



FIRST TEAM CARTOON BY VLT LAWRENCE MACKENZIE

## Wrong Channel?

"Well, it looks like we miss 'Combat' on TV tonight!"

# Cav, Allies Net 783 Enemy KIA During Pegasus

By SPS MIKE LARSON

Convair Staff Writer

**KHE SANH**—Soldiers of the 1st Air Cavalry Division's Third Brigade met surprisingly light North Vietnamese Army resistance as they swept into besieged Khe Sanh Combat Base, spearheading the drive to relieve the surrounded base.

A total of 783 enemy had been killed by U.S. Army, Marine and ARVN units during the first phase of Operation Pegasus, aimed at taking pressure off Khe Sanh.

The drive on Khe Sanh went smoothly for the 1st Cav troopers until Alpha and Bravo Companies, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry slammed into a company-sized NVA blocking force three kilometers southeast of the Marines. Charlie company, 2nd of the 7th, slipped behind the enemy and cut off his escape. The action netted 14 NVA killed, including tree-top snipers.

From that point, the march went swiftly.

"The men seemed eager to reach Khe Sanh," said Master Sergeant Jack E. Shryver, Durant, Okla., with the 2nd of the 7th, "and the closer we got, the faster they walked."

"When we reached the outer wire, the Marines were standing on top of their bunkers, waving at us, taking pictures, and throwing us C-rations. They seemed pretty happy to see us."

That night, the Cavalrymen slept outside the perimeter, and the next morning, led by Charlie Company, they moved through the front gate of the camp while Marines, lining the road, silently watched.

"They didn't say anything," said one soldier. "It was probably hard for them to believe the

Cav had come to help."

Three days before, the 2nd of the 7th, anticipating a large enemy force, had air assaulted three kilometers southeast of Khe Sanh. Not a shot was fired. That morning, the 2nd of the 7th captured one NVA and killed 11 others, including an NVA captain.

Joined by the 3rd Brigade's 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry, and  
(Continued On Back Page)



US ARMY PHOTO BY SPS CHARLES EKBORG

## Towards Khe Sanh

Cavalrymen prepare to jump off at Landing Zone Stud for Operation Pegasus while overhead Chinook helicopters move out with troops and supplies as the FIRST TEAM spearheaded the operation that lifted the 78-day siege of the Marine outpost.

# Khe Sanh From Above

## First There's The Craters

By SPS MIKE LARSON

Convair Staff Writer

**KHE SANH**—First you see the huge craters dug into the green mountains by B-52 bombs that increase in number as you near Khe Sanh.

You spot the NVA's zigzag trenches snaking toward the perimeter, some less than 100 meters from the outer barbed wire.

And finally, lying below you, ruddy, dusty, shell marked but not beaten, is the Marine camp you've read and heard so much about—Khe Sanh.

For 78 days, the Marines here were pounded by enemy artillery, rockets and mortars, receiving up to 1,500 rounds in a single day. But now, as the 1st Air Cavalry Division entered the camp, the pounding had stopped and, while the job of clearing NVA from the surrounding countryside still remained, it seemed the 20,000

enemy troops surrounding the camp had left, abandoning the plan to make Khe Sanh an American Dien Bien Phu.

"The Marines looked sort of downhearted when they left," said Private First Class Ray Knott, East Riverdale, Md., with the 1st Cav's 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, "but I think they were happy to leave."

"I like Khe Sanh," he added. "These bunkers they've built here are some of the best I've seen, and their perimeter is out of this world. I don't think they could have been overrun. I just hope we stay here awhile."

The 1st Cav's Third Brigade has moved two battalions, plus its command post into the camp, firing the Marines to patrol the nearby hills and push out the NVA.

When Cavalrymen moved in, they found deep, solid bunkers replete with food—tomato juice, orange juice, oranges, apples, C-rations—the Marines had left behind. But they also found trash, empty cans, paper

that the Marines could not dispose of during the heavy bombardment.

Soldiers working feverishly to clean the bunkers brought the camp alive. Helicopters sliced in and out of the airfield with supplies needed until Marine engineers open Highway No. 9, the only overland supply route to Khe Sanh.

Not a single enemy round fell during the day, and it was difficult to imagine how hard the Marines had been pounded, how they waited and listened inside their bunkers for the next artillery shell to land.

But one 1st Cav soldier felt sorry for them.

"There was something that struck me odd about the Marines when we first pushed into the camp," said Private First Class Claude S. Brown, Pascagoula, Miss., also with the 5/7th. "Finally I knew. They were pale, and I thought how happy they must be to get out of their bunkers. Some of these Marines are going to get a nice sunburn."



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## Completes Relief Effort

# 2nd/7th First Into Khe Sanh

By SPS DON GRAHAM

Convair Staff Writer

**KHE SANH**—The 1st Air Cavalry Division's 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry shot its way into the Marine base at Khe Sanh after four days of fighting with an entrenched enemy force.

All four companies of the 2nd

of the 7th fought at close quarters against North Vietnamese Army troops who have been surrounding Khe Sanh. At last, the NVA gave way under a barrage of artillery and air strikes, leaving behind the bodies of 92 men, plus a staggering pile of

equipment including 71 weapons.

All the action took place within sight of Khe Sanh, and when the shooting was over, C and D Companies of the 2nd of the 7th moved into the Marine base to take up security.

### Completed Relief

In effect, the arrival of the 1st Air Cavalry Division completed the relief of Khe Sanh. Where the embattled Marines had been employing some 5,000 troops to guard the perimeter of the combat base, the Air Cavalrymen were able to entrust the sprawling perimeter to a single battalion, so saturated with U.S. and South Vietnamese troops was their territory around Khe Sanh. The 26th Marine Regiment, which had defended Khe Sanh for months, moved out of the base to attack the North Vietnamese who had been surrounding them.

Even as they advanced into Khe Sanh, the men of the 2nd of the 7th were able to see that the dangers of the place were—at least temporarily—not what they had read about in the newspapers. The deadly anti-aircraft and mortar fire which had threatened the existence of any aircraft flying into Khe Sanh slackened. Four-engine C-130's, which for weeks had been unable to land at the base, because they drew too much mortar fire, were landing regularly. The 1st Cavalry's helicopters were flying resupply to the base, drawing only occasional fire.

(Continued on Back Page)

## Editorial The Reserves

Every month thousands of Americans put on the uniform of their respective services and devote a few hours of their time to attending training and drill periods of their reserve units. These are the men of the Ready Reserve, available for call to active duty in any emergency declared by the President or Congress.

The value of a strong Reserve was readily apparent during the crises in Berlin, Cuba and, most recently, Vietnam. The show of force needed to help keep the lid on world trouble spots such as these can be provided only by a strong regular force, backed by a trained, ready reserve force.

Whether actually called to active duty or not, the mere existence of a strong, trained, available reserve force is a significant factor in our world military position.

Of course, everyone who entered the military service before his 26th birthday has a statutory obligation to serve a total of six years in the Armed Forces. This obligation may be met by six years of active service or by serving varying periods of active service combined with service in either the Ready Reserve, the Standby Reserve, or both.

Members of the Standby Reserve, although they can be called to active duty only in the event of war or national emergency declared by Congress, do not serve on active duty or active duty for training under normal conditions.

In the past, our Reserve forces have played an important role in our military preparedness. Today and in the future they play an even more vital role in preventing full-scale war.

However, the Reserve is only as strong as the trained men who serve in it. Your country needs your experience in the Reserve—not only for the remainder of your military obligation, but for longer if you are willing to serve again if needed.

Of course, you aren't expected to remain available for active duty with no consideration. Ready Reservists receive pay for training and drill periods and for active duty for training. Promotions are made in the Reserve just as in the regular establishment and technical training available can not only help you in your Reserve assignment, but may be of definite value in your civilian occupation.

While you're in the Reserve and advance in rank or move to warrant or commissioned status, you have a source of substantial and dependable income. Then when you reach the age of 60, and have met the necessary requirements, you become eligible for retirement benefits, including pay.

This can prove to be a worthwhile extra measure of security and financial independence for yourself and your family.

Our Reserve forces are an important part of our Nation's military team. There is a place for you on that team for as long as you want to serve.

**Coming On May 18th**  
**Armed Forces Day**



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US ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 CRAIG COFFMAN

## Learning Those ABCs

Chaplain (Major) Wilbur Peterson of the 1st Air Cavalry Division's artillery, asks a Vietnamese child a question about the English alphabet. The chaplain teaches about 20 children near the Cavalry's Camp Evans base.

## To Vietnamese Children

# Cav Chaplain Teaches ABCs

**CAMP EVANS** — Chaplain (Major) Wilbur Peterson of the 1st Air Cavalry's division artillery, teaches English in the refugee village of Tan Nguyen, just outside of the division's new I Corps base at Camp Evans. Chaplain Peterson, whose family resides in Seattle, Wash., teaches the children common

English words and phrases that ease communications between the Vietnamese and the American soldiers working in areas around them.

He tries to get them to understand and recognize English as it is both spoken and written.

Chaplain Peterson has been encouraged at how rapidly the Vietnamese he teaches are picking up the language. In the two weeks that the class has met,

the 20 or so children who attend have learned the English alphabet and its sounds. They have also demonstrated their understanding of certain requests by performing such actions as walking out the door in response to a statement by the chaplain.

The chaplain hopes that the progress will continue and that the class will increase in size as time goes on.

## Brothers Meet In An Khe

By SP 1 DON GRAHAM  
Cavalair Staff Writer

**BONG SON** — After Specialist Four Darryel Erdmann had been in Vietnam for six months, he went in to his division's An Khe base camp to start his rest and recuperation leave.

"I went back there, and one of the first things I saw was my brother."

Erdmann, a 1st Air Cavalry Division infantryman, had heard that his brother, Dale, volunteered for duty in Vietnam. "But I never expected to find him in An Khe, let alone in my own battalion," he remarked.

An Army policy says that no one with a brother serving in Vietnam will be assigned to the country unless he volunteers. Darryel had heard that Dale had volunteered for duty in Vietnam, but not that he had been assigned to the 1st Cavalry.

Darryel, 20, is a year older than his brother. He was drafted, and six months later his brother enlisted, and was assigned to Germany. After serving several months there, Dale decided to go to Vietnam.

The two brothers saw each other frequently when Darryel's company passed through the battalion's training area, where Dale is a driver and general repairman.

"I live a little rougher out in the field than he does at base camp," Darryel grins, "but when I leave here, he'll have six months left, and I keep him thinking about that."



US ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 CRAIG COFFMAN

## Visual Aids

Chaplain (Major) Wilbur Peterson of the 1st Air Cavalry Division uses visual aids, including a blackboard and himself during an English teaching lesson to Vietnamese children.

# Kuala Lumpur, Penang—Malaysia



University of Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur.

For those wishing a Malaysian R&R, there is a choice of the capital city of Kuala Lumpur or the beach city of Penang. Both offer a wide variety of things to do and see.



Face of Orang Ulu tribesman of Malaysia.



Priest carried on palanquin in Kuala Lumpur during a Chinese festival.



# Re-Linking Khe Sanh



US ARMY PHOTO BY SPS JOHN PETTWAY  
After delivering a bridge to repair Highway Nine the Cav's Flying Crane moves off for another mission.



US ARMY  
A Flying Crane lifts a bridge.



US ARMY PHOTO BY SPS JOHN PETTWAY  
A Flying Crane lifts a bridge section into place.



US ARMY  
Huey and Chinook aircraft abound at LZ Cates as 1st Air Cavalry soldiers deploy for Operation Pegasus to relieve Khe Sanh.



US ARMY PHOTO BY SPS CHARLES EKHBERG

# By Land And By Air



US ARMY PHOTO BY SPS CHARLES EKHBERG  
Skytroopers wait at LZ Stud for aircraft to carry them into Operation Pegasus.

# 1st/9th Rescues Downed Chopper

By SP4 SCOTT SMITH

Cavalier Staff Writer

**QUANG TRI** — Helicopter crews from the 1st Air Cavalry Division's A Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Cav, succeeded in the rescue of a chopper crew that was downed by heavy Communist ground fire 12 kilometers southwest of Quang Tri.

Scout helicopters and gunships from the 1st of the 9th had spotted 80 to 85 bunkers and structures earlier in the day and returned for a second look.

Suddenly the sky exploded with heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire. The intense volume of the fire hit the command ship. It fluttered out of control and crashed on a hillside, then rolled to the bottom of a deep gorge.

Immediately, other 1st of the 9th choppers converged on the crash scene. WO-1 Michael Bond, from Roanoke Va., was the first to arrive. His observer, Platoon Sergeant Otto See, from Washington, D.C., leaped out and headed toward the downed

crew.

Captain Phillip Branstuder, from Key West, Fla., followed suit, and used his gunship to serve as MEDEVAC. His copilot, WO-1 Arthur F. Chaney, from Vienna, Va., as well as his doorgunner and crew chief, jumped out to help the stricken crew.

Platoon Sergeant See cut his way through the tall elephant grass until he came to the chopper. "At first I thought they were all dead," recalled See. "Then I saw the doorgunners working to pull the co-pilot out, so I ran over to help."

At this time the gunship crew arrived, and together they succeeded in freeing the two seriously wounded pilots from the wreckage.

After first aid had been administered, the group started up the steep incline.

When they were halfway up the hill, red snipers opened up from the undergrowth. Platoon Sergeant See grabbed an M-16 and returned fire while the exhausted pilots and crewmen dragged their wounded buddies to the awaiting gunship.

As the wounded were being lifted out, Platoon Sergeant See returned and the remaining five men hastily formed a defensive perimeter.

Choppers were standing by, and quickly extracted the crewmen.



US ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 CRAIG COFFMAN

## Traveling Light?

Skytroopers use a little brain and brawn to move a tent from one location to another at landing zone Jone in I Corps, the Army's northernmost area of tactical operations.

In 2nd Of The 8th

## Medic 'Trusts In The Lord'

By SP4 BILL BLESSINGTON

Cavalier Staff Writer

**QUANG TRI** — He is one of the men of the U.S. infantry in Vietnam. He goes with the fighting men on their "travels with Charlie" and gets shot at just like everyone else. But in important ways Specialist Four Edward Gladden, 21, of Columbus, Ohio, is different.

A senior medic with the 1st Air Cavalry Division's 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry, Specialist Gladden does not carry a weapon. On the side of his helmet is the motto which molds his life: "Praise the Lord".

On a recent search mission with his company, now working in the northernmost two provinces of South Vietnam, Gladden showed his trust in the Lord in many ways. For one thing he was there while his friends moved through NVA infested positions, rifles at the ready, and keyed for battle. The only weapon "Des" Gladden carried was a small medical kit and a heartfull of courage.

### Sniper Rounds

When sniper rounds buzzed through the brush near his position, Gladden hit the ground while the infantrymen about him tightened their grips on their black rifles. The "Doc" didn't move a muscle during these first long seconds of silence, but when it appeared as though the immediate danger was over, Gladden could be heard asking the radio operator, "Did anyone get hit?"

Sp 4 Gladden has a key job with the infantry. He takes care of friendly or enemy wounded, and advises his company commander if any injured men must be helicoptered back to field hospitals. He is also responsible for seeing to the little things that might mean

the difference between catching tropical diseases and staying healthy.

### Clear LZ

When the company cleared a small landing zone for the night on a jungle mountain, Gladden busied himself with the treatment of cuts, scrapes and scratches.

The red stains of antiseptics seemed to pop up on just about everyone, covering nicks and bruises that could easily become infected in the humid climate.

Later, as heavy mist settled over the LZ, "Doc" drifted off to sleep, an ominous quiet pervading the jungle.

### Gives Aid

When a man was wounded

late that night, Gladden was the first man to bandage the wound and give an injection for pain. He stayed beside the soldier until he was evacuated.

About noon of the following day, another man was wounded, and under Gladden's care, was on his way to a field hospital within 15 minutes.

Throughout the battle filled eight-day operation, Gladden treated the wounds of war and through his seemingly unbreakable composure, soothed their minds.

When asked what it's like to be in the middle of a firefight without anything to defend himself with, "Doc" Gladden replied, "Well, I put my trust in the Lord and He'll take care of me."



US ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 GARY VOGT

## Moving Out For Khe Sanh

Skytroopers and one of their scout dogs pour out of a Chinook helicopter as they prepare to move out on a phase of Operation Pegasus to bring relief to the Marines at Khe Sanh.

## Mortars Returned NVA Fire

**LZ SNAPPER** — When the 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry, 1st Air Cavalry Division, set up at LZ Snapper, four miles south of Khe Sanh Combat Base, the mortars of the infantry companies were the first equipment to be put in position.

It paid off, on the first night. According to 1st Lieutenant Tommy Bye, Dallas, Texas, the assistant operations officer for the battalion, NVA mortar rounds began falling on the base about dusk. "The mortars of C Company were right with the program. They had their tubes ready to go after the first few incoming rounds. They let loose, and the mortar rounds stopped."

A morning search of the site of the NVA mortars revealed five NVA bodies, thirty-two 82mm mortar rounds, one AK-47 automatic rifle, and two SKS rifles.

## Leeches Present Problem

By SP5 MIKE LARSON

Cavalier Staff Writer

**LZ STUD** — Most soldiers dread leeches.

One leech confronted with mosquito repellent or a cigarette lighter will usually retreat hastily, but with friends he can be a problem.

The 1st Air Cavalry Division's 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry was working some 25 kilometers northwest of Hue and set up their perimeter in a deserted rice paddy, before moving into the mountains the following morning.

"It started raining about 4 or 7 o'clock that night," said Private First Class Douglas Reddema. "We were going on a listening post that night. All of a sudden Steele (PFC James E. Steele, Birmingham, Ala.) came running from his tent, his chest covered with blood, calling for the medic."

Checking Steele, the medic discovered a leech had made the wound.

"He found three or four more on my leg," remembers Steele, who has been in Vietnam seven months, but can't recall so many leeches in one place, "then pretty soon everyone was complaining. This old rice paddy had grown full of elephant grass, but it still held water. Even the inside of our hootch was full of it."

Staff Sergeant Frederick C. Micholichuk, Reidsville, Pa., attracted the most leeches, though — 35.

"All you could do," he explained, "was to spray the ground where you slept, but then you'd be depriving someone else of insect repellent. We just bloused our pants, buttoned our sleeves, and I even put rubber bands around my sleeves. I still spent all day picking off leeches."





PHOTO COURTESY OF PARAMOUNT PICTURES

## That Old Hitchin' Post

We're not sure what kind of hitchin' Miss Svetlana Mishoff has on her mind but whatever it is we are to be most obliging.

### Medevac Member

## Medic Serves Second Tour

By SP5 HERR DENTON  
Cavalry Staff Writer

**LZ JANE** — Specialist Five William F. Word, Long Beach, Calif., could be sitting in a comfortable dispensary at a state-side Army post helping treat indigestion and common colds.

Instead he chose to come back to Vietnam to be a flight medic

for the 1st Air Cavalry Division. He is a member of a medical evacuation helicopter crew. They often fly a tight course around enemy bullets to pick up wounded soldiers and take them back to an aid station or hospital.

In the air, Word is a decisive factor. In some cases he has

had to administer external heart massage or mouth-to-mouth resuscitation the entire flying time.

On one occasion he and another medic gave mouth-to-mouth and a heart massage simultaneously to one critically wounded soldier as the chopper soared to the hospital.

The medical evacuation choppers must be ready to go any time, in any kind of weather.

When infantrymen in the field were wounded during a mortar attack on their nighttime position, Word's helicopter sailed through a thunderstorm to evacuate the wounded.

It was a dark evening illuminated only sporadically by the flashes of lightning. The infantrymen burned small chunks of C-4 plastic explosive to guide the chopper in.

As they flew back, Word examined the wounded with a flashlight. His medical equipment includes typical first aid gear plus clamps, forceps and plastic resuscitators. He is so familiar with the set-up, he says, that he can find everything in the dark.

Word served a previous Vietnam tour as a field medic with the 1st Infantry Division. He has been awarded the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star Medal for Valor, the Army Commendation Medal for Valor, the Air Medal, flight wings and the Combat Medic's Badge.

# 13,500-man Move— It's Just Routine?

By SP5 DON GRAHAM

Cavalry Staff Writer

**LZ STUD** — The start of Operation Pegasus involved moving 13,500 troops, and setting up a brand new line of communication to keep them supplied. The 1st Air Cavalry Division's logistics office (G4) considered this a routine task.

"After moving the entire division up to I Corps from Binh Dinh Province in mid-January, this was a relatively simple deployment," said MAJ Hugh B. Sproul, plans and operations officer in the Air Cavalry's G4.

But to an observer on the ground, the deployment that started Operation Pegasus looked like an amazing logistical feat. Within five days, all three of the Cavalry's brigades had moved into positions within five miles of the Khe Sanh combat base and were ready to move. The supplies to keep them going were pouring into the new area.

## Infantryman Gets Wish Near Hue

By SP4 G. W. BUTZ

Cavalry Staff Writer

**CAMP EVANS** — Specialist Four Lesley O. Fike came to Vietnam as an infantryman, but wanted to be a medic. His wish came true in the Battle of Hue.

In a firefight a couple days earlier, his 1st Air Cavalry Division company had lost all of its medics. One morning a medic came out to assist the company in case it ran into any trouble.

Delta Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry was making its way towards a woodline through some rice paddies when it was hit by sniper fire. Fike and the medic went to the aid of those who were wounded. Soon enemy mortar rounds began raining in to the paddies. The medic had to be medevaced along with the wounded due to a high temperature. This left Fike as acting medic.

The Cavalrymen were forced to pull back due to the constant incoming mortar rounds. Fike received a shrapnel wound. SP4 Fike refused evacuation to stay with his buddies. "I couldn't go in because there wouldn't have been anyone to help the men," he said.

As the company pulled back, an M-49 machine gunner couldn't make it because of a head wound. Keeping down and crawling through the rice paddies, Fike eventually made it to the gunner.

too.

The resupply mission is the more impressive, because the Air Cavalry's G4, under LTC Robert Vaughn is planning resupply not only for its own men but for the 1st Marine Regiment and an ARVN task force—some 17,000 men in all.

"The thing that made the operation go smoothly was being able to pre-position supplies at LZ Stud," Sproul said. Stud was opened two weeks before Operation Pegasus began by Seabees who carved out an air-strip on the new base, nine miles northeast of Khe Sanh. "We had not only the runway, but refueling sites and an ammunition storage base before the troops began moving in," Sproul said.

The Air Cavalry's unique ability to move supplies by helicopter permitted the division to deploy to six landing zones which are not served by any road. Supplies are taken by convey along Highway Nine—secured by the Third Marine Division—to Landing Zone Stud. From there, Chinook and Huey helicopters lift the supplies to the Cav's maneuver battalions in the field near Khe Sanh.

The Cavalry faces two daily resupply problems that no other division has to cope with. Because it has more than 400 organic helicopters, the division needs some 120,000 gallons of "JP-4" helicopter fuel every day. About half this amount is brought forward daily into the Pegasus area of operations; the rest is at the division's bases to the east in the Jeb Stuart area of operations, where the helicopters return overnight.

The second daily resupply problem is artillery ammunition. "This division shoots about half again as much artillery as any other division in Vietnam," Sproul said. "We're planning on expending 300 tons of artillery ammunition a day in this area."

There is of course a third major daily supply problem—food—but that is by no means unique to the Cavalry. Cavalrymen like their food hot and should be pleased to hear that MAJ Sproul feels logistic needs are in line with their taste. "We'd rather move A or B rations (hot food) than C-rations," Sproul says, "because they weigh less."

The Air Cavalry, of course, works hand-in-hand with a number of units of the 1st Logistics Command to solve its supply problems. The 30th General Support Group, stationed in Quang Tri, and the Marine Force Logistics Command have been co-operating in the resupply of the division.

## One Is A Crowd... Four Is Ridiculous

By SP5 MIKE LARSON

Cavalry Staff Writer

**CAMP EVANS** — One enemy soldier inside a unit's defensive perimeter at night can be a nuisance; four is just ridiculous.

Companies A and D of the 1st Air Cavalry Division's 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry, had set up their perimeter for the night some seven kilometers northwest of here, along the sandy beaches lining the Gulf of Tonkin, when one man, standing guard in a foxhole, heard someone moaning.

"I heard a wheezing," said Private First Class Rodrick G. McArthur, Ludington, Mich., with Alpha Company, "just like someone couldn't get any air and was gasping. With another man I went toward the sound and

found a spider hole. Someone inside was gasping."

For the rest of the night, extra guards were placed to watch the spider hole, and when morning came an interpreter and the men pulled four weak NVA from the hole, all alive but one still gasping for air.

"We found a plywood board covered with sand over most of the hole," McArthur added. "On the way to our night camp, we had killed one NVA, and we think he might be the one who covered the hole, but he did too good a job."

"We thought all the holes had been checked," said another man, "but we missed this one."



US ARMY PHOTO BY SPS DON GRAHAM

## Everybody Out!

Heavily-laden and camouflaged 1st Air Cavalry Division troops of the 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry pour out of a Huey liftship on an air assault during an operation in Quang Tri Province.

## Cav, Allies Net 783 KIA—

(Continued From Page 1)

5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, the 2nd of the 7th pressed toward Khe Sanh, locating tons of equipment and great numbers of enemy bodies, killed by artillery and B-52 strikes.

The second morning of the operation, one of the 2nd of the 7th radio-telephone operators, while adjusting his radio, came upon an NVA frequency.

"Sergeant Mink (a 2nd of the 7th interpreter) monitored the radio," recalled Specialist 5 Steve Robinson, a 1st Cav photographer. "The first transmission stated that the NVA were combining small groups of men into one large group, and sending them across a valley to obtain more ammunition."

"We contacted Alpha Company. One of their men climbed

a tree and, through a sniper scope, spotted the NVA. Alpha's FO (forward artillery observer) called artillery in on them.

"After that, we heard two more transmissions," Robinson added. "First, that they had lost all contact with the patrol sent for ammo; second, that their main group was down to just 34 men."

Carefully moving through terrain that one soldier called "perfect for the enemy," methodically checking enemy trenches and bunkers with well-camouflaged overhead cover, the three battalions slowly tightened the ring around Khe Sanh, closing it the following morning. The 2nd of the 7th took over positions on the Marine perimeter, allowing the Leathernecks to move into the hills surrounding the camp.

The same morning, the 3th of the 7th moved into the camp to take up security along part of the perimeter. Private First Class Ray Knott, East Riverdale, Md., thought some of the Marines looked downhearted when they had to leave, "but I think they were really happy to go."

"Anyway, I hope we stay here for a while," he smiled, glancing around the perimeter at the solid bunkers connected by deep, zigzag trenches. "Before I had seen this place I was a little afraid of Khe Sanh, but I'm not anymore. Now the Cav is here."

poked his head up, someone else would take him under fire."

### Nose-To-Nose

After two days of nose-to-nose fighting, the battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Roscoe Robinson, air assaulted C and D Companies of the battalion behind the enemy lines. Moving up swiftly on the NVA positions, C Co surprised one group of enemy during a chow break. At one point in the bitter fighting, Lt. Col. Robinson landed his helicopter to evacuate 3 men from D Co despite heavy enemy fire.

Finally, with the four companies sealing off the NVA, 14 air strikes and more than 1,600 rounds of artillery were brought in. Advancing through the burned-out terrain, some three kilometers from Khe Sanh, the Air Cavalrymen found an assortment of enemy weapons, including a 7.62 mm anti-aircraft machine gun, two 60 mm mortars, 11 B-40 rocket launchers, six RPD light machine guns, and dozens of individual weapons. Some of the weapons were stored in bunkers; others had simply been abandoned alongside the trail as the North Vietnamese fled.

## 2nd/12th Undergoes Major 'Facelifting'

By SPS DON GRAHAM

Cavalry Staff Writer

QUANG TRI—Since October, 1967, the 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry has been on the move in South Vietnam. Most of the time it has been moving north, towards the Demilitarized Zone and the heavier concentrations of North Vietnamese troops and weapons there.

The moving has worked changes in the day-to-day life of the men in the 2nd of the 12th's rifle companies.

"Back in Bong Son," said Specialist Four Thomas Richards, recalling the Cavalry's Operation Pershing as if it had been a vacation trip, "they'd say 'Dig in' at night, and you'd scratch a hole in the ground, just something you could put your feet in."

But as B Company works with the Air Cavalry's Second Brigade during Operation Jeb Stuart, Richards and the other men in the company not only dig in waist or chest deep—they each carry 10 sandbags which help make overhead cover for a foxhole. The bags are filled at night, emptied in the morning, and carried until the company stops again.

That's one measure of how much things have changed for B Company. They started changing in October when the unit moved to Landing Zone Ross, at the mouth of the Que Son Valley. For three months, the battalion engaged in bitter fighting with the 2nd North Vietnamese Army (NVA) Division.

At that time, B Company's men started to carry gas masks just in case the NVA started getting any ideas.

When the battalion moved farther north, to Thua Thien Province, there was another addition to the daily costume—"flack jackets," to protect against fragmentation wounds. The heavy vests make a soldier on a day's walk feel like a lobster being slow-boiled, but they've saved lives in mortar, rocket, and grenade attacks.

The soldiers look different, too. They camouflage their faces with camouflage sticks

daily. "We started that during the Hue campaign," said Lt. "Butch" Herbaugh, the company's executive officer, recalling the battalion's assault on North Vietnamese forces occupying South Vietnam's imperial capital. "Too many guys were being sniped at, from here up," —he gestured at the "V" of his collar. The company also camouflages its helmets and sometimes goes in for more elaborate camouflage.

One medic who carries a litter in the field every day (another policy adopted since the Hue campaign) recalls disguising the stretcher to look like a tree and standing behind it for ten minutes while the members of his platoon vainly looked for him.

"We're moving at night all the time now, that's another difference," recalled Sgt. William McCune of Chicago, another of B Company's handful of veterans who can recall such ancient history as Bong Son.

"We used to wear soft hats, some of us," Richards, the RTO, recalled. "We didn't even think we needed helmets. Look at us now!"

## NVA Select Wrong Time For R And R

CAMP EVANS—Choosing the wrong rest and recuperation area, a group of NVA soldiers found themselves in the hands of the 1st Air Cavalry Division's Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry.

After making an air assault, the men of Bravo Company were on a search and destroy mission on the outskirts of Hue. Upon entering a deserted village the Cavalrymen found several North Vietnamese Army packs. Upon further probing, the men found two NVA officers and one NCO hiding in a bunker. Two more NVA were netted from another bunker.

## 2nd/7th First—

(Continued From Page 1)

### Last Resistance

The 2nd of the 7th Cavalrymen eliminated one of the last pockets of resistance around Khe Sanh when they blasted their way past enemy troops south of the base. From these positions, just south of the runway at Khe Sanh, NVA marksmen had been bringing fire on aircraft approaching the base. Their bunkers had been carefully prepared during the six-month siege of Khe Sanh.

They defended the positions ferociously. As A and B Companies of the 2nd of the 7th advanced, they drew fire from enemy riflemen, some of whom waited until the Skytroopers were within five yards of their bunkers before opening fire.

"These were the best enemy soldiers I'd fought against," said Captain Al Degyansky, El Paso, Texas, who has commanded A Company for six months. "Their camouflage was terrific, and their fire discipline almost unbelievable. The machinegunner would pull off six rounds and wait, then when some GI



US ARMY PHOTO BY SPS DON GRAHAM

## Stream Crossing

Skytroopers of Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry cross a slippery stream bed during an operation in I Corps near Quang Tri City.