



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



MailCall No. 2094

February 19, 2012

*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

517th Annual Reunion

Please see the 3 attached forms for the Kansas City reunion, July 12-15, 2012. Bob, will you put these forms on Mailcall. Helen and Claire please put these forms in our next Thunderbolt. The forms are: The registration form, program of activities, and Hilton Hotel registration. I look forward to seeing everyone again this summer. Please mark these dates on your calendar to attend.

Airborne All the Way!
Lory Curtis

Annual National Reunion
Kansas City, MO
July 12-16, 2012
[Program](#)
[Registration Form](#)
[Hotel Registration Form](#)





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517 PRCT West Coast Mini-Reunion

[West Coast mini-reunion information and registration instructions](#)

May 14-18, 2012

Raymond Bunce, F Company



I have attached my father's recollection of training and a very little bit about his first injury [in June 1944]. I did find the references below. Thank you. I am going to try and send you the photos I have. Unfortunately Comcast limits the size of photos so I will probably have to send them one at a time. There is little info we have about each one in the way of names of the other soldiers who are in the pictures but I will designate which one is my dad.

Thanks so much for your assistance! If there is anyone I could contact who may know more info about my dad's platoon or company or my dad, I would appreciate it!!

Chris

Chris,

I took a quick look at it, and that is a great diary! I know the other troopers will love to hear the Toccoa indoctrination stories.

I can't fit it into this week's MailCall that I need to send out tonight. I'd prefer to wait until I get some of your photos and put it all together.

Thanks again.

I can take whatever photo formats and size that you can send. If you too many to send one at a time, let me know and we can figure out another way.

Bob Barrett

Will you please include me in future Mail Call's? I will share them with my family as well!

Thank you!

Christine Bunce



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Hi Christine,

I cleaned up the formatting and a couple of minor spelling errors on the Raymond Bunce story. Please take a look and let me know if you want to change anything. It is attached in Word format.

I also made a web version for the 517 website, which is posted at: http://517prct.org/bios/raymond_bunce/raymond_bunce.htm I included the pictures at the bottom. If we can identify where the pictures were taken I could insert them into the document at the right place – or anywhere you tell me to put them.

Note that we do have autobiographies from a few other F Company folks: <http://517prct.org/bios.htm> The one from **Ray Hess** has a full photo of F Company from Camp Toccoa, which includes **Ray Bunce**. (He looks tall.)

Bob Barrett

CHAPTER I

Having been notified that I was accepted and saying goodbye to my one and only Sweetheart thru out my life, and also my mother and sister, I boarded a train for Philadelphia.

Arriving in Philadelphia, my orders were given to an Army Sgt., who took charge of 15 inductees. We departed and arrived at an induction center. Processing began at a supply depot where you follow each other in single file, you are instructed to hold your arms straight out and follow the man ahead of you, as you proceed the first thing you get is a duffel bag which is put into your right hand, after that everything is almost thrown at you including boots, that's the only item they ask you for your size. You get the whole wardrobe, green fatigues, underwear, Dress khakis, Army packs, wool socks, overcoat – the WORKS At the end of the depot was a Sergeant who marched us to our barracks. At this time, we were designated bunks.

CHAPTER II

Our bunks were naturally not your run of the mill bed you were used to at home, however, they were serviceable.

The Sgt. of our barracks came in and announced himself very cordially. I found out later that his job could have been very enviable and realized that all he was required to do was separate us as we came in to our various assignments. He was performing a separation phase of this first step.

All the occupants of my barracks were not given a chance to get acquainted for an hour ? Second day ? our group began to dissipate. At that point in time I had never heard of the old cliché, DO NOT VOLUNTEER FOR ANYTHING IN THE ARMY.

My thoughts wandered back to the brochure. I had heard about the paratroops. It said excellent training, extra pay for jump status and 3 day missions and back to the base. In other words Jump do your Job and return, plus \$50.00 a month. SOUNDS GOOD?? WRONG"



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CHAPTER III

By the 5th day, I was the only one left in the barracks except for the Sgt. My assignment was to keep the barracks clean. The Sgt. told me that as soon as there were enough volunteers at least 12, we would be on our way.

It was the 10th day and finally the Sgt. told me to get my gear together and report to another barracks. When I arrived at the barracks and reported to the Sgt., he lined us up and called the oldest volunteer, and informed us that he was in charge of us as an acting non-commissioned officer.

The next morning we loaded on an army truck that transported us to the train station. After boarding the train our acting Non Commissioned officer opened the orders, we were going to a place called Camp Toccoa Georgia. Finally the first peg of our unknown future. Would we survive?? WHY NOT!

CHAPTER IV

THE ARRIVAL: When I use the term arrival it is used very loosely. Getting off the bus we immediately learned the subtle terms of military jargon. Three examples are, IMMEDIATELY, DOUBLE TIME AND GIMMEE 25 PUSH UPS- on the double was meant for all occasions even if you were not ordered to do it you did it automatically.

We were about to enter the "Twilight Zone" or weeding out process. As we hit the ground from the bus, a couple of Sergeants met us, told us to drop our Duffle bags, got us in formation and immediately double-timed us to an area where a tower loomed ahead and in single file we climbed this tower. One by one, we entered the tower and two Non Commissioned officers, strapped a harness on us and pushed us out the door. It was quite an experience but, really more surprising than dangerous, the harness was attached to a guide wire and you just slid down to the ground. Again, there were two non-commissioned officers there to unhook us and told us to double-time back to the tower. The repetition continued. I went up six times and that was a maximum amount to pass the first hurdle, however, we lost five of our group in that foray.

CHAPTER V

Having decimated our rank in this initial venture, another Sgt. took us by the hand and immediately double-timed us to the dispensary and we underwent an anatomical procedure that missed absolutely nothing. X rays, Blood test, nerve ending tests, Cardiograms, "Do you like Girls" questions, nothing was overlooked and I Mean Nothing.

We lost three more of our group. The Sgt., double-timed us to the barracks and we entered a barracks and sat down. As we looked straight, there was a table with four men seated there, three Second Lieutenants, and one First Lieutenant.

These officers were going to question us one by one. The questions were of all varieties and situations, these were all answered and I was the last one to be questioned. None of us knew what was asked and answered by each one. I was the last one, I was questioned by the First Lieutenant, and he finally asked me if I could obey any order , and I proudly answered "Yes Sir". He responded to me "I know you will". I looked straight into his eyes and



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I have never seen blue eyes that twinkled as brightly as his. At this time a Second Lieutenant said I'll take this man.

I forgot to mention the one odd question which probably was a deciding factor in my being chosen by my 2nd Lieutenant., was his order to go over to the wall and hit it with all the force I had. At the time, I didn't know anything about studs or building factors so I answered "Yes Sir" and went over to do it, I pulled my arm back made a fist and began, and I heard a voice say that's fine soldier. I felt good about myself, however, the worst was yet to come.

Read the rest of Raymond Bunce's journal at:
http://517prct.org/bios/raymond_bunce/raymond_bunce.htm

Photos of **Raymond Bunce**, F Company. Can you identify where these were taken?



MailCall News

We have an indoor 'flea market' a few miles north of The Villages, FL with about 1,000 different vendors. Visiting there yesterday to find a new pair of sunglasses, it turned out there was a military exhibit at the far end of the market. Wandering thru there were all sorts of military 'junk' and exhibits, including several types of vehicles outside. To my surprise...and excitement...I found a pristine gold license plate of the 517th, showing all three patches in glorious color, with the words '517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team Association' at the bottom, and on the top side 1943 in the left top corner, and 1993 in the top right side. Needless to say, without any haggling, I now have this plate, and have to determine if I want it to go on my front bumper or in the rear window. What a find! Love it!

Phil McSpadden



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Hi Bob,

Alicia Miller wrote in about her research into the Enigma machine in WWII. There is a really good book I read years ago called "The Ultra Secret" written by F.W Winterbotham, a chief in the British Air Department Intelligence Service who worked with the device and the cryptographers at Bletchley Park. It was apparently written soon after many of the details about its use became declassified. A good record of how the British came about getting their hands on it with many fascinating stories about how the Germans and Japanese used it during the war without ever knowing it had fallen into Allied hands. I don't know if it's still in print but used copies are probably available.

Best regards,

Mike Kane

Hi Bob,

Hope that all is fine for you and your family.

Just a few notes to say hello and sending to Mrs **Kim Harris** [daughter of **Lt. Robert Morgan**, the Best Wishes from Manhay. Maybe a day, if she desire to visit the town, I'm present to welcome everybody from the 517th PIR and family !

If she want more photos from the Manhay taken then or now, I will can sending you. If you have my book "La Bataille des Carrefours"... You can use anything you want from !

I will be enjoy to read the memories of his father but I presume, you will present it on your website !

Best Wishes to all 517th Family from your Belgian friend of Manhay !

Eddy Monfort

Thank you, Eddy. Always great to hear from you.

Yes, I have Ben's copy of your book, and may borrow some photos. As soon as Kim can manage to get the transcription done, I will certainly get it onto the website.

Kim, I hope you hear Eddy's offer. Eddy, his family, and all the people of Manhay have always been wonderful to the 517th family and all vets who visit.

Bob Barrett

Please add me to the "Mail Call" list. I am **Nolan Powell**'s son.

Thank you

Alan Powell

powell.nan-al@verizon.net



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Dear Bob, Great Mail Call. Keep up the good work.

Note to **Jodi Longo Jennings**: Your father and I did many things together and most of them are set forth in the citations Bob listed for you to click on. Since these accounts are detailed, I won't try to rehash.

After the jump in S. France, he took care of **Col. Paxton** better than any orderly could. He got the grub, cooked it, saw that the colonel's uniforms were in good shape. He really liked the job or was a good actor. It put him in the center of things that were going on in 3rd Bn.

I last saw him at the reunion in Ft. Benning. He looked to be in good shape. We corresponded some and he told me about working, I think, at JC Pennys and raising some beef cattle on a small acreage. You must have seen some of the results on the table.

Note re **Bob Morgan** and Manhay: There apparently were more than one Sgt. Brown. Donna's father [**Sgt. Silas Brown**] was **Bob Reber's** platoon sergeant, 3rd Bn. 81 mortar platoon all the way through. The Polish-American captain whose name I always misspell (but Kim has it right) commanded G Co. after he and **Hooper** swapped places and Hooper became the S-3. We will be interested in Bob's write up, but this gives me two questions. We attacked and held Manhay in the wee morning hours of darkness on December 27, 1944. What went on before we took it is confusing, but I have a loose handle on it, some of I remember from reading a book on General Rose, Commander of 3rd Armored Division, to whom **Bill Boyle** reported in Manhay when his headquarters was there a while before the 3rd Bn. attack on the 27th. They gave Rose and the 3rd Armored a 14 mile front to defend and then reassigned his two combat commands, A and B, leaving him with C, composed of a few recon. tank units, his communications units and little else. In addition to this, higher Hq. changed the defensive borders of the units so who was in charge of defending Manhay was unclear. In this confusing situation, **Bill Boyle** and **Don Frasier** separated in the fast move forward and each commanding parts of the 517th1st. Bn. assisted Rose in holding most of the line. In the confusion, however, Manhay fell to the SS armored outfit the 3rd Bn. removed in our Dec. 27 attack. We were told that previously two regiments in separate attacks had failed to do the job. Manhay was the center of an important net of highways we needed to hold to prevent the Germans from going on to Antwerp.

This raises my second question about Bob's write up. The first being that the dates mentioned by Kim precede the 27th of December. During this time period the 3rd. Bn. operated without G Co., which was ordered to guard Ridgeway's 18th Airborne Corps CP. If **Bob Morgan** was with G Co. at that time he did not participate in taking and holding Manhay. Perhaps his write up will make this clear.

Hope I haven't confused everybody including myself.

HH [**Howard Hensleigh**]

Now that I look around, there were a number of Brown's.

I just assumed that since **Bob Morgan** was with G Company, the only Brown like that that I could find was **Sgt. Silas Brown** of HQ/3. But Howard is sure that Silas stayed with **Reber**.



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I did find 2 other Browns in the 3rd Bn, but they were in I Company, and not Sgts. And I forgot about **Fred Brown**. He was with the 460th. And there's Cpl. **Joe David Brown**, the author, also with the 460th. There was the 517 chaplain **Charles Brown**. And Tom McAvoy mentioned a **Sgt. Harlan Brown** of the demo Platoon, which I think was the 3rd Bn. Maybe that's a possibility.

Howard seems confused by the whole account, especially the dates, and we know how sharp his memory is. I guess we'll have to wait for the story and see what emerges.

Now I'm really curious.

Bob B.

Mr. Barrett,

To answer (a little bit) that question regarding **S/Sgt Howard M. Daniel** in MailCall # 2093, I found him listed in H Company, 517th PIR, as a Sgt, ASN - 33856350, MOS 7745 (Rifleman) in the passenger list of the SS MADAWSKA VICTORY, sailing from Le Havre, France on August 12th, 1945, and which brought back the 517th PIR to New York after the end of war in Europe.

According to his enlistment record, mr. Howard M. Daniel enlisted on July 5th, 1944 in Richmond, VA.

I hope this will help a little bit his children,

Regards from France,

Christophe Mora

Bob,

It's on page 13, passenger # 25, can you see him?

I have the transcript of Morning Reports for H Company (the one from your website), and checked with name + ASN, and apparently, there's no **Howard M. DANIEL** in that Company from May 1944 up to march 1945.

Maybe he was from another Company in the 517th PIR, or even from another PIR? I check my Pulles Roster for the 101st A/B Div, and he is not listed there. I also checked all the "indexes to the General Orders" from 82nd, 101st, 13th and 17th A/B Div, and he was not awarded anything from these Divisions, not Silver Stars, no Bronze Stars and no Purple Heart. That could have helped.

It seems like his son/daughter has it's Separation papers, maybe he/she can check what Campaigns he is credited for, it will help find out if he saw combat with the 517th. There should also be a listing of his awards there, with indication of the authorities that awarded them, and that could help out a bit as well...



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Let me know if you have problem finding Mr. DANIEL's name in the embarkation roster, I might have a different copy (from Ancestry).

Regards from France,
Christophe

Thanks, Christophe. I found it. And now I know what MOS 7745 means! A 745 is a rifleman, but a 7745 is a parachute-qualified rifleman.

http://www.fatherswar.com/8thinfdiv/WW2/ww2_8thgeneralinfo/general%20info/WW2_MOS_text.htm

I agree with you. I have no signs of Howard Daniel in my records, but that is mostly the Xmas roster, the incomplete casualty reports, and whatever other photos and stories people have sent in. But those discharge papers and now the Madawaska manifest do confirm that he joined and ended with the 517 H Co. Good, I would hate to have disappointed her. It would be nice to confirm if, when, and where he saw some action in Belgium or Germany, but that might never happen.

I asked Donna the same question you are asking: Don't the discharge papers have more details? Usually they have the unit, campaigns, medals and sometimes weapon skills. If I hear more from her I will.

PASSENGER LIST

Vessel _____ Sailed From _____ Staged At _____

IGSSO H _____ 812TH PRCT INF REGT _____
 Unit Shipment Number _____ Unit Designation _____

COMPANY SHP
Sub-Unit

List Number	Name	Grade or Rank	ASN	ASN	Arm or Service	MOS
21.	BILLIGRAFF, LEE B.	(17)Sgt	33	37472-76	Inf	7745
22.	BOWLEY, CHARLES E.	(3)Sgt	50	6826225	Inf	7745
23.	BRADSHAW, JAMES H.	(7)Sgt	54	36480803	Inf	7607
24.	BRAUD, DEWITT H.	(5)Sgt	72	36382629	Inf	7745
25.	DANIEL, HOWARD N.	(3)Sgt	30	33856350	Inf	7745
26.	FERRY, DONOHIO	(6)Sgt	26	35916861	Inf	7745
27.	GUESS, HOWARD E.	(3)Sgt	61	33719375	Inf	7745
28.	HARGADON, WILLIAM F.	(21)Sgt	26	33803399	Inf	71812
29.	HUNTER, RALPH D.	(12)Sgt	65	39456009	Inf	7653
30.	KHISLEY, JAMES M.	(6)Sgt	42	35237199	Inf	7745
31.	MALLOU, BERNARD J.	(2)Sgt	70	32225074	Inf	7604
32.	MULLINS, GEORGE D.	(6)Sgt	33	35780350	Inf	7761
33.	NEWTON, JAMES E.	(4)Sgt	58	14000924	Inf	7745
34.	STEELE, ROBERT E.	(21)Sgt	65	33921853	Inf	7745
35.	FRANK, AMBROSE W.	(16)Tro/4	42	37568853	Inf	7060
36.	KARLA, JOE H.	(10)Tro/4	19	38679128	Inf	7060
37.	BLACKBURN, CLAUDE A.	(5)Cpl	49	14171994	Inf	7511

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PS: You're not on my weekly MailCall list. How did you happen to pick up #2093?

Regards,
Bob Barrett

Bob,
Yes, somewhere in '44 they added that "7" digit in front of all "regular" MOS to show it was paratroops...
Oh, I think I used to be on the MailCall list a long time ago (several years ago I think). I suppose my address was removed or lost, but I go to check the MailCall straight online every week or so...



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I never bothered to request to be added to the list again, because I believe it is extra-work for you, and since I'm not a veteran, or from a veteran family, I figured it was not easier for me to just check them online.

I am very interested and actually researching the 509th PIB, but I'm also very interested in all the US Army WWII Paratroopers history.

I think the 508th and 517th PIR's websites are wonderful, and I check them on a regular basis,

Regards,

Christophe.

Bob,

Just to make sure, I have checked my 505th PIR roster, the Phil Nordyke's roster for the 504th PIR, Brian Siddall's roster for the 507th, and the excellent 508th website for this outfit... Mr. **Howard M. DANIEL** doesn't seem to have served in any of those Regiments.

I'm quite sure the Discharge papers could be of some help to find out more. What campaigns did Mr. DANIEL fought in? Was he wounded? What awards did he obtain? etc...

I wish I could help more,

Regards from France,

Christophe

RE: Casualty reports

Dear Sirs; I know that many e-mails have gone back and forth about morning reports being transcribed onto this website but there doesn't seem to be any changes in quite some time. Do these updates show up on another site or will they be posted on this site and are you still looking for volunteers?

Sincerely,, **Bob Gummow** (son of **John Gummow**, D Company)
S.O.B. D Co.1st.PLT Msq

Guess what "Currahee" means?

Think you will find this interesting. Phil
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wV2r42l6sQo>

Phil McSpadden





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Hello, all -

Dad (**Allan Johnson**) and I did a super-fast run up to see **Leo Dean** today. It was just a quick up-and-back run (central New Jersey to Albany), but we picked up some 517 stuff and went to a lovely lunch at one of his favorite local watering holes, La Serre.

Leo looks fabulous - cast is off and he's been back to work for quite a while. His right wrist is still swollen but he can lift a wine glass so really, what else matters? He'd had to use a left-handed wine glass for weeks.

Dad asked him if he's cleared to jump (Leo had just done #150 a month or so prior to his fall). I think Leo's as cleared as he's ever been.

Leo and Allan are both looking forward to Palm Springs and Kansas City. Make your travel plans now!

Agenda Item #2:

When we were in Atlanta last summer, I met a gentleman who was attending his first reunion. I know his father (the WWII vet) is long-deceased. He was really hoping for a copy of Paratrooper's Odyssey, and I scored one from Leo today. Who is this guy that I met? Please let me know at clairejib@comcast.net so I can mail it. My apologies - I remember many details about our conversations but not the gentleman's name.

Agenda Item #3:

Please remember **Brenda Verbeck Mortensen** as Jim's memorial service is tomorrow (February 18), as well as **Hal and Helen Beddow**. Hal's daughter Jan died last week after a long battle with cancer; many of us met Jan at Atlanta.

All the best to my favorite vets and families -

Claire





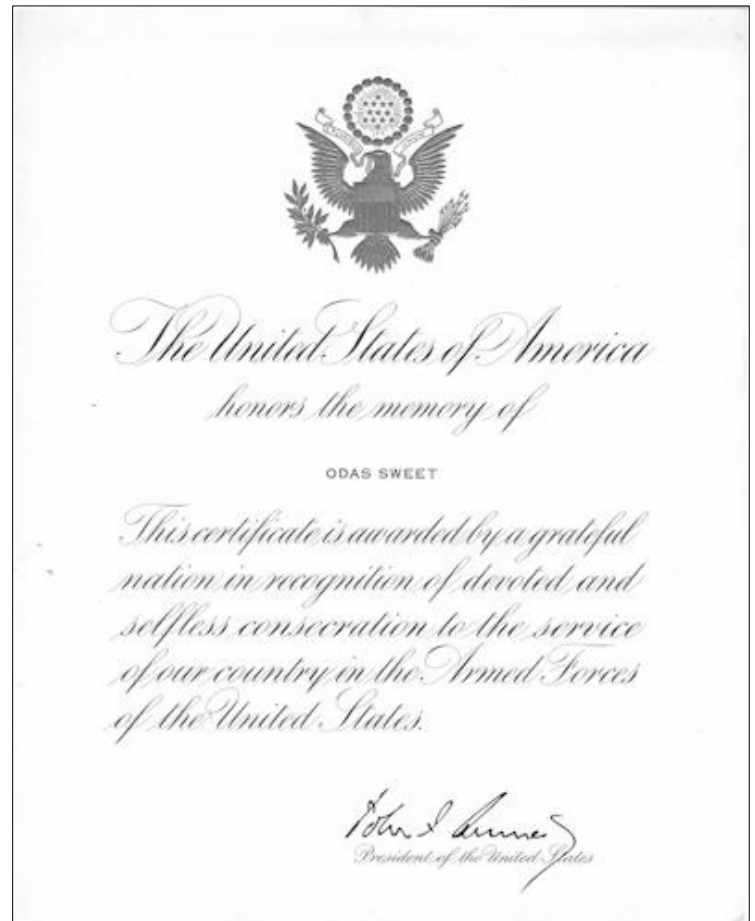
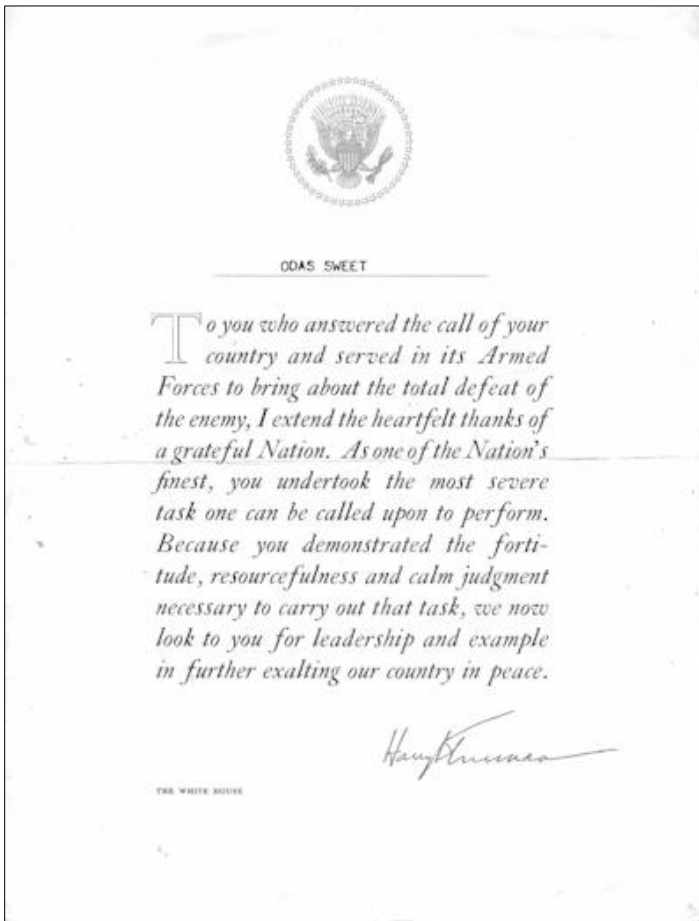
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Hi Bob,

My mom found these documents and gave them to me for safe keeping. One is signed by Harry Truman and one is signed by John F Kennedy. I was impressed and would like to share with the 517th. I wonder if anyone else received the same documents from the presidents?? The one from Kennedy was sent away for in the early 60's before he was assassinated. After sharing them would you please add them to the rest of the pictures that I sent in for **Odas Sweet**? You are much appreciated for what you do. I also found French money that he brought home with him. The last time I saw that was 50 plus years ago when I used to look through his war things as a child....Wow! He was promoted to Private First Class on the same day as **Jim Suttcliffe** while in the 517th. Before he was with the 517th he was in the 504th A co and after leaving the 517th in June of 1945 he was back with the 504th co E in occupied Germany until he came home on the same victory ship the Onieda with the 517th. It's amazing how much I have learned since finding the 517th web site. Dad died when I was four years old in 1959 and I didn't remember much about him. I am proud of him for what he did in WWII.

Thanks

Rick Sweet



See all the papers at: http://517prct.org/photos/odas_sweet_3/odas_sweet_3.htm



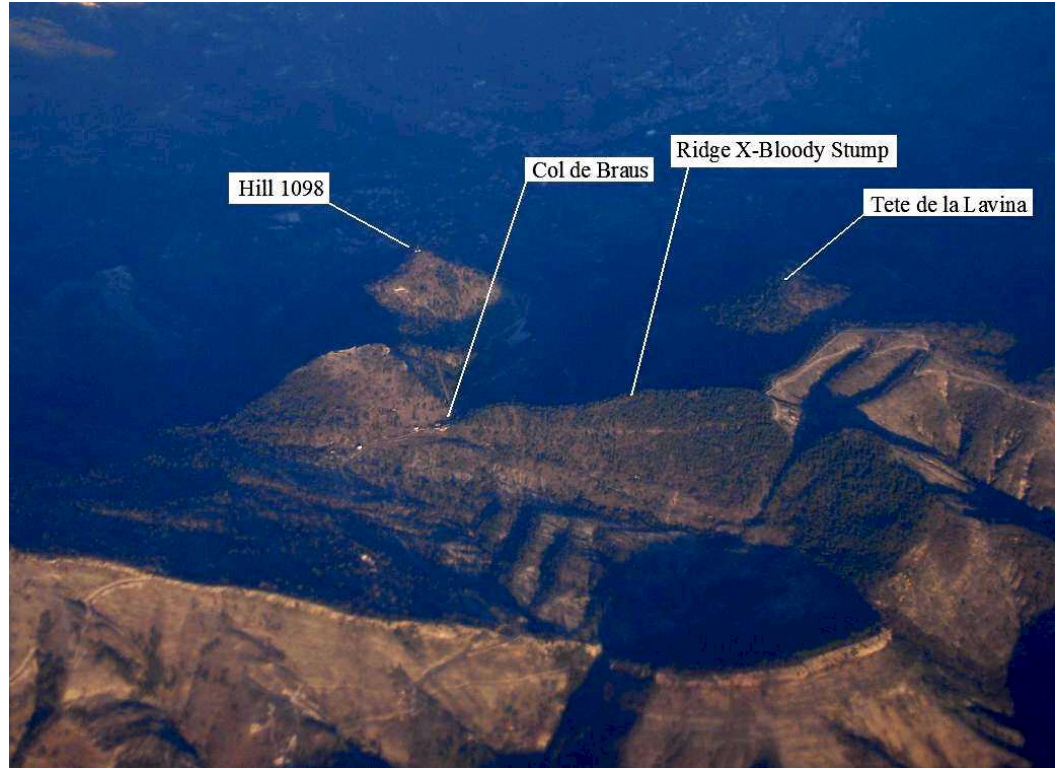
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Dear Bob

I thought you might be interested in this photo of Col de Braus that I took from the airplane the other day. Not the best, but I happened to snap it as we flew over.

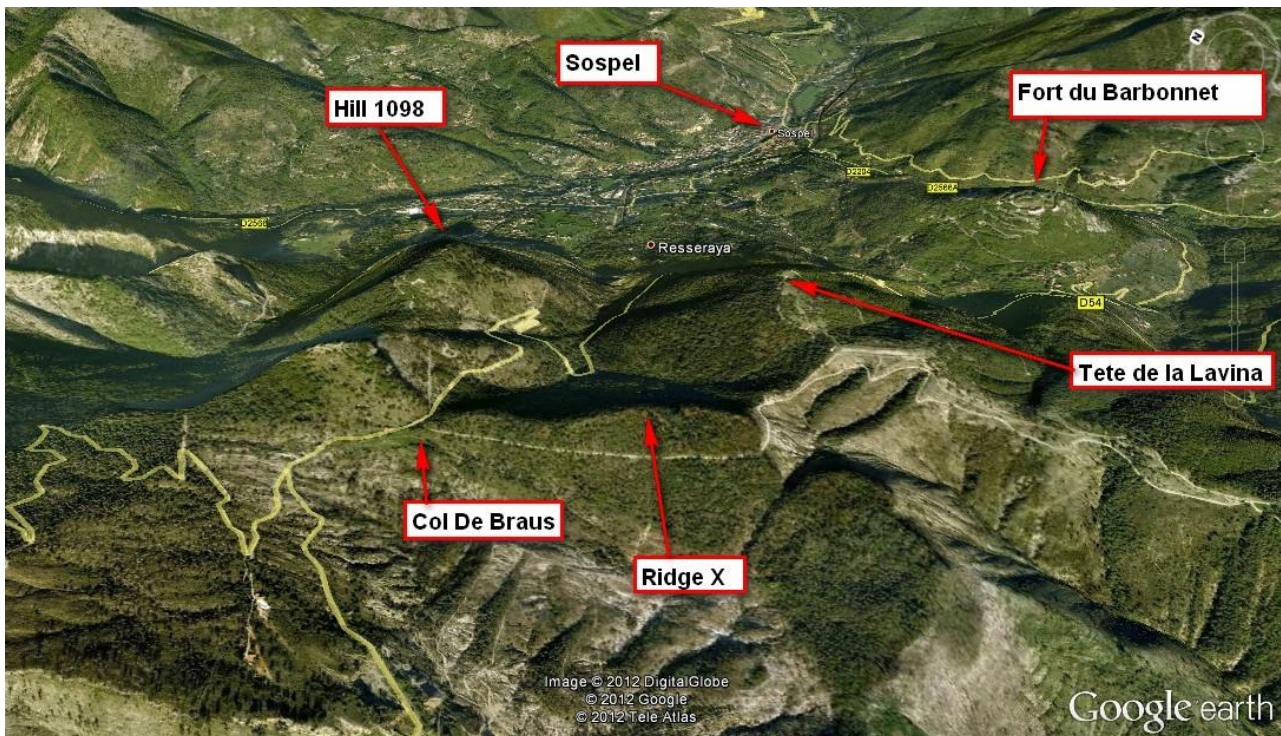
This photo gives a good impression of how savage the terrain in that area is. Sospel is visible in the background.

Jean-Loup Gassend



Jean-Loup,

Great pic. When I try to get orientated, I use Google earth. I like the 3D views you can get with it. Now with you help, I was able to recreate your photo. Both your live photo and mine are looking from west towards the southeast towards Sospel. – Bob B.





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J.Mickael & Bob,

J.Mickael, here are some additional photos as promised.

Bob, Dad also had a 517th ring – you can just make out the “Battling Buzzards” logo on the front. I hadn’t seen this anywhere else & thought you’d also might like the picture.

Regards,

Roger Sullivan

Son of **George Sullivan**, A Company



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 new Association Treasurer: Identify the purpose of any donation (Annual Dues, etc.) and make all checks payable to:

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