

**George E. Koskimaki Collection,
Box 31 Folder 25. U.S. Army
Heritage and Education Center,
Ridgway Hall Research Room,
Carlisle, PA**

**Lt Col William Parkhill Report on
Bastogne resupply by 441st TCG**

**Research by Patricia Overman
and Hans den Brok**

Leon B Spenser Research Team



441st TROOP CARRIER GROUP



99th - 100th - 301st - 302nd
TROOP CARRIER SQUADRONS

USAAF - ETO - WWII



MERRYFIELD, ENGLAND / DREUX, FRANCE

Aug 7, 1990

Dear George

Thanks for your note of July 31st. Am sending for the D-Day book now. Have you read Green Light by Martin Wolfe?

On the Normandy para-drop, I led the second serial of the 441st Troop Carrier Group. We carried (as I recall) the 2nd Bat of the 501st Reg led by Lt Col Ballard. Is he still around? Could you send me his address? Enclosed is a copy of a letter I wrote to Max Hastings in 1986. It outlines my personal remembrance of that operation. Also I am sending a photo of a 24" by 36" oil painting I made depicting the 301st Troop Carrier Sqdn which was the first half of the 45 plane second serial of the 441st TC Gp on the Normandy drop. We are flying at 200' altitude over the English Channel just before sundown.

Regarding the resupply of the 101st at Bastogne, I am attaching a summary of our operation which I led. I believe our flight was the first to drop supplies shortly after the pathfinders set up. I could be wrong about this.

Am looking forward to reading your books and greatly admire your effort.

Regards,

Bill
Bill Parkhill
8509 Grenache Court
San Jose, CA 95135

LTC Williem H. Parkhill - 441st Troop Carrier Gp

On December 22, 1944 a fighter pilot was sent to our base to describe what he had seen around Bastogne the previous day. We received orders to load up 21 C-47's with 66,800 lbs. of ammunition, 15,600 lbs. of rations and 800 lbs. of medical supplies. We also received a route map and pathfinder signals data. The route took us from Dreux (SW of Paris) direct to the Initial Point about 60 60 80 miles due west of Bastogne. The weather couldn't have been worse. A great frontal storm was moving slowly westward over all of northern Europe. The next morning when we took off the clouds were right down to the ground. We flew in a column of 3 ship V's right through the tree tops. We managed to stay together and turned at the IP heading due east to Bastogne. About 40 miles from target the weather broke clear and we were out of the weather front. You could see for a hundred miles in all directions. There were no other aircraft around. We stayed on the deck but had to cross a series of low hills running north and south. In the valleys there were roads loaded with German armor and other vehicles bumper to bumper moving north. When they heard us coming but couldn't see us because of the low hills they ran away from their vehicles. When they saw what we were, they ran back and started shooting. The knocked down our last three aircraft. We went on to the target, got all the right signals, dropped our loads and climbed out right over Bastogne. As we climbed and turned we could see over the weather front to the west and saw hundreds of bombers and fighters climbing out of England making contrails on their way to the battle area.

Later that day and the following day hundreds of C-47's dropped great loads of supplies and were very badly shot up. We were lucky. I always thought we were first in because we got there within minutes of the weather breaking and because the Germans didn't know what we were and must have assumed we were fighter bombers when they ran from their tanks. They knew better when the next troop carriers flew in.