

59 AIR DEPOT WING

MISSION

LINEAGE

59 Air Depot

59 Air Depot Group

59 Air Depot Wing

STATIONS

Rome, NY

Burtonwood, England

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

BG Edward W Anderson

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

When the 59th Air Depot arrived at Burtonwood it found the remnants of what had been a thriving wartime depot. Quarters were broken down, offering little protection against the elements. Heat was lacking and the weather damp and cold. Mail flowed at a snail's pace sometimes requiring five weeks to arrive from the US. There were no recreational facilities and few of the necessities. It frequently required more than an hour for a man to travel from his quarters to the mess hall where he had to wait up to 40 minutes in the queue. This was Burtonwood in 1948. Progress seemed slow; the base was big, and men lived in deplorable conditions.

The physical problems of supplying the goods to be carried to the airfields supplying the lift can be imagined and these were scattered all over Germany still desecrated from six years of the most devastating warfare ever. Britain was still on ration books and had trouble supporting itself never mind a new American township at Burtonwood. Timber, for instance had to be flown into Burtonwood from Germany as it was so scarce and restricted in the UK.

When 59th Air Depot Group left New York on 3 September 1948 for Burtonwood they had no idea of the magnitude and importance of the mission. Personnel numbers were to soon swell from 2,000 to more than 5,000. Many problems were to be settled after the mission assigned to 59th ADG was disclosed. The buildings on the aerodrome, covering 48 square miles, had been allowed to deteriorate. It was hardly foreseen that a large force enough to require 1,054 Nissen huts, seven mess halls, 30 warehouses and seven hangars would need to inhabit so soon after the War.

"Emphasis was put on production of aircraft because of urgent requirements in Germany. At first supplies were slow in arriving in quantities required, therefore reducing the number of aircraft coming out of maintenance. Experienced personnel were also slow in arriving from the US. Because of the vast area and dispersed layout of the base it was found that a new organization of the entire structure was needed.

The 59th Air Depot was given Group status being renamed 59th Air Depot Group on 17 January 1949 and disbanded in Sep 1953

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

Created: 19 Feb 2025

Updated:

Sources