



## *517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team*



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

### **MailCall No. 2210**

**April 20, 2014**

*517th Parachute Infantry Regiment  
460th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion  
596th Parachute Combat Engineer Company*

Website  
Send MailCall news to  
MailCall Archives  
2013 Roster (updated!)  
Thunderbolt (Winter 2014)

[www.517prct.org](http://www.517prct.org)  
[MailCall@517prct.org](mailto:MailCall@517prct.org)  
[www.517prct.org/archives](http://www.517prct.org/archives)  
[www.517prct.org/roster.pdf](http://www.517prct.org/roster.pdf)  
[www.517prct.org/archives](http://www.517prct.org/archives)

### ***Merger of the Association and Auxiliary***

As many already know, the membership voted to merge the memberships of the Association and the Auxiliary, effective May 30, 2014. Over eighty-eight percent of the Association members who voted voted in favor of the merger. On that date, Auxiliary members will become full-fledged members of the Association along with the troopers who served with the 517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team during World War II. We old timers welcome all those new members who have already proved themselves worthy by providing the invaluable assistance which has kept the Association alive and thriving while our 1943-1946 membership has thinned out.

The merger will allow the Association to continue its activities in the USA, Southern France and Belgium as long as there continues to be an interest in preserving the memory of the 517th men who fought valiantly through five major battles to liberate Europe from Nazi occupation.

The merger is timed for May 30 so that anyone desiring to make a donation to the Association before that date could deduct the donation as a charitable contribution on their 2014 individual tax returns. Donations after that date may not be deducted.

**Joanne Barrett** and **Howard Hensleigh** have informed the Internal Revenue Service and the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (where we are incorporated) of the merger and report that there should be a continuation of the Association's nonprofit status.

Airborne all the way,

**Kaare Allan Johnson**  
President, 517<sup>th</sup> PRCT Association



# 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

## MailCall News



From [Loïc 'Jack' Jankowiak](#) via Facebook

Happy Easter to all! :D

This image is often used during Easter time, but who are these two men? Which unit they belong? These are the T/5 William E. Thomas and Pfc Joseph Jackson which are part of the 333rd Field Artillery Battalion. A battalion which for many is unknown, because these are the all blacks and not whites, and yet, December 17, 1944, the battalion remained in history...

When the German offensive in the Ardennes is triggered, most of the available units are African-American. One of them is the 333rd FAB.

This battle emerged a multitude of heroes and... Monsre. If the Malmedy massacre trial is very well known, it is not the same for the forgotten massacre of 11 black Gunners from the army.

On 17 December, C Battery of the 333rd FAB is surprised by the German breakthrough in the Ardennes. Radios called for the infantry front to receive help from the artillery, the Germans seem to be everywhere. That day, chaos reigns and some escape through the woods, including 11 men. After a long walk through the woods, in the mud and fog, 11 Gunners asks for help and stop in the small village of Wereth near Sankt Vith where they are assisted by Mathias and Maria Langer.

Unfortunately for them, a German sympathizer informed on the presence of 11 blacks. Shortly after, a patrol of the 1st SS Panzer Division arrived in the village. The Gunners calmly surrendered without a fight.. The Germans brought them to a field and then it is the drama: the 11 men are tortured, beaten to death, shot and then completed.

In January, a patrol of the 99th Infantry Division discovered the massacre. What they saw was horrible: men's legs had been broken, many had received shots of bayonets in the head, skulls had been broken and many had cut fingers.

These 11 men are: Private Curtis Adams Corporal Mager Bradley Private George Davis Staff Sergeant Thomas Forte Tech Corporal Robert Green Private James Leatherwood Private Nathaniel Moss Tech Sergeant William Pritchett Tech Sergeant James Aubrey Private Due Turner Private George Molten the culprits have never been tried.

For my Belgian friends and others who would like to reach, May 17 has held a ceremony at the monument of the "Wereth 11". This monument erected in 2004, is the only one in Europe on army African-American <http://www.wereth.org/index.php/wereth-11>

eat too much chocolate! :D



## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

As Easter Sunday is coming up in a few days I thought this little video would be appropriate to show. May everyone have a very blessed safe and Happy Easter.

**Lory Curtis**

**BECAUSE OF HIM :** <http://bcove.me/25ol2ef3>

Whoever .... My dad , **Fred Waites** was a PFC in the Hqtr. Company. I have come across several WWII photos that he took in Europe, including a few of troopers who are identified. If you are interested in any of these photos, I am 99% sure that I can copy these and e-mail them.

Call me if you need to .... **Fred Waites, Jr.**

Here is another page from **Col. Grave's** files, recalling the death of **Lt. Harry Allingham** of C Company on Christmas day 1944:







## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

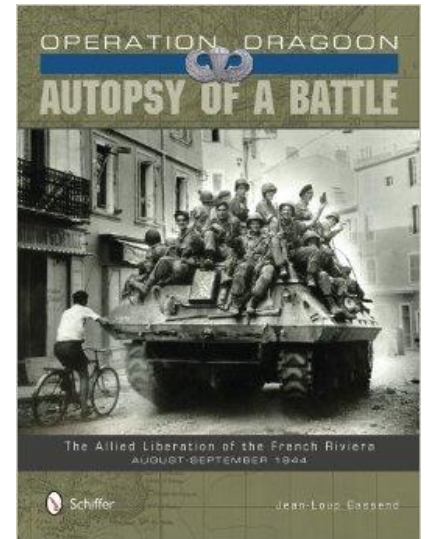
I was just notified by the author that a new book about Operation Dragoon is being published and will be available around May.

I was contacted by the author years back to provide information on my grandfather, **Joseph F. Van Ness**, B/517th. He was able to find and reveal some info we did not know based off of his research and our documents and input.

JV+ (Jeff Van Ness)

### Operation Dragoon: Autopsy of a Battle: The Allied Liberation of the French Riviera August-September 1944 Hardcover by [Jean-Loup Gassend](#)

On the night of August 14-15, 1944, the First Airborne Task Force, which included the U.S. 509th, 517th and 551st Parachute Infantry Regiments, jumped into enemy held territory spearheading Operation Dragoon, the Allied invasion of southern France. Based on interviews from all combatant units, battlefield archaeology, period photos, letters and reports, this book provides an outstandingly detailed hour-by-hour account of the advance through southern France, as seen through the eyes of those who lived through it, bringing to light the tragic and gruesome realities of what was later to become known as the, Champagne Campaign.



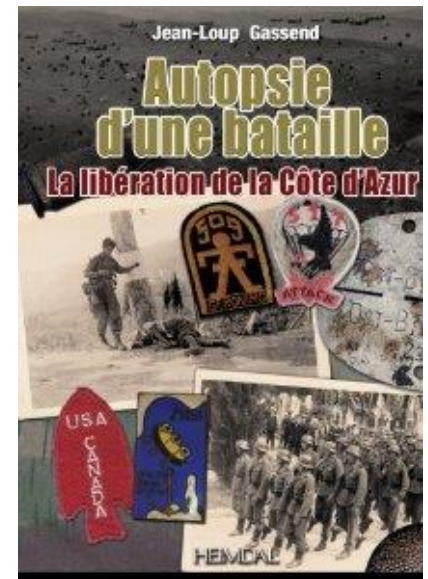
Pre-Order at: <http://www.amazon.com/Operation-Dragoon-Autopsy-Liberation-August-September/dp/076434580X>

Jean-Loup's book will be available in May. It includes some previously untold stories from the 517<sup>th</sup>. This has been a huge, multi-year effort by Jean-Loup, with lots of meticulous research. The book is 560 pages!

The French version is also available soon:

[http://www.amazon.com/Op%C3%A9ration-Dragoon-combats-Riviera-ao%C3%BBt-septembre/dp/284048353X/ref=la\\_B00J0JDI60\\_1\\_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1397747816&sr=1-2](http://www.amazon.com/Op%C3%A9ration-Dragoon-combats-Riviera-ao%C3%BBt-septembre/dp/284048353X/ref=la_B00J0JDI60_1_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1397747816&sr=1-2)

This book recounts the Liberation of Côte d'Azur, from the landing in Provence on August 15 1944, until the arrival of Allied soldiers on the Italian border on September 7, 1944. This campaign is told primarily through the testimony of witnesses present at the time: American parachutists, resistants, civilians, and also several German soldiers. All the facts told by these witnesses were meticulously crosschecked with records and documents of the time, autopsy reports from exhumed bodies, and excavations in the field. The result is a very detailed and lively history about three weeks of fighting, illustrated by many period pictures, with equipment found on site, and excavated objects directly related to the events recounted in the book.



**Congratulations, Jean-Loup! – BB**





## *517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team*

**Subject:** One of your vets

To whom it may Concern;

I would like to let you know that I have had the honor of meeting one of your comrades, he is living in the area and comes to visit me pretty regularly. His name is **William McGary** - 91 and getting around very well still, even with the shrapnel in his leg. I see that you are interested in stories of the 517th and I wanted you to know that he's here, as I do not see his name on your page. Currently we're having a friend of mine reconstruct a unit patch for him. He's such a dear and sweet man - please let me know how I can assist you in getting in contact with him for his story to be added to your wonderful website.

Dagmar Youngberg; VSO  
NMDVS Office - Carlsbad  
305 E. Fiesta Dr  
Carlsbad, NM

---

Hello Dagmar,

You are correct – I cannot find any mention of **William McGary** on our website records, although these records are very incomplete. Do you know which Company of the 517<sup>th</sup> he fought with? There are still about 600 517<sup>th</sup> veterans and family members in communication with us, and I am sure they would love to hear any stories, and/or wartime photos of Mr. McGary. Where and how was he wounded? And a current photo.

Any info is greatly appreciated.

Thanks,

Bob Barrett

---

I'll check with him tomorrow. I just got him information about honor flights (had a women's vet conference over weekend and met a coordinator)- do any of the veterans from the site go that you know of? I believe Mr. McGary wants to go this year~ he said it sounded fun.

Dagmar Youngberg

---



# 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Below is another sample from **Mike Kane's** findings from **Col. Grave's** files at the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center (USAHEC) in Carlisle, PA. This is a program for a boxing match at Camp Toccoa between the 517<sup>th</sup> and the 326<sup>th</sup> Glider Infantry.

**Hi - Welcome to Palm Springs**

*Toccoa - Fla*

**BOXING PROGRAM**  
517TH PARACHUTE INFANTRY vs 326TH GLIDER INFANTRY

FIRST BOUT

Clyde Chandler    Pvt    170 lbs Louisville, Kentucky    517th	vs	Alfred Fisher    PFC    170 lbs Hartline, Washington    326th
-------------------------------------------------------------------	----	------------------------------------------------------------------

SECOND BOUT

Albert Sylvester    PFC    150 lbs Detroit, Michigan    517th	vs	Bobby Cochran    Pvt    150 lbs Olney, Illinois    326th
------------------------------------------------------------------	----	-------------------------------------------------------------

THIRD BOUT

Dennis Fogarty    S/Sgt 160 lbs Dover, New Hampshire    517th	vs	James Finegan    PFC    160 lbs Chicago, Illinois    326th
------------------------------------------------------------------	----	---------------------------------------------------------------

FOURTH BOUT

Norman E. Allen    Cpl    155 lbs Chadron, Nebraska    517th	vs	Maurice Myers    PFC    155 lbs Minier, Illinois    326th
-----------------------------------------------------------------	----	--------------------------------------------------------------

FIFTH BOUT

Raymond King    460th Sgt 126 lbs Marlow, Oklahoma	vs	Tonny Laboradore    PFC    126 lbs Los Angeles, California    326th
-------------------------------------------------------	----	------------------------------------------------------------------------

SIXTH BOUT

Daniel Smith    PFC    144 lbs Baltimore, Maryland    517th	vs	William Murphy    Pvt    144 lbs Brooklyn, New York    326th
----------------------------------------------------------------	----	-----------------------------------------------------------------

SEVENTH BOUT

Charles Wysocki    Sgt    175 lbs Newark, New Jersey    517th	vs	Alex Solovoll    PFC    175 lbs Erie, Pennsylvania    326th
------------------------------------------------------------------	----	----------------------------------------------------------------

EIGHT BOUT

Lenord Aspinwall    PFC    180 lbs Odum, Georgia    517th	vs	Joe Lewis    Pvt    180 lbs Lackawna, New York    326th
--------------------------------------------------------------	----	------------------------------------------------------------

NINTH BOUT

LoBianco, Pele    Pvt    165 lbs York, Pennsylvania    517th	vs	Earnet Dreaser    PFC    165 lbs 326th
-----------------------------------------------------------------	----	-------------------------------------------

TENTH BOUT

Eugene Haikey    PFC    140 lbs Tulsa, Oklahoma    517th	vs	William Miller    PFC    140 lb Lawnton, Oklahoma    326th
-------------------------------------------------------------	----	---------------------------------------------------------------

EXHIBITION BOUT

Jackie Conn	vs	Roman Alveraze
-------------	----	----------------

Announcer ----- Lt. Kerr  
Judges ----- Lt. Reynolds  
Timer ----- Lt. Bachus  
Referee ----- Lt. Connors



# 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

## Submitted by

Name: **Richard Smith**  
From: Wellsville, Ohio  
E-mail:  
[rsmith16265@comcast.net](mailto:rsmith16265@comcast.net)

## Comments:

I was at the cemetery today cleaning up a few grave sites and one was my Uncle **Robert Joseph Rock, 517 Parachute Inf. Reg., Co. C, Staff Sargent**, US army. I used this information to find this web site and found out a lot about Uncle including that he received a Purple Heart. He was from Toronto, Ohio and served during World War II. He played football in high school and also was on a team in Nice, France that won a championship game. I was real close with him and sat many evenings and also in the farm fields talking and learning from him. He did not share any combat information with me or any of his other cousins but we knew he was proud to be in the U.S. Army. He wore his uniform often and I have a picture of him with me and 5 of my cousins in his sump boots and pants. He was a wonderful Uncle to us and we love and miss him and his strong character and leadership. God bless you Uncle and all of the great generation that fought for our freedom. Dick Smith

Added: April 18, 2014

Hi Dick,

Sgt. Rock is in a couple of pictures with that Company C football team. See: <http://517prct.org/photos/miler2.htm>

I would love to have any photos or stories of Sgt. Rock, if you have any.

Thanks,

Bob Barrett

“Camp Mackall was not much different from Toccoa but bigger, on level ground. Everyone was quartered in the same one-story, uninsulated "hutments" heated with coal

stoves, and the same drab, all-male existence went on. Passes were allowed, but after a few visits to the local small towns most troopers decided they might just as well stay in camp. The 17th Airborne was big on athletics, and the 517th shook it up a little by fielding football and boxing teams that won the Division championships. “







## *517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team*

### *70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations in France*

We are starting to get a little info on liberation celebrations in France and Belgium. No details yet, but we are hoping to have a good turnout of the 517th family and friends mid-August in France. There will be additional remembrances in Sospel in October, celebrating their liberation, as well as December/January in Belgium for the Battle of the Bulge.

---

**Patou and Roland** are busy working with the new mayor of Sospel to organize this summer's celebrations! Please see below - those of you who were in Sospel in 2009 will remember Isabelle, Patricia's best friend who did a guided tour of Sospel for us. The events in Sospel will be before 15 August in Draguinan/La Motte/Les Arcs/Le Muy, so please plan on coming for special time with special friends in Sospel.

Please note that they are also planning October events, which we have never attended.

#### **Claire Giblin**

This is from Patou:

Could you tell to everybody (by next mail call) that we have 11 beds close our home at 30 € / night / person. Bedrooms to share for 3 or 4, and 2 bedrooms for two. There is one for 2 with private bathroom at 60 € for the room. So we can take the breakfast all together at our home.

The mayor of Sospel is now a young woman and Isabelle works with her... so you will have a beautiful welcome ... and Roland is in charge of organizing the 70th anniversary in October.

---

Here are some more details for the invitation from Patricia and Roland Orengo in Sospel for the summer (August) festivities:

---

our neighbour has a structure and offer for our "summer visitors" bedrooms :

- 1 bedroom with bathroom for 2 persons (1 bed), plus:
- 1 bedroom for 2 persons (1 bed)
- 1 bedroom with 4 beds for 1 person
- 1 bedroom with 3 beds for 1 person

these 3 bedrooms has 3 showers to share. It's very clean and nice and close to us. You can pay what you want, but I can recommend you 30 Euros each person for 1 night.

It will be nice because we can have breakfast on our terrace all together...

we would like welcome you in Sospel as we did in 2009 with a party. and the new mayor (a woman) can also welcome you.

Please, Send this message by mail call. We can book the bedrooms for you.

Friendly,

**Patricia et Roland Orengo**



## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

### More MailCall News

I ran across this mention of **Jean-Loup Gassend** on Wikipedia:

### [Villeneuve-Loubet mass grave](#)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**Villeneuve-Loubet mass grave** is a grave site near the village of [Villeneuve-Loubet](#), near [Nice](#), in the Maritime Alps region of southern [France](#). On October 18, 2006 the bodies of 14 German soldiers killed during [World War II](#) were exhumed at the site. **The bodies were discovered by local medical student and World War II enthusiast Jean-Loup Gassend**, and were subsequently exhumed by a team of local volunteers including an archaeologist and several medical students under the supervision of Mr Julien Hauser, representative of the Volksbund ([German War Graves Commission](#)) in France. The Villeneuve-Loubet grave was the largest mass grave of World War II German soldiers discovered in France since 2003, when 17 bodies of German prisoners executed by the French Resistance had been exhumed from a mass grave at St Julien de Crempse, in the Dordogne region.

The soldiers in the Villeneuve-Loubet grave were members of Reserve Division 148 who had been killed in battle against soldiers of the Second Regiment of the famous [First Special Service Force](#), also known as the Devil's Brigade, on August 26, 1944, shortly after the Allies invaded southern France during [Operation Dragoon](#) on August 15, 1944. The bodies of the dead Germans were buried by local civilians in a specially dug trench after the battle, and forgotten about.

**Jean-Loup Gassend** managed to discover the location of the grave by interviewing some of the surviving locals. He and archaeologist Pascal Boucard made arrangements with the Volksbund in order to exhume the bodies in archaeological manner, which is only very rarely the case for German World War II era graves. The goal was not only to exhume and identify the bodies, but also to attempt to find the cause of death of each body and to try to extract a maximum amount of historical data from the grave. In this aspect, the work at Villeneuve-Loubet was innovative as [battlefield archaeology](#) usually concentrates on more ancient sites.

The bodies were rediscovered at a depth of approximately one metre, along with several helmets and large amounts of military equipment. Battle wounds caused by bullets or [shrapnel](#) fragments were found on several of the bodies. Seven identification tags ([dog tags](#)), including one that had been pierced by a bullet, were also discovered, leading to the identification of six of the bodies. Two more bodies were subsequently identified by cross checking information contained in the personal files of German soldiers reported as missing or killed in the Villeneuve-Loubet area in August 1944. The ages of the identified soldiers ranged from 17 to 35. One soldier in particular had been killed the day before his 18th birthday.

The exhumation team carefully analysed the [artifacts](#) found in the grave, which led to some interesting conclusions about the events surrounding the burial. For example only one of the fourteen bodies was still wearing his shoes, meaning that all the other pairs of shoes had been removed from the bodies by local civilians before the bodies were buried. Also, the only two canteens that were found had been pierced by shell fragments, rendering them useless, and it can be suspected that all the other canteens that should have been on the bodies were taken by the civilians. Several of the helmets that were recovered had been damaged by shrapnel or bullets, helping to establish the cause of death.

All the bodies were reburied in the German military cemetery in Berneuil, France, on June 23, 2007, in the presence of 60 German families, as well as many French and German officials.



# 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Here is a copy of the form used to keep track of pay in the Army.

## Merle McMorow

NAME McMorow, Merle E.		GRADE Tech 4	
ARMY SERIAL NO. 37608301		DATE MOVED 11-8-45	
SIGNATURE OF SELECTED PERSON			
NAME OF EMERGENCY ADDRESS Robert E. McMorow			
STREET 327-11th St.			
CITY Spickard, Minn			
STATE			
RELATIONSHIP (IF OTHER, SO STATE) Father			
ALLOTMENTS AND DEDUCTIONS			
Class A	Class B	Class C	Class D
Class E	Class F	Class G	Class H
Class I	Class J	Class K	Class L
Class M	Class N	Class O	Class P
Class Q	Class R	Class S	Class T
Class U	Class V	Class W	Class X
Class Y	Class Z	Class AA	Class AB
Class AC	Class AD	Class AE	Class AF
Class AG	Class AH	Class AI	Class AJ
Class AK	Class AL	Class AM	Class AN
Class AO	Class AP	Class AQ	Class AR
Class AS	Class AT	Class AU	Class AV
Class AW	Class AX	Class AY	Class AZ
Class BA	Class BB	Class BC	Class BD
Class BE	Class BF	Class BG	Class BH
Class BI	Class BJ	Class BK	Class BL
Class BM	Class BN	Class BO	Class BP
Class BQ	Class BR	Class BS	Class BT
Class BU	Class BV	Class BW	Class BX
Class BY	Class BZ	Class CA	Class CB
Class CC	Class CD	Class CE	Class CF
Class CG	Class CH	Class CI	Class CJ
Class CK	Class CL	Class CM	Class CN
Class CO	Class CP	Class CQ	Class CR
Class CS	Class CT	Class CU	Class CV
Class CW	Class CX	Class CY	Class CZ
Class DA	Class DB	Class DC	Class DD
Class DE	Class DF	Class DG	Class DH
Class DI	Class DJ	Class DK	Class DL
Class DM	Class DN	Class DO	Class DP
Class DQ	Class DR	Class DS	Class DT
Class DU	Class DV	Class DW	Class DX
Class DY	Class DZ	Class EA	Class EB
Class EC	Class ED	Class EE	Class EF
Class EG	Class EH	Class EI	Class EJ
Class EK	Class EL	Class EM	Class EN
Class EO	Class EP	Class EQ	Class ER
Class ES	Class ET	Class EU	Class EV
Class EW	Class EX	Class EY	Class EZ
Class FA	Class FB	Class FC	Class FD
Class FE	Class FF	Class FG	Class FH
Class FI	Class FJ	Class FK	Class FL
Class FM	Class FN	Class FO	Class FP
Class FQ	Class FR	Class FS	Class FT
Class FU	Class FV	Class FW	Class FX
Class FY	Class FZ	Class GA	Class GB
Class GC	Class GD	Class GE	Class GF
Class GG	Class GH	Class GI	Class GJ
Class GK	Class GL	Class GM	Class GN
Class GO	Class GP	Class GQ	Class GR
Class GS	Class GT	Class GU	Class GV
Class GW	Class GX	Class GY	Class GZ
Class HA	Class HB	Class HC	Class HD
Class HE	Class HF	Class HG	Class HH
Class HI	Class HJ	Class HK	Class HL
Class HM	Class HN	Class HO	Class HP
Class HQ	Class HR	Class HS	Class HT
Class HU	Class HV	Class HW	Class HX
Class HY	Class HZ	Class IA	Class IB
Class IC	Class ID	Class IE	Class IF
Class IG	Class IH	Class II	Class IJ
Class IK	Class IL	Class IM	Class IN
Class IO	Class IP	Class IQ	Class IR
Class IS	Class IT	Class IU	Class IV
Class IW	Class IX	Class IY	Class IZ
Class JA	Class JB	Class JC	Class JD
Class JE	Class JF	Class JG	Class JH
Class JI	Class JJ	Class JK	Class JL
Class JM	Class JN	Class JO	Class JP
Class JQ	Class JR	Class JS	Class JT
Class JU	Class JV	Class JW	Class JX
Class JY	Class JZ	Class KA	Class KB
Class KC	Class KD	Class KE	Class KF
Class KG	Class KH	Class KI	Class KJ
Class KM	Class KN	Class KO	Class KP
Class KQ	Class KR	Class KS	Class KT
Class KU	Class KV	Class KW	Class KX
Class KY	Class KZ	Class LA	Class LB
Class LC	Class LD	Class LE	Class LF
Class LG	Class LH	Class LI	Class LJ
Class LK	Class LL	Class LM	Class LN
Class LO	Class LP	Class LQ	Class LR
Class LS	Class LT	Class LU	Class LV
Class LW	Class LX	Class LY	Class LZ
Class MA	Class MB	Class MC	Class MD
Class ME	Class MF	Class MG	Class MH
Class MI	Class MJ	Class MK	Class ML
Class MM	Class MN	Class MO	Class MP
Class MQ	Class MR	Class MS	Class MT
Class MU	Class MV	Class MW	Class MX
Class MY	Class MZ	Class NA	Class NB
Class NC	Class ND	Class NE	Class NF
Class NG	Class NH	Class NI	Class NJ
Class NK	Class NL	Class NM	Class NN
Class NO	Class NP	Class NQ	Class NR
Class NS	Class NT	Class NU	Class NV
Class NW	Class NX	Class NY	Class NZ
Class OA	Class OB	Class OC	Class OD
Class OE	Class OF	Class OG	Class OH
Class OI	Class OJ	Class OK	Class OL
Class OM	Class ON	Class OO	Class OP
Class OQ	Class OR	Class OS	Class OT
Class OU	Class OV	Class OW	Class OX
Class OY	Class OZ	Class PA	Class PB
Class PC	Class PD	Class PE	Class PF
Class PG	Class PH	Class PI	Class PJ
Class PK	Class PL	Class PM	Class PN
Class PO	Class PP	Class PQ	Class PR
Class PS	Class PT	Class PU	Class PV
Class PW	Class PX	Class PY	Class PZ
Class QA	Class QB	Class QC	Class QD
Class QE	Class QF	Class QG	Class QH
Class QI	Class QJ	Class QK	Class QL
Class QM	Class QN	Class QO	Class QP
Class QQ	Class QR	Class QS	Class QT
Class QU	Class QV	Class QW	Class QX
Class QY	Class QZ	Class RA	Class RB
Class RC	Class RD	Class RE	Class RF
Class RG	Class RH	Class RI	Class RJ
Class RK	Class RL	Class RM	Class RN
Class RO	Class RP	Class RQ	Class RR
Class RS	Class RT	Class RU	Class RV
Class RW	Class RX	Class RY	Class RZ
Class SA	Class SB	Class SC	Class SD
Class SE	Class SF	Class SG	Class SH
Class SI	Class SJ	Class SK	Class SL
Class SM	Class SN	Class SO	Class SP
Class SQ	Class SR	Class SS	Class ST
Class SU	Class SV	Class SW	Class SX
Class SY	Class SZ	Class TA	Class TB
Class TC	Class TD	Class TE	Class TF
Class TG	Class TH	Class TI	Class TJ
Class TK	Class TL	Class TM	Class TN
Class TO	Class TP	Class TQ	Class TR
Class TS	Class TT	Class TU	Class TV
Class TW	Class TX	Class TY	Class TZ
Class UA	Class UB	Class UC	Class UD
Class UE	Class UF	Class UG	Class UH
Class UI	Class UJ	Class UK	Class UL
Class UM	Class UN	Class UO	Class UP
Class UQ	Class UR	Class US	Class UT
Class UY	Class UZ	Class VA	Class VB
Class VC	Class VD	Class VE	Class VF
Class VG	Class VH	Class VI	Class VJ
Class VK	Class VL	Class VM	Class VN
Class VO	Class VP	Class VQ	Class VR
Class VS	Class VT	Class VU	Class VV
Class VW	Class VX	Class VY	Class VZ
Class WA	Class WB	Class WC	Class WD
Class WE	Class WF	Class WG	Class WH
Class WI	Class WJ	Class WK	Class WL
Class WM	Class WN	Class WO	Class WP
Class WQ	Class WR	Class WS	Class WT
Class WY	Class WZ	Class XA	Class XB
Class XC	Class XD	Class XE	Class XF
Class XG	Class XH	Class XI	Class XJ
Class XK	Class XL	Class XM	Class XN
Class XO	Class XP	Class XQ	Class XR
Class XS	Class XT	Class XU	Class XV
Class XY	Class XZ	Class YA	Class YB
Class YC	Class YD	Class YE	Class YF
Class YG	Class YH	Class YI	Class YJ
Class YK	Class YL	Class YM	Class YN
Class YO	Class YP	Class YQ	Class YR
Class YS	Class YT	Class YU	Class YV
Class YW	Class YX	Class YY	Class YZ
Class ZA	Class ZB	Class ZC	Class ZD
Class ZE	Class ZF	Class ZG	Class ZH
Class ZI	Class ZJ	Class ZK	Class ZL
Class ZM	Class ZN	Class ZO	Class ZP
Class ZQ	Class ZR	Class ZS	Class ZT
Class ZU	Class ZV	Class ZW	Class ZX
Class ZY	Class ZZ		

Mr. Bob, hope all is well. Wishing you and your family a safe and Happy Easter, along with all of the 517th Family. I am still finding treasures from my father's memories. This is a list of some men from the 517<sup>th</sup> that achieved medals. These memories are priceless, Heroes of Valor!!!!

Thanks and have a great day,

## Tony Patin

The Family is worth it!!! The other e-mail I sent was a big file with a lot of info. If you turn to page 6 for the Bronze Star Award, you will see my father wrote, one of my boys - **PFC Wahlstrom**.

Tony Patin

*one of my boys -*

Private First Class Per R. Wahlstrom, 39 699 409, 517th Parachute Infantry, United States Army, for heroic achievement in action. On 16 August 1944, near Les Arcs, France, Private First Class Wahlstrom was assigned to an outpost position on the left flank of the Second Battalion, 517th Parachute Infantry. On arrival at the outpost position, Private First Class Wahlstrom noted an enemy communication wire strung on poles running in the direction of the enemy. Private First Class Wahlstrom moved forward, climbed the pole, and cut the wire. While climbing the pole, he was fired on by enemy small arms but persisted in his mission.

When the Germans attempted to repair the wire, Private First Class Wahlstrom killed three of them and the others withdrew without accomplishing their mission. Private First Class Wahlstrom's display of courage, initiative, and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service. Entered the military service from Los Angeles, California.

See the entire document at: [http://517prct.org/documents/1945\\_april\\_30\\_bronze\\_stars2.pdf](http://517prct.org/documents/1945_april_30_bronze_stars2.pdf)





## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

This document, a [record of Silver and Bronze](#) Stars authorized on April 30, 1945, includes the following medals:

### **Bronze Star w. Oak Leaf Cluster:**

1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Worthington J. Thompson, 460<sup>th</sup> PFAB, B Battery,, St. Jacques, Belgium

### **Bronze Star:**

Cpl. Joseph A. Della Fave, 517<sup>th</sup> PIR, I Company, , 10-Jan-45 Hourt, Belgium  
PFC Sheldon L. Donovan, 517 PIR, H Company, Les Arcs, France, 16-Aug-44  
S/Sgt. Troy Eagans, 517PIR, A Company, 25-Dec-44, Soy, Belgium  
Pvt. John J. Griffin, 517 PIR, E Company, 3-Jan-45, Monte de Fosse, Belgium  
S/Sgt. Ralph R. Grizzle, 517PIR, I Company, 27-Dec-44, Manhay, Belgium  
S/Sgt. Harry J. Hewitt, 517 PIR, G Company, 17-Jan-45, Pateaus, Belgium  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt. John M. Hill, 517 PIR4-Jan-45, Basse Bodeux, Belgium  
Sgt. Arnold P. Klingelhoef, 517 PIR, E Company, 3-Jan-45, Monte de Fosse, Belgium  
PFC Donald L. Knapp, 517 PIR, A Company, 23-Dec-44, Hotton, Belgium  
Pvt. Wilburn J. Lewis, 517 PIR, 3-Jan-45, Monte de Fosse, Belgium  
PFC Joseph F. Locke, 517 PIR, B Company, 1-Jan-45, Brume Belgium  
PFC William A. MacRae, 51 PIR, C Company, 24-Dec-1944, Soy, Belgium  
Sgt. Raymond E. Markley, 517 PIR, H Company, 28-Dec-44, Manhay, Belgium  
PFC James B. Nichols, 517 PIR, G Company, 17-Jan-45, Pateaux, Belgium  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Thomas F. Patin, 517 PIR, 15-Aug-44, Le Muy, France  
Pvt. William A. Petryna, 517 PIR, E Company, 8-Feb-45, Bergstein, Germany  
PFC Ervin J. Yackmin, 517 PIR, A Company, 25-Dec-44, Hotton, Belgium  
1<sup>st</sup>.Lt. Robert J. Reber, 517 PIR, 10-Sep-44, Col de Braus, France  
Cpl. George A. Sullivan, 517 PIR, 18-Jan-45, Petit-Thiere, Belgium  
Sgt. Joseph W. Tylka, 517 PIR, H Company, 11-Sep-44, Col de Braus, France  
PFC Vincent L. Vendrzyk, 517 PIR, G Company, 17-Jan-45, Pateaux, Belgium  
PFC Per R. Wahlstrom, 517 PIR, 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn., 16-Aug-44, Les Arcs, France  
M Sgt. Douglas Emmons, 517 PIR, 22-Dec-44 to 9-Jan-45, Belgium and Germany  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Robert T. Greene, 460<sup>th</sup> PFAB, 11-Aug-44 to 10-Feb-45

### **Silver Star (posthumous):**

Capt. Jame P. Birder, 517 PIR, I Company, 27-Dec-44, Manhay, Belgium  
Pvt. Richard L. Lyman, 517 PIR, H Company, 5-Jan-45

### **Silver Star:**

PFC Jack. C. Castiglione, 517 PIR, I Company, 17-Oct-44, Piera Cava, France  
SGt. Norman S. Fry, 517 PIR, H Company, 13-Jan-45, Butay, Belgium  
PFC Clyde P Guillott, 517 PIR, D Company, 3-Jan-45, Trois Ponts, Belgium  
Capt. Milton M. Kienlen, 517 PIR, A Company, 5-Jan-45, Bergeval, Belgium  
2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Cecil T. Lockhart, 517 PIR, C Company, 15-Jan-45, Coulee, Belgium  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Russell F. Miller, 517 PIR, 15-Jan-45, Patteau, Belgium  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Olvie J. Nunnery, 517 PIR, H Company, 13-Jan-45, Butay, Belgium  
SGt. Glen H. Overmyer, 517 PIR, 1<sup>st</sup> Bn., 25-Dec-44, Soy, Belgium  
1<sup>st</sup>. Lt. Thomas F. Patin, 517 PIR, 3-Jan-45, Trois POnTs, Belgium  
PFC Walter Perkowski, 517 PIR, 10-Sep-45, Luceram-Sospel, France  
Sgt. Charles C. Scherer, 517 PIR, I Company, 27-Dec-44, Manhay, Belgium  
PFC Carl E. Votti, 517 PIR, B Company, 12-Jan-45, Stavelot, Belgium  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Paul P. May, 517 PIR I Company, 10-Jan-45, Hourt, Belgium  
1st Lt John W. Weddle, 517 PIR, E Company, 8-Feb-45, Bergstein, Germany  
PFC Paul L. Westerman, 517 PIR, D Company, 3-Jan-45, Trois Ponts, Belgium  
Pvt. Leroy E. Wittner, 517 PIR, 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn, 27-Dec-44, Manhay, Belgium  
Pvt. Ogden A. Young, 517 PIR, E Company, 8-Feb-45, Bergstein, Germany

### **Bronze Star (posthumous):**

Pvt.Louis J. Barberra, 517 PIR, E Company, 3-Jan-45, Monte de Fosse, Belgium

### **Bronze Star**

PFC Robert E. Anderson, 596<sup>th</sup> PCEC, 26-Dec-44, Manhay, Belgium  
S/Sgt. Nello R. Arterburn, 517 PIR, G Company, 14-Jan-45, Beaumont, Belgium

### **Bronze Star (posthumous):**

1<sup>st</sup> Lt. John W. Casselman, 517 PIR, 18-Aug-44, Luceram, France

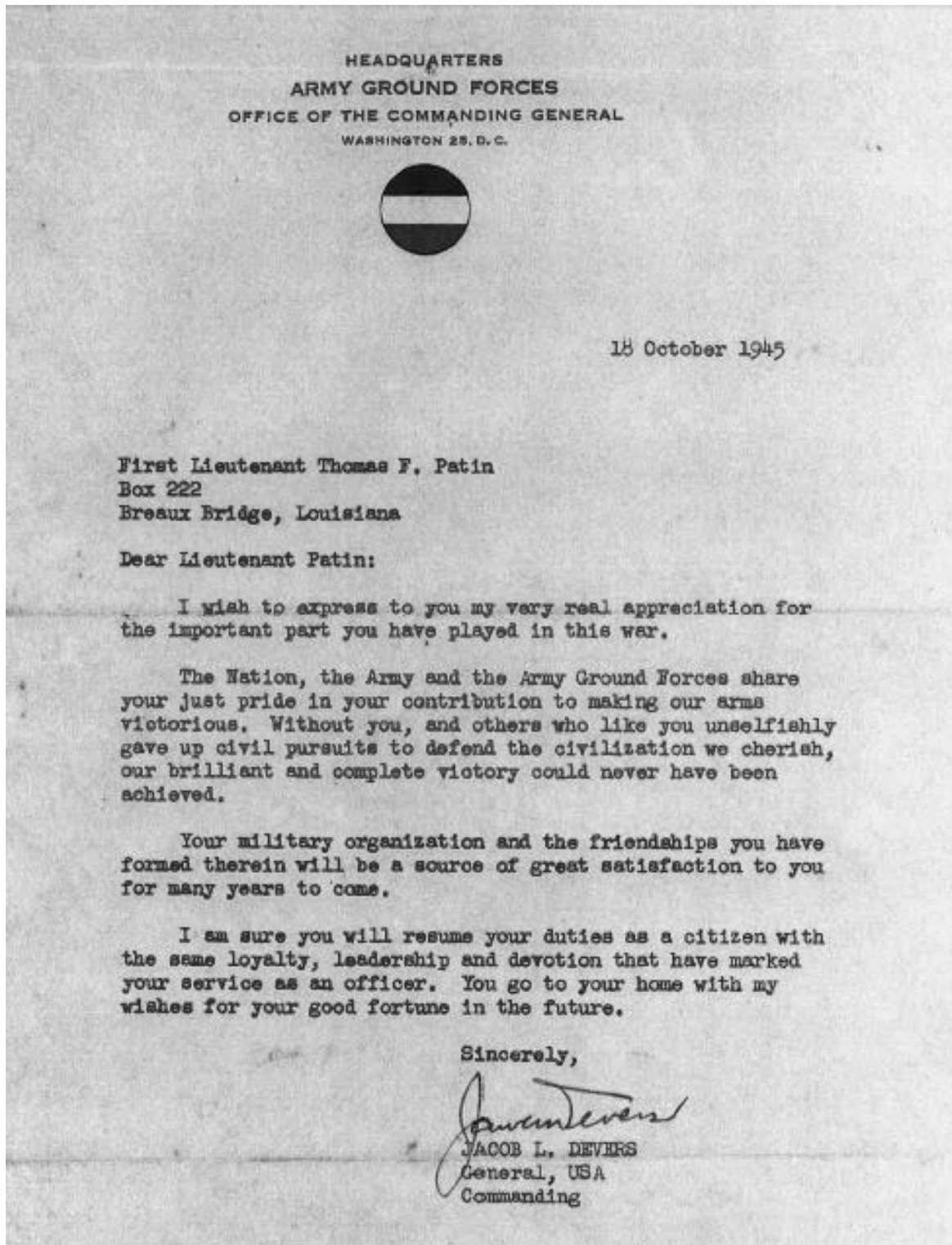


## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Mr. Bob, these are letters of thanks from some high ranking men, I'm sure all men of the 517<sup>th</sup> received them, everyone deserves them. I just had to share them with the family.

**Tony Patin**

---





## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team



Thomas R. Patin

*To you who answered the call of your country and served in its Armed Forces to bring about the total defeat of the enemy, I extend the heartfelt thanks of a grateful Nation. As one of the Nation's finest, you undertook the most severe task one can be called upon to perform. Because you demonstrated the fortitude, resourcefulness and calm judgment necessary to carry out that task, we now look to you for leadership and example in further exalting our country in peace.*

A handwritten signature in cursive script, which appears to be "Harry Truman".

THE WHITE HOUSE





## *517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team*

### *Administrivia*

- If you miss any MailCalls, they are all available online at <http://www.517prct.org/mailcall/>
- At any time, if you want to be added or removed from the MailCall list, just let me know, or just click on the unsubscribe link on the email.
- Send any news, stories, or feedback to: [MailCall@517prct.org](mailto:MailCall@517prct.org)
- If you send me email that you do not want included in MailCall, just label it as FYEO.
- I now understand how Ben could get confused about what he already posted and what he didn't. If I miss something, please just send it again.
- Donations for any programs involving the 517th should be sent to our new Association Treasurer: Identify the purpose of any donation (Annual Donations, In Memory of... etc.) and make all checks payable to:

**517 PRCT Association, Inc.**  
c/o Joanne Barrett  
70 Pleasant Street  
Cohasset, MA 02025

### *Army Life, as told by PFC William B. Houston (Part 3)*

A few more pages from **William Houston's** biography are on the following pages.

These pages continue his story of life at Camp Toccoa, started in [MailCall 2209](#).

Next week: Fort Benning

anything special except that I got a pile of cards and letters from friends and relatives along with a birthday cake from home. Birthdays came and went and there was nothing to mark the event, save the birthday cake that might arrive in the mail. In such cases all those in the barracks pitched in to help consume the goodies.

July started with a gun drill in Area A in the morning. That was fine until it started to rain, then it became miserable. For an hour we drilled in the rain and when we finally started back to the barracks we were soaked to the skin. Right in front of our barracks door there was a puddle of muddy water about three inches deep, fifteen feet wide and twenty feet long that looked so inviting that one guy could not resist diving in. We were already wet so most of us flopped in. After changing to clean, dry clothes we went up to the day-room for our pay and then I returned to the barracks \$23.25 richer. A short time later I turned out for guard duty and walked the post from 2000 to 2200 and from 0200 to 0400 in a light rain. It gets pretty lonesome on post especially when it is raining - for some reason it doesn't seem so bad when the stars fill the sky. At least it was cool that night with the light rain.

On the third of July it rained and with the rain went my chance to jump from the mock-up tower. In the evening we took in a movie, "Stage Door Canteen" which I thought was pretty good.

I spent the Fourth of July on K.P. wondering what all this talk about independence meant and to whom it applied. It was evident that it did not hold true in the mess-hall, that's for sure.

During July we were practicing tumbling in preparation for landing after a parachute jump. First we tried it on the flat ground, then off a four foot platform and finally off a six foot platform.

During the first week of July there was a jump scheduled for the officers and non-coms. Like everything else there were work details connected with it, my job was that of a spotter to watch and see if any of the jumpers landed in the woods. Other jobs included choppers to help, or if necessary, chop down those who landed in trees, to run out and meet each jumper as he landed in case he had been hurt, another was to set out markers and still another detail was to build fires. Makes one wonder who will be there to meet us when we jump in combat and behind enemy lines.

To make life miserable for our sergeants we went through the process dividing up their money and clothes between us, assigned a "blotter detail" for those whose chute didn't open and we cut out paper crosses on which we lettered their names and placed on their bunks.

On the day the jump was scheduled it rained and the jump was postponed. Oh well, it gave the sergeants a little more time to sweat the jump out.

The jump did take place on July 23rd and it proved to be a day long event. Over fifty men jumped but there was only one plane so it had to make two flights and two passes on each flight, dropping fourteen men on each pass. There were no injuries but two men landed in trees. It was fun to watch as it was our first chance to be on the spot for a jump and I was able to take some pictures.

In July our schedule called for a lecture and demonstration on what to do in case of a gas attack so on this particular morning Lt. Cooper marched us out to Area A to go through the gas chamber. His face was a little red when he found out that the tent had not been set up and there was no gas chamber to be found. He settled for a lecture and demonstration of how to use the gas mask. Several practice or "dry runs" followed.

Summer storms in North Carolina were a nuisance and frequently the lights went out as a result of these storms. This made letter writing difficult and often a letter went

unfinished for several days. I do not know if the interruptions were actually more frequent in camp than anywhere else but they seemed to be to me.

Our training on the mock-up towers continued and some of us plotted to take pictures. Evidently this plan failed because, to this day I cannot recall seeing any pictures and there are none in my collection.

Also in July we were visited by General Marshall and General Guard, a French general. It was a big deal and the day before the review, which was on a Sunday, we had to spend time cleaning and painting the field pieces. On the day of the review we marched to the airport and stood review. The actual review only took a few minutes as the generals rode past the ranks in a jeep. We then marched back to the battery area. Although it was only three and a half miles to the airport and another three and a half back we managed to cover eleven miles by marching to the airport, weaving across the airport and taking a round-about way back to our area. There are times when I am not happy to have visitors drop in, no matter how important they are.

The invasion of Sicily took place in July of 1943 and the parachute field artillery went into action for the first time. In Camp Mackall we watched the results with special interest because the success or failure of the two field artillery battalions of the 82nd Airborne Division forecast our future. If they proved successful we would continue on with our training as a field artillery battalion - if they were not effective we would probably be converted into an infantry outfit.

One day in July I became a carpenter by a cruel stroke of fate. Between each of the bunks there was a shelf above a clothes rack which was divided into two equal parts and shared by the men in the upper and lower bunk. Gallagar and I shared a shelf and rack which, for some reason, gave away. The result was that everything from toothbrushes to overcoats were dumped on the floor. However, he had taken it upon himself to go over the hill and I was stuck with the clean-up job. The least he could have done would have to wait a week longer before going R.W.O.L. because last week was his turn to sweep the floor and I got stuck with that task too.

Fire guard was a soft job, all one did was sit around the barracks and pass the time by writing letters, or whatever you wanted to do, just so you stayed in the barracks and awake. The bad side of the detail was that you could not go anywhere in the evening even if the barracks was full of people.

Basic training actually started on July 19th. Until that time we were simply marking time until the battalion could be brought up to full strength so our regular training schedule could begin. A good share of the trouble was boredom. Almost all of the lectures had been given two or three times already and it was difficult to stay awake while sitting on the floor of a hot, stuffy barracks on a humid day. It was always a humid day because the lectures would be saved until a rainy day, when we could be inside.

It was a major crime to fall asleep, or even yawn, during a lecture. To do so meant that you would have to dig a 6 X 6 on your own time, that is after training hours. In this case, a 6 X 6 was a hole six feet square and six feet deep, to be dug that evening and as far into the night as necessary. This meant that you got little or no sleep that night. The same detail may result from removing your helmet.

Our basic training was cut from twelve to eight weeks because we had so much of the training while waiting for the battalion to fill up. The army seems to be a hurry up and wait deal. Especially during basic, rain had very little effect on our training. As an example, we went out one evening and by the time we got 300 yards from the gun park it was raining cats and dogs. This did not have any effect on the training schedule, we went anyhow and



practiced night firing of the guns - without ammunition. That is really stretching the definition of a "dry run". When we got back to the battery area there was coffee waiting for us in the mess-hall. This tasted good because of the rain and the standing order that we could not carry a canteen unless we were gone for at least one meal.

All of my equipment seemed to be falling apart at the same time. The point fell off my mechanical pencil and I lost the point, now the pencil is useless. The cable release on my camera, which was already in poor condition, broke completely off but the camera has a regular shutter release so it is still usable.

A new order just came down: "There will be no more jumping off the roofs of moving trucks".

Sgt. Schneider from Detroit was one of my favorite non-coms. He had a great sense of humor and kept our spirits up. We all had the feeling that he would do anything for us and I know that the guys would do anything for him.

There was the time when took us out on a detail to build a log bridge over a small stream in Area A. We rode all over the camp looking for suitable trees and averaged about a mile per log. While looking for logs Sgt. Schneider came up with the sensational idea that we were thirsty and should stop at the P.K. where we downed a couple of bottles of pop, some cookies and a candy bar. While we were feeding our faces in the P.K. the sergeant saw a good-looking girl and decided that he needed some stationery. After a half hour of discussion with the clerk as to just what kind of paper he wanted, the rest of us made the decision for him. When we finished the bridge we tore it down and kept the parts for a demonstration at a later date. After the demonstration all of the guys that worked on the bridge were given a three-day pass so Jim Andersen and I took off for Raleigh, North Carolina. Lt. Saad gave us a ride to Fort Bragg on the twentieth of July where we caught a bus to Raleigh. It was 0145 when we arrived in Raleigh so we took the first hotel room we could find. It was one with two twin beds and cost \$6.50 but we were so tired that we did not shop around for a better price. The beds were so soft that it was difficult to sleep in.

Saturday morning we started out on foot to see the city but it wasn't long before we found ourselves on a city bus with "Merdith College" on the destination board. It was an all girls' school about the size of West High school and a real disappointment since it was summer vacation time and there were only eight students left on campus. Back on the bus we went and to the State College with its roller rink and outdoor swimming pool. First we went skating, then swimming. I caught Andersen on the merry-go-round and he made me swear that I would keep the incident a secret. Later in the day he ducked out and went over to some girl's house for a chicken sandwich.

At the swimming pool my pity for a civilian caused me to strike up a conversation with a red-head, just to try to raise her moral. We had a long chat and she told me that she was from a little mistake on the map about 150 miles from Raleigh, goes to business college and lives in a boarding house. She would not make a date but suggested that the U.S.O. on Hillsborough might be a nice place to visit later in the evening. Andersen and I both went to the U.S.O. as per suggestion and had a good time. The U.S.O. was a Catholic one and only about three blocks from the hotel we were staying at. After the U.S.O. closed Bernice and I went to a midnight movie. This was against the U.S.O. rules in that the girls were not supposed to go out with the G.I.s after the U.S.O. closed, but we sure enjoyed the movie.

Sunday morning Andersen and I split and went to our own church, he to the Mormon one and I to a pretty little Catholic one next to the U.S.O. There were only about twenty-five Mormons in Raleigh so the people in church noticed Jim. A Mr. Henderson invited Jim, and myself, to a picnic that noon. It was a great picnic, the weather was perfect and the food

excellent. That afternoon I met "Red" and we tried to go bowling but the alley was closed so we settled for a peaceful rest in a park. In the evening Jim and I were back at the U.S.O. and we have never played so many games of ping-pong as we did that night. After leaving the U.S.O. Jim and I were walking down the street when a car pulled up and some of the girls, who had been at the dance, asked us if we wanted to ride around and see some of the city. Naturally we accepted. They dropped us off at the Henderson's where we had been invited to spend the night. In the morning we had breakfast, said, "Good-bye" and went back to the swimming pool. After a short swim we did a little shopping and took the 1400 bus back to camp.

While in Raleigh I weighed myself - I had gained fifteen pounds since joining the army but, at the same time, have lost a couple of inches around my waist.

Late in July I began to think how nice it would be to have my own radio in camp and mentioned the desire in letters to home, but did not actually ask Mom or Dad to send it. The radio was a portable, such as portables were at that time, and the batteries were large, heavy and expensive. During wartime the batteries were usually unavailable so I asked that a bottle of Valentine Hair Tonic be placed in the battery compartment instead of a battery. Anything to help me look beautiful!

Meanwhile, back at camp, I had another jeep driving session over an obstacle course. This course had mud holes to drive through, ditches to cross, sand to plow through, logs to dodge, trees to thread between and water to drive through. They also tried to teach me how to double-clutch a 2 1/2 ton truck - they must have failed that mission because I never became a truck driver.

The battalion just got back from a seven mile "conditioning march" but I was a road guide and only covered about two miles. My job was to stand at an intersection and direct portions of the battalion as they arrived at this point. I hardly worked up a sweat.

In the latter part of July we got a new battery commander by the name of Lt. Vogel who replaced Lt. Harding. In my opinion I felt that Lt. Vogel was too strict right from day one, rather self centered and therefore not very well liked. I noted that the other officers only associated with him while on duty or for official business and appeared to avoid him on other occasions. Early in August an incident occurred when, for a just reason, Vogel, now Cpt. Vogel, busted a corporal. Because of this action a second corporal, Stanfill, turned his stripes in. The captain then marked the service record of both men as inefficient. Stanfill was one of the older men in the battery and did not want to go to jump school so he was shipped out to another outfit. After he is assigned to another outfit the poor record will make it difficult for him to earn any stripes again.

Sgt. Schneider and Cpt. Vogel had a run in on the 24th of August. While out in the field Sgt. Schneider had removed his shirt and Cpt. Vogel ordered him to put it back on. Schneider answered, "Yes sir" in no uncertain terms and put his shirt on. The following day Schneider was called into Vogel's office where the captain told him that he did not like Schneider or any of the other non-coms. Schneider invited Vogel to remove his bars and step outside. With that Vogel busted him, put him under arrest and now Schneider is in the guardhouse. All of C battery is in a bad mood because of the incident. In a test, given on the howitzer the following day, Lt. Payne added one final question which read, "Who is the most chicken-shit officer in the battery?". There was no contest, Vogel won the honor hands down. In contrast when Lt. Harding left the battery he complimented the non-coms by saying that they were the best he had ever worked with.

During the first week of August we went to Fort Bragg to fire our howitzers for the first time. I was the number two man on a gun crew and ended up with a sore hand. The

number two man loads the eighteen pound, 75mm shell into the breach then doubles up his fist and slams the shell home. The breach was then closed, the shell fired, then the breach was opened by other crew members and I had to grab the shell casing and toss it back and out of the way. It was hard, fast work and my right hand was pretty sore after loading and removing the shells even though we fired only ten rounds, plus several hours spent before hand doing dry runs. Each shell cost \$18.75, or the price of one war bond. When the gun was fired it jumped into the air about six inches, the concussion snaps your head and the sound makes your ears ring.

Life on the artillery range was not always easy. There was one day when we started hiking toward Fort Bragg but only got twelve miles down the road before the trucks came along and picked us up. I suppose I should be thankful for the ride though, without it we would have had a forty mile hike. In spite of the lift it was after dark when we arrived at Fort Bragg and we had to pitch our tents in the dark. That in itself was a chore, but to make matters worse Ping and I chose a very poor location; we found this out when we tried to sleep, the tent had a ditch running through it. To make the night more miserable a battery of 155mm rifles opened up behind us at about midnight and those big shells made a tremendous noise as they roared overhead.

When morning came after that long and uncomfortable night Ping and I went up to the top of a hill to watch the shells land and explode. My thought was that it was much better to be on the firing end than on the receiving end.

This is getting a little ahead of the story but as the months passed and fall came we still made trips to the range and things only got worse for me. As a private I was always the one who had to go for the wood for the bonfire. The higher ranks enjoyed the warmth of the fire while I gathered still more wood. You would think that I was the only private in C battery.

Back to August. By the second week of August I had decided against asking that my radio be sent, at least until after we got back from jump school, which would be late in September.

On the 13th of August we went out to the rifle range to fire for record. I did not do very well although I qualified and earned a marksman medal. Only about half of the battery qualified, that is shot a score of 135, and there was only one who earned an expert medal. Those who did not qualify had to go back again (and maybe more than once) until they did qualify. Shooting, and trying to qualify, was much better than "pulling targets" where you had to be in a pit below and ahead of the target. When someone shoots at the target it is your job to mark where his round hit. This was done by holding a three or four inch disk, attached to a stick, over the hole in the target so the shooter could see, and adjust for, his next shot. If there was a complete miss you waved a red flag, known as "Maggie's drawers" to indicate such. After each person fires his required number of rounds in the three required positions - prone, sitting and standing - the target was lowered and patches pasted over the holes. This was to prevent any mix-up between the shots of different men. To say the least it was very hard work and under poor conditions.

The term "lunch" was an insult. It consisted of a sandwich made early that morning, had dried out and was curled up by lunch time. To go with the stale sandwich we were allowed one canteen of water, a quart which had to last us the whole day - a day spent in the hot sun. After one of the days on the range we were given the choice of riding back to the battery area or marching. As usual marching meant double-timing. Those who chose to march, of which I was one, were offered a week-end pass when we reached the battery area. If I recall correctly it was after marching back (on the double) that I went into the



latrine and drank over a gallon of water within five minutes. Four times I filled my canteen and then a little more and even the warm tap water tasted good!

During August we were issued our jump helmet liner, which looked like the regular G.I. helmet liner except that it had a chin saddle to secure it during a jump.

With tongue in cheek I wrote to Dad and complained about the nomenclature used in the army to identify any and everything. As an example I used a rain whistle and, by sketching a cross section of it, I identified, named and assigned a number to each part.

At the same time I both praised and criticized our M1-A1 carbine. I did like the semi-automatic capability of the gun but did not like the low fire power or the sights. It was accurate up to about 200 yards but not very good beyond that range. The sights could not be adjusted for the 150 and 300 yard range and there was no way to adjust for the wind. It was no match for the German .31 caliber Mouser or our .30 caliber Garand. In its favor was the light weight and folding stock which made it easy to jump with and carry. Late in the war the carbine was to come with a larger clip - thirty rather than fifteen shells and a fully automatic feature, but this was only on the solid stock model.

My next assignment was with the instrument section. A rather easy job when it came to moving because you did not have to pull the howitzer. In this capacity I ran surveys and sat by a drafting board where I plotted the positions of the gun and target. This was done on an overlay on a map, then I decided the settings for the gun to get the desired effect. The first round could be anywhere but short just so you could see the impact. A short round spelled danger for your own troops so you always made sure that it was long enough. This served as a base round or marker and adjustments were made from that point. Commands were then telephoned or radioed back to the gun crew.

Tumbling was an important part of our training and as a part of this training we learned how to do the high fall. To do it you place your right foot about a foot ahead of your left one, then bring your arms, with your elbows straight and your hands locked together, up to the right of your head. Now, at the same time, whip your hands down and kick your feet up and you flip over without touching the ground and land on your left side. Better than fifty years later I am still trying to evaluate just how valuable this maneuver has been in civilian life.

There was another side to military life, that of making up new words to popular songs of the day so as to adapt them to the military. There was an outstanding example in the paratroops and that was "The Paratroopers' Hymn" or as it is often called, "Blood Upon The Risers" which was sung to the tune of the "Battle Hymn Of The Republic" It must have been outstanding because it is still sung at paratrooper reunions. Another example was the song "Long Ago And Far Away" in which the words "----Chills run up and down my spine, Aladdin's lamp is mine----" became "-----Shells run up and down my spine, a Purple Heart is mine ---" Of course there were others with words not suitable for print here or anywhere else.

As August slipped by there was talk of going to Fort Benning for jump school and furloughs which would follow.

We had a chance to go swimming on August 27th but it was not much fun because the lake had turned muddy, so on the following day, when I had another chance to go swimming I decided against it. We had spent the morning out in the field tumbling and studying the aiming circle which by now was old stuff, heard over and over again, but the mud in the lake did not appeal to me. Those who stayed behind had a good time playing ball. Later in the evening I went to a movie with another fellow and when we returned to the battery area at about 2230 we found a pillow fight in progress. D battery, was going at it with nearly a hundred men but when Headquarters battery joined in D battery forgot the infighting.

joined forces and went after Headquarters. C battery pitched in to help D battery, members of A and B batteries joined in until nearly four hundred men were pounding away at each other. After about twenty minutes the Officer of the Guard, the guards and the M.P.s came upon the scene to break up the battle. They did not have to work very hard to stop the fight - about three seconds after the M.P.s arrived the area cleared as if by magic.

At one time during this period at Camp Mackall we were in formation out in Area A and I had a T-shirt on with paratrooper wings across the front and Lt. Roberts informed me that I was not to wear it until I had qualified. Naturally I took the message to heart and put the T-shirt away until after jump school.

On August 30th at 1500 hours we left Camp Mackall for jump school at Fort Benning, Georgia. We traveled by train, a real antique train of which the speed matched the appearance. The railroad cars looked like they were out of the 1860's and we figured that the termites had moved out in about 1903 to search for happier hunting grounds but we still rode in those cars. And the seats, if you could call them seats, looked like they had been woven from old, used straw brooms. What's more they felt like brick pikes with sticks in them. As for the speed of the train, it was on the slow side. It took us twenty-two hours to travel the four hundred miles from Rockingham, North Carolina to Fort Benning, Georgia.