

HEADQUARTERS 80TH INFANTRY DIVISION
Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff G-4
APO#80, U.S. Army

MEMORANDUM:

17 November 1944.

To : Chief of Staff, 80th Infantry Division.

PERIODS FOR HISTORICAL RECORDING
1 SEPTEMBER TO 30 SEPTEMBER 1944

1. Movement and Operations at Commercy
2. Operations at Toul
3. Mosselle Bridgehead and River Crossing Operations

ERLAND L. SANDBERG
Lt Colonel, GSC,
AC of S, G-4

1. Movement and Operation at Commerce (1 Sept - 4 Sept 1944)

a. Operational type rations were used throughout the period.

b. The critical shortage of gasoline was alleviated by the capture of an enemy Supply Point at St. Julien, consisting of 25 Tank cars of approximately 100,000 gallons. The 80th QM Company established a Class III SP with its portable dispensers and resupplied the Division and attached units from this source. Approximately half this gasoline was taken over by Corps and issued to Corps units. Track laying vehicles were not authorized to use this captured gasoline because of its low octane rating.

c. The enemy supplies captured in the vicinity of Commercey are as follows:

10,000 litres	Gasoline	Commercy
25 Carloads	Gasoline	St Julien
6 Carloads	Ord equipment	Commercy
30 Carloads	Sig equipment	Essey-et-Maizeres
5 Warehouses	Ord equipment	Sampigny
	Med equipment	Commercy
	Mixed supply train	Rambucourt

d. Throughout the operation, Army Supply Points remained in the vicinity of Sonmesour, as noted by administrative order. Request to Corps to have the SP's moved closer to better support the Division were acknowledged essential, but difficult to accomplish.

2. Operation at Toul (4 Sept - 10 Sept 1944)

a. Operational rations during this period were supplemented by fresh beef, bread and oranges. The Division Commander directed that when "B" rations were available units would serve them at least three times per week. A Class I train captured at Bouy consisting of cheeses, butter, and Post Exchange items were issued as a supplement to the ration. Effective 3 September 1944, authorization was granted to purchase from unit funds, surplus fruits and vegetables.

b. The supply of gasoline became critical. This limited the operation and the situation was partially solved by the use of captured gasoline. To facilitate control of gasoline units were required to report daily the amount of gasoline on hand. The following logistic table was used in rationing the small daily allocation:

Unit	Cap of Tanks	No of Caps	Cap of Cans	Am't required to move 100mi	Gas on hand	Days of supply 50 mi. per day	Over or Short

During the initial phase of gasoline rationing, considerable difficulty was experienced at the Class III SP's. To alleviate these discrepancies an 80th QM representative was detailed to the SP to coordinate issues and amounts to divisional and attached units.

c. A critical shortage of 105mm HE and Smoke, belted .30 cal. MG ammunition was alleviated by releasing to Corps the attached 443d QM Truck Company for the purpose of transporting ammunition to ASP #24.

d. Traffic Control

1. Traffic control points were established at Commercy, Beaumont, Flirey, and Toul. In Toul, three teams were alerted to control the Traffic pending the installation of the Bridge.

e. General.

1. The Army Supply Points of all classes were entirely too distant. Resupply for Class I and III was approximately 85 miles from division area to Sommesous. On the 7th of September the SP's were moved to 2 miles SW of Ligny-en-Barrois.

2. During the period 8-10 Sept 44, the 858th QM Fumigation and Shower unit was located at Martincourt. The installation showered approximately 300 men an hour and was used extensively throughout the period.

3. Corps authorized the guarding of unimportant captured items to be maintained by the Free French. Food which was not desired for military need was turned over to the French for consumption thru Civil Affairs.

4. The transporting of replacements for the Division was performed by the attached 443d QM Truck Company.

3. Moselle Bridgehead and River Crossing Operations 11 Sept - 31 Sept

a. "B" ration supplement issues increased considerably during this period. The supplements consisted of fresh meats, bread, fresh and dehydrated vegetables. Coffee issue was also increased. Some Units reported difficulties in feeding because of the loss of individual mess gear, which were not readily replaced. Meals definitely improved and it is felt moral likewise improved as a result.

b. During this operation the replacements received were short considerable equipment particularly entrenching tools, shelter halves and bayonets. The entrenching tool shortage was tentatively solved by the receipt of 1500 long handled British shovels. This was not an ideal solution as the shovels were bulky and could not be carried in the carrier, however it did provide a means for individual entrenchment.

c. The Units were being supplied Class III on an allocation basis. The basis of the issue and the procedure for drawing was through the operation of a Division Class III Truckhead. The 80th QM transferred the Division allotment to Division area and Units drew their allocation at

that point. The Division allocation during this period averaged 5,000 gallons per day.

d. During this operation ammunition rationing became effective. The following list indicates the total amounts of ammunition per gun not to be exceeded for the periods.

	<u>SEPT 3-10</u>	<u>SEPT 11-19</u>	<u>SEPT 19-27</u>
Shell, 81mm Mortar, light	83.6	88.3	64.0
Shell, 81mm Mortar, heavy	35.6	22.8	17.2
Shell, 81mm Mortar, WP	22.6	13.0	10.2
Shell, 105mm How, M3, HE	135.8	155.5	133.3
Shell, 105mm How, M3, WP	6.4	3.1	4.0
Shell, 105mm How, M2, HE	278.4	310.3	234.2
Shell, 105mm How, M2, WP	None	None	None
Shell, 155mm How, HE	245.8	126.0	105.3
Shell, 155mm How, WP	None	2.5	None
Shell, 4.5 inch Gun, HE	245.8	200.0	185.4
Shell, 155mm Gun, M12, HE	258.0	166.6	166.7
Shell, 155mm Gun, M1, HE	143.3	166.6	140.0
Shell, 155mm Gun, M1, WP	None	None	None
Shell, 8 inch How, HE	121.5	80.0	48.3
Shell, 8 inch Gun, WP	None	None	None
Shell, 240mm How, HE	63.5	75.0	60.0

e. To date there has been no resupply available of Shell, 57mm Antitank Gun, HE. This item has been constantly reported short and has been requested frequently by all Regiments.

f. Antitank mines, anti-personnel mines, trip flares and booby trap materiel, because of limited availability, were established in a Division DP under the direct control of the Division Engineer Officer.

g. During this operation Artillery ammunition became critically short at the ASP. Basic loads in Artillery trains after attack were reduced to 50% in many cases. Arrival of a train load of ammunition at Commercy relieved this situation.

h. Troop Movement

(1) The following motor movement plan was used to effect expeditiously and with a minimum of marching, the withdrawal of front line battalions to new positions.

(a) The withdrawal of the 3rd Battalion of the 318th Infantry Regiment from the general vicinity of Faulx was controlled by the following movement plan - 20 trucks were concentrated in an area approximately 2 miles from the forward assembly point. Five (5) vehicles at a time were sent to the forward assembly area and loaded with the withdrawing troops and the remainder of the vehicles dispatched at fifteen minute intervals in groups of five. As the vehicles were loaded they were dispatched to the concentration area individually. When ten trucks were concentrated at the rear area they were dispatched to their destination. The time to complete the withdrawal and movement was eight (8) hours.

i. Traffic Control

(1) Traffic plans for crossings over Mosselle River are indicated on attached sketches, number 1 - Dieulouard, number 2 - Pont-a-Mousson.

(a) It was interesting to note that the civilian directional signs to the large cities in vicinity of Pont-a-Mousson had been reversed by the enemy.

j. General

(1) During this operation the 1st Battalion of the 318th Infantry Regiment was completely cut off and isolated on Pont-a-Mousson Hill after its capture. Some needed supplies were flown by Division Artillery Liaison Planes. On the 15th September 1944 ammunition to the extent of 38,000 rounds was dropped by the observers. On 16th September 1944 forty (40) units of blood plasma were dropped by the same process.

(2) A report to higher headquarters for dropping the heavier needed supplies was instigated. The priority list for the dropping was as follows:

- a. 100 rounds 75mm HE, with M48 fuze
- b. 200 rounds 81mm Mortar, heavy
- c. 300 rounds 60mm Mortar, heavy
- d. 100 Antitank Rockets
- e. 20,000 rounds, cal..30, 3 per clip
- f. 40,000 rounds, cal..30, machine gun
- g. 150 rounds, 81mm Mortar, light
- h. 180 rounds, 60mm Mortar, light

Special apparatus and the supplies had to be assembled and prepared in England. Time for preparation and finally inclement weather were factors which delayed this plan. Resupply by air was cancelled when supply to the Battalion was effected by the destruction of enemy positions isolating the Battalion.

k. The 858th QM Bath was made available to the Division and was set up in the vicinity of Dieulouard. On 29 September 1944 3169 individuals received showers and on the 30 September 1197 received showers. A QM Laundry Section was also made available to the Division and this was set up in the same vicinity. Bundles were limited to 9 pieces per individual, and Units were required to sort their own items. In a weeks operation 13,700 pounds had been laundered.

l. Browning Automatic Rifles, cal..30 and 60mm Mortars were critically short as evidenced by the attached letter. Additional shortages at the conclusion of this period are attached as Inclosure #4.

m. Post Exchange rations (RAC Kits) were generally issued short and at the conclusion of this period the Division was short seven(7) days supply.

n. The duffel bags for the Division in storage at Montsurs and Avanches were transported forward by Communications Zone trucks to Sommes-Sous, and then by rail to Toul. A detail of two (2) Field Grade

officers and one hundred (100) men plus a representative of each organization were required for three (3) days to unload, sort, and distribute duffel bags to organizations. Previously the storage of duffel bags had been under Division control, however the directive requiring gas masks to be immediately available within a 24 hour period, prompted the change in policy to require organizations to be responsible for own storage, guard and movement of duffel bags and gas masks.

ERLAND L. SANDBERG
Lt Colonel, GSC,
AC of S, G-4

3 Incls.

- No. 1 - Sketch of Moselle River
Crossing
- No. 2 - Sketch of Pont-a-Mousson
Crossing
- No. 3 - List of Critical Shortages

HEADQUARTERS 80TH INFANTRY DIVISION
APO #80, U. S. Army

20 September 1944.

SUBJECT: Critical Shortages Mortar, 60mm, M2, w/mount and Rifle,
Browning, automatic, cal..30, M1918A2.

TO: Commanding General, Third U.S. Army, APO #403

1. As a result of battle losses a critical shortage of Mortar, 60mm, M2, w/mount and Rifle, Browning, automatic, cal..30, M1918A2 exists in this command.

2. To date no replacements have been received even for items lost one month ago, in spite of continued effort on the part of the Division Ordnance Officer to obtain such replacements and in spite of their inclusion as a critical shortage in the Daily G-4 report.

H. L. McBRIDE
Major General, U.S. Army
Commanding

Info copy to:

CG, XII Corps