

# Korea: The Forgotten War

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Most people think about the Korean War beginning in 1950 and finally ending in a truce in 1953. But the seeds of the conflict for the United States begin back at the WW2 Yalta conference between Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin. Korea was an afterthought where two American officers drew a line across the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel without any forethought about terrain, cities, and the people affected. It was a line on a map, convenient and simple. In 1948, north of the 38<sup>th</sup> would be ceded to a socialist state under Kim Il-sung and south of the 38<sup>th</sup> would be a capitalist state under Syngman Rhee. Tensions would simmer between the two countries until 1950 when Kim Il-sung's army would invade South Korea.

Initially, Stalin had no plans to support a war between North and South Korea. Kim Il-sung convinced Stalin this would be a quick offensive. Stalin would provide the military material Kim Il-sung needed. The United States had not provided Syngman Rhee's government with large offensive and defensive weapons for fear he might do the same thing to North Korea. There was not a large US Military presence either. The US did not want another war so soon after WW2 and from Truman's perspective, Korea was not on his radar screen. The US had also drawn down its military forces since a large military force was not needed at the end of WW2. Given the circumstances, Kim Il-sung thought this was a slam dunk. It would prove otherwise.

The lists below are available online and have been revised/confirmed since the original paper was presented.

## **NARA Resources**

### **Armistice Agreement for the Restoration of the South Korean State (1953)**

<https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=85>

This is a text of the armistice that ended the fighting in Korea in 1953. "The armistice, while it stopped hostilities, was not a permanent peace treaty between nations."

### **"Electronic Records of Korean and Vietnam Conflict Casualties"**

<https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2000/spring/korean-and-vietnam-casualties.html>

*The Prologue* is an article by Theodore J. Hull describing NARA's electronic records about the Korean and Vietnam Wars.

### **The Korean War**

<https://www.eisenhowerlibrary.gov/research/online-documents/korean-war>

The Eisenhower Presidential Library maintains this site which describes the Korean War and President Eisenhower's actions to deal with it.

### **The Korean War and Its Origins 1945-1953**

<https://www.trumanlibraryinstitute.org/?s=Korea> Harry Truman's Library is currently closed for a one-year renovation beginning July 22, 2019. Hopefully, access to Korean documents and images will be restored.

### **The Korean War as History: David Rees' Korea: The Limited War in Retrospect**

<http://www.archives.gov/research/foreign-policy/cold-war/conference/stueck.html>

Presentation by William Stueck at *The Power of Free Inquiry and Cold War International History* program held on September 25-26, 1998, at the National Archives in College Park, Maryland, and sponsored by NARA's Archival Research Coordinating Committee and the University of Maryland.

### **Korean War Records**

<http://www.archives.gov/research/military/korean-war/>

A guide to Korean War records at the National Archives.

### **Records of Nurse Casualties in the Korean War: Electronic Records Reference Report**

<http://www.archives.gov/research/military/korean-war/nurses.html>

An article on how to locate records of the Korean War nurse casualties found at the National Archives.

### **Records of U.S. Military Casualties, Missing in Action, and Prisoners of War from the Era of the Korean War: Electronic Records Reference Report**

<http://www.archives.gov/research/military/vietnam-war/electronic-records.html>

"Overview of the electronic data records in the custody of the National Archives relating to U.S. military casualties, missing in action, and prisoners of war from the Korean War era."

And also: <https://aad.archives.gov/aad/series-list.jsp?cat=WR27> this is a subset of databases found online at the National Archives on the Korean War

### **"Revisiting Korea: Exposing Myths of the Forgotten War"**

**Exposing Myths of the Forgotten War** is James I. Matray's two-part *Prologue* article from summer 2002 examining U.S.-Korean relations and the myths about the Korean War.

<http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2002/summer/korean-myths-1.html>

<http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2002/summer/korean-myths-2.html>

### **State-level Lists of Casualties from the Korean Conflict**

<http://www.archives.gov/research/military/vietnam-war/casualty-lists/>

NARA's Center for Electronic Records has made these lists available online. Casualty lists for the Vietnam War are also available.

### **The United States Enters the Korean Conflict**

<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/korean-conflict/>

A Teaching guide with a document lesson plan.

### **Other Resources**

#### **50th Anniversary Commemoration Korean War 1950-1953**

<http://www.qmmuseum.lee.army.mil/korea/>

Check out this site sponsored by the Army Quartermaster Corps Museum at Fort Lee, Virginia, and visit the related exhibit, "Korea: The Quartermaster Story" which will be open at the museum on June 25, 2000, 50 years to the day the Korean War began.

#### **Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO): Korean War**

<https://www.dpaa.mil/Our-Missing/Korean-War/>

DPMO is the Department of Defense office that oversees and manages POW/MIA issues. This site dealing with POW/MIAs of the Korean War provides information about DPMO's activities, fact sheets, maps, and lists of POW/MIAs. Also included is the Johnnie Johnson List, a list secretly compiled by Army Private First Class Wayne A. "Johnnie" Johnson of 496 fellow prisoners who had died during their captivity.

#### **Korean War, 1950-1953**

<http://www.army.mil/koreanwar/>

The U.S. Army developed this site to pay tribute to veterans of the Korean War and their families.

#### **Korean War Maps**

<http://www.history.army.mil/books/maps.htm>

Website maintained by the U.S. Army Center of Military History.

#### **Korean War Overview**

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/history/euro-hist/cold-war/v/korean-war-overview>

A video lecture from the Khan Academy.

#### **Korean War Project**

<http://www.koreanwar.org/>

The site includes information about POW-MIA issues, veterans' issues, and units that served in the war.

**Medal of Honor Recipients: Korean War**

<http://www.cmoah.org/> From their web site: The **Medal of Honor** is the highest award for valor in action against an enemy force which can be bestowed upon an individual serving in the Armed Services of the United States. Generally presented to its recipient by the President of the United States of America in the name of Congress

**Remembering the Korean War**

<http://www.history.army.mil/reference/Korea/kw-remem.htm>

Compiled by the U.S. Army Center of Military History, this site contains official histories, art and images, and studies and documents related to the Korean War.

**United States Army in the Korean War: Policy and Direction: The First Year**

<http://www.history.army.mil/books/P&D.HTM>

Written by James F. Schnabel and published by the Center of Military History, this work was first published as CMH Pub 20-1-1 in 1972.

**"What We Learned From the Korean War"**

<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/07/what-we-learned-from-the-korean-war/278016/>

This article from *The Atlantic* discusses ways in which the Korean War influenced the course American wars that followed.

**Albuquerque Public Library:** Search for “Korean War” for a list of Korean War subjects.

**The Korean War: An International History (Asia/Pacific/Perspectives) Hardcover – November 21, 2013, by Wada Haruki (Author)**

[http://www.amazon.com/Korean-War-International-History-Perspectives/dp/1442223294/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1422910140&sr=8-1&keywords=Korean+War%3A+An+International+History](http://www.amazon.com/Korean-War-International-History-Perspectives/dp/1442223294/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1422910140&sr=8-1&keywords=Korean+War%3A+An+International+History)

On Amazon.com and other booksellers. This classic history of the Korean War—from its origins through the armistice—is now available in English for the first time. Wada Haruki, one of the world’s leading scholars of the war, has thoroughly revised his definitive study to incorporate new sources and debates. Drawing on archival and other primary sources in Russia, China, the United States, South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan, the author moves beyond national histories to provide the first comprehensive understanding of the Korean War as an international conflict from the perspective of all of the major actors.

## The Korean War Era - additional resources

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### **“Welcome to Jim Forte Postal History”**

<http://www.postalhistory.com/index.htm>

In a word, postal history is about mail. While we may think we know mail, this man knows the meaning of mail.

### **A.P.O.’s By Number**

[http://www.postalhistory.com/Military/APO/apo\\_number.htm](http://www.postalhistory.com/Military/APO/apo_number.htm)

Numerical listing of APO’s. This may or may not contain all APOs. But it does cover a large number of them. The owner of the web site Jim Forte sells postal covers and lists.

### **Wilson Center – Cold War International History Project**

<http://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/soviet-aims-korea-and-the-origins-the-korean-war-1945-50-new-evidence-the-russian>

A download PDF document about new information about the Korean War involving the Russians.

### **City of Albuquerque - History: Korean War**

<https://www.cabq.gov/parksandrecreation/parks/veterans-memorial-park/documents/KoreanWarEra-NM.pdf/view>

A condensed version of the Korean with a local Medal of Honor winner identified. (PDF File Download)

### **You Tube**

[https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=Korean+War](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Korean+War)

Enter “ The Korean War” into the YouTube search bar and you will get a list of Korean documentary videos. Take them for what they are worth.