



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2361

July 3, 2017

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

MailCall News

Camp Toccoa at Currahee, Inc.

• June 30 at 11:25am •

As we celebrate our nation's birthday next week, Camp Toccoa at Currahee would also like to celebrate some very large donations to the rebuilding efforts of the Camp.

First, we would like to thank the 517th Parachute Regiment Combat Team Association for their outstanding donation. We can assure you it will be put to good use.

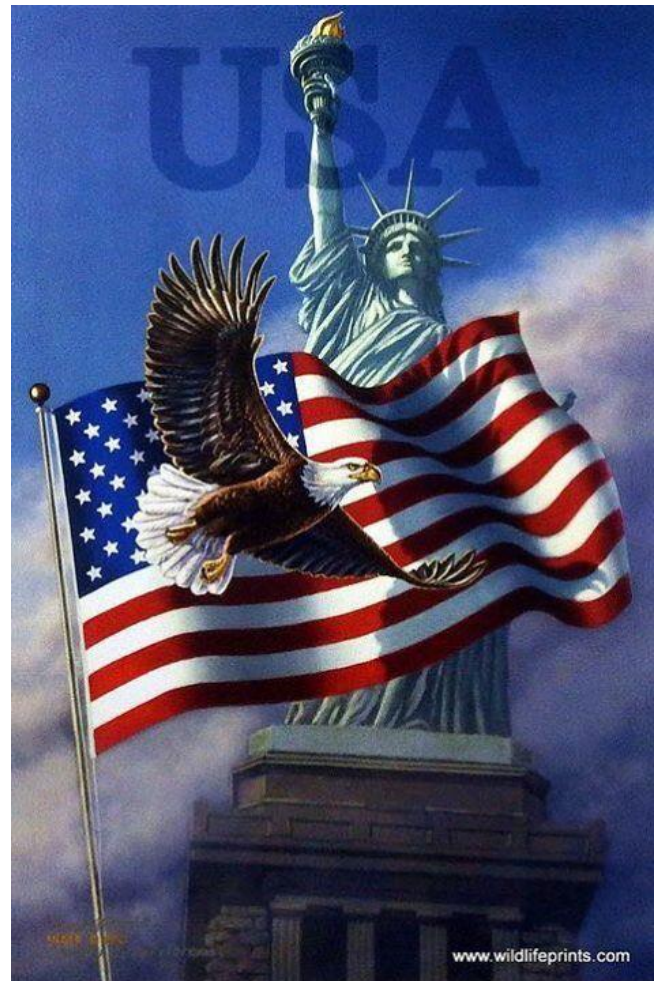
Second, we would like to thank the Harbin Family Foundation for donating the funds to purchase the building materials for the first barracks to be built at the Camp. The Harbin Family Foundation, along with Harbin Lumber Company out of Lavonia, Ga., together were major contributors to the Pavilion Project in 2016.

Again, we say thank you to Roesch Construction. Matt Roesch and his crew built the pavilion and have volunteered their services to build the first barracks for us, with a lot of help from volunteers. Our plan is to have the foundations in place, building materials on site and a well thought out plan on how to build it in one week. It should be interesting.

The pavilion now has a ceiling installed and the lights back up. The D-Day Banquet was held there on June 2nd and was a big hit with everyone that attended. Please stop by and visit us some time.

We are working on trying to get volunteers signed up for having the Camp open on Saturdays from 10:00am to 4:00pm and Sundays from 1:00pm to 5:00pm. Our thought was to split up the times, Saturdays 3 hour shifts and on Sundays 2 hour shifts. Anyone interested in learning the Camp Toccoa Story and passing it on to our visitors. Please contact **Brenda Carlan** at the Museum, phone number is 706-282-5055.

Happy Birthday America!





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Pictures of the recent West Coast mini-Reunion in Oregon, from **Karen Frice Wallace**

We had a great week, started with fundraiser dinner, bagpipes, a flyover, dance and auction at our place (my riding arena) with 300 + attendees. Raised over 20,000.00 for a local veterans group for hospice and end of life care. Our men were guest of honor and had a wonderful time. Many thanks (again to **Wade Gilbert**) for his support of the veterans.



We then went to historical Mt Hood for a night's stay and sightseeing.

On the way back we ventured to Erickson Air Museum and saw many WW 2 planes. We also toured a special WW 2 display at the High Desert Museum. Sat and enjoyed the company of each other the view of the 3 sisters and BBQ at our ranch a few nights.

It was a wonderful time with special people, again!
Planning for next year, God willing as **Bill Christian** always said.

Sincerely,

Wayne and Karen Wallace (Frice)





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team





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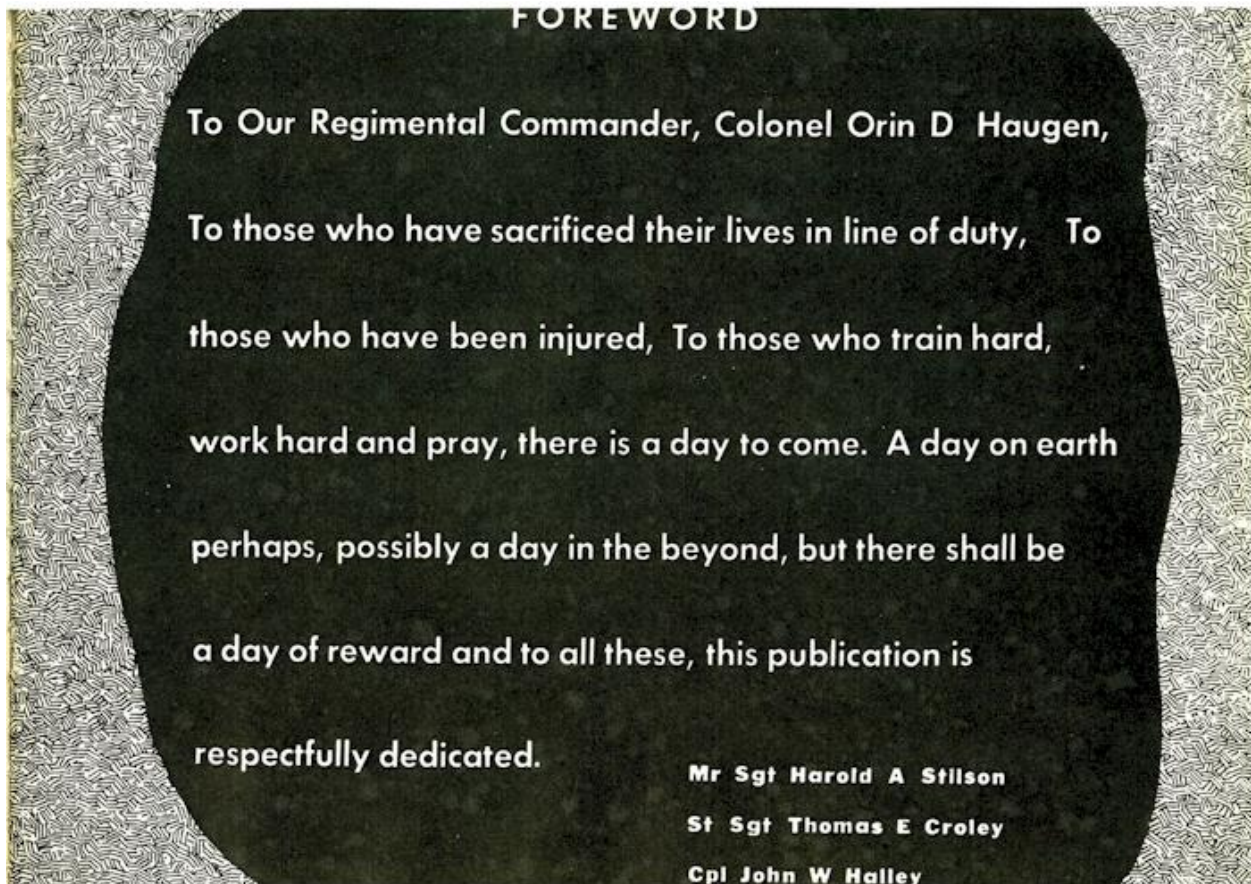
Pvt. Robert Gruwell in the 511th PIR Yearbook 1943

I received information from Leo Kocher, Secretary/Treasurer (Emeritus) of the 511th Parachute Infantry Regiment Association [11th Airborne Division], that Gruwell was listed by name and photo in the 511th PIR Yearbook - 1943 at Camp McCall, 1st Battalion, C Company. I found a copy of that yearbook at USAHEC and scanned the pertinent pages for you. From what I was told, he was sent to the 517th as a replacement, but I do not know if he was transferred while the 517th was in the US or in Italy.



Gruwell is in the 8th Column from the left, the 6th photo down.

Joe Figueiredo





51st Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Company "C" - 511th.

Parachute Infantry

1943

Camp Mackall ~

~ North Carolina



Headquarters Co. - 2nd Bn. -

511th. Parachute Infantry

1st Lt. John H. Chambers
1st Lt. H. M. Whigley
1st Lt. C. E. Jackson
Capt. C. C. Co.



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

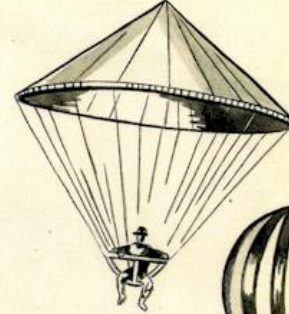
511 1943 603-511 1943
Historical Review of the
Modern Warfare Five Eleven

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARACHUTING AS A PART OF MODERN WARFARE

Leonardo da Vinci's Parachute, 16th Century.



Leonard's Parachute, 1783.



Guerin's Parachute, 1795.



Cocking's inverted cone parachute, 1824.

for jumping. He is taught the mechanics of parachute manipulation and means of various apparatus. He is given a half hour of "double time" taught how to tumble so as to absorb the landing shock, and jumps from a platform to develop his ankle and leg muscles. He is taught balance by the use of the "Trainisium". The Trainisium is a device invented by Stafford, director of physical education of the University of Illinois, and is of reports collated by the American Military Intelligence of training employed by various warring powers. The device is believed to reduce the time needed to train troops by solving the problem of rapid con-

dition. Trainisium is the only one of its kind in the Army and cost \$4,000. Its structure thirty feet high and nearly fifty feet square and is a maze of ladders built at all angles, horizontal bars and gymnasium ropes, all designed to strengthen and develop the muscles most apt to be used in falling. In all, the men execute 20 separate movements and 140 trainees can descend in one time.

Training part of the student parachutist's life probably gives him his first sensation of jumping as from a tower training consists of two parts: jumps from the controlled tower and free tower. The beginner is first taken up on the controlled tower in a seat, those seen at the World's Fair, and is allowed to "ride" until he gets a sensation of descent. He is then placed in a harness and makes descent until his instructors are satisfied that he has mastered the techniques. He is then hoisted up 150 feet in a plain harness attached to a bar. At the top he pulls the rip cord and falls straight down for 20 feet until the harness is taut and straightens him up. This will accustom him to the sensation of the free fall satisfying his instructors as to this phase of his training he is to go to the free tower. The free tower is so called because the parachutes from it are not controlled by guide wires but are free to drift with the wind. The student actually descends 250 feet in a free parachute. After he has satisfied his instructors that he has mastered this phase of his training, he is ready for the final stage, the qualifying jumps.

During the student makes five jumps from a plane in flight and participates in two mass jumps of twelve men each. During these jumps the student is taken up in the plane and from the ground, and if both ratings are satisfactory is designated as a qualified parachutist. At no time is any attempt made to push a student out of a plane, and if the student feels that he is incapable of the jump he is allowed to transfer to some other branch of the service.

It is expected that the parachutist in the war is expected to grow in importance with the progress of time. The possibilities of troops of this nature have by no means been exhausted and it is the confident opinion of the officers and men of the Parachute Regiment that they will be able to contribute notably to their country's defense.

In acknowledgement of effort and time used parallel to the creation of this commemorating annual, the Editors wish to express their appreciation to each individual who contributed.

Special acknowledgement is extended to the following named men for the application of their individual talent in the interests of this publication. These men are all of the Engineer Reproduction and Publications Section, Airborne Command.

CAPT. HAROLD BEATY

WILLIAM L. McCULLOUGH

JAMES W. CHAMBERLAIN

WILLIAM KLIEN

JOSEPH E. WITZERMAN

ALBERT F. POLINSKE

SANTA SORRENTINO

WILLIAM E. PERRY



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

RE: Pvt. R. Gruwell Search

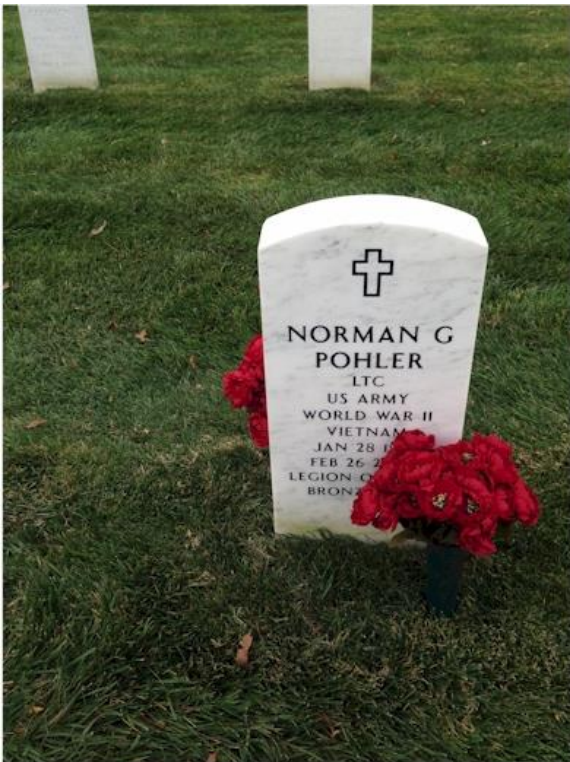
You are aware C Battery lost **Lt. Harry Moore** and **PFC Phil Kennamer** in the early morning hours of August 15, 1944. They, along with a FFI member, were evidently picked up by French civilians and buried. In time, a monument was built along the road for the three men. Colette Michel from Le Muy, France became interested and decided she wanted to write a story about the three men killed sixty years earlier. Colette had heard Kennamer bunked in my barracks. In fact, he was in the bunk above me. Correspondence followed and in 2004 a book was published. I received a copy. I am mentioned but I think it is only an acknowledgement. Title of the book is Mour en Provence -- le Destin Brise de Trois Heros de La Liberation.

She did considerable research before publishing and I wonder if maybe she might have been in contact with some people that might have also been involved with Gruwell's disappearance and disposal. Rumor was that they were picked up and buried in a church cemetery,

Colfite's address is

722 ch du jas de la paro
83490 Le Muy

Merle



Hello, I am the daughter of **Norm Pohler**, 517th D Battery. My father passed away in 2009 and is buried at Arlington National Cemetery. I made a copy of the schedule, in his own hand, my dad kept in his pocket and updated as he moved. I thought you all might find this of particular interest. Thank you for keeping the memories alive. Sue

Sue Pohler



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Feb 5 To Mar. 4 - Tennessee		Manuevers
May	7 - Camp Mackall	
	17 - At Sea	
	31 - Arrived, Naples, Italy	X
June	18 - Grosseto	
	22 - Gaborrawa	
	24 - Follonica	
	30 - Del Castello	
July	2 - Rome, Italy	(Base (camp)) X
Aug	13 - Montalto di Castro	(Airport) X
	15 - La Motte, France	
	18 - Puget-sur-Argens	
	20 - Fayence	
	22 - St. Cezaire	
	23 - St. Vallier	
	27 - La Broc	
	31 - Levens	
Sept	4 - L'Escarene	
	8 - Sospel	
Nov	18 - La Colle	(Rest Area) X
Dec	11 - Soissons	(Base (camp)) X
	22 - Namur, Belgium	X
	23 - Xhoffraix	
	25 - Ferrieres	
	29 - Werbomont	
Jan	2 - Cheneux	
	5 - Basse-Bodeux	
	7 - Diaromont	
	13 - Stavelot	(Rest Area)
	15 - Henumont	
	17 - Coules	
	20 - Petit-Thier	
	23 - Stavelot	(Rest Area) XX



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Feb 2- Lasheimergraben, Germany

5- Hurtgen

12- Aachen, Stolberg

13- Maastricht, Holland

13- Laon, France

vitry Joigny
Pcix Airport at Poy
Joigny

Airport
Poy

X
X
X
X
X
X

Fought with 5+7 Armies

6, 12 + 18 Corps

36, 79, 106, 75, 30 Inf. Divisions

82 Airborne Division

3+7 Armored Divisions

1st Allied A/B Army

1st Allied A/B Task Force

36, 79, 106, 75, 30 Inf, 82 A/B, 3-7 Amd Divisions

6, 12, 18 A/B Corps

5+7 Ground + 1st Allied A/B Armies

1st Allied A/B Task Force

X - no combat in these city
XX - Combat seen here but at
an earlier date - look above



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The Thunderbolt

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1st Quarter

2000

From The President's Desk

At the end of April Hitler and his mistress Eva Braun were hidden in an underground bunker along with a small cadre of loyal followers. He couldn't believe his armies were being defeated. The sounds of the Soviet army overhead however convinced Hitler his 1,000-year Reich was crumbling after 12 years. Adolph Hitler married Braun on April 30, 1945, and shortly after the wedding they both committed suicide in his Berlin bunker.



Merle W. McMorrow

Prior to this, the Big Three—Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin—met in February at Yalta on the Black Sea. During this meeting Roosevelt confirmed the agreements reached at Teheran during their first meeting during the period November 28–December 1, 1943. Among other things, it was agreed that the Soviet Union would occupy and govern Eastern Europe with the exception of Poland. However, the Big Three including France would occupy and share in the governing of Berlin. These decisions would affect all of us. Units would be broken up and, depending on the individual's point total and desires, his final location in the Army's

reshuffling of men would be determined. A low point total would shuffle men to units scheduled for redeployment to the Pacific. Those that felt they had seen enough combat opted for Berlin occupation duty.

Those low-point men on ships in the Atlantic were informed two atomic bombs were dropped and World War II was over.

Discharges for these men would soon followed. Now I want those that were on those ships to hear what golden opportunities they missed by going home for an early discharge.

I left my unit on June 25, 1945 to become a part of Headquarters Battery, 376h FA Battalion. We stayed in an old French cavalry barracks in the outskirts of Epinal, France. Men from various other units were assembled in the Epinal area and became members of the various battalions making up the 82nd Airborne Division. General James Gavin was the Commanding General.

We spent almost two weeks in the Epinal area. The weather was beautiful and passes to Nancy

about 50 miles north were plentiful. Sunny afternoons were spent lying on the beach or swimming in the Moselle River.

Soon it was over and we were on our way to Berlin. Since the west bank of the Elbe River was the most easterly point American troops occupied, it meant we had to pass many Soviet checkpoints in crossing the corridor between the American occupied zone and the Berlin city limits. The stops on the Autobahn for checking appeared to be more of a harassing procedure than a necessary requirement.

We triumphantly entered vanquished Berlin on a glorious day about mid-July 1945. Many who had fought from Africa through Sicily, Italy, Holland, Belgium, France and into Germany never had the opportunity to share in the thrill of entering the seat and power of Nazi Germany. Berlin was to be an example to the world in Allied unity, cooperation and harmony.

Berlin consisted of 20 boroughs, which were divided into four sectors. The four victorious commanders adapted the temporary demarcation lines for the purpose of quartering troops. Much of the housing was uninhabitable because of the bombings. We were assigned an SS barracks located to the south Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church. This church was located in what had been the fashionable

West Side of the city, at the intersection of Kurfurstendamm and Tauentzien Strasse. The destroyed steeple remains today as a landmark in the rebuilt city.

Berliners began moving freely throughout the city. Their entire waking hours were spent searching for food, looking for relatives and trying to find fuel for the coming winter. Gaunt refugees streamed through the



General Dwight Eisenhower and General James Gavin, Commander of the 82nd Airborne Division, in Berlin to see first-hand what had happened to the seat of power in Hitler's Germany

city continuously during the five months I was there. The westward stream had begun as early as the summer of 1944 as the Soviets continued their westward push. Mixed with the Germans were Latvians, Lithuanians, Estonians, and Poles—a flotsam of war on a journey from east to west.





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Merle McMorrow sent me a pile of old Thunderbolts from the early 200's. A sample is on the previous page, with a picture of Merle, then president of the 517th Association. It will take me a while to scan these. I may need to find a large format scanner. – BB

At the end of each of Bob Barrett's MailCalls, you see the name **Miriam Kelly**. She has been the guardian of the 517th Association Treasury. Each year she gets a Blg Bang out of the July 4th Weekend, That is because it is her Birthday.

So, Happy Birthday Mimsey and Happy 4th to the rest of you.

This is not "Fake News".

Merle

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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