



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



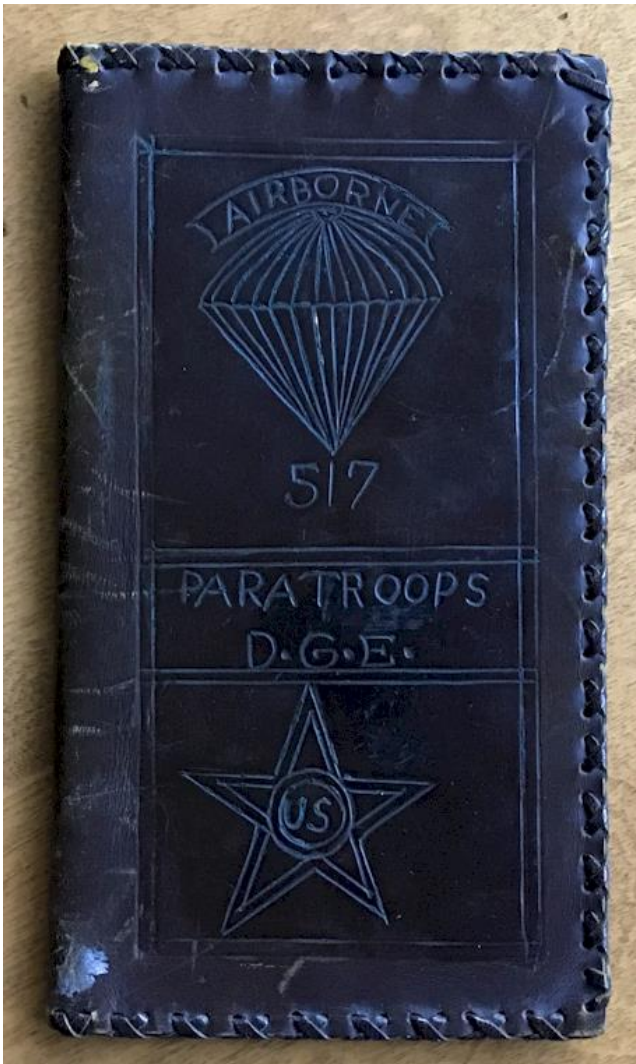
PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2446

June 21, 2020

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

MailCall News



RE: Leather tooled wallet

Good day.

This item was found among my father's belongings after he passed. No value to me but may be to someone else. Any help you can provide would be appreciated. Thank you in advance!

Kate Emerick

Hi Kate,

I will post a picture in the next MailCall. It looks handmade. I have never seen one of these before. I don't know if it is worth anything to anyone else. I suspect it was made post-war, but that's just a guess.

Can I assume that DGE is Doren G. Emerick of HQ Company, 3rd Battalion? (He was wounded on August 26, 1944 in France.)

Thanks,

Bob Barrett



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Can you help me find out who was **Gordon Lippman**'s platoon leader and what happened to him? Did he move on or was he wounded, captured or KIA?

Appreciate any help you might offer.

All the Best.

~ **Rob Lofthouse**

As discused in recent emails, **Gordan Lippmann** was with **Bill Boyle** duing the Battle of the Bulge. Has was wounded and was given a battlefield commision to 1st Lieutenant. (Sorry, but I don't have HQ/1 Company Morning Reports after November 1944)

http://www.517prct.org/bios/gordon_lippmann/lippman_family_history.pdf

Unfortnately, I have no way of teling who was the Platoon Leader. In December 1944, Lippmann was a Staff Sergeant. Weren't most Platoon leaders Sergeants or at least Corporals?

Bob Barrett

I am emailing you on behalf of my father Al Eckart. My Uncle, **William J. Eckart** was in I Company - 3rd battalion. Today, while my dad was on MailCall he can across a woman, Shelly Aleff, in search of Paratroopers Odyssey. He is interested in getting in contact with her, as he has an extra copy of it. If you could please help us get in touch with her or her in touch with us, we would be very grateful. His phone number is (609) 914-0188 residing in Nj. Thank you so much l'm advance and for your time.

Alicia Eckart
Alvah Eckart

Alicia,

This is wonderful of you and your Dad. I'm not sure how else we would have found copies.

Alicia, meet Shelly Aleff. *[I connected them by email.]*

Bob Barrett

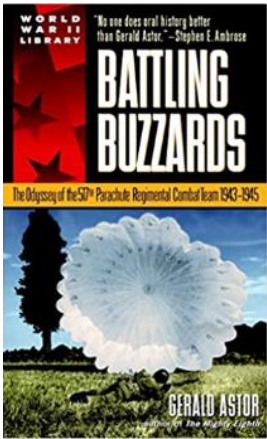


517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



For Shelly or anyone else looking for copies of the *Paratrooper's Odyssey*, unless we find a big stash in someone's cellar, I don't expect that many copies will be available. There are almost always one or two copies on eBay, currently selling at \$210 to \$350.

I did make a digital copy which is already on the website if anyone wants to read it or search through it: http://517prct.org/documents/odyssey/odyssey_history.htm



Also, a much easier to find book is Gerald Astor's *Battling Buzzards* book, published in 1993. It is easily available and inexpensive in hardcover or paperback on Amazon [here](#). I actually saw a copy in a Barnes & Noble bookstore not too long ago.



Bendejun septembre 1944. Andrée Caisson deuxième à partir de la gauche, et six amies accueillent deux paras du 517th.

Bendejun (?)
september 1944,
Andree Caisson
second from the left,
and six friends
welcome two
paratroopers from the
517th. (picture sent to
MailCall 1032,
December 2005, from
Robert Cohen, a
friend in France.



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Bob,

I can't find a link to copies of the Thunderbolt on the 517th web site. I thought there was a link there before. I also seem to recall a comment that additional copies were gradually being scanned and added to the web site, and that you were looking for copies that you didn't currently have. I found a stack of old copies of the Thunderbolt in some of my dad's (**Ray Helms**) things. The attached EXCEL spreadsheet summarizes the copies I found. They are from the period 1993 to 2008, but they are not a complete set. Let me know if I have something you need and I might be able to scan it into a PDF for you. Unfortunately, 12 of the copies during the period 2000 to 2003 were larger documents printed like a small newspaper and they won't fit on my scanner.

I'm not sure why I didn't find a complete set of the documents for the 1993 to 2008 period and why I didn't find anything after 2008 unless the Thunderbolt ceased publication, my dad got dropped from the mailing list, or he just stopped keeping them. Since I still haven't gone through all his things it's also possible that I may find more copies in the future.

Thanks,

Glenn Helms

Hi Glenn,

The only Thunderbolts I have scanned are the few recent ones listed on the website, shown below. I did not have to scan them since I had digital versions to work from. Yes, it is a bit of work to scan the old ones, since most of them are larger newspaper formats and they will not fit on a home-sized scanner. In the past, one or two people (**Merle McMorrow** comes to mind) have offered to send me their piles of old Thunderbolts, but I didn't want to take responsibility, since I knew I would not have the time to scan them.

Most of the material in the old Thunderbolts include info and photos about reunions, the Auxiliary business, and personal news from the troopers. It is not wartime news, so is probably of little interest to historians or researchers. But, like MailCall, there are occasional stories and photos about war-time events. I hate to have them all end up on the scrap heap. If your only choice is to throw them out, I would accept them and put them into storage in my attic. (And look through a few to see mentions of my Dad and people I know.)

Bob Barrett

Thunderbolt

Now available online here!



- [Winter January 2016](#) (Final Edition) (11Mb)
- [August 2015](#) (Special T-Bolt to vote for Dissolution of the Association)
- [Winter \(December\) 2014](#) (7Mb)
- [Spring/Summer 2014](#) (7 Mb)
- [Winter February 2014](#) (7 Mb)
- [Fall October 2013](#) (3 Mb)
- [Summer July 2013](#) (5 Mb)
- [Spring April 2013](#) (12 Mb)
- [Winter January 2013](#) (3Mb)
- [2nd Quarter 1999](#) (11Mb)



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

As I was looking over my dad's (**Ray Helms**) old copies of the Thunderbolt magazine I came across something in the August 1997 edition asking troopers to send in their photos and stories for a book that was to be published by Turner Publishing with the title "517th PRCT History Book". Was that book ever completed and published?

Also, in the 4th Quarter 1996 edition there was an article reporting on the death of **Col. Rupert Graves**. It reported that he died on October 23, 1996 at Martin Medical Center in Stuart, Florida and was buried on October 28, 1996 in Hendersonville, North Carolina. Both those places are very familiar to me. We vacation in Stuart for about a month every year and are very familiar with the Martin Medical Center. Both my wife and one of my cousins were admitted there for short stays in the past few years. Hendersonville is not far from where I grew up and where I still live in North Carolina. And by the way, my cousin who spent some time in the hospital at Martin Medical Center lived in Hendersonville for a number of years in the 1970s. Another example of how "it's a small world".

Thanks,

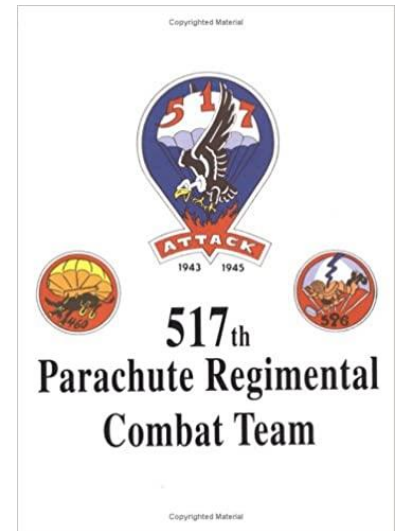
Glenn Helms

Hi Glenn,

Yes, the Turner Book was published in 1998. Copies are available occasionally in eBay and Amazon (at prices up to \$899!). Turner did this for several Army units, and the idea was to include a little history probably copied from other sources and also to collect personal news from current alumni. My Dad is not in there as he had not reconnected with the 517 by then. I thought he had reconnected with the 517 in the early 90's, but maybe he just missed it. A lot of people were not. (Unfortunately Ray Helms is not in there either.)

I did check and the history of the 517 in the Turner book was written by Col Rupert Graves, but it is copied word for word from the *Blue Book Magazine* 3-part series.

http://517prct.org/documents/bluebook_magazine/bluebook_magazine.htm





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Hi Mike,

Hope all is well these days.

I seem to have misplaced the copies of the morning reports images from B Company. I know you had them since the records are in the excel Master List.

While we figure out how to get them to me, could you just send me 5 images for now, the reports that list **Jack Bandy**?

Bob Barrett

See attached. Sorry it took so long!

Let me know you received them; am sending them to both email addresses I have for you.

Mike Wells (son of **Chester Wells**, H Company)

Hi Damiano,

Here are the 5 Morning Reports for **Jack Bandy**. The first if his promotion to PFC near Rome.

Bob Barrett

COMPANY MORNING REPORT DATE 4 Aug 1944

STATION 9 Miles SE Rome, Italy

ORGANIZATION Co B - 517th Parachute Regt - 1st Div

SERIAL NUMBER	NAME	GRADE	CLASS
39287631	Bandy, Jack D	745	1st
3034284	Blair, Kenneth J	745	1st
39279276	Boyd, John R	745	1st
32774571	Burkhardt, Louis G	745	1st
3941288	Chapman, George H	745	1st
39867835	Coe, Edward	745	1st
25631554	Carver, Carroll C	608	1st
27861830	Davis, Allan H	745	1st
2714817	Gonzales, Manuel E	607	1st
39462001	Hartnett, James W	745	1st
39284283	Immittell, John	607	1st
39727630	Vanderford, George E	745	1st
39727630	Walter, Donald E	745	1st

Above 13 EM Present
to RRC.

Record of Events
Usual Camp Duties

OFFICER STRENGTH	PLD B & CAPT		1ST LT		2D LT		CO		PLT C	
	PRESENT	ABSENT	PRESENT	ABSENT	PRESENT	ABSENT	PRESENT	ABSENT	PRESENT	ABSENT
ASSIGNED		1	1		4					
ATTACHED										
UNASSIGNED										
ATTACHED TO OTHER COMP										
TOTAL	1	1			4					

AVN CREDIT & ENLISTED STRENGTH	EVATION CREDIT		ENLISTED MEN			
	PRESENT	ABSENT	PRESENT FOR DUTY	ABSENT FOR DUTY	ABSENT	PRESENT AND ABSENT
ASSIGNED			108		7	115
ATTACHED						
UNASSIGNED						
ATTACHED TO OTHER COMP			4			4
TOTAL			112		7	119

R 1 ESTIMATED NUMBER OF RATIONS REQUIRED FOR DAY OF WEEK

A DATE

T RATIONS ATTENDANCE FOR DAY OF THIS REPORT

I BREAKFAST DINNER SUPPER

O MEN AUTHORIZED TO BE SEPARATELY

N MEN ATTEND TO OTHER DUTY FOR RATIONS

S MEN PRESENT 112 MEN 112 MEN 5 TOTAL 117

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SIGNATURE Charles H. Hilldale - 100544



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

In the last MailCall, **Shelly Caulfield Azeff** (daughter of **Lt. Warren Caulfield**) was looking for copies of *Paratroopers' Odyssey* for her children. Copies show up on eBay occasionally, but at absurd prices. I don't know that the 517th Association did a reprint in paperback around 2005. That effort was led by **Chris Linder** and **Claire Giblin**, I think. But I don't know where or if there might be any remaining copies. In an old MailCall in July 2005, Ben included a note, "*Paratroopers' odyssey*. Copies can be ordered from Bob Christie for \$22.50". I remember **Bob Christie** (HQ/2) being a very active participant with the Association, reunions, and MailCall. He might have been the Association Treasurer at the time. He is on my MailCall distribution list, but we haven't heard from him in a long time. On a quick search, I found that Bob [passed away in 2019.



Robert J Christie, of Bradenton Florida, passed away on December 8, 2019, at the age of 93, he was born in the Bronx New York, on December 11, 1925. He is a Veteran of WWII, very proud to have served as a "517th Infantry Paratrooper". Robert was an active member of Southside Baptist Church of Bradenton for many years. Growing up in Groton, CT., Robert graduated from Fitch Senior High and earned a Bachelor's degree from UCONN.

He loved raising Brown Swiss calves, being a kind and gentle man himself. Robert was a Restaurateur (owner and operator) foodservice business.

He is preceded in death by his wife Mildred and parents Howard and Vera Christie. Robert was loved and cared for by: Gail and Charlie Dufour Trudie Cunningham Holly and James Collum and family, friends at Bradenton Oaks Memory Care and Tidewell Hospice.



Bob and Mildred Christie, Valentine's Day 2014



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

My Uncle is **Charles J Walter** who has been deceased since 1999. I know some history about him and his role in the 517th Parachute Infantry, but I would like to find out more details if that is possible about the awards he received and any other information about his service that is known. Where was the mine field located that he rescued a person?

Here is what I know:

1. He was a Private First Class in Company E.
2. He jumped into Southern France in Aug 1944.
3. He was wounded seriously in the Battle of the Bulge Jan 1945.
4. On October 20, 1944, he went into a mine field and administered plasma to a wounded person then brought him out of the mine field to safety under heavy fire.
5. His awards are Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Sharpshooter, European Campaign Medal, Good Conduct Medal, World War II Medal.

I thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Marnie Ammons, Niece

Hi Marnie,

For some reason, I cannot find him on the December 1944 roster. But I do see a number of Morning Reports for Pvt. Charles J. Walter with E Company, so we know he was in Italy, France and the Bulge. He was LWA (lightly wounded in Action) at Trois Ponts in Belgium on January 3, 1945. (attached)

On October 23 he rejoined the unit north of Col de Braus, France. I haven't yet found too much about a mine field, but we do know that the Germans left plenty of mines in the area. Here is one story from Gene Brissey's biography. Gene was also with E Company.:

"After several more days of slugging back and forth with the Germans, we decided to move into the city of Sospel. As we moved forward, signs of

COMPANY MORNING REPORT ENLISTED 3 Jan 5

STATION Vicinity of Trois Points, Belgium
 ORGANIZATION Co E 517th Procht Inf Regt Inf

SERIAL NUMBER	NAME	GRADE	CODE
19121011	Pravo, Frederick I 7745	Sgt	
Fr dy to ab sk hosp SNA (BC) basic status changed fr asgd to atchd unassgd			
0-1304235	Kizaleswicz, Joseph F Jr	1st Lt	
Fr dy to ab sk hosp LWA (BC) basic status r) changed fr asgd to atchd unassgd			
0-520914	Whitley, Charles V	1st Lt	
Fr dy to KIA			
36748617	Maurek, Robert R 7745	Cpl	
37567901	Gustafson, Bertilo	7745	Pvt
Fr dy to KIA			
35568870	Walker, Charles J 7521	Pvt 4	
Reld fr atchd to Hq Co 2nd Bn this Regt to ab sk hosp LWA (BC) basic status changed fr asgd to atchd unassgd			
33761629	Mullan, Thomas R 7657	T/5	
(atchd fr Med Det this Regt) reld fr atchd to Co. PRECED OF EVENTS			
Co began attack on enemy held terr at 0630 Met heavy enemy resistance and Co subjected to intense mortar barrage.			

OFFICER STRENGTH	PLD O & CAPT			SER LT			E2 LT			NO	FLT D
	PRESEN	ABSENT	PRESEN	ABSENT	PRESEN	ABSENT	PRESEN	ABSENT			
ASSIGNED	1		3	1	3						
ATTACHED UNASSIGNED ATTACHED FR OTHER UNITS				2							
TOTAL	1		3	3	3						

SERIAL NUMBER	AVIATION CADETS		ENLISTED MEN			
	PRESENT	ABSENT	PRESENT FOR DUTY	PRESENT	ABSENT	PRESENT FOR DUTY
ASSIGNED			100	2	27	129
ATTACHED UNASSIGNED ATTACHED FR OTHER UNITS					40	40
TOTAL			100	2	68	173

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF MEN REQUIRED FOR 1 DAY

WATER ATTENDANCE FOR DAY OF ENL REPORT

BREAKFAST **DINNER** **SUPPER** **TOTAL** **AVERAGE**

REN AUTHORIZED TO BE SEPARATELY **REN ATCHD FOR BATTIONS & OTHERS**

REN ATCHD TO OTHER **REN ATCHD FOR BATTIONS & OTHERS** **TOTAL**

REN PRESENT **LESS** **PLUS** **TOTAL**

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MAINTENANCE J. PASATA, CAPT INF



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

over 50 days of war were everywhere. The trees, grass and other former living things were now dead in no-mans-land between our positions and the forts where the Germans were holed up. The Germans were tired of war as they and we had been living it and all evidence pointed to the fact that they started to move to more comfortable land. As we moved through one of the areas where they had been, our Platoon leader was leading us along a narrow path in single file formation. He decided that we should post a guard and search the area and told me to drop out of line and post a guard nearby. I stepped out of line and another man moved up into my position and took two or three steps forward and stepped on a mine. The mine blew his entire foot off at the ankle. We were all on the ground as soon as the mine exploded. The stub of this man's leg was right in front of my face. This bothered me more than anything else that I had seen during the war. Whether it was the thought that I "should" have been the one to step on the mine or something else I don't know, but I could not push the scene from my mind."

- http://517prct.org/documents/brissey/brissey_history.htm

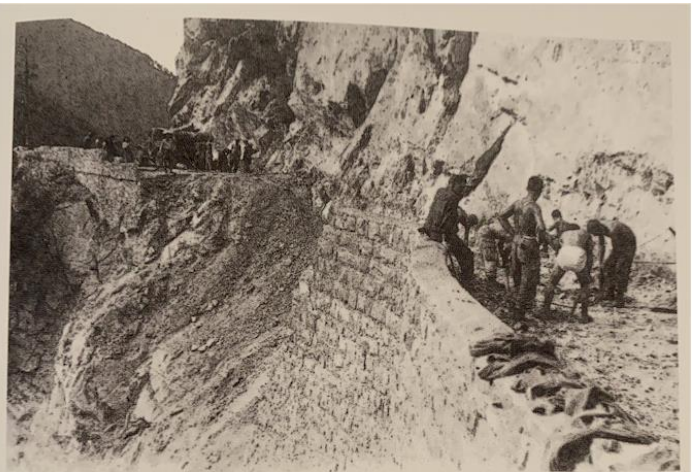
I did find another sad story on mines in the Col de Braus area in **Jean-Loup Gassend's** book on Operation Dragoon. The story is from Chares Erbeta, a Frenchman in the area. This occurred around August 30th 1944, as the Germans were retreating and blowing up bridges and roads.

"When the Germans retreated, they blew up the road and then laid mines. We had gone up to see if it was possible to go past the craters, and a woman with a child, the young Jean Cavallero, came up behind us, wanting to get to Sospel. I told that woman: "You cannot go by, the road is blown and mined. Don't go off the road, there are mines all around," In the meantime, the kid felt like going to the toilet, he said, "I want to do a per, I want to do a poo." The poor kid was frightened. I told him, "If you want to do a pee, there is lots of room here. Do your pee in the middle of the road, it's OK." But he wanted to go to the side of the road. I said, "Don't go there!" but there was nothing I could do. He just got to the side of the road and he stepped on a mine and was killed. It was horrendous to see that. He died 15 meters away from me. It was an atrocious sight. Afterwards I couldn't stand the sight of a drop of blood.

The woman wanted to get to Sospel. Later we found out that she wanted to escape and go to the Germans. Supposedly she went to Austria."



10-year-old Jean Cavallero, who was killed by a mine near the craters on the road leading from l'Escarène to Col de Braus August 30, 1944. Author's Collection.



The cratered road between Touët de l'Escarène and Col de Braus as it appeared in early September 1944, when it was being repaired by troops of the 596th PCEC. Courtesy Michel de Trez.



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Speaking of eBay, there are always interesting items popping up there. And a search for 517th makes it quick – What other items would include the name “517th”? I see this 517th commemorative bowl currently on eBay for \$89.99. It looks and sounds authentic from the description. I’ve never actually seen on before.



“Super Rare post WWII Commemorative Bowl 517th Parachute Infantry Regiment made by Dubois Pottery Bouffioulx, Belgium for veterans of the 517th PIR and the 517th PRCT which included attached arty and engineer units. Commemorative bowls such as this one were popular with returning Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge and those who visited the battlefields after the war. I suspect this bowl was made post war for a 517 Vet touring Belgium. I’ve never seen a Dubois Bowl for a separate regiment, It was more common to make them for division units such as the 101st Airborne or the 7th Armored Division. During the Battle of the Bulge the 517th distinguished itself while attached to the XVIII Airborne Corps and other units including the 82nd Airborne Division.”

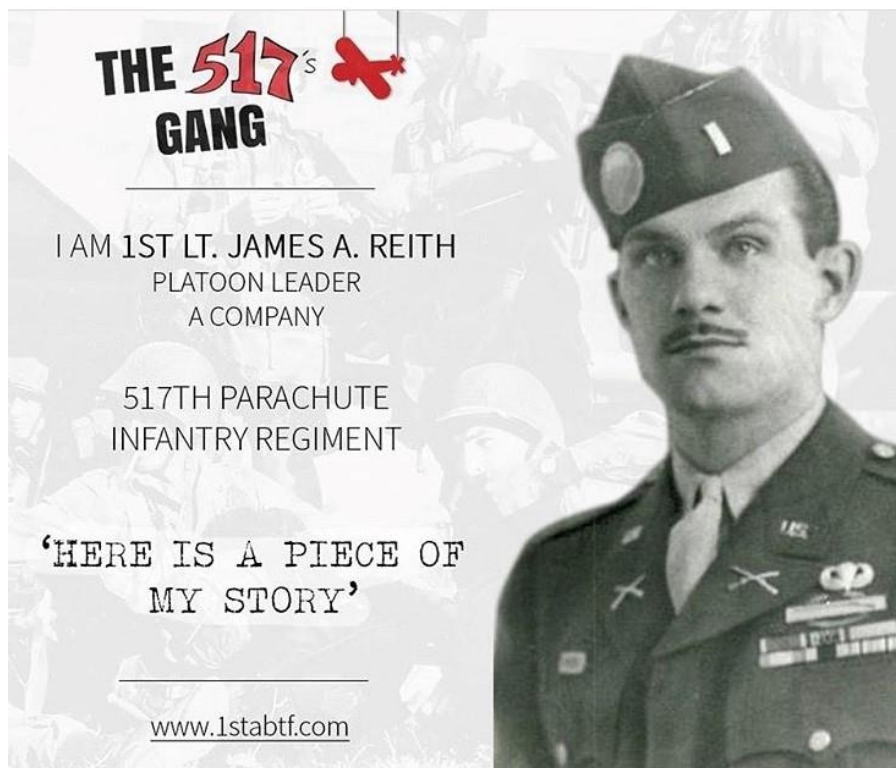


517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

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.

Website	www.517prct.org
Send MailCall news to	MailCall@517prct.org
MailCall Archives	www.517prct.org/archives
2018 Roster (updated!)	www.517prct.org/roster.pdf
Thunderbolt Archives	www.517prct.org/archives



For Operation Dragoon, 1st Lt. James A. Reith is entrusted with a special mission: Capture General Ferdinand Neuling, commander of the LXII ArmeeKorps in Southern France.

His plane and his group of paratroopers are dropped far east of Draguignan and the operation fails.

Contrary to popular belief, General Ferdinand Neuling was not captured by the 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion in Draguignan, but by a Troop from the 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron on August 18, 1944.

The 517th's Gang is available at: <https://1stabtf.com/en/boutique/the-517ths-gang-us-eng-version/>