



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2285

August 16, 2015

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

MailCall News



The National Geographic Channel was at Camp Toccoa to do some archeology, looking for historical artifacts for their show "The Diggers"

<http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/diggers/episodes/band-of-brothers/>

Next airing Fri Aug 14, 10 p.m. ET

Band of Brothers

The Diggers have traveled deep into the heart of Dixie, but they're not after Civil War nectar this go-round. They're digging for World War I and World War II artifacts from training camps and airfields in the South. The sites are all but lost to time, and KG and Ringy are fighting to preserve the history of "The Greatest Generation" and maybe find a buried World War I airplane!

[Brenda J Carlan](#): Yes, that is one of the segments of the show Monday night. Not sure how many segments, we are the last part of the show. They found several items and were very pleased with the search.



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Today is the 71st anniversary of the Jump the 517th made on Aug 15, 1944. My Dad sent a letter home to his mom about the jump. Here is the Top Secret letter from Colonel Graves to the men of the 517th and the letter my Dad sent home to his mother. This is what was said.

Thanks to all troopers for volunteering for the paratroops and making that jump.

Lory Curtis, proud son of **Bud Curtis**, HQ, 1st Bn

TOP SECRET

HEADQUARTERS 517TH PARACHUTE INFANTRY CT
APO 758, U. S. ARMY

11 August 1944

The following general considerations should be noted in the operation now being undertaken.

For most of us this is our first combat jump. Consequently some may be a little apprehensive. Remember that the advantage is with the attacker, as the enemy does not know exactly how or when he is going to be struck. Particularly in an airborne operation in which we land in his rear areas where his CP's, lines of communication and supply echelons are set-up, will our activities give him grave concern. The enemy consequently will be a lot more apprehensive than we are. That the enemy will react to our landing by movement of forces towards our area should be expected within a few hours. However by that time we expect to be pretty well set for him and deal out a lot of punishment. It must be remembered also that he will be engaged at many other points by other airborne units and the large scale attack by the amphibious landing. There can be no doubt of the success of this operation if we use our heads and keep our confidence, work quickly but smoothly and act aggressively using good tactics and security measures.

As it will be dark when we first land it will be difficult to see what is going on around us. Therefore, we must not start firing promiscuously at any thing that moves. You must be certain it is the enemy before you fire. After the first unit lands many of our men will be moving around the area, some already in assembly or moving to assembly positions and others recovering bundles. Don't fire first and find it is one of your own men later. Weapons, on landing, should be loaded and locked, and fired only on orders of an officer or in case of emergency. The sound of enemy weapons is known to you and should disclose the location of enemy forces if present. Enemy flares may be fired around the area to give the appearance of enemy strength and to cause us to be alarmed. Remember that more casualties can be caused by



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some of our own men getting trigger happy than from enemy fire. It is possible that your stick may land some distance from the DZ. Your action in this case should be considered. The general idea is to move to your Battalion assembly area and if the Battalion has already left for its objective join them there. If this is impossible join up with friendly troops preferably of this unit and assist them in accomplishing their mission. In either case do as much damage as possible on the way, for example a staff car or a truck load of Germans may be driving along the road unaware of your presence in the area. In case no officers are present with your group the senior NCO should be prepared to take over. All men will be issued instructions regarding the terrain objectives, important towns, streams etc., and also a map in the escape kit. Remember that a few men can create a hell of a lot of trouble if they happen to be in the right place.

Due to lack of transport in landing and the difficulties of supply, don't expect any easy time. However, I am confident that this outfit can take care of itself in any situation that may arise. May success reward our efforts, and good hunting to each and every one of you.

R.D. Graves,
Lt. Col., 517th Prct. Inf
Commanding

Letter to Mom from **Harland L. Curtis**
Combat Jump into Southern France
August 15, 1944 as recorded by Bud on August 22, 1944

Dear Mom,

We boarded C-47's (the twin engine plane that was used by paratroopers) in Italy (Chiteviccia) about 2:30 am and had a nice pleasant ride with no opposition at all. Most of us were asleep until almost time to jump. They woke us up and said we would be over the field in eight minutes. That was about 5:00 am. We stood up and hooked up. It seemed like years went by as those last minutes ticked off. I was number 13 man. The green light came on and guys began to disappear in front of me. Then there I was at the door. I had a hell of a body position. I went out of the door like I was throwing a flying block with my right shoulder at somebody. I was heading down nose first when "Wham" she opened and jerked me back up right. I looked up to make sure my chute was open and then I looked around. We must have jumped awfully high because I thought I was never going to come down. There was a low fog about a 100 feet off the ground and it looked just like water. I really thought my number was up for sure. I was cussing the Air Corps and all their ancestors for 17 generations back.

When I sank through the mist I was just beginning to figure it all out when "Thud" I hit the ground. I will never forget that morning. I was miles away from the jump field. Later I found out that it was a good thing I didn't land on the jump field as the Germans had it all ready for us with mines, machine guns, and flame throwers. All I could see was forms of trees through the fog. I cut myself out of my chute and



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when I stood up I seemed to have lost my sense of balance. I fell down and rolled down the side of a mountain a few yards. I stood up again, and did the same thing again. I stood up again and took a couple of steps and fell off a ledge about 10 feet high and about broke my neck. There was dry grass all over and every step I took you could hear it for a mile. I decided to lay still for a while and see if I could figure out where I was at. I didn't know which way to go. I heard somebody moving a little ways in front of me. I shouted the password at him hoping it was one of our guys, but instead of getting the right answer I got a couple of bullets just over my head. I took off for a big rock and figured I would have it out with the guy, but then I heard somebody behind me. Once again I made the mistake of hoping it was one of our guys and shouted the password to him and got my answer in hot lead. It was so foggy we couldn't see each other but we could hear every move each of us made.

There must have been a whale of a patrol around me and every step I took away from them I could hear them coming closer. I knew as long as it stayed foggy I could hold them off, but it began to get light and I decided the best thing to do was make a run for it and hope they would miss. I took off zig zagging and they opened up on me, but I was lucky and got to the other side of the hill and down in the valley and there I met some of our own guys.

We climbed over another hill and came to a road and met up with most of the company. Ever since then I haven't had much trouble. In fact the Germans are running to fast. I haven't seen one for days.

End of the letter



A toast to the courageous men of the 517th PRCT on this Anniversary of Operation Dragoon. - All the best,

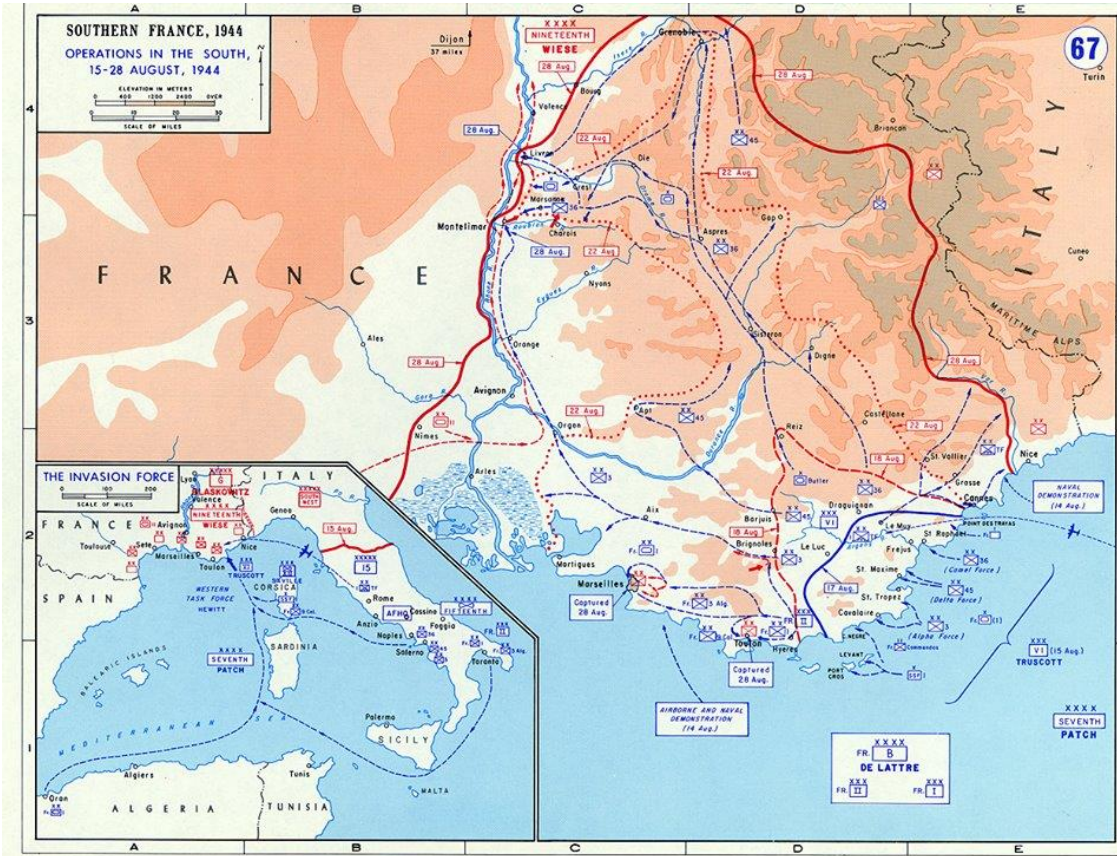
Paul Abbene

Click here to open ["Why would you want to dissolve the 517th Association?" - Questions and Answers"](#)

And don't forget to vote: [Special 517th Thunderbolt and voting ballot](#)



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71 years ago today. Allied troops land on beaches along the French Riviera. Operation Dragoon is in full swing. The night before and during the early morning hours, paratroopers of the First Airborne Task Force landed inland to secure vital towns and crossroads.

Dracénie - Var - Provence



Fête de la Libération - Le Muy

It was this morning @ [Le Muy](#) 71 th anniversary of the liberation



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At [Rhone American Cemetery and Memorial](#).



Merci, Les Arcs

Claire Giblin



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Subject: Mail from Belgium

Sent from my iPad. I just received a letter from Belgium from a person called Philippe Bastin. Has anyone in our outfit received a letter from him? He is wanting my history & I wonder if he is lajit. He gave me a two dollar bill & is from Belgium.he is interested in the area battle of the bulge of which he lives in the area. He seems to be a doctor. He says he is not a dealer & just wants keep alive the memory of those who fought for there freedom. He has the 517 th patch on the letter.

Mel Trenary

Hi Mel,

I do not know Philippe, but with some quick Google search, he does seem to be real. It's not a scam, just an interested collector. He has asked many WW2 vets for autographed photos.

See: <http://www.veteransofthebattleofthebulge.org/2013/08/30/belgian-sends-letter-to-5th-id-veteran/>

As always, sending him a photo or autograph is harmless, but do not send any personal information to people you don't know via email.

Bob B.

Belgian letter to Dan Santagata 5th ID

Posted on August 30, 2013 by [admin](#)

Philippe BASTIN RueDr.Olyff19A 4570 MARCHIN

BELGIUM phil.bas@skynet.beMember VBOB

Dear Mr Santagata,

firstly,1 hope you and your family have not had problems with the storm and that you are all in very good health !!

My name is Philippe Bastin and 1 live in Belgium, a few kilometers from Bastogne .

I am interested in the history of the second World War .because I have in my family an GI, Sergio Moirano (80 Th Division) ,who participate in D-DAY June 6 landing on Utah Beach and the Battle of the Bulge with the Third Army of General Patton.

Sergio is still alive and lives of 5 km from my home.

For this reason I searched for my collection of signed photos of U.S. veterans and I would like to have a signed photo of you at the time of World War II.

This will be a great honor for me!

Thank you in advance and wish you a very good health for your future and all the best for you et your family.



Philippe Bastin with Sergio Moirano

This entry was posted in [VBOB News](#). Bookmark the [permalink](#).



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Administrivia

If you miss any MailCalls, they are all available online at <http://www.517prct.org/mailcall/>

- At any time, if you want to be added or removed from the MailCall list, just let me know, or just click on the unsubscribe link on the email.
- 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 Miriam Boyle Kelly
19 Oriole Court
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866



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