

Fix Bayonets: On to the Punchbowl

Story by R.R. Keene • USMC Photos

The Chinese 1951 spring offensive had been a colossal failure. It shook every Communist soldier from peasant foot-slogger to Mandarin general.

They had tried by probing desperately with massive force for a weak link in the United Nation's front. Their greater communist numbers only served to create greater casualties. Unable to divide and conquer or sucker units out to be chopped up piecemeal, the Chinese were out-gunned, out-equipped, out-general-ed and out-soldiered.

The allied front was anything but stationary. It had become a northward moving steamroller, protected by American air which seemed like hornets from a nest and rained rockets, bombs and napalm from the skies on the exposed Communists. The U.N. forces' heavy artillery bracketed them and mortar rounds walked onto their positions. Capitalist riflemen caught Communists in ambushes and then radioed for tanks to crush them. Even the Korean peasants mocked them with smiles, saving their grins for allied intelligence officers usually not far behind the Communists.

The Republic of Korea troops no longer ran in fear before them. The American Army fought as fiercely as the "yellow leg" Marines. Combined, the imperialist forces were advancing. The Communist forces were flushed like birds from staging areas and forced to scatter in small groups. At first, remnants of platoons started surrendering, then companies and even battalions were

throwing down their burp guns and potato-masher grenades.

Eighth Army estimated that between May 15 and 31 the Communists suffered 105,000 casualties which included 17,000 dead. What was more important was that the Chinese had started to run, and run scared. Of the 10,000 prisoners captured during the last week of May, most were taken in frantic efforts to escape.

"We met the attack and routed the enemy," wrote Eighth Army commander Lieutenant General James A. Van Fleet. "We had him beaten and could have destroyed his armies. Those days are the ones most vivid in my memory—great days when all the Eighth Army, and we thought America too, were inspired to win. In those days in Korea we reached the heights."

Only the rugged mountains saved the Communists from total annihilation. In the safety of heights, the American tanks could not be brought to bear. The bursting radius of artil-

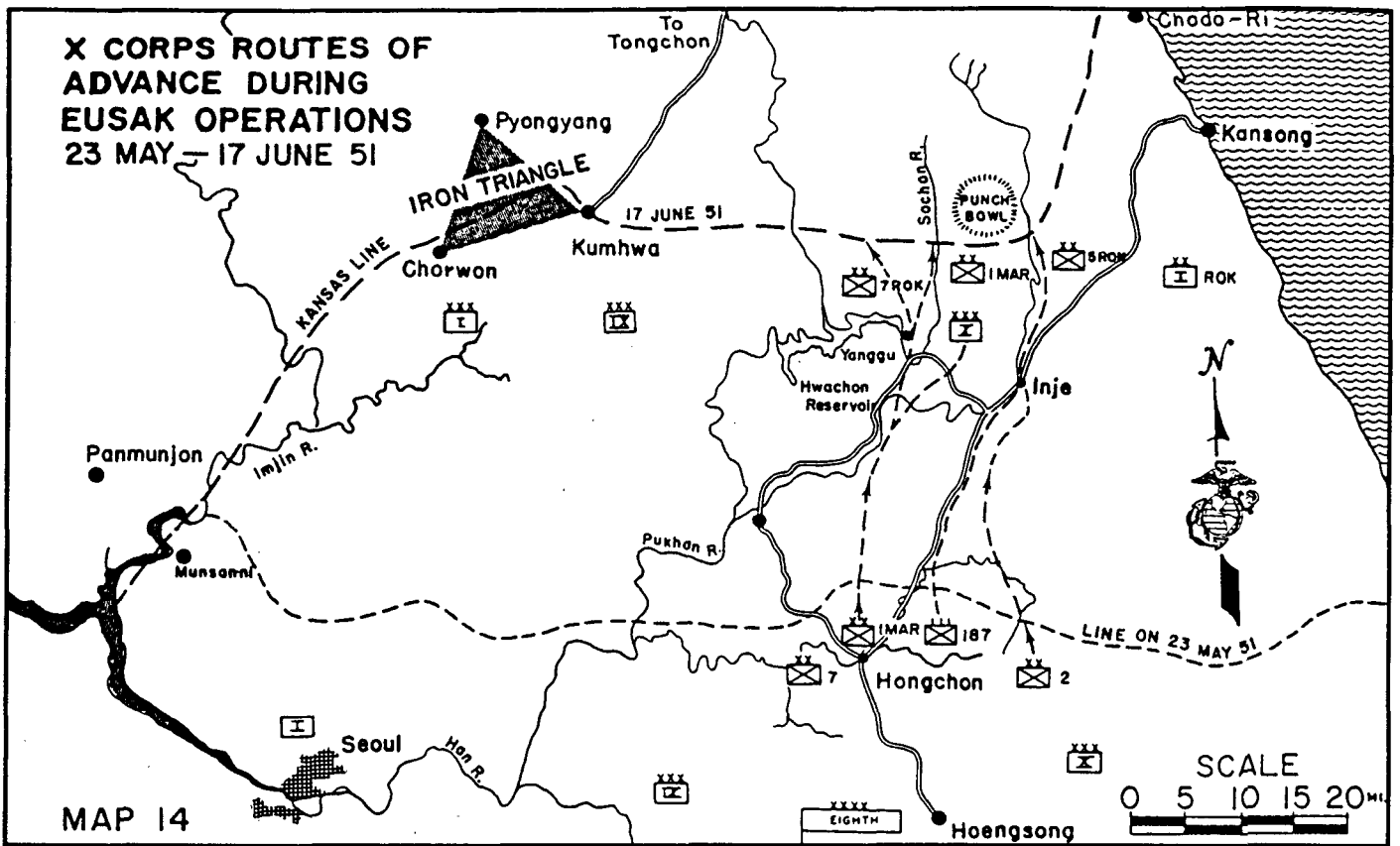
lery rounds was limited, targets and ambush were not so easy for riflemen and, with a little caution, the cursed American aircraft could not spot them. A platoon and a few good marksmen could keep large numbers of imperialists from moving forward. That was with the exception of the Marines. They always kept coming, even over the jagged peaks and through the dark and narrow valleys. The communist losses in the mountains were not as high as the casualties suffered by their comrades in the open, but the Marines with their small-unit tactics relentlessly pursued and eventually found them.

In the last week of May the Communists had seen 1,870 of their own killed by Marines and another 593 who, unable to take any more, had gone over to the Yankee Marines, hands raised, hoping for mercy.

X Corps commander Major General Edward M. Almond was impressed and congratulated the First Marine Division for its accomplish-



Communist and allied forces both used fortifications such as depicted in this photo. However, in May and June of 1951, the Communists were on the defensive.



ment of "a most arduous battle task. You have denied (the enemy) the opportunity of regrouping his forces and forced him into a hasty retreat; the destruction of enemy forces and material has been tremendous and many times greater than our own losses."

Their losses, nonetheless, were accompanied by feats of courage which every effective fighting force needs to carry the day.

Seventh Marine Regiment was operating around Chunchon, south of the Pukhan-gong River on May 17 when "Item" Company, 3d Battalion was probed enfor by the Chinese. Private First Class James E. Jackson Jr. was quiet as they passed his listening post. Although cut off from his unit, Jackson couldn't pass up the opportunity to catch the Chinese in a cross fire. He opened fire on the surprised Communists and also drew their complete attention, automatic weapons and small-arms fire.

Alone, Jackson returned fire and pinned the Chinese down, but was seriously wounded in the process. "Item" commander Captain Victor Stoyanow led a counterattack. In the ensuing firefight Jackson was again seriously wounded. His wounds were fatal, but the enemy was scattered, leaving 112 dead. Jackson's family received his Navy Cross.

Allied units saw an opportunity to

cut off the retreating Communists. The 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team (RCT), elements of the 2d Infantry Division and I ROK Corps linked with the 1stMarDiv, hoping to surround the Commies and pull the drawstring, thus bagging all the Chinese Communist forces south of the Inje-Kansong road south of Hwachon Reservoir. The Communists were retreating so fast that the allies had to race to pull it off.

The Marines jumped off on May 23 and moved forward with little resistance. They covered more than 5,000 yards on the first day and in four days captured 100,000 rounds of small-arms ammunition, 12,000 mortar rounds, 1,000 artillery rounds, 6,000 pounds of explosives, and 9,000 grenades.

The 187 Airborne RCT ran into enemy resistance on May 24, but pushed the enemy into retreating even faster, so fast that they slipped out of the planned encirclement. However, it turned out the Chinese had jumped from the cooking wok into the fire. As they stumbled along the south shore of Hwachon Reservoir, they moved into the killing zone of IX Corps, whose forward observers called in U.N. aircraft. In two days of easy, killing sorties. First Marine Aircraft Wing pilots claimed 879 enemy kills. While that may have been exaggerated by overly op-

timistic controllers, there was definitely a slaughter from the air and it panicked the Chinese.

Poor flying weather saved the Communists who, desperate to get away, violated their own rule of not moving except at night and risked movement whenever fog and clouds set in. It proved a poor decision. With each break in the patchwork of clouds, aircraft would catch glimpses of the Chinese units fleeing and punch through the gray to drop their napalm and bombs or strafe the hapless survivors.

The Chinese ordered the North Korean People's Army (NKPA) to delay the U.N. forces and cover their retreat. They also left orders for Korean political commissars to "shoot like a dog" any NKPA soldier who fled his post or shirked his duty. Left with a choice of possibly dying on the firing line or definitely dying on the run, the NKPA proved pugnacious in their defensive positions. Leathernecks of the Fifth and Seventh Marines were among the first to attest to this.

First Lieutenant Lucian L. Vestal of "Fox" Co., 2d Bn., Fifth Marine Regiment was a man with an easy smile who liked to joke with his platoon. The smile left his face when he received his mission on May 28 to make a frontal assault across open ground near Hangye and take a hill

The rugged terrain made it difficult for Marines to bring their 105-mm. howitzers to bear on dug-in Communist forces.

heavily fortified by the Communists. He ordered his men to fix bayonets and led them out. There is something inherently eerie about the command to fix bayonets in combat. The sound of cold metal sliding from the scabbard, the metallic click of the knife locking to the rifle lug and bonding with its man chills the soul more than chambering a round. Men can chamber a round when hunting game or on the rifle range. Marines seldom fix naked steel unless against other men when death is imminent; one-on-one, *mano a mano*.

The site of Marines advancing with fixed bayonets also has a disturbing psychological effect on the enemy. The Communists opened up with everything they had; machine guns, small-arms fire and grenades. Marines around Vestal were dropping and only a few feet from the enemy position, Vestal himself was painfully wounded in the stomach. They closed with the Communists, driving them in fear from their positions while Vestal calmly redeployed his platoon, directed the evacuation of his wounded and set up a screen of protective fire.

They evacuated Vestal with the last of the wounded. He used his smile to hide his pain and again joked with his fellow Marines, who promptly recommended Vestal for the Navy Cross.

That same day over at "Charlie" Co., 1st Bn., Seventh Marines near Yanggu, Corporal Donald T. Toland, a radio operator for forward observers, was trying to rejoin his team. He never made it. Communist bullets and explosions cut him down and damaged his radio. He was losing too much blood too quickly, but he saw the Communists and knew where they were. He remained in the open and fixed his radio, then called in fire mission commands for his forward observer team. The enemy realized what he was doing and tried to charge through Toland and eventually through the observer team to safety. Toland faced them head-on, taking as many as he could and forcing them back into the artillery killing zone before he himself was killed. He would be posthumously awarded the Navy Cross.

The next day, "Baker" Co., 1st Bn., Seventh Marines near Hwachon made



an assault on Communist forces defending a steep, rocky ridge line. The leading assault platoon reeled under a wall of fire from the Communists. Taking heavy casualties which included the platoon commander, the Marine attack started to falter and become disorganized. Into this charged 1stLt Van D. Bell, who had been watching with a reserve platoon. A barrage of bullets didn't stop Bell who, reaching the beleaguered platoon, started barking orders, giving commands and regaining organization.

Enemy bunkers lay ahead, one, two, and three. He spearheaded the assault and took one after the other. There was, however, a fourth, and from it came a grenade which exploded, knocking Bell off his feet and partially blinding him. He looked a mess, but regained his footing and led a final charge to take the hill. Chasing off corpsmen who would treat his wounds, Bell moved his platoon up to pursue the enemy who'd had enough. He chased them to another ridge line where one of the retreating Communists managed to wound Bell in the leg. Bell settled for directing machine-gun fire on the Communists and periodically chased off more corpsmen trying to treat him. His dogged tenacity against the enemy and stubborn refusal of treatment had paid off, allowing him to consolidate his position. In so doing, he also earned the Navy Cross.

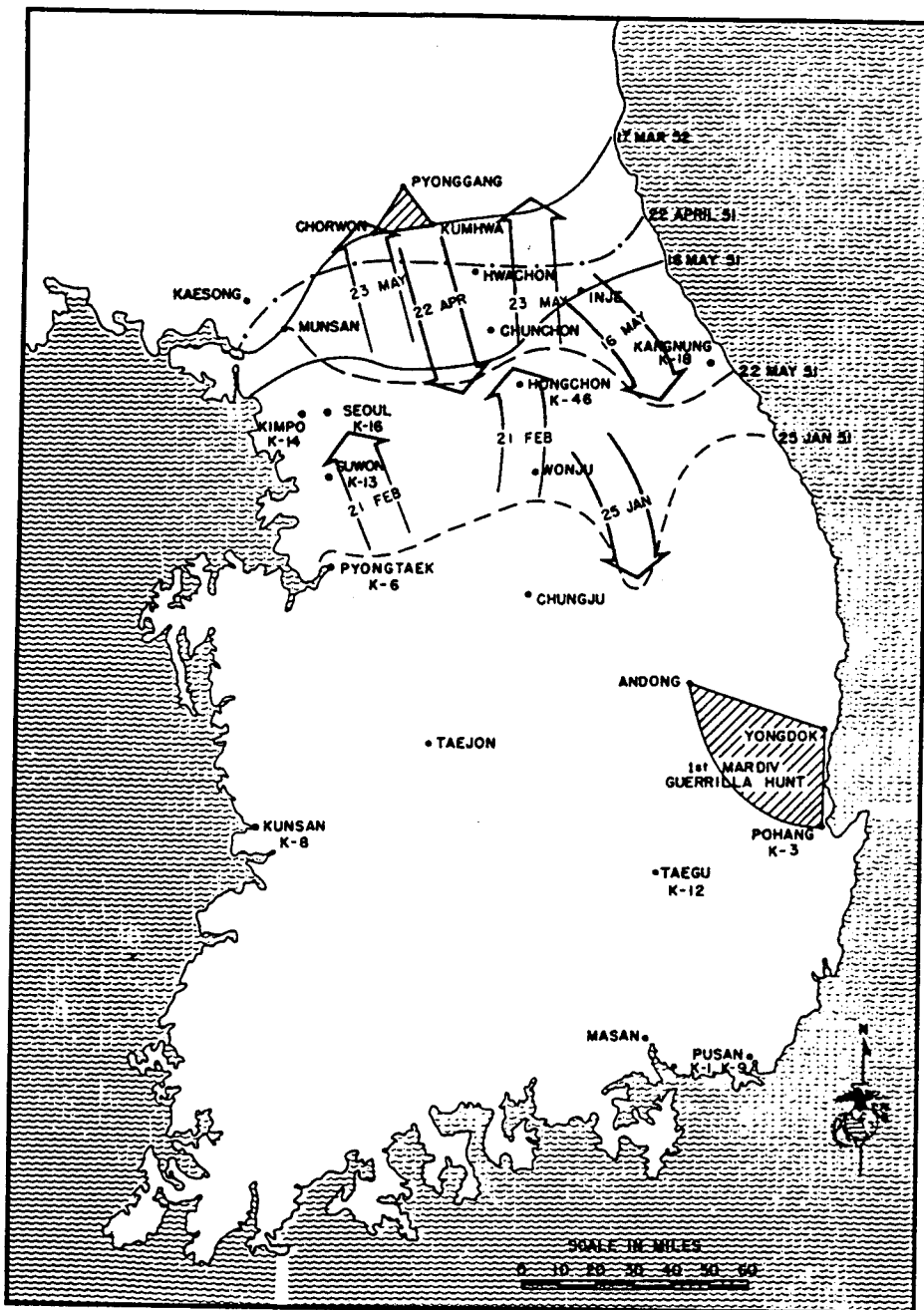
Second Lieutenant (later U.S. Congressman) Paul N. McCloskey Jr. won his Navy Cross and PFC Whitt L. Moreland earned the Medal of Honor the same day with "Charlie" Co., 1st Bn., Fifth Marines.



Tenacity was required by Marines who rooted the Communists out of the hills.

McCloskey skillfully led a platoon through automatic weapons fire and grenade blasts against the Communists. Wounded in the initial charge, he continued to spearhead the assault, coolly directing and encouraging his men. He personally went from bunker to bunker to flush and destroy any remaining occupants. His daring leadership was responsible for 40 enemy dead, 22 captured and the seizure of strategic ground.

It was at Kwagchi' i-Dong and Moreland volunteered to accompany a rifle platoon as an intelligence scout. It got nasty fast when the Communists opened up on the Marines, forcing them to make an assault. Moreland threw such fierce



Co. "C," 1st Tank Bn. started up the steep road embankments with infantry hugging close behind. As the tanks drew fire, the "crunchies" spotted the source and returned fire from the center force as well as from the flank attackers. The Communists beat feet. By nightfall a burnt-out Yanggu, its airfield and surrounding hills were property of the USMC. The kill ratio for the Marines in May had been nine Communies to one Marine.

In June that ratio rose to an astonishing 15 to one. Cool professionalism and good luck were the main reasons. Being alert and taking advantage of a situation helped. Take Col Wilburt S. Brown, commander of First Marine Regiment, for instance. He'd learned from NKPA prisoners of their terror of new gasses that Communists propagandists told them the Americans had and were using against humanity. Brown knew that there were no such chemicals, but he did have a supply of colored smoke shells for signaling. Sending volleys of green, red and yellow smoke into the North Korean lines had devastating effects on soldiers who believed their own propaganda. Unfortunately, the supply was not unlimited. Brown went to Lieutenant Colonel Merritt Adelman of 2d Bn., Eleventh Marine Regiment for more, but the cupboard was bare. It was "amusing" while it lasted.

Not to be outdone, Major David W. McFarland of Marine Observation Squadron 6 noticed the presence of his observation planes (OY) would silence the enemy, even on night missions.

McFarland explained: "The aerial observer was often unable to determine the location of the enemy artillery even though he could see it firing, because he would be unable to locate map coordinates in the dark—that is, relating them to the ground. Fortunately, this fact was unknown to the enemy. From their observation of the OYs in the daytime, they found that the safest thing to do was whenever an OY was overhead was to take cover. This they continued to do at night."

LtCol Bernard T. Kelly, who commanded 3d Bn., Seventh Marines, also brought back an old infantry tactic. He used indirect automatic weapons fire. Four, water-cooled, heavy machine guns provided fire up to 2,600 yards that plunged on re-

fire on the enemy emplacement that it was forced to button up and allowed Marines to neutralize the position. As this was happening, Moreland noticed an enemy bunker 400 meters beyond. Alone, he approached it. The Communists saw him coming and opened up their killing zone. Moreland moved through it and his fellow Marines followed. As soon as he got close to the bunker, the Communists heaved a volley of grenades. Moreland kicked several grenades off the ridge line where they exploded harmlessly. It was steep and tricky terrain. As he attempted to kick another away, Moreland slipped and fell near the sputtering missile. He shouted a warning to his fellow leathernecks and covered the grenade with his body. PFC

Moreland died, but other Marines lived to fight on.

The Fifth and Seventh Marines continued to steadily advance toward Yanggu. On May 31, Colonel Herman Nickerson Jr., Seventh Marines commander, managed to get two battalions up ridge lines to a pass that led to Yanggu. It was slow, dangerous, hard work. Getting down the other side was just as rough. Some 500 enemy mortar and 76-mm. shells rained on the regiment.

Gen Van Fleet, visiting the regiment, shook his head in wonder. He asked Nickerson, "How did you ever get the men up those cliffs?"

"General, they climbed," said Nickerson, who later in the day launched what was called "a through-the-middle play." Capt Richard M. Taylor's

A mortar observation crew put the finishing touches on retreating Communist soldiers.

verse slopes of hills in support of his leading elements during the final assault on Yanggu on May 31. It hit the enemy where they thought they were safe and made it impossible to determine the direction of the heavy machine guns.

It was at Yanggu that PFC Ernest J. Hightower earned a Navy Cross. It was June 1, and Hightower, a member of "Easy" Co., 2d Bn., Fifth Marines, moved quickly when his platoon was pinned down by the blistering fire from a heavy machine gun during an assault on a battalion-sized force of Chinese.

The Communists were innovative too. There may have been a would-be admiral in the Communist ranks, for they adapted the naval maneuver known as crossing the "T" to mountain warfare. Wherever possible, they'd stand on a hill flanked by transverse ridge lines. Having hidden automatic weapons or mortars on these ridge lines to pour a converging fire on attackers limited by the terrain to a single approach forced Marines to advance through a single approach and through the cross fire. The Marines would counter with air, tanks (advancing parallel to the enemy-held ridge lines), 90-mm. cannon and .50-caliber machine guns, or in this case, Hightower.

The Marine crawled through the enemy's weapon-fire lane. He reached an incline five yards from the communist bunker and hurled his grenade. The explosion killed the gunner. Hightower charged and fired point-blank into the assistant gunner, killing him. It was Hightower's machine gun now. He turned it on the Communists and pinned down a second, enemy, machine-gun crew.

When the-gun jammed, he fixed a bayonet on his rifle, rejoined his unit and charged the communist position. He was wielding his rifle in a bayonet attack and firing when cut down and killed by automatic weapons fire.

"Dog" Co., 2d Bn., Fifth Marines ran into a hail of heavy enemy fire on June 7 near Taeam-san. Two squads of a platoon became separated during an assault. Master Sergeant Edward Fristock, the company "gunny," took charge. He organized the two units and led them up a hill against the deadly fire. Forced to remain in the open, he directed and



encouraged his tired Marines. He continued to urge, push and lead his Marines to the top of the ridge where he was killed by hostile fire. He was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross.

The North Koreans, hoping to buy the Chinese time, were going to fight to the last man. They reinforced themselves in log bunkers, niggardly holding on to every piece of high ground that was defensible. It took grenades and bayonets to pry them out from areas north of Hwachon Reservoir and south of the Punchbowl. It came to a head on June 10.

Col Brown, a veteran of three major wars, not to mention Nicaragua and China, later described it. "Everything I had ever hoped to see in years of teaching such coordination of fires seemed to come true that night. I stayed in my regular CP (command post) until I was sure all I could do. . . was done, and then went forward to see the finale. It was a glorious spectacle, that last bayonet assault. In the final analysis. . . 1st Marines had to take its objective with the bayonet and hand grenades, crawling up the side of a mountain to get at the enemy. It was bloody work, the hardest fighting I have ever seen."

He witnessed or received reports on men like Sergeant William B. Lourim of "Able" Company, 1st Bn., First Marines north of Yanggu. Lourim moved forward firing his rifle with the point squad. He went through enemy fire to the aid of a wounded Marine, carrying him out



Marines advanced across fog-filled valleys while supported by machine-gun fire.

of the open and then shielding the man with his own body. He then charged through a cross fire to the aid of another wounded Marine only to be killed by hostile fire.

Cpl Charles G. Abrell of "Easy" Co., 2d Bn., First Marines rushed forward through the assaulting squad of Marines who were pinned down by automatic weapons fire from a bunker. Wounded by grenade fragments, Abrell made a single-handed assault against the bunker and yelled to his Marines, "Follow me!"

The Koreans, seeing his determined assault, poured it on and wounded Abrell twice more. Still in the attack, Abrell pulled the pin on a grenade and hurled himself into the bunker. Abrell and the Communist gun crew were killed in the explosion. Posthumous awards of the Navy Cross and Medal of Honor went to Lourim and Abrell respectively.



At first, remnants of Communist platoons started surrendering. Then, companies and even battalions threw down their weapons.

and in the ensuing battle Barrett was wounded once more, this time mortally.

PFC Ora E. Barrett Jr. was with "Able" Co., 1st Bn., Fifth Marines at the Punchbowl when heavy fog and darkness forced the Marines to withdraw from a hill. Barrett, realizing that several Marines were still wounded on the hill, moved forward up the slope, placing himself between the casualties and the enemy in order to lay down a base of fire while corpsmen could move the wounded. Once the wounded were evacuated, Barrett made a dash for his lines. He never made it. Both Barretts, related only as brothers in arms, were awarded the Navy Cross posthumously.

It was attack and counterattack for more than a week; 1stMarDiv casualties were starting to add up. Seventh Marines' "George" Co., commanded by 1stLt William C. Airheart, met and repulsed five successive attacks. 1stLt Frank A. Winfrey's "Item" Co. made five assaults and both companies were prepared to go it again, when they realized that the North Koreans, deciding to **risk** execution by their **own** leaders

had withdrawn in the night. They had, however, bought the Chinese time and made it costly for the Marines who suffered 67 killed, 1,044 wounded.

Col Brown, in tribute to his regiment, expressed words that any commanding officer in the 1stMarDiv would have felt toward his own men: 'They were war-wise when I got command; I contributed nothing to their training because they were in battle when I joined them and I left them when they came out of the lines for a rest. They used cover, maneuvered beautifully, used their own and supporting arms intelligently, were patient and not foolhardy; but when it came to the point where they had to rely on themselves with bayonet, hand grenade and sheer **guts**, they could and did do that too. I have long ago given up telling people what I saw them do on many occasions. Nobody believes me, nor would I believe anyone else telling the same story of other troops.'

The war, however, was starting to **turn** into a stalemate.



Bunkers used by Marines for a machine-gun emplacement had often been previously occupied by the Communist troops.

Cpl John Barrett with "Fox" Company, First Marines was painfully wounded by an exploding grenade while leading his rifle squad against a hill near Hangnyong. He refused medical attention and continued to move forward through enemy fire. Wounded again, he paused only long enough to receive first aid and charged forward again. His men at first watched Barrett's bravery and then, inspired by it, charged. They overran the enemy emplacement



Outpost Three

Story by R. R. Keene

The patrol from "Item" Company, Fifth Marine Regiment had run into a nest of Communist vipers. Accurate enemy fire had poured on them, sending screams of agony from Marines stung and tom by hot lead and grenade and mortar fragments whipping through the cold Korean April night in 1951.

Private First Class Robert E. Beatty had been in the forefront and had taken the brunt of enemy fire. He was wounded, but miraculously was in one piece. His platoon commander had not been so fortunate and lay dying some distance to his front.

As in all battles, confusion reigned. The Marines survived by not heeding the natural instinct to panic. Beatty heard someone shout orders to break contact and move back. He could hear his fellow Marines gather up their wounded and start to withdraw behind the steady sound of their rifles throwing out protective fire.

Beatty knew there was a time to fight and a time to back off and regroup. This was one of those situations where the latter was obviously prudent. Prudent, except for the fact that Beatty knew his officer's body was still out there, and maybe, just maybe, the lieutenant could still be alive. It was probably not a greatly debated or even a conscious decision that took more than a fraction of a second. It was just something that men, against all reason, sometimes do. Instead of cautiously slipping backward, Beatty found himself moving forward and taking enemy fire.

He reached the body and found it lifeless. Lesser men might have yanked the lieutenant's tags and left. Beatty threw the body over his shoulder and ran the gauntlet of fire. He zigged and zagged, nearly buck-

Beatty threw the body over his shoulder and ran the gauntlet of fire. He zigged and zagged, nearly buckling under the weight and precarious balance. His lungs screamed for air as he tumbled headlong into cover at the base of a small hill.

ling under the weight and precarious balance. His lungs screamed for air as he tumbled headlong into cover at the base of a small hill. The body was slowing him down. For all he knew, he was cut off from his withdrawing patrol. Exhaustion and reason told him to leave the body. He tucked it, if not reverently at least quickly, into a thicket where it would not easily be found and he bolted for home.

The main body of the patrol had made it back to its own lines. Round one had gone to the Communists. Not only had the platoon comman-

der been killed and several others wounded, but one man, PFC Beatty, was missing. Only five Marines remained in any shape to fight and they, along with Second Lieutenant George W. Alexander Jr., an intelligence officer who volunteered, were drawing ammunition for round two.

About that time the forward listening posts reported movement in the flooded and icy rice paddies. It was rifleman Beatty. Nobody had noticed his wounds which Beatty had the forethought to conceal and consequently nobody questioned him when he volunteered to lead the patrol to the lieutenant's body. It would soon be dawn and the patrol would be completely exposed.

The Korean morning calm was punctured with the crack of small-arms fire that sent geysers of water spouting up from rice paddies. The patrol had taken fire almost from the start. Also, almost from the start, Lt Alexander proved himself as a Marine to be reckoned with. He was one hell of a rifle shot and had picked off three Communist soldiers as the patrol maneuvered slowly, wading through the freezing paddy water toward their objective. As they neared the place where Beatty had left the platoon commander's body, Alexander directed the automatic riflemen to targets of opportunity.

The enemy fired back, wounding several including Beatty again. They even managed to cut off one member of the patrol, hoping to capture him. Alexander foiled their attempt, promptly killing one Communist and scaring the others off. He then laid down covering fire to ensure the patrol's advance.

Beatty, in the lead, was wounded twice more, but led the patrol to the body. He then laid down protective fire as the patrol picked up their

*DON, WE SHARED EVERYTHING INCLUDING RICE!
GOD BLESS ONE
BUDDY, I'LL NEVER FORGET YOU!
Akte*

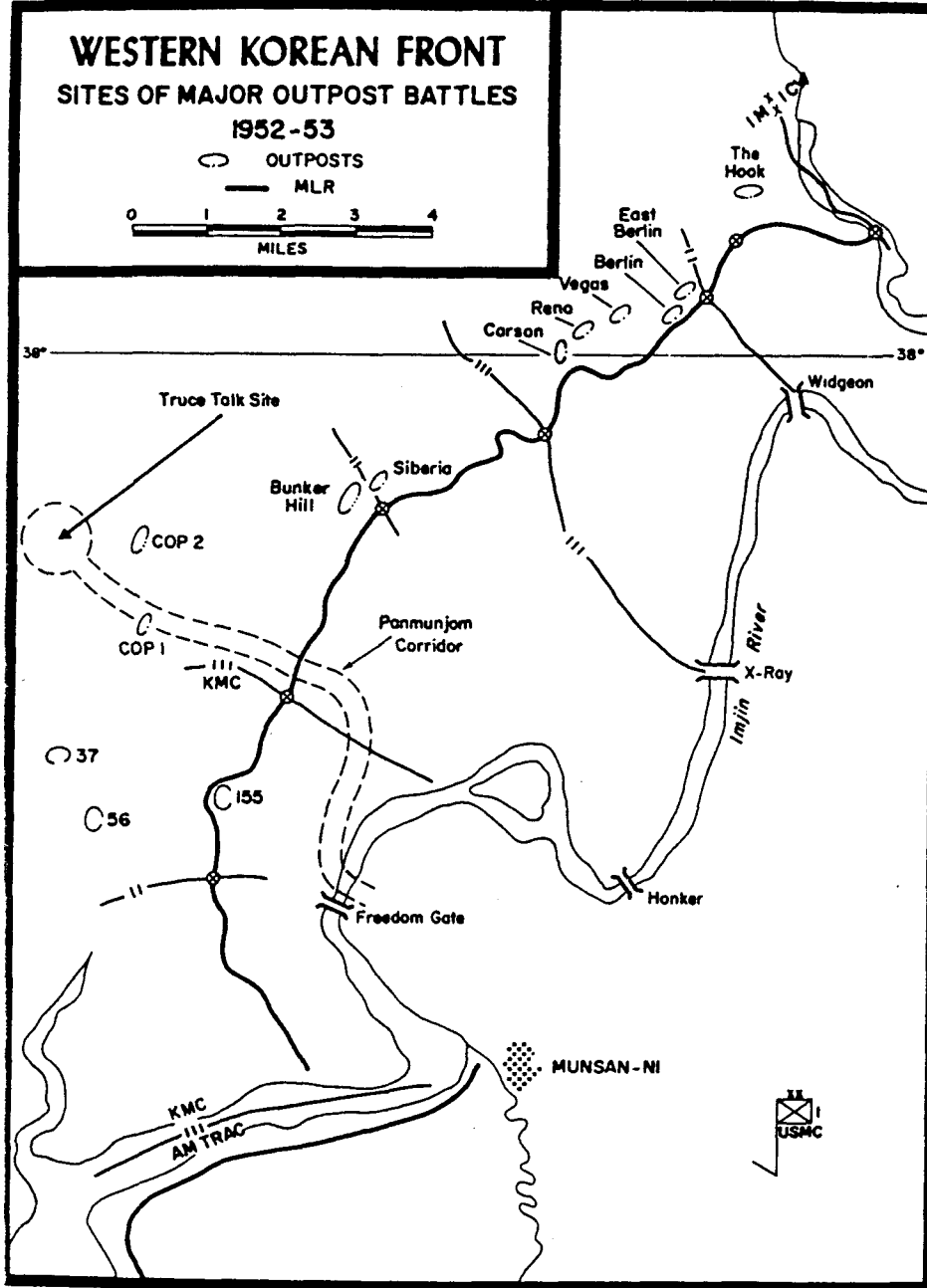
*Don, Best Regards
Marine*

WESTERN KOREAN FRONT SITES OF MAJOR OUTPOST BATTLES

1952-53

○ OUTPOSTS

— MLR



rea was high and contrasted with of the mood at home. The war in Korea had become unpopular with many Americans. Letters from home and newspaper reports caused anxiety among the citizen soldiers in the Army. Author James Michener visited the 1stMarDiv and told Lieutenant Colonel Franklin B. Nihart that he was "impressed with the morale of the Marines." Michener said he "had been prepared to find that they didn't know what they were fighting for or why they were there." He was encouraged to find that they knew exactly their purpose in the Korean fighting.

Among the reasons for the Corps' excellent morale were innovations such as helicopter-borne assaults, lightweight body armor, and realistic in-country training for both enlisted and officers. The Corps' leaders' policy to issue frank and honest replies to inquiring politicians and members of the media played a major role in countering any spirit of doubt that may have arisen.

Elements of the Corps had been in Korea for 15 months which was then the longest stretch of continuous land warfare ever experienced by a major Marine unit. They occupied nearly 35 miles of front less than five miles from Panmunjom, site of the sporadic truce negotiations and the most critical sector of the entire Eighth Army line known as "Jamestown."

Fighting such as that suffered by Beatty and Alexander was sporadic. The Chinese were more inclined to probe with artillery and mortars... that is, until mid-April, at Outpost Three near Panmunjom.

Outpost Three was one of a series of outpost lines of resistance beyond the main Jamestown line. Why the Reds hit there is something nobody knows. Some speculate that the Communists hit it just because it was there and occupied by a reinforced platoon of (Easy Co., 2d Battalion, 5th Marines).

PFCs Edgar "Bart" Dauberman Jr., Gerald J. Genovese, Corporal Duane E. Dewey, Sergeant Arthur G. Barbosa, Technical Sergeants Quinton T. Barlow, Stan Wawrzyniak and James A. Harrington (assigned from Weapons Co.) along with the rest of the platoon were making their 400-foot high piece of real estate home. For Marines, that means digging in. They'd have been

leader's body and hurried back to their lines. Beatty covered them. Then, weak from the loss of blood, he stumbled beneath friendly covering fire into the safety of his lines. Beatty refused any medical attention until all the other wounded had been tended. He then quietly and calmly walked to the forward aid station. It was only 3,000 yards away.

Both Beatty and Alexander were later awarded Navy Crosses.

Lieutenant General James A. Van Fleet, Commanding General, U.S. Eighth Army, had only a month before moved the First Marine Division from defensive positions in eastern and central Korea across the peninsula to west Korea.

His reasons were that plans to car-

ry out an amphibious envelopment somewhere on the east coast were no longer seen as necessary and therefore were abandoned. Van Fleet was now more concerned with weakness in the Kimpo Airfield-area defenses and ordered the Republic of Korea First Division on the extreme left of the Eighth Army line under the operational control of I Corps. Seoul had changed hands too many times. The overall situation would not permit the loss of ground on the left flank that would endanger the capital again. Van Fleet knew the U.S. Marines viewed all property they occupied as theirs, and trespassers were zealously prosecuted.

The morale of the Marines in Ko-



USMC Photo

fools not to. The platoon wasn't exactly praising the strategist who put them way out front of the Jamestown line, in an area known to be swarming with Chinese.

Digging bunkers kept them from beating their guns in protest too loudly. Wawrzyniak had transferred in from Fox Co. where he'd become somewhat of a battalion notable for his action on "The Rock" in September (See "Hill Battles," page 50 in the September 1991 issue of *Leatherneck*). However, in the Marine Corps one is only as good as his next battle, and on April 15 Wawrzyniak was busy digging into the frozen earth with the rest.

They congratulated themselves on being industrious "home" builders for that afternoon the Commies lobbed in a few shells and repeated it again at dusk when they wounded one Marine.

A half hour before midnight a green star cluster burst in the southwest. There was a blinding burst of light just below their positions, followed by a shock wave and a horribly loud, but dull crack of air. "Incoming!"

The Communists let loose with 20 minutes worth of 76-mm. cannon and 120-mm. mortars. It was heavy and it was brain jarringly close. At 10 minutes to midnight, the barrage seemed to drift like a rainstorm to the west. Another green star cluster exploded, followed by another five minutes later.

TSgt Harrington's machine-gun section opened up, sending a stacca-

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to report and bursts of bullets emphasized by tracer rounds into the Chinese frontal assault.

"There were about 80 of us," said PFC Dauberman. "I estimate 600 to 800 Chinese hit us hard!" The flood of Communists bounced off the machine guns' wall of hot steel, quickly enveloped and charged Outpost Three from three sides.

Harrington, Wawrzyniak and Bar-

The 1stMarDiv redeployed to western Korea. Units from the 5th Marines en route to the new sector in April 1952 were slowed by muddy roads and spring thaws.

moved from Marine to Marine, trying to tighten up their perimeter which had shrunk to a circle of Marines in the southwest corner of the outpost. In 15 minutes of burp-gun assault, "potato-masher" grenade barrages, bangalore-torpedo explosions and 57-mm. recoilless-rifle fire, the Chinese had surrounded the Marines, cut off a few elements and severed the command post communications, but Outpost Three had not fallen.

One reason it held was because of Sgt Barbosa and his machine-gunners. "During the confusion of the attack 'Arty' [Barbosa] reorganized us," reported Dauberman. "He kept going from man to man distributing ammunition. When his men were killed or wounded, he himself took over the machine gun. His action was unbelievable! He kept the enemy from taking over the hill and running over us, and he protected the wounded." Before it was over, Barbosa would personally kill 12 Chinese, some whose bodies lay only inches from his machine-gun barrel.

The Chinese flood crested and ebbed. They called artillery onto the Marine positions, caught their breath and charged, only to be repelled again. In the frenzy, the Marines came up on three hapless Chinese who charged into captivity.

At 3:15 a.m., they came again. Somewhere in the melee where rifle butts, knives, kicks and fists replaced grenades and bullets, PFC Genovese was killed trying to bring a dead Marine back into the lines.

About a mile away, on Jamestown line, the rest of Easy Co. and the battalion, tried desperately to re-establish contact with Outpost Three and help with casualty evacuation.

Things were grim at Outpost Three. Cpl Dewey and his assistant machine-gunner had been wounded but pushed the Chinese off long enough for a corpsman to take a look. Dewey was in intense pain. As the corpsman looked at Dewey, a Chinaman lobbed a grenade. Dewey shouted a warning, pushed the corpsman to the ground, and smothered the grenade's blast with his own body.

Ammunition was running low: Barlow was down to issuing words of encouragement to his men, who sparingly used their ammunition to drop one of the enemy less than live yards from their positions.

Wawrzyniak braved a hail of bullets repeatedly to lead men back into the defensive perimeter. Wounded himself, he refused treatment but dressed the wounds of others and led the stricken Marines to the safety of bunkers. He shouted encouragement and disappeared in the darkness, taking ammunition to Marines manning the guns as the enemy closed in.

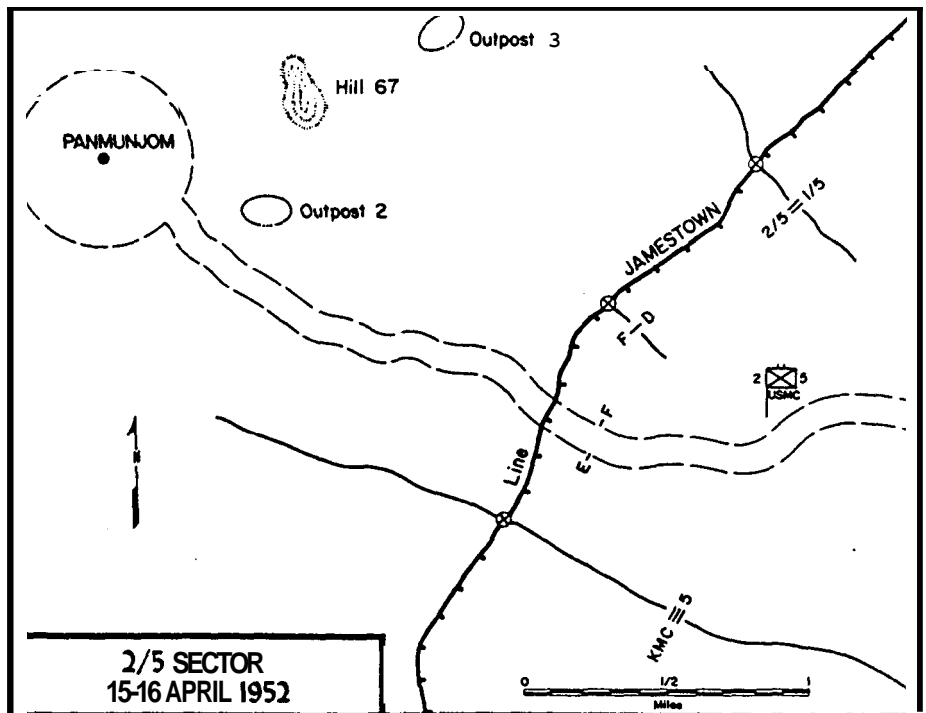
It was nearly dawn and Marines were hoping for a break. Unbeknownst to them, the Chinese apparently had decided to call it quits. Their mistake was to pass the word on a network tapped by American intelligence. Friendly artillery in the area zeroed in on all known escape routes. The barrage was impressive, but unfortunately not effective. The Marines of Outpost Three watched in amazement as the Chinese slipped through without a loss.

Dauberman was so tired that he had slept through the artillery barrage. He was surprised by Barbosa who had shaken him. "He looked me in the face and said, 'Are you all right?' He was a giant of a Marine!"

He was big enough to be sure. Barbosa and Barlow received Navy Crosses. Wawrzyniak, who finally accepted medical assistance, received a Gold Star in lieu of his second Navy Cross. Harrington was awarded the Silver Star medal. Dewey, tougher than any Chinese grenade, somehow survived. A little less than a year later he would be discharged from the Corps and visit the White House where he was awarded the Medal of Honor, the first to be presented by the new President. Dwight D. Eisenhower.

In all, six Marines were killed, five were missing and 25 were wounded and evacuated from Outpost Three. The Chinese left 25 dead. 45 were known to be wounded and three were prisoners.

The First Marine Division's commander, Major General John T. Selden, shored up the Jamestown line. Marines got plenty of physical training and blisters from picks, shovels and axes, as they dug, timbered and sandbagged their physical defenses.



Ammunition was running low; Barlow was down to issuing words of encouragement to his men, who sparingly used their ammunition to drop one of the enemy less than five yards from their position.

Selden was also a Marine who believed that if forced to occupy defensive positions, Marines must do it aggressively. He ordered patrols out forward of the line to ambush, raid, kill or capture any Chinese foolhardy enough to come near the Marine main lines of resistance. He placed his best riflemen as snipers along the line and encouraged them to seek targets of opportunity. He knew that artillery, tanks and air power

were designed for more than protecting men in defensive positions. It was ideal as harassment and interdiction fire. It could destroy hostile defenses, break up Communist build-ups or hit suspected assembly areas and, in general, make life miserable for the enemy.

The abandonment of the forward outposts added strength to the main line, but its length, in part, also forced the front-line battalions to commit all their companies on the line, thus losing their reserve. The division dispatched combat and reconnaissance patrols forward of the line to keep the Chinese from occupying desirable terrain features such as the site of Outpost Three, which Marines who later patrolled there always treated with respect.



*The following were used as references and are recommended for further reading: *"Korea: The Untold Story of the War" by Joseph C. Goulden; *"U.S. Marine Operations in Korea, Volume IV" by Lynn Montross, Maj Hubard D. Kuokka, USMC and Maj Norman W. Hicks, USMC; *"Red Blood. . . Purple Heart. The Marines in the Korean War" by Joseph A. Saluzzi; *"U.S. Marine Operations in Korea, Volume V" by LtCol Pat Meid, USMCR and Maj James Yingling, USMC; and *"Korean War Almanac" by Harry G. Summers Jr. *Available through MCA Bookservice, 1-800-336-0291.*

To: Dan Matthews - One who gave the best for
our "Corps" Good luck, best wishes
Co. Gunnery Stan Wawrzyniak
F-2-8/E-2-5

The Life and Times of Stan Wawrzyniak

The road from the brig as a private, to retirement as a lieutenant colonel included a pair of Navy Crosses, a Silver Star, four Purple Hearts, a sockfull of assorted campaign medals and a change of attitude.

Story by Tom Bartlett • Photos courtesy of Stan Wawrzyniak

If Stanley J. Wawrzyniak ever comes up and says, "Today's gonna be a good day," get away; put in for special liberty; get on a bus and head out of town. Do something, but get the hell away from him.

A good day for Wawrzyniak is getting hit by shrapnel, winning a high personal decoration, and scaring the bejabbers out of almost everyone by spraying .45 slugs with his Thompson submachine gun.

He's not tall, about 5 feet, 6 inches, but he has a wide, thick chest, and arms that can carry or smash a whiskey keg. He is a man of few words: many of them of the four-letter variety, and he has a voice like a drill instructor with a sore throat.

Some have difficulty pronouncing his name: Wawrzyniak, as in "wore-zin-knee-ack." His friends call him "Ski," but chances are you'll never get to be his friend, so call him "Sir," and be relatively safe.

His journey in the Corps, from the brig, through Korea, into the commissioned officers' ranks and to Vietnam and back is one of a kind.

When his troops found themselves facing an enemy machine gun, there was nobody in the world they'd rather have at their shoulder than "the Gunny."

He was talking. I couldn't see him, but his voice penetrated the thick, blue-gray cloud coming from his Manila cigar. He admitted being a young kid Marine private, having a good time, screwing up, and not accomplishing a hell of a lot, early on.

"Sergeant Major John Kozak calls

me into his office. I've never been afraid of any human being like I was scared of him. His muscles started at his ear lobes. And when you reported, you banged three times on the bulkhead and you'd march up to within three paces of his desk and stop at attention. "He was a hell of a Marine, got a Silver Star at New Britain in World War II.

"In China back in 1947, we were with 'Charlie' Company, First Marines. I had a bad attitude. I'd been in the Navy for three years. I'd been around. You couldn't tell me anything I didn't already know. I don't think the first four months I was in China that I had a legal liberty.

"But the old-timers weren't about to put up with my nonsense, you know? I ended up on bread and water and I worked on the rock pile. I had more restriction than you could shake a stick at, but as much trouble as I ever got into, I never got busted.

"We were at Tientsin, and the Marine Corps gave out a blanket promotion. All the enlisted Marines got promoted but me. And the company commander calls me in and says, 'Ski, when you work, you work like hell, but when you go on liberty, you're nothing but trouble. You keep your nose clean for six months and I'll promote you to corporal.'

"And then it sunk in. I thought to myself, 'Hey, you're not winning, you know?' It was time to get serious and make something out of myself. And that's what I did, but I didn't do it on my own. We had many senior staff NCOs who had served in the

Banana Wars or World War II who were willing to share their knowledge and experiences with a younger Marine trying to get ahead and make something of himself for the benefit of the unit or the Corps."

SgtMaj Kozak called PFC Wawrzyniak into his office and told the young Marine, "You asked for a transfer here, by God, and you're gonna become a good Marine." He handed the young Marine a stack of infantry manuals. "You start studying these damned books and you come back in two weeks and you'd better know everything in that Marine Corps Drill Manual."

Included in that stack of manuals were the bibles on the machine gun, Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR), grenades, small-unit tactics, and more.

"Every non-working hour, I'd read from one of the manuals, and some senior ranking Marine would see me and say, 'Hey Ski, come on over,' and he'd have a .30- or .50-caliber machine gun or a BAR, and we'd go over different things in the manual. I read, I retained and before my 35 years were up in the Marine Corps, I used much of what I'd studied.

"I did a lot of growing up. I became a Marine, but it wasn't easy."

Time passed. He reported to Camp Pendleton, Calif., to train reservists, coaching on the rifle range. He, was promoted to sergeant and ordered to the Marine Guard, Philadelphia Navy Yard, but he lasted only a couple of months there.

"Single Marines got the shaft with all the after-hours stuff and weekend

commitments," he recalled. "Like there were 19 of us Marines there and five of us weren't married. Once, I had just come off of weekend duty and went to the mess hall for a cup of coffee and some kid comes down and says, 'Hey, Sergeant Ski, you got your blues ready?' And I say, 'What?' And he says, 'You got the funeral detail up in Johnstown.'

"And I say, 'What do you mean? I just got off weekend duty.' And I got kind of boisterous, and the mess sergeant A. B. Collins [Silver Star, Okinawa. World War II] comes over and says, 'Keep your voice down. No yelling in my mess hall.' And without thinking, I turn around and tell 'Abie' what he can do with his mess hall and his serving line and the overhead fans, as well.

"And the next thing I know, old Abie is rolling up his sleeves and he says, 'Come on out to the spud locker.' I figure not only did I make a mistake, but now I'm gonna die because old Abie had this cook who had given him a rough time. and Abie took him out to the spud locker and beat the living daylight out of him. and that cook was a hell of a lot bigger than me.

"I had better sense than to go to the spud locker with Abie. so I apologized, and I didn't get stomped but I did get office hours with the captain.

"The skipper says, 'You seem unhappy here.' And I say, 'No. sir. I'm happy. The liberty is great. but the duty and work load aren't distributed fairly. The barracks rats catch the work load and the brown baggers skate on evening and weekend details. Married guys can't go on funeral details because they'd get back too late.'

"And the captain says, 'What you're saying is that you don't like it here.' And I say, 'No. it's all right.' and he says, 'Then why are you complaining like a Bolshevik private?' And the next thing I know, I'm on my way to Camp Lejeune.

"I get orders to Shore Party, and I say, 'What the hell is Shore Party? Nobody knows, but one guy knows where their barracks is. so he points me in the right direction. And it's 4:00 [2 p.m.] on a Saturday. I look around for an empty bunk and I start squaring away my gear. Sergeants had a cubicle to themselves. but the spaces were full. so I went into the open squadbay.

"I go to chow and get ready to go

to the movies and here comes this warrant officer and he says, 'Where're you going?' And I tell him and he tells me and everybody else in the barracks to go outside and fall in on the hardtop. By now, it's almost six. And he tells me to drill the troops until he tells me to stop. And he goes to adjacent barracks and shakes those Marines out of their racks and away from their card games, and next thing I know, I'm drilling 100 to 150 Marines.

"So I drill them for about an hour, and then I halt them and call another sergeant out and tell him to drill the troops for a while and he says, 'I can't. I don't know anything about drill.' And I can't figure this out. What kind of Marine sergeant doesn't know how to drill troops?"

Sunday. he squared away his gear, preparing for the work week. A Marine introduced himself and told Ski that Shore Party Battalion was a great outfit. "We play pinochle all day, don't make formations and don't have weekend duty."

"Hell. according to that guy, they don't work. they don't train, they don't do anything." Ski recalled. "The guy told me that they didn't get up until 0730 on weekdays.

"And I say, 'Well, I tell you what. You'll hear reveille tomorrow morning. So. at 0500. I get up. shower. shave and pull on a fresh uniform and at 0530. I get a Coke bottle and an empty GI can. and I held reveille. Guys were coming out of their racks



"In China back in '47, I was with the First Marines. I had a bad attitude. I'd been in the Navy. I'd been around. You couldn't tell me anything I didn't already know."

like you wouldn't believe. All except one character.

"So I go to his bunk and I say, 'Hey! Did you hear reveille go?' And he says, 'Yeah,' and he rolls over. So I grab one end of his rack and I dump the whole damned thing over on him and I say, 'Reveille ain't going. . . it's gone,' and suddenly I had his attention, and he's running for the shower and a quick shave."

At 0600, he marched Shore Party Marines to morning chow. At 0700, the Marines held a sweep down, fore and aft. The company gunnery sergeant entered the barracks and introduced himself to Ski. "Are you the one that held reveille?"

"Yes, Gunnery Sergeant."

"Are you the one who marched them to chow?"

"Yes, Gunnery Sergeant."

"Are you the one supervising the cleanup this morning?"

"Yes, Gunnery Sergeant."

"And he tells me that I'm kind of taking things upon myself. Hell, I thought that's what sergeants were supposed to do. And a few minutes later, here comes this master sergeant. and we go through this whole rigamarole all over again. And he says, 'Why did you hold reveille: why did you march them to chow: why did you order the cleanup of the barracks?' and I say I figured-somebody ought to take charge to get things done. and nobody else seemed willing to volunteer.

"Later, I meet the commanding officer and he says, 'I've heard about events since your arrival and I like what I hear.' He made me platoon sergeant. and that's when Shore Party began military training. We had a corporal who knew machine guns. and I had him hold school: and we had a mortarman, and he held school. and so forth. right up through the BAR, grenades and bayonets and what have you, and we went on conditioning hikes.

"And we went on overnights and bivouacs and we started a staff NCO school: not as elaborate as the schools they have today, but suddenly the attitude of the whole battalion changed. They were being treated like Marines. for God's sake. and they liked it!"

He was promoted to staff sergeant on June 15, 1950. From Marine recruit to staff sergeant in four years. "But I can tell you one better than that," he said, grinning. "How about private to master sergeant in five

years eight months? The longest time I ever spent in grade as an enlisted man was two years and that was from buck to staff sergeant."

He landed on "Blue Beach" at Inchon, Korea, with Shore Party. "We had 56 in our platoon. After landing, we went to Kimpo [Airfield] and set up on the Han River. We had our own machine guns, BARs and M1 rifles. From there, we went to Wonsan."

At first, the unit moved supplies off the beach. Their secondary mission was as engineers. "We had Bay City cranes, bulldozers and what have you," he recalled, "and we laid culverts or built bridges.

"And one day they come to me and say, 'Ski, get your team. You're going up north,' and we go with Korean troops on small patrol boats. We help the South Korean troops unload and store supplies, and then we return to Wonsan. And me and my 19 Marines come back from that one, and they send us out again for another such operation.

"And that's how it went for a while until they send us to Hungnam to help with the evacuation of the First Marine Division and the Republic of Korea Third Division between December 10th and 14th, 1950. We provided security while the First Division pulled out, after their withdrawal from the Chosin Reservoir.

"Meanwhile, I kept trying to transfer to an infantry unit and to make a long story short, I finally got switched to Fox Company (2d Battalion), Fifth Marines. Now it's March 1951, and I'm working for a brand new second lieutenant, Lucian L. Vestal [who would win a Navy Cross in Korea]. My company commander was a Reserve captain, James H. Honeycutt. Battalion commander was Lieutenant Colonel Glen E. Martin [who would win two Silver Stars in Korea].

"Well, Lieutenant Vestal asks me, 'Ski, how come you turned down the chance to go home? You got enough time here to rotate home.' And I say, 'I'm not going home until I get an award of some sort,' and he says, 'Do a good job for me today and I'll see you get a Bronze Star.'

"Well, that turned out to be one hell of a fine day. I'll tell you. Dog Company was going up one ridge line on our right. Fox was going up the left flank, minus one platoon. There was a small finger, so Vestal's platoon (me included) was going to



"I'm just a little runt; about 5 feet 6 inches tall. That's me on the left on Guam in 1948. The big guy is PFC B. F. Marshall from Glendale, California. He was 6 feet 5 inches tall, and he was only 17, so I guess he was still growing."

take the finger."

As a staff sergeant, Ski began to see young Marines who reminded him of what he once was. "I had this kid that I totally hated and despised. Every time I saw him, I wanted to knock him up alongside his head. He was always doing something wrong. Tell him to put on his helmet, and he'd put it on backwards. I hated that kid.

"So we're going along these railroad tracks and I hear this 'kaplunk .. kaplunk .. kaplunk,' and I'm wondering, 'What the hell is that? And I turn around and it's this kid, Pat Callahan, and he's dragging the butt of his BAR along railroad ties. And I lost all semblance of good sense. I go charging up to him and I tell him where I'm going to stick the butt of his rifle if he continues dragging it along.

"And the skipper says, 'Take it easy, Gunny. He's just a kid,' and I say, 'And he'll die a kid if he keeps dragging that rifle, cause I'm gonna kill him!'"

The company continued the climb. Nearing the top, the point man turned and yelled, "Grenades!" Small-arms fire quickly followed.

"I had a good idea of where the enemy was, so I took my Thompson and a handful of grenades and

headed for the right flank. I began tossing grenades, but it was rough, getting them through the heavy brush and all. All the enemy had to do was pull pins and roll them down the mountain.

"I saw this one grenade coming, and I'm next to the tree, so I slide around and damn! Here comes a grenade down that side, too. I put my hands over my head, hit the deck and start saying the Lords Prayer. I get shrapnel in my face, neck, hands, back, buttocks, both legs, and my canteens had so many holes they looked like little showers. I reached up to feel my face, and I'm covered in blood."

But he could still walk. The platoon went into the assault. "We're clearing the enemy off the hill, and as the North Koreans run from Fox Company, they run into the guns of Dog Company who opened up and killed more than 200 of them. The Dogs were eating up whatever we scattered their way," Wawrzyniak said, chuckling.

"Now, let me tell you about Callahan. He got shot twice in the shoulder during the final assault. But the bugger never quit. He kept moving and shooting his BAR. And he was aiming; he wasn't spraying. He was delivering a base of fire with accuracy. I can't tell you how proud I was of that kid."

Callahan and Wawrzyniak were evacuated. "They lay me on this table and they're yanking shrapnel out of me. They patch up Callahan nearby. And the next day, I go over to see how this lieutenant is doing, and hell, they didn't wash him up or anything. Sure, they treated his wound, but the guy is lying there in the mud and crud that he brought down with him. So me and Callahan find a wash basin and we clean the lieutenant up, making him look better and making us feel better.

"We stayed there a couple of days and they were talking about sending us to another medical facility and I told Callahan, 'Let's get the hell out of here and go back to the company.' And he takes off. A couple of minutes later he comes back with this set of utilities all nice and fresh: washed and pressed. And I say, 'Where the hell did you get these?' And he says, 'You'll never believe it, but I walked into this tent, and there they were, just kind of waiting for me to bring to you.' We leave, and later, we each get a Silver Star.

"So we go back to the company, which wasn't easy because the company was in the hills. surrounded. This lieutenant colonel walks out of a tent and eyeballs me and Callahan and says, 'Where are you two going?' and I tell him, but he turns to Callahan, who is heavily bandaged with one wound bleeding, and the colonel says, 'Not him. He's going back to the aid station.'"

Arrangements had been made to send a pair of communicators up to the surrounded Marines. They hoped to string wire to forward positions from the battalion headquarters. Ski made arrangements to accompany them during the midnight patrol, conducted in a heavy rain.

"We didn't run into a thing all the way. It was so rotten a night the enemy figured they could dope off because not even idiots would be roaming around in no man's land in such crummy weather.

"I go over and wake the skipper up and he's obviously happy to see me. So I find a hole and get some sleep, rain or not. And the next morning, I make a fire and hold reveille on the troops. I'm brewing coffee and the troops climb out of their holes and welcome me back by singing 'The Marines' Hymn.' I was touched. [His voice cracked as he recalled the event.]"

The enemy had disappeared during the night.

The days and weeks passed.

September 19, 1951, was a good day for Wawrzyniak. Hill 812 was in the area known as the Punchbowl. One Marine unit operating in the area "got their clocks cleaned." They were replaced by another unit who got their clocks cleaned. Fox Co. was in reserve; it was soon their turn.

"During a three-day battle up there, units of the First Division suffered 33 killed in action and 235 wounded. Enemy losses were estimated at 972 KIA (265 counted), and 113 captured.

"We moved into position. It was a good day. I could tell. We got hit with our own mortars, four deuces, [4.2 inch], and then we got hit by our own artillery. Whatever could go wrong did go wrong. And then we call in an air strike, and they're bombing and strafing our guys.

"And I'm on the extreme left flank. When darkness came, we remained in position and waited for sunup. I look around and I see a corporal I've had trouble with before.

He never went to boot camp. He was a reservist, and when we were at Hill 884, before I took over the platoon, they got hit and he broke ranks and ran.

"So I get ahold of him and say, 'You run on me and I'll kill you myself,' and he says, 'Gunny, I ain't afraid, but if I think it's time to go, I go!' And I say, 'From here on out, you don't go anywhere unless I tell you, okay?'"

"And he made up for his past actions, I tell you. We go up [Hill] 812 and he takes a round in the neck, and he's happy as hell, because now he rates a Purple Heart. But he keeps on chuggin'."

"And I decided: first squad to the right; second squad to the left; third squad up the middle and let's go! And we went right up that damned hill. I led the final assault over the top, and then we set up a hasty defense. That's when machine-gun fire started coming from the left flank, and that damned hill was just as bare as the palm of your hand.

"Then grenades started falling. We had one hell of a grenade fight up there. They'd throw and I'd throw, and I was hoping I was hurting them as bad as they were hurting me, because I was full of shrapnel. My face was all cut up and I hurt like you wouldn't believe.

"To this day, I don't know why, but I ran over, grabbed a couple of grenades and I ran right down that hill line. I don't know why the North



Silver Star Awarded Buffalo Soldier
SOMEWHERE IN KOREA, Aug. 24.—For gallantry in action, Marine Staff Sgt. Stanley W. Wawrzyniak, 259 Chandler St., Buffalo, has been awarded the Silver Star. Presenting the medal to the Buffalo Marine during recent field ceremonies is Lieut. Gen. Edward M. Almond, former commander of the U. S. Tenth Corps, and now commandant of the Army War College. Sgt. Wawrzyniak is the son of Mrs. Stephen Sedus of the Chandler St. address.

"Can you believe the caption under my picture in my hometown newspaper in Buffalo? They called me a 'Soldier.' Hell, I wasn't a soldier. I was a 'squid,' but never a 'doggie!' --

Koreans didn't shoot me or whatever, but I ran right at that machine gun, about 60 to 70 yards, and I blew it and the crew away without getting hit.

"I put that old Maxim machine gun out of action. My head was killing me from the wounds and concussion, and we kept getting incoming artillery and mortar fire. And we get pulled off the hill and put in reserve. The corporal gets his wound treated and returns to duty. The corpsman gives me a handful of pills and some medicinal alcohol, and I sleep the night away like a baby."

That was the night Easy Co. got pushed off the hill. Fox Co. was asked to send reinforcements, and Wawrzyniak volunteered his second platoon. "So we go back up the hill and you know what? The North Koreans got another machine gun in the exact same place where I'd knocked out the Maxim the day before!

"And the guy I'd accused of being a coward says, 'I'll take care of the gun this time,' and he collects a sack full of grenades and yells, 'Never fear!' and he charges right into the mouth of that machine gun. After he stood up and did his John Wayne impersonation, the whole squad charged up the hill, following his lead, and we took that hill without suffering a single Marine casualty."

The corporal would receive a Silver Star medal. Stanley Wawrzyniak would receive his first Navy Cross.

Following the battle for Hill 812, Ski went to Camp Otsu, Japan, for some rest and relaxation.

"I'm in the gym one night watching a basketball game and in comes Ray Bowman. And immediately I think back to when I was stationed in China, and Bowman had me locked up. He was my company commander over there.

"After I got out of the brig, we got racing around with jeeps on the dock. The jeeps belonged to some air wing unit, and they were going to be loaded aboard the ships to return Stateside.

"We were drag racing, and somebody passed the word. 'Here comes the officer of the day.' I jam my foot on the brake pedal, but the damned thing's got no brakes, and the jeep goes over the end of the dock. I managed to jump, and the jeep ends up upside down on a floating causeway leading to the ramp of an LST. Everybody, including CID [criminal in-

vestigators] are trying to find the responsible party, but nobody squeals.

"At Camp Otsu, Bowman's a major, the camp operations officer. And he comes over and says, 'Ski, I hear you got a Silver Star and a Navy Cross in Korea. Now will you tell me about that jeep that rolled off the dock in China?'"

Ski was offered the opportunity to serve at Camp Otsu. He accepted and served as a troop handler and basic military subjects instructor. "But you can only party so much, so I started going to school. Hell, I had never finished high school. I figured it was time."

He took a math course and an English course, but then "tired of the whole damned thing. I figured I'd go back to Korea. Hell, I had a Silver Star, a Navy Cross and a couple of Purple Hearts. I figured I'd go back and get me a Medal of Honor."

Before leaving Japan, he went to the staff noncommissioned officer's club and bought a case of whiskey to take with him. "I'm going back in style," he said, smiling. "I fly to Korea and report in to [First Marine] Division Headquarters. I get assigned to Easy Company, Fifth Marines, and I arrive in time to make the move from the east to the west coast."

"My company commander is Captain Merlin 'Terry' Matthews [who received a Silver Star in Korea]. He sends me to OP [outpost] 3 to help a brand new second lieutenant up there. We were 4,000 meters in front of the MLR [main line of resistance], the northernmost position at that time."

"We're there a few days and we start taking enemy mortar rounds. I couldn't figure what was wrong with those guys. They weren't hitting anything. And then it dawned on me. They weren't trying to hit us: they were bracketing us. We were located on three separate small knobs. Corporal Hart, a squad leader, had his men on one knoll. My position was center, and the lieutenant was on the right, slightly forward."

Enemy artillery fire began slamming into the Marine positions. "We got 2,000 rounds in a half hour's time," he recalled. "The barrage started right around nine o'clock one night, and when it quit, this Marine comes running down the hill yelling, 'Gunny...Gunny...' He's been hit and his position has been overrun. Says he pulled his guys



"You can tell that I posed for this picture that was taken of me in Vietnam in 1966 when I was with the Third Marines. I was a major, then. And look! I don't have a stinking magazine in my weapon, right?"

back to secondary positions, but the North Koreans are really giving them hell."

Ski began moving. He latched onto Cpl Arthur G. Barbosa [who would win a Navy Cross] who placed his machine gun overlooking a saddle on the left flank. "I figured Hart had been overrun, and the enemy would probably slide down the hill to hit us next," Ski said. "And then the bugles and horns sounded."

"I told the lieutenant that I'd moved Barbosa's gun. I told him the enemy was coming and I asked what he wanted us to do. Grenades started zinging into our positions, and the lieutenant says, 'Gunny, I don't know what the hell to do. Do what you think is best and tell me where you want me.' That was some smart lieutenant, huh?"

"I had Harris with his heavy machine gun [assigned from Weapons Company], and he started placing his guns. We were definitely organized. Technical Sergeant [Quinton T. Barlow [who won a Navy Cross] went with his men around one side of our hill and I went around the other, and we were catching the North Koreans as they came down the middle."

"From the time the arty started falling and Hart said his position had been overrun, I knew what the hell was going on. It was one hell of

a night," Ski continued. "The moon was out and it was sort of cloudy."

"When the damned clouds covered the moon, the enemy would advance, and when the clouds cleared and the moon shined, they would halt in place and be almost invisible. But we kept them at a distance until our recoilless rifle got hit."

"We had one 60-mm. mortar up there, and I tell the Marine to run his tube up as high as he can without having the rounds tumbling back down on us. He cranks it up and I start dropping rounds. And I tell him to move [traverse] it 90 degrees, and we're spraying the area with mortar rounds. We slam in rounds and move it and slam and move. We had almost 200 mortar rounds up there and we put them to good use that night, let me tell you."

Their radio was knocked out. The Marines were running out of ammo. "Our supply dump was set up between the lieutenant's position and mine, and now we were isolated from each other. I crawl out [between the lines] and pick up a couple of cans of ammo, and on the way back. I get shot in the hip."

"The lieutenant comes out and helps me with the ammo and kind of helps me back. He asks, 'What can I do?' and I say to help the wounded when you can and shoot like hell when you can't, and that's what he did. He did everything right."

"A couple of enemy got into our lines and I figure if there's two there'll soon be 50. I killed one and our corpsman killed the other. And we had this kid, [Cpl Duane Edgar] Dewey who'd been shot in the neck and back. The corpsman was patching him up when a grenade came flying over the hill."

"Dewey pushes the corpsman out of the way and yells, 'I got it in my pocket' and grabs it. Then he rolls over on it, saving the corpsman and a couple of other wounded Marines nearby."

Ski stopped and drew deeply on the cigar. He didn't seem to notice that it had gone out. He exhaled and continued.

"Dewey survived and received the Medal of Honor."

"I keep moving. I figure if I stop, the leg will stiffen up. I guess I'm moving on adrenaline. When the sun comes up, we move to take our positions back again. Reinforcements start coming up the hill. Helicopters come in and take the heavy wounded. Me

and the lieutenant grab a ride in a jeep."

Pulling into the battalion compound, Ski immediately limped to the supply shed and got a clean set of utilities, borrowed a towel, bar of soap, set of skivvies and a razor.

"I go take me a long shower and get all cleaned up," he said, smiling. "I buy a couple of cartons of cigarettes and I see a stash of oranges, so I take a mittful and walk into sick-bay. Corpsmen are running around, going ape and I ask, 'What the hell's going on?' and this doctor answers, 'Where's this Sergeant Ski that's supposed to be coming in here that everybody's talking about?' and I say, 'I'm right here, Doc.'"

"And he says, 'Where the hell you been?' And I say, 'This ain't my first time to get hit. The other two times I came in dirty, and you guys cut off my clothes and patch me up, but you didn't wash me and I stayed dirty for days. This time I got cleaned up before you guys work on me,' and he tells me to get on that stretcher and he points.

"I say, 'Aye, aye sir,' and he thinks I'm a nut case."

After receiving preliminary care at the aid station, Ski was flown out to the hospital ship *Consolation*, where he remained for six weeks. It was there he learned he'd been recommended for the Medal of Honor.

"And I get off the ship and report back to division headquarters. And I'm in a grubby uniform: my boots are scruffy and all the guys there at headquarters are all shiny clean and wearing spitshines. I feel like a bum.

"I'm told the general [Major General John T. Selden, Commanding General, First Marine Division] wants to see me. And I'm heading towards the general's hootch and I run into an old China buddy of mine named Pekela and he says, 'You can't go up to the general's office looking like that' and I say, 'I got no choice,' but he fixes me up with a clean uniform and I wipe off my boots and I continue the march.

"The general hands me a warrant promoting me to meritorious master sergeant, and he says they're sending me home. I say, 'I want to report back to Easy Company. I got no reason to go back to the States,' but he says I got no choice because I'm a potential Medal of Honor winner, and they don't want me killed before receiving that medal.

"OP-3 is a place I'll never forget."

he continued. "We'd gotten our heads and butts handed to us up there, but we killed a locker box full of North Koreans, I'll tell you.

"I come back to the States and report into the Sixth Marines at Camp Lejeune. The Medal of Honor gets knocked down to a Navy Cross and General Randolph McC. Pate presented it to me, and then he asks if I've ever considered taking a commission. Hell, I was a 25-year-old master sergeant and had the world by the fanny on a downhill drag, you know? But I went for it."

During the Vietnam War, he fought to return to combat. Eventually, in 1966, he reported to the 3d Marines as the battalion operations and training officer. Sound safe? Not if you stay with Wawrzyniak.

"It was a great day," he recalled. "We were on this operation and a company finds a whole mess of tunnels and enemy bunkers. Colonel Gary Wilder, the battalion commander, tells me to fly out and see what it would take to blow that place apart. So I call back and say they should send out 1,500 pounds of TNT and a mile of primer cord. The whole 'nine yards.' And we set up a defense and prepare to blow that whole damned place. And as night came on, we could hear drums from a nearby village.



"This picture was made at the Marine Corps Birthday Ball at Cherry Point in 1979. That's my wife, Adaline, and my dad. Adaline and I have been married 38 years and we have five kids. None were Marines. They said, 'Pops, we lived the Corps all our lives, and that's enough.'"

"Dark. We started taking mortars. And I'm counting the rounds that hit . . . 99. . . 100. . . 199. . . 200. . . 299. . . 300! I couldn't figure when it was going to end. Anyway, we didn't get anybody killed, but we have four or five wounded. I got a minor 'ding' [wound]. I call for a medevac because we got one man hit bad.

"It's the middle of the night and I don't want the chopper landing in our defense, so I go out a couple of hundred yards and guide the chopper in with a cigarette lighter.

"It's darker than inside your locker box. I wait outside the wire to guard our rear while the rest of the squad returns to camp. I'm walking back to our lines and this Marine challenges me. I identify myself and he lets me in and asks what the hell I'm doing out there. I tell him and he says, 'Major, with all due respect, you got more brass than brains.' And you know, he was right."

For his Vietnam service, in addition to another two Purple Hearts, he also received two Bronze Star Medals with Combat "Vs." Wawrzyniak would retire later as a lieutenant colonel.

"I tell you what," he said. "The Marine Corps' been awful good to me. I was in 35 years, between the short Navy hitch and my time in the Corps. I got my bachelor's and master's degrees from college and I got a good job.

"But I tell you what. I probably couldn't cut it in today's Marine Corps. If I got into as much trouble today as I did back then, I'd have gotten a bad paper discharge. I was a hard individual to live with, but I've always tried to be fair, be tolerant, and be patient.

"I've seen guys who remember an injustice that happened years ago. They don't forget and they still look for 'paybacks.' That's nonsense.

"I came in at the right time. There were old-timers that I learned a lot from. But you have to be willing to listen. Even after I made staff sergeant, I still listened and learned from gunnies and sergeant majors [sic]. You should never stop learning."

He stopped and stretched. Relighting his cigar, he smiled and said, "Hey, it's gonna be a great day!"

I got the hell out of there. I've never stopped learning either.





Welcome to the Western Front

By Maj Allan C. Bevilacqua, USMC (Ret)

"Cripes, there were mines all over the damn place."

—Cpl Wes Gilliland
"How" Co, 3d Bn, 1st Marines

At 0400 on 25 March 1952, Major General John T. Selden, USMC, Commanding General, First Marine Division, assumed responsibility for carrying out the division's assigned mission: "to organize, occupy and actively defend its sector of Line Jamestown." It would have been understandable had MajGen Selden shaken his head in dismay. Facing him was a task never before thrust upon the commander of a Marine division—to actively defend a front that stretched nearly 35 miles, six times the normal frontage assigned to a division. It was the stuff of which nightmares are made.

Those nightmares began on the division's far left with the Kimpo Peninsula, the long tongue of land bounded by the Yellow Sea and the large island of Kanghwa-do on the west and by the Han River on the north and east. Sticking out like a hitchhiker's thumb, the peninsula was home to a number of critical installations, the most important of which were Kimpo Airfield, the port of Inchon and the sprawling Eighth Army logistics installation known as Ascom (Army Support Command) City.

Beyond these considerations the Kimpo Peninsula posed a serious threat to the 1stMarDiv's left flank. A successful Chinese penetration into the peninsula would turn that flank and with it the left flank of the entire Eighth Army, opening the door to the South Korean capital of Seoul. While the two Chinese armies opposite the 1stMarDiv's sector, the 63d and 65th, had shown no interest in the Kimpo Peninsula, the peninsula's tactical importance was too great for MajGen Selden to ignore. The peninsula would have to be defended.

Unfortunately, the fact that the Kimpo Peninsula would have to be defended did not answer the question of how. To solve that thorny problem, MajGen Selden had to be inventive. In order to provide for the

defense of the peninsula, the Kimpo Provisional Regiment was formed around the nucleus of the 5th Korean Marine Corps (KMC) Battalion, the 1st Armored Amphibian Bn, the 13th Republic of Korea (ROK) Security Bn and one battalion of the 1stMarDiv's reserve regiment. In one sense it was a case of robbing Peter to pay Paul, since the subtraction of one battalion from the division's reserve regiment would detract from the reserve's ability to reinforce or counterattack if needed. The problem of the Kimpo Peninsula quickly demonstrated that MajGen Selden's assets would be thinly stretched.

What would stretch those assets even

Something that would defy any degree of reworking or revising was the matter of the Panmunjom Corridor. Located squarely in the middle of the 1stMarDiv's sector, the corridor led to the village of Panmunjom, the site of the so-called "truce talks," in between friendly and enemy lines. Both the corridor and Panmunjom itself were official no-fire zones that by order of the I Corps commander, Lieutenant General John W. O'Daniel, USA, "could not be fired into, out of, or over." The Panmunjom Corridor and the tactical limitations it imposed would be a constant thorn in the 1stMarDiv's side.

A more painful form of thorn didn't take long to make its presence known at the level where war becomes personal—the division's rifle companies. The sector the division had inherited was littered with mines. The ROK First Division that had previously held the sector had made liberal use of mines, but had been less than meticulous in recording or marking their locations.

Mines serve a useful military purpose. Coupled with fire and observation, mines deny the enemy the use of an area. They impede his progress. They protect friendly areas from attack. The enemy must redirect his movement to avoid minefields or slow his march in order to remove them, leaving himself open to friendly counteraction.

To the man on the receiving end, though, mines are nasty things. They can turn a man's foot into strawberry jam, shred his legs or blow him end over end. Rigged with a tripwire, a mine can riddle a man with fragments from head to foot. Bounding mines, such as the "Bouncing Betty," can detonate at waist height, inflicting damage that no amount of medical care can overcome.

Corporal Charlie Houchin, a Fifth Marine Regiment squad leader, remembered one Marine's encounter with a Bouncing Betty in the early days on the Western Front. "The poor guy was practically cut in half. From the chest up and from the hips down he was recognizable. Everything in between was just a mangled mess of meat and blood and guts. He lived for



Sgts Kenneth R. Snyder and Lucien Parent manned a light machine gun at a Marine outpost in Korea in April 1952.

further was the incredibly long front line that trended off to the east for miles until it reached its junction with the solid rock of the British Commonwealth Division at the Samichon Gang (River). Normal procedure called for the manning of a strong main line of resistance (MLR), with units linked together side by side, and an outpost line of resistance (OPLR) sited on key terrain features forward of that. No matter how MajGen Selden and his Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3 (Operations), Lieutenant Colonel Gordon D. Gayle, juggled the figures they always came out the same. There was too much ground to hold and too few Marines to hold it. The job was going to require a constant reworking and revising that would last for the remainder of the Korean War.

TS/SGT JACK A. SICKBOWER



Leathernecks, who were dug in along a meandering trench line, stood by to support machine-gunners of 1st Marines who laid fires on enemy forces. (Photo by TSgt Jack A. Slackbower)

maybe a minute after we got to him. ... We had to bring him out in two pieces. I never went out on patrol afterwards without thinking about that. When I finally left Korea I wasn't the least damn bit sorry to go." In the 1stMarDiv's first weeks on the Jamestown Line, mines caused 50 percent of the division's casualties.

Mines or no mines the division would carry out its order to "actively" defend its sector of the Jamestown Line. It was not a matter of blindly following orders. Much more than that, it was sound military sense. MajGen Selden had no intention of permitting his division to sit passively in trenches and bunkers while the Chinese roamed the landscape unhindered. Nothing good could come of that.

Immediately upon occupying their positions, the division's forward regiments commenced an aggressive program of combat patrols, mostly at night, with the objective of keeping the Chinese off balance. The Chinese, who had been unnaturally passive while the division moved into position, weren't long in

reacting. As March gave way to April, clashes between friendly and enemy patrols out in the disputed ground became the nightly norm. The sector that had been one of the most somnolent in Korea was fast becoming very "active" indeed.

It soon became evident from their increased probing and patrolling that the Chinese were feeling the Marines out. To the Marines on the outposts and along the M.I.R., falling back on their fractured Japanese, it was a case of *testo-testo*. The Chinese were seeking to find out what these American Marines were made of. From the Chinese standpoint it was a logical undertaking. The Chinese soldiers who could have testified to the fighting qualities of the 1stMarDiv, those who had opposed the division during the Chosin Reservoir campaign and on the Eastern Front, for the most part were dead. Very few of them were left to testify to much of anything.

Chinese activity increased sharply during the first week of April, beginning

with a strong ground attack against the KMC regiment when a Chinese battalion, supported by a 30-minute artillery preparation, slammed into the South Korean lines. An early penetration was sealed off, and the attack was thrown back. The attack set the stage for an almost nightly series of such forays against the KMC regiment and the 1st and 5th Marines. The Marines struck back viciously, often meeting the attackers forward of the OPLR before they could deploy for attack.

It was during the course of one such attack on the night of 8-9 April that Private First Class Robert E. Beatty, a rifleman serving with "Item" Company, 3d Bn, 5th Marines, distinguished himself. Seeing his platoon leader fall mortally wounded, PFC Beatty, despite suffering painful wounds himself, fought forward into the teeth of the enemy fire to recover the fallen officer's body.

Exhausted and weakened by the loss of blood, Beatty carried his dead platoon leader through a hail of small-arms fire to the lee of a hill where he hid the body



Front-line wounded could be whisked away to waiting medical facilities by an aerial ambulance such as this Bell HTL-4 chopper. (Photo by TSgt Jack A. Stockbower)

in a thicket, then made his way back to friendly lines to seek help. As long as Robert Beatty was alive, a dead Marine would not be left on the battlefield.

Once safely within friendly lines, Beatty, concealing his wounds, volunteered to guide a recovery party to complete the job of bringing back the dead lieutenant. Stepping forward to lead the party was the 3d Bn's S-2 (Intelligence), Second Lieutenant George W. Alexander Jr.

With PFC Beatty showing the way, 2dLt Alexander led his seven-man party forward through an intense enemy mortar barrage to the site where Beatty had secreted the dead officer's body. As Beatty, wounded three times now, provided covering fire, Alexander lit into the Chinese attempting to block his route, killing three of them. When one of his men was hit, Alexander attacked the Chinese soldier who was attempting to capture him, shooting the enemy soldier in the face at point-blank range.

For three hours Alexander, Beatty and the small group of Item Co Marines fought off every Chinese attempt to thwart their mission, returning to friendly lines as dawn broke. Only after the other wounded member of the party had been treated would Robert Beatty consent to medical treatment himself. Even then he did it his way. Bleeding from three wounds, Beatty walked 3,000 yards to the battalion aid station. For their courageous actions on the night of 8-9 April 1952, 2dLt Alexander and PFC Beatty each would receive the Navy Cross.

By mid-April, actions such as this were the nightly norm. During the hours of darkness the ground all along the 1stMarDiv's front echoed to the ripping crackle of small-arms fire and the heavier cracks of exploding mines, grenades and shells. It was what 2dLt Bernard E. "Mick" Trainor described as "a small taste of what was to become ugly fighting on the Western Front. It was to be an

outpost war of close combat, drenched with mortar and artillery fire that turned the terrain into a moonscape."

It was as well a small-unit war, an affair of squads, platoons and companies, vicious little actions that did not merit much more than a sentence or two in the division's command diary, but which could leave a man no less dead. It was in one of these hotly contested fire-fights that 2dLt Trainor lost the man who was his trusted subordinate, his mentor and his cherished friend, his platoon sergeant, Gunnery Sergeant Harold Wagner.

Wagner, a seasoned veteran of the war in the Pacific, had taken the raw young officer under his wing and taught him the ropes. Sharing the perils that engulf men who face death side by side, a deep bond of comradeship had grown between the old sergeant and the young lieutenant. Long years afterward, following his retirement, LtGen Trainor revisited the places where he had fought as a young

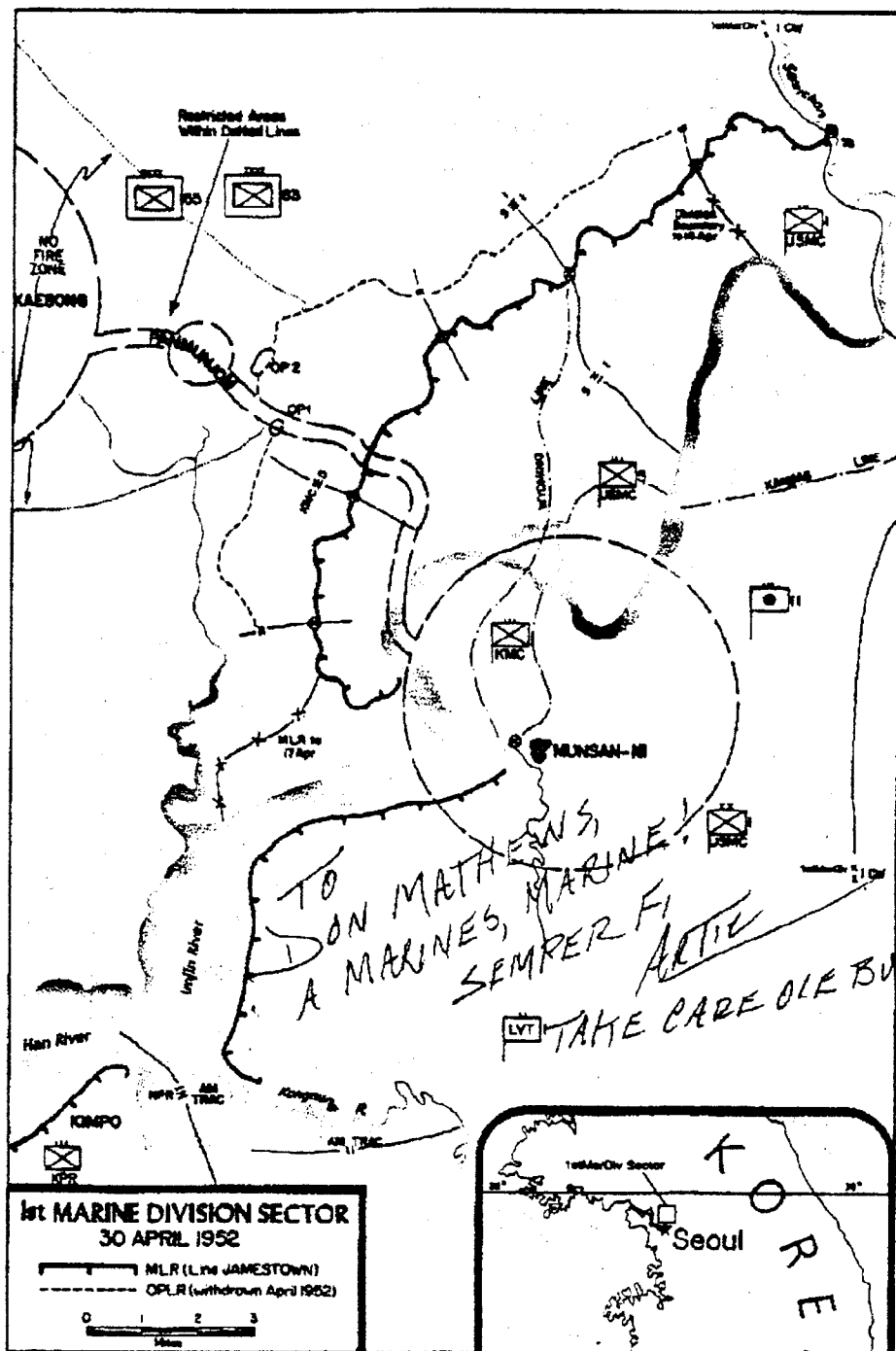
man. On the spot where Harold Wagner had fallen in a blaze of gunfire, LtGen Trainor knew once again the pangs of loss and sorrow he had felt on that long-ago day when he closed Wagner's sightless eyes and bid his friend a last farewell.

The Western Front was indeed going to be one of "close combat." This was vividly illustrated on the night of 15-16 April when the Chinese attempted to eliminate the Marine defenders of a very ordinary 400-foot hill known as Outpost Three (OP-3). Located well forward of the MLR and close to the bothersome Panmunjom Corridor, OP-3 was frequently used as a patrol base. At the end of the second week in April it was defended by a reinforced platoon, the 2d Platoon of Captain Charles C. Matthews' Easy/2/5. In the fighting that followed, that small band of 80 Marines would collect a Medal of Honor, three Navy Crosses, a Silver Star and 36 Purple Hearts.

It all began routinely enough when OP-3 received several rounds of 76 mm artillery fire in midafternoon. There were no casualties among the Marines of the platoon. Later, as dusk began to fall, the hill was the target of four rounds of 120 mm mortar fire. This time one Marine was wounded. No one thought much of it. From time to time during the preceding days the Chinese had dropped a shell or two on or near the Marine positions on the hill. It was just the Chinese way of keeping things from getting dull. At least that was the thinking of the Marines manning the defenses of OP-3. In all the actions thus far the Chinese had never backed up their ground troops with supporting arms. Unknown to the Marines though, this time the Chinese were playing for keeps. The seemingly commonplace Chinese activity was actually registration for the supporting fires of a major attack.

At 2330 on 15 April a green star cluster burst over Hill 67, a Chinese strong point some 1,900 yards to the west of OP-3. A thunderous torrent of 76 mm and 120 mm shells immediately fell upon the defenders of OP-3. The hilltop erupted in a volcanic upheaval of lurid red explosions that lit up the night sky and set the ground to shaking. The Marines of Easy Two could only hunker down in their fighting holes, caught up in the roaring vortex of sound, each man hoping it wasn't his turn just yet.

As any combat veteran can attest, there is no feeling of helplessness so complete as that which accompanies being under constant, roaring shellfire, unable to strike back. Time can stand still, and it did then, as the incoming fire seemed to last



for hours. Actually, the Chinese preparatory fires, as intense as they were, lasted only 20 minutes before another green star cluster above Hill 67 brought an eerie, ear-ringing silence down over OP-3. Five minutes later the fires shifted to the west, and two Chinese battalions threw themselves at OP-3.

One of the Marines standing to meet them was Sergeant Kenneth O'Farrell. Today Ken O'Farrell is retired from 30 years in law enforcement as a police officer in his hometown of Long Beach, Calif., and as a Special Agent with the California Department of Justice. When the Chinese barrage descended upon OP-3, he was section leader of Easy Co's machine guns. It was his habit to spend

a night with one or another of his squads that had been attached to the company's rifle platoons.

"As usual, my timing was bad," O'Farrell reminisced years later, "and I was on OP-3 during the night of 15-16 April. That night we were hit with the most incoming I had ever seen. We were constantly shelled for what seemed like an hour and a half. Then the Chinese hit us with a couple of reinforced battalions.



MajGen John T. Selden, the commanding general of 1stMarDiv, examined a smiling PFC's M1 rifle. The front sight had been shot off in a firefight with North Koreans. Better the sight than the PFC.

MSGT JAMES GALOWAY

We held, and I don't remember seeing anyone who wasn't wounded. We lost a lot of guys that night."

Among those wounded was one of O'Farrell's machine-gunners, Cpl Duane E. Dewey. With one leg ripped by a grenade blast, Dewey was one of several wounded being treated by a corpsman when another Chinese grenade landed in the midst of the group. Knocking the corpsman to the ground, Dewey rolled atop the sputtering grenade, shouting, "I've got it in my hip pocket, Doc!"

Dewey, a retired small-business owner from Iron, Mich., remembered it this way: "I couldn't throw it beyond my people. I thought if I could get it behind my wallet, it would be smothered." The blast that "felt like a mule kicked me" fractured Dewey's hip and tore a deep gash in his side, putting him in hospitals for months. Upon presenting Dewey with the Medal of Honor at a White House ceremony on 12 March 1953, President

Dwight D. Eisenhower told him, "You must have a body of steel."

Dewey wasn't the only member of the machine-gun squad out of action. More and more members of the squad fell wounded, leaving only squad leader Sgt Arthur G. "Artie" Barbosa and one other man unscathed. Taking over the gun himself, Barbosa, with the fierce, battling instincts that had made him a standout Marine Corps boxer, poured fire into the attacking Chinese ranks, stacking them body upon body. Skillfully moving his lone gun from position to position, organizing the resistance of the Marines around him and standing like a rock, Artie Barbosa chopped the Chinese to bits with devastating fire.

Beyond inflicting horrendous casualties upon the Chinese, Barbosa's actions were inspirational to his fellow Marines. From his home in Florida, Easy Co veteran Edgar "Bart" Dauberman remembered Barbosa on that fire-swept hill long

ago. "His action is still in my mind today. He was unbelievable. He was a giant of a Marine." Apparently the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Secretary of the Navy thought likewise. For his epic stand on OP-3, Barbosa was awarded the Navy Cross.

The Chinese were coming in waves, flinging grenades, firing wildly with automatic weapons, determined to overwhelm the small force of Marines clinging to their shell-blasted positions on OP-3. The Chinese had attacked frontally initially, scrabbling up the hillside in the face of determined Marine resistance. Eventually, through sheer weight of numbers, the attack lapped about the sides of the hill until the Marines of Easy Two were packed into a tight perimeter, confronted by swarms of Chinese coming at them from every direction. The attackers were met by the cold, fighting fury of men who refused to be beaten.

Two of those men were exceptional staff noncommissioned officers, GySgt Quinton T. Barlow and GySgt Stanley J. "Stan" Wawrzyniak. Either one was a bit more than the Chinese had bargained for. With the platoon leader down, GySgt Barlow took command, resolutely organizing the defense, directing fire, constantly ranging the firing line to the point of greatest danger in complete disregard for his personal safety. It was Marine leadership at its finest: resolute, stalwart and indomitable, a magnificent display of courage and character in the face of overwhelming numbers.

No less heroic than Barlow was Wawrzyniak, the company gunnery sergeant who had volunteered to accompany Easy Two that night. As the fighting became hand to hand, Marines and Chinese battling each other with bayonets, knives, entrenching tools and bare fists, a portion of the hill's defenders were cut off from the main perimeter. Amid a blazing inferno of fire, Stan Wawrzyniak, a natural-born battler utterly without fear, repeatedly fought his way through the attacking Chinese to lead small groups of cut-off Marines back to the defensive perimeter. Confronted by Chinese each time, he killed them in hand-to-hand fighting. Although painfully wounded, he refused medical treatment and organized his own sector of the perimeter, placing deadly fires on the attackers.

Barlow and Wawrzyniak each would receive the Navy Cross. For Stan Wawrzyniak it would be his second award of the naval service's second highest award for valor in six months.

For more than three hours the fighting raged without letup atop OP-3. Each Chinese onslaught was met by furious

resistance, the outnumbered Marines of Easy Two fighting like men possessed. The Chinese threw assault after assault at them, hammering the Marine lines with small-arms and automatic-weapons fire, grenades, Bangalore torpedoes and shoulder-fired 57 mm recoilless rifles. Marines fell with wounds, rose and returned to the firing line, unwilling to seek shelter while their brother Marines faced the enemy alone. It was Chinese manpower against Marine resolve.

One of those resolute Marines was GySgt James A. Harrington, the section leader of the two attached squads of heavy machine guns from Weapons Co. Moving his guns from one threatened portion of the perimeter to another, placing scything fires on the ranks of charging Chinese, GySgt Harrington ignored the hostile fire, a leader who did his leading from up front. For his steadfast and courageous actions James Harrington would receive the Silver Star.

Suddenly, at 0315 in the early morning hours of 16 April, it was over. The Chinese had thrown everything they had at the small band of defenders on OP-3 only to find that it wasn't enough. Well to the rear of OP-3, friendly intelligence specialists intercepted a Chinese radio message directing the attacking force to withdraw. Every available gun of the division's artillery regiment, 11th Marines, immediately plastered the known escape routes with volley after volley of high-explosive shells, helping the withdrawing Chinese on their way. After a night of carnage OP-3 fell silent.

A sadly forgotten chapter in the "Forgotten War," the defense of OP-3 ranks among the epics of courage pitted against overwhelming numbers. The defenders of OP-3 had stood firm against an enemy force that outnumbered them by almost 20 to one. In doing so they had seen fully half of their number fall dead or wounded. Small wonder then, that the veterans of that night in Korea still think back to that time 50 years ago this month when a "band of brothers" lent new meaning to the old, original refrain of "The Marines' Hymn":

"Admiration of the nation,
We're the finest ever seen,
And we glory in the title
Of United States Marine."

Editor's note: Maj Bevilacqua, a frequent contributor to Leatherneck, is a former enlisted Marine who served in the Korean and Vietnam wars. Later in his career, he was an instructor at Amphibious Warfare School and Command and Staff College, Quantico, Va.

