

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Jearl 'Buck' Ballow

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Veterans Remember—Korean War Oral History project

Interview # VRK-A-L-2009-021

Jearl 'Buck' Ballow, an Army veteran assigned to GHQ in Tokyo during the Korean War, who spent the bulk of his military career as a CID agent, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Veterans Remember* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: June 30, 2009 Location: Ballow residence in Springfield, Illinois

Date: July 17, 2009 Location: Ballow residence in Springfield, Illinois

Date: July 30, 2009 Location: Ballow residence in Springfield, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

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

Transcription by: Audio Transcription Center, Boston, MA

Edited by: Rosie Camille & Rozanne Flatt, ALPL Volunteers

Total Pages: 141 pgs Total Time: 2:57 + 2:33 + 1:27 / 2.95 + 2.55 + 1.45 = 6.95 hrs

Session 1: Ballow's early life, and experiences in Tokyo during Korean War

Session 2: Ballow's career, from enlisted clerk to CID Warrant Officer

Session 3: Ballow's military career from 1970 to retirement in 1979

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on Aug 10, 2009

The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in
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Abstract

Jearl 'Buck' Ballow, *Veterans Remember*, VRK-A-L-2009-021

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Jearl 'Buck' Ballow was born on May 15th, 1932 in the small Indiana town of Cannelton. His father worked as a laborer in town, and his mother died when he was five. Buck attended St. Vincent's School in Vincennes, Indiana, then returned to Cannelton during WW II. Following the war, seeing no future in Cannelton, Ballow dropped out of high school and enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1949. By March of 1950 he was stationed in Tokyo, Japan, assigned to the General Headquarters (GHQ) staff as an assistant company clerk in Company B, Staff Battalion. Ballow discussed occupation duty in Tokyo in detail, working on the same staff as Douglas MacArthur, and remembers well when the Korean War started. He remained in GHQ until his return to the states in early 1953, following the war closely. While in Japan, he married Kazuko (Cookie) Moriyama.

Once back home, Ballow completed high school, then returned to the Army in 1955. For the first several years he continued to serve in clerical posts, first at Army posts in Texas before deploying to Germany in 1958. During this time he completed a pre-commissioning course, but continued to work as an enlisted man, earning regular promotions. By 1962 he was posted at Fort Banks, Massachusetts. In 1965 he attended training to become an Army Criminal Investigator, and was subsequently commissioned as a Warrant Officer and assigned first to the 12th Military Police Group in Fort Devens, MA. He next was assigned as a CID agent in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. During that tour, he worked as an agent on the floor of the Chicago Democratic Convention in 1968.

In 1969, during the height of the Vietnam War, Ballow was transferred to Okinawa, Japan. While there, the Island commander, Lieutenant General J.B. Lampert, put him in charge of fighting the growing drug problem then plaguing military forces on the island. Because of his effectiveness, the commander blocked several attempts to transfer Ballow to Vietnam. He was finally transferred to Camp Howze, South Korea, but only after the island reverted to Japanese control when the Status of Forces Agreement expired. He returned to Okinawa after one year, and then to Fort Riley, Kansas in 1977. Ballow subsequently retired in 1979, settling in Springfield, Illinois, where he found work with the Illinois State Police.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Cannelton, Indiana; St. Vincent's School, Vincennes, Indiana; GHQ-FEC (General Headquarters – Far East Command); occupation duty in Japan; start of the Korean War; General Douglas MacArthur; MacArthur's firing by President Harry Truman; General Walton Walker; General Matthew Ridgway; Raider Company (8245th Army Unit); Criminal Investigation Division; 1968 Chicago Democratic Convention; fighting drugs in Okinawa as a CID agent; Status of Forces Agreement with Okinawa; CID duty in South Korea

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