5th Marines from the Kansas Line for additional offensive operations east of the Punchbowl. Except for the 8th ROK Division on Thomas' right flank, the rest of X Corps would seize another hill mass soon called "Heartbreak Ridge." Byers expected the Marines to resume the attack on 11 September.

With only 48 hours to mount an attack, Thomas had little alternative but to look again to the 7th Marines to lead the advance on Kanmubong Ridge, the hill mass directly north of Yoke Ridge and the division's next objective. The concept of the operation envisioned a two-phase operation that would begin with the 7th Marines seizing the two most dominant peaks at the eastern edge of the ridge, Hills 673 and 749. To eliminate a transverse ridge spur (Hill 680), a secondary attack would strike directly north from the Hays Line on Yoke Ridge. This mission went to 3d Battalion, 7th Marines, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Bernard T. Kelly, with the main attack to 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, under Lieutenant Colonel James G. Kelly, relatively untouched by the fight for Yoke Ridge. When the 7th Marines had secured the Hill 673-Hill 749 area, the 1st Marines would come forward and continue the attack up Kanmubong's long axis, "ridge-running," to capture a series of peaks designated (east to west) Hills 812, 980, 1052, and 1030. The scheme of maneuver would allow tanks to fire across the front of the advancing troops and artillery fire (even naval gunfire) to converge in concentrations from the firing positions to the south and southeast. The advances had to be supported by hundreds of "chiggy bearers" since there were no roads of any kind to bring the ammunition, food, and water forward in any other way.

Fighting from cleverly-concealed and strongly-built bunkers and trench systems, the North Koreans made the 7th Marines (all three battalions) pay dearly in three days of fighting, 34 dead and 321 wounded. The assault companies that crossed the line of departure in the morning fog of 11 September did not expect a walkover. Despite the hour of intense artillery preparation, the North Korean defenders fought with unflagging tenacity until killed. Each bunker system came ringed with mines and booby-traps, and Korean mortar shells and grenades showered crippling fragments across every contested position. Long-range heavy machine gun fire from higher up Kanmubong Ridge took its toll among the Marine assault units that struggled forward with flamethrowers and satchel charges.

Once again dark memories of Iwo Jima and Okinawa came to the veterans. More heirs of the Japanese military tradition than the Soviet, the North Koreans showed no hesitation in launching counterattacks large and small and at unexpected times and from unexpected directions. Although the enemy did not overrun any Marine positions, only quick shooting and quick thinking broke the backs of the attacks with bullets and artillery shells. Although the 3d Battalion took its objective with no assistance, Colonel Nickerson had to commit his 2d Battalion to aid the 1st Battalion on 12 September. Only a converging two-battalion attack—the companies in column—finally seized Hill 673, and the subsequent 2d Battalion attack on Hill 749 fought itself out far short of the crest. In all the fighting tank fire proved decisive when the bunkers could be identified and fired upon, line-of-sight. Many bunkers, however, could have been reached by close air support, conspicuously absent. The key ground maneuver came from a company of the 1st Battalion that made an undetected night march to reach a poorly-defended entrant to Hill 673, then assaulting through a breach in the North Korean defenses. Nevertheless, the 2d Battalion's attack on Hill 749 stalled with the three rifle companies reduced, scattered, and battling back small counterattacks in the dark before a battalion of the 1st Marines replaced them on 13 September. So hard-pressed and scattered were the Marines of 2d Battalion, 7th Marines, that the battalion misreported its location and gave Nickerson the impression that his regiment had taken Hill 749, which it had not. Moreover, the approaches to the hill were still held by some very combative North Koreans. Assuming operational control of the 2d Battalion, the 1st Marines, under Colonel Thomas A. Wornham, picked up the responsibility for occupying Hill 749. Only a helicopter reconnaissance proved that Hill 749 would have to be taken first.

The logistical burden of supporting five committed infantry battalions (the situation on 13 September) proved too much for the "chiggy bearers" of the Korean Service Corps 103d Division, but the Marines now had an alternative for the emergency resupply of ammunition and medical goods and the evacuation of the seriously-wounded: the Marine Corps helicopter. Although the light helicopters of Marine Observation Squadron 6 (VMO-6) had been a fixture in operations since August 1950, the battle for Kanmubong Ridge opened a new era in Marine Corps history, the combat employment of helicopters as an integral part of Marine air-ground operations. General Thomas and Colonel Krulak had both played

key roles in developing the concept of vertical envelopment and fighting for funds to procure and test helicopters in HMX-1, the experimental helicopter squadron created at Marine Corps Air Station, Quantico, Virginia. HMX-1 gave birth in January 1951 to Marine Transport Helicopter Squadron 161 (HMR-161), commanded by a helicopter pioneer, Lieutenant Colonel George W. Herring. Herring brought HMR-161 to Korea in August 1951 ready to make its combat debut under the sharp eye of Krulak, who had made vertical envelopment his latest magnificent obsession. Herring's squadron of 300 Marines and 15 Sikorsky HRS-1 transport helicopters arrived at the airstrip (X-83) near the division command post at Sohwa-ri and moved in with VMO-6. Anticipating some employment in the weeks ahead, Krulak and Herring prepared the squadron for operations in combat landing zones and declared it ready for commitment on 12 September. Thomas told HMR-161 to carry supplies to the embattled Marines near Hill 793.

Operation Windmill I on 13 September lasted only about three hours, but its impact stretched into the future by years. In the short term it made sure that 2d Battalion, 1st Marines, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Franklin B. Nihart, faced another day's battle with plenty of ammunition, water, and rations and without the burden of casualties. The first lift brought in a helicopter support team from the 2d Battalion to run the landing zone, and the remaining 27 flights delivered nine tons of cargo and evacuated 74 casualties. Not one helicopter was lost to ground fire or accident. A similar resupply mission would have required almost 400 Korean bearers and a full day to accomplish. Unlike an earlier parachute resupply mission to the Korean Marines,

Second Lieutenant George H. Ramer

Born in 1927 at Meyersdale, Pennsylvania, he enlisted in the Navy in 1944. After the war, he entered Bucknell University, from which he graduated in 1950 with a degree in Political Science and History. While attending Bucknell, he enrolled in the Marine Corps Reserve Platoon Leader's program and was commissioned in the Marine Corps Reserve. He taught high school civics and history in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, before being called to active duty in January 1951 at his own request.

As a platoon leader with Company I, 3d Battalion, 7th Marines, in Korea, his bravery in covering the withdrawal of his platoon on Kanmubong Ridge on 12 September 1951 was recognized by the posthumous award of the Medal of Honor. His citation reads, in part:

> Second Lieutenant Ramer fearlessly led his men up the steep slopes and, although he and the majority of his unit were wounded during the ascent, boldly continued to spearhead the assault. . . . he staunchly carried the attack to the top, personally annihilated one enemy bunker with grenade and carbine fire and captured the objective with his remaining eight men.
> Unable to hold the position against an immediate, overwhelming hostile counterattack, he ordered his group to withdraw and single-handedly fought the enemy to furnish cover for his men and for the evacuation of three fatally wounded Marines. Severely wounded a second time, Second Lieutenant Ramer . . . courageously manned his post until the hostile troops overran his position and he fell mortally wounded.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A48025

In 1963, a facility for physical conditioning at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia, was named in his memory.—Captain John C. Chapin, USMCR (Ret)

Whirlybirds

When Marine Transport Helicopter Squadron (HMR) 161 deployed to Korea, the squadron took with it an aircraft that pushed the technical state-of-the-art in helicopter design into a new frontier. Designated the HRS-1, the Sikorsky-designed and built helicopter had endured the inevitable ups and downs that characterized the introduction of any pioneering aircraft. Without government contracts, the Sikorsky Aircraft Division of the Vought-Sikorsky Corporation, Stratford, Connecticut, produced an aircraft designated the S-55, first flown in 1949. Initially marketing the aircraft as a commercial utility helicopter, Igor Sikorsky hoped the S-55 could compete with the Piasecki H-21 (or PD-22), which had been adopted by the U.S. Air Force for its air rescue service. The Navy, however, was in the hunt for a general-purpose helicopter that could be adopted for shipboard use. Naval aviators liked the S-55 because of its economical design, modest size, and serviceability.

Redesignated the HO4S-1 in its naval model, the S-55 represented at least two major engineering advances: the addition of a tail rotor for greater stability in flight and a front-mounted Pratt & Whitney R-1340-57 engine that could generate a respectable 600 horsepower. The engine placement helped solve a nagging problem of weight-distribution and flight characteristics. Prior helicopter models placed the engine directly under the rotor-blades, a design that gravely limited any so-designed helicopter to very light loads and insured flight instability. The front-mounted engine dramatically increased the helicopter's carrying capacity and simplified maintenance since the HRS-1 had clam-shaped nose doors that provided easy access to the engine for the ground crew mechanics. The new design also improved vertical flight stability.

In the earliest stage of evaluation, 1948-1949, Navy and Marine Corps officers, encouraged by Sikorsky, saw capabilities the helicopter did not yet have, even under optimum weather and altitude conditions. The original requirement the naval aviators placed on the helicopter was a 10-man load (225 pounds per Marine) to be carried 150 miles. The requirements shrank, as it became more and more obvious that the HRS-1 was not going to be a two-ton-plus lifter. All the helicopter's other characteristics, however, made it the aircraft of choice for the Bureau of Aeronautics, and the Marine Corps joined the program in August 1950, with an initial order of 40 aircraft.

The HRS-1s that went to Korea came into service with a gross weight rating (7,000 pounds at sea level) about 1,000 pounds slighter than originally designed with a payload reduced to 1,420 pounds under optimal flight conditions. Its troop load dropped from 10 to four to six. The helicopter's maximum speed remained at 90 knots, but its range had dropped by half to 70-mile round trips. Nevertheless, the HRS-1 was not a "whirlybird" of disappointment, but promise.

National Archives Photo (USN) 80-G-433347

none of the cargo drifted off to places and users unknown. The use of externally-slung, quick-release loads in cargo nets made easy. For the corpsmen and wounded Marines, helicopter evacuation meant that a hard-hit casualty could be transported to a medical clearing station ("battalion med") in 30 minutes, not doomed to a day-long stretcher ride. Even without accumulated statistics, medical personnel could already tell that medical evacuation helicopters would save lives and boost morale.

The plan for the 1st Marines to attack up Kanmubong Ridge continued to unravel despite the helicopter resupply and the commitment of two battalions, the 2d Battalion to take Hill 749 and the 3d Battalion to seize the ridgeline across the Soyang on Nihart's right flank. Nihart's battalion finally cleared Hill 749 after sharp fighting one company at a time with only a platoon in battle by the evening of 14 September. Before Nihart could mount another attack the next day, the North Koreans deluged his Marines with heavy artillery and mortar fire, pinning them to their Hill 749 positions. The North Korean regiment with accompanying artillery tried to throw the 2d Battalion off Hill 749 for four hours during the night of 15-16 September and left almost 200 bodies and many blood trails behind when it withdrew, but the battle cost the 2d Battalion almost 200 casualties and limited it as an offensive threat. Two Korean deserters reported that their regiment had 1,200 casualties.

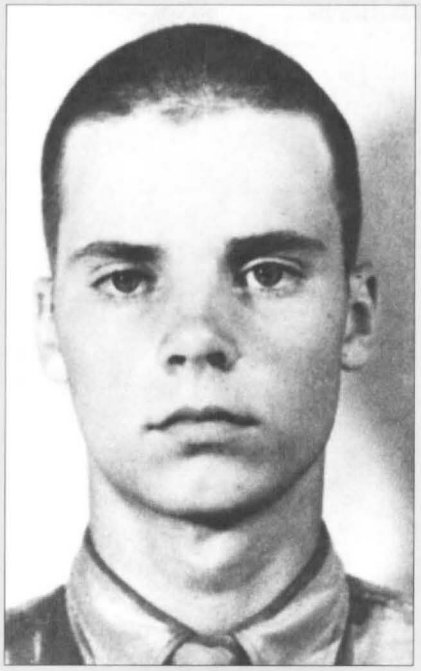
Wornham now had to commit his reserve 1st Battalion to ensure that the complete Hill 673-Hill 749 complex was secure, leaving Thomas only one unbloodied regiment (the 5th Marines) to assault the heights of Kanmubong Ridge. At the cost of more than 800 casualties in the 7th and 1st Marines, the 1st Marine Division had only seized the ground identified five days before as the departure point for the more demanding advance up the spine of the ridge. Now it was the turn of Colonel Richard G. Weede's 5th Marines to continue the attack.

The battle of Kanmubong Ridge continued for four more days (16-20 September) and ended with the 5th Marines reduced by some 250 casualties and only Hill 812 securely under Marine control. The commanders of Weede's two assault battalions believed they could also have taken Hill 980, but it would have been difficult to hold with the peak (Hill 1052) still under North Korean control. The problems of Communist enfilade fire from the north simply got worse as the Marines worked their way to the west along the ridge. The Lieutenant Colonel Donald R. Kennedy's 3d Battalion in the left zone of action had its flank protected by Yoke Ridge and by tank fire, but the 2d Battalion working along the opposite slope enjoyed no advantages in cover and friendly fire, except close air support—which did not arrive. Staggered by its mounting casualties, the 2d Battalion stormed Hill 812 on the evening of 17 September. Without physical contact, the two battalions went into perimeter defenses, expecting North Korean counterattacks from the heights to their front or, in the case of the 2d Battalion, from the broken ground to the

A wounded squad leader of the 5th Marines ensures that a North Korean emplacement no longer threatens the advance along Kanmubong Ridge. The September attacks into the ridge mass north of the Punchbowl produced the most intense combat since the Chinese Fifth Offensive of April and May.

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A156867

Sergeant Frederick W. Mausert III



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A46970

Born in 1930 in Cambridge, New York, he enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1948. Following recruit training at Parris Island, South Carolina, he was stationed at Cherry Point and Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, before going to Korea, where he participated in campaigns in South and Central Korea. Serving as a squad leader with Company B, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, he was wounded on 10 September 1951. Two days later at Songnap-yong (Punchbowl), he was killed in a courageous action for which he was awarded the Meal of Honor. His citation reads, in part:

> Sergeant Mausert unhesitatingly left his covered position and ran through a heavily mined and fire-swept area to bring back two critically wounded men to the comparative safety of the lines. Staunchly refusing evacuation despite a painful head wound . . . [he] led his men in a furious bayonet charge against the first of a literally impregnable series of bunkers. Stunned and knocked to the ground when another bullet struck his helmet, he regained his feet and resumed his drive, personally silencing the machine-gun and leading his men in elimination several other emplacements in the area. Promptly reorganizing his unit for a renewed fight to the final objective on top of the ridge, Sergeant Mausert . . . still refused aid and continued spearheading the assault to the topmost machine-gun nest and bunkers, the last bulwark of the fanatic aggressors. Leaping into the wall of fire, he destroyed another machine-gun with grenades before he was mortally wounded by bursting grenades and machine-gun fire.—Captain John C. Chapin, USMCR (Ret)

north and east. Acutely aware of his danger and reduced supply circumstances, the 2d Battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Houston "Tex" Stiff, asked for helicopter resupply. In Windmill II, the helicopters of HMR-161 delivered six tons of scarce ammunition and engineering supplies in less than an hour on the afternoon of 19 September.

Just to hold his line across the ridge line, Colonel Weede had to bring up his uncommitted 1st Battalion, which fell in on Stiff's right and rear and allowed the hard-pressed 2d Battalion to consolidate its hold on Hill 812 and to find the 3d Battalion on its left. Even with the 5th Marines' lines more or less connected, the North Koreans made life miserable for the troops by sniping with long-range, high velocity antitank artillery guns and by attacking any patrols or outposts pushed forward of the main line of resistance. Two companies of the 2d Battalion became embattled for two days over control of "The Rock," a granite knob about 700 yards west of Hill 812. In a close-quarters melee of almost 24 hours, the Marines finally chased off the last of the Korean raiders. The Marine victors found 60 dead North Koreans scattered among the shattered rocks, but the victory cost the 5th Marines five dead and almost 50 wounded. Major Gerald P. Averill, the battalion operations officer, watched Marines shoot fleeing Koreans from the off-hand position while one Marine took photographs of the Korean corpses.

The battle for "The Rock" seemed almost symbolic since it had been a no-quarters fight for a piece of ground of little tactical significance. It also was the last part of the battle for Kanmubong Ridge, for General Van Fleet on 20 September ordered Byers to stop the offensive. The simultaneous battle of Heartbreak Ridge to the west of the Punchbowl had produced few results except soaring casualties in the 2d Infantry Division, and Van Fleet wanted all of X Corps fire support committed to that struggle. In addition, he approved of Byers' plan to shift the 8th ROK Division since the division—one of the better units in the South Korean army—had taken its objectives east of the Soyang River, though at prohibitive cost. Only in disgruntled retrospect did the Marines realize that they had fought in their last division offensive in Korea. The relief of the 8th ROK Division simply meant that the South Koreans would shift from the eastern to the western flank of X Corps.

The change meant that the 1st Marine Division assumed about five miles more of front in a sector already 15 miles in length. With the 1st KMC Regiment still holding the northern lip of the Punchbowl and the 5th Marines defending part of Kanmubong Ridge and the Soyang River valley, the 1st Marines assumed the mission of

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A157221

A rifleman of the 3d Battalion, 7th Marines, disembarks from a Sikorsky HRS-1 helicopter of Marine Helicopter Transport Squadron 161 during Operation Bumblebee. The operation allowed two Marine infantry battalions to exchange positions on Hill 702 by airlift, not overland march.

occupying the sector east of the river since the 7th Marines were the corps reserve. To take possession of its sector the 1st Marines had to control Hill 854 and Hill 884. Lieutenant Colonel Foster C. LaHue's 3d Battalion found to its dismay that the 21st ROK Regiment occupied the summit of Hill 854, but that the North Koreans still held almost all the northern face. For two days the battalion attacked and ran the survivors off, but the Marines lost 11 men to uncharted South Korean minefields and 50 more casualties in the fighting. LaHue's requests for essential air strikes were answered too late or not at all, again bringing the close air support issue to a boiling point with Thomas and Krulak.

Marine helicopters, however, provided one of the bright spots in the sector extension. To buy some time for another 1st Marines battalion to move to Hill 884 and to explore the possible routes to the hill—and any enemy ambushes or friendly minefields—Thomas ordered the division's Reconnaissance Company to move by helicopter to the summit of Hill 884 and to establish a patrol base there as well as replace the South Koreans. On 21 September, HMR-161 carried the first fully operational combat unit into a potential battle. Despite poor landing sites and marginal weather, the helicopters delivered 224 Marines and almost nine tons on supplies and equipment in four hours. The troops disembarked by "hot rope," a rappelling technique that does not require a snap-ring hook-up; the Marines and accompanying load slung from each aircraft could be delivered in 90 seconds after an eight minute flight from X-83, 15 miles away. General Thomas and Colonel Krulak complimented all hands with glowing messages. Van Fleet and Byers sent their own congratulations, fully realizing the potential of helicopter operations. The next operations, Blackbird on 27 September and Bumblebee on 11 October, produced mixed results, but Blackbird proved that HMR-161 could do limited nightwork, and Bumblebee demonstrated that HMR-161 could move an entire battalion into a non-hostile landing zone. A helicopter-mobile briefing became a standard stop, dictated by Van Fleet, for VIPs, which included the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Omar N. Bradley, USA. After his 1 October briefing, Bradley, no fan of the Marine Corps, admitted to his staff and accompanying journalists that the Marines might have discovered an operational technique that might change the conduct of land warfare. The September fighting that might not have been Iwo Jima II for the 1st Marine Division, but Bradley's faint praise gave a little more meaning to the battle for Yoke Ridge and Kanmubong Ridge. The surviving Marines felt that strange mixture of grief, guilt, relief, and satisfaction of veterans. They had upheld the

reputation of the 1st Marine Division and X Corps for never shirking the most dangerous and onerous missions.

With the 1st Marine Division in place in its part of the Hays-Kansas Line, the division could assess its latest month of Korean combat. First, the North Korean army had proved more skilled and determined than the Chinese, but not immortal. The division intelligence section estimated that the Marines had inflicted about 10,000 casualties on the enemy. The number of enemy bodies actually counted numbered 2,799, and the Marines had taken 557 prisoners. Measured against its most taxing battles in World War II, Peleliu and Okinawa, the 1st Marine Division losses, compared with the casualties inflicted, appeared acceptable: 227 killed in action, and 2,125 wounded in action for a total of 2,452 casualties. Almost all the casualties occurred in the four infantry regiments and their attachments. The single most costly 24-hour period (39 killed and 463 wounded) was 13-14 September in the first phase of the attack on Kanmubong Ridge, which involved two battalions each of both the 1st and 7th Marines.

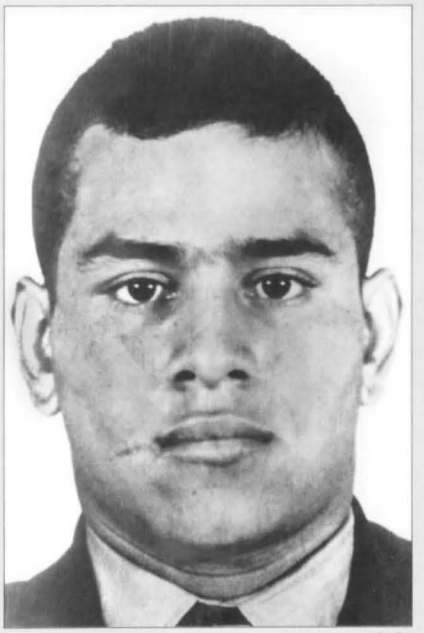
What gave the battles for Yoke Ridge and Kanmubong Ridge a special quality was the discouraging impact of the geography. If one stands along the Demilitarized Zone today—as the author did in 1994 and 1998—in the sectors in which the Marines fought around the Punchbowl, the mountain ranges stretch off without visible end into North Korea. It is difficult not to feel that there must be a better way to conduct war than to mount one attack after another against those forbidding (and still fortified) mountains. Surely the same thoughts came to the Marines of 1951 as they felt the first chill winds of winter on the Hays-Kansas Line.

A Long Winter and a Longer War

While battles still raged to the western zones of I and IX Corps and most of X Corps focused on the capture of Heartbreak Ridge, the 1st Marine Division secured its own portion of the new Minnesota Line. For the Marines the front became the Kansas Line bent, twisted, and renamed to include the terrain captured on the Yoke and Kanmubong Ridges. The signs of approaching winter were many. The distribution of cold weather clothing and equipment went on throughout the division, and the Marines' bunkers started to include stoves and makeshift furniture

Private First Class Edward Gomez

Born in 1932 in Omaha, Nebraska, he attended Omaha High School before enlisting in the Marine Corps Reserve in 1949. In Korea, he participated in three operations and was wounded in June 1951. With a strong premonition of death, he wrote his mother in September: "I am writing this on the possibility that I may die in this next assault . . . . I am not sorry I died, because I died fighting for my country and that's the Number One thing in everyone's life, to keep his home and country from being won over by such things as communism . . . .Tell Dad I died like the man he wanted me to be."



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A46968

On 14 September, he was killed on Kanmubong Ridge, while serving as an ammunition bearer with Company E, 2d Battalion, 1st Marines, and saving the lives of four of his squad members. His Medal of Honor citation reads, in part:

> Boldly advancing with his squad in support of a group of riflemen assaulting a series of strongly fortified and bitterly defended hostile positions on Hill 749. Private First Class Gomez consistently exposed himself to the withering barrage to keep his machine-gun supplied with ammunition during the drive forward to seize the objective. As his squad deployed to meet an imminent counterattack, he voluntarily moved down an abandoned trench to search for a new location for the gun and, when a hostile grenade landed between himself and his weapon, shouted a warning to those around him as he grasped the activated charge in his hand. Determined to save his comrades, he unhesitatingly chose to sacrifice himself and, diving into the ditch with the deadly missile, absorbed the shattering violence of the explosion in his own body.

After the war, a plaque was dedicated in his honor at the Omaha Boys Club.

—Captain John C. Chapin, USMCR (Ret)

Corporal Joseph Vittori

Born in Beverly, Massachusetts, in 1929, he attended high school and worked on his father's farm before enlisting for three years in the Marine Corps in 1946. After being discharged, he joined the Marine Corps Reserve in 1950 for an indefinite tour of active duty. He trained at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, until January 1951, when he joined Company F, 2d Battalion, 1st Marines, in Korea. Having been wounded in June near Yanggu, he was killed in the fight for Hill 749 in the Punchbowl on 15 September 1951 and became the second Marine of 2d Battalion, 1st Marines, within a 48-hour period to receive the Medal of Honor. His citation reads, in part:

> Corporal Vittori boldly rushed through the withdrawing troops with two other volunteers from his reserve platoon and plunged directly into the midst of the enemy. Overwhelming them in a fierce hand-to-hand struggle, he enabled his company to consolidate its positions . . . he assumed position under the devastating barrage and, fighting a single-hand battle, leaped from one flank to the other, covering each foxhole in turn as casualties continued to mount, manning a machine-gun when the gunner was struck down . . . With the situation becoming extremely critical . . . and foxholes left practically void by dead and wounded for a distance of 100 yards, Corporal Vittori continued his valiant stand, refusing to give ground as the enemy penetrated to within feet of his position. . . . Mortally wounded by enemy machine-gun and rifle bullets while persisting in his magnificent defense of the sector, where approximately 200 enemy dead were found the following morning, Corporal Vittori . . . undoubtedly prevented the entire battalion position from collapsing.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A46971

In 1986 there was a parade and memorial service in his honor, with a park named after him in his hometown of Beverly, Massachusetts.

Corporal Jack A. Davenport

An ardent athlete and a Golden Gloves champion, he was born in 1931 in Kansas City, Missouri, and enlisted in the Marine Corps in July 1950. Sent to Korea that December, he took part in four successive operations. Then, as a squad leader with Company G, 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, he died in a valorous action at the Punchbowl on 21
September 1951. His citation for the

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A48023

Medal of Honor read, in part:

> While expertly directing the defense of his position during a probing attack by hostile forces attempting to infiltrate the area, Corporal Davenport, acting quickly when an enemy grenade fell into the foxhole which he was occupying with another Marine, skillfully located the deadly projectile in the dark and, undeterred by the personal risk involved, heroically threw himself over the live missile, thereby saving his companion from serious injury or possible death. His cool and resourceful leadership were contributing factors in the successful repulse of the enemy attack.

The man in that same foxhole was Private First Class Walter L. Barfoot, and, due to Davenport's heroic self-sacrifice, he survived the war. Later, a gymnasium at Camp Pendleton, California, was named in honor of Corporal Davenport.

—Captain John C. Chapin, USMCR (Ret)

made from ammunition and equipment boxes. American fighting men make their lives as comfortable as possible; the Marines had no desire for a Valley Forge in the Taebaek Mountains. They also followed their instructions to make the Minnesota Line defensible without unnecessary casualties or the commitment of reserve forces. For the first time division staff officers reported how many sandbags the troops filled and placed and how many yards of barbed wire they strung in front of their positions.

Even without some progress in the armistice negotiations—and the plenary sessions did not resume until 25 October at a village along the Kaesong-Masan road called Panmunjom—the onset of winter alone would have given urgency to the 1st Marine Division's energetic development of its defensive area, some 14 miles across and 30 miles deep. The division could hardly afford to take its defensive mission lightly. On its left the 11th ROK Division showed some reluctance to either man the boundary or patrol it very carefully, which concerned the division staff. The U.S. 7th Infantry Division in the ridges west of the Punchbowl did better. The only advantage to the west was that the terrain and corridors offered less opportunity for the North Koreans. The division had few troops to spare since Byers decreed that one of the American Marine regiments would be the corps reserve and occupy positions 17 miles to the rear, but at least the reserve (initially the 7th Marines) could conduct rear area security patrols. After trying several combinations, Thomas committed six battalions on the main line of resistance and held three battalions in either regimental and/or division reserve. The division reserve battalion had the mission of patrolling the Kansas Line and protecting the main supply routes.

MajGen Gerald C. Thomas talks with MajGen Clovis E. Byers, USA, X Corps commander, center, and Gen Omar N. Bradley, USA, during the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's visit to Marine frontlines. Among the tactics and problems discussed, Gen Bradley made note of the Marines' unique use of the helicopter in battle.

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A132072

The principal objective of the operations along the Minnesota Line was to drive the North Koreans away from their observation posts, combat outposts, and forward slope bunker defenses, and the Marines made major advances in this terrain cleansing in October and November 1951. The 11th Marines, occasionally reinforced by corps artillery, provided the umbrella of counterbattery fire that kept the Communist artillery in its caves. Their fire support burden eased with the arrival in January 1952 of an artillery battalion (four firing batteries) of Korean Marines; the U.S. Marine artillery advisors who had trained the battalion accompanied it to the front. The war on the bunkers, however, required much more than saturation shelling, given the strength of the Korean positions. The Marines went after the bunkers with 90mm tank guns, 75mm recoilless rifles, rocket launchers, and flamethrowers, supplemented by snipers with .50-caliber machine guns and scoped rifles. Some of the operations did not require close combat, but in other cases only heavy combat patrols, sometimes with tanks, would suffice. Such actions—night or day— cost some American lives. The Marines killed many more Koreans.

Some of the raids took the Marines time and again back to terrain they had learned to hate in September. Hill 1052 on Kanmubong (a North Korean strong point and observation post) became a favorite target, and "The

The Year of the Boot

In the autumn of 1951, the 1st Marine Division received a new piece of cold weather clothing: the boot, combat, rubber, insulated or Insulated Rubber Boot. No one called it anything else but "Mickey Mouse Boots" since their outsized shape and black color gave the wearer some podiatric similarity to Hollywood's famous rodent. Other names for the boots were less complimentary, but compared with the "shoe-pacs" they replaced, the Mickey Mouse boots quickly proved their value in preventing frozen feet.

The U.S. Army had conducted experiments with a cold weather boot during and after World War II, but by 1949 it had abandoned the effort since all the experimental prototypes did not meet Army standards for long-distance marching. Less concerned about the marching requirement, the Navy and Marine Corps conducted their own boot tests, 1948-1951, and concluded that one boot had merit. The field tests included wear in all sorts of cold weather and terrain conditions, and the Marines hiked in the boot and found it at least acceptable as winter footwear since no one marched very fast or far in inclimate conditions anyway. The Mickey Mouse boots arrived in Korea in August 1951.

The design of the insulated rubber boot was based on the concept that body-heat from the feet could be stored as a vapor barrier between two layers of felt-lined rubber. The airtight boot allowed the wearer to keep his feet warm with captive air, created by the wearer's own movement. The vapor barrier principle and the boot's all-rubber construction meant that cold and moisture from outside the boot would be defeated before they reached a Marine's precious feet. Only a boot puncture by shrapnel or some sharp object could ruin the boot's airtight integrity, and the boot, like early automobile tires, came with a patching kit.

Mickey Mouse boots, however, could turn the unwary and careless Marine into a frostbite casualty. The boots trapped more than heat. They also trapped sweat, and even if the feet remained warm, the moisture—with its ability to transfer heat four times more rapidly than dry air—accumulated, too. If a Marine did not stay on the move, the feet cooled, and the more sweat-soaked one's socks, the faster one's feet froze. One hour of inactivity could bring on an attack of frostbite. The standing operating procedure, therefore, for Mickey Mouse bootwear included a provision that each Marine had to dry his feet and change to dry socks at least once a day and preferably more often.

The next worse thing to having frozen feet, however, was preventing frozen feet. Changing socks and drying feet in the open air of a Korean winter tested the staunchest Marines. Units tried to establish a warming tent of some sort where the machocistic ritual could be performed with a hint of comfort and adequate time. Fortunately, the static winter war of 1951-1952 allowed such luxuries and cases of frozen feet in the 1st Marine Division dropped dramatically. The Mickey Mouse boots had come to stay.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A167955

Rock" received a new name that suggested the permanency of its final residents, "Luke the Gook's Castle." Marine patrols prowled the unoccupied terrain at night to discourage infiltrating Koreans. The frontline battalions had no monopoly on armed nighttime strolls. The rear areas of the 1st Marine Division (like those throughout Korea) were not safe from guerrillas, who preyed on road transport. The greater threat was teams of Communist artillery observers who infiltrated the 11th Marines positions and called in counterbattery fire of considerable accuracy, if not heavy weight of shell. Marine gun batteries lost both men and field pieces in such shoots. The rear area patrols used one capability to advantage: helicopter transportation. With every mission, the work of HMR-161 became more routine, and only the lift of entire battalions to and from the main line of resistance now justified codenames and special publicity. The squadron also received an aggressive new commander, Colonel Keith B. McCutcheon, whose work in aerial innovation had made him a legendary figure in the Corps.

None of the virtuoso campaign against the North Korean bunker system could reach the growing Communist in-depth system of fortifications, all duly observed and photographed by aerial observers.

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A157015

Marine foot patrols ranged farther into enemy territory during October, while tank-infantry raids in company strength, supported by air and artillery, were launched at every opportunity.

Naval gunfire—8- and 16-inch shells from cruisers and the battleship *New Jersey* (BB 62)—contributed to the bunker-busting, but not enough. The missing ingredient was close air support. Two Marine aircraft groups operated fighter-bombers within an hour's flight from the front, but they seldom came when called, and their Air Force and Navy comrades seemed even less available as they flew off to bomb railroads, tunnels, and roads off a target list dictated by Fifth Air Force.

General Thomas had grown ever unhappier with the lack of close air support. When he learned that Van Fleet had told Byers on 28 September that X Corps requested too much air, he ordered his staff to do a study on the lack of close air support in the September battles. His anger grew with his division's casualties. As a veteran of World War I, Thomas had his heart hardened early, but he never measured success by counting his own losses. He knew that the fights for Yoke Ridge and Kanmubong Ridge would have been much easier with Marine air on call. His own anger was fueled by deaths that touched him personally. One was the loss of his G-1, Colonel Wesley M. "Cutie" Platt, on 27 September. The most senior Marine officer to die in Korea, Platt had earned a special place in the Corps' history as one of the heroes of the defense of Wake Island. Now a shell ended a distinguished career and a special person. Thomas also knew that his division included as many as 20 sons of Marine generals and colonels, all eager to prove their own mettle. He wrote his wife that he worried about these "juniors" constantly, but could hardly ruin their careers and lives by protecting them. When one of the "juniors," First Lieutenant John C. Breckinridge died in combat, Thomas immediately pulled First Lieutenant James Breckinridge out of his infantry battalion and did so without regret since he wanted the family line of Major General James C. Breckinridge to survive Korea. The September battles had also turned Thomas into a critic of the Truman Administration, and he wrote his brother that the concept of "limited war" was ridiculous. China should be ruined as a Communist revolutionary power, and it would be easier to do it now, not later. The administration's concept of limited war offended him because "the wounds and worse acquired by Americans here had a real one hundred percent appearance . . . our guys are off base in D.C. and plenty."

Against this emotional background, Thomas again challenged the U.S. Air Force. Thomas fired the first shot in the new war with a letter asserting that his September casualties could have been reduced with timely close air support. He forwarded a study done by his staff that showed how much air he had requested and how little he had received. The 1st Marine Division had made 271 requests and had only 187 granted. More

Corporal Jack Davis: Veteran

After an ocean voyage to California, three or four days of out-processing, and an air flight to Tennessee, Corporal Jack Davis, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, returned to Nashville in March 1952. He had been gone almost two years, and he was not quite 20 years old. In his well-tailored green service uniform, bearing ribbons for his two Purple Hearts, a Presidential Unit Citation, and a row of Korean service ribbons, Jack marched across the tarmac towards his waiting parents and older brother. They did not recognize him. He had been the only Marine in uniform on the plane. He also had lost 30 pounds and still sported "a Joe Stalin" mustache. Jack walked past his mother and father, then turned back to them: "You don't know your own son?" As Jack recalled, "mild bedlam ensued for a few moments."

After three or four days at home, however, Jack realized that he was having serious difficulty adjusting to life outside a combat zone. His brother went off to classes at Vanderbilt, and his parents both had full-time jobs. He even felt strange driving a new Nash Rambler after months of driving a Marine truck on Korean country roads. After about a week, he went out and found a job driving a big truck for a local construction company, and for the first time he felt mildly comfortable, earning 75 cents an hour, and enjoying the company of hard men doing hard work. He did not miss being shelled. His parents found his job puzzling and worried about his sanity, but his new job started Jack on the road to normalcy. "The Marine Corps does a marvelous job making civilians into warriors, but then to turn those persons back to civilian life approximately thirty days after leaving a combat zone, with no decompression period stateside, acclimatizing back to a quasi-polite environment, leaves a bit to be desired."

With his usual enthusiasm, Vince Davis tried to help his brother reenter Nashville—actually Vanderbilt—social life, but the well-intentioned effort on Jack's behalf did not go well. Jack found little in common with Vince's friends in Vanderbilt's senior class, and he concluded they would find his service stories meaningless. Besides, Jack hardly trusted his ability to carry on a social conversation without lapsing into standard Marine language, which would have set all of Davidson County on fire. "I was so unsure of my polite verbal utterances that I was barely better than a mute. And for a while I preferred not to go out in polite society until I had reacquired some social skills."

In the autumn of 1952, Jack Davis entered Vanderbilt University, his education partially funded by a disability pension and the GI Bill. When he graduated with a degree in geology in 1956, he also had a new wife, Joan Fortune of Lafayette, Georgia. Even with a Master's of Science in geology (1959) Jack found the life of a petroleum geologist too uncertain for a family man (two sons), and he shifted into sales management in the oil and pharmaceutical industries until his semi-retirement and return to Tennessee in 1971. A small advertising business he and some local friends created keep him busy enough—along with church and civic activities in his new hometown of Winchester, Tennessee—until the partners sold the business to a larger Texas-based company in 1998. Jack and Joan now have more time to enjoy their hobbies and extended family.

Jack has never returned to Korea, but he is proud to have been the teenage rifleman of 1951 who found himself in Korea with "Bloody George" Company, 3d Battalion, 1st Marines.

serious to operations, only 32 had arrived within 30 minutes, the Marine Corps standard. During various conferences in October, Thomas had an opportunity to discuss the issues with General J. Lawton Collins, USA, the Army Chief of Staff, and General Ridgway. Although Byers appreciated his aggressiveness, Van Fleet and Everest did not. Thomas thought Collins and Ridgway liked his letter, "a stick to beat the Air Force with." Ridgway said he wanted Van Fleet and Everest to look at the Joint Operations Center system and see if it could be adjusted, at least to give the 1st Marine Division 40 sorties a day. Van Fleet, however, argued that X Corps got too much air support already. Thomas and Byers decided to push the issue; Byers' outrage was fueled by another problem, the unwillingness of the Army to send its best officers and noncommissioned officers to combat assignments in Korea. Byers also bridled at Van Fleet's suggestion that his faltering generalship

National Archives Photo (USA) 111-SC382827

Gen Matthew B. Ridgway, left to right, Gen J. Lawton Collins, U.S. Army Chief of Staff, Gen James A. Van Fleet, U.S. Eighth Army commander, and MajGen Clovis E. Byers, commanding general of U.S. X Corps, study the situation map during Gen Collins' tour of the frontlines in Korea. Within a month of Collins' visit, Ridgway relieved a stunned Byers for what some believed was his support for the Marine position on close air support.

explained the losses of the 2d Infantry Division on Heartbreak Ridge. Byers put his staff to work on studies like those underway in the 1st Marine Division. Byers and Thomas also raised the related issue of dictated artillery shell expenditures, which they claimed produced predictable shortages when real fighting occurred. Van Fleet was not happy with the two senior generals of X Corps.

Byers and Thomas mustered more evidence in November that the Joint Operations Center had willfully prevented X Corps from receiving effective close air support. The 1st Marine Division claimed that it had made 188 requests for air support and received only 53 strikes in response. In the case of 86 requests, Fifth Air Force said it had no aircraft available, and poor weather had affected most of the other requests. The 1st Marine Division's statistics provided an even more damning picture. During the 30 days of November, the division had requested air support on 26 days and received no response at all on 12 of those days. On the days that the Joint Operations Center responded, it approved only 52 of 125 close air support requests. In terms of aircraft and ordnance, only four missions were flown as requested, and only one arrived in less than an hour from the original request. The only mission that went as planned occurred on 10 November when 89 aircraft from the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing celebrated the Marine Corps' Birthday with a heavy strike north of Kanmubong Ridge. The X Corps study, directed by Lieutenant Colonel Ellis W. Williamson, a pioneer in Army aviation and air mobility operations, produced similar results. For 1-20 November, the entire corps had made 224 requests and had 145 requests filled in some way. Forty-six requests took more than two hours to fill, and Williamson, X Corps G-3, judged that 42 of these strikes came too late to have the anticipated results.

The X Corps' analyses, like studies submitted earlier in the year by General Almond, changed nothing. Van Fleet and Ridgway saw no immediate advantage in pressing the issue, whatever their personal views. The major influence on their commitment to the Joint Operations Center-status quo was the news from Panmunjom. The negotiators had accepted the United Nations position that the armistice line should be the line of troops when the armistice was signed, not the 38th Parallel. Each belligerent coalition would withdraw four kilometers from the point of contact and thus establish a neutral zone between the armies. Van Fleet had anticipated the agreement on 14 November and ordered that no operations by a battalion or larger formation could be mounted without the approval of the corps commander. When the negotiators signed an agreement on 25 November on the line-of-contact solution, Eighth Army interpreted the agreement as an omen of an early ceasefire. The word went forth throughout the front to hold down casualties, conserve ammunition, defend the current positions, and even to limit patrols to those areas where earlier patrols had made contact with the enemy. These rules of engagement would be in effect for at least

30 days. The instructions had "a considerably inhibitory effect on the operations of the division." They also meant that a change in the system of air support had been overtaken by events.

An examination of the fighting by the 1st Marine Division in October and November 1951 suggests how large an opportunity cost the ground forces paid for the Air Force interdiction campaign. The aggressive ground operations and use of artillery and naval gunfire demonstrated that even without close air support, the 1st Marine Division (and probably most of the U.S. Army divisions in Korea) could still inflict substantial casualties on the enemy. The Chinese might have unlimited manpower to throw into the battle, but the North Koreans did not. In two months of operations that can only be characterized as "defensive," the 1st Marine Division killed 1,117 North Koreans and captured 575 more at a cost of 87 dead or missing Marines (both American and South Korean) and 573 wounded. The 1st Marine Division order-of-battle analysts estimated that the division and air strikes had caused as many as 12,000 more casualties in the three North Korean divisions that faced the Marines. Even if wildly optimistic, the estimates were probably not completely illusory. If, for example, the Marines had killed or wounded only one-third of the enemy estimated, they still would have accounted for more than 6,000 enemy casualties at a cost of 660 losses of their own. An exchange ratio of 10:1—given the rules of engagement—is an operational achievement in any war, but the Eighth Army missed the lesson.

As the pace of the war congealed with the coming of winter and the hope of an armistice, the 1st Marine Division passed through another set of organizational milestones. It celebrated the Marine Corps' 176th birthday with the traditional ceremonies of reading John A. Lejeune's birthday message and cake-cutting; General Thomas added a special wrinkle, a one-round salute at noon 10 November from every weapon in position, which the commanding general found "very satisfying." Thomas then hosted Byers and X Corps staff for lunch.

A rifle platoon celebrates the traditional Marine Corps Birthday, 10 November, with a no-frills cake cutting on the reverse slope of battle-scared Kanmubong Ridge.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A159434

Thomas also drew satisfaction from an extensive study done by X Corps for the Department of Defense. Sensitive to Army carping about Marine tactics and casualties, Thomas could point to irrefutable statistics: in both raw number and percentages the 1st Marine Division in 1951 had one of the three lowest loss rates in the Eighth Army. Within X Corps its losses in combat were half those of the U.S. 2d Infantry Division in percentage terms and 50 percent lower in raw numbers. Between 1 June and 15 October, the Army division suffered 6,247 casualties, the Marine division, less the 1st KMC Regiment, 4,241. During the first 10 months of 1951, the 1st Marine Division had rotated 11,637 Marines out of Korea and received 13,097 replacements, which did not quite cover the losses from all sources. In the autumn of 1951 there were still almost 5,000 Marines in the division who had joined the division in 1950, but by Christmas these veterans (the vast majority technical specialists) had all gone home. By the end of December, one-third of the division's Marines had come to Korea since early September, but the division showed no signed of reduced effectiveness. The 14th Replacement Draft (2,756 officers and men) closed the gap, but the 11th ("Home for Christmas") Rotation Draft opened it again.

From the perspective of Headquarters Marine Corps and the Commanding General, Fleet Marine Forces, Pacific, the 1st Marine Division had done a splen-

did job in 1951 as a fighting organization and as a source of favorable publicity. Both Generals Cates and Shepherd visited Thomas in the last two months of 1951 and congratulated him on his successful command. By November, Shepherd knew that he would replace Cates as Commandant and he told Thomas and Krulak that he wanted both of them back in Washington to run the staff of Headquarters Marine Corps. Thomas' successor pleased the incumbent division commander: Major General John Taylor Selden, an accomplished officer who had commanded the 5th Marines on Cape Gloucester and served as the division chief of staff on Peleliu. A Virginian of "First Family" roots as well as another "mustang" of the World War I era, Selden had a deserved reputation for getting along well with the Army without compromising Marine Corps interests.

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A159279

With a resumption of the armistice talks, a lull set in along the 1st Marine Division's front in December. While patrols were sent out to maintain pressure on the enemy, work continued on winterizing bunkers and improving defensive installations, such as this machine gun position.

The change of command for X Corps showed none of the good feeling that accompanied Thomas' departure in early January 1952. On his latest visit to Korea in November, J. Lawton Collins asked Van Fleet how Byers was doing as a corps commander and whether he met the World War II standards of the Army in Europe. Van Fleet responded that Byers did not match the best corps commanders of Eisenhower's army, which meant that Byers was not Collins, Ridgway, or Van Fleet. Without warning, Byers learned from Van Fleet on 24 November at a ceremony presenting a Presidential Unit Citation to the 2d Infantry Division that Byers would be reassigned as commanding general, XVI Corps, the theater reserve force just constituted in Japan. Without ceremony or any chance to visit his subordinate commanders, Byers flew to Japan as ordered four days later, his distinguished career in eclipse. His replacement, Major General Williston B. Palmer, was a Europeanist and a Collins intimate. General Thomas remained convinced that Byers had been too friendly with the Marines for Collins' and Ridgway's taste and too assertive in demanding changes in the close air support system.

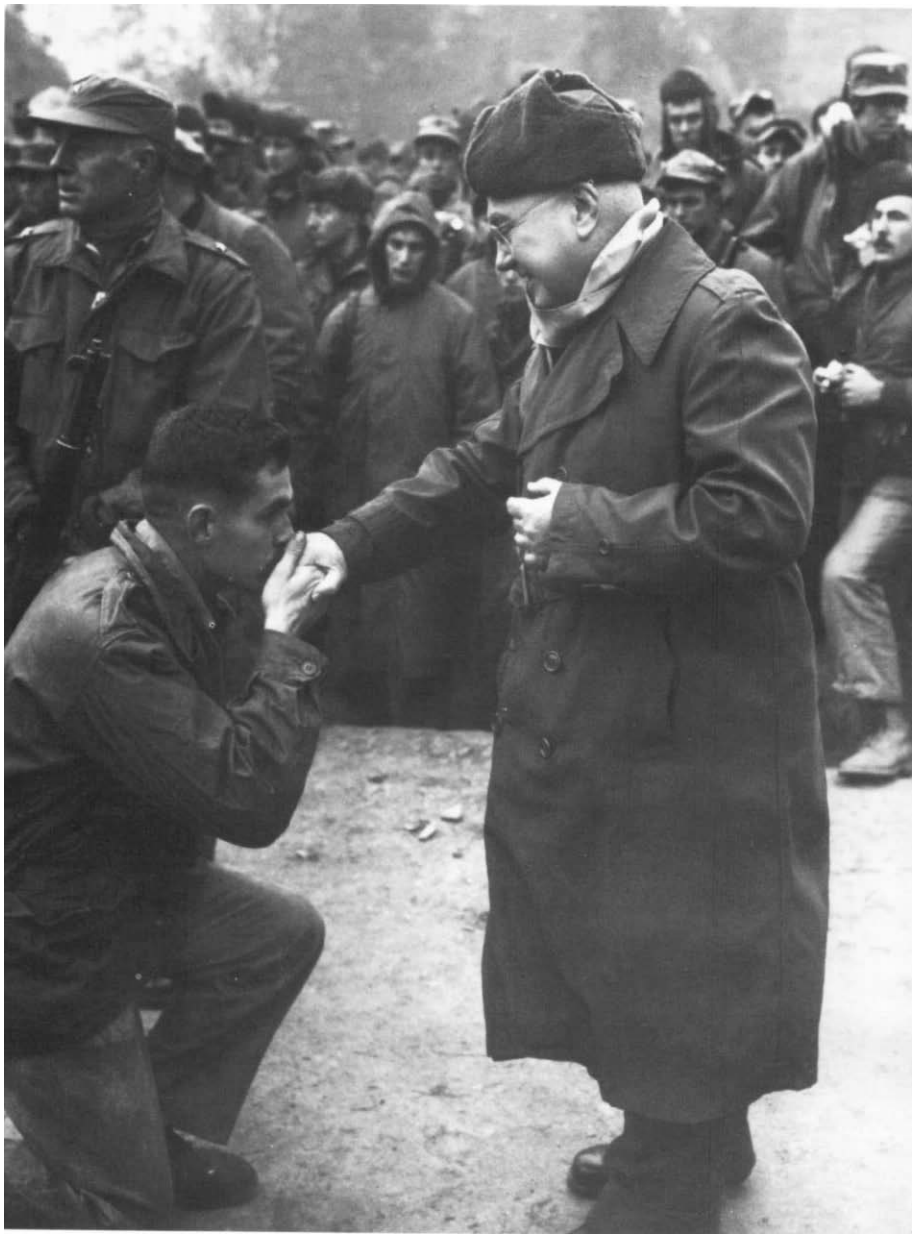
The best way to deal with the other armed forces, whether the battlefield was in Washington or the entire Pacific theater, had always been obvious to Cates, Shepherd, Thomas, and Shepherd's successor in Hawaii, Lieutenant General Franklin A. Hart. The answer was to attack and withdraw at the same time. Hart's mission was to support the 1st Marine Division and 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, but he had a second responsibility, which was to prepare a new 3d Marine Brigade and supporting aviation elements for possible use (including amphibious operations) in the Pacific. Pending legislation in Congress suggested that in 1952 the Marine Corps would add a third division and aircraft wing to the Fleet Marine Force. The Marine Corps also was investigating arming itself with tactical nuclear weapons. With Colonels Wornham, Hayward, and Nickerson on Hart's staff, the interests of the 1st Marine Division would not be ignored, but as a Service the Marine Corps was not inclined to pursue the close air support issue when the interservice relations landscape looked good for the moment and the

future of operations in Korea so uncertain. Another factor was simply that Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, and its Navy superiors, including Admiral Arthur H. Radford, Commander in Chief, Pacific, proposed that the 1st Marine Division and 1st Marine Aircraft Wing be withdrawn from Korea and placed in strategic reserve. When General Hart made his first command tour of Korea and Japan, he found the senior commanders in Korea and Japan convinced that Eighth Army would waste its Marines. The division and aircraft wing should be placed in Japan and brought to a peak state of readiness for battles that mattered.

Nothing that occurred in December 1951 along the Minnesota Line gave any clues that the war would either end or be fought with any rational purpose, as seen from the 1st Marine Division. The division's defensive posture faced no serious menace from the North Koreans, although the Communist troops became progressively more aggressive with their patrolling and use of artillery fire. A summary of one day's operations (8 December 1951) catches the winter war along the Minnesota Line. A 5th Marines patrol exchanged gunfire with a Korean patrol without known results; the regiment called in 117 rounds of naval gunfire on a bunker system and did acceptable damage to seven bunkers. The 7th Marines sent out a patrol to retrieve the body of a dead Marine and engaged in a firefight with an enemy patrol. The Korean Marines sent out two patrols, which were fired upon by machine guns in hidden bunkers, but took no casualties. The 11th Marines fired 14 observed missions on bunkers or in patrol-support. The following days were no different. On Christmas Day, the North Koreans tried to disrupt the division's hot holiday meal and a visit by Cardinal Francis J. Spellman but only drew smothering artillery and naval gunfire on the NKPA combat patrols. The next day a heavy snow slowed the action even more, and on 27 December Eighth Army announced that even though no truce agreement had been signed, the restrictive rules of engagement remained in effect.

Cpl Kevin J. Griffin receives a blessing from Cardinal Francis Spellman during the cardinal's Christmas visit to the 1st Marine Division.

National Archives Photo (USN) 80-G-436954



The dawn of a new year did not change the pattern of warfare for the 1st Marine Division. Such novelties as psychological warfare units—the masters of the surrender leaflet and the insinuating broadcast—became regular fixtures at the front, first a source of amusement and later an object of contempt. Army searchlight batteries added little light to the operations. An epidemic of boredom and carelessness spread throughout Eighth Army. To give at least a hint of battle, Van Fleet's staff dreamed up Operation Clam-Up, 9-15 February 1952, as a way to draw the Chinese

and North Koreans into an above-ground killing zone through deception. The basic concept was that the frontline battalions would either go underground or appear to withdraw from the front; allied artillery would reduce their firing to almost nothing; and the usual patrols would not go out. Presumably, the collective impression would be that the United Nations forces had fallen back to the Kansas Line. Van Fleet's grand deception did not fool the Communists—at least not much. In the 1st Marine Division sector—especially on Yoke and Kanmubong Ridges—the North Koreans sent out only patrols, which set off a series of small battles. The North Koreans also deluged the main line of resistance with artillery fire, a sure sign that they had not been fooled. For all the sound and fury the casualties showed how insignificant Clam-Up had been. For February the Marines lost 23 killed and 102 missing; they killed by count 174 Koreans and took 63 prisoners. Whether they had actually inflicted an additional estimated 1,000 more casualties was guess work.

In other aspects of the division's operations, the order-of-the-day became doing less with less. The helicopters of HMR-161 developed stress fractures in their tail assemblies, so Colonel McCutcheon grounded his squadron until the defects could be corrected. The lack of helicopters slowed the modest counter-guerrilla campaign in the rear areas. Certainly the North Korean lines had become impenetrable. The G-2 estimated that 21 infantry battalions and nine artillery battalions, all embedded in the ridges to the north of the main line of resistance, faced the division. Although the Marines did not yet know what great plans Eighth Army held for them, their campaign in east-central Korean was ending not with a bang, but a shrug.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A159378

Oblivious to the wet snow and North Korean harassing fires, Marines line up for a Christmas dinner with all the trimmings.

In Retrospect

From its initiation in battle as part of the U.S. Eighth Army in January 1951 until its eventual movement to an entirely new zone of action in western Korea in early 1952, the 1st Marine Division fought with as much distinction as its 1950 edition, the division that landed at Inchon, liberated Seoul, chased the North Korean army away from Korea's northeast coast, and blunted the first appearance of the Chinese army in the battle of Sudong. The advance to the Chosin (Changjin) Reservoir and "the attack in another direction" to Hungnam added more honors to the 1st Marine Division and created a tradition of valor and professionalism that shares pride of place in the memory of Marines with Tarawa and Iwo Jima.

Yet the 1st Marine Division in 1951 added a new and equally useful tradition of valor: that a Marine division in war of diminishing rewards, fought under unpleasant physical conditions and uneven Army leadership, could maintain the Corps' highest standards even without the constant stroking of admiring reporters and camera crews. To be sure, the division suffered more casualties in all

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A159018

Marine TSgt John Pierce gives some North Korean soldiers hiding in a bunker a warm reception as he throws a white phosphorus grenade into the bunker's entrance.

categories per month of combat in 1950 (1,557) than it did in 1951 (747) or 1952 (712), but there is no convincing evidence that the division inflicted more casualties upon the enemy in 1950 (per month of combat) than it did in 1951, only that its battles had been more dramatic and photogenic.

In an official sense, the 1st Marine Division in 1951 received the same recognition as its 1950-predecessor, the award of a Presidential Unit Citation "for extraordinary heroism in action against enemy aggressor forces in Korea." There are, however, no battles in the citation, no identified geographic locations like Hill 902 or Taeu-san and Taeam-san Mountains or Yoke Ridge or Kanmubong Ridge. The only geographic location mentioned is the Punchbowl and some vague terrain "north of the Hwachon Reservoir." The citation gives only three sets of dates: 21-26 April, 16 May-30 June, and 11-25 September 1951. There is no book like Andrew Geer's *The New Breed* to honor the 1951 Marines, no collection of memorable photographs by David Douglas Duncan to freeze the fatigue and horror of war on the faces of young men turned old in a matter of days in December 1950. The same faces could have been found on Hill 924 or Hill 812 if anyone had looked.

In addition to adding to the heritage of heroism in the second year of the Korean War, the 1st Marine Division and the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing made history for its introduction of the transport helicopter to American ground operations. In January 1951, the Landing Force Tactics and Techniques Board, Marine Landing Force Development Center, approved the first doctrinal study of vertical envelopment in *Employment of Assault Transport Helicopters*. When the first operational squadron, HMR-161, was formed, its original name was "Marine Assault Helicopter Squadron 161" until Marine aviation bureaucrats protested that they and the Navy thought the more comprehensive designator of

"transport" was more appropriate. The name mattered less than the mission. When the squadron began operations with Windmill I (13 September 1951) until the tail section fractures grounded the helicopters on 28 February 1952, HMR-161 conducted six major operations and many hundreds of other less dramatic flights with troops, weapons, and supplies. A concept developed for amphibious assaults received its first test among the mountains of Korea, an irony that bothered no one among the community of Marine helicopter pioneers. The future arrived to the sound of flailing rotors and storms of ground-effect dirt on a bit of ground on the lower slopes of Hill 749, Kanmubong Ridge. Today the site is somewhere within the Demilitarized Zone.

What make the fighting qualities of the 1st Marine Division, aided without stint by VMO-6 and HMR-161, even more remarkable was the growing difficulty in obtaining close air support and the suspicion after July 1951 that there would be a substitute for victory. As the 1st Marine Division proved in September 1951, the young riflemen and platoon commanders might not be ready to kill and die for a stalemate, but they were more than willing to kill and die for each other, and that was what was important to them then. And it still is.

An alert Marine rifleman, framed in the doorway, provides cover while another Marine searches through an abandoned Korean farmhouse. Guerrilla and infiltrator attacks forced all Marine units to mount security patrols and to defend their positions.

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A159239

Essay on Sources

The archival sources on the 1st Marine Division, X Corps, and the U.S. Eighth Army for the campaign of 1951-1952 are voluminous, but the place to start is the monthly organizational historical reports, usually containing annexes of other reports and studies, submitted to the service headquarters for permanent retention and reference use. For the 1st Marine Division, I used the monthly historical reports for April 1951 through February 1952, supplemented by similar monthly historical reports made by Headquarters, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific (FMFPac), for the same period. Both 1st Marine Division and FMFPac reports included invaluable appendices. Of special use for this study were two Type C Special Reports:"Employment of Assault Helicopters," 4 October and 15 Novem-ber 1951; and "1st KMC Regiment and Its Relationship to the 1st Marine Division, September 1950-May 1952," 13 June 1952. The FMFPac historical reports include memoranda for the record of the weekly staff conferences and the travel reports for Generals Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., and Franklin H. Hart for their visits to Korea and Japan. The original reports are in the Records of Marine Corps Field Commands, Record Group 127, in the National Archives, but copies may often be found at the Marine Corps Historical Center, Washington, D.C., and the Marine Corps Research Center, Quantico, Virginia.

The X Corps Command Reports for April 1951- February 1952 may be found in Command Reports, 1949-1954, Records of U.S. Army Field Commands, Record Group 407, but these records— which include such things as the "Commanding General's Diary," which is schedule and commentary as maintained by his aides— can also be found in duplicate form in key Army educational and research repositories like the U.S. Army Center of Military History, Ft. Leslie J. McNair, Washington, D.C. and the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. Like their Marine Corps counterparts, the monthly "Com-mand Reports" include special studies, which for X Corps included analyses of close air support and personnel matters.

The senior Army and Marine commanders in Korea, 1951-1952, maintained extensive personal files that are open to researchers, and I used these invaluable sources extensively. General Matthew B. Ridgway, Commander, United Nations Command, and Commanding General, Far East Command during this study, kept extensive correspondence and memoranda files, Matthew B. Ridgway Papers, U.S. Army Military History Institute (MHI). His successor as Commanding General, U.S. Eighth Army, General James A. Van Fleet, maintained a personal journal and conducted an extensive correspondence with his military and civilian contemporaries, all preserved in the James A. Van Fleet Papers, George C. Marshall Library, Lexington, Virginia. Van Fleet, like Ridgway, kept essential data, studies, maps, memoranda of staff meetings, and orders/instructions, but unlike Ridgway, he never wrote a book about the war. His papers are especially important on interservice and intercoalition command relations.

Lieutenant Generals Edward M. Almond and Clovis E. Byers saved extensive files for their periods of command of the U.S. X Corps, which included all but two months of the period covered in this study. Especially important is Headquarters, X Corps, "Battle of the Soyang River," June 1951, a special report with extensive intelligence studies and fire support studies. Almond's papers are essential sources on the conduct of the Korean War. Almond did an especially good job at creating subject files, two of the most important containing material on close air support and artillery employment. Like Van Fleet, Almond kept extensive personal notes. After his retirement Almond became a subject of extensive interviewing, the most exhaustive by Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Ferguson, USA (Almond's son-in-law), Professor D. Clayton James, and John Toland, and these transcripts are attached to the Almond Papers and the Douglas MacArthur Papers, the General Douglas MacArthur Library and Memorial, Norfolk, Virginia. Throughout his retirement Almond continued to collect documents and add them to his collection. A complementary view of X Corps may be found in the oral memoir of General Frank T. Mildren, the corps G-3 in 1951, Senior Officers Oral History Project, 1980, MHI. The Clovis E. Byers Papers are held at the library of the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, Stanford, California, and include his copies of the corps reports and studies and his "Commander's Diary." Byers also corresponded with many of his Army contemporaries and friends in other services. He kept a personal diary that includes the touching story of his "reassignment." Byers' comments on the South Korean divisions in his corps are important in giving a full picture of corps operations.

General Gerald C. Thomas did not maintain the vast correspondence files or intimate diaries of his Army contemporaries, but he wrote his wife, his brother, and his oldest son and son-in-law, both Marine officers and both 1952 members of the 1st Marine Division. The Thomas family allowed me to read this correspondence while I did research on *In Many a Strife: General Gerald C. Thomas and the U.S. Marine Corps, 1917-1956* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1993). General Thomas also left multiple, extensive oral histories, 1966-1979, and assorted files, now part of the Oral History Collection and Personal Papers Collection at the Historical Center and Research Center. Other personal collections and oral histories from important sources are the late General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., USMC; Lieutenant General Herman Nickerson, USMC (Ret); Lieutenant