

NOTES REGARDING UNCLE CARL'S EXPERIENCES IN KOREA



Carl Edward Bower-right-in the Philippines or Japan, he said, goofing off in his silk pajamas.



Carl Edward Bowers

Great Uncle Carl was the ninth child of ten born to William Edgar Bowers and Jerusa Edith Grant, being born in Knoxville on 13 October 1932. Uncle Carl passed away at 1.15 a.m. or so on 2 October 2008 at a Hospice Home in Tampa of lung cancer. He resided in Tampa, Florida with his son Ricky. He was one of five brothers who served in the military, his service being with the Army during the Korean War. Great Uncles Robert, Frank and Melvin Bowers served during W.W.II, and Great Uncle Art Bowers served in the Army and later the Air Force, mainly after the Korean War. Robert was a tail-gunner in a B-17 bomber called the Thunderbird (97th Bomb Group/340th Bomb Squadron) Frank was with the 3rd Army under General George Patton as a mechanic and half-track driver and Melvin was a medic in the Army with the 79th Infantry Division.



Carl Edward Bowers-82nd Airborne

Uncle Carl said that he enlisted at the age of fifteen in the Army in Knoxville. He lied about his age and said that he was born in 1930. He enlisted on 10 May 1948 and his serial number was RA14297164. During a conversation on 19 July 2007 Uncle Carl said he had a nice looking, blond teacher and one day she said, "Carl, what are you thinking about?" and his reply would have made a sailor blush. He was told to go home and later that day had to return to school with his dad. The principal told Carl to wait outside and the principal and his dad seemed to talk forever he said. The principle told Uncle Carl that he would never amount to anything. After the powwow, Carl's dad said "Come on" and they went outside where his dad gave him a street car token and said "You know the way home." Instead of going home Uncle Carl took the street car uptown to the recruiting station, took his physical, filled out the necessary paper work and was taken back home in a staff car in order for his parents to sign for him. He had told the recruiters that he was seventeen, thus requiring his parent's signature. His mother refused to sign, but his father didn't. Carl later went uptown to catch the bus for boot camp. His brother and sister-in-law, Melvin and Nell Bowers, tried to talk him out of going. "The reason I joined was because my dad called me stupid" Uncle Carl said.

Carl's first stop was Fort Jackson (Tar Heel) South Carolina. He next went to Fort Benning, Georgia for jump training. Next he went to Fort Sam Houston, Texas to the Brooke Army Medical Center/Medical Field Service School and graduated on 24 September 1948 as a Medical Aid Man. He joined the 82nd Airborne, made his jumps and earned his wings, but broke his ankle during a jump at Poke Field at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. He stated they were given the green light too soon and dropped into the wrong zone, thus landing on the airstrip. He made his jumps from C-47's. Carl said "During training you'd wear your zippered jump boots, all shined up and they would run you through a mud puddle and be waiting for you on the other side and then ask you why you got your boots muddy. They would make you run around

the parade ground when you got out of step yelling "I don't know my left from my right." "Make you feel so stupid," he said.

From Fort Bragg he was given a five-day leave or lay over in route to the Philippines and went home. He said when his leave was over "Dad went to the bus station with me and mom made me a big ole sack lunch and boy was I glad that she did." He had sent his parents all of his money and didn't have a penny for the trip. The lunch ran out by the time he had arrived at Camp Stoneman in California. He and a buddy went to a bar and the only food they served was chili, so they had chili and wine.



Carl Edward Bowers-1st Cavalry Division

Carl boarded the Liberty Ship U.S.S. Greely and headed to the Philippines. He was in the Philippines in September or October of 1949. Related that he swam in McArthur's swimming pool, but he wasn't there at the time. Uncle Carl said that he started off in the Philippines hunting "Huks" or guerillas. This was necessary in order to keep the Huks from harming Philippino and American officials. The Huks wanted valuables and often ambushed convoys and kidnapped these officials for ransom. The Huks were first an organization of Philipinos dedicated to the defeat of Japan, but later became a Communist organization dedicated to turning the Philippines into a Communist country. General Lansdale was instrumental in their defeat. Uncle Carl said that he was in the Philippines a short time because he "got into trouble." He and another buddy from his unit were at a bar/ house of ill repute called the Greenhouse in Guadalupe drinking Peso Gin and raising hell, just having a good time. Some members of the Philippine Army, Philippino Scouts, came in and started raising hell and a couple of the Philippine soldiers got killed. Uncle Carl said on 11 May 2007 that they were accused of killing the scouts. The scouts, he said, thought they "owned the world," and if they did kill them they "probably needed it." He said that this was in December and that they were shipped out that night to Japan to keep the Philippine Government from getting "ahold" of them. Said he probably would still be there if he hadn't left. When he arrived in Japan it was cold as hell and his only clothing was his lightweight or summer-weight uniform. "I was standing at that railroad station platform just a shivering," he said. "A woman with the U.S.O. came over and put her overcoat around me.



Carl Bowers, far right, in Japan



Carl Edward Bowers-far left

He spent about nineteen months in Japan, stationed near Tokyo in Osaka at Camp Drake I believe. Records show that he completed a class, Training in Military Justice, Course B, on 25 October 1949. I'm not sure where this class was taken, but the heading on the record said "HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY PHIL. SCOUT HOSPITAL, APO 1105. Carl's unit APO is listed as 1105. This may have occurred in the Philippines or in Japan. Once in Japan Carl joined up with the 8th Engineers, lived on Mt. Fuji and retrieved the bodies of servicemen or civilians when their planes crashed. While in Osaka, Japan he attended the Medical Department Technicians School/28th General Hospital and completed the Specialized Training Course for Medial Technician/Class # 21 on 29 September 1949. On 25 January 1950 an order from Headquarters 8th Engineers Combat Battalion, APO 201 directed that "certain erroneous MO'S and

re-designation or assignment of appropriate MO's" be changed. Uncle Carl is listed with a Medical Detachment and his MO was changed from 0409 to 0666. Not sure what the change meant.

"On a Sunday while in Osaka we were told to put all of our gear into our footlockers. They wrapped up our footlockers in plain tarpaper and then strapped them up and sent them back home. Mine went to Hoitt Avenue. I don't know what happened to all of the stuff in it. It was open when I got home. On Monday we were sent to the armory and given live ammo. I said, "oh shit," I knew something was up. We boarded a L.S.T. and then went over the side of these, down the nets, to small landing crafts; the kind that had the fronts that went down." They made a landing above Taegu at Pohang-Dong. Uncle Carl said that he was with the First Cavalry Division, 8th Engineers, and Charlie Company, or Sandbag Charlie as was their call sign when he went to Korea in July of 1950. He was in a Ranger unit of 18 men as a medic and demolitions expert. He carried an M1, clips of ammo, an aid bag on his left hip and 30 pounds of C3 explosives on his right hip. "One man carried the friction primers, one the explosives, and one the caps" he said.

War Diary 10 July 1950: *C Company ordered to Camp Zama and attached to 8th Cavalry.* (Camp Zama is located about 25 miles southwest of central Tokyo, Honshu Japan)

War Diary 12 July 1950: *C Company ordered from Camp Zama and embarked at Opama, Japan.*

War Diary 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 July 1950: *Battalion at sea.*

War Diary 18 July 1950: *Battalion less second and third lifts, debarked at Pohang-Dong, Korea and moved by motor convoy to Togu-Dong.*

War Diary 21 July 1950: *Battalion moved by motor convoy to Paegak-tong. C remaining with 8th RCT.*

According to Frank H. Armstrong the 8th Cavalry Regiment, with C Company, was the first to land.

Uncle Carl said he landed at Tabu-dong behind the Chinese and on to Kaesong on the 38th Parallel. (*Pohang-dong landing 18 July 1950*) Got hit hard and pushed back to Taegu. He said that the first man killed in their group after landing on the beachhead above Taegu was **William W. Mims**, who was killed while out on patrol. Uncle Carl said they had just dug in and that Mims was "killed the first night there by a sniper or something; he was shot in the head." On 19 July 2007 Uncle Carl related to me that Mims was killed by a sentry, shot with an M1. He said "I knew he wouldn't make it, had a hole in his helmet. Someone was nervous or jumpy." (*This story was confirmed during a conversation on 23 July 2007 with John Thomas Stevens of Wheelersburg, Ohio. He remembered the incident, was with Co. C, 8th Engineers, and also won a Silver Star for knocking out a tank using Daisy Chains. Mims was from Wayne, Michigan.*)

War Diary 26 July 1950: *All elements of the Battalion relieved from RCT attachment and regrouped as Battalion with Bn Forward CP located in vicinity of Taeryong-dong (1130-1470.0) PFC William Mims, "C", killed in action on outpost duty.*

The Marines landed at Inchon for support and pushed the Chinese and North Koreans all the way to the Yalu River. Uncle Carl stated that he landed during the Taegu/Pyongyang landing. He didn't participate in the Inchon Landing because he was already there. Said they were in the ditches beside the road when the Marines landed at Inchon. Said they cussed each other back and forth like they do, just jawing. He alluded to the Marines having the attitude that they were going to take care of business. Uncle Carl said the Marines came back down that same road later after being in action and said, "they looked worse than we did."

In a conversation with Uncle Carl on 11 May 2007 he mentioned an incident involving a private by the name of **Vernon C. Hardin**. According to Uncle Carl they were "clearing a minefield so the infantry could come in. We were standing around a bare tree when a mortar shell hit the top of the tree and exploded. We hit the ground," he said. Hardin was hit by a piece of shrapnel in the chest, the right lung. Uncle Carl said, "He was breathing through the hole in his chest. He died before I could get a Vaseline gauze on the hole in his chest." The account in Frank H. Armstrong's book, he said, is wrong. It states that they were unaware of what had caused Hardin's death or that he had been wounded at the time. (*I found reference to Vernon C. Hardin which states that he was from Unicoi, Tennessee.*)

War Diary 10-11 October 1950: *In part mentions that while attempting to clear mines north of Kaesong "C" ran into heavy small arms and mortar fire. Notes state that "C" again ran into heavy fire while attempting to clear mine fields and had one man KIA in the process. KIA = Private Vernon C. Hardin.*

Talked to Uncle Carl by phone a few days ago (Nov. 19, 2002) and he said that he had been shot through the knee, saying that the bullet had entered above the knee and came out below the knee. He was also

wounded by a mortar round in fighting during the Battle of the Walled City, or Ka-san, He was wounded in the foot and back, which required the removal of part of his intestines, I believe. This battle occurred during the first couple of days of September 1950. In a conversation on 25 April 2007 I asked Uncle Carl about being shot in the knee and where this occurred. He stated that he was shot in the knee during the Battle of the Walled City as well. Carl said, "Someone yelled medic and I went over to him. As soon as I started to stand up my right leg buckled out from under me. I got shot right between the groin and the knee. It came out below the knee. Then a mortar shell blew up behind me. The Marines had to take me out. They flew me out on a helicopter on one of those canvas stretchers on the side of the helicopter; liked to have scared me to death." He said that his Purple Heart was thrown on the litter he was being carried away on, but couldn't figure out where it had went. Uncle Carl also stated that he was sent to Osaka, Japan to recover and was then sent back to Korea. I told him that our mutual ancestor, **Alexander Black**, who served with the 16th Georgia Confederate Infantry, had been shot in the knee at the battle of The Wilderness. Uncle Carl said, "They must not like our knees." I told him the Chinese were short anyway and shot low and he said that they were either short or "I just wasn't running fast enough."



**Carl E. Bowers picture to mom in Knoxville
Back says "Me and my meat wagon."**

I asked Uncle Carl how he obtained a large cut on his arm and he related that one of the enemy jumped into a foxhole with him and cut his arm. I asked him what became of the enemy and he said, "I choked the bastard. They buried the gook later."

When marching, Carl said, they had to spread out and they would be marching and all of a sudden the rice paddies would "come alive" with the Chinese, who would be hiding under the water, breathing through reeds. Said the Chinese would start blowing horns to "unnerve" them, the American soldiers. "They would blow a horn over here and then over there, then nothing..... Silence." The Chinese would attack in waves. The front waves would be armed but the second wave would not be armed. They picked up the weapons of those who were mowed down. Sometimes the Chinese would blow the horns and nothing would happen. "Lots of times at night they would sneak up on you in masses."

He stated that North Korea in the wintertime was cold. "We got two cans of beer once, couldn't dig a fox-hole so we slept on the ground in our sleeping bags. I woke up and thought this is nice and warm. When I unzipped my sleeping bag snow fell in on me and I found my beer was frozen."

He was involved in the retreat from the Chosen Reservoir. The Army went to the power plant and the Marines went to the Chosen Reservoir. They were then pushed all the way back to the 38th Parallel. Uncle Carl recalls that a C-47 came over and someone on a loud speaker from within the aircraft told them that it was "every man for himself." He said they yelled "All American personnel head south." Uncle Carl said, "Sometimes we didn't even know which way south was, the Chinese would be blowing horns and whistles." Carl took off with another guy and they were captured by the Chinese and put into a cold, dark cave. When they crawled in they discovered that there was someone else in the cave with them with a wounded leg. It was dark, but they treated him and could not understand him. Later they pulled the wounded man out and found that he was a R.O.K. (Republic of Korea) soldier. He said the Chinese didn't feed them and they later escaped capture.

Uncle Carl stated that he didn't know how many times they went back and forth to the 38th Parallel, "We went all over Korea, up and down, back and forth." He told me that being there in Korea during the winter, the Chosen Reservoir, etc. was the coldest he had ever been and that his toes and finger tips were frostbit and they still bother him today when it's cold, turn black. He said that his outfit was annihilated on two different occasions with 90% casualties.

I asked Uncle Carl if he ever made it to the Yalu River and he said "Yeah, I went to the Yalu River, went across it too; that's when McArthur got fired." I, Joe Mode, didn't think we were supposed to be on that side of the river and asked him if they were supposed to be there and he said "No!" He said, "We weren't in Korea, we were across that damn river, the Yalu River."

He said that he saw a Korean with something on his arm. The Korean swung his arm into a tank tread and blew himself up and the tread as well. He said of the civilian massacre at No Gun Ri, "It happened, I saw it happen." (*I didn't follow up on this statement, but intend to do so, and others as well.*)

who was firing on them

They were told to blow a train bridge after the last train out of North Korea came through. Said they waited and waited and was then told to get their asses out of there. They blew the bridge with the pieces nearly landing on them. The last train never came.

Carl related that you could see refugees as far as you could see coming out of North Korea. He said of the refugees that it was just as white as far as you could see. (The refugees wore white clothing) They kept getting hit because the Chinese would mix in with and dress like the Korean civilians. The enemy would mix in during the daytime and attack them from behind during the night. Said they stopped and old women with a cow, which was loaded with bags. They searched the bags and found machine guns hidden under the bags. They let the woman go and took the machine guns, said she was probably made to carry the machine guns and the enemy were probably close behind her somewhere. Kids, he said, would be sent into their camps by the enemy with bottles of poisoned whiskey. "We didn't drink it," he said "Soldiers died from drinking that poisoned whiskey."

Once he and his men were charging up a ridge towards an enemy soldier, who was firing on them with a "burp" gun. Carl said he kept hearing "pops", hit the deck and found that the "pops" were where bullets had been hitting his trench/overcoat. Said that his coat was full of holes and they knew when that gun "burped" you'd have 50-60 rounds coming at you. Uncle Carl said they "got the sucker" that was firing at them. On 19 July 2007 Uncle Carl told me that he had fired a .50 cal. machine gun from a ring mount on a six-by truck until the barrel turned red. "The bullets would just drop out of the barrel when it got that hot" he said. "You had to wear gloves to change the barrel." He said when using a BAR (Browning Automatic Rifle) you could take out a whole squad with one burst. They also used the old water-cooled .30 cal. Machine guns from WWII, which were very heavy he said.

General Hobert R. Gay took over after McArthur was relieved. Meat was sometimes hard to come by and Carl and some others decided to confiscate a cow and deliver it to their mess hall for cooking. He said they were trying to load the cow in the back of a six-by and an old woman, the owner of the cow, was just fussing and making a racket while they were trying to get the cow in the truck. They had the road blocked as well when along came a jeep with a three-star insignia on it. Uncle Carl said "Oh boy, are we in trouble now." He said Gen. Gay came up to them and said "Boys, what are you up to?" and they explained to Gen. Gay that they were preparing to take the cow to their mess hall for supper. Gen. Gay responded by saying that perhaps he should join them for supper.

While clearing mines once he said someone yelled "medic", saw the guy going down. "I pulled the guy into a ditch a long side the road and looked around and realized they we were all alone." Carl knew he couldn't get the wounded guy out of the ditch all by himself because everybody had left. A U.S. tank came along and straddled the ditch. Uncle Carl said, "I thought the tank was going to put us out of our misery." The tank rolled over them, remained on top of them and he found that there was a hatch on the underside of the tank. A tank crewman opened the hatch and asked Carl if he could drag the wounded man into the tank. He did and they got out of there alive.

When clearing mines they would take a rope with a hook on the end and sling it as far down the road as they could in order to find trip wires. "We had to worry about "Bouncing Betty" mines, which would spring up and blow near waist high."

When he landed at Puson they went over the cargo nets, into the landing crafts. While unloading rations he heard someone yelling, but didn't pay any attention to it. Finally someone yelled "Carl Bowers." It was **Joe Carver** from Knoxville he said. A moment later he saw Carver get hit. He said that Carver received a "million dollar" wound and was sent home. (*Haven't found Joe Carver, but would like to hear his stories.*)

Uncle Carl asked me if I had heard of "Heart Break Ridge", said that he went there and found G.I.'s with their hands tied behind their backs and their feet tied with barbed wire, their heads were bashed in. About thirty of them were found.

Carl said they didn't have much of anything to stop the Russian tanks, they were big and the Sherman tanks were too small. During a conversation on 25 April 2007 Uncle Carl said, "Our bazookas couldn't knock out the tanks, they would just bounce off. We asked them (artillery) to bring up some artillery and they

wouldn't do it, they wouldn't come up to where we were, but they said we could take a piece (artillery) and some shells." He said that they "borrowed" an artillery piece and the shells. Stated that they didn't really know how to use it, but aimed at a curve on a mountain road and proceeded to knock out the front and rear Russian tanks and then took care of the ones in the middle.

Master Sgt. Stonebreaker was mentioned, someone Uncle Carl knew, but was in the rear echelon. He also mentioned a **Sgt. Day** and said "I saw him get blown up right in front of me, stepped on a mine, a mortar that the gooks and buried in the road, nose up, with a board on top of it so it wouldn't be seen. He stepped on the mortar and that was the end of him, wasn't nothing left." He said that he was about the third or fourth man back from Sgt. Day when the mine blew. He said the other guys in front of him really got tore up, but he didn't get anything from the explosion. Said he really liked Sgt Day, was a good guy and the son of a preacher from Virginia. *(I found reference to a Harold D. Day from Tazewell, Virginia who was in the same outfit as Uncle Carl. He was killed in action while clearing mines on the road to Chunchon, South Korea by an anti-personnel mine on 30 March 1951. I have since talked to Sgt. Day's nephew.)*

Uncle Carl also mentioned a **Major Holmes** who "went crazy, started shooting at his own men with his .45." Major Holmes, he said, was on one side of a rice paddy and Uncle Carl was on the other when Holmes went crazy and shot one of his own men in the leg. Someone grabbed him. Said they were lucky he didn't shoot more. *(I asked Uncle Carl why Major Holmes had gone crazy and he said it may have been because he was the one who had to write letters home to the parents of those who had been killed.)*

He mentioned that he had received the Silver Star, but could not find it and would like to have it. *(On 19 July 2007 he mentioned that he had given the Silver Star to his step-nephew, Robby Bowers)* His picture, he said, was in the Knoxville News-Sentinel when he received his Purple Heart and Silver Star. I asked him if he received more than one Purple Heart and he said they put a "cluster" on it when you are wounded more than once.



? and Carl Bowers right



? and Carl Bowers right



Carl Bowers left and ?

I asked Uncle Carl how he had won the Silver Star. He said they were having trouble knocking out the Russian T34 tanks. General Walton Walker told the men that he would give a bottle of champagne and a Silver Star to anyone who could stop those tanks. Uncle Carl and three other boys were in a group that tried. Said they went out one night and stacked anti-tank mines in the road, which were connected to one another by rope. He and one other boy pulled the mines, Daisy chains, across the road as three tanks came down a mountain road. He said, "We had forgotten what would happen when the mines blew. When the first tank ran over the mines we were blown off the mountain and into the Han river." He said then we were "sitting there thinking how stupid we were." He said they had forgotten about the ammo in the tanks and it blew as well. They knocked out the first and the other two in their group knocked out the third tank, but couldn't get to the middle one, which kept shooting at them, had them pinned down. "The middle one was really tearing everybody up. When it came light enough to see Navy Corsairs came in and took out the middle tank." He said they kidded that the pilots who came in low on bombing or strafing runs were single and those that stayed high were married. Once the tanks were knocked out he went into one of the tanks and took a pistol off of a dead Russian officer. The pistol was taken away from him when he went to Japan.

He believes that it was his eighteenth birthday when he won the Silver Star. He said, "General Walker called us out and we had a little ceremony, gave them each a Silver Star and a bottle of champagne." He said he doesn't recall what the general said and that at the time the champagne meant more to him than the Silver Star. He said, "We were just doing our job." The Knoxville New-Sentinel had an article about his awards, which read "**Luck Bunched Hits' for Bowers.**" He made Staff Sgt., received a Purple Heart, Silver Star, Combat Infantry Badge, and the Medical Combat Badge. Uncle Carl related that General Walker was killed later. *(General Walton Harris Walker was killed in a jeep accident on 23 December 1950.)* He also mentioned that the Knoxville News-Sentinel wanted to interview him on his return from Korea, but he refused at the time, saying that he wished he had talked to them now.

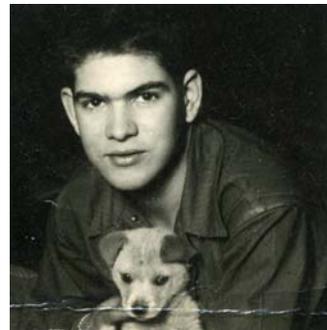
Frank H. Armstrong, Author of **The First Cavalry Division and Their 8th Engineers**, had this to say about Daisy chains and their use: “Daisy chains were anti-tank mines connected by a wire and concealed along the side of the road. The wire stretched across the road to a concealed personnel shelter. When an enemy tank neared the wire, the mine was pulled across the road until it was just in the path of one of the tank treads. The tank driver’s field of vision did not include the few feet of road immediately to his front. The operation of a daisy chain entails the use of exceptionally courageous men. The double daisy chain operation was an even more hazardous action. This was designed for enemy tanks which traveled in pairs. The first tank was allowed to pass the first daisy chain and then stopped by the second daisy chain. The second tank would then proceed to assist the first tank but would strike a mine on the first daisy chain. This was successfully employed by some very brave men. In the early days of the war there was really no other way of stopping the Russian T34 tanks.”

There is an account in Armstrong’s book of several men receiving Silver Stars for knocking out two T34 tanks employing the Daisy Chain method. Uncle Carl thought this a mistake regarding who participated and the number of tanks involved, but I have since verified this account through one of the participants, John Thomas Stevens of Wheelersburg, Ohio. On 23 July 2007 he stated that he was certain that there were only two tanks involved in his action and that a Corsair had not taken out any of the tanks that they encountered during their mission. He stated that the mission that Uncle Carl was involved in was a separate incident. Unfortunately Mr. Armstrong did not write about or include the mission Uncle Carl was involved in that night.

There’s a picture of Uncle Carl in Korea holding a puppy. I asked him about the picture and puppy. He said point blank “I killed that dog.” I was rather stunned by this statement. He said there were always dogs coming around and they tried to get rid of them. He said they were given pills for malaria, something called Chlorcan perhaps, and he said, “I thought if humans could take it so could the dog, so I gave him one and he fell over dead.” War is a cruel thing. His motives were good though. During a conversation on 11 July 2007 he mentioned people fussing at him for smoking, what he was inhaling I guess. He said “They never say anything about the napalm, or all of the crap in the rice patties, or all of the burning bodies, the sweet smell. Lord, I’ll never forget that.”



Carl -Anita Heslin Bowers



Uncle Carl with “Cutie” in Korea



Uncle Carl’s Purple Heart



Article from Knoxville-New Sentinel

The article reads: **Luck Bunched Hits' for Bowers**

Everything came at once to Staff Sergeant Carl E. Bowers in Korea. This includes a promotion from corporal, combat infantryman's badge, and the Silver Star for heroism, his father said today. The 18-year old son of Mr. and Mrs. W.E. Bowers, 705 Hoitt Avenue, joined the Army three years ago, with his parent's consent. He has been in Korea since the war started there and in Japan 19 months before that. Mr. Bowers said he didn't know what specific action earned his son the Silver Star. The young soldier is serving with a Medical Detachment of the 1st Cavalry Division.

Another article reads: **Sgt. Carl E. Bowers Home on Rotation**

Staff Sergeant Carl E. Bowers, son of Mr. and Mrs. W.E. Bowers, 705 Hoitt Avenue, after 19 months of occupation in Japan and 10 months of fighting in Korea, is back home. Only 18, Sgt. Bowers is already an Army veteran with three years service. He enlisted with his parents consent. In Korea he was awarded the Silver Star, the Purple Heart, and the Combat Medal. Sgt. Bowers, home on rotation, served with a Medical Detachment of the 1st Cavalry Division. He attended Christenberry Junior High School before entering the service.

Another article reads: **Area Combat Veterans Get Home Leaves**

Seattle, June 7 (AP) – About 75 men from Tennessee are among 3759 combat veterans from Korea expected to arrive here June 9 aboard the transport General M.C. Meigs. This will be the third and largest group of combat rotation troops to arrive in Seattle since the rotation program early in May. The list includes these from East Tennessee: Bowers, Carl E., Sgt., 705 Hoitt Avenue, Knoxville.

Uncle Carl received an honorable discharged from the Army on 29 March 1952 while at the U.S. Army Hospital at Fort Bragg, North Carolina; his term of service having expired. Was given the rank of Sgt. (T) on 21 February 1951. He is listed as male, Caucasian, brown eyes, brown hair, height 68 ½ inches, and weight of 149 pounds. His net service while enlisted was three years, ten months, and twenty days. Of that time he had two years, seven months, and fourteen days of Foreign and/or Sea Service. Decorations received were the Silver Star, Good Conduct Medal, Occupation Medal P I, Occupation Medal Japan, Korean Campaign Medal???, Conduct Badge, and Purple Heart. Wounds received as a result of action with enemy forces: Korea, 5 September 1951. Shrapnel right leg and right foot.



Carl Edward Bowers and son Ricky at Uncle Art's house –2007

It happened before dawn on 25 June 1950. Less than 5 years after the terrible devastations of World War II, a new war broke out from a distant land whose name means "Morning Calm". On the same day in June, the 8th Engineer Combat Battalion, located at Camp Drake, Asaka, Japan was performing normal Engineer Functions in support of the 1st Cavalry Division. "D" Company and the 3rd Platoon of "A" Company was located at Camp McGill, Japan were undergoing amphibious assault training. Training and preparations for overseas movement intensified. By 02 July, "D" Company and the 3rd Platoon, "A" Company had returned to Camp Drake. "B" and "D" Company was dispatched to Camp McGill to be trained as shore party. In final preparations, the 8th Engineers received their assignments to the Regimental Combat teams, "A" Company with the 5th Cavalry Regiment, "B" Company with the 7th Cavalry regiment and C" Company to the 8th Cavalry Regiment. On 18 July, the 1st Cavalry Division was ordered to Korea.

Initially scheduled to make an amphibious landing at Inchon, it was redirected to the southeastern coast of Korea at Pohang-dong a port 80 miles north of Pusan. On 18 July, the 8th Cavalry

Regiment, accompanied by "C" Company was the first to land followed by the 5th Cavalry with "B" Company. The North Koreans were 25 miles away when elements of the 1st Cavalry Division swept ashore to successfully carry out the first amphibious landing of the Korean War. Its initial mission was to establish the Pusan Perimeter. The landing of the 7th Cavalry and "B" Company was delayed by typhoon. On 21 July, the Battalion, minus the second and third lifts, moved by motor convey to Paegak-tong. By 22 July, all regiments were deployed in battle positions; in itself a remarkable logistical achievement in the face of Typhoon Helene that pounded the Korean coastline.

The 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, located forward of Yongdong, southwest of fallen Taejon, was the first to have contact with the enemy. In the early morning hours of 23 July, the North Koreans had launched a heavy artillery attack against the 2nd Battalion and concurrently the North Korean Infantry launched an attack against the 1st Battalion. Subsequent analysis of the orders of the 8th Army which established the locations of the 1st and 2nd Battalions, 8th Cavalry set the stage for the encirclement of the 2nd. Otherwise known as - military ineptitude ! The 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry moved south from Yongdong to assist the encircled 2nd Battalion of the 8th.

The rugged, mountainous terrain of Korea and the lack of developed transportation and communications systems, created significant challenges to the 8th Engineer Battalion. Most of the initial Engineer work involved demolition of bridges and important facilities in an attempt to delay the North Korean advance to the south. In the Pusan Perimeter, the invasion point of the 1st Cavalry Division, the 8th Engineering Battalion not only worked on standard defensive and construction projects, but also manned the front lines when the enemy threatened to penetrate the perimeter.

The 1st Cavalry Division was assigned to defend a 35 mile sector along the Naktong River, extending from three miles north of Waegwan south to the area defended by the 24th Infantry Division. On 09 August, the North Koreans hurled five full divisions and parts of a sixth against the Naktong defenders. On 14 August, a second powerful punch was delivered to the 7th Cavalry Regiment, but timely assistance from the 8th Engineers, 16th Reconnaissance and artillery caused the termination of the attack. To reduce the attack options of the North Koreans around Waegwan, the dominating terrain linking Waegwan and Tabu-dong, just 12 miles north of Taegu, would have to be reduced. Task Force Allen, composed of two provisional infantry battalions, was organized. The 8th Combat Engineer Battalion was pressed into service as infantry. "D" Company was given the mission to secure the "Walled City of Kusan". The Engineers fought their way to their destination and held it.

It was in this battle, repelling counterattacks, that PFC Melvin L. Brown, Company "D" distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty in action against the enemy. While his platoon was securing Hill 755 (the Walled City), the enemy, using heavy automatic weapons and small arms, counterattacked. Taking a position on a 50-foot-high wall he delivered heavy rifle fire on the enemy. His ammunition was soon expended and although wounded, he remained at his post and threw his few grenades into the attackers causing many casualties. When his supply of grenades was exhausted his comrades from nearby foxholes tossed others to him and he left his position, braving a hail of fire, to retrieve and throw them at the enemy. The attackers continued to assault his position and PFC Brown weaponless, drew his entrenching tool from his pack and calmly waited until they 1 by 1 peered over the wall, delivering each a crushing blow upon the head. Knocking 10 or 12 enemy from the wall, his daring action so inspired his platoon that they repelled the attack and held their position. PFC Brown's extraordinary heroism, gallantry, and intrepidity reflect the highest credit upon himself and was in keeping with the honored traditions of the military service.

The turning point in this bloody battle came on 15 September 1950, when MacArthur unleashed his plan, Operation Chromite, an amphibious landing at Inchon, far behind the North Korean lines. In spite of the many negative operational reasons given by critics of the plan, the Inchon landing was an immediate success allowing the 1st Cavalry Division to break out of the perimeter and start fighting north. The 8th Engineers made a substantial contribution to the crossing of the 38th Parallel by sweeping for mines and repairing a bombed out railroad bridge, located on the Yesong River, for troop crossing on 09 October 1950. The troopers of the 1st Cavalry crashed into Pyongyang, capturing the capital city of North Korea on 19 October 1950. This event marked the third "First" for the division.

In late October 1950, orders came from I Corps to saddle up the rest of the division and move north. The Korean war seemed to be nearing a conclusion. The North Korean forces were being squeezed into a shrinking perimeter along the Yalu and the borders of Red China and Manchuria. Company "A" was kept busy constructing POW stockades at Pyongyang. By now, more than 135,000 Red troops had been captured and the North Korean Army was nearly destroyed.

On 25 October 1950, the Korean War took a grim new turn. The sudden intervention of Communist Chinese forces dashed hopes of a quick end to the war. In the morning of 01 November, patrols from the 1st and 2nd Battalions, 8th Cavalry along with "C" Company, 8th Engineers, clashed with soldiers clearly identified as Red Chinese. The battle at Unsan left a deadly toll on the 8th Cavalry Regiment and members of "C" Company. The blackest month of the campaign ended bitterly for the 8th Engineer Combat Battalion, as it was withdrawing rapidly for the second time in November. By late December, the true extent of the enemy buildup had become clear. There was at least 20 Red Chinese divisions poised for a drive on Seoul. Now there was almost a million and a half Chinese and North Korean troops on the Korean peninsula.

The year ended unexpectedly quiet. The First Team defenders readied their weapons, shored up their defenses and waited in the bitter cold. This time there was no surprise when the Chinese artillery began pounding the UN lines in the first few minutes of 1951. The units forward of the 38th Parallel were hit by the Chinese crossing the frozen Imjin River. Ignoring heavy losses, the Chinese crawled through mine fields and barbed wire. The United Nations Forces abandoned Seoul and fell back to the Han River. With several breakthroughs reported along the front, "A" Company received orders to destroy the rail and highway bridges previously primed for demolition. The Chinese drive lost its momentum when it crossed the Han and a lull fell over the front. By 23 January, the period of withdrawing to previously prepared positions appeared to be at an end, as "A", "B" and "C" Companies reattached to their Regimental Combat Teams, began to move north to gain contact with the enemy.

On 25 January 1951, the First Team, joined by the revitalized 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry rebounding from its tragedy at Unsan, moved back into action. The movement began as a reconnaissance in force to locate and assess the size of the Red Army, believed to be at least 174,000. The Eighth Army moved slowly and methodically, ridge by ridge, phase line by phase line, wiping out each pocket of resistance before moving farther North. The advance covered 2 miles a day, despite heavy blinding snowstorms and subzero temperatures.

On 14 February, heavy fighting erupted around an objective known as Hill 578, which was finally taken by the 7th Cavalry after overcoming stiff Chinese resistance. During this action General MacArthur paid a welcome visit to the 1st Team. The First Cavalry slowly advanced through snow and later, when it became warm, through torrential rains. The Red Army was slowly; but firmly, being pushed back. On 14 March, the 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry had crossed the Hangchon River and on the 15th, Seoul was recaptured by elements of the 8th Army. New objectives were established to keep the Chinese from rebuilding and resupplying their forces and to advance to the "Kansas Line", which roughly followed the 38th Parallel and the winding Imjin River.

On 04 April, the 1st Cavalry Division crossed the 38th Parallel for the second time of the war. "A" Company moved forward to establish a bivouac area in Chunchon. Resisting stubbornly, the enemy fell back before the push of the 8th Army. Enemy resistance increased, particularly in the vital Chorwon-Kumwha area. On 22 April, 21 Chinese and 9 North Korean divisions slammed into Line Kansas. Their main objective was to recapture Seoul. The First Cavalry joined in the defense line and the bitter battle to keep the Reds out of the South Korean Capital. Stopped at Seoul, on 15 May, the Chinese attempted a go around maneuver in the dark. The 8th Army pushed them back to the Kansas Line and later the First Team moved deeper into North Korea, reaching the base of the "Iron Triangle", a major enemy supply area encompassing three small towns.

From 09 June to 27 November, the 1st Cavalry took on various rolls in the summer-fall campaign of the United Nations. On 18 July, a year after it had entered the war, the 1st Cavalry Division was assigned to a reserve status. This type of duty did not last for long. On the nights of 21 and 23 September, the 2nd and 3rd Battalions, 7th Cavalry repulsed waves of Red Chinese with hand to hand fighting. But harder work followed when Operation "Commando", a mission to push the Chinese out of their winter defense positions south of the Yokkok River, was launched. As the operation progressed, the 8th Engineers cleared or destroyed all of the many mine fields which were laid by the enemy in their retreat.

On 03 October, the 1st Team moved out from Line Wyoming and immediately into Chinese fire. For the next two days; hills were taken, lost and retaken. On the third day, the Chinese lines began to break in front of the 7th Cavalry. On 05 October, the 8th Cavalry recaptured Hill 418, a flanking hill on which the northern end of Line Jamestown was anchored. On 10 - 11 October, the Chinese counterattacked; twice, unsuccessfully against the 7th Cavalry. Two days later, the 8th Cavalry took the central pivot of the line, Hill 272. The southern end of Line Jamestown, along with a hill called "Old Baldy", eventually fell to the determined troopers. The troopers did not know it, but Line Jamestown would be their last major combat of the Korean War.

On 24 November 1951, in preparation for movement to Japan, members of the 120th Engineer Combat Battalion arrived at the 8th Engineer Battalion Headquarters to receive all T/O & E property of the 8th Engineers. By December 1951, the division, after 549 days of continuous fighting, began rotation back to Hokkaido, Japan. The First Team had performed tough duties with honor, pride and valor with distinction.

On 05 December, "A" Company departed Korea with the 5th Cavalry Regiment and arrived at Camp Chitose, Area I on the 11th. By 23 December, all units had arrived in Hokkaido and were assigned the following stations: "B" Company - Camp Crawford, "H/S", "C" and "D" - Camp Chitose, Area II. The division controlled a huge training area of 155,000 acres. The mission of the division was to defend the Island of Hokkaido and to maintain maximum combat readiness. Essentially, the war for the 1st Cavalry was ended, however it would be more than a year before other units could leave Korea. The 8th Engineer Battalion would return to Korea in 1952 and 1953 to engage in engineering construction tasks.

In September 1954, the Japanese assumed responsibility for defending Hokkaido and the First Team returned to the main Island of Honshu. For the next three years the division guarded the northern sections of Honshu until a treaty was signed by the governments of Japan and the United States in 1957. This accord signaled the removal of all U.S. ground forces from Japan's main islands.

On 20 August 1957, the First Cavalry Division, guarding the northern sections of Honshu, Japan was reduced to zero strength and transferred to Korea (minus equipment). On 23 September 1957, General Order 89 announced the redesignation of the 24th Infantry Division as the 1st Cavalry Division and ordered a reorganization of the Division under the "pentomic" concept. In ceremonies held on 15 October, the colors of the 24th Division were retired and the colors of the 1st Cavalry Division were passed to the Commanding General of the old 24th Division, Major General Ralph W. Zwicker. "The First Team" had returned, standing ready to defend Korea against Communist aggression.

The 1st Cavalry Division took over the facilities of the former 24th Infantry Division who were stationed at a Headquarters Compound located in the western defense corridor located at Bong il Chong in the Paju City area. Previous tenants, the 1st Marine Division, had relocated the summer villa and converted the rice patties, at the entrance to the valley, into an attractive lake. By the time the 1st Cavalry Division arrived, they were able to be billeted in permanent Quonset huts which had been constructed during a major program to improve the troops living conditions.

The redesignated and reorganized First Cavalry was assigned the mission of patrolling the "Freedom's Frontier" (DMZ). In addition to their assigned duties of patrol along the southern border of the DMZ, training remained a number one priority for the troopers and unit commanders. In January 1958, the the largest training exercise in Korea since the end of hostilities, Operation Snowflake, was conducted. This exercise was followed by Operation Saber in May and Operation Horsefly in August.

In 1959, the 8th Engineer Battalion made several modifications to their Headquarters installation and filled in the lake, at the entrance, to create a parade ground. It was named "Brown Field" in honor of PFC Melvin L. Brown, Company "D", 8th Engineers, 1st Cavalry Division, who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for heroic actions on 04 September 1950. After being designated a Headquarters compound for many years, the installation was redesignated "Camp Howze" on 25 March, 1960 in honor of Major General Robert L. Howze, Medal of Honor recipient and the 1st commander of the 1st Cavalry Division from 1921-25.