

Editor's Preface

Korea's monsoon rains and the floodwaters they spawned posed some of the most difficult technical challenges faced by the United States Army engineer units serving in the Korean War. Nowhere were those challenges more pressing than along the lower Imjin River, where tides, ice, and summer floods repeatedly threatened to break critical supply lines to United Nations forces which for two years manned defensive lines just ten kilometers northwest of the river. After struggling for more than a year with mixed success to span the lower Imjin with bridges that could survive the stream's fury, American military engineers finally conquered this river in the last year of the war with two modern bridges erected at sites where earlier spans had failed.

A report prepared in Korea by the military history staff of the 8086th Army Unit tells the story of the construction of these two successful spans, known as the Teal and Libby bridges. Majors William R. Farquhar, Jr., and Henry A. Jeffers, Jr., drafted the narrative report in 1953 and attached to it copies of a number of related documents. The U.S. Army Center of Military History holds a typescript copy of that report. Farquhar and Jeffers provide an instructive account of the accomplishment of a difficult wartime engineering assignment, one which required considerable imagination, determination, and perseverance. Innovative techniques developed by officers and enlisted men of the battalion served to overcome the difficulties imposed both by the physical problems involved and by the shortages of equipment and trained manpower. As my introduction to their report explains, U.S. Army engineers found that it was no easy task to overcome the wartime challenges of the, Imjin River.

In editing Farquhar's and Jeffers' valuable narrative, I have attempted to modernize or correct the spelling and grammar, and, in several instances, I have corrected minor misstatements of fact in order to avoid discrepancies between the report and contemporary documents. I have also amended the footnotes of the original study. I selected for publication 46 photographs drawn from the 57

included with the original report and **31** others taken from the collections of the National Archives, the Defense Still Media Records Center, the Office of History of the Corps of Engineers, and the Combined Field Army (**ROK/US**). The book contains four maps, which I prepared using information contained on contemporary maps found in unit history records in the National Archives.

I selected for this publication the documents contained in three of the eleven appendixes attached to the original report and added a fourth appendix drawn from a contemporary document. Appendix A, taken from Tab 3 of the original study, contains the official correspondence in which I Corps asked for the replacement of the failed high-level Teal and X-Ray bridges, and Eighth Army approved imaginative plans for new crossings there. Appendix B contains the engineering report of Eighth Army's 2d Engineer Construction Group that illustrates the manner in which the Teal site was evaluated prior to the decision to build a low-level bridge there. This appendix was at Tab 1 of the original study. Appendix C reproduces the section entitled "General Description" of the four-page mimeographed document "Libby Hi-Level Highway Bridge," which was prepared by the 84th Engineer Construction Battalion in 1953 and signed by Major William C. Carter, Jr., the battalion's operations officer. A copy of the document is contained in the Papers of William Clarence Carter, Jr., at the Office of History, Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The last and longest of the appendixes is the "Log of Libby Bridge," written by Majors Carter and Sam E. Fairchild, his predecessor as operations officer of the 84th Engineer Battalion.

I have made every effort to preserve or, when required, to restore the integrity of the documents printed in the appendixes. The first three of these appendixes consist of documents that were copied manually from the originals by Major Jeffers. I have corrected copying errors found in the documents in Appendix B by comparing Jeffers' manual copies with carbon copies of the same documents drawn from Box 1 of the Papers of Frank Otto Bowman at the Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford, California. I have not found any other copies of the documents in Appendix A, and thus they appear substantially as copied in the 1953 report. I simply rearranged the sections of this appendix to put them in

chronological order and corrected errors of spelling, grammar, and punctuation. I have not altered the hastily written “Log of Libby Bridge” except to correct spelling and punctuation, to add letters obliterated at the edges of the typed version of the log copied at Tab 7 of the original study, and to add explanatory notes. In doing this and in making the few factual changes required in the original narrative, I was greatly assisted by the late Colonel William C. Carter, Jr., who was the primary author of the log and the project superintendent of the construction of Libby bridge. I owe a special debt of gratitude for his help.

Sincere thanks are also due to the editors who have assisted my work on this **publication**—Chris Hardyman, Joyce **Hardy**man, and Diane Arms. Archivists Morris **Izlar** and **Fred Pernell** of the National Archives and Elena Danielson of the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace provided valuable assistance with documentary research and photo and map collection. Army cartographer Arthur S. **Hardyman** advised me on military map making. Robert R. **Weekes** prepared the cover.

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