

The Bad Hill 487 Operation

Up until August almost all the Plans and Operations of the 7th Cavalry were done with excellent results, including low number of casualties.

For a time, the 3d Battalion occupied Line Wyoming, strengthening it in the event of a general Communist Offensive. At the same time, the fledgling 'Truce Talks' at Panjumon started, and then faltered. In fact the new 8th Army commander, General Van Fleet was sure it was going to take a punishing push against the current Chinese lines east of the Imjim River to get the North Korean's back to the negotiating table.

Korean War (22)

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So he planned a push to a new line Jamestown, northwest of Yonchon, that would be across, but still close to, the original 38th Parallel. That push seemed to be started against a Hill 487. The 2d Battalion of the 7th Cavalry was the first unit to be given the mission.

That hill was not only very steep, but the closer one looked at the top, it became a hand over hand climbing problem. There were large rocks and boulders on top that gave the defenders protection from small arms fire.

Whether it was bad planning, or simply a much harder

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defense, together with less combat experienced - after the wave of summer rotation - soldiers and officers, they were repulsed. Several times.

Then it became the 3d Battalions time, and my Company K had to commit two platoons. It looked hopeless from the beginning to me. Hill 487 was absolutely dominant, and even plunging machine gun fire down from the top was deadly for the men trying to climb the mountain from the east side.

The worst happened. Not only were we repulsed but Lt Ross, the new platoon leader in my Company K, my West Point classmate, was shot up in his right arm so bad he had to be evacuated.

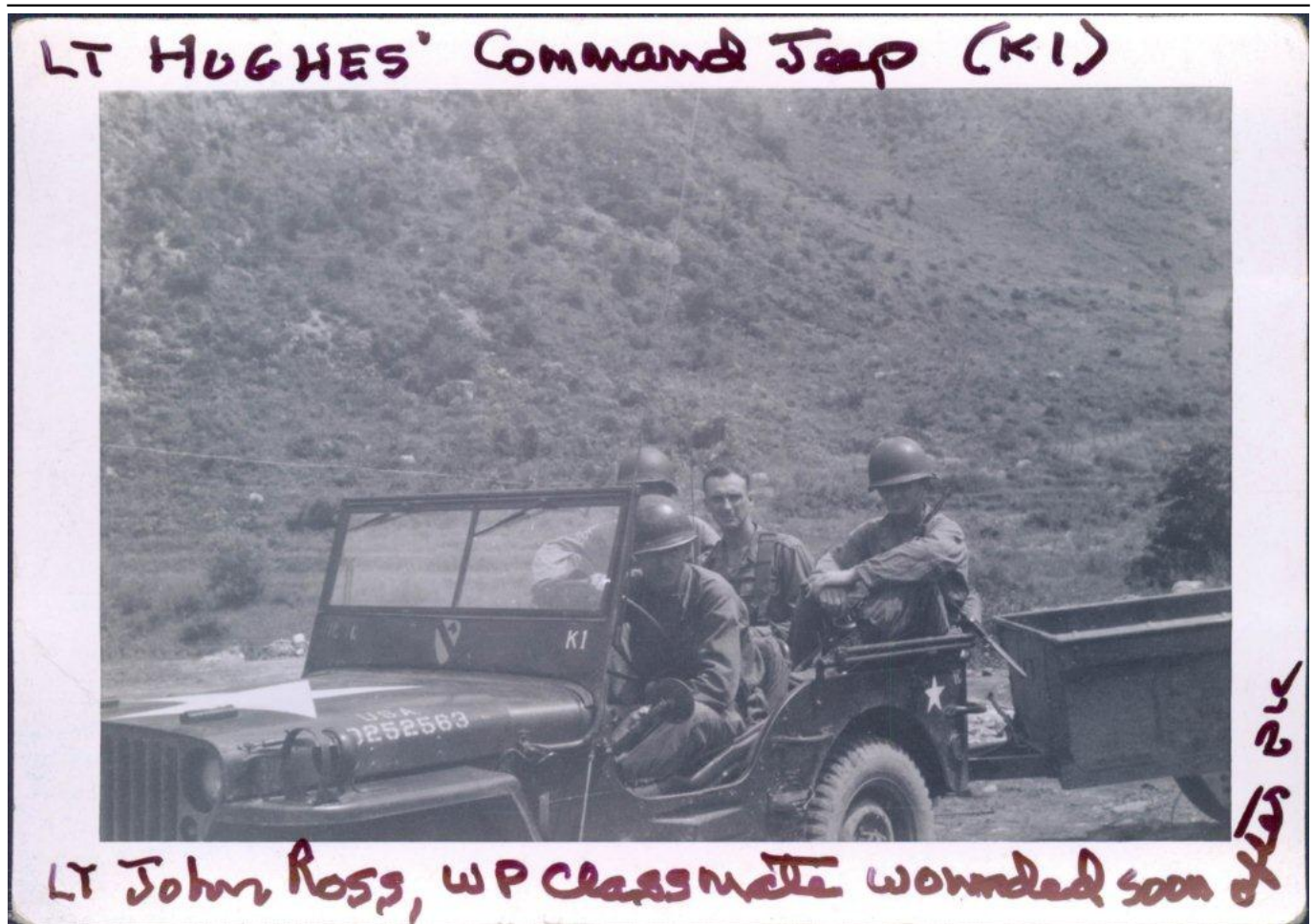
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The Battalion called off the assault, and we were returned to the Wyoming line for the entire operation to be reorganized.

It took another Division almost another month before 487 was taken. and only after other supporting, Chinese occupied hills fell.

Meanwhile the 7th Cav was having its own problems, in which I seem to have figured prominently, to bring off success. They were called Hills 339, and 347.

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