



***Too Young for a Forgettable War:  
Second Edition***

*(A Turkish-American's Memoir)*

**William Edward Alli** *USMC, Korea, 1951-52*

***“... a well-written book and an excellent reference work on the Second Battalion/First Marines in the Korean War.”***

Manert Kennedy, USMC Sergeant, Korea 1950-51

***“... your book resonates with me and fills an important historical gap. ... Your book stands as testimony that this sacrifice will not be forgotten.”***

David C Cuthell, Assistant Professor  
School of Foreign Service  
Georgetown University

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Background of the Second Edition

This is a coming-of-age story, in the most dangerous of environments. The Turkish- American author takes you on a vivid journey to a war – and back.

You will follow admittedly naive and immature 18-year-old Bill Alli, as he is forced out of his peaceful civilian life in Detroit Michigan, in 1950. Eventually he is taken westward, across the Pacific Ocean, to a war-stricken country known as “Land of the Morning Calm.



His father, Hüseyin Kayma, (also at 18) had sailed thousands of miles westward across the sea. But “Hüso” was coming to America, leaving the dying Osmanlı Empire—and its Yemen-bound army unit—to avoid a looming war. Bill’ s fate would be different: he would experience war and maybe die a bloody death.

Bill describes the dangers, his stupid mistakes, and his physical shortcomings. The dangers turn out to be not only from the enemy’s weapons, but even from those of a United Nations ally (the Republic of Turkiye), whose soldiers mistakenly arrest Bill as an “enemy agent.” That is clearly a justification for his execution.

He doubts that he will survive the war and is astonished, and grateful, that he does. But in civilian life he is mortally endangered twice, soon after his return to America.

As a senior, Alli seeks his “roots,” but they are not those of lineage; they are those of memory. He even visits



Korea and Turkiye to search for fellow American and Turkish veterans and compare his recollections to theirs. He realizes that his story is tightly interwoven with that of his comrades, but there is a conflict between their desire to be helpful and their instincts to avoid bad memories.

He knows that old veterans do not want, or maybe aren’t able, to relive the past but he forges ahead. He is determined to describe not just grim memories, but even pranks and the light-hearted recollections of youthful days and foolish ways.

He explores deep recesses of his own mind as he puts words to paper. He convinces himself that there are no lurking dangers from any PTSD working in his subconscious, but gradually loses much of his certainty.

Three years after the first edition, he publishes a larger, more detailed, and lower-priced **SECOND EDITION**. This major revision has over 30% more text (100,000 words versus 75,000 in the first edition), 150 photos & grafix (versus 43 in the earlier version), plus a map of Korea, a more extensive bibliography, and a bigger topical index.

Bill hopes his book can incline readers to believe that life’s dreams are not canceled out by life’s nightmares, nor its beauty by its ugliness, nor its worth by its tragedies.

The **Second Edition** is appearing close to the 60th anniversary of the Korean War Cease-fire, July 27, 2013. The U.S. and North Korea have not yet reached a peace agreement. This book may help all of us to remember that “forgotten war,” – and honor its veterans.

## Background of the Author

William Edward Alli was born in Detroit Michigan in 1932 and served in Korea with the 1st Marine Division, 1951–52. Alli graduated from Wayne State University with a BA and MA in economics. In 1958 he joined the U.S. Department of Labor as an economist. He was an Adjunct Professor of Economics at George Washington University, 1962-63.

From 1963 to 1965 he worked for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) as a Foreign Service Officer in Pakistan. From 1966 to 1970 he served in the *War on Poverty* as a manpower planner in the Dept. of Labor.

From 1970 to 1996 he worked for USAID as a project officer, a budget and program planning analyst and finally a management analyst. He authored a bilingual dictionary (*Basic Urdu and English Wordbook*) for USAID.

He received the GEICO 1995 Public Service Award for his efforts in the field of substance abuse prevention and treatment.

During the DOD's 50th Anniversary Commemoration Program for the Korean War (2000-2003) he was a co-founder and Activity Director of the American & Turkish Veterans Association.

He is a member of the Korean War Veterans Assn., Marine Corps Assn., First Marine Division Assn., Marine Corps League, American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars. In 1974 Alli was made an honorary member of the War Veterans Association of Turkiye.



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147929280X. 6.0" x 9.0" (15.24 x 22.86 cm). Black &  
White on Cream paper; 388 pages.

## From Chapter 39: ODE TO THE TURKISH SOLDIERS FALLEN IN THE KOREAN WAR, 1950–53

¶ Beyond frontiers and faiths  
Our rights now in a rendezvous;  
Enabled thus to sense and caress  
The hugging warmth of all that is past.  
¶ How precious were times before Pusan  
When sharing the glory of unified thought,  
And of battling hand-to-hand  
Over vast valleys and hills.  
¶ Brief was this advent for soon I parted  
In much mysterious a way,  
My life-blood drained away one night  
In flag-like waves and flutters.  
¶ Now enwrapped in Pusan's soil,  
My senses reaching death's infinity;  
And "Fatherland" grown to such dimensions  
Conversant I am, in all tongues there are.  
¶ We martyrs are actually alive;  
With our hands joined, reaching for the skies,  
We have embraced each other  
On this thriving land which belongs to us.  
¶ I salute you, oh Turkish martyr!

You in Anadolu and I  
in Pusan;  
You have fallen for  
my Türkiye,  
And I, for our world.

▲ Above poem is on display in Turkish Section at United Nations Military Cemetery. Turkish title: "Pusan'da Yatıyorum."

← Left: Ceremony at United Nations Military Cemetery, Pusan Korea.

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