

HEADQUARTERS
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
Fort Lewis, Washington

FORT LEWIS, Wash--Sergeant First Class Alan B. Robertson of Fort Lewis, Wash., has been charged with collaborating with the enemy while a prisoner of war in Korea.

A pre-trial investigation of the charges is now being made.

After a complete study of the facts by ^{two} investigating officers, a recommendation will be made to the convening authority, Major General Thomas S. Timberman, Fort Lewis and 2d Division Commanding General.

In the event trial is directed, the accused will be tried at Fort Lewis.

Sfc Robertson was captured in the fall of 1950 and released by communist forces in September 1953. He is presently assigned to the 71st Replacement company as a platoon sergeant.

Sfc Robertson was born March 13, 1925, at San Mateo, Calif., but lists San Diego as his hometown. He joined the Army in June 1941 at Phoenix, Ariz.

His wife and six children live at Fort Lewis.

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HEADQUARTERS

INFORMATION SECTION

FORT LEWIS, WASHINGTON

PHONE JU 8-3611, Ext 2-3111

FL-847-63

October 9, 1963

"FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE"

FORT LEWIS, Wash -- Looking at an old time cannon, most people are sure of just one thing--the shot came out of the front end. Little could be predicted concerning how far the shot would travel and exactly where the shot would land.

Yet, these clumsy and ineffective looking weapons are the parents of today's modern howitzer and mortar.

To compare a Roman catapult used many years before the time of Christ with a modern trench mortar seems absurd. But the only basic difference is the kind of energy that sends the projectile on its way.

In the dawn of history, war machines were performing the function of artillery (which might be defined as a means of hurling missiles too heavy to be thrown by hand.) These crude weapons set up the basic principles of artillery.

The scriptures record the use of ingenious machines on the walls of Jerusalem in 8 B.C. These were the predecessors of the "catapult" and the "ballista," (similar to the giant crossbow) the two basic artillery weapons. The ballista had horizontal arms like a bow and, like a modern field gun, shot low and directly toward the enemy. The catapult was the howitzer of its day. It could hurl a 100 pound stone 600 yards in a high arc to strike the enemy behind his defenses.

The show of firearms is credited to the Moors in 1118 A.D. The earliest known cannon was a cast iron weapon shaped like a jug, and the projectile was an iron dart. Due to its peculiar shape, this cannon was called "pot de fer" or "iron jug."

MORE

For approximately three hundred years, cannons remained small crude tubes which tossed one-pound lead or iron balls.

By the middle of the 15th century, the weapons had developed into enormous bombards with calibers of up to 25 inches. Some of these guns were of cast bronze, weighing 19-tons, and could fire a 600-pound stone at the rapid rate of seven shots a day.

During the period 1650-1850, tremendous advances were made in the field of metallurgy for bronze and cast iron. This saw the development and standardization of calibers, the use of wheels and carriages for mobility, and the first attempts at the use of the rifled bore with elongated projectiles for increased accuracy and range.

With the development of the steel industry, perfection of breech and recoil mechanisms became possible. Of equal importance was the invention of more efficient sighting and laying mechanisms.

In contrast to the old weapons, and in light of modern advancements is the span and variety of artillery pieces here at Fort Lewis' Division Artillery, and other artillery units.

In their possession is the 105-mm Howitzer with a range of 12,000 yards, quite an improvement over the 600-yard range of the catapult. The 105-mm fires a maximum rate of 4 rounds per minute as opposed to seven shots a day in the 15th century.

The effective fire power of the 155-mm howitzer and awesome power of the 8-inch howitzer with a range of 18,000 yards made the U.S. artilleryman one of the best in World War II.

MORE

Fort Lewis artillery groups have these weapons, modernized and, in some cases, self-propelled, such as the M-52 Self-Propelled 105mm Howitzer.

Also, they have, and have fired the Honest John Rocket, a weapon capable of carrying a high explosive or nuclear warhead a distance of 28,000 meters.

Keeping up with progress in an important part of any business and modern Army plays its part while remembering its past.

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FORT LEWIS, WASHINGTON

PHONE JU 8-3611, Ext 82511

FL-815-63

December 24, 1963

"FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE"

FORT LEWIS, Wash -- One-hundred and fifty dark-haired, flashy-eyed Nisqually Indian children filed into their tiny log cabin church with their parents Sunday morning. In the back of the church 95 uniformed visitors watched and listened with the Indians as the minister spoke of the "Miracle of Christmas."

The military mission, composed of members of the 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry and the 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry from Fort Lewis, was there to present each child with a Christmas gift.

After the services the tiny tots were called and Santa Claus presented the gifts to the children. The looks on their faces gradually changed from those of suspicion to sheer joy. Then came the cake, ice cream, apples and other assorted Christmas favors.

The female Indian chief, Calama, was on the verge of tears. She could only say, "We've never seen anything like this." First Sergeant Henry H. Lind remarked, "The spirit of our gesture really hit them hard."

As a return gesture, Calama made Lieutenant Colonel John J. Doody, 22nd Infantry Battalion commander, the first Army colonel to be an honorary member of the Nisqually tribe.

As the chief stated, "Even though our society contrasts our 20th-century surroundings, we are made to feel a part of the community by the generous deeds of these Fort Lewis soldiers."

The tribe, scattered over a wide area, is hearty with a lineage

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of grace and wealth.

Leading military personnel present at the Nisqually church were Major General Claire E. Hutchin, Jr., 4th Infantry Division commander; Bridadier General William R. Peers, assistant 4th Infantry Division commander and Colonel Robert W. Green, 3rd Brigade commander, 4th Infantry Division.

---FORT LEWIS---

HEADQUARTERS
FORT LEWIS, WASHINGTON
FL-1-12

INFORMATION SECTION
PHONE 96 8-3419 or 96 8-4308
January 13, 1966

"FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE"

FORT LEWIS, WASH-Historians have recorded for posterity the achievements of man from the beginning of time, and though the historian is often forgotten, the history lives on--for man lives in the present, planning for the future, yet never forgetting the past.

Gray Army Airfield, located at Fort Lewis, today finds itself the subject of an intensive research project, the product of which will be a history.

The task of compiling the data for this endeavor--requiring time, effort, and devotion--has fallen to Staff Sergeant Arnold C. Hernandez, senior flight operations coordinator at Gray Army Field.

He was appointed Gray Field historian eleven months ago by Lieutenant Colonel William R. Swift, aviation officer, when it was anticipated that a historical museum would be erected as a monument at Gray Field, housing flight memorabilia.

Since then, post engineers have approved the placing of a monument at the field, but not in the form of a museum. Instead, a historical marker has been decided upon, the final plans awaiting approval.

Sgt Hernandez nonetheless continues compiling his work, which he estimates is half completed.

By means of pictures and stories acquired from local newspaper files, by wandering through museums, and by word of mouth--received from persons formerly stationed at Fort Lewis--SSgt Hernandez has gathered his data, tracing Gray Field's history in word and pictures from 1917 to present.

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During the course of his work, the sergeant has come across many interesting facts, side notes, and anecdotes--information the average person would not be aware of without much research.

For instance, did you know that all Army aircraft were named after either animals or Indian tribes--Iriquois, Carabou, Sioux, and Seminole, for example?

Were you aware that Air Force I, the president's personal Boeing 707 had stopped at the airfield in 1963 bearing dignitaries?

How many realize that Gray Field hosts a flying club, with seven planes at the disposal of its members?

These are but few of SSgt Hernandez's discoveries, duly recorded.

Sgt Hernandez readily admits that though Gray Field is not the largest of its kind, it meets the needs of Fort Lewis. He cites the fact that neighboring McChord AFB sends its pilots here to practise landing on a smaller runway. Gray field has a runway of 6,175 feet, while McChord AFB boasts a runway of 10,100 feet.

Perhaps the most startling incident the sergeant has come across occurred in the early 1950's.

As SSgt Hernandez related it, a lightweight two passenger Army observation aircraft was preparing for take off at Gray Field, in the days when planes had no starters.

The pilot left the plane, cracking the throttle, turning the ignition on, leaving the mechanic alone in the aircraft.

While the pilot was propping the plane by hand, the mechanic accidentally

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bumped the throttle with his elbow, bringing it to its full RPM (revolutions per minute).

Realizing what was happening, the pilot clutched the strut (wing brace), in an effort to stop the plane. Turning 360 degrees, the plane proceeded to head north. The pilot released his grasp, and the plane became airborne.

The mechanic--with no knowledge of flying an aircraft--took stock of his situation, and decided to jump at 20 feet, escaping with a broken leg.

Aware of the hazards of a pilotless plane, Army officials contacted McChord AFB and gave instructions to down the plane before damage could be done to a heavily populated area. Nature, however, was against the move, and the aircraft was lost in the clouds, Air Force planes reporting no action taken.

The next day, an irate farmer from Allensburg phoned what today is known as the Federal Aviation Agency, notifying them that an Army plane was setting in his field, and he wanted it removed immediately. Surprised Gray Field officials were notified, and the plane removed unscathed--bearing no signs of the experience it had been through.

Little side lines add to the making of history, and SSgt Hernandez's research has borne that out.

A native of San Diego, California, SSgt Hernandez entered the Army in July, 1949.

Assigned to Fort Lewis in 1950, he was ordered to the headquarters of the Western Air Defense Command at Fort Baker, California, where he remained for two years, and marrying his wife Judy in a military ceremony in 1952.

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After serving in Europe, he was re-assigned to Gray Field in 1955, staying till his transfer to Libey Army Air Field at Fort Huachuca, Arizona.

Following a tour of duty in Korea, he was stationed at the Fort Lee Army Air Field, at Fort Lee, Virginia, where after an 18 month period he was sent to Vietnam, serving as part of the Tactical Operation Center at Da Nang.

Sgt Hernandez returned for his third tour of duty at Gray Field in July, 1964.

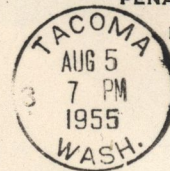
The sergeant and his wife have six children: Loretta, Arnold III, Darlene, Patricia, Scott, and Gregory.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

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