



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2424

October 27, 2019

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

MailCall News

There are some video in the post, if you click on the link below. More coming soon.

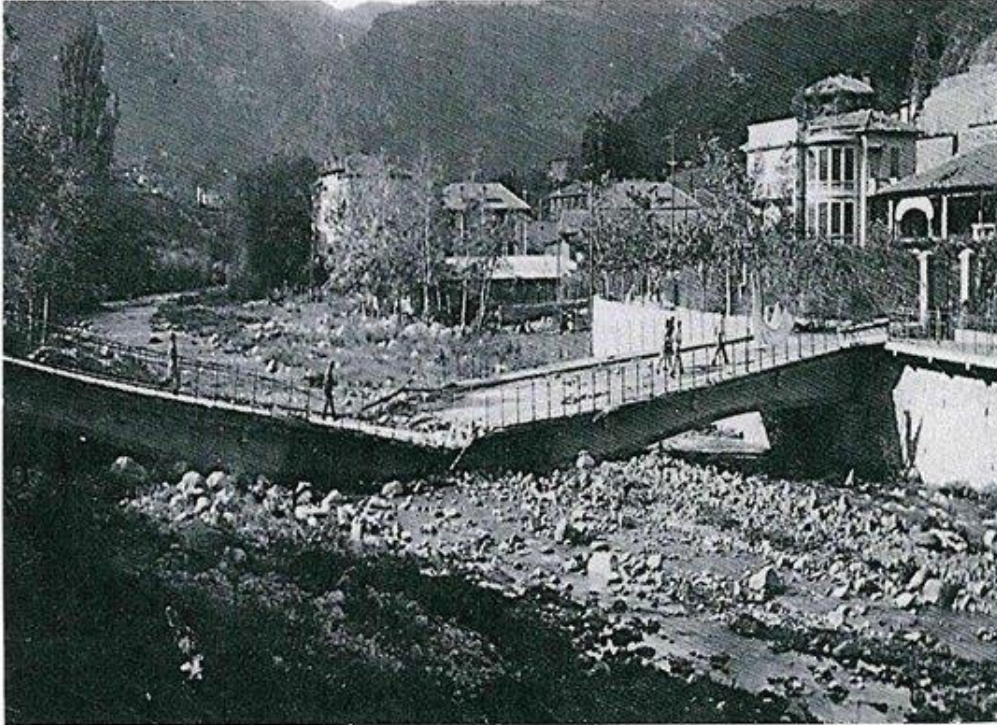
October 27, 2019 - 75th anniversary of the liberation of Sospel by the American paratroopers of the 517th parachute regimental combat team (Prct) who participated in the landing of Provence, released our region before going to fight in the Ardennes and in Germany.



From: <https://www.facebook.com/patricia.paviaorengo/posts/10157848478905746>



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



Marie-Christine THOURET
Maire de Sospel
le Conseil Municipal



vous prient de bien vouloir honorer
de votre présence

à la cérémonie du 75^{ème} anniversaire de la Libération de Sospel
le 27 octobre 2019

10h15 Rassemblement devant la Cathédrale Saint Michel

10h30 Messe

11h30 Départ en cortège jusqu'au pont de la Libération

12h00 Dépôt de gerbes suivi du discours et l'apéritif d'honneur offert par la municipalité

Participation de la Lyre Sospelloise et les associations de véhicules d'époque

***Vue du Pont de la Libération en 1944**



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That's **Roland Orengo** speaking above.



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Phil McSpadden's description about the raging fires in California compounds Alan's and my concern as we watch the coverage on the nightly news. Phil, his family and all in the way of the fires are in our heavy duty prayers. My sister lives in San Bernadino. Thank God that she and her house have been spared but she told me today that she knows others who have not be so lucky.

Thank you for the very uplifting parts of Mail Call:

First, God bless **Irma and Arnold Targnion**, CADUSA and **Eddy Monfort** for their excellent work and care in honoring the men of the 517th and keeping their sacrifices alive in the younger generations minds. Loved looking at CADUSA's program and Eddy's picture. Irma, Arnold and Eddy are outstanding. We owe them many thank you's.

Second, a special thank you Bob for reprinting the Santa Rosa Press Democrat's story on Phil McSpaddens' Veterans Day panel a year ago. Phil and his two co-panelists appear to have touched so many hearts and gotten standing ovations on behalf of all those who have served. Reading it made my heart swell.

Pat Seitz

Saturday, October 26: Here we go again... just two years ago this month we had the terrible fires here in my neighborhood...as a matter of record, the fire came within two blocks of where I live. All of Northern California is on high alert for fire, evacuations and power outages. With over 2500 acres already burned and only 10% contained, it doesn't look good. And, according to all sources, the worst is yet to come, from 8PM tonight until 11 AM on Monday, with high temperatures, low humidity and strong winds, with gusts up to 65 miles per hour.

This time I think where I am at should be pretty good, but still subject to power outages. My two children are already without power and have driven to Lake Tahoe to spend the week-end, or longer, and the staff has just notified all of the residents here can expect 56 senior citizens from a sister compound located just 8 miles north of here, the town of Windsor, which is adjacent to the Santa Rosa Airport.

I just received a phone flash message stating that all of Marin County is under evacuation alert and that power will be cut off for the entire county at 3 PM today...and it's now 4, so I guess it has already happened. Marin County, located just north of the Golden Gate Bridge, was my home for 20 years after I retired at the Presidio of San Francisco, from 1970-90. It is also the location of San Quentin, the well-known prison.....wonder where all the prisoners will go if they have to evacuate?

I live in Sonoma County, the next county north of Marin, famous for its extensive grape vineyards and wines, along with Napa County. These vineyards have not been destroyed, but the heat from the flames has not done any of the grapes any favor, or should I say flavor!!

This is the third year in a row that our area has suffered from these wildfires, and most of the blame is pointed at our power lines, so much so that they (PG&E) had to file for bankruptcy (msp). It has obviously affected all types of insurance rates as these companies face outrageous losses. I had two flashlights, and my daughter brought me another one this morning. Her car was packed with ice to they could take as many perishables with them to Tahoe as possible. The last time we had to evacuate we were gone for 9 days before we could return.

A big 'Airborne, all the way! to all my 517 friends. -- **phil mc spadden**



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My father, **William M. Wisber**, was a paratrooper in Company E of the 517th Paratroopers No 7745. His military records were destroyed in the St. Louis fire and it has been very difficult to get information about his time in the service during WWII. He is now 95 and lives with me in Plano, Texas. If you have any information or can point me in any direction to research the information about him I would really appreciate it. He originally was training as a tail gunner on a bomber in northwest USA but he transferred because he wanted to be a paratrooper. He was injured sometime in late July or early August 1945 and was shipped home on the Francis Y Slinger which docked in New York. [See *article about Francis Slinger below*]

He was then sent to the O'Reilly Hospital in Springfield, Missouri where he was treated and then discharged. He met my mother in the hospital and they were married in November, 1945 before he left the Army. Thanks for any help you can offer.

Sincerely,

Constance L. Wisber

Hi Constance,

I'm looking in the records and histories of 517th PRCT that I have for mentions of William Wisber, but unfortunately, I haven't found anything yet. I have not found anything yet, but my records are incomplete.

How do you know he was with the 517th and E Company? Do you have any records? Maybe discharge papers?

I do not see him listed on the 517th's Christmas 1944 roster, written just before the Battle of the Bulge, if he was wounded in the spring of 1945, that probably means that he joined the 517th as a replacement after December 1944. My Dad was also a "replacement" who volunteered to go overseas to fight.

On February 15, 1945, the 517th was reassigned to the 13th Airborne. Most 517th troopers were stationed in Joigny France in February and did not see much action after that. Most returned to the states in August, but some elected to stay in Europe, stationed mostly in Germany.

I have some Moring Reports which include some battle and injury reports, but my records stop by March 1945.

You probably have already seen William Wisber's enlistment record at:

<https://aad.archives.gov/aad/record-detail.jsp?dt=893&mtch=1&cat=WR26&tf=F&q=wisber+william+m&bc=sl&rpp=10&pg=1&rid=1261300>.

He enlisted from Chicago in July 1942, and was a "semiskilled machine shop worker".

I have been told that with modern technology, they are starting to be able to recover some of the records from the St. Louis fire, so there is a slight chance the records could be recovered eventually.

MOS 7745 means his Military Occupational Specialty was 7745. 7 = paratrooper, 745 is Rifleman.

Hope this helps a little. – Bob Barrett



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Thank you so much for your time and your reply. I know he was in the 517th because I got a copy of his discharge. I have attached a copy of this document so that you can add him to your records.

Sincerely,
Constance

Hi Constance,

That helps. I am not questioning whether he was with the 517th, I just can't help with the timing of when he joined and was discharged. I have not found William Wisber listed on the paperwork I have, but that is all before March 1945, as I only have partial records. The discharge says he served in the US, then was in Europe from 20-April-45 until 10-Aug-45.

From *Paratroopers' Odyssey*:

On April 4th the 13th Airborne Division moved to departure airfields in north-eastern France. The 517th went to the Airfield B-54 at Achiet, in the Arras--Bapaume region that had seen bitter fighting in the First World War.

Intelligence believed that diehard Nazis and SS formations were going to try to move south to carry on the war from the Bavarian Alps. The new mission -- EFFECTIVE -- was to be an airborne landing south of Stuttgart to block such a movement. Once more plans and preparations were made and once more they were cancelled.

More plans followed in quick succession. Jumps into Norway, Denmark, and to liberate prisoners "of war and/or concentration camp inmates -- all were overtaken by events.

Passes were liberal and the troopers made excursions to Lille, Paris, and local towns. No one paid much attention when told that a new mission was in the planning mill. Each day the troops forming for breakfast watched huge formations of C-46's and C-47's passing overhead carrying supplies for the rampaging ground armies.

**ENLISTED RECORD AND REPORT OF SEPARATION
HONORABLE DISCHARGE**

1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL Wisber William W		2. ARMY SERIAL NO. 10 692 122	3. GRADE Sgt	4. ARM OR SERVICE Army Inf	5. COMPONENT 24
6. ORGANIZATION Company B 517th Parachute Inf Regt		7. DATE OF SEPARATION 13 Dec 1945	8. PLACE OF SEPARATION Orlando Van Hook Springfield Mo		
9. PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES 1934 N Cottage St Chicago Illinois		10. DATE OF BIRTH 12 Apr 1921	11. PLACE OF BIRTH Chicago Illinois		
12. ADDRESS FROM WHICH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE RESUMED Home 2		13. COLOR EYES Brown	14. COLOR HAIR Black	15. HEIGHT 5'8 1/2"	16. WEIGHT 165 lbs
17. NO. DEPENDENTS 2	18. MARITAL STATUS Married	19. U.S. CITIZEN Yes	20. CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND NO. Truck Driver, Light & Heavy 7-36,950		
MILITARY HISTORY					
21. DATE OF INDUCTION 27 Apr 45	22. DATE OF ENLISTMENT 27 Apr 45	23. DATE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE 27 Apr 45	24. PLACE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE Chicago Illinois		
25. SELECTIVE SERVICE DATA 1-A	26. COUNTY AND STATE Ill	27. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE Home 2			
28. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY AND NO. Paratrooper 7745		29. MILITARY QUALIFICATION AND DATE (i.e. Industry creation and maintenance badge, etc.) None			
30. BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS Southern France 04 13 03 45 Rhineland 09 10 03 45					
31. OCCASIONS AND CITATIONS American Theater Ribbon Army Theater Ribbon with 2 battle stars Good Conduct Medal					
32. WOUNDS RECEIVED IN ACTION None					
33. LATEST IMMIGRATION DATES APPLICANT: None OTHER (Specify): None			34. SERVICE OUTSIDE COUNTRY (U.S. AND RETURN) DATE OF DEPARTURE: 5 Apr 45 DESTINATION: Great Britain DATE OF ARRIVAL: 20 Apr 45		
35. TOTAL LENGTH OF SERVICE CONTINENTAL SERVICE: 2 Y 11 M 10 D FOREIGN SERVICE: 6 M		36. HIGHEST GRADE HELD Unknown United States 10 Aug 45			
37. REASON AND AUTHORITY FOR SEPARATION 1-A 12-13-45 Certificate of Discharge issued on official 13 Dec 45					
38. PAY DATA YEARS: 1 MONTHS: 11 DAYS: 17 PAY: 330.00 TIME PAYMENT: 230.00 TOTAL AMOUNT: 560.00					
INSURANCE NOTICE					
39. KIND OF INSURANCE: None 40. MONY PAID: None 41. EFFECTIVE DATE OF ALIEN: 11 Dec 45 42. DATE OF NEXT PREMIUM DUE: Jan 46 43. PREMIUM DUE EACH MONTH: \$ 0.00 44. INTENTION OF VETERAN TO: None					
45. REMARKS (This space for completion of above items or entry of other items specified in W. O. Document) Explosive and Parachute tested ASB Squad (8 Dec 45) 43					
46. SIGNATURE OF PERSON BEING SEPARATED: <i>William Wisber</i>			47. PERSONNEL OFFICER (Type name, grade and organization - signature) W. D. BARKER, 1st Lt, SAC		



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In April and early May three momentous events occurred in rapid succession. President Roosevelt died, Hitler committed suicide in his Berlin bunker, and the German Armed Forces surrendered unconditionally at Rheims. Suddenly and unbelievably, it was over.

On May 12th the 517th returned to Joigny .As the European war ended, the Army proceeded to dismantle the machine that had won it. Each man was credited with "points" * toward discharge, and it was announced that no one who had served in both the Mediterranean and Europe would have to go to the Pacific. Every 517th long-term survivor became eligible either for discharge or occupation duty.

My guess is that he joined the 517th who were stationed in Joigny France or the airfield in April. By then, the 517th was absorbed into the 13th Airborne. But then he was wounded, and I cannot tell where that was. I do know that some of the 517th troopers decided to stay in Europe rather than return home, most served in Germany. If he did not have enough points to return, he probably stayed in Europe for the occupation. The discharge does mentioned "Southern France", but I would not be surprised if they just copied that from the 517th records.

Bob Barrett

The Francis Y Slinger was a U.S. Army Hospital Ship, named after a US Army nurse who was killed in Belgium in 1944. Coincidentally, she was killed exactly 75 years ago tomorrow, October 21, 1944, in Belgium. See article below.

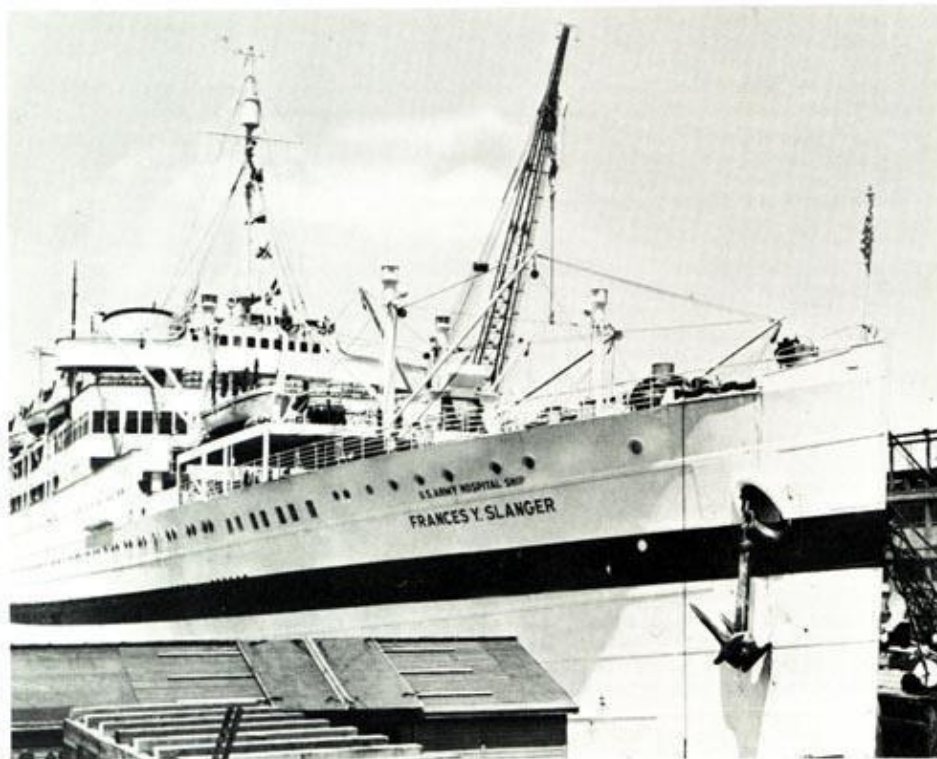


FIGURE 55.—The U.S. Army Hospital Ship *Frances Y. Slinger*, named after the first Army nurse to be killed by enemy action in the European theater. New York Port of Embarkation, Brooklyn, N.Y., 1945.



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From: <https://jwa.org/thisweek/oct/21/1944/frances-y-slanger>

Army nurse Frances Y. Slanger killed by German artillery

October 21, 1944

On October 21, 1944, Frances Y. Slanger, R.N. died in Elsenborn, Belgium, a victim of a German artillery attack. She was the first American nurse to die in Europe after the June 1944 D-Day landings in Normandy. She was 31 years old.

On the night before she died, Slanger had written a letter to the *Stars and Stripes* military newspaper, on behalf of military nurses, praising American G.I.'s and thanking the wounded for the privilege of easing their pain and sharing some of their hardships.

Featured on the newspaper's editorial page by editors who did not know of her death, Slanger's letter evoked a deep response. When the news of her death was published, *Stars and Stripes* received an unparalleled outpouring of letters from its moved readership. Charles Sawyer, the U.S. ambassador to Belgium speaking of Slanger, said, "if there is in heaven and in our hearts a special shrine for those who have given the most and the best, it is held sacred for the American nurse."

Born in Poland, Slanger came to Boston, Massachusetts when she was seven years old with her family. She helped her father, a fruit peddler, while she attended high school. She graduated from the Boston City Hospital School of Nursing in 1937 and entered hospital work. In 1943, she enlisted in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps and attended the first nursing basic training program at Fort Devens. In Europe, she worked as part of a surgical team on the front lines.

In June 1945, a cruise ship, refurbished as a hospital ship to return wounded American soldiers from Europe, was commissioned as the Frances Y. Slanger. In November 1947, her body was returned to Boston for reburial. More than a thousand people, including the mayor of Boston, paid their respects.

Source: Bob Welch, *American Nightingale: The Story of Frances Slanger, Forgotten Heroine of Normandy* (New York, 2004).



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RE: Toccoa progress

Hi Bob,

Heather Riley here. We went to the 75th tribute at Toccoa. They have made good progress on the 517th barrack. We took pictures. The sign has not been put up. They promised they had the funds for it. As we were going to pay for it. I'll send them as soon as I get them. No one from 517th was present. We were hoping to see Morris. I wish we could go overseas but Mama duty calls.

Thanks,

Heather and Joe Riley

Daughter of **Pvt. Ian Cowan**, Company B.

We were told that people asked why they were not building the barracks in order. The answer was that the 517th was the only regiment that had donated for the building of the replica.

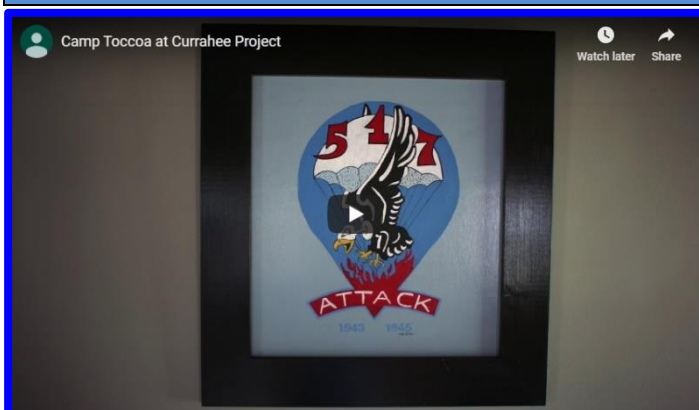
It's a great group running the actual mountain area. They have broken off from the museum and are strictly about the paratroopers. I'll send more information later. Hope you're doing well.

Heather Riley



WATCH OUR VIDEO BELOW:

See the progress we have made reviving this significant site amidst the beauty of Toccoa, GA. Visit us and experience Camp Toccoa first hand for yourself.



<https://youtu.be/RRMrDeo9KHs>



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Anthony S. Celli (KIA)

Date of Death: October 14, 1944

World War II

Service # 12160585

Private First Class, U.S. Army

517th Parachute Infantry Regimental Combat Team

Entered Service From: New Jersey

Buried: Plot

C Row 1 Grave 25

Rhone American Cemetery

Draguignan, France

Award: Purple Heart

: <https://www.facebook.com/usabmc/posts/>

See: http://www.517prct.org/photos/anthony_celli.htm



Good day Bob,

I want to ask you is there a possibility to get a copy of the 517th 75th anniversary patch?

And if there are still available, what is the price for one shipped to Belgium?

With regards,

Koen Van Hoey



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.

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