

Abn B R P Earns Medal Of Honor

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Quick Thinking Saves Crew

LONG THANH, (9th INF-IO) — A young American doorgunner and two Australian helicopter crews reacted rapidly recently to save the lives of four 9th Infantry Division helicopter crewmen.

Engine failure on a Huey gunship from D Troop, 3rd Squadron, 5th Cavalry caused the ship to crash into 100-foot high trees about five miles north of Nui Dat, Australian Task Force headquarters near Vung Tau.

All four crewmen escaped their quickly-burning and exploding craft but not until each had suffered burns and wounds. They were hoisted from the ground within 25 minutes by choppers from the 9th Squad, Royal Australian Air Force, based at Nui Dat.

Even while the powerless ship was falling, help was already on its way.

Specialist Four Marcus F. Bryant, doorgunner on a D Trp. Huey, was listening on his radio headset and heard the call for help from the stricken gunship.

Bryant said he saw the gunship rushing toward the ground five seconds after hearing its distress call.

"The pilot of my ship headed for the falling chopper immediately," explained Bryant, "and I grabbed a rope and told him I wanted to drop down to the crash site and help."

"I tied the rope to the chopper floor and the pilot found a clearing near the crash where the trees weren't too high. He hovered and I dropped the 100-foot rope. We were about 75 feet up."

"Their chopper was burning and most of their 7000 rounds of 7.62mm ammo and all ten of their rockets were exploding. Tracers were flying all over the place. The only thing I could do was hold the three on the

ground."

"The fourth man, like the others, was in shock," Bryant continued. "I couldn't see him, but one of the three I was with said he had run away, delirious."

"Then I saw an Australian Huey overhead. It dropped a hoist out and lowered a man not too far southeast of us. He found the fourth American, put him into the hoist, and then sent his ship over to us."

According to Capt. Howard P. Osterlin, a D Trp gunship pilot who witnessed the crash, the

first Australian helicopter was close by when the crash occurred and offered its assistance without hesitation.

"By the time the Aussie chopper got there, Bryant was on the ground, protecting three of the wounded," the pilot explained.

"Smoke was billowing 500 to 600 feet into the air, but that Aussie went right through it to help our guys out. Without their help those men couldn't have been taken out of the jungle so soon, and at least a couple would have died."



SHADE — A youngster takes advantage of the shade cast by Sp4 Ernie Todd, Company A, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division. Todd was on patrol with Task Force Steel when his squad paused for a rest in an old graveyard. The boy calmly established his squatter's rights and began eating a snack.

(Photo by Sp5 Dick Clapwood, 1st INF-IO)

Cav Raid Ends VC Checkers

LONG SON, (1st CAV-IO) — Six 1st Cavalry Division troopers recently had their hands full when they broke up a Viet Cong checkers game and flushed a scrambling VC platoon from their hideout during a daring midnight raid.

Private First Class Philip E. Hart led his small, five-man team to a group of farmhouses that had been searched earlier in the day by his platoon of Company D, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry.

When the team approached the houses, they heard male voices. Hart, a scout dog handler, and Sp4 John Daughtry investigated.

Crouching in the darkness of (Continued on Back Page)

198th Light Infantry Brigade Joins American Division In I Corps Area

LONG BINH, (USARV-IO) — American Division received its newest unit recently — the 198th Light Infantry Brigade, commanded by Col. James R. Waldie.

About 3600 infantrymen came ashore in the southern I Corps area at Chu Lai, completing an 11,000-mile trip which began at Ft. Hood, Texas, in early October.

Known by their motto "Brave and Bold," the 198th was orgi-

nally organized in 1921 as an element of the 99th Infantry Division. During World War II the unit was in combat in central Europe.

The brigade was re-activated at Ft. Hood on May 10, 1967. Waldie brought an advance party of about 300 men into the division's area early last month to finalize plans for the arrival of the main body.

With an authorized strength of approximately 4100 officers and

Despite Mortal Wound, Destroys Fifth Bunker

WASHINGTON — First Lieutenant James A. Gardner has been awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously for his heroic action at My Canh village where he personally destroyed five enemy bunkers with rifle fire and hand grenades.

He knocked out the last of these bunkers after being mortally wounded.

The medal was presented to Gardner's widow, Mrs. Joella Rosler.

On Feb. 7, 1967, Gardner's platoon was advancing to relieve a company of America's 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry, 101st Airborne Division.

The company had been pinned down for several hours by a large enemy force at My Canh who occupied a series of strongly fortified bunker positions well covered by automatic weapons, machinegun, and mortar fire. Air strikes and artillery had little effect on the fortifications.

Leading an assault of the bunkers, Gardner charged through a withering hail of fire across an open rice paddy. On reaching the first bunker, he destroyed it with a grenade and dashed to second bunker and eliminated it with a second grenade.

Reaching a third bunker, Gardner prepared to toss a third grenade when an enemy gunner jumped out and fired at Gardner. Gardner killed the gunner at a distance of six feet with his own weapon and then destroyed the bunker.

Following the seizure of the main fortification, Gardner organized his platoon to continue the attack. Again pinned down as they advanced, Gardner immediately collected several grenades and destroy it and its defenders with a grenade.

The citation awarding the Medal of Honor concluded by stating that "although he fell dead on the rim of the bunker, his extraordinary actions so inspired the men of his platoon that they resumed the attack and completely routed the enemy."



1st Lt. James A. Gardner

As the lieutenant monitored his radio, the seemingly panicked voice of Sp4 David W. Creech, a radio operator, blurted out what sounded like "There is a large element to our front."

"I had visions of the patrol running into a whole battalion,"

said the officer, recalling reports of such an enemy unit being in the area.

Hurriedly, Wheeler asked for more details.

"Well," came the reply, "it's big, has two white tusks, a long trunk, four legs, and is gray."

Candy Bar Used For Weapon

CU CHI, (25th INF-IO) — An ordinary chocolate candy bar proved itself an effective weapon against the Viet Cong during recent 25th Infantry Division operation.

Company A, 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry had been providing security for a road building project for the 65th Combat Engineer Battalion.

As the armored personnel carriers (APCs) moved into their positions near the small town of Loc Thanh, in Hau Nghia Province, a group of children converged on the vehicles.

"I was sitting on my APC when a small boy came up to me and wanted gum," said PFC John McCabe. "I couldn't resist

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