Brigade's First

Medal of Honor for Chaplain

REDCATCHER!

199th Light Infantry Brigade

Vol. I, No. 2 **Dec. 15, 1968**

(The Medal of Honor was presented to Chaplain (Captain) Angelo J. Liteky by President Johnson at a White House ceremony honoring five recipients.

The priest became the fifth chaplain ever to receive the nation's highest military decoration. His story is told by First Lieutenant Michael D. Swearingen, Jr., who recently left the Brigade Information Office for home.)

It had been the bitterest and bloodiest battle for any unit in the 199th Light Infantry Brigade and the brigade was nearing the end of its first year of combat. Twenty-one men had died the afternoon before and 74 more had been wounded in the battle with a Viet Cong battalion dug in at the largest basecamp the Redcatcher infantrymen had hit up until that time.

Tales of extraordinary heroism were beginning to filter back to the 4th Bn, 12th Inf fire support base. And one name, more than any other, kept being repeated in every conversation.

That of Father Angelo Liteky.

Chaplain Liteky was the Catholic priest assigned as the battalion chaplain. He had gone out the day before, Dec. 6, 1967, with a two-platoon-size patrol. The infantrymen were to find the site from which their battalion basecamp had been mortared the night before.

"We (the 199th chaplains) go along on combat patrols every opportunity we get, just to let the men know that someone else cares about them. It also gives oneself a greater appreciation of what they go through and it makes it easier to understand their problems.

"The men know that we don't have to be there and we think that it creates a little closer relationship between them and us. Also, if anything happens, you can function as a 'free agent' to give assistance where it is needed," Father Litkey said when asked why he was on the patrol.

Father Liteky became a living legend in the 199th for his "free agent" work. The rugged and deeply-tanned priest had personally rescued more than 20 wounded men pinned down by extremely heavy fire from automatic weapons and claymore mines during the Dec. 6 battle.

Repeatedly exposing himself to the savage fusillade of enemy fire, Father Liteky walked among the hail of claymore fragments and bullets, carrying out wounded and dead, administering last rites to the dying, and encouraging the bitterly embattled men. Although wounded himself in the neck and foot by the flying steel fragments, Father Liteky refused to leave the battle or the area until the next morning. And then only after he had personally checked every man still there.

"As everyone crawled and ran during the battle, Chaplain Litkey walked through the woods with the shrapnel and bullets cutting down trees all around him. He would not take cover and I never saw him try to protect himself. Later, while talking to the men who were left, I found they had the same story," said First Lieutenant Wayne Morris, a platoon leader from Oak Ridge, Tenn.

"He just seemed to be everywhere during the battle and his actions and presence awed and inspired myself and my men. God only knows how many men we would have lost if he had not been there risking his life over and over again to get them out," the lieutenant added. Morris, one of the platoon leaders on the patrol, was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross himself for his heroism during the fierce battle.

Another company of the battalion reinforced the embattled platoons. A company of the 3rd Bn, 7th Inf, airmobiled in to hit the enemy base camp from another side and a platoon of armored personnel carriers from the brigade's Delta Troop, 17th Cav joined in the assaults on the base camp.

The combined force then drove the VC from the base camp and discovered 67 VC dead left behind by the fleeing enemy. The base camp consisted of over 125 heavily fortified bunkers and fighting positions.

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Lucky Leaf Saves Pair From Trap

A lucky little leaf got blown away the other day, but not until it had saved two Redcatchers from the same condition.

A radio-telephone operator and his platoon sergeant were on a reconnaissance-in-force mission with Delta Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf, in the region southwest of Saigon. Specialist Four James E. McKenzie (Pine Bluff, Ark.) was about to search an abandoned shelter when he nudged a booby trap wire with his boot toe.

"When I had realized what was happening," said McKenzie, "I caught myself, then jumped over and hit the dirt, knowing I had taken the slack off the wire."

Platoon sergeant Robert Johnson, Jr. (Utica, Miss.), who was behind McKenzie, said, "We were both looking for trip wires, knowing the area was heavily infested with booby traps. When I saw him jump, I got behind a nipa-palm tree." Both men waited. No explosion. Slowly McKenzie approached the booby trap and, in examining it, saw a small leaf caught between the hammer and the firing pin. From a safe distance Johnson pulled the trip wire with a grappling hook and rope, but still the booby trap failed to detonate. "The little leaf prevented the grenade from going off and putting holes in our fatigues," he said.

CHAPLAIN (Captain) Angelo J. Liteky conducts Mass at a 4th Bn, 12th Inf fire support base 2 miles southwest of Saigon. (Photo by Hansell)

Not 'Forgotten Men'

Home Ties Stronger Now

Home ties have never been stronger for soldiers anywhere than they are for the American in Vietnam. That counts strongly at Christmas, but is true for the other 364.

The increased efficiency and speed of the Army postal system, the increased capability of overseas telephone service, the MARS System can be credited with making home merely hours away in some cases, days in others.

Reenlistment and extension leaves and R&R in Hawaii with wife are a means of getting the soldier home or with his family.

The Army Home Town News Program and increased facilities of civilian news media keep the folks at home more informed and with greater speed than ever before, a speed at times incredible. A combat action can be filmed, processed, and shown on network television within the same day.

This is one of the blessings which modern American soldiers count, and a comparatively recent one at that.

Even during the Korean War mail from the United States was slow unless specifically sent "air mail." Telephone calls were unheard of unless initiated from Japan. Television crews were practically non-existent. The celebrated Christmas program by Edward R. Murrow was a truly special television effort, and part of its effectiveness was because it was filmed in a combat zone. Today television crews are many and often follow the fighting man right into battle, in order to help people at home understand and appreciate what their soldiers are doing and what dangers and hardships they face daily.

Back even a hundred years ago home ties were strained indeed by military service. A man disappeared into the Army and his means of communication was usually mail, painfully slow.

By the time of World War I the ties were stronger, since the telegraph now spanned the Atlantic and stories could be sent more quickly. Photography had improved, and many front line actions were filmed by both Signal Corps and civilian photographers. The *Stars and Stripes* brought news of both the war and the home front to the doughboys—on a weekly basis and by a brilliant military staff that included Franklin P. Adams, Harold Ross and Alexander Woollcott. For the first time, the "boys" were not only far from home, but also separated from it by an ocean.

World War II saw GI's on every continent "for the duration and six months" or longer. Mail became more important than ever to the far-flung servicemen and "V-Mail" was developed so that it could be flown in quantity. The *Stars and Stripes* began daily publication

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CHRISTMAS TREE on bunker in the Brigade forward headquarters area shows how closely soldiers identify with traditional Christmas activities of home. (Photo by Eckert)

REDCATCHER!

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Brig. Gen. Frederic E. Davison — Commanding General
Maj. Ralph K. Anderson — Information Officer
SFC Robert E. Jones — Editor

Editorial Staff: 1st Lt. Bennie D. Brown, 1st Lt. Larry D. Muse, 1st Lt. Michael D. Swearingen, Jr., Sp4 Peter Gyallay-Pap, Sp4 Larry Trammell, PFC Bruce Bolinger and PFC Robert Loughran. Writers. Sp5 Craig Hansell, Sp4 Richard Eckert, Sp4 Jose Gonzales, Sp4 Robert R. Gragg and Sp4 Joseph F. Whinnery, Photographers.

BMB Named

Every Redcatcher knows the name of the Brigade's main base camp—Camp F[illegible]zell-Jones. But how many why that name was chosen?

The main base camp was officially named Sept. 18, 1967, in honor of Private First Class Herbert E. Frenzell and Specialist Four Billy C. Jones, who were killed Jan. 21, 1967, during the newly arrived 199th's first combat operations in Vietnam.

The two infantrymen of Alpha Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf, were posthumously awarded the nation's third highest medal for valor, the Silver Star, for their actions during combat operations in Thu Duc District.

Brigadier General Robert C. Forbes, then commanding general of the 199th, spoke briefly during a January 1968 ceremony naming the base camp. In praising the soldiers' heroic actions, General Forbes reminded those present of Specialist Four Jones' last words and said, "...their heroic actions live in the minds of all members of the Brigade. The plaque commemorating the designation of the Brigade base camp will continually symbolize the sacrifices these two soldiers made for their country."

Set in a special concrete base, the plaque reads, "Specialist Billy C. Jones and Private First Class Herbert E. Frenzell were on an eagle flight on 21 January 1967 when their unit met a well entrenched VC force.

"The unit, caught in open terrain and without cover, was in a desperate situation.

"PFC Frenzell, who was not at the time directly involved in the ambush and was in a safe location, chose to open fire on the enemy, thereby drawing fire away from the exposed positions.

"After everyone had withdrawn, PFC Frenzell started his attempt to move back to rejoin his squad. As he left his concealed position he was shot and killed.

"'Specialist Four Jones crawled through the mud and enemy fire to recover Frenzell's body. After contact was broken, Sp4 Jones carried PFC Frenzell's body for over two hours through thick jungle growth and hazardous swamps to place PFC Frenzell on the waiting helicopter.

"However, when he saw another man hit and fall, he lowered PFC Frenzell's body to the ground and rushed to assist the newly wounded soldier. It was at this time tthat he was fatally wounded. His final words were, 'I tried, I did all I could do. I couldn't do any more.'"

The Chaplain Speaks

Change, Change, Change

By Chaplain (Captain) Edison F. Burleson

One of the things most people dislike most is change. We want to stay the same. I suppose it is because we don't like to exert the energy called for to adjust to new situations. Nevertheless, we live in a changing world and everything about us is in the process of changing.

It has been said that the place you just left was the best place to be and the present place is the worst place to be. I'm not sure that this is always true. We make a place good or bad for ourselves. The important thing for us to remember is that today, the present is the most important time in life. If we seek to make changes to new situations life offers us with patience and persistence, we will find life more fulfilling.

The apostle Paul said in Philippians, chapter four, 11-13: "Not that I complain of want; for I have learned, in whatever state I am, to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and want. I can do all things in him who strengthens me."

If we can face changing situations like this, God will truly bless us in our ventures.

Tennyson also had something to say about change. "The old order changes yielding way to new and God fulfills himself in many ways..."

How will you face new situations? Make them count for your advantage. It is your decision. You can do it.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

LONG BINH AREA

Lutheran	Sunday	11 a.m.	303rd Radio Research Orderly Room
Latter Day Saints	Sunday	1, 2 p.m.	Plantation Chapel Annex
Episcopal	Sunday	1 p.m.	Plantation Chapel
Jewish	Friday	7 p.m.	Long Binh Post Chapel
	Saturday	10 a.m.	Long Binh Post Chapel
Christian Science	Sunday	2 p.m.	Plantation Chapel

CAMP FRENZELL-JONES

Catholic Mass	Sunday	9, 10 a.m.	7th Spt Bn Messhall
Protestant worship	Sunday	9, 11 a.m.	Brigade Chapel

"Hey, Sarge—It's Lulu!"

Hawaii R&R

By Private First Class Robert Loughran

Some airlines offer a special discount to wives flying to Hawaii to meet their husbands on R&R. The special discount is about 25 percent less than the regular price and applies only to a round trip flight from the West Coast to Hawaii and not any other location in the continental U.S. Passengers travel economy class and must complete the trip not later than 15 days after leaving the West Coast.

These particular airlines have imposed certain rules that must be adhered to. These simple rules are:

(1) You must have 5 copies of DD Form 1580. This form may be obtained from your unit personnel officer and is accepted by the airlines as proof that you are a serviceman on an authorized leave or pass.

(2) When you or your wife purchase the ticket, a proper copy of DD Form 1580 and DD Form 1173 (your wife's identification card) must be presented.

(3) You are required to provide your wife with two copies of your DD Form 1580, one for the airline when she purchases the ticket, and one to be kept for herself.

(4) You receive an additional reduction in price if you purchase tickets in Vietnam because they are tax-free. Otherwise, tickets may be purchased from the airline ticket office, or a joint military ticket office.

(5) And, of course, these special fares along with the guaranteed reserved seat apply only to *wives* of military personnel in Vietnam on R&R leave to Hawaii.

One word of caution, however: Some airlines may differ slightly and require slight modifications. Your first sergeant or personnel officer can help you with this.

Military reserved travel is offered to you as a service and the DD Form 1580 and careful planning guarantee you full benefits of reduced fare. Keep this in mind, be prepared, and you'll have a pleasant trip on R&R.

Red Cross Distributes Ditty Bags

As in years past, the American Red Cross will once again ensure that every serviceman in Vietnam will get at least one gift this Christmas.

Under "Program 60," the Red Cross is shipping over 624,000 Christmas gift kits, commonly called ditty bags, to Vietnam, of which thousands will be distributed through the Brigade's field office.

The ditty bags, whose origins date back to the Civil War, are sewn and packed by volunteers from communities throughout the United States, with contents contributed by local business firms, and civic, patriotic, religious and fraternal organizations.

Redcatchers will receive most of their goods from chapters in Massachusetts, including ones from Springfield, Holyoke, Berkshire County, Leonminster and Fitchburg. In Fitchburg, a fraternity of the state college wrapped and labeled the cartons before a local trucking company transported them without charge to San Francisco.

"Each chapter in a city or community is given a certain program directive from the national headquarters," says assistant Field Director for the 199th, J. Flora (Lafayette, La.). "From there quotas are met, and the bags are filled and mailed to their destination."

The green bags made by the Springfield Chapter contain a deck of playing cards, envelopes, writing tablet, pen, Kool-Aid, "Lifesavers," nail clippers, paperback book, two plastic bags (a sought-after item by troops *in the paddy region), and a* Christmas card whose bell designs were probably hand colored by school children.

Other gift bags coming to Vietnam include nuts, candy, pen-sized flashlights with batteries, windproof lighters, and small pen knives. The drawstring ditty bags are themselves considered handy items.

Support units around the Brigade's main base will also be recipients of the ditty bags. The goods will be delivered from the field office here to the battalions and separate units by Dec 22, through an officer or senior NCO, who will be responsible for the distribution.

What's Legal

Insurance

By Colonel Clayton B. Tasker, Staff Judge Advocate, Ft. Belvoir, Va.

Lotta Goodheart purchased a $5,000 Lincolac sedan for her husband, Corporal Bennie Volent Goodheart. She traded her 1968 Volksbagle and paid the rest in cash which she had won on a World Series gambling pool. To protect her investment she bought liability, comprehensive and collision insurance on the Lincolac and received a 1A insurance classification.

Shortly after the purchase of the auto, the Goodhearts' cousin, Big Orphan Brandy, age 22, 6'4", 260 pounds, came to live with them while he finished high school. Six months later and 20 pounds heavier, Brandy asked if he could drive the Lincolac to the senior prom. Of course. What was the luxury bucket for?

After the dance, Big Brandy just had to see how fast the Lincolac could get to 85. It didn't. A tree got in the way at 67 miles per hour.

The Goodhearts visited Big Brandy in the hospital and assured him that the car was insured so there was no financial worry.

Bennie turned in an accident report which gave all the details concerning the wreck. His insurance broker, Ketchum, Fish and Eadem sent their insurance adjustor, Morton (Mo) Sly, to see the Goodhearts.

"Ah, he is bringing the money personally. What a wonderful insurance company," thought Bennie.

"But we cannot pay your claim," Mo explained. "You were insured under a 1A classification which you received because you stated in your application that no male under 25 years of age residing in your house would drive the auto. Based on the 1A classification your rates were lower because the risk to my company was less if no male under 25 drove your car."

Bennie and Lotta ran to the office of the brilliant, omniscent legal assistance officer, Captain Leadbetter (Lead) Head, and explained to him what they had heard from the insurance adjustor.

Captain Head explained that the adjustor was correct, "Insurance companies base their premiums on the risks which they run; therefore, when you placed an additional dangerous driver in your car you increased the chances of the company having to pay a claim. Accordingly, the company can avoid paying for the damage. You should have read your policy and all the papers you received at the time you applied for and received the insurance. I can be of no help to you, but perhaps your misfortune will be a warning to others that before counting on their insurance protection they should read all of each of their policies and understand them."

As the Goodhearts went out of the office, Lotta was heard to mutter, "Even though we don't pay for legal advice I certainly would appreciate getting more encouragement from that handsome legal assistance officer."

Decorations, Awards

In the News

Bronze Star Medal (Valor)

PSG Alan W. Campbell-4/12. Led his platoon against intense fire from enemy bunkers to overcome Viet Cong May 30.

SGT David E. Stewart-3/7. An RTO, he assisted five wounded men, though knocked to the ground twice by enemy rockets, to safety during intense contact April 24.

SP4 Phillip G. Lynch-A, 4/12. Single-handedly charged and destroyed bunker positions while team leader March 22.

SP4 Gary R. Pearson-3/7. Though painfully wounded, medic Pearson continued to administer first aid to his comrades during a heavy night mortar attack Sep 29.

SP4 Kenneth L. Yager-3/7. Repeatedly charged a well-entrenched enemy force to rescue wounded comrades, being critically injured on last attempt by a rocket blast, April 18.

SGT John C. Krumpos-2/3. A squad leader, he rushed to aid wounded platoon sergeant. Krumpos refused to leave him and was wounded by shrapnel August 15.

PSG Franklin East-3/7. The platoon sergeant continued to direct his own mortar unit, under heavy attack, though severely wounded, until the enemy was silenced.

1LT Ralph W. Sevelius-A, 2/3. The platoon leader repeatedly moved across an open marsh to direct each of his positions, overcoming the well-entrenched enemy Sep 15.

1LT Patrick J. Feenan-C, 2/3. The platoon leader courageously and expertly directed his men in overcoming an entire enemy bunker complex and single-handedly rescued two wounded comrades Sep 13.

SP4 Raymond C. Jones-D, 5/12. Unmindful of intense enemy fire the specialist rushed to the aid of his platoon leader and RTO who were trapped in a collapsed command bunker during a night attack Sep 20.

1LT John E. Dubel Jr.-2/40. As forward observer for the line units under heavy enemy fire, he charged the most strategic enemy bunker, drawing their fire and enabling the men to move into an advantageous position. He was severely wounded during the action.

Bronze Star Medal (Meritorious Service)

MAJ Nicholas B. Wilson-HHC, 5/12; 1LT Jay R. Logan-B, 7th Spt; SFC Richard C. Savage-A, 4/12, (1st OLC); SSG George A. Moore-A, 4/12, (1st OLC); MAJ Gerald L. Coffey-HHC, 2/3, (1st OLC); CPT Wesley M. Scoates-B, 2/40, (1st OLC); CPT Thomas P. Tysdal-HHB, 2/40, (1st OLC); 1LT Frank A. Szymanski-298th Sig.; SFC Tillman Brown Jr.-HHC, 7th Spt; 1LT Peter L. Price-A, 3/7; 1LT Worley W. McClellan-A, 7th Spt; CW2 Bunyan Wicker-H&SB, 2/40; SFC Robert H. Applegate-HHC, 199th; SSG Carl C. Ford-HHC, 2/3; SGT William E. Stone-A, 3/7; SSG Derry Rutherford-B, 5/12; 1LT Jerry D. Mitchell-HHC, 199th; SFC Franklin Gomas-H&SB, 2/40; CPT Jerald L. Boykin-H&SB, 2/40; SSG John A. Malone-C, 2/40; CPT Norman G. Collier-H&SB, 2/40; CPT Phillip L. Kenny-H&SB, 2/40; SSG Leo Arndt-C, 4/12; SSM Roger H. Kramer-HHC, 3/7; MAJ Edward J. Kelly III-HHC, 4/12; CSM Walter J. Ibbotson-HHC, 4/12; CW2 William J. Matthews-HHC, 4/12; SSG James F. Newton-87th Engr; SFC Bobby J. Hill-B, 4/12, (1st OLC); 1LT Alfred Gentile-A, 3/7, (2nd OLC); SFC Allan W. Campbell-A, 4/12, (1st OLC); SFC Horace L. Hall Sr.-HHC, 4/12; SSG Nathaniel Vann-C, 3/7; PSG Walter H. Jackson-C, 5/12; SGT Thomas E. Daily-A, 7th Spt.

Army Commendation Medal (Valor)

SSG Howard H. Pruett-C, 5/12; SP5 Louis P. Lavezzo-HHC, 5/12; PSG Angel-Mulero Sanchez-A, 3/7; SP4 Michael J. Marino-B, 4/12; PFC Herman L. Sanchez-C, 5/12; PFC Peter Palkowski-49th Scout Dog Plt; SP4 Michael E. Young-A, 2/3; SP5 Richard A. Soloc-A, 2/3; SSG Kenneth D. Mundy-A, 2/3; MAJ Nicholas B. Wilson-C, 5/12; SP4 Robert J. Eno-A, 2/3; SSG Henry W. Tyson-D, 3/7; SP4 Robert E. Howard-A, 2/3; SGT Gary D. Witt-HHC, 3/7; SP4 Douglas Stannard-D, 4/12; SSG Warren D. Rees-D, 2/3 (1st OLC).

Detainee Talks Too Much

By Sp 4 Larry Trammell

Quick thinking by a 199th sergeant recently outfoxed an ingenious Viet Cong ambush plan when the fake "Hoi Chanh" bait talked too much.

While on a reconnaissance mission west of Saigon, Team II of the Long Range Patrol (LRP) had a Viet Cong suspect boldly walk toward its position. As the moved nearer, a member of the patrol shouted "Dung Lai" (halt). The man calmly walked over to the Americans, still talking in his native language.

The team leader, Sergeant Bill Juechter (Long Beach, Calif.) said, "That guy seemed like he wanted to be captured and take advantage of the "Chieu Hoi" program, but we couldn't figure out why he continued to talk."

Mission completed, the LRPs made their way back to the helicopter landing-zone at dusk. The Viet Cong suspect persisted in jabbering, so his mouth was taped shut and the team silently continued through the dense growth.

Then, acting on a hunch, Sergeant Juechter discreetly gave orders to his men. First the tape was removed and the man began talking at once.

Next, Specialist Four Scott Hokoana (Hilo, Hawaii) and a companion in the rear of the patrol quietly slipped off the trail and into the nipa-palm as the rest continued to the pick-up point.

The pair waited only a few moments before they heard noises. They trained their weapons on the path and two Viet Cong with AK-47s appeared, following the sound of their "Hoi Chanh" companion's voice ahead.

Specialist Hokoana and his buddy opened fire, but both VC fled.

When the two LRPs rejoined the team, the VC detainee realized his plan had backfired, and he tried violently to free himself. As the helicopter appeared, he found himself at the end of his rope, literally.

Recounting the episode, Specialist Hokoana smiled and said, "I guess he decided he didn't want to go if his buddies couldn't go too!"

BRIGADE COMMANDER, Brigadier General Frederic E. Davison congratulates Staff Sergeant Paul A. Palazzolo before he left for home. (Photo by Whinnery)

In One Year

E-2 to SSG Hero

Paul A. Palazzolo's tour was unlike that of most draftees—or even Redcatchers—who come to Vietnam for their year of service.

In less than a year, teh 22-year-old soldier from Detroit climbed from private to staff sergeant of a company of the 4th Bn, 12th Inf, and earned an Army Commendation Medal, Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, and Silver Star in the process.

He had arrived after only five month's service.

As Specialist Four, Sergeant Palazzolo distinguished himself in action May 7, while on a reconnaissance-in-force operation southwest of Saigon. While serving as platoon sergeant, his platoon approached a suspected enemy camp and became subjected to intense enemy automatic weapons fire.

Specialist Palazzolo quickly maneuvered his men into the cover of a nearby ditch. When his platoon leader, who was attempting to pin-point enemy positions, was mortally wounded, Palazzolo immediately took command of the platoon, reorganized the men, and began directing fire upon the enemy.

Locating an enemy machine gun emplacement, he hurled a hand grenade into the Viet Cong positions, silencing them. He then moved through the intense fire and carried his fallen platoon leader to the rear.

Returning to the area of heaviest contact, Specialist Palazzolo persisted in his valiant efforts as he exposed himself to enemy fire in order to successfully maintain a heavy volume of fire upon the Viet Cong force, enabling his company to conclude the engagement.

For his gallantry in action, Specialist Four Palazzolo received the Silver Star, followed by a two-step jump in rank to staff sergeant.

NEW FLAK SUIT for use by point men in heavily booby-trapped areas is tested by a Redcatcher near Saigon. Developed by 7th Spt Bn, it is meant to protect the wearer from fragments. The soldier is shown using a grappling hook, thrown out and dragged along the trail ahead to snag trip-wires. (Photo by Eckert)

Redcatcher Summary

4 Nov 68:

Helicopter gunship crews from the 7th Sqdn, 1st Air Cav, flying in support of Brigade elements, engaged the occupants of six sampans. Two VC were killed and two sampans sunk.

Other action saw elements from the 3rd Bn, 7th Inf destroy 26 bunkers in the same area.

5 Nov 68:

Binh Canh PF's working with Bravo Co, 2nd Bn, 3rd Inf engaged six VC, holding one wounded detainee and capturing his pistol.

The Brigade's 5th Bn, 12th Inf destroyed eight bunkers, two punji pits, and captured one 82mm mortar base plate and an enemy poncho in the "pineapple" region 3 miles southwest of Duc Hoa.

"Redcatchers" from 3rd Bn, 7th Inf destroyed 23 enemy bunkers 7 miles south of Saigon. Supporting Air Force bomb strikes destroyed 2 enemy bunkers and one structure.

6 Nov 68:

An element from the 3rd [illegible] 12th Inf destroyed [illegible] bu[illegible] and detained five sus[illegible] miles south of Duc H[illegible] Redcatcher was reported [illegible]ed.

7 Nov 68:

Troops from 5th Bn, 12th Inf found two 250-pound bombs set up as booby traps. The bombs were destroyed as were three sampans the soldiers found later in the day. Four pounds of C-4 explosive were also uncovered.

9 Nov 68:

Delta Co, 2nd Bn, 3rd Inf apprehended three detainees 21 miles south of Saigon, destroyed eight bunkers and captured one bag of medical supplies, four Chicom grenades, one M-79 grenade and fuse wire 11 miles south of Saigon. Bravo Co apprehended one suspect at Binh Dinh Bridge.

Alpha Co, 5th Bn, 12th Inf destroyed one bunker and three sampans and captured one VC claymore and various other VC equipment on a sweep 7 miles southeast of Saigon today.

Alpha Co, 3rd Bn, 7th Inf destroyed three bunkers while patrolling 4 miles south of Saigon.

Four miles further south, Bravo Company, 3rd Bn, 7th Inf destroyed 24 enemy bunkers. The battalion's Delta Co also destroyed 2 bunkers and captured numerous iron reinforcing bars in the same area.

11 Nov 68:

Gunship crews supporting the Brigade reported killing six enemy in two contacts today.

Crewmen from the 7th Sqdn, 1st Air Cav killed five VC in action 5 miles southwest of Saigon. Four AK-47 automatic rifles were also captured. One more enemy was killed by another cavalry gunship 9 miles southwest of Saigon.

13 Nov 68:

Infantrymen from Alpha Co, 3rd Bn, 7th Inf, discovered one VC considered killed earlier by a light firing team 12 miles west of Saigon.

They also destroyed 7 bunkers, 15 fighting positions and detained one suspect and captured 2 9mm pistols and enemy supplies and documents.

While on a recon-in-force mission 9 miles south of Saigon, elements from Delta Co, 3rd Bn, 7th Inf discovered one AK-47 and two magazines sealed in plastic buried in the ground.

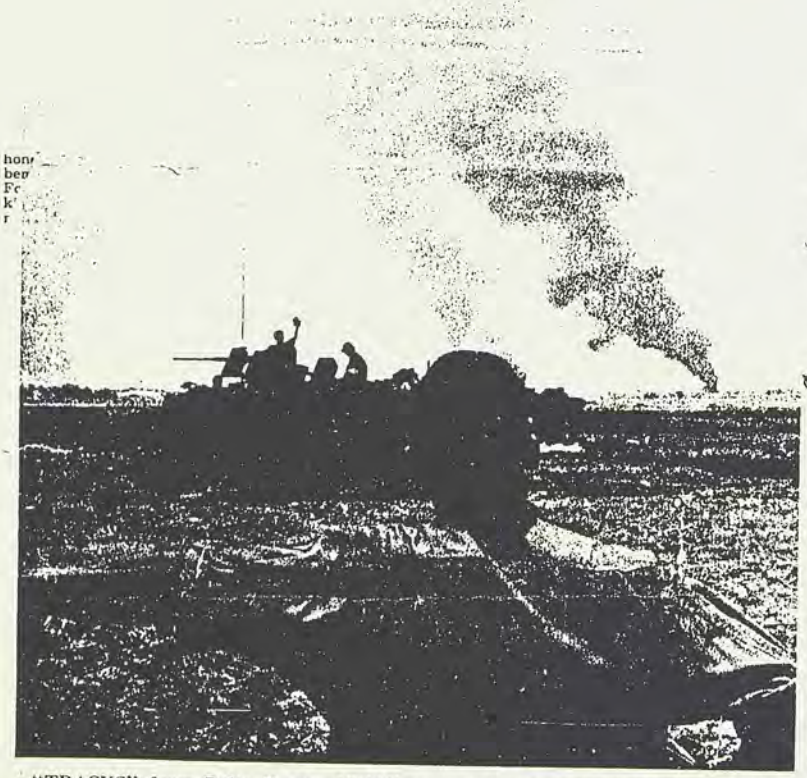
14 Nov 68:

Alpha Co, 5th Bn, 12th Inf found a cache consisting of two B-40 rocket rounds, medical supplies and a bundle of documents in a bunker 3 miles southeast of Duc Hoa.

In May, Redcat

Press Summar

The May Atta



"TRACKS" from Delta Troop, 17th Cav are pointed in the right direction while columns of smoke billow skyward during the May attacks near Saigon—and a passenger airplane prepares to land. (Army photo)

May 6—Reconnaissance elements of the 199th killed 44 NVA soldiers in a series of sharp clashes west of Saigon Monday. The US units suffered light casualties.

Other elements of the Brigade discovered new enemy fortifications and equipment during reconnaissance-in-force operations south and southwest of Saigon, in areas of previous contacts.

Delta Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf "Warriors," commanded by Captain James F. Dabney encountered two NVA soldiers in flat terrain near their basecamp just west of Saigon shortly after daybreak, quickly killing one and detaining the other, capturing his AK-47 rifle.

Moments later, the Delta Warriors working with Charlie Co, commanded by Captain Robert Tonsetic, fought an unknown-size enemy force which attacked the US basecamp. Twelve enemy soldiers were killed and four were detained. Delta Co troops pursued four NVA soldiers, pinned them down, and killed them in the ensuing action. Later another enemy soldier was killed and one detained.

The Warrior battalion units received sporadic fire after the early morning contacts were broken. By noon, they had killed 25 enemy and detained six, while sustaining one US soldier killed and seven wounded.

Contact continued that afternoon until 1:30, with a total of five US troops killed and 16 wounded.

May 7—A North Vietnamese Army battalion's march to Saigon ended 2.5 miles short of the South Vietnamese capital before dawn May 7 when it was hit by elements of the 199th Brigade, supported by artillery and airstrikes.

Reports initially listed 92 enemy soldiers killed. US losses were two killed and 18 wounded, with half the wounded requiring dustoff. Captured enemy equipment from the initial fighting included large numbers of AK-47 automatic weapons, RPG rocket launchers and ammunition, enemy packs, documents and other equipment.

Meanwhile, infantrymen of the 3rd Bn, 7th Inf, the "Cottonbaler" battalion, slammed into an enemy-occupied village along with supporting APC's from Delta Trp, 17th Cav, about two miles west of Saigon Tuesday afternoon.

NVA troops and machine guns were well dug into the village, which had been deserted by the civilian population. Enemy automatic weapons and troops were hidden underground in haystacks and buildings.

"Cottonbalers," supported by helicopter gunships of the 1st Aviation Brigade and APCs of Delta Trp, poured gunfire into enemy positions.

USAF F-100 jets did a "beautiful job" according to Captain Steve M. Proctor, who flew a 199th Command and Control helicopter over the battle area. "Those pilots knew the enemy was firing on them, but they brought their stuff right onto target, within 150 meters of our positions."

"Bravo" Btry, 2nd Bn, 40th Arty, placed direct fire onto the enemy positions from a 199th battalion basecamp north of the battle.

Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth Hall, commanding officer, 3rd Bn, 7th Inf, directly controlled the unit's action from a helicopter.

The pre-dawn battle with the NVA battalion began when a small lead element of the Saigon-bound enemy battalion was hit by a Delta Co outpost of the 4th Bn, 12th Inf, shortly before midnight May 6. An hour later, other approaching NVA lead ele-

COMBAT HUSTLE—A Redeatcher recoilless rifle team moves into firing position southwest of Saigon during the May attacks. (Photo by Whinnery)

ENTRENCHED INFANTRYMEN of Delta Co, 3rd Bn, with smoke to guide supporting air strikes to bomb e village near Saigon. (Photo by Hansell)

:chers Trapped and Smashed Them

'ies During
'cks on Saigon

ments of platoon and company-size were hit by ambush patrols of the "Warrior" battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel William Mastoris of Farrell, Pa. Army helicopters and USAF tactical airstrikes supported the action.

When the main body of the NVA battalion marched through the area at 3:15 a.m., the bulk of enemy troops ran into one of the Redcatcher companies. Stopped by firepower, the enemy rebounded and apparently tried to flank the company. Instead, they ran into the perimeter of the "Warrior" battalion basecamp, and made an all-out assault on the Redcatcher positions. Repulsed by the hail of automatic weapons fire and artillery fired point blank by batteries of 2nd Bn, 40th Arty and 2nd Bn, 35th Arty, they reeled back again, into one of their own units which had been repulsed by another US company.

At that point, USAF airstrikes were directed into the enemy concentration. Twelve secondary explosions resulted from the airstrikes.

Initial sweeps just outside the US unit's positions at dawn revealed 92 enemy bodies. Sporadic fighting continued that day.

May 8—Redcatchers continued heavy action Wednesday, killing 44 enemy, destroying 54 enemy-occupied military structures and three bunkers, 90 meters of trench, and damaging 27 additional structures during their fifth day of fighting just west of Saigon's outskirts.

Bravo Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf, teamed with Delta Co, 3rd Bn, 7th Inf to meet substantial enemy opposition 3 miles west of Saigon Wednesday morning. Supported by eight USAF airstrikes, the Redcatchers continued their assault against an estimated NVA battalion in heavily fortified village positions. Early reports listed the enemy losses at 44 killed, while US casualties were 2 killed and 12 wounded.

Charlie Co, 2nd Bn, 3rd Inf destroyed three bunkers in reconnaissance actions south of Saigon Wednesday.

May 9—Redcatcher elements mauled a 180-man body of enemy troops who stumbled into the 199th's positions about 3 miles west of Saigon just after midnight.

Sweeps of the battle area revealed 135 enemy killed in the blazing night battle. A total of 18 suspects were detained following the action, including a group of 11 who surrendered at one time.

US losses in the battle were one wounded.

The battle began when infantrymen of Delta Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf found themselves surrounded on four sides by 180 enemy troops who were unknowingly moving through the Redcatchers' area. The infantrymen set off Claymore mines, and hit the surprised enemy with automatic weapons fire.

The enemy troops, NVA and VC, rebounded south directly into Charlie Co. at the 4th Bn. basecamp, and were thrown back by heavy perimeter fire.

The enemy forces retreated into the heavy fire of Alpha Co, 3rd Bn, 7th Inf positions as the US troops continued to cut down the reeling enemy soldiers.

Army helicopter light fire teams and Air Force AC-47 "Spooky" dragonships poured heavy mini-gun and rocket fire on the enemy troops as they were repelled from the Redcatcher elements.

The remaining enemy troops, their force totally broken, fled to the southwest.

Four companies of the 3rd Bn, 7th Inf and Bravo Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf swept through a previously enemy-occupied village Thursday.

The fighting which had raged there for two days was finally broken, with the US troops receiving only sporadic rifle fire, in sharp contrast to the previous heavy automatic weapons and rocket fire from the heavily entrenched enemy troops in the village. A total 18 airstrikes supported numerous assaults, breaking the enemy's resistance.

The initial sweep of the village revealed 36 enemy bodies. Captured enemy equipment included 15 AK-47s, three light machine guns, two night vision devices for rocket-propelled grenade launchers, 22 AK-47 magazines, 18 Chicom grenades, 13 RPG rounds, two 75mm recoilless rifle rounds, five RPG-7 rocket launchers, two B-40 rocket launchers, one Chicom pistol and and one Browning Automatic Rifle.

The 199th's 5th Bn, 12th Inf deployed northeast of Saigon, sustained four wounded during reconnaissance actions.

May 10—The 199th and supporting elements accounted for 42 enemy killed in action, captured five AK-47s, and found 2,600 pounds of rice during action Friday on the western outskirts of Saigon.

Delta Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf fought an estimated Viet Cong battalion late Thursday night and early Friday. The Redcatchers and air support killed 24 VC and destroyed one RPG round in their sixth day of fighting west of Saigon. One US soldier was wounded in the action.

Before noon Friday, Charlie Co, 3rd Bn, 7th Inf fired on 50 enemy troops moving west through their area. Supported by artillery, they killed 11 VC, captured four AK-47s, and destroyed a 75mm recoiless rifle round.

Helicopter gunships and an Air Force "Spooky" dragonship, were called in when Bravo Co of the "Cottonbaler" battalion sighted another 50 VC in the open plains west of Saigon. The action resulted in seven enemy killed, one AK-47 captured, and several B-40 rocket rounds destroyed. In a sweep following the contact, a 2,600-pound enemy rice cache was found.

South of Saigon, two bunkers were destroyed by the 199th's Charlie Co. of the "Old Guard" in Binh Chanh District of Gia Dinh Province.

May 11—Elements of the Brigade and supporting units killed 12 VC and captured several AK-47s, a light machine gun, a rocket launcher and ammo, and destroyed 12 bunkers in action May 11, on the southwestern outskirts of Saigon.

Early Saturday, a recon element of Alpha Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf fought an unknown-size enemy unit, killing 5 VC. The Redcatcher troops captured six AK-47's one light machine gun, a rocket cache, and detained three suspects. Bravo Co. troops captured a B-40 rocket launcher and rocket near Saigon.

Elements of the 199th's 2nd Bn, 3rd Inf, killed five VC in an action with 30 to 35 enemy on the south edge of Saigon. Artillery bombarded enemy elements which had moved into a factory building. Eleven US soldiers were wounded. Other battalion elements destroyed 12 bunkers in earlier reconnaissance operations.

An ambush patrol from Bravo Co, 3rd Bn, 7th Inf engaged and killed two enemy and captured a rocket-propelled grenade. Charlie Co found a VC killed in a previous 199th action near tthe edge of Saigon.

May 12—Elements of the Brigade found 16 enemy bodies killed in previous actions Sunday, and found numerous enemy arms and equipment south and west of Saigon as contact with the enemy lightened. The Redcatchers also detained one suspect and captured 70 60mm mortar rounds, 4 AK-47's, 51 RPG rocket rounds, 6,950 small arms rounds and 2 RPD machine guns Sunday.

Elements of the "Old Guard" called artillery, light fire teams and "Spooky" dragonship fire on approximately 70 enemy observed moving through their area. Initial sweeps of the area revealed two VC bodies left behind.

Delta Co of the same battalion found 11 VC KIA during the day's action. They also found one RPG launcher with 7 rounds, two RPG-7 rounds and charges, 2 60mm mortar rounds, 300 AK-47 rounds, 30 AK-47 magazines, 10 hammocks and documents.

Early Sunday morning, "Warriors" of the 4th Bn, 12th Inf, spotted a group of VC attempting to avoid contact. Artillery and helicopter light fire teams and "Spooky" dragonships fired on the enemy. Initial sweeps of the area netted one VC KIA, one AK-47, one new RPG rocket, clothing and a rucksack.

Three Redcatchers were wounded and dusted off during the day's action.

May 13—Redcatchers contacted an estimated reinforced VC company late Sunday night and the contact continued throughout Monday five miles southwest of

(Continued on Next Page)

7th Inf mark their position ...ay bunker positions in a

OVER THERE! A "Hoi Chanh" points out to a Brigade interpreter NVA-occupied positions in a village only hours after he left the same positions. The village was the scene of heavy fighting between the 199th and an NVA battalion. (Photo by Van Wyngarden)

Mid-May Found the Attack Dead

(Continued from Preceding Page)

Saigon. The Redcatchers killed 15 Viet Cong and detained four suspects during the day's action.

A recon platoon from Echo Co, 2nd Bn, 3rd Inf took two VC under fire late Sunday night. Moments later they took under fire a large group of VC who quickly broke into groups of 8 to 10 and dispersed. Contact was broken for an hour until the platoon saw approximately 50 VC and called artillery from 2nd Bn, 40th Arty on them. Later in the morning the platoon came into heavy contact with an unknown-size enemy force. Alpha Co, 5th Bn, 12th Inf reinforced the platoon and soon began receiving automatic weapons fire. The contact continued and Delta Co, 2nd Bn, 3rd Inf and APC's of Delta Troop reinforced the other two Redcather units. Sporadic firefights continued throughout the day.

Alpha Co, 5th Bn, 12th Inf killed 13 VC, detained 3 suspects and captured 1 machine gun on wheels during the action Monday.

Delta Co, 2nd Bn, 3rd Inf. killed two VC and found and destroyed 35 bunkers constructed by the enemy Sunday night.

Charlie Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf detained a suspect and destroyed eight enemy fighting positions in action Monday.

During the day's action three US soldiers were killed and six wounded.

May 14—Fighting resumed late Monday afternoon, following a short lull in the battle. Three company-size outposts of the 2nd Bn, 3rd Inf and a company outpost of the 5th Bn, 12th Inf came under simultaneous heavy attack from several enemy units trying to overrun Redcatcher units during a heavy rainstorm that night.

The battle raged all Monday night, with no enemy unit overrunning any of the company defenses. The enemy broke contact Tuesday morning, leaving behind 86 killed in the previous night's action, along with weapons, ammunition, and equipment.

The latest toll of enemy killed in the clashes four miles south of Saigon was in addition to 15 enemy killed on Monday, the second day of the three-day series of engagements. Three suspects, two of them wounded, were detained in the Tuesday morning fighting.

At one company position, enemy troops hit one bunker at the corner of the unit's perimeter. When four enemy troops ran into the bunker and were about to enter the perimeter,, Platoon Sergeant Fernandos Quintos fired an 81mm mortar at the enemy-occupied bunker from 30 meters away, killing all four.

At Delta Co, 2nd Bn, 3rd Inf enemy troops probed the perimeter at 11 p.m. Monday, then attacked four hours later during a heavy rainstorm with RPG and automatic weapons fire and mortars.

Unit commander, First Lieutenant William Danforth said, "They crawled up behind dikes of rice paddies around us. With the heavy rain, we didn't see them until they were 20 meters from the perimeter and had started firing."

"We knew they were all around us. The men let go with all we had and held them. They were so close that they were throwing grenades at us. They were dropping all around us. We could see them dragging bodies away. After 90 minutes of that, we started to conserve ammo some, and called in artillery, 360 degrees around us." The 2nd Bn, 40th Arty did an outstanding job for us," he said.

First Sergeant Jack R. Boney described how one enemy RPG rocket came into the half-flooded company command post during the battle: "The C.O., myself, and the Forward Observer were in there firing. The CP was built into a sunken basin 15 meters wide, flooded from rain. All of a sudden, the RPG came sailing in and buried itself in mud before it blew." The sergeant was thrown back against a wall, but was not injured. All three occupants continued firing until the enemy fled.

Weapons and equipment captured by the "Old Guard" battalion companies and Alpha Co, 5th Bn, 12th Inf included 10 AK-47 rifles, 12 AK-47 magazines, 2 RPG-7 rocket launchers, 1 RPG-2 rocket launcher, 25 RPG rockets, 3 RPG machine guns, 26 grenades, 2 bolt-action rifles, a K-54 pistol, equipment from a 60mm mortar and ammunition, documents, a Chicom claymore-type mine, small arms ammo, webgear and a rucksack, and an enemy gas mask.

Intelligence sources indicated that part of the enemy troops involved in the Tuesday morning battles were the 3rd Bn, 273rd Viet Cong Regt, reported to be comprised of 80 percent NVA soldiers.

Vietnamese, Americans Rebuild Together

By Pfc Peter Gyallay-Pap

A dozen new brick and concrete houses now stand near completion where there had been ruins and rubble months before—because of a joint Vietnamese-U.S. Army project.

The original houses were destroyed during the Tet attacks, when VC infiltrated into the area to stage an attack on the Brigade base camp, at the end of Long Binh Post. More than 100 houses were destroyed in Ho Nai village, 22 miles south of Saigon, leaving 700 persons homeless.

After the fighting ended, tthe 199th began a resettlement program for these persons. A total of 58 temporary houses were built, as well as 44 more permanent structures.

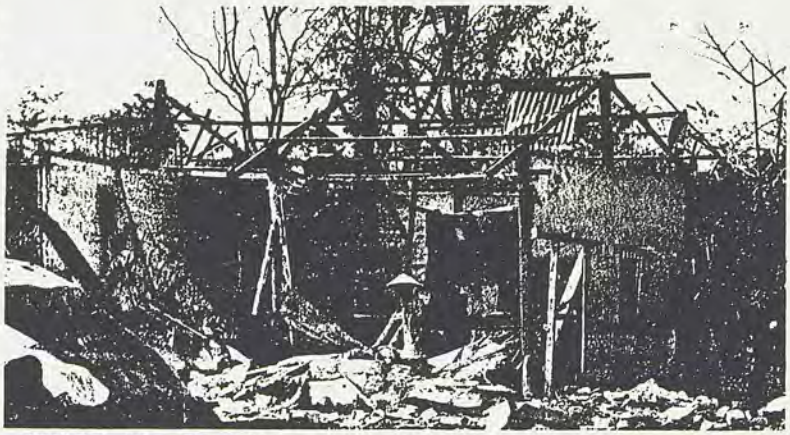
"Project Tarp" (Tet Aggression Relief Project) was announced in March by the commander of US Forces, Vietnam, and the Brigade's Civil affairs Office responded: Brigade soldiers were asked for voluntary contributions to help their unit begin restoration of destroyed homes in their area of responsibility. By April, $3,684 had been contributed.

"We then discussed how and where to use these funds," said Major Melvin L. Byrd (washington, D.C.) former Civil Affairs Officer and now Executive Officer of 7th Spt Bn. "The fund council finally decided to try to initiate a self-help project with the people of Thanh Tam who wished to rebuild their destroyed homes. After consulting with the hamlet chief and priest, we went to work."

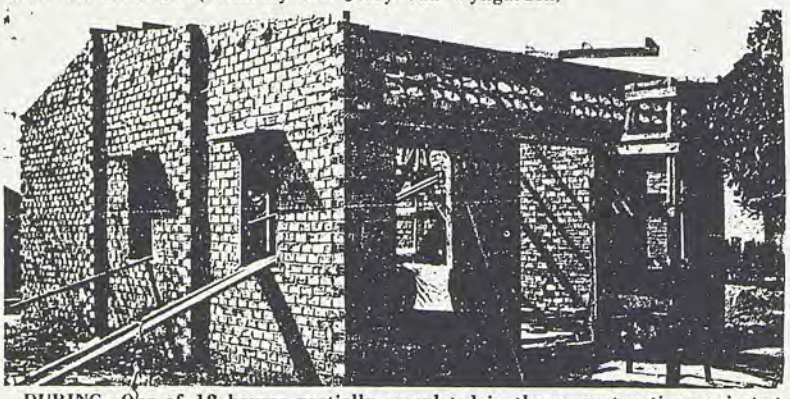
The plan called for the Brigade to provide the building materials and for the villagers to rebuild their houses. First the rubble and debris had to be cleared away. Then the bricks (7,000 to a house), cement (30 to 40 bags per house), lumber, tin, roofing, and doors began rolling in by truck to the delighted villagers.

A Vietnamese carpenter and a mason showed the villagers how to frame the structures. But, said Major Byrd, "The actual construction was done by the people themselves." Delays were experienced, because building materials weren't always available when needed. The homes are now more than 85 percent complete, however, and lack only finishing touches.

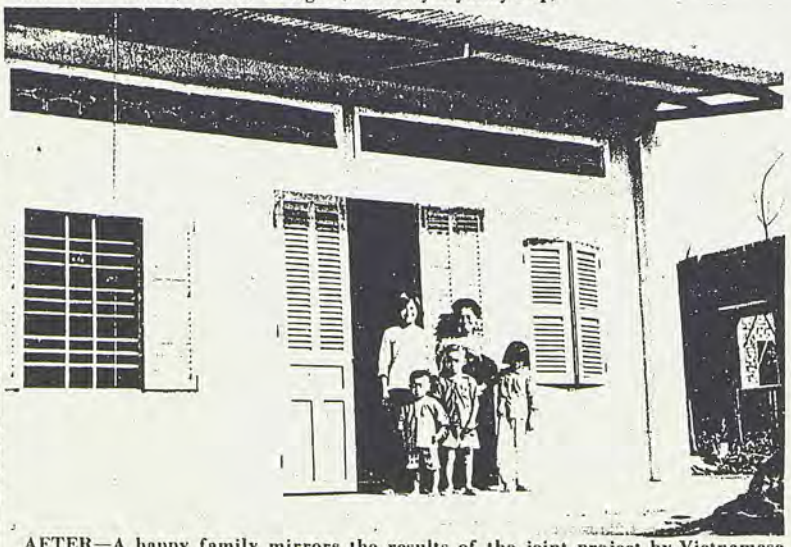
In assessing the tangible success of the project, Major Byrd expessed satisfaction at "How well the people cooperated, making it easier for us. It is a very worthwhile project."



BEFORE—After Tet, 127 houses in Ho Nai Village were left in ruins, rendering over 700 homeless. (Photo by SP5 Jerry Van Wyngarden)



DURING—One of 12 houses partially completed in the reconstruction project at Tanh Tam hamlet, Ho Nai village. (Photo by Gyallay-Pap)



AFTER—A happy family mirrors the results of the joint project by Vietnamese and the Brigade. (Photo by Gyallay-Pap)

LOH Model Given to General

The Hughes Tool Co. (Aircraft Division) has presented a scale model—the first in Vietnam—of its recent OH-6A "Cayuse" helicopter to Brigadier General Frederic E. Davison. The Brigade recently acquired the light observation helicopters (LOH).

The presentation was made by William B. Collins, Southeast Asia operations manager of Hughes Aircraft, in a brief, informal ceremony at Camp Frenzell-Jones, Long Binh, Vietnam.

The Brigade got four of the record-setting "Cayuses" in mid-September. They replace the small H-23 "Bubble." In accepting the model, General Davison praised strides made by the aircraft industry in helicopter production, performance, and efficiency.

"We've used the LOH extensively in our operat. ns," he said.

The "Cayuse" is equipped with safety features that include an "A"-frame, or roll-bar type of basic body construction, and blades which are anchored to the body rather than th[illegible] mission of the most helicopte[illegible]

Save For Me

Wracked Region Yields 4 VC Dead

The rectangular area had been a rice paddy once, but now it looked like 900 wretched square meters of the moon.

Large chunks of earth, ripped from the surface and blasted through the air, evidenced the explosions that had rocked the area and left craters and upheavals.

Four VC soldiers, killed the afternoon before, still had their weapons. They had not expected to be here this morning, but here they were and here were the Americans.

The four were members of a group of between 15 and 30 VC that had been spotted by a light firing team from the Brigade.

During the two and one-half hour battle, three additional light firing teams from the 199th joined in, two airstrikes were made, and rockets and large artillery shells thundered on enemy positions.

The combined effect of this assault caused the enemy forces to withdraw during twilight. At dawn, men of Charlie Co, 2nd Bn, 3rd Inf, were helicoptered in to search the area and see what would turn up.

During the first hour of the sweep, the lead platoon of Charlie Co found a cartridge magazine sticking out of the mud. It was still attached to an AK-47 automatic rifle and this was pulled out. A soldier dug where the weapon had been and found a dead Viet Cong. He was still carrying maps and documents pertaining to VC operations.

After crossing one of many streams and proceeding further into the scarred area, the men of Charlie Co found three more dead VC and their weapons along dikes of the former rice paddies.

They were not buried in the mud like the first, but were lying about 10 meters apart in the short, nipa-palm foliage. Apparently they had been setting up for the night when an airstrike took them by surprise.

Continuing the search under a blazing early afternoon sun, wading at times through a combination of waist-high-or-over water and knee-deep mud, the infantrymen came upon an enemy bunker complex large enough for a platoon. They destroyed it with explosives and then slowly made their way to the pick-up zone and boarded helicopters.

5/12 Mobile Aid Station

Needing a truly mobile aid station, 5th Bn., 12th Inf went to work and developed one from a tent and a conex container.

When required to move, the tent and its equipment are stored inside the conex and away she goes.

The aid station is equipped with an operating table, two locked cabinets for prescription medicines and drugs, several cabinets for equipment, and a refrigerator.

The operating light is made from a sealed beam auto headlight and is connected to two 12-volt batteries. The shelves and cabinets are fitted ship's cabin style, so that when the conex is picked up and moved, nothing will jar or fall.

Medicines and other supplies needed by an aid station are constantly replenished so that the unit can be dismantled, moved, set up and ready for business with minimal delay.

Star Black, a correspondent, relaxes for a moment to model the Redcatcher shoulder patch. (Photo by Anderson)

No Thanks

Fisherman Saves Crew

What do you say to a Vietnamese fisherman after he saves your life and the lives of your buddies when your airboat overturns in a river and everyone is completely helpless against the strong current?

On a recent reconnaissance-in-force mission just south of Saigon, soldiers from Delta Co, 5th Bn, 12th Inf were suddenly dunked in the Rach Cay Kho River when their airboat was caught in a whirlpool and capsized—men, equipment and all.

Said one witness, "Suddenly the boat was turning in a counter-clockwise direction and it upset! All of us were thrown into the river. A man who couldn't swim panicked and grabbed onto me. I tried to swim ashore with him on my back but the current took us downstream about 20 yards in a matter of seconds. As I looked to the left I saw the overturned airboat about 10 feet away, moving swiftly with the current. A buddy managed to help get me and 'the man with the steel grip' over to the boat."

At this time most of the survivors were desperately holding onto the slippery hull. Only one had managed to swim ashore. The airboat had gone downstream about 50 yards further when a muscular Vietnamese fisherman rowed his sampan madly towards it. He rammed hard into the hull and, with brute strength, used his paddle to push the hull with its survivors ashore.

Once on the bank, the soldiers were not only breathless but wordless, while the only concern of the fisherman was helping get them to further safety, since VC were reportedly in the area.

He beckoned one soldier into his sampan and rowed him downstream to the original starting point where the man could report what had happened and get help for the others.

"After I told the company commander, I turned around to thank the guy again, but he was gone," the soldier said. "I don't know who he was, but he sure saved our skins!"

Lt Col Ray Now Exec

Lieutenant Colonel Herbert H. Ray, former battalion commander of the 5th Battalion, 12th Infantry, assumed new duties as Brigade Executive Officer November 19.

He replaced Lieutenant Colonel William C. Carper III, previously battalion commander of the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Infantry, who returned to CONUS to be assigned to the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia.

Joint Effort

PF-US Save Bridge

A combined platoon of eight Redcatchers and Vietnamese Popular Forces fought off an estimated enemy sapper platoon which tried to sabotage a Route 1 bridge five miles east of the Brigade main base camp.

After the action, one Viet Cong body and three Communist AK-47 automatic rifles were left behind. Numerous blood trails indicated where enemy troops had been dragged away.

The combined unit alerted at the bridge site after an early morning VC attack on a PF outpost at Trang Bom village, east of the bridge, was aborted. "Sergeant William McCormick put the platoon on full alert because he knew the VC wanted that bridge," said First Lieutenant Roger L. Tyson (Anaheim, Calif), the platoon leader.

At 4:06 a.m. an estimated platoon of VC fired the first RPG round at the site's bunkers, defended by three squads of Popular Forces soldiers who were supported by the 199th soldiers. The RPG hit a bunker, slightly wounding two PFs and one American, all of whom continued to fight.

"Once the RPG was fired, everyone on the bridge opened up," said Lieutenant Tyson. Because of the Redcatchers' and PF's barrage of automatic M-16 and carbine fire, the next four rounds of RPG rocket fire missed their target.

One PF soldier fired a Browning Automatic Rifle from the top of a bunker as enemy fire came in.

Specialist Four Kenneth G. Martin (Dallas, Tex.), manning a .50 cal. machine gun, said, "When the VC got too close my squad leader yelled it was time for me, so I let go at them."

The red platoon, repulsed, delivered automatic weapons fire at the combined US-Vietnamese force, but again failed to breach the bridge defenses.

On a dawn sweep of the contact area, the combined platoon found one mortally wounded VC, who died moments later, and two AK-47s.

Blood trails showed where other enemy had been dragged from the scene, wrapped, and carried away. Where the blood stopped, another AK-47 automatic rifle was found.

"These PFs really did an outstanding job at the bridge site," said Lieutenant Tyson. "We're always glad to support them," said a staff sergeant. "They do things we'd probably get a medal for and take it all in stride."

MARTHA RAYE, who gets around Vietnam as few women do, is shown with two escort officers during a visit to Brigade forward headquarters in late November.

'Sharp Eyes' Hunt Cong Booby Traps

By Specialist Four James Christofferson

"I guess it's a combination of good vision, extra sensory perception, extreme caution, and lots of luck."

This is how Sergeant Vitas Bagdonas (Dearborn, Mich.) described the "sixth sense" attributed to infantrymen from the 2nd Bn, 3rd Inf. On recent operations west of Saigon, men of the "Old Guard" battalion have walked point in an area chronically infested with booby traps. Their skill in discovering the carefully hidden devices has led to the destruction of 30.

The devices vary so drastically in size and location that no set enemy pattern has been established. They may consist of a Chinese Communist fragmentation grenade, an unexploded US 105mm round, a land mine, or one of many "home-made" devices for which the VC have been notorious.

Some booby traps have been installed along dikes, some next to dikes, some under water, some in trees, some along paths, and some off the paths.

The only sure method of combating the booby traps is finding them before tripping them. That's were the sharp eyes come in.

On a recent operation, Sergeant George Jadlos (Patterson, N.J.), was walking point for Charlie Co. He walked stealthily but looking alternately from the ground at his feet to the terrain ahead. Suddenly he tensed and froze in his tracks; there was a trip wire running across his path, leading to Chicom grenades.

The Battalion Commander, Lieutenant Colonel M. J. Asensio, Jr., in the combat area at the time, came for a first-hand look at the find. Asking Jadlos to point it out to him, the CO stared for several moments, then again asked exactly where the trip wire was. The point man directed his attention to the spot, where an almost-invisible trip wire connected clusters of grenades. The eagle-eyed point man had scored again.

The ever-present danger, according to Specialist Four Robert Eno (St. Louis), has much to do with the efficiency of the point men. "When you're walking up there in front of the company, you know if you don't see a booby trap in time it could kill you, so you watch pretty closely."

Whatever the reason for their skill, the rest of the men in the unit know what a service the point man performs. As one man said after a point man narrowly averted tripping a wire attached to a land mine, "It's a good thing that all the guys with 20/20 vision didn't decide to be Air Force pilots."

OPEN WIDE—Captain Jerry Cremer takes a peek at a Vietnamese interpreter's ailing lower molars inside the Brigade's new mobile dental van, while dental technician, Specialist Four Tom Gardner, stands by. (Photo by Whinnery)

Driven to Extraction

Dentist's Office Moves

With a cracked filling or crown as near as the next piece of cherry pie, dental incapacity can seriously impair the efficiency of a field soldier and, by projection, that of his unit.

The 199th Light Infantry Brigade's solution is a mobile dental van that travels to all forward base areas and is designed and equipped to treat most common dental problems. No longer do dental emergencies require a lengthy trip back to the Brigade main base camp here. Routine fillings, repairs and adjustments need not be put off.

The Brigade's 7th Spt Bn spent weeks planning the van and Specialist Four Greg Hoschen, a dental technician, built the laboratory in two weeks by converting a communications van and installing the necessary equipment. The Brigade Dental Officer, Captain Jerry Cremer, makes the rounds with the van.

"While it is up to the individual to properly care for his teeth, too often they are neglected," said Cremer. "Many soldiers with slight problems of decay or the preliminary beginnings of disease or infection may hesitate too long in seeking dental care. This is why the van was built: to handle any problem that might occur in the field."

The van will make regularly scheduled stops at all forward areas and remain in each for three days, handling approximately 22 patients a day. Those needing routine dental care should make arrangements ahead of time.

Father Liteky Honored At White House Ceremony

(Continued from Page one)

Father Liteky, who entered the Army in July, 1966 was in Vietnam from March, 1967 until October, 1968. During the entire tour, he served with the 199th Light Infantry Brigade.

The 37-year-old battle chaplain said that he joined the Army and volunteered for Vietnam because of the shortage of chaplains. Also, he felt that he could be comfortable in a service atmosphere, because his father had served in the US Navy for 32 years and retired as a chief petty officer. He chose the Army instead of the Navy because, "I felt that there was a greater need for chaplains here."

"And being a service chaplain is not nearly so difficult as having a civilian parish. In the military, there are fewer social problems than you would encounter in civilian life and here you don't have the financial worries about facilities for your people and for yourself," Chaplain Liteky adds.

"It is much more interesting in the Army because there is a greater cross-section of people from all over the United States with different cultures, backgrounds and social levels. A large percentage of the officers and enlisted men are in for just two or three years to fulfill their military obligations, and meeting these people, as well as the career Army men, is very interesting and rewarding for me.

"Once a man is in the Army, whether for a career or for a short while, he experiences situations and problems that don't exist in civilian life, particularly when he must go abroad for extended periods of time, like to Vietnam.

"Being able to help and counsel these men is a very rewarding experience for me personally and I enjoy doing it." That's one reason I extended my tour."

Born in Norfolk, Va. in 1931, the chaplain and his family lived there until his father was transferred to Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

"This was when I was about 12 years old and I ran away from home for a couple of weeks and went back to Norfolk. That was where all my 'buddies' were then. I was slowly turning into a juvenile delinquent in those days." Chaplain Liteky laughed.

"When I decided to become a priest, my father was a little more than surprised after some of the things I had done in my younger days," he added.

Before deciding to enter the seminary, the 180-pound, six-footer attended the University of Florida for one year on a football scholarship as a quarterback. Injured in team try-outs, he sat out the season and later switched to Chipola Junior College in Mariana, Fla. on another scholarship for a year.

"Then I decided to enter the seminary. I had been thinking about it off and on through the years since I had been brought up for the most part in parochial schools.

"Also, during my second year of college, I read a book entitled "The Red Hat." It was about a man that became a priest and later a cardinal. He led a very interesting life and, to me, a very inspiring one. So, I started thinking a little more seriously about my values and decided to become a priest.

"I entered the seminary and was later ordained a priest as a member of a religious order called the Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity in Winchester, Va. The order is dedicated to "abandoned work" such as working among the poor wherever they might be, where their church is unable to devote the time to care for everyone."

"For three years, I worked at the Shrine of St. Joseph, mission in Sterling, N.J.

"Later I requested to go into the service.

"I attended Chaplain's School at Ft. Hamilton, N.Y. for two months and then was assigned to the basic training command at Ft. Benning, Ga. for six months. I volunteered for Vietnam and have been here since March of last year," the quiet priest stated.

Does he feel any impulse to get where the action is?

"No, I just want to be with the men. I'm just as scared as they are when we go into an area where we think there is going to be a firefight. But I believe that the men like to have a chaplain along. I really admire those men and want to do anything I can for them, and that's why I get out every time I can.

"Of course, I can't just tell them things like that whenever one of them asks me, 'What the heck are you doing out here, Father?' I just say I'm out for a little exercise."

Fast-Acting Infantryman Saves Life

By PFC Robert Loughran

The patrol had been searching abandoned huts when an unknown number of Viet Cong opened up with rocket grenadee and automatic weapons fire from a nearby nipa-palm line.

Specialist Four Thomas Kitt (Pensacola, Fla.) was returning the enemy fire with his M-16 rifle when he heard a U.S. soldier screaming for help. The screams were coming from a nearby hut that had been set afire by tracer bullets.

Dodging through the heavy firing from both sides, Kitt ran into the blazing hut, found the seriously wounded man, dragged him outside and put him behind a low mud wall.

He gave the man first aid while still exposed to enemy fire, then picked up a machine-gun and rejoined the battle.

The patrol eventually gained fire superiority over the VC force and held them off until the enemy broke contact as the 199th's Alpha Co, 2nd Bn, 3rd Inf assaulted into the area by helicopter around midnight.

The "Redcatcher" infantrymen found three VC (BC) dead and numerous blood trails leading away from the battle scene the next morning.

Christmas Rush Peaks at APO

During this Christmas season, postal workers and facilities in Vietnam are being confronted with a greatly increased workload.

More than twice the normal monthly volume of mail is being received in Vietnam, with an expected total of 38,750 tons of mail expected for the Christmas season.

The 1968 Christmas Mail Program, nicknamed "Kriss Kringle '68," is being implemented in force at the new Redcatcher post office at BMB. To cope with the rush of mail, the usual two runs to get the 199th's mail have been expanded to four. The fourteen post office members, who work in two shifts to provide, if necessary, 24-hour service, have been augmented by six full-time battalion mail clerk representatives who make up to four mail runs per day.

"The volume of mail is now averaging between 35,000 to 40,000 pounds per week," said Sergeant John F. Buchanan (Pomona, Calif), the administrative NCO. "This compares to approximately 25,000 pounds per week at this time last year."

"These last two weeks," Buchanan continued, "we've handled in excess of 50 tons of mail, consisting of cards, letters, and the Christmas packages from home."

Postal Officer, First Lieutenant Gary L. Binderim (Reno) said the well-oiled sorting and distribution process has not "experienced any backlog as of yet. Mail is handled and taken care of immediately." He added that hospital mail is treated on a priority basis.

CHRISTMAS MAIL—Sergeant John Buchanan, administrative NCO at the main base post office, shows Specialist Four Jim Larson where to stack packages bound for battalions and separate units. (Photo by Gyallay-Pap)

Home Ties

(Continued from Front Page)

in Europe in 1942 and in the Pacific Theater later, and is still going strong with both editions. Service-wide magazines were begun, with strong professional staffs; unit newspapers were published by the score. Radio, newsreel films, training films and virtually every means were used to speed two-way communication.

Since the Korean War, the Command Information Program has used many techniques proven in civilian practice to ensure that the soldier is not only informed of current events, but is able to grasp the issues involved in day-to-day history in the making. The Armed Forces Radio and Television Service has made possible rapid communication between far away places and Main Street. Large-circulation command newspapers such as *The Reporter* and *The Observer* here supplement the unit news coverage of *Stars and Stripes*, and dozens of smaller weekly and bi-monthly newspapers are published to support the Command Information Program. Further, Vietnam has seen the emergence of unit magazines and yearbooks as a popular form of military journalism, one that goes into greater depth and detail, that the soldiers might better know and understand their unit, Army and environment.

The home fires are still burning. Though we are far away, we are far from forgotten. They get our letters daily, see our pictures in the newspaper, see us on television, hear our voices on tape, constantly feel our presence as we do theirs.