



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2360

June 25, 2017

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

MailCall News

At the 2012 Atlanta reunion, **Hal and Helen Beddow** gave me the 517th official regimental flag and campaign streamers for safekeeping. As one of the final acts to the handover of the 517th Association's assets to the Currahee Military Museum at Camp Toccoa, I just packed and sent the flags and steamers to the museum. And I believe the final paperwork has now been completed for the formal handover. More info on that soon.

Bob Barrett





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

I ran across a note on Facebook that a collector managed to purchase **Leo Dean's** copy of the Michael de Trez's *First Airborne Task Force* book. (I have Ben's copy of that book.) Leo made some notes on a few pages of the book, including this note on the pages about his friend, **Al Ernst** (A Company), who was KIA in Operation Drogoun.



"A" Company embarque pour son premier saut de combat. Le nombre 17 est clairement lisible sur l'enveloppe du parachute dorsal. (voir légende page 167).

"A" Company loading up for its first combat jump. The number 17 is clearly visible on the parachute cover (see note page 167).

Al Ernst and myself met at Camp Upton, N.Y. in March 1943. Volunteered for Paratroopers. To Camp Toccoa, GA. Assigned to Company A. Later I transferred to Regimental HQ Company. On D-Day I found his body!! Quite a shock. In 1989 I visited the American Military Cemetery in Draguignan. The superintendent told me he had been buried there but his parents brought him back to New York.

Leo P. Dean

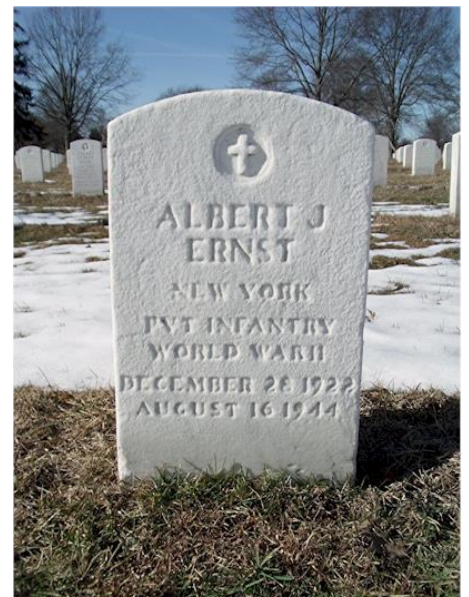
Le Pvt. Albert Ernst, tué au combat aux Arcs, 2 jours après le Jour-J.

"**Al Ernst** and myself met at Camp Upton, NY in March 1943. Volunteered for paratroopers. To Camp Toccoa, GA. Assigned to Company A. Later I transferred to Regimental HQ Company. On D-Day I found his body!! Quite a shock. In 1989 I visited the American Military Cemetery in Draguignan. The superintendent told me he had been buried there but his parents brought him back to New York."

Leo P. Dean

Albert J. Ernst is buried in the Long Island National Cemetery in East Farmingdale, New York,

-->





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

After talking about the practice "D-Day Landing" I wondered if your generation heard about the horrific incident that happened in the Mediterranean Sea Area the night of July 11, The 504 PIR from the 82nd Airborne Division was coming from North Africa to Sicily to support the 505 PIR The planes carrying the paratroopers flew over Navy ships. The Navy, thinking they were German planes, opened fire. Before the cease fire could be enacted 23 to 27 planes were shot down and many more damaged. Total number of paratroopers lost- 410.

After that incident all planes had wide white stripes painted around each wing and body to identify the plane as friendly.

Merle McMorrow

That is great news about **Pvt. Gruwell**. I hope they can locate his remains and have him buried with his fellow veterans or repatriated to his family. I have been in touch with a Ted Darcy from Fall River, MA, <http://www.wfirg.com/>, concerning Pvt. Gruwell. Mr. Darcy has been searching for and helping to identify non-recoverable veterans from World War II for many years. I do not know how he does it. I did send Mr. Darcy all the information about Pvt. Gruwell that the 517th sent to USAHEC back in the 1970s. Mr. Darcy told me at that time that he somehow knew Pvt. Gruwell was buried in one of 10 graves. I do not know how he knows that. I do not know if Col. Forbes got any information from Mr. Darcy, but perhaps you could put them in touch with each other.

I hope to submit Pvt. Gruwell's story to the Army officials here at USAHEC. I just need permissions to use certain photos. I hope I can get them. I have also sent to St. Louis for Pvt. Gruwell's records a month ago but have not heard anything yet. Hopefully, very hopefully, I hope they were not destroyed. I will keep you posted.

Joe Figueiredo

Wow, what a packed Mail Call. The new possible lead on identifying the remains of Pvt. Gruwell gives all of us renewed hope. Thank you for adding him to the list of KIA, even if Col. Forbes investigation doesn't produce a final answer. It appears that you may be a better investigator than the past efforts of the Army! I pray this time is the successful one. Thank you, Bob, for your sleuthing help.

Am glad that Merle lived to tell about his one and only glider experience! And I am amazed at the high quality of 517th related artifacts are on EBay. Is this just the latest addition to EBay? I am a bit surprised that someone would put their hero's memento's up for auction but it may be some other reason that these articles are there and they show how very young all our 517th men were in WWII as they put their lives on the line.

Pat Seitz

This gmail address is the one I want to make my one and only address. I have been trying to figure out how to delete all the others. I have been receiving all your MailCalls. You should receive all the Thunderbolts I sent no later than today,

Merle



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Here's the two Morning Reports I have for **Gruwell**; thought they may add to the discussion.

Mike Wells

COMPANY MORNING REPORT ENDING 15 August 1944

STATION 1 1/2 Miles E. Fayence, France
ORGANIZATION Co G 517th Pz Inf Regt

SERIAL NUMBER	NAME	GRADE	CODE
39339807	Stout, Lester L.	Pvt	
	MOS 745		
19085457	Johnson, Edward J.	Sgt	
	MOS 653		
17122774	Abadie, Albert T.	Cpl	
	MOS 653		
32855177	Irackey, Lawrence	PFC	
	MOS 745		
34505901	Callahan, James H.	Pvt	
	MOS 745		
Above 5 EM Tr duty AB SK LIA (LD) to trfd to Det of Pz 7th Army.			
12181627	Rogel, Leroy	Pvt	
	MOS 745 Dy to MIA		
35174115	Willison, Thomas E.	Pvt	
	MOS 745 Dy to MIA		
6708937	Whitcher, Carl E.	Pvt	
	MOS 745 Dy to MIA		
36437845x	Johnson, Alvin E.	T/5	
Relvd fr Atch to Co Status MIA MOS 861			
39277657	Gruwell, Robert B.	PFC	
	MOS 504 Dy to MIA		

OFFICER STRENGTH: 1 PFC, 5 PVT, 2 SGT

ENLISTED MEN: 110 PRESENT, 2 ABSENT, 7 AWOL, 119 TOTAL

WESS ATTENDANCE: 114 TOTAL, 2 AVERAGE

SIGNATURE: Schofield

COMPANY MORNING REPORT ENDING 15 August 1944

STATION 1 1/2 Miles E. Fayence, France
ORGANIZATION Co G 517th Pz Inf Regt

SERIAL NUMBER	NAME	GRADE	CODE
36593484	Kellogg, Ralph W.	PFC	
	MOS 745 Dy to MIA		
36479353	Juenger, William H.	Pvt	
	MOS 745 Dy to MIA		
33623176	Willet, Norman	Pvt	
	MOS 745 Dy to AWOL as of 0600 15 Aug 44		

RECORD OF EVENTS
Co Departed Orbetello Airfield Italy by plane 0230, Jumped at Location 1 1/2 miles E. Fayence, France, Co Assembled and marched enroute to Lalette, France, Bivouac at location unknown.

OFFICER STRENGTH	PLD O & CAPT	1ST LT	2D LT	WO	PLT O
ASSIGNED	1	5	2		
ATTACHED					
UNASSIGNED					
OTHER ORGN					
TOTAL	1	5	2		

AVN CADET & ENLISTED STRENGTH	AVIATION CADETS		ENLISTED MEN			
	PRESENT	ABSENT	PRESENT FOR DUTY	PRESENT NOT FOR DUTY	ABSENT	PRESENT AND ABSENT
ASSIGNED			110	2	7	119
ATTACHED						
UNASSIGNED			4			4
OTHER ORGN						
TOTAL			114	2	7	123

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF MEN AUTHORIZED TO WESS SEPARATELY: 114 TOTAL, 2 AVERAGE

SIGNATURE: Schofield

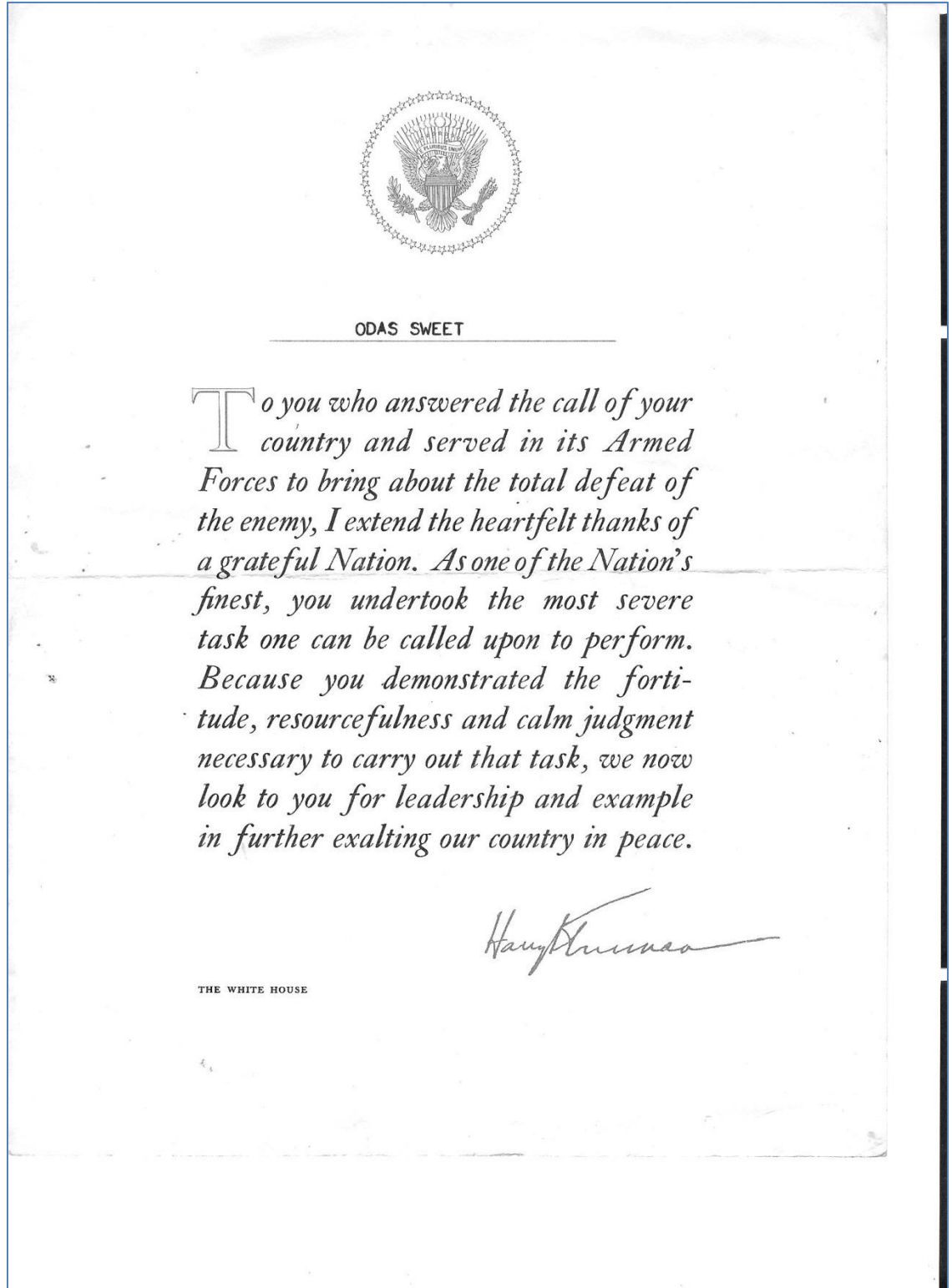
Regarding the search for **PFC Gruwell's** remains in France. My understanding is that Col. Forbes and the Dept. of Defense is heading to France soon to continue the investigation. Col. Forbes had been in touch with the necessary people, including **Jean-Loup Gassend**. For now we will keep things quiet as to not interfere with the investigation. Let's mall hope for positive results. – BB



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

My dad had the same parachute training school certificate as shown in [MailCall #2359](#). I can't make out the General's name who signed it can you? He also received a letter from President Harry S Truman. Did anyone else from the 517 receive the same letter? Having his signature is pretty cool. Harry Truman saved my dad's life by dropping the atomic bomb, thus ending the war and keeping my dad from having to invade Japan. Therefore I was born! Dropping the bomb saved more lives than it destroyed, including Japanese.

Rick Sweet





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, 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

