

LIBERTY AVIATION MUSEUM



Elliot Latez Collection

MH.17.1

Introduction
Biographical Sketch
Scope and Content
Inventory

Introduction

This collection of papers was given to the Liberty Aviation Museum by Mr. John Bailiff of Toledo, Ohio in July 2016. This collection of papers is a small collection of personal and military papers that were the property of Irving Elliot Latez. Permission to use this collection for research purposes was granted by the donor.

Biographical Sketch

This collection features archives of papers from Irving Elliot Latez. Mr. Latez served in the United States Coast Guard as Chemical Weapons Specialist during World War II in the Pacific Theater and domestically as well. Elliot Latez was born in Toledo, Ohio on 16 March 1921 to Benjamin and Mollie (Fagan) Latez. He attended Scott High School in Toledo and graduated in ca. 1939. After graduation, he became a salesman. It is unclear what company or organization he worked for prior to World War II. He enlisted in the United States Coast Guard on 2 September 1942. After completing basic training, he was sent to Chemical Warfare School at Edgewood Arsenal/Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Edgewood, Maryland. He would go on to serve in the Pacific Theatre during the war and be discharged from active service on 18 February 1946.

After returning home from active military service, he married Hilda Schulman on 29 December 1946 and became a clothier. It is unclear what other occupations and/or careers that Mr. Latez held throughout the decades following WWII. Mr. Latez continued to live in Toledo for many years and moved to Framingham and Needham, Massachusetts during his elder years. Elliot Latez died on 15 November 2008 in Needham, Massachusetts and was laid to rest in Toledo, Ohio.

Scope and Content

This collection consists of training documents, training examinations, handwritten training notes, newsletters and a personal letter relating to Elliot Latez's time of military service in the United States Coast Guard while training at the US Army's, Edgewood Arsenal in Edgewood, Maryland during World War II. These documents demonstrate the thorough training that military personnel received in regards to the defense from and use of chemical weapons if necessary during World War II. They cover the different types of chemical agents that could be used, from lethal exposure to non-lethal exposure. They explain the effects of the chemicals, the odor, breathing apparatus use, first aid procedures due to exposure and more. The documents and notes also document the use of smoke as a cover to avoid detection while on a marine vessel.

"The United States Army in preparing for World War II investigated on an intensive and very large scale the chemical munitions that might be necessary or useful in fighting the Axis powers. This effort required the collaboration of a host of civilian scientists and research centers as well as a great expansion of the laboratories and proving grounds of the Chemical Warfare Service itself. In World War II, the Army not only prepared against gas warfare sufficiently well to discourage its employment by the enemy, but also developed a number of new chemical weapons that contributed materially to victory."¹ They prepared on both fronts, in Europe and the Pacific.

The depth of the documents indicate that Mr. Latez may have helped with instruction duties as well. There items were categorized and organized by theme, and then chronologically, into three (3) archival file folders and stored in one archival quality box.

Inventory

Box 1

Folder 1

USGC Chemical Warfare Pocket Reference Card, dated April 1943

WDC Chemical Warfare Pocket Reference Card, dated 1 July 1943

¹ Leo P. Brophy, Wyndham D. Miles and Rexmond C. Cochrane, "THE CHEMICAL WARFARE SERVICE: FROM LABORATORY TO FIELD," Center of Military History: Washington D.C., 1988. Accessed: 3 February 2017, http://www.history.army.mil/html/books/010/10-2/CMH_Pub_10-2.pdf.

CW Specialists Examination, dated 9 September 1943

Blank Chemical Warfare Examination, dated 8/43

Two (2) Noncommissioned Officer's Gas School Course Outlines, d. 6-10 March 1944

"Duties of Noncommissioned Gas Officer and Gas Sentries" (handout) document; L.E. Latez, U.S.C.G., handwritten at right upper section

"Enemy Shell Markings" (handout) document

Chemical Warfare Terms & Definitions document (handle with care)

Folder 2

One (1) two-ring binder w/ printed text, "Defender Note Book" full of handwritten training notes on the types of chemicals used in CW warfare, the effects, diversionary chemicals to avoid detection, first aid procedures due to exposure, training handouts from Edgewood Arsenal training school

Folder 3

Personal letter (correspondence) from home, written to "Butch," dated Friday. Signed by Sarah. Sarah was the sister of L. Elliot Latez. On the reverse side is handwritten notes for waterfront security procedures.

Newsletter titled, "The Gas Sentinel," was "published weekly by C.W.S.," 5 March 1944

Newsletter titled, "Daily Polaris, of the Men, By the Men, for the Men", dated Friday, 22 September 1944.

* Objects in relation to the Elliot Latez Sr. papers of the Paeth Collection, Accession 2016.60, can be viewed upon request, on site, at the **Liberty Aviation Museum** in Port Clinton, Ohio. *