

Lawrence (Larry) E. Palmer

- Private to Staff Sergeant

Served with distinction in the Hq1 Light Machine Gun Platoon from October 1942 to September 1945.

Larry Palmer was a Hq1 "Hell's Half Acre" survivor (See Chapter II, Combat Operations – Normandy).

Larry was an outstanding soldier, a magnificent leader, and a cherished friend.

Larry Palmer was a classic example for why Hq1 men are considered the "Greatest of the Greatest Generation." He was always cheerful, loyal, industrious and honest. He loved his family, he loved his country, and he loved his fellowmen.



Larry Palmer was born July 12, 1920 in Augusta, Georgia. He was a graduate of Richmond Academy. Larry died November 5, 1998.

His devoted wife Laura and his life long friend Kenneth (Rock) Merritt provided information for this summary.

In Augusta, Georgia, on November 7, 1998, at a memorial service, CSM Rock Merritt presented an eulogy for the Life of Larry Palmer. Rock said.

"I met Larry Palmer 56 years ago in the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment (508th PIR) at Camp Blanding, Florida. We were privates assigned to the Hq1 Light Machine Gun Platoon, and we served therein throughout WW II. Larry participated heroically in all of the 508th PIR combat operations.

On June 6, 1944 (D-Day), Larry parachuted into Normandy and fought gallantly in 'Hell's Half Acre.'

On September 17, 1944, Larry parachuted into Holland in a force determined to liberate the Netherlands from German occupation.

Starting early in the morning of December 19, 1944, under the most severe winter conditions experienced in Europe in years, Larry fought for months in the 'Battle of the Bulge'. The regiment fought through the heavily forested and defended Ardennes, through the Siegfried Line fortifications and the Hurtgen Forest - all the way to the Roer River. Operating without winter equipment and clothing, Larry and his men bravely fought continuously through heavy snow and bitter cold against a desperate German army trying to avoid the destruction of the Third Reich.

Lawrence (Larry) E. Palmer

- Private to Staff Sergeant

As WW II was ending, the 508th PIR was alerted to jump into Germany to rescue allied prisoners-of-war. However, attacking allied forces over-ran the prisoner-of-war camps and liberated the prisoners before the 508th PIR could execute any of the missions.

The war ended in Europe and the regiment was returned to Sissonne to await orders. The wait was short.

The 508th PIR was selected for Occupation duty as security forces and honor guards for General Eisenhower's Supreme Headquarters. The regiment quickly moved to Heddernheim, a suburb of Frankfurt, Germany and performed its elite functions.

During combat in Holland, our Assistant Platoon Leader said 'Rock, Larry Palmer is one of the coolest men in combat that I have ever seen.' A few years later I asked Larry about his being cool under fire -- he said 'Rock, I was scared to death, I just didn't want my men to see how really scared I was!'

Rock concluded the eulogy. "In my home state, Oklahoma, we had a great man named Will Rogers who once said 'I never met a man that I didn't like.'

I can say without reservation, that I never heard Larry Palmer say a bad word about any other human being. He was a great man and a cherished friend."

Larry Palmer was a "company" man. When-ever he could he went the extra step to enhance the welfare of his comrades. For example, in Heddernheim, Germany (Hq1's billet area) Larry organized and managed a "winning" First Battalion baseball team. He planned and developed the playing field, acquired (scrounged) the equipment, recruited the players and coached the team.



Larry Palmer – The Manager

Larry Palmer was an outstanding soldier, a competent leader, and a supporter of all Hq1 and 508 PIR Association WW II activities. He was loved and respected by his airborne comrades and fellow men.

Larry Palmer was awarded:

- ?? Bronze Star Medal
- ?? Combat Infantry Badge
- ?? Invasion Arrowhead

Lawrence (Larry) E. Palmer - Private to Staff Sergeant

- ?? Four battle stars
- ?? Parachutist Qualification Badge with two stars for combat jumps (Normandy and Holland)
- ?? Presidential Unit Citation
- ?? French and Belgium Fourrageres
- ?? Orange Lanyard of the Royal Netherlands Army
- ?? Numerous defense medals including the Occupation Medal with Germany Bar

Consistent with the attributes of Hq1 men, Larry Palmer was a devoted husband, a dependable father, and a grandfather and great grandfather.

He enjoyed being a respected Augusta businessman for over 50 years, and he was a devoted Atlanta Braves baseball fan. He also was an active member of the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment WW II Association, and of the Masonic Lodge.

Larry and Laura Palmer were married December 21, 1945. They had two sons Larry & Troy and five daughters, Cheryl, Emily, Ann, Bunny and Susan - extended by twelve grandchildren and six great-grand children.



Laura and Larry Palmer

Mrs. Larry (Laura) Palmer lives at 116 Village Parkway, N. Augusta, SC 29841

Lawrence (Larry) E. Palmer - Private to Staff Sergeant

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.

No reproduction or distribution restrictions are imposed or implied for the album or pages thereof -- providing such actions are not undertaken for profit.

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 . Stock~~

Hq1 Album Collator

Lawrence (Larry) E. Palmer
- Private to Staff Sergeant

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.

No reproduction or distribution restrictions are imposed or implied for the album or pages thereof – providing such actions are not undertaken for profit.

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 . Stock~~

Hq1 Album Collator

Lawrence (Larry) E. Palmer
- Private to Staff Sergeant