

# ***THE FIRST TEAM***



Winter  
1970



# ★ Commander's Message ★



Today The FIRST TEAM finds itself performing the traditional Cavalry role of screening across a broad front, one covering an area of operations comprising some 10,000 square kilometers. The responsibility for carrying out this mission has been a true challenge to the airmobile concept and to the fighting spirit and teamwork of the 1st Air Cavalry Division.

You, the Skytrooper, have more than met that challenge. Your superb performance will stand as one of the greatest Cavalry actions in military history. You have covered approaches to Saigon across the northern tier of III Corps; you have cut enemy supply routes; you have slashed with lightning raids into areas that had previously been the sole preserve of the enemy for years. All this you accomplished in the fashion of the Cavalryman, a man with a proud heritage.

Infantry units in the field, sustained by the blades of the helicopter, have flown deep into the jungle to meet the enemy on his own terms. The Communists learned that no trail was safe from our ambushes, no cache secure from our searches, that there was no place to hide in "Cav Country." If it was not the ever-present infantry tracking him day and night, it was the air and ground teams of the 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, or it was the nightriding helicopter searching the darkness.

You have responded with the same spirit to other challenges. Working with the ARVN Airborne Division, the ARVN 5th Division and other territorial forces, including the CIDG, The FIRST TEAM has added a new dimension to teamwork in working with our gallant comrades-in-arms under the "Dong Tien" (Progress Together) program.

This issue of The FIRST TEAM Magazine, as with those of the past, highlights a few of those who have made the Cav's accomplishments possible. Included are the fire team (the most fundamental combat combination of rifleman, machinegunner and grenadier), the cooks, the military policemen, the supply men, and the aviators: all vital members of the fighting team.

This magazine is meant to emphasize the contributions of these men to the success of the finest infantry-cavalry outfit that ever rode—the 1st Air Cavalry, The FIRST TEAM.



*E. B. Roberts*

E. B. ROBERTS  
Major General, USA  
Commanding



# THE FIRST TEAM

## In This Issue



2

conway



18



22

coleman



27

fallscheer



32

conway

The Men at the Right of the Line	2	PFC Charlie Petit
Rifleman		SP4 William Block, Jr.
Machinegunner		SP5 George Vindedzis
Grenadier		CPT Peter Zastrow
The Ninth Autumn	12	
(Joint Operations)		
The Law in Cav Country	15	SP5 Ed Freudenburg
Barrels, Bolts, Bread'n Butter	18	PFC Dennis Thornton
(S&S Battalion)		
Red, White & Blue... The Real Cav	22	SGT Roger Ruhl
Drum O'Tin: Verse	26	CPT J. W. Ryan
Best in the Boonies (Cooks)	27	SP5 Al Persons
The Whole Team, The Best Team	30	Staff
The Escort Cobra	32	SP4 Ron Merrill
Pacification: Return to the Land	36	SP4 Tom Benic

### The Cover

Front: The Cav's "fire team," including rifleman, machinegunner and grenadier, as photographed by Specialist Four Robert Conway.

Back: One of the division's many Huey helicopters departing on a pre-dawn combat mission, as captured by Private First Class James McCabe.

**COMMAND GROUP:** MG. E. B. Roberts, Commanding General; BG George W. Casey, Assistant Division Commander (Operations); BG Robert M. Shoemaker, Assistant Division Commander (Logistics); MAJ J. D. Coleman, Information Officer.

The FIRST TEAM is published quarterly under the supervision of the Infor-

mation Office, 1st Air Cavalry Division, APO SF 96490 and is an authorized publication. Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. Letters to the editor should be addressed: Editor, THE FIRST TEAM, c/o Information Office, 1st Air Cavalry Division, APO SF 96490.



36



# The Men

## At the Right of the Line

### Rifleman



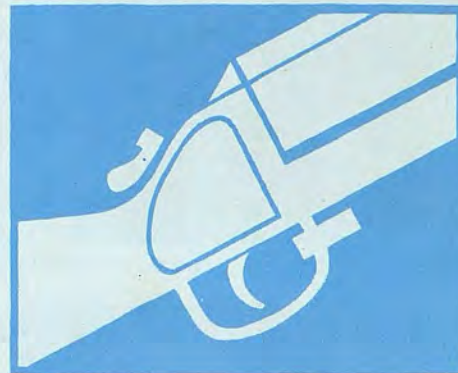
PFC Charlie Petit

### Machinegunner



SP4 William Block

### Grenadier



SP5 George Vindedzis

**H**e is the basic soldier, the grunt's grunt. He is the rifleman. In any division he numbers but a few thousand, but in that number he is the soul of the infantry; indeed, the Army itself.

One company commander — veteran of two tours and an astute observer of the citizen-soldier in combat—said that the rifleman is cast of guts, stamina and a quiet resolve to do his job and do it well. When he has finished the job, he will go home proud for having done it, though he probably never wanted to do it and would hardly prove eager to do it again.

Grunt. That's a good, hard word. It describes any member of the world's least exclusive but most difficult fraternity of men. Anyone can join, and many do. Few are willing. But once a member they are blood-jealous of that fraternity and will brook no criticism of it by those who did not belong, those who were not "out there."

Even line company officers call themselves grunts. Because to them to be an

**H**e first came to combat in the American-Indian Wars. With the Gatling Gun he secured his place in the tactics and mechanics of battle. Conflicts, global or brushfire, would never be without him.

He rose to real tactical prominence during the First World War. More than any other soldier-weapon combination short of aviation, the machinegunner rewrote the strategists' textbooks and changed tactics that had lingered since the standoff at Thermopylae. No longer would troops march upright into an enemy position; no longer would they run bravely uphill on line in phalanx fashion.

After World War I, where the machinegun made "no man's land" the terror that it was, one simply did not charge an entrenched machinegun... unless, of course, the whole situation had gone to pot and somebody, a York or a Murphy, had to do something. In the "Great War" the machinegun had made the foot soldier an elbows, knees and belly soldier, too. Things were different.

**N**o matter the speed of modern artillery, jets or helicopters, there is in a firefight a few minutes or more when the fight is strictly an infantry fight, limited to those men fighting on the ground. In those minutes—before heavy artillery can be brought crashing into the enemy line or Cobras brought in from the sky with flashing rockets—the balance of battle may hang with a rifle company's ground-bound bombardier, the grenadier.

Before the Vietnam War the grenadier could only rely on a good arm and, occasionally, the rifle-grenade. But now that baseball arm has been stretched many times over with the introduction of the M-79 grenade launcher, giving that extra range and punch to the rifle company's portable bomb. But technology, as always, still depends on a man's ability, his skill in using new machines.

That skill is earned and learned the best way, that of on-the-job-training—OJT for short. Throughout basic and advanced training, the potential gre-

(See Page 3)

(See Page 6)

(See Page 9)





foltscheer



# RIFLEMAN

(From Page 2, Col. 1)

infantryman is to know that the job being done is wanted by no other, to know that the whole army of rear echelon workers is pitched toward making the rifleman's job easier, safer...if combat can ever be called safe.

To be a grunt is to be proud. It is a tight-lipped pride born of the rock hard life, the worst of human conditions shared by a field soldier and his fellows—the worst of conditions under which he and others have displayed the best of what it means to be human. Strange, that the best of being human should burn brightest under the darkest, most inhuman product of man, war.

Most grunts are riflemen at one time or another, and it is in that role that they learn the heart of warfare, the core of tactics since Caesar, Napoleon, Washington and Rommel. Whatever modern machine has been added to the order of battle, they have all been for one purpose: to give more advantage to the rifleman, the individual soldier whether he bore a Springfield or a sword. Whatever the science of war may bring—saving that final cataclysm of global nuclear war—it is only to aid the foot soldier, the rifleman, in his very personal war.

His equipment has changed over the centuries; it is more sophisticated and rapidly more deadly. But he is still the single machine-superior element that can move quickly and think for himself. He is the one, the final thing upon which a line company depends.

However much equipment has changed, it still adds up to one factor, weight. Altogether, the rifleman may have 65 or more pounds on his back or swinging from his arms. He has two claymores, two or three bandoliers, five or six quarts of water, some rations and perhaps a pick or shovel, mortar rounds or a machete. He has his home on his back,

all the things needed to fight and survive in this jungle war.

There's something else that the rifleman carries with him on his back, chest, arms and legs. It's standard, but it's not issued. He earns it. It runs in rivers, beads on the end of his nose and other places. It's sweat.

A look at an M-16 that's been humped through the boonies by a grunt for many long months will show corrosion of metal from that briny sweat. The metal on the carrying handle down around the magazine well is pitted. That's where the palm of his hand spends most of its time. The weapon swings low and ready, guided through clutching vines, around fallen bamboo, lofted high over rice paddies and swollen, leech-infested streams.

Combat. That's what war is all about. When people picture the man involved, they think of a man with a rifle. He's the guy with the ability to move fast, to flank and fix a fleeting enemy. He's the man who can lay down a heavy volume of fire over several sectors at once. When they say "Fire and maneuver!" it's the rifleman who's doing most of the maneuvering.

Modern infantry combat has a lot of men working with a lot of weapons. But the fundamental fighting unit, particularly in the jungle terrain of Vietnam, is still the rifleman.

Though his deep pride is quiet, the soldier's traditional emotional outlet, griping about anything and everything, is more than outspoken. He may be airmobile, as in the 1st Cav, but most of the time he's walking. He may get a hot meal once in a while, but there's still a bag of C-rations on his back. He may have the latest style in jungle fatigues, but he's still wet a lot of the time. The ants still bite, the leeches still find their way past the most tightly tied pants.



And the jungle rot, the ringworm, the threat of infection to every scratch and scrape still plague him. He gripes, but he doesn't fail, doesn't let down.

The reward comes afterward. While in the field the work is too hard, the conditions too rigorous, the job too demanding of strength of courage to think much in abstractions. But ask a man who's been through it, who was "out there." Ask him how he feels about what he's done. They'll all say much the same thing; that they are glad to have done a difficult job, and that they'll challenge any man, other than a fellow rifleman, to feel more a soldier than they.

He is the basic soldier, the grunt's grunt.

He is the rifleman.



---

*"Grunt. That's a good hard word. It describes any member of the world's least exclusive, but most difficult fraternity of men."*

---



borchester



ahrbeck



ohrbeck



ohrbeck



ohrbeck



*"The handful of M-60 machineguns in a company represent over half the company's firepower. In a firefight it is king."*

# MACHINEGUNNER

(From Page 2, Col. 2)

The trouble was that almost immediately everyone had it. By the Second World War the advantage of the machinegun became a matter of which side got it into action first. If our forces could use the machinegun to encircle the foe, then they could do the same—provided they got the jump.

So it has been too in Southeast Asia, the Vietnam War. In the dense jungles and open, soggy rice paddies or the rugged and spooky highland hills, the machinegun and the man behind it have been the key to a thousand battles.

Getting the "gun" up to the front of the battle to lay down its deadly dancing fire has given the rifleman the chance to maneuver on his enemy. Both sides use the tactic.

First Cavalry Sergeant Fred Barrowman, now a machinegunner after watching the gun in action on his third day in the field, knows of the gun and its power, a power both actual and psychological. Its very sound is terrifying. Barrowman's unit had come up against an NVA force hidden in old French fighting positions amid thick bamboo.

"We saw them first and our machinegunner dropped down

and opened up. In no time at all the enemy was fleeing after a brief standoff. The M-16 rounds tumbled in the bamboo, but the machinegun rounds smashed right through. I wanted one of those guns." Barrowman got his M-60 shortly afterward.

The weapon is carried over or slung from the shoulder. A starter belt of 7.62mm ammunition is kept in the gun to provide that initial, all important, burst. Other men in the company carry extra belts of the ammunition, some of them looking every bit like Mexican bandits of the last century.



borchester



conway



borchester



fallscheer



borchester



borchester



The M-60 is heavy (18 pounds more than an M-16), though not nearly so heavy as its predecessors, and it requires constant care and cleaning...but it's worth it.

The handful of M-60 machineguns in a company represent more than half the company's firepower. In a fight it is "the king."

"As long as the gunner keeps pump-

ing out rounds," said Private First Class Thomas M. Reilly, "there's nothing coming back at him. The enemy keep their heads down. They know what the gun can do. But when the '60' lets up, the rounds are likely incoming" he said.

There are certain advantages to carrying the M-60, to being a machine-gunner. Perhaps the extra privileges are

fitting, because the gunner is naturally a prime target for enemy gunners and riflemen.

"With the gun," said Private First Class John D. Nelson, "you don't walk point and you don't check out bunkers. But when contact is made, someone is always yelling, 'Bring up the gun!'"



borchester

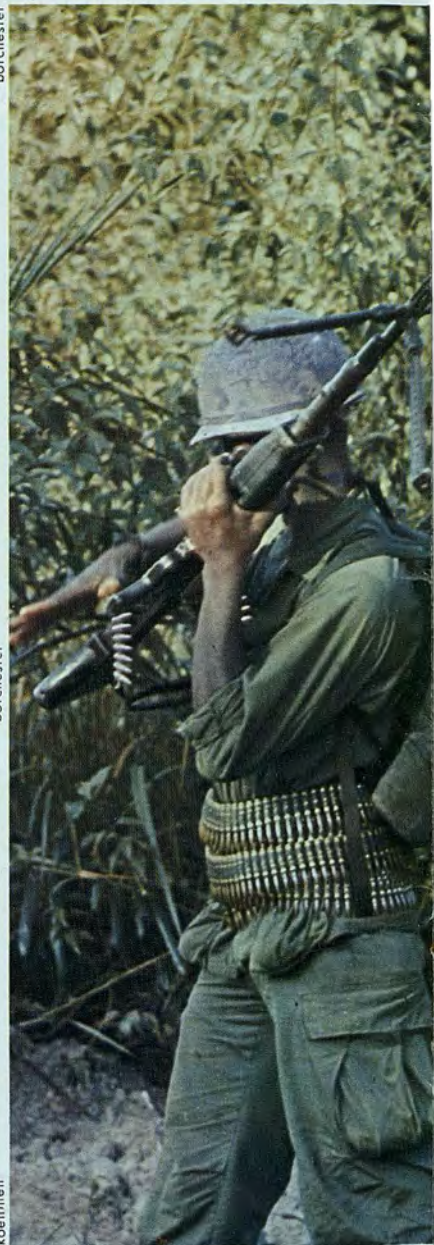


borchester

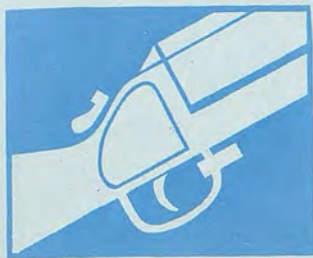


borchester

koehn







# GRENADIER



borchester

*"Before the Vietnam War the grenadier could only rely on a good arm and, occasionally, the rifle-grenade. But now that baseball arm has been stretched many times over with the M-79 grenade launcher, giving that extra range and punch to the rifle company's portable bomb."*

(From Page 2, Col. 3)

nadier is trained like any other soldier. Only when he arrives in Vietnam and either asks for or is assigned the M-79 will he begin to learn his new trade as a grenadier.

The M-79's light weight and dependability are only two of its advantages in the field. Another is its ability to strike behind obstacles that offer cover to the enemy. If the opposing forces are too close to call in artillery, the grenadier is called up to lob high explosive rounds down on top of the enemy.

"The grenade launcher, the 'chunker' as it's called, is one of the most dependable weapons the Army has in its arsenal," said Captain Ralph Hallenbeck, former commander of Company B, 5th Battalion of the 7th Cavalry. Hallenbeck himself carried a "79" in the field.

"One incident where the grenadier proved invaluable took place when one of my squads was pinned down in a bomb crater," said Hallenbeck. "The men in the crater were right in the middle between the enemy and the rest of the company. We couldn't risk the lives of the squad by firing over their heads, so we brought the grenadier into action. He lobbed several high explosive rounds over the squad and hit right into the midst of the enemy."

The "chunker" is also used in the first moments of a fight. With the weapon broken open and a buckshot round chambered, the grenadier walks closely behind the pointman. When contact breaks he can quickly snap the weapon shut and blast out a fistful of ball bearings the size of early June peas. It makes the other side think twice about sticking its head up to fire and gives the grunts time to maneuver into good firing positions.

"The chunker is a great weapon to have when receiving sniper fire from trees," said Private First Class John A. Conway, grenadier with Company C, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry. "If shrapnel from the round doesn't knock him out of the tree, the blast will."

"The 79 round is not quite as powerful as a frag (fragmentation grenade)," said Conway, "but at least you know that once you've fired it, no one will throw it back at you."



---

*"When contact breaks the grenadier can quickly snap the weapon shut and blast out a fistful of ball bearings the size of early June peas."*

---



fallscheer



In addition to its real tactical power, the grenade launcher also serves as a potent psychological weapon. The sharp and loud explosion of the round, seemingly coming from nowhere, is terrifying to the enemy. Sometimes he panics.

Unlike the rifle round, the M-79 grenade throws shrapnel in all directions instead of just one, making protective cover all the more difficult to find.

But the grenadier has a weapon which the ordinary rifleman does not have to cope with. The grenadier's mini-artillery requires a heavy load of ammunition, usually about 50 rounds. And even though the vest-like carrying case for M-79 ammo makes the job a little easier, it does not lighten the weight of 50 rounds. It grows heavier and heavier as the day wears on, the sun gets higher and higher and the steps get shorter.

Still, the grenadier has a weapon which is almost maintenance-free and hardly ever malfunctions. "It is as close as the Army comes to the 100 percent reliable weapon," said Hallenbeck.

"The chunker definitely has a place in the field," said Specialist Four Greg Schlieve, a 1st Cav machinegunner.

shorp





"It's not used all that often, but when it is, it's really a great weapon."

While the grenade launcher and its operator are highly effective in the field, they are even more appreciated on a fire support base, where the weapon is not hampered by field disadvantages, like dense trees and thick bush.

Used to defend the base after dark, the launcher has an open field of fire, a holiday at a shooting gallery. Even if the enemy presence is only suspected, or if he probes the perimeter and quickly evades, the M-79—with a good man behind it—can throw quick, deadly rounds into the black night.

"The grenadier who knows his weapon and knows how to use it can put a round right into Charlie's pocket," said Sergeant Shockley, a 1st Cav squad leader. "And the '79' has no muzzle flash and therefore won't give your position away. The grenadier could chunk rounds out there all night and Charlie wouldn't be able to pinpoint his position."

As one Skytrooper put it, "I'm just glad the VC and NVA don't have either the M-79 or the grenadier on their side. Things could get mighty bad if they did."



conway




---

*"The sharp and loud explosion of the round, seemingly coming from nowhere, is terrifying to the enemy. Sometimes he panics."*

---



# The Ninth Autumn

## *Battle for Song Be*

By CPT Peter Zastrow

fallscheer **I**n the fall of 1969—the ninth autumn of Allied commitment to the Vietnam war — “Vietnamization” was what was happening. And just as the 1st Cavalry had been in the fore of the battlefield since its arrival in the summer of 1965, the division moved with parallel determination into building joint operations with the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) under the “Dong Tien” (Progress Together) program.

It began at Fire Support Base (FSB) Buttons, a dusty, tented and bunkered brigade basecamp in the shadow of Nui Ba Ra Mountain, located some 100 miles north of Saigon. The camp was shouldered up against the capital of Phuoc Long Province, the village-city of Song Be.

In August of '69 a North Vietnamese Army (NVA) soldier, who had decided to cast his lot with the south, told of an NVA plan to throw three regiments, some 5,000 troops, against the provincial capital of Song Be—a tactic seen by some as an attempt to secure a capital city for the Communists' so-called “provisional revolutionary government” in the south.

To counter the impending Communist push, the 1st Cavalry's 2nd Brigade moved into FSB Buttons, built two other bases in the area and began operations in the rolling, heavily forested and jungled countryside around Song Be. But in the intricate network of trails and jungle-covered paths, the two battalions alone could not hope to cover all the enemy's avenues of approach.

*the fall...*





*...the NVA had designs to take Song Be—  
but their plans never got beyond the drawing board*

The brigade found one ARVN battalion along with 17 Regional Force (RF) units and 60 Popular Force (PF) platoons, all under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Luu-Yem, the Phuoc Long province chief, ready to contribute to the containing effort. Coordination with these forces and the American brigade was opened. This was the beginning.

Soon after the initial coordination, Allied forces at Song Be were swelled with the arrival of a brigade from the 5th ARVN Division and the 35th Vietnamese Ranger Battalion, both of which were moved in to man the defenses of Song Be. The combined operation was in full swing, as the province capital was secure and Allied battalions were combing the hills in search of the enemy.

The maneuver battalions swept back and forth through the provincial territory, taking chunks out of enemy forces when they met them and generally thwarting NVA plans. The battle for Song Be was never big news because the battle never flared. It was not fought at Song Be itself, but rather in scattered contacts and skirmishes for miles around the city—fights whose accounts were small but whose impact was immense.

With the threat to Song Be neutralized, if not eliminated, the 1st Cavalry began to train Vietnamese soldiers who lived in the area, working with them in true combined operations on a man-to-man basis.

The range of operations was wide: from multi-battalion maneuvers to simple joint-squad operations, to teaching RF companies the techniques of the combat assault, the Cav's "thing."

The largest operation was directed against the longtime Viet Cong-controlled village of Duc Bon, located just south of FSB Mary, home of the 5th Battalion of the 7th Cav. Within three weeks more than 230 refugees from the village fled from five years of Viet Cong control, rallying to the south.

After the first small group of ralliers from Duc Bon had rallied, influenced by a combination of Allied firepower, psychological operations' broadcasts and near starvation, a number of combined operations began.

Companies from the 5th Battalion, 7th Cav swept into the area, but the VC

broke the village population up into small groups and scattered them, under guard, through the jungle. Several days later two ARVN battalions, working with 1st Cav forward observers, radio operators and pathfinders, combed the jungle and found 91 villagers, all eager to rally.

Another 50 villagers were found after a brief skirmish between a Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) force and VC guards, who had held the villagers captive.

After several small groups of the villagers had been rounded up in six weeks of searching, their number totaled more than 450 refugees from Duc Bon and two other hamlets.

At the other end of the scale were the small and repeated combined operations designed primarily to increase the combat effectiveness of the local forces. When the Cav moved into Song Be, few of the RF forces had spent the night away from home, as they previously had only patrolled around their hamlets during the day and then withdrew into them at night.

RF companies, whose members range in age from 15 to 60, were soon working with American platoons on normal Cav operations—and both units were learning.

"We learned in both directions," said Major Joel D. Jones, the brigade's operations officer. "Perhaps the most important thing gained from these combined operations was a better understanding, on both sides, of how the other unit operates."

In the most fundamental of combined operations, pilots of Company A, 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion, showed excited RFs, most of whom had never ridden a chopper, how to organize, mount and dismount on a helicopter-borne combat assault.

Combined operations ranged in other directions. Delta Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, ran almost daily check-point operations with the Vietnamese National Police (NP). While D Troop's "Rat Patrol" of well-armed jeeps secured a section of roadway, the NPs checked for identity papers and possible infiltrators. The Delta Troopers and the police also worked the rivers around Song Be, providing a stopgap against infiltration on waterways as well as the roads.

Cooperation seeped down even to the support groups on both sides. The Cav's 1st Battalion of the 77th Artillery at Buttons worked with ARVN artillery dug in nearby at Song Be, giving the Vietnamese classes in the techniques of American artillery fire. American artillery fired in support of the Vietnamese and Vietnamese artillery returned the favor. Not infrequently Allied shells impacted side by side in support of the joint operations.

The engineers—that special breed of soldiers who tote both rifles and wrenches—did their part, too. Company B of the 8th Engineer Battalion worked under security provided by province forces to rebuild province roads worn thin under the heavy traffic of American vehicles. The unpaved roads which connect Song Be with outlying hamlets were almost impassable until the engineers went to work.

Throughout the period there was a constant flow of coordination: personnel from the brigade visited the province headquarters several times daily. CIDG camps in the area sent liaison officers to Buttons to assure good coordination. Even when American and Vietnamese soldiers were not fighting side by side, their leaders were making plans together.

Like a pebble dropped into a quiet pond, the combined operations sent ripples flowing out from the center at Song Be to the fringes of Phuoc Long Province. As the RF and PF soldiers gained confidence and experience, they maintained the immediate perimeter around the capital, freeing 1st Cav soldiers to move further into the province to push NVA and VC units northwest and north. Song Be was no longer in danger of a large-scale attack.

In earlier days the Song Be complex of small villages was a trading center fed on the lifeline of Highway QL-14, which runs southwest to Phuoc Vinh and then south to Saigon. NVA activity had made the road nearly impassable until, through a series of combined convoys, the road was gradually reopened and secured. ARVN armored cavalry units patrolled the road and, on the increasingly frequent convoy days, the 1st Cav provided overhead cover with gunships and additional ground protection with the Rat Patrol.

When the inevitable ambushes came,



ARVN tracked vehicles swung into the contact and took care of the enemy. No convoy suffered any serious casualties and the enemy paid heavily for his attempts.

"Dong Tien" operations were not limited to offensive moves. On each fire-base in the brigade a combined ready reaction force nightly awaited the word to move out. Even atop Nui Ba Ra, ARVN soldiers and the Americans operated side by side on the mini-fire-base.

As the monsoon rains ebbed and the dry season settled in, no end was in sight for the combined operation program at Song Be. It had, in fact, spread beyond Phuoc Long. At Tay Ninh City the 1st Cav's 1st Brigade was beginning to work with the ARVN Airborne Division's 2nd Brigade.

The ripples started in combined defenses at Song Be had grown into a wave of joint maneuvers and coordinated plans elsewhere.

For soldiers of the 1st Cavalry combined operations were both an experience and a prelude. They learned about hammocks, carrying rice and about moving quickly through the jungle from those for whom the jungle had sometimes been home.

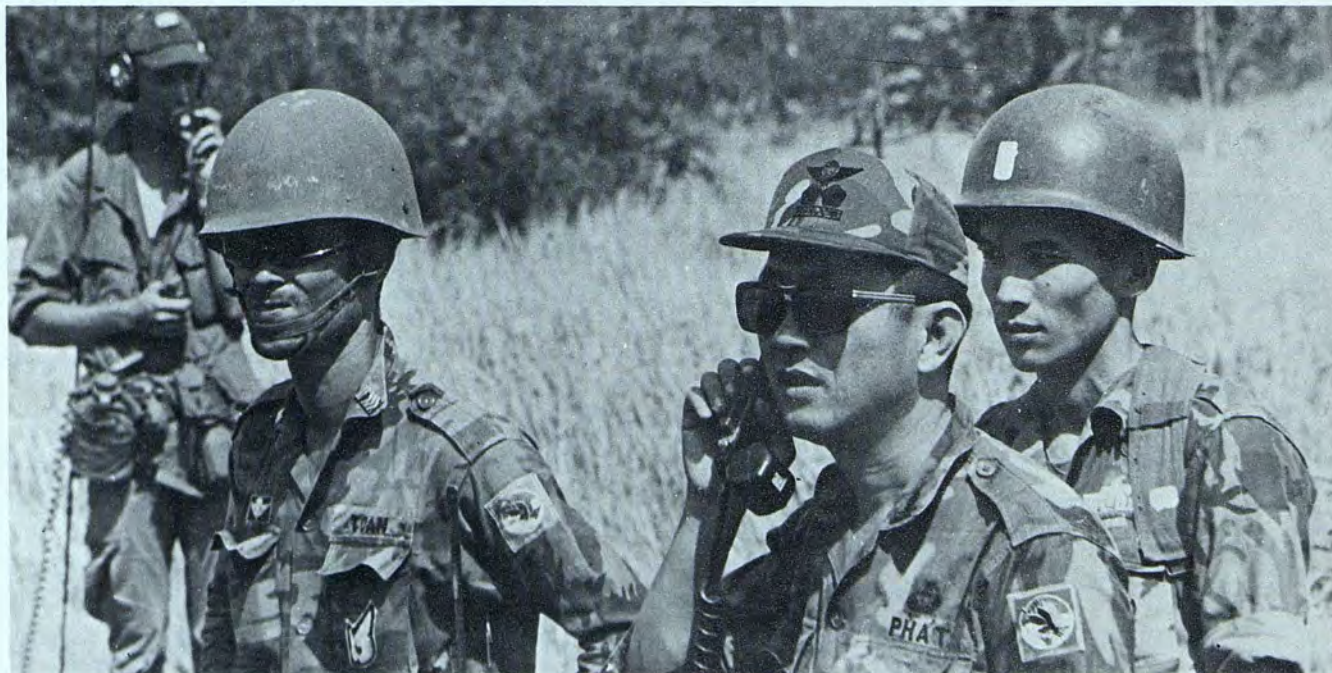
The prelude? In terms of airmobility, the cavalymen knew that when the time came the Vietnamese soldiers, trained by the Cav, would be securing the final pick-up zone for the division's last air move in Vietnam...to a place called "LZ World."



borchester



*Combined operations between ARVN and U.S. Forces have spread quickly in the Cav's area of operations. Above, an ARVN infantry company receives transportation via one of The FIRST TEAM's CH-47 Chinook helicopters, and below, a Skytrooper arranges communications for an ARVN officer during the construction of a new firebase for the allied government force.*





# THE LAW IN CAY COUNTRY

By SP5 Ed Freudenburg

When Americans enjoy one of their favorite oldtime heroes, the town sheriff, they become one with him and imagine themselves standing alone—at high noon, of course—against a half dozen fast guns on a hot and hushed street of the western frontier. But when stopped for a speeding ticket or pinched for too enthusiastically demonstrating Clay's lightning punch on a drinking buddy, those same people become persecuted victims of the law. They scream police harassment. Their vicarious empathy with Matt Dillon vanishes; all they see is "a cop."

Though they fail to recognize it, today's police officer, military or civilian, is the traditional and practical great-grandson of Dillon and the others who pioneered peace-keeping in the United States. Then, as now, Dillon and police are needed to save a community from the more robust and reckless of its own members.

An Army division like the 1st Air Cavalry is also a community, a community of 21,000 strong. Only dreamers would picture ours or any collection of so many men without the usual average of wild ones. Any community's lawless elements, without control, have the potential for creating social chaos, as much now as in Dodge City. The wild bunch plagues not only New York, Phoenix and Peoria, but also the extensions of America, like the 1st Cav in Vietnam. So, as Wyatt Earp and Judge Roy Bean were called upon to keep the peace in Tombstone and the Pecos, police—military police—are needed in the 1st Cav.

Only the most romantically inclined will see the attempted connection between the solitary and stolid figure of the single sheriff fighting high odds and that of a well-staffed and modern police force. The name "Matt Dillon" evokes a weighty tradition and romantic image. There is nothing romantic about the sound of "The 545th Military Police

Company." It is not intended to be romantic, nor can the work of MPs be called such. Yet the connection is there. Like Dillon, members of the 545th are peers of their fellows and their job is to keep the peace between neighbors.

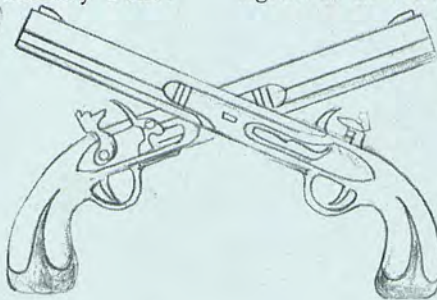
The keepers of the peace within the 1st Cavalry Division have an awesome task. They must police the normal and expected differences of opinion and judgment—often inflamed by emotion—that occur in everyone's lives. And there is even a stronger similarity to the Dillons of yesteryear in that they oversee a population in which every single member is armed to the teeth with the best weapons available. For a stateside police chief and his men the assignment would be no less than a nightmare—a completely armed community of 21,000, all possessed of the same human passions that have driven men since the beginning of time. Arguments that ordinarily might end in a black eye or bloody nose can erupt into a no-foolishness, honest-to-god gunfight, the likes of which Dodge City never saw or could have ever feared.

But the division's basecamps are far from being hotbeds of infighting. Because the men of the 545th are on the job; because by their very presence they are maintaining law and order; there seldom is more disturbance than in the sleepest of small midwestern towns.

But the peace belies the potential for trouble, if for no other reason than the staggering size of the Cav's "community." The 545th's "beat" covers 4,000 square miles.

"Our whole operation in the 545th is a little different than most, because we have the largest area to patrol of any MP company in Vietnam," said Captain Eugene Dillard, company commander.

The size of their job keeps the men moving. "An MP assigned to us will probably get an opportunity to see most







fitzwater

of the basecamps and brigade headquarters on his tour here, because we like to keep our men moving around. We want everyone to be familiar with every aspect of our work so they can easily fill another position if and when needed," said Dillard.

There is, however, considerably more to the MP mission than just standing the beat. There is a variety of jobs ranging from the very basics of police work and criminal investigation to the "only in Vietnam" tasks, those unique to combat zones.

An MP may be riding shotgun on convoys, patrolling village streets and checking identifications, or maintaining security on major roads within the division's cut of III Corps.

"As an MP a man must simply be more alert, and he must create a sharp impression while on duty," said the division's provost marshal, Lieutenant Colonel John Pearson. "MPs have got to think on their feet and judge each situation quickly and rationally."

"I have served with many MP companies in the States and overseas," said Pearson, "but I have found the 545th MP Company to be the sharpest around. They are true professionals."

As was Dillon.



*The duties of a 545th Military Police Company patrolman are many. Among those tasks are traffic control along heavily travelled convoy routes and patrolling villages near Cav installations. The job can be dangerous, but more often, merely by his presence, the MP preserves "Law in Cav Country."*



sharp





sharp

*Meeting the people on a day-to-day basis becomes as much a part of the MP's life in Vietnam as do starched fatigues, clean shaves and spit-shined boots.*



sharp



moon

sgroi



*The military policeman is a soldier, too. He must often perform the infantry tasks of cordon and search, looking for enemy caches and hidden bombs. And there are always the more routine jobs of checking both military and civilian vehicles.*

sgroi





DB



# Barrels, Bolts, Bread 'n Butter

By PFC Dennis Thornton

**T**o the public conditioned by years of exposure to the celluloid and newsprint version of combat, men at war are characterized by a glamorous hierarchy. From "God is My Co-Pilot" to "Pork Chop Hill" through "The Anderson Platoon," the image projected is that of the hero—the quarterback or halfback on the field of battle.

And with good reason for combat is personal, and personal combat is the very heart of war. But, paradoxically, even as it is the heart, combat is also the cap of the iceberg that is the total war effort, a top that only faintly bespeaks the mass effort beneath it.

A substantial portion of that sub-surface mass is made up of men providing what is tersely termed in military parlance as "combat service support." When translated, this means supplying the beans and bullets without which the front line troops could not do their more publicized "thing."

In the 1st Air Cav one of the primary movers, shakers and suppliers is the 15th Supply and Service Battalion, the people who furnish nearly everything Skytroopers eat, wear, build or shoot.

It was said of World War II that twelve men were needed, working behind the lines, to maintain one man on the front. Whether these figures were accurate then and today is irrelevant. It remains that a great deal of work is required to field a company of infantry. The men of the S&S Battalion keep the infantryman armed and dressed and fed, keep the artillery battalions packed with rounds and keep aviation companies full of fuel. Anything that moves or needs moving, is consumed or expended, has to do with the 15th S&S Battalion.

On a daily basis nearly 1.6 million pounds of supplies are sent to units in this division of 21,000 men. Not only does the unit pack the shopper's list of needed items, but it also coordinates the truck convoys, Chinook helicopter lifts and Air Force C-130 cargo planes needed to deliver items on request.

While the rifleman on the front is cutting his slow way through wait-a-minute vines, men in supply—like the 15th's Redhat riggers—can match him drop for drop in sweat and strain, even though they work in the rear area. From dawn to dusk they pack and load supplies and equipment. They load trucks, fix and hook sling loads for helicopters and also manage the delicate balance of material inside the cavernous hulls of cargo aircraft. Day by day they broil in the sun. The work never ends.

"It gets pretty hectic trying to keep track of everything,

but generally the operation runs smoothly," said Sergeant First Class Thomas Walker. Walker is the man who has people yelling at him most of the time. He handles requests for needed items, but he is a strangely calm man.

"We have a Class A phone, a regular telephone and a radio—and it seems like half the time we're talking on all three at once," he said.



Thornton






---

*Paradoxically, even as it is the heart, combat is also the cap of the iceberg that is the total war effort, a top that only faintly bespeaks the mass effort beneath it.*

---



*The 15th Supply and Service Battalion is, above all else, people—men who make the machine of a division work. They provide all the ammunition and gasoline . . . and they unload heads of lettuce.*





Once an order is received, clerks search through their files, find the stock number and then check the inventory to make sure the item is on hand.

"We have a list of over a thousand items that we keep in stock here," said Sergeant First Class Charles Facemire, a stock control specialist. "Besides those we have access to over 4,000 other items that can't be stored, but are readily available."

"Occasionally we have a mix-up, like the time we asked for 2,000 feet of electrical wire and they sent us two feet. But that sort of thing doesn't happen very often," he said. "Our most unusual request was for anti-freeze and snow chains. Still haven't figured that one out for sure."

One large storage yard at the battalion's headquarters in Bien Hoa contains a 1st Cav invention, the firebase kit. The kits contain everything needed to construct a firebase: concertina wire, timbers, support steel, culverts for hootches and thousands of sandbags, all packaged and ready for shipment at a moment's notice.

Another entire yard is home for the concept that "an army moves on its stomach." The yard contains tons of food, everything from C-rations to ice cream and fresh vegetables.

International marketing provides the Cav's food, even though most of the foodstuffs are shipped from the continental United States. "But we get bananas from the jungles of Vietnam, tomatoes from Japan, some fresh fruits from Hawaii and bread from the Long Binh bakery," said Staff Sergeant Ralph Hall, food yard manager.

"Our biggest problem used to be the shipping of ice cream," Hall said, "but we came up with a solution. We put the boxes of ice cream in styrofoam containers surrounded by dry ice, then pack them in Conexes (large steel shipping containers). We can only put 500 pounds in each Conex, but it stays frozen all the way."

Another problem in supplying troops at war is that of having ready transportation. Every means possible is used, both ground and air.

"We run heavily guarded convoys to Tay Ninh and Quan Loi and Song Be from Bien Hoa," said Major Thomas Young, division traffic controller.

One of those recent convoys to Song Be, originating in Phuoc Vinh, ran a gauntlet of enemy mortar and machine-gun fire to "cannonball" through an ambush. Letting the convoy be stopped by an ambush is more hazardous than running through it while jeep and track-mounted escorts fight off the enemy. But, then, driving your truck through a firefight is not easily done either. The supply soldier's life is not always free from the aura of infantry.

He works long and hard to see that those doing the fighting get what they need, when they need it. But there are some things that he simply cannot do.

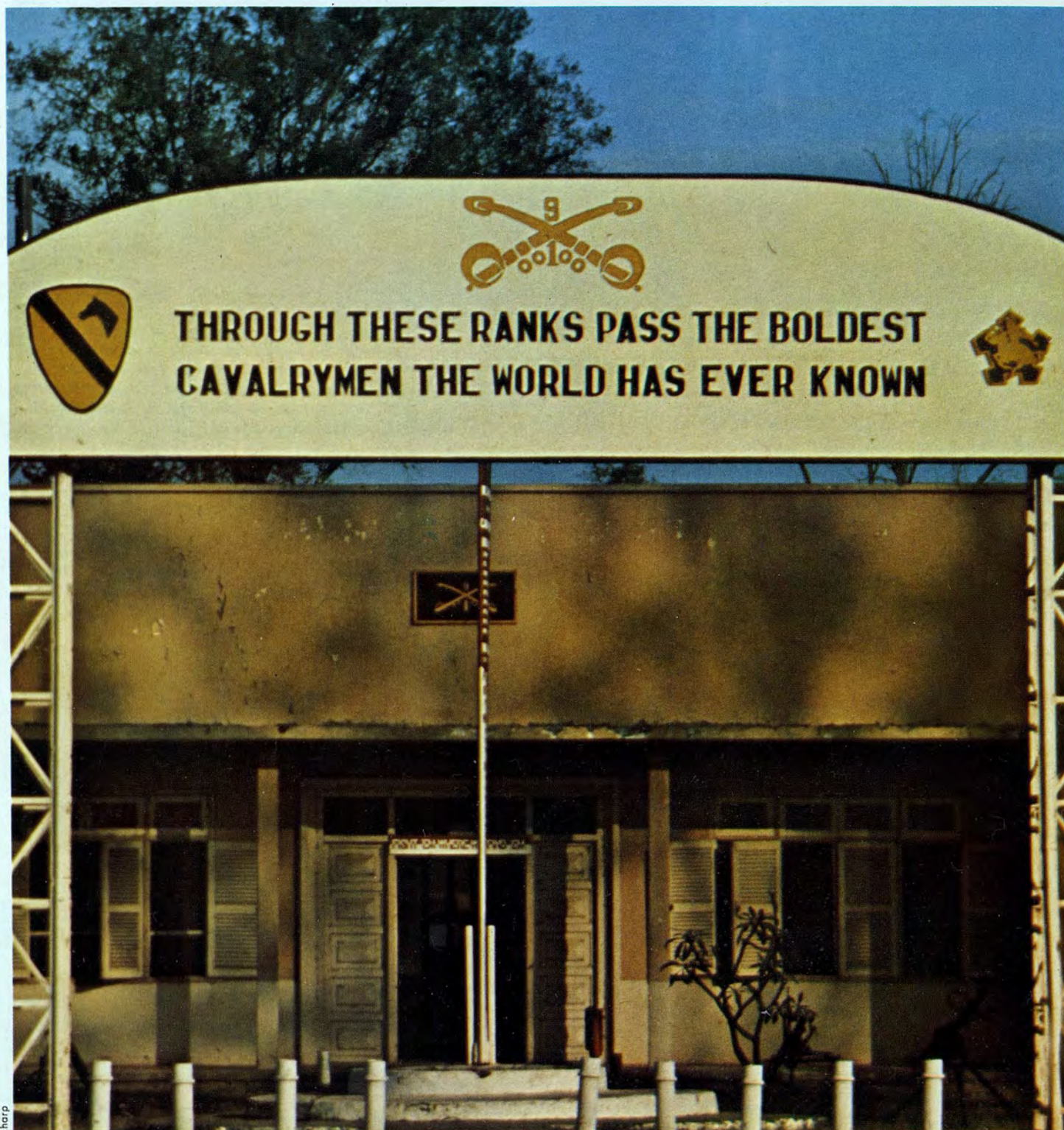
"We get a lot of orders for Racquel Welch," said Facemire, "but we always have to answer that she's not in stock."

*Behind every man on the battle line there is a structure of supply that supports him as much as do his rifle and his skill. It is a cluster and—to the uneducated eye—a clutter of supply that ranges from canteen cups to sandbags. It is hard work, supplying a division that moves like the wind . . . and sleep is where you find it.*





RED WHITE AND BLUE  
RED WHITE AND BLUE  
RED, WHITE AND BLUE...





# THE REAL CAV THE REAL CAV THE REAL CAV



conway

*The Cobra gunships (above) form the "reds," the LOHs or observation helicopters (below) make-up the "whites" and the infantrymen (right) are known as the "blues." These three elements are the basis of the 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry . . . The Real Cav.*



sharp



sharp

By SGT Roger Ruhl

**T**he sign proudly proclaims "The Real Cav." It is a name and legend both, a legend born on horseback in the hot desert winds that carried the faint but unmistakable sound of clattering Cavalry sabers.

The same sign welcomes and hails "the boldest cavalymen the world has ever known," the men of the 1st Air Cavalry's most active unit—the 1st Squadron of the 9th Cavalry.

Formally designated 1st Squadron (Airmobile), 9th Cavalry, the unit likes to flaunt its unique composition within the division. But with more kills and action to its credit than any other unit in the 1st Cav, the squadron gets little backtalk from anyone.

"The Real Cav" works hard to perpetuate that individuality.

No self-respecting officer of the 9th Cavalry would be caught without his genuine \$12 Cavalry Stetson, a unit trademark. It is said that Major General John J. Tolson, former division commander, was so impressed with the gold-trimmed black hat that he told an officer leaving Vietnam, "Do not remove it until you reach your next duty station...and send any DRs you get to me."

The squadron is uniquely color conscious. There are "red teams" and "white teams," combining to form "pink teams." And, too, there are the "blues."

Fundamentally, 1st of the 9th is the

division's reconnaissance unit. Slightly larger than an infantry line battalion, it encompasses three airmobile troops and the ground-mobile "Rat Patrol," or Delta Troop. The squadron also controls the operations of the division's long range reconnaissance patrols.

The air-minded troop is known for its capability to function almost entirely on its own. They are the first ones in on the hottest fights.

The "white," or scout platoon, initiates most actions. A pilot, observer and crew chief-doorgunner fly their LOH (light observation helicopter) at daring tree-top levels. Experienced scouts can pick out foot prints on the ground and spot other enemy indicators in the area.



*The 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry is a battalion size unit, 100 percent mobile with organic transport, including more than 100 helicopters. The unit has three air cavalry troops, with each troop having an aero-scout platoon, an aero-weapons platoon and an aero-rifle platoon. The fourth troop, Delta Troop, is a ground cavalry unit with its three platoons mounted on heavily armed vehicles. Together, the four troops make the 9th Cavalry the only former "horse outfit" still completely mounted.*



conway

*A Delta Troop platoon winds its way through a suspected enemy location, its column bristling with firepower and antennas. Below, one of D Troop's jeep-mounted machinegunners is reflected in the jeep mirror as he scans the terrain before him. The goggles on his helmet are for protection when the column moves as did the old cavalry—"hell bent for leather."*



sharp

*The infantry "blues," (above) are extracted from their day's search for the enemy, while (below) the big three of the 9th Cav—the LOH, the Huey and the Cobra—await the claxon call to action that will surely come.*



conway



sharp





*Good maintenance is important to any aviation unit, especially to the men who fly the machines. A young warrant officer checks the work of ground maintenance men—the work that he knows is as perfect as humanly possible, but, then, he has to fly it.*

Weaving above the trees, the low-flying helicopter seems to invite, even dare, Charlie to reveal himself with AK-47 rifle fire. When he does, he meets "red."

"Red" is the red or weapons platoon, the Cobra helicopter, gun-toting smoke-bringer. Combining with the "white" team LOH, a "red" platoon Cobra roars down on the scene of the action. These two form the "pink team" (directions: mix red and white, stir, and get pink). The enemy needs no introduction: "pinks," rockets and miniguns suffice.

The "pink team" is no stranger to Charlie. Division intelligence gatherers got a chuckle when interrogating a captured enemy soldier. He explained that he and his fellow troopers had their own set of nicknames for the choppers: the low-flying LOH was the "up bird" and the high-flying Cobra was the "down bird." Incongruous by Cav terminology? Not at all. The NVA explained that when one fires at an LOH, it goes up; when one fires at a Cobra, "It comes down!"

The "blues" form the troop's aero-rifle platoon. A lift section, composed of aircraft commanders, co-pilots, crew chiefs and doorgunners, provides Huey slick transportation for the "blue" riflemen. These men do some ground reconnaissance, but they spend most of their time serving as a quick reaction force.

The "blues" lead a rich man's life by 11 Bravo (infantryman) standards, spending most nights in a basecamp bed, whiling away many daylight hours "just waiting." But when action comes—enemy troops being spotted or a downed bird needing security—the "blues" jump in with both feet and hit like a falcon sure of its prey.

Alpha, Bravo and Charlie Troops include headquarters and maintenance platoons, rounding out what amounts to near self-sufficiency at troop or company level.

Delta Troop, the "Rat Patrol," employs jeeps with

mounted machineguns and recoilless rifles, a truck toting a squad of riflemen, and yet another equipped with 82mm mortar and other ammunition.

Frequently broken into smaller sections, the "Rat Patrol" draws a wide range of missions. Its troops escort convoys, provide firebase security, patrol both open and jungle terrain, and cordon and search suspected enemy hideouts. They move through jungle areas where few vehicles would dare tread. And they dismount and become "foot soldiers" when the tactical situation calls for such deployment.

Vietnam, where the word "mobility" was prefixed with the word "air," provides 1st of the 9th Cavalrymen with plenty of war stories:

—Pleiku Campaign, which introduced squadron helicopters to war and gave the unit a chance to show off...and also help win for the division the Presidential Unit Citation (PUC), the first of its kind in the Vietnam conflict.

—Operation MASHER WHITE WING, where squadron helicopters concentrated on the capture of intelligence-baring information.

—Operation IRVING, in which "the real cav" won for itself the PUC. In one day's action the unit initiated attacks which left 320 enemy dead that night.

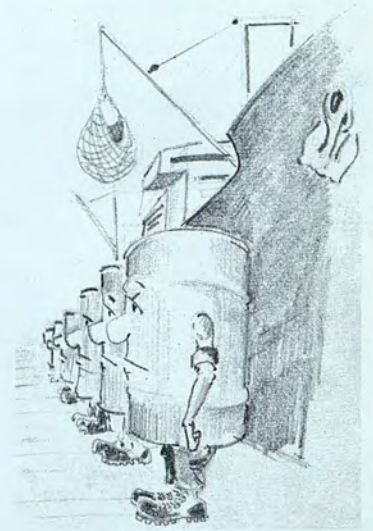
—Operation THAYER II, which intensified search and destroy missions in II Corps' coastal plains.

But these are only a few testaments to the 9th. The Cavalrymen who have and are filling her ranks are their own special breed of history, a legendary history that began in the hot desert winds of western America and is growing even now in the air and on the ground in Vietnam.

The sabers are gone, but sometimes, they say, you can still hear the clatter of their metal in the wind.







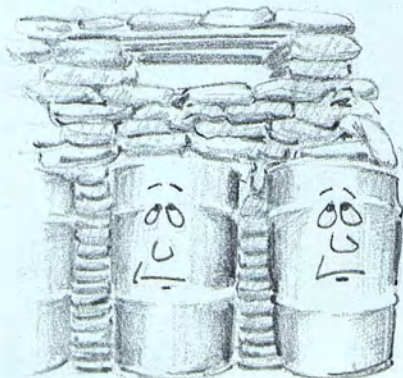
## "The Drum O' Tin"

Verse and Art

By CPT J.W. Ryan

(With Apologies to Rudyard Kipling)

Now in Asia's sunny clime  
Where a man can spend his time  
A'fightin' in the war and tryin' to win,  
An unsung hero stands  
With neither head nor feet nor hands,  
Just a rusty, old and blistered drum o'tin.  
He lands at Cam Ranh quay  
For his duty in the fray  
On the docks and full of oil and lookin' new,  
But the black gold soon is gone  
And his life continues on  
As a bunker or mayhaps a barbeque.  
They may stand to for showers  
Or even growin' flowers  
Or might serve as regimental refuse bin,  
But the bravest of them all  
Are those in halves who fall  
To the duties of the flamin' drum o'tin.





# Culinary Art It's Not, But Best in the Boonies

By SP5 Al Persons



**T**he flankers are out. Directly over the company the sun seems too big, taking too much sky, and it is hot and wet as only the pressure cooker jungle of Southeast Asia can be hot and wet. The jungle is only less thick where they have stopped, and the men have chopped saplings and clusters of bamboo with machetes to make it just big enough. They have been moving since early morning. A soldier at one end of the clearing tosses a smoke grenade to his front and guides in a Huey slick whumping down over the high trees that surround them.

It is lunchtime: Cav style.

From the helicopter come a half dozen Marmite cans, insulated tins that keep food hot for 36 hours. By platoons the company of men lines up to dig into what was practically

unknown to front line soldiers of other wars, a frequent hot meal in the field.

*Grilled hamburgers with catsup and mustard, french fried potatoes, buttered corn, sliced onions and tomatoes, salad and ripe olives, hamburger rolls, and ice cream and vanilla pudding.*

There are cooks everywhere in the Army, but none are more appreciated than those who serve on little circles of Vietnam jungle real estate known as fire support bases. It is these men—magicians of the mess hall and best in the boonies—who supply one of the best morale boosters for field soldiers. Good, hot meals.

*Roast beef with gravy and mashed potatoes, Harvard beets, garden salad, marinated green bean and onion*





*Preparing a meal in Vietnam means box after box of canned foods, stacks of vegetables and many pounds of fresh meat. The steamy kitchens, whether they be in a tent on a firebase or a wood and tin structure in the rear, are not the most comfortable work areas imaginable. And the gas burning, portable stoves merely add to the discomfort.*

salad, and cherry pie.

Any man who is or has been in the Army knows that soldiers like to gripe. Complaining about the Army is their chief recreation and a conversational subject second only to women. Most of the time they complain about the food. But on 1st Cav firebases—especially the firebases—the GIs' food is better today than ever because of the cooks.

*Grilled beef patties, buttered noodles, buttered asparagus, stuffed celery sticks, hot biscuits, yellow cake with mocha butter cream frosting.*

The firebase cook uses the same ingredients as does his counterpart in the rear area, but he works under conditions barely kept from being primitive only by constant vigilance and care. Even so—and ask any Cavalryman—the best food is most often found on firebases.

An example of this is FSB Vivian, where a cook affectionately known as "Mess Daddy" serves up his own proud style of the culinary art. Mess Daddy provides fresh pastry and coffee every night at eight o'clock, plus pizza on Saturday nights. Food is available fifteen hours a day at his kitchen. Fresh rolls and bread are found at every meal; kool aid and milkshakes are available from breakfast until after dinner. And there is a fine variety of courses for every meal.

*Braised beef steak with brown gravy, oven-browned potatoes and buttered peas, sliced cucumber and*

*onion salad or lima beans, a relish tray and apple brown betty.*

Not just "chicken" for dinner, but a choice of chicken fried, barbecued, or in dumplings. Mess Daddy, the artist, can serve up omelettes of cheese, bacon, green pepper, onion, or any combination.

Mess Sergeant First Class C. A. Richmond of Quingood, West Virginia, a 1st Cav firebase cook, told one of his "customers," "Every morning one boy comes in here and insists on a strawberry jelly omelette. If that's what it takes to make him happy, then I'm only too glad to fix it."

At larger mess operations, much bigger than the firebase mess, cooks can seldom favor such individual tastes. But you can still have your eggs cooked to order.

It might seem strange that in the heat of jungle work a man should welcome hot food, but hot meat and potatoes will revive and invigorate him in a way that C-rations, cold or warmed, could never do.

When historians list Medevac and the one-year tour as two examples of fine morale boosters for GIs in Vietnam, they should also add—for the men of the 1st Cav anyway—the cooks who start work three hours before dawn to see that every grunt possible gets his hot fare for that day.

It may not always taste just like Mom's cooking, but, then, Mom doesn't have to cook in Vietnam for 500 men at a time either.



*The work is worth it. It may not always be as colorful as above, but it is always as rich—especially on the firebases, where it really counts.*







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.

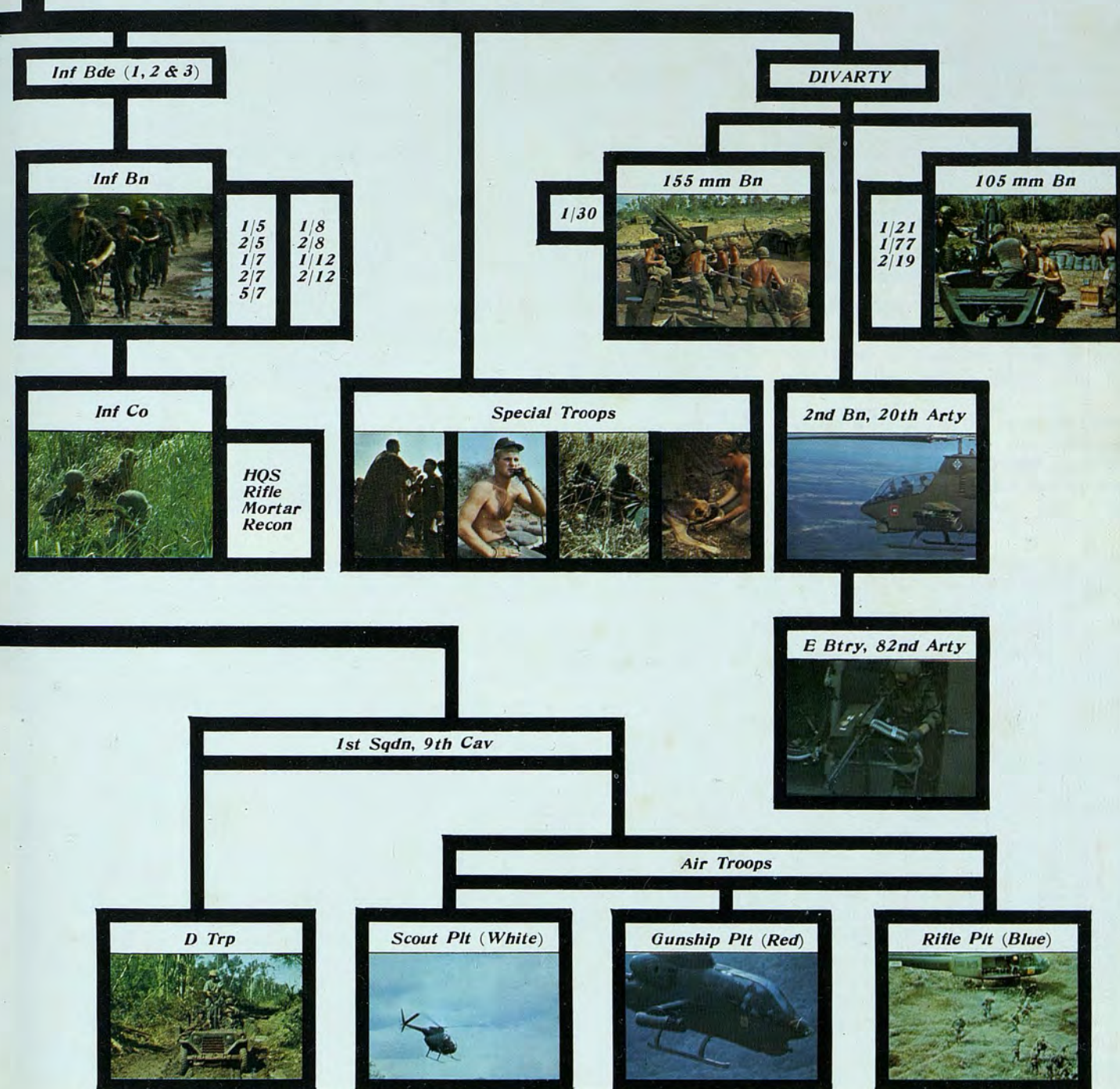
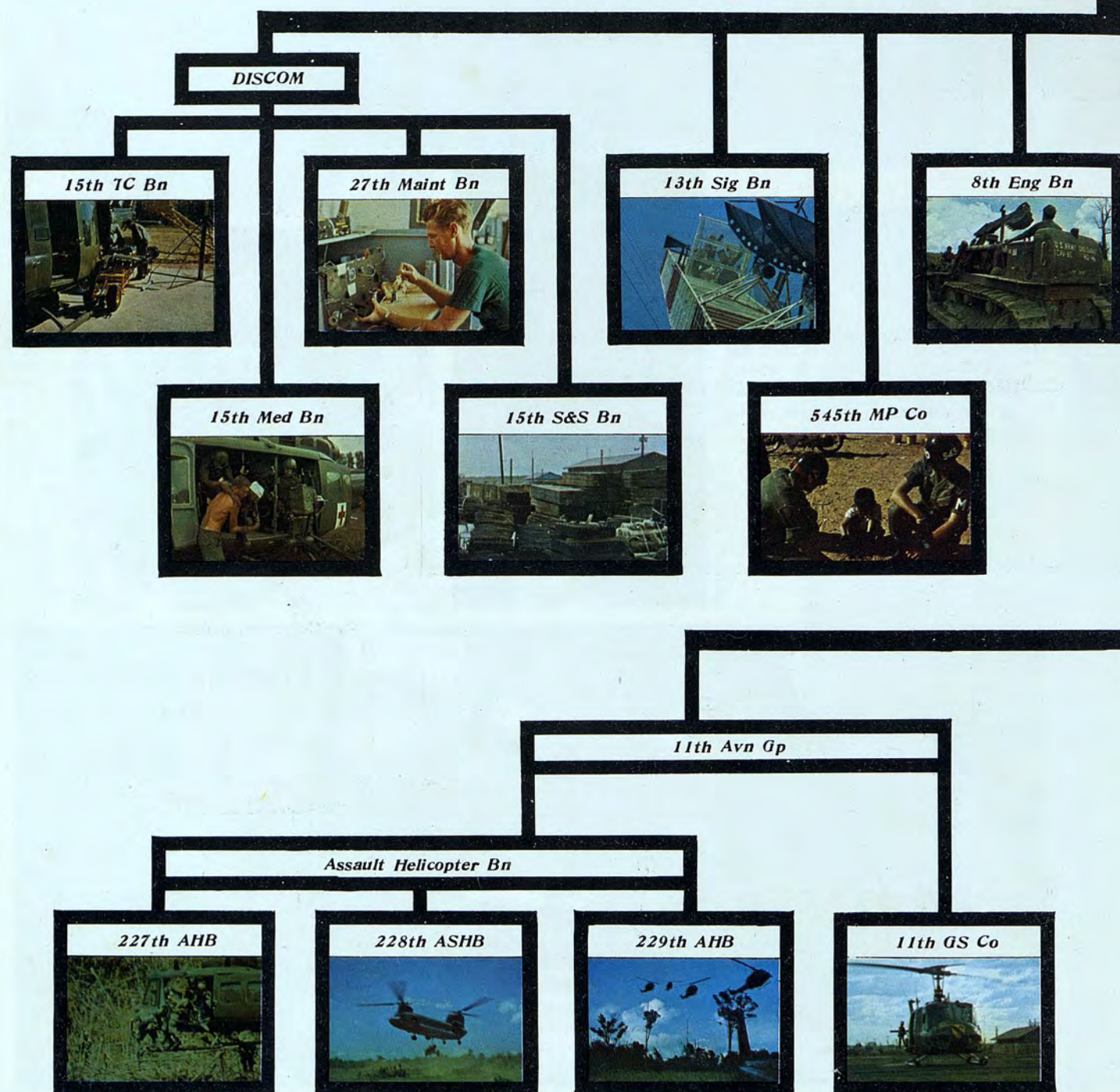
Getting their "first  
with the most"—that's  
the basis of the  
1st Air Cavalry Division.



## The Whole Team



## The Best Team







*The grunt on the ground calls it "the snake." It strikes with rocket fangs—and there is no remedy for its bite.*

## The Escort Cobra...

### Slick Security

By SP4 Ron Merrill

**T**he small jungle clearing was heaving, throwing geysers of earth and bits of trees skyward, its open space being pitted and trees in the woodline being shattered at half-mast by howling artillery rounds.

The avalanche of artillery stopped. Dust and grey-black smoke drifted in the sunlight and momentary silence. Into that quiet with the sun behind them dove sleek Cobra gunships, loosing rockets and long, reaching bursts of minigun fire at the treeline.

As the Cobras pulled out of their dive and climbed back into the blue sky, a bobbing line of Huey slicks packed with

infantry dipped their tails to begin a fluttering descent into the still smoking target.

This was the final cue for the escort Cobras.

From above and behind the last Huey the Cobras nosed forward "on the step" and streaked by the Huey formation, firing rockets and minis all the way down.

The clearing and woodline danced again in the spray of bullets and rockets. Soldiers jumped and scrambled from the slicks as they landed, while machineguns blazed from the ships' sides.





conway

Even as the Hueys lift-off again, scarcely touching down before climbing out quickly, the Cobras make circling dives on the landing zone, lashing the jungle around it until it is declared "green," which means no enemy contact has been made by the infantry below.

It is the Cobra that makes the Huey missions possible. When the slicks lumber to a dead halt only inches over the landing zone, they are then most vulnerable to enemy fire, and the Cobras must provide their deadly suppressive fire if the Hueys are to remain whole, to remain intact.

The men who fly the smoke-bringing Cobras are all among the top graduates of their Army flight training classes. They have to be among the best.

"Actually, we don't have time to worry about flying the ship. It just...well, it just becomes part of you. We have to worry about ammunition expended, protecting the lift birds and the troops on the ground," said a 23-year-old gunship pilot, Captain Albert C. Zimmerman of the 1st Cav.

In the air during a combat assault Cobra pilots are tuned to several different radio frequencies while they scan the jungle for enemy activity. If help is needed they are on hand—immediately. Cobra pilots are almost as close to the ground and the situation as the infantrymen themselves.

Because of that daily proximity with ground troops, the Cobra pilot is revered by the infantry as much or perhaps more so than the pilots of past wars. Unlike today's pilots who fly

*Generally hesitant to fire upon the Cobra (main reason shown to the left), the enemy concentrates their fire upon the Huey "Slicks" (below). But gunship fire-power prevents that fire from being effective.*



conway



sophisticated jets at antiseptic altitudes and almost invisible speed, divorced from the ground troops by that very altitude and speed, the Cobra pilot must fly at treetop level in order to give the close, eyeball support required. He flies with his aircraft belly bared to the easy marksmanship of enemy automatic weapons.

"Oh, sure, we go back to the rear area and live pretty comfortably," said Captain David M. Carpenter, another Cobra aviator. For Carpenter and the others life is much akin to the infantry: "Our lives are filled with hour upon hour of boredom, broken by moments of sheer terror—just like they are for the infantryman," he said.

"And we are aware of the job that the guy on the ground does...guess that's the reason why a gunship pilot will crank his bird under any circumstances to help the grunt in contact," said Carpenter.

Very often the thick jungles of Vietnam do not permit a multi-ship landing, and the lift of ships must be broken up. But the Cobra mission remains unaltered. Through coordination between man and machine, they perform an aerial ballet of dives, sharp turns and steep chandelles, which would make the World War I biplane look like a cumbersome dirigible.

When the birds are split into smaller



*Enroute to a combat assault, a man's thoughts are his own. Overhead the Cobra is there, perhaps out of sight and mind... but there.*



*While the Huey slicks descend to the landing zone below, the gunship's rockets tear into the enemy that may be waiting there. And the Cobra pilot on high continues cranning his neck, watching all sides.*



groups of three or so, the gunships split up, one going with the slicks descending to unload and the other flying security with the birds still airborne.

But the real challenge comes when the lift birds are split into even smaller sorties.

Then the LZ takes on the air of a crowded bus terminal during the 5:00 p.m. rush. Ships are on the ground off-loading passengers who carry their baggage on their backs; only seconds away and behind are more helicopters inbound, ready to drop their load of men; and yet there is another group just leaving the pick-up location enroute to the landing zone. This round-robin maneuver makes the Cobra's job all the more important and difficult.

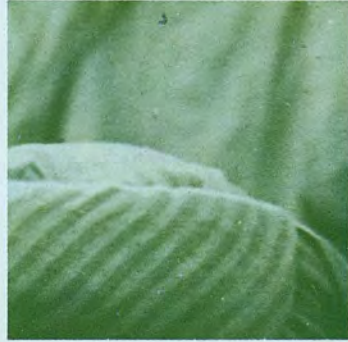
While one Cobra gains altitude to survey the LZ, the jungle, and the traffic pattern of incoming lift birds, the other ship escorts the Hueys into the LZ, meeting them enroute after taking in the first lift.

But regardless of the procedures used on a given day, or of the location and type of LZ, there are certain elements common to the Cobra pilots: they are the most skilled of pilots, their courage is iced, and their necks are sore...from all the craning to watch everything around them at once.

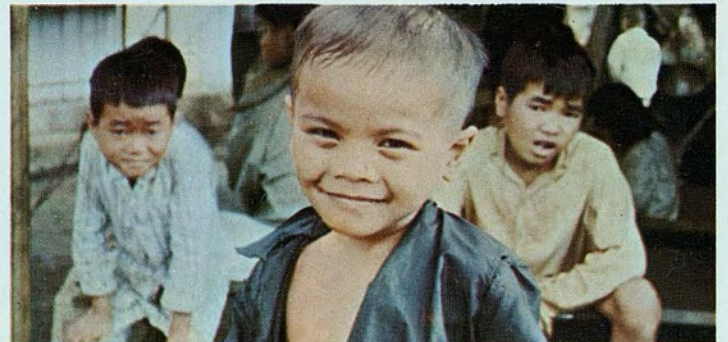
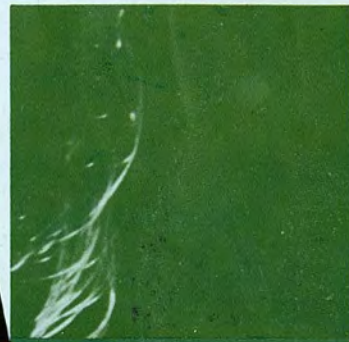
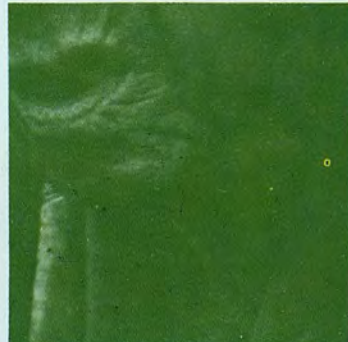
"To provide protection to the lift birds means that many times I have to out-guess them. But this is something you learn with practice," said Zimmerman, "and in the Cav you get plenty of practice."



# The People and



sgroi





# Pacification:

## For Some Vietnamese...

Land.

It was there before everything else. It is the source from which men sustain life itself. It means food and shelter and warmth, the three essentials of life. We grow food in it, graze our animals on

it, take building and fire materials from it. It has been the object of disputes and wars ever since man first stood upright upon it and gazed over his wild domain. It is the core of economics; stock markets crash, gold values fluctuate and

currencies crumple like the thin paper they are, but the land remains and will outlast them all.

Wars are fought for it because men live on it and some have less than others and want more. To free the land is to free the people—to make it safe and productive is to keep the people free and strong. The two, land and people, are inseparable.

Mr. Dung Viet Qui is a farmer, a man of the land, one of many millions. In 1965 he was wrenched from his land by the tides of war that have swept Vietnam for a quarter century. In late 1969 he was given a 10-acre plot of land to farm, and for him the war was beginning to end.

Qui's return to the land was an experiment, and if it proved successful, it could be a harbinger—along with many other such programs throughout South Vietnam—for the return of the land to its people.

That 10-acre world, born of war and hopeful of peace, was an important test, one designed by the 1st Air Cavalry's G-5 or civil affairs people. The program test began at Phuoc Vinh, site of the division's basecamp some 40 miles north of Saigon. Once a thriving agricultural area, much of the land around Phuoc Vinh had gone fallow due to a variety of war-related reasons.

Dung Viet Qui is typical of many. A refugee from a Viet Cong infested area, he emigrated with his family to Phuoc Vinh and took a job hauling garbage for Pacific Architects and Engineers. Qui also worked a small plot of ground behind his one-room thatched home. But without fertilizer, quality seeds or even the rudiments of farm equipment, his produce barely satisfied the needs of his family. With the money he earned from his job he could buy other foods to fill out his family's diet.

But sooner or later that job and the United States Army would be gone, because the foreign army would no longer be needed. When the job didn't exist anymore, Qui and many others like him would be facing an economic vacuum. So it was necessary to find something to fill that void before it threatened.

"The object, of course, is to make the







## a new beginning—

villagers, the people, economically independent," said Major Victor Esch, deputy G-5 for the 1st Cav. "When a farmer can raise hogs on the garbage from our mess halls, why should he spend time and money on feed grain?"

Esch, like hundreds of civil affairs officers and men in Army divisions throughout Vietnam, knew that someday the mess halls would be gone.

Working closely with village leaders, the 1st Cav's civil affairs office purchased a tractor for the village, secured 10 acres of fallow land and selected a man who could farm, a man for an experiment. They chose Dung Viet Qui.

"When we approached him with the idea, he quit his job that very afternoon," said Private First Class Richard Kuhr, a member of the civil affairs office and holder of an agricultural degree from Iowa State University.

Under current plans Qui will rent the tractor from the village for three years, then it will be given to someone else. The 1st Cav provided the initial seed, fertilizer and insecticides for such proven crops as "miracle rice," sorghum (feed grain), corn, bananas, watermelons, peanuts and vegetables.

"With a little luck and a lot of hard work he'll raise enough money crops to buy a tractor after those three years," said Esch. And the South Vietnamese government's new land policy enables him to keep the land he works during that time.

Elsewhere the 1st Cav dispenses \$5,000 a month in aid, plus providing building materials and technical assistance in programs, according to Esch. "In all cases it's the villagers who first conceive the projects and do the work."

At Phuoc Luv, a village near Song Be, a meat shortage was curbed by villagers who built a fish pond, contacted a government fish hatchery to purchase stock and then turned to the Cav for a helicopter to fly the 10,000 fish to their new fishery.

Another diet deficiency was solved when 230 young ducks were flown to Song Be. Rabbits were later brought in and distributed on the basis of need.

A brigade S-5 office campaigned to raise \$10,000 in dona-

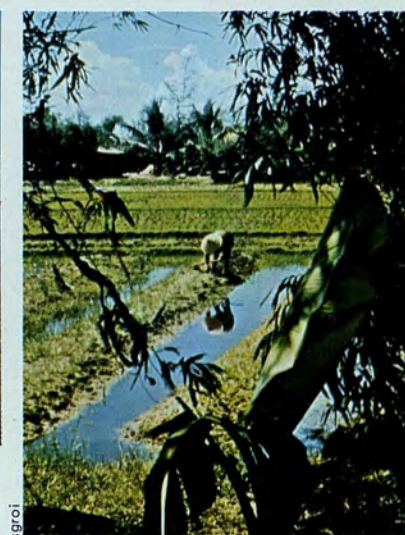
## a return to the land

tions for half the construction cost of a Vietnamese high school, then later provided technical aid needed to get a great many power tools operational after some delay.

Some \$282,000 worth of building supplies were distributed during the summer of 1969, resulting in three hospitals, eleven schools, four orphanages and one dispensary.

These are but a few of the 1st Cav's civil affairs projects. The list is long and varied, but it has one common strain running through it: help the people help themselves.

That, in brief, is the Cav's pacification policy.







fallscheer



*While the war proceeds, the two allies together steady the plowshare of economy to rebuild this war-torn land. When peace comes, the Vietnamese will then be able to renew their rich agrarian society.*





**THE FIRST TEAM**



**STAFF**

Dave Wolfe, editor  
Ron Doss, lay-out & art design  
Joe Kamalick, copy editor  
Douglas Crow, art design

**PHOTOGRAPHERS**

Paul Sgroi  
Terry Moon  
Bill Ahrbeck  
Bob Borchester

Bob Conway  
Dean Sharp  
Len Fallscheer  
Dennis Thornton  
Jim McCabe  
Vic Fitzwater

**EDITORIAL CONSULTANTS**

MAJ J. D. Coleman, Information Officer  
CPT J. W. Ryan, Deputy Information Officer  
SGT Roger Ruhl, Publications NCOIC





Freed Forever From the Tyranny of Terrain

