

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with George Pempek

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Veterans Remember Oral History project

Interview # VRK-A-L-2009-011

George Pempek, on occupation duty with the Army in Korea in 1948, then a Korean War veteran in 1950-1951, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Veterans Remember* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: April 16, 2009 Location: Korean War Museum in Springfield, IL

Date: May 14, 2009 Location: Korean War Museum in Springfield, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 2:06 + 1:30 = 3:36 / 3.6 hrs

Session 1: Early life, occupation duty in Korea in 1948 & war thru Dec 1950

Session 2: Experiences in Korea from Dec 1950 to May 1951 and later career

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on 06/16/2009.

The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in
Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

George Pempek, *Veterans Remember*, VRK-A-L-2009-011

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: George Pempek was born on January 30, 1930 in Blackwell, Wisconsin where his father worked in a lumber camp. During the depression, his father worked in a Civilian Conservation Corps camp near Blackwell, Wisconsin. Life for the family was tough and primitive, but life improved a bit during World War II.

Pempek joined the Regular Army in February of 1947, and following training at Ft. Lewis, Washington and Ft. Meade, Maryland, where he received training as a firefighter. He was assigned to the 31st Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division, then serving occupation duty near the 38th parallel in South Korea. By 1949 he was reassigned to Hawaii and the 5th Regimental Combat Team, working in the 3rd Battalion's Intelligence section. In late July, 1950, the 5th RCT was deployed to Korea, arriving in time to participate in the defense and breakout from the Pusan Perimeter. Over the next year, Pempek continued to serve in the 3rd Battalion's Intelligence and Reconnaissance section, accompanying the unit, then attached to the 24th Division, as it advanced toward the Yalu River in November, 1950. When the Chinese launched their massive offensive in late November, Pempek's unit was pushed back down the spine of Korea until the line stabilized below Seoul. The front line moved up and down the center of Korea over the next few months in a series of attacks and counterattacks. Pempek returned to the United States in mid-1951, and stayed in the Army.

George was reassigned to South Korea again in 1962-63, this time as the Sergeant Major for the 8th Army, seeing only limited improvements. He returned to Korea in 1999 as a tourist, and was impressed by the vast strides the South Koreans had made.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Civilian Conservation Corps; USS Collins; 7th Infantry Division; 5th Regimental Combat Team; service in Hawaii in 1949; Operation Mickie; Pusan Perimeter; Chinese Offensive of Nov-Dec 1950; General Douglas MacArthur; 555th Field Artillery Battalion (Triple Nickle); 8th Army, Seoul, South Korea;

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