

First Lieutenant Arthur Franklin Mulock, Jr.

By Irving T. Shanley

Arthur Mulock volunteered for the United States Army and the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment in October 1942 from his hometown of Waltham, Massachusetts. On reporting to the newly-formed Regiment at Camp Blanding, Florida, he was assigned to Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion for 13 grueling weeks of basic and advanced infantry training. He was then transferred with his unit to Fort Benning, Georgia for three weeks of intensive parachute qualification training and was awarded his coveted silver parachute wings on graduation in March 1943. He moved then with his Regiment to Camp Mackall, North Carolina, for nine months of tactical training, including maneuvers in South Carolina and Tennessee. Arthur was assigned to the Battalion's 81mm Mortar Platoon and served with this Platoon throughout World War II in Europe. During the Regiment's combat operations in Europe, the Regiment was part of the 82nd Airborne Division commanded by Major General Matthew Ridgeway and Major General James Gavin.

Arthur was born on July 18, 1923 in Weston, Massachusetts and graduated from Weston High School in June 1942. His high school yearbook shows that he wanted to join the Marines or the Air Corps but realized that his best choice would be the Army paratroopers. The yearbook lists his pastime activities as eating, sleeping, and wolfing. He was noted for his flirtatious character. While in high school he was active in football (4 years), basketball (2 years), baseball (2 years), basketball manager-1939, and glee club.

As a member of the 508th, Arthur parachuted into Normandy, France on D-Day, June 6, 1944 and into Nijmegen, Holland on September 17, 1944. He also participated in the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium during the winter of 1944-1945. Just prior to the end of the war in Europe in May 1945, the 508th was stationed at an airbase in Chartres, France southwest of Paris, prepared to jump on short notice to liberate prisoners in German POW camps in case the Germans resorted to atrocities. The allied ground troops at that time were moving quickly through Germany and since there was no evidence of atrocities, the jump was cancelled. On June 10, 1945 the paratroopers of the 508th arrived at their new station, Frankfurt-am-Main, Germany to become part of the Army of Occupation but primarily as General Dwight D. Eisenhower's Honor Guard at his Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force.

Arthur was honorably discharged from the Army after World War II ended. He returned to his home in Waltham where he married his high school sweetheart, June Wales, and enrolled in Springfield College. Upon graduation, he was then commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant and reentered the Army. He was assigned as a Platoon Leader with L Company, 3rd Battalion, 34th Infantry Regiment, 24th Division when they were thrown into combat in the summer of 1950 to slow the communist invasion of South Korea. Arthur was initially listed as missing in action for many years until his name appeared on "Johnson's List." This list was secretly kept by an 18-year old soldier, Wayne Archer (Johnnie) Johnson, from the time he was captured on July 11, 1950 until he was repatriated almost 38 months later. Although Johnson presented his list to a debriefing officer after his release from captivity, it was not made public until 1994 at a reunion of Korean War POW survivors when he again presented his list to his comrades. The list confirmed that Mulock was not missing in action but had died in captivity. The list included the names of 496 American soldiers who died after being captured by the communists. Johnson was awarded the Silver Star at one of his reunions by the Pentagon after they realized he had laid his life on the line for his comrades. Further research revealed that Arthur's name was mistakenly added to Johnson's list, and a check with Department of the Army in 2003 shows that he was still carried on the records

as a POW. A former POW named Shorty Estabrook founded a group called the "Tiger Survivors." The "Tiger Survivors" are those men who survived the grueling march from South Korea to North Korea after being captured. They nicknamed the brutal North Korean Major who was in charge of them the "Tiger." Estabrook mentioned that Arthur's name along with his appeared on a list of American Korean War POW's taken to Russia for imprisonment but Eastabrook said that this was not true. Eastabrook said that he remembered seeing Mulock's name on a blackboard in a school in North Korea that was used as a prison.

As a result of a query placed in "The Graybeards," the Korean War Veterans Association magazine, Joe Gomez of McLoud, Oklahoma wrote that he joined Lieutenant Mulock's platoon in June 1950 in Japan. Gomez said that the 34th Infantry Regiment, their regiment, shipped to South Korea July 5, 1950. He said that he was with Mulock on an outpost in Taejon on July 19, 1950 when Mulock was wounded and evacuated. Gomez said that he and another member of the platoon, French Kennedy, were captured on July 20, 1950 and released from captivity in 1953. Gomez said that he never saw Mulock during his captivity

Arthur Mulock's name appears on the Korean War Memorial in Charlestown, Massachusetts and is also engraved on paving bricks at the Korean War Memorial in Worcester, Massachusetts. Arthur Mulock's sister, Carolyn McElhiney, has provided a DNA sample to be used in the event Arthur's remains are ever recovered.

Arthur Mulock's awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Parachute Wings, Combat Infantry Badge with Star, American Campaign Medal, National Service Medal, Europe-Africa Campaign Medal with four battle stars and invasion arrowhead, World War II Victory Medal, World War II Occupation Medal, Korean Campaign Medal, United Nations Medal, Republic of Korea Medal, United States Distinguished Unit Citation, French Fourragere, Belgian Fourragere, the Militaire Orde degree of Knight from Holland, and the POW Medal.