ATTACHED TO THE 54th AIR SERVICE
GROUP KEEPING UP THE CHEMICAL
BOMB DUMP ON THAT AIR FIELD.

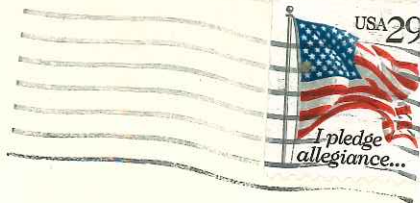
MUSTARD GAS BOMBS WAS OUR
MAIN CONCERN SINCE WE HAD
MANY OF THEM IN THE DUMP. IT
WAS AN EVERY DAY THING TO CHECK
THE REVENTMENTS FOR LEAKING BOMBS.
THE HEAT WOULD BUILD UP PRESSURE
IN THE BOMB & THE MUSTARD GAS
IS A CORROSIVE AGENT, EATING AWAY
AT THE BOMB CASING, CREATING
THE CONDITION OF DEVELOPING LEAKS.

WE HAD TO SEE OR SMELL THE LEAK.
WHEN A LEAK WAS FOUND, IT WAS

picked up with shackles on
a pole & carried to the pit
for burying. We had no other
equipment for detecting leaks,
it was sight & sniping.

Sincerely
Geeta Hewlett

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