



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2357

May 29, 2017

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

Memorial Day 2017

Remembering the Veterans of the 517 PRCT and their families on this Memorial Day 2107. All the best. - Paul Abbene

ps - and a special hello to my pen pal **Virginia Jorgen**.

Paul Abbene





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Just A Common Soldier, also known as A Soldier Died Today, is one of the most popular poems on the Internet. Written and published in 1987 by Canadian veteran and columnist A. Lawrence Vaincourt, it now appears in numerous anthologies, on thousands of websites and on July 4, 2008 it was carved into a marble monument at West Point, New York. This year marks the poem's 25th anniversary.

Please enjoy this tribute to the Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and Airmen who have given so much for our country.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eEs4ke7cdNQ&sns=em>

Dear friends of America, Here is a picture of Wanne and the 517th monument during the ceremony of MAY 8th. As we attended the ceremony in Trois-Ponts, 2 persons joined us because they could hear "the Last Post" near the church of Trois-Ponts. Alexandra and Jeremiah, 2 American from Arizona,

visiting the area, they were very touched about the ceremonies at the US monuments and they stayed with the group for the rest of the pilgrimage. On the picture, you can see the Mayor Francis BAIRIN, Alexandra and Jeremiah, Victorine GUSTIN, President of CADUSA and the children of the little school of Wanne with their teachers. Very soon, we shall attend the ceremonies of Memorial Day in Henri-Chapelle.



Irma and Arnold Targnion



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From the Doddridge County (West Virginia) Heritage Guild web site:

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1948056585435830&id=1873947726180050



James Harold Sutton

Pfc, Co G, 517 Parachute Inf, 13 Abn Div, US Army, WW II

Born in Blandville, Doddridge County, May 24 1919

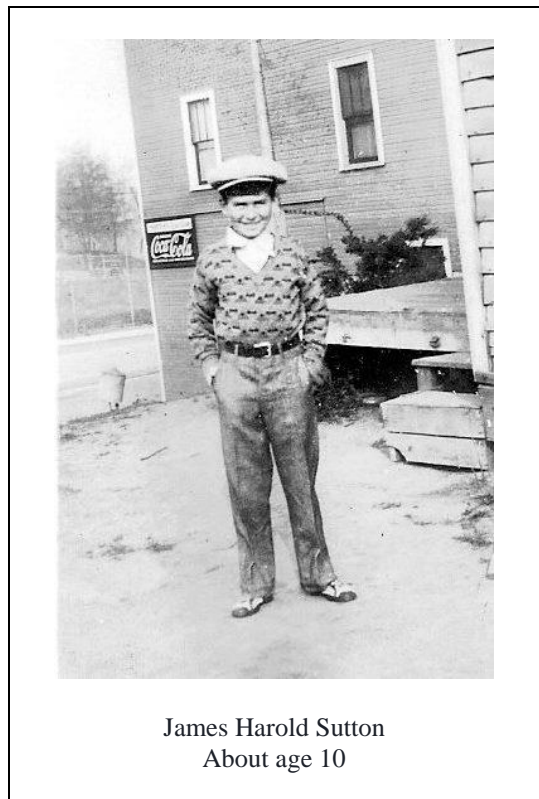
<http://www.doddridgecountyroots.com/tng/getperson.php?personID=I66907&tree=dcr>

This Memorial Day we pay tribute to the 132 known Doddridge County military servicemen who have lost their lives while in the service of the United States. From the 44 known Civil War casualties to the 88 in the so-called modern wars and the War on Terror, those Doddridge Countians have gallantly paid the ultimate price for our country's freedom. Today I want to share the story of one of these men, courtesy his niece who is guardian of a collection of his memorabilia.

James Harold Sutton was born in Blandville, Doddridge County, on May 24, 1919, a son of Ellsworth Sutton and Ina Mae Ross. He was known to his family and most friends as Harold. His Doddridge County roots run deep, with a family tree that includes some of our most prominent families. A few of his ancestors include Cornelius Sutton, Robert Lowther (father of Col. William Lowther), William Childers, Thomas Ross, Daniel Southworth and Samuel Lippincott. Three of his lines go back to William "Greenbrier Billy" Davis, two lines go back to William "Jarsey Billy" Davis, and his 4th-great-uncle was West Union's founding father Nathan Davis. Such a pedigree is about as close to Doddridge County royalty as you're going to get.



The Sutton home on Lick Run, Doddridge County WV



James Harold Sutton
About age 10



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James Harold Sutton

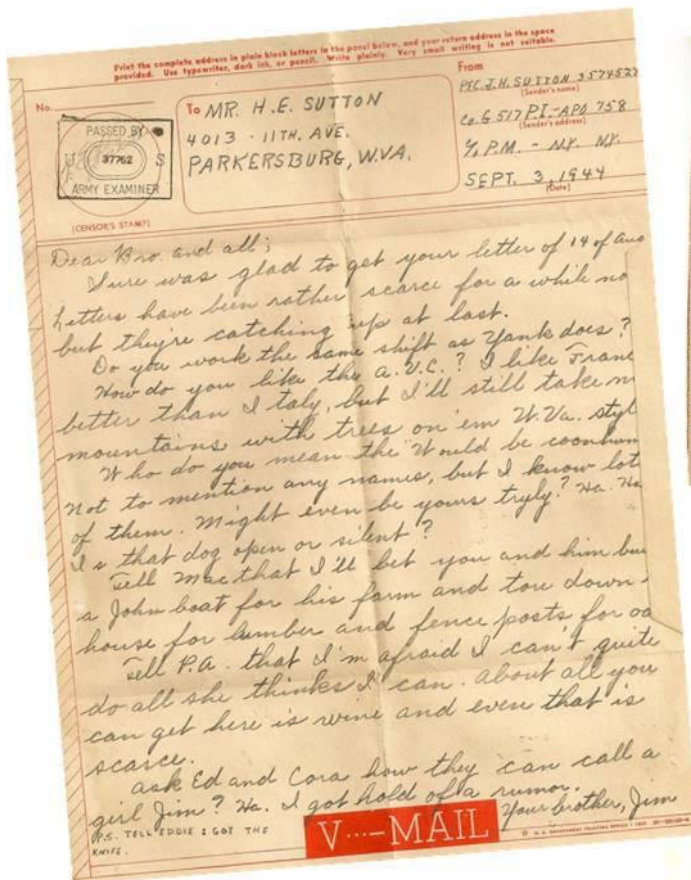
Posing at gate to the American Viscose Corporation factory in Parkersburg, where both he and his father worked.

In December 1942, James Harold Sutton enlisted in the U.S. Army. He was a Pfc Paratrooper in Co. G, 517th Parachute Infantry, 13th Airborne Division. The following is an excerpt from a letter, dated September 3, 1944, that he wrote to his family from France:

“Dear Bro and all,

Sure was glad to get your letter of 14 of Aug. Letters have been rather scarce for a while now, but they're catching up at last. Do you work the same shift as Yank does? How do you like the A.V.C? I like France better than Italy, but I'll still take my mountains with trees on 'em W.Va. style.”

His niece explains that “the reference to ‘How do you like A.V.C?’ was The American Viscose Company, where Harold and my dad, his brother Harrison, worked in Parkersburg. Ironically the fabric that parachutes were made from was manufactured there. I have always wondered if it was possible that my dad helped make Harold’s parachutes. The ‘Yank’ he mentions was a guy whose name was Yank Wade, one of Harold and Dad’s coon hunting buddies.”



Pfc. Sutton Writes Paratrooper Song

Probably everybody knows the song, “Rambling Wreck From Georgia Tech,” but here is a brand new bunch of verses to sing to that classic composed by Pfc. James H. Sutton, stationed with the Paratrooper Infantry at Camp Mackall, N. C.

Pfc. Sutton sends in the song with the following letter:

Dear Sirs: Although I doubt very much if this song will even amount to much as far as the Parachute Troops are concerned, I thought maybe it would furnish an idea of what goes on in a Trooper's mind and what he thinks of those who say they "aren't afraid of anything under the sun." I don't want to give anyone the impression that I wasn't scared so I think this should show the folks back home that fact. I use the tune, "The Rambling Wreck From Georgia Tech."

Forget the place you're landing, Forget the ground below, Just concentrate upon the fight, We'll win it blow by blow.

Think of the ones before you, How many of them fell; Then visualize how many guys "Those troopers sent to hell."

Show me the guy who isn't scared, Who isn't afraid at all, Show me the guy who doesn't sweat About the way he falls.

Mention "nerve" to a trooper He'll think that you are nuts, He never heard of such a word, To him it's just plain "guts."

Trooper don your harness, Get your reserve on right, Then snap your fasteners solid, Make sure your straps are tight.

Make sure you have your rations, And ammo for your gun, Get everything exactly right, And half the battle's won.

Now climb into your transport, And pretty soon you've found, You're rolling down the runway, And now you're off the ground.

We find the target we're looking for, The moon is out of sight, Then "shuffling" to the door, we go,

For the time is almost right, First we see the "red" light, And then we see the "green," So out we bail into the night, Our mottled chutes unseen.

Whatever our target may be, Bridge or ammo dump, The way we always get there, Is to fly a while, then jump.

We're sure to take our "object" And then the fight is over, A "pair-o-boots" and a parachute, Is the pair that'll win the war.

When e'er the war is over, We'll forget Berlin and Rome, We'll have just one more jump to make, That's yelling out at "home."

The name of this song is, "Paratrooper's Hell."

Sincerely yours, PFC. JAMES H. SUTTON, D-170, First Inf.



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PARATROOPER'S HELL"

Harold apparently had a creative side to him, as he wrote a song based on his experience as a paratrooper. The following excerpt from a newspaper article offers an idea of his personality and a glimpse into how he viewed his military duties:

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"Paratrooper's Hell"

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KILLED IN ACTION

James Harold Sutton was killed by a sniper's bullet during the Battle of the Bulge on January 13, 1945, near the village of Stavelot in Belgium. His niece provides the following details:

"We were told by another paratrooper that was in the same location with Harold when he was killed that Harold and several others were on guard duty the night of January 13, 1945, and they knew there were snipers nearby. At dawn, as his duty shift ended, he said that he was going to smoke a cigarette before he went to have breakfast. He stood up beside a big tree, lit a cigarette and was shot by a sniper. He died instantly."

The following is contained in a letter of condolence to Harold's sister Audrey Sutton Shepard from the Regimental Chaplain:

Dear Mrs. Shepard,

Instead of writing I wish I could be in your home and talk with your family and you. We do not think of you as strangers since we have had the privilege of knowing your brother James for some time. But it is sometimes quite difficult to find the right words when writing to people you have not seen. As I write to you, however, I am thinking of James and what he would want me to say.

We have been thinking of you and the telegram you have received from the Sec of War. Believe me, that behind that necessarily short announcement is the full sympathy of the nation in a personal way. To that we would add the sympathy of your commanding officer, Col. Rupert D. Graves, and of the entire Regiment to which your brother belonged.

We have no way of expressing freely what we feel, every respect and military honor was shown your brother, and as we sharing your loss extend to you our deepest sympathy, we add our gratitude for your great gift. The Nation will not forget your sacrifice, and if it seems too great a one to make, I can only say that, in this tragic time through which we pass, you have followed the example of the Father of us all who "so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son" to redeem the world. I do not believe such sacrifices are in vain.

We have no wish to add to your grief, but we know there are many things you wish to know. To relieve your mind of anxiety and for your possible consultation we may tell you that your brother was fatally wounded by enemy fire near the village of Stavelot, Belgium. He died instantly and did not suffer in any way. He was buried in the Allied Cemetery at ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ Henri le Chappelle, Belgium, where some of us have visited him, we hope that someday you may come there too.

If the personal effects of your brother have not reached you, they will be forwarded in due time by the proper ~~xxxxxx~~ Army agency. Let me suggest that if you need help in the settling of any affairs, the Red Cross will be glad to assist in any way possible.

We pray that Almighty God in whom we trust for our Nations victory, will grant to you in your ~~xxxxxx~~ personal grief the victory of his peace.

Sincerely
Charles Lynn Brown
Chaplain (Capt) U.S.A.
Regimental Chaplain

Sutton, James H. Pfc.
ASN 35745273



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BATTLE OF THE BULGE ATROCITIES

The Battle of the Bulge, in the Ardennes Forest of Belgium, took place from Dec 16, 1944 to Jan 25, 1945. The specific location of James Sutton's death during that battle is noteworthy, for it reflects the significance of his mission. "During the Battle of the Bulge in World War II, the city [Stavelot] was the scene of severe fighting. From December 18-20, 1944, soldiers belonging to Sixth Panzer Army's Kampfgruppe Peiper armored battle group murdered more than 100 civilians, including women and children, as well as American prisoners of war, in Stavelot and the surrounding area. Peiper and some of his officers were after the war tried and convicted for this war crime along with others perpetrated during the same period." [Wikipedia]

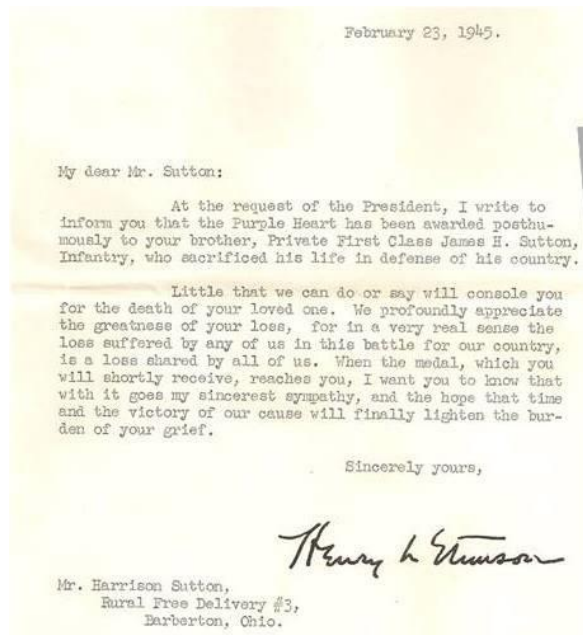
In September 1948, James Harold Sutton's remains were removed from a temporary grave at an American cemetery in Belgium and reinterred at Evergreen Cemetery in South Parkersburg, where most of his family had relocated from Doddridge County.

A LASTING IMPACT

I would like to say a special thank you to Phyllis Sutton Hargreaves, Harold Sutton's niece, for sharing this information and accompanying images with me. When asked for a comment about her uncle, Phyllis said, "When he was killed, it changed my family forever. He was the baby brother and the only one in the Army. My dad, Harrison, was drafted, but laws about age and marital status changed and he was sent back home before he was inducted."

This Memorial Day is a special one for Doddridge County, because the formalities on the Court House lawn will include the VFW VFW's unveiling of a granite monument inscribed with the names of the 88 Doddridge County veterans who gave their lives in service to their country from World War I to the present. Just as James Harold Sutton's death in 1945 changed his family forever, there have been 87 other Doddridge County families also changed forever in the same way. All of which, for me at least, gives us even more to think about and appreciate this Memorial Day.

(NOTE: This article, written by Heritage Guild member Jennifer Wilt, originally appeared in the May 26, 2017 issue of [The Doddridge Independent](#) as part of her weekly column "Our Heritage: The REAL History of Doddridge County.")





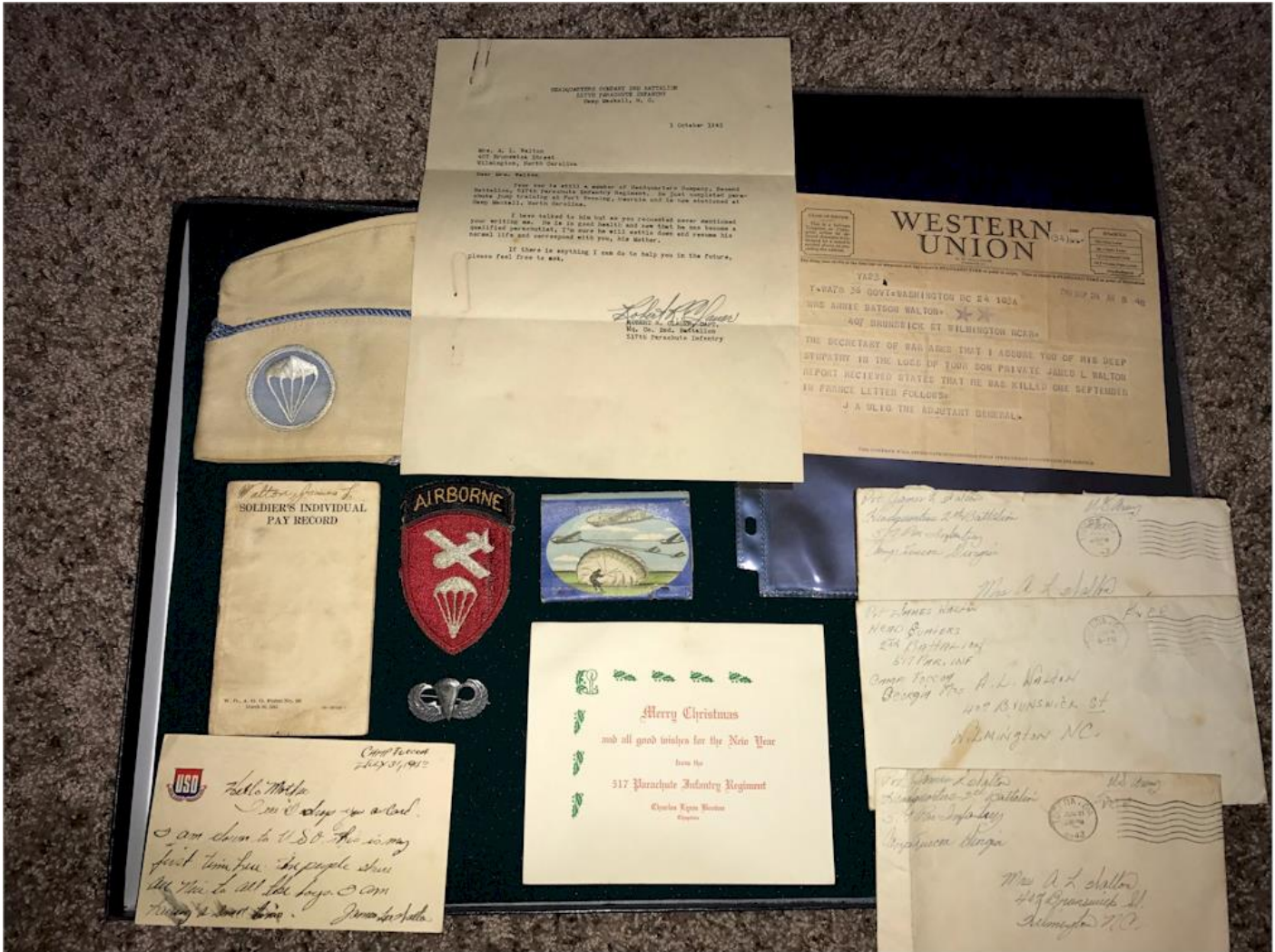
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I just returned from the grouping of **Pvt James .L WALTON** of 517, KIA in the South of France during Operation Dragoon

I'm looking for a photo of James WALTON, can you help me?

Thank you in advance for your response

Best Regards
Michel QUILEZ



Pvt. James L. Walton was with Hq. Co, 2nd Battalion, and was killed September 1, 1944 near Levens, France. Unfortunately, I do not have any photos of James Walton. -- BB

I did locate this photo of his gravesite in the Calypso Cemetery, Duplin County, North Carolina, USA. – BB





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HEADQUARTERS COMPANY 2ND BATTALION
517TH PARACHUTE INFANTRY
Camp Mackall, N. C.

1 October 1943

Mrs. A. L. Walton
407 Brunswick Street
Wilmington, North Carolina

Dear Mrs. Walton

Your son is still a member of Headquarters Company, Second Battalion, 517th Parachute Infantry Regiment. He just completed parachute jump training at Fort Benning, Georgia and is now stationed at Camp Mackall, North Carolina.

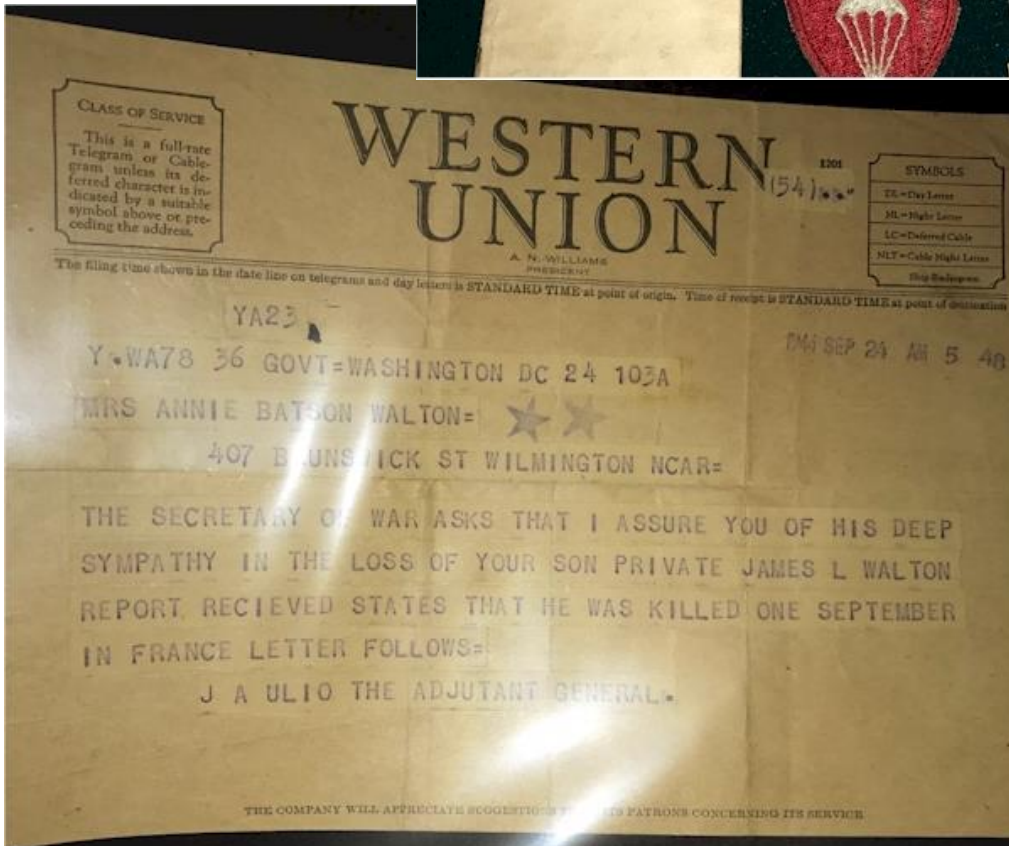
I have talked to him but as you requested your writing me. He is in good health and now the qualified parachutist, I'm sure he will settle down normal life and correspond with you, his Mother.

If there is anything I can do to help you please feel free to ask.

Robert H. Williams
ROBERT H.
Hq. Co.
517th P



Walton, James L.
SOLDIER'S INDIVIDUAL
PAY RECORD





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

West Coast Mini-Reunion

This week! June 2 to June 8. Anyone in the area is still invited to join in. Contact Karen Frice Wallace at 541-948-2486.

- Arrive June 2. Then very tentative schedule depending on interest. Red, White and Blue Ball and Mt Hood for sure.
- June 3 visit Erickson Aircraft Collection in Madras Oregon then attend the Red, White and Blue Ball at our Ranch (flyer attached)
- June 4 BBQ at our Ranch
- June 5 breakfast with the Band of Brothers in Bend then head to Mt Hood Resort for the night
- June 6 back to Bend to the High Desert Museum (has WWII exhibit and history of Camp Abbot)
- June 7 rest, sightsee Metolius River and fish hatchery
- June 8 depart

And for those on the East Coast,
the Camp Toccoa, GA – D-Day
events this week --->

CAMP TOCCOA AT CURRAHEE 2017 D-Day Events

Friday, June 2nd

Camp Toccoa at Currahee Banquet

5:30 p.m. Reception (cash bar) and Silent Auction

7:00 p.m. Dinner followed by live music - *Big Teach*

Cost: \$40 ticket includes pork loin or chicken, music

\$350 reserved table for 8

Speaker: Col. Joe Alexander (Ret.), Past President 101st
Association and Trustee of Camp Toccoa at Currahee

Saturday, June 3rd

Currahee Mountain 10 K Run/Walk

"3 Miles Up and 3 Miles Down"



- 7AM Registration

www.active.com or www.camptoccoaatcurrahee.com/events

- 8 AM Run/Walk Starts
- 10 AM Pavilion & Arch Dedication
- 10 AM - 4 PM On-Site Military Encampments, Displays, Music & Food
- 2 PM Battle Re-enactment

706-282-5055 or contact@toccoahistory.com

Proceeds will be used to restore Camp Toccoa!



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MailCall News

During the summer of 2016 I visited Stalingrad, in Russia, and filmed the work of the volunteers who still find dozens of bodies of missing soldiers every summer. I thought some of the 517th family may be interested to see what is still happening on the former eastern front, so here is a link to my video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SdZjSf-i-4o&t=1s>

Jean-Loup Gassend



Exhumation of WWII mass graves in Stalingrad

From: <https://www.facebook.com/CampToccoaAtCurrahee/posts/1550872648318316:0>

The new divisional signs were installed today. The 11th Airborne on the left column, the 17th Airborne on the right column and the 101st Airborne overhead in the center. Stop and take a look and don't forget the Memorial Day celebration at the Camp on Monday at 11:00am. Hope to see you there.

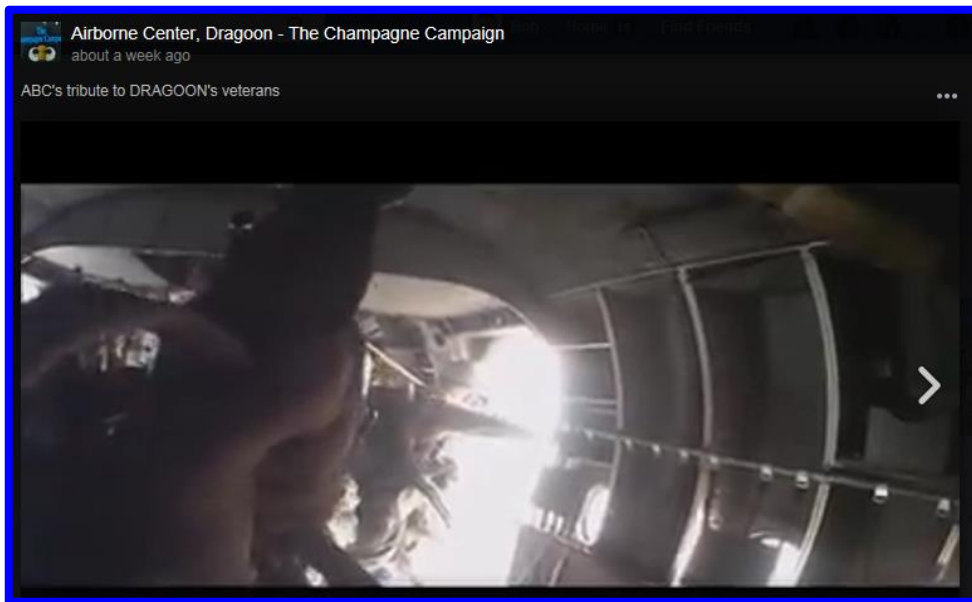


See more info on the Camp Toccoa preservation efforts at: <http://www.campoccoaatcurrahee.com/>



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ABC's Tribute to Operation Dragoon: Airborne Center, Dragoon - The Champagne Campaign



<https://www.facebook.com/188257914927863/videos/309286782824975/>

Attached is a picture from our Salt Lake mini-reunion this past week (lunch) with **Lory Curtis** (vice president of the 517th Association), **Mike Wells** and Tim Curtis. Lots of great memories discussed of past reunions and the great men of the 517th and their families. Lory is not getting too far from home these days. He was recently diagnosed with ALS. If you get a chance drop him a line. I know he would love to hear from you.

Tim Curtis
Son of Harland
"Bud" Curtis
Hdq 1st.





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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

Website	www.517prct.org
Send MailCall news to	MailCall@517prct.org
MailCall Archives	www.517prct.org/archives
2016 Roster (updated!)	www.517prct.org/roster.pdf
Thunderbolt Archives	www.517prct.org/archives



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM