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Parachute Rifle Company: A Living Historians Introduction To The Organization, Equipment, Tactics And Techniques Of The U.S. Armys Elite Airborne Troops In Combat On The Western Front In World War II





Synopsis

Entering battle by parachute was the 'easy part'. Packed with information for U.S. Airborne enthusiasts of all kinds, this volume provides a critical context for both the collector of U.S. Airborne memorabilia, and a methodology for living historians to research and translate the real-life story of the legendary U.S. Parachute Infantrymen to the hobby environment. Over 100 full-color images including battle recreation photographs, charts, tactical maps, order of battle graphics, authentic tables of organization and equipment, and numerous special features.

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PARACHUTE RIFLE COMPANY: A LIVING HISTORIAN'S INTRODUCTION TO THE ORGANIZATION, EQUIPMENT, TACTICS, AND TECHNIQUES OF THE U.S. ARMY'S ELITE AIRBORNE TROOPS IN COMBAT ON THE WESTERN FRONT IN WORLD WAR II
ROBERT TODD ROSS
SCHIFFER PUBLISHING, LIMITED, 2010
HARDCOVER, \$49.99, 208 PAGES, PHOTOGRAPHS, CHARTS, MAPS, ORDER OF BATTLE GRAPHICS, TABLES OF ORGANIZATION & EQUIPMENT
Robert Todd Ross's new book entitled PARACHUTE RIFLE COMPANY is an excellent primer for re-enactors but in regard to historical information, there are numerous mistakes by the author that I have put the corrections below by page:
*Page 14-The 1st Jager Bataillon was formed on 1 April 1935 when the Landespolizei General Goring was expanded to a regiment and given the new military designation Regiment General Goring (not Regiment Herman Goring). It was composed of the following units: Regimentstab (HQ Staff), Musikkorps (Band), 1.Jager-Bataillon (Light Infantry), II.Jager-Bataillon (Light Infantry),

13.Kradsehutzen-Kompanie (Motorcyclists), 15.Pionier-Kompanie (Engineers), Reiterzug (Mounted Troops), and Nuchrichtenzug (Signals Platoon). On 1 October 1935, Regiment General Goring became part of the Luftwaffe and in March, 1936, the Luftwaffe opened its first jump school at Stendal-Borstel with the first class starting on 4 May 1936 and ending 3 July 1936. The following two units were tasked to attend the jump school: 1.Jager-Bataillonen and 15.Pionier-Kompanie. By the end of 1937, 1.Jager-Bataillonen and 15.Pionier-Kompanie were re-constituted into the IV.Fallschirmschat (Parachute Rifle Battalion.) It remained part of the Regiment General Goring until March, 1938 when they were detached and formed the initial cadre for the Luftwaffe's paratrooper unit-1/Fallschirmjager-Regiment 1 (1/FJR1). The regiment was commanded by Major Bruno Brauer. Not to be outdone, on 4 October 1936, the OKH ordered the formation of one parachute kompanie which was formed on 1 April 1937. Its mission was to drop behind enemy lines to conduct sabotage missions (zerstoreertaktik). It was organized like a support battalion with both heavy machine guns and mortars. It was designated Schwere Fallschirm-Infanterie-Kompanie but on 1 June 1938, it was expanded to a full bataillonen and re-designated Fallschirm-Infanterie-Bataillonen des Heeres and was commanded by Major Richard Heidrich. It was transferred to the Luftwaffe on 1 January 1939 and was again re-designated as 2nd Bataillonen, 1st Fallschirmjager Regiment (II/FJR1). The 7.Flieger-Division was formed in October, 1938 and while units of this division didn't conduct any airborne operations during the invasion of Poland, its 1st Bataillonen, 2nd Regiment air landed and captured Deblin Airfield while its 2nd Bataillonen, 2nd Regiment captured the airfields near Dukla Pass. This was done to prevent senior Polish Army officers from escaping the country. Its 2nd Bataillonen, 1st Regiment conducted combat operations at Wela-Galowska against a Polish artillery regiment. It is here that the German airborne suffered their first KIA. The crossings conducted at the Albert Canal was undertaken by 11 officers and 427 NCOs and enlistedmen not 500 as written by the author. The German gliderborne troops captured the Corinth Bridge not Corinth.*Page 15-The first U.S. airborne troops who jumped was conducted at Brooks Airfield not Kelly Field on 29 April 1928 as written by the author. The Parachute Test Platoon was formed on 26 June 1940 with 48 men. Four of the men took a voluntary demotion from corporal to private because the platoon had no corporal billets. The 501st Parachute Infantry Battalion was formed on 1 October 1940 at Fort Benning, Georgia as the 1st Parachute Battalion. On 15 February 1942 at Fort Benning, Georgia it was re-designated as the 1st Battalion, 501st Parachute Infantry.*Page 18-The two main reasons individuals enlisted in the airborne was for the extra money they received a month-\$50.00 for enlisted and \$100.00 for officer and the sense of being part of the elite.*Page 20-The mistakes in the HBO series BAND OF BROTHERS is the result of poor research and plagiarism.*Page 74-The

author failed to list the 13th Airborne Division. Even though this division arrived in France on 6 February 1945 and never entered combat. The plan was to employ it in Operation VARSITY, the codename for the Allied airborne drop east of the Rhine River. But because of insufficient airlift, it remained in France until 15 August 1945. The 13th Airborne Division was activated on 13 August 1943 at Fort Bragg, North Carolina and moved to Camp Mackall, North Carolina on 17 January 1944. Staged at Camp Shank, New York on 20 January 1945 and departed New York City on 26 January 1945. It arrived in France on 6 February 1945 and returned to New York on 23 August 1945 and then moved to Fort Bragg, North Carolina on 26 August 1945. It was inactivated on 25 February 1946 and is credited with the Central European Campaign.*Page 74-Failed to list the 1st Airborne Task Force (Provisional Seventh Army Airborne Division). It was organized on 15 July 1944 near Rome, Italy to control the air-assault forces scheduled to invade Southern France. It air-assaulted into Southern France on 15 August 1944 and was de-activated in France on 23 November 1944. It is credited with the Southern France and Rhineland Campaigns. The 1st Airborne Task Force was formed on 8 July 1944 in Italy as the Seventh Army Airborne Division (Provisional) and organized 15 July 1944 as the 1st Airborne Task Force. It commenced training near Rome, Italy on 20 July 1944. As RUGBY Force, it air-assaulted the French Mediterranean coast in the Le Muy-Le Luc area on 15 August 1944 to block German access to the invasion beaches. Le Muy was taken the following day as the force consolidated and made contact with the 36th Infantry Division on 17 August 1944. The task force became responsible for the Fayence-La Napoule Line on 20 August 1944 and began clearing the region around La Napoule in the coast sector the next day and advanced on Cannes. The 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion, followed by the 1st Battalion, 551st Parachute Infantry, occupied Cannes without opposition on 24 August 1944 as the 1st Special Service Force seized both Grasse and Valbonne and then linked up in the Cannes area. The task force crossed the Var River on 29 August 1944 and drove through Nice to Beaulieu without opposition on 30 August 1944. It then cleared a strongpoint at La Turbia on 2 September 1944 and pushed through Menton to the Italian border on 8 September 1944. The task force was then assigned defensive positions in the Alps along the Franco-Italian border.*Page 76-The 501st Infantry Regiment (Separate) should include the Pacific Theater Without Inscription Campaign. The following should be added to this unit's chronicles after 23 March 1943: and then to Camp Mackall, North Carolina on 13 April 1943 when they were assigned to the 2nd Airborne Brigade on 3 September 1943. Also the following is a correction to the chronicles of the 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment: on 24 February 1942, the 1st Battalion (located at Fort Benning, Georgia) was re-designated from the 501st Parachute Battalion (which was stationed largely in the

Panama Canal Zone; on 30 October 1942, a battalion task force, including Companies A and B, departed Panama en route to Australia when re-designated 2nd Battalion, 503rd Parachute Infantry while at sea on 2 November 1942 (reached Townsville, Australia on 6 December 1942); on 19 November 1942, the 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment was activated at Camp Toccoa, Georgia (less Company C which was at Fort Kobbe, Panama Canal Zone and was re-designated there on 26 November 1942 as Company C, 551st Parachute Infantry Regiment (Company C reformed at Camp Toccoa, Georgia); and the regiment was assigned to the Airborne Command on 15 December 1942.*Page 76-The 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment (82nd Airborne Division) should include the Anzio Campaign. The following additions and corrections to the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment's chronicles: It assaulted Salerno, Italy on 9 September 1943 with the 3rd Battalion and completed its arrival there by 18 October 1943. A Provisional Cannon Company was formed in Belgium on 21 December 1944 with captured German weaponry.*Page 77-The 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment (82nd Airborne Division) should have the following additions to its chronicles: It then went to Sicily on 4 September 1943 and then landed in Italy on 13 September 1943. It then departed on 19 November 1943 for Ireland where it arrived on 9 December 1943.*Page 77-The 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment (101st Airborne Division) should have the following addition to its chronicles: Camp Toombs, Georgia (renamed Camp Toccoa, Georgia) on 21 August 1942.*Page 79-The 517th Parachute Infantry Regiment (Separate) should be corrected to 517th Parachute Infantry Regiment (13th Airborne Division).*Page 79-The 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment should read 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment (Separate). The 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion was formed from the 2nd Battalion, 509th Parachute Infantry and it should have the Anzio Campaign included. The chronicles should have the following additional information included: re-designated in Venafro, Italy as the 2nd Battalion, 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment on 10 December 1943. Provisional Scout Company formed 1 March 1943 but later converted on 10 December 1943 to Provisional Company G and disbanded in March, 1944.*Page 79-The 515th Parachute Infantry Regiment (13th Airborne Division) should have the following additions: It was activated on 31 May 1943 at Fort Benning, Georgia and assigned to the Airborne Command; moved to Camp Mackall, North Carolina on 19 January 1944 under XIII Corps where assigned to the 13th Airborne Division on 10 March 1944; stayed at Camp Shanks, New York on 19 January 1945 and departed New York City on 26 January 1945. Arrived in France on 6 February 1945 and returned to New York City on 22 August 1945 and then moved to Fort Bragg, North Carolina on 26 August 1945 and was inactivated on 25 February 1946. The Central Europe Campaign added.*Page 79-The 551st Parachute Infantry Regiment (Separate) has the following additions and corrections: On 30 October

1942 elements were formed at Fort Benning, Georgia and transferred to the Panama Canal Zone where 1st Battalion was activated at Fort Kobbe on 26 November 1942. The battalion departed on 20 August 1943 and arrived in San Francisco, California and left on 30 August 1943 to Camp Mackall, North Carolina. It arrived there on 1 September 1943 and departed New York City on 20 April 1944. Arrived in Algiers on 10 May 1944 and then sent to Italy on 26 May 1944. It was relocated to Sicily on 1 June 1944 and returned to Italy on 3 July 1944 and assaulted Southern France on 15 August 1944. It moved into Belgium on 19 December 1944 where it was attached to the 82nd Airborne Division. The battalion was decimated during the Battle of Rochelival on 7 January 1945 and its remaining personnel were transferred to the 82nd Airborne Division. It was inactivated in Belgium on 10 February 1945 and the American Theater Without Inscription Campaign added.*Page 83-The Winter Service Uniform, Wool, With Coat, Officers' is sometimes called "Pink and Greens."*Page 93-The caption has the word "divine" instead of the word "divide."*Page 177-The caption should just state that due to the fluid state of combat, lack of facilities, and transportation; this often precluded the taking of prisoners. The use of the phrase "Nazi-former Superman" should be left out. This is mere propaganda and grand standing.*Another point is that no mention of glider units is made throughout the book even though glider units were an integral part of the U.S. Army Airborne divisions TO&E.*The author uses the old edition of Captain Shelby L. Stanton's World War II U.S. Army Order Of Battle while I have used as a reference his revised 2006 edition with Stanton's corrections to the first edition.Lt. Colonel Robert A. Lynn, Florida GuardOrlando, Florida

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