

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS 77843

Telephone (713) 845-7151

Summer 1981

Dear Fellow Ranch Hand Veteran:

I am writing the unit history of the Ranch, one of the unique outfits in military history. Through the assistance of the Office of Air Force History and the Air Force Archives, I have looked at most of the "official" paperwork. Now I need your help. Both as a professional historian and one who is proud to have been a Ranch member, I want to be certain that this history accurately reflects the contributions of all its members. After all, it is the people who are the real stories in a successful organization.

I know that it has been a long time, but if you will pull out those pictures and letters you will be surprised at how much comes back to you. If you will only take just a little time from your busy day to fill out the enclosed questionnaire, you can insure that our story is complete. Please note that this information will ONLY be used for scholarly purposes. The data will not be released for other uses and it will be restricted in both handling and use exactly as you specify. To the extent that you permit, the information/materials you furnish will be permanently deposited in the archives at Texas A&M University, a school whose military associations date back to 1876. Of course, any pictures, diaries, letters, etc., that you furnish will be duplicated and the original will be returned to you. Some of you will also be asked to provide taped discussions of your experiences. These tapes, with your permission, will become a part of the oral history archives. I will, of course, furnish the tapes for this purpose.

I realize how much I am asking to impose on your time and privacy, but it is very important that we preserve the true story of our time for future generations. I will deeply appreciate any help you can give me. I hope to get the opportunity to thank you in person at the next Ranch Hand reunion.

Thank you,



Paul F. Cecil
Ranch Hand '67

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RELEASE FORM

I hereby authorize Paul F. Cecil to use the material contained in my "Ranch Hand" Oral History interview tape(s) for scholarly research and publication.

I agree that, at Paul Cecil's discretion, these tapes may be kept in the Archives of Texas A&M University and will be made available for historical research and study after a period of _____ year(s).

1, 2, 5, or 10

Other Restrictions:

Signature

Date

Printed Full Name

Interview Tape Number

Address

City and State

Zip Code

THE AIR FORCE RANCH HAND PROJECT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA:
OPERATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

A Dissertation

by

PAUL FREDERICK CECIL

Approved as to style and content by:

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(Chairman of Committee)

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(Member)

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(Member)

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(Head of Department)

August 1984

RETURN ADDRESS



**RANCH HAND HISTORY PROJECT
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY**

**Texas A&M University
College Station, Texas 77843**

RANCH HAND HISTORY PROJECT

Form No. _____

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.

Name (last first middle signature date

Specific Information

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

1. Ranch Hand service: From _____ to _____. Where? _____
2. RH/C-123 training: Where/when? _____
3. Rank while in RH? _____ Present/retired rank? _____
4. Duty(s) while in Ranch? _____ dates? _____
5. Other Vietnam service? Where/when? _____
6. If aircrew member:
 - a. Number of missions: RH _____ 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? 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.

Please type or use pen to provide the requested information. If you wish a particular answer to remain confidential (i.e., for my use only), place an asterisk (*) before the number of the question or that particular portion of your information and the answer will be blacked out before this form is deposited in the archives.

Release Form (Initial appropriate boxes)

1. a. You may attribute this information to me and quote me, except as asterisked.
1. b. You may quote this information, but I wish to remain anonymous.
2. a. You may deposit this information in the archives, except as asterisked.
2. b. You may deposit this information in the archives, except as asterisked, but I wish to remain anonymous (black out my name and other identification).
2. c. Do not deposit this form in the archives. It is for Paul Cecil's use only.
3. This data may be made available in the archives for research by qualified scholars:
 - a. immediately after completion of the unit history.
 - b. after _____ years. (Fill-in a number from 1 to 10, if you check this item.)
 - c. never. I have specified above that this form may not be deposited.

I hereby authorize the scholarly use of this questionnaire, except as restricted above.

Name _____

last first middle

signature

date

Questionnaire

Be as specific as possible. On the back of this form, and on as many additional pages as you care to use, please amplify any of the following items. What I need are your feelings and impressions....about people and events....both humorous and serious.

4. Ranch Hand service: From _____ to _____. Where? _____
5. Other Vietnam service? Where? When? _____
6. Ranch Hand/C-123 training: Where/when? _____
7. Rank(s) while in VN/ present/retired rank. _____ / _____
8. Duty(s) while in Ranch. _____
9. Decorations? (If Purple Heart, DFC, or above, please give date and details of event.)

10. Special missions/operations participated in? (Give as much detail as possible.)

11. If aircrew member:
 - a. Number of missions. RH _____ Other (specify) _____
 - b. Combat flying hours. RH _____ Other (specify) _____
12. Were you present during an attack against the base, Ranch site, or quarters? Explain.
13. Were you present when a Ranch aircraft was shot down, crashed, or crew members were killed or wounded? Explain.
14. Were you present during any planning meetings with US and/or Vietnamese officials for spray missions? When/where/who? Explain.

15. Did you take part in any civic action projects? (Orphanages, parties, etc.) Explain.
16. Did you ever observe the effects of Ranch Hand missions from the ground?
17. Did you ever discuss the effectiveness of Ranch missions with personnel who had operated on the ground in mission areas? If so, how much help did they feel it was?
18. Did you ever observe or help repair unusual battle damage (more than just routine small arms damage)? Details?
19. How did you get into the Ranch? What did you know about the mission beforehand?
20. What were you told about the chemicals used? Before Vietnam? In Vietnam?
21. What other things should I tell about that would help the reader understand and know the uniqueness of our outfit? What people, events, etc. deserve special mention?
22. What were your living quarters like? Your typical day? Your in-or out-processing to Vietnam or to the Ranch? Your days off? What kept you sane...or drove you nuts?
23. There are a thousand questions that I have not thought of. Please tell me the good and the bad things we should remember about Vietnam.
24. Other data: Do you have any good pictures (especially of Ranch Handers), journals, notes, diaries, letters, briefing papers, maps, etc., that I could copy and return to you? 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 on it, and I will give you instructions on when to send them at a later date.

(Use the below space, the back of the forms, and as many additional pages as you like to expand on the answers to the questions. Annotate with question number to identify.)

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION

SUPPLEMENTAL INTERVIEWEE AGREEMENT

I, _____, hereby request that Texas A&M
(Interviewee, please print)
University, College Station place restrictions on the information
which I have given in connection with the Oral History Program
of the University, with respect to the:

Tape of the interview

Verbatim original typescript

Final retyped and edited transcript

Other

Explanation and nature of restriction:

Interviewee (signature)

Interview Number

Date _____

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

INTERVIEWEE AGREEMENT

I _____ in my desire to

(Interviewee, please print)

increase the understanding of human experience and in view of the historical and scholarly value of this information, voluntarily permit Texas A&M University the full use of the information taped during interviews made in connection with the Texas A&M University Oral History Program.

I hereby grant all of my rights pertaining to this information to Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas with the understanding that it will be used for research by qualified scholars, for scholarly publications, for university instruction, and other related purposes.

Interviewee (signature)

Interview Number

Date

BACK GROUND

5003 Hist of Crop Dusting

5081 (126) explain why US pilots needed in VN

5029 (5480)

81203 Summary of events 61-67

5070 { French troops use tear gas in 1914
Germans use chlorine in 1915
Nerve gases tabun, sarin and somo originally developed as insecticide.

5088 22 Apr 1915 German Chlorine Attack

5109 History of Poison Gases

5112 Use of herb in Malaya

4027 " " " "

4023 WWII development of herbicides

9002 " " " "

5069 Attack on dams in Korea

5005 WWII devel. of herb.

5001 " " " "