

## RESUME OF SERVICE CAREER

Of

### **ARCHIBALD WILLIAM LYON, Brigadier General**

**DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH:** 15 September 1909, Fort George Wright, Washington

**YEARS OF ACTIVE SERVICE:** Over 33 years

**DATE OF RETIREMENT:** 1 January 1966

#### **MILITARY SCHOOLS ATTENDED**

The Engineer School, Basic and Advanced Course  
The Armed Forces Staff College  
The Army War College

#### **EDUCATIONAL DEGREES**

United States Military Academy - BS Degree - Military Science  
Carnegie Tech - MS Degree - Civil Engineering

#### **MAJOR DUTY ASSIGNMENTS**

<b><u>FROM</u></b>	<b><u>TO</u></b>	<b><u>ASSIGNMENTS</u></b>
Nov 55	Mar 56	CO, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Trans, TML CMD, C, AFFE
Mar 56	Jul 57	CO, Yokohama Army Post, Japan
Jun 56	Jul 57	CO, Trans TML CMD, AFFE
Jul 57	Jun 59	CO, Commandant, Trans School
Jun 59	May 62	Trans Officer, HQ USAREUR & USCOMZEUR
Jun 62	Jul 62	Asst to Chief of Trans, HQ DA
Aug 62	Oct 62	Retired, US Army
Oct 62		Recalled to Active Duty
Oct 62	Jul 64	Dep Dir for Emerg Trans, Dept of Commerce
Jul 64	Jan 66	Dep Dir for Emerg Trans, Dept of Transportation

## PROMOTIONS

## DATES OF APPOINTMENT

2LT	10 Jun	1932
1LT	23 Aug	1935
CPT	1 Oct	1940
MAJ	20 Feb	1942
LTC	21 Aug	1942
COL	2 Jan	1946
LTC	6 Jul	1946
COL	7 Sep	1950
BG	8 Aug	1958

## US DECORATIONS AND BADGES

Legion of Merit w/Oak Leaf Cluster

Army Commendation Medal

SOURCE OF COMMISSION USMA (Class of 1932)



## INTERVIEW ABSTRACT

### **Interview with BG (Ret) Archibald Lyon**

BG (Ret) Archibald W. Lyon, a member of the class of 1932, United States Military Academy, was interviewed by CPT Thomas Swarren on 22 April 1985.

After a brief description of his duties as a Combat Aviation Engineer Battalion Commander, **BG Lyon** detailed a description of the 3rd Military Railway Service and its mission in Japan after VJ Day.

A basic tenant to be followed when implementing a railway system is that host nation civilian are vital to the success of the project. In Japan, the Americans supervised the local nationals in the running of the railway system. The U.S. set priorities, but the Japanese performed the actual work, from maintenance to scheduling to the physical running of the trains. Development of a good working relationship with the local railway personnel is vital to an efficient operation.

**BG Lyon** covered the initial problem facing the implementation of the 3rd MRS: the organizational layout of the system; and the basic mission of the 3rd MRS.

## INTERVIEW

This is the Oral History Program, and this is an interview by **CPT Swarren** of BG (Retired) Archibald Lyon on the 22nd of April 1985.

**CPT Swarren:** Sir, I'd like to open by saying, thank you for agreeing to participate in the Oral History Program, and I think we've agreed that the subject matter today will be the occupation of Japan and the railroading during the occupation of Japan. So, let m start by asking if you could explain a little bit of the background of how you got involved with the Third Military Rail Service and how they ended up going to Japan during the Post War Era?

**BG Lyon:** I'm very happy to be a part of this program, and to the best of my recollection I'll fill in. I hope what I have to offer will be of value and assistance to the program. My background before I became associated with the Third Military Railway Service was engineering. Upon graduation from West Point, I went into the Constructing Quartermaster Corps. At the beginning of the War, the engineering function of the Quartermaster Corps was taken over by the Corps of Engineers, and from that point on I became Corps of Engineers. When the War began I was with the Office Chief of Engineers, and had immediately asked for Troop duty. I got it and was assigned to activate, organize, train and deploy overseas an Engineer Aviation Construction Battalion (the 1872d). We ended up in New Guinea and were there about 19 months before moving into the Philippines. We got into the Philippines in April of 1945, where we were on construction support of GHQ Staff Headquarters in Manila. In early August of 1945, I learned that my friend and classmate, Brigadier General Frank Besson, was in Manila. I went over to make a call, and learned from him that he had been brought over to Manila to reactivate the Third Military Railway Service in preparation for the invasion of Japan. He had previously commanded the Third Military Railway Service in Persia, providing logistics support to the Russians over the Persian Railroads. At the end of the War in Europe the Third Military Railway Service, among other organizations, was deactivated and its personnel were scattered. Many of the personnel returned to civilian status or were transferred. General Besson was having quite a time getting reorganized in Manila. He was trying to locate as many as he could of his old command and staff, and filling in as best he could from any other source. He was on an active recruitment campaign at that time. We'd been classmates and old friends, so he asked me if I would consider joining him as his Chief Engineer. My response was that I would like to, except I didn't know anything about railroading. He responded that engineering is much the same in whatever field - and that as a good experienced engineer in whom he had a lot of confidence he had no doubt that I could fill the bill. So, I agreed, and accordingly, was transferred from command of the 1872d Engineer Aviation Battalion and became a part of General Besson's staff.

Soon thereafter, two atomic bombs were exploded over Japan and the plan for invasion of Japan turned into a plan of occupation for the occupation of Japan. Accordingly, one of the first jobs was to get the occupation troops dispersed in Japan. This was going to be a job carried out very largely by the railroads once the troops were airlifted or sealifted into the Ports of Japan. To make a long story short, plans were made for General Besson and his primary assistant to fly into Japan with the advance parties and General MacArthur's staff. It was on the 28th of August, if I remember, that they flew in and made contact with their opposite numbers in Tokyo. I was chosen as the next senior on the staff to lead the advance-working group of Third Military Railway Service by ship into Japan. We would get in there on VJ day and be among the first ashore. The contingent that I had at that time, as I recall, was not over about 15 people; officers and enlisted. We arrived in Tokyo Bay on the morning of 2 September. As the hour approached for the agreement to be signed on the Missouri, we were all ordered below decks as a precaution against any hostile contingency. After the events were over on the Missouri, the all clear was given and we moved onto shore. That afternoon we moved in, found quarters, and were met by General Besson, who told us at that time,

that the railroads were basically in good condition and that the Japanese were doing a good job. As far as the engineering side was concerned, the rights of way for the most part were clear, and the damage that had been done by the bombing that had gone [on] had been very quickly repaired. Train service had been restored and our immediate and primary action was to organize train elements, meet the troops on arrival at the seaports and the airports, and disperse them to their occupation sites. Accordingly, General Besson made me the superintendent of the Tokyo-Yokohama Division, to perform that duty.

**CPT Swarren:** Sir, how was the 3d MRS organized?

**BG Lyon:** The Third Military Railway Service was basically a Headquarters structure primarily intended to have attached to it railway operating units, railway maintenance units, right of way units, and other elements actually running and operating a railroad. What we found was the activity in Japan was a little bit different. We were to be primarily an operating Headquarters to administer and supervise the Japanese who were operating at least that part of the railroads in support of the Occupation Forces. We did not ourselves operate or maintain the railroads in any way, except in local Army depots and at some of the Army stations. We did have a few railroad troops or individuals that were engineers, operators, or maintenance people. Their job was primarily to operate and maintain the diesel engines that were ultimately brought over to do the primary switching jobs within the depots. We had very few, rare opportunities to operate with the military on the main lines. Primarily people that were picked up and transferred from many sources staffed us. Hopefully some had railroad experience, but most did not. We were always seeking additional people because our mission was expanding and growing faster than the available personnel would permit. So, we operated primarily through the Japanese. We told them [the Japanese] to go ahead and operate the railroad but their first priority was to the needs of the Occupational Forces. Their response was expedited by the attitude of the Supreme Command of the Allied Powers. General MacArthur made it clear from the very first that the Occupation Forces were in charge, the Japanese had lost the War, the Occupation was going to be peaceful and we expected absolute cooperation. That's important. This went all the way down in our own railroad operations. General Besson made it very clear to his counterparts, in the Japanese Government and the Japanese railroads, that the Third Military Railway Service was an arm of the Occupation Forces and was in charge of that phase of the occupation. Every member of the Military Railway Service, regardless of rank, whether he was commissioned or noncommissioned or a Private would be in charge of his particular area of responsibility and whatever he ordered or directed would be followed. Our soldiers found that their orders were indeed executed and, generally, always in a very effective manner.

**CPT Swarren:** Sir, you said you had very few professional railroaders in your chain of command. Did you have sufficient time to accomplish the training you needed to do before you went into Japan?

**BG Lyon:** No we did not. There was no time for training. In fact, I think I was on the boat enroute from Manila to Japan before I even had my first look at the Table of Organization and Equipment (TO&E) of the Third Military Railway Service. Even then that was only a means to an end. We actually operated later on under a TD [Table of Distribution], and the TO&E was a means of arriving at that Table of Distribution. We tailor-made an organization to accomplish our mission and we operated from there. We had titles compatible to those in a regular railroad. The Commanding Officer was the Director and General Manager and we had superintendents of the Divisions and Subdivisions. We had departments as you would have in a Headquarters of an operating railroad.

**CPT Swarren:** Did you have any railroad professionals, people who did this for a living?

**BG Lyon:** We had a few. The one that General Besson had as his Chief of Operations, Tom Matson, had been and still was on leave from the Northern Pacific Railroad. He was a Vice-President of the Northern Pacific Railroad. He had been with General Besson in Iran and was one of the few people that General Besson had been able to salvage from the old organization. Probably from our original group for the first few months in Japan, not more than a third were professional railroaders in any sense of the word. The rest moved in and were given a job to do and went on and did it. We learned by doing. We had no formal training, as such, except as given by command channels under the conditions of the work. I learned as much from the Japanese as I've learned from anybody else. My immediate job when I first went in was to get acquainted with my counterparts on the Japanese side, with whom I worked. There were two men from the Imperial Japanese Railroad as it was initially called. Later it became known as a National Japanese Railroad. These men, Mr. Kanematsu and Mr. Yamaguchi, were the ones through whom most of our contacts were made. They represented the Headquarters of the Japanese Railroads out of Tokyo. One or both accompanied me in all my travels. They were involved in most of my contacts with the railroad people, serving as an advisor, as an interpreter, and as an intermediary in passing on directions to the Japanese Railroad.

**CPT Swarren:** Sir, I wonder if you can comment on the attitude of the Japanese people. How did the Emperor's actions upon surrender impact upon the Japanese, and how they treated you as Occupation Forces?

**BG Lyon:** I describe this somewhat like turning off a water tap. As we knew the Japanese during the War, they were an absolutely disciplined people. They responded well you might say, blindly and directly, to the orders of the Japanese Government as given, in the name of the Emperor. Up until the end of the War though, the Emperor was deity. He was worshipped, and his word was doctrine as far as the military forces was concerned. Their highest glory was to die in the name of the Emperor, and this led to the latter days of kamikaze actions. When the war was over, before the treaty was signed on the Missouri, General MacArthur ordered the Emperor to go on the radio and personally announce to the nation that the War with the United

States, Britain and the other Allies was over. Japan had lost the War and the occupation elements of the opposing armies were coming in to carry out a peaceful occupation of Japan. The Japanese were pledged for total cooperation. As this was assimilated throughout Japan, it was like turning off a faucet. I don't think it could have happened in any of the Western countries, it could happen only in a disciplined country like Japan, particularly, like Japan was at that time. And, so as a result we had no opposition, at least no hostile opposition or obvious opposition. What was ordered was done. Sometimes I saw a little reluctance, but I got cooperation. When we first went into Japan it was rather interesting, as I said earlier, we landed and were ashore within about two hours after signing the agreement on the Missouri. It was rather eerie coming into Yokohama which was a major port of Japan, and finding the area absolutely devoid of people, except for a few Japanese police and not very many of those scattered around. Primarily, the police were there just to keep the Japanese themselves away. An area had been cleared for about a 10-mile radius around the port. As the days went by, I had occasion to move out through the immediate area and beyond, particularly out to the airport of Atsugi where we met arriving troops. We passed towns and countryside where there were Japanese. The first couple of days as we approached villages, or farms, we could see activity in the distance but as we approached the various areas, nobody was to be seen. But after a day or so, the older people just went around doing whatever they were doing and paid no attention to us. About the same time the curiosity of little children showed, because they were peeking around and out the doors to see what was going on. The GIs in particular were all interested in the children. They were passing out chocolates and chewing gum and the kids were soon running out whenever any Occupation Force vehicles came by with their hands out calling for "chocolate" or "chewing gum." And, after about a week things began to go back to normal, as far as the Japanese activities were concerned. Bit by bit they began to come back into Yokohama and the Tokyo area, into their regular activities and businesses. Meanwhile, all the fire bombing, around the Tokyo-Yokohama area had absolutely leveled all except for some major fireproof or fire resistant buildings. Everything else was pretty well leveled, and that was quite impressive too. Most of the people had no place to live except holes in the ground. They found tentage and bits of corrugated metal to build them a little shelter and lived that way. Food was hard to come by and the black markets sprung up rather quickly. The railroads were overloaded, the passenger side particularly, with people trying to get out into the country areas to find food and bring the food back to their families in the cities. The railroads, Japanese passenger cars, and freight cars too as far as that was concerned, were dangerous. The Japanese climbed on anything that moved in order to get where they wanted to go. They were packed like sardines inside and outside hanging on the sides and riding on the roofs.

**CPT Swarren:** Was that type rail movement controlled by the Third Military Railway Service, Sir, or was that still a Japanese operation?

**BG Lyon:** No, no, none of that. We never exercised any direct control over that, except that we were immediately shocked at the absolute lack of safety involved in this. There were some accidents, people would fall, be pushed and so forth. But we looked at this as a Japanese problem. Even our discussions with the Japanese railroads were just to

encourage them and urge them to exercise greater cautions to protect human life. One of the first things we did was to make a survey of their rail equipment, particularly the passenger carrying equipment. We immediately requisitioned some of the better units and put them through the shops where we stationed elements of the Third Military Railway Service. They knew something about car construction, car rehabilitation and had the cars cleaned out and in some cases, rebuilt to American standards. The cars were cleaned and had sanitary facilities installed, so that our troops would have something proper to ride in. The passenger equipment that we took over and operated, as the Occupation Forces railroad equipment was all identified with a white stripe along the length of the cars. It was apparent to everybody that this car was for the Occupation Forces. The stripe identified the cars to the members of the Occupation Forces so they knew what part of the train to get on to, and to the Japanese it was just a sign of 'off limits.'

**CPT Swarren:** Sir, you mentioned Diesel power. What was the general type equipment that the Japanese were operating: steam, diesel, or diesel electric?

**BG Lyon:** Well, the Japanese equipment was almost exclusively coal fire steam. The equipment basically was in very, very poor condition. Through the extremities of the War, maintenance standards failed and their fuel standards had dropped very, very considerably. During the War the coalmines got relatively little priority as far as manpower was concerned. As a result, new mines were not opened and the old mines were called upon for so much production that they were running out of good grades of coal and running into a lot of mixture of slate or just plain poor grades. As a result, the motor power was less productive, and schedules were accordingly distrusted, but the Japanese met that particular problem in a rather straightforward manner by just adjusting the schedules. The Japanese were very proud of operating a railroad with an on-time reputation. They set a schedule and they kept the schedule. You could set your watch by the time of arrival.

**CPT Swarren:** Sir, I would like to back up and ask you a question that I neglected earlier. How was the surrender of Japanese soldiers who were on the Island handled when you first arrived?

**BG Lyon:** I never had any direct contact with the surrender operation, of course, being in a support unit. But individuals of the Third Military Railway Service did have some experiences that were rather interesting. Our primary job initially, as I mentioned, was to meet the arriving military units that came into Japan by air and sea. The trains were already made up to move the troops. Consists had been arranged by prior meetings between myself or one of the Officers working with me, and with the representative of the Japanese railroad, the local Division Superintendent, and the G-3 or the G-4 of the arriving units. Depending upon the number of people, and the kind of equipment, we made up trains to accommodate them. Those trains were waiting on the tracks for the arriving troops. Meanwhile, we sent ahead an advance Rail Traffic Officer (RTO) to the destination point, to arrange for the arrival of the train and its disposition once it got there. Sometimes they would go miles away from Tokyo and Yokohama. There were

instances when some of these young officers, and in some cases NCO's all designated "Rail Transportation Officer", would be the only American, the first American that had come into that particular town in Japan since the end of the War. Hearing that an American had arrived, the Commander of the local Japanese troops would come or send his representative offering his surrender. The young Officer or NCO, of course, was not charged with that responsibility nor authorized to accept surrender. He would just have to tell the Japanese that the American military would be arriving shortly and at that time they could offer their surrender. As part of the arrangements between the Supreme Commander Allied Powers and the Japanese command, all the troops in homeland Japan were required to stay in place until a proper military unit and commander had arrived to accept their surrender and receive their arms.

**CPT Swarren:** Sir, how were the troops that were brought in for the Occupation actually phased in through the different ports and which units came first?

**BG Lyon:** The first unit was an element of the First Cavalry, which had been the first in Manila. Their area was the immediate Tokyo-Yokohama area. They arrived mostly by sealift. The next unit was the 11<sup>th</sup> Airborne that arrived at Atsugi airfield and their area was designated in the northern part of Honshu in the Sendai area. I don't remember the designations of some of the other units, I know there was one division that, after the 11<sup>th</sup> Airborne arrived, went up to the Northern Honshu (Aomori) area. Another division was sent across to Western Japan to Niigata. Then later another element was sent up to Hakodate and Sapporo on the island of Hokkaido.

**CPT Swarren:** Didn't one Army actually stage a nock invasion, Sir, as part of the occupation?

**BG Lyon:** Yes. Basically, the initial occupation of which we were a part was by the Eighth Army that came in under an administrative landing and effected their operation from September 2nd and the days following. Sixth Army came in about two weeks later into Southern Honshu area. They came in simulating the invasion plan that they would have executed earlier under combat conditions. They came in landing crafts and landing craft type ships. They came ashore and beat their way across through the fields and finally inland to the point where our counterpart, the Sixth Army Rail Section under LTC Tom Rice, had trains in the nearest exchange to receive them. As they came up out of the fields, they were dispersed to their occupation areas.

**CPT Swarren:** What were the results of that invasion, Sir, did it go well for the American troops?

**BG Lyon:** Well, they found that even coming in under unopposed conditions was fairly tough, because it was across rice paddies and undeveloped areas pretty rough area. The area was already honeycombed with all kinds of defense positions. We knew how the Japanese had fought the island campaigns and how they would have fought and resisted invasion troops coming into their homeland. They would have been prepared. Even the saturation pre-bombing probably would have been only partially effective.

**CPT Swarren:** Sir, you mentioned Colonel Rice which leads me to the question: How were the railcars controlled between the regions, so that you kept accountability of yours and your counterparts, Transportation Officers from other units, could keep track of theirs.

**BG Lyon:** Initially when we came in, good railroad equipment was in very short supply. The Occupation Forces coming in demanded good railroad equipment. We needed it to be assured that our mission could be accomplished, both for passenger and for freight. When we moved in, for example, into Northern Japan, we were responsible only for that part of Northern Honshu and Hokkaido. The Japanese railroad with its headquarters and a lot of the best railroad equipment was kept up in the Tokyo-Yokohama area. When Sixth Army moved into the Southern part, they found relatively little first class equipment so they negotiated with the Eighth Army element, the 3d MRS, for some equipment to supplement that which they found. But for the immediate stages of the occupation, each Army was independent of the other in moving out their elements of Occupation Forces. With railroad equipment, particularly, passenger carrying equipment being in such short supply, there was a little jealousy over who had what equipment. We counted very carefully the cars that moved from one zone to another, almost to the point that some equipment wasn't permitted to cross into the other zone until like equipment was passed to the other direction. That only lasted a few days but it was interesting. Later on ... soon after the Sixth Army moved in and consolidated their positions, which didn't take very long, it became obvious that ultimately the railroad system had to be operated as a single entity. The Third Military Railway Service was therefore given the responsibility of directing, in behalf of all the Occupational Forces, the entire railroad system. The Sixth Army rail unit was in active service in Japan for a relatively short time, I think not longer than about three weeks. I was given the responsibility when this transfer did take effect, to travel to Kyoto and there receive the administrative transfer from Tom Rice of the Railroad Fleet and the Railroad System in the Southern part of Honshu.

**CPT Swarren:** Sir, what kind of special modifications did you need to make with the rail equipment to compensate, for say, the steep hills or the poor quality of coal? Did it affect more than the schedules, did you have to actually change or update the equipment?

**BG Lyon:** No, we didn't make any real upgrades or update equipment on that account. We used basically the Japanese freight equipment as we found it. As long as it was operating, there's not much you can do to a boxcar; it's just a box on wheels. And except to clean it out sometimes, our standards of cleanliness were a little bit different from the Japanese, that was no big problem. The primary upgrading we did was in the passenger equipment, because their equipment basically was in very, very sad condition. Windows were broken, plumbing didn't work, some of their brakes didn't work, and the equipment was dirty. Any of the equipment that was used in the Occupational Forces Service was run through the Japanese shops. We had priority on the use of the shops for this purpose. The cars were pretty well stripped down, windows were replaced, the cars were completely repainted and the plumbing was upgraded. In so far

as we could, we put in Western type toilets instead of the Japanese type and we restored the heating system. We came in the early Fall when heat was not a problem, but we were fast approaching Winter when it would be a problem.

We tried to identify all first class equipment. One of the first things we did was to locate the Emperor's train. The Emperor had special equipment, special cars set aside. They had been carefully cared for by a Japanese officer and when we found them, they were in almost mint condition. This equipment was immediately set aside and identified for use of General MacArthur and his staff in case they had need for it. Other elements were organized into special trains. As the Occupational Forces came in and were settled, there was also a lot of traffic between Tokyo and the outlying areas. As things settled down everybody wanted to see Tokyo and Yokohama so train units were set up to augment air travel. In accordance with the old saying, "all roads lead to Rome", in Japan, all roads lead to Tokyo. That was the way all trains were identified and structured. You had the "Uptrains" that ran into Tokyo from the South and the North and the "Downtrains" that ran from Tokyo to all points outside.

One of the real interesting rail operations we had quite early in occupation was a real challenge. In the latter stage of the War and in the Occupation too, there had been a lot of rivalry between the First Cavalry Division and the Eleventh Airborne Division. Somebody came up with the idea of a football game between the two Divisions over Christmas 1945 in Tokyo. All the troops from both divisions were to be given an opportunity to come into Meiji Stadium, the big stadium in Tokyo to see this game. As I mentioned before, the Eleventh Airborne was positioned in Northern Japan up around the Sendai area, which was six or eight hours by the rail from Tokyo. The desire was to have everybody except for small housekeeping units that would stay back and provide security for the barracks and post areas, come down and see the game. So, in order to do that, we had to muster a lot of railcars. I don't know how we ever did it, but we certainly upset the Japanese Railroads.

We requisitioned passenger equipment and had them spotted where the troops were in the North. I think some of the troops themselves had to go into the railcars and scrub them out, so that they would be clean enough for them. But anyway, we worked with all the railroad people, because we were breaking all the rules about not using tracks for parking passenger equipment in order to get the troops to the stations and as close to the stadium as possible. It was like bringing in the Corps of Cadets and the Brigade of Midshipmen by rail into the Memorial Station at Philadelphia for the Army/Navy Game in the old days. It was quite an operation, but it all went out quite well. It was well planned and well organized. While the Japanese shook their heads in amazement about the demands that were being placed and the unusual requirements, they cooperated and it worked very well. It was only in a few cases where we had some SNAFU's and that was usually where someone in one of the tactical units would figure he knew more about what was to be done than the people trying to handle the railroad situation.

**CPT Swarren:** Sir, with the extended distances in the areas, how did you handle command and control; did you have Regional Headquarters?

**BG Lyon:** Yes, we did. Almost immediately we had set up separate divisions. In railroad terminology, we had the Tokyo Division, and I guess the next one we set up was Sendai Division in the North to serve the Eleventh Airborne area. We set up another division in Aomori to handle Northern Honshu. We had a Niigata Division and later on we had a Hokkaido Division when the Island of Hokkaido was occupied. Later on in the South we had a Division in Kyoto and we had a Kure Division. Incidentally, later on, we became International. The British had a part in the Occupation and they occupied the Southern part of the Island of Honshu. The main railroad center there was Kure, which is a port, a big port on the Inland Sea. The Fifth Marine Division occupied the Island of Kyushu in the South, and so we had a division set up at Moji. Moji was a port and a major railroad center in the northern part of Kyushu. We set up a division there to handle that Island and the needs of the Corps. We also had a very interesting operation, because we wanted to establish a link with Korea. We requisitioned and had rehabilitated a couple of ferries to operate between the Island of Kyushu and Korea. That was a part of the Third Military Railway Service, operating the ferries and the train to serve the ferries.

**CPT Swarren:** Did each of the Divisions handle operations within their area, in terms of scheduling and prioritizing.

**BG Lyon:** Yes, they did. They worked very closely with the Senior Tactical Commander who was generally a Division Commander. We had a Railroad Division serving an Army Division, more or less. In some cases, like the British, there was a Corps Headquarters. Of course, initially we had an Army Headquarters, Sixth Army Headquarters at Kyoto, and the Eighth Army Headquarters at Yokohama. We actually operated the Third Military Railway Service under the Eighth Army.

**CPT Swarren:** Sir, what kind of special units were you augmented with to assist your mission accomplishment? By that, I mean Signal, or say, Railway Maintenance, those sorts of units that might not traditionally fall under the Military Railway Service, but you needed to accomplish the mission?

**BG Lyon:** We didn't have units or elements, as such, attached to us, but we had detachments, that were assigned to us. They functioned simply as a section of our Headquarters. We did have a signal section, and a car maintenance section. Of course, we operated our own motor pool, and we controlled and dispatched motor equipment. We assigned motor equipment to each one of our field elements. Within each Railroad Division we had Rail Transportation Officers, and assistant Rail Transportation officers. Wherever there was a military element of the Occupational Forces, we had a Rail Transportation Officer. He had his own office in the local railroad station, which usually was carved out of a piece of the Station Master's office. In some cases we required the Japanese to build a separate office for our Rail Transportation Officers. The Rail Transportation Officer worked with his counterpart, the Station Master of the local station. He also had contacts with the rest of the railroad structure within whatever territory he was assigned to.

The Rail Transportation Officers for the most part were officers: 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenants, 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenants, sometimes a Captain or sometimes a Non-Commissioned Officer. They were all identified with a green armband marked with "RIO". To the Japanese railroad people in that area, he was boss. In so far as serving the Occupational Forces, whatever he said went. And again, I emphasize that we did have real fine cooperation. Our people went out with very little training, but they went out with a few very simple orders and cautions. One of the cautions was, of course, not to become overbearing. If the Japanese had any objection from an operational point of view, the RTO would listen to those objections, and, if need be, overrule them. If the RTO had a question, then he was to consult the next in the chain of command. Generally, this worked out quite well and these Rail Transportation Officers made a lot of local friends among the Japanese.

**CPT Swarren:** Sir, what about motor transportation during the period? Was it available or was transportation strictly limited to rail movement?

**BG Lyon:** It was almost entirely strictly limited to rail movement. This was due to two things: The primary reason was the condition of the roads. The roads in Japan were atrocious. We think we know potholes but the Japanese know potholes by the thousands within limited areas. Just to illustrate, in my own experience, generally within the immediate built-up areas they were not too bad. Once you got outside town, the potholes were terrible. I endeavored to drive from time to time in my vehicle and had a difficult time. Even after the families came, which was about eight months later, the roads were virtually impassable. I wanted to take my family up to see Nikko, which is about 90 miles northwest of Tokyo. Nikko was one of the places, perhaps the place, to see for any tourist in Japan. We decided to go and drive up. It was all right until we got to the city limits of Tokyo. The moment we got to the city limits of Tokyo it was not a road, it was just all potholes. Even if you drove 15 miles an hour, the roads would shake the car apart. How we made it, I really do not know. But we were insistent and persistent and finally made it. When we got to Nikko, we had trouble. My radiator had been shaken apart, and I had to find a garage to get it taken care of, or I couldn't move. The Japanese, for a lack of petroleum converted the automobiles and trucks that they had to operate on charcoal burners. This was something else again. Each one had a charcoal burner on the back that generates gas that was fed into the carburetor system. It was very, very poor, but it did give them mobility. They would only travel a few miles and the driver or the assistant driver would have to get out and stoke the fire and add charcoal to the burner so they could keep going. This occurred even late in the Occupation on the Japanese side. For the Occupation Forces, fuel was no problem. We had our own fuel that was brought in. Of course, this was distributed in a large part by railroad in tank cars. There was a big Quartermaster Petroleum Depot setup in the Tokyo-Yokohama area. As one of the first priorities, we worked very closely with them distributing fuel and oil throughout Japan for the Occupational Forces on the various bases. As the need developed, priority was given to improving the roads. Bit by bit, the road system was improved so we could move between camps in the major communities and cities. Ultimately, the road system was quite well repaired. Later on, some of the members of the Occupation Forces, when their families came took quite extensive automobile trips. They had to plan the trips for the most part, of course, between military

stations so they could get fuel. It was quite some time before there was any reliable system to get fuel from the Japanese.

**CPT Swarren:** Sir, on the subject of families. Was morale a problem with the soldiers who wanted to stack arms and go home?

**BG Lyon:** Yes, it was. The point system was immediately put into effect. If one had points to go home, he got impatient to go. We were moving in troops who were trying to effect an occupation, but at the same time give the troops that had enough points a chance to go home, either for discharge or for Rest and Relaxation (R&R). For the most part, certainly for the first few months, those eligible to go home far exceeded either the capacity of home bound ships and aircraft to take them or for the occupation mission to spare them. That ultimately worked out, but it was quite a problem for a while. This led to another railroad problem. As units were deactivated, they had to send all their equipment into the depots to be received. But the depots were meeting up with the same power-man situation and they were not in condition to accept anything. The depots were still in process of development and re-organization. The tactical organizations being de-activated were impatient to be gone. So, General Besson devised and proposed a scheme that was in opposition to all professional railroad concepts. He proposed using the railroad cars as a temporary expedient to store all this equipment as an adjunct to the depots. There was a tremendous lot of freight equipment: flatcars, and almost no end of boxcars available. The Japanese economy was flat on its back and there was no great movement, and in that respect, no great demand for the flatcars. So, we requisitioned thousands and thousands of these cars and had them mustered at the stations where the units were being demobilized. The units were told that as soon as they get their equipment loaded on the cars, they were free to accept their orders and go home. So, this is basically what was done. They loaded the equipment onto the freight cars, and hopefully made an inventory that identified with a serial number the cargo on the cars. We kept track of the inventory and sent it to the Depot where that equipment was supposed to ultimately end up. It was our mission, then, to find railroad yards where we could store this equipment and still keep track of it and maintain security. The security problem was turned over to the Japanese. We made the Japanese Government responsible for the security, and we were responsible for keeping the inventory of the cars. This generally turned out pretty good, although initially, we had great opposition from both our own professional railroaders and the Japanese railroaders. We violated the principle that freight cars having wheels were not meant for static storage, but for movement. They were not moving anyway, so they may as well have stayed in one spot with a load on them. This was a tremendous boost to the demobilization process.

**CPT Swarren:** To what extent did pilferage become a problem, with all this equipment sitting on railcars, Sir.

**BG Lyon:** Never a great problem. It was, yes, but only to a degree both from Japanese and from our own people. Sometimes out of curiosity and sometimes out of sheer need.

People were trying to find something that they needed or wanted, but it was never a major problem.

**CPT Swarren:** Sir, so far we've talked a lot about inland traffic operations. To what extent did the rail interface with the port operations in moving cargo?

**BG Lyon:** Yes. Well, of course, this is always a major part of railroad operation, particularly in a country, that is so oriented to the sea as Japan. As I mentioned, our first mission and the continuing mission was to receive the troops at the airports and at the seaports, and to move them wherever they might be destined. We had several primary seaports and they were operated under a separate command. The Second Major Port was the designation of the unit that first came into Japan to operate the ports. It was a collateral command with ours. We worked very cooperatively, coordinating the ship arrival and departure schedules with our own schedules. They would place upon us the requirement for rail equipment, which would be spotted on the piers to meet scheduled arrivals. As railroad equipment was loaded or discharged, as the case may be, the equipment was moved out to where ever it belonged. Arriving passengers, initially, did not work out quite that way because the trackage on the piers had been designed for freight purposes and not for passenger. Initially the first troops, who were to be moved by rail, came into Yokohama and were marched about two miles up to the Yokohama Central Railroad Station where the trains were assembled. A few days later we were able to move the trains to a marshalling yard which was considerably closer to the port, but still required about a half-mile march. Ultimately, the question was raised as to why not move the passenger equipment down to the piers? It was understood that the freight equipment having a much smaller wheelbase than the passenger equipment could negotiate sharper curves. The trackage in the port area was laid out accordingly, and there were some very, very sharp turns and curves. These turns would cause a problem for the passenger equipment. But with careful handling, we found that it was not an insurmountable problem. Soon we were able to move passenger equipment right down to the piers alongside the ship so the troops and later the dependents could move from the ship to the railcars.

**CPT Swarren:** Sir, at what point were dependents allowed in country?

**BG Lyon:** The first dependents were authorized to come in about May 1946.

Of course, dependents came in according to the points that their sponsor had accrued. I had enough points, and in fact, orders were issued for my family to come in on the first dependent ship. Meanwhile, I had points to go home on R&R. I went home on R&R at that time. I came back on concurrent travel with my family on a ship between the first and second dependent ships. We got into the port in time to go on the second dependent ship that was scheduled for about June. There had been one troop ship that came into Seattle, (that's where we were departing from), which had been scheduled to be deactivated. Then orders were given for it to make one more trip; I'll never forget the name of it - The Cape Perpetua. It was a troop ship and in no way adapted to handle dependents and families. There were about five families already at the Port of

Debarcation awaiting dependent travel. We were told if the sponsor would inspect the ship, sign a waiver of facilities and assume responsibility for his family, particularly children then we could travel. We would use what had been the Marine detachment quarters on the stern of the ship. I had one son who was five years at the time. This was not without its hazards particularly for children, because the quarters were really steel huts built on the stern of the ship. There was an open deck between there and the main body of the ship where the recreation room, the mess hall, and all the rest of the facilities were. There were no good lifelines around the sides of the ship. In some cases, the lines were not all secured. It was necessary that an adult accompany any children when they went from the quarters to the rest of the ship. There were about five of us that went over. I think it was late May when we arrived. We called ourselves one and a half shipment of families. There were only a very, very few ahead of us. In Yokohama there were only two other dependent youngsters near the age of my own son. General's Besson's older son and General Byers' older son. General Byer was Chief of Staff of the Eighth Army at the time. They were the three youngsters in the Yokohama area who were first there.

**CPT Swarren:** Sir, let me close by asking you one final question. Do you have any lessons learned that you can pass on to young officers who will be reading this transcript? What should they expect and what sort of things should they do as they move into a foreign country as an Occupation Force, or in a wartime situation, utilizing Host Nations support railway equipment?

**BG Lyon:** Well, I would say, the most important thing is to be flexible and adaptable. Meet the situation as you see it, because it's not likely to be as you pre-plan or pre-expect it in your mind. Make use of whatever facilities and capabilities you find at hand. We operated with only a relative hand full of American resources. We did ultimately have not only some military personnel with us, but also some civil service personnel. We were very quickly augmented with civil service personnel. Even then, the American mission was very much carried out using the Japanese resources. Another thing we did was to very quickly establish a meal service aboard on the trains. Initially, we just got some cooks and kitchen personnel and equipment from military units and put them aboard as we now do in some of our troop trains. The Japanese, before the War, had operated a very, very fine fleet of passenger ships, the NYK Line. They had a superb staff of caterers, cooks and waiters. Our Headquarters was in the NYK building that is almost adjacent to the Customs building that Eighth Army headquartered in. Some of the NYK cadre was still in that building. We immediately called upon them to set up staff dining cars that we attached to our trains. We operated the dining service with the assistance of the Japanese. They ran it, and we provided them with food. They used the Army rations, cooked and served it, particularly, dependent's food. We set up some first class rail service for their convenience and use. We had regularly scheduled trains. Where the traffic justified it, we had full trains on a schedule, complete with coaches, sleeping cars and dining cars. Where the traffic didn't justify it, we just used individual cars or half-cars in some cases. All were kept clean, sanitary and all identified with our white stripes. If we had a half car, then the white stripe was just on the half of the car that was for occupation use.

**CPT Swarren:** Sir, thank you very much, for sparing this time and participating in the interview.

**BG Lyon:** Well, there's just so much to remember, and one thought leads to another. Some of it I have not thought about in a long time. It does go back; the Occupation was forty years ago. You're calling upon a lot of memory.