



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2387

May 13, 2017

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

MailCall News



V-E Day, Victory in Europe is commemorated today (May 8, 2018)
at Rhône American Cemetery in Ville de Draguignan, France

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=the%20franco-american%20society%20of%20draguignan%20france>



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My dad, **Ben Combest** was in G company. I was wondering what was the standard issue rifle that he would have carried into combat. The M1 Garand or the carbine?

Joe Combest

Can anyone answer Joe's question? What was the standard issue for combat – the M1 rifle or carbine? Wasn't there a mix in each unit? Plus some sub-machine guns? Let us know. – BB

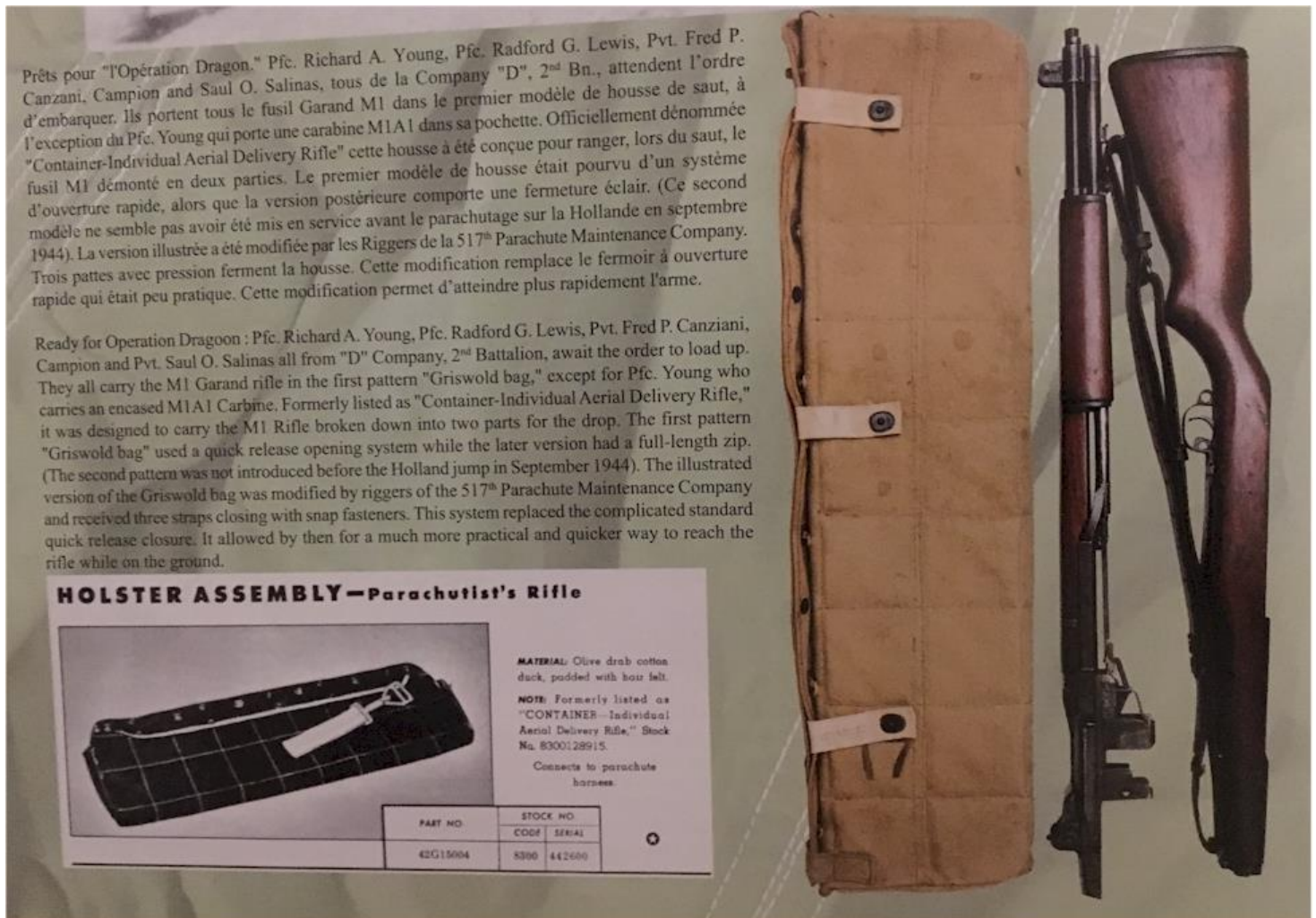
Wait... I just looked up **Ben Combest** in the Morning Reports. (Thanks, **Mike Wells**)

On 20-Jan-45, Ben Combest was wounded:

Fr dy to ab sk in hosp LWA BC as of 19 Jan 45 basic status changed fr asgd to atchd unasgd LWA BC – Lightly wounded in action Battle Casualty

And the entry lists him as MOS 7745, which means 7 = Airborne, and 745 = Rifle

Here are a couple of notes about the M1 Garand and also the Thompson sub-machine gun, from the Michel De Trez book, *First Airborne Task Force*.





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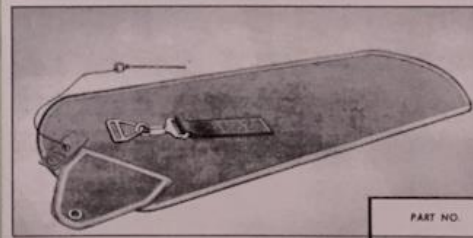
Officiellement dénommée "Container-Individual Aerial Delivery Sub-Machine Gun", cette housse était prévue pour transporter une mitrailleuse Thompson M1928/M1928A1 démontée. Elle était fabriquée en bâche de couleur O.D., rembourrée avec du feutre et se fixait au harnais du parachute au moyen d'un mousqueton. Aujourd'hui, cette housse demeure une des pièces d'équipement de la 2 G.M. les plus rares!

Le nombre 17 imprimé sur l'étui est un marquage d'unité propre au 517th PRCT. Ce marquage était appliqué par la Parachute Maintenance Company de la 17th Airborne Division (le 517th PRCT avait été formé à partir de cette division). Ce marquage particulier peut être observé sur plusieurs équipements de saut, employé par la 517th PRCT, retrouvés sur les champs de bataille ou illustrés par des photographies d'époque.

Formerly described as "Container-Individual Aerial Delivery Sub-machine Gun", this holster was designed to fit a disassembled M1928/ M1928A1 Thompson SMG. The bag is made of olive drab cotton duck padded with hair felt. It is connected to the parachute harness by means of a snap hook. Today, the bag remains one of the least common WWII standard field equipment items!

The number 17 printed on the case is a unit marking proper to the 517th PRCT. The markings were applied by the Parachute Maintenance Company of the 17th Airborne Division, hence the number (the 517th PRCT was formed from this Division). This particular marking can be observed on many 517th jump equipment, recovered from the battlefield or illustrated in period photographs.

HOLSTER ASSEMBLY—Parachutist's Sub-machine Gun



MATERIAL: Cotton duck, olive drab color, padded with hair felt.

NOTE: Formerly listed as "CONTAINER-Individual Aerial Delivery Sub-machine Gun," Stock No. 8300128925.

Connects to parachute harness.

PART NO.	STOCK NO.	
	CODE	SERIAL
42G15005	8300	442700

48

U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES ILLUSTRATED CATALOG

Here is some discussion about the weapons received when the 517th arrived in Italy, as discussed by **Erwin Scott**, D Company. See: http://www.517prct.org/bios/erwin_scott/erwin_scott.htm

"We had old rifles. They were the Garand rifle, but they had 4 serial numbers. But, they gave us a brand new one when we got off the boat and it had 6 digits on it. It didn't shoot near as good as what we left at home. The mass production did something to it. The ones we had apparently were within the first 9,000 made. Maybe Garand made all of them. They were almost as good, but not quite. We were trained for the 60 millimeter bazooka, the 90 millimeter bazooka, the Thompson sub machine gun, the grease gun, the carbine, the M 1. We all loved the Thompson, but if we had to carry it, we would have taken the grease gun over the Thompson. We would not have used the grease gun the way it came from the factory. There were 2 rods there and they had a long spring that went on the rods. It fired putt putt putt putt if you got an extra set of springs and put 2 springs on each rod and then put the bolt on, it wasn't as fast as a German machine pistol, but it was faster than a Thompson. It threw more lead. In Italy, there was an ammunition dump out there, where we could go out and get ammo 30.06, and .45 and blast away to our hearts' content. I know one time on a grease gun we fired it just as fast as you could put a clip in. We got the barrel to a cherry red and it still fired and did not stop. It used .45 pistol ammunition, same as a Thompson. We only had 3. We had that and the 30.06 and the M 1 - probably better than any pistol shell at the time. You were supposed to take a shot at a German or something up to 300 yards. Beyond that it wasn't a good idea to fire at anybody."





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The M1 Garand is a .30 caliber semi-automatic rifle that was the standard U.S. service rifle during World War II and the Korean War and also saw limited service during the Vietnam War. Most M1 rifles were issued to U.S. forces, though many hundreds of thousands were also provided as foreign aid to American allies. The Garand is still used by drill teams and military honor guards. It is also widely used by civilians for hunting, target shooting, and as a military collectible.

The M1 rifle was named after its Canadian-American designer, John Garand. It was the first standard-issue semi-automatic military rifle. By all accounts the M1 rifle served with distinction. General George S. Patton called it "the greatest battle implement ever devised". The M1 replaced the bolt action M1903 Springfield as the standard U.S. service rifle in the mid 1930s, and was itself replaced by the selective fire M14 rifle in the late 1950s.

From: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M1_Garand

Hi there,

Phil here, was wanting to read the newsletter but unfortunately the link isn't working. would you please resend it to me in hope that it might work this time.

Thank you so much.

Phil McSpadden

Hi Phil,

Good to hear from you. I don't know why that link didn't work for you. Could you try it again? Sometimes the internet is just slow to push out new content.

Bob Barrett



PVT Bertil Q Gustafson (KIA)

Birth
28 Jan 1922

Death
3 Jan 1945 (aged 22)

Burial

Fort Snelling National Cemetery
Minneapolis, Hennepin County, Minnesota, USA

Plot
SECTION B-1, SITE 345-S



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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.
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- 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.

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"I'll be dawgoned! Did ya know this can opener fits on th' end of a rifle?"