

immediately up to the front to support the Infantry that were in need of support. Our Recon Platoon, boarded flatcars and headed for the Eastern end of the front, near Pohang-dong. We went through a long tunnel and were on a flatcar right behind the engine. Steam, and smoke, made it very hard to breath. Upon arriving we took a position overlooking a small stream. Seeing no action, we moved back to the main camp. We cleaned the guns, test fired them, and did necessary patrols.

Orders were received to load up on an LST to make a beach landing at Incheon with the Marines. We had the same type Tanks as the Marines, so it was easier to supply our Battalion than the others. Our Recon Platoon, some of the Headquarters, plus "B" Company were on board the LST. The tide at Incheon harbor was a factor. We only had a short time to land the tanks before it went out and left a long mud flat until it came in again. That was very important for a successful landing. General Macarthur proved that he was an experienced, efficient Commander. The landing turned the War in our favor. Our Battalion's previous training at Little Creek Marine Base was about to pay off.

The marines took a small island before we could land. Our tank was near the front of the ship so we were off first. When I drove off there was a concrete seawall that we could not go over. After looking the situation over we followed the wall, until we had an opening. The opening was right at the village of Incheon. We took up a defense near a house, knocking down some picket fence for a field of fire, and remained there until the rest of the unit unloaded . We saw no action there, just happy Koreans parading. The 7th Infantry Division, from Japan, landed when the tide came in. My tank was in front of one of their foxholes. I took my turn on the tank that night and every time I raised up out of the tank the rifleman behind would take a shot at me. He, obviously, was not a very good marksman.

The rest of the 8th Army were moving up from Pusan and we then moved back to Pusan. I was hospitalized for an infection. When I was released from the Hospital I went back to the 73rd Tank Battalion. They were preparing for a move to North Korea. We shipped out and to Hungnam and moved from there to Hamhung. The Marines were moving back from the Chosin Reservoir battle area. We shared Thanksgiving dinner with some of them.

After all the refugees and most of the troops had boarded ships, we loaded our Tanks on a British



ship and watched as the 65th Puerto Rican Regiment set fire to the warehouses. The ship had no heat so we started the tank engines, to keep warm in the sub-zero cold. It was a few days until Christmas. We spent the 1950 Holliday in Pusan. Our time there was very short, mostly spent getting ready for a counter attack, with the 7th Infantry Division, up the center of the peninsula. Our objective was a road junction near Chechon.

The Chinese had infiltrated into the mountain villages so a raiding party was formed, to get rid of a rear area threat. The 73rd Tank Battalion Reconnaissance Platoon, 2 armored vehicles from another anti-aircraft unit, one had a twin 40mm anti- aircraft gun mounted on it and a halftrack had quad-50 caliber machine guns, and rifle company of Korean volunteers formed what became known as Rice's raiders, commanded by Col. Rice from the 7th Infantry Division. If a village had enemy in it, we would surround it, then riflemen would move in, set the buildings on fire, and wait for ammunition to blow up and the enemy to come out. Villagers were warned one day ahead of a raid, so they could move to a safe place. This worked very well and the rear areas were soon fairly safe. Mission completed, we all returned back to our regular unit.

WITH 1st R.O.K. Division

The 73rd Tank Battalion was then assigned to the 1st ROK Division near Seoul. The Chinese started their 1951 Spring offensive and we were assigned to reconnoiter roads on the left flank. On patrol, the Tank I was driving broke through a bridge. We sent a jeep back to get a retriever to pull us out. A Korean rifle Company was moving to the rear and enemy were advancing. We pulled the Tank out just in time and the Engineers were filling holes with land mines as soon as we passed through. That could have been bad news for us.

I was due for rotation, my three year enlistment plus the one year, (Truman) extension ran out, so I risked being captured, as a civilian. I have no idea how the Army would have handled that. After, I went back to Taegu to re-enlist, at 8th Army HQ. One of our Tank crew was killed on that trip. Some trucks coming toward us, on a narrow road, sideswiped our jeep dragging him onto the road. We got him to an aid station where he died. I was in charge so I had to make out a report the next day which was normal procedure for accidents.



Soon after, I was sent to Incheon, for processing, to rotate back to the States. The enemy was advancing. Having turned our weapons in put us in a bad situation. As it turned out, we processed, the enemy advance stopped and we boarded the ship for home. There were troops from several units on board, those that had enough points, or some disability that kept them from duty. I had enough points and was anxious to see my third child who was born on September, 29th, right after the Incheon landing. My wife had named him Curtis James Jr. because it was possible for me to be killed . We arrived at Seattle, Washington and processed at Fort Lewis. There were no bands, only an Army band at the field house. We were glad to be back!!

COLD WAR, 1951:

Our stay at Fort Lewis was short, only long enough to re-assign us and get orders cut. We had 30 days leave time. The train ride was to Chicago where we had at switch trains. Mike McCormick and I went that far together. He went to Georgia. That was the last time I saw him. Dorothy and the family were glad to see me in Plattsburgh, N.Y. It had been a long time since I had seen some of the family. After my leave, I reported to Fort Devins, Massachusetts then Fort Hamilton for re-assignment and processing. I was assigned to be a N.Y. National Guard Instructor at the Brooklyn Armory. I was not familiar with what this duty was.

At the Brooklyn Armory I reported to a warrant Officer that I was to replace. He gave me some of the details and got me a room at a private home in Brooklyn, where he had been staying. The lady that owned it was friendly and glad to have an Army person there. The Army Major, at the Armory, was also very helpful and got me started. I had to make out training reports for the National Guard Bureau in Washington, D.C. and check on the troops when they were training.

Shortly after, we went to Fort Drum for field training. The National Guard has to have this annually. This training lasted for 2 weeks. The vehicles used were from Troy Arsenal so we had to turn them in to the Arsenal, after the training. When I returned to Brooklyn I decided to apply for a transfer to the 278th Infantry Regiment stationed at Fort Drum. At Fort Drum I could have my wife and children there and rent a place to live in Watertown, N.Y. My brother, who was living there, could help me locate a place to live. The transfer went through and I was assigned to Tank Company, 278th Infantry.



Some of the troops were Korean War veterans so I fit right in and assigned as a tank commander. During part of the winter, 1951-52, A ski Company was formed and I was assigned to train in winter warfare. Our instructor was a Major who had served in the Finland, German and now the US Army. We learned how to ski and winter tactics in a cold climate. The major had fought the Russians so he was well aware of their tactics. I had learned to ski so it was easier for me to learn than the troop's from the South. Tactics were different, because of the frozen ground and snow. We finished that training and returned to our regular duties. Our 4th child, Donna, was born on March 24th, 1952 in Watertown, N.Y. Hospital. There was no Base Hospital at Fort Drum.

We were scheduled to go on winter Maneuvers, against the 82nd Airborne Division, as aggressor forces. The 82nd was not used to cold weather. We would catch them every morning in their sleeping bags. It was excellent training for them. The Tanks we used were old obsolete M-4s. In the spring we got new M-47 Tanks. Then we went to Little Creek, VA. for amphibious training, my 2nd time there. We spent most of 1952 in field training. I decided to take classes, try to pass a GED, and get my High School Diploma. I completed the tests and passed. I was at Fort Drum until January, 1953. The 278th Regiment had one Battalion in Iceland. I was due to rotate and given a choice of one year in Iceland, or Germany for three. I chose Germany and sailed the last week of December 1952, without family. Our ship arrived at the port of Bremen a few days later, January, 1953.

GERMANY – 1953-56

Germany was still under the control of the US, Britain and Russia. They didn't get their sovereignty back until 1954. I was briefed on the regulations and quarantined to camp in Bremen until I got orders and assigned to my new unit. After a couple of days, I got my assignment and boarded a train to Bad Kissingen, Germany to join the 2nd Battalion, 14th Armored Cavalry. The Headquarters for the 14th was at Fulda, Germany, near the border with East Germany, which was under Russian control. The 14th had the mission of securing the border from Bad Hersfeld to Bad Kissingen in the South. Each Battalion had their area to patrol. The barracks were very neat and we kept them clean each day.

The Regimental commander was Colonel Raymond W. Curtis, a very strict and proven leader. The 2nd Bn. commander was Col. Reynolds, also a very respected leader. The Officers in command near the



border had to be the best to earn the respect of the German people and Russians. This was, without a doubt, the most disciplined unit I had ever been in since joining the Army. This helps to increase esprit de corps and Morale in the troops. If I had any choice of any unit to serve with it would have been the 14th Armored Cavalry. We had a few bad troopers, but soon corrected them or got them out. They usually saw that it was better to straighten out. We had to be ready to move out at any time, day or night, in case the Russians decided to cross the border. Our equipment and Tanks were Combat ready. We had practice alerts at unscheduled times of night or day and had 6 minutes to mount our tanks to move out to our alert area near the border. We were not confined to a reservation, for training, but could enjoy the beautiful countryside, as we rode our Tanks through the winding roads and villages.

I had a high AGCT test score on my records so I was chosen to attend the 7th Army Tank Leaders course at Vilseck. This consisted of Officers as well as Enlisted ranks. I completed school 2nd in the class and also won the Military Stakes competition, which was a very tough test of skill and physical endurance. I am proud of that trophy.

I returned to my Company and was promoted to Sergeant First Class a short time later. The 14th Cavalry Headquarters in Fulda needed a Tank instructor at the N. C. O. Academy. I was ordered to report there and was appointed chief Tank Instructor. That was my position until the school closed. I returned to my Company as a Tank Commander and gave a lot of classes to our Tankers. I was on the Battalion pistol team, Umpire on maneuvers for another unit, and also represented our Company on the board of Governors at the Non Commissioned Officers Club. I enjoyed doing it. I also had to train my Tank crew.

In January 1956, I rotated back to the States and was assigned to a basic training unit. I really hated that duty and requested a transfer to the 714th Tank Battalion which was going to Germany. This time my family could go. My wife, pregnant for our 5th child was allowed to go anyway. I was glad to return to Germany. This time we were at Schweinfurt, and the families had all new quarters. It was still close to the border. We did not do border patrol. The spouses had to learn the evacuation route, in case of conflict, every year. They also had to keep an emergency supply packed, for 3 days, in the front closet. Dorothy didn't drive, so we arranged with another family to take her and the children with them if they



needed to evacuate. On June 26th, 1957 our 5th child, David was born in Wurzburg Hospital. I took a few days off until Dorothy was able to take care of the family. When she recovered, I hired a maid to help. We did mostly routine training and ran the tank firing ranges at Belson in 1958 for the Army. On March 3rd, 1959 our 6th child, Harry, was born at Wurzburg Army hospital.

FORT HOOD ,TEXAS

November, 1959, we rotated back to the US .I purchased an Opel car and had it shipped to have when we got to New York. I had a 30 day leave at home before reporting to Fort Hood, Texas. We arrived at Fort Hood the first week of December, 1959. They had no quarters, on base, for my family. I rented a house in Gatesville, about 40 miles from my unit so, as soon as possible, I bought a mobile home and moved to Killeen which was close to camp. On the 11th of December 1961, my wife gave birth to twin girls, Carla and Carmen, at the base Hospital. I became a Catholic, at the local Church in Harker Heights, near Killeen. My first assignment was giving basic to new recruits, which I hated, so I signed up for Officers classes from the Infantry school, Ft. Benning, GA., correspondent courses, to be a 2nd Lieutenant in the Infantry. I also attended the 2nd Armored Division NCO school where I graduated 2nd Place Honor Student. I talked to the Colonel, and got transferred to "D" company, an advanced training Company which was much better for me. I gave a lot of classes. I was responsible for our platoon being rated 3rd in the 2nd Armored Division , Platoon tests. I took command during an attack on a hill during that test because the assigned platoon Sergeant was not familiar with how to call for, or adjust, heavy Artillery support. I learned this from Cannon Company in World War 2 when I was a crew member in Cannon Company, 103rd Inf. Regt., 43rd Inf. Div., on an Artillery gun.

I became a Platoon Sergeant soon after. I could not get a promotion to E-7 because promotions in my Military Occupation Specialty were frozen at that time. I was doing very well with my Officers Course but the School changed some classes and I would have to take extra classes to complete the course. I was close to the maximum age limit, as a Lt. Officer, so I dropped the course. I decided to retire from the Army. I applied to retire on November 30th, 1963.

In September, the 2nd Armored Division went to Germany for a training exercise. I was in charge of "B Company rear as First Sergeant. This made it hard to clear the post, with my family, prior to



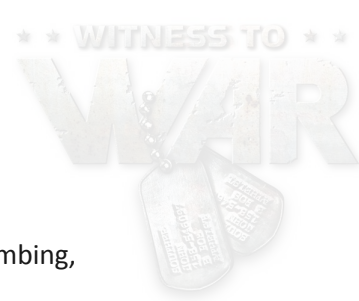
retiring. I had to take care of duty rosters, morning reports and one soldier had reported back from AWOL He had to be confined for Military Police. Most of the personnel were due for release so we started to run out of troops to perform the necessary duties, but by joining forces with another unit, with the same problem, I managed to keep everything operating until the main body of the Division returned. I hurried through clearing for retirement and on the 1st of December, 1963 I retired from the U.S. Army at Fort Hood, Texas, with honor. We had a parade ceremony and all of the retirees were presented their retirement certificates. My family watched the parade from the bleachers.

CIVILIAN AGAIN:

I had traded my Opel in for a 1961 Ford Station Wagon. This gave us more room on our trip home. Dorothy had purchased a house at 29 South Peru St. in Plattsburgh, N.Y., while I was in Germany the first time, so we had a place to live when I retired. An airman from the airbase was renting it and was moving out so it worked out fine.

My Army retirement was not nearly enough to support my family. Most of The jobs available were not something I could do, so I found a job pumping gas at the Airbase. This gave me time to look for a better job and put food on the table. The house was not large enough so, in 1964, I bought a house in Peasleeville, NY. My family loved it there. The house needed some repair. I did that on weekends. I quit working at the service station and went to work 'as a door to door salesman, selling roofing and siding. I quit that job and worked selling for Fuller Brush Company. It also required walking, door to door, so I kept looking and finally found employment at Pratt-Whitney in North Haven, Connecticut. They made parts for military aircraft engines. I would drive home on weekends and repair the old house. I rented a room at a private home in Wallingford, Connecticut during the week. I also took a course in writing while there on the GI bill, but my time ran out before I finished the course, so I did not graduate. Our last child, John, was born May 11th,1966. This completed our family. The work at Pratt Whitney was good but my wife was going blind and needed eye surgery, which would take a long time to recover. It forced me to find a job closer to home to be with the family.

A private employment agent got me a job as ambulance driver at the local Hospital as Ambulance driver. I drove and did other work for a year, then transferred to the powerhouse as a steam boiler



operator/handyman. I went to school at BOCES a local training center to learn heating and Plumbing, which the Hospital paid for. I was also taking welding training at Peru Central school. I worked at the Hospital until March 1974. I was terminated at the Hospital and started to work for Forrence orchard in Peru, N.Y. My wife was recovering from her eye surgery and was doing fine. The Job at Forrence Orchards was manual labor but I liked it. I was doing many different things, pruning trees, repairing tractors and machines, sprayers , mowers, trailers. I hauled the apples, during harvest, to storage.

I was taking a course in Auto Mechanics so that helped by giving me hands on experience. Pay is very low, minimum, for farm labor.. I worked there until my Son, Curtis Jr., who was in Chicago, got me a job as security guard at Kirby private investigators . Once again, I left my family and lived with my two older sons. My family joined me later and we lived in Chicago for a year. I never liked living in a city, especially with children.

I got a call from an old Army buddy, Bennie E. Rondeau. We had kept in contact with him many years. He lived in Jefferson City, Missouri, and worked at the State Prison. He said that he could get me employed at the Prison. Having studied Law Enforcement at a Chicago University, while at Kirby's, it was something I was trained for and I trusted my old friend. I did not like bringing my children up in Chicago. I went to his house that week end, to get more details. He gave me a good idea of the work and benefits so I decided to give it a try, if I could pass the test they gave to new Corrections Officers. I passed, which included range firing with all the weapons. I then had a 90 day trial. Later on I rented a mobile home and moved my family from Chicago. Dorothy was happy to leave there. I was trained on several jobs during my trial period. They decided that I would be better qualified to be at the Power Plant, because of previous experience. I went to work on night shift, 12PM to 8 AM. I had charge of 3 or 4 Inmates to keep the, high pressure, steam boilers operating. I bought a nice home in Russellville, a few miles West of Jefferson City, and we settled there.

I was elected as Alderman of the West Ward. Our children only lived a short distance from school. The older children were all married so there was only the twin's and John living at home. The people in Russellville treated us like we had always lived there and were very friendly, unlike Chicago. I helped make a swimming pool behind the school, which was a community project. After working at the Prison



for three years I left there and found a job on night shift at Lincoln University, doing the same work. It was not as dangerous as the prison. The power plant was supervised by a person that had been in the 82nd Div. when we maneuvered against them at Camp Drum, NY.in 1952. I enjoyed working there.

Moved to New Hampshire

I left Missouri In 1983 and moved to New Hampshire and started employment at Terradyne Inc. They made parts for Computers. Dorothy stayed in Missouri, until our house there was sold, then she moved to New Hampshire. Terradyne was probably the best job I ever had. The working conditions, bosses, pay and other employees were great. I worked nights on several different machines, punch press, drill press, bending machine and other jobs as a machine operator. I took a blueprint reading course, sponsored by the company. I worked there until I retired on April 1st, 1986. I had saved some money and with my Army retirement, Social security and 2 houses I owned I felt that it was time for me to retire and enjoy my remaining years doing whatever I chose to do. We moved back to our old house, in Peasleeville, N.Y, Which had been empty for 10 years.

RETIRED LIFE:

There were many things that I had wanted to do during my working years and now I had to decide which one had priority. I joined several military organizations as a start. I volunteered to work in the office for the American Military Retirees Association, located on Clinton Street, Plattsburgh, NY, each Wednesday. I also served on the Board of Governors at the American Legion, Post 20. I started raising vegetables in the home garden. All the old barns were torn down. I cleared up the area for a garden. The house had been empty about 10 years so repair work had to be done. This kept me busy for a long time. I went to some reunions as a member of the 43rd Division Association. I, later, joined a group to try and keep the Airbase open and manned the office for the group ,one day a week. I was Chaplain for 2 years at AMRA Chapter 2-1, took census for the local Catholic Church, and was Vice president for two terms at Chapter 2-1 also. I finally ended up President of 2-1 for two terms and elected to the AMRA National board of Directors twice. I served on 3 committees and was appointed chairman of the "disciplinary manual" committee.



In 1995 I decided to find old friends I had served with in Korea with the 73rd Heavy Tank Battalion. I went to a 7th Infantry Division reunion in Knoxville, KY, as they had informed me they had members from the 73rd. I was sad to see only 3 from the 73rd. Those 3 and I talked about forming our own Tank Battalion organization but no one was willing to start it. I contacted a CSM from the 73rd Armor, Third Battalion, assigned to the 82nd ABN Division, at Ft. Bragg, NC. He was in training and would work on it as soon as possible. He later informed me that the 73rd would be deactivated in 1997. I decided to try Vets Inc. from the Legion Magazine. They were getting reunions started for small and suggested a reunion at Breckenridge Hotel in Louisville, KY for our first meeting. We had to have 10 members for a group rate. I put a notice in the VFW Magazine, reunion column, so former members could contact me. We scheduled the first reunion for May, 1997. By that time our membership reached 34 and 18 came to the first reunion. It went very well and we formed plans for another one in 1998 at the same place. My plan had worked and the Organization membership was still growing.

I have been President of the 73rd Tankers Association until 2013. We had 18 reunions at several different locations and found over 400 former members. Some have passed away but we are still active. I am confident the new President, Bob Jones, will carry on with our traditions and motto, HONOR-FIDELITY-COURAGE.

END OF MY STORY

Life has been good to me, I am now 90 years old. I have had a few health problems, surgery and heart attack. I will now complete these memories. I did not go into detail as that would have taken entirely too long and probably never would have finished. I hope anyone reading this gets a benefit from it. (OLD SAYING): "You can take the boy away from the farm but you can't take the farm away from the boy". That saying can be related to the Military as well. I really miss the bugle calls, the boots marching in cadence, the pride of being a part of it all. I just plain loved Army life! I never seem to fit into civilian life very well but have managed to do some good. I have pride in my family and that is, in itself, a gratifying life experience. My children grew up and have their own families. The hard part is that Dorothy is in a Skilled Nursing Facility and it is difficult for me to see her as often as I would like. She has been a faithful wife and wonderful inspiration to me over the years. GOD Bless her!!



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