



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2051

May 15, 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 (from 2008) www.517prct.org/roster.pdf

Last soldier dies, but WWI legacy lives on



Claude Choules died last week at 110 in Australia. He was the last surviving veteran to have seen action in the First World War. His death erases the Great War from living memory, its remembrance now confined entirely to the recorded past. (The last American veteran of that war, Frank Buckles, died in February.)

Sadly, our nation's collective memory of WWI is foggy at best. Although nearly 5 million Americans served in the Allied Expeditionary Forces, how many today know of the Meuse-Argonne, Sgt. Alvin York or flying ace Eddie Rickenbacker?

It is also quite telling that there is no official national memorial in this country to commemorate the sacrifices made by that generation, or its 53,000 dead and 200,000 wounded.

But, then, WWI wasn't a war that excited American passions. We tried to stay out of it, came in late, and got out as soon as we could. Moreover, it was a war of stalemate and gruesome, mechanized slaughter. The human cost, and the war's misery and destruction, had no previous parallel.

There were no glorious cavalry charges, rapid flank movements or quick victories, and the war produced few memorable leaders like a Robert E. Lee or a George Patton. Images of gas masks, barbed wired and shell-pitted landscapes give the war an alien, otherworldly strangeness.

Yet, few wars in human history have been as important or as influential, and America today would do well to reflect on its legacy.

WWI triggered the collapse of three major powers: the Ottoman Empire, tsarist Russia and Austria-Hungary. It



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

destroyed the power of the landed aristocracy. Problems in the Balkans continued while new ones were generated in the Middle East. National governments were given broad powers to marshal resources, powers that have largely remained. It also set the stage for Hitler's rise in Germany.

But perhaps equally as important, the war thrust America for the first time into global affairs, and created a deep and persistent cultural divide between the United States and western Europe.

Globally, American foreign policy before WWI was generally isolationist. And although the U.S. had entangled itself in foreign affairs before the war's outbreak, especially in Latin America, it had never been a major player on the world stage. That is, until 1917.

American industrial output at the time was nearly equal to that of all of Europe, and the collapse of Britain, its largest trading partner, and the threat of German militarism abroad, made American isolation impractical.

The U.S. entered the war to free the oceans, weaken European empires and make the world "safe for democracy." Indeed, President Woodrow Wilson's uniquely American agenda to create a new, liberal world order based on national self-determination and free trade is still a driving force behind American foreign policy to this day.

But Wilson largely failed in his bid to create this new world order, and WWI should remind us why Europeans remain cautious about using war to further ambitious ideas.

WWI also shattered European religious faith and optimistic notions of human progress. Before the Great War, western Europeans were, like most Americans today, optimistic people of faith. Church attendance was high and European missionaries spread the Gospel around the globe with zeal. But the scale of the war's death and destruction gave Europeans pause, and a lost generation of youth renounced their faith in any divine power that could have wrought such terrible misery. What faith remained after 1918 was largely finished off after 1945.

The recent deaths of Choules and Buckles remind us of an event that changed the world more than any other since the Reformation.

As Memorial Day approaches, we should reflect upon the deep and tragic legacy of WWI, a conflict that claimed the lives of millions and gave birth to the world we know today.

R. Matthew Poteat is an assistant professor of history in the Virginia Community College System. Email him at rmpoteat@gmail.com

From: Newsleader.com
10:04 PM, May. 9, 2011



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Mail Call News

Bob,

Tell Lory Curtis that he can add two more to attend the reunion in Atlanta. Betty and I just made our reservations for hotel, trips and flight. See you there in July.

Myrle Traver
F Co.

Hi Bob,

Hope you and your family are keeping well.

Believe it or not, but the below picture of Lt Patin [*See next page*] posted by Tony Patin has been probably taken in the garden of our family house in Villefranche sur Mer (4km outside Nice)!!!! My grandparents are living in the house since the 60's....

I will take a picture of the same place / view shortly to show.

517th's friends know the place well (ask Mike Kane)!

In this purpose, I would love that you communicate my email account to Tony Patin.

Incredible!

Have a good day,

With best regards,

Frederic Brega

Hi Fred and Bob,

What a great find! It is indeed a photo from Frederic's family's home. I am attaching a photo I took there when I visited a couple of years ago. It wasn't the same angle but you can see the railing that they were leaning against and Cap-Ferrat (the peninsula) in the background across the bay.

Fantastic!

Mike Kane





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

1945 newspaper photo:

MESSENGER

IRISH SCHOOL BOARD, TOWN OF ST. MARTINVILLE.
 GE OF PARKS & DRAINAGE DISTRICTS

TO ALL — COMPLE

FRIDAY, AUGUST 3, 1945

LT. FRED PATIN GETS SILVER STAR



At extreme left is First Lieutenant Thomas Fred Patin of Breaux Bridge. The photograph was taken at Nice, France with some of his friends.

First Lieutenant Thomas Fred Patin of the 517th Parachute Infantry, U. S. Army, was recently awarded the Silver Star Medal for gallantry in action. (While second

January 3rd, 1945, Lieutenant Patin and his demolition section were pinned down by a heavy artillery barrage. Disregarding his own safety, Lieutenant Patin proceeded forward in an effort to find cover for his men. He discovered a group of enemy-dug foxholes near the crest of the hill and returned through the withering fire for his men. Considering their safety above his own, Lt. Patin led his men in small groups through the barrage to this cover, thus necessitating his own passage through the barrage at least eight times. After having brought the last group to safety, this officer turned again through the barrage to check the casualties. On discovering one man with a serious back wound, Lt. Patin carried him through the barrage to the base of the hill, from there he could be evacuated, and then rejoined his men." Last August, Lt. Patin was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for heroic achievement in action. "Landing by parachute behind the enemy lines near Le Muy, France, Lt. Patin voluntarily sought a position with the lead scouts during the move through enemy positions to the Battalion objective. After moving a few hundred yards, Lt. Patin observed troops, but was unable to determine whether they were Allied or Germans due to the poor visibility. He advanced, but at a distance of 100 yards from the observed troops, he was fired upon by German Machine guns and machine pistols. Lt. Patin took cover and observed enemy dispositions, then withdrew under heavy small arms fire to the 2nd Battalion and reported the enemy strength and dispositions. Using this information the Battalion was able to bypass the enemy without loss of men or time." The Lieutenant is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Alberie Patin of Breaux Bridge. He graduated from the Breaux Bridge High School in the class of 1939.



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Hi,

Same place today !

We checked carefully, and it corresponds exactly to the garden / terrace of the family house.

With kind regards,

Frédéric Brega





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Subject: Re: 517 PRCT - MailCall No. 2050 - May 8, 2011 (1)

could not open 2050. my fault? - Ellis Boyd

Give it another try. It should open, but unfortunately it is a HUGE file -- 9Mb, which is very large. So it might take a long time to load depending on your connection speed.

Sorry that these MailCalls are so big lately, but that's the only way I can include all the photos and documents. I am trying to make them smaller, but I am having trouble with my computer tools lately.

Bob Barrett

Hi Bob,

This is Heather and Joe Riley of 1253 Euel Saggus Rd. Tignall, GA. which is about 80 miles from Toccoa. My dad, Ian Cowan was a member of Co. B, 1. You might remember that I sent copies of The Blue Book. At any rate, Joe wrote one time and offered our services to help in any way with the Toccoa end of the reunion. We have been to the museum many times and are very familiar with their layout (may have changed in the past year - there was an addition added.) We would very much like to help in any way to help you with an area of tribute to your father. Of course, we are offering to help in ANY WAY possible. Joe and I could go up early and set up an area that would be fitting (as I am sure Brenda and Carl from the museum would). We could also go up very soon and take photos of the museum just to give you an idea of the layout and the room available. They have a yearly military tribute in October which includes a nice banquet. I hope that you can find some way for us to help. Please have Helen or Lory contact us if they need anything done. Hope to hear from you very soon. We'll see you in July.

The Riley's

Heather,

Of course I remember you and the Blue Book. I was surprised to find that it actually existed, since I had never actually seen a copy until you showed it to me in Savannah. Prior to that, everyone had it confused with the booklet written in Joigny in 1945.

I am copying this note to Lory and Helen, who are organizing the Atlanta reunion. I bet they'll take all the help they can get.

Bob Barrett

See: [Blue Book Magazine Articles – 1947 - 1948](#)

Thanks Bob,

I know Heather and her family so this is great information.

Lory



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

To the men of the 517th.

I have a question about your training in hand to hand combat.

I have studied martial arts most of my life. About 5 years ago I started with a completely different Martial Art, it's called "Combat Hapkido". This is not a competitive art, no tournaments no full contact sparring. It is close quarter combat to train for street self defense.

My dad, Corbin, just passed away last Nov. so he and I talked a lot about my hapkido training. I had no brothers, so dad was my dad, my brother, my buddy, my only 'go to' guy, my whole life. Being the only son we wrestled a lot and he was interested in my martial training. Of course he taught me to defend myself as I was growing up.

I told dad that for the first year of my Combat Hapkido training I don't think they taught me anything that he hadn't taught me 40 years ago! He would laugh, but I was very serious. Still today as a black belt in the art many of the so called 'advanced techniques' are old hat to me. Stuff dad and I did.

The art of Hapkido is a Korean art. There are many styles of Hapkido. But the art under the name HAPKIDO goes back only to the 1960's. Before that is was derived from many different arts, like jujitsu , akijujitsu, judo, hudo. Both Korean and Japanese and even some Chinese arts.

Lately I have been wondering "Just how DID my dad learn these fighting techniques? " Law enforcement and military are now going to Combat Hapkido for standard hand to hand training. But how did the 517th get such training in 1941 ??? I know from my own experience that the Army doesn't teach at this level in basic training.

Can anyone tell me about the hand to hand training of the 517th troopers. Where did they receive it? Does anyone know who taught it and if it was based on a particular art? I read almost everything ever published on the 517th, but don't remember reading anything on their hand to hand training. I know from living with my dad that they were WELL trained.

If anyone can give me any information on this part of their training I would appreciate it.

Larry Zickefoose

(son of Corbin Zickefoose, HQ Co, 1st Battalion)



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Subject: WWII Trailer
From: Walter Smith

Show Your Thanks to World War II Vets by Watching this 2-minute Video

http://media.causes.com/1060527?p_id=175378540

Keith Leibovitz's youngest nephew, Seth has been working on a full-length feature documentary about a program that honors WWII vets. He said that working on it has been a very emotional experience, because the story is so powerful. A trailer for the film has now been released, and it would really help if you watched it all the way to the end, and sent it to other folks who would enjoy it.

They are trying to get 50000 views before Memorial Day. I think you'll agree that it is very poignant and you need to view the whole thing to be counted, it's only 2 min long .

http://media.causes.com/1060527?p_id=175378540

Bobbie-Jo Spencer

This video has grown legs and the new goal is 2 million views. I hope it makes it and the full-length feature is produced.

Don Gentry



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Jump or be Pushed by Herb Loken

A REAL HERO (1/30/97)

BEING AN OLD VETERAN OF WWII I HAVE READ MANY STORIES OF MEN WHO WERE HEROES DURING THE COURSE OF BATTLE AND ADMIRERED THEM GREATLY FOR THE COURAGE THEY PORTRAYED. I HAVE A TALE I WOULD LIKE TO RELATE TO YOU ABOUT SOMEONE I KNEW PERSONALLY AND WHO HAD A TREMENDOUS INFLUENCE ON MY LIFE. HIS NAME WAS SERGEANT DELANEY. I CAN'T RECALL WHAT HIS FIRST NAME WAS... AND BELIEVE ME WE HAD NICKNAMES FOR MOST ALL OUR NON-COMS AND OFFICERS... LIKE "MICKEY MARKS" FOR OUR PLATOON OFFICER... BUT TO ME HE WAS ALWAYS.. SERGEANT DELANEY!

THE MAJORITY OF US RECRUITS WERE JUST A YEAR AWAY FROM H. S. GRADUATION WHEN WE REPORTED TO CAMP TOCCOA, GEORGIA FOR OUR BASIC TRAINING. WE CAME FROM ALL PARTS OF THE U.S. WERE SELECTED TO FORM A REGIMENT OF 2,000 PLUS MEN TO RECEIVE SPECIAL CONDITIONING BEFORE REPORTING TO FT. BENNING FOR JUMP SCHOOL AND WIN OUR WINGS AS PARATROOPERS. PRIOR TO THIS TIME IN MARCH OF 1943 THE MEN WHO VOLUNTEERED FOR THE PARATROOPS WERE SENT DIRECTLY TO FT. BENNING AND AFTER PASSING SPECIAL PHYSICAL EXAMS WERE FORMED INTO COMPANIES UPON COMPLETION OF JUMP SCHOOL. RECRUITS WERE ASSIGNED TO VARIOUS DIVISIONS OF THE AIRBORNE SUCH AS THE 82ND AND 101ST.

WE WERE AN EXPERIMENT TO SEE IF INTRODUCTORY PHYSICAL TRAINING WOULD RESULT IN FEWER DROPOUTS DURING THE FT. BENNING TENURE. FROM ALL RESULTS IT PROVED TO BE A SUCCESS. TO MY KNOWLEDGE ONLY ONE CANDIDATE FROM OUR IMMEDIATE GROUP FAILED TO COMPLETE JUMP SCHOOL.

NOW..GETTING BACK TO SGT. DELANEY, THE AVERAGE AGE FOR RECRUITS WAS 19 YEARS .. HE WAS AN OL' MAN.. I WOULD GUESS ABOUT 25!



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

MUST HAVE BEEN IN THE ARMY AND THEN VOLUNTEERED FOR AIRBORNE DUTY AFTER COMPLETING HIS TRAINING AT FT. BENNING WAS ASSIGNED TO OUR 517TH REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM. WHAT A ROLE MODEL!. EVERYTHING YOU WOULD EXPECT IN A MILITARY LEADER RAMROD STATURE, TRIM AND PRECISE IN HIS COMMANDS AND ALL KNOWING IN THE SCIENCE OF MILITARY TRAINING. BESIDES ALL THAT HE WAS VERY UNDERSTANDING AND PATIENT WITH HIS YOUNG RECRUITS. SO TO MOST OF US HE WAS OUR LEADER, OUR "SUPER-MAN" WHO WOULD LEAD US INTO BATTLE AND NO HARM COULD EVER BEFALL SUCH A SOLDIER. , HE HAD ONE WEAKNESS IN HIS "COAT OF ARMOR" WHICH WAS A BLESSING TO HIS MEN... THEIR CONCERN AND SAFETY WAS FOREMOST IN HIS THINKING.

THIS BRINGS ME UP TO THE PERIOD WHERE HE TRULY EXHIBITED WHAT I WOULD PROCLAIM, "A TRUE HERO!" LET ME TELL THE TALE AS IT WAS TOLD TO ME.

IT WAS DURING THE "BATTLE OF THE BULGE" IN BELGIUM IN 1945 WHEN THE GERMAN AND ALLIED FORCES WERE IN COMPLETE CONFUSION. YES, WE SEEMED TO HAVE THE GERMANS STOPPED MOMENTARILY, OR MAYBE IT WAS THE LACK OF PETRO THAT CAUSED THEIR HALT, BUT AT ANY RATE WE WERE AT THE PEAK OF THEIR THRUST TO REACH ENGLAND ALONG WITH THE 82ND AIRBORNE THAT WE WERE ATTACHED TO AS WELL AS THE 101ST AIRBORNE. WE HAD BEEN TOLD BY OUR LEADER, "IKE" THAT THIS WAS A STRATEGIC WITHDRAWAL OF THE ALLIED FORCES TO TRAP THE GERMAN FORCES. WHAT A JOKE! I THINK IN ALL OF EUROPE OUR PARATROOP DIVISIONS WERE THE ONLY FORCES AVAILABLE TO PREVENT THE SUCCESS OF THE PANZER DIVISIONS. AT ANY RATE, WE SEEMED TO HAVE HALTED THEIR ADVANCE FOR THE MOMENT AND WERE ATTEMPTING TO REGAIN SOME LOST GROUND. I WAS ON FLANK PATROL ON THIS PARTICULAR DAY AND NOT WITH SERGEANT DELANEY'S SQUAD AND THEY WERE DIRECTED BY OUR "FEARLESS?!" CAPTAIN TO ADVANCE TO A BUILDING THAT HAD JUST BEEN CLEARED OF GERMAN TROOPS.



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

OUR PLATOON LEADER, LT. BURKHARD, HAD REFUSED THE CAPTAIN'S COMMAND BECAUSE HE FEARED FOR HIS TROOPS WITH THE THOUGHT THAT THE GERMANS HAD THE HOUSE ZEROED IN AND WOULD BRING DOWN HEAVY FIRE ON THE FACILITY IF WE TRIED TO OCCUPY IT. IN DOING SO, LT. BURKHARD WAS STRIPPED OF HIS RANK AND SENT TO THE REAR. SGT. DELANEY, DEDICATED SOLDIER THAT HE WAS, COULD NOT REFUSE A COMMAND AND TOOK HIS SQUAD FORWARD AND OCCUPIED THE BUILDING. ALMOST IMMEDIATELY, AS ANTICIPATED, THE GERMANS OPENED UP WITH HEAVY FIRE ON THE BUILDING. SGT. DELANEY TOOK IT UPON HIMSELF TO ORDER HIS MEN BACK TO SAFER GROUND AND ONCE ALL WERE CLEAR OF THE BUILDING HE WAS IN THE PROCESS OF MAKING HIS ESCAPE WHEN A SHELL MADE A DIRECT HIT ON HIS LOCATION AND HE WAS KILLED. IT SEEMED LIKE A DREAM, IT JUST COULDN'T HAPPEN, THAT ANYTHING OR ANYONE COULD TAKE SGT. DELANEY FROM US. TO THIS DAY, I THINK THE COMMANDING OFFICER THAT DAY SHOULD HAVE BEEN CHARGED FOR HIS POOR JUDGEMENT THAT CAUSED THIS TERRIBLE LOSS. NOT A WORD WAS EVER PRINTED AND TO MY KNOWLEDGE, SGT. DELANEY NEVER RECEIVED A MEDAL FOR WHAT HE SACRIFICED THAT DAY.

I'M RECALLING THIS HAPPENING ON JAN. 30, 1997, BUT I WILL PURSUE THIS TOPIC WHEN WE MEET FOR THE REUNION - OF OUR OUTFIT IN MAY OF THIS YEAR IN PALM SPRINGS. IF SOMETHING SPECIAL WAS NOT DONE... I WANT TO INITIATE THAT ACTION PROMPTLY!

TO ADD TO THE GRIEF OF THE LIFE THAT HE LOST... HE HAD JUST RECEIVED A LETTER FROM HIS WIFE WITH A BOOTIE BELONGING TO HIS NEW-BORN DAUGHTER AS A UNIT WE SPONSORED A COLLECTION FOR HIS DAUGHTER AND SENT A SIZEABLE AMOUNT TO HIS WIFE TO SHOW OUR LOVE FOR OUR SERGEANT! I STILL HAVE HER RESPONSE TO THAT GIFT AND I TRULY WISH I HAD KEPT IN CONTACT WITH THE FAMILY.



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Recent website additions:

[517th Order of Battle by Clark Archer \(18.4 Mb\)](#)

[Fred Marron, B Battery, 460th PFAB](#)

[Charles William Young, C Company](#)

[2nd Battalion - Communications, Mortar and Machine Gunnery](#)

1943 May 10 - [Letter to parents of new recruits from Lt. McKinley](#)

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:

Brenda Verbeck Mortensen
13046 Race Track Road #220
Tampa, FL 33626

