



# 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

**MailCall No. 2299**

November 22, 2015

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

## Thanksgiving Day 1943

These two pictures from **John Harte**, son of **Don Harte** of B Battery 460<sup>th</sup> PFAB are titled "Thanksgiving Jump" and "Thanksgiving Howitzer", from 1943 at Camp MacKall.



From:

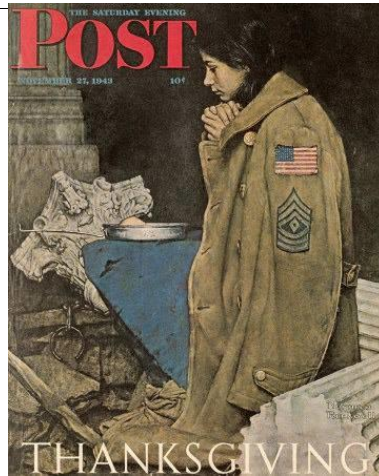
[http://www.517prct.org/photos/harte\\_460th.htm](http://www.517prct.org/photos/harte_460th.htm)



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The Saturday Evening Post

November 27, 1943



### *Ray Bunce, 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon, F Company*



“PFC Raymond Bunce from Scranton, Pa. He is the best kid in our platoon. Doesn't smoke, first drink he ever had was here in France, and swears very very little. Good kid.” - **Ray Hess**

D-1 Day

From Ray Hess' Meet the Troopers page

[http://www.517prct.org/photos/ray\\_hess/ray\\_hess2.htm](http://www.517prct.org/photos/ray_hess/ray_hess2.htm)

I am hoping this will reach you. I have tried to send messages via the address in the MailCall but they come back to me. I have sent them with an updated version of my dad's WWII memories (**Ray Bunce 2nd Platoon F Co 517th**) as well as a letter he had written to his buddy's parents about the buddy's injuries. I am not attaching anything to this and it is not for print 'til i can figure out how to get the info to you.)

Thanks  
**Chris Bunce**

Thanks so much - I am going to send an e-mail immediately following this with my dad's updated memoir - we found more pages that we missing and I have added them to the document that is already posted. So if you could replace that document with the new one, it would be great. I love the work you do with the MailCall and read everyone:-)!!!

**Christine Bunce**



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File received with no problem. I'll get that posted soon.

Thanks! Bob Barrett

PS: You probably know this, but there are several other pictures of Ray Bunce on the website from other F Company trooper pages:

[http://www.517prct.org/photos/george\\_ross/george\\_ross.htm](http://www.517prct.org/photos/george_ross/george_ross.htm)

[http://www.517prct.org/photos/ray\\_hess/ray\\_hess2.htm](http://www.517prct.org/photos/ray_hess/ray_hess2.htm)

[http://www.517prct.org/photos/f\\_co\\_2nd\\_platoon.htm](http://www.517prct.org/photos/f_co_2nd_platoon.htm)

Bob B.

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... Thanks for the suggestion and for your persistence!! Please feel free to share both documents on the website and via MailCall. I so appreciate all the work you do through both! I would love to know the battle my dad described in the letter. Figuring it must have been around January of 45. Thank You!!!!

Christine

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Can anyone tell Christine more about the F Company battle in January as described in Ray's letter starting on Page 4? - BB

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A few more pictures from [George Ross' F Company pictures](#):

Davis, Bolt, Adleman,  
Jonientz, Ray, Rudy,  
Young, Gilbert, Brazie







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Ross, Frice, Caver, Rudy,  
Webb, Horne, Johnston  
F Company 2nd Platoon



Ray Bunce



Capt Lissner & Col Seitz



Ray Bunce and George Ross



Ray Bunce writing a letter  
to George Ross's girlfriend Lois



Chow line in L'Cole



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RE: **Lt. David P. Taylor**, HQ Co., 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn

Imagine my surprise when I saw our complete email exchange reproduced in [Mailcall!](#) And so quickly! I should have done a better job of proofreading:) After your last note, I read up on your father. I did not realize until then how completely I am both in his and your debt for creating this extraordinary website and for tending it so faithfully. Thank you also for the two mailcall references.

I looked at the Meet the Troopers page with great interest. How do I add Uncle David's information on to the page? Clearly I will be adding information as I go, but wanted to know how to start.

As I mentioned, I am very interested in interviewing anyone who may have known my uncle. I also realized I did not give my email in the exchange that you printed, just my phone number. If you could, I would appreciate it if you would put my gmail address, which is [ellenodonnell03@gmail.com](mailto:ellenodonnell03@gmail.com) in the next mailcall. I'm transitioning out of this email address, which gets entirely too many ads etc. My home phone number, which is 510-397-0373, has a mailbox and can record a message.

Thanks,  
**Ellen O'Donnell**

Hi Ellen,

It is my intention to take Lt. Taylor's bio, as you sent it to me, and add that to the "[Meet the Troopers](#)" page of bios. I will be doing that soon. Feel free to make any edits or additions, now or in the future. And if you have any more pictures, those are always good additions.

I will let you know when I get it posted. Won't be too long.

Bob B.

### *Letter Home from Lt. David P Taylor, 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn*

Thanks!!!! I will check out the pictures. I am also going to try and send you a letter written by my father to the parents of **George Ross** also of the same Company F 2nd Platoon of the 517th describing how their son was wounded and my father's deep regret at having to leave his buddy for the medics. It is a powerful letter. Please feel free to post it as well. If anyone can tell me where/what battle this may have been, I would greatly appreciate it. January of '45 field of waist deep snow? It will be attached to the next e-mail as it is close to the max limit for Comcast!



Christine Bunce





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July 15, 1945

Loigny, France

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Lass and Gwen;

This may come as a surprise to you but I'm certain my conscience is indeed catching up to me for I've been going to write for such a long time. I'm awfully ashamed of myself and I humbly ask your kind forgiveness for this simple apology of mine.

Before going further might I inquire as to how all is going on at the old homestead. Wife (George and I) are praying that you are all in the pink of condition.

George is fine as still the same old huddy, hasn't changed a bit, Reddy is o.k. as well and me, well it's not important but I'm tickin' as well ~





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2.

Now, how may I take these few moments to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the swell package you sent me, it arrived at a period when delicacies of the sort that you included in that gift. My gratitude is exclusive of that which the boys in the platoon extend to you for they, too, were most fortunate in partaking of those tasty morsels. Enough of my concerted remarks regarding my humble being for I know you wish to hear about one you love more than anyone else in this world.

I know you would like to hear how George was hit, I know he's too modest to discuss it with you, promise you or wait till he's I wrote this, kid skin me alive.





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<sup>3</sup>  
George had been doing a wonderful job as a squad leader in Belgium and when we were left without a platoon Sgt. he took over. It was one morning in Jan. cold, snowing and ever so miserable. We were to make an attack across an open ~~or~~ field approx. 1500 yds without any cover or concealment whatsoever to an area of woods where there was an enemy force concentrated. ~~As~~ we knew we had a big bunk cut out for us so George and I had one of our usual prayer meetings just him and I, we used to read our testaments to each other and say a prayer, I know that in our hours of need, He was there watching over us. When we were in position George asked me to take care of his things if anything happened and I said





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the same. The <sup>4</sup>sign, without exaggerating was waist high and for that reason we couldn't use tanks. As we started of the woods we got no further than 35 yards when we were fired upon by machine guns sniper fire and all those other missile of death. George was straight across from me and just about 15 yds from me, at the first burst I heard him call my name and then I saw him falling to the ground. Never in my heart have I felt the pang of helplessness tear at me so for I knew that I couldn't stop and yet it was harder for me to leave. Tho it was best for me to leave as we both ~~we~~ might have been "taken care of". I can never express the fear, anguish and anger that was in my heart that





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3.

L.O. Thanks for writing Miss. You're Swill!

All the way across I prayed, prayed and prayed and you I know that our Good Lord had spared George again for a while. Mrs. Ross, never can anyone realize the loudness and love for someone till destiny interferes the way it did George, Rudy and I. I know you'll understand my feelings cause I wanted ever so much to stay with George but I know you can see the disadvantage.

See, I guess I've disillusioned you enough for tonite. I'll say an revoir and Goodnite. George will be writing soon - we have two pens between three of us so we have a schedule. I'm praying for our trip home soon. God Bless you and keep you safe always.

Please write soon. I remain Always  
George's Buddy  
Ray





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## More MailCall News

Thank You.

Sent from my iPad. I enjoy the news that you give out about our outfit. It's great! We are having a dreary day in east texas. Tomorrow I go to Conroe, Texas to be with veterans. They are a bunch of good guys. All of them! Last week we were invited ( veterans) to Montgomery Jr. High school on the 11th, Veterans Day for a program about Veterans in Vietnam. it was great! Both of my sons were in Vietnam. One was wounded. They had breakfast for all of us. One of my sons was with me.

### Mel Trenary

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In the [photos of George Ross](#), he included this picture, labeled "The Pin-Up of the 517th PIR F Co 2nd Platoon"

Biography of Sherry Britton from Wikipedia:

Sherry performed in many theatres and clubs during the Golden Age of burlesque. She once said "I despised burlesque." However, she did enjoy stripping in nightclubs, like Leon & Eddies where she was a regular for seven years. She stripped to classical music, wore lovely long gowns and tiaras and crowns. When burlesque went by the wayside due to the NYC ban in 1940, Britton turned to plays, eventually appearing in almost forty of them. Britton also spent much time during WWII entertaining troops, for which she was made an honorary Brigadier General by President [Franklin D. Roosevelt](#).



Britton was performing in [Washington, D.C.](#) clubs as late as 1958, the year she turned 40. She was barred from appearing at the 1964 New York World's Fair, because she was too risqué. She instead became a cabaret singer and appeared in many theater productions.

In 1971, Britton, who had been married twice previously, and who once said she'd been engaged "14 times," married wealthy businessman Robert Gross (no relation to aviator [Robert E. Gross](#)). Gross urged her to attend [Fordham University](#). Although Britton had never attended high school, she was said to have a very high IQ. She attended Fordham and graduated pre-law in 1982, magna cum laude, at the age of 63.

After Gross died in 1990, Britton lived a life of retirement, stepping back into the limelight in 1993 on her 75th birthday performing at the Marriott Marquis Hotel on Broadway in NYC.

Britton died of natural causes on April 1, 2008 in New York City.<sup>[2]</sup>

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From **Nila Gott**:

## Acuity Flagpole Project

Standing 400 feet tall, the new Acuity Insurance Flagpole is the tallest flagpole in North America ([#tallestUSflag](#)). Located on the [Acuity Insurance](#) headquarters campus in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, along Interstate 43 between Milwaukee and Green Bay, the pole supports a 60-foot-wide by 120-foot-long American flag. Located at the base of the flagpole is a brick paver patio featuring the names of Sheboygan County residents killed in active duty.



### Flagpole Facts:

- 400-foot flagpole weighs approximately 420,000 pounds
- There are two versions of the 60- by 120-foot flag:
  - 220 pound flag is flown during normal conditions
  - 350 pound flag is flown during harsher weather
- Each star is 3 feet high and each stripe is 4 1/2 feet wide
- 680 cubic yards of concrete used in foundation
- Over 500 gallons of paint cover the pole
- 11-foot diameter at base tapers to 5 1/2-foot diameter at top
- Three pendulum-style tuned mass dampers reduce movement and vibration
- Designed to withstand a low temperature of -42°F

For more videos, images, and information visit the [Acuity Flagpole](#) project page.

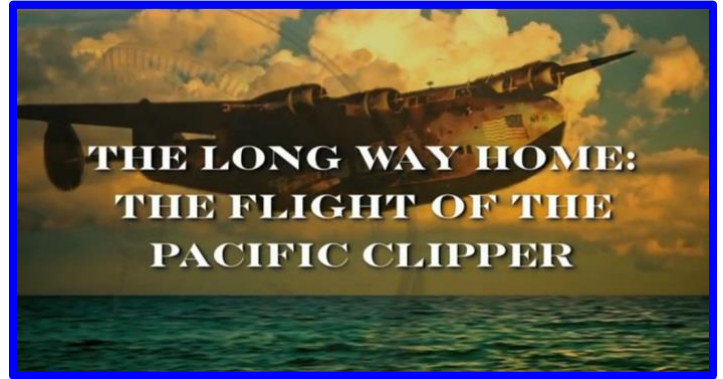




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### The Long Way Home - The Pacific Clipper.

In 1943 FDR wanted to join Stalin & Churchill in North Africa for a secret meeting. The US, afraid of German U-boats did not use battleships or carriers. Instead they requisitioned a Boeing Clipper, named it the "Dixie Clipper", and it flew FDR south to Brazil, refueled and flew on to North Africa. They knew if mechanical troubles occurred the plane could land on water. Ships were stationed en route just in case. No problems occurred and the return flight was also easy.



<https://www.youtube.com/embed/Ms84WfJwall>

### *Half Man, Half Boy – A Tribute to the Military Man*

The average age of the military man is 19 years. He is a short haired, tight-muscled kid who, under normal circumstances, is considered by society as half-man, half-boy. Not yet dry behind the ears, not old enough to buy a beer, but old enough to die for his country. He never really cared much for work and he would rather wax his own car than wash his father's; but he has never collected unemployment either.

He's a recent high-school graduate; he was probably an average student, pursued some form of sport activities, drives a ten-year-old jalopy, and has a steady girlfriend that either broke up with



him when he left, or swears to be waiting when he returns from half a world away. He listens to rock and roll or hip-hop or rap or jazz and 155-mm Howitzers. He is 10 or 15 pounds lighter now than when he was at home because he is working or fighting from before dawn to well after dusk.

He has trouble spelling, and thus letter writing is a pain for him, but he can field strip a rifle in 30 seconds and reassemble it in less time in the dark.

He can recite to you the nomenclature of a machine gun or grenade launcher and use either one effectively if he must. He digs foxholes and latrines and can apply first aid like a professional. He





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can march until he is told to stop or stop until he is told to march.

He obeys orders instantly and without hesitation, but he is not without spirit or individual dignity or the capacity to think for himself, which may one day save his life or that of his platoon members. He is self-sufficient. He has two sets of fatigues: he washes one and wears the other. He keeps his canteens full and his feet dry.

He sometimes forgets to brush his teeth, but never to clean his rifle. He can cook his own meals, mend his own clothes, and fix his own hurts.

If you're thirsty, he'll share his water with you; if you are hungry, his food. He'll even split his ammunition with you in the midst of battle when you run low.



He has learned to use his hands like weapons and weapons like they were his hands. He can save your life — or take it, because that is his job. He will often do twice the work of a civilian, draw half the pay and still find ironic humor in it all. He has seen more suffering and death in his short lifetime than he should have to see in a hundred lifetimes. He has stood atop mountains of dead bodies, and helped to create them.

He has wept in public and in private, for friends who have fallen in combat and is unashamed. He feels every note of the National Anthem vibrate through his body

while at rigid attention, while tempering the burning desire to "square-away" those around him who haven't bothered to stand, remove their hat, or even stop talking.

In an odd twist, day in and day out, far from home, he defends their right to be disrespectful. Just as his Father, Grandfather, and Great-grandfather, he is paying the price for our freedom. Beardless or not, he is not a boy. He is the American Fighting Man that has kept this country free for over 200 years. He has asked nothing in return, except our friendship and understanding.

Remember him, always, for he has earned our respect and admiration with his blood.







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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](mailto: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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