



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2234

September 28, 2014

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

Website
Send MailCall news to
MailCall Archives
2013 Roster (updated!)
Thunderbolt (Winter 2014)

www.517prct.org
MailCall@517prct.org
www.517prct.org/archives
www.517prct.org/roster.pdf
www.517prct.org/archives

MailCall News

New on the 517th website: 1943-45 photos from the files of **Cameron Gauthier**, C Battery, 460th PFAB.



For more pictures, see: http://517prct.org/photos/cameron_gauthier/cameron_gauthier.htm



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Soldiers of C Battery, 460th PFAB

Now that Jean-Loup's great book is out, I want to repost this updated video of Howard and the returned photos of the German soldier. This only happened because of **Jean-Loup Gassend** and his tremendous research for his book, ***Operation Dragoon – Autopsy of a Battle***. Available on Amazon.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uux-vk0HJ74>



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Please put me back on the MailCal list.

Rob McDonald Jr.

Nephew of **Hunter McDonald**, HQ/2

Hi Rob,

I added you onto the MailCall list. I try to send these out weekly, as I get news from the 517th family. You can unsubscribe yourself at any time – there is a link in the email.

You can also search and read old mailcalls at: <http://517prct.org/mailcall/index.htm>

BTW, I do want to personally thank you for the outstanding job with the “A Cut Above” film. It is a great history of the 517th, a unit that was so small and specialized and short-lived, that they might be overlooked if not for work like this. And it is a personal treasure for our family, as Ben was involved in and recorded in the film, shortly before he died. Thank you for the memories.

Bob Barrett

Son of **Ben Barrett**, H Company, 517th PRCT



You can see “A Cut Above” as well as interview excerpts at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DLAmn-HqI7I>

RE: Response to **Jean-Loup Gassend**,

Helmet **Richard Daley** has been found in Arizona at an auction of the family of veteran auction. I know that this man died in France and was buried in Draguignan, it is possible that these personal items were returned to the USA for the family, it does not seem that this helmet is a copy. It is in my possession and in my collection. I am looking for a picture of him to honor him, thank you in advance for those who can help me.

Best Regards

Michel QUILEZ



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Belgium Trip Report

August 2014

Merle McMorrow, Mimsey Boyle, Nancy Fraser, Roland Orengo and myself visited our Belgium friends. Thank you to Roland who accompanied us —he was our driver and interpreter and is a good friend.

We were met at the Brussels airport by **Dieter** who escorted us to **Irma and Arnold Tarnion's** home in Trois Ponts where we were warmly welcomed by the CADUSA, **Eddy Monfort**, townspeople and unbelievable homemade pastries! We visited **Maria Gaspar**, who was a young girl when the Nazis occupied her home in Bergeval. Eddy Monfort took us out to the nearby fields where both Mimsey's father **Colonel Bill Boyle** and my father **Ben Barrett** were wounded. My dad and Col Boyle were wounded on the same day, Jan 5 1945, not too far from each other.

Irma and Arnold, **William and Arlette Raiglot**, and **Antoine and Ghislaine Ladry**, graciously hosted us and made sure our every need was met. Arlette Raiglot who opened her heart and home to Mimsey and myself was a 2yr old child when the Nazi's burst into her home killing her mother and 4 and 6 yr old sisters. Arlette was seriously wounded. We visited the plaque in Stavelot and saw the name of Arlette's family along with the many other citizens of Stavelot who lost their lives during the war. We were invited into the home of the **Chevalier de Collombs** and his lovely wife Teresa for a toast to honor the 517th.

The CADUSA arranged ceremonies for us at several monuments and plaques and we attended a service at St Jacques church which was destroyed by the Nazis and rebuilt after the war. The Mayors and officials of Trois Ponts and Manhay took time from their schedules to recognize the 517th.

Eddy Monfort took us to Bastogne to where we were given a private tour of the Bastogne Barracks. On the way back to the Brussels airport we stopped at a monument plaque that had recognized **Col Bill Boyle** and **Major Don Fraser**.

Throughout our too short visit we were escorted and wined and dined and beautifully welcomed by so many. We heard numerous 1st hand stories from those whose families experienced life under Nazi occupation. We thank the Belgium people for their incredibly gracious welcome. It was a real honor, an unforgettable journey and we will never forget their kindness.

Joanne Barrett



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Merle, Irma, Roland



Eddy Monfort



Mimsey, Nancy,? Roland, Joanne



Maria Gaspar and Merle



Maria and Merle



St. Jacques



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Trois Ponys



Chevalier de Collomba's house



Bastogne



Bastogne



Roland, Nancy, Merle,
Mimsey, Joanne,
Eddy, Eddy's son



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517th History

OKLAHOMA STATE PENITENTIARY

Institution -- OKLAHOMA STATE PENITENTIARY Located at -- McALESTER, OKLAHOMA.

	Received	3-4-35	
	From	Pawnee	
	Crime	ansl. 1st. dg.	
	Sentence	25 yrs. mos. days	
	Date of sentence		
	Sentence begins	3-4-35	
	Sentence expires	3-3-60	
	Good time sentence expires	12-21-46	
	Date of birth		
	Occupation	salesman	
Birthplace	Okla.	Nationality	amer.
Age	19	Com.	med.
Height	5-11	Eyes	bro.
Weight	161	Hair	bro.
Build	med.		

I have mentioned before that in his book, **Jean-Loup Gassend** does a great job of telling the stories of many of the men who died in Southern France. Here is part of one story that I had not heard before:

There were many such ambushes in the early morning of August 15th. Amongst the paratroopers who were involved in these firefights was a most unusual character, **PFC Philip Kennamer**, who had barely missed being sentenced to death in 1934 after he had shot and killed John Gorrell, a young and prominent dental student, in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Kennamer, who was himself the son of a judge, claimed he had shot Gorrell because Gorrell was planning to kidnap the girl Kennamer loved, Virginia Wilcox. The bizarre case, which also involved the suicide of a key witness and the exchange of coded messages in jail, made headlines at the time. After the trial, Kennamer was lucky to be found guilty of manslaughter only and was sentenced to 25 years in prison. He was just 19 at the time.

However, Philip Kennamer's destiny, like so many others, was unexpectedly changed by the war, and in 1943, he was paroled out of prison in order to join the army. One of the 1934 articles had described Kennamer as a boy who "had wrecked cars; he had jumped from windows, he had walked around the edge at the top of a tall building, he had discussed joining revolutions." Another article told of "stunts," such as "walking around the 16th floor ledge of the Mayo Hotel and leaping from one automobile to another while travelling 50 miles an hour." In other words, Kennamer was a promising paratrooper candidate, and it was as a member of the 460th PFAB that he jumped into



From convict to paratrooper. PFC Philip M. Kennamer was sentenced to 25 years in jail for manslaughter in 1934, but was paroled in 1943 in order to enlist in the paratroopers. He was killed in action in Trans en Provence the morning of August 15, 1944, as a member of the 460th PFAB. Tulsa World Collection. Dominic Biello/ww2-airborne.us Collection.

southern France August 15th. Kennamer spent the night before the jump with his army buddy **Milton Rogers**, who later wrote:

My outfit was made up mostly of young guys, most of them right out of high school - or in some cases reform school. I was one of the older ones. Phil Kennamer, of the Oklahoma State Penitentiary (...), was three or four years older than I was, and partly due to our advanced years we



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had become pretty good buddies. We couldn't sleep as well as those young kids without nerves, so we sat up and talked till time to load in the planes. We were out of about everything to talk about, and finally got to religion. He said he didn't believe in God, didn't believe in much of anything. I said, "You mean you think that if you get shot tomorrow it's all over?" He said, "Yep, that's what I think."

After parachuting out of their aircraft, the group of men Kennamer was with got pinned down by a German machine gun near the village of Trans en Provence. **Philip Kennamer** and **Lt Harry Moore** volunteered to eliminate the opposition and rushed forward. Unfortunately, both men were gunned down by automatic fire and killed.

...

The inhabitants of Trans en Provence certainly hold the killer-turned-paratrooper in their memories, and his name as well as that of Lt. Moore and of French paratrooper **Jacques Debray**, who were killed at his side, are inscribed on a stone monument in their town.

For more of this story, you'll have to buy the book at:

http://www.amazon.com/Operation-Dragoon-Autopsy-Liberation-August-September/dp/076434580X/ref=la_B00J0JDI60_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1411907530&sr=1-1

Administrivia

- If you miss any MailCalls, they are all available online at <http://www.517prct.org/mailcall/>
- At any time, if you want to be added or removed from the MailCall list, just let me know, or just click on the unsubscribe link on the email.
- Send any news, stories, or feedback to: MailCall@517prct.org
- If you send me email that you do not want included in MailCall, just label it as FYEO.
- I now understand how Ben could get confused about what he already posted and what he didn't. If I miss something, please just send it again.
- Donations for any programs involving the 517th should be sent to our new Association Treasurer: Identify the purpose of any donation (Annual Donations, In Memory of... etc.) and make all checks payable to:

517 PRCT Association, Inc.
c/o Miriam Boyle Kelly
19 Oriole Court
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866