

VC No Match For 196th DSC Winner

TAY NINH (196th INF-10) — While on a search and destroy operation with Company C, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry, 196th Light Infantry Brigade, SSgt. Lester Armstrong, winner of the Distinguished Service Cross during Operation Attleboro, continued his winning ways on recently completed Operation Cedar Falls.

After competing in a game of tag-of-war and losing, a hapless VC tried his hand at baseball and lost again. Sergeant Arm-

strong explained how it all happened.

"A Chieu Hoi had directed us to a suspected three-man VC underground hide-out in a thickly wooded area. I crawled up to the hole and noticed it had a bamboo top. I picked up a stick and cautiously tried to pry it up, but it was down tight. Then I grabbed it with both hands and tried to pull it up.

"Suddenly, the top opened and a VC popped out and threw a grenade at me which bounced off my chest. I really thought I was a goner. I turned to dive out of the way and yelled 'grenade!'

"I knew I had been hit, but I rolled over and reached for my weapon. Flying shrapnel had damaged it so I grabbed for one of my men's weapons, who had also been wounded by the grenade.

"As the VC scurried out of the hole and into the jungle I shot and killed him," Lieutenant William C. Burch, the executive officer of Co. C, was to the sergeant's right, and shot and killed the second VC heading for the woods. Specialist Four James Failing moved up behind Armstrong and dropped a grenade into the hole killing the third VC.

'Cats' Are Welcome

NHA TRANG (1st AVN-10) — Do black cats bring good luck? It depends on whose side you are on.

Infantry commanders, Special Forces troops, and downed aviators in the I Corps Tactical Zone sometimes feel pretty fortunate when they see one. The Black Cats from the Army's 282nd Helicopter Company, 14th Combat Aviation Battalion, have brought many a sigh of relief from allied troops in need of rescue, resupply, or medical evacuation.

An Air Force pilot whose plane was felled by VC gunners while supporting the Marine Corps' Operation Prairie near the DMZ, recently joined the ranks of the unsupersititious.

Four Hueys from the 282nd had been hauling med-evacs from a VC-surrounded ARVN battalion, when a spotter pilot reported sighting an Air Force B-57 going down in hostile territory nearby. He said one crewman had ejected safely.

One of the Black Cat choppers, piloted by 1st Lt. John R. French and WO Russell P. Mellute, headed for the downed airplane. As they neared the victim, intense enemy fire began.

Ignoring the crack of VC bullets piercing their helicopter, the Army pilots dropped in, picked the survivor from his predicament and evacuated him to a safe area.

Abn Man Hits Big

BIEN HOA (173rd ABN-10) — It does not happen every day, but a big day came twice within 48 hours for Robert W. Jones of the 4th Battalion, 503rd Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade.

Jones, a platoon sergeant with Company B, was recently promoted to platoon sergeant and, before he could celebrate, he received his appointment as a second lieutenant, infantry.

Lieutenant Colonel Michael D. Healy, the battalion commander, and Capt. John Yaksha pinned the gold bar and crossed rifles, symbols of the combat infantry platoon leader, on Jones' jacket. The brief ceremony was conducted in the battalion's forward combat area.



HUEY "LOG" SHIP—A helicopter of the 1st Cavalry Division's 229th Aviation Battalion performs the unusual mission of airlifting logs. The logs were later used to construct bunkers during Operation Thayer II. (Photo by SFC Paul J. Porter, 1st CAV-10)

'Low, Slow, Reliable' U-1A Otter Flown By 18th Aviation Company

DA NANG (1 FV-10) — In today's age of jets flying at twice the speed of sound, an aircraft with a top speed of just over 100 knots may seem out of place.

But to the men who fly it, and to the people who ride in it, the U-1A Otter is one of the finest aircraft in the sky. It is not fast and it does not fly very high,

but it will fly in almost any weather short of a hurricane.

"Low, Slow, Reliable" is the slogan of the 18th Aviation Company, and it means just what it says. The 1st Platoon of the 18th is stationed near Da Nang at the Marble Mountain Aviation Facility and is responsible for transporting personnel all around I Corps Tactical Zone.

One day may involve delivering a courier with classified messages to his destination, and the next day carrying Martha Raye or John Steinbeck to visit outlying troops.

"The Otter is like the old street car; it's taken for granted. It's always there and ready to go," says Maj. Courtney E. Smith Jr., the platoon leader of the detachment stationed at Marble Mountain.

The reliability of the Otter just does not happen. Trained crew

chiefs like Sp4 Richard L. Patterson, and Sp4 Kenneth Lowery check and double-check their aircraft both before and after each flight. At intervals of 25 flying hours the aircraft's engine is gone over with meticulous care, and at 50-hour intervals the Otter receives a full shop-maintenance going over.

The Otters have taken their share of ground fire from the Viet Cong. In a recent day of flying, one aircraft twice sustained hits with the rocket. Captain Louis E. Sokolowski was the plane's pilot on one occasion and the co-pilot on the other. He escaped with nothing more than a case of jarred nerves.

The Otter has several other claims to fame. It is the world's largest propeller-driven, single-engine, passenger aircraft and is the largest fixed-wing aircraft currently in use by the Army.

'Pied Piper' Of 1st Cav Div Has Good 'Chieu Hoi' Record

AN KHE (1st CAV-10) — The "Pied Piper" has started a new type of war in the rice growing area between the Nui Mien Mountains and the South China Sea.

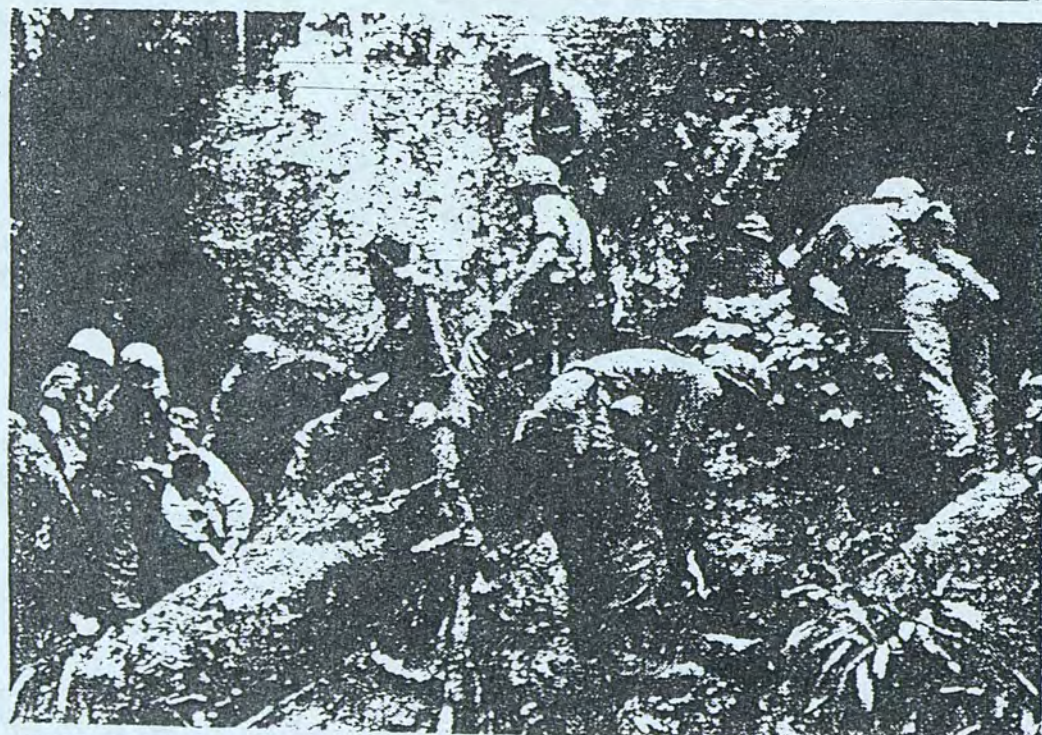
Captain Michael F. Spigelmeier, who has been dubbed with the nickname by the men under his command in Company C, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division, is a trained psychological warfare officer and believes it is better to use words rather than force to win the war in Vietnam.

His company can use force when necessary. During its two months in the valley 33 miles

northeast of Hammond Army Airfield, Co. C has killed nine enemy, wounded seven and captured 171.

But it has used persuasion too and Spigelmeier's psy-war operations have produced 66 "Chieu Hoi" (Open Arms) returnees.

Most of the "Chieu Hoi's" have been political cadre and Spigelmeier credits the success of his program to the fact that the unit has controlled the area for so long that the Viet Cong, hiding in mountain caves surrounding the valley, are running low on food.



CAVE COMPLEX—Tropic Lightning infantrymen search a huge cave complex near Bong Son. At the left, a wounded North Vietnamese soldier is evacuated from one of the tunnels. (Photo by 25th INF-10)

Clinic Receives Paint

BEAR CAT (9th INF-10) — For two years Mr. Tran Cong Tri, resident medical technician of one of the rural dispensaries of Long Thanh District, tried without success to get paint for the blistering walls of his dispensary.

For many years the people of Cau Xeo hamlet in the Long Thanh District — like those of many areas in Vietnam — needed only materials to prove they could work together.

Recently, Mr. Tri's dispensary got a fresh coat of paint—direct from the U.S.—and the residents of Long Thanh District had their chance to work as a team.

When Maj. Joseph A. Barry III of the 9th Infantry Division and a handful of men of the 9th Military Police Company drove into Cau Xeo hamlet with 25 gallons of latex paint, about 30 village residents pitched in and it took only a few hours to get the job done.

The paint traveled a long way before reaching the walls of the Cau Xeo hamlet dispensary, 10 miles from Bear Cat.

Barry, deputy provost marshal of the 9th, requested donations of paint for civic action programs in Vietnam before the division left the States.

Paint retailers in Kansas City responded with 125 gallons. The paint arrived shortly after the division in Vietnam.