

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Ivan Maras

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

Interview # VRK-A-L-2013-104

Ivan Maras, an Illinoisan who served with the 65th Infantry Regiment (a Puerto Rican National Guard unit) during the Korean War, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's Veterans Remember - Korea Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Dec 17, 2013 Location: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, Director of Oral History, ALPL

Transcription by: Patty Maynor, ALPL volunteer

Edited by: Susan Seiber & Jan Culp, ALPL volunteers

Total Pages: 39 pgs Total Time: 1:39 / 1.65 hrs

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The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Ivan Maras, Veterans Remember, VRK-A-L-2013-104

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Ivan Maras was born in March, 1931 in Bulpitt, Illinois and grew up on the family's small farm near Bulpitt. Ivan attended a two room school for six years, graduated from Kincaid High School in 1948 and went on to college, with the goal of returning home to farm. He graduated from Illinois Teachers College in Normal in 1952 and was soon drafted into the Army. Maras attended Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training at Ft. Knox, Kentucky and shipped to South Korea in the spring of 1953.

Once in South Korea, Maras was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company of the 65th Infantry Regiment, a Puerto Rican National Guard unit, which had been in-country for over two years. The 65th Regiment manned the line near the Kumhwa Valley during the last three months of the war, when the Chinese launched a series of heavy attacks in an attempt to gain as much territory as possible before the armistice was signed. Although his unit was heavily engaged, Maras saw little direct combat. After the armistice, he was assigned to help run a school, due to his college degree and teaching certificate. The school was nothing more than the unit's tents, and later on, a series of Quonset huts. Maras taught math and science courses to many of the Puerto Rican members of the 65th and greatly enjoyed the experience. He finally returned to the United States in October, 1954, at the end of his tour and soon found a job teaching, which he made his career. Maras has returned to Korea, both in 1987 and 2005, and traveled to Puerto Rico in 2011. In all cases, he was treated like a hero.

Subject Headings/Key Words: service in Army in South Korea; 65th Infantry Regiment; teaching American soldiers (Puerto Ricans), following the Korea War; growing up on the farm, during Great Depression; the artillery barrage at the end of the Korean War; Bulpitt, Illinois; Kincaid, Illinois; South Korean governments treatment of American veterans, returning to Korea

Note to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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