

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Norbert Bentele

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

Interview # VRK-A-L-2011-035

Norbert Bentele, a Korean War veteran, who served in the Signal Corps during 1953-1954, 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: August 12, 2011 Location: Quincy Museum, Quincy, Illinois

Date: August 31, 2011 Location: Bentele residence, Quincy, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

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

Transcription by: Audio Transcription Center, Boston, MA

Edited by: Roberta Volkmann & Rozanne Flatt, ALPL Volunteer

Total Pages: 106 Total Time: 2:02 + 3:18 / 2.03 + 3.3 = 5.33 hrs

Session 1: Early life on the farm, experiences as wireman, & early military

Session 2: A year in Korea & post-war duty at Ft. Leonard Wood & Colorado

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on April 30, 2012.

The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Norbert Bentele, *Veterans Remember*, VRK-A-L-2011-035

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Norbert Bentele was born on November 9th, 1932 on the family farm in Macon County, Missouri. He grew up in a large family in a subsistence type farm, and spoke extensively about life on the farm, one-room schools, social events, and life during the war years of World War II. The family moved to the nearby town of Macon, Missouri, where Bentele attended high school, graduating in 1950. He soon was working for the railroad, which was constructing a new line. Norbert worked stringing telephone lines adjacent to the railroads, a skill that put him in good stead when he joined the Army in March, 1952 and began his training in the Signal Corps. The bulk of his training took place at Ft. Gordon, Georgia, and his first duty station was at the choice posting of the Presidio in San Francisco. From there he made a short stop at Ft. Lawton, Washington, then was shipped to Korea.

Bentele arrived at Inchon, Korea in January, 1953, and was assigned to the 4th Signal Battalion, part of the X Corps, which defended the central-eastern sector of the front. He discusses his duties in detail, as well as life near the front line in the winter and spring of 1953. By June, with the armistice talks reaching a conclusion, fighting in his sector got very hot when the Communists launched a massive offensive. He discussed the South Koreans' reaction to the approaching armistice, and the final day of the war. Following the armistice on July 27th, his unit trained South Korean troops assigned to newly formed signal corps units. By early 1954 he was back in the United States, assigned to Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri. His unit spent the winter of 1954-55 at Camp Hale, Colorado, and shortly thereafter Bentele was discharged from the Army. He returned to South Korea in 1993 as a guest of the South Korean government. Norbert passed away on August 20, 2019.

Subject Headings/Key Words: service in Signal unit during Korean War; 4th Signal Battalion, X Corps during Korean War; armistice talks at Panmunjom, Korea; training South Korean soldiers; R & R in Japan during Korean War; growing up during depression of a subsistence farm; working as a lineman for the railroad; one room schoolhouse; rural electrification; Macon, Missouri; Presidio, California; Camp Hale, Colorado; Ginza Street (Tokyo) during Korean War; Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad

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