

Virginians at War

Korean War: Back from the Yalu

Resource Packet

Contains: Glossary, Timeline, Images, Discussion Questions, Additional Resources

Program Description: In *Virginians at War - Back from the Yalu*, Virginian veterans of the Korean War share harrowing stories of facing the extreme cold and overwhelming numbers of enemies while fighting a back-and-forth war on the Korean Peninsula. Released on the 70th Anniversary of the beginning of the Korean War, this film reminds us of the desperate nature of a conflict that never truly ended and has become largely known as “The Forgotten War.”

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Length: 23:16

Streaming link: <https://vimeo.com/431576931>

Featured Speakers:

SGT James Adkins, Richmond
LT COL Albert L. Belbusti, Virginia Beach
CPL William Berkley, Danville
CPL Charles Brammer, Glen Allen
CPL Freddie J. Church, Keysville
1st SGT Charlie B. Davidson, Richmond
CPL Vernon Good, Broadway
CPL Robert O. Gray, Roanoke
COL Alan Walter Jones, Jr., Ft. Belvoir
BGEN James F. Lawrence, Ft. Belvoir
CPL Davis E. Newman, Danville
MSYSGT Wm. F. O'Brien, Manassas
CPL James A. Ransone, Jr., Powhatan
SGT Leroy L. Shook, Keysville
PFC Duane D. Trowbridge, Virginia Beach
BM3 Alvin B. Waitt, Keysville
COL William C. Wood, Ft. Belvoir



GLOSSARY

IMPORTANT TERMS

- **38th Parallel:** the name for latitude 38 degrees N, that separated North Korea from South Korea prior to the invasion of South Korea by North Korea in 1950.
- **Armistice:** an agreement between sides in a war to ceasefire for a certain amount of time.
- **Battle of Chosin Reservoir:** November 27-December 13, 1950; fought when the Chinese forces surrounded UN forces near the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea. UN forces broke through with support from the US Army and US Marines but all suffered heavy casualties. UN forces were pushed out of North Korea, ending the expectation of total victory.
- **Communism:** an economic philosophy based on the concept of community or government ownership of business; governments that took on this economic system during the Cold War era included the Soviet Union and China.
- **Corsair:** the Vought F4U Corsair was an American fighter plane used most heavily in WWII and the Korean War.
- **Democracy:** a system of government in which the people exercise the authority of government; democratic governments in the Cold War era included the United States.
- **Shoepac:** a waterproof laced leather boot worn during cold weather.
- **United Nations:** an international organization formed after World War II to increase communication and cooperation between the world's countries and to promote future peace and justice.

US MILITARY LEADERS/GROUPS

- **1st Marine Division:** part of the US X Corps
- **7th Infantry Division:** part of the US X Corps
- **General Edward Almond:** the commander of the US X Corps during the Korean War
- **General Douglas MacArthur:** the commander of UN forces in Korea from 1950-1951.
- **US X Corps:** the force that invaded Korea at Inchon in November 1950, and who were surrounded and mostly defeated by the Chinese in North Korea during November-December 1950.

IMPORTANT PLACES

- Chosin Reservoir (also Changjin Reservoir)
- Hagaru
- Hamhung
- Hungnam
- Kunu-ri
- Yalu River
- Yudam-Ni






KOREAN WAR TIMELINE

- **August 14, 1945:** World War II ends with Japan's surrender
- **June 25, 1950:** North Korea crosses the 38th Parallel and invades South Korea
- **June 27, 1950:** United Nations passes Resolution 83
- **September 12, 1950:** North Korea reaches its furthest invasion point at the Pusan Perimeter
- **September 15, 1950:** UN forces land at Inchon
- **September 25, 1950:** Seoul is liberated by UN forces
- **October 25, 1950:** Chinese troops arrive in South Korea, begin pushing UN forces South
- **November 27-December 13, 1950:** Battle of Chosin Reservoir
- **January 4, 1951:** Chinese and North Korean forces recapture Seoul
- **March 14, 1951:** Seoul is again liberated by UN forces
- **August 31-September 21, 1951:** Battle of the Punchbowl
- **September 13-October 15, 1951:** Battle of Heartbreak Ridge
- **October 6-15, 1952:** Battle of White Horse
- **October 14-November 25, 1952:** Battle of Triangle Hill
- **April 16-18, 1953:** Battle of Pork Chop Hill (UN victory)
- **July 6-11, 1953:** Battle of Pork Chop Hill (Chinese victory)
- **July 27, 1953:** Armistice signed by representatives of the United Nations, North Korea, and China at Panmunjom, North Korea

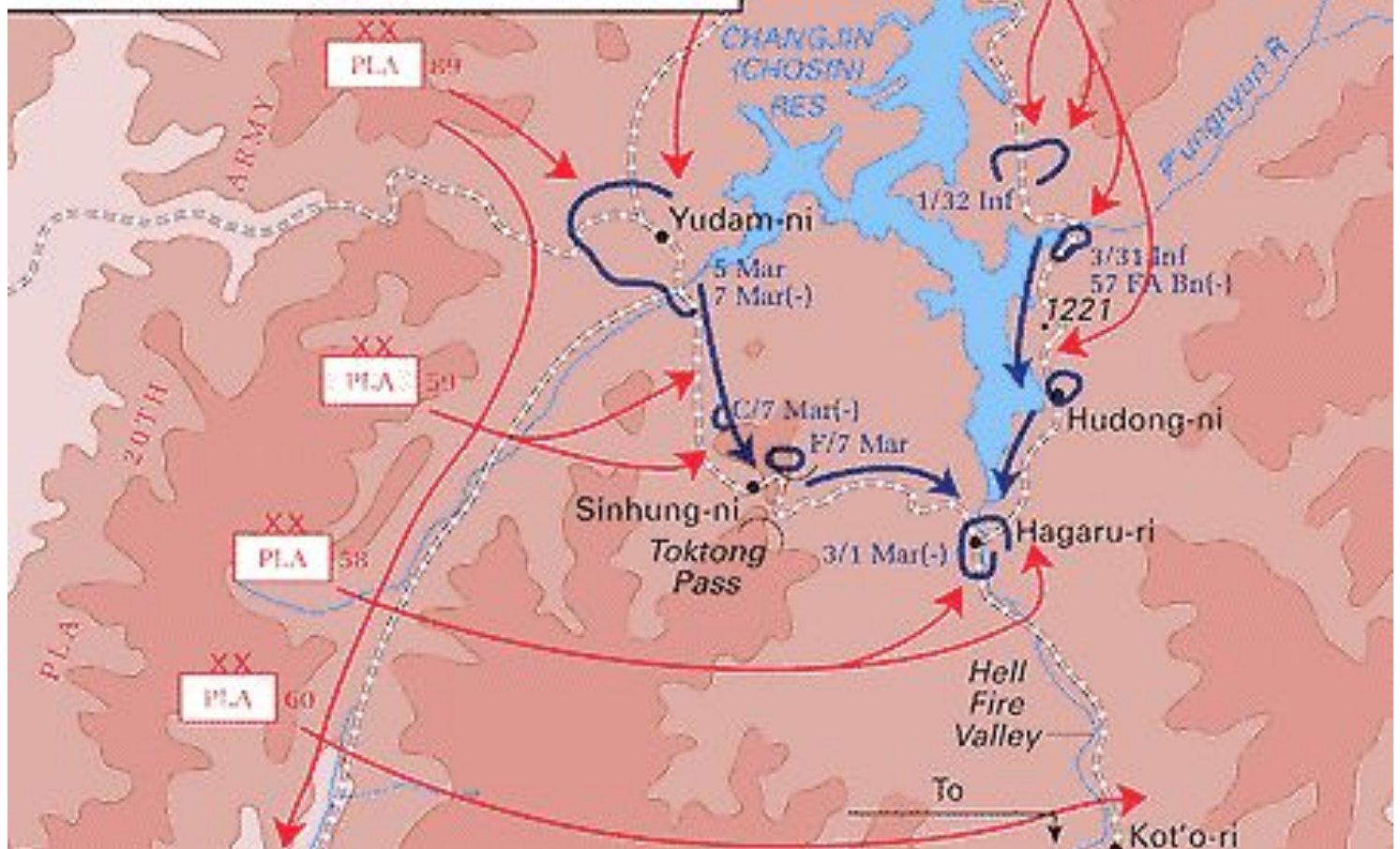
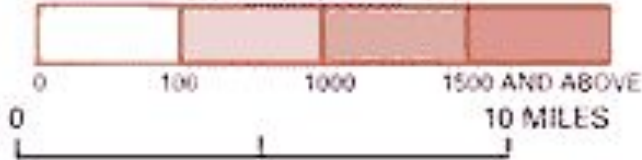


US Army Center of Military History

BATTLE OF THE CHANGJIN RESERVOIR 27-29 November 1950

-  U.S. Positions, Night, 27 Nov
-  Axis of Chinese Attacks,
Night, 27 Nov-Morning, 29 Nov
-  Route of Withdrawal to Hagaru-ri

ELEVATIONS IN METERS



US Army Center of Military History

Article about CPL Robert O. Gray, featured in the film

Roanoke Soldier, Missing Two Years, Seen in Photo From Red POW Camp

By MELVILLE CARICO

An anxious mother and father last night clutched a news photograph of three American POWs in Korea brought them by The Roanoke Times.

"That's him. Sure, that's him," said the father of the stocky 21-year-old on the left.

Thus, for the first time in almost two years, Mr. and Mrs. F. G. Gray, 2214 Morris Ave., S. W., felt sure their son, Pfc. Robert O. Gray, is alive.

Telegram Received

The last they had heard from him was a Defense Department telegram on Dec. 4, 1950, saying Bob was on a Red POW list but advising them not to place too much hope in its accuracy.

An earlier telegram on Nov. 24, 1950, had advised them that their son had been missing in action since Nov. 4.

"Yes, that's him, all right," the soldier's mother agreed.

The photograph of three Americans enjoying some sun as they sat on a makeshift diving board in a Communist POW camp somewhere in Korea was made by Associated Press Photographer Frank Noel, himself a prisoner of the Communists.

Passed By Censors

It reached The Times through the Associated Press after being

(Continued on Page 4, Col. 7.)



ROANOKER IS RED PRISONER—Pfc. Robert O. Gray, left, sits with two other Americans on a makeshift diving board at a Communist POW camp in Korea. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Gray, 2214 Morris Ave., S. W., had not heard from him since he was reported missing in action two years ago. The other men are Pvt. C. R. Smith, Jacksonville, Fla., center and Pvt. John C. Augliera, Boston, Mass. The picture, received in Tokyo Oct. 9, was made by Associated Press Photographer Frank Noel, himself a prisoner of the Communists, and was passed by UN and Communist censors.

Roanoke Times, 10/15/1952

Roanoke Soldier Reported Prisoner

ROANOKE, June 6—Private First Class Robert O. Gray, son of Mr. and Mrs. F. G. Gray, of Roanoke, is alive and a prisoner in Korea, according to a radio broadcast heard here yesterday morning.

Private Gray has been missing in action since November 4, according to the Department of Defense. And Mrs. Gray hasn't heard directly from her son for eight months. He was reported wounded slightly on September 20, and returned to duty after hospitalization.

The broadcast, from a Roanoke station, was based on an Associated Press dispatch from San Francisco, which said that a Chinese broadcast had included messages from four prisoners of war, including Gray, saying they were being well treated. Neighbors of Mrs. Gray began telephoning and coming to her home to tell her the good news at about 6 A. M. yesterday.

Richmond Times-Dispatch, 6/7/1951

MISSING ROANOKER PRISONER OF REDS

Robert Gray Sends Radio Message to Mother

A 19-year-old Roanoke boy reported missing in action is alive and is being held a prisoner of war by Communist forces in Korea.

He is Pfc. Robert O. Gray, son of Mrs. F. G. Gray, 2214 Norris Ave., S. W. The youth was reported missing in action in Korea seven months ago.

The news that he is a prisoner was heard on a radio broadcast over a Roanoke station yesterday morning. Neighbors heard the report at 6 a.m. and called Mrs. Gray.

It was the first word she had received of her son since he was reported Nov. 23 by the Department of Defense as missing in action in Korea since Nov. 4.

The mother recalled that it was eight months Monday since she had heard directly from her son. He was reported slightly wounded Sept. 20 and returned to active duty after hospitalization.

Normally, she said, her husband would have had the radio turned on and she would have heard the news. But Mr. Gray is on vacation and was not at home.

The radio broadcast over a Roanoke station was based on the following Associated Press radio news dispatch:

"San Francisco (AP)—A Red China radio broadcast has carried a message from a Roanoke soldier said to be a prisoner of war in Korea. The broadcast heard by Associated Press in San Francisco included greetings from Pvt. Robert Gray to his mother at 2214 Morris Ave., S. W., Roanoke, Va.

"Gray's message was one of four from American prisoners of war saying they were being well treated."

Roanoke Times, 6/6/1951

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why was the Korean peninsula divided after World War II? What is significant about the participation of United Nations troops?
2. Why do you think the Korean War is called “the Forgotten War?” What is unique about the Korean War that gave it this name?
3. The Battle of Chosin Reservoir led to the retreat of American forces from North Korean territories, but also caused nearly 80,000 Chinese casualties, rendering portions of the Chinese Army ineffective in combat for months. Do you think that this was a UN or a North Korean/Chinese victory? How do you define “victory?”
4. How does the war in Korea relate to the Cold War as a whole? Were the goals of the United States met? The United Nations? China and the Soviet Union? How does this impact the relationship between the world and North and South Korea today?
5. What is the role of a place like the Virginia War Memorial in helping us remember events like the Korean War? What are some other ways to remember?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

To learn more about the experiences of Virginians in the Korean War, view Virginians at War: Korean War - Inchon Landing, Pusan Breakout and Korean War - Hill Fights at vawarmemorial.org. Looking to do more research? Check out the links below.

- <https://www.britannica.com/event/Korean-War>
- https://www.ducksters.com/history/cold_war/korean_war.php (Elementary level)
- <https://www.koreanwarvetismemorial.org/the-memorial/>
- https://www.army.mil/article/47963/combating_cold_korea
- <https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/1d561db0-05bb-4838-8048-fc045db69c14/the-korean-war/> (Grades 6-12)
- <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/postwarera/1950s-america/a/the-korean-war>
- <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/postwarera/1950s-america/v/korean-war-overview> (High School level)
- Propaganda during the Korean War:
<http://www.digitalhorizonsonline.org/digital/collection/ndsu-korea>
- Eisenhower Memo (public opinion):
<https://www.eisenhowerlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/research/online-documents/korean-war/public-opinion-1953-06-02.pdf>

