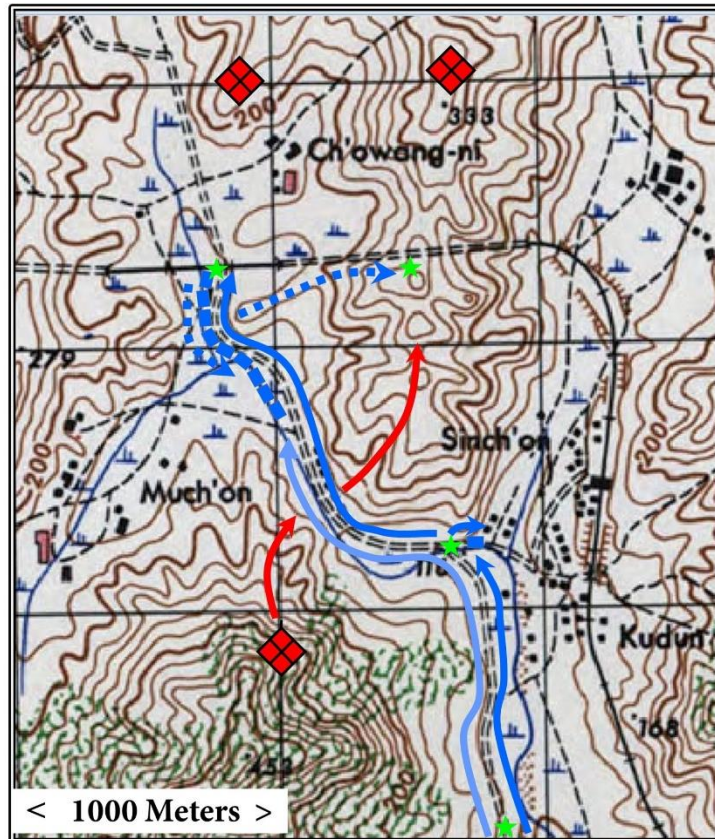


COMBAT ACTION IN KOREA: THE LOST PATROL STAFF RIDE (27-30 JANUARY 1951)



STUDY INSTRUCTIONS & READINGS (Exportable)

Combat Studies Institute
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COMBAT ACTION IN KOREA: THE LOST PATROL STAFF RIDE

STUDY INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Overview:**
2. **Divide the staff ride participants into five groups:**
 - a. **Group 1: LT James Mitchell and the soldiers of C Company, 1st Battalion/23d Infantry Regiment.**
 - b. **Group 2: LT Harold Mueller and the soldiers of F Company, 2d Battalion/24th Infantry Regiment.**
 - c. **Group 3: The 2d BN and the 23d Infantry Regiment- the higher headquarters for the patrol.**
 - d. **Group 4: The Chinese Communist Forces**
 - e. **Group 5: Captain Stanley C. Tyrrell and the soldiers of F Company, 2d Battalion/23d Infantry Regiment.**

CORE READINGS:

1. The Korean Peninsula
2. Operation Thunderbolt
3. The Twin Tunnels Patrol Ambush

SPECIFIC READINGS / ANNEXES

Annex A: 23d Infantry Regiment/Battalion/Company/Platoon

Annex B: Colonel Paul LaMarch Freeman Jr., Commander 23d Infantry Regiment

Annex C: US Weapons

Annex D: Lieutenant General Matthew B. Ridgway, Command US 8th Army

Annex E: The Chinese Communist Forces- CCF

Study Instructions

1. Overview:

- a. **Overview:** This Army University Press-Combat Studies Institute virtual staff ride examines a reinforced platoon patrol from the US 23d Regimental Combat Team (RCT) in the Korean War. On 27 January 1951 the patrol conducted a route reconnaissance toward the village of Chipyeong-ni. The Chinese People's Volunteer Army (PVA) ambushed the patrol several miles south of Chipyeong-ni near the site of twin railroad tunnels. The US platoon established a defense on a nearby hilltop while PVA forces tried repeatedly to seize the position. On 29 January, F Company 23d Infantry fought its way through 2-3 companies of communist forces to relieve the besieged platoon. The patrol's strength at the start of the action was 60 men and it suffered 13 KIA, 30 WIA, and 5 MIA.
- b. The material in this packet is designed to assist in preparing for the virtual staff ride and consists of core readings for all the staff ride participants and specific readings (annexes) for key historical characters (or groups) in the story. The readings provide context for the operations of the 23d RCT in early 1951 and give the participants the details of the operations that will be covered during the virtual staff ride. It is highly recommended that participants read all of the material and take notes for use during the staff ride.
- c. The staff ride is not a lecture; it will be a facilitated discussion. The better prepared the participants are, the better the staff ride will go.

2. Divide the staff ride participants into 5 groups:

- **Group 1: LT James Mitchell and the soldiers of C Company, 1st Battalion/23d Infantry Regiment.**
 - **Read all the core readings.**
 - **Read Annex A: The 23d Infantry Regiment.**
 - **Read Annex C: US Weapons**
 - This group should be prepared to tell the story of the combat action of the "Lost Patrol" from the perspective of LT Mitchell and the soldiers of C CO.
 - The organization and mission of the patrol.
 - Command relationship with Captain Melvin R. Stai – what was Captain Stai role?
 - What was LT Penrod's role?
 - LT Mitchell's decision to serve as the advance guard and recon element.
 - Initial contact near the twin tunnels.
 - LT Mitchell's communication or lack of communication with BN (Major Millard Engen, BN XO in the Liaison Plane).

- LT Mitchell's Decision - "*Let's get out of here.*"
 - The problems with the new replacements.
 - Lt Mitchell's climb up the hill – what did LT Pinrod do?
 - Defending the hill top.
 - Preparations for the last stand and leadership on the hill.
 - Air support and resupply.
 - The night battle.
 - The relief.
- **Group 2: LT Harold Mueller and the soldiers of F Company, 2d Battalion/24th Infantry Regiment.**
 - **Read all the core readings.**
 - **Read Annex A: The 23d Infantry Regiment.**
 - **Read Annex C: US Weapons**
 - This group should be prepared to tell the story of the combat action of the "Lost Patrol" from the perspective of LT Mueller and the soldiers of F CO.
 - The organization and mission of the F CO/2/24 element.
 - What was LT Mueller's role?
 - LT Mitchell's decision to serve as the advance guard and recon element.
 - Initial contact near the twin tunnels.
 - Mueller's actions based upon LT Mitchell's Decision of "*Let's get out of here.*"
 - Initial actions at the hill top.
 - Defending the hill top.
 - Preparations for the last stand and leadership.
 - Air support and resupply.
 - The night battle.
 - The relief.
- **Group 3: The 2d BN and the 23d Infantry Regiment- the higher headquarters for the patrol.** (Also a small group, a consideration is the primary cadet leadership – Commander and some of the primary staff).
 - **Read all the core readings.**
 - **Read Annex A: The 23d Infantry Regiment.**
 - **Read Annex C: US Weapons**
 - This group should be prepared to tell the story of the combat action of the "Lost Patrol" from the perspective of the battalion and regimental leadership.
 - Discuss the 23d Regiment's transition from retreat and defend to resuming offensive operations. Why are there so many replacements in LT Mitchell's platoon?
 - The organization and mission of the patrol –from the BN and REGIMENTAL level.

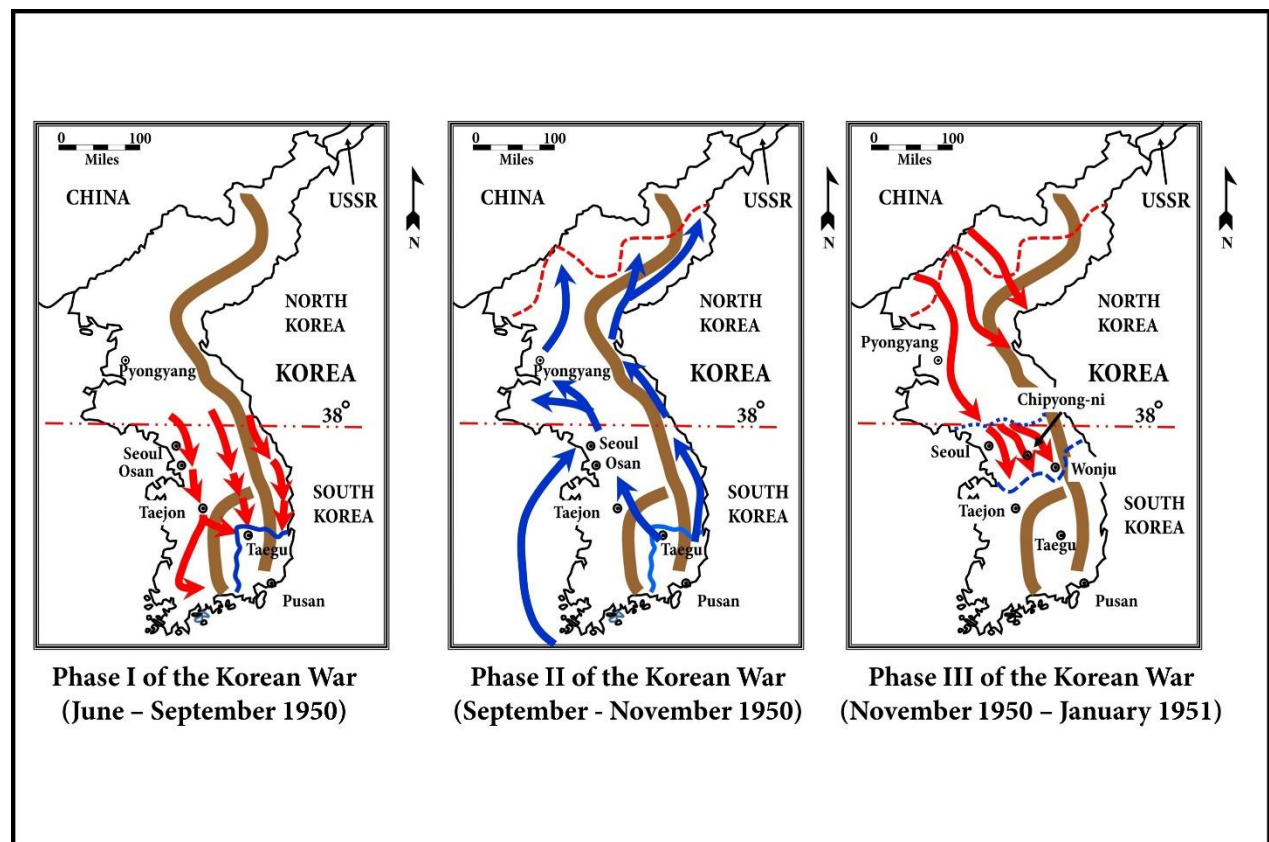
- How does the mission fit into the battalion and regimental mission?
 - Why send Captain Melvin R. Stai?
 - Discuss the contributions of Major Millard Engen (1st BN XO) in the liaison plane.
 - Discuss COL Paul Freeman's decision (the 23d regimental commander) to mobilize help for the patrol.
 - Discuss LTC James W. Edwards' decision to send a relief effort.
 - Why CPT Tyrell's company – why the two hour delay before movement?
 - Why the special instructions about night operations?
 - Discuss the results of the patrol and the new mission for the regiment.
- **Group 4: The Chinese Communist Forces** (this should be a small group, recommend those cadets wanting to go Military Intelligence or Special Forces). This group will have significant participation during the entire staff ride.
 - **Read all the core readings.**
 - **Read Annex E: The Chinese Communist Forces- CCF**
 - The readings are from the US Army perspective. The CCF group will need to make their own analysis of the readings to provide the CCF perspective. **Example** -when reading about the ambush, the CCF group needs to reverse engineer the story and discuss what they perceive to be the CCF plan and the execution of that plan. In short- be prepared to discuss the battle from the CCF perspective.
 - There is no definitive information on the specific CCF units that ambushed the American patrol near the twin tunnels. It is believed to be a CCF Infantry Battalion because of the significant use of mortars (mortars not found in a CCF infantry company) – or it could have been reduced strength Infantry Regiment. A CCF Regiment was in theory 3,242 men, but usually they were understrength. The regiment had three Infantry Battalions (each with three three-platoon companies), and artillery battery, mortar battery, transport, signals, medical, and stretcher company.
- **Group 5: Captain Stanley C. Tyrrell and the soldiers of F Company, 2d Battalion/23d Infantry Regiment.**
 - **Read all the core readings.**
 - **Read Annex A: The 23d Infantry Regiment.**
 - **Read Annex C: US Weapons**
 - This group should be prepared to tell the story of the combat action of the “Lost Patrol” from the perspective of CPT Tyrell and F CO/2/23 –The relief company.

- The organization and mission of the relief element.
- Timeline of the warning order and departure.
- BN guidance on night operations.
- The fight for Hill 453.
- Estimate of the situation and the decision to halt.
- Why did he reassess the situation and decide to continue the advance.
- The relief.

Core Readings

The Korean Peninsula: Excerpt from CMH Pub 19-6, *The Korean War – The Outbreak* (Center of Military History), 1-5

Korea is a mountainous peninsula jutting from the central Asian mainland with a shape that resembles the state of Florida. Water outlines most of this small country, which has more than 5,400 miles of coastline. The Yalu and Tumen Rivers define much of its northern boundary, while major bodies of water are located on its other sides: the Sea of Japan on the east, the Korea Strait on the south, and the Yellow Sea on the west. China lies above the Yalu and Tumen Rivers for 500 miles of Korea's northern boundary as does the former Soviet Union for some eleven miles along the lower Tumen River. Korea varies between 90 and 200 miles in width and 525 to 600 miles in length. High mountains drop down abruptly to deep water on the east where there are few harbors, but a heavily indented shoreline on the south and west provides many harbors. Summers are hot and humid, with a monsoon season that lasts from June to September, but in the winter cold winds roar down from the Asian interior. A rugged landscape, a lack of adequate roads and rail lines, and climatic extremes make large-scale modern military operations in Korea difficult. In 1950 the country's population totaled about 30 million: 21 million south of the 38th Parallel, with 70 percent of the people engaged in agriculture, and 9 million north.



Operation Thunderbolt: Excerpt from *CMH Pub 19-9, The Korean War – Restoring the Balance* (Center of Military History), 5- 7.

By January 1951 the Korean War was six months old. The invasion by North Korea (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) in June 1950 had driven the UN forces into a headlong retreat to the Pusan Perimeter. In a spectacular reversal of fortune, the amphibious landing of UN forces at Inch'on in mid-September triggered a collapse of the North Korean People's Army that was only stopped by the enormity of the Chinese intervention in October and November.

The entry into the war of major Chinese military forces rocked the overextended UN troops and sent them reeling back into South Korea [note: U.S. 2d Infantry Division sustained heavy casualties fighting as the Corps rearguard during the retreat]. For a time it seemed that the UN forces might have to abandon the peninsula, resulting in a complete Communist victory. Only by trading space for time and by pummeling the advancing Chinese with artillery fire and air strikes did the new UN commander, Lt. Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway, halt the enemy. Operations on the eve of the renewal of full-scale UN offensive operations, the Eighth Army consisted of 178,464 American soldiers and marines, 223,950 ROK Army troops, and UN ground contingents from Australia, France, India, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. These forces were organized into five corps, from west to east: I, IX, and X and the ROK III and I. In general, ROK forces held the more easily defended, rugged terrain in the east, while U.S. forces were positioned on the lower, flatter areas in the west, where their greater mobility and firepower were more decisive.

Arrayed against the UN forces were some 290,000 Chinese and North Korean soldiers. The Chinese were organized into seven corps size armies and twenty-two divisions, 204,000 strong, primarily holding the western and central portions of the front. About 52,000 North Korean soldiers, in turn, organized into three corps and fourteen understrength divisions, held the eastern sector. In addition, an estimated 30,000 North Korean guerrillas were still behind UN lines in the mountainous areas of eastern South Korea. Although the Chinese had halted their offensive after heavy casualties, they had no shortage of manpower. Supply difficulties, rather than casualties, had stopped the Chinese Communists' drive south, encouraging American commanders, in turn, to resume their own offensive north.

On 20 January 1951, General Ridgway, Eighth Army commander, issued a directive designed to convert his current reconnaissance operations into a deliberate counterattack. Since the enemy situation was still unclear, the action, codenamed Operation THUNDERBOLT, was designed to discover enemy dispositions and intentions with a show of force. The operation had the additional objective of dislodging any enemy forces south of the Han River, the major estuary running southeast from the Yellow Sea through Seoul and beyond. The projected attacks did not represent a full-scale offensive. Phase lines—lines drawn on maps with specific reporting and crossing instructions—would be used to control tightly the advance of the I and IX Corps. The units were to avoid becoming heavily engaged. To accomplish this, each corps would commit only a single U.S. division and ROK regiment. This use of terrain-based phase lines and of limited advances with large forces in reserve was to become the standard procedure for UN offensive operations for the rest of the war.

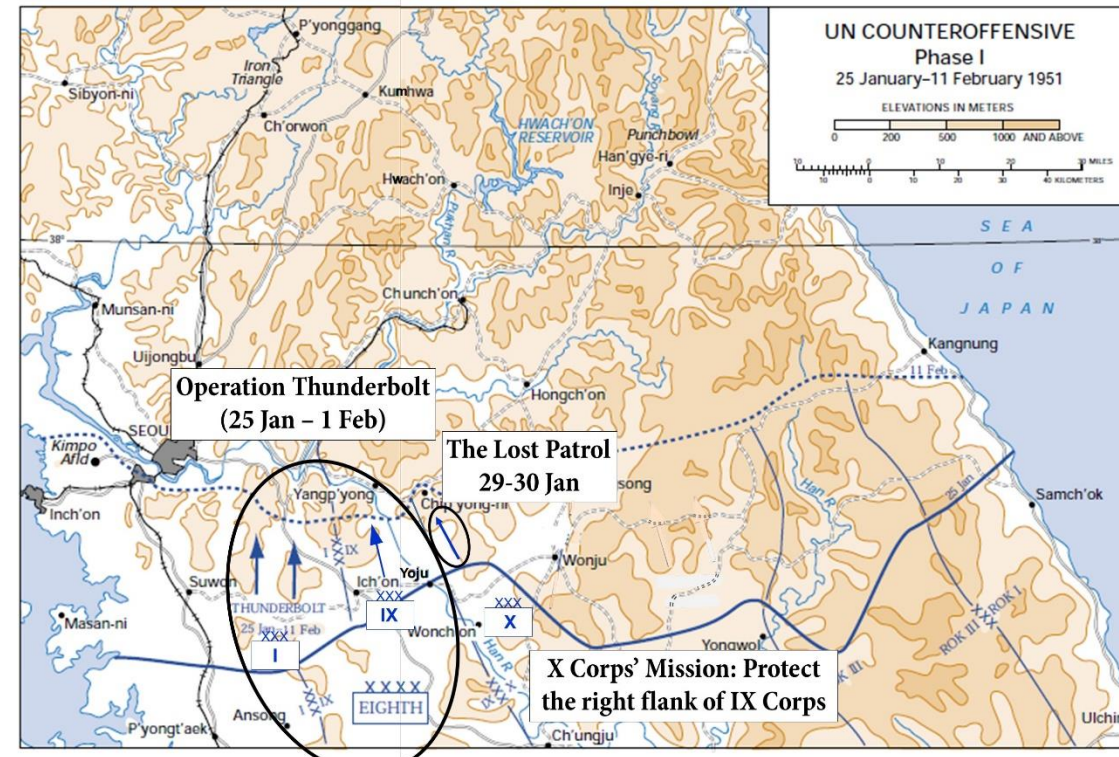
The first, or western, phase of Operation THUNDERBOLT lasted from 25 to 31 January. The I and IX Corps moved up to twenty miles Corps sector, and on the twenty-ninth Ridgway converted THUNDERBOLT into a full-scale offensive with X Corps joining the offensive on its eastern flank. The I and IX Corps continued a steady, if slow, advance to the Han River against increasingly more vigorous enemy defenses.



General Ridgway (National Archives), CMH 19-8

The Twin Tunnels Patrol Ambush: Excerpt from *Combat Actions in Korea* (Center of Military History), Chapter 7 (pages 80-98).

1E: Operation Thunderbolt and the Lost Patrol



During the withdrawal from northern Korea in December of 1950, U.S. Eighth Army outdistanced the pursuing Chinese and North Koreans and broke contact with the enemy. By the end of January 1951, as a result of firm orders from its commander (Lt. Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway) the army turned and took up defensive positions near the 37th parallel, and from there sent feeler patrols northward to locate the enemy again and reestablish contact.

The 24th and 2d Infantry Divisions occupied adjoining positions near the center of Eighth Army's line. Late on the 27th of January, the commanding general of U.S. X Corps directed the 2d Division to send a reconnaissance patrol northward to the vicinity of two railroad tunnels a few miles south of Chip'yong-ni. It was to join forces at Iho-ri with a group from the 24th Division, after which the composite patrol would proceed to the objective. [1] [The X U.S. Corps mission was to protect the IX Corps right flank – the patrol was part of that mission].

Because the order reached the divisions so late, the 24th Division was unable to make arrangements for crossing the unbridged Han River in time to effect the meeting. A patrol from the 23d Infantry (2d Division) reconnoitered the Twin Tunnels area, however, and returned to its base without incident. [2]

At 2240 on the night of the 28th, X Corps directed the 2d Division to run the same patrol on the following day, again in conjunction with a patrol from the adjoining division. This time the 2d

Division was to furnish five additional jeeps to carry the men from the 24th Division, which was still unable to get its vehicles across the river. [3]

First orders concerning the patrol reached the 23d Infantry at 2300. They were passed on down to the 1st Battalion which, in turn, called Company C and gave preliminary instructions to Lt. James P. Mitchell (one of its platoon leaders), asking him to report to battalion headquarters the following morning at 0600 to get complete orders. [4]




It was still dark, the sky was clear, and the temperature was a few degrees above zero when Lieutenant Mitchell reached the S-3 tent on the morning of 29 January. Here he was given the mission of making another reconnaissance of the Twin Tunnels area-by road, about thirty miles north of Company C's location-and told to make contact with the enemy, if he could, but to avoid combat with any large enemy force. He was ordered to move out as soon as possible since he was scheduled to meet the 24th Division's patrol at 1030. By 0630 Lieutenant Mitchell had returned to his company to organize his group.

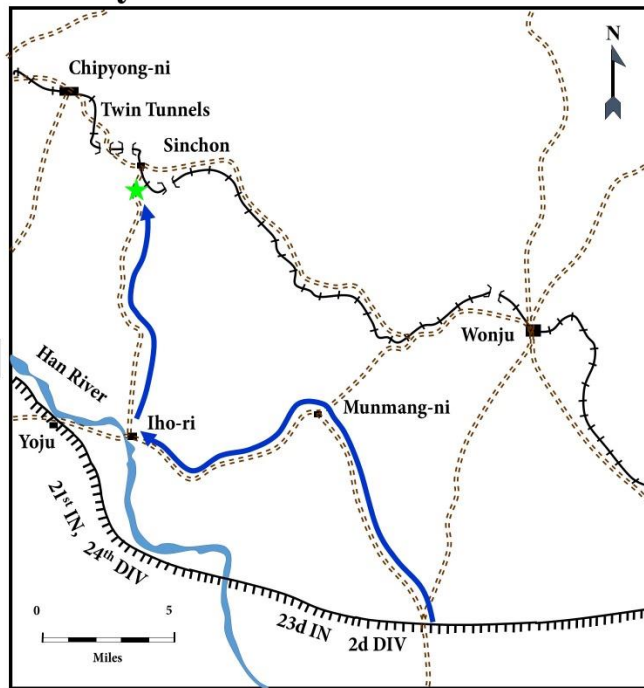
Plans for the patrol were being made and changed while the members assembled. Battalion headquarters called three times between 0630 and 0800, each time adding men and weapons to the patrol. There were also difficulties and delays in securing enough vehicles and radios, both of which were acutely scarce as a result of heavy equipment losses which the 2d Division had sustained during its withdrawal from northern Korea. The 1st Battalion finally arranged to borrow three jeeps, with drivers, from another battalion of the same regiment, and extra radios from an artillery battalion. Lieutenant Mitchell had two SCR-300 radios, neither of which worked well, for communications within the patrol. To help maintain communications between the patrol and its headquarters, the regiment had arranged for an L-5 liaison plane to circle above the patrol and act as a radio relay station. It was therefore necessary to have an SCR-619 radio to communicate with the plane. To be safe, the 1st Battalion borrowed two. On the morning of 29 January, however, the artillery battalion complained because two of its radios had been damaged when loaned to the infantry the previous day, and insisted on furnishing its own operators with the radios. It was 0900 before the artillerymen reported, and the patrol was ready to get under way. [5]

Lieutenant Mitchell was in command of the patrol. As finally organized, it consisted of forty-four officers and men, most of whom were members of his Company C rifle platoon. Nine members of the patrol, including an officer, were from Company D; the others were the artillery radio operators and the drivers from the 3d Battalion. These men were mounted on two 3/4-ton weapons carriers and nine jeeps, five of which were for the 24th Division men. Mitchell's men carried two BARs and either rifles or carbines, plus a 75-mm and a 57-mm recoilless rifle, a 3.5-inch bazooka, a 60-mm mortar, and two caliber .50 and three caliber .30 machine guns mounted on the vehicles, and two light machine guns with tripod mounts.



2C: The Organization and Mission of the Lost Patrol 27 – 29 January 1951

Lt. James Mitchell 23d Infantry / 2d IN DIV Elements 1  C/1/23 1  1/D/1/23 (Lt. William Penrod) 2x radio operators (Artillery BN) 5x jeep drivers (24 th Division) Capt. Melvin Stai (2d BN Asst. S3) (45 Men)	
Total: 60 Men	
Lt. Harold Mueller 21st Infantry / 24th IN DIV Elements 1  F/2/24 (15 Men)	
2x ¾ - Ton Trucks	3.5" Bazooka
9x Jeeps	60mm Mtr
8x BARs	2X 50. Jeep mtd HMG
75mm RR	3x 30. Jeep mtd MMG
57mm RR	3x 30. tripod MMG



For 20 of the 44 members of the patrol, this was their first combat action since they had joined Company C only four days before. They were from specialist schools-listed as draftsmen, mechanics, and technicians and had received little training as infantrymen.

Another officer joined the patrol just before it left. Capt. Melvin R. Stai (battalion assistant S-3) went along only to be certain that Lieutenant Mitchell's patrol met the men from the 24th Division as planned. He was told to return to battalion headquarters after the composite patrol departed for the tunnels. [6]

Lieutenant Mitchell, with four men in a jeep mounting a caliber .50 machine gun, made up the advance party and led the patrol by about fifteen hundred yards. The main body, under the control of Lt. William C. Penrod (a Company D platoon leader), followed, with intervals of at least a hundred yards between vehicles. For Korea, the road was good but movement was slow because of heavy snow in shaded spots and patches of ice that covered some sections of the narrow road.

The liaison plane circled above the vehicular column as far as Iho-ri where it lost visual contact because of the haze that frequently filled the narrow Korean valleys during the morning hours. At 1115 the column reached Iho-ri, a small village on the east bank of the Han River, where the patrol from the 24th Division was waiting. The group from the 24th consisted of Lt. Harold P. Mueller and fourteen men whom he had selected from his platoon of Company F, 21st Infantry.

In addition to rifles, the men had six BARs and a light machine gun. They had reversible parkas which they wore with the white side out, including white hoods over their helmets, whereas the men from the 2d Division were dressed in fatigue clothing and field jackets. The combined patrol now numbered 4 officers and 56 men, including Captain Stai, who decided at Iho-ri to accompany the patrol instead of returning to battalion headquarters. It proceeded at once toward the objective, which was still approximately fifteen miles away.

The Twin Tunnels were located about three miles southeast of Chipyeong-ni and less than a mile northwest of a little village named Sinchon. As Lieutenant Mitchell in the lead vehicle neared the objective, he passed a large hill that rose steeply on the left (west side of the road, dominating the entire area. This was Hill 453. Skirting the base of the hill, the road crossed a ford in a shallow stream and then split at the base of another, smaller hill. One fork of the road turned right to Sinchon; the other fork went west for several hundred yards, then turned north for another two thousand yards where it crossed the railroad track between the two tunnels.

At the ford Lieutenant Mitchell stopped to wait for Lieutenant Mueller and Captain Stai, who were riding in the two jeeps immediately behind. Since the patrol was already behind schedule, Captain Stai offered to go alone into Sinchon while the rest of the patrol went on to investigate the tunnels, after which they would be ready to return. Accordingly, the two lieutenants and the men with them proceeded to the railroad track, turned their vehicles around in position to go back, and then waited near a farm house. The tunnels were not side by side, but were, instead, end to end, cutting under two steep ridges, one on each side of the road and narrow valley. On the west side the ridge rose toward the south to the hill mass of which Hill 453 was a part; the ridge on the east side of the road sloped north to Hill 333. Between these two ridges were a stream, terraced rice paddies, and scattered Lombardy poplars, all typical of the Korean landscape. Captain Stai left his driver and vehicle by the road, walked alone toward the cluster of drab houses in Sinchon and disappeared. The time was about 1215. [7]

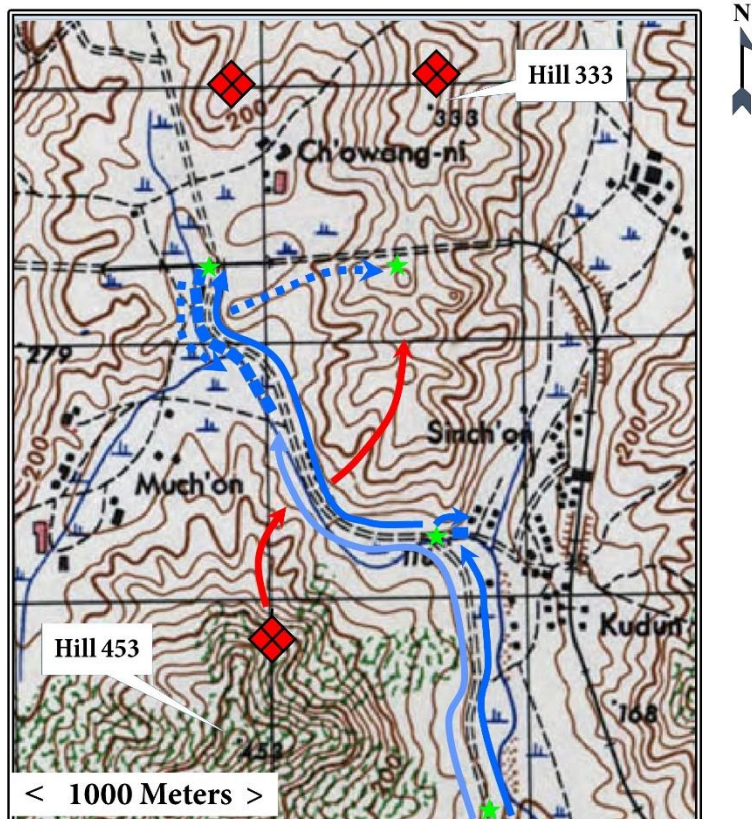
Trouble started within a minute or two after the two jeeps stopped by the railroad tracks. Men from the 21st Infantry patrol spotted 15 or 20 Chinese soldiers running from a small hill just north of the railroad crossing, and opened fire on them. The others of the patrol ran up to see what was happening. Soon after the first shots, ten or twelve scattered mortar rounds fell near the road, landing just south of the two parked jeeps and in front of the other vehicles which were now closing into the tunnels area.



3B

Initial Contact at the Twin Tunnels (29 January 1951)

- 1215: Initial Contact
- Lt. Mitchell's Decision
- 1300: Lt. Mueller's Decision



At about this time the liaison plane appeared overhead again. The battalion executive officer (Major Millard O. Engen) was in the plane which, after it had turned back at Iho-ri because of ground haze, was now returning since visibility had increased. Major Engen saw the same enemy troops whom Lieutenant Mueller's men had taken under fire, as well as another company-sized group on Hill 453. He immediately reported this over the SCR-619 radio together with instructions for Lieutenant Mitchell to turn his patrol around and get out of the area at once. [8]

Lieutenant Mitchell did not receive this message because of faulty radio reception. By the time the last vehicle in the column crossed the ford near Sinchon, Mitchell also saw enemy movement to the south and suspected that his patrol had been caught in a well-planned ambush. He realized that from the fingers of Hill 453, which dominated the road and even the ditches along the road, the Chinese could see when the last vehicle of the patrol closed into the tunnels area. Hill 453 also blocked the route of retreat. Further advance of the column was stopped by enemy positions on Hill 333 northeast of the railroad crossing. Lacking radio communication with the liaison plane and also within the column, and since the ridge tips crowded so close against the road that the men in the trailing vehicles could not see ahead, the vehicles and the entire patrol bunched up in the area just south of the railroad crossing. Lieutenant Mitchell had decided to make a run for it before the last vehicles in the column had come to a stop. "Let's get out of here!" he shouted to the men, most of whom had dispersed to seek cover when the first mortar rounds fell. "Let's get out of here!" Before the last vehicles to arrive could be turned around, however, the men could see Chinese soldiers running from Hill 453 down toward the ford.

In the plane overhead, Major Engen also watched the Chinese moving to cut off the patrol. He radioed new instructions, this time directing Mitchell to head for the high ground east of the road. He then left the area since it was necessary to refuel the plane. No one received this message either.

Men in the get-away jeep, which having turned around was now in the lead, opened fire with their caliber .50 machine gun, but the gun was cold and had so much oil on it that it took two men to operate it, one to jack it back and another man to fire it. It had little effect. Lieutenant Penrod tried to get the 75-mm recoilless rifle in position to fire, but gave that up when he saw that the Chinese had already cut the road and that they were racing for the high ground on the east side of the road. He called back to Mitchell to say they couldn't get through.

After Captain Stai had walked off toward Sinchon, his driver followed him in the jeep for a hundred or two hundred yards and had then stopped in the single-lane road to wait. When the enemy force began running from Hill 453 toward the east side of the road, the driver left, apparently trying to join the main body of the patrol. He was shot and killed before he had gone far, the jeep overturning by the road.

When the firing commenced, Lieutenant Mueller looked at the hill on the east side of the road. Realizing they had no chance of breaking out of the ambush by following the road and, wanting to get on defensible high ground, he started up the hill, calling for his men to follow. [9] A single, narrow ridge rose abruptly at the east edge of the road, and then extended east for nine hundred yards to the high part of the ridge. The ridge was only about four hundred feet higher than the road, and both it and the ridge leading to it were covered with low brush and, on the northern slopes, a foot of wet snow. After climbing a short distance, Lieutenant Mueller stopped to study the area through his binoculars. To the south he saw the Chinese running toward the same hill for which he was heading.

"We're going to have to get to the top of that hill," he called back to Lieutenant Mitchell. "The Chinese are coming up from the other side! This is our only chance!" From this time on it was a race for the high ground, with the Chinese climbing the south slope of the hill from which the snow had melted.

The patrol, well equipped when mounted, was forced to abandon most of its heavy and crew-served weapons now that it was on foot. Penrod and Mitchell loaded their men with as much ammunition as each man could carry, and with the tripod-mounted caliber .30 machine gun and the 3.5inch bazooka. Mueller's men had another light machine gun with them. The two recoilless rifles, the 60-mm mortar, the five machine guns mounted on the vehicles, and the ammunition that could not be carried, were all left on the vehicles which were abandoned on the road, their engines still running. [10]

Seven of Lieutenant Mitchell's men, all from the group of replacements, stayed in the ditch by the road. They had become frightened at the outbreak of the enemy fire, had taken cover in the ditch, and refused to leave when the other men started for the high ground. All seven were killed in the same ditch later that afternoon. With Captain Stai and his driver, nine of the original sixty

men were out of action. It was after 1300. The remaining fifty-one men were climbing the steep northern side of the ridge.

[Other sources indicate a different story on the men left behind. In the confusion of the break for the hill seven of Lieutenant Mitchell's men, all new replacements, did not hear the order to run for the high ground. One of those was Pvt. Fockler, who realized "There was no one there. We had been left behind." At first the orphaned squad tried to hide in the ditch. Then they tried to infiltrate up the hill to join with the unit. Unfortunately they were spotted and engaged by the Chinese. Most were killed. Fockler was wounded and captured along with one other soldier. The Chinese took Fockler back to the jeeps and then abandoned him. Fockler over the next two days was rocketed by UN planes, but then rescued when the 23d Regiment moved into the twin tunnels area.]. (*High Tide in the Korean War* by Leo Brown, 55-58)

The climb was agonizingly slow. Since enemy soldiers were climbing the hill on the south side of the same ridge, Mitchell's men had to stay on the north, steep, snowy side. Even so, they were under fire from several enemy riflemen and an enemy machine gun located to the north. Men from the 23d Infantry were conspicuous targets since their dark clothing made them prominent against the bright snow. Much of the way they moved on their hands and knees, pulling themselves from one scrub brush to another. Enemy fire was so accurate they would often pretend that they had been hit, deliberately roll a short distance down the hill and lie quietly until the enemy rifleman shifted his fire to someone else. They did this in spite of the extreme difficulties of carrying their heavy loads up the steep, slippery ridge.

Within a short time all of the men were wet, either from the snow or from perspiration, and several of them were injured on the way up. PFC Bobby G. Hensley, who was carrying the light machine gun and tripod on his back, stumbled and fell forward over a pointed stump, breaking several ribs. Sgt. Alfred Buchanan, who was with him, carrying four boxes of ammunition, rubbed snow in Hensley's face to revive him, and had him on his feet a few minutes later when Lieutenant Penrod came along and told Hensley to throw away the bolt and leave the machine gun. Hensley said he didn't think he could make it any farther. "You've got to make it, son," said Penrod. "Just keep climbing." Sergeant Buchanan left the ammunition and helped Hensley part way up the hill. Lieutenant Mitchell also became a casualty before reaching the hill. During World War II he had received an injury to his spine, which left his back and legs weakened. Three fourths of the way up the hill one of his legs became weak and numb. Mitchell slid himself along the ground for a while but finally sat down in the snow to rest. While he was sitting by the trail a jeep driver (PFC William W. Stratton) stopped and urged Mitchell to go on. Stratton was one of the recent replacements and this was his first day in combat. When Lieutenant Mitchell explained that he couldn't move for a while, Stratton offered to stay with him. Just about this time, three Chinese riflemen appeared on top of the ridge and stopped about fifteen feet from where the two men were sitting. Mitchell was hidden partially by brush. Stratton saw them first and fired seven rounds from his rifle, missing each time. Mitchell fired one round and missed. His carbine jammed then and he had to take out his bayonet and pry the cartridge from the chamber. Meanwhile, a bullet from one of the Chinese guns hit the stock of Stratton's rifle and then his hand, tearing it badly. Then the enemy gun jammed. The other two Chinese had turned

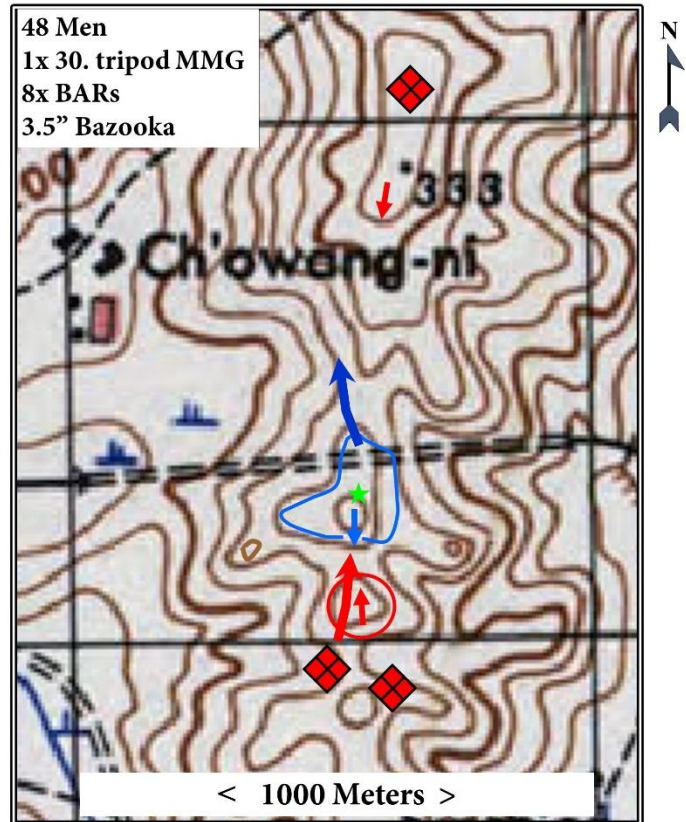
their backs and appeared to be listening to someone who was shouting to them from the opposite side of the hill. Lieutenant Mitchell finally got his carbine in operation and killed all three of the enemy. The two men slid down the hill a short distance to a small gully that offered more cover from enemy fire. Hensley (the machine gunner with the broken ribs) was already sitting in this gully, having been left there by Sergeant Buchanan. The three men sat there for about a half hour.

Except for one man, the remaining forty-eight men left in the patrol reached the crest of the hill. Sgt. John C. Gardella, loaded with machine-gun ammunition, slipped in the snow and fell down a steep part of the ridge. Since he was unable to climb back at that point, he circled to the north looking for an easier route. As it happened, he went too far north and suddenly came upon several enemy riflemen and a crew operating a machine gun. He was within twenty feet of the group before he noticed it and, although he was in heavy brush at the time and had not been seen, he was afraid to move back. He lay there for the rest of the day and throughout the night. Lieutenant Mueller and his fourteen men were the first to reach the top of the hill. Once there, they learned that it afforded little protection from the enemy guns, which both to the north and to the south were located on higher ground. The ridge, which extended south from Hill 333, was made up of several pointed peaks connected by narrow saddles. The hill Mueller's men now occupied was approximately sixty feet lower than the top of Hill 333, nine hundred yards to the north, and a little lower than another hill not more than one hundred and fifty or two hundred yards to the south. The Chinese reached the hill to the south about the same time Lieutenant Mueller occupied the center high ground. In addition to the two narrow saddles that connected Mueller's position with the enemy-held ground both to the north and to the south, there was another narrow saddle between his hill and a smaller mound of earth to the west, on the ridge that the patrol followed toward the high ground. This mound of earth was within grenade-throwing distance. All three of these saddles were under enemy fire.



4A: Defending the Hill Top (29 January 1951)

- 1300+: Perimeter Established
- The Hill
 - North –South –West
 - 1x MMG (?)
- First Attack
 - Enemy MGs
 - Southern Assault
- PVT Stratton's Crawl
- CPL LeRoy Gibbon's Demonstration
- SGT Everett Lee's Attack
- Mueller's Challenge – "Like hell it's a ricochet"



The useable area on top of the hill was so small it could have been covered by a squad tent and was tilted so that it sloped toward the east side of the hill, which was so steep that there was no danger of enemy attack from that direction. However, the hilltop was too small to accommodate all of the men, so Mueller and Penrod put some of the men along the saddle toward the north. Even then, it was crowded. There were no holes and the ground was frozen too deep to allow digging.

Enemy activity commenced almost at once, with machine-gun and rifle fire coming from both the Chinese north and south positions. The activity from the south was the more serious threat for two reasons. The enemy machine gun on the southern hill, being only slightly higher than the hilltop occupied by the American patrol, fired from a flat angle. Its beaten zone, therefore, was long and almost exactly covered the hilltop. In addition, the saddle connecting the two hills was so deep that the Chinese would be able to move under the machine-gun or other supporting fire until they were within a few yards of the patrol before they would mask their own fire. This would place them within easy grenade range. Fortunately, this same path was so narrow that the Chinese would be limited to small groups for each assault. Lieutenant Mueller, realizing that this was the critical part of his perimeter, placed his machine gun to guard this approach. (The machine gun was the only one left to the patrol by this time. There were eight BARs and the 3.5-inch bazooka.) The first enemy assault was prepared by mortar fire while the Chinese moved under the machine-gun fire until they were within easy grenade range. Mueller's men stopped it just below the rim of the perimeter with the machine gun and a concentration of BAR fire. The Chinese backed away and the enemy was comparatively inactive for about twenty minutes.

Meanwhile, the three injured men-Lieutenant Mitchell and Privates Hensley and Stratton-worked their way up on the hill to join the rest of the men in the perimeter. Stratton, pleased because he thought his shattered hand would be sufficient cause for returning home, crawled around the perimeter and showed it to some of the men. "Give me your telephone number," he said to several of them, "and I'll call your wife when I get back to California."

Soon after the initial thrust from the south, the enemy gun to the north opened fire, wounding seven men at that end of the perimeter. The men lay as still as possible to avoid this fire, except for an eighteen year-old squad leader (Cpl. LeRoy Gibbons) who already had been wounded six times during the Korean war. Gibbons wanted to talk with Lieutenant Mitchell, who, by this time, had reached the small, flat part of the perimeter. He stood up and walked erect through a string of tracers that went past him. Several of the men yelled at him to get down. "Aw, hell," he said, "they couldn't hit the broad side of a barn," and continued walking.

After this demonstration, Sgt. Everett Lee decided to take the enemy gun under fire. He crawled about fifteen feet farther north, saying to the other men nearby, "I'm going to get that son of a bitch." He fired two rounds to zero in his rifle, then killed two of the men operating the machine gun. Other men near him joined in the firing and the enemy gun went quiet and did not again fire. Sergeant Lee stood up and walked back to his position on the line. This relieved much of the pressure on the north end of the line and, from then on, the main enemy efforts came from the south and from the west.

Lieutenant Mueller's machine gun, the only one to reach the top of the hill, was the main strength of the defense. Five or six separate assaults were directed against the south side of the perimeter during the afternoon. Each time the men held their fire until the enemy soldiers were within close range and then directed all available fire at the narrow enemy approach route. The machine gun was effective and Mueller's chief concern was keeping it and several BARs operating at the south end of the line. Seven men firing these weapons were either killed or wounded during the afternoon, all hit in the head. When one man was hit others would pull him back by his feet and another man would crawl forward to man the machine gun. One of the machine gunners (Cpl. Billy B. Blizzard) raised his head not more than six inches from the ground and was struck by a bullet that went through his helmet, cutting into the top of his head. Lieutenant Mitchell noticed Blizzard's head jerk and saw the hole suddenly appear in his helmet. He yelled to him, "You aren't hurt, son. That was a ricochet." Corporal Blizzard turned so that his platoon leader could see the blood running across his forehead. "Like hell it's a ricochet," he said. Mueller put another man in Blizzard's place. "For God's sake," he kept saying, "we've got to keep this gun going." During one of the attacks, a Chinese crawled close to the perimeter, stood up and fired a continuous burst from his burp gun. He hit five men, including Mueller, before one of the Americans killed the enemy soldier. [11]

When Major Engen (executive officer of the 1st Battalion) and the liaison pilot left the Twin Tunnels area to refuel their plane, they immediately reported to the 23d Infantry that the Chinese had ambushed and surrounded Mitchell's patrol. The regimental commander (Col. Paul Freeman) immediately requested an air strike, ordered the 2d Battalion to send relief to the patrol, and directed that a liaison pilot make a drop of ammunition to the patrol. The 2d Battalion occupied a

patrol base forward of the regimental line and was already about ten miles (road distance) nearer than the remainder of the regiment. The order reached the 2d Battalion commander (Lt.Col. James W. Edwards) at 1300. [12] Colonel Edwards immediately called Capt. Stanley C. Tyrrell, whose Company F had performed a similar rescue mission the day before. Even though Company F was available at once, it required a little more than two hours to assemble the vehicles, weapons, and necessary supplies for the company, which consisted of 3 other officers and 142 enlisted men. Colonel Edwards added a section of 81-mm mortars, a section of heavy machine guns from Company H, and included an artillery forward observation party because its radio was necessary for communications with the liaison plane. Thus reinforced, the total strength of the force amounted to 167 officers and men. [13]

Captain Tyrrell's mission was to rescue the ambushed patrol and to recover the bodies and the vehicles. Since darkness was not far off, Colonel Edwards instructed Tyrrell to form a defensive perimeter and proceed with the mission the following morning, if he could not gain contact with the ambushed patrol that night. [14] Company F started north at 1515.

Back at the perimeter, the afternoon wore on with occasional lulls between enemy assaults. Toward late afternoon ammunition was getting scarce and the officers kept cautioning their men to use it sparingly. Medical supplies were exhausted three and a half hours after the fighting had begun. [15] More than a third of the men had become casualties, although many of the wounded men remained in the perimeter fighting. Private Stratton (the jeep driver with the shattered hand) had taken over a BAR from another wounded man. He fired it with his left hand. During quiet periods he crawled around the perimeter telling the other men not to worry about their situation. "We'll get out of this all right," he kept saying. However, by evening few of the men there expected to get out alive. Lieutenant Mitchell pulled his men back several feet to the rim of the hilltop. There were advantages to this move. There, the Chinese could not spot American weapons so easily, and from the new position the Americans could not see an enemy soldier until his head appeared a few feet away. This saved ammunition since the men could not fire until they could see a Chinese head. As a frozen crust formed over the snow, the men braced themselves for the heavy blow they expected as soon as the darkness was complete. Said one of the men, "I'll see you fellows down below."

The first help for the surrounded patrol members came late in the afternoon. A Mosquito plane appeared above the patrol about 1730, just before sunset. The men watched as it circled above them and then screamed with delight when the first fighter planes appeared. Altogether they were two flights of four planes each. The first planes were jets, and they came in so low the men thought they could have touched them with the tips of their bayonets. Enemy activity stopped abruptly and, for the first time that afternoon, the men could raise their heads from the ground and move around freely in their crowded perimeter. The first planes fired machine guns and rockets. The second flight carried napalm bombs that burst into orange blossoms of flame among the enemy positions. It was excellent close support, and Lieutenant Mitchell and the members of his patrol grinned with appreciation during the half hour that it lasted.

Immediately following the air strike a liaison plane came over to drop supplies to the patrol. It made four runs over the group of men, each time flying no higher than fifteen feet above their

heads, so low the men could see that the pilot had pink cheeks. And because the enemy hills were so close, the plane had to cross the enemy positions at the same height. The pilot dropped thirty bandoleers of rifle ammunition, two cases of machine-gun ammunition and several belts of carbine cartridges and then, on the last run, an envelope to which was fastened a long, yellow streamer. Except for one box of machine-gun ammunition, all of this fell beyond the tiny perimeter and, now that the air strike was over, in an area that was under enemy fire. Nevertheless, several men dashed out to retrieve everything that was close. A young soldier raced after the message, which fell well down on the eastern slope, and took it back to Lieutenant Mitchell. The message said, "Friendly column approaching from the south. Will be with you shortly." Mitchell read it and then crawled around the perimeter to show it to the rest of the men. About the same time, there was the sound of firing to the south. A few minutes later mortar rounds exploded on the top of Hill 453. Hopes of survival soared suddenly and the men shouted for joy. This, they decided, was the friendly relief column.

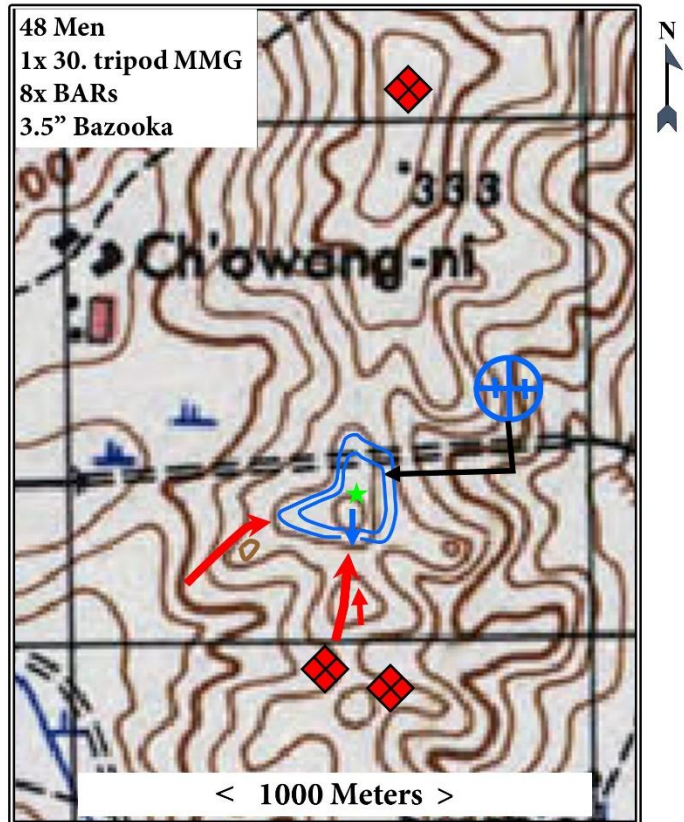
The airplanes left just as darkness began to set in, and Mitchell and Mueller warned their men to expect an enemy assault just as soon as it got dark. They also told the men not to yell out if they were hit because they did not dare let the Chinese know how many of the group were wounded. Several mortar shells fell in the area, and one exploded in the center of the crowded perimeter, wounding one man seriously. The Chinese added automatic-weapons and rifle fire, building up the volume fast. There was the sound of bugles and of enemy voices and, between bursts of enemy fire, the sound of enemy soldiers walking over the crusted snow. Four men crawled forward until they could see the enemy approaching across the narrow saddle from the south. One of them, Sgt. Donald H. Larson, began yelling: "Here they come! Here they come!" They opened fire but within a few seconds all four of the men were hit. They crawled back. Sergeant Larson pointed to his head wound-his fifth for the day-as he crawled past Lieutenant Mitchell. "That's enough for me," he said.

The situation was grim. The fire fight that had flared up in the vicinity of Hill 453 had stopped, and there was now no evidence of friendly troops nearby. Gradually, the men who had been looking anxiously toward the area from which Captain Tyrrell's men had been firing lost their hope of getting out of their perimeter. It was colder now. Their wet clothing was freezing to the ground. Several men were suffering from frostbite. More than half were casualties. Those with serious wounds had been dragged to the rear (east) part of the hilltop where they were laid on the frozen earth. The hill was so steep there that if grenades were dropped they would roll on down the hill away from the wounded men. Those men who were less seriously wounded kept firing on the line or loading magazines for automatic rifles and carbines. One man with a large hole in his stomach loaded ammunition for an hour and a half before he died. [17] Lieutenant Mueller, who had been wounded earlier when a bullet struck his leg, was hit a second time-this time in the head-injuring his left eye. He began to see flashes of light and occasionally lost consciousness. [18]



4B: The Last Stand (29 January 1951)

- Regiment Actions
- Ammunition & Medical Supplies
- 1/3 Wounded
- PVT Stratton Crawls Again – “We’ll get out of this all right”
- LT Mitchell’s Decision
- 1730: Air Support, Resupply & Hope
- Leader’s Actions
- Night Attacks
 - 1st Attack (SGT Larson)
 - ½ Wounded, Aid Station
 - Loosing Hope
 - 2d, 3d, & 4th Attack (PVT Stratton)
- Attacks from the West & South
- Talk of Surrender
- 2300: Infiltration Attack



Instead of the expected help, a second night attack hit Mitchell's patrol. It began with the usual mortar and machine-gun fire, worked up to grenade range, but again stopped a few feet from the edge of the perimeter when faced by the concentrated fire at the south end-fire from the machine gun and from several BARs. Private Stratton fired one of the automatic rifles with his left hand. When the Chinese were close, he stood on the rim of the perimeter, leveled his BAR at them and emptied the magazine. He was hit a second time, this time through the chest. Someone pulled him back toward the center of the perimeter. Soon afterwards a grenade exploded between his legs. Stratton screamed. "For God's sake," said Mitchell, "shut up! " "My legs have just been shot off," Stratton complained. "I know it," the Lieutenant answered, "but shut up anyway." Soon after this Stratton was wounded a fourth time, and died. [19]

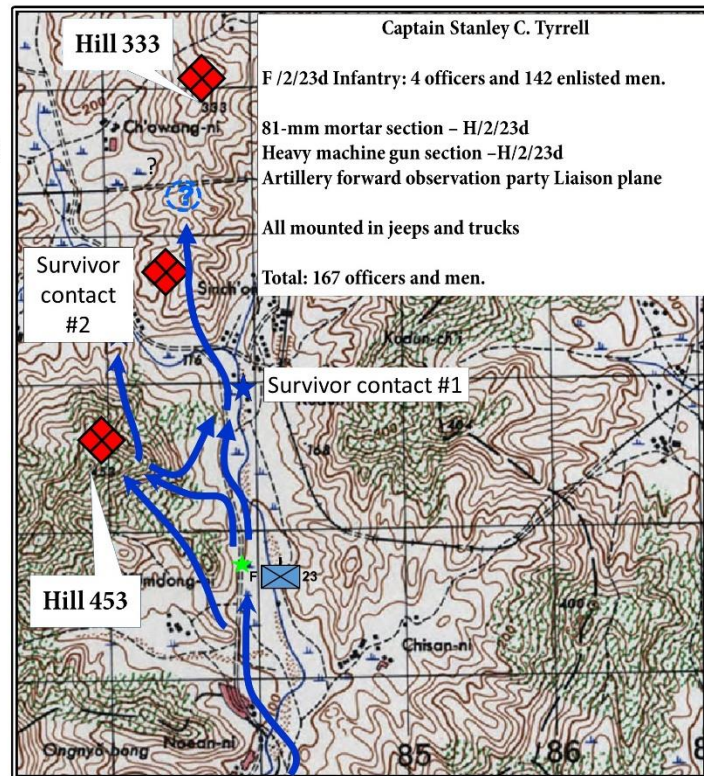
While all of these events were taking place on the hill, Captain Tyrrell's rescue mission was progressing even though Mitchell's men could see no action. Company F had arrived in the Twin Tunnels area between 1720 and 1730-as the air strike was in progress and a few minutes before darkness. The vehicular column of eight 3/4-ton trucks and thirteen jeeps, with all of the trucks and some of the jeeps pulling trailers loaded with extra mortar and recoilless rifle ammunition, followed the same road used by the patrol. While the column was en route, an observer in a liaison plane dropped a message giving the exact location of the ambushed patrol, its vehicles, and also several positions where he had observed groups of enemy soldiers in that vicinity. Nothing important happened until the two jeeps that formed the point of the column were within one hundred or two hundred yards of the ford near which Captain Stai had disappeared earlier in the day. Two machine guns on Hill 453 opened fire on the jeeps, bringing them to a quick halt.

The occupants scrambled into the ditch for protection. Captain Tyrrell, in the third jeep, soon appeared. He dismounted and walked back toward the rest of the column while his driver, already in the ditch, called after him, "You'd better get in the ditch, Captain. The Chinks will get you." Tyrrell walked on back toward the 2d Platoon, which was next in column. "To hell with the Chinks," he said. [20]



5A: The Relief (29 January 1951)

- 2 Hours: Mission, Assembled, SP 1515 (Risk – Guidance)
- 1730: Near Hill 453
- 1730: CPT Tyrrell's 1st Decision
- 1730 - 2030: Clearing of Hill 453
- 2030 - 2100: Moving into position to continue the advance
- 2100: Last Sound of Heavy Firing from the Lost Patrol
- 2100+: Survivor contact 1 & 2d Decision
- 2130+: Survivor contact 2 & 3d Decision
- 2200: The advance continues
- 2330: Link-up
- (30 January 1951)
- 0001-0330: Evacuation
- 0330: Return Journey



Deciding he could not proceed to the patrol with enemy machine gunners in his rear and riflemen on the highest hill in the area, Tyrrell hurriedly prepared to attack Hill 453. He ordered his 2d Platoon to dismount and lay down a base of fire to support an attack by the other two platoons. The 2d Platoon was firing rifles at Hill 453 within three to five minutes after the Chinese began firing. In the haze of dusk, Tyrrell sent his other two platoons toward the top of the hill, attacking up two of three spur ridges which extended generally east from Hill 453 and ended abruptly at the road. The heavy-machine-gun section was in action by the time the infantrymen started up the steep ridgeline, and before they had gone far the 81-mm mortar section began firing. Captain Tyrrell told the mortar crew to plaster the hill during the attack, moving the shell bursts up the ridgeline just in front of the advancing platoons. All of this had taken place in no more than twenty minutes, and in the midst of brisk enemy fire. [21]

The first sergeant of Company F, in the meantime, had all vehicles turned around and parked in a closed column near the mortar section so that the drivers and other men not actively engaged at the time could guard both the mortar section and the vehicles.

There was no fight for the top of Hill 453; the Chinese abandoned it and fell back in front of the mortar and machine-gun fire. In fact, enemy fire fell off sharply after the first half hour, and thereafter there was negligible opposition. Darkness, however, retarded the advance, which was already difficult and tedious because of the snow and the steepness of the ridge. It took two hours or longer for the 1st Platoon the one that attacked straight west-to gain the top of Hill 453. Once there, Captain Tyrrell told it to form a hasty perimeter for the defense of the hilltop and then send one squad south to contact the other platoon, which was coming up along the southern of the three spur ridges, thus making certain that the top of the hill was free of enemy soldiers. At 2030 these two platoons made contact. [22]

From the hill to the north came the sounds of grenade explosions and heavy firing as another enemy attack fell against Lieutenant Mitchell's patrol. Having secured Hill 453 and eliminated the threat from his rear, Tyrrell was ready to go ahead with his original mission. His 2d Platoon, which had been in support so far, was on the road and ready to head straight north toward the surrounded patrol just as soon as the rest of the company could be maneuvered into place to support the attack. By radio Captain Tyrrell ordered one of the platoons on Hill 453 to return to the road by the most direct route, and told the other one to move northeast to a point approximately two thirds of the way down the northernmost of the three spur ridges from that hill mass. When this platoon reached a position from which it could support the 2d Platoon by fire, it was to hold in place. He also sent the heavy-machine-gun section up the northern ridgeline to join the platoon that was to form the base of fire. [23]

This re-positioning of his force required time, and in the meanwhile Tyrrell went to the area of his 2d Platoon to work out the complete plans for its advance and to make certain that all men of the platoon knew of the movements of the other platoons so that units of his company would not get into a fire fight among themselves. Having done this, he walked off to choose new positions east of the road for the heavy mortars, which he intended to displace forward. It was, by this time, 2100 or later. While Tyrrell was thus engaged, he heard a voice coming from the direction of Sinchon: "Hey, are you GIs?" It sounded like an American voice.

Captain Tyrrell called back, "Who are you?" and received an answer that they were three wounded Americans. Returning to the road, he alerted the platoon there to the possibility of some incident occurring on its right flank, moved a squad into position about a hundred yards east of the road and then, with his runner and radio operator, walked forward toward the direction from which the sound of the voice had come. They stopped at a ditch and Tyrrell called for one man to come forward to be recognized. Someone answered, claiming they could not come forward separately since two of them were wounded-one seriously-and could not walk alone. Tyrrell, by this time reasonably certain that they were Americans, told them to come forward together. It was so dark that Tyrrell could distinguish objects only a few yards away and although he could see nothing, he could hear the three men stumbling through the crusted snow. He saw them first when they were only a few yards away, halted them, and asked who they were. The three men explained that they were members of Mitchell's patrol. They had escaped from the perimeter and had made their way down the steep east side of the hill to the railroad tracks, which they had followed south. All of them appeared to be excited and suffering from exhaustion. One was bleeding badly. Tyrrell told them to get into the ditch with him and remain quiet while he listened for the sound of any enemy soldiers who, he thought, might have

followed them. The six men sat quietly. There was no sound anywhere in the area, only darkness and stillness. After several minutes of waiting, they returned to the road and the area of the 2d Platoon. [24]

Everyone else in the patrol, according to the three men who reached Company F, was dead. They described the last attack which ended with Chinese swarming over their perimeter, shooting and throwing grenades. Only the three of them had escaped and there was nothing on the hill now, they claimed, but "hundreds of Chinese." Although Captain Tyrrell questioned them in detail, they were emphatic in stating that the entire patrol had been overrun and all members had been killed. [25]

The last fire fight on the hill had ended abruptly after what seemed to Tyrrell like a half hour of heavy fighting. He now decided to wait until morning before continuing, since his battalion commander had told him that if he could not make contact with the patrol before dark, to form a defensive perimeter until morning to prevent falling into an enemy trap or getting into a fire fight with friendly troops. He advised his platoon leaders of the change in plan. [26]

Ten or fifteen minutes later the leader of the 1st Platoon (Lt. Leonard Napier), which was moving down the northern ridge from Hill 453 with the mission of establishing the base of fire for the next attack, called his company commander by radio. "If you had talked with a man who just came into my position," he told Tyrrell, "you wouldn't believe the patrol was wiped out." This was Lieutenant Mueller's aid man who had run out of medical supplies during the afternoon and had left the perimeter after dark to try to get back to the vehicles where he hoped to find more supplies. For some unaccountable reason, he had gone too far south and there encountered Napier's platoon. Captain Tyrrell, questioning the medic over the radio, learned that the patrol was still holding at the time he left, even though three fourths of the men were casualties. [27]




At once, Tyrrell issued new orders for his 2d Platoon (Lt. Albert E. Jones) to head north up the end of the long ridge toward the ambushed patrol. In the path of this platoon were three high points on the same ridgeline. Moving as quietly as possible, without preparatory or supporting fires, Lieutenant Jones and his platoon started forward, experiencing only the difficulties of moving and maintaining contact over steep terrain. They could hear another fire fight starting at the perimeter. They reached the first knob an hour later. The next knob ahead was the one from which most of the Chinese attacks had originated. Beyond that was the slightly lower knob where the patrol itself was located. There was no firing going on at the time Jones's 2d Platoon arrived at the southernmost knoll. Afraid that he might be walking into an ambush with his own platoon, he halted and then decided to go forward with one squad while the rest of his men formed a defensive perimeter. [28]

Several hours had passed since Company F had done any firing. To the surviving members of Mitchell's patrol there was no evidence of the promised rescue. Enemy attacks, however, continued. Between first darkness and about 2100, the enemy made four separate assaults, all of them against the south end of the perimeter. It was the last of these that Captain Tyrrell had heard end abruptly while he was waiting for two of his platoons to get into position. Like the others, this attempt was preceded by heavy machine-gun and rifle fire with a few men making the final assault. It was broken up by Cpl. Jesus A. Sanchez, one of Lieutenant Mueller's men

from 21st Infantry. Sanchez loaded two BAR magazines, waited until the Chinese were almost upon them, then jumped up and forward a few feet, and emptied both magazines at the Chinese. He ran back and lay down again.



5B: The Lost Patrol's Casualties 27 – 29 January 1951

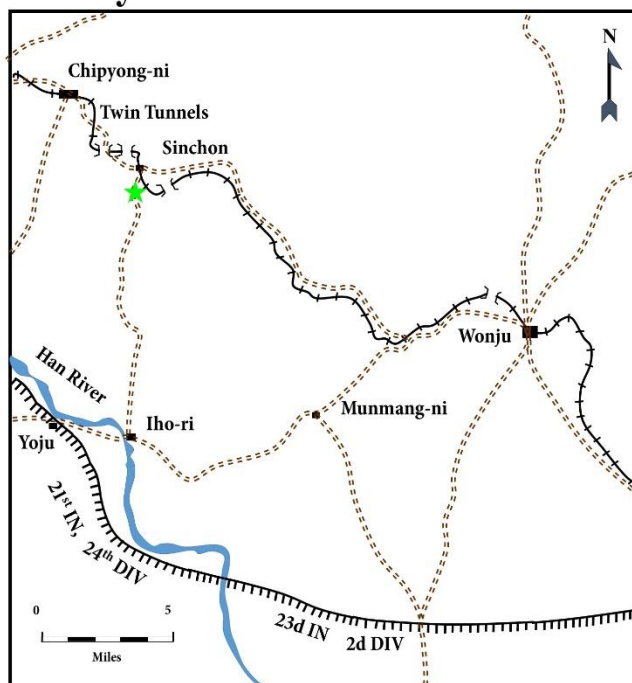
Lt. James Mitchell 23d Infantry / 2d IN DIV Elements 1  C/1/23 1  1/D/1/23 (Lt. William Penrod) 2x radio operators (Artillery BN) 5x jeep drivers (24 th Division) Capt. Melvin Stai (2d BN Asst. S3) (45 Men)	
Total: 60 Men	
Lt. Harold Mueller 21st Infantry / 24th IN DIV Elements 1  F/2/24 (15 Men)	

13 KIA.

30 WIA.

5 MIA.

Only 12 remained physically unscathed



There was respite for an hour before the enemy struck again, this time as Lieutenant Jones's platoon began moving north. For this assault the Chinese shifted to the small mound just west of Mitchell's hill, and attacked from that direction. Ten or fifteen enemy soldiers crawled up under the mortar and machine-gun fire and attempted to overrun the American position. Since Lieutenant Mueller's machine gun was still guarding the south end of the line, five men with rifles and automatic carbines waited until the Chinese were at the rim of their perimeter, then fired at full rate for a minute or less. There was another brief lull before the Chinese made one more assault. This time three enemy soldiers succeeded in getting into the perimeter where they caused considerable confusion in the darkness. One Chinese soldier stood erect among Lieutenant Mitchell's men. "Get the son of a bitch!" one of them yelled. Several men fired at once, killing him. They killed another one who appeared immediately afterwards. A third Chinese walked up to within a few feet of SFC Odvin A. Martinson (Mueller's platoon sergeant) and fired at him with a burp gun. Sergeant Martinson, who already had been wounded five times that day, fired back with a pistol. Neither of them hit the other. PFC Thomas J. Mortimer, who was lying on the ground immediately behind the Chinese soldier, raised up and stuck a bayonet into his back as someone else shot him from the front. Sergeant Martinson picked up the body and threw it out of the perimeter. "I don't want them in here," he said, "dead or alive."

The time was now 2230. There were between 27 and 30 wounded men in the perimeter, including those who were unable to fight, and several others, like Martinson, who had been wounded but were able to keep fighting. Lieutenant Mueller, having become conscious again, kept experiencing flashes of light in front of one eye. Ammunition was nearly gone, the effective strength of the patrol was low, and several doubted if they could hold off another attack. A few of the men wanted to surrender. "Surrender hell!" said Sergeant Martinson who was, by this time, thoroughly angry. Two red flares appeared toward the west and thereafter it was quiet. The patrol members waited for a half hour or longer while nothing happened. Then they heard footsteps again, the same sound of men approaching over frozen snow. This time the sound came from the south again. When the footsteps sounded close, Lieutenant Mitchell's men opened fire. "GIs!" someone below yelled. "Don't shoot! GIs!" For several seconds no one spoke or moved. Finally Corporal Sanchez called down, "Who won the Rose Bowl game?" There was silence again for a few seconds until someone below called, "Fox Company, 23d Infantry, by God!" Lieutenant Jones and his squad from Company F moved on up, following the same snow-beaten path over which the Chinese attacked during the afternoon and evening. Sanchez, the BAR man, stood up. "We're relieved, fellows!" he yelled. "We're relieved!" The others who could also stood up and, from then on, they disregarded the Chinese who had, apparently, moved back for the night. A thin moon came up and furnished a little light, which made the evacuation of the wounded men easier. Nevertheless, it required more than three hours to move everyone off of the hill. Corporal Sanchez took charge of the top of the hill and supervised the evacuation from that end, searching the hill to be certain no living men were left behind, and emptying the pockets of the dead. [29]

Some of the men whose wounds were not serious complained about the cold and the hardships of walking over the difficult terrain in the dark, but those men who were wounded seriously expressed only their gratitude, and tried to help themselves. Sergeant Martinson, with five bullet wounds, left the litters for the other men and hobbled out with two other men. Private Hensley, who broke several ribs while climbing the hill at the beginning of the action and had received help himself at that time, now helped carry another man down the hill. It was 0330, 30 January, before Company F men had carried down all surviving members of the patrol. Captain Tyrrell gave the word to move out and the column started south with one platoon of Company F marching ahead of the column and another following on foot behind the trucks. [30]

The sun came up as the column reached Iho-ri.

* NOTES

[1] 23d Infantry Regiment: S-2 journal, entry 12, 27 January 1951; 23d Infantry Regiment: special report, Patrol Ambush and Rescue Action, 29 January (hereafter cited as 23d Infantry: Patrol Ambush).

[2] 23d Infantry: Patrol Ambush.

[3] 2d Infantry Division: G-3 journal and file, entry 107, 28 January 1951.

[4] Unless otherwise mentioned, the account of the Twin Tunnels patrol action is based upon interviews by the author with the following officers and men who participated in the action: Lt. James P. Mitchell, Lt. William G. Penrod, PFC Bobby G. Hensley, Cpl. Billy B. Blizzard, PFC Thomas J. Mortimer, PFC Bernard L. Dunlap, and Sgt. John C. Gardella

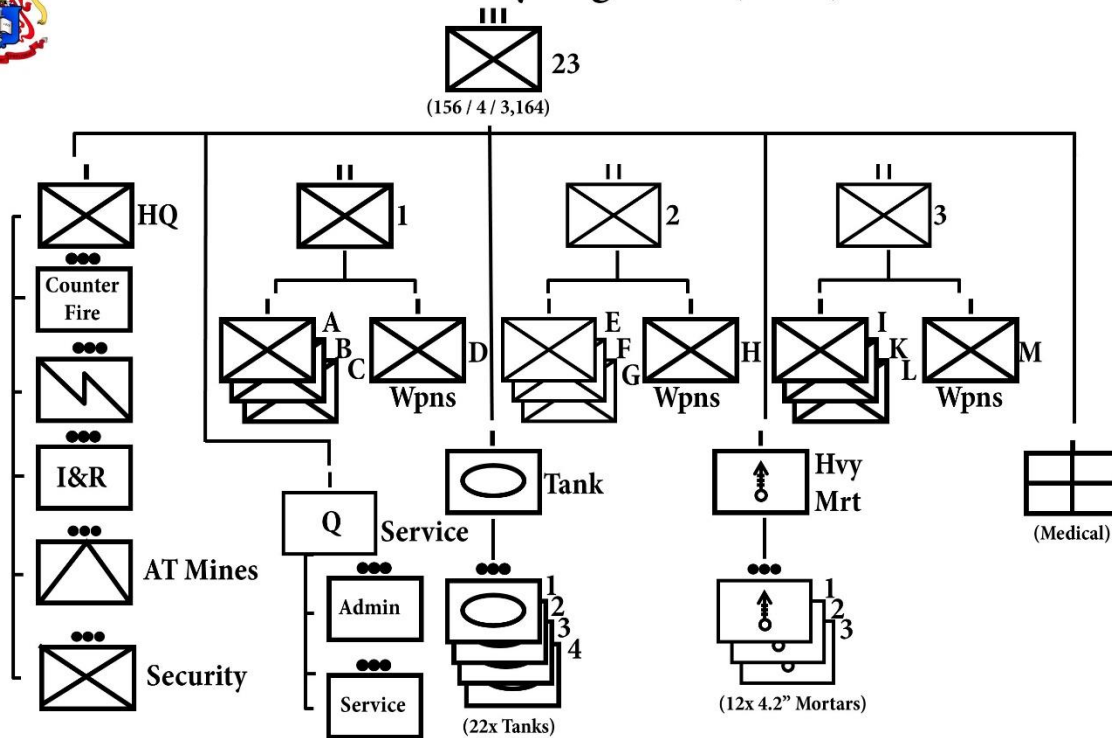
- [5] Major Millard O. Engen: comments and notes. Major Engen was executive officer of the 1st Battalion, 23d Infantry, at the time of the patrol action.
- [6] Engen, Op. Cit.
- [7] An enemy radio broadcast made in March or April 1951 mentioned a Capt. Melvin R. Stai, claiming he was a prisoner of the Chinese Communists.
- [8] Engen, op. cit.
- [9] Statement of Lt. Harold P. Mueller. Lieutenant Mueller and his men reached the top of this hill some time before the men from the 23d Infantry.
- [10] Although several reports indicate these vehicles were destroyed before they were abandoned, Lieutenants Mitchell and Penrod, in Twin Tunnels interviews, say they were not destroyed then, and that the engines were left running since they thought there was a possibility that they might later escape and need the vehicles. The next day (30 January) the 2d Division requested and got an air strike to destroy the vehicles. See Capt. William G. Penrod, letter to the author, 6 May 1953; also 2d Division: G-3 journal and file, entry 36, 30 January 1951.
- [11] Lt. Harold P. Mueller, letter to the author, 30 January 1952.
- [12] The narrative of the action of Company F, 23d Infantry, is based on an account by Lt.Col. James W. Edwards, CO, 2d Battalion, "Patrolling at Twin Tunnels," and upon two letters from Major Stanley C. Tyrrell to Major Leonard O. Friesz, dated 5 March and 9 September 1952. These letters were written in answer to questions submitted by OCMH.
- [13] Statement of Lt. Col. James W. Edwards. [14] Tyrrell, op. cit., 5 March 1952.
- [15] Mueller, op. cit.
- [16] Statement of Lt. Harold P. Mueller. [17] Mueller, op. cit.
- [18] Ibid.
- [19] In order that his family may not suffer unnecessary anguish, "Stratton" has been substituted for the real name of this brave soldier.
- [20] Edwards, op. cit.
- [21] Tyrrell, op. cit., 9 September 1952. [22] Ibid.
- [23] Ibid.
- [24] Ibid.
- [25] Tyrrell, op. cit., 5 March and 9 September 1952. [26] Ibid.
- [27] Ibid.
- [28] Edwards, op. cit., p. 11.
- [29] Mueller, op. cit.
- [30] Tyrrell, op. cit., 9 September 1952

Annex A: The 23d Infantry Regiment/Battalion/Company/Platoon. Details from Donald Boose, *US Army Forces in the Korean War 1950 -53*.

The three infantry regiments (9th, 38th, and 23rd) were the largest maneuver elements of the 2d Infantry Division. Each regiment consisted of a headquarters and headquarters company, a service company, three infantry battalions, a tank company, a heavy mortar company, and a medical company. Below are the details for the 23rd Infantry Regiment.



4B: 23rd Infantry Regiment (1951)

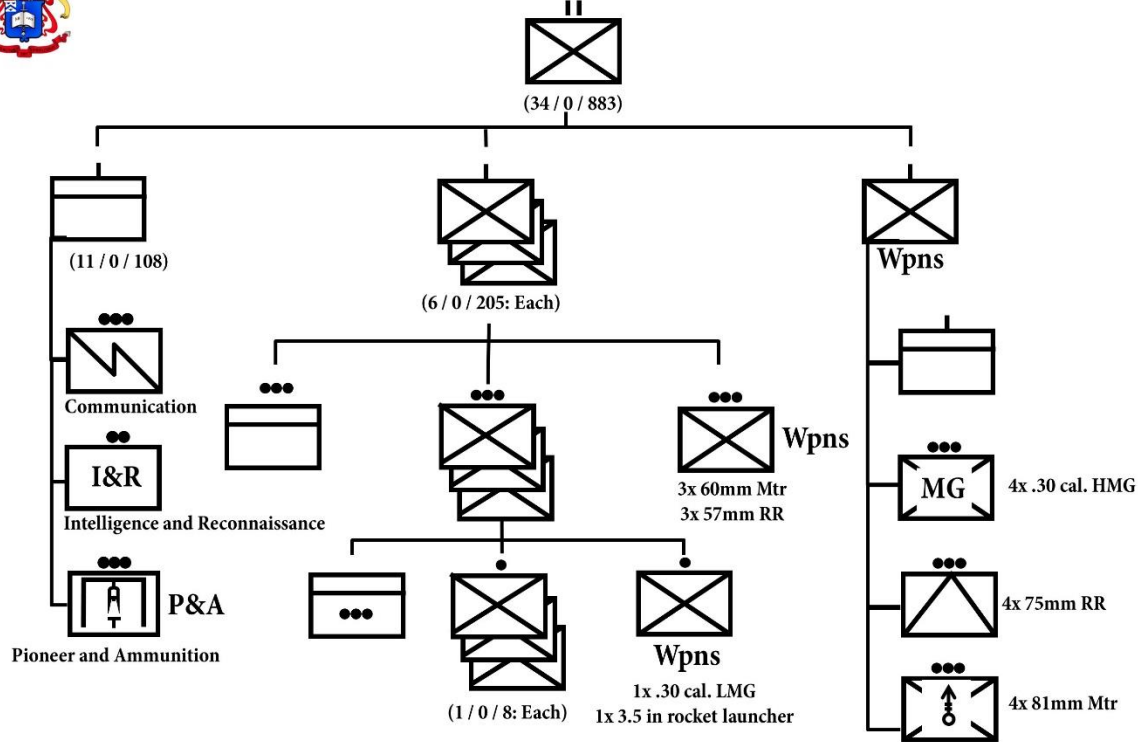


(T/O&E 7-11IN, 1948)

The infantry battalions (1st, 2^d, and 3^d) were the largest maneuver element of each regiment. Commanded by a lieutenant colonel, the infantry battalion was composed of a headquarters and Headquarters Company, three rifle companies, and a heavy weapons company. It had a strength of 917 at the beginning of the war.



4C: Infantry Battalion (1951)



(T/O&E 7-15IN, 1948)

The rifle companies were the largest maneuver element of the Infantry Battalion. Each battalion contained 3 infantry companies: 1st BN: A, B, and C companies. 2d BN: E, F and G companies. 3d BN: I, K and L companies. (There was no J Company). A Captain normally commanded the company. The company consisted of a headquarters section, three rifle platoons, and a weapons platoon.

The three rifle platoon were the major combat power of the rifle company. Each platoon had a five-man headquarters consisting of a platoon leader (lieutenant), platoon sergeant (master sergeant), assistant platoon sergeant (sergeant first class), and two messengers (privates first class); three nine-man rifle squads; and a nine-man weapons squad.

Three rifle squads made up a rifle platoon. Each squad consisted of a squad leader (sergeant first class) and assistant squad leader (sergeant), both armed with a .30 -cal. M1 Garand rifles; an automatic rifleman (corporal) armed with a .30-cal. M1918A2 Browning Automatic rifle (BAR). The remainder of the squad consisted of; an assistant automatic rifleman (private first class) and five riflemen (three corporals and two privates first class). All armed with the M1 Garand rifle. One of the riflemen served as ammunition bearer for the BAR, and one carried an M7 grenade launcher. One man in the squad was sometimes designated by the squad leader to by squad sniper and was armed with the MIC sniper rifle.

The platoon weapons squad consisted of a squad leader (sergeant first class), a four-man team with one M20 3.5 in. Rocket/Bazooka launcher and another four-man team with an M1919A6 light machine gun. Each squad had one corporal and three privates.)

The company weapons platoon contained a headquarters, a mortar section with three 60mm mortars, and a recoilless rifle section with three 57mm recoilless rifles.

Annex B: Colonel Paul LaMarch Freeman Jr., Commander 23d Infantry Regiment.

Only two days prior to its deployment, COL Paul L. Freeman, Jr. took command of the 23rd Infantry Regiment. The new commander did not have much time to evaluate the battle-readiness of his soldiers and equipment before deploying. Freeman, however, proved a wise choice for commander of the 23rd. He had spent most of his youth in East Asia and then, after graduating in the West Point class of 1929, served with the 15th Infantry Regiment at Tientsin [T-en-sin], China. While in China, he attended language school and became the assistant military attaché at Chungking [Chongchim]. During the Second World War, Freeman first served as the supply officer for General Joseph W. Stillwell, commander of the China-India-Burma Theater. He later participated in more covert operations that further put his language skills, regional expertise, and cultural knowledge to good use. Following the war, Freeman was stationed in Brazil, where he first met and worked with General Matthew Ridgway, his future commander in Korea.

Even though Freeman was only with his unit for a short amount of time prior to the deployment, the leadership attributes he exhibited would serve him well once the 23rd reached Korea in the summer of 1950. The Soldiers respected Freeman because he led from the front, sharing the same conditions and dangers as his men. Also known for his calm demeanor, even during combat, Freeman projected confidence when the situation was bleak—which was often the case in Korea.¹

Biography²

- Born on 29 June 1907 in the Philippines where his father, a US Army Colonel, was stationed.
- In 1929, he graduated from the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, and was commissioned in the infantry.
- Assigned to the 15th Infantry in China (1929-1936).
 - Served as an observer in the Second Sino-Japanese War, and as a military attaché.
 - Learned to speak Chinese.
 - in Chongqing (Chungking), China
- Assigned to Fort Washington, Maryland and served as a company commander in the 12th Infantry Regiment
- Reassigned to Fort Benning for the Tank Course.
 - Company command again
 - Battalion Maintenance Officer with the 66th Infantry Regiment.
- WW II:

¹ Army University Press, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Korean War Documentary Series, Twin Tunnels. Published 7 Jun 2019.
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCX9G3c6jkROVZ0tXr4gvUKQ>

² Information from Dr. Spencer Tuckers, *The Encyclopedia of the Korean War*, 280 and Wikipedia (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_L._Freeman_Jr)

- Assigned to China as Assistant Military Attaché at the American embassy.
- 1942, assigned to the U.S. Military Mission to China
- 1942, Reassigned to the staff of the China India Burma Theater as an instructor to Chinese and Indian Armies.
- 1943, staff officer in Washington D.C
- 1944-1947, assigned to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil as Director of Arms Training for the Joint Brazil-United States Military Commission
- 1947, Army General Staff in Washington D.C. (Latin American Branch of the Plans and Operating Division)
- 1948 to 1950, assigned to the Joint Brazil-U.S. Military Commission.
- Korean War:
 - Commander 23d Infantry Regiment, 2d Infantry Division.
 - Participated in the defense of the Nakdong River in the Pusan Perimeter.
 - Participated in the breakout in September and the push northward across the 38th Parallel.
 - Participated in the fighting in the Chongchon River valley north of Kunuri against the Chinese People's Volunteer Army (CPVA).
 - Participated in the rear-guard actions after the Chinese intervention.
 - Last regiment in the 2nd Division to withdraw from the northernmost positions.
 - Kunu-ri controversy: Unofficially accused of disobeying orders when he deviated from the division route. 9th and 38th regiments suffered heavy casualties running what was called the gauntlet. Freeman insisted he had permission from the assistant division commander. Nevertheless, his regiment suffered far fewer casualties.
 - Participated in the engagements at the Twin Tunnels and at Chipyeong-ni
 - Wounded and evacuated during the fighting at Chipyeong-ni.
 - Returned to the U.S. to recover from his wounds.
- 1952, National War College
- 1955, assumed command of the 2nd Infantry Division
- 1956, assumed of the 4th Infantry Division
- 1960, Deputy Commanding General for Reserve Forces (CONARC)
- 1962-1965, fourth star, and assigned as Commander in Chief, U.S. Army Europe/Commander, Central Army Group (CINCUSAREUR/COMCENTAG), serving in that capacity until 1965.
- 1965-1967, Commanding General, U.S. Continental Army Command (CG CONARC).
- 1975, Senior Army Member to the Weapons System Evaluation Group in Washington D.C.
- Death Date: 17 April 1988

Annex C: US Army Weapons with the patrol (Primary source is:

<https://www.nps.gov/spar/index.htm> (Springfield Arsenal) for both information and picture.

Other sources noted below.



1. M1 “Garand,” U.S. Rifle caliber .30: The basic shoulder weapon of the UN Forces. It was the first gas-operated, semi-automatic service rifle adopted by the U.S. Army.

First fielded: 1935 (iconic American shoulder arm of WW2)

Weight: 9.5 pounds.

Effective range: 300 yards.

Rate of Fire: 30 rounds per minute. (Fired an 8-round clip)



2. US Carbine Caliber .30: The M1 Carbine was developed as a “light rifle,” chambered for .30 pistol weight ammunition. Principal arm for officers and senior NCOs.

First fielded: 1941

Weight: 6 pounds.

Effective range: 200 yards.

Rate of Fire: 750 rounds per minute. (15 or 30 round detachable magazine) [Practicable rate of fire with 30 round magazine was far less]

3. Pistol, Caliber .45 M-1911 A-1: the Colt .45 Automatic (M1911A1), was the primary service pistol of the U.S. Army, Navy, and Marines by World War II. B

First fielded: 1911

Weight: Slightly less than 2 pounds.

Effective range: 25 yards.

Rate of Fire: 70-85 rounds per minute. (7 round detachable magazine)



4. Browning Automatic Rifle, or BAR: The U.S. Army’s squad level light machinegun in WWII and Korea. (limited use in WWI) Fired the same cartridge as the M-1 Garand.

First fielded: 1918

Weight: 15.98 pounds.

Effective range: 1,500 yards.

Rate of Fire: 500-650 rounds per minute. (20 round detachable magazine) [Practicable rate of fire with 20 round magazine was far less]



5. US Machine Gun, Caliber .30, M-1919 A-4: The standard U.S. Army Light Machine Gun. In Korean War the standard was 1 per platoon. Fired the same cartridge as the M-1 Garand

First fielded: 1919

Weight: 31 pounds.

Effective range: 1,500 yards.

Rate of Fire: 400-600 rounds per minute. (Belt fed)



6. US Machine Gun, Caliber .30, M-1917 A-1 (Heavy/Medium Machine Gun): A heavy/water cooled version of the M1918 LMG. The Infantry Battalion Weapons Company had four of these guns. The mounted element of the patrol had three jeep-mounted 30. Cal machineguns and some of these may have been the M1917.

First fielded: 1917

Weight: 103 pounds.

Effective range: 1,500 yards.

Rate of Fire: 600 rounds per minute. (Belt fed)

7. 50 Caliber Air Cooled MG M2HB: A large-caliber machine gun that was usually mounted of vehicles or positioned in fixed positions. The mounted element of the patrol had 2 mounted M2s, but not present in the defense of the hill top.

First fielded: 1933

Weight: 83.78 pounds.

Effective range: 2,000 yards.

Rate of Fire: 400 to 600 rpm.



8. M20 3.5in Super Bazooka: A man portable rocket launchers, developed in WWI. The Super Bazooka replaced the WWI era 2.36 in Bazooka. A rifle platoon had one bazooka. In the Lost Patrol action the mounted element of the patrol had a Supper Bazooka and it may have been present on the hill top.

First fielded: 1950

Weight: 15 pounds (each shell was additional 8.5 pounds)

Effective range: 75 yards.

Rate of Fire: 575 rounds per minute. (Belt fed)

9. Recoilless Rifles: The 57mm, and 75mm recoilless rifles (RR) fire artillery or tank like shells along a flat trajectory – known as “Pocket Artillery.” The back-blast escapes from the rear of the weapon so that there is no recoil, as with howitzers or cannon. The 57mm RR could be shoulder fired. The 75mm RR was crew-served and mounted on a tripod. The RR’s were effective against infantry and fortifications such as bunkers.



Each infantry company had 3x 57mm M18 RRs. [Note: In the Lost Patrol action the mounted element of the patrol had a M18, but not present in the defense of the hill]

First fielded: Early 1945

Weight: 45 pounds. (Each shell was an additional 5.3 pounds)

Effective Range: 500 yards (area targets out to 4,340 yards).



Each infantry battalion had 4x 75mm M20 RRs in the battalion weapons company. [Note: In the Lost Patrol action the mounted element of the patrol had a M20, but not present in the defense of the hill]

First fielded: Late 1945

Weight: 103 pounds. (each shell was an additional 5.3 pounds)

Effective Range: 1000 yards (area targets out to 3.9 miles).

10. Infantry mortars: The 60mm, 81mm and 4.2in. Mortars were the infantry's organic artillery. They were primarily anti-personnel weapons. The mortar consisted of a sealed-breach tube with bipod and a base-plate. Mortars threw high explosive shells at high angles and were capable of reaching into trenches and other defilade positions that were impervious to direct fire weapons.
- a. M2 60mm mortars (3 each in a rifle company) [Note: In the Lost Patrol action the mounted element of the patrol had a 60mm mortar, but not present in the defense of the hill]
 - (1) **First fielded**: 1940
 - (2) **Weight**: 42 pounds (each shell is an additional 3 pounds)
 - (3) **Effective Range**: 1.1 miles
 - b. M1 81 mm mortars (4 each in the battalion weapons company) [May have been with F Co. 1/23 Infantry in the Lost Patrol Action]
 - (1) **First fielded**: 1940
 - (2) **Weight**: 136 pounds (each shell is an additional 6 to 15 pounds)
 - (3) **Effective Range**: 1.9 miles
 - c. M2 4.2in mortars (12 in the regimental heavy mortar company) [the 4.2in mortar is similar today's 120mm mortar]
 - (1) **First fielded**: 1928
 - (2) **Weight**: 333 pounds (each shell is an additional 24 to 28 pounds)
 - (3) **Effective Range**: 4.4 miles

Below are other significant U.S. weapons in the Korean War.

- **Not present during the Lost Patrol action.**
- **With the 23d Infantry at the Twin Tunnels and Chipyeong-ni.**

11. Artillery: During Korean operations, the standard US artillery of WWII was employed: the 105mm, the 155mm, and the 8-in howitzers and rifles. Normally Allied forces enjoyed a significant advantage in artillery.



18x 105mm howitzers in the 23rd RCT 37th Medium Artillery Battalion.

Maximum Range: 7 miles



6x in B Battery, 503d Heavy Artillery Battalion (attached to the 37th Artillery Battalion at Chipyont-ni).

Maximum Range: 9 miles

12. Flak Wagons: Normally anti-aircraft weapons. Employed in Korea as anti-personnel weapons.



M16 MGMC - Quad .50: A half-track mounting four 50 cal. HMGs. It was originally developed as an anti-aircraft weapon in WWII. In Korea, it was primarily used as an antipersonnel weapon. It was capable of hurling an immense amount of fire onto hillsides against infantry. US soldiers referred to them as a “vacuum cleaner” or “ridge sweeper” that was capable of sucking the ridge until it was devoid of life. **(8 in the 23rd RCT’s B Battery, 503 AAA AW (SP) Battalion).**

Maximum Range: 4.6 miles against an area target.



The M19 Multiple Gun Motor Carriage (MGMC) was originally developed as self-propelled anti-aircraft weapon on the M24 light tank chassis. It was equipped with two Bofors 40mm guns mounted in a revolving turret. **(4 in the 23rd RCT’s B Battery, 503 AAA AW (SP) Battalion).**

Maximum Range: 7.8 miles against an area target.

13. Armor. The US Army operated several different types of tanks in the Korean conflict. These included M-24 light tank (75mm gun), the M26 Pershing Heavy Tank (90mm gun), and the M46 Patton Medium Tank (90mm gun).



However, the most common US Army tank in the Korean conflict was the WWII era M4A3E8 medium tank (76mm gun), also known as the “Easy 8.” It had a high silhouette, light armor, and an inadequate gun, but it had an excellent power to weight ratio and was more maneuverable in Korean terrain than more modern tanks. The 23d Infantry Regimental tank company was authorized 22 M4A3E8 medium tanks.

Annex D: Lieutenant General Matthew Bunker Ridgway, Commander U.S. 8th Army:
Excerpt from CMH Pub 19-8, *The Korean War – The Chinese Intervention* (Center of Military History), 27-28.

“The job of the commander was to be up where the crisis of action was taking place. In time of battle, I wanted division commanders to be up with their forward battalion, and I wanted corps commanders up with the regiment that was in the hottest action. If they had paper work to do, they could do it at night. By day their place was up there where the shooting was going on. I held to the old-fashioned idea that it helped the spirits of the men to see the Old Man up there, in the snow and sleet and the mud, sharing the same cold, miserable existence they had to endure.” - Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway³

The man selected to replace General Walker as Eighth Army commander was Lt. Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway. At the time Ridgway was serving on the Army staff in the Pentagon as deputy chief of staff for operations and administration. A famed airborne commander from World War II, Ridgway was knowledgeable about conditions in Korea and the Far East and had a strong and dynamic personality. He would need both for the task ahead. His success in turning Eighth Army’s morale around, using little more than a magnetic personality and bold leadership, is still a model for the Army, showing how the power of leadership can dramatically change a situation.

Ridgway landed in Tokyo on Christmas Day 1950 to discuss the situation with MacArthur. The latter assured the new commander of his full support to direct Eighth Army operations as he saw fit. Ridgway was encouraged to retire to successive defensive positions, as currently under way, and hold Seoul as long as he could, but not if it meant that Eighth Army would be isolated in an enclave around the city. In a foreshadowing of his aggressive nature, Ridgway asked specifically that if he found the combat situation “to my liking” whether MacArthur would have any objection to “my attacking”? MacArthur answered, “Eighth Army is yours, Matt. Do what you think best.”

General Ridgway knew that one of his first jobs was to restore the Eighth Army soldiers’ confidence in themselves. To accomplish this he had to be aggressive, despite the hard knocks of November and December, and find other leaders in Eighth Army who were not defeatist or defensive oriented. In practice he proved quick to reward commanders who shared his sentiments and just as quick to relieve those officers at any level who did not. During one of his first briefings in Korea at I Corps, Ridgway sat through an extensive discussion of various defensive plans and contingencies. At the end he asked the startled staff where their attack plans were. The corps G-3 (operations officer) responded that he had no such plans. Within days I Corps had a new operations officer. The message went out: Ridgway was interested in taking the offensive. To aid in this perception he also established a plan to rotate out those division commanders who had been in action for six difficult months and replace them with fresh leaders who would be more interested in attack and less in retreat. In addition, he sent out guidance to commanders at all levels to spend more time at the front lines and less in their command posts in the rear. The men had to see their commanders if they were to have confidence that they had not been

³ Kenneth Hamburger’s “Leadership in the Crucible.”

forgotten. All these positive leadership steps would have a dramatic effect almost from the first. Eighth Army was in Korea to stay.

Ridgway, despite his aggressive intent, was also enough of a realist to know that the Chinese were still capable of launching major attacks. He also knew that his Eighth Army still needed time to refit and reorganize. Thus, he immediately began planning to strengthen the defensive lines around Seoul while bringing up X Corps as quickly as possible to strengthen the Wonju sector in the center of the line. Almond's X Corps was no longer independent, but would be just another corps of the Eighth Army, tied into a new defensive line that stretched unbroken from one side of the peninsula to the other.

Ridgway's Guidance for "Meat Grinder Tactics"⁴

- Units off their vehicles and on the hills.
- Troops to construct tight defensive perimeters for night fighting, while expanding the perimeters during daylight.
- Use the UNC advantage in airpower, artillery, tanks, and flak wagons to grind down the communist forces
 - a. Punish the Chinese by killing as many as possible –not concerned with fighting for real estate.
 - b. No more "bug outs." Units would stay in position and fight surrounded if need be, holding out until a relief force could get to them the next day.
 - c. At night, destroy the enemy with artillery and flak wagons, and using tanks to support the infantry, then call in air strikes during daylight hours.

⁴Kenneth Hamburger's "Leadership in the Crucible."

Annex E: The Chinese Communist Forces- CCF

Organization of the CCF (details from Nigel Thomas' "The Korean War" pages 33-35.

In 1950 the Chinese People's Liberation Army ground forces were referred to as the CCF (Chinese Communist Forces). There were between two and three million troops in four Field Armies (numbered 1st-4th).

A Field Army was 130,000-160,000 strong and normally contained three group armies. It was equivalent to a weak US or British Army.

A Group Army was 30,000-80,000 strong and normally contained two to six armies. It was equivalent to a Western 'corps.

The Army was 21,000-30,000 strong and normally contained three or four divisions. It was about the size of a US or British Division. It was a self-sufficient tactical formation with anti-aircraft, artillery, communications, engineer, reconnaissance, special duty, training and transportation troops.

A division was 7,000 – 10,000 strong with three infantry regiments, an artillery regiment, and engineer, transport, medical and signals companies. It was equivalent to a US 'light division.

A regiment was in theory about 3,242 men with three infantry battalions (each with three rifle companies, an artillery battery, and guard, mortar, transport, signals, medical and stretcher companies. In the field the rifle regiments were usually significantly understrength.

The Chinese Communist Forces (CCF) (Details from Kenneth Hamburger's "Leadership in the Crucible," pages 47-49)

1. General:

- a. Possibly some of the finest light infantry in modern history.
- b. Leaders at all levels with the CCF had extensive combat experience.
 - i. Fighting for independence continuously in China since 1927.
 - ii. Against the Japanese in WWII.
- c. The CCF adhered to a sophisticated doctrine of mobile guerrilla warfare. Relied upon:
 - i. Hide during the day and attack between midnight and 0300 –this somewhat negated the UNF superiority in artillery and air.
 - ii. Thorough reconnaissance and superb infiltration tactics.
 - iii. Concentrate forces at a decisive point.
 - iv. Surprise night attack.
 - v. Withdraw quickly after victory – to avoid UNF airpower.

2. Equipment and Uniform:

- a. The CCF carried a variety of WWII era light infantry weapons.

- b. Limited artillery and no air-support.
- c. The winter uniform was simple, but very effective. It consisted of a heavy quilted uniform, a padded cap with earflaps, and sandals over layered socks.
- d. The soldiers carried their limited rations and ammunition in a cloth tube carried diagonally across the chest.
 - i. One hundred bullets, and three grenades.
 - ii. Two to ten days of food.

3. Tactics and Procedures:

- a. The average CCF was a peasant in his late teens or early twenties.
 - i. The peasant stock was normally robust and hardy, but lacked technical sophistication.
 - ii. Communist ideology instilled discipline and enthusiasm.
 - iii. Very mobile - daily marches of ten miles over mountainous terrain were the norm.
- b. UNF soldiers noted that the CCF enthusiasm also had a touch of fanaticism.
 - i. The CCF soldiers apparent indifference toward death unsettled the UNF soldiers.
 - ii. Attacks bordered on the fanatical and at times the men in the first wave attacked without weapons.
- c. The CCF organization relied heavily upon the squad.
 - i. Each squad composed of three teams of three men each, plus a squad leader.
 - ii. Because the squad lived, ate, worked, trained, and fought together they usually became an extremely efficient organization.
 - iii. The individual soldiers looked after one another and checked any tendency a squad member might have to deviate from expected behavior.
- d. The CCF predominant tactic.
 - i. Attack in overwhelming numbers.
 - ii. Look for and exploit any hole in the UNF's defensive line.
 - iii. Pour through the hole to envelope the defensive line and cut supply routes to the rear – this normally resulted in the UNF “**bugging out**” and withdrawing.”

4. Communications:

- a. Very limited communication abilities. Normally consisted of noisemakers and light signals-bugles, whistles, shouts, and torches.
- b. Few to no radios and telephones were available only at battalion level.

5. Logistics:

- a. Supplies were normally man-packed.
- b. Resupply columns consisted of coolies bearing loads of seventy to one hundred pounds on A-frame pack- boards.

- i. A unit's resources allowed it to conduct one or two short attacks without needing resupply.
- ii. Chinese soldier required less than ten pounds of supplies per day (American soldier needed sixty)
- iii. A CCF division required forty tons of supplies per day (US Division needed six hundred tons)

6. Summary:

- a. Historian Kenneth Hamburger stated: "They were serious adversaries, practicing a war of hate, among other motivations. In short, the Chinese infantry were very light, very robust, very aggressive, and very mobile."
- b. The CCF soldiers respected American weapons. After their first encounter with American forces, one wrote: *"The coordinated action of mortars and tanks is an important factor. . . . Their firing instruments are highly powerful. . . . Their artillery is very active. . . . Aircraft strafing and bombing of our transportation have become a great hazard to us . . . their transportation system is great. . . . Their infantry rate of fire is great and the long range of fire is still greater."*
- c. They had less respect for the fighting skill of the American soldier, for when cut off from the rear: *"American soldiers abandon all their heavy weapons, leaving them all over the place, and play opossum. . . . Their infantrymen are so weak, afraid to die, and haven't the courage to attack or defend. They depend on their planes, tanks, and artillery. At the same time, they are afraid of our fire power. They will cringe when, if on the advance, they hear firing. They are afraid to advance father. . . . They specialize in day fighting. They are not familiar with night fighting or hand-to-hand combat. . . . If defeated, they have no orderly formation. Without the use of their mortars, they become completely lost . . . they become dazed and completely demoralized At Unsan they were surrounded for several days yet they did nothing. They are afraid when the rear is cut off. When transportation comes to a standstill, the infantry loses the will to fight."*

CCF Weapons: The Chinese Communist Forces (CCF) relied primarily upon WWII era weapons. Most of their weapons and ammunition were provide by the Russians. Even though the equipment was WWII vintage it was generally extremely rugged, and very easy to maintain. Therefore it was very suitable for the equipping of peasant armies of the CCF.

CCF Weapons used in the combat action with the Lost Patrol (Primary source is: <https://www.nps.gov/spar/index.htm> (Springfield Arsenal) for both information and picture. Additional sources from the internet also used)



Infantry rifles: Communist forces were equipped with a miscellany of shoulder weapons. Two of the most prominent were the Russian 7.62mm carbine and the Japanese 7.7mm Imperial Army Rifle (both WWII era weapons).



In time, the CCF discarded the rifle in favor of the submachine gun. It was less accurate and had less killing power. However, it gave the peasant soldiers the ability to deliver a much higher volume of fire.

The Shpagin PPSH41 submachine gun (burp gun) was the most common submachine gun:



First fielded: 1941

Weight: 8 pounds without the magazine.

Effective range: 140 yards.

Rate of Fire: Up to 1000 rpm (35-round box

magazine or 71-round drum)



The CCF fielded many Japanese and Russian Light Machineguns. One such LMG was the Degtyaryov Light Machine Gun (7.62mm).

First fielded: 1928

Weight: 25 pounds with the magazine.

Effective range: 879 yards.

Rate of Fire: 550 rpm (30 round overhead round-box magazine)



Chinese hand grenades were significantly different in physical appearance to US grenades. The stick fragmentation grenade was less powerful, and their stick concussion grenade more powerful. In the attack, the CCF ordinarily employed one platoon armed only with grenades to lead the attack.



Machine Guns: Several varieties of medium and heavy machine guns were used by the CCF. One of the most common was the wheel-mounted PM M1910 heavy machine gun (7.62mm).

First fielded: 1910

Weight: 140 pounds.

Effective range: 1500 yards.

Rate of Fire: 600 rpm (belt fed)

Mortars: The CCF used a variety of mortars – mostly of Russian. Because of its ease of transport, the mortar was the most common form of indirect fire-support.

- Communist regiments had six 120mm mortars.
- Each infantry battalion had had nine 82mms or sometimes the more portable 61mms.
- Communist mortars could use US 81mm and 60mm ammunition. US 81mm and 60mm mortars could not use the communist ammunition.
- The CCF forces in the combat action against the Lost Patrol did employ mortars –the size and numbers present are not known. This indicates that at least a BN (-) was employed against the Lost Patrol.

Artillery. Theoretically artillery support for a CCF Division closely followed that of WWII Soviet Division. A division contained twelve 122mm howitzers, twenty-four 76mm field guns, twelve 76mm SU-76 self-propelled guns, and twelve 45mm anti-tank guns. In addition, each of a division's three regiments was issued four 76mm howitzers. However, at Chipyong-ni the CCF divisions probably operated with far less artillery than they were authorized. In the action against the Lost Patrol there is no indication that the CCF employed artillery. The CCF had a marked reluctance to fire interdiction missions on targets they could not observe.



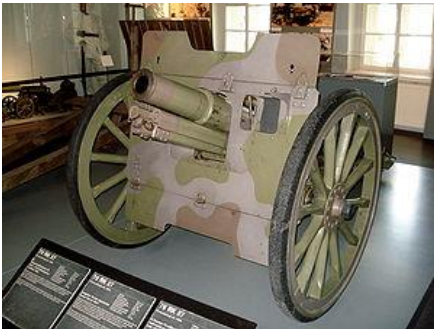
122mm howitzer M1938 (M-30)

Maximum Range: 7.3 miles



76-mm divisional gun M1942 (ZiS-3)

Maximum Range: 8.2 miles



76mm regimental gun M1927

Maximum Range: 2.6 miles