American Railway Operation Battalions in ETO During World War II
The USATC in WW II
Organization

USATC

1st MRS
N. Africa
Italy
S. France

2nd MRS
Europe

3rd MRS
Middle East

RGD
Railway Grand Division
250-450 miles of rail

ROB
Railway Operating Battalion

RSB
Railway Shop Battalion
Recruiting for the USATC in WW II
The need for the MRS
Supply Problems

• Patton’s Third Army
  – required an average of 350,000 gal/day
• The Red Ball Express
  – consumed 300,000 gal/day itself
• 28 Aug – Patton’s fuel allocation falls 100,000 gal short
• 31 Aug – No fuel arrives, Patton grinds to a halt
• Increased use of larger caliber artillery adds to supply problems
The need for the MRS
Railway Infrastructure Destroyed
Railway Infrastructure Destroyed
Operation Overlord was sustained by rail and pipelines constructed by Allied Engineers, extending inland from the Normandy beachhead, the French Port of Cherbourg, and Vannes and St. Nazarre on the south shore of Brittany.
U.S.-BUILT WORLD WAR I LOCOMOTIVES

at the roundhouse in Cherbourg.
American flat cars being unloaded from an LST onto a specially constructed rail pier head
American LST lower bow ramp equipped with rails for unloading railroad rolling stock
Positioning LST on temporary quay for unloading rail cars
Flat cars rolled onto panel track; note bumpers of English design
Transition ramp for taking rail cars from LST hold onto sections of panel track
Allied rail support system extended all the way across northern France by Mid-September 1944, just three months after D Day.
By VE Day in May 1945 the Allied rail system extended in Germany, mostly on restored right-of-ways.

The solid lines indicate rail lines restored prior to mid February 1945 while the dashed lines indicate those restored between mid February and May 1, 1945.
References

http://home.att.net/~rwy720th/

http://homepages.tesco.net/~martyn.witt/milrly/mil_rly_hist_e_0.htm#top_of_page

http://www2pb.ip-soft.net/railinfo/car-floats/dday-landings.html