



UNDERSTANDING
SACRIFICE

Activity: Hit the Ground Running: Escape and Evasion Behind Enemy Lines



Guiding question:

How did paratroopers survive their first hours on the ground and lay the foundation for the success of the Allied war effort?

DEVELOPED BY JAMIE SAWATZKY

Grade Level(s): 6-8

Subject(s): Social Studies, English

Cemetery Connection: Rhone American Cemetery

Fallen Hero Connection: Major John Newton Apperson



NHD
NATIONAL
HISTORY DAY


Overview

Using resources from the American Battlefield Monuments Commission as well as primary documents from the National Archives and Records Administration, students will explore what it was like to jump out of the C-47 troop transport plane as well as the “escape and evasion” resources and strategies that paratroopers and other airborne personnel used. Students will be cast into the role of a paratrooper who landed behind enemy lines and is attempting to avoid capture and find other paratroopers. Students will write a first-person account of their experiences.

Historical Context

The 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion’s jump into North Africa marked the first time that paratroopers were ever used in combat by the United States military. Paratroopers from the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion were also used in campaigns in Italy, Belgium, and southern France. Paratroopers secured important targets, confused the enemy, cut enemy communication lines, and paved the way for the infantry units that followed.

The U.S. Army had to learn what resources paratroopers needed to survive on the ground and the paratroopers’ gear was the envy of other nations. As the *Stars and Stripes* reported in 1944, “American paratroopers’ equipment was described in a German broadcast yesterday as a ‘luxury’ kit. No other unit in the world is so well equipped as the American paratroops.” Thanks to the innovations made, paratroopers were instrumental in securing victories for the Allies in both the European and Pacific theatres of World War II.



“Paratroopers have always been a source of wonder and inspiration for students as well as the focus of Hollywood movies and historical documentaries. Jumping out of a plane is an adventure that most of us do not want to attempt. But what happens after the jump? How do they survive once they hit the ground? Often alone and suffering from disorientation, paratroopers hope that what they have packed is enough to survive the challenges that they will face on the ground.”

— Jamie Sawatzky

Sawatzky teaches at Rocky Run Middle School in Chantilly, Virginia.

Objectives

At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Describe the anticipation and action of jumping out of a C-47 transport plane;
- Analyze the resources that paratroopers utilize in order to survive once they are on the ground;
- Apply the escape and evasion techniques that paratroopers used; and
- Evaluate the contributions made by paratroopers to the war as a whole.

Documents Used ★ indicates an ABMC source

Primary Sources

Benzedrine Packets

Laurier Military History Archive

Chewing Gum, Fishing Line, French Francs, Halzone Tablets, Language Translation Cards, Signaling Mirror, Silk Map

Imperial War Museum

Compass

Dead Man's Corner Museum

Cricket, Flashlight, Entrenching Tool, Luminous Disc, Wire Cutters, Zippo Lighter

National World War II Museum

wired.com/2012/06/d-day-paratrooper-gear-gadgets/

First Aid Kit

Collection of David Steinert

Newsreel, *U.S. Prepares More Paratroops for Battle*, August 4, 1944

National Archives and Records Administration (39021)

catalog.archives.gov/id/39021

Private Charles H. Frankenfeld, 502nd Parachute Infantry Regiment

Escape and Evasion Report Number 863 (excerpt)

National Archives and Records Administration

catalog.archives.gov/id/5555506

Private Joseph Deziel, 101st Airborne Division
Escape and Evasion Report Number 893 (excerpt)
National Archives and Records Administration
catalog.archives.gov/id/5555540

Second Lieutenant Jack E. Williams, 360th Bomb Squadron
Escape and Evasion Report Number 9 (excerpt)
National Archives and Records Administration
catalog.archives.gov/id/5554651

Second Lieutenant John N. Hendrey, 14th Troop Carrier Squadron, 61st Troop Carrier Group
Escape and Evasion Report Number 781 (excerpt)
National Archives and Records Administration
catalog.archives.gov/id/5555421

Secondary Sources

509th Parachute Infantry Battalion
509thgeronimo.org/history.html

“France’s Second D-Day: Operation Dragoon and the Invasion of Southern France,”
August 15, 2014 ★

American Battle Monuments Commission
abmc.gov/news-events/news/france%E2%80%99s-second-d-day-operation-dragoon-and-invasion-southern-france

Jean-Loup Gassend, *Operation Dragoon*, Autopsy of a Battle (excerpts)

“Paratroopers”
PBS *American Experience*
pbs.org/wgbh/amex/dday/sfeature/sf_paratrooper.html

Materials

- Escape and Evasion Behind Enemy Lines Prediction Sheet
- Chance Cards
- Paratrooper Experiences in France, 1944
- Hit the Ground Running Writing Prompt
- Hit the Ground Running Writing Prompt Rubric
- Manila folders (one per group) to hold Escape and Evasion Kit materials
- Computer with internet and sound capability

Lesson Preparation

- Arrange students in groups of four to five students each.
- Make one copy of each of the following for each student:
 - Escape and Evasion Behind Enemy Lines Prediction Sheet
 - Paratrooper Experiences in France, 1944
 - Hit the Ground Running Writing Prompt
 - Hit the Ground Running Writing Prompt Rubric
- Print, copy, and create one Escape and Evasion Kit for each group of students (in manila folders).
 - Compass
 - Benzedrine Packet Tablets
 - Chewing Gum
 - Cricket
 - Entrenching Tool
 - First Aid Kit
 - Fishing Line and Hook
 - French Francs
 - Halzone Tablets
 - Language Translation Cards
 - Luminous Disc

- Signaling Mirror
- Silk Map of France
- TL-122 Flashlight
- Wire Cutters
- Zippo Lighter
- Print, and cut one set of Chance Cards for each group of students.
- Read the ABMC article, “France’s Second D-Day: Operation Dragoon and the Invasion of Southern France,” for context of the invasion.
- Set up classroom technology.
- Test all online resources before class.

Procedure

Activity One: Preparing to Jump (30 minutes)

- Distribute one copy of the Escape and Evasion Behind Enemy Lines Prediction Sheet to each student.
 - Read the introduction with the students, answering questions as needed.
 - Ask students, *What gear and supplies do you think paratroopers will need as they prepare to jump behind enemy lines?*
 - Instruct students to predict ten items that paratroopers would bring with them on their jumps. Students can record their answers on the Escape and Evasion Behind Enemy Lines Prediction Sheet.
- Encourage students to share their responses with the whole class. The teacher should not provide feedback during discussion but may record a list of student predictions.
- Ask students to put the Escape and Evasion Behind Enemy Lines Prediction Sheet aside.
- Project and play a short newsreel clip, *U.S. Prepares More Paratroops for Battle*, from August 4, 1944. Play from 0:25 to 1:53. Ask students, *What attracted men to join the paratroopers?*
 - **Teacher Tip:** Remind students that the paratrooper units were new and experimental. The units were filled by volunteers who were paid an additional stipend to account for the additional dangers.
- Distribute the Hit the Ground Running Writing Prompt.
 - Review the prompt for Parts One, Two, and Three and ask students to create notes (bullets or phrases) on how they would respond to the prompts.
 - Allow students time to respond. Circulate and assist as needed. Encourage students to use all five senses to describe the experience.

Activity Two: Chance Cards (15 minutes)

- Distribute one manila folder of the Escape and Evasion Kit to each group of four or five students.
- Ask students to imagine that they just jumped behind enemy lines. Their folder contains the supplies with which they have jumped.
 - Ask student groups to discuss these materials and compare them to their list on the Escape and Evasion Behind Enemy Lines Prediction Sheet.
- Distribute one set of Chance Cards to each group and instruct students to randomly shuffle the cards without looking at them.
 - Explain that they are paratroopers who have landed in southern France in support of Operation Dragoon. These cards will determine whether they make it to their first objective and meet up with the other paratroopers. Students should take turns drawing a card and reading the scenario to the person across from them. That student has up to ten seconds to pick the correct tool from the manila folder.
 - If the student gets the answer correct, he or she should follow the instructions on the card.
 - If the student gives a clearly incorrect answer, then he or she is captured by enemy force. The student should then read the correct answer.
 - Continue the process until all students have participated.
 - **Teacher Tip:** Between students, the cards should be shuffled and drawn randomly.
- Collect the Chance Cards and Escape and Evasion Kits for future use.
- Ask students to respond to Part Four of the Hit the Ground Running Writing Prompt.

Activity Three: Reading and Writing About the Experience of Paratroopers (30 minutes)

- Distribute one Paratrooper Experiences in France, 1944 handout to each student.
- Ask students to read the account of Private Charles H. Frankenfield. Ask students,
 - *What do you think happened next?*
 - *What tools or resources might be needed to survive on the ground?*
- Instruct students to read about the experiences of paratroopers who participated in airborne invasions in France in 1944.

Assessment

- Direct students to the synthesis section of the Hit the Ground Running Writing Prompt. Using their notes from sections 1–4 of the pre-writing activities, they will craft a fictional, first-person narrative. Each paragraph will be about a different phase of your experience (the jump, descending to the ground, the landing, and operating on the ground).
 - **Teacher Tip:** Remind students that in their first person account they should focus on the Chance Cards activity as well as the eyewitness accounts that they read. Students should also be reminded to focus on their five senses in their writing. What are they hearing, seeing, smelling, tasting, and touching?
- The Hit the Ground Running Writing Prompt Rubric can be used to assess the writing piece.

Methods for Extension

- Students can explore the Evasion and Evasion reports available online from the National Archives and Records Administration.
- Students can explore the PBS *American Experience* site on paratroopers.
- The American Battle Monuments Commission maintains U.S. military cemeteries overseas. These cemeteries are permanent memorials to the fallen, but it is important that students know the stories of those who rest here. To learn more about the stories of Americans who made the ultimate sacrifice, visit abmc.gov/education and NHDSilentHeroes.org.
- Teachers can enhance students' interest in World War II covert actions by exploring these related lesson plans:
 - [Deception and Double Agents: The Success of Operation Fortitude](#)
 - [Resistance Rising: Fighting the Shadow War Against the Germans](#)

Adaptations

- Teachers can adjust the reading level by carefully selecting which Escape and Evasion reports are used.
- Teachers can choose to read portions of the eyewitness accounts aloud to better ensure student understanding of the material.
- Teachers can create content-specific language guides to assist with student reading and understanding.
- Teachers can scaffold the written portion of the report to a more “fill in the blank” worksheet.

Escape and Evasion Behind Enemy Lines Prediction Sheet

World War II was the first time that the United States used paratroopers to fight battles. The 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion jumped into combat in North Africa in 1942. The 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion also made combat jumps into Italy, southern France, and Belgium.

When paratroopers jump from their airplanes behind enemy lines, they need to carry enough resources to survive for up to 48 hours before being able to join up with the rest of their unit. These resources range from food and water to tools that can be used to avoid being captured. During World War II, paratroopers would jump with 70 pounds of gear. Officers carried an additional 20–25 pounds worth of gear. When combined with the parachute, paratroopers jumped with 90–120 pounds of gear in addition to their own body weight.

Use the space below to record your predictions of what paratroopers would pack for their jump.

Prediction	What would it be used for?	Was it correct?

Chance Cards

Chance Card 1

You are badly injured during your landing. You are bleeding and in great pain from the injury. Which tool will you use?

Acceptable response:

First Aid Kit

Result: Advance to the next card

Chance Card 2

You believe that where you landed is about ten miles away from your objective. You spot a road sign that gives you a hint of your location. You know that Germans are in the area, so you need to be as quiet as possible. Which tool do you use?

Acceptable responses:

French Language Cards

French Fracs

Result: Advance to the next card



Chance Card 3

You come across a Frenchman and you cannot decide whether or not you can trust him or if he will turn you over to the German authorities. What tool can you use?

Acceptable responses:

French Fracs

French Language Cards

Result: Congratulations! You “convinced” the Frenchman to help you, and he leads you to some of your fellow paratroopers!

Chance Card 4

It is nighttime and the noises that you hear in the nearby bushes could be a friend, an enemy, or perhaps an animal. Which tool will you use to find out?

Acceptable responses:

Cricket Clicker

Result: Advance to the next card



Chance Cards

Chance Card 5

You come across a small market on the outside of town and you are desperate for food. Which tool will you use?

Acceptable responses:

- French Francs
- French Language Cards

Result: Advance to the next card

Chance Card 6

You believe that where you landed is about ten miles away from your objective. You spot a road sign that gives you a hint of your location. You know that Germans are in the area so you need to be as quiet as possible. Which tool do you use?

Acceptable responses:

- Silk Map of the region
- Compass
- French Language Cards

Result: Congratulations! The map leads you to your objective where you meet up with other paratroopers.



Chance Card 7

You are lost and trying to find your way to the town that you believe to be north of your current location. Which tool will you use?

Acceptable responses:

- Compass
- Silk Map

Result: Congratulations! The map leads you to your objective where you meet up with the other paratroopers.

Chance Card 8

You've been on the ground for almost a full day and are feeling exhausted and confused. Which tool will you use?

Acceptable responses:

- Benzedrine Tablets
- Chewing Gum

Result: Advance to the next card



Chance Cards

Chance Card 9

You have been on the ground for almost 24 hours and have run out of water. You approach a pond that looks murky. What tool do you use?

Acceptable response:

Halzone Tablets

Result: Advance to the next card

Chance Card 10

You come across a barbed wire fence. What tool do you use?

Acceptable response:

Wire Cutters

Result: Advance to the next card

Chance Card 11

You landed in a wooded area just outside of town. You'd like to be able to hide your parachute and other evidence of your presence. What tool do you use?

Acceptable response:

Entrenching Tool

Result: Advance to the next card

Chance Card 12

You have been on the ground for 24 hours but haven't had much to eat. You come across a stream. Which tool can you use?

Acceptable response:

Fishing Line

Result: Advance to the next card



Chance Cards

Chance Card 13

You see what looks to be other paratroopers in the woods about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile away. There are also Germans in the area so it is important that you maintain silence. What tool do you use?

Acceptable response:

Signaling Mirror

Result: Congratulations! You successfully signaled to other paratroopers, and now you join them.



Paratroopers Experiences in France, 1944

Flight to Drop Zone

"We boarded C-47s in Italy at about 2:30 A.M. and had a nice pleasant ride, with no opposition at all. Most of us were asleep until almost time to jump. They woke us up and said that we would be over the field in 8 minutes. That was at about 5:00 A.M. We stood up and hooked up (to the static line). It seemed like years went by as those last minutes ticked off. I was number 13 man. The green light came on and guys began to disappear in front of me. Then there I was at the door."

–Corporal Harland "Bud" Curtis, 1st Infantry Battalion, 517th Parachute Infantry Regiment
Reprinted from *Operation Dragoon, Autopsy of a Battle*.

Jumping from a C-47 Transport Plane

"I can remember when I stood in the door in southern France, I thought 'Wow, what am I doing here?' I noticed on my watch that it was 0432 on 15 August 1944 and I thought: 'well that's actually two minutes late.' I was the first one out the door. We were pretty low, it seemed to me like around 800 feet."

–Captain Robert Dalrymple, Commanding Officer, of 596th Parachute Combat Engineer Company
Reprinted from *Operation Dragoon, Autopsy of a Battle*.

"I went out the door (of the plane) like I was throwing a flying block with my right shoulder at somebody. I was heading down nose first when 'wham' she opened and jerked me back up right. I looked up to make sure my chute was open and then I looked around."

–Bud Curtis, 1st Infantry Battalion, 517th Parachute Infantry Regiment
Reprinted from *Operation Dragoon, Autopsy of a Battle*.

"We were jumping from an average of 500 feet and were down on the ground in about 7 seconds. We landed at 3:20 in the morning, and the Germans didn't even know that we were there. Our first person to get killed was named Eric Morley. His parachute never opened."

–James Chittenden, 1st Independent Platoon, 2nd Independent Parachute Brigade, British Special Forces
Reprinted from *Operation Dragoon, Autopsy of a Battle*.

Paratroopers Experiences in France, 1944 cont.

Descent and Landing

“When you are leading the stick [group of paratroopers] out, as soon as your chute opens, you turn yourself around 180 degrees so you can see your men coming out, to make sure everybody got out. Then you had to get back and get ready to land. Well about the time that we did that, we went into a little cloud bank.... I didn’t know where the ground was so I had to get ready to land, and pretty soon, bang, I landed on a rock pile on the bank of the Argens River there at le Muy [France].”

–Captain Robert Dalrymple, Commanding Officer, of 596th Parachute Combat Engineer Company

Reprinted from *Operation Dragoon, Autopsy of a Battle*.

First Moments on the Ground

“I came down near Lestre at about 0122 hours, 6 June. Seventeen others in my plane jumped at the same time, but I never saw any of them again. I lay in the field until dawn with the intention of getting to the coast to join my unit. From dawn until about 0900 hours I walked toward the coast through the fields. A German passed me on a bicycle as I was walking down a little road. Later that morning I met with some men from the 377th AB Artillery. I joined up with them, and we all moved toward the coast together. Four of us traveled until almost nightfall when we could see the coast. The Germans were just ahead of us, so we lay on top of a ridge and spent the night there.”

–Private Charles H. Frankenfeld, 502nd Parachute Infantry Regiment

Escape and Evasion Report Number 863

National Archives and Records Administration

“I landed safely in a field and cut off my chute at once...I got out my compass and we started to crawl away as we heard Germans talking nearby and knew that they had seen us land. We got into a hedge and hid. The Germans combed the field. Just as they were going to find us, I threw two hand grenades at them, and we started firing. Then we ran away and hid again in a hedge. It was pretty dark and Germans did not come after us till the next morning. Then they discovered us and began firing at us. We ran out of ammunition about noon.”

–Private Joseph Deziel, 101st Airborne Division

Escape and Evasion Report Number 893, National Archives and Records Administration

“Immediately on landing, 12 to 15 French people came running, surrounded us, and Therien, who could speak French, asked which direction to go. They said anyway but North. We all ran to a wood, shook hands, split up in pairs, and set off in different directions.

Paratroopers Experiences in France, 1944 cont.

"We crossed a barbed wire fence, a highway, and then a railroad. Then we went under a bridge and continued west along a creek where we found a series of small squares of thick underbrush... we stayed in these woods till dark and then set out on a south-west course through a field. We crossed a railroad running due east-west. Coming to a small village we walked around it and stayed on this same course until about 10 p.m. We were tired out and wet and at this time we had on low shoes. We found an old abandoned farmhouse. I still had my torch [flashlight] which turned out to be very useful. We found a hay loft above a pig pen and slept there all night and till dark the next day. We had a good view from this hiding place and there was no activity around it. We then left for a large farmhouse we had been watching all day.

"We opened the door and walked in on some people who had just finished eating. There were five grown people and two children. They stared at us a few minutes and then started jabbering. One large man just looked at us and then came up and said that he was Swiss. He made a great fuss over me. I showed him the 'U.S.' on my clothes and the man showed them all around the room. He told the women to give wine to us. They offered us their bed, but we said that we would rather sleep in the barn."

–Second Lieutenant Jack E. Williams, 360th Bomb Squadron

Escape and Evasion Report Number 9, National Archives and Records Administration

On the Use of Escape and Evasion Aids

1. Of the aids box contents, I used the Horlicks tablets, a chocolate bar, matches, and chewing gum. I used the adhesive tape to hide one of the compasses in the event of capture. The food had a plastic box taste.
2. I carried a red purse. Used the maps of France and gave the money to French Helpers.
3. I had no extra evasion aids and did not carry escape photos.
4. I had been lectured (about escape and evasion kits) at Baier Field, Ft. Wayne, Indiana and at Burkston Health by Captain Newman. I didn't think that the lectures particularly valuable because evasion requires the use of common sense. The French should be trusted when necessary and a working knowledge of French is required.

–Second Lieutenant John N. Hendrey, 14th Troop Carrier Squadron, 61st Troop Carrier Group

–Escape and Evasion Report Number 781, National Archives and Records Administration

–catalog.archives.gov/id/5555421

Hit the Ground Running Writing Prompt

Part One: The Jump

After having watched paratroopers in training, write a brief first person account of your experience as you prepare to jump. What are your emotions? What are your senses telling you? Are you interacting with anyone else on the plane?

1. What do you see?
2. What do you hear?
3. What do you smell?
4. What do you taste?
5. What do you feel?

Part Two: Descending to the Ground

Describe your experience as you drift closer to the ground below you.

1. What do you see?
2. What do you hear?
3. What do you smell?
4. What do you taste?
5. What do you feel?

Hit the Ground Running Writing Prompt cont.

Part Three: The Landing

The ground is getting closer but obstacles such as trees, water, buildings and, of course, the enemy might be in your way as you land. Describe your experience of landing.

1. What do you see?
2. What do you hear?
3. What do you smell?
4. What do you taste?
5. What do you feel?

Part Four: Operating on the Ground

Participate in the Chance Cards experience with your group. Did you evade capture? Why or why not? What tools did you use? What mistakes did you make?

Hit the Ground Running Writing Prompt cont.

Part Five: Synthesis

After reading the experiences of real paratroopers, craft a fictional, first-person narrative explaining what happened to you once you landed. Each paragraph will be about a different phase of your experience (the jump, descending to the ground, the landing, and operating on the ground). Include your five senses throughout the piece and give details to bring the experience to life.

Hit the Ground Running Writing Prompt Rubric

	Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Emerging
Historical Accuracy	Responses are extremely detailed and 100% accurate in terms of what a paratrooper might have experienced in 1944. It is abundantly clear that the student processed all of the steps and information in this lesson.	Responses are detailed and mostly accurate in terms of what a paratrooper might have experienced in 1944. It is clear that the student processed all of the steps and information in this lesson.	Responses are somewhat detailed and partially accurate in terms of what a paratrooper might have experienced in 1944. It is clear that the student processed some of the steps and information of this lesson.	Response attempts to accurately demonstrate what a paratrooper might have experienced are weak. It is clear that the student did not process much of the information of this lesson.
Use of descriptive language	Prompt is answered as if written by a professional author. First person perspective is maintained throughout writing. Strong attention to descriptive language and use of all five senses demonstrated.	All aspects of the prompt are addressed. First person perspective is maintained. Author demonstrates mastery of descriptive language. Writing features four senses.	Most aspects of the prompt are addressed. First person perspective is mostly maintained. Author demonstrates some mastery of descriptive language. Writing features two or three senses.	Responses to prompt are limited. First person perspective is not followed. Author demonstrates minimal use of descriptive language. Only one sense is featured.

Compass

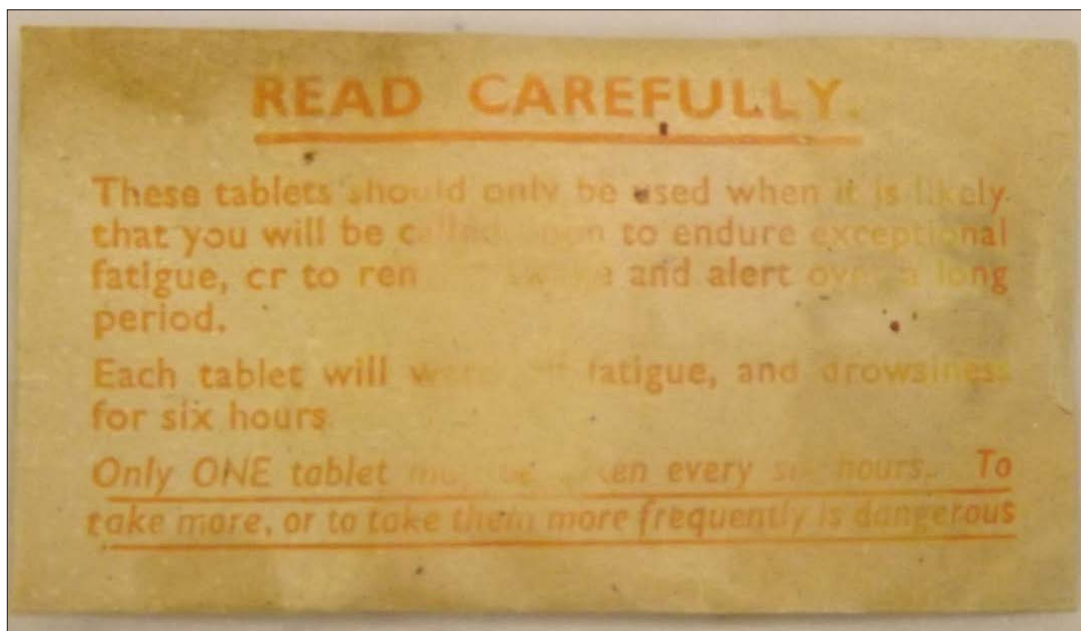
Dead Man's Corner Museum



Compasses were used to determine the correct direction to proceed. Compasses are set to point due North.

Benzedrine Packet Tablets

Laurier Military History Archive



Benzedrine tablets were used to relieve fatigue (tiredness) and to keep people awake.

Chewing Gum

Imperial War Museum



Chewing gum was used to hold off hunger and to keep people awake.

Cricket

National World War II Museum



Crickets were used to make a slight clicking sound that mimicked noises of insects. Paratroopers and others carried these to communicate with one another in the dark or in places with limited visibility. One click was supposed to be returned by two clicks.

Entrenching Tool

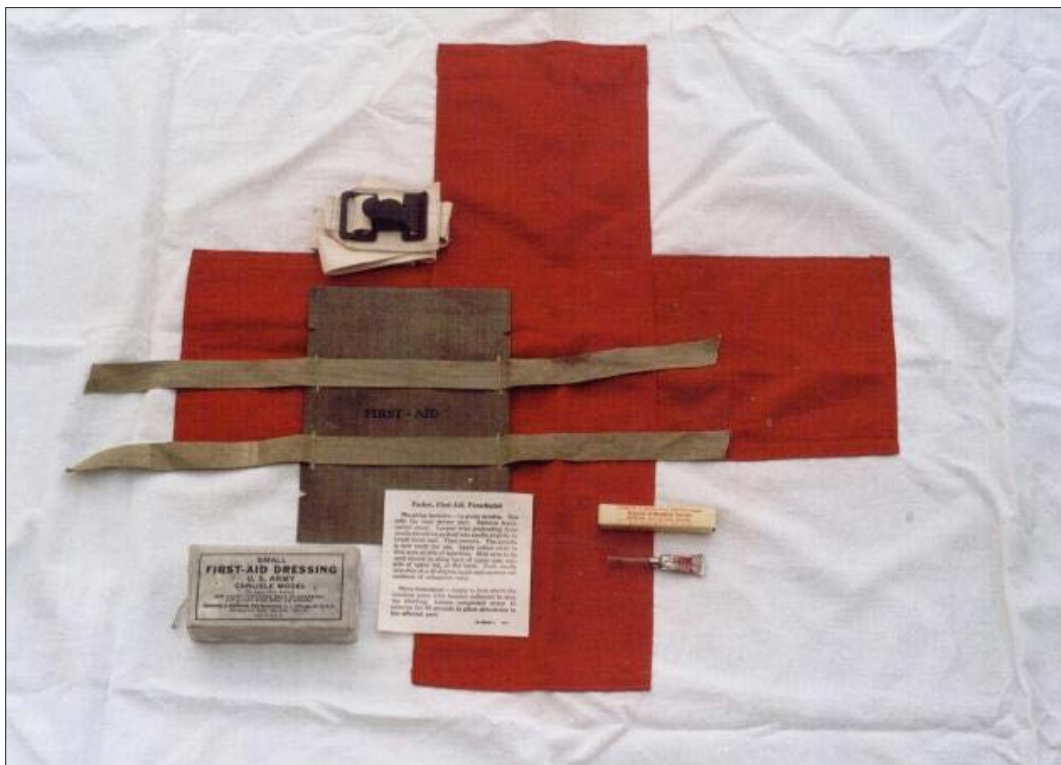
National World War II Museum



Entrenching tools were used to dig foxholes (small areas dug in the dirt to provide protection from enemy fire), as well as to hide materials from enemy sight.

First Aid Kit

Courtesy of David Steinert



Packet, First-Aid, Parachutist

Morphine tartrate.— $\frac{1}{2}$ -grain syrette. Use only for very severe pain. Remove transparent cover. Looped wire protruding from needle should be pushed into needle slightly to break inner seal. Then remove. The syrette is now ready for use. Apply iodine swab to skin area at site of injection. Skin area to be used should be along back of upper arm, outside of upper leg, or the back. Push needle into skin at a 45-degree angle and squeeze out contents of collapsible tube.

Strap tourniquet.—Apply to limb above the bleeding point with tension sufficient to stop the bleeding. Loosen completely every 15 minutes for 30 seconds to allow circulation in the affected part.

16-28598-1 GPO

First Aid Kits were used by paratroopers to address injuries suffered by themselves or others. The kits usually included bandages, morphine (pain medication), tourniquets (used to stop loss of blood), sulfadiazine (antibiotic), sulfanilamide (antibacterial treatment).

Fishing Line and Hook

Imperial War Museum



Fishing line was used to catch fish.

French Francs

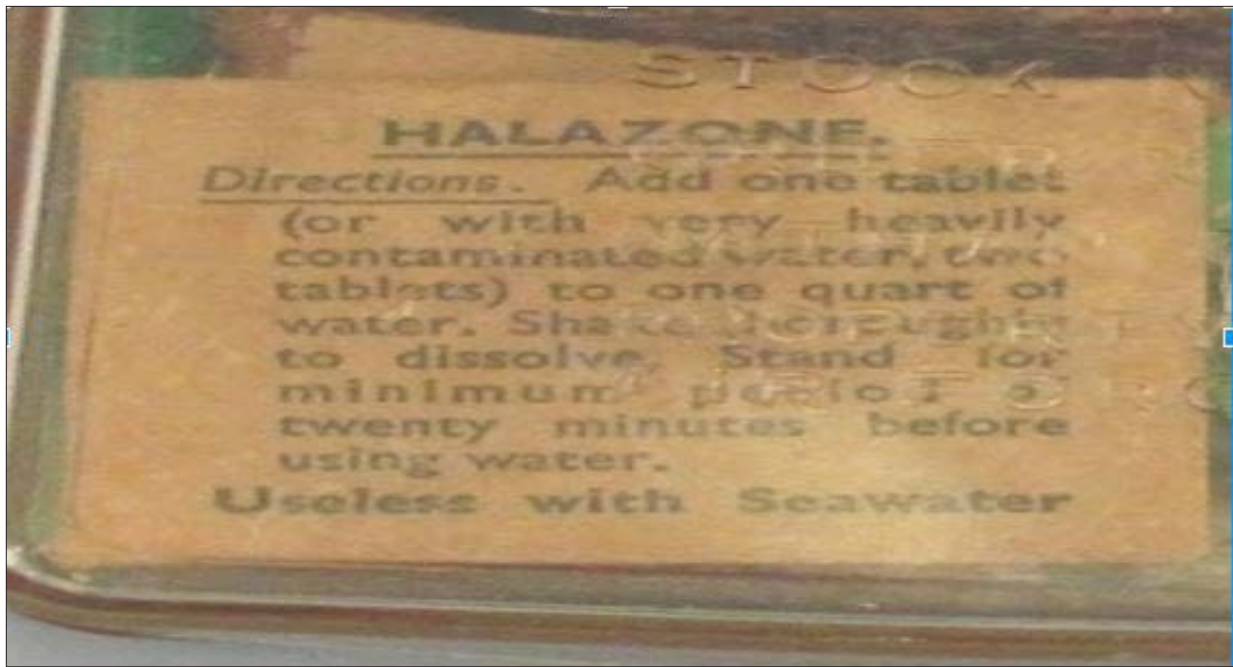
Imperial War Museum



Francs were used to buy goods, pay for assistance, or bribe the enemy.

Halzone Tablets

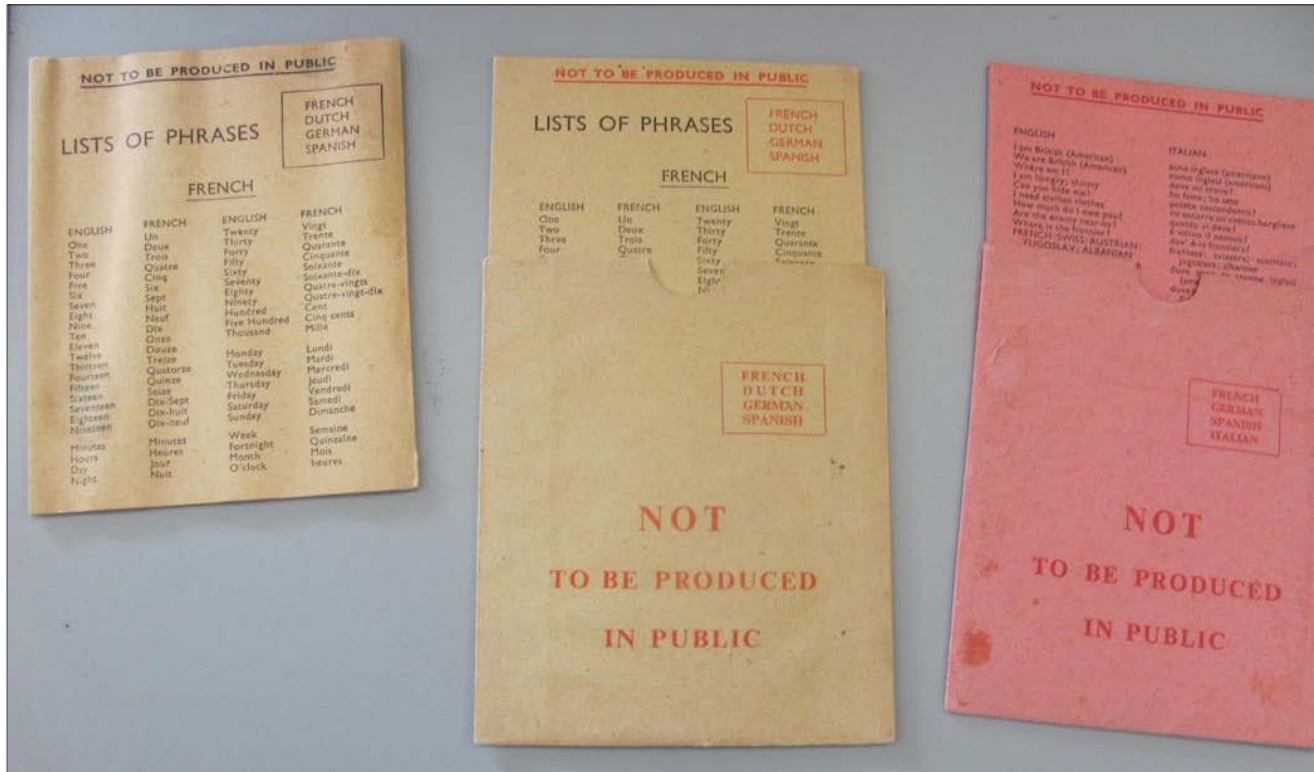
Imperial War Museum



Halzone tablets were used to purify dirty water to make it suitable for drinking.

Language Translation Cards

Imperial War Museum



Language translation cards were used by paratroopers to communicate with French citizens.

Luminous Disc

World War II Museum



Luminous discs are small discs containing radium. These discs, after exposed to light, maintain a glow for hours. Paratroopers and others often put them on their helmets so that they could follow each other in the dark without having to talk.

Signaling Mirror

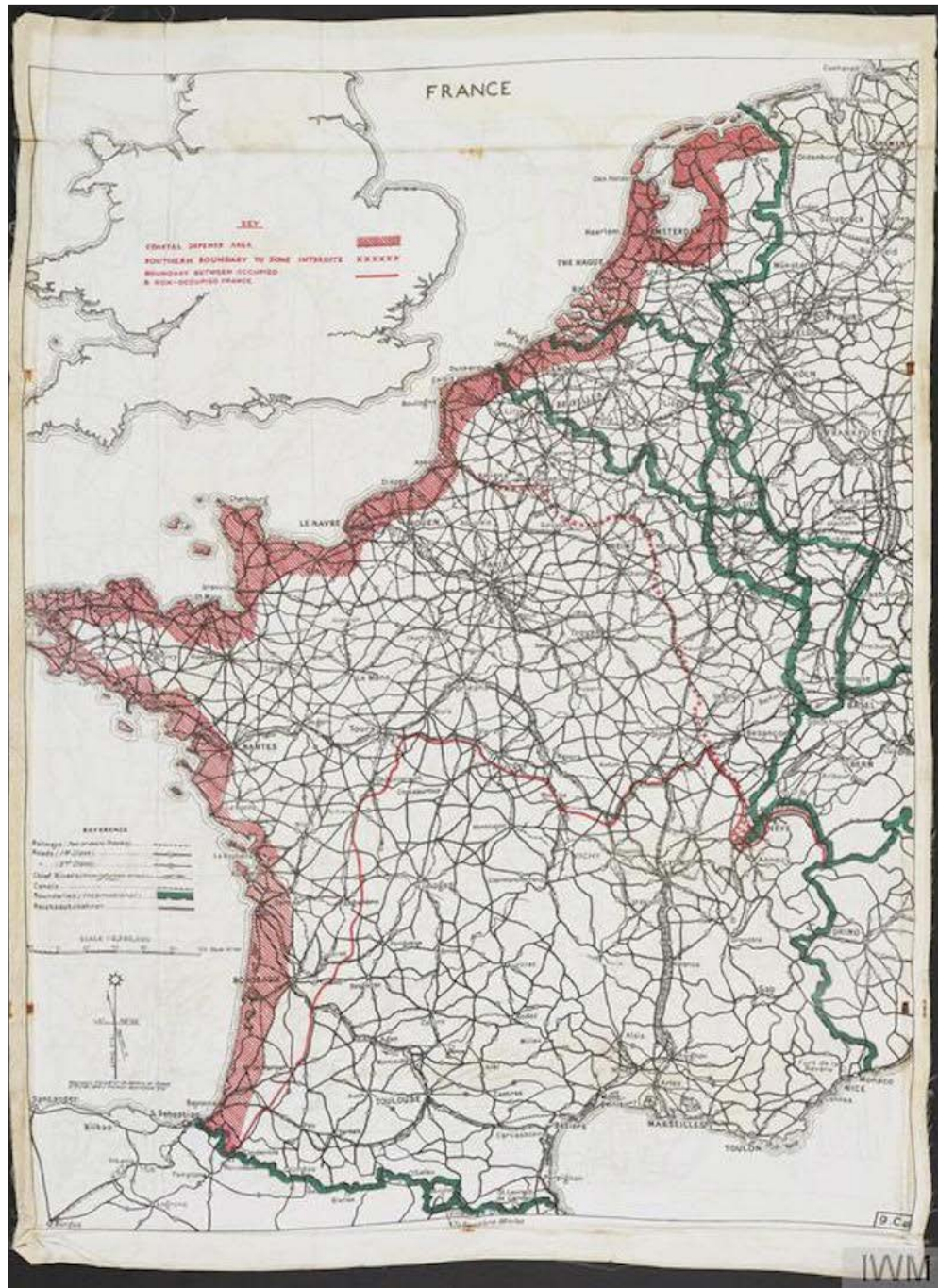
Imperial War Museum



Signaling mirrors were used to re-direct sunlight over long distances. Paratroopers and others could signal each other without having to communicate verbally and risk getting caught by the enemy.

Silk Map of France

Imperial War Museum



Silk maps were quiet and could be hidden. These maps were used by paratroopers and airmen.

TL-122 Flashlight

National World War II Museum



This was the most common type of flashlight issued to paratroopers.

Wire Cutters

National World War II Museum



Wire cutters were used to cut through barbed wire and other obstacles.

Zippo Lighter

National World War II Museum



Lighters were used to light fires and provide warmth.