

My Two Years as an Infantryman in the United States Army

A REPORT

By

Frank McGill

March 13, 2006



Frank McGill in Caribou, Maine
October or November 1950

REPORT

From: Frank McGill

To: Grandchildren

Date: 2 Jul 2005

Subj.: My Two Years as an Infantryman in the United States Army

Ref: (a) Monthly Command Reports, 45th Infantry Division, 179th Infantry Regiment, APO 86, for October, November and December 1952

(b) Topographic Maps, Army Map Service, Korea, L751 and L851

Encl.: (1) Photographs, seventeen

(2) Maps, round trip road route of troop truck convoy, Camp Rucker, Alabama to Fort Hood, Texas

(3) Maps, ocean route of troop transport ships, Seattle-Adak-Yokohama-Inchon

(4) Map, route of troop train from Inchon to Chuncheon in Korea and truck route from Chuncheon to Line Minnesota, the front line

(5) Map, AMS topographic, 179th Inf in reserve, Inje area in Korea, 1:50,000

(6) Maps, AMS topographic, road route for trucks from Inje north to Line Minnesota in Korea, 1:50,000

(7) Maps, AMS topographic, 179th INF regimental sector on Line Minnesota, the front line in Korea, 1:50,000 and 1:25,000

(8) Map Overlay, Enemy Positions, Annex #1 to Intelligence Section III, December 1952 Command Report, 179th Inf

(9) Copy, prayer card entitled "Prayer of a Soldier" and handmade calender

(10) Copy, D.D. Form 24, Report of Separation From the Armed Forces of The United States, 27 Jan 1953

(11) Copy, Discharge Certificate, United States Army Ready Reserve, 4 Feb. 1957

(12) Table of Organization and Equipment, 45th Inf Div, Korean War

(13) Copy, Daily Journal for 29 Oct 1952, Monthly Command Report, 179th
Infantry Regiment, APO 86

(14) Information for Researchers at Archives II in College Park, MD

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	v
WELCOME TO YOUR LOCAL DRAFT BOARD	1
FORT DEVENS, MA - A SHEET OF ICE	3
ALABAMA, HERE WE COME	5
MY FELLOW SOLDIERS AT CAMP RUCKER, AL.....	7
BASIC AND ADVANCED INFANTRY TRAINING AT CAMP RUCKER.....	12
SOME WEEKEND PASSES	17
INTELLIGENCE AND RECONNAISSANCE TRAINING AT FORT BENNING, GA.....	19
TRUCK CONVOY TO INFANTRY MANEUVERS AT FORT HOOD, TX	21
INFANTRY MANEUVERS IN AND AROUND FORT HOOD, TX	23
HOME FOR THIRTY DAY LEAVE BEFORE GOING OVERSEAS	25
FAR EAST, HERE I COME	26
ACROSS THE PACIFIC ON AN MSTs TROOP TRANSPORT SHIP	28
TOKYO BAY AND THE PORT OF YOKOHAMA	30
REPO DEPOT AT CAMP DRAKE, NORTH OF CITY OF TOKYO	32
HERE COME THE MARINES	35
INCHON TO CHUNCHON, KOREA BY TRAIN	36
45TH INFANTRY DIVISION REPLACEMENT COMPANY, NORTHEAST OF CHUNCHON.....	37
HISTORY OF THE 45 TH INFANTRY “THUNDERBIRD” DIVISION	39
THE SOYANG RIVER.....	40
GLOSSARY FOR US ARMY TOPOGRAPHICAL MAPS OF KOREA.....	41
THE TOWN OF INJE	42
MY BULLET PROOF VEST	44
MY CAREER ON THE ‘VICE’ SQUAD	45
SLUGFEST ON LINE KANSAS.....	46
NCO SCHOOL AT CHUNCHEON	47
WELCOME TO LINE MINNESOTA	48
CODES USED IN THE DAILY JOURNALS OF THE COMMAND REPORTS	51

2 ND BATTALION OBSERVATION POST ON HILL 749 AT DT29754560	53
ATTACK ON F (FOX) COMPANY OUTPOST	56
HISTORY OF THE NORTH KOREAN 45 TH INFANTRY DIVISION	59
MAP OVERLAY OF ENEMY POSITIONS ON LINE	60
AIRCRAFT SUPPORT	61
ATTACK ON HILL 812	62
LIFE ON THE LINE	64
G (GEORGE) COMPANY, 179 TH INFANTRY REGIMENT, HERE I COME	69
THREE MAN DAYLIGHT OBSERVATION PATROL	71
THANKSGIVING DAY, 1952	73
BACK IN THE FRONT LINE TRENCH.....	74
WINTER IN THE TRENCH	77
PATROLS	78
TIME TO GO HOME	81
CHUNCHON TO SEOUL BY TRAIN.....	84
45 TH INFANTRY DIVISION REPLACEMENT COMPANY NEAR SEOUL	85
REPLACEMENT DEPOT AT SASEBO, KYUSHU ISLAND, JAPAN.....	86
MY ONE DAY OF LEAVE IN THE SHOPPING DISTRICT OF SASEBO, JAPAN	88
BACK ACROSS THE PACIFIC, SASEBO TO SAN FRANCISCO	89
CAMP STONEMAN, CA TO FORT DEVENS, MA	91
SEPARATION FROM THE US ARMY AT FORT DEVENS, MA	92
CAMPAIGNS, US MILITARY IN KOREA	93
ENCLOSURES	

PREFACE

The originals for the command reports, reference (a), and the topographical maps, reference (b), are located in the National Archives at 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, Maryland 20740-6001. We know this federal government archive and research center as Archives II. Archives II operates under the National Archives and Records Administration, see enclosure (14).

Monthly Command Reports

Monthly Command Reports contain a considerable amount of information relating to the everyday activities of an infantry regiment while it is in combat. The report is composed of seven sections. Those sections are:

- I. Introduction
- II. Narrative of Activities
- III. Intelligence
- IV. Personnel
- V. Logistics
- VI. Chronology
- VII. Daily Journals

Most of a report is devoted to its Section VII, the Daily Journals. This journal is a minute by minute log of messages within the regiment from 0000 to 2400 each day of the month see sample, enclosure (13). The messages in these journals were typed up at the regimental headquarters for the 179th Inf as the events were occurring. The map location, for each event mentioned in the message, is identified in the journal by a six digit set of longitude and latitude coordinates. See enclosure 13 for a typical day's journal entries.

During October, November and December 1952 the typist for the 179th Inf was at the regimental headquarters in the village of Kajon-Ni. Kajon-Ni was on the west side of the Soyang River at coordinates DT310406. This was about two miles behind our position on the Main Line of Resistance (MLR), the Minnesota Line.

The originals for the command reports are under the control of Maria T Hanna, Modern Military Records (NWCTM), Textual Archives Services Division. They can be viewed and copied in the Textual Research Room on the 2nd floor of the archives. They are filed among the:

Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1917- (Record Group 407).

45TH Infantry Division, 179th Infantry Regiment

Folder: 345 - INF(179) Command Reports, October/November/December 1952

Box #: 4342

Location: 270/68/12/05

They total 700 pages: 100 for October, 300 for November and 300 for December. Excerpts from these reports are in enclosure (13). The originals at the Archives II were typed on legal size pages, i.e., 8 1/2" X 14". They have been modified by me, so that they fit on the 8 1/2" x 11" pages of this report to my grandchildren.

It is sad that the originals of these command reports are turning yellow and are becoming very brittle. The corners of the documents are beginning to break off because of this brittleness. I questioned the young lady, who oversees these records, as to when they would be microfilmed. She said that there is no plan to microfilm them. That was in either 1996 or 1998.

When originally typed in 1952, these reports were stamped SECRET SECURITY INFORMATION. In 1996 and later, as I was making copies of the reports, a declassification sticker 3/4" x 2" was affixed to the glass on the copy machine. As each copy was made, the declassification information was transposed onto each page. The guard at Archives II looked for this stamp on each page, as I left the building. He also made certain that none of the originals were inadvertently carried from the building.

Topographic Maps

Originals for the Army Map Service (AMS) topographical maps of Korea, reference (b), and enclosures (5), (6) and (7), are in the Cartographic & Architectural Research Room on the 3rd floor of Archives II. The originals are among the records of the Chief of Engineers, Records Group 77. A topographical map, in this report, is only a portion of the original map. The size of an original map is 22" x 29". Distances and elevations on these maps are in meters. They have a contour interval of ten meters. They date from the 1950's and do not show troop positions or troop movements.

The AMS topographic maps in this report are as follows:

The 1:50,000 map for Inje, enclosure (5), is sheeting 6828 III of Army Map Service Series (AMS) L 751.

The 1:50,000 map for Mandae-Ri, enclosure (6), the stretch of road between Inje and the Maine Line of Resistance (MLR), is sheet 6828 IV of AMS series L 751.

The 1:50,000 map for Sint'An-Ni, enclosure (7), the 179th INF sector on the MLR, the Minnesota Line, is sheet 6829 III of AMS series L 751.

The 1:25,000 map for Sint'An-Ni SE, enclosure (7), the 179th INF sector on the MLR is Sheet 6829 III SE of AMS series L 851.

These topographical maps were compiled in 1947 by the US Army Map Service (AMS&S) Corps of Engineers from the Japanese Imperial Land Survey, Sint'An-Ni, of the year 1918. They had been updated, but not verified, by reconnaissance. A more precise description of the Sint'An-Ni 1:50,000 map and our location is Sint'An-Ni, Korea; Kangwon-Do; N3820-E12800/10x15.

The map overlay of enemy positions, enclosure (8), has been reduced to 64 percent of its original size. That reduction was done so that the overlay will fit on an 8.5' x 11" page of this report. This overlay was Annex #1 to the Intelligence Section of the 179th Inf Command Report for the month of December 1952.

Still Pictures

The Still Picture Research Room on the 5th floor of the Archives II has thousands of Army Signal Corps photos taken during the war in Korea. I think that the photos are divided into two sections. One section is for individuals as they are presented medals. The other section contains views of the battlefield and is filed by geographical areas in Korea. If they are, we should look for photos taken in and around the area of Sint'An-Ni. I will do more research in the Still Picture Room in the future. The photo of the sniper in B CO, 179th Inf taken on 22 Nov 1952 was filed by geographical area.

I want a photograph, an aerial view, of Hill 749 and the adjacent Hill 812 for this report. Those two hills are still on the front line between North and South Korea. At this moment, I do not know where to obtain such a photo. Such a photo may be classified.

US Marine Report

Hill 749 and Hill 812 were originally captured by the United States Marines during the period 11 to 20 Sep 1951. They were taken by the 1st, 5th and 7th Regiments of the 1st Marine Division. The source for information on their fighting is the five volume report entitled "*U. S. Marine Operations in Korea*," published in 1962. The capture of Hills 749 and 812 are described in detail on pages 173 to 198 of Volume IV of that five-volume set. Volume IV is entitled "*The East Central Front*."

These two hills were captured in four days by the Marines in late 1951 during the warfare of "movement" in Korea. They were held by the 179th Inf during October, November and December of 1952 during the warfare of "position" in Korea.

Miscellaneous

An unanswered question is whether the Archives II has rosters for the enlisted troops assigned to the 179th Infantry Regiment of the 45th Infantry Division during 1952.

It is worth mentioning. The employees at Archives II are helpful and will guide you; however, you will do all of the research.

See enclosure (14), if you are planning on doing US Army Command Report research at Archives II.

Veterans History Project

Charles Rickard of Sausalito, California completed the final layout and publication of my memoir. I thank Mr. Rickard for his assistance and for submitting my history to the Veterans History Project, Library of Congress, American Folklife Center, Washington,

D. C.

WELCOME TO YOUR LOCAL DRAFT BOARD

Sunday 25 Jun 1951 at 0400 in the morning, the North Korean People's Army, with seven infantry divisions and one armored brigade in the line, and with two more infantry divisions in reserve struck across the 38th parallel in Korea. Their move would affect my life for the next couple of years. On Thursday 27 Jun 1950 the House of Representatives extended the Selective Service by a vote of 315 to 4. In the Senate the action was unanimous.

When the incursion took place, I was working as a shipping clerk at the Fram Corp. in Pawtucket, RI. Fram manufactured a complete line of automobile filters. The fellows, with whom I worked, began to kid me. They said that I should get ready for the draft. Most of them were veterans of WWII. Around August or September, the word went out from the Selective Service Board in Pawtucket. All young men of a particular age had to come forward and identify themselves at an American Legion post somewhere around Weeden and Dexter Streets. One night, I went over by bus and registered. They assigned me the Selective Service Number 37-5-29-114. Naturally, I gave no other thought to the matter. A young person usually lives for the present. He assumes that something adverse will always happen to another person, never to him. Another consideration was that I had no strong feeling either way as to being drafted. Lo and behold, about two weeks later, I received a notice to come to the draft board on High Street in Pawtucket. They will transport me to and from Fields Point in Providence for a physical and whatever else that they examine. The examiners, the draft board or both gave me a draft qualification of 1-A.

Most of what occurred that day is vague, but I do remember an incident toward the end. After all of the examinations had taken place, we went up individually to a desk. We sat in a chair on the right side of the desk and faced the right side of the individual seated behind the desk. He was glancing down at the paperwork lying on the desk in front of him. He had a pen or pencil in his hand. I mentioned that I would like to go into the infantry. Without looking up, he lay down the pen or pencil. He picked up an eraser and proceeded to erase something on the paper. He wrote something else in its place. Could my offhand remark have affected my two years in the army?

A selective service board comprises citizens of the local community. In Pawtucket, the chairperson was a fellow with a surname of Blais. He was the owner of the New England Bakery and employed a few hundred people. He was very active in the local Franco-American Community. His bakery was a few blocks from my home in the South Woodlawn section of the city. I had worked there during school vacations, when I was fifteen and sixteen years of age. Maybe, his business had something to do with our being served coffee and doughnuts, on the morning when the Army inducted us.

I would like to note here. They also examined a former classmate from St. Raphael Academy in Pawtucket on the same day. His name was Grant and he was studying law at Harvard. Another fellow had been an outstanding football athlete at either Tolman or West High School. Our draft board never inducted either of them. I should also note

that a few of my friends had brothers who were very seriously injured while in the military during WWII. Since the incursion by the North Koreans, my friends had joined the Navy or the Air Force. At the prodding of their concerned parents, they volunteered for a much longer tour of four years. They did that to avoid this draft into the Army. During the Vietnam War, I was uneasy when I saw veterans of the Navy, Air Force, National Guard and members of the reserves pointing their fingers at others. They would deride others for not being willing to give they're all for their country. They, themselves, had taken steps to reduce the probability that they would be in harms way.

Around November, I received a letter stating that I must return to High Street on 2 Feb 1951 and be sworn into the US Army at Fields Point. I was a young fellow of twenty-one years, six feet tall, weighed 190 lbs. and had a waist of about thirty inches. I figured that I could handle just about anything that came my way. No girlfriend or a wife with children was being left behind. Let me see what the Army is like. At the time, the tour was supposed to be for either eighteen or twenty-one months. See my photo in enclosure 1 a.

While in the building at Fields Point, we were formed into single lines. A formal document was read to us by an individual facing us at our front. At the conclusion of his reading, we were asked to take one step forward. I understand that by taking that one step, we showed our acquiescence to being inducted.

FORT DEVENS, MA - A SHEET OF ICE

On 2 Feb 1951, I rode on a bus to Fort Devens, MA with a group of about forty-eight young fellows, see the Fort Devens group photo, enclosure 1 b.. We were from the draft boards in Pawtucket-Central Falls, RI and Newport-Tiverton, RI. One fellow from Central Falls complained that he was a Canadian citizen and should not be inducted. He ranted and raved on High Street and later at Fields Point as we were sworn in. They told him to take it up at the next station. They also told him the same thing at Devens, when they shipped him to his next camp for basic training. I found this interesting. I was already learning how the military works.

At the Reception Center in Devens they put us on the second floor in a two-story barracks. The bunks were stacked two high. There were fifteen sets of bunks on each side of the room, sleeping sixty draftees on that floor. At about 7:00 P.M. another large group arrived from a draft board in downtown Manhattan, NY. Was the name of the location of their draft board Whitehall Street? They took over the first floor. Many of the New Yorkers were black.

During those first few days you were always apprehensive. You wanted to know what was going on. You wanted to be up on all of the current rumors in case you had to make a quick decision. We need not have been concerned. For the next couple of years most decisions would be made for us by others.

I can identify only a handful of the draftees in the photo. Some of the draftees signed the back side of the photo, see enclosure 1 b. Duggan is third from left in the front row. He is from Pawtucket and he is mentioned later in this report. Fenton Mulligan, from Pawtucket, is fifth from left in the front row. Is the eighth man from the left in the front row Ray Massey from Pawtucket? Paul Bachand, from Pawtucket, is the first draftee on the left in the second row. John Methinos, from Newport, is the thirteenth draftee from the left in the middle row. John was in my squad in the 135th INF in Alabama. He ended up in the 3rd INF DIV in Korea. I saw him at his father's shipyard on Thames Street in Newport about ten years after the war, so he came through all right. I am the last draftee on the right in the back row.

The draftee in the middle of the back row is a big fellow from Central Falls. He is wearing civilian clothes because Devens had no clothes to fit him. Later, during basic training, he was assigned to a rifle company in the 135th Inf and was still wearing civilian clothing. One day I noticed him hiking on those Rucker roads in civies. Eventually, I did see him in uniform.

Some other draftees in the photo, whom I cannot identify are: Louie Amoruso, Allan Manuel, Manuel G Arruda, Renato Ray Giglio, Robert "Tucker" Sullivan, John Furtado, Tom Moon, Bento Aguiar, Mike Fitzgerald, Gino DeAsceates, Marco Rospole and Chester J Greene Jr.

I was now McGill, Francis J, US 51016597, a private in the United States Army.

Imagine how cold Devens is in early February. We would line up outside our barracks

in the darkness at five or six in the morning. The place was a sheet of ice and extremely cold. I could see the lights of our distant mess hall reflecting off the field of ice between it and our formation. At moments like that, I would wonder what the future held. The mess hall had a sign above the serving counter that read "Take all you can eat, but eat all you take." Years later, in our Naval Aviation Depots, I would see a sign over the tool cribs. It read "We have replacements for your every need except eyes, fingers, toes, hands and feet."

I will always remember a comment made by an officer at the Reception Center at Devens. They seated a large group of us in an auditorium. We were wearing our brand-new fatigues (GI), so we all looked alike. He was an older man in his Class A or dress uniform all covered with gold and medals. The coat or jacket was a dark khaki or dark brown and the trousers were sort of a pinkish tan. He said, "Let me offer to you a word of advice. Try to maintain a sense of humor during your time in the Army. It will get you over the rough times and through your tour."

I pulled one day of KP at Devens. The shift ran from 4AM until about 8PM. I had to work till about 10:00 P.M., because I had mouthed off to an NCO of the mess hall. The top of his head came to about the middle of my chest, but he had stripes on his arm. I was not accustomed to taking orders. You learn fast or else.

When I returned from Korea, I worked a few months back at Fram. At the time, a federal law stipulated that a draftee be given back his old job, if he so desired it. One of my coworkers told me that he was a cook at that chow hall, when I pulled KP. His name was Ed Bianchini. He said that he could have taken care of me.

We spent about four or five days at Devens. They gave us a series of written tests. I had not slept at all the night prior to the tests. My discharge paper states that I was in Aptitude Area I with a score of 118 because of those tests. Apparently, this meant that I could also apply for Officer Candidate School (OCS), if I were so inclined. This was something to think about.

ALABAMA, HERE WE COME

We stood in formation on the outside of our barracks. One of the cadre would announce the name of an Army unit somewhere in the United States. He would then read the name of those in the formation who were going to that unit. I was one of many who were being sent to an infantry training division at Camp Rucker in Alabama.

A locomotive backed some Pullman sleepers into Devens. It would take a few hundred of us to Camp Rucker, Alabama for basic training with the 47th Infantry Division. The DOD had recently activated the 47th, the "Viking" Division, a National Guard unit from South Dakota and Minnesota. It would be a training unit for the duration of the Korean conflict. The sleeper to which they assigned me contained mostly draftees from Manhattan. I noticed that none of the black draftees were accompanying us to the 47th in Alabama. This division for trainees eventually rose to a complement of about 18 thousand men, but none of them were black. How ironic when you consider that the first two men killed or wounded with me in Korea were black. A couple of months later, an all black engineering unit came hiking down the main road through our regimental area. They looked sharp and were singing a catchy marching tune.

On the train my draftee buddies passed the time by playing cards. Two seats faced two seats with a small table in the center. They never seemed to look at the scenery passing outside the windows. These New Yorkers were a strange crowd. The earth gradually changed color from the gray of New England to a reddish orange. The rivers turned from a bluish green to a muddy brown.

We were aboard this train for about four days. As we worked our way south, they would push us off onto a siding. There we would sit for hours waiting for a new steam locomotive to be hooked up to our Pullmans. At night the black porter would convert our seats to upper and lower bunks.

I spent most of my time talking to a Manhattan fellow who was born in Greece. We would stand in the area between the cars, above the coupling, and have a smoke. He had spent a few years in the merchant marine. He could speak a few languages. I met him later when he was in a unit that could use his talent in linguistics. Another fellow, with whom I spent time on the train, apparently had some connections. This draftee lived on Fifth Avenue. His family also had a home in Scotland. He told me that he would be with us for only a short time. When we got to Rucker, he repeated the statement that he would be leaving shortly. The morning after our arrival, the draftee grabbed his duffle bag and left. He said that he was going either to a special school or for special training. He was a quiet fellow and seemed very refined. At Devens, after we had completed our testing, they asked all those with doctorates to raise their hands. About ten or twelve raised their hands. They moved them to another room. So, the difference for this fellow was not his higher learning. He was not going to be pulling KP and going through bayonet practice. In the US we may be "created equal." That does not mean that we will receive equal treatment. Apparently, we are not all pawns when it comes to war. Whom did this guy know?

As I said, we had steam locomotives. At night, we would lie in our bunks. We would listen to the wail of the steam whistle, as we passed through those crossroads in all of those southern towns. Years later, that sound was gone after the diesel came on line. Too bad that younger people will never hear the sound of a locomotive steam whistle.

This sound differed slightly from the sound we heard at my home on Glenwood Avenue in Pawtucket. When the weather was warm, our bedroom windows were open at night. I could hear the boxcars being hooked together down at the freight train yards in the valley beyond North Main Street in Providence. Steam engines gave the boxcars a push. You would hear the “choo, choo” of the steam engine and then you would hear the “clunk” as another boxcar would be added to make a freight train. Sound is also a part of a person’s history.

Two of the fellows on the train had attended St. Raphael Academy in Pawtucket with me. One was Paul Bachand, a Pawtucket school teacher, and the other Fenton Mulligan. Paul’s parents owned and operated a small hotel on Times Square in Pawtucket. They assigned us to the same regiment, when we arrived at Rucker. I believe that they assigned Paul to the regiment’s headquarters company and Fenton to a rifle company. After basic training, Fenton served as a topographical draftsman. Did Paul Massey, another draftee who attended St Raphael Academy, also accompany us to Alabama?

MY FELLOW SOLDIERS AT CAMP RUCKER, AL

The train finally pulled into Camp Rucker. I looked out the window and saw a couple of men who were walking around in T shirts. Welcome to the Southland, Yankee. The dirt was red and hard as a rock. We could see few trees. The camp had been in semi retirement since WWII and was undergoing renovation. The two-story wooden barracks were newly painted a light tan or very light yellow color on the exterior. The interiors of the barracks were unpainted. Later, the camp became Fort Rucker. They trained helicopter pilots there during the Vietnamese War.

They assigned me to Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 135th Infantry Regiment, 47th Infantry Division. I was a private in an Intelligence and Reconnaissance Squad with a military occupation specialty number or MOS of 1814. This meant that I was to be trained as an infantry Intelligence and Reconnaissance (I & R)Scout. Dummy, that is the reason all of your buddies had avoided the infantry by volunteering for a stretch of four years in either the Navy or the Air Force.

Other draftees assigned to the I&R squad were: John E Mathinos, whose father owned and operated a shipyard on historic Thames Street, in Newport, RI; Lynn Andersen a lanky fellow from Utah; Swartzaffle who had been a dance instructor and a musician (saxophone) in Manhattan (he said it was the Germanic translation for black apple; Phil O'Hara of Tucson, Arizona; Robert G Sullivan, from Manhattan, who was married with no children; John B Ekin, a tall fellow; and Leonard M Brodsky, from Manhattan, who ironically looked like an Aryan trooper.

See the five photos, in enclosure 1.c to 1.g, of the officers and enlisted men in the Headquarters and the Headquarters Company of the 3rd Battalion 135th Infantry. Phil OHara, Swartzaffle and I are not in these photos. We must have been on leave when they were taken around June, 1952.

The strength of our company was about 140 men. I think that the strength of each of the other three rifle companies and one heavy weapons company in our battalion was closer to 200 men.

I was to be with these fellows for about a year. Mathinos and Sullivan ended up serving together as I & R scouts in the 3rd Infantry Division in Korea. Sullivan was sent and Mathinos volunteered to go over there. Both of them went to Korea four or five months before me. I stopped in the Mathinos shipyard about ten years after the war. Mathinos was working away and just as intensely as ever. It was during an America Cup Yacht Race and his yard on Thames Street was extremely busy. At Rucker, he was always hyperactive. He had asked to go to Korea. They sent O'Hara to Austria as an intelligence analyst, when we split up. He later married a girl he met while on duty there. Andersen remained with the training cadre at Rucker. Swartzaffle moved to the regimental band. I eventually ran into him in Korea. He had a job at the 45th Inf Div Replacement Company north of Chuncheon. I wonder if he still had the MOS of an I & R Scout. All of these fellows were ready and eager to be good soldiers.

Thomas J Chakos joined us after a few months. He was transferred from the regimental headquarters company. He was a graduate engineer (mechanical?) from Gary, Indiana. He gave us a few lectures on the need for the US to join the newly formed NATO. Later, when we were on maneuvers in Texas, Tom left us in order to attend OCS at Fort Bliss, TX. He received his commission in Class #07-52, as a lieutenant, at Bliss in Nov 1952.

The one with whom I would spend most of my time was Phil O'Hara. He had been attending the University of Arizona. He was extremely bright. His mother and step father were professors at that university. When he was a teenager, the group that put on the radio show "Quiz Kids" wanted him as a contestant. However, his parents rejected the idea. His shoulder joint was constantly coming out of its socket. He would lie flat on the ground, raise his arm and bend it to a right angle at the elbow. I would put either my foot or my knee in the center of his chest and pull straight up. The arm bone would snap back into the shoulder socket. He told me a couple of times that his mother's surname was no longer O'Hara. He said to use her correct surname when she came to visit him one weekend. So naturally, to O'Hara's consternation, when he introduced me to her, I called her Mrs. O'Hara.

Andersen was a pushy guy. He was taller than I. Later, he and I got into a fist fight. I can still recall the hollow sound, when my fists would hit his chest. We were still good friends. You had to be. You spent twenty-four hours a day together for seven days a week. Later, he got upset with me when we were on leave in Dallas, TX. We were in a bar. The owners covered the whole wall behind the bar with brass knuckles, pistols and rifles. They were for sale to the customers. One was a WWII German officer Luger pistol with its regulation holster. The holster had an engraved swastika. It had a good feel when you held it in your hand. I would not lend to him the purchase price of fifty dollars. I, being from the city, was not into guns.

The company and most of its compliment were from Luverne, a small farming community in the southwest corner of Minnesota. Some of them were from nearby South Dakota. These National Guard farmers would discuss the merits of the John Deere versus the Ford farm tractors, at night after lights out. The soldiers on the second floor of that barracks would listen to these discussions as they fell asleep. One of the fellows who discussed the tractors was Verlyn L Hagen. He was always smiling, cherry and of the impression that his family had the largest farm.

For some reason the radios in our barracks were manufactured so that they played only country music. I can still hear the lyrics, "Ah got a hot rod Ford and a two-dolla bill and ah got a gal rot over the hill. Hey good lookin. Wacha got cookin? How bout cookin somthin up with me?" The radio commercials were either "Lil Ole Women" relating how Hadacol had turned their lives around or someone from "Cincinnati One Ohio" selling "unsexed" chickens. Years later the state of Louisiana required that Hadacol be sold only in liquor stores, because of its liquor content. As I remember, a family with the name LeBlanc was the manufacturer of Hadacol.

Our company commander was a tall blond National Guard captain with the name of Lester U Tollefson. He was the publisher/editor of the local newspaper in Luverne. Other National Guard troopers from Luverne and nearby communities were Corporal Norman F Larsan, the company clerk; Msgt. Stanley A Arends, the NCO for the pioneers' platoon; and James B Fleming, a school teacher.

Jim Fleming returned to teaching and school administration, when he returned to Minnesota. He stayed active with the engineers in the National Guard. He later returned to active duty and retired as a full colonel in 1986. Two additional photos in enclosure 1.h and 1.i are of Jim Fleming, Phil OHara and Bob Sullivan

We had two Arends brothers, Stan and Steve. Later, Stan delivered mail in Luverne for thirty plus years. Around 1960, I wrote a letter to another guardsman from Luverne by the name of Stu Adams. He wrote back. He said that some of our fellow Luverne area soldiers in the company had met violent deaths. One had died in a crop spraying plane accident and another in an auto accident shortly after our separation from the service.

We had two fellows in the Pioneer Platoon who constantly competed with each other. Their names were Richard O Karli and Clarence V Franka. One day the two of them were competing to see who could do the most squat jumps. The younger of the two ended up on the ground with his legs all cramped up. A Helverson was also from Luverne. We had two Gibson brothers, Earl and Gene. One was an NCO. We had an Art Rogness. He was an NCO in Blue 2. Sgt Warren Herreid was our communications platoon NCO and the battalion communications sergeant.

Robert H Schlotfeldt, a young enlisted guardsman from our company, was killed in action in Korea before the end of our first year. His home had been a farm outside of Hills, Minnesota. He was a short powerfully built farm boy, with red hair, who had graduated high school in 1947. I do not know whether we have other men from our company who were also killed in action, wounded in action or missing in action.

Our battalion commander was a National Guard lieutenant colonel. His name was William G "Wild Bill" Kreger. He was a crotchety old guy who would come out of his office in the morning, when the five companies lined up in the quadrangle for roll call. He would go back into his office after roll call. In civilian life, Kreger was a judge somewhere in Minnesota or South Dakota. He was more than likely qualified as a commander of a battalion devoted solely to training. Kreger was much different from our younger aggressive Major, we had as a battalion commander in Korea. Our commander in Korea spent most of his time walking the front line trenches and little time in his forward and rear CPs. Kreger later became a brigadier general. He wrote a history of the 135th Inf reg.

The battalion operations officer, the Blue 3, was a major named Paul V Meyer. He was a tall thin scholarly looking guy with dark horn-rimmed glasses and also from the Luverne area. O'Hara opined that he would rather go into combat under Major Meyer than the regular army major who replaced him. The regular army major had recently returned from serving with the 1st Cavalry Division in Korea. How is that for a couple of

rank amateurs rating their superiors? Meyer later became a major general in command of the 47th Inf Div.

In those days, Luverne was also a major builder of fire fighting truck bodies. In 1987 the town which is situated on Interstate 90 had a population of 4568.

Before being drafted, my breakfast consisted of a bowl of cold cereal prior to starting work. My workday started at 10 A.M.. At six or 7:00 P.M., we would go to a pub near Fram. I would have a glass of beer and two pork pies, loaded with catchup, for supper. So, imagine the improvement in my diet. Now, I got three square meals a day.

I can remember being the last one in the mess hall on a morning when we had pancakes. I kept on going back for more. Three cooks stood behind the serving counter. They watched me as I ate pile after pile. They would cook them; I would eat them. They must have felt a sense of accomplishment.

One of them, a big kid of Italian descent named Nick R Lauritano, had been a cab driver in NYC. I think that his family ran a deli in the Bronx. He had come into the company with the group from Manhattan. Later, he and I took the same plane out of New York heading for Korea. I made sure that I did not sit next to him. He had sat next to me on the plane, when we had flown north to go home on leave. He was a big guy and overflowed into my seat. He wrote a letter to the fellows back at Rucker, shortly after he arrived in Korea. He wrote that a young Korean had offered to have his mother wash Nick's clothes for some cigarettes. Nick never again saw his clothes or the young Korean.

On some nights, I would walk a block to the post exchange. I would buy a package of Fig Newtons to eat while lying on my bunk.

Quite a few times as I moved through a chow line a cook, dressed in white and standing behind the food, would say something to me. It sounded like, "Do you want some Grrrr?" He would repeat the question. I would say no and move on. It finally dawned on me. He was offering me a scoop of grits. I had never eaten grits before. It took a while before I tasted grits. I would say about 1997.

A post beer hall was a couple of blocks down the road from our barracks. They sold beer only by the quart. I do not remember any glasses. We would drink out of the bottle. The soldiers would sit on the floor with their backs against the unpainted walls while drinking. The beer hall had no furniture.

Occasionally, after lights out, a group of draftees from Tennessee would come back to the barracks after drinking. The gang would be looking for a fight. Their leader was a fellow called "Blue." Was his name Curtis O Ballew?. He was about six bunks down from me on the second floor of the barracks. His buddy was a husky Tennessean. His bunk was on the lower floor in our barracks. I and everyone else sort of stayed out of their way, when they wanted to fight. "Blue" kept picking on a very young guardsman who was very homesick. The army in all of its wisdom knew how to handle this type of a situation.

The company brass decided that we would hold boxing bouts at night in the company day room. Weight paired me against Blue's right-hand man. Blue probably weighed fifty pounds less than I. We would hold two or three bouts a night. We would be stripped to our waist wearing only fatigue trousers and combat boots. Most of the bouts consisted of sparring. The opponents would dance around and throw an occasional jab. I could not do that. When I took off my glasses, I could just about see my opponent. So, I knew that I had to stay in close, maintain contact always and slug it out. That is what I did. As a result, we shattered the full length mirror that the troops used to view appearance before inspections. One of us landed on top of the ping pong table and broke that in two. Other items in this large room were also broken. Those who watched the bout were yelling at the top of their lungs. He kept trying to back away and spar, but I knew that I had to stay with him. I don't know how many rounds we went. I believe we had three rounds for each bout. At the end, I put my arms around him and gave him a hug. The guy did not know. If I let him back away, I would not have seen his punches coming. After those bouts, "Blue" and his buddies did not come into our barracks looking for a fight. The army knows its business.

A draftee from New York, named Art Mascarella, had been a professional or a semi professional baseball player and property of the NY Giants. He was always pulling duty around the barracks. He was never out in the field with the rest of us. I thought that odd. He was of Italian descent and a very cool customer. As I remember, he wanted to be involved with athletics while in the service. After a while he just disappeared. He must have found a duty more to his liking. I hear that he fell on his shoulder while playing baseball at Rucker. The fall ruined his career.

Letter writing was not my thing while in the service. I probably wrote five or six letters and received about the same number. I would never go out and stand near the day room each afternoon during mail call. Later, I probably received one letter and two packages while in Korea. My sister Patsy says that she wrote a few letters to me. She says also that she made chocolate chip cookies and sent them to me, while I was in Korea.

My father was a friend of a Duggan family on West Avenue in Pawtucket. They had a son in a rifle company in our regiment. See his photo among the draftees in Enclosure (1). He was very homesick. Occasionally, he would come over at night and sit on the end of my bunk. When O'Hara would see him coming, he would say with an Irish accent, "Here comes Duuugan." Duggan and I would walk down the road to the beer hall. We sat on the floor in the hall and leaned against the buildings outer walls. When we wanted a beer, we would walk over to the huge cooler; reach down and grab a quart and then pay the clerk. We would drink one, two or three quarts of "3.2" beer. It was called "3.2" because that was the percent of alcohol that it contained. The only item sold was beer and it was sold in only quart bottles. The beer hall contained no furniture. After I came home from Korea, I spoke with Duggan. I saw him at a bus stop in front of Shartenburg's Department Store in downtown Pawtucket. He came through all right.

As I remember, we had two other fellows in the company from New England. One was John E Maguire from the Boston, MA area. The other was Romeo L Lassard from Maine.

BASIC AND ADVANCED INFANTRY TRAINING AT CAMP RUCKER

We went through the standard infantry basic training. Then we went into the advanced infantry training which meant exercises on the platoon and company level. One night, while waiting in line to go into the mess hall, I bought a newspaper from a local paper carrier. An article was in the paper stating that Congress had extended the time to be served by draftees to two years. No one had commented on the extension. No one knew about the extension. They never notified us before, during or after the extension. So much for the policy of informing the troops. No one in the barracks ever mentioned it. Around the same time, the US had signed the NATO pact. We were given regular lectures on the impact of NATO on the defense of the US. I would have preferred to hear word one about the extension of my army life.

The heat must have been intense. After the long hikes, my leather rifle strap and my leather boots would be white from the salt in my sweat.

The barracks must have been hot as we had no air conditioning. We were young and usually exhausted, so we probably did not notice. We got to the point where we stayed in the field even on weekends. The only thing between us and the ground when we slept was our shelter half. We never put up our pup tents. Camp Rucker must have been huge because we would hike every day and the dirt roads always seemed different. We would take a ten minute break every hour. Most of us would smoke a cigarette. We would sit in our steel helmets. Alabama had a very small ant. Most of the time, if you sat directly on the ground or with your back against a tree, that small ant would give you a very painful bite. Was it the infamous Fire Ant?

Between the hiking and the hours of calisthenics every day, we must have been as hard as rocks. We had calisthenics after breakfast and after lunch every day. The calisthenics that were the most strenuous were the ones called the squat jump (I think). You would crouch down into a squatting position with one leg forward of the other. Your hands would be locked behind your head. Then you would leap into the air and land in the same spot but with your opposite leg in the forward position. Try about thirty repetitions of that exercise up to four times a day.

My personal weapon ("piece") was the US rifle caliber .30 M-1 Garand, not the lighter carbine. I carried it in the US and in Korea. It was semiautomatic, single shot and self loaded after each shot fired. It weighed 9 pounds, eight ounces and was 43.5 inches long. It was equipped with a stud for the attachment of a standard bayonet with a 9.75 inch blade. We carried our bayonet in an aluminum sheath on the side of our cartridge belt. The M-1 held an eight round clip of .30 caliber ammunition. The clip automatically ejected through the open top of the receiver after the last round in the clip was fired. This rifle became a part of my body. In the infantry it is you and your rifle. You live with it and you sleep with it. It is all that you have. When I first fired the M-1, the explosive kick of the ammunition surprised me. In a navy, it is you and your ship. In an air force, it is you and your aircraft. In the infantry you hold tight to your personal weapon. However, it is not much protection when the big stuff comes in.

At the time I liked the army. Later, in Korea, I changed my mind. There, I found out the psychological reason for the close order drill. I realized that an army career was not for me. In combat every thing that is human within you tells you to turn around and go the other way. However, the close order drill in training, the hiking and following the one in front of you affects you to such an extent that you keep moving forward. Most people do not realize the psychological implications of a marching band and close order drill.

Each soldier had to be able to recite a list of rules. One of the items on the list was "I will walk my post in a military manner." About once a month our company would pull guard duty for a twenty-four-hour period for the entire regimental area. While walking your posts during that period, you were dressed in "Class A" uniform. You were expected to look and act very professional. We had a husky nineteen year old kid with rosy cheeks who drew a walking post along the main road. We also had a few very small trees newly planted along the same road. The Colonel called our CO and told him that the kid was sitting up in one of those trees. He was as big as the tree. I guess that the tree was a challenge to him.

One day I ran a fever. At lunch, when we came in from the field, I went to the dispensary rather than to the mess hall. I felt terrible. After taking my temperature, which was more than one hundred, the doctor or corpsman gave me duty rather than the cot. He also gave me APC (all purpose) capsules. There was no way that I could go back to the field that afternoon. I spoke to one officer. He told me to spend the afternoon working in the supply room. I worked there for about fifteen minutes. The National Guard supply sergeant, named Russell Swenson, understood my predicament. I then sat on the floor in a corner and shook with my back against the wall for about four or five hours. When the troops came in from the field, I was permitted to get into my bunk. I slept until the next morning, when the fever was gone. Why did the medics not allow me to lie down and get under cover immediately, when I was running a fever?

Corporal Larsen, our company clerk from Luverne, told me that I had to go to an eight-hour film projectionist school. The company needed someone to run a Bell and Howell 16-mm movie projector. However, all of those sprockets, film loops, lens adjustments, pulleys, take-up reels and settings were still a mystery to me. I lived in fear of the day when I was to use my newly acquired talent. Sure enough, that day came. I had a hall filled with about two hundred troops who were to view a film on intelligence gathering. My buddy Lynn Anderson was giving them a short lecture on military intelligence. They were also about to view my first attempt to run this intricate monster. I could not get the damn thing to work properly. I stood back from this little brown monster. What do I do now? Suddenly, an NCO from the rifle company came to my rescue. With a couple of adjustments he saved my butt.

Another day, this same Olsen told me that I was to go to a four-hour school to be a fireman. That is to shovel coal into boilers to keep the water hot for showers in the barracks and provide heat in the winter. A fireman would catch about a day of work once every couple of months. You would haul coal into the boiler room and ashes out

for a twenty-four-hour period. At the end of the twenty-four hours you looked like a piece of coal. Why was this guy Larsen, with his pudgy nose, so interested in my education?

On the night of the second occasion that I pulled this duty, I went into town. That was a no no. I figured that there was enough coal in the boiler. I was wrong. The fire to heat the water decided to go out. The Master Sergeant for the company caught up with me the next day. His name was Dale E Opsata. He knew that I had gone to town. My punishment was an extra day of duty using this highly technical knowledge that I had obtained at the four-hour fireman school.

How many more of these wonderful career enhancing opportunities will I be offered in this man's army?

At one point, someone in the regiment came up with an idea. The regiment would give ranger training to those who would volunteer for the training. This was supposed to be strictly voluntary. One day, as we were standing in formation, I heard Master Sergeant Opsata make an announcement. "McGill" was to be the man from our company who would take this ranger training. Our company had no one who was foolish enough to volunteer. Apparently, the other companies within the regiment had a similar problem. About two weeks after we started this rigorous physically demanding training the program was ended. Shortly after this occurred, the same Sergeant Opsata was transferred to the division tank unit. One night I was sitting on the back steps of the barracks. Sergeant Opsata had come back for a visit. He came out to where I was sitting. He asked me if I wanted to go into the tank unit with him. I told him that I was not interested.

We spent many days on the firing range. There was a very tight control over everything that occurred while on the range for safety reasons. We would fire in a standing position, a kneeling position and a prone position. At the end of the day, after firing our weapons, we had to pick up all empty shells lying on the ground. No live ammunition was allowed off the range.

Occasionally, we would "pull targets" for those on the firing line. This meant that you were in a deep concrete walled trench below the targets. We attached the target to a frame. We would pull the target by way of a pulley arrangement into the air above the trench. After the troops fired, the target would be lowered into the trench. You would then mark the hole and again raise the target. If I remember right, you would then raise a long pole with a pie plate sized object on its end to show the shooter where his bullet had entered the target. There was a long line of men firing their weapons. They would all fire at the same instant. A loudspeaker would announce when to fire. The long line of men, in the concrete trench, would also pull their targets at the same time. Those on the firing line would fire their weapons. You would hear a pop as the slug passed seven or eight feet above your head.

I never paid much attention to that popping sound while pulling targets. I thought that it was the slug hitting the target. When I got to Korea, I heard that popping sound again.

Two other fellows and I were on a daylight patrol. We went down the hill to a river named the Soyang. The river was forward of the trench on the main line of resistance (MLR). Four N Koreans had set up a machine gun a few hundred feet below our line. They were between us and our line. As we worked our way back up, I heard pop, pop, pop and the branches were falling from the trees above our heads. The pop is the sound of the air as it fills the void after a slug has passed. I assume this is similar to an aircraft sonic boom.

In the middle of one night, I pulled guard duty, by myself, on the firing range ammunition bunker. There were no lights. I sat on the ground with my back against the bunker and kept my eyes on the unlit road. I fell asleep. I did not hear or see the jeep approaching. I awoke with a lieutenant standing in front of me. He smiled, said stay awake and drove off.

Some of the troops were more daring than I in their handling of snakes. I observed the following incidents:

Some troops put a King snake into a trash barrel with a Rattlesnake. The King swallowed the Rattler until only a few inches of the Rattler were sticking out of its mouth. They then poked the King with their rifle butts until the King regurgitated the Rattler.

I saw one fellow tie the tail of a Rattler to the rear view mirror of his 2 ½ ton truck. The snake was long enough so that its head lie along the ground.

As our I&R squad was moving through the woods, one day, we came upon a group of snakes wrapped around the trunks of trees. There must have been six of them. Each had its own tree in the cluster. They were wrapped about a foot or two above the ground. I thought that the situation was dangerous and I wanted out of there. O'Hara and Anderson loved it and had to examine closely every tree and every snake.

Our I&R squad was the point early one morning as a couple of companies were moving along a grassy road. Lying coiled on the grass in the center was a green Rattlesnake. Two or three of us had passed within a foot of him, before he was spotted. I was fascinated as the troops would hold their rifle butts in front of him. He would strike the wood butts and you would see the venom running down the wood. They killed him. We had to keep moving.

On another occasion we came to a small stream, which we had to cross. A Water Moccasin stuck its head about six or eight inches above the water and looked right at us. We moved downstream to cross at another point. We had a young Floridian lieutenant leading us. He stressed that we had to be very careful when confronting Moccasins. As we moved along the stream bank, I could see the moccasin moving with us.

We had a couple of classes on snakes. At one class the instructor mentioned that we had two bites from coral snakes within the regiment. Corals were about a foot long, an inch wide and had multicolored rings encircling their bodies. There were venomous and

non venomous coral snakes. The venomous had a thin red ring between each of the red, black and yellow rings that encircled its body. They did not have fangs and had a small mouth. He mentioned that they would prefer chewing on the thin skin between your fingers and toes

During one of our field exercises, I was assigned to “ride shotgun” on our battalion commander Kreiger. This duty required me to stay one step behind him and protect him no matter where he went. “Wild Bill” Krieger was not the kind of a guy who would want a young soldier following him around all day and night. A couple of hours after my assignment, he and I were walking through the woods with no one else in sight. Wild Bill said that he heard voices off to our right. He told me to go over toward the sound of the voices and make a determination as to whether the troops were friend or foe. I went off through the woods as he requested, saw that they were the foe and within ten or fifteen minutes returned to where I last saw him. Naturally, Wild Bill was not there. He was long gone.

On Friday nights we would prepare for our weekly inspections. These were held every Saturday morning. We would polish our boots, clean our rifles, clean the barracks, straighten out our foot locker and line up our uniforms. The uniforms hung below the shelf on the wall behind our bunk. Nobody went on leave on a Friday night.

On Saturday morning, we would stand at attention at the front of our bunk as the company CO inspected each one of us, our equipment and our barracks. We would be dressed in our “class A” uniforms.

Our company would then form up, with our personal weapons, on the quadrangle in front of our barracks. An officer would walk the lines in the formation and inspect every soldier and weapon for cleanliness. No oil was allowed on the weapon during this inspection. We would re-oil them when this inspection was completed.

The officer would approach from my right and stop in front of me. He would then make a sharp left turn to face me. I would bring my weapon from “shoulder arms” to “inspection arms.” At “inspection arms” your weapon is held at a forty-five degree angle forward of your chest. As you position the rifle, you push the bolt (firing mechanism) into the open position with your left hand.

He would stare you straight in the eyes. When he was ready, he would quickly bring his right hand up and grasp the rifle out of your two hands. You had to release the rifle a moment before his hand grabbed it. For a fraction of a second the weapon was not in your hands, nor in his right hand. If you did not release before his hand hit it, you would feel a jolt throughout your body. He would then swing it in an arc up into the air and look up the barrel for any signs of pitting. If he did not grasp the weapon firmly during that fraction of a second and dropped the weapon, than he was required to have it cleaned..

Around noon, after inspections, we were off until Monday morning. If we were in the field, we went for seven days. There were no weekends off.

SOME WEEKEND PASSES

Occasionally, on a weekend, I would take a bus trip into Dothan the nearest town. Dothan was known as the "The Peanut Capital of The World." I had my first piece of pecan pie at a lunch counter in Dothan one Saturday afternoon. Then it was back to the camp. Two other close towns were Ozark and Enterprise.

Once, I took a bus to Tampa for a long weekend. You had to get as far as possible away from things military when on leave. I rented a hotel room and that night went over into Ybor City. I sat in a bar drinking beer with a young Cuban woman. She rolled cigars during the day. We were the only patrons in the bar. The bartender kept coming over and asking her if everything was OK. For the curious, I did go back to the hotel by myself and I had drunk quite a bit of beer.

I went down to Panama City, FL three or four times on weekend passes. Once I thumbed a ride with two middle-aged Alabama men, who were going down to Panama City to look for work. They had worked in a shipyard there during WWII. One had the surname of Cotton. It was interesting listening to them for a few hours. My usual sources for conversations were other young army draftees.

One weekend four of us were on leave together. We spent the night sleeping on the beach near Panama City, Florida. We were in our sleeping bags, on the sand about thirty feet from O'Hara's car. I would not advise anyone to do the same. The flying bugs make sleep almost impossible. Insect repellent did not work. At that time the state used convicts to clean the beaches early in the morning. When we awoke, five or six of them were standing next to our auto and peering inside. Unfortunately, O'Hara had left his brand new loaded twenty-two Winchester rifle lying on the rear seat. Fortunately, their armed guard was facing them at a distance of about twenty feet.

On one long weekend, I thumbed a ride over to Thomasville, Georgia and checked into a hotel room. The room contained a ceiling fan. I had never seen a ceiling fan before. That night, I went into a local pub. Where else is an army private going to go when he is in a strange town for only one or two nights? I sat at the bar for a few hours nursing my beer. Eventually, I was talking with some woman at the bar. Would you believe me, if I told you that she paid for the beer? We would flip a coin to see who would pay for the beer. Every time we flipped she would lose. Toward the end of the evening I told her that I was part Indian (not true), and she was very upset.

On the outside of our company day room was a bulletin board. Establishments and localities around Rucker that could be harmful to the troops were listed on the board. Shortly after my visit to Thomasville, its name appeared on the board as a locality to avoid while on leave. It seems that the police and cab drivers were in cahoots to shake down the troops on leave. A soldier would ride in a cab. The driver would accuse him of damaging the rear seat of the cab. The police would pick up the soldier and put him in a cell. He would be released upon payment of a fine and for the repair of the interior of the cab.

NOTE: You will need to read the next volume of my biography, if you are interested in matters of a romantic nature that occurred during my two-year military career. I have not thought of a title for that volume, but I am open to ideas from my readers.

During one period, a toilet in our barracks head was reserved for a young fellow from West Virginia. He had come back from leave with a case of gonorrhea. The toilets were all in one room with no partitions. Four or five toilets faced four or five toilets. This was not very private for the privates of privates. One had a sign on it that said "Reserved Venereal Disease." The sign stayed on the toilet until his treatment was completed.

I can remember only one "short arm" inspections while in the army. During this inspection in Alabama, we were required to wear only our poncho and boots. We stood at the foot of our bunk. The medic and one other came down the line and stopped at each man. You raised the poncho and was told to "milk it down" For the uninitiated, the medic was looking for symptoms of venereal disease.

A Catholic chapel was in our regimental area. I attended Mass on every Sunday that we were not in the field. The civilian priests, who occasionally said the Masses, were usually from Alabama communities outside the camp. By saying Mass in the camp they had the opportunity to raise money for their small rural churches. The percentage of Catholics in Alabama must have been very low. Was it considered a mission area?

A fellow on the first floor of our barracks had a problem in his family back in his home state. He went to the Red Cross to obtain money, so that he could return home. They would lend him the money, but he had to wait to get that money. I lent one hundred dollars to him, so that he could return home immediately. When he returned from leave, he was in no hurry to return my money. I approached him and told him that I wanted the money now. He handed me one hundred dollars the next day.

INTELLIGENCE AND RECONNAISSANCE TRAINING AT FORT BENNING, GA

In the fall, I traveled by bus to Fort Benning, Georgia, the infantry school, for thirteen weeks of schooling as an intelligence and reconnaissance scout. We had no one in our unit who could train us in that specialty. I was accompanied by two young regular army corporals from my company. It was more of the same, rifles and bayonets, but included much more classroom training. We had no hiking and calisthenics, but plenty of map making and reading.

On Thanksgiving day, I went to town with these two fellows. They had recently returned from Korea. One of them was a Latino paratrooper from New Mexico, who had been in the 1st Cavalry Division. The other was a Franco-American kid, with the surname Pariseau, from the Albany, NY area. He had been in the "Hourglass" Infantry Division. Was that the 2nd Infantry Division? We took a bus into Columbus, GA. We walked across the bridge over the Chattahoochee River into Phoenix City, AL and visited a couple of places that were off limits. After we spent most of our money, we re-crossed the bridge back into Columbus.

We went into a tavern named the You and Me Club. It was located on the second floor of a building in downtown Columbus. The three of us were standing at the bar. I could see no other patrons. About three women were sitting around a table in a room behind the bar. One of us (I think it was I) made a comment about the probable morals of the women. A few moments later, I came to as I was falling to the floor. As I came to, I saw my overseas cap with its blue piping on the floor in front of me. It was lying next to a piece of wood. I grabbed my hat and stood up. The bartender had hit me on the upper right-hand side of my head with a baseball bat. The bat had broken in two. He was hitting the Latino kid over the head with the butt of a pistol. The next thing I knew, I was standing at the top of the stairway with my two buddies lying at the bottom. A couple pairs of hands gave me a push and I was lying there with them. We high tailed it back to the bus station and got the hell out of Columbus. I had a lump on the side of my head for quite a while. You live and learn, or is it that you learn and live. The following incident did not help us either. A young paratrooper had either tried or succeeded in throwing a Columbus police officer over the rail of the bridge, we had crossed.

Years later, I read that General Patton had placed the city of Columbus off limits for a short period during WWII. His gripe was the maltreatment of his troops by the citizenry.

One morning, as we were standing in formation, the commander asked for volunteers to give blood. My Latino paratrooper drinking buddy, at the other end of the line, yells out the name "McGill." I would have had a difficult time, if I walked up to the officer after the formation and tried to explain that it was not I who had called out my name.

On the way back from the hospital, I walked by the site where Dean Martin and Jerry Louis were filming a scene for a paratroop movie. Was the film called "Jumping Jacks?" Naturally, on an army post in the middle of the day no spectators are standing around. I walked over to observe. The site was the bus station for Fort Benning. Martin was off to

the side. He was by himself and leaning against a fence. Lewis in all of his foolishness was acting out a scene. I told Martin that I did not care for their brand of humor. I do not remember his response. I do know that he just stared at me. At the time, I was not particularly interested in his response.

We had classes in hand to hand combat. The idea was to take another man out using only your hands. After the instructor demonstrated the various movements, we would then use them ourselves on a partner. This was interesting. In some of the movements one would pick his partner up and throw him to the ground. We had an unfortunate accident during this training. The accident victim was a young master sergeant of the Rainbow Division (the Fighting 69th?) from New York City. He was a National Guard soldier and was on active duty only for the duration of this training. He was a garrulous, well-liked Jewish fellow.

During that phase of training, we had hand to hand combat training during the early hours. We then had rifle training during the latter part of the day. On the field where we had the rifle training 1" x 2" stakes were driven into the ground. They stuck up about 12" above the ground. Once an hour or so we would take a ten minute break. During one of those breaks the young M. Sgt. and another fellow were practicing some of the hand to hand movements we had learned. His partner flung him into the air and he came down on one of those stakes. The stake did a job on either his kidneys or his intestines. We never saw him again.

TRUCK CONVOY TO INFANTRY MANEUVERS AT FORT HOOD, TX

When I returned to Rucker, the unit was preparing for maneuvers in and around Fort Hood, about fifty miles southwest of Waco, in Texas. Two infantry divisions would defend against the aggressor. The defenders were the 47th and the 30th or the 31st from Fort Jackson in South Carolina. The aggressor was to be the 82nd Airborne Division from Fort Bragg, North Carolina. I think that the 2nd or 3rd Armored Division, stationed at Fort Hood, also participated.

Our division traveled in the back of 2 ½ ton trucks across the western part of Alabama, across Mississippi, across Louisiana and finally across the eastern part of Texas into Fort Hood. We must have followed interstate route 84 from Dothan, Alabama all the way to state route 28 northwest of Alexandria, Louisiana, see map enclosure (2) Map page 1 and 2. Route 28 would have taken us down into Fort Polk. I do not know the exact route we traveled across eastern Texas. We did pass the front gate of a Texas state prison in Huntsville.

Each truck pulled a canvas-covered trailer. The trailer contained our duffle bags. You leave as though you will not return. Either eight or ten of us sat in the back of each truck. We sat facing each other on two long wooden seats. At night we would sleep either under the truck or on top of the canvas strung above our heads. The canvas lies over the top of five or six thin rails, like an umbrella. One of us would sleep in each portion that was between the rails. There were four or five of these portions. During the night, with our weight as we lie there, you could hear the canvas go rip, rip, rip. If it had let go, we would have been seriously hurt.

This trip was fascinating to me. We rolled the sides of the truck canvas up so that it provided only a roof over our heads -- talk about seeing the Deep South.. There was no effort to limit our mingling with the civilians as we crossed those states. But then again, during the day we were in the back of those trucks. At night we would bivouac in a field beside the highway many miles from any town.

On one occasion we were sitting at a standstill. Some high school girls were selling soda or ice cream to the troops sitting up in the trucks. One young girl had very pretty eyes. I mentioned this to the fellow who was sitting next to me. Another of the girls must have heard me, because the girl with the eyes came back and said that she would never forget me. Well, I haven't forgotten. Has she?

The first night out, we stopped in Alabama. The next night we stopped in Mississippi. Was the stop near Laurel? I think we made two stops in Mississippi. One night we stopped at a ball field on the Natchez side of the Mississippi River. After chow we thumbed a ride into Natchez and went to a group of nightclubs in a historic area called "Below the Hill." A sedan with about three blacks gave us a ride into town. I remember a girl passenger saying, if I can paraphrase, "They're all right, they're from the North." In one tavern, I noticed that there was a partition between the dancers and the black musicians. The partition had a hole cut at the level of a person's chest. The hole was

about a foot high and twelve feet long. The dancers could not see the musicians playing in the darkness beyond the cutout. For some reason, I almost got into a fistfight with a young Second Lieutenant at the bar. The next morning our trucks crossed the bridge over the Mississippi River into Louisiana.

The trip to Fort Hood probably took close to a week. A convoy does not travel very fast. One night we stopped at Fort Polk, Louisiana, five miles southeast of Leesville. I remember that stop. The next morning as we left the mess hall, I filled the inside of my fatigue shirt with many, many doughnuts. I usually let the bottom of my fatigue shirt hang out over my cartridge belt. That morning I tucked my shirt inside of my trouser belt. I ate them all that day, as we rode in the back of the truck. The troops on the other seat would watch me, as I ate doughnut after doughnut. The army made great big doughnuts with a very thick crust. I loved them.

I was surprised at the large number of Brahman beef cattle along the highway. They began to appear as we moved across Louisiana. Large herds of all kinds of beef cattle were in Louisiana. I had thought that we would have seen beef cattle only in Texas. Later, in Texas we would try to creep up on the steers to ride them. They would always move away from us. You could not get close to them, no matter how hard you tried. Apparently, the Brahman beef cattle thrive on the type of terrain that is in that part of our country.

INFANTRY MANEUVERS IN AND AROUND FORT HOOD, TX

Fort Hood is between Killeen and Gatesville. Hood is an armored power concentration. The maneuvers lasted for two or three weeks. We walked forever across the fort and those ranches surrounding Hood. The ranchers had an agreement with the army. The army would come back at the end of the maneuvers and repair any damaged property. The weather was cold and damp. We could not find any wood to build a fire. This part of Texas had no trees. Also, orders were that we will build no fires.

One day we had a demonstration put on by the Air Force. We sat on the side of a hill and watched them drop napalm and bombs. Did they also fire rockets?

After the demonstration, we were walking back down a road to where our pup tents were pitched. Some wise-guy jet pilot came at us from the rear. We did not know that he was coming. He was flying very low and must have broken the sound barrier. The "wham" really shocked me. He could not have been more than a couple hundred feet above our heads. Even after over fifty years, I can still feel that shock today. Recently, the city council here in Chesapeake voted on a rezoning. They okayed the building of 240 homes in a high military jet engine noise area near Fentress Auxiliary Airfield. It is an ACUZ zone with a 3-noise level. Two of the nine council members are medical doctors. These two doctors are voted to go ahead with the home building.

We went a couple of days with very little food. In the darkness one morning, I was on guard duty while the rest of the unit slept. We were assigned to the battalion headquarters. A three-quarter ton truck pulled up and unloaded three or four thermal food containers. It was about three in the morning. After the two cooks(?) left, I walked over to the containers. One of them contained hot meat. One of them contained large chunks of warm bread. The last contained hot cocoa. I sat on a container and ate a piece of meat. Now remember, I had eaten very little in the last few days. I just kept eating more and more. Later, it was time for me to awaken the fellow who would replace me on guard duty. Then, I rolled up in my bag and went to sleep. When daylight came, I awoke to the sound of one battalion officer yelling. He said that someone had eaten all of the meat or that the cooks had not delivered enough meat. I pulled my bag tight and went back to sleep.

Tom Chakos, a draftee from Gary, Indiana had joined our squad before we left Alabama. He was a very intense kid and had recently graduated with a degree in mechanical engineering. He was of Greek descent. He had moved into our company from the regimental headquarters. He like Mathinos had to be active all of the time. He was a camera bug. I had never owned a camera in my life. In Texas, he experimented with his camera by taking many individual photos of us when we were not hiking. He would experiment with differing types of lighting with that big sky and beautiful sunsets. Nothing was in sight for him to film on those ranches. I mean nothing. So he took photos of us. Today, I would like to get my hands on those photos. Toward the end of the maneuvers, they told him to pack his bags. They had accepted him for officer candidate school at Fort Bliss, Texas (missiles). I hope that he found his niche. OCS

was supposed to be one tough grind. He was commissioned a lieutenant in Nov 1952.

After a day or two of cold rain we were soaked. The weather was bad and we were confined to the back of a 2-½ ton truck. They were moving us from one area to another. They stuck a newly recruited young Catholic chaplain in the truck with us. He was just another soldier to O'Hara, Anderson and Chakos. I don't think that O'Hara was too fond of things Roman Catholic. I think that Chakos was Greek Orthodox. Religion was never a topic of conversation among these fellows. We were cold and damp and spent the day playing the word game "Ghost."

One day we were resting near a river bed. Many scorpions were running-back and forth on the bank. They told us to always shake out our sleeping bags and boots before use because of their sting.

The Army policy was that at the conclusion of an exercise, all involved would come together and critique the exercise. For these maneuvers, the critique would have to take place at a much higher level. We, at my level, had no idea as to the plans, the movement of the troops or the disposition of the opposing forces. We had no maps and were completely in the dark. We were moved around in trucks or through long hikes. We covered many miles. Our discussion each day dealt with our running into the paratroopers (the aggressors). Rumor had it that when we met up, they wanted to get into fist fights on the field. Maybe, all of that movement was to keep the opposing forces apart.

At the end of the exercise, three or four of us went north by bus to Dallas for a three or four-day leave. We slept the first night at a motel in Waco.

At the time, the talk was that they would send our regiment or battalion from Texas to Nevada or New Mexico. There we would participate in some nuclear tests. Fortunately, we did not go. Years later, I read that members of the participating unit suffered ill effects from the blast fallout. If you are in the service for a short period, you are truly a pawn. You have no say, as they move you around to suit a higher command's purposes. Maybe, a career soldier has options.

We returned to Rucker by the same route. When we arrived, they told us that they were shipping most of us out to other commands. We had earlier calls for troops from this division. They were never as large as this call. They would send most to either the Far East Command (FECOM) or the European Command (EUCOM). My destination was to be FECOM. The day after we learned where we were going, a young lieutenant came to me on the second floor of the barracks. He said that he was sorry they had given me FECOM as my assignment. I thought at the time that his remark was out of character for an officer.

They were shipping none of the National Guard troops out with this batch. I believe that they held the decision to ship in abeyance until the National Guard troops had too little time left in the service. I believe that they made that decision because of political pressure. Earlier, they had shipped about twenty National Guard rifle company

sergeants from our regiment to Korea on one day. Not long after, word started coming back that some of these troops were killed. The folks at home in Minnesota and South Dakota would not like that.

HOME FOR THIRTY DAY LEAVE BEFORE GOING OVERSEAS

They gave anyone headed for Korea (FECOM) a thirty-day leave before departure, so it was home to 253 Glenwood Avenue, Pawtucket, RI for me. They gave me my plane tickets from Providence to Fort Lawton, Washington on the west coast. Fort Lawton was a few miles north of downtown Seattle.

On the way home, I took a plane to LaGuardia. I then rode a cab from LaGuardia to either Grand Central or Pennsylvania Station for the trip to Providence. In those days, a soldier had a small leather kit in which he carried his shaving equipment and whatever else he could fit inside. It measured about 10" x 6" x 4" and had a zipper across the top. I had also put my billfold, my advance money of three or four hundred dollars, my coast to coast airline tickets and my travel orders into the kit. I jumped out of the cab, grabbed my duffle bag and walked into the train station. As I walked to the ticket window, my hand went for my billfold. I realized that I had left the kit in the cab. I ran back to the street. The cab was gone and so was my money and tickets to the west coast. A cop came by and I told him my story. He told me to walk a couple of blocks to the nearest police station and file a report. I stood at the curb in a state of shock. That was probably the first time in my life that I used the word "shoulda." Like, I shoulda kept my money in my pocket. I've been using "shoulda" ever since. Suddenly a cab pulled up in front of me. The passenger side window opened up and the cab driver handed my kit to me. Did he know the contents of the kit? Three or four hundred dollars, my plane tickets to the west coast, my travel papers and a dozen other items were in that little kit. I opened the kit and gave him about twenty dollars in appreciation. I still wonder if he had opened the kit. On the drive from the airport, I had talked to him about Korea. During that conversation he mentioned that he was a WWII vet.

FAR EAST, HERE I COME

This was my second or third time home since going into the army. The thirty days went fast. I spent a couple of days lying in the bathtub. It seems that one day my father and I went quahauging in either Barrington or Bristol. Swarms of flying bugs were above the water and landing on your skin. When we returned home that evening, my torso broke out in a rash from the waist up. The skin doctor near the tunnel in Providence took many photos of my rash. Could it have been water pollution? I told him that I was headed to Korea. He did not charge for the visit or the solution added to the bath water. He did get a dozen or so photos of my bitten, itchy torso.

I flew out of Hillsgrove Airport to LaGuardia in New York. The first leg of my trip to Korea, Pop McGill, my brother Tom and sister Marie or Dorothy had accompanied me to the airport. I and many other troops were flying out of LaGuardia that night on a charter flight. The troops sat around the airport terminal for hours waiting for the chartered plane to come in. We left New York late in the evening. We stopped in Montana. I believe it was Billings, Montana. I walked outside the terminal to look around. Nothing was to be seen. I looked in every direction. Nothing was there. I could see no buildings, no trees and the place was flat as a pancake. We then flew from Montana into Seattle, Washington. We crossed high hills or mountains just before coming down into Seattle in the daylight.

They called the unit at Fort Lawton, to which I reported, a Replacement Depot (REPO DEPOT). Today, Fort Lawton does not exist. It has been deactivated. Today the fort is called Discovery Park and is in the Magnolia neighborhood of Seattle. It overlooks and has a beautiful view of Puget Sound.

The United States Army relied on individual rather than the unit replacement system for their manpower needs in Korea. For that reason REPO DEPOTS were set up at Fort Lawton near Seattle, WA; Camp Drake near the port of Yokohama, Japan; Camp Mower, near the port of Sasebo in southern Japan and Camp Stoneman near San Francisco in Pittsburgh, CA. That was the order in which I hit them.

The land around Fort Lawton, five miles northwest of downtown Seattle, was very hilly. The high hills seem to run right down into Puget Sound at a forty-five-degree angle, leaving no beach. While on guard duty (fire watch), I stood among some trees and looked down at the ocean going ships sailing north through the sound.

We had received a series of shots before leaving Rucker. We received another whole series of shots at Fort Lawton. Was this an error? The medic looked at our paperwork and then dabbed colors on our arms as our line moved forward. These colors would show to the shooter the shots needed.

We stayed at Fort Lawton for only a couple of days.

One night I went into downtown Seattle. I walked around and eventually ended up in a bar, naturally. I sat there talking to a woman who worked as an attendant aboard the Military Sea Transportation Service (MSTS) ships that crossed the Pacific. That same

evening, I ended up buying beer for a woman who claimed to be a member of some local Indian tribe. A fellow, sitting on the other side of her, tried to talk her into riding in his truck to a local mountain. He wanted her to see the inside of this gorgeous cave that he had discovered. She was more interested in me. She had a tattoo on her leg. This was forty-five years before a tattoo was the 'in' thing for a woman. So much for my social life in Seattle.

One night, I thumbed a ride back to Lawton from downtown Seattle. A homosexual gave me a lift. I told him that I was not interested. The same thing happened a couple of months before, when I was passing through a train station in NYC. I "shoulda" asked them if they had any sisters. In Alabama, we had two draftees in our communications platoon who were using the same pup tent. In the infantry you carried one half a pup tent wrapped around your backpack. This oiled rectangle of canvas was called a shelter half. In foul weather you would team up with another soldier. When your two shelter halves were buttoned together, you had one whole pup tent. One of them woke up to find the other guy touching him. The young fellow reported the incident the next day. The homosexual draftee said that his family would feel bad after they discharged him and he returned home to the DC area. He said that his parents knew his brother was homosexual. They did not know that he was also.

ACROSS THE PACIFIC ON AN MSTS TROOP TRANSPORT SHIP

Hundreds of us were moved by bus or truck a couple of miles to a barracks at the point of embarkation (POE). The POE, where we waited to board a ship, was Pier 91 on the waterfront in Elliott Bay near downtown Seattle. It is at the intersection of 15th Avenue West and Elliot Avenue West, see enclosure (3). Today it is referred to as T (terminal) 91. A Pier 90 (I think) is next to Pier 91 on the waterfront, but I believe we sailed from Pier 91. We must have traveled south along the water down Magnolia Boulevard. After a day or two in those barracks on the pier we boarded a Military Sea Transportation Service (MSTS) troop transport. On the pier beside the ship were Red Cross women passing out doughnuts and cocoa as we went aboard. I believe that was the only time I ever saw members of the Red Cross. I think that they had an office at each of the camps where I had been stationed.

The day was in either late June or early July 1952.

MSTS included civil-service manned (USNS) transport and cargo ships. Its name may have been the "Marine Adder" a WWII Victory Ship. Maybe it was on the "Marine Adder" that I came back across the Pacific. Were the MSTS transports and cargo ships designated USNS? I sailed on two MSTS ships on the way to Korea: one from Seattle to Yokohama and one from Yokohama to Inchon. I sailed on two MSTS ships coming home from Korea: one from Inchon to Sasebo and the last from Sasebo to San Francisco. Though the skipper and crew were civilian, these ships had a handful of naval personnel also attached.

I have tried to find the names of the four MSTS ships on which I sailed. I have not been successful. Recently, I attended the twenty fifth anniversary of the closing of Naval Air Rework Facility Quonset Point in Rhode Island. I met an old apprentice buddy, Carlton Florence, who had been an artillery forward observer in Korea during the war. He said that he was a passenger on the General Bruckner, General Walker and Marine Adder. Was I a passenger on one of these ships? At a recent reunion of Korean War vets in Virginia Beach, one fellow told me that he sailed on the General Walter N Walker from Seattle to Yokohama.

The ship had a strong smell of diesel oil. Our route was to be north along the coast. We must have gone north on Puget Sound. We went through the Strait of Juan De Fuca and sailed northwest across the Pacific to a ship refueling station on Adak Island.

Adak Island lies on the great circle navigation route halfway between Seattle and Japan. It is in Alaska's Aleutian Islands and is 1300 miles southwest of Anchorage.

At first, we had long mess lines on the ship. The word got around; that in time the long lines for chow would disappear. After a couple of days, the waves got higher and the weather got bad. I would stand in the center of the ship and face forward. I would watch the bow first go down into a trough and then come back up, while the ship would slowly roll from one side to the other side. Luckily, my compartment was in the center of the ship. I went forward to see how bad it was for the men in the compartment at the bow of

the ship. The smell of vomit was overwhelming. So history should include that which we see; that which we hear (steam train whistles); and that which we smell, diesel oil and vomit.

They stacked our canvas bunks either four or five high. The holes or compartments could carry either bulk cargo or troops. Each morning, all troops had to go on deck while the compartments were cleaned and inspected. Those troops who were seasick would be lying face down on the steel deck in the rain. They would lie there all day, for day after day. For some reason, I was not subject to sea sickness. Now, I could walk right into the mess hall without waiting in a line. We had plenty of food. We had some difficulty when we stood at a table to eat the chow. The tray would slide all over the place. On a troop ship, one did not sit while eating. On rough days one had to hold on to the table with one hand. Some troops would also get sick in the mess hall. So, one could smell of vomit and food. Was it six, seven, eight or more days going across? At night, while lying in the bunk, we could hear the sound of the diesel engines. Occasionally, one would hear a "thunk" on some rough nights. I wonder if that was the screw or propeller rising out of the water.

On some rough days, I would start walking up a stairwell holding on to rails on each side. As I went up, the ship would start to roll and the rails would become more vertical and I would be climbing straight up. Then the ship would roll the other way and the rails would be more horizontal and I would be walking as though on a level surface. It was quite a sensation.

We also had some pleasant days and nights. We had some beautiful sights. At night, when looking into the water, one would see the green-white phosphorescence. We had several days of cloudy and foggy weather, as we were approaching Adak. Suddenly, a small clearing appeared high in the sky. Way off in the distance, in that small clearing, I could see the peak of a mountain. The peak was covered with snow. As the sun hit, it shone like gold.

All of the troops got down on the pier and went through calisthenics, while we waited for the ship to refuel at Adak. We were docked there for four or five hours. It was a cold and barren looking place. Not a tree or a bush was in sight. I could see a low building about the size of a house and a single gray pickup truck or Jeep parked next to it. That was the only sign of life.

After refueling at Adak, we sailed south toward the Japanese Islands. At a Sunday Mass, the chaplain said that we were passing about thirty miles off Siberia, but not to worry.

We finally pulled into Tokyo Bay. We would sail up Tokyo Bay to dock at the Port of Yokohama. See map enclosure (3) for our sailing route across the Pacific. To understand the route, or the curvature of the earth, one needs to be holding a globe of the earth in ones hand.

TOKYO BAY AND THE PORT OF YOKOHAMA

We sailed up Tokyo Bay and the terrain was the same as on our Pacific coast. The land is hilly and slopes down at a steep grade into the water. That leaves not much of a beach. It is so different from the East coast of the US. Is it caused by a volcanic past? Is that why we hear the term "Pacific Rim?" The weather was warmer and I was getting a sun burn on deck. As we got closer to Yokohama, the shoreline came in close around the ship.

I understand that when Japan surrendered at the end of WWII, they still had heavy anti ship weapons dug in on these same hillsides. As the first American ships came up the bay, they were under these guns. For that reason, each gun emplacement was required to be covered with white sheets. They could be more easily identified.

For the last couple of days, I had been talking to a draftee from Manhattan. He had been a trainee cop in NYC before being drafted. His father, a NYC police officer, had been shot and killed while on duty. His brother was also a NYC police officer. The job was his if he wanted it, because of his father. He was of Irish-American descent. His surname probably started with "Mc", as we were bunking near each other. He was concerned about the conduct of the police officers with whom he patrolled. While on duty, they would go into a barn in Central Park and "coop." Cooping is a NYC police term for hiding out and loafing while on duty. They expected him to do the same.

At the pier, in Yokohama, we stayed aboard as women and children debarked. I never even knew that they were on board. How could all of those women and children have been aboard that ship for all of that time without the troops hearing or seeing them? We watched as autos and other cargo were lifted out of the holes.

Down on the pier, the Japanese stevedores sat and ate their lunches from what looked like rolled up newspaper. They would hold the opened paper in the heel of one hand up close to their mouth. They held the chopsticks so that they were pointed straight down into the fish and rice. They would then push the food into their mouths. I watched our civilian crew go ashore and walk away from the ship.

In Oct 2002, I asked the Japanese Embassy in DC if they could help me in identifying the exact pier to which we were tied up. On 11 Nov 2002, I received a response from Osamu Ichise, Manager, Marine Affairs Division, Port & Harbor Bureau City of Yokohama. Mr Ichise wrote, "We regrettably have no record from those days. All of the port of Yokohama facilities were requisitioned and administered by the US Army after World War II, so the City did not have access to ship records. Our guess is that your troop ship most likely docked at Mizuho Pier (Yokohama North Dock). Mizuho Pier, completed in 1945, was the main pier used by warships, It is still used by the US Army today."

We loaded aboard trains and headed for the Replacement Depot at Camp Drake just north of the city of Tokyo. Camp Drake was in the city of Asaka, in the Prefecture of Saitama near a city named Ikabukaru. Today this camp is deactivated. While en route

to the camp, we passed slowly through many subway stations. We must have gone through the city of Tokyo. The windows on our cars were open and many troops yelled obscenities in Japanese at the men, women and children standing on the subway platforms. I thought it was deplorable conduct. They yelled an obscenity that sounded like "---- a harchee." They yelled the same things at the men who were working in the rail yards. One worker got very upset and reached up to grab a soldier.

I noticed people exercising in the squares early in the morning. They would be exercising in time with music coming from loudspeakers. Was the exercise Tai chi? Those scenes were much different from downtown Pawtucket, RI at seven or eight in the morning. As the train went to and from Camp Drake, we could see down into the homes of the families who lived along the tracks. The houses were very close to the tracks. I could see the families sitting around their tables. I never saw a scrap of paper or piece of trash on the ground.

REPO DEPOT AT CAMP DRAKE, NORTH OF CITY OF TOKYO

Camp Drake had been a military installation before and during WWII. Officers for the Japanese Imperial Army had trained here. We were to process at the REPO DEPOT here for two or three days. It was either the 8068th or 8069th Replacement unit. We got rid of unnecessary clothing and made out our wills. They issued to us a rifle, bayonet, cartridge belt with an aluminum water canteen and bandage container and field equipment. Our field equipment included such things as backpack, trenching tool, mess kit, steel helmet, plastic helmet liner, shelter half, sleeping bag and rain poncho.

The Korean War memorial in Washington, D.C. depicts riflemen wearing rain ponchos. I do not believe that the wearing of a poncho gives a realistic picture of a rifleman in Korea. He wore the poncho when it was raining. What percentage of the time was it raining in Korea?

We zeroed in our rifles, converted our money into scrip and were assigned to our unit in Korea. I was issued an M-1 rifle, not the carbine. Later, I found that my M-1 was not working properly. I think it was an intermittent fault in the return spring. This spring is located inside the gas chamber. It is part of the mechanism that reloads the rifle after one fires each round in the clip. I was not aware of this intermittent malfunction until I was on my first patrol in Korea.

Our paperwork was processed in an office in which all of the girls were Japanese civilians. The American NCO in charge was of Japanese descent. Each of us would sit at a desk with one of the girls as she processed our paperwork.

While standing in formation, we were told the infantry division to which we were assigned. I do not know if we were told our regiment within that division. My unit was to be the 45th Infantry Division, the "Thunderbird" Division. This unit, a former National Guard division from Oklahoma, had been in Korea since late 1951. It had been in a few battles. Between 5 Dec and 29 Dec 1951 the 45th Division had replaced the 1st Cavalry Division on the Main Line of Resistance (MLR).

Years later while working at Quonset Point in RI, we had a fellow passenger in our car pool named Alex Paulucci. Al told me that, at the time that I went through Drake, he was in the assignment section of the REPO DEPOT at the base. He said that he could have pulled my jacket and given me a choice assignment in FECOM. He said that he had posted his phone number and a message on the bulletin board in the post exchange. The message was for troops from RI to give him a call. I never visited the post exchange during the two or three days that we were at Camp Drake.

We were marched into a field on the day we got rid of our excess gear. We were told to dump everything in our duffle bag onto the ground. Then we were told the items of clothing that were to be put back into the duffle bag. As I remember, we kept very few items: a couple pairs of socks, a couple pairs of underwear, one or two pairs of fatigues and a fatigue jacket. We were then marched out of the field. Our duffle bags were full when we marched into the field. They were less than a quarter full when we marched

out. We left everything on the ground. All of the brand-new dress uniforms, that I was ordered to purchase a month earlier, were left on the ground in that field. Later, when we went up on line, we never even saw our duffle bags. We had whatever could be carried in our backpack. Civilian Japanese women employees were standing at the edges of the field ready to walk in and collect our clothing that was left in piles on the field.

The army owes me some money for the following reason. Before we left Camp Rucker in Alabama, we had to have all of our clothing both summer and winter issues in our duffle bag. We had to have all dress and fatigue clothing. Anything we were short we had to buy at Rucker. Now, we dumped all of that clothing we had bought and carried half way round the world. Later, I left Korea and was going home. I was at the REPO Depot at Camp Mower near Sasebo in southern Japan. I was given one winter dress uniform, one set of fatigues, one pair of high boots and no dress shoes. I want either all of my uniforms and dress shoes back or the money I paid for them at Rucker. If I am given the money, I want the interest that has accrued since 1952. If I am given the uniforms dumped on that field, I want them tailored to my present size. Do you think that the US Army will satisfy either of my requests? Listen up, Secretary of Defense Cohen!

A mandatory tax was levied by the command on every soldier who came through Camp Drake. The levy was to be donated to a local orphanage to help in the care of their children. The fathers of these children were American soldiers who had come this way before us.

We were briefed on items to consider while in Korea, the "Land of the Morning Calm." Those words of advice were:

- Do not eat any locally grown vegetables. A harmful parasite is in the vegetables. It is caused by the use of human excrement for fertilizer.
- Dip the bottoms of all trousers in a readily available chemical in order to combat the same parasite. I do not remember seeing those barrels.
- Take good care of boots because of their need if taken prisoner.
- When questioned, if taken prisoner by the Chinese, stress that you are of the working class in the US.
- Elderly men wear small black hats with a wide brim and small perforations in the top. The perforations allow their wisdom to flow out and into the heads of younger people.
- If taken a prisoner, your Chinese interrogators will show surprise that anyone would have the nerve to oppose such a vast and ancient nation as China.
- If taken a prisoner, the only information that you had to give (international law) was your name, rank and serial number.
- Be careful while driving on the highways. The peasants will leap into the path

of your vehicle and then quickly leap back out. They believed that the vehicle would run over their evil spirits.

- Do not buy and consume any alcoholic beverages brewed or distilled and bottled in Korea. Some troops died or were hospitalized because of their toxic nature.

In the evening, Japanese guards were posted around the perimeter of this REPO DEPOT. Their assignment was to stop any troops from leaving the camp. Those enlisted troops headed for Korea were ordered to stay in the camp. The guards were spaced about 100 feet apart and carried shotguns, which I believe held no shells. Facing the guards were hundreds of troops who wanted to get out. Occasionally a trooper would run for the wire fence, leap over and run for town. Sometimes, the guards would throw their rifles at the runners. It was like a game.

When a couple of men near me made a break for the fence, I went with them, naturally. It was dark and I started walking through the lanes of the community. I noticed that the people were very short. The smell was awful, as I walked down the lanes between the homes. Many families were cooking over fires on the exterior of their homes. The homes were constructed much different from the way we build them in New England. After a couple of hours, I went back and climbed through the fence into the camp. Welcome to the Far East, Yankee.

HERE COME THE MARINES

After two or three days, we headed back to the Yokohama port to board an MSTS troop ship. The ship was carrying two or three thousand US Marines to the port of Inchon on the Yellow Sea side of South Korea. They were coming from Twenty-Nine Palms in California. I believe Twenty-Nine Palms was a training or staging area for marines headed overseas. I also believe that they stayed aboard the ship while in Yokohama. The trip from Yokohama to Inchon would take two or three days. So here we were, about two hundred draftees, all army infantry, among thousands of gung ho leathernecks. The marines spent much of their time oiling their weapons and sharpening their bayonets. They would talk about how many "gooks" they were going to kill. Gook is a Korean or Japanese term for foreigner.

One evening, I was sitting on a hatch smoking a cigarette. When I finished the cigarette, I flipped the butt on the steel deck in front of me. I knew that was a no-no. A young marine officer happened to be walking by. The butt landed in front of him. He stopped, turned and gave me a withering look. With that, I jumped down. I picked up the butt, stripped it and threw the rolled up paper over the side of the ship. As I remember, stripping was the term used for removing the remaining tobacco from a used cigarette.

When the ship got to Inchon, we walked down a stairway attached to the outside of the ship and jumped into a landing barge. The barges would move fifty to a hundred men at a time. Inchon did not have a pier. The water was shallow and the troop ships had to stand offshore. At the time the front lines were thirty or forty miles north of Inchon. We were not in danger. All of the marines disembarked before they unloaded the Army infantrymen. The ship loudspeaker called out the units, in Korea, to which the marines were headed, so that they could be assembled. Would you believe that not one of those ferocious marines was going into an infantry outfit? They were all going into laundry companies, transportation companies, air squadrons, medical units, etc., etc., but not one infantry unit. So much for their ferociousness.

The two hills that I would later serve on, Hill 749 and Hill 812, were originally captured in Sep 1951 by the marines. They fought ferociously for Hill 749 and suffered 90 KIA, 714 WIA and 1 MIA in that one action. Two of them were awarded the Medal Of Honor.

In the harbor at Inchon, a large white hospital ship was sitting off to our right, with huge red crosses painted on its sides. It was sitting further off the beach than our ship. Were there helicopter pads positioned on the water next to that ship? Was it the hospital ship USS Haven (AH)?

INCHON TO CHUNCHON, KOREA BY TRAIN

When the barge touched the beach, the front end dropped down and we walked up onto the beach. Off to our left were hundreds of troops bunched together and sitting on the ground. They were waiting to go aboard the same barges for the trip back out to the ship. They had served their time in Korea. They were yelling, "You'll be sorry" and "Take good care of your boots." As we moved away from the beach, I saw an old Korean fellow pulling a wagon load of dogs. Someone said that dog meat was considered food in Korea.

I cannot remember where we were when we were first issued ammo. The United States army keeps very tight control over ammo that is in the hands of their young troops. In the US, the only time you had ammo was on the rifle range or when guarding a working prisoner outside a stockade while on post guard duty. While guarding those prisoners, they allowed you only one round for your rifle.

This was where I said goodbye to my police officer buddy from NYC. We were in a train station. All men going to the 45th Infantry Division were being loaded into one grouping of passenger cars. He was going into the 7th Infantry Division that was loading further to the rear or on a lower platform. We may have been loaded onto the same train.

My train was headed northeasterly for the city of Chunchon. It is in the center of the country, see map enclosure (4). We had to pass through the capital of Korea, the city of Seoul. We must have had ammo because they positioned guards at the ends of each car. Each of us was issued a small box lunch with two large slices of bread. Inside the bread was a slab of cheese and a slab of meat. Every so often the train would come to a stop and people would run up to the train selling food. I remembered the parasite. The windows must have been of a type that can be opened. Every so often we would pass trains heading in the opposite directions. Some trains would be carrying military vehicles and others would be hospital trains. I do not know how they built those hospital cars, but it seems to me that I could see the full length of the soldiers' bodies as they lie on their hospital bunks. I looked at a map today and the symbol for that line is for a single track, so one of us had to be on a siding as the other passed. The train passed through tunnels and crossed a few bridges. When we went through tunnels, the smoke from the steam engines would come back into the coaches. I do not know how many hours we were aboard that train. We traveled about eighty miles. When we arrived at Chunchon, the 2-½ ton trucks were waiting to carry us to the 45th INF DIV replacement company. The camp was on the north side of the Soyang River, a few miles north of Chunchon. We crossed a bridge and went to the right along the river.

45TH INFANTRY DIVISION REPLACEMENT COMPANY, NORTHEAST OF CHUNCHON

The replacement company for the 45TH Infantry Division was on the left side of the road headed northeast out of Chunchon. Barbed wire surrounded it. The camp consisted of tropical huts (corrugated buildings) and squad tents.

They gave us our company assignment at this site, I believe. They assigned me to the Intelligence and Reconnaissance Section of the Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 179th Infantry Regiment. At the time, the 179th was in reserve. Part of it was encamped along the Soyang River at a town called Inje. Inje was about forty miles to the northeast of this replacement company, see map enclosure (5).

General David Ruffner was the 45th Infantry Division Commander (Code name Power). Colonel Jefferson Irvin was the 179th Infantry Regiment Commander (Pagan6). I believe that a Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Sandlin had been the 179th Regiment Commander in June of 1952. I do not know the name of the major or lieutenant colonel who was our 2nd Battalion Commander. His rank and name may have been Major Naughton (White 6).

The length of time that a soldier would spend in Korea depended on the type of unit to which they assigned him. He had to earn thirty-six points to leave the war zone. He would earn four points a month, if he were on the line fighting in an infantry battalion and his life was in danger. In units behind the line, he would earn fewer points per month and he would be in the war zone for longer periods. I would be earning four points per month.

We stayed at the replacement company for a couple of days. It was here that I ran into my old buddy Swartzaffle. He said that he was billeted at the Replacement Company and had a job that involved finance or payroll. I wonder if he still had the MOS of a scout. We had some training at that site. I think we went over to a hill and fired our rifles into the side of the hill. I think we had to charge up the hill with a tank firing over our heads.

We would occasionally be sitting on the side of a hill in a graveyard. On each grave was a mound of dirt rising up about a foot above the ground. Rumor had it that people were buried in a sitting position, with their head inside that mound, so that after death they could observe those they left behind. Was that an accurate explanation?

Civilians were living around this camp. We had guards posted inside the wire. These civilians still came through the barbed wire during the night and stole one or two duffle bags from the cots near me. At Inje, we will have no civilians. They are not allowed within thirty miles of the front lines. No civilians are permitted north of the "NO FARM LINE." Some civilians lived between the camp and the river. I took a walk down in that area. Their homes were hovels. The top of their roofs came to below your chest. They were all dressed in GI fatigues. Some of them made money washing fatigues for the GIs. Some worked as prostitutes. At chow time men, women and children would stand

outside the wire near the point where the troops dumped their garbage and cleaned their mess kits. They would thrust their empty army mess kits through the wire asking for the food the troops were dumping into the garbage cans.

While at the replacement company, I took a bath and shaved in the Soyang river. Many troops did the same. The Korean women would gather around as we sat naked in the water. Their trousers or skirts were rolled up and the troops could see their bare legs. They wanted to wash our fatigues, to make money, while we sat naked in the water. We thought that this was great fun. We were in the water naked with all of those young women giggling around us.

It was here that I had a strange experience. I was sitting in a latrine having a bowel movement, while someone is below me shoveling the excrement into a bucket. The excrement is used for fertilizer. I remembered the parasite.

I pulled a couple hours of guard duty while at the replacement company. It was at night and a club for officers was within my post. The club was either a tropical hut or a squad tent where they could have a beer, relax and shoot the breeze. At about 10 PM a 3/4 ton truck pulled in with four or five young women wearing kimonos riding in the back. The women were led into the club where loud music was being played and plenty of beer was being consumed. After a while an officer and a woman would leave the tent arm in arm and walk over to a darkened tent where the officers were billeted. I also found a young Korean woman dressed in fatigues among some 2 ½ ton trucks that night. She was in the same line of work and propositioned me. The trucks were also on my walking post.

HISTORY OF THE 45TH INFANTRY “THUNDERBIRD” DIVISION

“Organized in 1920 as part of the Oklahoma National Guard, the 45th ‘Thunderbird’ Infantry Division was called to active duty in September 1940 as part of America’s mobilization for World War II. It served during eight campaigns in the European Theater of Operations, including assault landings at Sicily, Naples- Foggia, and Southern France, and the campaign at Anzio. In 1946 it returned to state control as part of the Oklahoma National Guard.

“On September 1, 1950, the 45th Infantry Division was once again called into active federal service, this time for the Korean War. It consisted of the 179th, 180th and 279th Infantry Regiments; the 105-mm howitzer battalions of the 158th, 160th and 171st Field Artillery Battalions and the 155-mm howitzers of the 189th Field Artillery Battalion; the 14th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion (Automatic Weapons); the 245th Medium Tank Battalion; the 45th Reconnaissance Company; and the 120th Engineer Battalion. The division arrived in Japan in April 1951 and began an intensive training program.

“In December 1951 the 45th Infantry Division replaced the First Cavalry Division on the front line in Korea. From December 1951 until the armistice in July 1953 the division participated in four campaigns. It fought in the Chongjamal area east of Chorwon in the central sector, helped defend Heartbreak Ridge and fought in the Punchbowl area in the eastern sector.

“For its actions in Korea the 45th Infantry Division was awarded the Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation. In addition to other awards won by members of the division, one ‘Thunderbird’ Division soldier won the Medal of Honor for conspicuous bravery on the battlefield. During the course of the war the division suffered 4,038 casualties, including 834 soldiers killed in action or died of wounds, 3170 wounded in action, 1 missing in action and 33 prisoners of war.”

Source: Korean War Almanac
Harry G Summers
1990

THE SOYANG RIVER

I never gave any thought to the name of the Soyang River until 26 Nov 1996, when I obtained the military topographic maps at Archives II in College Park, MD. Some maps identify the river as the Soyang and others identify it as the Soyang Gang. Gang is the Korean word for river. We climbed into the 2-½ ton trucks for the ride to our units. The trip would be northeasterly along the north side of the Soyang River to Inje. The forty miles of roads were dusty. At one point we rode behind a honey wagon. A honey wagon is a cart filled with human excrement and pulled by an ox. The smell was awful. They spread excrement on the vegetable fields as fertilizer. I remembered the advice on parasites. We were getting up into the hills. I did not feel too comfortable with those young army drivers on those winding narrow roads cut into the hillsides. In places with tight curves and steep drops you would see five or six steel helmets on sticks beside the road. These were reminders to the drivers of accidents and resultant fatalities at those points.

I would be close to the Soyang River until it was time for me to leave Korea. I was probably within a couple hundred yards of it during this whole period. We followed the Soyang to the town of Inje. Inje is beside and to the north of the river, at coordinates vicinity DT282132 on your map, enclosure (5).

To find this point on the map read right to the longitude line 28 and then estimate the additional 2. Then read vertical up the latitude lines to 13 and then estimate the additional 2. Later, we would travel thirty miles north along the Soyang to get to the front, see map enclosures (6) and (7). There we would pull patrols from the main line of resistance (MLR) down to the Soyang, see map enclosure (7). At that point it curved back toward the northwest behind the enemy lines. They named the MLR (main line of resistance) the LINE MINNESOTA. For some reason from Inje north the map calls the Soyang the Soyang Gang.

GLOSSARY FOR US ARMY TOPOGRAPHICAL MAPS OF KOREA

Term	Meaning
_bong	mountain
_chae	mountain pass
_do	primary administrative division
_dong	settlement, village
_gang	river
_gun	secondary administrative division
_jae	mountain pass
_kogae	mountain pass
_kol	settlement, village or valley
_kun	secondary administrative division
_lyong	mountain pass
_ni	settlement, village
_ri	settlement, village
_san	mountain
_tong	settlement, village

THE TOWN OF INJE

At Inje personnel and staff sections were quartered in squad tents. Mess halls were in tropical huts. We were encamped between the road that ran through the town and the river. I think that the only building left standing in the town was the gutted Catholic church on the west side of the highway. Someone must have directed me to the squad tent, where I put my duffle bag next to a canvas army cot. Very few cots were in the tent. It had a dirt floor. The tent for the battalion headquarters was nearby. That tent contained a table for the White 2, the 2nd Battalion Intelligence Officer, Captain Carl Oja and a table for White 3 the 2nd Battalion Operations Officer (?). This tent was on a raised wooden platform. I guess that this tent and the tent for the 2nd Battalion Commander were the only ones on wooden platforms. All others were on the ground.

When you are an intelligence and reconnaissance scout attached to a battalion headquarters your duties are different from those of a rifleman in a rifle company. A rifleman does everything in unison with his squad. A scout operates more or less, on his own. We had about four men in our I&R squad. When we got to the front line, we would: brief and debrief patrols, man the battalion observation post, go out on patrol and ride shotgun (protect) on the battalion commander. One of us would go to each rifle company command post each night and tell them in person the password for that night. That was something that could not be spread via the radio or telephone.

During this period, while we were in reserve, we did not have much to do. Captain Oja, our boss, spent most of his time in a jeep inspecting the check points for the "No Farm Line."

One scout had the assignment of riding shotgun for the battalion commander. He had the same assignment later when we were on line. He was a very mild mannered kid of Italo-American extraction. He was in E Company with Oja when they were on lone in the spring. When we got up on line later, he would come to the observation post at night to sleep. The battalion CO's walking through the hills would exhaust him.

Was Ackerman the name of another man who was not a scout? He was assigned to the Operations Section (White 3) and had been with Oja in E Company in an earlier battle.

We had a young North Korean fellow attached to our battalion headquarters. He wore a fatigue uniform, but he did not carry a weapon. He was about twenty-five years of age. He could speak perfect English. He had been educated in North Korea to the university level. I enjoyed talking to him. I believe his duties were those of an interpreter and also of an intelligence nature. He was born and raised in North Korea. His parents and siblings were still there. He was in North Korea when the first Russian troops liberated that country at the end of WWII. He was a clean cut nice looking fellow, but his teeth were in terrible condition. He said that the Russians ground units had many women in their ranks. I especially enjoyed his stories relating to how the Russian women soldiers would ride through the streets of his hometown to pick up young North Koreans like

himself for purposes of making love. I never did see him after we went on line.

The rifle company troops of the 2nd Battalion were improving LINE KANSAS near Pyongchon, see map enclosure (6).

Other enlisted men in the squad had been with Captain Oja when he was the E Company commander. They had gone through a battle while on line a couple of months earlier, in the spring of 1952. The company had suffered many casualties. Now, Oja was White 2, the Intelligence Officer, for the battalion. Later when we got on line, they moved him to the position of White 3, the Operations Officer. He was from Minnesota and much shorter than I. See his photo in Enclosure (1). He would stand in front of me, look up at me and say something like, "McGill, you do not know what it is like." He had a picture in his billfold that he would show to everyone. It was a picture of him on a bucking bronco, but I believe that it was a fake. It seems to me I saw the same bucking bronco on a pedestal in front of a photo shop near Fort Hood in Texas. You will see his name mentioned quite often, as the White 3, in the Daily Journals of enclosure (13).

In 1952, Captain Oja would have been about thirty-one years of age. He saw service in WWII, Korea and Vietnam.

Mickey Rooney put on a show for us one night. He went through his regular routine with the tall girls. I felt very apprehensive, as we walked back to our tents, after the show was over. The show was presented on the other side of the highway that runs through Inje. I think that I was able to see the ruins of the Inje Catholic Church from the field where we sat and watched the show.

When we were on maneuvers in Texas, a professional army entertainment group also put on a show. It was a musical comedy about a preacher. It was really great rollicking entertainment.

MY BULLET PROOF VEST

“From Cpl Campbell, White 3: 426 vests worn, 10 hit while wearing vests: 2 vests hit, 1 WIA, 0 KIA through vest.”

*Command Report, 179th Inf, APO 86,
Daily Journal Message No 44, at 0915 hours,
7 Nov 1952*

At Inje they issued me my armored or bulletproof vest. The thing did not fit. It was too small and they did not have a larger size. My boss, Captain Oja, would say, “McGill, zip up that vest.” The vest had a zipper plus snaps at the front. It was a couple of inches thick. If you did not zip it up, it hung open for about a foot across at the front of your chest. You were supposed to wear it over your outside garments. When we went on line, I wore mine over my underwear. I put my shirt on over it. Even then, if I took a deep breath, I could not expand my chest. Later, when we were on line, I went out on patrol. The enemy started shooting at us. When you are frightened, you need to take a deep breath. At the same time we ran up the side of a hill. With being frightened and the exertion, I could not expand my chest. I could not get to the vest. It was zipped up and next to my skin. It was under my fatigue shirt and two bandoliers of ammunition that were crosswise on my chest. After that, I always wore the thing outside and wide open. Not the best situation. I never did get one that fit.

They constructed the armored vest of flexible pads of basket weave nylon with curved overlapping Doron plates. Doron plates were plastic armor plates made of laminated layers of glass cloth filaments bonded under heavy pressure to form a thick rigid slab. The vest could stop a .45 caliber bullet, all fragments of a hand grenade, 75% of fragments from a US 81-mm mortar or the full thrust of a US bayonet.

MY CAREER ON THE 'VICE' SQUAD

The Soyang river was just a few yards from our tents. It was very swift because the land was much higher to the north of us. If you look at the map of Inje, enclosure (5), you will see that the contour lines on the south side of the river are very close together. The vertical distance between these contour lines is ten meters or more than thirty feet. That means that a steep cliff exists on that side along the river. The cliff is about one hundred and fifty feet high. We are on the north side. Recently we have seen a couple of women standing on the top of the cliff. They allowed no civilians north of the "No Farm Line." The women should not be there. A couple of the troops have been missing for a few days. They could have drowned in the swift current trying to get to those women. One day Oja said to me, "McGill, get those people out of there." So the next day a rifle squad showed up looking for "McGill." The squad leader would direct his men. Did I come up with the "plan of attack?" We waded across the river and started walking up a valley toward the abandoned town of Chaeudok, in the vicinity of coordinates DT291117, see map enclosure (5).

About a mile up an old overgrown road, a couple of the young women came walking toward us. They apparently thought that we were coming to do business. We eventually rounded up about five or six of them. They were dressed in army fatigues many sizes too large for them. The young women looked like duffle bags with little red lips at the top. I do not know what they used for lipstick, but it was brilliant. The mamisan was an older woman and the young women looked to be in their early teens. The young soldiers wanted to stay there with the young women. They wanted us to go back without them. I told the sergeant that we were bringing all of them back and turning them all over to the CID unit in Inje.

When we got back to the river, it was swift and at chest level for the troops. It was over the heads of the women. At our crossing point the river was about one hundred feet wide. We got back to the river after chow, just before nightfall. About a hundred of our troops lined up along the other side of the river. They hooted and howled at us for taking away their women. Our squad had a difficult time carrying both the young women and their weapons across the river at the same time. At one point, I thought that I would have to get a rope for the men to hang onto while carrying the young women across. We finally got them across and through the angry troops to the CID unit. Later, when I was a rifleman in a rifle company, a cook in the chow line recognized me. He said to me, "Are you the guy who took our girls down in Inje?"

Army trucks are constantly carrying supplies north toward the front on the road through Inje. The women must come north while hidden in the backs of those trucks.

SLUGFEST ON LINE KANSAS

One day another scout and I were sent up to the LINE KANSAS to find a good location and start building a battalion observation post. LINE KANSAS was to be the drop back position in case the enemy overran LINE MINNESOTA. The KANSAS line ran through Pyongchon, in the vicinity of coordinates DT 303343, see map enclosure (6). It must have followed Route 96. I do not know where we were that day, along that backup line. The other fellow was a corporal or a sergeant from Michigan, I think. Was his name Brodniak? He had been in OCS at the Infantry School at Fort Benning. For some reason, he had dropped out. He was an overbearing type of guy. I was a private first class. We were both scouts and had the same duties. We found a spot that had good observation forward of the trench that was under construction. The shovels, we had to dig with, were the small trenching tools carried on backpacks. Brodniak said to me, "Start digging." I dug. After a while, I told him that it was his turn to dig. He said that I would do the digging. He threw the first punch and with that we were slugging it out on the side of the hill. After a while we quit fighting. Anyone, friend or enemy, who could have been watching us, would have thought that we were some sort of a comedy act. We sat. Neither of us did any digging. Later that afternoon, a jeep brought us back down to Inje. Since neither of us had a black eye, they would ask no questions.

NCO SCHOOL AT CHUNCHEON

Around this time, they sent me back to the 45TH DIV Replacement Company near Chunchon. I was to receive about a week or two of training as a non commissioned officer (NCO). Another rugged young fellow, undergoing the same training, was an actor on Broadway before they drafted him. His surname was McDaniel. Years later he appeared in a stage production in Boston. McDaniel had the same job in either the 1st or 3rd battalion as I had in the 2nd battalion. How different his experience in Korea was from that of the singer Eddie Fisher. Fisher was an Army entertainer in Korea. He was separated from the army at Devens on the same day as I. On the ride home to Pawtucket in an auto that day, I heard him interviewed by a Boston radio station. The interviewer mentioned that his (Fisher's) life had been in danger while in Korea. Fisher said nothing to correct that misinformation.

Toward the end of my week of NCO training, we got word, the 179th INF is moving up to the Minnesota Line. So we broke open wooden boxes. We loaded up with bandoliers of ammunition and grenades. Then we climbed back into the 2- ½ ton trucks. This time we would bypass Inje and ride straight through to what I believe was the headquarters for the 179th while it was on line. The location was on Route 291, about twenty-five miles north of Inje. It was on the west side of the Soyang Gang, at a place called Kajon-Ni. It was in the vicinity of coordinates DT 310408, see map enclosure (7). The map on enclosure (6) shows Route 291, the approximately fourteen miles of loose surfaced road that is just to the south of Kajon-Ni. This is the road on which we traveled north in those trucks.

WELCOME TO LINE MINNESOTA

“On the night of 24-25 October the 1st Battalion relieved the 3rd Battalion, 279th Infantry in the left sector of the 45th Division sector of LINE MINNESOTA. On the following night the 2nd Battalion relieved the 3rd Battalion, 279th Infantry in the right half the regimental sector. At 0015 hours, 27 October, upon completion of this relief, responsibility for the regimental sector was passed to the 179th Infantry by the 279th Infantry.”

*Command Report, 179th INF, APO 86
Part I - Introduction
1 October - 31 October 1952*

“Opposing the Regiment were the 89th and 90th Regiments of the 45th NK Division.”

*Command Report, 179th INF, APO 86
Part III- Intelligence
1 October - 31 October 1952*

At or near Kajon-Ni to the left of the Soyang Gang, our battalion commander briefed the officers of the 2nd battalion on our movement up to the front lines during the coming night. I am not sure of his name; I believe it was Major Noughton. I attended the meeting. Everyone seemed apprehensive. He told the platoon commanders to accompany all patrols sent out that night by the battalion we were replacing. This was necessary so that they would be familiar with terrain forward of their positions in the front line trench. The question arose about what should be their responsibility if their patrol unit got hit. These men were officers and the leaders of the patrols going out would be NCOs. The battalion commander said that he would leave it up to their judgment.

I threw my duffle bag onto a pile of other duffle bags that night. It was about a quarter full. I would not see it again until I was leaving Korea. I would be living out of my backpack. You travel light.

For the 179th Inf the front would run in more of a NNE to SSW direction than in an east to west direction, see maps in enclosure (4).

To our left, southwest of us, was the US 40th Infantry Division and the Punchbowl..

The Philippine 10th Infantry Battalion Combat Team occupied the position immediately to the right of the 179th Inf on the Minnesota line. They would have been northeast of us. They were attached to our 45th Infantry Division. I think that they were regular army troops and signed up for many years when enlisting.

We were part of X Corps. Beyond the Filipinos to our right was the South Korean (ROK) 11th Infantry Division. Beyond the ROK 11th Division to our right was the ROK 5th Infantry Division. The front line for the 5th ran all the way to the Sea of Japan. The front line for those two ROK divisions ran in a SSW to NNE direction.

Trucks carrying our battalion of troops would be moving up Route 291 during the night.

The job for the three or four scouts in my squad was to make sure that the drivers did not make a wrong turn. The North Koreans held hills that were much higher than ours. They could see down onto the road behind the hills that we would be occupying. The hill that I would be on was 749 meters or 2,434 feet above sea level. They had a hill that was about three miles north of us that was 1320 meters or about 4490 feet above sea level. We called that piece of road behind us the "mad mile." Our trucks could not use their headlights. They positioned me at a Y intersection. They told me to make sure that the drivers went to the right. They told me that a jeep would be the last vehicle in the convoy and that it would give me a lift. I "shoulda' asked how the troops in the jeep would see me in the darkness.

A military policeman had a permanent position at that intersection. I chewed the fat with him for a few hours, as the battalion convoy passed through the intersection. He said that he was afraid that he was to be put into the infantry. His command used that threat with the troops under their control. He said that he was a "sole survivor." A sole survivor is one who is in the service and whose only brother has already been killed in the service. The DOD policy was that they would not endanger the lives of sole survivors.

After a few hours, no more vehicles were coming through. No jeep stopped to pick up Private First Class Frank McGill. Eventually, I stopped a vehicle going forward. It was a 3/4 ton truck and belonged to a mortar outfit. I jumped into the back. I had no idea where it or I was going. Eventually that vehicle stopped. The driver said that he was going no farther forward, so I got out and walked. I came to some troops who were well dug in manning large caliber mortars. I asked where my unit was and they said that they knew nothing about it. They pointed the direction to the front lines and I started walking up a road or path between two hills.

The road starts at DT292436 and runs more or less north. It turns into a path and runs to the right of Hill 812 and to the left of Hill 749. The path ends at the Soyang river at DT292476. It runs for about two and one quarter miles. I will be within a mile of this road/path until I leave the MLR in December. First, I will be in the White observation post (OP) to the right of it as an I&R scout; then I will be a rifleman in G Company on a hill to the left of it.

No one was anywhere in sight. Even in daylight, no one is in sight on the front line because they are all dug into the ground. Eventually, I came to a "hoochee" dug into the side of the hill. I started walking around it looking for a door. I called out to the occupants, but they would not answer. I could not find a door. The hoochee was filled with KSCs. They would not open a door. They yelled, "Go away." The Korean Service Corps (KSC) consisted of older unarmed uniformed Korean men who were used for carrying meals, logs, ammo, etc., etc. up the hill to the troops.

A KSC was usually seen walking with an "A" frame on his back. The device is peculiar to Korea. The frame is made of wood and it is shaped like the capital letter "A." It has shoulder straps of woven straw and can carry very heavy loads.

When you have trench warfare everything on the MLR is underground. Nothing sticks up into the air. If it must rise above ground level it is embedded in layers of sandbags. Even the 105 and 155 artillery pieces in Artillery Valley behind the line were dug in. You could see the ends of their barrels sticking up above the ground.

Further up the road, between those hills, I found three or four men with a phone or radio. I asked them to get the White CP (forward command post) on the phone. Red is the code for 1st Battalion; White is the code for 2nd Battalion and Blue for 3rd Battalion. White 2 is the 2nd battalion Intelligence Officer. They got the battalion forward CP on the phone. The CP gave me the directions to the observation post, where I would be working and sleeping. I continued up the hill. I could not see a soul anywhere. Every thing and every man is underground.

We had powerful search lights positioned many miles behind our lines shining into the eyes of the enemy. The enemy had the higher ground. As I got further along the dirt road or path, I could see the enemy hill spread out across the front of me all lit up.

Suddenly, a machine gun and a recoilless rifle erupted from the higher ground behind me and to my right. Tracers were going over my head toward the enemy positions. Maybe, I had gone too far forward. I went back down the road found a path that ran up behind those guns. I eventually found our observation post on the top of Hill 749. The time was a little before daylight on 26 Oct 1952. Like I said, I&R scouts operate more or less on their own.

In a war of position or trench warfare everything is underground or under sandbags. If you looked around during the day, you would see no troops and no structures. Every thing and every man was in a trench, dug into the side of hills or under the cover of logs and sandbags.

CODES USED IN THE DAILY JOURNALS OF THE COMMAND REPORTS

When reading the daily journals in the command reports, see enclosure (13), remember that code words are used for individuals and units within the regiment. Some examples of these code words are as follows:

Code	Meaning
Red	1 st Battalion, 179 th Inf, includes A, B and C (rifle) Companies and D (heavy weapons) Company
White	2 nd Battalion, 179 th Inf, includes E, F and G (rifle) Companies and H (heavy weapons) Company
Blue	3 rd Battalion, 179 th Inf, includes I, K and L (rifle) Companies and M (heavy weapons) Company
Gibraltar	Headquarters, ???? Inf Regiment
White 2	2 nd Battalion, Intelligence Officer
White 3	2 nd Battalion, Operations Officer
White 6	2 nd Battalion, Commanding Officer
Pagan	Headquarters, 179 th Inf Regiment
Pagan 2	179 th Inf Reg, Intelligence Officer, also known as S2
Pagan 3	179 th Inf Reg, Operations Officer, also known as S3
Pagan Green	179 th Inf Reg, Tank Company
Pagan Brown	179 th Inf Reg, 4.2- inch Mortar Company
Poison	279 th Infantry Regiment
Poison Green	Tank Company, 279 th Inf
Polish	Artillery
Power	Headquarters, 45 th Infantry Division
Power 2	45 th Inf Division, Intelligence Officer, also known as G2
Power 3	45 th Inf Division, Operations Officer, also known as G3
Plunder	????

Code	Meaning
Passport	180 th Infantry Regiment

See Enclosure (12) for the organization of the various units within our division. This enclosure also shows the equipment used by these units.

2ND BATTALION OBSERVATION POST ON HILL 749 AT DT29754560

“From White-2: White OP picking up flashes (muzzle) approx 3000 yds, az 316 deg, White OP at DT 29754560.”

*Command Report, 179th Inf, APO 86
Journal Message No 73, at 2205 hours,
28 Oct 1952*

Our observation post, White OP was the highest point on Hill 749. The observation post would ordinarily be located by the six digit coordinates of DT 297456. By adding the fourth digit 5 and the eighth digit 0, i.e., DT29754560 a more precise location for our observation post was sent to the regimental headquarters by the 2nd Battalion Intelligence Officer, (White 2). I think that the White 2 was a Captain Wendt, but I am not sure. Did Wendt take over E Company a couple of days later? I did not know that the White 2, who replaced Captain Oja, had come into the battalion within the last couple of days.

On the army topographic map the number 749 is written. That number is the number of meters above sea level for that location. In many cases rather than using Korean geographical names the hill height was used to identify a location.

I do know why the White 2 was that exact on giving the map coordinates for our observation post position. When we sent a piece of information on enemy activity to the battalion forward command post (White Forward CP), we always gave the direction in degrees and the estimated distance. With those three pieces of information: our position, an azimuth reading and a distance, the counter fire platoon within the regiment had a target for our mortar or artillery fire. We also had the same map that is in this report for identifying the coordinates of the enemy positions. I do not remember whether it was the 1:50,000 or the 1:25,000 map. We would watch everything the enemy was doing and relay the information by phone back to the 2nd Battalion forward command post. The battalion forward command post was about one hundred feet behind us on the back side of our Hill 749.

No wonder the daily journal messages, in the command reports, are stamped SECRET.

For a roof our observation post (OP) had logs with about three or four feet of dirt on top. The interior was about six feet by six feet square and about four feet high. The slit for observation was about three feet wide and about a foot high. It was there that the observer positioned himself. The position was manned twenty-four hours a day. The logs with dirt on top extended about six feet toward the front above the slit, like a visor on a cap. This visor like protrusion would make it more difficult for the enemy to fire a shell from a flat trajectory weapon through the slit or far a mortar round to land close to the slit..

A tunnel from behind the hill led to the OP. On the sides of the tunnel were two small alcoves for us to sleep. The alcove in which I slept had a huge hole in the roof. I could see the sky. Our bunks consisted of telephone wire strung across two tree branches.

These branches were positioned about four inches above the ground. This portion of the MLR was occupied by the South Korean Army when the trenches were dug and the hooches were built. For that reason everything was constructed on a smaller scale. Our bunks were about four feet long. You had a choice you could let your head hang off the end or you could let your feet hang off the end.

We manned the post around the clock. We reported everything we saw. On a couple of occasions, I watched the enemy digging trenches toward our lines during the day. We would call in the coordinates and the distance to where the digging was taking place. We had a pair of powerful artillery binoculars, a map of the area and a hand-held compass. The binoculars were built like a periscope. They were built somewhat like a Z. During the night we could see the flashes when the enemy fired his mortars and artillery. We would call in the azimuth reading from the OP to the flash. Using the map, we would also give the approximate coordinates for the position from which they fired. This is important work. The enemy fired 966 rounds of mortar and artillery into our regimental sector during the last six days of Oct 1952. We received 41,393 rounds during Nov and 23,978 rounds during Dec. Maybe, this amount of incoming fire means that our efforts and those of our regimental counter fire platoon were not very effective or efficient.

At times it was frustrating. You would see the muzzle flashes from their mortars or artillery coming from the same locations every night. You would call in the location of those flashes continuously night after night. Why were they not knocked out?

I am quite sure that our map showed an enemy hill more than 3000 meters high. It was a few miles north of our position. The highest point in our regimental area was 812 meters. In addition to our regular maps, our battalion forward CP also had one three dimensional map of the area. This was the only such map that I saw while in the Army. I saw that three dimensional map only one time. It was lying on a table in the battalion forward CP.

They could not knock us out with a mortar because of that long overhang on the front of our observation post. The one that we had to worry about was their 76MM recoilless rifle, with its flat trajectory, putting one through the slit.

We could tell which nights they would attack. Their incoming would knock out much of our wire communications during the previous day. We buried our phone wires about a foot under the ground in our trenches. During the day we were looking for enemy activity such as the digging of trenches at night we looked for their flashes.

Hill 749 had been originally captured from the NKPA (North Koreans Peoples Army) by the United States 1st Marine Division during the period 13 through 16 Sep 1951. A detailed description of their action is in Chapter IX, pages 190 through 194 in Volume IV of the five volume *"US Marine Operations In Korea."* Volume IV is entitled *"The East-Central Front."*

Excerpt from the section entitled, *"The Fight for Hill 749"*, in Chapter IX are as follows:

“Casualties of the 1st Marine Division during the four-day fight for Hill 749, most of them suffered by the attacking regiment, were 90 KIA, 714 WIA, and 1 MIA. Enemy loses for the same period were 771 counted KIA (although more than twice that number were estimated KIA) and 81 prisoners.

“Vittorio (Corporal Joseph Vittorio of Fox Company) was mortally wounded, thus becoming the second Marine of 2/1 in a twenty-four hour period to win the Medal of Honor. His predecessor was Pfc Edward Gomez of Easy company.

I had no idea, until early 2003, that the Marines had suffered such a high number of casualties in taking this hill.

ATTACK ON F (FOX) COMPANY OUTPOST

“On 29 Oct at 0440, an outpost from F Company engaged approximately ten (10) enemy in a firefight of 30 minutes duration. In this action three (3) enemy were killed and one (1) additional enemy was estimated killed and one estimated wounded. Friendly casualties were two (2) killed, four (4) wounded and one (1) missing from the outpost, with one additional killed from a relief unit en route to the outpost and three (3) men were hit from litter teams evacuating wounded.”

*Command Report, 179th INF, APO 86,
PART II - Narrative of Activities
1 October - 31 October 1952*

Around 0700 or 0800 on 29 Oct a call came telling me to accompany White 2 and another fellow down to the outpost. I think that the other fellow was my “slugfest’ buddy, Brodniak. On the outpost a draftee from Puerto Rico had killed and wounded the enemy with his Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR). He was the only one on the outpost not killed, wounded or missing. He said that the enemy had “come down from our lines.” We figured that many of our other men on the outpost had been asleep when the enemy hit. The enemy had dropped a white phosphorus grenade in each of their holes. The only way to stop white phosphorus from burning is to stop oxygen from getting to the wound. How are you going to do that in a fox hole on an outpost in front of the line? White 2 said that the other fellow and I were to find out how the enemy had gotten through the minefields. He then returned to the battalion CP. I am not sure but I think that he was Captain Wendt. He was new. He had been with us since we came on line. I never saw him again. He was kind of chubby. I think that later became the CO of Easy Company.

The CO of F Company, First Lieutenant Pedro Schirra, a 1950 graduate of West Point was considered one of the best officers in the battalion. He like the kid with the BAR was a resident of Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico, because of its relationship to the US, also drafted men for the Korean War.

White 2, the other fellow and I climbed out of the F Company trench and started going down the hill to the outpost. The coordinates for the outpost were vicinity DT303467, see map enclosure (7). This was the first time that I had been forward of the front line trench. You felt very exposed. As we worked our way down the steep hill, we came to a rest. Within a few inches of my left hand was an army boot. I sat there looking at the boot and marveled at how shiny it was. One spends a lot of time in the army shining boots. I suddenly realized that the boot was on a dead American GI. He was partly hidden by a bush. The reason I say American is that most of the squads in the rifle companies had one or two Republic of Korea (ROK) troops integrated into them. They were referred to as KATUSAS. We got to the outpost and it consisted of about seven or eight single man holes around a slight knoll. They position the holes in the shape of a horseshoe with the open end facing the enemy. You want them to walk inside the horseshoe and then you have them.

The smell of burnt powder, excrement, white phosphorus and whatever was awful. The ravines on both sides of this knoll were supposed to be mined. Suddenly, we heard a whoosh as a flat trajectory shell went past us and exploded in the ravine to our right. I jumped into a hole with a young black kid. He was bigger than I. They dug the hole for one man. I think that the only phone to the outpost was in this hole. I do not know whether the phone at the other end of the line was in the Fox Company CP or the platoon CP. The enemy kept on trying to hit us with that 76-mm recoilless rifle. Most of the rounds were slamming into the ravine to our right. We were on a knoll, so when they missed with a flat trajectory round it would hit far behind us.

I did see the squad leader and some other members of his squad when we first got to the outpost. After the rounds started coming in, I saw none of them. He kept yelling to his men to keep their heads up, so they could see if any of the enemy were coming. I kept telling this kid to keep his head down. The enemy soldiers from the earlier attack were lying on the ground around us. Apparently, the Puerto Rican kid with the BAR had cut them across their stomachs with his fire. They were holding their stomachs. A little red star was above the brim on one of their cloth caps. I did not know if any of them were still alive. We later found that two were officers. The young guy in my hole asked if he could use my toothbrush to clean his M1. A weapon had a light coating of oil. It was always in the dirt. Your weapon always needed cleaning, whether in this hole or in the trench.

After a while, 82MM mortar rounds started coming in. The enemy would be more accurate with mortars. When they missed, they could see where they landed. They could then walk them around until they were on target. By this time I was on the phone. I was lying in the bottom of the hole. The other guy kept lifting his head up, to see if the enemy was coming. I told the guy on the other end of the line that we needed smoke. The enemy would not see where their rounds were landing, if we had smoke. I also told him that I was one scared soldier. He told me to keep talking, if that would help.

I must have moved up to near the top of the hole. Suddenly, I felt something. The other guy fell over on top of me. The blood was coming out of the side of his head. A mortar round had landed about a foot from the edge of our hole. I could see wisps of smoke coming out of the ground in the indentation it had made in the earth. I was back on the bottom of the hole. The kid was lying on top of me. His blood was running down all over me. I told the guy on the other end of the line that we needed a medic. The mortar rounds were landing and I was under him. I kept thinking that I should be on the top protecting him. Whoever had the responsibility for firing the smoke mortars were dropping them down wind from us. I told the guy on the phone, that they had to drop them up wind, which would have been to our left.

Suddenly, a tall thin medic appeared in front of me. He was carrying a rolled up canvas stretcher. I yelled at him to get down. The mortars were still coming in. I think that I poked him in the legs with the butt of my rifle, to get him to drop. By this time the smoke was helping us. I pulled the kid out of the hole and strapped him into the stretcher while the medic connected something to him and held it high in the air. I started dragging the

stretcher up the steep hill. See the closeness of the contour lines on the map, enclosure (7). He kept sliding out of the stretcher. It kept getting tangled in the bushes and the telephone lines that ran everywhere. I took him out of the stretcher and tried pulling him by the back of his shirt. He slid down out of his shirt. I tried pulling him by one of his legs and his other leg kept getting entangled in the bushes. The blood started to fill his mouth. He was gurgling. The medic disappeared. I do not know what happened to the medic. I turned him on his stomach, grabbed him by both of his boots and with both of our M1s slung over my shoulder, I dragged him up to the trench. As I dragged him, I was wondering if he was still alive. We eventually got to the trench. I sat him up against the wall in the trench.

I went to an F Company CP behind the hill to tell them that they had to take care of their man. About four men were sitting outside of the hoochee in a daze and they would not respond. Finally, someone stuck his head out from behind sandbags at the CP and said that they would take care of him. I had to go back down to the outpost. As I passed by the kid lying in the trench, I reached down and got my toothbrush out of his shirt pocket. I do not know whether he was alive. I often wonder if he lived. Later that day, my buddy and I got word to come back. My helmet had a slight dent in the side. I must have had my head slightly above ground when that mortar round hit.

Later that day, a short black sergeant from an engineering outfit came to our observation post. He had to answer questions as to the existence and location of minefields in front of F Company. A career man, his wife and children were back in Germany. We admired a pair of binoculars that he had recently purchased while on R&R in Japan. He was an upbeat guy and slept in our tunnel. A couple of days later a mine went off below him. He was alive, but the bottom of his torso was in bad shape.

HISTORY OF THE NORTH KOREAN 45TH INFANTRY DIVISION

Opposing the 179th Infantry Regiment were the 89th and 90th Regiments of the 45th North Korean Infantry Division.

“45th Infantry Division

“August - December 1950: Formed in the Nampo area where it trained and had a coastal defense mission. Routed by UNC forces in October, it withdrew to Manchuria.

“January - May 1951: Reconstituted under VIII Corps in eastern sector. Fought until April when it suffered heavy losses in personnel and equipment. Withdrew to the Kumgang Mountain area for rest, reorganization and training.

“July - August 1951: Relieved the 15th Infantry Division, III Corps in the eastern sector. Later it was relieved by elements from the VI Corps.

“August 1951 - January 1952: III Corps reserve, involved in training

“January 1952-53: Recommitted to combat, again relieving the 15th Infantry Division, III Corps in the eastern sector.”

*The Korean War, an Encyclopedia,
Stanley Sandler,*

1990

MAP OVERLAY OF ENEMY POSITIONS ON LINE

“One prisoner of war identified the 9th Company, Third Battalion, 89th Regiment; one identified the Heavy Machine Gun Company, Second Battalion 90th Regiment and two identified the 7th Company Third Battalion, 89th Regiment. The latter two were captured by L Company in an assault on an enemy outpost. The other two surrendered voluntarily, being dissatisfied with conditions in the NKPA . . .

“The Regimental Counterfire Platoon fixed 15 enemy weapon positions during the period, of which 2 were 60 mm mortar positions, 6 were 82 mm mortar positions, 1 was a 120 mm mortar position, 4 were 76mm artillery positions, and 2 were 57mm recoilless rifle positions....”

*Command Report, 179th INF, APO 86
Section III, Intelligence
1 Dec 1952 to 31 Dec 1952*

See the map overlay enclosure (8) for the disposition of the North Korean 89th and 90th Infantry Regiments of their 45th Infantry Division. It also shows some units of the North Korean 91st Regiment. This overlay was drawn up either by or for Col Irvin the commander of the 179th Inf Reg on 1 Jan 1953 after the regiment headquarters had pulled back to Kowontong at DT348216 around 29 Dec 1952.

The original overlay is in the folder at Archives II. It was made of a translucent plastic material. It would lay over Map Korea 1:25,000, sheets 6829 III SE, 6828 IV NE. I have reduced the overlay to 65 percent of its original size so that it will fit on an 8 1/2" x 11" page in this report. If a reader wants to reproduce the original from this copy, he needs to return it to its original size. The overlay was Annex #1 to the Intelligence Section III of the December 1952 Command Report for the 179th Inf Reg.

AIRCRAFT SUPPORT

"From Lt Runyon: Re: Air Activity

"1. Planes 3 AD (Navy) carrying 9, 500 lb GP bombs 18,260 frag bombs. 12 HUAR (rockets) max ld. 20mm. On tgt 0931 off at 0941. 100% coverage of tgt; 85% eff use of ordinance. 4 bunkers damaged. 4 mortar position damaged. 1 secondary explosion. Tgt DT297482.

"2. 4 F84's, 8 napalm on at 1442 off at 1450, 100% coverage, 80% use of ordnance. 11 pers shelters damaged; 8 small fires. DT280535.

"3. 4 F84's, 8 napalms on tgt DT283951103; 100% coverage and 80% eff use of ordinance - hazy smoke could not evaluate."

*Command Report, 179th Inf, APO 86
Journal Message No. 52, at 1650 hours
Delay Entry
6 Nov 1952*

Occasionally, small aircraft dropped napalm and bombs on the enemy on the other side of the Soyang Gang. These aircraft were of a silver or white color. Puffs of smoke would appear around the planes as they made their dives. The puffs were from enemy anti aircraft guns positioned in front of our lines. I never realized that those type of guns were forward of our lines.

We could hear but could not see the heavy bombers as they dropped their heavy loads beyond the enemy hills. We would hear a continuous rumble.

Occasionally on some nights, a large Air Force plane would drop a huge flare behind the enemy lines and take photos.

ATTACK ON HILL 812

“The night of 6-7 Nov produced the heaviest action of the month . . . An enemy force . . . a reinforced battalion attacked along . . . two thirds of the regimental front . . . Beginning at 060800 Nov . . . a total of 1625 mortar and artillery fire was received in the 2nd Battalion sector. The attack began at 2300, hours when a selected force of approximately 75 enemy attacked Hill 812 . . . The initial attack of this force was made through their own mortar and artillery fire . . . Friendly casualties totaled 1 killed and 10 wounded, while those inflicted on the enemy were 9 known killed, 11 additional believed killed, and 18 estimated wounded.”

*Command Report, 179th INF, APO 86,
PART II - Narrative of Activities
1 Nov - 31 Nov 1952*

“From Major Naughton, White 6 : Commo out fr all Cos to White CP; serious probe in White area, Blue alerted, Bn Commander estimated it as heavy atk. (Lt Anderson)”

*Command Report, 179th INF, APO 86,
PART VII - Daily Journal
Message No. 103 at 2330
6 Nov 1952*

“From White: HILL 812, half overrun. (Lt Anderson)”

*Command Report, 179th INF, APO 86,
PART VII - Daily Journal
Message No. 108 at 2340
6 Nov 1952*

“From Major Naughton, White 6, large force in front of F Co, waiting for situation to crystallize before firing; 3 platoons fixed bayonets, have moved half way up hill. (Lt Anderson)”

*Command Report, 179th INF, APO 86
PART VII, Daily Journal
Message No. 112 at 2345
6 Nov 1952*

I remember that day and night. During the daylight hours so much artillery came in that our telephone lines buried in the bottom of our trenches were blown up. So we were limited in our communications. They attacked before midnight and overran our front trench. They set up a machine gun on top of the platoon CP on the rear side of the hill (with the Lieutenant on his radio inside) and were firing and moving down the back side of the hill.

Our battalion commander was on the other end of our phone line wanting to know whether the artillery rounds coming in were from our guns or their guns. I told him that I did not know. He kept after me for an answer. I really could not tell the difference. The

next day he crawled up into our observation post.

The hills were lit up as though it was daylight. Huge flares were slowly coming down from the sky. They must have been fired from artillery pieces and attached to parachutes. All of those huge searchlights miles behind our lines were also concentrated on our area.. Anti aircraft artillery (AAA) searchlight batteries behind our lines bounced searchlight beams off low-lying clouds and that light was reflected onto enemy positions. I tried to crawl out of the observation post through the slit with the phone in order to answer the questions from our battalion forward CP. I think that they plugged us through to the regimental CP, so that we could answer their questions also.

I heard later that our battalion commander wanted to lead the troops in the push to take back our trench. I heard also that he was ordered by the regimental commander to stay in the battalion forward CP.

When the enemy was pushed back off the hill, they took our apple butter and crackers with them. I was concerned that the enemy could toss a grenade through our slit from the side. One kid positioned himself so that he could get any of them coming up our tunnel from the rear. If I remember right, some incoming were air bursts. Could some of the incoming also have been white phosphorus? The command report states that over 200 enemy troops hit our lines.

We usually had mortar rounds coming in, but this time it was heavy artillery rounds. Some of them landed near us and the ground would shake. One large shell landed forward of our OP and it looked like white phosphorous. Some of them must have had proximity fuses, as they seemed to burst above the ground.

LIFE ON THE LINE

One scout manning the OP was an older career man. Earlier, he was stationed in Panama and he had six or eight years in the army. He would often use someone else's sleeping bag. He would then urinate in the bag. After a while, our bags smelled terrible. Used mortar tubes were driven down into the sides of the trenches for urinating. Slit trenches for bowel movements were behind the hill. One night I saw an officer squatting over the slit trench behind our OP. He had a pistol on his hip and no other weapon. His left arm was missing. His shirt sleeve was rolled up and pinned at the top. I spoke to him and gave him some of our rations. He was sleeping in an abandoned hoochee just behind our OP. I could not figure what a guy with no arm could be doing on line. I believe he was connected to some artillery unit.

The guys in our I&R squad were assigned a short stretch of trench which we were supposed to keep clean. I made a small sign. The sign read "Keep this trench clean. Cleanliness is next to Godliness." I pinned the sign to a log that ran over the trench. The next day my sign was gone.

As I remember, we used two different types of sleeping bags. In the warmer weather, it seems to me, we had a woolen bag with a cloth cover. When the weather got very cold we had a very large quilted, down filled, mummy shaped bag. This bag was big and bulky. You could climb into it with helmet, weapon and wearing all of your winter clothes and boots.

We did not have a source for meals for the first couple of weeks. The rifle companies around us had their meals carried up the hill by the KSCs. We were told to walk over to the rifle companies for our meals. We never knew when they were being fed. Instead, we ate C rations or maybe they were called assault rations. We would steal cases of these rations from an artillery forward observation post. Their observation post was on a hill near us. They stored their cases of C rations in an alcove outside of their hoochee. About twelve boxes/meals were in a case. A case was about the size of a suitcase. A black quarter moon, shaped like a C, was stenciled on the outside of the case. We would steal a case or two a week. We would store these cases of rations in an abandoned hoochee behind our OP.

These rations were very rich. Each box contained a large round bar (chunk) of cocoa, a sealed can of food, a large round cracker, toilet paper and a can of Sterno for heating. A bar of soap must have been in there also. The sealed cans contained a variety of food. As I remember, they were ham and eggs, pork and beans and maybe one other meal. Were matches in there also? I would eat the chunk of cocoa without water. Later, during the physical when I was separated from the army the dentist said, "You have excellent teeth. Take care of them." We stored the toilet paper inside of our helmet liner. I ate the sealed cans of food cold. They usually contained meat. I would open box after box looking for a meal that I liked. The sealed tin that contained eggs and ham was the best. After a while these sealed cans were always frozen. I ate them while frozen. It was too much of an effort to heat the cans over the Sterno. The large

cracker was similar to a Uneeda biscuit and made to expand in your stomach, I think. I lived on these rations until I went into a rifle company on 16 Nov 1952. As I remember, the constant diet of this rich food made us very gassy. Every night at seven they would also give each of us two candy bars.

The enemy would play oriental music on loudspeakers during some nights. They would then speak in the Korean language to the KATUSAS in our rifle squads. Some days they would send mortars over us that made a whirling sound before exploding in the air. The whirling sound would attract your attention. After the round exploded in the air above our heads, their propaganda pamphlets would fall into our trenches. I remember one with a fellow lying on the beach in Miami. He was lying back on a chaise lounge and holding a drink. A bevy of young women in bathing suits were around him. The wording was something to the effect of why should that guy be there and you here.

While in Korea, I had my first bath in a river with women around me wanting to wash my clothes. That was at the 45th DIV Replacement Company back near Chunchon. It was quite a thrill to be sitting in the river naked and shaving with young Korean women giggling around you wanting to wash your clothes. Their clothing was tied up in such a way that you could see their smooth bare legs.

After we went on line, we went to the rear once to take a shower. On that day it was snowing. We stacked our rifles, shed our clothes, put our billfolds in our helmets, and carried only our helmets into the shower tent. I got all soaped up under a trickle of water and they shut the water off. Our time was up. We came out the opposite end of the tent where there were piles of clean used clothing. You poked through the piles until you found something that fit.

Any other bath that I took in Korea was in my steel helmet. I used the can of Sterno from the rations to heat the water in the helmet only one time. Not much heat, not much water.

Our battalion commander would come down our trench on an inspection trip. The rumor was that he would levy a fifty-dollar fine on anyone who did not shave. I was always fully clothed when getting washed. A couple of times I tried to shave by splashing cold soapy water on my face and then using the razor. After a while, you dry shaved without soap or water. My third bath, a cold saltwater shower, was on a troop ship headed back to Japan. It was not worth a hoot. Hill 812 is 812 meters above sea level. That is 2652 feet. If you wanted water, YOU walked down the back of the hill to the bottom. Then YOU hauled that can back up the hill. We did not have any KSCs assigned to us. The enemy had the higher ground and could walk his mortar rounds along those paths. We did not waste water on staying clean.

We could hear the shells from the heavy artillery passing in both directions high over our heads. You could tell which way they were going. They made a shhh sound and must have been of a very large caliber. I would think they were trying to knock out those huge floodlights. The lights were positioned many miles behind our lines. Down behind us was a place we called "Artillery Valley." It had many well dug in 105 and 155

artillery pieces. The artillerymen covered the valley with a heavy smog. They burned some kind of chemical in 50 gallon drums. This created the smog. The smog would hinder the enemy in seeing where their rounds were landing. The hills of the enemy were higher than ours. I often wonder if those artillerymen suffer ill effects today from breathing that burning chemical for month after month.

The walls of the trench were about five to seven feet high. Every fifty to sixty feet along the trench, a log roof with three or four feet of dirt was placed atop the trench. This roof would run for six to ten feet. They dug hooches into the walls at these points for the troops to sleep and take cover from incoming artillery. Later, when I was assigned to a rifle platoon, for some reason, I was the assistant squad leader. My position, when we ran down that trench at night, was at the rear end. As we ran, our spacing would be subject to the accordion affect. It was dark and you must not lose touch with the man in front of you. The logs across the trench were never at the same height. Remember also that these trenches had been dug by South Korean soldiers for a South Korean Infantry Division. They were much smaller than Americans. I would be running as fast as I could in a stoop over position. I would run into one of those low slung logs at full speed. Though you wore that steel helmet, the jolt would leave you staggering. At night you would be running through a strange tunnel. The tunnel would make a sharp turn. You would run bent over, head first at full speed into a wall. You were always concerned about getting dirt in your weapon.

The closest I came to a "purple heart" was on two occasions. One night another fellow and I were carrying a stretcher with an F Company man down the trench. We were running as fast as we could, with our rifle slung over our shoulder. The trench was a couple of inches wider then the handles on the stretcher. My knuckles were rubbing the sides of the trench as we ran. They were very raw, when we got the guy behind the hill. The second time was when I was opening a C ration can of food. You used a little metal key to puncture and peel back the thin metal cover on the can. I gouged my thumb on my left-hand knuckle on the sharp blade attached by a hinge to the small metal key. The key was about 1-1/2 inches by 1/2 an inch. Attached by a hinge to it was a small blade 1/2 inch by 1/2 inch. The army nomenclature for this little devil was "P-38." As I am typing this, I looked at the scar. It is still there. My war wound? At the time it seemed to take forever for these cuts to heal.

The KSC carried the enemy dead off our hills. The KSC would tie the two hands together. They would use telephone wire. They would also tie the two ankles together. They would then slide a pole about eight or ten feet long through the arms and then the legs. With a KSC on each end of the pole and the pole on their shoulder, they would walk the body off the hill. The head of the enemy dead would hang and bounce as they walked. Our dead were not handled that way.

At one point, a curious thing was happening and for days I could not figure it out. Occasionally, I would see a yellow drop at the front brim of my helmet. While wearing the helmet, I would stare at this drop in wonder. I would sit in the sun in the trench and look at the sun shining through this yellow spot. After a few days, the reason for this

yellow spot dawned on me. In the cold weather we had a mummy style down filled sleeping bag. It was very large. You could climb into the bag wearing all of your clothing. Your boots, rifle and helmet would go into the bag with you. When you needed to urinate, you would remove your plastic helmet liner from inside the steel helmet. You would then position the steel helmet in the bag and you would urinate into it. Then you would poke the steel helmet out of the bag and dump it out. You would leave the wet steel helmet outside the bag with the open side facing down. The remaining urine would turn to ice on the inside of the steel helmet. I would never noticed the ice when I inserted the plastic liner. So during the day the weather would warm up, the ice would melt and start dripping from my brim. Dummy!

We had mice in the hoochees. The hoochees were dug into the sides of the trench and used for sleeping and cover from artillery. They were about four feet high, four feet wide and seven feet long. A sandbag, slit open along its seam and hung over the opening, gave us a door. A slight mound was just inside the door. If the enemy threw a grenade into the hoochee, the blast would be reflected upward and back toward the opening by the mound.

We would not sleep during the night. At daybreak we would catch a couple hours of sleep. That also meant no breakfast. During the whole period that we were on line, the longest sleep I had was two hours. Actually, I felt better when I was exhausted. When rested, you would start thinking about going home. That would hurt because you were always very frightened. In the colder weather, my hoochee also had stalactites and stalagmites of ice.

I received one letter while in Korea. It was sent to me by my sister Marie. She enclosed a picture of the family. Apparently, the negative was not the best. Most of the family did not have heads. At that time, I was in the rifle squad. I showed the picture of my family to the other fellows. Enclosed with the picture was a small prayer card entitled "Prayer of a Soldier." On the reverse side of the prayer card, I started checking off the days I had remaining in Korea, see copy enclosure (9).

When I was in the rifle squad, I sent about three hundred dollars home. We were going out on patrol every three or four nights in the "No Man's Land" forward of the trench. I was afraid of getting hit with all of that money in my pocket. I was afraid to leave the money in my backpack back in the trench. There was always the possibility that we would not return to that same position on line, when we came back in from a patrol. My sister Marie bought a sofa, for the living room in our home in Pawtucket, with that money.

I went to a Catholic Mass once the whole time that I was in Korea. That was at Inje and before we went on line. The Mass was held in a tent and there were no seats.

We had no idea as to the days of the week. At the time, I could not have told you whether the day was a Monday or a Thursday. The day of the week had no relevance. I saw the Catholic chaplain one other time. We had a contact patrol going out that night. He had come up to hear the confession of any kid so inclined. His head was all

wrapped in white bandages. His jeep had recently turned over on the side of a hill. A contact patrol keeps going forward until it meets the enemy. It is heavily armed. The combat patrol that night was armed with a mortar, a light machine gun and also had an artillery forward observer among the troops.

When the weather got very cold, we were issued the recently invented Mickey Mouse boots to stop our feet from freezing. These rubber boots had an air pocket that made all of its surfaces about an inch thick. So as you can imagine my size 13 Mickey Mouse boots were gigantic. Every one of my buddies had received their boots. They told me that they could not find a pair big enough to fit me. One day, after about a week, two KSCs came up the hill. Each of them was carrying one boot for me. Imagine! When you walked through the snow, you left very large footprints when wearing those boots. When I went into the rifle squad on 16 Nov, the medic would check our feet every couple of nights for frostbite. We would remove our boots and he would stick a pin into each of our toes. Every night he would hand us a clean dry pair of socks and the two bars of candy.

Years later, I learned that the brother of a fellow naval aviation depot employee, Bruno Tassone, designed and oversaw the manufacture of the first Mickey Mouse boot for the army. He was employed at a US Army research lab up outside of Boston. These boots were good when staying in one position. They could not have been used for hiking over long distances. Your socks seemed to be always wet in the boots, but your feet were not cold and they would not freeze. We wore them in the trench and on patrol.

The snow melt during the day and the water ran down the walls of the trench. At night, the water would freeze and the walls would turn to ice. After a while, the crust of ice on the walls of the trench built up. The ice got to be five or six inches thick. I can remember one night standing in the trench with my back against the icy wall. I fell asleep while standing upright. When I awoke with a jolt after a few moments, my legs seemed locked at the knees. That was the only time in my life that such a thing has happened. On one occasion, I awoke to see a stalagmite sticking up inside of one of my boots.

We never spoke to each other about our families back home, politics, religion or any matter relating to our personal lives. Even when two of us were in the trench together, we would never communicate to each other anything other than that which was occurring here and now. This must be the reason that I do not know anything about the names or lives of the men I served with in Korea. We never engaged in small talk. That is sad.

G (GEORGE) COMPANY, 179TH INFANTRY REGIMENT, HERE I COME

“On 15 November the first of 3 additional rifle platoons in the regiment became operative in I Company. 2nd Battalion organized a similar platoon in G Company on 16 November and 1st Battalion in B Company on 18 November . . . Third Battalion relieved Second Battalion on the MLR on the morning of 16 November . . . G Company moved into blocking position at DT286440 . . . ”

*Command Report, 179th INF, APO 86,
PART II - Narrative of Activities,
1 November to 31 November 1952*

On 15 November, I was told that I was going into the G Company fifth rifle platoon mentioned above. I was the one in my unit with the least time left in Korea. That night, I grabbed my sleeping bag and backpack and went to the back of the hill where the platoon was being put together. About six men were assigned to my squad. I do not know any of their names. I know that our squad leader was a corporal and that his father was the distribution manager for the newspaper in Detroit, MI. Two of the fellows were draftees from Puerto Rico. One of the two remaining was a tall thin kid and the other was a short rugged kid. Most of them had just come on line that night. When I approached the lieutenant, it was very dark. He said that he thought that he had seen me before. I did not like that, I did not respond. There are times when the less you know the better off you are.

Ernie Pyle, the newspaper correspondent/columnist, had written a few columns on the men in G Company, 179th Inf while it was in action in Italy during WWII.

Our battalion was now in reserve. That meant that we would pull daylight security patrols behind our line. We would also pull observation and contact patrols in front of our line. Our squad walked the hills behind our lines constantly looking for enemy who may have penetrated our lines. This was more relaxing than patrolling in “no man’s land” in front of the lines. The only time that I was really concerned was the two or three times that our young squad leader led us into possible mine fields. He carried the map which identified those fields. We would be walking along and he would suddenly stop. He would say something like, “I think were in a minefield,” then he would start studying the map. Other than that, I believe that he was a good squad leader.

On one cold day, we were pulling a patrol behind our line. We came to a road where four or five troops were standing around trying to keep warm. Lying nearby was a pile of Munroe shaped charges. A Munroe shaped charge is an explosive. However, it needs an igniter in order to explode. The charges were about the size of a one gallon paint can. The “shaped” comes from the fact that at one end it has an indentation shaped like and larger than the size of an ice cream cone. When a Munroe charge explodes all of the force is exerted at a point in the center of the opening in that cone. When positioned right and backed up by sandbags, it can blow a hole through steel or a couple feet of concrete. I had been introduced to this explosive during my intelligence

& reconnaissance training at Fort Benning.

One of the troops placed one on the road and other troops broke it into smaller pieces by pounding it with the butts of their rifles. I do not know how but someone then ignited those pieces. They burned with a brilliant light and we all stood as near as we could to capture some of the heat. I do not think that they gave off much heat. Could we have been hurt doing this?

On one patrol behind the line, I remember seeing a cave dug into the side of a hill. The cave was small and black inside. Someone mentioned that it was an old oven in which the Korean civilians would have made their charcoal.

On one of those patrols we came upon a road being built for better access to the front trench. No one was working on it. On another occasion we searched the hill above the artillery positions.

THREE MAN DAYLIGHT OBSERVATION PATROL

One foggy morning the platoon sergeant, accompanied by a fellow with a radio on his back, came up to me. He said that the three of us were going down in front of our line, "no man's land", to the Soyang Gang River on a three-man daylight observation patrol. We would go forward of the MLR at the trench held by the 3rd Battalion. We would also avoid any contact with the enemy. Both of them carried the light carbines and I had my M-1. This was to be strictly an observation patrol. We were to avoid contact with the enemy.

Some light snow was falling and it was very foggy. The sergeant was the point man. The radioman was in the center and I was in the rear. The radio was carried on his back. It was about 18"x12"x6", as I remember. It was heavy. Most of the weight must have been the battery. It had a hand held phone attached to it by a cord.

We went down a finger to near the river. I would estimate that we went down to the vicinity of coordinates DT293473, see map enclosure (7). I had never been that far forward of the front lines. The fog gradually lifted and after a while the light snow stopped. We took cover and stayed there for quite a while. I could hear the water flowing in the river which was about twenty feet in front of us. We listened for sounds of the enemy. A log was lying in the water for use in crossing. The Soyang Gang was very narrow at this point, maybe twenty feet across. It ran in a west to east direction. Actually not much cover existed because at that time of the year no leaves were on the trees. We moved to the left along the river. We had been out for three or four hours. There was no enemy activity from what we could see or hear. Their trench was on the other side of the river. It was at a higher elevation than where we stood. We moved further to the right along the river. Did we plan to return up a different finger than the one we had come down?

We started moving back up the ravine toward our own lines with the sergeant in the lead, the fellow with the radio in the middle and me in the rear. Suddenly, I heard pop, pop, pop . . . and I noticed branches were falling from the trees over our heads. We hit the ground. In front of us was an enemy machine gun. Two of them were crouched over the gun. Off on each side was a man with a rifle. They were well dug in. Our rifles were no-match for their machine gun. We could not have reached them with a grenade. They were between us and our lines. The sergeant said to run up the hill to our left and get to the other side. As the kid with the radio ran in front of me, I thought I saw the radio on his back take a few rounds. It was tough running up that hill and I was one scared soldier.

I soon realized that I was in trouble. I could not expand my chest. The damn armored vest was beneath my clothing. It was atop my T shirt and zipped up. There was no way I could get to it through the layers of clothing and bandoliers of ammunition, while I ran up the hill. I could not see the sergeant and I could not see the radioman. I had to do something. So I slowed, lie on the ground and eventually crawled to the top. I moved beyond the view of the machine gun and lie on the ground. I got below the layers of

clothing and opened the vest so that I could take a deep breath.

We were still quite a distance below our line and did not know if there was other enemy in the area. I spotted the Sarge and we moved closer together. We could not see the fellow with the radio. We could not leave him. We looked for about a half an hour but could not find him. We worked our way back up to the outpost in front of the line.

At the outpost we picked up about six more men. Some carried BARs. The Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR) carries a clip of twenty rounds of .30 caliber bullets. It can fire a single shot or at the rates of 350 or 550 rounds a minute. When empty the BAR weighs sixteen pounds. We had to go back down and find the kid with the radio. I don't think that the battalion would have dropped any mortar rounds on the MG until we found him. The mortars of the battalion's heavy weapons company would take care of the enemy machine gun, not us.

We found him sitting against a tree down almost to the river. He apparently turned left when he ran up the side of the ravine to the top of the finger and headed back down to the river. He seemed pretty relaxed. He was a cool customer. Why didn't he try to work his way back up to the line?

THANKSGIVING DAY, 1952

We had turkey for Thanksgiving Day. Usually we had two meals a day. The KSC's carried one meal to the top of the hill just after sunrise. I usually missed the morning meal. The only time that we could sleep was for a couple of hours just after sunrise. They brought the evening meal up just before sundown. We were going out on patrol that night and I was very apprehensive. Later, I saw a copy of the Army Times. It mentioned that the troops were well fed that day and were being supplied with charcoal for heat. We never saw our first piece of charcoal. The day was cold with half rain and half snow coming down.

The KSC's carried the containers of food up the hill. The meal was served in the usual place a very shallow (two or three feet) trench that ran just behind the hill. We took turns leaving our positions to go back and eat. That was our usual procedure. Very few men were allowed to be in the chow line at one time. The NCO running the chow line was constantly yelling "Don't bunch up" or "One round will get you all." The enemy knew how to walk their mortars right down that trench. You would get your chow and move away from the area as quickly as possible.

A mess kit has two halves. The KSC's brought all mess gear back down the hill after each feeding to be cleaned. You would grab half a mess kit at the beginning of the chow line. They were carried in wooden crates. So you did not have your own mess kit. You did have your own metal cup, which you rarely cleaned. The bottom of the trench had about four or five inches of mud.

When it was my turn to eat, the mess kit halves that were left in the crate were the smaller of the two. I started through the line and the first KSC was serving mashed potatoes. The next one was serving yellow turnip . . . next cranberries . . . next gravy . . . next turkey. The rain was coming down and the food was all soupy in the tray. They then put a scoop of ice cream on the top with small jelly beans. I then moved down the trench with this soupy mixture. I promptly tripped over a telephone wire in the trench and the whole thing landed in the mud at the bottom of the trench. I scooped as much of it, as I could, back into the tray and leaned against the side of the trench and ate it. So much for the Army Times and their reporting. I then went back to the trench on the front of the hill and sat there worrying about the patrol that night.

BACK IN THE FRONT LINE TRENCH

“The First Battalion was relieved in the left Battalion sector by the Second Battalion on the night 6-7 December. Responsibility for the sector changed hands at 070357 December 1952.”

*Command Report, 179th INF, APO 86,
Part II, Narrative of Activities
1 December 1952 to 31 December 1952*

On the night of 6 December we grabbed our bedrolls and knapsacks and moved from our trench into the front line trench. I would estimate that our squad had about one hundred feet of the line.

Either the G Company Weapons Platoon or H Company, the heavy weapons company, had a belt-fed 30-caliber machine gun in the center of our squads' sector. This gun when swung either to the left or the right would be interconnected with another machine gun further to the left or to the right. They would provide crossfire in the form of an X. The MG was manned by two men. At least one of them was at that gun every minute of the day and night. That was their fighting position. They rarely had to go out on patrol. Sometimes an air cooled 30 caliber machine gun would be brought along on a heavily armed platoon size combat patrol that was going forward until contact was made. Such a patrol would also on occasion bring along a 60-mm mortar.

I cannot identify the belt-fed machine gun that was near and to the right of me. At that time the light machine-gun, in the weapons squad of an infantry platoon, was the belt-fed Browning .30-caliber air-cooled M-1919A6 machine gun. It had a shoulder stock and bipod. The machine-gun squads in the infantry battalion weapons company (which in combat was attached to the rifle companies) had the M-1919A4 machine-gun, identical to the A6 except that it was tripod-mounted and had no shoulder stock or bipod. Those squads also had the extremely accurate belt-fed Browning .30-caliber water cooled M1917A1 machine gun. See enclosure (12) for further information on our battalion weapons.

The incoming that I hated the most were those we received from their 76MM recoilless rifles. This was a direct fire weapon. They would start at one end of our trench and work their way down to the other end. First one would hear a bang. One would then hear a long “shoo” as the projectile approached our trench. Finally a boom as it hit our trench. As the enemy worked their way toward you the shoo would get shorter. The boom would get louder. Then one would hit near you. You would not hear the bang or the shoo on that one. Then you would hear the bang, the shoo and the boom as they went further down the trench. This was a psychological effort by the enemy. We would crawl up inside of our steel helmets.

Another soldier and I were at the far left in our squad's sector. Another rifle company held the line to our left. Our platoon CP was on the back side of our hill. The trench dipped or ran downhill to the left of our hoochee. For that reason the enemy on Hill

1052 (Luke The Gook's Castle) could see right to the bottom of our trench at that point.

On the two topographical map enclosures to this report, the altitude of Luke The Gook's Castle is given as Hill 1052 or 1052 meters. That height is based on a Japanese land survey conducted in 1918. A more recent survey in the Global Gazetteer by Falling Rock Genomics, Inc dated 18 Jan 2001. It states that Luke The Gook's Castle has an altitude of 1035 meters. It gives its position as 38.4281 degrees North 128.1531 degrees East.

We had a phone at our position. The platoon CP would get our attention by whistling into the mouthpiece of their phone. We would get their attention by blowing into the mouthpiece of our phone. The phone wire was buried about a foot under the ground in the trench.

We would never see a soul come down that trench. The battalion commander came by once. He was concerned because the enemy on Sniper Rock could see right to the bottom of the trench for about forty feet at the left of our position. Was Luke the Gook Castle another name for Sniper Rock? Sniper Rock at 1052 meters was 720 feet higher than our highest hill at 812 meters. At a sprint it would take the enemy a couple of minutes to cover the distance from his trench to our trench at their nearest points. Or vice versa. This was at Sniper Rock/Luke The Gook's Castle.

The battalion commander, Major Naughton, was upset because we had new dirt on the trench bottom. I had shoveled the dirt out of our hoochee. The young Italian American kid, who I knew, was standing behind Naughton and our G Company commander (?). He was "riding shotgun" for Naughton. I remembered the comments the kid would make back in the battalion observation post after his days with the CO. Any officer who came up with an excuse to Naughton was always in trouble. I told the CO where the dirt came from and that we would get rid of it this instant. Then the CO inquired about my welfare. I had a piece of sandbag attached to my helmet as camouflage. He told the company CO to get a piece of netting for me to replace the piece of sandbag. He knew me from the battalion headquarters. They moved on. We shoveled the dirt over the side of the trench. The only problem was that the enemy could see the new dirt on top of the snow. That could bring in a few mortar rounds.

The second or third night back in the front line trench, I heard voices to our front. The talking continued so I blew into the phone. The platoon sergeant came on the line. I told him that I heard voices to our front. In a couple of minutes he was in the trench with me. He asked if it could be one of our own patrols from the company to our left. I told him that they ran their patrols further to our left. We started throwing grenades forward of our position. Each of us threw about four. One of them did not explode. A couple of them were white phosphorus. The phosphorus grenades were shaped like soda cans. We had barbed wire about fifteen or twenty feet in front of our trench.

Another visitor was a new platoon sergeant who was lost. I believe that he was coming

into a platoon in our company. He was so drunk that he was falling against the side of the trench. The smell of alcohol coming from him was awful. Two or three KSC's were carrying his personal gear for him. We carried our own gear. If there was any place in the United States Army that needed able-bodied men it was in those units on the front line. We could not function with misfits that officers in units in the rear would send to the front lines as punishment. How many men were sent to the front lines as punishment? What a lousy way to treat the young men in those units who were already operating at the extremes of their endurance.

WINTER IN THE TRENCH

We had no heat on line. Around Thanksgiving Day, I saw a copy of the Army Times. An article mentioned that the troops were being supplied with charcoal. Which troops? What charcoal?

As the weather got colder, we were issued heavier clothing. During the whole time that I was at the front I had no heat. Earlier, when I was in the observation post, we had tried to heat it but were not successful. I wore two sets of winter underwear, a woolen shirt, a woolen pullover sweater, a fatigue shirt, a fatigue jacket, a parka liner and a parka with a fur hood. Somewhere in there also was that armored vest that did not fit. We wore a fur lined hat under our helmet liner and steel helmet. The hat had fur earlaps. We wore woolen gloves with five fingers. Over these we wore a heavier mitten that had a trigger finger. Over these two pair of gloves we wore white silk like mittens for camouflage. We wore those white camouflage silk like mittens while on patrol forward of the trench with snow on the ground.

When the snow came and we went out on patrol, we also wore a snow suit. Before a patrol, they would hand us a small packet about the size of a small laptop computer. The packet contained four white silk like items that were for camouflage. One was a pair of trousers with a drawstring. One was a pullover jacket with a hood. We also got a pair of white pullover gloves. The hood had a drawstring so that the enemy could see only your eyes. That caused a problem for me later. Over the top of all of this were two bandoliers of ammunition crosswise on your chest and a cartridge belt with a bayonet. Your big pockets would hold four or six grenades. We would rap our rifles in white adhesive medical tape, when snow was on the ground. The enemy could not see your rifle against the snowy background or when lying on the ground during a patrol. They could see only the soles of your Mickey Mouse boots when you were lying in the snow.

PATROLS

“A total of 289 patrols were prescribed and executed during the period (1 - 30 Dec), of which 58 were daylight security patrols, 56 were daylight observation patrols, 4 were special patrols, and 171 were night combat patrols, from which resulted 31 contacts.”

*Command Report, 179th Inf, APO 86,
Part III - Intelligence,
1 Dec - 30 Dec 1952*

We pulled patrols forward of the line into “No Man’s Land” about once every four nights. These were combat patrols and would consist of about six men. The point man would walk about fifty to a hundred feet in front of the others. The distance in front would depend on the darkness of the night. He would draw fire in case of an ambush. The other five would be well behind him. I pulled point man two or three times and I was one scared soldier.

Abbreviation used in the Daily Journals of the command reports:

<i>AW</i>	automatic weapons
<i>cal</i>	caliber
<i>cas</i>	casualties
<i>degs</i>	degrees
<i>en</i>	enemy
<i>FDC</i>	<i>fire direction center</i>
<i>FF</i>	<i>firefight</i>
<i>HE</i>	high explosive
<i>HG</i>	<i>hand grenades</i>
<i>KIA</i>	killed in action
<i>LD</i>	<i>line of departure</i>
<i>MG</i>	machine gun
<i>OP</i>	observation post
<i>pt</i>	<i>point</i>
<i>ptl</i>	patrol
<i>rd</i>	round

<i>RR</i>	recoilless rifle
<i>SA</i>	small arms
<i>tk</i>	tanks
<i>unk</i>	<i>unknown</i>
<i>vic</i>	<i>vicinity</i>
<i>WIA</i>	wounded in action
<i>WP</i>	<i>white phosphorus</i>

At least two of the six would be carrying Browning automatic rifles (BARs). The M-1918A2 Browning automatic rifles could fire full automatic. Those not armed with BARs would carry two sandbags containing extra cartridge cases of ammo for the BARs. The BAR cartridge cases held twenty rounds. The BAR was the best friend that an infantry squad had; it would make the enemy take cover and stop firing at you.

The squad leader was usually in the center with the radioman immediately behind him. Did our night patrol carry one phone in addition to the radio? The wire for the phone would come out of a spool he carried on a back. When coming back in he would cut and leave the wire. For some reason, I seemed to end up as the assistant squad leader. I would bring up the rear and make certain that everyone got where we were going. We always had a medic with us on these night combat patrols.

We would climb up out of the trench. We would then go down about the length of a couple football fields toward the enemy. At that point was a slight knoll. At the site of the knoll small foxholes were dug in the form of a horseshoe. The open end of the horseshoe faced the enemy. The squad leader was positioned at the back of the horseshoe and would be the first to fire. You wanted the center of the enemy patrol in the horseshoe, when you opened fire. The weather was getting cold, so we would spend about half the night down there. For either the first half or the second half of the night the position would be held by a different squad. The first time down there, I lie in the bottom of the hole looking up at the sky and scared to death. I could not see any trees, just the sky filled with stars. I had a grenade in my hand with my finger through the pull ring.

We would also pull patrols beyond that point. One night the patrol at the outpost said that they had seen about five or six of the enemy in front of their position. My squad was told to go down and check it out. I was the point man. The point man walks quite a distance out in front of the rest of the troops. We were wearing our snow suits. You could pull your hood tight so that only your eyes could be seen. So I had a small hole for my eyes. The rest of my face was covered. We moved through the men at the outpost and continued going down toward the enemy. As I passed the men at the outpost, they told me that they had seen five or six of the enemy down the hill among

the trees in front of their position. They said that they could see one of them near a tree. That made me move a little more carefully. On this patrol we were accompanied by the platoon Lieutenant, for some reason. It was unusual for him to go out on patrol. His position was half way back in the patrol. He kept saying "Move faster McGill." The problem was that my glasses were fogging up, because of the small opening in the snow hood, and I could just about see. The fact that I was taking deeper breaths did not help matters. The guy just behind me was carrying a BAR; I had confidence in him. I thought that I saw one of the enemy next to a tree on a slight rise in front of me and I went down on one knee. I pulled the damn hood off so that my glasses would clear up. We continued down another couple hundred feet or so but could find no enemy.

One night, as I looked down from the trench, I saw what I thought were two men carrying something between them. I watched them as they moved through the trees. After a while, I realized that I was watching a deer.

You had to go out on patrol just at night fall so that the enemy could not set up an ambush before you got out there. I remember one night with snow on the ground that had turned to ice. The temperature was extremely cold. The path that we were following was a sheet of ice. When we had climbed out of the trench and started to go down the hill, we had problems. One fellow tripped over some telephone wire and his helmet went clanging on the ice down the side of the hill. You are supposed to make no noise. We went past the outpost where the foxholes were situated. When we got to the site where we set up our horseshoe ambush positions, we had to lie on top of the ground on the ice covered snow. We stayed out there without moving for about six hours. I actually froze to the ground. At one point I removed my glove for some reason. I could feel my hand start to freeze. We saw no enemy. It was extremely cold.

TIME TO GO HOME

One morning we came in from patrol. It must have been around 20 December 1952. It was just about at sunrise. I heard a whistle on the phone in the trench. I picked up the phone and it was the platoon sergeant. He said "McGill pack up your stuff and report to the G Company forward command post at the bottom of the hill. You are going home."

So, I gave my candles to one guy. My brother Tom had sent a battery operated hand warmer to me. I gave that to another guy. I told them that I would try to find some more candles for them behind the line. Our big parka with the fur lined hood was the warmest garment that we had. I gave mine to another fellow and took his. His parka had a sleeve that was badly torn. My platoon sergeant gave his Worcester, MA phone number for his girl friend to me. He asked me to give her a call and tell her how he was doing. When I got back to Rhode Island, I never gave her a call. Did I lose her phone number? I grabbed my back pack and sleeping bag and went down the backside of the hill.

I do not know the names of these men. Why do I not know the names of any of the enlisted men I served with in Korea? We never carried on small talk while on line. I will continue to try and find rosters that will contain their names. The names in this report relating to events in Korea come from the daily journals of the command reports, so they would have been only of battalion officers and not enlisted men. Why did I not call the girlfriend of my platoon sergeant, when I got back to Rhode Island?

I had an indescribable feeling. I felt like a tremendous load had been taken off my shoulders. I was floating on air. This feeling would stay with me for many months. At the command post, they told me that I would stay there until the next day. They said that a vehicle would take me to the G Company or the 2nd Battalion Headquarters Company rear command post. I do not know which unit I was permanently assigned to while in this G Company, 5th Platoon. The 5th Platoon was a temporary creation because of our additional trench line to man.

I was given the job of walking shotgun on KSC's. They were carrying logs up the hill to be used for fortifications. Two of them would be abreast at the front of the log and two abreast at the rear. A rope was across their shoulders with the log hanging between them. On our first trip back up the hill a couple of mortar rounds came in and the KSC's disappeared. I spent some time trying to round them back up. We probably made one trip. Did I make another trip up with them when they carried the evening meal up to the troops?

That night, I slept at the bottom of the hill in a hoochee used by G Company for storage. Also sleeping in the hoochee with me was a platoon Master Sergeant. He had come into the company a few days earlier. He was in big trouble. He had refused to take command of one of the G Company platoons on the line. He refused to lead a patrol out in front of the line. He said that he had a wife and five children at home and did not want to be killed. He said that he would probably be asked to lead a platoon in a

different company, but that he would still refuse. The only weapon he had was a pistol. He sat there cleaning his pistol. His previous assignment had been in some kind of finance unit in Japan. He had been a machine gunner in the infantry in Germany during WWII. When an NCO heads a platoon on line, he is always required to lead or be part at least one patrol forward of that line so that he is knowledgeable about the terrain forward of his position. I wonder how he made out.

My father had sent a small bottle of whisky to me for Christmas. My younger brother Tommy had put it in the center of a loaf of Italian bread so that it would not break. He wrapped the loaf in tinfoil. The outside wrapping was a heavy brown paper. I received it that day I came off the hill. The wrapping was open and you could actually see the pint or half pint bottle. Yet, nobody had taken it. I do not know the brand. There was a picture of a late 1800's gentleman in a suit on the label. Each of us drank half of the bottle. I did not feel any effects from the alcohol. I don't think that the other poor guy, who was in big trouble, did either.

In the darkness the next morning, I started toward the rear in a vehicle. You had to travel the first piece of road in the darkness. The enemy, with higher hills than us, had it under surveillance. The road was heavily pockmarked from mortar and artillery rounds. We arrived at a rear command post. I sat or stood across the table from an officer. He could have been a G Company officer or a 2nd Battalion Headquarters Company officer. He had a list of company gear checked out to me. He wanted them back. Was one item the parka with the fur lined hood and the torn arm? The one that I was wearing had a badly torn arm. I think that another item was the armored vest that did not fit. This was where I was given back my duffle bag that had little or nothing in it. After a while, he said to forget about any other gear that I might owe them. I did not have any other gear that belonged to them.

He told me that he was sorry to see me leaving. He said that he had put me in for promotion to corporal. That was one promotion that I did not mind losing. I wanted out of the US Army.

Could it have been on this occasion that I was handed my Combat Infantryman Badge?

During my time in Korea, I had never pointed my M1 at an enemy soldier, pulled the trigger and seen him wounded or killed. I had thrown grenades at them, but even then I could not determine whether I wounded or killed an enemy soldier. There probably were many enemy troops killed or wounded from my pinpointing them while assigned to the 2nd Battalion observation post.

Three of us climbed into the back of a 2 ½ ton truck for our continuing trip south toward the rear. If you look at the map, enclosure (6), you will have an idea of the route that we took. The other two guys were smarter than I was. They bundled up in their sleeping bags on the steel floor behind the cab of the truck. The cargo area of the truck was wide open with no cover. It was a wild, cold, dusty and long ride, but I was one happy guy. You can imagine how those young army kids drive those trucks on those icy mountain roads.

At the time, I thought about the army's way of handling some things. On our way going forward into battle, they kept tight control over our whereabouts at all times. We had constant roll calls. Now that we were going home and of no value to them, we would make our way to the rear the best way that we could. It was all right with me. I was one happy guy.

When it got dark, the driver pulled into some type of encampment on the left side of the road. As he walked away from the truck, he said that we would continue our ride in a couple of hours. I grabbed my rifle; my duffle bag, into which I had put my knapsack; and my sleeping bag and looked for a place to lie down for a couple of hours. I noticed a large tent. The door flap was hanging open, so I went inside. I saw these sleeping bags all lined up neatly. As I remember, there were about four rows with ten or fifteen in a row. I thought that the neatness of the rows and the door flaps wide open was strange, but I needed to sleep. I put my stuff down and climbed into my bag. Suddenly, it dawned on me that the place was a morgue. That was why the flaps were wide open in December and the men had no gear lying outside their bags. I grabbed my stuff and went back and slept on the floor in the back of the truck. A couple of hours later the driver continued our trip to Chunchon. Chunchon was at the north end of the railroad tracks. We pulled in there about nine in the morning.

CHUNCHON TO SEOUL BY TRAIN

I had not eaten for a couple of days. A mess tent for officers was sitting near the tracks. I walked into the tent. I was the only customer. One mess Sergeant ran the operation and a Korean girl took my order. They were serving pancakes. I ate and I ate. I loved those Army pancakes. When I finished, I picked up my gear and walked toward the door flap. The Sergeant handed me a clipboard to sign. I signed "Lieutenant Frank McGill, 179th INF."

Before boarding the train, I disassembled my rifle and put the two pieces into my duffle bag. I still had grenades and two bandoliers of ammo crisscrossing my chest. The train was headed southwest across Korea to Seoul. It was the same train that I had come to Chunchon see map enclosure (4). Most of the soldiers on board were from rear units and stared at this filthy soldier. I was filthy. I had not had a bath or shower for a couple of months. My clothes were the same ones that I had put on after that last shower a few months earlier. I was wearing my Mickey Mouse boots. The other troops on the train from front line units looked and smelled just as bad as I did. I was sitting on the sunny side of the train. I took up two seats and slept all the way into Seoul. I could feel the warm sun and I was in heaven.

Darkness had fallen and it was late at night by the time that we pulled into the train station in Seoul. About twenty troops from the train were headed, with me, to the 45th Infantry Division Replacement Company somewhere near Seoul. They were also from front line companies and looked it. We were told where to wait in the station. Trucks from the replacement company would come to pick us up. We lie down on the floor and all went to sleep. I remember how strange it felt having a roof over my head and not being scared. I woke up around sunrise. There was a crowd of military standing around looking down at us. They must have been attached to rear units because they had pistols on their hips, clean clothes and polished boots. We must have looked strange to them with months of dirt, torn clothing, filthy boots and dusty weapons. We just lie there and let them look at us. After a while the 2-1/2 ton trucks came to take us to the replacement company somewhere in Seoul. As we climbed into the trucks young people ran up to us and asked the name of the unit to which we belonged. The response they got, from those of us who were wiser than me, was "If we told you; you would know."

45TH INFANTRY DIVISION REPLACEMENT COMPANY NEAR SEOUL

At the replacement company, we were ordered to turn in all of our weapons, ammo, grenades and field equipment. Field equipment consists of such things as cartridge belt, knapsack, shovel, canteen and Mickey Mouse boots. Maybe it was here that I turned in my parka with one sleeve and my armored vest. No wonder they looked at us in the train station. They also made their first pitch at trying to talk us into staying in the army. We were also asked whether we wanted to join the 45th Infantry Division Association. I wanted no part of any offer to join anything. We may have slept one night there and then loaded aboard 2 1-2 ton trucks for the ride to Incheon the next day.

At Incheon it was our turn to sit, in a group, on the beach to wait for the landing boats to bring us back out to the troop ship. Again we were told, one last time, to get rid of all contraband, or be in big trouble. No contraband was to be taken out of Korea. Contraband includes weapons, ammo and grenades. We were told to throw it into a pile. A pile began to grow. It included grenades, rifles, pistols and ammo.

We watched the landing craft as they came to shore. The new troops came out of the boats and walked up onto the beach. They were greeted by cries of, "You'll be sorry" from my group. We climbed into the boats and rode out to the ship.

The ocean at Incheon was very shallow. There was no pier. Troops came and went in those landing craft.

REPLACEMENT DEPOT AT SASEBO, KYUSHU ISLAND, JAPAN

The trip aboard the ship to Sasebo in the southern part of Japan took about twenty-four hours. There was a problem with the showers aboard the ship. I think that there was no warm water. I think that Sasebo is about six hundred nautical miles east southeast from Inchon. It is in the prefecture of Nagasaki and is on the west side of the island of Kyushu. It was the second largest Japanese naval base during WWII. During that war 60,000 people were employed at the base. The land closed in around the ship. I could see down into the heavy manufacturing plants close to the shore. I could see the men at work. I asked myself how they had the nerve to challenge us in the early 1940's.

Sasebo was a major port in support of the UN troops in Korea. Over one hundred cargo ships were being unloaded or loaded on a typical day. It was then and still is a major port in support of the US Navy.

We must have come into Sasebo Bay from the South China Sea. The hills were very high on both sides of the bay. We would have headed North in the bay and docked in the India Basin.

The day was 24 December 1952, Christmas Eve, and it was about eight in the evening. We came down out of the ship carrying our duffle bags. We were to climb up into the back of trucks for the ride to the REPO DEPOT. I was told recently that the name of the Army Camp was Camp Mower. The Replacement Depot designation was either 8068th AU or Company B 8069th Replacement Battalion, Sasebo, Japan. The trucks were built different than the others in which I had been riding. They were longer than the 2 ½ ton trucks. We stood in lines as we loaded into the trucks. When it was my turn to climb up into the truck, I said "Merry Christmas" to the Japanese truck driver. He then said to me "Wait, you ride up front with me." We talked about his family on the ride to the army camp.

At the REPO DEPOT within the Army camp we were assigned to tents that contained army cots. We were told that the only thing we could keep was our billfold. Everything else had to be turned in before taking showers. I hid my parka liner under my mattress on the army cot. I liked the feel of it and wanted to take it home. While we turned in everything we had, stripped and went to the showers, our tent was searched for anything that we left behind. I hoped that the searchers would not find my parka liner. They did not find it.

The shower was my first good cleaning since I took a bath in the Soyang River back in the summer. It was about 10 P.M. Around midnight we were being issued new clothing. I received one winter class A uniform, a couple sets of fatigues and one pair of high boots, no low quarters. That was about a quarter of the clothing that I had to buy and turn in at Camp Drake. Around 1:00 A.M. we had a steak dinner with all of the milk we wanted to drink. It was either then or the next morning that I got a shave and a haircut in a barber chair. The Japanese barber did not give me a close shave.

This may have been the place where I was given the medals that I had earned in

Korea. The one that I was proud of was the Combat Infantryman Badge. To earn this badge, one had to have been an infantry man and under enemy fire for at least thirty days. The medal is rectangular about three inches long and an inch high. It has a silver rifle on a blue background and a silver wreath around the edges. You see them above the campaign medals on a soldier's left chest. I also received the Korean Service Medal with one bronze service star and the United Nations Service Medal. Today, whenever I see a member of the United States Army on television, I look to see if he has that blue Combat Infantry Badge at the top of his medals on his left chest.

During WWII American military prisoners were used as labor to tunnel into the sides of the hills at Camp Mower. I understand that they were subjected to harsh treatment and that many of them died because of the harsh conditions. Was one of those hills referred to as the Witch's Teat?

MY ONE DAY OF LEAVE IN THE SHOPPING DISTRICT OF SASEBO, JAPAN

Our ship would be leaving for the United States in a couple of days. The next day, I went into the shopping district of Sasebo to look around. As I remember, it was not within walking distance of the reception center in the Army camp at Camp Mower.

As I approached the business area, I remember two American women in Red Cross uniforms walking in front of me. As we passed a business establishment there was a statue standing at ground level at the front door. It was about four feet tall and similar to the Indians that had been traditionally placed in the front of tobacco shops in the US. The difference with this statue was that it had an erect penis that stuck out into the sidewalk. The two women had to walk out and around the penis as they continued down the sidewalk. Today, I wonder whether the item that protruded was actually a sword.

I had a meal in a second floor restaurant. A place of business that sold food, not grown using human fertilizer, displayed a special sign out front. The waiters actually ran back and forth between the kitchen and the tables. The streets were crowded with Japanese people. Most of the women wore the kimono. The tops of the people's heads came to about the middle of my chest. I stopped in a small bakery shop, sat at a low table and ate a small piece of cake. The cake tasted like sawdust.

I visited many shops. Some of the shops contained pachinko games. These were similar to the one arm bandit in the US. Most of the games had a Japanese person standing in front of them. They would insert a coin and then pull down on the handle.

On the side streets there were red light districts with big signs beside the road saying OFF LIMITS to US military personnel. I ended up in a bar, naturally. A US Navy man was sitting in a booth with a Japanese girl. The girl was sobbing. He must have been telling her "Sayonara." The fellow who operated the bar kept asking me if I wanted a girl.

BACK ACROSS THE PACIFIC, SASEBO TO SAN FRANCISCO

The Military Sea Transportation Service ship, that we came back on, could have been named the "Sea Serpent." Could it have been the General Polk? I enjoyed that trip home. It felt so good not to be scared.

I was floating on air not water. Our sleeping bunks were stacked four or five high. The fellow who slept in the bunk next to mine was an army staff sergeant from Northern New England. His surname must have also started with an M, since we were bunking that close. He had a wife and four or five children at home. He had ten or twelve years in the army. He had to decide whether to stay in the service. I believe that he was in the Army Signal Corps in Korea. He and I spent time talking on that voyage home.

My two years were up in a couple of weeks. I thought about getting discharged in California and finding a job on the West Coast. However, if I did that, I would never get to see family and friends back in Rhode Island.

Our ship passed about one hundred miles either north or south of the Hawaiian Islands. We had many troops of a Columbian Infantry Battalion aboard ship. They were also returning home from being on line in Korea. I do not know which US infantry division they were attached to while in Korea. They were a little shorter in stature than the GIs.

At one meal in the mess hall, a young fellow was eating at the same table as I. He was wearing a medal on his left chest. The medal looked similar to a Combat Infantryman Badge. The difference being that the background was red and the weapon an artillery gun barrel. I told him that the US Army did not confer such a medal. He got very mad at me. He was just a little fellow. I repeated my statement that there was no such medal. He said that it was a Combat Artilleryman Badge. I said that there was no such thing. His buddies huddled around him and glared at me. Every time we ran into each other on the ship, he would be with his buddies and he would give me an angry look.

Every morning we had to go up on deck while the berthing area was cleaned and inspected. We would reposition our bunk so that it was at a forty-five-degree angle before going on deck. One morning, my buddy the staff sergeant said to me let's stay in our bunks and continue to sleep. We had top bunks and we figured that no one would notice us. With that, I went back to sleep. About an hour later, I awoke to the sound of voices. When I opened my eyes, I saw all of this gold on the top of the visor of a cap. The cap was about two feet from me. I was above his head. I also heard "Put them on report." With that the NCO, with the inspecting officer, asked us for our names. He told us to report to an office.

When the Sarge and I reported to the office, we were told that we had to sweep down one of the stairwells every night after lights out. We figured that this was a piece of cake, as we were now about two days out of San Francisco. Men would play cards in the stairwells after lights out, but that was no problem. We could work around them. That night after we had completed our sweep down; I took every broom in the locker and threw them over the side of the ship. The next night when we reported for work, the

closet was filled with brand-new brooms.

As we came under the Golden Gate bridge, many small boats came out to welcome us home. One of those water spouting fireboats may have been there also. We pulled into a pier at Fort Mason. Fort Mason was on the right about a mile past the Golden Gate bridge.

The Sarge and I stood at the rail as the ship tied up. A band was playing on the pier. Down on the pier was a nice looking blond waving to someone on board the ship. The Sarge said something like, here she is welcoming him home, when she has probably been playing around ever since he has left. As we were lined up to go ashore, I heard someone yelling that such and such a stairwell had not been cleaned and who was responsible. The Sarge and I looked at each other, but we never said a word. We were standing in line and were about to go down the gangplank. We were supposed to have swept it down that morning. The troops went down the gangplank one at a time. When I got to the bottom of the gangplank, I reached down and patted the ground.

My Army separation paper, enclosure (10), states that I had been overseas for five months and twenty-nine days.

From the ship, we went through a large door into a huge terminal building. Many people viewed us as we came off the ship. A welcoming band was playing music. Someone gave a speech. As we lined up in formation inside the terminal, we could see ferry boats through the other door that would take us inland to a REPO DEPOT at Camp Stoneman, in Pittsburgh, CA. They seemed to be rising and falling in the swells. Fort Mason and Camp Stoneman were part of the San Francisco Port of Embarkation.

We would go about thirty miles northeast. We would then go about thirty miles east and dock at Camp Stoneman on the San Joaquin River. As the ferry boat took us inland, we passed under the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge. I could see Mare Island way over on our left. We passed through a narrow inlet into Suisun Bay. We must have been on the ferry for a couple of hours. It was daylight and this was my first close look at the countryside of California.

CAMP STONEMAN, CA TO FORT DEVENS, MA

The weather was sunny and warm at Camp Stoneman. We stayed there for one or two days. On one occasion, we sat in a large auditorium while some highly polished officer on the stage tried to talk us into staying in the army. He was met by catcalls and boos. Someone yelled to him "Why are you not over there." He finally left the stage. I ran into a few fellows there who had been with me in the 135th INF at Camp Rucker, Alabama. One of them was a quiet blond haired fellow named Olsen who was headed home to either Utah or Colorado. It made you feel good to see that they had come through all right.

We traveled by bus to San Francisco, where we boarded a plane for Logan Airport in Boston. I believe that we were flying around the time that Eisenhower was to be inaugurated for his first term as president. As I remember, either all or most of the passengers were soldiers headed for Fort Devens, MA.

The plane made a stop in Chicago. We were delayed in getting back into the air. The aircraft had a problem. We were told that it would take a few hours to make the repair. Most of the soldiers decided to do a little sightseeing while we waited. The Sarge and I and a couple of other fellows went by cab to a bar near the airport. The bar was huge. We had a few beers and after a couple of hours went back to the airport. The plane was taking off sooner than we had been told. Most of the passengers were left in Chicago. Their luggage on the seats continued on to Logan Airport in Boston, MA. I could see items of clothing that they had left in their empty seats. At Logan we switched to buses and continued our trip in the snow to Fort Devens in Ayer, MA.

SEPARATION FROM THE US ARMY AT FORT DEVENS, MA

The first thing that I did at Devens was buy a pair of shoes. The army had given me only boots in Japan. I was given a weekend pass, so I headed to Pawtucket, RI to see how everyone was doing. On a Sunday, I took a train back to Boston and a bus from there to Devens to be discharged.

A physical is part of the discharge procedure. As I was moving through the line, I passed a young doctor who was reading a soft-covered pocketbook. Without looking up, he said, "----- degree flat feet," as I passed him. I thought that I deserved a closer scrutiny than that.

When it came time for the eye exam, I had a plan. I did not want to go back into the army, so I would make my eyesight seem as bad as possible. The eye doctor examined me, and then he reexamined me. He came back to me and said that something did not seem right. That was when I told him about my plan to avoid re induction into the army by not being able to read the eye chart. He sent me on my way. The standard response from the medics to any query about physical matters was "See your local VA." VA is the acronym for the Veterans Administration.

I was separated from the Army on 27 Jan 1953 at the age of twenty-three years and ten months; see Report of Separation, enclosure (10). I rode back to Pawtucket, RI in an auto, with a couple of fellows from Providence. They were separated on the same day as I.

By law, I remained in the United States Army Enlisted Ready Reserve until 4 February 1957. On that day, I received my discharge from the Armed Forces of the United States of America, see enclosure (11). Once a year between 1953 and 1957, I would receive a questionnaire from a Ready Reserve office. I would never fill out and return that paperwork. I received a few letters threatening to call me back into uniform, if I did not fill out and return the forms. I still did not comply.

Eddie Fisher, the singer, was separated from the Army at Devens on the same day as the three of us in the car. As we rode back to RI, we heard him as he was interviewed at a Boston radio station. The interviewer mentioned that Fisher's life had been endangered while he was in Korea. Fisher said nothing to correct this statement. Fisher had been an entertainer in Korea. Entertainment took place well behind the lines.

Within a couple of days after separation, I rented a typewriter from a shop in downtown Pawtucket. I sat at the dining room table at 253 Glenwood Avenue teaching myself how to type. Is it possible that I worked it up to sixty words a minute using all of the proper fingers? I wanted to make certain that I could type. Never again will I be standing in ranks, be asked if anyone can type and not be able to say yes. That happened to me two or three times, as they were moving me ever closer to the front in Korea.

CAMPAIGNS, US MILITARY IN KOREA

"The US military categorizes each war it has been involved in terms of a series of campaigns, defined as a connected series of military operations forming a distinct timeline of a war. For units involved in these operations, a streamer embroidered with the name of the particular campaign is displayed along with the unit's colors (its official flag). Those individuals who have participated are entitled to wear a bronze battle star for each campaign . . . Ten campaigns were authorized for the Korean War.

Campaign	Inclusive Dates
<i>UN defensive</i>	<i>June 27-September 15, 1950</i>
<i>UN offensive</i>	<i>September 16-November 2, 1950</i>
<i>CCF intervention</i>	<i>November 3, 1950-January 24, 1951</i>
<i>First UN counteroffensive</i>	<i>January 25-April 21, 1951</i>
<i>CCF spring offensive</i>	<i>April 22-July 8, 1951</i>
<i>UN summer-fall offensive</i>	<i>July 9-November 27, 1951</i>
<i>Second Korean winter</i>	<i>November 28, 1951-April 30, 1952</i>
<i>Korea summer-fall 1952</i>	<i>May 1-November 30, 1952</i>
<i>Third Korean winter</i>	<i>December 1, 1952-April 30, 1953</i>
<i>Korea summer-fall 1953</i>	<i>May 1-July 27, 1953"</i>

*Source: Korean War Almanac, 1990
Harry G Summers*

I believe that I am entitled to wear two bronze battle stars. I was on line during the Korea summer-fall 1952 campaign and on line during the Third Korean winter campaign. My separation paper, enclosure (10), states that I am entitled to one bronze battle star. Maybe the reason for the discrepancy is because I was separated on 27 Jan 1952 and the parameters for the Third Korean winter campaign had not been established.

During the Korean War, a soldier received about \$50 a month extra if he was in a front line unit. I believe that it was referred to as combat pay. I was out of the service for about a year, before I received all of that money.

So, the US Army owes me money for the clothing they took from me in that parade field in the REPO DEPOT at Camp Drake near Tokyo, Japan. They also owe me one additional battle star for the Third Korean winter Campaign. I expect an accounting by the 50th anniversary of these events, i.e. the year 2002. Listen up, Secretary of Defense Cohen!