Interview with Dan Foulke

VRK-A-L-2007-019

Interview Date: September 12, 2007

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DePue: Today is Wednesday, September 12, 2007. I'm here with Dan Foulke in his family room, a little bit west of Geneseo, Illinois. And I guess I should say Dannie Foulke, shouldn't I?

Foulke: Yes, Dannie.

DePue: We are here to talk about Dannie's experiences during the Korean War. Dannie, what I'd like to have you start with here—I start with this with everybody—is tell me where and when you were born.

Foulke: I was born in Cuba, Illinois. July 30, 1932.

DePue: Okay. And did you grow up in the Cuba area?

Foulke: I grew up in Fulton County in Canton, Illinois. My dad was a coal miner.

DePue: Oh, really?

Foulke: He worked in the strip mine and the underground mines in Beardstown when he was small. Then he went to St. David, Illinois and worked in the strip mine. I went to country school at Canton, and we lived out north of Canton—what they call Raywalts, up by the Canton Lake. I had the experience of going to country school for eight years.

DePue: Raywalts was the name of the town? Little town?

Foulke: No, the little area outside—east of Canton. When we first moved there, my dad worked for the man who owned the Ford garage in Canton. My dad painted cars. .

DePue: On the side?

Foulke: Yes. Even in the garage out there where we lived, done that.

DePue: But for the whole time you remember growing up, he was otherwise working in the coal mine?

Foulke: Yep. He retired out of the strip mines and then he died down in Belleville, Illinois. He's buried at Belleville, Illinois.

DePue: He was fortunate, at least, during the height of the Depression to have some steady work.

Foulke: He worked for the state of Illinois. And all these little bridges you've seen around the state of Illinois, he worked on the bridges. Now, how he met my mother—working on the canal bridge at Wyanet, Illinois.

DePue: Okay. Well, he kept pretty busy, because so far you've mentioned he's a coal miner, he did a lot of maintenance work, and then he's checking on bridges as well?

Foulke: Well, the bridge work he did when he was a young man.

DePue: Okay. Before you came along?

Foulke: Then when Mom and Dad got married, he got a job at the mines. He started out as a truck driver and then he went into the garage as a grease monkey and ended up as a master mechanic on the night shift. My uncle was the master mechanic on the day shift at Central States Collierries, Inc. at Saint David, Illinois.

DePue: Saint where?

Foulke: Saint David.

DePue: Okay. And what was the name of the place again? The mine?

Foulke: Central States Collierries, Inc. Little Sister Coal Mine.

DePue: Okay.

Foulke: Then my mother and father separated when I was twelve years old.

DePue: That would have been 1944?

Foulke: Yes. Right in that vicinity. Before that. I think it was about '44—Yes, somewhere in there. I was seventeen when I went in the Army.

DePue: Okay. You were still a pretty young tyke when Pearl Harbor happened. Do you remember anything about Pearl Harbor?

Foulke: Yes. I was at my grandfather's place in Wyanet, Illinois. I remember when it was on the radio and Grandpa brought us all in to listen to President Roosevelt.

DePue: Now, you were, what? Nine years old at that time?

Foulke: Yes.

DePue: What are you thinking as a nine year old at the...

Foulke: Well, you know, we couldn't really, but I can remember that day.

DePue: Wow. But later on, you're growing up during that time...

Foulke: I think I was, about seven years old. Seven or nine.

DePue: Yes, if you were born in '32...

Foulke: Yes when we used to go up to my grandfather's on the weekend from Canton up to Wyanet. That's where my mother lived. They lived down along the Hennepin Canal just south of Wyanet. I always went fishing. I remember that Sunday. I still remember it.

DePue: Did you follow the Second World War pretty closely when you were growing up?

Foulke: Yes, we did.

DePue: And did you get kind of an interest or feel like, "Boy, I need to get old enough so I can do something?"

Foulke: Yes. Always knew I was going to go in the Army when I got older.

DePue: The Army.

Foulke: Yes, the Army.

DePue: Always the Army.

Foulke: I wanted to go in the Army.

DePue: Why the Army?

Foulke: I don't know. Because a lot of my friends… We had the draft in those times.

DePue: Sure.

Foulke: And I knew a lot of them, they would find out they're going to get drafted, so they run down and join the Navy or the Air Force so they wouldn't get drafted in the Army. I said to myself, Well, I'm going to go in the Army. These other guys—they're always running for the Air Force, the Navy, or the Marines, so I want to go in the Army. So I did. There was four of us who quit school when I was a sophomore. We went with the volunteer draft.

DePue: That would have been what year?

Foulke: Forty-nine.

DePue: So you dropped out of high school, and you must have been...

Foulke: Sophomore.

DePue: Sophomore.

Foulke: First of the year. Four of us all went over and volunteered for the draft at Princeton, Illinois.

DePue: Where was that?

Foulke: Princeton. Bureau County.

DePue: Princeton, okay. Princeton.

Foulke: We went into the Bureau County through the volunteer draft, and they sent us up to Dearborn Street, Chicago.

DePue: Were you old enough to be drafted or did you need your parents' signature?

Foulke: My mother signed for me.

DePue: She was okay with that?

Foulke: Yes. Yes.

DePue: She was probably figuring 1949—World War II is over—nothing's going to happen.

Foulke: Yes, well... (laughs) You know, the war wasn't quite… It was over with, but...

DePue: The Cold War was certainly going.

Foulke: The Cold War. But all four of us went in. But when I got up there, took my physical, and they called me over to the side and they said, You've got TB. [tuberculosis] (laughs) Sent me home. So when I got back to Princeton, I went into the courthouse. That's when they had the tuberculosis x-ray places in the courthouses. I went down, had another x-ray taken. Next day they called me up and said, You don't have TB. The next day I was on the train going back to Chicago. The guy ahead of me was already at Fort Sheridan; he had the TB. He was already inducted into the service.

DePue: They probably kept him in, huh?

Foulke: I don't know what happened to him, but that's what happened. Then they send me to Fort Sheridan, and then I went to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, the 50th CEB, Engineer Combat, and went through basic training there. Then I had eight weeks of advanced Engineer Combat training at the 50th CEB in Fort Leonard Wood.

DePue: CEB. Engineer—CEB, what's that stand for?

Foulke: It's a Combat Engineer Battalion. CEB, yes.

DePue: Okay.

Foulke: Combat...

DePue: CEB, okay.

Foulke: Yes., CEB. Yes.

DePue: Okay. So you start off as an engineer in the first place.

Foulke: Yes. And they give me a 30-34 MOS [Military Occupational Specialty – a soldier's specific skill]. My uncle and my grandfather were masonry contractors. They done concrete work and laid brick and block and I worked for them as a kid. So I had a mason MOS when I first went overseas. Mason. Brick mason MOS.

DePue: Because there's probably not a lot of demand for that...

Foulke: Not really, you know. So that is what they gave me after I got out of basic.

DePue: And when did you graduate from basic? What month?

Foulke: In March.

DePue: Of '50? March of '50?

Foulke: Yes. I went in the service March of '50, and then I went right overseas from there. After we got out of basic, I was assigned to Korea.

DePue: Here's my question for you. North Korea invaded South Korea June 25, 1950...

Foulke: I got in Korea on August 10, 1950.

DePue: So you were just finishing up basic training?

Foulke: And went right from basic training to Korea.

DePue: So you were an individual replacement when you went over?

Foulke: That's right. I went through a repo-depot.

DePue: A repo-depot, replacement detachment...

Foulke: When I hit Korea, they sent me to the 1st Cav [Cavalry], to a combat engineer unit.

DePue: Okay. And that was when the 1st Cav was in the Pusan Perimeter.

Foulke: That's right.

DePue: Okay. You and I have talked about this a lot. I consider this a great privilege and important for me to have a conversation with you. You've decided you don't want to talk about your experiences with the 1st Cav.

Foulke: Not with the combat, because it...

DePue: You don't need to explain why. It's okay. What we want to do is pick it up somewhere in early 1952, from what you've told me. Then, you ended up with A Company of the 76th Construction Engineers. Now correct me if I'm wrong.

Foulke: 76th.

DePue: 76th Construction Engineers, and that was with the 7th ID? [Infantry Division]

Foulke: 8th—that would be 8th Army.

DePue: 8th Army.

Foulke: 2nd Engineer Group.

DePue: So they weren't assigned to any particular division...

Foulke: No. They were 8th Army.

DePue: Okay. And construction engineers.

Foulke: Construction.

DePue: So what kind of things do construction engineers do?

Foulke: We build anything from a latrine to a building, a bridge. We did whatever they wanted. We'd build roads, we'd build airfields, we'd build training camps for ROK [Republic of Korea] soldiers. We built prisoner of war camps. We built bridges. We cleared mines. Whenever any of the units up on the front line needed something that they couldn't get done themselves and we could do, they'd send us up. I'd use either KATUSAs, [Korean Augmentees to U. S. Army] which are the Korean soldiers attached to our unit, or KSCs, [Korean Service Corps] which are the Korean job corps. You know, they'd pay them wages. But they couldn't go within five hundred yards of the front line.

DePue: Oh, okay. You don't have to answer this if you don't want to, but you had mentioned before that you were in Korea from August 1950 all the way up through 1953. You're the only person I know who stayed there for the entire time. How did that happen, that you stayed there for the whole time?

Foulke: You know, a draftee is two years.

DePue: Right.

Foulke: When my two years was up, my company commander called me in. He said, You can go home now, or how would you think about extending a year in the Army? And being a young twenty year-old, I said, "Okay." So I extended a year in the Army and stayed in Korea.

DePue: That sounds like it'd be about the time that you ended up with the 76th.

Foulke: I was at the 76th Engineers. I was in the 76th when this happened, yes.

DePue: Okay.

Foulke: After I'd been reassigned, they figured after three times being on the front line that I'd had enough front line duty. My record showed that I shouldn't be up there because I'd been, well...

DePue: Yes.

Foulke: Had been...

DePue: You were wounded a couple times your first few months there. Three times?

Foulke: Yes.

DePue: How many points did it take to get rotated back to the States?

Foulke: Was thirty-six: four a month for nine months.

DePue: Four a month if you were in combat...

Foulke: Yes.

DePue: For nine months. So you got fewer points if you were not in combat.

Foulke: Yes.

DePue: And you ended up by the end of the war having how many points?

Foulke: I think they told me a hundred and two. I had a hundred and two points.

DePue: A hundred and two points. So you earned about two and a half...

Foulke: The points didn't mean nothing to me, so...

DePue: Yes.

Foulke: But I did some things while I was in the 76th Engineers, too.

DePue: I wanted to talk...

Foulke: The first place they sent me was to Quong Ju.

DePue: Quong Ju?

Foulke: Wait a minute. I'll find it here.

DePue: Was it...

Foulke: I think it was Quong Ju.

DePue: Which is fairly far south, if I recall.

Foulke: Yes. It's where we build a ROK (pronounced rock) training camp.

DePue: ROK as in Republic of Korea training camp.

Foulke: Yes. South Korean soldiers: you wouldn't believe this. They didn't have a training camp for them, so we put up tropical shells, those Quonset huts and tropical shell buildings. One thousand...

DePue: One thousand of these buildings?

Foulke: …went up.

DePue: This was a huge camp, then.

Foulke: Yes. I got a picture of it here somewhere.

DePue: I'm looking for a map that has something as far south as Quong Ju, maybe. Of course, I can't find that very quick. Don't think I brought that with me.

So that didn't happen overnight. You must have spent a few months building that compound.

Foulke: Yes, we were there quite a while.

DePue: What exactly was your position then, in the company?

Foulke: I still had that 30-34. More or less I worked the KATUSAs, which were Korean engineers. Most of them could speak English, and most of them were college graduates.

DePue: Well, KATUSAs, if I recall, is Korean Augmentees to the United States Army.

Foulke: Yes. They were assigned fifteen in each platoon.

DePue: So you supervised them, and they were just average carpenters and...

Foulke: I could go out and whenever they'd want something done, or they wanted a bridge built, we'd go out and build bridges. If they wanted us to put up tent frames—these sixteen-man-squad tent frames—we'd build and put them up. Or we'd build roads. Anything they wanted.

DePue: Excuse my ignorance here. But the kind of engineering skills that you need to build a Quonset hut versus the kind of engineering skills you need to build a bridge – where you want to make sure the darn thing doesn't collapse –you've got to have somebody working on the bridge who's paying attention to the details.

Foulke: Well, they sent me to Japan.

DePue: Okay.

Foulke: All right? I got to Korea, maybe PFC. [Private First Class] Thirty days later, I made Corporal. Sixty days later I made Sergeant. So after I made Sergeant, I got in the 76th Engineers and they sent me from Korea to Japan, to Eta Jima.

DePue: Eta Jima?

Foulke: Eta Jima, Japan, which is the island which was a naval base during World War II, an island right off of Japan. They had schools there, and I went to 10-5-9 School, which was Construction Foreman. They taught me surveying, engineering, map-reading and bridge construction.

DePue: Wow.

Foulke: Road construction and map-reading—the whole thing. And blueprints.

DePue: So whatever the assignment was, you knew how to supervise these guys.

Foulke: So I went to 10-5-9 School and I came back with a Construction Foreman MOS, 10-5-9.

DePue: It sounds like a crash course, because they had plenty to cram into the course.

Foulke: Six weeks. Six weeks. Then they sent me back to the unit, and from them on I was a Construction Foreman.

DePue: What was the project after Nonsan?

Foulke: Then we went to Song-Yong Ni and built a prisoner of war camp.

DePue: Sun...

Foulke: Song-Yong Ni.

DePue: And that was also fairly far south, or at least south of Seoul?

Foulke: Here it is on the map. Song-Yong Ni.

DePue: Okay.

Foulke: Song-Yong Ni.

DePue: Okay, got it.

Foulke: We built a prisoner of war camp there. And it was basically a—the ground where we built it on – was a Korean cemetery.

DePue: Wow.

Foulke: We had to go in with 'dozers. We gave the Korean people at that time six weeks to move the bodies out of the graves. See, they were all mounds. Above ground.

DePue: Right. And normally the mounds are on the hills.

Foulke: It was kind of a flat area though. Down there it was. But anyway, they were given six weeks to remove the bodies. Then we went in with 'dozers and just flattened everything.

DePue: Did you find some bodies?

Foulke: Oh, Yes. Bones everywhere.

DePue: Oh, wow.

Foulke: They hadn't cleared them. And there was one woman had her house right at the end of the cemetery. It was in that area where it's going to be and we had to go down to remove her. Otherwise she was going to stay in that house and they were threatening to bulldoze the house with her in it.

DePue: I can kind of conjure up the picture of what this probably was like.

Foulke: Yes. Yes

DePue: She wasn't moving for anybody.

Foulke: I'll tell you, it was the awfullest smell from the graves and the old bones. They bury the Koreans sitting up and they got their rubber shoes and a bowl and chopsticks in their hand. They take them out and just wrap them in cheesecloth and they're put in

a –I don't know what you call that wood, Balsa wood or something –just a little thing. They have quite a parade when they go bury them and they're all drunk.

But anyway, we cleared this graveyard and they built the camp on that. They brought in prisoners of war to help us build that camp. They dug the ditches and put up the fences. We built the towers and all that stuff. We used the Korean prisoners to build their own cooking ovens and stuff to make their kimchee [pickled cabbage, lots of garlic] and their food..

DePue: Were these North Korean prisoners?

Foulke: North Korean prisoners of war, yes.

DePue: No Chinese prisoners of war?

Foulke: No, no, you see most of them didn't want to go back to North Korea, because they were alive. They would send three hundred of them out with one ROK soldier guard on them. We'd work them. We'd line them up and give them de-handled shovels and make them dig a ditch and dig holes for the concertina wire fence that's around them.

DePue: And with three hundred and one guard...

Foulke: One guard.

DePue: That suggests that...

Foulke: I'd walk down the line and supervise them, make sure they were working, with a Korean interpreter with me. I'd say, "Bali, bali. [hurry up, hurry up] One day one of them swung a de-handled shovel at me and just missed my head. He was kind of a heavyset one and he didn't want to work. I'd been watching him. But I guess I pushed him too hard. I won't say what I did, but I didn't get to go out there and supervise that one anymore. (laughs) One of the colonels saw me and what I did to him and...

DePue: You might have got his attention, though, huh?

Foulke: I got his attention. Those Korean prisoners could take a beer can and make anything out of it. You give them beer cans, they'd make cigarette cases and lighters. They could make anything out of beer cans.

DePue: But the other thing that amazes me is, you didn't need hardly any supervision...

Foulke: No.

DePue: Because they had absolutely no intention of ever going back north.

Foulke: Oh, they weren't going to run. They were happy to be there. I would say that probably half of those after the armistice or the cease-fire would come, didn't want to go back to North Korea.

DePue: That's getting a little bit ahead of the story. I wasn't aware that you had that much help in that respect.

Foulke: Yes.

DePue: Do you know what month this would have been, the timeframe when you were working on the Song-Yong Ni?

Foulke: Oh, boy.

DePue: Was that still the late summer or fall of '52?

Foulke: No, I would say it was in the summer of '52. Had to be.

DePue: Okay. What was the project, then, that took you through the winter and into the spring?

Foulke: We moved from there. We went back to Yong Dong-po. Our battalion headquarters were in Yong Dong-po.

DePue: And that's right there next to Seoul?

Foulke: It was right across the river, on the west side between Inchon and Seoul. We started building bridges.

DePue: Yes, just on the other side of the Han River.

Foulke: Yes.

DePue: So you were building bridges across the Han River?

Foulke: Yes. Then we went up here. This was north of Seoul, and put this bridge in. (see picture of bridge at Nonsan)

DePue: Yes, that's no small bridge there. That's a huge operation.

Foulke: There it is. When the Chinks made the push, we had to blowout two spans of the bridge. You see, two spans?

DePue: Oh, Yes.

Foulke: We put a timber truss bed in and then...

DePue: So these particular trestles? Spans were there before?

Foulke: What was blown out, right here. These two spans.

DePue: Oh, okay. Yes, but that's at least, what, fifty feet off the ground there?

Foulke: Oh, it's up there quite a bit above the riverbed.

DePue: Forty, fifty feet?

Foulke: We had a young lieutenant that took us up there and I told him, I said, "Sir?" He set us up in the riverbed. He set us up on the riverbed and... (chuckles) We woke up about four o'clock in the morning and we got flooded. The only thing you could see was the antenna on the deuce-and-a-half [2-1/2 ton truck] sticking up.

DePue: I was going to say, that's not a good place, because Korea's known for flash floods.

Foulke: I know! And I said, "Sir, I don't think we should set up down here. " But he's decided we were going to, so we set up our camp there and worked on this bridge. We put these two spans back in that bridge. (coughs) We had rubber air mattresses and canvas cots? We used our rifle butts for paddles and we paddled out of there. I had to go down and blow the flood gate down by the village.

DePue: You were blowing a flood gate?

Foulke: I blew a flood gate to let the water out of there so we didn't lose everything. Captain had me do that.

DePue: So you wouldn't lose anymore of the bridge that you're working...

Foulke: No, our equipment where we were living.

DePue: So it was either your equipment or the village.

Foulke: All I can see was the Koreans coming out of there with stuff on their heads. I flooded their village.

DePue: You probably weren't their most favorite person that day.

Foulke: Oh, no, I wasn't their most favorite person, but...

DePue: How long did you work on that particular project, then?

Foulke: We worked on that for about a month.

DePue: Okay. And do you recall what was the next project?

Foulke: Then we moved back to Yong Dong-po, and there was a quartermaster building that needed to be repaired. It was an old beer factory, and we went down and remodeled the buildings for a quartermaster outfit. I worked KATUSAs and poured concrete floors in all these buildings.

DePue: You otherwise had dirt floors before that time.

Foulke: Yes.

DePue: And converted it from a beer factory to a quartermaster building.

Foulke: That was Christmas of '52.

DePue: So they converted it from a beer factory to a warehouse?

Foulke: Warehouse for a quartermaster outfit. Then they built some buildings.

DePue: Now what was the condition in Yong Dong-po? I know Seoul and I've got to believe Yong Dong-po had been fought over about four times. There wasn't a whole lot left, was there?

Foulke: No.

DePue: How would you describe that?

Foulke: Well, the buildings were all bombed out. There were no large buildings. In fact, I've got pictures. This is a building in Seoul that we'd stayed in.

DePue: Was it in half-way decent shape?

Foulke: Yes, but what the funny sort of part of it was… We were in that building about a week. I don't know what brought it up, but somebody said, "You know, we better get down underneath this building." It had a basement in it, a foundation underneath it, and an open area underneath it. We went underneath this building right then. There were two fifty-five gallon drums down there with a thousand pounds of explosives with a drip coming from the barrel full of water and a contact point on a wooden block coming up from the bottom barrel. In a matter of three more weeks, that building would have blown up.

DePue: Guerillas had set those up, or...

Foulke: They had set that one before we moved in. They were pushed out of Seoul. And it was just dripping – one drip at a time – down into that fifty-five gallon drum. It went on a wire with a contact point coming up the wire on a wooden float. Had it got up there, it would have set off the charge when the water all come out of the fifty five gallon drum up above.

DePue: Well, that's pretty...

Foulke: One drip at a time there.

DePue: That's pretty ingenious, huh?

Foulke: Yes. So we found a thousand pounds of explosives underneath that. At that time, everything was still blacked out when we would go patrolling these buildings at night. We had to carry our weapons with us at all times because we were subject to be attacked anytime.

DePue: There was enough guerilla activity to keep everybody on their toes.

Foulke: That's right. This bridge right here is the Han River Bridge. It goes up from Yong Dong-po into Seoul, and these are the two spans they'd blow out every time we pushed the North Koreans out of Seoul, or they pushed our forces out of Seoul.

DePue: I have seen these very famous pictures where the Koreans are crawling over these trestles –I think it was over the Han River over the bridge spans that had fallen into the water, and they're practically going straight up in these things. There's hundreds of...

Foulke: Yes they did. These are right after they're rebuilt.

DePue: But this is the same bridge?

Foulke: Yes. This is the main bridge that goes across the Han River into Seoul.

DePue: That's got to be the same one I'm talking about, then.

Foulke: Yes. Then there's the railroad...

DePue: And pretty much the rest...

Foulke: There's a railroad bridge to the north of it which goes into K16 Airbase. It was a pile bent-timber trestle bridge going across the river. There was a sign up. The Koreans had put a sign up that said that anybody caught crossing that bridge would be hung.

DePue: And they probably meant it.

Foulke: Many a morning I'd see them hanging on that bridge.

DePue: Why would they cross the bridge? Are these people infiltrating south?

Foulke: No, they were trying to get out to that airbase and blow that airbase up or steal things.

DePue: Oh, okay.

Foulke: But every time, the North Koreans would make a push. We had a pontoon bridge going across the...

DePue: The Han River?

Foulke: Between the Han River Bridge, the main bridge and the railroad bridge for track vehicles. We had to sink that every time the Chinks would push you out. We'd have to shoot it with the fifty caliber and then raise it back up and refloat it.

DePue: Were both of these bridges you're talking about in Seoul proper, or were they up or downstream of Seoul?

Foulke: They were right here between Yong Dong-po and Seoul. The Han River's the only way you can get across. One railroad bridge come out to K16 out of Seoul. The railroad might have run down to Inchon, I think, or up into there. But I'd seen that railroad.

DePue: Yes. Well, here's the one bridge I'm seeing.

Foulke: Yes, and the other one was right here where that railroad is, see it?

DePue: Okay. Yes.

Foulke: They would always blow two spans out of that one and two spans out of the main bridge.

DePue: "They" in this case, meaning whoever was retreating?

Foulke: Yes. Whatever engineer group that was there.

DePue: Okay. So you're working on this bridge as things are getting a little bit colder. Did the Han River ice over in the winter time?

Foulke: No. You know the Han River is close to the ocean. And at eleven o'clock every day, you had a fourteen-foot tide come in.

DePue: Oh, that's right, because Inchon...

Foulke: The river would come up and it would go out. Between midnight and one o'clock at night, it would do the same thing. Twice a day.

DePue: So even at the bridges in Seoul, that far away from the ocean, they were still affected by the tide.

Foulke: Correct. That river would come up and down. It was a dangerous river.

DePue: Boy, I'll tell you.

Foulke: After we get done with the quartermaster outfit, then we started building a twenty-nine pile bent bridge going from the Yong Dong-po side out to K16 airbase.

DePue: Point out K16 airbase here on the map, just with the pencil here so I know where it is. Is it on the north side of the Han River?

Foulke: That's right. It was right over here.

DePue: Okay, just on the south side...

Foulke: It was right out here in no-man's-land.

DePue: Okay. Really close to Yong Dong-po on the south side.

Foulke: Yes, between the two. That railroad bridge come right into it, right on this side of the river—right in here—on the Yong Dong-po side.

DePue: Okay. We're looking at a map...

Foulke: There was water all around it. It was right in there.

DePue: Okay. As we're looking at the map here, we're a little bit to the east of Seoul itself, on the south side of the Han River.

Foulke: Yes, and west of the main bridge.

DePue: I'm sorry, west of Seoul.

Foulke: Yes.

DePue: Get my directions straight here. (pause) You worked on several bridges during this time period, then.

Foulke: Oh, I worked on lots of bridges in Korea. Different bridges. That was our job: to go out and replace those spans that got blown up.

DePue: And for all of these bridges, you're generally supervising some KATUSAs?

Foulke: That's me on the Han River, on that K16 bridge. We had twenty-nine pile-bents.

DePue: For a non-engineer, what does twenty-nine pile-bents mean?

Foulke: Each bent is a pier.

DePue: Okay.

Foulke: And then you have a fifty foot span in between each pier, and the piling drove in.

DePue: So when you say twenty-nine pile-bent, you're talking about twenty-nine piers.

Foulke: Twenty-nine piers. They were made with dry piling—creosote piling. Wood. Then we capped them with a twelve inch cap. We put twelve-by-twelve corbels and then metal bearing plates on top of that. The steel I-beams set on each one of the corbels and the bearing plates on each pier.

DePue: Again, these bridges that you're working on across the Han River are...

Foulke: They were critical.

DePue: Huge operations, then.

Foulke: The problem was, as you can see right here, this was a road that went into K16 airbase. When the monsoons would come, it would be all flooded.

DePue: When the monsoons...

Foulke: Monsoons would come, it would all be flooded. I have some pictures in here. Here's the bridge going in. That's the twenty-nine bents. This is when the monsoons would hit.

DePue: Holy cow, it's right up to the deck.

Foulke: Underneath of it. This road that went into K16 airbase would get flooded, so they had no way to get out there.

DePue: Wow.

Foulke: So that's why we put in the bridge. There it is, when it was under construction.

DePue: This is the K16 bridge?

Foulke: Right, yes.

DePue: How long did you work on the K16 bridge, then? You're smiling. (laughs)

Foulke: Yes. I got it in here somewhere.

DePue: Yes, anymore, working on a bridge like that would take a couple of years, wouldn't it?

Foulke: I got a copy of...

DePue: Okay. Forty-three days. “Engineers finish span across Han in forty-three days. The new K16 bridge, 885 feet long and fifty-ton capacity, constructed in the short period of forty-three days, is another proud accomplishment of the 76th Engineer Construction Battalion.” Wow, that's lightning speed.

Foulke: Yes.

DePue: How much of your workforce were Koreans or KATUSAs, then?

Foulke: We didn't use any on this bridge.

DePue: What's the reason for that?

Foulke: Our KATUSAs were still working on buildings for the quartermaster. We used the men in the H platoon. This was Company A, and I was in the First Platoon, in Company A. Our job was that bridge.

DePue: What was your rank at this time?

Foulke: Sergeant.

DePue: Sergeant, E5. So that means that you were a squad leader or a section leader?

Foulke: Construction foreman, which is a squad leader. I mean platoon sergeant.

DePue: I was going to say...

Foulke: Platoon sergeant.

DePue: You're playing a platoon sergeant's role, then.

Foulke: I was the platoon sergeant.

DePue: Wow, that's an awesome amount of responsibility for how old? Twenty? Twenty-one.

Foulke: I was twenty then.

DePue: Building a bridge that… I suspect that they used that bridge for twenty, thirty, forty years longer after that.

Foulke: Oh, yes. That's me right there, standing on one of the I-beams. We got that bridge just about completed and the captain called me in. He said that the 7th Division needed me to build bunkers and a mess hall for them. I went up there and built them for them.

DePue: I just want to back up real quickly. This information I was reading is from *The Spirit of '76*. It looks like their locally-published little newspaper.

Foulke: Yes.

DePue: And it's dated 23 April, '52.

Foulke: Yes.

DePue: So you guys were building that at the tail end of the winter.

Foulke: Yes.

DePue: It's not an easy winter there in Korea either, is it?

Foulke: We'd put a pontoon on each side of the—each one of the pier—trusses. We'd have to drive the piling off of a pontoon. We had a pile driver crane on a pontoon driving piling. You'd drive eight piling this way in a row and then you'd drive eight piling on the other side in a row. Then you took four-by-four come-along on each side and pull them in where they were four foot wide at the top. And the engineers would shoot grades from the banks on them. Then we'd have to go cut them off at the...

DePue: With surveying equipment.

Foulke: We'd have to cut them off and put the twelve-by-twelve caps on them. Then we'd put all the diagonal and longitudinal bracing on them and pull them in. Then they'd put the corbels across the top where the piers would sit on I-beam...

DePue: What's a corbel?

Foulke: A corbel is like a twelve-by-twelve timber, two of them together. Molded together. We'd have to use three-quarter drift pins and drive them into the caps on top of these pilings. That's where the bearing plates set, where each one of these I-beams would sit on.

DePue: Again, this is a major operation. I'm going to guess that where you're driving these pilings, that the riverbed must have been pretty darn deep.

Foulke: We had about fourteen foot of water there under us, almost.

DePue: And then there must have been a lot of silt and...

Foulke: It was the backwater off of the Han River.

DePue: A lot of silt and sand that you were driving these pilings through, too.

Foulke: Yes. We'd have to drive them down to where we were only going an inch per hundred beats.

DePue: So you probably didn't find bedrock down there.

Foulke: No. But they'd drive it down. Going in all directions, you had to pull them in with big, long bolts and four-by-fours where they were four foot wide. Then cut them off and cap them.

DePue: Okay. Let's go back, then, to the project that you went to after this. You started to talk a little bit about it before I interrupted you.

Foulke: After we got this bridge done –if I remember right –I went up to the 7th Division above Uijongbu. I went up to the 71st Smoke Generator Company.

DePue: 71st, you said?

Foulke: Yes.

(pause)

DePue: Okay. And tell us what you did when you were with them.

Foulke: They put out smokescreens for the 7th Division up on the MLR. [main line of resistance] They had a mess hall and a tent and a couple supply tents they cooked in. They sent me up there to build them a mess hall and two buildings for their supply and equipment. All they give me was KSC personnel...

DePue: KSC personnel set.

Foulke: Which is civilian people—ones that couldn't go in the Army. They send them up there, and that's what I used. We mixed all of the concrete by hand. I put up three tropical shells, fifty by a hundred and fifty feet.

DePue: What we would know as Quonset huts?

Foulke: No, they weren't Quonset huts. They were tropical shells and they were fifty foot wide and a hundred and fifty foot long.

DePue: Much, much larger than a Quonset hut.

Foulke: They're wood and they're six-by-six posts. You had to dig post-holes. Just like the pole sheds that you see that the farmers put up around here.

DePue: Yes.

Foulke: Well, the Army had what they called a tropical shell kit. They were tin on the outside. They had tin roofs. They'd insulate them with a kind of plywood and they had windows in them so that the mess people at this headquarters company of this unit. They sent me up there and I was up there I don't know how many weeks.

DePue: This was in Uijongbu? Is this farther north than that?

Foulke: Oh, this was up at Uijongbu. This is right up on the front line.

DePue: Roughly where on the front line was the 7th...

Foulke: 7th Division, above Uijongbu which is up Route One.

DePue: Yes, here's Uijongbu, straight north.

Foulke: Right up there. Right behind the Thirty-eighth Parallel.

DePue: Okay.

Foulke: Wherever the Thirty-eighth was.

DePue: Were you in mountainous terrain there? ...

Foulke: It was mountainous.

DePue: Okay.

Foulke: And they were behind the mountain.

DePue: The 7th ID was.

Foulke: They were attached to the Seventh Division and they had five bunkers five hundred yards out in front of the MLR. They put up smokescreens whenever they were going to move equipment or troops.

DePue: So you were building this stuff in front of ...

Foulke: No, we built these buildings right behind the mountain, or large hills..

DePue: Okay, so that was the staging area.

Foulke: That's where the headquarters were. They'd go out at night and take their fuel for the smokescreens out there. They'd roll them out up these trenches. I used to go up at night with them and work on their bunkers.

DePue: Wow.

Foulke: I got to be pretty good friends with the first sergeant and the men.. So rather than lay around there at night, I'd just go up there and give them a hand on the bunkers. (laughs)

DePue: Okay, and the date for this is nineteen June. By the time you'd finished this one, you're into the middle of June. 19 June, 1953.

Foulke: Yes.

DePue: And you got there on the twenty-eighth of May, so you guys were busy there for a while, too.

Foulke: I got called back to my unit, as you can see in the letter.

DePue: Recalled to the unit on 11 June, 1953.

Foulke: They sent our Company A up behind the 24th Division right on the road to Panmunjom.

DePue: Okay.

Foulke: Because the 24th Division was up this road and right on the main...

DePue: Yes, here's Panmunjom. And here's the road from Seoul straight up to Panmunjom.

Foulke: Yes, Okay.

DePue: And that's considered to be basically...

Foulke: That's the road that went up to Panmunjom. We were right behind the 24th Division. Our unit set up right behind the 24th Division, approximately a quarter of a mile from the MLR.

DePue: Okay. MLR is the main line of resistance.

Foulke: The main line of resistance. The 1st Marine Division was on the left flank and the 24th was right. We had the job of building the prisoner of war exchange camp out in no-man's-land.

DePue: Freedom Village and the exchange camp.

Foulke: Yes.

DePue: Let me just kind of explain quickly for people who are going to listen to this later. By this time, this is at the very end of the war. The Armistice was signed, I think, on the twenty-seventh of July. For two years, they had been arguing at Panmunjom, basically about how they were going to do this prisoner exchange. The Chinese were insistent that all of the Chinese and all of the North Koreans were to be returned back to the North. I know that Truman insisted that, no, if they didn't want to go back, they wouldn't have to go back. From what you're telling me, I guess, you and your unit had the responsibility of building these camps where people would finally go in. There they would be asked questions and make that ultimate decision: are you going in the South or are you going up North? It was also the same place where they would bring the American and the South Korean prisoners south at the end of the war, is that right?

Foulke: Okay, the agreement was made at Panmunjom that our unit would go out into no-man's-land and clear a strip a half mile wide and two miles long and a half mile out.

DePue: In front of the American lines.

Foulke: In front of the 24th Division and the 1st Marine Division right off of Mt. Vegas, which the North Koreans held. We were to clear a strip a half mile long and the North Koreans were to clear a strip. We were told that we could have no weapons, no cameras, wear no flak jackets or helmets. In other words, we had to be non-combat. If you know what the feeling is to go out and they're firing over your head all day long...

DePue: Oh sure, because at the end of the war, that got even more intense.

Foulke: In the morning in Korea is calm and it's always foggy. The fog doesn’t lift until about nine o'clock a.m. And you’re out there, and I had three electric lateral

scrapers that they make in Peoria, Illinois. I had three of those and three D-7s and a D8.

DePue: This is all heavy construction equipment.

Foulke: Yes. Cats. [Caterpillar Tractor Co.] And then I had a tank with chains on it with a roller to beat the ground with. Our first thing we did, we went in and we sprayed the area with diesel and Agent Orange, I would think

DePue: Defoliant.

Foulke: Yes. We killed all of the foliage. Then we burned it off.

DePue: How close were you to the North Koreans?

Foulke: We could see the North Koreans. They were right out in front of us. I'll explain how we cleared ours first. We went in and we sprayed the area and then we burned it off. Then we moved all of the anti-personnel mines –trip-wires -you can see them. We cleared all the mines. This was A Company of the 76th Engineers. But the First Platoon –what I was in –we had fifteen KATUSAs, and I think there was no more than four others that were regular army men from our unit. Most of them were Korean KATUSAs working with it.

DePue: So this is a small handful of people...

Foulke: Except for the operators on the heavy equipment from H Company.

DePue: Yes.

Foulke: So we go in and we burn it all and clear the anti-personnel mines. Then we take this tank in and beat the ground with the roller chains on it, setting off the anti-tank mines. Then we go in with ‘dozers and took six inches of the earth, pushed it aside, and still setting off mines. So it wasn't a safe place to be, but we had to clear it. At this same time, the North Korean Army was clearing their section over there. They didn't even burn off the area or anything. They just line them up in a big long line. They had their long, three foot bayonets on the end of a ten foot pole, probing the ground ahead of them. And whenever they'd hit a mine, it'd go off if it was booby-trapped. Maybe you'd see two or three guys go flying in the air. They'd just replace them and go on.

DePue: Again, you're close.

Foulke: I don't know how many that got killed, but it seemed like they didn't care.

DePue: And you're close enough to...

Foulke: See it.

DePue: Watch it all the time.

Foulke: Yes.

DePue: How far away would you think you were from them sometimes? Fifty...

Foulke: Fifty to a hundred yards from them when we were out at the edge of our strip working. After we got it all cleared off, we brought in these tent-frame kits for sixteen man squad tents. I think we put up about fifty of them. We used KATUSA soldiers to put those fences on. The neutral soldiers from India [designated by the United Nations] were going to be handling the prisoner exchange. We had to build latrines for them. We had to dig holes and build latrines. They use the slit floors like the Japanese and the Orientals do. .

DePue: The slit trench for a latrine.

Foulke: Yes. Then we had to build a compound for the North Korean prisoners and the Chinese prisoners coming to be exchanged.

DePue: Compounds where they would be held until they could be...

Foulke: We had to build concertina wire fences—the high wire fence surrounding. We put up twenty-five tent frames in the compound and built the ovens. Our KATUSAs built the ovens for them to cook their food—the soup, or whatever you want to call it. We had to do that and we had to set up a water point for them. There was a little old railroad spur that used to go into North Korea, that's that railroad that come up from Seoul...

DePue: Right, up to—probably, yes, running up to Pyongyang.

Foulke: Right up through there. When we came out there, we had to cross a bridge going over this old railroad spur. We were up there about two weeks. About ten o'clock in the morning, a deuce-and-a-half got blown about sixty yards in the air. They had set a thousand pound pressure charge on our side of the bridge over the railroad...

DePue: How long had that been there do you think? Been sitting there waiting for a long time?

Foulke: The pressure from us hauling material in probably built up and set it off.

DePue: So you think that had been there for a while?

Foulke: We lost one truck driver, Yes. After we got it all done, the Indians moved in. That's after the cease-fire. I remember that day. (laughs) Ten o'clock in the morning: everybody quit firing. I think everybody the night before was trying to get rid of all the ammo they had left.

DePue: You're the second person today to tell me the same thing.

Foulke: They fired all night long, and up there they had searchlights bouncing light off of the clouds. That's to light up the front line. It was just like the 4th of July out there. Both of them getting rid of their ammo I guess. But there were still some incidents after that.

DePue: You've told me before that you built Freedom Village. Is what you explained to me just now—Freedom Village?

Foulke: I was up at the other one. Couple of our other platoons built the Freedom Village.

DePue: Okay. Where was Freedom Village from where you were working, then?

Foulke: It was down by the base camp.

DePue: Closer to Panmunjom.

Foulke: It was down to the road. It was closer to the Forty-fourth MASH [Mobile Army Surgical Hospital].

DePue: But it was farther inside the American lines?

Foulke: It was down by where the generals and everybody negotiated the cease-fire.

DePue: Where the peace talks were actually going on.

Foulke: Yes. After they'd brought them in, the North Koreans brought them to the prisoner exchange point and to the Indians. Then they brought them down to Freedom Village. Our soldiers came first. They got the medical examination and were interrogated.

DePue: Were these exchanges going on at the same time?

Foulke: Yes.

DePue: Which one do you want to talk about first? You want to talk about the Americans coming south or the Chinese and North Koreans going north?

Foulke: The 2nd Division was on Koji-do and they brought the prisoners off to Koji-do. The first ones that came up was the Chinese, mostly. The hard heads—the ones that they considered bad—along with a lot of women which the communists and the soldiers had with them. They brought them off to Koji-do and took them into Pusan. Then they took them by railroad into Yong Dong-po. They took them up from Yong Dong-po by truck. When they left Yong Dong-Po and they went across the river and started up that main road up towards Panmunjom, to the prisoner exchange point where they started taking off their clothes. And by the time they got up to the exchange point, our encampment was right on that road going to the exchange point.

DePue: So you're sitting there watching this.

Foulke: We're watching them. They go by and they're throwing their clothes and their shoes. By the time they got up there to the prisoner exchange camp, they didn't have anything on but their shorts. The women wouldn't have anything on but a pair of panties and they had a big red star on the rear end of them. When you'd look at them, they'd turn and moon you with a big red star. (laughs) I tell you, it was something.

DePue: What was going on there? Why were they doing that?

Foulke: I don't know. Just to show their...

DePue: Contempt?

Foulke: Contempt to us. But they wouldn't have anything. That whole road was just shoes and clothes from Seoul all the way up to the prisoner exchange camp.

DePue: Yes, I've heard that they didn't want to have anything that was beholden to the South or capitalism.

Foulke: Right, no. When they brought our prisoners back from North Korea, they would bring them to the point and turn them over to the Indians. The Indians would load them on trucks and bring them to Freedom Village, which I have a picture of there. That's where they processed them.

DePue: When you say processed them, that's where they were interviewed and they said, "Do you want to stay in the North or do you want to return to the South?"

Foulke: No. These were our prisoners. All the American soldiers went to Freedom Village. The North Korean prisoners went up to the exchange point. But most of those that they sent up there were going back to North Korea.

DePue: The ones that you saw...

Foulke: In fact, most of them that had wanted to stay in South Korea didn't even come up.

DePue: Okay, so they weren't processed through either one of those points.

Foulke: No. They had processed them out of the prisoner of war camps.

DePue: I have read some accounts of this, though. They made one more attempt with these people who were heading north to talk them into making these decisions. That was primarily going on at Freedom Village?

Foulke: No, that's out of the prisoner of war exchange point up at...

DePue: That's where they were doing this interrogation?

Foulke: Where they put them in the compound up there before they released them to the North Koreans.

DePue: Was that strictly Indians, then, who were talking to them?

Foulke: Mm-hmm.

DePue: Yes. The vast majority of them ended up heading north?

Foulke: Yes. Most of those were the ones going back to North Korea. Most of them that didn't want to go north never come up there. But, there's one thing I did notice, though. There was, I think, only one Ethiopian come back to be released. And Turks –there were very few, maybe one or two—Turks come back, because the Turks took no prisoners. The Ethiopians took no prisoners. Highlanders took no prisoners or those Congos. At the exchange, they'd lift the smoke screen and shoot the wounded. They didn't take prisoners of war.

DePue: There were no...?

Foulke: They didn't take any prisoners and the North Koreans didn't take any prisoners; they'd just shoot them. That's why they didn't come back, I guess.

DePue: Did you have a chance to see some of these Americans coming back through?

Foulke: Yes, on the trucks, as they rode by us.

DePue: You didn't get a real close look at them?

Foulke: Yes, they were pretty well dressed by the time. They gave them clothes up at the...

DePue: What did they look like otherwise, though?

Foulke: Thin. Long hair and beards. They were tough-looking.

DePue: Yes.

Foulke: They'd been through hell.

DePue: Did they look like they were overjoyed or were they just kind of numb to the whole thing?

Foulke: They couldn't believe it until they got to Freedom Village.

DePue: They weren't taking any chances of celebrating.

Foulke: No, no. We were waving at them when they're on the road, you know.

DePue: Okay.

Foulke: Once they got out of that Indian village and started down that road to Freedom Village, we were there greeting them along the road and waving at them.

DePue: I just can't imagine the emotions they're feeling at that time.

Foulke: Oh, they were just—oh, it's hard to explain.

DePue: What were you feeling at the time?

Foulke: Thank God for this, you know? But you're going to interview another fella that was there, a North Korean prisoner.

DePue: Gene [Bleuer].

Foulke: Gene. And he'll explain that to you, the feeling. He told me his feelings about that, so he'll tell you it's quite a feeling.

DePue: Yes.

Foulke: I got another friend in Sheffield that lives here in Geneseo now. Bob Rogers. He was a prisoner of war during World War II. He spent two and a half years in Germany as a prisoner of war. Got shot down over Germany in a B-29. And he...

DePue: B-29?

Foulke: I don't know how he feels.

DePue: B-17 maybe?

Foulke: B-17. Yes, I think it was. He was the bombardier.

DePue: Wow.

Foulke: And he just had hip surgery the other day. He's got quite a story.

DePue: That's amazing to be there at that important moment of history. Again, the thing that always strikes me about the Korean War is that it went on for two years because they were arguing about exactly how that particular moment was supposed to occur.

Foulke: Yes. They'd go up there and talk about thirty minutes. One would get mad at the other and walk out. That's another thing I did. I helped build that camp where the negotiators lived. I was there for two months.

DePue: At Panmunjom?

Foulke: No, at the base camp behind Panmun—where all our American officers who negotiated at Panmunjom lived. They'd go up there every day and come back to base camp, they called it. There were two generals and all kind of officers.

DePue: You built the base camp as well?

Foulke: And this one water tower that I showed you here.

DePue: When were you working on that? Was that roughly the same time period?

Foulke: That was just before I went up to this one. That's a water tower up there.

DePue: Okay. Oh, that's a huge water tower.

Foulke: Yes. I took these pictures while we were there working at the base camp. The railroad goes to Panmunjom, when you get up to the end of the railroad spur, as far as the railroad went during the Korean War. That was the end of it. The Turks had their headquarters along this road right next to the base camp where the officers were that were handling the negotiations for the cease-fire. So they moved us in there and helped put up a water tank and built Quonset huts for those officers.

DePue: Of all the different things that you ended up...

Foulke: I've been all over Korea. I've even been to Mokp'o.

DePue: Mokp'o.

Foulke: Yes, that's the very tip of South Korea. I didn't go on R&R, so they sent a few of us down to Mokp'o.

DePue: Now here's the map. Mokp'o, right there.

Foulke: Yes, it's a...

DePue: M-o-k-p-apostrophe-o.

Foulke: Yes.

DePue: I was going to ask you, of all these things that you worked on while you were there with the 76th, what are you most proud of?

Foulke: That bridge.

DePue: The bridge that we spent so much time talking about?

Foulke: Mm-hmm. Pheasant.

DePue: Good eating that night, huh?

Foulke: Yes. This one, they sent me to Eda Jima.

DePue: Yes, you were talking about that. You did get all over, didn't you?

Foulke: I've been all over Korea. I've got another picture in here. Mokp'o. That was a monastery. The Chinese took over and killed everyone in there—all the nuns—and the only one that was left alive in this Catholic monastery was the bishop.

DePue: They left the bishop, or he hid?

Foulke: No, they didn't kill him, but they killed all of his nuns and everyone there. Our company commander sent us down there for five days' rest.

DePue: A little bit of R&R down there. Was the priest still down there?

Foulke: Yes.

DePue: He stayed.

Foulke: Mm-hmm, Yes.

DePue: Boy.

Foulke: When we built that ROK training camp. I don't know what general that was, but that's when I first went into the 76th Engineers. They landed in a 46, I think it was. C46 airplane.

DePue: That's what it looks like there, a C46.

Foulke: Yes. And then the 47, we put in a steel treadway airfield for them to land on there at that ROK landing strip.

DePue: Is that like those airfields that they were putting on all those South Pacific islands?

Foulke: Those little steel treads.

DePue: Yes, exactly.

Foulke: We built one there for them to land on.

DePue: You built a little bit of everything, then.

Foulke: Yes. Everything from back houses to bridges.

DePue: (laughs) Water towers.

Foulke: I blew bridges, I built bridges. Cleared minefields. Laid mines.

DePue: Let me ask you a few questions, then, in a general sense. You worked with the Koreans a lot, the South Koreans. You saw some of the North Koreans and Chinese going north. What'd you think of the Korean people?

Foulke: When I was there, those poor people had nothing. They used beer cans on the roof down in Seoul and Yong Dong-po after they got settled. It's all they could do to eat. When we were building this prisoner of war camp at Song-Yong Ni, we had a compound with the concertina around it. Right outside the concertina, little kids would come—orphans. It was forty below zero, and they didn't have any clothes on. They'd have a little tin can with a wire thing on it. They'd build a fire and stand around that fire and they would come up to our gate and beg for food. You'd give them food, but after awhile, you had to turn your head because there were so many of them. You just didn't have enough to give them. But you still tried to help them when you could. That used to make me sick to see those little kids there starving and freezing.

DePue: And there was no shortage of orphans in Korea at that time.

Foulke: They had no families, because most of their fathers were taken into the army or they were killed during the war. You knew what the Korean army would do. If they missed a formation, they'd hang them.

DePue: And yet I've heard lots of veterans talk about how unreliable the ROK units were.

Foulke: But I blame that on their leader.

DePue: It wasn't the soldiers themselves.

Foulke: No. When they'd move out, they had orders to move out.

DePue: You talked about this one North Korean prisoner who obviously wasn't interested in working hard. The KATUSAs you had working for you and the rest of these people knew how to work hard?

Foulke: Yes. When my fifteen KATUSAs were first put in our unit, they sent one master sergeant down with them. The rest of them were privates.

DePue: One Korean master sergeant?

Foulke: In charge. His pay would equal about a dollar thirty-seven cents a month to our pay. He couldn't even afford to buy cigarettes for himself.

DePue: That's the master sergeant.

Foulke: Yes. So I did my best to get them all promoted to sergeant or better, up to master sergeant. When I left, they were all master sergeants. (both laugh) But they would do anything for me. When we were up building that prisoner of war exchange camp up there, one night about six or seven decided to go down in a village. They went down there and they got to drinking.

DePue: Soju?

Foulke: Soju, and got drunk. The Korean police arrested and put six of them in jail. (both laugh) So the two of them come back up. "Sergeant! Sergeant! They're in jail! What are we going to do?" So we organized a platoon and we went down and literally ejected them out of jail under arms. (both laugh) After that, those boys would do anything for me, you know?

DePue: You were their hero.

Foulke: Yes. I got to be friends with a couple Turks, too. The Turks' headquarters were right behind us, and they would take over a village and the GIs. Nobody'd go in that village. Those guys were something. Bonfires on the front line at night. I was told by a Turk sergeant that the way they got to rotate, they had to have a set of a hundred ears. They had to be killed by knife. They'd come back with heads and burn them on the bonfires at night. Put the ears on the shoestring on their side. When they got a hundred set of ears, they'd go home.

DePue: And the bonfires in part were to entice the Koreans...

Foulke: Yes, They'd let the patrols come in and then they surrounded them, and they'd take them out one by one. Those guys were bloodthirsty. All they do when they're at their compound was, they'd put one little roll of concertina around it. The gate was out there and if they caught anybody—Koreans trying to steal from them— there's a pair of ice tongs that'd be hanging over the front gate. Well, no need to hear about that.

DePue: No, okay.

Foulke: They were bloodthirsty.

DePue: Tell me about some of the American NCOs and officers you worked with. What'd you think of them? What was your general opinion of them?

Foulke: As you know, most of your engineer officers are West Pointers.

DePue: Yes

Foulke: I thought they were the best officers in the world. After we'd get a job done, we'd decide to go down to Seoul, to run around a little bit. The main PX was in Seoul. Have a few beers or something down at one of the signal unit. NCO mess was down there. Officers would take off their bars. [insignia of rank] Everybody protected everybody's back. You had to. If you didn't, you wouldn't be around long, because you had to have buddies. If you didn't watch out for one another, you weren't going to survive over there. I found that out in the 1st Cav.

DePue: Yes, I'm sure—especially then. A lot of the senior NCOs you were with: a lot of World War II veterans?

Foulke: Yes, lots of them. Some of them like Sergeant Whitey, a platoon sergeant. I've got a picture of him here somewhere. He was a World War II vet. I think he had twenty-nine years in the Army.

DePue: Can you tell me a little bit about some of your good buddies in the 76th?

Foulke: Yes. DePue: Thank you, ma'am. We're flipping through the...

Foulke: The books.

DePue: Photo album again.

Foulke: Yes. James Peterson, he's from Decatur, Illinois. I just got a call from him the other day. He goes to Florida. I've been trying to get hold of him. And this is that Sergeant Whitey. Tony Alvarez was my squad leader when I first went there. He was from Wisconsin. And Corporal Browning. Costa. That's me. I got another friend down at Alton, Illinois, James Wolberg. I went to the 76th Engineer reunion in Fort Mitchell, Kentucky. There was three of us from our platoon. Ten had died.

DePue: So some of these guys you've managed to keep in touch with over the years, then?

Foulke: We have a reunion every year.

DePue: The Seventeenth Engineer Construction Battalion strictly from the Korean War era?

Foulke: Correct. This year it was in Denver.

DePue: You got to travel around the country, then.

Foulke: It was in Laughlin, Nevada year before.

DePue: Lawton, Oklahoma?

Foulke: Laughlin, Nevada.

DePue: Laughlin, Nevada. At least you could do some gambling out there, then.

Foulke: I didn't go to Denver this year, because I had a parade here. James Wolberg, he lives in East Alton. He was in my platoon in Korea. His picture is right here. We were in A Company.

DePue: Okay. What did you and your friends think about the way the Korean War ended? I mean, you were right there to watch it. You were there for the entire war. You had an awful lot of your life invested in this.

Foulke: Yes. I was seventeen when I left the States and I turned eighteen on the boat going to Korea, and I come home old enough to buy a beer. (both laugh) Twenty-one.

DePue: And you'd lived a lifetime during those three years. Do you think it was a satisfactory conclusion to everything that you'd experienced?

Foulke: As you know, it's the longest lasting war the United States has ever been in. It's still not over yet. We're still at war with North Korea.

DePue: Most people don't even begin to understand that, though, do they?

Foulke: And we lose men on the DMZ [De-Militarized Zone] every year in skirmishes.

DePue: Was that to say that you would have preferred a different kind of answer to it?

Foulke: It should have been a siege. I think they should have declared a peace treaty and got back together with the South Koreans. As you know, North Korea's a communist country now. And the only thing I can think of that we stopped in North Korea was the progress of communists from spreading all over the Far East. That's what I think. While we were over there, half of us didn't even know why we were there. Only to protect the South Koreans. But really, it was a political war, I think, to stop communism from spreading. They were trying to take over South Korea and then wherever they went from there.

DePue: Again, that's part of why I'm fascinated by the story about the POWs. Because in those POW camps, both north and south of the line, they continued that psychological war, didn't they?

Foulke: Yes. And, you know, I'd worked a lot of those prisoners. They were happy to be in that prisoner of war camp, because they were lucky to be alive. They knew it, too. I don't know how many communists and North Koreans lost their lives over there. They had never got an answer to that; I don't think they ever got a figure. But I do know what we lost, which was...

DePue: The figures I hear most frequently now is that two million died in that war. Most of them were civilians. An awful lot of Chinese and North Koreans.

Foulke: Yes.

DePue: And of course, something like fifty-some thousand Americans as well.

Foulke: I lost one of my company commanders when the civilians were all coming south.

DePue: This would have been in 1950?

Foulke: Yes, in '50. That's when they blew that bridge.

DePue: Oh, Yes.

Foulke: We grew to believe we were getting artillery rounds. Mortar rounds were coming in on us and artillery coming in on our positions. We knew we would get some more.

There was a Korean woman working out in a rice paddy. My company commander went out to check her out. When he got up by her, she just pulled up her dress and shot him with an AK-47. Killed him and the driver.

DePue: Totally senseless.

Foulke: She was a forward observer, and every time we moved, she was bringing in fire on us. She had a baby on her back, too.

DePue: Yes. Hard to comprehend, isn't it?

Foulke: Yes. But, you know, when those civilians were coming, the North Koreans and the communists were in civilian uniforms right with them. That's how we got all of those terrorists in there. You didn't know who was the enemy and who wasn't. It was just like it is in Iraq now. .

DePue: Yes. Even the Koreans couldn't necessarily tell.

Foulke: No, they didn't know. There's a lot of them who came down that way.

DePue: When you finally left Korea, it was October of '53?

Foulke: Right.

DePue: Two or three months after the Armistice was signed.

Foulke: Right.

DePue: And you headed back to Japan or did you head back to the States?

Foulke: I came back to the States and we went to Fort Carson, Colorado for discharge.

DePue: You told me this before we started recording. Tell me again what happened when you got to that point.

Foulke: They assigned me a little engineer unit there. I think I had about two weeks to go before they were getting ready to process me out. They sent me up to Camp Hale for mountain warfare training—ski training. They put me up on top of this mountain on the snow. There's a slope coming down with probably two and a half foot of snow on it and these little evergreens about two foot tall sticking out. They put a full field pack on me and put me on a set of skis with a thirty-caliber machinegun and a Browning strapped on the back of my field pack, and then they turned me loose going down that slope. When I hit the bottom, I rolled maybe forty yards, just rolled, because I ran out of snow. On the way down, I kept knocking down these little trees. They just whipped me, and the major was standing down there just laughing at me, you know? "What's the matter, Sergeant?" I said, "I don't want any more of this." He said, "Why?" And I said, "When's the next truck go back to Fort Carson?" And he said, "This afternoon, why?" I said, "I'm going back

to reenlist for the Far East." He said, "You're on that truck." Then they sent me back there and sent me to Sheridan, and I reenlisted in Sheridan.

DePue: Fort Sheridan, you mean.

Foulke: Fort Sheridan.

DePue: Was that the first time in many years you got back to Illinois after you'd left?

Foulke: Oh, I'd gone home for a thirty day leave first.

DePue: Okay. But this was October 1953 when you went home for a few days leave.

Foulke: When I got to San Francisco, I went directly home for thirty days, and then I had to go back to Fort Carson.

DePue: So after you volunteered to go back to the Far East, did you go back to Japan?

Foulke: Yes, they shipped me to Japan. 43rd Engineers.

DePue: What were they doing there?

Foulke: They were construction engineers. I was stationed building roads up at Ota, Japan. At that same time they were building the war rooms underneath the Far East

Headquarters in downtown Tokyo. So we had to put on Class A uniforms and they trucked us to Tokazawa, about forty-five kilometers down to Tokyo. We'd go into 8th Army Headquarters, and we went down and underneath the building to work on an atomic nuclear war room that's underground in the tunnels.

DePue: So you were wearing uniforms...

Foulke: Yes, we had to change clothes down there because we had to go through where all the generals were and all were in dress uniforms.

DePue: So all of that was just as a ruse to...

Foulke: On a two and a half hour ride every day, to and from.

DePue: A ruse to make sure that nobody knew exactly what you were doing.

Foulke: That's right.

DePue: Somewhere along there you met your wife, then?

Foulke: I met her in the PX in Tokazawa. It took me a little over two years to get married, because of the time for paperwork. You got to prove she's not a prostitute, you've got to prove she's not a communist, and you've got to do this and do that. A

Japanese birth certificate's only good for six months, so every six months she had to get another birth certificate and all that.

DePue: Was that all Army red tape that you were going through?

Foulke: Yes. And the S-2s or CID. They are intelligence. It takes you about two years.

DePue: What was her name?

Foulke: Kimi. K-i-m-i. U-m-e-z-a-w-a.

DePue: U-m-e-z-a-w-a.

Foulke: Umezawa.

DePue: Umezawa, okay.

Foulke: She was born in Ashikaga in Japan. A-s-h-i—Ashikaga, which is about sixty-five kilometers north of Tokyo.

DePue: I suspect almost every Japanese at that time had relatives who'd been in the Second World War...

Foulke: She had five brothers, and three of them were killed in the Second World War.

DePue: Were most of them in the army?

Foulke: She said the army and navy both. She had two brothers alive, and her younger brother and I got along pretty good. But the other one, he was an outcast.

DePue: He was still hanging onto the war, was he?

Foulke: Yes. The younger one was never in the service. He was younger than my wife. My wife was two years older than I was. We have two children. Both of them were born in Japan. I delivered my son at North Camp Fuji at Fujiyoshida. We were sixty miles from the hospital, so I and a mama-san delivered my first son. And then my daughter was born in the Johnson Airbase just north of Tokizawa. And the funny part of it was, they put the 43rd Engineers back to Korea in 1956. So I left on the fourth of June and my daughter was born on the seventh of June. I was back over in Korea. (both laugh) So I caught me a ride with a general back to Tachikawa Air Base. I got to stay a week there and see my daughter and wife. Then I went back to Korea. I spent ninety-four days in Korea in 1956 from June to September.

DePue: What was the name of that? Takaziwa?

Foulke: Tachikawa Airbase, which is right near Yokohama.

DePue: Okay. We're getting close to the end here, I promise, Dan. What struck you about going back to Korea after just a couple years at the end of the war?

Foulke: That Han River Bridge? Our headquarters when we went back to Korea was just on the Seoul side. On the east side, after you cross the Han River Bridge was our headquarters. We set up there and I was an A Company First Sergeant. They sent my company back up to base camp, where all of the officers had negotiated the cease fire, armistice.

DePue: Yes. .

Foulke: We went right back there. So I got to see how that was, and how all that had built up since the cease fire.

DePue: The Koreans had gotten busy and started rebuilding their country.

Foulke: Oh, it was something.

DePue: And I'd always heard, too, that by the end of the war, especially if you got close to the DMZ, there weren't any trees. There was nothing.

Foulke: Nothing. There are no trees up there. Between the artillery and the mortar rounds and the shelling and the aircraft and bombing.

DePue: The Koreans trying to strip everything down just to keep warm and...

Foulke: Yes, there's nothing. But I'll have to say that, in '56 when I was up there at the base camp, up towards the DMZ, it still looked the same up in no-man's-land.

DePue: Still pretty much just filled with...

Foulke: Yes, just blowed up. Just no-man's-land.

DePue: ...shrapnel and mines and that was it, huh?

Foulke: Every day, little kids get in them rice paddies and got blowed up. Mines. It's still going on over there.

DePue: Yes, I'm sure. Just some final reflections here, and then I'll get on my way and let you get back to your own life. You spent how many years in the military?

Foulke: Twelve.

DePue: And then you came back to the States, to Illinois?

Foulke: My wife and I came back from Japan in '57. I was sent to Fort Riley, Kansas. Stationed Fort Riley, Kansas. When I got to Fort Riley, Kansas, they didn't need engineers in the States, especially me, who was a 10-5-9 Construction Foreman. On each military base, they'd have one NCO in charge of engineers, all civilians. I got to the 1st Division Headquarters at Fort Riley, Kansas and they said, "Well, we're going to send you down to B Troop. We'll send you down to the 4th Cavalry Recon

Battalion. They'll make you an Operations Sergeant (unintelligible) Recon (unintelligible) Battalion."

DePue: That's quite a stretch from being an engineer.

Foulke: I was an operations sergeant after meeting with that company commander in Japan. before getting married, I lost my first sergeant's job when I went down as operations sergeant at Fujiyoshida at the North Camp Fuji where we were stationed. We were building the tank park for the Twelfth Marines up at Camp McNair by Lake Yamanaka. I had five engineer draftsmen. They drew the blueprints up for all the jobs that we were going to do in our company. I had five Japanese draftsmen, and one was electrical, plumbing, structural. They'd draw the blueprints and then I would write the specs. Then we would submit them to 8th Army headquarters for approval. They'd get approval and they'd come back and then we would assign the jobs to our engineer units and build them.

I was Operations Sergeant for our company. I had that title when I come back to the States. Operations sergeant, or first sergeant. I get to Fort Riley and they call me in and they send me down to the Battalion Headquarters for the 4th Cav and told them, "They sent me down here," I said, "You're just going to make me operations sergeant for a recon unit here." The major said, "Well, I got four sergeants right now. I got too many. I don't need an operations sergeant." So he said, "I'm going to send you over to B Troop and make you a tank commander. We'll retrain you as a tank commander."

By this time, I didn't care what they did to me. I get over to B Troop;, I went into the captain, and the captain said, "I have tank commanders coming out my ears. I don't need any tank commanders. But I do need scout section leaders." I ended up being a scout section leader. We ran through two groups of trainees for scouts. In the scout section, after they take their first six weeks of infantry, then they come to us for recon training for eight weeks after. I taught bridges and bridge capacities. We went out and tested the weight limits on bridges because we had armor.

DePue: Oh Yes. That's very important, then.

Foulke: We had to teach them bridge capacities so then we can make bypasses, fords, or put up steel treadways or whatever they needed. I taught map reading. I taught land mine warfare. I was also a demolition expert. I taught demolitions to trainees, and military courtesy. Then after that was over, I became first sergeant for that troop.

DePue: So you got to be a first sergeant again.

Foulke: Yes, after we got done training scouts. My reenlistment went out, so I reenlisted. They sent me to Germany. They sent me over to the 12th Cavalry, 3rd Armored Division in Budigen, Germany, about twelve kilometers from Gellenhausen. That's right near Frankfurt.

DePue: Gellenhausen?

Foulke: Gellenhausen. And we were at Budigen. And the Berlin crisis come up at that time, when President Kennedy stopped all families from coming to Europe.

DePue: That would have been about '62, I think?

Foulke: Yes. It was '60.

DePue: ’60? Okay.

Foulke: ’59, really. The end of '59. So my wife and children didn't get to come to Germany. They had orders to go to Camp Dix, New Jersey, but they cancelled it. So I was Scout Section Leader and Operations Sergeant for a recon unit there. A Troop. Being as I was the only master sergeant with no family, I got to pull border patrol on the Polo-Czechoslovakian border for three years.

DePue: More than your share. A lot more than your share.

Foulke: We patrolled a hundred miles of border. We'd go a hundred miles one day up and the next day a hundred miles back, watching...

DePue: What division would you have been assigned to at this time?

Foulke: 3rd Armored.

DePue: 3rd Armored, okay.

Foulke: 3rd Armored Division, 12th Cavalry.

DePue: Okay.

Foulke: It came time to go back home. I told the Captain I was going to get out. He said, "Oh, you can't get out. You've got twelve years." Yes I can. My children were growing up. When I left home, they were two, three years old.

DePue: Yes.

Foulke: They didn't know me. Of the last six years in the Army, I spent two with my family. I said to my wife I was going to get out. She said, "Okay." So I got out, and I went home and I went to work in a factory. I lasted about a month and a half in the factory. I couldn't stand being in a factory. I ended up being a cement finisher for thirty-two years.

DePue: In the Rock Island area here?

Foulke: No, Bureau County. Joined a company putting in Interstate 80. Yes, they built bridges and all that good stuff.

DePue: But Dan, if you'd stayed in the Army until twenty at least, you would have gotten up to about 1970?

Foulke: I'd have been thirty-seven years old; I would've retired.

DePue: But you'd have gone to Vietnam at least once or twice in that time.

Foulke: Yes, I think maybe the good Lord was looking out for me. If I'd have stayed in the Army, I would have gone to Vietnam. My MOS was Intelligence Specialist, Scout.

DePue: Wow.

Foulke: And in the scout section, they work anywhere from fifteen to seventy-five miles in front of the MLR. Our job was to find the enemy, watch him, report his movements, but don't let them see you because the life of a scout in combat is thirty minutes if they find you.

DePue: And in a war with no front lines...

Foulke: Mm-mm. You know where I'd have been. I'd probably been in that First Cav again—jumping out of jumping out of helicopters into no-man's-land. I probably wouldn't have been here today. I think the good Lord was looking out for me. Told me to get out of the Army, you know.

DePue: Let's go back to just some general questions here and we'll finish off. This has been a great interview, and I really appreciate your being willing to do this. I think I appreciate what it means that you are willing to do this. You spent a lot of time in Korea. Are you proud about that time? You think it was justified? It was the right thing to do?

Foulke: I do now.

DePue: At that time you didn't have any idea.

Foulke: At that time, we didn't know why we were there, really, only to keep the communists from taking over South Korea. That was the objective. And that's what we did. That's the only thing we can say we accomplished. We didn't gain any ground. We ended up on the Thirty-eighth Parallel. We were all the way up the Yalu River, but we got pushed back to right where the communists invaded South Korea. We're still at war with them.

DePue: I ask this of a lot of people, and I think this might be a little bit different for you since you spent it in Japan. Did you have a hard time adjusting from being in combat all that time to coming back to the States or going back to Japan? That was tough?

Foulke: I used to. In Korea on New Year's Eve of '52 I came down with malaria. All we had was a medic, and he called for a helicopter to come and get me. I was burning up and freezing and shaking over a pot-belly stove in the bunker. They used to give us those pills on Sundays so you wouldn't catch malaria. I saw a bottle of them setting up on the shelf in this bunker. I said, "Give me two of those pills."

DePue: Quinine pills were they?

Foulke: I don't really know what they were, but I tell you what, in an hour, I was well again. I still got a bag of them in the drawer in here. I still have attacks. It's always in the cold weather. You never get rid of it. I can't give blood. But I didn't get a helicopter right away either. (both laugh) But anyway, that's another thing I got out of Korea: malaria.

But when I came home, I'd wake up in the middle of the night and just shake and wake up, just scaring my mother to death when I had one of those malaria attacks when I got home on leave in December. They gave me a bag of those pills when I left. They told me if I ever had an attack, just take two of them or whatever I needed. I still have them, but it doesn't bother me anymore like it used to.

DePue: So were you struggling: coming home; trying to figure out, okay, I'm living on the edge of life and death every second. Then you come home, and I hear a lot of people say it just doesn't make sense and nothing seems to be relevant.

Foulke: I probably shouldn't say this, but I got to drinking. You know how Army guys are. I got to drinking too much beer. I got to the point when I went to Japan, I was going down to the cabarets and drinking there until I met my wife. Then after I met her, it was either my happy home or quit that drinking. I had to give that up. I don't know. I think that was partially due to that. But I really had a hard time for a while, for about a year and a half, two years.

DePue: Again, that would be about the time you met your wife, then?

Foulke: I think so. Yes. My wife brought me out of it. And then I had two children and they...

DePue: Then you knew what the priorities were, huh?

Foulke: Yes.

DePue: Okay, how did this experience, then, change you?

Foulke: Well, it made me appreciate life and appreciate the freedom we have in this country. Like we say, if it wasn't for all those that we left behind in Korea… They say it was a forgotten war and I guess it was, but I haven't forgotten those guys that lost their lives over there so that people in this country can be free.

DePue: Yes. How do you feel about the way Americans have remembered, or maybe not remembered, that war in particular? We pay a lot of attention to World War II, we pay a ton of attention to Vietnam, and you guys hardly get a mention.

Foulke: When I came home from Korea, you could take your medals and lay them on the bar and you couldn't get a beer for them. People seemed to not like us in uniform, you would get out of that uniform. I thought they snubbed us. The only thing they

did mention when I came home was, on television in Springfield. I had a girlfriend in Springfield. She saw my name on a TV show when I came home. I got home and she called me and she said, "Don't come and see me, Dan. I got married." (both laugh)

DePue: Well, that's a hell of a note.

Foulke: That's the only thing, you know?

DePue: That's a heck of a homecoming, huh?

Foulke: Yes. And so...

DePue: Does that bother you, though, that Americans know next to nothing about the Korean War?

Foulke: That's why I belong to the Korean War Association, Chapter 68, down in the Quad Cities. We go around to the schools and we do tell our narratives. We like to go to the eighth graders or high school kids and tell them what the Korean War was for and what it was all about and why it was fought and how it was fought. You'd be surprised at the questions those kids will ask. But that's the only way they're ever going to know there was a Korean War.

DePue: So you're surprised at how ignorant they seem to be?

Foulke: Yes. They've got questions you'd...

DePue: What kind of questions?

Foulke: They want to know if I have ever been wounded, you know? How'd it feel? And all that kind of stuff. The kids have questions that are out of this world. It's, you know, right there. I think that this generation now—the younger kids in school— they're starting to teach the Korean War. They've got teachers that are Korean War veterans. We go around to schools, and they want us there to teach it to them. We take a lot of our equipment there. We got the first cell phones: hand-held walkie-talkies. We'll take that. And we've got rifles, bayonets, trenching tools, a bazooka, a jeep and a machinegun. We've got all that equipment and they like to see it. We usually spend about two hours in the school and explain why the Korean War was fought and how many men we lost and how many were wounded and that it's still going on.

DePue: What do you think about what's going on today as far as our involvement overseas, about Iraq?

Foulke: I'm glad I'm not there, because, at least in Korea, most of the time we knew who we were fighting.

DePue: Yes.

Foulke: In Iraq, they go down the road, they might get hit from anywhere and they don't know who the enemy is. They might be shooting at civilians, they don't know. They're all dressed alike.

DePue: The uncertainty of what it's like in Iraq would...

Foulke: It's an altogether different war.

DePue: Yes.

Foulke: More crowd control.

DePue: Each war is unique. But your war was really the last war we fought where you could say, "Here's the front line."

Foulke: Yes. And another thing that I don't like is that our government hasn't given us a charter for the Korean War yet. We're the only one without a charter.

DePue: A charter? What do you mean by a charter?

Foulke: What I showed you there. This bill—that's what it's for, to give us a charter.

DePue: This is Senate Bill 1692, and I'm sure there's a House version—House of Representatives Bill 2852—to grant a federal charter to the Korean War Veterans Association Incorporated.

Foulke: They have never given us one. See, where they put it?

DePue: It's—in terms of what—House...

Foulke: It's the Judicial...

DePue: House Committee on the Judiciary?

Foulke: They put it in there and they let it lay there. They never do anything.

DePue: What the heck is it doing there? Same thing for the Senate...

Foulke: They don't act on it.

DePue: Is this museum that's going to be constructed down in Springfield something that's important to you guys?

Foulke: Sure. It's only going to be about a block and a half from the Lincoln Museum.

DePue: Yes.

Foulke: And people that come to the Lincoln Museum will probably want to go see the Korean Museum, because it's going to be quite an attraction. It's going to cost around fifteen million to build it.

DePue: From the designs, it looks like it's going to be an impressive institution.

Foulke: It's going to be like you were landing at Inchon and going on a landing barge. When you come into the building it will be just like coming off of a landing barge into a combat zone with videos like you're in combat. That's the way they say it's going to be.

DePue: And they're doing the groundbreaking of that in just a couple months, it sounds like.

Foulke: The sixth, October.

DePue: Sixth of October. Last couple questions, then. What advice would you give to your kids, to your grandkids, to future generations that you've learned from your experiences, and not just from Korea but overall?

Foulke: My son spent four years in the Air Force. He was in Greece, in Athens, Greece, up on the mountain near Athens. He worked there until he came home and was stationed at Omaha...

DePue: Omaha, Nebraska?

Foulke: He was cleared for top secret. I don't know what he did.

DePue: Yes.

Foulke: Then he was at Tinker Air Force Base at Oklahoma City in the Strategic Air Command, doing the same thing. He went to Biloxi, Mississippi for basic communications and training and learned everything. He's got an electrical engineer job in Kansas City now, so...

DePue: But what advice would you give him and your grandkids?

Foulke: Serve your country, even if it's only for one term. It teaches them to respect this country. Everybody should give a little bit for the freedom they have, by being in the service. Now they're going to give twenty thousand dollars to any man that wants to join the Army. Twenty thousand dollars. That's what they're trying to get them so they'll enlist, because...

DePue: The bonus, Yes.

Foulke: Because we don't have a draft. Nobody wants to join the Army. So now they're going to give them a twenty thousand dollar bonus to join the Army. When they complete basic training, they're going to give them ten thousand dollars, and then they're going to give them the rest of it in pay while they're in service. And I think

it's the worst thing they can do. Why don't they bring the draft back and draft them like they did us?

DePue: I know why they aren't doing it, because the reaction to the draft in the Vietnam War turned so ugly.

Foulke: I know. But I think every young man should serve his country, in one way or another. Disability, that's different. But if he's able to serve, two years in the service don't hurt nobody. And I think that's good training for them.

DePue: The Korean War was really the first war where the United States military was integrated. You have any opinions about how that went?

Foulke: It went all right. We had to take colored men, four per platoon, in Korea when they integrated them into us. And we had some key NCOs that came in with them. I thought they were good soldiers. They had a little trouble on the front lines with them. The PFCs and the privates that had been put up on the front line came, most of them, from the quartermaster, or the dump truck company—triple-nickel [555th Field Artillery] Company or the quartermaster outfit that's supplying the troops –is supplying us or the men. The ones that were sent up on the front line, they got pushed into the front lines right now.

DePue: Without the right kind of training and experience?

Foulke: They didn't have the right kind of training for it, and what I thought—that, you know...

DePue: So maybe the Army wasn't wise in exactly how they did it?

Foulke: They should have integrated them in the States and sent them in as trained soldiers for front line duty.

DePue: Yes.

Foulke: At training for combat. Because mostly your colored that we got in Korea would come out of quartermaster and transportation...

DePue: Oh, okay.

Foulke: Just pushed into it because Truman said they had to integrate them. They just weren't ready for it.

DePue: But by '50—well, by '60, the Army had figured it out, do you think?

Foulke: Yes. But when I was over in—I shouldn't say this –but when I was over in 3rd Armored Division in Germany, we were stationed in Budigen. When we went out the gate to go down to the cabarets or the guest houses to have a beer at night, the white boys went to Budigen, the colored boys went to Lorabock. When they come

back at midnight, you didn't want to be around that gate, because they might be fighting. Integrate. During the daytime, they had worked together. But at night, they were two different directions.

DePue: Did you say Bunigen and...

Foulke: Budigen.

DePue: And...

Foulke: Lorabock

DePue: Lorabock.Okay.

Foulke: Yes. When the Puerto Ricans come into the picture, too, they didn't want to speak English. They always wanted to speak Puerto Rican, and you didn't know whether they was cussing you out or what, you know? (both laugh)

DePue: What would you like to close with here as we finish this up?

Foulke: It's been nice talking to you and it was a good experience—Korea. But I don't want to do it again. (both laugh)

DePue: Well, again...

Foulke: But I'll do whatever I can as long as I… My belonging to Korean War Veterans Association, Chapter 168 in the cities to promote and educate the children and the people around us to why that war was fought.

DePue: I think that's a good place to stop, then. It's been my honor and privilege to talk to you. Again, I thank you for that opportunity, because I know it wasn't necessarily an easy thing for you to decide to do. So thank you, Dan.

Foulke: Yes. (laughs)

(end of interview)