

AMERICAL



JULY, 1969

Anniversary Greetings



UNITED STATES ARMY
THE CHIEF OF STAFF

TO THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF
THE AMERICAL DIVISION

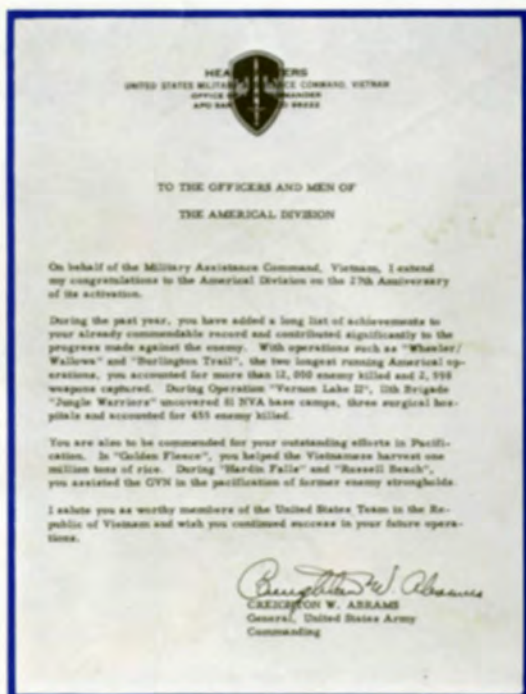
It is a distinct pleasure on the twenty-seventh anniversary of the activation of the Americal Division to extend to all its members hearty congratulations from the men and women of the United States Army.

During World War II the Americal Division was the first division to be activated in a foreign country and was also the first Army unit to go into combat against the Japanese forces on Guadalcanal. The organization took part in four major operations in the Pacific.

The division, now in its second year of fighting in Vietnam, again has a "First" -- the first such unit to be activated in Vietnam. In combat and in progress to assist the South Vietnamese people, the division continues to add to its proud record of meritorious success. Operations such as WHEELER-WALLING, BURLINGTON TRAIL, CHAMPAGNE GUNS, and POCKETED FOREST during the last year have shown the enemy that he will not be allowed to succeed in his aggression and that we are determined to help secure South Vietnam the opportunity to determine its own destiny.

For its achievements, I salute the Americal Division. I am confident that each of you will continue to uphold its fine traditions through your courage, dedication, and skill.

W. C. McCreeland
W. C. MCCREELAND
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff



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AMERICAL

The Quarterly Magazine of the Americal Division, Vietnam

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The Cover

FRONT COVER: Soldiers from the 4th Bn., 3rd Inf., 11th Bde. prepare to cross a river during Operation Russell Beach. (Photo by SP4 Dean Norland)

BACK COVER: Chaplain (CPT) Clement Marcantonio says Catholic mass in the field with D Co., 4th Bn., 31st Inf., 196th Bde. (Photo by SP4 Bill Crawford.)



AMERICAL LOG

A QUARTERLY RECAP OF MAJOR ACTION

Combat action followed a cyclic pattern in March, April, and May, a period which debuted on the seventh day of the enemy's post-TET offensive and was characterized by standoff rocket and mortar attacks of brief duration and several abortive attempts at ground probes of Americal installations.

The offensive dragged into mid-March and, despite increased casualties, Americal forces beat back every

enemy attack and lost no ground while scoring an overwhelming kill ratio against NVA and VC units.

April brought two weeks of relative quiet before another barrage of standoff attacks. May followed the same pattern with increased activity throughout the last half of the month.

Three division operational zones were enlarged in March and brigades began operating with ARVN units.

By SP5 BILL ELSEN

MARCH

The first and last weeks of March were characterized by moderate action while mid-month brought renewed standoff and ground attacks on Americal positions and Vietnamese population centers.

By March 6, A Co., 1/46, 196th Bde. had killed 36 VC in seven days and F Trp., 17th Cav., working with Popular Force platoons near the 1/46 northwest of Tam Ky, had begun a remarkable four-day series of rice discoveries.

On March 6, F Trp. killed five VC in three incidents and found 7-1/4 tons of rice 16 miles northwest of Tam Ky. Almost four tons were found in false graves, false hut floors, and buried crocks and baskets.

A day later, F Trp. turned up 12-1/2 tons of rice five miles nearer Tam Ky, and a Regional Force element discovered 18-1/2 tons nearby.

In the same spot on March 8, F Trp. located 20 tons buried in crocks and, on March 9, the troopers collected 6-1/2 tons hidden in hedgerows and huts 10 miles from Tam Ky.

On the battlefield, a sapper attack was smashed at LZ Ross, and NVA regulars were stymied in several places. Four miles west of Duc Pho, C Co., 4/21, 11th Bde. killed 15 NVA and captured two RPG launchers and a Chicom machinegun in a one-day firefight.

Two days later, northwest of Tam Ky near the original rice find, A Trp., 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav., killed 14 VC and blasted 43 bunkers. Southwest of Tam Ky, B Co., 3/21, 196th Bde. found 12 NVA killed by air strikes near 20 bunkers connected by small tunnels.

In mid-March, television came to Chu Lai on the Armed Forces Vietnam Network's Channel 13; "Aero Scout" gunships of the 123d Avn. Bn. teamed with radar units and a 1/6 Inf. ground observer to pin-point and destroy rocket launch sites near Chu Lai shortly after an attack; a Ranger team of G Co., 75th Inf. killed five NVA on a whirlwind mission lasting 17 minutes from insertion to extraction; and the

3/16 Arty., firing day and night, helped repel a furious NVA assault on the Tien Phuoc Special Forces camp.

March 15-22 brought the month's heaviest action as 224 NVA and 119 VC were killed in a six-day period. Three miles north of Duc Pho, C Co., 3/1, 11th Bde. took on an unknown-size NVA force and was soon joined by sister companies A and B; D Co., 1/20, 11th Bde.; E Trp., 1st Cav.; and the 6/11 Arty.

A day-long battle near Highway 1 left 33 NVA dead and led to capture of 14 weapons, including an RPG launcher and two machineguns.

The next day, the full story of the Tien Phuoc attacks was revealed when A Co., 3/21, 196th Bde. found

Schwarz



bodies of 152 NVA in graves 10-1/2 —11 miles southwest of Tam Ky and Americal's Vietnam kill total passed the 26,000 mark.

On the same day, C Co., 4/3, 11th Bde. found graves of 15 VC nine miles northwest of Quang Ngai, and B Trp., 1/1, killed three NVA and four VC before destroying five tons of rice 5-1/2 miles west of Tam Ky.

The third week and fourth weekend in March brought renewed standoff and ground attacks. LZ Bronco, 11th Bde. headquarters, was shelled seven times in 72 hours, and the rocket count rose at Americal headquarters.

In the field, 32 NVA were killed March 19, a day on which more than 50 incidents of enemy activity were reported overnight. Eight NVA sappers died, and one was captured at LZ West as the 4/31 Inf. ruined 10 hours of NVA planning for the attack.

The 5/46 Inf. and two Regular Force units stayed to secure the area as the 26th Engr. Bn. rebuilt damaged structures and added new ones.

APRIL

A relatively quiet month, April saw the daily body count fluctuate very rarely as enemy units retreated



Mout

to mountainous cover and only occasionally ventured out to start trouble. Fewer NVA were killed during April than had died in one week of action March 16-22.

D Co., 4/31, 196th Bde. keynoted April action with a large ammo find. Included were 22,500 AK-47 rounds; 100 82mm rounds; nine 60mm rounds; and three B-40 rounds. All was concealed in an open pit full of heavy underbrush.

One April 2, D Co., 1/52, 198th Bde. extracted 20 tons of rice from roofs of 63 of 87 bunkers destroyed 16 miles northwest of Tam Ky in F Trp.'s rice-hunting grounds.

On the same day, C Trp., 1/1, opened the second in a series of skirmishes with VC on Barrier Island 12 miles north-northwest of Tam Ky. Working with a PF platoon, C Trp. engaged a large VC force dug into dikes and sand dunes and fought eight hours to kill 16. Ten VC died there a day earlier.

In five days beginning April 11, 1/1 units and "Blue Ghost" gunships of F Trp., 8th Cav. killed 10 NVA and 47 VC on Barrier Island. F Trp. killed 28 VC that week.

On April 12, C Co., 4/21, 11th Bde., working 14 miles north-northwest of Duc Pho, located a well-camouflaged

Shingledecker



hut containing 26 poorly-concealed weapons, including 23 rifles of French, Chinese, and American make, two U.S. carbines, and an M-60 machinegun.

Five days later and 6-1/2 miles west of Duc Pho, C Co., 3/1, 11th Bde. killed six NVA and took two .50-cal machineguns mounted on tripods in secured positions.

As Americal began its third year of operations in southern I Corps April 20, action remained sporadic. "Blue Ghost" gunships accounted for 30 of 37 VC killed in the 1/1 area between April 19-25, and the recon unit of 4/21, 11th Bde. found 18 NVA killed by air strikes 10-1/2 miles north-northwest of Duc Pho April 19.

Two days later, D Co., 2/1, 196th Bde. found almost 14 tons of rice buried near a river 19 miles northwest of Tam Ky.

F Trp. struck again a week later

and accounted for 50 of 77 VC killed in the 1/1 area between April 26 and May 2. On April 28, F Trp. killed 17 VC 15-1/2 miles north-northwest of Tam Ky, and "Shark" gunships of the 174th Aslt. Hel. Co. killed nine VC two miles southeast of Duc Pho.

MAY

BG Edwin L. Powell Jr. replaced BG Howard H. Cooksey as assistant division commander May 1; a 1/6 Inf. visit to Ky Sanh village marked the unit's 10,000th MEDCAP; and machinegunner SP4 Stanley Goff (San Francisco) received the DSC after singlehandedly routing 100 heavily-armed NVA regulars in a trench line.

Combat maintained its April pace until May 11 when enemy rocket and mortar crews joined sappers to renew violent attacks on Americal positions and Vietnamese population

centers. The 2d NVA Div. resurfaced west of Tam Ky to harass the city and west of Quang Ngai, and VC units grew considerably bolder than in previous weeks.

The enemy reawakening cost him 389 NVA and 205 VC killed and 109 weapons, 21 crew-served, captured between May 11-17. Almost immediately, April-like calm again settled over battle areas.

On May 8, 350 refugees began the first leg of a two-day journey to Hiep Duc Valley 35 miles west of Tam Ky, their home until savage terrorist raids forced them out four years ago.

Some 2700 refugees had returned to Hiep Duc in early May, and 5700 were to follow.

During the week of heavy attacks, artillerymen and engineers fought like infantrymen to repel ground probes. At LZ Baldy, 196th Bde. headquarters, the 2/1 Inf. killed 40 NVA sappers and took 13 individual weapons.

At LZ Snoopy, 1/82 Arty. gunners slammed back an NVA-VC charge with help from C Co., 39th Engr. Bn. Seventeen NVA and 23 VC were killed.

At LZ Stinson (then Buff), the 1/52 Inf., 198th Bde. killed 27 VC sappers and on bloody Nui Yon hill south of Tam Ky, the 3/21 Inf., 196th Bde. and 1/1 elements recaptured the peak. Fifty-three NVA were found dead there.

Just as before, an uneasy quiet settled over the Americal area after the hectic week. Even Ho Chi Minh's birthday passed on May 19 with no appreciable escalation of enemy activity.

May 31 brought to an end over 11 months as Americal commander for MG Charles M. Gettys. In ceremonies June 1, he relinquished command to MG Lloyd B. Ramsey and moved to the Pentagon as Director of Individual Training, DCSPER.





Longwell

A 196th Bde. soldier gives a concerned mother from the refugee village of Que Son a bar of soap and advice on how to combat her baby's skin infection. Below, the youngster casts a curious glance back at the generous GI.

Longwell

VILLAGE OF HOPE

By SP4 JIM BRUCE
196th Inf. Bde.

In the pre-dawn hours during the first week of the post-TET offensive, Que Son refugee village, located 20 miles northwest of Tam Ky, was hit in a lightening Viet Cong terrorist attack.

Thirty-four villagers lost their lives, 58 were wounded, and 86 homes burned to the ground in the violence that followed. A Regional Forces (RF) company on the northern edge of the village killed 17 of the attackers.

Most of the Que Son victims, many of them women and children, suffocated in the narrow confines of underground bunkers as terrorists systematically put two blocks of thatch-roofed houses to the torch. Others were trapped in the flimsy, burning structures. The survivors, already once refugee from VC-controlled regions, were left homeless.

But by mid-afternoon, the stoic villagers already had begun sweeping up the ashes and starting over again.

JULY, 1969





Bruce

Schools let out for the day and the students appeared in organized groups with rakes and brooms to help clear the rubble.

Civil Affairs personnel of the nearby 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., 196th Inf. Bde. distributed clothing and almost 2,000 pounds of rice to victims of the raid. The district government made money available to begin rebuilding.

An attack apparently aimed at destroying the people's resolve and driving them back into VC-controlled regions had only strengthened their determination to stick it out where they were.

Que Son village is a sprawling community of 26,000 located in the rich agricultural plain of Que Son Valley in the Central Lowlands. Its population has almost doubled in the past two years as refugees from the surrounding rice lands fled fighting in NVA and VC-controlled regions.

Through the combined efforts of the 2/1, the people, and their leaders, Que Son District and its environs have steadily extended Government of Vietnam (GVN) controlled territory in the district, secured new hamlets, housed and employed thousands of refugees from Viet Cong rule, improved school systems, and set up one of the best village medical systems in Vietnam.

"We don't do it for them, but we do our damndest to help them help themselves," said Battalion Commander



Bruce

MAJ Terry E. Rowe, S3 for the 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., proves a strong attraction to Que Son youngsters during a visit to the family refugee housing unit. Above, an Americal intelligence officer takes a break to chat in Vietnamese with PFs who guard their village against enemy terrorism.

LTC Sinclair L. Melner (Reno, Nev.). "And of course, the key factor is a district chief in Que Son who is motivated to help his people establish genuine government control, protection, and support."

LTC Melner was referring to District Chief "Dai Uy" (Captain) Nguyen Cong Chinh, who directs the affairs of his people with genuine concern.

The 2/1 works with CPT Chinh in carrying out two missions in the Que Son area. The first is to identify, close with, and destroy any VC or NVA concentrations. The battalion showed deadly proficiency in that regard when they helped break the hold of the 2nd NVA Div. on Que Son Valley. Securing and supporting pacification projects is a second objective.

An effective combination of the two missions, military and pacification, was achieved through the close cooperation of the 2/1 and the Que Son District Regional Forces and Popular Forces (PFs).

"When we first came into the valley more than a year ago," said MAJ Terry E. Rowe (Quincy, Calif.), battalion operations officer, "we were primarily concerned with freedom to maneuver and make contact with the enemy. The district RF/PF elements seldom ventured outside their No-Fire-Zone, and we never encouraged them to.

"But after the major enemy hold was broken," MAJ

Rowe added, "we realized the tremendous opportunity right here in our own back yard of making the RF/PF forces more active in pacification and security."

To achieve that aim, last August the battalion set up a program of close coordination with the Que Son District forces whereby CPT Chinh's RF/PF platoons were placed under U.S. operational control on a rotational basis. Typically, on any given day the "Legionnaires" had seven or eight of the platoons OPCON to its rifle companies in the field.

LTC Melner feels the RF/PF response has been well worth the effort. "Company commanders had the patience and recognized the long-term value in helping these people become more proficient soldiers," he said. "Part of the success was due simply to osmosis—being with an American unit on a patrol, in a night position set up by Americans; they just couldn't help but learn. And most of them were genuinely interested in learning and working with us."

One of the best examples of close ties between the military mission of the 2/1 and its desire to help the people of the district was the highly successful rice denial program, Operation Golden Fleece, in which elements of the 196th Bde. last autumn set out to deny VC and NVA units the grain from rice-rich Que Son Valley.

Through cooperation with CPT Chinh and his people, the "Legionnaires" were able to fulfill their rice denial assignment and also provide employment to several hundred refugees and a plentiful food supply to thousands more. The 196th Bde. harvested and captured more than 3,000,000 pounds of rice from enemy-controlled areas, with the 2/1 accounting for two-thirds of the total.

But the most significant factor in the success of Operation Golden Fleece was the work of the refugees, who actually did the harvesting.

"The refugees were given the opportunity to make a direct and meaningful contribution to their own support,"

said then Battalion Commander LTC Robert "Buck" Nelson (Columbus, Ga.). "They responded very well."

On the pacification front, the people of Que Son, district officials, and "Legionnaires" Civil Affairs Section are working together to improve the lives of the village's mushrooming population. An example of that cooperation was the dedication in February of a 100-family refugee housing unit and new civilian and military dispensaries.

The housing unit, which provides temporary shelter to refugee families until they can be allotted land and build new homes for themselves, was a thriving community with dozens of playing children and smoking kitchen fires within a week of its opening. The two dispensaries contain 26 beds for the medical needs of the village, and additional facilities are under construction.

To insure that quality of medical care for the villagers is in keeping with the new quarters, 10 Vietnamese nurses receive on-the-job training twice a week during MEDCAPs conducted by the Battalion Surgeon, CPT Kirk Hilliard (Pheasantville, N.J.).

Both the housing units and the dispensaries were self-help projects. The battalion S-5 provided the necessary building materials, according to Civil Affairs Officer 1LT Edward R. Suits (Palatine Bridge, N.Y.), but the people performed the work.

"The approach we take in these projects," LT Suits said, "is for the people of Que Son to do the planning and building, and for them to get the credit. But because of their limited resources, we try to provide technical assistance, fill in gaps within their own channels of supply, and generally serve as a sort of big brother."

Resources for refugee aid come from some unlikely sources—the fire support base trash dump for one. An American military facility generates a lot of trash: C-ration cartons and broken ammunition boxes that might serve as building material or firewood, and vast piles of garbage that could be used to fatten hogs.

During a MEDCAP to one of the Que Son hamlets, a 2-1 soldier carefully examines a Vietnamese child for signs of disease.

Bruce



LT Suits and CPT Chinh struck upon an idea beneficial to both the base and the people of Que Son. Why not contract bids for the trash and garbage pickup to someone in the village, auction the refuse, and put the money generated into a refugee fund?

It proved to be an efficient system. In one sweep, LZ Ross got rid of its waste disposal problem, several people were employed by the new sanitation service, and the village gained a new source of building materials, firewood, and livestock feed. The winning contract bid of 30,000 piasters put almost \$300 a month into the refugee fund.

CPT Chinh and a council of district representatives worked out a system earmarking money from the fund for refugee death benefits and reconstruction payments. When Que Son became the target of the post-TET terrorist raid, there was nearly \$1,200 in the fund to help the victims rebuild.

While Que Son represents a pacified area with a relatively secure populace and established community services, Phu Tho village, halfway between LZ Ross and LZ Baldy, exemplifies a region at an earlier stage of the pacification effort.

In 1965, Phu Tho was overrun and controlled by the Viet Cong. Much of the village population fled north and south to the GVN security of Moc Bai and Que Son. Now the people and their 52-year-old village chief, Ngo Thuong, are making a bid to return and reconstitute their village.

Phu Tho is one of 26 hamlets in Quang Nam Province targeted for government reconrol this year, thanks to the initiative of the old chief.

Known affectionately to Americal soldiers who work with him as "Number One VC" (for Village Chief), Thuong is a short, leathery, brown man with an infectious grin and persistent determination. He initiated the rebirth of his village last summer with little going for him other than his desire to go back.

When Thuong approached the 196th's Civil Affairs Section saying he would like to take his people back to their village, GVN presence in the area was nonexistent. The only sector even remotely secure during the daytime was along the maximum security region of Highway 535 where the 2/1 maintained a rifle company as security for convoys.

Thuong recruited 45 volunteers from the PF platoons around Moc Bai, people who previously had lived in the area and had a vested interest in re-establishing government control. He brought them back to Phu Tho, along with a village committee, census people, and police interrogators.

"They did a very good job," LTC Melner said. "The Phu Tho group was the best PF platoon we ever operated with. I guess it was having a feel for the area and being highly motivated to go back. They rooted out several dozen VC infrastructure from their area, more than we've ever gotten from a similar place".

With the VC infrastructure exposed, the second phase of constructing an outpost and hamlet security began.



Vietnamese nurses inventory stock of medicines on hand at one of two Que Son civilian dispensaries.

Demolition men and bulldozer operators of the 26th Engr. Bn. at LZ Baldy blasted and tore at a low ridge north of the main hamlet, clearing boulders and plowing up a 12-foot berm to form a triangular fortification.

The main hamlet at Phu Tho has doubled and then tripled in size since construction began, and more people in Moc Bai plan to move when the village is more secure. But the exodus is slow, and the VC remain a very real threat.

"Prior to last fall this was all more or less VC-controlled area," said MAJ William C. Simpson (Roanoke, Va.), MACV advisor to the Que Son District. "The outlying area is still VC. In Que Son District, we have 18 villages and 75 hamlets like this one. Out of that 75, we control 21. Pacification takes time. If we can get five or six more this year, then we're doing good."

So far the Phu Tho outpost is about 50 percent completed. Resettling of the people from the hamlets closely adjacent is well under way, but refugees come back into an area slowly.

"These things don't happen overnight," MAJ Rowe said. "I don't think we want them to. We want to be able to keep what we've got out there. When a man establishes his village headquarters and puts up a Vietnamese flag, we want to be sure we can secure both him, the flag, and the people who have resettled and declared their allegiance to the GVN."

"In pacification, civic action, the economy," he added, "by letting these people have jobs and some means to generate support, we have made a lot of progress."

"Maybe it is not spectacular, maybe it is not dramatic, but I think it is meaningful."

N C O

Story and Art by
SGT ALFRED ANTHONY JR
198th Inf. Bde.

"I remember him back in basic," recalled a young soldier of the 1st Bn., 46th Inf. "He gave me my first impression of the Army. He told me how ugly I was, how weak I was, and just how dumb I was."

Men like the one who greeted the young recruit appear in every platoon, at every fire base, and on every patrol in the 198th Inf. Bde. area. He is the man who wears the stripes—the non-commissioned officer.

The NCO works at a variety of jobs, from leading a platoon in combat to preparing daily meals. He is the action man, the manpower hustler of the modern Army.

SSG Joseph W. Preola (Terra Haute, Ind.), weapons platoon leader for B. Co., 5th Bn., 46th Inf., handled troops in Korea in 1949 as a machinegun section leader when present



PFCs and SP4s had trouble standing on two feet.

"We used water-cooled 30s then," Preola recalled. "They don't even have them anymore."

Preola views changes in the Army from what he calls "the lifer's point of view." "With so many college men, troops are smarter now," he said. "In the old Army you were something if you'd been through high school."

"With the men today you have to tell them the 'whys' about what they're doing. But it's a good change—more people understand what's going on. As a result the enlisted man can help out in more ways than one."

Men like SFC Herman M. Obst (Hancock, Mich.) perform their jobs with characteristic pride and professionalism.

A mess steward for the 5th Bn., 46th Inf., Obst is no ordinary cook. He feeds field troops at 19 separate locations, sometimes treating the men

to home-style cookouts.

A soldier stuffing himself with chicken, ice cream, and fresh watermelon on desolate Batangan Peninsula can thank Obst for the special catering service.

The true professional soldier does not sit back and let the Army grow around him. By continually updating his knowledge, the NCO can pass on valuable information to his men.

SFC Charles T. Sizemore, a PSG with D Co., 4th Bn., 3rd Inf., came back to Vietnam for a second tour.

"For the man with stripes, being a soldier becomes a job," he said. "The more stripes, the more responsibility. You become more efficient, and suddenly it's a way of life."

After thirteen years in the service, Sizemore is applying for a direct commission because he feels he can put his knowledge to good use leading troops.

It is said of a sergeant that it takes three cups of rotten coffee to melt the iceberg of his heart.

But the NCO acts tough for a reason. He is the one responsible for getting the job done.

The man in charge of big blasts on the enemy at the 4th Bn., 3rd Inf., SFC Pedraza Rodriguez (Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico) is, as he puts it, "responsible for defending 360 degrees."

Rodriguez thinks an NCO's job here is deeper than it appears. Fluent in Vietnamese, he believes the GI must continually study military tactics in relation to the people.

"It is important for the men to learn a few phrases of Vietnamese, even if it's just 'how are you,'" the 13-year veteran stated. Like many NCOs, Rodriguez plans a return trip to Vietnam.

SSG J.C. Clayton (Seaside, Calif.), who has practiced the medical trade in Europe, Alaska, and now Vietnam, typifies the sergeant who performs with determination despite a harsh environment.

After treating frostbite in Alaska at 65 degrees below zero, Clayton volunteered for Vietnam and now serves with the 5th Bn., 46th Inf.

"When something happens to a man here," he said, "he is on the way to fine medical treatment fast. We've saved some men's lives, and that's about the greatest satisfaction I could ask for."

SSG Jim Damico (Closter, N. J.), a platoon sergeant with A Co., 5th Bn., 46th Inf., arrived in Vietnam a PFC, and within a year earned the right to lead a platoon. Only 19, he has found the responsibility of his stripes a tough challenge.

"The sergeants do the dirty work," he said. "They run the war in the field."

Fellow platoon sergeant Preola, a thin and grizzled man, cracked a smile listening to Damico. "I'm old enough to be his father," he joked.

Preola continued with a grin, "I am a veteran of the 24th, 7th, and 1st Cav. Divisions. I started my career three times as a private—I guess I just never learned."

The sergeant paused and looked around the desolate LZ surrounding him, "I guess to me it's a job, not a war."



Combat Art: Men In War



Geserick

▲ HELPING HAND

BRINGING SMOKE ►

Art By

SGT ALFRED ANTHONY JR

198th Inf. Bde.

SP5 ED GESERICK

Combat Center



Anthony



▲ M-60 POWER

WAITING ▼



Geserick

ED GESERICK

AMERICAL



Anthony

Combat Art

◀ GENTLY NOW

▼ PORTRAIT OF A SOLDIER



Anthony

▲ HERE COMES TROUBLE, CHARLIE



Anthony

Amidst the endless rice paddies and scattering of small villages and hamlets in the Americal AO rest three cities that display a colorful mix of Vietnamese and Western cultures.

Although not as large and modern as Saigon, the cities of Quang Ngai, Tam Ky, and Duc Pho are the religious and commercial hubs of Quang Ngai and Quang Tin Provinces.

The largest urban area in the Americal AO, Quang Ngai has been described as a city to see, hear, and smell.

There is the constant din of merchants hawking their colorful wares from the great central market place. In a typical urban scene, children run and skip to school, and people bustle about their business. The smell of freshly caught fish and pungent odor of nuoc mam waft from crowded markets.

Wolf



Most of Quang Ngai's public buildings feature old French Colonial Tropical architecture. They contrast with traditional Vietnamese structures to give the city a unique charm.

Located 15 miles north of Chu Lai, Tam Ky is the administrative center for Quang Tin Province. It also is an important Buddhist center, marketplace for surrounding farmlands, and home of a large university.

The third main urban area, Duc Pho, lies adjacent to LZ Bronco near the South China Sea. A typical Vietnamese market village, Duc Pho serves mainly as an administrative capital and farmers market.

All three cities reflect Vietnamese, French, and American influence, spicing the Americal scene with a quaint urban flare.



A TRIP

Vietnamese walk and ride down busy street in Quang Ngai City, Vietnam's fifth largest city. Below, cute young vendor arranges her wares in colorful Duc Pho marketplace.

Heath





Guerrant

The Quang Ngai Roman Catholic Cathedral is largest structure in division area. Below, Duc Pho family scrubs down near marketplace. Duc Pho school kids cool off with ice-pops made in national colors, and mama-san prepares Vietnamese rice toast for sale in central Duc Pho market area.

TO THE CITY

*Pictorial Visit To Quang Ngai
Tam Ky, And Duc Pho*

Heath



JULY, 1969

Fedorski



Heath







Photos by Moore



In Buddhist temple at Tam Ky, small boy looks in awe as elders kneel and monks pray before statue of Buddha (opposite page). Pot in front of Tam Ky cathedral holds paper money burned in offering to spirits of dead (above left). Open-air farmers market in Tam Ky serves Quang Tin Province (above). Traditional and modern vehicles whiz by Tam Ky intersection (left).

GRUNTS

anatomy of an infantry squad

By SGT DAVID DEVERICK

11th Inf. Bde.



Photos by SP4 STEVE TIPTON

11th Inf. Bde.

There are 25,000 men in the Americal fighting machine. But the main cog, the basic combat unit that encounters the most fierce and direct contact with the enemy, consists of 10 men—the infantry squad.

SGT David Deverick (Riverdale, Ill.), a former 11th Inf. Bde. squad and platoon leader with D Co., 1st Bn., 20th Inf., writes of his buddies in the 1st squad. He tells of young men suddenly matured by the stress of combat, and what they think of their job, buddy, and themselves. The following story is written in tribute to infantry squads in all Americal units.

One year ago, James Kedwards' only association with the U.S. Army consisted of drawing armored personnel carriers as a draftsman for a firm that manufactures the tracked vehicles in his home state of California.

Today, SGT Kedwards is an infantry squad leader with the 11th Inf. Bde.

A 21-year-old product of the NCO school at Ft. Benning, Ga., Kedwards is the backbone of his squad. Each squad member has his own function in keeping the squad moving, working, and fighting together. The squad leader insures these jobs are done.

The modern squad leader does not have to be the hard-nosed, blood and guts stereotyped sergeant of World War II movie fame. He gains the respect of his men by using common sense and a soft sell technique.

The young sergeant ran his fingers through his thick black hair and explained, "I could just tell the men when to move out and who to follow. I try to let my men know what's going on. It's a lot easier to work with people who feel they have a purpose."

When his men suddenly meet the enemy, the squad leader reaches the supreme test of his leadership ability.

In a recent firefight just a few miles from Duc Pho, Kedwards' squad, the 1st squad, D Co., 1st Bn., 20th Inf., was pinned down by Viet Cong automatic weapons fire. Kedwards had to get his men moving; and he did.

"Sure they were scared," the sergeant exclaimed as a trace of a smile broke on his suntanned face. "I was scared as hell, too. The guys came through and reacted in the way they had to. We didn't lose a man in the squad. We were lucky, but we worked as a team."

"First I got the M-79 man pumping rounds out to keep the bad guys' heads down until we could find a target for the sixteens to fire at."

"You have to control these guys though; they like to fire rounds like they grow on trees. The most M-16 rounds any of my men carry is 45. There's one guy, we call him 'Rose-

bud,' who carries a case of 'Cs' along with all his ammo."

Being able to find his way through mountains, over rice paddies, and across coastal plains is of great importance to the squad leader.

Kedwards can read a map well, and often consults the plastic-wrapped map he keeps in the pocket of his sweat-stained jungle trousers.

"Sometimes when we make contact," Kedwards said, "the men in my squad are the only ones who know where an exact enemy position is. If I can pinpoint the enemy target on the map, we can really bring smoke with artillery, gunships, or jets."

Taking a sketch book from his trouser pocket, Kedwards began drawing another cartoon for which he has become famous in his company. As



Members of the 1st Sqd. D Co., 1st Bn., 20th Inf. sweep across a grassy field (opposite page). Above, PFC James C. Barger (Rochester, Mich.) keeps a close watch on hedgerow as he walks past.

usual, the cartoon dealt with a man in D Co., this time a member of another platoon who had just shaved an unusually bushy mustache that had ridden his upper lip for the last 11 months.

Written underneath the caricature was, "They made me shave my mustache off, so I'm quitting the Army." The GI was to DEROS in three weeks.

One of Kedwards' most common targets for cartoon subject matter is one of his squad members, PFC John DeVarso.

Affectionately called "Jelly Belly" because of his portly stature, DeVarso is a rifleman. His duties, however, go much farther than just toting an M-16.

At times, DeVarso must be the demolition man for the squad. He carries necessary explosives to blow dud artillery and mortar rounds that create deadly litter around LZ Liz, D Co.'s fire base.

DeVarso doesn't look like an infantryman. His glasses generally are at half mast on his nose, and his baby-like cheeks haven't seen a razor lately, and don't miss it.

A five-month veteran in Vietnam, he always seems to be looking for an elusive piece of equipment he has misplaced again. "I'm learning, though," he quipped. "I only lost an entrenching tool, three grenades, a poncho liner, and my rifle this week."

There usually are five riflemen in a squad, the "book" calling for three riflemen and two automatic weapons men. Because of a shortage of men, there are only three riflemen in SGT Kedwards' squad, which is broken into two teams.

DeVarso is a member of SP4 Donald Cook's team. Cook is Kedwards' right arm, reminding people like DeVarso not to forget their gear.

A former auto mechanic from Rosemead, Calif., Cook has been in Vietnam eight months, longer than any man in the squad. He was with the company less than a month when it ran into a fortified NVA base camp near the Ha Thanh Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) camp.

Noticeably nervous, Cook puffs

away on cigarettes at record speed, continuously looking around as if expecting someone to sneak up and slit his throat.

But the young specialist does not let caution get the best of him. "There are many times when caution is necessary," Cook noted, his fingers playing with another cigarette. "There also are lots of times when caution can really mess you up."

"Sometimes you get a guy leading you around who is so cautious and slow that everybody gets worn out. The men also get bored, and that's when they stop paying attention."

Cook's interests are clearly drawn on his helmet camouflage cover. His fiancée's name, Margo, is written in huge letters. The word "Chevy II" also decorates his helmet. "I'm gonna take the C-modified production class at the drags with that car," he said with assurance.

Cook's team includes one more rifleman. He is the man with the fantastic appetite, SP4 John "Rosebud" Rosebrook, formerly an inspector at a water pump factory in his home town of Columbus, Ohio.

"I'm a big eater," the blonde-haired, rosy-cheeked rifleman shyly admitted.

Rosebrook is far from shy when it comes to fighting "Charlie." He walks point more than any other man in the squad and doesn't have to be told twice to do anything.

When asked about his squad leader, "Rosebud" smiled and said, "SGT Kedwards is a good man. He keeps the squad together. The guys over here are much closer than they were with people back in the States. One man's problems are every squad member's problems."

"We always try to watch out for each other. We know the best way to make it out of this place is to watch out for the other guy as well as yourself. One man can't win the war; it takes a team effort."

Soldiers like Rosebrook with their C-rations make a pack mule look like a piker. Some infantrymen even carry tape recorders strapped to their pack or stuffed inside it.

SP4 Steven Reynolds, the other



team leader in the 1st squad, humps along with a collection of books that could stock a library.

A native of New York City, Reynolds was chosen to attend leadership school at the Combat Center in Chu Lai just three months after arriving in country. The top two graduates of the school automatically are promoted to sergeant. Reynolds came in third.

If there is one man who can boost squad morale, it is Reynolds. "Rosebud" tells of one time when "Rusty" Reynolds lifted the whole platoon's spirits.

"It was Christmas Eve, and we had been cutting our way through some of the thickest brush I've ever seen. Just before dark we hit the top of the hill and cut out an LZ as darkness set in.

"The brush was so thick that we had to cut out places to sleep. I

slept with a tree stump in the middle of my back. But finally morning came and it was Christmas Day."

"It's bad enough being away from home at Christmas, especially in Vietnam, and the situation we were in made things even worse. But Rusty was full of cheer.

"He had taken a can of shaving cream we had received the night before in a sundry pack and sprayed a Santa Claus beard on his face and a 'Merry Christmas' on the back of a C-ration box.

"After this, he really went wild, flocking all the trees and bushes around him in shaving cream. Everybody got out their Instamatics and took pictures. It certainly made Christmas a little brighter."

Reynolds' constant companion, SP4 Reginald "Rat" Asplet, is a rifleman in Reynolds' team.



SGT James Kedwards, the squad leader, cautiously checks out the ruins of a church north of Duc Pho (left). Above, at a signal from Kedwards, the first fire team hustles forward from its concealed position.

In civilian life a student at Northern Michigan University, Asplet's nickname fits his rodent-like appearance. "I don't mind being called Rat," he explained. "I've been called that for a long time. I told the guys in the squad that I was nicknamed Rat in college."

During his six months with the squad, Asplet has carried a radio for the platoon leader, 1LT Robert Maxwell of Troy, New York.

Lugging a PRC-25 is no mean job. The radio weighs 24½ pounds with battery, but most radio telephone operators (RTO) carry at least one extra battery and a speaker box to make it easier for their leader to hear the radio at a distance.

"I bring along more stuff than the average guy out here, I guess," Rat, a Detroit native, exclaimed. "I read a lot, so I always have a bunch of

paperbacks in my rucksack, along with 45 M-16 magazines.

"I usually bring along an entrenching tool, too. Quite a few guys didn't bother to carry them when I first came to the company, but after a few mortar rounds came into an NDP (night defensive position) and they tried to cram themselves into a steel pot, they decided it might not be a bad idea to carry one."

Like everyone else in the squad, Asplet walks point. No one is permanent point man, just as no platoon or squad is always on point. But some men have a knack for walking point and would just as soon do it themselves as have a poor point man hit a booby trap and wound several men.

Asplet often volunteers to be lead man, and does his job well. The bespectacled rifleman does not espe-

cially like the point, but as he said, "I don't like to follow some clown who's going to go through Cambodia to get to the South China Sea."

The 1st squad has only one grenadier—SP4 James White, a hefty sawmill worker from Happy Camp, Calif. A normal load of 60 M-79 rounds are strapped to White's rucksack around his waist and over his shoulders.

"I like the grenade launcher," the hefty specialist said. "Whenever we are fired at, I'm usually the first one to fire back."

"There are a lot of guys who want to carry the 79. One thing, it saves a guy from walking point."

"The weapon has its disadvantages too. When you get up in the mountains and can't see more than a few feet through thick brush, the M-79 isn't worth much since the round has to go about 17 meters before it becomes armed."

When the squad moves out, a grenadier is usually near front and rear. Like the machinegunner, the grenadier is surrounded by riflemen for protection.

If the squad leader suspects "Charlie" may be waiting in ambush, he calls on White to fire a few rounds ahead, causing the enemy to flee or to spring an early ambush.

The remaining man in the 1st squad is SP4 David Fletcher, a rifleman in Reynolds' team. A 30-year-old father of four from Lansing, Mich., Fletcher previously served a four-year hitch in the Navy as an aviation boatswain's mate.

The squad members have a great deal of respect for Fletcher. "He isn't afraid of anything out there," SP4 Asplet claimed. "Even after he was severely wounded, he was anxious to get back out to the field and fight."

As the dawn light breaks through the hazy sky, SGT Kedwards' squad mans a night defensive perimeter.

Some men are curled in poncho liners, using rucksacks as pillows, while others have inflated air mattresses and sleep peacefully. But a few mattresses have gone flat.

The squad leader and team leader begin rolling men out of the rack.

After the squad gathers up the Claymore mines, it is time for the first C-ration meal of the day. A few men heat hot chocolate to warm up.

Kedwards is called to the platoon CP (command post) and informed of the day's activities. He learns time of departure, route to be followed, type of mission, and what position the platoon will take up in the order of march.

This particular morning, the first platoon will be the point platoon, and Kedwards' squad will take point. Reynolds' team is appointed. "Rat" Asplet is pointman. The area to be covered crosses an expanse of rice paddies, with intermittent tree lines hiding possible enemy soldiers.

Everyone is ready to go, except DeVarso; he forgot to pick up his LAW (light anti-tank weapon). He finally straps it on his rucksack, and the command "move out" is given to start the day's trek.

Rat advances slowly and carefully because he knows if the enemy is around, booby traps may well be planted along possible exit routes from the NDP.

As the platoon moves out in a column, the GIs are reminded to spread out. In open rice paddies, Kedwards wants none of his men closer than 15 meters.

When the Americal unit runs across a village, the rest of the company forms a cordon around the village as the 1st squad closes to search for weapons, ammo, or food caches. The area is searched and everything is in order, but one young child seems sick. Kedwards calls for a medic to look at the youngster.

The platoon proceeds until noon, when the men find a shady spot, set up a perimeter, and settle down for more C-rations.

After chow, Fletcher removes boots and socks and airs his feet. Foot problems are one of the common health hazards to the infantryman.

"Rat" catches up on his sun and reading. Team leader Cook sits down to write a letter to Margo, while "Rosebud" has his shirt off and tries to get more sun.

DeVarso struggles to reorganize his pack, and Kedwards is busy ribbing him as he draws another cartoon featuring "Jelly Belly." Reynolds also is kidding DeVarso. White sleeps through everything.

Again the command to move out is heard, and the men reluctantly struggle to their feet to head for a village where D Co. recently received sniper fire.

Disappointed, they find the village almost deserted. They wanted to

discover evidence of VC in the village, but the only sign of the enemy is the sudden absence of people.

The 1st squad finally leaves the village to set up an NDP and accept resupply.

Smoke is popped and the Huey supply chopper lands, bringing hot food, mail, C-rations, beer and soda, and other incidentals.

Some nights Kedwards takes his men on ambush patrols, so the squad loses precious sleep. But men are compensated in other ways, like staying with the command post the next day instead of patrolling.

Finally, Kedwards has a chance to read his mail and take a break from duties. He huddles under a poncho liner and poncho and, with a flashlight, tries to read a letter from home.

As he finishes, his mind slips back to his job in Vietnam, and he wonders where he and his men would be if war had not joined them.

What a fellow did before he came in the Army does not bother any of the squad members. They stay together because they want to go home.

Many will never see each other again after they leave here. They may forget their company commander's name, but they never will forget their buddies in the 1st squad.

The infantry squad's vital communications link, the RTO, lugs a 25-pound PRC-25 and sizeable load of accessories on his back.



Soldiers from the 26th Engr. Bn. keep sharp lookout for lurking VC snipers as their combat engineer vehicle gouges a road through rugged mountain terrain.

They Make The Going Great

By SGT HERB HARTLEY

No bridges support heavy artillery pieces vital to the infantryman. No roads carry the ever-important convoys. No landing zones or air strips.

This disastrous situation would exist in the division area if not for a broad-shouldered, hard-working lot known as combat engineers.

Under the command of LTC Donald R. Swygert (Carlisle, Pa.), the 26th Cmbt. Engr. Bn. increases combat effectiveness of Americal troops through construction, impeding the enemy by destroying his facilities, and fighting as infantry, if necessary.

"To say our battalion stays busy is an understatement," said CSM John R. Spehar (Kenosha, Wis.). "Doing the job right the first time doesn't necessarily mean it will be the last. What 'Charlie' doesn't bruise with mines and satchel charges will be damaged by weather or heavy use."

"A couple of months ago we reconstructed the Binh Son Bridge on Highway 1 for the fourth time," LTC Swygert stated.

"It was a cooperative effort. Co. E constructed a temporary 260-foot floating bridge to carry traffic, while the 39th Engr. Bn. removed Bailey bridging used to close gaps created by VC sapper squads."

Division engineers work with men of the 19th and 39th Engr. Bns. of the 18th Engr. Bde., and 9th Marine Engr. Bn. to keep all-important Highway 1 open.

When it comes to pioneering a road into country that has not seen a four-wheel vehicle in years, however, men

of the 26th are on their own.

In a typically important mission, engineers were tasked with opening a road across 17 miles of rugged terrain between Binh Son and the Tra Bong Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) camp so giant artillery could move into position.

The day before the operation began, two airmobile bulldozers, four 3/4-ton dump trucks, a 1/4-ton truck, and a bucket loader were airlifted into the CIDG camp with men from B Co.

The next morning, men and equipment began working east, while B, D, and E Cos. cut a path west from Binh Son.

Combat Engineer Vehicles—58-ton tanks with dozer blades and a 165mm demolition gun—led the way, barreling over obstacles, filling in trenches, and blasting enemy sniper positions with huge guns.

"It took three miserable days of hard work to get those guns to Tra Bong and because of heavy rains, even longer to get the equipment out," Spehar remarked.

B Co. had earned a rest, but that had to wait. A day and a half later, the engineers were committed to another operation occupying them for weeks.

The 26th Engrs. are proud of the motto emblazoned on their battalion colors: "Way of the Victors," as they continue to make the going easier for the Americal team.



Friedman

Americal Teams With Other Services To Form THE MAGNIFICENT FIGHTING MACHINE

By SP4 JOHN W. HEATH

The Americal battalion commander needed air support. Fast.

One of his companies was pinned down by a stubbornly-entrenched enemy element. He contacted an Air Force Forward Air Control (FAC) pilot circling nearby.

Assessing the position of enemy and friendlies, the FAC pilot flashed a call for air strikes to the division Tactical Air Control Party (TACP).

The Air Force major in the TACP requested clearance from the Third Marine Amphibious Force (III MAF) in Da Nang, and within 30 minutes of the infantry unit's call for help, a Marine Phantom jet from Chu Lai roared in to blast the enemy position.

Army, Air Force, and Marine units in the Americal AO once again had combined to crunch "Charlie." If the beleaguered ground unit had been near the coast, the Navy also would have pitched in with powerful gunfire support.

Few Army divisions work as closely with the other services as does the Americal. And the division has the distinction of being the only Army division in Vietnam under direct operational control of another service—III MAF in Da Nang. All services are represented in III MAF.

"There is more inter-service cooperation here than anywhere in Vietnam," said MAJ Colin Powell, Americal deputy G-3. "For example, you will find Marine flyers, guided by Air Force FAC pilots, supporting Army troops."

Despite this diversity in personnel, there is little inter-service rivalry or harassment. "If an Americal trooper on the ground relies on Marine fighters," MAJ Powell added, "he learns to respect the other services."

Most cooperative efforts between

Army, Marine, and Air Force elements involve air support. Marine Phantom and Skyhawk jets based at Marine Air Groups 12 and 13 in Chu Lai fly most of the missions, although Air Force craft from as far away as Saigon or Cam Ranh Bay also assist division units.

After discussing the tactical situation with Americal ground commanders, Air Force FAC pilots guide the jet fighters on target.

"FAC planes go out 30 minutes early to see if the target area is clear and to consult with the infantry leader," said Air Force MAJ Robert Burnell, assistant air liaison officer at the Division Tactical Operations Center (DTOC).

"The pilot may advise the ground CO on enemy movement," the major continued, "or suggest he pull back troops farther from the strike zone. Overall control of the mission, however, remains with the CO. He can call off the mission at any time."

In addition to FAC planes, the Air Force provides support from C-47 "Spooky" craft. The "Spooky" orbits the Americal AO nightly, ready with its potent miniguns to ward off enemy assaults on fire bases and LZs.

The Air Force also works with an Army crew in the DTOC to prevent an artillery shell from accidentally meeting the multitude of airplanes in the Americal area. The division's Air Warning Control Center, "Sav-A-Plane," keeps track of artillery and aircraft and makes sure they never collide.

Americal elements also work closely with Marine ground units. Twenty-three Combined Action Platoon (CAP) teams—each consisting of a squad of Marines, a Navy Corpsman, and 35 Popular Force soldiers (PFs)—operate in the division area from



A Marine F-4B Phantom jet drops a 500-pound bomb on VC trenches concealed in a tree line. Close cooperation between Americal ground troops, Marine pilots, and Air Force FAC pilots keeps "Charlie" on the run. Right, Navy Swift Boat sailors from Chu Lai search a junk for possible contraband as part of Operation Market Time, designed to interdict enemy sea supply routes.

U.S. Marines



U.S. Navy

Quang Ngai City to Tam Ky.

"The CAP mission is to destroy the VC infrastructure in their hamlet or village areas, and to assist in civic action projects, like building schools," said CPT Jerry Frost, assistant G-3, plans.

The division gives CAP teams supplies and necessary air and artillery support. Choppers fly one hot meal a day to the Marines.

Offering highly diversified support to Americal units, the Navy provides gunfire, Swift Boat patrols, supplies, utilities, maintenance, and construction.

Depending on the type of mission and ships available, the Navy can supply gunfire for division troops near the coast. Destroyers, rocket ships, and cruisers operate an average of 25 days a month, and fire one to two missions a day, mainly in the 11th Inf. Bde. area.

Small, but fast and maneuverable, Swift Boats patrol the coast from Hoi An to Quang Ngai City 24 hours a day. "Armed with three .50 cal. machineguns and an 81mm mortar, the Swifts prevent infiltration by sea and hamper movement of enemy troops and supplies along the coast," explained Navy LT E.A. Flynn, OIC of the Chu Lai Swift Boat detachment.

Swift Boats often act as a blocking force for Americal ground units, preventing trapped enemy from fleeing by sea. On the Batangan Peninsula south of Chu Lai, the Navy vessels provide fire support for LZ Minuteman.

Supply is another task the Navy performs for the division. Except for high-priority items delivered by air, all supplies for units in Chu Lai funnel through the Naval Support Activity Detachment (NSAD) sand ramp.

Barges, LSTs, and other ships are unloaded around the clock. Goods, ranging from ammunition to tape recorders, pass through NSAD each month.

"Although we supply all services in the area, the Americal is by far our largest customer," said LCDR J.C. Wheeler, NSAD supply officer. "For example, the Army accounts for about 85 percent of the business in our Servmart, which sells high turnover items valued under fifty dollars, such as paint and office supplies."

Besides gunfire and supply support, the Navy cooperates with the division in construction and maintenance. The famous Seabees build and maintain most utilities used by Americal soldiers and construct everything

from bunkers to airports.

The Public Works Shop at NSAD provides utilities and facilities maintenance and common-use land transportation for Chu Lai. Over a thousand Seabees and Koreans and Vietnamese civilians insure the smooth flow of 143,000 gallons of water a day and 3,500 kilowatt hours of electricity a month.

Like a public works department in a small city in the States, the Public Works Shop also operates steam, telephone, sewage, ice, refrigeration, and trash facilities.

Whereas Seabees at NSAD maintain most Americal facilities, another Seabee group, Mobile Construction Battalion 58 (MCB-58), builds the equipment that NSAD maintains.

"MCB-58 performs two major tasks for the Americal: combat and non-combat construction, and technical engineering assistance," said LCDR Donald Sturmer, operations officer.

Seabees from MCB-58 build roads, hangars, bunkers, electrical systems, fuel storage areas, and other facilities. For example, the Seabees pre-cut several large timber bunkers and made them into banded kits which the 26th Engrs. transported and assembled at division LZs.

In a recent project, the naval engineers rebuilt half a million square feet of runway and apron at Duc Pho airstrip.

Operation Russell Beach and Bold Mariner offer a classic example of

Americal, Navy, Marine, and Air Force units working together to rout the enemy.

Beginning in January, two division battalions, together with two battalions of Marines, two battalions from the 2nd ARVN Div., and Navy Swift Boats established an 11½-mile land cordon and sea blocking force encircling enemy elements on the Batangan Peninsula.

In the first phase of the operation, Navy ships and Army units made diversionary movements to distract the enemy from the main landing area.

Two Marine battalions launched an air-sea assault on D-day during phase II, as Americal troops swept in from the west and ARVNs from the south. Swift Boats and helicopters with division PSYOP teams aboard initiated the important pacification stage of the campaign, broadcasting pre-recorded tapes to VC and civilians in the cordon area.

During the third phase of Russell Beach/Bold Mariner, the cordon tightened as Navy ships closed from the sea, and Americal, Marine, and ARVN units shrunk the noose inland.

"Many diversified elements were involved in the combined operation," said LTC Thomas J. Ambrose, S-3 for the operation. "Nobody had control over anybody else, so the different services had to work together. Communication was vital."

Liaison officers from the Air Force

TACP, the Navy, and the Marines coordinated with Americal representatives in the 198th Inf. Bde. TOC. The liaison team kept track of Army artillery fire to avoid accidental firing on friendlies. A division team, in turn, was stationed on the Bold Mariner command ship to coordinate naval gunfire.

To safeguard proper execution of Marine air strikes, ground commanders worked through an Air Force liaison who requested air support through the Navy command ship.


"An Army Air Element directed all chopper supply flights to prevent accidental hits from naval gunfire," LTC Ambrose explained. "Air corridors were set up just like at a civilian airport."

Each service established its own supply unit for the operation, but if a service ran short, others filled in. For example, the Navy supplied the Americal with needed small boats, and Americal provided the "swabbies" with engineering equipment.

When the Bold Mariner phase of the Batangan campaign ended, one of the Marine battalions was OPCON temporarily to the Americal.

In a gesture symbolic of the effective cooperation between services in Russell Beach, Task Force Commander BG Howard H. Cooksey, then assistant division commander, presented the Marines with Americal patches as a token for their efforts.

Traditional inter-service rivalry may continue in the form of Army-Navy football clashes, and remain symbolized by the vast distance separating infantrymen in the mud below from Marine and Air Force pilots high above.

But as any hapless VC in the Americal AO can testify, the four services here fight as one. And fight tough. 

The Battleship New Jersey thunders a sixteen-inch shell in support of Americal units. Navy destroyers, rocket ships, and cruisers fire one or two missions a day at enemy concentrations.

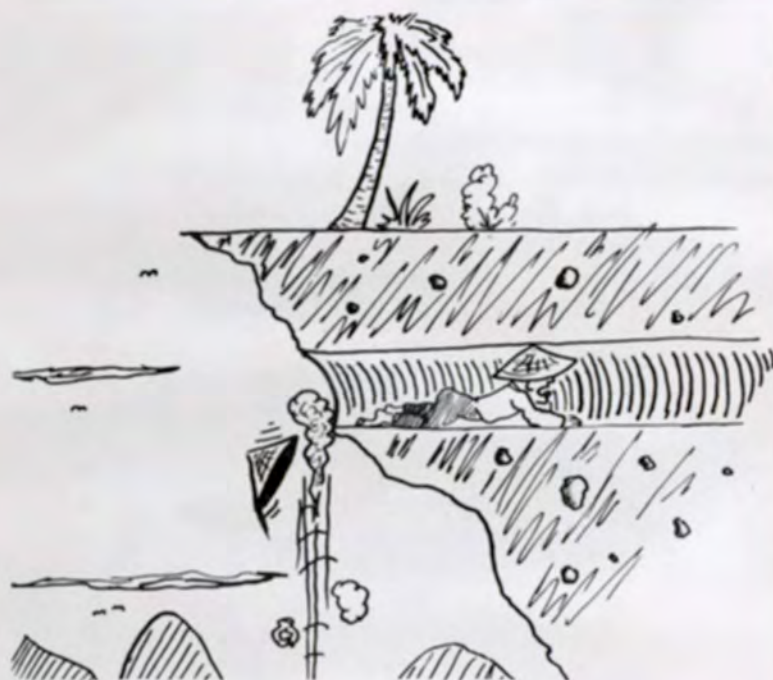
U.S. Navy



AMERICAL MIRTH

By SP5 LOU FEDORSKI

11th Inf. Bde.



"Keep backing up Nguyen, I think I still hear the Americans coming."



"We've come a long way since the start of the war."



"How long have you been working in these tunnels anyway?"

The Oriental Art Of Healing

By SFC LARRY BABITTS



Oriental Health Symbol

During the 10th century, King Dinh-Tien-Goang was so impressed with the scholar Tue-Tin that he offered him the office of The Court Mandarin. Although this title would have made him the First Lord over millions of people in the Vietnamese Empire, the scholar refused. The refusal was based upon a prophecy given Tue-Tin by a Buddhist

monk that the House of Dinh would not reign much longer.

Unaccustomed to having his will disobeyed, the Emperor sent an army to bring the young philosopher to him, but to no avail. Tue-Tin had escaped to a Confucian monastery in southern China.

It was during a visit to this holy place by the most celebrated Doctor of Medicine in China, Duong-Quang-Thanh, that the remarkable Tue-Tin, by now a member of the order of monks, became interested in the healing arts.

Within 10 years, Tue-Tin was said to be a greater doctor than his teacher. It was most likely with a sense of relief that the Grand Court Physician to the Celestial Emperor of China permitted his protegee to return south to his home in Vietnam.

Arriving in his homeland, Tue-Tin learned that the prophecy had been correct. The Dinh Dynasty had ended, and a man named Le was now the Emperor of all land south of the Red River.

Tue-Tin began his practice of medicine and became so skilled that his fame spread through all Asia. Soon he had more patients than he could handle. To help relieve the misery of the people, the noted physician opened a school of medicine and brought in students from all castes, many of whom became equally renowned. The graduates of his school were required to take an oath and swear before the gods to practice with integrity and honesty.

During his more than a quarter-century of practice, this early Vietnamese scientist did a great deal of pharmaceutical research and detailed his observations in a book painstakingly written by hand.

This is the earliest and most thorough book on oriental medicine known, and is still used in part as a textbook for studying the art of Chinese medicine.

While the western field of medicine is constantly changing and improving, the Eastern school of herbology has

not changed its basic doctrines in nearly a thousand years.

About six centuries later, another scholar, perhaps the best known doctor of oriental medicine, Le Huu Chan of North Vietnam, compiled a complete set of medical textbooks which are still followed today exactly as they were written.

Basically, the traditional medical theory now practiced in Vietnam states that the human body has five major internal organs: heart, liver, spleen, lungs, and kidney plus six secondary organs.

Perhaps the most familiar thought to Westerners is the belief that the body is always under the influence of nature's five major elements: metal, wood, water, fire, and earth. Another influencing factor in Asian thought regarding the body is the five directions: north, south, east, west, and center.

Another ancient practice Westerners are acquainted with is acupuncture and bloodletting, which are still practiced extensively throughout the orient.

Puncturing the body at specified locations with gold and silver needles in order to relieve pain and cure diseases by the release of "bad winds" and "poisons of the blood" may be witnessed in the market places of many Vietnamese cities.

Many Western physicians have explored acupuncture as a method of therapy in their constant search for relief from disease without surgery. But bloodletting, by either the opening of the veins or by the use of sterilized leeches, was abandoned in the Western world more than two centuries ago.

The major help to Westernization of Vietnam's medical practitioners is now coming from the United States and other interested nations through various international commissions and nonprofit committees.

The Agency for International Development sponsors a special medical school in Saigon and attempts to produce about 200 qualified physicians each year. The government of South Vietnam has formed a Department of Preventative Medicine for malaria eradication and has instituted a Rural Health Program to train auxiliary health workers for duty in the countryside.

Despite the government's concentrated health programs and the influx of foreign medical personnel to the provinces in Vietnam, the people, particularly those living in small hamlets and villages of the countryside, continue to rely on the arts of oriental medicine. Only when it fails, and it often does, will they turn to the more sophisticated Western sciences.

The answer's in a child's smile
In his tears
And in his innocence
In his joy and his sadness
It's why I fight
For everyone's children



Noel



Noel

