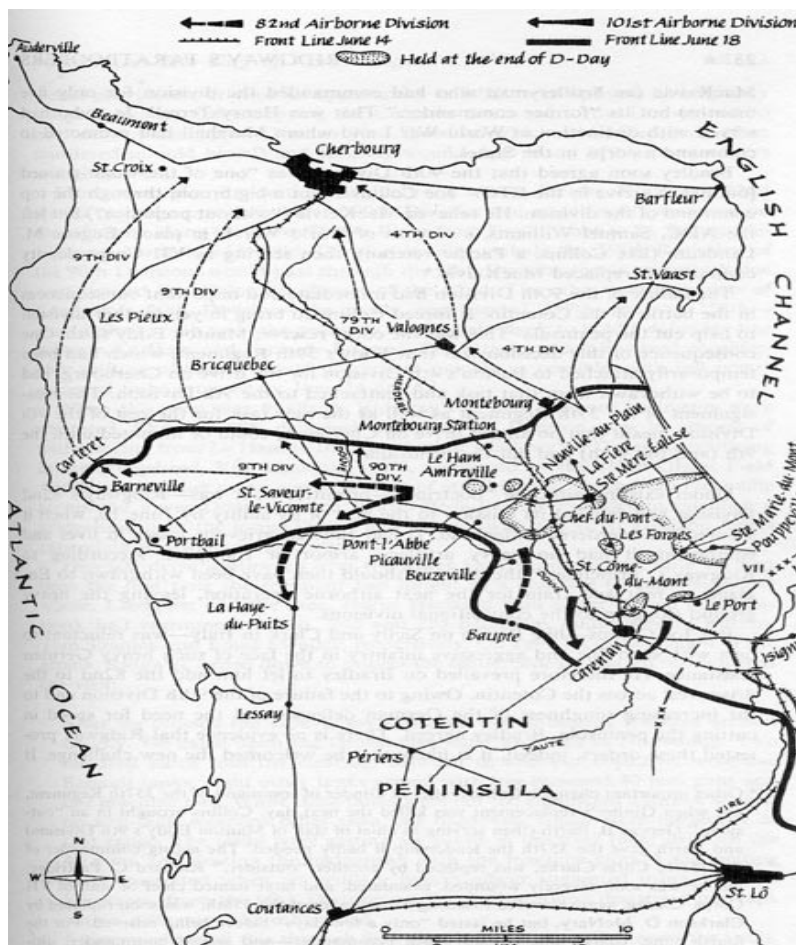




Charlie Company 2nd Battalion 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment 82nd Airborne Division





Leonard Funk clears the LZ for the Gliders

Back in 1985, I was a PFC in the 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment. As one of the three infantry regiments of the 82nd Airborne, it was our job to be ready to deploy anywhere, anytime. Each battalion spent two or three weeks as part of the Division ready force. On paper, that meant if you were the DRF 1, your battalion would be wheels up in 2 hours. If you imagine it as a line, we were always somewhere between first and ninth. If we were in the back of that line, we got stuck with a variety of undesirable tasks; post clean-up, guard duty, the dreaded ROTC training or ferrying around VIPs for the Division Review which was held each year.

My first summer in the 82nd, we drew prep duty for Division review. One day I was told to pick up this old codger from the airport, get him back for lunch and basically shadow him, drive for him or help him with anything he needed for the next couple of days. Not really thrilled with this prospect, I proceeded to the airport to pick him up. His name was First Sergeant Leonard Funk. At the time, I was unaware that he had been awarded the Medal of Honor, a Distinguished Service Cross and a Silver Star. His brave escapades had been written about in many books before then and have been included in many since. Needless to say, by the end of my assigned tasks, I had a new hero.

Because of 1SGT Funk, my father's service in the 82nd and my own loyalty to my old unit, choosing my Flames of War Company is an easy choice. And of course, the 508th Red Devils played a major part in the Normandy invasion.

D-Day had come and went and after a month of combat, the 508th neared an interesting battle. Hill 131 commanded an astounding view of the surrounding country and would be a key strong point in the allied effort to cut off the Cotentin Peninsula. I find this particular battle intriguing because my grandfather was in the 90th Infantry Division, which protected the far left flank of the attack. Immediately to the left of the 508 was the 325th Glider Regiment, to the right was the 505th Parachute Regiment and on the far right was the 79th Infantry Division.

Shifting artillery bombardments preceded the hedgerow jumping nature of the attack. Before the Germans could recover from the artillery, the infantry would rush forward. Mines, booby traps and stubborn Germans with machine guns took their toll, but



the 508th pushed forward against heavy, but off-balance opposition. With the 505th tasked to the north slope of the hill, the 508th would lead the main thrust on the southern slope. Within a day, all but the 90th had captured their objectives. The 325th shifted left to cover the 90th as did the 508th to capture Hill 95. The success of this effort was one of key attacks early in the invasion of Festung Europa.



My Flames of War Force

My three short platoons of paratroopers are the remnants of C Company after one month of continuous battle. The support platoons vary, depending on the day and action. The Anti-tank platoon and artillery are divisional support, mostly on loan from the 325th Glider Regiment or battery A of the 80th AA Battalion. The cannon platoon(s) belonged to the 319th or 320th or were also on loan from the 325th. The tank platoon is Company A of the 749th Tank Battalion. They provide sporadic, unreliable armored support (if there are enemy tanks, the 749th likes to hang back and let the paratroopers do the dirty work. In this case, the game mimics life).





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