

U. S. COAST GUARD HISTORICAL MONOGRAPH PROGRAM

The United States Coast Guard in South East Asia

During the Vietnam Conflict

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FOREWORD

In brief, the Coast Guard Historical Monograph Program, of which this publication is the first product, is simply the publishing of worthy historical works by Coast Guardsmen in the field of Coast Guard history. All that is essential for this experimental program's continued success is the willingness of enough Coast Guardsmen to undertake the task of researching and writing a concise narrative of specific segments in the vast treasure trove of little-known Coast Guard history.

The idea for this program was conceived by Captain B. L. Meaux, U. S. Coast Guard, Chief, Public Affairs Division, Coast Guard Headquarters, in mid-1973. Primarily, his rationale for initiating this program was: (1) to insure the preservation of as much Coast Guard history as possible in order that no important phase of it may be lost; (2) to stimulate interest in Coast Guard history among Coast Guardsmen, the academic community, and the general public, (3) to attempt to convince many individual Coast Guardsmen that the preservation of Coast Guard history in a narrative form is primarily their responsibility, since no one else can tackle this job with the same sense of identity, interest, or knowledge of the subject; (4) to record the brave deeds and honorable service of past Coast Guardsmen so that they can be compared to current and future performances; and (5) to use history as a means of fostering esprit de corps, as well as building and maintaining Coast Guard traditions.

PREFACE

This monograph is an overview of the activities of the United States Coast Guard in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam Conflict.

I would like to thank the Military Readiness Division at United States Coast Guard Headquarters for allowing me access to their files. The information in this monograph was gleaned from operational and administrative reports submitted by the various cutters, field units, and their operational and administrative commanders.

Appreciation is also acknowledged to Captain A. L. Lonsdale, U. S. Coast Guard, Chief, Public Affairs Division , and his Assistant, Commander J. L. Webb, U. S. Coast Guard. The encouragement and advice of the U. S. Coast Guard Historian, Mr. Truman R. Strobridge, was most helpful.

BIOGRAPHICAL FORMAT

LT. Eugene N. Tulich is a 1965 graduate of the University of Buffalo and a 1967 graduate of Officer Candidate School at Yorktown. LT. Tulich has spent two tours on cutters in Vietnam. His first tour was as Gunnery Officer on the Cutter CAMPBELL and the second tour as Operations Officer on the Cutter MORGENTHAU. Between tours in Southeast Asia served as a rescue controller in the COMMANDER EASTERN AREA/COAST GUARD DISTRICT THREE Rescue Coordination Center.

LT. Tulich was awarded three Navy Commendation Medals with Combat Distinguishing Device, the Combat Action Ribbon, and the Government of Vietnam Staff Service Medal, First Class for his performance in Vietnam.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER

1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
2	COAST GUARD SQUADRON ONE.....	2
3	COAST GUARD SQUADRON THREE.....	11
4	PORT SECURITY AND WATERWAYS DETAIL.....	16
5	AIDS TO NAVIGATION.....	19
6	SHIPPING ADVISOR.....	23
7	SENIOR COAST GUARD OFFICER VIETNAM.....	25
8	MISCELLANEOUS.....	26
9	HUMANITARIANISM.....	27
10	CONCLUSION.....	32

APPENDICES

I	EIGHTY-TWO FOOT PATROL BOATS ASSIGNED TO COAST GUARD SQUADRON ONE	34
II	HIGH ENDURANCE CUTTERS ASSIGNED TO COAST GUARD SQUADRON THREE	36
III	OTHER COAST GUARD CUTTERS IN SOUTH VIETNAM	38
IV	COAST GUARD SQUADRON ONE STATISTICS	39
V	COAST GUARD SQUADRON THREE STATISTICS	40
VI	MAJOR TRAWLER ENGAGEMENTS INVOLVING U.S. COAST GUARD UNITS	41
	ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	42
	GLOSSARY.....	46

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Early in the Vietnam War, the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces obtained their supplies in many ways. The forces allied with the Republic of South Vietnam could not stop the enemy's flow of men, arms and supplies.

During February, 1965, a U. S. Army pilot flying over Vung Ro Bay near Qui Nhon noticed an "island" moving slowly from one side of the bay to the other. Upon closer observation he saw the "island" was a carefully camouflaged ship. Air strikes were called in and the vessel sunk. Intelligence sources determined the ship was North Vietnamese and engaged in supplying enemy forces.

A tight security and surveillance system was necessary. This would be no easy chore with 1,200 miles of coastline to patrol and over 60,000 junks and sampans to control. To provide this coverage the Coastal Surveillance Force was established in March, 1965. Called Market Time after the native boats using the waterways for fishing and marketing, this task force provided a single command to integrate sea, air, and land based units and coordinate U.S. Navy, Coast Guard and South Vietnamese naval units.

Market Time units stopped many enemy vessels carrying supplies and men. The success of the operation forced the enemy to rely on the Ho Chi Minh trail to transport supplies. As many of the trawler "kills" were in southern Vietnam near the Ca Mau peninsula, the enemy had to carry supplies over an extraordinarily long distance.

CHAPTER 2

COAST GUARD SQUADRON ONE

Shortly after the trawler incident, Commander, Naval Forces Vietnam (COMNAVFORV) considered maintaining surveillance and patrols on the inland and coastal waters of the Republic of Vietnam. Soon the need for Coast Guard units was recognized and the Secretary of the Navy asked the Secretary of Treasury about the availability of Coast Guard units. The Commandant of the Coast Guard said that 82 foot and 40 foot patrol boats were available. Coast Guard representatives and the Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet (CINCPACFLT) met and decided that the Coast Guard would provide seventeen 82 foot patrol boats. The Navy promised two Repair Ships (ARL's) in support of the seventeen. The Secretaries of Defense and Treasury sent a joint memorandum to the President for approval of the proposed deployment. On April 29, 1965, the formation of Coast Guard Squadron One was announced. On May 6, the Coast Guard ordered the deployment of the seventeen patrol boats and only twelve days later they were loaded on merchant vessels in New York, Norfolk, New Orleans, Gavleston, San Pedro, San Francisco, and Seattle. At Coast Guard Base Alameda, Coast Guard Squadron One was commissioned in a ceremony that took place at 1000 hours, May 27.

Initially, 47 officers and 198 enlisted were assigned to the newly formed Squadron One. These Coastguardsmen underwent survival training at Coronado, California, and were also instructed on such topics as the care and feeding of the 81 mm mortar and the .50 caliber machine gun. Other subjects included NBC warfare, Damage Control, Navigation and Piloting, Organization, Rules of the Nautical Road, Boarding Procedures and Tactics, Lookout Procedures, Recognition, Combat Indoctrination, Radiotelephone Procedures, Water Survival, Hand to Hand Combat, and the Code of Conduct. After training, the personnel joined their patrol boats at Subic Bay, Philippine Islands.

On June 12, 1965, Coast Guard Squadron One came under the authority of the Navy when it changed operational control to Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet (CINPACFLT). The Coast Guardsmen of Squadron One were given orientation and refresher training at Subic Bay Naval Base. While the cutters prepared for their voyage to Vietnam, Squadron One established a liaison office at the Headquarters of Chief, Naval Advisory Group in Saigon to help resolve any problems.

The boats of Coast Guard Division 12 departed Subic Bay for Da Nang on July 16, and eight days later Division 11 sailed for An Thoi in the Gulf of Thailand. Upon arrival, both units changed operational control to Commander Task Force 71. They were only under CTF 71 a few days until Commander Task Force 115 (Market Time) was established on 30 July 1965. Five Coastal Surveillance Centers were set up under CTF 115 and located at Da Nang, Qui Nhon, Nha Trang, Vung Tau, and An Thoi. These CSC's coordinated the patrols of the Squadron One cutters and directed significant operations.

The cutters immediately began their patrol duties. The great profusion of junks, sampans, and varied other craft required a prioritized system for boardings. The priority scheme was:

- 1) Vessels transiting the area;
- 2) Junks fishing or operating in restricted areas;
- 3) Fishing boats anchored and not working nets;
- 4) Fishing boats working nets.

Division 11 carried out patrols by being underway two-thirds of the time; for Division 12, three days on patrol followed one day in port with a five day rest after six patrols.

When the cutters were underway they reported to a minesweeper or destroyer escort that was patrolling the outer barrier. The escort ships provided the WPB's with radar and navigational information. In turn, the WPB's provided

similar service to Vietnamese Navy Junk Force units that were close inshore. Although the water was too shallow for the cutters to be in close with the VNN junks, they could provide gunfire support if necessary.

A few matters required quick remedy. On its first night patrol near the 17th parallel, the CGC POINT ORIENT received mortar and machine gun fire. White cutters were easy targets in moonlight or by flare-light. On September 21st, CTF 115 ordered the patrol boats painted gray. POINT YOUNG did not get the word and on one of its early patrols received fire from friendly forces. Luckily no one was hurt and the cutter was quickly painted gray.

After one month of aggressive patrols, command felt there was only about a 10% chance of a junk slipping through security and no chance for a steel-hulled vessel. In its first month of operation, Division 11 boarded more than 1,100 junks and sampans, inspected over 4,000 Vietnamese craft, and used more than 4,800 man hours to carry out the assigned mission -- "Stop Sea Infiltration of Weapons and Supplies to the Viet Cong". In addition to the heavy patrol schedule of the cutters, the support staff ashore worked an average of 84 hours a week.

The effectiveness of the patrols hurt the VC and the barrier patrol became both a physical and psychological battle. The VC told the local fishermen that the WPBs were driving them from their best fishing grounds just so U.S. fishing boats could fish there. This may have seemed true to the Vietnamese fishermen since frequently the best fishing grounds were in restricted areas and the WPB's did chase them out. The Coast Guard, Navy and South Vietnamese set up a counter psychological warfare operation which included handouts of literature and SVN flags. Medical treatment was given and medevacs to United States-supported hospitals were common. The Americans also gave away large quantities of candy and cigarettes.

Action was always just around the bend. On September 19, 1965. POINT GLOVER was nearly rammed by a 20-foot junk carrying five men, one of whom was subsequently captured along with several small arms, ammunition and papers. That same day POINT MARONE attempted to inspect a 40-foot junk. The junk evaded and opened fire with small arms and grenades. The cutter responded with machine gun fire, killing 8 Viet Cong. One VC was captured along with small arms, ammunition, grenades, a lead sealed box, clothing, money and caulking compound. Besides their normal patrol duties, the WPBs frequently provided emergency support for U.S. Special Forces. This emergency support included transportation of personnel, medevacs, and Naval Gunfire Support missions.

Despite the performance of the cutters, there remained a large gap in the forces. Division 12 in Da Nang covered the East Coast and Division 11 provided coverage on the West Coast, but no one protected the vital Southeast Coast. So on October 29th, 1965, at the request of the Secretary of the Navy, the Coast Guard ordered nine additional Coast Guard 82-foot patrol boats to join RONONE under CTF 115. The WPB's of Division 13 embarked on December 1, 1965 and the division was established on the 12th. The cutters sailed from Subic Bay enroute Cat Lo on February 18, 1966. As Squadron One grew so did the duties of its staff. On November 5, 1965, Commander Coast Guard Squadron One was assigned additional duty with the U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (COMUSMACV) Joint Staff attached to the Naval Advisory Group (NAVADVGRP) in connection with IV Coastal Zone advisor task. On December 15, the commander of Squadron One was upgraded to a captain (O-6) billet and assigned the additional duty of advisor to Chief, Naval Advisory Group SAIGON for Coast Guard related matters.

POINT WHITE was in Vietnam only a month when she started conducting patrols on a VC-controlled area of the Soi Rap River. The POINT WHITE used a

plan of steaming out of the patrol area and covertly returning. Soon she spotted a junk crossing the river and attempted to stop it. The junk opened fire with small arms, including automatic weapons. POINT WHITE returned the fire and rammed the junk throwing the occupants into the water. The cutter's commanding officer rescued a survivor who turned out to be a key VC leader of the Rung Sat Secret Zone. During March, three WPBs of Division 13 killed twenty-seven VC in action, and captured seven more, and confiscated considerable contraband.

In April 1966, POINT COMFORT was fired upon by a Cambodian patrol in the Gulf of Thailand; POINT PARTRIDGE captured a VC Colonel of Engineers; Coast Guard and Navy personnel fought a fire that destroyed several housing units in the village of An Thoi, Phu Quoc Island.

During May POINT PARTRIDGE captured a junk containing Chinese Communists weapons and POINT GRACE captured a sampan and took three prisoners, rifles and ammunition. On May 10, Coast Guard units fought a significant naval engagement. POINT GREY was on patrol near the Ca Mau peninsula when she sighted a 110-foot trawler heading on various courses and speeds. Suspicious aroused, POINT GREY commenced shadowing the trawler. After observing what appeared to be signal fires on the beach, she hailed the vessel, but received no response. The trawler ran aground and POINT GREY personnel attempted to board it. Heavy automatic weapons fire from the beach prevented the boarding and three were wounded on board POINT GREY. POINT CYPRESS and U.S. Navy units came to assist. During the encounter the trawler exploded. U.S. Navy salvage teams recovered a substantial amount of war material from the sunken vessel. This incident was the largest, single, known infiltration attempt since the Vung Ro Bay incident of February 1965.

During that first year of operations the cutters of Squadron One

- 1) steamed more than half million miles;
- 2) stayed underway over seventy percent of the time;

- 3) detected 15,000 junks;
- 4) inspected 30,000 junks;
- 5) boarded 35,000 junks;
- 6) accounted for 75 VC KIA/WIA/CIA;
- 7) arrested several hundred;
- 8) destroyed sixteen junks and one steel hull;
- 9) captured more than 100 tons of enemy weapons and supplies;
- 10) conducted thirty-five Naval gunfire support missions;
- 11) participated in special operations in support of U.S. and South Vietnamese forces; and conducted an active psychological warfare campaign.

In the month of June, POINT LEAGUE detected a 99-foot trawler in South Vietnamese waters. POINT LEAGUE challenged the trawler and was fired upon. The cutter returned fire and ran the trawler aground. POINT SLOCUM and POINT HUDSON joined in the fray, along with aircraft. After a small explosion was observed on the trawler, she was boarded and captured. Two Coastguardsmen were wounded during the battle.

POINT ARDEN rescued an LCU from straying over the 17th parallel, a not uncommon occurrence due to the configuration of the coastline. On August 11, 1966, POINT WELCOME was on patrol near the DMZ when suddenly she was illuminated and mistakenly attacked by U.S. Air Force aircraft. Before the mistake was found out and the attack stopped the commanding officer and a crewman on POINT WELCOME were dead. The executive officer, two other crewmen, the Vietnamese liaison, and a freelance photographer were wounded.

September was a time for rescues when the Coast Guard saved four of six crewmen from a downed helicopter. POINT LEAGUE responded to a distress on the SS DRAGONFLY, dewatering a flooded compartment, and replaced the injured Chief Engineer with one of its crewmen.

October was quiet and November was highlighted by POINT COMFORT dispersing enemy forces attacking U.S. Special Forces personnel. POINT COMFORT provided naval gunfire support, suppressed enemy fire and evacuated refugees.

The days went routinely until March 14, 1967 when POINT ELLIS and Navy units detected an enemy steel hulled trawler and forced it to beach. The enemy was forced to destroy a precious cargo of mortars, small arms, uniforms and other contraband, and lost a large quantity of much needed war material.

The waters around Vietnam were relatively uncharted and so survey vessels were dispatched to conduct hydrographic operations. During these operations in May 1967, a survey boat from the USS MAURY was hit by enemy fire and was sinking. POINT KENNEDY went along side the survey boat to give damage control assistance and simultaneously suppressed enemy fire while extracting both craft from this precarious position. The same month the Vietnamese liaison and a crewman from the POINT ELLIS went into the water to recover a sailor lost overboard from the USS PRINCETON.

On July 15, 1967, POINT ORIENT led an attack on an enemy trawler. The trawler was disabled, run aground and captured.

The Coast Guard patrol boats were built for offshore rescue work in adverse weather conditions while their Navy counterpart, the PCF, was not. Well suited to their mission, the Coast Guard craft frequently remained on station in bad weather after larger naval units departed. As a result, CTF 115 decided in September 1967 that WPBs would shift patrol areas seasonally. The WPB's followed the monsoons and the PCF's followed the sunshine. Though this policy may have been unpopular with an occasional Coastguardsman, the cutters still maintained the patrol schedule and fulfilled all their duties.

The largest naval engagement of the Vietnam war was on February 29, 1968. Four trawlers attempted to penetrate the barrier. Of these, three were destroyed and the fourth retreated to the north. The first attempted to run

the barrier south of Da Nang. The 255-foot high endurance cutter ANDROSCOGGIN challenged her and soon commenced fire which the enemy infiltrator returned. POINT WELCOME closed in, firing illumination mortar rounds. POINT GREY and PCFs used machine guns. The trawler fired back at the patrol boats until she beached herself. Shortly after 2:30 a.m on March 1st the trawler self-destructed.

Another trawler was destroyed off the Ca Mau peninsula. After numerous hits by gunfire from cutters WINONA, POINT GRACE, POINT MARONE, POINT HUDSON, and navy PCF's, she burst into flame and exploded. She disappeared from the radar screens about the same time as the previous one.

About the same time a third trawler was caught and beached northeast of Nha Tang. The trawler attempted to return the fire of the Coast Guard and Navy units, but was destroyed after several direct hits from 81 mm mortars. While on outer barrier patrol, MINNETONKA spotted a fourth trawler before the trawler crossed into Vietnamese waters. The trawler turned and left the area.

The LST ramp for unloading supplies and ammunition was located near the DMZ at Cua Viet. POINT ARDEN was there on March 10 when a fire started. The chief boatswain's mate from POINT ARDEN extinguished the fire, and secured a 5 inch rubber hose pumping gasoline. He received shrapnel wounds from a minor explosion. He is given credit for saving the main ammunition dump.

In January 1969, in the first phase in a transition of WPBs to Vietnamese control, two Vietnamese Navy lieutenants reported on board WPBs. A month later seventeen VNN ensigns and two more lieutenants reported as part of a turnover. Language and communications problems were quickly overcome. Vietnamese enlisted men were phased in, replacing U.S. counterparts and after several fully operational patrols were ready for takeover. On May 16, 1969, the cutters POINT GARNET and POINT LEAGUE transferred to the Vietnamese Navy in ceremonies at Saigon and were renamed LE PHUOC DUI and LE VAN NGA respectively

Meanwhile the other cutters continued their normal duties. In two trips through the surf, POINT BANKS rescued nine members of friendly forces trapped by the VC. Damage control parties from POINT CYPRESS and POINT WHITE saved a PCF from sinking. POINT WHITE refloated two PCF's that went aground at Ha Tien. While at Ha Tien, POINT WHITE crewmen repaired an evaporator previously thought unserviceable, giving forces in Ha Tien their first consistent water supply in more than a year.

Paramount to other activities, the primary goal was turnover. The turnover process included the training of Vietnamese repair forces. By August the VNN WPB repair crew could remove and install overhauled engines in the WPB's unaided, except for some American muscle. Certain personnel problems were encountered, attributable to the fact that the VNN was emerging from a coastal junk force to a modern navy in just a few years.

Boats were steadily turned over and several significant operations took place while a substantial portion of each crew was Vietnamese. In early 1970, POINT JEFFERSON and POINT PARTRIDGE conducted many boardings, searches and psychological operations. Three hundred fifteen junks were boarded or inspected and two detainees taken; the cutters distributed 3,000 bars of soap and 5,000 leaflets along with numerous food items. Twelve Vietnamese received medical treatment. Later POINT JEFFERSON helped friendly forces retake an outpost overrun by the VC. During May 1970 POINT BANKS and POINT GRAY landed a group who detained sixteen suspected VC, captured twenty-two VC/NVA, and killed nine VC. The group destroyed ten enemy watercraft, fifteen offensive structures and thirteen other structures.

On August 15, 1970, the last two cutters of the twenty-six, POINT MARONE and POINT CYPRESS transferred to the Vietnamese. The same day Coast Guard Squadron One and Coast Guard Division Thirteen were disestablished. A new post of Senior Coast Guard Officer, Vietnam was established as a sub-unit of Commander, Coast Guard Southeast Asia Section.

CHAPTER 3

COAST GUARD SQUADRON THREE

Early in 1967, the Navy forces assigned to Market Time and other operations were being stretched thin. As a result, the Navy requested that the Coast Guard provide five high endurance cutters (WHEC) for duty with the Coastal Surveillance Forces. On April 24, 1967, Coast Guard Squadron Three was formed at Pearl Harbor. Two days later the squadron sailed from Pearl Harbor and arrived at Subic Bay on May 10.

BARATARIA left Subic Bay a few days later and on the May 22 fired the first WHEC Naval Gunfire Support Mission (NGFS) mission of the war. Still, the WHECs continued their peacetime duties with HALF MOON acting as On Scene Commander in the search for survivors from the sunken ship SHINAGAWA MARU. YAKUTAT took a young girl on board for medical treatment after she suffered a gunshot wound to the leg. Also the cutters immediately started conducting MEDCAPS.

On October 1, 1967, Commander, Task Unit (CTU) 70.8.6 (Coast Guard Squadron Three) consolidated with CTU 70.8.5 (Navy Escort Squadron). The new unit, designated CTU 70.8.5, was commanded by the senior Coast Guard officer, and given the additional duty as "Commander, Cruiser-Destroyer Group Seventh Fleet Representative, Subic." Besides the normal squadron administrative duties, CTU 70.8.5 was also assigned scheduling, equipment pools, boarding briefings, message handling, yeoman and storekeeper services, casualty report control, material expediting, personnel matters, and more. Coast Guard Squadron Three cutters were soon included in the Senior Officer Present Afloat Administrative (SOPA ADMIN) HONG KONG rotation. Vessels assigned as SOPA ADMIN provided administrative support for other naval units visiting Hong Kong including coordinating arrivals, departures, services and activities, liaison

with the Royal Navy authorities, the American Consulate, and SOPA HONG KONG.

BERING STRAIT was the first cutter to perform these duties.

Due to their shallow draft the cutters of Squadron Three were primarily assigned to the Gulf of Thailand. Not long after their arrival, they began to provide 5"/38 gunfire support. The primary NGFS aid was given to the village of Song Ong Doc near the Ca Mau peninsula. Song Ong Doc had a small United States Special Forces base and was located in the middle of a VC controlled area. The high endurance cutters also supplied logistic support to the WPBs and PCFs on patrol. The PCF is a rough riding boat, with few amenities. To allow the PCF to remain on patrol for extended periods two crews were assigned. With the off-duty crew lived aboard the outer barrier cutter. Frequently cutter personnel replaced the sick, wounded or tired personnel of the PCF.

The high endurance cutters resupplied at either one of the support bases or from one of the oilers, ammunition ships, supply ships transiting the coastal waters. The latter proved more feasible; besides, the support ships also carried the mail from home.

On February 29, 1968, WINONA and ANDROSCOGGIN engaged enemy infiltrating trawlers and destroyed them with the aid of WPBs and Navy units. MINNETONKA repelled another. These engagements have been previously described in the WPB story.

The high endurance cutter constantly provided medical treatment for other military personnel. Wounded U.S. Navy and Army personnel were treated on board the cutters, along with other friendlies. USN, USCG, and VNN vessels knew that the cutters carried medical officers and would transfer their sick on board for treatment. ANDROSCOGGIN's medical officer once performed four hours of major surgery on a Vietnamese soldier wounded by a grenade.

In the spring and early summer of 1968 CAMPBELL and ANDROSCOGGIN found action. ANDROSCOGGIN assisted ARVN troops in an amphibious operation. Other cutters participated in similar operations at later dates. On patrol near the DMZ, CAMPBELL came across a derelict junk and blew it up so the junk would not be a hazard to navigation. A few days later, the PCF 19 attached to CAMPBELL was sunk near the Cua Viet river by friendly aircraft. POINT DUME recovered only two survivors. A month later ANDROSCOGGIN provided emergency damage control assistance to a PCF. Later OWASCO saved a PCF hit by enemy fire from sinking.

In June 1969, ANDROSCOGGIN conducted a hydrographic survey of a an uncharted area. This type of operation became routine as the cutters charted the exact position of lights, islands, and other landmarks. MORGENTHAU frequently transmitted chart corrections and even located an uncharted pinnacle when she struck it. INGHAM provided a similar chart correction when she grounded.

The Song Ong Doc area was in a constant state of battle and the cutters gave frequent assistance. Eventually, due to the extreme situation a cutter was assigned to regular support of Song Ong Doc especially with NGFS. The cutter would provide NGFS, logistics, damage control, and medical support to PCFs travelling into VC controlled areas.

At the other end of Vietnam, the cutters patrolling near the DMZ also prevented lost vessels from straying over the 17th parallel. Gunfire support was not a prime duty in this area, but on one occasion OWASCO illuminated an Army post in danger of being overrun while the USS NEW JERSEY provided destructive fire.

On May 16, 1969, the Navy personnel of CUT 70.8.5 were withdrawn. As the duties were only slightly lessened, the Navy provided one officer and six enlisted on TAD to fill in the gap. A month later, the RONTTHREE staff worked nearly full-time on salvaging gear from the stricken USS FRANK E. EVANS.

SPENCER caught fire in Sasebo, Japan, during July 1969. The fire damage was not extensive and she was soon underway. The same month, SEBAGO removed five ARVN's from an enemy-controlled area with a landing party accompanied by the ship's doctor. One hour after removing the five ARVN's, the landing party returned to rescue the spotter pilot who was shot down during the earlier rescue attempt.

The cutters of RONTHREE consisted of pre-World War II and World War II vintage cutters. Their performance was handicapped by age, partial obsolescence, and relatively low speed. On October 1, 1969, HAMILTON arrived in Subic Bay. She was the first of a new Coast Guard cutter class, commissioned in 1967, with high speed, improved gunfire control and quarters, and a large flight deck. The flight deck made the cutters extremely versatile, allowing helicopters to use the ship to refuel, transfer supplies, transport personnel, and evacuate wounded. Less than a month after arriving HAMILTON landed a large twin-rotor helicopter.

In March 1970 the SS COLUMBIA EAGLE was seized by mutineers, the crew set adrift, and the ship taken into Cambodia. MELLON and CHASE resolved the situation, and CHASE transported the shipless crew home.

The Coast Guard cutters remained in the Gulf of Thailand and gathered considerable knowledge about the area which they passed on to arriving Navy ships. As the cutters normally returned to the area after an R & R port, they frequently took in-country personnel with them on these port visits which proved to be a tremendous morale booster for the in-country troops. Vietnamese naval personnel were also taken along, and on some trips it was standing room only.

In the Gulf of Thailand during April 1970 an ARVN unit was in danger of being overrun. DALLAS responded with naval gunfire support, providing a path for the ARVN's and routing the enemy. DALLAS' medical officer treated eight

wounded Vietnamese soldiers on board until they could be evacuated to a hospital. During the operation, DALLAS covered the landing and the subsequent extraction of the troops.

BERING STRAIT and YAKUTAT were selected to be used by the Vietnamese Navy as offshore patrol units. They arrived in Subic Bay in June 1970 with a small cadre of Vietnamese on board, which was supplemented by another contingent at Subic. The VNN personnel were taught the operations of the ship and soon took over important positions in CIC, boarding parties, NGFS details, and repair crews. The VNN also performed the external functions of the ship, especially boardings. The VNN officers soon became underway and in-port OOD's. Teams assumed engineering watches, navigated, piloted, and provided all the control and most other positions in the NGFS teams. Their training became apparent when a combined USCG/VNN rescue and assistance party from YAKUTAT extinguished a serious fire and performed damage control on a USN landing ship

Rumors circulated that Song Ong Doc would be overrun and in October 1970 the village and base were hit hard by the VC and most of the base destroyed. In November, the base and village moved inland to New Song Ong Doc and the need for Coast Guard support was reduced. However, a month later RUSH and an Australian destroyer conducted emergency gunfire support for New Song Ong Doc killing sixty-four attackers.

A trawler attempted to infiltrate on November 21, 1970. After being hailed to stop, she resisted and was destroyed by gunfire from RUSH, SHERMAN and USN units.

During November 1970 BERING STRAIT and YAKUTAT in Subic Bay were painted gray except for Coast Guard identification markings. In December, the cutters underwent refresher training with nearly an all Vietnamese crew. After completing the training, the ships departed for Saigon. There they were turned over to the Vietnamese on January 1, 1971 in a colorful ceremony where the invocation was given by a Navy chaplain and the benediction by a Buddhist monk.

On February 28, 1971, after dropping off a MEDCAP party, MORGENTHAU struck an uncharted rock pinnacle in the Gulf of Thailand causing extensive underwater damage. After being towed to Subic Bay, the Ship Repair Facility repaired MORGENTHAU in record time.

On the night of April 11-12, 1971 RUSH and MORGENTHAU teamed up with Navy and VNN units to destroy an enemy trawler trying to infiltrate supplies into South Vietnam near the Ca Mau peninsula.

CASTLE ROCK and COOK INLET arrived in Subic Bay in July 1971 for eventual turnover to the Vietnamese Navy. The training progressed rapidly, with dual ship exercises taking place in November. To display his confidence in the high state of training, the Commodore of RONTREE transferred between the two ships on a highline.

In December 1971 COOK INLET was the last Coast Guard cutter on a combat patrol in Vietnamese waters, with a primarily Vietnamese crew. On December 21, the final two ships of Coast Guard Squadron Three were transferred to the Vietnamese Navy in Saigon. These two ships proceeded to Subic Bay in January for refresher training conducted by RONTREE and Navy personnel.

Coast Guard Squadron Three was disestablished on January 31, 1972, ending another chapter of Coast Guard history.

CHAPTER 4

PORT SECURITY AND WATERWAYS DETAIL

One of the missions of the Coast Guard is Port Security in United States ports. The Coast Guard is also responsible for supervising the loading and unloading of dangerous cargo. From early on in the course of the Vietnam War, some sort of port security and dangerous cargo safety was needed. The port of Saigon was especially unsafe. On August 4, 1965, COMUSMACV initiated a

request for a Coast Guard Port Security Officer to be assigned on TAD to the Commander, Capitol Military District for the Port of Saigon. The Chief of Naval Operations concurred and forwarded the request to the Commandant of the Coast Guard. The success of the Coast Guard officer sent to Saigon prompted a request from CHNAVADVGRP to CINPAC for the billet to be made permanent.

The need for personnel experienced in handling explosives personnel became more obvious after the demonstrated ability of the Port Security officer. On February 17, 1966, COMUSMACV requested CINPAC ask the Commandant for two Explosives Loading Detachments, each consisting of one officer and seven enlisted. The ELD's were to be highly trained in explosives handling, port security and also be able to instruct others in these duties. Commander in Chief, Pacific forwarded the request to JCS and the Chief of Naval Operations requested that the Coast Guard provide them. The two ELD's were sent, with ELD #1 located at Nha Be and ELD #2 at Cam Ranh Bay.

After several months of operation RONONE asked that the senior enlisted be upgraded to either a senior or master chief as the chief petty officer ran into difficulty with senior Army enlisted personnel and was frequently dealing directly with senior Army officers on important matters. The ELD's could stop any US flag vessel from loading or unloading and basically had "carte blanche" to do what was needed to enforce regulations.

The ELD's lacked equipment because they were assigned away from the Coast Guard and attached to the Army's First Logistics Command. However, they made do with what they could borrow from the Army. Once ELD's were in-country, masters of vessels carrying dangerous cargo asked for them. Hairy situations were quite common on US and Vietnamese vessels due to carelessness, drinking, and smoking. At Duc Pho one-third of the ammunition was lost due to sloppy procedures and it was common to have ammunition barges with Vietnamese families living on board, cooking with open fires.

Most recommendations of the ELD's were followed including a recommendation of ELD #1 to move operations from Nha Be to Cat Lai in May 1967. In August, Nha Be was hit extremely hard by the VC and had ammunition still been unloaded there a disaster, could have occurred.

A common problem in handling ammunition was smoking. The military police assigned for security and merchant seamen were common violators. One Coast Guardsman was assaulted by seamen who did not like being told not to smoke on deck.

In the port of Da Nang, Division Twelve provided an inspection and advisory team for dangerous cargo handling as normal duties allowed. Though extremely useful, they could not provide the necessary service and in August, 1967, Commander Naval Support Activities Da Nang requested a full-time ELD team. In October the port authorities in Qui Nhon made a similar request in the aftermath of a potentially disastrous incident. The latter request came after a bomb dropped into an LCM killing the coxswain and one other man. The subsequent explosions would have caused the greatest disaster of the war if the LCM hadn't drifted away from the ammunition ship.

ELD #1 was busy during February 1968. A merchant ship was hit by nine rounds of recoilless rifle fire and started to burn. The ELD team charged the hoses and put water on the deck, manned winches and stowed ammunition located on deck, and finally got the Vietnamese stevedores to cover the hatches. A second incident involved a direct hit on an ammunition barge loaded with 81 mm mortar rounds. The barge started to burn and the 1st class engineman assigned to the ELD boarded the barge. Finding that the fire hoses would not reach, he fought the fire with his bare hands and buckets of water. Six pallets of mortar shells burned before the fire was extinguished.

The ELD's for Da Nang and Qui Nhon arrived and soon the Port Security Officer called on the new port commander of Qui Nhon to discuss extremely

hazardous conditions at Vung Ro Bay which were noted by the officer-in-charge of ELD #3. Corrective action was immediately taken and several army officers relieved on the spot. A TAD unit was set up for the port of Vung Tau made up of personnel from the other ELD's and so there were now five ELD's in-country.

The ELD's were active teachers as well as supervisors. They taught U.S. Army and Vietnamese boat coxswains how to handle small boats and perform maintenance on outboard motors. The ELD's gave instructions in port fire fighting and pier inspections. They instructed Vietnamese army stevedores in the techniques of blocking and bracing cargo.

In January 1971 the Coast Guard began to train Vietnamese personnel in the safe handling of ammunition. The first eight ARVN officers completed on-the-job training in September. These officers were assigned to the various ELD's to further train ARVN personnel. The Vietnamese learned quickly and soon began supervising the offloading of ammunition, under the direction of ELD personnel. Some masters objected to the arrangement, but complaints diminished due to the demonstrated competence of the Vietnamese ELD teams. Training continued and the Senior Coast Guard Officer, Vietnam presided at a graduation ceremony in Cat Lai for twelve Vietnamese explosive loading specialists in which graduation certificates were provided.

In early February of 1973, the Coast Guard Port Security and Waterways Detail in Vietnam was disestablished.

CHAPTER 5

AIDS TO NAVIGATION

COMUSMACV requested a buoy tender in early 1966 and PLANETREE was sent that spring. Her job was to set petroleum (POL) buoys for offloading fuel. Though requested by MACV, her appearance came somewhat as a surprise. Most

activities had to be improvised. Despite these handicaps, the PLANETREE was able to set 16 large POL buoys in four Vietnamese ports.

Once PLANETREE demonstrated its expertise, more requests came in, such as marking a newly dredged channel, marking coral reefs, positioning mooring buoys, and others. The Coast Guardsmen trained in Aids to Navigation did attempt to fulfill these requests, even under adverse conditions, including setting buoys from an LCM in six to eight foot seas and using such navigational aids as "VC tree, grassy knoll, prominent rock, etc."

Eventually an improvised Aids to Navigation (ATON) advisor billet was established at COMCOGARDACTV which subsequently became permanent. As more aids were set, MACV hoped the Vietnamese lighthouse tender CUU LONG would be able to service the aids. However, the Vietnamese did not have the equipment or personnel to fully support the U.S. buoys. A full-time deployment of a Coast Guard tender was requested but denied. However, frequent short-term deployments were promised.

In May 1967 Coast Guard personnel were requested to set some "oil drum" buoys in Vung Tau Harbor. To do this, the men of Division Thirteen used a "cherry picker" on an LCU. However, they were handicapped by the Army's use of only two small red flags as position markers over a quarter-mile away. The mission proved difficult and the Army replaced the flags with 4' X 8' plyboards painted brown and green to blend into the background.

Army transportation officers were responsible for the harbors and when the CUU LONG entered port they acted as advisors. The Vietnamese were too polite to argue with these adamant Army advisors to set the buoys in accordance with the U.S. system rather than the Vietnamese system. Buoy tenders spent considerable time switching the buoys to the Vietnamese system.

Besides resetting buoys in the primary harbors, the IRONWOOD repositioned buoys in the Bassac River in 4 days which compared favorably with the 42 days

it took the CUU LONG. The IRONWOOD also confirmed a harbor pilot's suspicion that a sandbar was creeping across Vung Tau harbor by running aground on it.

In August 1967 CINPAC requested to have the Coast Guard tasked with the interim responsibility for the installation, maintenance and servicing of U.S. sponsored aids in Vietnamese waters until the RVN Directorate of Navigation could assume responsibility. The Coast Guard accepted the mission.

All Coast Guard units in Vietnam assumed the job of aids to navigation in addition to their normal duties. They received reports of abuses, received requests for new buoys, and conducted surveys to assist in establishing suitable navigation routes. The abuses were mainly caused by collisions and target practice by friendly forces. Another problem with lighted buoys was the constant replacement of batteries. The Vietnamese found that they could use the batteries in their junks and Coast Guard personnel in turn used car batteries as a temporary replacement.

When buoy tenders arrived in Vietnamese waters, they were kept busy. However, as soon as it became known that a buoy tender was in the area requests for services would pour in. One tender established a light on a wrecked and a beached tug as a vital navigation aid. The tug was also a forward observation post for the VC. The NAVAID was important to naval units operating in the area and used by the VC who knew the American forces would not destroy such an important navigational mark.

Tenders often constructed or replaced range markers. BASSWOOD planned to replace one for the fifth time in as many months. A range dayboard was to be installed in the graveyard of a small village. While the board was being hoisted by a small block and tackle, an old man calmly cut the line and walked off with the board. That made the sixth time.

Vietnamese lighthouse service personnel were assigned to temporary duty on board Coast Guard buoy tenders when the tenders arrived in-country. This

relationship fostered an interest by the Government of Vietnam in Aids to Navigation. Together Coast Guard and Vietnamese personnel reactivated and automated Vietnamese lighthouses, and activated U.S.-sponsored lights. While servicing lighthouses and other aids the tenders also provided services to the local populace such as MEDCAPS.

The Coast Guard trained Vietnamese in the various duties performed by the Service in the United States, including aids to navigation. Soon their expertise was developed, and they were called upon to relieve Coast Guard personnel of these duties. A timetable was set up for the turnover for responsibility of the aids from the Coast Guard to the Directorate of Navigation. Vietnamese Aids to Navigation Structures (VANS) were constructed under contract to replace aids such as buoys and ease the workload of the single Vietnamese buoy tender. The CUU LONG, however, was the stumbling block in the turnover. She was old; her engines obsolete, funds insufficient, and lacked a master or deck mechanic due to low wages. The latter situation was rectified when the Vietnamese Navy filled the billets. Other deficiencies were corrected with an increase in funds and a reorganization of the Directorate of Navigation to combine the Hydrographic and Lighthouse services. The transfer of responsibilities started in January 1972 and the last servicing by a Coast Guard buoy tender occurred that spring. The Directorate of Navigation assumed responsibility for all aids to navigation in December 1972.

The Coast Guard established another type of Aid to Navigation in South East Asia. It was called LORAN (Long Range Aid to Navigation). The purpose of LORAN was to provide a means of electronically aiding the mariner and aviator in an area where surface aids were almost nonexistent, the waters relatively uncharted, and the sky frequently overcast due to the monsoons.

CHAPTER 6

SHIPPING ADVISOR/MERCHANT MARINE DETAIL

The escalation of the Vietnam War meant that many supplies had to be transported by ship. Very little cargo could be carried on combat ships and as a result there was a tremendous buildup of merchant vessels under Military Sealift Command (MSTS) contract. The some of the seamen manning these vessels got into trouble both on board and ashore.

The merchant officers and shipping companies complained about the lack of a merchant marine detail and finally in August 1966, MSTS requested MACV to provide Coast Guard Merchant Marine Detail personnel. In December that year a marine inspection officer was assigned to Saigon.

Coast Guard officers assigned to merchant marine details have considerable authority when dealing with merchant vessels and personnel. They have authority to remove sailors from ships, order violations corrected, or stop a ship from sailing. To perform those duties successfully, the Coast Guard officer needed to be a diplomat, a judge, and also have a sense of humor.

Cases investigated by the marine inspection officers included suicide, missing at sea, assaults, marijuana use, desertions, gross misconduct, stabbings, drownings, pilfering cargo, sodomy, drunk on duty, incompetence, flag desecration, murder, sabotage, expired licenses, violation of statutes and regulations, hard narcotics, malingering, racial incidents, and verbal abuse to a Coast Guard officer in the performance of his duty. A constant problem was merchant seamen who got into trouble ashore. The authority of the army to arrest and prosecute merchant seamen often complicated matters. Courts-martial were not the normal procedure because of many legal problems. Any matter could normally be resolved by shipping advisor or the union representatives. In many cases the seaman voluntarily surrendered his license

to avoid prosecution and was repatriated back to the United States. One man was given a General Court-martial for murdering a shipmate.

The following are a few thumbnail sketches :

- A radio operator refused to fly from Saigon to Cam Ranh Bay because he should have had first class jet travel all the way from the Continental United States (CONUS) to his ship. There was no jet service available.
- A 77 year old first mate voluntarily surrendered his license because he could not see other ships close by in daylight.
- The master of a vessel was relieved because he was intoxicated during ammunition handling.
- A flag desecrator was removed from his ship.
- A military guard was provided for a merchant vessel whose crew had not been paid in several months and planned to leave the ship. In a similar case in 1964, 150 sampans stripped a liberty ship clean within 24 hours of abandonment.
- A seaman was accused of running a "house of ill-repute."
- An abusive seaman with a prosthetic leg woke up to find it had been thrown overboard.

The cases described above were routine, but others were more unusual. In August 1969, the MMD officer received word that a seaman was sailing on an altered license. Investigation showed that he was sailing as Chief Mate on a forged Master's license. In his possession were twenty-one blank counterfeit Coast Guard merchant marine licenses. He was also wanted by federal and local authorities for theft of a half million dollars.

The officer-in-charge also investigated cases where merchant vessels were fired upon while transiting the Saigon River and other waterways. After the merchant ship COLUMBIA EAGLE mutiny, the three MMD officers took testimony from the twenty-four crewmen that had been put off in lifeboats.

The signing of the peace treaty lessened the amount of U.S. flag merchant vessels arriving in Vietnam. This reduction eliminated the need for a Merchant Marine Detail and their duties were returned to the United States Consular Missions.

CHAPTER 7

SENIOR COAST GUARD OFFICER VIETNAM

The post of Senior Coast Guard Officer Vietnam (SCGOV) was established on August 15, 1970 when RONONE was disestablished. The main purpose of the post was to coordinate Coast Guard activities and provide support for the Coast Guardsmen arriving or departing Vietnam. This included normal rotation tours, R & R flights, emergency leave arrangements, and the returning to CONUS the crewmen relieved from the ships turned over to the Vietnamese. Other duties included administrative control of most Coast Guard personnel in-country and operational control of the Aids to Navigation detail and all buoy tenders deployed to Vietnam. The post was also a liaison to NAVFORV for the turnover of Coast Guard assets when specific turnover personnel were not attached. SCGOV also served on the operations staff of NAVFORV and worked closely with MACV.

The senior officer provided delivery service to Coast Guard ships of men and supplies, arranged USO shows, and assisted in civic action projects. SCGOV requested the cutters seek out fellow Coast Guardsmen assigned to various Army bases throughout Vietnam as these men were "suffering from cultural shock by having to live with the Army."

Besides helping the Coast Guard, he also gave aid to the Vietnamese when they needed supplies for the cutters previously turned over to them on February 11, 1973 the post of Senior Coast Guard Officer Vietnam was disestablished.

CHAPTER 8

MISCELLANEOUS ACTIVITIES

Coast Guard Exchange Pilots

In April 1968 three Coast Guard helicopter pilots were assigned to the 37th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron at Da Nang. Pilots were assigned there until November, 1972, while their USAF counterparts were assigned to stateside Coast Guard air stations. One Coast Guard pilot died in a rescue attempt. He was attempting to pick up a downed Marine Corps flier when his helicopter took heavy ground fire, touched down, and burst into flames.

Marine Police Advisor

This position was relatively shortlived, lasting only May 7, 1970 to March 18, 1971. The duty of the marine police advisor was to collect, prepare, and catalog a law library of pertinent Vietnamese laws and decrees. These included maritime law, ship inspection regulations, ship licensing, crew licensing, mortorboat licensing and inspection, fisheries law, and navigation laws. The advisor also helped the Vietnamese Marine Police obtain suitable boats.

WHEC Turnover Liaison

This position was established in June 1970 to assist in the turnover of the cutters BERING STRAIT and YAKUTAT to the Vietnamese which was accomplished on January 1, 1971. The post was disestablished on January 31, 1971.

Additional cutters were turned over and much of the initial liaison was accomplished by SCGOV, and on September 30, 1971 the position was re-established. After the transfer on December 21, 1971 of the cutters COOK INLET and CASTLE ROCK the position was again disestablished.

CHAPTER 9

HUMANITARIANISM

Song Ong Doc

The village of Song Ong Doc was located in the primary patrol area of the high endurance cutters from their arrival in 1967 until November 1970. A U.S. Special Forces (USSF) camp was also at Song Ong Doc. The commanding officer of this camp persuaded the cutters to perform MEDCAPS and other civic action projects which benefitted the people of Song Ong Doc, and also proved to be a great morale booster for the men of the WHECs.

HALF MOON built and installed playground equipment at the village school. ANDROSCOGGIN painted the school and gave a Christmas party for 500 children. ANDROSCOGGIN also purchased an engraved bell in Hong Kong for the school and WINONA's band performed for the village on more than one occasion. ANDROSCOGGIN repainted the popular village school and repaired a generator while MINNETONKA painted the local dispensary, repaired playground equipment, and distributed over 50 boxes of clothing, toys, and soap.

The ANDROSCOGGIN participated in the commencement exercises at the village school and gave away 400 dolls and 400 yo-yos. MENDOTA poured a new concrete floor for the village dispensary. DALLAS erected a building to be used as a dispensary and refurbished the village school.

The people of Song Ong Doc may have had the best medical treatment of any place in Vietnam. Nearly every cutter stationed off Song Ong Doc conducted MEDCAPS in the village on a frequent basis. Cutters providing MEDCAPS included ANDROSCOGGIN, YAKUTAT, WINONA, CAMPBELL, MINNETONKA, WACHUSETT, WINNEBAGOM, and MENDOTA.

Saigon School for Blind Girls

This school received early attention from the Saigon contingent of COGARDACTV. In late summer of 1966 Coast Guard personnel purchased and gave

the school a refrigerator. The refrigerator was followed with a washing machine from Japan. Gifts of food and clothing were common.

The Squadron wanted to help send one of the girls to the United States for further education. They contacted several schools and in July 1967 they were successful in obtaining a \$5000 scholarship from the Perkins School of the Blind. The biggest obstacle was arranging an exit visa for the girl selected. The Squadron personnel visited seventeen agencies in July and the end was not in sight. The visa was approved by President Thieu and the Minister of Education, but each time there was a referral to another agency. Finally on August 4, the exit visa and passport were arranged. Pan American Airlines graciously provided special VIP treatment for the young girl from Saigon to the East Coast.

The Saigon school constantly received help from the Squadron with most of the men giving up a small portion of their pay each month for its upkeep. Dental treatment was arranged with a dentist trained in the United States who volunteered her services. RONONE also arranged for transportation by Air Force helicopter of a girl from the school to the hospital ship, USS SANCTUARY, for eye surgery. The Squadron Commander hand delivered a cornea transplant to be surgically grafted on the girl.

Island Adoption

In August 1966, the patrol boats instituted an island adoption program. There were four main objectives of the program:

- 1) to provide educational and informational materials in order to promote understanding;
- 2) to counter VC propaganda through the distribution of accurate information;
- 3) to provide medical treatment; and
- 4) to promote imaginative projects and services in order to improve the civilian-military relationship.

The program had certain ground rules. Since food was plentiful on the islands, none was to be distributed, but rather news media and publications. Cigarettes, candy, fish hooks, salad oil were given sparingly. Personalized gifts were encouraged. Visits were limited to no more than once every two weeks, for only three hours, and with a VNN liaison present.

Other Efforts

The Coast Guard units assigned to Vietnam performed many different types of humanitarian service, including the following:

- Catholic personnel renovated the local church at An Thoi.
- WPB's evacuated refugees from the vicinity of Cape Batangan.
- RONONE personnel visited Buddhist and Protestant orphanages to distribute clothing, soap, toothpaste, and toys brought to Vietnam on the Commandant's plane.
- HALF MOON delivered medicine, toothpaste, and clothing from Coast Guard personnel in New York City.
- Division 11 men helped make voting booths in An Thoi.
- POINT ORIENT went to the aid of a cargo junk loaded with school children bound for Hue. The junk was dewatered and escorted to Hue.
- BARATARIA gave medical aid to acute asthmatic on a Chinese Nationalist trawler.
- POINT ARDEN saved an LCM taking on water north of Da Nang.
- Division Twelve personnel distributed Christmas gifts to VNN dependents in Da Nang.
- POINT GRACE saved a PCF from sinking after the PCF lost all power in rough seas.
- ANDROSCOGGIN took two Vietnamese fishermen on board for surgery, saving both their lives.

- HALF MOON went to aid of a Filipino tug whose barge sank. HALF MOON personnel cut the barge loose preventing loss of the tug and the other barges under tow.
- Division 11 personnel constructed a fresh water well and storage system, and planted a vegetable garden for 2 families on an island.
- The cutters assigned as Hong Kong Station gave many pints of blood to the Hong Kong Red Cross.
- CAMPBELL's medical officer performed surgery on a nine year old girl wounded in the chest and both legs by the VC.
- ANDROSCOGGIN rescued twenty-seven South Vietnamese refugees fleeing the VC from a small junk lost in heavy seas. The people were taken on board and given food, medical treatment, and shelter. The junk was repaired and towed to port.
- DUANE treated a sailor on the merchant ship YOCHOW for pneumonia and asthma.
- ANDROSCOGGIN medical officer removed a benign tumor from a Vietnamese and treated five fractures.
- CAMPBELL personnel repaired the Save the Children Hospital at Qui Nhon.
- CAMPBELL's medical officer treated a VNN officer's badly swollen leg.
- ANDROSCOGGIN treated, a Thai sailor whose toe had been amputated by a winch.
- BIBB personnel fabricated new drive shaft for a fuel pump on the Thai M/V DAKTACHI.
- CAMPBELL aided the Filipino vessel CARMELITA which had a broken propeller shaft and was drifting in the extreme current of the San Bernadino Strait.
- WINNEBAGO aided the Vietnamese coastal freighter THUAN HING which had a broken shaft and was taking on water.

- OWASCO responded to an SOS from the S/S FOH KONG which had lost power and was flooding. OWASCO rescued the twenty-three on board and towed the vessel to safety.
- WINNEBAGO responded to the SOS of the S/S AGINAR
- Division Thirteen personnel visited the 36th Medevac Hospital Children's Ward and gave toys, games, candy and clothing to the children.
- WINNEBAGO rescued thirty-five persons from the distressed M/V FAIR PHILIPPINE ANCHORAGE.
- KLAMATH personnel donated 200 man hours of work and \$187 to Holy Family Hospital in Qui Nhon.
- TANEY's medical officer remained in Qui Nhon when the cutter went to Japan. He organized sixteen MEDCAPs and treated over 3200 villagers plus another 300 patients at local hospitals.
- HAMILTON personnel repaired the Save the Children Hospital at Qui Nhon.
- KLAMATH aided a fishing vessel that had been drifting for ten days with engine trouble. KLAMATH towed the vessel to Vung Tau.
- HAMILTON personnel assisted in preparing dependent housing for VNN personnel.
- BLACKHAW rescued a Vietnamese national drifting on a plank at sea.
- HAMILTON delivered 2500 pounds of canned goods, clothes, toys, and school supplies to Love of the Cross Orphanage at Cam Ranh Bay donated by the New Bedford, Massachusetts junior high school.
- CHASE dewatered USS WINNEMUCCA which was taking on water and sinking.
- CHASE personnel fabricated a complete playground on board CHASE for the fifty children in Coastal Group 16.
- YAKUTAT delivered 500 pounds of materials to Can Tho orphanage from the people of New Bedford, Mass.
- BERING STRAIT's crew installed playground equipment near Coastal Group 16 which the crew purchased.

- MORGENTHAU delivered clothing donated by the people of Croton-on-Hudson, N.Y.
- PONTCHARTRAIN provided engineering assistance to the merchant ship SEA PROSPERITY which had been adrift for three days.
- MORGENTHAU rescued twenty-three persons from the sinking merchant ship JOY TAYLOR.
- SHERMAN responded to a possible cholera epidemic at New Song Ong Doc and immunized over 600 Vietnamese civilians.
- MORGENTHAU medical teams conducted twenty-five MEDCAPs and treated over 2600 people.
- MORGENTHAU personnel donated \$2200 to Operation Schoolhouse, allowing twenty-five children to attend four years of high school.

This list is by no means complete, but rather representative of Coast Guard non-military operations. All during the Coast Guard's involvement in Vietnam, there were several hundred medcaps.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

Though the activities of the Coast Guard in South East Asia are relatively unknown, the Coast Guard played a significant role in the war. Some eight thousand Coast Guardsmen served in Vietnam and Fifty-six different combatant vessels were assigned to duty there. They participated in, and were normally the primary unit in all trawler destructions. This alone set the VC/NVA back many months. The statistics show that Coast Guard units boarded nearly a quarter of a million junks and sampans in the attempt to stop infiltration. These cutters also participated in nearly 6,000 NGFS missions causing extensive damage to the enemy. Of these fifty-six vessels, thirty were turned

over to the Vietnamese and the Coast Guard played a significant role in training the Vietnamese Navy to operate these vessels. The former Coast Guard cutters and the Vietnamese sailors on board them formed the nucleus of the Vietnamese Navy.

The Port Security and Waterways Detail was equally important to the war effort. They provided the necessary expertise to allow the safe loading and unloading of vitally needed ammunition. The Explosives Loading Detachments taught the Vietnamese safe ammunition handling procedures which they needed to use on their own.

Teaching was also an important factor in Aids to Navigation. The Aids to Navigation personnel and ships succeeded in their primary duty of assisting the safe navigation of ships.

Merchant Marine Detail personnel helped keep the merchant vessels sailing by providing investigative services, judicial services, and diplomacy. They served the merchant sailor both afloat and ashore. Though normally in the background, these officers were vital to the supply effort in Vietnam.

When the Coast Guard went to Vietnam it did not forget its training and tradition. The primary peacetime mission of the Coast Guard is the safety of life and property at sea. Frequently the cutters of RONONE and RONTNINE went to the aid of those in distress. In helping to relieve the sufferings of others the Coast Guard personnel in Vietnam conducted numerous MEDCAPS, Civic Action Programs, and distributed considerable quantities of food, clothing, toys, and love to those in need. The relief of suffering will probably remain in the minds of the Vietnamese and Americans alike long after the battles have been forgotten.

APPENDIX I

EIGHTY-TWO PATROL BOATS ASSIGNED TO
COAST GUARD SQUADRON ONE

DIVISION 11

	<u>TURNOVER</u>
USCGC POINT BANKS (WPB 82327)	26 May 1970
USCGC POINT CLEAR (WPB 82315)	15 September 1969
USCGC POINT COMFORT (WPB 82317)	17 November 1969
USCGC POINT GARNET (WPB 82310)	16 May 1969
USCGC POINT GLOVER (WPB 82307)	14 February 1970
USCGC POINT GREY (WPB 82324)	14 July 1970
USCGC POINT MARONE (WPB 82331)	15 August 1970
USCGC POINT MAST (WPB 82316)	16 June 1970
USCGC POINT YOUNG (WPB 82303)	16 March 1970

DIVISION 12

USCGC POINT ARDEN (WPB 82309)	14 February 1970
USCGC POINT CAUTION (WPB 82301)	29 April 1970
USCGC POINT DUME (WPB 82325)	14 February 1970
USCGC POINT ELLIS (WPB 82330)	9 December 1969
USCGC POINT GAMMON (WPB 82328)	11 November 1969
USCGC POINT LOMAS (WPB 82321)	26 May 1970
USCGC POINT ORIENT (WPB 82319)	14 July 1970
USCGC POINT WELCOME (WPB 82329)	29 April 1970

DIVISION 13

	<u>TURNOVER DATE</u>
USCGC POINT CYPRESS (WPB 82326)	15 August 1970
USCGC POINT GRACE (WPB 82323)	16 June 1970
USCGC POINT HUDSON (WPB 82322)	11 December 1970

USCGC POINT JEFFERSON (WPB 82306)	21 February 1970
USCGC POINT KENNEDY (WPB 82320)	16 March 1970
USCGC POINT LEAGUE (WPB 82304)	16 May 1969
USCGC POINT PARTRIDGE (WPB 82305)	27 March 1970
USCGC POINT SLOCUM (WPB 82313)	11 December 1969
USCGC POINT WHITE (WPB 82308)	12 January 1970

APPENDIX II

HIGH ENDURANCE CUTTERS ASSIGNED TO

COAST GUARD SQUADRON THREE

4 May 1967 to 31 January 1972

FIRST DEPLOYMENT

USCGC BARATARIA (WHEC 381)	4 May 67 - 25 Dec 67
USCGC HALF MOON (WHEC 378)	4 May 67 - 29 Dec 67
USCGC YAKUTAT (WHEC 380)	4 May 67 - 1 Jan 68
USCGC GRESHAM (WHEC 387)	4 May 67 - 28 Jan 68
USCGC BERING STRAIT (WHEC 382)	4 May 67 - 18 Feb 68

SECOND DEPLOYMENT

USCGC ANDROSCOGGIN (WHEC 68)	4 Dec 67 - 4 Aug 68
USCGC DUANE (WHEC 33)	4 Dec 67 - 28 Jul 68
USCGC CAMPBELL (WHEC 32)	14 Dec 67 - 12 Aug 68
USCGC MINNETONKA (WHEC 67)	5 Jan 68 - 29 Sep 68
USCGC WINONA (WHEC 65)	25 Jan 68 - 17 Oct 68

THIRD DEPLOYMENT

USCGC BIBB (WHEC 31)	4 Jul 68 - 28 Feb 69
USCGC INGHAM (WHEC 35)	16 Jul 68 - 3 Apr 69
USCGC OWASCO (WHEC 39)	23 Jul 68 - 21 Mar 69
USCGC WACHUSETT (WHEC 44)	10 Sep - 1 Jun 69
USCGC WINNEBAGO (WHEC 40)	20 Sep 68 - 19 Jul 69

FOURTH DEPLOYMENT

USCGC SPENCER (WHEC 36)	11 Feb 69 - 30 Sep 69
USCGC MENDOTA (WHEC 69)	28 Feb 69 - 3 Nov 69
USCGC SEBAGO (WHEC 42)	2 Mar 69 - 16 Nov 69
USCGC TANEY (WHEC 37)	14 May 69 - 31 Jan 70
USCGC KLAMATH (WHEC 66)	7 Jul 69 - 3 Apr 70

FIFTH DEPLOYMENT

USCGC HAMILTON (WHEC 715)	1 Nov 69 - 25 May 70
USCGC DALLAS (WHEC 716)	3 Nov 69 - 19 Jun 70
USCGC CHASE (WHEC 718)	6 Dec 69 - 28 May 70
USCGC MELLON (WHEC 717)	31 Mar 70 - 2 Jul 70
USCGC PONTCHARTRAIN (WHEC 70)	9 May 70 - 3 Sep 70

SIXTH DEPLOYMENT

USCGC SHERMAN (WHEC 720)	22 Apr 70 - 25 Dec 70
USCGC BERING STRAIT (WHEC 382)	17 May 70 - 31 Dec 70* **
USCGC YAKUTAT (WHEC 380)	17 May 70 - 31 Dec 70* **

SEVENTH DEPLOYMENT

USCGC RUSH (WHEC 723)	28 Oct 70 - 15 Jul 71
USCGC MORGENTHAU (WHEC 722)	6 Dec 70 - 31 Jul 71

EIGHTH DEPLOYMENT

USCGC CASTLE ROCK (WHEC 383)	9 Jul 71 - 21 Dec 71*
USCGC COOK INLET (WHEC 384)	2 Jul 71 - 21 Dec 71*

* Turned over to the Government of South Vietnam

** Second deployment

APPENDIX III

OTHER COAST GUARD CUTTERS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

BUOY TENDERS

USCGC BASSWOOD (WLB 388)

USCGC BLACKHAW (WLB 390)

USCGC IRONWOOD (WLB 297)

USCGC PLANETREE (WLB 307)

CARGO VESSEL

USCGC NETTLE (WAK 169)

FOURTH DEPLOYMENT

USCGC SPENCER (WHEC 36)	11 Feb 69 - 30 Sep 69
USCGC MENDOTA (WHEC 69)	28 Feb 69 - 3 Nov 69
USCGC SEBAGO (WHEC 42)	2 Mar 69 - 16 Nov 69
USCGC TANEY (WHEC 37)	14 May 69 - 31 Jan 70
USCGC KLAMATH (WHEC 66)	7 Jul 69 - 3 Apr 70

FIFTH DEPLOYMENT

USCGC HAMILTON (WHEC 715)	1 Nov 69 - 25 May 70
USCGC DALLAS (WHEC 716)	3 Nov 69 - 19 Jun 70
USCGC CHASE (WHEC 718)	6 Dec 69 - 28 May 70
USCGC MELLON (WHEC 717)	31 Mar 70 - 2 Jul 70
USCGC PONTCHARTRAIN (WHEC 70)	9 May 70 - 3 Sep 70

SIXTH DEPLOYMENT

USCGC SHERMAN (WHEC 720)	22 Apr 70 - 25 Dec 70
USCGC BERING STRAIT (WHEC 382)	17 May 70 - 31 Dec 70* **
USCGC YAKUTAT (WHEC 380)	17 May 70 - 31 Dec 70* **

SEVENTH DEPLOYMENT

USCGC RUSH (WHEC 723)	28 Oct 70 - 15 Jul 71
USCGC MORGENTHAU (WHEC 722)	6 Dec 70 - 31 Jul 71

EIGHTH DEPLOYMENT

USCGC CASTLE ROCK (WHEC 383)	9 Jul 71 - 21 Dec 71*
USCGC COOK INLET (WHEC 384)	2 Jul 71 - 21 Dec 71*

* Turned over to the Government of South Vietnam

** Second deployment

APPENDIX III

OTHER COAST GUARD CUTTERS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

BUOY TENDERS

USCGC BASSWOOD (WLB 388)

USCGC BLACKHAW (WLB 390)

USCGC IRONWOOD (WLB 297)

USCGC PLANETREE (WLB 307)

CARGO VESSEL

USCGC NETTLE (WAK 169)

APPENDIX IV

COAST GUARD SQUADRON ONE STATISTICS

27 May 1965 - 15 August 1970

Miles Cruised	4,215,116
Vessels detected	838,299
Vessels boarded	236,396
Vessels inspected	283,527
NGPS missions conducted	4,461
Personnel detained	10,286
Enemy KIA/WIA	1,055
USCG KIA	7
USCG WIA	59
Vessels damaged/destroyed	1,811
Structures damaged/destroyed	4,727

APPENDIX V

COAST GUARD SQUADRON THREE STATISTICS (1)

4 April 1967 to 31 January 1972

Miles cruised	1,292,094
Percent of time underway	62.6
Market Time patrols	205
Vessels detected	69,517
Vessels inspected	50,000
Vessels boarded	1,094
Personnel detained	138
NGFS missions conducted	1,368
Rounds fired	77,036
Structures destroyed	2,612
Structures damaged	2,676
Enemy KIA	529
Enemy WIA	243
Underway replenishments	1,153
Vertical replenishments	87
Small craft replenishments	1,516
Civic Action Projects	20 *
Medical Civil Action Program	131

* Data incomplete

¹U.S. Coast Guard Squadron Three (Subic Bay, Philippines:
U.S. Coast Guard Squadron Three, 1972(?), Extract.

APPENDIX VI
MAJOR TRAWLER ENGAGEMENTS INVOLVING
U.S. COAST GUARD UNITS

10 May 1966

Trawler destroyed: POINT GREY, POINT CYPRESS

20 June 1966

Trawler captured: POINT LEAGUE, POINT SLOCUM, POINT HUDSON

1 January 1967

Trawler destroyed: POINT GAMMON

14 March 1967

Trawler destroyed: POINT ELLIS

15 July 1967

Trawler captured: POINT ORIENT

29 February - 1 March 1968

1. Trawler destroyed: ANDROSCOGGIN, POINT WELCOME, POINT GREY
2. Trawler destroyed: WINONA, POINT GRACE, POINT MARONE, POINT HUDSON
3. Trawler destroyed: CG units not involved
4. Trawler turned back: MINNETONKA

21 November 1970

Trawler destroyed: RUSH, SHERMAN

11-12 April 1971

Trawler destroyed: RUSH, MORGENTHAU

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DURING THE VIETNAM CONFLICT

Compiled by

Truman R. Strobridge
U.S. Coast Guard Historian

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Kaplan, H.R. Coast Guard in Vietnam. (Washington: Public Information Division, U.S. Coast Guard, 1967). (8) pp. illus.

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GLOSSARY

ADCON - Administrative Control

ARL - Repair Ship

ARVN - Army of the Republic of Vietnam. Also soldier of same.

A to N - Aids to Navigation

CASREPT - Casualty Report

CHICOM - Chinese Communist

CHNAVADVGRPMACV - Chief, Naval Advisory Group, Military Assistance
Command Vietnam

CHOP - Change operational control

CIA - Captured in action

CINCPAC - Commander in Chief, Pacific

CINCPACFLT - Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet

CNO - Chief of Naval Operations

COMCOGARDRONONE - Commander Coast Guard Squadron One

COMOGARDRONTHREE - Commander Coast Guard Squadron Three

COMNAVFORV - Commander Naval Forces Vietnam

COMUSMACV - Commander United States Military Assistance Command
Vietnam

CONUS - A mythical island far away (Continental United States)

COTP - Captain of the Port

CTF - Commander Task Force

CTF 115 - Commander Coastal Surveillance Forces

CTG - Commander Task Group

CTG 70.8 - Cruiser-Destroyer Group Seventh Fleet

CZ - Coastal Zone

ELD - Explosives Loading Detachment

H & I - Harrassment and Interdiction
KIA - Killed in action
LCM/LCU - Landing craft types
MACV - Military Assistance Command Vietnam
MEDCAP - Medical Civil Action Program
MEDEVAC - Medical Evacuation
MMD - Merchant Marine Detail
MSTS - Military Sealift Command
M/V - Merchant vessel
NAVADVGRP - Naval Advisory Group
NAVAID - Navigational aid
NBC - Nuclear Biological Chemical Warfare
NGFS - Naval Gunfire Support
NVA - North Vietnamese Army
PCF - Patrol Craft, fast
POB - Persons on Board
PSYOPS - Psychological warfare operations
PSYWAR - Psychological warfare
ROK - Republic of Korea
RONONE - Coast Guard Squadron One
RONTHREE - Coast Guard Squadron Three
RVN - Republic of South Vietnam
SCGOV - Senior Coast Guard Officer Vietnam
SOPA - Senior Office present afloat
SOPA ADMIN - Administrative deputy to SOPA
SRO - Standing Room Only
TAD - Temporary Additional Duty
UNREP - Underway replenishment
USSF - United States Special Forces

VC - Viet Cong

VERTREP - Vertical or helicopter replenishment

VNN - South Vietnamese Navy

VS - South Vietnam

WAK - Small Coast Guard transport

WHEC - Coast Guard high endurance cutter

WIA - Wounded in action

WLB - Coast Guard large buoy tender

WPB - Coast Guard patrol boat