



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2030

January 1, 2011

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

Website

www.517prct.org

Mail Call

MailCall@517prct.org

Mail Call Archives

www.517prct.org/archives

Roster

www.517prct.org/roster.pdf

December 27, 1944

Dear Bob and the 517th Family,

Today (December 27) marks the Sixth-sixth Anniversary of the 517th in their Battle to secure Manhay, Belgium. In that early cold and snowy morning, many fine Troopers gave their full measure so that you and I might have a better life.

Lest we forget...Remember the following 517th names who were KIA, December 27, 1944 just outside Manhay.

Pfc. William Eckart
Pfc. Fred Iserman
Pvt. Merle Kaminsky
Pvt. John Penn
Pfc. Paul Rzonca
Pvt. Arthur Sessum
Pvt. Frank O. Scott
Pfc. Shannon Smith

Lt. Floyd A. Stott
Cpl. Courville Tarpley
Sgt. Wendell J. Tinger
Pvt. Albert Vasquez
Pfc. Edward Walsh
Pvt. Edward Weimer
Pfc. Clyde Whittington
Pvt. Robert Williams

Sincerely,

Kenton Floyd Immerfall
Nephew of **Floyd A. Stott**



Floyd Stott's grave at American Cemetery Henri-Chappelle



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Guestbook Entries

Submitted by

Name: **Chris Walters**
From: Dallas, TX
E-mail:
cwchris@hotmail.com

Comments:

Sorry- I even misspelled his name. It is **DUNLEVY** officially on his records.

Added: December 27, 2010

Submitted by

Name: **Chris Walters**
From: Dallas, TX
E-mail:
cwchris@hotmail.com

Comments:

My grandfather, **Virgil Frances Dunleavy** (sometimes misspelled Donleavy), was in the 517th PICT. He is listed in the 1944 Christmas roster as a Corporal. There is also a photo of him in the book *Battling Buzzards*. He is smoking a cigarette right before a jump. This is where his name is misspelled. There are also photos of him that Joseph Brody's son submitted.

Virgil passed away in 1970 at the young age of 50. I was 13 at the time. I do have his Purple Heart. I am looking for any information on him. I will be at the mini reunion in Florida in January. My mother, his daughter, will be with me.

Added: December 27, 2010





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

MailCall News

From: Chris Walters [mailto:cwchrisw@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, December 27, 2010 11:31 AM
To: webmaster@517prct.org
Subject: My Grandfather was in the 517th...

My name is Chris Walters.

My grandfather, **Virgil Frances Dunlevy** (sometimes spelled Donleavy), was part of the 517th PICT. I have attached a photo of the 1944 Christmas book that lists him as a Corporal in Company A. I have also attached photos that the Captain of Company A, Joseph Brody, took of my grandfather. These photos are listed on the site that were submitted by Brody's son. In the plane picture, my grandfather is the one smoking a cigarette.

Virgil passed away in 1970 at the young age of 50. I was 13 years old at the time. I never talked to him about his time in the service. I do have his Purple Heart.

I know Virgil was part of the 17th Airborne and the 82nd AA's. I have photos of him with the shoulder patches of both. But I do not know the timelines of his service as of yet. The photo of him as a Corporal shows the Purple Heart, ETO, and Good Contact medals in his ribbon.

I do plan on attending the mini reunion in Florida in mid January. My mother, his daughter, will be with me.

Hopefully I can find out more information on Virgil. From everything I read about the 517th, these were an elite group of men.

Any information that can help would be greatly appreciated.

Chris Walters
Dallas, TX
214-783-3280





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Thought this might be of interest to many

Different Christmas Poem

*The embers glowed softly, and in their dim light, I gazed round the room and I cherished the sight.
My wife was asleep, her head on my chest, my daughter beside me, angelic in rest.
Outside the snow fell, a blanket of white, transforming the yard to a winter delight.
The sparkling lights in the tree I believe, Completed the magic that was Christmas Eve.
My eyelids were heavy, my breathing was deep, Secure and surrounded by love I would sleep.
In perfect contentment, or so it would seem, so I slumbered, perhaps I started to dream.
The sound wasn't loud, and it wasn't too near, but I opened my eyes when it tickled my ear.
Perhaps just a cough, I didn't quite know, then the sure sound of footsteps outside in the snow.
My soul gave a tremble, I struggled to hear, and I crept to the door just to see who was near.
Standing out in the cold and the dark of the night, a lone figure stood, his face weary and tight.
A soldier, I puzzled, some twenty years old, perhaps a Marine, huddled here in the cold.
Alone in the dark, he looked up and smiled, standing watch over me, and my wife and my child.
"What are you doing?" I asked without fear, "Come in this moment, it's freezing out here!
Put down your pack, brush the snow from your sleeve, you should be at home on a cold Christmas Eve!"
For barely a moment I saw his eyes shift, Away from the cold and the snow blown in drifts.
To the window that danced with a warm fire's light.
Then he sighed and he said "It's really all right, I'm out here by choice. I'm here every night."
"It's my duty to stand at the front of the line that separates you from the darkest of times.
No one had to ask or beg or implore me, I'm proud to stand here like my fathers before me.
My Gramps died at ' Pearl on a day in December," Then he sighed, "That's a Christmas 'Gram always remembers."
My dad stood his watch in the jungles of ' Nam ', and now it is my turn and so, here I am.
I've not seen my own son in more than a while, but my wife sends me pictures, he's sure got her smile.
Then he bent and he carefully pulled from his bag, the red, white, and blue... an American flag.
I can live through the cold and the being alone, Away from my family, my house and my home.
I can stand at my post through the rain and the sleet; I can sleep in a foxhole with little to eat.
I can carry the weight of killing another, or lay down my life with my sister and brother.
Who stand at the front against any and all, to ensure for all time that this flag will not fall?"
"So go back inside," he said, "harbor no fright, your family is waiting and I'll be all right."
"But isn't there something I can do, at the least, "Give you money," I asked, "or prepare you a feast?
It seems all too little for all that you've done, for being away from your wife and your son."
Then his eye welled up a tear that held no regret, "Just tell us you love us, and never forget.
To fight for our rights back at home while we're gone, to stand your own watch, no matter how long.
For when we come home, either standing or dead, to know you remember we fought and we bled
is payment enough, and with that we will trust, that we mattered to you as you mattered to us."*

Bob Christman



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

From: PRUD HON Bertrand [mailto:bertrand.phn@wanadoo.fr]

Sent: Friday, December 24, 2010 6:34 AM

Subject: Joyeux Noël, Merry Christmas

Mes Amis,

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

Que la nouvelle année vous apporte santé, bonheur, réussite et prospérité.

Merry christmas to you and to your family

Amicales pensées

Bertrand

Click on :

http://ak.imgag.com/imgag/product/preview/flash/bws8Shell_fps24.swf?ihost=http://ak.imgag.com/imgag&brandldrPath=/product/full/el/&cardNum=/product/full/ap/3166187/graphic1

Hi Bob,

I actually was a subscriber previously but we moved and our email address changed. I had the wonderful opportunity to meet and visit your Mom & Dad twice when we lived in Whitman, MA. My uncle was **Patrick Michaels** and he was in the 596th. Your Dad was a pretty amazing guy and it was an honor to meet and spend time with him.

My best to you and your family in the new year.

Regards,

Jolene Michaels Devaney

From: john presner [mailto:jpresner42@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, December 31, 2010 3:37 PM

To: webmaster@517prct.org

Subject: Unit info

Hello,

My name is John Presner. I was doing some research on my grandfather who originally served with the 139th AEB. From what I gathered some of the Troopers in the 139th went into the 517th. I was wondering if he served in 517th. He was Tech-5 **John J. Presner**.

Thank you,

John Presner



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John,

Do you know if he was in C Company? It was mostly C Company of the 139th that became the 596th Parachute Combat Engineer Company.

See: http://517prct.org/documents/odyssey/paratroopers_odyssey.htm#1_standing_alone

I do not see John Presner listed in the 517th Christmas 1944 roster, which is fairly complete (we think) as of December 1944. So if he was with the 596th, he left them before then, either wounded or transferred. I also do not see him in the Casualty Reports of the 596, but we currently have only the Casualty reports from June, July and August of 1944.

Do you know if he was wounded?

I will include your note in the next MailCall newsletter to see if any of the troopers have any more information.

FYI, there is some info about the 139th at <http://www.ww2-airborne.us/units/139/139.html>

And I did read that someone is attempting to write a history of the 139th:

<http://www.usmilitariaforum.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=89543&pid=659734&mode=threaded&start=>

Regards,
Bob Barrett

Hello Bob, I hope you find this appropriate for your MailCall.

[Click here: Bob Hope Christmases with the troops - Zoomers](#)

and some quotes:

[Click here: Bob Hope Quotes - When we recall the past, we...](#)

Don Gentry



My dad **Mike Sura Cpl. Company H 3rd Platoon** told me many stories of the 517th and his last days in the Battle of the Bulge. Once on a fishing trip to Canada in the early Spring of '66 we got caught in a snow storm on the lake and I mentioned how bad it was to be wet and frozen. Dad said it was nothing like the Bulge and we started a fire which he said he couldn't do in the days of Xmas of '44.

Thank You American Troops and let us remember **Mel Biddle**.

Dennis Sura son of a buzzard



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Subject: Happy New Year 2011 !

Happy New Year 2011 !

Except you that 2011 season as nice as each other.

Carried by the wishes fair winds for a harvest of happy omens.

Lightning to remove the clouds and bring down a rain of good surprises.

Moments starred in a haze of happy coincidences;

Arcs in the sky in a good mood when crossing the turbulence

... as flakes of tenderness, that your year is radiant !

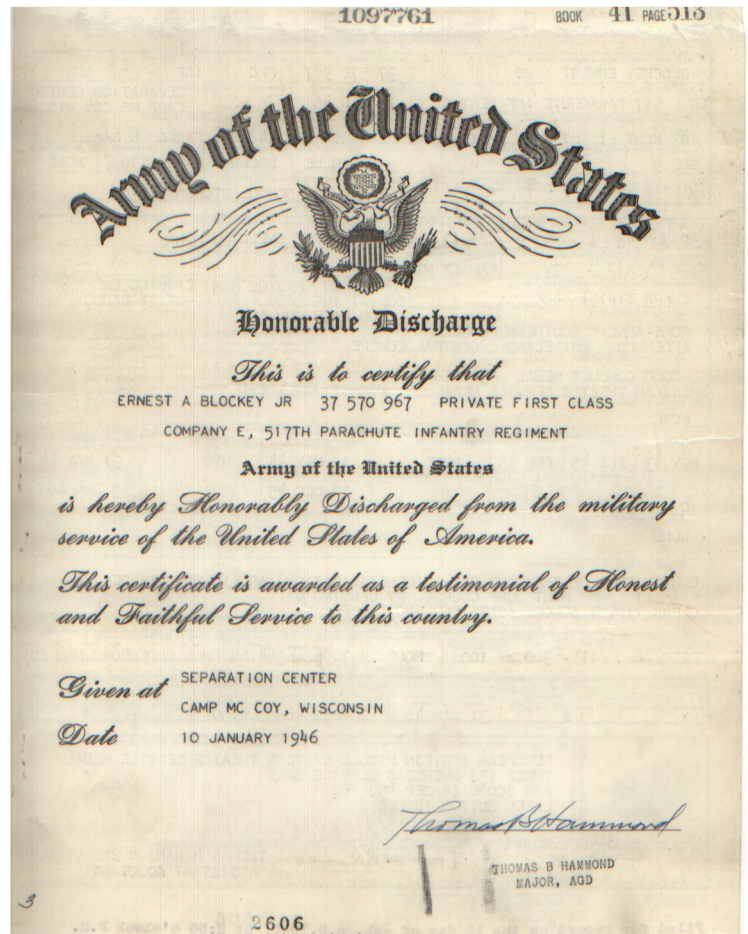
Patricia and Roland Orengo
Sospel - France

From: J.C. Blockey
[mailto:jcblockey@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, December 27, 2010 8:56 PM
To: webmaster@517prct.org
Subject: Information for E.A. Blockey-517th
Company E

Hello,

I had emailed a while back for information regarding my grandfather, but had never heard anything back. My grandfather was **Ernest Alfred (Al) Blockey Jr.**, he served in Company E of the 517th from June 1943 to January 1946 and entered the service at FT Snelling, Minnesota. I was hoping you may know someone that may have known my grandfather and could provide any information or stories about his time in the Army. I've included the previous email I sent for reference and a scan of the cover page of his Discharge Documents. If there is anything else I can provide to help, please let me know, I can also be reached on my cell at 406-580-3110.

Thank you for your time,
J.C. Blockey





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Information About my Grandfather (Al Blockey E Company 517th)

From: JC Blockey (jcblockey@hotmail.com) Sent: Sat 4/17/10 3:35 PM To: webmaster@517prct.org

Hello,

My grandfather, **Ernest (Al) Blockey Jr.**, served in E Company of the 517th from 1943 to 1946. Growing up I knew he had served, but was too young to appreciate or understand what that meant and was always under the impression that it wasn't my place to ask until shortly before he passed. The day he passed was the only time we ever really discussed his time in the service, he had a small box of pictures and souvenirs from his time in the military that we went through and discussed. Since then I have realized how foolish I was for never talking to him about his service and over the years have grown increasingly interested to learn more. Recently I found this website and have looked for everything I could find, but the only way I felt I could really learn and understand my grandfather's story was to hear it from him, in his writing or stories he told, or to hear it from someone he served with. This last option is where I hoped you might be able to help me, if there's any stories and memories that you can gather for me about my grandfather it would mean so much.

Here's some of the key information I could gather: He was 18 when he signed up for the Army. From his discharge papers I know that he was inducted June 30, 1943, entered active service on July 13, 1943 and then left for Europe on May 17, 1944. While in Europe he served in Rome-Arno, Southern France, the Ardennes, Rhineland and Central Europe. On December 22, 1945 he left Europe and he was discharged on January 10, 1946.

If there is any other information that I can give that would help, please let me know.

Thank you for any assistance you can provide.

J.C. Blockey
(406) 580-3110



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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.
- Send any news, stories, or feedback to: 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 treasurer:

Leo Dean
14 Stonehenge Lane
Albany, NY 12203

Reunions - Save the Dates!

[Florida Mini-Reunion](#)
January 15-17, 2011
[Register now!](#)

Annual 517th Reunion (Probably the Last)
July 13-18, 2011, Atlanta, GA
with visits to
Camp Toccoa and Fort Benning



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