



# SYKES REGULARS

1ST BATTALION 20TH INF



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LZ LIZ, VIETNAM

February 26, 1970

## SFC DELA CRUZ RECALLS THE 1/20'S ARRIVAL IN VIETNAM

The SYKE'S REGULARS have a record in Vietnam that we can all be emminently proud of. Since the battalion was activated for Vietnam in 1967 at Schofield Barracks, Pohakuloa, Hawaii the 1/20 has shown a capability and enthusiasm that has distinguished it as a fighting unit.

In December, 1967, SFC Angel Dela Cruz, now platoon sergeant of Charlie Co.'s 3rd Platoon, came over with Alpha Co. after months of intensive training at Pohakuloa. Assigned to the Americal Division, the battalion conducted rigorous exercises in jungle warfare and amphibious landing techniques.

"We got a lot of men directly out of AIT. All our squads and platoons trained together, and we were a tight unit, full of esprit de corps. We knew we were coming to Vietnam as a green outfit, and we were ready to prove that we could do the job," he recalled.

After 15 days at sea, the battalion arrived in the Dic Pho area on December 20, 1967. The rear party set up on LZ Bronco while the forward and field elements moved to LZ Carentan just east of Bronco for three days of intensive in-country training under the supervision of MACV advisors.

(It may be of interest to note that the "Bud Pad" was named after the then battalion commander, LTC Edwin D. Beers.)

After its training on Carentan, the battalion forward moved to LZ Thunder, already in existence and which is now LZ Debbie, forward of the 4/21. Charlie Co. was detached for the next 37 days to "Task Force Barker," which worked north of Dic Pho in sweeping and clearing operations. The other rifle companies rotated between Sa Huynh (Charlie Brown), the bridges along Highway One south of Dic Pho, and Thunder for perimeter security.

In the spring of 1968 the 1/20 acted as the Division Mobile Reactionary Force under the direct control of the Americal Division. It was during this period in the Que Son Valley that the battalion saw some of its heaviest fighting.

"We made our mark as a fighting outfit in the Que Son Valley. In May, LZ Center was under siege (DELA CRUZ cont. page 3)

## CHARLIE CO. SURPRISES FIVE

GAZA STRIP--VC in the battalion's AO are finding it increasingly difficult to conduct their operations at night. Charlie Co. demonstrated that the enemy can't even sit down and enjoy an evening meal by the fireside.

At dusk one night this week, the 1st Platoon was enroute to its various ambush sites in the thickly vegetated Gaza Strip region, six kilometers east of Liz. PFC Frank B. Young (Cambellton, Fla.), walking point for the 2nd Squad, spotted five VC sitting around a fire near an old bunker in a deserted ville. The enemy, obviously taken unaware, quickly got up and started running.

In spite of Young's commands to halt, the VC dispersed, too excited in their scrambling to fire back at the men.

"They seemed to just keep running into our other elements behind the 2nd Squad," said SP4 Steve Fordice (Enterprise, Ore.), as one enemy was killed and another wounded. Somehow in their confusion, the other three managed to evade with their weapons.

## RECON ROAMS THE STRIP

GAZA STRIP--Available as a quick-strike reactionary force, the Recon Platoon had frequent engagements with the enemy this week, inflicting a number of casualties within their ranks. Much of the action occurred at night, further reducing the enemy's mobility at night.

Last Wednesday, shortly after a C/A into the Gaza Strip, the Little John element uncovered a camouflaged hooch with steel pots and a VC uniform. That evening at dusk, the Robin Hood element, working just to the north, fired on three VC wearing dark blue uniforms and moving down a paddie dike 600 meters away. One of the VC was wounded instantly, but his two comrades dragged him over a dyke and disappeared into the darkness.

Two days later, both the Will Scarlet and Robin Hood squads saw more action. While moving into an ambush position, Will Scarlet received about 15 rounds of AK fire and moved back to call in artillery on the enemy's position. Moving in to check the area after the arty barrage, the men received more AK fire from two different locations, but the enemy, not wanting to engage Recon further, broke the contact and the men were unable to uncover any significant (RECON continued page 3)

DEFENSE EXPANDS EARLY RELEASE POLICY TO INCLUDE VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) Roger T. Kelley has expanded Department of Defense policy on the early release of enlisted personnel to attend college to include eligible enlisted personnel who desire to attend recognized vocational/technical schools.

Since 1959, the Department of Defense has followed a policy permitting release of enlisted personnel up to three months before their normal separation date to attend accredited colleges and universities which award baccalaureate or higher degrees. In 1968, this policy was expanded to include institutions which award an associate degree or higher.

A Department of Defense Instruction now additionally provides that eligible enlisted personnel may be released up to three months prior to their normal separation date to enter a recognized vocational/technical school, i.e., one which is approved by the cognizant State Board for Vocational Education, or is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association listed by the U.S. Commissioner of Education.

Eligibility criteria are generally the same as formerly used in releasing personnel to attend college. To qualify for early release a serviceman (1) must show that he has been accepted for enrollment commencing with a specific school term in a full-time resident course of instruction of no less than three months duration at a recognized vocational/technical school, (2) must not be essential to the mission of his assigned organization, and (3) must have completed 21 months of active duty on his current term of obligated service if he will have a reserve obligation after separation.

"The expansion of the Department of Defense early release policy to include eligible enlisted personnel in obtaining specific skills is an effort to improve opportunities for immediate civilian employment and thereby give veterans the assistance they need to make a smooth transition to civilian life."

Secretary Kelley then explained, "This helps those eligible enlisted men who would be unduly penalized in the pursuit of their education if required to remain in service until expiration of their term of enlistment or induction."

24 RECEIVE AWARDS IN CHU LAI

Twenty-four men received recognition in Chu Lai during the battalion's retraining periods this past week. Among the awards presented were three Silver Stars commanding outstanding accomplishments in the field.

SILVER STAR

SP/5 Kieth E. Stensgaard--Hawley, Minn. (HHC-Medic)  
SP/4 Franklin M. Wootan--Fairfax, Okla. (Alpha Co.)  
SP/4 Juan D. Mercado--Phoenix, Ariz. (Alpha Co.)

BRONZE STAR FOR VALOR

SP/4 Dee W. Dye--Independence, Mo. (Alpha Co.)  
SP/4 Robert D. Gee--Elburn, Ill. (Echo Co.)  
SGT Edward J. Gatton--Baltimore, Md. (Bravo Co.)  
SP/4 David M. Snyder--Mt. Clare, W. Va. (Bravo Co.)  
PFC William A. Herod--Chicago, Ill. (Bravo Co.)

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL FOR VALOR

CPT James J. Donovan--South Orange, N.J. (Charlie Co.)

BRONZE STAR FOR SERVICE

SGT Robert E. Frye--Williamsburg, Pa. (Delta Co.)  
SGT Jack W. Hayden--Turners Station, Ky. (Delta Co.)  
SGT Freddie T. Young--Decatur, Ill. (Delta Co.)  
SP/4 William M. Auburn--Muskeegan, Mich. (Delta Co.)  
SP/4 Billie G. Bryant--Leland, Miss. (Delta Co.)  
SP/4 Willie F. Hardaway--Pensacola, Fla. (Delta Co.)  
SP/4 Silvestre Hernandez, Jr.--Del Rio, Tex. (Delta Co.)  
SP/4 Grafton Sweat--Pittsburgh, Pa. (Delta Co.)  
SGT Antonio Verduzco--Phoenix, Ariz. (Delta Co.)

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL FOR ACHIEVEMENT

CPT Daniel W. Thomas--Leesville, La. (Alpha Co.)  
CPT James J. Donovan--South Orange, N.J. (Charlie Co.)  
1SG Erskine L. Wade--Drakesboro, Ky. (Delta Co.)

PURPLE HEART

SP/4 William M. Auburn--Muskeegan, Mich. (Delta Co.)  
SP/4 Billie G. Bryant--Leland, Miss. (Delta Co.)  
PFC Granville E. Harwood--Atlantic City, N.J. (Delta Co.)  
PFC David K. Patterson--Rat Cliff, Ark. (Alpha Co.)  
PFC James Thornton--Louisville, Ky. (Alpha Co.)  
PFC Kurtess R. Walker--Parowan, Utah (Bravo Co.)

## LET'S FIRE THE COMPANY COMMANDERS

By Your Chaplain, Eugene W. Scott

There are times when we should fire our company commanders. But before anyone drifts off to fantasia-land boiling mad, or allows himself henceforth to climb the Alps without his right shoe--be so kind as to understand what I am saying.

A stimulated mind can overcome the hardest hardships, but a laxative mind could cause your attitude to run loosely down hill to the lowest of resting places.

A fired up team with a fired up coach usually wins the ball games. So it could be with ourselves over here. If we give our commanders our courageous support, they will be fired up and so stimulated that your chances of winning the battles with the enemy and time will be successful.

Let's fire our commanders. Let's do our best so they can be stimulated to do their best. It is the unit with inspired and stimulated men that possesses pride, prestige, and perseverance.

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## SSG WALTERS IS NCO OF THE WEEK

Staff Sergeant Thomas J. Walters is the SYKE'S REGULARS' NCO of the Week. He has been with Alpha Co. for almost two months now and currently serves as the platoon sergeant of the 2nd Platoon.

A product of Ft. Benning's NCO School, he also attended the Ranger School with the 3rd Ranger Co., where he earned his rocker.

SSG Walters is married and attended Canute High School, Canute, Okla. He also worked toward a degree in electrical engineering at Oklahoma University.

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RECON continued from page 1.  
results.

Meanwhile, Robin Hood, a kilometer to the north, had just arrived at its ambush location when three VC came down a paddie dyke near its position.

"We hadn't had time to set up yet, so we applied 'immediate action' and put a lot of small arms fire on them. We killed one of the VC instantly and wounded the other two," explained 2LT Warren T. Waterbury (Ashland, Ky.), Recon's platoon leader.

Although the two wounded VC managed to evade, a later check of the area revealed heavy blood trails and obvious indications that they had fallen about every ten feet.

TO THE LIMIT OF OUR ABILITY

## GRATEFUL VILLAGERS HOLD CEREMONY

A Vietnamese ceremony at Van Truong this week evidenced the successful efforts of the Allies along Highway One. Leaders of the Regional Forces, Popular Forces, and Popular Self Defense Forces elements working with Bravo Co. sponsored a religious ceremony in the village to give thanks for the people's good fortune in the recent months and to seek the guidance that will further the success of the pacification program in the area.

Local village and hamlet chiefs were in attendance at the ceremony that began at three o'clock in the morning and included a three hour prayer devotional. Special thanks were given for last week's rout of an intended sapper attack on the compound at Van Truong when the assistant hamlet security chief, Mr. Vo Dinh Khoi, learned at the last minute of the sapper plans.

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DELA CRUZ continued from page 1 by the 2nd NVA Division. Our Alpha and Bravo companies were Op Conned to the 1/6 of the 198th Brigade, and for six days we fought to lift the siege. Our mission was to take the pressure off the guys on Center by covering the high ground. We named the battle after Hill 352, which we finally took on May 19th," Dela Cruz explained.

"During the Battle for Hill 352, Lieutenant Faulk of the 3rd Platoon became the first man in the battalion to earn the Distinguished Service Cross. He and six other men got behind an enemy position on the hill, and he killed eight of them single-handedly."

In the remaining months of SFC Dela Cruz's first tour with the battalion, the 1/20 participated in operations Champaign, Wheeler/Wallowa, Norfolk Victory, Champaign Grove, and Vernon Lake II. In these operations the SYKE'S REGULARS killed 328 VC and NVA, an accomplishment that set the pattern for successes to follow.

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The 11th Brigade Education Advisor runs a full-time counseling operation designed solely for the benefit of the members of the Brigade.

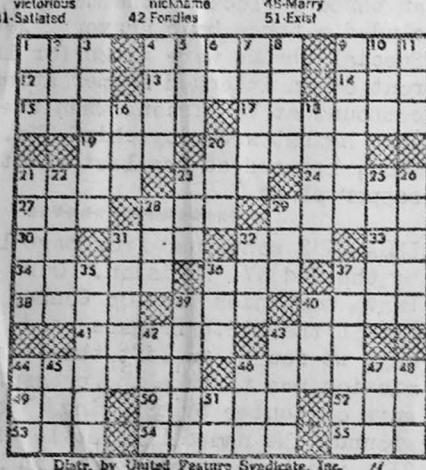
Besides preparatory classes and administration of the High School GED tests, the Education Office offers higher level correspondence courses in a wide range of fields that can lead to a degree at virtually every college or university in the States. Talk to your First Sergeant for an appointment.

**ACROSS**

- Idle chatter
- Keen
- Unit of Latvian currency
- Angle-Saxon money
- Part of flower
- Time gone by
- Pennant
- Spruce
- Small child
- Locations
- Dilise
- Sign of zodiac
- Lease
- Conjunction
- Insect egg
- Broader
- Proven
- Drink slowly
- Mountain pass
- Parent (colloq.)
- Lawful
- Shallow vessel
- Siamese native
- Prepare for publication
- Cooling device
- Stop
- Repulse
- Man's nickname
- More insane
- Uncultivated
- Poem
- Kettledrum
- Female sheep
- Equality
- Slumber
- Communist

**DOWN**

- Sailor (colloq.)
- Macaw
- Ridicule lightly



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See SSG Mac!

— RE UP —



## HAILS AND FAREWELLS

### Replacements:

#### Alpha Co.

PFC Ralph R. Laffitte--Sacramento, Calif.  
 PFC Stephen L. Sigler--Elwood, Ind.  
 PFC Michael F. Chrisawa--Hickory, N.C.  
 PFC George M. Latham--N.Y.C., N.Y.  
 PFC Eugene D. Schmitt--Philadelphia  
 PFC Ernest T. Allred--Liberty, N.C.  
 PFC Clair W. Carnahan--Homer City, Pa.  
 PFC Coshel Hall--Leburn, Ky.  
 PFC Glenn E. Farley--New Cumberland, W.Va.  
 PFC Rodney G. Doss--Chatham, Va.  
 PFC Ronald Dempsey--Stockton, Ga.

#### Charlie Co.

SSG Ronald L. Parrish--Millersburg, Ohio  
 PFC George L. Malone--Lockport, Ill.  
 PFC William F. Fowlkes--Augusta, Ga.  
 PFC Edward W. Darzenkiewicz--Southbridge, Ma.  
 PFC Dale A. Throntveit--Crosby, N. Dak.  
 PFC David L. Sowell--Sioux Falls, S. Dak.  
 PFC Michael P. Bingham--Corbin, Ky.  
 PVT Allen T. Sarabia--Chicago

#### Delta Co.

PFC Ronald C. Leonard--Daly City, Calif.  
 PFC Sammy L. Sanders--Albany, Ga.

#### Echo Co.

SGT Thomas W. Kruchowski--Chisholm, Minn.

### Departures:

#### Alpha Co.

SGT Stanley H. Caillet--North Lawrence, Ohio  
 SP/4 James R. Fish--Lillington, N.C.

#### Bravo Co.

SGT Roy A. Peterson--Billings, Mont.  
 SGT Lawrence Whitmyer--Billings, Mont.

#### Delta Co.

SP/4 Silvestre Hernandez, Jr.--Del Rio, Tex.

## SYKE'S REGULARS REPORTER

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Adjutant	CPT Edward J. Mullen
Correspondant	SP/4 Toby B. Proders

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