

TROPIC LIGHTNING NEWS



Ready To Strike.... Anywhere, Anytime

Vol 4 No. 9

TROPIC LIGHTNING NEWS

March 3, 1969

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'Hollywood' Regulars To Star In TV Film

By SP4 Dave DeMauro

TAY NINH - Companies C and D of the 3d Battalion, 22d Infantry, now are filled with actors. The Regulars performed their daily mission of searching out the enemy in front of television cameras belonging to the British Broadcasting Company.

The motion picture film with sound is used in England as a documentary of the war in Vietnam. On two successive days the Regulars were filmed as they air-assaulted deep into the jungles of War Zone C. With the cooperation of the 187th Helicopter Assault Squadron the film crew was able to film the assaults both from the air and on the ground.

During the first day of filming the cameras followed the 1st Brigade troopers right into the jungles to get dramatic shots for the documentary.

The crew was accompanied by First Lieutenant Mack D. Gooding of Jacksonville, Fla., with the 15th Public Information Detachment and Specialist 4 David DeMauro of Upland, Calif., a correspondent with the 3d Battalion, 22d Infantry.

Coordination of activities for the four days of filming was handled by Captain Les Rashko of Walla Walla, Wash., also with the 15th Public Information Detachment in Tay Ninh base camp.

Arrangements were made to film the helicopters belonging to the 187th Helicopter Assault Squadron and the 3d Battalion 17th Aviation Assault Group.

The film crew was able to capture the ships working out on an estimated enemy platoon of NVA soldiers near Nui Ba Den Mountain. Slicks, Cobras, Bubbles, Chinooks and Flying Cranes were all caught by the camera.

The intentions of producer Dick Taylor were to film all of the aspects of the war in Vietnam to include living conditions for both civilians and the military, civic action programs, terrain and weather conditions, and

operational tactics and procedures. The majority of the filming was done around Saigon, the Mekong Delta, and Tay Ninh.

A co-operative medical civic action program between the 1st Brigade's S-5 and the 3d Battalion, 22d Infantry, S-5 was filmed at Trang Sup Village, three miles northwest of Tay Ninh. Over 180 people were treated in front of the BBC cameras. Having finished the MEDCAP, the crew moved on to film a school house and church that were constructed as a part of the Tropic Lightning civic action program.

Commentator for the program was Peter Arnett, an Associated Press writer who has spent the last six and one-half years as an AP correspondent in Vietnam. Arnett conducted interviews with Tropic Lightning soldiers at the forward fire support bases to show the public what an infantryman's job is like in Vietnam.

The actual presentation of the documentary will be in London, and it will later move to other parts of the world. Completion of the film is expected in approximately six weeks.

Bobcats Aid Widow

CU CHI - When Ngo Dau, a Kit Carson Scout with Company A, 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 5th Infantry, was killed in action against Communist forces on December 9, 1968, he left a wife and five children.

Mrs. Dau's problems went beyond the obvious loss of her husband, for she was unemployed and was now faced with the additional responsibility of providing a living for her young family.

Fortunately, aid was quickly available from the Battalion Survivors Assistance Officer, Lieutenant Harry P. Clark. Support was quickly provided by the fund.

This aid, however, was only a partial solution to the family's problem. With the active encouragement of Bobcat battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel William E. Klein, Clark requested and received the help of the Division Labor Office in arranging for Mrs. Dau to be employed as a food handler in the Battalion's Rear Mess.

She is now working for the unit for which her husband served so honorably and is restoring a semblance of normalcy to her family's life.



THE WAR I USED TO KNOW -

In the traditional slog and mire of a Vietnam rice paddy, Specialist 4 John Bowermaster of 29 Palms, Calif, trudges toward dry ground with his machine gun at shoulder height. The 2d Brigade soldier is with D Company, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry, Wolfhounds. **(PHOTO BY SP4 R.B. WILLIAMS)**

Be sure to listen to 'Lightning 25' on AFVN Radio every Sunday at 1245 hours. The show features the men and units of the 25th Infantry Division on location in the field and in base camp.

Tomahawk Wrath Hits Cong

TAY NINH - Five VC were killed by Company B, 4th Battalion, 23d Infantry (Mechanized) when the soldiers locked horns with an enemy squad while on a sweep 11 miles northeast of Tay Ninh City.

As elements of Company B moved through a woodline they spotted the enemy squad circling around to the east. The Tomahawks opened fire.

"After a brief fire fight the VC broke contact and fled into the jungle. We pulled back through the woodline and proceeded in an easterly direction. About 10 minutes later we received small arms fire again. This time the contact lasted approximately 40 minutes," said Specialist 4 Nicholas G. Jaramillo, San Antonio, Tex.

While the Tropic Lightning soldiers laid down a concentration of fire power, the Tomahawks' commander, Lieutenant Colonel Albert C. Butler, Jackson, Miss., called for air strikes.

The Tomahawks pulled back and let the Air Force bomb the area. The Air Force showed their skill by dropping deadly ordnance accurately on the enemy. Artillery also weakened the enemy's position.

"The VC never had a chance, he tried to inflict damage, but our tremendous fire power proved too much for them," said Private First Class Soloman Hubbard, Washington D.C.

When the action ended in the late afternoon, the Tomahawks loaded on their armored personnel carriers to start their journey home.

You have probably had your ears talked right off your head about safety ever since you entered the service. There is a good reason for it. The figures on accidental deaths here in Vietnam due to carelessness and ignorance are appalling. Uncle wants you safe back in the States too. Think safety first!



SLOW PROGRESS but safe progress is guaranteed with careful inspection by this mine sweep team with the 2d

Battalion, 34th Armor as they make the early morning convoy run through the Filhol plantation north of Cu Chi. Specialist 4 Jerry Calhoun of West Monroe, La., from the lead track, watches (right) as the engineers probe the road. (PHOTO BY SP4 DOUG ELLIOT)

Decorated

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL (HEROISM)

MAJ Wilber L. McPherson, HHC, 3d Bde
 1LT James R. Dombrowski, HHC, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 1LT John H. Brinkert, C Btry, 2d Bn, 77th Arty
 1SG Carlos Solivan, C Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 1SG James I. Powell, B Btry, 1st Bn, 8th Arty
 1SG Carlyle Rivenbark, C Btry, 2d Bn, 77th Arty
 MSG Marvin Meritt, Jr, HHC
 PSG Robert C. Lewis, C Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SFC Eldon Sellars, C Btry, 2d Bn, 77th Arty
 SSG James O. Coleman, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SSG Roy J. Alexander, C Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 SSG Paul W. Swalve, Co A, 2d Bn, 14th Inf
 SSG James A. Reed, A Btry, 1st Bn, 8th Arty
 SSG William W. McMaster, C Btry, 2d Bn, 77th Arty
 SGT John H. McEwen, HHC, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 SGT Donald Mills, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SGT Eldorado Vance, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SGT August A. Plitt, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SGT Danial E. Inman, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SGT Robert Lynch, C Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 SGT John H. Pickens, C Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 SP5 John T. Albers, D Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 CPL James R. Belmundez, C Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 CPL Willie Stamper, Jr, C Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 SP4 Bruno J. Hoegler, Co B, 2d Bn, 22d Inf
 SP4 Daniel Oparka, Co A, 2d Bn, 27th Inf
 SP4 Phillip R. Schoonmaker, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SP4 Steven P. Stanley, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SP4 Alexander Lopez, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SP4 Joseph P. Kern, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SP4 Henry F. Wilson, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SP4 Barry R. Vasconcelios, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SP4 Leonard V. Simpson, Co B, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SP4 Scott C. Jarvis, Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Inf

SP4 Gerald D. Bussell, Btry C, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 SP4 Charles W. Potts, C Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 SP4 David W. Stairs, C Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 SP4 Elwood L. Genaire, C Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 SP4 Edward L. Hall, C Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 SP4 Donald R. Bennett, C Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 SP4 Tommy E. Bell, B Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SP4 Thomas E. Osborne, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 PFC Thomas M. Oser, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 PFC Leonard Truchan, C Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 PFC Douglas P. Russell, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 PFC Douglas A. Stewart, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 PFC Roy Yuarte, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 PFC Edward Noll, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 PFC Clarence E. Moore, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 PFC David A. Hartley, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 PFC Terrence N. Goldsberry, Co A, 2d Bn, 27th Inf
 PFC Norman L. Russell, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 PFC Michael Pinquoch, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 PFC Gary E. Earley, Co B, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 PFC Ronald D. Alexander, Co B, 2d Bn, 22d Inf
 PFC Neil R. Wagner, Co B, 2d Bn, 22d Inf
 PFC Jess Hernandez, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 PFC Thomas G. Sovey, Co C, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 PFC Richard T. Seery, Co D, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 PFC Clayton W. Wallace, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 PFC Clifford Martin, Co B, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 PFC Francis L. Hansen, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 PFC Edward R. De Witt, Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 PFC William D. Gilliland, Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 PFC Richard D. Kline, Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 PFC Harry D. Johnson, Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 PFC Vito Pilla, Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 PFC Lester Maneval, B Co, 4th Bn, 23d Inf



Tropic Lightning Tots
The Commanding General Welcomes
The Following Tropic Lightning Tots
To The 25th Infantry Division – As
Reported By The American Red Cross.
Born T

Feb. 5

SP4 and Mrs. Frederick Parker Jr., Co E, 65th Engr Bn, a son

Feb. 11

SP5 and Mrs. Charles R. Langley, Co C, 1st Bn, 5th Inf, a son

Feb. 9

SP5 and Mrs. James R. Watkins, Co D, 1st Bn, 5th Inf, a son

SP5 and Mrs. Walter W. Thompson, HHD, 86th Sig Bn, a son

Feb. 12

SP4 and Mrs. Lee A. Moore Jr., A Btry, 3d Bn, 13th Arty, a

son

PFC and Mrs. Steve E. West, C Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav, a son

Feb. 10

SP4 and Mrs. James A. Grammer, Co A, 25th S&T Bn, a son

PFC and Mrs. Robert Feyes, Co D, 2d Bn, 12th Inf, a son

Feb. 14

SP4 and Mrs. Stanley E. Collver, Co A, 125th Sig Bn, a son

Feb. 11

CPT and Mrs. J. Russel Ross, HHT, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav, a daughter

Feb. 16

SP4 and Mrs. Tommy J. Pearson, 242d Aslt Heli Co, a son

Former Commander In Chief Stresses Bonds' Importance

When Former President Johnson Presented a U.S. Savings Bond Minuteman Award to a military unit in Texas last year, he stated, "One of the things I am proudest of is the men who do the most fighting do the most financing too."

After pointing out that the Department of Defense has one of the best Savings Bonds purchase records, he added, " . . . "In back of those men out there (Vietnam) we have here at home tens of millions of bond buyers in the defense establishment, in the Federal Government, throughout all of our big production plants in the country.

"These patriotic Americans today hold Savings Bonds and Freedom Shares that are valued at \$52 billion. That is almost two-thirds of what our defense budget will be this year.

"Because you have done that we are stronger in our freedom and are stronger in our finances."

Savings Bond Facts

Savings Bonds pay you back \$4 for every \$3 after only seven years.

You can't lose a Savings Bond. The Government will replace it free if it is lost, destroyed, or stolen.

The interest rate on your bond is guaranteed through maturity.

As a valuable plus, Series E Savings Bonds carry an automatic ten-year extension privilege beyond maturity. They will keep earning interest.

There are tax advantages. E Bond interest is exempt from State and local taxes. Federal income taxes on E Bonds' accumulated interest may be deferred until you redeem them.

E Bonds may be redeemed for full purchase price, plus accumulated interest, any time after the first two months.

The payroll savings plan offers you systematic savings - an effective way to save for a secure future. Through systematic, easy thrift, you can watch your savings grow automatically into substantial reserves.

Why Buy Bonds?

Today, millions of Americans are saving money for their own future security and the security of their country with Savings Bonds through the payroll savings plan. They know that this is the easy, automatic way to insure a regular, continuing savings program.

Equally important - you put your savings to work for your country as you build a more secure future for yourself.

Freedom Shares - A Savings Extra

When you purchase bonds through the payroll savings plan you're eligible to purchase the higher paying U.S. savings notes, Freedom Shares.

First placed on sale in May '67, they pay 4.75 per cent interest when held to maturity - 4% years - and may be redeemed after one year.

Freedom Shares, which can be bought only in combination with Savings Bonds, are available in the same four denominations as E Bonds: \$25, \$50, \$75, and \$100.

You do not have to sign up for a Savings Bond-Freedom Share combination. You have the choice of signing up for the E Bond alone, if you wish, or for the combination.

However you cannot sign up for the Freedom Share alone. The Freedom Share's higher interest rate alone

makes it worth while for you to step up your allotment and buy both.

Allotment amounts and procedures for civilian employees of the Services differ from those used for military personnel.

Contact your unit Savings Bonds Officer for detailed information.

Near Misses Still Count!

Among the most common accidents are the ones you seldom hear about. These are the near misses, the close calls, the ones that are not newsworthy.

Another common accident is the one resulting from the calculated risk. A chance is taken and an accident results, usually referred to as "just one of these things."

There isn't anything glamorous about our accidents, or the injuries, or our dying due to accidents. It is an apparent disregard for the safety and well-being and future of ourselves and those around us.

How many times have you permitted an unsafe act or unsafe procedure or unsafe condition to exist without calling it to the attention of the individual or the supervisor?

How many times have you, by your silence, by your indifference, by looking the other way, accepted, condoned, even encouraged an unsafe act?

Silence is not golden where safety is concerned.

Safety must be accepted as 'a part of,' and not as an 'addition to.'

Tropic Lightning

Combat Honor Roll



Specialist Four James B. O'Keeffe distinguished himself by heroic actions on Jan. 17, while serving as a medic attached to A Troop, 3d Squadron, 4th Cavalry.

While on a combat operation in the Boi Loi Woods, A Troop came under an intense hostile attack.

During the initial contact, an armored personnel carrier was struck by several RPG rounds, wounding the crew.

With complete disregard for his own safety, O'Keeffe exposed himself to a heavy volume of fire as he dismounted his vehicle and moved to the aid of his wounded comrades.

As he neared the burning APC, he killed a Viet Cong soldier who was preparing to fire at the vehicle. Reaching the beleaguered APC, O'Keeffe killed an enemy soldier who was moving towards his position.

His valorous actions contributed immeasurably to the success of the mission, and the defeat of the hostile force.

O'Keeffe's personal bravery, aggressiveness, and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, the 25th Infantry Division, and the United States Army.

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Sheridan Tank Is Now In VN Arsenal

CU CHI - The Army has introduced a new piece of armored equipment into its Vietnam arsenal. The 25th Division has been selected to be one of the first to use the M-551 General Sheridan Armored Assault Vehicle.

The Sheridan has a 152mm main gun compared with the 90mm gun of the older M-48 tank. It can fire combustible-case type and conventional ammunition. This vehicle can also launch the Shillelagh missile.

The Sheridan has a .50 caliber machine gun atop the turret and a coaxially mounted M-73, 7.62mm machine gun.

Four grenade launchers are mounted on each side of the turret. These launchers can fire fragmentation and smoke grenades in a circle around the vehicle.

The Sheridan has a four man crew, a tank commander, a driver, a leader and gunner. The Sheridan is an armored reconnaissance vehicle designed to supplement the armored personnel carriers now used by the 25th Division. The 17-ton vehicle is powered by a 300-horsepower diesel engine. The vehicle can travel 370 miles without refueling and hit a top speed of 43 mph. The Sheridan can also swim or be air-dropped into otherwise inaccessible areas.

Moreover, the Sheridan is noted for durable tracks. On older tracked vehicles, such obstructions as logs lodged between a road wheel and one of the track blocks have thrown the track off the wheels. The Sheridan's track, however has been designed to largely overcome this problem.

The Sheridan became operational at Ft. Riley, Kansas, in March 1967. It first made its appearance in Vietnam in the middle of January. Crews are now learning to operate the Sheridan.

Former CG Advises In Peace Talks

Lieutenant General Fred C. Weyand, one-time commanding general of the 25th Infantry Division, was named recently to be chief military adviser to Henry Cabot Lodge, U.S. chief negotiator at the Paris peace talks.

General Weyand commanded Tropic Lightning from August 1964 through March 1967. He was responsible for the soldiers' training at Schofield Barracks Hawaii, and for the division's deployment to Vietnam in early 1966.

After he left the division in March of 1967, General Weyand was later promoted to command of U.S. forces in an 11-province corps area.

Until his recent assignment, General Weyand was the Army's chief of U.S. reserve affairs, stationed in the Pentagon.

General Weyand came to know Henry Cabot Lodge when Lodge was ambassador to South Vietnam under the Johnson administration.



Priest-Soldier Realizes Duty To God, Country

By SP4 David DeMauro

TAY NINH - Throughout the Armed Forces there are many people with unusual backgrounds. The conscription system guarantees a cross-section of young men varying in age, educational background and work experience.

Yet most people would probably find it rather strange to be assigned to the same infantry unit as an ordained Mormon Priest.

Specialist 4 Judd Coon of Delta Company, 3d Battalion, 22d Infantry, has no problems communicating with his Army buddies, however.

Coon attended the University of Utah Seminary School for four years and received a degree in Theology. Soon after his graduation he was ordained as a Mormon Priest.

Prior to entering the Army, Specialist Coon performed many services and duties for his church. He had served as a Deacon and teacher before becoming a priest.

Later as a priest, Coon conducted services, administered the sacrament and baptized church members. He also supervised extensive church programs of building missionary functions and sports.

Coon commented, "The Mormon religion has grown rapidly to the fourth largest church in the world. We conduct extensive missionary programs. Being a non-profit organization, we solicit as much help as we can from within the church itself, and then if we need additional funds we go ahead and hold various fund-raising activities."

At present, Coon is serving on top of Nui Ba Den Mountain, guarding the signal facility there.

For two years Coon has set aside his obligations to the church to fulfill his military obligation. "Sure I'd much rather be doing something else," said Coon, "but somebody has got to do this job. I believe in the freedom of all mankind and feel that our cause in Vietnam is justified. I intend to do my share as best I can. I hope very much that the war will end soon."

So within the realm of the Regulars is a Tropic Lightning soldier a little "different from the rest" - Mormon Priest Army Specialist Judd Coon.

Discover NVA 'Ghost Town,' AF Jets Destroy At Sundown

By 1Lt. Mack D. Gooding

TAY NINH - Manchus of the 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry uncovered a vast North Vietnamese Army ghost town that extended for 1,780 meters of almost-empty tunnels, bunkers, and underground rooms while sweeping through the Renegade Woods, 17 miles southeast of Tay Ninh.

There was evidence, however, that the camp had been haunted by active NVA troops not too long before the Manchus ran into it.

Specialist 4 Lloyd H. Gray of Colorado Springs, Colo., of the Manchus' Bravo Company, the man who noticed the freshly dug dirt that tipped off the Tropic Lightning soldiers to the presence of the camp, found a box of what he said looked like personal articles.

He also found a Chicom hand grenade during an exploration of one of the camp's many tunnels.

Gray's platoon leader, First Lieutenant William M. Barnes of Charlottesville, Va., said his platoon found six tunnels and 15 bunkers in the small area it covered. His men found bamboo picnic tables and clothes lines in some of the bunkers.

"They must have been there for a while," Barnes said. "They were so well dug in. They may have heard us coming and decided to leave in a hurry."

If the NVA did hear the three allied companies - Bravo and Charlie companies of the Manchus and an ARVN company - it wouldn't have been too surprising.

They had been hacking their way through thick underbrush in the communist-infested woods from 9:00am., when they were airlifted in, until 3:00 p.m. when they found the camp.

Gray was walking just behind the patrol's point man, Private First Class Matt R. Sitanowski of Roseville, Mich. ("just out of machete range," Gray said), when he noticed the fresh diggings that turned out to be a nearly completed mess hall, with a chimney and cooking area already dug, but no cover installed.

"We found some tunnels that were down about 12 or 15 feet underground," Gray said. "A few were just barely big enough for me to squeeze into, and there were some that weren't big enough." (Gray is about 5-9, 160 pounds.)

Other elements of the allied sweep found what appeared to be a hospital complex, but on-coming darkness and the arrival of helicopters at their pickup zone forced an early end to the exploration of the abandoned camp.

That night though, the Tropic Lightning soldiers watched the fireworks as Air Force planes destroyed the camp, which was two miles from the Division's Fire Support Base Sedgwick.

THE LONG WATCH BEGINS - A 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry Manchu soldier gets ready to begin the long night's watch as the setting sun outlines the 30-foot observation tower at the Manchus' Fire Support Base Sedgwick, 16 miles southeast of Tay Ninh. (PHOTO BY 1LT. MACK D. GOODING)



New Command Sgt. Maj.

The 25th Infantry Division has a new Command Sergeant Major.

Replacing former Division Command Sergeant Major Francis Bennett is Command Sergeant Major Howard A. Brosseau, of Boulder City, Colo.

Brosseau is no stranger to the Tropic Lightning Division. He was with the 25th at Schofield Barracks in Hawaii from 1960 to 1963. During that time, he was the Division Sergeant Major from March of 1961 to April of 1963.

Brosseau, who entered the service in 1940, served in the European theatre during World War II. He was stationed in Italy following the war. From 1950 to 1956, he served in Alaska, assuming duties as a Sergeant Major as early as 1951.

He now returns to his former job with the 25th, but in different surroundings. He is married and has two sons and a daughter.



FIRING INTO A WOODLINE where enemy movement had been spotted moments before are Tropic Lightning soldiers from C Company, 4th Battalion, (Mechanized), 23d Infantry. The action took place ten miles east of Tay Ninh City. (PHOTO BY SP4 ROGER WELT)

TOUGH GOING - Making their way through downed rubber trees are the Manchus of A Company, 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry, during a reconnaissance in force mission west of Dau Tieng. (PHOTO BY SP4 H. J. TSCHIRNER JR.)



Lightning Seeks A Place To Strike

Plowing through jungles, slogging through swamplands, trudging through rice paddies, or moving across open plains, Tropic Lightning troops are perpetually seeking out the elusive enemy. Whether Mechanized or on the hoof, 25th Division soldiers consistently and persistently are on Charlie's trail. Swift and sure, the infantry finds the enemy and deals him his due - anywhere, anytime!

WOLFF WITH THE WOLFHOUSES - Specialist 4 Robert Wolff, Elgin, Ill., a medic with Company C, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry, finds the going a bit rough as he forces his way through a pineapple hedgerow near Fire Support Base Reed II. (PHOTO BY SP4 KARL KARLGAARD)



SECOND BRIGADE WARRIORS search through thick hedgerows near Fire Support Base Reed for signs of Charlie. The Tropic Lightning soldiers are from the 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry Wolfhounds. (PHOTO BY SP4 KARL KARLGAARD)

FROM THE REAR a 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry soldier moves through a break in a thick hedgerow as Private First Class Richardo Zamora, Mathis, Tex., an ammo bearer, remains on the alert during a search and clear mission near Fire Support Base Reed. (PHOTO BY SP4 KARL KARLGAARD)





HARVEST TIME puts Charlie on the move transporting and hiding vast quantities of rice. Men of Tropic Lightning from the 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry, question farmers during a sweep eight miles north of Cu Chi. (PHOTO BY SGT CHARLES HAUGHEY)

CRASH - When an abandoned ARVN compound was suspected as being used by the Viet Cong, tanks from the 2d Battalion, 34th Armor were called in to rid Charlie of his hiding places. The giant vehicles demolished what were once bunkers. (PHOTO BY SP5 DOUG ELLIOTT)



Warrior Reads Well, Finds Cong Hideouts

CU CHI - Tropic Lightning infantrymen from the 2d Brigade's 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry, uncovered a well-equipped Viet Cong aid station 10 miles north of Cu Chi thanks to a point man who took time to read.

Fire Brigade Warriors from Charlie Company made the discovery during a sweep operation 800 meters from their night laager at Fire Support Base Pershing.

The first hint of success came when a scout dog alerted as the First Platoon approached a thick hedgerow. Suspecting a possible enemy ambush, platoon leader First Lieutenant James S. Hawthorne, Austin, Tex., called for a reconnaissance by fire, directing firepower into the dense foliage.

"We moved in fast," said point man Private First Class Bruce E Reed of Peekskill, N.Y. "I had just read a pamphlet on tunnel detection the night before at the fire support base. It sure paid off," he continued. "I was

thinking about the pointers in the article when I realized I was looking at a prime example. I signaled for someone to give me a hand."

Squad leader Sergeant Steve Divan, South Bend, Ind., and Reed probed the small mound of leaves and bamboo. They found a wooden door covering a narrow tunnel entrance.

"I borrowed the machine gunner's .45 pistol and a flashlight and crawled inside," said Reed.

In the 50-foot tunnel the point man-turned-tunnel rat discovered 41 VC gas masks, 600 rounds of AR-47 ammo, 10 VC uniforms, 20 bottles of plasma, and assorted weapons and equipment.

Reed was finished with that tunnel only a short time when about 50 meters further into the thicket he detected another expertly camouflaged cache. This time in a tiny room beneath an old hootch. He extracted four Chicom grenades, three RPG rounds, two RPG boosters plus more medical supplies and first aid books.

ROAD-BUILDING ENGINEERS
from the 65th Engineer
Battalion watch from a safe
distance as a Flame track from
the 1st Battalion (Mechanized)
5th Infantry destroys dense
foiliage. (PHOTO BY SGT
CHARLES HAUGHEY)



Amateur G.I. Shows Pro Cool

CU CHI - With only 20 days behind him in Vietnam and only five days out in the field, Private First Class Roger A. Haake, 20, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Rudy Haake of Malinta, Ohio, found himself in a situation he won't forget for the rest of his life.

Haake was a rifleman with Troop A, 3d Squadron, 4th Cavalry when his unit was told to proceed to assist Troop C, which was in heavy contact with the enemy. When the troopers reached Go Dau Ha, 33 miles northwest of Saigon, they turned their tanks and armored personal carriers off the road and moved two miles across dried up rice paddies to where Troop C was waiting.

Ahead lay enemy bunkers and spider holes camouflaged in heavy woods and hedgerows. Then B Troop arrived and all three troops pressed forward toward the enemy positions.

They advanced into a storm of rifle and machinegun fire and rocket-propelled grenades. One RPG and then another hit the track on which Haake was riding. He was thrown off the APC from the concussions of the heavy enemy fire.

At that moment the tanks and APC's pulled back to regroup. Haake lay flat on the ground, not wanting to chase the tracks for fear of being shot. He knew the tracks would be coming back.

Haake found himself about ten feet from a brush line. But he decided to stay where he was. He couldn't see anyone, but bullets kept whizzing over his head. Some hit so close that they sprayed dirt in his face.

Just outside the woodline, Haake's comrades were waiting and firing illumination flares over the area. They seemed a thousand miles away to him.

Sometime between 9 p.m. and 10 p.m., Haake began to notice movement ahead of him. Gradually figures silhouetted themselves against the orange-black background and started moving across the small clearing where Haake was lying. They were Viet Cong. He counted between 15 and 20 of them and watched as they fanned

out, searching the ground. Haake lay there, not moving.

After three-quarters of an hour of searching, the VC left. Haake did not want to move for fear of being detected, but when air strikes began to pound the area, he decided to crawl for cover.

Haake spent the rest of the night under a log. It was a long night. Early the next morning, he heard tanks approaching about 75 yards away. He stood up cautiously and then waved his hands.

"One of the guys on the tank saw me," said Haake. "He jumped off and began running toward me and all he kept saying was, 'Boy, am I glad to see you!'"

Probably no other reunion was ever so welcome.

Cycle Chase Nets Two

TAY NINH - Would you believe Cowboys vs. Indians in Vietnam? The scene turned out very much like that after two pairs of fatigues were stolen from an ARVN lieutenant at Trang Sup ARVN Special Forces Camp five miles north of Tay Ninh.

The lieutenant saw two men grab his fatigues and speed off on a motorcycle. Infuriated, he mounted his own cycle and chased the thieves up Highway 22 toward Fire Support Base Washington. Unfortunately, the thieves had a faster bike and left the lieutenant far behind.

But all was not lost. He notified Combat National Policeman Sergeant Le Van Si. Si maintains an identification checkpoint on Highway 22 in front of FSB Washington. Unsuspectingly, the thieves approached Si's roadblock and became alarmed when told to halt.

Gunning their engine, they sped away as Si fired two warning shots. Ignoring the shots the culprits forged on, not knowing Si had mounted a motorcycle and was close behind. Roaring down the highway, Si took the thieves to Tay Ninh for interrogation. Later, Si returned the officer's fatigues.

This checkpoint has proven valuable for the 3d Battalion, 22d Infantry, who controls it. For Sergeant Si, finding VC agents posing as civilians is a slow and tedious task. But Si mans this checkpoint every day and inspects each vehicle. It takes a great deal of fortitude to search ox after ox cart but Si realizes its importance.

Fire Guts Villagers' Dwellings Civic Action Helps Ease Pain

Story And Photos By 1LT Mack Gooding

TAY NINH - Fire is a constant fear in Vietnam. One small spark among the numerous huts made of lumber, bits of straw and other highly flammable materials, and an entire city block will be gone before assistance can arrive. This is precisely what happened recently in Tay Ninh.

Available assistance was rendered at the scene of the fire from the 1st Brigade, but it was too little too late. The block of huts that had previously housed 222 people in 48 dwellings was reduced to ashes in less than 30 minutes. The inhabitants were left with nothing. The blaze began when an open cooking fire had gotten out of hand late one evening.

As dawn broke over the rubble that once was the home for so many people, the familiar vehicles of the 1st Brigade's civic action section rolled into view. After an inspection of the area and conferring with local officials, Major Clarence M. DeYoung, Brigade S-5, radioed for a Medical Civic Action Program to proceed to the area. He then set out for the Long Hoa market to purchase 600 kilos of rice for the displaced families. The rice was distributed to the families every day for three days.

In addition, DeYoung made arrangements for assorted groceries to be delivered to the families. All of Tay Ninh base camp donated food and clothing for the fire's victims. For instance, the officer's mess donated its

monthly ration of Soy Sauce and funds to purchase powdered milk; the 2d Battalion, 32d Artillery, donated fruit and solid foods.

During the MEDCAP, health kits, T-shirts and sleeping mats were distributed. In addition, more than 175 persons were treated for minor burns, cuts, and abrasions. The majority of these wounds were the result of the clean-up activities the morning after the fire.

"I've never seen such an outpouring of aid from the ordinary soldier before," said DeYoung. "There is one young specialist running around here somewhere who has been using a 3/4 ton truck to haul supplies from his unit out here all day."

DeYoung was referring to Specialist 4 Don Wadley of Rockford, Ill. "I heard about the fire last night and came down here this morning to see how much damage had been done," said Wadley. "When I saw all the kids running around and digging in the smoldering ruins, I felt that I just had to do something.

"I went back to the base and asked my company commander if I could run some things out to the fire. He not only agreed, but he gave me some canned meat that his wife had sent him and told me to see that it got to the people."

The afternoon after the fire the 1st Brigade sent a bulldozer to level the ground and prepare it for rebuilding. Two large tents were set up on the site and the families moved into their new temporary homes.

Colonel Nguyen Quang Thong, Province Chief of Tay Ninh Province, made an inspection of the area and, after co-ordination with the S-5, made arrangements for the province to furnish each family cooking oil, vinegar, blankets and two meters of cloth.

An aide to Colonel Thong said, "The Colonel is very much impressed with the way the Americans have helped our people during this tragic time. Without their help, the people who were burned out last night would be hard put to recover.

"Now, they are well on their way to rebuilding and recouping their losses. The colonel wishes to thank the Americans for their invaluable aid."



IN TIME OF NEED - A portion of the 600 kilos of rice delivered to 48 displaced families in Tay Ninh City is unloaded by soldiers of the 1st Brigade and their Vietnamese co-workers. From left to right are Staff Sergeant Nguyen Doan Phuong, Major Clarence M. DeYoung from San Diego, California, Miss Jeanne DeChantal Diep, Staff Sergeant Tan Van Than and MP Gary W. Carlson of Jamestown, N.Y.

Engrs. Open Cong Road

CU CHI - Company B, 65th Engineer Battalion open a road south of Trang Bang which has been used by the Viet Cong for eight years.

At least 30 days were estimated to open the road, 7 Alpha west of QL 1, but Bravo Company made the road passable in five days.

During the next 16 days the mission was expanded to make the eight-mile road two lanes and clear the undergrowth for 150 yards on both sides.

The road has been an infiltration route for Viet Cong and NVA since 1961. The enemy also used it to mortar allied forces.

Ten dump trucks hauled more than 360 loads of rock and 1,720 loads of laterite to raise the road level one and

a half feet. Thus, it will be passable even during the rainy season. In addition, 12 culverts and one 30-foot, dry-span bridge were installed.

AN EXPLOSIVE SITUATION created by Specialist 4 Michael T. Empel of Southgate, Mich., will eliminate one hazard of the battlefield and deny the VC another booby trap. The 500-pound bomb, which failed to detonate during a recent pounding of the area near the Saigon River, was strapped with C-4 plastic explosive and blown in place by a 2d Brigade soldier from the 65th Engineer Battalion. (PHOTO BY 1LT J.N. BLACK)



Sgt More Than Maxes LCLC



CU CHI - Sergeant Robert Noel, a 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry soldier from Pontiac Mich., accomplished the "impossible" in the Lightning Combat Leadership Course (LCLC) by scoring 1019 out of a possible 1000 points.

Brigadier General Carlton Preer, assistant division commander, presented Noel with a citation honoring him for his accomplishment and replaced the Fire Brigade soldier's Specialist 4 patches with Sergeant stripes.

General Preer commented, "Men are the most important thing the Army has and the most important men are the leaders. Men like Sergeant Noel are needed, because they are the ones who know how to put the material at their disposal to the best use to complete their mission."

LCLC is a nine-day course designed to polish the leadership qualities in men picked by their commanders.

The school conducts practical exercises and gives many written tests to sharpen the skills needed for a combat leader. It thus

enables those selected for the school to progress more rapidly than usual.

Points are given for each of these tests and exercises. Additional points are given to students who show outstanding leadership qualities.

Noel achieved the highest score recorded since the school started in 1965. The course is specially designed to

be virtually impossible to achieve the maximum score.

Dunce In The Water Surrenders To Engr.

By SP4 D.J. Caldwell

DAU TIENG - A mystery detective might have called it 'the reappearing dunce-cap caper.'

It began in an ordinary way as two combat engineers assigned to the 3d Brigade drove down a road 40 miles northwest of Saigon. They had just left Fire Support Base Wood of the 2d Battalion (Mech), 22d Infantry, when the driver, Specialist 4 James Azbell of Manito, III., spotted what looked like a fresh enemy grave.

"As we approached what we thought was the grave, an old 'mama-san' came rushing up with a long pole and began to push it down a well. It didn't look right to us, so we ran her off. We weren't taking any chances," said Azbell.

The two engineers of Delta Company, 65th Engineers Battalion stood there, puzzled, but decided that the freshly dug well harbored nothing unusual. What they thought was a grave was only a mound of dirt.

Then the plot thickened.

"All of a sudden, I noticed movement in the water. It looked like a camouflaged dunce cap coming to the surface," said Bates. The two engineers stood bug-eyed as the dunce cap disappeared, then rose to the surface again.

Bates drew his .45 caliber pistol and watched as a Vietnamese man wearing a hat made of banana leaves emerged from the depths.

"He had his back to us, so he didn't see us right away. But when he was one-third of the way out, he froze," noted Bates.

Bates ordered the man to come along before radioing Triple Deuce battalion headquarters for further instructions. The suspect was taken to Dau Tieng for further questioning.

ARTY, Jets Join, Plaster 13 Viet Cong

DAU TIENG - In a coordinated barrage of artillery and gunship fire coupled with air strikes, 13 enemy were killed after they tried to shoot down a helicopter hunter-killer team recently.

The enemy force was spotted from a light observation helicopter of Delta Troop, 3d Squadron 4th Cavalry, in the Michelin Rubber Plantation, 50 miles northwest of Saigon.

The small helicopter and an accompanying Cobra gunship engaged the group, believed to be VC, with rockets and miniguns.

But the enemy responded with heavy ground fire from a .51 caliber anti-aircraft machinegun and other weapons. The Centaur team called for help from artillery and airstrikes.

Howitzers from Charlie Battery, 2d Battalion, 77th Artillery in Fire Support Base Mahone and Alpha Battery, 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery in Dau Tieng base camp opened up on the enemy as Captain Jon Swift of Plattsburgh, N.Y., arrived overhead in an OV-10 Bronco spotter plane.

Swift got the gunships to mark the location of the VC, then marked the spot with his own rockets to enable two strikes and several strafing runs by F-100 'Supersabres' to find the enemy, who were in an X-shaped trenchline complex.

"It was incredible. They must have been inexperienced enemy troops because many of them stayed above

ground during the strafing runs. They seemed to be confused," noted Swift.

Five of the enemy ran into a bunker which took a direct hit from a bomb, he said.

Swift, who flies as a forward air controller for the 3d Brigade, praised the work of Lieutenant Colonel Vernon Lewis of Marshall, Tex., commander of the 2d Battalion, 77th Artillery, who directed artillery fire.

"It was a classic example of artillery and airpower being completely coordinated," Swift said. "As the jets and choppers lifted away, the artillery filled in immediately. The enemy never had a chance to move."



WOLFHOUND NAVY, or the closest thing to it, was afloat recently when troops from Delta Company, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry captured and launched a pair of sampans. The 2d Brigade soldiers were operating in the swamp area west of Saigon.



Hales Adds DSC To Laurels

TAY NINH - Captain James P. Hales III of Fayetteville, N.C. recently became one of the Division's most decorated soldiers.

Hales was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, our nation's second highest award for valor, by Lieutenant General Frank T. Mildren, Deputy Commanding General, USARV, in ceremonies at Tay Ninh.

The captain performed his valorous actions on April 28, 1968, while commanding Company B, 4th Battalion, 23d Infantry, near the village of Xom Bao Cong, five miles southeast of Cu Chi. His unit was on a reconnaissance-in-force mission when they were suddenly fired upon by North Vietnamese regulars.

"They were using rocket-propelled grenades, automatic weapons, and small arms against us," said Hales, "and they were firing from well-fortified bunker positions."

Hales immediately maneuvered his armored carrier toward the aggressors and sprayed them with machine gun fire, enabling his men to withdraw to a more strategic location.

"Things were really going along smoothly until they started firing grenades and machine gun bullets back at me," continued Hales. "Then one of their grenades penetrated my carrier immobilizing it and blasting my ear drums so bad that I couldn't hear anything for the longest time."

Finding his machine gun inoperative, Captain Hales picked up five grenades and crawled under the devastating fire to one of the bunkers containing a four-man enemy rocket team. Pitching two grenades into the position he killed all four occupants.

Crawling another ten meters toward the second emplacement, he threw his remaining three grenades which silenced the machine gun nest and killed two more Communist soldiers.

After destroying the two positions, he directed artillery and air strikes and succeeded in routing the enemy. "I

was more mad than anything else," said Hales. "I couldn't hear a thing and I was seeing red. I guess that's why I reacted the way I did."

In addition to the Distinguished Service Cross, Hales is the recipient of two Silver Stars, two Army Commendation Medals for Valor and three Purple Hearts.

His first tour in Vietnam was spent as an advisor with the Vietnamese Army, and since leaving the 4th Battalion, 23d Infantry, he has served as an assistant operations officer, planning ground operations against the enemy.

Very soon Hales will be returning home to be with his wife Norma and his two daughters.

"My tour in Vietnam has been a rewarding one," said Hales, "but I must admit I'm sure looking forward to that trip home."

Thanks to Captain Hales' aggressiveness, many of his fellow soldiers will also be making that long-awaited trip home to be with their friends and loved ones.

Young Exec Ambitious In Civil Affairs

CU CHI - The ambition to know your field and do well in it is a prized commodity in any organization's young executives.

First Lieutenant Harry Clark, Brooklyn, N.Y., serving with the 2d Brigade, has been recognized for that ambition.

Clark, civic actions officer for the 1st Battalion (mechanized), 5th Infantry, completed in January a two year civic actions course by correspondence, giving him more than 125 college hours in his field.

The course is called the Psychological Operations Extension Course which is given by the Special Forces School at Ft. Bragg, N.C. It consists of nine sub-courses in civil affairs, group procedures, behavior, operations, planning and procedures and other related subjects.

"Civil affairs consist mainly of trying to help the Vietnamese help themselves. Basically we give them guidance and supply them with equipment and materials, such as lumber and cement. From there they can do their own work, build schools and have a feeling of pride in the results."

Nui Ba Den 'Tops' Says Mortar Crew

TAY NINH - Bombing from 3,200 feet is normally done by the Air Force, but for mortar-men of the 1st Brigade it's old hat.

Launching lethal projectiles from their high perch atop Nui Ba Den, on the edge of War Zone C, is the job of a group of mortarmen from Headquarters Company, 4th Battalion (Mechanized), 23d Infantry.

The men, all members of the 4.2 mortar platoon, have a unique assignment. They have exactly 60 seconds to get off the first round after the fire mission is called in.

"We have it down so pat that when the fire mission is requested the first round is on its way in less than 45 seconds," said Specialist 4 Ronald Friedman of Scarsdale, N.Y.

The small contingent of Tomahawks has been on top of the Black Virgin Mountain since the middle of last September.

"Duty up here is great. A gentle breeze and cool temperatures make life enjoyable," commented Specialist 4 Gregory S. Porter of Englewood, Ohio.

"It's like being on top of a tall pedestal looking down at the war," said Porter. "A number of times we have watched fire fights, air strikes, and gunships work out from up here. There's never a dull moment here in our little niche above the Tay Ninh area."

The one thing the Tropic Lightning soldiers all agree on is that they would all like to serve their entire tour in Vietnam on top of the legendary mountain.

Fair Fight - Charlie Lost

CU CHI - Second Battalion, 12th Infantry Warriors recently flushed out a pair of Viet Cong from a twisted maze of jungle foliage directly into the sights of waiting Stinger gunships.

Flanking a 700 square meter area of low, dense jungle, the Alpha Company Warriors pushed into the heavy undergrowth from two sides. Bursting from the tree line about 300 meters from the 1st Platoon flank element, the duo was quickly spotted by Tropic Lightning's 2d Brigade infantrymen.

"My people reacted quickly," said platoon leader First Lieutenant Tyrone J. Staten of Gary Ind. "They had M-79 fire on the VC in seconds."

With the M-79 grenades exploding behind them at first, the two had no choice but to run for the next hedgerow hundreds of meters away.

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