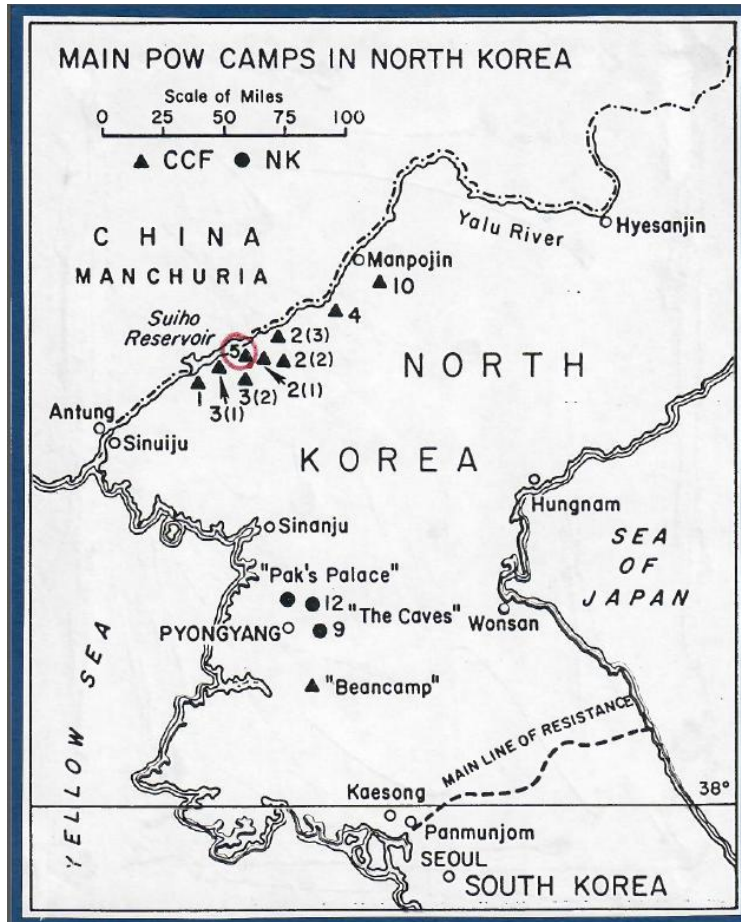


Scarce POW Cover Sent During Korean War to Jupiter Florida

By John H. Walker

Without warning North Korean forces invaded South Korea on 25th June 1950 and rapidly advanced taking control of much of the country. Heroic resistance by American forces in Southeast Korea around the area known as “The Pusan Perimeter” contained the advance.

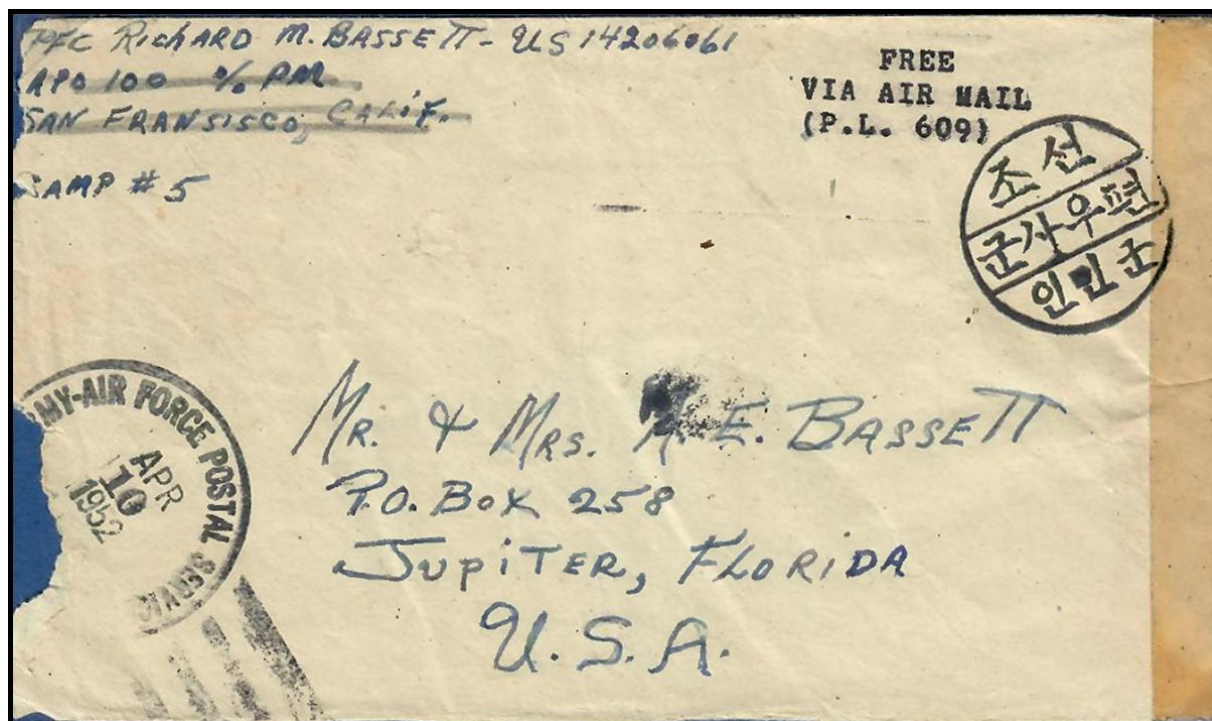


the war North Korean troops who took American prisoners often tied their hands behind their backs and executed them by shooting them in the backs of their heads. It was only when the Chinese allied with North Korea that proper POW camps were established.

A resolution was passed by the United Nations to resist the invasion and sixteen nations led by the United States sent forces to combat the invasion by North Korea, other nations providing medical and other aid. The most significant contribution in terms of military personnel being made by the U.S.

Following successful landings at Inchon in Northwest South Korea in September 1950, UN forces made rapid advances into North Korea at which point China came to the aid of North Korea on 8th October 1950. There then followed nearly three years of military stalemate with the war moving backwards and forwards either side of the 38th Parallel.

During the war American POWs suffered greatly and very nearly 40% died in captivity. In the early days of



On 10th July 1951 Armistice negotiations began but it was not until 27th July 1953 that an Armistice was signed at Panmunjom bringing an end to the conflict in which some 5 million people lost their lives. Both countries are still technically at war since a formal peace treaty has not been concluded.

POW mail from the Korean War is not common and is often found in poor condition. Illustrated is a cover sent by Private First-Class Richard M Bassett to his parents living in Jupiter, Florida. The cover has received a strike of the North Korean 'Military Mail' cachet and was received and postmarked with the US ARMY-AIR FORCE POSTAL SERVICE APO 100 (CDS) the 10th April 1952 applied at Yokohama. All American POW mail passed through this APO.

Also illustrated is a map of the main POW camps in North Korea and circled in red is Camp 5 where Bassett was held prisoner.

Acknowledgments

1. Book-Postal history of American POW's -World War 2, Korea, Vietnam by Norman Gruenzner 1979
2. Anthony Bard FRPSL
3. Cover manipulation by Thomas Lera.