



Bobby
...with Frederickson for 8 years
'...you just can't give up'

(From page 1A)

As it turned out, the Navy plane did drop a message on that cold January day in Korea.

The message was napalm and machine gun fire.

The thatched hut where Bobby and his fellow soldier were staying went up in flames like a tinder box. The adrenalin pumped through Hull's body as he grabbed his friend and carried him to a bunker.

It was around 6 a.m. when the attack began. Radio messages were dispatched, alerting the Navy forces that they were bombing their own men.

At 1 p.m., the airplanes turned homeward leaving a toll of one dead, one wounded, and countless others shell-shocked and frostbitten.

Bobby had spent seven hours in sub-zero temperature, without shoes, without heat. His feet and legs were frostbitten and his only thought was to find a warm place.

Bobby Hull sat at his desk at Frederickson Motor Express Corporation this past week and reminisced about that day that eventually altered his life forever.

"The Navy apologized for the mistake they made," Hull said with a slightly sardonic tone. "They issued a formal apology and told us orders had been for the aircraft to strike Inchon. Instead they hit us at Ichon."

The story of Bobby, his friend, and the tragic error could be dismissed as just one more "war" tale except the ending isn't as "story book" as it appears.

As a result of that day in January, 1951, Bobby Hull lost both of his legs.

It wasn't immediately, but eight years later that Bobby Hull underwent a series of operations for his legs.

During those eight years Bobby had intermittently been to doctors about pains in his legs. "They diagnosed the problem as 'athletes foot' and other problems."

Upon his discharge, Bobby went to live in Mississippi where he worked for the Eagle Rubber Company. After the firm went out of business, Hull started working for Riverside Industries in 1959.

Bobby had been with Riverside for about three years when gangrene set into his left leg. He entered the hospital and "underwent tests for 19 days and they told me there was nothing they could do for me and told my father-in-law I was going to die." Bobby's father-in-law took him to Kennedy Veteran's Hospital in Memphis. The doctors there examined Hull and told him they would try to save the leg and proceeded with 5 operations. From there Hull went to Oteen for more operations and finally to Thayer Hospital in Nashville where the process of removing the left leg began.

"This was around 1962 when the amputation of my left leg was completed. Then around 1964 the right leg had to be taken off," Hull remembered.

He began sending in applications to the armed forces for disability payments but hit a stone wall. Bobby said, "the AmVets, VFW, American Legion and several other service connected organizations helped me with the applications but the military wouldn't pay anything. The last letter I received from Washington said if tests proved frostbite in the army caused the trouble I would get benefits, but they added such tests might take 40 years or more."

The case of Bobby Hull has been shelved by the military but as a point of information, Hull's legs were amputated "at the same spot exactly where they had been frost-bitten."

It would seem a man in Bobby's position would be very bitter against the military but he dismisses the whole matter as "a mistake" and adds "I feel strongly about the maintaining of a standing army and feel ours is not large enough today."

After losing his legs, Bobby decided to further his education and not let the misfortune get him down. He enrolled in Southern Business College in Shelby and finished with a degree in Junior Accounting. He has also taken courses from LaSalle Extension College in Traffic Management. His current occupation, as has been for the past eight years, is rate clerk for the Frederickson company, York Rd., Kings Mountain.

Double amputation could (See YOU p.7A)

Kings Mountain
Mirror

P.O. BOX 6
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The Kings Mountain Mirror is published each Thursday in Kings Mountain, N.C. by General Publishing Co., P.O. Box 6, Kings Mountain, N.C., 28086. Offices located downtown at 146 W. Mountain St. Phone: 739-7496. Subscription rates: \$4 plus tax per year mailed inside N.C. Out-of-state, one year, \$5-plus tax. Second class Postage paid at Kings Mountain.

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