

RECORD OF EVENTS  
REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

Regimental Headquarters Company was divided between two take-off fields for the enplaning. Demolition Hq. 1st and 3rd Bn Demolition Sections and 11 men from the Wire Section Enplaned at Orbitello Airfield with the 3rd Battalion of the 517th Parachute Infantry, while the remainder of the Company and Headquarters went to Ombrone Airfield with the 2nd Battalion of the 517th Pchgt. Inf.

The Demolition Sections and Wire Section landed in the hills approximately 3 - kilometers North East of Callian, France. Lt. Minard assembled most of the Demolition men and moved near Callian where they joined the 3rd Battalion and proceeded to the Regimental CP, arriving at "D" plus two.

S/Sgt. Allison, Tec 5 Boynton joined Captian Hooper, Co. "G" and 5 men from the 3rd Battalion. A fire fight between a group of approximately 30 Germans that were trapped on a highway in a bus and an ambulance and elements of Service and Hq. Company was seen to be in progress. The vehicle was destroyed, 5 enemy killed, 9 wounded, and 16 captured. Pvt. Miller of Regtl. Hq. Co. was seriously wounded in this encounter and was evacuated to Callian and hospitalized by the French.

Captain Hooper, S/Sgt. Allison and 7 men, then occupied the town of Callian for 3 days until driven out by a force of approximately 200 Germans. They then moved to Montamoux which was held by Lt. McElroy and 34 EM. S/Sgt. Allison, Tec 5 Boynton and a few members of the FFI then blew a road crater in the highway near Callian which runs between Fayance and Grasse, trapping 4 German trucks and 22 Germans who were taken prisoner by the FFI. Captain Hooper then moved his men to San Raphael and arrived on "D" plus Five.

Lt. Lempke dropped on the hills North East of Callian and soon assembled approximately 30 men, including the Wire Section, a few demolition men and a mixed group of British and 3rd Battalion men. Lt. Lempke moved his men South and West of Callian where they met the enemy in a force which was estimated at one Company. Casualties estimated at 30 men were inflicted on the enemy by mortar and small arms fire. Enemy reinforcements were very quickly brought up and Lt. Lempke withdrew and led his group to the Regimental CP on "D" plus four.

The remainder of the Company jumped with the 2nd Battalion and landed in the vicinity of Lemuy. Lt. Tait and Company Headquarters landed approximately two kilometers North East of Lemuy. He assembled 1st Sgt. Arnold and 7 men and was later joined by elements from other companies of the 2nd Battalion. Lt. Tait led the men toward Lemuy in an attempt to orient himself and was fired upon from the town. The entire group withdrew a short distance to a defiladed area and engaged the enemy. Three casualties were inflicted upon the enemy according to the British who shortly took over the area. A perimeter defense was then formed with the British and an attack was made on the position by a German patrol estimated at 40 men at 1000 and 1100 hours. Lt. Tait led his group toward LaMotte when they encountered elements of the British. They directed him to the Regimental CP.

Captain Pearce, Tec 4 Dublin, and Tec 4 V. Cleave dropped on a German fortified area approximately 1 kilometer North East of Lemuy. Captain Pearce sustained a broken leg on the jump. Tec 4 VanCleave was fired upon immediately upon landing, but evaded the fire by hiding in a vineyard. Three of the enemy pursued him. VanCleave disposed of one with his trench knife and killed the remaining two with a hand grenade when they came to investigate the struggle. At 0900 hours he contacted a British patrol which he heard passing by calling to them over the wall which surrounded the fortification. At 1100 hours the British attacked the fortification with mortars, and under cover of smoke, entered the fortification. In the ensuing fight approximately 30 Germans were killed, 20 wounded, and 20 captured. Captain Pearce was then evacuated.

Lt. Pattin and part of the 2nd Bn. demolition section landed approximately 11 kilometers South of LaMotte. He assembled his section and equipment and moved to a bridge North and East of LaMotte which he prepared for demolition. Then, with part of his section he established a road block on the highway between Lemuy and Les Arcs near the railroad bridge. No enemy of any force was encountered.

Lt. Alicki, with the remainder of the 2nd Bn. demolition section and the Regimental M.P.'s landed 1/2 mile South of Lemuy. He assembled 4 of his men and moved North. He encountered Major Paxton, S-3, and a large group of men who led him to the C.P.

Sgt. Brown, who was in the same place as Lt. Alicki, assembled 8 men from the stick and was immediately surrounded by a force of Germans estimated to be 30 men. In the fight that followed Pvt. Ciner was killed and the remainder captured. They were taken to a German prisoner-of-war enclosure at Le Muy and were held until the town was captured by the 550th on the afternoon of "D" plus two.

Captain Dearing and Captain Bigler landed approximately 1 kilometer North East of Le Muy and assembled approximately 10 men from the Communications Platoon. Captain Dearing led the men toward Le Muy when he met a group of 20 men of the 2nd Bn. and 460th PFA Bn. At daybreak the group was on the outskirts of Le Muy when a German motorcycle patrol was encountered. Three Germans were killed.

Captain Dearing then attempted to lead the group to the Company assembly area but was immediately pinned down by enemy fire. An attack on a strong point which was between Captain Dearing and the assembly area was launched with Captain Dearing leading half the men on the right flank and Captain Bigler furnishing a base of fire and attacking from the left. Captain Dearing with 8 EM succeeded in capturing the strong point from the right but the enemy brought in reinforcements of men, mortars, and 88's. Captain Dearing and 3 EM were wounded and all 9 men were captured. They were taken to Le Muy where the wounded were treated by a French doctor and a captured British Medic. They were liberated when the 550th Pz Inf. Bn. captured Le Muy on "D" plus one.

Captain Bigler withdrew his group and led them to the Regimental CP after dark, arriving on the morning of "D" plus one, 3 walking wounded. Estimated enemy casualties were 12 killed and wounded.

Major Paxton, Regimental S-3, landed approximately 1 1/2 miles South of Le Muy. He assembled his men and waited on the field until daybreak. At daybreak, he led the men toward Le Muy meeting Chaplain Brown, Lt. Mitchell, Captain Kinzen, Major Vella, Lt. Alicki and approximately 75 EM. After orienting himself, he moved to the assembly area by way of La Motte. On the way two enemy on motorcycles were killed. No enemy were found in La Motte. Captain Newberry with approximately half of 2nd Bn. was encountered shortly thereafter and stated that the rest of the 460th PFA Bn. was in position and that they had communications with the 1st Bn., who were moving on their objective. Major Paxton instructed Captain Newberry to proceed to his objective and led his men to the Regimental CP arriving at 1230 hours on D Day. At approximately 1300 hours, Colonel Graves arrived with elements of V Company and took command.

RICHARD A. BIGLER  
Capt., Infantry  
Commanding

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SERVICE COMPANY  
517th PARACHUTE INFANTRY  
APO 469 U.S. Army

13 August 1944

Service Company personnel, totaling 92 men and officers boarded 6 planes at Orbettallo Field, Italy, at 0133 hours. The group, under Lt. Col. Melvin Zaiz was composed of 45 plane loads consisting of personnel of Service Company, the 3rd Battalion, and one platoon of the 596th A/B Engineers.

The group left the field at 0255 hours and landed by parachute about 500 yards west of Callian, France, at 0445 hours. Upon landing Service Company was assembled into two groups.

Group #1 consisted of the men from planes #83a and 86. Captain Sigl kept the men in an assembly area in the woods while Lt. Freud, with 2 EM entered the town of Callian to determine the location of the town in reference to the DZ and to find out the enemy situation. Returning to the assembly area, contact was made with elements of the 3rd Battalion under Lt. Gibbons, senior officer present at the time, and it was decided that we should consolidate forces and proceed to our objective at a location South West of Le Muy.

Service Company, cont-

Consolidation and reorganization was accomplished in the town of Callian and the column started toward the objective at 1200 hours. Service Company formed the rear guard and the point for the column at this time until British troops in a similar situation joined the unit just East of Bagnoles and became the rear security.

Group #2 consisted of men from planes #87,88,89, and 90. Upon landing, Lt. Skutaik and M/Sgt. Coil assembled as many men as was possible under the circumstances and went to a Red Cross Building. A French patriot brought a message to Lt. Skutaik about American soldiers and elements of the FFI engaged in a fire fight in the valley South East of Callian at a road intersection. Lt. Skutaik and M/Sgt. Coil with 15 men went with the messenger and there joined the battle. Two enemy vehicles were destroyed and ten German soldiers were killed. Sixty prisoners were taken and turned over to the French for disposal.

After the fight was over, Lt. Skutaik assembled the men and went back to the Red Cross Building. There, two men who were wounded by small arms fire and four men who were injured from the jump were taken care of by the French Red Cross. Lt. Freund contacted this group and took 10 men with him to Callian to form part of the rear guard. In the mean time, more men had assembled at the Red Cross Building who had just found their way from the far side of the mountain where they had landed.

With about 25 men Lt. Skutaik moved cross-country to contact the head of the column. The march continued until 1500 hours before a break was taken and then continued again at 2110 hours. At 2330 hours the column had reached a point about 5 miles North of Bagnoles and established a bivouac for the night. Upon talking with the men it was found that Tec 5 Schneider, Rigger Section, 596th AB Engineer Company, attached to Service Company, had carried a wounded man down the steep slopes of the mountain to the Red Cross Building and then made numerous trips up and down the mountain side assembling small groups of men and leading them to the 3rd Battalion assembly area.

16 August 1944

At 0700 hours, march was resumed and after covering a distance of approximately 25 miles the 517th Regimental CP was reached at Chateau St. Rosseline. One American and six British paratroops protecting two wounded men dropped back during the march, and approximately 10 minutes later made contact with the enemy. The British soldiers were equipped with shaped charges and succeeded in knocking out two trucks loaded with German soldiers and driving the remainder of the Germans, in three trucks, back in the direction from which they had come.

17 August 1944

Personnel of the Company were divided into sections and sent out to retrieve equipment bundles dropped by parachute. The ammunition accumulated was sufficient to carry the combat team through the attack for the next two or three days. Another re-supply came by A-20 bombers. All bundles were retrieved.

KENNETH B. FREUND  
1st Lt., 517th Pchd. Inf.  
Commanding

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HEADQUARTERS 1st BATTALION  
RECORDS OF EVENTS

The 1st Bn., enplaned at Campino Airfield, thirty miles North East of Rome, Italy, at 0030 hours, 15 August 1944. The planes took off at 0200 hours and after circling the field for assembly purposes, headed North West for Southern France. The intended drop zone was in a flat area about one mile West of La Motte, France and the mission of the Bn. less A Co., was to be in Regimental Reserve in the vicinity of Chateau St. Rosseline. From the time all sticks jumped until about 1400 on "D" plus three the activities of the Bn., must be recorded in terms of smaller units in view of the fact that assembly of the Bn was not completed until the above mentioned hour and dates.

At H Hour Hq. Co., 1st Bn. jumped, and landed in scattered areas in the vicinity of Trans-en-Provence. Darkness and a low lying fog obscured all land marks. A temporary CP was established and searching parties were sent out for men and equipment. At day light the Co., location was definitely established. The Co., then consisted of the LUG and Rocket-Launched sections, a few 31mm Mortar men and five men from Co., Hq. Enroute a few riflemen from "A" Co., joined the organization as did the remainder of the 31mm platoon. A few hundred yards West of the assembly area the Co., was fired on by automatic weapons. The enemy were driven out and the Co., moved into the assembly area. Road blocks were set up with LUG's and Rocket-Launchers and the area was out posted by mortarmen. At the cross road South of the assembly area a German barracks, housing about a squad of men was located. After a short fire fight, four were captured, two killed and two wounded. In the immediate area, a heavy water cooled German machine gun, a small field piece, a few automatic weapons, a large store of grenades and a supply of gasoline were located. The machine gun, field piece and gasoline were destroyed, during the attack section Pvt. Lynch was severely burned. At about 0740 hours two platoons of Co. A under command of Lt. Reith joined the organization. At 0750 hours, the elements of Hq. Co. 1st Bn and Co. "A" moved out toward the Bn. objective. Along the prescribed route a small German patrol was encountered and after an exchange of shots the unit continued its advance across Highway #7 and started to ascend to it's objective. At this time a German truck and trailer loaded with demolitions drove out of the woods and parked near a small bridge. Machine gun and rifle fire was placed on the truck and it's occupants and they jumped in a ditch across the road. Lt. Kruse and five men moved forward but they were pinned down by enemy fire. Sgt. Ford who was with Lt. Kruse, was shot in the leg. As more fire was placed on a civilian truck which had pulled up along side. Both trucks were utilized to a road block, thus completing one phase of the Co.'s mission. The Co. then reorganized, consolidated positions on top of the hill and prepared to defend.

Later, two cars and motorcycle came down the road from the West. As they slowed down on sighting. The road block, a patrol led by Lt. Reardon knocked out one car and a motorcycle and the LUG team at the road block knocked out the other car. D Day passed without further event with the exception of small clashes with snipers in the surrounding area.

On "D" plus one approximately a Bn. of Germans moved up to a line North West of the railroad, West of the Co. position. The 480th FFA Forward Observer called for fire and halted the advance. Co. 31mm were laid behind the enemy and when they took cover from the artillery, the mortars routed them out. A great number of casualties were inflicted and the advance was completely halted. Fire was placed on this position periodically throughout the day until the 3rd Bn. moved up and pushed forward thru the enemy positions. A heavy concentration of 4.2 mortars and 75's preceded the 3rd Bn. and this joined with the small arms fire of the 3rd Bn. cleared out all the enemy in that area. "D" plus 2 uneventful and on the morning of "D" plus 3 the Co. moved down toward Highway #7 and moved east to join the Bn. The Bn. was enroute to Buget-sur-Argens.

EARLE H. EMLEY  
Capt., 517th Pch. Inf.  
Commanding

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COMPANY "A"  
RECORD OF EVENTS

1. Company Headquarters boarded planes at Camino Airfield, Italy at 0030 hours. Hqs. divided into two sticks led by Captain Fraser and Lt. Hreudy, jumped at 0450 hours in the area of Trans-en-Provence, France. They had trouble assembling but all joined at the Regimental CP excepting Pvt. Fliger who is still missing. Captain Fraser put out security at Regimental CP and sent Sgt. Rost to the hill overlooking Los Aros to join the part of Co. "A" which Lt. Kienlen had established in a defensive position.

2. First Platoon: enplaned at 0030 hours jumped at 0432 hours. Lt. Kienlen with majority of stick landed about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the DE. S/Sgt. Chobot, PFC Distanislar, Pvt. Knapp were separated from the stick and met North of the DZ. They joined about 50 men from different companies, some British troopers plus a pack howitzer group. They arrived at the assembly area 0830 hours and were pinned down by M.G. fire. The men used grenades on M.G. nests and the enemy withdrew. Lt. Cook, C.C. joined the group and took command. The group continued on to the Bn. objective. Enemy was encountered enroute and Sgt. Chobot killed two. They continued on to the and occupied the hill with no resistance. Lt. Kienlen and stick and part of Co Hqs. met North of Trans-en-Provence and were directed to the Regimental CP by a French Major. They picked up Sgt. Waterman and other C Co. men, with six prisoners, and also assisted in capturing 3 more Germans. They were fired on, as they moved to the CP, Lt. Kienlen, PFC Jones and Sgt. Kiefer killed three Germans and wounded a fourth. The unit then reported to Lt. McDonald and helped outpost the Regimental CP at 1600 hours Lt. Kienlen with 22 men moved to a hill overlooking Los Aros and was reinforced that night by an anti-tank platoon from the 142nd and part of Co. Hqs. Lt. Sadlo and PFC Gobirich were separated from the stick and remained with PFI in vicinity of Draguignan for two days. Sgt. Critchlow and Sgt. Mitchell with their squads assembled 2 miles South West of Draguignan and joined Captain Young and 500 others from the Bn. They moved to Trans-en-Provence, captured a German Captain, moved to Los Aros and joined Major Doyle Co 1st Bn., in forming a defensive position on the edge of town and engaged the enemy in a fire fight.

3. Second Platoon: Platoon jumped at 0450 hours in two sticks. Lt. Reith and S/Sgt Ritchie were jumpmasters. They landed 3 miles from the DZ and assembled at the Bn. Assembly area at 0730 hours with all equipment. Sgt. Ritchie broke both ankles in the jump. With parts of 1st and 2nd Platoons and part of Hqs. Co., all under Captain Le Chaussee of Co. C, they headed for the Bn. objective. Enroute a small group of Germans were encountered. A patrol of 8 men led by Cpl. Marshall drove the enemy off. They continued to the objective and went into a defensive position and were immediately fired upon. Fire was returned and the enemy retreated.

4. Third Platoon: Jumped at 0450 about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  kilometers South East of Trans-en-Provence. 12 men assembled and moved South to the highway and joined troops from the 1st Bn. heading East to the Bn. assembly area. They picked up 6 more 3rd Plt. men and set up a perimeter defense in Co. A assembly area. Later they moved to the Bn. objective. No enemy was encountered. The platoon deployed in a defensive position on East Slope of the Bn. objective.

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"D" Plus One

1. Company Headquarters: A first platoon HQ team on the hill North East of Los Aros was hit by artillery fire. S/Sgt. Nelson and Pvt. Peppito volunteered to man the gun. S/Sgt. Nelson was later hit in the leg by artillery fire while still with the gun.

2. First Platoon: Germans, with reinforcements, attacked the group at Los Aros at 0730 hours. Pvt. James did exceptionally good work with the MG and was wounded in the right ear. Pvt. Ernest trying to move the gun to a better position was killed in action. The Platoon then withdrew under fire and reinforced the remainder of the 1st Bn. on the 3rd Bn. objective. Sgt. Kienlen on the hill North East of Los Aros was joined by Co. E. Enemy forces were seen but were out of range. Intermittent artillery fire was received and PFC's Anderson, K.B., and Trenary and Pvt. Baney and Cpl. Stewart were hit.

"D" Plus One, cont-

3. Second Platoon: No change.

4. Third Platoon: No change.

#### "D" Plus Two

1. Company Headquarters: left hill overlooking Los Aros and moved to Chateau St. Rosseline.

2. First Platoon: While platoon moved toward Chateau St. Rosseline, Lt. Sadlo and PFC Grbinich joined the platoon.

3. Second Platoon: No change.

4. Third Platoon: Eight men patrol suprised and drove away Germans setting up MG to cover area in which equipment bundles had just been dropped.

#### "D" Plus Three

1. Company Headquarters: Left Chateau St. Rosseline and moved to area North of Puget and set up CP in defensive position.

2. First Platoon: Left Chateau St. Rosseline, and moved to area North of Puget and took on left flank of Bn. on 7th Arm's right flank.

3. Second Platoon: joined remainder of Co. and moved to area North of Puget and set up defensive position. No enemy activity.

4. Third Platoon: joined Co. and set up defensive North of Puget. Platoon complete, except for PFC Davis, R.E (lw) and PFC Plasse (MIA) from jump.

DOMAIN W. FRASER

Capt., 517th Precht. Inf.

Commanding

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#### COMPANY "B" RECORD OF EVENTS

At 0300 hours, D-Day at Campino Airfield, Italy, Co. B loaded planes 16,17,18, 25,26,27,34, and 36. This is a record of activities of each of thes plane loads. Plane 16, Lt. Millsdale - Jumpmaster, 1st Squad of 1st Platoon and communications personnel.

#### "D" DAY

The stick dropped approximately 2 1/2 miles North and 1/2 mile West of Lorgue, France. Then after landing the entire stick was assembled and started for the objective by way of Lorgue to Los Aros. They arrived in Lorgue at 0800 hours and left Pvt. J. Davis in the hospital because of injuries received in the jump. The group left Lorgue at 0930 hours on a cross country route for Los Aros. They moved very slowly and cautiously because of strong enemy positions. The group pinned down on the outskirts of Los Aros by heavy enemy small arms fire and enemy concentrations. They withdrew to the outskirts of Lorgue and started out for their objective by a different route. They stopped in the woods at 2200 hours and stayed there until morning.

#### "D" PLUS ONE

The group started for the objective at 0700 hours and received strafing from a plane and came under light artillery fire. They selected another route to their objective by way of Draguignan. The unit started out preceeded by two 3 men patrols. One partol engaged in a fire fight on the edge of Draguignan. No word or contact was received from the other patrol. The main group captured 2 German trucks carrying officers and wounded men. They killed 3 officers, took 25 prisoners and turned them over to the FFI in Lorgue. They started for the objective and moved through Draguignan and Trans-en-Provence. First American troops contacted were 551st. Gave them information of enemy positions on outskirts of Draguignan. The unit arrived at the regimental CP at 2300 hours, "D" plus 1 and joined Hq. Co. early the next morning. The missing patrol reported on "D" plus 3. They had been captured by a depleted Bn. of Germans, about 250 in number. This German unit was being surrounded by FFI units and they surrendered to Pvts. James and Gray who turned them over to French unit and were taken to "Irvastion G-2" to give him what information they had.

Plane 17 - Lt. Fisher - Jumpmaster

Jumped at 0505 and landed about 3 miles North East of Lorgues. The equipment bundles were found, most of the stick assembled, and they began to march to the Battalion objective. Just East of Lorgues they encountered an enemy patrol and forced the enemy to withdraw. They received word that American troops were trapped in Lorgues so they attempted to go into the town, encountered fire, but forced the enemy out. They then moved toward Los Aros, being forced into hiding during the day because of the presence of large numbers of enemy troops. They moved into Los Aros and joined a fire fight in progress between American troops and the enemy. They remained there until "D" Plus 2 at which time they withdrew to the Regimental CP and rejoined the Company on "B" Plus Three.

Plane 18 - Lt. Engelson - Jumpmaster.

Jumped at 0456 hours and landed about midpoint between Los Aros and Trans-en-Provence. Eleven men were assembled and the equipment bundles were obtained. This stick joined a group of about 40 men in Los Aros under the Command of Major Boyle and set up a road block at the South East corner of town. On "D" Plus One strong enemy forces attacked and Major Boyle's forces withdrew. Lt. Engelson and his men withdrew to the 2nd Bn. position and from there to the Regimental CP and on "D" Plus Three joined the Co. S/Sgt. Meyers and his men joined Co. D which entered the town from the other end of Los Aros.

Plane 25 - Lt. Reardon - Jumpmaster.

Jumped 2 1/2 miles South West of Draguignan. All 18 men were assembled under Lt. Reardon, but the equipment bundles were not found. They moved South West until reaching Hourdarne and then took a donkey trail toward the objective. They were joined by Lt. Lynch, 7 Hq. Co. men and 8 Co. B men. They were fired on at 1000 hours by an enemy patrol, which moved out when the fire was returned. At 1035, they were joined by Lt. Allingham and Co. C. men, who joined the column as a rear guard. At 1240 they ran into the rear guard of approximately one company of enemy on Route 7, attempting to locate a route to objective, they fired on and knocked out two cars and one motorcycle, killing six and capturing one German. One of the cars was in good condition and was turned over to the Regimental Commander. They sent out patrols from this position and received fire from the Bn. objective. They were unable to determine whether this was friendly or enemy fire, so they returned to Regiment to obtain further information and orders at Regtl. Cp. At approximately 1600 hours the Co. was organized and moved out to the objective.

Plane 26 - Sgt. Price - Jumpmaster

Landed about 6 miles North East of Los Aros, and assembled on the machine gun bundle. Capt. Young joined them and assumed command. They proceeded toward the Bn. objective, were joined by Lt. Engelson and his men and moved to Los Aros where they came under the command of Major Boyle.

Plane 27 - Lt. Miller - Jumpmaster

Landed 3 miles East of Trans-en-Provence. They assembled with Capt. Young and moved toward Los Aros, capturing a truck on the way. Half of the group moved by truck to the Regtl CP and there joined Co. B. The remainder stayed in Los Aros with Major Boyle.

Plane 34 - S/Sgt. Lovrine - Jumpmaster

Landed about 200 yards West of the Drop Zone. The stick was unable to organize at the position but moved to the Bn. objective and there joined the Co.

Plane 38 - Lt. Sanford - Jumpmaster.

Lt. Sanford, the 1st Sgt., Co. Hqs. personnel, one mortar squad and Bn. aid men, jumped at 0505 and landed 10 miles North East of the DZ. In attempting to find their Bn. objective they joined General Fredericks and accompanied his forces to the Task Force Headquarters, at which time they received orders to send out patrols to lead in Hqs. personnel, to outpost the area, and to remain there until further orders. The aid men immediately joined in bringing in and treating the wounded, although they were under sniper fire. At 1200 hours, they were relieved and moved by way of La Motte, through the British lines, to the Regtl. CP picking up about 50 men on the way. At the Regtl CP, Co. B personnel was organized under Lt. Sanford and moved to the Bn. objective, reporting that the Bn. Exec. Officer. Then, the Co. was given two missions: To outpost the E flank of the Bn. positions: to place a road block, with an attached A.T. platoon (442nd) on Route 7 N of the Bn. position. This was accomplished and on the morning of "D" plus 1 the entire Co. was moved to the road block. The 2nd platoon one squad of the AT platoon, and the Bn. Rocket Launcher team were placed on the E side, the 3rd platoon and 2 AT squads to the W, and the remainder held in support. At about 1400 hours a section from the Reconnaissance Co. of the 15th Division contacted the road block and SE of Los Aros to determine if the bridge was prepared for demolition.

Sgt. Montgomery volunteered his squad and moved out with radio contact. At the bridge Sgt. Montgomery, Pvt. Baldwin, Pvt. Hathorne were killed; Pvt. Reese returned immediately to warn his unit. The other four, one of whom was seriously wounded, returned after dark. The leading elements of the enemy Bn. ran into the Co. position and were engaged in a fire fight. After about two hours the enemy withdrew. Three prisoners were taken. The road block was held through the night and no action was seen on "D" plus 2 and on "D" plus 3 the Co. Commander took over the Co. On "D" plus 3 the Co. joined the Bn. as it moved out to Puget.

CHARLES J. HILLSTALE  
Lt., Infantry  
Commanding

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COMPANY C RECORD  
OF EVENTS  
"D" DAY

Company C enplaned at Campino Airfield, 30 miles NE of Rome, Italy at 0030 hours, 15 Aug 44, with a total strength of 121 EM and 9 Officers. The planes took off at 0200 hours and after circling the field for an hour headed NW for France. Most of the men settled down and went to sleep. The trip over the sea was uneventful. 20 minutes from the DZ all pilots gave the parachutists an oral warning and the men buckled on their equipment. There was a heavy fog lying close to the ground. It was later revealed that the Pathfinder group had missed the field, thereby resulted in having the pilots use their own judgement for the drop. The results were that the Co. was scattered. The majority of the Co. landed approximately one mile S and W of Trans-en-Provence, France. One stick of the 3rd Platoon under Lt. Cook landed near La Motte, and the Company Commander landed in the center of Trans-en-Provence proper. The Company assembled by sticks and in groups of three and four and began to find their way toward the 1st Bn. assembly area. Enroute there were several minor clashes with German patrols with no casualties to ourselves and 20 or 30 Germans were killed. Because they were widely scattered it was necessary for each of these groups to take a different route to the Bn. assembly area (which was near Chateau St. Rosseline) and noon of "D" day found the Co. disposed as follows: (a) Majority under Lt. Duce in position near Chateau St. Rosseline, (b) A group of 15 under Sgt. Hanson with Major Legie in Les Arce where they were helping to defend a road block. (c) Captain LeChausse plus the stick that jumped with Lt. Cook at La Motte, was on the Co. objective (Roches Rouges, France). Throughout "D" day there were not any clashes with German troops on a large scale. A few minor clashes occurred. Outside of these skirmishes there was no section, but it was with relief that the Company saw reinforcements arrive by parachute and glider early in the morning.

CHARLES E. LA CHAUSSE  
Capt., 517th Pchut. Inf.  
Commanding

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HEADQUARTERS 2ND BATTALION  
RECORDS OF EVENTS

At 0200 hours, 15 Aug 44, the 2nd Battalion, 517th Parachute Inf., enplaned at Ombone Airfield, Italy, located at 8 miles S of Grossette, Italy. The battalion mission was to spearhead the Airborne Invasion of Southern France. To land on a pre-designated dropping zone, located 1 1/2 miles Southwest of La Motte, France. Then after assembly to seize and hold high ground commanding the approached to the beaches where our amphibious forces were to effect a landing a short time later. The Battalion loaded in 34 planes of the 440th TC Group commanded by Lt. Col. Krebs. At 0235 hours the planes took off and after aerial assembly proceeded NW to the designated objective. The Battalion was preceded by Pathfinders consisting of 10 men, 1 officer, Lt. Diddle who jumped at 0255 with the mission to precede the Battalion, and set up at the drop zone. The order of drop was to be "D" Co., Hq. Co., "E" Co. and "F" Co. The actions in the earlier phases of the campaign will be described by Company units because of the independent nature of the activity.

RICHARD J. SKITS  
Lt. Col. 517th Pchut. Inf.  
Commanding



## HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

"2nd BATTALION"

"D" DAY

Hq. Co. 2nd Bn. enplaned at Ombrone Airfield near Crossette, Italy at 0200 hours. The Company departed the airfield at 0235 hours on 15 Aug 44 for Southern France. Lt. Col. Seitz, Commanding Officer, 2nd Bn. was the first man in the lead plane of the Company. He jumped at 0435 hours. The Co. was scattered over a large area extending roughly N to La Motte, and S. to Los Aros, E to Le Muy and W. to Draguignan. However approximately 50% of the Co. assembled 3 kilometers SE of La Motte and moved with Co. "D" to the assigned area. Several injuries were sustained in this operation. Major Gross, Battalion Executive Officer, suffered a fractured leg but refused to quit his post until given a direct order by Lt. Col. Seitz. The Battalion Sgt. Major, S/Sgt Backus could not continue due to a sprained ankle. Cpl. Neirmann of the light machine gun platoon neglected his injured ankle so that he might go on with his squad until the following day when it became necessary to evacuate him. Less than an hour after descent, Lt. Miley, was electrocuted while cutting wires which he thought to be used for communication. A group of machine gunners consisting of Lt. Robinson, Sgt. Furnelson, Pvt. Clark and Pvt. Began, while searching for equipment bundles was attacked by an enemy force with machine pistols. Lt. Robinson took cover in an irrigation ditch. While Clark and Began were searching for better cover for protection, Clark was shot in the back. Began turned to aid him, but was urged to go on by Clark. Clark was later found dead with several bullet holes in his body. Sgt. Furnelson was captured but escaped later.

Fifty percent of the company was assembled and in position by 0230 hours on D+1 Day. It remained in position on the road from Draguignan to Le Muy until 1230 hours, at which time it was relieved by Hq. Co. of the 331st Parachute Battalion.

On "D" plus one, 15 Aug 44, Headquarters Company moved into position on the hills S of Chateau St. Rosseline near Los Aros. The 31mm Mortar Platoon was attached to Company "D" in Los Aros. The light Machine Gun Platoon outposted the railroad between Los Aros and Le Muy and also served as protection to the 2nd Bn. CP which was located 3 kilometers N of Los Aros. While in this position the Co. was shelled several times by German artillery with scattered mortar fire. Both Lt. Lewis, Battalion Adjutant and Cpl. Fischer, Battalion Clar, received wounds necessitating their evacuation.

The positions were not changed until "D" plus three when the Company moved to the vicinity of Bagnola.

ROBERT B CLACER  
Capt. 517th Pch. Inf.  
Commanding

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## COMPANY "D" RECORD OF EVENTS

Co. D was assigned the mission of clearing the DZ, located as described above by sending 2 platoons (reinforced) to seize and hold the hill front commanding a possible approach to the Bn. AA. The other platoon was to push forward to secure the left flank of the Bn. Sector. At 0425 hours on 15 Aug 44, Capt. David H. Armstrong, Co. Co. D led his first plane load of paratroopers out the door of the 1st plane of the 1st wave over S France from a height of 1500 ft. Simultaneously 7 more plane loads of D Co. troopers bailed out with their equipment bundles. They landed about 3 kilometers SE of La Motte, France. The night was dark, and a thick fog approximately 800 ft. in depth obscured the ground and materially affected the assembly of the men and equipment. Some of the Company units encountered a light enemy resistance, characterized principally by small arms fire. This fire came from enemy patrols and was quickly silenced. The majority of the Co. was assembled by daylight on the highway leading into La Motte. At that point the Co. joined Hq. Co. which was about 50% strength.

The command of the Co. was delegated to Lt. Laron, S. James, former Co. Exec. Officer as the injuries sustained by Capt. Armstrong when he landed made his evacuation necessary. Other Co. jump casualties were: Pvt. Flagle, sprained ankles; Pvt. R. A. Allen, broken foot; Lt. Sherman Williams, sprained ankle; Pvt. F. Wapori, sprained back; Pvt. Foute, sprained ankle; Pvt. Sloav, sprained ankle; Pvt. Bill Jones, broken rib; Pvt. Payne, ruptured ear drum; Lt. Melvin Edwards, back injury. Lt. Williams and Pvt. Flagle and Jones and Edwards later joined the Co. Pvt. Frederis Johns, while attempting to join the Co. was killed by 3 MC bullets in his back. His last words were "I'm sorry I let you fellows down". The other injured were evacuated, Pvt. Jones broken rib; Pvt. Payne, ruptured ear drum, Lt. Williams, Pts. Flagle and Jones re-joined the Co. The remainder were evacuated.

The 2nd Bn. with Co. D leading assisted by a French guide, moved to the planned assembly area near a large Chateau located 1½ miles SW from the Chateau, Lt. Williams took one squad from the 2nd Platoon and put out a road block on Highway 7 moving through the valley. This squad proceeded to a point 500 yards from the Chateau where Cpl. Fred Gensianni blew down poles with demolitions and cut down important communication wires with wire cutters. Trees were also blown down along the road. The remainder of the Co. went into position on the highground commanding the valley through which the road ran.

Approximately at 1200 hours on D Day, a reinforced squad, commanded by Sgt. Roger Goodwell, accompanied by Lt. Gal Starkey to high ground on the right of the valley and prepared to defend the high ridge until relieved by the 551st Prohlt. Inf. The 3rd platoon, commanded by Lt. Cooper occupied the high ground E of Lt. Starkey and organized for defense. The 1st Platoon, now commanded by Lt. Williams, was in reserve, with the remainder of the 2nd Platoon.

Although the 551st jumped into the valley protected by the 2nd Bn. at 1310 hours, plans evidently were changed since the 3rd platoon was not relieved and remained in position all night until "D" plus 1. The reinforced squad from the 2nd Platoon stayed in position until 2200 hours when they were ordered to withdraw. They withdrew under the light of enemy flares and were attacked by a superior force of Germans who threw more than 10 hand grenades into their positions. The withdrawal, however, was without mishap and they joined the 1st Platoon.

The night of "D" plus 1, the 1st and 2nd platoons moved to a bivouac near the Chateau and spent the night. The following day the 2nd Bn. moved out to take over the objective of the 3rd Bn., which was delayed because of dropping so far from the DZ. At that time a small force from the 1st Bn., commanded by Maj. Boyle, was trapped in the town of Los Aros by an overwhelming force of Germans. The 2 platoons of Co. D were ordered to proceed to the town, get Maj. Boyle out, then withdraw.

The 2nd platoon moved out first, followed by the 1st platoon. They met no opposition until they moved into the town. A defense was thrown up from house to house 200 yds from the railroad station in the S part of Los Aros early in the morning of "D" plus 2. The defense held despite repeated massing of enemy troops at the railroad station and constant threat of attack. One attack was broken up by extremely effective firing by the 2nd platoon mortar squad, commanded by Sgt. Hillhouse, and the 1st Platoon MG gunner Pvt. Joe Haynes, with other riflemen. A second attack was stopped by strafing and dive bombing P-61's and the Germans massing for a third attack was stopped by a barrage from 4.2 mortars of Co. D 63rd CWS Bn. During that time the S end of Los Aros was held by the 2nd platoon. The 1st platoon held the right flank while the left flank was lightly held by scattered men from the 1st Bn. Prior to the attacks, the 1st platoon led by Lt. J. P. Witt, reconnoitered deep into enemy territory where Lt. Witt and Pvt. Salians were wounded. The 1st platoon commanded by S/Sgt. J. V. Benton, then defended the right flank.

At approximately 1500 hours, Co. F reinforced D Co. and secured the N end of town. Ten men were sent from Co. F to reinforce the 2nd platoon in the S of the town.

During the day, 4 patrols led by Lt. Starkey penetrated into enemy territory on reconnaissance missions. On D plus 2, Lt. Starkey finally contacted a patrol from the 3rd Bn. and a reconnaissance unit from the 45th Div. Following this the enemy was dispersed.

In the section of Los Aros, the following were wounded, Lt. Witt, Pvt. Salisas, Pvt. Haynes, Pvt. F. Callucci, Cpl. B. McKean, Pvt. Gallucci and Cpl. Mo Koan were injured by shelling from German Artillery.

The 3rd platoon on D plus 1 at 2200 hours moved to the N side of town and organized defense and sent out 4 patrols to locate 3rd B., without success.

At 0730 hours on D plus 3 the Bn. moved to new positions 9 miles SE of Los Aros where the Co. organized positions on high ground protecting the 7th Army on its right flank.

On D plus 6 the Co. moved a ½ mile W of Fayence and set up a defense in conjunction with E and F Co's. They hold that defense to date (Dplus 7).

LOREN S. JAMES  
1st Lt., Inf.  
Commanding

COMPANY "E" RECORD OF EVENTS  
"D" DAY

Company "E" was assigned the mission of seizing and holding the high ground to the W and SW of the assembly area which commanded the approaches into the valley leading to the beaches. The assigned DZ was as prescribed for the Bn. Co. "E" enplaned at Ombrone Airfield at 0200 hours, 15 Aug 44. The men jumped over France at 0435 hours and landed generally in the vicinity of La Motte, France. That part of the Co. which assembled moved toward its objective near Trans-en-Provence vis La Motte arriving at 1045 hours. It was not there by the Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Seitz, who ordered it to move into the predesignated defensive position at 1143. It held that position until it was relieved by the 551st Pcht. Bn. at 2100 hours. During the day no organized resistance was encountered. Small patrol action by last members of the Co. were the only contact made. With a rifle grenade, Pvt. E. M. Magelo killed 2 Germans riding a motorcycle in the vicinity of La Motte. Near Le Muy, Pvt. C.C. Simon was killed by a small enemy tank. Pvt. Little and Short were captured and held prisoner by the enemy in Le Muy until the town was taken by the 550th Glider Inf., Bn. the following day. They were released and returned to the Co. on the following day. Upon relief by the 551st Pcht. Inf., the Co. moved to the Regtl. CP area N of Los Aros and remained there until the morning of "D" plus 1.

"D" plus one

The Company then moved into defensive position in the vicinity of Los Aros at 0900 hours relieving part of Co. A. 1st Bn. From the 1st Squad of the 3rd Platoon, a patrol led by 1st Lt. J. E. Bearley killed 12 Germans and captured one. The Co. remained in the position until the evening of D plus two. During the afternoon of 16 Aug 44. in the shelling of the left flank, three casualties were suffered. Pvt. Ware was shot in the hand while on patrol with Lt. Bearley.

"D" plus two

The Co. moved back to the 2nd Bn. Cp in the evening of 17 Aug 44 and stayed until 1330 hours 18 Aug 44 when it moved to defensive positions NE of La Motte, arriving there at 1630 hours and remaining until 0500 hours 20 Aug 44. During this time no enemy were contacted.

ROBERT H. NEWBERRY  
Capt. Infantry  
Commanding

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COMPANY "F" RECORD OF EVENTS  
"D" DAY

The Company enplaned at Ombrone Airfield near Grossette, Italy, at 0200 hours, 15 Aug 44. At 0435 Capt. McKinley led the Co. out of his plane in its first combat jump. The Co. was assigned the mission of clearing the town of La Motte, France after organizing on the assigned DZ 1 1/2 miles SW of La Motte. However, the Co. landed in the vicinity of Le Muy, NE and SE of the town. As the town was defended these men quickly moved for cover outside the town. There several Germans were met and the fatal wounding of Pvt. O'Brien occurred. The several units finally organized under Capt. McKinley, the Commander, Colonel Graves, who had previously joined Capt McKinley, the Co. moved out for La Motte, its original objective. About 2 miles outside of La Motte the Co. found the body of Tec 4 Shanneyfelt, who had been shot through the head and killed by a sniper. On the march the point discovered several camouflaged enemy barracks on the side of a small hill near the route of march. Lt. Riddle, under cover of two scouts and a BAR moved up and captured 8 enemy soldiers. Lt. Ginchici was wounded by a grenade on the outskirts of La Motte. The right flank patrol, commanded by S/Sgt. Minick, discovered some men from the 2nd British Parachute Brigade and learned that La Motte was occupied by both British and American Parachute Troops. The column then moved from La Motte SW approximately 2 miles to the Regimental CP where the men rested over night.

"D" plus one

On 16 Aug 44, the Co moved S of Los Aros to reinforce Co. D. Received moderate shell fire, but sustained no casualties while en route. The Co moved to the S and W edges of the town encountering sporadic sniper fire from the vicinity of the rail road S of the town. Here defensive positions were set up. They remained in Los Aros gradually getting reinforcements until 18 Aug 44, when the Co. left Los Aros and moved to the vicinity of Bagnols. There defensive positions were set up and were held until 20 Aug 44. No resistance encountered.

JOHN N. MCKINLEY  
Capt. Inf.  
Commanding

HEADQUARTERS 3RD BATTALION  
RECORDS OF EVENTS

The 3rd Bn. left Ortatello Airfield. Italy in 45 planes at 024 hours. 15 Aug 44, bound for a DZ located near La Motte, France. The lift was scheduled to jump at 0440 hour and did so but landed in a line extending from east of Callian to about 5 miles W of Seillana.

35 planes jumped in the vicinity of Callian. These planes contained personnel of Hq. Co., O Co., and H. Co. of the 3rd Bn. and Regimental Hqs. and Service Co. The remaining part of this group landed just E of Callian and assembled there with the following personnel: G co., - 40: H Co., - 60: Hqs. Co., 3rd Bn. - 60: Service Co. - 40: and Regimental Hqs. Co. - 20. Lt. Gibbons resumed command of this group and made plans to march back to our objective near Los Aros, France. They marched across the valley to the road junction at 643-5305 map XXXV-43, 7 and 8 where they met another group of about 50 American and 80 British.

10 planes landed in the hills about 5 miles W of Fayence, France. 8 planes of this group contained the entire personnel and equipment of I Co. and two planes contained the command group and part of the Communication personnel of Hq. Co. These planes were the first 10 planes in the first group formation.

After assembling the personnel and equipment, Lt. Col. Zais proceeded on to Claviers with this group. Enroute they were bombed by P-38's. The attack terminated when the yellow smoke signal was displayed. The railroad to the NE of town was blown and the group reached Claviers just before darkness. They bivouaced on a Chateau W of town at 2300 hours. In the morning the group proceeded toward their destination - Los Aros. Nothing was encountered on the march. Lt. Co. Zais obtained a vehicle at the glider landing field near La Motte and set out to obtain information, about the rest of the Bn. At about 1400 hours of D plus 1, this group met the remainder of the Bn. in the outskirts of La Motte.

Some of the 33 planes landed in the hills just E of Tourettes. This group was assembled, amounted to 60 men of G, M and Hqs. Co's. Of these, 10 were wounded badly enough to be unable to march. Three aid men were left with this group and a place fixed for them in the hills E of Tourettes. Capt. McGeever was in command of this group and after gathering up the injured the morning of D Day started toward his destination. - Los Aros, at 1100 hours. Just S of Tourettes they joined up with about 80 British paratroopers under Maj. Boackwood. This combined group ran into a convoy of German vehicles which were under fire from a stone house near the main highway S of Fayence.

Under the combined fire of the English American group and the personnel in the house, that convoy personnel were either killed, surrendered or fled. The English American group put an 81mm mortar in action and that terminated the action as the enemy fled. Five prisoners were taken, one of who died, around 10 or 12 were killed and the rest escaped. Six vehicles were taken, three of which were in operating condition. This convoy was on the road between Bagnols and Fayence. This group then marched until they met the rest of the 3rd Bn. at about 1300 hours at road junction 54. S-82.25.

The personnel in the stone house was Lt. Col. De Cavre, Chief of Staff of ABIF, Phillips and S/Sgt. from Div. Hq. They also came along with the English American Group.

At the road junction Capt. McGeever took command of both the 3rd Bn. group and the British troopers. This group of 390 men marched to within about 6 miles of Bagnols before bivouacing at about 2400 hours D Day. During the night plans were made for the remainder of the march, to Los Aros. On D plus 1, the march was resumed at 0600 hours. During the day at about 0600 hours Co. De Cavre took command of the men. Around 1030 in the morning the rear element of this group shot up a German convoy and captured six prisoners. Col De Cavre left the group to go to Div. Hqs. at 1200 hours. The groups marched on until it met Col. Zais's group in the outskirts of La Motte. The English met elements of their own organization and left the group.

Most of the 3rd Bn. was now assembled and marched to an assembly area near Reg'l Hqs. at Chateau Rosseline. At 1945 hours of D plus 1 day, the 3rd Bn. attacked the area S of Los Aros and entered the town itself on D plus 2. The Battalion stayed in town all of D plus 2, that night they departed for a new defensive area at 0800 of D plus 3 day. The Battalion marched from Los Aros to the assemble area at 609-47 map XXXV-44, 3 and 4 on D plus 4 day the Battalion went into a defensive position in the area N of this position. During the afternoon and night of this day Capt. McGeever with an officer of the 602 FA, and 4 jeeps returned to the hills E of Tourettes, and picked up the injured men as well as others of the Regiment who had been left behind. The whole amounted to about 25 men who got back to the 3rd Bn. at 0700 hours of D plus 5 day.

JOSEPH T. MCCEEVER  
Capt. 517th Frcht. Inf.  
Commanding



HEADQUARTERS COMPANY  
3RD BATTALION  
RECORDS OF EVENTS

Headquarters Co. 3rd Bn. took off from Crtatello, Italy, at 0240 hours "D" day, and dropped near Callian, France at about 0435. The landing area was hilly and covered with terrace walls resulting in many jump casualties. Those injured were Maj. R. E. McMahon, Executive Officer of the Bn. 1st Sge. Kievet, Pvt. Kelesar, Cyomber, Growsan, Lt. Plassman, PFC Constantine, and Pvt. McAvoy.

Great difficulty was encountered on the ground in locating equipment bundles due to fault or complete failure of bundle lights. The light MG platoon located all light MG and rocket launchers, and the mortar platoon located 2 31mm mortars. The communications section was less successful. Some equipment was lost and some of that found was useless due to breakage.

The men who could be located, assembled under Lt. Gibbons of H Co., who was the senior officer present and moved Southeast toward La motte about 23 miles away. Among other members of this group were Lt. Reber, Largan, and Garrett. The first two from Hq. Co., and the latter from H Co.

Platoons were formed as well as possible with the men on hand and the unit marched until 1900 hours, D day without opposition. This group then met Capt. McGesver Hqs. Co. commander who had assumed command of another force and the units combined totaled about 320 men. Capt. McGoover took over command of the battalion at this point. After resting a short while, the Bn. started across the valley from Callian toward Los Arcs. Most of the communication platoon had landed about 5 miles west of Fayence and were under the command of Lt. Col. Zais. At about 1410 on D plus 1 joined Lt. Col. Zais with all of I So. in the vicinity of La Motte.

At 1946 that evening, the Battalion attacked up the valley in the direction of Los Arcs. One Section of rocket launchers was attached to H Company for this operation. That night most of the Co. remained on the outskirts of Los Arcs. On D plus 2 the Co. entered Los Arcs proper and most of the day was spent in reorganizing and cleaning weapons and equipment.

On D plus 3 the Co. moved out with the Battalion to the vicinity of Puget where the Battalion established defensive positions.

The work of Lt. Plassman, and S/Sgt Chism, and Pvt Polaski, all of the Medical Detachment was outstanding. Lt. Plassman and S/Sgt Chism sustained painful leg injuries, but insisted on administering aid to all other jumpers injured in the DZ. Lt. Plassman remained at Callian with 9 American and British Soldiers, 6 Maquis, and 1 British Lt., and 3 days later when the troops returned to Callian he was evacuated.

S/Sgt. Chism remained at Feyance with 25 patients including 1 British and 7 American soldiers, and 17 Frenchmen. He was evacuated at the same time as was Lt. Plassman.

JOSEPH T. MCGEEVER  
Cpt., 517 Frecht. Inf.  
Commanding

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COMPANY "G" RECORD OF EVENTS  
"D" DAY

"G" Co. took off from Orbetello Airfield, Italy at 0220 hours D Day, with the mission of dropping in the vicinity of La Mote, France and moving to a location near Chateau St. Rosseline in Regimental Reserve.

At 0440 the Co. dropped about 25 miles from their objective, near Callian, France. Assembly was difficult since the element of the Co. were spread over a large area and the DZ was on unfamiliar terrain. The first units assembled, set up on high ground and established an all around defense, while the organization was carried on. An aid Station for jump casualties was set up in a French house, and patrols were sent out to contact other members of the Co. and carry in the injured.

When the Co. was assembled, Lt. Ridler assumed command, being senior officer present in the assembly area. A study of the maps, aided by some French people, showed that some elements of our Co. were dropped 25 miles from the original DZ.

The Co. moved into the town of Callian, where Lt. Steele and a group of 13 men joined the unit. As the Co. left Callian and crossed the railroad tracks running through the valley, several men dropped out for demolition work. Col. Collins, and Thomas blew up sections of the railroad tract, and tore down communication lines.

The unit was halted during the afternoon to give injured men medical aid and rest for the others. After dark the column moved on to a bivouac area and set up defenses. Capt. McGeever, Commanding Officer of Hqs. Co. 3rd Bn. and another group of troopers joined here. Among them were 15 G Co. men.

The Co. went into a forward assembly area between La Motte and Los Aros and got a 2-hour rest before getting word to attack at 1930. The attack came about 1930 hours and ran through a vineyard and around a railroad bend. The running skirmish lasted most of the night, with our troops digging in the vineyard and sending out patrols. The G Co. patrols brought in 19 prisoners during the night, and 6 early the next morning.

In the morning the Co. moved into Los Aros, and then took up defensive positions on the outskirts of town. These positions were held throughout the day and night. When the Co. formed the next day, we moved out with the Battalion to a location near La Lieutenante, and spent another night there in preparation for setting up defenses along the Fregus-Bagnols highway.

In the morning we moved into these positions, with MG's attached from Hqs. Co. and some attached from Hqs. Co. and some attached Anti-Tank Units. Capt. Hooper rejoined the Co. here, also Sgt. Long, who had badly injured his ankle on the jump.

Capt. G. A. Hooper, Commander of Co. G had come in with the lead plane in the Co. flight, and had not received the pre-planned warning the crew chief was supposed to signal to prepare the men for the jump. Then the signal came, Capt. Hooper was still working with a damaged harness on his own chute but helped get door load out and get his stick of men on the way. It was several seconds before the Capt., was ready to jump, but he bailed out as soon as he had his harness adjusted. He landed NW of Grasse, approximately 40 miles from the EZ, but contacted members of the French Maquis, who lead him through the enemy lines to rejoin his outfit 4 days later.

Two G Co. men had jumped with the Pathfinder Unit at 0326 hours landing 6 miles from the DZ. Pfc. Henry Fitipnek was injured on the jump, but assembled with 4 other Pathfinders and fought with the British paratroopers in the taking of Le Muy the following day.

Pvt. J. Kitchen assembled with 20 of the Pathfinders near a German barracks at Le Muy. They were drawn into a firefight which cost the enemy 17 dead and 4 wounded. They also joined the British and fought at Le Muy. They reached their objective, set up, and guided in the 551st Pzcht. Inf. the Glider units, and some aerial re-supply drops.

Cpl. Allen Douglas landed near Fayence, and assembled with several other paratroopers on the ground. Realizing they were off the DZ they set up a small defense and waited for dawn. They eventually formed a mixed group of 13 men, Americans, British, and Scotch. They contacted the Maquis, who brought them a 2300 radio they had recovered from an equipment bundle. They worked into the frequency, took the call name and contacted other American forces.

From their positions they radioed information back to the American troops, and P-47's were sent over to dive bomb and strafe.

When "King Six" said they were going to bomb the town of Fayence, Cpl. Douglas had them hold off until he sent a Maquis down into town to have the civilians evacuate it, which they promptly did.

Lst L. McElroy had jumped at Callian and went patrolling to assemble other paratroopers. The column moved out while he was still patrolling through the hills. As he moved in towards Callian to rejoin the troops, he engaged the Germans in a fire fight. He killed 5, and was lightly wounded himself when he shot one who had pulled the pin on a grenade. He reported into the 36th Div. and was given the location of his outfit, rejoining them in Montauroux.

As Cp. Louie Hopke moved along the Ragnols road with another trooper they got word of some Germans in a large house. They took up positions and called for them to surrender. They came running out of the house, so the men opened fire on them with a tommy gun and a barbine. They took 40 prisoners, after killing close to the same number. They turned these prisoners over to the 143 Inf.

Sgt. Hackard and Col. DesMayes worked with an O83 Officer in negotiating surrender terms with a German Officer in command of the fortress at La Roeb, taking 174 prisoners. Later in the afternoon, Sgt. Hackard along with 3 others assisted in the killing of 3 Germans and the capture of it.

GRANT A. HOOPER  
Capt., 317th Pzcht. Inf.  
Commanding

Co. H boarded their transport planes and took off for France, at 0220 hours from the Airfield at Orbetello, Italy. One mishap marred a perfect take off. The plane in which Lt. Athey and one squad of the 1st platoon were riding, stalled on the runway and crashed. However, only minor injuries were sustained. S/Sgt. Harmon, Pvs. Villalba, Ostashen, Byaun, Denning, Pippin, Hamilton, Kaudy, Averill, Downs, Helmer and Cpl. Graham were left behind, in the hospital. Lt. Athey, Cpl. Frucht, Sgt. Laeben, Pvs. Watkins, Schroeder and Cpl. Bischoff landed on the DZ on D Day by glider.

Until the jump, the company's flight was uneventful. Early on the morning of D Day scattered groups from the Co. slowly were collecting themselves after dropping into the rugged hills behind Callian at 0420 hours.

Lt. Bennett, Executive Officer, Pvt. Elliott and Barnes landed close together. As it grew light more men joined the group. Lt. Callaghan and Sgt. Copeland soon joined the Group. In a short time Lt. Bennett met Lt. Riddler and Pinkston and McKillop of Company G.

Lt. Bennett led a patrol to find others scattered elements of the Co. and also sent out patrols headed by Sgt. Walden and S/Sgt. Callahan, the latter from G Co. Lt. Bennett came across Lt. Freeman and Lt. Jackson with a few men. Lt. Thomas and Lt. Carrett who both were holding small groups of men on nearby hills sent messengers to contact Lt. Bennett and soon joined the rest of the Co. Patrols which were sent out for Capt. Morris by Lt. Bennett failed to report any information as to the whereabouts of the Capt. Later it was discovered Capt. Morris stick landed several miles W of the Battalion. With the Capt were Sgt. Karatom, Sanders, Erickson and Pvt Meador.

The Co. now about 20 in strength met another group of men with Lt. Gibbons. After a brief reorganization, the Co. moved off with Lt. Gibbons in command of the Bn. Lt. Bennett in Command of Co. Lt. Jackson, 1st platoon, Lt. Carrett and Freeman with the 2nd platoon and Lt. Thomas with the 3rd.

Now 70 in strength the Co. started to its objective 23 miles away. Capt. McGeever with approximately 60 men, Lt. Co. Decarue and 100th British Parachutists, led by a British Maj. joined the Bn. 3 miles W of Callian. At 2200 hours the Bn. stopped to rest 3 miles NE of Bagnols.

On D plus 1, H Co. formed the advance party of the Bn. as it proceeded to the objective. Lt. Thomas now in command of the 3rd platoon was the advance guard of the Bn. The march proved to be uneventful.

The Bn. reached La Motte at 1400 hours and was met by its Bn. Commanding Officer, Lt. Col. Zais. The Bn. under command of Lt. Col. Zais arrived at St. Rosseline at 1600 hours. Lt. Athey, Cpl. Frucht, Sgt. Leaben, Cpl. Bixcholl, Pvs. Watkins and Schroeder rejoined the Co. at 1630 hours. Lt. Col. Zais left for the Regt'l Cp to receive further orders. The Co. posted local security and remained in area until 1800 hours.

The Bn. Commander issued orders to all Company Commanders and properly oriented them in regards to our forward assembly area, at that the Bn moved out, H Co. forming the advance guard. Company formation, first Platoon, company headquarters, second and third platoon. Arrived at forward assembly area at 1900 hours. At the forward assembly area the Bn. was given order to attack at 1945 on an azimuth of 230 degrees. H Co. to be on the L, I Co. on the R, and G. Co. in the reserve.

Supporting 4.2 mortars was to lay down a concentration at 2000 hours and come at 2030 hours. H Co. attacked with the 3rd platoon on the L, 2nd platoon on the R and 1st platoon in support, Co. Hdqs. to be in rear of 2nd Platoon.

During this attack Lt. Freeman and 1st Sgt Caunce were killed by enemy small arm fire. Pvs. Watermand and Pastalouic were also wounded. Casualties inflicted upon the enemy were estimated to be 10 dead and 12 captured.

The Bn. reached its final objective 2100 hours and set up on high ground outside. Los Aros. Bn. remained at Los Aros throughout D plus 2. Cpt. Morris, Sgt Rickson, Saunders, Karatea rejoined the Co. at 1500 hours D plus 2. The Co. moved out 0600 hours D plus 3 to its former forward assembly area to pick up its usetta bags which were left behind prior to the attack. Remained in this area until 1500 hours. At approximately 1630 hours, Co. moved to the high ground immediately S (2 Miles) of Bagnols and remained there in a defensive position until 0800 hours D plus 4.

MARVIN D. MORRIS  
Capt. 517th Pch. Inf.  
Commanding

COMPANY "I" RECORD OF EVENTS  
"D" DAY

At about 0230 hours, the Co. took off for the coast of Southern France from the Air base at Orvetello in 8 C-47 planes. At about 0430 hours the entire Co. jumped and landed just outside the town of Seillans, which was about 23 miles from the pre-designated deep zone.

Company Headquarters: Upon landing, Capt. Fastain located a house at which point he was met by Pvt. Egan and Ayers. After a brief survey of the area, he came to the conclusion that the Co. had been dropped in the wrong DZ. Since the house was a natural assembly point, Capt. Fastain stayed there with Pvt. Ayers, while Pvt. Egan went to locate his equipment. After a short while, elements of the Co. began to drift in and Capt. Fastain told Lt. Birder to take the men to a small hill nearby and set up a defensive position. Meanwhile, Cpl's Castiglione and Kuyseyek and Pvt. Pisaro came along and they were used at the house as guided by Capt. Fastain. Presently Col Zais, Maj. McMahon, Capt. Pencak, Lt. Preist and many of the Hqs. Co. communication section joined at the house.

Col. Zais took complete charge of the situation. After a short while, Col. Zais asked for a report of the Co., which at that time as all had not arrived, stood at 85 EM and 8 officers. Just as dawn came a report from Lt. Birder stated that Lt. Scott, Pvt. Loeffler, Sigonga, Jerena, Sailor and Ayers were hurt and it was not likely that they would be able to continue. We were then joined by Lt. Neiler and his SO2 section. In a short while, Col. Zais established his exact location by questioning some French civilians.

Soon a group of British paratroopers joined us with their Capt. in Command. Maj. McMahon revealed a severely bad cut on his right leg and was given first aid and decided to continue with us. At about 0800 hours Col. Zais ordered Capt. Fastain to form the Co. and move out in the direction of St. Clariers, the next town in the direction of the Regimental Area. As this was being done, P-38's dropped small bombs on us, no doubt thinking we were the enemy. Capt. Pencak set up a yellow smoke pot and soon the planes recognized us as friendly troops. We moved out at about 0830 hours cross-country and at 1000 hours Colonel Zais ordered a halt, at which time the 3 platoons set up a perimeter defense.

At 1800 hours, we moved down the road towards St. Clariers, and as we crossed at a railroad, Col. Zais ordered that the section be blown up. This was done by Lt. Roston and some men. We passed through the town of St. Clariers, and continued on towards the town of Callas. About 1/2 mile from the town Col. Zais ordered a halt for the night and again the 3 platoons took up a perimeter defense.

First Platoon: After landing at the DZ the elements of the platoon preceded to the Co. assembly area to Lt. Birder, and the Platoon leader, Lt. Terrell reported that Cpl. Bailey, Pvt. Loeffler, Sibonga, Jerene and Sailor were injured and that Pvt. Clark was missing. After reaching the Co. assembly area, the platoon put out its local security. Then the order came to move out, the 1st platoon took its position in the march, that of support platoon.

Second Platoon: Upon landing on the DZ, they assembled with the rest of the Co. and also set up a local security. Lt. Stotte reported to Lt. Birder that he had sustained a back injury and the Cpl. Boyer, Sgt. Miller and Pvt. Hughes were missing. When the order came to move out, the 2nd platoon and rear guard. After preceding a short way the injured men could no longer continue. Capt. Fastain ordered Lt. Stott to remain behind with Cpl. Bailey, Privts. Loeffler, Sibonga, Jerene and Sailor. At this time Sgt. Miller and Pvt. Hughes joined the platoon and since Pvt. Hughes was hurt, he also stayed behind. After obtaining all necessities, Lt. Stott took charge of the group at a nearby farm house, and the rest of the Co. moved on. Lt. Stott then moved himself to a nearby hill where he and the men dug in and put out local security.

Pvt. Bennett, a platoon medic was also left behind with Lt. Stott to aid the injured men. At 1500 hours 4 French Patriots approached the group. The left and later returned with a Scotch Lt. and a truck, which the group boarded and proceeded to the town of Seillans. There they went to a small hotel and were treated by a local doctor, after which the group rested outside of town in a barn for the night.

Third Platoon: Upon landing, the platoon was guided to the assembly area and set up its local security. Lt. Fearney, in his report to Lt. Birder stated that Privts. King and Colli were missing. When the order came to move out, the 3rd platoon formed the advance party of the Co. and moved out as directed by Col. Zais.

D plus 1

Company Headquarters: At 0730 hours, the Co. moved out towards the town of Callas. We passed through the town and continued on towards the



## Company Headquarters:

At 0730 hours, the Company moved out towards the town of Callas. We passed through the town and continued on towards the Regimental Area, which was the town of St. Rosseline. At about 1030 hour, we met a jeep our first sight of one in France. Capt. Brooks and another officer were in the jeep and informed Col. Zais the location of ABTF Headquarters. We passed hundreds of American and British Gliders enroute. They were badly smashed and showed signs of many casualties. At 1500 hours we passed through the town of a Motte, and at 1630 hour we reached our Regimental Area at St. Rosseline. During the march a few men dropped out, but they rejoined their platoons later on. At 1900 hour the Col. called the Commanding Officers and told them that the Bn. would proceed to a AA outside the town of Los Arcs and would attack in the morning. We moved out to our forward position but enroute the attack order was changed to 1945 hour that night. We reached our position and Capt. Fastala received the attack order from Col. Zais. Musette Bags were dumped at a nearby shack and the Co. went into the attack position. The first platoon was on the left, rear of the formation. We attacked as ordered after a heavy concentration of 12 mortats was placed on the enemy. The Co. on our left met some enemy resistance. At 2000 hour, we captured 3 enemy who were lying in the vineyards. They were placed under guard by the men of Co. Hqs. and we advanced to the outskirts of Los Arcs. We halted on an order from Col. Zail and set up defensive positions for the night. A squad led by Col. Reyacyck went to the town of Los Arcs and reported that no enemy were in the town.

## First Platoon:

This platoon became the advance party of the Co. and led the entire way to St. Rosseline where we joined the rest of the Bn. On the Attack, the platoon occupied the left sector of the Co. area and accomplished its mission. At 2000 hours Cpl. Wulton and Staff Sergeant Shenk noticed movements in vineyard. They investigated and found it was 5 Germans, which they captured. Upon reaching the halt for the night the platoon set up its security and dug in.

## Second Platoon:

This platoon, with Lt. Renton in Command remained as supporry throughout the day, and during the Attack they searched out all houses and barns in their sector. They found much German equipment, but no enemy. Lt. Stott and his group meanwhile moved his injured men to houses throughout the town where they were cared for by the friendly villagers. Lt. Stott and a French Cpl. and 5 Patriots boarded a truck and went to a bridge which they blew up. They saw a German Truck coming in the direction of the bridge and when the bridge was blown a falling rock from the blown bridge demolished the truck completely and killed its lone driver.

## Third Platoon:

The platoon became the rear guard of the formation throughout the march and when in the attack position it occupied the right sector of the Co. formation. After they had taken defensive postions for the night halt, Cpl Ryescyck led a squad to the town of Los Arcs and reported no enemy activity in the town. The platoon dug in and set up security for the night.

## D plus two

At dawn we moved forward and attacked the left section of the town of Los Area. The formation was still the same in the Com/, but I Co. and H. Co. switched sections and I Co. now occupied the left sector of the attack. Enroute, Capt. Fastala met Lt. Starkey and he was informed that Co. been in the right part of the town during the night. The 2nd Platoon picked up a prisoner in one of the houses and he was added to the other three. We took our section of Los Arcs and Col. Zais gave the Co. the mission of holding the left flank of the Bn. sector. The 3rd Platoon occupied the left sector while the 2nd Platoon remained in support. We dug in and took defensive positions for the rest of the day.

## First Platoon:

The attack continued with the 1st Platoon still on the left of our sector. No resistance was encountered and upon reaching the objective, the platoon took the forward position, dug in, and continued to send out patrols throughout the day. Pvt Coark rejoined the platoon at 1030 hours.

Second Platoon: The platoon, still in support, continued its mission of cleaning out houses and barns and that the lead elements had by-passed. At one of these barns, Pvts. Sparga and Patterson picked up a German hiding inside. Upon reaching the objective, the platoon remained in support, but a patrol of 12 men, led by Sgt. Dallas, investigated a house and reported German bicycles but no riders. Meanwhile, Pvts. Britsky, Egan, Carall, Cornett, Moore, Conyeneck with their IMG were sent, under the command of Lt. Heinsleigh of Hqs. Co. and a section of that Co.'s Bazooka's to guard the cross-road on the rear left flank of the town of Los Aros. Meantime, Lt. Stott with his group, were shown by the French a load of chutes, MG's and Mortars and Ammo that they (the French) had collected. Pvt. Bennett and 11 French patriots boarded a truck to pick up some Italian prisoners. On a returning truck turned over, killing one man and injuring Pvt. Bennett's left arm. Lt. Stott and Pvt. Hughes and a Frenchman proceeded to a nearby bridge which they blew up. The time was 2300 hours. Then Lt. Stott met Capt. Remma and Sgt. Palmer of the SSF and informed Lt. Stott that Germans were in the vicinity. Lt. Stott sent out a patrol, reported back no German activity.

Third Platoon: The platoon continued on the right sector during the attack and after reaching the objective of Los Aros, set up a defensive position and dug in. A small patrol at 0600 hour consisting of Sgt. Russell, Pvt. A. C. Fields and Holbrook were fired upon by a German sniper, and they immediately returned fire and killed the sniper and discovered a 50 Cal. MG (American) which had been captured by the Germans near the dead sniper. There were 3 dead Germans by the 50 Cal MG, apparently killed by the French, the next day the Bn. moved out to a position to protect 7th Army right flank.

MARTIN J. FASTAIN  
Capt., 517th Frecht. Inf.  
Commanding

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### 596th AIRBORNE ENGINEER COMPANY

This mission of the 596th AB Engineer Co. in the recent AB Operation into Southern France was to prepare various bridges for demolitions in the Agens River Valley near Los Aros, France, to be blown only upon order of the Combat Team Commander or to keep them from falling intact into enemy hands.

The first platoon was attached to the 509th CT for the operation and had no mission prior to take off. The Second Platoon was charge with the reconnaissance and preparation for demolition of the bridges at (374368), (353330) and (350360). The Third Platoon was charged with the reconnaissance, and Preparation for demolition of the bridges at (336376) and (356370).

Preparations for this operation were short. Of course the Co. had been engaged in regular Engineer Training but details of the operation were lacking until the last week before the call to departure airfields. In fact, the Co. Commander was asked for his basic combat loads before he knew what his exact mission was to be. This action should be avoided in the future because the Engineer must load for a specific mission. Unlike the Infantry, the Artillery the mission will be the determining factor in the loading of Engineer equipment. After much thought on what we might be expected to do, the types of bridges that we might have to blow, the plane space and carrying weight available, basic loads for each Co. schedule were determined. When the actual bridges that were to be prepared were studied we found that our basic loads were fairly accurate. The Co. carried 58 equipment bundles equally contained approximately 6000 lbs. of explosives, 2000 lbs. of mines, 14 mine detectors, bazookas bundles and 3 extra equipment bundles.

The Co. did not jump as a unit. The 1st Platoon was attached to the 509th CT; Co. Hdqs and the 2nd Platoon came in with Regimental Headquarters, 517th CT and the 3rd Platoon jumped with the 3rd Bn., 517th CT. Co. Hdqs. and the 2nd Platoon took off from Ombrone Airfield near Grosseto, Italy at 0240 hours, 15 Aug 44. They were dropped on Le Muy, France at 0432 hours, about 4 miles from the planned DZ. Le Muy was occupied by the enemy and several men of the Infantry elements were killed before they had a chance to get out of their chutes. Of our own unit, 2 men received injuries which would not permit them to move with us to our assembly area. They were Sgt. Sanberg of the 2nd Platoon and Pvt. Wilkins of Headquarters Platoon. Both had to be left because of enemy mortar fire into the area. Sgt. Sanberg was evacuated safely later by the Medical Corps but Pvt. Wilkins was found dead on the 15th of Aug. 44.

S/Sgt. Hoffman and Cpl Roberts of the Supply Section were pinned down by enemy machine gun and rifle fire, for 6 hours about 30 yards from an enemy pillbox. They could hear the enemy talking and kept clear only by crawling down different rows of the vineyard as the enemy tried to find them. Finally S/Sgt. Hoffman and Cpl. Roberts got into a neck deep sluiceway and waded it under the various buildings of the village until they came out on a river bank. After a few minutes rest they got into the river and followed the current until they encountered some British Trooper -

In the process of attacking the German Headquarters - S/Sgt. Hoffman and Cpl Roberts went in with the and preceeded to assist in the capture of the enemy. They helped occupy the enemy Headquarters building the night of D day and until the town of Le May was taken on the afternoon of D plus 1. All night of D and part of D plus 1 sniped and were sniped and rejoined the company in the evening of D plus 1 at Chateau St. Rosseline.

Part of Co. Hdqs, and part of the 2nd Platoon got together about daylight and after some map work found out where they were. Each element of the Co. i.e., each platoon and Co. Hdqs. had come in with from 12 to 15 equipment bundles. These were spread all over the mountain side on thich we were dropped. Because of enemy occupation of the territory and the distance we would have to carry our equipment it was decided to take only our weapons and ammunition to our assembly area about 4 miles away. It was planned to capture some transportation and come back for our supplies later. About the time of the decision to move the enemy started dropping mortar fire in on us. We made our injured men as comfortable as possible. St. Sanberg was in a small stone building and well protected. Pvt. Wilkins however, we could not move. On the way to the assembly area we met Col. Graves and some men from men from Co. F 517th FIR. All proceeded up the Natuby River onward to La Motte, capturing about 10 German Service Troops on the way. At La Motte the unit met British Troopers who had taken the town without opposition. Here the unit was informed that half of the artillery had landed near the DZ had cleared that area and that the 2nd Platoon and already been to the area and had returned to Le May to try to bring up some of the equipment. He was unable to get any because of enemy action in the area.

Immediately upon arrival in the assembly area Lt. Morward of the 2nd Platoon was sent out with a 1st Bn. patrol to reconnoiter the bridges which were to be prepared for demolitions. The bridges were found intact and were covered by fire from the 1st Bn. 517th FIR. Thus it was not necessary to prepare them immediately and as the situation developed they were not prepared at all. D plus 1 found Co. Hq. and 2nd Platoon gathering in Artillery ammunition and small arms ammunition from the aerial re-supply of the morning of D plus 1. Some explosives and some mines were recovered and a dump was established. In the afternoon of D plus 1 the 3rd Plt. joined the Co. They had been dropped about 25 miles from the DZ and along with the 3rd Bn. 517th FIR. had walked 2 days and 1 night to reach their assembly area. The night of D plus 1 and 2 the 2nd Platoon outposed the Regimental Hq. area and the Co. joined by the 1st Platoon proceeded to set a Regimental reserve line in the vicinity NE of La Puget, France on D plus 3.

The first platoon, attached in the 509th CT, was Airborne at Fallonia, Italy at 0200 hours and were dropped in France at 0420 hours. They landed near their DZ which was a platoon drop, which was on a platoon in the hills, SW of Le May, France. They assembled by daylight and by 1400 hours had accomplished their orders, which were to assemble their equipment and unit for a mission from the CT Commander. On the afternoon of D plus 1 the 1st platoon attached to the 509th formed an Assault Co. and moved into La May behind tanks of the seaborne forces. As the town was already occupied by our troops, no action was encountered. This platoon recovered more equipment than the rest of Co. They were ready for any demolition mission, but again as destruction was necessary.

The 3rd Platoon took off from Orbetello, Italy at 0243 hours on D day. They were dropped at 0438 hours in the vicinity of Callian, France approximately 25 miles from the planned drop zone. They landed on a mountain just N of Callian. At first they thought they were only a few hundred yards from the DZ but some learned from the French that along with the 3rd Battalion, 617th FIN. they had been dropped far away from their area. By 0800 small groups were getting together and starting for the DZ 23 miles away. It was impossible to carry any equipment except weapons and ammunition. Some of their equipment was gathered by the French and was picked up when the unit passed thru Callian several days later. However, the enemy destroyed most of it.

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# TH PARACHUTE F. A. BATTALION RECORD OF EVENTS "D" DAY

## Activities of Lt. Co. Catl's Group.

At 0430 hours Co. Cato assembled 2 Hq. Battery plane loads and proceeded to look for the equipment bundles. Having found the bundles the group moved off to the predesignated Bn. assembly area. Speradic small arms firing was encountered enroute and also a German machine gun nest. Col. Cato organized his small group into an assault squad and attacked with a submachine gun, bazooka, 50 cal. machine gun, grenades and individual arms. The installation was neutralized and the group proceeded.

Between 0445 and 0600 a little more than 1/3 of the Battalion was assembled. At 0630 hours 4 howitzers were put in the predesignated gun positions. By 0800 hours 2 more Howitzers arrived and immediately joined the first two forming the first Battery of 6.

A skeleton CP was set up and various infantry platoons and companies reported in to Col. Cato was dispatched then to their objectives. A liaison officer was sent to each infantry Bn. position with a radio and the Combat Team was controlled by means of the artillery communication through the Liaison officers. Infantry Bns. were notified that the Artillery was ready to be fired on call.

At 0900 hours the 234 radio was in operation at the CP. The 45th Division, 35th Division, VI Corps and the 1st Airborne Task Force were contacted. In the meantime the 609 radio had contacted Capt. Vogel with "C" Battery in the vicinity of Trans-en-Provence and Lt. Sullivan with 1/2 of "D" Battery N of Puget.

By 1200 hours, 11 Howitzers were in position and ready to fire, F, D, C, was set up and ready to control the fire of the Bn. The S-2, Capt Lantz, was sent to reconnoiter howitzer positions for the 602nd. After locating 602nd positions Sgt. Richardson completed the 602nd positions area survey and tied it in with the 460th. Agents were posted to guide the 602nd guns to their positions. Panels designating friendly troops and panels to guide the gliders were put out during the afternoon and everything was in readiness for the arrival of the 602nd. As soon as the 602nd landed radio communications were established and the 460th laid a telephone line to the 602nd switchboard. At 1900 hours the 460th and 602nd were registered on the Bn. Base Point.

By 1930 hours both artillery Bn. were ready to support the infantry on call. Complete installations were in and 11 guns of each Bn. were ready to fire.

#### Activities of Capt. Vogel's Group

Capt. Vogel's Battery came in with the 1st Bn. of the 517th Parachute Infantry and landed in the vicinity of Trans-en-Provence. After assembling 3/4 of his Battery Capt. Vogel put his 2 Howitzers in position, and set out security elements and then contacted Bn. with the 609 radio. After receiving radio instructions to move to the Bn. area Capt Vogel assembled his group and about 40 infantrymen and started his march.

Sporadic firing was encountered enroute, but no organized resistance. A German machine gun nest opened fire on the column and Lt. Moore and Pvt. Kennamer were killed when they rushed the nest in an effort to knock it out. A few minutes later the nest was surrounded and neutralized. The group then continued its march, the march continued its march without further resistance, arriving at the CP around 1200 hours at which time they immediately went into position.

The 4th section of "D" Battery with Sgt. Bartlett in command was dropped about 3 miles from Trans-en-Provence, to the N. Sgt. Bartlett assembled his howitzer and moved off toward the Bn. position. Enroute they met a German patrol. Sgt. Bartlett prepared for action and fired at the German patrol. Sgt. Bartlett prepared for attack but the enemy proved to be larger than expected. After expending all ammunition available the section was forced to leave the gun. The following day the gun was recovered only slightly damaged and still able to fire.

#### Activities of Major Frank's Group:

Major Frank's plane and 3 other Hq. Battery plane landed in the vicinity of Frejus. After assembling the sticks and equipment the group started its march to the predesignated Bn. positions. At 1200 hours the group met several other sticks from Batteries A, B, and D, with 4 complete Howitzers. After evacuating the injured men to homes in the area, the group was organized into a march column. A Frenchman volunteered to guide the group over the trail to the N of Puget parallel to the main highway to the Bn. position at Chateau St. Rosseline.

At 1700 hours a patrol of 13 men under Lt. Smith was sent down toward the highway to try to locate and capture some transportation. About an hour later the patrol returned with an English speaking Frenchman whose Chateau on the main highway was near a Battery of German '88's. The Frenchman plotted the approximate position of the guns on the map and Major Frank took 3 men with wire and telephone and went to an observation post to the rear of the 88's. After reaching the CP word was sent back to lay the guns and be prepared to fire at daybreak the following day.



PLY

The main criticism of re-supply seems to be that the supplies were scattered over too large an area. Very few came close to the DZ and those that did were gathered up by the individuals who happened to be in the vicinity. The supplies that landed away from the DZ were also picked up by anyone who happened to be in that area, but the largest proportion of these supplies were gathered by the

460TH P. A. BN.  
(IV)

Glider troops who had transportation to locate them and haul them immediately. Therefore, due to the widely scattered pattern it was a race between men on foot and men in vehicles with the "Lion's share" going to the motorized elements. Partial readjustments were made later, but the whole re-supply plan was completely disrupted from a Parachute Battalion viewpoint.

It is believed that many supplies were not found because the natives and Army personnel tore the cutes from the bundles for souvenirs and other purposes. Thus making the location of the bundles very difficult.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. It is recommended that when the first wave of gliders came in that some transportation be immediately allocated to Parachute Troops for the purpose of locating and gathering supplies that do not land on or near the DZ.
2. The most critical shortages occurred in signal equipment. Therefore an immediate re-supply of wire, radio batteries, radio tubes, and telephones is recommended.
3. It is also recommended that a higher priority be given to Airborne Troop for transportation when the ground troops arrive.
4. As for percentages of types of ammunition, the following changes are recommended:

Smoke-----	10% to 20%
HE-----	85% to 75%
	1/2 M54
	1/4 M48
Heat-----	5% CI

CONCLUSIONS:

In general the operation was well planned and well coordinated. This greatly facilitated the troops in making plans and being able to carry out plans as arranged. The lack of usual last minute changes was most important for the men and officers, and neither of the two were nervous or tense, they knew exactly what to do upon reaching the ground. It is the opinion of this officer that careful planning and lack of changes was the deciding factor in the success of the operation.

RAYMOND L. CATO  
Lt. Col., 517th Inf., CI  
Commanding, 460th PFA Bn.