

Arthur B. Jacoby - Private to Private First Class

Served with distinction in the Hq1 Battalion Intelligence Section (S2) from March 1943 to November 1945.

Arthur (Jake) Jacoby was a heroic Hq1 "Hell's Half Acre" survivor (See Chapter II, Combat Operations – Normandy).

Arthur Jacoby is a distinguished member of the "Greatest of the Greatest Generation."

Arthur (Jake) Jacoby was an outstanding courageous combat soldier but a ne'er-do-well garrison soldier, always pursuing his own agenda and marching to a different drummer than his contemporaries.



Jake was a magnificent patrol leader, he habitually accomplished his missions, and provided decision makers with timely, accurate and comprehensive information concerning the identification and capabilities of German forces in contact.

Jacoby was admired, envied, and respected by his peers and with reservations by his superiors.

Jake was born July 5, 1923 in New York City, NY. He moved to San Francisco, CA, and on October 7, 1942 enlisted in the Army.

The ever adventurous Jake, volunteered for Airborne training and was sent to Camp Blanding, FL, assigned to the newly created 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment (508th PIR) for basic and preparachute school physical training.

In March 1943, Jake qualified as a parachutist at Fort Benning, GA. He pinned on his coveted parachute wings, went on furlough, returned to Fort Benning, and moved with the 508th PIR to Camp Mackall, NC.

At Camp Mackall, Jake was transferred from Company A to Hq1 and assigned to the Battalion S2 section. He served outstandingly in the S2 section for the remainder of his military career.

For the remainder of 1943, Jake participated in an arduous advanced infantry training and airborne operations training program. He fired weaxpns, performed long cross-country marches, participated in field exercises, made several parachute jumps with equipment, and struggled through large-scale maneuvers in Tennessee and South Carolina.

Concurrently, Jake mastered the skills necessary to function effectively in the Intelligence section, i.e., develop sand tables, sketches, and maps, lead patrols, and learn how to capture and interrogate prisoners.

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Finally, the carefully trained, confident and eager 508th PIR paratroopers were ready for overseas assignment, and the regiment moved to Camp Shanks, NY.

On December 28, 1943, Jake started drawing overseas pay when the "James Parker" sailed from New York into the Atlantic Ocean bound for Ireland.

Previously, on June 11, 1943, Jake married Elizabeth (Betsy) in Charaw, SC. Needless to say, the 508th PIR's ambitious training schedules and large-scale maneuvers, and now the ocean voyage did not permit Jake and Betsy much of a family life.

However, Betsy supported Jake's activities and morale through WW II and for the remainder of their lives.

Very few Hq1 men were married. Many of the men had girlfriends waiting for the war to end, but Betsy was one of the sweethearts already married and patiently waiting for husbands to return.

Eleven days after leaving, New York the "James Parker" arrived in Belfast, Ireland, and the 508th PIR took up residence in Port Stewart. The regiment lived in uncomfortable, [Nissen] huts, tolerated dismal weather, and ate miserable food.



However, the 508th PIR immediately embarked upon another ambitious training program (it never seemed to run out of them!) After weapons firing, physical training exercises to restore muscles that had deteriorated during the 11-day sea voyage, and small field exercises, the 508th PIR moved to Nottingham, England.

Life in Nottingham was pleasant, the 508th PIR occupied tents within a tenminute walk of a city with many pubs, several dance halls, and friendly people. The Hq1 "bachelors" had a grand time.

However, the regimental staff unrolled another of those 508th PIR ambitious training programs, and started field exercises, dangerous night parachute jumps, physical training, and preparations for combat somewhere in Europe.

Early in June, the 508th PIR moved to a marshaling airport. The S2 Section prepared sand tables and maps that were used to brief the men on their objective areas. Except that no one knew where the objectives were located, they were told Normandy, after they were seated in their C-47 aircraft.

Chapter II contains a brief description of the adventures of some of the Hq1 men while enroute to Normandy and later on the ground after the jump.

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Arthur Jacoby and his buddies, Jim Lutton, Garfield Wilkinson, and Joe Atkins provided the core of the Battalion S2 Section, they performed the most dangerous jobs in the battalion. However, at times, they acted as if WW II had been created just for them to have fun.

When they were not leading an attack, patrolling behind the lines to determine the German's deployment, or capturing Germans for interrogation, they were busy finding ways and means to improve their welfare or just to have fun.

On or off the battlefield nothing was sacred or exempt from their attention. If it was not under heavy guard, it was fair game, often even some of the "guarded" refreshments and food was acquired.

The four comrades were well trained, and skilled in methods for infiltrating German lines and positions, and extremely adroit at capturing Germans and bringing them safely through friendly lines, they were irreplaceable, courageous, dependable and successful in combat. If they did not exist, the 508th PIR would have had to create them!

Jim Lutton was wounded and evacuated. Joe Atkins, Garfield Wilkinson, and Jake survived the war and performed security and honor guard functions for General Eisenhower's headquarters in Frankfurt, Germany.

Only Jake and Betsy are still alive, at this writing.

Arthur B. Jacoby participated heroically in all of the 508th PIR campaigns.

He parachuted into Normandy and Holland, and he fought through the bitter cold, sunless days, and deep snows of the densely forested Ardennes and through the fortified Siegfried Line, all the way to the Roer River the threshold to Germany.

During WW II, Arthur B. Jacoby earned the following awards and décorations.

- ?? Bronze Star Medal
- ?? Combat Infantry Badge
- ?? Invasion Arrowhead
- ?? Four battle stars
- ?? Parachutist Qualification Badge with two stars for combat jumps (Normandy and Holland)
- ?? Presidential Unit Citation
- ?? French and Belgian Fourrageres
- ?? Orange Lanyard of the Royal Netherlands Army
- ?? Numerous defense campaign medals including the WW II Victory Medal and Occupation Medal with Germany Bar

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Arthur and Betsy
Jacoby reside at 162
McDonald Church Road,
Rockingham, NC 28379

Arthur and Betsy Jacoby

Note: Look for Betsy in Appendix

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This Album is Not For Sale

This excerpt from the "We Served Proudly, The Men of Hq1" album contains the recollections of men who in their youth risked their lives in furtherance of our national interests. These memoirs are sacred to them - especially those events alluding to activities in which comrades lost their lives on the battlefields of Europe.

This album was prepared for perpetual residence in the archives of the Camp Blanding Museum complex, operated by the Camp Blanding Museum and Historical Associates, Inc. Starke, Florida. We are grateful for the support and assistance of the Camp Blanding Museum and Historical Associates, and for their kindness in having the museum make our album available to historians, students, researchers and others interested in our background and brief history.

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Copies of the album have been presented to the Hq1 veterans or their survivors that contributed information for the effort. To facilitate reproducing copies of individual memoirs for relatives or friends, the memoirs have been developed as separate entities.

October 19, 2004

George S. Stokel

Hq1 Album Collator