

Chief of Chemical



**Brigadier General
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Dragon Soldiers, another great edition of *Army Chemical Review*! I am proud to report that our Corps is advancing on all fronts.

On 28 June 1918, President Woodrow Wilson ordered the establishment of the Chemical Warfare Service as a separate branch of the National Army. Therefore, 2008 marks the 90th anniversary of the founding of our branch, and this edition of *Army Chemical Review* commemorates that fact. We will celebrate this milestone 22–28 June 2008 here at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri—the home of the Chemical Corps. (See page 4 for a schedule of events.) If you can't be here with us—and I truly hope you'll be able to join us—then I ask you to reflect during that week about the service of our Corps to the Nation and how it has always been the Dragon Soldiers who make our Corps the greatest in the Army.

The theme for this year's Regimental Week is "From Gas Attacks to CBRN Response: 90 Years of the Dragon Soldier." I didn't dream up this theme, but I wish I had. Because, to me, it perfectly captures the idea that our Corps was founded by Soldiers. Despite all odds and despite skepticism and outright hostility at times,

Dragon Soldiers strived and succeeded in training, equipping, and protecting their comrades from the dangers of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) weapons.

Major Charles Heller, in his seminal paper, "Chemical Warfare in World War I: The American Experience, 1917–1918," speaks eloquently of the difficulties faced by Dragon Soldiers in 1918 while training other Soldiers to use the uncomfortable equipment that protected them from mustard and other agents.¹ Although much has changed

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in ninety years, some things stay the same. We must continue training Army forces to survive and win in CBRN environments, despite the discomforts and challenges of operations in those environments. Ninety years later, Dragon Soldiers still employ persuasion, innovation, and persistence to overcome all obstacles. Chemical units and staffs (Active Army and Reserve Component) continue to perform magnificently in all areas: continental United States (CONUS), outside the continental United States (OCONUS), combat zones, and civil support operations. I like to tell folks that the Chemical Corps is the most versatile and experienced Corps in the Army—and I defy anyone to make a valid argument otherwise!

It's hard for me to believe, but it has come time for me to move on to another assignment. In June, I will be reassigned to the Department of the Army G-8. Frankly, I hate to leave this position—and I could not have survived without the help of Regimental Command Sergeant Major Patrick Z. Alston—but the Army will assign another great officer to this command. Our Corps will not lose a beat with the help of our outstanding Assistant Commandant, Colonel Greg Olson; the Chief of Staff, Lieutenant Colonel Doug Straka; and the superb teams at the U.S. Army Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear School (USACBRNS) and 3d Chemical Brigade.

I will continue to serve as a staunch advocate for the Chemical Corps and for the capabilities needed for this Nation to counter the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction. I want to thank you for your service to the Chemical Corps and for your support to the USACBRNS and me. I am in awe of your sacrifices and dedication.

ELEMENTIS, REGAMUS, PROELIUM!

Endnote:

¹Charles E. Heller, "Chemical Warfare in World War I: The American Experience, 1917–1918," Leavenworth Papers No. 10, September 1984, <<http://www-cgsc.army.mil/carl/resources/csi/Heller/HELLER.asp>>, accessed on 8 April 2008.