

# 162 HAIKU



## a korean war sequence

by ernest berry  
with jerry kilbride

*P*  
HASTON



# 162 HAIKU

a korean war sequence

TO JIM KACIAN,  
IN APPRECIATION OF  
HIS LARGE AND CONTINUING  
CONTRIBUTIONS, ON A GLOBAL  
SCALE, TO THE HAIKU MOVEMENT.

by  
ernest berry  
with  
jerry kilbride

Best wishes - ernie & Jerry

AUGUST 2000

*Post  
pressed  
flaxton*

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## DEDICATED TO

my extended family of roughly 6 billion refugees, leaders, followers, peaceniks, warriors, politicians, prisoners, saints, waifs, orphans, patriots, perverts, sportsmen, criminals, citizens and all to whom war is as inherent as it is abhorrent.

Before we start another one, ask with haiku number 116

**why?**

## AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Haiku nos. 25, 70, 116 & 131 owe some of their structure to the book **HAIKU IZ RATA** 1995 by the Croation Haiku Association.



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TRISKA, without whose love, support, faith, forbearance, patience, encouragement and creative visualisation i could never have got started.

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HAIKU SOCIETY OF AMERICA

BRITISH HAIKU SOCIETY

HAIKU INTERNATIONAL tokyo

HAIKU HEADLINES U.S.A.

HAIKU SPIRIT Ireland

PAPER WASP Australia

RAW NERVZ U.S.A.

HAIKU LIGHT Canada

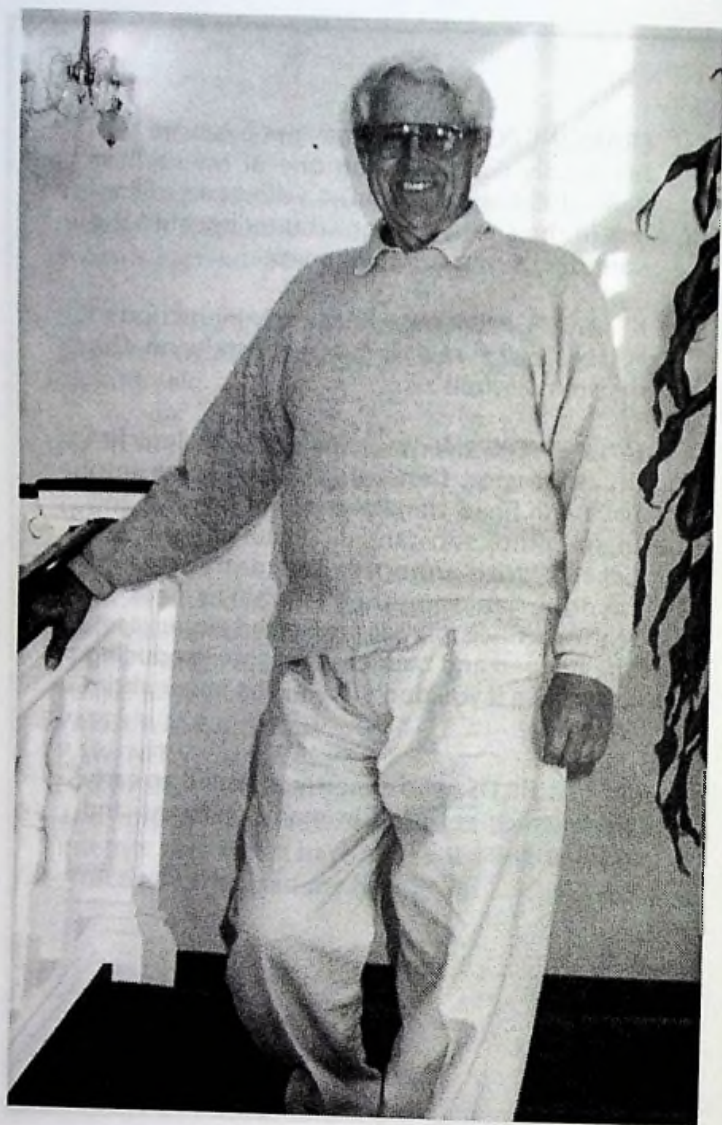
and many other societies, publications and internet sites which have published and /or constructively criticised my haiku over the years.

FRANCINE PORAD: who may not be aware that her kindly comments on one of my earliest haiku: [nibbling on a leaf/ a yellow caterpillar/ lets in the sun] very significantly boosted the confidence of a new haiku writer.

KENNETH LEIBMAN: whose early injunction to revise revise revise got me firmly on the disciplinary rails.

JAN BOSTOK: used superlative psychology [ie: unadulterated flattery] to delude me into believing I had some sort of literary gift; and in so doing, substantially enabled my haiku career. With monumental patience and wisdom, jan smoothed my haiku path by fearless criticism, sage advice and enthusiasm. She nagged and badgered me into producing a book, so if you don't like it, you know whom to blame!

CYRIL CHILDS, who expertly critiqued an early draft which resulted in many revisions and refinements.





## PROLOGUE

As a youth in the 1940s, i was acutely aware of the advance of communism across Asia, and that it was only a matter of time before the red tide swung South to engulf my homeland.

Fired with missionary zeal, I joined like-minded patriots dedicated to battling what we perceived as marxist front organisations.

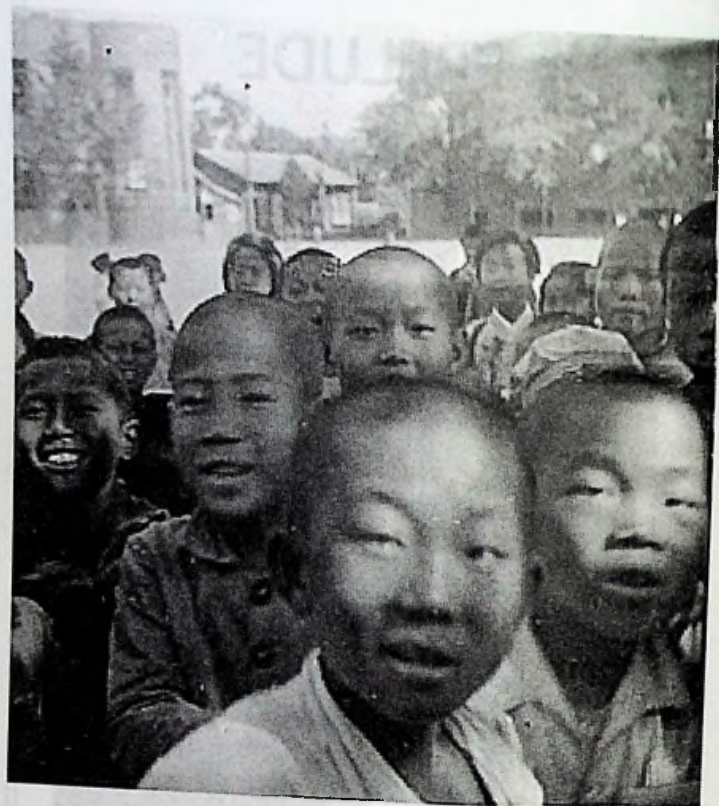
Invasion of South Korea brought my 'righteous indignation' to boiling point, so when the opportunity presented to enlist in 'K FORCE', [NZ's contribution to the United Nations team in korea] I couldn't wait.



Part 1

## PRELUDE







## A (sort of) HAIBUN

The following sequence was penned after many years of trying to forget; so some of these “keenly felt” moments may have lost relevance, immediacy, focus and accuracy in the meantime. My aim of a strict diary-style haibun has likewise been frustrated by a half century of sublimation.

---

war poster from the united nations  
a plea for peace

2

korea?  
yeah, somewhere over there  
left of japan

3

a volunteer ...  
i'm commanded to appear  
with my pyjamas


## A (part of) HAIBUN

The following sentence was penned after many years of trying to forget, so some of these "keenly felt" words may have lost relevance to today's world. Accuracy in the translation of the original style haibun has been maintained, but a full century of submission

~ i believed war to be noble, chivalrous, heroic ...  
then i woke up

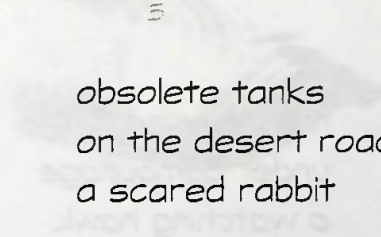
in command to appear  
with my cyones  
a volunteer

4



perils of war  
for basic training  
we peel potatoes

5



obsolete tanks  
on the desert road  
a scared rabbit



6

manoeuvres  
under camouflage  
a watching hawk



~ due to u.n. reverses, our training is cut short  
and we're directed to enter korea before new year



7

passing out parade  
army brass inspect  
my buttons

under the eagle  
a watching hawk

~ secrecy shrouds our departure from wellington  
on the passenger liner 'ormonde', so only a few  
friends and family turn up

security  
our farewell  
top secret

softly she sings  
we'll meet again  
i cross my fingers



~ and the war news worsens. With our armies in full retreat, infiltrators snuff out soldiers and civilians as they sleep

off to war  
mother warns  
be good

10

boarding the troopship  
after 90 days training  
now is the hour

11

into the unknown  
hoping to arrive in time  
to go home

~ after two days at sea, we steam upriver to  
perhaps Centralia, flanked by trees, hoots!  
~ we steam away, but our route and intermediate  
ports of call are classified  
the following followed  
and morning by a street march where everyone  
waves us goodbye with shouting goodwill -

13

war footing  
everyone knows our destination  
is top secret

into the unknown  
trying to arrive in time  
to go home



~ after two days at sea, we steam upriver to  
brisbane (australia), flanked by sirens, hooters,  
cheers from crowded jetties. The city waterfront's  
alive with bunting, speeches, fanfare; followed  
next morning by a street-march where everyone  
waves us goodbye with touching goodwill ~

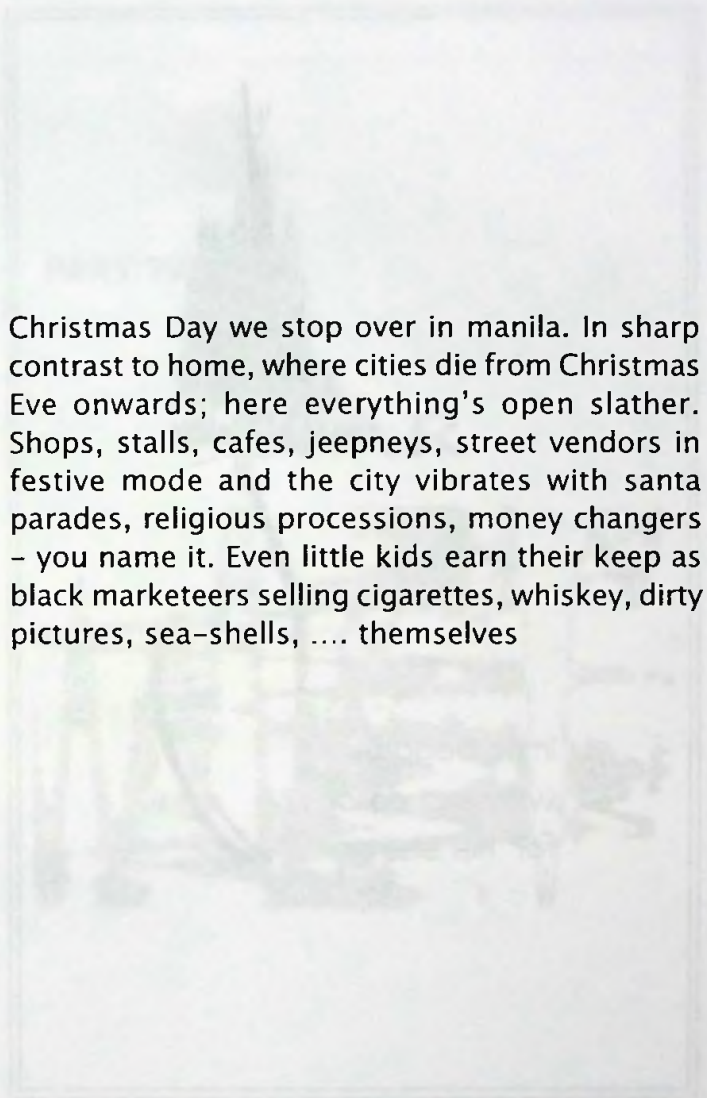
foreign port a young lady whispers i'll miss you

~ our onward journey is punctuated with frequent  
[unsettling] reports from korea, but we are too  
busy polishing guns, buttons & boots to reflect



15

a ship  
passes in the night  
the space between



Christmas Day we stop over in manila. In sharp contrast to home, where cities die from Christmas Eve onwards; here everything's open slather. Shops, stalls, cafes, jeepneys, street vendors in festive mode and the city vibrates with santa parades, religious processions, money changers – you name it. Even little kids earn their keep as black marketeers selling cigarettes, whiskey, dirty pictures, sea-shells, .... themselves



little beggar  
wants a dollar  
for his sister



PART TWO ...

# WAR

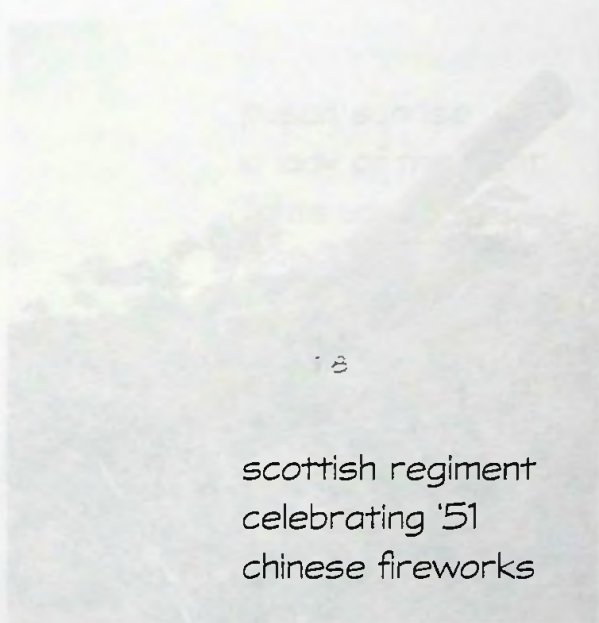




~ and reach pusan on schedule, new year's eve  
1950. Filing ashore's like stepping back into the  
dark ages

17

new year  
on the horizon  
sounds of dying



scottish regiment  
celebrating '51  
chinese fireworks

19

morning thunder in pusan distant guns





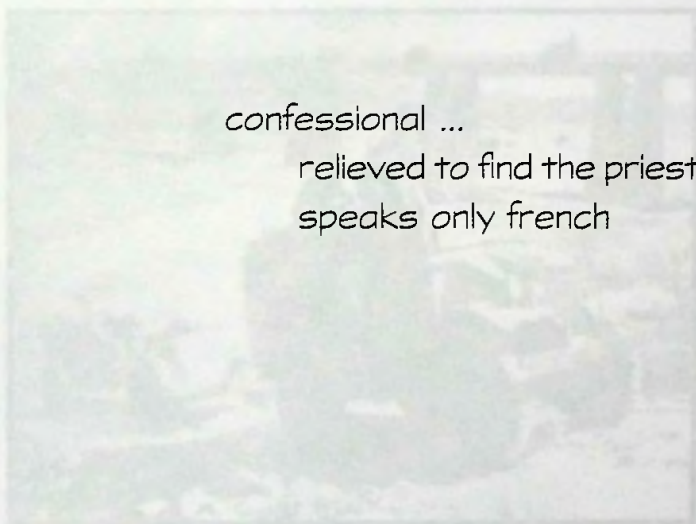
pusan sunrise  
a lady of the night  
lights up

~ all our engrained civil, moral, legal values and mores are reversed. From this day forth it shall be heroic and laudable to:- kill & be killed, maim & be maimed, cheat & be cheated, swindle, lie, steal, deceive and terrorise, in fact all behaviour normally attributed to the criminally insane now becomes desirable

— northwards in our same truck, over bone-  
lashed roads, stop a pile of explosives with 10  
other inmates of 'sound mind'.

21

confessional ...  
relieved to find the priest  
speaks only french



~ northwards in our ammo truck, over bone-jarring roads, atop a pile of explosives with 10 other lunatics of 'sound mind'

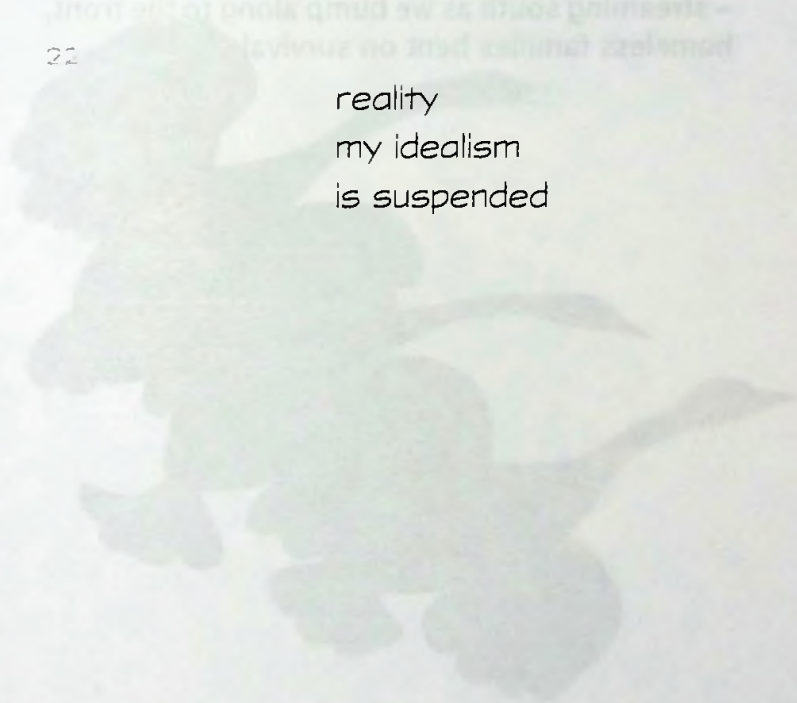


narrow road  
refugees E - from my  
rubbing shoulders

streaming south as we bump along to the front -  
homeless families bent on survival

22

reality  
my idealism  
is suspended






~ northwards in our ammo truck, over bones  
jamming roads, atop a pile of explosives with 10  
other lunatics of 'sound mind'

~ streaming south as we bump along to the front,  
homeless families bent on survival



narrow road  
refugees & infantry  
rubbing shoulders

frosty morning  
migrating geese  
and refugees



~ typical refugee family, led  
by dad in ceremonial hat,  
then sons & daughters;  
followed by mother with  
a heavy back-pack. She  
also has pots, pans, babies,  
sundries slung around her  
waist, arms full of family  
treasures, head piled  
high with household  
linens, and the odd  
toddler anchored to her  
skirts



25

refugees  
she wears the home  
he the hat

blinding snow  
our local guide follows  
a lost dog



line of refugees  
the smallest child carries  
a centipede



~ surprisingly we soon adjust to the intensity of  
war, to our future immediate death because the  
bitter Siberian winter, whose endless snows test  
our tropic frailty. To save body heat, we seldom  
undress before turning in and we remove boots

~ after hours of silent contemplation [aka -  
paralysing fear], cooped up in trucks, we're  
released for a little exercise. Under a full moon  
we skate with insane abandon in hobnail boots  
on the frozen river ~ then ~ a gradual awareness  
that our ice-rink is tomb for a grotesque army of  
cadavers caught like ants in amber

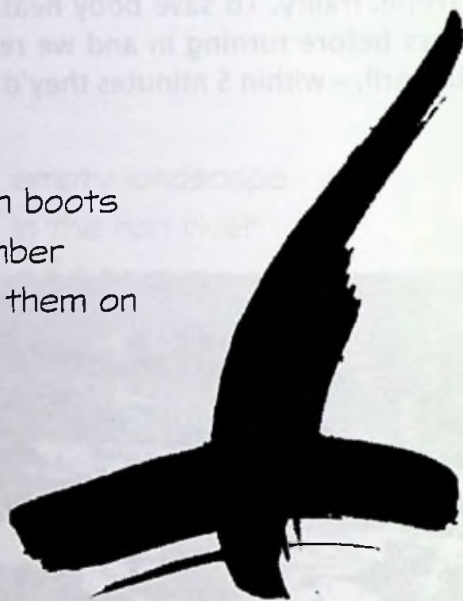


empty landscape  
in the han river  
a full helmet

~ surprisingly we soon adjust to the insanity of war; & our more immediate enemy becomes the bitter siberian winter, whose endless assaults test our tropic frailty. To save body heat, we seldom undress before turning in and we remove boots at our peril, – within 5 minutes they'd be like steel



frozen boots  
a bomber  
helps them on



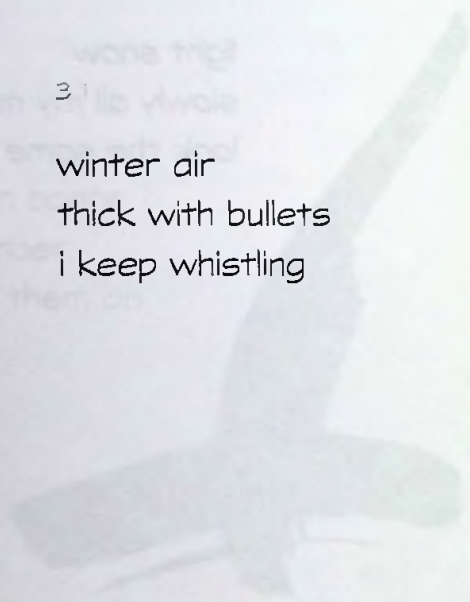
50

light snow  
slowly all my mates  
look the same

- every few days, for hours), our battery of 25-pounders, complete with entourage, relocate; each new site means the same routine - dig in the guns, latrines, fox-holes, picket posts & command post (in frozen ground) lay phone cables, set up antennas, water supply, congregate, lookouts, mess tents, pup tents

31

winter air  
thick with bullets  
i keep whistling







~ every few days, [or hours], our battery of 25-pounders, complete with entourage, relocates ... each new site means the same routine – dig in the guns, latrines, fox-holes, picket posts & command post [in frozen ground]! Lay phone cables, set up antennas, water supply, cookhouse, lookouts, mess tents, pup tents

32

pup-tent  
digging in beside me  
an old dog

33

command post  
the frozen camouflage  
lit from within



~ picket duty involves two-hour shifts on camp perimeter, standing alone in darkness prepared to shoot anything that moves

cold night  
 cupped in my hands  
 a lucky strike

snowstorm  
 a haloed moon  
 shows me home

hill 710  
 a dusting of snow  
 covers our losses

~ though we share this campaign with many nations, most of the time we are isolated [even from the rest of our regiment] and seem be fighting a lone war



cold night  
on the g.i.'s grave  
a pile jacket



~ many of the rok [republic of korea] troops are  
untrained teen-agers

brisk morning  
a company of roks  
running in place

in retreat  
we celebrate mass  
on a jeep

missing in action  
beyond the 38th  
red sunrise



~ we variously locate in villages, towns, schools, graveyards, mountainsides, paddyfields, playgrounds, beaches, farmyards, city rubble... occasionally we have the luxury of bunking on the fire-heated mud floor of a farm cottage

in from the cold  
the farmer's cat  
on heat

postcard snow we soon outgrow the novelty

scarecrow  
leaning over  
a load of winter

fraternising with civilians is forbidden but no one  
tells our hormones



shibi-shibi  
we follow camp followers  
to yong-dong-po





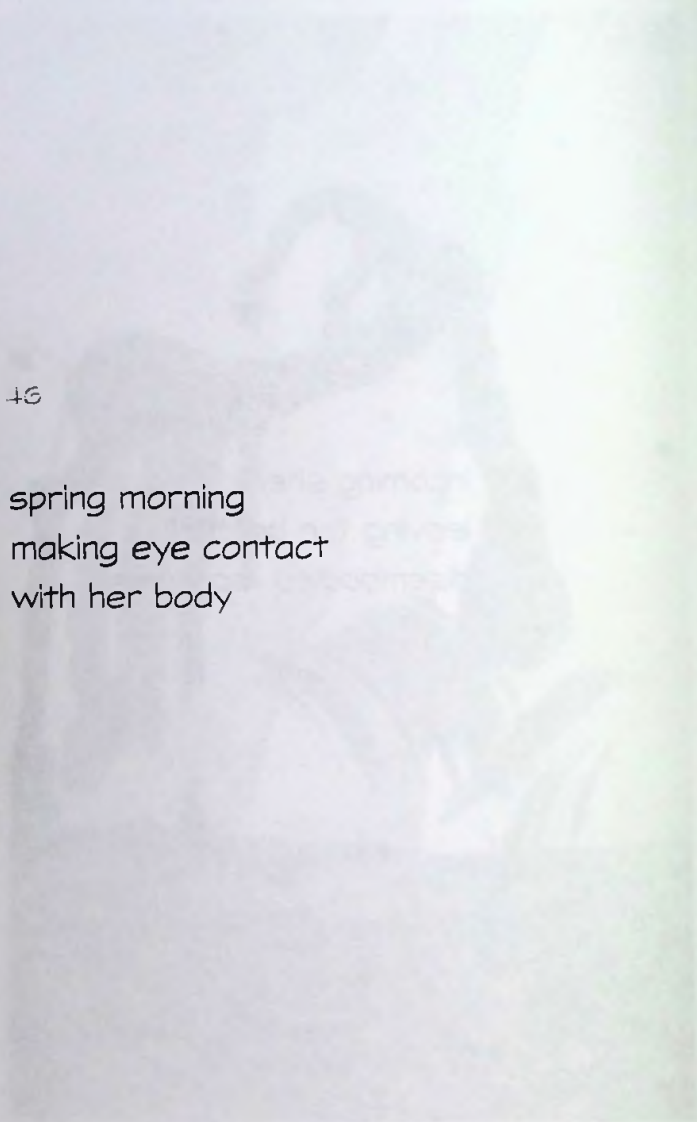
45

incoming shell  
leaving the brothel  
disembodied screams

ragged mist  
a refugee appears  
in patches

46

spring morning  
making eye contact  
with her body

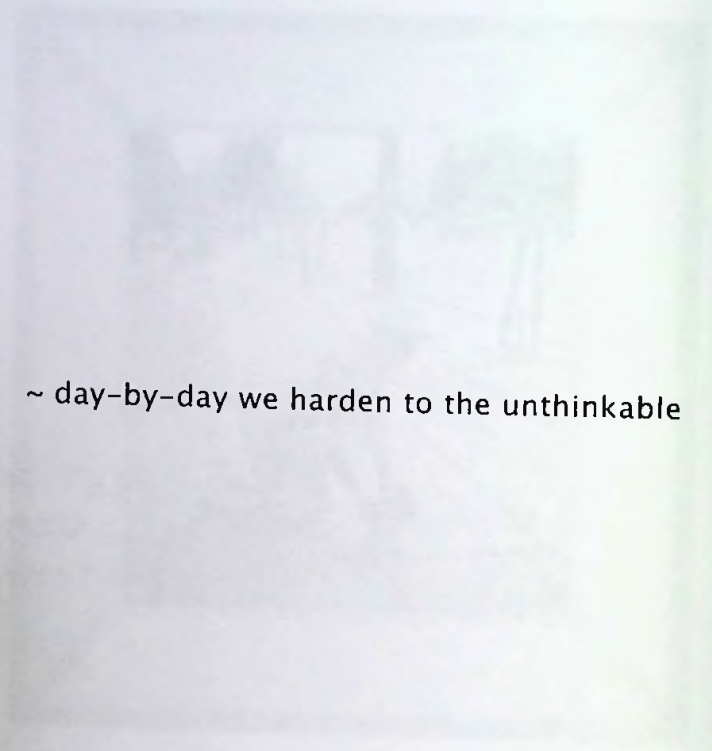




47

ragged mist  
a refugee appears  
in patches





~ day-by-day we harden to the unthinkable

to be  
the  
the  
the



lull in the fighting  
 i squash a butterfly  
 for no reason

hey, it's really  
 somebody loves me  
 my boyfriend

- day-by-day we harden to the unth- +2 ble

gatling gunner  
the rattle  
in his throat

beyond repair  
somebody lends him  
my bayonet

brief rain  
the new u.s. general  
afloat in stars

gating gunner  
the bottle  
in his throat

blistered beyond  
mirrored voodoo

52

insomnia  
playing the body game  
i lose count

liberated hospital  
the pregnant women  
all headless









as we rage up and down the peninsula, the  
appearance of civilization and civic  
infrastructure disintegrate

51

winter sun  
a napalm victim  
sizzles

~ as war rages up and down the peninsula, the appurtenances of civilisation and civic infrastructure disintegrate





but body of peace  
in the crossfire

卅三

imjin river the new bridge going up  
down





as you rage up and down the peninsula, the  
appearances of civilization and civic  
infrastructure disintegrate...

the new bridge going up

how

historic shrine history

snipers  
our lady of peace  
in the crossfire



stray bullet  
the brass buddha sports  
an extra navel

159

buddhist temple  
without a bell  
without a building





60

bombed cafe  
a crow drops in  
for a snack





51

vandalised chapel  
the avenging angel  
gets carried away

~ our first close encounter is kapyong, where chaos reigns for one long night and we retreat into premises hastily vacated by an american mortar battalion. In the confusion of battle they abandon almost everything — including a mobile medical outfit which i commandeer and repaint as 162 BATTERY AID POST





~ this is a watershed for me. Forthwith, by virtue of my experience in field medicine and newly acquired facilities for fixing v.d., i become a "protected species". With the nick-name doc, my new status excuses me from nearly all regimental obligations, and i am free to ply my "trade" among the military as well as civilians



sleepless explosions pound away the night

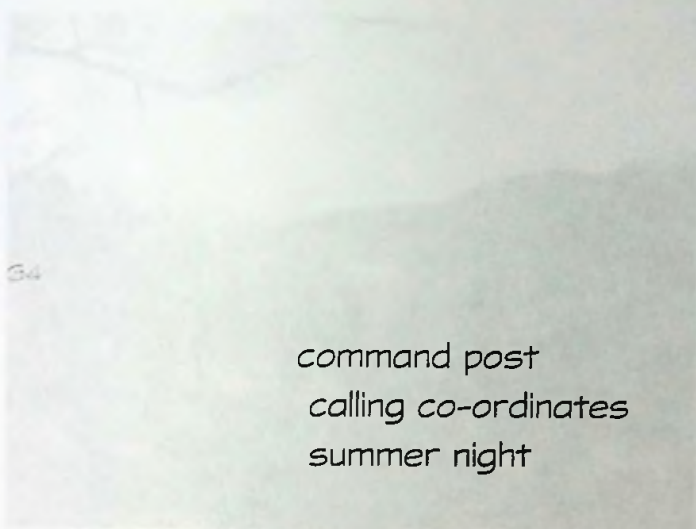




at kapyong  
a friend i've never met  
from kaiapoi







command post  
calling co-ordinates  
summer night

at Kapyong. Only the disciplined valor of a few British infantrymen saves thousands of retreating allies from annihilation by ambush. The price is obvious next morning as bodies and equipment litter the narrow valley. Some of these bodies we knew. Most were killed or captured.



~ at kapyong. Only the disciplined valour of a few british infantrymen saves thousands of retreating allies from annihilation by ambush. The price is obvious next morning as bodies and equipment jam the narrow valley. Some of these blokes we knew. Most were killed or captured

65

morning sun  
running low  
on body-bags

red sky a reflection of earth



Only the disciplined valour of a few  
 british infantrymen saves thousands of retreating  
 allies from annihilation by ambush. The price is  
 obvious. The bodies and equipment  
 jam the narrow roads. These bikes we  
 knew. Most were

bottle-hardened  
 a turkish officer  
 tries anti-freeze

first light  
splitting the horizon  
gunfire

69

calling for reinforcements  
on the radio  
the lone ranger

battle-hardened  
a Turkish officer  
miss anti-freeze



70

more notes

Embraced and all the

in parting rain

dodging but

covering the old temple  
without a roof  
tonight's sky



easter storm  
half his face  
blows away

battlefield  
in pelting rain  
dodging bullets



red moon  
an enemy medics  
drags shadows



first dry night  
the land-mine crater  
fills with moon

75

shaving mirror  
hanging on the tree  
a strange face

76

grenade attack  
this north korean gravel  
tastes ok



incoming shell  
once again  
my final moment



shaking mirror

hanging on the tree

a grudge face

late grimace

big song

~ occasionally i overnight with other national units



waning moon  
a homesick marine  
cradles his carbine

army headline  
general macarthur flies  
back to front

going to the movies at an aussie camp superman



~ my memories don't age well. They get mixed up and dream-like, losing all sense of space, time, narrative

counter attack  
a terrified cat  
gives me the shits



3 - 2 - 1 - zero fire inside me



83

morning is late this morning gunsmoke

84

friendly fire  
enemy and friend  
uniformly dead

counted drops  
of melted wax  
gives me the sense

65

flame thrower  
the battle-scarred marine  
lights a camel

softly the  
boastful ymone  
doubt ymone

3 - 2 - 1 - zero fire inside me

~ my attitude to death & destruction matures with  
time



pronounced dead  
the continuing tick  
of his watch



dawn attack  
an ancient paddy field traps  
the latest tank



quick retreat  
the sergeant barks  
at a dog



my first kill  
putting kapyong  
in perspective





30

tactical retreat  
through the wheat field  
a platoon of quail



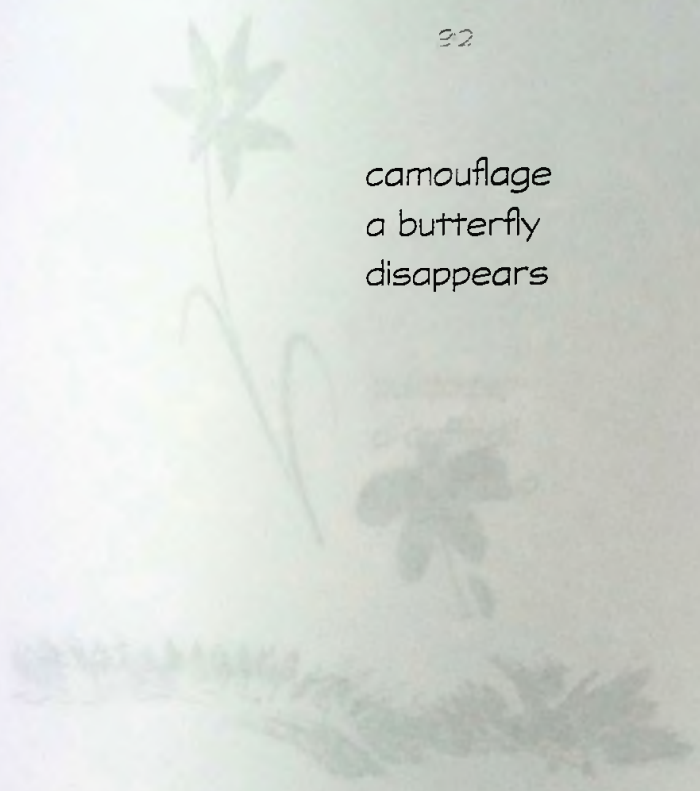
91

infiltrator  
a spotlight stretches  
his legs

practical retreat  
through the wheat field  
a platoon of dual

32

camouflage  
a butterfly  
disappears





bulldozer  
a daffodil  
holds it up

midnight  
a loud explosion destroys  
my erection





95

tin hat  
in the exit hole  
a blowfly

56

interrogation  
forgetting  
to forget

wild canary ...  
an octave or two higher  
the hurricane

anti-aircraft shell  
an explosion rocks  
the pleiades

silent night  
the distant mig  
a mosquito

100

mothers day  
i write an affectionate letter  
to lana turner



crashed plane a chrysalis on the wing

in the dust of history  
the dogtag

the wound  
the wound  
the wound

about to fire  
when someone whistles  
waltzing matilda

103

m.a.s.h.

the wounded pacifist  
swats a fly





m.i.a.  
 in the dust of kapyong  
 his dogtag



back from awol  
 we take a back-road  
 to the front

106

blitzed village  
somebody up there  
spared the idiot



battlefield  
the rising moon  
heavily cratered

108

dugout  
our padre  
deep in prayer

korean girl  
calls me amelicano  
giggles in english

110  
red stain  
on his khaki tunic  
a purple heart

red cross convoy in the fog haloes of light







~ field-hospital housekeeping involves lots of innovation and i shamelessly scrounge medical supplies, food, clothing and ammo wherever i can. Americans usually dump all their old clothing and equipment, so their vacated campsites are targeted by armies of aussies, kiwis & koreans battling for the buried treasure. Even livestock's not immune from anzac scavengers



112

silent dawn  
the blood-red rooster  
tastes great

113

burial plot  
a blackbird  
senses life



114

treeless plain  
a kestrel lands  
on its shadow

115

day of rest  
a disabled farmer  
mends his sunflower

116

waif  
the eyes  
ask why





117  
fresh crater his atheism on the edge

half  
the eyes  
out with

116

dead dog  
the body count  
doubles

~ entertainment was scarce, so we very much  
appreciated visits by bob hope, jack benny, larry  
adler, danny kaye, then one

starless night  
 marilyn monroe lights  
 the darkened stage



liberated village  
the survivor holds out  
his severed hand

war widow  
her old dog limps  
beside her

*dear john letter  
on the canadian's face  
snowflakes*



liberated village  
the survivor holds out  
his severed hand

125

in tokyo a war movie





12-

long march  
dogs along the route  
sound off



123

dusk  
the darkness  
inside me

dying rabbi  
father ryan reads  
the last rights



127

liberated village  
the inhabitants line up  
in shallow graves



encl 28 om-er

night coast is to shat er

evacuated village the dove-cote door left ajar

oying communit

in his corker

deret crushed

liberated village

the no-mans land

the rattle of a troop train

returning empty



130

dying communist  
in his pocket  
christ crucified

teotl yncas aaron an no aah



131

lilies on his cross early frost

132

peace talks  
my trigger finger  
tenses





133

retreating ambulance  
his empty sleeve  
keeps waving

lies on his cross early frost

154  
cold thanksgiving  
he spikes his drink  
with canned heat

135

xmas stocking  
the following morning  
combat rations



nativity play

2 star-angled luminous

detent strangle

'36

xmas dinner

mistletoe

on spam



137

xmas night  
strangers in the paddy-field  
plant a land-mine

138

nativity play  
a star-shells illuminates  
distant strangers

139

goodwill season  
for good measure  
we fire another

140

sergeant santa a xmas bell on his bayonet



PART 3

PEACE



PART 3

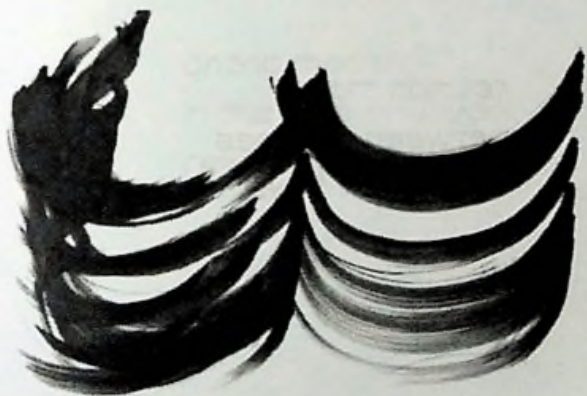
PEACE

141

spring thaw  
in my native earth  
same snowdrops



visiting the soldier's orphans play all fall down



143

reunion march  
between the lines  
a bunch of boys

1-1

anzac morning  
in the memorial pool  
reflections

war book my buddy 1-of-a-100 scarlet crosses



anzac day searching in vain for old mates



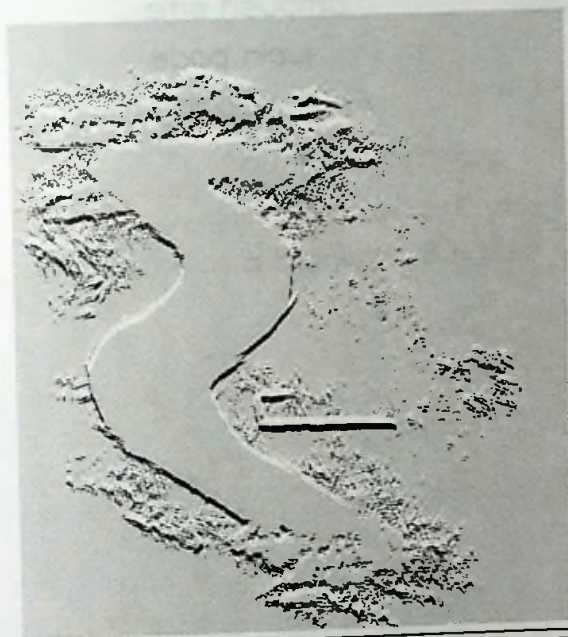
dawn parade  
old soldiers line up  
dropping poppies





PART 4

REVISIT



PART A

# REVISIT

149

ambush site  
lupin pods  
popping

war museum

in the peace long

a dead night

trumpet

equally ym private

association

trumpet \$1.50

covering a

autumn morning  
in the war cemetery  
a blanket of frost

memorial day the war cemetery arrived in gardens



151

summer  
slowing my steps  
poppies





152

war museum  
in the peace lamp  
a dead moth

153

trumpet flowers  
covering our fortress  
summer afternoon

154

memorial day the war cemetery smells of cordite

155

headstones  
from last century  
i feel my age

156

veterans parade  
they lead a peacenik  
to safety

157

dawn service  
i meet an old man  
younger than me

were history  
school kids do  
in a doer

scorched earth  
the dying grasses  
alive with cicadas



we're history ...  
school kids do our battle-sites  
in a daewoo

160

massacre site  
a little girl catches  
white butterflies

161

unknown soldier on his cross a steel helmet

162

spring crop  
the killing fields  
first to sprout



the following haiku and haibun  
contributed by

THE JAPANESE HAIRY HORSE  
APPROXIMATELY 10,000 YEARS OLD  
WITH HAIRY HORSE  
WOMEN  
FOREIGN WAR.



fragments  
of old soldier's fingers  
lighten on his crust



***the following haiku and haibun  
contributed by:-***

pfc. JERRY KILBRIDE, attached to U.S. Army Security Agency in an area of signal intelligence credited with saving the lives of thousands of men and women serving the United Nations during the Korean War.

soldiers' graveyard  
a bird rests for a moment  
on a heavy gun

firecrackers  
the old soldier's fingers  
tighten on his crutch

# **LOSING PRIVATE SUTHERLAND**

**[a haibun]**

**jerry kilbride**

## **PREAMBLE**

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pfc. Raymond Sutherland- 38th Infantry Regt., 2nd Infantry Div., was wounded, hospitalised; returned to duty, only to be killed near Sadmak, North Korea. Sept. 1952.

Steven Spielberg's searing indictment of war - the bloody and horrendous carnage at Normandy Beach - was difficult to watch as I sat in the dark theater during a weekday matinee. Then, unexpectedly, the 506th was mentioned and I found myself on the verge of breaking down; that number identifying our basic training regiment triggered the old and unassuaged grief at Sutherland's death. A magnificent human being wasted in a forgotten war; the youth and promise of a good friend forfeited. I can still see

him standing in combat boots smudged  
with kentucky mud... a cigarette in his  
mouth that he lights for me... and then  
another that he lights for himself.  
Pentimentoed under this memory, carried  
for almost 50 years, is a body riddled with  
bullets as it is washed away in the flashing  
rampage of a Korean river, and there  
follows a scene long and relentlessly willed  
to stave off madness ... sediment settles  
gently on my friend's handsome face ...  
peacefully ... softly ... quietly ... Yes, the  
soldier can no longer hear gunfire; the  
young soldier can no longer hear the river  
thundering into his throat. He is quiet... as  
I soon will be quiet...

*the flag folded  
something of myself is lowered  
with his coffin*

[also published in: UP AGAINST THE WINDOW:  
American Haibun & Haiga, Vol 1, March 2000]



with a heavy, dark, and somewhat

with a heavy, dark, and somewhat

mouth that he lights for me, and then

another that he lights for himself.

He is a man of a very different

kind, almost 50 years, a body filled with

power, it is washed away in the fashion

of a man of a Korean, with a strong

and a very long and interesting

in the old days, a man of a very

greatly as he is a man of a very

greatly as he is a man of a very

greatly as he is a man of a very

greatly as he is a man of a very

greatly as he is a man of a very

greatly as he is a man of a very

greatly as he is a man of a very

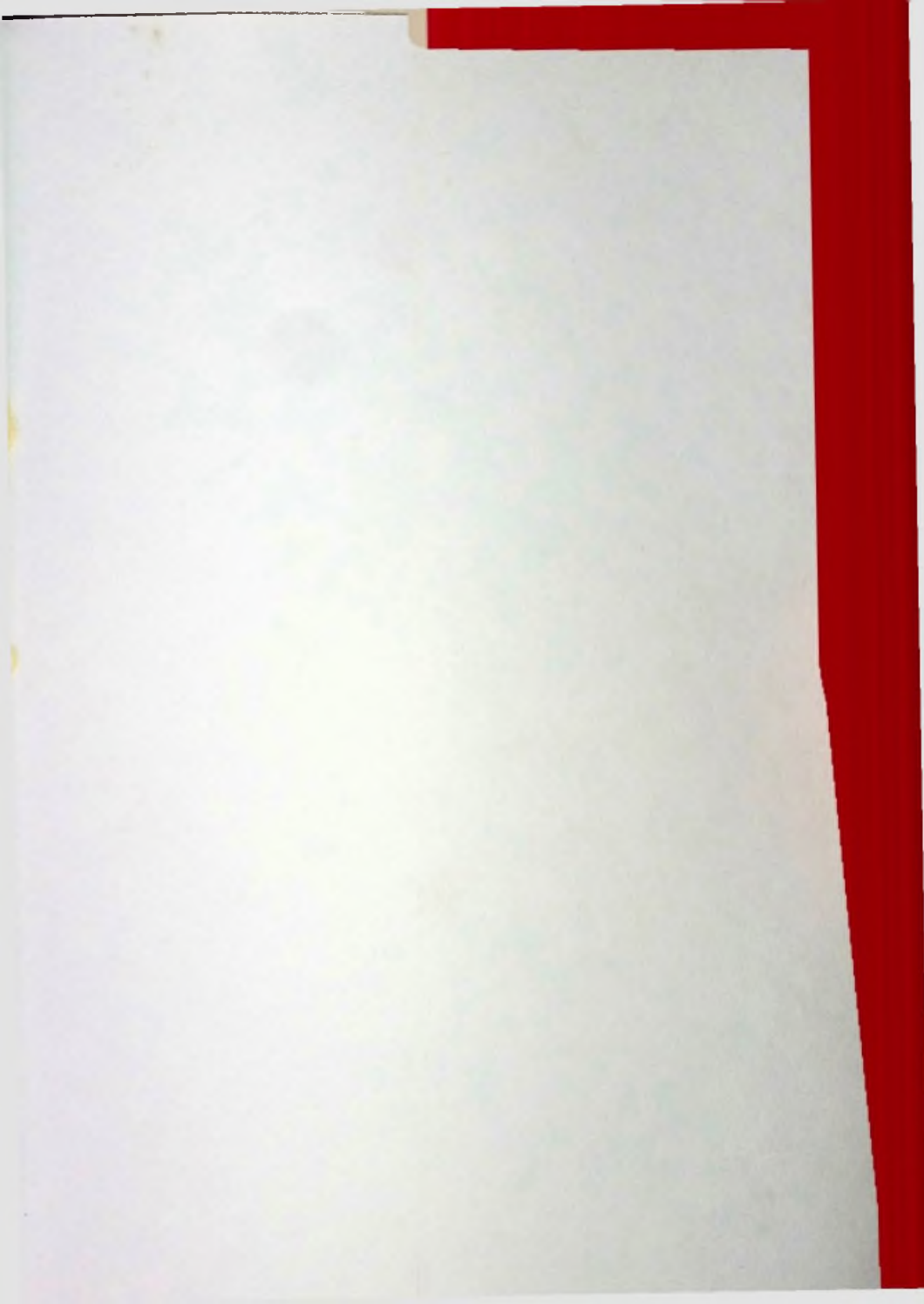
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greatly as he is a man of a very





JANICE BOSTOK: ... awesome ... powerful ... superstar stuff ... a milestone development for haiku in English...

CYRIL CHILDS ... intensity of experience ... horrors and humour of war are all there...

JERRY KILBRIDE ... wow! ... very powerful ... wonderful ... zoweee ... superb....

ELIZABETH ST JACQUES ... Berry's haiku talent rates among the world's best

JOHN KNIGHT ... Berry's Korean sequence is as moving and poignant as the work of the great poets of the first world war

MAJOR LES PYE N.Z. K.V.A. ... great, just great

About the author

ERNEST J BERRY

since 1995 has won:-

27 1st places; 33 2nd's; 18 3rds as well as countless commendeds, honourable mentions and 'runners-up' in international haiku competitions. Over the same period more than 1000 of his haiku were published in periodicals world-wide and he's been quoted in such eclectic media as Canadian radio, Gaelic, Romanian and Japanese newspapers, Australian, Croatian and Irish magazines and been translated into 7 languages. He has judged 2 international haiku competitions, initiated an haiku in schools programme and had his haiku carved in stone (thrice) on haiku walks. He has convened 15 haiku workshops, 2 conventions, 5 anthology launches, appears in numerous internet-sites and is founder/convenor of WINDRIFT HAIKU and PICTON POETRY. This is his second book, the first, - "RAINDROP - - -". may be ordered by emailing: <bluberry@xtra.co.nz>

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\* Features a concluding segment (haiku & haibun), by another Korea war vet. and highly respected haijin JERRY KILBRIDE of California.

*Pure  
Pressed  
flaxton*

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