

# Easy Company

506<sup>th</sup> PIR, In Photographs

By the **Men of Easy Company** — Introduced by **Tom Hanks**

A limited edition book signed by 7 veteran soldiers

Autumn 2008



On the road into Carentan in Normandy, D-Day + 7, 1944

Over 400 photographs and items of memorabilia have been assembled by **Genesis Publications** for *Easy Company, 506<sup>th</sup> PIR, In Photographs*; a unique historical document of one of the most revered Allied companies of World War II.

*“Call any one of those veteran soldiers, sailors or airmen by the term ‘hero’ and they will look away. None of them will claim that status for themselves... Let’s keep that term to ourselves and be content to flip through the pages of this book, seeing for ourselves in story after story, photo after photo, what heroes look like.”* From the foreword by **Tom Hanks**.

Gathering as civilian volunteers at Camp Toccoa, the men of **Company E, of the 2nd Battalion of the 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment**, could not have foreseen the triumphs and tragedies that would befall them as members of the United States Army during World War II. Now for the first time, over 400 period photographs – many unseen and previously unpublished, a great many taken by the soldiers of Easy Company themselves – have been collated and presented within a single volume. Historical memorabilia and artifacts are also included throughout *Easy Company, 506th PIR, In Photographs* the latest signed, limited edition of only 1,000 copies, from **Genesis Publications**.

This unprecedented archive of photographs and memorabilia – both in colour and black & white – is accompanied by **20,000 words** from original interviews with the surviving veteran soldiers of Easy Company, alongside diary entries and extracts, with a beautifully poignant foreword from **Tom Hanks** and an afterword by **James Madio**. With many images taken from **Major Richard Winters’** personal collection, and limited to only 1,000 hand-bound, numbered, signed copies, *Easy Company, 506th PIR, In Photographs* is a truly remarkable testament to the bravery and valour of a company of heroes.

The men of Easy Company were united by more than a shared cause. The gruelling training they endured in Georgia, North Carolina and England paled in comparison to the physical and mental onslaught of **D-Day** and the battles beyond. From Normandy, to **Operation Market Garden** in Holland, to the **Battle of the Bulge** in Belgium, to the victorious capture of Hitler’s alpine fortress, **‘The Eagles Nest’**, in Germany, the exploits of the men of Easy Company are truly awe-inspiring. Their incredible journey engendered a special bond; and it is this brotherhood – documented in Stephen Ambrose’s *Band of Brothers* and the Spielberg/Hanks much-celebrated TV mini-series of the same name – that has fascinated all those who have encountered it.



Training at Camp Toccoa, Georgia, 1943.



Parachuting into the drop zone at Son, Holland, 1944.



The early stages of Operation Market Garden, Holland, 1944.



- All copies in the edition are quarter-bound in a black medium-grain leather. The spine lettering features hand-tooled gold.
- The front and back boards are covered with green US Army 8oz cloth – a fabric used for the original M1942 Paratrooper uniforms – with a replica 'Screaming Eagle' airborne patch embossed on the front board.
- Limited to just 1,000 copies worldwide, each of the 232 pages is edged with gold, master printed in full-colour with fine screen lithography and full page varnishing using heavy weight, acid free, matt art paper.

When the war ended, **Major Richard Winters** and a regiment photographer made a trade – Winters' Luger for the photographer's collection of images. *Easy Company, 506<sup>th</sup> PIR in Photographs* is the first ever publication to bring together this wealth of phenomenal material, edited in collaboration with **Jake Powers**, archivist and historian for Easy Company. Powers acted as consultant for *Band of Brothers*, advising on historical accuracy, and is the curator of the Winters Archive.

In addition to Winters' material, *Easy Company, 506<sup>th</sup> PIR in Photographs* contains images from two Easy Company soldiers of note. **Buck Taylor's** Kodachrome images document the punishing training regime in colour, while **CPL Forrest Guth**, an ex-handyman, sewed additional pockets onto his fatigues in order to transport a camera on D-Day.

"This book is in itself a unique historical document," says **Nicholas Roylance**, managing director of Genesis Publications. "As well as the incredible content and images, each book has been signed by at least seven of the veterans; and each comes with fascinating reproductions of maps; literature; pamphlets and so on from the era.

At Genesis, one of our core aims has been to produce books that are historically, culturally, and socially important – and *Easy Company, 506<sup>th</sup> PIR in Photographs* is a perfect testament to that objective."

"There is so much that could be said about Easy Company, the sacrifices they made, how what they did is more or less beyond the comprehension of anyone that wasn't there," comments **Alex Hedley**, editor of *Easy Company, 506<sup>th</sup> PIR in Photographs*. "But that's a given. This book speaks for itself – all you need to do is look through to realise what an astounding group of men this was."

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## Contacts

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## Websites



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## Editor's Notes

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### Alex Hedley

Alex Hedley is the editor and writer of the caption and narrative text for *Easy Company, 506<sup>th</sup> PIR, In Photographs*. He began a sojourn with the men of Easy Company during a reunion tour in Europe with veterans, celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the D-Day landings. The tour was sponsored by DaimlerChrysler, and comprised a three-week tour beginning in Normandy, including Bastogne and Eindhoven. The purpose of accompanying the vets was to film and interview them as they made their way to battle sites – for many this was their first time back in Europe since the war.

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### Herb Suerth

Herb Suerth joined Easy Company as an enlistee prior to the Battle of the Bulge. At this stage the company were a very tight-knit unit; replacements often found it difficult to gain the respect of battle-hardened 'brothers in arms'.

Suerth took his camera – a Falcon 120 – into combat. One photo came out on the only roll of film, of Popeye Wynn and Hank Zimmerman on the 26<sup>th</sup> of December, 1944 in the snow. The film was not recovered until after the war.

Suerth was later wounded during heavy shelling on Easy Company's position outside Bastogne. He was pulled from the line after being seriously wounded by an exploding shell. Suerth took over from Bill Guarneri as president of the Easy Company charitable association, organising the annual reunions, memorials and monuments; dedicating his time to preserving the memory of Easy Company.

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### Jake Powers

Jake Powers acted as historical consultant on the HBO production *Band of Brothers*, and attended Easy Company reunions from an early age. Powers redefines the concept of 'official historian' – no one has had more contact and access to the men of Easy Company than Jake.

Powers is also a regular attendee on the Ambrose historical Band of Brothers tour across Europe, as well as the unofficial curator of Major Richard Winters' archive of personal documents, maps and his photographic archive.

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### James Madio

James Madio starred as Frank Perconte in the dramatisation of Easy Company's history, *Band of Brothers*, featuring in nine of the 10 episodes. Madio attended the 2005 European reunion tour with Frank Perconte. "I'll be an advocate for the rest of my life, talking about the Easy Company men. I'll be an ambassador for them until the day I die."

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### Genesis Publications

Genesis Publications is the worldwide leader of limited edition books. Each title is produced to the highest standard in the tradition of the private press and with the full co-operation of each author or artist concerned, and their autographs signify their approval and authentication of each edition.

Genesis was founded in 1974 by Brian Roylance, a former student at the London College of Printing; his aim to create a company true to the art of printing and craftsmanship. For this reason Genesis books are printed and hand-bound in Italy by top artisans. Brian's son and daughter, Nicholas and Catherine Roylance now run the company.

Since 1974 Genesis have published such leather bound historical volumes a *The Journal of a Voyage in HMS Beagle* by Charles Darwin, with a foreword by Prince Charles, The Prince of Wales; and *James Cook's Journal of HMS Resolution*, signed by the late Earl Mountbatten of Burma.

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