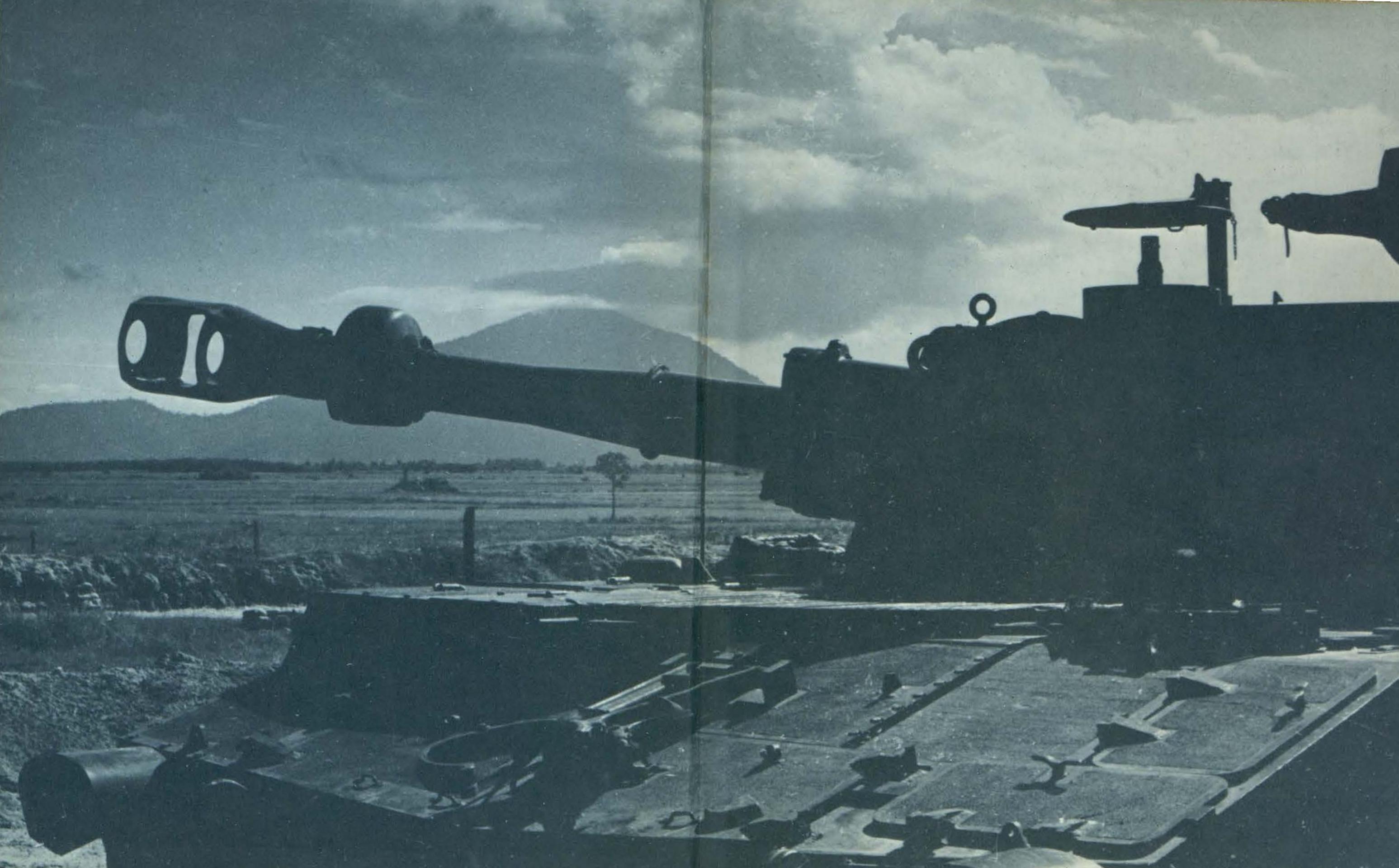




1ST BATTALION

27TH ARTILLERY

IN VIETNAM





This book is dedicated to the courage, determination and professionalism of the officers and men of the 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery in Vietnam. Their unselfish sacrifices, and those endured by their loved ones back home, stand as a monumental inspiration for future generations. May their deeds be always remembered.





LTC Joseph J. Skaff, Commanding Officer

On the archway as one departs the Battalion area is the phrase "The Best Artillery Battalion in the United States Army." The officers and the men of this battalion believe in that phrase and have proven it true here in Vietnam. The battalion has provided continuous support throughout the III Corps tactical zone to United States as well as Vietnamese units. We have shown our ability to move and shoot wherever and whenever the necessity requires.

Your hard work and sacrifices are the price of keeping our ally free. By reaffirming our sincerity to keep a national pledge, we have strengthened not only our ally, but the United States as well. And to you, the men of this battalion, who have given immeasurably to this cause, I pay the highest tribute and proudly recognize that it is you who have made this, the best Artillery Battalion in the U.S. Army.

The XO, CO, and S-2 studying the situation.





Change of Command
Dan Tieng, RVN
15 December 1968

I have derived great pleasure from having the 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery as a member of the 23rd Artillery Group. In the time that I have been Group Commander, you have established yourselves as some of the finest artillerymen in Vietnam.

Your long list of accomplishments speaks for itself. You have provided crack artillery fire in support of the 1st, 9th, and 25th Infantry Divisions, the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), CMAC, the 5th and 25th ARVN Divisions, and several independent operations with the Mobile Strike Force, ARVN Airborne, and U.S. Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol units.

In every instance, you have distinguished yourselves and the field artillery in its role in Vietnam, its most prominent and effective role in the history of warfare. I salute you and wish you the best of luck in the future.

Harold G. DeArment

Colonel, Commanding





Major Gerald T. Desmond,

Executive Officer



Getting the daily vehicle status



Putting out the word



*Command Sergeant Major
William D. Allen*





LTC Leo S. Comish

Battalion Commander

June - December 1968

LTC Comish's farewell address.

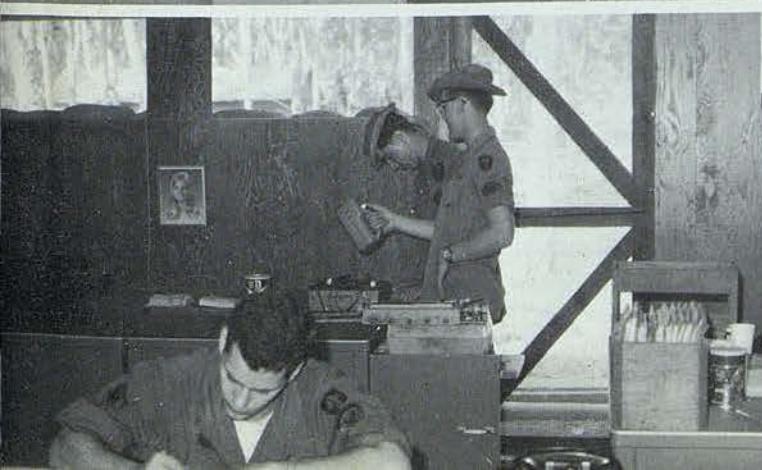


S-1



The Job With

A 1000 Facets





The S-2

The eyes & ears of the Commander



In Vietnam, finding the enemy is a particularly difficult job; identifying him is the remainder of the problem. Using all possible resources the S-2 seeks to determine where to shoot. The aerial observers and flash tower play an important role in gathering data.



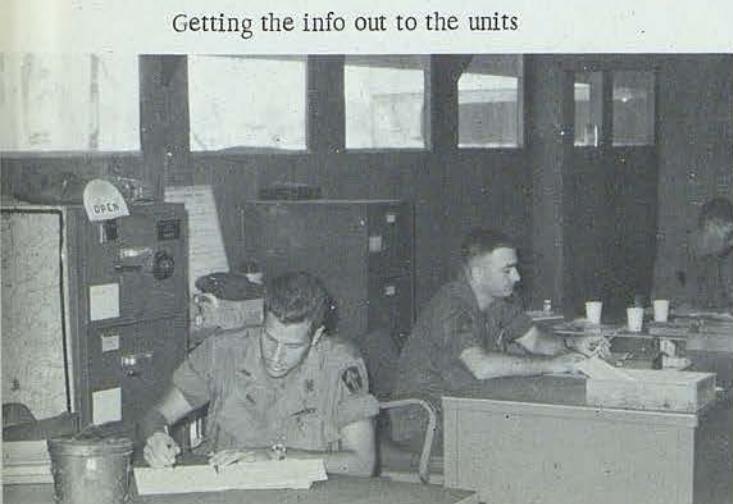
Seeking out the enemy



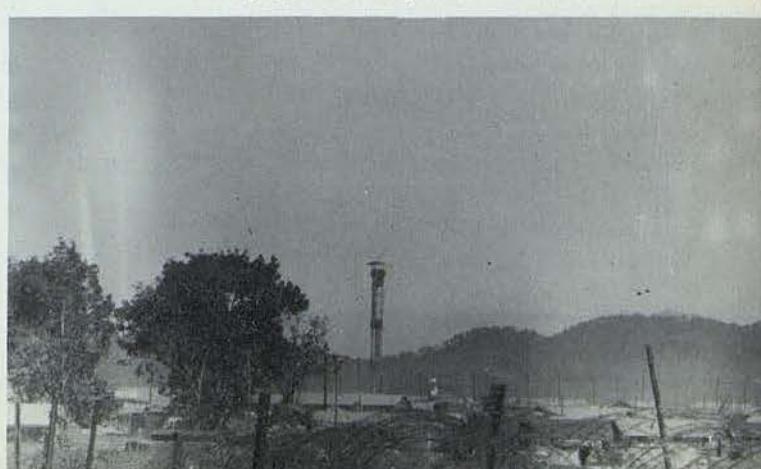
Processing the data



Going out to get the info



Getting the info out to the units



A lonely spot requiring constant alertness



The S-3 Handles

Operations, Training,

and Beau Coup Reports



The TOC determines

which targets to engage

with what Artillery

The Command Tracks are always ready to go.





Assigning targets



Sending the fire missions



Counter-mortar gets the exact grid



Plotters post the grids



*to the cry of
"incoming"*



Clearing the grids

Clearing the air



Passing the calls



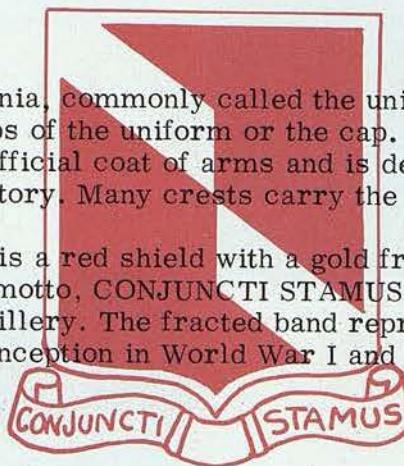
Algeria-French Morocco

Tunisia

Naples-Foggia

The 27th Artillery Crest

Anzio



The distinctive unit insignia, commonly called the unit crest, is usually made of metal and worn on the shoulder loops of the uniform or the cap. These distinctive insignia are closely related to the unit's official coat of arms and is designed by experts in heraldry after a close study of the unit's history. Many crests carry the units motto or slogan on a scroll attached to the bottom.

The 27th Artillery crest is a red shield with a gold fractured band. Attached to the bottom is a gold scroll with the motto, CONJUNCTI STAMUS (United We Stand) inscribed.

The shield is red for Artillery. The fractured band represents the break in the history of the organization between its inception in World War I and its reconstruction as the present unit.

Rome-Arno

North Appennines

Po Valley

Vietnam

History of the 27th Artillery

The 27th Artillery was constituted as the 27th Field Artillery Regiment, on 2 August 1918, and assigned to the 9th Division at Camp McClellan, Alabama.

It did not serve overseas during World War I, and was inactivated on 24 March 1923. On the 15th of July, 1940, the unit was redesignated the 27th Field Artillery Battalion (Armored), and activated with the 1st Armored Division at Fort Knox, Kentucky. The 27th remained with the 1st Armored Division during World War II. In the spring of 1942 the battalion was armed with self-propelled 105mm howitzers and was shipped to Northern Ireland. By the end of the war the 27th had spent over 550 days in firing positions, fired 380,115 rounds of 105mm and 3447 rounds of 75mm ammunition, and had totaled more days of combat than any other unit in the Division. The authorized battle honors of the 27th are the following: Tunisia, Po Valley, Rome - Arno, Salerno, Naples - Foggia, Anzio, North Appennies, Algeria - French Morocco (with Arrowhead). In addition the battalion was awarded a streamer in the color of the French Croix de Guerre, with Palm, for action in central Italy. On 1 May, 1946, the battalion was redesignated the 27th Constabulary Squadron and assigned to the 14th Constabulary Regiment for occupation duty in Germany. On 20 December, 1948, the battalion was redesignated the 27th A.F.A. Bn., assigned to the 1st Armored Division and inactivated. The battalion was reactivated with the 1st Armored Division on 7 March, 1951, at Fort Hood, Texas. Since that time the Battalion has participated in such exercises as Exercise Longhorn (1952) and Exercise Spearhead (1953). The battalion was inactivated in December 1957, reactivated in March of 1960 and remained on the active list until it was deactivated in February, 1963. The 1st (155SP) Battalion, 27th Artillery, was activated at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, on 5 October, 1966. The 1st of the 27th has three sister Battalions, two now serving in Vietnam and the other stationed in Friedberg, Germany. The 1/27th was the first unit at Fort Sill to be armed with the M109 Howitzer. The battalion is augmented with its own meteorological section, liaison section, two aerial observers, and six forward observer sections.

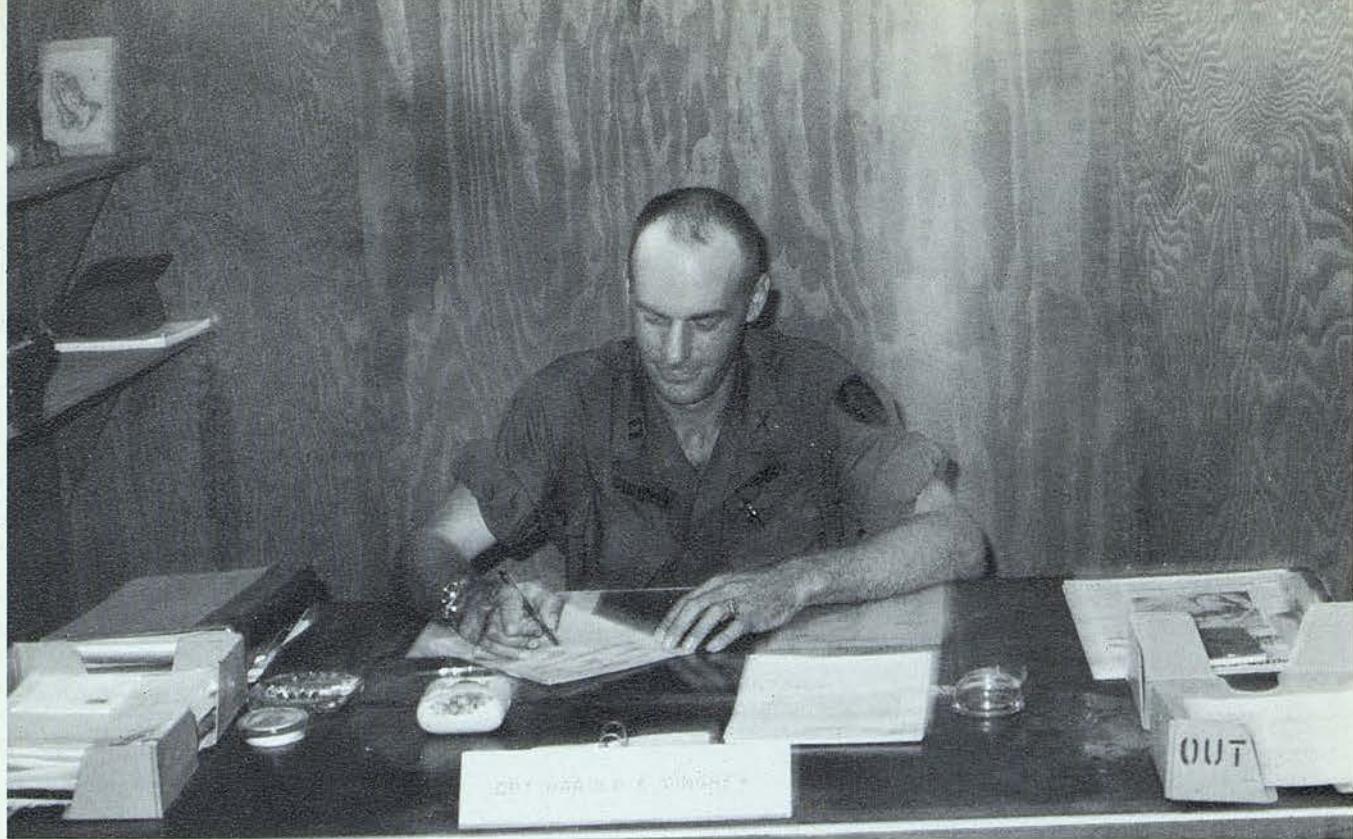
The battalion was deployed to the Republic of South Vietnam in March 1967. Upon arrival, it was assigned to the 23rd Artillery Group and based at Phu Loi. In June 1967, Headquarters and Battery C were moved to Dau Tieng, Battery B and Service Battery were re-located in Tay Ninh, and Battery A remained in Phu Loi. Present base camp locations are Headquarters and A at Dau Tieng, B at Tay Ninh, and C and Service at Cu Chi. The battalion has supported the 1st, 9th, and 25th Infantry Division.





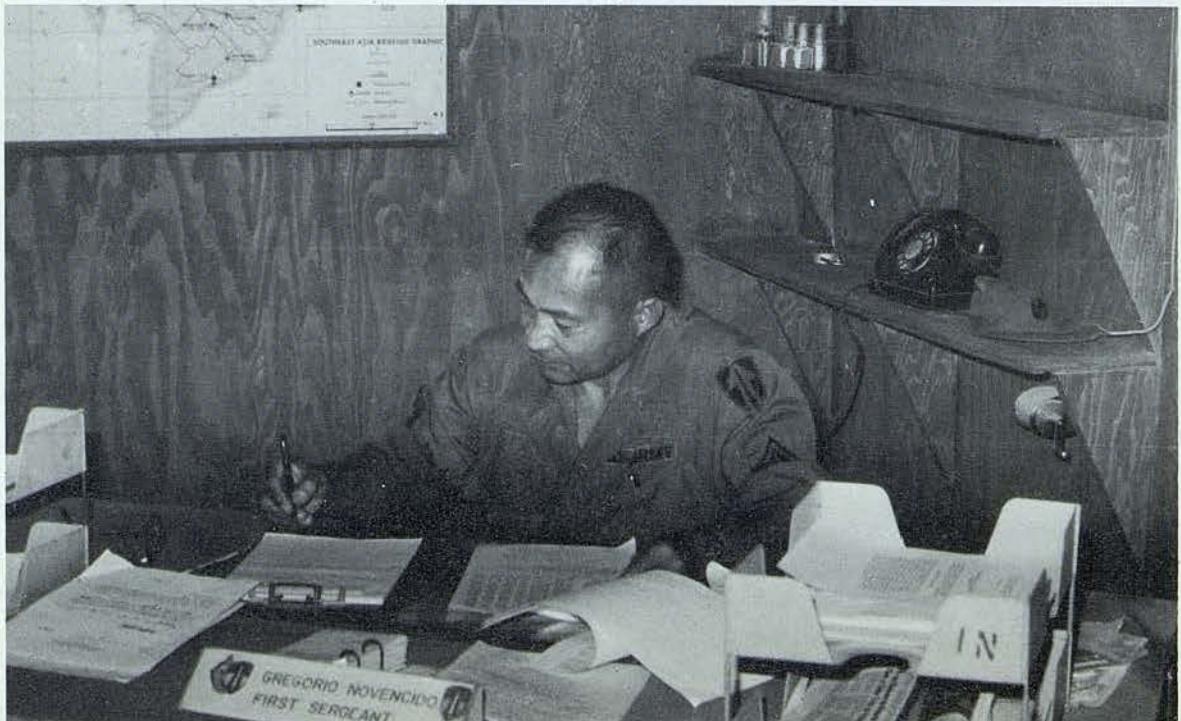
Headquarters

Battery



Battery Commander

First Sergeant





*Orderly
Room*





CW4 Dunn



SFC Tobias

Metro

Section

Four times daily the metro section probes the atmosphere to determine what effect the weather will have on the artillery. With the data provided by the balloon-blowers, Artillery can give the first round hits desired.



Metro Computers



Wind Plotters





Davroom



Maintenance Technician



Balloon Blower Greely



Snoopy & Dee



Tell the story



Hot Shower





Commo

From climbing trees, operating the radio teletype and repairing the countless radios and switchboards, the commo section is kept busy. They do find time, though, to take care of "mama-san" and her pups.





Shellrep Team

In order to gain valuable targeting data for counterbattery fire, the shellrep team immediately departs for the impact area when incoming rounds are received. Utilizing a compass, bayonet and a rod, this team provided the information to pin point the enemy battery.



Checking the azimuth.

Medics

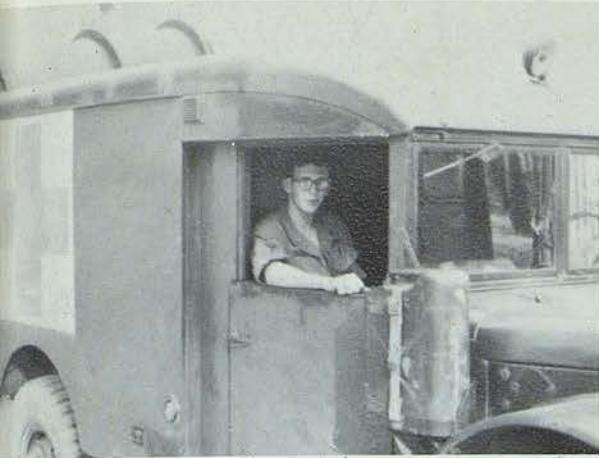


The Doc begins an examination

Most of the news headlines are afforded to the destruction and suffering caused by this war. Headlines rarely go to the positive work done by medical personnel who perform an invaluable service to the people. From aspirin or a bar of soap to treatment of wounds and diseases, the medics show the sincere concern they feel for each person in need. The medcaps show that we really care.



Kids are usually the most willing to be helped.



Shots must be kept current
for R&R or DEROs



The ambulance is always ready.



Headquarters Battery Mess

The mess personnel have a thankless chore. They work long hours with little recognition for their preparations and serving. It may not taste like mother's cooking, but most of it is very good. No one admits it though.

Thanksgiving was an excellent example. It also provided us an opportunity to initiate our allies into the Thanksgiving traditions.



Good Food. And



Plenty Of It



Working on a carburetor

Maintenance

To move, shoot and communicate is our mission. Without maintenance support from this section the rolling stock could not be kept moving.

No shortcut for this job.





Generators pose constant problems



Keeping the fittings greased



Even MSG Anthony gets into the act.



Survey Section

Seldom together as these pictures show, these surveyors perform a myriad of functions for the battalion. From actual survey, which is their primary function, to tower guards, shell-rep team members, training NCO, club custodians and, of course, Santa Claus.



One of the rare pictures of the section getting together.

Shellreps give valuable counterbattery data



Flash towers provide valuable protection for the base camp.







Supply



If you need it, we can get it, but you have to let us know. Just remember, it's a two day trip to Chu Chi and back and then they may not have it.





Alpha
Battery

Battery Commander



First Sergeant



"Agitating Alpha" housed at the Laterite Hilton provides both base camp defensive fires and support to the maneuver elements. It has consistently fired more rounds than any other battery in the group. Able and aggressive, Alpha carries a fine reputation for accurate and timely fires.





Receiving a fire mission

Fire

Direction

Center



Plotting the initial data



Getting a computer readout

Rapidly and accurately transforming a map plot to the workable form of deflection and quadrant requires a highly trained fire direction team. Utilizing the FADAC computer and checking the data manually in a few seconds time demands the maximum efficiency. When firing a near maximum range in support of friendly troops mounts the tension in the hole. Although speed is essential, accuracy can never be sacrificed.



Checking manual and computer data



Plotting a correction

Home Sweet Home



Commo



The third element of the artillery mission is to communicate. Maintaining the equipment plus manning the switchboard 24 hours a day keeps this section busy.



*The
XO Post*



Checking piece displacement from battery center



Twice daily the lay is checked.





1st Section



2nd Section



3rd Section



The Base Piece





4th Section





5th Section

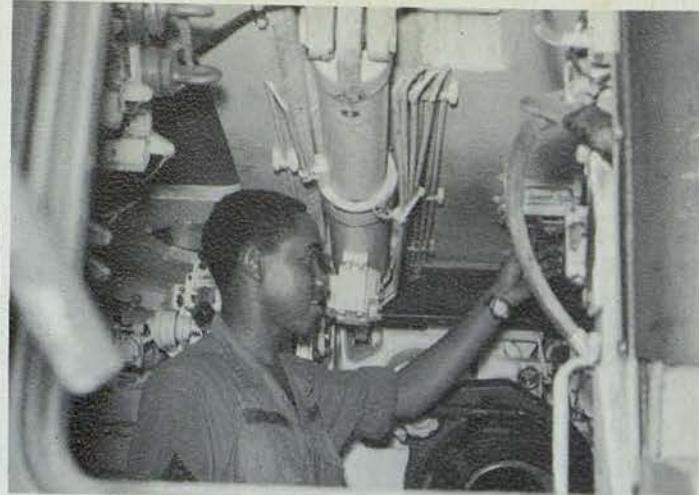


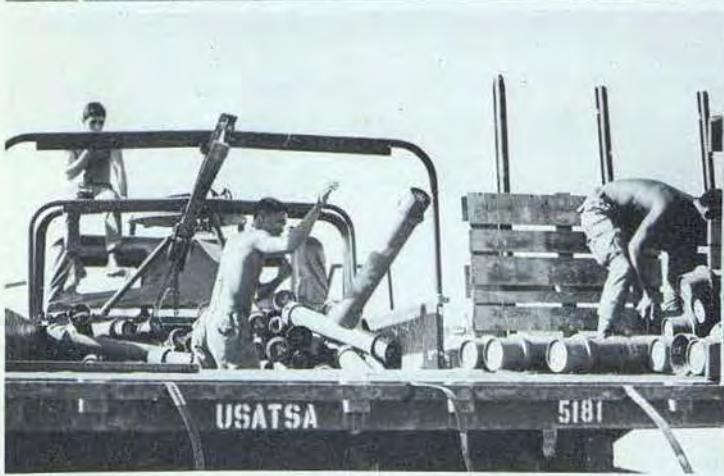


6th Section











The Maintenance Section



The artillery must be able to move and the key to movement is maintenance. The long hauls for ammunition and the battery displacements require the maintenance section to work day and night. Then, of course, there are the M548's



The Supply Section

Although "beg" and "borrow" are not found in Army supply manuals, for a short time, it was a way of life. Keeping the necessary parts and clothing plus numerous other items on hand requires an unending number of requisitions, trips to Cu Chi and Tay Ninh, and some good relations with the unit next door.



Counting the inventory

Check the requisitions





Mess



Exotic Atmosphere
Superb Cuisine
Romantic Music

General

Activities







Bravo

Battery



Battery Commander

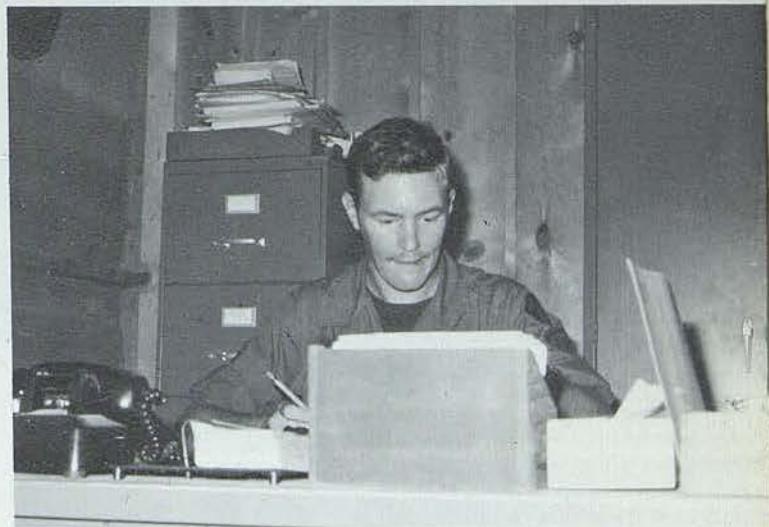
First

Sergeant





The 1SG and battery clerk have many unique problems while the battery is in the field.



Battery Headquarters

Commo section is kept busy





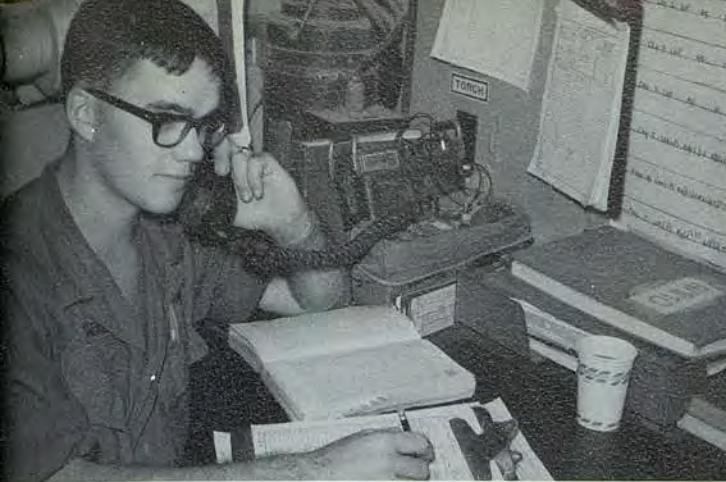
*The
Fire Direction
Center*



Keeping the M-60 clear

Plotting the grid





Receiving a fire mission.



Maintaining the on-track generator



Compiling the met data



Operating the FADAC

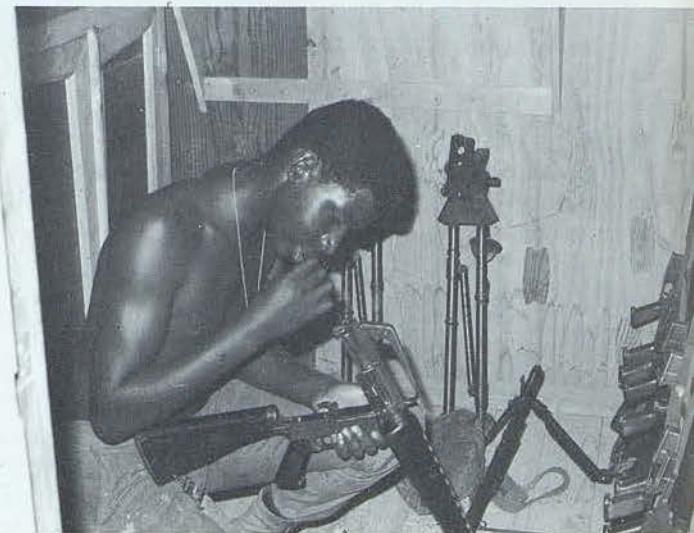
Supply

Section

Keeping the supplies flowing to a battery which is completely out of the area requires a gigantic effort.



The armorer maintains and controls the individual weapons.



A new man draws beau coup gear.

The XO

Post



Checking the lay



"Fire"



Verifying the data



Removing the muzzle brake

1st Section



Reinforcing the Ammo bunker

Individual training records showed three hours of PT.



2nd Section



Daily Maintenance



War is hell





Preparing to fuze.



3rd Section



Ramming the round.

4th Section



Ammo Resupply



Fire Support Bases require constant position improvement.

Always ready to shoot at a moment's notice.





Receiving a fire mission

5th Section



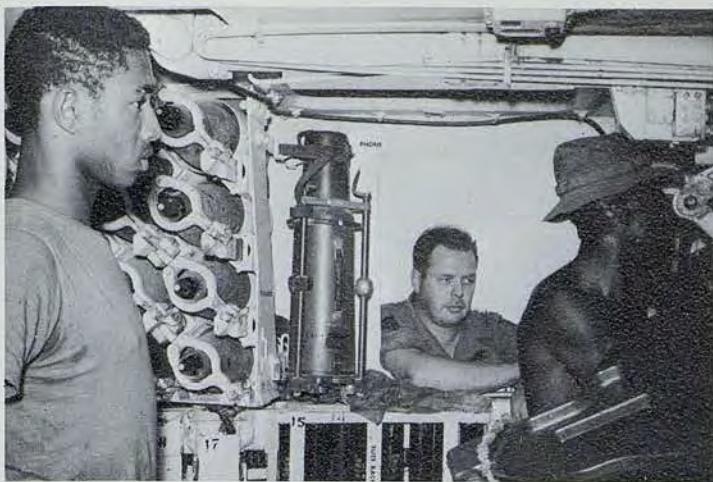
Keeping the fuzes tight



Bravo's body building course



6th Section



Checking the deflection before firing



Overhead protection for personnel and ammo is of prime importance.













Mess

Cooking and serving chow in the open may sound like fun, but for the last year, Bravo's mess has been operating under field conditions for all but three weeks. So, please don't mention picnics or outdoor barbeques when they get home.





Fire Support Base Rawlins provided one of the better locations. At least there was no knee-deep mud to contend with.





Maintenance



The motor sergeant
insures the repairs are
correctly completed.



General







Charlie

Battery

Battery Commander



First Sergeant





At the call of "Fire Mission", a definite routine of utmost urgency is set in motion. The generator starts; the Fire Direction Officer grabs his sticks, and the RTO is on the radio. Before the complete mission is received, the data is being processed for transmission to the guns.

Fire Direction Center







Mess



The XO Post



The XO constantly checks the lay of the battery.



Verifying the ammo count

Sights must be in perfect working order.





1st Section



Passing projos from the ready rack to the track.



2nd Section





3rd Section

The 50 caliber must be combat ready, always.

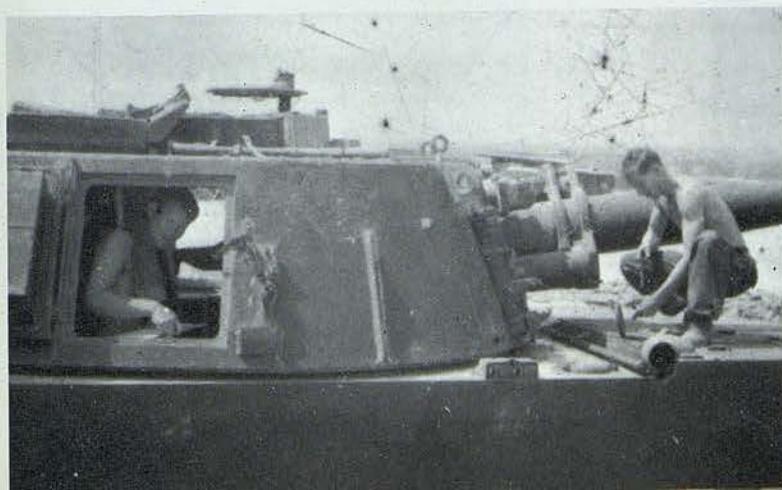
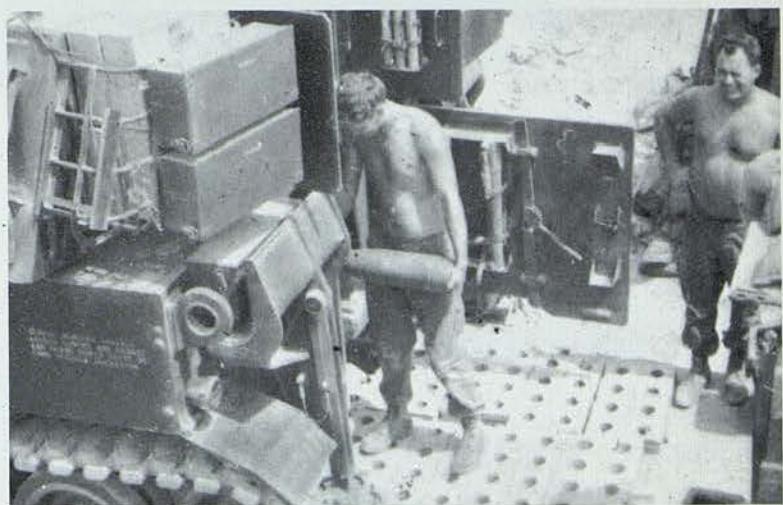


There is no elbow room inside the track.





4th Section



5th Section



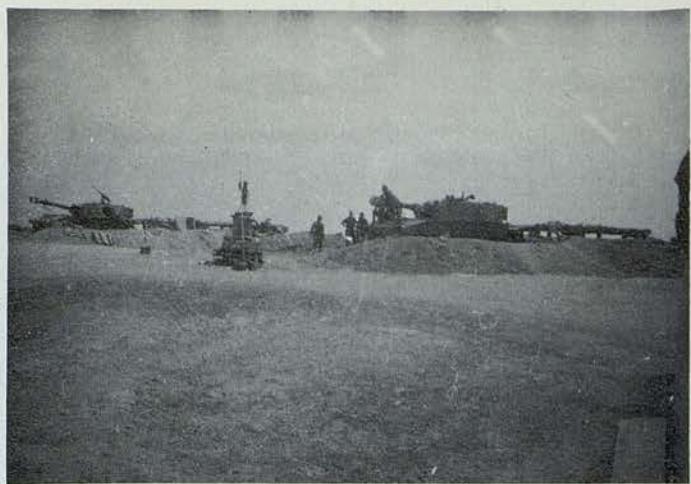


6th Section



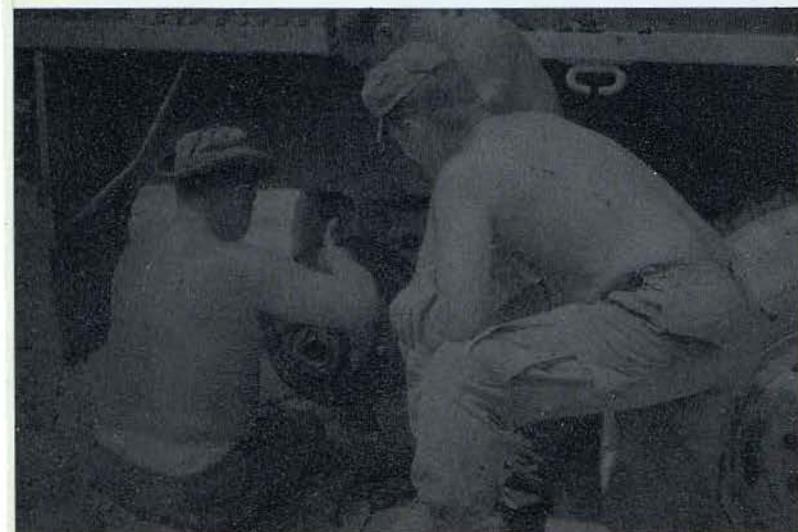
General





















Service

Battery



*Commanding
Officer*

Service Battery

Far from the least important element, Service Battery insures that the firing batteries continue to shoot, move and communicate. The battalion S-4, Maintenance and Ammunition sections are incorporated into this one entity. A power rammer, 155mm illumination rounds or a deadlined M-109 - All these are major crises handled daily by Service personnel.

First Sergeant





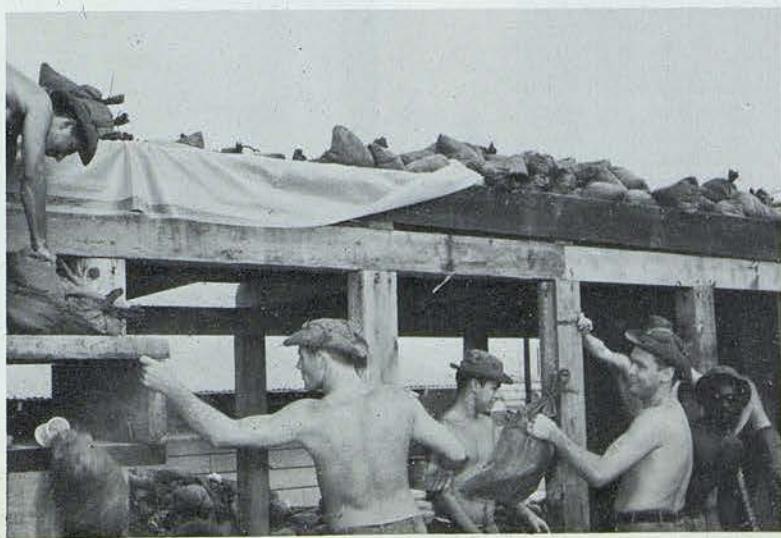
Besides the myriad of problems the Service Battery faced, the problem of a complete relocation from Tay Ninh was completed. Personnel, equipment, supplies, material, files, spare parts and vehicles - all these were involved in a gigantic move. Then, as indicated on the next few pages, rebuilding began.



















Yearbook Staff



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1LT Lester Nance - Distribution
SP4 Burt Yanagicla - Clerk

We thank the PIO Section of
the 23rd Artillery Group for their
assistance.

