



Korea: One POW's Story

Lloyd Roberts

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“After returning from Korea, I started a family and immersed myself in school. Nevertheless, a day seldom passed without something triggering a flashback to Korea - if only briefly. This book is intended to chronicle life as a POW, from the initial appalling conditions and near total neglect by the Chinese, to the almost surreal final year when conditions somewhat resembled a boy scout camp.” – *Lloyd Roberts (the author)*

As the military situation worsened in Korea due to the entry of the Chinese in the winter of '50/'51, thousands of men were called up. Having spent prior time in the service, the author was recalled and sent directly to Korea. He joined the US Army 2nd Infantry Division to replace the hundreds killed and wounded in two previous actions at Kunuri and Hoengsong.

The author saw light action from March through April as the Chinese were pushed back, giving ground in preparation for their big Spring offensive in late April and May. The 2nd Division bore the brunt of the attack which culminated in the so-called 'May Massacre' below the Soyong River where two battalions were surrounded with heavy losses in men and equipment. Several hundred men were captured along with the author. This began a 27 month journey which is chronicled in this book. In the beginning the POWs were intermingled with the Chinese and subjected to the same artillery, bombing, strafing and napalm as our Air Force pummeled the Chinese.

This book is intended to depict the life of the POWs as the author experienced it. The initial conditions that first year were appalling, with high death rates and rampant disease and filth. With the start of the peace talks, conditions improved until the last year when the food was plentiful and almost no one was sick. The dramatic changes in the food and living conditions reflected the Chinese agenda to use the POWs as pawns in the Cold War. The POWs were constantly subjected to attempts at brainwashing and more subtle intimidation to support their policies in Korea. In the end, the Chinese failed at achieving their goals but at least the POW's lives improved.

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