

242nd Medical Dispensary (Aviation) War Diary

HISTORY OF 242ND MEDICAL DISPENSARY AVIATION

1944 - 1945

It was towards the latter part of September 1944 that certain segments of medical troops formerly attached to Service Units of the Army Air Force and serving overseas now in the European Theater of Operations under the Eighth Air Force were re-designated 'Medical Dispensaries Aviation'.

There was no change of station, nor was there any change in the daily routine duties, or the mission of the troops involved in this reorganization. It did represent however, the organizations of troops, who had for many months floundered around without a parent organization, and whose moral was ebbing. It now enabled certain deserving men to achieve ratings previously denied them. They had been working for over a year without T/O, and in many instances were classed as average. At the same time they occupied key positions at the Station Sick Quarters and were essential for the proper function of the established Station Medical Detachment. It was indeed a step in the right direction and most welcome.

The activation of the 242nd Medical Dispensary Aviation at AAF Station #167 was in accordance with a directive from higher echelons. Pursuant to authority contained in General Order #493, HQ Eighth AF, dated 15 Sep 1944, certain Medical Dispensaries were activated effective 2400hrs, 22 Sep 1944, by the Commanding General, HQ 1st Bomb. Div. in GO #347, dated 21 Sep 1944. These units were to be organized in accordance with T/O and E 8-450(RS) less line 3, dated 1 March 1944 with an authorized strength of two officers and 13 enlisted men.

Local authority was given to the activation of the 242nd, as Station #167, by Special Order #220, paras 6-8, dated 28 Sep 1944. The unit newly created was attached to the 7th Station Complement Squadron, for rations, quarters and administration. Pursuant to the same authority, Capt George J. Pease 0-1690307, MC, 7th Station Complement Sq, was relieved from assignment thereto, and was assigned to the 242nd, and designated Commanding Officer. He has been the only officer in this unit from its inception.

The initial roster of the enlisted men, and the organization they were from, which formed the 242nd Medical Dispensary is as follows:

Rank	MOS	Name	ASN	Org trans from
Sgt	(502)	Hannigan, Joseph C.	31077484	HQ 381stBG
Sgt	(673)	Hench, George M.	33493703	535th BS
Sgt	(673)	Wayland, Durrell S.	35379239	532nd BS
Cpl	(409)	Casas, Jeronimo A.	38368797	535th BS
Cpl	(405)	Hoehn, Charles	36316801	HQ 381st BG
Cpl	(657)	Jordan William H.	37408450	HQ 381st BG
Cpl	(409)	Smith, Aulton D.	35266150	HQ 381st BG
T/5	(409)	Butler, Marvin D.	34343105	HQ 381st BG
T/5	(657)	Eads, Sammie C.	34190456	HQ 381stBG

Pfc (861) Manning, Joseph R. 37400665 HQ381stBG
Pfc (864) Flores, James F. 39565198 HQ 381st BG
Pfc (673) Stone, William O. 36167415 533rd BS
Pfc (861) Trusky, Henry R. 39305659 HQ 381st BG

As previously indicated the new unit did not materially affect the status quo of the Medical. Detachment at #167. The men continued to function in the same capacity as before and the change was an administrative one. For this reason the history of this unit for Sep -Dec 1944 is inseparable and part of all the units comprising the MD of the station.

Certain changes did occur and listed as follows:- Special Order #273 dated 29 Sep 1944, Pfc Joseph R. Manning trans. to Casual. Pool., 70th Replacement Depot for return to Zone of Interior.

SO #224- 2 Oct 1944.

Pvt Ralph A. Timonere (35029701) trans. from 534th BS to 242nd Med. Dis. SO #228- 7 Oct 1944
Sgt Joseph C. Hannigan re-classified from 502 to 673 SO #232 -12 Oct 1944
Sgt Joseph C. Hannigan promoted to S/Sgt; Pvt Henry R. Trusky promoted to T/5 Unit Order #1. -18 Oct 1944
Pvt James F. Flores promoted to Pfc
Pvt William O. Stone promoted to Pfc So #259- 15 Nov 1944
Cpl Charles Hoehn transferred to 534th BS
Cpl Andrew H. Joerger transferred from 534th BS SO #263 -20 Nov 1944
Cpl Aulton D. Smith reduced to Pvt for violation of 9th Article of War SO #226 -26 Nov 1 944
Cpl Andrew H. Joerger promoted to T/4 UO #2 -29 Nov 1944
Pfc William O. Stone reduced to Pvt for misconduct.

As of 10 Dec 1944 all these changes can best be summarized by listing the personnel and their assigned duties:-

S/Sgt Joseph C. Hannigan (673) Surgery I/C
Sgt George M. Hench (673) Treatment Room
Sgt Durrell S. Wayland (673) Ambulance Dispatcher
T/4 Andrew H. Jeorger (409) Wardmaster I/C
Cpl Jeronimo A. Casas (409) Ambulance Driver
Cpl William H. Jordan (657) Dental Technician
T/5 Marvin D. Butler (409) Dental Assistant
T/5 Sammie C. Eads (657) Wardman
T/5 Henry R. Trusky (861) Wardman
Pfc James F. Flores (264) Dental & X-Ray Technician
Pvt Aulton D. Smith (409) Treatment Room
Pvt William O. Stone (673) Treatment Room
Pvt Ralph A. Timonere (055) First Aid

The unit being of such small size, its identity merged into the much larger unit in which it functions as an integral part, there is little for the historian to record. The life, history and accomplishments of the 381st BG, are similarly those of this organization.

September was nearly over when this unit was created and the week or so remaining was spent chiefly in organization and trying to conceive in broader aspects what its creators had in mind and heading towards that end.

October saw this shaping up with the shifting, promotion and reclassification of some of the men in the unit. It functioned this month as mentioned several times as part of the Medical Detachment of Station #167.

November saw the Commanding Officer on detached service for two weeks at RAF Halton, Bucks., where he enjoyed the hospitality of the RAF as well as the course in Tropical Medicine excellently presented. During his absence a couple of men in this unit were punished for misconduct. To date nothing noteworthy has occurred.

In conclusion it can be said that the unit pride is surprisingly high even though its identity is lost by merger into a much larger organization. The CO and men anxiously look forward to the time when they hope they can assert themselves as a separate and independent unit with greater opportunities and responsibilities.

George J. Pease, Captain, M.C. Historian.

DECEMBER 1944

During the past month the 242nd MD continued to function and members thereof performed their respective duties satisfactorily as a section of the composite Medical Detachment of # 167. The shaping of of the unit continued with the addition of a new member, T/4 George Gennick, (36555243), X-Ray Technician on 18 Dec 1944, and the promotion of Cpl William H. Jordan to temporary rank of T/4 on 19 Dec 1944.

With the entrance of T/4 Gennick to the unit, the morale and pride of all has been greatly increased due to the realization of the position of the Medical Dispensary with the invasion forces though experiences may be colored by the Sergeant reconnoiter. T/4 Gennick was assigned to an MD with the 9th Air Force on the continent for some months.

An outstanding occurrence during this period was the extraordinary performance beyond the call of duty of Cpl Jeronimo A. Casas, while on duty as first aid man of an ambulance crew on the flight line, 31 December 1944. At approx. 10.30hrs a B-17 piloted by Capt Troy H. Jones, acting as co-pilot, lost flying speed as it approached the runway and crashed. The landing gear gave way under the impact, and upon striking the runway the end of a broken propeller blade hurtled through the cockpit, crushing and mangling the left hand and fingers of Capt Jones, and causing a traumatic amputation of the left leg plus a compound comminuted fracture of the right femur of 2nd Lt Weynand. Almost instantaneously one of the engines caught fire but disregarding any personal danger Cpl Casas entered the B-17 and applied tourniquets to the extremities of Weynand. It is the opinion of medical officers that the prompt action on the part of Cpl Casas undoubtedly saved the life of Lt Weynand. Steps are now being taken to properly commend this man for his act. After the administration of blood plasma and nasal oxygen at station Sick Quarters both men were evacuated to the 121st Station Hospital at Braintree (White Courts) and are making satisfactory progress.

Joseph C. Hannigan, S/Sgt, Medical Dep., Historian.

FEBRUARY 1945

During the past period the 242nd MD continued to function as before, the previous co-ordination of the effort with that of the medical section of the 381st BG has continued. A recent change of base policy whereby all enlisted men excepting the first three grades must perform a period of kitchen police duty (KP) at the various base messes has not been received very

enthusiastically by our enlisted men, who had previously had been excluded from such duties. Human nature being what it is, such an attitude can be easily understood.

The new base commander Lt Col Hall, made an informal inspection of base Sick Quarters and was favorably impressed by its appearance and maintenance.

At a meeting of the NCO department heads of the station sick quarters with Major Blount, station surgeon, it was decided to eliminate the last eyesore of the hospital site. An unsightly boggy area which is to be completely cemented over during March. Inasmuch as the Medical Department enlisted men will of necessity furnish the greater part of the labor, a hardship will be imposed on various departments until its completion. We all feel it to be a worthy and desirous contribution towards a better medical establishment on the base.

One change occurred during the month in connection with Infantry Transition with Pvt William O. Stone, is transferred to 12th Reinforcement Depot, ETO, US Army, as per Special Order #33, dated 22 Feb 1945.

Joseph C. Hannigan,
S/Sgt, Medical Dept., Historian