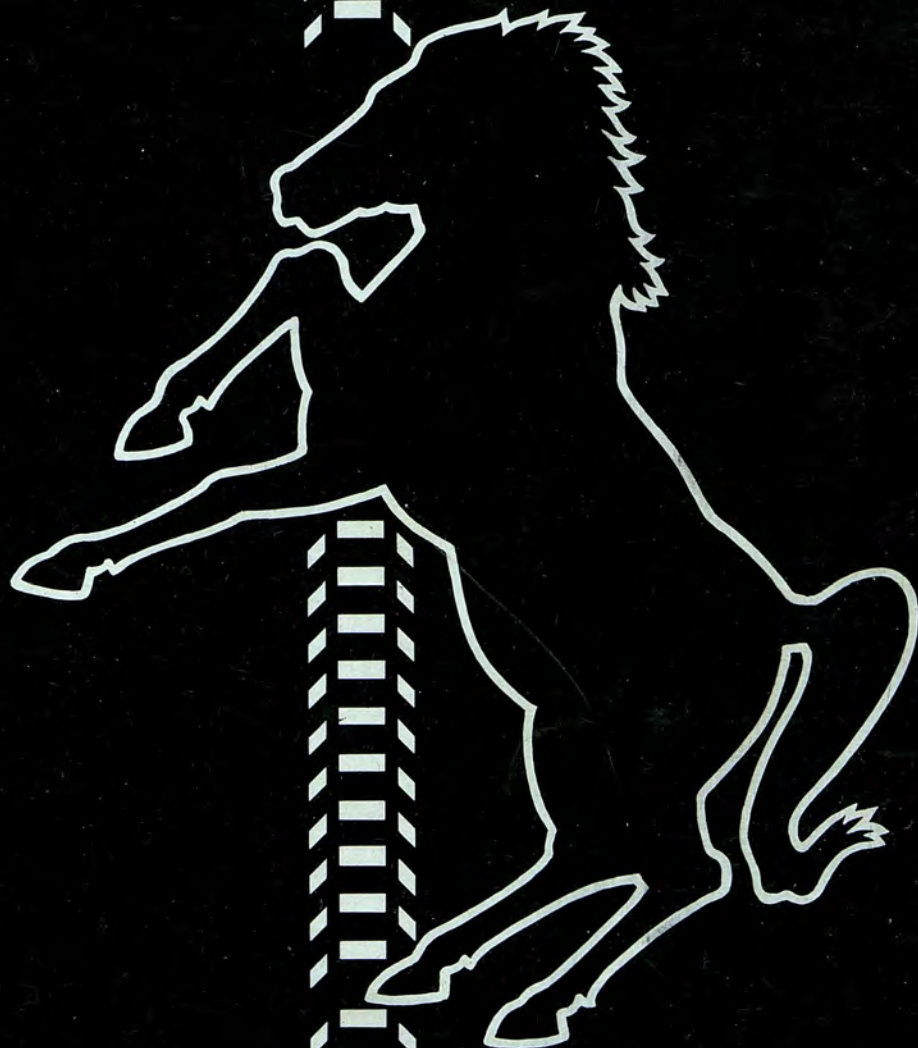


The **BLACKHORSE**



SUMMER 1970

NUMBER THREE



BLACKHORSE



THE SEMI-ANNUAL PUBLICATION OF THE 11TH ARMORED CAVALRY REGIMENT

SUMMER 1970

NUMBER THREE

To the Blackhorse	2
Leaders of the Blackhorse	3
A History of the Regiment	6
Taking the Barb off the Fishhook	11
Gaining the Inside Track	16
Area of Operations	20
Let's Go, 1969-1970	22
Valor and Honor	36
In Memoriam	40



6



11



16



22

The 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment
COL Donn A. Starry, Commanding Officer
COL Robert L. Bradley, Executive Officer
1LT Daniel I. Davis, Information Officer
PFC Joseph J. Marchesani, Editor

The BLACKHORSE is an authorized, semi-annual publication of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, published by the 17th Public Information Detachment. It is designed to orient newly assigned troopers and to serve as a memento for those who leave the Regiment. The views and opinions expressed in this publication

are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. Front Cover Design, by Marchesani. Inside front Cover, by Davis: A Sheridan stands ready. Back Cover, by Parker: Troopers from the 1st Squadron mount up to move out on an operation. Inside Back Cover: The Regiment's colors and standard.

To The BLACKHORSE...



This Blackhorse Magazine gives you who are newly assigned to the Regiment a glimpse of what life in the Blackhorse has been like over the past few months. For those of you who leave our ranks, Blackhorse magazines provide a look back at some of the things you've participated in with the Blackhorse. It's your magazine, for it records in a very small way some of the places you've been, the faces you've known, and a bit of the sweat and grime that typify cavalry life in Vietnam. To those who join—welcome; you belong to a great regiment with a proud history—I know you'll add to that history. To those who depart—good luck and God speed; you march away in a distinguished company.

"Allons"

Donn A. Starry

DONN A. STARRY
Colonel, Armor
41st Commander

Commanders

in Vietnam...

William W. Cobb
Roy W. Farley
Jack MacFarlane
Leonard D. Holder
Charles R. Gorder
George S. Patton
James H. Leach
Donn A. Starry

7 Sep 1966—8 May 1967
8 May 1967—5 Dec 1967
5 Dec 1967—12 Mar 1968
12 Mar 1968—21 Mar 1968
22 Mar 1968—15 Jul 1968
15 Jul 1968—6 Apr 1969
6 Apr 1969—6 Dec 1969
6 Dec 1969—present

The LEONARD D. HOLDER Museum



SMITH

On March 1, 1970, General Creighton W. Abrams, Commander United States Army, Vietnam, and Colonel Donn A. Starry, Regimental Commander, dedicated the 11th Armored Cavalry Museum. The museum was named for Colonel Leonard D. Holder, the Regiment's 37th Commander, who was killed in a helicopter crash near Bien Hoa on March 21, 1968. Colonel Holder's son, Captain William D. Holder, participated in the dedication ceremony. As guest of honor at the dedication, General Abrams said, "Many troopers have sacrificed much in this struggle; no one has given more than Colonel Holder." The museum is a visual history of the Blackhorse Regiment since its arrival in Vietnam in late 1966. Its collection of enemy artifacts ranges from a huge Soviet 120mm mortar to a Viet Cong crossbow.

General Abrams and Captain Holder, as they unveil the marker at the Holder Museum dedication.

... and before Vietnam

FRANCIS MOORE	1901-1903
EARL D. THOMAS	1903-1907
JAMES PARKER	1907-1913
JAMES CROCKETT	1913-1915
N. I. McCLURE	1915-1916
JAMES B. ERWIN	1916-1918
CLAUDE E. SWEEZY	1918-1920
JOHN M. JEMKINS	1920-1923
HERBERT J. BRES	1923-1926
LEON B. KROMER	1926-1928
ROGERS S. FITCH	1928-1930
BEN LEAR	1930-1932
R.M. PARKER	1932-1935
TROUP MILLER	1935-1938
HOMMER M. GRONINGER	1938-1940
HAROLD M. RAYNER	1940-1942
B. MORROW	1942-1943
WLILIAM H.W. REINBERG	1943-1944
HARRY W. CANDLER	1944
ANDREW A. FRIERSON	1944-1946
WILLIAM S. BIDDLE	1946-1948
INACTIVE STATUS	1948-1951
CHESTER WILLINGHAM	1951
BRAINARD S. COOK	1951-1952
CARL N. SMITH	1952-1954
B.W. HECKEMEYER	1954-1955
ARTHUR D. POINIER	1955-1956
ALLEN D. HULSE	1956-1958
JAMES W. SNEE	1958-1959
WALTER GREENWOOD	1959-1960
ROBERT L. ERLNBUSHH	1960-1961
GEORGE M. SEIGNIOUS	1961-1963
CHESTER E. KENNEDY	1963-1964
DONALD P. BOYER	1964-1965

Regimental Command Sergeants Major

Arthur W. Hawthorne
Donald E. Horn
Daniel J. Mulcahey
Paul W. Squires
Robert J. Crowe
Donald E. Horn



CSM Donald E. Horn

A History of the BLACKHORSE REGIMENT



A column of the horse cavalry winds through the hills into Mexico with General John Pershing's 1916 Punitive Expedition.

The attacked Troop quickly comes on line, firing with everything it has, and assaults. During the advance of the tanks and ACAVs, those who can hear the past seem to catch the echoed din of muted bugle calls, the distant rhythm of thundering hooves, and the seventy year thrust of an aggressive tradition. From the black-horsed troopers who charged insurgents in the Philippines to the track-mounted troopers who search out the insurgents in Vietnam, the men of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment have habitually struck forth from the forefront of battle.

Initially organized at Fort Meyer, Virginia in 1901, the Regiment was soon tested in the Philippines. There, its first battle streamer, "Samar 1902" was earned, and there, in the spirit of its motto, Allons (Let's go!), the Blackhorse began its energetic career. As part of General John Pershing's expedition against the Mexican bandit, Pancho Villa, the 11th Cavalry fought the

Villistas and struggled with the dry, dry desert heat from March 1916 to February 1917. The cavalrymen's endurance on forced marches and their swift and skillful tactics were singled out by the *New York World* as an outstanding achievement, "one to the lasting credit of the Regiment."

Although the 11th Cavalry did not go overseas as a unit in World War I, several of its officers and troopers formed the centers of other combat units. In the years between the two World Wars, the Regiment ex-

The Symbols of a Proud Tradition Patch Crest

Since it was only a regiment, the 11th Armored Cavalry was not authorized a shoulder patch when it first came to Vietnam. Because of our mission and our operations as an independent unit, the Chief of Staff, General Harold K. Johnson, in February 1967, authorized us to wear our own distinctive patch. We chose traditional cavalry colors of red and white for the background, and a rearing black horse in honor of our nickname.

The Regiment's service in the Philippines is signified by crossed bolos with red blades and blue hilts, and its participation in General Pershing's Mexican Expedition by a green cactus plant. The Regimental symbol, a black horse, is represented above the crest, and the unit motto, ALLONS (Let's Go), underscores the design. Black, and gold, the colors of the Regiment, are prominent throughout. The crest was adopted on 12 December 1934.



Troopers from the 11th Cavalry take up fighting positions during a practice alert in Germany near the Czechoslovakian border.

U S ARMY

perienced the dramatic change-over from horses to armor, and with the change, received a new name, the 11th Tank Battalion, 10th Armored Division. Adapting to new tactics and equipment, the Battalion was thrust into the European theater, where it served with honor in France, Belgium, and Germany. Two other representatives of the 11th Cavalry, the 11th Armored Group and the 11th Cavalry Group, also fought in Europe. The 11th Armored Group distinguished itself at the Battle of the Bulge, when it took over the entire sector which the 102nd Division had previously controlled, and the 11th Cavalry Group fought with eminence for two years in Normandy, the Rhineland, and Arolennes-Alsace.

Disbanded between 1948 and 1951, the elements of the 11th Cavalry Regiment were reactivated to instruct armor tactics during the Korean conflict. In 1957, the unit was assigned to Germany as part of the NATO forces, and was given the strategically important job of patrolling the border between West Germany and Czechoslovakia. After seven years of outstanding performance protecting the bor-

der, the Regiment once again returned home in August 1964. Then, in March 1966, the Blackhorse was alerted for movement overseas to Southeast Asia, and immediately began training for combat in a counter-insurgency environment.

The Regiment arrived at *Vung Tau*, South Vietnam on 7 September 1966. Adapting quickly to the war, the 11th Cav completed its Blackhorse Base Camp at *Long Giao* by November, and began reconnaissance in force (RIF) operations in the provinces around Saigon. These operations were directed at suspected Viet Cong headquarters, and clearly established the rapid movement and massive fire power which made the Blackhorse armor flexible and potent.

In addition, the Regiment worked into March 1968 to secure and pacify *Long Khanh* Province. And in September and October 1967, the Cav helped to insure free participation of the local civilian population in the Vietnamese General Election.

When the crisis of Tet, 1968, began, the Blackhorse troopers were seasoned and ready to respond. In a demonstration of the Regiment's great mobility, the

Blackhorse, after a road march of eighty miles, was in position to provide support in the *Bien Hoa* and *Long Binh* areas just fourteen hours after its alert. In their counter-offensive and subsequent security operations, the men of the Blackhorse inflicted heavy casualties as they drove the enemy back.

The enemy had increased his activity in *Long Khanh* Province, however, by the end of April 1968, and the 11th Cavalry was assigned to destroy these enemy forces and to interdict their supply routes. In accomplishing this mission, the Regiment fought its way through 115 miles of dense jungle.

Then, with the enemy again threatening Saigon through the area around *Long Binh* and *Bien Hoa*, the Cavalry was called back from *Long Khanh*. After two days of fierce fighting, the Blackhorse had forced the enemy away, maimed several of his major units, and broken his power to threaten this critical area with a large-scale attack.

In the last part of 1968 and into 1969, the weight of the Regiment's attention shifted towards the Cambodian border. In operations around *Lam Son*, the

Catcher's Mitt, and the Iron Triangle, the Blackhorse was charged with ending the use of these locations as secure staging areas for the enemy. During "Operation Montana Raider," in April and May 1969, the Regiment's reconnaissance in force maneuvers were extended into the areas northwest of *Dau Tieng*, south of the Cambodian "Fish-hook," and around the *Minh Thanh* Rubber Plantation. One tactic which especially added to the Cav's success was the com-

bination of air cavalry and armor to strike swifter lethal blows at the enemy.

Successful in war, the 11th Armored Cavalry has also proved successful in its peace-building efforts. The Blackhorse worked with the local population, helping them to secure their villages and giving the local Vietnamese units added training and confidence. At the same time, the Regiment provided many villages with medical care, building materials, and other supplies to improve their

conditions.

A lot has happened to the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment since its beginning in 1901. The organization has changed, adding an Air Cavalry Troop, an engineer company, medical and other specialized support units. The tactics and the equipment have changed, too. But the most important element, the troopers of the 11th, continue their tradition of excellence, the continuity which keeps the Blackhorse Regiment tracking forward. **B**

Leaving Blackhorse Base Camp

SMITH



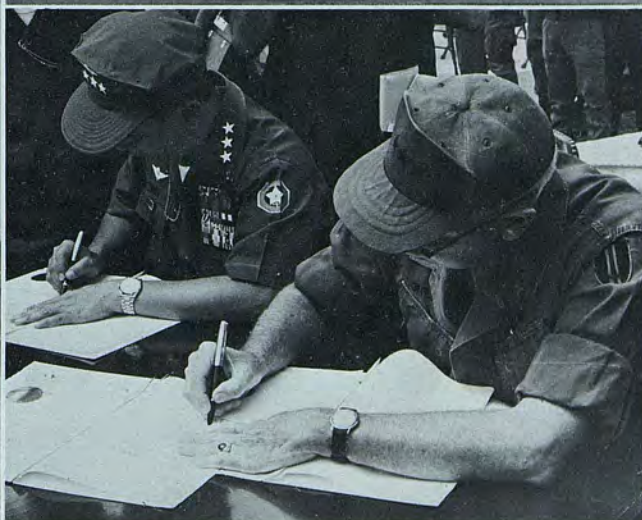
When the Regiment first opened its Blackhorse Base Camp in Long Khanh province shortly after its arrival in 1966, the flags of the Republic of Vietnam and the United States were raised side by side (above, left). In the months that followed, foundations were laid for permanent buildings (top, right), like the Headquarters



U S ARMY



SMITH



SMITH

building (center, right) which the 11th Cav occupied until 1969. To mark the allied progress in the war and the shift to Vietnamization, the Blackhorse facilities were formally transferred to the 18th ARVN Division as Lt. Gens. Minh and Mildren signed the turnover agreement (bottom, right).

CAMPAIGNS



Samar, 1902

Mexico, 1916-1917

Normandy

Northern France

Rhineland

Ardennes-Alsace

Central Europe

RVN Counter Offensive Phase II, 1 Jul 66 — 31 May 67

RVN Counter Offensive Phase III, 1 Jun 67 — 29 Jan 68

RVN Tet Counter Offensive, Jan 68 — 1 Apr 68

RVN Counter Offensive Phase IV, 2 Apr 68 — 30 Jun 68

RVN Counter Offensive Phase V, 1 Jul 68 — 1 Nov 68

RVN Counter Offensive Phase VI, 2 Nov 68 — 23 Feb 69

RVN Tet 1969 Counter Offensive, 24 Feb 69 — 8 Jun 69

Present Unnamed Offensive, 9 Jun 69 — Unknown

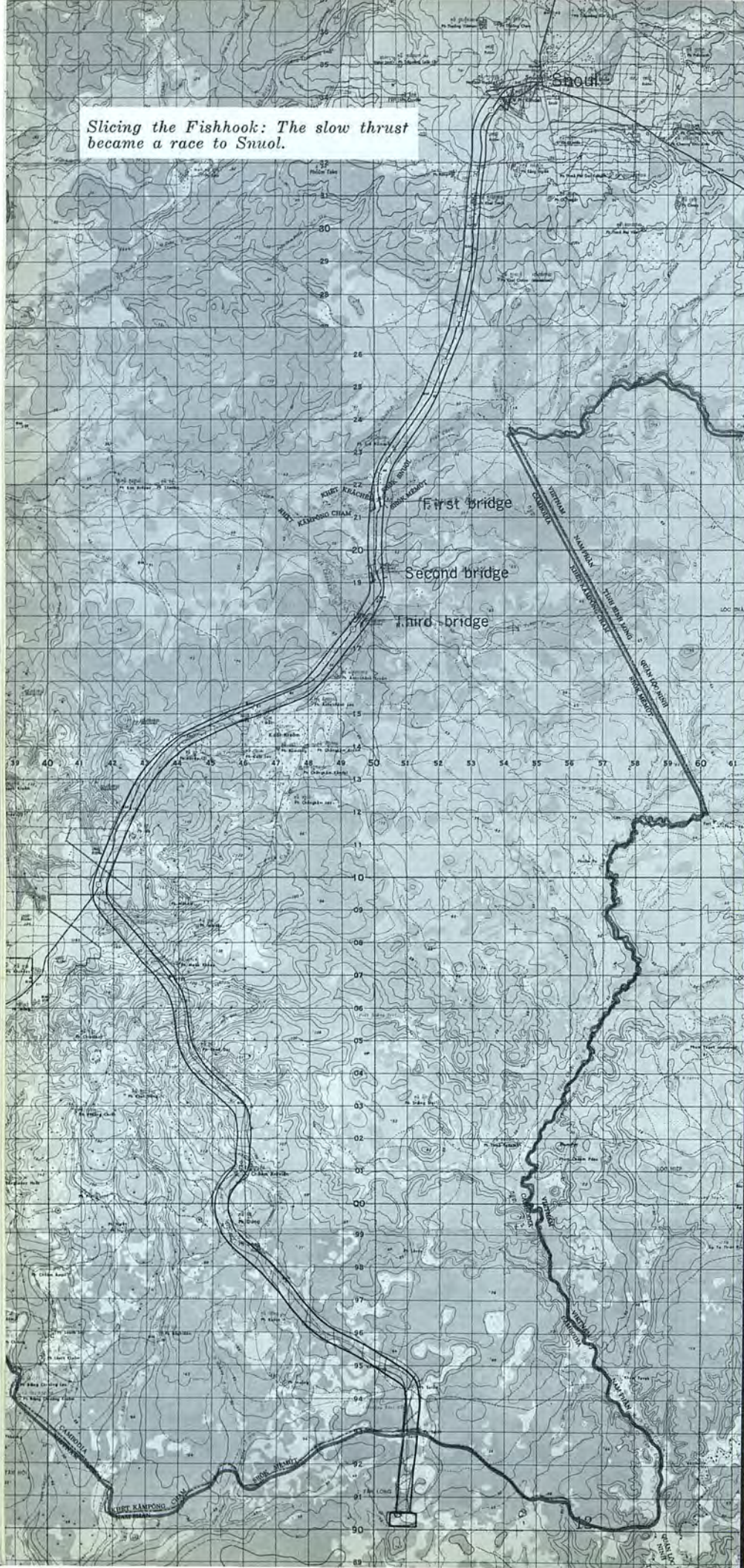


Evil Troop crosses the marsh that marks the Cambodian border.

Taking the Barb Off the Fishhook

To some it seemed a Rubicon crossed. On the morning of May 1, as President Nixon addressed the American people, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment tanks slogged across an open marsh, forded a narrow stream, and pushed into the Fishhook area of Cambodia, seventy miles north of Saigon. The Blackhorse was thrusting into a network of Communist basecamps and supply areas which the enemy had been using for the past five years to launch attacks on allied troops and Vietnamese population centers. And it wasn't alone.

Slicing the Fishhook: The slow thrust became a race to Snuol.



To the west, a battalion of armor and a battalion of mechanized infantry from the 25th Division were pushing up from Katum. To the east, a squadron of ARVN armor was moving to seal the flank of the Fishhook. And three battalions of the Third ARVN Airborne Brigade were being inserted well inside the enemy base area, ahead of the armor thrust.

"In a sense, it's classic tank warfare," Colonel Donn A. Starry, 41st Commander of the Blackhorse, said afterward. "Airmobile forces are inserted in deep, and the cavalry links up with them."

A classic armor tactic indeed, but it was no breezy cavalry charge. Instead, it was slow, deliberate, methodical. Second Squadron led the way, with Colonel Starry in an armored assault vehicle near the front of the column. Third Squadron followed slightly to the east. First Squadron, for the moment, remained in Vietnam securing the fire support bases below the border and keeping the supply lines open.

The armor column rumbled slowly over flat open fields and through double canopy jungle and bamboo thickets. It swept through an abandoned NVA village and then, in the late afternoon, met its first serious resistance. An Air Cav Troop Light Observation Helicopter, reconning to the right flank of the lead vehicles, spotted movement near a zig-zagging trench line. The LOH engaged the movement, and suddenly the whole trench line opened fire. Moments later the armored vehicles were hit from three sides, but they were ready. They blasted back with .50 caliber machine guns and Sheridan cannister rounds, then called in tactical air strikes. When the smoke cleared, fifty enemy lay dead on the battlefield.

The sharp contact also claimed two American lives. PFC Paul M. Dailey of Parkersburg, West Virginia, and SP4 Keith S. Arneson of Portland, Oregon, were killed by a rocket propelled grenade. They were the first U.S. soldiers to die in combat in Cambodia.

The second day, the armor column continued in a northwesterly direction toward the projected link-up point with the 5th Battalion of the Third ARVN Airborne Brigade. Now deep in

the enemy sanctuary, the Blackhorse troopers passed numerous supply dumps and bunker complexes. A scout helicopter spotted an extensive laundry facility—and a tactical airstrike festooned the trees for hundreds of meters around with enemy clothes and uniforms.

But it was not until the next morning, when the link-up was complete, that the search of the enemy base areas began in earnest. Actually, very little searching was necessary. For there was an abundance of hootches, bunkers, vegetable gardens, and food and weapons caches. An almost festive mood prevailed.

One LOH pilot used his chopper to round up a bunch of stray water buffalo and then drove them into the forward command post. E Troop found a cluster of bicycle parts, heaps of rice and vegetables, and a 35 lb bag peanuts. M Company uncovered about 200 cubic feet of rockets and grenades that now would never be used against Americans. Best of all, the enemy wasn't shooting—he was giving up. Five NVA soldiers, abandoned by their units, were brought in without a fight.

By all accounts, it was a good day, and the next day promised to be even more productive. But that night a change of mission crackled over the radio. Finding the enemy caches would be left to the ARVNs; the 11th Cav was to drive 25 miles northeast to Snuol, a Cambodian city at the junction of tactically crucial Routes 7 and 13. The regiment was given 48 hours to get there and root the Communist forces from the city.

The thrust into the Fishhook had been slow and deliberate, but now it was time to move. In the early morning of the fourth day, the Blackhorse armor crashed along a narrow trail, heading for the asphalt of Route 7. By one o'clock in the afternoon, the first vehicles were on the blacktop racing north.

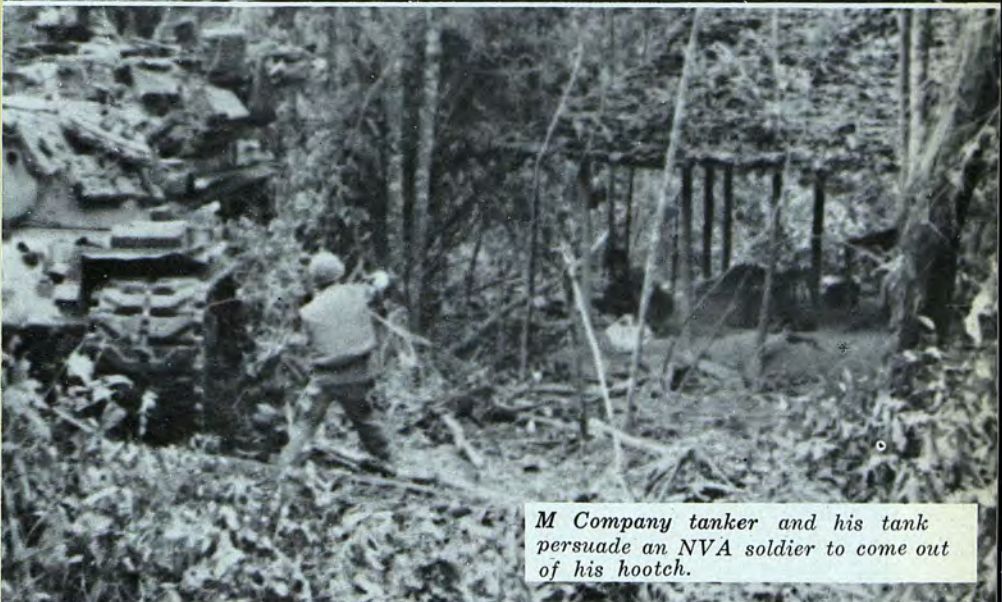
On the road the tracks hit speeds up to 35 miles per hour. "The last time we did this was during Tet of '68, when we headed back to reinforce Long Binh," Colonel Starry remarked. But it wasn't all a wild dash; the Communists saw to that. Understanding the value of the road, they

PARKER



Under the gun: Colonel Starry (tee shirt and cigar) riding with lead elements just north of the border.

SMITH



M Company tankster and his tank persuade an NVA soldier to come out of his hootch.

PARKER



May Day in the Fishhook: E Troop cavalrymen engage hidden enemy on the first day.



Fifth day: Lead elements of 2nd Squadron arrive at the third destroyed bridge.

had taken precautions. Three key bridges on the way to Snuol had been destroyed. So three rivers had to be spanned by Cav ingenuity—and Armored Vehicle Launched Bridges.

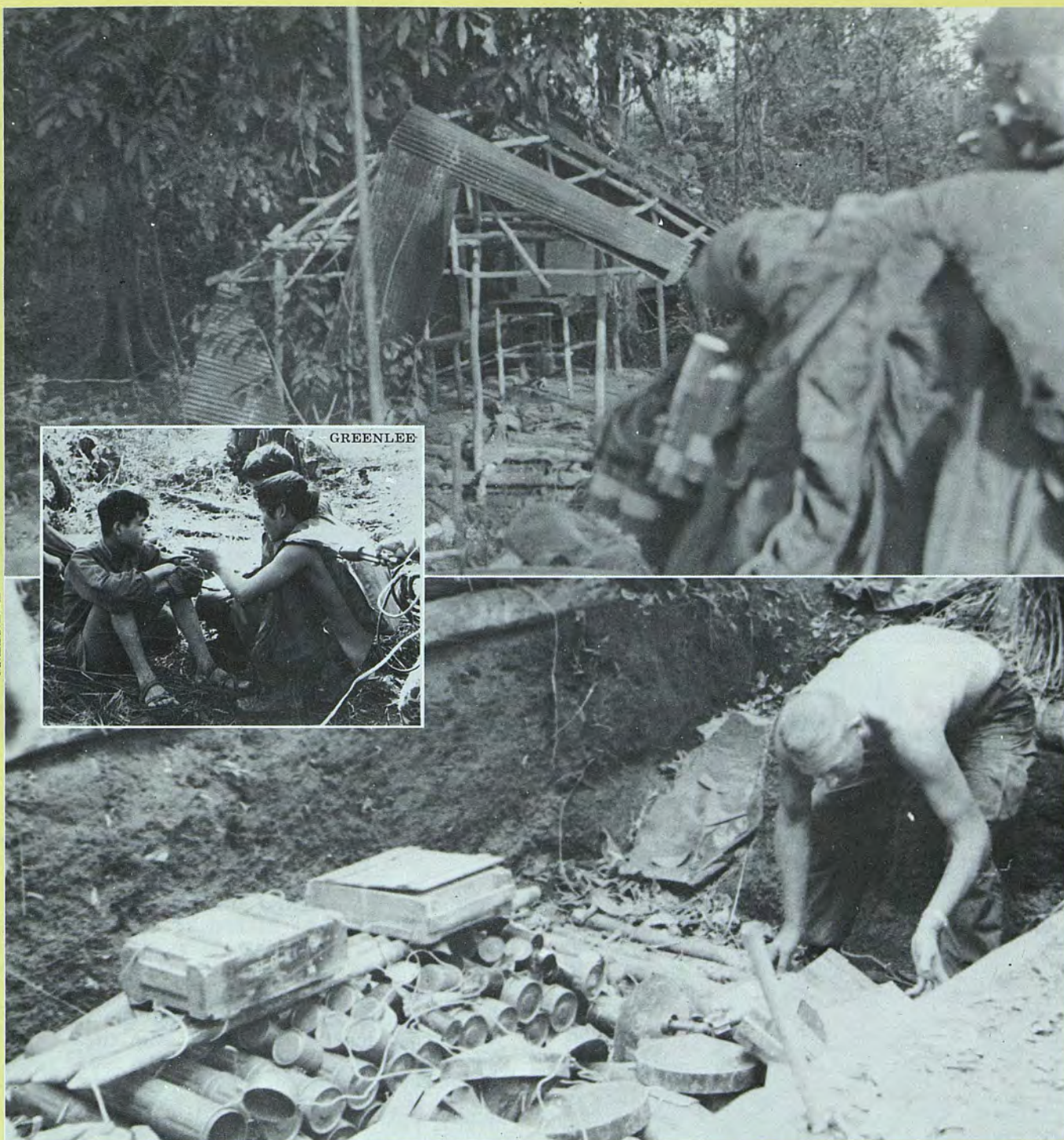
Heading north to Snuol, the Blackhorse cavalymen rolled through several small hamlets. Cambodian villagers stared open-mouthed at the growling machinery. Some tossed the Americans fruit and received boxes of C rations in return. Instead of

the familiar “V” sign, the Cambodians, hands folded, rendered the traditional Buddhist bow of greeting. For the troopers it was a new experience, and inevitably it led to comparisons. “Here when you give the people some C’s, they thank you,” one said. But not everyone liked the idea of Cambodia and someone else remarked, “Me, I’d rather be back in War Zone C.”

But they were a long way from War Zone C. Lead elements of

Second Squadron spent the fourth night between the first two bridge sites. By the afternoon of the next day they had crossed the third river and were forging into Snuol.

There the enemy was waiting. Probing the city, a reconnaissance element from E Troop received a fusillade of small arms and RPG fire. In short order the tracks were reinforced by H Company tanks. They blazed away at the hidden enemy for



Second Squadron trooper (top) takes a look at what's left of an NVA hootch in the Fishhook.

ARVN interpreter (inset) interrogating NVA soldier found wandering in the Fishhook.

Third Squadron trooper (bottom) checks out huge weapons cache on the third day.

nearly thirty minutes, before calling in tactical airstrikes. When the armored vehicles finally pulled back, the southern portion of Snuol was smoking rubble. And an estimated NVA regiment was silent.

Meanwhile, on the airstrip just south of the city, Colonel Starry, Major Frederick M. Franks, the 2nd Squadron Operations Officer,

and four others were attempting to coax two enemy soldiers from their bunkers. One came out, but the other didn't. Instead, he threw a Chicom grenade, wounding the six Americans.

But the enemy paid heavily for his brief stand at Snuol. Field reports set the number of dead at 138. Two NVA soldiers and two .51 caliber anti-aircraft machine

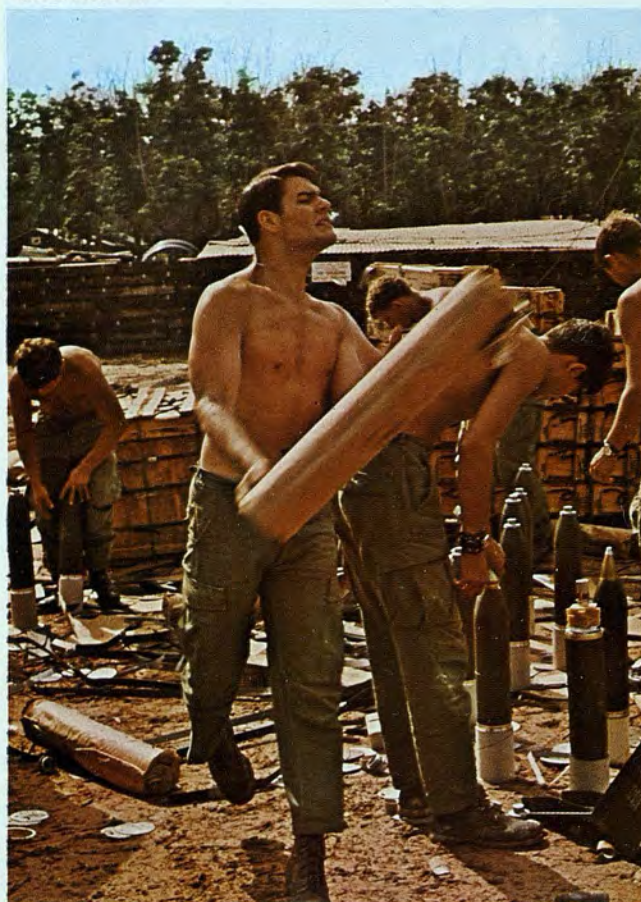
guns were captured.

The morning of the sixth day, 11th ACR tracks rolled through the city, meeting no resistance. Some of the 6,000 Cambodian civilians, who had left Snuol two days earlier, now began to trickle back. The Blackhorse controlled the road junction. And the enemy was fleeing north.

B

Gaining the Inside Track

MARCHESANI



You grew up and went to school along the way. And at nineteen, you were doing the things a young man does in the world. And then Uncle Sam stepped in, and you, Jim Profita, found yourself detected, inspected, selected, and injected for service in the United States Army. That was months ago. Now, as Private James C. Profita, you are on your way to Southeast Asia.

Past Cam Ranh Bay, the freedom bird begins the glide and descent that will end the long flight from Oakland. Maybe you spend those remaining minutes in the air looking out the window, getting your first impression of the unfamiliar countryside with its clusters of lush green and baked browns and with an occasional hamlet, road, or crater that remains as a reminder of past violence. Maybe you just lean back in your seat to

Between operations, PFC Profita helps the mortar crew break down ammunition.



Before you can mount your track and go busting jungle, there are a few side trips.

SMITH

MARCHESANI



spend a few moments quietly wondering what it will be like, how quickly the year will pass, what they are doing at home. You already suspect that you will be thinking about home quite a bit.

I'm really close to my family and my fiancée. Really close. That's what I miss the most. I'm not complaining, but if I could be here and know that I could go home every night—even on weekends—I wouldn't mind this. But that's the hardest part.

But you know too well that the freedom bird will not be going back, for you, for another year. Someone across the aisle packs up his black-jack deck, for the time being, and cracks a final joke for the stewardess. And then, in less time than you have to think about it, comes the approach to the landing strip, and you have touched down at the 8th

Aerial Port, *Bien Hoa*, in the Republic of Vietnam.

After seventeen hours in the same seat, you are ready to move again. Everybody is, and the aisle jams up until the crush of jungle-fatigue clad bodies eases into a file that passes through the exit, down the ramp, across the apron, and into the terminal. For a few minutes you wait, while your loosely packed and not quite filled duffel bag—all the world you carried with you from the States—is unloaded. Overhead, the fans contend with the warm Vietnamese air. "I'm sorry," says the public address system, "but incoming replacement personnel are not to use the snack bar or base exchange until their American currency has been converted into Military Payment Certificates (and what's that? you ask yourself). When your baggage has been unloaded, pick it up at

the counter, walk to the left around the corner, and board the buses for the 90th Replacement Battalion in *Long Binh*."

The ride to *Long Binh* is short, but you pay a lot of attention, because it is your first close-up look at the local life. For a few minutes the bus winds around the road inside the barbed wire and bunkers of the perimeter, as you try to decide just how recently they might have been attacked. Then for a few minutes it rolls past some scattered Vietnamese houses and then past a collection of them that looks big enough to be *Long Binh* itself. And then the bus is inside another perimeter, and you are trying to get yourself and your bag off.

The 90th Replacement, your first home away from the States, has all the reassuring continuity of the army chow and rumors and bunks and barracks that you

SMITH



SMITH



SMITH



At newby school, you learn about the things that can hurt you, like enemy booby-traps (top), the things that can help you, like the M-60 machine gun you test fire (center), and a touch of military discipline in daily formations (bottom).

already know so well, except that a barracks is called a "hootch" now, and the latrine has wandered off by itself. There are also three mandatory shipping formations every day, and just in case you don't ship right away, there is an endless round of details to help you pass the time. But soon you know about MPC funny-money, with its paper nickels, dimes, and quarters, and you get your TA-50 issue to help fill out your duffel bag. With your newly acquired unit assignment, you are ready to leave the ranks of transient personnel. Somewhere in the jumble of coded letters and numbers on your supplementary orders you find *11 AR CAV REG.* You are going to join the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment. You say good-bye to the guys who trained with you and the guys you met since Oakland, and heave your bag onto the bus that will take you to the 11th Cav's rear headquarters. Then you swap rumors with the guys who are riding with you.

"Workhorse Country," announces the red and white sign with the black horse. You have arrived at the 11th Cav, where you find out that you are going to the 3rd Squadron. You have a return address again, and you can begin to wait for letters from home. When you write, you can tell them that you will be driving a track, an Armored Cavalry Assault Vehicle. You draw your weapon. But before you climb into the driver's mount and go out busting jungle, there are a few side trips: first, to Finance for the important business of getting your pay straight, and then to the Regiment's replacement school for incoming personnel—commonly known as newby school or dumb-dumb school.

Newby school is a week-long series of classes on the 11th Cav's ways and means of operating in Vietnam. It tells you who is out to get you, what they are equipped with, and all the things you have to use against them. And you are told by the people who have been there. It means an extra week of living out of your duffel bag, fending off mosquitoes without a net, double-bunking at close quarters, and restriction to the school area, but the immediate inconvenience might help to save your life later on.

That's what the school is about.

To be honest, I think it's great, really great. Very much worth it. It teaches a lot...ACAV's Sheridan's, 50's, 60's. If some guys don't know anything about radios, it teaches that. Or maps. It was a good refresher for me. I had forgotten a lot, so it really helped. It teaches you what to expect. Maybe it scares you a little bit, but it's good training if you're going out to the field at all.

By the time you leave newby school to join your Troop you will know about sappers and RPG's and how they can hurt you, how a sapper team is trained to slip through a concertina wire obstacle in less than a minute, how rockets can pierce the

armor plate on tanks and ACAV's. But you will also be introduced to the things that will protect you, the vehicles, the M-60 and M-50 machine guns, the M-79 grenade launcher, C-4 explosive and demolition cord, infra-red scopes, star-lite scopes, searchlights, radios, mine detectors, *Hoi Chanh*, security procedures, and tactics. You zero your weapon, and you come out feeling you will be on top. You already had some training back in the States, but now you are ten thousand miles closer to the two-way ranges, and the refresher is reassuring.

And your introduction to the realities of Vietnam may also include after-class activities, like pulling bunker guard or waiting

with the reactionary force. It is practice, but like much of the practice that you will be getting as your year passes, it is not simulated. And the day soon comes, when you leave the school, draw the rest of your field equipment, take your crammed and companionable duffel bag, and join your unit.

If you are Jim Profita, your unit is the 3rd Squadron's provisional mortar battery, and you spend your time working a 4.2 inch mortar at the base camp and driving a track-mounted mortar on missions out in the field. But whoever you are, you concentrate on your job, prepared to live with what you have learned, prepared to learn as you live.

B
GIANNINI



A K Troop mortar track works out. The 4.2 inch mortars of the 3rd Squadron can be set up at fire support bases, or mounted on ACAV's for more mobile operations.

ZS DESIGN | ZS DESIGN | AM



CODY



LET'S GO 1969-1970

The First Squadron

After reconning the northern portion of the "Iron Triangle" in July, the 1st Squadron joined with the 34th ARVN Rangers to form Task Force Wright in August. A joint Command Post was established and joint operations were undertaken. On the night of 12 August, the NVA began an extensive attack in the *Loc Ninh* area. At first light the next morning, the maneuver elements of the Squadron moved out to find and destroy the enemy elements, and the following day, D Company and a company of the 34th ARVN Rangers engaged a company-sized NVA force two miles west of *Loc Ninh*, killing thirty.

Just when Task Force Wright was dissolved on 6 September,

MANG



Reconnaissance operations in the rubber plantations of Binh Long and Tay Ninh provinces kept the Regiment's tracks on the move, and inhibited the enemy's use of these areas for staging his operations.

GIANNINI



Chinooks transport most of the supplies to support the troops in the field.

Sometimes a Fire Support Base is a formation of tracks and tents, surrounded by a dirt berm, in the middle of a jungle clearing, like FSB Deb.

STUPPY



CODY



Behind a wire mesh screen to protect them from Rocket Propelled Grenade fire, two Blackhorse troopers wait on their ACAV.

PARKER



LTC Reed, commanding officer, and Command Sergeant Major Burkeholder of the 1st Squadron.

GIANNINI



B Troop engaged a NVA battalion, and was reinforced by C Troop, D Company, and a company of CIDG. In the end, 74 NVA were killed and 5 were taken prisoner.

After 12 October, the Squadron began to work southeast of *Quan Loi*, where they set up a concentrated program to train Regional Forces in combined armor and infantry tactics and air assault techniques. The Squadron moved back north on 3 December to assume responsibility for ground reconnaissance for the area around *Loc Ninh*.

When a land clearing operation was attacked on 7 February, A Troop responded, killing 14 NVA soldiers. A week later, C Troop and M Company killed 17 more enemy on an assault on a bunker complex north of *Nui Ba Den*. During March, B Troop was engaged in two heavy contacts, killing 32 NVA on the sixth and 42 on the thirty-first. The latter action also netted an unusually high number of enemy prisoners, sixteen.

B

A wounded trooper waits for the Med-evac chopper that will quickly bring him to efficient, effective medical attention.

After contact, a member of B Troop (below) probes an enemy bunker for signs of further resistance or abandoned supplies.

GREENLEE



A tanker inserts a deadly present for the enemy into his main gun.

SMITH



The Second Squadron



The 2nd Squadron's commanding officer, LTC Brookshire, and acting Command Sergeant Major Bolan.

On 28 June, the Squadron moved to the *Loc Ninh* district to conduct combined operations with the ARVN 9th Infantry Regiment. Their mission was to support the pacification effort and to conduct reconnaissance in the area. For greater efficiency, a joint Tactical Operations Center was employed, which facilitated the coordination of combat personnel, fire, and supporting fires. A very successful pacification program conducted MEDCAPS and helped to build four compounds for the Regional and Popular Forces.

After the Squadron moved west with the ARVN Regiment, E

MANG



Tanks move in on suspected enemy positions in the rubber.



Troop and H Company, on 12 August, were engaged in a heavy contact with a battalion-sized element of the NVA in the rubber southwest of *An Loc*. At the same time, F Troop was ambushed on Highway QL13 while escorting a log convoy. The contacts proved very costly to the two attacking forces, who lost 200 men. Then, due to increased NVA pressure in the *Bu Dop* area, F Troop was airlifted there to conduct joint operations with the CIDG and ARVN forces.

Rome plows were the main tool in clearing away the jungle that provided excellent cover for enemy ambushes along Highway QL14A.



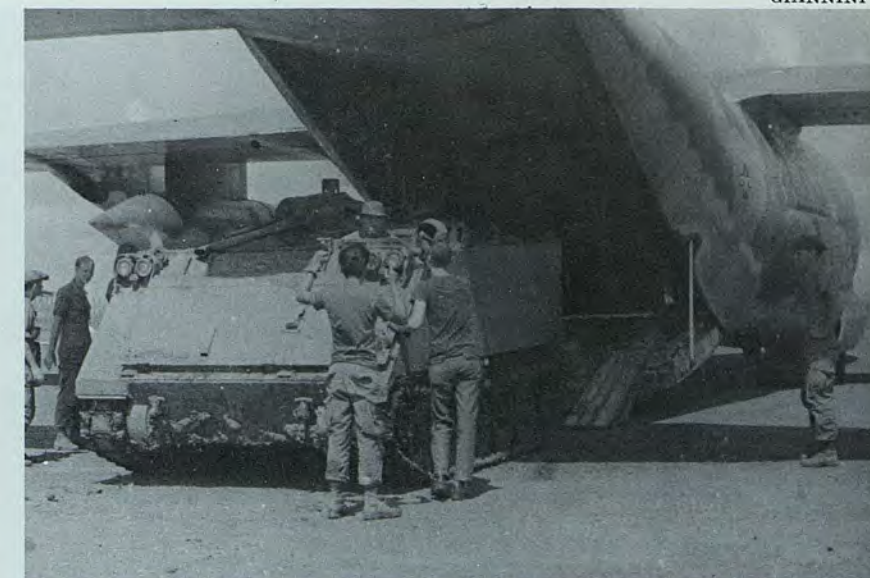
Former Command Sergeant Major Burkett of the 2nd Squadron, who was injured in April by an enemy mortar attack.

During December, the Squadron, working with the Rome plows of the 984th Land Clearing Company, opened the road from *Loc Ninh* to *Bu Dop* for the first time in two years. The operation involved clearing away the jungle in a strip two hundred meters wide on each side of Highway QL14A. Then, on 21 January, men from the 2nd Squadron killed at least 27 enemy in a day-long battle near the Cambodian border. A continuous series of small-scale actions kept the Squadron busy and chipped away at enemy strength throughout February and March. **B**

GIANNINI

"Jungle-busting" meant going to look for the enemy in the densely foliated regions of War Zone C.

GIANNINI



*In order to speed their relief operation for the besieged forces at *Bu Dop*, the ACAVs of F Troop were airlifted to the area by C-130 planes.*



A trooper takes a break on the back-porch of his ACAV for chow.

PARKER



*M-60 in hand, an ARVN infantryman climbs down from a Blackhorse track during a joint operation southwest of *An Loc*. Combined operations were emphasized as part of the Dong Tien program.*

GIANNINI



Even the densest jungle could not stop the Sheridan.

GIANNINI



I troopers in a heavy contact west of An Loc.



CODY



The Third

Squadron

GREENLEE



Amid the swirl of a marker grenade, a Huey sets down its passengers and supplies for a Fire Support Base.

GIANNINI



Work in the pacification of *Binh Long* Province and acquisition of the Sheridan M551 kept the 3rd Squadron busy in the months between June 1969 and February 1970. Early in June, the Squadron moved to central *Binh Long* Province to conduct reconnaissance in the area and offensive operations against an NVA Division and local force units. A major contact with the NVA took place southwest of *An Loc* on 18, 19, and 20 June, after an aircraft had been shot down and K Troop reacted to secure the ship. All Squadron combat elements, as well as H company which was under operational control of the 3rd Squadron, became involved. When contact was finally broken on 20 June, 78 NVA had been killed. Meanwhile, I Troop, in a separate contact on 17 and 18 June, killed another 13 NVA in an area five miles to the north.

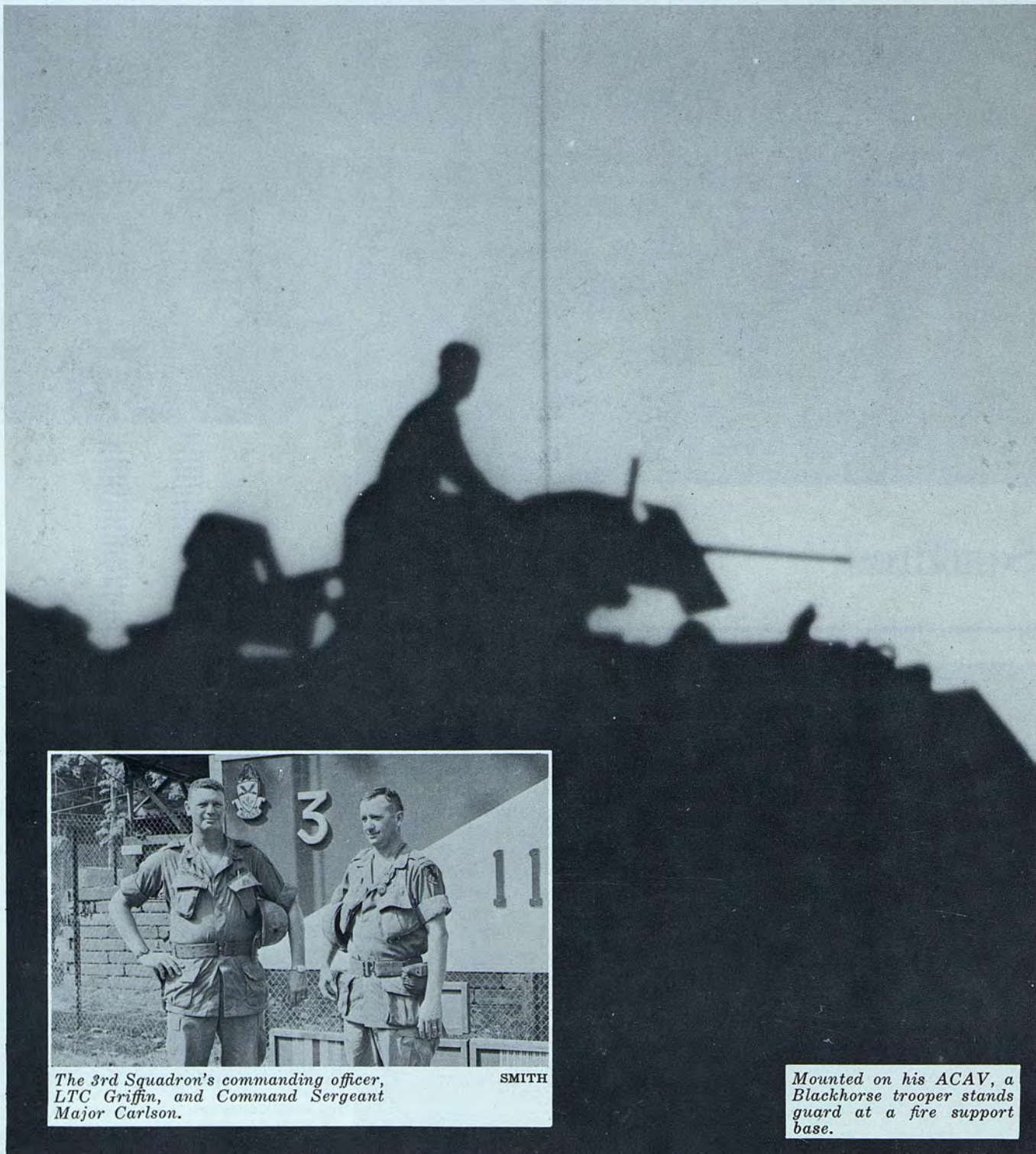
In September, I Troop and M Company engag-

Chaplain Mara celebrates a mass in the field for the 3rd Squadron.

ed a NVA battalion headquarters element near the area of the 18-20 June contact southwest of *An Loc*. The contact resulted in heavy enemy losses. Through the remainder of the year, the Squadron conducted reconnaissance operations through the Province, and concentrated on improving joint operations with the Vietnamese. A contact with unusually stiff resistance was made

in early December west of *Loc Ninh*, but hostile action during January and February remained light. On 2 March, L Troop engaged a NVA company west of *Loc Ninh*, which resulted in 26 enemy killed. Near the same area a week later, L Troop again engaged the enemy in an even more costly contact, in which 88 NVA were killed and 6 taken prisoner. **B**

DAVIS



The 3rd Squadron's commanding officer, LTC Griffin, and Command Sergeant Major Carlson.

SMITH

Mounted on his ACAV, a Blackhorse trooper stands guard at a fire support base.

SMITH



General Abrams attends the change of command ceremony at which Colonel Starry took over the Regiment.

STUPPY



Under Secretary of the Army Beale is made an honorary Black horse trooper by Colonel Starry.

McALLISTER



General Haines, Commander of the U.S. Army in the Pacific.

VISITORS

GREENLEE



Lieutenant General Davison, the II Field Force commander.

CARLTON



Lieutenant General Sutherland, Deputy II Field Force commander.

Air Cavalry Troop



CODY

PARKER

It was 8 August 1969. Intelligence had indicated that a large NVA force might be moving in from Cambodia to attack Binh Long Province. B-52 bomb strikes had been called in to interdict the enemy's movements, and it was time for the Air Cav Troop to make its assessment of bomb damage. The scene was set for a daring action in which the Troop captured six NVA prisoners, killed thirty-eight other NVA, and did not suffer a single casualty.

Flying over the target area, the Light Observation Helicopter of the chopper team spotted six NVA soldiers, apparently dazed by the strike, and dispatched them. But darkness set in before any further assessment could be made that day. When the air reconnaissance team returned on the next day, more NVA were observed in the

battered area. After one had been killed, it was observed that the enemy still seem dazed, and the decision was made to try to capture some of the NVA alive.

Due to the lack of an adequate Huey landing zone, an eight-man team of the Aero Rifle Platoon, selected from eighteen volunteers, was inserted by two LOH's. Their original objective was to capture a group of NVA soldiers being kept under surveillance by other LOH's. But before the ARP's could reach that group, they encountered smaller, scatterings of NVA soldiers, and captured six of them. All the while, additional NVA troops could be seen throughout the area, but only a brief firefight ensued, in which two NVA were killed. The ARP's then withdrew to

enable their accompanying Cobras and air support to deal with the remaining NVA. Thirty-six were killed.

The entire action was only one spectacular example of the speed, co-ordination, and ingenuity that has made the Air Cav Troop such an effective addition to the armored Squadrons. With their low-flying, inquisitive LOH's, they have an extended eye for spotting Charlie, and the concentrated fire power of their Cobra gunships can help to soften up enemy positions before a contact, and then mop up resistance after one. And the Aero Rifle Platoon is always ready to be inserted for direct contact. Together, they add up to an effective extension of the Cav's blitzing power, worthy of their nickname, Thunderhorse.

PARKER



SMITH

PARKER

In an unorthodox maneuver, two ARPs move out quickly from a LOH which inserted them west of Quan Loi. (near left).

On patrol, a team of ARPs recon in the jungle of Binh Long province. (center left).

During contact, a spotter directs another ARP where to fire his M-79 grenade launcher (center right).

M-16 ready, an ARP moves cautiously past an enemy bunker. (far right).



The 919th Engineer Company

To protect a hamlet near Loc Ninh, members of the 919th Engineer Company construct a sunken wire barricade in a dry moat.



WALDREP

Expansive, restless energy that gets the job done, no matter what, no matter where, has marked the "red devils" of the 919th Engineering Company as they continue to operate with the 11th Armored Cavalry. They are, like Sandburg's Chicago, builders and wreckers and builders again, working on a variety of missions that includes the clearing of roads from mines and encroaching jungle, the demolition of enemy bunkers and supplies, and the construction of everything from showers to watch-towers.

With the addition of a fourth platoon in January 1969, the 919th Engineers increased its ability to accompany the Cav in the field or to improve base security.

When the Regiment still maintained its Blackhorse Base Camp, the responsibility for mine-sweeping the road between there and *Xuan Loc* rotated among the platoons. And as elements from the Headquarters Troop or the squadrons' headquarters have moved on to *Bien Hoa*, to *Quan Loi*, or to *Di An*, the Engineers have been there to improve the perimeters, construct or enlarge quarters, and provide security forces. As a defensive force at a base camp, they have proved, on at least two notable occasions just how valuable they can be. The first came on 12 May 1969. The perimeter at *Quan Loi* was breached by sappers, and the Engineers' 4th Platoon was called upon to close the gap. Twelve NVA were killed. Three months later, when the perimeter was breached again, the 3rd Platoon played a major role in holding the line across a two-hundred meter front. They were credited with killing ten NVA and the destruction of two RPG teams.

But while the Engineers have proved quite capable of meeting hostile force with force, they have proved equally willing to assist the civilian population when they can. Thus, the 2nd Platoon constructed rice paddies at *Bih Co* by levelling and terracing the area around the local river. And both the 1st and 4th Platoons assisted in operation Long Reach, which made the road to *Bo Duc* secure for civilian traffic for the first time in two years.

Like the Regiment it supports, the 919th Engineering Company works with mobility and versatility, and works, and works.

The Montagnard children of Lich Loc enjoy a playground that the Engineers built for them.



STUPPY



MANG

Helping to open up the jungle for the tracks, the Engineers work on a bridge west of Quan Loi.



The 37th Medical Company

Working under sterile conditions, a medic (above, left) cuts away dead tissue around a wound, but to get the inside information, a doctor has to peer intently through his otoscope into his patient's ear (above, right).

Dust-off on the way in. Shrapnel wounds. Urgent." says the admissions clerk as he turns from the phone. There is a flurry of knowing activity. Several medics clear a litter stand and gather emergency equipment—IV fluids, gauze, an oxygen tank. The doctor stands ready nearby. Soon there is a throb of chopper blades. Quickly and carefully, the laden litter is brought into the dispensary. It's all been done before, and everyone knows what to do now. Many hands, trained to reflex sureness, cut away dirty fatigues, check the bleeding, watch the breathing, administer the IV, clean the wound. Blood pressure. Pulse. Tetanus anti-toxin. "Call in the chopper. Urgent." the doctor orders, "This will hold him until he gets to the 93rd Evac." Sterile gauze over the wounds. A blanket tucked around the body. A securing strap. And the casualty, in less than twenty minutes, is

on his way to life-saving surgery, sure to make it. Another critical moment for the 37th Medical Company has been met and handled.

Not all of the Med's moments balance life against death so sharply, of course. More often, the doctors and medics find themselves treating the diseases and lesser injuries that occur as the daily hazards of a combat zone—or giving shots to prevent those diseases.

Arriving in Vietnam with the Regiment in 1966, the Company really came into its own in June 1969, when the 7th Surgical Hospital, which had been operating at Blackhorse Base Camp, deactivated, and the Company took over the facilities for its own clearing operation in support of the 11th Cav, the 3rd Brigade of the 1st Cav, the 199th Light Infantry Battalion, the 18th ARVN Division, and a small Australian force. Capable of splitting up its

operations, separate elements of the Company followed the 11th Cav to its different locations as it moved out of Blackhorse to *Bien Hoa* and *Quan Loi*. In December, 1969, the Med's operations were consolidated at *Quan Loi*, where it maintains its dispensary, x-ray and laboratory facilities, a dental van, and two permanent hospital wards. It also maintains a medical supply and support element with the Cav's rear headquarters.

With these facilities, the 37th Med, whose 125 men make it the largest separately operating medical company in Vietnam, provides division-level medical service within the Regiment, and, as required, to units operating in the Regiment's area. In addition, a MEDCAP team goes out each day to treat civilians in the area around *Quan Loi*, securing them further treatment when necessary. All of which keeps those reflex-sure hands in practice between the crises of a dust-off. **B**

Valor and Honor

The dedication and courage of the Blackhorse troopers in Vietnam have gathered an ever growing list of honors. To the many who have already been acknowledged, we proudly add the following men, decorated between August 1969 and April 1970.



Distinguished
Service Cross



Silver Star



Distinguished
Flying Cross

Presidential



Presidential
Unit Citation

Distinguished Service Cross

PSG Donald M. Biggin
CPT Bertrand J. Dacey*
SSG Daniel A. Carrizales
CPT Claude K. Hudson
PSG Donald W. Kelly
LTC John W. McEnery
SGT Robert I. Meeker*
SP4 Daniel A. Nedolast
SP4 Ronald E. Pongrantnz*
SSG Francisco Rodriquez
SGT Frank D. Saracino*

*posthumously

Unit Citation

The Regiment's 3rd Squadron, the 2nd Platoon of the 919th Engineer Company, a platoon of Air Cavalry Troop gunships, and a tactical air control party of the 19th Tactical Air Support Squadron were cited for extraordinary heroism in actions against hostile forces from 12 March to 1 April 1968. During this period, the 3rd Squadron conducted continuous defensive operations near *Duc Hoa* in *Han Nghia* Province. The cited units fought a total of seven major battles during the twenty-day period, killing 473 enemy soldiers and forcing an almost total withdrawal of the enemy from the province.

The 1st Squadron's B Troop and the 1st Platoon, C Troop were cited for successful defensive operations in late 1966.

On 21 November 1966, a convoy which was being escorted by C Troop's 1st Platoon from *Long Binh* to the Blackhorse Base Camp was ambushed on Highway 2. The platoon's ACAVs reacted quickly to maneuver between the burning trucks and bring suppressive fire on the entrenched enemy. They held out until relief forces moved in to cut off escape routes and devastate the enemy.

On 22 December, a convoy with a small armored escort from B Troop was attacked in the same area. The escort gained fire superiority and held out until the remainder of B Troop was able to reinforce them. The relief force kept in contact with the enemy throughout the night and counter-attacked at first light. More than 100 enemy soldiers were killed.

Silver Star

SSG Clinton C. Adkins
LTC James H. Aarestad
PSG Allen R. Allman
2LT Martin Amestoy III
SGT Donald F. Anderson

1LT Vincent P. Baerman
MAJ John C. Bahnsen 2 OLC's
2LT Michael D. Bates
SSG Bill Bathe
SP4 John A. Berger
PSG Donald M. Biggin
SP4 Daniel J. Bock
MAJ James K. Bradin 2 OLC's
PFC Rothie Brakins Jr.
SP5 Kenneth L. Brooks
1LT Edward Buening Jr.

CPT Ronald G. Caldwell 1 OLC
CSM John A. Carlson
1SG William Chambers
PSG Everage T. Clardy
SP4 James A. Clark
CPT Gerald T. Cole
SGT Edward M. Cook
SGT William H. Cone
SP4 Robert E. Coventry
CSM Robert J. Crow
SP4 Russell R. Crowley

1LT August Daub Jr.
SP4 Arlester A. Dennis
PFC Robert Dickerson
SGT Robert M. Dinsmore
SP4 Denny L. Douglas
LTC David K. Doyle
SP4 James L. Dunlop
CW2 Clemens J. Duprey 2 OLC's

1LT Francis E. Egan
SP4 Selby E. Egedner Jr.
SSG Willis R. Embree 2 OLC's

CPL Thomas Farmer
SP4 William A. Faulkner
SP4 William K. Fergerson
SSG Wilson B. Fields
CPT Dennis E. Firestone
1LT Elbridge G. Fish II
CPT Lemos L. Fulmer

SSG Henry A. Gatewood Jr.
1LT Charles Gill 2 OLC's

1LT George W. Gomoll
CPT Malcom S. Gilchrist
1LT George Green
1LT George A. Greene
SP4 Michael C. Grove
MAJ John C. Gilbreath
PFC J. B. Griffin

PFC William W. Hadix
SP4 Roy T. Hall
1LT William N. Hannah
CPT William W. Hansen
CPT Robert L. Harris
CPT Michael B. Hartgraves
SGT Leo F. Hartsuff
SGT Walter R. Hastings
1LT Isaac Heath*
SP4 Michael G. Henkel
CPT Jerry L. Hensley
SGT Bruce A. Hiller
PFC Russell Hires

SP4 Amos L. Hissem
SP4 Gilbert Holder*
SP4 Donald E. Honaker
1LT Edward L. Horton
CPT Claude K. Hudson
CW2 Michael Huff
CPT Robert K. Hurt 2 OLC's

SP4 Dennis A. Iasello

PFC Stephen H. Jacobs
PFC Dennis Jamison
1SG Willie Johnson

PSG Donald W. Kelly
CPT Chester E. Keith
SGT John W. Kimble
1LT Michael G. Kuehn

PFC Robert B. Lambdin
SP4 Thomas P. Landman
COL James H. Leach 2 OLC's
SGT James W. Leathers
WO1 Stephen C. Little

WO1 Paul D. Madsen
PFC Stephen Maks
SP4 Billy R. Mayweather
SGT Thomas B. McGee
SP4 Hollis G. Miller*
SP4 John S. Montgomery
CPT Thomas M. Montgomery

SSG Johnny A. Moore
1LT Stephen Moushegian
SSG Ronald L. Murphy

SP4 Thomas K. Naylor
SP4 John C. Near
SGT Stanislavas V. Nerkeliunas
1LT Dennis E. Newman
PFC Michael B. Nosera

1SG Ronald B. Osborne
PFC Willie F. Owens

CPT Fredrick E. Palmer
PSG Eugene Paradisio
PSG Fictor A. Parrish
MAJ William G. Privette

SSG Armand E. Racine
SSG Arthur J. Rambo*
PFC Joseph S. Redon III
SP4 Daniel Reid
1LT Douglas P. Rich
SSG Don D. Richter

SSG Billy J. Sams
SSG Wayne J. Sanders
SP4 Rober B. Schaefer*
WO1 Roger L. Scott
SSG Michael J. Share
CPT Henry G. Simon
SSG John J. Sinclair*
SSG Kenneth R. Smith
MAJ Don F. Snow
CPT Douglas W. Starr
PFC Bruce J. Stephens
SP4 Daniel Stocki

CPT John C.F. Tillson
SGT Dillard E. Trimble
CPT James T. Tutt 2 OLC's
SP4 L. V. Tyler Jr.
SSG Ashby W. Tyree

1LT Stephen W. Vince

SP4 Sidney T. Walden
SP4 Joseph Wasdovitch
CPT Arthur L. West III
SP4 Allan C. Wharfield III
SGT Charles I. Wigton
LTC Lawrence Wright
CPT Ronald C. Wyse

PFC Darwin R. Yopek

*posthumously

Distinguished Flying Cross

LTC James H. Aarestad
 1LT George H. Adams
 2LT Michael D. Bates
 MAJ James W. Bradin
 WO1 Ortha D. Brooks
 WO1 Vito Bubell
 CW2 Clarence P. Burkett Jr.
 SP4 William J. Carrara
 1LT Thomas A. Ceres*
 CPT Lee J. Church
 WO1 Thomas F. Clifton
 CPT Bertrand J. Dacey*
 CPT Theodore. A Duck 1 OLC
 SP4 Enrique Enrico
 CW2 John L. Enticknap
 SP5 Thomas E. Foust

WO1 Stephen E. Gardipee
 MAJ John C. Gilbreath 2 OLC's
 WO1 Ronnie E. Gordon
 CW2 James T. Hall
 SP4 Jeffry T. Harvey*
 CW2 Michael Huff
 CPT Fred O. Jackson Jr.
 SP4 Kenneth V. Jensen*
 WO1 Dean K. Klackner
 WO1 Johnathan D. Kurtz
 WO1 Terrence E. Ledden
 WO1 Paul Madsen
 CPT Tom D. Mitchell
 CPT Alan A. Moore III
 WO1 Horace F. Morton
 CPT Carl B. Marshall

1LT Thomas D. Mott
 1LT Stephen Moushegian 2 OLC's
 MAJ Andrew P. O'Meara Jr.
 WO1 Larry M. Parsons
 1LT Edward G. Powers*
 WO1 Dewey W. Rowe
 WO1 Frederick R. SchMike
 SP5 Lorne J. Sipperly*
 WO1 Gerald C. Strange
 WO1 Robert D. Strawbridge
 1LT Jerry W. Thurman
 1LT Fred J. Van Orden 1 OLC
 1LT Robin K. Wetzler*
 CW2 Randal L. Willer

*posthumously

...above and beyond the call of duty...



The Medal of Honor

awarded posthumously to

Corporal Jerry W. Wickam

On 6 January 1968, Troop F, 2nd Squadron, was conducting a reconnaissance-in-force mission southwest of Loc Ninh when the lead element of the friendly force was subjected to a heavy barrage of rocket, automatic weapons, and small arms fire from a well-concealed enemy bunker complex. Disregarding the intense fire, Corporal Wickam leaped from his armored vehicle, assaulted one of the enemy bunkers, and threw a grenade into it killing two enemy soldiers. He moved into the bunker and, with the aid of another soldier, began to remove the body of one Viet Cong, when he detected the sound of an enemy grenade being charged. Corporal Wickam warned his comrade and physically pushed him away from the grenade, thus protecting him from the force of the blast. When a second Viet Cong bunker was discovered, he ran through a hail of enemy fire to deliver deadly fire into the bunker, kill-

ing one enemy soldier. He also captured one Viet Cong who later provided valuable information on enemy activity in the Loc Ninh area. After the patrol withdrew and an airstrike was conducted, Corporal Wickam led his men back to evaluate the success of the strike. They were immediately attacked again by enemy fire. Without hesitation, he charged the bunker from which the fire was being directed, enabling the remainder of his men to seek cover. He threw a grenade inside of the enemy's position, killing two Viet Cong and destroying the bunker. Moments later he was mortally wounded by enemy fire. Corporal Wickam's conspicuous gallantry, extraordinary heroism and intrepidity at the cost of his own life were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Army.

In Memoriam



You've never lived, till
you've almost died. For
those who have to fight
for it, life has a flavor
the protected will
never know.



