

Major Robert E. Jones' Personal Statement which he made after the CCF encirclement at the Chosin Reservoir. This record is referred many times throughout LTC Roy Appleman's book EAST OF CHOSIN. I obtained this from the US Army Military History institute at Carlisle Barracks, PA

## **MAJOR ROBERT E. JONES' PERSONAL STATEMENT**

NOTE: Copies obtained from Roy Appleman's records while writing EAST OF CHOSIN. These pages also contain his hand-written notes which I have omitted. They are held at the U.S. Army Military History Institute at Carlisle Barracks, PA. Exact Location/Call # is DS918.2.C35 A66 1987.

4 December 1950

To: Major Lynch: G-3 Section; 7th Division, APO 7

On 27 Nov 1950 1st Bn 32d Inf 2/attachments closed into area vic "A" (see map) about 1330 and went into perimeter defense. Perimeter was probed by enemy patrols beginning approximately at 2200 hours. Coordinated attack began about 0030 29 Nov 1950. "B" Co outpost was penetrated but line was restored by CP personnel. "A" Co on left flank was overrun, but the enemy was driven out. Capt Scullion was killed and Lt Denchfield was wounded from "A" Co. Capt Haynes was killed going into "A" Co's position about 0030 28 Nov 1950. Lt Kempen of "B" Co was killed in "B" Co area. Enemy withdrew to high ground about 1000 hours. Col MacLean, 31st Regt CO brought his forward staff to Bn CP about 1230 hours. Lt Col Faith reorganized the positions, closing the perimeter in. There were about 100 casualties that passed through the aid station by 2000 hours 28 Nov 1950. The rest of the evening of 28 Nov was quiet. Est Nr enemy casualties between 600-1000.

About 0030 29 Nov 1950 enemy began attacking. "A" Co's left flank was bent back with considerable casualties. "C" Co's line was penetrated, but was restored by a platoon of "B" Co. Lt Col Faith decided that since ammunition was very low it was necessary to pull out of position and fight back to Position "B" (see map) and join the 57th FA Bn (-) 15AAA and 3d Bn of the 31st. The withdrawal began at 0430 with "C" Co as the advance guard. "B" Co held the high ground in its position and followed "C" Co - both companies were to parallel the road on east side on the high ground. Hq Co and "D" Co accompanied the motor column on the road with "A" Co following. Major C.P. Miller with parts of "A", "C" and "D" Co's fought a rear guard action.

The Bn reorganized at position "X" with HM Co, 31st Inf. Part of the forces went over the high ground to the road block at the bridge at position "Y". Col MacLean and Lt Col

Faith went down the road almost to the bridge and were fired on from across the ice close to the position the 31st Inf and 57th FA were in. Col MacLean, believing the fire was coming from friendly troops decided that they must be informed that the 1st Bn 32d Inf was coming in and to hold their fire. He therefore started across the ice at approximately 400 yards west of the bridge to notify them. He was hit four times, but managed to cross the ice. Lt Col Faith managed to get portions of two companies across the ice and kill the enemy along the edge of the ice directly below the 31st Inf position. Lt Col Faith then directed the motor column to run the road block across the bridge to position "B" (see map). Major Jones returned to the battallion and dispatched all the trucks down the road to Major Miller and Lt Col Faith who directed them across the bridge. The majority of the trucks were filled with wounded and Lt Col Faith's big concern was to get them to a position where they could be evacuated.

-PAGE 1-

The whole battalion managed to close into position "B" by 1230 hours 29 Nov 1950. A search was made for Col MacLean, but no trace could be found of him and the personnel of the 31st, 15th AAA, or 57th had seen him. Lt Col Faith then reorganized the various elements into a Task Force with Major C.P. Miller in command of the 1stBn 32d Inf., Major Storms in command of the 3d Bn 31st Inf., and Lt Col R. Tolley in command of the 57th FA. He reorganized a perimeter defense with the 3d Bn of the 31st Inf on the East, the 1st Bn of the 32d on the North, West and South flanks with HM Co 31st w/1 platoon HM Co 32d Inf, the 57th FA and 15th AAAA in the center. No airdrops were made that day with ammunition and rations. The rest of the evening and night of 29-30 Nov was quiet.

The 30th of Nov was quiet with occassional small arms and mortar fire. The TACP officer Capt Stamford USMC brought in airstrikes all day and covered all the high ground surrounding the position. About 0030 1 Dec 1950 the enemy began attacking along the road and hit "A" and "C" Co's of the 32d Inf. They also attacked the whole 3d Bn of the 31st Inf front, with extremely heavy small arms and automatic wpns fire. Lt Col Faith had organized a counterattack force of HM and CP personnel. When "C" 32d was threatened with a penetration Lt Col Faith dispatched his counterattack force to bolster their lines. There were altogether five penetrations and five different counterattacks. By daylight the perimeter was contained although the enemy was only 300-400 yards outside the lines on sides. The area received heavy mortar and artillery fire throughout the morning hours of the 1st Dec. Lt Col Faith's greatest desire was to get the wounded out to a place where they could be taken care of. The number of casualties by this time was more than tripled and all Med Off had been wounded. Lt Ed Wilson "D" Co 32d Inf, was killed among others. Lt Col Faith then issued orders that all vehicles except the 2 1/2 ton trucks and tracked vehicles would be destroyed. All wounded would be loaded on the Task Force with the help of the Air would attempt to fight their way south to make contact with the 1st Mar Div. The order of march was - 1st Bn 32d Inf; as follows, "C", "A", "B", Hq Co, "D" Co and HM, 57th FA; HM Co; 3d Bn 31st Inf with 15AAA split up

in truck column. The plan was to march down each side of the truck column as fast as possible and fight any resistance hit. The column started southwest on the road at 1300 hours 1 Dec 1950. They proceeded approximately 20 yards when the enemy opened up with extremely heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire. The column fanned out and went into assault fire, literally overrunning the enemy in their foxholes. Those of the enemy that were not killed started running southwest but most were shot down. The column then proceeded to position "Z" (see map) where the truck column was held up by a blown out bridge. A very rough and difficult bypass was effected and it took till dark to get all truck through the bypass at position "Z" and on the road running NW between position "Z" and roadblock position "C" (see map). The roadblock at "C" comprised of at least two MG's stopped the movement of the Infantry, along the road with heavy losses. The truck column was also halted and received very heavy small arms fire from both flanks, literally raking the column and hitting the wounded loaded in the trucks. Lt Col Faith started the troops up the ridge south of the truck column to flank the roadblock and knock it out. By six o'clock although the high ground directly south of.....

-PAGE 2-

.....the stalled column was taken; the roadblock was still in effect. Major C.P. Miller and Major Storms, and Major Curtis had all been wounded by this time and loaded on vehicles. Lt Col Faith instructed Major Jones to gather up all available men and go up on the high ground directly south of the stalled column and flank the roadblock. Lt Col Faith went on ahead and organized the people already on the high ground. Major Jones arrived at point "D" with about 200 men at dark and joined up with Lt Col Faith who had a force of approximately 100. He (Lt Col Faith) personally organized the two groups on each side of the road to attack the roadblock. With Major Jones on the right of the road and Lt Col Faith on the left, the force advanced to the roadblock at the hairpin turn and knocked it out. At this time Lt Col Faith was hit by a fragmentary grenade (Lt Shelton HM Co 31st Inf confirmed this, as he was hit by the same grenade. He attempted to help Lt Col Faith down to the road. but couldn't make it. He wrapped up Lt Col Faith and went to the truck column for help.) Major Jones continued down the road with the group that knocked out the roadblock to where the vehicles were stopped. With the aid of Lt May and many other unknown officers and soldiers all possible effort was made to get the truck column started. Almost all trucks had flat tires, many would not run, and the column was blocked by these vehicles. Three 2 1/2 ton trucks were unloaded, pushed over the cliff on an effort to get the column started. By this time so many wounded were without transportation that even though the column was started many hundreds would be left where they lay. Major Jones decided that the only situation was to leave guards with the wounded and take as many able bodied and walking wounded as possible with him to attempt to fight south to the 1st Mar Div for help. Approximately two hundred men were put on the road. The leading vehicles that could move were taken as far as point "D" (see map) where burned out tanks and vehicles blocked the road. Major Jones instructed the group of guards with the lead vehicles to attempt to remove the roadblock. The column then moved down the road toward Hagaru-ri catching up with several groups of men who

had already struck out and picking up stragglers all along the way. The march was made without incident to about point "E" (see map) when it was decided that it would be more advisable to cross over to the RR track and follow it south. Upon reaching approximately point "F" (strictly an estimate in the dark) the column was fired on by automatic weapons from roadblock believed to be located at POKKO-CHI. The column disintegrated to a certain extent, but the majority of them ran for the ice and skirted around the roadblock. Major Jones, Lt May and Lt Harris of the 32d and Capt Robbins of the 31st and approximately 100 men were able to reach the Marine lines at Hagaru-ri at 0030 2 Dec 50. Lt Escue of the 31st Inf was at the CP and arranged for transportation of the entire group to the various Medical installations of the 1st Marine Div. Attempt was made by Major Jones to contact someone from the 7th Division to pass on all information as to the critical situation of those left. Major Jones was able to contact Major Lynch of the 7th Div G-3 and Lt Col Anderson of the 31st RCT about 1000 hours 2 Dec 1950. Lt Col Anderson, as CO of 31st RCT organized and consolidated the units of the 7th Div at Hagaru-ri. The 1st Bn 32 Inf as of this date is composed of the following:

-PAGE 3-

OFFICERS: Major R.E. Jones  
 Lt. C.G. Smith  
 Lt Barnes (48th FA FO)  
 Total: 3 Officers

EM:	Hq Co	10 EM	16 ROKs
	"A"	14 EM	13 ROKs
	"B"	15 EM	8 ROKs
	"C"	11 EM	15 ROKs
	"D"	19 EM	30 ROKs
	32d Hvy Mort	3 EM	7 ROKs
	Med Co	4 EM	7 ROKs

Total: 76 EM 102 ROKs

It is requested that this be kept in mind this narrative is only from the view and experience of one person. There were many plans and actions of which this officer knew nothing. There were also many acts of heroism and outstanding leadership that this officer witnessed, too numerous to mention. There were many more that were not witnessed. Many officers and men did outstanding jobs whose names were unknown. It has been honestly attempted to make this as objective as possible and as factual as possible. It necessarily deals mainly with the 1st Bn of the 32d Inf as that is the unit this officer is assigned.

ROBERT E. JONES  
Major                    Inf  
32d Inf 7th Div

-PAGE 4-

Statement of Major Robert E. Jones  
Hagaru-ri to Hamhung, Period of  
6 December - 13 December 1950

Hq RCT 32  
APO 7  
29 December 1950

The 31st RCT under the command of Lt. Colonel Anderson, 31st Infantry was composed of all members of the 7th Inf Div who had joined the 1st Marine Division at Hagaru-ri, Korea. The units of which the 31st RCT consisted of were the remnants of the 1st Bn, 32d Inf, 3d Bn 31st Inf and the 57th FA Bn. Lt Colonel Anderson organizes the RCT into two battalions by splitting the 57th FA equally and integrating them into the 1st Bn 32d Inf and the 3d Bn 31st Inf. Major R.E. Jones commanded the complete 1st Bn 32d Inf and Major Witte commanded the 3d Bn 31st Inf. The RCT was given the mission of extending the left flank of the point of the 1st Marine Division on the march to Kotori. The plan was to have the 2d Battalion of the 7th Marines to form the point of the column, the 1st Bn of the 7th Marines echelon to the right rear extending the flank of the point 1000 yards to the right of the road and the 31st RCT to echelon to the left rear extending the flank of the point a 1000 yards to the left of the road. The motor column followed these units on the road with the 3d Bn of the 7th Marines protecting the Division motor column. The 5th Marines followed the column as the rear guard. The attack to the south commenced at 0630 6 Dec 1950. The column was halted at approximately 0730 by enemy action approximately one mile south of Hagaru-ri. The column continued on south at approximately 1100 hours. After proceeding south for approximately two miles, Lt Colonel Anderson committed units of the 3d Bn 31st Inf to the left flank and held the 1st Bn 32d Inf on the road with the motor column. At approximately 1600 the motor column was stopped by a roadblock on the left flank consisting of an enemy machine gun emplacement and a number of enemy riflemen. The point of the Marines was held up by heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire from the left flank. Lt Colonel Anderson instructed Major Jones to take his battalion and build up the left flank of the point and reduce the roadblock which was holding up the column. Major Jones instructed Lt C.G. Smith to take his company and attack the above mentioned positions and to build up on the left of the Marines, with Capt Thackus company to follow and build up on the left of Lt Smith's company. The enemy MG emplacement was knocked out by Lt Smith and Lt Barnes and the enemy positions were overrun. Approximately 30 prisoners were taken and the buildup was successfully made on the left flank of the Marine Point and the motor column was able to proceed. The 1st Bn remained on the left flank throughout the night and closed into Kotori at 0545 7 December 1950.

Lt Colonel Anderson had instructed Major Witte to bring in his battalion as their missions were completed and to stay in the motor column in readiness to be committed if the occasion demanded it. The column was attacked by enemy who had allowed the point and flank troops to bypass them. The RCT CP vehicle was hit and the S-3 Sgt and Major Witte were wounded.

At approximately 0700 7 December 1950 Lt Colonel Anderson alerted the RCT to move out approximately 2 1/2 miles back toward Hagaru-ri and protect the left flank of the 5th Marine Regiment which was having considerable trouble. The RCT moved out and met the 5th Marines approximately 3 miles north of Kotori and held left flank positions until relieved by elements of the 5th Marine Regiment, at which time it returned to Kotori and stayed in the 2d Bn 31st Infantry area that night.

Due to the great number of cold casualties, Lt Colonel Anderson decided to form the remaining men into two companies. The "31st Company" under Capt George Rasula and the "32d Company" under Capt Robert J. Kitz. The RCT jumped off in the attack at 0730 8 Dec 1950 and took objective "A" which was the high ground one mile south of Kotori and about six hundred yards east of the main road. This was taken without resistance and the two companies went into a defensive position.

-PAGE 5-

At approximately 1300 hours the two companies were instructed to move approximately 1500 yards south of objective "D" which was the high ground overlooking the pass and closed in about 1600. (The facts on this movement and attack on the enemy positions on objective "D" will have to be obtained from Lt Smith, Capt Kitz or Capt Rasula as this officer was not present.) There was one KIA and 2 WIA from the 57th FA Bn which were evacuated by Sergeant Luna, "B" Company 32d Sgt Piercefield, Hq 32d Inf.

The RCT remained in position throughout the night and Lt Colonel Anderson issued instructions for "31st Company" to advance to high ground overlooking the power plant at 0730 9 December 1950 and for the "32d Company" to hold high ground overlooking the pass. This was accomplished and the night was spent in these positions. At approximately 0730 10 Dec the head of the 1st Marine Division column started down the pass with the 7th Marine Regiment leading. The 31st RCT closed in behind the last elements of the Seventh Marines. The march down the pass was uneventful and at the 3d Division position the 31st RCT mounted their trucks and proceeded to Hamhung. They closed into the 31st Inf assembly area in the 7th Division area in Hamhung at approximately 2400 hours 10 December 1950. There were three officers, Major Jones, Lt Smith, and Lt Barnes 49th FA (Forward observer with the 1st Bn 32d Inf) eighteen men and four ROK's from the 1st Bn, 32d Inf that closed into the Assembly area. The unit moved to Service Co 32d Inf area on the afternoon of the 11th, where 29 more men and 3 ROK's of the battalion joined in small groups. Battalion moved out to Pusan 13 December 1950.

ROBERT E JONES  
Major            Inf

-PAGE 6-

END