

Apr 1973 - 13 Feb 1974

FORWARD

The 24th Transportation Company "Truck Masters" Unit History is long and filled with honor and accomplishment. Our present unit historian is presently obtaining all known facts concerning this unit, however, many gaps still exist and further attempts are being made to aid in preparing a complete unit history.

Accomplishments the "Truck Masters" have compiled since origin are participation in five campaigns during World War II, thirteen campaigns during the Vietnam Conflict and the Meritorious Unit Commendation in Vietnam (1970). In addition numerous letters of Commendation and Appreciation have been recieved.

This annual supplement covers the period from 1 April 1973 to 13 February 1974, which includes the reorganization of the 24th Transportation Company on 1 April 1973 at Fort Riley, Kansas. As you will see the 24th Transportation Company "Truck Masters" are continuing in the honor and accomplishment of the past.

  
DONALD J. BRUNS  
CPT, TC  
Commander

AFZNNEN-V-J

14 February 1974

SUBJECT: Annual Historical Supplement

THRU: Commander  
541st Maintenance Battalion (GS/DS)  
Fort Riley, Kansas 66442

Commander  
138th Engineer Group (Const)  
Fort Riley, Kansas 66442

TO: Commander  
1st Infantry Division (M) & Fort Riley  
ATTN: AFZND0-PH  
Fort Riley, Kansas 66442

The 24th Transportation Company (Medium Truck) (Cargo) "Truck Masters" was reactivated in December 1972 at Fort Riley, Kansas 66442. Personnel were not assigned until 3 April 1973 and the majority were AIT graduates with little experience in the Army.

Our TOE is designated medium truck company 55-18G with modifications. We are part of the 541st Maintenance Battalion commanded by LT Col Richard L. Scott. The next higher headquarters is the 138th Engineer Group commanded by Col John P. Chandler who takes his orders from Major General Gordon S. Duquemin Commanding General, Fort Riley, Kansas.

Our mission as described by our TOE is, to provide transportation for the movement of General Cargo, Bulk Petroleum and Refrigerated Cargo by motor transport. When fully equipped can transport 2160 short tons of cargo or, in emergencies only, 4500 passengers. However, what we are equipped to do and what we do, have two different outcomes because of our actual missions: 1. Provide transportation for Reserve Officer Training Corp (ROTC) summer camp, 2. Provide driver support to Transportation Motor Pool (TMP), 3. Support Departure and Arrival Airfield Control Group, and garden plot exercise with transportation and trained personnel, 4. Provide support for reserve summer training, 5. Provide 541st Maintenance Battalion a dining facility, 6. Provide support for contingency plans.

Since reactivation we have had two commanders, Captain Edward S. Dougil QM and Captain Donald J. Bruns TC. Captain Dougil started as the commander taking command in April 1973, until transferring to the Fort Riley Officer Open Mess in Dec of 1973. He brought the 24th from a 1 man company to its present strength of 88 EM, 5 Commissioned Officers, and 1 WO. Upon that

AFZNFN-V-J

SUBJECT: Annual Historical Supplement

cold snowy change of command on 16 December 1973 Captain Donald J. Bruns TC took command of the mighty "Truck Masters".

To present, the 24<sup>th</sup> has had 10 Commissioned Officers; 1st LT Larry D. Russell, 1st LT Richard Merkwin, 2LT Kenneth A. Barr, 2LT Stanley G. Huckabee, 2LT Joseph H. Weaver, 2LT Robert W. Meyer, 2LT Richard Johnson, 2LT Edwin Hickle, with 1SG Ralph D. Jordan as ranking enlisted man, the command and staff of the 24<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company has had considerable number of changes since its activation.

The major accomplishments of the 24<sup>th</sup> have been many and varied, ranking from aircraft loading to rail loading operations, from reserve support to major mission support; what follows is what we as the 24<sup>th</sup> have contributed to the US Army.

After being re-organized, effective December 1972, and personnel assignment starting in April 1973, our first mission consisted of a support company for the Fifth Army Rifle & Pistol Matches. Our mission was to support the match participants by providing transportation, food services, and supply services and administrative support. The participants numbering nearly 800 officer, enlisted personnel and civilians were well pleased with our help and commended Captain Dougil for his outstanding leadership.

Following the matches our company started the move from Camp Eensythe to Main Post. Problems erupted here due to the fact we had not been organized for any length of time, especially in our supply room, and we had no vehicles of our own. But as usual we completed the move in high fashion and settled down in a routine of organization and police call, a mission no one appreciates.

In June of 1973 the company augmented the 1st Transportation Company Provision in support of the annual ROTC Summer Camp 1973. Twenty six drivers and Assistant drivers were assigned to operate thirteen 2½ ton trucks to supplement 44 passenger buses whenever the weather prevented the buses from operating. During that summer we logged 4,500 accident free miles not much in numbers but the cadets were certainly happy for our support.

While a portion of the company was performing the above mission the remainder of the company was tasked to support the 75<sup>th</sup> Maneuver Area Command (MAC) at Fort Carson, Colorado. This operation required the company to receive, load, and transport by rail 71 vehicles and other equipment necessary to establish motor and equipment pools. While at Fort Carson the 88 operators from the company logged more than 85,000 miles in support of the 75<sup>th</sup> MAC's training exercise. Upon completion of the mission the equipment and vehicles taken to Fort Carson were again rail loaded for return to Fort Riley, Kansas.

Beginning in October 1973, 25% of the company's drivers were detailed to support the post Transportation Motor Pool (TMP). This involves operating various vehicles, ie sedans, 45 PAX busses, carry-all vans. These operators

AFZNNN-V-J

SUBJECT: Annual Historical Supplement

have logged over 14,000 miles and the mission has continued into calendar year 1974.

The most important mission successfully accomplished by the 24<sup>th</sup> occurred between 27 September and 27 November 1973, exercise Reforger V. This was the entire movement of the 1st Inf Div TAT (to accompany troops) including personal baggage, footlockers, and miscellaneous equipment, which was transported 150 miles from Fort Riley, Kansas to McConnell AFB, Wichita, Kansas. At McConnell, company personnel supervised the loading of this equipment onto Military Aircraft Command (MAC) aircraft. Upon the return of the Division to the U.S. the 24<sup>th</sup> again transported back to Fort Riley the items listed above. The entire operation involved the use of thirty 5 ton tractors and sixty S & P trailers in which the company's drivers logged 154,000 accident free miles, delivering all baggage and equipment intact and on time to over 50 different units participating in the exercise.

But of course to break the monotony of the routine established we decided to organize the company and move to the field. Not only for those reasons did we go, but our training required us to participate in a FTX at least once every quarter. An eventful experience, our first mission as an entire company with harmonic training and living together resulted in another successful mission accomplished by the "Truck Masters".

The reception for Captain Donald J. Bruns was unique. On 16 December 1973 it decided to snow on Kansas, Fort Riley, the 24<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company, and Captain Bruns. Although the weather was cold the hearts of the men of the 24<sup>th</sup> were warm in their receiving of their new commander.

Special events of the 24<sup>th</sup> consisted mainly of one action by the men. In May 1973 Army Emergency Relief (AER) was collecting donations for their fund to support personnel in need. Until the final day of collections the 24<sup>th</sup> was one of the lowest on their list as far as contributions. But the night before the deadline 2LT Larry Russell with assistance from 1SG Jordan decided to have a cake auction. Without knowledge of what they had done, the Tiger, Top, motivated the men into spending \$1100 for cakes, sacks, and anything else that was available... a day to remember.

At present our basketball team is competing in the Post Tournament for the championship of Fort Riley. They have successfully captured the Pacific League Championship and hopefully will get the Fort Riley "Champs".

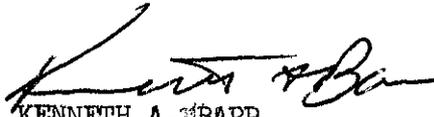
With the closing of our Special Events Section special mention must be made about our unit Dining Facility. We have just completed competition for The Best Dining Facility in FORSCOM, the J.P. Connelly award. The results of the inspection have not been distributed but our hopes are high. To date, we have won six monthly Best Mess Awards, and one yearly "Best Mess Award" from the 138<sup>th</sup> Engineer Group, so we know we're good.

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SUBJECT: Annual Historical Supplement

The 24<sup>th</sup> now has settled down to a mission of training in preparation for our Army Training Test (ATT) in May 1974. But before then, we have to accomplish two important steps, another FTX and an IG with the leadership and attitude of the men of the 24<sup>th</sup>, we say, "No Problem".

To reminisce on the past year would take 365 pages to fill a book, but of course not every day can be written history. But a few segments follow with importance only to us: "Tiger"... Nuck... Blap!... Pop Your      ssy... Contribute to the Old Soldiers Home... "Bones"... "Mouse"... \$1,100 for AFR from cakes?... Laugh In... etc, etc.



KENNETH A. BARR  
2LT TC  
Unit Historian