

# National Archives & Records Administration War Department Files

**CAPT Jacob I. Stahl**

**Class 14-42**

**ID: 01165452**

**Branch of Service: U.S. Army  
Hometown: Essex County, MA**

**Status: KIA March 24, 1945**



**Killed in action serving with Battery B, 680th Glider Parachute Infantry Battalion,  
17th Airborne Division**

**Silver Star**



**(Citation Needed): Jacob I. Stahl, United States Army, is reported to have been awarded the Silver Star under the below-listed General Orders for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action against the enemy while serving with the 680th Glider Field Artillery Battalion, 17th Airborne Division during World War II.**

**General Orders: Headquarters, 17th Airborne Division, General Orders No. 22 (1945)**

## **Operation Varsity - The Airborne Assault on the Rhine**

**In early February 1945, the tide of battle was such as to enable an accurate estimate as to when and where the 2nd British Army would be ready to force a crossing of the Rhine River. It was determined that the crossing would be in conjunction with an airborne operation by XVIII Airborne Corps.**

**The sector selected for the assault was in the vicinity of Wesel, just north of the Ruhr, on 24 March 1945. Operation Varsity would be the last full scale airborne drop of World War II and the assignment went to the British 6th Airborne Division and the 17th Airborne Division.**

**This would be the last full scale airborne operation of the war and the first combat glider landing for the 680th GFAB. The 680th's mission was to land north of Wesel in Landing Zone (LZ) S, a large flat area where the Issel River and the Issel Canal merge. Then to seize the crossing over the Issel and protect the division's right flank.**

**As General Eisenhower watched the operation from a church tower on the west side of the Rhine the 680th had the misfortune of flying over a concentration of German anti-aircraft weapons. Two-thirds of the C-47's were either damaged or in flames. The pilots remained with the aircrafts until they released the gliders which landed amid German Artillery units. The German gun crews immediately repositioned their guns for direct fire. It was a fluid situation for a period but the glider troops prevailed and were able to overrun the German positions.**

**By mid-afternoon on 24 March 1945 after sustaining high casualties, the 680th had secured its objective including the capture of 150 German prisoners, a battery of German 105-mm and a battery of 155-mm artillery.**