

By NWDNARA, Date 1973

COMPANY S 318TH INFANTRY  
AFC 80, U.S. ARMY

1 May 1945

ATTACHMENT

Two things characterized this month's activities; intensive movement and warehouses. Movement meant gasoline and maintenance; warehouses meant added features to the menu which were a change from the operational rations which we drew most of the time. The first of the month found us still in the general vicinity of Humberg, Germany, and had reverted to control of the 80th Inf Div. We drew three days of class one from the 80th C.M. and spent all day trying to draw one day from the 6th Armored Div. from whom we had been detached on this date. We had started out with a five day supply of class one when we left the division, but had consumed three days before resupply was available from the Armored Div. Immediately G-4, Sixth Armored Div learned of our detachment from the 6th Armored Div and canceled our requirements on classes one and three. We were in pretty bad shape on class three because of the attached Quartermaster trucks with which we had been chasing the armor. This unit requires an average of 80 2 1/2 ton attached trucks to be motorized, and each truck has a 40 gallon tank and carries an spare tank of gas. Just to refill the attached trucks requires 3200 gallons. We had dissipated the organic load of the transportation platoon truck of the Service company and had acquired a large German truck which we use to haul our lubricants and gasoline. This truck gave us a 1500 gallon resupply which keeps our organic vehicles going a little longer. Whenever any of our trucks are requisitioned to transport other units, we assume the obligation of resupplying their fuel. All of our 2 1/2 ton cargo trucks carry at least ten cans of gas in addition to starting with their tanks full. In all the operations in which we have engaged we have had to refuel the attached quartermaster trucks, and most of the time they came to us empty. It is the policy of this organization to send them home filled and when they leave us they are invariably filled. Why cannot we receive the same consideration? And, why should we, who are not a Service regiment, but a "combat" outfit, have to resort to class three resupply for these vehicles? Why cannot each vehicle of a QM truck company either carry an extra dozen cans to increase its range, or why do they not have an extra truck to carry their gasoline?

On the third of the month, the regiment was on the way to Kassel, Germany, and the initial attack was supported by the battalion trains in battalion control, and the Service train in the division garrison in the vicinity of Oberhausen, Germany. Roads were congested and lines of communication were short. The 3rd BN captured the well stocked warehouses on the outskirts of Kassel, from which we took two 2 1/2 ton truck loads of canned food, cheese, lard, butter, and liquor, of which we made regimental distribution. The Division G-4 was notified of these warehouses and the others which the 3rd BN

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On the 14th, the regiment was in Kassel, and we moved our  
 camp to the city, and immediately alerted all elements  
 for movement. During the 14th and 15th we moved approximately sixty  
 miles to Gotha. The regiment initially stopped west of Gotha, and  
 the train went into bivouac in Eintrachtshaus, about 15 miles west  
 of the city. Even when the regiment moved five miles east of the  
 city and extended the supply lines to about twenty miles we still  
 kept the train in its initial location, because the need for motor  
 maintenance was so great. During these continued periods of move-  
 ment we had been unable to stop long enough to catch up with our  
 second echelon motor work. At this time, our 2nd battalion dis-  
 covered a railroad engine which was in workable shape. The Service  
 Company commander took it over and we began operation of our initial  
 and short-lived venture into railroading. Fortunately the track  
 ran almost to our train bivouac, and the forward railhead was in  
 the vicinity of our advanced elements. We got more publicity than  
 reports from the 318th Inf Railroad, however, and after one day  
 of operation as a supply train, we had to abandon it because of  
 bad road beds and because we were on the move again. It is believed  
 though that this was the first train to run east of the Rhine.

Around the tenth of April, the 318 began the attack of Erfurt.  
 The train initially supported from Seemergen and shortly the entire  
 AT closed into the city. We had acquired a fine German power plant  
 which we mounted on a captured carriage as a generator for lights  
 for the regimental command post. We have found this to be a very  
 necessary piece of equipment, and one which is not provided by  
 existing T/O.

The capture of Erfurt by the 318 resulted in the usual acqui-  
 sition of warehouses. These we found mostly in German garrisons.  
 From these we acquired handkerchiefs and socks which we badly need-  
 ed as these items were difficult to obtain through requisition.  
 Div 1-4 was notified of all captured material, and soon higher  
 echelon took over the many installations which we had taken and  
 were guarding.

On the 15th of the month we were sitting before Chemnitz, and  
 all basic loads except class I were intact, road nets were excell-  
 ent and there was no problem in supply excepting the continual re-  
 passing of the attached CV trucks. Every time we stopped for a few  
 hours we sent trucks racing to the rear to get the necessary gas.  
 Our men, operating these trucks never slept, and as a result we had  
 organic loads strung out all over the countryside. But when we stopp-  
 ed for at least a day, we managed to race back again and pick them  
 up.

On the 18th we were on the road again. The 3rd Bn had requeste-  
 ed 57mm AP ammunition, and the ASF backing us up at this time  
 could not furnish the same. However, action was light and we do not  
 believe that any had been fired since Kassel, therefore there was  
 little danger of being caught short. The entire regiment was in  
 column and moved all night. We closed in the vicinity of Bamberg.

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At 1400, 18 April.

On the 18th we moved to Hurn erg, which town we garrisoned and polined. Several warehouses were located and sufficient butter and canned milk was found to make a complete regimental distribution. The regiment had two Displaced Persons camps to take care of, and we were urgently requisitioned for soap, brushes and lime. The Div immediately went to work on the requisition. We filled it from regimental stocks taken from each company, and awaited replenishment from 24. The city water supply was out off leaving the people at the DP camp at the north end of the city without drinking water. We arranged with G-4 to obtain the use of a corps point which was set up about two miles from the camp, and by using two of our trucks and borrowing a hundred water cans from each of the 1st and 2nd Bns we were able to maintain a SP of drinking water for the 5000 people in the camp for two days. We had the use of the camp controlled by the guards, and everything worked out all right. By this experience we found that the civil affairs officers who were in charge of the camp did not have one piece of equipment with which to accomplish their mission of caring for these people. Moreover, they apparently had no source to which they could have resorted in their plight. Why does not the T/O place the necessary equipment in the hands of these officers so that a combat outfit does not have to become a poor substitute for a Service regiment?

On the 28th we moved out again, traveled all day and night and closed in the vicinity of Over-siling at 0730, 29 April. We were immediately alerted for another move and on the 30th moved to the vicinity of Wengkofen. At this point we were told we were moving again, and due to our continual movement it had been impossible to resupply class I. Mr. Atkinson, the ass't S-4, raced back to the Div Quartermaster and obtaining the loan of seven CM trucks joined the column, finally arriving at 0400, 30 April, with three CM trucks and about 1800 gallons of gasoline. We used the extra CM trucks to ship out our PWs. By the end of the day we had resupplied all classes of supply to include at least five days reserve of rations and all vehicles filled with gas and oil and a reserve of about 1500 gallons of gasoline. During the day we had issued 8000 gallons of gasoline, and were ready for the highroad again.

The following notes were compiled by the Regimental Surgeon and the Company Commander of Collecting Company "B":

During the month of April our problems were mainly concerned with movement. This involved the usual treating of casualties and still remaining mobile. Our problem is made doubly difficult due to the fact that the ambulances are our only means of transporting casualties and they are needed when casualties occur.

The problem of transporting personnel has been met with the cooperation of the OF. Room for the men normally occupying these ambulances has been given by the engineers. This allows the ambulances to keep three ambulances clear on waves and provide medical aid without dropping personnel off on the road.

The problem of treating during movement has been solved with the addition of our mobile station. This has been set up in the rear.

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carried every truck and is always ready for use. During movement, technicians ride in the truck and all of our means of treating the wounded are included in the station on the truck.

On a night move of 18 April, the station proved invaluable. During the early part of the evening, an enemy plane strafed the column. The casualties resulting from this attack were quickly treated in the station truck and then carried in the empty ambulances until a medical installation was passed. The more serious casualties were retained in the station truck and were treated on the move until they were in fit shape to be carried in an ambulance. This kept the down any mobile and did not force part to remain behind and set up a station. Had the "T" ran into more difficulties, the Company was still in the convey and ready to operate.

In a situation of continuous small moves, the station on wheels is again a boon to mobility. Upon reaching an area, it is immediately available for treating of casualties. When a move is to be made, no time must be spent in closing a station.

During the attack on the city of Kassel, the mobile station at one time handled over 50 casualties in a matter of 3 hours. The casualties were brought into the Company area immediately upon arrival. The station truck was used and in a matter of 5 minutes, 5 casualties had been treated and the ambulances returned to the Battalion Aid Stations. This speeded up evacuation and returned the ambulances to the Aids where they were needed. With the old type station, it would have been necessary to retain the casualties in the ambulances until a station could have been set up.

The possibilities of a mobile station are many and many are being fully exploited in this Company. Many new ideas are being used and the work on the interior of the station has produced many good aids in treatment. It is possible to carry litter casualties in comfort and treat them at the same time. The station is covered with lights from the truck electric system and has a small coal stove in one corner for heat. It can always be restocked on supplies from the other station trucks.

The addition of an awning that is quickly unfurled from the top of the truck provides a rainproof and sunproof evacuation site. This is handy in hot or rainy weather.

We cannot too strongly recommend the equipment of the Military Government officers with the equipment to accomplish their missions or suitable availability of this equipment to them by liaison with higher echelons who have this equipment.

More pressing is the recommendation that Quartermaster supporting companies be equipped with the necessary gasoline carrying vehicle to sustain their movement. If each Personnel carrier were equipped with racks which would carry twenty extra cans their range would be about 600-800 miles. With the addition of 1 truck to each company they would be able to operate continually for three days.

The fact that we still accomplish our missions without this equipment is a testament to the skill and initiative of our personnel.

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realization of these recommendations apparently refutes their requirement. But the price paid by the personnel who make the accomplishment possible without the equipment is not worth the lack of equipment.

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