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1st Air Cavalry Division

December 10, 1969

Air Cavalry Inflicts Big Losses on NVA

PHUOC VINH — 1st Air Cavalrymen continued to exact huge casualties on the enemy during the week ending Nov. 21. Skytroopers accounted for 402 enemy killed, second largest weekly total since the middle of August.

While on a ground reconnaissance mission five miles north northwest of Fire Support Base (FSB) Ellen, men of Company B, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry, killed 11 NVA during an all-day series of contacts with an estimated enemy platoon. The enemy would be engaged, only to shortly break contact and retreat.

Later that afternoon, Skytroopers from Company E, 1st

Battalion, 8th Cavalry, discovered a large enemy cache several miles north of Quan Loi. Six pounds of documents, 4,000 rounds of small arms ammunition and medical equipment were among items found by the sharp-eyed troopers.

The next day Air Cavalrymen from Company A, 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry, were on a routine search and clear mission through the thick jungle southwest of Bu Dop when they received heavy small arms, automatic weapons and B-40 fire.

The Garry Owen troopers returned fire and called in artillery, aerial rocket artillery and an air strike. After 30 minutes of

fierce fighting the enemy broke contact, leaving behind 16 of its dead.

At 4:30 p.m. that afternoon, 2nd Brigade Scouts spotted 50 to 80 NVA in bunkers seven miles northeast of FSB Judie. The LOH and Cobra received heavy ground to air fire. The pilots engaged the force and called in artillery and an air strike, killing 22 of the enemy.

The next morning, 2nd Brigade Scouts again flew over the area where they had made contact with the enemy. The helicopters observed 30 individuals attempting to bury more than 50 bodies of their comrades.

Although receiving heavy fire from the NVA force, the Scouts engaged with their M-60 machine guns and called in artillery and an air strike, killing three.

During the week's action 12 Skytroopers were killed and 36 wounded.

546 in Two Months

Villagers Rally to RVN

FSB JUDIE — Thirty-five Vietnamese from the village of Phu Vang, southeast of the 1st Air Cav's Fire Support Base (FSB) Judie, are the latest to rally to the Republic of Vietnam government.

The ralliers raised to 546 the number of Vietnamese who have sought protection of the 1st Cav in a two-month period, according to Captain Michael Falkowski, assistant division PSY-OPs officer.

Refugees were met by Sky-

troopers of Company A, 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry, under operational control of the 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry.

With the exception of two Viet Cong, the villagers were seriously undernourished.

"I feel sorry for these people," said First Lieutenant Michael Olenczuk. "Some of them are sick, and almost all are undernourished."

According to Sergeant First Class Cung Nguyen Van, 2nd Brigade interpreter, Tran Huu,

a villager from Phu Vang, told the following story:

"I wanted to rally long ago, but my child was sick. Moreover, the Viet Cong knew of my intentions and they kept me and my family (eight children) in the jungle at gunpoint."

Tran Huu managed to bring his entire family with him. Medical attention was provided his family and the other ralliers by the 2nd Brigade surgeon at FSB Buttons.

Garry Owen Command Changes

PHUOC VINH — The command reins of the Garry Owen Brigade changed hands last week with Colonel Robert C. Kingston replacing Colonel John Barker.

Colonel Kingston comes to the FIRST TEAM from Ft. Bragg, N.C. Colonel Barker will be as-

signed to the JFK Special Warfare Center at Ft. Bragg upon his return to the United States.

Colonel Kingston's commissioned service began in 1949 following graduation from officer candidate school. He served as a rifle platoon leader in Korea in K Company, 32nd Infantry in 1950-51. His company commander at the time was Captain Joseph P. Kingston, now a colonel and the 1st Air Cav's chief of staff.

The new Garry Owen Brigade commander served a second tour in Korea in 1952-53. In 1961, as a major, he was an exchange officer in Great Britain and commanded a British parachute company, leading it on a worldwide tour.

His Vietnam service includes a tour as a senior Ranger advisor and as commander of the 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry, when

that unit was part of the 25th Division in the central highlands in 1966.

Bronc Rider 'Saddles Up'

FSB GRANT — Private First Class Stephen Deisley came to the 1st Air Cav with all the credentials.

The 6 feet, 2 inch, 200-pounder, a regular on the rodeo circuit last year, specializes in brahman bull and bareback bronc riding events.

"I think the Cav should bring back the horses," the dismounted cavalryman said after a rather strenuous hump through the jungle of northern III Corps. "It sure would help my tired feet."



(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Bob Borchester)

After a long day of humping, Private First Class Edward Benton, an RTO with the 1st Air Cav's Company D, 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry, pauses on the trail near Fire Support Base Grant for a brief rest.

'Pink' Team, Artillery Kill 28

PHUOC VINH — A 1st Air Cav hunter-killer helicopter team combined with 155mm artillery to kill 28 NVA soldiers east of Quan Loi.

The "pink" team from Troop B, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, consisting of a light observation helicopter (LOH) from the "white" Scout platoon and a Cobra gunship from the "red" weapons platoon, was flying a

routine reconnaissance mission over dense triple canopy jungle when the LOH received .30 caliber ground to air fire.

Marking the suspected enemy position with smoke grenades, the LOH swung into a hard right turn as the Cobra rolled in hot, rockets and mini-gun blazing.

The Cobra expended its ammunition on the enemy, killing

16 of the NVA soldiers and destroying their machine gun position. The team then called for artillery with the 155mm howitzer batteries at Quan Loi going into action immediately.

The high explosive barrages pounded the well entrenched enemy position, killing 12 more NVA, attempting to flee into the protection of the thick jungle.

New Lieutenant . . .



(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Dean Sharp)

First Lieutenant Rodney G. Hillard (left), former chief warrant officer with the 1st Brigade, receives his lieutenant bars from Colonel Joseph P. Kingston, FIRST TEAM chief of staff, in commissioning ceremonies at Camp Gorvad. When Colonel Kingston commanded the 1st Bde, Lieutenant Hillard piloted his command and control helicopter.

Educational Benefits

VA Provides Assistance

PHUOC VINH — If you are expecting to DEROS and ETS soon, now is the time to examine the benefits offered the ex-serviceman by the Veterans Administration.

If you are not planning to leave the service soon, many of the VA benefits are still applicable to you, providing you've had at least two years continuous active duty.

Two major laws passed by the United States Congress provide benefits to service veterans released from active duty since 1955. These laws offer the veteran of the Vietnam conflict approximately the same benefits offered the veteran of the Korean War.

The prerequisites for obtaining VA benefits are twofold: You must have completed at least 181 days of continuous active duty and you must have been discharged under other than dishonorable conditions.

The one veteran's benefit which all Skytroopers should look into is educational assistance. You are eligible for one and one-half months of educa-

tional assistance for every month you spend on active duty, but not to exceed 36 months. You are eligible to receive this assistance up to eight years from the day you are released from active duty.

Your assistance is good if you attend any public or private secondary, vocational, correspondence or business school; flight training; college or university; professional, scientific or technical institution; or any other institution which provides education at a secondary level or above.

You may also attend selected schools out of the United States, and your local Veterans Administration Office can give you information on this program.

You are, of course, allowed to choose your own program of study. Counseling by qualified VA personnel is available but not necessary. After you choose your course of study, you are allowed to change it once. After that, a change must be approved by your VA Administrator.

If you are pursuing your education full time (14 semester

hours), you will receive \$130 monthly if you have no dependents. With one dependent, you will receive \$155, and \$175 for two dependents. You will receive an additional \$10 for each dependent after the first two.

If you are taking 10 to 13 semester hours, your reimbursement will be \$95, \$115, \$135 and \$7 respectively. Half-time students, taking seven to nine semester hours, will receive \$60, \$75, \$85 and \$5, respectively.

Stay Healthy by Keeping Clean

PHUOC VINH — Maintaining your health in Vietnam is important both to you and the Army.

If hospitalized, you can't fulfill your mission and the efficiency of your unit may be damaged. Your health depends greatly on the precautions you take.

Cleanliness is one of the best defenses against illness. Keeping clean in the field is sometimes difficult but try to wash your face, hands, feet, armpits and groin area daily.

Keep your teeth clean. Tooth decay and other oral problems are much easier to prevent than repair. If a tooth brush is not available, use a twig to clean between the teeth. Swish water around in your mouth to loosen trapped food particles.

Protect your feet. Make sure your boots fit properly. Always keep your feet as clean as possible because a variety of infections can affect them. Carry clean, dry socks. If you develop a blister, don't break it, see a medic immediately.

Treat all water as if it's impure. When possible, boil water before drinking or use the special tablets provided. Use one tablet for a canteen of clear water, shake, let sit for 30 minutes before drinking. For cloudy water, use two tablets and follow the same directions.

Heat injuries are common in Vietnam, from simple heat rash

Warrant Officer Gets Commission

PHUOC VINH—Chief Warrant Officer Rodney G. Hillard, a pilot with the 1st Cav's 1st Brigade aviation platoon, received a direct commission to first lieutenant in ceremonies at Camp Gorvad.

Lieutenant Hillard was sworn in by Colonel Joseph P. Kingston, FIRST TEAM chief of staff. When Colonel Kingston commanded the 1st Bde, the former CWO piloted his command and control helicopter.

The veteran aviator has logged more than 2,200 hours of flight time since graduating from the warrant officer candidate course in 1965.

Lieutenant Hillard came to the Cav in April and previously served in Vietnam with the 114th Assault Helicopter Company of the 1st Aviation Brigade.

The Lieutenant, a qualified instructor pilot, was offered his direct commission by the Department of the Army and felt he "couldn't pass up such a good opportunity."

Lieutenant Hillard began his military career by enlisting in the National Guard to serve with the 138th Artillery Group at Frankfort, Ky.

He volunteered for active duty as a pilot in 1965 and was sent to the warrant officer course to become an aviator. He retained his National Guard status until resigning on the date of his commission.

The new Transportation Corps officer was also reassigned, effective the date of his commission, to the 17th Aviation Group, 1st Aviation Brigade.

... For God And Country

By Chaplain (MAJ)
Kenneth K. Witterburg
Assistant Division Chaplain

"... out of the depths have I cried unto thee. Lord, hear my supplication." A psalm of David, the great man of faith of the Old Testament.

David is called a man after God's own heart. Even though especially blessed by God and with His favor, David endured the constant attempts of Saul to kill him as he was harried through the hills of Judea.

His sons rejected and to a great degree despised him. One actually rose in rebellion against him. Yet God had chosen David. He was God's creature, His workmanship, a man after God's own heart.

We are of the same workmanship. We are God's creatures and God's favor is upon us. We sometimes quail before the

onslaught of slings and arrows of outrageous misfortune that befall us.

Yet, because we are God's workmanship and because He is the only sure and certain source of strength, courage and comfort in this world, we should rejoice and be happy for God our Savior is with us.

We stand with firm faith that the destiny which is ours will be His eternal glory and our good. We often can't and do not see the guiding hand of God, or the protecting of wing of His mercy.

If, however, we keep the faith, remembering always we are His created workmanship, we can stand firm in the face of all that may assail us, good or bad.

"... for He is our peace — the peace which passeth understanding, the peace of God that flows from sincere faith and firm trust in Him."



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2/8 SP4 Robert Feters
2/12 SGT Dennis Harding
15th Admin SP5 L.D. Barton
15th Med PFC Gary Holland



SGT RE-UP
SE2
"DID YOU
KNOW???"



PHUOC VINH — The Army's Re-enlistment Central Assignment Program (RECAP) guarantees a one-year stabilized assignment at your CONUS station of choice.

All enlisted personnel, except command sergeants major, can apply for assignment under this program. There is no restriction on pay grade, time-in-service or amount of service remaining on present enlistment or active duty commitment.

A realistic decision in making selection of station must be made. Make a choice where you can be utilized in your MOS.

Department of the Army can't

assign you to a post just at your convenience — there must be a vacancy in your MOS at the duty station.

You can apply for assignment under RECAP as early as six months in advance of your normal rotation date. Applications can't be accepted if your are less than 30 days from your normal rotation date.

To apply for RECAP, see your 1st Cav career counselor at Bien Hoa, Phuoc Vinh, Quan Loi or Tay Ninh.

RECAP is one way to select your next assignment and be guaranteed stabilized duty for one year, possibly longer.

Gunner Unseats Pachyderm Rider

QUAN LOI—An elephant-riding NVA soldier found out that daring, Tarzan-like exploits are more easily accomplished between covers of novels than in 1st Air Cav Country.

While the original Tarzan conquered all, the NVA made a fatal mistake—he took on Skytrooper firepower with his AK-47. The Cav won.

"At first, I couldn't believe my eyes," said the light observation helicopter (LOH) pilot, the first to spy the pachyderm and his passenger.

"But when the bullets started wizzing past us, I knew it was no joke," he added.

The LOH from Troop B, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, was flying a routine reconnaissance mission east of Quan Loi.

The pilot spotted the NVA aboard his steed through a small opening in the double canopy jungle below. Realizing he was taking fire from the NVA soldier, he immediately ordered his doorgunner to open fire. The M-16 machine gun fire quickly silenced the enemy.

Trackers Uncover Cache in Backyard

FSB BUTTONS — Sixty-six mortar rounds came into the 1st Air Cav's Fire Support Base (FSB) Buttons but hardly on the trajectory Charlie intended.

Working from intelligence that pointed to an enemy cache near FSB Buttons, home of the Blackhorse Brigade, a combat tracker team conducted a reconnaissance around the firebase.

"We weren't really expecting to find anything so close to the base, but when we crossed a fence we couldn't miss one round lying right at our feet," said Specialist Five John Church, a member of Tracker Team Four, 62nd Combat Tracker Platoon, 1st Battalion, 9th Cavalry.

The first round was only 175 meters outside the perimeter. A grass trail led from that one round to three tube positions.

Fifty-one rounds were primed and ready to fire. A further search by Air Cavalrymen revealed 14 more rounds buried nearby.

APO Hanoi

FSB JACKIE — NVA mailmen will be toting empty mail bags in 1st Cav Country. Somebody robbed the post office.

Troops from the 1st ARVN Airborne Division, patrolling an area northeast of FSB Jackie, pulled the "heist" when they discovered a heavily-bunkered NVA base camp, complete with 55 six-man hooches and one post office.

Documents found revealed the camp to be an enemy APO center.

Fun Work . . .



Skytroopers from Company C, 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry, cool off while dismantling an enemy foot bridge east of Fire Support Base Wes cott. (U.S. Army Photo by PFC Len Fallscheer)

Bridges Gap . . .



(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Dean Sharp)

Sergeant First Class Huynh Tan Phan, a translator working with the 13th Signal Battalion, discusses his work with executive officer Major James W. Maddan at the 1st Cav's Phuoc Vinh basecamp.

ARVN Is Versatile Asset

PHUOC VINH — Vietnamization is nothing new to ARVN. Sergeant First Class Huynh Tan Phan. The 25-year-old South Vietnamese interpreter has been bridging gaps and closely working with 1st Air Cavalrymen for five years.

Sergeant Phan works at head-

quarters of the 13th Signal Battalion at Phuoc Vinh, translating captured documents and monitoring ARVN radio communications to coordinate their movements with Americans.

A veteran of nearly three years in the field as a liaison between American advisers and ARVN troops, Sergeant Phan also worked two years in civil affairs.

His Chieu Hoi broadcasts from helicopters and talks to villagers on the ground brought in "many, many" ralliers.

He shrugs off his own role in

the war. Of his three years in the field, he would only say, "I was lucky many times."

The son of a government official in Quang Ngai Province, about 700 miles north of Phuoc Vinh, Sergeant Phan is of a "medium class" family. His two older sisters are elementary school teachers and his wife is a nurse.

In spite of five long years of fighting already, Sergeant Phan is not ready to quit as long as the war continues. "I hope to help my country until the war is over," he said.

COL Starry Takes 11th ACR Command

PHUOC VINH — Colonel Donn A. Starry assumed command of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment this week replacing Colonel James Leach.

The 11th Armored Cav has been under the operational control of the 1st Air Cav either in part or in total since July.

The 44-year-old colonel comes to the Blackhorse Regiment from Military Assistance Command Vietnam Headquarters, J-3, where he has served as deputy chief of operational plans and requirements since last February.

"I am very happy to be taking over the 11th Armored Cav," Colonel Starry said. "I've always admired the regiment and the dedication of its fighting men."

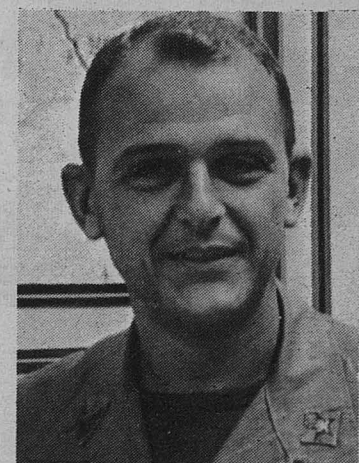
Colonel Starry, a 1948 West Point graduate, started his career in armor with the 63rd Tank Battalion, 1st Infantry Division in Germany.

He later served five years with the 3rd Armored Division, a tour in Korea with the 8th Army Staff and a tour at the Pentagon as a military assistant on the staff of the Secretary of Defense.

A graduate of the Armed Forces Staff College and the Army War College, Colonel Starry holds an MS in international affairs from George Washington University.

Colonel Leach will become Chief of Armor Branch in Washington, D.C.

The 11th Armored Cav is playing a key role in helping the FIRST TEAM's pacification mission in the Loc Ninh and An Loc areas.



Colonel Donn Starry

*'You just don't know what
a job the grunts do until
you go out with them'*



Artist Goes Humping

Until one fateful week in September, Specialist Four Ron Doss's chief claim to fame was his loose-limbed performance of a dance called "The Gator." Then the 1st Air Cav's combat artist went humping.

Four days later he returned to his palette and canvas with a heavy beard, aching muscles, a pair of weary legs, a giant-size appetite and, most of all, a deep, new respect for the grunt in the field.

"You just don't know what a great job they do until you go out with them," he told his buddies...

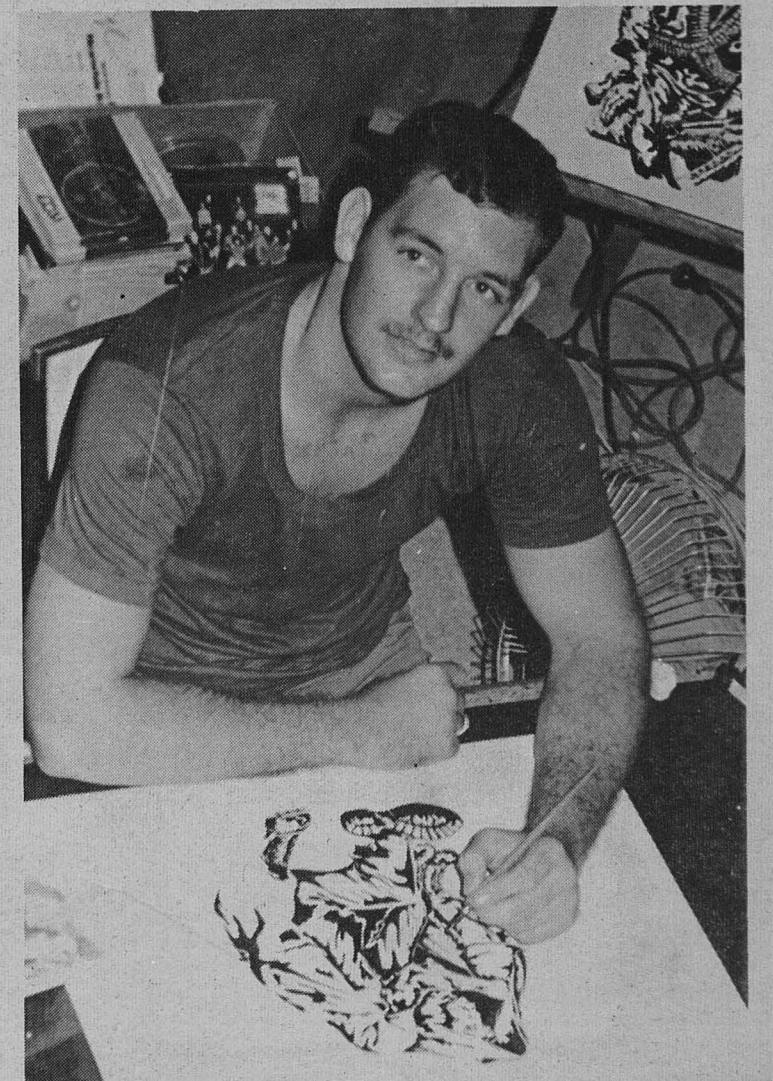
Most of them, reporters for the Cav's Information Office, had been down that road before. They knew what it was like to go humping for the

first time, to make that first combat assault, to get shot at in a firefight. They shared his respect for the grunt.

Specialist Doss went to the field with the 3rd Brigade's Company C, 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry. His four days were eventful enough. The unit recorded three enemy kills and uncovered six caches, which yielded seven tons of rice and a bicycle.

A typical Texan, "Doss" likes everyone — as long as he's from Texas — and everything — as long as it's from Texas.

In addition to painting and sketching, he handles page design of the FIRST TEAM Magazine. The art on these pages is a result of his trip to the field.



Specialist Five Ron Doss, combat artist



Diane Olson's suntan formula is mix generous amounts of exposed surface with minimum tactical camouflage, then blend in a sufficient amount of suntan lotion. Of course, the Las Vegas beauty doesn't have anyone to spread the lotion. Any volunteers?



Want to Tell Tales?

Want to tell war stories and get paid for it? Then the Army has a deal for you.

The Army's National Speakers Program is looking for qualified volunteers to recount their Vietnam experiences and the Army's role in the war to civilian audiences back in the states.

Initiated on a trial basis in August, 1968, the project proved so successful that it was established permanently five months later.

USARV submitted 105 nominees for the program in 1969, including seven Skytroopers from the 1st Air Cavalry. Fifty additional nominees are needed to meet current demands.

Interested Air Cavalrymen with a DEROS before Dec. 30 should contact their unit adjutant for more details about the program. Volunteers must be in grades E-7 through O-4 and have more than six months remaining in service after Feb. 1, 1970.

They 'Endure' War

Skytroopers of the 1st Battalion, 21st Artillery, are setting endurance records for remaining with the 1st Cav.

Staff Sergeant Fred Boeschen came to the FIRST TEAM in July, 1966, and recently completed his 40th month here.

He's one month ahead of Staff Sergeant Kenneth Ray with 39 followed by Staff Sergeant John Hatchett with 36 and Staff Sergeant Franklin Snow with 33.

The more than 20-month set includes Specialist Six Marshall Donald, Staff Sergeant Randy Rich, Sergeant Ben Wells and Sergeant James Ratliff.

Python Rattles LP

Meeting your friendly, neighborhood python for the first time can be an unsettling experience as four 1st Cav soldiers well know.

Company A, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry, sent the foursome to a listening post 150 meters from its night position near Fire Support Base Vivian.

The Skytroopers detected movement immediately. A report was relayed to the company command post. The noise came again, this time from the bamboo canopy a few meters to the front.

The noise-marker turned out to be a 15-foot long python resting comfortably near the Skytroopers.

Not willing to engage the snake tactically in "hand to hand," the men spent an uneasy night and slipped back to the company perimeter the next morning with a story about "the one that got away."

Specialists Named 'Best'

Specialist Four John Atherton, Company A, was named the 27th Maintenance Battalion's Soldier of the Month for November.

Chosen Soldier of the Month for the 1st Battalion, 21st Artillery, was Specialist Four James O. Jackson.

Forward APO Serves Buttons

By SP5 George V. Vindedzis
FSB BUTTONS — To accommodate the increase of personnel and expansion at Fire Support Base (FSB) Buttons, a forward APO now serves 1st Air Cavalrymen stationed here.

The 2nd Brigade APO provides complete postal service, including money order purchases and parcel post service.

"Operating hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily," said Captain Keith R. Jennings, division postal officer. "If business requires it, we will extend our hours of operation — to 24 hours a day if necessary."

More outgoing mail can be handled with the new APO. "All incoming mail is sorted in Bien Hoa and flown to FSB Buttons," said Captain Jennings. "With the unit mail clerk checking the APO twice daily, mail service should improve 100 per cent."

The APO will send out registered, certified and insured let-

ters and packages. All packages must fall within postal regulations.

Individuals purchasing money orders are required to have a current identification card, a Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) form five card and an addressed envelope to a destination outside the Republic of Vietnam. A list of foreign countries authorized U.S. postal money orders is at the APO.

Postal service will also be provided for personnel stationed on Nui Ba Ra mountain. "The men can't come down here for the service," said Captain Jennings. "We'll close down at a given time and take the APO services to them."

For APO construction, all materials were measured, cut and prepared at Bien Hoa and flown by Caribou to FSB Buttons where the building was completed and open for business in two days.



1st Air Cavalrymen from the 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry, discovered it's easy to make friends with Vietnamese youngsters while on patrol near Fire Support Base Ellen. Here, Private First Class Paul Oliver walks with a newly-acquired buddy through a small village.



"Guess who's coming to dinner?" asks Private First Class Don Hoesman (center), a rifleman with the 3rd Brigade's 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry. The Skytrooper's new friend is anxious to try out those LRRP rations.

Buddies

1/8 Skytroopers Make New Friends on Patrol

"You can't help liking these kids," says Private First Class Robert L. Copeland, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry, rifleman, as he walks hand-in-hand with a Vietnamese youngster down a dirt road near Fire Support Base Ellen.



(Photos by SP4 Bill Ahrbeck)

Pointman School Teaches Caution

By SP4 Charles Harris
FSB VIVIAN — The 1st Air Cavalryman is walking quietly through the jungle, eyes searching the thick vegetation for the slightest sign of the enemy.

No, it's not a combat situation, but rather an exercise on the combat reaction course at Fire Support Base (FSB) Vivian.

Located just outside the base-camp perimeter, the pointman school is the creation of First Lieutenant Matthew McGough, a platoon leader with Company A, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry.

Lieutenant McGough proposed the possibility of the course when his battalion moved to FSB Vivian to assume base defense.

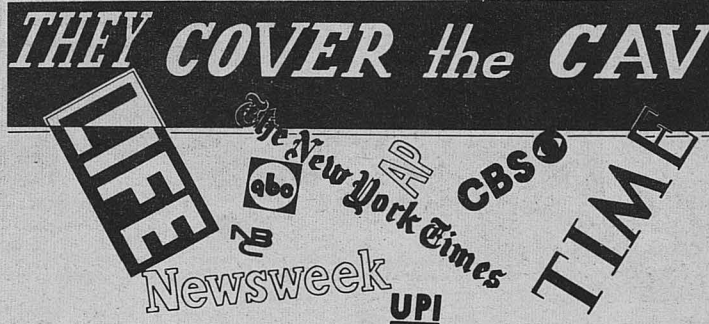
Realizing the safety benefits possible by training men to walk point before going to the field,

he proposed the course to Captain George Smith, his company commander.

Lieutenant Colonel Ronald Rassmussen, battalion commander, refined the idea, adding an incentive-building scoring system.

The course was set up using 12 targets. Three shots are fired at each target with a hit counting one point. Lieutenant McGough was made principal instructor.

"This course is of immeasurable value in teaching caution to new men and reminding combat veterans the importance of keeping their minds on what they are doing," said the lieutenant. "And if it prevents just one casualty, all the work will be worth it."



By SP5 Joe Kamalick

One of the New York Times' correspondents in Vietnam is 30-year-old Terrence Smith, a 1960 graduate of Notre Dame University and a four-year veteran of the Times' staff.

His first war was the lightning-quick Israeli war of June 1967. He had been assigned to Jerusalem barely 10 days before the five-day war flared.

Unlike the short fuse Israeli war, the Vietnam war finds Smith more concerned with the political and over-all military

trends, especially those military moves which might evidence the less obvious political decisions.

So except for major combat stories — such as concentrated attacks on firebases — Smith and other large daily newspaper correspondents are looking for the answers as to why the war is slowing down.

Personally, Smith is "amazed by the detachment of the Vietnamese people about a war in their own back yards. But I suppose that is to be expected after 20 to 25 years of war."

But while the war may become common for many Vietnamese, Smith said that he was "impressed by the degree of dedication on the part of province and district councilors, both military and civilian."

"The war," he said, "has a way of narrowing the field of vision of anyone who becomes involved in it."

That tunnel vision can be found among the men who fight it, the men who are most involved in it. I've found that the GIs are not concerned with things outside of Vietnam. He's got so many days left to go in country and that's all that matters."

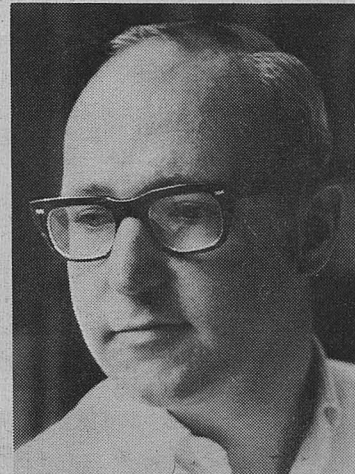
For Americans, then, the war is just a matter of 365 slow days. "But for the Vietnamese," said

T. Smith
NY Times

Smith, "the war has penetrated right into the social fabric of their lives; it has become the axis around which their lives turn."

"I wonder," said Smith, "about the effect of this war and the fatalism of these people."

Though the war is closer to an end with each passing day, its importance and the significance of its outcome is not diminished. "Because outside of China," said Smith, "I think Vietnam is the most important country in Asia."



Terrence Smith

Quick Kill . . .



(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Charles Harris)
Cardboard targets stress the point—the hazards of the pointman, that is. First Lieutenant Matthew McGough (left), Company A, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry, observes Private First Class John Lovejoy at the battalion's pointman training course near the 1st Cav's Fire Support Base Vivian. Lieutenant McGough is the principal instructor at the newly-formed school.

'Irregulars' Aid 3rd Brigade Unit

By SP4 Ron Merrill

TAY NINH — A 1st Air Cav company usually operates with four platoons, but Company C, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, has a fifth.

This extra platoon of Charlie Company is made up of a 35-man Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) force:

"We learn a lot from them, and they learn a lot from us," said Captain Walter E. Brinker, the company commander. "But they're good, professional soldiers, and we like the fact that we're working with them."

Attached to each platoon is a squad of CIDG troopers. The CIDG's usually walk point for company and platoon patrols.

"Those little guys really move through the thick bamboo a lot quicker than we can," said Specialist Four Dean Hower, a rifleman with the company. "And they are a lot sharper on reading trail signs and following the enemy."

"The speed with which they do it is the amazing thing," said Specialist Hower.

Pastry Maker

'Phantom' Hits Daily

TAY NINH — Rarely seen but always appreciated, "The Phantom" of the 1st Air Cav's mess hall at Tay Ninh lurks about night after night doing his job.

The Phantom, alias Specialist Four Ron Thielen, puts duty before self each night. Never enjoying a movie at the Enlisted

Men's Club or a floor show at the VIP Center, he keeps the Cav's 1st Brigade mess hall in cakes, pies, rolls and doughnuts.

"The job has its advantages," said Specialist Thielen. "I don't lose any sleep over incoming rounds in the middle of the night."

The Phantom is a loner, but it's rumored he makes middle-of-the-night contacts with an anonymous representative of the 1st Bde Tactical Operations Center on courier duty for coffee and doughnuts.

"Thielen tends to overplay his cloak and dagger role," said the Phantom's boss, Sergeant First Class Ed Hoepfner, 1st Bde mess sergeant. "Of course, if his pastries are not up to standard, I'll disavow any knowledge of him."

Roving Chapel Finds New Home

FSB MARY — The roving chapel of a 1st Air Cav artillery battery has found a new home at Fire Support Base (FSB) Mary.

The chapel, dubbed the House of Saint Barbara in honor of the patron saint of artillery, once consisted of a single cross

carved from a brass 105mm canister.

Now it has grown to include rows of pews, a picket fence and an altar for the cross. Made from "walnut stained" ammo boxes (the "walnut" stain is tar paper coated in gasoline), it is

now the pride of Battery A, 1st Battalion, 21st Artillery.

The new chapel was dedicated in special services conducted jointly by Chaplain (Major) William T. Carter, of the 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry; Chaplain (Major) Eugene E. Allen, of the 2nd Brigade; and Chaplain (Cap-

tain) Robert T. Murphy, of the 3rd Brigade.

"This event is especially significant," said Chaplain Allen, "not only because this is one of the few chapels on a forward base, but because it is a mutual effort of men of all faiths to have a place to worship."