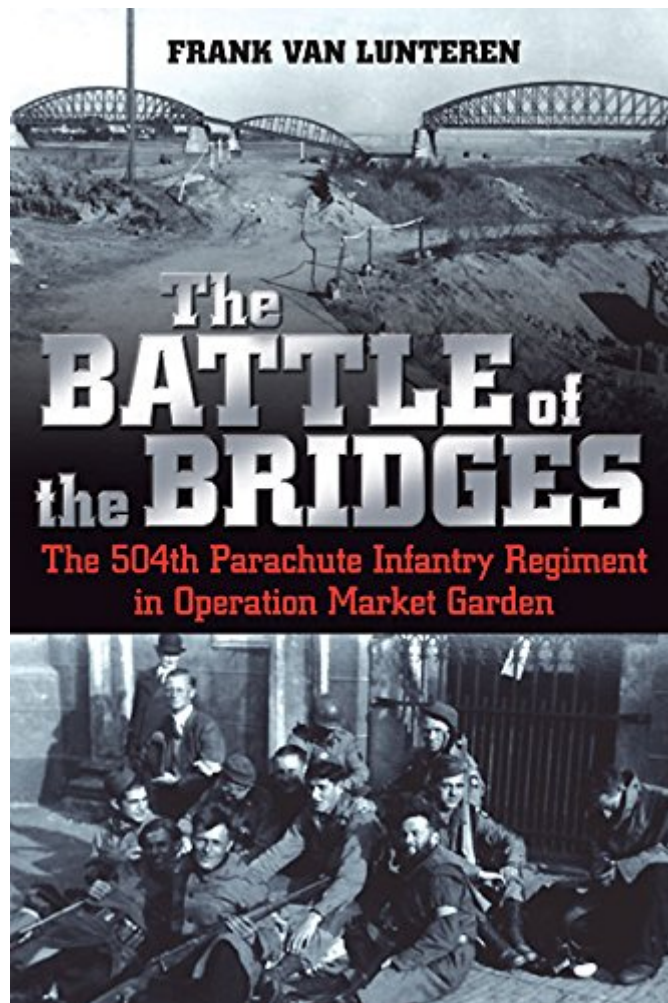




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The Battle Of The Bridges: The 504 Parachute Infantry Regiment In Operation Market Garden



Synopsis

Operation Market Garden has been recorded as a complete Allied failure in World War II, an overreach that resulted in an entire airborne division being destroyed at its apex. However, within that operation were episodes of heroism that still remain unsung. On September, 17, 1944, the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, floated down across the Dutch countryside, in the midst of German forces, and proceeded to fight their way to vital bridges to enable the Allied offensive to go forward. The 101st Airborne was behind them; the British 1st Airborne was far advanced. In the 82nd's sector the crucial conduits needed to be seized. The Germans knew the importance of the bridge over the Waal River at Nijmegen as well as James Gavin and his 82nd troopers did. Thus began a desperate fight for the Americans to seize it, no matter what the cost. The Germans would not give, however, and fought tenaciously in the town and fortified the bridge. On September 20 Gavin turned his paratroopers into sailors and conducted a deadly daylight amphibious assault in small plywood and canvas craft across the Waal River to secure the north end of the highway bridge in Nijmegen. German machine guns and mortars boiled the water on the crossing, but somehow a number of paratroopers made it to the far bank. Their ferocity thence rolled up the German defenses, and by the end of day the bridge had fallen. This book draws on a plethora of previously unpublished sources to shed new light on the exploits of the "Devils in Baggy Pants" by Dutch author and historian Frank van Lunteren. A native of Arnhem—the site of "The Bridge too Far"—the author draws on nearly 130 interviews he personally conducted with veterans of the 504th, plus Dutch civilians and British and German soldiers, who here tell their story for the first time.

Book Information

File Size: 17960 KB

Print Length: 336 pages

Publisher: Casemate; Reprint edition (June 19, 2014)

Publication Date: July 24, 2017

Sold by: Amazon Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00LCAEABW

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #178,326 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #31

in Kindle Store > Books > History > Europe > Netherlands #78 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > History

> Europe > Western #147 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > History > Military > Aviation

Customer Reviews

Frank van Lunteren masterfully writes about the exploits of the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment in operation Market Garden. He has used all the rare original sources which are available, like after action reports, combat interviews, narratives and the research by Cornelius Ryan. His well documented and well researched book tells exactly what happened, but he keeps away from the context of the operation and the controversies surrounding some of the decisions made by various division and corps commanders. A great book with touching stories of combat by the heroes of the 504th.

Frank Van Lunteren has done a masterful and interesting job of pulling together actual accounts of Operation Market Garden. While Cornelius Ryan's book was about all the units who participated, Frank zeroes in on the 504--those Devils in Baggy Pants. My uncle was one of those H Company "Devils" who participated in the Waalcrossing...probably one of the most amazing battles in US military history. This is a fabulous addition to the great books written by Burriss (I Company) and Megellas (H Company) because it covers the entire regiment during Operation Market Garden. The number of people interviewed and other research included are a testament to Frank's amazing skill as a historian.

Very detailed account of combat by those proud and brave men who served in the Regiment, in a battle that should have never occurred. Lay the lives of those lost and injured at the feet of that ego driven Gen. Montgomery. He adds this to his wonderful resume next to the failure to take objectives on D-day. Shame on the US army for this political decision to join in this folly. Stupid decisions by high command and boys don't come home.

Excellent! A must have for anyone interested in a factual account of the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment in Operation Market Garden during WWII.

My Dad, Lt Joseph D. Shirk was in I Company all the way from Africa to Berlin and until this book came out he had never talked about this operation or his participation. The only discussions that we ever had were about his good times with friends in London and Paris. I recognize some of the names in the book because I've served in the 1st of the 504 PIR myself know the Division lore backwards and forwards. I knew he had been wounded in the Bulge but never here....it was not on his DD 214 Record of Service. This book tells a wonderful story using the operation as a canvas and then the memories of those who fought in it as its paint. Frank Van Lunteren has accomplished a wonderful feat of communication with his masterful telling of the human side of the Operation Marker Garden. Thanks Frank...good job.

Exciting and riveting story of amazing hero's by front line soldiers very brave men.

This book has Excellent historical detail. Great job!! More than you will get anywhere I have read I enjoyed it thoroughly! Try it...

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