

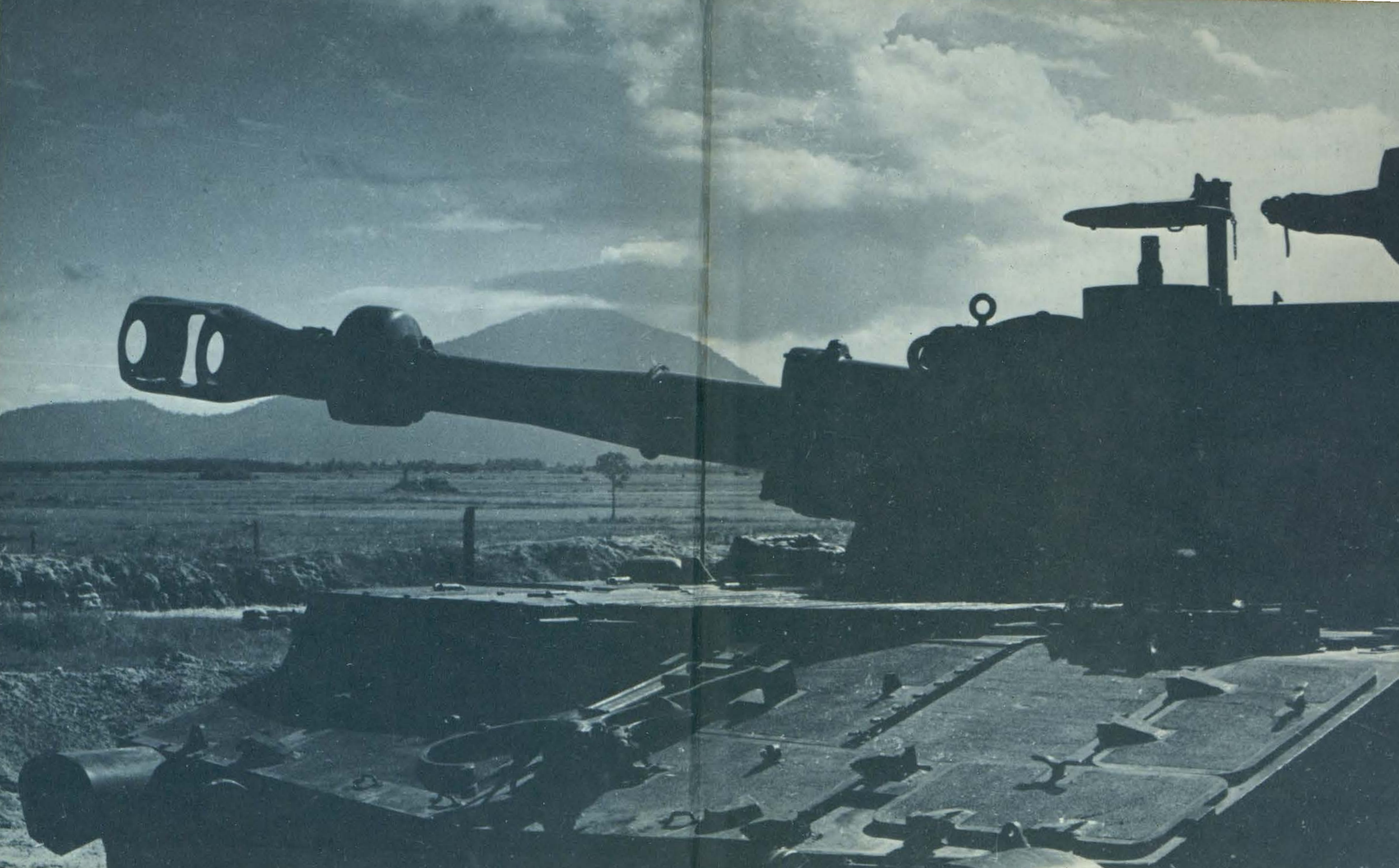


**1ST BATTALION**

**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.







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*

Change of Command  
Dan Tieng, RVN  
15 December 1968







*Major Jerald 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*

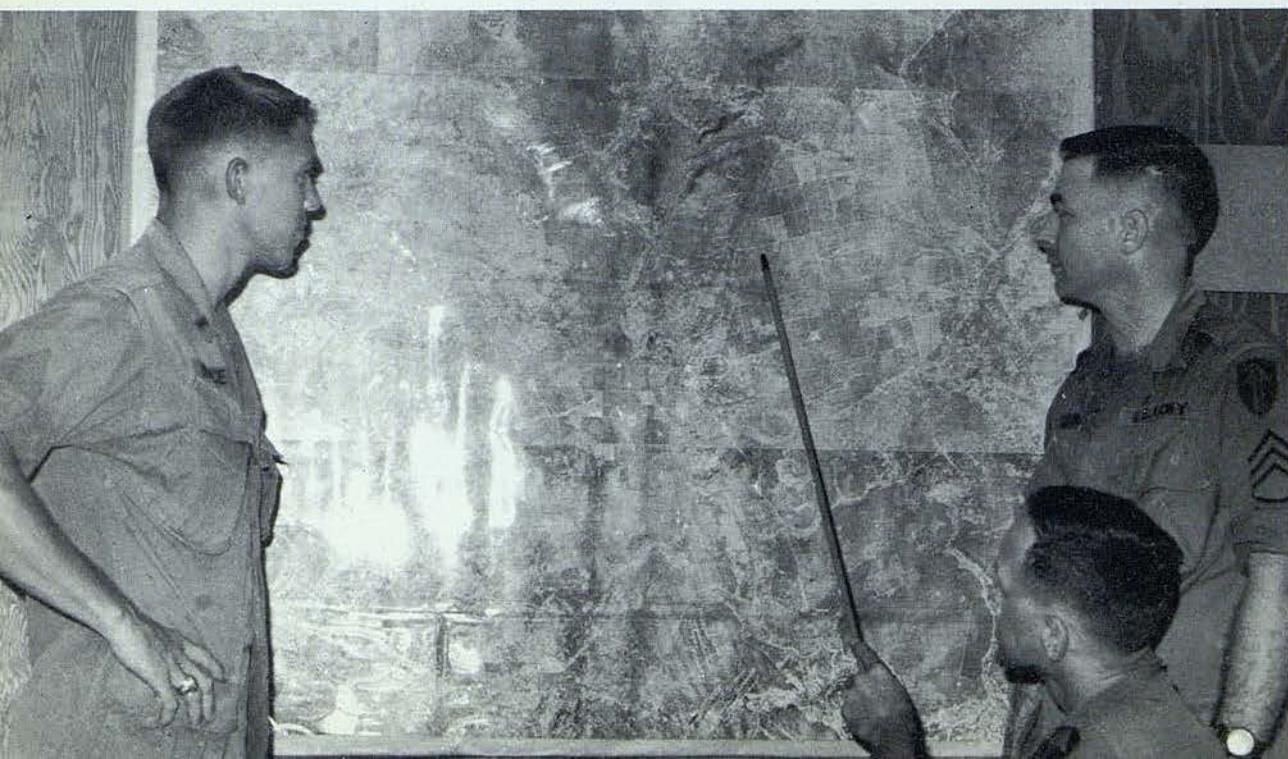






## *The S-2*

*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

# *Base Camp Defense reacts*

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 fracted 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 fracted 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 Appennines, 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 relocated 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.





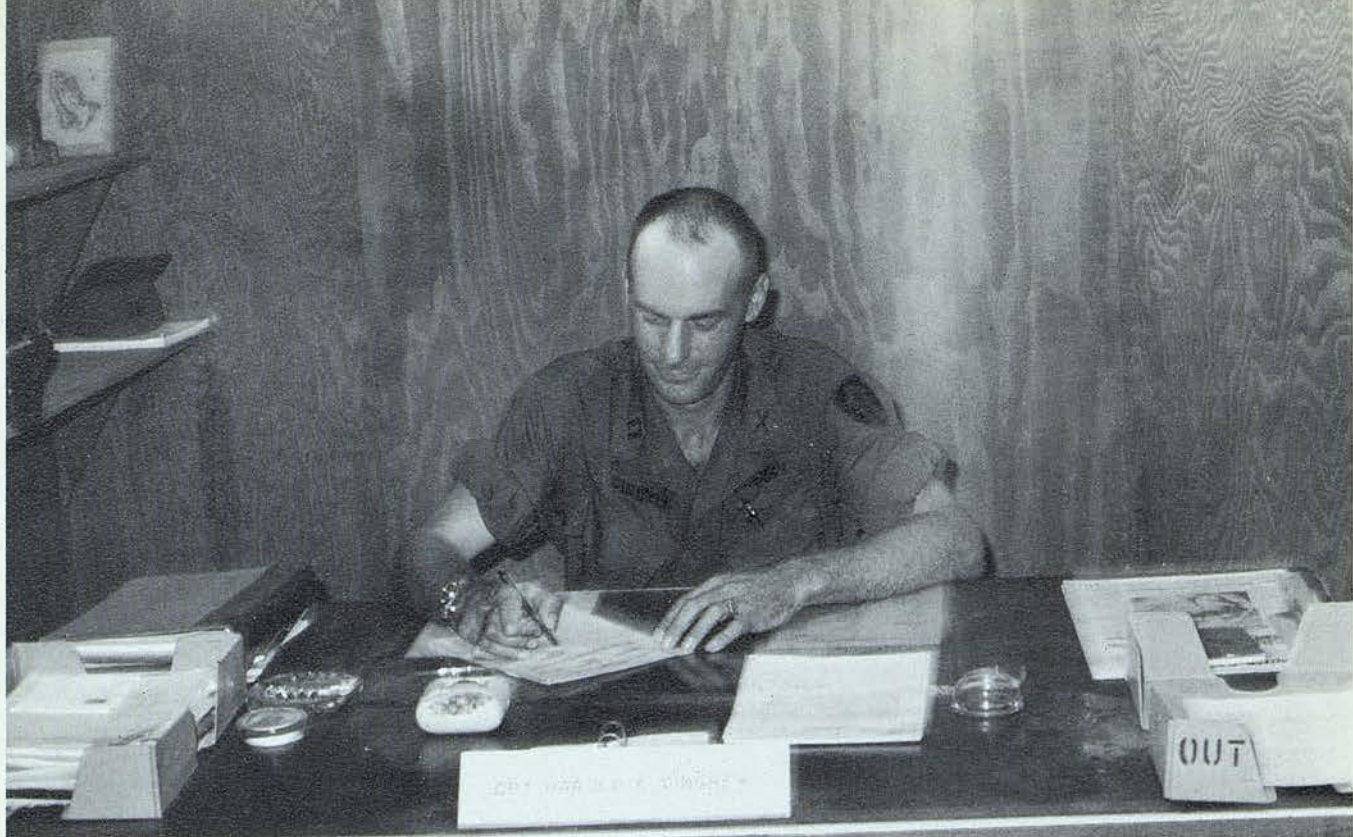




*Headquarters*

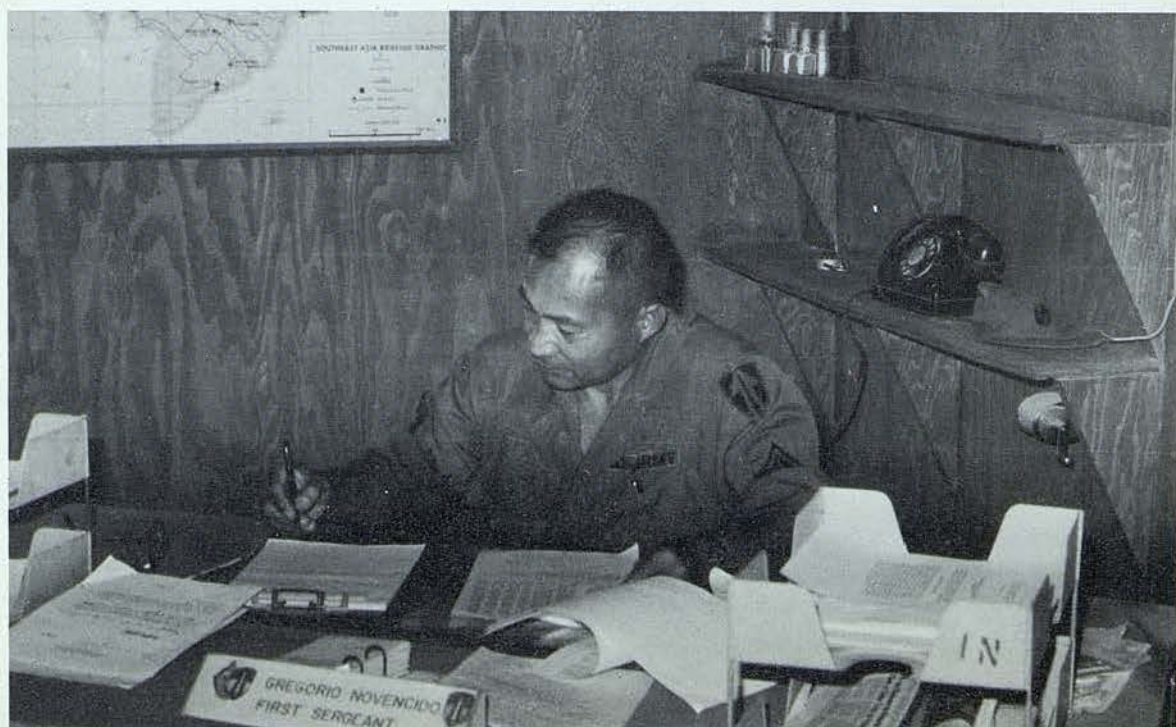
*Battery*



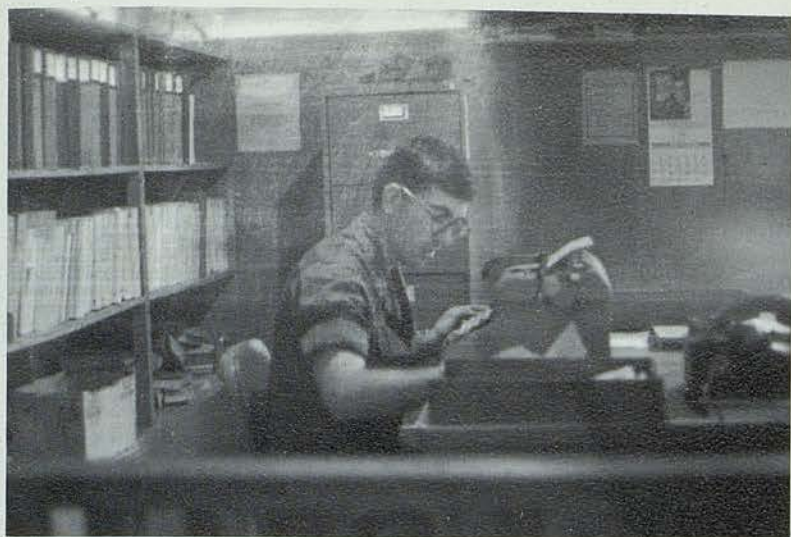


*Battery Commander*

*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.



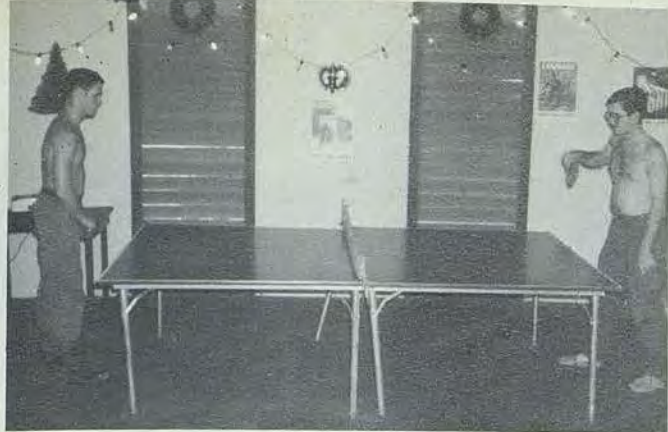
Metro Computers



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.

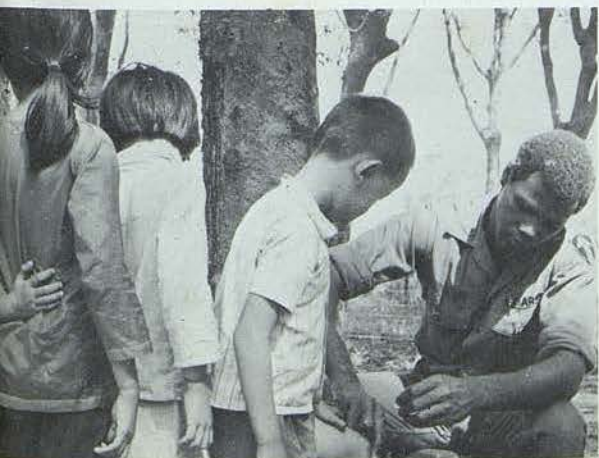




Shots must be kept current  
for R&R or DEROs



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



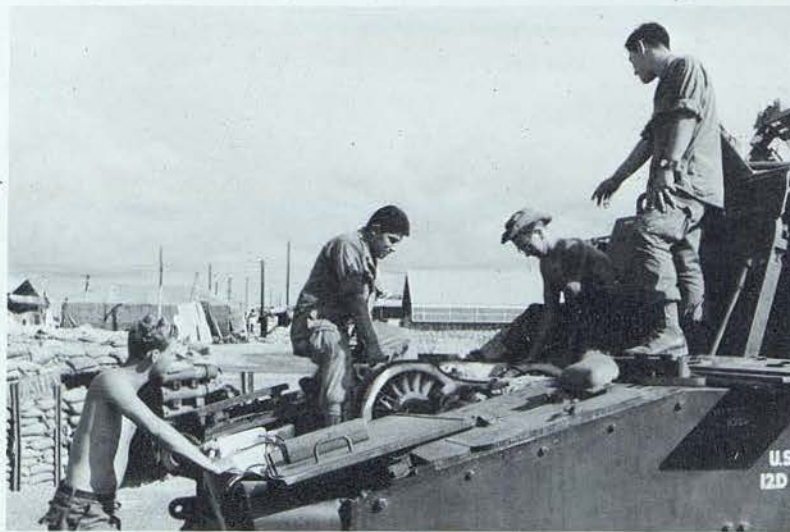
Twice daily the lay is checked.







## *1st Section*





## *2nd Section*





### *3rd Section*



### *The Base Piece*







## *4th Section*







## *5th Section*







## *6th Section*



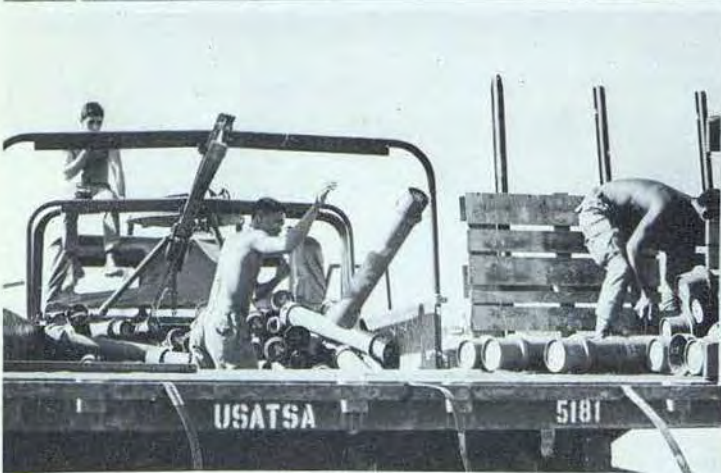


















*The  
Maintenance  
Section*



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*



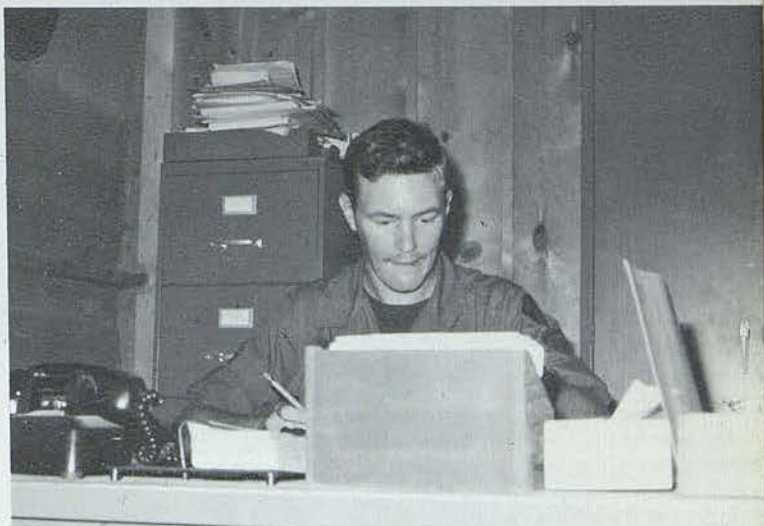
*First*

*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*

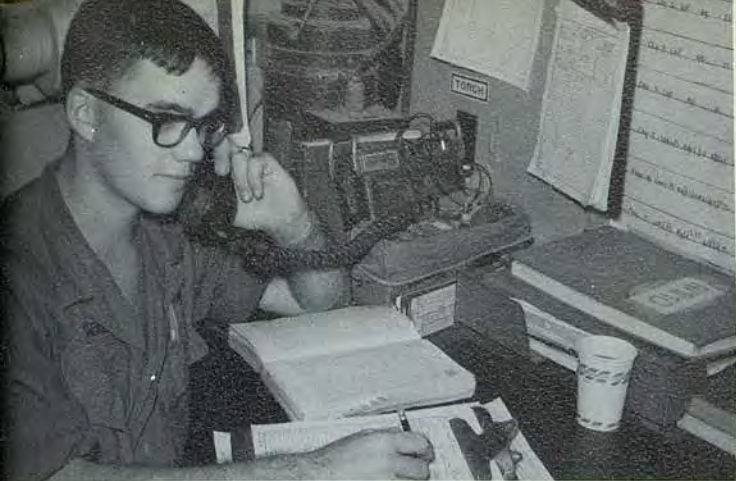


Keeping the M-60 clear

Plotting the grid







Receiving a fire mission.

The M577, command track, has been the mobile home of the FDC for over a year. From north of Tay Ninh to south of Ben Luc and numerous stops between, these men have learned to move. For a solid nine months, the road was their home. Finally getting back to base camp, they stayed three weeks and were off again.



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.

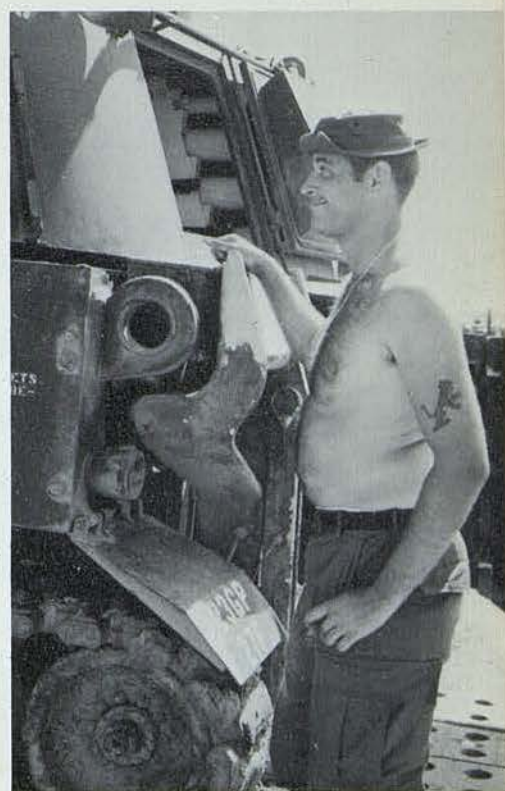




## *2nd Section*



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*

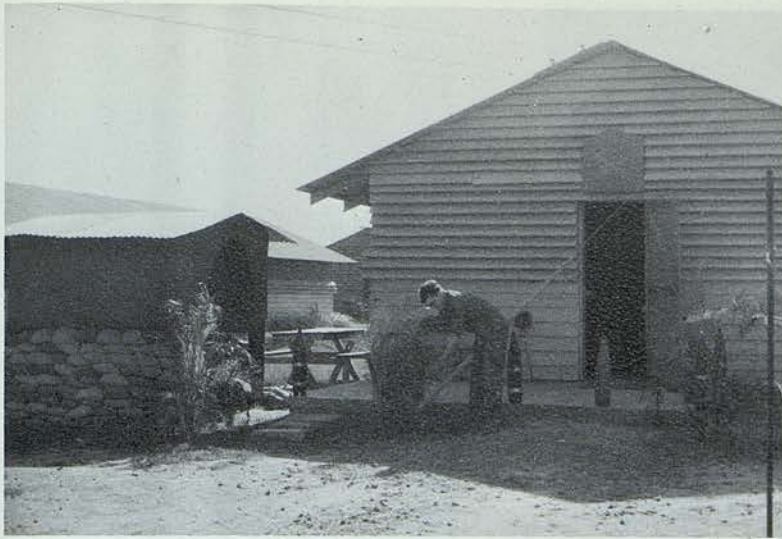


*Battery Commander*



*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 constantly checks the lay of the battery.

## *The XO Post*

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.



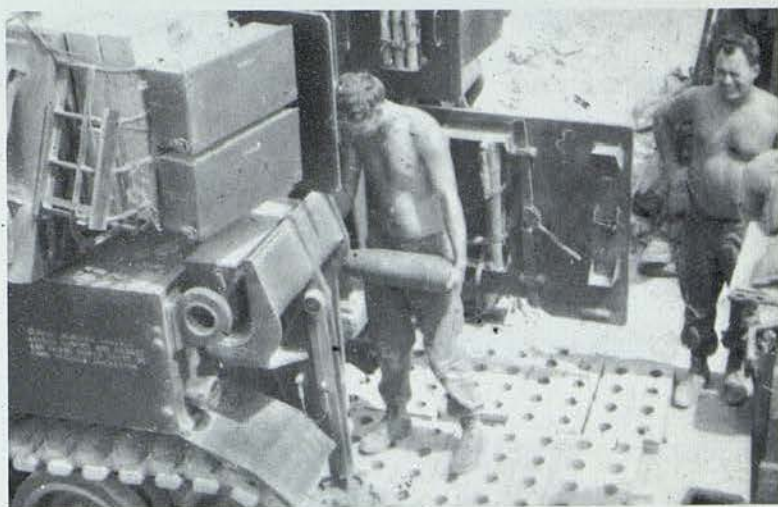
There is no elbow room inside the track.







*4th Section*





## *5th Section*







## *6th Section*



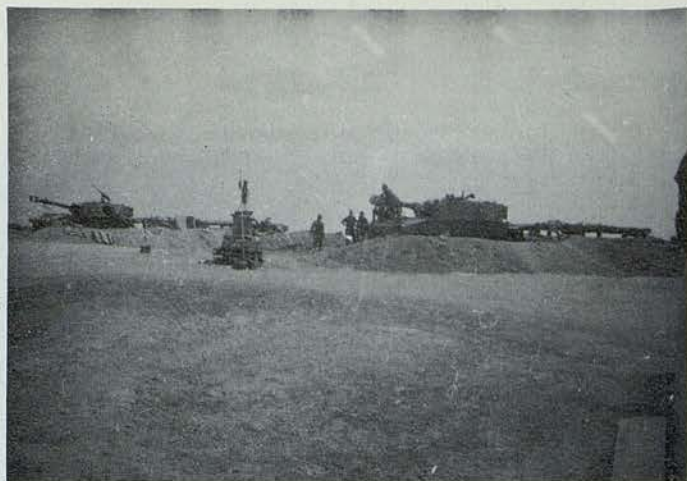
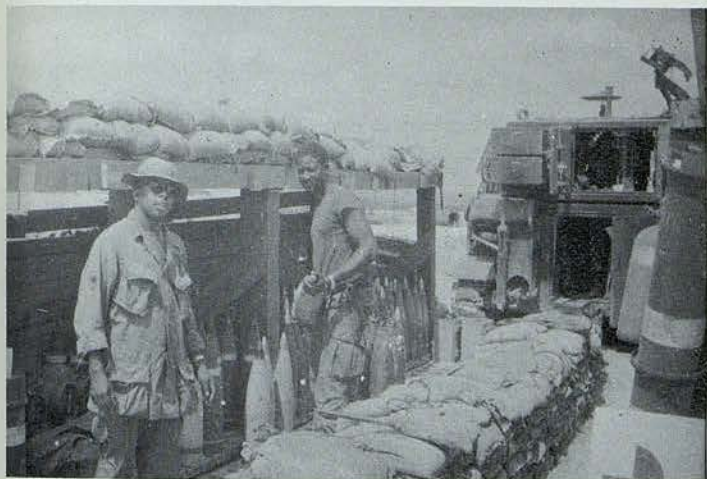




## *General*







































*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.







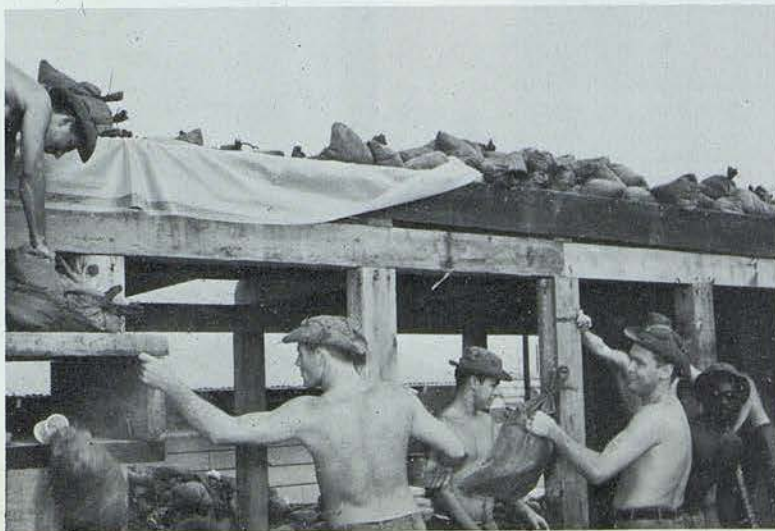
















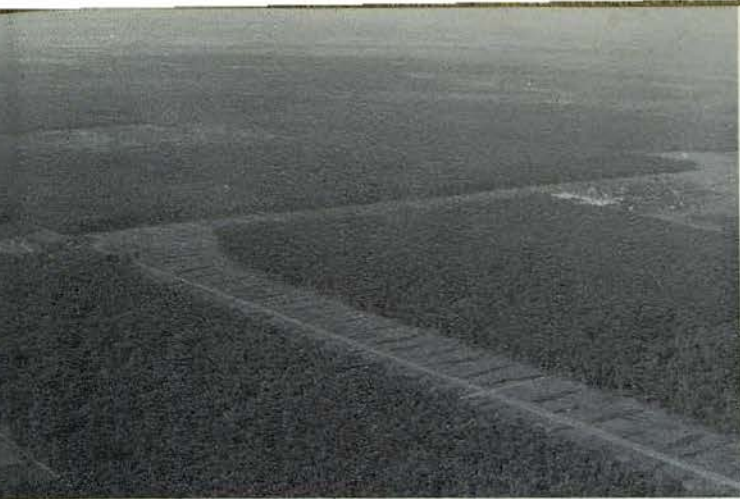














## *Yearbook Staff*



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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.



