The Korean War — A Former POW’s Story

by Ralph E. “Eli” Culbertson

“The motor convoy to Sasebo consisted of 28 vehicles for Headquarters Company, 19 vehicles for Heavy Mortar Company, 12 vehicles for Medical Company, 9 vehicles for Service Company and 28 vehicles for the Third Battalion. The remainder of the Regiment and the Third Battalion departed from Kumamoto by train. Seven Hundred and eight men left Kumamoto by train to Sasebo, Japan. The train depot was filled with Loved Ones saying goodbye to their men. The Japanese girls especially were visually affected. Each one was with their man to the last moment and the crying towels were very much in evidence. As for those personnel who left their dependants at Camp Wood the movement was not much of an emotional scene. Most of them had said their farewells at their respective quarters in the dependant housing area. Here is where, as I walked away from my wife and two small children, I turned and said to my wife, ‘Well, this is just a police action, I will be home in two weeks.’ HA! For myself it turned out to
be more than 38 months later. For many others it was the last time they saw their loved ones. The 21st Infantry Regiment’s Third Battalion lost more than two thirds of its men in the first three weeks of fighting in South Korea.” (Ed. Note: The following story was written in 1992 by Eli under the title on the previous page and appeared in the March 1993 issue of EX-POW BULLETIN. It is reprinted here with their permission.)

The following story will recount my experience from July 1950 until September 4, 1953. It includes the first battles of the war and what happened to the POWs. The story is from the recently discovered notes I made following my release in 1953 and other events, as I remember them today. The following is a list of dates, places and the number of men who died during the POW ordeal:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 25-Sept 5, 1950</td>
<td>Pyongyang</td>
<td>9 men died</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 5-Sept 11, 1950</td>
<td>enroute to Manp'o</td>
<td>2 men died</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 12-Oct 11, 1950</td>
<td>Manp'o</td>
<td>30 men died</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 12-Oct 25, 1950</td>
<td>Kosan &amp; area</td>
<td>14 men died</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Kosan Police Station</td>
<td>7 men shot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 25-Oct 31, 1950</td>
<td>Manp'o cornfield</td>
<td>21 men died</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 1-9, 1950</td>
<td>Death march to Apex area*</td>
<td>88 men shot**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 10, 1950-Oct 21, 1951</td>
<td>Apex area</td>
<td>254 men died</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Lt's shot</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>427 men died</td>
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*Apex area includes the sites of Chunggangjin and Andong
**Includes Lt. Thornton, executed by the Tiger

There were 726 POWs at our compound in Pyongyang in July 1950. There were 442 deaths from July 1950 until November 1951. Of the 427 total given above, 114 men were shot to death, some were beaten to death. All others died from starvation, beriberi, dysentery, or exposure or a combination of all. My notes said 275 men of this group from Pyongyang were repatriated in 1953, including 14 officers. Our guards from time of capture until October 1950 were North Korean (NK) soldiers; from then until October 1951 they were NK Political troops.

The Korean War started on the 25th of June when the NK troops crossed the 38th Parallel. The United Nations (UN) shortly thereafter authorized intervention. The 24th Infantry Division was put on alert and was the first to fight. It was called a “police action”. We were told the NK soldiers would withdraw as soon as they saw our uniforms. There was no panic among the troops. Equipment, such as it was, was readied.
Task Force Smith left Tachikawa AFB and arrived in Korea on July 1st. At Pyongtaek, they were joined by 134 men of the 52nd FA and elements of the 34th Infantry Regiment. The equipment and munitions these troops carried with them was little better, if at all, than the equipment they used at Division maneuvers at Onobura, near Beppu, in April 1950.

On the night of July 4, Task Force Smith established defensive positions at Osan. At dawn, 540 American soldiers were attacked by two divisions of the NK Army, which were supported by T34 Russian tanks. Only two infantry companies were placed on both sides of the road leading south from Seoul. The infantrymen could see movement in the distance near Suwon. At 0700, eight tanks approached the waiting Americans. Our artillery scored direct hits upon them. The tanks, undeterred, kept on coming. Some of the hits were with practice rounds; 75mm recoilless rifles held their fire until the tanks were within 700 yards and scored direct hits to no avail. The infantrymen also used 2.36 inch bazookas to no avail. The tanks kept on coming. Lt. Ollie Conner fired 22 shots from a rocket launcher and knocked out two tanks which were moved off the road and 33 tanks passed through the positions at Osan.

The tanks encountered the 52nd FA and knocked out their positions. The 52nd FA had no HEAT rounds, their HEs were ineffective. No anti-tank mines were employed. SFC Larry B. Hidalgo and Pfc Lewis J. Patterson, of B Co, 21st Infantry, were ordered to stay behind and remove the firing pins from the artillery pieces. In doing so they were taken as POWs and are alive today. Hidalgo lives in San Francisco and Patterson lives in Deadwood, SD. This happened around 1430 hours, when Col. Smith decided to withdraw using the leapfrog method. About 150 men were killed, wounded or taken as POWs during this action. Two monuments now stand where these brave American soldiers valiantly delayed the enemy for several precious hours.

The remainder of Col. Smith’s battalion was on its way to reinforce the positions at Osan. They took up positions at Chonan. The 34th Infantry Regiment was at Pyongtaek. The 3rd Bn, 21st Infantry, was still in Pusan under the command of Lt. Col. Carl C. Jensen and departed Pusan by train on July 6. The Train Crew (Korean) refused to take the train north; therefore trucks were used to transport the 3rd Bn to the East Fork of the road just north of Taejon. We set up positions on the military crests of the hill flanking both sides of the road. We left those positions on the morning of the 9th and took up positions just north of Chochiwon. We could hear gun fire ahead of us. Our positions were in a valley that ran north and south, with a river running through the valley. Along the river was a railroad and a two-lane graded, gravel road. Companies I and K were located in the mountains overlooking the road on the west side and my Company L took up positions on the east side of the road. By midday we were firmly entrenched. We could hear the sounds of battle ahead. We saw some of our aircraft try to support us, but actually strafed our own positions. That evening we watched rocket, mortar and artillery shells explode ahead of us. It was truly a night of “rockets red glare”.

On the morning of July 10 the sounds of battle were still ahead of us. We could see troops of A and D Companies head south on the road. Orders came for us to counterattack to retake the positions just lost. This was the first counterattack executed by American forces in Korea. We formed into attack columns on the road and headed into battle. Not far into battle I saw five men with hands tied behind their back and shot in the head. I also saw the remains of a lieutenant from D Company laying on the road, flattened by a tank. Then I met Lt. Delbert Gates of D Company, walking south, bloodied and dazed. He related the events of the previous day to me.

The NK forces were overwhelming; the tanks could not be stopped.

We found positions of A and D Companies in chaos. Equipment was scattered. The NK soldiers withdrew and did not oppose our counterattack any further. It was late in the day and we withdrew to our original positions at Chochiwon under the cover of darkness. A and D Companies delayed the NK forces for a day. Our counterattack delayed them for another day.

Heavy fog was hanging over the valley on the 11th of July. We could hear bugles sounding “Taps” all around us. We were surrounded and attacked with direct charges up the hill to our fox holes. Our CO, Capt. Odean Cox, ordered me to call the Bn CP and report our situation. Col. Jensen ordered us to hold our positions at all costs. We fought off repeated assaults until about 10:00 a.m. I telephoned Lt. Jacques, Bn S3, and was informed to withdraw the best we could. Capt. Cox ordered me to take the men at the company command post while he went to get Lt. Mitchell and his platoon. We fixed our bayonets at the CP to take as many of the enemy as we could. It was a fateful position. I led the men to the bottom of the hill where I met Lt. Jacques. He told me Col. Jensen had just been killed. He had about ten men with him; I had about 14 with me. We could see the men from K Company being shot and killed as they tried to escape by crossing the river. It was like shooting ducks in a gallery. I presented to Lt. Jacques a plan of following the river south, using the bank as a cover, as a means to withdraw. He agreed. We told the men of the plan. I was to lead and Lt. Jacques was to bring up the rear. I never saw Lt. Jacques again. Downstream I came to an opening in the river bank about twenty yards wide and as I ran across it, I could hear and see the NK soldiers shot at me. I was the duck in the shooting gallery. We continued downstream for about 200 more yards and came to another, yet wider, opening in the river bank. Here I saw about twenty NK soldiers about five feet away, pointing their rifles directly at ten of us who had made it that far. We then became prisoners of war. We delayed them another day.

Our captors ordered us to sit on an embankment alongside the road. A machine gun was placed behind us (about fifty at that time). The enemy soldiers took our shoes, jackets, helmets and undershirts away from us, plus anything we had in our pockets,
including watches and rings. I remembered the five men with hands tied behind their backs the previous day and thought that was to be our fate also. I made my peace with God. Then I heard a commotion near the machine gun. I thought, “This is it.” However, the commotion was caused by the decision to take prisoners. Our lives had been spared for that day. We were consolidated into one group, had our hands tied behind our backs with telephone wire and then moved north for about seven miles at double time. There were about one hundred of us. Nearly half the group was barefooted and our feet were cut and bleeding. Circulation in the hands was cut off and they became swollen. At the end of the march we were crowded into a small schoolhouse and forced to squat on the floor.

All the officers of our group were interrogated that first night. The interrogators were of several nationalities; I believe the questions came at me in Russian to Korean to English. My Korean interrogator told me that we were all bandits and could be shot at any time they wished. He informed me that they already knew about the 21st and 34th Regiments. He wanted to know where the 19th Regiment was. Such information in a volatile situation as ours could only be valid for 24 hours, so I had to think fast ... name, rank and serial number was not going to work. I told them that the 19th Regiment was only 24 hours away, but I didn’t know if that was by forced march, by truck, by train or by sea. The North Korean officer stared at me. I didn’t know what to expect. He then waved to a guard who escorted me out of the room. That night we were given a ration of dry crackers, but no water. We were not allowed to use the latrine. We had our hands tied behind our backs with telephone wire, then six men were wired together. We remained wired together that way for about six more days.

The next morning the guards took about six men who were wounded and told them they were going to a hospital. We never saw those men again. We were marched for about a mile, when an air raid halted our movement. Again we were placed in a small hut, given a small rice ball, little water, and could not use the latrine. We were kept tied together for the rest of the day and night. The next day we marched over battle-debris covered roads to Suwon. We were placed in a bombed out building next to a Catholic church. Broken glass from the windows and cinders from the fire covered the floor. We were subjected to communist propaganda there for about three days. Some POWs were called out and taken away. We were shown leaflets supposedly signed by POWs captured earlier. One day we heard American aircraft overhead. The pilots must have spotted some POWs trying to get their attention from the windows. This resulted in a strafing attack on the building. A bullet from our own aircraft struck a POW lying next to me. He bled to death immediately. There was no medical aid from the guards.

The next march was to the outskirts of Seoul where we were given shaves and a pan bath. On this march I found a light Korean shirt and a pair of worn out shoes which I had until mid-November 1950. After the pan bath we were lined up three abreast and
given a propaganda banner to carry as we marched across the Han River into Seoul. Pictures of this were published by Life magazine's May 11, 1953, issue. I have a video copy of the film which was made by the Korean propagandists of this march through Seoul, which ended at a schoolhouse where we stayed for about three days.

During our stay in Seoul we were forced to attend political rallies. Pictures of this are also in the above cited Life magazine. Two very brave officers were forced to read speeches against “American Warmongering.” Military interrogations ceased. Political interrogations and communist indoctrination sessions started in Seoul. These long term, never ending sessions, which were later to be called “brainwashing,” started in Seoul. We departed Seoul by train and arrived in Pyongyang on the 25th of July. Little or no food or water was given and the train was hidden in tunnels by day. Engine smoke filled the tunnels and we had to remain aboard the crowded cars. Upon arrival in Pyongyang, we again were forced to march through the streets carrying propaganda banners. At Pyongyang our numbers grew to 726, mainly from the 24th Infantry Division.

The political interrogations became intense. Pressure was put on the officers to make radio broadcasts with threats of death to the officers and the enlisted men under them if they did not comply. In secret group discussion the officers decided to make the broadcasts; however, each officer would include some bit of information about us and our conditions. We thought that, in this way, our intelligence gathering sources could piece together our actual conditions. In my broadcast I included the number of POWs at Pyongyang.

Other officers added different bits of information. One officer at the end of his broadcast said, “And you can tell this to the Marines.” With that, our captors became aware of what we were doing and the broadcasts ceased. While at Pyongyang there was no medical attention provided, neither was there sanitation, clothing or bedding - nothing to combat the lice infestation. Food was rice, millet and some dried fish. Everyone began losing weight.

On September 5, we left Pyongyang by train and traveled to Manp’o. The travel was by night and we were hidden in the mountains by day. It was a miserable trip. We were accompanied by a group of civilian internees who were mostly missionaries, diplomats and other mixed families taken captive in South Korea, just after the war started. This group included the Catholic Bishop Byrne, Catholic Monsignor Quinlan, Salvation Army Commissioner Herbert Lord, and other distinguished priests, ministers, Methodist missionaries, Catholic nuns, and persons of the diplomatic corps including the British traitor George Blake.

We reached Manp’o on September 11 and stayed there for one month, during which time we were forced to work on excavations. Food was inadequate. The buildings were not heated. On occasion we were permitted to bathe in the Yalu River. Thirty men died.
here of starvation. Since the Allied Forces were nearing the Yalu River, we were moved by forced march to Kosan. The purpose of this and following moves was to prevent us from being liberated. Fifteen men died at Kosan. Mr. Hale, a civilian, also died here. Three men escaped, were caught and two were executed; Pvt. Rodrigues was returned to us. On October 21 we were moved over a mountain to a small village and then on October 25th back to Kosan. The village of Kosan was deserted. Chinese soldiers occupied our old camp. The next day we were moved into a cornfield near Manp'o. Seven men who were critically ill were taken to the Kosan Police Station where they were executed. On our march to the cornfield two men were shot. We carried as many of our sick as we could. The Chinese troops passed us on the road on a dead run toward battle, crossing the Yalu River at Manp'o by the tens of thousands to interdict an apparent allied victory.

We wore only that which we had at time of capture in July. We were in the cornfield for about five days. Inadequate food was provided. No fires were permitted. About ten men froze to death there. A North Korean Major, who we soon nicknamed "Tiger", took command on October 31. He ordered us to move through Manp'o that night, leaving fifteen men behind. One of the missionaries overheard the execution order for those men. In fact, had the missionaries not been with us, that fate for us was also considered by the North Koreans. On November 1, 1950, we were assembled again and the death march began.

Major Dunn had organized us into sections while at Pyongyang. Each section had about fifty men with an officer as leader and assistant leader. There were 13 sections and an officers section. Some officers assisted Major Dunn, but his main assistants were Lts. Peppe and Minietta. I was leader of Section 6, Lt. Thornton of Section 7, Lt. Adams of Section 8, and Lt. Stavarakes of either Section 5 or 9. As we marched away from Manp'o, the column became very long, with a lot of men lagging behind as fallouts. After about one mile of march the Tiger called a halt. Ranks were closed up and the leaders of Sections 5, 6, 7, 8, and 5 or 9 were ordered to report to the Tiger, who had positioned himself on a small knoll alongside the road. Section 7 was directly in front of the knoll. The civilian section was about 100 yards to the front. My section was about 50 feet from the hill. As we reported to the hill, we were to line up abreast of each other. Commissioner Lord, who was acting as the interpreter for the Tiger, announced that the Tiger was going to kill all of us for allowing our men to fallout. A commotion occurred among all of us. I was making my final prayer to Mary, knowing I would soon see God. There was more commotion, perhaps the Tiger was talking to his men who responded. I don't know. Then there was an argument between Commissioner Lord and the Tiger. Commissioner Lord must have talked the Tiger out of killing all of us, but rather the leader of Section 7 was to be shot. I believe Commissioner Lord told me that the Tiger had picked number seven at random. However, at this late date, I have rationalized that the members of Section 7 were in full view of the hill and the Tiger wanted his men to see the execution. The Tiger then said that any leader who permit-
ted future fallouts would be executed on the spot. Lt. Thornton was ordered to come forward. Two guards came to the hill with shovels in hand. The Tiger knocked a bundle of wood from Lt. Thornton’s shoulder, then pushed his hat (from behind) over Lt. Thornton’s eyes with his pistol. Lt. Thornton was not handcuffed or blindfolded. At this time Commissioner Lord was pushing me off the hill and telling me to go back to my section. As I headed back, I heard a pistol shot ring out. Lt. Thornton was then buried in a shallow grave. Lt. Thornton accepted his fate with dignity. He was a camp friend of mine who always maintained his self discipline, military bearing and personal appearance neat and clean throughout his POW ordeal, right up to the end. He met his fate as a hero.

Before the march continued, I instructed my assistant to take up the lead and I would bring up the rear of the section. I was the one to be executed if anyone fell out. Later in the day I was struggling with one of my men to keep him from falling out. I was pulling, tugging, coaxing, and sometimes carrying him. After about two hours of this a guard took the soldier away from me and told me to continue on. As I ran to catch up, I turned to look back and saw the guard lead the soldier into a wooded area, then I heard a shot. The soldier had just been executed. Another time, after finding a hideout during the morning accounting (we couldn’t start until all were accounted for), I half dragged and half carried the hideout all day. That night, before bedding down, a guard took that man away from me and led him off the road where he shot the soldier. In all I lost two men of my section to executions. I believe all the deaths (88) we suffered on this march happened in similar manner.

Another night, as we huddled into a small room, Commissioner Lord came in. Commissioner Lord was always trying to cheer us up. We had heard rumors of being liberated. When the Commissioner entered on that bitterly cold Korean night, someone asked him if he had any good news.

The Commissioner replied: “The Good News tonight is, ‘The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want; He makes me lie down in green pastures ... He restoreth my soul ... and yeah, though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death I shall fear no evil ... He will spread a table before me in the sight of my enemies ... and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.’ “ The rest of the march was much easier for me after that experience; I shall never forget it.

The civilian group was an inspiration to me. As I watched those old folks climb the mountain ahead of us, I said, “If they can do it, so can I.” I don’t know how I survived that march, but I did. Step by step. Another night we had a large fire, the Koreans had just given us a bowl of soup, but before we got it, word came for those who were Catholic to watch Bishop Byrne. We were told that as the Bishop stood up and turned around in a complete circle that he would give us special and general absolution for all our sins. We were to say our prayers accordingly, and I did.
We reached our destination on November 9, about ninety miles from Manp'o. It was a schoolhouse in Chunggangjin. It was bitterly cold and the Tiger made us take physical exercise and gave us a long tirade on the evil of capitalism before he permitted us to go inside the school building. He put about 100 of us in each room. No one was allowed to go to the latrine at night. No water was allowed for the first four days, then only in small amounts. On November 14, seven of the sickest men were placed in a separate room. That night the wood stove caught the room on fire. The seven men were carried to the courtyard where they froze to death.

We were then moved to a small village where we stayed until the middle of March 1951. A schoolhouse and some Korean houses were used to house us. There were from 100 in a room to 45 men to a small Korean house. Men were so crowded that not all could sleep on the floor at the same time. The wood ration only lasted a few hours to keep us warm. Blankets were not provided. The death rate ran as high as eight men per day. Those who died were taken outside and not buried until a burial detail was allowed. Men were placed in pits, small ditches, or shallow graves with snow and gravel scraped over them. Dysentery and lice were in plague proportions. Food was cracked corn or millet mixed into one ball at night. Soup was made from cabbage and an occasional diacon. Once in awhile bean paste was put in the soup. The only meat I can remember was on New Years Day 1951, when one pig was butchered and each man got about a teaspoon size piece of meat in his soup that day. Millet and corn were the usual grains. We were reduced to walking skeletons.

Anything that displeased the guards caused instant punishment. Section leaders were punished by kneeling in the snow while water was poured over their bare chests. One officer who was caught stealing food was severely beaten. He died a short time later. Enlisted men were also beaten and died. Some punishment was to stand outside in the sub-zero weather. One time I had to kneel in the snow all afternoon for something someone else did. Another time I was beaten by a guard, merely for his pleasure. In another case a corporal was called out and beaten because the embers of the wood stove could be seen through the window. These sort of things were daily happenings.

In mid-March of 1951 we were moved to Andong, a former Japanese camp, where we stayed until mid-October 1951. Work details went out everyday to gather firewood. The usual punishments continued. I was punished for stealing corn I witnessed a mass punishment where some POW's were beaten, as they knelt, with rifle butts and clubs. The death rate diminished to about two or three a week. Attempts of brainwashing continued. Two or three men seemed to have given in to this. The Koreans tried to get us to sign “peace documents,” claiming the Americans were the aggressors, etc. One officer was shot as he tried to return to camp after he went out looking for food. Another officer was “mysteriously killed” for an unexplained reason. Clothing became worn and ragged. There were no mail or medical facilities.
In mid-October 1951 we were moved by river boat down the Yalu River to Camp 3, where the Chinese took over. A few days later the officers were moved to Camp 2, the officers’ camp. Camp 2 consisted of a schoolhouse (for housing) and several buildings for kitchen and bath. I weighed about 90 pounds when I arrived at Camp 2. Fortunately the Chinese did feed us rice and soup rich with vegetables. I gained weight under the Chinese, as did others. Living conditions improved. Winter clothing was issued as were shoes and an overcoat, which I used as a blanket. Attempts of brainwashing became intense under the Chinese. Germ warfare was a big issue. Group indoctrination sessions were a daily routine. The difference between treatment at the hands of the Chinese vs the Koreans was that you never knew what the Chinese would do. The Koreans administered immediate punishment and forgot it. Under the Chinese “lenient policy,” they took notes about your behavior, until suddenly it was, “Take all and come with,” which meant solitary confinement and intense interrogations. The Chinese did feed us, and the death rate fell to nil.

The Chinese held me until Big Switch. I cannot describe anything the Chinese did that was a war crime; however, they did not follow the rules prescribed by the Geneva Convention. Quite often they would say, “You are not in Geneva.” When I was moved to the holding camp at Kaesong, there was a daily roll call for people to be repatriated the next day. My name wasn’t called until the last day, and then it was the last name on the list.

As I was being released, and just before I stepped through the gate at Freedom Village, I turned and looked back. I saw my main tormentor at Camp 2 staring at me. His name was Wong and I smiled with the thought that I was going home to freedom and he (the SOB) had to stay in his communist world.
The Forgotten War

By Eli Culbertson

The cold bleak hills of Korea
Are far away from the USA
Where we fought the fight for freedom
And the right for human liberty.
And in captivity as POW's, we saw
The worst of inhumane treatment
That man can give to man
It happened in the Bean Camp, Pak's Palace
The Mining Camp, Death Valley,
In the Cornfield and on the Death March.
It consisted of beatings, murders, and starvation
Brainwashing, mock trials and isolation
Kneeling barechested in the snow,
Standing with arms held high
While the Bull or the Whip beat you over the head
With corn cobs or sticks or rifle butts,
And all allowed since each guard was
His own judge, jury, and executioner.
And this was done in the name of
Stalin and Kim Il-Sung.

Whether the “Tiger” led this
Or by “Dirty Pictures Wong”

It is still remembered in my mind

As a long — dark — dreary passage of time
Which many of us could not endure

It was really not “Give-up—it is”

The flesh was weak and the mind unable to cope

But why did some of us die,

And others live?

I know not why.

Sometimes I’ve said, simply, that

“I would not let the bastards kill me.”

And yet there is more to it than that.

As Father Coyos reminded me at my daily prayer,

“Please God, increase the value of this food”.

Brings to mind what our captors used to say,

“Well, if you believe in God —

... Then let him feed you.”

So I suppose in many cases, such as mine

He did.

But how can we live today,
Without remembering the past?

We cannot.

And most important, we must remember our

Buddies who did not make it.

Thornton, Jester, Anderson, Cox, McKinley

And the Roll Call goes on.

Left behind. Somewhere on the cold Korean

Hillside, or beside the road.

Let's bring them home if not their remains, at least their Roll Call

Enshrined forever in appropriate memorial

As at the Punch Bowl

TO THAT FORGOTTEN WAR.
Task Force Smith

To the Japanese people we were the victorious, occupying army astride their industrious, talented, martial nation. We say ourselves committed and engaged in reorienting them to become a positive, but peaceful economic force in Asia. We even thought to raise the status of Japan's women by extending them voting and property rights. Indulgent and overconfident in the American nuclear umbrella, we seldom engaged in field exercises, involving ourselves chiefly with housekeeping and garrison duties. All units were under-strength.

Our first fight in Korea was with 540 men who had to move up, locate, and prepare a defensive position in less than five days; naturally, we were roundly defeated.

Many of the WWII weapons we took to Korea had been condemned by our own division ordnance inspectors as "unfit for combat." For example, a sergeant and I taught a class on flame-throwers the month before we embarked; but we had to cannibalize all eight weapons in the Regiment to get two that worked. All had "503 PIR" stenciled on them by the 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment that had dropped onto Corregidor with them five years earlier.

General Matthew Ridgway, the splendid soldier who brought us back from being a beaten Army near chased off the Korean Peninsula in a near-panic motorized retreat, said we had gone to Korea in a "...state of shameful un-readiness."

Our national age-old tradition was that we didn’t need an Army once the enemy at hand was beaten. Hiroshima and Nagasaki persuaded us that ground forces were no longer relevant, so we slashed our defense budget and the size of our forces. We filled our intelligence services with incompetents, also traditional, and deliberately chose to assign our least qualified people to infantry units that would be first in combat. As a final error, personnel in Japan were constantly moved, destroying unit cohesion - the most beautiful word in the lexicon of soldiers. Combat units survive on personnel who know and trust each other.
A capable fighting unit is NOT just a set of well-trained and competent individuals. A brief illustration: I was one of two lieutenants in the regiment trained as parachutists. This got me sent to the airfield at Kokura to load out Task Force Smith, to which I did not belong. Colonel Smith said, "Stay on the plane. I've got work for you." As my fourth platoon in eight months, this ensured me about the same close personal contacts as a hired gun.

First Contact — Osan

The official history is unkind about what happened to my platoon full of strangers in our first fight. It says we failed to get the word to withdraw and didn't know the rest of the outfit had left. True, and most of the platoon was destroyed because we stayed too long in a losing fight.

The Task Force Smith Executive Officer, Major Floyd Martin attributed the reason that my new TFS platoon never received the withdrawal order at Osan to the company commander's telling Brad Smith that I was dead and my platoon gone. This misstatement left my platoon serving as a rear guard for a short time, rather than the close-in combat outpost line role originally required by our location.

Before the NK infantry ground attack began, I'd gone back with my bazooka gunner to the ditch that led to a road splitting our company positions. This kept me alive for the horror of Chochiwon six days later. I had heard the Bazookas firing and could see the tanks going on through anyway. This made me believe our young gunners were missing their targets.

Another platoon leader, 2/Lt Jansen Cox (later murdered as a POW) was there already with his Bazooka team, and we worked from the relatively safe locale of the ditch. 2/Lt Ollie Connor, another platoon leader originally from I Company, was on top of the hill-knob just south of us. (The T-34's coaxial MGs were Jan's and my only danger, and we were safe as soon as the big tube passed us by.) The eight hits I got myself with no discernible effect on the passing T-34s corrected my impression of gunners firing wide, and it taught me a valuable lesson for Love Company's fight the following week.

In his On To Berlin. General Gavin details burying parachutists in Sicily with bits of Bazookas ground up in their bodies. The seats in Hell closest to the fire are for Army officers who knew the Bazooka didn't work and did not alert our soldiers to its inability to kill tanks, while keeping the larger, much more effective 3.5-inch rocket launcher back in the States.

We could not bring one wounded sergeant with us. We left him with a Korean farmer with a wheelbarrow. We gave him my rose gold Longines wristwatch (won in a poker game) with a note asking the first American unit he met to give the farmer $100 cash
for delivering the sergeant. They arrived in Pusan on the 8th, making it to the coast and down on a fishing boat! I don't know if the farmer got his money. It took me and the stragglers I had gathered up three days of prudent walking around North Korean units to reach our retreating forces.

Our group was too large. After the third time we were nearly caught, I detailed a very young first-rate soldier who had been walking scout for us to take about five men with him and seek another trail south. This was buried in my memory until 1985 at a TFS reunion in Ohio when a tall old man came up to ask if I remembered him. It was the same guy; they got back a day before us.

I met the 34th Infantry Regimental Commander very early in the morning three days later at Chonan. We had broken into a schoolhouse near Ansong and torn a large map from a geography book that had the road south to Chonan on it. Scraps of a South Korean recon unit had been with us the day before, helping with locations. Their CO shot one of his men who wanted to surrender and turn us in as proof they were willing to become good communists.

We had gone sharply east from Osan and were in hilly country until forced to go west to regain the main road. I had located all the NK tanks we had seen (only tanks; we would not have been able to evade infantry) on my map, and explained their location to the Colonel. Some were just outside Chonan! (The Colonel was killed fighting them later that morning.) I described the fight at Osan to him as well as I could, with a particular emphasis on the invulnerable tanks. I was adamant about the impossibility of our Bazooka killing tanks, even from the flank where I had been shooting. He asked whether I had pulled the rocket's safety clips before loading and firing, and speculated that the fuses were possibly too old or had been badly stored, hence damaged in Japan. The fragments I had in my face and hands helped me assure him that they were exploding. I showed him how we were perfectly safe firing from down in our ditch after the big gun with the co-axially mounted MG had dragged by.

I thought that some of our bazooka rounds had not exploded, and attributed this to the warhead not having time to arm because we were too close. Jan had said something like this at the time. The Colonel had someone with him who knew these were T-34s, describing a slanting, hexagonal turret. I had no idea earlier what kind of tank it was.

My discussion with him was also about the artillery Forward Observer who had been with me, and the fact that we had lost communication. The tanks tore up our wire while the rain was taking out our obsolete radios. After the first tanks went through us we had almost no support. Combined arms training could have identified the problem of mixing tank treads and telephone wire; alas, housekeeping in Japan left little time for such things.
Artillery would have made a difference when the Korean infantry dismounted and moved in those long lines around us. I mentioned that my platoon's .30 caliber machine gun, and the BARs were not effective once the North Koreans first got off their trucks some 1000 yards out. The .50 cal might have reached them (firing from a knob several hundred yards behind me) but the Koreans were well out of my range until dispersing just before their assault. This is almost the same story as later at Chochiwon, particularly the long columns walking around us. We fired, and they kept going on their course.

I had thought I was on loan to "B" Company and went on back to "Love" after Doc Duerk had finished patching me up and dosing me with medicinal alcohol, thoughtfully keeping me overnight on one of his stretchers. Captain Cox had given away my platoon, but said there would be one available shortly — very true.

A and D Companies, the still usable elements of the 21st Infantry Regiment's First Battalion, not committed at Osan, were in a blocking position at Chonui when they were attacked early on 10 July by a force they could not contain. Their forced withdrawal caused a number of their men to be left in uncoordinated fragments on position. The Regiment's Third Battalion was directed to counterattack to recover the blocking position about noon on 10 July. This well-done effort succeeded despite considerable resistance by North Koreans who had not yet established a coherent defense on the positions they had seized. We rescued about ten men from A Company. We found four men on the 4.2 heavy mortar position with their hands tied behind them with telephone wire, each shot in the head. One was a corporal in khaki, a reporter from the Stars and Stripes.

Chochiwon

Our night withdrawal back to our original positions north of Chochiwon was tightly controlled, despite the dislocations caused by the numbers of "killed in action" and the wounded we had. These had been evacuated during the counterattack. K Company's positions were partially occupied by the North Korean soldiers able to flank us when we were focused at Chonui. They fought much of the night; K Company was forced into locations slightly different from where they had prepared defenses on 9 July.

The Koreans attacked our just-evacuated positions at Chonui at first light, and moved on through them to our new locations in heavy fog. One of their elements moved as close to our front as they could and kept us under sporadic fire. As the fog cleared, and we could see something over three hundred yards to our front, trotting formations were visible scurrying eastward parallel to our positions. This was almost the same situation as at Osan on the 5th. My light machine gun and that of the third platoon were not able to stop their flanking movement here either. The company mortars were providing shooting support for the first platoon. Our artillery, unknown to us, had already been taken out by infiltrators. Our problematic ally, the USAF took out its own Forward Air
Controller early. It was not the last time the magic pill of air power would fail us.

Love Company's idiotic "hold at all costs" order kept us in place. We got relief from this at 1100 hours, and were authorized to pull back at 1130. Captain Cox gave me the artillery FO and instructions to stay on my position until then. We were defending against what the official history later described as: "This attack on the 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry was one of the most perfectly coordinated assaults ever launched by North Koreans against American troops." Our defense was later described as "...the most impressive performance yet of American troops in Korea"; small comfort to the company's men who paid its costs.

The Koreans had already flanked our positions and had machine guns on the ridge behind us before launching their "pinning" attack. Our ammunition was already running low due to the previous day's fight, and the well installed North Korean roadblocks to the company's rear kept us from being resupplied. Most survivors of this fight went due south in small groups into the NK force behind us that had gotten there by going around our flanks. Twenty-seven of these men found they had no option but surrender. A dozen of these did not survive the stay in "Tiger's Camp." ('Johnson's list,' smuggled from the POW camp in a toothpaste tube by one of the 15, tells when, how, and where these and other POWs died. See Chapter 15 of this book. A Readers Digest Article)

The lucky handful with me who covered the final withdrawal went west immediately across the road from where the BN CP had been, crossed the railroad track and the river, surviving to fight again. The lessons: first be lucky; then keep a clip of ammunition for the pullout you may have to make; and never willingly take the desperate possibility of living as a POW. The official history intoned: "One officer of L Company [me] who came out with some men said that after he and others had removed an enemy machine gun blocking their escape route, some uninjured men by the side of the road simply refused to try to go on. One noncom said, 'Lieutenant, you will have to go on, I'm too beat up. They'll just have to take me.'" I never learned if he survived prison camp since he was not from Love Company, but the odds were grim.

Two months later I identified the bodies of a number of those still there who had been KIA or wounded early in the fight. All the wounded had been killed, and also many who had surrendered. Graves Registration led me by the hand, sobbing much too hard to see, through our abandoned positions and the battalion aid station to name the ones I could.

Almost all of the men captured from Love Company were taken after we had stayed much too long above Chochiwon because of the order that kept us in place. Captain Cox, some of our veteran NCOs, and the replacements we had received made a great difference, and the company fought surprisingly well. We delayed the North Koreans for two days, but at great cost.
The most effective leader of fighters I've ever known was the sergeant who had deserted the 24th Infantry Division's headquarters to come forward to our rifle company. My watching everything he did, understanding why, and imitating him is likely why I'm alive today. Even though he was younger than I, his previous experience with Merrill's Marauders was far more relevant than my non-fighting role in the 7th Marines. You may never encounter such an example of military virtue when you need him most, but borrow the right things from each of the best you do come across.

"I climbed on the top of the first Soviet-made T-34 tank. The Koreans would open their plug, stick out a burp gun and fire it to clear people off the tank's back. Being safe on top, I hit the plug with my rifle butt and broke the chain. The sergeant with me, Hugh Brown, best fighting man I've ever known, put 15 rounds from his M-2 through the open port when the burp gunner paused to reload. We got the next tank by pouring a fivegallon can of gas on its hot engine compartment. Then we went back and burned the other tank." I asked him later why he was burning it, as the crew was already dead. He answered: "I want them others to know where this one is, what happened to it, and for them to be discouraged about the idea of coming where we are."

The only flaw in his theory was the noxious brown trail of smoke that helped US Air Force pilots see it. They strafed it in the middle of our position for the next two hours! We were dug in so well by then that none of us were hit. DOUBLE LESSON: dig yourself in if any aircraft overfly the area, as they do not discriminate well. Do not count on your own planes to solve your problem with dug-in enemy infantry. This only happens in Hollywood scripts. Note also, that much of the advantage we think our airplanes should provide disappears as the enemy quickly learns to dig in too.

Simply stated: decorations for the infantry's fighters at platoon level are awarded in an erratic manner, and too few of those earned are ever granted. Most are not because men in rifle squads see a world few others do, and many at these levels are often not able to describe what they have seen even if they are aware of its significance. Also, there are few persons with whom they can talk.

S/Sgt. Hugh Brown had deserted forward from the Division's headquarters on July 1st to join "Love" company. We found this out when proposing a battlefield commission for him in August while we were still on the Naktong. He left a hospital without permission after his second wound in late September, because being promoted required 30 days on the line; he did not want to return to Japan as the junior officer in the company (we innocents thought the war was over after Seoul was retaken).

1 See Newsweek Magazine article for March 8, 1999 p57 reprinted on following page.
A Survivor’s Guilt

CHOCHIWON JULY 11, 1950: Col. Carl Bernard won a Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary heroism during the Korean War for his actions at Chochiwon. His rifle company was slaughtered after being given a tragic “hold at all costs” order.

WE WERE DEFENDING against what the official history later called “one of the most perfectly coordinated assaults ever launched by North Koreans against American troops.” Our defense was later described as “the most impressive performance yet of American troops in Korea.” Small comfort to the company’s men, given its costs. Hell, no, we didn’t hold. I lost nearly 101 men killed or captured out of a rifle company of 130 people. Thirty-three men died in captivity.

When L Company got down to fighting tanks, I knew our 2.36 bazooka didn’t work. The seat in hell closest to the fire is reserved for the Army officers who knew this and didn’t tell. I climbed on the top of the first Soviet-made T-34 tank. The Koreans would open their plug, stick out a burp gun and fire it to clear people off the tank’s back. Being safe on top, I hit the plug with my rifle butt and broke the chain. The sergeant with me, Hugh Brown, best fighting man I’ve ever known, put 15 rounds from his M-2 through the open port when the burp gunner paused to reload. We got the next tank by pouring a five-gallon can of gas on its hot engine compartment. Then we went back and burned the other tank.

We were low on ammunition and couldn’t get resupplied. Unknown to us, Koreans had already flanked our position and had machine guns on the ridge behind us. My own platoon was destroyed because we stayed too long in a losing fight. I took the DSC citation for the Chochiwon fight back to “Love” Company’s location. My handwritten note said it was for the men who were killed or captured there. My perceptive French wife is convinced that I would never have spent my adult life as a soldier if there had been psychiatrists available to relieve my guilt at staying alive while so many of the men with me were killed.

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The account on which this paper is based was prepared in 1955 at the request of an official in Washington who was writing back-up papers for a Presidential Unit Citation for “L” Company’s action. I have no recollection of who was working on this matter, but Major General Stephens, our first regimental commander, was then chief of military history, and it may have come from his office. This fight was a microcosm of our war. An abridged version of the original paper written in 1955 is attached also.

BACKGROUND

The 19th Infantry was the spearhead of the 24th Infantry Division’s move to contact as part of the Operation ROUND-Up offensive in early February. They received sharp attacks from an aggressive Chinese Infantry force during a meeting engagement, and withdrew behind a screen hastily established on the first defendable terrain behind them by the first and third battalions of the 21st Infantry Regiment. The Chinese force, later estimated as division size, pursued the withdrawing American forces closely, and closed on the 21st Infantry’s hastily prepared defensive positions just after dark on February 5, 1951.

The weather was cold and there was some snow on the north face of the ridgeline. We were well equipped with winter gear, i.e., shoe-pacs, down sleeping bags, and parkas. We had men present for duty.

The men of the 19th Infantry who pulled back through our lines were fatigued, but in relatively good shape. They withdrew as complete units, with some individual stragglers and small groups trailing the main bodies. Some individuals were unable to withdraw and stayed hidden forward of our battle position in the area held by the Chinese throughout the engagement.
Soon after dark, we received word of probing attacks on the First Battalion area. The Third Battalion itself was probed by forward scout elements moving up the ridgeline in the center of the “L” Company sector on Hill 296. These probes very quickly built up in intensity and became an attack, with many mortar and artillery rounds falling in and around the company position. The initial enemy assault against the center platoon of Company “L” was characterized by heavy exchanges of grenades. While we repulsed the first wave with heavy losses, an assault echelon of “burp gunners” broke the center of the company about 0130, followed by the main assault. The center platoon was forced completely out of position. Groups of Chinese bringing up heavy machine guns established themselves in the positions the center platoon had occupied, and light Infantry elements rolled up the flanks of the rest of the company. The left platoon was forced back several hundred yards towards the “I” Company position, where it established a blocking line. The right platoon, reinforced by remnants of the center platoon that had been stopped at the company command post area and reorganized by headquarters personnel, made a short counterattack to close the gap left in the lines.

This force was successful in reaching the edge of the left platoon area in the saddle separating the platoons, but withdrew back down the ridge when taken under fire by a nest of four or five Bren guns established in the center of what had been the left platoon’s position. The right platoon was then hit by a Chinese ground attack coming from the First Battalion sector and forced from its hill top. It was reorganized by the platoon leader and company commander in a position approximately 300 yards below the hill crest. The platoon leader was wounded but able to maintain control of his platoon in this position.

The Regimental Commander and his artillery commander arrived at this time and remained in the battle position for several hours. The left platoon attempted to return to its original positions at first light, but close-in machine gun fire dispersed it with light casualties. At the same time, the enemy beat off a coordinated attack by the right platoon and a platoon that had been attached to it from “K” Company. Several men of the squads leading the assault were killed before they were able to move more than 10 yards.

Another platoon of “K” Company was attached to the left platoon, which had taken up blocking positions below and to the right of “I” Company’s original positions. We resupplied the ammunition by 1100 hours. Shortly after 1100 hours, “L” Company made a coordinated attack to restore the original line, with the main attack made by the left platoon and its attached platoon from “K” Company.

The artillery battalion commander personally closed an artillery battery sheaf, placing it directly ahead of the Infantry that was advancing by crawling and short sprints. This
neutralized the Chinese infantry who had moved forward to act as outposts for the main positions they had seized. The commander had another battery firing on the top of the hill so the enemy infantry there were pinned down and not able to fire upon our assault echelons. The men from the “K” and “L” grouping of platoons crawled forward until nearly into their own fire and then requested an “add five-zero” to the concentration. They repeated this procedure until they were able to get into a final assault position with only a few casualties. We used an exchange of grenades to take the machine gun nest that had fired on the right platoon the previous night and captured seven serviceable Bren guns. (The last Chinese soldier in this position was an extremely brave man who fought to his death despite his hopeless situation.)

Each of the four artillery tubes, which were keeping the crest of the hill under continuous fire, then fired a white phosphorus shell as the last round of their “fire for effect” to signal the last of the friendly fire. We launched the final infantry assault with the burst of the fourth “willy peter”, and were able to secure the position. The left platoon came under severe fire at the crest, but organized and held its original positions. It then turned its fires to support the right platoon and was successful in flanking the Chinese defending on the right hill mass. We adjusted artillery fires on the withdrawing enemy with great casualty effect.

The right platoon was reorganized on its original positions and the platoon leader evacuated in very poor condition from loss of blood from the second wound he received earlier in the day. We completed the action by 1500 hours, having restored the original battle line.

Our depleted company was hit again by heavy probing attacks at 2230 the same night, but was able to hold the position by calling in close-in heavy defensive fires. At least one case of fragmentation grenades was on each position and each machine gun had more than 20 cans of ammunition. The Chinese force was not as vigorous in pursuing its probing attacks as on the previous day, and did not close into the battle position. It is probable that they were fixing our forward elements in place while they were withdrawing their main forces further north. The next day, the company front was reduced by inclusion of 5th Regimental Combat Team elements on the hill that had been occupied by our right platoon.

“L” Company casualties in the two days were 85 of whom 16 were killed in action. Those killed included three men (Rounds, Musick, and Pickens) who had been with the company since the unit left Japan in July, 1950. Enemy dead in the company area counted the next day were 169; we estimated their wounded at many more. An unusual number of the enemy dead were officers, indicating that a command post of some type had been established on Hill 296 during the night.
**Other Notes and Recollections:**

We called it “Sleeping Bag Hill” because so many of the down bags were hit by artillery fragments that the hill was partially covered by feathers.

The air control jeep about four miles behind us was attacked by our fighter planes. Those planes would have helped us if the Forward Air Controller had not been lost. We did have other air support. Joe Griffith had a hole put in his pile cap by one of these planes.

Col Stephens insisted on using his zippo lighter outside. It lit up like a flame thrower or at least like a flashlight.

We had just received the payroll for the month of January. The payroll and a box of money were left where we had dumped the backpacks until the fight was over.

Hugh Brown was unhappy with the aggressiveness of the platoon from “K” Company he acquired in the middle of the night.

We found one man’s body after we got the position back, we found one body with only a superficial wound in the forearm. We concluded he had been so terrorized by the fight he died of fright, shock and exposure. Who was this? Ed. Ans: George Barrell

The Chinese assault came in three waves: (1) a group of men armed just with hand grenades crawled to our forward positions and threw all they had in a coordinated effort; (2) just after the last grenade exploded a line of men with “burp- guns” ran through our positions firing as they advanced; they went through to the reverse slope, hence were protected from the fire of the next echelon; (3) the main assault followed in a classic fire and movement forcing our platoons off the hill.

Colonel McConnell arranged that the battalion S-1 come up to the company position several days after the fight to offer me a job flying as an air observer. Col Mac came for a visit and concluded I was losing my grip because I set down the C-ration can I was eating from as a mark of respect for his rank and presence. However I had set the can down on the body of a frozen Chinese soldier that had not been dragged off.

We found one of the company M-8 telephones rigged by the Chinese to use as a detonator for a case of explosives buried under the edge of the house-sized rock between the rear command post and the center platoon. We had paused there briefly during our move back up to retake the position. Some one saw telephone wires going in an unusual direction and traced them finding the set-up.
The First Seven Months

Naktong Notes

by Harry J. Maihafer

Ed. Note: Harry Maihafer is the author of “From the Hudson to the Yalu,” the story of several members of the West Point Class of ’49 in the Korean War, and many other books. This segment is a part of contemporary notes he kept at the time and generously allowed L Company to include in its book.

... Captain Dick Daschner, the S-3 Operations Officer, was quiet, confident, friendly. First Lieutenant John Watkins, West Point ’48, was the S-4 Supply Officer. John was a tall, clean-cut officer, an “army brat” whose father had also been graduated from the Military Academy. With my insecurity in this new environment, I jumped at the chance to have a West Pointer to lean on a little. It wasn’t that I wanted to talk “old school tie,” or as the saying went, “to knock rings” with him, it was just that I had many, many questions, and it was far easier to talk with someone with a common background.

John said he had been with the unit in Japan and had been leading a rifle platoon when they first came to Korea. He told me about the basic code system, how the three battalions of a regiment were “Red, White, and Blue.” Thus the 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry, was “Diamond Blue.” As the S-4, he was “Diamond Blue 4.” As the S-2, I would be “Diamond Blue 2.” Seconds in command, or executive officers, were called “5,” commanders were “6.” (So that, I realized, was why they called Colonel Stephens “Big Six”.) Our 3rd Battalion had four companies: rifle companies I, K, and L (Item, King, Love) and the weapons company, M or Mike.

John told me of the first days of the war, the hastily established positions, the infiltrating enemy who appeared to your rear, the demoralizing retreats, the disastrous day of July 11th, at Chochiwon, when the 21st had been overrun and it had very nearly been every man for himself. 23 men had come out with the surviving officer of L company, Lt Bernard. Casualties had been high, and only a fraction of the original battalion had escaped. Among those killed that day were Lt. Colonel Carl Jensen, the Battalion Commander, and Lieutenant Leon Jacques, the S-2. It was a strange feeling to realize Jacques was the man I was replacing. Maybe a battalion headquarters wasn’t the safe harbor I had presumed it to be.

Things were fairly relaxed the rest of the day. Now that we had air support, the enemy seemed to have established a pattern of night attacks, so it was only after dark that we would all go on full alert.

As darkness fell, we crowded together into the small operations tent. Contact with the companies on line was by both phone and radio. The phone line to one of the companies had just been re-established, and the wire crew restoring the line said the old line
had been cut. John said he wasn’t surprised; phone lines between battalion and the companies were cut rather frequently. It gave one an eerie feeling.

Companies were required to report in every hour, or whenever something significant took place. Mac gave me the job of maintaining the battalion log. It was a routine task at best, but I was thankful finally to be making some sort of contribution. As S-2, I wrote down a summary of all messages, including the hourly negative reports. When all units had reported in, I relayed a negative report to “Diamond 2” at Regiment on behalf of “Diamond Blue.”

The night wore on, and according to instructions, two of our units sent out patrols. Then a chilling message came in. One of the patrols, from the regiment’s I & R platoon, had wandered into a minefield laid by the division’s engineer battalion. L company’s only officer, Lieutenant Bernard, said they would be going out to investigate.

An hour later Bernard called in again. He gave some coordinates for a rendezvous; requested a litter jeep from Battalion to meet him there. He had one wounded and one dead man to be evacuated. After some delay the rendezvous was made and Bernard headed back to Battalion to report.

While Bernard was en route back, John Watkins told me about him. In the early days of the war, when enemy T-34 tanks seemed unstoppable, Carl Bernard had knocked out one of them single-handedly with a puny 2.36" rocket launcher.

For his actions on that occasion, Bernard had been recommended for a Distinguished Service Cross. Time and again Bernard had shown incredible courage in action. When the fighting was over however, he had broken down emotionally and it had been necessary to evacuate him for psychological reasons. He was just now returning from the hospital, and was quite probably still on the edge.

It was an incredible tale, and I looked at him with almost a feeling of awe. And as I looked, he began to cry. At first it was a quiet thing, but it turned into violent sobs. I led him out of the operations tent, to a sheltered spot where he could rest.

“Damn it all, Harry,” he cried, “why do I have to get this way? Why can’t I keep hold of myself and be like the rest of you guys?”

Ironic. Here was the bravest man I had ever met, talking to me, an untested newcomer, as though I were one of the strong ones. In the morning Carl Bernard made ready to return to his company. I asked to go along. Maybe I felt guilty about remaining in comparative safety at the CP without having even seen the Naktong River we were defending. Then too, I had decided that I could help my S-2 message interpreting by taking a map board, going to various spots along the line, and marking them to show
what could be seen from where. Then, when reports came in of enemy activity, we could tell which front line locations could either observe the enemy or take him under fire. I also thought Carl would be a good man to know better.

Carl said he would be “proud” to have me come along. It would be good for the men, he said, adding, with just a trace of bitterness, that it would be the “first ever” visit to that location by a member of the Battalion staff.

The first leg of our journey was by jeep. Along the way we came to an outpost, actually two men and a machine gun at a bend in the road. Using a poncho, they had erected a lean-to shelter to shield themselves from the August sun. Carl jumped from the jeep and proceeded to bawl them out soundly.

“Stupid! That poncho is like a big flag giving away your position. It also cuts down your visibility, and makes you too comfortable and careless. What do you want—to get a little shade or to stay alive?” Sheepishly, they started taking down the poncho.

We drove on, and I said it seemed a long way from the Battalion CP to the Company. Carl agreed readily, saying he felt the Battalion staff was playing it safe and staying much too far to the rear. Finally we came to a cluster of huts at the base of a mountain, which Carl said was “Love Company Rear.” Six or eight Americans were there, loading ration boxes onto the backs of a Korean “carrying party”. The Koreans, called “chiggi-bearers” by the Americans, wore A-frames which distributed the weight high up on their shoulders and allowed these short, wiry men to carry incredible loads.

Carl had a warning for the soldiers at Love Company Rear: “Someone back here has been taking the fruit cans from some of the C-ration boxes. With no water on that mountain, the fruit is the only part of the ration anyone really cares about. Stealing that fruit is pretty low, and if it happens again I swear I’ll have every one of you up top in a foxhole while someone from up there takes your place!”

This was getting real. I was learning a whole new set of values. In the hot sun, on a mountain with no water supply, a can of fruit, and the moisture it contained, was one of the things that really mattered.

As we climbed, I learned more about Carl. He had taught school for a while, had then decided to enter the Army. He was currently on a “competitive tour”, at the end of which a board would decide if he could qualify for a Regular Army commission. Right now, though, he said he’d settle for a new pair of glasses. His present ones had been cracked and one lens was patched with a sliver of adhesive tape.

The trail up the mountain was long and steep. By the time we reached the top, I was nearly exhausted and had to stop and rest every few yards. I marveled at the frail-looking Bernard, who wasn’t even breathing hard.
As we were climbing, Carl pointed out the “bug-out” route, the predetermined path for an emergency retreat. “Bug-out”, a new term coined in Korea, seemed very much on everyone’s mind. At last we reached the crest. Looking down, I could finally see the famous Naktong River. Several hundred feet below us, and about a hundred yards to our front, it flowed serenely, looking more like a picturesque tourist attraction than a military barrier. Carl introduced me around as “the new Battalion Two, come to visit.” The soldiers were a lean, scruffy looking bunch, ones who seemed to show the results of having fought, and lost, too many times the past month.

I met Hugh Brown, the Company First Sergeant, a young, farmerish-looking fellow with straw-colored hair. He seemed competent and sure of himself, and I suspected he was a good man to have around. Proudly, Sergeant Brown showed me a dozen fresh eggs he had just acquired. He was sheltering them in a straw basket, and treating them with a good measure of tender loving care.

It was late afternoon by the time I had looked around and done some plotting on my map board, late enough that I decided to stay the night with Love Company. I called back to let Battalion know.

On the far side of the Naktong lay a wide sandy beach edged by a two-lane dirt road. Beyond the road a mountain similar to ours rose abruptly; I wondered if there were Communist soldiers on it looking across at us.

“L” Company began calling for artillery fire, registering specific concentrations which they might be calling for during the night. Two nights before, they told me, enemy trucks had appeared on the road across the river. The convoy must have been lost, since the trucks had come driving along in full view with all headlights shining! Artillery and mortar fire had been brought down on the convoy, destroying enough trucks to block the road, and after that the men said it had been like picking off ducks in a shooting gallery. Through my binoculars, I could see some of the “remains”, hulls which were still smoldering.

Soon after dark it began to rain. I put on my poncho and tried to use it to shield my map board as well as myself. An ominous message came from Battalion--at midnight the company would withdraw from the mountain.

Midnight came, and in the darkness, carrying my weapon and my map board, I joined one of the squads which was starting single file down the narrow path from the mountain. The rain had slickened the trail and suddenly I pitched head first, with helmet, weapon, and map board flying. I managed to retrieve them, and myself, and to keep sliding along. Others were falling too, cursing softly since this was supposed to be a silent withdrawal. I fell again; my hands and feet were coated with mud. Clumsy! Somehow I was glad the darkness made me anonymous.
At the base of the mountain, someone was shining a dim light, probably a flashlight with a filter on it. The rain had changed to light mist as “L” Company huddled in the dark, near a cluster of buildings I recognized as the “Company Rear” where Carl had accused men of stealing cans of fruit from the rations.

I wasn’t sure what was happening; my only information came from Hugh Brown, the First Sergeant, who said they had been told to stay where they were for the night. I noted admiringly that he had managed to make it down from the top without cracking a single egg. I decided I might as well stay with their group; there seemed no reason for returning to Battalion before morning.

A messenger with marching orders arrived just after daybreak. We started out, and after walking more than an hour, ...

Ed. Note: This is the end of the segment of Harry Maihafer’s private diary disclosed to us.
In the summer of 1950, young men in their late teens and early twenties were surprised, shaken, and overwhelmed. Within a few days after learning that enemy soldiers had invaded South Korea, they found themselves to be among the first in a strange land fighting for their lives against hordes of experienced enemy troops who were well-equipped and familiar with the terrain. This quick transition from relatively simple occupational duty in nearby Japan was not easy. The experience of combat against outnumbered forces with their unorthodox method of warfare, would never lose its grip on the minds and hearts of the remnant who survived in Company “L” of the 21st Regiment of the 24th Infantry Division.

Many good men from the company did not live through this tragic experience. The company’s original strength was cut to less than three dozen men. Combat had proven that it was no respector of persons or rank. Survivors had seen men from privates to their own general, either killed or captured. One religious-minded officer said, “I could never be selfish enough to pray that God would spare me. I just saw too many good men, far better than I, who had fallen at my side. who was I to ask God for some special privilege”

Men who were lucky enough to escape death and fight their way back to the small defensive Pusan Perimeter would never be the same again. Little did they realize that they were the nucleus of an indescribable “spirit of one-ness” of “Love” Company — a “one-ness” which would continue many decades after the company had done its thing in Korea.

How do you explain this close-knittedness which started back there in that small combat company? How do you account for the fact that such a spirit continues to cause men from across America to come together each year for a few days of remembrance and fellowship? Perhaps it will never be explained. We shall not try to dissect and analyze this very unique spirit of concern and love among the men of Company “L”. One has wisely suggested that an attempt at such dissection and analysis would be like pulling up a beautiful flower to examine its roots in an effort to understand the flower’s beauty and fragrance. We shall simply endeavor to stand off at a safe distance and try
to look with gratitude at some of the things which may have contributed toward making the spirit of “L” Company what it was, and what it continues to be after these many years.

**Dependency For Survival**

During the first days of combat, the young soldiers were teachable and learned quickly that survival involved dependency upon one another. Such dependency could not be based on any other source. Little or no security was assured from the civilian population. Many of these didn’t even know whose side they were on. Often they had three flags (North Korean, South Korean, and United Nations), and they would wave these for whoever was in possession of their village at the time.

North and South Koreans looked alike and our men could not distinguish between them. An innocent-looking individual in a rice paddy, wearing baggy-assed pants who appeared to be a peasant farmer, was discovered to be an enemy forward observer who directed artillery or heavy mortar fire on our own troops. Such incidents caused men of “L” Company to distrust nearly everyone and to come to depend entirely on each other with an explicit trust. Such dependency, which enabled men to survive, was the beginning of a “soldier-looking-after-soldier” relationship. It was a vital part in the development of the “spirit of togetherness” which continued to permeate the company in the months and the many years ahead.

But someone may say, “Sure! I understand how those initial survivors learned well their lessons of distrust of some, and sole dependence on others. I can see how such dependency caused them to develop close relationships with one another. But, what about those replacements who would trickle in slowly at first, but soon would outnumber the original survivors? Would these inexperienced replacements not destroy the “one-ness” which had developed among the originals?” Probably they would have, had it not been that these survivors who had gone through hell, had something mighty important to share — and the replacements, who knew little of the combat situation, were willing to listen carefully. For the first group, it was therapeutic — for the second it was an advanced course in combat training and the importance of “togetherness” for mere personal survival.

A lieutenant, the first officer replacement in the company after it drew back to the Pusan Perimeter, told this story. “I climbed that hot barren hill overlooking the Naktong River late one afternoon and joined the company. The only officer left in the unit, almost wept for joy when he saw me. He welcomed me with open arms. He told me how much the company needed me and how glad he was that I had come to share some of the tremendous responsibility. He began explaining the defensive area for which the company was responsible — an area which would have been far too great for a full-strength battalion — and yet a few more than a couple of dozen men were respon-
sible for it. Before his briefing was finished, seven rounds of heavy enemy mortar landed near us and literally shook the hill on which we were sitting. This was the breaking point for the officer who had carried the super-human load during the previous weeks of torment, and who was determined to hold up until help came. He had to be taken off the hill that night and it took a couple of days of rest before he could return and get it all together again.”

The new officer joining the company went on with his story. “During those first important weeks, we held our defensive position along the Naktong. During that period I developed a mindset that stayed with me through all of the difficult days in Korea — in fact, it has never left me. Very little that I experienced during those first weeks, matched anything I had ever learned from books. That ‘American soldier, pictured as the best fighting man in the world’, was an exhausted, horror-faced individual with sunken dull eyes, appearing to be a hundred years of age, with defeat and fear written all over his countenance.

That ‘best equipped combat man’ was poorly equipped and had on either a helmet-liner or fatigue cap and well-worn fatigues. Some still had aching feet. The ‘superior fire power’ of the company consisted of a couple of small mortars, some dependable M-1 rifles, some carbines which were not so dependable, and one air-cooled machine gun with a worn-out bore resulting from overuse. (It was placed on a point near the water level of the river for the purpose of intercepting enemy soldiers on home-made rafts which tried to sneak over during the nights.) We had very little of anything that would fit in any ‘table of organization and equipment.’ Fortunately, we did have a good artillery outfit to back us up, even though it was short of ammunition and flares.”

“As I talked with the men who were left in the company, I saw far more under the surface than the dismal picture which I have painted. My heart went out in sympathy and admiration to these men who had sacrificed so much and had lost the first battles but had given it their best. And to do this is always victory! Whether verbal or otherwise, I kept hearing these men saying, ‘We’ve suffered a lot — we’ve paid a big price — but very little compared to those who didn’t make it back with us.’ One could sense that these men had a determination to hang in there and continue to give it their best, because the sacrifice of the lives of their buddies was constantly on their minds. They could not afford to do otherwise.”

“After observing, and listening, and weighing all of the evidence that came to me through contact with these men, I came to the conclusion that they had set some pretty damn high standards and examples, and I for one as a new replacement, could not afford to disappoint them with less than they expected. And soon I found myself being intergraded into this small company and becoming a part of the ‘fellowship of the inter-dependent.’”

With slight variations, the story of the replacement officer was duplicated many, many times. One by one, new men coming into the company, were indoctrinated with this
spirit that “if we stick together we can make it — if we don’t, we can’t.” And “stick together” they have! I am convinced that this attitude has played a tremendous part in the “togetherness” which started early in the outfit and has not vanished from the lives of the men of Company “L” even to this day.

Leadership

In any organization, leadership makes the difference. Good leaders build spirit, plan well, involve others, and provide help. This was true of Company “L”. (And the fact does not, in any way, lessen the importance of every man in the outfit.)

An artillery forward observer officer, who was never considered anything other than an actual part of the company, had this to say about the company’s leadership: “Love Company was indeed fortunate to have, in its first year in Korea, such a group of leaders who truly thought first of their men and used their logic, training, and ingenuity to accomplish their mission. I cannot recall any of the leaders who lacked the basic leadership qualities or that basic survival ingredient. From these components came the feeling of confidence that spread throughout the company. Men believed in themselves and in the leadership that directed them. Loyalty developed that created a unity among the squads. Platoons were tight units that could function as separate units in any type situation. There was total confidence in each other.

The artillery officer concluded by saying, “I have trouble trying to explain why Company “L” was different. But we were! I’ll swear to my dying day, WE WERE DIFFERENT!”

It would be unfair to both the leaders and the principle of truth, to say that the leaders did not have their weaknesses. Everyone did. Weaknesses were recognized and the common attitude was, “That guy is weak in that particular area and needs our help. Let’s help him.” Some good common-sensed mature noncoms were a tremendous help to young officers. Officers and men recognized each other as important individuals and their respect was mutual. Platoon leaders were an integral part of their units and they spent most of their time alongside their men, both in combat and when pulled off the line for rest.

Concentrated within this small company were some exceptional officers and non-commissioned officers. With few exceptions, these leaders were capable, well-trained, and had the welfare of their men at heart. The over-all leadership record speaks for itself. In this small company alone, four men were given battlefield commissions in a one-year period. At least five of the platoon leaders went on and later became colonels and another became a four-star general. That’s a pretty good record from one small infantry combat outfit called “L” Company! Like coaches of great teams, these young but capable officers played an important part in molding the company into one tight and
lasting unit - members of which would be proud that they fought on the team, and who would not forget each others in the years ahead.

**Humor**

Humor was an important element in the welding together of the men of Company “L”. God knows, the company had its share of reasons for crying and it had the choice of doing this or of laughing when it could. It chose to do the latter. Many would never have made it if they had not had the ability to laugh and see the funny side of things. Humor was contagious and therapeutic. It reduced tension and was a unifying factor. It served its purpose well in “L” Company.

Evidences of such humor could be observed and heard constantly throughout the company. An officer welcomed two excellent young officers from West Point into the company and then said, “Hot dog, the war is over! They are now putting West Pointers in the rifle companies” Everyone had a good laugh — including the two new men.

A young soldier eating the large round crackers from his C-rations exclaimed, “My wife sure would give me hell if she could see me eating these crackers in bed” — and one could hear the chuckles from nearby foxholes.

Mess hall curtains had been ordered from a mail-order house before the company knew it would be leaving for Japan. A few month’s later the curtains arrived and were forwarded to the company’s dug-in location in Korea. Having no other use for the curtains, some of the men had fun hanging them on the walls of their foxholes and gloated in such extravagant living.

The consequences could have been terrible one evening on a day when the company had been pulled off the line for hot chow and rest. A bare-headed GI with a big smile on his face came driving up to the chow line in a T-34 Russian-built tank that had been captured that day. The driver was thrilled that he had been able to get the tank in running condition. Everyone, with a few exceptions, thought the incident was hilarious and digestion that night went better because of it.

Occasionally, one’s spirit was lifted by seeing a platoon leader from Georgia, wearing his Luxembourg hat and waving his Confederate flag.

Thousands of other examples could be given of humor which enabled weary men to laugh just one more time and to hold up under the stress and boredom. And such sharing of humor among men had its way of pulling men into a tight circle which we call “togetherness.”
Let There Be Differences

Men in Company “L” were recognized as being different from one another. They were permitted to be themselves and no effort was made to try to make them all fit into the same mold. No one tried to restrict their individuality as long as it did not interfere with the combat mission. The Indian boy from South Dakota and the Japanese American soldier from Los Angeles were not expected to be exactly alike. This was true of all individuals.

A strong robust young soldier from Salinas, California was a failure at garrison duty in Japan. He faced court martial for clobbering an MP and knocking him under his desk. His court martial was suspended and instead, he was sent to Korea in the original group. His potential was recognized, he was permitted to be himself and to develop within reasonable bounds, and he became one of the most dependable, courageous, and finest combat soldiers in Korea.

Call it what you will, this attitude in the company of letting individuals be themselves, played its part in molding the “togetherness” spirit. Like different shaped pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, the men of Company “L” were permitted to fit together and to become a very special unit made up of many variable parts.

Two Secret Ingredients

Names of individuals have been conspicuously absent in this written endeavor to take a fresh look at Company “L”, in an effort to better understand what made it great and lasting. However, someone has said it well, “Behind every great institution, there have always been one or two special people who have made it great.” Company “L” is no exception. Without diminishing the importance and contribution of every man in the outfit, the tracks of two key individuals can be traced as a golden cord from the beginning tragic days in Korea through the horrifying experiences on “Sleeping Bag Hill.” From the beginning, one of these was an officer. The other key figure was a sergeant who later was commissioned in Korea. Many men came late into the company and many others left early. However, these two were with it all of the way through and played a big part in the company’s spirit.

The love and concern for his men is evident as one of these officers relates his experience. He tells of his experience of returning to Chochiwon for the purpose of identifying the bodies of the many who were killed in that area of fighting. He says, “The graves registration people led me by the hand from hole to hole. I would wipe away enough tears to identify a body, and then they would lead me crying to the next hole.” When others hurt in the outfit, he always somehow found out about it, and seemed to hurt with them — and the hurt ones seemed to be aware of this. Empathy draws people together in an unforgettable bond.
Without being weak in discipline, this same officer was responsible for a degree of permissiveness in the company which allowed men to relax and do some things which they would not be permitted to do under other circumstances. Things like: the one already mentioned, driving a captured enemy tank to the mess line without being severely criticized; digging up sacks of apples in a nearby village after moving into a new location; purchasing and slaughtering a cow from a local farmer and roasting fresh steaks for the first time since leaving their homes (and knowing in advance that food inspectors would have a fit when they later found out about it); discovering and driving a few old civilian cars and station wagons (which had been hidden) until regiment found out about it and said that it must stop immediately. Many things like these could not have been done in an outfit with a “toe-the-mark” attitude. Somehow, this limited permissiveness caused men to feel that those in charge were identified with them, and they did not have to live in fear because others would understand their need for a change of pace in such an impossible situation.

The very appearance and presence of this officer seemed to say, “Tell me about it. I am anxious to listen.” This was his attitude when he set the half-eaten can of lima beans and pork on the chest of a frozen enemy Chinese soldier, and stood up to talk with the battalion commander who happened to come by. (I think the colonel thought the officer may have been on the line a little too long when this happened.) His approachable and concerned attitude extended down to the teen-aged soldier who was homesick for the first time. This attitude not only affected the men themselves, but it affected other leaders joining the outfit who found his spirit and attitude worthy of emulation.

This key officer did not destroy, but he narrowed the usual gap between officers and enlisted men. He was so human and others were quick to recognize this. Periodically, he would receive a long letter from a well-meaning uncle, admonishing him “that he had better get right with God in the life of danger he was in.” The officer became furious over the letter and would read it to anyone who might be around. He would rave about the uncle’s free advise and say, “Sure, it is easy for him to give it from a soft leather chair in a secure office. But what would the “blank” do if he were here facing what I am?” Then after pouring out his bitterness toward the uncle’s letter, he would relax and make fun of himself and laugh at the letter. Others would laugh with him.

From the letter he might go off on a philosophical explanation on how he planned to get out of Korea by shooting himself in the foot, giving a detailed explanation of the procedure and his plan for covering up the evidence. He was so convincing that one might think that he was seriously considering it.

After listening to a few incidents like these, others felt free to let their hidden feelings surface, and to admit that they too, were limited and human. This brought men closer to each other.
The other “secret ingredient” was the sergeant who received his commission early in
the Korean conflict. He was a natural born “encourager.” Every organization needs at
least one person who majors in such. It is impossible to measure the adhesive effect
such encouragement had on the company. His positive attitude and the little words of
encouragement counted for so much. For example, one day some of our planes flew
over. They had dropped their bombs and were returning to their base in Japan. Men
were discussing how well the plane crews had it and how they would get to sleep
between clean white sheets in a secure building that night, while we would spend the
night in a water-soaked foxhole in near-freezing weather. “Yea,” said one man, “the air
force may win this war, but they sure as hell haven’t fought it!” Two days later the
officer who heard the remark said to the man, “You know, I’ve been thinking about
what you said the other day. That is a great philosophical statement’ It ought to be
framed and hung on a wall in the Pentagon.” The man was encouraged to know that
someone thought what he said was important.

I still remember an often-repeated scene when a tactical map was spread out on the
hood of a jeep and the platoon leaders huddled around while the company commander
explained in detail the probing mission of the platoon whose turn it was to go out that
day. Though it was not his turn, the “encourager” would often request if he could go
along with the platoon on its important patrol. Having been denied his request, after
the briefing the officer would tell the platoon leader who was going, “Listen, he won’t
let me go. But just remember we are back here, and will be ready to come to your
rescue if you need us.” We knew he meant it, and such encouragement was always
needed. You felt if you had to go down, the whole outfit would go down with you. To
this very day, he is still encouraging people. In today’s mail, a letter came from this
officer concerning the last reunion of Company “L”. To the one in charge of the reunion
he says, “Received your GREAT financial report. YOU DID A GOOD JOB ALL THE
WAY!”

Besides being positive and encouraging, this key person set a good example by his
optimism and his willingness to work hard, and his persistence in his work. He was a
soldier through and through. He had a determination like few men ever had. “I’ll get
him! I’ll get him if it takes everything I have!” he said one day as he finally located a
lone sniper who was holding up our advance. The sniper also knew the position of the
officer and did almost “take everything he had” when he put a bullet through his arm.
Within a very short time the officer was back on line with his bandaged arm. He never
did give up through the remainder of the war, trying to get that same sniper who had
cased him and others so much trouble. “Quitting”, before the job was finished, was not
in his vocabulary. When asked what he thought the secret to the company’s closeness
through the years, his answer was, “Love, laughter, and labor.” He was a good example
of all three! In addition to his role as “encourager”, he has continued to do the three
things he suggested since he first put his foot in the soggy rice paddies of Korea.
Conclusion

Korea is now behind us. Several decades have passed since we were there. The war cost to America alone was eighteen billion dollars. A total of 33,741 American men who served in Korea did not get to return to their homes and families alive. In addition to these, 103,284 of our men limped their way off, or were carried on stretchers, from planes and ships who returned them to their homeland as wounded soldiers. These have had to live with their handicaps through the years. No bands ever played and no flags ever waved to welcome back home the men who were lucky enough to make it. No ticker-tape parades have ever been held to express appreciation for the several hundred thousand men who sacrificed and did their jobs well in Korea. No monuments with names on them have been erected for the 33,741 American men who died for their country.

And the men who made it back will never be the same again. No one will ever know the damages and scars which the experiences in Korea have left on the lives of these men. Little changes and scars like - like the man I ate with recently who turned the handles of the serving spoons and forks away from him in the dishes on the table. When asked why he did it, his explanation was: “I don’t like those handles pointing at me. They remind me of some weapons I faced in Korea and literally scare the hell out of me after all of these years. I can’t eat unless I change them.” He was serious as life itself when he said this. Yes, a lot or big scars remain — scars like broken homes, crippled bodies, and some shattered minds and nervous systems.

But there are also a lot of positive changes that have taken place in many of our lives. Things like the enjoyment of not having to shoot, and be shot at — and the joy of not seeing good men still fall at our sides — and not having to wonder if we will get to be home for Christmas — and not having to dig a hole in rocky ground before we can go to bed each night — and having the opportunity to get up in the mornings instead of staying up through the nights — and eating food not out of a can — and not having to put two water purification tablets in every quart of water we drink after we have carried it up a hill from a spring at its foot — and not having to move in the middle of the night — and getting to sleep in a house, I mean one not infested with body lice — and on and on we could go. But in addition to all of the above, there is satisfaction in knowing that we have been a part of something big and important in a mighty little infantry unit called Company “L”. Something which cannot be analyzed or explained — but something sort of precious that is real and genuine. Call it whatever you will, only the men who shared in it will ever understand what we are talking about. And only they are responsible for what it was, and what it continues to be. It’s like the man said, “My loyalty was developed early. I was a part of Company “L” and I did what I was supposed to do. I belonged and my contribution was accepted as such. We all did our part. It was a small band of self-motivated people who accepted their role of responsibility without question. I was truly a part of that wonderful group and I have a great
deal of trouble trying to explain why we were different. BUT WE WERE DIFFERENT.
I WILL SWEAR TO MY DYING DAY, WE WERE DIFFERENT! I am so very lucky to
have lived with, shared, and known this great group of people. What more can I say’’

Acknowledgement—Thanks to the following who offered material and suggestions,
some of which are incorporated in this article: Carl Bernard, Hugh Brown, Joe Griffith,
Olin Hardy, Earlwin Oaklaire, & Vol Warner.

Ed. Note: Earlwin Oaklaire is full blood Ogalala Sioux Indian and is identified elsewhere in
this book as Earlwin C. Deer With Horns
It was past midnight in June of 1951 when my plane landed at Travis Air Force Base in Northern California. Combat in Korea was behind me and I was coming home. I had been wounded in battle and had undergone several corrective surgeries in a hospital near Fukuoka, Japan.

No band played and no one was there to meet me when I hobbled off the plane at Travis that night. But it was so good to place my feet on American soil once more! If I could have done it on my crutches, I would have bent down and kissed that precious ground. These words which I had learned as a child came to me: “Breathes there a man with soul so dead, Who never to himself has said, ‘This is my own - my native land!’”

After having gone through hell on earth and a lot of suffering, deep emotions surged through my soul when I realized that I was HOME AT LAST in MY OWN COUNTRY - the “SWEET LAND OF LIBERTY.”

Now, it is thirty-three years later. That’s a long time - a third of a century! The invitation came to meet with the men I had served with in combat in Korea. The “L” Company of the 21st Infantry Regiment was having its reunion just outside of Washington, D. C.

“We have tried to keep expenses as low as possible and still make sure you have the best four days of your life here in the nation’s capital,” wrote Janice and Volney Warner who were co-hosts of the reunion. Volney was a second lieutenant fresh out of West Point when he joined our company in Korea. He went on to become a four-star army general.

Should I attend the reunion? I had mixed feelings about it. I had been invited to four previous ones but for one reason or another had not been able to go. Just two years before, the group had presented me with the “Service to Mankind” award when they learned that I would be celebrating my twenty years of service as pastor of Clinton Avenue Baptist Church in Richmond, California. I was not aware that I would be receiving the award at our anniversary service that Sunday morning. I was moved deeply and could not hold back a few tears that trickled down my face as a church leader gave me the award and read these words from the plaque which had been shipped to him in secrecy:

We were that which others did not want to be.  
We went where others feared to go, 
and did what others failed to do.  
We asked nothing and reluctantly accepted 
the thought of eternal loneliness should we fail.
We have seen the face of terror,
    felt the stinging cold of fear;
and enjoyed the sweet taste of love.
We have prayed, cried, pained, bled, and hoped...
    But most of all, we have lived times
others would say were best forgotten.
We say that we are proud of what we used to be,
    A soldier in Company “L” of the 21st Infantry.

Throughout the thirty-three years I had always had a warm feeling toward the men I had served with in combat. I had seen them on many occasions when their lives were at stake and they had passed the supreme test and had come through. Reality had proven what they were made of and none had flunked the course of life in combat. Together we had suffered the almost unbearable heat of summer and the extreme cold of winter on the outside. We all knew what it meant to see good men fall about us when the bullet or shrapnel had hit them instead of us. Together we had heard the screams of enemy soldiers and smelled the stench of burning flesh when they had been bombed with jellied gasoline. We had lost sleep together, we had been hungry together, we had been afraid together, we had laughed together when we had felt like crying, we had spent Christmas together in foxholes which were over 6,000 miles away from the ones we loved at home. All of this “togetherness” of the past had blended us into one closely knit fellowship which was known as Company “L” of the 21st Infantry Regiment. But that was what it was like then - what would it be like thirty-three years later?

Many of the men who would be attending the reunion would have made a career of the army. The lieutenants I knew back then would now be retired colonels and one an army general. Hugh Brown, who had kept me informed about the reunions, had insisted that I attend and promised that he and the others would not get drunk until after Norma and I went to bed each night. And unless the bunch had changed greatly over the years, that is a big promise. (By the way, Brown kept his promise, even though Norma and I had to go to bed by 7:30 each night.) And Brown went on and insisted, “We want you to come. After all, you are the only ‘reverend’ we have in the outfit.”

I knew Brown’s concept of my being a “reverend” was a wholesome one. But, dammit, what about the concept of the others who would be at the reunion? It bothered me a bit as I tried to decide whether or not to attend. I get so tired of being placed in the same category with a lot of emotional jackasses who are in the ministry - Baptists or otherwise. Measure me by what I am! Don’t dump me in with all of the rest. I’m not like anybody else. The chances are that I dislike the same counterfeits in the ministry that you don’t like. If you must categorize me, don’t put me in with the bunch of half-cracked jerks like the ones you sometimes see on television or hear on the radio. Put me in with a group of Baptists like Art Linkletter, Senator Mark Hatfield, President Harry Truman, Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court Earl Warren, John
Davidson, Bill Moyers, or my own late brother, Hicks Epton who held the most prestigious position in the legal realm, President of the College of Trial Lawyers in America.

Maybe I should not try to go to the reunion this year. After all, Norma and I spent four and one-half weeks in Hawaii in February and March. That's a long time to be away from your work and we were just beginning to get caught up on things. Should we be gone for two additional weeks so soon?

And besides, Washington, D.C. is 2,869 miles from San Francisco. That's a long way! Maybe the reunion will be closer next year. On and on the excuses began to pile up. To heck with all of them! I want to go and I'm going. After all, we do pretty much what we really want to do in life. We go this way but once. Yes, I'm going!

I shared my plans with my church. They were excited that I was planning to make the trip. In fact, in previous years they had insisted that I go. When you have been pastor at the same church for twenty-two years, the very thought of being able to get rid of you for even two weeks, excites the people. All on their very own, the church voted unanimously to give me a bonus of $100 a year for each of the twenty-two years I had served as pastor, and this was to be used toward the expense of the trip to the reunion.

The day came for our departure. United Airlines flight 50 left on time that Tuesday morning. We decided to go two days early so we could visit for one day with a college roommate and his wife who lived near the reunion hotel. We had not seen them since 1948. And we wanted an extra day for resting up, getting settled in the hotel, and adjusting to the three-hour time change before the reunion schedule started.

Once airborne, our thoughts began to focus on a lot of specifics at the end of our flight. Marvin Gennings, the roommate, and his wife, Rena, were to meet us at Dulles Airport. Would I recognize them after these thirty-six years? I remember that he had a gold-tipped tooth. If only he would have his mouth open I think I could recognize him. After these years though, he has probably learned to keep his mouth shut. If this is true, I may not know him and he surely will not recognize me for I know I don't look like I did in 1948.

And just suppose that Gennings and I do recognize each other - what about the Company “L” bunch? I saw Carl Bernard one time several years ago when he was in Berkeley and I will recognize him. I've talked with Hugh Brown over the phone many times but he won't have on fatigue, a helmet, and combat boots like he did when I saw him last. And what about Norma? She has never seen any of the men I knew in Korea. And come to think of it, I have never seen any of the wives and neither has Norma. Will Norma fit in and be accepted? Did we bring the right clothes? After all, we have never attended a Company “L” reunion! Maybe we shouldn't have come. Maybe I volunteered for the wrong patrol. Would it be possible to turn this plane around? I think I'm beginning to get cold feet!
Our flight was pleasant and we were scheduled to land on time. However, when our plane reached Dulles Airport at Washington, D. C., we were told that we must take a holding pattern for about eight minutes before we could get a clearance to land. The holding pattern time was extended to eighteen minutes. What was wrong as we circled around Dulles at 13,000 feet in the clouds? Did Company “L” know that I was on that plane? Had L. P. Henderson arrived early and started a riot on Dulles airstrip by waving his array of flags as he had done in Korea? Was Short-round Hardy still practicing at a nearby military base and had some of his artillery rounds gone astray as they did in Korea? Had all of Company “L” come early and had the liquor ration come in and had they thrown a big party at Dulles and shut down the joint? I was relieved when word came from the flight captain that tornado-like weather at Dulles prevented us from landing and we were running short on fuel and must go to Pittsburgh (250 miles away) and land and refuel. We did that and later returned to Dulles and landed three hours later than scheduled.

Marvin and Rena were waiting for us. His mouth was shut just as I expected. But I recognized them and they did us. We had dinner at the airport and went to their lovely home in nearby Fairfax for the night. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit with them in their home. Next morning Marvin gave us a birds eye view of the area by car. We ended up at Blackie’s House of Beef, a famous restaurant in Washington, and enjoyed a wonderful dinner. About the middle of the afternoon we checked in at the Marriott Hotel at Tyson’s Corner where the reunion would be held. We enjoyed a good day of rest and “looking” at a nearby shopping center with one-hundred and thirty-four stores.

The next afternoon we had been out walking and returned to the hotel lobby. Norma nudged me and said, “That was Brown who just went out the front door.” “How do you know? You have never seen Brown?” I said. “I know him from his picture” she replied. These women are hard to fool! It was Brown. Warner and his wife, Janice, were standing at the registration desk. I immediately recognized him and went over and introduced ourselves and met his wife. He looked the same - just a few extra miles on him since that day when he and Dreisonstok reported into the company as second lieutenants from West Point. A few extra miles and a lot of extra rank - now a general.

The CP (Command Post) opened at 4:00 in the afternoon.

It was a suite of rooms on the sixth floor with a bar and a place where everyone could meet and visit. Display boards on the walls held approximately two-hundred pictures which were taken by Henderson in Korea and were developed by Brown and made available to those of us who wanted copies. The CP was sort of a headquarters for reunion activities. We went to the CP a little after 4:00 expecting to walk into a room filled with strangers. It was not that way. Carl Bernard, the only officer I saw when I reported into the company in its defensive position on the hill overlooking the Naktong River on the Pusan Perimeter in Korea, was the first person I saw when we entered the
CP. He gave me a big bear-hug and Norma and I felt welcome. Hugh Brown came next and we embraced like long-lost brothers. The third person I met in the CP was Herman Ludwig. He said, “You remember me? How is your left leg and hip? I was the medic on the special patrol with you when you got it through the left leg. Remember I made a tourniquet to help stop the bleeding? I improvised a litter (stretcher) out of a field coat and a field jacket and we carried you some distance on it. And remember, I broke a small plastic vile of morphine and gave you a shot when the pain became so severe?” Yes, I remembered it all. And Ludwig had remembered for thirty-three years exactly as it had happened - with one minor exception - it was my right leg and hip - not the left one.

Katsumi Yagura was the next one to greet me. We called him “Kats” for short. He was my jeep driver and a member of my platoon. From him we went on and met many others—about fifty in all. When I saw the individuals, I began to remember them. Sometimes their names were hard to remember. Little by little it all seemed to come back to me. The voices had remained basically the same. Most of the men had put on some weight and of course were thirty-three years older. I was surprised that I met no strangers among those I had known in Korea. It just seemed that we picked up where we had left off a few weeks before.

Norma was received warmly by both the men and their wives. She fell in love with everyone. Her response was, “These people are genuine. They seem more like family members than strangers.” One of the first women she met was Virginia Chandler, the wife of Hap who was our company commander for quite some time in Korea. Hap was a good guy and you always felt he had the welfare of the men at heart. He carried a little pearl-handle pistol and could draw and fire it in a split second. Hap passed away a few years ago and when I learned of his death, I felt a deep personal loss even though I had not seen him since Korea. I wrote his wife in North Carolina and expressed my concern and deep sympathy to her. When we met her in the CP, she told Norma and me how much the letter had meant to her at a time when she really needed it. After seeing her, we felt as if we had always known her. And by the way, she made some of the best lasagna I have ever eaten, which was served at Warner’s home on the evening we visited there.

The entire group had breakfasts together each morning in our own private dining room at the hotel. (With one exception when we had a lovely brunch at the Cafe Mustache near Alexandria.) On two nights we had dinner in the same private room in the hotel. Introductions, the memorial service in honor of those who died, and other program activities were conducted before and after the evening meals at the hotel. Two highlights of the reunion were getting to be in the home of Janice and Volney Warner in nearby Vienna, and Edith and Carl Bernard at Alexandria near Mt. Vernon. Both couples had lovely homes and were gracious hosts as we had an evening meal with them.
Janice Warner deserves the “Host of the Year” award. She did such an excellent job in planning and keeping activities on schedule. I suggested to her husband that he give her a three-day pass after the reunion was over because she deserved it. I don’t think she should even be required to pass inspection before leaving on the pass. (I guess army generals have enough administrative authority to grant a three-day pass, don’t they?)

We had our own tour bus and tour guide for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Our well-planned tours included the White House, the Capital (including going into the House and eating in the Senate Dining Room), Air and Space Museum of the Smithsonian Institute, Viet Nam Memorial, Arlington Cemetery and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Library of Congress, Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, Washington Monument, Iwo Jima Memorial, Embassy Row, Georgetown, the “Awakening”, Christ’s Church at Alexandria, Washington’s home at Mt. Vernon, and many other places of interest which are too numerous to name.

At the Tomb of the unknown Soldier, Company “L” presented a wreath in a very impressive ceremony. Olin Hardy represented the company in the presentation. He was tall, well-dressed, and looked very distinguished in the ceremony. He did an excellent job and we were all proud of him.

We ate together, rode the tour bus together, walked on tours together, and spent time together in the CP. What did we talk about? Nearly everything. We re-lived many of our experiences in Korea. We recalled how dangerous it was at Sasebo, Japan, where everybody was trigger-happy in this last port before getting to Korea. We remembered how concerned the medical authorities were when they found out that we had bought and killed a cow and cooked steaks and ate them. We remembered the Pusan Perimeter and the many uncertainties related to it. We recalled the Taegu apple orchard experiences. We thought of the body lice and how they began to move around in our winter underwear when we would get warm. We remembered the slick ridges of the rice paddies where you would always slip off both sides at the same time. We talked about the artillery flares that would light up the Naktong River so we could see the self-made rafts of the enemy as they sought to cross the river and get behind our lines. We thought of “bed-check Charlie,” the small enemy plane that would make its rounds at night and drop its home-made bombs. We remembered warm rides on the back of tanks on cold nights. We thought of ice and snow and frost-bites. We remembered the good and the bad, and I don’t think much escaped from our collective minds over the last thirty-three years.

The discussions at the reunion led me to come home and dig out from an old cedar chest, a box of letters from Korea which I had written to Norma in 1950-51. The following are excerpts from some of the letters and are examples of situations and incidents upon which many of our reunion discussions were based.
16 August 1950: “This section of the world is the hottest and filthiest place I’ve ever seen. Flies swarm all throughout the day and mosquitoes at night. Every imaginable insect and disease is prevalent. Most of the people are living primitively. Every village has a terrific and sickening odor. However, I suppose if I stay here long enough, everything will smell like Chanel #5.”

“I have just finished censoring twelve letters written by men in my outfit. An officer must censor all letters before they can be mailed.”

“One of the men in a foxhole about twenty feet away from me just remarked while eating the large round crackers in his “C” rations, ‘If my wife were here, she sure would give me hell for eating these crackers in bed.’”

16 September 1950: “We have three new officers in the company. Two are second lieutenants straight out of West Point. (Warner and Dreisonstok.) They are fine guys and I like them a lot.”

19 October 1950: “At the present time we are well up into North Korea. Day before yesterday we marched twelve miles. Yesterday we marched twenty-six miles. The opposition along the way has not been too great, only occasional roadblocks. One outfit had forty killed and forty-five injured but we only lost two men. We should have troops in Pyongyang, the capital of North Korea, by now. This war should not last too much longer.”

“I’ve never seen so much heartless action and cruelty. Just three days ago we took a large town where the people met us with open arms. The North Korean soldiers had come in and taken the young men of the town outside the town, tied their hands behind them with rice ropes, and killed all of them. They had taken several hundred of these dead ones and put them in a cave in the side of a hill. After we arrived, the people of the town began taking the dead bodies out of the cave. It was certainly pitiful to see the young wives, sweethearts, parents, and others, as they moaned and wept over their murdered loved ones in the stench of decaying human flesh as these were removed from the cave. My! how our own great America should pause and be grateful for all that we have. I for one, have determined that I will be one American who will do less complaining when I return.”

25 October 1950: “We are about forty miles north of Pyongyang. Our final mission will probably be to clear out the area between here and the Manchurian border. Hope we are through within another two weeks - at least we hear rumors to that effect.”

“Guess what? I had steak to eat tonight! Some of our men killed a cow and fried some steaks. Although we had no bread or anything else to go with it, it was certainly good.”
All of the meat we ever get is hash or stew in cans and that gets old pretty quick.”

7 November 1950: “We had thirteen casualties yesterday. Seven of these were killed immediately. All of the enemy we have killed during the last few days have been Chinese. It is pretty certain that over 100,000 of them have crossed the Korean border. I had hoped that we would get out of these foxholes by Christmas but it is a bit doubtful now.”

15 November 1950: “This afternoon my interpreter went out and got me two chickens which he dressed. The company commander and I fried the chickens and ate them. They were good even though we had no bread or anything to go with them.”

15 December 1950: “The civilians have certainly suffered much here in this war. Just today I had to run all of the people out of a village in front of my position. It is pathetic to see both old and young leaving their homes. I was supposed to burn the village of about fifty houses in order to keep enemy troops from hiding in them. I put off the burning until tomorrow, hoping that we might move tomorrow and then I wouldn’t have to cause these hundreds to be homeless. Oh, that good old America could realize what she is missing by not having this war fought on her own dear soil!”

16 December 1950: “Upon orders, today I drove the remaining civilians from their homes in the village to our front and burned their houses with all of the people’s belongings. It makes a person feel heartless to do such things, but after a time, one wonders if he even has a heart at all. I guess it is natural for war to make one hard, and cold, and bitter.”

“All of the days are about the same here. After a time they just become gaps between two nights.”

28 December 1950: “Yesterday we had a man deliberately shoot a big hole in his leg, bone and all, in order to get out of here. This isn’t the first time this has happened.”

13 January 1951: “The sun is shining brightly here this morning over eight inches of snow. The temperature is eight degrees below zero!”

The sharing in the above experiences and thousands of others similar to them, has brought members of Company “L” into a bond which has not been broken by thirty-three years.

It is a bond that will never be broken. Even now, the spirit of the unit is such that causes me to think that if there were enough intelligence in Washington to assign us the task, Company “L” could capture the Kremlin any time and stop the communist threat to the world. (Provided, that is, that we would not have to go through any electronic security
checks which would, of course, stop many of us who have metal screws, steel braces, and silver wires to help hold our bodies together.)

I am reminded again of the letter from Janice and Vol Warner before the reunion which included these words: “We want to make sure that you have the best four days of your life here in the nation’s capital.” Well, you did make sure, and we did have them! Thanks to you Warners, Dreisonstoks, and Bernards, for all you did to make the reunion so great as you co-sponsored it.

The good day we spent in the Gennings’ home and the four days at the reunion, provided an excellent foundation for the remaining ten days of our trip. After the reunion we rented a car and drove nearly a thousand miles to key places between Washington and Boston - places which played such important roles in the birth and beginning of our great nation.

We stopped in Baltimore, Maryland and had a wonderful evening with a nephew, Bill Epton, and his lovely wife, Carolyn, and their son, Alexander. Bill and Carolyn are artists. He majors in sculpturing and she in painting. We had not seen them in many years.

We enjoyed Philadelphia. Our hotel was in walking distance of all of the great historic spots. Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell - and so many other historic places! The Bookbinders was recommended and we had a wonderful eating experience there. The people in Philadelphia were so friendly and helpful to us. I had the feeling that many recognized us as tourists and said to themselves, “This is the heart of your country, and we are going to help you enjoy seeing it.” And they did and we are grateful.

New York City - I loved it! It looked and acted and felt like a big city should. My bite of the “Big Apple” was so satisfying. The Empire State Building was all and more than I expected. We went to its top and could see as far as eighty miles away on the beautiful clear day. And who can adequately describe Broadway, Fifth Avenue, Wall Street, the Statue of Liberty, the United Nations building, Chinatown, and hundreds of other exciting buildings, and places, and over seven million exciting people!

The streets of New York City are large boisterous parking lots which move forward when the traffic signal changes. People cross the streets whenever and wherever they desire. Thousands of yellow cabs, each with at least two horns, zip from one empty space to another in the traffic. (Flagging a cab is an experience in itself!) Why are there double center stripes in the middle of the streets, and why are traffic lanes marked off? - no one ever uses them in New York. And yet, everyone seems to get where he wants to go quickly.
In walking distance of our hotel in New York was Trump Towers on Fifth Avenue - not far from Central Park. It is the newest and most glamorous of the commercial buildings around the city. The walls and floors are made of Italian marble. It has waterfalls, greenery, and cafe tables for lounging. A variety of shops include Bonwit Teller, Buccellati silversmiths, Boehm porcelain, Asprey luxury gifts, and fashion designer Lina Lee. Few price tags were evident in the stores. People who can afford to purchase in such places are generally not concerned with prices. Some T-shirts did have prices on them in inconspicuous places. Norma thumbed through these, hoping to find a hummingbird. I was relieved to learn that no hummingbird had perched among the T-shirts because they were priced at $126 each. We could afford the restrooms which were equipped with well-dressed attendants whom we were expected to tip. Mirrors were all around the walls in the restroom and I had trouble locating the wall with the real urinals on it. Maybe the attendant really earned his tips from people who used the wrong mirror.

From New York we drove to Providence, Rhode Island, and visited the oldest Baptist Church in America. This First Baptist Church was established by Roger Williams in 1638. We were impressed by it. In fact, we were impressed with all of the great cathedrals in Washington, New York and Boston. We were amazed by the many high church spires on old, old white church buildings in all of the New England towns and cities. These have all played such a vital part in the development of America.

I am concerned that our churches continue to undergird our great land as they have in the past. We were a bit disappointed in our visit to a First Baptist Church in one of the suburbs of Boston on one Sunday morning. Our hotel directory of church services showed services to begin at 10:45 and we went early. But the church bulletin said 10:00, so we were thirty minutes late because of the discrepancy. The minister had a good personality and attitude, and sense of humor. He brought a good message which we appreciated. He was personable and greeted us at the door when we left after the service. We wanted to meet some of the people but none seemed to want to be met. We stood around, cleared our throats, went to our car and returned with our camera and took pictures at the church entrance, but not a single person spoke to us, said “Goodbye,” “God bless you,” “We are glad you came,” “Go to hell!” or anything else. This was such a contrast to a previous night when we returned to our hotel room and found a lovely basket containing special crackers, exceptional cheese, choice chocolates, and a bottle of expensive wine. Included in the basket was a note signed personally by the hotel manager, welcoming us and expressing his hopes that our visit in his hotel would be a pleasant one. Sure, you might expect such treatment after you had paid well for a night’s lodging. But when in the hell are some church people going to wake up and act as friendly and as Christian as the people of the business world. Maybe that’s why the hotel was filled to capacity that night and the church house was half empty that Sunday morning. Come on, people, don’t pin on the Christian name tag unless you are willing to act a little bit like Jesus!
Boston was a special experience. I visited with a niece, Vivian, with whom I grew up but had not seen in forty years. I was her uncle, but she was nine months older than I. I always thought that was funny. We met her lovely children, Bill, Bob, and Jean, and their families. We sat down to one of the most beautiful tables and ate as delicious food as we have ever experienced. It was really a Thanksgiving dinner in May. We were just forty miles from Plymouth Rock and I expected John Alden and Priscilla to walk in any moment. Vivian lost her wonderful husband of over thirty years through death. Though very difficult, she had worked through the grief process and has a good outlook toward the future. We look forward to a good visit from her. We became aware that people miss so much in life when they get out of touch with loved ones as we had done with these wonderful people.

Boston held so many interesting things for us. History dripped from nearly every rooftop. We visited Old North Church (1723) which was made famous by Paul Revere’s signal lanterns. I stooped over until my shoulders hurt as we went through the U.S.S. Constitution (Old Ironsides) which was launched in 1797 and engaged with the British in the War of 1812. It was built for men whose average height was slightly above five feet in those days. We shopped at Faneuil Hall Marketplace, ate at Durgin Park, visited the location of the Boston Tea Party, went up on Bunker Hill, went to Concord and Lexington and visited Old North Bridge where the Revolutionary War began. We went to Plymouth and saw Plymouth Rock and toured Cranberry World which was of interest. In Cambridge we visited Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology. I think we saw everything in the Boston area - at least our feet felt we had. No family has ever increased as rapidly as our’s did during the two-week period while we were on our trip. We added Marvin and Rena from Fairfax. We adopted every member of Company “L” and their wives who were at the reunion. Bill, Carolyn, and Alexander from Baltimore were new additions. Vivian and her three children, Bill, Bob, and Jean, and their families were added to our family roster. After returning home, our first long distance telephone call came over a line from Boston that had been silent for forty years saying, “I just called to see if MY RELATIVES had a safe trip back home in California.” Our first mail had a “Thinking of You” card from Virginia Chandler in North Carolina and it started out, “Hi, Loved Ones, I just wanted you to know how much I enjoyed both of you. This reunion made me feel like I was a part of one big family.” Gina, it made us feel the same way!

Yes, our trip to the birthplace and early childhood of America ended too soon. We turned in our rented car with our additional nine-hundred and eighteen miles on it and flew back from Boston to San Francisco. We arrived in time to settle down before observing Memorial Day. What a day to climax such a trip! I don’t think I have ever been as well-prepared for the observance of a day in memory of some five-hundred thousand men and women who have given their lives to make America possible and to keep it strong. I could hardly wait until Memorial Day arrived when I could display my American flag on a staff and suspend it above the center front entrance of my own little
“White House” in Richmond, California. The flag was unusually beautiful as it waved in the California breeze all day. It represented to me everything that’s good and great about America - including those with whom I had fought and the many who have died. On Memorial Day I re-lived the previous two weeks and felt a renewed sense of gratitude to God for my country and my people. Throughout the day, these words written by Samuel F. Smith in 1831, kept going through my mind, and continue to do so:

“My country, ’tis of thee,
SWEET LAND OF LIBERTY,
Of thee I sing:
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrims’ pride,
From every mountain side
Let freedom ring!
Our fathers’ God to thee,
Author of liberty,
To thee we sing;
Long may our land be bright
With freedom’s holy light;
Protect us by thy might,
Great God, our King!

And now, from the San Francisco Bay area on the West Coast of this “SWEET LAND OF LIBERTY,” in the words of the old Irish verse:

“May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
And the rains fall soft upon your fields,
And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of His Hand.”
Dreisonstok Memoir

by Thomas F. Dreisonstok

This Memoir is the work of “Toady” Dreisonstok, who commanded the second platoon of Love Company, 21st Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division.

15 July 1951, Assignment and first few days on or about the 4th Sept. 1950.

Korea:

It was an average Korean day - hot, and six lieutenants looking rather confused and naturally scared, walked into the tent of the battalion commander of the 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division.

He stared at us as a tiger would stare at raw meat being thrown into his cage when he hasn’t eaten for several months. Major McConnel, was glad to see us for his Battalion was low in strength and also morale. The horrible days of Chochiwon had drawn a heavy total of men not only enlisted men, but officers as well, for in those days, there wasn’t too much cognizance of rank and if you were near a machine gun, you fired it.

The major had us take seats (on the ground as there were no chairs) and introduced himself to all of us. He had a jolly face and a ready smile which brought something of a comfort to us. We had heard so much about the war from the men who were in Japan suffering from wounds. Needless to say, those war stories didn’t help our own morale too much. Every once in a while we would run across an officer who realized our situation and would tell us that things weren’t too bad over there now as the worst was over, that helped. These stories were going over in my mind as the Major was talking to us. Finally, he started down the row of officers asking the experience of each. “None at all sir.” “I haven’t even been to infantry basic school.” “I was just graduated from West Point sir, and don’t know a thing about the infantry.” “L Company”. “I was once a communications officer, sir.” “Good we need one.” The last one we had was found the other day with his head cut off, I think it was him anyway.” “No experience, sir” “L Company” “Same sir” “L Company.” This was our introduction to the way of the army. You take what they give you and don’t gripe about it until you are alone.

We waited around for transportation to our companies and were feeling quite low. Not too much was said except an occasional “see you around the battalion in a few days if
I am alive” or “UF, make sure that my wife gets the wooden handles off the box will ya?”

Finally, after what seemed like hours, we got our transportation and took off for our respective companies. We were anxious now for it was getting late in the day, and we had heard about what happens at night in those Korean hills. After wading a couple of streams and going up mountains which seemed to be straight up, Vol and I were met at the base of a hill by a man who said he would take us to the C.P. We walked for about ten minutes and then came to the entrance of a Korean shack where we saw a man of about 28 years wearing a beard of about equal time. He half laughed when we saluted him and said that he was the executive officer and that Planter Wilson would be along in a minute. In the meanwhile, we sat down and he talked to us and tried to build up our morale as much as he could. “Haven’t got too much to worry about. Those Gooks can’t hit the broadside of a barn door with a rifle and when you are hit with a grenade, it just feel like pins have been stuck in you. The only thing you have to worry about are those God-damned mortars. Those SOB’s can put’em in your pockets. Again, you don’t have too much to worry about there, for if they land far away, you’re ok. If they land on you, then you don’t feel a thing.” About this time we saw another man with a long beard walking up the path and were told that this was our company commander. This time we didn’t salute, he looked like a fine man and was honestly glad to see us. He pulled four cans of hot beer out of his nap-sack and we all talked for a while. I was out of cigarettes, and hungry so they split a box of “C” rations with us and a PFC gave me a pack of Chesterfields.

“We’ll wait awhile before we take you to your platoons because to tell you the truth, I’m beat to hell from climbing these hills, and it will take us about an hour and a half to get up top. That’s one thing I ought to tell you all about these hills, when you are climbing them, stop when you get tired or they will kill you.”

Planter turned to his exec and asked where Hardy was, then he explained that Hardy was the artillery F.O. for “L” company and the best “scrounger” in all Korea( I later found this to be true and also that he was the best F.O. in Korea) A few minutes later, Hardy came in with a large bag of “scroungings” and a smile on his face which you could barely see through his beard and his long nose. He had a personality which you could detect right off and I was attracted to him and made a note to keep my eye on him, for future parties.

Finally, the exec offered to take us to our platoons and Planter gave me the 2d platoon and Vol the 3d platoon. “Warner, you have a fine platoon and it has quite a few men in it. Dreisonstok, you have the best platoon SGT. in the company (I breathed an audible sigh of relief). I’ll contact you both by telephone if I want to clue you in on anything else - so long for now.”
On the way up we found out that there had been another platoon leader but that he had come down with malaria and had been sent back for a rest. We passed the 1st platoon and met the platoon Sgt. and then went up to the 2d platoon where I met a man with whom I was to spend many hours. I was to sleep with him, eat with him, fight with him, and laugh with him. Here was a man who was to save my life with his knowledge and wisdom and here was a friend. I waved Warner goodbye and looked out in the rapidly growing dark valley many many yards below me. The wind had started to blow quite hard. Sgt. Tompkins was standing by my side and he asked me how I pronounced my name again. I made some funny crack about it, and he took me around to meet the squad leaders in the nearby vicinity, then I got him aside and we had a talk.

“Sgt. Tompkins, I don’t know you very well, but I would say that you have put a little time in the army, right?”

“Ten years, sir”

“OK. then, here’s the pitch, I understand that you have been running this platoon for about a month, and as far as I am concerned, you will continue to run it until I can figure out what the hell this is all about. I want to know what your decisions are for my own benefit, but the platoon is yours. Do you understand, and is it ok?”

“Yes sir.”

I then told him that I had no training whatsoever, and he told me that I’d learn. I liked the man from the beginning. He was courteous, military, and I could tell (and the next day I knew) that he was liked and respected by all of the men. Here indeed was a soldier.

He asked me which side of the hill I was going to put my tent and I told him that I was going to stay with him. The wind was blowing quite hard but he suggested (Tompkins never told me anything, he always suggested) that we put our tent in the forward slope, as there were supposed to be enemy on the hill right to our front. (I looked and it appeared that the hill to our front was about two feet from us) He said that he could best control the platoon from there. Then he showed me the platoon area which was about three times as big as all of my book learning had taught me. By this time it was dark and we crawled into our tent with two other men and lay down. I had a sleeping bag which I had brought from Japan, and I offered it to the man who would be standing guard, but they said no that it was too hard to get out of one in a hurry. I offered to stand guard with the other men in my tent, but Tompkins said no, so lay down and another ardent prayer was added to the list in Korea that night. The night was unbroken except for a fire which our third squad started at a movement from the hill ahead of us. No, I wasn’t very scared. Morning came, and I was awakened by the telephone in
the tent ringing. Tompkins answered it and found that he had to send men to the company headquarters for coffee and rations. I walked out and got a better view of the terrain to the front.

It was lucky I did this for in an hour, I was to lead my men in an attack over it. As soon as the rations arrived and were given out, the phone rang again and we were told to pack up and move out to the bottom of the hill. Still thinking this was just a shift in position, I waited until all the men were assembled and then met the other squad leaders. I could see some of them smirking and thinking “that brand new Lt., look at how that bar shines, he’s got clean fatigues on, and he doesn’t need a shave.” About this time, I was thinking the same thing myself and I wanted to look like a combat soldier too - it took me about one more day to accomplish this. We arrived at the bottom of the hill and Planter told me to move out with my platoon and keep on the left of the tanks which were in front of us. Tompkins led the way and I followed as we moved across the rice paddies. The open expanse was about two miles in length. I had my pack all rolled up and on my back as we moved along. When we were about half way across, I heard sharp whistles going by but didn’t pay any attention to them until I heard a cry from the rear - one of my squad leaders had had his finger shot off. It came to me like a bolt of lightning. Hell, We’re in an attack, and those people on the hill to our front are firing at us - me. I looked around and saw no one as they had all dropped to the ground. I quickly joined them, and with my sweaty hands, I took off the pack roll from my back and threw it in the rice paddie along with my rations, then we moved on as Tompkins was shouting to the men to keep moving. We got within 400 yards of the base of the hill and were partially protected by a group of trees and again took cover. I inched up to Tompkins and thinking of nothing better to say, I nudged him and said, “Say Sgt., how about telling me when it’s time to get scared?” “Yes sir” was the reply with a little smile. Encouraging him hell, I was trying to get someone to encourage me!

Tompkins hollered to the men to run across the open space a squad at a time and hug the base of the hill. I followed him right over and heard another cry from one of my men - he had been hit with shrapnel. Our medic was with us hugging the hill and when he heard the cry, he ran back to aid the wounded man (I wrote him up for the bronze star, he received it later.) The tanks were alongside of us, and were buttoned up. Even I could see that if they weren’t going to fire, they would just attract fire, so we were stuck and then I heard a loud explosion a little ways up the hill. They were rolling hand grenades down the hill at us. I hugged that hill closer than I hugged my wife when I returned home. “It’s time to get scared” said Tompkins. At this point, the exec arrived and we laid out a plan of attacking the hill. Then he jumped on the tank and tried to get it to open up. Warner was on my right, and had the same trouble. The tanker told him if he wanted that tank to fire, he would have to fire it himself, so he put a man on the machine gun located on the front of the tank. The man was almost immediately killed and as he rolled off the tank, the name of the tank was visible through this man’s blood. “Death!”
In my platoon, Tompkins had set up a base of fire with the bazooka and was all ready to attack. We had planned to have five minutes of mortar fire before the attack. The mortars started to come in, but most of them were short. I looked to my left when I heard a scream and saw one of our own mortars which had landed about two feet from the center of the first squad. A dud. I sighed, and when Tompkins gave the word, I arose and started up the hill. The men were firing, the bazookas were firing and the tanks were firing. We reached the top and found that all of the Gooks had gone, so we immediately set up for a counter attack, and I sat down to rest on the edge of a gook foxhole. I reached in my blouse and pulled out the percussion grenade which Tompkins had given me. The top had unscrewed, and I know I turned four colors as I pulled out that top with no bottom. Not knowing too much about grenades, I had expected the thing to go off as I pulled it out. Right then and there I decided not to carry grenades anymore, and from then on, whenever I needed them I always borrowed them from someone else.

Tompkins had got the men all set up and walked back to me to tell me so. “Well, Lt, you just won the combat infantry badge.”

I looked up at his smiling face and said “The next time we go into an attack, I hope to hell that someone tells us.”

There was no counter attack, and when we sent out a small patrol, they found two North Koreans hiding at the bottom of the hill to the front. One was killed and the other had his head bashed in with an M-1 before he would give up.

As soon as we had dug in, we were told to get ready to move out again this was a favorite tactic of the battalion I found. We moved on to a higher hill and there we’re told to bed down for the night. Our platoon was hooked on to the 1st platoon, and we had a little hill all of our own. That night as I was in the foxhole with Sgt. Tompkins a guide came over to me and took me to the company commander on the high hill. There I saw Warner, it seemed that I had not seen him for weeks. About the time I arrived, we were taken under mortar fire from the hill to the front, and then I saw Hardy go into action. Our own mortars had tried to knock out the enemy fire, but were unable. Hardy came singing up on the hill as everyone else was hugging the ground. “What seems to be the trouble up here?” he asked looking as happy as a small child with an ice cream cone. “You God-damned SOB, I’ll tell you what’s the matter!” said Planter, “our friends the Gooks don’t seem to want “K” company to move up on line with us, and they have decided to give us a hard time too.”

Hardy, with as much calm and finesse as a movie star, slowly pulled out his field glasses, looked, picked up the SCR 300 radio transmitter and gave a few orders which I do not understand. While he was waiting for a response, he looked up at me. I was trying to become and integral part of the terrain. “Hi, Toady” “Hi, Hardy”, I answered quite weakly.
At that moment, the artillery came sailing over heads and I mustered up enough courage to take a look. They all landed exactly where the Koreans had been firing from, and Hardy stood up, dusted his fatigues and slowly walked down the hill. As he got a little way down, I heard him give the command over the radio, “Fire for Effect” - The enemy position was silenced for good. The next day, “K” company went to the top of that hill and found the remains of what had once been several Koreans and their mortar.

I got lost finding my way back to the platoon area, but finally found it, and went to bed quite tired and full of admiration for Hardy.

The next day we moved out again and went for quite a distance before we put up for the night. Nothing exciting happened except that the mail arrived and I watched with an aching heart as all the men read their letters. Mine wouldn't arrive for at least 30 days. Sgt Tompkins told me about his wife and child who he had received a letter from. About time to go to bed, Carl Bernard appeared and introduced himself to us. He was a 1st Lt who had been in this war since the 21st had sailed. He had been evacuated once to Japan and had gone AWOL from the hospital to return to his unit. I went to bed that night again quite tired. This time, I had dug a foxhole for myself and Tompkins had one right next to me. It rained that night, and when morning came, I awoke to find my fox hole full of water. Almost everyone else was in the same boat, and it was cold in the morning. We waited until daylight and built fires and awaited for rations to arrive.

Subsequent days in the Company to include first rest period, second rest period and crossing the Naktong.

While still new in the company and also in the army, I had begun to feel as if I had already spent a lifetime in the Army, and most certainly had completed my two year hitch in the Far East.

Sgt. Tompkins and myself became fast friends and we kidded each other about going home. The next day we moved out again, and were told to advance to a hill far in the front, and one which I couldn’t see the top of. It had started to rain, and as we marched down the hill we were on and into the open rice paddie, I couldn’t help feeling that we would certainly run into the enemy here as we were the element which was supposed to feel out the enemy and tell higher headquarters where they were. About half way to the other hill, my lead scout stopped and said that someone was coming up the path. Pickens, my 1st squad leader, hollered to the approachers, but they did not answer. All of a sudden he saw one - a Korean - and dropped to his knees as he fired his rifle. Then I heard quite a vocabulary of cuss words up ahead, and knew that they were friendly troops. It was Lt Bernard who had been out scouting the area with a platoon of South Koreans, and he had been on top of the hill which we were to take. He said it was clear and told me the best way to get there. The Korean who had
been lead man, was still a little dazed, as Pickens’ shot had gone through his helmet and out the other side - this man was a good shot to say the least.

Still wet, and a little tired, we wound our way up to the base of the hill where the company commander took the platoon leaders on a reconnaissance and told us our areas. Mine was from the top of the hill halfway down, and I still couldn’t see the top of the hill. I sent word back for the rest of the platoon to start moving out, and Tompkins and I walked around to the front of the hill to see the terrain and decided to start our climb from there - that was our big mistake although the other way wasn’t too easy to climb either. The hill was straight up, and you had to hang onto bushes, trees, ground, and anything you could find to keep from falling back down the hill. After about an hour of cussing and climbing, we reached the end of the platoon and looked down the hill.

You couldn’t see the bottom, so I figured that this was the place to stop. The men had been carrying the heavy machine gun, ammunition, and their rifles up the hill, and were darned tired as was I. I had just started to dig in when Planter came up and said, “Let’s take a little walk up to the top, Toady”. I have always contended that he was the first cousin to a billy goat, and he proved this point as he scampered up the side of that hill. Tompkins came along and we finally reached the top and found that Hardy and his FO group were on the top - Hardy, as usual, was smiling and singing some hill-billy song. I was told that I should move my 1st squad to the top and then string them down. This I did, and then I started to find some place to put up for the night. The wind was blowing, very hard, we were wet from the rain and from sweating, and the fog was so thick up there that you couldn’t see your hand in front of your face much less a North Korean down in the valley. Tompkins had a poncho, and I had one, so we tried to make a little tent as best we could. There would be three of us in there that night. We couldn’t have fires as it was now dark, and we were all cold. Both Tompkins and I agreed that it was the most miserable night we had ever spent in our lives. We had chills all night through and the ground wasn’t level enough to lay down comfortably on the ground. I am amazed that we all didn’t get pneumonia that night. We had chills all night through and the ground wasn’t level enough to lay down comfortably on the ground. I am amazed that we all didn’t get pneumonia that night. To add to our misery, Hardy started calling for fire, and as it was later discovered, our unit had gone too far ahead of its phase line and the 105’s were firing the maximum range - it wasn’t enough. Hardy would call for a round and we could almost read the rotating band on the shell as it flew by - luckily, none of the rounds hit any of the many trees around us or we would have all been killed. The battery kept on insisting that they were firing on the right hill, and Hardy and I kept on ducking the rounds as they went about five feet over our heads. A few of them landed on the rear slope of the hill, but no one was hurt. That night I named Hardy, “Short Round Hardy” a name which has stuck by him ever since. We spent, as I said, a most miserable night. The hill was called “miserable hill”, or “turkey nob hill”, but it was one which we would never forget. The next morning we were ordered down off of it and the process of going down was almost as tedious as climbing. If you slipped, you went rolling all the way down, and would have been killed
before you reached the bottom. No one slipped very far, and in another hour, I had all the men down and lined up on the road. We were given about face and told to start marching. We were to move into a rest area - a most enjoyable command. It took us quite a while to get back, as we walked most of the way. Hardy passed me on the way and gave me a hot beer which I enjoyed. At last we were in the rest area and could set up tents and get hot meals. Planter set up a CP tent and all the officers were to sleep in there together - all except our exec who was lying on the ground shivering, Malaria. The next day he was taken away and I never saw him again or heard from him either. That night we had the first hot meal in what seemed like a year, and did it ever taste good. After dinner, I wrote a letter, shaved, washed, and was feeling quite good. All of my men had pitched their tents and had had a chance to shave and get cleaned up. I wrote my medic up for the bronze star for his actions on that first day. Hardy came by as I was sitting there and said that the battalion commander was throwing a party and to come up. We went up and I found a bottle of liquor waiting for me. I also found a guitar which I played on while I sang.

The next day I held an inspection of my platoon and wrote more letters. Those 6 days of rest helped an awfully lot, and the men began to get restless again - the poker games got rough when we got our beer and liquor rations, but no one got hurt outside of a black eye or two. I had found my shaving brush, razor, and a few other articles which I had placed in a case which should have been used for carrying telephones.

Finally we moved out again - this time on trucks - we were moving eastward to get ready for the big breakthrough and crossing of the Naktong. At last the 8th Army was getting ready to strike back. All the probing we had done had just proven the theory that the North Koreans had just a shell force around us, and if we could penetrate that, we could go all the way up. Of course, we didn't know this, nor did we know that General MacArthur was planning the best military tactic he or anyone else had ever done - the landing at Inchon. These things were a long way from my mind as I drove along that dusty road, for an infantryman can't afford to see too far ahead - he has to live day by day. Along the road I saw my first dead North Korean - he was lying face down in a small lake on the side of the road and had evidently been there for some time as he was bloated. When we reached our new area, I saw that it was an apple orchard, and a very nice set up. It was close to an air field. Again, we had a few days rest unbroken but by a few incidents - Tompkins had to beat the hell out of one man who thought he was pretty tough himself after a little too much liquor, Carl Bernard and I spent the better part of an evening with this man trying to talk him out of his oath to shoot Tompkins at the first opportunity, we did. We listened to "Seoul City Sue" over a radio which Carl had, and I got quite a laugh over it as she would announce the names of the American dead, and some of the men would be right there listening to her. She said that the North Koreans would stop fighting as soon as they annihilated the 24th Division - we all got a big laugh out of this too. A new officer came to our outfit at this time, and with the one which had arrived in the last area, we at last had an officer
for each platoon. Our command set up was as follows: CO. Lt Wilson; Exec Lt Boyd; 1st Plt Lt Epton; 2d Plt Lt Dreisonstok; 3d Plt Lt Warner; Korean platoon Lt Henderson and of course, Hardy. We had liberated me a guitar in the last area, and we were busy learning all the hill-billy songs. I received 10 letters from my wife and I must have read them all at least five times.

When Colonel Stephens, our regimental CO, got the regiment together and told us the 8th Army plan, every one was ready to go - the slogan was “Out of the foxholes by winter”, and we really meant it. The next day, Planter took all the officers in his jeep and we entered a convoy which was to take us to our proposed crossing sites on the Naktong River. I had heard a lot about this river and had also heard “Seoul City Sue” say that if we ever tried to cross it, the Naktong river would flow with the blood and bodies of American soldiers. When we arrived, I wasn’t any too happy, and couldn’t help but think what if that damn theory about a thin crust isn’t true?” - it was true tho, and we still lost a lot of good men.

We stayed there all night, and the next day, the troops came up to us, and we began to make preparations for the crossing. We weren’t in the area more than five minutes when all hell broke loose - the Reds started firing mortars into the apple orchard we were in, and the men began to get scared. When the word came to move out to the boats, the enemy barrage was twice as strong as ever, but we had to go. I didn’t want to leave all those large apples, and more important, I didn’t want to leave that nice foxhole we had. I moved because I didn’t want the men to think I was a coward, and they moved because they thought that if I went, they didn’t want to be showed up - between the both of us, we were scared to hell. The approach to the beach wasn’t covered at all, and after we got to the beach, we had about 200 yards to move out in the open sand. The enemy mortars were landing all around us, but no one in my platoon was hurt. We jumped in the boats and started pulling for the opposite shore as fast as possible - some boats didn’t move fast enough. On the side, we had a hurried organization and moved out to our appointed spots where we would pick up the rest of the company. It was dark by the time all were over - we were in enemy territory, had no supplies over there, no tanks, no nothing - just good old infantrymen. The plan was for the 24th Division to go up the east bank or the Naktong and the 1st cavalry to go up the west bank. Not knowing where any one was, we moved as far as possible up the river and then camped for the night. We heard by our company radio that the 24th division had been given credit for the crossing of the Naktong which made us all feel good as the 1st cavalry got credit for the crossing on the Naktong.

Again, we spent a night in strange territory with no previous observation of the terrain around us, and no maps. Rumors were that 3000 Reds were on a hill to our left front, Hardy came up and tried to get fire on the hill, but to no avail. Morning came and everything was still all right. The 1st cavalry tried for three days to get through to the
town they had to take to keep up with us. This town was finally taken by a patrol from the 5th RCT - and we moved down to the banks and continued the march up the river. The next day, the tanks got across and we applauded them as they moved along the road - we began to feel better at this crossing now. The Reds were right, the Naktong was flowing with bodies and blood, but most of them were Reds - I thought of “Sue” as I saw bloated NK bodies going down the river. The Naktong had been crossed and the first step to breaking the crust had been made. We were happy - the war would soon be over.
What follows are a series of very short vignettes on L Company activities often the subject of reunion banter, seldom reduced to writing since no one person is repository for the total story.

**Liquor Ration**

Once in a while the troops got beer and the officers a fifth of hard liquor. After many consecutive days of the extremes of heat or cold, a formal liquor ration or merely a square barracks bag returned by someone on R&R created great excitement in the ranks. Those officers who did not drink, and there were several, passed the hard liquor off to the platoon sergeant who established a rather unique procedure to ensure that the troops got some but not too much. Basically the troops fell in in a single file, facing the platoon sergeant. The platoon sergeant then uncorked the fifth, aimed the aperture toward the single file and summoned each troop forward for one small swallow, no more. The risks of overindulgence were great. As many will recall the formal near fatal duel in the company street in the Apple Orchard where the pace count got to six before some courageous soul managed to enforce a halt and disarm the two.

**Enemy Equipment**

At some point in the walk North, we managed to overrun a T34 tank, Soviet Jeep and assorted other items of equipment. As soon as the more mechanically inclined discovered how to get the T34 out of reverse gear, it began to move forward northward at the head of the column. In fact it led the advance for a day or two until finally the word came down from on high at 8th Air Force, that if we persisted in having that tank in the column the Air Force could not guarantee that individual pilots wouldn’t make a gun run and a rocket attack on the Company column. Not that this hadn’t occurred before for lesser reason, but it did seem prudent to abandon the tank which we promptly did and began again to walk to work.
The Inchon landing was followed by the long trek north as North Korean forces crumbled in front of us. Unfortunately, we outran our field kitchen, were short on rations and frequently reduced to periodic combinations of foraging and barter. Upon crossing the 38th Parallel, we discovered our South Korean Won was unacceptable currency. So as we waltzed through a comparatively well-off village on the West Coast, several of the more enterprising troops had a great thought, “Let’s rob the bank”. Though there undoubtedly must be volumes written on why this is unacceptable behavior, one round from a “bazooka” unhinged the safe and suddenly there was chicken money for all in the form of newly minted North Korean currency.

The Cold

The terrible cold of the Korean winter became a far greater hazard than enemy fire. Our adversaries were much better prepared for the rigors of winter. That fact was not lost on the shivering troops. Still equipped with summer clothing, troops quickly learned to improvise in all manner of ways. The summer sleeping bag was suddenly transformed into a field jacket by cutting it off at the bottom providing two arm holes, and then simply pulling it on like a parka. Some squads even launched “Chinese pile cap and blanket patrols” with the admonishment not to put bullet holes through these
items, but to put them on instead in order to armor up against the increasing cold. The incentive to attack until a village had been secured just prior to darkness was driven less by the enemy and more by the elements. Pushing straw under the floor to generate heat Korean fashion became a common way to stay warm through the night.

**R&R**

Somewhere at the 6-9 month point, if you were still standing, five days Rest and Recuperation (R&R) out of theater became your reward. This meant a quick trip usually to Japan throwing away all your clothes, running through a hot shower, delousing, then wandering around drunk for about 5 days in newly issued, clean fatigues. As those few who highjacked the Japanese train to Kumamoto only to be met by the Provo Marshall on arrival can well attest. Thank goodness they were delivering the mail from the unit or they might have spent the rest of their R&R in the stockade!

The Air Force Club later refused to admit such a motley and rambunctious bunch of ground pounders into the Club for lobster night. So they squatted in front of the main entrance, as properly attired guests walked around them, threatening to warm up “Mung” on a squad stove. Then fortuitously the Base Commander arrived and either because of self interest or sympathy interceded and invited us into the Club for a free meal!

**Mail**

One Lieutenant’s mother became exceedingly alarmed upon receipt of a package in the mail containing “every stitch of clothes he had on when he left for the Far East”. So alarmed she called a Senator who was friends of the Regimental Commander (Big 6), convinced that her son was already dead. So thirty days into his War and at the top of an exceedingly tall hill, the Lieutenant was ordered to get down to the Red Line in the valley and report directly to the Regimental Commander in his Jeep Command Post. Some 30 minutes later after a long run down the hill, the befuddled Lieutenant reported to the battle hardened Colonel of rather ominous appearance who gave him a pencil and paper, offered the hood of the Jeep as table, and directed that the Lieutenant “Write your mother now, tell her you are alive and don’t let it happen again.”! After a profuse string of yes-sir’s the Lieutenant slumped back up the hill to assume his duty of staying alive so that he could continue to write home.

**The First Day**

What a ride it was for the new butter bar Lieutenants on the Tatami Mats of the Japanese pig boat that took us from Camp Drake to Pusan, then by train to Taegu and finally into the Apple Orchard. All along the way we received excellent advice on how to put our bars on under our collar, that the North Koreans couldn’t shoot straight (despite the constant flow of casualties headed the other way). The Lieutenant Colonel
at Camp Drake stood under the smoke stacks decorated with the 1st Cav patch and announced to us that he was a “be’r”. When asked what a be’r was, he responded “I’ll be’r when you go and I’ll be’r when you get back”. Our arrival in Taegu was greeted by the pronouncement that “the War is over, the ring knockers have arrived”. Our new gear and equipment disappeared the first night on the hill as the various South Korean units shot back and forth at each other, and we at both of them. In fact, one Lieutenant spent most of his first night having been assigned to a squad given no visible rank and of an age judged too tender to be in charge of anything. Thus the War began!

**Napalm**

As the Cav Commander stated in Apocalypse Now, “I love the smell of Napalm in the morning.” As I recall, we loved the smell of Napalm any time that it was at least 25 meters away on the forward slope of the hill. The ingenious use of Napalm as “FUGASE” or a jury rigged mine field on the forward slope often diverted the Chinese to the flank or into somebody else’s domain. 55 gallon drums of Napalm spaced along the platoon or company perimeter some 500-800 meters out created a remarkably effective barrier to break up the traditional Chinese early morning assault accompanied by bugles and ear splitting whistles. Each drum was connected by telephone wire extending from a “naily board” in the platoon headquarters position running out to the drum and 2 ½ pounds of TNT underneath the semi-buried drum and a circle of det chord around the middle, plus a white phosphorous grenade replacing the bomb on the top. Once the nails were touched at the Command Post, a charge under the barrel was detonated and if the timing was correct the det chord cut the barrel in half and the WP ignited the Napalm as it geysered up into the air then settled back to melt the snow or reasonably good sized area of effect. Early one morning during a Chinese attack, what appeared to be a Chinese Company Commander observed this series of partially buried 55 gallon drums and could not resist the thought that they offered a better vantage point for him and his binoculars to survey our position. Unfortunately for him, but perhaps fortunately for the rest of the organization, the temptation to send him sky high was overwhelming so somebody touched the nails and let him go up in the air in a spectacular display, albeit about 20 minutes too early. Nonetheless, it did break up the attack. Napalm definitely has a deterrent effect!
“Half the world is composed of people who have something to say and can’t, the other half those who have nothing to say and keep on saying it.” Robert Frost.

“Hugh Brown is not an officer, he is a commissioned sergeant.” These words of praise were from First Lieutenant Carl F. Bernard, Company L, 21st Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division, during the early days of Korean War. It is hoped that statement is used as my epitaph.

Early in December 1949, Lieutenant Colonel S. S. Sogart, the 24th Infantry Division G-1 sent one of his clerks to me with the TLC’s issued M1911 .45 caliber pistol with a note from him asking me to please tune up the .45 because of a upcoming pistol match among the Division Headquarters officers. I did my best with this pistol and sent it back to his office the next day.

LTC Sogart had been in the Army for 16 years, of which 14 years and 10 months were on duty outside the Continental United States. It was rumored that the initials S.S. in his name stood for Steam Ship.

LTC Sogart was highly respected in Division Headquarters and had the reputation of telling you something, that you could take to the bank. You didn’t get a bunch of BS from LTC Sogart.

It was a day or so after Christmas in 1949 when I received word to report to LTC Sogart. When I reported to him in his office, he put me at ease and asked me to be seated.

Next he said, “Sergeant Brown, I’m curious about you not going to OCS. You appear to meet all the necessary requirements. Would you please give me your reason for not going.”

I explained to him about being asked to leave four different grade schools before joining the Army in July 1944 at the age of 17, being a replacement in “E” Troop, One Hundred and Twenty-Fourth Horse Cavalry Regiment Special, then located at Myitkyina, Burma, and reenlisting December 1945 at Shanghai, China for the 33rd Infantry Regiment in Panama.
I also told LTC Sogart that while on delay in route leave at home in Myrtle Point, Oregon, a neighbor and former classmate, Billie Osborne, asked if I was going to take the GED test for a high school diploma. My reply was that I did not think I could pass the test. She then ordered me to go to the high school and obtain a GED test packet. I was to meet her the next day at a local ice cream parlor with the packet. When I arrived there the next day, she had three high school classmates with her, Mary Ann Bellshaw, Elizabeth Pierson, and Anna Bell Vadness, all of whom I had known most of my life.

The four girls then divided up my GED test package among themselves and told me to meet with them the next day, at the same time, and place.

The next day the girls gave me my GED test completed, which I turned in to the high school and forgot about until the next spring when I received my high school diploma.

LTC Sogart said I needed to work on my education and dismissed me.

In March 1950 Pfc Arnold R. Yoshizawa, an infantry operations assistant in Division Headquarters, G-3 Section, and I designed weapons racks which would meet the 8th Army requirement that all individual weapons not in use would be stored and secured under three locks and keys. Pfc Yoshizawa was starting work on the drawings when First Sergeant Carl Maxwell of Division Headquarters and Headquarters Company told me that the company commander, Captain George B. Hafemen, had selected me to go on temporary duty for 30 days with the 21st Infantry Regiment located at Kumamoto Kyushu, Japan. Division Headquarters was located in Kokura Kyushu, Japan, approximately 75 miles north of Kumamoto.

I was to attend a water safety instructor’s class and after completion would be a certified Red Cross water safety instructor. Returning to Division Headquarters in Kokura, I was to start preparing to instruct a class for Red Cross certification of lifeguards. The 24th Infantry Division had an amphibious maneuver scheduled for the fall of 1950 and would need many certified lifeguards.

Approximately 30 men from the division reported for this water safety instructors class. A corporal from the Regimental Headquarters said for us to determine who was the ranking NCO and that this NCO was to report to First Lieutenant Richard Levers at building number 147 in ten minutes. It turned out that I was the ranking NCO.

On the way to report I thought to myself, “Brown, you’re about to get the old Army bullshit lecture that all soldiers get when they are away from their own unit, i.e., see that the men all shine their shoes, brass, shave, haircuts, bed check, roll call, reveille, retreat, do not drink local booze, and above all else keep their peckers in their pants.” As I approached building number 147, a good-looking, dark-complected officer was standing by the entrance to the ground floor of this two-story wooden barracks.
I reported to 1LT Levers in my best military manner and he put me at ease and welcomed our group to Camp Wood and the 21st Infantry Regiment.

His instructions were brief, direct, and to the point. The group would be billeted on the second floor, would mess with Regimental Headquarters Company, be free to go on pass from retreat until roll call just before reveille in the mornings Monday through Friday. No roll calls on Saturday or Sundays. Anyone not present for the roll call and anyone who answered for someone who was absent, would be reported to 1LT Levers' clerk and they would be sent back to their units that same day.

As the NCO in charge, I was also to see the barracks were ready for inspection before departing to the post swimming pool. I never saw 1LT Levers again until 4 July 1950 in Pusan South Korea.

Our group had arrived late on Friday afternoon and by noon Saturday the barracks was settled. After noon chow I walked over to the 21st IR, First Three Graders NCO Club. As I approached the bar in the barroom someone called my name. It was S/Sgt Roger A. Smith who had been in one of the G. Sections of Division Headquarters.

Roger cautioned me about the seats at the bar. This was “L” shaped and had three on the short end with twelve down the long part. Starting at the short end against wall the first stool was for the Regimental Sergeant Major, next two on his left were for the Battalion Sergeant Major's. Turning the corner and going down the long part of the bar were stools for the benefit of Regiment’s twelve First Sergeants. Roger continued, telling what happens when a new First Three Grader comes to this club for the first time and sits on one of the stools at the bar. A Sergeant Major or First Sergeant would call out in a deafening voice for the Club manager. When the Club manager comes into the barroom, he would be questioned in a blaring voice, why is that man setting in First Sergeant’s seat? You know that seat is reserved for the “K” Company, First Sergeant. Whereupon the manager would ask the Japanese bartender in a piercing voice what’s he doing in the “K” Company seat? In a loud voice the bartender would reply, I ask sergeant to sit table, he say bar O.K., I’m Japanese not General McArthur, no tell 21st Infantry Sergeants where set!

If the new N.C.O. had not fled by this time, the Club Manager would buy him a drink and explain the custom of this bar.

Roger Smith was the most tenacious man to be a soldier I had ever met. On the day he was clearing the supply room of Div. Hq. & Hq Co., he remarked, “Brownie I did not join the Army to run a G— D— typewriter. I’m going to the 21st Infantry to be a Real Soldier.” Unhappily Roger was running a typewriter again at regimental headquarters. I was to meet Roger later in South Korea on 10 July.

The total group completed the water safety course and returned to their respective units around 1 May.
Upon returning to Division Hqs. & Hqs. Company in Kokura, a letter was waiting for me from a Lieutenant Colonel Woods in the newly formed Enlisted Career Branch located in the Pentagon, Washington, D.C. It was a complete surprise. The letter was a reply to a letter written in January 1950, by LTC S.S. Sogart, the 24th Infantry Division, G-1, to Enlisted Career Branch in Washington inquiring about my anticipated future career in the Army.

The contents of LTC Woods’ letter is what ultimately sent me to Korea, 21st Infantry Regiment, and Love Company. One statement was that I had been in Grade E-5, a S/Sgt. for only 18 months and could not be considered for promotion to Grade E-6 Sfc for another three years, six months. My age would be 27 at the end of that period. LTC Woods went on with the good news that after being promoted to Grade E-6, I could not be considered for promotion to Grade E-7 Master for 10 years. My age by that time would be 37.

I was upset to say the least. First Sergeant Maxwell stopped in the First Graders Club each day after duty hours for a drink or two. I waited until I saw him alone and showed him Colonel Woods’ letter. The Tops’ reply was that the information contained in the letter was a lot of bull and would probably change in six months and I should not pay any attention to it. I lost this letter along with other things in Korea.

The indefinite enlistment I was on required me to give six months’ notice before I could get out of the Army.

While I was in Kumamota attending water safety, Pfc Rik Yoshizawa had finished the drawings for the weapons locking system for our arms rack. My plan was to finish the arms room then give my six months’ notice to get out of the Army.

The Arms Room project was going slowly because the weapons were required to be under lock and key at night. This meant removing each one in the morning and putting them all back each night, leaving only a few hours each day for the construction of the new system.

On 25 June 1950, North Korea started the invasion of South Korea. Reactions to this was very much the same as 7 December 1941, when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor to start World War II. We had total blackout of all lights in the headquarters area for the first night or so and alerts to issue the arms, then to take the arms back but that ended in a day or two.

Of course, weapons and ammunition were utmost in our minds. Headquarters — Headquarters Company combat load of ammunition was stored in one of the two small concrete buildings in back of the Headquarters Company supply room. Sergeant First Class Don Todd, the supply sergeant and I had finished an inspection of the ammunitions and crew served weapons that were stored in one of the buildings. When
Staff Sergeant Tucker, the Division Chemical NCO, drove up and opened the other small one-room building, neither Todd nor I had ever been inside this building and were curious about its contents. Sergeant Todd asked Sergeant Tucker for permission to enter and Tucker said come on in and look around. A small amount of different chemical gases used for training was stored in one end of the room. The other end of this room contained 10 to 15 foot lockers. I asked Tucker what was in the foot lockers. He replied that he did not know.

One foot locker in front of the rest was marked G-1 with white paint. It was not locked, so I opened it and looked at the contents. Big files held together with metal fasteners. On the front of this first file was lettered G-1 Operation Mount Olympus. Reading on I learned it was part of the 10th United State Army Amphibious Invasion Plan for the Isles of Kyushu, Japan, scheduled for the fall of 1945.

The estimated number of American casualties for the first 30 days of this invasion was a hundred thousand. After fighting Japanese in Burma, living on Kyushu and seeing the terrain, I disagreed with this estimate; it was much too low. Harry Truman’s decision about the atomic bomb probably saved a million or so American and/or Japanese lives.

*June 30th, 1950, President Truman authorizes commitment of U.S. ground forces to combat in Korea.*

Plans for getting out of the Army now changed. Being single and not owing money to anyone, I planned to go to Korea. There were sure to be some promotions in Korea.

**Morning, 3 July, 1950:** An advance party of division headquarters was forming in the Company street. The party consisted of 10 Jeeps with trailers and around 20 men and officers.

I asked Sergeant Todd to please tell Captain Hafemen the next morning of my going to Korea.

Our small party of vehicles left the headquarters company area around 1000 hours and boarded a Japanese ferry at Moji at 1300 hours. Others on this ferry were MPs and signal troup. We departed Moji around 1700 hours. I slept on a Tami floor mat that night and it smelled like a fish.

We arrived in Pusan, South Korea about 0830 hours 4 July, 1950. I learned part of the 21th Infantry Regiment was at the Pusan ball park.

As I approached the entrance to the ball park, I recognized First Lieutenant Richard Levers of the 21st Infantry. I reported to 1Lt Levers that I was AWOL from division headquarters company and that I’d like to go to the 21st Infantry Recon Platoon. 1Lt Levers says, no, Sergeant Brown, you go to L Company. Again I mentioned to Lieuten-
ant Levers that I really thought I could do more good in the Recon Platoon, and he was a little short with me. He said, Sergeant Brown, you’re to go to L Company or you go to the stockade. I said, yes, sir, where is L Company located, sir? And he pointed to the inside of the ball ground.

Inside the ball park was the Third Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment. I reported to L Company’s First Sergeant, Edward Hluboky, who told me to report to Second Lieutenant Frank Mitchell, the Third Platoon leader.

2Lt Mitchell made me the Third Squad leader of his platoon. The squad was made up of men coming to L Company on the 4th of July, 1950. Their last names were: Moreno, Wodarski, Kinard, Barrett, Struble, Hansen, Krebs, Farr, and Nolen.

All were privates except Kinard. Corporal Kinard had a friend, Corporal Bunting, in a different platoon and asked if he might be assigned to his friend’s platoon. I told him it was okay with me, but he must check with the Third Platoon sergeant and the Company First Sergeant. That was the last time I saw Kinard until the L Company reunion in Milwaukee thirty-some-odd years later.

Vernon “Tommy” Farr — whose first name was Vernon, which he did not like and went by the name of Tommy — Farr and I pitched shelter halves making a pup-tent. The ground in this ball park was just about level. Tommy was in excellent physical condition because he was a boxer. He said he would take care of ditching our pup-tent while I went on a work detail. Upon returning a few hours later to our pup-tent, it looked at first to me like Tommy had dug a fox hole in the rear of our tent. I asked Tommy if he was expecting a air raid or something, and he says no, that’s not a fox hole. He crawled out of the tent and proceeded to explain that that was a sump and because this ball field was level, he had to have some place for the water. As it run off our pup-tent into the ditch so water wouldn’t stand and he had this hole that looked like a fox hole diked so only the water from our immediate area would run in his sump, which later that night proved to be a very wise action.

Five July, 1950: First Sergeant Hluboky put me in charge of a 10-man detail to report to Major Bond, 21st Infantry Regiment, S-4. I was to report to Major Bond at a nearby railroad siding. At the siding, Major Bond told me to load 40 drums, or metal barrels, each containing about 50 gallons of gasoline that had been dumped near a railroad flat car. This flat car had low removable sideboards about two feet high. To get the drums from the ground to the bed of this flat car, a vertical distance of about eight feet, it would be necessary for us to roll the drums up a very steep two-foot-wide wooden ramp which had cleats nailed across about one foot on center to help your footing going up this ramp.

Thomas Woodward, one of the privates, said Sergeant, I think I know a easy way to load this stuff. I asked, how Woodward? And he replied, take a 10-minute break or so
and I’ll be back in just a few minutes.

About 10 minutes later, Woodward returned with two Korean men equipped with a pole, chains and hooks. For one pack of American cigarettes, the Korean men contracted to load all the drums aboard the rail car. While the detail sat around and watched the loading, Woodward walked over to the local bootlegger’s place and purchased some rot-gut whiskey. It smelled on his breath like rotten eggs. We returned to the company area, and that was the last time I was to see Woodward until 34 years later at a Company L reunion in Washington, DC. He looked just about the same as he did that day in Pusan in 1950.

On the night of 5 July 50, it rained from about 2000 hours until about 0200 hours. Thanks to Farr’s work on the ditching, our pup-tent remained dry all night long but about half of the men in our battalion were up the rest of the night due to the standing water on the ball field.

We loaded on a train 6 July, and as the train passed through cities and towns on our way north, the crowds would cheer and wave flags as the bands played. It really looked like it was going to be a good time, but I knew better.

We dug in on the road to Chongju, then moved northeast of Choichiwon, approximately 10 miles on 9 July and dug in on terrain that was ideal for a defensive position.

The Third Platoon sergeant showed me where my squad was to dig in and I told the sergeant that I did not think this was the right place for my squad and recommended we move a few yards for a better defensive position. The platoon sergeant said I should talk with 2LT Frank Mitchell before moving and he would tell Lieutenant Mitchell that I would like to see him and departed.

My Third Squad had nine men and myself on the 4th of July. Corporal Kinard did not return, so myself and eight men made up the Third Squad meaning if we had 10 men, we would dig five two-men fox holes. But with eight men and myself, we would dig 4 two-man fox holes and I was to dig by myself.

This was a regular Army unit. The officers who were not regular Army were in the process of trying to become regular Army. Most of the higher ranking NCOs had five to ten years behind them and were all regular Army. Most of the young men had grown up during World War II and heard the tales from their neighbors, their uncles, their older brothers, perhaps fathers who served in World War II about the good times, the wine, women and songs. So they joined the Army looking for wine, women and song, which they found in Japan in great supply.

Years later, I was to see reports of the 21st Infantry Regiment receiving by this date 285 infantrymen fillers from other infantry units in Japan.
This is how the personnel replacement system and selection worked in 1950:

**Example:** X division was levied on for 120 infantrymen. Division headquarters would tell each of its three regiments to furnish 40 men. Each regimental headquarters would tell each of the 10 company commanders to furnish four men from their company for this levy. The company commander goes back to his area, calls in the first sergeant and each of his platoon sergeants, informs them about the company must send four men to the 24th infantry division. Then the company commander asks who should the company send. The first sergeant says, put Master Sergeant White on this. He’s been a square peg since day one. First Platoon Sergeant says, send — put Private Brown. He’s a wise-ass and late for all the formations. Second Platoon Sergeant says, put Corporal Smith on this. He does not sober up each week until about Tuesday. Second Platoon Sergeant speaks up about a rumor going around. Corporal Jones is screwing some officer’s wife and if true, could be a big trouble. The company commander says okay, first sergeant, phone those names and serial numbers to the Regimental Sergeant Major. The rest of you see that each of these men are packed and at regimental headquarters 0530 hours tomorrow morning. That’s all. Dismissed.

The 120 infantrymen levy requirement on X division has just been met.

2LT Mitchell came up the hill to me and said, I understand from the platoon sergeant that you do not like the area he told you to dig in your squad. I replied, sir, what I suggest is we swing my third squad like a gate from the second squad around to the high ground at my rear.

Lieutenant Mitchell became excited and in a loud voice said, “Captain Cox, pointed to this metal tower that supports those electrical transmission lines and said, Frank, you are to put your last man just past and a little in front of that tower.”

My being a regular Army staff sergeant and wanting to be a sergeant first class and knowing I would need Lieutenant Mitchell’s help said, yes sir. Telling my men to dig in where they were, I started digging my hole, which was the last hole on the right flank of the Third Battalion.

The remainder of 9 July was spent digging fox holes. I could see in the area to my front that the 21st Infantry, First Battalion Companies A & B occupied ground just south of the small town of Chonui. The distance from our line to the A & B Companies’ lines were approximately eighteen hundred yards. On that afternoon the artillery registered defensive concentrations in front of A & B Companies.

Our Third Squad had no radio or telephone. We had no idea of what was going on or the overall situation.
I did not see any mortar or artillery defensive concentrations fired in front of the Third Battalion on 9 July.

**Ten July 1950:** We awoke hearing gunfire, mortar and artillery fire exploding in the First Battalion sector. Around noon I could see what I thought was North Korean infantry. When our mortars or artillery fired, they would run into a railroad tunnel. When the firing stopped, they would come back out.

Late in the day on the 10th, the Third Battalion was ordered to counter-attack the First Battalion positions. The First Battalion had been overrun. They left a lot of equipment and some wounded men. My Third Squad was ordered to remain on our present position as security.

A big, fine-looking Army Air Corps major with a beautiful map case and a lovely map came onto our position and asked me to confirm his location, and asked me about the enemy situation. I pointed out the First Battalion positions where the Third Battalion was counter-attacking just outside of the City of Chonui. He asked if he could get his Jeep up on the position and I told him I didn’t know of any way he could get his Jeep up there. He said he’d have to go back to the road and go around in front of our positions. He had a flight of jets that would be there in about 20 minutes and they were going to take care of everything. I had never had any close air support, because in World War II in Burma we didn’t have any and I don’t believe I’d ever seen a jet plane up until that time in my life.

The Company L First Sergeant, Hluboky came by and I mentioned I’d like to go up on the 1st Bn position.

Later he said “I talked with the company commander. He had a detail that returned to our position here and the captain said ‘You could go ahead and take your squad up there.’”

My squad went straight ahead. We didn’t go back and go around by the road; we just cut straight down the hill and hit the road that ran between Chochiwon and Chonui. We’d gone just a short way when a sniper fired one round. We hit the ground but we were never fired on again.

We came out on the road to Chonui about halfway to the First Battalion positions and maybe 50 to 100 yards in back of the First Battalion positions we found five men who had been executed with their hands tied with engineer’s tape, and all were shot in the head with a small-caliber pistol.

I reported to Second Lieutenant Bernard. He was kind of a goofy-looking individual. I found out he’d been with Task Force Smith and he wore glasses. The lenses had come out of the frames and he’d taken tape from the 60 mortar canisters and taped up the
lenses to the frames. This caused him to constantly be turning the back of his head trying to see around the tape on the glasses, and he was immediately dubbed Peep-sight.

Lieutenant Bernard told me that Carl Jackson had a 2.36 Bazooka and two rounds for it but Jackson did not have an assistant gunner. There were some tanks coming from Chonui towards the position, and would I go and assist Jackson. I said, yes. Jackson and I went out to some old First Battalion holes that were good fox holes on this slope where we could see. The tanks started up the hill and Carl hit the first tank on the left track and for some reason it made the tank turn just 180 degrees and stop. A crewman in this tank got up out of the hatch and, of course, Carl and I both started shooting. One or perhaps both of us hit him and he slumped over the turret, the top half of his body was hanging down over turret while the other half of his body remained in the tank. The two tanks behind this one decided they’d turn around and go back to Chonui for some reason. Carl had only one more round of Bazooka ammunition and he fired that at the rear tank’s back end as it was going away from us. We missed by about five yards to the right of the tank and hit a telephone pole blowing it in half about four feet above the ground. I don’t know why, but this brought a big cheer from the Third Battalion men who were around us in the First Battalion fox holes.

After dark we were ordered back to our original positions. Following the road back I saw a jeep with Air Corps markings that had been shot up. This Jeep had a big radio with holes in it. I was to learn later that the Air Corps Major was killed by his own jets on their first pass.

The road made a big circle around to the back of our positions. A little draw ran up off the road past the L Company CP. When I had left Division Headquarters Company, I had taken my M-2 30 caliber carbine with me, and I was about out of carbine ammunition. I stopped at the CP to look around for 30 caliber carbine ammunition. While looking for ammunition, I met Staff Sergeant, Roger Smith, who was filled with joy. Roger said he was a rifle squad leader in a rifle platoon in a rifle company and at long last he was a real soldier. Records show Roger was killed in action the next day.

**Eleven July 1950:** In the Miho River Valley, the fog was so thick you could not see the road. We could hear tanks and men marching. The sound of tanks and men marching stopped, and a bugle call was sounded which I shall never forget in ten thousand years. It was beautiful and at the same time, frightening. One of the men, Private Nolen, in my squad said it was the charge of the light brigade. I’m sure it was because when you repeated half a league forward, it fit the bugle call.

Tommy Farr called to me that Private Barrett was dead. Farr and Barrett had dug in a two-man fox hole. Farr asked me to come over and look at Barrett. I helped Farr get Barrett out of the fox hole and inspected him but could not find any marks or whatever. Tommy thought Barrett died of fright. We put Barrett back in the fox hole and Tommy
came with me to my hole. I had taken Barrett's M-1 rifle, belt, and bandolier ammo because I did not find any carbine ammo the night before.

By this time it was twenty or so minutes after the bugle call and you could hear firing on our left, but we had not received any fire or seen any enemies. The ground to my right and also my rear was about 20 or 30 feet higher in elevation than my fox hole. This higher ground was covered with small trees. Suddenly on my right flank a North Korean came down out of the small trees and he stopped perhaps 10 yards from my fox hole. He looked as surprised as I was, then someone called from my rear and the enemy started at an angle up to my rear. By that time both Tommy Farr and I began firing at his back until he disappeared.

Tommy was watching to our rear and I looked to our front. Abruptly a line of little holes appeared in the dirt on the outside of my fox hole. Then I heard the snap of the bullets passing inches away from my right ear. During World War II I had learned to judge the distance that bullets travel passing my body. Tommy and I both had dropped to the bottom of the hole. Tommy asked if I was hit, and I said, no, but we were leaving, so stay close.

We went down the line of my squad's fox holes and I told the men each to follow me because an enemy machine gun was on the high ground to our rear. This machine gun on the right flank was firing down the whole front of L Company. Because of the higher elevation, this gun was actually firing into some of the other platoon's fox holes. I put my squad less two men that did not follow my instructions into a wash that was on the ridge. Other men from the Third Platoon were in the wash also. About this time Lieutenant Mitchell showed up asking me if I'd seen the Third Platoon sergeant. I told him the last time I saw the sergeant was early yesterday.

I wanted Lieutenant Mitchell to get our 60 mortars to fire on the machine gun. Lieutenant Mitchell wanted to be sure that I had the correct location of this machine gun. He asked me to go back up the ridge line with him so that he could see the exact location of the machine gun himself. We started on our bellies and had gone maybe 20 yards up the ridge line when he said, Sergeant, this is silly crawling on our bellies. My reply was, no sir, those bullets are only two or three feet above us. His reply was, bullshit, and he started to get to his feet and was struck in the chest and knocked down.

Orville Musick, came over the top of the wash on his belly and helped me get Lieutenant Mitchell back to the wash. Two men went with Lieutenant Mitchell helping him on his way back to the L Company CP.

Raymond Brown was short, not over 5 foot 4 tall. Brown was not in my squad but looked calm, cool, and collected. I showed Brown the location of the machine gun and I asked him to go to the L Company CP and have our 60 mortars fire on that area the
last round to be white smoke or phosphorus. We'd taken the high ground. I had him
repeat the message and he did so correctly. I sent him on his way.

In less than three minutes, Ray Brown was back and said I had best come with him and
look at something. Just over the ridge line and looking to our left at an elevation about
four feet lower than our location stood a man I thought to be an officer looking through
field glasses. Sitting on the ground beside him with a light machine gun, a gunner was
firing towards Love Company CP area. The man standing had a shiny belt buckle. I told
Brown to aim at the belt buckle and on my count of three squeeze off a round. I
counted to three, Ray hit the officer, and he went down like a sack of potatoes. The
gunner looked around at this officer and I shot him in the chest and he did a back flip.

Ray and I went back to the wash and I counted 17 of us who I told we were leaving. We
would go down across the road, railroad, and river, and that I was sure some of the
24th Infantry Division would be on the ridge across the river.

All went well until we reached the road. Sitting on the road headed south was a T-34
tank. The turret and its 85 cannon was turned and pointing up the little draw off the
road that ran past L Company CP.

I explained to the men that we had only once chance of crossing the road alive. That
was for all to cross at the same time. I lined them up along the road saying I would
count out loud to three and on three go like hell across the road and jump off the bank
towards the railroad then off the railroad to the river.

Before I could count to three, three men dropped their weapons before going back up
the hill with their hands up above their heads, called to others to drop their weapons
and join them to surrender. One called out, if you listen to that sergeant, he'll get you all
killed. At that time killing those three cowards would have been a pleasure if doing so
would not have alerted the bow gunner in the T-34 tank.

On the loud count of three, seven men crossed the road. Ray Brown had short legs and
fell about halfway across. I reached back and caught his hand about the same time the
bow gunner in the tank opened up on Ray. Pulling Ray into the briar patch, I found that
his right leg was just about shot off. I gave him first aid and told him I would have to
leave him. He said, that's all right, sergeant, just give me a grenade, maybe I'll be able
to take a couple of them with me.

Down on the railroad tracks, I looked at the river about 15 feet below me. The bank
was rip-rap stone work. Starting down, I fell and slid into the water, losing my steel
helmet.

Farr and Musick were waiting for me. I told them I watched a man trying to cross the
river and that machine guns would hit the water on his right side and the man would
Remembered Brown

turn left. If the machine gun bullets was hitting on his left side, he would turn to his right. When the machine gun bullets would hit in front of him, he'd stop and I think was then hit and fell over in the water. The plan I give to Farr and Musick was Musick would run downstream across the river at a 45 degree angle from us. I would run at a 45 degree angle up and across. Because Farr was in the best physical shape, his route would be the shortest but the most dangerous, going straight across as hard and fast as he could run. We would go on the count of three. “Remember, do not turn or stop until you reach concealment.” We could see bushes across the river, it was about 250 yards.

On the count of three we all started. The water in the river was deeper than it looked. About a third of the way across I stepped into a deep hole and went in over my head. I let go of the M-1 rifle and continued the crossing. Our luck held. Only one machine gunner was firing at us. That gunner could not make up his mind who to shoot at. First at me then Farr and over at Musick, then return to me, then Farr and back to Musick. By the third cycle around of firing I made the bushes on the far side of the river. Farr had made it across ahead of me and he went into the bushes downstream about a hundred yards. I did not know about Musick.

When I started to walk after leaving the river, I discovered the heel of my left combat boot was missing and the nails were hurting my left heel. Thinking I had lost it when I fell down the river bank that the stone rip-rap was on, I took off my boot to try and get the nails out. But having only an M-1 bayonet to work with, I could not. Upon examining the boot a small hole at the junction of my sole and where the heel had been made me believe it had been shot off. Leaving the left boot, I went up the hill again.

Continuing up the hill, I was not concealed, but I was out of small arms range of the enemy across the river. The T-34 tank fired three 85 rounds at me. The nearest miss was about 15 yards.

On reaching the top, I found Tommy Farr sitting under a bush. He thought I had been hit in the left leg because of the way I was walking.

Looking back across the river, we could see a hundred or more American prisoners marching on the road south with a few enemy infantry and one T-34 tank following.

Starting to walk towards Chochiwon, I had trouble keeping up with Farr. Stopping, I took off my right combat boot and my walking became a whole lot easier. Tommy and I had recrossed the Miho River about 1500 hours three miles or so downstream from the first crossing. Walking on the road was much better than coming through the hills. We had not been on the road more than 20 minutes when a L-19 airplane came down to look us over then made a 180 turn and buzzing us while wagging its wings, he flew towards Chochiwon.
Perhaps it was 10 or so minutes before a three-quarter ton weapons carrier came down the road from the direction of Chochiwon. The weapons carrier stopped in the middle of the road almost fifty yards from us and we continued walking towards it while it was turning around in the middle of the road. The driver asked if we were from the Third Battalion and we said yes. He said, get in the truck. Then he delivered us to a lot in Chochiwon that was near regimental headquarters.

I walked over to the regimental headquarters mess without helmet, weapon or shoes, borrowed a mess kit and had the first hot chow since breakfast on 3 July in Division Headquarters Company mess in Kokura, Japan.

When I returned to the lot which was a straggler collecting point, Tommy Farr had a poncho, two wool blankets and a case of “C” rations, all of which he had borrowed.

Just as it was getting dark, we were ordered to move to the field outside of Chochiwon. We walked about 30 minutes to a field by a road. Twelve July, I awoke from the best night of sleep that I’d had since 5 July in the ball park in Pusan. A captain from regimental headquarters asked us to talk with a newspaper reporter. His name was Keyes Beech and he worked for the Chicago Daily News Foreign Service.

The newspaper article that followed that interview as it appeared on the front page of the Oregonian newspaper July 13, 1950 appears on the following page.

Ten hundred hours, 12 July: We were loaded on trucks and traveled to the south bank of the Kum River at Taep'yong-ni. I was told to stay on the truck; it was going to Taejon airstrip where the 3rd Battalion trains were located. There I received an M-1 rifle, steel helmet with helmet liner, poncho, and a pair of combat boots.

Late 12 July, the first sergeant of G Company, 19th Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division was Vic Hungerford, who I had known in Kokura where he had been in charge of the 24th Infantry Division NCO school. I asked Vic for a ride up to the Kum River with his company. First Sergeant Hungerford made a big deal out of my having been in L Company north of Chochiwon the day before saying it couldn’t be too bad or I wouldn’t be going back to the line. Of course, I would have a lot of questions asked during this trip.

It was dark before I found the 21st Infantry Headquarters. Lieutenant Bernard was there and showed me where to bed down saying if he needed me, he would know my location.

Thirteen hundred hours July 13: 3rd Battalion moved from the Kum River line to the Taejon airstrip. Our company supply truck had the company field desk, and in it I found our morning report book. I could count only 36 men. Most of those were cooks and supply people. I also found out that I was the de facto company commander of
American Battalions
Shattered by Koreans

"I have been in the army eight years and I've never fought without flanks."

"Reprinted with special permission from the Chicago Sun-Times, Inc. @ 1999"
BY KEYES BEECH
Chicago Daily News Foreign Service

WITH THE UNITED STATES FORCES IN KOREA, July 12—Whipped, frightened and hopelessly outnumbered survivors of chopped up American battalions were stumbling out of the hills Wednesday, with backward looks at the ever-advancing gooks.

Only a fragment of the original unit was accounted for although more stragglers may turn up later.

Those who raised their hands to surrender were shot dead by as savage a foe as Americans ever faced.

* * *

Squatting in a potato patch with his ragged, weaponless and sometimes shoeless men around him, Lt. Edward James, 25, Columbus, Ga., said:

"Tell people how blank useless it is. I have been in the army eight years and I've never fought without flanks."

* * *

The battle began Monday afternoon when the Americans counterattacked in the Miho river valley. They drove forward for 1800 yards. At midnight they drew back to their original positions.

But these positions were occupied—by North Koreans.

Slaughter Begins With Daylight

As usual our forces were outflanked. Americans were under small-arms fire all night but the slaughter didn't begin until dawn.

The fog still hadn't lifted from the valley when the attack came. Surrounded and tense in their foxholes the Americans heard the Communists sound the charge of the light brigade on a bugle as signal for the attack.

"It was well played, too," said Sgt. Hugh Brown, of Myrtle Point, Or.

"We could hear their tanks moving up into position in our rear," said Capt. Leon Rainville, 35, St. Paul, Minn.
Battalion Staff Silent and Missing

The battalion staff still hasn’t been heard from. Sergeant Brown said that after he had crossed the river he looked back and saw a large group of American prisoners being marched along the road toward American positions with Communist infantry and one tank behind them.

Brown, who came out with only part of his platoon, said it had been cut to pieces by four enemy machine guns mounted on high ground around them.

“We headed down from the hill toward the road,” said Brown. “When we got to the road it was covered by machine gun fire.

“Three of my men turned chicken and dropped their rifles and ran back up the hill with their hands up. The rest refused to try to make it across and hid in the bushes.

“One kid was hit going across. His leg was dangling in shreds so I pulled him into a briar patch as far as I could. I gave him first aid and told him I would have to leave him.

“He said, ‘That’s all right, Sarg. Just give me grenades and maybe I’ll be able to take a couple of them with me.’”

The fleeing Americans made their way across rice paddies for 200 yards with bullets pecking at their heels. When they reached the river they turned downstream.

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This newspaper clipping was restored graphically and rearranged physically. It appeared in the Portland Oregon “Oregonian” Newspaper July 13, 1950 as a two column wide lead article. It has been enlarged in order to better fit the page.

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Remembered

Love Company, 21st Infantry Regiment. Captain Cox, the de jure company commander along with all officers and senior NCOs were missing in action 11 July. Lieutenant Carl Bernard had been transferred to B Company, 21st Infantry Regiment on 1 July, and I did not see him again until the 22nd of July. The last morning report signed by Captain Cox was 3 July. All Love Company morning reports after that date were compiled many miles to the rear in the 24th Infantry Division Personnel Section, and this caused a great many erroneous entries to be made in our morning report.

Love Company’s total battle casualties 10-11, July, 1950, north of Chochiwon South Korea, were 101 men or officers. This is 74 percent of the 136 men and officers at the position. The detailed breakdown of the 101 casualties is as follows:

- a) Killed in action, 39 ----------------------------------- Percentage 27 percent.
- b) Captured POWs, 54 ----------------------------------- Percentage 40 percent.
- c) Wounded in action, 4 ----------------------------------- Percentage 3 percent.
- d) Missing in action, 5 ----------------------------------- Percentage 4 percent.

Fifteen July: The remaining men of Love Company were attached to K Company. On our arrival at Mado-Ryong with K Company, I and 14 L Company men were a squad in K Company. I cannot account for the other 20 men on the morning report.

Sixteen July: My squad was assigned a part of this defensive position at one end of a tunnel. I couldn’t tell for sure whether it had been a railroad tunnel or a road tunnel in as much as the highway passed through a tunnel nearby and the railroad was using the tunnel at a little higher elevation, but in any event the squad was at the end of this old tunnel and I was sitting on the side of my fox hole and this defensive position was south of Taejon on the road to Yong-Dong. It was a nice warm day and suddenly there was a burst of machine gun fire just to my immediate right. When I turned my head, I was looking right straight into the face of a North Korean pilot of a Yak fighter plane whose canopy was slid back and I could see enough of the features of his face to see he did not have any goggles over his eyes, they were up on his forehead, and he’d put his left hand out and let go of a big handful of leaflets, gunned the Yak, and fired a burst at a little building up on the railroad. I was so surprised I didn’t get a shot at the Yak. It was gone. But after we looked around and were sure there wasn’t any other Yaks in the area, we went over and picked up some of these leaflets the plane had dropped which were propaganda surrender leaflets. It went on to say if you presented that to the Korean soldiers, that you’d be treated well. I kind of imagine everybody may have tucked one or two of those away on the possibility that he might have to use them. Years later William York, who was one of the men who was there that day, brought one of those surrender leaflets to our Company L reunion, and of course, the people who weren’t there were very much amazed that he’d kept them all these years.

Eighteen July: Lieutenant Elmer Gainok, a K Company officer, came up to me and said, “Brown, K Company’s been doing all the patrolling here for about three days and
you guys from L Company have just sat on your duffs.”

I said, “Well, Lieutenant, no one said a word to me about any patrols or anything.”

He replied, “Well, you guys ought to do your share.”

I said, “Well, if you tell me what it is y’all want me to do, why we’ll sure try to do it, Lieutenant.” And he said, “Well, you come on down to CP and talk to the Company Commander.”

I went down to the CP and, of course, Sid Dunn, the first sergeant was there, and the company commander who was named Junior Childers. He was a very sick man. He couldn’t stand up; he was laying on a blanket. I understood from Sid the only thing he could possibly eat was powdered milk and corn flakes, and there weren’t any places you could get powdered milk and cornflakes there at that time. But Junior said, “Yeah, I want you L Company guys to go on a patrol. I want you to go and see if you can go back to Taejon.” I said, “Fine. Do you have a map we could use?” He said, “I’m sorry. We don’t have a map, but I want you to go as far as you can toward the city of Taejon.” I said, “Well, there’s only two ways I know to go without a map, and that would be, one, follow the road or go down the railroad.” He said, “Well, I’ll leave that up to you. You can go whichever way you want to.” I said, “All right — reconnaissance patrolling?” He said, “Yes. If you’re fired upon, return here and report.” I said, “Yes sir.”

I went back up to the L Company bunch and I said, “I need four people to go with me on this patrol. We’re going to see how far we can go to get back to the city of Taejon.” I’m not sure who all went with me. I think Carl Jackson was one and I know Boggie Fetters was one. Boggie had metal taps on his boots and made a loud noise walking on the railroad tracks. I told him to sit down and I took a bayonet and took the taps or metal clips off his heals and toes of his boots.

We went down the railroad track and came to a cut in a small ridge running out of the hill and the railroad went through it; just a cut. I said, “Let’s get up on the high side of that; let’s don’t go through that cut.” We went up on the ridge, and I could see a stretch of the highway, maybe — oh, maybe a couple of miles from us, but I could make out people coming down the road with their hands on top of their heads. I could see men occasionally walk along with rifles in their arms, so it was American prisoners coming down the road towards our position. But they were four or five miles from our position by the way the road went, and I said, “Well, we still haven’t been fired on; we’ll go as far as we can.”

We returned to the railroad again and before we had gone a quarter of a mile or so, there was a big, deeper cut in the hill that the railroad passed through. I said, “Let’s go up on the high side again.” We eased up on the high side which was the left side of the
railroad, and I was very cautious leading up to the crest of this hill. As I was parting the grass and the little bushes very carefully, quietly, and just as I parted some bushes, there was a Korean soldier directly opposite me doing the same thing. We were perhaps three yards apart looking eyeball to eyeball. He was just as surprised and frightened as I was. He turned tail and ran and I did the same. We were just about back to the railroad before the Koreans got their act together and had a squad up there on top of the hill firing at us. We were fortunate that none of us were hit. So I said, “Okay, we’re heading on back.” So we went back and reported this information to the commander of K Company and he in turn passed it on to Regiment.

**Twenty one July:** We moved from Mado-Ryong to a position three miles north of Yong-dong. Lieutenant Bernard returned for a short time while we were at this position. Twenty-four days after joining Company L on the 4th of July, my notes differ with the morning reports.

**Twenty eight July:** We arrived on the Naktong River Line at Ibang-Myon. I was the squad leader of L Company, 10 men and myself, still attached to Company K.

K Company had been given a front along and overlooking the river of 11,880 feet. Lieutenant Gainok pointed to a map and said, “L Company is supposed to take care of half of this from here to here.” I said, “Lieutenant Gainok, I can’t even see those places there. Would you please walk up on the hill and show them to me?” He said, “No, I haven’t got time to walk up on the hill.” I don’t think I can recognize it.” I said, “I don’t have a map. Could I please borrow yours?” He said, “Well, that’s the only map we have in K Company.” He said, “I’ll let you take it, but you must bring it back to me by tomorrow morning.” I said, “Yes sir. Thank you.” I took my men and we walked up to the top of the ridge. We were overlooking the Naktong where the Ch’angnyong to Ch’ogye Bridge crossed the Naktong. Engineers later blew one span and dropped it in the river. I could see the town of Ch’angnyong about eight or so miles to our rear.

After studying the map, I found that L Company had a front of 5,940 feet. This distance is 60 feet short of 20 footballs fields laid end to end. I divided this into three sections, left, center, and right, which was closest to K Company. We had no radios or telephones. The center section was the highest elevation. About 70 yards in front of the high point was a large grassy hole. We used this hole as an outpost manned only at night. Pickens and Musick manned it the first night.

**Twenty nine July:** When I returned the map to Lieutenant Gainok, I asked if it was all right for me to go to Ch’angnyong. I thought I could bum some EE-8 telephones and wire from Division Headquarters & Headquarters Company supply. He said, “Okay.”

Ch’angnyong was eight miles from the Naktong River and Division Headquarters and Headquarters Company was in a school yard. I had caught a ride with two men from the Division G-2 Section. Sergeant Todd was glad to see me and asked if he could help.
I told him, “You bet.” Sergeant Todd and I were loading a Jeep trailer with two light machines guns complete, two cases of machine gun ammunition, an M2 30 caliber carbine, a case of carbine ammo, three EE-8 telephones, and three miles of telephone wire along with three cases of C rations. Lieutenant Wilson, the Headquarters and Headquarters Company Supply Officer, walked up and asked what we were doing. Todd said he was giving L Company, 21st Infantry Regiment some stuff Headquarters Company did not use. Lieutenant Wilson replied, I see; turned and walked away.

I had started the Jeep and was leaving with a trailer load of goodies when Lieutenant Wilson stepped into the road stopping me then handed a package to me saying, “You will need this more than I do.”

A artillery round hit north of the division headquarters as I was leaving. Looking at a small tent straight ahead of me, the 24th Infantry Division surgeon who was short, round, and had more black hair on his chest and arms than most dogs, had just came out and was frantically looking for his steel helmet. It was being used as a wash basin setting on top of three tent stakes. The surgeon put the helmet on without first pouring out the water. He was a sight to behold. Water running down all that black hair dressed only in a steel helmet and white boxer shorts. Another artillery round hit the south side and I knew it was time to leave the area.

I remember crying only twice while in Korea. Once in February, 1951, at a hospital. The other time was when I looked into the package First Lieutenant Wilson had handed me. It contained a square bottle of Ballentine Scotch Whiskey. I knew the price this generous act cost this good man.

When returning to our position on the Naktong, I drove around to the back side. It was close to being dark by the time I reached the high ground.

At dark William Travers and I went to the outpost for the night. Travers was slightly built, having sandy-colored hair, and with a quiet reserved personality. He was about five-eleven or six feet tall.

He talked that night of his plans which were his girlfriend in college graduating three months before his enlistment was finished. They would be married and she would work while he attended college. His car was a light blue 1941 Plymouth convertible with red leather upholstery. It was one of the last manufactured in the year 1941.

**Thirty July:** Talk about mistakes, I made a real lulu this morning. We were all busy digging in our new machine guns and stringing wire for the EE-8 phones when I told two men (I’ll not use their names here but refer to them as Shorty and Slim), “Shorty and Slim, take it easy today,” because I wanted them on the outpost tonight.
Not having a switchboard for the three EE-8 phones, we hooked up a party line going to the K Company CP now with two machine guns on our flanks with the high ground and wire communication, our biggest problem was drinking water. Someone thought up drip springs and installed three on the back side of our position. Each spring would produce only about one-half a canteen cup per hour.

About sundown, I was at the high ground phone waiting for Shorty and Slim to go on outpost with me. When all ten men came up and stood around, Shorty told me he and Slim were not going on outpost duty that night. It was plain the other eight were waiting to see what I would do about Shorty and Slim. First, I disarmed them. They did not resist in any manner. Then cut two pieces out of the phone wire about three feet long and told Shorty to put his hands behind his back and I tied his wrists together. I did the same for Slim. I then picked Slim up on my shoulder and carried him out and placed him in the grass hole. I went back and picked up Shorty and placed him in the outpost also. As I was leaving, I told them if someone came to kill them, please yell real loud. Sometime later in the night around 0200 hours, my conscience began to bother me, so I crawled out towards the outpost but stopped and turned back after hearing both men snoring loudly.

Thirty one July: When I cut Shorty and Slim loose the next morning, I said, “You may not be so lucky next time.” It was around noon when Shorty came to me saying he was sorry about what happened last night and that he would never do anything like that again. Nine months later, I was processing at the division rear for rotation back to the states when Slim give me a big hug and a kiss on the cheek. He had written his mother about the Naktong River incident. She wrote he was to thank me for not putting him in a military prison. If I had done that, he would not be going home on rotation to see her.

One August: I received a phone call from K Company clerk that L Company had three replacements waiting at K Company CP and please come and get them. I ran down the hill to the K Company CP. The clerk pointed out the three replacements. My greeting to them was, “Welcome to L Company.” They were the first replacements since our battle at Chochiwon. I told them to follow me as I started back towards our hill. K Company’s clerk stopped me a short distance away saying that Sergeant Dunn wanted to see me right now. I told the three men to just wait a minute and I’d be back. I went into the K Company CP and First Sergeant Sid Dunn said, “Brown, those three replacements are volunteers released from the 8th Army Stockade in Japan. Be careful and keep a close watch on them.” When I got the three men away from K Company CP area, I stopped and said, “Sergeant Dunn tells me you are just out of the Big 8 Stockade. That doesn’t matter to Company L. What will matter is how you conduct yourselves from this time on.” We started up the hill again. By the time we arrived at the L Company high ground, I had only two replacements. The third one, Darrell D. Campbell, went AWOL before getting to the top of the hill. One of these two men became an outstanding Sergeant First Class before rotation in May, 1951.
**Nine August:** Carl Jackson, Tommy Farr, Freddie Pickens went on a patrol with me from our positions to the east end of the Ch’angnyong-Chogye bridge. But first let me tell you what the morning reports said 9 August, 1950. “Four man patrol dispatched to Naktong River and secured enemy weapons. Upon the return of the patrol, this information was reported to Battalion Headquarters.” What happened was we saw the enemy in and around the abutments of the bridge from daylight on. When we fired on them, they would go in the back of the abutment under the bridge. I had Cliff Bergman to keep their heads down with machine gun fire. When we got to the bridge, all the enemy were gone. It appeared they had gotten back in the river and staying close to the near bank to us, we couldn’t see them from up on our position and they had eased on down the river. However, they had left their equipment behind, 28 Russian made rifles, one Burp gun, and a North Korean flag that measured 4 X 7 feet. We couldn’t carry all the rifles, so we took the bolts out of 22 of them and threw them in one part of the river and threw the rifles in another part. We carried six of the Russian made rifles back along with the Burp gun and the 4x7 North Korean flag. We reported this to the Battalion and, of course, if these were not the first, they were among the first enemy weapons captured during the Korean War, and we received the information that they wanted us to bring the flag and the weapons we had to the Battalion Headquarters.

When we arrived at Battalion Headquarters, the regimental S-2 officers was there and they examined everything. The S-2 officer said the manufacturing date on the Burp gun which was 1950 indicated it was made that year and it was important, and he would like to keep it and send it on to higher headquarters.

I was to see and hear about this Burp gun after returning to the United States. I think it was in October 1951, while watching TV news in a bar. The news showed a UN meeting with the United States representative, asking the Russian representative about them supplying North Korea with new weapons. The Russian’s reply was only WWII surplus weapons were given to North Korea in 1946. The US representative took a Burp gun from under his desk saying it was manufactured in 1950, and captured nine August 1950, in South Korea near the Ch’angnyong-Chogye bridge over the Naktong river.

We took the rifles and the flag and went back to the company. The next day the Army Signal Corp. sent photographers down and they photographed the rifles and the flag along with the men that were with me on the patrol, and I’ve hunted high and low in the archives but I’ve been unable so far to turn up that photograph that was made of this equipment and men.

**Ten August:** Early in the morning we received word that a patrol from the Regiment had crossed the Naktong River before daylight upstream and would return through our position. Just before sundown I received a report that this patrol had recrossed the Naktong, and being worn out on their feet walked into a poorly marked hastily-pre-
pared mine field installed by our divisions engineer battalion on the left flank of the company.

I went to this mine field and upon arriving saw that one man was down wounded in the mine field and two were standing. They were afraid to move in either direction because the man had set off one of the mines.

I had four men there, William Travers, Freddie Pickens, Orville Musick and Tommy Farr. William Travers had some kind of experience with mines somewhere along this line and had started to work. He had Pickens and Farr take down the engineer tape that helped or was supposed to mark the mine field, and had them roll them into a tight little balls.

Evidently the engineers had left a pair of wire cutters on the ground. Travers had started Musick cutting barbed wire and just stranding it, then cutting short lengths about five inches long and bending it U-shaped something like staples you would use to wire fences up on a wooden fence post. So I said, “Travers, what else can I do to help you?” He said, “Well, just keep the folks calm in the mine field.”

The leader of that patrol said he would go over as near as he dared to the man that was wounded on the ground and keep reassuring him. I said, “That’s the thing to do there.” At that time we stopped and talked about what we were going to do next.

Then Lieutenant Carl Bernard and Sergeant Leon Wilson came off the hill to the mine field. About twenty yards from the mine field Carl went down on his knees and started praying. I went to Wilson and handed him my carbine saying, “Lieutenant Bernard is out of this world. You are to shoot him in his legs if he moves towards the mine field.” I went back over and I said, “It’s getting late and it’ll be dark soon. We’ve got to get these people out.” William Travers explained how to use the staples and the roll of engineer tape. He was going to put the staples in one fatigue pocket of his jacket and the roll in the other and staple one end of the tape to the ground and let the tape play out between his legs. I said, “Well, I think it’d be best if I do that because if anything goes wrong, I sure as hell want somebody out here who knows what to do to get me out.” So we agreed that I was going to probe starting at the nearest place to the wounded man. But Pickens stopped me and said, “Hey, you’re going to have the sun at your back and you’re going to be looking in the shadow and you’re not going to be able to see the ground in front of you.” and he was right. So we went around on the other side. It was a little further.

We decided I’d go to the two standing men first. So I put the roll of engineer tape in my pocket and I’d just reel it out and run it between my legs. I was down on my hands and knees and somebody had given me a carbine bayonet to probe with, but the ground was fairly bare, but I just poked away at the ground about two foot wide and I’d look at the ground and poke anything then I’d pull one of these staples out and staple the
engineer tape down in place and then I’d crawl ahead on my hands and knees. While going to the men standing, I could see before getting to them that they’d been standing in a strain. So when I got to them I told them to stay still and I had Pickens come out. I told one of the men standing, “Now, you put your hands on his shoulder and you walk where he walks.” They walked right on that engineer tape and got out. Then Musick came in and took the other man out. I continued on over to where the wounded man lay. Farr was a big strong guy, I came out on the tape and Farr went in and picked up the wounded man and brought him out. By that time somebody had gotten a stretcher, and it was damn fine work by all and it suddenly was just about dark. I never want to ever have to do that again.

Eleven August: Our position overlooking the Naktong River had a rough kind of trail like a cart road. It ran left (facing the river) back right across down the hill in front of us to the road down there at the river, and each evening I or Cliff Bergman would take this small pine tree and drag it down that little road trail and then drag it back up being careful to brush out any footprints. Then the next morning we’d go down and look for footprints to see if we’d had any visitors down there the night before.

On the 11th of August Cliff went down to look at the trail and got halfway down and he became excited. He called me and said, “Hey, Brown, you better come down here and look at this.” I went down there and one man had spent the night walking back and forth on that trail or else a large patrol had been down there very close to us the night before. It really concerned me and I was frightened. I told Cliff, “Hey, I think we’re going to be rolled over probably tomorrow morning ‘cause people know where we are and how to get to us. I want you to quietly pass the word to the men that as soon as it gets good and dark tonight, we’re going to bug-out and go down off the back side of here.”

The F.O. with the 13th Field Artillery had been with K Company and he moved over to our position because there were some areas that he couldn’t see. I didn’t know that he was coming over there until he came and said he needed to be over there where he can see a little further to our left.

I hadn’t seen Lieutenant Carl Bernard since the day before at the mine field. He was in bad physical condition plus he was exhausted mentally. He’d been with Task Force Smith on the 5th of July and he was just wore out mentally and physically. So I didn’t know where he was, but low and behold, late that afternoon he came back up on the position and he had the new Battalion S-2 officer, Harry Maihafer, with him.

This was the first and only time that I can remember in Korea when we had a Battalion Staff Officer on our positions. But nevertheless I got Lieutenant Bernard aside and told him we were going to bug-out when it was dark. And, of course, he was not in favor of that. We had some strong words about it. I said, “Well, I think it’s the best thing to do.”
After it was dark I went over to the EE-8 phone, picked it up and said, “Okay, let’s go.” We started down off the back of the hill. Well, I only had 12 men and of course the officers came on behind us.

That night we passed through an area where we were fired on by artillery enough to convince us that they had some people to our rear directing that fire. We had passed through where the 3rd Engineers had been and they had left some rubber air mattresses, and I think nobody wanted to see the air mattresses go to waste, so we rolled them up and took them with us. Later on we laid down and slept till daylight.

We were at a road running from the Battalion back to the Regiment Headquarters and there were several telephone lines strung alongside the road. I scraped one of these lines, I didn’t know which lines it was, but I just opened and scraped the line and doubled it up and stuck it in my EE-8 phone and give it a ring. As luck would have it, the man that answered that ring was the 3rd Battalion Commander, Major McConnell. I told him who I was and he says, “Where in the hell are you?” I said, “Well, we’re about two and a half miles to your rear.” He said, “Are those officers with you?” I said, “Yes sir, the three officers are with us, Lieutenant Bernard, and the Battalion S-2, and the F.O. from 13th Field Artillery Battalion.” He said, “Brownie, I want you to take the men and go back up on the position, and don’t you leave that position without me telling you to; do you understand?” I said, “Yes sir.” He said, “Now, you put Lieutenant Bernard on the telephone.” Well, I put Lieutenant Bernard on the telephone and walked away. Apparently he told Bernard he wanted to see him, the Battalion S-2 and the F.O. from the 13th Field Artillery Battalion. So the men and I went back up on the position.

Twelve August: I had been promoted to Sergeant 1st Class effective 2 August. Lieutenant Bernard said they were processing my paperwork for a direct commission and I had told him I would much sooner wait until I had been promoted to a Master Sergeant; that I didn’t think I had a real career as a Army officer with my lack of education. Carl went back to the Regiment and spoke to the Regimental Commander, Colonel Richard A. Stephens. Colonel Stephens said that he needed officers right now; he didn’t need Master Sergeants. He said if I didn’t take a commission now, I damn sure wouldn’t become a Master Sergeant in his Regiment.

Later that night on the Naktong River, Lieutenant Bernard was not only my commanding officer, he was my friend and mentor. Being four months older, he was giving me advice on becoming an officer. When talking about women, he said I should marry a professional woman because they were more broad-minded and the extra income would help. I stopped him by saying that I knew some prostitutes but I did not know one I would want to marry. Carl explained what he meant by professional women were women such as doctors, nurses, lawyers, school teachers and such as that. So we continued that night to talk about the things I should know and should do and shouldn’t do. So it was quite an education I received there on the Naktong with Carl.
Twenty August: I received notification that I was to report to Division Headquarters G-1 at Miryang. So on the 21st I went back to the Division Hqs. They’d been spread out in a big field back there and I reported to Lieutenant Colonel Sogart the Division G-1. We finished up the paperwork and LTC Sogart pinned a Second Lieutenant’s bar on my collar and gave me a pair of crossed rifles and told me that those had been his personal property and that he wanted me to have them and wear them in good health. As I was about to leave a message came that I was to report to the Commander of the 21st Infantry Regiment. I went to the Regimental Headquarters. I went in and told the Adjutant who I was and I’d received a message to report there. The Adjutant came over to me and took off my Second Lieutenant’s bar and my new crossed rifles and I thought there for a little while that I was being decommissioned a few hours after being commissioned. But it turned out that Colonel Stephens had a set of bars and crossed rifles that he wanted to pin on me and so I went in to see Colonel Stephens he told me that he was delighted that I’d accepted the commission and that he wanted me to be as good an officer as I was an N.C.O. And with that he dismissed me.

Back around the 12th of August or somewhere in that time, we’d received a new commanding officer by the name of Woodrow “Hap” Chandler he was a First Lieutenant. Hap was an old soldier so to speak. He’d been an NCO in the 21st Infantry Regiment prior to Pearl Harbor and had went through World War II as an NCO. After World War II, he attended college. While in college he received a ROTC commission and came back into the Army, and he was not only a good soldier, but he was a very good man. I liked Hap very much and he did a whole lot to keep a bunch of us alive there during some very rough times. He was also a collector of old Army songs and he had the vast majority of them memorized. He did his best to teach us some of those. There was one in particular “Old King Cole (see p139).” I need to record that somewhere later on because it was kind of a funny thing. It took up a lot of hours in the night. It would have been just sheer boredom if we hadn’t had these to try to sing to or call or whatever you want to say about them. I had served briefly with Lieutenant Chandler in Division Headquarters at Headquarters Company, and he was a very good officer.

Twenty three August: We’d moved to the apple orchard at the Taegu Airport and received a beer and liquor ration and a lot of pent up emotions of some of the old timers got displayed. Lieutenant Chandler, our CO, wrecked a Jeep. When I receive word of that, I went down to the clearing station to see if there was anything I could do to help, and Hap told me the only thing I could do was just take his revolver and keep it for him, a little snub nose .38 revolver. I told him I’d take care of it.

On the 26th we moved out of the Taegu apple orchard and went over on the east coast not far from Pohang-dong. W went into the position at night being contested by North Koreans. We had South Koreans in the area and it was a bit confusing. On the morning of the 28th, I was trying to do away with a sniper that was giving us some problems. Tommy Farr was with me and I had a civilian Korean interpreter with me. I knew
where the sniper was who’d been firing on us, and I was going to eliminate him when
suddenly one at a slightly higher elevation raised up and shot me in the right arm.
You’ve heard about these things of people seeing stars; well, I saw some stars. I spun
around and hit my left knee on one of the stones exposed there. Fortunately Tommy
Farr killed the man; he shot him.

I was able to get back around our rock and he got a couple of stretcher bearers up there
because I couldn’t walk. I was relieved, greatly relieved to be alive because I’d had a lot
of nightmares about it happening like in Burma where I’d seen some Japanese burned
by flame throwers. In early Korea I would have a recurring dream every night that God
would save me for the flame throwers. So I was really, really much relieved to be just
shot through the right arm.

As we’re going back through the company area, I took off Hap’s pistol and give it to
Master Sergeant Mike Thiel, he was a good man who’d joined us. I said, “Hey, Mike,
please give this to Hap Chandler.”

They carried me on back to the aid station and I had a shot of morphine. Throughout
the day I went on back to the different clearing stations. Then I was sent to a MASH
back in the rear. It was the only wooden two-story school buildings I was to see in
Korea. By the time I arrived there, it was late in the afternoon around 17:30 hrs. The
walking wounded were directed to the trailer down below this big wooden building.
There was an x-ray machine set up. I went down there and ten or twelve soldiers were
ahead of me in this line going through this trailer to be x-rayed, and we had wounded
South Koreans in line also. There was one little Korean right ahead of me, he had been
wounded about the same place I was. I couldn’t speak Korean and he couldn’t speak
English. But we kept inching up on the way. When I got into the trailer, and the ser-
geant was there taking the x-rays, I asked him how long it’d be before we could get a
look at the x-ray, and he said, “Oh, Lieutenant, it’ll probably be a half hour or so.” He
said, “Why don’t you go on up to the mess and get something to eat, and after you find
out where you’re going to be bunking tonight, you come on down and we’ll look at the
film.” I said, “Thank you and I’ll do that.”

So after chow I found a nurse who told me where I was going to be that night. I walked
down to the x-ray trailer and saw the sergeant. Oh, yeah, he says, he pulls out a film and
placing it on a shadow box he said, Hey, Lieutenant, you got a million-dollar wound.
You’re going to be on the way to the states in the morning. That right arm is shattered,
so you have a ticket home. Well, I wasn’t mad about going to the states, but I was a little
upset about thinking about I might lose my right arm. Anyway, I went back up and laid
down where the nurse had told me to. Later on that night real early in the morning, a
nurse comes and shines a flashlight in my eyes and said, are you Brown? I said, yeah,
and she said “They want you down in the operating room.” I said, why do they want me
in the operating room, nurse? She said, look, I don’t know why; now just get on down
there.
So I go downstairs to this operating room and I'm looking at six of the most worn out people I'd seen. They'd been the only hospital I think in that area at that time and they hadn't had any sleep in I don't know how long. You could look at them and see they were worn ass out. The doctor said get up on that table. I said, now, wait a minute, sir. I said, I want to know what you want me on that table for. He said, why we want to débride that arm so we can get you evacuated out of here. I said, sir, that arm's not to be débrided. I said, that bone's shattered in there. He said, what do you mean? I said, well, I saw my x-ray earlier this evening and it showed that bone being shattered. He said, just a minute, and he put the x-ray up on the shadow box and looks at it and he said, “Hell, there's nothing wrong with this except a small groove, now get up on that table.” I went up to the doctor and I said, I'm sorry, but I saw a different x-ray earlier. I'll say this for the doctor, he was patient with me. Each of your x-rays has little lead numbers on the bottom for record keeping as to who it is and so forth. When he put up the preceding x-ray that was taken just before mine. It was of the little Korean in line ahead of me, he had a right forearm shattered. He said, well, now, does that satisfy you. I said “Yes sir.” I got up on the table and they cleaned out my arm and the next day I was on my way to Japan. I ended up at our division hospital back in Japan that served the 24th Division while we were there.

The hospital that I was in was located not far from Kokura where I'd been stationed at Division Headquarters at Headquarters Company, and I would like to go to see some of the people I knew in that area. I asked this doctor if it'd be possible for me to get a couple of days to go to Kokura. He said “No way; we can't let you out of here, period.” I said, “Yes sir.” In the next day or so, I was transferred to the Osaka General Hospital in Osaka, Japan. I traveled there by train. I was in Osaka General which is right downtown Osaka for a few days, maybe a week, and then I was transferred to one of the annexes on the outskirts of Osaka.

I learned that a friend of mine, Rip Tyler, a staff sergeant in K Company received a commission a few days before I did. Matter of fact, when I'd received mine and returned to the company on the 21st, he'd climbed a very steep hill and came a long ways, dropping down on the ground panting he said, “Okay, Brown, you got your commission, but I want you to remember that I outrank you. I've had mine six days.”

I learned Rip was in the Osaka General downtown. Visiting him I learned he'd been pretty well shot up around one hip and groin. He was in a cast that reached from his groin down one leg. Rip told me, “Now Brownie, you come back tomorrow night and we'll go to the Turkish Ligation. I used to be on duty there and know all those Turks and they're good guys; you'll like them.” I said, “Rip, there is no way in hell you can go.” He said, “Oh, yeah, I'll get a big pair of pants and with crutches we can get there, if you'll come by tomorrow evening.” I said, “Okay, I'll come back tomorrow evening.

“Next night I went back and Rip had a big pair of pants on over his cast. We went to the Turkish Ligation and had a big time. Those Turks were really tickled with Rip being
back. We had a dinner and partied some until late, late, late in the morning. The Turks drove us back to the downtown hospital, but Rip wouldn’t let them pull up to the front; they had to pull around to the side street. He said there was a Major OD (Officer of the Day) at night and he was kind of a chicken sort of a guy, and if he tried to go in the front door, why, he’d have to be explaining why he wasn’t there and blah, blah, blah, and so on. So he said he had it figured out to go around to the back of the building and he’d go in through the kitchen and go back to the ward and nothing would be said. I walked around to the back of the building with him. The gate to the little yard was locked. So he said, “Well, there’s nothing to it.” It was a fence three-foot high, one of the woven wire fences, of a heavy gauge and it had little round tops to it decorated more than anything else.

He said, “Brown, you just help me get over this fence.” So I was helping him get over the damn fence. About that time he got straddled on this fence and he got hung up on his crotch, and he was squalling ’cause he was hurting. I was trying my damnedest to get him off but I only had one arm to work with. About that time some soldier came by and said, “Hey, can I help y’all?” I said, “Hell yah, help me get this bastard off the fence.”

So we got him back off the fence onto my side of the fence and in the process I’d looked over and saw the insignia on this man’s shirt collar was a eagle. I thought, Oh, no, that’s a colonel. I’m in deep trouble now. But the colonel helped me get him off. He said, “Who are you?” So I jumped to and told him who I was. Rip told him who he was.

The Colonel was Guy S. Meloy who had command of the 19th Infantry in Korea until wounded. He asked what was our problem? I explained to him about the chicken shit OD Major who was going to give Rip some trouble if he went in there this late. The colonel said, “No, y’all come on. I can take care of that.”

We go around to front of the hospital and ring the bell, and here comes this OD Major huffing and a puffing. As soon as he saw Colonel Meloy, why he calmed down considerably. Colonel Meloy said, “Lieutenant Tyler and Brown have been with me all evening and I need somebody to get a wheelchair and take Lieutenant Tyler, back to his ward, he’s tired.” The major said, “Yes sir, yes sir.” He said, “By the way, we need some transportation for Lieutenant Brown, he’s in the Number 2 Annex. Would you ring for some transportation to get him out to his annex.” “Yes sir, yes sir.” So in about ten minutes a driver came by and took me out to the annex.

Years later I met Major General Meloy at Fort Benning and I thanked him for his help that night in Osaka.

**Twelve September:** It was my birthday and I requested to be returned to Korea. I was given a five-day recuperation leave.
I moved into an officers’ hotel, the Myarn or something like that, but this was a hotel that was strictly for officers and I found other men who were going back to Korea, and I felt a little more at home being among people who’d been wounded and were going back. They had a tradition when a man’s five days was up, they’d give him a 21-gun salute. This was made up of drinking what they called the French 75, brandy mixed with champagne, and when they had 21 corks on the table, it was time to take the man and pour him on the train for Sasebo.

Well, after a couple of days of sending people on the train, I suddenly came down with pneumonia. After the third day of this, I was readmitted to the hospital and kept in the hospital another 10 days. When it came time to go when that 10 days was up with pneumonia, I told them, “Please don’t give me anymore recuperation leave; I don’t think I could stand it. Just let me get on the train and go to Sasebo,” which they did.

In Sasebo I boarded a ship to Pusan and I was traveling fairly light. When I arrived in Pusan I decided that I wasn’t going up through the Replacement line but instead I was going to steal a Jeep and drive. The division was fighting up around Taejon then and I knew I wanted to go back up if possible to Chochiwon battlefield.

As I was standing on one of the main intersections in Pusan I looked and there were two MPs sitting in a Jeep. Looking at them I said, Hey, I know those people. It was Sergeant First Class Lewis and Staff Sergeant Sholtz with him. I’d served with them a short time in Tooele, Utah, outside of Salt Lake. I went over and they were, of course, surprised to see me. I told them I was looking for a Jeep to steal, did they have any idea where I could steal a good one. After they found out that I was sincere and I really wanted to, Lewis said, “Why don’t you go out to the ordinance depot; there’s one outside of town.” I said, “Okay, how about giving me a ride out there.” They said, “Sure.” So we rode out a mile or so outside of Pusan and there was a Korean guard on the gate. I left my little pack there with him, drove down with these two MPs to a bunch of Jeeps parked and I could see it looked like they were servicing them. I went over to the Sergeant in charge and I said, “Sergeant, where’s the Jeeps that are ready for issue that’s been fully serviced?” He said, “Those are the Jeeps right over there, sir.” I said “Thank you,” walked over and got in one and drove up to the gate and picked up my pack and went out to the road. I told Scholtz and Lewis I appreciated their help and I’d see them. Lewis had married one of the Hill girls, and I told him to tell Mama and Papa Hill that I said, hello.

I took off north driving towards Taejon. A few miles south of Taejon I started seeing these signs that said danger forward. Boy, that kind of got my attention; danger forward? I drove on for a while and saw another sign, danger forward. About the third sign it dawned on me that that was the code name for Division Headquarters. Everything in the 24th Division was named D, like 21st Infantry was Diamond. So I continued on to Taejon. The Division was at Taejon and I learned that the Regiment was up around Osan. I went to the Headquarters and Headquarters Company motor pool and
I asked one of the mechanics there to paint the bumper markings on the Jeep I’d acquired at the Ordinance depot. I said, just paint it up to the 24th Division, 21st Infantry Regiment L Company 3.

While they were painting the bumper markings on the Jeep, First Sergeant Carl Maxwell, happened to drive by and see me. Boy, he jumped out and he started giving me hell. He said, I want you to come down to Headquarters in Headquarters Company orderly room at once, Lieutenant. You’re about to screw up my unit fund. I said, no, Top, I didn’t have anything to do with your unit fund. He said, you come down there, you hear? I said, yes, Top, I’ll come down there. So I went down to Division Headquarters in Headquarters Company and Top had a check made out to me for $10. I’d forgot that we fired for record, our annual firing, before I went to Kumamoto for water safety training. The Company Fund had put up a $10 prize for the high carbine marksman and $10 for the high M-1. Sergeant Maxwell said, now, you endorse that and I’ll give you the $10. So I endorsed it and he give me the $10. He said, boy, I was afraid you were going to get killed and I’d have never got that damn $10 in the unit fund straight for years. Carl Maxwell was a nice guy, he wished me luck and I got on my way.

I spent the night there at division headquarters and the next morning I went north on the road to Chochiwon, nine miles beyond Chochiwon the power transmission lines that ran across the positions, continued across the river there. Right about in the middle of the river entwined in these electrical cables that run from these steel towers from hill to hill was the remains of a jet airplane. I hoped that the pilot wasn’t in it when he got wrapped up in those cables. I pulled up where I’d had seen a T-34 parked on 11 July at the little draw which ran up past L Company’s CP. I pulled the Jeep up and took out the rotor just to be sure someone didn’t borrow my Jeep while I was up on top of the hill. I walked up on the hill and you could smell where people died in various fox holes. It seemed like just a short period of time from the 10th or 11th of July and this was late September, how overgrown this had become. I walked back down to my Jeep, satisfied that I had seen that ground and I had it right in my mind. I drove on north to near Osan. I’d rejoined my company early in October.

When I returned to L Company in South Korea around the 6th of October, they were at Onchon-ni, South Korea. The officers were the Company Commander, Planter Wilson; Executive Officer, Carl Bernard; First Platoon, T L Epton; Second Platoon, Thomas Dreisonstok; Third Platoon, Volney Warner; Fifth Platoon, which was also known as the Gimlet Platoon, Lindsey P. Henderson, better known as Dixie. I was given the Fourth Platoon which was the weapons platoon.

The first part of October, everything was moving rapidly and I do now know exactly what town we were in, Onyang I think, but it was probably 10 or 12 miles or so from the 38th Parallel which separated North Korea from South Korea at that time.
1Lt. Olin Hardy, our Forward Observer (FO) from B Battery, 52nd Field Artillery Battalion, had been with us a long time and was better known as Short Round, he and I were to take a motorized patrol and go to a Yonan just a few miles south of the 38th Parallel. We were to leave early that morning about 07:30 hrs. For some unknown reason, we were stopped and sat around not knowing whether we was going or not going.

About 11:00 hrs. Dixie Henderson come along and asked if he could go with us. We said yes, but it doesn't look like we're going to go, but about 11:10 hrs. we received the word that we could depart.

I do not remember where we aquired this large American flag, it was 3x6 the staff was attached to the jeep's front bumper. So there was Hardy, his driver, Dixie and I, we were in Hardy's Jeep which had a trailer behind it. We went from On-Yang (Hot Springs) that was just a few miles south of the 38th Parallel and we drove north rather cautiously. The reason we were using Hardy's jeep is because he had a radio and could reach Regiment if we ran into trouble.

The plan was we'd use artillery to help get us out of any trouble. We arrived at the little town of Yonan and the people were just in tears to greet us. The North Koreans had left the day before, but before they had left, they had literally killed everybody that had an education, school teachers, postmasters, everybody that had an education was killed. They'd killed some of these people earlier, and the townspeople were in the process of digging the bodies out of the caves. Lt. Henderson had his camera and he photographed these atrocities.

The man who took over as the police chief there gave us drinks and we were about half loaded before we got out of there.
Some of the victims of the North Korean Yonan Atrocity

Villagers of Yonan gather to search for loved ones or just to help identify the over 300 dead.
As we started to go back to our unit we drove south. For some reason or another, Dixie Henderson and I were in the trailer, and Dixie had picked up a bugle. I said, “Hey, what are you doing with a bugle?” Dixie said, “Well, I used to be a bugler in the Horse Cavalry.” I said, “Horse Cavalry, my butt.” He said, “Yeah, I was a bugler and I was in the Horse Calvary.” I said, “Well, I was in the Horse Cavalry, let’s hear you sound water call.” So Dixie tuned up and started blowing water call.

Just then we broke up over a hump and there was a long stretch of straight road going down the hill. There were American two and a half ton trucks pulling to the left and right sides of the road, it was a unit of the Fifth RCT Regimental Combat Team. They didn’t know what to make of it. Here comes this American Jeep with an American Flag and a guy blowing a bugle, and I watched these guys very closely. I wasn’t worried so much about their eyes; I was looking at their hands. They looked white and they all had their hands on their weapons triggers as we passed down the center of the road. Of course with this audience, Dixie really turned it on. Boy, he really blew some calls as we drove down through the middle of this column. Had it not been for that U.S. flag up there, we probably wouldn’t have lived to travel 200 feet down that road between those two columns.

When we returned to our unit that evening, we were told to stand by we were going to go north into North Korea that evening. It was October the 16th that we actually crossed the 38th Parallel to North Korea, a very slow movement that night. The next morning we ended up very close to Sinwon-ni, North Korea. We had by passed the city of Haeju, North Korea, going to Sinwon-ni.

The next day, October 20th, we sent a patrol out to the southwest area. Lt “Toady” Dreisonstok’s 2nd platoon, I and a section of my light machine guns joined this patrol. We were about one hours march up into the hills when we arrived at a small cluster of houses.

It was real evident to me that there’d been some people living out in the woods nearby from the discarded cigarette packages and defecation over the area. When we questioned these people at the six or seven houses there, they finally said, yes, there were Communists with long hair who’d come up there and were staying out in these trees and had left when they heard us coming that morning.
They brought out a girl that was about fourteen years old and she'd been shot through the stomach. They said the night before that some of the people from up on the top of hill had come down and wanted her to go back up with them. When she refused, they shot her. Lt. Dreisonstok was told by medics the girl would die if she did not get help. Toady sent a medic, two men and four Korean volunteers with this girl on a stretcher down to the main road to stop an ambulance or any vehicle and send this girl to a hospital. For identification, he sent his AGO card along.

Well, when the group of Korean people saw what we'd done for this girl, this one guy spoke up and said, There's some of those guys with long hair (ordinary folks had close cropped hair.) up at his house and he would show us where it was. We went further up the hill and his house sat just below a little ridge.

I told this man to go down and get your wife and son and get them out side and come on over here where we are before we do anything about those people in your house. So the man went down, got his wife and son, and they came out with him. We were actually standing higher than the rooftop of the house and we had our interpreter call down there and told the people to come out and surrender.

Well, as soon as we did that, there was all kinds of commotion going on in the house with the popping of hand grenades and gun shots, but none of them came out. So we fired down through the roof, 50 or 60 rounds, and called for them to come out. Again no one came out, so we were getting excited.

We understood these guys had long hair, which meant they were of high rank. This house faced away from the ridge we were on and I went down to go around to the door, and there was a young medic by the name of Roger Preston with me. I told him, “Now, you stay over there until I go in that house and throw out all the weapons, and then when I call for you, I want you to come in and give these guys first aid 'cause we'd like to keep them as prisoners.”

I walked over and — the doors on these Korean houses were maybe three and a half feet high and maybe 18 to 24 inches wide. I ducked down as I reached over opening the door, I saw a man laying there and he looked at me and then rolled off a hand grenade. As I attempted to turn from the door, this hand grenade went off and unknown to me Preston had come up and stood right beside me. He was blasted in his legs and when I turned my head to get away from the door, it hit me in the left side of...
the head. It blew my helmet off and blew me back five or six yards into the yard. I was stunned and lost my carbine, and I didn’t really know my condition.

Thinking it was like that wound earlier when I was shot through the arm I was feeling where this grenade had hit me in the left side of the head and I was feeling on the right side of my head to see where it came out, and the thought struck me, Hey you dummy, if that went through your head, you’re dead. About that time one of the people from the house came running out with a revolver in his hand. Somebody evidently shot him in one leg and he staggered over to this little fence. He was probably 30 or 40 feet from me. He was looking at me and I didn’t have a weapon at that time; my carbine was five or six yards from me. He looked at me and he stuck the revolver up to his head and pulled its trigger; it didn’t fire. He did that three times. On the fourth time, it fired.

Well, that kind of got me out of my stupor, I went over and picked up my carbine. Another man broke out of the house and headed down the hill. I’d set up my two machine guns further down the hill knowing if people run, 99 times out of a hundred, they’ll run downhill. So I knew the two machine guns with the men sitting down there would pick him up. We looked back in the house and there was just a mass of bodies. We gathered up 10 prisoners, there at that time, and there were still bodies in that house.

Returning to the company, I went on to the aid station. The medics sent me on north, the situation was moving so fast that the hospital they sent me to was actually in Pyongyang, the capital of North Korea. The doctors told me that they wanted to evacuate me to Japan because the injury to my head could be very serious and their x-ray wasn’t too hot. I said, no, I’ve got to go back to my company. They said, no, you must to go back over to the ward. We will evacuate you later.

The reason I wanted to go back to my company was at that time you had to be on the line 60 days to get a promotion to First Lieutenant. I was a Second Lieutenant and I just lacked 10 or 12 days of being on the line 60 days and being promoted to First
Lieutenant. Because it looked like the war was about over with there, if the Regiment went back to Japan, I sure as God didn't want to go back to the peacetime conditions as a Second Lieutenant.

A Second Lieutenant in the infantry outfit is the VD officer and recruiting officer and troop public information officer and recreation officer and you had 10 or 12 extra duties, and I certainly didn't want to be a junior officer in a company back in peacetime.

So when things quieted down, I just eased out and although my head was all wrapped up, I went on back to my company at Yongu-ri and every day or so I'd go down to the Battalion Aid Station and have them change the dressing on my head.

I did survive till the required date and was promoted to First Lieutenant in December. It was around the 4th of November and we were in North Korea that Hap Chandler came back as the company commander, because Planter Wilson went home on an emergency leave. We made an attack to help the 19th Infantry out 'cause they were having some problems. It was the Chinese who had come into the war, it was definitely Chinese. In the process we'd picked up two prisoners that were most definitely Chinese. I had spoke with one of them who'd served with the Nationalist Army.

During WWII, in Burma, when President Roosevelt died 15 April, 1945 the Mars Task Force turned over to the Chinese Nationalist Army ("Y" Force) all mules and crew served weapons before being scattered all over China to train Chinese soldiers.

The question came up when all the officers were gathered on top of the objective after it was taken and somebody asked what do we do with these prisoners. Hap Chandler said, "Well, shoot them." I intervened; I said, "Hap, I'll fight these guys all day long, but we are not going to shoot unarmed prisoners." He delayed longer than I wished he had and said, "Give them to battalion."

We rode some tanks coming out of North Korea and, of course, we had winter clothes. Riding the tanks we were up on the front end of it, in a little while you'd get cold and there were red hot mufflers, just under the rear deck, and we'd ease around the turret and go back. Staying too long in the back, you would get too hot. If you had anything in your pocket it was apt to melt back there and you'd go back up on the front and freeze. So it wasn't really all that comfortable, but it sure beat walking.

We retreated actually and came back down below Seoul, South Korea again and Ridgeway took over and we started back to the north again. We were in a area called Mansegyo. This is the map coordinate CT468035, sheet number 66271 1:50,000. We stayed for quite some time there. This was in December and early January of '51. Joe Griffith had joined our company from M Company. We'd known Joe while he was a mortar man by
choice. Joe needed to go back to the division rear where the personnel records were kept, and asked me to go along. I had just made First Lieutenant and needed to go back and change my allotment for my mother. So I asked Company Commander Hap Chandler if it was all right to take a Jeep with Joe and go on back there, and he said yes. Hap asked “Brownie, you goin’ to take that carbine with you?” I said “Yes.” He said, “You’ll look like some sort of farmer back there carrying a carbine around, so why don’t you take my .38 pistol.” He took off his pistol and give it to me and I laid my carbine back in the corner. Joe and I went on to the division rear and the records center. Somewhere in the process, Joe and I had acquired a couple of bottles of booze and had a few drinks.

Sergeant First Class Bobby Hatfield, a man at the division headquarters and headquarters company who I’d reenlisted with in September of 1949, had his wife and family back in the Kokura, Japan. His wife was in the process of having a baby and he was going to Kimpo and fly back to Japan. Bobby asked us if we could give him a ride to the Kimpo airstrip. Joe and I said “Sure; we’re going by there.”

So we took Bobby out to the Kimpo airstrip and checked with the operations; they said “Yeah, but it’s going to be a little while. There is a truck parked out there and the plane isn’t going to be here long so, you get on that truck. It will back up to the plane and you get on it.” We parked the Jeep and walked out to this deuce and a half truck that was out by the airstrip. Taking our booze with us. We were having a few drinks with Bobby celebrating his new baby that was coming, and pretty soon a C-47 come along. The truck backed up to it and we were just intending to put Bobby on it. Bobby got on it and the sergeant there said “Okay, get in here and sit down.”

We did as he ordered then he said, “All right, fasten your seat belts.” So we fastened our seat belts. In a little while the plane took off and the sergeant come along with a clipboard taking names. I said somebody else’s name other than mine; Joe gave his; and it wasn’t long before we were in Fukuoka, Japan.

Bobby went on to Kokura. Joe said, “Well, we’re here; we might as well go on to Kumamota; my wife’s in Kumamota.” Of course, I agreed with him, and we were walking around this air base looking for the railroad station to go to Kumamota.

About that time I heard something go whap, crack, and oh, God, I thought Joe’s fallen and broke his leg; I’ll have to turn him in to the hospital and I’ll be in all kind of serious trouble. But it wasn’t his leg; it was his pipe stem.

We eventually boarded a train and went to Kumamota. In Kumamota he called his wife and told her where he was. She had a friend that worked for post engineers with a enclosed Jeep who came and picked up us and carried us out to Camp Wood.

I could see real quick it wasn’t any place for me. We arrived there late at night, 02:00 or 03:00 hours in the morning. I had met a lady in Kumamota the last time I was there.
so the next morning I asked Joe's wife to call her friend at post engineers with the enclosed Jeep, and had him deliver me back into town to my friend's place.

Things rocked along pretty good that day and we went to a cabaret that night. I'd had a few drinks during the day and, of course, I'm standing in the bar wearing field clothing, pistol belt and I have this .38 pistol of Hap's on my side and everybody's asking me “How is it in Korea?”

One of them says “Hey, what are you doing with that pistol?” I said “I'm keeping it for a friend.” He said, “Well, let me see it.” I said “No, I can't let you do that.” He said, “Well, it probably isn't even loaded.” I said “Yes, it's loaded.” He said “No, there's no way you'd have a loaded gun here.” He says “Okay, let's see.” I pulled it out and cranked off a couple of rounds up through the roof and then, of course, the place emptied like a covey of quail.

In just a few minutes here come two or three Jeeps loaded with MPs and they were all excited and then the Provost Marshal drives up in a staff car. He gets out of the staff car and I said, gee, I know that guy. Sure enough it was an exsergeant that I'd known in I Company, and his name was Raoul Cano. And, of course, when Cano saw me, he said “Brown, what in the hell are you doing here?” I told Cano the truth of the matter and he said, “For Christ sakes get in my car.”

He put me in the car and we went to his office. He dialed Joe's quarters and he handed me the phone saying “You tell Joe to get his butt back down here 'cause you guys must get back to Korea.” I told Joe where I was and told him this provost marshal had me and we had to get back 'cause we were in some serious trouble. So, Joe said “Let me talk to Cano.”

Cano sent a Jeep out to pick up Joe. He brought Joe back and we boarded the train and went back to the air base. I'd been promoted to First Lieutenant. I bought a case of promotion liquor in the officer's club at the air base before we went back to Korea.

And, of course, when we returned to Kimpo air base back in Korea, our Jeep was long gone; it wasn't there. I saw one of the men I knew in division headquarters there and I said, “Hey, I need to steal a Jeep someplace. As cold as it is, we'd like to steal one that's enclosed.” He said, “Oh, I know a place for that. Go over there to the APO, they have lots of Jeeps and they're all enclosed.” I said “Fine, how about you riding us over?

We drove over there and selected a Jeep and drove back out and went north on the road back to Mansegyo. Joe said “Gee I sure hope the company's there. We'll have a tough time finding them if they're not.” I said “Yeah and our butts are in some hot water if they're not.” But luckily for us we got there and the company was still there.
I told Hap the straight of it. He said, “Well, there hasn’t been anything said around here so just keep your mouth shut and see what happens.”

We kept that case of whiskey for a good many days. Every time I’d come in, I’d check the wires on it to be sure no one had been tampering with it. But later on back in reserve, that’s when we planned to drink my promotion whiskey.

A week later we went in reserve, and I passed out all the whiskey to the lieutenants who passed some to the men; and we drank up the biggest part of that in just a little while. I remember the cooks, there were about six of them, and they were all hooked arm-to-arm and coming to the company CP calling for Lieutenant Bernard. Lieutenant Bernard went out and they said “Everybody else had a drink of liquor and us cooks didn’t even get any cooking whiskey,” and they couldn’t hardly stand up then.

But the party proceeded and I had on some black Pendleton longjohns that I’d had my mother send me, and they were good wool from Pendleton, Oregon. I said “Hey I remember where there’s some whiskey.” I remembered seeing a case of whiskey under the battalion commander’s bunk at battalion headquarters. I proceeded on down there in just my shoe packs and field pants. No shirt or nothing just my black underwear. I walked in and the battalion commander wasn’t there and I reached under his bed and got a case of whiskey and went to throw it on my shoulder, but I threw it over my shoulder and luckily it hit on his bunk and nothing was broken. I picked it up and was going out the door as he was coming in. He said “Brownie where are you going with my whiskey?” I said “Don’t worry Colonel Mack, I’ll pay you back next ration day.” I went back to Love Company, and of course we drank that up. The next day I was very, very hung over and sorry about what had happened.

Twenty January, 1951: Third Battalion, 21st Infantry relieved First Battalion on the 8th Army Outpost, vicinity Chagbong-ni. It was about 20 miles out in front of the 8th Army and the map coordinates were CS809235 6725III 1:50,000. Each day some of us went by truck to the Han-gang River patrolling the north and the south side of it. On the 24th Lieutenant Epton’s platoon was to make this patrol. About 11:00 hours in the morning we received word by radio that they’d run into an ambush and Lt. TL Epton was pretty badly wounded, so the rest of the company saddled up and we went out and located this patrol. They had been ambushed in a railroad cut. We carried Epton to the battalion outpost on a company Jeep; then loaded him on one of the medical jeeps. He was still conscious but he’d been badly shot up in one leg. As the jeep drove away Colonel McConnell come over and put a arm around me and I immediately thought of my recent sins; for I knew it wasn’t a common thing for a Lieutenant Colonel and a battalion commander to put his arm around a platoon leader.

Colonel Mack said “Hey, Epton was a good man and we’re going to miss him.” I said “You damn right we’ll miss him.” He said Brownie, “Now that he’s left I can tell this story.” He proceeded to tell me the story about his being in Fort Jackson, South Caro-
lina at the outset of the Korean War where he was president of the board of officers for
renewing all of the people that had reserve infantry commissions.

They’d call them and chances were they received their marching orders there. This big
ugly gangly guy came in, TL Epton, no first name, no middle initial. The name was TL
Epton; that was it. Mack said that he looked at the paperwork and said “I see you
graduated with a R.O.T.C. Infantry reserve commission when you finished college in
Arkansas and then after that you went on to a seminary and become an ordained
Baptist minister.” Epton said “Yes sir, that’s right.” Mack then said “Well, Mr. Epton, we
can probably call you back as a chaplain. What do you think of that?” Epton spoke up
and said “Which do you need worse, chaplains or infantry officers?” He said “I’m
qualified for both.” McConnell replied, “We need infantry officers bad.”

Epton said “Go ahead and call me back as an infantry officer.” Mack said “Hey that’s
what we’ll do.” McConnell went to his quarters in the BOQ and he had a note on the
door to report to the airport. He came to Korea and became our battalion commander;
the other battalion commander had been killed at Chochiwon. So just a week or two
after that, why in comes Second Lieutenant TL Epton reporting to the battalion. Mack
had him in for a talk. He said “Hey, it’s good to see you again soldier. He said I’m going
to send you to a company that really needs an officer in the worse sort of way and if
there’s anything I can do, you let me know.”

Then Epton said, “Major McConnell, there’s nothing to be gained if everybody knows
I’m a ordained Baptist minister. Why don’t we just keep it between ourselves?” That’s
what they did.

By Mack telling me that story, it cleared up a lot of mysteries surrounding TL Epton for
me. A month or so back most all of the good NCOs were trying to become members of
Epton’s platoon, and I couldn’t understand why all of a sudden the good NCOs all
wanted to be in Epton’s platoon, but after that I figured out what had happened. Epton,
being a Baptist minister, didn’t drink his booze rations and he was giving it to his
platoon NCOs and he was very popular with his NCOs; I’m sure of that.

1 February 1951: Lieutenant Elmer Gainok became the L Company Commander. He’d previously been in K Company.

R&R was rest and recreation for five days back in Japan not counted as leave time. The
roster for officers to go on R&R started with those officers who’d been outside the
continental limits of the United States the longest; in other words the ones who’d been
overseas longer were at the head of the list and sending the more new arrivals towards
the tail of the list. The troops had the same setup. Those who’d been outside the states
the longest were at the head of the list, there could only be a few each time to go back
to Japan for five days of rest and relaxation.
It was around the 1st of February that I received word to report to the battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel McConnell. Colonel Mack said “Brownie you’re up on the roster for the next officer leaving the battalion for R&R.” Then he said “I’d like for you to just say you didn’t want to go and let Lieutenant Gainok go instead. His family is in Kumamoto. You’ve been back to Japan several times.” And I’m sure when he said several times, it was not because I had been back in Japan when I was shot through the arm. I think he was probably referring to the time Joe and I unintentionally went AWOL to Japan. So I said “Yes sir, I’ll just let somebody else go. I have been back to Japan since I’ve been here.” With that I left, and orders were cut for Lieutenant Gainok to go to Japan for five days R&R.

**Five February 1951:** We had moved to a defensive position located at Sojon-ni, South Korea, map location CS670417, sheet 6626III:50,000. The position of the company, was Item Company was on our left, K Company was in reserve, First Battalion on our right flank. On Tuesday, 6 February 1951 three officers were present for duty in Love Company. Carl Bernard, the XO; Hugh Brown, Fourth Platoon Leader; and Volney Warner, Third Platoon Leader, all were First Lieutenants. First Lieutenant Eversole was attached FO from, 52nd Field Artillery Battalion. Our regular FO, Short Round Hardy, was not present. Starting on our left flank the company disposition was Third Platoon, Fifth Platoon Gimlets, Second Platoon, First, and the Fourth Platoon machine gun sections were split up with the First and Second Platoons. Sixty mortars were to the right of the company CP.

During this day I received information from three different sources that we could expect an attack that night. One went as far as to state the time as being 2400 hours. That afternoon around 1630 hours, I asked Lieutenant Eversole to fire high angle fire on the area; I thought would be used as an assembly area for the Chinese. Eversole started crying and said he didn’t know how to fire high angle. My reply was “Goddamnit, get Captain Burns or someone up here that can fire high angle.” Checking, I found the ammunition and grenades in good shape but only eight rounds per mortar for the 60 mortars. This was a total of 24 rounds of 60 mortar ammo.

I went to the nearby 81 mortars. First Lieutenant Joe Griffith had left L Company and was in command of the battalion’s 81 mortars. I asked Joe about 60 mortar ammunition and he said he was sending a three-quarter ton weapons carrier with a trailer for 81 ammo and would try to get me some 60 ammo. I phoned Joe a little later that afternoon and asked about the 60 ammo. Joe reported that the driver did not get any 60 ammo.

I told Lieutenant Bernard I was going to the company right flank for the time being and Sergeant Bergman could handle the 60s. When I reached the platoon’s right flank I asked how we’re tied in with the First Battalion. I was told a machine gun covering a draw on our right.
I walked to this machine gun which was a heavy, water-cooled .30 caliber with a three-man crew from D Company of the First Battalion. Upon questioning them about the location of the rifle company they were attached to, I became alarmed by the fact they did not know where it was located. I walked for fifty yards in the direction I thought the rifle company should be in, but found no one. I found no fox holes to indicate that anybody had been there. When I went back to the heavy .30 caliber, I said, “If things get too hot for you, I don’t want you to go to your rear. I want you to go to your left and stay about the same elevation you are now and just move to your left around behind L Company. I’ll be around here some place and I’ll see that you’re taken care of, but don’t run off; I need you here.” They promised they would and I left them.

I returned to the First Platoon CP around 1830 hours, and took off my shoe packs, getting into my sleeping bag I told those present to awaken me in case of an attack or at 2300 hours.

At 2300 hours I went and checked with the heavy machine gun from D Company and they were okay. I then started up the ridge line going the length of the First Platoon and Second Platoon; which was at the highest point in our position and then down to the Fifth Platoon Gimlets. Sergeant First Class Leon Wilson was having some problems keeping the Gimlets in place. Around 2330 hours while I was with Sergeant First Class Wilson, the sound of a lot of small arms fire began in the First Platoon area. Then the heavy .30 machine gun opened up with a long, long, long sweeping fire of the area in front of them and the First Platoon. The Chinese also opened up with long return fire. The expected attack and the battle for “Sleeping Bag Hill” had started.

I started back to the First Platoon. While passing through the Second Platoon, I saw Sergeant Marion Todd in a sleeping bag and I told him to get out of the sleeping bag as we were being hit. His reply was, “If they kill me, it will be in this sleeping bag.” I had known Todd when he was at Div. Hq’s & Hq’s Co., he was something of a hardhead. So not wanting to waste time, I kept going. Yes, the Chinese killed him in his sleeping bag!

I reached the phone in the First Platoon and had Cliff Bergman fire the 60 millimeter mortars at the assembly area concentration three rounds per mortar: nine rounds. Then he was to fire the three approach concentrations. Each mortar had a different concentration to fire five rounds per mortar and that was the end of our 60 millimeter ammo.

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Going to the 60 mortars, I had Bergman and Jose Benitez go with me to D Company’s heavy machine gun. On the way I explained to Cliff and Jose that I thought the rifle company from the First Battalion had pulled out of position leaving the attached heavy
machine gun. Not wanting to lose this machine gun, Cliff and Jose were to help the machine gun get back over to our mortar position.

While attempting to get up to the First Platoon area, I was hit in the head with a piece of hand grenade. It was just a scratch, but the ridge line was a mass of confusion. Chinese and GIs mixed. I could do no good here in the dark.

My thoughts were to get partway down the hill toward our CP and set up a temporary reverse slope defense.

I went back to the 60 mortars. By this time day was breaking, I showed Cliff where I wanted the heavy machine gun. He took some of the mortar crew with him and the heavy machine gun crew.

I sent Benitez with the remaining mortar men to the CP to get all the machine gun ammo and hand grenades and then bring them back to the heavy machine gun position.

Wounded men were coming down off the hill with the aid of our medics or other L Company men. I told them to get M-1 ammo and hand grenades on the return trip back up the hill.

I remember two medics coming up the hill with three cases of hand grenades, one case between them and each had a case in their other hand. The medics were a large part of our success at sleeping bag hill.

The heavy machine gunner was doing a wonderful job of keeping the Chinese on the reverse slope at the crest.

Two men, one wounded and the other with a SCR300 radio on his back came up to me. Upon questioning them it turned out they were an 81 mortar FO party that Joe Griffith had sent to L Company. They had reported to our CP and were told to report to Lieutenant Brown on the hill, and had spent the night looking for me. The FO had a bad wound and it looked as though it went through one lung. I told the radio man to leave the SCR300 radio with me and take the FO to the road and the Battalion Aid Station.

Approximately 09:00 hours, 6 February 1951. Now I had around 30 men with ammo and hand grenades. I told them L Company lost the hill and L Company would take it back. They were to watch for wounded and missing men. They could be prisoners or hiding out.

I had the SCR300 radio on my back which gave me contact with our 81 mortars, but had no control over the artillery for I had not seen or heard from Lieutenant Eversole.
all night. By tying an air panel to the back of the SCR radio, I hoped to keep the artillery and the air corps off of us.

We had advanced up the hill maybe 30 yards when Sergeant Freddie Pickens called to me, “You had better come and see this.” Going over to Pickens I saw Corporal Theodore Johnsbury, a big man who was well-liked by all of L Company. He was dead with most of his head missing. Nearby was a field stripped M-1 rifle (trigger group and stock removed). The receiver group was full of brains from Johnsbury’s head. Someone had beaten his head in with the M-1 rifle. It was at that moment I knew L Company would not take any prisoners this day. I was later told one of our Medics checked each of the many Chinese bodies for a pulse, if there was one, he would put a .45 pistol to his head and fire. Then he said “This one is dead also.”

We were slowly going up the hill when I heard a strange noise. Looking to my far right I could see the 81 mortar position just as it was engulfed with a blue flame. Then I saw the bomber fly over our heads. My thoughts were, Oh, God, we can’t retake this hill without 81 mortars. Later I learned that due to the short range the 81s were firing all powder increments were pulled off each round and thrown in a pile. It was this pile of powder increments hit by a bullet from our Army Air Force bomber that made the blue flame, but no damage to crew or mortars.

About 20 yards short of the crest, I adjusted the mortars’ fire just over the crest. We were using hand grenades to clear the remaining Chinese.

Before this battle had started, the hill had a lot of small four to six foot tall pine-like trees. With artillery and mortar fire, the limbs were blown off and were all around on the frozen ground. Standing was difficult; walking with people shooting at you was impossible.

Sergeant Freddie Pickens was on the ground just ahead. My head was near his boots. He asked for a hand grenade but I had taken off my ammo belt when I put on the SCR300 radio and had none to give him.

I saw the enemy throw a potato-masher--type grenade (concussion) at Pickens. He picked it up and threw it into a hole occupied by some enemy. I raised up with my left knee on the ground to shoot this enemy the next time he came up to throw a grenade, but another potato-masher grenade landed to Pickens’ left and exploded. Because I had my right arm up to fire, some of this grenade entered my armpit and came out the top of my right shoulder.

To my right front and higher by five or ten feet, Sergeant Orville Musick yelled, the Chinks are bugging out. I knew instantly we would be successful. A dozen of our folks that were timid rushed up to get a shot at the enemy retreating.
We fired at the enemy as they retreated away from us, adjusted the mortar fire in pursuit of the enemy and all our artillery had already been firing over in the valley. My big concern at that time was how L Company could defend against a counter-attack by the Chinese. My estimate was a sick prostitute armed with a broken tennis racket could run us off this hill again. Sergeant John “Doc” Shields asked “Can I help you?” He was probably referring to my wounds. My reply was, “Yes, Shields,” and I pointed down the hill and asked “do you see that platoon sitting about 50 yards down there.” He answered “Yes.” I told him it was a platoon from K Company sent to help us and asked him to go down there and ask the officer in charge to please bring his men up to our position. He said “Yes sir” and left. Returning in about five minutes, Shields reported that the Lieutenant had said “I’m waiting for orders from battalion headquarters.”

It was then that I gave Shields a verbal order to deliver to the lieutenant, “This is a direct order from Lieutenant Brown in command of this hill. You will immediately move your men up to L Company’s position then report to Lieutenant Brown.” I also gave Shields a direct order on how he was to deliver the message, which was to put the muzzle of your .45 against his side and say “Lieutenant, I have orders from Lieutenant Brown to blow your guts out if you do not obey this order.” Shields left heading for the K Company platoon. About five or ten minutes later, this platoon moved into our position and the lieutenant reported.

(It was 37 years before I saw Doc Shields again in 1988 when we were together in Orlando for “L” Company’s 30 plus 8 reunion.)

Time now about 14:00 hours, I told the lieutenant from K Company he was now in charge of the hill and that I was going to the battalion aid station.

Approximately 15:00 hours at the Third Battalion Aid Station I was told that I was going to a MASH Unit, not to regimental clearing, and was put in an ambulance. One of the people already in the ambulance, First Lieutenant Loran E. Chambers, was from C Company, 21st Infantry. He had been wounded that day also. Lieutenant Chambers had a fifth of whiskey and we had a few drinks on the way to the MASH Unit. It was dark when we reached the hospital. After getting something to eat I was directed to a ward that looked full of men on stretchers that were setting on the ground. The only light was a small one on a table. Going to this table and standing until a nurse came along, I was asked my name. As I finished giving my name a voice from the darkness called out, “Lieutenant Brown, Lieutenant Brown, please help me.” I recognized the voice of Sergeant William Travers. I went to Travers and he was bandaged around his chest area and neck. I saw him on one of the stretchers. What he wanted was a drink of water. I said I’d see about it. The nurse said that I could not give Travers any water and that she was going to give him a shot so he could get some sleep, and did so. I laid down on one of the few empty stretchers and immediately I was asleep.

1 “L” began hold reunions in 1980, 30 years after the war started — hence 30 plus 8 in 1988.
Sometime later in the night I awoke to Sergeant Travers calling my name. I went to him and he told me he was already dying and could I please give him a drink of water. The nurse was standing beside me and she told him, Travers, you cannot have any water. I sent the nurse to get a doctor. The doctor was a little upset with me because I asked him to examine Sergeant Travers. This doctor told me water would kill Travers. I asked if he would guarantee me Travers would live until daylight if he did not get any water. His reply was he didn’t think Travers could live until daylight. I asked “What kind of Goddamn people are you? This man is in agony and he’s praying for water and he’s dying.” The doctor said they could not give Travers any water. I said “By God, I can.” I went to the table and it had an empty cup setting on it. I found the water can, filled the cup and went back to Travers.

Holding his head up a little so he could drink some water, he looked at me and said “Thank you for giving me water. I’ll see you one day,” and he died as I held him in my arms. For the next 27 years I could not speak this man’s name.

Snow was coming down very heavy when I went to the operating tent where my shoulder was debrided.

Heavy snow fell all morning and after lunch, I was sent by ambulance to the holding ward set up on the edge of an air strip. This ward was long because it was four or five tents erected end-to-end.

**Nine February:** Upon arriving at the holding ward next to the air strip, I slept 24 hours continuously. When I awoke hungry, I started walking around looking for something to eat.

Entering another tent or room I saw some of our men and the D Company man that had been the gunner on that heavy .30 caliber machine gun. He asked if I would help him get someone to change his bandages. He smelled like an outhouse. He had been hit in the throat and he thought the bullet was in the back of his neck. He also told me the bandages were put on at the third Battalion aid station. This meant the bandages were about three days old.

I went to a nurse saying that some of my men needed to have changes in bandages and she said she had to have a doctor’s order. I asked her where may I find a doctor and she directed me to the last tent in the row. I went in and three men in whites were sitting at a table drinking coffee. I asked if anyone here was the doctor and one stood up and asked me why did I need a doctor. When I repeated my story about the men and the bandages, he said, well, “Lieutenant, up at the front those men were your problem, back here they’re ours.” We’ll take care of them all in good time. Now just go back to your bed in the officers’ ward and let us take care of the men. I said “When are you going to take care of them?” He said “When we get around to it.” I said “Okay.”
When I’d entered, I’d seen a little tent that was generally reserved for field grade officers and a little sign with some colonel’s name who was the commanding officer. I went back out to the tent and attempted to knock on his little tent pole there on his tent. He asked me to come in and asked me was there something wrong. I said “Yes sir, there’s something wrong.” I said “I have some men with three-day-old bandages out there and they smell like outhouses. I asked the nurse to change the bandages she said no she couldn’t without a doctor’s order, and I asked the doctor and he told me he’d do it when he got around to it.” He said “Lieutenant you must be mistaken. There are no men here with bandages three days old.” I said, “Colonel, how about you looking at some of them. I’ll point them out to you.” So we walked back to the ward where my men were and the Colonel said “Lieutenant, I believe you’re right.” He started to take the bandage off the gunner’s neck and it smelled like hell. Boy, the old colonel got hot, calling a nurse over; the colonel said, “You will tell major so-and-so to report to me immediately.” In a little bit major so-and-so showed up and the colonel said “You get every nurse, every doctor and you have all bandages in this place changed by dark this evening. Now, do you understand?” In the process he said “This man should go back to be operated on.” And there were four or five others. It ended up there were two ambulances loaded with men that were sent back to the MASH for operations. The gunner was one of them. When the colonel took the stinking bandage off, you could see the bullet under the skin, at the back of his neck.

The colonel went on to explain what the problem had been. Normally they did the routine debriding and sew up and so on in MASH and the more severely wounded such as the gunner being shot through the neck were evacuated to the hospitals better able to handle them in Japan. Because of the snow, no planes were able to land or take off and this had backed-up the evacuation and caused the screw up here. He said he’d have it straightened out, and I thanked him. It had stopped snowing and the next day I was on the first plane out of there, on my way to Japan and a hospital at Kyoto.

I was evacuated to a hospital in Kyoto, Japan, and was in the downtown main hospital a week or so, then transferred to an annex on the outskirts of Kyoto. There I met Lieutenant Colonel McConnell who’d been my battalion commander in Korea and we had some things in common. We both watered at the same water hole, we had a conversation and I asked Colonel McConnell how come Colonel Stephens wouldn’t let Carl Bernard be the L Company commander. He said, well, Brownie, it wasn’t Colonel Stephens, it was me that had kept that from happening. He said most of us did not like that bug-out back on the Naktong in August. I said “Colonel, I told you the next morning that was my fault and none of them had anything to do with it.” And he said well, nevertheless that’s the way I felt about it.
One evening a Red Cross lady came through and said, Lieutenant, I need one more person to go to the Bewa Ski Lodge this weekend. The bus is leaving here at 09:00 hrs and it'll return Sunday evening. It's a lovely resort and I'm sure you'll enjoy it. I said, "Yes." It sounded like a good idea.

The bus rolled up that morning and we went up in the mountains above Kyoto to this ski lodge overlooking a ski slope. I had a drink or two and looked around and there wasn't anybody there who had been in Korea. There were about forty officers and nurses. Everybody was curious about, what's going on in Korea. I just felt out of place maybe because I was a new officer, but more so because none of these people had been to Korea and none of them wanted to go.

I just didn't really think I should have been there in the first place. I asked the manager that ran the ski lodge, "Is there anything to do besides ski around here; I don't think this arm could take any skiing?" He said, well, we do have duck hunting down on Lake Bewa, but you'd have to get up at 4:00 o'clock in the morning to go duck hunting. I said, "Well, that suits me just fine."

The next morning at 4:00 o'clock he woke me up and a driver took me down to a Japanese family's house that was right on the shores of Lake Bewa. This old gentleman took me out in his boat and we had duck decoys to put out. About two hours after daylight we hadn't seen the first duck. It was a nice bright morning and I heard several China pheasants over in rice paddies nearby. So I told him, "Papa San, I want to go over and shoot a China pheasant." We landed the boat and I was sneaking around with an automatic 12-gauge shotgun when a thought occurred to me, Boy, you're really a big brave man running around looking for an old China pheasant that hasn't a damned thing to shoot back with and you're going to shoot him. If you just want to really try your skill, why don't you go back to Korea in the field where they have weapons to shoot back at you. Those thoughts kind of unsettled me and I went back to the boat and asked Papa San to take me back.

When we returned to the hospital in Kyoto late Sunday evening, business hours were over, I saw one of the doctors I knew there and I said, "Colonel, I sure as hell would like to get out of here and go back to Korea." And he said, "Oh, well, Brown, I can't do anything about it today. You come to my office tomorrow morning and we'll see about sending you back."

The next morning I went to his office and the Colonel had two other people there, and one said, you know, Lieutenant, it's not that we don't believe you want to go back to Korea; it's just that usually a normal person being through what you've been through wouldn't want to go back and we hesitate to let you go back. I said, "Well, I'm not nuts but I feel out of place here. I just feel like a fish out of water around here; and I really do want to go back." And he said, well, now, if you really want to go back, we'll let you
go, but we think that maybe you might have some mental reservations. And I said, no, I have no reservations, sir, just let me go. So they agreed that I’d go.

In March I was sent back and instead of being in a rush I just took the replacement route back to the 24th Inf. Div. Hqs.

At Div. Hqs. I found First Lieutenant Carl Bernard was now the 21st Infantry Regiment Liaison Officer with Division. Carl went to work and succeeded in having me assigned as regimental aerial observer for the 21st Infantry. I was assigned back to “L” Company, not joined, TDY w/ 24th Inf. Div. Hqs. My duty was to fly along the regimental front in one of the division L19 or L20 airplanes and keep the people on the ground informed of what I was observing. And it was one hell of a relief to me. I would have gone back to the L Company, but this came up and paid extra money (Hazardous Duty). I thoroughly enjoyed the experience. The pilots of the 24th Infantry Division Air Section for the most part had been flying since July going up in the morning, coming back, refueling, getting something to eat and going back up. They had accumulated hundreds of hours of flight time since July of 1950. When I discovered that they would just as soon let me fly the airplane and they could read a book I thought that was neat. I learned how to fly an airplane, with some of the best pilots in the world there if anything went wrong. The L19 and L20s were very forgiving. You could make a mistake and they’d give you five minutes to correct it. I thoroughly enjoyed it.

One of the most interesting things about being a aerial observer is the refractions of the light off something. ‘Cause everyday you went up you didn’t know what color the enemy would look like on the ground. But once you saw them, why that color would be the same all day. But the next day it might be a different hue or color, it would always start with a different shade. The real trick was to make that first sighting. I had a SCR300 radio in the plane, the plane itself was equipped with a high frequency radios for getting on the air with other airplanes. Mine was just strictly air to ground and I communicated with the battalions.

Just shortly after I became the regimental observer, I was flying over a sector and this happened to be in the 3rd Battalion and I saw what looked like one Chinese coming down the road with one of the old American pack mules that’d we’d turned over to them at the end of World War II, and he may have been taking chow up to the boys in the front or whatever, but it was one man coming down the road with one mule.

I used the SCR300 radio and called the 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry. They had a brand new battalion commander. I told them about a Chinese coming down the road with a mule. Saying, if the battalion point would just step off the side of the road and just be still, that mule and that man would walk right into their arms. They’re up around a couple of curves from him right now, neither one knows the other one’s there.
Well, in about two minutes here comes the battalion on the air. The battalion commander is calling for artillery and a air strike. He said they’re being attacked by a regiment of Chinese horse calvary. I tried to get on the air and explain it to the new battalion commander, but he wasn’t having that. He already knew they were coming.

About that time the mule came around the corner with the Chinaman and the guys on the point stepped out and took him prisoner along with the mule. I don’t know what disposition was made of the mule. The comical errors that get into it sometimes make you wonder how we ever got through it.

In April of ’51 we were attacking and had about every vehicle in the division busy hauling Chinese prisoners to the rear. The 21st Infantry Regimental Commander Colonel Gines Perez was very aggressive in moving the regimental headquarters way, way out into the boondocks, and when I first flew over it that morning I saw a few enemy on the ridge lines and didn’t pay a whole lot of attention to it.

We returned to our air strip to refuel and get something to eat. We flew back up over the regimental headquarters area shortly after lunch and conditions had changed alarmingly along the ridge lines. Where we had one or two or three enemy that morning when I’d first flew over it, there were groups of tens and twenties all around.

Here was the regimental headquarters setting down in the valley and on every hill around them I could see lots and lots of enemy. I became concerned about it and tried to reach somebody on my SCR300 radio but there was a storm coming up and I couldn’t make contact with anybody.

Captain Brennan was the pilot, a good man, he said, “Hugh, we need to set this thing down before this storm reaches us.” So we flew out to some 8th Army air strip, I don’t know what strip it was, and he suggested I try high frequency to get the message to regiment that they had a lot of enemy sitting up there that had assembled since early that morning and it looked like they were in for trouble once it got dark. I tried various radio systems and none of them could get through to the 21st Infantry Regiment. Captain Brennan asked me, “Now, Hugh, how much of a danger do you think they’re in?”

“I don’t think, I know damn well that they’re in for trouble tonight. I just want to be sure they know they’re in for some trouble and be prepared.” He said, “Okay, you write a message so we can make a message drop and I’ll fly if you’ll go with me as soon as this storm passes and we hope it breaks before it’s too late. But if nothing else I’ll fly through it if you’ll go with me.” I said “Yes, we need to do that.” I wrote the message that they had enemy all around them and they would probably be hit as soon as it turned dark and to dig some holes and be prepared.
The weather broke in a little while and I still couldn’t get anybody. Brennan tried to go back through the radio systems that he had on the plane and there was nothing doing there either so we flew back up buzzed the regimental headquarters to get their attention. Then on the next pass I threw out this message envelope that had a long streamer on it so everybody would know there was a message being dropped.

We flew back through one hell of a storm. I was nervous and anxious about the people at regimental headquarters so I kept a close tab on them and sure enough they were hit that night as soon as it got dark.

They made a very good showing for themselves. The regimental headquarters and the medical company were both there. They held on and killed quite a number of enemy there right in their headquarters so to speak. The location of that place was Sanghongjong-ni, Korea. The Department of the Army general order number 77, 1951, awarded the Presidential Unit Citation to the Regimental Headquarters Company and the 21st Infantry Medical Company for their action that night and they damn well deserved it.

I’d like to tell about defensive fire, when you’re in need of help quickly. Generally this is done with artillery and the better infantry companies use their mortars for the same thing. But generally it was the artillery. The FO from your artillery unit along with the infantry company commander or one of the officers would select any possible suspect target in the viewing area that might be used for an assembly area for the enemy, or approaches such as ravines or ditches for giving cover or through woods or bushes for concealment. They would fire one round say into a place they suspected could be used for an assembly area and the fire direction center back in the artillery unit would give that location a register number or concentration number of say 6112. That would be put on a overlay of the map the infantry company had and recorded back at the fire direction center of the artillery unit which fired it. If we saw enemy at the 6112 location, we just call for fire at concentration 6112.

On the Naktong we had five defensive fire concentrations in front of us between our hill and the river. As I told earlier, we had the 13th field artillery battalion supporting us. The 13th field artillery battalion was a 155mm howitzer outfit which has a bigger gauge and a little longer range than the 105mm howitzer. They were replaced by the 52nd field artillery battalion which is a 105mm howitzer outfit with not quite as much range.

This required a change. Hap Chandler had arrived and Hap was a good soldier. He knew what was going on. He had gotten with me and I told him I didn’t have an overlay of the defensive concentration fired by the 13th field, but I kind of sketched it in on a rough map that I had. He and I were trying to make an overlay for the correct map and First Lieutenant Olin Hardy from B Battery, 52nd Field Artillery came up. He was helping us locate where we thought these concentrations were.
Hap said “Well, the best way to do this Hardy, is just have the FDC give this location to the firing battery and fire one round into concentrations 6112 and if it hits in that area, then we'll know that that concentration is okay and we can go on to the next one.” So Hardy was on the phone and he called back and he finally said, “Yes, on the way.” Of course, something had happened back in the battery at the very first and he said “Oh, oh, that's a short round, that's a short round, that's a short round.” And it was a short round, it exploded about 80 yards to the rear on the back side of the hill where we were.

When Hap saw that this really upset First Lieutenant Hardy he kind of poured it on him. He said, “Oh, you said it was a short round. I guess we'll have to know you as Short Round from now on and watch the backside every time you're going to the fire.” Of course, Hardy was a little disconcerted, but we went on and checked the other concentrations and we placed them on the overlay. But every time Hap had anything to say, he'd say, “You get Short Round Hardy up here.” And so it just didn’t take much time until all the people knew our FO as Short Round Hardy.

To this day he is known as Short Round Hardy. Hap also give 2Lt Volney Warner, one of the officers from the West Point class of '50 that joined us in late August, the nick name of Little Fellow. I never understood this because Volney Warner was four inches taller than Hap Chandler.

Mike Thiel joined us in August at the Naktong. He was a master sergeant at the time but he had a second lieutenant reserve commission. Mike was a good man, big, husky, good natured fellow. He said that he'd probably apply to come on active duty as soon as he had his reserve commission straightened out. Mike was very pleasant to be around and a good soldier. His wife Dolores was a very beautiful letter-writer. The word would go around that Mike had received a letter from his wife. Mike would always read her letters aloud and it was very entertaining. People around him enjoyed them and it definitely was a moral builder. I had been around Mike quite a bit and liked to hear him 'cause he always laughed and Dolores had some real stories to tell about the children. Mike had a picture of the baby at that time, her name was Genie, a beautiful little girl. Mike never referred to his children as children. They were always kiddies. I had heard this two or three times and I said to myself, Mike Thiel is a lucky guy. He has a wonderful wife who writes very entertaining letters and she writes one about once a week. I thought, When I get out of this hell hole, I'm going to get married and raise a family. I owe this to Mike's wife. The little girl Genie was the baby when I was in Korea, I saw her some years later and she was a married woman and she had just become a grandmother herself, and she was very beautiful. So that's a by-product that Mike really didn't know he was doing for all of us. Mike continued on, did get his reserve commission through and subsequently retired from the Army as a full colonel.
Old King Cole

recalled by Hugh Brown

Old King Cole was a merry old soul and a merry old soul was he,
He called for his pipe and he called for his bowl and he called for his Privates Three
Beer beer beer said the privates, merry men are we.
There's none so fair as can compare with the Twenty First Infantry.

Old King Cole was a merry old soul and a merry old soul was he,
He called for his pipe and he called for his bowl and he called for his Corporals Three
Hup two, hup two, Hup, said the corporals,
Beer, beer, beer said the privates merry men are we.
There's none so fair as can compare with the Twenty First Infantry.

Old King Cole was a merry old soul and a merry old soul was he,
He called for his pipe and he called for his bowl and he called for his Sergeants Three
Right by squads, squads right said the sergeants,
Hup two, hup two, Hup, said the corporals,
Beer, beer, beer said the privates merry men are we.
There's none so fair as can compare with the Twenty First Infantry.

Old King Cole was a merry old soul and a merry old soul was he,
He called for his pipe and he called for his bowl and he called for his Shave Tails Three
We do all the work said the shave tails,
Right by squads, squads right said the sergeants,
Hup two, hup two, Hup, said the corporals,
Beer, beer, beer said the privates merry men are we.
There's none so fair as can compare with the Twenty First Infantry.

Old King Cole was a merry old soul and a merry old soul was he,
He called for his pipe and he called for his bowl and he called for his Captains Three
Where's my boots and spurs said the captains,
We do all the work said the shave tails,
Right by squads, squads right said the sergeants,
Hup two, hup two, Hup, said the corporals,
Beer, beer, beer said the privates merry men are we.
There's none so fair as can compare with the Twenty First Infantry.

Old King Cole was a merry old soul and a merry old soul was he,
He called for his pipe and he called for his bowl and he called for his Majors Three
When's my next promotion said the majors,
Where's my boots and spurs said the captains,
We do all the work said the shave tails,
Right by squads, squads right said the sergeants,
Hup two, hup two, Hup, said the corporals,
Beer, beer, beer said the privates merry men are we.
There's none so fair as can compare with the Twenty First Infantry.

Old King Cole was a merry old soul and a merry old soul was he,
He called for his pipe and he called for his bowl and he called for his Colonels Three
Where's my next command said the colonels,
When's my next promotion said the majors,
Where's my boots and spurs said the captains,
We do all the work said the shave tails,
Right by squads, squads right said the sergeants,
Hup two, hup two, Hup, said the corporals,
Beer, beer, beer said the privates merry men are we.
There's none so fair as can compare with the Twenty First Infantry.

(This is the Hap Chandler version that I remember)

The more popularly known nursery rhyme appears below:

Old King Cole

Old King Cole
Was a merry old soul,
And a merry old soul was he;
He called for his pipe,
And he called for his bowl,
And he called for his fiddlers three.

Every fiddler,
He had a fiddle,
And a very fine fiddle had he;
Twee tweedle dee, tweedle dee, went the fiddlers.
Oh, there's none so rare
As can compare
With old King Cole and his fiddlers three.

One version of the origin of the history of this rhyme is:

Coel was a British King, whose capital was Colchester. He married his daughter Helena to a Roman general and she subsequently became mother to the Emperor Constantine and was subsequently declared as saint for her work in spreading Christianity. Presumably Coel’s good humour relates to the peace his daughter’s marriage brought to his kingdom.
| 126 | Brown | Remembered |
Surrounded by men of his company Lieutenant Henderson holds a Chinese Shepherd’s horn while Lieutenant Chandler in the foreground examines a captured tommy gun.

COMPANY L’S FOUR DAYS
FROM THE JOURNAL OF COMPANY L, 21st INFANTRY
Lieutenant Lindsey P. Henderson, Jr.
PHOTOGRAPHS BY AUTHOR

Saturday, 4 November 1950. Company in defensive position, 6 miles northeast of Anju, south of Chongchongang River: 8 officers, 170 enlisted men, with 11 attached. At 2300 hours left position for battalion assembly area for attack on enemy northeast of Anju.

Sunday, 5 November 1950. 2 enlisted men returnees: Swift and Schramm.


Monday, 6 November 1950. Company in attack on enemy position 8 ½ miles northeast Anju at 1400 hours. Light enemy resistance. Company reverted to battalion re-

**Tuesday, 7 November 1950.** Company left reserve position at 1530 hours. Arrived bivouac area 8 miles east Anju 1730 hours.

**THAT** is what the first sergeant wrote in the little black notebook which is L Company's journal. Simple, concise, no excess words. Paper shortage, no space for extras.

But what about this operation? Who did what? And why and how? I will tell you the story as I saw it happen.


Now we are thirteen miles from the Yalu and the war is almost over.

“Mac's Marauders”—the 3d Battalion is commanded by Lieutenant Colonel John A. McConnell. We are to pass through the 2d Battalion for the drive on the final objective, Sinuiju and the Yalu River. Company L will point with tank and artillery support. The Air Force is working the objective over. The jumpoff is scheduled for dawn, 1 November. When the objective is secured, the 21st Infantry will be relieved and return to Camp Wood, Japan. The “Gimlets” nightmare will be over.

Few of those who were “First in Korea” that day in July, when a composite battalion of the 21st faced the North Korean hordes, are still here. I am a replacement officer myself. But I saw the old battleground when we won it back again. I heard the survivors talk about it.
Flashes of the beginning:

“They’ll stop when they see Americans here.”

... This is a police action, the United Nations is with us. They wouldn’t dare.”

But one battalion, one regiment, couldn’t stop divisions.

“No flanks... we’re murdering them on the front... We haven’t got any flanks... Stop them on the front a slaughterhouse... wave after wave... no flanks... burned-out barrels... no more ammo... screaming, stinking Reds all around... bugles, bloody bugles sounding taps... red flares, green flares on the flanks... behind us... fall back... bugout... to where... tanks... Russian T34s... gimme a bazooka... my God, this won’t stop ‘em, it bounces off... fall back to new positions... fight back to new positions....”

Osan, 4 July. “Bugout....”

Chochiwon, 10-11 July. “Bugout. Bugout... we’re Americans; they can’t do this to us.”

20 July Taejon. “Oh no! General Dean’s not dead, not him........ He got some tanks, by himself..... What in hell is a general doing leading assaults? Hell, the cooks are fighting... everybody’s fighting... I thought this was a police action where’s my badge?... Where is the U. N. army? Brother, you’re it!”

“The Naktong line... the Pusan perimeter... no more bugout... no place to bugout to. It’s a long swim to Japan... wish I were there now... Pohang-dong, Kigge, Taegu, Masan... the Naktong River again... The Marines and the 7th Division have taken Inchon from the sea. Engineers bring up assault boats... have you ever crossed a river under fire? No, you Yo-Yo, I don’t mean on a bugout, I mean in attack.”

We assault the Naktong line. The British anchor the far left. The 19th Infantry crosses on our left flank as we hit the center. The 5th RCT is on our right. They came up and took Waegwan and Hill 303. It’s good to have outfits like the 19th and the 5th with you. No sweat about the flanks now.

The long hard push north... Namgye-dong. headquarters of the crack Red tank division, Kumchon, Taejon again, on through Seoul... Yonan and the discovery of the bodies of the civilians who refused to accept communism... a thousand of them—hands tied behind their backs, murdered like so many thousands of others. We cross the 38th... It doesn’t look any different—same rice paddies, same high
rugged hills and mountains. . . . Communism didn’t do much for these people . . . a
crazy woman running in circles . . . burned out tanks . . . the war on the ground just got
here . . . Sinwon-ni, Pyong-yang, Anju, Chongju, Sonchon, Yang Si.

And tomorrow Sinuiju and the end of the war. No more filth . . . clean clothes again.

1 November . . . We’re waiting for orders. Lieutenant W. W. (Hap) Chandler, Love
Company CO, is completing coordination with the commander of the 21st’s Tank Com-
pany and Lieutenant O. M. (Short Round) Hardy, our forward observers

has been with us for months. Besides being a dammed good forward observer who
drops ‘em in close, he is a first-rate infantryman. The kind who goes on our combat and
recon patrols to locate and pinpoint enemy positions for more accurate artillery sup-
port. His two assistants, Sergeant Heiser and Corporal Dossett, are experts also. The
important thing is that they are an integral part of this company. They live, eat, breathe
and think like the Infantry. They know our job and our mission as well as their own.

The Old Man doesn’t have to pinpoint it for them. We want fire. Short Round and his
crew lay it on for us.

Their other outfit, the 52d Field Artillery (the first FA in Korea) is accurate, fast-
shooting. We have faith in them from longtime mutual aid. Familiarity breeds security.

Waiting for orders. . . . Colonel Mac sent for Hap. Rumors . . . please God, no more
bugout! Let’s get the war over and go home. Patrols covering the assembly area bring in
wounded Chinese they shot. Are the Chinese in now? Why don’t we move out? . . . Big
Six (Colonel Stephens) is back trying to find out what’s going on. Morale high . . .
Remember, we’re winning! Going home in a few days . . .

Hap is back. Look at him. Something wrong. The officers and senior noncoms as-
semble.

“There has been a breakthrough in the center. We don’t know yet how bad it is.” The
ROKs have been split and the Cavalry’s in trouble. We move back to Chongju and
anchor the line. Maybe we will find out more there.

**Chongju.** We’re still OK . . . no pressure on us. We hit ‘em too hard in our sector for
them to re-form yet.
More poop now. . . . The enemy’s driving to the Chongchon River. If they take Anju our bugout route is cut and we’ll have to swim for it. . . . in this weather? Hell, we won’t last two minutes in that ice water. Here we go again . . . CSBO. (close station, bugout). Gasoline sabotaged. Water in the tanks, but maintenance crews from battalion keep ‘em rolling. Tanks pulling tanks and trucks. Reassemble at old battalion assembly area east of Anju. Cross the river . . . Colonel Stephens has a good regiment . . . Colonel Mac has a good battalion. Hap has a good company. The orderly withdrawal doesn’t look orderly. But squads, platoons and equipment make it to the assembly area, and reorganize and establish a defense line in the hills overlooking our sector of the river. The 19th Infantry is holding the road junction across the river. Dig in for the winter, we’ll hold ‘em here. God, it’s cold!

Saturday, 4 November. Rumors . . . a battalion of the 19th has been cut off across the river. At 2230 hours Hap sends for platoon leaders. It’s true. We’re going across the river and get ‘em out. At 2300 hours we move out for battalion assembly area, We cross the river . . . long, dismal march. . . . , God, it’s cold . . . stop near village . . . platoon assigned areas . . . security out . . . Hap goes for orders . . . men burrow in cornstalk and rice stacks to keep warm. Lucky ones flakeout in native shacks.

0200 hours, 5 November. Hap sends for company officers and senior noncoms. Reporting . . . 1st Platoon, Lieutenant T L Epton; 2d Platoon, Lieutenant “Toady” Dreisonstok; 3d Platoon, Lieutenant Volney Warner; 4th Platoon, Lieutenant Hugh Brown; 5th Platoon, the “Gimlets,” made up of ROKs with American noncoms used for patrols, points and special missions, Lieutenant “Dixie” Henderson; Lieutenant Carl Bernard, exec., and Lieutenant Joe Griffith, supply officer (expert weapons man who free lances), and of course, Lieutenant Short Round Hardy and his section chief.

H

AP laid it on the line. Somewhere out there is a battalion of the 19th and it’s in trouble. We’re going to get them out. King Company is pulling security, Love will point the attack. Item will secure our left flank. The river’s on our right and the ground is open. If we can, we are to drive the Reds back. At any rate we’ve got to cut a hole through to the 19th. Last report was that they’re holding their own. Our trouble, we don’t know where they end and the Reds begin. So. . . . . . . a daylight attack. Rough, But we’ll have tanks. We’ll look over the ground at dawn and make the final plans Grab what shut eye you can. It may he a couple of days before you get any more.

Dawn, we move out and up those saw-toothed ridges again. Point to remember: always secure the high ground, front and flanks. Too many men died to learn that. But ridges or not, morale is high. Funny how it goes up when we move forward to attack again. Hate to lay there and get shot at . . . like to fight back . . . Joe Griffith has already
covered the area so he moves us to position. Hap meets us at the OP with the final word from Mac. He points out the objective and issues orders. We have certain SOPs so he doesn’t take too much time with details. We’ve been at this game a long time.

“The Reds are in those hills overlooking that village. (See sketch) We still don’t know where the 19th is so we won’t use the artillery, yet. We’ll have a platoon of tanks for direct fire on it. We don’t want to shoot up our own people. Our intermediate objective is that ridge line above the village. We will attack with four platoons on line. If they know our book, they will think it’s two companies Epton’s 1st platoon on the left; Dixie, move your Gimlets on line with Ep and tie in with Toady’s 2d; Little Fellow [Warner] will put the 3d on the right. I’ll be between Dixie and Toady. Brownie will bring up his mortars and will go into action when suitable targets or on orders. Joe has spotted likely enemy weapons positions and has gone to bring up the tanks. They’ll give us direct over head fire. Joe will man the caliber .50 on the lead tank. He has a can of tracers and will spot the targets and direct the fire. He has a 300 radio for direct commo with me, and lift the fire when we mask on my order. Keep your 536s open and hope they work.”

“We’ve got about 1800 yards of rice paddies to cross. I suggest platoon columns until we get fired on. Make more time . . . then follow your SOP. Gibb’s Item Company will be in support (not reserve). That line of trees is the line of departure, and the assault position as you hit the village and the base of the ridge. From there on your SOPS. Assault fire moving up, reorganize on the ridge, prep to continue the attack, then platoon leaders report to me on that high point. Hardy, you stick with me. I don’t think we’ll have any trouble the tanks can’t handle until we get that ridge and see where the 19th is.

“H hour is 0800 . . . synchronize your watches: the time is now 0729 hours. Any questions? Oh yes! Brownie, give a 57 rifle to the 1st, 3d and 5th Platoons. We’ve got FOs for a 75 rifle and 81mm mortars from Mike Company attached for direct support. Litter bearers will follow closely, litter jeep will move to that village when we take it. Any questions? OK. Move out, and God bless you.”

Each platoon has its own SOP for attacks. I use a modified platoon column until fired on or hit the assault position. Then the platoon V. I like the modified column I worked out. First is the point squad, then me followed by my weapons, closely followed by Sergeant Studebaker, my platoon sergeant, and my two other rifle squads. Sergeant Wilson, assistant platoon sergeant brings up the rear. If we run into
trouble I can put my LMG into action immediately. My 57 recoilless rifle is handy if it's an appropriate target—saves time—also the bazooka if I need it fast.

Meantime, if my heavy fire power can't take care of it, the two rifle squads have moved out, right or left on signal, for an enveloping movement. The platoon sergeant takes over the base of fire and I join the maneuvering element for attack. It may not be the solution, but it works. Further, it speeds up the operation. But back to the story.

Joe brought up the tanks from around the bend, just as we hit the line of departure, and they went into action. It's a good feeling to have five 90mms working over the ground in front of you, particularly when it's direct fire. Those 1800 yards of rice paddies would be hell to negotiate and if it got hot, well, we didn't like to think about bellying up in those half-frozen, ice-covered cesspools.

We were lucky. The tanks made them keep their heads down. Hardly a shot fired at us as we struggled up the slope. Most of the gooks had bugged out. The high ground was ours.

We reorganized to continue the attack. Hap got Mac on the 300. "Intermediate objective secure . . . no casualties, can see part of Doughboy on ridge to our right front."

*Lieutenant Henderson sporting his Luxenber cap and Confederate battle flag, poses with his Gimlets.*
Their air panels point west and north. West toward adjoining ridge on our immediate front. We're set . . . how about the artillery?  OK, I'll put Hardy right on it . . . yes, sir."

“You get that Hardy?” Yes, sir, I’ve got Captain Burns on the line (battalion artillery liaison) and can get right on it. OK, give me a quick concentration on that ridge. Lift on my signal.”

Hardy laid it in there while we got set for the jumpoff. The Reds were running and we didn’t care if they never stopped. We moved out under overhead fire and ran into some snipers and some wounded Reds who had been abandoned. Some were on litters and some lay where they had fallen unable to reach the dubious safety of their next position. We killed the snipers and made prisoners of the wounded. The attack hardly slowed down. The artillery fire was lifted as we hit the objective and we took it with marching fire and fixed bayonets.

The slopes seem to get steeper . . . this one is almost impossible . . . over two miles from where we started this morning . . . most of us pooped, but not for more than a second. From prepared positions on the next ridge, which actually angled out of ours, the Reds poured on a murderous fire. Lieutenant Dreisonstok was clipped on the head and was out cold. Hap pulled him out of the line of fire just as Sergeant Tomkins caught a burst. Hardy, who was directing artillery fire, pulled him out and went back to that exposed position to direct fire. Pretty soon Sergeant Warren, Toady’s assistant platoon sergeant, was hit while directing that same 2d Platoon. Corporal Farr, the light machine gunner, kept it in action. How he wasn’t hit is a miracle. He was in a hot spot and doing considerable damage to the Reds. Toady came too, groggy, but refusing to be evacuated. Plenty of spirit in that June ’50 class of West Point. They were on my right flank and I could see the litter bearers struggling down the steep slope with the wounded. Warner, also class of ’50, was holding the right OK and had made contact with the 19th. On my left, Epton’s platoon was digging in and holding. My Gimlets were doing the same. A mortar round hit in my platoon CP about 20 yards from the crest and wounded my medic, Noble; my ROK adjutant, Lee Pok U; and 3d Squad leader Lee Han Tok. They were littered out by hand to the litter jeep which was working overtime today. All the wounded were taken to the battalion aid station and the seriously wounded by helicopter to the hospital across the river at Anju. That “egg beater” is a wonderful thing.
Company L’s Four Days

The 4th Platoon, which was giving us close support with its 60mm mortars, received some counter fire which killed five and wounded two men. The counterattack was broken up before it could get started and the ridge was secure. Contact had been made with the 19th . . . Mission accomplished . . . The Colonel called in a “well done.”

The Chinese Reds settled down to sniping at us and we sniped back. They quieted down completely when the 19th got an air strike on the ridge to their right front. It was a beautiful sight to see but hell to be in the middle of. Machine-gun fire and rockets are bad enough, but napalm . . . that’s something out of this world. Talk about your atomic bombs . . . well, one napalm bomb covers an area about 80 yards wide and 250 yards long. It cremates everything in that area. If there is a covered position the fire doesn’t reach, the flame sucks out the oxygen and suffocates anyone in it.

Well, we got our well done and as usual were ordered to stand pat and await further orders. The flyboys were overhead most of the afternoon and really raked the Reds over the coals. Short Round and his crew, both slightly wounded registered on likely approaches. We got hot coffee in five gallon containers the kitchen sent up, also our resupply of ammo, C rations and —God bless the APO—mail. The thousand and one little things that can be so big were done SOP. Wire laid, radios checked, weapons and positions checked and improved, ammo rechecked, and so on. Outposts went out at dusk and we settled in for a night of frigid watching and waiting.

During the night we could hear their bugles and whistles and their rooster (shepherd) horns, and the sound of distant firing to our left rear. The Reds in front of us were licking their wounds; they left us alone all night. And our mortars and artillery discouraged them with night-long harassing fire, and we watched and waited. As tired as we were, few men slept. Love Company learned a long time ago to catch what sleep is necessary in the daytime when on line. In some positions where three men are dug in, one is allowed to sleep. When a man is bayonetted in his foxhole at night, it’s because he’s asleep and can’t hear. We just don’t let that happen to us.

Then the dawn and with it hot coffee up from the rear.
Word that a company of Reds infiltrated on the extreme left flank and hit Chet's King Company during the night accounted for the noise we heard. King beat them off OK, but had a few casualties.

It was a beautiful sunny day, if any day in Korea can be beautiful, and with the help of the coffee we thawed out quickly. Lieutenant McLean, attached to us yesterday with the 75s from Mike Company, was giving them a workout, and most of our people were sniping. Sniping can be dangerous. I was creased across the nose, hands and shoulder, Allen had a permanent wrinkle placed on his forehead and Hap was clipped. Nothing serious. Now it was Monday, 6 November, we waited for orders. They came.

Time of attack: later. L Company's objective: the ridge to our immediate front. Hap asked for an air strike on the objective. Without an air observer it took a few extra minutes to put them on the target. But with the help of the liaison plane from regiment who relayed to the Mosquito, who in turn directed the strike, the F-80s gave us some real close tactical support. When you get a strike fifty to seventy-five yards in front of your position, which is generally where you need it, brother, you've got close air support. We used our 300 to the liaison plane. That pilot of the 21st's L-5 is really a dream and made it all possible. Bless him.

Of course we took the precaution of pulling all our men onto the reverse slope of our ridge and our air panels were plainly visible while the strike was on. Also we assisted the air by designating the forward target area with white phosphorus from our 57 recoilless rifles. Sometimes the enemy have our panels and throw the WP back at us. This time they didn't. The strike was perfect.

Then the word at 1330: H-hour 1400, same plan of attack as the day before.
HARDY laid in a twenty-minute barrage. That boy brings ‘em in close. Item Company covered our left flank and 75s in position there fired into the objective. The 19th covered our right. Platoon LMGs and 57s were left in position to cover each platoon’s sector. As soon as the fire was masked they would displace forward and rejoin their platoons. The 60 mortars as usual were in company support. Watches synchronized we waited for the whistle to attack.

I guess it was my close shave of the day before that made me do it, but I took the cap ornament off of my Luxenberg just before H-hour. I’ve worn that cap on all patrols, and in every action since my footlocker arrived at the front. Somebody in Japan made a mistake and shipped everything I owned to Korea. Now it’s all I’ve got left. Anyway, that dress cap, my Confederate battle flag that I had in New Guinea in ‘42, and the Rebel yell I taught my boys got me the name “Dixie.” While I’m at it I might add that my people shine and polish their bayonets. Let ‘em see it and maybe they’ll run before they feel it. It’s both psychological and debatable. But I believe in sharp, shiny steel and so do my men. The “Yankee” gooks banzai and manzai; but my ROKs were mighty fierce with their gleaming steel and Rebel yells. No one in my outfit wore steel pots anymore. After the middle of October those that were left were used to wash, shave or soak tired feet, Just fatigue caps or liners. With some it was contempt of personal armor, but the steel hats give me a real headache. You can move faster without ‘em, and speed and mobility were what we needed most, next to fire power. I heard that in some outfits they court martialed men if they removed their helmets. Thank God I was in an outfit where the CO’s passed out jobs and let their subordinates do the best they could. We knew they trusted us or we wouldn’t hold the position long.

If we needed anything and it was humanly possible to get it, we got it.

In the 24th Division, General John Church wasn’t a regimental commander, Colonel Stephens wasn’t a battalion commander and Lieutenant Colonel McConnell wasn’t a company commander. But they all had been. That’s why the unit was so effective. Our people did the jobs they were supposed to do, and did them well. I’ve strayed again.

THE time: 1400 hours; the place: another hill eight and a half miles northeast of Anju. The whistle blew . . . this is it . . . a quick prayer . . . over the top in platoon V formation . . . out of the trees at the base and into a clearing . . . five or six pillboxes on our left front . . . the attack slows down. Sergeant Todd, my assistant platoon sergeant, moves out in front . . . right through MG fire to knock out another MG emplacement. How he wasn’t hit I’ll never know. I took out two MGs with hand grenades and carbine fire, Sergeant Wilson got one on the right . . . Running, falling, stumbling, crawling, bayonets gleaming in the sun . . . Rebel yells . . . “At ‘em, Gimlets!” . . . the line moves
forward . . . the supporting fires lift . . . just assault fire and grenades now . . . flashing steel, screaming men out banzaiing the Reds . . . the hill is ours . . . the time 1430 hours . . . six enlisted men, one officer slightly wounded in action . . . Lieutenant Carl Bernard sitting just over the forward slope with his grease gun working over the retreating Reds . . . the hill is secure . . . Sergeant Pickens takes a patrol out to check the area for snipers.

Another “well done” for the company and Gibb moved in to take over our position. We revert to battalion reserve.

Battalion reserve . . . In this country I think I’d rather be on line. At least you know where the gooks are all the time. We passed through King Company’s old area . . . noted a few dead enemy waiting for the shovel detail and some bloody splotches of ground where GIs had been killed the night before. We’ve got to make up our minds that the enemy is everywhere. It means being constantly on the alert, always digging in for all-around security. Hell, we learned that in New Guinea . . . at least some of us did!

Carl Bernard had the map and the coordinates of the area we were to cover. Although we were in reserve, we were actually to be on a line covering the left flank of the battalion. We were to tie in with King on the right and Baker Company of the 19th on our left. As usual we had a hell of an area to cover. The limits were between two hills . . . peak to peak with a wide valley in between . . . the same valley the gooks came up last night. In Korea a company occupies the ground the book says a battalion can cover. But we cover it . . . we have to. Well, we stretched and made contact with King on the right, but we couldn’t find the 19th. We were one platoon short because we had to leave Epton and his platoon up on the last objective to reinforce Gibb. Where in hell is the 19th?
We sent out a patrol, we rechecked our coordinates, we called Mac. But no “Doughboy.”
Hap requested a platoon of tanks to reinforce us and we got ’em. It made up for our
lack of depth, in a sense. We didn’t have any activity before the tanks arrived, but we
were a little on edge until Joe Griffith brought them in and put them in position. Brownie
was active all night and had a short fire fight with a Red patrol. Its strength was un-
known, as it pulled out when it hit all our fire power. A young Korean girl was wounded,
but the medics patched her up OK. It’s the civilian who suffers the most. Damn war
anyway . . . morning again and hot coffee. And doughnuts!

Orders again . . . go back across the river . . . the 19th swept around our flank and
regained control of the whole area. We still don’t know where they were last night. .
but we are going back to rest. Thank you Lord and powers that be!

Tuesday, 7 November, the journal says: “Company departed from battalion reserve
for reserve position (regimental) 7 miles north of Anju 1530 hours. Arrived bivouac
area 8 miles east of Anju 1730 hours.”

THAT was it. In the past four days we had covered a lot of ground . . . kicked hell out
of the Reds and relieved the pressure on a brother regiment . . . We learned a lot, but we
had twenty-five casualties, five of whom were dead. Cotrell had four kids . . . damn all
wars! We killed scores of Reds . . . scores . . . but what of Cotrell’s kids? If we can stop
Communism it may have been worthwhile . . . at least his wife and kids won’t be
refugees . . . won’t live in constant fear . . . We did something else, we proved a point.
Teamwork wins battles! We jumped off with an infantry—tank team in the attack. We
continued with the infantry—artillery—armor team in the attack, and finally we had the
infantry—artillery—armor—air team in the attack. Coordination, teamwork, mutual aid
and understanding did it. Without the support of our tanks, artillery and air we
mudsloggers would have had a much tougher job. Yes, we proved a point.
NOT long after I joined Company L, 21st Infantry, 24th Division, in September 1950 I was given command of the 5th or “Gimlet” platoon, as the attached Republic of Korea troops were called in the 21st. The platoon consisted of 22 Koreans who had been with the company a short while, and 20 untrained Koreans who had joined us the night before I took over the platoon. My company commander, Lieut. Planter Wilson, gave me M/Sgt. Lester Studebaker and Sgt. Leon Wilson for assistants.

When I first inspected my platoon it was easy enough to tell who the old combat men were. I can’t explain it exactly, but there is something about a combat man that you can feel.

After the inspection the two sergeants and I got to work. The sergeants told me who the new men were and their opinions of the old men. We then reorganized the platoon.

Lieutenant Lindsey P. Henderson

In training they worked hard to be soldiers and in combat they earned the right to “belong.”
Looking back, I say

My ROKs Were Good

SHORTLY after the crossing of the Naktong in September 1950, these four members of the “Gimlet” platoon were snapped by their Platoon leader. The man hidden behind the moustache is Master Sergeant Lester Studebaker, the platoon sergeant. Next is Sergeant First Class Leon Wilson, then Kim, the radio operator, and finally Yum, the platoon interpreter.

One of the tanks destroyed by the platoon on 23 September was photographed three days later. The bandaged man is Corporal Cho Byung Je who attacked one of the enemy tanks withgrenades. Squad Leader An Nak Chan stands beside him.
Two of the men, Ryang Hyong Jin and Lee Han Tok, had officer’s training and Lee had been in the police force. I appointed them first and second lieutenants, respectively. Hong Chang Ki had been a district school superintendent. He was made first Sergeant. Sergeant Wilson told me that Kim Hong Kwan, Kang Si Tae, Kim Ju Tong and An Nak Chan were the roughest, toughest, most fearless of the combat men, and were looked up to by the others. I appointed them sergeants first class and made them squad leaders.

As soon as the platoon was reorganized I called a meeting of my key men and told them what I intended to do and why.

First of all, I had to be sure that they felt like they “belonged,” even though they were Koreans in an American outfit. Then I had to be sure that they understood what we were to do and that they had to earn the right to “belong.”

Our job, I told them, was to point the attacks, do most of the extended patrolling and man listening posts. We were fighting in Korea and they knew the terrain and understood the language.

I told them that they would be responsible for the training and discipline of the men.

ORIENTAL justice and discipline is foreign to the American way of thinking and doing things. It is forceful, swift and sometimes brutal, but it is what they expect, understand and respect. But I did not let my American noncoms use it for two reasons: our repugnance for brutality, of any kind, and “Face.” It wouldn’t do to have an Occidental strike an Oriental. There are those who would condemn an American officer who turned his head from native brutality but here I stand on the end results. My platoon gave me complete faith, devotion and loyalty.

Sergeant Studebaker, Sergeant Wilson and I supervised and made corrections where necessary. We spent every minute we could and on teaching the care and cleaning of weapons and tactical training. Hand-and-arm signals were thoroughly taught and learned. Signals were a universal language and, in combat would eliminate any confusion that might result from the loss or lack of an interpreter and the breakdown of communications. I made it clear that with few exceptions a man only makes one mistake in combat. Whenever we came off the line, if mistakes had occurred, we would double the training to iron out the bugs. The more training we had, the less likely we were to be killed.

The Gimlet platoon had forty-six warm bodies, including mine, and I hoped that in combat they would all be hot. In mock attack, the Gimlets looked and sounded ferocious. They were developing as a team, and the hand-and-arm signals seemed to be
working. I wanted to work more with each squad and develop my fire teams to a fine point, but there wasn’t time. The few days we had were much too short. I needed two more U.S. noncoms. With one for each 10-man squad I could exercise closer control. I was lucky in Sergeant Studebaker. He had been first sergeant of an outfit in the rear, but wanted action. He jokingly said he had been sent forward to be killed. He asked for it often enough, but he was a superior soldier, an old hand at combat and knew his business. Sergeant Wilson was young, sometimes rash and headstrong, but all guts; he knew his business too. He had been in combat since the first day in Korea, one of the few original men who survived and remained with his company.

After a few weeks I did get two more noncoms. Sergeant Todd and Corporals Weber and Rounds each had something that we needed in the Platoon. Due to the nature of our missions we were assigned an aid man. Good medics lift morale.

There has been much talk of AWOL, but the men of Company L reversed the procedure, they went AWOL to the unit. Officers and men who were lightly wounded in action were constantly skipping channels and leaving the hospitals as soon as they thought they were ready to return to the company. They knew they were needed. My Gimlets were no exception. As soon as they could walk, they left the hospitals and started looking for the company.

One day my ROKs were paid. Not much, to be sure, but it made them happy. Then a delegation, representing each squad, visited me. They wanted to contribute their pay to their own Government; it was enough that the U.S. Army fed, clothed and armed them. Deeply moved, I accepted their money and, through channels, sent it to the Minister of Defense of the Republic of Korea. Sometime later an acknowledging letter came back. In it the Minister spoke of his gratitude to his fellow citizens in the platoon and of his happiness that American and Republic of Korea soldiers “could fight for the common cause of humanity.”

But I’ve gotten ahead of myself.

On 16 September we pushed back to the Naktong River and took up positions about five miles south of Waegwan. On 18 September we crossed the Naktong in assault boats under a murderous fire. We took the high ground on the enemy side of the river and the half-green platoon acquitted itself admirably. From that point on, we were on the upgrade.

At about 1630 hours 21 September 1950, Company L was pointing the advance of the regiment on the Waegwan-Kumchon road. When elements of the company were well within a town which was the headquarters for one of the crack Red tank divisions, tanks and automatic weapons opened up with heavy fire on us. The enemy fire was so
strong our forces were ordered to withdraw. The artillery wasn’t up yet, but the Old Man called for an air strike which was on the way. Sergeant Wilson had a patrol with a bazooka team on the left flank in town and I had one on the right flank. When the withdrawal was ordered, I got the word OK, but Wilson couldn’t be reached. As soon as I got back and heard about it, I took two men and went looking for him. Private First Class Charles Mersing, a volunteer, was my bazooka man and Corporal Yu Ok Sang, my runner. We had only one 3.5-inch round when we entered the town.

Sounds of a hell of a big fire fight broke through the general din of the battle. We headed in that direction, dodging Reds when we could, killing them when we couldn’t. We found Wilson and his patrol engaging two T-34 tanks. As I looked over the situation, I saw Corporal Cho Byung Je running toward one of the tanks. He was evidently trying to get aboard. At that moment a Red stood up in the turret with a burp gun. He threw a burst at Cho and I saw Cho’s helmet fly off as he fell to the ground, his face covered with blood. He struggled to his feet and wiped the blood from his eyes with his left arm as he pulled the pin from a grenade with his teeth and threw it at the gunner’s turret which was still open. It was a perfect shot which exploded just inside, blowing pieces of the Reds out of the tank. Cho collapsed.

Another T-34 came up to join the show but we were out of bazooka ammo. In broken Japanese and Korean I asked Yu to try and make it back for more ammo. We had a beautiful position for that other tank and the gooks didn’t know where we were. Yu stripped down for the run, as I wrote a note asking for more ammo and to have a litter jeep ready for protection. He was scared, but he was all guts. As he slipped away I wondered if I’d ever see him again. The air strike was on and if the Reds didn’t get him, one of our planes might.

Meantime, Sergeant Wilson had spotted us and worked around and through the Reds to our position. We waited awhile for the ammo, but as Cho had lost a lot of blood and had what looked like a serious head wound, I decided to withdraw to our lines. We had to stop and fight once or twice and during one of these breaks, Yu reappeared with a note. He had successfully infiltrated the enemy lines three times that afternoon. I’ll never forget it.

“No more ammo. Find Sergeant Wilson and return immediately. We’re leaving town.” All the way back, Cho had refused to be carried. The stamina of those ROKs is terrific, to say nothing of their guts. And believe me, it takes guts to throw grenades at tanks, and to take off into a swarm of Red fanatics with only a knife for protection.

It was at this point, I believe that whatever doubt there may have been about my Gimlets completely disappeared. My ROKs were good. But as time went on they became better. Being a 5th Platoon gave us a unique slot in the TO&E of the rifle com-
pany and gave me the opportunity to mold and develop them into a highly specialized raider-type unit that could do and did do almost anything. With the highly skilled American noncoms I had for my staff functioning like a group of G3 inspectors at every break from actual combat, the individual ROKs were sharpened into first-class fighting men. Fire teams and squads soon developed into unbeatable combat teams.

Probably the biggest problem I had was teaching defensive tactics. Making my Gimlets understand that in the attack, on patrol, setting an ambush, no matter what the immediate mission might be, every time we halted we were on the defensive and must take security measures, wasn’t easy. When they learned that lesson, their effectiveness as raiders was greatly increased. Whether at squad or platoon level, I found that “simple and direct plans, promptly, boldly and thoroughly executed, are usually decisive.”

Some outfits in Korea didn’t get much use out of their ROKS. Some of them tried the “Buddy system,” sometimes successfully, but most outfits generally used them as ammo bearers. The trouble, it seems to me, is that the average American soldier lacks the patience of the Oriental. This lack of patience, the language barrier (which in itself was an almost insurmountable obstacle) and the apparent lack of advance briefing on, and understanding of the ROK soldier, created real difficulties. Then there was the sour hangover from the first days of the war when the partially trained, inadequately armed and poorly led ROKs almost completely disintegrated in the face of the enemy. Units of well-led ROKs that fought well were forgotten. We solved the problem in Company L just by facing up to it. You have to recognize that some American soldiers will always take advantage of a “not so bright” buddy, no matter what his race, color or creed. Because they didn’t understand the ROK, some American GIs used him as a pack horse. It’s no wonder that these men lacked spirit.

Once one of my patrols picked up a scared, sick, war weary young Red. We fed him and kept him until we had bagged a few more to make it worth while to send an escort back to the battalion POW compound. When he found out he wasn’t going to be killed or mistreated, he told us that about twenty-five of his friends wanted to surrender but were almost as afraid of their leaders as they were of us. I took a chance on him. I wrote out a safe-conduct pass in case he should tangle with one of our patrols, and at dusk let him slip through our lines. It paid off. The next morning he returned with twenty-six of his friends. We fed them and sent them back to battalion S2. This side venture, we figured, had saved a lot of ammo and maybe a few lives.

It took a great deal of self discipline for my ROKs to take prisoners at all. They had found their towns and villages laid waste and their families gone, many never to return. Every one of my Gimlets had at least one close member of his family to revenge. Some had lost their families; like Lieutenant Ryang Hyong Jin. Although his home was at Kaesong, his family had been living in Seoul, and when we went into the assembly area
a few miles north of Seoul, I let Ryang go home. He returned the next morning and reported in to me. He told me that friends told him that his mother, father and brother had been executed by the North Koreans, and his sisters had been added to a Red brothel and were taken north when the Reds withdrew.

Ryang requested permission to take over the training for the rest of the morning. Knowing that work would occupy his mind, I said OK. He saluted and with cold hatred in his voice said, “The communist dogs will pay, Lieutenant Dixie; they will pay dearly.”

Just before Thanksgiving of 1950, we got orders to advance into forward assembly areas. My ROKs were jubilant — primed for a fight.

“This is going to be a reconnaissance in force,” our company commander told his platoon leaders. “The whole front is moving forward on line. It’s going to be a slow process. We will advance from seven to ten miles a day, dig in and send out patrols to probe for the enemy. If the patrols don’t make contact, the front will move forward to the next phase line and the process will be repeated until the enemy is contacted or we reach the Yalu.”

He continued with the briefing, outlining what each platoon would do and their areas of responsibility. Then he turned to me.

“Dixie, I’ve got an extra job for your Gimlets. The S2 says that we have Korean agents behind the enemy lines that will be infiltrating through to us. They will carry identification. They are to be sent back to battalion without delay as soon as we meet them. But I want to know what’s out front, too. How do you think we can work it?”

I suggested sending one of my squads out with each patrol (they had to be big anyway) and my men could interrogate PWs or agents as they were brought in. This would eliminate delay at our CP and still give us immediate intelligence. The plan was approved. When we moved at daybreak Company L was on the battalion’s left flank. King was on our right and Charlie was on our left. We met only token resistance.

We took Chongju again, dug in and sent patrols out. If all went well, we would make the border in five days. All didn’t go well.

Corporal Rounds’ patrol brought in three Allied agents, four Reds and a new Russian jeep. He reported a mine field being laid on our front. The agents reported thousands of mounted troops about fifteen miles to our right front. This information was phoned back while the agents were back for further interrogation. We were ordered to dig in solid. Other reports were coming in.
The honeymoon was over. Before the information could be completely evaluated, the Reds hit the center again. Another bugout, the biggest, was on the way. However, the enemy had been forced to fight before he was set. By making him fight then, costly though it was to us, it threw him off balance and prevented his buildup for a winter offensive that might have pushed us out of Korea.

My ROKs fought well as they always did. They were men who traded, borrowed and even liberated BARs from rear-echelon troops so that they could have two to a squad and make the fire teams more effective. They were men who calculated their risks and had only twenty-seven casualties, none killed, while inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy. They were the men who attacked in helmet liners or fatigue caps. They were the men who charged the enemy with bayonets gleaming, confident of victory. They were men, (just cogs in the great Yo-Yo that swung up and down the Korean peninsula, from victory to bugout to victory again), secure in the knowledge that they were a part of the best company, battalion, regiment and division in the world. They believed it. So do I.

My Gimlets proved to me that ROK troops or any troops can be good — if given superior training and a feeling of belonging.
Eighth Army had said it was time. “Love” Company had said it was ready. As ready as we could be given the situation as it was. I don’t remember the date but I believe it was the 17th or 18th of Sept. 1950. There was fear and trepidation to this operation. Open boats without protection was a scary thought. Would the boats have motors or oars. Would we have to row? After all there was no place to dig a hole in a boat. The thought was scary. Most of us were scared. I was. Now we knew, yes we would have to row. Small wooden boats, carrying about 10 or 12 men was to be our means of transportation. At least we weren’t the lead company. I believe that was Gib’s Item Company.

What did the enemy have in store for us after we got across? It was an unknown factor for us but one we would soon have the answer. The night before, the incoming mortar and artillery rounds were frightening enough to cause one of our members to lose-it. It was not as if it were embarrassing, because it was no more embarrassing than getting hit by a snipers bullet. Sometimes it just happened. When a comrade cracks-up, mental fatigue, loses-it or whatever tag is imposed on the incident. Members of Love rushed in to console and assist as best they could the man in trouble. It happened to Franks the night before we crossed and it happened to Ulrich the day we crossed.

It was to be a daylight crossing. We were scattered along the river bank digging in, waiting for the boats when the incoming rounds started to pound. It was an all out barrage, mortar if I recall correctly. I dug faster and deeper. I thought it would never end. It is difficult even when you can fight back. But in this position we were without artillery support that I could direct. I couldn’t fight back just had to hide and pray. Within a few minutes Ulrich lost-it. Fellow comrades rushed in to comfort him and try to assist him in overcoming his fears. It’s not easy to help someone else when you are as frightened as we were.

The boats arrived and we loaded up. Scared to death. Eager for it to be over. We moved out, there were 6 paddles. I don’t remember who paddled. We all ducked low, a few incoming rounds landed in the water, but no one was hit. We landed on the other side. Awkwardly and hastily we escaped the confines of that totally unacceptable floating device. It was over. Now we advance and fight as we go. Scared yes, but much more in control of my own destiny now I breathed a sigh of relief. So did the members of “Love”. Here they were confident of their own abilities. As we formed up and moved
out the feeling of self confidence almost over took the feeling of caution we had about moving into the unknown. Now all we had to do was link up with the elements of the 3rd Battalion. Secure our flanks and wait out the first night. Our first night outside the Pusan Perimeter. There was a good feeling about being here.

**THE VALIANT**

*by Olin M. "Short-Round" Hardy*

Out of the mountains
Dog dirty and bare,
Staggered ninety-six men
And they didn’t care.

They were all that were left
of one company strong.
They had been on the line
20 days too long.

Their beards were long
And their bodies were gaunt.
Eyes sunk way in
with a look that would haunt.

There was Greco and Nelson
Dossette and Cox
and Even old Zeke
With a nose like a fox.

Their buddies were gone,
Some wounded some dead.
Some even had ‘bugged’.
Just took off and fled.

But the rest had remained
and held fast the line.
The Eighth Army had said,
“you did mighty fine.”

Now back for a rest.
Maybe two days or three.
‘Cause it was up to God,
Enslaved or free.

So on down the trail
the weary men dragged,
Foot weary and sore,
Many of them lagged.

But they’d return again
to avenge the dead.
Back up every word
their buddies had said.

So the war goes on.
Just a line to some.
Or a tack on a map,
pushed in by thumb.

But it’s vivid to them
and those who fell
For in other words
It’s a taste of Hell.

written after Hill #1157 in April ‘51
Mac’s Marauders
Motivation and Visibility
by Olin M. “Short-Round” Hardy

Many times during our tenure in Korea our battalion had the opportunity to be labeled different. We were well aware of the difference of Love Company. “We were different,” but by the same token, so was our Third Battalion. “Mac’s Marauders” were not always in step with the rest of the 24th Division. The reputation of “Big Six”, Colonel Richard Stephens, was legendary in the division. He was a leader who led by example. This often put him in ‘harm’s way’. It was not uncommon to find him with the lead unit of a night march.

Talk about motivation. I remember one dark and scary night the Regiment was advancing to an unknown position in an unknown area. This is normal, of course, but within the confines of the Pusan Perimeter we, more often than not, had been over the same road before. Now we had crossed the Naktong and were marching into new and uncharted waters. There was considerable grumbling and distaste for this type maneuver, and the members of Love Company were not above voicing their disapproval. Fear is normal, and the tone of some of the voices expressed it better than words.

A slow moving jeep progressed through our column and in the dim illumination of the night-lights we could read the words, “This is Mac’s S-3”. Written in white paint on the 8-inch metal strip below the glass of the windshield in 6” letters. The sign stood out even in the pitch black of the night. Some Love Company “wiseacre” smarted off with a comment about weren’t they worried being so far forward. A voice from the jeep assured them that they were really in the rear. “Big Six” was a couple of miles ahead of them already.

Needless to say the spirits of the unit took a turn for the better. The pace picked up along with the mutterings of how did he do that. “Love” Company was used to being in the lead. Now the regimental commander was ahead of us. That was a little too much.

Colonel McConnell was very much aware of the importance of staff visibility. He accomplished this in a very unique manner. His staff jeeps had painted on each of their jeeps the designation of the staff member. “This is Mac’s Exec.” “This is Mac’s S-4,” “This is Mac’s S-1,” and so on until all staff members were identified. Then came the jeep with the sign “This is Mac” and in small print in front of the driver was the sign “This is Mac’s Driver”. It was always a good sign when we would see the Jeep with the sign “This is Mac’s S-4”. That usually meant the Major Uzzle had come forward with the Class X supply. Many comments were cast at the S-4 about the sign on his jeep. A few brazen types suggested that it be changed to “Guzzle with Uzzle.”
This method worked. I thought enough of it myself to label the FO jeep with the sign “The Short Round’s.” It identified my vehicle and trailer to all members of Love Company. The trailer became the target of many as a place where they could store their unmentionables, i.e. captured weapons, whiskey, the frozen side of a “prime mover.” (side of frozen beef) as well as packages from home that they wanted to save ‘til later.attic.’

Visibility, motivation, and pride eventually went the way of all things that are good for the troops. Colonel Armor, the 52nd FA Bn. Commander noticed my jeep’s FO sign on one of its trips to the firing battery. He said it was degrading and I was ordered to remove it immediately. The 3rd Bn. lost its identification when Lt. Colonel Gines Perez took over the regiment. Some one in a high place ordered them all to be removed.

So some of us were different. Perhaps we just expressed ourselves more openly, or the urge to be different may have been more abundant with us than with others. In any case, we noticed, were noticed, and proceeded accordingly.
Where was our faithful FO while the battle of Sleeping Bag Hill raged?

The FO’s Reward

by Olin M. Hardy

There is nothing normal in the life of a Forward Observer. Digging fox holes in the frozen hills of Korea is not normal, becoming personally involved in a firefight is not normal, sleeping in 30 degree below zero in the open is not normal, nor is using the heat from your fox-hole buddy’s body to warm the cold water of your foxhole normal. The life of a Forward Observer is comparable to that of the normal infantry soldier on the front lines of combat. The only privilege I can recall was the liquor ration. I received an officer’s ration not only from the Infantry but from the Artillery as well. Of course we had to climb down the hill and drive back to the Artillery Battery to collect it. If the liquor ration hadn’t arrived by the time we went to mail call we didn’t get it. So that wasn’t much of a privilege after all.

Feb 3rd, 1951 I was selected to perform my duties from the air via the auspices of the 24th Infantry Division Light Aviation Section. Now, this was a reward, befitting the abnormal behavior pattern that I had developed over the past 7 months of front line combat. Sleep in a tent, eat hot food at a table, from real plates. Just to be warm was reward enough. Now this was more what I envisioned a Forward Observer’s life should be. Little did I know.

The amenities of the month at the rear were a wonderful change. I do not recall any heat features of the plane and the bitter cold at the high altitudes seemed to penetrate all layers of clothing and even seeped through the blanket wrapping the steel plate I had liberated to sit on. The thought of rifle fire penetrating the fragile fuselage where I sat was of much concern to me, (had a puckering effect on me).

The Chinese activity during this period increased and we often found ourselves in danger of flying through our own high angle fire. The Chinese would dig in on the reverse slopes of the ridgelines. High angle was the only solution to reaching this near impossible target area. The Chinese were dedicated in their training. They never seemed to move and never fired at our plane. Only at the lower elevations or the base of the mountain would we receive small arms fire. On occasions they would fire mortars at us and we could witness the round as it sped by our plane and in some instances its descent after it reached the apogee of its trajectory. Apparently they believed the round would not return to their area to impact, or they had an impact area cleared and only fired if we flew through their field of fire. It was disconcerting to say the least.

I flew 43 missions during my reward period. Often two, and sometimes three missions a day. Mostly enjoyable missions, despite the cold and the bitter biting wind. The one exception to this favorable routine came with this memorable flight with a newly com-
missioned 2nd Lt with dubious piloting expertise. I had flown several missions with him before and had never noticed anything peculiar about him other than his incessant scratching and his obvious inexperience. He scratched himself continually. During this flight I happened to notice that during take-off he not only scratched himself but also checked mags. Now checking mags during take-off is a dangerous procedure. It is normally performed prior to take-off. This time it was very obvious. Now I was nervous. As we climbed to our observation altitude I noticed that we were really moving as we headed north. We really had a tail wind. We made it to our area of observation very rapidly but had to climb over a very high range of mountains to get to the area. Because of the high velocity of the wind we had trouble staying over our target area. Since this pilot easily became disoriented, I always was especially observant of our location and direction.

We finished our mission and were headed home when I noticed our land speed appeared to be negligible. We were now headed into the wind and the speed of the little Piper Cub type aircraft was less than the velocity of the wind. When I noticed the bobbing cork wire that represented the gas gauge I really became nervous. We had to gain altitude to get over the high range of mountains before we were behind our lines. At this point it was a formidable task. My brave pilot seemed not to notice our stand still position. At times we even appeared to be flying backwards while at full power. I called this to his attention and he seemed to become more confused. We needed more speed to gain altitude to get over the mountains. I finally convinced him to do a split-S maneuver, dive as steeply as possible and ride the curvature of the mountain to its peak and then dive down the other side. Granted we would be very close to the surface but I really didn’t want to be forced down behind enemy lines. My young pilot completed the maneuver successfully. As we glided down the south side the mountain headed for home the wire gas gauge was bouncing on the top the gas cap. I was near the end of my tour with Light Aviation but needless to say, I never flew with this pilot again.

By the way, if any one should ask me to describe the sound of a bullet piercing the fabric of a plane wing, it is indescribable in sound and not decipherable in the printed word. I actually believe I am more comfortable in the security of a foxhole during a firefight than in the seat of an ice-cold plane at the hands of an inexperienced pilot. I’m not sure I can stand any more rewards.
When we went into reserve, our FO always seemed to luck out and draw something exciting to do. The Aussies and the Turks were very different duty indeed!

With the Aussies

by Olin M. “Short-Round” Hardy

Aussie Patrol

I made several patrols with the Aussies.

On this particular one we went out in the small half-tracks, I believe they referred to them as “weasels”. We opted to leave our jeep behind and carry the radio and spare batteries. With the Aussies, their actions being unpredictable, using their equipment seemed prudent at the time.

We left the line of departure just before daybreak and proceeded to our objective. We had been there before. We stopped and the officers and command NCO’s had a conference. They elected to proceed until we found some of the enemy. I advised them that we would be out of artillery range within another 1,000 yards. They indicated they understood, and were openly hostile to returning to their positions. I kept my mouth shut while they decided which route to take as we advanced. We moved slowly now with occasional stops while a squad sized unit spread out and reconnoitered.

About 3 miles down the road the advance party found about a company or larger group. It was still early in the morning. We advanced slowly towards their position, lined up the weasels and then attacked at maximum speed. Each vehicle was equipped with a mounted machine gun and about 4 or 5 heavily armed men. It was early morning, and the entire camp was in the process of doing the usual morning things, going to the slit trench, eating breakfast, getting dressed etc. This wild bunch of Aussies descended upon them with all guns blazing and yelling in an obscene way that was enough to terrorize a company of Turks. People ran in all directions, some half dressed, some with their pants around their knees. One vehicle ran over a man who couldn’t move fast enough away from the slit trench. When they had over run the entire area, they turned around and came back through the area killing anyone they had missed the first time. Then they departed very rapidly, forming up as they left the area. There were no wounded or killed that I can recall. But there was a lot of laughter, camaraderie, and checking of weapons as they rolled back to their positions. This was the second or third time we went past our objective. But by far the most rewarding.
Aussie Ire

During my tenure as an FO, I continually found myself directing fire for other members of the United Nations contingency. It seemed that every time Love Company was placed in reserve I was directed to one of these participants. I served as an FO for the Australians, the Canadian’s “Princess Pats Own”, the British Commonwealth Brigade, the Turks, the Colombians, as well as the ROKs. If any of these were really memorable it would have to be my times with the Aussies. The best of the best of the many stories I could tell about them went like this.

The company I ended up with was commanded by a Major, who appeared fastidious in his personal appearance and insisted on traveling with a real bed and mattress for his CP. Where he acquired them I haven’t a clue. One afternoon I had joined them rather late in the day and had to hastily lay in my defensive fire for the evening. We discussed the avenues of approach and possible eventualities and I began my registration.

The Major hurried back down the hill to supervise the erecting of his CP tent on the reverse slope of the hill approximately 75 yards from my OP. The registration was proceeding as scheduled when apparently someone forgot to level a bubble or there was a 100 mil error on the registering piece. Whatever the problem, it produced the eerie whissssh of an incoming round. I dropped to the ground and yelled “Incoming” while turning to see where it would land. As fate would have it, it landed in the middle of the Majors CP. Tent, bed and CP paraphernalia, the Major and his orderly were sent flying. I yelled “Cease Fire!” to the FDC and asked them to stand by while I investigated the damage. I stood up and started to run down to the CP when a very disheveled Major picked himself up, dusted himself off and hurried in my direction. Prudence dictated my conduct at the time and I snapped to attention as he approached. I prepared myself for the ‘ass-chewing’ I felt was coming, and saluted. He pointed his swagger stick at me and in his very proper, very controlled Aussie brogue said, “I say Arty, old boy. Was that one of yours?” Not sure of the outcome of this encounter I squared my shoulders and answered, “Yes Sir.” He looked at me with the dirt in his hair and the anger still in his eyes and then most suitably said, “Well, would you mind lifting them up just a little bit?” He then turned abruptly and limped back to his CP, leaving me in a quandary as to the proper reply to his question. It wasn’t till I quit shaking that I started to laugh. Even today as I tell this tale once more, the humor returns.
A
fter we were relieved by the 2nd Division on the Naktong, we moved to the Taegu apple orchard for rest and re-supply. From there we moved to Pohang-dong on the east coast. We set up positions north of the city. Love company in the center and to the left of the road, King company on the right and Item company on our left. I company drew the patrols and K the attack on hill 99. During one of the patrols into the valley that stretched way north across a wide level area, I company came under mortar fire as well as attack from our own aircraft. The F.O., Beverly Dunlap was injured by the either the mortar fire or the aircraft. It was around the end of August I believe. during our short 2 or 3 day stay there, K company was involved in a furious fire fight for hill 99 directly to their front. Bill Head was the FO at the time I believe. We had dug our OP in on the forward slope of the hill overlooking the entire valley. We were peppered by flat trajectory weapon fire during most of our stay there. Sniper fire was continuous. Here I learned that the sound of a round that misses you by scant inches gives forth a resounding “whap” like the side of a wooden ruler smacking the top of a desk. At the time I was not aware that these “cracks” were from sniper fire until part of my helmet camouflage dropped down the neck of my fatigues.

Apparantly I wasn’t the only one receiving fire because Love company returned the fire and the harassment ceased. My OP was barely over the crest of the hill and I had been desperately trying to locate the high velocity weapon that had us under fire. The weapon was well camouflaged and couldn’t be located. My only alternative was to return fire to the suspected location. This was accomplished and some of the rounds must have irked them because we came under an intense concentration of firepower. Most of the rounds went over my position. Thinking I had the range I adjusted the next volley for the FDC. I had just ducked down in my foxhole with the EE-8 telephone to my ear when a round hit the front side of my OP. The force of the explosion tossed me up in the air with the telephone still to my ear, turned me upside down, and threw me outside my hole. I was deafened, and visibly shaken, unable to continue with the fire mission. Gradually my senses and hearing returned, my actual return to reality took a little longer.

Dusk was rapidly approaching. Still shaken by the close call I had experienced, I became more determined than ever to find the SP that had damn near killed me. Night time arrived and K company across the road was once again under attack. Then I saw it. The flash of that obscene high velocity weapon firing on our position. I immediately pointed my compass and shot an azimuth to that position. Battalion FDC was notified of the situation and preparations were made to record the flash to bang time and to further solidify the azimuth. They fired again and I hit my stop watch. “Got it,” I yelled to Bn., fed them the rest of the data and requested Bn 3 rounds. With the “On the way” information tucked in my head, I watched and waited. What a beautiful sight. All the guns in the Bn landed on target. Secondary explosions confirmed that we had indeed
hit home. What a feeling. Elation, revenge, contentment and complete satisfaction that everything had worked out as “the book” said it should.

Morning found us in the same position. Patrols went out and returned. K company and hill 99 had not come to terms. Business as usual. That afternoon the FO crew was informed that the Bn was pulling out and that we were to cover their withdrawal. “How long should we stay here?” I queried. “As long as you can,” I was told, “the ROK’s are supposed to occupy our positions.” Somehow I had trouble accepting this as I watched the Bn pull back to the rear to load up on trucks to go plug a hole somewhere else in the line. We were alone. We had not been given a location to report to. We had not been given any indication as to how long we were to remain. We dug deeper in our holes.

There was movement out to my front, near the suspected location of the High Velocity weapon. I rang Bn FDC and gave them the fire mission, also explained our position and the absence of the Infantry. The fire mission was completed and we waited. The enemy, politely called our little brown brothers from the north, regrouped and started once again in our direction. I waited until they were closer and called for another fire mission. When I reached battalion they said this was the last mission they could fire for us. “Why?” I asked. “After this mission we are CSMO.” They answered. The mission fired and the lines were disconnected. Now we really were alone. I called Sgt. Heiser and Cpl. Dossett up and explained the situation to them. We all agreed it was time to move on down the road and see if we could locate Love company before dark.

As darkness fell, we were west bound towards Taegu. We became involved with a KMAG group who stated they would try to find our unit for us. Suddenly from the north came the sound of many running feet. The entire Korean First Capitol Division was headed south in retreat with two ranks on each side of the road. None appeared to have weapons. All this without any sound other than the slap slap of their feet as they hit the ground. We then joined up with the KMAG unit and followed them as they headed North. The KMAG Major explained that by going north we would miss the traffic jam on the main road at night. He also explained that we needed an assessment of the situation to send to Headquarters. So we tagged along. Not necessarily happy about going north, but resigned to the fact we didn’t know where we were or where our unit was, we found the other west bound trail and progressed slowly. Dawn found us on some high ground overlooking another short valley. Behind us was a contingency of the enemy and another group approaching us from the northwest. Following the KMAG Major we headed northeast to evade the NKA that seemed to have us pinned in. The KMAG Major knew what he was doing and by late afternoon we were back on the main road. We never did find out the name of the KMAG Major. He was one of the true heroes of the conflict. We were passengers in the night, looking for Love.

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1 Close Station, March Order
2 Korean Military Advisory Group
If this can help you or any of the other survivors remember that 20 hours, go ahead and use it. I am not sure about some of the times and names of those who I served with. I have had most of these notes for over 40 years in my footlocker. I took them out and tried to put this together for you. If I made any mistakes I am sorry but that was a very busy 20 hours in my life. I have notes of other L Company actions I put together over the years. If you would like them I will send them to you.

The date I put these together, it's like the guys called out to me. Sorry about Lt. Dreisonstok, He and Tompkins were next to me when they both got hit November 5, 1950.

Ed. Note: Thomas F. Dreisonstok had died 11-30-93.
Allen Haller died 9-14-96

HILL 296 or “Sleeping Bag Hill” as it is called.

Dates: 3 to 7 February 1951

The information herein is based upon what I can recall from personal experience and notes kept and conversations with survivors after the action. I know this info will not cover all the actions and time periods and some may be in error, but if any of this info helps just one person to remember any part they played, so be it. Please remember that I had been with the 2nd squad 2nd platoon since first week of Aug 1950 and after living in foxholes and having total strangers shooting at you for over 6 months, you learned very fast........

DAY 1....1700 3 Feb 1951

We had come off of the line for some rest, hot chow and baths. I recall we were to sleep in Korean mud-huts for the night. This meant that you had heat under the floor, warm...... We had no sooner got set in for the night than we were told that the 19th got overrun and we were going up to set up behind them so they could withdraw through us. We departed about 2130 hours and about 5 walking miles later we arrived at the base of 296 and started climbing. The going was slow as it was cold as hell and light snow was falling and we had all our gear on our backs. We got to the top about midnight and it was freezing cold and windy. The ground was so frozen and hard that we could only dig small shallow foxholes and pile rocks around them. The company setup somewhat like the below diagram. Its not to scale and may not be correct in detail.
Day 2 0800 hours 4 Feb 1951

It must be 30 below today....... We found that it was cold as hell up here as the wind blew all the time. We got to build squad fires on the backside of the hill and tried to heat up our frozen C-Rats and some water for coffee. We dug some more on our positions but the ground was frozen hard as a rock. We spent the rest of the day in pure misery as it was so cold. “Lt. Eversole” was zeroing in and that flying steel going out over our heads did nothing to help us rest. Night came early and we pulled watch in three man teams so we could get more rest. The night passed with only some grenades being thrown and outgoing 105 fire. You can believe me that without those sleeping bags we would have froze.

Day 3 0700 hours 5 Feb 1951

Nobody in the 2nd squad got out of the sacks this morning as we were covered with snow, it was very lucky for us that we didn’t as a short round hit on the backside of the hill right where we had our squad fire pit. If we had been up heating water and rations...well I probably would not be around today. I remember they sent up some extra cases of hand grenades and bandoliers of M1 ammo and we had hot chow that evening. At what I guess everyone figures was about 2130 hrs I was on guard overlooking the 5th platoon outpost area when we heard rifle fire and then lots of grenade explosions coming from the 1st platoon area. Then quiet, then more shooting, then a lot of small arms firing and then a .30 cal machine-gun from probably our Mike company opened up and poured a long-long-long stream of fire toward the front of the 1st platoon. At this time there was return fire, and it was Chink (amber) tracers went toward the MG gunner but he keep up his rate of fire. Much small arms and grenade fire in the 1st platoon area and then some guys from the 1st platoon came up the backside of the hill and asked for ammo and grenades as they were running low, Sgt. Todd gave them some of ours and they departed back to their positions. I guess the time must have been just past midnight now and we all thought they had run off a Chink patrol and we could go back to our sacks. Then the small-arms and grenades went off below our position from the 5th platoon. Then whistles, bugles and all hell broke loose down in the 5th platoon area as much small arms and grenade fire erupted. This got our attention in the 2nd squad as we were on the very tip and high point of the hill and any fool knows you go for the “high ground” in an attack. We began to receive small arms fire which went over our heads and did no damage, Sgt. Pickens and Travers had me crawl out to the forward slope where we had a foxhole that gave a straight shot down the hill, I got out there and started to pull the pins, let handle go, wait and throw them fast getting an almost instant explosion,.....something they tell you in training not to do. They kept handing me grenades and I kept rolling them down into what I guess was Chinese crawling up the hill toward our platoon. I started getting heavy small arms fire coming toward me and finally Pickens and Travers pulled me back up the hill to the topside. By now the whole 2nd platoon was engaged in heavy fighting and grenades were being used by both GI’s and Chinks. This Chink attack was stopped and a quiet
came over the hill, in the meantime “Lt. Eversole” had the Arty going full blast but it overshot where we needed it. Our 60mm mortar fire did no good as nobody knew where the Chinks were except the 5th platoon and it appeared that they had been wiped out in the first attack. Myself, Travisano, Reeves, Jacques set up right on the high point of the hill, you might say at the top of 296.

At approximately 0130-0200 hours another attack came at our platoon, this time they used burp-guns and grenades and scared the hell out of all of us with their god-damn whistles and bugles We had fired up about half of our basic-load and most of our grenades were gone. Pickens came up with a couple of cases of grenades and gave us one and took the other to the 2nd platoon CP.

NOTE: The battle up to that point had been won by using our grenades.

I must have thrown fifty that night. I was carrying an automatic rifle and was one of the lucky ones who had a grenade pouch that carried three grenades, otherwise I probably would not have had as many grenades that night. The firing started again real heavy around 0330 hours, I heard some guys yelling for medics from the platoon CP area. Travisano and me crawled back there to find I think Sgt. Todd and two other GI’s dead. We pulled two other guys to the reverse side of the hill, one had a leg wound and the other was bleeding bad from a head wound, we pushed them over the side of the hill and some guys from the 1st squad said they would take them to the Aid station. About this time the Chinks really hit the 1st platoon, the whistles and bugles told the story that 1st platoon was no longer on our flank. 1st platoon survivors came through but most were out of ammo. (the most popular item that night was hand-grenades) that everybody hated to carry and had used up in first attack with enough grenades we could have held.) Sgt. Pickens yelled that the Chinks were coming thru the 3rd squad area and for me and Travisano to go there and help, on the way I fell over the bodies of 2 GI’s killed in their sacks, How that happened is still unknown as the battle had been going on for over 5 hours and they should have been up and in their holes. Travisano and myself found nobody in the 3rd squad area except about 10 -12 chinks digging in on the other side of the hill, they must have thought Pat and I were Chinese because they did not stop digging and me and Pat did not stop to ask directions. We got back to our holes and found that most of the platoon had pulled back on the reverse side of the hill, Pickens put me with my BAR on top of the little knoll and told me to cover the rear, the last I remember is that I was firing the BAR and after the magazine was empty I would push my trigger-finger forward and release the magazine and let it fall to the dirt as my hands were so cold. I remember that the Chinks came up and over the crest of the hill running and blowing whistles and ran toward us, I fired one more magazine and beat feet down the draw, the time I estimate was 0400-0500 hours 6 Feb 51 and it was cold as Hell and I was scared stiff. L company had been fighting for over 8 hrs now.
In the draw most of us thought we were safe and that the Chinese would not follow us down, that was correct except they found some of our grenades and threw them down at us. Some of the so called incoming mortar fire that night in the draw was really our own grenades being used against us. Now to top off the big mess we were in, our US Air Force sent over a flare ship that dropped flares over us hiding in the draw instead of the Chinks and so now the Chinks fired on us again and again we had to retreat farther down the hill. The Chinese stopped the attack and from the position that Pat and I were in they were about 25 yards away, We watched them dig in on the front side and start smoking GI cigarettes and yakking (probably about the dumb-ass Americans they just ran off of the hill.) Pat and I slowly crawled down the draw very quietly hoping that the Chinese would not hear us. We turned a small hump in the ground and Pat came face to face with a wounded GI and yelled so loud that others told us to shut-up and only then did we know we were back in friendly lines.

I felt something warm on my leg, “Blood” I was secretly praying that it was so bad, I mean really bad that I would have to be sent to the States, no luck!! It was just a small shrapnel wound that the medics bandaged. We started getting ready for the retaking of that hill... L Company had been fighting for 11 hrs......

Day 4 0900 6 Feb 1951

The chinks held the high ground and in that draw was about 60-75 frozen GIs getting ready to go back up that hill. We were so damn cold that we could hardly move, but the order came from somebody that dark cold morning..... Who was where and who was with who at what point of the area where the remains of L company were? That remains to be answered by each individual. Travisano and I found ourselves about 400-500 yards down the draw in a ditch with a dead GI who had half his head shot off. I took his water and Pat his ammo.... Other wounded were been taken down by the guys from 3rd platoon.... Somebody said to pickup ammo and grenades. Me and Pat got some more grenades, I filled my pouch and pockets with grenades. We got no briefing or were told what to do or where to go except, up to the top of that hill........... We started up using marching-fire after somebody said “lets go guys”.......... I had a good position to fire my BAR, Pat loaded magazines but we only got some “over” artillery support and the attack failed . The next counterattack took place about an hour later. This attack failed also (our Short Round LT was not with us and his replacement was not doing very good). I burned out the BAR I was using, nothing would fix it, I had to look for a weapon and Pat told me to go back about 10 yards and get the rifle from Rose, I found Rose but he was dead, I returned and word came down that we were going up again about noon. I tried to take a leak but some chink shot at me and I jerked back and my taleywacker slipped back in my pants and I pissed in them. Word came to get ready for a third attempt to retake the hill. Most of our platoon NCOs were dead or wounded, I had no idea what the hell was going on or who was in charge...... Lt. Brown came up and told us that we were going to attack in 15 minutes and to carry all the “grenades
and ammo” we could, and then he said to watch out for our missing GI’s, that they
could still be up there as prisoners or hiding (he was right as we found two that hid
out......... Lt. Brown left us and took up a position between the remains of the 2nd and
1st platoon and the 3rd which had the most men left. L Company had been fighting for
over 16 hrs.

On signal from the Lt., lots of cussing the remains of L company was attacking again. Lt.
Brown was carrying an SCR 300 radio with an orange air panel on the back, a carbine
and smoking a pipe? We started the attack up 296 again for the 3rd time (The rock
ledge that Jim Fine talked about was to the right of me and it is possible that growth
had now covered it upon his return) Travisano and I were old foxhole buddies and
therefore stayed side by side going up in the 3rd attack, Pickens I think was to the right
of us and shooting and yelling............. I think at this point we had about 15 left in the
2nd platoon. I don’t know for sure as I was too busy trying to stay alive. We were about
25-35 yards from the top of the hill when the Chinks stood up and threw Potato-
masher type grenades right down on top of us. Several landed right in front of Pat and
me, I yelled for Pat to “look-out” but he jumped in front of a couple and they exploded
and got Pat in the face, chest, and eyes. Jacques and I shot the two closest chinks and
pulled Pat down behind a rock. He was bleeding bad, another GI Willy Williams came
by with another wounded GI and we got Pat and the other guy to a small knoll where
the medic bandaged him up. I took Pat back down the hill along with Willy and we
passed them on to some walking wounded to take to the CP. I returned and teamed-up
with Jacques and Reeves and we started up the last 25 or so yards to the top. We
stopped about 10 yards from the top and threw about 10 grenades and then crawled
up to the top and jumped into a large trench-like hole filled with dead chinks. The three
of us and a couple of 1st platoon guys crawled to the top and it was at this point that the
chinks started to run away, we shot about 10 of them in the back.

Anytime you can shoot a chink in the back, do it. It’s justified. We were thinking that we
can’t hold this hill with only 4 or 5 guys, when some more GIs came up to the top
shooting and yelling.During this hectic time, some chinks wanted to surrender but were
killed with grenades......Jacques and I shot 2-3 more in the back that were running
away. If those guys had not got there I think we might not have held the hill. Our
ammo was getting low as we kept firing into the area where the chinks were seen
running. Pickens to the right of us took a bad hit in the neck or head. Someone took
him off and later we learned he died. Jacques and I found a hole with 2 wounded
Chinks in it, they would not come out, so threw in a grenade and killed them. Jacques
shot 2 more. Lt. Brown came up and told us to hold this top as more help was com-
ing........ I mentioned to Jacques that Lt. Brown made a nice target with that stupid air-
panel on his back. We started to look into all the holes around us and found several
with dead GIs in them, dead chinks were all over the hill and then somebody yelled
that Lt. Brown got hit and was dead....... Other GIs came up and me and Willy were
selected to go for ammo, water and grenades. We stripped the dead and wounded for
anything we could use........ All the ammo we could find was 4 boxes of .30 cal and some grenades. We set up for the night, we had about 8 or 9 guys left in the 2nd platoon. L company had been fighting for over 20 hours. We laid out the dead GI’s and rolled the dead chinks down the front of the hill, I guess there was about 40 or 50 dead Chinese laying around the top.

**Day 5 0800 7 Feb 1951**

Nobody slept last night because we threw grenades and fired at any sound and anything. Jacques and Reeves got hit during the night by grenades, we were in the old 3rd platoon’s position. I remember they sent us replacements, a cook named “Tex” (?) and some guy from the Regiment band? When they carried the wounded off I took Jacques watch and Reeves .45 pistol (I saw him later in Germany). Counting the Gimlet platoon I guess we lost about 100 killed and wounded..? I never did learn of the fate of that outpost of Gimlets. They took the main attack and it is possible that we killed some by mistake as they withdrew back to our position. I swore that I would always carry as many grenades as I could in the future........... They were life-savers that night.

They say that Hill 296 as seen from the air the next morning by an observer looked like sleeping bags were growing up there as they got scattered all over the hill and were used by the Chinks, the wounded, the dead, and the living, hence the name of “The Sleeping Bag Hill”. L Company fought for over 20 straight hours............. I went up that hill 19 years old, but when I came down I felt that I was old enough for Social-Security.
Blood Mountain

by James C. Fine

February 6, 1951

The night was black, The enemy hit ever so bold. He came unexpected, Two were unprotected. Above on the right hidden in the night. We contort in our shallow cup, We whispered council in coldest fear, From death to life, how short the bridge. "Chinese hold high the outcrop right. We dare not fire, for the flashes of light."

Sergeant Sharp listens with never a scold. Three recross the ridge; Two in God we trust. If fight we must then fight we will, We'll choose a way that keeps us still. "We will wait use only blades. or rifles aside use grenades." "Instrument of death, tool of force, do your work, reveal no source."

One I feel is cold, smooth in my clutch. "Damnable fool!" on such a dark night, white phosphorous makes a hellish light. We turn to statues move not a bone, Beads of sweat, bodies of stone. In white hot anger, oh it burns so. At least we can see, there's no one below. Its life complete, it's moment of fame. It flickers, then dies, and leaves no flame.

Once again we decided to quit this position. Firing and shouts above and to our right indicated the Chinese had advanced along the outcrop almost to the main crest. Herlindo Tabares and I slipped from the hole as quietly as possible and bounded for the safety of the back slope. Once across the crest we were confronted by the sight of a 90mm recoilless rifle with a thermite grenade burning in its breach and chamber. The sergeant watching it burn...
seemed apologetic as he explained that the South Korean crew was not there and he was burning it because he couldn’t carry it alone. We nodded and slipped on down the slope a few yards where we were met again by Sergeant Sharp.

For the second time we explained why we couldn’t fight from the hole on the forward slope. This time Sharp listened, sympathetically, and when we were through he informed us that the outfit on our right had broken and we were now waiting for orders to withdraw or counterattack. He then separated us and had us swing down the slope for several yards so that we might resist any advance by the Chinese along the main crest. I found a wash, maybe eighteen inches deep, and dropped in.

Waiting there in the dark the minutes dragged by as though they had suddenly become hours. The firing had almost ceased now and the Chinese were shouting and laughing over their victory. In the dark it seemed only a few scant yards to where they were celebrating. It probably was just yards to where they celebrated. I listened for what seemed an eternity — then a new fear squeezed me. “Suppose they’re not all celebrating. Suppose even now they are slipping this way. Maybe part of them are shouting to fool us while the rest are already crawling our way.” Beads of sweat popped out on me as I felt for my one remaining grenade. It was a fragmentation grenade that I had set up to use on my rifle. I slipped the launching attachment off in the darkness and slipped the pin out.

I heaved the grenade as hard as I could aiming at the noise and laughter. It exploded. A few seconds later, two chinese potato mashers (concussion grenades) went off eight to ten feet behind me — if they were close enough to overthrow me it was time to leave. I panicked. I bolted and ran like a rabbit through the blackness. The sound of slugs clipping through the short scrub grass and brush around me added wings to my feet.
With each terrorizing whine and snap I imagined the sledgehammer blow of a slug hitting the small of my back. I was no longer rational. I was no longer useful. Fear and desire to live had taken over and overpowered military discipline and reasoning power. I fled blindly in the pitch dark. This was the peak of the terror I had been nursing since being nicked at Kumchon months before. In the first few seconds of my flight I lived that moment at Kumchon over and over again, feeling the neck jarring blow and hearing the maddening crash as the slug tore through my helmet. I remembered feeling for the split in my skull and there was only the thick mat of my uncut hair, I had felt for the gush of life's blood and there had been only a few small stains on my grimy hand, I remembered the throbbing headache that had followed. A thought crossed my mind — I had escaped death before by perhaps an inch and this time it might not be so. Survival became paramount as I slipped and slid over the hard frozen slope. I discarded my cartridge belt with canteen, bayonet scabbard and empty grenade pouch still attached, thinking that throwing away this little bit of weight might make the difference between escape or capture or death.

Running down the mountain in the blackness, the curious black blackness that always precedes the dawn and is especially black on moonless nights, I put my foot down and there was nothing there. I fell — five, six, seven feet — I don't know. Bluff I suppose. I sprawled among the rocks and scrub brush, lay there several minutes shaken, gasping for the breath that had been knocked from me and fighting to recover the reason that had also been "taken" from me. My cheek lay against the frozen pebbles and clay-like soil and the cold ground felt good; the air cooled my whole face and I listened. I could no longer hear any rifle fire or any firing at all for that matter; so I closed my eyes for a few moments, resting and listening. Momentarily, I got up and continued down the mountain, picking my way more carefully. It was then that I began to consider the consequences of my actions. Like a cold ocean wave washing over you the overwhelming thought hit me that I had deserted. That's the only way it could come out — I was guilty of desertion — me — me that used to dream of performing heroic acts. I had known ever since Kumchon that I certainly was no hero; but to desert! In a way I didn't much care. Now it was over, there was no longer a reason to stay, no reason to sit in a cramped foxhole waiting for those damnable bugles to blow, no reason to devise ways of self torture to, stay awake through the long freezing winter nights, no reason to sleep in a half-finished foxhole in water up to my chest during the rainy season. There was no turning, not really. I could go back up, but for what? Better to live a coward than to commit suicide by going back up there. Go back up to be carried off on a litter and dumped somewhere, wherever it is they dump bodies to wait patiently for their unpainted box. The coast couldn't be over twenty or twenty-five miles to the west — there would be fishing boats there and escape, escape to somewhere, anywhere. I don't know how long it took me to make my way down the mountain. It had taken us a couple of hours to climb it; but we had only climbed half the time and we had been tired and it was the middle of the night when we had gone on the mountain.
When I reached the bottom it was breaking dawn and I was completely bewildered by the scene before me. There was the company, perhaps the whole battalion, strung out at the base of the mountain as if they were getting ready to police it for cigarette butts and candy wrappers. But how? If they had quit the mountain and come down in time to be here in formation like this .... they must have quit it before I did. But why? Why hadn’t they called to me when they withdrew? Why hadn’t Shertzer yelled for me or even whispered? I would have heard. Shertzer had been next to me in that last failing attempt at defense and I had been next to the Chinese. I looked among the milling GIs for Shertzer’s boyish face, the square cut chin with the fuzz on it and that blond hair rising over the typical German head. I wanted to know why he hadn’t passed on the order to move off the mountain. I found my squad; it was complete now, except for Shertzer. Someone slapped me on the back. Congratulations ... I remember it only through a haze.

A short time ago I had deserted, displayed cowardice in the face of the enemy but fate had intervened with characteristic abandon and now I was no longer a wretched coward. They had given me up, but now I was here — and no longer a deserter. Fate twitches a finger and a most unfortunate is transformed into a most fortunate without undergoing any actual change. I marveled.

I began to catch snatches of the murmuring around me. It seemed there might be no retreat. “No retreat, hell. We had already retreated.”

We had to have the mountain. “Why did we have to have that mountain?”

The officers were gathered at the battalion control point now. “Oh please God, don’t make us go back up there.” Attacks were hell. Defense was much safer.

The prayers were silent, rumors abounded, fear lived in the frigid air, gripes and theories could be had for the loan of an ear — willing or unwilling. Deep down we all knew what was coming. The waiting was a nuisance — a brief intermission between the preliminary and main bout. We stomped aching feet against the frozen mud and waited.

The officers returned and a strange stillness settled over the formation. I prayed for the last minute reprieve — it didn’t come.

“We’ve got to have the mountain. Division says we’re to retake it — period.”

That was it. The stillness prevailed. Scores of men were suddenly quiet. Talking was no use now, better to save your breath. The clouds of condensation still rose in seemingly continuous puffs, but the snap of a twig would have fallen on every ear. The mountain appeared defiant. A raised ridge ran from the crest to the base near where we stood. Gradually we spread out across this ridge and then we were climbing again.
I don’t remember much of the climb; although I do remember sweating profusely
despite the bitter cold of early morning. At the time I had on a large amount of clothing
and there wasn’t time to remove any of it. Starting at the skin I had on a summer
undershirt, wool underwear, wool shirt, khaki shirt, sweater, fatigue jacket, pile liner,
field jacket and last a parka. Several pairs of differing trousers, two pairs of wool socks
and a pair of shoe pacs completed my defense against the Korean winter. I remember
reaching the hump where the firing commenced. I found a small tree, bushy near the
bottom, that afforded some concealment and sat down. I sat there for a few minutes
breathing hard and sweating. Then finally I settled down and commenced to fire at
likely bushes near the crest.

After a while we began to get artillery support. Shells whined overhead singing their
deadly swan song — landed near the crest — then exhaled their one and only breath
which was life and death both. Several Chinese jumped from the bushes and crossed
the crest. Then the jets came from beyond the mountain and blasted the other side with
high explosive and napalm. The Chinese came back on our side and we fired into the
bushes where they had disappeared. Then the artillery ran them to the other side — the
planes ran them back — we kept firing at them or where they had been for some time.
I know now that the Chinese we saw were the ones who didn’t have holes to take cover
in; but at the time I figured that we almost had the mountain back and it hadn’t been so
bad after all.

By this time the sun was fairly high in the sky and someone called from behind the
hump to say that there was ammo back there for anyone who needed it. I had only two
bandoleers of ammo draped around my neck after discarding my cartridge belt and I
had already used most of one. There was little firing on our side of the ridge and hadn’t
been for several minutes so I decided to get more ammo during the lull.

I walked around the hump to find everyone there stretched out behind a low rock
ledge. Someone yelled at me, "You'd better get down. A machine gun's got us
pinned down."

My feet kicked from under me automatically and I stretched my arm to break my fall,
too late — the sledgehammer hit me.

My arm was numb and I had been flipped completely over by the impact. I struggled
for an eternity trying for that first breath of air. There was air all around me; why
couldn’t I get just a little of it into my tortured lungs. I gasped hard and the air finally
sucked in. I looked at my numb arm, it wasn’t there. The thought flashed across my
mind that I been hit by mortar or artillery and that my arm had been torn off. It still felt
as though it was at my side. How could it still feel like it was there if it wasn’t there? John
Shields and a medical company medic were right there and went to work on me
immediately. They pulled my right arm from behind my head where it had been twisted by the impact. Strange, it had felt as though it was still at my side. Inwardly I was momentarily overcome by joy and relief at regaining my lost limb.

John Shields was an infantry medic from my platoon, not an official medic. He had transferred in from some support unit, maybe quartermaster. It was learned he had been a medic in WWII. A medic’s kit was arranged for and he became a medic again. John worked furiously now, cutting at my clothes with his scissors. I recall wondering how in God’s name two medics could kneel there in the open where I had been hit only a moment before and survive, but they did.

Shields said, “Fine, I can’t cut through all these clothes. We’re going to have to take them off of you.”

“I don’t care,” and I really didn’t. A doctor would later tell me a drain hole in my side had saved my life. The clothes probably also contributed since the slug had to penetrate the layers three times before entering the body cavity. It had gone through my right upper arm, exited, then re-entered through the right rib cage shattering a couple of ribs in the process.

They raised my arms and peeled off the layers of clothing until I was bare to the waist.

Shields bandaged my arm while the medic gave me a shot of morphine. Then Shields voice drifted through the fog, “Damn, here’s another hole.”

I burst out of the fog and Orville Musick’s rough face was staring down at me. Good old Musick...California, I think...in a lot of trouble in Japan...damn sure proven himself here. I believe he would have led a patrol into hell itself with very little encouragement. When I was a kid I thought you always had to say something when you were lying wounded on the field...too many World War II movies I guess. I looked up at Musick and gasped out, “Get that son-of-a-bitch for me, Musick.” Musick grinned and then the fog closed in again...

Shields was saying, “The goddamn gook litter bearers ran off and it’ll be a little while before they can get them back up here with a litter to take you down the mountain.” I don’t know why, but I didn’t try to answer Shields. I heard everything he said — it was just that I didn’t want to say anything.

And then, finally, I was lifted carefully onto a litter and the trek down the mountain began. I was stripped to the waist and the temperature was hovering near thirty and yet I sweated. I could feel the beads of perspiration form and yet I wasn’t cold. I closed my eyes and felt very peaceful and secure. Morphine will do that to you. I heard the sergeant once, “Bali bali you sons-of-bitches, can’t you see this man’s dying.” I recall...
thinking how crazy he was. Hell, I wasn’t going to die. I was going home. Once they dropped the litter, but I couldn’t feel it and I didn’t care.

At the bottom of the mountain they set me down behind a large rock. I could hear slugs whining close by and began to fear being hit again. A medical officer came over and worked with me for a while...I don’t remember. The next thing I knew he was cursing the plasma because it was frozen and wouldn’t flow. He ordered me placed in a litter jeep. The litter was strapped down and someone was placed alongside me in another litter and then we started for the rear, away from the mountain.

The jeep bounced along the frozen road for some distance; but the morphine stayed with me and it could have been a Sunday drive down main street back home for all I cared. We arrived someplace and once more I found myself on the ground. Again I could see the bottle of plasma above me; but this time it dripped...and it dripped... and it dripped... drip... drip... drip... drip... . At times the mysterious fog rolled in from out there somewhere and for a time it would hide the dripping; but I could feel it and then the fog would clear momentarily and there would be the bottle... dripping. ...drip ...drip ... drip ... drip.

I closed my eyes and there was a great feeling of peace, sweet and soft and warm and black. ...whispers ...talk..., “morphine...plasma...extent of injuries..., Division Medical... .”

Then the litter was moving again and I opened my eyes in time to see a cracker box ambulance with its mouth open wide. The doors swallowed me up. When the litter settled down the roof of the cracker box was inches above me. I closed my eyes and once more took up the deep enjoyment of the black peace that engulfed me.

The cracker box jogged along, slid into ruts and climbed jerkily from them — then something commenced to gnaw at my side. For the first time since the slug hit me, I began to feel pain. At first it was just a little stabbing pain and then the intervals between grew shorter and shorter until one pain merged with another and then pain was continuous. I closed my eyes; but the black peace was gone and everything was red ... all red. There was something...gnawing...I don’t know...it was starving... it nibbled ... then bit harder and grew more persistent ... each nibble ... stronger ... huge ... green eyes ... no, ... red ... yellow ... flashing ... orange. I couldn’t pin the colors down ... like some crazy kaleidoscope ... and gnashing, gnashing of teeth. The beast exploded and everywhere there were brilliant colors and pain ... pain everywhere. Everything was pain and pain was all there was. “Oh God.” It seemed as though we were driving down a railroad track and I cursed the stupid bastard driving us at such a breakneck speed down a railroad track. “Oh God, help me.” I screamed at the driver to slow down — I screamed at the top of my lungs; but he ignored me. “Why won’t he listen?”
I took my good arm and beat at the roof with all my strength; the cracker box continued its breakneck pace. I cried and that seemed to help a little. The pain grew worse and then I couldn’t cry anymore. “Oh God, God, God. Please slow this thing down.”

Then a curious thing happened. I heard one of the guys below speak to the driver in a normal tone of voice explaining that ... seemed ... be hurting ... said something ... “slow down”... . And the driver slowed down. Curious. He couldn’t hear me when I screamed at him — but heard the other boy who didn’t even seem to raise his voice. I relaxed and the fog drifted in and out mysteriously. I closed my eyes and most of the colors were gone. I felt the sting of salt in my eyes and rivulets of sweat running off my body. A semblance of the former peace returned and the fog drifting in and out and presently we arrived at another place where my litter found its way once more to a resting place on the ground.

I saw the ambulance driver hand some papers to an officer and talk for a time. Then I got another shot of morphine. I began to think of home again and I wondered how long it would be before I got there. And the fog drifted in and out. I heard some officers and they were talking about me — I knew they were, but I couldn’t make it out. I liked it where I was; it was so peaceful and nice and I didn’t want to go anyplace else. “Fly this man and this man out.” I didn’t want to go but the damned litter got up and went anyway. I tried to open my eyes, but the fog. And the fog drifted in and out and finally it cleared and there was a helicopter. The next instant I was in one of the pods and a kindly looking sergeant with gray hair...or was it black...he was very hazy...tucking the blanket around me as if I were a little child being bedded down for the night. I wanted to thank him or tell him good night or something. Then a strap was snugged up around me or was it two straps. I saw the clear plastic bubble come down and heard it being fastened. Then I could see the blades coming round and round and round, faster and faster until the fog drifted in. A feeling sort of like being in an elevator came over me only I was flat of my back. And the fog drifted out and the blades came round and round and round and the ‘copter drummed on toward someplace — someplace far away from the mountain and I didn’t really care. The blades hummed their peculiar out of balance song; I closed my eyes and the song was sweet background for the black peace. And the black peace was soft and warm like velvet. The sun warmed my face and I felt at peace with the whole world.

The beat slowed and the helicopter eased into a gradual descent. I chewed at an imaginary cud of gum to relieve the pressure on my ears. A slight jar, hardly noticeable, and we came to rest.

Up went the canopy and more strange smiling faces peered into my pod, I wanted to smile back. Straps were loosened and out floated the litter. I turned my head and caught sight of some sort of building or tent; but something was coming. I forced my eyes wider, but the black cloud rolled in from all sides and engulfed: ...everything.
I wandered in the darkness for a long time and then a pinpoint of light appeared. I fought to reach the light and when I reached it a strange mist clung to everything. There were a great many lights and I fought hard to drive the mist back and focus my eyes. At last I recognized the form of a woman. She came toward me with what appeared to be an oversize Chapstick. I thought, ‘What the hell is she doing with that big chapstick?’ And then she rubbed my arm with it and the black cloud returned to swallow up the lights.

Again I was in the dark; but not conscious of time. Time was not. Quite gradually I came on another light, very dim and so I was not particularly conscious of the suddenness; it crept upon me like old age without any fanfare or warning. There was a dark angular ceiling above me and I must have gazed on it for some time not seeing to where it went or really caring. It was not there and then it was there and when I was able to look around I was in a tent and all around the walls of the tent were other GIs resting on litters laid in neat rows on the dirt floor ... or was it wood... . In a little while a ward man came through and I asked for a cigarette I don’t know, I really didn’t particularly want one; but there was nothing else to do. My stomach was sore as was my side and my right arm hurt. When I had finished the cigarette a colored nurse came with a stand and a bottle of glucose and she stretched my left arm out and inserted the needle, adjusted the stand and went off. For a short while it was all right and I lay there and stared at the dripping; then my arm began to hurt, not the wounded arm, but the one with the needle in it. I realized that the bottle was so high that I was forced to hold my arm straight out; I couldn’t lower it to the ground or pull it in to the litter. Sweat popped out and I cursed her for a stupid wench and then she returned to the tent.

“This stand is too high and my arm is hurting bad.”

“Bettah not move yo ahm oah I has ta stick yo agin.”

I was born in the South; but I had been raised in Kansas City and to that moment colored folk had always been Negroes to me; but this one was a nigger, a black nigger bitch.

“You’d better lower this goddamn stand or I’ll... I’ll...” what could I do. I lay there and cursed her under my breath and moaned a little, or a lot, out loud and she came presently, a few seconds perhaps a few minutes, it seemed hours. The stand came down, I lowered my arm to the ground, relaxed, gave thanks; not to her and went to sleep.

A few minutes, a few hours, a day, two days, three days I don’t know; but it seemed only a short while and my litter was on it's way again along with others. We converged on a bus converted to haul litters and the people on litters. A short ride, then a C-47, then another bus and another hospital — Quonset huts this time and beds — real beds, hospital beds that cranked up and down — with sheets — clean white sheets.
This was the Fourth Field Hospital at Taegu, the only hospital in Korea at that time in Quonset huts instead of tents. The colonel who commanded it said Quonsets were as easy to put up as tents and by God he was going to have Quonsets. And ice cream, so help me; ice cream every day, made right there at the hospital.

And every meal the nurse would come around and ask me if I wanted to eat or take it in the vein. And I watched the bottles dripping away until finally the urge to taste something again or maybe it was that ice cream... anyway I told her I would try some soup and it was good and then they brought me some ice cream... peppermint ice cream.

Every six hours I got shots; one shot, then six hours, two shots and one and two and so on. The nurse would come around and help me over on my side and then down with the pajamas and in with the needle. I tried to keep my muscles from flinching; but I couldn’t seem to control them and they got so good at it that they could flinch just as the needle went in. Once it hurt like hell — she pulled the needle out and clucked her tongue.

“Look here,” she said.

The needle had a large bow in it. After that she slapped the daylights out of my buttocks just before the needle was inserted and I quit flinching.

The doctors came in the mornings making rounds and they would take the dressings off and poke around and go, “Uh huh” and “Hm” and so on. Once one of the doctors asked me if I wanted to see my side or my arm; I didn’t. A rubber tube came out of my side considerably below where the wound was and I wondered what it was there for. One of the doctors said it had slipped out a little one day, so he pushed it back. He went easy, but it hit something inside me that felt fairly solid and really hurt. I asked him what it was there for and he said it was to drain off the liver bile. It had saved my life he said and it was my turn to “Huh”. I didn’t look at my arm; but I could see my belly and the long scar there with the wire stitches. It looked like a twelve inch angle worm stretched out and held down by the stitches. I asked the doctor if they had taken out everything except my liver and he laughed. He said it was just the scar from an exploratory operation and I said, “The doctor must have had awful big hands.” He laughed again. He told me I could get up for trips to the latrine and so forth if I wanted to. I didn’t want to.

That evening they brought in an old boy, I’d say fifty or fifty-five at least, and took out his appendix. Bright and early the next morning he got out of bed and walked around to the latrine. I lay there a little while and then I got up and started for the latrine. It was just around the corner; but by the time I got back I felt as though I was just coming off a twenty-five mile forced march. After that it got easier.
Then it happened. I hadn’t thought of the company or the mountain until I ran into that mortar man from the fourth platoon. I didn’t recall his name at the time, nor can I remember it now; but at the time I was very glad to see him for I had a hundred questions to ask.

I eagerly inquired as to the outcome of the battle for the mountain and was very surprised at hearing that the fight was just beginning when I was hit. The company had suffered sixty percent casualties. He had a flesh wound in the shoulder. By the time it was over my squad leader, Sergeant Sharp, had been hit in the foot, though not seriously I believe; Francis Renzi, the “Ginny” had suffered powder burned eyes from a Chinese concussion grenade; Ellison had been hit hard in the arm, badbreak; (this later turned out to be false as did the sixty percent figure), no trace was found of Shertzer and hasn’t to this day; Tabares and Moreno, the only two to come out of it unscathed from my squad.

“And Musick? What about Musick?”

“Dead.”

“Dead?” That’s when it hit me. Musick dead. I remembered coming out of the fog. I remembered asking Musick to get the machine gun, more damn theatrics than anything else. I remembered Musick grinning back and vanishing in the fog. And now he was dead. I tried to find out what he had been doing when he got it or where on the mountain when struck down ... machine gun ... machine gun. The mortar man didn’t know except that he had been killed.

In the hospital in Japan at night, in the dead still quiet of night, I would burst from the fog and see Musick bending over me. I would gasp, “Get that son-of-a-bitch for me, Musick.” Musick would grin and vanish in the fog and then the fog would blow away and there would be Musick bending over me. Again and again and again.

I looked in the airplanes and the hospitals all along the route home for someone from the old company, someone who would know and at night ... the dream ... the fog ... Musick grinning.

I didn’t write; I could have written to the company commander and maybe found out. I didn’t ... I don’t know why — well, I couldn’t write ... but I could have had someone write for me ... but I didn’t ... and always the dream ... the fog ... Musick grinning .... Over and over. Again and again.

Months later, on convalescent leave from the hospital in San Antonio, I ran into Sharp. Sharp had married a girl from home and was stationed at a nearby camp. And finally the question was answered, as well as it can be. Musick was far to the right of the machine gun near the crest when the shrapnel had torn into his face and drained his life into the earth.
I never see him at night anymore, in the dead still quiet of night. Still, I wonder how the plea of a man you think is dying must affect you and I wonder ... Did I get Musick killed? Was he working toward the machine gun when the shrapnel got him? I’ll be dead when the question is finally answered — it probably won’t matter much by then.

I see the Mountain once in a while, not at night though. In the daytime in my imagination I see it and think of the ones who died there or just bled there as I did and the mountain takes on a blood red hue. In my imagination.

**Epilogue**

**Gordon Shertzer** died in captivity according to official records (Korean Conflict Casualty File). Was he still in position when I had the grenade exchange with the Chinese or had he already been captured. Was the laughter of the Chinese them taunting Shertzer? Is that the reason I didn’t get the word to pull off the mountain?

For thirty-five years I figured I would one day locate **Herlindo Tabares**. I even hunted for him in the Brownsville Texas phone book once when I was in Harlingen Texas on business. He was a good soldier and I figured if anyone would survive, he would. In 1986 I went to my first reunion of Love Company, 21st Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division. There I learned that Tabares had been killed April 7, 1951 when he stepped on a “Bouncing Betty” mine, just two months and a day after I had been hit. It had taken the top of his head off. At least he never knew he had been hit. I really miss Tabares. He used to tell me, “Jim, you come to Brownsville after we get home and I’ll introduce you to a girl but you’ll have to stay faithful or she’ll cut you.” Once in a while you would swear an eye had crossed but when you looked back it wouldn’t be there.

**William Sharp** returned to the states and retired after teaching ROTC in a Dallas suburb high school for many years ending with a 4-year hitch in Ketchikan AK. Bill died July 10, 2002 following a heart attack.

In 1994 we located **Leroy Ellison** living in Louisiana.

**1st Platoon Leader Lt. T L Epton** died of a heart attack April 16, 1989 after serving for over twenty years as pastor of the Clinton Avenue Baptist Church in Richmond, California.

**1st Platoon Sergeant Powell Sale** died September 14, 1996 in Georgia.

**John Shields** died November 20, 1998 at his home in Florida.

**Antonio Moreno** and **Francis Renzi** have not been located ... yet.
The following memoirs originated for the most part as essays in an honors English course I was taking at the University of Arkansas during the 1959-60 school year. The course was taught by T. C. Duncan Eaves who informed us very early, “I have one formula for success in this course. You read a book a week, you take a test a week, you write an essay a week.” A few have been written more recently to expand mention of a location or event so that others might remember what or where I am referring.

The Knife

Camp Stoneman California — It was about August 1, 1950. I waited impatiently for the cab driver to return with the knife. I was green. That was the reason I wanted the knife. I didn’t have any idea of what I was getting into, but I felt like the knife might help me.

He came back. He could have taken my money and forgot that he ever saw me, but he came back and presented me with the knife and a little change from the twenty. He charged me two dollars for going to town after it which was no more nor less than the regular price of a trip to town and back. I thanked him and started back to the barracks.

It was a pretty thing, my new switchblade knife with its red handle and nickeled metal parts. I had never owned a good switchblade before and this was a good one. I squeezed the button and the blade obediently jumped out faster than the eye could follow. The spring was so strong that I underestimated it that first time and the knife snapped out of my hand and stuck in the barren ground. I picked it up and examined the blade. It was unhurt, not a scratch. I wiped it off carefully, replaced it in its sheath after locking the release and started once more for the barracks.

Duarte and Tamber had already shipped out. In the mornings they called a formation of all the troops here for embarkation to Korea and announced the names on the first group to ship that day. There was another formation immediately after noon chow every day, but I hadn’t been on that one either and Tamber and Duarte had been called for this morning. I wished that I had gone with Tamber and Duarte. I had been in Leadership School with Duarte and was Cadre with Tamber in Company E, 86th Regiment — all at Camp Funston adjacent to Fort Riley Kansas. I wasn’t really so anxious to go, not anymore, but I still wished that I could have been with some of the boys from my old post. Oddly, I ended up in the same Company with Duarte in Korea and Tamber was in the unit that relieved us on the Naktong about the 21st of August 1950.
I had been happy when I heard that I was on orders for Korea. I had tried everything to get off Camp Funston and Korea finally did it for me. I wasn’t so happy now. It was that “old army” soldier I had met that made me doubt my good fortune. He had been in the army in the 1930s and in WWII. He convinced me this was not going to be some Hollywood movie plot.

Later near Camp Stoneman — we were traveling light and fast. We milled around the air terminal building with only the shirts on our back and a small ditty bag of shaving gear. Those of us who were green carried the dreams of heroes, but the combat veterans of World War II carried only the skill and knowledge or just luck it had taken to survive during that period. ... I lost the knife in the ditch between the tank and the rice paddy September 6, 1950, NW of Kyongju — the first attack I was in.

**Bridge on the Naktong**

*Overlooking the Ch’angnyong to Ch’ogye Bridge*

“L Company, 21st Infantry Regiment in August 1950 was in position on high ground overlooking the Ch’angnyong to Ch’ogye Bridge across the Naktong River.”

Will it aid memory if we describe the gook train winding its way around the hill trail once a day carrying A-frames laden with jerry cans of water and thermos containers of hot chow? Will it begin to come alive again?

My apologies to our Korean friends, but that is what we called it. Forty some years later I think I know why we called them gooks. I believe a one word question by a Korean native to an American GI “Miguk?” (American?) was misinterpreted as “Me Gook!” by the GI. We knew nothing of Hangul and the guys who had been in Japan usually spoke limited Japanese to the Koreans. After 35 years under the Japanese all Koreans knew Japanese.

Who could forget the ants? In the early days I believed that Korea was one giant ant hill. My first night away from Miryang Replacement Depot had been painful. We had not managed to make it to L Company and the 6X6 I was on stopped in a schoolyard. I believe this is the reason John Marshall and I could never agree on the time of day when we first joined the company on the Naktong. John maintained we had gone on the mountain at night in the dark. I have always remembered going up there in the daylight. I have long since lost the memory it would take to tell anyone the hour. I think
John’s truck went on that night while we stopped to spend the night at the schoolyard. We bedded down after dark on the side of a nearby hill above the schoolyard.

I could not believe my bad luck when I picked out two locations in the dark, both of which were already occupied by ants. When daylight came, there were ants everywhere! Ants learn. On the Naktong I killed every ant that ventured into my foxhole for the first two days I was there. Then they quit getting into my foxhole.

We augmented our water ration at a dripping spring just across the shallow saddle to the south of my hole and the east across the knob of the hill from the CP where we kept a container sitting to catch and accumulate the water. This turned into a small disaster for me— I had heated some beef stew in my canteen cup but had not been able to wash it. We had no water to speak of on the hill. So I went to the spring and used a little of that water mixed with some of the gravel in the small bed below the spring. Swirling this around for a while in the canteen cup really made it gleam. How could it not be clean. Clean maybe but not germ free. I made some hot chocolate in it and then carried a trenching tool everywhere I went for several days. I borrowed and begged extra toilet paper from most of the guys on the hill.
Lt. Hap Chandler lay, stripped to the waist sunbathing at the CP overlooking the river. The dark American Indian hardly needed a tan, but there he was anyway soaking up the sun of which there was plenty.

We had an outpost manned nightly down at base of the hill below the CP. God the mosquitos were terrible at night down there where you were much closer to the Naktong River. The mosquitos bred easily in the stagnant water of the rice paddies that seemed to cover every available square-inch of the Korea flat enough to flood. The human waste used to fertilize the soil where the rice crops were grown provided the mosquitos with plentiful nutrients for their larvae.

There was harassing fire which the artillery dispensed nightly. It would come marching down the road from the north across the river. Boom ...boom ...boom and then when it came to the bridge, twelve rounds just to make certain the NKs were not trying to repair the missing spans and use it. One night nine of those twelve hit the back side of our hill. Good thing no one was back there digging catholes at the time.

I returned to this site in 1992 when I worked a few months in Korea on an engineering job. As I approached from the South all I could see was a new bridge that has been built just downstream from the old bridge. I couldn’t recognize the location as I approached. There is a fair sized village on the east bank of the river around the bridge where there had been none in 1950.

We parked the car at the side of the road, I climbed a short way up the hill to look across the river and try to remember. The far side where the road continued north, snaking along the foothills meshed completely with my memories. Once I had climbed a short distance the old bridge came into view from its hiding place and there was no doubt this was the location. Blown spans had been replaced. This was betrayed by the color of the concrete. It had apparently been used for many years before the new bridge was built.

I think I was here 8 days in 1950. The company had been on position much longer. I’m reasonably sure we moved off the mountain the 23rd of August. We were relieved by elements of the 2nd Division. As we trod down the trail off the hill I met Cpl Tamber among the group coming on. We exchanged hurried greetings and continued our separate ways.

Sometime during the 8 days we decided we should have houseboys even though we certainly didn’t have a house. Two kids from the train of bearers that brought supplies to us were asked if they wanted to stay with us and they eagerly accepted the offer. I believe they were kept with squad level units. One was bright and spoke a little english, enough to get by. I understood his name to be Young Sand Dee so it seemed natural to nickname him Sandy. The boy who stayed with the other unit was called Charley. As I
said, Sandy was very bright and I thought it would be great to take him to the states where he would have a much better life than war-torn Korea. I wrote about this idea to my mother.

The night of our departure from the hill we stopped to camp near a small dry stream bed. Several of us, maybe as many as four snapped ponchos together and strung them across the pea sized gravel. With a shelter half for a ground cover the gravel felt like a good mattress compared to what we had been sleeping on. The location was a stupid choice. It began to rain during the night and very quickly there was 2 to 3 inches of water running through our “sleeping quarters.”

The Apple Orchard
Taegu Korea

We next moved into an apple orchard east of the city of Taegu and just to the northwest of the Taegu airstrip. The Taegu airstrip was just getting setup as a base of operations for P-51 aircraft. These were able to linger over nearby target areas much longer and get to them quicker than the P-80s operating out of Japan. I walked down the dusty road and around to a PX I heard was there. It was in a ramshackle structure that looked for the world like an open air vegetable stand. I seem to remember that all they had were a few shaving items which I didn’t need and perhaps toothcare items which I was not prone to use. I know I didn’t buy anything so it is definite they had no candy.

Sandy and I snooped around the abandoned houses that were near. It should properly have been called looting and probably was even though we did not find anything worth taking. We were at the apple orchard twice and I believe it was here that we were told “You can’t keep those kids with you.” So Sandy and Charley were sent back home to the village near the bridge on the Naktong.

In the apple orchard we had pup tents set up under the trees. There was to be a beer ration and and a pit perhaps 3 feet deep and 4 feet square was dug in the soft orchard soil to cool the ration. Two or three of us decided to go into town. I did not drink and had no particular interest in the ration. We walked the 2 or 3 miles to the center of town then began to explore what stores were open for business. In a sparsely stocked jewelry I dickered for a small pearl set in a delicate gold ring. I understood the price was to be 5 dollars in the script money we were given rather than U.S. currency. Once the deal was made the price suddenly doubled and heated argument erupted. This drew in a city policeman who understood enough english to get the drift of the problem. A few harsh words from him and my purchase was handed over. I carried this ring wrapped in a GI handkerchief in my fatigue jacket pocket until I was wounded several months later.
On the way back we passed an open-air native liquor market and searched the stock found some bottles of “Taegu Apple Brandy.” We each purchased a bottle. As I said I did not drink at the time and I’m not sure what I thought the apple brandy would be like, probably somewhat like homemade berry wines I had tasted. When we got back to the orchard we put the bottles in the iced pit with the beer to cool.

Sometime after sunset as it began to get dark we retrieved the bottles and I eagerly opened mine. One large swig was enough. It felt as if a large very coarse wood rasp had been run down my throat. Finally I read the label in detail. “Alcohol - 40% or better by volume.” “Let’s give it to the cooks — they’ll drink anything.” And that’s what we did.

KyongJu
September 6, 1950

The company went on a low hill early in the morning. I don’t remember how we got there, but probably by truck. In my mind I still see the hilltop where we were issued ‘C’ rations for breakfast. Before we could open and begin to eat we were ordered to drop our rations and ponchos in a pile. We were to go to the bottom of the hill and begin an attack on the next low hill. Rations and poncho’s would catch up with us in a short while.

At the bottom of the hill we boarded tanks and shortly they moved out on the road around the hill towards the next hill. The road skirted the two hills running straight between them. I was on the second tank. There was a small terrace of rice paddies climbing a narrowing draw to the left of the road. Some of our boys were running one of the small dikes separating the paddies about fifty yards off the road. I noticed them was the sudden explosion of incoming rounds around them. I think the rounds were mortar and may even have been short. Then the guy directly across the turret from me was hit by rifle fire. We jumped from the tank into the ditch at the side of the road. I slid down into the water until the water was around my chest. I looked to my right out into the rice paddy and there was a rock building some fifty yards out in the paddy with a rock wall around the yard. It seemed unusual because of the construction. We didn’t see many masonry buildings in the countryside. The tank was concerned about the building because the 90mm was swinging around to target the building. The muzzle was directly over my head and I was scared of the muzzle blast so I began to crawfish back down the ditch as fast as I could to get away from the gun. While doing this I passed a G.I. sitting on the edge of the road in the cover of the tank holding the man wounded earlier. The wounded man’s helmet was off and blood thick as differential lube seeped from a small hole in his temple. This was probably Glennon Boyer as I learned later Leslie VanPouke was on the first tank with Al Sebring. These were the two men from “L” who were killed that day. The tank fired one or two rounds
at the wall and building and receiving no fire back, returned attention to the hill in front of us.

After the fire fight we moved onto the hill. There were many shallow foxholes around with tree and brush foliage stuck in the loose dirt for camouflage. Someone spotted something white moving across the valley. Many of us shot towards the white movement. Months later in Brooke General Hospital I found out the movement was a goat. One of ‘K’ company’s guys had taken canteens down to fill at a well and had to take cover when the firing commenced. He had been wounded sometime after that episode by a very small shell fragment and was recuperating from neuro surgery.

We moved on off the hill and headed northwest on the road. We entered a village and kicked open a door. An old man lay wounded in the chest with several of his family around him. We yelled for a medic and moved on.

Around sunset we stopped around the skirt of a hill and began to dig in. The soil was hard as a brick and after a long time I had only the start of a prone shelter instead of a foxhole. Rations finally caught up with us just before dark. We divided a days ‘C’ rations for one between three of us. I drew a can of peaches. I had just gotten the can open and set it at edge of the hole while I got my spoon out and wiped it off. Suddenly there was incoming. I dived for the hole. It hit close. When I raised up I was ok, but the peaches were full of soot.

The next day we began moving up into the mountains northwest of Kyongju. It was the first time we had tanks with us. I remember watching a tank try again and again to break across a high dike separating two fields. The dike had heavy brush growth down the top. The word hedgerow came to mind from the many WWII newsreels I had seen.

I did not see the event but it was told while advancing up the narrow road the point came under fire from a sniper. He was spotted in a tree and a G.I. on the tank was about to fire when the tank commander said “We’ll get him,” as the 90mm swung around and

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**Buddy**

*Kyongju Korea*

He sat there in the mud by the tank and his feet dangled in the putrid water of the ditch between the road and the rice paddy. A buddy held him as you might a loved one or a small child. Between the piercing crashes of the 90mms and the staccato rifle fire the buddy who supported him so tenderly cried softly with slight sobs shaking his frame. But he just sat there held in the arms of his friend, saying nothing, seeing nothing as though in a peaceful sleep. There was a small hole above the ear, and from this hole no bigger than a dime oozed his life’s blood. The buddy screamed for the medics but the medics were pinned down on the far side of the road. I believe this was Glennon J. Boyer as Leslie A. VanPoucke was on the first tank. 09/06/50
the whole top of the tree disappeared in the explosion. Probably not a prudent use of ammunition but one could scarcely disagree with its effectiveness.

We gained some high ground and Tabares and I were ordered to dig in on a saddle connecting two mountains. The earth was again extremely hard and after a lot of work we had a prone shelter big enough for both of us but only three or four inches deep. I believe Herlindo Tabares was the only one who had not thrown down his poncho the morning before. As night fell it began to rain. It was wet, cold and miserable and we shared the poncho as well as possible. All through the night there a great deal of wiggling and squirming as buddies attempted to join us under the poncho. After an extremely long night it began to break day. There were ten bodies under the poncho, some with only an arm or part of a leg covered. It rained continuously.

It continued to rain. We moved up higher on the side of the mountain. We climbed past some GIs trying to huddle under an air panel. It was foggy and misty. We decided no-one could see us and built a fire. A short time later an officer came up the mountain and ordered us to put out the fire. We were cold and miserable.

The following day it was clear for a change. I decided to go back to the supply truck and see if I could find the ponchos. At the company area a Captain was darting about and I heard him say “Where’s my helmet. I’m going to the front lines.” Somehow that conveyed some fear to me on the part of this officer and I lost at least a measure of respect for this man. Lt Chandler had been injured in a jeep accident several weeks before. I wanted Chandler back in the worst way.

The 10th of September we moved back into a reserve position. I think this was the area we called the pine woods for a long time. The pine woods was a park of some sort. A thin forest of tall trees on flat land with interlaced straight roads. At the edge of the woods we had a tank with us.

This is the place where I drew a new rifle just to get the trigger housing group. I remembered stories of filing the sear off the old M1 carbine and ending up with a full automatic weapon. I figured if it would work on a carbine it should work on an M1 Garand. I would file on it and then walk to a firing range nearby and try it. Finally after several attempts the damn thing fired three rounds without stopping — almost tore my shoulder off. I threw the modified trigger group away and abandoned the idea. Later I would come to regret wasting a new rifle.

One night as we strained to see out into the darkness, one of the tankers saw a light moving out in the field in front of us. The light moved back and forth slowly at times disappearing only to reappear shortly. Finally the tanker could stand it no more and cut down on the light with a grease gun. We sheepishly realized from the movements of the light that it was a firefly that had been fired on.
During the day a group across the road sat around playing poker. Along in the afternoon as I glanced over there the group suddenly seemed to explode. They left in all directions except for two guys, one of whom was waving a 45 automatic at the other. I eased down behind the tank amazed that even while in a rest area violence continued to dog us.

**Naktong Crossing**

*September 22, 1950*

We loaded on trucks and left the “pinewood” after noon. The 6 X 6s eased along the rough dirt Korean roads. There seemed to be no haste as there had been so many occasions in the recent past. It was apparent we were not rushing somewhere to plug some gap. But where were we heading? We began to see apple orchards again as we slipped lower into river bottom country.

Then along in the afternoon the trucks slowed and came to a stop. Everyone piled off and the company formed into squad and platoon clumps. We moved off the road to the right into an apple orchard and began settling in the squad areas assigned. “Dig-in!” It was peaceful here and there seemed no great need to fortify but we commenced to dig anyway. Contrary to most locations, the soft river bottom soil was extremely easy digging and large comfortable foxholes quickly appeared.

I cannot recall his name but can still clearly see the face of the large country kind of kid who declared “I’m gonna make some hot chocolate.” I did not foresee the consequences of his “hot chocolate” and neither did the others who knew what he was doing.

As the smoke from the small fire curled up through the apple trees we came under artillery or mortar fire from across the river. The trees led to tree bursts every bit as dangerous as the air bursts from proximity fused shells. “Get that goddam fire out!” came the shouted instructions. There was great haste on everyone’s part now to get tops on the foxholes for protection from the fragments raining down. Quickly there were tops on the foxholes from the soft bottom soil for protection.

With the fire out the incoming fire tapered off and soon we were once more at ease. It was obvious we could not be seen moving amongst the trees and only the smoke had drawn attention to us.

Someone laughed and said “J.C.’s diggin’ a tunnel from his hole to “Bogie” Wines’ hole and won’t come out.” Many of the replacements of which I was one thought this incident funny. But the tree bursts had a terrible effect on J.C. who had been through Choch’iwon and the other horrific experiences of the company in the early days of the war. The tree bursts had driven him to the brink and perhaps shoved him over a little.
The next morning we had chow and then formed up and marched to trucks where we boarded and made a short run to the end of a river bottom road and the edge of a wide sand bar. We began to cross the sand bar and this time we were in a hurry.

I don’t recall being under any fire as we trotted across the sand bar but it was apparent that someone had been under fire here. Out to the left maybe 30 or 40 yards could be seen a light 30 machine gun laying in the sand. I wondered only momentarily about who might have been carrying it and what had become of him. Then we came to the edge of the river and engineers hustled us into boats and we paddled across the river.

The river was narrow here and on the other side rose sharply for maybe 20 or 30 feet to the edge of a bare road. Beyond the road the land rose quickly as low hills. We moved up this road cautiously with some apprehension.

We followed the road until evening and then moved off to the west onto the low hills. There was relative quiet with no sounds of battle near us. Dark fell quickly and we didn’t dig-in but threw down shelter halves to lie on. We had not eaten since breakfast and hunger now intruded into our thoughts. In the darkness rations finally arrived and were parcelled out. One days C-rations were divided amongst three men. I took the GI can opener from my fatigue jacket pocket and eagerly removed the top from the can I held. Next the spoon was taken out of my fatigue jacket pocket, wiped in the dark to remove any dirt and thrust into the contents. I had no trouble believing my taste buds. It had to be soap. “What the f—k is this!” I dived beneath the shelter half and struck a match to see what it was. Beef Stew. Cold beef stew topped by a layer of grease. Beef Stew was alright when you could heat it but something else again when cold. I emerged from the shelter half and in the dark removed the top half inch or so from the can throwing it to the ground. The remainder was passable although it would have been ten times that good heated.

The next day I was close to a radio and overheard the following conversation:

(Someone to elements of the 19th). “Have you relieved the 5th RCT yet?”

“We haven’t been able to catch the 5th RCT yet.”

We were immensely cheered by this. The war was at last going our way and would surely be over shortly.

The Eagle’s Nest
As I have said before, when I first returned from Korea, each day of the 178 days I was there until being hit on “Sleeping Bag Hill” was burned into my memory. They were all in sequence and I could recount each day’s happenings. I was sure the memories would never leave me but they have.

The Eagle’s Nest was always notable to me for what I personally experienced but not for its location. It was and has remained a mystery to me both then and now because I never knew where it was. I can no longer remember how many days the Company was there.

I believe in calendar terms that it was some time after Kumchon and certainly before crossing the 38th parallel into North Korea. It was not in the regular path of advance. The explanation at the time was that we were searching for pockets of North Korean troops cutoff and isolated by the rapid progress of the UN forces after breaking out of the Naktong perimeter.

We moved into a large schoolhouse for the length of our stay and began to run patrols into the surrounding mountains. I only recall this one that I took part in. I cannot remember all the individuals in the patrol. There have 12 to 15 in the group. Lt. T L Epton led the patrol. The others I can remember were Charles Byrge and Russell Oxley of the weapons squad 1st platoon. The weapons people carried a light machine gun. The light machine gun is only light when compared to the heavy machine gun. It is not an easy carry. More of the weapons folks carried ammunition boxes.

We left the company area and began climbing into the hills. We kept working higher and higher farther and farther out. I recall thinking, “Dammit, he’s gettin’ us out too far.” We ran the backbone of a mountain for a long way following a worn foot trail. We came finally upon a bluff blocking our path. The bluff rose nearly straight up for perhaps 40 or 50 feet of rock ledges.

About this time we also encountered two or three GIs from another outfit. They told us their unit had been nearly wiped out in an engagement on the other side of the rise confronting us.

As they left back down the trail a North Korean squad was spotted near the top of the bluff beginning setup of a machine gun.

Apparently our orders had been to make contact and then return with the information for Epton said, “Let’s get out of here.” Charles Byrge then said, “Lieutenant, let me and my ammo man stay and setup. I’m sure we can beat ‘em gettin’ setup.” Epton replied “Okay, we’ll wait for you back down the trail.”
The remainder of the patrol began trotting back down the path we had followed up there. Our movement along the backbone attracted “friendly” attention from the valley below and we began to receive small arms fire from American troops. There was not a lot of it and fortunately no one was hit.

Back down the trail we reached a small clearing and stopped to wait for Byrge and Oxley. After a time we heard a large bore weapon fire down in the valley just once. It impacted back behind us where we had been.

We waited for a time and suddenly Charles Byrge appeared on the trail from the summit. He was trotting and cradling the machine gun in front of him. Russell Oxley followed behind carrying a box of machine gun ammo in each hand. They were both huffing and puffing from the effort.

Byrge blurted out, “We had ‘em beat. We had just pulled the first round into the chamber when a goddam tank down in the valley hit ‘em with the first round with their 90mm. I never saw a shot like that before.” He was angry that he had been denied his duel. I just wanted to get back where people knew who we were and weren’t shooting at us.

We continued our return to the schoolhouse without further event. Shortly after this we resumed the advance north.

Kumchon
September 25, 1950

September 24, 1950: The company was stretched out in a streambed some distance north of Waegwan. About sundown the 1st and 2nd platoons and perhaps the whole company moved out marching up the dry streambed.

After dark as we rounded a bend in the creek, we came under artillery fire. It was the most intense I experienced for the entire time I was in Korea. I dropped to the gravel removing my helmet with both hands and in just a few seconds had dug a decent prone shelter using the helmet shell for a tool. The rounds were coming in salvos. A salvo would come in and then break for a few seconds followed by the next. In the breaks, we could make out voices out past the edge of the streambed. My squad leader, James Medley said “Fine, you and Beal go see who that is”. At the next break Duane Beal and I took off running. We got maybe half way to the bank when the next salvo hit. We dropped. The shrapnel around us was making terrifying clicking noises as it tore through the dry weeds around us. I told Beal, “At the next break I’m going back to the hole.” We both took off and as we regained cover I told Medley “I don’t know who’s out there, but they’re crazy as hell.” Medley didn’t say anything further. We later found out the the voices were signal people laying wire.
We became lost and marched all night. At first light we came through a low pass in the hills and there was Kumchon laying out in front of us. Someone took a higher vantage point and yelled back, “There’s gook tanks in the town!” We paused behind a railroad trestle while an air strike was requested to clear the tanks from Kumchon. Air panels were laid out in the open area to the left of the trestle. I either went or was sent to the top of the RR embankment south of the trestle to watch. The sun was up by now and it was not long before I fell asleep. I was 19 years old, I dreamed I was laying on top a young oriental girl of my age next to a foxhole. Their was no raging sex in the dream although it might have become a “a young man’s dream” had it gone on longer. Suddenly she was pointing into the air frantically. The sound of the burst of machine gun fire from a P-51 woke me abruptly and I slid to the bottom of the cinder covered bank.

James Medley and Raymond Croisant, the commo man carrying a backpack radio were hit by 50 cal. from the P-51. The one that hit Medley entered just underneath the skin about 6 to 8 inches below the arm pit, stayed between two ribs for maybe 6 inches, then emerged and burned a path for another 6 to 8 inches across his upper abdomen. The one that hit Croisant split one of his buttocks open (right I think). As the last P-51 had made his pullout he had by chance headed for us. He was too low to see the air panels behind the railroad embankment. Medley and others had stopped a couple of civilians under a railroad trestle and were questioning them. The pilot apparently saw the white clothes and squeezed the firing button.

We moved through the town and on west toward the hill we were supposed to occupy. I heard that “Intelligence” had told us there was no one on the hill, we could simply walk on the hill and it would be ours. We were marching west along the north side of a railroad embankment when we spotted NK on a hill south of the railroad. “Ediwah” we shouted, indicating we wanted them to come and surrender. Almost immediately a NK appeared on top of the tracks. He was shaking but finally understood we wanted him to throw down his rifle. He did and then jumped on over on our side. Another appeared. He got scared and changed his mind. When he turned to run, a GI shot him and the battle commenced. The first platoon left me guarding the single prisoner and moved off to the north towards a village.

The prisoner lay against the embankment. The second platoon moved off to the north behind us toward the village. Someone yelled “Where’s the first platoon?” I stuck my head up to see if I could see them. The sound of the slug tearing through the helmet and the force of the impact made me feel as if my head had exploded. I rolled over on my back, yelled “MEDIC,” and thought of shooting the prisoner before I passed out. I didn’t and instead felt with my hands expecting my head to be split open. I could feel no hole. I looked at my hands expecting blood everywhere. No blood. I yelled “Never mind.” John Shields never let me forget that episode. He had immediately started back for me when I yelled. He said later, “I thought what the hell are those guys doing, playing games at a time like this.”
The firing was extremely heavy now. An NK machine gun had been brought to the tracks ahead of us and behind, our weapons platoon had set up a machine gun and they were firing at each other up and down the track. Heavy firing from the hill south of the tracks was being returned by the two platoons in the village. The slugs all seemed to cross right over me. The slugs whined for what seemed like hours and may have been. I kept my nose rooted in the dirt and prayed for survival. The old saw about there being no foxhole atheists was never more true than at that moment. I made lots of promises if God would just let me live through those moments.

Finally a GI came working his way up the ditch alongside the rice paddy. I yelled at him. “Are you taking any fire?”. He shook his head no. I motioned to the prisoner to move down into the ditch. He did and we began working our way back to the rear.

Perhaps a hundred to two hundred yards back to the rear the land fell off into a sunken paddy which was dry. The weapons platoon had mortars set up down there. I motioned the prisoner down into the field. A mortarman was leaning against a small tree reading a comic book.

The prisoner by sign language let me know he wanted to get something from his pockets. I nodded. He pulled a dirty looking piece of paper and another piece of paper folded up. He unfolded it and what might pass for tobacco was in it. He was going to make a cigarette. I pulled the ever present pack of Camels from my pocket and offered him a tailor-made. He grinned and eagerly accepted. I lit one and lit his.

Someone said I should go back and see the medics about my headache which by now was ferocious. I left the prisoner with them and headed back to the company aid station.

In the village, the second platoon leader “Toady” Dreisonstock and his platoon sergeant were running down a street with a sniper kicking up dust at every stride. They turned in the first door they came to. It was a “honey well”. They went in almost to their waist. It was still better than getting hit. After the battle, they were refused entry to the company area. They wore civilian clothes and got civilians to wash their clothes and bathed themselves. Then they were welcomed back. Anyway that’s the way the story was told to me.
I heard one of the fellows who was killed took out a crucifix and holding it in front of him began to walk up the hill from which we were receiving fire. His body was brought down after the battle.

At the aid station it was decided several of us should get in a jeep and go back to battalion aid. All of us were walking except for a Sergeant who was hit in the thigh. He sat in the right front seat and we started right down the middle of a stream of water, not the same one we had marched up the night before because this one had water in it. Shallow water. It was a good thing most of us were walking because twice the jeep got stuck and we all had to get out and push — except the Sergeant.

At the aid station a doctor looked at my head, said they would write up a Purple Heart, gave me a couple of APCs and told me to get a good nights rest before going back. I slept on a litter that night. It was great.

It was several days before it dawned on me that by getting the Purple Heart my mother would be notified of me being wounded. I set about to reassure her it was not serious.

At Kumchon we became motorized infantry for a while. The company acquired quite a collection of vehicles courtesy of the North Korean Forces who had abandoned them in wild flight. A couple of GIs found a perfectly good T34 tank, got it started and were having a ball until they turned it turtle in a ditch. They crawled out and left it there. We also ended up with three Russian jeeps, which sounded just like a model A Ford. Some of the medics ended up with a shaft drive german motorcycle complete with a sidecar. Someone else acquired a jeepster station wagon and ended up putting a replacement jeep engine in it and I have vague memories of a Russian truck. I’m not really sure of the truck. After a few days or several days word came down that we would have to turn in this equipment. Once again we became plain “gravel agitators.”

The Atabrine Tablet

One scene that I remember very vividly was of a morning chow although I can no longer place it in location or time. I only recall we were in a flat wooded area and it was a cool morning in the fall. The kitchen was with us as it always was when they could set up close to us.

I came to the coffee pot and drew a canteen of hot coffee. Two ROKs were in front of me and though I used sugar in my coffee at that time, I did not use it as they did. They had each spooned about a third of a canteen cup of sugar into their cups and then topped it up with coffee. When I had put what I usually used in the coffee I went on down the line. They were passing out atabrine tablets, I believe to guard against malaria. I took the tablet and since there was no water nearby I popped it into my mouth and followed it with the hot coffee to wash it down. It melted instantly and the bitter
taste was very nearly more than I could handle. I gagged and thought I would upchuck right there in the chow line. I learned a bitter lesson that morning — **Never take medicine with anything hot!**

**Ambush**

**AMBUSH.** My impression is that it was October, probably the early part, in North Korea. We had marched maybe 15 miles up the road and then as frequently happened were told there was a NK penetration on one of the flanks. We would have to go back.

The company was marching south, single file on each side of the road. At the end of a long straight stretch the road bent to pass around a low knoll. An ideal place for a machine gun to cover that long straight stretch.

Suddenly there was rapid fire. POW..POW..POW.

Probably the worst reflex action that could have been taken was taken. The company almost as one fell into the shallow ditches at each side of the road. A machine gun would have the ditches zeroed in.

Everyone was in the ditches trying to see from where we had taken the fire. Except for one, Lee “Bogie” Wines still stood in the middle of the road struggling to get his bayonet guard out of the trigger guard of his M-1. As he had trod along, tired as we all were his bayonet guard had slipped into the trigger guard of his rifle, knocked the safety forward and began what would pass for automatic fire. I am sure Bogie felt a little sheepish as we all did as the road was regained and our march continued.

Near sundown as we neared our point of departure that morning the column halted AND collapsed. God, I was tired. I lay off the road and revelled in just laying there not doing anything. It did not last. A jeep drove up and braked hard to a stop. I think it was carrying Major “Mac.” He yelled, “Have you started laying down that preparation fire for ‘L’ company?”

I didn’t want to believe it but I did. I raised up and looked for the tallest hill around. Sure enough, rounds began to land near the top of that hill. I lay back and closed my eyes to get some last moments of rest. Several minutes passed and I became conscious that the 60mm mortar just feet away from me had gone silent. I opened my eyes and the crew had the tube off the base plate. The man holding the tube shook it gently while another held his hands under its muzzle as if to catch a very thin shelled egg. A misfire and armed and ready to go. I decided discretion was by far the better part of valor and deposited myself in a new location much removed from the hot ammo.
Shortly after this we did indeed assault this hill against no resistance and after getting hot chow at the bottom of the hill climbed it again and dug-in on top for the night. I stretched my shelter half between saplings and built a small fire. It was dangerous but I was cold, exhausted and didn’t care. A soft breeze rustled the leaves until I fell asleep.

Burp Gun Incident

Somewhere in North Korea — fall 1950 ....

We had marched several hours when about sundown we passed through a town where there was evidence of fighting, destroyed and damaged buildings. As the road ran east we passed two of our tanks, burning along the north edge of the road as it traversed the town. It was the only place I ever saw our tanks in trouble. Shortly after passing the tanks the road again turned north and in the twilight we left the town. As darkness fell there was some firing from west of the road and the column halted. Someone carrying an M-1 thought he had seen the source of the fire we had received and attempted to show the location by loading tracer ammo into his rifle and firing it. As I remember I was not able to see the tracer path and cannot recall clearly the outcome of these moments.

Shortly we were told to fall off the road, that another outfit would move through us and take up the point of the advance. At about the same time we began not to receive fire but to see hostile fire passing overhead. As I looked north up the road I saw a white dot materialize some distance away. I’ve never been able to identify this weapon. It had an extremely flat trajectory and in hindsight almost had to be a rocket of some type. It appeared to stay about 12 feet above the road and had a sound I’ve never heard before or since as it screamed by to land and explode in the town now some distance behind us.

I went through a low ditch on the east side of the road and climbed a small embankment that seemed like shale in the dark. I found a small wash in this bank and tried to get comfortable for the night. The weird weapon was fired several more times and on at one occasion I thought I heard some of the dry weeds click as it passed through.

I don’t remember much of the following morning, whether we got rations or simply formed up and began to march. I do recall we had been constantly warned “Don’t drink from the streams — the North Koreans may have poisoned them as they retreated.” So for hours we marched — a single column on each side of the road with a very clear small creek running south just to the west side of the road. As the day wore on the fall sun beat down on us and the temperature climbed. By midmorning most of us had no water left in our canteens. We were hot and dry and were constantly reas-
sured that water was being brought and would catch us soon. The stream to the left of the road was a constant temptation but no one wanted to die.

It was maybe 3:30 in the afternoon as we approached the dryness of parchment a truck arrived and we lined up for the anticipated water. As each man stepped up to the truck he was given a half a canteen cup of water and turned away.

Now we had marched all day to that point in what was actually hot weather for fall. We were so dry that it seemed the walls of the mouth absorbed most of the water ration leaving little for the stomach and the rest of the body. Thirst raged. It was just too damned much. The company, the entire company simultaneously decided to disobey orders. We fell into the creek and drank ... and drank ... and drank. God it was good and we probably didn’t much care if we did die or not at that point. Then we all filled our canteens to the top with the water and now satisfied returned to the road.

As we began the march again there were short bursts of burp gun fire ahead. I hated the burp gun because of its sound and what little I knew about it. It had a terrifying sound because of its rate of fire. It was rumored that at the time that a slug left the muzzle of a burp gun there were two more in the barrel behind it on the way. Now I no longer believe this is possible but we believed it at the time. We did not yet know on the rifleman level at least of the poor consistency of the Chinese loads. After I had been wounded and was in Brooke General Hospital in San Antonio there was a fellow patient who had been hit by burp gun burst up the back. He had been hit 18 times, some near through wounds, some barely penetrating.

Powell Sale, the platoon Sgt said “Sharp, take your squad around there and see if you can locate that burp gun. I had tranferred to William Sharp’s squad after we had come through Taejon in September.

Dead Bodies in the Creek: We dropped down onto the creek bank which at this point flewed from the northwest to the road where it turned south. Working our way upstream for about a quarter mile the creek again turned north and widened as we approached a pool area that was several inches deep maybe 18” to 24”. There was no flat bank here to walk on and so we got out of the streambed to go past the pool area. From the three to four foot bank we could see clearly into the water and there was an entire North Korean squad beneath the water surface dead along with one machine gun. Some GIs from another outfit then appeared and said they had found the burp gunner and removed him as an obstacle. At this point we began to discuss whether we should tell the rest of the company about the dead bodies in the creek just upstream from where we had all just drank our fill. I offered “There’s no damn use tellin’ ‘em about it — we’ve already drunk the water.” And we didn’t.
Near the Yalu

November 2, 1950 — Near the border of Manchuria in North Korea.

Something awakened me. It was a bright, crisp autumn morning just as it might have been back in Arkansas or any of the places a soldier calls home. We had come to this position the evening before, that is my platoon had come up the evening before from the company position some two miles down the road to the south. We were supposed to guard a few 105mm howitzers that were in the field between us and the road, but I am afraid that it was precious little guarding that was done by the first platoon that night. As I said, something had awakened me (I never was sure, but it may have been William Sharp, my squad leader.). The sun beamed through the few brown leaves that clung to the skeletons of the trees in front of us. The last thing I remembered was going on guard at around midnight. I had fallen asleep on guard as had apparently, the rest of the platoon. The guns were gone — and even three tanks that had been near had departed sometime during the night without awakening me. I was a little confused by the absence of the equipment we were supposed to have been guarding, but as I had been one of the ones to fall asleep I thought perhaps it would be better if I didn’t say too much about it and besides everyone else seemed to be in a hurry to get the bedrolls bundled up so I set to work on mine.

The platoon was soon ready to go and we tramped out of the woods and through the now empty field where the sun was relentlessly and quietly drying up the early morning dew. Rumors started to fly as soon as we struck the road and started south towards the Company, but they didn’t carry their usual weight because it was becoming apparent that no-one in the platoon was really sure of where we going, why or where the guns and tanks had gone, except that they had received orders to pull out. There was the hopeful speculation that the war was over and that we were on our way home. That could have very well been true, because we were within eight miles of the Manchurian border at the time and had met with only scattered and sporadic fighting in the last few weeks. In short we had gone through North Korea like a dose of salts and were now ready to reap the benefits. I had ceased to worry about falling asleep on guard the night before since Sharp hadn’t said a word about it and the march took on the jaunty atmosphere of a bunch of school boys on a field trip. I looked around me and noticed that everyone else seemed to be feeling likewise.

There was almost a spring to our steps, rifles were slung on shoulders straighter than they had been since the push started. We passed the hill where the company had been the day before. We had gotten word that the company had pulled back to a village a half mile or so on down the road. The village came into view and it soon became apparent that our company was the only unit there. The outfit was scattered in small groups of three or four just talking or lying back on the rolled up bedrolls, some sleeping, some just walking around. We also broke up into groups as we came into the village.
and set about to “learn the score.” Again no-one seemed to know anything for sure, but
the rumors were much more abundant and more elaborate and more authoritative,
each preceded by some explanation of the source such as “Heard it straight from the
orderly at General So and So’s headquarters who overheard it accidently.”

“North Korea gave up unconditionally.” or...

“Just mopping up to do now. The South Gooks can handle it.” or...

“We’re goin’ home.” or ...

“We’re supposed to go straight to Pusan and leave for the states. Be there by Thank-
giving.” or...

We’re going to Taegu and train a Gook outfit to replace us and then we’re going home.”
or... etc . etc .

The only thing we found out for sure was that we were waiting on trucks to take us
someplace. We all hoped it was to the rear to get ready to go home. Towards the middle
of the morning we had a little excitement. It seemed that two of the South Korean boys
that were attached to the company had gone off through the village in search of some
apples supposedly. After a while, when they didn’t return, two of the boys went to find
them. They found them — in a house at the edge of town — one dead — the other dying
of knife wounds. They had run across a woman in the house and thinking her alone
had undertaken to take advantage of the situation. She hadn’t been alone, much to
their regret. This was of course told by the one who was dying since the woman and
her husband were nowhere to be found.

Around noon C-rations were issued and soon after the tension began to mount. It was,
I think, not knowing what was going on that began to gnaw at our nerve fibres. That ,
coupled with the knowledge or at least strong belief that we all alone there. The other
outfits that we knew had been there had all left the general vicinity early in the morn-
ing by truck and for all we knew were the only troops within a hundred miles of there,
friendly troops that is. Then, to make matters worse, about three in the afternoon
several F-80 jets began to circle the town. To be exact, there were three of them. It
wouldn’t have been so bad if we had been sure that they knew there were still Ameri-
cans up there, but we weren’t sure that we hadn’t been just forgotten. We had no
communication with the jets and we knew from past experience that a low flying fighter
pilot cannot recognize uniforms or faces. So the jets began to circle the town staying
about two miles out and we began a slow sweat. Some of the boys who had had near
miss experiences with our own planes before began to go near nuts, not so slowly.
Lee “Bogie” Wines, who always reminded me of a living incarnation of Al Capp’s “Pappy
Yokum,” started to pace the narrow dirt street like an expectant father who has been
too long at the hospital. Two or three others did likewise and all of us began to watch the three jets like children watching the three rings of a Barnum and Bailey showing, first one and then the others. All of the time we put ourselves in the flight leaders position and tried to decide what he was likely to do. It was no use, we just hoped that he would go on and get the hell out of there, but they kept up their slow circling. Somebody discovered a cellar. Bogie got in the cellar and said “I’m not comin’ out until those sons of bitches leave.”

After a long while an AT-6 mosquito spotter plane arrived and made a low pass over us. He gave us a big wag of the wing and the F-80s immediately flew off much to everyone’s relief.

The sun was getting low in the sky when it was decided to start marching south down the road. We were not sure at all what had become of our transport and so began the trudge down the road.

Probably no further than a mile and a half to two miles we met the trucks and piled on board.

This road may have been a little better than usual but was still just a dirt road with a little gravel topping it off. Perhaps an hour or two after dark we passed a tank burning on the left side of the road and the entire convoy swung into a large field on the west side for a refueling stop. 5 gallon Jerry cans were all over the place and the trucks and other vehicles were fueled as quickly as possible. When our truck, which had most if not all of the first platoon was ready we headed back out to continue the journey south. Our truck made it only to the road — the engine sputtered and quit. We had no idea
what was wrong — we knew only that we did not want to remain north while everyone else was going south. We split up and a squad of us managed to board another truck. It ran perhaps a quarter mile and also sputtered to a halt. Someone had mixed about 5 or 6 cans of water with the cans of gasoline. At that point it was every man for himself. Three of us flagged a russian truck being operated by the artillery. It was loaded level to the top of the sideboards with boxed artillery ammo. It sounded and pretty much looked like an old D-35 International that I had driven for my father before going in the army. It coughed and sputtered all through the night but never quit. About daylight we crossed the Chongchon River close to Anju North Korea and pulled into the assembly area for the artillery unit that operated the truck. They fed us breakfast which seemed better than the usual breakfast we got. We then set off east to try to locate Love Company.

I don’t recall how we found them but several miles east they were located in a shallow valley running between some low hills.

This was the location we left from to cross the Chongchon to fight the battle described in Love Company’s Four Days. As we marched across the bridge someone shouted “Lookit them chinks!” There had been heavy fighting here to hold the Chinese to the north bank of the river. The north shore bore witness to this by the presence of 15 to 20 enemy bodies. Some GI with a macabre sense of humor had turned each body on its back and placed an unlit tailor-made in its lips.

As we gained the north side and continued up a gentle rise in the road sweeping to the left there was another chinese body on the right with his feet in the ditch and his head almost to the road. As we passed I glanced back to see a sight I’ve never been able to forget. His head on the north side had a large hole and the skull was completely bare inside. He looked like watermelons I’ve seen back in Arkansas that have been picked clean internally by crows working through a hole in the rind.

Several days later after the battle we returned to the site and went into reserve for many days. I sent my rifle to ordnance. It had started to fire the first 2 or 3 rounds from a clip and then refusing to feed. The remainder of the clip had to be fired by working the bolt handle by hand. This might have got me in trouble although it never had. In a few days it was returned and I set off a half mile or so south to a draw being used for test firing. Again it wouldn’t work right. After trying several clips I was ready to give up. Some guy from another outfit had an M-1 and he was burning that hillside up. I wished mine would fire like that. About that time he yelled out “Does anyone want this M-1? I found it in the road and if I take it back to the company, they’ll take it away from me.” I immediately shouted “I’ll take it!” It looked as if it had been run over by a wide assortment of vehicles and the stock was scarred and scratched but as long as I had it, it never failed to fire.

We had Thanksgiving dinner here of as tradtional a fare as the military can provide in the field. Afterwards I decided that I had to have a bath. The weather was already cold
with few warm days. I knew I would not be able to voluntarily put the creek water on me to rinse the soap off. I asked a buddy if he would throw the rinse water on me when I was ready. Naturally he was only too pleased to oblige. I stripped off and waded into a little wider pool in the shallow creek. The water was only 6 to 8 inches deep. As I was just getting soaped up good a NK civilian came running up excitedly. “Mama San come, Mama San come!” I didn’t like the options and replied loudly “Let ‘er come!” As they passed I looked to see her with eyes tightly closed being led by a male on either side by the immodest American in the creek. When I had finished I told my buddy to throw the water and with each canteen cup of cold water my lungs involuntarily inhaled large gulps of air. He seemed to enjoy his task a little too much. I think this was Leroy Ellison but it’s tough to remember after almost fifty years.

The squad acquired some sweet potatoes here. We bummed some grease from the kitchen and that night by the campfire we peeled a couple, sliced them as thin as we could and cooked sweet potato chips over the fire. They were really good but then everything was good when you were as hungry as we were.

I think we left here on trucks eventually — headed south — giving ground to regroup and fight again another day. We were leapfrogging south and at some point we dismounted the trucks and took up positions on the hills that made a sort of bowl of the valley. The troops who had been behind us moved through. I was on top a ridge that had a footpath along the crest. Sometime the second day, John Shields caught the hillside on fire. Three times I beat out small fingers of the fire as it reached the path. Then it was chow call for the noon meal. I didn’t see any more fire and my down sleeping bag was on the north side of the path where the fire had been on the south side. I went to chow. Returning I found the sleeping bag with several large smoldering holes in it. It was a loss. I went to supply to get another but they were only able to give me two old WWII blanket bags. These kept you from freezing at night but just barely.

When we left this area we rode out on tanks at night. It had turned very cold and the tanks were really miserable to ride. If you were alongside or in front of the gun turret the cold of the steel worked through your boots until you were sure your feet would freeze and fall off. Because of this we shuffled in a circle continuously, up alongside the turret, across the gun and down the left side of the tank. By the time you were sure your feet were numb you had reached the grillwork over the engines. A few inches below the grill two large mufflers ran cherry red and by the time the circle had carried to the right side your feet were hot almost to the point of pain.

Eventually I found a brand new GI down sleeping bag in an attic space of a South Korean house we were staying in. It was an L shaped house. There was a small storage room separated from the house by a “breezeway.” The Korean who had lived here apparently lived a little better than most. He had a drum of kerosene and a bag of cement in the store room, items I had never seen in a Korean residence and quite unexpected in a village such as this.
Night of Sounds

by Jim Fine

Quiet, the absence of sound at the approach of darkness.
   Approaching footsteps down the path behind me.
   Grains of dirt falling noisily into the foxhole.
   Whispered instructions for the night.
   Footsteps on the path behind, fading to silence.

   The dull metallic clicks of a rifle chambering a round.
   The low whistle of a vagrant breeze.
   Leaves on a nearby sapling sounding a staccato rattle.
   The clack clack rumble of a distant tank.
   My own breathing in anxious harmony with the sounds.
   The hissing of the cigarette cupped in my hand.
   The thunder-like roll of a salvo being fired — far off.
   And for the moment silence... .

   From somewhere in the rear, a dying raucous laugh.
   My feet shuffling a bit in the damp hole.
   A cough from the friendly knoll across the draw.
   My ears roaring from unheard sounds.
   More silence, the predominate sound of a moonless night... .

   A slight shuffling from across the draw.
   “Halt”, from the friendly knoll, whispered softly.
   My heart beating a little faster.
   Again from the knoll, “Who goes there?”

My ears roaring from the strain of the unspoken countersign.
   The sharp piercing report of a rifle from across the draw.
   A low moan.
   The safety on my rifle clicking as it goes forward.
   “I got the son-of-a-bitch!”

   A nerve rending shriek, “Motherrrrrrrrr!”
“It’s Whitham!!”
“Oh God!”
“Mother, Motherrrrr!”
“Oh God! Why didn’t he answer?”

“Motherrrrr!”
“It’s a head-wound!”
My clothes rustling from a violent shiver.
“Mother, Motherrrrr!”

“I called to him. Why didn’t he answer?”
“Mother, Motherrrrr...help...me!”
Sobbing. “I called to him.”
“Mother!”

A cry of agony, “I called to him! Oh God, help me!”
Two pairs of feet with a loaded litter.
Bouncing, muffled, tapering, “Motherrrrr.”
Sobbing, uncontrolled and uncontrollable “Oh, Oh, Oh!”

“You couldn’t help it. NOW SHUT UP and get hold of yourself.”
A release of pent up air from my lungs.
Soft murmurs and soft sobbing fading to silence... .
The safety on my rifle clicking as it comes back.

Friendly fire is not friendly. There were more sounds this night, bugles, shouts, and conflict from a knoll south of the knobs held by “L” and “K” companies. Those need to be added one day. I don’t know if the name Whitham is accurate or not. I wrote this in 1959 and did not look at it for almost thirty years. The name surprised me. I certainly have no recollection of it today and the name may well be fictional as I wrote it as a college theme. I will never forget the event described nor the sounds of the bugles, shouts and firing which took place later that night.
Mansegyo Korea

December 11, 1950 to January 2, 1951

A lot of this location is pretty hazy, doggone it, all the locations we were at are getting hazy or even non-existent. When I first got back from Korea I could tell anyone day by day what I had done for the almost six months I was in Korea. Then the sequence went to pot and then the locations began to disappear except for a few that are kind of tattooed into my memory. A lot of Mansegyo has gone that way.

I believe this is where the two Brits went AWOL and “joined” us as we moved up to the line. I can still almost see the two Brits standing there in strange looking woolen overcoats, they really weren’t strange — just a different color. I think they were carrying bolt action rifles but that is no longer clear either. We were relieving them or they had been relieved by some other outfit. They had asked “Do you chaps mind if we tag along?” We didn’t. Mansegyo was the location they left to return to their outfit. Hap Chandler gave each a new carbine and wrote a letter of explanation to their commanding officer attempting to keep them from getting in trouble for their foray.

As I think back I believe the road ran north and south about 25 or 30 yards east of a low hill mass. Farther east there were higher hills rising from the East edge of the narrow valley. A little farther north the land flared into a much wider valley with the higher hills circling back west to form an irregular bowl. The road curved around toward the east and either stopped or passed through a cluster of several native houses. My squad settled into a house. The open field north of this spot stretched a 1000 yards or so to a hill or hills about half as high as the hills to the west and the higher hills to the east.

One night a B-26 dropped flares and then strafed the western line of the company. I think it was a BAR man who fired at them and exclaimed, “If those sons-of-bitches are gonna shoot at me, I’m gonna shoot back.”

There was no snow when we got there. We had a squad foxhole just big enough for one or two which we manned as an outpost at night and sometimes during the day. It was equipped with a field phone. One day I saw two figures moving at the edge of the hill to the north. I thought seriously about asking for mortar fire on them but decided not to. Later I learned they were Charles Byrge and Russell Oxley the first platoon weapons squad leader and his ammo man pheasant hunting so far in front of our position you could not tell whether they were GIs or not.

I think Byrge is the guy who took over the light machine gun squad in the weapons platoon. I heard he had been a prisoner of war in the pacific in WWII and had signed a waiver in order to come to Korea. He was the guy who reportedly shot pheasants on
the fly with a carbine and wanted to duel a NK machine gun squad at what I called the eagles nest earlier. I have always believed he came to Korea for the money. The first of the month he would draw some script and gamble with the other guys. He always sent home several hundred dollars afterwards. In January, he went to Japan on R&R, bought a new zippo lighter and a Parker fountain pen for me. Soon after returning from R&R he told us goodbye, said he was returning to the states, went to the medics and told them he was having those dreams again. He left.

We were always hungry and so Herlindo Tabares and I went to all the houses and gathered the beans that were there as some sort of cultural symbol, then we cooked the dried beans. When we got through we had a pretty good pot of beans and in between the half hour sessions in the outpost hole at night we would fry a handful of these beans in our messkits over an open fire in the yard of the house. I don't remember when it snowed but by Christmas there was a good layer of snow that had been packed on the road by the three daily trips to chow at the kitchen area.

Christmas day I decided it was time for a bath. I had not had a bath since the creek east of Anju — Thanksgiving day. I built a fire under the largest pot, the one we referred to as the cattle pot. We called it that because someone told us the Koreans heated water or food for the cattle in it. Then I took a bath, at least as good a bath as you can take in what was probably a four or five gallon pot. I even shaved and got ready to celebrate Christmas dinner in style. I can’t recall what it was but Arnold Tye recalls it was turkey. If that was true, I’m sure we also had dressing, sweet or mashed potatoes and probably cranberry sauce. I know that we had a lot of fruit cake at Mansegyo because we had found a Sears catalog somewhere and it seemed half the company had ordered a fruit cake and they came in. Mail order was wonderful.

It was at Mansegyo that the grenade launcher attachment for my M-1 came in along with several propelling rounds for the rifle, two concussion grendes and an attachment for a regular fragmentation grenade. I had asked for these several weeks before and was eager to try the weapon. I don’t recall asking for permission to try the grenade launcher but I’m sure I did. 50 to 75 yards to the front and westerly from the outpost was a draw opening into the field — I mounted a concussion grenade, planted the butt of the stock in the packed snow and fired. It flew true and about where I wanted the impact to be. If there had been a hoard of Chinese coming down that draw it would have given them a headache if not worse.

I returned to Mansegyo December 11, 1992 just before “Otie” (my wife — Leota Fine) and I returned to the states. Very appropriately it snowed the entire 35 or 40 kilometers from Seoul and all the way back. I took some pictures there but could never get oriented at all. I really think we were located west of the highway next to the hill but could not get over there that day.
The Canales Diary

by Isaac A. Canales

When Ike Canales was in Korea he had a “Dime Store” address book. Printing 30 to 36 lines on a page he recorded events from August 8th until November 26. After nearly 47 years it was difficult to read but I think we have most of it. — Jim Fine

Aug 8th - Took positions along Naktong River. From Aug 9th through Sep 1st didn’t take notes.

Aug 18th - Moved from Naktong River to Taegu.

Aug 19th - Moved to Yongchon. Their outfit was pretty near being wiped out. We moved in just before dark and right above us on high ground was a whole outfit of reds. We didn’t know it until it was too late. We dug in that night and about 12:00 midnight hell broke loose. We were lucky an outfit of S. Koreans got in behind the enemy lines. The fighting went on all night long and we couldn’t fire for fear of shooting the S. Koreans. At the break of day the reds spotted us down below and started in on us. We lost two men. We still didn’t fire. By this time we could see the S. Koreans fighting the reds just above us. The S. Koreans won in pushing back the reds. Then we started pulling out to another area.

Aug 31st - Pulled out of Yongchon. Rested one day. Sep 2nd moved in on Pohang.

Sep 2nd 1950 10:00 a.m. Pohang-dong. Started on drive, objective secured. Jets and F-51s fired and strafed enemy in front of us. God support. Russian tanks shelled us (3 casualties - 1 severe). Night of 2nd at 11:15 p.m. the reds shelled the hell out of us. Mortar shells came as close as 5ft from my foxhole. Foxhole was deep enough but it sure didn’t seem like it last night. No one hurt, thank God.

Sep 3rd 1950 Pohang. Our artillery shelling the reds, plenty of small arms fire can be heard. Co. K and a Co. of ROK troops attacked N. Koreans. ROK troops run off leaving Co. K to fight N. Koreans. Co. K greatly outnumbered by 25,000 reds. Co. K suffered 89 casualties. Again the Air Force was called. Fighters fired rockets and strafed N. Koreans. Our Co. (Co. L) was going to make an attack after the Air Force finished strafing but Co. K was called on again to attack. Co. K took over N. Korean ground, found pieces of N. Koreans all over the battlefront. No GIs were hurt in last push. Bn. Hqtrs. sent word for the 21st Regt. To pull out. S. Koreans
took our positions and we pulled out. All the fighting took place just outside Pohang where 25,000 N. Koreans are trying to push us back. We are greatly outnumbered. About every 4th N. Korean has an automatic weapon. We have reason to believe the Russians are supplying the N. Koreans by air at night (it stands to reason). Today N. Koreans broke through ROK lines. We have been told if things get worse we will reinforce the ROK troops. Now we are resting a few miles away from the lines.

**Sep 4th 1950** - Our Regt. gets shots. I think I’d rather fight the whole red army than take shots. It’s safer. We moved out of our resting area at 5:00 p.m. Moved about 5 miles, ate supper and started to the front lines again. Walked all night up hills and down. Got to the front lines, dug in and waited.

**Sep 5th** - Spent all day in the same position.

**Sep 6th** 1:00 a.m. - Reds tried breaking through our lines. Never seen a sorrier bunch of reds in my life. We threw everything at them but the weapons. At daybreak our whole outfit moved out for a big push. Co. K lost some men from small arms fire. We lost 8 men from artillery fire, our own artillery fire. A couple of shells hit pretty close to me. Right now we have one of the highest mountains in Korea to take. We took our mountain. Right across from us our artillery and planes are hitting the reds pretty hard. The night was fair except for our artillery that shelled the reds all night. We advanced about 5 miles all day today. When we took our objective we were all just about dead from running and walking up hills.

**Sep 7th** Our positions are east of Pohang. We are in what's supposed to be a big push to relieve the pressure on Pohang where 25,000 red troops are concentrated. Yesterday PFC Pickens captured a red. The following info was related to by the red. 400 red troops were in full retreat They are equipped with 71 pieces of mortar equipment, artillery concentrated nearby. Early today we moved to higher ground. Artillery and planes are still pounding the reds in front of us. The morning about 0900 our platoon captured 2 reds. The following info was related to us. Between 4 & 500 reds were in full retreat on the mountain in front of us. Before pulling out they destroyed about 69 mortar pieces taking 2 with them (souvenirs). Our tanks and artillery are giving us darn good support. It’s a wonder how these damn reds are holding out with the beating we’re giving them. Every time we take a hill we find dead reds with half their body blown off. It really makes us happy to see dead reds. I wish I could see them all dead. I’m not alone. One thing about our troops, they respect prisoners. Well at 3:45 p.m. we started advancing again. We took a pretty high mountain. Now we have orders to dig in for the night. Our artillery is now firing at the reds. Tomorrow will be another day. Reds are running so fast they’re leaving their equipment behind. It’s about 7 p.m. and a group of reds are starting to come down the hills to surrender to us. There’s
about 30 of them. Nothing happened during the night. Only that it rained and everybody is soaking wet.

**Sep 8th** Nothing has happened so far this morning. Orders just came that we are pushing on again and it’s a rough day. Everybody is soaking wet. 140 reds surrendered to our forces. Rumors are that U.S. Marines and S. Korean Marines made a landing at the 38th parallel and captured Seoul. Today we moved out again and captured another hill. We pushed for 2 miles before we came to one of the highest mountains in Korea. It stood at an 85 degree angle and about 1 ½ miles high. The day was very miserable and it was pretty hard going through mud on a steep grade. When we got to the top, our section (machine gun) was set up directly facing the enemy covering a bridge when our artillery started shelling the enemy and made a mistake and shelled us instead. When those 90s started coming in I moved so fast that I burned ground. Never in my life have I been so scared. One of our shells fell about 20 ft. away from us. I bet I broke all official track records. Right now I don’t know whether to keep on going or not. My feet are just raw on the bottom. I feel like just dropping out but that will never happen. It’ll take more than a couple of sore feet to knock me out. It’s rough going but with God’s will we’ll all make it back. It takes more than these savages to beat a bunch of men like us. These people have no regard for life whatsoever. They don’t know what the word defeat means. I’ve seen them lying with their body half blown off and they still try to kill somebody. One thing that should be understood by the American people that will never be told them is that there’s just as many cold blooded men in our army as there is in the N. Korean army. Most of ours have turned killers ‘cause the enemy has committed cold blooded killing on the Americans. I can see killing only when it’s called for. Around here it doesn’t pay to have kind heart. Men with kind hearts don’t live long over here. If some of our people back home who are backing the cause of Russia would only open their eyes and see what it really stands for this world would be a lot safer for our families to live in.

**Sep 9th** We were called back for a rest. This one time in my life that I’ve really appreciated a rest and I’m making good use of it. We were issued new clothes and we at least got clean. I hadn’t been clean for over 3 weeks. Now we are awaiting orders. We pushed about 15 miles in our push and lost very few men, mostly wounded.

**Sep 10th** We are all thankful to God that we made it back once again. Everybody is resting. Today our Co. gets whisky. That is all NCOs only so I guess it’s going to be quite a Sunday. I’ve been to the medics and now my feet are better.

**Sep 11th** Well we’re still waiting for orders. It looks like this morning we’ll be moving out somewhere. Today my squad got issued a new weapon, a 57 mm rifle M18. It can be fired from the shoulder or from the prone position. It’s a recoilless rifle and
there's no kick to it but it sure is hard on your eardrums. Orders just came out that there will be no more censoring of mail.

**Sep 12**<sup>th</sup> Looks like we didn't get to go anywhere yesterday. Latest reports are that the 21<sup>st</sup> Regt. or the whole 24<sup>th</sup> Div. Is going back to take invasion training, so I guess we'll have it rough going.

**Sep 13**<sup>th</sup> Still resting and really having good chow.

**Sep 14**<sup>th</sup> Today at 4:00 a.m. we moved out to Taegu. On the way to Taegu we went through a town that had just gone thru a pretty rough battle. All the houses were leveled to the ground. The hills around the town were covered with dead Koreans. Speaking of something stinking that place stunk from dead people. No body was making any effort to bury the dead. Well now we're in Taegu and once again taking life easy.

**Sep 15**<sup>th</sup> Well late last night and early this morning 4 Divs. Moved up here, the 82<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and the other not known. The Navy Air Force has been alerted for a major push. Today is the starting of the final blow. Latest are that the 24<sup>th</sup> Div. Is supposed to support one of the Div. I figure if the big push did start today this war won't last over 2 weeks. A N. Korean officer was captured the other day and he said they ( N. Koreans ) just about had enough supplies for 30 days. Today Sep 15<sup>th</sup> 1950 at 1300 hrs. a landing was made by the Marines and some other Divs.

**Sep 16**<sup>th</sup> 1950 at 0900 a.m. our troops made a landing on Inchon and Yongdok. Today was the official day of the coming big push. All day yesterday our tanks kept coming thru here on the way to the front. I never did find out if there was a limit to the tanks coming over. There's quite a few Eng. Outfits over here just waiting to move up front. We even have 8 inch guns mounted on trucks (prime movers). Now I've seen everything. I pity the reds. Our objective is to get this war won before winter. This morning our ban. was called for a big before by our ban. comb. and we were told that the 24<sup>th</sup> Div. Would be playing a big role in this big push.

**Sep 17**<sup>th</sup> 1950. All day today planes from Australia kept coming in to the airfield here in Taegu. I counted about 150 fighters alone. Gen. Stratemeyer was over here today on some kind of mission. Late tonight took in a movie at the airfield.

**Sep 18**<sup>th</sup> 1950. The 24<sup>th</sup> Div. Was instructed on how to make a crossing in the near future. We know better. We're supposed to cross the Naktong River very soon. As a matter of fact we're moving out now to the Naktong River. This morning I thought I was going to have to go to the hospital. My left ear was hurting so bad it was driving me nuts. It was caused from firing that new rifle we got. 57mm.
recoilless similar to the 75mm. only smaller. But now I feel better. One thing I don't like being left behind from my outfit. Well our trucks are here and it's about 15:35 p.m. and it'll be an hour before we leave here. It'll be good going back into action again. I think it's safer up front. Since we've been off the line there's been many shootings and once our own guys got drunk and pretty soon they're shooting at each other. In 2 days I've disarmed 2 men. One of them had the rifle all loaded and ready to shoot at a group of men when I jumped him from behind. I was really shaky from anger. We have more casualties behind the lines than we have on the front lines. One of our “cowboys” was tinkering with a 45 when it went off taking one of his fingers with him. And the other night I was playing cards when somebody fired a shot that hit a tree pretty close to me. Well we pulled out of Taegu. We finally got to our destination. We drove so slow that it took all night to get to the front. We are now at the Naktong River and we were (told) that we're making a crossing tomorrow before daylight. We're pretty close to Waegwan. Well we're now digging in for the night. The whole 24th Div. is here now.

Sep 19th 1950. Well this morning some of our units made the crossing. We're still waiting for orders. In the meantime we're dodging shells. We've had about 3 casualties from shelling. My buddy and I dug a hole about 6ft deep and then dug a cave on the inside about 4ft wide and 6ft long. The reason we dug so deep was because I happened to notice a shell crater about 5 or 6ft wide and about 3ft deep. I still think we didn't dig deep enough. Well tonight we're crossing the river. Got to hang up now. Shells coming in. The reds zeroed in on one of our units in front of us. Our planes are out trying to locate the enemy artillery. We've suffered a few casualties. The outfit in front of us is reported to have suffered heavy from artillery. Our men in front of us are reported doing well. We've had about 5 of our men with nervous breakdowns. They were sent back.

Sep 20th. Our main elements crossed the river last night and this morning our Company (Co. L) crossed the river. This morning the 19th Regt. joined the rest of the 24th Div. Today our planes have raised hell with the reds. Some of our men captured some prisoners and they revealed the following info. Between 3 & 4000 enemy troops are dug in directly in front waiting for the 24th Div. to attack with plenty of mortars. Well the rest of the day went by fairly quiet with occasional small skirmishes. So far we've met no real opposition. Suffered very few casualties. The enemy has suffered heavy, both men and equipment.

Sep 21st. Well all night last night we waited for the estimated 3 or 4000 reds to attack. I kind of had a feeling they wouldn't try it. My buddy and I stood guard by our 57mm. all night like we were part of it. The night was sure rough. It got pretty cold. It got so cold that I had to smoke all night to keep warm. Cigarettes sure keep 2 men warm in cold weather. I never smoked but I do now. Well this morn-
ing before the light of day came out our planes were over us giving the reds hell. Without them God only knows what the story would be now. The 24th Div. sure owes a great deal to the USAF. I’m sure the ————— fighting men over ——— feel the same way about it. At 0645 this morning we started advancing again. We got he three bridges that span across the Naktong River. Once the Eng.’s get the bridges repaired we’ll start getting tanks and supplies over across the river to us. This morning we went for about 3 miles no opposition. Now the morale in the 24th Div. is up 100%. Everybody is either singing or making some attempts at it.

Well we got to our objective. Another outfit is going up ahead of us. Now we’re by the river everybody’s swimming. Today is just wonderful.

We just captured Waegwan and by the looks of things the reds are in full retreat. Going thru Waegwan I saw a lot of equipment left behind by the reds in their hasty retreat. Now we’re really giving the reds the same treatment they gave us at the beginning of the war. The only difference is that we’re doubling the punishment we took. Right now our planes are after some tanks that are holding us up. By the looks of things we’re headed towards Kumchon. News just came that our bazooka squad knocked out a tank. One of our boys got lost and came about 25 yards from an enemy tank without knowing it. When he found out he opened up on the tank with his carbine and then started running. He made it back. Coming through Waegwan I saw enough captured automatic weapons to equip a Div. Those reds sure pulled out fast. They even left their artillery. Well it’s getting too dark to write anymore. By the looks of things we won’t be digging in tonight, we’ll probably push all night. Well we were pulled back for the night. Our other Co.’s went ahead of us. We are staying at Waegwan.

Well we’re here now and are we tired. Our bazooka squad got two tanks. The red tanks were out of gas and out of ammo but they were shooting at us with burp guns so we had to blow them up. They wouldn’t surrender. The reds are afraid to surrender. What they’re doing now is waiting for us to capture a position. Then they hide and make sure we’re Americans. Then they come out and surrender to us. They’re beaten now. They won’t surrender in groups because if they do their own officers will shoot them. They’re starting to surrender now in groups nevertheless. They’re leaving so much equipment behind that we can’t find enough trucks to haul it away. Tonight we (57mm. Squad) are sleeping next to a small tunnel. There's 5 of us. We’re covering the road in front of us just in case somebody should decide to run tanks against us. Corporal Bates is playing it safe. He thinks there’s reds in the tunnel we’re staying next to. I threw some rocks in too but all I heard was a hollow bang. Anyway Cpl. Bates and PFC Dunn started throwing dirt and covered the mouth of the tunnel. Well we’re all going to bed now. The town is really light. Every house is on fire. Good night.
Sep 22\textsuperscript{nd} - News just came that we have more than 50 tanks just waiting for the bridge to be repaired to get across to us. Then look Gooks. We're really coming in. Well I've got the jitters this morning. That tunnel that Cpl. Bates said had reds in it did have reds in it. Cpl. Bates and myself and PFC Weber went over to talk to some fellows when 3 reds started coming out of the tunnel and surrendered to PFC Brennan and PFC Diehl. Those reds could have come out last night and shot us all. They had enough grenades, 2 rifles and 1 burp gun and plenty of ammo. I guess God was really watching over us. After Bates and myself saw those reds surrendering we came over and Brennan and Diehl searched the prisoners and then I crawled into the tunnel and found a set of binoculars which I kept and a burp gun which I gave to Cpl. Bates. And two rifles, one I gave to PFC Brennan and the other some jerk got it. I found plenty of ammo. I was kind of scared going in there 'cause there were plenty of grenades.

Well we're moving up again. The 24\textsuperscript{th} Div. Is doing very good. Well today our Air Force really gave the reds hell. They're in full retreat. We've had air support so close to us that the plane fire almost hit us a few times. I guess today has really been a very lucky day for us. Today while advancing we came across 4 Russian brand new trucks that were left behind. We (57mm. squad ) got one and got it running and now we're riding trucks. Co. L really got mobilized overnight. We have Russian trucks and motorcycles and plenty of tires for our truck. Now besides the binoculars I captured I got me a burp gun. It's about the same as our Thompson-sub only the burp gun holds 72 rounds of ammo in the magazine. Well a few enemy tanks held us up today but our bazooka's and tanks got them. Two of our tanks are knocked out. One got it in the tracks. The other got it broadside but no one was wounded. Our Div. is really advancing. We're advancing so fast that we hardly can keep up with the enemy. Well today makes the 5\textsuperscript{th} day of our push since we crossed the Naktong River. Tonight the 24\textsuperscript{th} Div. made history in this war. We ( 21\textsuperscript{st} Regt. ) made the first night attack of this war. We advanced about 2 miles when 5 artillery pieces opened up on us. That put a stop to our night advance. We dug in for the night and one of our platoons went up ahead and ran off the reds. The reds fired about 300 rounds on us before our platoon silenced them. No one was hurt.

Sep 23\textsuperscript{rd} - We had a pretty cold night despite the close call we had. So far I've counted 13 enemy tanks knocked out and 3 self propelled guns. As for enemy trucks there's been so many left behind that I lost count. I lost count at 58. Well right now we're bringing up the rear. Our men in front must have hit stiff resistance 'cause there's been wounded carried by us in fair numbers about two tank crews included. Some kid was riding in a jeep sitting up with half his face blown off. He didn't even show signs of pain.

News just came that we've lost 6 tanks ( 2 beyond repair ) since Sep 19, the
beginning of the big drive. Our troops up front on the outskirts of Kumchon have met plenty of small arms fire but are doing well. Our planes have been with us all the way. The 19th Regt. is supposed to relieve us when we get to Kumchon. News just came that the 19th Regt. won’t relieve us. They’ve been called to help the British out instead. The 5th RCT is relieving us. We are now about 3 miles from Kumchon. We are just bringing up the rear. Our main units are in Kumchon already. Well it’s getting late at night and I’ve got a feeling we’re getting shelled tonight so I’m digging in for the night.

Well my feeling was right. We did get shelled. During the shelling some dumb jokers decided to blow up an enemy tank near our encampment. They just hollered “fire in the hole” and blew up the tank. Fragments from the tank blew all over the area. I was kneeling just going to bed when I saw the big flare from the explosion. I thought it was enemy shells coming in on us. I jumped and while on my way to my foxhole a piece of steel from the tank hit me right in my rear and on my knee. Fortunately it didn’t hit me with full force and I wasn’t hurt, but my buddy next to me got a piece of shrapnel in his knee. He had to go to the medics. After the explosion the tank started burning pretty big fires and it drew fire from the enemy lines.

During the late hours of the night our tanks “about 20 in number” started coming thru our lines towards the front. Then following was our artillery. Right behind us we have artillery. Well our tanks and artillery finally got the enemy artillery so I guess we can spend the rest of the night in sleep.

Sep 24th . The night was very peaceful except for the reds. Our artillery nailed them all night long. Well we spent ‘til noon behind the lines. Now our Co. is supposed to go ahead about 8 miles. It’s night now and we’ve been on the road about 3 hours. We are right on the river bed where the reds can see us. They’ll probably start shelling us before long. The moon is bright as can be.

I was right. We got shelled for about 3 hours straight. This was one time that I really did some praying not only for myself but for all our boys. God must have heard me ‘cause none of us were hurt. A few pieces of shrapnel fell pretty close to many of us. We would walk a few feet when shells would come in on us and we’d dig in. I bet I dug about 15 holes. We started advancing about 6:30 p.m. and didn’t get out of the river bed till 2:00 a.m. The river bed wasn’t over 3 miles long. We had too much artillery coming in on us.

Sep 25th . Well we’re out of the river bed and on our way again. I guess we’ll be walking all night long. Our tanks are all moving up along with us. Now we’re about 3 miles more ahead and our leader just found out that we took the wrong road so now we have to go back 3 miles and start all over again. It’s now about 4:30 a.m.
and it's really cold. We just had to cross a river about knee deep. Lucky the water was warm. Well it's been walk and walk. We just came into a very long slit trench where pretty near close to 4 reds were just waiting for us to come. We were all pretty lucky our leader lost his way 'cause if we'd of gotten there a few minutes sooner they would have picked us off one by one. As it was the reds got tired of waiting for us and took off.

Well now it's daylight and our planes are strafing and bombing Kumchon. This is the first stiff opposition we've had since the start of this push. Once we kick them all out of Kumchon they won't have too much of a chance to hold us back. They can't fight much longer 'cause the 7th Div. and the 1st Marine Div. are pushing south from Inchon, where they made their invasion. News just came that the 1st Cav. is 23 miles in front of us at “Sanju.” They crossed the Naktong farther up north and went right in and captured Sanju. What they want to do now is wait for us to catch up to them and then push up together. The enemy may be beaten but they still reserve the initiative to strike at us once in a while. We've taken many prisoners. There's only two kinds of good reds, dead reds and the ones that surrender. I'd sooner take them prisoner than fight them. I just came to one conclusion, Gen. MacArthur sure used his brains when he had the Marines and the Army invade the 38th parallel. By doing that we can destroy the N. Korean army in S. Korea and thus we have accomplished our mission whereas if we just push them into N. Korea and not go beyond the 38th parallel we have not accomplished nothing. Well getting back to us, our planes are still strafing Kumchon and we're still waiting and are we tired. No sleep all night. My feet are really tired and aching. We got into a small skirmish and our planes were called over. The planes got mixed up and strafed two of our boys before they found out where the reds were.

Well now we are in a fair size skirmish. We got the reds scattering for the hills. Our platoons are after them while the machine guns and the 57's ( that's me ) are all lined up firing away. I made 4 hits out of 4 with my 57 mm. at about 800 yds. and 750 yds. I guess we got the reds I hope. We haven't got too much ammo left with us. Right now I'm not firing 'cause I've just got two rounds left. I have to hang up now. Air support was just called. This I've got to see. When you get a front seat to a strafing show you've really seen something.

Well our Air Force really did a wonderful job. Now comes our artillery. “Boy” are they doing good. Now our platoon is going to take a village and I have to fire a couple rounds at the two houses facing us to get a few reds there so our platoon ca go in. I got two direct hits at 400 yds. and 350 yds. I bet I got every one of those Gooks. We're drawing plenty of small arms fire. I just fired a couple more rounds at a hill where the Gooks were retreating up a hill. I got both rounds right smack in them.
Well we captured a small town and a hill with only three casualties. The reds suffered plenty plus some prisoners. There's about a 1000 reds waiting to surrender but they won't 'cause they're afraid of their officers. When we had first started taking this town 2 reds ran to us to surrender. One of their officers saw them and shot one. The other made it to our lines. One of our men shot the officer. Coming through one section of the town we were advancing and to our left there was a high bank which had reeds on both sides and the bottom of the bank. Advancing we came to a section of the bank that had a bridge. Reds were retreating on the other side. When I spotted them just as I was going by the bridge I couldn't fire at them 'cause I was carrying my 57 mm. so I called on some of my buddies to fire at them. Cpl. Bates made an attempt to fire at them but he didn't have round in his rifle. Then the reds were out of sight and we kept on going. Our CO got complimented on the good teamwork we practiced in taking this town. This town is just between Kumchon and Sengju. It's a small industrial town or shall I say it was after we got through with it.

Well the night was very pleasant. For once since I've been here in Korea I didn't get shelled at night. We all hadn't had any sleep for one day and we sure walked that night.

Sep 26th. Early this morning 13 of our tanks went thru our lines on the way to the front. The 13 tanks were medium tanks. Here come the heavy tanks now. 12 heavy tanks came thru. 12 heavy tanks are the same as 40 medium tanks. Plenty of troops going with the tanks. Our patrols just came from scouting thru the town we took last night and they say there are about 50 Russian tanks that were left behind by the reds. They didn't even fire with them. We found plenty of artillery ammo stacked up alongside one of the hills we took. Some of our Korean soldiers told me this morning that I saved their life by firing with my 57 mm. rifle at a bunch of reds piled up on a hillside. They were firing at us with everything. If I had a camera I could sure take some good pictures. There's GI's riding horses, some driving captured Russian jeeps and driving Russian tanks. Some trying to fire Russian artillery. Some playing basketball with an old football they found laying around and funniest of all there's two GI's chasing a poor defenseless pig. I've got a hungry feeling we're going to have pig tonight.

Well we're staying behind and some other units are going ahead of us. There's been trucks and trucks full of troops pass thru our lines. News just came in that our other units pushed clear up to Yongdong. We've uncovered many boxes of enemy ammo. We captured about 50 tanks that the reds left in their hasty retreat. I believe they're retreating faster than our troops were when the war first started. Our Co. alone has killed and captured quite a number of them. From what I hear
the war can’t last the rest of this month. Well it’s night now and I guess it’s safe to
sleep without worrying about getting shelled.

Sep 27th. Everybody had a pretty good nights sleep. Everything is progressing fine.
Our troops are doing fine. Today we move out for the front. The 7th Div. has been
reported 3 ½ miles from Taejon. Well we’re on our way again only this time by
trucks. We’re passing through Yong-dong and by the looks of it our forces sure
raised hell here. There isn’t a building standing. The reds left tanks and artillery
and ammo behind. There was quite a number of prisoners taken here. I guess
we’ll be staying here the rest of the day and probably tomorrow. We’ll be moving
into Taejon. Well we dug in up on a hill and my 57 mm. rifle. We ( squad ) set up
the 57 mm. covering a big draw where ( it’s ) reported ( a ) number of reds have
been reported stringing down the draw to surrender. We’re supposed to see that
nobody shoots at them and that they don’t try to break through our lines. Well the
night was very dull. Nothing happened.

Sep 28th 1950. Early this morning two reds started coming down the draw when
one of our trigger happy machine gunners opened up on the reds. They just
ducked in time to be missed. I hollered at the machine gunner to hold his fire and
I went down and took in the two prisoners. Well we’re in our trucks waiting to
move out again. I guess we’re moving to Taejon. Every time we move through a
town all the civilians wave at us and cheer at us. I guess they’re happy to be free
again. ( Sept 25 PFC Brant got killed ). Well I guess we won’t be going into Taejon
just yet. Taejon still isn’t secured. We’re spending the night near Yongdong.

Sep 29th. Early this morning we got orders to move into Taejon. One of our Regt.’s
captured Taejon and got the airstrip too. Well we’re in Taejon now. We didn’t get
to see too much of it. We have to be up on the hills guarding against a breakthru
by the reds. Well everybody is relaxing now. The night was very quiet.

Sep 30th. Early this morning one man from “M” Co. shot himself cleaning his rifle.
He forgot to unload. I went through all of Taejon today and I saw great big holes
about 20X20 and there was about 25 holes dug. They were all filled with dead S.
Koreans. The N. Koreans shot everybody that wouldn’t cooperate with them in
defending the city. They buried some up to their necks and then took pot shots at
them. The reds had about 40 American prisoners all of which the reds shot. They
tied their hands behind ( them ) and then shot them. All of Taejon is nothing but
rubble.

Well we’re moving back today about two miles and start flushing out the hills and
searching for weapons.
Well we're staying in a schoolhouse. From here we're supposed to go out and patrol hills. One of our patrols just came back from patrolling and they came in contact with seven reds. The reds opened fire on our patrol. Our patrol shot back killing 1 and wounding 4. They captured all of them and brought them in. They sure had a bloody mess. Well the night was very quiet.

Oct 1st. Well this morning I went out on patrol and captured one red. I searched a lot of homes looking for arms and ammo but found none. Every patrol that went out brought back some prisoners. Our patrol brought one. The biggest bunch was brought in by our Gimlets. They brought in about 14. All day today our trucks have been hauling back Prisoners by the hundreds. It's rumored that somewhere in the vicinity of Pohang there's a few thousand reds that were given a chance to surrender but they refused it and today our Air Force started in after them. The reds are really getting a break they don't even deserve. My opinion is that if we're going to accomplish anything from this war we should start by giving the prisoners fair treatment and treat them like humans and make them see the truth. Every time I capture 1, I try and make him feel at ease by offering him a cigarette. News just came that tomorrow we're moving up north about 60 miles from here. The boys at church today were told that Gen. Walker told Gen. Church that the 24th Div. had one more job to do and that within two months the 21st Regt. would be either in Japan or the states. I hope it's the states. Now it's night and everything looks all right except that the Eng.'s are really on the ball. They got a locomotive running today.

Oct 2nd 1950. Well the night was very calm and everything went pretty good. This morning we're supposed to move 60 miles up north. After that job is done I believe we're going home.

Well we just went through Chochiwon and all I could see was bunch of dead reds that the S. Koreans caught and hung. The city itself was leveled down. Between Taejon and Chochiwon I counted about 300 vehicles and 30 tanks destroyed by either our Air Force or ground troops. We crossed the Kum River and in one small section I saw 6 tanks destroyed. Some tanks were left intact. And as for ammo the reds have left loads and loads of it. Well it seems like the people like seeing us back here again. They gather in groups and as our trucks go by they cheer at us. We just came through Chason and did our Air Force raise hell with the reds here. Just before coming into the city itself there's a few hundred trucks, jeeps and tanks destroyed. I counted about 50 SP guns and a bunch of small 37s.

Now we're staying in an old army barracks. One of our company's is set up about 3 miles ahead of us. All we're doing is setting up a roadblock for any reds that should happen to come our way. Either they surrender to us or we'll have to fight
it out. I'd rather have them surrender to us than have to fight them and kill them. I
can see killing them only when it's called for. Well the rest of the was very quiet.

Oct 3rd 1950. Last night was very quiet. Early this morning one of our SGT's came
around looking for volunteers to go on patrol into enemy territory. The patrol is
supposed to go and find out if there's any enemy concentrations nearby. Anyway I
was one of the volunteers to go. We went about 5 miles up on our lines to Div.
Hqtrs and picked up a couple of civilians. One was a missionary who said that the
N. Koreans had been plundering villages at night and killing many of their people
'cause they wouldn't cooperate with them in fighting us. He said that the N.
Koreans had butchered about 300 innocent people. We drove for another 8 miles
and then left our lines and started into enemy territory. As we passed thru some
villages the people would holler and cry, hollering "Welcome." Some came up to
me and grasped my hand and kissed it. Some shook hands with (me). Some people
would jump up with joy. Kids, hundreds of them all over filled with joy welcoming
us. We drove to a church where all the killings were supposed to have taken place.
When we arrived there I got kind of scared 'cause I saw a great big mob totaling a
few thousand. I loaded my weapon and so did the other men and we just kept on
driving towards the mob. Then the missionary told us that the mob was his people
waiting for us. He'd told them that he was bringing American troops to protect
them. As we drove up to the mob they started crying with joy. Those people didn't
have anything to fight with. All they had were bamboo sticks with a sharp point at
the end of it. But bamboo sticks are no match against military arms. I went inside
the church and one missionary told me that the reds had hoarded every thing
away. I didn't see anything inside the church. The rest of our patrol was talking to
the townspeople and I started looking for the people that were supposed to have
been murdered. They had been buried but I saw a few enormous graves where
the (townspeople) had buried their people. By now we were about 5 miles in(side)
enemy lines. While another of our patrol went to another village to look for
enemy troops some of us stayed behind waiting. When they returned they said
that the villagers had everything under control. They had about 80 red prisoners
just waiting for us to take. We told them we couldn't take them back but we'd
send a truck to haul them away. We fired a few shots. We had 4 BAR's and 3
M1's and 3 carbines and only 3 weapons would fire without trouble, 1 BAR 1
carbine and 1 M1. The rest all had some kind of trouble. I was carrying an M1
and every time I fired a shot I had to poke a long rod through the barrel to knock
the cartridge out of the chamber. It wouldn't extract but I had a hand grenade
with me. After looking over the place we proceeded on our mission looking for
enemy troops. We stopped in a few villages, searched the houses for possible
enemy weapons. We finally drove to about 15 miles into enemy lines and according
to the villagers we were completely surrounded but the reds only had one
weapon to every 5 or 10 men so they didn't dare attack. If they'd only known the
condition of our weapons! In one section 200 troops and in another section they had 500 troops and many others we didn't count.

We came to a village about 15 miles in enemy lines and the townspeople were waiting for us with flags waving and cheering at us. We talked to the mayor and he told us he had about 50 prisoners locked up. 2 men and myself went up to the jail and the rest of the patrol kept watch. They had a bunch of S. Koreans standing guard with long sticks with sharp ends. When I looked up all the prisoners showed signs of being worked over. Their faces were bloody where the S. Koreans had poked them with their sticks. We took 2 that were supposed to be the leaders. We took them back for questioning. On the way back we stopped at the church again and the people there had a chicken dinner waiting for us. We ate French fries and eggs. They begged us to stay so we could protect them. We told them we couldn’t but that our troops would be here very shortly as soon as we reported back. We were sure lucky. 15 miles in enemy lines surrounded by several hundred and eating a chicken dinner not worrying about the war. That was really something. We came back and turned in the prisoners and came back to camp. We had our chow and went to bed.

Oct 4th. Sure had a good nights sleep. Right now waiting for today’s duty. Yesterdays 2 groups of our men went up towards Taejon where our Div. suffered heavy losses at the early stages of the war. Our .... said that Div. Hqtrs estimated about 1100 dead Americans killed on one certain place. This happened on one hill which was nick-named “suicide hill” where our troops made one of this war’s greatest stands against tremendous odds. It is estimated that for every G.I. that was killed 10 reds were killed. They just came in waves all bunched up like a bunch of cattle. Some of our men went out on patrol and captured two trucks and killed (1) red trying to run. The rest of the day was quiet.

Oct 5th - Well this morning I volunteered to drive a truck to haul army personnel to another place. I drove for about 20 miles. Drove a Russian truck, they’re no match for our trucks. I was just told that tomorrow we move again “North.” We’re going about 1 ½ miles from the 38th parallel. What I think is that instead of going home we’re going to make the crossing at the “38.” I myself feel that if we are to achieve peace from this war we should carry the war all the way north until we have licked the enemy. If we stop at the 38th the fighting will never cease. Nothing happened today .... that we were told that yesterday all our forces combined captured 4000 prisoners. “Good news.” The night was pretty calm and we’re all getting fat like pigs acting .... Well nothing else for today.

Oct 6th - Well we’re all waiting to move this morning. All packed up and everything. Well now we’re in our new place. We came through Suwon and Seoul. I couldn’t
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see too much of Seoul. We came through at night. We drove about a hundred miles. Now we are waiting for further orders.

Oct 7th - All around us we have the Cav. and I hear we’re supposed to help the Cav. take a town. So we’re getting ready for it. I got my 57mm all set for action. Well we didn’t help the Cav. We’re just supposed to wait here a couple of days until further orders.

Oct 8th - Well today I was made squad leader of the 57mm. I used to be gunner before. We’re still waiting for orders to move out. Nothing unusual happened today.

Oct 9th - Today we were told that we are going to cross the “38.” All day today truckloads of troops and Artillery and supplies pass through here on the way to the “38.” Right now we (24th Div.) are about 30 miles from the 38. I kind of doubt if we (24th Div.) will have to go across the 38. The marines and the 7th Div. are making a landing up north close the N. Korean capitol while the S. Koreans are coming from the east coast and a few other divisions composed of Americans, British, Australians and S. Koreans are to push up north from the Seoul area. Today 4 S. Korean divisions and our trucks hauled trucks and truckloads of British and “Aussies” to the front lines. Our air force had gotten a little lax on the reds for a few days but now they’re going at it again. We were told that the N. Koreans turned down the surrender reply. The only (reason) I can see for them for turning down the surrender plea must be because they expect the Chinese to help them. Our air force spotted two columns of tanks coming down south from up north in the direction of Wondong and the N. Korean capitol. When the S. Korean divisions were passing thru here I counted about 14 infantry women with them. Well we’ll be moving any day now I guess.

Oct 10th - All night last night hundreds of troops just kept a steady stream through here and plenty of our tanks and supplies came thru.

Oct 11th - We’re still waiting for orders. We’re really enjoying life. Going to the movies at night. Right now we’re like a bunch of vacationers just out for a time of relaxation.

Oct 12th - Well this morning we move out up north somewhere. Well some ride it was. We came thru Kaesong and crossed a big bridge which was supposed to be the 38th line so I guess we’re across now. Well we’re back in combat again. We’re on a hill where the 1st Cav. got counter-attacked 3 times Oct 11th. If they try counter-attacking us we’ll be ready for them. The 1st Cav. lost quite a few men because they all fell asleep at night and the reds just sneaked in at night and had their pickings. Well we’re digging in for the night now and heres hoping those reds
don’t start coming around at night and getting nosy cause we’ll sure do our best to accommodate them.

**Oct 13th** - “W hew”. Did I sleep last night. They can start calling me pop now. Luck for somebody the reds didn’t come around last night to get acquainted with their new neighbors. If they’d of come over last night we couldn’t have been of any service to them. All we had to serve was nice hand grenades and mortars and 57mm and some of that good old southern hot lead. Well we got patrols out probing around us to see just what is in front of us. Mostly what we are fighting now are small patrols of reds. Well all day today we’re preparing for a reported counter-attack that’s supposed to come at night. We have plenty of mortars and machine-guns and I’ve got plenty of ammo for my 57mm. Well the rest of the day was spent preparing for anything that might come. Now it’s about 11:30 at night and I had one of my men on guard and he reported some .. reds were coming up our flanks. Everybody was awakened and a burp gun in front of us went off and our machine-gun opened up. I was kind of worried but I overcame that. After awhile we laid low and waited.

**Oct 14th** - Well all last night we just waited for the reds to start coming. They didn’t know they better stay (away) cause now we got tanks, artillery and all kinds of weapons. Today we’re just waiting for more reds.

**Oct 15th** - Well it’s Sunday once more and this morning we had a luxury, hot baths, I just came back from one. All day our Artillery and mortars (4.2) harassed the enemy. Our patrols have been sent out and report that the reds are all running away. Well it looks like we’ll be moving out tomorrow. We were just told that the 7th, 3rd, 1st Marine Divs. Just made a landing 30 miles from the Manchurian border. I was just issued my winter clothing so I guess we’ll be here all winter.

**Oct 16th** - Well last night was pretty quiet. It rained all night. Now we’re ready to move out. We’re supposed to push 15 miles and stop there. That’s a lot of miles to walk when you’re loaded down with weapons. I’m carrying about 160 lbs. of equipment.

We sure walked a long ways. We captured a town 15 miles away on the 38th without being asked. Before the reds pulled out they massacred 1000 civilians including kids and women. It’s really a bloody mess. The town folk are really glad to see us. They’re all crying with joy.

Well we were just starting to dig in when orders came to pull out. The S. Korean police are taking over the town and we’re supposed to move by trucks about 85 miles north, where nobody knows.
Well we finally got here. We just went 40 miles into North Korea. The reds must have drafted everyone cause all I’ve seen so far are old men and kids. Well we’re staying behind lines for tonight and tomorrow morning we (21st Regt.) are making a push (on) the red capitol. From there we’re supposed to be relieved and ship out of Korea.

Oct 17th - Well this morning we’re all ready to go and get into action. Right now we’re all rested from a good nights sleep. Well we advanced 18 miles since 0230 this morning without opposition. Right now it’s 12:00 noon. Boy am I tired. My feet are really burning from walking. It was 60 miles from where we started this morning to the red capitol. Right now our tanks in front of us found resistance. There’s some reds in a house right now trying to hold us back. Our tanks are blasting away. Well I guess our tanks knocked out the reds. We’re advancing again. North Korea is sure a … place. The farming lands are all dry and nothings been raised on them for … … time. I guess the reds must of forced all of the Northern people to fight. Mostly what we see has been women and kids. Our Bn. Just captured a Co. of reds plus two officers. Every mile we advance we take 20 or more prisoners. I guess they’re finally realizing that they’re licked. I just came thru a bunch of hills and upon these hills there was 1 machine gun plus 10 able men (reds) and the people up there they could of just cut us down. They had high ground but instead picked up their weapons and surrendered to us. On one of our flanks we had a platoons go up a hill where they found one Co. of reds. Our platoon got up on high ground and started going down after the reds. I guess they killed every one of them. Some tried to bug out but our men got them. The reds have surrendered to us artillery and all kinds of automatic weapons. They’ve got plenty of machine guns. They just don’t want to fight anymore and I don’t blame them. I hate killing people or even think(ing) about it but I will try and do my share when ever it’s called for. What I want to do now is get this war over with and get home where people are free. I don’t mind fighting this war. I don’t mind ‘cause I know from this war many people are going to learn to respect people’s freedom. I’m helping win this war so that every human on this earth can live and worship the way he feels. All we fighting men ever think about is getting is getting back home again and start living again. Well I guess we’re nearing our objective for today. It’s getting dark now and I guess everybody’s hungry. All we’ve had to eat was two pancakes this morning. We’re supposed to get hot chow in a few minutes. Well we just came thru a small town and I guess we’re staying here. I just found out that we advanced 30 miles. That’s a lot of miles to walk in one day. My feet are just raw on the bottom. But if I have to go I’ll go. I guess everybody in the outfit’s got sore feet. We’re just 30 miles from the red capitol. From there we’re supposed to get relieved and pulled back. I just got back from eating chow. Boy, was it good. Now I’ve got to take my squad and set up on an outpost.
Oct 18th. Well last night the reds tried to sneak into our lines from the rear but our Gimlets spotted them in the dark and opened up with machine guns. That was enough. They didn’t bother us anymore the rest of the night. We sure have a bunch of good Gimlets with us. Gimlets are S. Koreans that we put into American units to fight alongside us. They wear the same clothing we do and get the same rations we do. They’re rough little fighters.

Well I guess some other BN. is spearheading this morning. The 5th RCT is ahead now. We linked up with the 19th Regt. They’re part of the 24th Div. This big push is being done by the 24th Div. That’s us. Well my feet sure feel good this morning. When I went to breakfast I went for 4th helpings. That’s how hungry I was. Well we’re waiting for orders to move out. I just came back from taking a walk thru the town we stopped at and all I can say is I’m really ashamed of the things our men are doing to these N. Korean civilians. In one instance I saw a bunch of our Gimlets beat up a couple of kids to a pulp. And GI’s are going around beating up old and young men alike. I just hope this doesn’t get around to the U.N. This morning I saw three Gimlets go into a watch shop and beat up the owner and break all his watches. All I’ve got to say is that the first G.I. or Gimlet I see shoot a defenseless N. Korean civilian I’m going
to shoot that man right on the spot and then drag (him) to an officer. Then maybe they'll put a stop to these inhuman acts. I think it's about time somebody wised up. The order just came out that anyone committing indecent acts against civilians would be court martialed. One of our officers just found 3 GI's and 4 Gimlets with 20 N. Koreans tied up and beating them on the head with a club. The 3 GI's were so dumbfounded that when the officer asked them why they were beating up the civilians they just said "We're punishing them!" Evidently they haven't heard of that system that punishes the guilty by fair trial "LAW." We just had a meeting and we were all told that if anyone man or men were caught beating up these civilians to turn them in. I'm a 100% for that. Well it kind of looks like we'll be here for awhile now. One of our other Regt.'s is doing the spearheading now. Well it looks like the slaughtering stopped this morning. The Gimlets robbed a bank of 3 million in Korean currency. Well I guess we'll be moving tonight about 2 thousand yards away and set up a roadblock.

Oct 19th. Well it finally happened, just what I feared. Some GI from another outfit went into town and beat up a Korean thinking the Korean was a Northern. He picked the wrong man. The Korean happened to be a S. Korean C.I.D. man and besides beating up the man he set fire to half the town.

Last night was very quiet. Nothing happened. Well it's rumored that the 24th Div. might go to Germany. As of today the U.N. Forces have captured 60,000 prisoners. There can't be very (many) more reds left. Well it looks like some officer spotted some reds up in the hills and they're sending us to get them. They're sending 2 rifle squads, 1 mortar squad and 2 57 mm. squads. Must be quite a bunch of reds.

Well we just got back from the patrol. We estimated about 50 reds. 40 of them took off before we got to them and 4 came running to us with their bugle and very happy to surrender to us. Our riflemen fired at a bunch of reds hiding in some very thick bushes and some little girl got in the way and got shot in the arm. We're taking her back to our medic station with us. Well it's night again and tomorrow we're moving again. Moving about 17 miles farther north. Today we were told that all the roads in the N. Korean capitol were closed to all Div.'s but the Cav. I'm glad we're staying behind. They can take all the credit. Well night is setting now and it's time to turn in.

Oct 20th. Well we had another night of rest. We've got plenty of time and can't get hold of writing paper. Well we're going out on patrol again this morning. It's reported that 70 reds are next to our camp.

Well we just got back from patrol and we had some pretty good catchings. Most of the reds got away but we killed 16. The officer in charge of our patrol gave the reds a chance to surrender. They preferred to die. One of our medics got wounded in the ankles and our officer got shrapnel in the head. When we looked over the dead reds we discovered they were high officials. They were all wearing pretty fancy
clothing. Now we got our G-2 looking them over. We found some very important papers on them. We brought a prisoner back and he told us there's pretty close to 200 reds hiding out in the hills near us so I guess tomorrow we'll be going out again. Well it looks like we won't move today either not until we get all these reds cleaned out. We're supposed to move to Haegu. It's about 17 miles from here on the coast. Haegu is supposed to be one of the most modern seaport cities in N. Korea. Well I guess we'll just be spending the rest of the day relaxing.

Oct 21st. I guess I was right about going out on patrol again today. We're getting ready for it now.

Well we've covered about 6 miles already and still can't find any sign of reds. I'm getting pretty tired just walking and no action. It's a pity having to tow all these heavy weapons so far and not fire them.

Well we're back in our camp and we didn't fire one shot. As we were heading back our officer spotted a Korean and asked me if I needed a man to carry my 57 mm. I told him I did and the Korean turned out to be a soldier. He had white clothing over his uniform. I started shaking him down and found some very important papers in his shirt cuff.

Well it's been three days since we've been here and there's really been a lot of equipment and troops go by here. Right now we're about a 1000 yds from Yonan. It's a small railroad town in North Korea. I guess we'll be moving into the red capital day after tomorrow. Our billeting party is leaving tomorrow to find a place for us. Well tomorrow will be time to go to church again.

Oct 22nd. Well this morning some very good news came. We might leave Korea very soon now. Our Gimlets are all going home today. All our litter bearers are leaving and without them we can't go into battle. The special service is sure on the ball. They've been showing movies ever since the second day we took this town but me and my squad can't go. We have an outpost and we have to remain here. Well no patrol today and news just came that ... mean one of the men can go into Haeju and see a movie.

Just got back from Haeju. It's really a better town than I've seen before over here.

Oct 23rd. Well we're moving this morning up north past the North Korean capitols. We're supposed to go about 50 miles.

Well we just passed through the red capital. It's quite a place. It's better than Seoul. It's got a big airfield. The only thing wrong with the capital is that it has been bombed too much. There's equipment strung all over the place.
Well we finally got to our objective. Right after we got here we could see our planes dropping artillery pieces to our paratroopers. We’re supposed to be here until the 2nd Div. relieves us. Then probably it’s home for the 21st Regt.

Well it’s night now and we have to pull guard. Right now my men in my squad brought 3 ducks and I guess we’ll have duck tonight.

Well I roasted the ducks and were they good. Tomorrow my men are going after more prey.

Oct 24th. We were lucky. We found some coal last night to burn. If we hadn’t we’d have froze. It got so cold last night that our water in our canteens froze. We were up in the hills (as usual) pulling guard.

Well it’s happened again. Some G.I. last night raped a girl and now we can’t even leave our Co. area. I’ve got no place to go anyway but who ever stooped so low as to go around raping girls. I hope he gets caught.

I think we’re getting pushed around too much. We were just told that we (24th Div.) have to push about a 100 miles up to the Manchurian border. I don’t mind it myself. It’s just that they tell us we’re on our last job, then they bring up another one. The only thing that’s got me worried is this coming winter. We’re getting winter sleeping bags very shortly so it won’t be so bad.

Well I just fried a chicken in a pot full of lard. Boy was it good. By the time the 24th Div. leaves Korea there won’t be any chickens left. All we do all day long is go around from village to village looking for chickens, rabbits or ducks and are they good. We got relieved so tonight we’ll be staying inside a building.

I just finished taking a hot bath. The water was so hot you could have cooked a chicken in it. I sure feel good.

Well it’s night now and we finally got some writing paper. Not much good but it’s writing paper anyway.

Oct 25th. This morning we were told that unless our supplies start coming in we’ll be eating two meals a day. That’s going to hurt some of our other platoons. It won’t bother us cause lots of the men in the platoon I’m in are all cooks and there’s quite a few cows and pigs running around here loose. It happened the fan hit the sky. Just a few minutes ago 8 of our men came in with one pig and one cow. So there’s good eating tonight.
Our Bn. commander just called up and he wants all of the troops under his command to go over to Bn. for a little speech.

Well we just got back from our little speech and our Bn. commander told us that we (21st Regt.) had one more technical job to do and after that we start polishing up (shipping out for home).

We just started in on the cow and pig. Our platoon has 32 men. In 4 hours our platoon of 32 men had eaten the pig and eating till midnight and my squad (4 men including myself) took two posts up in the hills and with us we took about 50 lbs. of meat from the cow. That lasted us till midnight. If we had more we’d eat more. We got a fire going and got a big pot and filled it half with lard and just kept frying the meat in it.

**Oct 26th**. Well it started raining early this morning. Lucky it didn’t rain last night. Well so far we haven’t had word on moving out. We do know that we’re moving up north very soon. We’re all equipped for winter.

Well nothing unusual happened today. All we’re doing besides going up on the hills or on outpost is eating and sleeping.

**Oct 27th**. Well last night was a night of horror. We got bombed and strafed last night. Our 50’s opened up on the airplane but I don’t think they hit it. The plane sure came down low. He dropped two bombs and strafed a little but I don’t think anyone was hurt.

Well word just came that we’re moving out

We just came thru a town where the paratroopers landed and I guess they really did a good job coming thru this town. We saw hundreds of dead reds scattered all over town. Their body’s we really re.. from bullets.

Well now we’re close to the lines and it’s night now so we’re staying here for the night. We just heard on the radio that a Regt. of ROK troops has been surrounded by reds close to the Manchurian border and there’s no other way of getting supplies to them but by air. The ROKs have been advancing so fast that they had to throw away some of their equipment so that they could keep up with the retreating reds. Right now we are right on the MacArthur Line. This line is to be some of a defense line in case uncle Joe or China chose to step into this so called “police action.” I doubt very much if either of them will risk open war with us. We have plenty over here now.
Oct 28th. Well early this morning my hunch came true. About 12 flying boxcars were on their way to drop supplies to the ROK Regt. that’s surrounded up north this morning. The British crossed the river this morning and met stiff resistance. Our air force is giving the enemy hell today. The reds are really getting the works.

Well it’s about 3:00 p.m. now and we were just told that the ROK Regt. pushed it’s way out of the trap they were in. The ROKs have been pushing so fast that their supplies can’t even catch up with them. Our planes have to drop them supplies.

Now it’s exactly 9:30 p.m. and a red airplane just came in on us and dropped some bombs. Fortunately only one man was hit and it wasn’t severe. Shrapnel hit him in the leg. I guess those bombs hit about 200 yds. from my tent. All of our anti-aircraft opened up on him. I think he got away. Well I guess he won’t be coming back here tonight.

Oct 29th. Early this morning I went over to look at the spot where the bombs fell and I really made a strange discovery. The plane dropped 3 mortars and it came so low he fired a burp gun and blew out two tires on one of our jeeps.

Well we’re moving out this morning up north. We’re supposed to move thru the British and relieve them. We just passed thru a small town where the British had a fight and there’s reds laying all over.

Well we’re at our new place and this just about makes us 30 miles from the Manchurian border. Tomorrow morning one of our Bn’s. is supposed to push first and the first roadblock they run into as soon as they knock it out we push thru them and take over. This push is being done for the 21st Regt.

We just heard some rather nasty news from one of our officers. He told us that our objective which is the Manchurian border is about 30 miles away and we are supposed to take one of the largest power plants in Korea. This power plant is supposed to furnish all the electric power for N. Korea and there (we know for a fact now) the Chinese have 40,000 troops. Now whether we fight them or not depends entirely on them. One thing is certain then. They’ll have to move out regardless. Well here’s hoping we don’t get bombed tonight.

Oct 30th. We just found a name for our night intruder. He’s been named “bedcheck Charley” cause he always comes around at night to make sure all the troops are in. Then he drops a few bombs on us to make sure we’re all in. Lucky for him he didn’t come around last night. Four of our B-26’s (night fighter equipped) kept circling our area all night long and our ground twin 40’s and anti-aircraft guns with spotlights and radar kept watch all night long for him to come over.
Well this morning we were told that our original plans had been changed. What we're going to do now is push west instead of north and come into this town from another road and about 6 miles from this border town stop. Right in this town is one of the biggest power plants over here in the orient and it's just like a twin city. Half of it is in Korea and half of it is in Manchuria. The Chinese claim that they helped finance and build it. It cost somewhere between 75 and 80,000,000 dollars to build. Our air force never did bomb there. These 40,000 Chinese troops are supposed to be guarding the plant. Anyway that's our objective. Once we get there and secure the area the 3 rd Div. is coming over to relieve us. The 3 rd Div. is coming up now.

Today I help conduct a class on the 57 mm. and I can see that I'll have to do plenty of it once we're back in garrison. Well news is that where we're going the reds have plenty of S.P. guns and plenty of tanks but no artillery. Today we have been getting class 1 rations. They're just like home cooking and they really taste good. Well night's coming and we have to get ready for bedcheck Charley.

Oct 31 st. Well I guess bedcheck Charley gave up his job of checking troops at night. I imagine it got too hot for him.

Well we're moving up again this morning and our Bn. (3rd) is going into the attack now. We'll probably go into it tomorrow. The trucks are here now and we're loading up.

We moved out and just relieved the British. The British are at a town we just came thru and our air force really did a job there. It leveled every building in sight. Well we've reached a position where we're supposed to remain till tomorrow morning. Then we relieve one of our Bns. and we take the attack. Co. “L”, that's us, is supposed to take the lead. 2 nd Bn. of the 21 st Regt. ran into 15 tanks destroying all but three. The three got away. All we're up against now are roadblocks and stragglers. I pray to God none of us get killed or wounded.

Well I guess we don't stay here after all. We just got orders to move up about 12 more miles. The men in front are really doing a fine job. Our jets just came flying over us so I guess the men in front met up with something big. Well we finally reached our point. We stay here tonight and tomorrow morning we push through the 1 st Bn. and take the lead right on through to our objective. We're all set up for the night.

Well, we started pulling guard about 11 PM and “Bed check Charley” brought another friend with him and now he's circling our area looking for a fire. Well I guess he won't be dropping “Bombs” on us this time. I think the plane mistook the Reds for American troops and strafed them. Well now I guess ... ... back to sleep.
Nov 1<sup>st</sup> - Well we have just ordered to get ready to move out. It’s 4:00 am and rather chilly. ...

Nov 2<sup>nd</sup> - Well it looks like we’re moving back this morning. I believe we’re getting relieved. Well rumors are really going around right now, mostly bad. Its rumored that the Chinese went to war against us and that we’re moving back to a more defensive position. All I can say is that if the Chinese go to war with us we’ll have to use the “A” bomb. That would be the only sensible thing to do. Well we just heard the news that President Truman was pretty near to getting assassinated and the something happened in Puerto Rico. Well we move(d) out at 5:00 p.m. and we traveled by truck till 10:00 p.m.. Now it looks like we’ll be spending the night here and tomorrow morning we’ll move out again. Still no one will really tell us whether we’re getting relieved or we’re pulling back.

Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> - Well last night was a pretty cold night. We’re all packed up ready to move out again and still no one knows why or where we’re going. All we know what is that we’re moving back. Rumors are popping out everywhere. Well we’re on our way now and I guess we’re going back quite a ways yet. Well we’re here now and thank God somebody really knows what’s really going on. Our officers told us that “officially” 6 Chinese jets similar to ours were destroyed. And our job so far is to form a defensive line here and prepare for the worst and may the best come. Up north close to the Manchurian .... have about 7 DIV’S and 4 ROK DIV’S. It could be that the N. Koreans had some jets hidden somewhere. I hope so. Accidentally we did reached our objective but no one knows what came off with the 40,000 Chinese on our Regt. It is said that the Rocks took over our objective. Well we have reached our objective an we are digging in on the MacArthur Line. It is estimated that 1500 reds are trying to surround us.

Nov 4<sup>th</sup> - Well last night was a pretty dull night except for our artillery (155’s) that kept firing on the reds all night long. The news just came that one of our REGT’s (19<sup>th</sup> Regt.) got cut off and the British are trying to help get them out. Anyway we are supposed to go and help out too. Today we killed 4 pigs on our ....... They sure tasted good. Well it’s getting late now and we were just told that tomorrow sometime we would move.

Nov 5<sup>th</sup> - Well we moved out last night at 1:00 am and I guess we walked 8 miles to the assembly area. Now this morning we’re supposed to move in for an attack and back off some reds. Well we’re moving out and it’s a little bit might chilly. Well it’s 4 hours later and we made good our attack. We captured x. Believe we didn’t suffer any casualties. Now we are digging in. I was wrong on casualties we suffered. Five of my best buddies were killed by a mortar shell. It makes me feel pretty bad losing my buddies. One of the men killed was one new man we just got 4 days ago. He was married and had 4 kids. Our artillery and planes are really
giving us close support. Our planes are coming down so low that the dirt around us is picking up. Well it’s night and we’re all digging in.

**Nov 6th** - I doubt if anybody slept last night. All night long the reds tried making banzai attacks but every time they tried we repulsed them. Our artillery gave us support all night long. This morning we might make another attack and take another hill. Our plans are for us to take another hill and then we get relieved and go in reserve. One of our companies last night got about 3 banzai attacks. The first failed but the last one the reds managed to drive the company off the hill. This morning the same company rushed the reds on the hill and retook their lost hill. The reds come in at night blowing whistles and bugles and making noise like a bunch of people that got no sense and try to demoralize the troops. Well at 4:00 p.m. we started on our objective and had it secured by 4:30 p.m.. Here’s how the whole operation went off. At 3:45 we called in for air support. Our planes worked the hill over for ten minutes. Then our artillery went to work for five minutes they laid a pretty heavy barrage of fire. Then at 4:00 p.m. sharp my ... squad and 2 ... 57 squads and 4 squads of 75s and 6 squads of machine guns and 4 squads of mortars opened fire on the hill for five minutes. Then our company started climbing the hill. Only 4 men were lost and they were only wounded. The fight lasted for 25 minutes. Then we secured the hill. The 19th Regt. Relieved us and we went into reserve. We walked back for about 4 miles up and down hills and dug in around 6 of our tanks at night.

**Nov 7th** - I think somebody was crazy when they said we were going in reserve last night. I don’t think anybody slept at all. Reds tried to overrun our lines but failed. We opened up with everything we had.

Well this morning we (21st Regt. ) officially became reserve. All the other outfits are starting a big push this morning. Our bombers are strafing and bombing the hills right in front of us. Well news just came that I’m to transfer to the SV Co. 24th Div., 21st Regt. So I guess my days of combat are over with now.

Well I’m in my new company and I guess I’ll be driving now.

**Nov 8th** - Well this morning I got my job. I’m hauling mail for our Regt. (21st ). It’s kind of quiet here. I’m kind of thinking of going back to my Co. even if it means going back into combat. The people here just don’t seem to get along with each other.

**Nov 9th** - Well today I had my first run. But I still prefer a line outfit to driving.

**Nov 10th** - This morning I spoke to my motor officer about getting sent back to my outfit and he just told me to “stick around for a while.” So I guess I’ll just have to
make the best of things and stay driving. Maybe if I stick around long enough I’ll like this job. One thing the morale here in this Co. is low. These people don’t kid around like the combat fellows do. When I was in the front lines morale was high ‘cause there you find fellows that are always kidding around and get along like brothers.

**Nov 11th** - Well same old thing driving for the post office only this morning we really got our cold spell. It really got cold aside of that “Normal.” Troops pushing up …..

**Nov 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd** - Nothing new.

**Nov 23rd** - We’re moving up this morning. Moving up the same road we withdrew down a few days ago. Well we moved 17 miles, W of Pak’Chon.

**Nov 24th** - Our front troops have been advancing without opposition. I hope that something doesn’t happen as before.

**Nov 25th** - Well we’re moving out again today. … Well we moved 20 miles the … time and now … … … artillery.

**Nov 26th** - Well this morning when I went after mail I heard that the Chinese had broken thru the ROKs and that we (24th Div.) were withdrawing to prevent from being cut off. On my way back to our area I found out that my Co. had moved back 6 miles. The Chinese found a weak spot and just kept coming in. Its very doubtful whether we’re staying here in this area long.

**Nov 27th** - All last night our artillery kept pounding the Chinese and at 4:30 a.m. we packed up and pulled back to Anju again. So I guess our troops are getting up in Pakchon. Well I went after mail and set up my tent and went to bed.

**Nov 28th** - We’re still waiting for further orders. Nothing new on the war. I haven’t heard nothing.

**Nov 29th** - Well we’re moving out again this morning over to Sukchon to fill in a gap. Going thru Anju about 6 miles east we ran into a roadblock of about 300 reds. Our officer called for support and 4 tanks came over to help us out. We then turned around and went back through Anju and Sinanju and out Sukchon so we’re going to stay here tonight to probably tomorrow continue to Suchon. Something funny is going on right now. Everybody is falling back. I can’t see why we’re falling back with all the firing power we have. We’ll probably move back tomorrow. Still
no one knows what really is going on. The roadblock we ran into today still hasn't been knocked out. We have 28 tanks trying to break it up plus our A.F. that's been helping out.

Nov 30th. Well looks like moving again. We're still going to Suchon I guess. We finally made another stop. We're still not in Suchon. We're six miles east of Pyongyang. We're just staying here for the night and tomorrow continue to Suchon. About 16 miles from where we're at now there's been an estimated 10,000 bypassed reds pretty well organized. On our way here from Anju I saw an outfit of Canadians going to Anju. They totaled 10,000. Today I heard that we are fighting 200,000 plus 500,000 (more waiting to come across) Chinese. The airfield over here in Pyongyang was evacuated last night. Well it looks like there won't be a home Xmas for many of us over here. Oh well, it won't be the first time for me.

Dec 1st. Well we still haven't had orders to move. We'll probably spend the day here.

Well we still haven't moved so I guess we'll be staying here another day.

Dec 2nd. Well we're moving again about 15 miles south of Pyongyang.

Well we're here now and I guess the Chinese are getting pretty close to us.

Dec 3rd. Well things are sure cooking around here. The roads are all packed full of convoys going south. The Chinese are about 15 miles from us now.

Dec 4th. Well Chinese artillery are having a duel with our artillery. We're supposed to be pulling out very shortly. It is rumored that the Chinese told the UN that if it pulled it’s troops out of N. Korea they (the Chinese) would bargain with us.
The sign on the banquet-room door read “Tiger Survivors.” The 30 men who gathered that July evening in Evansville, Ind., could have been retirees, perhaps a bowling club. But the tales being told transported them back four decades to freezing mud, starvation, the sickening smack of rifles.

They had been American prisoners of war who lived through three years of captivity, some of it under a brutal North Korean army major the prisoners called The Tiger. In October 1950, he took command of 758 sick and dejected POWs. When repatriation came in August 1953, only 262 were still alive.

At one table the men recalled The Tiger’s infamous death march along the Yalu River. They struggled to remember just when one buddy had died.

A quite man with a careworn face named Wayne “Johnnie” Johnson, 57, rose from his chair. “I’ll tell you exactly, when,” he announced.

The others exchanged quizzical glances as Johnson, a newcomer to their reunions, produced a smudgy photocopy protected by clear plastic. Both sides of 2 1/2 pages of narrow note-pad paper were crammed with columns of tiny, neatly printed block letters and numbers.

“This is my list,” Johnnie explained. He scanned the rows, then said that the man had died in a freezing cornfield pen outside Manp’o, North Korea, before the death march.

Larry Zellers, 66, a Methodist missionary prisoner in the Tiger group, was intrigued. “Where on earth did you get this list, Johnnie?”

“Well,” Johnson replied with a soft Southwestern twang, “it’s a long story…”

PFC Johnnie Johnson, from Lima, Ohio, was just 18 when his division, the 24th Infantry, was thrown into combat in the summer of 1950. Their mission: a desperate attempt to slow the massive communist invasion of South Korea.

On July 11, 1950, less than three weeks into the war, Johnson was captured. A few nights later American planes accidentally strafed a building where he and other POWs were being held. Several men were killed. Somebody might forget these guys, Johnnie...
thought. But their families have the right to know where and when they died. Using a pencil stub, he carefully wrote down on a scrap of paper their names, units and date of death.

By late October the North Koreans were pushed north by American-led allied forces. Huddled in a pen in the village of Manp’o and fed wormy, half-cooked millet, most of Johnson’s POW group were sick and malnourished. Seventy were already dead, including seven executed. Johnson listed each name on scraps torn from guards’ discarded cigarette packages and a strip of wallpaper he’d ripped from a schoolhouse. We’ll be home soon, Johnnie hoped, and the families will know the truth.
Then The Tiger took command. “We are going on a long march,” he announced. A priest protested that the POWs were too weak. “Then let them march until they die,” The Tiger replied.

For nine days the POWs marched across 120 miles of steep mountain terrain. Despite bitterly cold November weather, the prisoners wore only summer fatigues. The guards promised that the sick who fell out would be picked up by ox cart. But as the POWs climbed the next ridge, they heard gunshots.

The Tiger threatened to execute American officers for failing to keep the column moving quickly. They protested. He exploded in a rage. “Then I will shoot only the officer whose group lost the most men.” Army 1st Lt. Cordus H. Thornton stepped forward. The Tiger put his pistol to Thornton’s head and fired.

Then he ordered the stunned POWs to turn in their dog tags. “Forget dead men,” he shouted. Risking execution if he was caught, Johnson managed to jot down the names of over a hundred men who died in the snowy mountains.

That winter, in the prison camp on the ice choked Yalu River, was one of the coldest in Korean history. Almost 300 more prisoners died, many in unheated huts where guards abandoned the sick. Johnson added their names to this secret list, now kept on dozens of scraps of paper stuffed into a small cloth pouch.

In October 1951 the surviving prisoners were transferred to Chinese control. After hearing rumors of a prisoner exchange, Johnson began compiling a master list on paper he’d stolen from a guard’s note pad. Working each night for months by the light of a crude oil lamp, he made two identical lists and hid one in the mud-hut wall, the other in the dirt floor.

One sleety morning Chinese guards discovered the list after digging out the patch of wall where it was hidden. “You keep this criminal propaganda list for your government,” charged the Chinese major.

“It’s not propaganda, sir,” Johnson replied, trying to subdue his fear. “It’s for the families.”

The commandant began to beat Johnnie’s face with a thick leather riding crop. “Who helped you?”

“I’m acting on my own.”

For an hour the commandant methodically whipped Johnson, repeating the questions. But Johnson didn’t break. Finally the commandant thrust the muzzle of a .45 caliber
pistol against Johnson's head. “Eventually you will tell me the truth,” he said, cocking
the gun. Inexplicably, he didn't fire.

When he returned to his hut, Johnnie knew he should destroy the second list. Then he
pictured his closest friend, Raymond Alford, who died of beriberi at a camp in An-dong
and was buried without dog tags in an unmarked grave. No, his list must reach the
hundreds of families like Alford's. It remained hidden in the floor.

In August 1953 the 262 Tiger survivors were ordered to prepare for repatriation.
Johnnie dug up his list. At the processing camp the POW's received Red Cross relief
packages that included toothpaste. Peeling open the tube, he cleaned out the interior as
best he could and sealed the list inside.

Not until he was safely on a troopship home did he bring the list out. Intelligence
officers asked the POW's to write the names of buddies who had died in captivity.
Johnnie sat at a table, his precious list spread before him. An officer approached: “W hat
have you got there?”

“It's my list, sir,” Johnnie explained. “I kept it for the families.” The officer held up the
thin sheets of note paper crammed with the tight columns of names. Quietly Johnson
added, “There's 496 on the list.”

A lieutenant made a brief note in Johnnie's debriefing report: “Subject very cooperative
—has recorded names, dates & places—should be commended.” But as America tried to
forget the tragedy of Korea, the record of Johnson's list slipped into bureaucratic oblivion.

FREEDOM did not bring peace to Johnnie Johnson. Haunted by nightmares, he sought
solace in alcohol. He moved from one job to another, and four marriages ended in
divorce. Not until the 1980s, when he was treated for post-traumatic stress disorder,
was he able to resume a normal life. In all that time, the military never sought out his
list.

The men at the reunion listened, shaken. “Your list is important, Johnnie,” said
Wilbert “Shorty” Estabrook, one of his buddies from the camp and founder of the Tiger
Survivors. He had tried for years to reconstruct an accurate roster of dead Tiger group
members. “Can you work with us?” he asked.

“I'd be proud to,” Johnson replied.

But residual toothpaste had faded the ink on several column, blotting out almost a
quarter of the names. The men asked for help from forensic document examiner
Howard Birnbaum at the Arizona Department of Public Safety in Phoenix, where Johnnie
lived.
Birnbaum gently placed the 40-year-old list in an infrared scanning device, and phantom images began to emerge. “Roger...Hart...man,” Johnnie read. It was 1st Lt. Roger W. Hartman, an artillery officer, who had died at the An-dong camp in February 1951.

Working tirelessly, Johnson and Birnbaum were able to reconstruct more than 100 of the previously illegible entries. By the summer of 1991 the restored list contained most of the 496 names Johnnie had compiled.

Johnnie, Estabrook and retired Army Command Sgt. Maj. Tim Casey compared the names against official records. They were astounded to learn that most of the men were still officially classified as missing in action. What’s more, in 1953 the communists had given the U.N. Command the names of 147 POWs who they claimed had escaped from captivity. In fact, Johnnie’s list showed that most had been executed. Still, they couldn’t contact the next of kin because the Privacy Act prevented the Pentagon from releasing their addresses.

MARY LOU HOOLIHAN, 47, of St. Cloud, Minn., flew to Denver the summer of 1991, torn by optimism and anxiety. Her father, 1st Lt. George Kristanoff, had disappeared while leading a reconnaissance patrol in July 1950. As a child, she had spent hours studying fading press clippings about her dad.

The Army sent a presumptive finding of death in 1954, but uncertainty remained. The communists claimed that Kristanoff was one of the 147 American POWs who had escaped. Mary Lou’s family believed he may have been recaptured and was being held hostage. Decades passed, but the aching wound of her father’s fate was unhealed. Then, by chance, she heard of the 1991 Tiger Survivors reunion in Denver.

Johnnie listened intently to Mary Lou’s story. He then sorted through his papers and handed her a photocopy of his list. “His name is here,” he said tenderly, his finger gliding to the upper right-hand column: George Kristanoff IL, 24 Rec. 4-29-51.

First Lt. George Kristanoff of the 24th Reconnaissance Company had died in An-dong prison camp on April 29, 1951. Mary Lou’s eyes filled with tears. Then she felt a release she had never before experienced. “I had to find out what really happened to my father,” she told Johnnie, her voice growing strong.

Now Johnnie’s deeply lined face was wet with tears. He took Mary Lou’s hand. “After 40 years I’ve been able to help one family,” he said, his voice breaking. “Risking my life was worthwhile.”

Johnson, Estabrook and Casey were able to help a dozen other families as well. At a 1993 Tiger Survivors reunion, retired teacher Gerald Doyle, 68, gave an anguished account of his youngest brother, Austin. A Navy reservist in 1949, Gerald had per-
suaded their mother to allow Austin to enlist “so he’d have a chance to grow up.” When Austin’s unit was thrown into combat, Gerald asked to be activated and sent to Korea. He was processing for overseas when the family received news that Austin was missing. “If I hadn’t asked Mom to let him enlist, he’d still be alive,” Gerald said.

In 1953 the Army wrote that Austin had died in 1951 but that the information was unverified. “Even after all these years,” Gerald Doyle said, “I need to know how he really died.”

Estabrook handed Doyle a roster. “You can trust this list,” he explained.

Doyle read the words he had both dreaded and longed to find. PFC Laurence Austin Doyle had died in the pen at Manp’o on October 28, 1950, just before the death march began.

The survivors explained that Austin had been among the sick separated from the group. Most of these young soldiers understood they would be executed after the column left. They readily gave their boots to the comrades who needed them. “I’ve never seen braver men,” a survivor told Doyle.

IN AUGUST 1995 Army Reserve Sgt. Victoria Bingham of the Defense Department’s POW/MIA Office attended the Korean War Ex-POW Association’s reunion in Sacramento, Calif. She was electrified by accounts of Johnson’s heroic action and touched by the comfort his list was bringing. She embarked on a crusade to have Johnson deco-rated for valor.

A search of intelligence archives yielded Johnson’s original debriefing report and other POW reports that corroborated his story. At long last the names are being incorporated into the POW/MIA Office’s database. Analysts confirm that the list is incredibly accu-rate.

On August 3, 1996, America finally thanked Johnnie Johnson for his “exemplary courage and selfless determination to provide a record of deceased soldiers, even in the face of death by a hostile enemy.” Pinning the Silver Star, the nation’s third-highest medal for valor, on Johnson’s chest, Lt. Gen. John E. Miller said, “I’m very glad to see you receive this award, even though it has taken a very long time for you to be recognized.”

Johnnie Johnson’s comrades-in-arms exploded in applause.

Families with inquiries or information regarding a missing serviceman can write: Defense POW/MIA Office, 2400 Defense Pentagon, Washington, D.C. 20301-2400.

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The Tiger Survivors List

This is the list recorded by Wayne A. Johnson as a POW

A document examiner recovered nearly all the names from Johnson’s original list. Some entries, however, could not be saved. Thus, there are fewer than 496 names on the list below.

Entries are presented in the following form: LAST NAME, First and Middle Names, Rank — Date Deceased — (Unit,) Regiment (, Division) — Hometown City, State/Country

Notes: Date Deceased is given as YYMMDD and is actual date deceased as recorded by PFC Johnnie Johnson. Unit is only given where applicable, and Division is only given if other than the 24th.

ADAMS, Daryl Tine, PVT — NA — 19 Inf — Los Angeles, CA
ADAMS, Robert Irving, 1LT — 501115 — 34 Inf — MA
AHERN, Gerald, MNE — 510507 — British, 41 R. Marine Cmdo — London, England UK
AKINS, Willis L., PVT — NA — 21 Inf — Milwaukee, WI
ALBRECHT, John A., PFC — 510131 — I Co, 21 Inf — Pittsburg, PA
ALEXANDER, Jack Duane, PFC — 501119 — 21 Inf — Eildeaur, WI
ALFORD, Raymond K., PVT — 510227 — L Co, 21 Inf — Atlanta, GA
AMBEAU, Donald F., PVT — 501101 — L Co, 21 Inf — Escanaba, CA
AMPON, Joseph Obonon, CPL — 520120 — L Co, 21 Inf — Chicago, IL
ANDERSON, Douglas R., CPT — 510814 — Med Co, 21 Inf — Rockford, IL
ANDERSON, Larry Joe, PVT — 510225 — 19 Inf — Battle Creek, MI
ANDERSON, Omer Lee, CPL — 510205 — 21 Inf — Floyd, TX
ANGELL, Eugene Leroy, CPL — 500925 — C Co, 19 Inf — WI
ANZALDUA, Baldomero, SGT — 510417 — 21 Inf — Raymondville, TX
ATEN, Fred William, PFC — 501024 — 34 Inf — NJ
AYO, Albert James, PFC — 510110 — 19 Inf — Bronx, NY
BAER, Donald L., PFC — 501203 — 34 Inf — WI
BAILEY, Charles V., CPL — 510122 — L Co, 21 Inf — Holly, MI
BAKER, Walter R., PFC — 510112 — 21 Inf — Rockbridge, IL
BAMFORD, Charles M., SFC — 510724 — D Btry, 15 AAA Bn, 7 Div — Ontario, CA
BARNES, Herbert R., PFC — 510503 — 19 Inf — Lonaconing, MD
BARNETT, Raymond E., PFC — 500800 — 21 Inf — Seattle, WA
BARON, John, PFC — 510125 — 21 Inf — Pawtucket, RI
BARRICK, George M., 1LT — 501107 — L Co, 21 Inf — WV
BARTER, Charles Tracy, MAJ — 510503 — HQ Btry, 63 FA Bn — Mt Vernon, IN
BASTIN, Sr. Therese, CIV — 501130 — Belgian, R. Cath nun —
BAULK, Richard E., PVT — 510111 — C Co, 19 Inf — Detroit, MI
BEAHM, Thomas J., PVT — 510116 — 21 Inf — Bethlehem, PA
BECKHAM, Larry E., PVT — 510224 — C Co, 19 Inf — Lutherville, AR
BEECHER, Wilbert C., PVT — 510122 — 34 Inf — S. Miami, FL
BENNER, Warren W., PFC — 510108 — 21 Inf — Chester, PA
BERARDI, Thomas Henry, PFC — 510711 — 21 Inf — N. Bellingham, MA
BERGERON, Joseph E., PFC — 510116 — Med Co, 34 Inf — Waterbury, CT
BERGMAN, William J., 1LT — 510618 — 34 Inf — Little Rock, AR
BERGER, Ralph O., PVT — 501226 — 21 Inf — Clearwater, TX
BERGERON, Joseph E., PFC — 510116 — Med Co, 34 Inf — Waterbury, CT
BERGMAN, William J., 1LT — 510618 — 34 Inf — Little Rock, AR
BERRY, Michael G., PVT — 500926 — 21 Inf — OR
BEVIL, Jackie G., PVT — 501105 — L Co, 21 Inf — Kansas City, MO
BEVIL, Jackie G., PVT — 501105 — L Co, 21 Inf — Kansas City, MO
BEVIL, Jackie G., PVT — 501105 — L Co, 21 Inf — Kansas City, MO
BROW, Adelbert, PFC — NA — 34 Inf — Dayton, OH
BOLLES, Lloyd J. Jr, PVT — 520413 — 34 Inf — MI
BOOKS, Arthur Howard, 2LT — 501101 — 52 FA Bn — Norwood, OH
BOONE, James L., PVT — 501103 — 63 FA Bn — AR
BOR, Felix V., PFC — 501112 — 21 Inf — Detroit, MI
BORDEAU, Alfred C., PFC — 510429 — 21 Inf — Bay City, MI
BOTSFORD, Philip A., PFC — 501029 — 34 Inf — Manchester, NH
BOWSER, Lemuel R., PFC — 510222 — 21 Inf — Elmhank, PA
BOYER, Charles Edwin, CPL — 510128 — L Co, 21 Inf — Benton Harbor, MI
BOYD, Silas W., PVT — 501027 — L Co, 21 Inf — OK
BRADLEY, Edgar N., PFC — 501111 — 21 Inf — Honar, AR
BRANDENBURG, Kenneth, CPL — 501030 — 21 Inf — Norwood, OH
BRINGE, Donald P., PFC — 510318 — 63 FA Bn — Milwaukee, WI
BROCKMAN, John Joseph, 1LT — 501212 — L Co, 21 Inf — Tarpon Springs, FL
BROWN, Arthur Leroy, PFC — 510119 — 21 Inf — Cincinnati, OH
BROWN, David O., PFC — 501111 — H Co, 19 Inf — Farmington, MI
BROWN, Joseph C., CPL — 510700 — M Co, 21 Inf — Briggsdale, OH
BROWN, William E. Jr, PFC — 501125 — 34 Inf — Weissport, PA
BUFF, Jack Y., MSG — 501028 — 19 Inf — McAlester, OK
BULTEAU, Fr. Joseph, CIV — 510106 — French, R. Cath priest —
BUNTING, Worth L., CPL — 510108 — 21 Inf — Ahan, NC
BURFORD, Bobby L., PFC — 501104 — A Btry, 11 FA Bn — Lynchburg, VA
BURNS, Francis T., CPL — 500902 — 34 Inf — Santa Monica, CA
BURROUGHS, SGT — N/L — — CA
BUSICO, Ernest, PFC — 510303 — 19 Inf — NY
BUSKIRK, George E., PVT — 510128 — 21 Inf — Topeka, KS
BYERS, Charles E., PVT — 501227 — 21 Inf — Fort Plain, NY
BYRNES, Bishop Patrick, CIV — 501125 — USA, R. Cath bishop —
CADARS, Fr. Joseph, CIV — 501218 — French, R. Cath priest —
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<td>CALAWAY, William E.</td>
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<td>501102</td>
<td>34 Inf</td>
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<td>CIV</td>
<td>501206</td>
<td>Irish, R. Cath priest</td>
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<td>CARMAN, Lyle Harvey</td>
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<td>CARNES, Harry Zane</td>
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<td>63 FA Bn</td>
<td>Detroit, MI</td>
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DRISKELL, Herman L., 2LT — 500907 — A Co, 34 Inf — LA
DU BOSE, Clyatt R., PFC — 5010527 — 21 Inf — Tampa, FL
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EASTERDAY, Charles W., PFC — 501116 — L Co, 21 Inf — Ann Arbor, MI
EATON, Edward Drew, CPL — 501125 — 63 FA Bn — AR
EATON, John Omer, PFC — 510508 — C Co, 19 Inf — Sulphur, IN
EBENSPERGER, Clarence W., CPL — 501102 — G Co, 34 Inf — Utica, NY
EDGE, Edward C., PFC — 501120 — A Co, 19 Inf — Seaside Park, NJ
EDOUARD, Sr. Beatrix, CIV — 501103 — French, R. Cath nun —
ELTRINGHAM, Walter, CIV — 501117 — USA, ECA Engineer —
EMMOTT, Robert P., CPL — 500700 — 63 FA Bn — NY
ESTES, Edward Eugene, PFC — 510207 — 34 Inf — Cane Hill, AR
EVANS, Joseph Kenneth, SGT — 510102 — 21 Inf — Macon, GA
EVANS, William H. Sr., CIV — 50112 — USA, Mining engineer —
FABBII, Ernest, PVT — 501220 — 21 Inf — Carthage, NY
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FANCHER, Harold S., PFC — 510509 — Med Co, 34 Inf — Johnstown, NY
FANNIN, Clyde A., CPL — 511100 — 24 QM Co — Tyler, TX
FARONE, William M., CPL — 501031 — 21 Inf — Watertown, NY
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KLIMSEY, Joseph W. Jr, PVT — 510102 — A Co, 21 Inf — Cleveland, OH
Knapke, Anthony L., CPL — 501104 — A Co, 19 Inf — Minster, OH
Koch, Kermit K., PVT — 510503 — Med Co, 21 Inf — Frederickburg, TX
Kolberg, William V., PFC — 501228 — 21 Inf — Keyser, WV
Kristanoff, George W., 1LT — 510429 — 24 Rcn Co — Pengilly, MN
La——Y, John, PFC — 501114 — 21 Inf — Philadelphia, PA
Laessig, Kenneth F., PVT — 501122 — 21 Inf — Whitefield, MI
LaSitter, Donald T., PFC — 501120 — 34 Inf — Ripley, TN
Layton, Robert Hollace, 1LT — 510400 — 28 BS, 19 BG, USAF — Tulsa, OK
Le Matty, Donald Gene, PFC — 501101 — 63 FA Bn — Keokuk, IA
Lebiedz, Joseph, CPL — 501103 — 19 Inf — E. Cambridge, MA
Lee, Charles S.A., PFC — 510106 — 34 Inf — Honolulu, HI
Lenz, Robert G., PFC — 501225 — C Co, 19 Inf — Beloit, WI
Leonoff, Civ — 510120 — W. Russian —
Lewis, Warren Gunn, 2LT — 510206 — M Co, 21 Inf — Cartersville, GA
Lieberg, Robert W., PFC — 510301 — 19 Inf — Brainerd, MN
Lingle, Keith Le Velle, CPL — 510101 — 63 FA Bn — Coalwood, WV
Lipes, Richard Ray, PFC — 501223 — 19 Inf — Lewisburg, WV
Logston, Edward R., A2C — 501104 — 620 AWS, USAF — Richmond, CA
Loomis, Otis Wayne, CPL — 501225 — C Co, 19 Inf — Caledonia, NY
Lorenz, Robert Edward, PFC — 501028 — 63 FA Bn — Chicago, IL
Love, Robert James, PVT — 501114 — 21 Inf — Mansfield, OH
Lukitsch, John Joseph, PFC — 501027 — C Co, 19 Inf — Allentown, PA
Lycan, John Smith Jr, PFC — 501205 — 21 Inf — Sun Valley, CA
Mac Gill, Henry Tomlinson, 1LT — 500716 — C Co, 21 Inf — NC
Mac Nair-Raga, Hector, PVT — 510116 — 34 Inf — New York, NY
Machen, William Allen, PFC — 501104 — 21 Inf — WA
Macomber, Wayne B., CPT — 510719 — Hq,1 Bn, 19 Inf — Oakland, CA
Magnus, Donald F., PFC — 510104 — 21 Inf — Evansville, IN
Maher, Frank X., SGT — NA — 34 Inf — Philadelphia, PA
Mahoney, Kenneth R., PVT — 500803 — 21 Inf — MA
Majeske, Arthur Jr, PVT — 510101 — 21 Inf — West Allis, WI
Malodonado, Victor S., PVT — 501127 — 34 Inf — New York, NY
Malone, Francis P. Jr, CPL — 510129 — 19 Inf — FL
Mann, William Cornett, PFC — 510303 — Hq Btry, 52 FA Bn — Indian Mound, TN
Manross, Thomas M., PFC — 501114 — 19 Inf — Titusville, PA
Marsh, Harold L., SFC — 500800 — 34 Inf — Oshkosh, WI
Martin, Elwin C Jr., CPL — 510101 — 21 Inf — Evansville, IN
Martin, John A., CPL — 510502 — D Co, 21 Inf — Ridgeway, TX
Marty, Albert E., PFC — 500717 — C Co, 19 Inf — OH
Marzlitisky, Andre, Civ — Disappeared Pyongyang — W. Russian, ECA Diver —
Mathewson, Ward F., SFC — 500716 — 21 Inf — NY
MATTHEWS, Richard F., SFC — 510103 — 34 Inf — Sacramento, CA
MATTI, Alfred, CIV — 501130 — Swiss, Chosen Hotel Manager —
MAYNARD, Edward Wiley, 1LT — 510620 — Hq Btry, 63 FA Bn — Baltimore, MD
MC CUBE, Donald John, PVT — 501104 — A Co, 19 Inf — Brooklyn, NY
MC CLAIN, Frederick F., SGT — 501102 — 34 Inf — OH
MC CORMICK, Billy Gene, PVT — 501106 — 5 RCT — Santa Paula, CA
MC DONELL, John James, PVT — 501114 — 34 Inf — Philadelphia, PA
MC ELROY, Joseph A., CPL — 501213 — 34 Inf — Newport, PA
MC GILL, William R., PVT — 501218 — 21 Inf — Lock Haven, PA
MC GRATH, Ross Robert, PVT — 501102 — 63 FA Bn — MA
MC INTYRE, James T., PFC — 501228 — 21 Inf — New Albany, IN
MC KING, Ralph H., CPL — 510505 — 21 Inf — Atlanta, GA
MC NARY, Walter David, PVT — 501122 — 34 Inf — East Detroit, MI
MC QUEEN, Norman, SFC — 501116 — 63 FA Bn — OK
MC SHAKE, Edward P., PFC — 510124 — A Co, 19 Inf — Pittsburg, PA
MELCHIORRE, Joseph D., PFC — 510319 — 21 Inf — Utica, NY
MELLINGER, James R., PFC — 501102 — 34 Inf — Billingsdale, OH
MENTZOS, Paul Gust, SGT — 510703 — 21 Inf — St Louis, MO
MERSHON, David F., PVT — 501104 — A Co, 19 Inf — Portsmouth, OH
MERTH, Philip F., CPL — 500700 — 63 FA Bn — IN
MIELKE, Robert C., PVT — 501031 — C Co, 34 Inf — Kenosha, WI
MILLER, Paul Luther, A1C — 501115 — 28 BS, 19 BG, USAF — Flat Rock, MI
MINER, Donald W., PVT — NA — 21 Inf — Hudson Falls, NY
MICHAEDES, Rudus Jr, PFC — 501104 — Hq Co, 19 Inf — New Orleans, LA
MICHAELES, William B. Jr, PVT — 500729 — A Co, 19 Inf — Jackson, MS
MICHAELESE, Thomas P., PFC — 500924 — 34 Inf — WY
MOMFHER, David P., PFC — 501029 — 24 Rcn Co — Fostoria, OH
MONROE, James H., PFC — 501102 — C Co, 19 Inf — Meridian, ID
MONTGOMERY, Harold W., SGT — 510103 — 21 Inf — Madera, CA
MORADES, Joseph S., PVT — 501126 — 34 Inf — Johnstown, PA
MORENO, Raymond M., PFC — 510517 — 21 Inf — Los Angeles, CA
MORGAN, Melvin H., PFC — 501206 — L Co, 21 Inf — Stanfield, NC
MOSS, William R., CPL — 501118 — 34 Inf — MA
MULOCK, Arthur F., 1LT — NA — 34 Inf — Waltham, MA
MURDOCK, Jackie Lee, PVT — 501029 — 34 Inf — Crawfordsville, IN
MURPHY, Michael D., CPL — 501114 — Med Co, 34 Inf — Oklahoma City, OK
MURPHY, Robert Mervin, PFC — 510527 — 34 Inf — Fairchance, PA
MYERS, Guy K., PVT — 501031 — 34 Inf — Boston, VA
NAZELROD, Earl C., PFC — 510414 — 34 Inf — Oakland, MD
NELSON, Oscar R., PVT — 501026 — C Co, 19 Inf — Detroit, MI
NELSON, Woodrow W., PFC — 501019 — L Co, 21 Inf — New Biochices, OH
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ROMO, Angel Peter, PVT — 501104 — I Co, 21 Inf — Whittier, CA
ROSE, Albert Eugene, PFC — 501215 — 21 Inf — West Frankfort, IL
ROTH, Bernard F., 1LT — 511026 — 11 FA Bn — Dayton, OH
ROY, Floyd Alexander, SGT — 510703 — 21 Inf — Cloquet, MN
RUDDELL, James C. Jr, 1LT — 510121 — Hq,1 Bn, 19 Inf — Ft Hamilton, WV
RUFENER, John F., PFC — 501121 — 34 Inf — South Gate, CA
RUSSELL, Gordon C., SGT — 501230 — 63 FA Bn — Caniesville, IL
RUSSELL, John W., SFC — 501028 — 34 Inf — Lawton, OK
SADDER, William, PFC — 501110 — 34 Inf — Altoona, PA
SALMON, Donald W., PVT — 501022 — 21 Inf — Maplewood, NJ
SAMMS, Jack Clinton, PFC — 501113 — G Co, 19 Inf — Ashland, KY
SANDERS, Gene A., PFC — 501101 — 34 Inf — Greenville, CA
SCHMOLLINGER, James E., PFC — 501102 — 21 Inf — Platte City, MO
SCHOURTHIES, George L., PVT — 501130 — 21 Inf — California, KY
SCHRENGOOST, Paul M., PVT — 501104 — 26 AAA Bn — Mayport, PA
SCHUMAN, John Henry, CPL — 510301 — C Co, 3 EngrC Bn — Ridgefield, NJ
SCOTT, Amos L., PFC — 520100 — 19 Inf — Rose Hill, VA
SCOTT, Floyd Edward, PFC — 501111 — A Co, 19 Inf — MO
SCOTT, Neil Roger, PVT — 510105 — Med Co, 34 Inf — Hillsboro, OH
SCHMORGELD, Thomas E., PFC — 501102 — 21 Inf — Pearl City, HI
SCHMIDT, Carl C., PFC — 510103 — 21 Inf — San Gabriel, CA
SCHMIDT, David E., CPL — 501120 — 21 Inf — Bunker Hill, IN
SCHRADER, John V., CPL — 501117 — C Co, 3 EngrC Bn — Smock, PA
SCHROEDER, Donald W., CPL — 501103 — 21 Inf — Heflin, AL
SCHROEDER, John R., CPL — 501119 — 21 Inf — Bartlesville, OK
SCHROEDER, Richard H., CPL — 501102 — 21 Inf — Ft Hamilton, NV
SCHUMANN, John, PVT — 501110 — 34 Inf — Yalesville, CT
SELMER, Robert, CPL — 501101 — 21 Inf — Vicksburg, MS
SELWAY, John W., PVT — 501104 — 34 Inf — Caniesville, IL
SEXTON, Talmage J., PFC — 501103 — 21 Inf — VA
SHERWOOD, Howard M., PFC — 501102 — 34 Inf — South Gate, CA
SHAW, Irvin B., CPL — 501101 — 21 Inf — Mardela, MD
SHAW, John C., CPL — 501102 — 21 Inf — Ft Hamilton, WV
SHAW, William, CPL — 501101 — 21 Inf — Yalesville, CT
SHARP, Raleigh T., CPL — 501205 — 63 FA Bn — Guthrie, OK
SHORTER, James W., PFC — 501031 — 63 FA Bn — Davis, SC
SIEGEL, Joseph H., CPL — 501103 — 21 Inf — Newark, OH
SIMS, Holly B., PVT — 510202 — 21 Inf — Wichita, KS
SIRTZ, Donald S., 1LT — 510707 — 35 FBS, USAF — Hartford, CT
SKEENS, Irvin K., PVT — 501320 — 34 Inf — Goldvein, VA
SKER, Charles C., PFC — 501022 — B Co, 34 Inf — Mt Pleasant, PA
SKINNER, Kenneth L., PVT — 510109 — 34 Inf — Abingdon, IL
SMIRNOFF, CIV — 500601 — W. Russian —
SMITH, Billy E., PVT — 501104 — I Co, 21 Inf — AL
SMITH, George R., PFC — 501212 — L Co, 21 Inf — Whitehall, MT
SMITH, John D., MSG — 501111 — 34 Inf — Gastonia, GA
SMITH, Leonard J. Jr, CPL — 501203 — 7 Med Bn, 7 Div — Tampa, FL
SMITH, William L., PFC — 501220 — 21 Inf — York, PA
SMITHSON, Donald, CPL — 501122 — 21 Inf — Gaywood, MD
SPARKS, Donald D., CPL — 501104 — 52 FA Bn — Hawthorne, CA
SPECHT, Wilfred G., CPL — 501204 — 21 Inf — Saginaw, MI
SPOOK, George J., PFC — 501010 — 21 Inf — Mt Pleasant, PA
STALLINGS, Vernon D., PVT — 501101 — 21 Inf — Mooresville, NC
STANSBURY, William H. Jr, PFC — 501102 — 34 Inf — Kansas City, MO
STEEL, Clyde D., CPL — 501210 — 24 Rcn Co — Charles City, IA
STEPHENS, Robert D., PFC — 510114 — 52 FA Bn — Clayton, KS
STEWART, Robert Edwin, PFC — 501226 — L Co, 21 Inf — Detroit, MI
STOUT, Johnnie Oval, PFC — 501114 — F Co, 19 Inf — Old Hickory, TN
STRAWESER, Paul P., PFC — 501122 — 34 Inf — Ashley, IN
SUMNER, William G., CPL — 501212 — 21 Inf — Greer, SC
SUMPTER, Bill S., CPL — 501107 — C Co, 19 Inf — Kanokatto, MO
SUNSDAHL, Roy L., PVT — 501204 — C Co, 19 Inf — Cambridge, MN
SWANSON, Richard P., PVT — 510212 — 34 Inf — Enfield, MN
SWEET, Richard L., PFC — 501219 — C Co, 19 Inf — Huntsville, TX
SWEITZER, William C., PFC — 501111 — 34 Inf — Altoona, PA
SZCZEPANSKI, Anthony A., PFC — 501104 — L Co, 21 Inf — McKees Rocks, PA
TATE, Hershel Leon, SGT — 510112 — 34 Inf — Beersheba Springs, TN
TAYLOR, William E., PVT — 501122 — 34 Inf — Greencastle, IN
TEIXEIRA, James Cunha, SFC — 501121 — 63 FA Bn — Los Angeles, CA
THOMPSON, Ronald L., PFC — 500000 — 21 Inf — IA
THOMSON, Keith Edward, ENS — 510103 —, USNAF — Macomb, IL
THORNTON, Cordus H., 1LT — 501101 — L Co, 34 Inf — Dallas, TX
TIERNAN, John J., PVT — 500729 — L Co, 21 Inf — New York, NY
TITUS, Robert Eli, PFC — 501123 — C Co, 19 Inf — Fairland, IN
TODD, Blanton, SGT — 510203 — 21 Inf — Orlando, FL
TOMASZEWSKI, Waclaw A., 2LT — 510102 — 34 Inf — MI
TORHAN, George, PVT — 510527 — 34 Inf — Ambridge, PA
TOTLAND, Mical M., PVT — 501031 — 34 Inf — Bronx, NY
TREXLER, Rayfield A., PFC — 501102 — 34 Inf — Breinigsville, PA
TROSS, Eugene F., PFC — 501223 — 21 Inf — St Louis, MO
TUGMAN, Richard J., PVT — NA — 63 FA Bn — Chicago, IL
TYLER, Charles R., PFC — 510614 — L Co, 34 Inf — Reyno, AR
UNDERHILL, Virgil E., CPL — 510805 — 57 FA Bn, 7 Div — Tampa, FL
VAN DEWERKER, Patrick W., PFC — 501104 — 34 Inf — Bryce Canyon, UT
VAN WINKLE, Calvin A., PVT — 510216 — 21 Inf — Ft Calhoun, NE
VANN, Harvey Thomas, MSG — 510106 — 21 Inf — Portland, OR
VANNOSDALL, Gilbert A., CPL — 501121 —, 1 Mar — Bronx, NY
VARNER, Edmund Stanley, PVT — 510205 — 34 Inf — Summit, NJ
VARNEY, Basil Jr, PFC — 500925 — 34 Inf — Hardy, KY
VERCOLEN, Albert L., SGT — 500720 — 34 Inf — Rochester, NY
VIARS, James E., PFC — 501127 — 21 Inf — Baymeadow, VA
VILLEMONT, Fr. Paul, CIV — 501111 — French, R. Cath priest —
VINCENT, Albert A., PFC — 501104 — 21 Inf — Kearney, MO
VINCENT, William E.R., PFC — 501220 — 21 Inf — St Louis, MO
WAGONER, James C., PFC — 501217 — 34 Inf — Kannapolis, NC
WALTEM, Thomas, PFC — 501104 — 34 Inf — Bainbridge, NY
WANCOSKI, Frank P., PFC — NA — 21 Inf — Dunmore, PA
WARD, Delmer R., PFC — 501116 — Hq,1 Bn, 19 Inf — Greenville, TN
WARREN, Everett, PFC — 501028 — Hq Co, 19 Inf — Meigs, GA
WARRICK, John E., CPL — NA — C Co, 19 Inf — PA
WENDLING, Ernest A., PVT — 501104 — 21 Inf — Chicago, IL
WILLIAMSON, Claud H., PVT — 501112 — L Co, 21 Inf — Weissport, PA
WILNER, William H., PFC — 510601 — 21 Inf — CA
WILSON, David H., PFC — 501126 — L Co, 21 Inf — ——oha, IA
WILSON, Earl T., PVT — 501212 — 21 Inf — Cromwell, KY
WINTER, Gerald A., PFC — 501103 — A Co, 19 Inf — Berwick, PA
WISE, Arthur F., PVT — 501122 — C Co, 3 EngrC Bn — Pomeroy, OH
WOODRING, Raymond L., PFC — 501102 — 21 Inf — Waynesboro, PA
WRIGHT, Chester A., PFC — 510113 — L Co, 21 Inf — Battle Creek, MI
YOST, Edward F., PFC — 501101 — A Co, 19 Inf — ——ville, PA
YUHASZ, Tony F., PFC — 501102 — 19 Inf — ——ville, MI
ZAMORA, Anselmo, PFC — 510224 — 21 Inf — New Braunfels, TX
ZUVER, Robert L., PFC — 501210 — 21 Inf — Whittier, CA
Ed. Note: Al Sebring died 24 March 1999. After a long bout with cancer which was believed to be in remission he had a series of heart attacks that finally stilled his fighting spirit.

I can't begin to tell anything about the Korean War without explaining my background. I never wanted to be anything but a GI. I registered for the draft in 1944 when I was 14 years old. I would have made it if one of my uncles hadn't been called at the same time. He informed my mother and that halted my trip to the South Pacific.

I settled for second best and joined the Merchant Marines. I celebrated my 16th birthday in the European theater and continued sailing until I was old enough to enlist in the Army.

I met Genelle and we married on June 17, 1946, I was 16 years old and she was 15. I would have enlisted in November 1946 but I had to wait until my best friend turned 17 in February 1947.

We were sent to Fort Ord, California for six weeks of basic training and at the end of training the two of us were selected as Cadre out of the 200 men in the company. I remained at Ord until October 1948 when I volunteered to help activate the 3rd Division at Fort Riley, Kansas. I had by then reached Staff Sergeant during my first year of service. After a time, I volunteered to help reopen Camp Chaffee, Arkansas. While at Camp Chaffee, I was hospitalized and told that I could be given a medical discharge or remain in the Army with no outside duties. I was sent to the AG school at Camp Lee, Virginia for training as a clerk and returned to Chaffee as a Finance Clerk. I remained there until it was closed and went to Camp Hood as a Finance Clerk but there were no vacancies so I volunteered for Japan because dependents could travel sooner than Europe.

I arrived in Japan on June 25, 1950; the day they crossed the 38th. I arrived in Kokura that day and was assigned to Finance as a clerk but there were no vacancies as they had all been frozen into their jobs and extended for one year.

While acting as a flunky and doing nothing we were all called to the auditorium where General Dean told us that we were going to Korea, that there were only 4,000 of the enemy and that they had no tanks, artillery, mortars or automatic weapons. We were to be gone no longer than four weeks, to just put everything in a duffel bag, put it on our bunk and it would be there when we returned.

After arriving in Korea, I was still without a job and I resented it. While sitting on a hillside, I watched the battle of Taegon and the next morning watched the men from the
19th come through our camp with no fatigue tops, boots or weapons. I wondered what in the hell was going on. This was not what I had been taught or had been teaching at two different divisions. So I volunteered to go to a rifle company thinking I could make a difference. Remember, General Dean had said there were only 4,000 enemy and I wanted to make sure that I got my part of them. What a fool I was!

I was put in a jeep and transported to the base of a hill and told they were at the top, to just follow the trail up. When I started up that hill I had a duffel bag of goodies for my vacation with the boys at the front. Before I reached the top, I had discarded everything in that bag!

The first man I met was a kid by the name of Freddie Pickens. He said I could spend the night with him in his foxhole. This was about July 28. I can't remember exactly but Freddie said he hadn't killed a gook in two weeks.

There were no officers and no NCO's when I joined the Company. Everybody said that they were all lost at Chochiwon. I met a sergeant a few days later who was waiting for a battlefield commission by the name of Hugh Brown. He introduced himself as Mrs. Brown's little boy, Hugh.

We stayed on top of that mountain for a long time. Men started coming in as replacements because there was nobody in the company when I got there, maybe 30 or so. They were a ragtag bunch and were listening to and obeying three privates named Orville Musick, Lee Wines and Freddie Pickens. I understood that Pickens and Musick had been released from the stockade so they could go to Korea with the Company. This is all hearsay to me.

When the replacements started coming in, we got some good men, real leaders like Powell Sale in the First Platoon with James W Medley as one of the squad leaders. I was a squad leader in this platoon with Wines and Musick. Musick was the radio man as he was the only man big enough to carry the damn thing and it never worked.

On the 6th of September, 1950, as I said; I was a squad leader in the 1st Platoon. Powell Sale was the Platoon Sgt. and Lt. T L Epton was the Platoon Leader. Lt. Epton came to the Platoon and told us that we were going to load on tanks and move up to the hill in front of us. He said there were no gooks on the hill. Sgt. James Medley told him that the hill was covered up with them because he had been on patrol the day before and had stood up in a rice paddy and waved at them and they waved back. Epton said he was wrong. That we would get on the tanks and ride up there. Sale told me I would be point, to get on the first tank with my men and ride up with him. So we loaded up and moved out.

While moving up, I saw two huts, one on each side of the road. I bent over and told the tanker to knock them out because they were a good place for a crossfire roadblock. He
agreed and told me to move back so he could close his hatch. I turned to Dan O’Connor and told him to change places with me. He stepped in front of me just as they opened up on us. Dan took a bullet in his groin which would have hit me if he had not stepped in front of me. He fell off the tank and I fell off with him. I rolled into a ditch at the side of the road. It was filled with water and I was submerged up to my neck, and I laid there for a while before they started firing at my head. I kept moving back and forth to keep them from hitting me. I yelled to Sale on the opposite side of the road and asked him what we were going to do. He said we couldn’t do anything until we had gotten the casualties loaded onto the back of the tank. That he had orders to pull back but Powell said we were not going until he said so. Powell had me crawl around the side of the tank, get hold of O’Conner and he and Wines pulled me back around by my feet and legs. I helped lift VanPoucke; he looked so peaceful, he only had a little slit over his left eyebrow, but when we lifted him up on the tank, the back of his head was completely gone, nothing in it, just an empty shell.

After we got all of them loaded, the tank pulled out, leaving just the four of us on the road. Wines, Sale, Musick and myself. I asked Powell what we were to do now and he said that if we stayed where we were they would kill us and if we tried going back they would kill us. The only chance we had was to run for the bottom of the hill and get underneath their fire.

We got out of the ditch and ran as fast as we could for the hill. I had just seen a movie where machine gun bullets were clipping at the heels of a GI and I got to see it for real and free. They were shooting at Musick and they were behind him, then stopped. Musick gave out and quit running and they were hitting in front of him. We all reached a small dugout at the bottom and waited for the rest of the company to catch up with us. We then went uphill and guess what? There was no one on the hill!

I believe that Powell’s decision to run for the hill had something to do with causing them to retreat, but I had lost my squad except for Orville Musick and Lee Wines.

Dan O’Connor	WIA
Glennon Boyer	KIA
Jack Burns	WIA
George A. Murdock	WIA
Donald Schramm	WIA
Billy Simpson	WIA
Leslie VanPoucke	KIA

This was my baptism of full combat and frankly I aged 20 years that day. I think about that day every day of my life and I live it over and over. If we had listened to Medley we would not have lost those men. Was it my fault for not taking up for Medley. I was 19 years old and had lost my entire squad.
THIS STORY WILL CONTINUE AT A LATER DATE........

Ed. Note: Al Sebring died 24 March 1999 after a long bout with cancer.
Beauty is in the Eye of the Beholder

by Emil Rebrovich

After my arrival in Korea in 1950, I tried to make a few friends in Love Company just in case most of the gang felt as I did: You could pretty much tell who had been there from the beginning - you had only to look at their eyes and you knew. Those who were looking behind them knew. When one of our 105’s or 155’s went on overhead some of the men would not move. Then there was the guys like me - trying to dig a foxhole six feet deeper than anyone else.

After a few days, you found out why you were there.

Shortly after my arrival, my platoon sergeant came over and handed me a gorgeous BAR and he took my M-1 in exchange. To top it off, I had never fired one in my life. Then he told me to try something - there was an ox in the rice field blowing up the mines that the engineers had planted. Would you believe that ox was about seven or eight hundred yards away. I let go about four rounds - and guess what - from that day on I was married to the BAR.

The Naktong was a good place to learn. It was also a place, I found, that our forward observer could censor his own mail. I knew Japan had stolen most of Korea’s timber, but one day, in front of me, were several beautiful boards and a handful of nails. Then I happened to see something like a burp gun slightly covered with cosmoline and a cloth. Eventually this burp gun found its way into a beautiful wooden box with about 100 rounds of ammo to help pack it well. Then this guy nails the box shut and proceeds to mail it to his “aunt” in the good old U.S.A. I always wondered if “aunt” was named Bonnie and her boy friend named “Clyde.” About two months later, this guy gets a letter from home and jumps up and down hollering - “Guys, my burp gun got home!” From that time on, I sure didn’t want to get our F.O. into trouble - so I just stayed away from him unless it was a business call. But let me tell you, there was never a better F.O. than “Short Round” Hardy.

Ed. Postscript: Actually the burp gun was shipped to Short Round’s brother who was a gunsmith. His brother plugged the barrel as required by law and mounted the weapon on his den wall where it hung for many years until it was lost in a divorce settlement. The ammo was some Korean brassware “liberated” from an abandoned home by Short Round and the beautiful wooden box was an ammo crate but knowing the military was probably prime wood. I tried to straighten this a little but anything I did ruined the humor so decided to leave it as written. Jim Fine
Squad Patrol

by Emil Rebровich

In memory of our Medic, Whitey.

A Squad Patrol on a Very Hot Summer Night

It is so good that we can remember the funny things that happened to us.

After marching and poking around for several hours over the Korean landscape, we started back to our company area and we almost thought as one — we didn’t have the password. Just about then, we bumped into a little Korean farmhouse. There was no one inside so we just made ourselves at home. We voted to stay the night and rejoin the company at daybreak. We posted our guard and took shifts in napping on the straw mats we found. None of us needed a whistle or alarm clock to wake us up as everyone seemed to be doing the same thing — scratching furiously — particularly in the groin area. It seemed like mine was the worst, must have been the best nesting area, Whitey was out of medical supplies, so I asked him what I could use to relieve the torture. He nicely suggested I use mosquito repellent which I happened to have in my jacket pocket. Now the rest of the squad was starting to circle around and the word crabs was heard.

So down came my pants and shorts to reveal a great battle going on — I poured the repellent into my hands and liberally rubbed it all over my body. Well, would you know I could have become Joey Chitwood and beat a motorcycle around the mountain. But in about four or five minutes, the parasites were all gone.
Counterattack on Hill 296

by Roy Powers

February 6, 1951

Edward Rounds and I were together going up a small draw to the highest point of the ridge. Which I believe was referred to as Hill 296. This ridge was somewhat in the shape of a lazy “S” laying backwards. “I” Company was to be on our right. The highest point was just about in the center of our company line.

Sgt Rounds and I reached the top and we saw Sgt Sales coming up to us. We had M-1s and were firing at the reds as they left the hill. They in turn were returning fire and kicking gravel in front of us that hit us in the face. There was a Light Machine Gun M-109 6 feet or so in front of us that had been left. Rounds said “Let’s get it” and I told him to leave the damn thing alone, it could have a trip wire. He went ahead and opened the breach. It blew up and killed him.

After the hill was secured T. J. Brennan and I found Sgt Marion Todd lying about 10 feet to the right of Rounds still in a sleeping bag from the night before.

We also found George Barrell, a young man from New York state 19 years old married with a wife and small child — dead. He apparently died of fright as he had no wounds on his body. We knew how scared he was and most always left him with our back packs at the truck.
Hardy, Brown and others try to catch some news by the side of the road.

Joe Griffith, Olin Hardy and Leon Wilson
Rounds walks through campsite in N.K., kitchen truck in background - Nov ‘50
Left to Right: Clifton A. Pritchett Jr., Thomas F. Dreisonstok, William B. DeGraf, John Ufner, Volney F. Warner — West Point ’50, somewhere in Korea

Hugh Brown after bath, with new clothes at Songu-ri
Resting in Village — Olin Hardy, Carl Bernard, Planter Wilson, Harold Terry

Carl Bernard, Olin Hardy, Planter Wilson and Harold Terry
3rd Battalion Staff and Planter W Wilson (on right)

Captain Cosgrove — Battalion S-1
Four Jeeps on Road

Destroyed Structure
Jeep with Prisoners Following

Lindsey Henderson, Planter Wilson, Henry Baer, Carl Bernard, Thomas Dreisonstok, Harry Tompkins, Vol Warner
Edward Rounds and Planter Wilson

Resting Along Road After Pausing to Eat - L to R
Unkn., Vol Warner, Hugh Brown, T L Epton, Kenneth Noble, Lester Studebaker
Communicating

Backlit by Exploding Shell
Left to right:

1.  
2.  Interpreter “Tommy”  
3.  
4.  Tommy Bishop  
5.  
6.  
7.  
8.  Leroy Ellison  
9.  Richard Shaver  
10. Bobby Compton  
11. Francis Renzi  
12. Kenneth Flansaas  
13.  
14. Gordon Shertzer  
15. Katsumi Yagura  
16. William Hays  
17.  
18. Jim Fine  
19.  
20. Arthur Rose  
21.  
22. Herlindo Tabares  
23. Duane Beal  
24.  
25. Antonio Moreno  
26. Russell Oxley  
27. Ramon Padilla  
28. T L Epton (front)  
29. William Sharp  
30.  
31.  
32. Robert Leslie jr  
33. Powell Sale  
34.  
35. Charles Byrge  
36. Jimmy
LOVE COMPANY - 21st INF. REGT.
24th INFANTRY DIVISION
4th Platoon
Korea - 1950
Front to rear  
(left to right):  
Front row  
1. Andy Anderson  
2. Hugh Brown  

Second row  
1.  
2.  
3.  
4. William Duarte  
5.  
6.  
3rd row  
1.  
2. Jimmy  
3. Noble Toucha  
4.  
5. George Vlasic  
6.  

4th row (standing)  
1. Al Sebring  
2. Isaac Canales  
3. Bernard Diehl  
4.  
5. Thomas Brennan  
6. Roy Powers  
7. Robert McGuire  
8. Bobby Bennett  

Rear row  
1. Carl Jackson  
2. Benny Nelson  
3. Mac Mrad  
4. Jerald Ulrey  
5.  
6.  
7.  
8.
After the Battle at Kumchon September 25, 1950

L to R: Unkn., Henry Baer, Planter Wilson, Olin Hardy, Carl Bernard (glasses), Unkn., Lindsey Henderson, Volney Warner, Thomas Dreisonstok
Texan Carl Bernard on Mission of Mercy — Insuring horse not eaten

In dry river bed — Noble Tousha in soft hat
Prisoners in North Korea

Lester Studebaker in front row with Gimlets, Unknown GI in 2nd row at left
"Dixie" with some of his Gimlets

Gimlets bring in some prisoners
Officers outside CP Tent — L to R: Carl Bernard, Volney Warner, Hugh Brown, Woodrow Chandler, Thomas Dreisonstok

Lester Studebaker, Marion Todd, Edmond Weber, Leon Wilson, Ken Noble (med.)
Leon Wilson, “Hap” Chandler, Lester Studebaker, Unknown in rear, Jimmy, Volney Warner looks at captured weapon sight
Rear of Burning T-34 Tank — Turret was rotated

Captured Weapons by the Road — North Korea October 1950
North of Anju North Korea — November 1950

“Toady” Dreisonstok and “Hap” Chandler
North of Anju North Korea — November 1950

Dead Enemy — November 1950
Photographs

Gimlets on point after Naktong River crossing - September 1950

Planter Wilson and Gimlets
L to R: Hugh Brown, Jimmy, Joe Griffith, T L Epton, Vol Warner

Henry Baer, Carl Bernard, Edward Rounds, Olin Hardy
Photographs

Lindsey P. Henderson

Lindsey P. Henderson Jr.
Lindsey P. Henderson Jr.

Hugh Brown and Carl Bernard
LOVE COMPANY 50/51

by Jim Fine

This writing is based primarily on morning report data, corrected to the extent possible using database techniques to establish true names using serial numbers plus raw data provided by a small notebook kept by First Sergeant Howard R Lumsden during a major portion of the period covered and further by the Korean Conflict Casualty File (KCCF).

Note: The following text is primarily from the morning report, italicized text are entries from Howard R. Lumsden's little black book, and text in parentheses are my personal remarks or recollections. The numbers in parentheses at the left edge correspond to numbers stuck on a Korea map sent to me in Korea by Hugh Brown.

06/01/50 Kumamoto Kyushu Japan

(1) 5 EM attached for rations quarters & administration

06/27/50 Kumamoto Kyushu Japan

(2) Effective 26 June 1950, Co L, 21st Inf Regt reorganized under TO&E 7-17 N per Gen Order 41, Hq 24th Inf Div, APO 24 dtd 22 June 1950 Authorized strength 6 Off 185 EM.

07/02/50 Sasebo Kyushu Japan

(3) 2 July 1950 departed Camp Wood Kumamoto Kyushu Japan for Sasebo...(can't read rest)

07/03/50 Pusan South Korea

(4) Departed Sasebo Kyushu Japan for Pusan So Korea 1000 hrs Arrived Pusan So Korea Approx 2300 hrs

07/07/50 Choch’iwon South Korea

(5) 5 Officers & 148 EM departed Pusan South Korea by rail at 0200 hrs arrived Choch’iwon South Korea at 1800 hrs
07/08/50 Chongju South Korea
(6) Unit arrived by truck convoy from Choch’iwon to a defensive position east of the Mihochohn river approximately ten miles east of Choch’iwon and 4 miles west of Chongju

07/09/50 Choch’iwon South Korea
(7) Units moved to a defensive line 11 miles north of Choch’iwon by truck convoy

07/10/50 Choch’iwon South Korea
(8) Company attacked enemy positions north of Choch’iwon at 1830 hrs - mission accomplished and organization withdrew to original position at 2100 hrs

Wounded: Robert Holloway Wayne E McGrunder

07/11/50 Choch’iwon South Korea
(9) At approximately 0600 hours the enemy attacked in great force. The Company was subjected to mortar, small arms, and tank fire forcing withdrawal to the vicinity of Choch’iwon for reorganization. 4 Officers and 95 EM are missing in action and 1 Officer and 6 EM were wounded in action.

Killed in Action
Silas F Barrett
Frank J Bolt
Julian T Brooks
Raymond R Brown
Robert E Clouser
Patrick W Guthrie
Luther D Hanson
Robert V King
John Krimsky
Jearold D Leonard
Richard Spon

Died While Captured
Billy C Billington
Theodore S Cabanbam
Lynnward T Crosby
Samuel J Donohoe
Stanley G Durachta
Thomas Floyd
Gilbert Gutierrez
Norman R Henricksen
Edward L Hluboky
Elzie F Hughes
J D Floyd Junior
Harry E Mallery
Franklin Mitchell
Robert A Nolen
Richard B Quigley
Leslie A Siciliano
Roger A Smith
Anthony A Szczepanski
John J Tiernan
Forrest R Werley

After Missing
Raymond K Alford
Joseph O Ampon
Charles V Bailey
Jackie G Berrier
Charles E Boyer
Silas W Boyiddle
Worth L Bunting
Robert C Cox
Richard A Daniel
Alex Danowski
Charles W Easterday
George A Frantz
Harold O Fullerton
Eugene W Grant
Billy M Haggard
Charles R Hoak
William R Jester
Personnel were assembled in an area 5 miles south of Choch’iwon and moved by truck convoy with the remainder of the 3rd Bn 21st Inf Regt to a defensive position in the vicinity of Taep’yong-ni on the southern bank of the Kum River.

**Killed in Action:** George M Barrick  Odean T Cox  Carroll R Feagans

07/13/50 Taejon Airport South Korea

Rel of defensive position at Taep’yong-ni by elements of the 19th Inf Regt and moved to the Taejon Airstrip by truck convoy

07/15/50 Mado-Ryong South Korea

Company moved to defensive position south of Taejon on the road to Yongdong in the vicinity of Mado-Ryong - mode of travel truck convoy

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1 Howell G Thomas was buried at Arlington National Cemetery 14 August 50. He was described as the first American Hero of the Korea Conflict to be interred there.
07/21/50 Yong-dong South Korea

(13) Company moved from defensive position at Mado-Ryong to a new position 3 miles north of Yong-dong

07/22/50 Yong-chon South Korea

(14) Company relieved of defensive positions north of Yong-dong by elements of the 8th Cav Regt 1st Cav Div Departed Yong-dong by rail at 1310 hours arrived Yong-chon 2210 hours

07/23/50 Kyongju South Korea

(15) Company departed Yong-chon by rail 1730 hrs arrived Kyongju 2045 hrs

07/24/50 Kyongju South Korea

(16) Bivouacked at Kyongju Korea

**Died Line of Duty 7/25/50:** Alvin L Phillips

07/26/50 Pohang-dong Airstrip South Korea

(17) Departed Kyongju at 0830 hrs by truck convoy arrived at Pohang-dong Airstrip 1030 hours approximately 5 miles southeast of Pohang-dong

07/29/50 Kusan South Korea

(18) Departed Pohang-dong 0400 hrs enroute Kusan South Korea

07/30/50 Kusan South Korea

(19) Established road blocks at Kusan Korea

07/31/50 Kusan South Korea

(20) On Road Block at Kusan with elements of 1st Cav Div

08/06/50 Ibang-Myon South Korea

(21) Eff 5 Aug 50 Co L 21st Inf Regt reorganized under T/O & E 7-17 N dtd 9 Dec 47 per GO 181 Hq Eighth Army dtd 29 Jul 50 authorized strength changed to 6 Officers 1 WO & 205 EM Dug-in at Ibang-Myon
(This location is difficult to locate on a map because it is an area not a town. I was told it translates literally to “home of peach” It is identified on one road atlas I have. “Counterattack on the Naktong” identifies the bridge at this location as the Ch’angnyong to Ch’ogye Bridge. - jcf)

08/07/50 Ibang-Myon South Korea

(22) Dug-in at Ibang-Myon

08/09/50 Ibang-Myon South Korea

(23) Four man patrol dispatched to Naktong river and secured enemy weapons upon return of patrol this information was reported to Bn Hq

08/13/50 Ibang-Myon South Korea

(24) Dug in at Ibang-Myon.

(I arrived at L company here along with perhaps forty-five others. There were 38 left in the company at the time. Some of them met us back in a valley to lead us in. I’d never seen a scruffier bunch in my life. They had killed a small musk deer and were roasting it over an open fire. Musick was in this group as I recall. -jcf)

08/23/50 Taegu Airport South Korea

(25) Company moved from positions on Naktong River in vicinity of Ibang-Myon to vicinity of Taegu Airport.

(This was the apple orchard. Actually we were relieved by elements of the 2nd Inf Div [Cpl Tamber and others], marched out and spent the night somewhere at a dry creek bed. Several of us snapped ponchos together and sacked out in the streambed. A mistake. It rained during the night and the creek rose. I’m not positive, but I think I visited a field dental clinic the next day, don’t remember why other than my teeth were terrible at that time. -jcf)

08/27/50 Nadang-Ni South Korea

(26)

08/28/50 Kigyo Area South Korea

(27) Wounded: Hugh A Brown Billy J Simpson
08/31/50 Kigyo Area South Korea

09/01/50 Pohang-dong Area So Korea

(28) Orgn dptd from Kigyo Area South Korea via mtr convoy at 1300 hrs arr in vicinity of Pohang-dong South Korea 1430 hrs

09/02/50 Pohang-dong Area So Korea

**Died of Wounds:** Porter W Taylor  **Wounded:** John B Haley

09/03/50 Kigyo Area South Korea

(29) Company moved from vicinity of P’ohang-dong by motor convoy at 1100 hours to Kigyo Area distance traveled 15 miles

09/04/50 Kyongju South Korea

(30) Company moved from Kigyo Area by truck convoy at 1300 hours arrived Kyongju area 1345 hours 43 ROK soldiers attached

09/05/50 Kyongju area So Korea

(31) Company moved by motor convoy from position 4 miles north of Kyongju to new positions 4 miles northwest of Kyongju departed 1630 hours distance traveled 6 miles

09/06/50 Kyongju area So Korea

(32) Company in attack at 1000 hours 4 miles north of Kyongju advancing north moderate to heavy resistance encountered Casualties 1 EM KIA 5 EM WIA 5 enemy prisoners captured

**Killed in Action**

Glennon J Boyer  Leslie A VanPoucke

**Wounded**

Jack Burns  George A Murdock
Daniel E O’Connor  Donald A Schramm
Billy J Simpson

6 Sept

**KIA**  VAN POUCKE - BOYER
**WIA**  MURDOCK - OCONNOR - BURNS - SIMPSON - SCHRAMM
Co in attack 0900 hrs 4 mi N KyonJu Lt to heavy resistance Obj Hill #137 secured 1200 hrs Advance continued 2000 yds N 3 prisoners taken
O - 5  EM - 177  Att - 8
S KOREAN - 55  WIA 5  KIA 2
09/07/50 Kyongju area So Korea

(33) Company in reserve of Battalion in attack 7 miles northwest of Kyongju
1 enemy prisoner captured
7 Sept

IIA - Grimshaw
Co advanced to position 6 mi N KyonJu no resistance encountered 2 prisoners
O - 5  EM - 175  Att - 8  S Korean 59
09/08/50 Kyongju area So Korea

(34) Company advanced in positions approximately 9 miles northwest of Kyongju
no resistance encountered
8 Sept

Co advanced to position 8 mi N KyonJu no resistance
O - 5  EM - 176  Att - 8  S Korean 59
Returnee “Albert J Trapani”  hrl
09/09/50 Kyongju area So Korea

(35) Company advanced to position 10 miles northwest of Kyongju no enemy resistance encountered 100 ROK soldiers attached
9 Sept

Co in position 8 mi N KyonJu  hrl
09/10/50 Kyongju area So Korea

(36) Company moved from position approx 10 miles northwest of Kyongju to reserve position 4 miles northwest of Kyongju
10 Sept
Ret Carl F Bernard O 1688498 Surrells, Roy RA16289988
O - 6 EM - 177 Att - 8 TOT 184
Ret - O - 1 EM - 1
Co reverted to res position bivouac 1 mi N KyonJu hrl

11 Sept
Bivouac Res position Returnee - Culp - Ulrey

09/12/50 Kyongju area So Korea

(37) Company in reserve position 4 miles northwest of Kyongju

12 Sept
Spaulding - Tennant - Hosp.
Anderson, Donald R RA13166035 Pfc
Terry 1st Lt Peigler
O - 5 EM - 177 Att - 8 G - 1 L - 3 L - O - 1
KyonJu hrl

13 Sept
Trfd Hq Co 21st Inf Smith, Waldron, Rayner
To Med Co Dollar To l Co Lepore
Med Att Noble Kenneth H Pfc RA19304452
Mensay Tom R Cpl RA19219147
O - 5 EM - 172 Att - 10 L - EM - 5
KyonJu hrl

09/14/50 Taegu area So Korea

(38) Company moved by motor convoy from positions 4 miles northwest of Kyongju to positions 3 miles east of Taegu departed at 0900 hours and arrived 1300 hours distance traveled 46 miles

14 Sept
Correction M/R 7 Sept Present for dy should be 175
Repl Boyd, Arthur M. 1st Lt O 1314095
Quinteros, Simon Sgt (RA)18314668
Murro, Cataido J. Cpl (RA)13266110
Wolfe jr, Wm H Pfc (RA)52033970
Ret Tennant   Att Med  Montalbo, Isaac G Cpl RA18016361
15 Sept
KyonJu
O - 6  EM - 177  att - 11  G - 4  Rep - 3  Ret - 1
G - O - 1
16 Sept
O - 6  EM - 177  att - 11
Taegu  hrl
17 Sept
O - 6  EM - 175  att 11  Losses 2  Sk - Sgt Anderson
IIA - Gebhart
Taegu  hrl
09/18/50 Yulch-on South Korea
(39)  Company moved by motor convoy from position 3 miles east of Taegu to a
defensive position at Yulch-on departed 1300 hours arrived 2300 hours
18 Sept
O - 6  EM - 177  att - 11  Gains 2 - Anderson, Lappas
Taegu  hrl
19 Sept
Henderson, Lindsey P Jr. 2nd Lt O 963477
O - 7  EM - 179  Att - 11  2 Rep Widger  Thomas
Moved to Yulchon defensive assembly area hrl
20 Sept
Quinteros (Hosp) Moor (Hosp) Ulrey (AW OL)
O - 7  EM - 176  Att - 11
Co in position Yulchon 3 mi S of Waegwan
1 prisoner 

09/21/50 4 miles north of Waegwan S Korea

(40) Company advanced from positions at Yulch-on to positions 4 miles north of Waegwan, 1 enemy prisoner captured 

21 Sept

Culp (Hosp) Moor dy O - 7  EM - 176
Waegwan

09/22/50 15 miles nw of Waegwan S Korea

(41) Company advanced from positions 4 miles NW of Waegwan following Taejon highway to positions 15 miles NW of Waegwan & continuing to advance during night of 21 Sep 50. 2 enemy tanks destroyed & 2 prisoners taken. 

Wounded:

Charles P Mersing

22 Sept

Co advanced from position 8 mi NW of Waegwan 2 enemy tanks destroyed during night 21 Sept 1 prisoner taken
O - 7  EM - 176  att - 11  hrl

09/23/50 Kimchon area South Korea

(42) Company advanced on Taejon highway from position 15 miles NW of Waegwan to position 8 miles SE of Kimchon 2 enemy prisoners captured

23 Sept

Co advanced on Taejon Highway from position 15 mi NW Waegwan to position 12 000 yd SE Kimchon Stopped 2200 hrs by battery enemy artillery 2 prisoners taken
O - 7  EM - 175  att - 11  W IA Mersing

09/24/50 Kimchon area South Korea

(43) Company advanced on Taejon highway to positions 5000 yards southeast of Kimchon No enemy resistance encountered.
24 Sept

Hosp Tennant, Surrells, Burgess Ret Culp, Ulrey
Togni Donald J. Pvt. RA12287495 to fdfr(or fdfv) Sv Co
Co advanced on Taejon highway (dry river bed) to position 5000 yd SE Kumchon no resis-
tance encountered
O - 7 EM - 175 att - 11 hr

09/25/50 1000 yards N of Kimchon S Korea

(44) Company advanced at 2000 hrs 24 Sep 50 from position on Taejon highway
5000 yards SE of Kimchon intense artillery & mortar fire reached objective 0100
hrs 25 Sep 50 No enemy resistance encountered 2 casualties at 1330 hrs 25 Sep 50
due to strafing by friendly aircraft

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Killed in Action</th>
<th>Wounded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>George J Brant</td>
<td>Raymond E Croisant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony Lappas</td>
<td>Leroy J Ellison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T L Epton</td>
<td>James C Fine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>James W Medley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Walter E Worthen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25 Sept

AW OL Ulrey, Carter, Hajdinak
Co advanced from position 5000 yd SE Kumchon to objective Hill 103 & 104 1500 yd N
Kumchon Subject to intense artillery and mortar fire 2200 2230 hrs no casualties no other
enemy resistance encountered Crossed Ld 2000 hrs reached objective 0700 hrs Morale
high.

WIA SFC Medley PFC Croisant O - 7 EM - 170 att - 11 hr

09/26/50 Hakug-yoku-do area South Korea

(45) Company advanced from Kimchon area to attack objective #1 in vicinity of
Hakug-yoku-do. Objective secured 1900 hrs moderate resistance encountered 15
prisoners 4 76 MM guns 2 Tanks & large quantities of small arms and ammunition
captured

26 Sept

Co advanced from hill 103 & 104 to attack objective #1 4500 yd W vicinity Hakugyoku-
do Objective secured 1900 hrs 15 prisoners 4-76mm guns 2 tanks Quantities of small arms
and ammo captured 2 EM killed 3 wounded 1 missing
Morning Report Extracts

KIA Sgt Lappas  WIA Sgt Worthen Pvt Brant Fine Ellison
Epton Hosp Culp AR 605-145  O - 7  EM - 164  Att - 11 hrl

09/27/50 3 miles west of Yong-dong S Korea

(46) Company moved by motor convoy from Hakug-yoku-do to establish road-block 3 miles west of Yong-dong departed 0900 hrs arrived 1330 hrs distance traveled 28 miles

27 Sept

Hosp Tomolovski  WIA Lt Henderson 23 Sept
Ret Sgt Worthen Pvt Fine Pvt Ellison
AW OL to Duty Pfc Ulrey Carter Hajdinak
O - 7  EM - 169  Att - 11

Co moved by motor convoy from Hakugyoku-do to establish roadblock 3 mi N Yongdong Departed 0900 Arr 1330 Distance 28 mi hrl

09/28/50 8 miles NW of Yong-dong S Korea

(47) Company moved by motor convoy from position 3 miles west of Yong-dong to bivouac area 8 miles northwest of Yong-dong departed 1000 hrs arrived 1230 hrs distance traveled 11 miles

28 Sept

Byrge, Charles P SFC RA 7085714 att & jd fm Hq 3rd Bn pending asgmt
Hosp Rogers

Co moved by motor convoy fm position 3 mi W Yongdong to bivouac area 8 mi N Yongdong Departed 1000 hrs Arr 1230 hrs Distance 11 mi  O - 7  EM - 169  att - 11 hrl

09/29/50 Taejon area South Korea

(48) Company moved by motor convoy from bivouac area north of Yong-dong to establish roadblock 6 miles south of Taejon departed 0800 hrs arrived 1100 hrs distance traveled 22 miles

29 Sept

Co moved by motor convoy to bivouac area N Yongdong to establish roadblock 6 mi S Taejon Departed 0830 Arr 1130 Distance 21 mi
Hosp Wagley  O - 7  EM - 168  att - 11 hrl
09/30/50 Taejon area South Korea

(49) Company maintaining roadblock & checkpoints 6 miles south of Taejon

30 Sept
Hosp Anderson, Donald R - Fischbeck
Co maintaining roadblocks and checkpoints 6 mi S Taejon  23 suspected NK soldiers taken in custody
O - 7  EM - 166  att - 11 hrl

1 Oct

Co moved by foot and motor movement to position 8 mi S Taejon vicinity Ibaeng-ni with mission to establish roadblock outposts and conduct aggressive patrols in area
Tomolovski sk to dy
O - 7  EM - 167  att - 11 hrl

2 Oct

Co moved by motor convoy fm Ibaeng-ni to OChin-ni Korea Departed 1100 hrs Arr 1730 hrs Distance 65 mi Mission to establish OP roadblocks and conduct aggressive patrols in area
O - 7  EM - 167  att - 11 hrl

10/03/50 Onsen-ri South Korea

(50) Company moved by motor convoy from Taejon area to the vicinity of Onsen-ri departed 1100 hrs 2 Oct 50 arrived 1730 hrs 2 Oct 50

3 Oct

Co maintaining roadblocks outposts and conducting aggressive patrols in area. 44 prisoners captured. Hosp PFC Sandoval
O - 7  EMM - 166  att - 11 hrl

10/04/50 Onsen-ri South Korea

(51) Company maintaining outposts, roadblocks & conducting aggressive patrols in area 44 enemy prisoners captured

4 Oct

Co maintaining roadblocks outpost and conducting patrols in area 21 prisoners captured.
1 Off Repl Chandler, Woodrow W  O - 8  EM - 166  att - 11  hrl

10/05/50 Onchon-ni South Korea

(52)

5 Oct

Co maintaining roadblocks outposts and conducting patrols in area 27 prisoners captured.

Todd

O - 7  EM - 165  att - 11  hrl

10/06/50 Kumchon-ni South Korea

(53) Company traveled by motor convoy from Onchon-ni to Kumchon-ni departed 1215 hrs 6 Oct 50 arrived 2130 hrs 6 Oct 50 distance traveled 88 miles

10/14/50 Paekch-on South Korea

(54) Company moved by motor convoy from Kumchon-ni at 1015 hrs 12 Oct 50 and arrived at position on roadblock 1 mile west of Paekchon at 1730 hrs reld elements of 7th Cav regt 1st Cav Div at 2000 hrs

10/16/50 Paekch-on South Korea

(55) Company moved by foot preceded by motorized patrol on 16 Oct 50 with mission to seize and secure Yonan and vicinity departed 0800 hrs mission accomplished 1130 hrs returned to Paekch-on area by motor convoy from position 1 mile west of Paekch-on 1630 hrs

10/17/50 Paekch-on South Korea

(56) 17 Oct 50 arrived at position 22 miles north of 38th Parallel 2130 hrs 17 Oct 50 distance traveled 39 miles departed from this position by foot advancing north 19 miles leading elements of battalion stopped by enemy small arms fire 14 enemy prisoners captured

10/18/50 Sinwon-ni Korea

(57) Company advanced with rest of battalion to the vicinity of Sinwon-ni arrived 1900 hrs
10/20/50

**Wounded:** Hugh A Brown Roger L Preston (Med)

10/21/50 Sinwon-ni Korea

(58) Company less 1st plat departed 0845 hrs to conduct agressive patrols in area NW of Sinwon-ni No enemy encountered and returned to positions 1330 hrs 58 enemy prisoners captured past 24 hours

10/23/50 Yongu-ri Korea

(59) Company departed by motor convoy at 0900 hrs from Sinwon-ni and arrived at Yongu-ri at 1630 hrs traveled 90 miles

10/27/50 Sinju Korea

(60) Company departed by motor convoy from Yongu-ri at 1200 hrs 27 Oct 50 and arrived at Sinju at 1700 hours 27 Oct 50 traveled approx 38 miles

10/29/50 Kaechongjong area Korea

(61) Company moved by motor convoy from Sinju to assembly area in vicinity of Kaechongjong departed 1000 hrs 29 Oct 50 arrived 1400 hrs 29 Oct 50 distance traveled 36 miles

10/31/50 Sench-on Korea

(62) Departed by motor convoy at 0830 hrs from Kaechongjong area and arrived at assembly area 1 mile east of Kwakson at 1100 hrs distance traveled 17 miles Proceeded to Sench-on arrived at approx 1900 hrs total distance traveled approx 30 miles

11/03/50 Sench-ong River Korea

(63) Departed by motor convoy from assembly area at Sench-on 1530 hrs 3 Nov 50 and arrived to establish defense position on south bank Sench-ong River

11/04/50 Sench-ong River Korea

(64) Company departed 2330 hrs 4 Nov 50 from defensive position NE of Anju for Bn assembly area preparing for Regt attack 0800 hrs on enemy position north of Chongch-on River NE of Anju.
11/05/50 Anju Area Korea

(65) Company advanced in Bn attack 0800 hrs 5 Nov 50 to objective 8 miles north of Anju objective secured 1200 hrs heavy enemy resistance encountered 4 EM KIA 2 EM SWA 2 EM LWA 3 Officers LWA 7 enemy prisoners captured

**Killed in Action**

Howard J Bogenschild  
William R Duarte  
Dale I White (Med)

**Died of Wounds**

Perry R Haworth

**Wounded**

Wilbur A Allen  
Thomas F Dreisonstock  
Harry I Tompkins  
James T Dossett (FA)  
Donald J Heiser (FA)

Woodrow W Chandler  
Lindsey P Henderson Jr.  
Joseph W Warren  
Olin M Hardy (FA)  
Kenneth H Noble (Med)

11/06/50 Anju Area Korea

(66) Company attacked with Bn on enemy positions 8 1/2 miles north of Anju light enemy resistance objective secured 1600 hrs 1 Officer and 5 EM LWA objective secured Company reverted to reserve in BN 1800 hrs 6 Nov 50.

**Wounded**

Wilbur A Allen  
J C Franks  
Arthur F Wall  
John J Yakowski

Woodrow W Chandler  
Franklin G Gordon  
Leon G Wilson

11/07/50 Tonghung-dong Korea

(67) 7 Nov 50 Company in reserve in Battalion occupying position 7 miles north of Anju Relieved by elements of 19th Inf Regt and retd to postions 8 miles E of Anju
11/08/50 Tonghung-dong Korea

(68) 8 Nov 50 Company in assembly area 8 miles E of Anju no enemy activity
11/09/50 8 miles east of Yonghung-ni

(69)

11/16/50 James W Medley returned from hospital.

11/18/50 Harold Sylvia reassigned to 8069 Repl. Bn.

11/22/50 Tongmun-ni Korea YD198966 sheet 6233 III 1:50,000

(70) Company departed Yonghung-ni at 1000 hrs 22 Nov 50 and arrived
Tongmun-ni 1500 hrs 22 Nov 50 distance traveled 20 miles.

11/24/50 Chang’gye Korea YD029968 Sheet 6233 II 1:50,000

(71) Company departed Tongmun-ni by foot for Chang’gye by foot on 24 Nov 50
a distance of 12 miles.

11/25/50 Chongju Korea XD894963 Sheet 6233 III 1:50,000

(72) Departed Chang’gye by foot 0830 hrs by foot for Chongju arrived 1300 hrs
25 Nov 50

11/27/50 Chang’gye Korea YD029968 Sheet 6233 II 1:50,000

(73) Company withdrew from position in vicinity of Chongju to a position 1 1/2
miles NW of Chang’gye departed 1200 hrs arrived 1500 hrs distance 10 miles

11/28/50 Chaesin-ni Korea YD164966 Sheet 63336233 II 1:50,000

(74) Company withdrew from positions in vicinity of Chang’gye to establish
defensive positions in vicinity of Chaesin-ni departed 1000 hrs arrived 1500 hrs
mode of travel foot distance 10 miles.

11/30/50 Yongu Korea

(75) Company withdrew from Chaesin-ni 0400 hrs 29 Nov 50 and arrived Yongu
area 0400 hrs 30 Nov 50 distance traveled 43 miles by motor convoy
12/01/50 Sungui-ri Korea

(76) Withdrew from Yongu area by motor convoy at 0630 hrs 1 Dec 50 and arrived at Sungui-ri at 1630 hrs 1 Dec 50 distance traveled 63 miles.

12/03/50 Siriwan-ni Korea BT6699 Sheet J52G 1:250,000

(77) Company departed Sungui-ri 1600 hrs 2 Dec 50 by motor convoy and arrived at Siriwan-ni at 0430 hrs 3 Dec 50 distance traveled 68 miles.

12/08/50 Enroute Songu-ri Korea

(78) Company departed Siriwan-ni by motor convoy at 1000 hrs enroute Songu-ri convoy in motion 2400 hrs.

12/09/50 Songu-ri Korea CS3891 Sheet J52N 1:250,000

(79) Company arrived at Songu-ri at 0400 hrs by motor convoy from Siriwan-ni distance traveled 148 miles

12/11/50 Mansegyo Korea CT468035 Sheet 6627 I 1:50,000

(80) Company departed by motor convoy at 0800 hrs 11 Dec 50 from Songu-ri and arrived at Mansegyo at 1000 hrs 11 Dec 50 a distance of 15 miles

Wounded: 12/18/50 Vernon A Farr

(I think this is the guy who was boarding a tank right in front of me when the tank gunner decided to clear the machine gun. One round had stuck in the chamber, He took it in the calf of his leg as I recall. He was not terribly unhappy about it. This happened as we left Songu-ri. -jcf)

Farr sk in hosp O - 6 EM - 157 (LB) hrl

12/23/50 Mansegyo Korea CT468035 Sheet 6627 I 1:50,000

(81) Company in defensive position vicinity Mansegyo Korea 7 man patrol departed 1900 hrs patroled 2000 yds north and maintained listening post until 0500 hrs no enemy activity reported mission completed & returned to company area 0600 hrs
12/29/50 Mansegyo Korea CT468035 Sheet 6627 I 1:50,000

(82) 6 man patrol departed 1900 hrs for position 2000 yards north contacted small enemy patrol which turned when fired on. Mission completed & patrol returned to company area 0730 hrs.

12/27/50 Mansegyo Korea CT468035 Sheet 6627 I 1:50,000

(83) 27 Dec 50 Listening post of 6 men contacted & directed mortar fire on group of approximately 20 enemy in vicinity of Hill #585. Mission completed & patrol returned to company area 0700 hrs.

01/02/51 CT471044 Sheet 6627 I 1:50,000

(84) 1 Jan 51 Company departed CT468035 6627 I 1:50,000 & arrived at CT471044 6627 I 1:50,000 (MR)

1 Jan 51

Co departed Mansegyo 1515 hrs (31 Dec) Arrived new area 0315 hrs 0 - 6  EM - 152 hrl

(Something wrong with the coordinates, probably the sheet number. Coordinates indicate move of less than 1 km, but took 12 hours travel? -jcf)

2 Jan 51 Co with Bn in Regt Res defensive position vicinity of ()
1 EM AWOL to dy 1530 hrs Duncan O - 6  EM - 152 hrl

6 Jan 51 Co in Bn assembly area vicinity (Medewon) hrl

01/07/51 Modowon Korea CR816953 6725 III 1:50,000 (12.5km S and 4km E of Changhowon)

(85) 2 Jan 51 Company departed CT471044 6627 I 1:50,000 & ... (2nd sheet missing)

01/08/51 Yoju Korea CR816953 6725 III 1:50,000

01/09/51 Yoju Korea CR816953 6725 III 1:50,000

(87) 9 Jan 51 Company departed with battalion by motor convoy 1145 hrs on recon in force to vicinity of Yoju. Mission completed and returned to company area 1700 hrs Distance traveled 42 miles round trip no enemy encountered.
01/20/51 Chagbong-ni Korea CR816953 6725 III 1:50,000

(88) 20 Jan 51 Company departed with Battalion from assembly area vicinity Modowon with mission to relieve 1st Battalion on outposts vicinity Chagbong-ni Departed 1000 hrs relief completed 1400 hrs Distance traveled 21 miles.

01/21/51 Chambong-ni Korea CS809235 6725 III 1:50,000

(89) 21 Jan 51 Company maintaining outpost & conducting aggressive patrols in vicinity of Yoju.

Wounded 1/23/51 T L Epton

(I think this was the 8th Army outpost, at least that was the story. Presumably we were 35 miles in front of the lines, waiting to see how close the pursuing Chinese were. Every day some of us would load up in trucks and make the run to the Han-gang River. We would then patrol either on the south side or the north side of the frozen river. It was as I understand it on the north side of the river that Epton was hit. I was kept in the company area the day he was hit. I was on outpost duty when a pheasant began walking about near me. I got on the field phone and lied. “My rifle just came back from ordnance. I’d sure like to test fire it.” I could hear chatter on the other phones that it was only test firing that was about to occur and then I got the ok. I raised up slowly and fired. The pheasant was only a few yards from me. I got on the field phone and lied. “My rifle just came back from ordnance. I’d sure like to test fire it.” I could hear chatter on the other phones that it was only test firing that was about to occur and then I got the ok. I raised up slowly and fired. The bird began to run and so did I firing several rounds and not understanding how I could be missing even though I could see the snow kicking up. It finally flew and I watched in disgust as a number 1 dinner flew off. Afterwards I realized the sights were still set at 300 yards. -jcf)

01/24/51 Chambong-ni Korea CS809235 6725 III 1:50,000

(90) 24 Jan 51 Company patroled in force vicinity Yoju north of Han River encountered enemy patrol of 17 men which withdrew north. Mission completed & company returned to company area 1630 hrs.

01/25/51 Chambong-ni Korea CS809235 6725 III 1:50,000

(4.5km south of Yoju on hwy 37)

(91) 25 Jan 51 Company maintaining outpost & patroling vic. of Chambong-ni.

01/28/51 Mugung-ni CR754945 6724 IV 1:50,000 (close to Changhowon)

(92) 28 Jan 51 Company relieved by elements of 2nd Bn 21st Inf Regt Moved by motor convoy from Chambong-ni CS809235 departed 1515 hrs and arrived Mugung-ni CR754945 1700 hrs Distance traveled 17 miles.
01/31/51 Majang-dong Korea CS738283 6725 IV 1:50,000

(93) 30 Jan 51 Company departed by motor convoy 0300 hrs fr Battalion assembly area vicinity Mugung-ni & arrived new area Majang-dong 0345 hrs 31 Jan 51 distance traveled 28 miles.

02/05/51 Chonyang Area Korea CS738283 6725 IV 1:50,000

(94) 5 Feb 51 Company departed from Bn assembly area vicinity Chonyang with mission to secure & occupy position between 19th Inf Regt & 1st Bn 21st Inf Regt Departed by foot 2000 hrs. Mission accomplished in 1 hr distance covered 5 miles.

02/06/51 Chonyang Area Korea CS670417 6626 II 1:50,000

(95) 6 Feb 51 Company began receiving small arms & mortar fire 2130 hrs 5 Feb 51 followed by attempt of enemy to infiltrate. All attacks repulsed until heavy attack supported by automatic weapons & mortar fire forced company to withdraw 0430 hrs 6 Feb 51. Company counter attacked at 0900 hrs & 1030 hrs repulsed by heavy enemy fire Reorganization & counter attacking 1230 hrs supported by heavy FA & mortar fire Company regained positions. Enemy withdrew leaving 50 dead.

**Killed in Action**

George Barrell  
William M Dougan  
Richard A Fleck  
Theodore T Johnsbury  
Orville D Musick  
Arthur J Rose  
Edward P Rounds  
Marion H Todd  
Donald J Togni  
Loyd A VanAllen  
Duerell Wade  
Durward E Wentz

**Died of Wounds**

Freddie F Pickens  
William S Travers  
Frank A Gerlach  
Byron R Grayless  
Vincent F Kane  
John E Marshall  
James W Medley  
James W Redmon  
Francis M Renzi

**Died While Captured After Missing**

Gordon R Shertzer  
William H Sharp  
Jimmy W Smoot  
Donald D Spreadborough  
Lester Studebaker  
Pasquale S Travisano  
John W Umbaugh  
Alonzo M Walden  
Robert E Wood  
James P Wright

**Wounded**

Hugh A Brown  
Phillip W Cribb  
James C Fine

(On November 28, 1992 Leota and I climbed this hill and I was astonished to find the foxholes still plainly visible. They are for the greater part almost filled in by 40 plus years of settling. We approached from the west the hole Tabares and I were in that night and took some pictures at another hole that I at first mistook for mine. After
noticing it was not immediately next to the point occupied by the adjacent outfit, we went farther east and at last there was no doubt that we had found it. It was eerie to stand there once again and remember that early morning so long ago. -jcf

02/07/51 Chonyang Area Korea CS670417 6626 II 1:50,000

(96) **Wounded**

Kenneth R Flansaas
Reginald A Jacques
Arthur J Murphy
George W Schultz

02/08/51 Chonyang Area Korea CS670417 6626 II 1:50,000

(97) 8 Feb 51: One Chinese prisoner captured 0730 hrs No other enemy activity

02/09/51 Chonyang Area Korea CS670417 6626 II 1:50,000

(98) **Killed in Action** Henry J Weckerly

02/10/51 Chonyang Area Korea CS670417 6626 II 1:50,000

(99) 10 Feb 51 Ten man combat patrol departed 0900 hrs & encountered 6 man enemy patrol which withdrew north when fired on Mission completed & patrol returned to company position 1300 hrs

02/16/51 Chonyang Area Korea CS670417 6626 II 1:50,000

(100) **Wounded** Arthur J Murphy Robert G Reeves

02/23/51 CS712427 6726 III 1:50,000

(101) 20 Feb 51 Company departed CS670417 6626 II 1300 hrs by motor vehicle to CS712427 6726 III & arrived in Bn assembly area 1800 hrs

02/28/51 CS743494 6726 III 1:50,000

(102) 28 Feb 51 Company departed CS712427 6726 III 1:50,000 0830 hrs by motor convoy & arrived 1000 hrs at CS743494 6726 III 1:50,000 to relieve elements of 1st Bn 21st Regt Distance traveled 7 miles
03/08/51 CS743494 6726 III 1:50,000

(103) **Wounded**

Richard A Capehart  
James P LaPlant  
Roy R Powers  
Leonard Weaver

03/09/51 CS743494 6726 III 1:50,000

(104) **Wounded**

Bufford Blankenship  
Vincent DelBuono  
Ralph O Grove  
Emil Rebovich  
Theodore R Gracia II

03/10/51 CS743494 6726 III 1:50,000

(105) **Wounded**

John I Veltman  
Jose R Villarreal

03/13/51 CS743494 6726 III 1:50,000

(105) **Killed in Action**

Talmage A Hinson  
Martin R Narey

03/15/51 CS690642 6726 IV 1:50,000

(106) 15 Mar 51 Co departed CS743494 6726 III 1:50,000 & arrived at CS690642 6726 IV 1:50,000

04/01/51 CS571951 6727 I 1:50,000

(107) 1 Apr 51 Co dptd CS690642 6726 IV 1:50,000 & arrived at CS571951 6627 I 1:50,000

04/07/51 CS571951 6727 I 1:50,000

(108) **Died of Wounds**  
**Killed in Action**

Joseph D Ramos Jr.  
Herlindo Tabares
04/11/51 CT578089 6628 II 1:50,000

(109) **Killed in Action**

Pablo A Castillo

**Wounded**

Nick Bodner
Jack L Poling
Raymond J LaBell
Arnold J Tye
Kenneth I Oliver
William H York

04/14/51 CT578089 6628 II 1:50,000

(110) **Wounded**

Jose Celestino
Steve Logan
Richard F Michalski

(111) 15 Apr 51 Co departed CT578089 (6628) II 1:50,000 and arrived CT589150 6628 II 1:50,000

**Wounded**

Stanley G Daffer
David Wright Jr.

04/17/51 CT589150 6628 II 1:50,000

04/18/51 CT589150 6628 II 1:50,000

**Wounded**

Adam H Mummey

(112) 18 Apr 51 departed CS589150 6628 II 1:50,000 & arrived at CT581209 6628 II 1:50,000

**Killed in Action**

Walter E Worthen

**Wounded**

John E Rinker
Earl Sorrell
Wounded 4/20/51
Ralph O Grove

Wounded 4/23/50
Albert Wahler

Wounded 4/25/50
Robert L Jansen

Wounded 4/26/50
James W Connolly
Fred Newman Jr.
Ralph K Smith
Alfred L Thiret

Wounded 4/27/50
Phillip K Wallace

Killed in Action
Clifford P Craddock
Darrell J Tibben

04/28/51 CS565620 6626 I 1:50,000

(113) 28 Apr 51 Company departed CT581209 6628 II 1:50,000 arrived at
CS565620 6626 I 1:50,000

Wounded Dilbert Garner Jr.

04/30/51 CS616622 6626 I 1:50,000

(114) 30 Apr 51 Company departed CS565620 6626 I 1:50,000 arrived at
CS616622 6626 I 1:50,000

Wounded Claude N Whidby
05/07/51 CS590624 6626 I 1:50,000

(115) **Wounded** Donald J Milyaro Robert Urvina

05/15/51 CS597641 6626 I 1:50,000

(116) 15 May 51 Company departed CS590624 6626 I 1:50,000 arrived at CS597641 6626 I 1:50,000

05/21/51 CS565665 6626 I 1:50,000

(117) 21 May 51 Company moved fr CS597641 6626 I 1:50,000 to CS565665 6626 I 1:50,000

05/22/51 CS595753 6626 I 1:50,000

(118) 22 May 51 Company moved fr CS565665 6626 I 1:50,000 to CS595753 6626 I 1:50,000

05/23/51 CS265790 6627 II 1:50,000

(119) 23 May 51 Company moved fr CS595753 6626 I 1:50,000 to CS265790 6627 II 1:50,000

05/26/51 CS265790 6627 II 1:50,000

(120) **Killed in Action** Arthur L Miller

**Wounded**

Henry H Baker Daniel L Tucker
Carl D Craner David Wright Jr.

05/27/51 CT794095 6728 III 1:50,000

(121) 27 May 51 Company departed CS265790 6627 II 1:50,000 arrived at CT794095 6728 III 1:50,000
Below are those persons who were not wounded, killed, or captured during the period 1 June 50 to 1 June 51 while assigned to LOVE Company.

Robert G Abner
Donald R Acheson
Elmer F Aldridge
G C Allen
Donald R Anderson
Robert L Anderson
Raymond N Arens
Cecil D Ashby
Meyer Auerbach
Paul Awrey
John A Babbit
George I Baines
Tony Baker
Theodore W Bakker
Samuel L Barber Jr.
Bernard F Barnes
George W Bates
Erwin J Baumhover
Duane W Beal
Richard H Beatty
Lewis C Bell
Jose S Benitez
Bobby G Bennett
Clifton B Bergman
Carl F Bernard
Carroll B Berry
Ramon I Bialek
Jerry M Binnion
Tommy W Bishop
Fredie J Blackert
Raymond R Boeding
Joseph R Borgerding
James B Bowers
Arthur M Boyd
Walter H Boyd
Louis P Brancati
Archie R Brannen
Charles E Brault
James H Brawner
Thomas J Brennan
Chester A Bretz
Robert E Brooks
Julius P Broxson
John G Bryant
Douglas G Buddinger
Daniel A Budzik
Charles W Bufford
Cecil F Burgess
Raymond V Burris
Clarence E Burton
Ernest W Busha Jr.
Carl H Butler
Robert E Butts
Charles P Byrge
Jil Cabral
Edward J Cadger
Paul R Cadmus
Howard R Cady
John C Camargo
Darrell D Campbell
Isaac A Canales
Jesse Carbajal
Albert Carmona
Robert Carroll
Alfred H Carter
Buford Carter
Roy E Cason
Emil R Catanese
Joseph D Catlin
Willie G Cay
Roland O Chartier
Ervin J Chromey
Walter E Cole Jr.
Richard T Colling
Jack C Combs
Bobby J Compton
Harry F Connor
Charles L Cooper
Donald W Corbeille
Benjamin L Cotton
Carl H Coulter
Dalton A Croy
Donald J Dabbert
Billy J Davis
Cosmol Davis
Ira Davis
DeerWithHorns,
Earlwin C.
David F DiPasquale
Enrique Diaz
Bernard H Diehl
Robert J Dillon
Joseph H Dobbs Jr.
William A H Dollar
Jack P Dotson
Walter H Drefke
Billy K Drumheller
Clarence A Duchaine
Kenneth W Dumas
Billie E Duncan
Thomas L Dunn
Eldridge Dumnmoody
Ellis E Dupree
Sidney J Dworkin
Leo B Eaton
Olaf P Egglund
Melvin H Eirling
Floyd K Ekers
Bobby F Elliott
Verlyn E Erickson
Jack P Etchison
Thomas J Farr
LaVern C Fetters
Alvin A Fischbeck
Robert B Foster
Omega T Fowler
Gilbert B Fowler Jr.
James R Francis
Buell E Frye
Elmer J Gainok
not wounded, killed, or captured ... 1 June '50 to 1 June '51 — continued

Richard L Galbreath
Donald A Gaulke
Albert George
Varner W Getz
Harrell L Gibson
Hans J Gideon
Charles J Gitzlaff
J S Glover Jr.
James C Goelzer
Manuel S Gonzales
Earl W Goodner
Joe E Griffith
Lawrence W Grimshaw
John J Guest
Eugene Haddock
Donald W Hadley
John H Hailey
Allen R Haller Jr.
Daniel B Hanbury
Aubrey L Hare
Paul B Harp
Ernest W Haskins
William A Hays
Terence G Healy
Herman F Heaton
George R Henson
Harvey Henson
Albert D Hibbard
Robert R Hicks
Donald E Higgins
Sam Higgins
Charles F Hirn
Cletus P Hockman
Harold L Hoffman
Don D Holcomb
Merle Howard
Joe R Hudson
Sidney L Huff
Carl L Hull
Loyal D Iakey
Abednego Ingram

Frank Ivy
Carl C Jackson
Earnest B Jackson
Dale T Jacobson
Manuel D Janard
John W Jarvis
William D Jenkins
Dean I Johnson
Eddie Johnson
Wilbur L Johnson
Charles O Johnson Jr.
Cecil A Jones
Charles E Jones
Robert L Jones
Henry E Judy
Lewis B Kappler
Herbert Kay
Ralph W Keck
Edward J Kelleher
Hugh L Keniston
Melvin H Kessler
Stanley J Kilgowski
Charles E Kinard
Donald F Kincaid
Edward L King
Don O Krause
Eugene D LaFleur
Donnie B Lambert
Robert O Langton
Jack E Lee
Isaac R Lee Jr.
Ray R Lemley
Robert V Lepore
Robert Leslie Jr.
Emmett J Levick
Bert H Lewis
Kenneth F Lewis
Renald J Lizotte
James T Loar
John Lubinski
Jack E Lukashuk
Howard R Lumsden
Bernard E Mallory
Benjimen Manigault
Eugene Matthews
Bobby McCormack
Stanley W McCray
Harry R McDowell
Andrew McGlowen
Raymond D McGrew
Robert H McGuire
Robert Mears Jr.
Tony Messina
Robert F Mills
Robert C Milos
Henry B Miner
Harry W Mitchell
Maurice R Mohelnitsky
Donald L Moor
Robert Moore Jr.
Antonio Moreno
Mahmoud Mrad
Carlos Mulvey Jr.
Cataido J Murro
Danial A Myers
Jerimiah C Myers
Benny J Nelson
James E Nelson
James H Nicholson
Nicholas Nickas
Kenneth H Noble
Abraham J Nunnikhoven
Kenneth E O'Daniel
Timothy P O'Sullivan
Edward F Oatrenza
Peter B Oda
Lloyd E Omatenga
Virgil L Olson
Russell E Oxley
Ramon Padilla
Robert D Parish
Joseph A Parone
not wounded, killed, or captured ... 1 June '50 to 1 June '51 — continued

Lester A Parteka
Roy D Pauleen
Clarence A Pawlowski
Bearl Payes
William G Pearce
Jimmy L Peigler
Robert L Pemberton
Hubert L Pendley
William H Penland
Finley Penney
Charles E Pentis
Nicholas A Pepe
Donicio Perez
Audie R Perkins
Charles D Peterson
Abraham Polish
Fernando C Powers
Albert H Pyles
Simon Quinteros
Robert G Rayner
Stanford Risner
Paul C Roberts
Frank C Roberts Jr.
Jesus S Rodrigues
Willard J Rogers
Earl H Rutter Jr.
Powell Q Sale
Henry D Sanders
Selestino J Sandoval
Edmond Santos
Leo L Saxton
James H Scott
Alvin L Sebring
Milo A Seger
Paul L Segrest
Frederick D Shadden
Richard T Shaver
Edward L Shaw
Edward J Sheehan
John L Shields
Richard L Sides
Ollie A Silvious
Dewey G Simpson
Bartis Smith
Garnett E Smith
James P Smith
Charles L Sparling
Richard J Spaulding
Victor W Stein
Eugene F Stetham
Darl G Stewart
Roy B Stewart
Stephen L Stiglich
Charles E Stocklen
Allen D Strouse
Thomas R Strolda
Robert Stubblefield
Harry G Summers Jr.
Roy Surrells
Dean C Swenson
John T Swift
Harold Sylvia
Charles F Tennant
Franklin O Terebessy
John P Ternosky
Harold I C Terry
Sandford Thatcher
Wilbur J Thiel
Donald E Thompson
Jacque A Thompson
Joseph M Thompson
Richard L Thompson
Leonard Tomolovski
Noble Tousha
Albert J Trapani
Leonard C Treadway
William V Trimble
Jimmie Tuley
John J Tuzvniski
Charles F Ufford
Jerald W Ulrey
Epinenio S Valencia
Raleigh T Vaughan
George J Vlasic
Thomas R Vonesky
Johnnie R Wagley
William D Waldron
Albert Wallace Jr.
William R Waller
Ronald C Waltz
Volney F Warner
Thomas J Watson
Edmond A Weber
Marvin F Weckwerth
Floyd B Weed
Thomas A Widger
Roy J Wiley
Robert L Williams
Planter W Wilson
Donald E Winchell
Lee O Wines
Donald Wodarski
Walter F Wojciechowski
William H Wolfe Jr.
Katsumi Yagura
Loyal E Yates
Raymond R Young
Stanley Zarkowski

Artillery

Henry J Baer
Coxe
Grecco
Nelson

Medical

Burns
Christenson
William A H Dollar
Martin Groth
Tom R Mensay
Isaac G Montalbo
Straith
John J Yakowski
The operations of the 21st Infantry Regiment during February are divided into three phases. 1) The early part of the month, from 1 February until 17 February, found the Regiment in a defensive, blocking position astride the Han River near Yoju, with the 1st and 3d Battalions west of the river and the 2d Battalion east of the Han. Aggressive patrolling was conducted during this period and two strong enemy probing attacks were repelled. 2) A successful limited-objective attack to the bend of the Han near Yangpyong, 18 through 19 February, marked the second phase of the Regiment’s activity during February. 3) On 20 February the Regiment was relieved in position and moved administratively to the east of the Han, where it relieved the 8th Cavalry Regiment of 1st Cavalry Division in position, strengthened defenses and patrolled vigorously to probe out enemy dispositions. Plans were made to withdraw on Division order to the west bank of the Han, funneling through Chonso-ri in event of attack by superior forces.

DEFENSE ASTRIDE THE HAN

The Regiment took up the mission of screening the Division’s right flank with the 1st Battalion closing into an assembly area near CS6935 on 2 February, protecting the artillery there and dispatching patrols which initially made no enemy contact. (See Incl. 1, Incl. 2, Annex A). The 1st Battalion was moved, on Division order, early on 3 February, to Pallin, in the vicinity of CS696379, continuing the same mission. Patrols crossed the Han at CS710308 and probed north, drawing small arms fire from Hill 231 vicinity CS719407 and from Hill 231 at CS720309. (See Incl. 1, Incl. 3, Annex A).
On 4 February the Regiment, less the 2d Battalion, was ordered to the vicinity of CS6835, there to protect the Division's right flank. The 2d Battalion was moved, initially, near Koksu-ri and later took up positions closer to the Han River. (See Incl III, Incl 3).

The 3d Battalion moved on 4 February into positions on the left flank of the 1st Battalion, giving the Regiment a defense generally along the horizontal CS42 Grid Line with its left flank in the vicinity of CS650410 and its right near CS729418. The 3d Battalion was on the left, the 1st in the center and on the right. The 2d Battalion was separated from the rest of the Regiment by the Han River. (See Incl. I, Incl. 4, Annex A).

Until 5 February, patrols made only slight contact with the enemy, but on that date a patrol from the 1st Battalion received machine gun fire from Hill 142, CS672446 and observed an estimated 40 enemy in that vicinity. A 3d Battalion patrol brought in a civilian report that some 50 mixed CCF and North Korean troops were moving south in the vicinity of CS635436 at 1100 hours, 5 February. A 2d Battalion patrol drew fire from the railroad embankment near CS717472 and estimated that there were two companies of enemy in that vicinity. The air OP reported enemy on a ridge line in the vicinity of CS672446 - CS641459. (See Incl I, Incl 5, Annex A) That general area was attacked by air with napalm and rockets. It was estimated that more than a regiment of enemy confronted the 21st Infantry on 5 February, totalling between 2,000 and 5,000 troops in an area bounded by Hill 42, CS672446, Hill 481, CS644441, Hill 303, CS641458 and CS670460. The enemy was believed capable, on 5 February, of defending in place on the high ground of Hill 142 and Hill 481 and denying all approaches to the Han River. (See Incl I, Incl 5, Annex A).

All units were warned on 5 February of the possibility of an attack in commemoration of the Chinese New Year. (See Incl III, Incl. 5).

Whether it was in celebration of the Chinese New Year is debatable, but our lines west of the Han were heavily probed early 6 February. “B” Company’s left flank was struck at 0130 hours 6 February by a patrol of unknown strength at CS674424. The enemy used machine guns and small arms. This assault appeared to be the vanguard of a reinforced company of enemy which attacked “B” Company’s left flank at 0205 hours. The Battalion’s reserve was committed and the situation cleared in the 1st Battalion sector by 0600 hours. Air strikes were called on the fleeing enemy. Results unknown.

An assault on the 3d Battalion which began at 0145 threatened to be
more serious. “L” Company, in position on Hill 296, received mortar and small arms fire initially in an action which increased in intensity as time elapsed, until it was estimated that two reinforced enemy companies were committed against “L” Company. The enemy advanced up a ridge line in the vicinity of CS674427, attacking with automatic weapons, small arms and grenades. (See Incl. I, Incl. 6, Annex A and Incl. III, Incl. 30). “L” Company was pushed off Hill 296 before it was able to counterattack. Two Platoons of “K” Company, supported by artillery, mortar and air, counter-attacked and the line was restored by 1500 hours, 6 February. (See Incl. III, Incl. 6 and Incl I, Incl. 6, Annex A).

It was estimated that the reinforced enemy battalion which attacked the 1st and 3d Battalions suffered some 280 killed and 305 wounded. (See Incl. 3, Incl. 6).

Friendly casualties during the action were 49 wounded. (See Incl I, Incl. 6, Annex A).

Friendly air strafed the 1st and 3d Battalions at 1235 hours, 6 February but were called off before any damage was done. (Annex A, Incl. III).

Units were ordered to tie-in solidly for the night of 6-7 February, in anticipation of a renewal of the communist attack. Artillery concentrations were planned and arrangements made for illuminating shells to be fired periodically during the night. (See Incl. III, Incl. 6, and Incl. I, Incl. 6, Annex A).

At 1850 hours on 6 February the enemy struck again at “L” Company’s left flank at CS671425, with an estimated platoon. The 1st Battalion moved its reserve into the gap between battalions in anticipation of a stronger attack, but the 3d Battalion drove off the enemy by 2000 hours. The, 3d Battalion received small arms and mortar fire from 2300 on 6 February until 0130 on 7 February, but no heavy attack materialized. (See Incl. I, Incl. 7, Annex A and Incl. III, Incl. 6).

Division was informed at 1900 hours on 6 February that the situation on our left flank was serious, due to the thin line formed by our troops and the fatigued condition of the men who battled the previous night and during the day to restore the line. (See Incl III, Incl. 6).

Division during the night of 6-7 February attached the 1st Battalion, 5th RCT, to the Regiment, and the Battalion was moved immediately into the gap between the 3d Battalion on the left and the 1st Battalion
on the right. The battalion of the 5th RCT was in position and digging in by 0600 hours, 7 February. (See Incl. III, Incl. 6 and 7, and Incl. I, Incl. 7, Annex A).

The Regiment on 8 February received word from G-3 that it was the desire of the Commanding General, 8th Army, that “patrols go out as far and deep as the need arises to determine where and in what force the enemy is.” (See Incl. III, Incl. 8).

Strong patrols probed deep into enemy territory and on 9 February it was estimated that at least two regiments of the 114th CCF Division, with an estimated strength of 3,000 were located, dug-in between Hills 481 and 142. Another two CCF regiments with between 2,000 and 3,000 men were believed to be assembled generally north of Hill 538 CS742455 on both sides of the Hukchon River.

The enemy was considered capable of defending, in place, denying access to Han River crossing sites until such time as he was ready to assume a general offensive. (See Incl. I, Incl. 9, Annex A).

A platoon-sized patrol from Company E, probing deeply in enemy territory, was ambushed in the vicinity of CS725460 by an estimated company of enemy. A fire fight followed. Only a few of the platoon members escaped the ambush. Two officers, the platoon leader and the artillery forward observer, 13 enlisted men and five Republic of Korea soldiers were either killed or captured. (See Incl I, Incl 9, Annex A and Incl. VII, Incl. 9).

Orders received late 9 February from Division G-3 directed patrolling on a 24 hour basis, to ward off surprise attack or envelopment. Patrols were sent out continuously, making contact with the enemy but avoiding serious fire fights. (See Incl. III, Incl. 9).

Forty-four men from the 19th Infantry, former prisoners of the Chinese Communist Army came through “E” Company lines at 0630 hours 10 February, some were wounded and some were suffering from frost bite. They were evacuated through medical channels. Captured at Uijongbu on 1 January, they had been subjected to a Communist Indoctrination Course and then released. (See Incl. III, Incl. 10, and Incl. I, Incl. 10, Annex A).

Night and day patrolling continued with no serious action and no new enemy dispositions being disclosed. On 12 February Division ordered
that an outpost be established at Koksu-ri, 03776414. The outpost, of not less than platoon size, was to have transportation, radio and telephone communication. (See Incl. III, Incl. 12).

The Outpost Mission was assigned the 2d Battalion, which complied, setting up two wire circuits and voice radio communication. At 2150 hours, 12 February the outpost at Koksu-ri reported by telephone that it was surrounded by a large number of enemy. During the ensuing conversation the wire was cut. The outpost platoon drifted into 2d Battalion positions in small groups during the night. The platoon leader reported that more than 100 enemy were in and around Koksu-ri. (See Incl. III, Incls. 12 and 13).

Again trying to outpost and patrol Koksu-ri as “the eyes and ears of the Corps right flank” (See Incl. III, Incl. 13), the 2d Battalion sent a patrol on 13 February, and it was repulsed by a numerically superior enemy. (See Incl. I, Incl. 13, Annex A).

Another patrol, supported by tanks, departed at daylight, 14 February. By 1140 hours that patrol was engaged in a firefight, one tank had thrown a track and was under small arms, automatic weapons and mortar fire. (See Incl. III, Incl. 14).

Upon being informed of the situation, Division G-3 ordered the patrol to break contact. It did so, having to destroy the disabled tank and one jeep to prevent them from falling into enemy hands. The patrol reported an estimated battalion of enemy in Koksu-ri. G-3, upon being informed, said the 5th Cavalry Regiment would move through Koksu-ri from the vicinity of Yoju during the nite.

The 2d Battalion tightened their defensive positions, established a bridgehead formation and with its back to the Han-gang put outposts to the northeast, east and southeast. (See Incl. I, Incl. 14 and 15, Annex A). Nine trucks, all the regiment could spare, stood by each night during this critical period to withdraw the battalion, should an overwhelming attack cause Division to order a withdrawal to positions west of the Han River. (See Incl. I, Incl. 15, Annex A).

Lieutenant Colonel Gines Perez, formerly Commander of the 2d Battalion, assumed command of the regiment on 15 February, succeeding Colonel Richard W. Stephens, who was assigned to GHQ, FEC. Other changes in key personnel placed Lieutenant Colonel Charles Mudgett, Jr., formerly Regimental Executive Officer, in command of the 3d Battalion vice Lieutenant Colonel John McConnell, previously evacuated
through medical channels. Lieutenant Colonel William F. Staab, formerly S-3, assumed the duties of Executive Officer, and Major Charles Alkire, Assistant S-3, assumed the duties of S-3. Lieutenant Colonel Floyd Martin was relieved as Civil Assistance Officer by Major Norman Anderson to assume command of the 2d Battalion. (See Incl. I, Incl. 15, and Incl. I, Incl. 30).

Units were warned, on 15 February, to be more than ever alert because of the situation on the right flank at Koksu-ri. (See Incl. I, Incl. 15, Annex A, and Incl. III, Incl. 15).

Company “B” of the 6th Tank Battalion was attached to the Regiment on 15 February. One platoon was attached to the 2d Battalion, on the right flank. (See Incl. I, Incl. 15).

The 1st Battalion, 5th RCT reverted to its parent unit on 17 February, and the 1st and 3d Battalions of the 21st were assigned wider sectors of responsibility to cover the sector previously held by the element of the 5th RCT. Also on 17 February, the 2d Battalion of the 21st was placed under the operational control of the 1st Cavalry Division, pending a limited-objective attack planned for 18 February. Tanks attached to the 2d Battalion were relieved and attached to the 1st Battalion. (See Incls. III, Incl. 6, 16 and 17).

Twenty-four men of the 21st and attached units were killed in action during the defensive and patrolling phase from 1 February through 17 February. Seventy-eight were wounded in action, and one officer and 13 men were reported missing. Two ROK soldiers were killed, nine were wounded and two were missing. One officer, one enlisted man and two ROK’s attached from the artillery were also reported MIA.

Non-battle casualties during the period amounted to 95. Trench foot and frozen limbs took the heaviest toll due to the bitter cold weather.

The Regiment inflicted, on the enemy, casualties amounting to many times those it suffered. (See Incl. I, Incls. 1 through 17).

Orders given the 21st RCT (less the 2d Battalion) by Division called for a limited-objective attack, by phase lines, to the north on 18 February. The final objective was the east-west line of the Han River west of Yangpyong.

Division called for the Regiment to be prepared to establish a line in
the most defensible positions south of the Han, to patrol-vigorously forward of that line, to seek out and destroy the enemy, and to locate sites to cross the Han river in its zone.

The 3d Battalion, already on the Regiment’s left flank, was assigned a zone of attack on the left and the let Battalion was to attack, with a platoon of tanks from “B” Company, 6th Tank Battalion, attached, on the right. Each assault battalion had attached one platoon of the heavy mortar company. The 52d FA Battalion was in direct support.

The terrain over which the attack was to be launched was extremely rugged, being a hill mass between 500 and 600 meters high known as Yanja San.

To facilitate supply handling, battalion, were ordered to use as carriers all possible laborers found in their zones. (See Incl III, Incl 29).

Preparations for the attack were completed by the night of 17 February, preparatory artillery fires were prepared, and all last minute instructions were issued for H-Hour, designated at 0700 hours 18 February 1951.

ATTACK TO THE HAN RIVER BEND

With the 3d Battalion on the left and the 1st on the right, the 21st ROT (less the 2d Battalion, which was under operational control of the 1st Cavalry Division) attacked north, jumping off at 0700 hours, 18 February following an artillery preparation.

No Communist obstructed the advance but the operation was carried out in a blinding snow storm and across rugged mountainous terrain. The 3d Battalion on the left advanced with “I” and “K” Companies abreast and “L” Company in reserve. The 1st Battalion, on the right moved out with “A” and “C” Companies abreast and “B Company in reserve. (See Incl. I, Incl. 18, Annex A).

The Regiment, attacking on phase lines, reached phase line “Red” by 0800 hours. (See Inclosure I, Incl 18, Annex A). At 0830 hours Division ordered the Regiment to advance to phase line “Blue.” (See Incl. III, Incl. 29 and Incl. I, Incl. 18, Annex A) Progress was so rapid that at 1215 hours Division suspended the phase line plan and ordered an advance with utmost speed to the Han River bend. Objective boundaries placed the Regiments left flank generally along Hill 395, Hill 295 and Hill
420 and the right on the Han River bend. (See Incl. III, Incl. 18). Orders from Division at 1315 directed units to ignore the roughest terrain and use the easiest paths to reach the Han as soon as possible. (See Incl. III, Incl. 18).

By 1830 hours, 18 February the 1st Battalion was on its objective and by 2130 hours the 3d Battalion, who had farther to go and rougher terrain to cross, reached its objective. Battalions set up a defense of the Han River line in the Regiment’s sector, and at dawn on 19 February patrolled in search of crossing sites. None were found. (See Incl I, Incls. 18 and 19, Annex A)

This advance increased the supply problem. The lack of roads limiting vehicular traffic. Engineers were set to work on roads, which would take 3 or 4 days to complete. Some thought was given to making an air drop. S-4 was instructed to get more Korean carriers to manhandle supplies to the troops or to arrange for boats to supply the units by hauling supplies up the Han River. More Korean Nationals, used as carriers proved to be the answer. (See Incl. III, Incl 19).

Reports brought in by two KLO agents indicated the enemy had withdrawn, to the north, prior to the attack which accounted for the lack of opposition. The agents said they observed, on 17 February, many CCF troops all packed up and moving north along the route from hyon-ni CS642606 to Okchon-ni CS643530. One of the Chinese soldiers had stated that they were headed for Chorwon, CT4335. At 1800 hours, on 17 February, they reported, about 1,000 CCF with 300 horses were headed north from Okchon-ni. (See Incl. I, Incl. 19, Annex A).

A prisoner captured by the 1st Battalion on 19 February said he observed, on 17 February, a large number of Chinese Communist troops heading north from Hwayang-ni, CS6646 toward Yang’Pyong, SC670495. (See Incl. I, Incl. 19, Annex A).

This information brought about the obvious conclusion that the enemy, in the Regiment’s zone, had withdrawn north of the Han River and now occupied previously prepared defensive positions there. (See Incl. I, Incl. 19, Annex A).

Lateral contact was established with the 19th Infantry Regiment on the left and the 1st Cavalry Division on the right. Battalions tied-in and consolidated positions during the day. (See Incl. III, Incl. 19).
At 1725 hours, 19 February, Division G-3 informed the 21st that it would be relieved, in position, on 20 February. Upon relief the 21st Infantry would proceed to the east bank of the Han River, vicinity CS673480, relieve the 6th Cavalry Regiment and take over responsibility for their entire zone. (See Incl. III, Incl 19). The 2d Battalion was scheduled to revert to regimental control upon completion of the move.

Plans were issued in the form of Operations Instructions #70 H21I. (See Incl. III, Incl. 29)

The 1st Battalion was ordered to assemble by 1000 hours 20 February, cross the Han in a non-tactical move and take up the positions now held by elements of the 8th Cavalry Regiment. The move was so directed that the 1st Battalion would be on the right of the 2d Battalion, which would then revert to Regimental control. The 3d Battalion was ordered to cover by fire and observation, the 1st Battalion sector, until it was occupied by elements of the 5th Infantry Regiment. (See Incl. III, Incl. 29).

The 3d Battalion, upon relief by the elements of the 5th Infantry Regiment, was directed to assemble, move administratively east of the Han River and to Regimental reserve.

The 2d Battalion, which had advanced generally to the CS50 horizontal grid lines while under the operational control of the 1st Cavalry Division, was to revert to the 21st Infantry, and remain in position with its left flank near the Han south of Yangpyong.

Aggressive patrols were ordered of both battalions, on line, those of the 1st Battalion to begin as soon as it reached its position. (See Incl. III, Incl. 29).

Preparations for the move were completed by the night of 19 February. There was no enemy contact during the period 18-19 February. (See Incl. III, Incl. 18 and 19).

DEFENSE EAST OF THE HAN RIVER

The 1st Battalion moved to its new sector, completing the relief of elements of the 8th Cavalry Regiment by 1300 hours 20 February. Patrols were sent out immediately. (See Incl. III, Incl. 20).
The Regimental sector now extended from the east bank of the Han River, in the vicinity of CS673480 east to the vicinity of CS749496. The 3d Battalion, in reserve, closed into its assembly area 6000 yards south of the 2d Battalion late 20 February. (See Incl. III, Incl 20, and Incl I, Incl. 20, Annex A). Lieutenant Colonel Perez directed Lieutenant Colonel Mudgett to reconnoiter the Regimental front and prepare counterattack plans. (See Incl. III, Incl. 20). Patrolling on 20 February brought no significant information on enemy strength, location or disposition. (See Incl. I, Incl. 20, Annex A).

An appraisal was made of the regimental frontage on 20 February and the 3d Engineers were informed amount of barbed wire needed to cover the sector. (See Incl. III, Incls. 20 and 21).

Patrol plans were issued calling for platoon-sized patrols, using tanks where advantageous. (See Incl. II, Incl. 29).

Company “B”, 6th Tank Battalion closed in the Regiment’s zone at 0815 hours 21 February. One platoon was attached to the 1st Battalion. The 52d Field Artillery Battalion also moved into position in direct support of the Regiment. (See Incl III, Incl 21).

The battalions during the period 20-28 February made extensive preparations for defense, using some 11,000 yards of barbed wire and setting some 300 trip flares, as well as continuing to improve emplacements. (See Incl. III, Incls. 20 through 28).

Platoon-sized patrols forward of our lines probed an estimated two battalions of enemy dug in on Hill 196 CS640518, Hill 211 CS650520 and Hill 126 CS668526, plus a minimum of one enemy battalion dug in around Hill 937 at CS701543 in order to better determine their disposition. (See Incl. I, Incl. 21, Annex A). The enemy was believed capable of adequately defending the area in which he was located, but was thought not to have sufficient force to launch an offensive at this time. Patrols during this defensive period attacked the enemy with artillery, mortar and tank fire, and directed air strikes upon enemy positions, inflicting many casualties. (See Incl I, Incls 21 through 28, Annex A).

On 23 February, a patrol engaged six enemy dug in on a knob at 05677524. The enemy used machine gun, small arms fire and hand grenades. Although enemy resistance was fanatic the patrol succeeded in killing all six in close-in fighting. At the end of the action an estimated company of enemy dug in on a hill-mass near CS671528 took the
patrol under small arms and mortar fire. The patrol withdrew, called for and directed an air strike, with napalm, rockets and machine guns on the enemy position with excellent results. (See Incl. I, Incl. 23, Annex A).

On 24 February a patrol assaulted an enemy strong point on a hill near CS671528. Running short of ammunition in mid-attack, the patrol used captured hand grenades and closed on the enemy with bayonets, killing some 40 during the action, wounding 15, and taking one prisoner for questioning. The patrol captured nine Bren Guns, a 60mm Mortar and ammunition, five M-1 Rifles, 3 Carbines and a large store of small arms ammunition and hand grenades. (See Incl. I, Incl. 24, Annex A).

Night security patrols reported no significant activity.

The Han River began rising the night of 21-22 February, and by morning the ford was passable only to 2 1/2 ton trucks and larger vehicles. (See Incl. III and IV, Incls 22 and 23).

While engaged in extensive patrolling both defensive and withdrawal plans were being perfected. At 1200 hours, 22 February, the 21st Infantry issued Operations Instructions #71, establishing successive defensive lines east of the Han River which were to be utilized if attacked by superior forces and the regiment was forced into a retrograde movement. (See Incl. III, Incl. 29).

Three plans were formulated should a retrograde movement become necessary. Plan “A” was to go into effect, on Division order, if the present front lines were attacked by a superior forces. Under Plan “A”, if put into effect, the 1st Battalion, (with one platoon of “B” Company of the 6th Tank Battalion and one platoon of the heavy mortar company attached) would move all organic vehicles to the vicinity of CS708425, break contact with the enemy and withdraw and defend on line “A”. (See Incl. III, Incl. 29). The 2d Battalion (with one platoon of “B” Company, 6th Tank Battalion and one platoon of the Heavy Mortar Company attached), would move all organic vehicles to the vicinity of CS707434, cover the withdrawal of the 1st Battalion and, on order, break contact with the enemy and withdraw to and defend along line “A”. (See Incl. III, Incl. 29). Under the same plan the 3d Battalion was to be prepared to counterattack, on order, with one platoon of the Heavy Mortar Company attached. (See Incl. III, Incl. 29). The 52d Field Artillery Battalion would support the Regimental combat team during all phases The remainder of “B” Company, 6th Tank battalion, less attachments, was to move, on regimental order to the west bank of the Han.
Plan “B” would go into effect, on Division order, should Line “A” be attacked by a superior force.” Under Plan “B” the 1st Battalion (plus attachments) would, on regimental order, move all non-essential organic vehicles west of the Han River, break contact, withdraw and defend on Line “C”. The tank platoon would assemble in the vicinity of CS709420 to cover the ford across the Han-gang. Plan “B” directed the 2d Battalion (plus attachments) on regimental order, to move its non-essential vehicles to the west of the Han-gang, to break contact, withdraw and defend on line “B”. Plan “B” directed the 3d Battalion, plus attachments, to move all non-essential vehicles west of the Han River on regimental order, to occupy and defend line “B”. The Medical Company would cross the Han under plan “B”, as would all non-essential vehicles of Regimental Headquarters. Artillery and tanks were to follow their instructions outlined in plan “A”. (See Incl. III, Incl 29).

In the event line “B” was attacked by a superior force, plan “C” would go into effect, on Division order. Plan C instructed the 1st Battalion (plus attachments) to defend on line “C” and protect the Han River crossing, withdrawing to the west bank on regimental order. The 2d Battalion (plus attachments) would defend line “B”, refusing the right flank to the enemy until the 3d Battalion had cleared, then withdraw to the west side of the Han River. The 3d Battalion (plus attachments) would withdraw through the 1st Battalion, on line “C”, on regimental order and move west of the Han-gang into a new assembly area. Regimental Headquarters and Headquarters Company would move west of the Han. The 52d field artillery and Company B, 6th Tank Battalion would carry on as ordered in plan “A”. (See Incl. III, Incl. 29).

The operations instructions in general provided for an orderly withdrawal, if directed by Division, funneling the regiment across the Han river in the vicinity of Chonso-ri CS709420.

Although no attack materialized, all preparations were made to put Operations Instructions No. 70 into effect.

On occasions, the swollen Han River would have hindered an orderly withdrawal. High waters made the fords impassable most of the time, and ferries operated only sporadically until new engines for them were flown in from Japan. (See Incl. III and IV, 22 through 28).

The river barrier slowed the logistical operations of regiment to a point where an air drop was considered. A bridge opened at Yoju late in the month and eased the problem somewhat. (See Incl. III, Incls 26 through 28).
Routine relief of the 1st Battalion by the 3d was planned on 27 February and took place without incident on 28 February. (See Incl. III, Incls 27 and 28).

The Regiment was ordered by Division G-3, to make a show of force by stronger patrol action on 28 February to divert activity from the 1st Cavalry Division sector on the right. Accordingly, the 1st Battalion dispatched two platoon-sized patrols and the 2d Battalion sent three platoon-sized patrols at 0815 hours, 28 February. Artillery was placed on enemy positions and the patrols made strong thrusts into enemy positions taking under fire an estimated reinforced company on Hill 937, at CS702543 and CS694533. (See Incl. I, Incl. 28, Annex A).

As the month ended, regimental intelligence estimated that a reinforced company of enemy was dug in on Hill 937 in the vicinity of CS701543 and that at least one battalion was dug in on the high ground north of Hill 126 in the vicinity of CS670526. (See Incl. I, Incl. 28, Annex A).

The Regiment began the month with a strength of 158 officers and warrant officers and 2,802 enlisted men, meaning it was 21 officers and warrant officers and 612 enlisted men short of its authorized strength. The Regiment during the month received one officer and 244 enlisted replacements, and four officers and 129 enlisted men returned to duty from hospitals in Japan or Korea.

This contrasted against the Regiment’s losses for the month which included two officers and 131 enlisted battle casualties and five officers and 156 enlisted non-battle casualties; 15 officers and 80 enlisted men transferred to other organizations; showed a net loss of sixteen (16) officers and a net gain of three (3) enlisted men.

The morale of the organization during the month was good. (See Incl. I through 28, Annex A).

Gines Perez
Lt Col Inf
Commanding
Talley, James R. Co C 21st WIA, GSW, lt arm, upper, evac by helicopter fr lst Bn 6 Feb 51, Hyonbang-ni Korea.


Cline, James E. Sgt KIA DOA, Hyonbang-ni, Korea.


Wright, James P. Sfc RA14019952 Co L, 21st WIA, multiple shrapnel wounds, buttocks 6 Feb 51 Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Chun Su Chul Pvt RA1104129 Co L, 21st WIA, GSW, rt leg & lt leg, Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Porter, Clyde S. Cpl RA38630212 Co I, 21st SIA, multiple wounds, rt hand, amputat’n of thumb and Index finger, 6 Feb 51, Hyonbang-ni, Korea.


Marshall, John E. Pfc RA19358968 Co L, 21st WIA, GSW, rt & lt ankle, fx, lt ankle, Hyonbang-ni, Korea. 6 Feb 51.


Spreadborough, Donald D Pfc RA19326924 Co L, 21st WIA, Shrapnel, rt hand, 6 Feb 51, Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Davis, George P. Cpl RA34081878 Co G, 21st WIA, GSW, abdom’n & lf leg, 6 Feb 51, Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Druss, Joseph J. Cpl RA13164198 Co B, 21st WIA, GSW, Dorsum, lt hand Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Chaney, Melton E. Cpl RA13271869 Co B, 21st Paralysis, lower limbs Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Haslett, Windol M. Sgt RA14280270 Co B, 21st WIA, GSW, mid Finger, lt hand, Hyonbang-ni, Korea.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Service Number</th>
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<tr>
<td>Howard, Merle</td>
<td>SFC</td>
<td>RA39830031</td>
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<td>Travis, William S.</td>
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<td>Dickerson, William V.</td>
<td>Cpl</td>
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<td>Co K</td>
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<td>Grayless, Byron R.</td>
<td>Pvt</td>
<td>RA15417142</td>
<td>Co L</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smoot, Jimmy W.</td>
<td>Pfc</td>
<td>RA16263878</td>
<td>Co L</td>
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<td>Theros, George</td>
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<td>RA16295758</td>
<td>Co M</td>
<td>21st SIA, poss fx, lt arm.</td>
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<td>Davis, Bobby G.</td>
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<td>RA15260547</td>
<td>Co K</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lee Oh Ayon</td>
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<td>K-1102147</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lee Jin Ho</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yu Chun Kil</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fristodt, Conrad E.</td>
<td>Pfc</td>
<td>RA57510339</td>
<td>Co K</td>
<td>21st WIA, GSW, lt scapular, poss fx, Hyonbang-ni, Korea.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blunnie, Patrick J.</td>
<td>Pvt</td>
<td>RA21907083</td>
<td>Co C</td>
<td>21st WIA, GSW, rt shoulder, rt thorox.</td>
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<td>Land, Norman</td>
<td>Cpl</td>
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<td>21st WIA, Shrapnel, lt upper arm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Davis, Charles W.</td>
<td>Cpl</td>
<td>RA14242092</td>
<td>Co B</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bancroft, Russell T.</td>
<td>Pvt</td>
<td>RA16320729</td>
<td>Co C</td>
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<tr>
<td>An Yee Han</td>
<td>Pvt</td>
<td>K-1102172</td>
<td>Co C</td>
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<td>Arend, Vernell</td>
<td>Cpl</td>
<td>RA17101734</td>
<td>Co M</td>
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<td>Gribb, Phillip W.</td>
<td>Pfc</td>
<td>RA14318776</td>
<td>Co L</td>
<td>21st WIA, GSW, lt leg, lt wrist Hyonbang-ni, Korea.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salkyards, Clayton</td>
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<td>Larson, Charles E.</td>
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<td>E Sung Kun</td>
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<td>Creasey, A. D.</td>
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<td>RA18331006</td>
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<td>Reynolds, Meredith E.</td>
<td>Cpl</td>
<td>RA13306419</td>
<td>Co C</td>
<td>21st WIA, GSW, rt hand.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Hyonbang-ni, Korea.
Thorpe, Dale W.  Cpl  RA15272126  Med Co  21st WIA, Shrapnel, lip & nose, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Robledo, Longino  SFC  RA19340351  Co C, 21st SIA, Dislocation, lt shoulder, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Flansaas, Kenneth R.  Cpl  RA19350503  Co L, 21st WIA, GSW, lt ankle, poss fx, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Umbaugh, John W.  Sgt  RA15243124  Co L, 21st WIA, GSW, lt shoulder, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Brown, Hugh A.  1st Lt  O 222070  Co L, 21st WIA, GSW, rt arm, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Redmon, James W.  Cpl  RA14345228  Co L, 21st WIA, GSW, rt buttock, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Studebaker, Lester  M Sgt  RA6883912  Co L, 21st WIA, GSW, lt abdominal, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Chun, Hunio  Cpl  K-1104136  Co K, 21st WIA, GSW, back, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Gerlach, Frank A.  Pvt  RA12322809  Co L, 21st WIA, GSW, hd, lt scalp, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Kane, Vincent F.  Cpl  RA13247075  Co L, 21st WIA, GSW, lt arm, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Fiero, Anthony F.  Pfc  RA21925767  Co M, 21st WIA, GSW, rt shoulder, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Pickens, Freddy  SFC  RA14299089  Co L, 21st WIA, GSW, neck, Spont- 
Trachiotomy, Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Medley, James W  SFC  RA34585822  Co L, 21st WIA, GSW, lt arm, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Wood, Robert E.  Pfc  RA35999601  Co L, 21st WIA, GSW, rt shoulder, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Derdan, Thomas A.  Cpl  RA18320287  Co K, 21st WIA, Shrapnel, head, lt arm, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Tarkas, George J.  Pfc  RA14314566  Co M 21st WIA, GSW, lt arm & rt hand, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Scarborough, Jack K.  Pvt  RA14340444  Co M, 21st WIA, GSW, abdomen, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Lee Ki Kon  Pvt  K-1102138  Co L, 21st WIA, GSW, lt mandible, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Walden, Alonzo M.  Sgt  RA19350503  Co L, 21st WIA, GSW, lt ankle, poss fx 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Schultz, George W.  Cpl  RA13152935  Co L, 21st WIA, GSW, rt auricular area, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Craddoxt, Wison Jr.  Cpl  RA15224337  Co M, 21st WIA, GSW, lt wrist, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Booth, George H.  Cpl  RA18344219  Co B, 21st WIA, GSW, lt hand, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Jacques, Reginald A.  Cpl  RA28145227  Co L, 21st WIA, GSW, lt leg, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Smith, Charles W.  Pfc  RA15320441  Co C, 21st WIA, Shrapnel, rt shoulder, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Samson, Emerson M.  Pfc  RA13332820  Co K, 21st LIA, torn ligament, lt knee, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Togni, Donald  Pvt  RA12287495  Co L, 21st KIA, DOA, Shrapnel in head, 
Hyonbang-ni, Korea.
Duerell, Wade  
Pfc RA14300614  
Co L, 21st  
KIA, DOA, GSW in head, Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Barrell, George  
Pfc RA21933212  
Co L, 21st  
KIA, DOA, GSW, Chest, Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Mikulik, Auther K.  
Pvt RA16305918  
Co K, 21st  
KIA, DOA, Shrapnel in head, Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Fleck, Richard A.  
Pvt RA19343270  
Co L, 21st  
KIA, DOA, Shrapnel in head, Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Johnbury, Theodore T  
Cpl RA53004351  
Co L, 21st  
KIA, DOA, GSW head, Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Kim Ja Wun  
Co M, 21st  
KIA, DOA, GSW head, ROK soldier, Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Sevening, William B.  
RA37699664  
Co D, 21st  
KIA, Shrapnel, Lt chest & Lt leg, Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Non-Battle

Vastano, Vincent T.  
Cpl RA11165001  
Co B, 21st  
Poss back injury, Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Graviano, John V.  
Sgt RA12300820  
Co A, 21st  
Observation for trench foot, Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Keipinger, Lyle K.  
Cpl RA16295672  
Co K, 21st  
Observation for trench foot, Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Loar, James T.  
Pfc RA13314048  
Co L, 21st  
Observation for trench foot, Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Ferris, Robert H.  
Pvt RA16272506  
Co D, 21st  
Pain lilcel, rt cheek, Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

Noble Kenneth H.  
Pfc RA19304452  
Md Co 21st  
GSW, Lt hand, (acc), Hyonbang-ni, Korea.

(2) Replacements.

None.

(3) Prisoners of War.

Three (3).
## CASUALTY REPORT

### BATTLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Service No.</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Injury/Condition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Todd, Marion H.</td>
<td>Sgt</td>
<td>RA15006600</td>
<td>Co L</td>
<td>21st</td>
<td>7 Feb 51</td>
<td>Hyonbang-ni, Kor.</td>
<td>KIA, DOA, Shrapnel, chest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Van Allen, Loyd A.</td>
<td>Cpl</td>
<td>RA19261630</td>
<td>Co L</td>
<td>21st</td>
<td>7 Feb 51</td>
<td>Hyonbang-ni, Kor.</td>
<td>KIA, DOA, Concussion, Shrapnel rt leg</td>
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<td>Wentz, Durward</td>
<td>Pfc</td>
<td>RA55002050</td>
<td>Co L</td>
<td>21st</td>
<td>7 Feb 51</td>
<td>Hyonbang-ni, Kor.</td>
<td>KIA, DOA, GSW rt temple &amp; throat</td>
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<td>Rounds, Edward P.</td>
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<td>RA12350174</td>
<td>Co L</td>
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<td>7 Feb 51</td>
<td>Hyonbang-ni, Kor.</td>
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<td>Musick, Orville D.</td>
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<td>RA19314348</td>
<td>Co L</td>
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<td>Dail, John D.</td>
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<td>21st</td>
<td>7 Feb 51</td>
<td>Hyonbang-ni, Kor.</td>
<td>KIA, DOA, GSW abdomen</td>
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<td>Murphy Arthur J.</td>
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### Non-Battle

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(2) Replacements. None.

(3) Prisoners of War. Two (2).
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(2) Replacements.
None.

(3) Prisoners of War.
None

(4) Discipline, Law and Order.
No comments

(5) Burials and Graves Registration.
None

(6) Morale.
Morale of the Organization - Good.
CASUALTY STATISTICS

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Larson, Charles E.
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Lewis, Norman
Pvt-2 Koksu-Ri, S-K 15 Feb 51 LIA, F

Marshall, John E.
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Maskell, Sherman E.
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McDonald, Buford D.
MSgt Yok-Kok, S-K 18 Feb 51 SWA HQ 1st Bn

McNamara, George W.
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Medley, James W.
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Pfc Koksu-Ri, S-K 13 Feb 51 SWA G

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Miller, Roy C.
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Moran, James I.
Pfc Chonyang, S-K 6 Feb 51 LWA M

Morrow, George P.
Sgt Hyonbang, S-K 11 Feb 51 LIA D

Murphy, Arthur J.
Pfc Sojon-Ni, S-K 16 Feb 51 LWA L

Nemeth, Paul J.
Sgt Hyonbang-Ni, S-K 9 Feb 51 SWA C

Nitta, Lawrence H.
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Niarhos, Robert E.
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Perry, Eugene L.
Pcf Chonson-Ri, S-K 9 Feb 51 LIA K

Pestana, Frederick N.
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Pikans, Freddie F.
Sfc Sojon-Ni, S-K 8 Feb 51 DOW L

Porter, Clyde S.
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Recchia, Raymond
Pvt-2 Chonson-Ni, S-K 23 Feb 51 Deceased I

Redmon, James W.
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Repplinger, Elmer R.
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Risner, Carl
Pcf Chonson-Ri, S-K 9 Feb 51 MIA E

Ritchie, Wilfred N.
Pcf Hokchon, S-K 22 Feb 51 SWA Hq 1st Bn

Robledo, Longino
Sfc Chonyang, S-K 6 Feb 51 LWA C

Roessler, Alexander
Sfc Chongan-Ni, S-K 2 Feb 51 DOI Hq & Hq Co

Rose, Arthur J.
Pfc Sojon-Ni, S-K 6 Feb 51 KIA L

Rounds, Edward P.
Pcf Sojon-Ni, S-K 6 Feb 51 KIA L

Rushmore, Donald J.
Pvt-2 Chonson-Ri, S-K 9 Feb 51 MIA E

Salvages, Clayton L.
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Sanson, Emmerson M.
Pcf Soyu-Ri, S-K 6 Feb 51 LIA K

Scaia, Lawrence I.
Pcf Hyonbang, S-K 12 Feb 51 SWA C

Scarborough, Jack K.
Pvt-2 Chonson-Ri, S-K 16 Feb 51 DOW M

Schultz, George W.
Pcf Sojon-Ni, S-K 7 Feb 51 LWA L

Sevining, William B.
Pcf Chonson-Ni, S-K 6 Feb 51 KIA D

Sharpe, William H.
Sfc Sojon-Ni, S-K 6 Feb 51 LWA L

Shertzer, Gordon R.
Pcf Sojon-Ni, S-K 6 Feb 51 MIA L

Skerry, Gerald A.
Pcf Soyu-Ri, S-K 6 Feb 51 KIA K

Smith, Charles W.
Pvt-2 Chonson-Ri, S-K 6 Feb 51 LWA C

Smith, Herman
Pcf Chonson-Ri, S-K 9 Feb 51 MIA E

Smoot, Jimmy W.
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Soto, Stephen C.
Pvt-2 Chonyang, S-K 6 Feb 51 LWA D

Spath, William C.
Pvt-2 Hyonbang-Ni, S-K 5 Feb 51 LWA Med

Spreadorcher, Donald D.
Pcf Sojon-Ni, S-K 6 Feb 51 LWA L

Sterwalt, Albert C.
Pcf Yuman-Ni, S-K 9 Feb 51 RMC G

Stout, Arthur V.
Sgt Chonson-Ri, S-K 9 Feb 51 MIA E

Studebaker, Lester
MSgt Sojon-Ni, S-K 6 Feb 51 SWA L

Talley, James R.
Pcf Chonson-Ri, S-K 6 Feb 51 LWA C

Tarkas, George J.
Pcf Chonson-Ri, S-K 6 Feb 51 SWA M

Taylor, Robert J.
Pcf Chonson-Ri, S-K 6 Feb 51 SWA B

Teran, Roberto P.
Pcf Chonson-Ri, S-K 23 Feb 51 SWA I

Theros, George
Pvt-2 Chonyang, S-K 6 Feb 51 LIA M

Thorpe, Dale W.
Pcf Chonyang, S-K 6 Feb 51 LWA Med
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FEBRUARY 6, 1951 COMMAND REPORTS

6 Feb 1951

0105 1 From 2d Bn: G Co reported MG fire at approx CS6939. Called 1st Bn and they will check.

0130 2 1st Bn reported an attack on left flank of B Co. Small force using burp guns and small arms. 2 unconfirmed mortar rounds.

0145 3 Capt Parker S-3 3d Bn called that L Co is receiving mortar and small arms fire. Notified Div.

0205 4 From 1st Bn CO: The attack on B Co is a large patrol and at the present time is being contained.

0207 5 CO called that he was leaving for 3d Bn. Informed CO 3d Bn.

0250 6 From 2d Bn: E Co left flank plat rec’d mortar fire from across river believed to come from 1st Bn area. Called 1st Bn and requested them to check their mortar fire across river. B Co still receiving arms fire.

0252 7 From G-2: 19th Inf right flank of E Co receiving attack by unknown No of En CS649410 at 0245 hours. Notified all Bns.

0255 8 From 1st Bn: D Co has been firing mortars at Kumi-ri CS698445. Will lift fires.


0333 10 From 3d Bn CO: L Co position broken through and K Co being sent to close gap.

0340 11 From G-3: 19th Inf reports many enemy came through between their 2d and 3d Bns. Many enemy in vic CS650410.

0350 12 From 3d Bn: 2 platoons from K Co moving up hill to restore L Co’s position. Position believed to be restored. Called G-3 and G-2.
6 Feb 1951

0400 13 From 1st Bn, B Co receiving MG fire and mortar fire believed that they have located MG.

0400 14 From 19th Inf: 2d Bn 19th counter attacking to restore line. Moving 2d Bn rear CP to Chonyang.

0401 15 G-3 called: 19th Inf 2d Bn counter attacking to restore line, Have alerted 19th ROK REGT. Request coordinated of all co’s on line.

0440 16 From 1st Bn S-3: Left flank of B Co had some difficulty, Sending extra platoon to reinforce. situation believed under control. Enemy believed to be attacking In force in that area,

0445 17 From 3d Bn 5-3: Believe that enemy that came through L Co moved east and attacked left flank of B Co. Believed situation is straightened out,

0530 18 From 1st Bn: At 060105 listening post at CS608362 opened fire on enemy. En returned fire and fled. Later some mortar rounds came in area knocking out oommo, 1st Bn patrol recalled to strengthen position NK at 0205. Situation cleared. No further activity.

0600 19 From 1st Bn. B Co left flank situation has cleared up and calmed down considerable.

0600 20 L Co in grenade fight, Don’t know results.

0630 21 From 19th Inf S-3: 21st left flank Co firing on 19th Inf G Co who is now vic CS650410.

0650 22 From 3d Bn: Left flank plat Ldr reports this plat haven’t fired a shot but is receiving fire from the west direction. Rest of area quiet.

0710 23 CO returned from 3d Bn and reported to CP that 1 Bn attacked C Co and 1st Bn while Regt (-) hit 3d Bn, Line was restored approx 0650. Air liaison officer dispatched immediately to 1st Bn.

0830 24 CO 1st Bn called for continual coverage of area by ll also that maps be forwarded to Air TAC.
6 Feb 1951

0832  25  Called G-3 re II in air at all times also reported the enemy still in force S of river.

0835  26  CO 1st Bn reported air strike coming in.

0836  27  S-3 19th Inf called reported hearing explosions in 3d Bn 21st Inf area.

0837  28  Called 3d Bn: 3d Bn in progress of retaking hill. Request 1st Bn not to fire in area. Slow work but are retaking ground.

0838  29  19th Inf S-3 reported 1 motorized company enroute to right flank of 19th Inf 2d Bn.

0839  30  G-3 called: Sending air to assist,

0840  31  52d FA Bn called: Arty was preparing to register and fire on enemy and were called off to let air in.

0845  32  Casualty report: 1st Bn 2 WIA evacuated 3 Battle fatigue; 1 Hysterical paralysis. 3d Bn: 12 WIA evacuated, 2 returned to duty.

0905  33  Called 3d Bn EX Off: L Co to approx 100 yds from top of hill. 3d Bn old CP is still held by En but mortars are being placed on it. Situation is still under control and all that has to be done is to retake old positions;

0915  34  19th Inf S-3 called stating that his unit is trying to retake old positions and have situation under control. Air OP reports En column of Inf at CS614409.

0917  35  From G-3 Air: B-26 strike for 1000 is called off

0935  36  CO departed for 1st and 3d Bns.

0940  37  Maj Anderson called stating Engrs expect to have channel open by 1000 and boats running by that time.

0945  38  Col Young G-3 called for results of nights activity to include friendly and enemy casualties.

1000  39  Called 1st Bn for report of results of nights activities, B Co’s left flank was where enemy hit and present sending patrol to investigate.
6 Feb 1951

1002 40
19th Inf S-3 called for our situation. Stated 19th is having a little trouble retaking the positions but believe situation under control.

1005 41
Called G-3 Capt Sweet, En came from hill 142 est 1 Regt, Came between B and L Cos up to hill 296. 1st Bn has 6 casualties so far, 3d Bn 15 casualties so far. Eat En casualties 200 KIA 400 WIA. Arty and air hitting vic 678430 and 662428.

1035 42
CO 1st Bn called: B Co made contact with L Co; Have retaken hill 296. Line extends back to left rear behind hill where enemy is now. L Co preparing counterattack to take hill. 10 WIA 1 possible KIA. 1 plat C Co attached to B Co.

1115 43
From 3d Bn: As of 1115 hours L Co was attacking to restore, former positions. I Co in position, No info at present on K Co progress,

1135 44
From 3d Bn Ex Off. CO 3d Bn stated that En putting up stiff resistance and having quite a time trying to restore old positions.

1210 45
Engrs have boats ready to move at approx 1300 hours at Chonyang.

1233 46
From 1st, 2d, and 3d Bns: Friendly aircraft straffing front lines.

1237 47
Called G-3 air to call off aircraft.

1240 48
Called 1s, 2d and 3d Bns to give detailed report on damage done by friendly air.

1245 49
From 3d Bn S-2: Planes struck villages at 664417 and destroyed 2 - 3/4T trucks w/4.2" mortar ammo on them. No report on casualties;

1245 50
Col Young called re psychological warfare team to broadcast New Year message to Chinese. Was told to go to A Co.

1305 51
From 3d Bn S-2: Corrected report on air straffing: NK one SK Gimlet wounded. Quite a few vehicles got shot up but they think that they are OK, 1 trailer w/4.2 ammo caught fire and is under control. Trailer may be used again. 14 or 15 civilians killed or wounded.
6 Feb 1951

1315  52  2d Bn patrol made contact with 23d Inf at Koksuri at 1300.

1325  53  Maj Ramsey called: Will send Lt Evins back.

1345  54  From CO 1st Bn: B-26s were to be controlled by Mosquito
         and Mosquito put them on target and left to go to the aid of
         a jet flight. Air controller. Could not contact B-26s because
         they were on a different channel. No Casualties or
         equipment lost In let Bn. A couple of villages
         destroyed. Notified G-3 air of msg #104 and 107.

1347  55  From 19th Inf S-3: Tempest 6 and Danger 6 left for 19th
         Bns and is checking on whether 19th and 21st is tied in and
         as to how many enemy are being killed,

1350  56  Col Young called stating that 2d Div G-3 arrived at Div CP
         checking on contact patrols between 2d Bn and 23d Inf.
         Wps notified of Msg timed 1315. Also was informed of 2d
         Bn patrol has been at 719463 at 1130 with no enemy
         contacts

1355  57  Col Young called: Air OP reports 4 or 5 wounded at
         CS680460, Request patrol edge over to that area to
         investigate. Notified 2d Bn.

1415  58  Blue 3 called says 3d Bn now has 2 knolls located at
         CS664424 and 669425. En is still holding in between,
         Should be cleared out soon. En retreating to villages via N
         and W of river. Reported to G-3.

1430  59  From CO: Hill 296 has been taken.

1510  60  CO returned to GP,

1550  61  G-3 air called for targets of B-26 tonight.
         Following given CS655431, CS635435, CS668438.

1610  62  Col Dean called and said we could get 2 or 3 bags of
         polished rice a day at Osan-ni.

1615  63  3d Engr Ex Off called and has Lt Roberts going to 3d Bn to
         put in Fougasse, if we want it. Suggested CS649410 as for
         locations Will!! need mortar shell or amber flare. Notified
         3d Bn 5-3,
6 Feb 1951

1630 64 Maj Brown called said no wounded troops were located at 680460. They are at vic 6644. Reported to G-3.

1650 65 3d Bn secured lines at 1515.

1710 66 From 3d Bn CO: Last report 3d Bn casualties estimated 150. Lost 1 Off. Need a mo, radio and wire, Colonel Staab informed him 3-4 and commo knows what he needs. Lot En casualties 600.

1715 67 Called 1st Bn, CO who stated the 3d Bn was going to close the 400 yd sparsely covered area. Booby traps and trip flares were set out by 1st Bn to their front, 3 normal arty barrages are in front of 1st Bn closer than yesterday.

1735 68 2d Bn: Helicopters located wounded in 6445 grid and dropped them a message stating they will return tomorrow and drop them a radio,

1750 69 The gap between 1st and 3d Bns is still open. 1st Bn will plug it up with one reserve plat.

1754 70 Maj Ramsey will call later and give report on Air Reoon, En bugging out from 296 to the NE.

1830 71 Recd attack from left flank same as last night Many enemy using arty on enemy advance. S-3 is going to have 3d Bn to put plat in gap between 1st and 3d Bns.

1900 72 Called G-3 Col Young: En hitting at Vic 2000 yds west of hill 296 in L Co positions. 3d Bn reports many enemy.

1905 73 From lot Bn: Negative report.

1910 74 From G-3: 2d Bn 5th Inf is being sent up now and will be attached to 21st.

1915 75 En est at plat strength are contained at present time.

1920 76 Called G-3 Col Young: En plat size is contained, Recommend 2d Bn of 5th Inf to move In between lot and 3d Bn.

1925 77 From Maj Thomas G-3 Air: Flare ship on the way.
6 Feb 1951

1930 78 Called 5th Inf: Asked how long it will take for his unit to reach Hyonbang-ni. Ans: approx 1 hour. Representative 21st will meet them there. Send representative of S-3 to 21st OF CS692338 to be briefed.

1935 79 Called 3d Bn Ex Off on situation. Only sporadic firing heard now. Lines still intact. Informed 3d Bn that 2d Bn of 5th Inf will be attached to 21st and that the plan is to put then in between 1st and 3d Bns, K Go will move over to the left and reinforce L Co. Tomorrow you may plan on pulling out 1 Co for reserve,

1945 80 Called 1st Bn S-3 and informed him of 3d Bn positions and of plan of deployment of 2d Bn 5th Inf.

1950 81 CO called and stated that 2d Bn 5th Inf will food when they arrive, CO was notified and approved of plan for deployment of 2d Bn 5th Inf,

1955 82 Maj Anderson departed to meet 2d Bn 5th Inf at Hyonbangni.

1956 83 2d Bn Negative report,

2005 84 1st Bn Negative report.

2020 85 CO 1st Bn called stated that the platoon of C Co is on its way to C Co CP and asked for approv 1 of that platoon to be used in counter attack plans since 2d Bn 5th Inf is on its way.

2045 86 From 3d Bn: All quiet at present.

2120 87 From 19th Inf S-3: Engrs are bringing up searchlight and will set it up vic CS6740. Notified all Bns.

2125 88 1st Bn 5th Inf representative arr CP and was oriented as to mission and sector.

2155 89 Notified 1st Bn 5th Inf to feed his men prior to moving into position.

2200 90 Radio Call for 1st Bn 5th Inf is complaint.

2207 91 1st Bn Negative.
6 Feb 1951

2208  92
From 2d Bn: Whistling heard in village near river.

2210  93
Called 3d Bn to have guides to guide 5th Inf Bn into position. L Co received 4 casualties just a little while ago.

2210  94
2d Bn reported illuminating shell exposed 15 man patrol in vic CS709426. Patrol going around hill going north.

2245  95
Maj Anderson called reference Domino’s position on line; referred to Capt Wilson who stated that position as shown on Domino 3’s map were correct.

2255  96
From Danger 3: Mission for 21st; Conduct string combat patrols and recon patrol in zone 7 Feb 51. If recon indicated enemy at withdrawing or has weakened his force to your front seize this opportunity to continue aggressively your advance to Phase Line Dog. “Do not want to endanger getting a large unit cut off.” Keep close liaison with flanks at all times and follow up all patrols;

2300  97
1st and 2d and 3d Bns negative report.

2345  98
G-3 called wanting to know if there was any further development on the situation on our front. Informed G-3 that other than patrol section, there doesn’t seem to be anything happening. G-3 stated that when 1st Bn 5th Inf closed, to inform him. Also inform his of any change in position.

2400  99
1st Bn negative.

2400  100
G-3 called asking for action on L Co if it has cleared up. Was arty and mortar put on enemy?
Ans: YES.
Did enemy use MGs?
Ans: Small Arms and auto wpns.
Love Company 50/51 Roster

This is a list of the personnel who served with “L” Company, 21st Inf Regt, 24th Inf Div during the period 1 June 1950 thru 31 May 1951 (to the best of our knowledge).

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<td>Acheson</td>
<td>Donald</td>
<td>R</td>
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<td>K</td>
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Peterson Charles D US55045126
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Powers Roy RA16277883 Died 11/27/02
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Rogers Willard J RA 6391009 Died 6/26/72
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Rounds Edward P RA12350174 Killed in Action 2/06/51
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<td>Yagura</td>
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<td>William</td>
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<td>RA15267574</td>
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<td>Young</td>
<td>Raymond</td>
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<td>Zarkowski</td>
<td>Stanley</td>
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<td>RA6716892</td>
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</table>
**THESE ALSO SERVED**

While not officially part of “LOVE”, the following field artillery and medical personnel were a part of us. Many of us who survived would not have had they not been. We regret that more detail is not at hand.

**F.O. Group “B” Battery 52nd F.A. Bn**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Baer</td>
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<td>Dossett</td>
<td>James</td>
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<td>RA15421253</td>
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<td>Hardy</td>
<td>Olin</td>
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<td>O 2210339</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heiser</td>
<td>Donald</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>RA13007246</td>
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<td>Groth</td>
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Pvt Cho was erroneously listed as dead by the ROK Army who found it more expedient to issue a second serial number than correct the error.
Glossary

57mm rifle A company level recoiless weapon that functions by exhausting some of the explosive gases to a coaxial chamber and out the rear of the weapon generating thrust to counteract the recoil.

6X6 6 wheel vehicle with all 6 driven (usually 2 1/2 ton truck).

A-frames A primitive Korean backpack made from tree forks and woven rice straw for straps. The straps are wide and they are surprizingly comfortable to use as a lot of the load weight is thrown into the back just above the hips.

AGO Adjutant General Office

Air Panels Two brightly colored panels laid out in patterns to both direct aircraft and identify friendly troops.

APO Army Post Office

Assembly Area (see) Staging Area

AT-6 A W WII “Advanced Trainer” with retracting wheels used in Korea as a spotter aircraft to identify ground targets for the higher speed jets.

Aussie Australian.

AWOL Absent without official leave

Bali bali Origin unknown to me — similar to hubba hubba or chop chop. Used by GIs to indicate urgency.

BAR Browning automatic rifle.

Bazooka A tubular projector for a rocket-propelled projectile.

Big Switch The prisoner exchange when the truce was established.

Bn Battalion

BOQ Bachelor Officer Quarters

Brits British Soldiers

Carbine, M2 A 30 calibre semi or full automatic fire weapon. In Korea, a standard setup was to tape two 30 round banana magazines together so that when one emptied, they could be released, turned and reinserted quickly to give another 30 rounds of fire.

Cathole A small hole dug with a trenching tool to defecate in and then cover.

CCA Chinese Communist Army

Check Mags Switching between the two magnetos on a light aircraft while watching the tachometer for any abnormal drop in rpm.

Class X supply Slang for Liquor Ration

CO Commanding Officer

CP Command Post

Cpl Corporal

Crackerbox A boxy military ambulance set up to haul four patients on litters, two high on either side of the interior.

CSMO Close Station March Order
CT  Combat team. A complete fighting unit.
CWO  Chief Warrant Officer
Div.  Division
EE-8  Field telephone
EM  Enlisted man or enlisted men
FDC  Fire Direction Center
FO  Forward Observer (usually artillery but can be heavy mortar, aircraft director or other weapons fired from a remote point.)

Freedom Village  The village where the prisoner exchange took place after the cease-fire of 1953.
Friendly Fire  Arms fire of any kind originated by one's own forces.

The G Section Designations
The sections of the staff of a general officer in command of a brigade or larger unit.

G-1  Personnel and Administration.
G-2  Intelligence.
G-3  Operations and Training.
G-4  Supply.
GED  General Educational Development
GI or GIs  Government Issue literally. As used, an American soldier or soldiers.
GO  General Order
Gook  A good dictionary defines the term thus: gook\(^1\) (g\(k\), g\(k\)) n. Variant of gock. gook\(^2\) (g\(k\)) n. Offensive Slang. 1. Used as a disparaging term for an Asian person. 2. Used as a disparaging term for a North Vietnamese soldier or guerrilla in the Vietnam War. [Origin Unknown.] It is believed but cannot be proved that it originated much earlier than the Vietnam war. I speculate a one word question by a Korean native to an American GI “Miguk?” (Korean language for American?) was misinterpreted as “Me Gook!” by American GIs and it stuck. I know we used it in Korea.
Greasegun  In Army nomenclature: “gun, sub-machine, Cal. 45, M-3.”
Hangul  Written Korean Language
Heat  High Explosive Anti Tank
HEs  High Explosive artillery rounds
High angle fire  An artillery technique for impacting a target such as the far side of a hill when a normal trajectory would pass harmlessly overhead.
Honey well  A large pit with a building constructed around it and usually two poles across the pit where villagers relieved their bowels. In the 1950s this excrement was dipped into “honey buckets” and carried to the fields for use as fertilizer.
Honey buckets Usually two containers to balance the load attached to the ends of a short pole and carried across the shoulders. (see Honey well)

I & R Intelligence and Reconnaissance.

Interpreter Individual speaking two or more languages who assists conversation between two or more persons who do not understand the others language.

IR Infantry Regiment

KMAG Korea Military Advisory Group

LT Lieutenant

LTC Lieutenant Colonel

M-1 World War II’s most popular model of the Army’s .30 calibre rifle.

M1911 .45 A .45 caliber 8 round magazine semi-automatic pistol worn as a side arm.

Mama San Any female who has attained an age sufficient to bear children.

MASH Mobile Army Surgical Hospital

Miguk English alphabet equivalent of Korean word for American

MP Military Policeman

Msgt Master Sergeant

Mung A dish made in the field from whatever is at hand combined with whatever else may be “acquired” locally, nourishing if not palatable. e.g tomato catsup mixed with boiled rice.

NCO Non-Commissioned Officer

NKA North Korean Army

NKs North Koreans

OCS Officer Candidate School

OD Officer of the Day

OP Observation Point

Papa San Any male who has attained an age sufficient to father children.

Pfc Private First Class

Plasma Cell-free, sterilized blood plasma, used in transfusions.

Police (verb). To clean or to pick up trash.

Poncho Rectangular piece of rubberized or otherwise waterproofed material with a hole just off center for a man’s head to go through. Worn as a raincoat, and also used as a shelter-half (half of a pup tent).

POW Prisoner of war.

Pvt Private

PX Post Exchange. A soldiers store for sundry items.

R&R Rest and Recuperation

Rct Recruit

RCT Regimental Combat Team. A complete fighting unit of regimental strength.

Registration Noting impact points of trial artillery rounds for called-in coordinates.
Recon Platoon  Reconnaissance unit of platoon strength.
ROKs  Republic of Korea force members

**The S Section Designations**
The four staff sections of a regiment or smaller unit:

S-1  Personnel and Administration.
S-2  Intelligence.
S-3  Operations and Training.
S-4  Supply.

SCR300  A heavy backpack radio that worked sometimes
Sfc  Sergeant First Class
Sgt  Sergeant
shelter half  Half a pup-tent. Two soldiers can snap these together to form a tent for two people.
Slit Trench  A trench used by a larger group of troops for sanitary purposes.
SP  Self Propelled
Staging Area  Camp or area used to prepare troops for movement.
TDY  Temporary Duty
T O & E  Table of Organization and Equipment. Specifies the personnel and Equipment assigned to a unit of the military.
VD  Venereal Disease
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- 3rd Battalion: 27
- 57 mm rifle M18: 207

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LOVE COMPANY
Mission Statement

by Jim Fine

War is an intensely personal thing. For the individual infantryman, war seldom extends more than a few yards. Because of this narrow focus, rarely will two soldiers agree on what took place in a given battle or engagement, unless they were foxhole buddies. Much of what is recounted has to be taken with the knowledge that what you hear is not necessarily what you saw or felt at the time. What you hear is a part of the person telling his tale, part of his vision, part of his hearing, part of his thinking, his experience, yes even a part of his soul.

I have come to this view reluctantly over the course of many years. I never gave it any thought until I began to attend LOVE Company reunions several years ago. Listening to a story which occurred at a place I remembered vividly, I recall thinking, “Hell, that’s not what happened there.” I believed the person telling the story was a truthful individual. I rolled this over and over in my mind. I finally realized that what I really wanted to hear was an exact account of the place as I remembered it. Complete agreement with my memories was what I wanted. And that will simply never happen. I think of the old TV or radio show that used to commence “There are ten million stories in the city. This is one of them.” The history of LOVE Company, if it is to be a warm living history will consist of these individual accounts to a large degree. Otherwise it will be another cold account of those things written elsewhere and questioned nowhere.
Provided by General Volney Warner to members of Love Company and used here with his permission.

3rd Platoon Leader Lieutenant Volney Warner .... Later
All who served in a rifle company during the first year of the Korean War will agree with General Sherman.

This book is an anthology of the experiences of a number of “L” Company, 21st Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division members. The tales are either written by members of “L” Company or by others about members of “L” Company. It is not a book on strategy or what tactics might have yielded a better result or what training would have fielded a better more able army. It has always been intended to simply answer the question, “Granpa, what did you do in the Korean War?”

This rifle company operated with a T O & E that set the number of trucks, jeeps, radios, telephones, rifles, etc, and personnel by grades and rank totaling 211 authorized men and officers.

"L" Company morning report shows that during this time frame approximately 600 men and 26 officers were assigned, but at no time did the company have more than 183 of the assigned people present for duty.

In addition to the assigned people "L" Company had approximately 200 Republic of Korea Soldiers attached with never more then 45 present for duty at any time. These fine soldiers are referred to in this book as Gimlets.

Also attached were the very important field artillery and medical personnel who were a part of us. As one "L" Company man wrote, "Many of us who survived would not have had they not been."

On the way south to the Naktong River, then north to the Yalu River. "L" Company was one of three rifle companies that accomplished the first successful attack against the North Korean Army.
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Love Company Memorial Service

Members, guests, relatives and friends of Love Company, 21st Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division.

It now becomes our solemn duty and privilege to devote a portion of our reunion time to the memory of our comrades in arms, who above all we would like to have in our midst today. Those heroes of our company who have laid down their lives in the service of their country.

This friendship we enjoy is different. It is engendered among those who fight together on the field of battle, risking their lives not only for the cause in which they fight, but also for one another.

It is different from every other kind of friendship.

Different from the ties of flesh and blood.

Different from the ties of business association.

Different from the ties of social acquaintance.

Once cemented this military and combat friendship will last forever. Our gathering here today is proof of that. Our memorial service is proof that it lasts beyond the grave. It is therefore fitting and proper that as we gather each year to renew our comradeship with one another we should also dedicate and consecrate some of our reunion time to the evergreen memory of those whom we administered the last rites on the field of battle. In this spirit, we have erected in our hearts symbols of their living memory which will never be effaced.

I now request we rise and stand in reverence to the memories of our fallen comrades.

Let us pray

Almighty god we give you thanks for the glorious and heroic spirit of patriotism which you implanted in the hearts of our fallen comrades, which enabled them to find the strength to make the supreme sacrifice to lay down their lives for their country. Without this sacrifice, without this bravery, without this heroism, our victory on the field of combat would have been impossible.
The holy book says “greater love hath no man, than a man lay down his life for another” and by this token, these comrades whose memory we commemorate today, paid the highest price. Not in money or perishable goods, but in flesh and blood for that priceless gift of freedom which we enjoy today.

Grant we ask you oh Lord that we, the living, may also be inspired by a spark of the consuming flame of faith and courage, so that we may labor and strive during all our days for the preservation of that freedom for which they gave the last full measure of devotion and grant also, oh God, the ray of inspiration to those men in whose hands there lie today, the destinies of nations. That they may never make a decision either in the halls of government or at the conference table of peace treaties, which might be inimical to the god given rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. For which so many of our comrades laid down their lives.

Let us pray together

Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.

Amen
An Excerpt from Chapter 4:

COMPANY “L” - “I ’LL SWEAR TO MY DYING DAY, WE WERE DIFFERENT!”

by T L Epton

“Concentrated within this small company were some exceptional officers and non-commissioned officers. With few exceptions, these leaders were capable, well-trained, and had the welfare of their men at heart. The over-all leadership record speaks for itself. In this small company alone, four men were given battlefield commissions in a one-year period. At least five of the platoon leaders went on and later became colonels and another became a four-star general. That’s a pretty good record from one small infantry combat outfit called “L” Company! Like coaches of great teams, these young but capable officers played an important part in molding the company into one tight and lasting unit — members of which would be proud that they fought on the team, and who would not forget each other in the years ahead.”

The Officers of Love Company at mess in Korea.

L to R: The enlisted man is James Loar, Joe Griffith (front), Hugh Brown, Thomas Dreisonstok (guitar), Woodrow Chandler, Carl Bernard, Volney Warner, T L Epton, Olin Hardy (standing)—Photo by Lindsey Henderson
LOVE COMPANY

Kumamoto, Japan
Photo taken Spring 1950 at Camp Wood Ball Field.
Not all members of L Company were in the photo.
Photo courtesy of Benny J. Nelson.
1st row:
1. Tommy Bishop
2. Robert Halloway
3. Paul R. Sanders
4. Edward Hluboky
5. Richard Spon
6. James Goelzer
7. Allan B. McCauley
8. Odean T. Cox
9. Franklin Mitchell
10. John Krimsky
11. Thomas Floyd
12. Tommy Conception
13. Emil E. Nimmo
14. Alex Danowski
15. Leonard W. Anderson

2nd row:
1. Howard Cady
2. Fernando Powers
3. Willie Gay
4. Mac Mrad
5. Virgil Anderson

3rd row:
1. Earl Culp
2. Richard Szepanski
3. Walter F. Wojcichowski

4th row:
1. William R. Jester
2. Alvin L. Phillips
3. Takashi Mukai
4. Charles Boyer
5. Richard Shaver
6. Raymond Brown
7. Amos Jiron
8. Donnal Smith

5th row:
1. John J. Tiernan
2. Norman Boutwell
3. William York
4. James Brawner
5. Jesse Durham
6. William York
7. Richard White
8. Charles Hoak

6th row:
1. George J. Srogoncik
2. Roy Surrells
3. James H. Scott
4. Edmond Weber
5. Raymond Alford
6. Bobby McCormack
7. Charles G. Conley
8. Norman R. Henrickson
9. Clifton B. Bergman
11. George Wm. Smith
12. Anthony Hajdinak
13. Carl C. Jackson
14. John A. Shimshock
15. Leonard J. Williams
16. Jesus C. Bazan
This book commenced on paper in the fall of 1986 as a project to assemble the names of the people who appeared in a copy of the morning report (“Love Company Roster — page 345”). It began long before that in the mind of Hugh Brown. After that a document called www — “Where We Were” which led to “Love Company 50/51” — page 281. Lindsey P. Henderson’s photos are used exclusively thoughout except where noted.

Some typical army documentation surrounding Hill 296, February 6 1951 is included in Appendix A to capture more of the flavor of the events. It is interesting to note the disparity between what we were feeling, doing, and experiencing with what was being entered in the 21st Regiment logs. For instance the commencement of the Chinese attack was noted in the logs as 0145, my recollection is that it began earlier than this but perhaps not. This first chaotic period during which several were killed and more wounded becomes a three short sentence entry in the regimental log at 0300:


In Appendix B we have assembled two rosters, one for the American personnel (Love Company Roster) which was put together from entries in the morning reports for the one year period covered, and one for the Korean personnel in the 5th Platoon. This roster may not be as accurate as it was a one time roster the Platoon Leader discovered in his papers around 1996.

We have added one name to this roster who was discovered by an odd coincidence of fate. Our FO worked for a time next to a liquor store in Georgia. One day he entered the liquor store and noting the proprietor was oriental said, “You’re Korean aren’t you?” “Hell no!” came the reply, “I’m American!” He had immigrated after the war. He said he had been in the army during the war and when asked what unit he stated, “L” Company, 21st Regiment.” After the initial surprize, a meeting of Hugh Brown, Olin Hardy (the FO) and Yong Moon Cho was arranged. Cho related events at “Sleeping Bag Hill” that only one who was there would know.

Olin Hardy, Yong Moon Cho and Hugh Brown
Stone Mountain Georgia — 1994
Photo courtesy Hugh A. Brown