FILE: 305 MED BN AUG→SEP→OCT→NOV →DEC→[redacted]
HISTORY

* Move Along Aug→Sep-Oct-Nov-Dec

HISTORY OF THE 305TH MEDICAL BATTALION
WHILE IN FRANCE

Aug 44 - MAY 45
+ STATIM Log 67 pp

AUG ~~45~~ To Dec 44

The Medical Battalion moved to France from Southampton, England, arriving at Utah Beach on the Cherbourg Peninsula on the sixth and seventh of August 1944. The Battalion moved into its postition in a Division Assembly Area near Vindefontaine.

The Division moved by motor on 8 August and the Battalion bivouacked at a point just south of La Chappelle and set up the clearing station.

On August 10th Combat Teams 317 and 318 advanced on St. Suzanne and Evron. Casualties slight, mostly due to snipers. Objectives taken.

On the night of August 11th an enemy sniper was reported to be in the immediate vicinity of the Command Post. Free French and an infantryman patient from the Clearing Station succeeded in chasing him away.

On August 13th the Division again moved; this time toward Argentan. The mission was to protect the flank of the 2d Armored Division, which was to cross in front of us. The mission was accomplished without delay. Casualties received were injured by mines along the routes of advance and were slight.

On August 14th the unit was ordered to a bivouac area one half mile north of Evron.

On the 17th of August the Battalion moved to the vicinity of Argentan to support the Division in taking the high ground north and east of Argentan and close the Falaise Gap.

Contact with the enemy was established on the night of August 17th. Battle casualties were heavy on the 18th, 19th and 20th. The clearing station and one platoon of the 60th Field Hospital which joined the Battalion on 14 August were both filled to capacity. The first Battalion casualty was Tec 5 Jones of Co B, who was evacuated with a possible broken vertebrae. Lt Borger of "A" Co and S Sgt White of "B" Co were also casualties and evacuated with a shrapnel wound and broken leg respectively. Company "B" in one twenty-four hour period handled 195 patients, all but three requiring evacuation.

On August 21st the Division took its objectives and mopping up activities were started. Most of the casualties were enemy wounded.

Total Division casualties for this action were four hundred thirty two.

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August 22nd, 23rd, 24th and 25th were spent in a rest phase and in preparation for the next move.

On August 26th and 27th the division moved approximately 300 miles to the vicinity of Sedan, France, and became tactically and administratively a part of the XII Corps of the Third United States Army.

Its first mission as part of this Corps was to spearhead the XII Corps attack on Chalons.

Chalons was taken on the 29th of August and the casualties for the Division were light. The Battalion moved forward on the 30th and 31st setting up its CP at Villesnieux and Chalons respectively.

SEP 44

On September 1st the Division moved toward Commercy with the objective of capturing the town and being prepared to move either East or North East.

The Battalion supported the Division in this move and on the 1st of September moved to vicinity of Erize St Dizier, France and on the 2nd moved up through the objective to vicinity of Vignot, France. The objective was taken on the 1st of September, 1944 and the Division consolidated its postition on 2nd of September, awaiting further orders.

The third of September 1944 was spent in care of clothing and equipment and a general rest period.

On the 4th of September the Battalion moved to the vicinity of Beaumont to support the division in its mission of crossing the Moselle River and establishing a bridgehead.

On the 5th and 6th stiff resistance was encountered from enemy small arms, automatic weapons and artillery. Casualties were heavy. On the 5th the battalion moved to the vicinity of Limey to shorten the ambulance haul to the Clearing Station. Pvt Bittner of Company A was wounded in action, while rescuing a wounded soldier. Pfc Prol and Getz and Pvt Bechdol of Company A were killed in action, and one ambulance was destroyed by a direct hit on the ambulance by enemy artillery. Two wounded men in the ambulance were also killed. Prol was recommended for the Silver Star, as was Pvt Bittner. Getz and Bechdol were recommended for the Bronze Star. These men were working under continuous artillery fire and had successfully evacuated many casualties.

The 8th and 9th were spent in the same area. Casualties were somewhat lighter than for the 6th and 7th.

10th, 11th and 12th - Same location. River crossing still unsuccessful. Casualties slight as division merely outposted awaiting further orders. On the 11th the Clearing Station moved to the vicinity of Martincourt to better support the division in renewing its river crossing mission. The 12th, 13th and 14th - continued attempts at river crossing. Casualties heavy. Attempts successful.

On the 14th the Clearing Station moved to the vicinity of Griscourt. Ten enlisted replacements sent from the battalion to the 317th Medical Detachment * to act as Company Aid Men; 4 from Co D, 2 each from Co's A, B and C.

On the 15th H. Fishkin, MC, was promoted from Major to Lieutenant Colonel. The Moselle River battle continued on the 15th and 16th. On the 16th replacements

sent to the 317th returned. On the 17th ten more replacements, and one officer, Capt Whitaker, were sent forward as replacements to the 317th Infantry Medical Detachment.

18th - Casualties continued very heavy - many NP patients.

19th - Moved to the vicinity of Loisy. Crossed the Moselle River. Fierce fighting still continued in this area. 20th and 21st - Same area, casualties continue to steadily come in. On the 20th ten more replacements sent to the 317th. Two of the replacements sent out on the 17th, Pvt Peters and Hill of Co D are wounded in action. Another replacement, Pfc Reeser of Co D, admitted to the Clearing Station as an NP patient.

On the 20th a Convalescent Hospital for the division started to operate in the vicinity of the rear echelon. The need for such a hospital, where injured men of the 80th who could be shortly returned to duty, could rest farther to the rear where it was completely quiet, first became obvious to Lt Col Fishkin, the Bn Comdr. He, in conjunction with the Chief of Staff, worked out the details, drawing on injured patients and division service units for personnel to run the hospital. This arrangement is expected to be very successful. It will allow the Clearing Station to remain mobile and will still allow the division to retain the maximum of its trained troops.

22nd - Casualties continue. Pvt Arguello, one of the latest replacements to go forward returned with a shrapnel injury.

23rd to the 27th - Same area. Casualties continue. Weather bad. Much rain. Much mud. 26th - Pvt Sibley another EM sent forward as a replacement was WIA.

27th - The Clearing Station moves to the vicinity of Millery and sets up in an electric light plant . This is the first time buildings have been utilized.

28th, 29th and 30th - Casualties light, as division has taken up a defensive position. Clearing Station remaining in light plant. Building facilities working out well.

OCT 44

1st to 5th of October - Location in Electric light plant near Millery remains unchanged. Except for localized actions the division tactical situation is static. Light casualties continue each day. On 3 October passes officially go into effect, allowing 7% of the command to be absent at one time. On the 4th at company formations, Tec 4 Oline of Co B, Pfc Bowman, Pvts Church and Ramirez of Co A are awarded Bronze Star ribbons by Lt Col Fishkin.

6th to 9th - Location same. Static tactical situation continues until 0600, 8 Oct 44 when all three combat teams attack. An additional combat team, the 328th of the 26th Inf Div comes under 80th Division control as of 7 Oct 44. This CT is medically serviced by our clearing station. At 0600 8 Oct 44 the division attacked with all units; pushing the enemy across the Seille River. The results were better than expected, and the objectives of the first phase were taken in time to move the schedule for the second phase up 24 hours. Casualties were high, but not as high as anticipated. The clearing station handled its peak load to date on 8 Oct 44: 460 total patients, 67 of which were wounded PW's. Two EM from Company B were evacuated as a result of battle injuries, Tec 4 Shine and Pfc Nichols.

On the 7th of October at a battalion formation at Company A area in the vicinity of Ruix, France, General McBride personally presented the following named Officers and EM with awards indicated:

1st Lt Bowers	Co A	Silver Star	
Tec 5 Miller	"	Bronze Star	
Pvt Flores	"	"	"
Pvt Tuschak	"	"	"
Pvt Long	"	"	"
Pvt. Comer	Co C	"	"

10th to 13th - Location same. The mission of the 80th Div to take the high ground and push the enmy across the Seille River was completed by 2400 on 9 Oct 44. The 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th were spent in consolidation and mopping up activities and reorganization. Casualties were light. The problem of warming the plant for the patients was solved by improvising stoves out of empty oil barrels.

On the 13th of October six enlisted men are placed on SD with the 317 Inf Med Det until replacements are received by that unit. These men were returned on the 15th of Oct 44, with the exception of those se nt by Co's A and B.

14th to 18th - Location same. weather: raining. Casualties not heavy. On 16th and 17th moving pictures of a patient going through all the sections of the clearing station were taken for the Army Pictorial Service.

19th to 23rd - Location same, weather bad. Moselle River rising steadily. Several bridges out of action. River subsides on 23rd. Casualties light. Some communicable diseases show up, including a run of mild diarrhea cases. Diarrhea cause laid to poor sterilization of water.

24th to 28th - Location same, weather colder. No change in tactical situation. Casualties light, mostly communicable diseases. Capt Thron, Commanding Officer of Company A was evacuated as sick. Capt Boughman of Co B placed in command during temporary absence of Capt Thron. The battalion was alloted six passes to Paris for EM. Co's A, B and C each sent one man as of the 28th. Three more to go on 5 Nov 44.

29 - 31 Location same, no change in tactical situation, casualties light. General McBride attends battalion review in honor of enlisted men who have earned awards. The General personally present the Silver Star award to S Sgt May of Co C, The Bronze Star award to Tec 4 Faust of Co C, Pfc's Salgado, Landolph of Co C and Hopkins of Co B, Pvts Kesler, Co B, Richardson, Higham, Smith, Weeks of Co C; and Tuschak of Co A. The weather is fair and the ceremony with the help of the Division band goes off very nicely.

Nov 44

1 Nov 44 - 3 Nov 44 Location same. Weather cold, CT 319th On 1 Nov made a reconnaissance in force and captured two towns. Casulaties amounted to 27 men. On 2 Nov 44 the 2d Platoon of the 60th Field Hospital moved up from Dieulouard to join the Clearing Station.

4 Nov - 6 Nov Location same, weather bad. Casualties light.

7 Nov - 8 Nov Location same, rains heavy, river rising. At 0600 on 8 Nov- the division attacks with objectives of taking high ground on the east of the Seille River. Fighting continues all day. Seille river crossed - casualties heavy. On the night of the 8th the Moselle River continues to rise. Roads and areas along the bank are flooded. Evacuation of casualties to the rear difficult because of flood conditions. Clearing Station and 60th Field Hosp work well set up in same building and casualties flow through smoothly and receive prompt attention.

9 Nov Station completely cut off from division by flood of the Moselle River. Division attack continues. Corps Clearing platoon - 613th - moves into Manoncourt to support Division. Later in day 613th moves to Nomeny and 2d platoon, 16th Field Hospital also opens in Nomeny to support the division. Attack goes well, casualties heavy. Only contact we have with outside is by boat. Water starts to subside at 1315.

10 Nov - 1st Platoon and Hq Det moves to Nomeny and sets up station. 613th Clearing platoon is relieved. 60th Field left behind at Millery goes into Corps reserve and 16th becomes supporting field hospital platoon for the division. Casualties heavy. Attack continues.

11 Nov - 2d Platoon moves up to Nomeny and then with Hq Det moves up to Alaincourt (Allenhofen). 1st Platoon moves up later. Casualties heavy. Attack continues with excellent results tactically.

12 Nov - Clearing station moves to Traigny (Tranach). Casualties heavy. High percentage of trench foot and Emergent foot. Approximately twenty ambulances, supplemented by tracks was necessary to keep the flow of patients to the rear running smoothly. These were made available by Corps. To supplement the 613th Clearing Company on 10 Nov, three medical officers were sent out by boat to join them. Bad weather has prevailed for the last few weeks being the exceptionally bad in the last few days. Despite this the attack has progressed well. On 11 Nov and M&C officer was sent up to the 317th as a replacement.

13 Nov - Clearing Station moved to St Epvre (Apern). All towns now have german names. Attack continues. Casualties heavy. Clearing station sets up in building. Very satisfactory set up. Division reaches its successive objectives as planned.

14 Nov - Same location. weather bad, casualties much higher as division consolidates gains. Two medical officer replacements received for temporary duty. One placed with Company B and one with Company D.

15 Nov - Same location, weather bad, casualties moderate. First snow of any consequence covered the surrounding area today.

16 Nov - Moved to Lesse (Lesche) . Casualties continue as division advances to an MLR before going on the defense. Capt Thron returns from hospital fit for duty, and goes to work with the clearing station.

17 Nov - Stations except for walking wounded is set up in tents. Casualties steady.

18 Nov - Division goes on defensive to establish protection for northern flank of Corps. Enemy air attack in afternoon. No hits made. Weather fair, casualties light. Capt Drozd transferred to Field Artillery.

On the 14th of November the Convalescent Station officially closed. Total patients admitted since 20 September - 1051, Returned to Duty - 948. These figures proved the ability of such a set up to conserve division personnel.

On the18th 12replacements were sent forward; to the 317th: seven, to the 318th - five, Nine men were taken from Co D, 1 from Co A, two from B and 1 from C.

19 Nov - 22 Nov We stayed at Lesse until 21 Nov 44 when we moved to Herrenwald, France. The division moved through Falquemont with no opposition and took the high ground north of the town. On the 22nd the division again resumed the defensive and we returned to Brulange, France to be in proper position to render defensive medical support.

23 Nov - Thanksgiving - Situation static. Weather bad. Big turkey dinner 1600. Casualties light.

24 Nov - Moved to Cites de Charbonnages - set up in hospital. Weather bad. Facilities fair. 60th Field Hospital sets up in same buildings.

25 Nov - 26 Nov - Casualties heavy as division attacks. Trench foot cases largely eliminated as command now outfitted with overshoes. Battalion contemplating move to St Avold when that town is taken. Weather improving.

27th, 28th, 29th Nov - Remained at Charbonnages until 28 Nov. Attack going well. Division liberates St. Avold on 27 Nov. Medical battalion moves to Civilian and Military Hospital on hill in St. Avold. The buildings are adequate and in fairly good repair. Third platoon of sixteenth Field Hospital joins the division and sets up in buildings adjacent to the Division Clearing Station. Casualties not too heavy. Attack continues with good results. Weather, raining andcold. Morale remains high - mail, allied successes, and teamwork.

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DEC 44

30th, 1st and 2d - Location same - weather improved - casualties light. Division consolidates gains. This location in a group of buildings formerly used as both a civilian and military hospital is one of the best we have had yet in the way of buildings. None of the buildings were damaged. We have been able to attach the generator directly to the central switch and lighttall of the lights. The central heating system works in one building. There is a wall around the periphery of the buildings and on one side there has been quite an underground project started. They look like narrow passageways, but indicate the effectiveness of our air corps. They were only in the beginning stage.

3rd, 4th and 5th. Same location, weather bad, 30-40 rounds of artillery fire received in vicinity of Clearing Station. No damage done to our installations. Quartermaster Company hit with several casualties resulting. Four time bombs in St. Avold went off on the evening of the fourth. These were located in homes of Nazi leaders. 633rd AA Bn were located in one of the buildings that blew up. Casualties during last few days light. A small attack by the 80th Infantry Division on 4 Dec 1944 was successful and no change of location by the Clearing Station was necessary to support the Division.

6th, 7th, 8th and 9th - Same location, weather bad, Division enters on first official rest phase on 6 December 1944. Rehabiliation of personnel and property stables are stressed. Officers party held 8 December 1944. Co C hit by artillery fire 8 Dec 44 - five enlisted men injured - one seriously. On the eighth of December a Battalion Officers party was held.

10th to 15th December - Same location, weather considerably improved. Rehabilitation of personnel continues. Companies have parties - French girls come to dances. Officers party held December 11th - General McBRIDE, General SUMMERS, General MacELVREY and Asst's Chief of Staff attend, nurses, Red Cross workers, and civilian girls make the party a huge success. PX is opened and will continue in operation. Everyone getting a good rest. Movies shown regularly.

16th to 19th December - Battalion stayed in St Avold until 17 Dec 44 - weather improved. Division continue rehabilitation of personnel and care of equipment. Officers party held 16 December 1944. One Clearing Platoon moves to Rahling to take part in attack on German border defenses. Conditions for medical service very poor in Rahling. Tents set up in streets. Division rest phases concluded. On 18th of December 1944 Hq Det and 2d Clearing Platoon is alerted to move with the 317th CT on a long motor march to the NW. 2d Clearing Platoon moves out on 19 Dec 44. Major Dines, Clearing Company Commander, goes along. Major Ball, Battalion Executive Officer, goes with Division advance party as Acting Division Surgeon.

20, 21, 22 December 1944. On the 19th of December, Bn Hq, Hq Det, and the first platoon of Co "D" move on a 118 mile motor march to Luxembourg, Luxembourg, and join the 2d Platoon. The convoy starts out at approximately 1900 on 19 Dec 44 and arrives in Luxembourg the following day at 1330. The roads were good and the weather cold. No major difficulty was encountered on the march. During 20 and 21 and 22 the mission of the Division was changed several times. First a perimeter defense of Luxembourg was the mission. Third Army headquarters moved to Luxembourg on 21 December 1944. Division received mission to attack to the north on 22 December 1944. Practically no casualties have been received as yet.

23 to 27 December 1944. The 1st Platoon of Co D and Hq Det moves to a Chateau at Hollenfels, Luxembourg. Facilities good, casualties heavy as Division attacks southern flank of enemy counter offensive. During the next few days weather is good, attack continues right through Christmas. Clearing Station moves to Bissen on 26 December 1944 and casualties are somewhat lighter on 26th and 27th as Division halts in front of Sauer River, preparatory to making a river crossing. General McBRIDE visited the patients on Christmas Day. Any ceremony outside of a big dinner was not possible.

28th to 31st. The Battalion remained at Bissen for the rest of the year. The Division took up a defensive position. Casualties slowed down and battle casualties resulted only from occasional artillery and mortar fire. The weather was generally fair and air activity was utilized by both ourselves and the enemy. On the night of 31 Dec 44 - 1 Jan 45 the town of Bissen was strafed and bombed. Bullets from the strafing entered the building where the medical patients were. Three patients and one attendant were wounded. The bombs wrecked a civilian home and killed two civilians. Enemy aircraft also strafed the town on 28 December 1944.