

PHASES

- I. BAR-LE-DUC — ROSSIERES-EN-HAYE.  
II. Battle vicinity FORET DE L'AVANT GARDE.  
III. Crossing MOZELLE and Battle for the Bridgehead.

Phase I

"BAR-LE-DUC — ROSSIERES-EN-HAYE."

Combat trains with basic loads intact displaced forward with battalion organic vehicles. Field trains displaced forward initially in a separate serial in the regimental column, and subsequently by infiltration from one bivouac to the next. Bivouac sites were: Vicinity of COMMERCY and vicinity of BERNECOURT. Operational rations ("C", "K" or "U") supplemented by occasional issues of meat, bread and coffee were distributed through normal supply channels. Individual clothing and equipment status was in good condition, no replacement being necessary at this time. However, we were short heavy machine guns, 60-mm mortars, pistols, binoculars and Browning automatic rifles.

Transportation, as in the past proved inadequate, but the use of captured German vehicles greatly facilitated our movement. We were also using captured gasoline at this time, and we found it favorable for operation and it had no ill effects on our motors.

Phase II

"Battle vicinity FORET DE L'AVANT GARDE"

Initial action was supported by combat trains in battalion control disposed in battalion class V DP's in vicinity of battalion rear CP's. Field trains were initially disposed in bivouac in vicinity of BERNECOURT. Later they displaced by infiltration to the vicinity of ROSSIERES EN HAYE. Displacement forward is effected by the selection of an area on the map supporting the tactical disposition as closely as possible. A reconnaissance group comes forward for a ground reconnaissance, actually selecting the site and posting an advance detachment. The trucks are then sent forward by infiltration after each driver has been properly oriented. All movements up to this time were without incident and accomplished in good order.

Supply routes were excellent and in all cases the trains adequately supported the tactical units from distances of about five miles.

During this phase a partial issue of "B" rations insured hot meals for those troops who were not in contact, and increased the difficulties of distribution. Inasmuch as the "B" ration proved impossible to feed to troops who were in contact, due to the fact that they were disposed over such wide sectors, we found it difficult to provide for those troops, who when relieved, returned to a situation which permitted hot food being served. The reason for this was that a two day to three day period is necessary to obtain the ration after its requisition, and often in that time a battalion's situation changed to preclude use of the requisitioned type of ration. We found that by handling seventeen hundred "B" rations we were able to shift them about the regiment so that the battalion in a relief situation could be fed hot meals, and the rest of the rations of this type were distributed to those companies who were in position to absorb them, i.e., headquarters companies of Regiment and Battalions, Anti-Tank and Cannon companies, etc. When we had more than one battalion off the line we shifted the ration from these separate companies to that battalion. When future dispositions and tactical action could be determined we asked for more "B" rations. Division quartermaster was very cooperative in helping us to provide for unforeseen occasions, sometimes borrowing, sometimes swapping rations so that we most always had enough "B" rations to meet our needs.

We used the normal methods of feeding where men could be relieved from their positions and returned to a sheltered area to be fed. Mostly, however, it was necessary to hand carry food, water and ammunition forward at night to the advanced elements.

Despite the fact that a marked decrease in the loss of equipment was noticed in these actions, resupply of mortars (60mm) BAR's, machine guns (heavy) remained critical.

Battlefield recovery and salvage were accomplished by normal methods and presented no problems. At the completion of each tactical action (during reorganization), details from each unit policed their zones of action and evacuated salvage through battalions to regiment to supply agencies. Evacuation of casualties and bodies was greatly hampered, however, by the <sup>use of</sup> undergrowth in the wooded areas where some of the action occurred. In some instances it was necessary to hand carry bodies and casualties for a distance of over one and one half miles.

At this time the shortage of 57mm HE ammunition began to manifest itself in practical situations.

**Phase III**  
**"Crossing MOZELLE & Battle for the Bridgehead"**

The initial crossing was supported from a Regimental Train Bivouac in the vicinity of ROSSIÈRES-EN-HAYE. The length of the supply lines were approximately eight miles. We were closely supported throughout this entire operation by Division Supply agencies. Limitations in the crossing of two bridges increased the time element in supply. Because of this, an advanced Regimental Ammunition DP was installed on the near bank of the MOZELLE in the vicinity of a foot bridge, over which the battalion combat trains initially reconstituted their loads. This DP was maintained over and above the specified basic loads for the regiment but, since this was an acute situation which could demand more rapid resupply of some items than was possible through normal methods due to the again lengthy supply lines from us to Ammunition DP's, we felt it necessary. It was. Again, on completing the action in the vicinity of the bridge and while fighting to secure the high ground -- STE GENEVIEVE -- LANDREMONT -- BRATTE, we displaced this DP into the vicinity of VILLE-AU-VAL in the rear of the center of our sector, and again it proved a good investment. We then expended the auxiliary DP and came down to basic loads after the danger was passed. But, this proved to us conclusively the need for an extra 2½ ton truck in the Ammunition Section of the Regimental Train. If we had had one we could have maintained a mobile reserve to back up the battalions, principally the resupply of specific items which each action peculiarly demands. In some instances, in rapidly shifting situations (and we had plenty of them here) a great amount of bazooka ammunition, and flamm of a certain type were demanded, and following the prescribed T/O it was necessary to spend a lot of time shifting loads and sending one of the battalion's two trucks after it on a jaunt which kept that truck out of action for five hours or more. In most actions we have encountered, a 2½ ton truck operated by the Regimental Ammunition Officer could maintain the resupply of the three battalions leaving the battalion ammunition sections free to operate over shorter lines of resupply and more adequately support their tactical units.

Authenticity 40257032  
by 38 Mark Date

Later the trains were displaced forward to positions immediately in rear of DIEULOUARD, shortening the supply lines by four miles. This was desired at an earlier date but it was impossible to find a train bivouac any nearer because of the very large concentration of supporting troops within our divisional sector. To this day that has remained our most pressing problem... finding Train Bivouacs within adequate supporting distance. Invariably there is a heavy concentration of supporting troops and the rear divisional installations are pushed forward so that there is little room left to bivouac our trains. We could not cross the river with them at this time because of the same reason and also because the situation remained so much in the balance that we deemed it unsound to move the trains across until sufficient depth was added to the bridgehead.

During this time gasoline began to be rationed, and it was necessary to allocate it on the basis of priority of missions. A priority was established for each situation and the gasoline rationed accordingly. The necessary commanders were advised to limit the use of their transportation to bare necessity and it worked out all right. Tires (600x16), tubes, and cold and hot patches became critical items of resupply and during this entire phase, resupply of 1½ ton trucks, 57mm Guns, Browning Automatic Rifles was also more than critical. In the case of Browning Automatic Rifles they were irreplaceable. The lack of 57mm HE ammunition was another critical matter. In extenuation of this contention, we quote a letter from this headquarters:

A TRUE COPY

HEADQUARTERS 318TH INFANTRY  
APO 80, U.S. ARMY

15 September 1944

SUBJECT: Vital Need of Shell, HE, 57mm.

TO : Commanding General, 80th Inf Div, APO 80, U. S. Army  
(Attn: G-4)

1. At 0600, 15 September 1944, the first platoon of Regimental Anti-Tank Company, this organization, was disposed at a road block East of Atton (Map; France, 1/50,000, Pont-a-Mousson sheet, coordinates 796338). This position was attacked by an enemy reinforced company of Infantry and three tanks. With 57mm armor piercing ammunition the AT platoon knocked out three German vehicles: two tanks and one half-track. If shell, HE, 57mm had been available, it is believed that the heavy counterattack by the enemy which followed could have been frustrated and stopped here. However, hostile infantry were able to overrun our gun positions at this point, with a resulting loss of about twenty men, three 57mm guns and four vehicles. The hostile attack then spread to other points along our front.



2. As this letter is being written, another platoon of the same company is in a situation similar to that of the platoon described above. Repeated efforts on the part of this organization to obtain Shell, 57mm ammunition have met with failure. The Regimental Munitions Officer has attempted to draw this type of ammunition from every ammunition Supply Point which has served this organization in the past month.

3. It is recommended that all possible efforts to obtain this type of ammunition be made without delay. Many situations have arisen in the experience of this organization during the past month in which Shell, 57mm HE, ammunition would have been of inestimable value.

/s/ H. C. Shattuck  
H. C. SHATTUCK  
Colonel, 316th Infantry  
Commanding

A simple and effective procedure for supply of all classes from Regimental Trains to using troops which had been developed by 1st Lt George Spayd, ASN G-1285652, 2d Battalion Supply Officer and Sgt Vakshawl, ASN 32113152, Supply Sgt, Company "C" was standardized by the regiment and used with all battalions. In the vicinity of the Battalion rear CP and Motor Park the battalion supply officer establishes a battalion DP for all classes of supply. When a Company Commander desires anything from ammunition to water, he merely calls the battalion rear CP on his SCR-300 and the requirement is transmitted to the company supply sgt in the battalion supply DP who loads a jeep and trailer and goes forward to his company.

We also discovered that coffee is not the only stimulant of value. Our recommendation that captured Cognac be distributed to all aid stations for the wounded was carried and Division made it available. Our Medics swear by it... and no doubt the wounded do too. It is our opinion that a regular issue of liquor to medical installations for the wounded would accomplish much in resuscitating the wounded. The Medics concur.

44-38861-1000  
by 38  
Date 10/1/44