



First Contingent Of Ivy Troops Returns Home

'Huey' Crew Recovers Pilot's Body

CAMP ENARI—The body of an Air Force pilot was recovered from the wreckage of an F-100 Supersabre by a helicopter crew and Pathfinder team from the 4th Division's 4th Aviation Battalion within hours after the plane crashed in Pleiku Province recently.

Rescue efforts began when a call from the jet pilot was heard at Hensel Army Airfield. The 4th Aviation operations officer who heard the call diverted a home-bound UH-1D "Huey" helicopter to the crash site.

The "Huey" crew located the wreckage immediately and landed nearby to look for the pilot.

Two helicopter gunships arrived to provide protective cover for the search party and spotted four or five enemy with weapons attempting to get to the downed plane. The gunships took them under fire with rockets and machine guns.

The crew on the ground fought their way through the jungle to the wreckage.

The pilot had apparently not had time to bail out. His body was found near the plane.

Back at the 4th Division base camp another expedition was organized with a flareship to light up the night sky.

A team of four Pathfinders from the 4th Aviation Pathfinder Detachment and Lieutenant Michael LaPolla, a Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol officer, went along on a second ship to provide ground security for the mission.

The pilot's body was taken to Pleiku Air Force Base.

Communist Terrorists Kill 178 Civilians

SAIGON — Communist terrorists killed, wounded or kidnaped 315 civilians in the Republic of Vietnam last week, a U.S. spokesman announced Wednesday.

A total of 178 civilians were reported killed, 74 kidnaped and 263 wounded in the seven-day period ending last Saturday.



AMBASSADOR MEETS PATROL

Ellsworth Bunker, American ambassador to Vietnam, meets members of the 2nd Brigade's Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol during his recent tour of the 4th Infantry Division area. The ambassador had previously visited the Edap Enang Montagnard resettlement village west of Pleiku. (USA Photo by Maj. Richard R. Dyer)

PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATION

Leaflet-Filled Shells Explode Over Enemy

VUNG DAT AM—North Vietnamese Army soldiers fighting in the Central Highlands cringe at the sound of incoming artillery rounds, but occasionally count their blessings as the projectile bursts in flight and leaflets promoting the Chieu Hoi program float gently to the ground.

The 105mm rounds, fired by the 4th Division's 4th Battalion, 42nd Artillery, are designed to

contain 1,000 to 1,200 leaflet-type psychological operations notices.

Requests for fire missions stem from infantry battalion operations officers and rounds are hand-packed by artillery personnel with leaflets best suited to the specific mission.

"Three rolls of leaflets are inserted into a specially designed shell," explains First Lieutenant Sebastian B. Rinelli (Mari-

By Al Gibbs
Tacoma News Tribune

MC CHORD AFB, Wash. — Soldiers leave for war and they return but the scenes of parting and homecoming are, at least outwardly, nearly the same.

When the 4th Infantry Division left Tacoma, Wash., last summer, wives, children and sweethearts kissed and waved and cried.

Nearly a year later the same loved ones greeted their men, home from the war, with kisses and waves and tears.

But the unseen hand that moved over everyone — fear, anxiety, sorrow then; joy, relief, anticipation now — that made the difference between the good-byes and the welcome home.

The Ivy Division men returning to the states had been the first group to go to Vietnam. Some had left from the Port of Tacoma.

The homeward-bound plane, one of the 62nd Military Airlift Wing's C-141 "Tacoma Starlifter" jets, set down and taxied up to the passenger terminal here.

The wives, children and sweethearts crowded against the fence as the aircraft stopped.

A few signs carried the message "Welcome."

Three women carried drawings of a ship sailing between Tacoma and Vietnam. It read "323 Days." That was all.

A staff sergeant dropped an armload of baggage and crushed his wife in an embrace. Then he released her and held for the first time his daughter, who had been born while he was in Vietnam.

She looked at her daddy for a moment, then grinned at him.

Colonel Donald S. MacGrain, deputy commander of Ft. Lewis, Wash., stood in the terminal and watched the greetings. He had gone aboard the plane shortly after it landed to welcome the men home.

Ft. Lewis officials cut the normal red tape so the men could be free after required health and customs inspections.

They normally would have gone to the fort's personnel center for a meal, shower and processing.

"I don't think we'll have many takers on our steak dinners today," Colonel MacGrain chuckled.

As the men finished their necessary processing, the passenger terminal became mobbed with families searching for their men.

Lieutenant Colonel Leonard A. Morley, who had commanded the advance party, walked into the arms of his family, including his parents.

"This is probably the understatement of the decade, but I'm sure glad to be home," he beamed.

He spoke for everyone.

3/8th Troops Assault NVA Stronghold

LE THANH — A suspected North Vietnamese stronghold was recently bombed with artillery fire and then assaulted by elements of the 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry.

Intelligence reports had confirmed the possibility of a well-entrenched enemy force on Hill 622 about seven miles from the 4th Division's 1st Brigade headquarters at Jackson's Hole in the heart of the Central Highlands.

Thick jungle growth and steep terrain, typical of the area, confronted the two companies.

The Ivy troops finally conquered the hill and found the remains of several base camps which the enemy had hastily abandoned.



At long last, their tour complete, 4th Division soldiers board a homeward-bound plane at Pleiku Air Base.

(USA Photo by SSgt. Bill Whittis)

Cav, Infantrymen Batter North Vietnamese Troops

DUC PHO—It was the "Blue Team," a platoon of air cavalrymen, from the 1st Squadron, 9th Air Cavalry who first collided with units of an estimated North Vietnamese battalion.

The cavalrymen had been inserted shortly after noon to check out a suspected enemy position. The helicopters had barely lifted off when they were hit from all directions.

The "Blues" held their own but were running low on ammo and being pressed by the NVA when the 1st Platoon, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry was airlifted into the battle.

"As we approached the landing zone I could see it was plenty hot," said Second Lieutenant Walter Twyford, 1st Platoon leader. "My chopper was hit and missed the LZ by 200 meters. We were all able to make it in and link up with the fighting cavalrymen, though."

The bitter fighting continued and an attempt to overrun the American positions was repelled before more help arrived.

The remainder of Company B and the 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry's Recon Platoon joined the fighting along with two platoons of armored personnel carriers from the 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry.

With the APCs and infantrymen battling side-by-side, the NVA lines were shattered.

"We really had the enemy on the run," said Lieutenant Twyford. "Forced from the trenches, he couldn't find enough holes to hide in. As we moved through the area we started receiving fire from the rear. Many were in spider holes and we had to sweep back through the area."

Darkness fell and contact continued throughout the night. The infantrymen of the 3rd Brigade, 25th Division now had a new danger to contend with as the NVA began firing mortar and

recoilless rifle rounds into the perimeter.

"When the mortar rounds began to fall I was too busy to be scared," said Sergeant Kenneth J. Hills of the 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry.

Sergeant Hills certainly was busy because during the night he fired 50 to 60 magazines of M-16 rounds, a case of M-79

grenades, and 3,000 rounds of 50-caliber machine gun ammo.

Aided by air strikes, artillery and "Spooky," the "Cacti" and 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry routed the NVA. A total of 87 enemy were killed and the 3rd Brigade troops captured numerous weapons, including a 60mm mortar, a recoilless rifle, and a machine gun.

2/8th Troop Really Has A Nightmare

VUNG DAT AM—Some guys boast they could sleep through the crack of doom.

Specialist 4 Robert Whitcomb (Braintree, Mass.) used to, but since he did the deed he's dropped the subject.

The specialist's mechanized outfit, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 8th Infantry was drawn up in a night perimeter when a mortar attack hit.

Specialist Whitcomb was sacked out alongside his armored personnel carrier. His pals, Specialist 4 John Rush (Pittsburgh), Specialist 4 Joe Trujillo (Fireball, Calif.) and Private First Class Ovidio Ruiz (San Francisco) were sleeping on the loading ramp.

When the NVA soldiers began a mortar attack on the fire support base, everyone fled inside the APC. Everyone, that is, except for Specialist Whitcomb.

Half asleep, the specialist heard the mortars and thought them to be small arms fire.

"Hey you guys, wake up," shouted Specialist Whitcomb when he was fully awake himself.

The only trouble was the men were already awake and inside the APC. Sure that everyone was inside, the driver had closed the ramp.

"Hey you guys, open up,"

yelled Specialist Whitcomb as the mortars pounded the perimeter and he found himself looking in.

"What the heck were you doing outside," asked Specialist Rush when the straggler bounded into the track.

"I was having a nightmare," answered Specialist Whitcomb.

'Cacti' Unit Turns Back NVA Force

DUC PHO—The sudden flash and sharp crack of enemy mortar explosions shattered the silence.

The incoming rounds signalled the beginning of a three-hour battle which many men of the Recon Platoon and Company B of the 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry will long remember.

The "Cacti" had been sweeping an area where there had been recent clashes with units of a North Vietnamese battalion. It was late afternoon when the infantrymen set up their perimeter for the night. Ambushes were set along enemy routes.

At 2:30 a.m. the first mortar rounds landed and contact was made for the third time in three days.

The NVA hit the "Cacti" with everything they had. It was estimated that 100 to 150 rounds of 60 and 82mm mortar and recoilless rifle fire were hurled at the infantrymen. The enemy, supported by two machine guns, then assaulted, attempting to penetrate the perimeter.

Artillery immediately began to pound the charging enemy and was lifted only long enough for gunships and "Spooky" to have their chance.

"My platoon was on ambush when the first rounds landed," said Lieutenant Walter Twyford. "We moved back to the perimeter as fast as we could. The men on the perimeter were running low on ammo when we arrived after slicing through the enemy on the way in."

The Recon Platoon, also on ambush, moved back to reinforce the perimeter.

Dug-in behind rice paddy dikes, the "Cacti" fought to hold off the furious assault by the NVA unit. The enemy charge carried them close enough to throw grenades over the paddy dikes.

Gunships from the 1st Squadron, 9th Air Cavalry delivered their ordnance within 20 meters of the infantrymen with flawless accuracy, driving back the enemy. With the enemy momentum broken, the "Cacti" swept the enemy back.

A total of 30 NVA were killed and three detained. Sixteen weapons were seized, including a 57mm recoilless rifle and three light machine guns.



GET READY

First Sergeant Robert B. MacDonald waits to give the word to move out. Sergeant MacDonald is from Company B, 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry which is participating in Operation Francis Marion west of Pleiku. (USA Photo by Sp4 Lewis Sauls)

State Flags Decorate Company Mess Hall

DAU TIENG — It takes an original idea to decorate a company mess hall and Company C, 2nd Battalion (Mechanized), 22nd Infantry has proven itself equal to the task.

The company's mess hall walls are covered with 40 flags donated by state legislatures.

Specialist 4 John Conat (Kellog, Idaho) started the ball rolling one day when he wrote to every state governor and requested state flags for use by the company. One week later the replies started arriving.

With the exception of a few states, which do not have money set aside to provide flags, every state has answered the request.

Governor and Mr. George Wallace of Alabama sent their greetings and thanked the men for their contribution in preserving freedom around the world. They made known their support

and the support of the people of the state of Alabama for the men fighting in Vietnam and sent a three-foot by five-foot silk state flag.

The same support was found in all the letters Company C received. There were even replies from Puerto Rico and other U.S. territories.

Specialist Conat said, "I was a little surprised at the replies, it sure makes me feel good to know that a lot of people back home are supporting us over here."

10 Games Prepared For Children

PLEIKU—A sergeant from the Ivy Division's 1st Battalion, 69th Armor recently drew upon his childhood experiences to find games for Vietnamese children to play.

Whenever lulls occur, the members of Master Sergeant Juan Cortes-Colon's Headquarters Company bring out a baseball or football to throw around. Usually watching the soldiers are several children.

Seeing the youngsters gave Sergeant Cortes the idea to teach them some of the games he played as a child in Puerto Rico.

He came up with 10 games, including take a step, roll the ball, cock fight, pick up sticks and flip the cap, which can be played in a small area with a limited amount of equipment.

The rules for the games are presently being translated into Vietnamese. They will then be distributed to 4th Division civil affairs teams which will teach them to the Vietnamese children.



CUSTOM-COOKED EGGS

Just the way mom cooks? Not exactly, but delicious anyway to the men of the 4th Division's 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry who are defending their fire support base six miles from the Cambodian border. (USA Photo by SSgt. Bill Whitits)



TWO "REGULARS" OF THE 1ST BATTALION, 22ND INFANTRY PREPARE TO GO INTO BATTLE.

Combat Assault

PLEIKU—In the semi-conventional, semi-guerrilla fought in the jungle-covered Central Highlands, the troops and artillery are committed to an area of known location is often the decisive element between victory and

In a move reminiscent of the German blitzkrieg, the Infantry teamed up with the 4th Aviation Battalion to unit's forward fire support base.

Prior to the heliborne combat assault, a 2nd Br Reconnaissance Patrol was dropped into the selected intelligence on possible enemy elements in the immediate

As Company A, 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry pulled the pickup point, "slick" helicopters from the aviation company commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Robert A. Holloman landed in waves of threes to ferry the waiting Iivymen and C to the new fire base.

As squad after squad of the "Regulars," commanded by Colonel Thomas G. Rosell (Omaha, Neb.), hit the fanned out to sweep the hillside, "Huey" gunships buzzed to blast any North Vietnamese who might try to take the "leg" units.

"The entire operation ran as smooth as clockwork," Warrant Officer Ralph L. Butcher (Newport Beach, Calif.) pilot. "I'd have hated to have been in the enemy's firepower on the loose."

Once the fire base was completely secured and positioned, the three companies began search and destroy operations in the surrounding jungle.

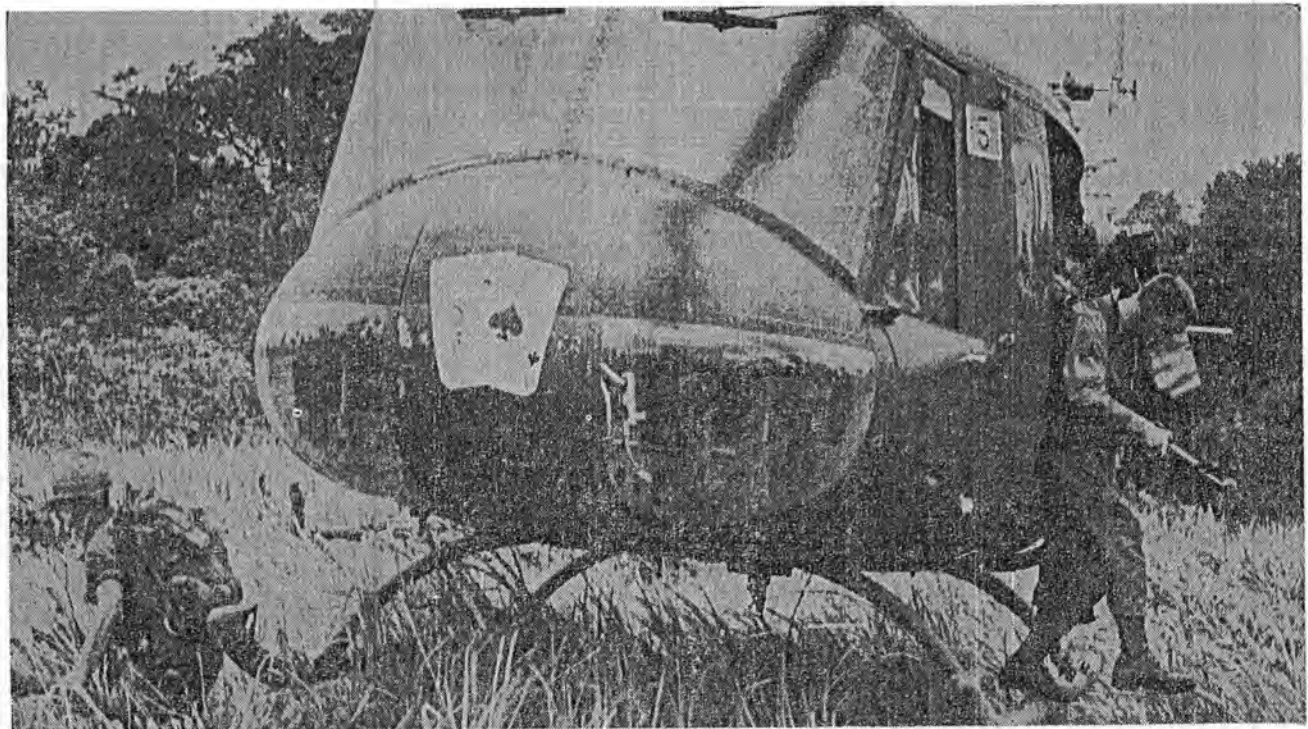
"We made the assault without any contact from the enemy," First Lieutenant William L. Smith (Lakeville, Mass.) leader. "But we know the enemy is around, and we're



IIVYMEN OF THE 1ST BATTALION, 22ND INFANTRY HUSTLE WHEN THE "BIRD" COMES IN TO SHUTTLE THEM.



A LONG RANGE RECONNAISSANCE UNIT.



"REGULARS" OF THE 1ST BATTALION, 22ND INFANTRY PILE OUT OF A 4TH AVIATION HELICOPTER AT NEW LANDING ZONE.

Story by Sp4 Robert Boudreaux
 Photos by SSgt. Bill Whitis



LONG RANGE PATROL MEMBER PULLS PIN ON SMOKE GRENADE USED TO GUIDE IN CHOPPERS.

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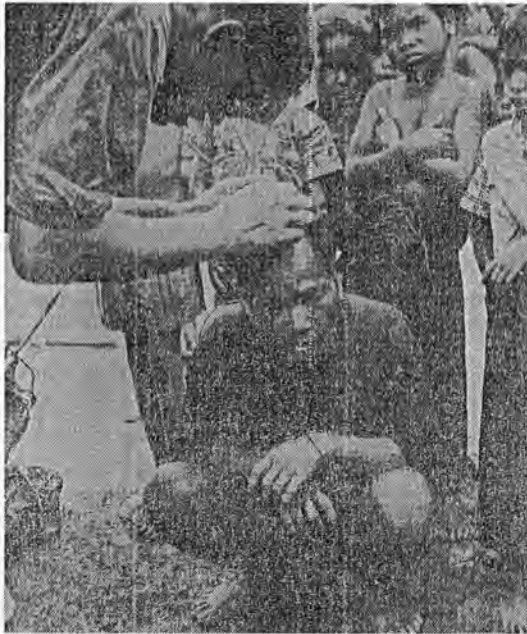
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CONTROL MEMBER DIRECTS A LANDING HELICOPTER.



DO UNTO OTHERS

A medic from the 4th Division examines a sore on the head of a Montagnard villager. Ivy Division units hold weekly sick calls in the villages near Camp Enari. (USA Photo)

'CHALLENGING WORK'

Chaplain Keeps Busy Schedule

By Sp5 Al Seagrove
VUNG DAT AM—What keeps the 4th Division's combat soldiers functioning daily in the face of sudden death?

Many things do, each of them peculiar in its own way to each soldier. One of the most common is God—arbiter of life and death.

The man who brings this arbiter closest to the soldiers of the division's 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry is Chaplain (Captain) Huel E. May (Belmont, N.C.), battalion chaplain.

His primary job is to bring man to God and God to man, but Chaplain May works in a pastor-counselor capacity too. He aids the soldiers in any problems—marital, personal, financial or religious—they might have.

"We use all available resources to aid the serviceman's problems—medics, legal counselors, personnel and finance sec-

tions as well as the Red Cross. Should these fail we correspond with their ministers, families and friends at home," explains Chaplain May.

"A lot of times, though, all the soldier needs is someone he can talk to," the chaplain added.

Although aiding the soldiers takes up a considerable portion of his time, Chaplain May and Specialist 4 Loren D. Mapson (Granada, Minn.), his assistant, manage to compose a weekly message for both Catholic and Protestant services.

As the week draws near its end, Chaplain May boards a UH-1D helicopter at the battalion's helipad for a trip to the unit's forward fire support base and the companies in the field.

Upon his arrival, the service schedule is announced and within minutes the soldiers begin to assemble. Seating themselves on "pews" of logs, stumps and

U.S. Air Force F-100 Pilots Pound Fleeing NVA Soldiers

VUNG DAT AM — The North Vietnamese soldiers found a "hot" escape route as they fled into the woods after mortaring the 2nd Battalion (Mechanized), 8th Infantry forward fire support base recently.

Minutes after the enemy fled, an air strike was laid down by screaming Air Force jets on the retreating NVA.

"The jet fighter-bombers were on target in less than 15 minutes after the request was made," said Airman First Class Lester D. Davis (Millington, Mich.) who is currently working with the "Panther" Battalion.

The airman is a member of the Tactical Air Command Post assigned to the 4th Division's 2nd Brigade. His job is to co-

ordinate air strikes in support of the battalion with his command post at the Oasis, 2nd Brigade headquarters.

Requests for the strikes come in from Ivymen. Nearby friendly positions are plotted and identified. If weather conditions permit, Air Force planes are on the scene within minutes after they are requested.

During the attack on the "Panther" fire support base, the NVA soldiers blasted the position with mortars, B-40 rockets, grenades and small arms fire. The call promptly went out for aid in suppressing the enemy fire.

Army gunships and artillery pounded the enemy until an Air Force forward air controller ar-

rived on station with a flight of F-100 "Super Sabres."

Pushing his small-engined plane into a shallow dive, the FAC fired his marking rounds to pinpoint the target for the fighter pilots. After that it was anything but quiet for the fleeing NVA.

Artillery Fire Stirs Up Bees' Nest

LE THANH—"Artillery fire was falling all around us. Some of it was only 10 or 15 meters away. Then things really started buzzing."

That's the way Specialist 4 Robert E. Hazeltine (Lorraine, N.Y.) described the chain of events in which six men of Company A, 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry were cut off from their unit by an estimated regimental-size North Vietnamese force while out on a night ambush patrol.

Unable to reach their company commander by radio, the men had taken cover as best they could. Situated in the rear of the attacking force, they had a panoramic view of the whole action.

Things began to heat up rapidly for the marooned patrol, though, as artillery fire, called in on the attackers, began falling uncomfortably close to their hiding place.

"One of our fellows was wounded by shrapnel from the artillery," said Specialist Hazeltine. "I was sure I had been wounded too. I had this sharp stinging sensation in my back."

"Then I heard our sergeant yelling in my ear to get the bees off my back and get out of there," said the specialist.

The incoming artillery rounds had apparently dislodged a huge bees' nest in a tree directly above the patrol's position.

The bees took their frustration and anger out on the Ivymen lying in the underbrush trying to avoid the NVA and artillery shells.

Grateful the pain was not from shrapnel, the Ivymen withdrew, leaving the area to the angry insects.

3/8th Sergeant Builds Bunker In Poor Spot

BAN ME THUOT — Cries of "I'm hit, I'm hit" pierced the deafening concussions of mortars impacting on a position of a 4th Infantry Division unit.

It all started after Company

A, 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry had dug in for the night near Ban Me Thuot.

At 12:30 a.m. the North Vietnamese began a mortar barrage which lasted 20 minutes. Staff Sergeant Charles Feldman (Dwight, Ill.), who was on guard when the attack began, aroused Sergeant Edward Barnett (Chicago) who began checking bunkers to make sure everybody was awake.

With this task completed, Sergeant Barnett returned to his own bunker to wait for the attack to subside. He jumped into his hole and landed on his back.

Suddenly he felt a sharp stinging pain permeate his left shoulder blade. Assuming the worst, the sergeant yelled, "I'm hit, I'm hit."

Several of his comrades, disregarding the incoming mortar rounds, raced to their buddy's aid. It was Sergeant Feldman who discovered the "wound"—a small pinhole located in the left shoulder blade—inflicted by a three-inch red ant.

An inspection of the bunker revealed that the infantryman had dug his shelter in the midst of a red ant colony.

After Sergeant Barnett learned he wasn't wounded by shrapnel, he chuckled and reportedly said, "I would rather have ants in my pants than a Purple Heart on my chest."

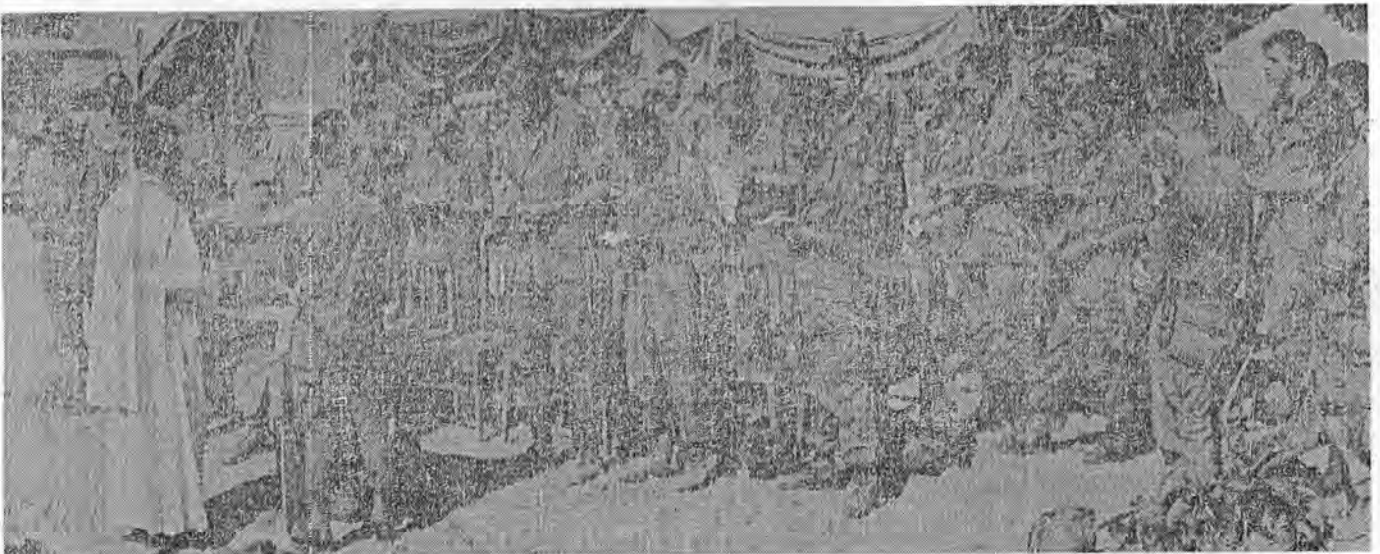
steel helmets, the men await the word of God.

It is not long before hymnal music marking the beginning of the worship service echoes through the low-hanging tree branches of the "chapel roof."

"I always try to present as inspirational a service as the men would receive at home," explains Chaplain May.

Not the least bit embarrassed about their religious beliefs and activities, the men have become accustomed to their make-shift church. They know that regardless of the weather conditions the services will continue without interruption.

"I find being a chaplain the most challenging work I have ever participated in," says Chaplain May. "These men are dedicated, motivated and responsible Americans. I only hope that they find my services as richly rewarding to them as it has been for me."



TIME TO WORSHIP

Taking time out from their duties in war-torn Duc Pho District, Quang Ngai Province, men of the 3rd Brigade, 25th Division attend Mass on a Sunday morning at the brigade's tactical command post. (USA Photo by Sp4 Robert M. Metz)

3rd Brigade Kills 81 Enemy In Task Force Oregon Battle

DUC PHO — Following artillery preparation, 18 air strikes and naval gunfire, infantrymen from the 3rd Brigade Task Force, 25th Division recently assaulted battered enemy positions and finished off what remained of an estimated North Vietnamese battalion.

After a day and a half of fierce fighting, which left the battlefield scarred by artillery and bomb craters, the "Cacti" assaulted with two companies, leaving 81 enemy dead and capturing large amounts of weapons, equipment and documents.

The battle took place in a heavily fortified area approximately eight miles southeast of Duc Pho in lower Quang Ngai Province.

The area was believed to have been one of the primary resupply points for the NVA as the mountains run almost to the coast.

The battle, one of the largest to date for Task Force Oregon, began when Company A, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry made contact while on a sweep of the area.

NVA Lob Mortars At Ivy Unit

LE THANH — North Vietnamese soldiers recently interrupted the breakfast meal of Company A, 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry.

The Ivy men were sitting around their bunkers finishing morning chow, sipping a last cup of coffee and preparing to move out for the day.

They were on guard because they were expecting an attack ever since enemy commo wire was found leading into their perimeter the previous night.

At 7:20 a.m. mortar rounds and automatic weapons fire began landing inside the perimeter. Canteen cups and C-ration cans clattered to the ground as the infantrymen dove for cover and began returning a hail of fire.

Sergeant Donald L. Collier (Chillicothe, Ohio), a squad leader with Company A, jumped into his bunker along with three other men and began directing his squad's fire.

The squad leader stopped firing long enough to bandage a wounded comrade as best he could. At one point the man he was aiding pointed frantically to the outside of the bunker.

Turning, weapon at his hip, Sergeant Collier put a burst of M-16 fire into a NVA soldier just 10 meters away.

Then, despite the intense enemy fire, Sergeant Collier managed to move the wounded man from his bunker to the command bunker where there was a medic.

Returning to his foxhole, the sergeant rejoined his comrades who were attempting to turn back the attacking NVA.

The contact lasted for approximately five hours before repeated air strikes and artillery concentrations forced the much larger enemy force to withdraw.

Commenting on the battle, Sergeant Collier said, "They threw a lot of stuff at us — rockets, grenades, mortars. But we held on and gave them a lot right back."

The crack NVA unit was tenaciously holding ground between two hills and fighting from prepared bunkers, tunnels, caves and complex trench systems.

Receiving heavy fire from automatic weapons, Company A maneuvered to flank what was later estimated to be a NVA battalion.

Captain Lloyd Yoshina, Company A commander who was wounded by the initial burst of fire, said, "The fire was so heavy I couldn't move even three feet to get to my radio."

Although members of the company attempted to get to him, Captain Yoshina ordered them back so that they wouldn't be hit. Refusing to be evacuated, he was still commanding his company a day later when the battle ended.

Artillery, gunships and air strikes were immediately called in to pound the entrenched enemy. Major James E. Moore Jr., 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry commander who was hovering overhead in his command helicopter, coordinated the supporting fires as well as combat assaults and the units in combat.

By mid-morning Company B had been airlifted into the area of contact. Upon touching down, the company quickly maneuvered to assault the enemy positions.

However, the NVA, dug-in in caves and bunkers, continued to fight throughout the afternoon. During that time other units were moved into the area and

by nightfall the enemy was surrounded by four companies and a cavalry platoon.

Before darkness engulfed the battlefield, the "Cacti" had killed 43 NVA and captured 16 weapons.

When darkness came, flare-ships turned the battlefield back to day. The battle continued throughout the night.

At daylight the "Cacti" were still receiving heavy fire from the entrenched NVA. Once again the area was saturated by air strikes and artillery.

While the supporting fires continued, Major Moore lifted his field commanders out by helicopter and conducted a detailed aerial reconnaissance of the battlefield for the final assault.

By mid-morning the air strikes and artillery were lifted. Through a screen of smoke and in 103 degree heat, two "Cacti" companies, accompanied by Colonel James G. Shanahan, 3rd Brigade commander, assaulted and overran the enemy positions.

Besides killing 81 NVA, the 3rd Brigade troops seized 151 82mm mortar rounds, thousands of rounds of small arms ammunition and large quantities of weapons, grenades and other equipment. They also detained one NVA sergeant.

The "Cacti" were still policing the battlefield when Major General William B. Rosson, Task Force Oregon commander, landed in the middle of the area to commend the infantrymen on a "tremendous victory."



ROAD SWEEP—Private First Class Stewart Isaacson sweeps the road for possible Viet Cong mines. This is part of the 4th Combat Engineers' job while working with the 2nd Battalion (Mechanized), 22nd Infantry of the 3rd Brigade, 4th Division.

JACKS-OF-ALL-TRADES

Engineers Clear Way For 2/22nd APCs

Story & Photos by Sp4 James Friar

DAU TIENG—Little is said but much is expected of those jacks-of-all-trades — the combat engineers.

Their importance in smoothing the way is important in the job of maintaining mechanized mobility for the 3rd Brigade, 4th Division.

The 1st Platoon of Company C, 4th Combat Engineers has the mission of assisting the 2nd Battalion (Mechanized), 22nd Infantry in the field.

Whenever there's a bridge to be built, roads to be cleared of mines, bunkers to be built or booby traps to be safely destroyed, the job falls on Second Lieutenant Walter H. Petrie (St. Clair Shores, Mich.) and his engineers.

One of the most important jobs, at least in the eyes of the mechanized troops, is the road clearing operations. With three-man security teams to the front and both flanks, men such as Private First Class Stewart W. Isaacson (Watota, Wash.) slowly sweep their mine detectors down an uncleared road.

Staff Sergeant Obel D. Nazario-Almodovar (Puerto Rico) comments, "The Viet Cong mines I have run into are pretty ingenious. The one we dug up the other day was a wooden box about 10 inches in diameter and contained a plastic explosive, nails and iron chips. It was hidden near a river bank."

The engineers are also responsible for bridge building. On a recent operation the armored personnel carriers of the "Triple Deuces" crossed over a river on an armored vehicle launching bridge which the engineers had prepared and set into place after clearing the road of mines.

As they walked by his APC, Sergeant John L. Jasinski (Danbury, Conn.) of Company A, 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry said, "I never thought much about the engineers until I saw them in action. The men appreciate their abilities and we are darn glad to have them in the field with us."

2/9th Arty Fires Round 300,000

DUC PHO — Major General William B. Rosson, commander of Task Force Oregon, recently fired the 300,000th round for the 2nd Battalion, 9th Artillery of the 3rd Brigade Task Force, 25th Division.

The ceremony, which took place at Battery C's location, came nearly 16 months after General W. C. Westmoreland, commander of U.S. Forces in Vietnam, fired the first round for the "Mighty Ninth" on January 2, 1966. That round was the first fired in combat by any artillery unit of the 25th Division since the Korean War.

General Rosson complimented the artillerymen on the severe blows they have inflicted on the enemy.



DESTROYING TROUBLE—Staff Sergeant Obel D. Nazario-Almodovar of Company C, 4th Combat Engineers prepares a charge to destroy a Viet Cong mine.



COULD THIS HAVE BEEN AVOIDED?

Fire sweeps through the Reenlistment Office and Personnel Actions Branch at the 4th Division's Camp Enari last week, inflicting heavy damage to the building. In the wake of the fire, a division spokesman stressed the importance of constantly being on the lookout for fire hazards.

(USA Photo by Maj. Richard R. Dyer)

Missing Claymore Mine Alerts 'Regulars' Of Possible Attack

By Sp5 George A. Beidler
VUNG DAT AM—The "Regulars" of the 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry's Company B pulled their ponchos and parkas tightly around their necks to keep out the penetrating evening rain while they waited for the attack that was said to be "a sure thing."

The previous evening the unit, under the command of Captain Richard D. Ator (Tacoma, Wash.), established its outpost hastily, deep in the Central Highlands 10 miles northwest of Duc Co.

The night was uneventful, but the absence of a claymore mine the following morning warned the 4th Division unit of enemy activity.

This evening they were prepared. Heavily fortified perimeter bunkers were constructed, fields of fire cleared and—as a final protective measure — all claymore mines were booby trapped with flares in addition to the usual illumination on the perimeter.

The North Vietnamese Army attack began at approximately 11 p.m. when a B-40 rocket screamed through the camp, smashing into the sole tank in the outpost.

"The rocket was the best warning we could have had," said the company commander. "If someone was walking around they immediately found a hole when that thing hit."

Two minutes later 82mm mortar rounds began "peppering" the camp.

"My listening posts requested to come in because they could hear rounds whizzing over their heads," said Lieutenant David E. Irizarry (Lajas, R.R.), 1st Platoon leader. "I couldn't let them move because the rounds were falling in our portion of the perimeter."

"I could hear movement to my right and front," recalled Private First Class Bertram Brown (Newport News, Va.), who was serving as a LP. "When the mortars stopped I blew my claymore and made it."

Sixty to 80 rounds had fallen within the confines of the outpost when the enemy began their ground attack.

"We were waiting on Brown to get inside the perimeter," said Sergeant Dorris C. Miller (Ackerman, Miss.). "Just as he made it some enemy tripped a flare about 15 feet behind him."

"As soon as the flare went off I opened up with my M-60," recalled Specialist 4 Maurice J. Laws (New York). "Then all I could see were bullets hitting in front of my position."

"One NVA was stumbling around setting off all the flares," said Sergeant Miller. "I don't know how Brown made it past the trip wires, but this NVA was making up for it."

"He seemed in a daze. Finally

he picked up a live claymore, igniting another flare, and began moving toward our position. I couldn't believe it. I squeezed the detonator and he hollered," said Sergeant Miller.

Six U.S. soldiers were wounded during the night attack. A sweep of the company's perimeter the following morning produced two NVA killed and an AK-47 and an SKS weapon captured.

"I don't know how my LP made it past the flares," said Lieutenant Irizarry. "But, at any rate, we were prepared. After nine months of fighting in this country you know what to expect from your enemy."

Maintenance Men Volunteer To Join Reaction Platoon

By Lt. Alvin D. Revwee
CAMP ENARI — Anyone in the 4th Division can be called on to be an infantryman in the Central Highlands.

Mechanics and technical supply personnel from the 704th Maintenance Battalion were recently called on to do just that.

A rapid reaction platoon was formed from volunteers in the battalion and since its formation it has already carried out three missions and is preparing for its next.

The unit's primary mission is to provide a small force which can react quickly to protect the base camp from enemy penetration. It is also available to assist civil affairs teams and patrols in the area should they be threatened by enemy forces.

Every man in the platoon is a volunteer and none, except the platoon leader, has had any previous infantry experience other than basic training.

Since its inception, the men of the rapid reaction platoon have undergone extensive training on weapons, squad and platoon tactics and methods of control and movement.

"We try to spend at least two to three hours per week in training the men," says First Lieutenant Patrick Byrne (Seattle), platoon leader. "The men are eager to get out in the field and spirits are very high. There is a waiting list of volunteers to get into the platoon."

Lieutenant Byrne came to the 704th after having served six months as communications pla-

toon leader in the 2nd Battalion (Mechanized), 8th Infantry of the 4th Division.

Staff Sergeant Donald E. Walker (Wilmington, Ohio), platoon sergeant for the rapid reaction platoon, came to Vietnam with the 704th and has been motor sergeant at Headquarters and Company A during his entire tour.

"I've never been in the infantry," says Sergeant Walker, "I just like to get out and do something to help win the war."

To date, the rapid reaction platoon has been called into action three times. The first call came when several suspicious looking individuals were sighted along the northeast perimeter of the base camp carrying what looked like satchels.

Moving swiftly, the platoon was able to detain one individual and returned him to the 4th Division's interrogation center. The entire mission took less than 45 minutes.

Enthusiasm for the rapid reaction platoon goes right down to the enlisted men who make up the core of the unit. Private First Class Dean P. Harrell (Gaston, Ala.), a technical supply clerk, says, "I like getting out and exploring the countryside. I felt that as long as I am here I want to do something extra to help win the war."

Through training and good leadership, the rapid reaction platoon of the 704th Maintenance Battalion is developing into a skilled protective force available for any emergency.

NVA ATTACK BACKFIRES

APCs Send Enemy Fleeing

VUNG DAT AM—The North Vietnamese are beginning to watch their rear when they go after a "Panther" track.

The first lesson was given to the enemy recently by a platoon of Company B, 2nd Battalion (Mechanized), 8th Infantry.

While the platoon, commanded by First Lieutenant John Connors (Alexandria, Va.), was sweeping an area in the Ia Drang Valley near the Chu Pon Mountains, a NVA platoon opened up on the lead armored personnel carrier with B-40 rockets.

The track, traveling far in front of the other four, was hit twice as it swung around a wooded hillside, disabling it.

Hearing the attack, Lieutenant Connors drew the rest of the platoon on line and then the APCs swarmed over the hill.

Unaware of the advancing APCs, the NVA were running from their attack positions to finish off the stricken track crew.

From the disabled combat vehicle the Americans were pouring grenades, M-16 rifle fire and 50-caliber rounds in all directions, fending off the NVA platoon.

Then Lieutenant Connors and the rest of the platoon rode over the hilltop and bore down on the NVA with machine guns blazing away.

"When the enemy realized our strength, he moved out in a hurry," said Private First Class Prattis Boswell (Detroit), radio-

telephone operator for the command track. "But by then we had already killed three of them."



BIRTHDAY SUIT

Major General William R. Peers, 4th Division commander, and Lieutenant Colonel Nay Lo, Pleiku Province chief, offer congratulations to one another on their 53rd birthdays. The two military leaders, currently working together in the Central Highlands, were born June 14, 1914, 9,000 miles apart. (USA Photo by Sp4 Ron Sato)

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