

**William R. Myers**  
3111 Country Club Lane  
Jeffersonville, Indiana 47130  
(812)284-1788



February 17, 2003

Dear Mark

I have put together a series of events covering your dad's combat experiences in Southern Europe. <sup>FRANCE</sup> Included in this package is a map showing each town we were in to help give a mental picture along with the story.

The following is a list of the numbers on the map corresponding to a specific event occurring at that town.

No# 1: May 17, 1944 We left from Norfolk, Va. via a ship for Naples, Italy.

No# 2: Arrived Naples, Italy May 31, 1944.

No# 3: We engaged in combat for a few days to get combat experience. JUNE 16/44

No# 4: Arrived at Grosseto, Italy to get ready for the jump in Southern France. AUG 11/44

No# 5: Combat jump on August 15, 1944.

No# 6: Trip to Soissons, France. DEC 6/44

No# 7: Trip to Belgium Bulge. DEC 21/44

I sure want to thank you for sending the "Special Orders" pertaining to the trip Roy and I made to Ft. Stevens, Oregon. We spent a lot of time together and got to know each other real well. Riding together on a passenger train for that many days gave us a chance to converse on every subject imaginable. I know we bonded, and I have had nothing but a high respect for your dad.

It was strange when <sup>WE</sup> I visited Roy and Elice. We didn't get into all of the past. I guess we wanted to talk about current events instead. I wish Roy and I could have had another visit.

Mark, if you have any questions, please let me know. Sorry I took so much time to reply. Give our love to Elice. Dot says hello. I'm sending you some pictures and some documents taken from my scrap book I put together in 1945.

My son, Mark, has a computer and has saved you from reading my hand writing. His e-mail address is [mmyers@www.sioln.com](mailto:mmyers@www.sioln.com). Please keep in touch.

Sincerely,

Bill & Dot

*Bill*

## OUR TRAVELS IN EUROPE

**No# - 1:** May 17, 1944, we left for Naples, Italy.

**No# - 2:** Arrived Naples Italy May 31, 1944. The name of the ship was Santa Rosa. In peace time it was used to transport bananas from South America to the U.S.

**No# - 3:** 517th entered combat for the first time. On June 16th, we fought from Civitavecchia to Follonica, Italy. We had some casualties and very few deaths. On July 4th we moved back to Rome for rest to prepare for the invasion of Southern France. July 4th to August 10th training, resting and passes to visit Rome. The main attractions were the coliseum and Vatican City. The reason for us fighting in this situation was to gain combat experience prior to our mission in Southern France.

**No# - 4:** August 11th, We moved to where we would take off and make our combat jumps in Southern France, behind the German lines, which was in the area of Grosseto, Italy.

**No# - 5:** We were briefed on our mission. We would take off August 15th at 02:30 a.m. and fly over the Mediterranean sea and at 04:30 a.m. jump in the area of Le Muy and Grasse, France, about 20 to 30 miles inland from the beach. Our mission would be to destroy all communication lines the Germans were using, and to set up road blocks to keep the German's from reinforcing the beachhead. When the invasion troops arrived, I'm happy to say, the mission all worked as planned. When we jumped at 04:30 a.m. and our parachutes opened, it was really a dark night. We could hear all kinds of gun fire going on below. We were behind the German lines fighting 2 or 3 days. Then the invasion forces landed on the beach with their tanks, heavy artillery, trucks and jeeps. We were so happy to see them! Our grenades, rifles, and small mortar shells were no match for what the Germans had; and what the Germans had would be no match for what the U.S. invasion forces possessed. Then things changed. The invasion forces drove the Germans to the north, and out of the area. It is hard to express the joy we had when we were relieved. The invasion forces drove the Germans to the north and we drove ~~the~~ them to the east as far as Nice. We walked and fought the Germans for 94 days, until we got in the area of Nice. Every night we would fire mortar shells at the Germans and they would fire artillery shells at us. That was nerve racking. Even more nerve racking, was when we had to take a night patrol of about 12 men to see what the Germans were doing. Every day we would exchange gun fire and the Germans would retreat, and we would advance. We had to dig a fox hole every night in anticipation of the night artillery. Every night after the shelling you could hear the moaning and groaning, and then you knew someone was hit and injured.

Mark, all during this period of time, when I say "we", I mean members of Company E. Particularly Roy's Platoon. I served under Roy as a Buck Sergeant. During the 94 days of fighting, we were together most of the time. After 60 years I can't

accurately remember details. Roy and I, and the others had a lot of close calls. We exchanged gun fire with the Germans, and sweated out the shelling from our fox holes at night. We lost a friend, named Joe Reginato, when your dad and I were on patrol with the 2nd squad. Joe was our "Scout"(point man), and a German sniper shot him. We got him back to the medics, but Joe died that night.

Mark, anytime we were faced with a dangerous combat situation Roy would rise to the occasion. He would be focused, and was able to make decisions with confidence. Everyone respected his "NO NONSENSE" style of leadership. He also had a "sense of humor". If he had much fear, and I'm sure he did, he did a good job of concealing it. You asked about Roy being a Platoon Sergeant at the young age of 20. At that time, everyone that volunteered for the paratroops was at that young age. Camp Toccoa had a Cadre of older experienced guys to help form the 517th Regiment. When they got the number needed the 517th was formed. I've never heard of this before, but they held elections and voted for whom they wanted as Sergeant, Corporal, and Private First Class. Roy was promoted from Private to either Corporal or Sergeant at that time, which gave him a quick start to Staff Sergeant. You asked what we did, on leave in Nice, France. In peace time the area is a big-time tourist attraction. We enjoyed the many restaurants to pick from, and the hotels. After sleeping in fox holes and not being able to take a bath for so long, it was an enjoyable time.

**No# 6:** After we were relieved in Southern France we went north near Paris via trucks. We were in a town named Soissons, France, a few miles north of Paris. We lived in French barracks, and we were preparing for another jump across the Rhine river.

**No# 7:** Before it was time to do the Rhine jump, things got real serious and they needed help at the "Battle of the Bulge". So we started for the Bulge in open trucks. The 101st Airborne was trapped in that area, and every available military outfit was helping to get them free. That's when General McCullif, Commander of the 101st told the Germans "NUTS!!!!", when the Germans told the 101st to surrender. Soon after we arrived, there was heavy fighting at the Bulge and it was really, really cold. I developed frozen feet and had to be evacuated. That's the last day I had with my unit. They sent me to a hospital in England. I was there for 3 months. Then they sent me to another hospital for 3 months in Colorado Springs, in the beautiful U.S.A. When I recovered, I was assigned to Ft. Benning Parachute Jump School as a jumpmaster until my discharge.

Mark, about when Roy was injured. It must have happened during the Battle of the Bulge because I don't remember Roy being injured.

IN NICE FRANCE

R. SALWIECH

ROY LANDRETH

DAVE HINES

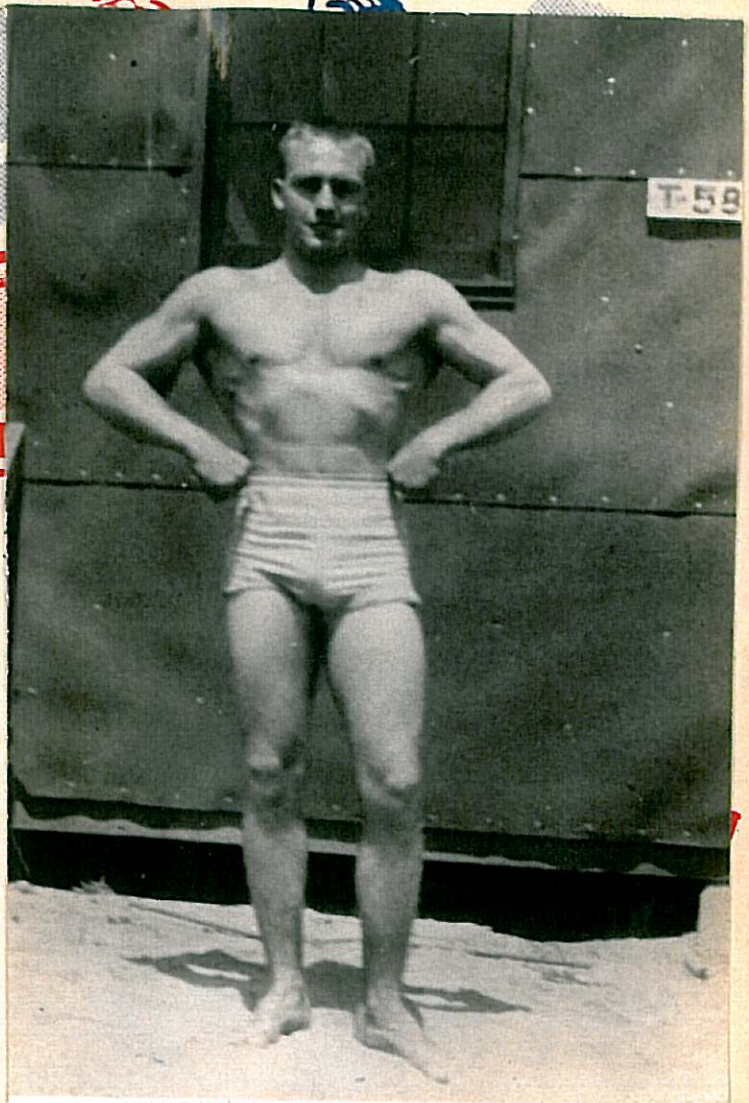


David Hines was  
from San Jose  
California. He was  
22 in 1944 when  
this picture was  
taken at Camp Mackall  
N.C.

He is included  
in the "We" group.  
He was a "quality"  
guy.

DAVID HINES

rite  
BUDDY



Hines

OUTFIT 517<sup>th</sup> PRCAT C.T.

MY California SELECTEE  AGE 22

ADDRESS

STATE California

PHONE

Taken at Marshall MAR. 44

85 Complexion L Color of Eyes blue Hair Blond

inton	Boating	Pool
Fatigue <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fishing	Golf
itsu <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Skiing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Boxing
ming <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Wrestling <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bowling <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Football <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Pictures	Master of Ceremony
Insignias	Getting Into Trouble
Photography	Getting Out Of Trouble
as	Gold Brick
	Musician

COMPANY E - 517th PRCT ----Joigny, France

June 15, 1945

TOP ROW - RIGHT TO LEFT:

O'Dell -- Sliker -- Griffen -- Morrison --Krumm -- Pryer -- Miller -- Boon --  
Lingenfelder -- Harris

ROW 3 - RIGHT TO LEFT:

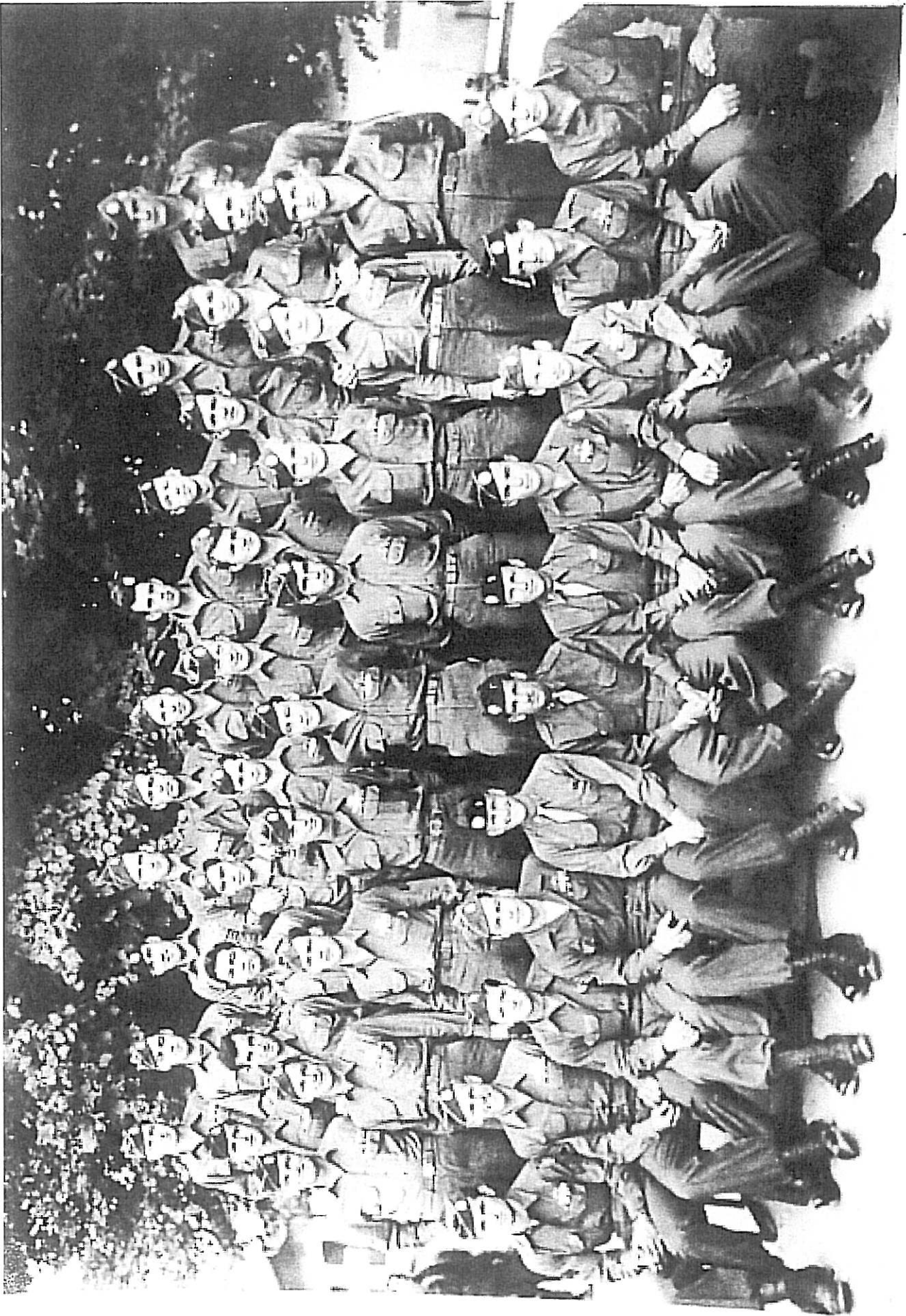
Brami -- Stubbs -- Klingenhoffer -- Stewart -- Zylowski --McAlroy -- Ginn --  
Haikey -- Lesiak -- Schalapa

ROW 2 - RIGHT TO LEFT;

Franko -- Edwards -- Champion -- Kiss -- Graham -- Smith --Hegespeth --  
Ryzuiski -- Helms

ROW 1 -- RIGHT TO LEFT;

Medonich -- Landreth -- W. W. Smith -- Woody -- Lt. Weddle --Captain  
Newberry -- Lt. Brearley -- Higginbotham -- Gethas --  
Krayche -- Racich



←  
NAMES ATTACHED



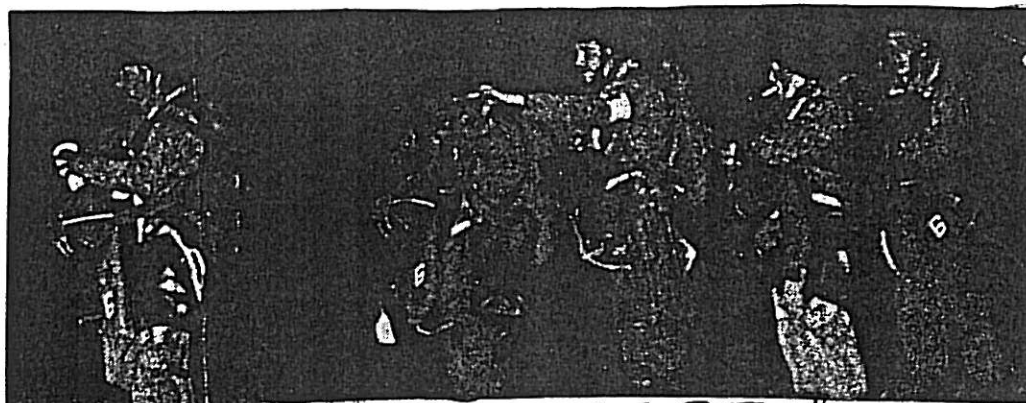
+ ↘  
Places we  
were at.

# SOME SWELL CHOW- I've Et



NAME	WHERE	REMARKS
Camp Jaccoa Fla.	U.S.A.	Basic training
Fort Benning Ga	U.S.A.	Jump School
Camp Mackall N.C.	U.S.A.	Advanced training
Tennessee	U.S.A.	Maneuvers
Camp Patrick Henry Va	U.S.A.	Port of Embarkation
Naples	Italy	Docked
City of Rome	Italy	Visit
Civitavecchia	Italy	Docked in L.S.T.
Follonica	Italy	Last day of Combat in Italy
Rome + Vatican City	Italy	Visit
Grosseto	Italy	Dispersion Field
Le Muy	So. France	Objective in Combat jump
Arasse	So. France	Liberated
Nice, Cannes	So. France	Liberated + visit
Monaco + Marseille	So. France	Visit
Sospel	So. France	Liberated
La Col.	So. France	Rest
Riems	North France	Stopped in train
Saissions	" France	Training for Rhine jumps
Paris	" France	Hospital
Namur	Belgium	On way to front
Liege	Belgium	Hospital
Malmedy	Belgium	At front
Bauhells	Belgium	Train
Salisbury	England	Hospital
South Hampton	England	Hospital
New York City	U.S.A.	Hospital
Camp Carson, Colorado	U.S.A.	Hospital

Places we  
visited



**LIST of \***  
**EQUIPMENT CARRIED on Combat Jump**

M-1 RIFLE + CASE	
160 ROUNDS of RIFLE AMMO.	
45 - PISTOL + 100 ROUNDS AMMO	
TRENCH KNIFE	
JUMP KNIFE + JUMP ROPE	
5 ANTI TANK Grenades	
3 Fragmentation Grenades + 2 smoke	
Compass + Watch + Maps	
Bayonet + Trenching Tool (SHOVEL)	
Parachute First Aid pack	
9 BOXES K-RATIONS (3 days)	
EXTRA DRATIONS + CIGARETTES	
EXTRA CLOTHING + SOCKS	
Bible, PICTURES, TOOTHBRUSH, spoon	
T-5 PARACHUTE (MAIN)	
T-4 PARACHUTE (RESERVE)	
Gas Mask + HELMET	
Jump Suit + Boots (camouflage)	

The things we carried  
 with us when we jumped in combat

NOTES I took way Back in 1945 when things were fresh in my mind

517<sup>th</sup> PRCHT. Combat Team

April 16, 1943. Joined the 517<sup>th</sup> at Camp Jaccos, Ga, while it was being formed, and started some rugged training to make Paratroopers out of us. Restricted for 17 weeks, and it was a good thing. Night life and that sort of training doesn't mix.

August 14, moved to Camp Mackall N.C., and continued training.

September 3, found ourselves on the way to Fort Benning, Ga. sweating out jumps school. We were pretty excited, after waiting almost six months to jump. The whole 517<sup>th</sup> went through together. We set a good record in having the least number of boys to freeze.

October 1, On our way back to Mackall, with Wings & Boots on. (Real Paratroopers) and ground ones.

November 3, Furloughs. 15 days at home.

November 15 - December 23. Jumping and training at Mackall. Landruth and I went to Portland Ore. for Pryer who was AWOL.

December 25. Stopped at home on the way to Oregon had a very merry Christmas.

Jan 7, 1944, returned to Mackall with Pryer. stopped at home on the way back also. 517<sup>th</sup> was on Airborne maneuvers, near Aberdeen.

February, maneuvers in Tennessee. mighty rough.

March, Returned to Mackall as 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Combat Team, ready for furloughs, then overseas. (Cont back of next page)

These are pages from my Army Book  
3 Pages of notes of Travel Schedule while in Europe

Virginia. This is as good as I can recall  
Our time and dates of our travels in

1944  
March 22 - April 7. Emergency furlough when Grandma Myers passed away.

April 8 - April 21. Ready for overseas.

May 17, Left for Naples Italy, from Camp Patrick Henry in the ship called Santa Rosa. (Dad left on same boat when he went over)

May 31, Arrived at Naples Italy, had a good time on the boat, 400 cases and an orchestra.

June 16 - 517th's first day in combat. Good thing the Germans didn't know it. We fought from Civitavecchia to Follonica.

July 4. Moved back to Rome for rest and prepare for the invasion of Southern France.

July 4 - August 10, Training, resting, and passes into Rome every day. Plenty of sight seeing.

Aug 11, Moved to dispersion field near Grosseto, Italy. Time was getting near.

Aug 13, We were told our objective and mission it was Le Muy, France, between Toulon and Cannes, but didn't know just when we were to jump.

Aug 14, Three good meals, Catholic + Protestant services, so we knew it wouldn't be long. No way of expressing on paper, just how we felt,

Aug 15, 2:30 AM. we put on our chutes + equipment and boarded the planes. 2:35 AM. took off and arrived in France at 4:30 AM via parachute. The Germans were waiting to welcome us.

Aug 15 - Nov 15, 94 days of fighting. we drove the Germans from Le Muy to Loysel France near the Italian border. Walked and fought all the way, over Mt's (don't work by next page)

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November 16 - Dec 5, Resting at Lo Col, France about 10 miles from Nice. Had memorial services for all who lost their lives.

December 6 - December 9, On our way to Soissons, France by train. (Near Paris)

December 9 - December 20, Lived at Soissons France in French barracks, and was preparing for the Rhine jump. Also ready to visit Paris. Dave and I were planning to fly to England to see Dad.

December 20, German breakthrough in Belgium was getting serious. Started for Belgium in trucks.

December 21, Passed through Namur, Belgium and heading for the front.

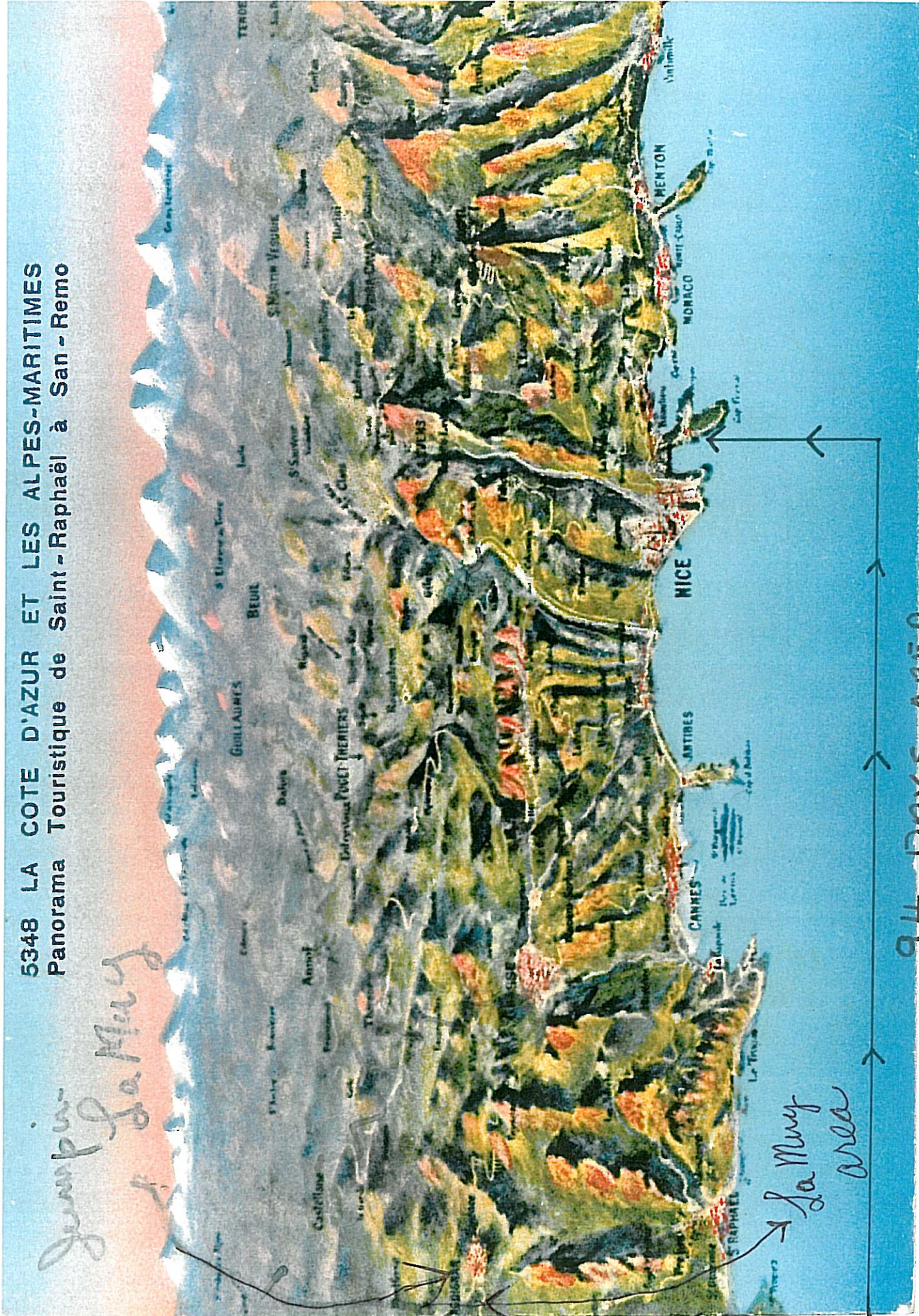
December 23, We were near Malmedy when I froze my feet, and left the outfit to go to the hospital. That's the last I was with them.

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5348 LA COTE D'AZUR ET LES ALPES-MARITIMES  
Panorama Touristique de Saint-Raphaël à San-Remo

*Jempin  
de la Mary*

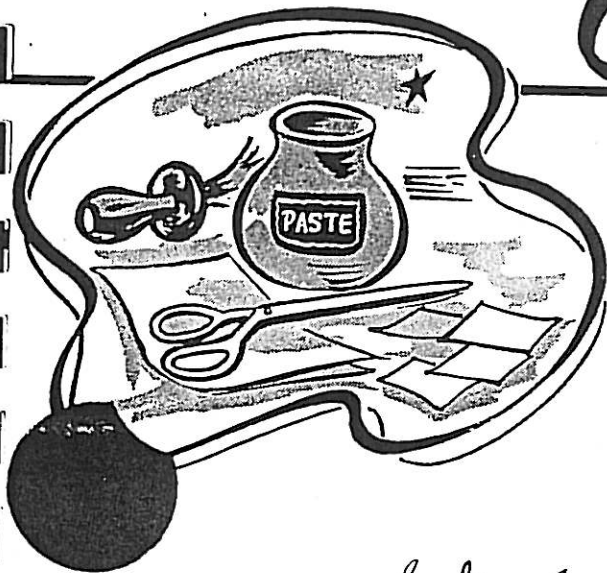


*→ La Mary  
area*

94 DAYS AREA

MORE NOTES and a Picture attached

★ PERSONAL Clipping

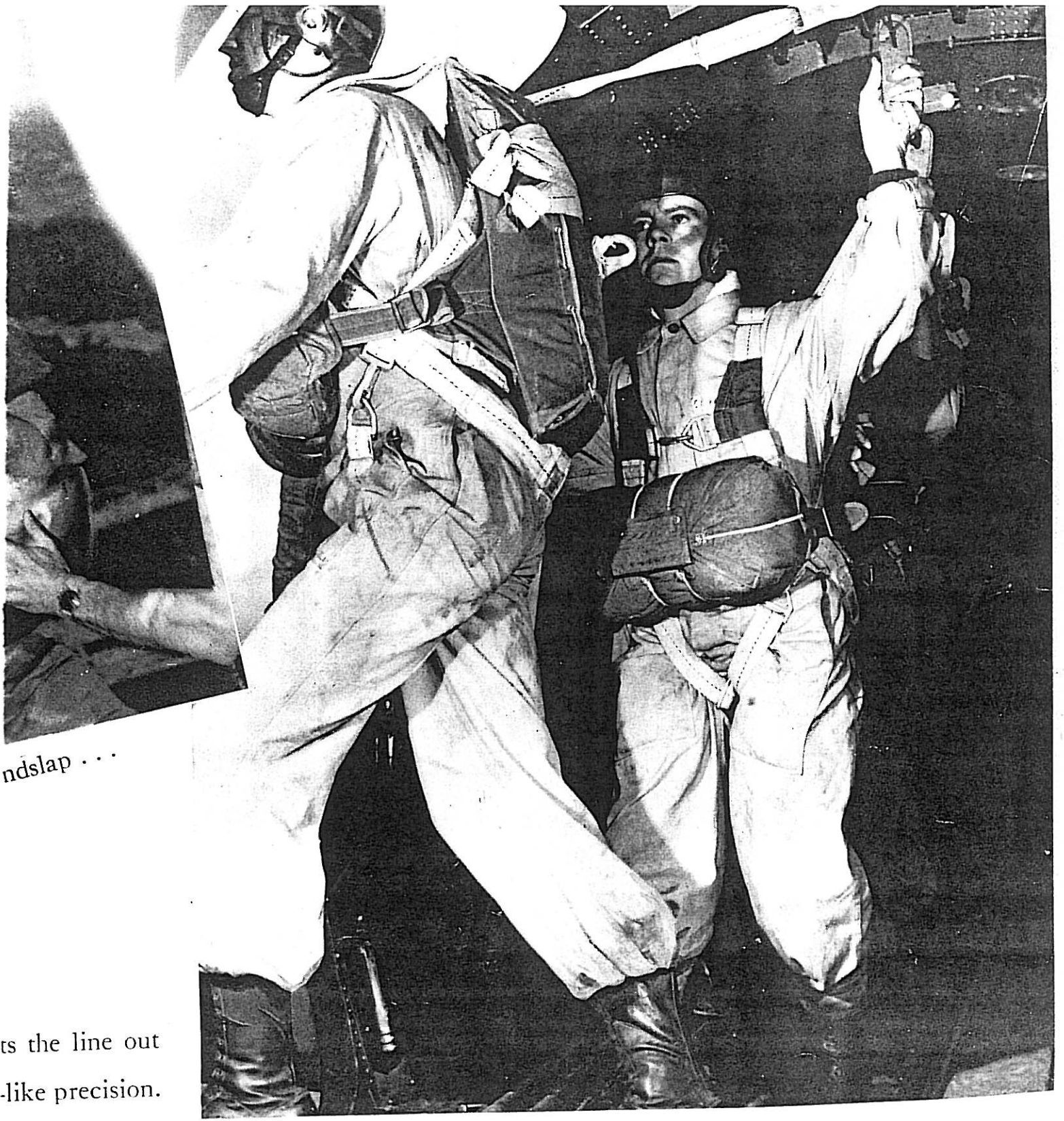


Southern France.

4:30 A.M. Aug. 15, 1944, we jumped in and  
near a small town called La Muey. France  
about twenty miles north west of S' Raphael.  
The beach head reached us in two days, they went  
on north, and we started driving the Germans  
east, to the Italian border. We drove them  
as far as Sospel, about fifteen miles northeast  
of Nice. Walked and fought all the way.  
We were relieved Nov. 15, 1944, then went  
back to Nice.

Jumped at 1000 ft. to clear the alpes.

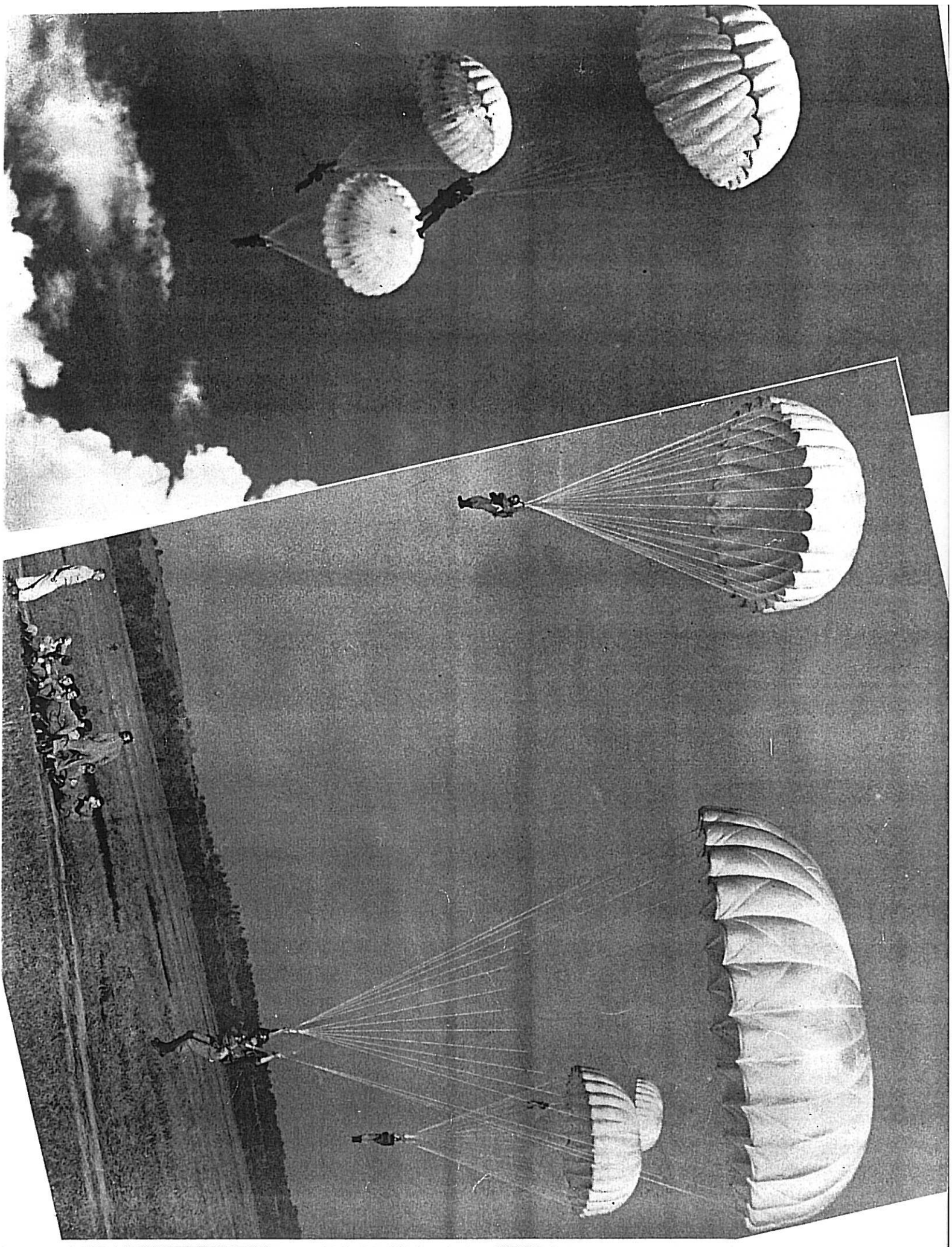
of the Riviera, where we jumped in Southern France.



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ts the line out  
-like precision.

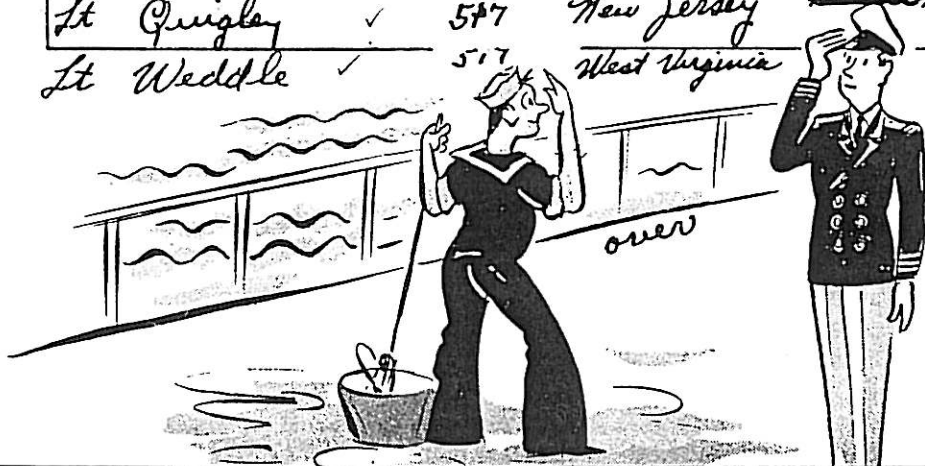






# ★ OFFICER'S I know ★

RANK	NAME	OUTFIT	ADDRESS	AUTOGRAPH
Col.	Graves	CO 517		
Col.	Sietz	517	New Jersey	
Maj	Thomas Cross	517	New Jersey	wounded
Capt.	Edga. Brooks	517	Illinois	
Capt	McKinley	517	North Carolina	
Capt	<sup>Bob</sup> Newbury ✓	517	North Carolina	wounded
Lt.	Kendall	517	Texas	
Lt	A. Jorgen ✓	517	California	
Lt	Bennell	517	New York	Dead
Lt.	Freeman	517		Dead
Lt	Kisakumich	517	New Jersey	wounded
Lt	Quigley ✓	517	New Jersey	<del>wounded</del>
Lt	Weddle ✓	517	West Virginia	



Everyone listed here was in the 517<sup>TH</sup> Combat Regiment.



# Some of My Squad



Squad



My Squad E Co. 1st Platoon 2nd Squad.

NAME	ADDRESS
Cpl Alex Witkowski Asst Ld.	Chicago, Illinois
Pfc. Richard Kain 1st scout	Hamilton, Ohio
Pfc. Joe Reginato 2nd "	Palo Alto, California
Pfc. David Walls - Boogie man	Dallas, Texas
Pfc. Johnny Tranks - Hunch back	Fort Worth, Texas
Pfc. Dave Fiorillo - Rifleman	Brooklyn, N.Y.
Pfc. Sam Mizarak - Rifleman	New York, N.Y.
Pfc. Bob Dobbs - Rifleman	Fort Worth Texas
Pfc. Eugene Hickey - 1st M.G.	Tulsa, Oklahoma
Pfc. Henson - 2nd M.G.	Tulsa, Oklahoma
Pfc. James Whalen - A/B	Chicago, Illinois
Pfc. Charlie Myers - Rifleman	Johnstown, Penn.
Pfc. Bill Butcher - Rifleman	Bartlesville, Okla.
Pfc. Leroy Smith - Rifleman	Portland, Oregon
Cpl. Charlie Lutz - Rifleman	Phila. Penn.





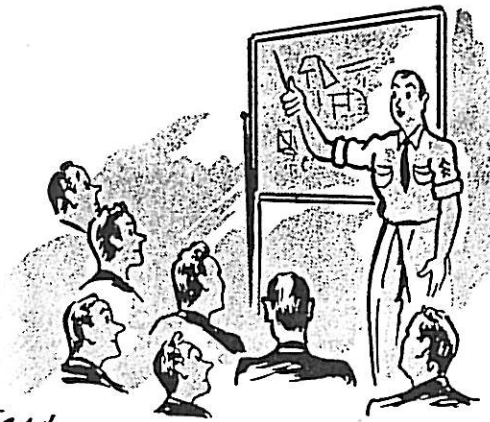
# ENLISTED MEN I KNOW

RANK	NAME	OUTFIT	ADDRESS	AUTOGRAPH
S/Sgt	Woodrow W Smith	517 CT.	W.A.	
Pfc.	Esser	"	Chicago Ill.	
Pfc.	Adams	"	South Carolina	
Cpl.	Alex Witkowski	"	Chicago Ill	
Pfc.	Richard Kain	"	Hamilton Ohio	wounded
Pfc.	Leroy E Smith	"	N. Dakota	wounded
Pfc.	Dave J. Walls	"	Dallas Texas	
Pfc.	Johnny Franko	"	H. Worth Texas	wounded
Pfc.	Dave Fiorillo	"	Brooklyn N.Y.	wounded
Pfc.	William Stephen	"	Di Ball, Texas	wounded
Pfc.	? Dobbs	"	H. Worth Texas	
Pfc.	Eugene Haibey	"	Okla.	wounded
Pfc.	Marshall Henson	"	Okla.	wounded
Pfc.	James J. Whalen	"	Chicago Ill	wounded
Pfc.	"Nie" Nichols	"	Portland Oregon	wounded
Pfc.	Mack	"	Wisconsin	
Sgt	Fred Provo	"	Oregon	wounded
Pfc.	Charlie Myers	"	Penn.	
Pfc.	Joe Reghiato	"	California	Dead ✓

Sgt Leland Wood	evac	Michigan
Cpl. Albritton	evac	Florida
Pfc. Champion		Michigan
" Becker		Ohio (akron) or newark
" D. E. Smith		Ohio (Columbus)
" Dan Medonick	wounded	Wyoming
" Darrel Odell	wounded	Texas
" M. C. Smith		Okla.
" Gale Graham	wounded	Colorado
Sgt Allen		Montana
" Dave Brooks	wounded	California
Pfc. R. E. Jones	wounded	California
" Mitchell		Texas
" Hammel		W. Va.
" Scott		N. Carolina
" Vason	wounded	Reno, Nevada
Sgt Bender		Indiana (Bloomington)
Sgt Smith (Ross)	wounded	Florida
Cpl. Brissey		Cinn. Ohio
Pfc. C. B. Jones	? Used <sup>45</sup> <u>3rd</u>	North Carolina
Cpl. Maurek	Dead	Chicago

✓

# Cadre MEN



more buddies



MEN AND RANK

WHERE

Cpl. Leatherwood	wounded	S. Carolina
Sgt. Joe Boon	wounded	N. Jersey
Cpl. Starrak	wounded	Florida
Sgt. Healey	wounded	Florida
Pfc. Kiss	wounded	Michigan
Cpl. Marion	wounded	N. Carolina (Durham)
Cpl. Markin	wounded	So Bend, Ind.
1st Sgt. Doane Barnes		Wilson, N. Carolina
1st Sgt. Ford	wounded	Minn.
Pfc. Charlie Lutz	evac	Phila, Pa.
" Bill Butcher	evac	Arkla.
" Chic	evac	New Jersey
" Speers		Ft. Wayne Ind.
Sgt. Bill Edwards		Chicago
Cpl. Dieth	513	California
Cpl. O Connal	513	Oakland, Calif
Sgt Roy Landreth		S Carolina over ✓

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nevada  
(Bloomington)

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Carolina  
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Sgt	Dave J Hines	Dead	San Jose Calif.
Pfc.	Don Sliker		New Jersey
Sgt.	Lmause		California
Pfc.	Markivich		Pa.
"	Tryon		Cincinnati, Ohio
Cpl.	Orville Stubbs		?
Cpl.	Trembature	wounded	Houston Texas
Pfc.	Griffen		New Jersey
"	Posey		Florida
Cpl.	Linu		Florida
Pfc.	Hustin	?	North Dakota
Pfc.	Bob Davis	wounded	Alam., N.Y.
Sgt.	Higgenbotham		Mississippi
Cpl.	Towmbly		Oregon
Pfc.	Joe York	Dead	Penn.
Sgt.	Robert Farmer	Dead	Wyoming
S/Sgt.	James Dipko	Dead	Cleveland, Ohio
Pfc.	Richards	Dead	- Ohio
Pfc.	Kersey	Dead	Texas
Cpl.	Little		

✓



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### Le Muy, FR



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## SS Santa Rosa

..which carried the 517 PIR from Norfolk, VA through Gibraltar, arriving in Naples on May 31, 1944.

For more pictures and info: SS Santa Rosa  
(from the web site of the the 488th Port Battalion Transportation Corps)



Port of Naples and the Castle where the allies came ashore.