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U.S History p.1
Walter Simmons
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Walter Simmons

Walter Simmons was born in May of 1944. Mr. Simmons was raised with 13 siblings, which wasn't always fun he says. He didn't speak much of his parents. He met his wife Caroline at church and married her before the War. When Mr. Simmons was in his mid 20's he volunteered into be in the Vietnam war, "if you get drafted, you get screwed around" he says.

Simmons was sent off to boot camp where all he carried was what he was given and an iron cross. "It really didn't bother me" as long as he listened and obeyed the rules, and if you didn't you'd get beat. Mr. Simmons says his nickname was "pain in the butt". In 1965 he was on his way to Vietnam along with 2000 other men on gun boats. Once he arrived they immediately he traveled: camp Beaver, Red Cloud, and Camp Casey, are all the camps Simmons and his men would attend. They covered over 500 miles of land on foot, 20 miles a day, carrying 100 pounds of equipment. Mr. Simmons jokes, "A handsome man like me never passed out walking". The bathroom breaks consisted of holes, they'd had to

cover them up so enemy's K9 units couldn't track their scent. "After a week you stunk like a skunk" he states referring to the once a week showers and dirty conditions.

The Front line of the war was bloody. Mr. Simmons says people cried a lot, get lonely, and prayed. War was not a game, "Be prepared" he said. Soldiers used airplanes and tanks. "You could operate a firearms as long as you weren't stupid". Men always had to be on the lookout. Of course they played little games between battles, "If you heard pineapple boy you dropped and run, and and if you saw one you were dead". He says during his time on the frontline Mr. Simmons would say to himself, "live, live, survive, survive". As medical was terrible along with the sanitation. As far as meals go, soldiers were served rations to the damp conditions. "I would feed rations to a dog" says Walter and the milk didn't even taste like milk! " Although the food was horrific , men still got coffee and tea. His cousin Sharol would send him goodies which of course would be rampaged if other men could smell them. Mr. Simmons says theft was a big issue as well.

After the war Walter Simmons returned home to his wife and kids. He received a Medal of honor from Lyndon Johnson in 1968. He also met several U.S presidents but when we asked how it was meeting them, he responded "It was just like meeting an ordinary people". Mr. Simmons went to the University of Maryland

and became an elementary school teacher for the 20 years after the war . He now loves to garden and characterizes himself as an American he jokes that he voted for himself this year.

Mr. Simmons says “You learn anything and everything about yourself in war”. Throughout his time in the service he made three extremely close friends that had happened Join us at King High Rememberers. When we asked him if he would do it all over again he simply and quietly replied “ I’d do it in a drop of a hat”.