

THE AIR CAVALRY DIVISION



MOTHER DORCY AND THE PATCH

In September 1921, the War Department authorized the establishment of the 1st Cavalry Division. A directive was published requesting submission of a design for the "shoulder sleeve" of the new unit.

The design selected for the FIRST TEAM patch was submitted by Colonel and Mrs. Ben Dorcy. The colonel was then commander of the 7th Cavalry Regiment at Fort Bliss, Tex., with the newly activated division.

Mrs. Dorcy relates that the combination of the golden sunset at Fort Bliss and the traditional cavalry colors of blue and gold were a great influence in the selection of the background color of the insignia.

The choice of the horse's head for the design was made by the Dorcys after they observed a mounted trooper ride by their home on a beautiful blue-black thoroughbred.

The shape of the patch represents the shield carried by knights in battle. The bar, or slash, across the yellow shield also finds its origin in heraldry and is always shown on a coat of arms diagonally from top left to lower right. It represents a scaling ladder used to breach castle walls.

As time went by, the blue of the patch was changed to black, otherwise the patch has not changed from its original design and shape.

The shoulder patch of the 1st Cav is the largest of all U.S. Army division insignias. "Mother" Dorcy explained: "The patch had to be large enough to be seen through the dust and sand at Fort Bliss, and we made it that way because it's worn by big men who do big things."



THE FIRST TEAM

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Orientation Handbook

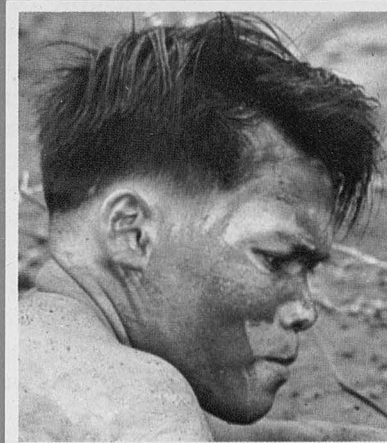
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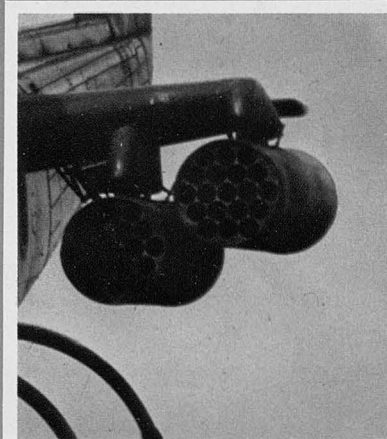
Front Cover: Helicopters are the backbone of the airmobile division. They help make the 1st Air Cavalry the most efficient fighting force in Vietnam. Photograph by SP4 Dean Sharp.



Back Cover: 1st Air Cavalry Skytroopers fan out to begin a search and clear mission after being dropped off by Huey lift ships in northern III Corps. Photograph by SP4 Bob Borchester.

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FIRST CAVALRY DIVISION 1921-65

The 1st Cavalry Division was activated as a Regular Army division Sept. 12, 1921, under the new National Defense Act.

The role of the division during the formative years and its contributions to the welfare of the nation is difficult to appreciate when viewed in the light of modern day events.

Vast expanses of land along the Mexican border necessitated constant patrolling by the horse soldiers to prevent smuggling of narcotics, liquor and high-duty items as well as cattle rustling and gunrunning.

Economic depression years of the 1930s spawned the Civilian Conservation Corps, and the division provided logistical and administrative cadre for CCC companies in the Arizona-New Mexico district.

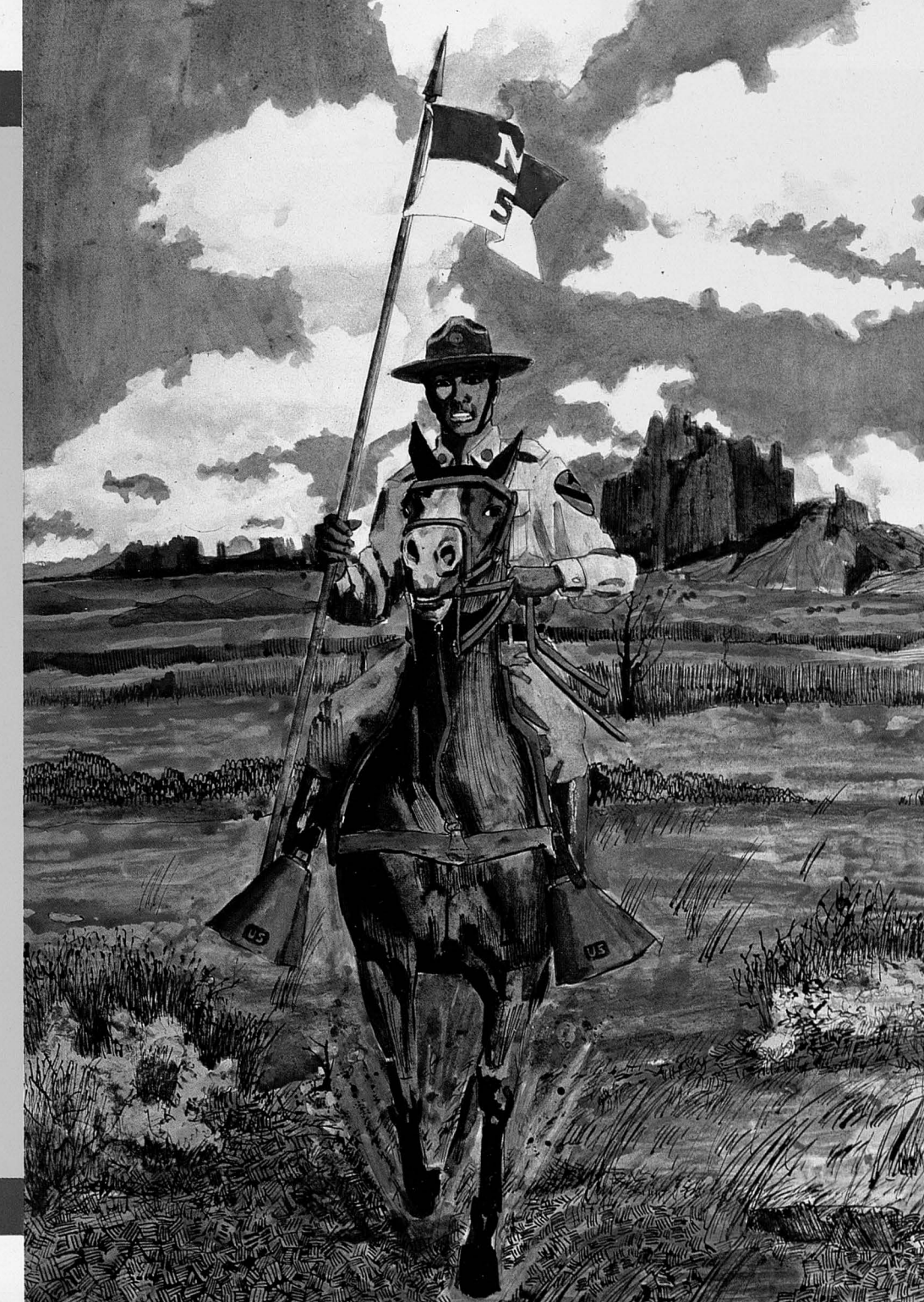
In 1941, the entire division assembled at Fort Bliss, Tex., for extensive field training, and the authorized personnel strength jumped from 3,575 to 10,110.

News of Pearl Harbor found many members of the division on furlough or back in civilian life, but men poured into Fort Bliss from all over the country to rejoin the 1st Cavalry.

In 1942, 1st Cavalry troopers were still horse soldiers. Two years later, these same men were assaulting tropical beaches halfway around the world. Now fully mechanized, they had been transformed into one of the finest combat outfits of the modern era with a name for being in the vanguard, willing to go where no one else dared: The FIRST TEAM.

The changeover from horses to jeeps came in February 1943 when the division received orders assigning it overseas. After six months of jungle and amphibious training in Australia, the division moved to Oro Bay, New Guinea, early in 1944 where final preparations were made for an assault into the Admiralty Islands north of New Guinea.

Preceded by a shattering naval bombardment, the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry, led the regiment



“No greater record has emerged from the war than that of the 1st Cavalry Division—swift and sure in attack, tenacious and durable in defense and loyal and cheerful under hardship. It has written its own noble history.”

General Douglas MacArthur,
Pacific Campaign
World War II.

into Hayane Harbor on Los Negros Island February 29.

The Japanese were caught napping. Establishing a firm beachhead and controlling the sea and air, the cavalymen advanced steadily across Los Negros. A two-pronged attack left 1,400 enemy dead. By March 10, only a mopping up operation remained.

Attention turned to Manus Island, a larger land mass west of Los Negros. Again the 1st Cavalry outflanked and routed the Japanese.

When the Admiralties Campaign ended officially May 18, 1944, the troopers had killed 3,317 of the enemy while suffering casualties less than one-tenth that size.

The tide of war swept westward across the Pacific, and the division was instrumental in liberating the Philippines.

On October 20, the division began its Philippines campaign by landing on the east coast of Leyte near Tacloban. When the Leyte-Samar Campaign ended in late December, the 1st Cavalry had eliminated 5,937 Japanese while losing 241 of its own men.

Without pause, the now battle-tested division entered the fight for Luzon and the capital city of the Philippines, Manila.

On February 3, 1st Cavalymen entered Manila. "First in Manila" became one of the highlights in Cav history.

Around the Katapalan Sawmill in eastern Luzon, the last major battle of the war was won in early May. When the campaign officially ended June 30, the 1st Cavalry had accounted for 14,114 enemy dead and 1,119 prisoners.

The shooting war was over for the cavalymen. On the morning of September 8, the division marched into Tokyo. And "First in Tokyo" was entered in the proud roll of 1st Cav achievements.

On July 18, 1950, when the 1st Cavalry landed at Pohang-dong, South Korea, within the rapidly shrinking Pusan perimeter, the division was one-third understrength.



The 1st Cavalry Division entered World War II in early 1944 with an assault into the Admiralty Islands. It was only the beginning. The FIRST TEAM was instrumental in liberating the Philippines and achieved a remarkable record in its Pacific campaign. When hostilities broke out in Korea (opposite page), the Cav played a vital role in quelling the Communist forces.

The division was being employed in a desperate attempt to salvage a war that had been three-quarters lost.

The cavalymen occupied a key sector of the perimeter, straddling the main road from Pusan to Seoul, capital of South Korea.

The North Koreans hammered the United Nations force for the next month. With the Eighth Army offensive underway, the 7th and 8th Cavalry penetrated North Korea lines September 20, raced behind them and linked up to encircle two divisions in a major breakthrough in the south.

Soon the division began to move north, advancing across the border. The North Korean capital of Pyongyang fell on October 19, and the third historic "first" for the FIRST TEAM was consummated.

As the cold Korean winter set in, the Reds launched carefully prepared offensives against the UN forces. Ignoring fearsome losses, the Communists managed to take control of Seoul.

The enemy was severely punished during its mid-February offensives, and Seoul was recaptured by mid-March.

During the summer months, the Communists suffered staggering losses with their "human wave" attacks.

The 1st Cavalry's last major battle in Korea occurred October 3-18 with the conquest of the Chinese defensive line, Line Jamestown. On December 16, the division was relieved in Korea and took over defense of Hokkaido, Japan.

On Aug. 20, 1957, the division was reduced to zero strength and transferred minus equipment to Korea where, on September 23, the 24th Infantry Division was redesignated the 1st Cavalry Division. Its next test in combat would come in Vietnam.



THE HERITAGE OF AIRMOBILITY

Woven into the rich fabric of traditional 1st Cavalry history is the bright and bold thread of the airmobile concept.

The background of the airmobile portion of the division title relates directly to another division, the organizational parent of the 1st Air Cav—the 11th Air Assault Division.

By the 1960s, the need for new horizons in airmobility became apparent, thanks to the drive and imagination of countless officers. Under the leadership of General Hamilton H. Howze, a board of officers determined that airmobility was feasible and necessary.

On Jan. 8, 1963, Brigadier General Harry W. O. Kinnard, assistant division commander of the 101st Airborne Division, received the mis-

sion: Create an air assault division and test it to “see how far the Army can go—and ought to go—with the airmobile concept.”

The stage was set for the beginning of recorded airmobile history. And the vehicle chosen for the airmobility test was the 11th Airborne Division.

It was recalled to active duty Feb. 15, 1963, and redesignated as the 11th Air Assault Division (Test). General Kinnard was the first Skysoldier on the division's rolls. His chief of staff, Colonel E. B. Roberts, who later was to command the 1st Air Cav, was the second.

The division took to the field almost immediately and spent most of the time in a continually expanding series of test exercises designed to wring the most from the concept. And the division was

under constant observation. So intense was this scrutiny that General Kinnard once was led to quip: “. . . never have so few been observed by so many so often.”

On July 2, 1964, three infantry battalions, two artillery battalions and brigade headquarters from the 2nd Infantry Division were formally attached to the 11th Air Assault Division—the wedding of two units which one year later produced a strapping offspring known as the airmobile division.

Ideas were tested, accepted, revised or rejected. By November 15, the tests were over. They showed conclusively that the division's elements could seek out any enemy over a wide area, find him and then rapidly bring together the necessary firepower and troops to destroy him.

It came as no surprise then when Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara announced on June 16, 1965, that an airmobile division had been authorized for the U.S. Army. What did come as a surprise was the secretary's announcement that the famed 1st Cavalry Division had been chosen to carry the standards of airmobility beyond the test stage.

General Kinnard paid tribute to those who had served in the test division when he told them: “As a result of your efforts, the soldier is free forever from the tyranny of terrain.”

Skysoldiers suddenly had become Skytroopers. And a chapter in the history of airmobility had closed, but a page away was the beginning of a new and even more glorious chapter.

*‘...freed forever
from
the tyranny
of terrain’*



Army Sergeant Philip Maddox, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, learns mountain climbing techniques of rappelling at Fort Benning, Georgia.



The 11th Air Assault Division — organizational parent of the 1st Air Cav — made the first airmobility tests back in 1963. A “Skysoldier” (left) loads a 2.75 inch rocket into the weapons system on a UH-1B helicopter for a firing demonstration, and other troops prepare to board Iroquois assault helicopters in another phase of testing.



THE VIETNAM YEARS

Members of Company A, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry, wade waist deep as they cross a river near An Khe in October 1965.



*The 1st Cav
unleashes the
full striking
power of
airmobility*

Huey helicopters, primary movers of infantrymen, fly in formation on a combat assault.

Somewhere in the annals of military organizations there may have been outfits activated, organized and moved 12,000 miles to combat all within the space of 90 days, but none comes to mind immediately.

That the 1st Air Cavalry successfully did just that is not only a remarkable achievement but a tribute to the men of the division who devoted an unbelievable amount of time and effort to accomplish their missions.

Forty-two days after Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara's June 16 announcement authorizing organization of an airmobile division, President Lyndon B. Johnson told the nation: "I am ordering the 1st Air Cavalry to Vietnam."

An advance party of 1,030 officers and men left Robbins Air Force Base, Ga., during a six-day period beginning August 14. Landing at Cam Ranh Bay, the cavalrymen flew to An Khe where work began on the division base.

The bulk of the division moved by troop ships with the first carrier leaving the States August 15. Air Cavalrymen assumed complete responsibility for defense of the An Khe area and the division's tactical area of responsibility September 28.

The number of "firsts" racked up by the Cav in the early days was staggering—first full division in Vietnam, first airmobile division, first unit to deploy CH-47 Chinook helicopters into combat, first unit to use CH-54 Flying Crane choppers and so on, ad infinitum.

Being first had become a habit. But there was no "first" more significant than being the first division in the Vietnam conflict to earn the Presidential Unit Citation (PUC).

The Pleiku Campaign, for which the Cav won the PUC, was 35 days of airmobile operations that swept across the plateau country west and south of Pleiku.

It was more than a triumph for the fledgling airmobile concept. It marked the first major confrontation between a U.S. Army division and a North Vietnamese division.

The campaign began October 19 when the Special Forces camp at Plei Me, 35 miles south of the key provincial capital of Pleiku, was besieged by the NVA 33rd Regiment.

In the next 35 days, the 1st Air Cav killed 3,561 North Vietnamese regulars and detained 157 others, captured 900 individual weapons and 126 crew-served weapons plus enough munitions to completely arm an NVA battalion.

Hounded by 1st Air Cav helicopters, North Vietnamese regulars sustained their first major defeat ever. Secretary of Defense McNamara called the campaign "an unparalleled achievement."

During the Pleiku Campaign, for which the Cav won the Presidential Unit Citation, some 900 individual weapons and 126 crew-served weapons were captured — plus enough munitions to completely arm an NVA battalion.



1966...

On Jan. 25, 1966, the 1st Air Cavalry launched Operation MASHER-WHITE WING, its longest and largest operation to that date. Also known as the Bong Son Campaign, the operation lasted 41 days as the division moved into the northeast and eastern portions of Binh Dinh Province.

It was conducted in five phases in which each one of the division's brigades participated in one or more.

And for the first time, the FIRST TEAM worked in conjunction with other Free World forces.

With the termination of MASHER-WHITE WING, the division had operated in 360 degrees around Bong Son in which enemy contact was maintained during each of the 41 days. The operation proved beyond doubt that the victory scored in the Pleiku Campaign was no fluke.

The statistics of the operations are impressive: 1,342 enemy killed by the Cav with an additional 808 killed by Free World forces.

Some important battles were fought during Operation LINCOLN west of Pleiku in April, then Operation CRAZY HORSE kicked off May 16. Centered in the mountains between the Vinh Than and Soui Ca valleys, it ended June 5 with 507 enemy from the Yellow Star division dead.

Operations DECKHOUSE and NATHAN HALE in the area around Tuy Hoa in Phu Yen Province were followed by HENRY CLAY in Phu Ben and Darlac Provinces. By August, the Cav had returned to its old haunts in the Ia Drang-Chu Pong area to initiate Operation PAUL REVERE II.

On September 13, Operation THAYER I began with five infantry battalions combat assaulting into a circular configuration around the Crow's Foot area. It was to be the start of a 17-month campaign to pacify Binh Dinh Province.

Other 1st Cav units meanwhile had moved east from the valleys and maneuvered into position to trap the enemy in a coastal pocket. There



Personnel of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, crawl under a fence to advance toward a Viet Cong bunker complex during Operation Masher near Bong Son.

Operation IRVING evolved.

The FIRST TEAM, working with Free World forces, killed 2,063 enemy, captured 1,930 and returned 141 to GVN in 22 days.

THAYER II was but a logical extension of the preceeding operations in the Bong Son area as part of the all-out effort to pacify eastern Binh Dinh Province.

On December 31, THAYER II was in its 68th day, the longest operation undertaken by the division in Vietnam. It was to last considerably longer.

1967...

In 16 months of being chased and chopped by a relentless air assault cavalry, the enemy became reluctant to meet the FIRST TEAM head-on.

The 1st Air Cavalry used platoon ambushes, long range patrols and "stirring forces" to prod and herd the enemy into "coming to us."

Ending February 11, THAYER II was the division's longest operation to date, lasting 111 days. Cavalrymen killed 1,757 enemy troops in that time.

An Air Cavalryman moves through the jungle during Operation Pershing which was conducted across 1,600 square miles and proved the FIRST TEAM's ability to hold such a large area with airmobile tactics.



Private First Class Joseph Lake of the 1st Brigade directs the landing of a UH-1D helicopter during a Company A, 1st Battalion 12th Cavalry, Jeb Stuart operation in the National Forest Reserve, 14 kilometers south of Quang Tri.



Operation PERSHING, from February 12 to January 1968, was the first division-size operation conducted by the FIRST TEAM. It pitted the Army's unique airmobile division against the 3rd North Vietnamese Army Division, a match which cost the Communists more than 6,000 killed.

Conducted in eastern Binh Dinh Province, the operation was largely unglamorous. The division began the monotonous task of cordon and search operations that would break the VC political stronghold in the villages. The process of physically rooting out the Viet Cong had begun. More than 2,400 of the enemy were detained during the year.

Though only 18 major engagements were made during PERSHING, the division took a heavy toll of the enemy as gunships caught food producing units moving down from the mountains.

As the pacification program pace increased, the division blocked VC attempts to regain influence in the villages. The PERSHING area of operations extended across 1,600 square miles, and the FIRST TEAM's ability to hold such a large area displayed the capabilities of a well deployed airmobile unit.

By early summer, the 1st Cav faced a highly demoralized enemy. Hoi Chanhs and detainees spoke of the terror that aerial rocket artillery and armed helicopters wrought and of the rapid decay of morale among the VC and NVA cadre.

Vietnamese civilians witnessed a great transition in 1967 as Operation PERSHING crushed the VC. Elections were held for the first time on September 3, schools, hospitals and refugee centers were constructed and Highway I was opened for commerce traffic through Binh Dinh for the first time in years.

1968...

The 1st Air Cavalry made news, made history and more important, made life miserable for the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong in 1968.



From the walls of Hue to the jungles of III Corps, Skytroopers relentlessly pursued the enemy.

With the termination of PERSHING, the division began Operation JEB STUART in eastern I Corps.

The enemy made JEB STUART something special when it launched its Tet Offensive in late January. Some 7,000 NVA blasted their way into the Imperial City of Hue. And to the north, five battalions of NVA and VC assaulted Quang Tri, the capital of Vietnam's northernmost province.

Responding in true Air Cav style, three companies of the 1st Brigade assaulted into LZs

around the village of Thon An Thai, east of Quang Tri.

Ground troops and aerial rocket artillery smashed the Communists as the Cav elements drove toward their objective. By noon February 1, Quang Tri City was cleared of enemy.

The 3rd Brigade was given the assignment of driving the enemy from Hue and its environs. That began February 2 when the 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry, air assaulted to an ARVN outpost 10 kilometers northwest of Hue and began its advance.

It ended February 25 after the 5th and 1st Battalions of the 7th Cavalry had secured the

northwest and southwest walls of the Imperial City and enemy resistance crumbled.

When the operation terminated, the 3rd Brigade had killed 404 enemy, 359 of them NVA. Bravo Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, accounted for another 156 enemy dead.

Before the month ended, the division received a new challenge—drive the enemy from the hills around the Marine base at Khe Sanh and reestablish an overland supply route to the embattled post.

For months the enemy had cut off Highway 9, forcing all supplies to come by air to the Marines, who also suffered constant pounding from NVA

Infantrymen (opposite page) from Bravo Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, assault onto a mountaintop overlooking the A Shau Valley.



The second wave of Company D, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, Skytroopers load on Huey helicopters in a combat assault during Operation Pegasus.



artillery in Laos.

Although the 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, helicopters entered the valley March 26 and eliminated the NVA anti-aircraft positions, Operation PEGASUS—as the action was tagged—officially started April 1 with 15,000 men deployed to the valley.

The 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, fought its way to Khe Sanh against an enemy force entrenched in positions it had been fortifying for months.

The battalion marched into its objective to the cheers of Marines and put up a sign: “Khe Sanh under new management.”

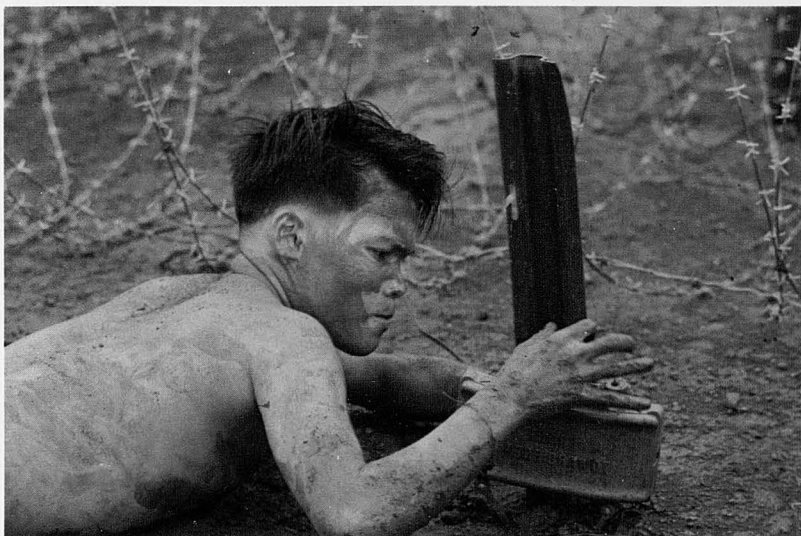
When Operation PEGASUS ended April 15, the division had relieved Khe Sanh, killed 1,259 enemy and captured 540 individual and 216 crew-served weapons.

A new objective was then announced for the Air Cavalrymen—the A Shau Valley, a slit in the mountains 45 kilometers west of Hue used by the



A “Garry Owen” trooper (left) moves toward the Imperial City of Hue during the enemy’s Tet Offensive of 1968. A

month later, the FIRST TEAM had successfully invaded the A SHAU Valley (above), a major NVA sanctuary.



This is the enemy (above). He receives months of training on the methods of breaching basecamp perimeters. A Skytrooper (right) prepares to leap from a helicopter skid. And Huey helicopters (below) glide down to a pick-up zone in Cav Country.



enemy as a major way-station on the Ho Chi Minh trail.

Operation DELAWARE, as the division's invasion of the NVA sanctuary was labeled, began April 19 and ended May 17 with 739 enemy killed. Captured or destroyed were 2,371 individual weapons, 13 anti-aircraft weapons, 42,000 large caliber rounds, 169,000 small arms rounds, 40 tons of food, two bulldozers, 73 wheeled vehicles, three tracked vehicles and a tank.

During the summer, there were rumors of a move. In late October, the Cav did just that. The division—19,000 men, hundreds of vehicles and helicopters and tons of supplies—picked up and moved to a new area of operations in III Corps northwest of Saigon.

The FIRST TEAM assumed areas of responsibility in the provinces of Phuoc Long, Binh Long, Tay Ninh and a corner of Binh Duong Province.

Hue, Quang Tri, Khe Sanh, A Shau, III Corps. The year of 1968, even by Cav standards, was one of unique achievement in the face of unusual challenge.

1969...

The new year opened with continued military successes for the 1st Air Cavalry.

From January 5 to 12, 267 enemy were killed, and one of the largest munitions caches of the campaign, some 18 tons of arms and ammunition, was found near Tay Ninh January 21.

In northern III Corps, Operation TOAN THANG II ended February 19. 1st Air Cavalrymen killed 3,300 enemy soldiers, captured nearly a thousand individual and 300 crew-served weapons along with 900,000 rounds of ammo and 400 tons of rice in the three-month operation.

The spring and summer of 1969 were unique in the enemy's frequent attempts to overrun 1st Cav firebases. The scenario for these attacks seldom varied. Shortly after midnight, the enemy would launch a barrage of rockets and mortars at the base, then sappers and infantry would try to breach



the perimeter.

One of the hardest hit Cav bases was LZ Grant, located northwest of Tay Ninh astride a major enemy infiltration route. The first attempt came February 23 at 3:30 a.m. The enemy lost 16. They tried again with 1,000 men March 8 and lost 157 in a six-hour battle.

An enemy battalion came back for more March 11. Sixty-two NVA died. Two hundred stormed the berm May 12 and made it over the western side, only to be hurled back again with the loss of 45 men.

Early on the morning of May 6, the enemy hit LZ Carolyn. The 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry, fought the regimental-sized force for four hours, killing 198 and taking 30 prisoners.

Eighty-three enemy died attempting to overrun LZ Jamie, Phyllis and Quan Loi, 3rd Brigade headquarters, on May 12.

In northern III Corps, the 2nd Brigade discovered a tremendously impressive cache May 26. Uncovered were 45 tons of rice, 11 tons of salt, 23 cases of B-40 rockets, 10 cases of .50 caliber ammunition and numerous other supplies.

A brief summer calm was shattered August 12 when the enemy hit LZ Becky, Jon, Kelly, Caldwell and Quan Loi. In a 24-hour period, the NVA lost 452 soldiers. Another 242 would be added as the pursuit of the Communists continued over the next two days.

The division continued to stop enemy infiltration in the last three months of the year. The 3rd Brigade was extremely effective in this mission, blocking the Serpes Jungle Highway, a network of trails hidden by triple canopy jungle.

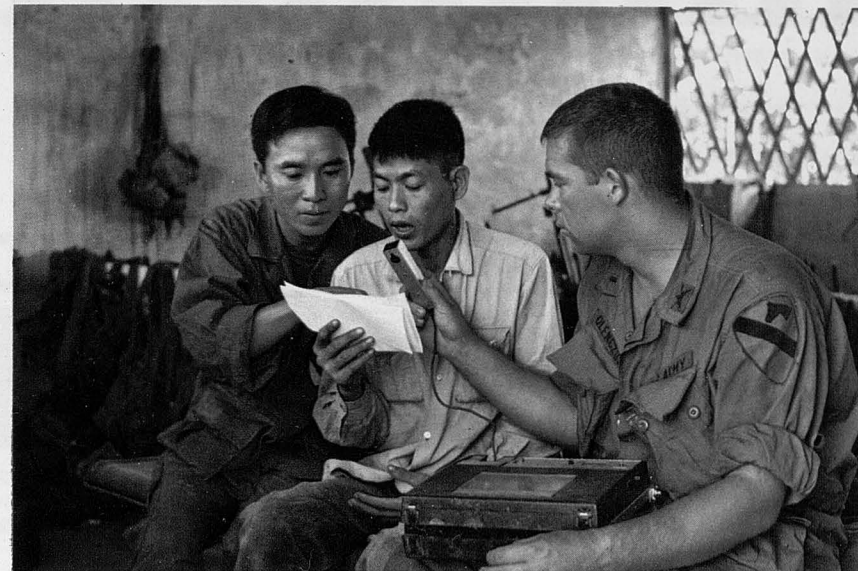
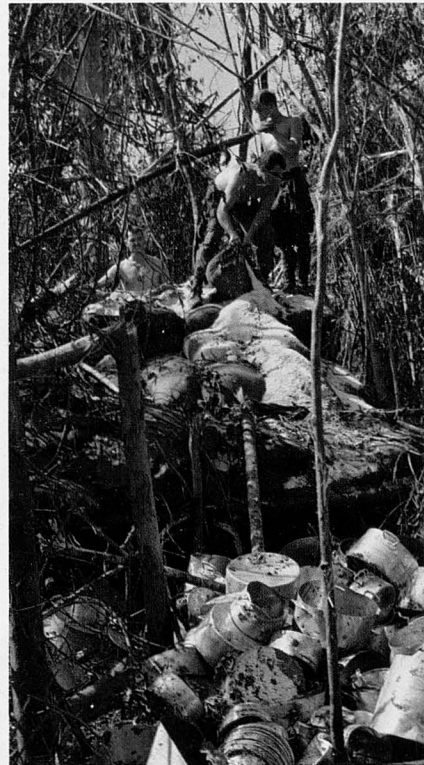
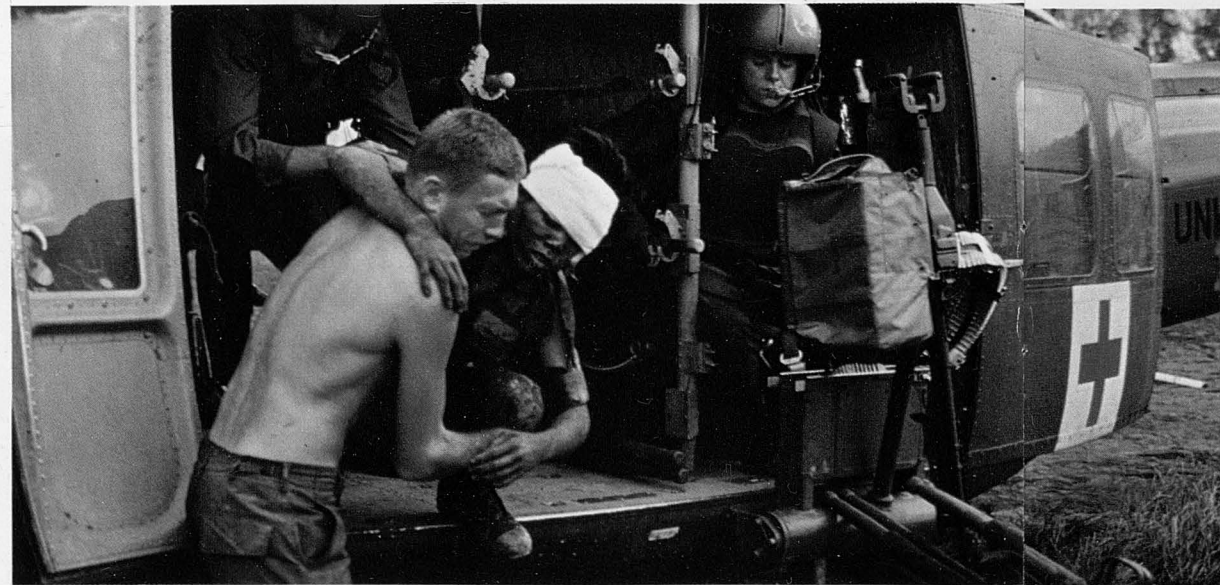
The enemy launched an all-out attack on FSB Buttons and other 2nd Brigade firebases November 4, losing 269 men.

Despite the military challenge, the division still carried on a vigorous program of civic actions. Tons of food were distributed to refugees and support was provided in building schools, orphanages and dispensaries.

From September through November, some 546



While the Huey (above) descends, the gunship's rockets tear into enemy positions. Skytroopers (right) sort through a rice cache, and a Kit Carson scout (below left) moves around brush. A medic (below right) helps an injured Air Cavalryman from a Medevac bird.



A Hoi Chanh (above) records a PSYOPs message to be broadcast to the enemy. A 1st Cav doctor gives a Vietnamese woman a routine check-up (right). The farmer (below) will have good use for the Cav-donated tractor.



Vietnamese rallied to Allied protection in Phuoc Long Province.

In the spirit of Dong Tien, "forward together," the division was also working with the Vietnamese in the fighting itself.

Cav helicopters and artillery provided support for Vietnamese units when they made contact. ARVN Airborne brigades and artillery battalions moved into the AOs of division brigades, doubling the pressure on the enemy, who was then faced with the best of both the American and ARVN forces.

ARVN units made an important contribution to the division's ability to shut off enemy supply and infiltration routes.

For the Communists, 1969 had been an unfortunate year. What he had taken for granted—domination of northern III Corps—was now under control of the 1st Air Cavalry Division.

1970...

Tet 1970 was quiet in Cav Country. The 1st Air Cavalry's successful surveillance of infiltration routes prevented the enemy from staging enough men or supplies to launch an offensive.

Using airmobility to best advantage, the Cav established mini-fire support bases in areas where the enemy thought he was secure.

Rome plowing in War Zone C stripped the NVA of needed cover, helped cut down infiltration and led to the discovery of a rice cache that yielded nearly 150 tons in early March.

Skytroopers from the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry, killed 87 NVA with the help of supporting gunships, artillery and airstrikes in War Zone C near FSB Ike January 5-6.

The enemy lost 44 soldiers in a daylight ground attack at FSB Tina against Company D, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, February 4.



*What elephants
were to Hannibal,
what airpower
was to Mitchell,*

*what tanks
were to Patton,
so the airmobile concept
is to the 1st Air Cav.*

*The formula for
victory has changed
little across the
pages of history.*

*Success belongs to
the most effective
combination of firepower,
mobility and shock action.*

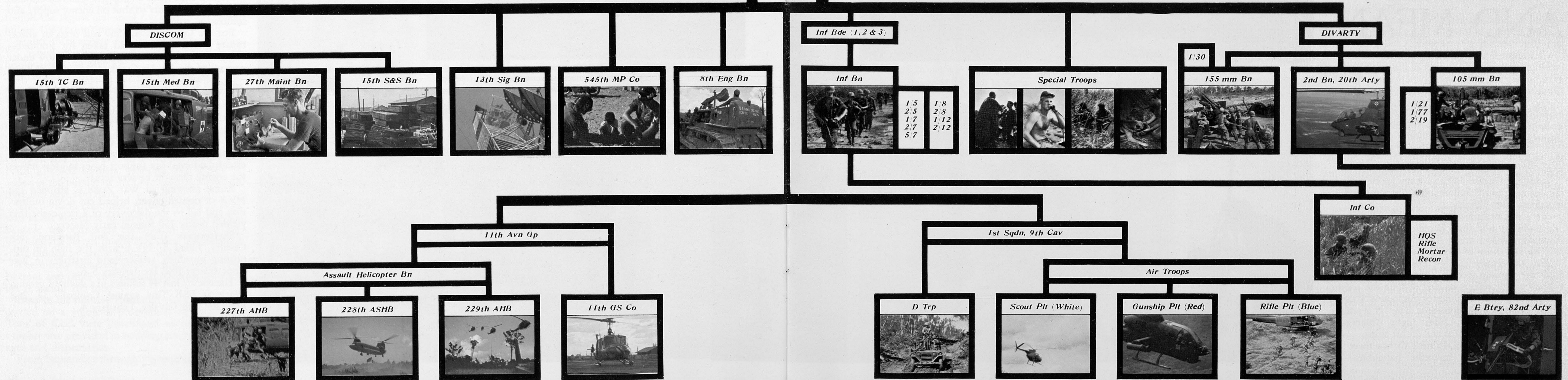
*The FIRST TEAM has not
changed the pattern.
Rather it has enlarged it,
refined it, sophisticated it.*

*Getting there "first
with the most"—that's
the basis of the
1st Air Cavalry Division.*



THE WHOLE TEAM

THE BEST TEAM



THE AIR CAV: LEAN AND MEAN

The 1st Air Cavalry Division—lean, light and possessing great striking power—is organized for total mobility.

Similar to a standard ground division with the addition of an aviation group, the Cav is organized with nine infantry battalions.

Traditionally associated with the 1st Brigade are the 1st and 2nd Battalions, 8th Cavalry; and 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry.

In the 2nd Brigade are the 1st and 2nd Battalions, 5th Cavalry; and 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry. Associated with the 3rd Brigade are the 1st, 2nd and 5th Battalions of the 7th Cavalry.

The 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, consists of three air cavalry troops, containing scout helicopters and gunships to find and fix the enemy. Each troop has an infantry platoon ("Blues"), acting as a quick reaction force. The 1/9 is authorized 88 aircraft—30 LOHs (light observation helicopters), 35 gunships and 23 lift ships.

Division Artillery (DIVARTY) has three 105 mm direct support howitzer battalions—2nd



The 1st Cav is a complex organization, consisting of many individual units. The 8th Engineer Battalion (above) builds anything from firebases to roads; A member of the 15th Transportation Corps Battalion (below left) helps keep the Blue Max Cobras (below right) flying.



A light observation helicopter (left) scouts the terrain in search of the enemy. The 13th Signal Battalion (above) keeps the communication lines open in Cav Country. And a mighty Chinook (right) carries an artillery piece into a landing zone.



Battalion, 19th Artillery; 1st Battalion, 21st Artillery; and 1st Battalion, 77th Artillery; and, as a theater augmentation, a 155 mm medium artillery battalion, the 1st of the 30th.

A unique feature in DIVARTY is the 2nd Battalion, 20th Artillery (Aerial Rocket Artillery). It is authorized 36 Cobras, each armed with four 19 tube 2.75 inch rocket launchers and 7.62 mini-guns. In normal operation, these would substitute for the 155 mm battalion.

Also found in DIVARTY is E Battery, 82nd Artillery, providing aircraft for aerial reconnaissance, aerial adjustment of artillery fire and command liaison.

The bulk of the Cav's aircraft belongs to the 11th Aviation Group, consisting of the 227th and 229th Assault Helicopter Battalions and the 228th Assault Support Helicopter Battalion.

The 227th and 229th each are authorized 60 lift ships (Hueys) and 12 gunships (Cobras). The 228th is the division's heavy lift battalion with all 48 of the Cav's CH-47 Chinooks.

Providing command and liaison helicopters for division headquarters and for units without aircraft is the 11th General Support Aviation Company.

Organic to the Division Support Command are Headquarters Company and the Skytrooper Band, 15th Medical Battalion, 15th Supply and Service Battalion, 15th Transportation Corps (Aircraft Maintenance) Battalion and 27th Maintenance Battalion.

The Cav's 8th Engineer Battalion is unique in that all its equipment is capable of heliborne transportation.

The 13th Signal Battalion provides internal and long range communication capability for the division, and its organic equipment is all miniaturized and airmobile.

...ABOVE AND BEYOND

2LT Walter J. Marm Jr.
1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry
Nov. 14, 1965

*SGT Jimmy G. Steward
2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry
May 18, 1966

SP4 David C. Dolby
1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry
May 21, 1966

*PFC Billy L. Lauffer
2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry
Sept. 21, 1966

*PFC Lewis Albanese
5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry
Dec. 1, 1966

SSG Delbert O. Jennings
1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry
Dec. 27, 1966

*PFC James M. Monroe
1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry
Feb. 16, 1967

SP4 Charles Hagemeister
1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry
Mar. 20, 1967

*SP4 George A. Ingalls
2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry
Apr. 16, 1967

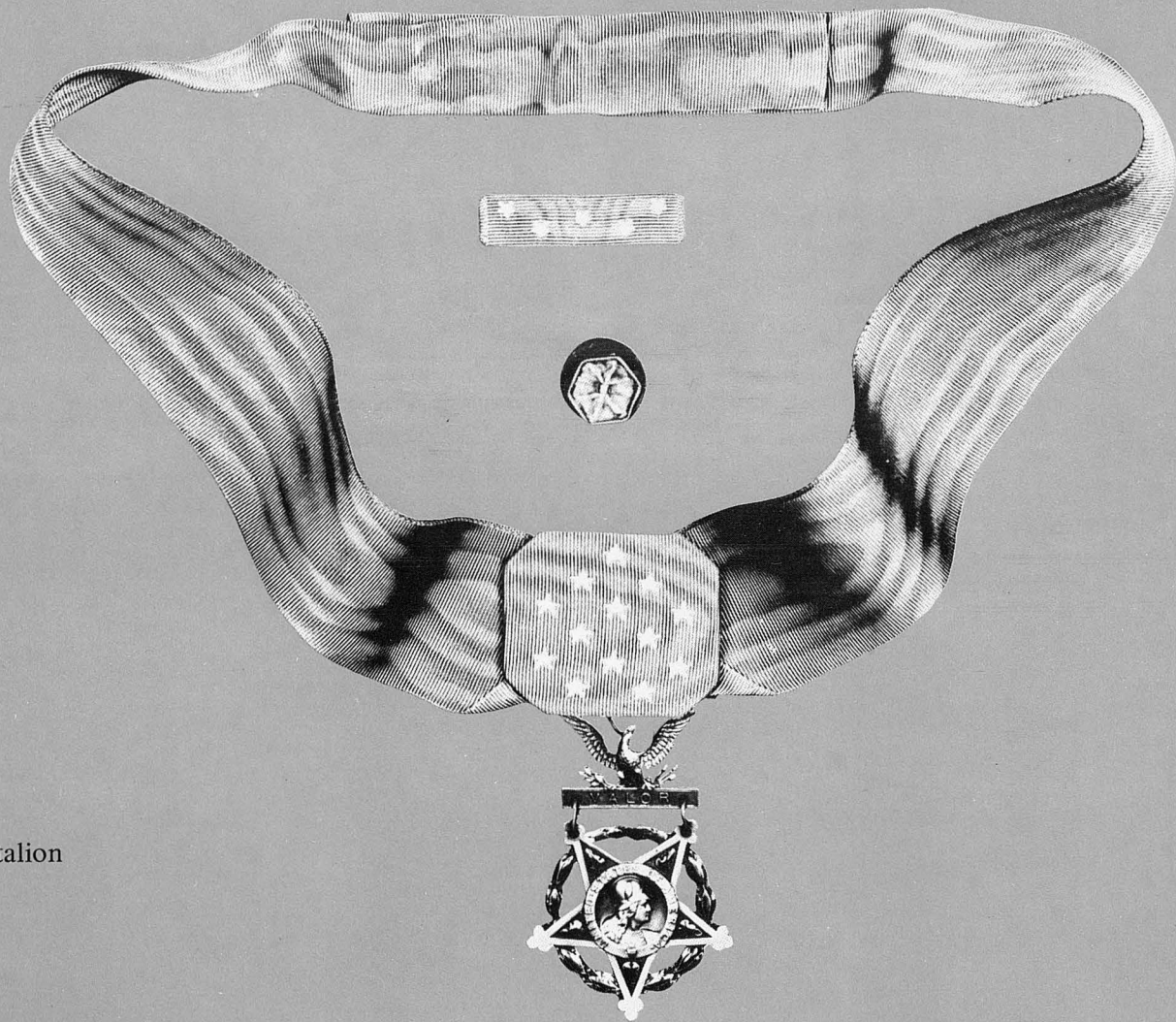
*SP4 Carmel B. Harvey Jr.
1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry
June 21, 1967

*SP5 Edgar L. McWethy Jr.
1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry
June 21, 1967

CW2 Frederick E. Ferguson
Aviation Battalion
227th Assault Helicopter Battalion
Jan. 31, 1968

1LT James M. Sprayberry
5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry
Apr. 25, 1968

*Awarded posthumously



PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION

*The Pleiku Campaign
introduced to the
enemy a new
concept in
warfare—airmobility*

The Pleiku Campaign, for which the 1st Air Cavalry received the only Presidential Unit Citation awarded to a division in Vietnam, was the first real combat test for the fledgling airmobile concept.

It marked the first major confrontation between a U.S. Army division and a North Vietnamese division.

The campaign—35 days of airmobile operations sweeping across the plateau country west and south of Pleiku—started Oct. 19, 1965, when the Special Forces Camp at Plei Me, 35 miles south of Pleiku, was besieged by the NVA 33rd Regiment.

In addition, intelligence quickly picked up the presence of a second NVA regiment, the 32nd, deployed in ambush along the road from Pleiku to Plei Me Camp.

A battalion task force, including airmobile artillery, was flown from the Cav's base at An Khe to Pleiku to reinforce an ARVN armored column moving down the road to Plei Me.

The battle at Plei Me was not a haphazard engagement but the outgrowth of a master plan by the enemy to secure and dominate a major portion of South Vietnam.

On October 23, when the ARVN relief column smashed through the ambush and relieved Plei Me, the two NVA regiments broke contact and began moving toward sanctuaries along the Cambodian border.

At this point, a significant and historic decision was made. Realizing only bold and decisive action would keep the enemy from retaining the initiative, General William C.

Westmoreland gave the Cav its head. He ordered the division to pursue, seek out and destroy the enemy.

The pursuit of the 33rd Regiment by the battalions of the 1st Brigade and the 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, introduced the enemy to a new concept in warfare.

North Vietnamese regulars were routed from their hiding places. Nothing in their background or training had prepared them to cope with the full effects of an unleashed airmobile pursuit.

On November 14, the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry, air assaulted into a landing zone code-named X-Ray where it met the 66th Regiment head-on. The FIRST TEAM inflicted hideous casualties on the enemy. And more was yet to come.

The 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, began moving November 17 from LZ X-Ray to a map location known as Albany and collided with a battalion from the 66th Regiment. A savage fight ensued.

The NVA had had enough. In 35 days, the 1st Air Cavalry killed 3,561 enemy soldiers and detained 157 others. The Cav captured 900 individual weapons, 126 crew served weapons and enough munitions to completely arm an NVA battalion.

Two things were accomplished in the Pleiku Campaign. North Vietnamese regulars sustained their first major defeat ever, forever disrupting a well-conceived plan of conquest. And the 1st Air Cavalry engineered the triumph of a concept. Airmobility.



THE CUTTING EDGE: HISTORY AND HERALDRY

5th Cavalry Regiment

With the increase of frontier forces, the 5th Cavalry Regiment was authorized in 1855. The outbreak of the Civil War found the regiment torn by sectional loyalty. One of the unit's first commanding officers, Lieutenant Colonel Robert E. Lee, resigned to lead the South.

Action in the west resumed following the war with the regiment defeating the Apaches in 94 engagements. The 5th Cavalry participated in the Spanish American War in 1898.

The regiment earned the Presidential Unit Citation, streamer embroidered Los Negros, in World War II; and Republic of Korea PUC, streamers embroidered Waegwan-Taegu and Korea.



1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry

The "Black Knights" of the 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry, gained valuable experience in October 1965, conducting counterinsurgency operations in the Vinh Thanh "Happy Valley," the jungled slash between mountains east of An Khe.

For actions against two companies of North Vietnamese in the village of Tan An, Binh Dinh Province, Mar. 20, 1967, the battalion's Company A received the Presidential Unit Citation. And medic Specialist Four Charles C. Hagemeister won the Medal of Honor.

In the fastest and largest move ever in the Vietnam conflict, the 1st of the 5th was ordered from northern I Corps to III Corps northwest of Saigon near the Cambodian border in late 1968. The battalion has conducted successful operations in this region for more than a year.

2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry

The 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry, landed in Vietnam in September and conducted Operation COBRA to clear and secure the Song Con "Happy Valley" region. November found the battalion taking part in the Plei Me Campaign in the Ia Drang Valley.

For heroism in the Bong Son Plain Mar. 11, 1967, in which 36 NVA were killed and 145 captured, the 2nd of the 5th received the Valorous Unit Award.

In April 1968, the "Black Knights" joined other elements in the division in relieving the Marines at Khe Sanh, and in November the battalion moved to its new III Corps home.

The process of Vietnamization began in 1969 and in October the battalion sponsored the 11th Battalion of the ARVN Airborne Division, conducting a series of missions to acquaint the Vietnamese unit with airborne concepts.

7th Cavalry Regiment

The 7th Cavalry Regiment was formed in 1866 at Fort Riley, Kan., consisting of a hard-bitten crew of trappers, war veterans and frontiersmen, many of them Irish immigrants. The influence of the Irish on the regiment is noted in its famous drinking song "Garry Owen" which the unit adopted as its own.

In the 1870s, the 7th Cavalry rode against the Sioux, Apaches and the Cheyennes. On the Little Big Horn River June 25, 1876, Major General George Armstrong Custer and his cavalymen made their famous "last stand" against 5,000 Sioux Indians.

Among the unit's decorations are the Presidential Unit Citation, streamer embroidered Yonhchon, Korea (1st Battalion cited); and the Philippine PUC, streamer embroidered Oct. 17, 1944, to July 4, 1945.

1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry

The Ia Drang Valley in mid-November 1965 provided the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry, with its first major test. In three days of fighting, the battalion and supporting units (including elements of the 2nd and 5th of the 7th) were credited with 2,040 NVA regulars killed or wounded.

For this action, the unit received the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm. And for individual heroism, 2nd Lieutenant Walter J. Marm won the Medal of Honor—the division's first in Vietnam.

The year 1969 found the "Garry Owen" Skytroopers operating near Quan Loi in III Corps Tactical Zone. Frustrated in their



attempts to travel through the 1st Cav area of operations, the NVA tried to break the Skytroopers' grip on the land by attacking their command posts. Each time the attacks failed.

2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry

The 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, arrived in Vietnam Sept. 16, 1965, and passed its first major combat test in the Ia Drang Valley in November. General William C. Westmoreland proclaimed the action "an unprecedented victory."

The "Garry Owen" battalion was a major force in relieving the Marine bastion at Khe Sanh. The 2nd of the 7th kicked off Operation PEGASUS April 1, air assaulting into the region and gaining control of Highway 9. For four days, the cavalymen ran into heavy enemy resistance. And then to the cheers of Marines, Delta Company entered the camp to relieve the besieged combat base.

Engaged in operations to seal off NVA supply routes from Cambodia, the battalion worked off LZ Jamie, 23 miles northeast of Tay Ninh, in 1969.

Frustrated by the FIRST TEAM's success at closing their infiltration routes, NVA regulars launched several assaults against Jamie, but each time were beaten back by the 2nd of the 7th.

5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry

The 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, joined the 1st Air Cavalry Aug. 21, 1966, and began a month-long mission, Operation ROAD RUNNER, securing Highway 19.

In October, the "Garry Owen" cavalymen made their jungle fighting debut in Operation IRVING in Binh Dinh Province. The mission was a resounding success with 681 enemy killed and 710 detained.

The battalion took part in the battle of Hue in 1968. In mid-February, it routed the enemy stronghold in the village of Then

Bon Tri near the ancient Imperial Capital. The Skytroopers were airlifted February 23 to the north Hue docks and began sweeping the enemy from that part of the city.

In the A Shau Valley, the 5th of the 7th taught the enemy a hard lesson—he had no area within the Republic of Vietnam that he could consider a secure base.

The battalion operated in northern III Corps in 1969, blocking enemy infiltration routes.

8th Cavalry Regiment

The 8th Cavalry Regiment was organized in 1866, its ranks filled with hard-fisted miners from the gold fields, restless settlers and adventure seeking frontiersmen. These men fought alongside the 7th Cavalry against the Sioux and Chief Sitting Bull.

The unit flies campaign streamers for the Indian Wars, World War II (New Guinea, Bismarck Archipelago, Leyte and Luzon) and the Korean War. Prior to Vietnam, the unit was decorated with Presidential Unit Citations, streamers embroidered Luzon and Taegu, for World War II. It also earned the Republic of Korea PUC, streamers embroidered Waegwan-Taegu and Korea.

1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry

In November 1965, less than two months after arriving in Vietnam, the 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry, initiated offensive operations around Plei Me and Duc Co and moved into the near-legendary Ia Drang Valley south of Pleiku.

For actions June 21–22, 1966, during



Operation NATHAN HALE in the vicinity of Tuy Hoa, the battalion received the Presidential Unit Citation. In a four-hour battle, the enemy left 134 dead.

The “Jumping Mustangs” compiled a remarkable record in the nine days they remained near beleaguered Khe Sanh in April 1968. They engaged in several sharp firefights and found large enemy supply caches.

In III Corps in December 1968, the battalion became the first cavalymen to go “watermobile,” patrolling rivers.

The battalion reopened Fire Support Base Ellen, six miles west of Song Be, in October and one month later repelled a sapper attack, killing 35.

In early 1970, the 1st of the 8th found itself in sporadic contact with the enemy, as it moved east toward the II Corps boundary.

2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry

Air assaulting to the outskirts of the Plei Me CIDG Camp Oct. 27, 1965, the 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry, plunged into the Pleiku Campaign to “pursue, seek out and destroy the enemy.” Significant engagements were made by the battalion November 4 and 6.

On May 16, 1966, the battalion’s Bravo Company clashed with a Viet Cong battalion east of the Vinh Thanh CIDG Camp and later received the division’s first Valorous Unit Citation for heroism in the battle.

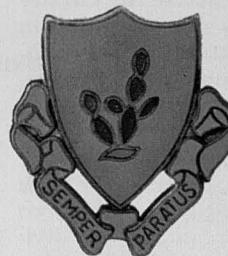
In a 10-day period in late September and early October 1968, the battalion uncovered, bagged and transported more than 57 tons of rice to Trieu Phong District headquarters, where it was distributed to needy civilians.

The enemy lost 198 soldiers in an attack on LZ Carolyn in May 1969. The battalion left War Zone C September 23 to secure the division basecamp at Phuoc Vinh. In mid-December, it moved to Fire Support Base Mary in the 2nd Brigade’s area of operations, and then, in early 1970, was back in War Zone C.

12th Cavalry Regiment

The 12th Cavalry Regiment was constituted Feb. 2, 1901, in the Regular Army and organized Feb. 8, 1901, at Fort Sam Houston, Tex.

In World War II, the regiment participated in New Guinea, Bismarck Archipelago, Leyte and Luzon. Its decorations include the Presidential Unit Citation (Headquarters and Headquarters Troop cited), streamer embroidered Ormoc Valley, Leyte; the PUC (1st Squadron reinforced cited), streamer embroidered Central Range, Leyte; and the Philippine PUC for Oct. 17, 1944, to July 4, 1945.



1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry

On Oct. 12, 1965, Companies A and B of the 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry, tangled with a VC battalion in the Suoi La Tinh River valley. The enemy left 95 dead on the battlefield.

The “Chargers” received the Presidential Unit Citation for actions near Hoa Hoi village Oct. 2–3, 1966, when they killed 141 enemy soldiers, captured 35 NVA and detained 15 VC suspects.

In the village of An Qui, the battalion’s Charlie Company engaged a battalion-sized force May 31–June 1, 1967, leaving 96 Communists dead.

Eight members of the company were awarded Silver Stars for their actions during the battle, and Company C later received the Valorous Unit Citation.

The battalion moved south in February 1969 to thwart enemy movement towards the population centers of III Corps.

2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry

The 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry, played an important part in the 1st Air Cavalry’s successful Pleiku Campaign in October and November 1965.

In late January–early February 1966, the battalion killed 191 and detained 10 enemy soldiers in Operation MASHER. Operation WHITE WING followed with the 2nd of the 12th locating enemy ammunition and equipment, hundreds of bunkers, 68 tons of rice and five tons of salt in the hills north of Bong Son.

Rapid moves and a variety of operations and assignments characterized the unit’s activities in 1967. In January 1968, the battalion was in the vanguard of units moving to dislodge the NVA from Hue.

Heavy contacts didn’t prevent the battalion from paying attention to the other side of the war in 1969. The civil affairs section paid weekly visits to the companies, rounding up unused sundries, and distributing the articles to children at Co Nhi Vien orphanage.

1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry

“The Cav of the Cav.” That’s one of the nicknames given to a unique unit, the 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry.

The unit has three air troops, and each one has an aero scout platoon (“White” platoon), an aero weapons platoon (“Red”) and an aero rifle platoon (“Blue”).

Using light observation helicopters, the aero scout platoon has the mission of finding the enemy. The aero weapons platoon



consists of Cobras armed with rockets and grenade launchers. And the aero rifle platoon provides ground reconnaissance.

More extensive ground reconnaissance is provided by the ground troop which is equipped with quarter-ton and three-quarter ton vehicles.

The squadron won the Presidential Unit Citation for action in October 1966. Bravo Troop won a Valorous Unit Citation for its action August 9-16 near Plei Me in 1966.

The squadron was constituted in 1866 and saw action in the Spanish-American War, World War II and the Korean War.

Company H, 75th Infantry

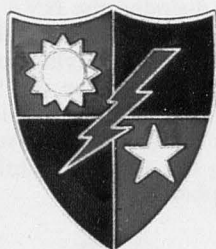
On Feb. 2, 1967, the 1st Air Cavalry organized its first division-operated Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRPs).

Attached to 191st Military Intelligence Company, the LRRPs were composed of two patrols, each with six men, all hand picked volunteers who had successfully passed a grueling 12-day training course.

On Dec. 20, 1967, the LRRPs were reorganized as Company E, 52nd Infantry, and then redesignated Company H (Ranger), 75th Infantry (Airborne) Feb. 1, 1969.

Upon joining the 75th Infantry, each Ranger goes through a 12-day training period where he qualifies to perform duties of a radio-telephone operator, medic and scout. Other courses offered in the school are combat intelligence, map reading, use of ropes and escape and evasion.

The Rangers are now attached to the 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, and operate with 12 patrol teams. They have continuously reported activity resulting in intelligence information which has proved invaluable in thwarting enemy movements.



11th Aviation Group

The 1st Air Cavalry is Army aviation in action. And helicopters are the lifeblood of the Army's first airmobile division.

There are three aviation battalions organic to the division, and together they comprise the 11th Aviation Group.

Specifically, the 11th Aviation Group consists of the 227th and 229th Assault Helicopter Battalions, the 228th Assault Support Helicopter Battalion, the 11th General Support Aviation Company and a headquarters company.

As command and control headquarters, the 11th Aviation Group is chiefly responsible for assigning support aircraft to an operation, be it a combat assault mission, logistical resupply or simply supplying a command and control helicopter.

Also under control of the 11th Aviation Group are the Pathfinders—a unique combination of soldier and air traffic controller, known as "Blackhats."



11th General Support Company

The 11th General Support Aviation Company provides aviation support for division headquarters, 11th Aviation Group Headquarters, support command and other units without organic aircraft.

That means 11th GS cranks up at least seven Hueys daily to ferry around the division commander, the two assistant division commanders, the aviation group commander, the DISCOM commander and the division's chief of staff.

And the 11th GS light observation helicopter pilots handle such diverse tasks

as carrying liaison officers from division to corps headquarters and back and transporting visitors for the protocol and information offices.

For its outstanding performance of duty from September 1965 to November 1966, the 11th GS received the Meritorious Unit Citation.

227th AHB

The 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion helped prove that airmobility is a vital factor in the success of the Army's most successful division in Vietnam, the 1st Air Cavalry.

The battalion is divided into four companies with Company D's gunships flying support for the lift ships of the other three companies.

For its outstanding air support of the division, the 227th AHB was awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation for the period of September 1965 to November 1966.

Operation Delaware brought the Cav into the A Shau Valley in 1968. Much of the success of the operation was due to the 227th.

Originally the 31st Transportation Company, the unit was redesignated the 227th AHB, an element of the 11th Air Assault Division, in 1963 before becoming part of the FIRST TEAM in 1965.



228th ASHB

The cargo and troop transport helicopters of the 228th Assault Support Helicopter Battalion are the workhorses of the 1st Air Cavalry.

General William C. Westmoreland knew the value of the mighty CH-47 Chinooks. He said: "The Chinook has added a new dimension to the battlefield . . . to be able to move an entire artillery battalion by air has been a tremendous stride in defeating the enemy."

In recognition of its outstanding work, the 228th received a Meritorious Unit Commendation for the period of Sept. 1, 1965, to Oct. 31, 1966.

Firmly established as the movers of the division, the 228th repeatedly set safety records despite long hours of flying time under all weather conditions.

The 228th, which has earned its title "the backbone of airmobility," was constituted in 1963 as part of the 11th Air Assault Division. In 1965, the battalion was assigned to the FIRST TEAM.



229th ASHB

"Stacking the deck" in a card game usually results in a winning hand. The same is true with the 1st Air Cav's "Stacked Deck" battalion—the 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion.

The battalion was organized in 1964 as



part of the 11th Air Assault Division and reassigned to the 1st Air Cavalry in July 1965.

Flying its first mission in support of the 101st Airborne Division, the 227th made three lifts carrying personnel and ammunition in a combat area near Qui Nhon September 18-19.

The battalion was soon operating to full capacity and realizing its mission of providing tactical mobility for combat troops and transporting supplies and equipment to units during airmobile combat operations.

For the period September 1965 to November 1966, the battalion earned the Meritorious Unit Commendation.

Because of airmobility, the enemy is not safe anywhere in Cav Country. Providing that airmobility, that extra factor in defeating the enemy, is the 229th AHB.

Division Artillery

The "Redlegs" of Division Artillery (DIVARTY) sailed to Vietnam aboard the USS Upshur, arriving at Qui Nhon Sept. 5, 1965.

DIVARTY's role in division operations is to coordinate tube artillery, aerial rocket artillery, air strikes and artillery forward observers to provide "accurate, fast and massive firepower."

In the Pleiku Campaign, for which the division won the Presidential Unit Citation, DIVARTY's fire support helped crush the enemy.

A significant first came for artillery during the MASHER-WHITE WING Campaign (Jan. 4-Mar. 6, 1966) when a special sling was devised to allow the displacement of the 155 mm howitzer by CH-54A "Flying Crane" helicopters. This permitted the 155s to be placed in firing positions otherwise



inaccessible.

In addition to providing fire support, DIVARTY has initiated many successful civic action programs since 1965.

Now located at Phuoc Vinh, DIVARTY controls three 105 mm battalions, one 155 mm battalion, 175 mm and eight-inch batteries, an aerial rocket artillery battalion and observation battery.

It's a combination of maximum flexibility and firepower, always ready for quick and massive support of division units in contacts anywhere in the area of operations.

2nd Battalion, 19th Artillery

The 19th Artillery was constituted on June 3, 1916, in the Regular Army as the 19th Field Artillery. It participated in the campaigns of St. Mihiel and Lorraine (1918) in World War I, and Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace and Central Europe in World War II.

The unit was redesignated 2nd Battalion, 19th Artillery, in 1963 and became part of the 1st Air Cavalry in 1965.

For action Oct. 2 and 3, 1966, a 13-man detachment of the battalion won the Presidential Unit Citation (First Oak Leaf Cluster). The artillerymen were observers with 1st Cav infantry companies, battling a well-entrenched enemy in Hoa Hoi village.

In December 1966, Bravo Battery won more fame for the battalion when LZ Bird in the Kim Son Valley was attacked. The enemy lost 266 solidiers in the unsuccessful assault.

The battalion's Alpha Battery used direct fire to repel an enemy assault on LZ Carolyn May 6, 1969. Some 198 NVA died in the attack.



Today, the batteries continue to perform their basic mission of supporting the infantry as it searches the jungle for the enemy, his bunkers and his supplies.

1st Battalion, 21st Artillery

The 1st Battalion, 21st Artillery, has been firing in support of 1st Air Cavalry ground troops since arriving in Qui Nhon in 1965.

In the division's first major battle of the war, the Pleiku Campaign, the battalion pumped out more than 4,400 high explosive rounds from its firebase to protect embattled Skytroopers at LZ X-Ray on the night of Nov. 14, 1965.

During the month-long operation PAUL REVERE II the following August, the unit played a vital role in the killing of 687 NVA. Answering an urgent call for artillery support on August 8, Charlie Battery delivered 1,408 high explosive rounds in two hours to kill 98 NVA.

The unit's Bravo battery was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for its part in repulsing several ground attacks on LZ Leslie during January 1968.

The 1st of the 21st was organized June 1, 1917, and saw action in World War I and II and in Korea.



1st Battalion, 77th Artillery

The 1st Battalion, 77th Artillery, originally organized in 1917, participated in five European campaigns of World War I.

In World War II, the battalion had campaign credit for Sicily, Naples-Foggia, Anzio, Rome-Arno, Southern France, North Ardennes, Ardennes-Alsace, Rhineland, Central Europe and the Po Valley.

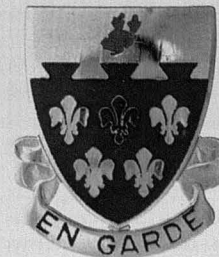
The "On Guard" battalion's initial assignment in Vietnam was direct support of the Cav's 2nd Brigade in defense of the An Khe basecamp.

In March 1968, the battalion's 3rd Liaison section and its forward observer section, working with the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry, won the Valorous Unit Citation.

The infantry battalion made heavy contact March 11 on the Bong Son Plain. In a vicious firefight lasting the night, skillful employment of artillery enabled the wounded to be evacuated and helped reduce two NVA battalions to ineffectiveness.

On Mar. 8, 1969, Charlie Battery helped repel an attack on LZ Grant in which 157 NVA died.

As 1969 ended, the battalion headquarters was at Song Be, and all "On Guard" batteries were supporting the 2nd Brigade in blocking enemy movement in Phuoc Long Province.



1st Battalion, 30th Artillery

Hue, Khe Sanh, A Shau—the 1st Battalion, 30th Artillery, has been in the thick of fighting with the 1st Cav since arriving in Vietnam in 1965.

The artillerymen fired 51,000 rounds to drive the enemy from its strongholds in and around Hue in 1968.

Within weeks, however, the battalion was on the move again in an impressive display of airmobility. Supporting ground troops, the battalion moved 10 times in three weeks as the division advanced to relieve the Marine garrison at Khe Sanh.

The 1st Cav's next objective was the NVA's longtime sanctuary in the A Shau Valley and once again the 1st of the 30th was there. Despite frequent shellings by enemy 130 mm artillery from the Laotian border, the unit continued to provide covering fire until the maneuver battalions completed their operations in May.

The unit was organized Aug. 10, 1918, at Camp Funston, Kan., as Battery A, 30th Field Artillery. The battalion was attached to the 1st Cav Feb. 10, 1968, and assigned to the division June 1, 1968.

2nd Battalion (ARA), 20th Artillery

The world's only aerial rocket artillery battalion—2nd Battalion, 20th Artillery (ARA)—arrived in Vietnam Sept. 15, 1965, and two days later flew its first combat mission, firing 2.75 inch rockets in support of the 101st Airborne



Division. Sixty-four enemy were killed. That was just a beginning.

At that time, the rockets of this unique unit were mounted on UH-1B Huey helicopters. The battalion had the ability to provide immediate artillery fire support to airmobile units, often operating beyond the range of conventional artillery.

For actions Dec. 6–10, 1967, in Operation PERSHING, the battalion won the Valorous Unit Citation.

During 1968, the battalion made the transition between Huey ARA ships and the AH-1G Cobra. Unlike the Huey, the Cobra was specifically designed for fire support and carried firepower equivalent to that of three conventional artillery batteries.

By the end of 1968, 2nd of the 20th helicopters were known throughout the 1st Cav as "Blue Max." In 1969, the Cobra completely replaced the Huey as the main force of the battalion.

E Battery, 82nd Artillery

An artillery battery without artillery? Until the activation of the second airmobile division, Echo Battery, 82nd Artillery, was the only one of its kind in the world.

Its primary mission is to provide aerial reconnaissance, adjustment of artillery fire and command liaison for the division. The battery has become the 1st Cav's "Air Wing"—using fixed wing aircraft as well as helicopters to accomplish the mission.

The unit was redesignated July 1, 1960, as Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 5th Howitzer Battalion, 82nd Artillery, and traces its lineage to World War II and Korea.

Arriving in Vietnam with the 1st Cav in 1965, the battery has taken part in every major campaign. During the Pleiku Campaign for which the division won the Pre-



sidential Unit Citation, Echo, 82nd, flew 1,234 hours and 2,498 sorties.

In III Corps, the unit has concentrated its efforts in the thick jungle near the Cambodian border, providing invaluable aid in spotting targets and adjusting artillery fire.

Headquarters—Headquarters Company

A division at war is a remarkable animal—flexible and powerful. The response to changes of conditions in Vietnam requires extraordinary discipline and initiative from Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC), the 1st Air Cavalry nerve center.

HHC is, by its definition, a hodgepodge of differing elements. It's home for legions of clerks, lexicographers, supply personnel, intelligence and personnel specialists.

It contains the division command structure, including the commanding general and his staff, aides and direct subordinates.

HHC has a bearing on nearly everything affecting the Cavalryman from distribution of R and R allotments to selection of battlefield tactics.

The success of the airmobility concept in Vietnam can be largely credited to the creation of a command system able to respond to its special demands. And HHC is a vital and integral part of that command system.

545th Military Police

The 545th Military Police (MP) Company joined the 1st Air Cavalry in Vietnam in 1965 and immediately began to expedite the flow of traffic in the An Khe area, checking for Viet Cong suspects.



Supporting Operation MASHER-WHITE WING in 1966, the company provided guards for captured materials and weapons and operated an inclosure for detaining VC suspects.

In October 1966, forward collection points were set up to screen Vietnamese. This process during Operation IRVING virtually destroyed the VC infrastructure.

The MPs launched cordon and search operations with the National Police Field Force in June 1967.

When the division moved north to I Corps in 1968, the MPs had to surmount the problems of securing multiple and constantly mobile Tactical Operation Centers.

At Camp Evans in the summer of 1968, the company built a POW collection camp, a facility given a maximum rating by the International Red Cross for complying with the highest standards of treatment.

After the 1st Cav moved south to III Corps, the MPs continued their missions of TOC security and convoy control.

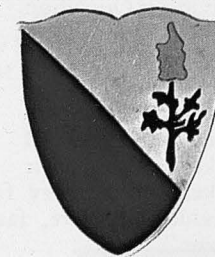
15th Medical Battalion

The 15th Medical Battalion, the Army's first airmobile medical unit, arrived in Vietnam with the 1st Air Cavalry in 1965.

Unique to divisional medical units was the assignment to the battalion of 12 aeromedical evacuation helicopters, making Medevac a part of the FIRST TEAM.

A major part of the unit's efforts has been spent working in MEDCAPs (Medical Civic Action Programs), visiting villages and hamlets to treat Vietnamese for everything from toothaches to starvation.

Feats of bravery—by Medevac crews and by medics with line companies—have been



numerous in the battalion.

The Valorous Unit Award was presented to the battalion's Company B for heroism on June 6, 1967, during Operation PERSHING.

The 15th Medical Battalion was organized in 1926 as the 1st Medical Squadron, 1st Cavalry Division, Special.

The unit travelled with the division throughout World War II campaigns in the South Pacific. In 1949, it was redesignated the 15th Medical Battalion and followed the Cav through Korea, earning seven campaign streamers.

191st Military Intelligence

The 191st Military Intelligence Company has the mission to perform all specialized intelligence and counter-intelligence functions requiring the employment of special skills or foreign languages.

Consisting of a headquarters and four functionally organized operations sections—Order of Battle, Interrogation of Prisoners of War, Imagery Interpretation and Counter-Intelligence—the company provides tactical commanders at all levels with timely intelligence to meet the changing situation created by the 1st Cav's mobility.

The unit was first constituted in September 1950 and participated with the Cav through six campaigns in the Korea War.

15th Administration Company

The 15th Administration Company is one of the largest companies in the Army. It provides personnel for various support sections throughout the division.

Finance clerks see to it that members of the Cav are paid every month. The chaplains' section is part of 15th Admin. The Staff Judge Advocate section provides legal counsel and aid for Skytroopers as well as handling claims of combat losses on personal property.

The Adjutant General section provides an orderly system of maintaining personnel records, as well as such branches as awards and decorations, casualty reporting, postal services and personnel management.

The Information Office publishes the division newspaper, the "Cavalair," the FIRST TEAM Magazine, supervises the command information program and handles the Skytrooper Chapter of the 1st Cavalry Division Association.

The unit was constituted Sept. 6, 1921, and has campaign participation credit for World War II and Korea.

Division Chemical

Since its arrival in Vietnam, the 1st Air Cavalry has relied exclusively on Division Chemical for use of chemical material in all its aspects.

Working in cooperation with G-3 (plans and operations), Division Chemical constructs, installs and maintains all fougasse barrels around 1st Cav basecamps and fire support bases.

Inspections are held regularly to insure all chemical equipment—everything from protective masks to flamethrowers—is in proper working order.

Division Chemical operates the Airborne Personnel Detector, or "people sniffer," a sensitive instrument operated from a low flying helicopter with the ability to detect enemy ground activity.

When not occupied with base defense and enemy detection, chemical personnel conduct flame drops, deliver riot control agents and coordinate the spraying of insecticides on division bases.

8th Engineer Battalion

The airmobile "Sky-beavers" of the 8th Engineer Battalion operate when and where things need building or improvement in Cav Country.

The battalion's expedient workmanship gives the division the required, bare necessities for tactical operation.

Airstrips the engineers build keep supplies flowing by Air Force fixed wing and their roads move the sustenance for battle.

But perhaps the most important mission of the Cav's "private construction company" is that of building LZs, mobile tactical locations used for varying lengths of time.

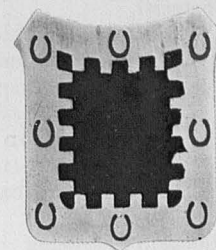
While infantrymen meet the opposition on the battlefield, engineers fight a different war, one against nature and her elements.

The 8th Engineer Battalion participated in World War II campaigns at New Guinea, Bismarck Archipelago, Leyte and Luzon, and in the Korea War.

13th Signal Battalion

The 13th Signal Battalion was formed June 7, 1917, as the 7th Field Signal Battalion and reorganized in 1921 as part of the 1st Cavalry Division.

When the 1st Cav moved into battle areas of the Southwest Pacific in World



War II, the 13th Signal followed. Actions in the Pacific earned for it the three Meritorious Unit Streamers. The unit saw combat again in 1950 in Korea and won the Meritorious Unit Commendation.

In Vietnam, the battalion has provided telephone, radio teletype and cryptographic services to an airmobile combat division spread over an area of operations approximately the size of Connecticut. All this was accomplished by the smallest signal battalion in the Army and with the least and lightest equipment.

27th Maintenance Battalion

Since the original activation of the 27th Maintenance Battalion Sept. 20, 1921, it has undergone a series of reorganizations and redesignations.

Throughout this entire period, however, the battalion has remained assigned to the 1st Cav.

The 27th Maintenance Battalion has won four Meritorious Unit Commendations—two in the Pacific, one in Korea and one in Vietnam (Oct. 22, 1965, to Apr. 6, 1966).

The unit arrived in Vietnam Sept. 15, 1965, and moved to An Khe. Despite lack of replacement parts through normal supply channels, the battalion kept the division shooting, moving and communicating.

During 1966, the battalion completed more than 22,000 maintenance jobs. Despite a critical shortage of manpower in the later stages of 1967, the unit maintained its high performance record.

The big story of 1968 was the move south to III Corps. On October 27, the battalion received word of the move and by November 15, all units were operational in their new III Corps homes.

The battalion has proved its ability to



perform any mission, no matter how difficult. Through the use of its contact teams, the unit's motto, "Anywhere-Anytime," is truly descriptive of its mobility and ability.

15th Transportation Corps

The 15th Transportation Corps Battalion (Aircraft Maintenance and Supply) keeps the 1st Air Cavalry flying.

Some 90 to 120 tons of repair parts are bolted, welded and fitted by the maintenance men each month to service Cav helicopters.

The battalion's shops are equipped to handle any electrical, hydraulics or avionics problem.

The 15th TC Battalion was one of the largest in the Army with more than 1,300 soldiers assigned. In mid-1969, however, the unit underwent a massive change, altering its operation greatly.

Battalion strength dropped from four to two companies, lowering personnel levels to about 600. In turn, separate maintenance detachments were assigned to each company-sized aviation unit in the division.

Although its job has changed since arriving in Vietnam in 1965, the 15th Transportation Corps Battalion continues to keep the airmobile division in the air.

15th Supply and Service

The 15th Supply and Service Battalion was originally organized as the 675th Motor Transport Company in February 1919. It acquired its present designation upon activation of the 1st Air Cavalry in July 1965.

In the airmobile



division, the 15th Supply and Service Battalion provides everything soldiers eat, wear, build or shoot.

Primary functions of the battalion are two-fold—service (laundry facilities, ice cream plants) and supply, which involves supporting the division with all classes of material.

Supplies, everything from food and field gear to fuel and ammunition, are moved by convoy or air transportation.

The 15th S&S even supplies a "firebase kit" complete with concertina wire, timbers, support steel culverts for hootches and thousands of sandbags.

Division Chaplains

He can't match the Division Artillery or ARA for firepower, but the support the chaplain provides to 1st Air Cavalrymen is sometimes the most vital offered in the war zone.

The chaplain is in Vietnam to give the soldier strength in his faith and spiritual guidance, to provide counsel and aid him in worship.

To accomplish his mission, the Army chaplain often goes to extraordinary lengths, reaching the combat soldier in the most remote areas, providing a hand for those who need one.

There are 24 chaplains in the 1st Air Cavalry. These men know and understand a soldier's spiritual needs.

In Cav Country, the Sabbath is extended throughout the week, providing each company-size unit and landing zone at least one service a week by this small band of modern chopper-borne, circuit-riding clergymen.



CAN COUNTRY

LOG OF SIGNIFICANT ACTIONS

- 1 "PEGASUS"
- 2 "JEB STUART"
- 3 "DELAWARE"
- 4 "WHEELER WALLOWA"
- 5 "KONTUM"
- 6 "PERSHING"
- 7 "MASHER/WHITE WING"
- 8 "THAYER I, II"
- 9 "IRVING"
- 10 "DAVY CROCKETT"
- 11 "MATADOR"
- 12 "PAUL REVERE II, III, IV"
- 13 "PLEIKU CAMPAIGN"
- 14 "LINCOLN"
- 15 "NATHAN HALE"
- 16 "HENRY CLAY"
- 17 "BYRD"
- 18 "PHUOC LONG"
- 19 "BINH LONG"
- 20 "WAR ZONE C"
- 21 "WAR ZONE D"
- 22 "NAV CAV"

