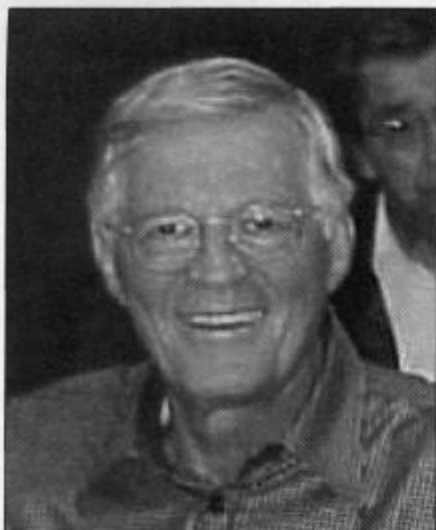




DALE KING

King was assigned to the 29th Car Company. He was taken prisoner of war on April 25th, 1951, and was exchanged on August 29th, 1953.

Would you please tell us about your experience?

The question that most people ask an ex-prisoner of war is "How were you captured?" I'll get to that later, but I'll start by saying that I enlisted in the service in 1948. I was enrolled in college but then changed my mind. I was kind of wild so I joined the Army. After basic training they sent me to a mechanic's school and from there I was assigned to the 29th Car Company in Fort Shafter on the Island of Oahu, Hawaii as a driver for the Surgeon General. There were a lot of people that came to Hawaii by boat those days. One of my jobs was to chauffeur his friends around the island. I have been around that island of Oahu many of times. I even got to dance with Shirley Temple at a party the General had for her. She was about 21 at the time. She was wonderful. She came out on her own, on the porch, and asked each of the servicemen to dance with her. Once the war started to look eminent, I was transferred out of the 29th Car Company to the 5th Regimental Combat Team in Schofield, Barracks, in Oahu, Hawaii. I was assigned as a battery clerk because one of my talents was typing. They took me in as a battery clerk for Battery B in the 555th Field Artillery battalion. I was not in Schofield very long because the war began very shortly after that. Within a week or less once we heard about the war, we boarded the ship for Korea. Once we got to Korea, we were supposed to land in one place and could not because the battle perimeter had gotten so small. There was only one place to land and that was Pusan. I do not want to knock Korea, but you could smell it when you are close to land. There is a horrendous odor in the summer time because of their method of fertilizing their crops, for recycling, whatever you want to call it. We went to the perimeter as an artillery group supporting the soldiers who are in the infantry. The artillery has what is called "forward observers" that go with the infantry and try to get to a position where they can see a large area and can identify what targets can be hit by artillery. We had a range of six and a half miles with our guns, not very long by today's standards. Being a forward observer is also a very dangerous job. The enemy always looks for the forward observers for the same reason we watch for them. We lost at least two or three of our batteries of forward observers. One in each one, but over time they were replaced. Our unit helped the breaking out of what was called the "Pusan Perimeter." We were heading north for a big trip when we were hit real bad, and our battalion headquarters of the 555th battalion was hit pretty badly by shells, and the commanding officer of the regiment was killed. We re-grouped and kept on going. I had a hernia develop, and I had to go to a MASH unit in Korea, same as you see on TV. They operate the same way too; it's the same, except for the girls. So they gave me a quick and dirty hernia repair job, which has since been repaired. I was then sent back to Japan for one month to recover.

What happened after you recovered from your hernia?

Our troops were moving very rapidly to the North and when I tried to rejoin my outfit, once again, we were supposed to land up close to the 38th parallel on the West side of Korea, but it was too dangerous because the Chinese were already moving fast from the north. We had to go back to Pusan to land. I had a very long trip to join my outfit. We stayed in Korean huts and no one knew what they were doing quite frankly. Everybody had lice like mad because we were living in Korean houses. The lice were very, very bad. We would go to bed at night and dump some DDT inside our sleeping bags, and it would cut back on the number of lice. But it was not a healthy thing to do by any means. Finally, I arrived back with my unit. They were moving south because the Chinese were right on their tail. With only about a month, my job changed because we had lost some people in the gun sections. I then became a gun section chief of a seven person team, part of four gun sections. We fired all night long, harassing fighters in enemy areas, just so they'd know we were there.

"We would go to bed at night and dump some DDT inside our sleeping bags, and it would cut back on the number of lice. But it was not a healthy thing to do by any means."

At a time when the Chinese were moving very rapidly, our infantry got into trouble because the number of enemy that were behind the infantry was infiltrating very heavily. The 5th RCT headquarters asked us to stand and not move, even though ordinarily it was time for us to get up and get the heck out of there. The infantry started joining us and we tried to give as many as we could rides out on our trucks. We finally got what was CSMO, which means close station march order (let's get out of here).

The Chinese were pretty much all around us, and we only moved a short distance up the road before the vehicles got knocked off and we became immobile. At that time we started shooting our howitzers point blank at the hills around us, which is not a real effective thing to do. First of all, the shells have to travel a certain distance before the missile arms itself enabling it to explode. Some of the hills were too close and they never exploded. My gun section was hit by a mortar round right between the trails of the cannon. My gunner was killed instantly by a mortar round. I was right in front of him and the shrapnel went through him and into me. At that point our gun was inoperable so we took off to the front of the convoy. We tried to fire at the Chinese running across the road in front of us. It started getting dark and ammunition trucks blew up with all their shells on them. It was an eerie sight. Thirteen of us found a low spot where the shell explosions couldn't get us. The Senior Officer, a second lieutenant from the infantry,

joined us. He had a radio. Because the Chinese were all around, he asked for some support. Then a marine plane came, armed with 50 caliber machine guns. On its first pass, the lieutenant got it through both legs. That kind of took him out but he lived and was picked up by the Americans.

Is that when you were captured?

We were surrounded by maybe 200 Chinese soldiers with machine guns, and the circle got smaller. While a lot of us were ready to jump up and fire at them, the lieutenant said, "Don't fire." Well, he was a smart man because there was no way that



King outside his barracks.

"We were surrounded by maybe 200 Chinese soldiers with machine guns, and the circle got smaller."

we would have lived. At that point, which is after all the trucks had blown up, we were marched up to a hillside and the Chinese soldiers took away all of our valuables. They took my new wristwatch and my dog tags, too. We camped out on the hillside that night and the next day. After that we started marching north at nighttime. They did not want us to be seen by the American airplanes, because the American airplanes would know it was Americans with Chinese. So they always marched us at night, we marched about 20 miles a night to a camp that was in the middle of North Korea, a camp called Bean Camp, or Mining Camp.

What happened at the POW camp?

We received indoctrinations on a daily basis about how good the Communist system was and how bad Americans are, like the greed of Americans. Two people tried escaping from that particular place. Well actually, that is not the correct way to put it. Two of the prisoners were badly injured and the Chinese were going to let them go by taking them to a place as close to the lines as possible. But the Americans didn't advance so the Chinese came back the next day to take them some food. Then the prisoners overpowered the Chinese and shot them, but they never got back to the American side. They were both caught and brought back to the POW camp, had a trial, and were shot. We were marched from that camp to Camp 1 on the Yalu River, which took about three weeks to walk it off, always at night.

What about water and food?

Not much food, no good water. Everyone drank out of the streams, or what they thought were streams. Actually some were the outlets from the rice patties, and there was a lot of dysentery that developed. Dysentery was the number one killer by far. Approximately one third of the prisoners who died, died of dysentery. At least the ones that were taken prisoner in 1951 or earlier, the later ones were exchanged. The earlier ones all had problems with dysentery. It wasn't so bad until I arrived at Camp One where a large percentage ended up dying. Camp One, which was a general camp for all ranks. We received anti-capitalism schooling daily. I eventually became extremely ill from dysentery and was taken to a "hospital" which was a room in a Korean hut.

How did you survive the dysentery?

I was really ready to cash it in because of my dysentery. Everyday they came to look around at your specimen to see if your dysentery was getting better. Your diet depended on how good your specimen looked. Mine was not very good so they kept me on what was called the water diet. I was afraid that I wouldn't make it if I didn't get some food. Then I saw this African American come out of the outhouse, his arm had been shot off. I thought, "he doesn't look like he has dysentery". I went and looked at his stool and it looked pretty good to me. I got two sticks and fished it out and put it in my container. I got upgraded to a soft diet from the water diet and that contributed to my survival. It pays to be humble.



King manning his gun.



King leaving Korea.

Were you treated well, or were you beaten?

They call it the "lenient treatment policy," but there was no lenient treatment. True there were few beatings, but in terms of food and medical care, none existed. Most of our food was consisted of cracked corn and millet. When we finally got some rice, it was frequently sour and if we didn't eat it all they'd put it in the next batch. We all agreed then between ourselves to take large portions so we could get rid of it and bury it. Well if they caught us they would cut back our rations because we were wasting food.

Anyway, Camp One was a mix of ranks. There was another Wisconsin man and his friend who asked me if I would go along with them on an escape. I said that I wasn't healthy enough. They were healthier than me and I would be drag. They got all the way to the Coast from the middle of the northern border of Korea. That was amazing. They were then brought back and put in solitary. They didn't physically abuse them though. Unfortunately for this young married man we hear stories, loosely put here, when he got back from Korea after three years, his wife presented him with a two-year-old baby. He became an alcoholic. I used to see him once in a while. He'd come up to my house.

When were you taken prisoner of war?

I was taken prisoner April 25th, 1951.

Did the military have a formal system for mailing or communication?

No, at first the Koreans did not even provide the prisoners' names. I did receive a letter from my mom and she wrote the letter as if she knew I was alive. I didn't know how she knew I was alive. Actually, she didn't know, she just wrote it like she knew I was. It was because someone else in my unit, not a POW, who was let go by the Chinese, had heard I was taken prisoner and he told my mother. He actually wrote to my mom telling her he had heard I was prisoner, so that's why she wrote to me. My parents found out a long time later about me being prisoner, thanks to this man.

"They call it the 'lenient treatment policy,' but there was no lenient treatment.

True there were few beatings, but in terms of food and medical care, none existed."

The Red Cross was not allowed in until the prisoner exchange began. We had no packages and very little mail. If you wanted to send a letter you had to put on the upper left-hand corner of your envelope that this was being sent by the Chinese Committee for World Peace and against American Aggression. You had to say that and send it to your home country if you wanted it to be sent. Most of us caved in and said that we'd do it just so we could tell them we were okay, otherwise you couldn't write.

Did the United States give your family any word?

They knew I was missing in action. It is funny because they actually had me down as being prisoner from the 24th of April, and I said 'no,' the 25th. I was taken prisoner after midnight, that I know. So they give me an extra day of being a prisoner. Officers were always kept in a separate place. Then the Chinese decided that there was too much organizing between the sergeants and the lower ranks. So, all the

sergeants were taken out to Camp Four. That was also on the Yalu River. It was the northernmost of the camps. It got to be quite cool there, 30 or 40 below. We were not clothed properly either. They didn't have any shoes for anyone who had a size 12 for instance, so you had to cut out the toes of the tennis shoes they would give you. You would freeze your toes, it was just not right.

Who did you pick for your bunkmate?

I was fortunate because I picked out the guy who was the biggest and fattest. He was hairy, and back then he wasn't fat but he was the best I could do. He and I kept each other warm; we huddled pretty close. The Chinese would only give us one blanket for two people, and what we would do is we would throw clothes underneath us to lay on and then throw the left over clothes on top of us to keep warm. We see each other every year.

"They had guards around but the problem escaping was knowing where you were going and where to find food. In the winter you'd be dead in one day because you could never stay warm enough. You'd have to escape in the summer time and because there are only oriental people up there, if you're seen, you're caught."

What were the camps like?

The first camp consisted of all Koreans' houses. The Chinese soldiers would make them move out.

Did they have guards around?

They had guards around but the problem escaping was knowing where were you were going and where to find food. In the winter you'd be dead in one day because you could never stay warm enough. You'd have to escape in the summer time and because there are only oriental people up there, if you're seen, you're caught. There just was no way. You'd have to run at night in an area you don't know without any maps and hope you're heading in the right direction when the moon comes up and never be seen during the two hundred mile journey.

Before you went to Korea, were you given a good sense of Korea's geography? Was it part of what you were told?

No we were not. We knew the Yalu River because it was next to us. But it sometimes went in different directions. Once out of camp, you could only tell which direction when the sun is coming up or going down.

Before you left you weren't given a good sense of what the country looks like?

No. We didn't know anything about that country. We started in this little perimeter in Pusan. We pushed the Koreans all the way up to the river but the Chinese joined in the fray and moved us back down again to just below the 38th parallel. Again we pushed back north of the 38th parallel. The units, when they marched north and went over the 38th parallel, we were quite cocky. For instance, the 5th Regimental Combat Team had a sign up there at the 38th parallel that said, "You are now crossing the 38th parallel courtesy of the 5th Regimental Combat Team." When we marched back north as prisoners, that sign was on the same road we had to use.



King playing poker.

We were not so cocky. The Korean War had the highest fatality rate of any war and the highest percentage of wounded. The survival rate of the Korean War prisoners was the lowest of any of the wars. Approximately 35% died in the camps.

How long were you in Korea before you became a Prisoner of War?

Almost a year exactly.

How many people do you think were with you when you first became a POW?

The first group was thirteen. More joined us later.

Did you get more at each camp you went to?

Yes, there were groups being added as we headed north. There were a few people from my unit. I thought that my entire unit had been wiped out behind me only to find out that some of them had found another road through the mountains and got out. I thought this was terrible because such a large number of people had been killed, all those people that I knew, but it didn't turn out that way. The majority of them got out. I didn't know that for a long time. I thought they were all gone.

If you had to walk at night, what did you do during the day?

We had to go to classes. We had to gather wood for the winter from the hills and bring it down. We built stone walls, which were useless. We rested and pondered what was in store for us.



King on the day he was released.

Were any of the people at the POW camp nice to you?

In the interrogation, which we had to go through quite often, they would offer you a cigarette. I'd swap my cigarette and my tobacco ration for sugar because I wanted sugar. When they interrogated us, they offered a cigarette always and they would ask questions about your family. Then they'd start saying, "Why do Americans lie so much? You say you have cars. Why do you lie so much?" They had no realization that it was possible for an American to have a car. Cars were non-existent where they came from. The chief muck in their town might have one but they thought everything we said was lies. It was unbelievable as to how ignorant these people were of how we lived and the structure of our government. In North Korea, nobody's elected to anything; they're all selected by the Party.

Do you think that they were never in the United States and they just didn't know?

There were some people who learned English in Hong Kong. There was one Lieutenant and because he was so stupid, he was kind of a friend in a way. We called him Louie because he was a Lieutenant. One of our friends, Patch, was unloading boats with food intended for the Chinese. They had tomatoes. Patch decided to put a few in his pocket. Unfortunately, Louis saw him take the tomatoes. Louis came over yelling at him in Chinese because he couldn't speak English and Patch said, "Okay Dick Tracy, you caught me." The amount of humor that existed in the camp is amazing. Patch took everybody's money in the camp playing cards. He was a hell of a card player. We all went home without a cent. We played a

lot of cards and checkers. There were a couple guys who made a guitar and a bass fiddle out of scrap wood. This one fellow I met in camp had a father who owned a foundry. He was taking every bit of scrap metal he would find and some charcoal and super heat the metal to make things. He used sand and a little oil. He could duplicate spoons so we all had brass spoons that he made. He could make other things, too. The Chinese could not believe what he could do. When they needed products, they would ask him if he would do some for them because he could copy whatever they had. They thought this was unbelievable being in the middle of nowhere and this guy could have this production shop.

"I was exchanged back on August 29th of 1953. I had been a prisoner for two years, four months and four days."

How often do you get together?

Once a year.

Is it all in different spots?

No. It is at the same spot every year. This is the group that survived in camp. We had better water and better food during the last year, so we survived.

Had Korea signed the Geneva Convention or did they not obey it?

I doubt they signed it. North Korea was a country divided that was being run by the Russians up until the war.

How were you exchanged back and when?

I was exchanged back on August 29th of 1953. I had been a prisoner for two years, four months and four days.

How big was a portion of the food you got?

We got fed twice a day and we didn't get fed a whole lot. We were fed cracked corn and millet for the first year and primarily rice after that.

What happened when you were exchanged? Was it like okay get up you're going home?

Initially we were trucked to an area close to the exchange area and put into tents. We were there about a month before repatriation.

How were you chosen?

I wasn't one of the first, I know that, nor one of the last. I don't know how the order was determined.

Did they call your name while you were standing in line in the morning?

Yes, and then those called out would go to the demarkation area and get into a truck.

As far as education, did they send you or did you go on your own to college?

The Veterans Administration paid for my tuition. I got \$220 a month. I was also working part time. I was married right after I started at the University. I had two children by the time I left school.

Did you ever have dreams?

No, except for dreams of food. I was asked to go to Officer Candidate School just before my capture.



Korean food given to King: rice, mullets, and his POW bowl.

Especially with so little communication with what's going on in the war, we didn't know anything about what was going on. The only news we had was when any recent prisoner would come in. We didn't know that we were going to be exchanged until they called a meeting and told us. While they were negotiating the peace treaty, they sent back and exchanged the sickest people. They probably sent back from our camp 10 or 20 people. One of the reasons we knew they made it back was that shortly thereafter, they bombed the holy hell out of a munitions storage area right next to our camp. Somebody from that group went back and said hey, there's a big supply depot right there. The Chinese got all mad about the bombing and called a meeting and said how many Chinese were killed, how many dogs were killed, and, lastly, how many Koreans were killed in that raid. Koreans were the dirt of the earth to the Chinese. Koreans were less than dogs. That's why they talked about how many dogs were killed. It's very peculiar the relationship between Koreans and Chinese. The Koreans could have possibly have been wiped out without Chinese help, but there was no great love there.

What happened once they called your name?

They transported you down by truck to the 38th parallel. The truck that brought us down was a Chinese truck. On the road going down coming in the other direction were the Chinese and Korean soldiers that were exchanged. There were a lot more of them than there were of us. They were in better shape, too.

How many would go down at a time?

Probably a hundred a day. When we got off the Chinese truck, a colonel shook hands with us and welcomed us back. But the funny part was, all the Chinese and Korean soldiers took all the nice boots and clothes we had given them on the way back to their side and threw them on the road.

Why?

To show their disdain for us and for our American clothing. They were so lucky to have such good clothing. We were so poorly clothed for the cold conditions. More than one of us took off their boots and their toes came in them. There was a lot of frostbite. It was cold.

Were there people who didn't know what to do about the cold?

There was nothing anyone could do except try to find a dying man who had good boots that would fit.

Well that didn't look as good as getting out of the military by then. A lot of my friends stayed in the military. Some went to Vietnam after that. We had people who were prisoners in WWII. One marine sergeant had also been a prisoner of war in WWII. He was the toughest guy I've ever met. Picture this, sentry standing there with his rifle, out in front at parade rest, and the marine comes along with his corn-cob pipe and taps his ashes into the gun of the sentry. The Chinese soldier was so mad. The marine was gutsy.

Did you ever think about getting out of there?

You can't help but think it because it's a long time.

"Koreans were the dirt of the earth to the Chinese. Koreans were less than dogs."

"No, I'm normal. All the surviving POWs from my camp have a very dry sense of humor, teasing and jabbing a lot. Humor can be a way through tough times."

We had a Chinese nurse specializing with her scissors cutting off toes. That was one of her jobs.

Did you get to come right away?

We had 3 days at the Red Cross Camp before we were sent by helicopter to the port of Inchon to get on the ship, *U.S.S. Charles Black*. I bought a camera at Inchon and a watch to replace the one taken from me. The government gave me \$90 for that cheap Rolex I had stolen by the Chinese guards.

What was it like when it was all done?

My single most memorable personal experience was that I had the biggest blackhead on my face and when I finally got the chance to use hot soapy water, it started coming out. Biggest old ugly thing you saw in your life. I had a hole in my face for years. That's how bad it was. No hot water and no soap.

Did you get to brush your teeth in camp?

Heck no, when I got back and started at the university and I went to see Dr. Damiano, the meanest, most efficient guy I've ever met. He was brutal. He medicated me under, then drilled out my cavities and pulled teeth. He worked me over. I used to dread going in to his office but he was a good dentist. All of my dentists after that have asked me who did my dental work because it was such good work.

Did you need psychological help?

No, I'm normal. All the surviving POWs from my camp have a very dry sense of humor, teasing and jabbing a lot. Humor can be a way through tough times. Maybe that's why some of them didn't make it. They lost their sense of humor and just gave up. I had a fellow who was in my first shebee, Korean hut, who was a concert pianist. He was called up with the Reserves. He was always worried about his fingers because it was very cold. That very first winter he had no gloves or anything, and he gave up and died just like that. He was so concerned about his hands that all he would talk about was that he hoped it wouldn't damage his hands. He stopped eating and was gone. You have to have the attitude that you'll make it.

What did you do with them when they died?

They were buried by the Chinese but the shallow holes were dug in advance by the prisoners.

Did you keep track of who died?

There was one guy in our camp who kept track of everybody.

After the war was over, did they dig up the bodies and bring them back to the States?

They are not all back yet. There are a thousand or so still missing. There was an agreement that we could come over, look for, and retrieve bodies but that agreement has not been totally executed.



Patch from the 5th regiment.

Have you gone back there?

I wouldn't mind going back there. Some of my friends have, just to see the place where it all happened. Unfortunately, all of our action was in North Korea, and they don't allow you to go over the 38th parallel. The closest I ever got to Korea was Japan.

How are the Korean people different than Americans?

The Orientals are different than we are in terms of how they think. They've got more patience than we have.

In the end, what was accomplished in the Korea War?

The Korean War was the start of our telling the Russians that they would not take over the world for Communism against people's wishes. North Korea was a Communist country while South Korea was Democratic, so we drew the line when North Korea attacked the south to make Korea all one Communist country.

Was that one of the first times that the US started the policy of stopping the expansion of Communism?

We had talked it, but we didn't do anything. It had happened in the southeast part of Europe, like Czechoslovakia. It was the same thing with East and West Germany. The Korean War was the first time we blocked the growth of communism.

Did you get a POW bracelet?

No, I have a lot of POW junk, but a bracelet is not among them.

Did you get any medals or anything for being a POW?

Yes, six, including the Purple Heart.

What did you receive your Purple Heart for?

I got hit with bullets and shrapnel. When I got my Purple Heart, I was in Fort Sheridan, Illinois. They had a little parade for everyone who received the medal.



King's medals and awards.

What was the first thing that happened when you got of the boat?

Parents and wives were waiting when the boat came in. My parents didn't recognize me, so I had to go up to them. I was skinny. They were happy to see me after driving out to California from Wisconsin.

How much weight did you lose?

My lowest weight was about 124 pounds as best I know. Before I was 195.

Did you have trouble adjusting to eating?

Oh yes I could. They controlled us at the Red Cross Camp and on the boat. But in California we ate like everyone else. After getting myself a pair of glasses, we started back home where they had a big parade for me. In fact, I was in a convertible with Miss. Oshkosh. The problem was, Miss Oshkosh had a boyfriend. Boy, was that a dirty deal.



DONALD MAGUIRE

Enlisting in the Marine Corps, Maguire was part of the invasion of Inchon in 1950. He operated a bulldozer with the infantry units creating roads for resupply.

I was sent into Korea during the Korean War. I entered it in the invasion of Inchon in 1950. I went in at Inchon and I ended up on Hill 854. That was the last hill I was on. I ran a bulldozer right with the infantry, cutting roads for them so that they could get supplies up to the soldiers all the time. I got a medal from the Marine Corps, but it was only for excellent service in the line of profession while serving with Marine Engineer Company during the operation against the enemy in Korea. It was on the particular road that I was cutting from December 24, 1951 to January 26, 1952. He was a corporal and served as a bulldozer operator and displayed a high degree of skill and courage in the performance of his duties. The engineer company was assigned to the mission constructing north and south extensions to a lateral road leading to Hill 854 on the main line of resistance. This road was required to run parallel to the main line of resistance. It served the twofold purpose of supplies and tank fire support for the infantry. Working under most adverse weather conditions and real bad terrain, it was steep terrain, all hills, and despite harassing enemy fire, he worked tirelessly until the road was completed. His courage under fire was forfeited in the face and he continued under adverse conditions. His skill displayed in the operation of his equipment contributed to the early completion of the mission. Corporal Maguire conducted throughout the operation in keeping with the highest tradition of the United States Naval Service. I got a commendation ribbon for doing this. They sent it to me after I was back from Korea and I was running a crane for Wausau Construction. I had just got back and they wanted me to come to Chicago to present me with the medal. I wrote to them and told them I could not afford to go there because I had hurt my leg. When I got out of the service I had 300 dollars and in those days we got paid 21 dollars a month. With the injury to my knee I had a pension of 10 dollars a month, and they wanted me to come to Chicago. I had an old Ford car, it was a 1937 car and it was good enough to run because we had rented a house in Wausau, my wife and I had just got married, and she was a nurse. She had just gotten out of nurse's training up at the old St. Mary's hospital. She went through that and became a registered nurse. We both went to work but neither one of us had any money at that time. I wrote them a letter and told them I could not afford to drive to Chicago so they shipped it up here to me and sent the letter to the Wausau paper and they printed it. With all the stuff we have done we are lucky to be alive, I am seventy-one years old. One time I was on the bulldozer and when you run it you have one hand on the control for the blade and the other one is on the clutch so you can throw it out at anytime to stop. So I was on the bulldozer and I leaned over, because you have to look over the machine so you can see the

"When I was in Korea I was eighteen and a half and I didn't think I would live to be nineteen."

blade and what you are cutting. Then all of a sudden I was getting wet so I threw it out of gear and jumped out. Then I looked back, the fuel tank comes up to your shoulders and it is behind you, and it is as wide as the machine. I bailed out and here a bullet had gone between my arm and my belly. It was a good thing in those days that I was skinny because it missed my arm and my belly. I was getting wet from the fuel. They issued us a jack knife in those days and I whittled a stick and stuck it in the hole of the fuel tank.

"We figured we were going to be dead in an hour, as we got close. We knelt on the deck and prayed, because we figured we were going to heaven, but we made it."

Then I took a wrench and pounded it in. After that I had to do the same thing for the other side because the bullet had gone completely through the fuel tank. I had to plug both ends to keep going. I made it through that mission. When I went in to Korea, I was on an LCT, a Landing Craft Tank, with the gate that folds down in front. The ships out there were pounding the shore, and then there was a letup. Corsairs come in at treetop level napalming

everything. I was eighteen and a half years old and there was about ten of us headed for shore with a tank on the LCT, too. It had to go on and we all knew we had to go on to the shore before sunup in the morning. We were all out there in the ocean behind the big ships, and we knew that we were going to be on the shore soon. I was scared too. I'm sure anyone would be scared going into an operation like that. But I made it through things having been good ever since, and now I am retired from working. I was a superintendent for a large construction company. I had tugman's license for pulling ships, and a master plumber's license for laying out city water and sewer lines, water intake lines from Lake Michigan and Lake Superior. Also we laid a lot of water intake lines for the city where they get their drinking water out of Lake Michigan. We had to lay in a big pipe and it had to have about seven feet of cover. We had lasers set up on shore so we could get the right depth and we could have sticks. We put a big pipe down, the pipe was 54 inches inside diameter, so it could come into shore and into a plant that took care of the water supply from there. When we got out in the lake, a mile to a mile and a half out, we brought them up from the bottom because we had to have them as high as six feet of pipe coverage. This was in case of a ship coming along and dropping their anchor, they wouldn't smash the pipe. So when we got to the bottom of it we had to build a big frame, it was made out of timbers, about 10 by 10 timbers. They were about thirty feet long all the way and made a big square with reinforced square corners. The only opening was for the pipe to stick out of. Then it came up about ten feet high there was a top. The top wasn't closed completely tight. This way the water could go through them and our diver would get inside of there and direct us to get the pipe. He would tell us which way to move. The pockets that were built into the wooden frame were filled with rocks so it would sink down there. The barges that we used were 40 feet wide and 140-150 feet long, and we parked one on each side of the wooden frame, which were built on shore. We set the wooden frames between the barges and filled the pockets with stone, so they would settle and the diver would direct us to sink the frame over the pipe. We had flags on buoys that marked the location.

I flew airplanes as well. I flew a company plane and I built one of my own, a single engine, but I had a multi-rating and everything, and an instrument rating for flying airplanes. Now, the only thing I have left is a Christmas tree farm. We have about 3000 people come to our place and cut their own. The only license I have left is my driver's license and my marriage license. I can still drive tractors around my farm though.

Were you drafted?

No, I enlisted while I was in high school. I enlisted in the Marine Corps and this was before the war. They said, in those days they were drafting everybody, and if I enlisted in the Marine Corps, my enlistment

would be for two years, and I wouldn't have to spend four years in the Army. So I enlisted so I could cut it down, but then, because you enlisted, you had five years of inactive reserve that you were on. If they needed a serviceman they could yank you right in. That is exactly what happened, I got out after my enlistment was up for about a month, and then they yanked me back in, that's the way life was. But, that was all right. So I served my time over in Korea and then I came home. I have been here ever since.

"It was awful cold in the wintertime and I used to gouge out a hole with my bulldozer and then I would slide in with a sleeping bag. I slept there a lot of nights underneath the bulldozer."

What was the weather like over there?

It was cold; the weather there was similar to Wisconsin weather. I had to keep it running, because it was so cold you wouldn't get it started in the morning if you didn't keep it warmed up. It was cold weather.

Did you have contacts with prisoners of war?

They picked them up periodically, they had some, but an awful lot of them got killed before they could be returned, a lot of people got killed over there. When I cut roads in the mountains we got up on the hills and I would cut the road then go back down and hook up a tank, which I would pull up to the top of the hill. I would have a tank emplacement gouged in so they could sit in there and fire point-blank into the gook bunkers on the next hill we had to take. They had caves in the hills, where they would go in, and then roll out. They would also fire shells at us and the tanks would watch for them. Then they would fire across the valley and when they hit one of the bunkers, right in the hole, it would blow out the side of the mountain, because it was full of ammunition. They had a lot of ammo in the hills, and mortars, they would roll out mortars and fire them at us. They came in just like rain, mortars were one of the big surprises they had. When they blew out as many as they could before we took the next hill that is why we had to put in all those roads to get them up there and we had to have supplies for the infantry to get it up to them, too. They had to have food and ammunition. We had a special pair of boots in the Marine Corps and they were rubber and the rubber would slide on your foot and be real tight, and then there was an airspace between that and the outer layer, and it came up a good part of your leg and they told us never to take them off, or your feet would freeze and they didn't freeze, and we didn't have any frostbite in our feet over there, because we were out in the nice cold weather and those boots were something else. About once every four weeks we got to go back and take a shower and get some new clothes. My goodness, you had to have somebody pull those boots off cause they were wet in there, they wouldn't freeze, but they were damp. We went through a tent, and showered, the tent was set up by a creek, and they were getting water from the creek, and it was pouring down inside the tent and it was cold, and right behind the tent they had a hot water heater, a big heater, and it would heat the water and blow it into a shower, but when you went in there the tent was cold and then you had to jump to another tent where the water was warm and when it ran out, it froze right away and it was slippery. You had to crawl on your hands and knees, because it was so slippery, and you were soapy as well. When you got out they had a person there to give you a towel so you could dry off and as soon as you got dried off you went to the tent and they issued you new clothes, not new boots, but new clothes, gave us new gear. We didn't get a chance to shower very often, because when you are in combat you are trying to stay



alive, there is nothing else that is important except staying alive. It was nice, and we all appreciated getting cleaned up once in a while and getting some clean clothes.

What did you do for fun?

Fun? There was no fun, there wasn't any fun at all. We didn't bother playing cards, we went into some caves and we were in out of the cold and that was fun. I have some pictures here. One of the guys I was over there with took a whole lot of pictures, and when I got home he shipped me a whole batch of pictures of us when we were over there. Somebody came over and entertained there one time, I don't remember who it was anymore, but they came over and entertained. There were a lot of trucks and bridges, and we had to make them. This guy got killed over there. He was running a bulldozer too, and he got killed. I haven't looked at these pictures since I put them away and my wife, dug them out for me this morning. You grow up in a hurry when you get out of high school, and a year or so later you are into something like that. It was quite an experience. Here are some of the guys I was with jumping up on my cat. See the size of those hills, you could roll rocks over the side with the bulldozer, and you could see them hitting trees and they were big. That is what I had to do. The terrain is steep, and it was tough. I made it, and I am still alive. This is the medal that I got. If you want to read it you can, its kind of tough. I got this from the Korean government, you can't read that side, but this is from the Korean government. This is the one from the letter that I got from the Marine Corps. That was a commendation ribbon that was in the Wausau paper.

Do you still associate with people from your unit?

No, I haven't seen them in years, there weren't any from Wisconsin that were in Korea, or that I ever met, and they were from all over the country.

What did you think of the outcome of the Korean War?

It was a good thing that we freed those people up over there, that was fine, but it is too bad that we didn't finish it out. Were we ever happy that Harry Truman yanked General Douglas MacArthur out of being in charge of the whole operation over there? He pulled him out of there, because MacArthur wanted to go into mainland China. The Chinese were sending people to fight us in Korea, too, and he wanted to go in and hit them. But when you are sleeping underneath a bulldozer you are happy that you didn't have to go into mainland China. There you would have a billion people shooting at you. That's a big operation, you don't want that, you are bound to get killed.

What was your worst memory of Korea?

It was pretty tough, I just don't remember where it happened. The Army was on one side of us, I was in the Marine Corps in the middle here and we were leading, we were above it, and we were making the main line of resistance, and here was the ROK army, the Korean Army, over here, and what happened is that, the North Koreans, had us cut off and the ROK fell back, and the Army fell back, and we were out ahead and we hit resistance. The Chinese came, and they were there by the thousands, and they came in behind us so we were cut off up here. General Puller was the name of the general, and we were cut off up here and we were up there for about a week and food and everything was getting kind of scarce. You could feel that it was froze cause it slid down into your belly but once it was in your belly you couldn't feel it anymore, but going down your throat you could feel it, but he, General Puller, came up to the line, and I remember that, because I was on the main line, and we were cutting roads and they were firing into the bunkers ahead on the next hill, and he come up and said we were going to advance to the rear and we are going to turn around in the morning and we are going back and I don't want any Marines left here,

"All we had left was frozen ham and lima beans that were in a container, and they were froze and you had to jab them out with your bayonet, and then throw them in your mouth."

with me, because we weren't going to leave them. We didn't want anybody to be left behind. We brought out the dead ones too. We got out, and three days later we went back there again and there was another bunch that was there, the Chinese kept pouring through, and we had to take that area twice. That time the Army and ROKs made it too. That was the worst time I had in my life. This fellow over here knows all about the prisoners. I wasn't around the prisoners very much, because they didn't have many of them. They shot most of them before we got them, they got killed. I ran into a lot of them that got buried with that bulldozer. I've seen lots and lots of them, and they were buried in the ground, I tried to miss them, because I didn't want to drag them out. I'd hate to see us go back to war again, I don't want to see young people go through what I had to go through.

bring them all out. Make sure everybody gets out and we did. The next morning we went back and hit them, and that was tough, we killed all of them, and quite a few of our people got killed there too in that operation. That was the worst one I was in. I don't know if it was the worst one of the war, but it was the worst one I was in, and I was running the bulldozer. A lot of Chinese and North Koreans were dead on the road, and I angled the blade on the dozer and rolled them off, I didn't want to run over anybody. We brought out three guys that got hit with me on the dozer, they were with the infantry, and they got hit and were wounded, and we put them up on the deck of the dozer, and hauled them out

After Korea, Maguire operated heavy equipment, recieved his plumbers license, a Tugman's license for pulling barges, a pilot's license, and became a super-intendant for a construction company. He has been married for 50 years and has six children.



MAGUIRE, DONALD