



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



MailCall No. 2095

February 26, 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

National Archives film: 517TH PIR, Logbierme, Belgium, 01/16/1945

Bill / Bob - You aren't going to believe it, but the film is on Youtube. Below is the link. Around 6:30 into the video, it shows, I presume, the 517th. At least, their boots are bloused like paratroopers did. I'm not sure if that's something all combat soldiers did, or if it was done to keep the snow out of their boots, or if, in fact, the video was of paratroopers. Some of the material I've seen shows 2nd battalion as being in the Logbierme area on that date. I hope someone will review and let us know which battalion was being filmed. Hope you guys enjoy it as much as I did! I do intend to follow up with the Archives and see if I can obtain a better quality copy.

Be well, **Mark Landreth**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SXJRf1czxs> (517 PIR starts at minute 6:30)

CAMOUFLAGING BIG GUNS, NEAR GRAND HALLEUX, BELGIUM ; SHELL BURSTS: GERMAN "K" BRIDGE, NEAR LAVAUX (?), BELGIUM ; **517TH PARACHUTE INFANTRY REGIMENT, LOGBIERNE (?), BELGIUM, 01/16/1945** ARC Identifier 16928 / Local Identifier 111-ADC-3125
Item from Record Group 111: Records of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer, 1860 -1985- Copied by Thomas Gideon





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v= SXJRf1czxs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SXJRf1czxs) (517 PIR starts at minute 6:30)

If anyone recognizes the places or people in the video, please let us know.

From morning reports, as described by **Nolan Powell, C Company**:

1/14 - 1/20/45 -Logbierme, Belgium. Left Stavelot early on the 14th attacked toward Logbierme, Belgium less than 10 km distance. In a two day battle in Logbierme, "C" Co had 5 paratroopers killed, William S. Spears one of the replacements that joined the outfit with your Uncle (Stephen R. Stepek), two other earlier replacements, and two others who had been with us since the outfits activation in Toccoa, Georgia in March of 1943. Seven paratroopers were wounded, including myself. I was in five Army hospitals from Jan 15 1945 to January 1946. Since I never returned to the outfit, the remainder of the events are from "C Co. Morning Reports. I assume your Uncle was with the 517th from January 8 to March 31, 1945, and maybe he was still with the 517th when the outfit returned to the U.S. in August of 1945.

June 2003: Belgian WW 2 survivors with Nolan Powell (tall one in the center) at Logbierme monument to the soldiers of 517th PRCT 'C' Company killed in action in Logbierme, Belgium.





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

MailCall News

I do enjoy Mail Call and you and your family are doing a great job in keeping it up.

I can imagine how pleased that **Phil McSpadden** found the license plate at a flea market. Isn't this kind of a miracle that a member of the 517th should find this for sale? I know exactly what the license plate looks like as I bought one for my husband **Leo Turco** at one of the reunions. He did not know it was for sale and was so happy to have it. It was on our front plate for years. I always was a little worried that someone might take it off but that never happened. Now I have it on display in my memory corner for Leo in my living room.

I also have had the great pleasure to be in close touch with our Friends in France, J.Mickel and Eric. They are running a history of Leo for their museum. I was able to send a few things for them since they had the flood. These young people are so respectful of the 517th Airborne. I feel lucky to have been with Leo from before the war. I really miss him but I am trying to keep his memory by helping with what I know about the history.

We also were able to attend three reunions in Europe so were able to see where he had been and to meet the wonderful people there who keep up the history.

Thanks for all the work you do and Phil, enjoy that license plate . I wonder how many are out there??

Best wishes to all,

Joyce Turco
widow of **Leo A Battery 460th**

To further the discussion about **Sgt Silas Brown** and the 3rd Bn, I asked Mr. Brown during one of the reunions, who took over the 81mm platoon after my Dad was hit by German mortar fire South of Stavelot, Belgium on January 13th, 1945. Mr. Brown said that he took over the platoon as a non-com. If I recall correctly, he remained a non-com until Joigny, when a replacement officer was assigned to lead the platoon. Possibly another reason for the hard feelings about the 13th AB Div.

Also, I asked about the role of my Dad's platoon during the Manhay attack by the 3rd Bn. Mr. Brown and Mr. Jim Royer (my Dad's aide) told me that the platoon acted like a rifle platoon and protected the left flank of the attack. This was due to the importance of the mission and needing every single man to retake Manhay, so all reserves were thrown into the fray. Also, the huge TOT bombardment as the attack kicked off, may have made the heavy mortars unnecessary.

Mr. **Howard Hensleigh** may be able to shed more light on the details of the battle plans for Manhay.

My best to all,

Tom Reber
son **Lt. Bob Reber**, HQ 3rd.



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Dear Bob,

about **Ray BUNCE** pictures.

Here a picture We took when we make the ceremonie to F co, **Gary Davis** ashes. We went up with Gary WWII picture, and as he was with Bunce he also have the same pic that Chris Bunce sent to you. So we look for the place and found the exact spot where the Pic was taken.. So definitively the pic she sent of the F co shraping wood was taken on the way up to 1098. near Col de Braus, sept.1944.

About the last one of the 4th troopers also definitively sure as we spend many good time at many reunion with him the second from the left is Alvin ADELMAN.

regards to you all
Airborne all Tha Way
J. Mickael and Eric,
" 15 Aout 1944" Airborne Museum Association
letter box 79
83490 LE MUY FRANCE
anvil-dragon@hotmail.com



Thanks so much for this info about my father! My nephews are very interested as well so I will be passing this along to them. Is Alvin Adelman in touch and if so, is there a way I could contact him or his family?

Christine Bunce

Christine,

Unfortunately **Alvin Adelman** died in 2003, and **Gary Davis** died in 2008. Both have family that are on the MailCall list, so let's see if they answer first.

Thanks to Mickael's input, I realized that we have a couple more pictures of F Company in that area, including Bunce and Davis, on George Spear's page:
<http://www.517prct.org/photos/spears.htm>

Bob Barrett





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Subject: C-17 Airdrop: 4 humvees and 50 paratroopers (NJ-G)

A lot of editing but worth a look

Phil McSpadden




[C-17 Airdrop: 4 humvees and 50 paratroopers. \[VIDEO\]](#)

A veteran is someone who, at one point in his life wrote a blank check payable to "The United States of America" for an amount "up to and including his life."

That is honor, there are too many people in this country who no longer understand this. Check out the attachment.

"God Bless Our Veterans"

Katherine Kramer Wheeler



A boy went to war in 1914 and left his bike chained to a small tree. He never made it home, and his family left the bike by the tree in his memory. This is that tree today.

SHARE

this if it's one of the best monuments to our fallen soldiers that you have ever seen.

Some time back I offered my services to aid in the work underway on the Casualty Reports as I was interested, particularly, in those reports dealing with the Service unit as my father in law was in that group and his first wound was reported in the single posted copy. As there was no response to my offer, I will now make the suggestion that perhaps the Google organization could be of assistance in copying the material for computer use. Presumably that would enable the entries to be enlarged for viewing on a computer and therefore readily available to be used by those preparing their presentation and those interested in the records.

I would be surprised if Google did not see the merit of completing these reports rapidly.

Harris Johnson



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

John McCain and the Pledge of Allegiance

I'm sure I have sent this along before, but I'm proud to send it again. It makes me angry to see a sporting event, where extremely high paid athletes stand around, chewing gum, talking to someone and not delivering the proper salute when the National Anthem is played. The same sense of outrage is in me when I see the Flag approaching in a parade, and people sit and watch, drink their beer and act as if nothing important is happening. On more than one occasion, I have let out a yell that would wake the dead "ON YOUR FEET AND SALUTE OUR FLAG, YOU DUMB S**TS!! Believe me, I got their attention and lots of chairs fell over!!

phil

In light of the recent appeals court ruling in California, with respect to the Pledge of Allegiance, the following recollection from Senator John McCain is very appropriate:

"The Pledge of Allegiance" - by Senator John McCain

As you may know, I spent five and one half years as a prisoner of war during the Vietnam War. In the early years of our imprisonment, the NVA kept us in solitary confinement or two or three to a cell. In 1971 the NVA moved us from these conditions of isolation into large rooms with as many as 30 to 40 men to a room.

This was, as you can imagine, a wonderful change and was a direct result of the efforts of millions of Americans on behalf of a few hundred POWs 10,000 miles from home.

One of the men who moved into my room was a young man named Mike Christian.

Mike came from a small town near Selma , Alabama . He didn't wear a pair of shoes until he was 13 years old. At 17, he enlisted in the US Navy. He later earned a commission by going to Officer Training School . Then he became a Naval Flight Officer and was shot down and captured in 1967. Mike had a keen and deep appreciation of the opportunities this country and our military provide for people who want to work and want to succeed.

As part of the change in treatment, the Vietnamese allowed some prisoners to receive packages from home. In some of these packages were handkerchiefs, scarves and other items of clothing.

Mike got himself a bamboo needle. Over a period of a couple of months, he created an American flag and sewed on the inside of his shirt.

Every afternoon, before we had a bowl of soup, we would hang Mike's shirt on the wall of the cell and say the Pledge of Allegiance.

I know the Pledge of Allegiance may not seem the most important part of our day now, but I can assure you that in that stark cell it was indeed the most important and meaningful event.

One day the Vietnamese searched our cell, as they did periodically, and discovered Mike's shirt with the flag sewn inside, and removed it.

That evening they returned, opened the door of the cell, and for the benefit of all of us, beat Mike Christian



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

severely for the next couple of hours. Then, they opened the door of the cell and threw him in. We cleaned him up as well as we could.

The cell in which we lived had a concrete slab in the middle on which we slept. Four naked light bulbs hung in each corner of the room.

As I said, we tried to clean up Mike as well as we could. After the excitement died down, I looked in the corner of the room, and sitting there beneath that dim light bulb with a piece of red cloth, another shirt and his bamboo needle, was my friend, Mike Christian. He was sitting there with his eyes almost shut from the beating he had received, making another American flag. He was not making the flag because it made Mike Christian feel better. He was making that flag because he knew how important it was to us to be able to Pledge our allegiance to our flag and country.

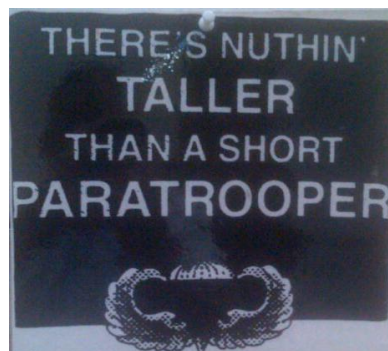
So the next time you say the Pledge of Allegiance, you must never forget the sacrifice and courage that thousands of Americans have made to build our nation and promote freedom around the world. You must remember our duty, our honor, and our country.

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Notes: Before turning to a political career which has included representing the state of Arizona for two terms in the House and four terms in the Senate, John McCain was a United States Naval Academy graduate who served as a naval aviator for twenty-two years and spent five and a half years as a prisoner of war after being shot down over Vietnam in 1967. Senator McCain rose to national prominence during his bid for the 2000 Republican presidential nomination, ultimately losing out to Governor George W. Bush of Texas.

Senator McCain delivered versions of the anecdote quoted above, the tale of Mike Christian, a Navy navigator who had been shot down in Vietnam six months before McCain and who used a bamboo needle and scraps of colored cloth to sew an American flag inside his shirt several times at speeches given along the campaign trail during 1999-2000, often bringing large crowds to a hush with his story of one prisoner's patriotism. McCain also related this tale in the History Channel's "Prisoners of War: Code of Conduct" series.

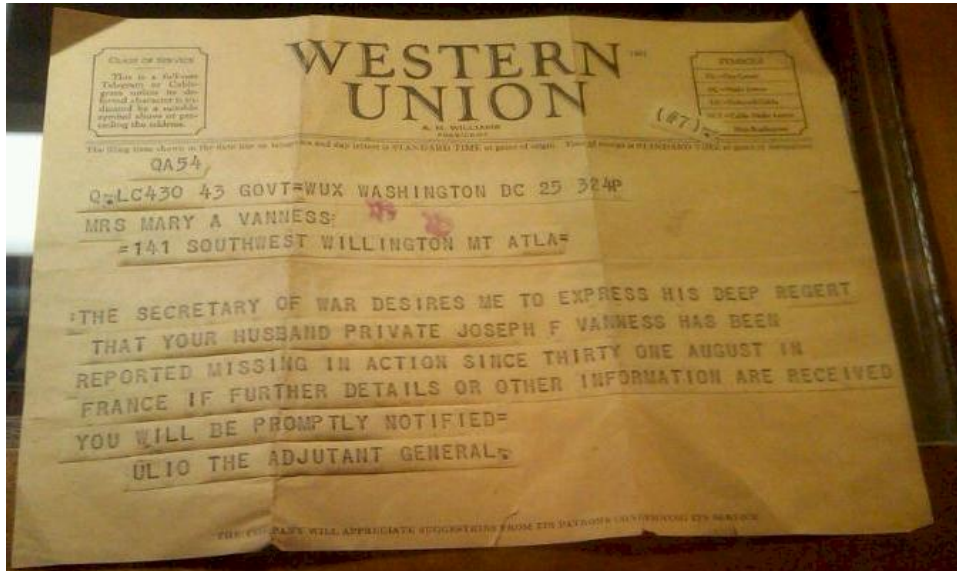
This sign was found at the Toccoa museum:





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Also at the Toccoa Museum:



MIA telegram to the wife of Pvt. Joseph F. Van Ness, B Company (KIA in France)

This is a photo of the Battle of the Bulge memorial at Arlington National Cemetery.



**FROM THE GRATEFUL PEOPLE OF
THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM AND THE GRANDDUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG**



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

To: Bob Barrett: Please repeat the West Coast Mini Info and Registration Instructions for the Palm Springs Bash.

Thanks **Lee Hekkala**

Reunion Info

Hi Bob -

Has everyone started making plans and reservations for Palm Springs and Kansas City?

Lory just received a call from **Mimsey**, I believe, who reported that she is pretty sure that she's just made the first reservation at the Kansas City hotel. I am guilty of not having registered yet as well, but I did get my flights.

Make your plans now. Lory has worked so hard and we are going to have so much fun! We will even be treated to an advance screening of the new movie featuring the 517th, featuring real people portrayed along with some fictitious events. Lory mentioned that there was a French love interest, to which I thought that it might not be all that fictitious....

And **Karen** and **Robin** have been hard at work (though I haven't talked to them, I know Karen and Robin and I know for a fact that they've been hard at work) on the Palm Springs reunion in a new hotel this year.

Come meet old friends and make new ones! Reunion season has started!

Claire Giblin

West Coast Mini-Reunion

Palm Springs, CA

May 14-18, 2012

[Information and registration instructions](#)

Annual National Reunion

Kansas City, MO

July 12-16, 2012

[Program](#)

[Registration Form](#)

[Hotel Registration Form](#)



517th 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.
- 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



Anonymous; "If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is definitely not for you."