

Please type or use pen to provide the requested information. This data will be used for the Ranch Hand History Project and then placed in the Archives at Texas A&M. It is your information. If you wish to restrict any part of this material, please indicate so:

I hereby authorize the scholarly use of the following information, except as indicated.

Smith Elwood Larry Elwood L Smith Jan. 24, 1982  
Name (last first middle signature date)

#### Specific Information

Please answer the following questions in the spaces provided. Be specific.

1. Ranch Hand service: From Jan 1968 to July 68. Where? Ben Hoa
2. RH/C-123 training: Where/when? 123 Training - Pope A.F. Base, 1963
3. Rank while in RH? Staff Sergeant Present/retired rank? T/Sgt. Ret.
4. Duty(s) while in Ranch? Flight Engineer dates? Jan - July - 68
5. Other Vietnam service? Where/when? Da Nang - 1963 Thailand - 1964
6. If aircrew member:
  - a. Number of missions: RH 288 approx. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Combat flying hours: RH \_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Narrative Information

On a separate sheet(s) of paper, please answer the following questions with as much detail as possible. Write too much, rather than too little. Use names and dates, if possible. If you want a name "blacked out" before this goes in the archives, just circle the name. On the sheets, indicate the number of the question you are answering, and put your last name and the form number in the upper right-hand corner of each sheet.

7. Special missions/operations participated in? (name, when, where, what, who else)
8. Decorations? (If Purple Heart, DFC, or above, give date and details of the act. If you have a copy of the narrative justifying the medal, please attach a copy.)
9. Were you present during an attack against the base, Ranch site, or quarters? Ben Hoa Explain.
10. Were you present when a Ranch aircraft was shot down or crashed? Give all details.
11. Were you present when a Ranch crew member was killed or wounded? Give as much data as possible, even if you didn't directly observe it or are not sure of date or names.
12. Did you ever see or repair unusual battle damage (more than routine skin holes)?
13. Did you ever help plan RH missions? If so, what was the procedure?
14. How did you get into the Ranch? What did you know about the mission beforehand?
15. What were you told about the chemicals used? In Vietnam? Before Vietnam?
16. Other than something already discussed (or going home), what is your happiest memory of the Ranch (or Vietnam)? What is your unhappiest (saddest)?
17. What unusual, odd-ball, weird, funny, etc., thing happened to you in VN or training?
18. Same as question 17, but you saw it happen to another person(s).
19. What were your quarters like? Your routine day? Your parties? Anything else?
20. We know that the Ranch was unique. What should I tell the reader that will help him understand why this was a special outfit of special people? What or who should I not talk about?

Other data: Do you have any good pictures (especially of RH members), any journals, notes, diaries, letters, briefing notes, maps, etc., that I could copy? If so, DO NOT SEND THEM with this form. Repeat...DO NOT SEND THEM!!!! Describe the items on a separate piece of paper, with your name and form number on it. I will write and give you instructions on when to send them, or how to get them copied, at a later date. All materials will be protected and returned to you!!! Thank you for your help and time.

Please return this form and the narrative sheets in the enclosed envelope to Texas A&M.

Ranch Hand History Project  
Texas A. & M. University

Sorry we did not reply to your request sooner. My husband, Elwood, had a severe nervous breakdown in 1977 and it is difficult for me to get too much information from him. I have gone through some of our records looking for dates and information. Rather than try to fill out your questionnaire, may I just tell you the things I do remember that might be of some interest to your project?

Elwood was assigned to Pope A.F. Base in North Carolina in 1962. It was there he received his training as a Flight Engineer on the C123. While there, he spent six months T.D.Y. in Da Nang at a time when most of us had never even heard of Viet Nam or what was happening there. It was there he received the Air Medal.

The whole squadron was transferred to Hurlburt Field (then known as Eglin Auxillary Field 9). This was in March of 1964. Elwood served as a Flight Engineer Instructor attached to the Royal Thailand Air Force from ~~May~~ April through October of 1964, then returned to Hurlburt.

In 1965 the squadron was split with half of them going to England A.F. Base in Louisiana and the rest staying at Hurlburt as an operational outfit. Elwood helped ferry the planes to and from Montgomery, Alabama to have them outfitted with the spray equipment. He flew spray missions in Texas and Mississippi.

In 1968, after training many Flight Engineers for service in Viet Nam, Elwood was transferred to Ranch Hand at Ben Hoa. I have included copies of his orders receiving the Purple Heart, Air Medal with clusters and the Distinguished Flying Cross. I do know he was there in time for the Tet offensive.

One incident he told me about; shells were incoming and they were trying to get the planes off. They heard an inbound close by and he and the co-pilot went out the back door and the pilot tried to go out the front. They were hit by shrapnel and the pilot was very seriously wounded but Elwood doesn't remember his name.

I have just asked Elwood some more questions so some of these answers will be out of context.

On missions, he said he flew 2 a day for six days a week but he has no idea of how many hours he flew. He did see one of our planes catch on fire, crash in the water and none of the crew survived.

Elwood was in Ranch because he volunteered to go there. I have already

told you of his training. He said he has no happy memories of Ranch. He didn't think anyone liked being over there and the only happy memory was coming home. (XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX)

Elwood lived in quarters where there were 22 men to a cubicle and that is all he said about it.

He did say there were lots of parties but he wouldn't say anything more than that.

I am sorry we couldn't be of more help to you and I wish you much success on your project.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Elwood L. Smith

STAFF SERGEANT HARVEY D RITCHIE, AF18483472  
17 October 1963 to 14 November 1963  
(Third Oak Leaf Cluster)

STAFF SERGEANT HAROLD E ROBERTS, AF15437901  
3 November 1963 to 2 December 1963

STAFF SERGEANT THOMAS J SCHULTZ, AF23009665  
25 July 1963 to 22 August 1963  
(First Oak Leaf Cluster)

STAFF SERGEANT THOMAS J SCHULTZ, AF23009665  
23 August 1963 to 27 August 1963  
(Second Oak Leaf Cluster)

STAFF SERGEANT THOMAS J SCHULTZ, AF23009665  
28 August 1963 to 4 September 1963  
(Third Oak Leaf Cluster)

STAFF SERGEANT THOMAS J SCHULTZ, AF23009665  
5 September 1963 to 4 October 1963  
(Fourth Oak Leaf Cluster)

STAFF SERGEANT HAROLD L SIFERS, AF13322596  
7 September 1963 to 16 October 1963

STAFF SERGEANT HAROLD L SIFERS, AF13322596  
17 October 1963 to 17 January 1964  
(First Oak Leaf Cluster)

★ STAFF SERGEANT ELWOOD L SMITH, AF13464922  
11 May 1963 to 7 July 1963  
(First Oak Leaf Cluster)

STAFF SERGEANT JOSEPH L SMITH, AF13416005  
20 September 1963 to 21 October 1963

STAFF SERGEANT JAMES D SQUARE JR, AF18398952  
9 May 1963 to 16 June 1963  
(Second Oak Leaf Cluster)

STAFF SERGEANT HUBERT G STENKAMP, AF19439567  
14 July 1963 to 12 August 1963

STAFF SERGEANT JERRY M SURRETT, AF18452915  
15 May 1963 to 1 June 1963

STAFF SERGEANT WILLIAM J SVOBODA, AF13312812  
16 August 1963 to 6 September 1963

STAFF SERGEANT WILLIAM J SVOBODA, AF13312812  
8 October 1963 to 4 November 1963  
(Second Oak Leaf Cluster)

STAFF SERGEANT JAMES W TERRY, AF14661162  
23 November 1963 to 27 December 1963

STAFF SERGEANT RICHARD A VAUGHT, AF16385532  
19 August 1963 to 17 September 1963

STAFF SERGEANT RICHARD A VAUGHT, AF16385532  
18 September 1963 to 17 October 1963  
(First Oak Leaf Cluster)

STAFF SERGEANT RICHARD A VAUGHT, AF16385532  
18 October 1963 to 25 November 1963  
(Second Oak Leaf Cluster)

STAFF SERGEANT WILLIS J WARREN JR, AF19479492  
18 April 1963 to 18 May 1963

STAFF SERGEANT WILLIS J WARREN JR, AF19479492  
20 May 1963 to 22 June 1963  
(First Oak Leaf Cluster)

STAFF SERGEANT JAMES R WEST, AF19453279  
27 November 1963 to 9 January 1964

STAFF SERGEANT JACK F WILLIAMS, AF14432874  
21 January 1963 to 10 January 1964

AIRMAN FIRST CLASS KENNETH J BIGGS, AF16447943  
7 December 1963 to 3 March 1964

AIRMAN FIRST CLASS DONALD L BRADSTREET, AF27069415  
28 December 1963 to 14 January 1964  
(First Oak Leaf Cluster)

AIRMAN FIRST CLASS ROBERT H BUSS, AF16609086  
1 October 1963 to 27 November 1963

AIRMAN FIRST CLASS ROBERT H BUSS, AF16609086  
4 December 1963 to 5 January 1964  
(First Oak Leaf Cluster)

AIRMAN FIRST CLASS WILLIAM H CLIXBY, AF16439450  
16 October 1963 to 15 November 1963  
(First Oak Leaf Cluster)

AIRMAN FIRST CLASS ERNEST COHEN JR, AF21946845  
7 November 1962 to 5 May 1963

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS SEVENTH AIR FORCE PACAF  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96307

SPECIAL ORDER  
G-274

20 JANUARY 1969

BY DIRECTION OF THE PRESIDENT, EACH OF THE FOLLOWING IS AWARDED THE AIR MEDAL FOR MERITORIOUS ACHIEVEMENT WHILE PARTICIPATING IN AERIAL FLIGHT. DURING THE PERIOD INDICATED, OUTSTANDING AIRMANSHIP AND COURAGE WERE EXHIBITED IN THE SUCCESSFUL ACCOMPLISHMENT OF IMPORTANT MISSIONS UNDER EXTREMELY HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS. THE HIGHLY PROFESSIONAL EFFORTS OF EACH INDIVIDUAL CITED CONTRIBUTED MATERIALLY TO THE MISSION OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

STAFF SERGEANT

AFSN	NAME	FROM	TO	PAS
19499008	CARTHAGE RAYMOND E	110967	241168	SDK3J
	2ND THRU 4TH OLC			
14776456	DRAKE BILLY E	200368	011268	UDHFV
	1ST AND 2ND OLC			
14804763	DRAYTON HERMAN	050368	031168	CSMTX
	1ST THRU 6TH OLC			
17595681	ENRIQUEZ JOHN	030268	030968	HKKJR
	4TH THRU 8TH OLC			
18509855	EWING GUESTLER D	260967	081068	MXFY2
	1ST AND 2ND OLC			
12442831	FAIRBROTHER RICHARD	210868	231268	MXFY2
	1ST AND 2ND OLC			
19461217	FOREE CHESTER T	241167	191168	MXFY2
	2ND AND 3RD OLC			
19553403	GLAESER JOHN P	040967	261168	MXFY2
	4TH AND 5TH OLC			
15655321	GODOWN CLINTON H	070867	240368	NMJZ5
	1ST THRU 3RD OLC			
17661129	HUMES SCOTT C	210868	261068	MXFY2
	2ND OLC			
17310551	LANGFORD RAYMOND B	140268	271068	NMMTV
	1ST THRU 5TH OLC			
17280673	MCDONALD HERBERT W	270768	261168	MXFY2
	2ND AND 3RD OLC			

G-274

SO G-274, HQ 7TH AIR FORCE, APO SAN FRANCISCO 96307, 20 JAN 69

52154604 ROSE IRA E 220968 211168 MXFY2  
1ST OLC

19847027 RYAN BERNARD V 010368 041068 PRC06  
1ST THRU 3RD OLC

19602117 SALTS GLEN E 291167 290568 TDC05  
1ST THRU 3RD OLC

11203909 SAVOIE RENE F 130268 271068 PRC08  
1ST THRU 4TH OLC


18529780 SMITH DONALD I 131167 110968 BKNMR  
1ST THRU 8TH OLC

\* 13464922 SMITH ELWOOD L 010368 100868 BKNMR  
3RD THRU 6TH OLC

17605622 STUMBAUGH WINDELL L 161267 150968 HKKJR  
4TH THRU 9TH OLC

19682419 YATES LEE W 301267 121168 NMRGF  
1ST THRU 8TH OLC

FOR THE COMMANDER

  
JOHN E DUNNING, CAPTAIN, USAF  
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

DISTRIBUTION  
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**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF  
THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS**

**TO**

**ELWOOD L. SMITH**

Staff Sergeant Elwood L. Smith distinguished himself by extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight as a UC-123 (Dakota) Flight Engineer near An Hoa, Republic of Vietnam, on 29 May 1968. On that date, Sergeant Smith encountered an area of intense automatic weapons fire and his aircraft sustained seven hits causing an engine to fail. Displaying great calm under fire, Sergeant Smith marked the positions of hostile fire and provided the aircraft commander with a timely battle damage assessment. In order to lighten his stricken aircraft, Sergeant Smith was forced to initiate emergency dump procedures when the electrical dump system failed. The professional competence, aerial skill, and devotion to duty displayed by Sergeant Smith reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS SEVENTH AIR FORCE PACAF  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96307

SPECIAL ORDER  
G-1392

10 MAY 1968

BY DIRECTION OF THE PRESIDENT, EACH OF THE FOLLOWING IS  
AWARDED THE PURPLE HEART FOR WOUNDS INCURRED AS A DIRECT  
RESULT OF AN ACT OF A HOSTILE FORCE ON THE DATE INDICATED.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL

AFSN	NAME	ON	PAS
00016551	HEDGE GEORGE E	050568	PRRKRC
00024383	CONNOR BRYCE C	050568	BKRNMR
00038511	RUCKER EMMETT JR	050568	BKRNMR

MAJOR

03035577	TAPMAN THOMAS F	070468	PQRNW5
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CAPTAIN

00070219	PAYNE ISSAC S IV	300468	BKRC50
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MASTER SERGEANT

13238528	MCCHESENEY THOMAS N	030568	CPUMTW
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STAFF SERGEANT

21316331	APPELBE JOSPEH A	300468	BKRC50
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16663847	BIENIAS THOMAS J	050568	BKRD08
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13469661	LESSIRE HARRY E	060568	TDRJX0
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<u>13464922</u>	<u>SMITH ELWOOD L</u>	<u>050568</u>	<u>BKRNMR</u>
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19544628	WEBSTER VERNON L	060568	PRRJX5
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SERGEANT

19846738	WHITE WALTER III	030568	HKQCPT
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G-1392

SO G-1392, HQ 7TH AIR FORCE, APO SAN FRANCISCO 96307, 10 MAY 68

AIRMAN FIRST CLASS

16880722 WELLS DENNIS M

060568

TDRM1G

FOR THE COMMANDER



DONALD L. MCCABE, CAPTAIN, USAF  
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

DISTRIBUTION  
G

08 CETS

30 MAR 1969

REPLY TO


ATTN OF: 12th SOS (A&D), APO San Francisco, 96227

SUBJECT: Award of Decoration to SSGT Elwood L. Smith, AF 13464932

TO: Chief, CBPO  
4420th Combat Support Group  
Eglin Aux Fld #9  
Florida 32544

1. Attached are elements pertaining to the award of VNAF Flight Engineer's Wings to SSGT Elwood L. Smith. This individual was recently assigned to your station and the award elements arrived after his departure from Bien Hoa Air Base.

2. Request that appropriate action be taken to present this award to Sergeant Smith.

  
DONALD W. RAYMENT, Major, USAF  
Awards & Decorations Officer  
12th Special Operations Squadron