



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2199

February 2, 2014

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

Website
Send Mail Call news to
Mail Call Archives
2013 Roster (updated!)
Thunderbolt (Spring 2013)

www.517prct.org
MailCall@517prct.org
www.517prct.org/archives
www.517prct.org/roster.pdf
www.517prct.org/archives

MailCall News

Lory Curtis: where did those beautiful jackets come from that **Mike Wells** has on? Love them.

I will be bringing my dad's ashes back to France for the 70th to be scattered. I wanted to tell everyone what a beautiful Veterans home is in Southern Utah, in Ivins. They are incredible. The facility is like a resort. The vets are treated like kings, as they should be. Dad wanted to be at home but his safety was at risk, as he liked to wander at night. I placed him there on Friday and he passed the following Tuesday. I wished he had more time with them and us, but he was tired. Now he is at peace.

Kathy McIntosh

Saw the email from SGM Zadra. **Bill Myers** was one of my father's good friends. I last spoke with him in 2009 while gathering information for the chronology I've been working on. Bill, at that time, was living in Indiana. I'm not sure if he's still with us, but I'm sure he'd be tickled to know his uniform is in the hands of SGM Zadra. Hope all is well with you, mark

Mark Landreth

I forgot to mention Bill (while he may have been wounded during the Battle of the Bulge) was evacuated because of a terrible case of frost bite. They thought he was going to lose both feet. mark

Mark Landreth



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Hi Friends,

I just cross this lovely Story want to share it.

my very Best

J. Mickael

This story is confirmed in Elmer Bendiner's book, "*The Fall of Fortresses*". Sometimes, it's not really just luck.

Elmer Bendiner was a navigator in a B-17 during WW II. He tells this story of a World War II bombing run over Kassel, Germany, and the unexpected result of a direct hit on their gas tanks.

Our B-17, the Tondelayo, was barraged by flak from Nazi antiaircraft guns. That was typical, but on this particular occasion our gas tanks were hit. Later, as I reflected on the miracle of a 20 millimeter shell piercing the fuel tank without touching off an explosion, our pilot, Bohn Fawkes, told me it was more complicated.

On the morning following the raid, Bohn asked our crew chief for that shell as a souvenir of unbelievable luck. The crew chief told Bohn that, in addition to that shell, another 11 were found in the gas tanks. Eleven unexploded shells where only one was sufficient to blast us out of the sky. It was as if the sea had parted for us. A near-miracle, I thought. Even after 35 years, this awesome event leaves me shaken, especially after I heard the rest of the story from Bohn.

He was told that the shells were sent to the armorers to be defused. The armorers told him that Intelligence had picked them up. They couldn't say why at the time, but Bohn eventually sought out the answer.

Apparently when the armorers opened each of those shells, they found no explosive charge. They were clean as a whistle and just as harmless. Empty? Not all of them! One contained a carefully rolled piece of paper with a scrawled message in Czech. The Intelligence people scoured our base for a man who could read Czech. Eventually they found one to decipher the note. It was amazing!

Translated, the note read: "This is all we can do for you now. Using Jewish slave labor is never a good idea."



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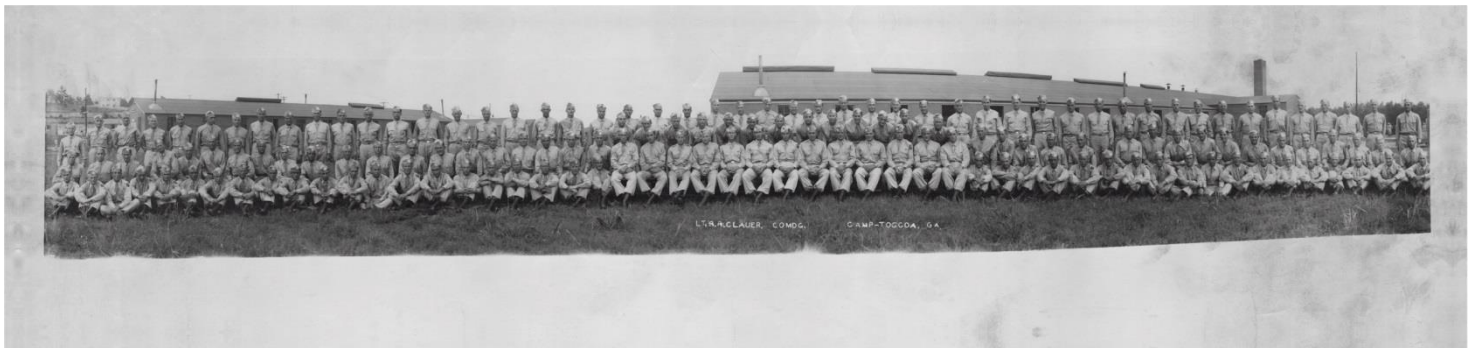
From: Kelly Coghan Holderbaum
Sent: Sunday, January 26, 2014 3:31 PM
To: Don Gentry; MailCall

Hi Don & All!

My Uncle John found a photo from Camp Toccoa, GA. We think we have identified my Grandfather, **John S. Hopkins** as the young man in the second row, second from the left. Can you give us any more insight into the photo? My Grandpa John enlisted in April 1943. Thanks so much and Enjoy!



Kelly Coghan Holderbaum



HQ Co, 2nd Battalion at Camp Toccoa, 1944
See full-size version at: [HQ Company, 2nd Battalion at Camp Toccoa](#)

On Sun, Apr 14, 2013 at 3:17 PM, DGentry509 wrote:

Hi Floyd and Sharon, I sent a note to Kelly about a spam message in my email and she said communications has dropped off a bit for all of us. That is true and I'm glad the spam got to me since I want you to know I think of you but had to ask Kelly your name. Shame on me and only in my 73rd Spring allergy season.

Cousin in law **Richard Baysinger** and his wife Vivian divorced and he moved to Idaho and not a word from him since. We managed to get to three 517th reunions. It was sure fun while it lasted. She has passed recently and we will have a memorial for her in June when our 'snow birds' return to the Northwest.

Here is Kelly's blog site and she is writing about her grandpa and his service as a paratrooper. <http://sunnyancestry.com> I'm honored that she mentioned us. Made my day.

Wondering how you are and if your still making wine and great hamburgers.

Don Gentry
East Wenatchee



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Here are a couple of clippings from Kelly's blog at: www.sunnyancestry.com :

[Army Records ~ Remember to evaluate all sources!](#)

by sunnyancestry

As many of you are aware, there was a fire in 1973 that destroyed “approximately 18 million service members’ records at the National Personnel Records Center”^[1]. Among those records were those of my Grandfather, John S. Hopkins. There is always more than one side to the story, though, I remember my Grandpa saying that when they were flying home, one plane had men and the other plan had war records. The plane with the war records went down and they made it home. I’ll leave it up to you to decide which story you like better.

Despite the tragic losses, we do have my Grandpa John’s Discharge papers, which is more information than the Army had on him. But, while reading through them, there were some issues. He always said he was in the 517th PIR Division and we had postcards with that return address. The Discharge papers had 531st PIR & 513th PIR on them. So after diligent research with my Uncle, we discovered yes, there was a 517th PIR and a 513th PIR but there was no 531st PIR! With the help of Don Gentry from the 517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team Association, we petitioned the Department of the Army and the Board for Correction of Military Records for my Grandpa’s record to be corrected and his metals to be awarded.

Because we were able to provide John’s certificate of death, Enlistment Record & Report of Separation, as well as records from the World War II Prisoners of War, Record Group 389, we were granted a review of our case. The board reviewed our case and made the corrections to John’s record, awarded additional medals that were due and gave us a wonderful historical record of the 17th Airborne Division.

We were then able to re-assemble my Grandpa’s uniform jacket with his medals for the family.

Kelly



[Why did he move?](#)

by sunnyancestry

Sometime before or during the Tennessee Maneuvers in March of 1944 Hopkins was moved from the 517th to the 513th PIR. We are not sure exactly why or when he was moved, but one story we have heard from several sources was that Hopkins was in a fight with a guy. When he swung, he missed and punched a wall which broke his wrist. He later claimed, and had guys back his story, that he had fallen roller skating so he would not get into trouble over the incident.

One other clue we have for Hopkin’s broken wrist is from a letter that Ruby saved from her brother Guy D. Rogers who was also serving in the war. He says “...I’m sorry to hear that Johnny, having his wrist broke...” Guy’s letter was dated 15 June 1944. Ruby must have written to her brother about what ever happened to Hopkins.



Cpl. John S. Hopkins



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2014 Memorial Day Ceremony at Rhone American Cemetery
Scheduled for: Sunday, May 25, 2014, 10:00am



The Franco-American Society
of Draguignan, France

Since 1968, The Franco-American Society has honored the memory of 860 American service members who sacrificed their lives for liberty and forever rest in Provençal ground at the Rhone American Cemetery in the heart of the City of Draguignan, France.

A SACRED MISSION

Since 1968, every year during the Memorial Day ceremony held at the Rhone American Cemetery, family members of one fallen American hero are invited and received by the Franco-American Society in partnership with the Mayor of the City of Draguignan, to pay homage at the tomb of a father, a brother, an uncle...who fell for liberty in World War II.

For over 40 years, next-of-kin have been invited by the Franco-American Society members, in partnership with the Mayor of the City of Draguignan, to pay homage at the Memorial Day ceremony held at the Rhone American Cemetery.

General Information

If you would like more information about the Society or to learn how to submit your candidacy for consideration, please email us at FrancoAmericanSociety@aol.com .

Website: <http://draguignansfa.jimdo.com/>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/FrancoAmericanSociety>



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Le soleil est revenu sur Sospel ! [*The sun has returned to Sospel !*]

(Patricia Orengo reporting)

4 nouvelles photos de membres la 517th Pathfinder Team ont été trouvées !

Il s'agit des :

S/Sgt. James "Jim" Kitchen - George Co.
Sgt. George W. "Jack" Dunaway - Baker Co
1st Lt. Robert B. Fuller - Item Co.
Ralph E. Hood - Dog Co.



S/Sgt. James "Jim" Kitchen
(George Co.)



Sgt. George W. "Jack" Dunaway
(Baker Co.)



1st Lt. Robert B. Fuller
(Item Co.)



Ralph E. Hood
(Dog Co.)

Visible en bas de page !

<http://1stabtf.com/drop-zone/Pathfinder-Serial-2.htm>

In Memorium – Chester Eugene Kayton, E Company

I am saddened to say that my grandpa (**Chester E. Kayton**) has just passed away can you please stop sending these emails.

Millie Ethridge

Chester Eugene Kayton

February 24, 1921 - December 27, 2013
Grand Junction, CO



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New Delivery Method for MailCalls

Thanks all for your patience with the new email delivery messages. The MailChimp service appears to be working and providing me with additional information. For example, I found out that 8 of the 346 recipients' emails bounced due to invalid email addresses, so they have been removed from the list. The removed names include:

Orville Downey
Kelly Edwards
Dannie Perry
Bill Elliot

Carol Laporte
Tom Peeters
Heather Riley
Donald Spears (Deceased)

If you know the contact information for any of these people, and know that they still want to receive MailCall or the Thunderbolt, let me know.

Bob Barrett

More MailCall News

Bob: the delivery system works beautifully. Very clever and resourceful of you. Another super fine MailCall. Love the historical bits and pieces you find. You are an amazing detective. But my favorite part was seeing the photos from the mini-reunion. Thank you for sharing the pictures. You, Helen, Claire, Nancy, Babbie and our 8 "guys" made our day. Thank you.

Love to all.

Pat Seitz and Alan Greer

PS Patricia's picture from Sospel was the kind that makes you sit up and take notice. Hope everyone is well there. Hope the winter hasn't be too rough on our Belgian friends as well.

RE: Invitation to view "517th Parachute Infantry Regiment - Group" photographs

I like the new format. It looks better and is easier to read on my computer screen. **Lory Curtis** was here in West Chester Ohio to visit his son and I was also on the list. It was great seeing him and talking about the 517th. Sorry we aren't having a National reunion...I hope to be able to join all in France but I know it will be expensive and I'm not sure I can swing it. We'll see what happens. Stay healthy people!

Rick Sweet



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

More Pics from Kissimmee

From **Claire Giblin**:





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More MailCall News



Bob I hope this can make it in today's mailcall. This past week my wife and I visited our son and his family in the Cincinnati area (where it was 20 below zero with the wind chill factor). Living in this area is our own son of a 517th trooper, **Rick Sweet**. Rick is the son of **Odas Sweet**, H Company. Rick and I had a very good visit and of course talked about the 517th. As most of you know Rick was in a very serious motorcycle accident this past summer and I am pleased to report Rick is doing well. While Rick was recovering from his injuries a friend of his made him a large 517th Battling Buzzard sign, that Rick has proudly

displayed in his music room. It sure was good to see Rick and know he is on the mend.

Lory Curtis, son of **Bud Curtis**, HQ, 1st BN





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[J Rossi - A Moment In Time](#)

[View Photos »](#)

517th Parachute Infantry Regiment - Group

[View Photos »](#)

Hi Bob

We've met a couple times at reunions. My name is **Jess Rossi** - middle son of **George L. Ross** F Company 2nd Platoon, 2nd Squad. I've been meaning to get these pictures out to share with everyone for quite some time.

I just finished setting up my 517th Photo collections on a new site and I would like to share them with anyone who wants copies. Even though this is a professional site for selling my photographs (first time) I don't intend to sell these photos of the 517th. They're really not mine to sell. They really belong to members of the 517th and their family and friends.

I'm hoping I set the site up so that folks can copy the images to their computer at no cost. On the other hand if anyone does want to order hard copies they can do that right from the sight. I won't make a cent on their purchase; I'm just passing it on at the sites set base price for the service.

I took the time to scan each of the black and whites and then cropped them and labeled them based on what was on the back of each of the photographs. The photos are from my dad's collection so, most of these photo center around F Company and many are of the 2nd Platoon and further down to the 2nd Squad.

I hope this all works out for everyone

-Jess Rossi

Enjoy,

J Rossi - A Moment In Time

<http://jessrossi.zenfolio.com/group>



Quick links to Jesse's photos:

[2011 Atlanta photos](#)

[2012 Kansas City photos](#)

[1944 F Company photos](#) (over 200 photos)



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Hi Jess,

Yes, I do remember you from the reunions. It was at one of the recent reunions that I finally figured out that you were son of **George L. Ross** (F Co.), and not related to **Scott and Deana Ross**, also at the same reunion, who are related to **Norman Ross** (I Co.)

Those are great pictures of the reunion. And I would like to use your Dad's wartime photos on the website. Is that OK? One more question: On our mailing lists, I currently have you on the MailCall list, and Teresa should be getting the Thunderbolt delivered to her. But we have 2 George Ross's on the roster. One is your Dad, George L. Ross (deceased), and the other is just listed as George Ross who is still being emailed MailCall at geokatll@aol.com. Is that by chance an old email address for your father that should be deleted?

Bob Barrett

[George L. Ross' F Company photos](#) have also now been posted on the 517th website. It includes 200 pictures, including photos of **Gary Davis, Gene Frice, Don Spears, John Jonientz, Ray Hess, Ernie Gilbert, Alvin Adelman, Mel Dahlberg, Merle Traver, John Terrill, John Lissner, and Dick Seitz.**

I'd like to hear **Gene Frice's** explanation of the photo, "Frice after fight with Walton" – BB



As long as we're looking at reunion pictures, I have a very personal request for anyone on MailCall: At each of the last couple of reunions, I tried to get a picture of me (Bob Barrett) taken with **Dick Seitz** at the banquets. But the picture from my cell phone never came out very well. In Kansas City 2012, someone with a good camera stopped by and took a photo for me. But I forgot who that was, so I do not have any good photos of me with my friend, the General. Might someone on the MailCall list be able to find that photo?

Bob Barrett

Thanks for getting me back on e-mail. The mini was great as usual.
Babbie Boyle

Hi Babbie,

So glad to have you back. You probably have not been aware, but I've been sending out 2 copies of email to you each week -- the normal email, and a separate copy individually addressed to you and Bettie Travers, who has been having the same delivery problems. I hope that this new method works more reliably. So far so good. It does have some tools that let me know who has received and opened the MailCalls, so I will keep an eye out for people who might not be receiving them. More pictures of the Kissimmee reunion in next week's MailCall.

Bob Barrett



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I have some propaganda that was fired at us. Sample included. Have I sent this to you before?

Merle McMorrow

The sample I sent just now is what we sent to the Germans.

BB: Here is a partial translation:

*In the West:
After Rundstedt offensive despair
Storm on the West Wall
Almost 900 000 German prisoners since the invasion
Anglo-American air offensive
from the Western Wall to the Eastern Front*

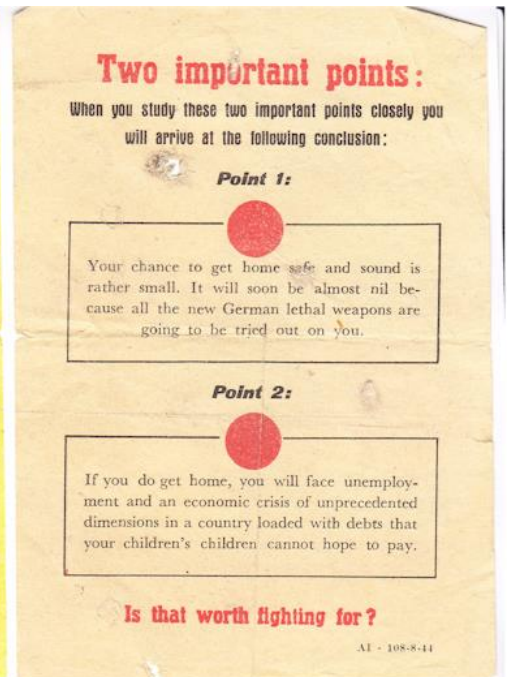
*In the East:
Silesia(?), the "Ruhr of the East" lost,
Threatened Saxon industrial area
East Prussia overrun
Zhukov's (?) armies against Berlin*



Merle, I have to say that the propaganda received from the Germans was more creative. See the sample below sent in from **Roger Sullivan** for MailCall #2178 (2011) -- BB

I've also enclosed an interesting piece of Nazi war propaganda targeting our troops. It's a front & back scan.

Roger Sullivan





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This is the most interesting video I have ever received and forwarded....You will enjoy it!

Phil McSpadden

You will enjoy this "Lady Astonaut" explaining all the things about our space craft.

I had no idea as to what the Space Station looks like. Now I do and it is very impressive.

This is something worthwhile. Forward this to your family and friends. Don't forget your children and grandchildren. Enjoy-



Click here: [Departing Space Station Commander Provides Tour of Orbital Laboratory - YouTube](#)



Coming soon. See the preview:

<http://www.dday-normandy1944.com>

Recent Website Additions

[200 photos of Sgt. George L. Ross and F Company](#)

[HQ Company, 2nd Battalion at Camp Toccoa](#)

[Sgt. Robert J. Miller, I Company \(KIA\)](#)

[B Company at La Colle Sur Loup](#)

[Sospel 1944 and 2013](#)

[A Veteran's Remembrance - World War II Survivor](#) by **John A. Alicki**



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This Week in 517th History - February 1945

From [Milton Roger's Biography](http://517prct.org/bios/milton_d_rogers.htm), "How I Saw it" http://517prct.org/bios/milton_d_rogers.htm

[S/Sgt. Rogers was with C Battery, 460th, working with the 3rd Battalion]

"After a few more days we crossed into Germany. The Battle of the Bulge was declared over, but it was still cold and we were still in action. The liaison officer, the go-between of the artillery and infantry, took me with him to an officer's call. He was **Capt. Woodhall**, a great guy who had always been more than fair to me.

The 3rd battalion commander, a lieutenant colonel from Flagstaff AZ, almost a neighbor, was holding the meeting. I was the only enlisted man there. The colonel had a map and was drawing on it with a marker, just like in the movies. There was a small town at the edge of the Hurtgen forest, which we had fought on our way there, and an open field on the other side. The field had land mines planted in it. Across the field was a hill. Down a steep bank on the other side of the hill was a small river. Our job was to cross the minefield, take the hill, go down to and cross the river, and take and hold the high ground on the far side of the river. Our engineers would crawl through the field, probe for mines, and tape a trail. If we stayed on the trail, we wouldn't step on a mine.

Capt. Woodhall said, "Colonel, we'll all be killed." The colonel said, "I know it," and went on explaining what we were to do. Well, that night it was dark and cold. It was cloudy and spitting a little snow and sleet. We got quite a way out into the field, and guess what? We were expected.

The Boche [German enemies] had moved to the edge of the woods across the field and off to the left. They had rocket launchers and machine guns. They would shoot a flare up that made it bright as day, and we would stay motionless while the flare was in the air. When it went out we'd drop to the ground and the machine guns would rake the field. This went on I don't know how long, until even the brain who plotted this strategy gave up, and we pulled back out. They then did what they should have done first. They plastered the woods where the Boche were with artillery, and we went across in daylight.

I company with **Capt. James Birder** commanding had, as usual, been heading the night march. They had crossed the field, climbed the hill, and gotten down to the river. When it got light they found they were there by themselves, except for a bunch of Boche paratroopers who had come from the town of Schmidt, across the river.

I would normally have been with I company, but for some reason they had kept us, I think 9 men, in a bunch. There were **Capt. Woodhall**, **Lt. Disutto**, **1st Sgt. Whitson**, **S/Sgt. Westbrook**, me, **Sgt. Corbett**, **T4 Kolzinski**, **Cpl. Washburn** and **T5 Moore**, whose army name was Frog Eye. We got up on that hill, and the captain left me, Westbrook, Corbett and Kolzinski, who was my radio man. The captain, lieutenant, 1st sergeant, Washburn and Frog Eye went to another vantage point.

There was a Boche with a machine pistol across from where my bunch were, and he kept shooting. He must have been almost out of range, because he was more of a nuisance than a threat. There were mortar shells coming up out of the gully, and rifle fire. **Sgt. Westbrook** never did want to be an observer up with the infantry; I don't know why they sent him. He knew the work, had been the sergeant over me most of the time I'd been in the army, and had taught me a lot of the trade. He had a bad cold, and it wasn't going to get any better, so he said that if I didn't mind, he'd go on back. They never had bothered to say whether he was in charge of me, so I was glad to see him go. If I was going to get killed, I'd do it my way.



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Capt. Birder and I company fought their way back up the hill. They all got back, which was almost impossible, but they had quite a few wounded. We were short-handed in the infantry anyway, going into battle with 90 men to the company instead of 130, I think it was. When **Capt. Birder** got back up with his men, he flopped down to rest and lit right on a small land mine. I saw them taking him out on a stretcher and could tell that if he wasn't dead, he soon would be. I was told later that he died before they got him on the ambulance.

About then our machine gunner from over the gully got a hit on **Sgt. Corbett**. He was hit in the leg and broke a bone. I gave him a shot of morphine and wrapped a bandage around the wound, but couldn't get him out. We were getting blasted pretty good. The litter bearers finally got Corbett out, and I never saw nor heard of him again.

One of the infantry guys said he saw some Boche in the edge of the woods across the gully. I couldn't see them, mostly because they weren't there, but called the fire in and raked the hillside to shut him up. I did get that pesky machine pistol-- he quit firing anyway.

Pretty soon here came **Frog Eye Moore**. He had a cut across his cheek bleeding pretty good, and was holding a knit cap-- like we wore under our helmets-- up to his face to stop the bleeding. I asked, "Where's **Washburn**?" He said, "He's dead. They're all dead but me." I pointed him in the right direction and sent him on his way. I told **Kolzinski** that if I lived I'd have to go see **Washburn** so I could tell his mother just what happened.

After a little while here came **Lt. Disutto**. He was carrying a radio battery, for reasons known only to him. He said, "My radio was hit by a shell and ruined, so I brought you this battery." As far as I know, the battery sits right where he put it down-- it didn't fit my radio. I asked, "Where's **Washburn**?" He said, "He's dead. They're all dead but me, and I'm wounded." He was plinked by shell frag, a small spot on each of his buns. I told him that **Moore** had already come out, and sent him on his way.

A while later, here came **Lark Washburn**, carrying **Sgt. Whitson** on his back. About that time the Boche came in with the mortars and Lark said, "I'll have to put you down, Sarge." Whitson said, "Oh, that's OK, Slim." He was high as a kite on morphine-- some people it works that way on. I asked Whitson, "What did you think you were trying to do?" and he answered, "Well, Blaze, I just didn't have the right attitude."

(I had been in a hole under a little piece of a house, trying to sleep beside a charcoal stove. I had dozed off and fallen against the stove, setting my coat on fire-- not flaming, just smoldering. I woke up and thought I had beat the fire out, but while I dozed again it started smoldering again. I woke up again, how I don't know, and this time got the fire put out. Whitson named me Blaze after the fire. The attitude bit was because he had heard the officers say that I didn't get a commission because I didn't have the right attitude. I ran into that same problem during my time in good old San Juan High School).

Lark went back to the aid station with Whitson and saw him on the meat wagon headed for the hospital. Then Lark went back to the gun position because his group was out of business. He was the only able-bodied one left. **Captain Woodhall** had been killed.

This left **Kolzinski** and me as the only artillery men left. After dark the infantry pulled off to get ammunition and wait for morning. Kolzinski and I came off the hill also, and slipped into the first aid tent. I needed to see if Washburn and Whitson had made it all right, and they had. It was warm in the aid station and rush had finished, so we stayed there.

The only patient that came in while we were there had got a sniper bullet that had taken two knuckles out of his hand, leaving his middle and ring fingers still attached, held on by the bottom skin and a little flesh.



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I knew the guy, name of **Tryon**. He was from Oklahoma and had been a friend of **Phil Kennamer**, my ex-con buddy. The Okies seemed to hang together like the Utahns, but there were a lot more Okies.

This Tryon kid was a mean, tough little cuss, but the wound, the cold, and the lack of sleep had gotten to him. He was going into shock. The medics got him lying down, covered him up, and went to work. One of them started asking questions while another gave him a morphine shot, then disinfected and covered the wound. He-- the Okie-- got to talking and came out of the shock, and by about half an hour after he came in, he was in an ambulance headed for the hospital. It didn't make me want to get shot, but I did have a lot of confidence in those front-line medics. They hung in with the best, and did a great job. I knew if I got wounded I'd be in good hands.

The next morning the infantry didn't go back up the hill, so we didn't have to go either. We were waiting for orders. I was standing by a rock wall about when I should have been down behind it. I was talking to one of the infantry men named **Bundy**. I remember he was from Denver CO. Whang came a rifle bullet from a sniper; it hit the wall and ricocheted off. It knocked off a little piece of rock that hit me in the cheek. I reached up and found it had given me a tiny scratch. I turned to show it to Bundy, and the bullet had hit him square in the forehead just above his eyebrows. The medics came running, but I could tell it was no use. He died real quick-- I don't think he felt a thing.

After a while, here came a jeep from the 460th. It was **Major Lantz** from battalion HQ. He said, "We need to go up on that hill and get those mortars out of action." I told him, "Those mortars are down in a deep ravine, and our shells can't clear the ridge and drop fast enough to reach them. We shoot over them." He said, "It's got to be done." I answered, "I've carried that radio up and down that hill for three days, and I can do it again." He promised, "If we go again I'll carry it for you." An obvious lie.

I said, "We can't go up until the infantry does." He asked, "Aren't they up there?" I replied, "No, or we would be." "When are they going?" I said, "Who's going to tell me? I'll have to wait until they start to move out." He said, "I'll talk to the officers." He came back in a few minutes and said we were being relieved, and that a regiment from the 82nd was moving in. Sure enough, here they came.

I found out since I've lived in this area (Missouri) that the whole mess we had been in was a planned thing. They taught at the command school in Leavenworth about how to do it, and one of the battles they studied was the battle of Schmidt. We were the bait to draw that parachute outfit of the Boche out to fight us so somebody else could sneak in and take the town. (I haven't quit fishing, but I've always felt a little more kindly towards the bait since learning this). The major sent Kolzinski and me back to the gun positions. I didn't know it, but I had fought my last battle.

I sat down in a couple of days and wrote up a citation for **Lark Washburn**, and also one for **Stanley Kolzinski**, for Bronze Star citations. I felt they rated the medals, and have seen medals given for less. I couldn't sign the recommendations-- that took an officer, not a sergeant. After a couple of weeks-- we were back in France by then-- I got a call to report to **Major Lantz** at battalion. Down I went, no choice. He said they had sent in the recommendation for Kolzinski but not for Washburn. The officers had ruled that Washburn should have stayed there. That was stupid beyond measure, but often it is the army way.

I was furious. An attitude problem, I suppose. For some reason I've never figured out, Major Lantz handed back the recommendation for Washburn. I took it and left. I knew if I went back to the battery, I'd probably revile an officer and wind up in serious trouble, so I went over to I company to visit. I was mad, and making no secret of it.

There was a [Lt. Carpenter](#) from Arkadelphia AR who had been the 1st sergeant of I company and had been field commissioned. He used to come sometimes to hang out with his old friends. He said, "Sarge



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Rog, what are you so mad about?" I told him. He said, "Is Washburn the tall, white-headed guy you sometimes had in your party?" I told him yes. He said, "Let me see the paper." I handed it to him; he looked at it and put it in his pocket.

About the time we started home from Europe, Washburn got his Bronze Star. It turned out that all the men who got wounded got not only a purple heart but also a Bronze Star, except for **Capt. Woodhall**, who got a Silver Star. Since I got medals for **Washburn** and **Kolzinski**, I was the only artillery man in that particular fight that wasn't decorated. I didn't even care. I already had two decorations and they haven't made life any easier for me."

BB: For more info and analysis of the Battle, here is a paper from the Advanced Infantry Officer's Course at Fort Benning. The "Analysis and Criticism" section beginning on Page 20 is especially enlightening, after reading Milton Roger's first-hand account.

From: http://www.517prct.org/documents/infantry_school/GohmertRolandL_CPT.pdf

The shortage of logistical and fire support of airborne units will not be discussed as these inadequacies have since been rectified by new and adequate T/O & E's.

In the planning stage, it should have been considered that this unit had been either in the attack or in movement almost constantly since the 18th of December, in the worst kind of weather and had suffered severe casualties. Committing parachute units to prolonged ground combat indicated a lack of knowledge on the part of higher planners as to their organization. This was especially apparent in the fact that they were committed in the attack of heavily fortified positions. Had their limitations been realized and the necessary units attached to support the lightly armed rifle units, much greater success with far fewer casualties could have been attained.

Using the combat team on a diversionary mission from Bergstein, necessitated an attack with both flanks exposed. The enemy took full advantage of this situation with their fire from the south bank of the Kall. Had the attack been coordinated with another regiment on the right, with the boundary just to one side of the Kall or the other, it would have given one regiment a mine free corridor which would have left the prepared fortifications vulnerable to a night attack.

Neither time nor permission was available to the combat team for the extensive reconnaissance and patrolling which would have been necessary to insure at least some measure of success. Perhaps the shortage of time was unavoidable, but this could have been partially overcome had coordination been affected so as to have elements of the 8th Division in Bergstein accomplish some reconnaissance prior to the arrival of the combat team.



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Military Humor

Here is a drawing that I found on **Kelly Cohan Holderbaum's** blog site (www.sunnyancestry.com)

This drawing is signed "Monk, 2nd Bn, 517th". That has to be **William F. "Monk" Huffman, HQ/2**, the same person who drew all the battle maps in *Paratroopers' Odyssey*. I have seen some of his maps reproduced many times in various histories of Operation Dragoon and the Bulge. – BB



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 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



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

2014 West Coast Reunion

2013 517th PRCT PALM SPRINGS REUNION

**March 10-14, 2014
Palm Springs, California**

Anahata Retreat/Lodge Hot Mineral Springs Pool and Spa here we come!

This will be a reunion like no other!! We have reserved the entire resort for our use.

We will provide breakfast, lunch and dinner while you sit soaking your feet in the warm springs.

There will be options for each meal and snacks all day so you won't go hungry.



Rate: Rooms will run from 120.00 to 200.00 per person for the entire stay, not per night, including all taxes and resort fees. This fee will be based on how many sign ups we get.

Registration fee: \$ 100.00
Your registration fee will cover all meals at the resort including the banquet which will be at the lodge with a choice of chicken or steak.
We may leave the lodge for ribs, museum, follies or ??, which would be additional charge.

Please mail registration form (next page) as soon as possible to lock in rate.

Karen Wallace
66295 Highway 20
Bend, OR 97701
541 948 2486

Please join the Frice Team, (the gals), and our many friends for another great 517th event!

Questions? Karen 541 948 2486 or
Wayne 541 948 2484

Please confirm by March 1st.



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

2013 517th PCT PALM SPRINGS REUNION

Registration form

**March 10-14, 2014
Palm Springs, California**

Please provide the following information before March 1st:

Date and time of arrival: _____

(We will arrange transportation from airport and return if needed)

Names of participants:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Note: Extra person for banquet at \$20.00 per person

Any special activity you would like to do?

Please send this registration form and \$100.00 registration fee per person to:

Karen Wallace
66295 Hwy 20
Bend, OR 97701