

TROPIC LIGHTNING NEWS




Ready To Strike.... Anywhere, Anytime

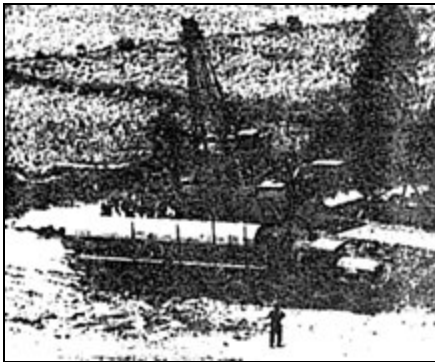
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TROPIC LIGHTNING NEWS

May 12, 1969

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THE 65th ENGINEERS' A Company is a versatile partner for 1st Brigade units operating out of Tay Ninh. The engineers are accomplished at destruction as the South Vietnamese Regional Force soldier watching the elimination of an NVA bunker at right can attest. The men of the Whiskey Fifth are also artists of construction, however, using their talents for such operations as spanning the Soui Ben Rong River (photo at left). For photo features showing the engineers at work see the center spread on pages 4 and 5, page 7.



Tropic Lightning Raids Foe's Pantries

Rice-naping Wolfhounds Dig 21 Tons Near Dau Tieng

DAU TIENG - Two companies of the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Wolfhounds knew it was going to be a "rice" day recently when they uncovered 42,000 pounds of the grain in several caches near the 3d Brigade base camp here.

Alpha and Bravo Companies were conducting sweep operations in the Boi Loi Woods, 12 miles southeast of Dau Tieng, when the discoveries were made.

Sergeant First Class Rodney E. Crosby, Santa Monica, Calif., who was in charge of Bravo Company lead platoon, spotted a few bags of rice in a hedge-row. With the help of Sergeant Lanny R. Vachs, Jonestown, Tenn., he checked the area and discovered a ditch about five feet deep, three feet wide and 35 to 40 meters long.

The rice stored in canvas bags with plastic bags as protective covering, was heaped in the ditch.

In addition to the rice, Bravo Company troopers also uncovered an old AK-47 assault rifle, three AK-47 magazines and 1,100 pounds of salt.

Alpha Company, working in close coordination with Bravo Company, discovered an estimated 14,050 pounds of rice in their area of operation. About 10,000 additional pounds of rice had been destroyed by weather. The company also located 200 pounds of salt and assorted pots and pans which showed signs of having been used in the last 12 hours.

On the same operation, Alpha Company located and destroyed nine Viet Cong claymore mines, three small bottles of morphine and a bicycle tire pump. One 60mm mortar base plate was evacuated to Fire Support Mahone.

"This is the largest rice cache we have uncovered since I have commanded the battalion," said Lieutenant Colonel James T. Bradley of Arlington, Va., Wolfhounds commander. "This rice cache discovery, plus arms cache discoveries by other 3rd Brigade troops in the last several days is going to seriously hamper the enemy's effectiveness in the field."

CONVERTED RICE - (right) A Wolfhound of B Company, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry digs up part of a 42,000-pound rice cache found near Dau Tieng. (PHOTO BY CPT. R.A. STEINHAUSEN JR.)



Let Them Eat Cake, Say Warriors After Rice Find

CU CHI - Nearly ten thousand pounds of rice intended for Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army forces will never reach them, thanks to two 2d Brigade soldiers with sharp eyes.

Private First Class Valentine Montesdeoca, Los Angeles, Calif., and Private First Class Dwain Taylor, Port Huron, Mich, uncovered the cache during a sweeping operation for the 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry Warriors near Fire Support Base Pershing.

The bags of food were stacked near a path and covered with rice straw and branches. "I just happened to see them," Taylor said. "They weren't camouflaged very well."

When the cache was uncovered, Fire Brigade troopers found 98 sacks, each holding 100 pounds of unpolished rice. There were fresh oxcart tracks in the area, which indicated that the pile had been there less than 48 hours.

The tracks led from a make-shift dock on a nearby canal. A sunken sampan, left from other recent activity in the area, still rested in the water.

A Chinook brought the cache to Cu Chi, where the rice was turned over to Helping Hand and Civic Action groups for distribution to Vietnamese civilians.

It couldn't make any difference to anyone you shoot, but you must keep your ammunition and magazines clean. Weapons often will simply not digest dirty ammo. In an environment where dust, mud and dirt are the rule, you must be extra careful lest you be left with no means of defense. Cleanliness is next to security.

Prowling Bobcats Tear Up NVA Unit in Ho Bo Woods

By SGT Jan F. Anderson

CU CHI - Two prowling Companies of 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 5th Infantry Bobcats flushed out an unknown size NVA unit and killed 50 enemy in a recent two-day operation near the Ho Bo Woods. After laagering for the night in the woods, the Bobcats' A Company moved out to sweep an area of rice paddies and potentially dangerous hedge rows. As the company was returning to the laager after a day which up to then had been uneventful, a nearby hedge row suddenly erupted in a hail of rocket-propelled grenades and AK-47 rifle

fire.

The Lead armored personnel carrier caught in the center of the action used its .50 caliber machine guns to slam a torrent of suppressive fire at the NVA. Having taken the initiative, the Tropic Lightning troops called in air strikes to smash the fortified bunkers and tunnels the enemy had constructed.

Then it became routine as (Continued on Back Page)



TOTE THAT BAG, LIFT THAT RICE - Warriors of the 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry stack bags of 10,000 pounds of rice they found in an enemy cache. Chinook helicopters evacuated the grain to Cu Chi, where it was prepared for distribution to Vietnamese civilians.

Decorated

BRONZE STAR MEDAL (HEROISM)

LTC William E. Klein, HHC, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 LTC Eelward C Gibson, HHC, 65th Engr. Bn.
 LTC Forest E. Pierce, HHB, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 MAJ Samuel Malave-Garcia DISCOM
 CPT Alton M Fennell, HHC, 2d Bn, 22d Inf
 CPT Paul D Conley, HHC, 2d Bn, 22d Inf
 CPT Charles P Ervin, Co C, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 CPT Randall Yeargan, Co A, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 CPT Elcie Adams, A Co, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 CPT Ardre F. Blackmon, A Co, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 CPT Gregory J. Hayward, B Co, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 CPT Carl Sweatman, HHC, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 CPT Kenneth E. Willingham, Co B 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 1LT Lon Rowlett Jr., 1st Bn, 8th Fld Arty
 1LT Daniel F. Wall, Co B, 2d Bn, 22d Inf
 1LT Clyde Oatts, C Btry, 2d Bn, 77th Fld Arty
 1LT Gregory B. Jamieson, Co A, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 1LT Richard E. Hetzel, 25th MP Co
 1LT Louis M. Gietka, Co C, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 1LT Edward Zglenski, Co C, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 1LT Gregor P. Schlau, B Co, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 1LT Dorothele J. Gillespie, D Co, 2d Bn, 14th Inf
 1LT William S. De Boer, B Co, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 1LT Paul Greenwalt, A Co, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 1LT Martin Beach, A Co, 2d Bn, 12th Inf

SGT Miguel Villarreal, A Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SGT James Roth, A Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SGT Charles C. Patterson, A Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SGT Lloyd M. Pusey, Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SGT Thomas E. Klooz, Co D, 2d Bn, 14th Inf
 SGT Michael J. McMahan, D Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SGT Thomas R. Leetz, A Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SGT Gary W. Barlow, A Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SGT Henry J. Bales, A Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SGT James F. Gruseck, Co A, 25th Avn Bn
 SP4 Michael Thomas, D Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SP4 Donald Kennedy, Co A, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP4 Donald W. Coldwell, Co A, 2d Bn, 34th Armor
 SP4 George A. Howard, 38th Inf Plat
 SP4 Clinton G. Cooper, Co B, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 Albert J. Nichol, A Btry, 1st Bn, 8th Arty
 SP4 Gary Conner, D Co, 2d Bn, 27th Inf
 SP4 Rocky A. Poulos, Co A, 2d Bn, 34th Armor
 SP4 Arthur B. Cohen, Co D, 725th Maint Bn
 SP4 Thomas R. Broughton, Co D, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SP4 Ronald E. Logan, Co D, 2d Bn 12th Inf
 SP4 David Edland, Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP4 Orville P. Billbe, Co B, 2d Bn, 22d Inf
 SP4 Harold R. Crum, Co B, 2d Bn, 14th Inf
 SP4 Darrell Frickson, Co B, 2d Bn, 27th Inf

1LT George Reese, B Co, 25th Avn Bn
 1LT Joseph Rio, C Co, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 2LT Paul B. Grigg, HHB, 2d Bn, 77th Fld Arty
 2LT Clyde A. Giddings, A Btry, 1st Bn, 8th Fld Arty
 WO1 Mark D. Mitchell, HHB, 25th Inf Div Arty
 CSM William Clevenger, HHB, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 PSG Lonnie Jackson, A Co, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SFC Marvin Edwards, HHC, 2d Bn, 27th Inf
 SFC Robert Wood, Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SFC Harold B. White, Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SFC Curtis C. Dees, Co E, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 SSG Charles Martin, A Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SSG Robert S. Correia, A Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SSG Herman C. Humiston, Co B, 2d Bn, 27th Inf
 SSG Elbert W. Price, HHB, 2d Bn, 77th Arty
 SSG Jerry E. O'Malley, A Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SGT Richardo Ortegon, Co C, 2d Bn, 22d Inf
 SGT John S. Gentner, Co A, 2d Bn, 34th Armor
 SGT Thomas J. Robbins Jr., A Co, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SGT Daniel E. Mackey, Co B, 2d Bn, 22d Inf
 SGT Thomas E. Vallow, Co C, 1st Bn, 5th Inf

SP4 Albert Hicks, A Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SP4 Vernon W Wendt, Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP4 John J. Maioni, HHC, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 SP4 Winston Cunningham, C Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SP4 John F. Sherwood, Co C, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 SP4 Ronald A. Williams Co D, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 Renard Godwin, Co C, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP4 Jerry L. Rudlaff, Co C, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP4 Ralph T. Lemme, D Co, 2d Bn, 14th Inf
 SP4 Ronald P. McTaggart, A Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SP4 Willie J. Maull, A Co, 2d Bn, 34th Armor
 SP4 James L. Thompson C Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 PFC Jergen Schors, Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 PFC Mervin Clark, Co D, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 PFC Roy C. Ancira, Co D, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 PFC Melvin Bimberg, D Co, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 PFC Carlton G. Harwell Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 PFC Lee E. Burnor, Co A, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 PFC Elias B. Papadimitriou, HHB, 2d Bn, 77th Arty
 PVT James E. Scanel, Co A, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 PVT Bruce M. Kraft, HHB, 2d Bn, 77th Arty

Rules Changed On Mailing Firearms

Changes in the restrictions applying to the mailing of firearms have recently been announced by the Department of Defense. The changes apply to military-postal channels in recognition of provisions of the Gun Control Act of 1968, Public Law 90618.

Firearms may be mailed to and from military post offices under the following circumstances:

When shipments are official mailings of weapons imported for, sold to, mailed by or issued to the exclusive use of the United States or any department or agency of the government.

When the weapons are sporting or antique firearms authorized to enter the US civil postal system.

In all cases the mailed fire-arms for personnel use must be accompanied by an approved Internal Revenue Service Form 6 (Application and Permit for Importation and Implements of War.)

Gun clubs may not send mailings as official mail under the "Postage Fee Paid" index. Individuals cannot qualify as "dealers" for the purpose of mailing firearms under the provisions of paragraph 5f of AR 65-10. War Trophy firearms and ammunition, remain unmailable.

Personnel Shortages Dictate Medical Service Cutback

A critical shortage of medical personnel, both military and civilian, in CONUS Army hospitals has forced curtailment of some medical services for dependents at several U.S. Army facilities in various parts of the country.

The shortage results from a sustained influx of patients and an insufficient number of medical personnel, primarily nurses special1sts and technicians.

Retired servicemen and other groups with lower priority for military care than active duty dependents are also affected by the new restrictions.

During this critical shortage period, dependents eligible for medical treatment will be issued certificates of non-availability by hospital commanders and will receive civilian medical care under the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS) .

The CHAMPUS program generally calls for the government to pay a share of medical care costs. The proportion paid varies with the length and type of illness concerned.

Under CHAMPUS, the patient pays his share of the charges directly to the source of care- the physician, hospital, out-patient facility or pharmacy. The source of care collects the remainder from the government.

Eligible personnel seeking advice on the CHAMPUS program should consult their hospital registrar. A booklet

containing additional details can be obtained by writing to: Department of the Army. CHAMPUS, Denver, Colo. 80240. Personnel in Europe should write: CHAMPUSEUR, U.S. Army Medical Command, Europe; APO 09403.

Law 'n Order: Friend and Protector

Some people live a lifetime without ever feeling that they are in direct, personal contact with the law. They may never be sued or sue anyone. They may never be summoned as a juror or a witness. If you hold such a view you are wrong. Every day of your life you are affected by laws and protected by them.

The law is the basic route by which we accomplish social gains. Through legislative enactment's, at all levels of government, the will of the people is expressed and progress toward a better society is consolidated.

It as always been so, and it must continue to be so. In more ways than you realize, the law functions as your friend and protector - not as something to be feared. (AFPS)

Tropic Lightning

Combat Honor Roll

Staff Sergeant John H. Iacovacci of HHC, 4th Battalion, 23d Infantry Tomahawks while serving as platoon sergeant of the scout platoon distinguished himself during contact with a numerically superior enemy force. During the initial contact, an armored personnel carrier was struck by a rocket propelled grenade, wounding the crew members.

With complete disregard for his own safety, Sergeant Iacovacci exposed himself to a heavy volume of hostile fire as he moved through the bullet-swept area to the aid of his wounded comrades. Nearing the damaged vehicle, Sergeant Iacovacci spotted an enemy rocket propelled grenade team and destroyed the hostiles with accurate grenade fire.

Reaching the wounded soldiers, Sergeant Iacovacci evacuated a fallen comrade to safety. Returning to the location a second time, Sergeant Iacovacci destroyed an automatic weapons emplacement as he evacuated a second wounded soldier to safety.

Crawling through the bullet-swept area, Sergeant Iacovacci evacuated a third wounded man to safety. His valorous actions contributed immeasurably to the success of the mission and defeat of the hostile force.

His 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 and the Tropic Lightning Division.



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RF Company Made Honorary Lancers



TAY NINH – "You have done yeoman Service in the cause of freedom."

With these words, Colonel Charles W. Hayward of Andover, Mass., commanding Officer of the 1st Brigade, inducted members of an ARVN Regional Forces Company as honorary members of the Brigade.

"Tropic Lightning" pins modeled after the famed division patch, were presented to each RF soldier.

THE FIRST PIN was presented by Hayward to First Lieutenant Nguyen Van Nguwu, commander of the ARVN company. Lieutenant Nguwu's unit often participates in joint operations with 1st Brigade units. According to 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry

Commander Lieutenant Colonel Leo L. Wilson of Salina, Kans., "The ARVN company is dedicated, trained, and professional in every way. They are invaluable allies in our operations."

A measure of the competence of the Regional Forces unit is shown by a recent action near their home village in Tay Ninh province. The ARVN company aggressively patrolled a stretch of the border north of Highway 1, anticipating that the Viet Cong would attempt a crossing to transport weapons.

CPT Gerold E. Knapp, leader of a military assistance training team in Hieu Thien district the ensuing action. "Lt. Nguwu sent one platoon on patrol and maintained one ready to react to any contact.

About 650 feet from the border, the RFs became suspicious of straw piles in a rice paddy. They sent for another platoon and began a reconnaissance by fire. A Viet Cong unit immediately broke from cover but the ARVNs had them pinned down.

The reaction force came up and started to engage with M79s.

WHEN THE fight ended, there were 16 Viet Cong killed, 1 VC, 1 light machine gun, 2 M79s, 7 AK-47 rifles, and an uncounted amount of small arms ammunition captured.

A combined US-RF operation a mile and a half away noticed the action and rushed to reinforce. It was a case of "Thanks but no thanks" as the ARVN RF Company needed no assistance.

The awards presentation gave Major Huhyn Kin Tuan, the new Hieu Tien District Chief, his first opportunity to review the troops and check administration in Tien Thom village.

MAJOR TUAN remarked that the company is one of the best of the regional forces that he has ever been associated with. The U.S. District Senior Advisor, Major Morton Cain, points out that the ARVN company has its work cut out for them, as Tien Thom village is only a half mile from the Cambodian border. Nightly probes and raids are the norm, but the VC have found that the new honorary Lancers are more than equal to the task.

Combined operations with the 1st Brigade and Regional Force units bring great dividends. The Tropic Lightning troopers gain the experience of the RFs who are fighting in their own neighborhood. And as Nguwu states, "We learn good from US troops. We fight; we kill Viet Cong."

LIGHTNING MEMBER - (Photo above) Colonel Charles W. Hayward of Andover, Mass., CO of the 1st Brigade, presents this member of an ARVN Regional Forces Company with a Tropic lightning Pin. (PHOTO BY MAJ CLARENCE DE YOUNG)

Red Rocket Rocks Regular

TAY NINH - Specialist 4 Gary Zeller of Mobridge, S.D., recently became the first American to launch a CHICOM 107mm rocket - by mistake!

Zeller was on a reconnaissance patrol for the 3d Battalion, 22d Infantry Regulars when he spotted a suspicious looking mass of bamboo sticks on the ground. Carefully lifting the bamboo, Zeller uncovered the opening of a well and heard someone inside speaking Vietnamese.

Knowing there should be no civilians in the area, Zeller pulled the pin from a hand grenade and dropped it in the opening. To his astonishment he heard a thundering roar as a 107mm rocket came zooming out of the well,

just missing his head.

After making a huge arch the missile landed in a field a few hundred meters away. The rocket did not detonate and was later blown in place.

"It sure surprised the hell out of me," remarked Zeller, "It just didn't seem real! It was more like something you'd expect to see in a cartoon . . ."

Home Front Sends Medical Aid to RVN

CU CHI - Light travels at a speed of 186,000 miles per second, which means that a trip to the U.S. and back to Vietnam would take less than a second.

It took a little longer than that for word to get to Elgin, Ill., from Trang Bang, but the swift response from the people there to a call for help was important in the silent side of the Vietnam conflict.

CAPTAIN LARRY Anderson formerly a citizen of Elgin, is a Fire Brigade surgeon for the 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry. He found a need for medical supplies at a clinic for expectant mothers in Trang Bang. Anderson, who performs daily MEDCAPS around the city, had tried to obtain the needed items, but could not.

"I was surprised at the medical knowledge of the Vietnamese concerning childbirth," said Anderson. "They could put to good use numerous items they didn't have and couldn't get."

"I decided to ask the people back home for help. My sister, Mrs. James Jeets, took charge of co-ordinating the effort there. The Reverend Marvin Shrolduke of St. Paul's United Church of Christ assisted her.

"**DONATIONS WERE** collected and sent to me to purchase the necessary equipment." About \$425 was contributed to the project. "This shows me that Americans DO care about Vietnam and the people," Anderson said.

Some of the items purchased were syringes and needles, an instrument for checking blood pressure, a stainless steel medical table, and stainless steel pans for holding sterile instruments.

SANITARY CONDITIONS were improved and the interior of the hospital building was painted. The "friends from Elgin" have helped to improve the medical facility so the 30-35 babies delivered each month will receive better care.

The people back home didn't stop there, however. Children from Kimball Junior High, Hilon Grade School, and Cifford Grade School wanted to help too. They gave toothpaste, toothbrushes, and school supplies for Vietnamese school children. Anderson distributed the items during the MEDCAPS around the Trang Bang area.

Bubbles Keep It Going

45th Hospital Vital and Ready

TAY NINH - No it's not a heat induced mirage. Nor is it science fiction.

For almost three years now the very real 45th Surgical Hospital at Tay Ninh base camp has made its home in five inflatable and fully air-conditioned buildings called "bubbles."

THESE RUBBER, air-inflated structures are cooled and pressurized by u-packs (utility packs), which supply the necessary air pressure and cooling to keep the structures erect.

The 45th Surgical Hospital was the first unit of its kind to arrive and be made operational in Vietnam. Since its opening in November of 1966, the hospital has consisted of five inflatable bubbles which serve as a pre-operation room; three operation rooms; a post-operative room; a laboratory and pharmacy; and a surgical and medical supply section.

To this date because of the "self-help" program, the unit also has a helicopter pad, inter-connecting sidewalks, showers, bunkers, and a five-foot high sandbag wall protecting the bubbles.

Like most civilian hospitals, the 45th Surgical Hospital is designed to treat most illnesses. However, for special operations, patients are flown to the 24th Evacuation Hospital in Long Binh for treatment of serious head wounds, the 12th Evacuation Hospital in Cu Chi for eye wounds; and the 93d Evacuation Hospital in Long Binh for extreme burns.

THE 45TH HAS 60-patient capacity. It treats military dust-off patients as well as taking care of civilians and

wounded VC and NVA detainees.

"To this date the hospital has administered care to approximately 20,000 people," says Lieutenant Edward A. Keene of Georgetown, Mass.

It takes just a matter of minutes to receive medical attention. Minutes after a dustoff is called for a Medevac helicopter is already on its way to pick up the patient. While the helicopter is flying back with its patient, a diagnosis is called back to the hospital. By the time the patient arrives back at the hospital, a surgical team is waiting to treat the injury.

BECAUSE OF its first-hand experience in a combat zone, the 45th Surgical Hospital has recommended changes and innovations. These have revolutionized the Army Field Medical Service to such an extent that the Surgeon General of the United States Army has sent additional similarly equipped hospitals to the Republic of Vietnam.

The mission of the 45th Surgical Hospital is "to save life and limb." Think of that the next time you see "bubbles" forming a hospital.



MICROSCOPIC ANALYSIS is performed by lab technologist PFC Peter Hubiak of Old Forge, Pa. (PHOTO BY PFC RICHARD MIZDAL)



SPLISH-SPLASH - Armored personnel carriers of the 4th Battalion (Mechanized) 23d Infantry Tomahawks splash through the Soui Ben River eight and a half miles southeast of Tay Ninh. The Tomahawks provided security as men from A Company of the 65th Engineers installed a culvert across the river to extend what was previously an unusable road.



They Build Their Bridges Before They Come to Them

TAY NINH - Launching a "constructive" drive deep into enemy infested rubber plantation area, Tropic Lightning Soldiers from Company A, 4th Battalion (Mechanized), 23d Infantry "Tomahawks", and Alpha Company, 65th Engineers rumbled eight miles southeast of Tay Ninh to bridge the Suoi Ben Rong River and make an old washed-out road reusable.

The two day operation centered on installing a culvert across the river to support the road, was performed without incident under the protection of Tomahawk armored personnel carriers.

"The new culvert will not only complete a fast access road between Highway 22 and 26, but the local villagers will benefit from it," said engineer Staff Sergeant Michael A. Wallace of Modale, Iowa." In the past the villagers

had to wade through waist deep water, or take their chances walking across a rickety bridge to get to the other side. Now it's smooth sailing."

The engineers used an awesome array of machinery to build the new culvert. Seven 5-ton dump trucks, two D7 bulldozers, one giant scoop loader, assorted smaller trucks, and one mammoth 20-ton rough terrain crane were employed during the operation.

While blowing the old bridge, clearing the culvert site, lifting the culverts into place and finally smoothing the fill dirt, the engineers worked methodically, avoiding possible complications.

The Tomahawks swept through the local jungle each day to evict any possible VC that might have planned to harass the engineers. "We never know what to expect when we work in the rubber plantation area. The enemy has used this location many times as a staging area for operations," said Sp4 Michael T. Shima of Hilo, Hawaii.

As an unexpected guest, Major General Ellis W. Williamson, Tropic Lightning commanding general, dropped in to view the project. He praised the coordination between Lieutenant Colonel G.E. Taylor of Shelby, North Carolina, commanding Officer of the 4th Battalion (Mechanized), 23d Infantry, and Captain Charles Nichols of Los Angeles, California, C.O. for the 65th Engineers.



TALKING OVER THE SITUATION - (Photo above right) While the work continues, Major General Ellis W. Williamson, 25th Division commander, discusses the operation with Captain Charles Nichols, CO of A Company of the 65th Engineers. Williamson praised the coordination between the engineers and the Tomahawks.



HELPING HAND- After the culvert was delicately lifted into place and fill poured on top of it Vietnamese of the area had a safe and quick way to cross the river. The improvement is evident from a look at the old bridge which the lady at left needed GI help to cross.

Story and Photos
by
Sgt Roger Welt





PUSH AND PULL - Even after demolition experts blew away most of the old bridge, a few parts of it remained. This soldier from A Company of the 65th Engineers had to go into the water to push and tug at this leftover log.



UP AND OUT - A rough terrain crane had to be called in to remove debris after the bridge was blown. The wreckage had to be removed before the culvert could be installed and fill dumped in. Use of the crane enabled the Tropic Lightning engineers to minimize the time it took them to make the bridge available for traffic by local Vietnamese.

SETTING A CHARGE - Sergeant Leon E. Harris, Peoria, Ill., prepares an explosive charge and detonator cord to blow up the old bridge over the Soui Ben Rong River. Harris is a demolitions expert with A Company of the 65th Engineers.



BRIDGE-WORK - After civilians and soldiers had been cleared from the bridge area, the charge was detonated, sending most of what used to be a bridge sailing off into the hinterlands. After disposing of the old, the 25th Division troops attacked the problem of putting in the new. Installation of the culvert-based road that replaced the bridge completed an access artery between Highways 22 and 26.



Dau Tieng's Ice Cream Men Keep 3d Bde in Good Humor

DAU TIENG - Nobody will see the Good Humor men of Dau Tieng wearing white suits or playing tinny sounding music boxes.

Where they make and distribute ice cream, they don't need costumes and musical sound effects to "sell" their product.

THE GOOD HUMOR men are Specialist 4 Billy Ware of Lake Charles, La.; Specialist 4 Bennington Hebron of Dorsey, Md., and Private First Class Danny Robinson of Philadelphia. They operate the Dau Tieng ice cream plant which manufactures 100 to 120 gallons of the taste treat daily.

"We have chocolate, vanilla, strawberry, lemon, peach maple, walnut and blueberry," said Ware, adding "but we have no banana today."

THE PLANT features two ice cream machines. "Not exactly the kind Grandma used," Ware said, "but the recipe is just about the same."

The Good Humor men blend several cans of ice cream mix with cream shipped to them from Long Binh. Almost-finished ice cream is poured into gallon containers and put into freezers to harden. The Good Humor men not only supply the Dau Tieng base camp area, but also Fire Support Bases Mahone II and Wood II.

COOL JOB - (Above) Specialist 4 Billy Ware, Lake Chorles, La., draws off a fresh batch of homemade ice cream at Dau Tieng. After the ice cream hardens in a freezer, it will be distributed to 3d Brigade soldiers. (PHOTO BY SP5 LARRY HAMILTON)

Dreadnaughts 'Audie II'

CU CHI - Vietnam has found its counterpart to Audie Murphy, the famous hero of World War II. "Audie Junior," better known as Sergeant John Gentner, Lexington, Mich., is a tank commander for Company A, 2nd Battalion, 34th Armor Dreadnaughts.

During recent operations near the Ho Bo Woods, an element of the 238th NVA Regiment decided to take on the Dreadnaught Armor. Gentner and his men immediately began blasting the North Vietnamese with their machine guns and 90 mm cannons.

Early in the fight, Gentner moved to the .50 caliber machine gun mounted on top of his tank and began firing on a sniper position. Suddenly the weld holding the machine gun mount in place broke loose. As if this were not bad enough, the sudden vibrations caused the pin holding the gun to the mount to fall out.

"It started beating on me and going all over the place," said Gentner. One long burst found Gentner laying on his back with the machine gun on top of him.

"I had to fire the .50 somehow, so I shoved it back on top of the turret," he said. By grabbing the gun and placing his shoulder to the rear receiver, he found he could get off five rounds bursts. Gentner, who weighs only 150 pounds, then had to push the machine gun back into position so he could fire again.

For over four hours, "Audie Junior" alternated between firing the main gun and rocking back and forth on top of the tank with his .50 caliber.

If you see a 5 foot, 6-inch tanker with a badly bruised right shoulder, say "hello" to Audie Junior.

Shot Record - 1st Brigade S-5 Gives 3,000 Inoculations in Three Hours

TAY NINH - Okay. So you can eat 100 eggs in an hour. Or stuff 50 men in a foreign ear while holding your breath for 20 minutes. That's great. But does it really mean anything?

A truly meaningful record was set by the 1st Brigade's S-5 (Civic Action) section on a recent day when its medics inoculated 3,000 South Vietnamese civilians against cholera in three hours.

The inoculations were part of a provincial campaign to obliterate serious diseases.



WETTING HIS WHISKERS - Shannon the scout dog needs at least as much water as his handler, Specialist 4 Peter Falcione, Newrock, Conn. The 38th Scout Dog Platoon team was operating with the 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry, on an aerial assault near the Oriental River when they stopped for a drink. (PHOTO BY SP4 ROBERT B. WILLIAMS)



INTERESTING READING - Men from a Vietnamese Regional Force Element and a Tropic Lightning patrol look over captured documents that led to the detention of more than 60 enemy suspects. Captain Gerald Knapp of Oklahoma City (far left) studies one of the documents. He is a MACV advisor with the RF Company. Lieutenant Richard L. Nichols, Corvallis, Ore. stands at for right.

RFs, Tropic Lightning Team to Play Homewrecker for NVA Battalion



TAY NINH - Soldiers from A Company, 65th Engineers, and C Company, 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry, teamed with a Regional Force Company to play home-wrecker for the enemy in an operation 14 miles south of Tay Ninh City.

The combined force destroyed most of a battalion-sized North Vietnamese Army base camp that was well dug-in and heavily fortified. In searching the camp, they found a number of documents.

The Tropic Lightning and the RF infantrymen secured the area while two engineers flown in by helicopter from Tay Ninh base camp - Sergeant Victor P. Tarnasiewicz of Gardner, Mass., and Specialist Four George A. Smalley of Mariana, Pa., made good use of six cases of C-4 explosive but still couldn't destroy the whole camp. The base was dug into a wooded area about 500 yards in diameter.

The battalion operations officer, Major Harry D. Ray, Jr., of Dillon, Mont., spotted the camp from his observation helicopter and ordered the two infantry companies in on it.

The Tropic Lightning soldiers found two Chinese Communist 20-pound land mines, 4000 yards of radio wire, and piles of freshly cut lumber gave strong indications that the enemy may have been starting to rebuild the camp, Ray said.

FIRE IN THE HOLE - (Above) Two members of the 65th Engineer Battalion watch from a safe distance as one of their charges destroys an NVA bunker. The troopers are Specialist 4 George A. Smalley (left) of Mariana, Pa., and Sergeant Victor P. Tarnasiewicz of Gardner, Mass.



JUST MAKING SURE - (Above, left) Checking out part of a 700-yard long trench line that was part of the NVA camp, PFC Buford C. Spears of Nashville, Tenn. probes under overhead cover.

BYE BYE BUNKER - (Above, center) Specialists 4 Wayne A. Killian of Reading, Pa. (left) and Robert L. Nivens of Matthews, N.C. look at the remains of an NVA bunker.

SOWING DESTRUCTION - (Above, right) In top photo Specialist 4 George A. Smalley and Sergeant Victor P. Tarnasiewicz prepare a charge of C-4 explosive. On bottom, Tarnasiewicz places a charge inside an NVA bunker.

PHOTO FEATURE BY SP4 RALPH NOVAK

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TROPIC LIGHTNING NEWS

May 12, 1969

Warriors Waste NVA, Slay 49

CU CHI - Second Brigade soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Warriors climaxed a week-long series of contacts with the enemy in a fierce two-hour fight.

The infantrymen, supported by gunships, artillery and Air Force Tactical jet fighters killed 49 enemy and took no

The Fire Brigade Warriors under the command of Lieutenant Colonel John C. Manh, began a week of on-again, off-again contact with North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong forces on March 28; in joint operations with 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 5th Infantry, and 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry, soldiers.

THE WARRIORS' Delta Company killed six enemy during a sweep through heavy hedgerow complexes, in a pincer-like movement which brought the Fire Brigade's Alpha Company soldiers into close co-ordination with the Delta Devils. As the Alpha Company men moved into the Delta Company location they encountered and killed 16 NVA regulars in scattered actions.

The following day the Warriors killed two enemy soldiers and uncovered 6,000 pounds of polished rice.

The Delta Devils again scored, killing two VC during an enemy probe on their night location. Simultaneously, Alpha Company soldiers killed another pair of insurgents during an ambush patrol.

ON TUESDAY, Delta Company, while manning a holding position, spotted an armed enemy soldier running from a treeline waving a Chieu Hoi safe conduct pass. Company Commander Captain Paul F. Allen of Orlando, Fla. advanced to meet the defecting Viet Cong.

As he and his interpreter began to talk to the former enemy, the woodline erupted with small arms fire, killing the communist defector and wounding Allen.

Later the same day the Delta Company soldiers made their way into a night location. Despite being mortared twice, they dug in for the long night of waiting.

AS THE TROPIC Lightning soldiers spent the night in the small perimeter in bunkers dug along the rice paddies' dikes, movement was spotted by a listening post. At first, 60 enemy soldiers were spotted moving toward the company-sized location. As the company executive officer, First Lieutenant Toy M. Smith of String, Tex. acting as company commander, received the reports, he called in support firepower on the advancing enemy.

While artillery rounds exploded in the woodline, more enemy soldiers poured out. Soon the insurgents were trapped between artillery to the rear and heavy Tropic Lightning firepower to their front.

As the enemy assaulted the perimeter, "They hit us with everything." Said Staff Sergeant Larry Pool of Norwalk, Ohio, acting second platoon leader.



HELMET HANG-UP - The prime responsibility of a combat radio-telephone operator is to constantly keep his headset dry and monitored. Specialist 4 Thomus Roeske of Lansing, Mich., accomplishes this by fastening his headset along with other precious items high and dry with his elastic helmet band. (PHOTO BY SP4 R.B. WILLIAMS)

No Hiding Place from Hunter-Killer Teams

By Sgt Herb Bordett

TAY NINH - A most dangerous game of hide and seek for the highest possible stakes goes on over the tree lines, hedgerows and jungles that are the area of operations of the 1st Brigade.

Light Observation Helicopters (LOH's) from C Troop, 3rd Squadron, 17th Cavalry, buzz the treetops; the downdraft from their rotors parts the thick overgrowth revealing enemy base camps and the enemy himself.

WHILE THEIR LOH counter-parts hug the ground, Cobra gunships fly overhead, watching, waiting for the enemy to be uncovered.

This is the Hunter-Killer team. Like the African warriors of old who flushed the lion from his lair so the big game hunter could fire a killing shot, the LOHs continue their search. Even though they are heavily armed, the crew flies knowing that a well-aimed burst from an enemy ambush position could cripple and possibly down the craft.

They must be ready to dodge and dart, attack and evade until their teammate can unleash his deadly barrage of rockets on the enemy.

The hunter-killers work hand in glove with the Air Force. Sometimes the LOHs and Cobras spot the enemy and call for air strikes. On other occasions Air Force spotter planes find traces of the enemy and call the hunters in for a closer look. In either case the result is the same, another enemy position destroyed.

AN AIR FORCE OV10 spotter plane piloted by Captain Harry Barr of Tuscaloosa Ala., circulated and directed artillery on a known enemy base camp 12 miles north of Tay Ninh recently when he spotted what appeared to be heavy trail activity a little further to the north. He called the Hunter-Killer team to search the area.

"I can smell food cooking and I see tables, chairs and command bunkers and fighting positions still being camouflaged," radioed hunter pilot Captain Ronald McDaniel of Columbus, Ga. The trail activity is immense. There are over 150 meters of trenchline," continued McDaniel.

McDaniel's observer on the LOH, Warrant Officer 1 Lance Bliss of Seattle, Wash., saw truck tracks, a bridge, and signs of recent use.

It didn't take long for the Cobra overhead to go into action. Chief Warrant Officer 2 Ward Harris of Muskogee, Okla., steered his gunship into position while ace gunner Warrant Officer 1 Ray Knowles of Miami, Fla., strafed the enemy camp.

CAPTAIN MCDANIEL summoned the Air Force forward air controller back on station and jet bombers were soon dropping their payloads on the Viet Cong hideaway. For three days the strikes continued, destroying huge chunks of the triple-canopied jungle below.

As the smoke from the last strike began to clear, Captain McDaniel went in to assess the damage. Under the watchful eye of big brother Cobra he searched every foot of the camp, darting and weaving, brushing the treetops. He confirmed the destruction of 36 bunkers, 15 fighting positions, and 400 meters of trench line.

This is but one example of how the hunter-killer team and their Air Force cousins serve the 1st Brigade. They continue their daily search missions, discovering camps and caches, rocket and mortar positions and groups of Viet Cong. Helicopter support often provides the margin of victory for U. S. forces in Vietnam.

The hunter-killer concept is the ultimate in helicopter support and the C Troop, 3d Squadron, 17th Cavalry, works it to perfection .

AN AIR FORCE JET (Above, right) called in by Captain Harry Barr of Tuscaloosa, Ala., helps destroy over 400 meters of trench line near the Cambodian border west of Tay Ninh. (PHOTO BY SP4 DAVE DE MAURO)



Charlie Moves Out As Regulars Move In

TAY NINH - For two days running, infantrymen from the 3d Battalion, 22d Infantry Regulars met the enemy head-on in fierce fighting near a VC base camp six and one-half miles north of Tay Ninh City.

Forced to hastily abandon the hidden camp within the jungle near War Zone C, the enemy left behind a 120mm mortar tube and other supplies.

The large complex, strung out over several miles, contained a number of bunkers. Just a day before, the Lancer Brigade troops had tangled with an NVA force guarding the outpost. Nineteen enemy were killed in that battle.

First Lieutenant William Ervin of Brunswick, Ga., led his unit into the area while pinch-hitting for his commander, who was wounded the day before. First Lieutenant James Trebilcock led the other regular company in the action. Both units assaulted into the area the next day expecting to meet heavy resistance, but the NVA had fled.

A sweep of the area turned up an 82mm mortar tube, ten 107mm rockets, a Chinese communist radio, small arms ammo, narcotics, propaganda leaflets, and a 102mm mortar base plate. A mine detector revealed the rest of the mortar.

"We would never have found the 120mm mortar tube if we hadn't had that minesweeper," said Trebilcock. "It wasn't buried very deep, but it was well camouflaged."

Both the 82mm and 120mm mortars were complete with baseplates, bipods and aiming quadrants.

Bobcats...

(Continued From Page 1)

Captain Randall Yeargen, San Antonio, Tex., coordinated air attacks with probing actions by his own infantrymen. Sergeant Raymond Kenny of New York, N.Y., summed up the day:

"When contact broke near dark, we still had a considerable distance to travel before reaching our laager site. We didn't get there until midnight. It was a long day."

While it was a long day for the Bobcat company, it was the last day for 17 NVA.

ON THE SECOND day, the Bobcats' C Company entered the enemy held area along with a company from 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry to support A Company in eliminating determined elements of the NVA unit.

Beginning on a sweep of the area, each company formed a leg of an L-shaped formation. With the thought of the previous day's contact in mind, everyone was exceptionally alert.

Sergeant James MacFarlane of Philadelphia, explained it this way: "Usually Charlie waits until we are 25 feet from him. But this time he waited until we were ten feet away before he opened up."

Cache 'n Carry

TAY NINH - The 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry Manchus located a weapons cache containing more than 200 rounds of enemy ordnance, including 72 75mm recoilless rifle rounds and 100 mortar rounds recently.

The Manchus of Bravo Company, patrolling nine miles southeast of Tay Ninh, gathered up 25 rocket-propelled grenades and five AK-47 rifles in addition to the other ammunition.

'Hounds Seek, Discover NVA

DAU TIENG - "Wolfhounds" of Bravo Company, 1st Battalion 27th Infantry recently spotted a group of North Vietnamese Army Regulars playing a go-for-broke game of hide-and-seek near their position.

The infantrymen responded with a "ready-or-not-here-we-come" that resulted in five enemy dead near Fire Support Base Mahone II.

A sweep force in the area discovered four of the bodies clad in black pajamas. The other dead enemy soldier was wearing a green uniform and bush hat. No weapons or documents were found.

The Bravo company "Wolfhounds" were assisted by cannoneers from 2nd Battalion, 77th Artillery.

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