



Army PFC Bob Gommel cleaned his M1 rifle after being on guard duty during his service in the Army. Tent camps were set up at Fort Riley, Kansas during Basic Training. (Inset) Bob has been a lifelong Malta farmer.



Robert R. (Bob) Gommel, 90

Malta

Farmer: 60 years

Branch of Military: Army

Rank: PFC E-3 (Private First Class)

War: Peace time service, after the Korean War, January 1955-May 1956

Location of Service:

Schweinfurt, Germany

Drafted/Enlisted: Drafted

Military Experiences: “Upon being drafted, a group of about 30 of us gathered at the building on the southwest corner of 4th and Locust

“The experience was good and instilled patriotism in me for a lifetime.”

streets in DeKalb and were taken to Chicago for physicals and induction in January 1955. Some of the other men that went with me were Bill Dumoulin, Norman Dienst, Bob and Jim Barr, Dale, Bob, and Vernon Herrmann, Bud Thompson, Roger Tuttle, Dick Bend, and Bob Hart.

We headed off to Basic Training at Fort Riley, Kansas. During that time, I was ordered to report for KP duty. The company commander came in and said, ‘Gommel, make me an omelet, and make it a good one.’ After the commander finished eating he said, ‘Gommel, that was the best damn omelet I’ve ever had.’ A few weeks later, I found myself assigned to cook’s training school for eight weeks at Fort Riley’s main base. I finished second in my cooking class of 40.

I was part of the 86th Regiment of the 10th Infantry in Company D, which was a machine gun company. In July 1955 we were sent to Germany, based at Schweinfurt, as part of an occupational group.

While in Germany, my father, Reinhold, suffered a heart attack and was not able to farm without assistance. A group of good friends and neighbors went to the Red Cross and made a request for me to be sent home. The request was granted providing that I remained on the active reserve list. I returned home in May 1956. As an active reserve, my honorable discharge credits me with nearly 8 years of service.”

What Serving Your Country Means: “I am very proud to be a citizen of this country. Serving in the military made me grow up and taught me how to structure my life. There is no deviation there – everything is by the book and as ordered. The experience was good and instilled patriotism in me for a lifetime. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve.”

Notables: As one of about five Army cooks, Bob prepared meals regularly for 400 in his battalion. He also was part of a machine gun company platoon. ►