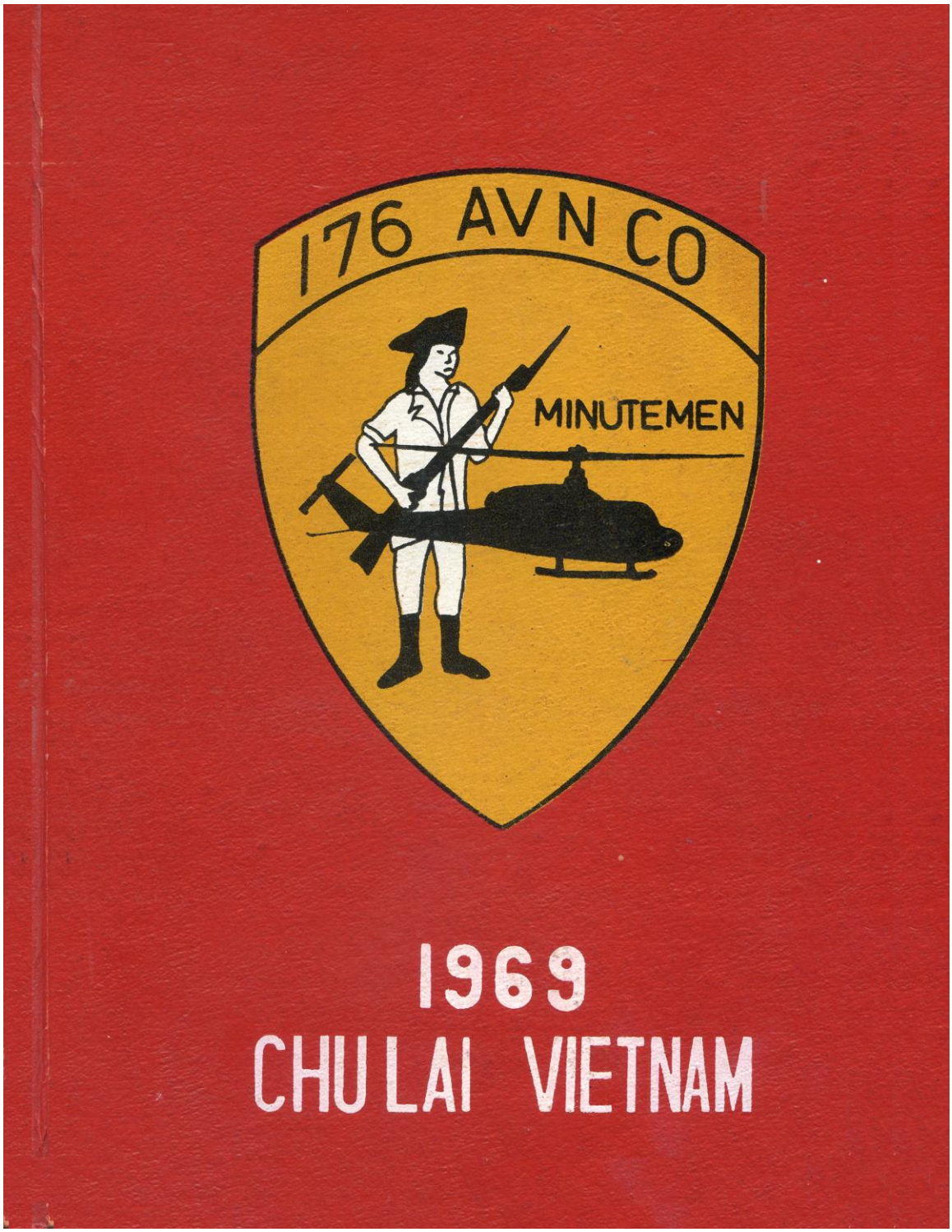


The cover of the 1969 176th AHC unit album. This has photos and a short history of the unit. Prepared at the request of the DoD for their research into the history of the 176th AHC prior to the CMOH award ceremonies for Charles Kettles.

UH-1H 176th Assault Helicopter Co. 23rd Division

CHU LAI, VIET NAM 1971

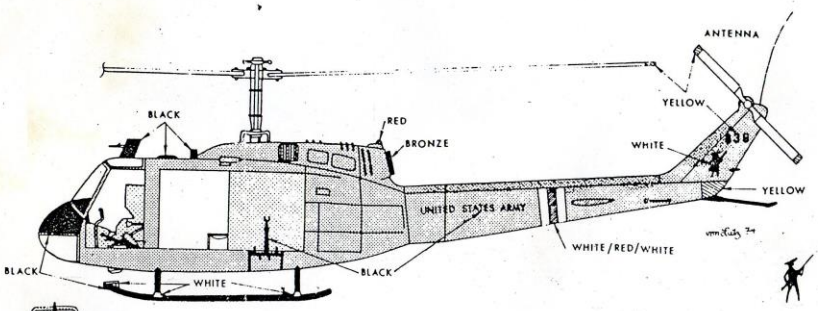
by Michael A. Campbell

Armament 2 M 60C Machine Guns
Tail No. 838 Yellow in Color

Color & Markings

Skids Black with white trim as noted (Paint is very scuffed up)
Antennas Black on cabin roof
Tail Skid "Stinger" Black
M 60 Mount Black
Exhaust Pipe Bronze

Aircraft Finish Olive Drab, slightly glossy from wax
Tail Boom Heavy exhaust stains on top of tail boom
Synchronized Elevators Orange or lt. red tops
Armor Seats Olive Drab



Battle Damage Apparently both the chin bubble and green house on theleft side of the aircraft had been replaced. The frames for each of these are off-white, as indicated in the front view drawing

Unit Markings Color band on tail - white-red-white; White minute man on tail fin, no other detail such as face or clothing.

I do not know who to attribute this drawing to. It was received from a 1/46th Infantry Veteran. A most distinctive marking is the "Minuteman" below the tail rotor.

Americal Division Historian Notes:

A request was made to provide a history of the **176**th AHC from our Americal Division Historical Data Base in 2016 by the DoD. The occasion was the awarding of the CMOH to LTC Charles S. Kettles. The DoD could not find a history for the **176**th in time to prepare their materials published online for the upcoming ceremonies. I pulled together a quick extract rather than a comprehensive history. The one thing that was used on their web-site was a map which they modified. Some photos, especially those from the "Southern Cross" that have been referenced might be inserted into this document at a later date. So this is not a finished work.

Articles and stories on file about the **176**th AHC in the Americal Division Veteran's Association data base. Some work is still needed to make these publishable. The newspaper articles are not usually public domain until 75 years have passed. Articles from magazines and books are not usually public domain until 95 years have passed.

Other materials for the 176th Assault Helicopter include Division reports such as the S2/S3 reports. These log incidents involving the 176th AHC. There are 50 months of these reports beginning in October 1967 through November 1971. There are three unit albums (like high school year books) that include photos and short histories of the 176th AHC. With the award of the CMOH to Charles S. Kettles there is a video of the award presentation at the White House and the Hall of Heroes at the Pentagon. A nice home made video is also available of the 176th AHC helicopters in action from 1969-1970.

There is an audio recording made of emergency radio transmissions made by 14th Cbt Avn Bn. crews during Lam Son 719. There are also some articles on file about the Lam Son 719 operation that the 176th AHC and other 14th Avn Bn. crews struggled through.

These are illustrative entries from the May 1968 Americal Division TOC report.
At the National Archives near Washington D.C. there will be reports for the 14th Avn Bn. and possibly some for the 176th AHC.

Date	Entry	Text
680505	179	Delayed Entry: 198th, 1 slick from 176th Avn down at BT080249 and 1 gun from 71st Avn down at BT075248. F/8 sent one hvy tm to area and rec'd fire and hits. both ships burned. 3 KHA and 7 MHA from slick, 1 WHA (E) and 3 WHA (M) from gun – WHA's evac SEE ENTRY 171
680506	29	11th, TOC – 11th wants to request tracker dog tm to help locate mortar pos. Called Sgt Golden he could furnish teams, 176th will pick up (laid on by 14th Avn) at LRP Pad at 0510 – notified 11th
680510	5	198th, Gunships – rec'd hit in plexiglass, 1 gunship down –rd severed hydalic line. Other gun lost rkt pod while covering dust off in R-1-20. 198th has ½ of its gunship capability. passed to AVN – MAJ Rector. 2 Muskets were sent to LZ Baldy. Fire birds will come back to Chu Lai for repairs.
680511	67	2-1, S3 vic ZC005081 at 1230H Radio message from S3, 2-1 Inf: this loc under mort attack. At least 2 WHA from 2-1, majority from 3/82 (cont) Arty. Total Cas: Slick from 71st evac 5 WHA to LZ Baldy 1242H. Another slick, 71st evac 2 litter patients to Baldy. Gunship of 176th evac 2 ambulatory and 1 litter, 176th gunship evac 2 litter and 1 ambulatroy. Total Cas: 13 WHA (E). 1525H change to read 2 KHA, 11 WHA (E), 6 WHA(M)
680518	5	196 A-4-31 vic BT035218 at 0225H A-4-31 recd explosions & SA fire while attacking hill – have taken some cas, scrambled gunships & requested extra gunships – sent gunships fm 198th on Mavarick Alpha Freq 39.85. Monitoring radio they have 7 cas for Dust off. They recd MTR fire w/neg CAS - monitored a Dustoff of 13 people. Put in Airstrike.
680520	24	196th S3 vic BT033197 at 1105H Gunship, 176 Avn, escorting sniffer mission vic BT0319 received 50 Cal fire. Gunship hit and sat down in D 16-4-31 location which is BT033217. No Cas, extent of Damage unk, tail no of acft 608. 2d Gunship hit but returned to LZ Ross OK and is flyable.
680522	68	196th 176 Avn Gunship vic AT985535 at 1625H gunships covering a CA recd AW fire and SA fire, 1 rd hit a rocket pod, 2xrockets went off, 1xBurst on mini Gun went off, 1x Pilot recd flesh wound in the leg, Res: 1 WHA evac to 2nd Surg, Chu Lai, they obsd NVA and Marines in the area
680525	32	Div Avn slick shot down at BT022220 [See Entry# 54]
680525	37	196th 176 Avn Co (Gunships with 1-6) vic BT0426 recd sniper from BT0426 took neg hits, returned fire w/unk results.
680525	39	196th CPT Witt Reference Journal #17, D-1-52d is still disorganized and the Bn Cmdr is in the air controlling the contact. D-1-52d's CO was KHA
680526	27	196th Maj Bearden rpts that Gen Koster expressed the desire that the chopper downed yesterday S of Center be extracted.
680526	30	196th Untility Aircraft 4-31 vic BT037229 at 1245H Utility aircraft from 176th Recd 4xrds of S/A fire from above grid while they where hooking up a downed Huey NCD
680527	21	196th CC-1-6 vic BT050234 at 0839H CC recd 10 rds of SA sniper fire 800 meters SE, Neg hits, firing mortars at suspected enemy loc
680527	92	198th, Gunships 1-46, BT423096 at 1840H hit above coord. Res: 1 VC KIA. Gunships moved to BT419091, worked over area, recd 1 sec explo. Gunships recd SA fire at BT419091.

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These are illustrative entries from May 1969 for the actions of 176th AHC.

Date	Entry	Text
690502	**46**	(C) 198th Bde, Cpt Brammer. A/C request. 2 G/S. Purpose: extraction of D/4, 1-6 Inf. PZ BT3880 to Hill 76. Call Sign: Regal Girder 41. Freq: 63.25 Time: 031000H – 031030H May 69. Approved G3 Maj Wagner. Passed to AAE WO Beard. Passed to 198th Bde Sp Rothermel.
690502	**59**	(C) 198th Bde, CPT Brammer. Request A/C. Purpose: sniffer msn. Target area: BS4197, BS4798 BS4790. 2xG/S. Time: 031500H-031600H May 69. Call sign: Regal Girder 41, freq: 63.25. Note: 8 running msn. Approved G3 MAJ Wagner. Passed to AAE WO Beard. Passed to 198th Bde SP R
690502	**60**	(C) 198th Bde, CPT Brammer. A/C request. Purpose: CA. PZ Dottie, PZT 030800H May 69. LZ B 5-46 and 3/6 Bn. 6xslicks, 60 pax, 226 pax.1xCC, 1xsmoke, 1xhook, 4xG/S. Call sign: Render Coats C, PZ, freq: 67.05 (LZ C-84) Approved by MAJ Wagner, passed to AAE MAJ White.
690503	**22**	(U) 198th Bde, CPT Brammer. BTOC, request for A/C. Type A/C: 6xUH-1H slicks, 1xCC ship, 1xs 2xG/S. Msn: CA. Unit supporting: 1-6th Inf. DTG: 040800H-040900H. Remarks: LZ vic BT404010 Fat City. Call Sign: Slang Payoff 91. Freq: 56.30. Duration: 1 hr, 120 pack involved. Approved: G3 MAJ Wagner, except 2xG/S. Passed to AAE, MAJ White, 198th Bde, CPT Brammer 031220H.
690503	**26**	(U) 198th Bde, SP Ball. CC/5-46, BS723824 at 0815H obsr 1xVC w/wpn, Eng'd, res: 1xVC KIA
690504	**31**	(U) 198th Bde, Sp Rothermel, CC/5-46 Inf, BS727795 at 1725H. Obsr 2 VC evading, eng. es: 2 V
690504	**46**	(U) 198th Bde, SP Rothermel, 1-52 utility A/C, BS505844 at 1745H, Obsr 3XVC W/packs & wpns, Eng, Res: 3XVC KIA. While trying to retrieve wpns, rcd AWF. ARTY was call W/ unk res. N C D. They did obtain a map of sourthern part of CLDC between hwy #1 and beach. On back of map was a sketch of area they were eng in. Also fnd 17 blasting caps & 3 breathing snorkles. Notified: CLDC, SGT Boddean and G-2 MAJ Doms.
690506	**36**	(U) 198th Bde, CPT Brammer. A/C res for 1-52 Inf. Purpose: CA. PZ: BS530817. PZT: 070800H. BS286647. Duration of msn: 2 hr. No of Pax: 374. Request 9xslicks, 1xCC, 1xsmoke, 2xG/S, 1xH Call sign: Cascade Pulley. Freq: 39.60. Note: LZ unsecured on initial lifts. Approved: G3, MAJ Wagner. Passed to 198th CPT Brammer.
690508	**55**	(C) 198th Bde, Cpt Brammer. A/C requirements on 9th May 69 for extraction of C,B/1-52 Inf and D Inf, plus airlift of B/4-3 to LZ Bronco. Request:2 hooks fm 0800H-1800H. 1 hook fm 1300H-1500H 2 slicks in afternoon. 2 G/S for final extraction in afternoon. Approved by Maj Wagner as follows: 1 hook fm 0800H-1600H, 1 hook fm 0800H-1500H. 2 slicks. 2 guns will have to come fm 176th Avn Passed to 198th Bde Cpt Gaffney 082200H. Passed to AAE, WO Beard and Lt Lyons 082300H.
690509	**9**	(C) 198th Bde, SP Ball. BS743854 at 0645H A/5-46 det unk type mine. Res: 2xUS KIA, 1xUS WIA D/O compl 0734H by CC/5-46.
690511	**63**	(U) 196th Bde, Sp Reese, CC/1-46, BT138000 at 1720H. While on VR obsr 10xVC evading S on trail, eng w/M-60 mg. Res: 3xVC KIA.
690511	**69**	(U) 198th Bde, Sp Hawkins, CC/1-52 at 1700H. Obsr 75 to 100 VN in valley at BT5478 moving S, est 25 were MAM.
690512	**76**	(C) 198th Bde, CPT Brammer. Request 4xslicks, 1xsmoke 1xCC & 2xguns for CA for 1-6th Inf. PZ follow. Time: 130630H to 130730H May 69. 1515H, CPT Brammer, 198th Bde, will use own acft e for smoke ship. CA appr by G-3 MAJ Wagner.
690513	**63**	(U) 196th Bde, Sgt Neroes, G/S 176th AVN, BT122353 at Eng 20 to 30 VC. Res: 4xVC KIA.
690513	**97**	(C) 198th Bde, Sgt Fults, B/1-52 Inf, BS525846 en: BS514853 at 1055H. Rec SAF, unk type mort- still in contact. Called arty, they had FAC and G/S on station. FAC called A/S on suspected mort site. Res: 7 US WIA(E), 1 dusted off by CC at 1100H, other 6 dusted off at 1305H by med, also 3 U KIA and 2 US w/heat exhaustion still in field. at 1300H rec mort fire again. Res: 8 US WIA, broke contact at 1730H. Res: 3 US KIA, 9 US WIA(E). Notified: C/S at 2125H; G3; G2; III MAF Cpt Phillip USARV Sp Smyphe.
690514	**37**	(U) 196th Bde, Sgt Liporto, CC/1-46, BT180076 at 1130H. Rec 50 cal fire w/several hits, neg US cas. Hel continued to Hawkhill. Passed to AAE.

		(C) 196th Bde, Sgt Neroes, A & R/1-46, BT132073 at 0645H & 1300H. (1) Rec SA & AWF fm N & UNSEF. Res: 8xUS WIA(E). (2) Unit continued to rec SAF. Res: 5xUS WIA(E). CC/1-46 rec SAF NCD. (3) Unit continued to rec SAF. Res: 5xUS WIA, 2xUS KIA. C/1-46 is moving in to reinforce A En broke contact at 1300H. A/1-46: 21xWIA(E) & 3x KIA. R/1-46: 3xWIA(E). Notified C/S Sgt Dro G3 SSM Skytta; G2 LTC Nelson; III MAF CPT Phillips
690514	**47**	USARV COL Mills.
690525	**16**	(C) 1-101st Abn, C/1-46, BT173058 at 0430H. A man fr C/1-46 heard noises outside the peri. Went to get his wandered outside of the peri and was shot in the leg by man on peri. He will be D/O by CC/1-46.
690528	**72**	(U) 198th Bde, CPT Please, CC/1-6 Inf, BT371096 at 1738H. CC eng 8xVC w/wpns. VC rtn fire, CC took 5xh Res: 2xVC KIA.
690528	**86**	(C) 198th Bde, CPT Please. Planning CA, 290630H May 69, of 1xUS Company and 2xARVN Bn's. Requesti 4xG/S, 1xsmoke ship, and 2xhooks. PZT 290630H. PZ A/5-46, PZ BS512962/LZ Gator, 3/6/ & 4/6 ARVN LZ 46 Inf. LZ BS484887 3/6 ARVN. LZ BS494888 4/6 ARVN. Approved G-3, MAJ Wagner.
690531	**48**	C) Div, CPT Newkirk, G-2. Request 2xslicks (H-model) and 2xG/S at 010900H Jun 69, purpose: to insert a LR tm will rpt to the Avn unit providing support. Appr by G-3, MAJ Wagner. AAE try to lay this on w/R/S birds of 1 CPT Mohrenweiser. 176th Avn will run msn, passed to Sgt Simpkins, Ranger Co. Notified: G-2, CPT Newkirk

These are illustrative S2/S3 entries from the Americal Division daily logs for May 1970:

Date	Entry	Text
700504	97	198th Bde, Sgt Lark, R/5-46, BS507966 at 1720H, obsr & eng w/SAF 1xNVA. Res: 1xNVA KIA, docu CIA, 1xsighting device CIA. Docu extracted to Bayonet. 176th Avn, 1750H, on station & eng 1xVC. Res: 1xVC KIA. R/5-46 sweeping area.
700507	97	198th Bde, Sp Burnette, 176th Avn BS603830 at 1750H, while in process of resupplying D/1-52, rec 10xrds SAF prox 300m NW of D Co's loc. Neg hits or cas. PF's sweeping area.
700508	4	(DELAYED) 196th Bde, Sgt Yockey, C/3-82, LZ Siberia & (en grid) AT894220 at 1830H. Rec unk amt of 82mm mort rds fr 3xmort pos. Res: 2xUS KIA (C/3-82) and 2xUS 105mm Howitzers hv dam. At 1905H, rec 3-4x82mm mort rds fr 1000m NE. Res: 1xUS WIA(E). 176th Avn G/S expended & arty eng suspected en loc w/unk res. At 1950H: Still receiving mort. Attack stopped at 2000H. Total cas: 2xUS KIA & 12xUS WIA(E). Ntfy: XXIV Corps, MAJ Rodecky at 0030H & CPT Fickessen at 2245H.
700510	51	198th Bde, Sgt Lark, 176th Avn, BS542812 at 1335H. Rec approx 6xrds of SAF while on approach to LZ Stinson. At approx 100xft. Res: NCD. Rtn fire w/4.2" mort w/unk res.
700512	52	198th Bde, Sgt Lark, A/5-46, BT377067 at 1340H. Rec 5-10xrds of SAF fr UNSEF w/NCD. Resupply hel fr 176th Avn rec 2xhits (1xin the tail & 1xin the rotor) & rtn to Chu Lai. Rtn SAF w/unk res.
700515	38	198th Bde, Sgt Lark, C/1-52, vic BS5186 at 0755H. First lift ship for CA rec 10-15xrds of SAF w/1xhit & neg cas. Alt: 500xft. Speed: 70xknots. At 0810H, vic BS5589: G/S rec SAF w/neg hits or cas. Alt: 1000xft. Speed: 90xknots. Rtn fire w/neg res. Ntfy AAE, LT Tomlin.
700516	52	198th Bde, Sgt Lark, 176th Avn, BS368051 at 1319H. While landing on LZ on CA, rec SAF. Res: 1xhit in the tail boom w/neg cas. Cont msn. Ntfy AAE, CPT Mikesell.
700522	44	196th Bde, Sp Goodfriend, 176th Avn, AT963269 at 0930H. A UH-1H 66 for 1-1 Cav rec 51xcal fire w/neg hits. Alt: 800xft. Speed: 30xknots. Ntfy AAE, CPT Sturdevant.
700523	64	198th Bde, Sgt Lark, 176th Avn, BS7781 at 0200H. While on a PSYOPS msn, UH-1H rec 20-30xrds of SAF w/neg hits.
700525	59	198th Bde, Sgt Lark, 176th Avn, BS516844 at 1420H. Rec 10-15xrds of SAF w/neg hits & NCD. Rtn AWF w/unk res. Alt: 1500xft. Speed: 80xknots.
700529	35	198th Bde, Sgt Lark, 176th Avn, BS631996 & BS632994 at 0755H. While supporting R/1-6 CA , eng UNSEF. Res: 1xVC KIA.
700530	22	198th Bde, Sgt Lark, 176th Avn, BS514776 at 0820H. UH-1H made precautionary landing due to transmission failure on OP #1 w/NCD. Acft is secured by ARVNs. Ntfy AAE, CPT Fisher.
700531	51	198t Bde, Sp Mitchum, 176th Avn, BS517876 at 0830H. Obsr 3xVC/NVA evad into structure. B/1-52 eng w/SAF & G/S w/neg res.
700531	73	196th Bde, Sp Goodfriend, B/2-1, BT191188 at 1240H. While on a recon in force op, rec SAF fr 300-500m S of their loc f rest 15-20xVC w/NCD. Rtn SAF, G/S on station & eng the area. Res: 9xprobable VC KBG/S (Rattler 23/71st Avn) & 3xVC KBG/S (conf & credited to the 176th Avn/Musket). B/2-1 swept the area and fnd 10xbnkrs. Also at BT192185, fnd 1x60mm mort rd B/T w/trip wire. Dest all. Ntfy AAE, CPT Mikesell.

These are illustrative S2/S3 entries from the Americal Division daily logs for May 1971:

Date	Entry	Text
710506	22	196th Bde, LT Lajoie, 176 Avn, AT907363 at 0930H. UH-1H on R/S on ground for B/3-21 rec 1xM79 rd. Res: 2xUS WIA(E) fr B/3-21, D/O compl 0947H to Hill 510. Neg dam to acft. US were 15m fr acft. Fire came fr SW. Arty fired on suspected en loc at AT901360.
710507	20	196th Bde, LT Lajoie, 176 Avn, AT954542 at 1005H. On CA for 37th Ranger Bn, UH-1C eng w/SAF 5xVC w/unk res.
710511	67	196th Bde, LT Smith, 3/21 FWD CP at LZ Yonkers, AT945405 at 111650H. UH-1H 176 Avn approached S-4 pad fr N when acft lost power and crashed inside perm. Res: 1xWNB(E), D/O compl to DNG at 1725H; 4xWNB(M), all US, treated at aid station of Yonkers. Acft out by Crane to Da Nang at 1915H.
710515	13	198th Bde, LT Bilstrom, 176 Avn, BT269089 at 150845H. While on a CA for B/4-3, the AMC obsr 1xVC. G/S expended w/unk res.
710527	108	(DELAYED) 198th Bde, CPT Basen, US MAT I 59 / RF937, BS743807, 262245H. RF leaders left area & remaining RF's began drinking & discharging wpns. The 7xUS Advisors req permission to be extr fr area & were extr to Son Tinh. Advisors rtn to their position this morning. Extr compl by A/123 Avn UH-1H & 176 AHC G/S at 2315H Tm reinserted 270939H.

(Written by Leslie Hines, ADVA Vietnam era historian)

Mar 1, 1969. Musket (176th AHC) gunship ship shot down near Tien Phuoc.

Whup, Whup, Whup the wind was rushing through the cockpit at 80 knots constantly contorting the skin on my face into new grotesque arrangements. I was the helicopter crewchief on a brigade command and control mission on March 1, 1969. I was trying to keep my tearing eyes focused on the hostile terrain below as well as other aircraft that might be on a collision course with our helicopter.

It was almost noon and we were on the way back to LZ Ross to refuel when we picked up an distress call from a downed helicopter. We arrived over the downed helicopter northeast of Tien Phuoc and circled overhead up at least a thousand feet. We were overhead but offset from the downed ship by several hundred feet for a clear view. I was on the same side of the helicopter as the aircraft commander and the brigade commander. This gave me a great view of the downed ship. Two **Musket** gunships flitting around down below were making gun runs to provide low cover for the crew. The terrain was steep and very rough strewn with boulders and brush. The downed helicopter was on the lower part of the hill with enemy in the rocks firing down into from fairly close range.

It soon became very heart wrenching. I could hear automatic fire and bullets impacting in the downed helicopter below. At times I could also hear it in stereo over the intercom. At least once I heard an impact of bullets hitting what I imagined a bullet hitting flesh would sound like. This was followed by an anguished scream. At times I could see flashes from the enemy firing down at downed crewmen. I was really getting pumped as it sure looked like we were going in for the rescue.

After a discussion between my pilot and the brigade commander a decision was made. We were not going in because of our heavy radio console. I had an emotional release with this news and hit the bulkhead behind me with the flat of my fist. I was thinking "Chicken Bird Colonel.", but I realized later that I mostly just pretty scared. The "whump" of my fist hitting was loud enough that the pilot asked if we had taken a hit.

Soon after this, one of the covering C model gunships made an unexpected move. I could see two green pods tumble from the gunship then disappear into the hillside. It slowly dawned on me that the gunship had jettisoned their rocket pods. What was wrong? It didn't make sense? Then coming in from my left the Charlie model dropped in over the trees next to the downed ship. My jaw dropped open in amazement. Charlie model helicopters had trouble getting off the nice long runways at our main base of Chu Lai. But out here the elevation was higher which reduced the lift the helicopter could generate. And then there were the extra men to lift out and the pretty steep terrain with trees to clear.

The downed crew was in the rescue ship in seconds. They had a difficult time getting up in the air again. However, the gunship struggled up and slowly cleared brush rocks and trees. It seemed like everything was in slow motion. I was certain they would be crash or be shot down. But each second in the air their odds improved. My mood was improving at each stage as they had cleared the trees and finally the enemy fire. Whooee, they made it!

I am so glad that they made it. I would have felt guilty if the rescue had failed. That would have meant two gunships would have been on station instead of one. We had an H model which although loaded down might have performed better than a Charlie model.

My diary notes indicated one crewman had been wounded and all four men were rescued. Since the ADVA has obtained the Division TOC reports for March 1969 I was able to identify the location of the incident and the units involved. I now have started to contact people from the **176**th AHC, 1/52nd Infantry, and B/123rd Avn Bn whose units are mentioned regarding this action. I could use some help to locate people who can tell the story of this action. The story from the men rescued, the rescuers, the infantry and recovery team that got the downed helicopter out shortly after we had left station.

The weather forecast was in the Americal Division Daily Newsheet. Vol. 3 No. 120 Wednesday April 30, 1969
MIRACLE WEATHER FORECAST 1 May 69 Partly cloudy, ground fog in the morning, scattered showers in the afternoon, winds southeast 5 to 10 knots with gusts to 15.High 93 Low 77

I did not see any mention of the heroic rescue in any of the records I have obtained to date. Most of what is reported is action and the number of enemy kills. I am not sure if any kills were confirmed in this action.

In the bigger, picture less than 10 days later, a large NVA offensive hit the Americal Division. It resulted in the III Marine Amphibious Force and Americal Division declaring a tactical emergency. Within 24 hours a brigade from the 101st Airmobile Division was brought in to join the Americal in bitter fighting until mid August. But that is another story.

Written by Leslie Hines (A/123rd Avn Bn, 1st flight platoon)

Unit awards for the 176th AHC.

SOURCE: Department of the Army Pamphlet 762-3

Unit Citation and Campaign Participation Credit Register

(1960-1978) Dated: May 1980

ABBREVIATIONS:

DAGO:	Department of the Army General Order
PUC:	U.S. Army Presidential Unit Citation
VUA:	U.S. Army Valorous Unit Award
MUC:	U.S. Army Meritorious Unit Citation
RVNGC:	Republic Of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm Unit Citation
RVNCAHM	Republic of Vietnam Civil Actions Honor Medal - First Class
	Unit Citation
HHC	Headquarters & Headquarters Company
DETACH	Detachment

176th Aviation Company

VUA13-19 Aug 67 DAGO 37, 1970
VUA12 May 68 DAGO 43, 1970
RVNGC1 Mar 66 - 26 Mar 67 DAGO 22, 1968
RVNGC27 Mar 67 - 17 May 68 DAGO 22, 1968
RVNGC24 Aug 69 - 31 Dec 69 DAGO 42, 1972
RVNGC31 Mar 70 - 30 Jun 70 DAGO 42, 1972
RVNGC8 Feb 71 - 31 Mar 71 DAGO 42, 1972
RVNGC1 Apr 71 - 30 Jun 71 DAGO 6, 1974

14th Combat Aviation Battalion HHC

RVNGC24 Aug 69 - 31 Dec 69 DAGO 42, 1972
RVNGC31 Mar 70 - 30 Jun 70 DAGO 42, 1972
RVNGC8 Feb 71 - 31 Mar 71 DAGO 42, 1972
RVNGC1 Apr 71 - 30 Jun 71 DAGO 6, 1974
HHD
VUA13-19 Aug 67 DAGO 37, 1970
VUA12 May 68 DAGO 43, 1970
RVNGC1 Mar 66 - 26 Mar 67 DAGO 22, 1968
RVNGC27 Mar 67 - 17 May 68 DAGO 21, 1969 / 21, 1978

176th AHC - 14th AVN. BN. (1970 16th Combat Aviation Group Album)

UNIT - HISTORY

The 176th Aviation Company became activated on 1 October 1966 at Fort Benning, Ga. The 176th and its detachments (the 411th Transportation Detachment and the 454th Signal Detachment which are now organic to the 176th) were under the command of the 44th Aviation Battalion, 10th Aviation Group.

Shortly after being formed, the company moved to Camp Shelby, Mississippi for a series of FTX's. When orders finally arrived, the twenty-eight UH-1 helicopters were flown to the west coast for shipment overseas. The remainder of the company arrived later at Tuy-Hoa Air Force Base, Republic of Vietnam.

Upon arrival they were assigned to the 17th Aviation Group located in Nha Trang. On 14th February 1967, the 176th was assigned to the 14th Aviation Battalion at Lane Army Heliport and began building their base camp at Phu Hiep. This was to become known as Minuteman Manor.

On 8 March 1967, Minuteman slicks and Musket gunship, led by LTC Harry T. McDaniel participated in their first combat assault along with the 174th Assault Helicopter Company. On 25 March 1967, the 176th was officially declared Operational Ready after having flown some 2200 sorties and 615 hours while participating in five combat assaults.

During May, the 129th Assault Helicopter Company replaced the 176th at Lane Army Heliport. The 176th received orders to provide aviation support to the First Brigade, 101st Airborne Division. Thus the 176th returned to its base camp at Phu Hiep and began preparation for its move north to Duc Pho.

The Minutemen remained in Duc Pho in direct support of the 101st Airborne Division on Operation Malheur II until 1 August 1967, at which time the 101st moved into the area west of Quang Ngai on Operation Hood River. At the completion of Hood River the 176th followed the 101st further north to Chu Lai.

During this time the Minutemen began working beside the other units comprising the Americal Division (then known as Task Force Oregon). This operation lasted until the 20th of August when the 101st again moved to Duc Pho. The 176th followed and on September 1967, they participated in Operation Raid southwest of Quang Ngai. Upon successful completion of this operation the paratroopers were lifted into the mountains northwest of Quang Ngai on Operation Cook. The operation lasted until 9 September 1967, at which time the 101st moved further north to Chu Lai. Here, the 176th set up their base camp at Ky Ha. During November 1967, the 176th began withdrawing the 101st from the field for their move to Phan Rang.

The 176th moved their base camp to the new Minuteman Manor which located on the southeastern perimeter of Chu Lai. The 176th Assault Helicopter Company's missions with the 198th Light Infantry Brigade were airmobile operations for the security elements of the Chu Lai Defense Command and support for the convoys from Tam Ky to Quang Ngai.

Beginning with the 12th of May 1968, the 176th Assault Helicopter Company was involved in one of the most important rescue missions ever conducted in the Americal Division's Area of Operations. North Vietnamese regulars had moved in and all but taken over the Kham Duc Airfield within a period of three days. the 176th along with several other helicopter companies played a major part in the rescue of hundreds of American troops and Vietnamese civilians.

On 19 March 1968, Brigadier General Wallace L. Clement presented the 176th with twenty-one medals for valor. This was the largest single group of awards that has ever been presented by the Americal Division to a unit for a single action under hostile fire. The awards were two Silver Stars, eleven Distinguished Flying Crosses and eight Air Medals for Valor. These awards were made to six crews of the 176th for their actions in a daring rescue mission near Thien Phouc.

On May 10, 1970, the Musket gunships of the 176th were credited with stopping a rocket attack on Chu Lai. Later ground sweeps by the infantry found 43 rockets still in place. Also is the highest ever recorded by the Minutemen.

MAJOR Julius B. Moore, JR. - Commanding
CO and 1SG
CAPTAIN Roger G. Ladd - Executive Officer
First Sergeant Hassell Miller
SSG Hubert Ryals - Motor Sergeant
SP4 Murphy * Company Clerk
Motor Pool Personnel
SP5 Britten - Company Clerk
SP4 Watts - Supply Clerk
SP4 Fuller - 1st Echelon Maint.
Best Mess Personnel
SP5 Robertson & SP4 Torres - Mess Hall
Mess Personnel
Top & the KP's
SSG James Presont - Sanitation NCO (101st patch)
Captain Joseph Lacher - Operations Officer
SFC Jerrold Jackson - Operations NCO
SP4 Louis Alston - Opns. Clerk
Captain Robert Cardin - Assistant Operations Officer
SSG JAMES Williamson - Asst Opns NCO
SP4 Ronald Berger - Opns Clerk
CPT James E. Frazier - Service Platoon Leader
SFC Howard Pratt - Service Platoon Sergeant
TI - Team
CW2 - Peter D. Cosgrove - Avionics officer
SP4 Morton - Maintenance Clerk
Avionics Shop
SP4 Mendivil - Maintenance
SP5 McNeill - Electrician
Tech Supply Personnel
Prop & Rotor Shop
SP4 Hall & SP4 Mayhorn - Maint.
SP4 Dumas - Hydraulics Shop
SP4 McAnally & SP5 Dunn - Engine Shop
SP4 Hamilton & SP4 Mendivil - Maint.
SP4 Attlesey & SP5 Barta - Sheet metal
SP4 Adams & Sgt Sousa - Avionics
SP4 Robertson & SP4 Attlesey -Sheet Metal
PE Team
SP4 Conners - PE Team
Bde CC Crew
SGT Holly & SGT Ohlheiser - Commo
Unit IP WO1 West
WO1 Doucette & SGT Eggleston - Maint.

There are many pictures in the album that do not have captions.

Platoon Uncovers Lucky 13

DUC PHO (1/327-IO)—A platoon from B Co. of the 1st Bn. (Abn), 327th Inf. Captured a 'baker's dozen' of VC weapons while exploiting a gunship attack on an enemy base camp near here recently.

Lt. Floyd Williams, Detroit and said 176th Aviation Co gunships opened fire when they saw 12 VC moving into the undergrowth.

"During our search we found clothing, cooking utensils and 1,500 pounds of rice abandoned by the VC," said Williams.

Intensifying their probe, Williams' platoon discovered five French light machine guns concealed under bushes.

"We were excited about the find and we fanned out to cover every foot of the camp," Williams added.

The platoon soon found a Chinese sub-machine gun, five rifles, two shotguns, a grenade and an assortment of small arms ammunition.

Log Over 600 Sorties in 24 Hours

Brigade Served and Saved by Flying 'Minutemen'

By SP4 Dan Stroebel

CHU LAI – The "**Minutemen**" of the **176**th Aviation Co. shouldered one of their heaviest workloads since arriving in Vietnam as they ferried troops, ammunition and supplies for the 101st Airborne during Operation Benton near here recently.

On D-Day the sound of rotor blades whipping the damp morning air echoed over the brigade area as the "**Minutemen**" lifted the first wave of paratroopers into the combat zone. Back and forth the choppers shuttled as the day wore on.

Late in the afternoon, 2nd Bn. (Abn), 502nd Inf. made contact and the pilots of the **176**th remained in their cockpits furnishing supplies, Medivac and gunship support.

WO Dennis D. Bostad, Stevens Point, Wis., flew nearly 19 consecutive hours during the first day of the operation.

"After the first 10 hours, I was numb," recalled Bostad. "Then I caught my second wind and kept going."

Bostad flew four types of missions during the long stint at the controls. After 11 hours and 30 minutes of combat assault flying, he switched helicopters and flew the command and control ship for lt. Col. Ralph Puckett Jr., commander of the paratrooper battalion.

Later Bostad was flying ammunition resupply missions. When he landed his helicopter at the end of the day, he had been evacuating wounded form the battlefield, often under fire.

"The night flying was the most challenging," Bostad explained. "About midnight, the moon set and the troopers on the ground had to use flashlights to guide us in. It got to the point where we quit hoping we could do it – we just knew we had to get in."

The gunship pilots and crews of "**Minutemen**" battled their way through the long day with mission after mission of close support for the paratroopers. Two and three gunships orbited the battle areas, lacing the Communist infested jungle with machineguns and rocket fire.

Capt. Matthew M. McGuire, Long Island, N.Y., was flying his gunship in support of 2nd Bn. (Abn), 327th Inf. when a .30 caliber enemy bullet smashed through the helicopter windshield and struck him in the chest. His armored vest saved his life.

"It knocked the wind out of me, but I was more concerned about where the bullet came from." McGuire said. "We weren't aware of any ground fire, but it came from somewhere."

McGuire had logged 14 hours when he walked away from his chopper.

WO Kim P. Hogan, Evanston, Ill., flew his gunship nearly eight hours that night, supporting paratrooper forces who battled the enemy at hand-grenade range.

The paratroopers had a man on the perimeter use a flashlight to mark their forward positions," said Hogan, "and we went in firing at close as possible it was tight all the way."

In the first 24-hours of Operation Benton, the "**Minutemen**" pilots of **176**th Aviation Co. logged 214 hours in the air while flying 648 sorties in a spectacular demonstration of Army aviation support.

Photo Caption: **176th Aviation 'Musket' Smokes VC**
A rocket from a gunship of the **176**th "**Minutemen**" streaks toward its target during Operation Benton fighting. (Photo by Pfc. James Nelson)

176th Aviation 'Musket' Smokes VC

A rocket from a gunship of the 176th "Minutemen" streaks toward its target during Operation Benton fighting.
(Photo by Pfc. James Nelson)

14th COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION (1970 16th Combat Aviation Group Album)

UNIT - HISTORY

The 14th Aviation Battalion (Combat), only a little over five years old, has a short but diverse history, having served all but two months of its existence in Vietnam.

The unit was constituted 2 September 1964 and activated the following day at Fort Benning, Georgia for ultimate assignment to Vietnam in October.

Upon arrival in Vietnam the battalion set up headquarters in Nha Trang and was completely operational by 1 November as a fixed wing unit.

Torrential rains hit Vietnam soon thereafter causing one of the worst floods in Vietnamese history. 5000 Vietnamese perished in the floods and hundreds of thousands were left homeless and stranded. The 14th's 18th and 92d Aviation Companies (Fixed Wing), just getting their feet wet in Vietnam, spent the first two weeks of November 1964 flying evacuation and food and medical relief supply missions for the displaced and homeless in I and II Corps.

As a fixed wing unit, with nine companies dispersed throughout Vietnam, from Hue in northern I Corps to Can Tho in the Mekong Delta, the 14th's missions consisted of general aviation support to U.S. and ARVN forces. This support was provided in the form of reconnaissance, airborne communications, aerial surveillance and the airlift of personnel, material and supplies.

Throughout 1965 and into early 1966 the 14th Battalion continued its responsibility of long distance cargo hauling, regular VIP and passenger flights and increased reconnaissance and resupply for the many Special Forces camps throughout I and II Corps.

In April 1966 the 14th entered a transition period exchanging its fixed wing companies for assault helicopter companies and being redesignated a combat aviation battalion.

The 14th left Nha Trang shortly thereafter for new headquarters at Lane Army Heliport west of Qui Nhon with three new assault helicopter companies: The 161st, 174th and 282d. In September 1966 the remaining fixed wing companies were detached.

The 14th's obligation were dispersed from Phan/Thiet to the DMZ and from the Cambodia/Laos border to the coast in support of Korean, MACV and various U.S. Army Units.

Both the 161st and the 174th supported Special Forces projects on numerous occasions from June 1966 to late fall of the same year.

In the spring of 1967 the 176th Assault Helicopter Company and the 196th Assault Support Helicopter Company joined the Battalion. The 196th afforded the 14th its first organic CH-47 Chinooks.

The 14th moved to its present location in Chu Lai in mid April 1967 to support Task Force Oregon. At the time the 282d and the 196th Aviation Companies were replaced by the 71st AHC and the 178th ASHC aviation companies respectively.

The year found the 14th supporting operations for armies of three nations. The U.S. forces included separate brigades of the 101st Airborne, 1st Air Cav, composing the newly formed Americal Division. The 14th also supported many operations for the Korean 9th ROK (White Horse) Division, and the 22d ARVN Division. With the addition of the distinction of being the largest aviation battalion operating in Vietnam with close to 1600 personnel and 129 aircraft assigned.

Operations during 1969 and up to the present have centered around the support of the Americal's 196th, 198th and 11th Infantry Brigades and the 2d ARVN Division with the main obligations being; resupply, combat assaults and gunship support.

LTC Dean G. Boyle - Battalion Commander
MAJ Timothy Scobie - Executive Officer
MSG Carlos Young - Bn CSM
1LT Oscar Patterson III - Adjutant
SFC Jesse Willis - PSNCO
SP5 Paul Fredenburg - Awards & Decorations Clerk
1LT John P. Cotton - Asst. Adjutant
SP5 Richard Burkett - Morning Report Clerk
SP5 Terry Gillespie - Promotion Clerk
SP5 Dan Brown - PIO Clerk
SP4 Ron Kimbell - Bn OER Clerk
SP4 Richard D. Foley - Distribution Clerk
SP4 Norman Fowler - Colonel's Driver
SP4 John Sherlock - PIR Clerk
SP4 Michael Gray - Bn Mail Clerk
SP4 Ernest Pereira - S-2 Clerk
SP4 Ron Kimbell - Assistant Colonel Driver
Major Trask - S-3 Officer
Mr. Bribbon - Operation Officer
Captain Silva - Safety Officer
Captain Chick - Operation Officer
SGT Dolloff - S-2 (wearing a 1st Cav Div patch)
Cpt. Jerry Lane - S-4
SFC Robert Vance - S-4
SP4 Tommy Mintz & Sgt John Minton
CW2 James F. Spencer - PBO
Chaplain Berry - 14th CAB Chaplain
Cpt Joseph Ernest - Signal Officer
SP4 Cherence, Sp4 Monroe, & Sp4 Blevins - Commo
SP4 Fraizer, Sp4 Blevins, SP4 Terry - Commo
SGT William Cahill - S-3 Operations
SP4 Kemp. Sp4 Troutman, Sp4 McKay Commo
SP4 Englert - Safety Clerk
SGT John Frie - Commo
1LT Alan C. Dell'Ario - Exchange Off.
SSG Alvin A. Emanuel - Exhange NCO
COL Silver opening PX.
SP4 McCutcheon - Accounting Clerk
SP4 Carl Greer - Medics
SP5 Rice & SP4 Laningham - Medics
SP5 Robert Reed - Medics
CPT Louis Blumegarter - Medical Admin Off. and Pham Thi Tam.
SP4 Henning & SP4 McCracken Medics

CPT James W. McElroy - Commanding (1st Cav Div patch)
SFC Henry Howard - 1SG HHC
PFC John Rogers - Clerk Typist
SGT Calvin Uyesono - Asst. Supply Sgt.
1LT Gregory E. Clark - XO pathfinder Detachment Commander
SP5 Steve Parkman - Co Clerk
SGT Clifton Marks - Supply Sgt.
SSG Edward Moring - Motor Sgt.
SP4 Larry Brunner - Dispatcher earning his keep in the Motor Pool.
SP5 Darrell Gill - Pll Clerk makes last minute adjustment on water truck.
SP4 Lenial White - Mechanic
SGT Thomas Souther - XO Driver
SFC Donald Brown - Battalion Food Service Advisor
SSG Keller - Pathfinder NCOIC
SGT Jenkins - Pathfinder
SP4 Brunner - Motor Pool
SP4 Robinson - S-1 Admin.
SP4 Venegas - Colonel's gunner
SP5 Garza - Colonel's Crew Chief
SP4 Fowler - Colonel's Driver
SP4 Brunner - Dispatcher
SP4 Chapman - Mechanic
SSG Laird Rybarick - Mess Steward
SP5 Brown & Sp4 Leslie - Cook
SP5 Dale Brown and & SP4 Harris Cook
1LT Clark - CO
SSG Keller (Pathfinders)

There are many pictures in the album that do not have the names listed.

Americal Division Magazine - January, 1970 (Americal PIO)

November – Recap

In widespread action later on in the month, "Shark" gunships of the 174th Avn. Co. chalked up nine VC in action 17 miles northwest of Duc Pho. Operating three miles north of Duc Pho, A Co., 1-20 Inf. killed seven enemy in two brief encounters.

Taking to the air again, Americal gunships of the **176**th Avn. Co., in an early morning battle, killed 12 VC after pursuing them over the rolling hills and thick jungle 11 miles northwest Quang Ngai.

Americal Division Magazine - April, 1970 (Americal PIO)

HELI-EVAC
By SP4 WILLIAM GILPIN
14th CAG

To say that every man in Vietnam is entirely dependent on the helicopter may be somewhat of an exaggeration, just as it would be to say the helicopter has solved all of the Army's mobility problems; but for the soldiers in the field, the helicopter is their breadbasket, their mailman and their primary means of transportation.

To the casual observer these aircraft give the impression of being entities unto themselves, needing only the presence of a man to stimulate them into motion. In watching the sleek forward pull of a helicopter, rarely does one think of the grace in terms of the complex piece of electronic equipment that it actually is. Underneath the olive drab aluminum skin hides a mass of mechanical and electronic wizardry that would spin the mind's of many laymen.

It is here that our story begins, the story of the men who maintain these helicopters. Knowing that the helicopters are the backbone of nearly all transportation beyond the perimeters of the main base areas, we must dig into the often invisible behind-the-scene operations; the shops and maintenance areas where the helicopters, receive the attentions of both major and minor surgery, that will re-furbish their thin skin, strong frames, and delicate internal workings.

(continued)

Photo: of Chinook lifting a UH1 helicopter. Credit: Gilpin.

The point to be made is that these helicopters, though highly mobile and capable of amazing feats of strength, do break down. They stop functioning; sometimes completely, sometimes only in part, sometimes because of mechanical failure, and sometimes as a result of enemy action. The job of the maintenance men, armed with tools and knowledge, is to repair these choppers so they may return to their primary missions quickly.

The job of maintaining the aircraft begins with the flight engineers and crew chiefs. Prior to each flight these men must perform a daily inspection. the exterior of the craft is checked for minute cracks, loose screws and missing rivets caused by the continuous vibrations that shake the ship. The oil and hydraulic systems, very critical for the operation of mechanical system, are likewise checked for leaks and adequate levels. Close attention is also given to areas where gritty dirt may have collected. Action necessary for the immediate removal of all dirt is of paramount concern since these gritty build-ups, tiny as they may be, can raise havoc with the smooth continuous operation of the aircraft.

"A change of the main rotor pitch change link will be completed before working on the 90 degree gear box or light control hydraulics."

Such a strange and seemingly alien barrage of language finds us in the maintenance hanger of the **176th Assault Helicopter Company**, 14th Aviation Battalion, where the hustle and bustle of men working is reminiscent of tireless ant colonies. At first glance one gets the feeling of confusion, men swarming on and over aircraft all in various stages of repair: tailbooms off, engines missing, transmissions dangling from cranes, main rotor blades lying beside the ship like amputated wings. Upon closer observation one sees that the confusion is actually as highly organized as are ant colonies, a smooth integration of mechanics and supervisors bent on the task of repairing helicopters.

"One of the biggest problems resulting from the ever present dirt and sand is worn out bearings. The helicopters' flight control systems are dependent on bearings and we are constantly checking and changing them," stated SP5 Robert Littlefield.

"Constantly", a very apropos word, for these maintenance men are involved in around the clock operation. The work forces are broken (continued)

Three photos of helicopter maintenance activities.

JANUARY 1971

The new year was characterized by light to moderate action, but the year started off with heavy activity when LAMSON 719 began.

Operation LAMSON 719 was a large, complex operation designed to sever the enemy's supply lines and destroy the stockpiles along his supply routes in Laos. American forces were to reopen QL-9 through Khe Sanh to the Laotian border. ARVN forces would then attack into Laos to interdict the enemy's supply routes.

Logistical and airmobile support would be provided by the United States. To insure the security of QL-9, a shifting of American forces westward toward the Laotian border had to occur.

The 23d Infantry Division was called upon to place forces under operational control, and augment those of the 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) and the 1st Brigade, 5th Mechanized Division. Elements of the 23d Infantry Division began moving north on January 29-the date of movement depending upon the unit. 4th Battalion, 3rd Infantry moved north on January 29, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry arrived at Tam Ky on January 30. F Troop, 8th Cavalry moved north on January 29, as did the 116th Assault Helicopter Company, **176th Assault Helicopter Company** and the 178th Assault Support Helicopter Company.

Headquarters Company, 71st and 174th Assault Helicopter Companies moved north at the same time, and formed the 14th Combat Aviation Battalion, Also, 1st Battalion, 82nd Artillery was moved north to support operations for Jefferson Glen and LAMSON 719.

Color photo left two thirds of page. Soldier hanging tough in the heat carrying a ruck.

THE ARMY REPORTER

26Aug67-**4th Inf Smashes VC Force On Banks Of Song Ve River**

DUC PHO, (4th INF-IO) -Pushing the routed Viet Cong forces to the banks of the Song Ve River, 4th Infantry Division's 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry massed three companies and the reconnaissance platoon to seal off enemy avenues of escape.

Tightening the cordon around the VC, the day-long battle left 65 enemy killed by body count.

The operation was prompted by information from a Hoi Chanh who stated that a large enemy unit was located about 19 miles northwest of here near the Cong Ve River.

Responding to the intelligence, the infantry men conducted combat assaults into the area to find and destroy the enemy.

Companies A and C and the recon platoon were the first to touch down. They deployed rapidly to encircle the enemy force.

In an effort to escape the grip of the infantrymen, the enemy began fleeing to the north.

Observation helicopters of the brigade's aviation section immediately engaged and killed six guerrillas and spotted what appeared to be the main force.

Flying over the area in the command and control ship, Lt. Col. Norman L. Tiller, battalion commander, informed the company commanders of the rapidly developing situation.

The ground troops were ordered to move north, pressing the fleeing enemy toward the Song Ve River.

Company A, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry was combat assaulted to the west to block off the remaining route of escape.

With all paths of withdrawal blocked and the enemy contained, the three companies and the recon began closing in on the besieged enemy force.

Under the mounting pressure, many guerrillas attempted to escape to the river but were met by the devastating firepower of the gunships from the 174th, 161st, and **176th Aviation Companies**.

The choppers maintained an effective screen around the cordon while the infantry advanced.

Pushing in from three directions through thick, heavily vegetated hedgerows interspersed with trenches, bunkers, and spider holes, all three companies engaged the divided enemy forces.

With their control shattered, the guerrillas took to their underground hideouts. Carefully searching each bunker and trench the infantrymen dislodged the tenacious force.

Contact was broken by late afternoon and on the battlefield lay 65 enemy killed, 20 weapons, and large amounts of ammunition.

THE ARMY REPORTER

14Oct67-**1600 Soldiers Air Assaulted In Operation**

CHU LAI, (1st AVN-IO) - Operation Benton a multi-battalion combat assault force from the Americal Division, placed nearly 1600 fighting men into fierce ground action on the first day of the operation.

Massive airmobile assaults planned and staged by the 14th Combat Aviation Battalion's five assault helicopter companies (Note: this must refer to the 71st AHC, 161st AHC, 174th AHC, **176th AHC**, & 178th AHSC who participated) contributed over 60 aircraft during the first day of Benton. That day, 637 hours were flown, lifting the combat troops and 259 tons of cargo.

Assistant S-3 officer of the 1st Aviation Brigade unit, Maj. Derald Smith, called it "by far the most complicated assault operation we've run."

Final figures showed the 14th had lifted 12,256 men and 2046 cargo, flown 2804 hours, and evacuated 48 casualties.

In addition, the battalion's gunships had been credited with 49 Viet Cong killed and 125 enemy structures destroyed.

THe initial fleet of heliborne troops touched down in the lading zones (LZs) at 7:30 a.m. Intelligence sources reported the area was "heavily saturated with anti-aircraft positions and .50 cal. automatic weapons."

Another factor which concerned the flight leaders was the extreme care taken to prevent aerial reconnaissance of the LZs by aviation commanders. Only spotter-type airplanes had flown the operational area the day before so as not to arouse enemy suspicion of the assault.

All LZs were picked by map reconnaissance and verified by infantry battalion commanders and mission aviation leaders riding in the same chopper on the day of the assault.

Once on approach to the secreted LZs, conditions proved less than desirable. While a command and control helicopter was marking all LZs for landing, fierce sniper and automatic weapons fire opened up from wood lines.

Later, the LZs were found to be mined - one even had anti-helicopter devices. Another was filled with punji stakes and hostile fire was reported from most of the villages in the well-populated area.

However, ground commanders later said the gunships had drastically cut friendly casualties. Gunships from the 161st and **176th Assault Helicopter Companies** made repeated runs in support of the operation.

***Note: This related information was found in the Aviation ORLL report for the 14th Aviation Battalion referring to moving the 101st ABN Division troops in Operation Benton.

(6) On 13 August 1967, the Battalion committed 52 UH-1D's, 13 UH-1C(gunships), and 10 CH-47's to start operation Benton. This massive operation involved moving 2 Infantry Battalions, two artillery batteries and support elements for a total of more than 1,500 combat troops. The combat assault was conducted in a morning and afternoon phase, however there was no break in pace as indicated by a new Battalion high of 637 hours flown in one day. Nine aircraft of the Battalion were hit by enemy ground fire, however there were no crewmember casualties.

THE ARMY REPORTER

25Nov67-**Footwashing Costly for 5**

CHU LAI, (AMERICAL-IO) - A **Musket** gunship from the **176**th Assault Helicopter Company caught eight North Vietnamese Army soldiers with their boots off recently. The crew killed five of them.

Captain Matthew McGuire and WO Jerry W. Busby were returning to their home base at Ky Ha near here after supporting ground elements of the Americal Division. They came upon eight NVA soaking their feet in a mountain stream.

Seeing the helicopter, the NVA soldiers grabbed their weapons and began firing at the ship. They then dashed for cover, but not until the gunship unleashed a barrage of rockets and cannon fire.

THE ARMY REPORTER

16Dec67-**Monsoon Rains, Mortars Fail To Stop 101st Abn**

CHU LAI, (AMERICAL-IO) - Paratroopers of the 101st Airborne Brigade and a courageous helicopter pilot accounted for more than a dozen enemy dead in the Americal Division's Operation Wheeler near here recently.

Company A of the 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry was conducting search and destroy operations when they captured two North Vietnamese Army (NVA) soldiers butchering a water buffalo.

A monsoon storm developed and blanketed the valley as Capt. Peter Mitchell moved his company across rice paddies toward a tree line.

"We could see the NVA setting up a mortar position about 100 yards away," said Sgt. Leon Hicks.

Lieutenant Thomas Lowrie led the 2nd Platoon in an assault on the enemy mortar. The surprised North Vietnamese lowered the tube and fired point blank. All but two paratroopers sustained minor shrapnel wounds.

"We didn't care about the wounds," said PFC Donald Jones. "We wanted that mortar tube in the worst way."

The enemy fire failed to slow the platoon. The enemy fled with their mortar into the jungle, leaving the ammunition behind.

The 2nd Platoon destroyed the mortar shells and moved back to rejoin the company. Enemy mortar fire resumed and the company started digging in. The enemy then attacked with heavy automatic weapons fire as their mortars shifted.

Repeatedly the enemy tried to overrun the company, but the paratroopers drove them off.

Ammunition was low and a resupply was requested. The men wondered if the helicopter could get to them through the storm. Because of the close contact, artillery was ineffective.

Warrant Officer Marion L. Mark, a pilot with the **176th Aviation Company**, volunteered to fly the mission. Captain Robert Hopkins went along to drop the ammunition.

As the chopper came in low over the enemy position, doorgunners and NVA soldiers blasted away at each other. While the chopper hovered to drop the ammunition the enemy ..... (continued on Back Page). (Do not have the rest of the story).

THE ARMY REPORTER

23Dec67-**Photo Caption - OFF AND RUNNING -** Paratroopers of the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division quickly unload from a helicopter of the **176**th Aviation Company during operations with the Americal Division in the I Corps Tactical Zone. (Photo by Sgt. Bob Chambers, AMERICAL-IO)

THE ARMY REPORTER

19Oct68-'**Miracle Division' Choppers pull two Marines from sea**

CHU LAI (AMERICAL) - Americal Division helicopter crews plucked two downed Marine pilots out of the South China sea recently in a daring display of inter-service cooperation.

The two pilots, Maj. Daniel Carroll and Lt. Ralph C. Brown Jr., were returning from a mission north of Chu Lai when they realized that there was a malfunction in their landing gear.

"I contact Chu Lai and told them to go ahead and 'foam' the runway," Carroll said. After about 10 or 15 minutes the two directed their F-4B Phantom jet towards the runway and the cross deck arresting gear pendent, which will cause the aircraft to come to a complete halt after about 200 to 250 feet.

Out of control

"Our speed was slowed down to about 80 miles per hour, when suddenly the pendant broke, causing our aircraft to go out of control and start to skid sideways," Carroll continued, "My choice at this time was to hit the burners
and attempt to get the aircraft off the ground. I believe we did a first in aviation history, when we got the aircraft off the ground without landing gear."

"While I prepared for our ejection, Brown headed the aircraft out towards the sea. We both ejected about a half mile from shore."

The first chopper to the scene was that of WO1 James M. White from the Americal Division's **176**th Aviation Co. Having spotted the red flare Carroll sent up, he proceeded to begin the rescue of the major.

Carroll commented later on the rescue, "The pilot hovered over me beautifully at about three feet and his crewmen tossed me the rope. White did a fantastic job of holding the chopper steady and his crew really humped in getting me into the chopper. The job was so proficient that it seemed that they had trained for years at air-sea rescues."

Rescue Fails

Brown's rescue was a little more exciting. A Marine CH-34 chopper first appeared to pickup the remaining pilot. The chopper, having Brown all hooked-up, began to pull him up out of the water, but then the craft began to lose power. The downed pilot was dragged by the CH-34 as it sank to the water. He disengaged himself, then the chopper regained its power and moved out of the way.

All this time another Americal chopper, piloted by Capt. Herman Castle from the 71st Aviation Co., was circling the area. When he saw that the Marine chopper was unable to make the pick-up he immediately lowered his craft to about two feet above the water.

There was no rope aboard Castle's chopper so the pilot was forced to hold onto the skids. Brown said, "The crew pulled me up and I hooked my elbow over the skid, and locked the other arm to it through my harness. Then we headed for the beach."

Traveling at a speed of 50 knots, the Huey flew just above the surface of the water to carry Brown a mile to land. "Because of an injured ankle, I let go in about three feet of water rather than over solid ground."

Praises Crew

Following his unusual rescue, Brown was quick to praise the professional ability of the pilot and crew of the Army chopper: "He did a beautiful job of fling . . . held it steady as a rock two feet above the water."

But Carroll's and Brown's day was far from over. That night the two "Leathernecks" went down to the **176**th Aviation Co. Officer's Club and bought refreshments for the company and especially for White, Castle and their crews. Carroll concluded by saying, "It was just our way of thanking the Army for helping out two Marines.

"MP" to most soldiers rings the bell of road guard, traffic cop and DR giver-outer. This impression is far from the truth in the daily activities of combat miliary policemen of the Americal Division's 198th Infantry Brigade who patrol Viet Cong infested rivers and roadways north and south of here.

Whether patrolling the rivers in 16-foot Boston Whalers or cruising the highways in gun-jeeps, the 198th MP's are combat geared for action and have fought their way through numerous enemy engagements.

Stop the flow

The major missions of the 40-man MP force are patrolling two major river complexes (An Tan and Tra Bong) and Highway One from Tam Ky to Binh Son. "We stop the flow of U.S. materials and black market goods going to the VC," said Spec. 4 Jerry D. Lear.

Lear, who has been patrolling the network of waterways north and south of Chu Lai for six months, said that combat MPs have a more challenging role. "Here there's a job to do. Back in the States we were a lot of spit and polish, but over here we're in combat," Lear said.

A young MP, Lear has not issued a single DR since he's been in Vietnam. Instead he sports a steel helmet that has a large dent in it - a dent that came from an enemy AK-47 round during a firefight on the Tra Bong River.

To patrol the miles of wandering rivers north and south of here the combat policemen use 16-foot Boston Whalers outfitted with 80 and 85 horsepower motors and M-60 machine guns.

Dubbed the "River Rats," the 198th MPs man an outpost on each of the two rivers and patrol the water 24 hours a day. During the hours of darkness the "River Rates" set up floating ambushes to catch unwary Viet Cong sampans.

"We use two boats on a patrol," Lear said. "The first boat stops the sampans and junks while the second boat lags a short distance behind for security. Our boats are the fastest ones on the river."

A Vietnamese National Policeman from district headquarters accompanies the roving water patrols and checks identification cards and picks up Vietnamese draft dodgers.

Security first

"Security is the most important thing during the river patrols," said Pfc. Kenneth C. Irvin. Irvin, who rides machine-gunner in the security boat during patrolling, said, "It's a lot of different situations - the Vietnamese, the soldiers, and even the VC. You have to be aware and alert at all times.

THE ARMY REPORTER

28 July 1969 - **Crew's last words, "our engine quit"**

CHU LAI - The pounding of an enemy 50-calibre machinegun turned a routine helicopter flight into a 45-minute gunfighting and trailblazing race for four Americal Division crewmen.

The helicopter from the division's **176**th Assault Helicopter Co. was over LZ Gator, about 6 miles south of Chu Lai, when a call was received for a medical evacuation from a nearby infantry unit.

Flying at 2,200 feet over the double and triple-canopy jungles that surround the Song (river) Giong area, the ship abruptly lurched, and a sound all fliers dread echoed in their ears - the thumping of an enemy .50-calibre machine gun.

Immediately the crew chief and the gunner opened-up with M60 machineguns aimed in the direction of the enemy gunfire, managing to suppress it for a few valuable seconds.

By dropping to treetop level, Capt. David Grieger, the aircraft commander, tried reducing the enemy's field of fire and gain protection from the trees.

But the chopper continued to take fire from Charlie's .50-caliber.

"The caution panel lit up like a Christmas tree," said Grieger. “Then the engine quit. I flared out, reducing our speed to about 40 knots, and the tail boom hit the trees. The tail rotor section broke loose and the main rotor blade flew off. We then fell through the trees, crashing to the ground on our left side."

The chopper crew maintained radio contact with the U.S. Air Force observation plane operating near the area. The last message was "engine quit, going down."

The crew escaped from the demolished aircraft with nothing more than minor scratches. But danger still lurked around them.

Grabbing all the necessary equipment while enemy movement erupted in the bushes and grew closer the crew proceeded down a hillside, moving through dense undergrowth toward the Song Giong riverbed.

Nearly 250 yards and 40 minutes later the crewmen reached the river bank and spotted the rescue aircraft which was backed up by two assault gunships.

After the crew constructed a make-shift perimeter defense and released a smoke grenade to mark their position, the rescue ships spotted them.

The rescue aircraft set down while enemy small arms fire crackled from the treeline. The crew was extracted just 45 minutes and a long run after the last radio message had been transmitted.

THE ARMY REPORTER

15 December 1969 - **Vietnam communiqué - November 24-30**

Americal Div - Men of D Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Armored Cav., Americal Division patrolling 12 miles south of Chu Lai on Nov. 30, killed three VC and detained another two.

Other gunships from Troop D patrolling nearby located a hidden enemy compound and accounted for seven enemy dead and detained another five suspected VC.

Twelve Communists were killed the same day by other Troop D gunships, helping to cover the departure of a patrol of Co. C, 3rd Bn., 1st Inf., eight miles southwest of Tam Ky.

On Nov. 29, a patrol from Co. C, 4th Bn., 21st Inf., killed eight enemy soldiers and captured three SKS rifles in a battle four miles southeast of Duc Pho.

Six enemy were killed by gunships of the **176th Avn. Co**. on Nov. 27 six miles northwest of Quang Ngai.

LZ BAYONET - Infantrymen from the 23rd Infantry Division's 198th Inf. Bde. working with Cobra gunships from the **176**th Avn. Co., overcame heavy enemy resistance and then trapped a Viet Cong element to kill six enemy, detain one and capture two individual weapons in the Vin Tuy Valley northwest of Quang Ngai.

Co. C, 1st Bn., 52nd Inf., had just completed a helicopter assault into the area when the unit began taking heavy enemy fire from a nearby treeline to the north. The Ready Rifles returned fire and quickly dispersed the enemy element.

"We saw one VC in a tree when the firing started, but when we returned fire in that direction, he leaped down and started running," said Spec. 4 Floyd W. Gibbs, a radio operator for Charlie Company. "I didn't see any others but we were also taking pretty heavy fire from the woodline."

The Ready Rifles started sweeping the area of contact in pursuit of the enemy soldiers, but an aerial observer spotted several Viet Cong moving onto a bunker in a different direction. The observer contacted Co. C and gave the location of the bunker site. The ground element then shifted its route of travel and closed in on the enemy location.

"When we got to the bunker we began receiving fire again. So we assaulted their position," Gibbs said.

When the Ready Rifles approached a small hootch adjacent to the bunker, a Viet Cong inside the hootch began firing through a small window. Pfc James McDuffie opened up with his machine gun, killing the enemy.

When we got close enough we started throwing hand grenades and firing M79 grenade rounds into the opening of the bunker until all the enemy firing had stopped," said Gibbs.

Meanwhile, gunships from the **176**th Avn. Co. were blasting the area to the immediate north with grenade, rocket and minigun fire.

A total of six enemy had been killed in the fighting, and one enemy detained. Two individual weapons were confiscated.

Choppers kill 27 in MR 4 action

.....

23rd Inf

In Quang Nam Province of Military Region 1, on the evening of Aug 30, an element of the 196th Bde., 23rd Infantry Division was ambushed by an unknown-size enemy force 19 miles southwest of Hoi An. U.S. casualties were three killed and four wounded. Two armored personnel carriers and one Sheridan assault vehicle were destroyed. Enemy casualties are unknown. (Note: Americal ORLL report states that E/1st Cav on Aug 30 had two incidents vic BT0018348 resulting in 3 U.S. KIA and 9 wounded. The first incident was a command detonated mine followed by Small Arms Fire (SAF)).

The same day in Quang Tin Province, helicopter gunships of the 23rd observed and engaged an estimated enemy squad 16 miles west-northwest of Tam
Ky. Five of the enemy were killed. There were no friendly casualties.
About four hours later, another gunship element of the division observed and engaged an unknown-size enemy force six miles west of Tam Ky. Eight of the enemy were killed. There were no friendly casualties. (Note: Americal ORLL report 20 Aug: 1230H vic BT078296 D/1st/1st Cav (Avn) recorded 5 enemy KIA, then **the 176th AHC** recorded 8 VC KIA vic BT215215).

THE ARMY REPORTER

21Sep70- <u>Vietnam communiqué</u> <u>Aug. 31-Sept. 6</u>

I Region gunships strikes slay 17

In the largest action of the week ending Sept. 6, elements of the 14th Combat Avn. Bn., ranging over I Military Region, killed 17 enemy soldiers in two separate contacts Aug. 31. In one of the actions, gunship crews from the **176**th Assault Helicopter Co. engaged an enemy force of undetermined size 14 miles north of Quang Ngai City.

THE ARMY REPORTER

21Sep70- Sounds of Muskets fill air following scramble call Page 12

LZ HAWK HILL - "Scramble" was the only word that could be heard echoing through the hootch as Capt. John Wheeler, fire team leader of the **Musket**s, **176**th Assault Helicopter Co., answered the telephone call.

The call was from brigade headquarters stating that Co. C, 3rd Bn., 21st Inf., 19th Bde., Americal Division, was being pinned down by sporadic small arms fire.

Wheeler stayed on the phone to copy down the infantry company's radio frequency, its call sign and the grid coordinates. Meanwhile the rest of the fire team was in hot pursuit of their gunships.

WO Bob Sizemore, lead pilot of Wheeler's craft, was already in the process of cranking up the **Musket** gunship by the time the officer finished copying down the information and arrived at the aircraft.

As the **Musket**s arrived on the scene, they were in direct radio contact with the infantry unit on the ground. After making their first run on the expected enemy position, the gunships' radio crackled with the sound of the infantrymen's voice from the ground, "Excellent, excellent, just keep working out in that area. You're right on target."

The **Musket**s continued to work out on the suspected enemy position, expending
their load of destruction. Rockets, minigun fire, and M60 machine gun fire peppered the entire area.

After firing up their destructive lead, the **Musket**s returned here to reload for another run. While they were sitting in the hootch, a report came in that the infantrymen of Co. C, 3rd Bn., 31st Inf., 196th Inf. Bde., had swept the area and found two VC snipers killed by a combination of the infantrymen's and the gunships' fire.

The **Musket**s and the Firebirds, 71st Assault Helicopter Co., both fly in support of the 196th.

The gunship fire teams are usually made up of two ships, each carrying a crew of four; aircraft commander, pilot, crew chief and door gunner.

The **Musket** gunships on this particular fire team were equipped with maximum firepower. The lead ship was equipped with two 159 rocket pods, carrying 24 10-pound rockets in each pod, and two M60 machine guns. The trail ship was equipped with two 158 rocket pods, carrying 19 10-pound rockets in each pod, two miniguns and two M60 machine guns.

The firepower of the gunships is always impressive. The miniguns pour out 4,000 rounds a minute while the two M60 machine guns fire 500 rounds a minute. (Continued)

All of this firepower combined with the rockets and mobility of the gunships make them one of the most effective weapons in the U.S. arsenal.

The gunships fly three general categories of flights: dustoff flights, gunship escorts of medevacs; contact missions, direct support of Allied ground forces; and general escort mission for aircraft such as the CH54 Flying Crane.

The general feeling of most groups served by the gunships is comparable to the reply of one of the infantrymen of Co. C,., 3rd Bn., 21st Inf., when he said, "Thanks a lot, guys. You don't know how we appreciate it." This is the usual final radio message for the gunships as they leave the scene.

The reply from the gunship fire team is frequently the same also. "We are returning to refuel and rearm. If you need us again, just give us a call."

The gunships have a certain way they like to refer to themselves: "Death on Call."

Pacific Stars & Stripes
10Oct71 – Page 6
Sunday

3 Flying Units Start Standdown

S&S Vietnam Bureau

SAIGON – The 389th Tactical Fighter Sq. at Phu Cat AB began standdown Friday, U.S. 7th Air Force spokesmen said.

Two units of the Army's 1st Aviation Brigade also began standdown, Army spokesmen said.

The 389th TFS will be the first F4 phantom fighter-bomber Squadron to leave Southeast Asia under the current U.S. withdrawal program, spokesmen said. There will be 650 space reductions.

The unit designation (389th TFS) will be transferred to Mountain Home AFB, Idaho. The squadron arrived in Vietnam in March 1966, flying more than 13,000 combat missions since moving to Phu Cat AB in June, 1969.

The two Army units that began standdown Friday were the 132nd Aviation Co. (CH47 medium helicopters) and the 176th Aviation Co. (CH47 assault helicopters). The number of space reductions is 555.

15Oct70-Pacific Stares & Stripes
Thursday page 6

Fierce Fire Fight

Americal Troops Slay 52 Reds

S&S Vietnam Bureau

CHU LAI, Vietnam – Troops of the Americal Div., encountering their heaviest fighting in four months, killed 52 enemy soldiers in a series of sharp actions Monday, division officers reported.

In the largest contact, eight miles south of Quang Ngai, a division soldiers killed 27 communists during a fierce exchange of fire. No U.S. casualties were reported by the U.S. Command. ***(Historian Note: The 174th AHC gunships claimed 27 probable kills in actions that resulted in seven 174th AHC helicopters receiving hits. 2 aircraft were to be extracted at first light. D/1/20 & B/1/20th Inf Bn were being medevaced and securing downed helicopters. C/6/11th Arty provided artillery fires).***

A half-mile to the north, three Americans were killed and seven wounded in a ground action in which enemy losses were not known.

Division ground troops, supported by helicopter gunships, killed 11 Communists in an area 10 miles northwest of Quang Ngai, the officers said.

(Historian Note: This action involved A/1/52d & C/1/52d Inf Bn. and 176th AHC helicopters. C/1/52nd was securing a downed 176th AHC in this action).

Fourteen other enemy soldiers were killed and seven wounded in a ground action in which enemy losses were not known.

Division ground troops, supported by helicopter gunships, killed 11 Communists in an area 10 miles northwest of Quang Ngai, the officers said.

Fourteen other enemy soldiers were killed by Americal GIs during several minor contacts throughout the day, division officers said.

An incident in Quang Nam Province Monday in which 105mm artillery fire killed two persons and wounded five others was under investigation, the U.S. command said.

A military spokesman said a U.S. Marine artillery unit was conducting a fire mission in the area, seven miles southwest of Da Nang, at about the same time.

One American and one Popular Force soldier were killed and four Americans and one Vietnamese soldier were wounded, the U.S. command reported.

Five Americans were killed and nine wounded by booby traps in Quang Nam, Quang Tin, Quang Ngai and Binh Dinh provinces, U.S. military sources said.

ARVN and Regional Forces killed nine enemy soldiers during scattered actions in Quang Tin and Phuoc Long provinces, the Vietnamese command said.

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Pacific Stars & Stripes
16Mar71 Page 6
Tuesday

S. Viet Forces Kill 69 Reds in 3 Delta Battles

S&S Vietnam Bureau

SAIGON -- .....

Communist gunners shot down a U.S. Army OH6 observation helicopter Saturday afternoon 80 miles southeast of Da Nang, spokesmen said.

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*(Historian Note: This was an B/123rd Avn Bn Warlord helicopter downed by .51 caliber fire. During this day there was also a **176**th AHC downed. A D/1/1 Cav (Nighthawk mission) and a 116th AHC helicopter were also damaged by enemy fire and could not complete their mission.)*

KETTLES, CHARLES S.

Major (Artillery), U.S. Army
176th Aviation Company (Airmobile) (Light), 14th Combat Aviation Battalion, Americal Division
Date of Action: May 15, 1967
Citation:
The Distinguished Service Cross is presented to Charles S. Kettles, Major Artillery), U.S. Army, for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam, while serving with 176th Aviation Company (Airmobile) (Light), 14th Combat Aviation Battalion, Americal Division. Major Kettles distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 15 May 1967 while serving as aircraft commander of a helicopter supporting infantry operations near Duc Pho. An airborne Infantry unit had come under heavy enemy attack and had suffered casualties. Major Kettles immediately volunteered to carry reinforcements to the embattled force and evacuate their wounded from the battle site. Although friendly artillery had pounded the hostile positions, the enemy was well entrenched and fighting fiercely. Major Kettles led a flight of helicopters into the landing zone through a savage barrage. Small arms and automatic weapons fire raked the landing zone and inflicted heavy damage to the ships, but Major Kettles refused to leave the ground until all the craft were loaded to capacity. He then led them out of the battle area. He later returned to the battlefield with more reinforcements and landed in the midst of a rain of mortar and automatic weapons fire which wounded his gunner and ruptured his fuel tank. After leading more wounded aboard, he nursed the crippled craft back to his base. He then secured another ship and led a flight of six helicopters to extract the Infantry unit. All but eight men had been loaded when Major Kettles directed the flight to take off. Completely disregarding his safety, he maneuvered his lone craft through a savage enemy fusillade to where the remainder of the Infantrymen waited. Mortar fire blasted out his windshield, but he remained on the ground until the men were aboard. The enemy concentrated massive firepower on his helicopter and another mortar round badly damaged his tail boom, but he once more skillfully guided his heavily damaged ship to safety. Major Kettles' extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.
HQ US Army, Vietnam, General Orders No. 1049 (March 9, 1968)

Challenge Coin presented by Charles S. Kettles to encourage support for Patriotic activities.

MARK, MARION L.

Warrant Officer (W-1), U.S. Army
176th Aviation Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division
Date of Action: October 3, 1967

Citation:

The Distinguished Service Cross is presented to Marion L. Mark, Warrant Officer (W-1), U.S. Army, for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam, while serving with 176th Aviation Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 327th Infantry, 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division. Warrant Officer Mark distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 3 October 1967 as pilot of a utility helicopter supporting ground operations near Chu Lai. An airborne infantry company conducting search and clear operations was heavily engaged by a numerically superior North Vietnamese Army force firing automatic weapons from well-concealed and fortified positions. The friendly force expended much of its ammunition and requested immediate re-supply. Aware that intense enemy antiaircraft fire had destroyed five helicopters and prevented gunship support, Warrant Officer Mark volunteered to attempt the mission. Devastating machine gun and automatic weapons fire raked his ship as he reached the area, but he refused to terminate his flight. As he flew low over the friendly force, the enemy launched a withering mortar barrage to prevent his landing. Disregarding his personal safety, he hovered ten feet above the ground while his crew pushed the vital ammunition out to the waiting ground forces. Machine gun fire shattered both of his legs and forced him to crash land. Despite his severe wounds, he skillfully controlled the crippled ship and brought it to the ground. With bullets striking all around him, he shut down all electrical systems to prevent an explosion and then moved to safety. His fearless actions in the heat of battle prevented his fellow soldiers from being overrun and annihilated by the determined enemy. Warrant Officer Mark's extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

HQ US Army, Vietnam, General Orders No. 2736 (June 7, 1968)

Disposition Form (AR 340-15)
AVDF-GC Combat Action Report
To: Chief of Staff (Nels Parson) from ACofS, G3 Date 8 Mar 68
MAJ Bittrich/rsv/545

1. PURPOSE: To circulate Combat Action Report to appropriate commanders and staff for review.

2. DISCUSSION:

a. In accordance with paragraph 3a (5), Americal Division Regulation 335-8, dated 28 Jan 68, the following Combat Action Report is forwarded for review.

"Battle for Lo Giang" (TAB A)

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e. **176**th Aviation Company (AMCAL). "The **Minutemen**" furnished a command and control helicopter for "The Regulars" on a continuous basis from 081430 - 121200 Feb 1968. Numerous sorties were flown in all categories (VR, resupply, C and C, dustoff, etc), and the courage, skill and desire to excel on the part of the **Minutemen** Pilots significantly contributed to the success of the 1-6 Infantry at Lo Giang.

(Note**: ... It should be noted that until 081430 Feb 68, the 1st Bn 6th Inf commander did not have a command and control (C&C) helicopter at his disposal. When it finally arrived it was used for two hours for medivac and resupply. A/1-6 had 28 WIA and C/1-6 had 17 WIA. The C&C helicopter pilots were WO1 Edward A. Fitzsimmons and 1LT David R. Ewing of the "Minutemen", 176th Assault Helicopter Company. They flew 21 sorties into the battlefield, evacuated 31 wounded, and resupplied all companies. To quote the official After Action Report:** ***"[w]ithout the courage and skill of Mr. Fitzsimmons and LT Ewing it is doubtful if all he wounded would have been evacuated prior to darkness on the night of 8 Feb 1968."***

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On the evening of 11 Feb 1968 LTC Baxley was given a warning order to be prepared to extract all maneuver elements from the area of operations for further deployment to LZ Baldy under the OPCON of the 3rd Brigade 4th Infantry Division Task Force. All companies were alerted and air-movement plans were made for a heliborne movement to LZ Baldy. This warning order terminated the operation as it was executed as an operations order on 12 February 1968. The 1st Battalion of the Sixth United States Infantry had completed its assigned mission and the NVA threat to the city of Danang had ended.

12. A. Enemy Equipment and Personnel Losses:

(1) Personnel - 266 KIA

(2) Weapons actually evacuated to 1-6 CP (numerous weapons were evacuated to TF Miracle CP and 3rd Marine Regiment CP)

Continued

(a) AK47 - 13
(b) SKS rifle - 4
(c) RPG - 6
(d) 60mm - 2
(e) 82mm - 2
(f) RPD MG - 6
(g) M-60 MG - 3
(h) M-1 carbine - 2
(i) M-1 rifle - 1
(j) Shotgun - 1

(3) Equipment:
(a) Uniforms - 268
(b) Hammocks - 13
(c) Protective Masks - 75
(d) Webb Gear - 203 sets assorted gear (canteens, packs, etc.)
(e) Helmets (PYTH type) - 34
(f) Uniforms separate from bodies - 16
(g) Pistol Belts - 201
(h) Numerous documents and personal wallets
(i) 5 tons of Rice

(4) Ammunition:
(a) 150,000 rounds cal 7.62
(b) 847 rounds cal 30
(c) 3,900 rounds cal 45
(d) 1,000 Chicom Grenades
(e) 4 rounds of 82mm mortar
(f) 48 M-26 grenades
(g) 576 rounds 12 ga shotgun
(h) 4,500 rounds AK47
(i) 240 rounds 60mm mortar
(j) 50 claymore mines
(k) 3 Bangalor Torpedoes
(l) 2 B-40 rockets

B. Friendly Personnel and Equipment Losses:

(1) Personnel - 22 KHA, 68 WHA

(2) Equipment:
(a) Six complete sets of webb gear
(b) Fifteen ruck sacks
(c) 2 PRC 25 radios (destroyed in combat)

(3) Weapons
(1) 1 LAW
(2) 1 cal 45 pistol
(3) 3 M-79 grenade launchers
(4) 7 M-16 rifles

SUBJECT: Combat Operation After Action Report (U)
VC Attack on Ly Tin District Headquarters, 2 January 1968

198th Light Infantry Brigade
Americal Division
APO San Francisco 96219

TO: See Distribution

1. (U) Name of Operation: Ly Tin Support

2. (U) Date of Operation: 020200 January 1968

3. (U) Location: Chu Lai XVX; map reference 1:50,000 sheet, Nbrs. 6739 (I) and 6739 (IV).

4. (C) Command and Control Headquarters: HQ's, 198th Light Infantry Brigade (LIB).

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7. (C) Supporting Forces:

a. 176th Aviation Company (Airmobile Light) provided gunships employing suppressive fires to destroy the enemy and relieve enemy pressure on the Ly Tin compound and Combined Action Platoon Location.

M R . T R U N C H O N ' S Combat Assault

(**176**th AHC-IO) CHU LAI, RVN-

November 2nd was a fitting day to climax the Army career of Chief Warrant Officer Three Michael Truchon of the **176th Assault Helicopter Company's** "Minutemen" stationed at Chu Lai, RVN.

CW3 Truchon goes home in December to retire with twenty years in the Army, nine spent as an enlisted man.

During his career he had two tours in Europe, one in Japan, and was an infantryman with the 1st Cavalry Division during the first beach landing in the Korean Conflict.

On his first tour in the Republic of Vietnam, June 1965 through May 1966 he was assigned to the 120th Aviation Company "Beans" at Tan Son Nhut Air Base near Saigon and while there participated in numerous combat assaults and eagle flights in support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

When the 120th went to VIP support, CW3 Truchon volunteered for maintenance "So I could stay busy," he said. Some hard work at on-the-job training, and his military occupation specialty was changed to maintenance officer.

Now on his second Vietnam tour with only 29 days left, this former tactics instructor at Ft. Rucker, Ala., volunteered to go on a "hot" combat assault west of Quang Ngai.

CW3 Truchon was on the "Blacksmith" maintenance ship and had been sent to the Quang Ngai Airstrip as a standby-recovery aircraft during a large combat assault involving more than 20 lift ships.

When one of the ships had to shut down for a maintenance inspection, and another had battle damage, CW3 Truchon volunteered to take their place. He took part in seven lifts and received heavy small arms fire, but took no hits as he was flying right behind and aircraft in which both pilots were wounded.

"It was just like old times with the 120th," he said smiling.

On retiring Mr. Truchon plans to complete a course in hotel management and settle down in New England to take up a new profession. With the drive and determination Mr. Truchon has shown for the last twenty years, the hotel business can expect some stiff competition in its ranks over the next twenty years!

AVIATOR FLIES
BEAUCOUP HOURS

Chief Warrant Officer Two Albert C. Cerullo, 23, of Elmont, N.Y. is completing his tour in Vietnam, having flown 1,605 combat hours in 241 flying days.

CW2 Cerullo came to the **176**th Assault Helicopter Company on Nov. 19, 1967 and flew his last day on Nov. 9, 1968. He became aircraft commander after slightly more than two months and 200 hours in-country. Mr. Cerullo, "Minuteman 12", has not had an accident charged against his record since he began flying.

That doesn't mean his tour went without incident. He has had two engine failures, one while sitting in a landing zone west of Chu Lai, and one at 1600 feet above ground level. On the second occurrence, Mr. Cerullo landed his UH-1H "Huey" in the only partially clear area available. The only damage done was to the rotor blades by trees in the area which could not be avoided because of the small LZ, no one was injured.

Mr. Cerullo mentioned other exciting moments, like west of Center when his helicopter received 32 hits in a LZ on a combat assault. Twelve of the rounds went through the cockpit. With severed tail rotor control cables, two crewmen and two passengers wounded, Mr. Cerullo took off and returned the crippled aircraft to the nearest hospital. He landed in a nearby rice paddy without further damage. The engine had taken a round, and there were powder burns on the bottom of the aircraft, form the enemy weapons, where they were dug in on the LZ.

Mr. Cerullo has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal with numerous clusters, and the Purple Heart, with several other valor awards pending.

He plans to continue his training at Hunter Army Air Base, Ga., upon his return to "the world" and hopes to earn the rating of instrument instructor, continuing the realization of his childhood dream to be a professional aviator. (**176**th AHC-IO)

Historian Note: Mr. Cerullo transitioned to Hollywood. He now provides helicopter services to big movie productions like the Spiderman movies.

CHANGE OF COMMAND AT THE 176th

MINUTEMAN PAD, **176**th AHC-IO

Major Ronald C. Metcalf, Hickory, N.C., took command of the **176**th Assault Helicopter Company on Jan. 14, 1969 during a brief Tuesday morning ceremony held on the **176**th maintenance ramp.

Major Metcalf assumed his new command after serving five months as the assistant operations officer of the 16th Combat Aviation Group. This is his second tour in Vietnam, having served with the 1st Air Cavalry Division during 1966-67.

During his 13 years in the Army Major Metcalf has served in Korea, Europe and Vietnam, as well as the United States. He entered the service during the Korean conflict, but got out in 1954 to attend college. He graduated from Wofford College, Spartanburg, S.C., with a Bachelor of Arts in psychology in 1959, re-entered the Army, and has served continuously since.

The new CO took command from Major Richard G. Adamski, who was reassigned to Ft. Carson, Colo.

Lieutenant Colonel Robert E. Wilson, 14th Combat Aviation Battalion Commander, participated in the ceremony, while LTC Charles A. Klopp, who recently relinquished the Battalion commander's slot to become Group operations officer, watched with a group of officer representing the 16th Group and the 14th Battalion.

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176 AHC BIRTHDAY

CHU LAI, RVN, **176**th AHC-IO

Happy birthday to the "**Minutemen**" of the **176**th Assault Helicopter Company! Feb. 8, 1969, the **176**th celebrated its second anniversary in Vietnam, and during the two-year period has built an excellent reputation as an aviation company.

The **176**th Assault Helicopter Company arrived in-country on Feb. 8, 1967 at Tuy Hoa Air Force Base and was immediately transported five miles south to its new home at Phu Hiep. Once settled, the men who were to be chopper crewmembers began flying with other companies of the 14th Combat Aviation Battalion which provided the instruction in planning airmobile assaults, and aerial gunnery tactics.

On March 8, 1967, Lieutenant Colonel Harry McDaniel led the "**Minutemen**" on their first combat assault, and by Mar. 25, 1967, the **176**th had flown 2200 sorties, over 600 combat hours, and was declared operationally ready.

The first operation was Beak Ma II, in which the "**Minutemen**" supported the 9th Republic of Korea "White Horse" Infantry Division, and then on to Operation Ojackyo and the Capitol ROK Infantry Division. During this operation the "**Minutemen** "trained five Korean aviators and familiarized them with the complexities of airmobile assault techniques.

Next came the 101st Airborne Division and Operation Malheur II, when the company was moved to Duc Pho. Upon the successful completion of Malheur II the "**Minutemen**" heli-lifted the 101st to the mountains and river valleys west of Quang Ngai in operation Hood River.

Following the completion of Hood River, the **176**th Aviation Company began Operation Benton and again were moved, this time to Chu Lai, the headquarters of Task Force Oregon. After operation Benton it was back to Duc Pho for the **176**th and Operations Raid and Cook.

In late November 1967 the 101st was withdrawn from the field and moved to Phan Rang, but this time without the **176**th. The old 101st area was taken over by the 198th Light Infantry Brigade, which had recently arrived in-country, and the "**Minutemen**" were to support the new brigade, now part of the Americal Division.

In all, the "**Minutemen**" of the **176**th have had an exciting two years in Vietnam and have had the privilege of working with two accomplished divisions in the U.S. Army.

----------**N E W L Z M I N U T E M A N**

CHU LAI, RVN, **176**th AHC-IO

The "**Minutemen**" of the **176**th Assault Helicopter Company were recently honored by Lieutenant Colonel Ronald R. Richardson, Colorado Springs, Colo., when the newest landing zone in the area of operation was named "LZ Minuteman" by "The Professionals," 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry, as a permanent reminder of the close combat-combat support relationship enjoyed by the two units.

LTC Richardson, commanding officer of the 5/46th, was on hand to receive the "Minuteman" guidon from Major Ronald C. Metcalf, Hickory, N.C., company commander of the **176**th AHC. Colonel Robert Tulley, Fairfax, VA., commanding officer of the 198th Light Infantry Brigade, looked on as LTC Richardson officially named the first LZ in the area of operation after a supporting unit.

LTC Richardson said, "I've named this LZ to honor the "**Minutemen**" without whom the Brigade couldn't function. They've done a tremendous job and we're proud of every "Minuteman'."

The new LZ is located 15 miles south of Chu Lai on the Batangan Peninsula, recently cleared by joint Americal Division, Marine and ARVN efforts in Operation Russell Beach. "Minuteman" LZ, named just two days after the "**Minutemen**" had celebrated their second anniversary in Vietnam, commands a beautiful view of the South China Sea and the lower rice lands around its base. Prior to Operation Russell Beach, the peninsula had been a VC and NVA sanctuary for about twenty years.

Captain Michael Smith, New Lebanon, Ohio, who commands "Delta" Company 5/46th, the company initially assigned to occupy LZ "Minuteman, "firmly planed the "Minuteman" guidon in the turf.

Daily support to the ground units in the area is being given by other units of the 14th Combat Aviation Battalion in addition to the "**Minutemen**." The 5/46th however is traditionally supported by the **176**th AHC. As LTC Richardson put it, "Every ground troop knows the '**Minutemen**'."

----------VOL II NO 7 16TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP, CHU LAI RVN APRIL 9, 1969

176th AHC RESCUE NEAR TIEN PHOUC
RATES 21 IMPACT AWARDS - 176 AHC-IO

Two Silver Stars, 11 Distinguished Flying Crosses, and eight Air Medals with "V" device for valor were presented by Americal Division Deputy Commander Brigadier General Wallace L. Clement at award ceremonies held at the **176**th Assault Helicopter Company maintenance ramp, Chu Lai, RVN on Mar. 26, 1969, the largest number of "impact" awards ever given by the Americal Division for a single action.

It was 1755 hours, Mar. 19, 1969--First Lieutenant William D. Bristow, Alhambra, Calif., aircraft commander of a 14th Combat Aviation Battalion Huey "slick" had been flying resupply missions in support of Americal ground units operating near Tien Phouc.

Bristow had hauled some food and ammunition and picked up a medevac on the last sortie of the day. As the aircraft commander emerged from the remote landing zone, a waiting enemy directed heavy automatic weapons fire at the chopper.

Private First Class Robert Wilhelm, Tolley, N.C., the Huey crew chief, and Specialist Four Boyd L. Kettle, Durango, Colo., doorgunner, responsively began suppressing the hostile fire with their M-60 machineguns.

1LT Bristow's craft pressed for more altitude, and then came a fateful lurching sensation---flames started spreading through the helicopter--they had been hit.

Crew and passengers placed weapons fire into the enemy position while LT Bristow attempted to land the burning chopper in the nearest possible place. Co-pilot Warrant Officer Paul E. Lent, Richmond Springs, N.Y. radioed two distress calls, giving call sign and location.

As 14th CAB aircraft number 516 touched ground, flames were lapping the cockpit; the medevac patient, passengers and crew evacuated the ship as its fuel cell exploded--the Huey "slick" burned like an inferno.

Approaching darkness added a note of fear to the stranded men. Bristow checked weapons and ammunition that would secure their defense--an M-16 rifle with 35 shells, and a .38 caliber pistol with 20 rounds.

WO1 Lent's call for help was luckily monitored by another aircraft and the message was relayed to the **176**th Assault Helicopter Company operations. Two **176**th AHC "**Musket**" gunships and (Continued next page)

(CONT'd) I M P A C T A W A R D S (CONT'D)

two "Minuteman" slicks, already airborne, immediately flew toward the crash area. Meanwhile, Major Ronald C. Metcalf, Hickory, N.C. commanding officer of the **176**th AHC, departed "Minuteman Pad" in a recovery aircraft with maintenance and medical personnel aboard.

At 1830 hours there were three "Minuteman" slicks and two "**Musket**" gunships orbiting the downed aircraft. Enemy ground fire increased as the choppers inched towards the burning "516".

Major Metcalf's first impression was that no one could have survived the searing aircraft, but instructed pilot WO1 Jerry W. Herman, Wooster, Ohio, to lead his "**Musket**" gunship light fire team over the area to look for survivors. Several passes over the stretch of land surrounding the crash site revealed nothing, and the gunship team temporarily diverted from the area to provide cover for a ground patrol that had been ambushed while attempting to secure the downed ship.

When the **176**th AHC gunships returned to the crash site, they failed to discover any trace of the downed crew and passengers. Hope was dwindling when "**Musket**" aircraft commander, WO1 Richard K. McLean, Miami, Fla., exclaimed what he had first thought was a muzzle flash of a weapon was actually a strobe light.

Co-pilot of burning "516" WO1 Lent, had spotted the rescue ships making low passes over the crash site, from which the stranded group had moved about 75 meters away to the cover offered by a hedgerow. Lent had used LT Bristow's strobe and crawled into the middle of a rice paddy where he lay on his back and directed the blinking beam of light at the gunships overhead.

WO1 Bruce W. Shaffer, WAShington, D.C., a "Minuteman" slick pilot, on monitoring the conversation about the strobe, immediately volunteered to extract the crash victims. Major Metcalf quickly organized the three slicks and gunship team and WO1 Shaffer began a high overhead approach to the flickering strobe.

As he descended through the intensifying enemy fire, **176**th AHC Commander Metcalf, flying his "click" like a gunship, followed behind Shaffer to lend cover. WO1 Gary L. Williams, Phoenix, Ariz., swooped in as Major Metcalf's wingman.

As WO1 Shaffer landed, "516" crewmen WO1 Lent and SP4 Kettle hustled the other five crash survivors into the rescue craft. Lent darted for the waiting chipper among a hail of bullets; "There were round hitting all around me," he said "I thought I was a goner."

SP4 Kettle was the last on the ship as he returned the enemy fire with his M-16 rifle.

176th AHC firepower and knowhow made possible a successful rescue, and qualified 20 members of the "Minutemen" and "**Musket**s" for impact awards.

(Continued)

(CONT'd) I M P A C T A W A R D S (CONT'D)

Receiving the following decorations were:

Silver Star- WO1 Bruce W. Shaffer, Washington, D.C., and WO1 John M. Blair, Spokane, Wash.

Distinguished Flying Cross- SP4 Robert O. Allison, St. Helens, Ore. SP4 Antonio K. Taylor, New York City, Major Ronald C. Metcalf, Hickory, N.C., 1LT James D. Horton, Troy, Pa., WO1 Gary L. Williams, Phoenix, Ariz., WO1 Glen E. Goff, Knightstown, Ind.

WO1 Jerry W. Herman, Wooster, Ohio, WO1 Thomas G. Melin, Clyde Park, Mont., WO1 Richard McLean, Miami, Fla., WO1 Philip S. Lee, Norfolk, Va., and 1LT William D. Bristow, Alhambra, Calif., a member of the 14th CAB.

Air Medal with "V" device for valor- SP4 Steven R. Cundry, Springfield, Mo., SP4 Phillip R. Varnum, La Crosse, Wis., SP5 Lawrence J. Silva, San Leandro, Calif., SP4 Billy L. Parsons, Trona, Calif., SP4 Jerry L. Mitchell, Reading, Pa., SP4 Richard C. Sear, Akron, Ohio, SP4 Richard R. Conover, Levittown, N.Y., and SP4 John C. Gruidl, Minneapolis, Minn.

Awards for WO1 Paul E. Lent, PFC Robert Wilhelm, and SP4 Boyd L. Kettle of the 14th CAB are pending.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters, Americal Division
APO San Francisco 97374

AVDF-CB 15 August 1969
SUBJECT: INTSUM #226-69 (U)
SEE DISTRIBUTION:
1. (U) AMERICAL DIVISION INTSUM #227-69
2. (U) 140001H – 142400H August 69
3. (C) SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY.
.....
(m) 141500H, 11th Bde BS340900, **176**th Avn, A/C hit on ground by mort fire. Res: 1 US KIA, 3 US WIA(E).

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters, United States Army Vietnam
APO San Francisco 96375

GENERAL ORDERS 30 March 1970
NUMBER 782

VALOROUS UNIT AWARD

TC 439. The following AWARD is announced.

By direction of the Secretary of the Army, under the provisions of paragraph 202rlg(2), AR 672-5-1, the Valorous Unit Award is awarded to the following named units of the United States Army for extraordinary heroism while engaged in military operations during the period indicated:

The 14TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION and its assigned and attached units:

Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 14th Combat Aviation Battalion
348th Aviation Detachment
534th Medical Detachment
14th Security Platoon
71st Assault Helicopter Company
151st Transportation Detachment
94th Signal Detachment
174th Assault Helicopter Company
409th Transportation Detachment
452d Signal Detachment
756th Medical Detachment
176th Assault Helicopter Company
411th Transportation Detachment
454th Signal Detachment
178th Assault Helicopter Company
400th Transportation Detachment

See the Citation on the following page:

The citation reads as follows:

The 14th COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION and its assigned, and attached units distinguished themselves by extraordinary heroism while engaged in military operations on 12 May 1968 in Quang Tin province, Republic of Vietnam. Demonstrating exceptional bravery and professional competence, the officers and men of the battalion gallantly extracted besieged friendly forces from the Kham Duc Special Forces came while under intense hostile fire. Severely threatened by an estimated two North Vietnamese Army/Viet Cong regiments, the camp had suffered heavy mortar, rocket and automatic weapons fire and numerous large-scale ground assaults and was clearly un-tenable. Although enemy gunnners were well-secured on strategic high ground positions in command of the airfield, aerial extraction of the defenders was necessary and the members of the 14TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION rapidly responded to the emergency situation. While a devastating rain of hostile mortar and machine gun fire poured into the path of oncoming helicopters, unit personnel expertly maneuvered their ships onto the runway and began evacuating the American forces. As airstrikes bounded enemy positions and gunships agressively supported the lift helicopters, the men of the command effectively completed a vital resupply of ammunition and continued to evacuate the hard-pressed troops. Despite severe damage to numerous aircraft, the determined aviators repeatedly entered the dangerous battlefield, ultimately evacuated the entire battalion and contributed immeasurably to the safety of seven hundred American lives. The extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty displayed by the members of the 14TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect distinct credit upon themselves and the Armed Forces of the United States.

FOR THE COMMANDER

GEORGE L. MABRY, JR
Major, General, US Army
Chief of Staff

items including a bear trap, two shotgun barrels, a U.S. bayonet, an 81mm mortar, 250 M-60 rounds, and eating utensils for 40 men.

****

Four incidents, two involving gunships, accounted for four VC killed in the 198th Inf. Bde. area where two VC suspects were also detained.

An "Aero Scout" of the 123d Avn. Bn. killed a VC 14 miles southwest of Tam Ky, and a gunship of the **176th Aslt. Hel. Co. killed a VC** 5 1/2 miles southwest of Binh Son at 0635 hours.

Vol. 3. No. 17 SUNDAY January 17, 1969

MIRACLE WEATHER REPORT

SATURDAY

Mostly cloudy with showers in the morning and afternoon. Winds will be from the northwest in the morning and from the northeast in the afternoon at 5-8 knots. High temperature, 81', lows 67'. Moon rises: 0715, set 1844.

AMERICAL DIVISION NEWS

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO)--Major contact with an NVA force southwest of Quang Ngai City, and the first big step forward in Operation Russell Beach highlighted increased enemy contact in southern I Corps yesterday.

Americal Division forces reported killing nine NVA and 21 VC, detaining 29 enemy suspects, and capturing 11 individual weapons and 7200 pounds of rice.

.....

After another morning of aid to refugees leaving the Batangan Peninsula area, target of a gigantic assault by Americal, Marine, Navy and ARVN forces, a platoon of Co. A, 4-3 Inf. crossed the Song Diem Diem to begin the first in-depth probe of the enemy stronghold.

Co. A's thrust came shortly after noon and was supported by artillery fire and gunships of the **176th Aslt.** Hel. Co. which raked the small island to which the platoon moved on rubber rafts. Another element of Co. A joined Co. C, 5-46 Inf. on the shore to provide ground cover for the crossing.

The platoon reached it's objective, a treeline, on the island and conducted a search of the area. Thirty-nine enemy suspects were turned up in the probe, and several enemy fortifications and underground refuges were destroyed.

Co. A killed one VC with small arms fire at 1250 hours and, 30 minutes later, found two more VC killed in the artillery barrage. Later in the afternoon, Co. D, 4-3 Inf. found an M-1 carbine in a cave and Co. B, 5-46 Inf. was given two M-1 rifles by three VC turned Chieu Hoi.

Cos. A and D, 4-3 Inf. found and evacuated 3400 pounds of rice to the refugee holding center behind the cordon.

A **176th Aslt. Hel. Co**. ship, piloted by 1LT William T. Koehler, killed two VC in the operational area while carrying members of the Psyops team assigned to encourage refugee evacuation of the area.

Vol. 3. No. 31 FRIDAY January 31, 1969
MIRACLE WEATHER REPORT
SATURDAY
Mostly cloudy in the morning, with possibility of rain in the afternoon. Winds will be from the northeast at 5-10 knots. High temperature will be 82' with a low of 70'. Moon rise will be at 1742 hours and set at 0618 hours.

AMERICAL DIVISION NEWS

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO)--Excellent coordination between ground and air elemetns helped the 11th Inf. Bde. to the lead among Americal units as action picked up yesterday in southern I Corps.

Americal forces reported killing five NVA and 51 VC, finding one VC, detaining eight VC suspects, and capturing seven weapon, one crew-served.

In Operation Russell Beach, two VC were killed, one VC body found, and one weapon captured as Americal and Marine units pressed through more mines, booby traps, and tunnels in their cordon of the Batangan Peninsula.

..... *****

Action tapered off in Operation Russell Beach where Co. A, 5-46 Inf. found the four-day-old body of a VC killed by air strikes; HQ Co., 4-3 Inf. killed a VC; and Marine Co. M, 3-26 Regt. killed two of the three VC engaged. All were killed behind the main cordon line.

Elements of the main line moved forward approximately 500 meters and again encountered numerpous mines and booby traps. Co. M also found and destroyed a tunnel complex and took documetns from another tunnel.

Co. A, 5-46 Inf. was being led by a Hoi Chanh to a tunnel complex when the Hoi Chanh stepped on a mine or booby trap, killing himself. No Americans were killeld.

Elsewhere in the 198th Inf. Bde. area, Co., C, 1-52 Inf. engaged three NVA, killed two, and captutred a K-50 rifle 11 miles southwest of Tam Ky. The **176**th Aslt. Hel. Co. killed two VC after receiving automatic weapons fire 11 miles north of Quang Ngai City.

Vol. 3 No. 134 Wednesday May 14 1969
MIRACLE WEATHER FORECAST May 15
Fair to partly cloudy, winds blowing east-southeast 5 to 10 knots and gusting to 20 knots in afternoon. Probable thundershowers over mountains.
Temperature: H 96 L 80
AMERICAL DIVISION NEWS

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO)--Enemy activity decreased in the past 24 hours in the Americal Division. Units reported killing 47 NVA and 40 VC and 18 weapons, three crew-served, were captured.

.....

FREDERICK HILL - Action in the 196th Inf. Bde. areas showed 17 NVA and 7 VC killed and eight weapons, one crew-served captured.

In an area six miles southeast of Tam Ky. Cos. B and C, 3-21 Inf. killed nine VC and one NVA.

Elsewhere, near LZ Baldy gunships of the **176th Aslt. Hel. Co**. killed four VC. In the same area the 2-1 Inf. accounted for one NVA killed.

Volume 1 No. 262 Americal Daily New Sheet Sunday January 7, 1968

Units of the Americal's 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry reported killing 16 VC in action south of here.

In ground action a reconnaissance patrol from the brigade accounted for seven of the kills. The patrol encountered the enemy twice during the day in an area (Continued on Page 3 Column 2) AMERICAL (Continued From Page 2) nine miles southeast of here. A company operating 15 miles southeast of here killed one VC as he tried to escape in a tunnel. Another company 18 miles south of here found a cache of miscellaneous articles including eight hand grenades, one M-1 rifle, a bayonet and several documents.

Gunships from the **176th Aviation Company** killed eight VC in two contacts 12 miles south of here as the choppers flew in support of ground troops.

Volume 1 No. 263 Americal Daily New Sheet Monday January 8, 1968

Seven VC were killed and three weapons were captured by Americal's 198th Brigade units as enemy contact increased yesterday.

The VC were killed after an infantry company conducted a combat assault 19 miles southwest of here. The kills were made by supporting "**Musket**" gunships of the **176**th Aviation Company. Another VC was killed at the same time in the same area by the command and control helicopter of the "Ready Rifles" (1st Bn., 2nd Inf., [***Ready Rifles would be 1st Bn., 52nd Inf***.]) when it engaged the enemy with its side mounted M-60 machine gun. Three VC were kill- (***Cont'd Page 3 Col1***) ed by an infantry company when the unit engaged an unknown size enemy force 20 miles southeast of here. Two M-1 carbines and one crew-served weapon were captured in the contact. One brigade soldier was killed in the day's actions. Three suspects were detained during operations yesterday.

Brigade soldiers conducted seven MEDCAPs and treated 371 Vietnamese through out the area.

Volume 1 No. 268 Americal Daily New Sheet Saturday January 13, 1968

AMERICAL DIVISION NEWS

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO) – Ground forces employed a wide range of combat tactics and accounted for 37 enemy killed. The infantrymen of the Americal Division were in constant contact with both VC and NVA soldiers throughout the southern I Corps yesterday.

A unit from Americal's 3rd Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry answered a mortar attack with a ground attack to account for nine enemy killed yesterday.

Numerous ground contacts accounted for 12 VC killed and one weapon captured by Americal's 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry yesterday.

A reconnaissance unit of the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry took part in the biggest action of the day for the "Bronco's" when on patrol they engaged a small group of VC. Artillery was called in and when they swept the area later they found four bodies. A unit of the 4th Battalion, 3rd located a fortified position. In a search they found an MAT-49 machine gun and ten sandbags of C- Rations. Another company of the same unit received heavy sniper fire in an area southwest of here. After they returned the fire they searched the area, but found nothing. A unit of the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry observed one VC later in the day and killed him. They also found two Chicom grenades. **The 176th Aviation Company** flying in support of the Americal "Bronco" brigade observed a VC from the air and engaged the enemy.

Volume 1 No. 274 Americal Daily New Sheet Friday January 19, 1968

other 700 pounds of rice one mile east of LZ Leslie.

The combined forces of Americal's 198th Brigade, infantry, artillery and gunships accounted for 15 kills yesterday during Operation Muscatine south of here.

During a search and clear mission yesterday morning, a unit of the 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry's "Ready Rifles" received sniper fire from the village of An Thanh (1) about 15 miles southeast of here. The combined forces of two elements of the "Ready Rifles", gunships from Americal's **176th Aviation Company** and a battery of the 1st Battalion, 14th Artillery returned the fire. Seven VC were killed by the gunships during the hour—long battle. A sweep of the area revealed four more enemy bodies and a 1,500 meter-long enemy tunnel. Two of the four kills were credited to the artillery unit an done each to the gunships and infantrymen. The tunnel, partially filled with water, is scheduled to be searched today. Later last night, a company of the 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry's Professionals" killed two VC and captured an AK-47 rifle northwest of here. A late report revealed that an additional four VC were killed by the 198th, but no details were available.

Volume 1 No. 277 Americal Daily New Sheet Monday January 22, 1968

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Americal's 14th Aviation Battalion flew 1,074 sorties, carried 916 combat troops and hauled 235 tons of cargo in support of division units yesterday.

Helicopters from the **176th Aviation** Company of Americal's 14th Aviation Battalion flew in support of a Popular Force element eight miles northwest of here yesterday. Twenty-thousand rounds of 7.62mm, 40 rounds of 40mm ammunition and 100 rounds of 2.75 rockets were expended during the day's operation.

Volume 1 No. 282 Americal Daily New Sheet Saturday January 27, 1968

.....

The action in Operation Muscatine 13 miles southeast of Chu Lai claimed two enemy kills. A patrol from the 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry killed one VC who had attempted to flee after warning shots were fired. Americal's **176th Aviation** Company reported killing one enemy while in support of the 198th Brigade. An element of the 198th operating southeast of Chu Lai came upon two Viet Cong who were preparing mines and booby traps. The VC fled the area leaving behind six 105mm rounds and seven hand grenades. The same element also uncovered 250 pounds of rice and some enemy arms ammo during a search and destroy mission.

Volume 1 No. 283 Americal Daily New Sheet Sunday January 28, 1968

Five VC were killed by units of Americal's 198th Brigade in yesterday's action.

Four of the enemy were killed by "**Musket**" gunships of Americal's **176th** Aviation Company as they supported brigade infantrymen on the ground. Three of these kills were reported in Operation Muscatine.

Volume 1 No. 284 Americal Daily New Sheet Monday January 29, 1968

MIRACLE WEATHER REPORT

Tuesday partly cloudy to fair. No significant change foreseen. Winds north-northeast at 5-10 miles per hour. High Tuesday 81. Low Tuesday night 62.

AMERICAL DIVISION NEWS

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO) Operation Muscatine forces accounted for 22 of the total 38 enemy killed yesterday by units of the Americal Division located in southern I Corps. Americal units reported that two U.S. soldiers were killed and seven wounded in yesterday's fighting.

Americal's 198th Brigade killed 22 VC in Operation Muscatine south of Chu Lai, including 17 in one brief battle. One other enemy was killed by a unit not participating in Operation Muscatine.

A company of the 1st Battalion 52nd Infantry on a mid-afternoon sweep near Dong Lo(5) came under heavy automatic weapons and sniper fire Gunships from Americal's **176th** Aviation Company were called into support the action. A search later in the afternoon revealed that 10 enemy had been killed by gunships and an additional seven by the company commanded by C.T. Virgil L. Cone (Fayetteville, N.C.)

page 2 AMERICAL NEW SHEET (Cont.) Vol. 2 No. 255 Dec. 30, 1968

****

Seven VC were killed, four by gunships just after daybreak, and three VC suspects were detained in a day of light action in the 198th Inf. Bde. area.

Gunships of the **176th** Assault Hel. Co., working with the 1-6 and 5-46 Inf., killed two VC each in contacts northwest of Binh Son. Later, Co. A, 5-46 Inf., surprised five VC and killed two in a brief firefight nine miles west of Binh Son.

Vol. 3 No. 86 Thursday March 27, 1969
MIRACLE SAFETY REMINDER
AMERICAL DIVISION NEWS

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO)--Light action prevailed throughout southern I Corps yesterday with Americal Division units reporting six NVA and 16 VC killed, one NVA body found, and three individual weapons captured, one of which was blown in place.

****

In the 198th Inf. Bde. operational area, eight VC were killed by artillery and aviation units.

D Btry., 1-14 Arty. engaged 20 VC nine miles west-northwest of Quang Ngai City killing two. Forty-five minutes later, the battery was called upon again and engaged eight VC, killing four, two miles east.

A "Minuteman" gunship of the 14th Avn. Bn.'s **176**th Aslt. Hel. Co., piloted by 1LT David Grieger (Weatherford, Tex.) engaged and killed two VC trying to flee from his craft near the Thai Can River, eight miles southeast of Chu Lai.

Vol. 3 No. 91 Tuesday April 1, 1969
MIRACLE SAFETY REMINDER

There once was a man from Chu Lai;
With grass he thought he could fly;
While on guard one night he took a trip,
But, Charlie cancelled his flight.

****

AMERICAL DIVISION NEWS

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO)--

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Three VC were killed in the 198th Inf. Bde.'s Operation Geneva Park area by a "Minuteman" gunship of the **176th Aslt. Hel. Co**., piloted by WO1 Richard McLean (Miami, Fla.), eight miles northwest of Quang Ngai.

Vol. 3 No. 108 Friday April 18, 1969

MIRACLE SAFETY REMINDER

If you are feeling tired
and run-down in the after-
noon try a couple of salt
tablets with your lunch.

AMERICAL DIVISION NEWS

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO)--Action was moderate in southern I Corps yesterday, 32 NVA and 17 VC killed, and 12 weapons, two crew served, captured.

****

GENEVA PARK and RUSSELL BEACH--One VC was killed and four weapons captured in the 198th Inf. Bde. areas of operation.

A "Minuteman" gunship of the **176th Aslt. Hel. Co**. killed a lone VC in a rice paddy seven miles north of Quang Ngai.

Americal Daily News Sheets- updated January 2015.
Volume 3 No. 116 Americal Daily New Sheet Saturday April 26, 1968
(Only the Americal Division news was transcribed from this issue)

MIRACLE SAFETY REMINDER

There was a GI named McGuire,
Who threw live ammo in the fire.
Twas an accident they said,
But poor McGuire is dead,
And now his commands come from much higher.

AMERICAL DIVISION NEWS

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO) – Action was light in southern I Corps yesterday, with Americal Division units reporting four NVA and 26 VC killed, and eight weapons captured.

* * * *

GENEVA PARK – The 198th Inf. Bde. accounted for one NVA and 13 VC killed, and six weapons captured.

Co. B, 5-46 Inf. spotted three VC crossing a bridge at 2400 hours 4 1/2 miles northeast of Quang Ngai. The VC opened up on the company and it returned fire. The area was searched at first light and the three VC were found dead. Two AK-47 rifles and eight Chicom grenades were found with them. Later the company engaged an unknown size force which resulted in five VC killed, an M-16 rifle and three carbines captured 8 1/2 miles northeast of Quang Ngai.

Co. A, 5-46 Inf. killed one VC in the same vicinity.

"Aero Scout" gunships of the 123rd Avn. Bn. spotted and engaged three NVA in a mountainous region 27 miles west-southwest of Quang Ngai, which killed one.

A Ranger patrol of Co. G, 75 Inf. spotted 12 VC in an area nine miles west of Chu Lai, and called artillery which killed three of the enemy.

A gunship from the 174th Aslt. Hel. Co. killed one VC in the triple-canopy jungle 13 miles northwest of Quang Ngai.

At 1800, FAC airplanes directed air strikes which destroyed 18 structures and two bunkers nine miles northeast of Quang Ngai.

WO1 Kenneth G. Wood (Idaho Falls, Idaho) destroyed 15 structures while flying a "**Musket**" gunship of **the 176th Aslt. Hel. Co**. in support of the 5-46 Inf. 21 miles southwest of Chu Lai.

Vol. 3. No. 207 Saturday July 26, 1969

CHU LAI AREA WEATHER FORECAST--July 27

Mostly cloudy to cloudy with a few rain showers expected, with variable winds from the NE at 3-5 knots, increasing to 3-10 knots.

High temp--92 Humidity--93

low--77 55

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO)--Thirteen VC and four NVA were killed in southern I Corps yesterday as Americal Division soldiers experienced light and scattered action.

The Americal team also captured 10 individual weapons.

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GENEVA PARK-The only contact in the 198th Bde. OZ occurred at 0820 hours when the recon element of the 1st Bn., 52nd Inf., observed two VC in the mountains 10 miles west-northwest of Quang Ngai City.

Artillery strikes were called in on the position and killed the two VC.

B Co., 1-52, while moving through an area four to 10 miles northwest of Duc Pho, found and estimated 8,145 pounds of rice.

The rice was hidden in 55-gallon drums and clay crocks.

B Co. also captured a VC suspect in the same area who was later determined to be a VC sympathizer.

The third platoon of D Co., 5-46, received small arms fire 11 miles northeast of Quang Ngai. The platoon returned fire and silenced the enemy activity.

A sweep of the area resulted in the detainment of a group of VC suspects, two of which were later classified as VC infrastructure.

B Co., 1-6, found an old helipad, six miles west of Chu Lai. A trip wire, attached to a B-40 rocket was stretched across the helipad and rigged so that the down-draft of a landing helicopter would detonate the rocket. B Co. blew the rocket in place.

****

A Trp., 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav., killed an evading VC while sweeping a mountainous region four miles south of Tam Ky.

****

"**Musket**" gunships from the **176th AHC** destroyed 12 structures while flying in support of the 5th Bn., 46th In., 12 miles south of Chu Lai.

The gunships were commanded by CW2 Robert J. Davies (Lincoln, R.I.), WO1 Gary Williams (Phoenix, Ariz.), WO1 Thomas G. Melin (Clyde Park, Mont.), and WO1 Richard T. Hulsey (Smyrna, Ga.).

Vol. 3 No. 44 THURSDAY February 13, 1969
MIRACLE WEATHER REPORT
FRIDAY
Tomorrow's forecast calls for fair to partly cloudy skies. Winds will be from the south-southeast at 5-15 knots. High temperature will be about 85 with a low of about 65. Moon will rise at 0357 hours and will set at 1623 hours.

Americal Division News

CHU LAI (Americal IO)---In surprisingly light action, Americal Division forces reported killing nine VC, detaining seven VC suspects, and capturing an individual weapon in southern I Corps yesterday.

Not since Christmas Day have fewer enemy kills been reported in the Americal area, and the total of nine has been equaled only twice since, most recently on Jan. 13.

****

The recon unit of the 4-3 Inf., OPCON to the 198th Inf. Bde., engaged four VC and killed three 8-1/2 miles northwest of Quang Ngai City in the lone contact with enemy troops in the 198th area.

A half-mile further northwest, Co. B, 4-3 Inf. discovered five 60mm rounds, four 81mm rounds, two M-79 rounds, a mine, and two beer cans filled with explosives. All the ammo was blown in place.

The 1-15 ARVN Inf., working with the 1-52 Inf. seven miles south-southwest of Tam Ky, found an ammo cache in a tunnel. Captured were four B-41 rockets, nine B-40 rockets, 72 M-26 grenades, four 60mm rounds and 2000 AK-47 rounds.

Near the ARVN find, choppers of the **176th Aslt. Hel. Co**. destroyed five structures.

Vol. 3 No. 51 THURSDAY February 20, 1969
MIRACLE WEATHER REPORT
FRIDAY
Tomorrow's forecast calls for clear to partly cloudy skies. Winds will be from the southwest at 5-15 knots. High temperature will be about 92° with a low of about 72°. Moon rise will be at 1006 hours and will set at 2301 hours.

AMERICAL DIVISION NEWS

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO)--Discovery of a large enemy concentration west-southwest of Tam Ky and a rapid Americal reaction in that trouble spot highlighted increased action in southern I Corps yesterday.

Americal Division forces reported killing 12 NVA and 21 VC, detaining five VC suspects, and capturing 11 weapons, one crew-served.

**** Eleven NVA and four VC were killed, and eight weapons were captured, including one crew-served, in the 198th Inf. Bde. area.

.....

Elsewhere in the 198th area, a gunship of the **176th Aslt. Hel. Co**. killed a VC 9-1/2 miles northeast of Quang Ngai, and Co. A, 4-3 Inf. killed a VC a mile nearer Quang Ngai. Co. A, 1-52 Inf. found an RPG launcher 9-1/2 miles southwest of Tam Ky.

**** Three units of the 3-1 Inf. and an Americal Long Range Patrol teamed to kill six VC and capture two weapons in Operation Vernon Lake II, while Co. C, 1-20 Inf. added two more VC kills elsewhere in the 11th Inf. Bde area. Four VC suspects were detained.

****

AMERICAL NEWS SHEET
MG Charles M. Gettys, Commanding
MAJ Paul B. Parham, IO
SP4 Bill Elsen, Editor
Telephone: Chu Lai 3212
This News Sheet is published daily under the supervision of the IO, Americal Division APO 96374 as an authorized Army publication. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.

****

A UH-1 helicopter of the **176th Aslt. Hel. Co**. crashed and burned after receiving heavy .50-cal fire three miles south of Tam Ky. Four Americans were killed in the crash.

**** Seven Americal Division soldiers were killed, one was listed as missing in hostile action, and 33 were wounded and evacuated for medical treatment, according to an initial report.

****

Americal Daily News Sheets- updated February 2015.
Vol. 3 No. 332 Americal Daily New Sheet Friday November 28, 1969
(Only the Americal Division news was transcribed from this issue. These issues were obtained by James B. Simms and Mike Crutcher from Carlisle Barracks, PA.)

CHU LAI AREA WEATHER FORECAST – Nov. 29
Mostly cloudy to cloudy with rain showers. Winds from the northwest at 10 to 15 knots.

Temperature H 72 L 65
Humidity H 95 L 65

CHU LAI (AMERICAL) – Action was moderate in southern I Corps yesterday as the fighting men of the Americal Division accounted for 10 enemy killed and 2 weapons captured.

* * * * * *

GENEVA PARK—"We saw one VC running toward the "ville" so we opened up with our miniguns and 17-pound rockets," said WO1 Thomas P. Herrington (Perry, Fla.), a pilot of one of the gunships.

The operation was a sweep of a village 6 miles northwest of Quang Ngai City by the 6th Regiment ARVN forces supported by the **176th Aviation gunships**.

The VC forces were pursued over hilly terrain into a ridgeline where six Viet cong were killed.

A machinegun, semi-automatic rifle, and a hand grenade were confiscated after the assault.

"It was a smooth operation and it showed this particular group of ARVN's are very capable, commented WO1 Herrington.

Vol. IV No. 246 Thursday September 3, 1970
Page 2

PRAISE FOR THE AMERICAL

On August 30, 1970, gunships of the Americal Division twice engaged enemy forces in an area eats and southeast of FSB Gator. The aviators readily demonstrated their proficiency by aggressively engaging enemy forces resulting in 17 enemy killed. There were no friendly casualties.

Please extend to the outstanding men of the **176**th Aviation Company my congratulations for their professional accomplishment. Well done!

LTG James W. Sutherland Jr.
Commanding General XXIV Corps

Note: This page may or may not be part of this issue of the "OREGON"
It is one page that came with the first four pages of the "OREGON". Without additional information I can not determine if this came from this "OREGON or another issue, as even though the reference to page 1 may appear wrong, this was often set up this way.

TF OREGON (From Page 1)

Helicopter gunships directed by CPT Matthew M. McGuire of the **176th Assault Helicopter Co**. laid down a base of fire as MAJ Bobbie G. Hanna landed the cavalry elements 100 meters from the village.

CPT James R. Harding led the cavalry platoon in pursuit of the fleeing enemy...supported by fire from the gunships.

"We had just reached the mouth of the Song Be Valley," said Harding, "when the VC were spotted and we moved in with all guns firing. All of the VC were carrying heavy rucksacks, "Harding said.

Searching the bodies, the paratroopers found various documents, medical supplies and articles of new clothing, including dark, woolen sweaters packed in plastic bags.

In other paratrooper action, ten tons of rice were discovered and prepared for extraction.

Cannoneers from the 3rd Bn, 16th Artillery firing in support of Task Force Oregon ground forces killed 11 enemy yesterday.

Light contact in the 196th Light Infantry Brigade accounted for one enemy killed.

Casualties for all Oregon units were eight U.S. soldiers wounded.

AVDF-GC **5 November 1967**

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1967 (RCS-CSFOR-65)(RI)(U)

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f. (C) Task Force Oregon assumed OPCON of the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div effective 071200H May; 2d Bn, 502d Inf (Abn) effective 081400H May; and the **176th Avn Co** effective 091200H May.

AVDF-HL **15 May 1971**

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 23d Infantry Division (Americal), Period Ending 30 April 1971, RCS CSFOR - 65 (R3) (U)

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g. The 116th Avn Co (AHC), **176th Avn Co (AHC**) and 178th Avn Co (AHSC) were relieved from attachment to 14th Cbt Avn Bn and attached to 123d Avn Bn effective 29 Jan 71. Effective the same date, Trp F, 8th Cav was relieved from attachment to 123d Avn Bn and attached to 14th Cbt Avn Bn.

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 14th Combat Aviation Battalion, Period Ending 31 July 1967 (U)

.....

176th Avn Co 20 UH-1D, 8 UH-1C Duc Pho, RVN (BS 845 370)

(b) The Aero Scout concept will continue to be the primary method of employment for B Company, 123d Avn Bn. With the attachment of D Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry to the 123d Avn Bn on 1 October 1969, the Battalion in essence becomes an Air Cavalry Squadron. The Battalion will remain in general support of the Division and direct support of the Brigades on a mission basis. A Company provides general support lift aircraft for the Division. B Company, 123d Avn Bn will normally support the 11th Inf Bde; D Troop, 1st Cavalry on the 198th Inf Bde; and F Troop, 8th Cavalry the 196th Inf Bde.

(c) The assignment of the 132nd and 178th Assault Support Helicopter Companies to the 14th CAB on 1 October 1969, increased the responsiveness of these aircraft to follow up combat assault requirements. They are frequently used to rapidly build up troop concentrations in LZs after they LZ has been secured and the enemy situation permits the use of CH-47 helicopters.

(d) The 71st AHC, 174th AHC and the **176th AHC** will continue to support the 196th Inf Bde, 11th Inf Bde and 198th Inf Bde, respectively.

(e) The 132nd and 178th Assault Support Helicopter Companies assigned to the 14th CAB will remain in general support of the Division.

(f) The **14th CAB** has been given the responsibility to operate a refuel point at Tien Phuoc, BT1114. Basic construction is completed and the point is expected to be operational during the second week of November 1969.

(g) A briefing team was formed to provide instruction on external load activities and CH-47 operations to all units within the Americal Division. It is too early to evaluate the results, however, there should be a notable improvement in the quality and efficiency of sling load operations.

AVDF-ABSC
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (16th Combat Aviation Group (Combat)) Period Ending (30 April 1970) RCS CSFOR-65 (RI)

6. 9-10 March: On 9 March CH-47 aircraft positioned the bulk of the 6th ARVN Regiment and supporting artillery into a staging area nea Ha Thanh (BS 3970). On 10 March early morning fog delayed the **176th AHC** from making the first assault to establish a fire support base at BS 348594. At 1000 hours security troops were assaulted into the area. CH-47 aircraft delivered the necessary artillery and supplies into the fire support base which were used to prestrike the landing zones aat BS305565 and BS 345525. Although the aircraft received hostile fire from the two landing zones, none of the aircraft were lost. During the operation the **176th AHC** moved 800 ARVN troops and contributed greatly to the success of the operation. A total of 1215 Infantry troops, six 105 howitzers and crews and supporting engineer equipment were moved on 10 March by elements of the 14th Aviation Battalion.

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10 1 April: **The 176th AHC** supported the 5/46th Infantry Battalion in establishing fire support base Hustler by lifting one company into the area to secure the landing zone at BS2903 followed by two additional companies. After security was established, CH-47 aircraft moved artillery and supplies into the landing zone. This artillery was used to prestrike a landing zone at BS2603 where one infantry company was subsequently inserted. Light enemy resistance was due, in part to the support rendered by the gunships. The assault was completed without incident.

20	Cont	(LZ SUE) 1119 hrs.	S,B
21	1123	3/E/1 Cav loc Bs565763	S
22	1139	Recon plat PZ (BS541774) 1130 hrs, LZ (OP-GEORGE) 1137.	S
23	1150	Fwd TOC moved back to LZ SUE.	S,B
24	1200	3/E/1 Cav & 3/C/26 Engr reached Hwy #1 vic BS 638758 and is released fr OPCON TF 4-3 Inf eff 1200 hrs	S,B
25	1212	At 1205 hrs 1 UH-1D lift ship, **176th Avn** Co, crash landed vic BS441768, apparently Due to mechanical failure. No injuries. Co A will secure crash site.	S,B
26	1218	DOLPHIN LEADER went down due to maintenance problems vic BS452778.	S,B
27	1250	DOLPHIN LEADER back in the air, flying to LZ SUE for maintenance.	S,B
28	1255	Co C loc BS509810, SITREP neg.	S,P,B
29	1404	1st lift Co A: PZ (BS 441768) 1404 hrs. LZ (BS728848) 1418 hrs; 2d lift PZ (BS452-775) 1432 hrs, LZ (BS 638846) 1445 hrs.	S
30	1452	Co C loc BS537837.	S,P,B
31	1547	OPERATION SHOW LOW completed at 1545 hrs	S,P
32	1559	3d lift Co A PZ 1509 hrs, LZ 1515 hrs; 4th lift PZ 1530 hrs, LZ 1536 hrs; 5th	S,B
	Cont		

Name and grade of Officer on Duty
JOHN P McANAW CPT Inf

From S2/S3 report of January 23, 1969. The 1/82d Artillery investigated a rocket attack on the Chu Lai Defense Command. entry 66 at 1427 hours. (U) Delayed Rpt: 14th CAB rpt 9 helicopters at **176**th Avn damaged (confirmed).

From S2/S3 report of May 5, 1968.
Delayed Entry: 198th, 1 slick from **176**th Avn Co.
down at BT080249 and 1 gun from 71st Avn Co. down
at BT075248. F Troop 8 Cavalry helicopters (Blue Ghosts) sent one heavy team to area and received fire and hits. Both ships burned. 3 KHA
KHA and 7 MHA from slick, 1 Wounded due to hostile action
evacuated.

AMERICAL ------- DIVISION

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SOUTHERN CROSS

30Aug68-Southern Cross Vol. 1 No. 6. Page 1

Army Choppers Pull 2 Marines From Sea

By SP4
CHARLES A. GORDON
Staff Writer

CHU LAI--A Marine pilot took a harrowing, one-mile ride on the skids of an Army helicopter recently after ejecting from his crippled jet over the South China Sea.

The Marine, 1LT Ralph C. Brown Jr., and fellow pilot MAJ Daniel Carroll, had completed a bombing mission north of here when the landing gear of their F-4B Phantom malfunctioned and forced them to eject.

Both were rescued by members of the 14th Avn. B., an aviation unit attached to the Americal Div. MAJ Carroll was pulled out of the water in a more conventional manner.

Attempt Landing

The two pilots had attempted to land their plane on a "foamed" runway ---specially prepared to aid the wheeless craft--but more problems arose when the cross deck arresting gear pendant broke and caused the jet to skid sideways.

"My choice was to hit the burners and try to get the aircraft back off the ground," MAJ Carroll said. "I think we did a first in aviation when we got the aircraft off the ground without landing gear.

"While I prepared for our ejection, LT Brown headed towards sea. We both ejected about a half-mile from shore."

First At Scene

The first rescue helicopter at the scene was that of WO1 James M. White, with the **176**th Avn Co.

"The crew tossed a rope to me, as the pilot hovered the craft at about three feet, Mr. White did a fantastic job of holding the chopper steady," MAJ Caroll said later.

LT Brown's rescue, however, was more exciting.

A Marine UH-34 tried to pick him up, but as it began to pull him out of the water, it started to lose power. LT Brown disengaged himself and quickly moved clear of the aircraft. (Continued)

(Continued)

Hangs From Skids

When CPT Herman Castle, a member of the 71st Avn. Co. who had been observing the attempted rescue, saw that the Marine aircraft could not make the pickup, he lowered his chopper to about two feet above the water.

There was no rope aboard, and LT Brown was forced to hold on to the skids.

"The crew pulled me up, and I hooked my arms over the skid. Then we headed for the beach," the lieutenant said.

The Huey sped off at 50 knots to the shore. LT Brown let go in about three feet of water to cushion his fall.

But the day was far from over for the two pilots, as they bought champagne for the men of both aviation companies.

"It was just our way of thanking the Army for helping two Marines," MAJ Carroll said.

AMERICAL ------- DIVISION

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SOUTHERN CROSS

10Nov68-Southern Cross Vol. 1 No. 11 Centerfold Page 4-5 (Continued)

The Fighting 14th

Busy 'Birds'

By SP4 PATRICK F. DOYLE
14th Avn. Bn.

Throughout the skies above the I Corps Tactical Zone aircraft of the 14th Cbt. Avn. Bn. are giving direct and general combat support to the Americal Div. and other select units.

Under the command of both the 1st Avn. Bde. at Long Binh and the 16th Cbt. Avn. Grp. at Da nang, the "Fighting 14th" is composed of three assault helicopter companies: the 71st, 174th and **176**th; and two assault support helicopter companies: the 132nd and 178th.

The "Arab Battalion" came to Vietnam in 1964 to provide primarily fixed wing aviation support, but evolved into a strictly helicopter battalion while engaged in activities near Qui Nhon in 1966.

In April, 1967, the unit was sent to southern I Corps to support the newly formed Task Force Oregon. It immediately occupied unprepared tactical sites in the Chu Lai area and sent its craft skyward in aerial support.

In carrying out their mission the men of the 14th, under the command of LTC Charles A. Klopp, have established an outstanding record for fast, reliable response to any situation that calls them to action.

The majority of the 14th's support activities consist of resupply missions which carry food, water, ammunition and various types of equipment to the men in the field. These are the "birds" that bring out beer, soda, ice cream, and the mail from home. They also give that ride to Chu Lai everyone dreams about for the long awaited trip back to the world.

Direct combat support can be considered an everyday mission at the 14th--but seldom routine. Each combat assault, emergency resupply under fire, or medical evacuation presents a dangerous challenge. In addition to the constant threat of enemy ground fire and anti-aircraft positions, the pilots must be prepared to overcome the hazards of terrain here in the southern I Corps.

The 71st Assault Helicopter Co., under the command of MAJ Dehne W. McGinnis, has established the highest safety record of any helicopter company in Vietnam. In addition to their outstanding safety record the "Firebird" gunships and "Rattler" slicks of the 71st have accounted for the capture of numerous enemy weapons and supplies being transported by sampans on the waterways which lace the area of operations.

The 174th Assault Helicopter Co., commanded by MAJ Richard A. Brown, bears the responsibility of supporting the 11th Inf. Bde. in the Duc Pho area. The "Jungle Warriors" rely on the 174th for safe and timely insertions and extractions and for the potent firepower of the "Shark" gunships when they need instantaneous close combat support.

The 238 enemy body count recorded by the "Sharks" on Jan. 30, 1968, is proof of their savage capability. The number of extractions, medivacs and resupply missions accomplished by the men of the 174th under intense enemy fire gives life to their unit's motto, "Nothing Impossible."

MAJ Richard G. Adamski, commanding officer of the **176**th Assault Helicopter Co., pilots one of the finest aviation units in Vietnam. The "**Musket**" gunships and "Minutemen" slicks are known throughout the I Corps for their outstanding combat support.

Busy 'Birds'

The recent conflict near Quang Ngai and the action in the Hue-Phu Bai area were marked by countless examples of the courage and professionalism of the pilots and crew members of the **176**th and their "Can Do" attitude.

The 132nd Assault Spt. Helicopter Co. arrived in Vietnam in May, 1968, becoming the battalion's newest unit. Under the command of MAJ Carl O. Johnson, the men of the "Hercules" unit have been quick to adapt to the demands of the tactical situation. In this short period of time they have established a record of excellent service with the units they support.

The 178th Assault Spt. Helicopter Co., commanded by MAJ Morris M. Jessup has the distinction of being the first fully operational CH-47B "Chinook" helicopter unit in Vietnam. Since their arrival in Chu Lai in April, 1967, the men of the 178th have earned both the Presidential and the Meritorious Unit Citations in recognition of their achievements.

AMERICAL ------- DIVISION

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SOUTHERN CROSS

River Is Crossed By 'Old Guard' In Initial Thrust

LZ South--The 2nd Plt. pushed off from the grassy beach in rubber boats and paddled across a gently flowing river. This was the first thrust into the enemy dominated area and the initial movement towards collapsing the ever-tightening cordon in the Batangan Peninsula as part of Operation Russell Beach.

The objective lay hidden in the large clump of trees on the western most edge of the unnamed island in the Song (Continued on Page 8) **River Crossing Mission** (Continued from Page 1) Diem Diem. Whatever was on the rest of the flat, cultivated lowlands would have to wait till later.

Vigilant Air Guard

Overhead, a pair of gunships from the **176**th Aslt. Hel. Co. circled slowly like watchful hawks, waiting to spit fire at anyone who would attempt to stop the "Old Guardsmen."

The noise of the choppers broke the quiet of the bright, Jan. 16 morning, as the monsoon rains of the days before were forgotten. There was a job to be done, a village to be secured. The "Jungle Warriors" were ready.

A Co., 4th Bn., 3rd Inf., had come into the area three days before, forming a small part of the 11 1/2 mile cordon surrounding the Viet Cong stronghold. To their north they linked up with a company of the 5th Bn., 46th Inf., to the south with the ARVNs.

Leaflets from division psychological operations (PSYOP) teams had been raining down on the coastal plains for three days. They were reinforced by aerial loudspeaker broadcasts telling the people to take up their belongings and pass through the cordon. Anyone who failed to do this would be an enemy of the Government of Vietnam.

Final Briefing

Battalion Commander LTC Jack Davis flew in to give last minute instructions to CPT Benjamin Maxham (Burbank, Calif.), A Co. CO.

The 2nd Plt. was to make the crossing with direct fire support from the 3rd Plt. and a platoon of the 5/46.

The 1st Plt. was to act as a blocking force to the south, while the Weapons Plt. secured the company area, and the Recon. Plt., attached to the company, joined up with the ARVNs.

After a lengthy preparing of the target by "penny-nickle-nickles" (105mm [155mm] guns) and "fat tubes" (8 inch-howitzers), forward observer 1LT Joe Pallischeck (Rochester, N.Y.), B Btry., 6th Bn., 11th Arty., told CPT Maxham the area was ready. The CO picked up the radio-telephone and called in the gunships.

(Continued)

(Continued)

Choppers Comb Area

The chopper duet worked together perfectly, circling the wooded area deliberately, then turning sharply into a dive, pounding the tree line with rockets and miniguns. A PSYOP Helix made one last pass, dropping leaflets, before the infantry advanced.

The time had come. CPT Maxham emphatically gave the word to his platoon leader, 1LT Kenneth Hamlin (Bowling Green, Ohio), "Move out!"

Launch Assault

Three squads jumped into their rubber boats and pushed off. Onshore, the staccato of the M-60s began slowly building in intensity until the sound of paddles breaking water was no longer audible.

It was 300 meters from beach to beach, and it took the boats only a few anxious minutes of waiting and watching until one squad landed and set up a base of fire.

The next squad landed and began running inland across the paddies, kicking up spouts of water that looked like enemy rounds hitting close by.

The **176**th gunships circled overhead and the M-60s in the woodline, joined by M-79s on the western shore, continued their steady chatter.

Penetrate On Line

1LT Hamlin moved his men swiftly and effortlessly in the classic infantry manner, fire and maneuver, fire and maneuver. Moving on line, they made a reconnaissance of the area by fire.

They passed through and secured the village.

This was a quiet beginning for Americal troops who are expected to see a lot of action in Operation Russell Beach.

Time Out For Chow In The Field

Never before in the long history of warfare, has any army ever been better fed than the U.S. troops here in Vietnam. Almost all of the soldiers receive at least one hot meal every day, and sometimes two.

To get the hot meals into the field, the food is packed in "mermite" cans at the base camps and carried out by the fastest means possible; truck or chopper.

When it is tactically impossible to bring hot chow to the field, C-rations are issued. These canned meals are a far cry from the K-rations of World War II or the C's of the Korean conflict.

Continuous experimentation with the latest food preparation methods and dietary techniques have brought about many improvements. Field rations have become more attractive in appearance and taste and the variety of foods available has been expanded.

Photo Captions:

1) "Hash and trash" chopper drops off its precious cargo. GIs then shoulder the load so they can relax and scoff-up the "Cs." (PFC Art Noel, 198th Inf. Bde). (Note helicopter has 14th Avn Bn markings for **176**th AHC).

2) No caption. (11th Bde soldier eating C rats. photo by CSM John R. Spehar, 26th Engr. Bn.)

3) No Caption. (Soldier carrying a case of C rats on either shoulder with a third case stacked up over his head resting on the two carried on his shoulder. (photo by 1LT Stephen H. Cobb 11th Inf. Bde.)

4) No caption. Soldier wearing jungle hat laying back and eating food from a clear plastic bag with a plastic spoon.

5) No caption. A soldier drinking from a "Maxwell House" brand coffee can.

6) While strawberry ice cream is the highlight of the day for 196th Bde. "Chargers" at LZ Mellon, two LRPs, from the 11th and 198th Bdes., respectively, dine in comfort with their specially prepared rations (this refers to photos **4)** and **5)**. Photo credit SGT George Hawkins, 196th Inf. Bde.

7&8) Hot chow really makes a difference in infantrymen who have been eating out of cans and humping through the "boonies." When a helicopter drops off steaming dinners, they are rushed to the serving line and enjoyed by hungry GIs. (Credits PFC Art Noel, 198th Inf. Bde & SGT George Hawkins 196th Inf. Bde.)

PFC Art Noel, 198th Inf. Bde.

"Hash and trash" chopper drops off its precious cargo. GIs then shoulder the load so they can relax and scoff-up the "Cs."

Combat In Review

Photo Caption: Here They Come

A troop-carrying helicopter of the **176**th Aslt. Hel. Co. hovers on target before touching down with its load of 198th Bde. infantrymen in an operation northwest of Quang Ngai City. (Photo by 523rd Sig. Bn.)

Here They Come

A troop-carrying helicopter of the 176th Aslt. Hel. Co. hovers on target before touching down with its load of 198th Bde. infantrymen in an operation northwest of Quang Ngai City. (Photo by 523rd Sig. Bn.)

176th Tops

CHU LAI--The Division safety award for the month of August were presented by MAJ O. R. Hite (Strunton, Va.), the commander of the **176**th Avn. Co. (Note: **176**th Assault Helicopter Company)

Major Hite received both the battalion and company "outstanding achievement award" in aircraft accident prevention.

The 14th Combat Avn Bn. was cited by the award as the outstanding unit in aircraft accident prevention and the **176**th as the example company from the 14th CAB.

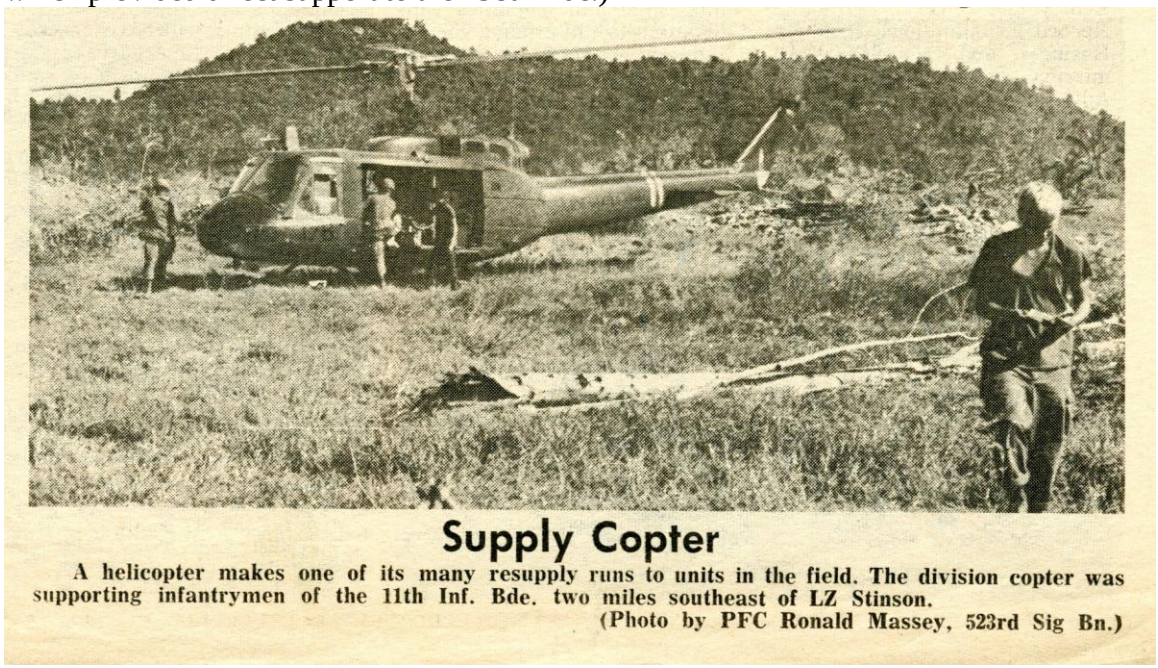
The **176**th experienced four consecutive months with accident-free flying, and from July 1 through August recorded 5,867 flying hours without an accident. (16th CAB IO) [Note: should be 16th CAG IO for 16th Combat Aviation Group]

22October69-Southern Cross Vol. 2 No. 30 Page 1

Photo Caption: **Supply Copter**

A helicopter makes one of its many resupply runs to units in the field. The division copter was supporting infantrymen of the 11th Inf. Bde. two miles southeast of LZ Stinson. (Photo by PFC Massey, 523rd Sig Bn.)

(Note:??? This caption may be wrong. This area and time might indicate the AO of the 1/52nd of the 198th Bde. The helicopter shown in the photo is a **176**th AHC helicopter which provided direct support to the 198th Bde.)



Supply Copter

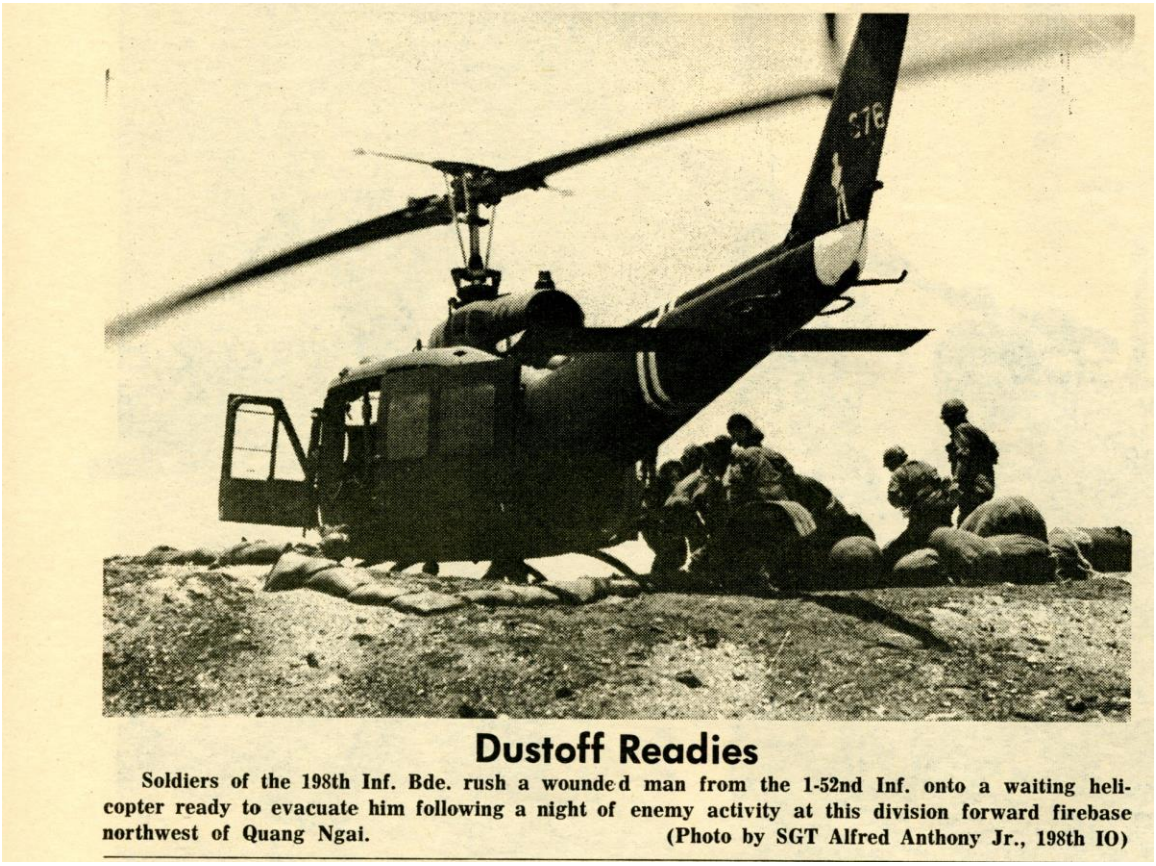
A helicopter makes one of its many resupply runs to units in the field. The division copter was supporting infantrymen of the 11th Inf. Bde. two miles southeast of LZ Stinson.

(Photo by PFC Ronald Massey, 523rd Sig Bn.)

Combat In Review

Photo Caption: Dustoff Readies

Soldiers of the 198th Inf. Bde. rush a wounded man from 1-52nd Inf. onto a waiting helicopter ready to evacuate him following a night of enemy activity at this division forward firebase northwest of Quang Ngai. (Photo by SGT Alfred Anthony Jr., 198th IO) (Note: helicopter is a **176**th AHC "Minuteman" helicopter).



Dustoff Readies

Soldiers of the 198th Inf. Bde. rush a wounded man from the 1-52nd Inf. onto a waiting helicopter ready to evacuate him following a night of enemy activity at this division forward firebase northwest of Quang Ngai. (Photo by SGT Alfred Anthony Jr., 198th IO)

12December69-Southern Cross Vol. 2 No. 37 Page 1

'Musket' Gunships Strike Enemy

CHU LAI -- "**Musket**" gunships of the Division's **176**th Assault Helicopter Co. accounted for 48 enemy soldiers killed while in support of units of the 3-6th ARVN Regiment near Son Tin.

The assault began when ships from the **176**th inserted the ARVN infantrymen into three different landing zones on the Batangan Peninsula 20 miles south of Chu Lai.

That afternoon, the "**Musket**" gunships were scrambled to the same location to support the ARVN infantrymen.

The fire-team made several target attacks on the area, placing heavy fire on all enemy positions. The gun-team, throughout its attacks, drew heavy fire from positions surrounding the besieged ARVN infantry unit.

As a spotter plane called in aircraft to bombard the enemy positions, the secondary gun team was called onto station to allow the first team to rearm. The secondary team remained in the area until the seriousness of the situation lessened.

Late in the afternoon, after all the gunships had returned to the company, the "**Muskets**" were, for the third time in 12 hours, called into the same location. After making several gun runs and drawing light fire, the ships were contacted by the ground unit for evacuating wounded.

As the "**Muskets**" continued to hammer the area with devastating rockets and min-guns while the wounded personnel were evacuated from the area. (Americal IO)

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AMERICAL ------- DIVISION

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SOUTHERN CROSS

Vol. 3, No. 17 CHU LAI, VIETNAM May 15, 1970

A wave of helicopters from the 176th Assualt Helicopter Company (ASHC) swoops down during the early morning hours on a surprise insertion of combat. troops. (Photo by Americal IO)

Caption: A wave of helicopters from the **176**th Assault Helicopter Company (ASHC [sic-AHC]) swoops down during the early morning hours on a surprise insertion of combat troops. (Photo by Americal IO)

NVA loses 135 in Nghia Hanh attack

By SP4 Peter R. Sorensen

FSB BRONCO (11th INF BDE IO) - A recent enemy drive against Nghia Hanh, CIDG Camp, has cost the NVA 135 dead. The emplacement, five miles southwest of Quang Ngai City, was the object of a regimental-size offensive which if successful, would have left Quang Ngai City open to attack. The enemy move was to coincide with a similar attack upon Hiep Duc to the north.

The 174th and **176**th Aviation Companies (Assault Helicopter) and the 4th ARVN Regiment combined to stop the NVA and dictate a bloody retreat back into the mountains.

Prior knowledge of the enemy's intentions, through military intelligence, could do little to stem the fury and force of the NVA mortar and ground attacks. "When we got on station it was hard to tell who was in possession of Nghia Hanh. Soldiers of the 4th ARVN Regiment who were air-lifted in earlier, were in heavy contact," stated Warrant Officer Jarvis D. Gambrell, Port Arthur, Texas of the 174th, "We came under heavy enemy ground fire...three or four .51 caliber machineguns and some .30 calibers.

Heavy ground fighting by the 4th ARVN Regiment and inspired flying by the gunships, neutralized the enemy action against Nghia Hanh. The NVA were forced to assume a defensive stance. NVA elements attempted to flee south to their sanctuary in Song Ve River Valley; they were fixed and destroyed by gunships and reaction forces of ARVN infantrymen delivered by "Dolphin" utility ships of the 174th Aviation Company.

The coup de grace" was dealt the enemy offensive on the western ridge of the Song Ve River Valley corridor. Second Lieutenant John I. O'Sullivan Brooklyn, N.Y., 174th gunship pilot, described the action: "The gunship pilots are familiar with the western and eastern mountain chains which rise up from the Song Ve. A 'Shark' gunship passed over the western ridge and noticed that it wasn't as 'bald' or as open as usual. From the base at the southern side-to the top-to the base at the northern side was a row of bushes that weren't there normally. A second pass of the area revealed an AK-47 attached to one of the limbs. What the pilot identified was a camouflaged, 800 yard relief column of enemy soldiers headed for Nghia Hanh."

Major Fredrick G. Blackburn, Kansas City, Mo., commander of the 174th Aviation Company, flying the Air Mission Control ship cleared the grid and turned the gunships loose on the trail. Lieutenant Colonel Le Ba Khieu, commander of the 4th ARVN Regiment, realizing the enemy situation organized a reaction force which was combat assaulted at last light right on tope of the now smoldering trail.

Commented WO Gambrell, "The 4th ARVN Regiment is an outstanding unit. We like working for them, because we know they are busting for us. They got in there and were all over the NVA."

On the command level, Major Blackburn had these words of praise, "The cooperation between the 4th ARVN Regiment and the 174th Aviation Company has always been excellent. Colonel Khien is an outstanding military leader. During this operation he was highly flexible in his decisions which were calculated a step ahead of the enemy situation."

The South Vietnamese element while sweeping the battlefield credited the 174th Aviation Company with the destruction of a command post. The 4th ARVN Regiment has confirmed that 135 NVA died in their attempt to raze Nghia Hanh. Seventeen kills were credited to the **176**th Aviation Company and 38 to the "Shark gunships of the 174th Aviation Company.

A grim postscript to the action occurred a day and a half later when an American force in the Song Ve River Valley detained an NVA who identified himself as a regimental cook. he reported that he was ordered to wait in the valley for the element's return from the Nghia Hanh mission-thus far, no one had returned.

Division recap

Action increases,
160 enemy killed

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO) -- Fighting increased in the southern part of First Military Region as the units of the Americal killed 169 enemy soldiers. The heaviest action of the week was in Operation Iron Mountain as the "Jungle Warriors" killed 53 enemy soldiers. The "Chargers" of the 196th Infantry Brigade in Operation Frederick Hill killed 30 enemy soldiers in sporadic contacts. In relatively light action the "Brave and Bold" of the 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry and gunships of the **176**th Aviation Company (Note: Assault Helicopter Company) combined to kill 15 enemy in Operation Geneva Park.

Geneva Park

The combination of ground and air units proved to be a devastating force in an area southeast of Chu Lai. First a gunship crew observed one VC evading in the area and engaged the enemy to kill him. Later the crew observed signs of enemy activity in a clump of rocks on the ground below, and saturated the area with automatic weapons fire.

Two platoons of Delta Company, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry were then inserted and began sweeping through the area. As they maneuvered, the "Regulars" spotted one Viet Cong evading from the rock formations and fired on him killing him. As they continued the sweep the found five more VC killed by gunships and two rifles lying near the bodies.

A short time later, the gunships, working in the same general area, took enemy small arms fire and spotted 15 VC on the ground below. The crew fired on the enemy to kill five more.

The next day, Delta Company made another sweep through the area of the previous day contact and killed one VC.

Men of the 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry saw light activity during the week. The battalion killed four and captured one in scattered engagements with the enemy.

Light action also characterized the activity in the 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry. Bravo Company found a maze of 10 bunkers and hooches built (continued on page 6) **11th Bde soldiers find tons of enemy rice** (continued from page 1) together in a n area northwest of Quang Ngai. Inside the bunkers, the infantrymen of the "Ready Rifles" discovered five AK-47 magazines, two CHICOM grenades, five mortar rounds, one RPG with seven rounds and another antitank weapon. Also found were two VC bodies dressed in brown uniforms. It was determined the two VC had been killed by an airstrike earlier in the week.

Musket gunships answer leg soldiers' call

by SP4 Robert A. Spangler

LZ HAWK HILL (196th INF BDE IO) - "Scramble" was the only word that could be heard echoing through the hootch as Captain John Wheeler, Canoga, Park, Calif., fire team leader of the **Muskets**, **176**th Assault Helicopter Company, answered the telephone call.

The call was from brigade headquarters stating that Company C, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry, was pinned down by sporadic small arms fire.

Captain Wheeler stayed on the phone to copy down the infantry company's radio frequency, their call sign and the grid coordinates. Meanwhile the rest of the fire team had hastily exited the hootch in hot pursuit of their gunships.

Warrant Officer Bob Sizemore, Panama City, Fla., lead pilot of Captain Wheeler's aircraft, was already in the process of cranking up the **Musket** gunship by the time Wheeler arrived.

As the **Muskets** arrived on the scene they were in direct radio contact with the infantry unit. After making their first run on the suspected enemy position, the gunship's radio crackled with the sound of the infantrymen's voice. "Excellent, excellent, just keep working out in that area. You're right on target."

The **Muskets** continued to work out on the enemy position, expending their load of destruction.

After firing up their load, the **Muskets** returned to Hawk Hill to reload for another run. While sitting in the hootch came a report that Company C had swept the area and found two VC snipers killed by a combination of the infantrymen's and gunships' fire.

The **176**th and 71st Assault Helicopter Companies both fly in support of the 196th Infantry Brigade (Note: the 71st AHC is normally recognized as Direct Support for the 196th Bde. and the **176**th as Direct Support for the 198th Bde.)

The gunship fire teams are usually made up of two ships, each carrying a crew of four: aircraft commander, pilot, crew chief and door gunner.

The **Muskets** of this particular fire team were equipped with maximum firepower. The lead ship had two 159 rocket pods with 24 10-pound rockets in each pod; two mini-guns and two M-60 machine guns.

The fire power of the gunships is astonishing. The mini-guns pour out 4,000 rounds per minute while the two M-60 machine guns knock out 500 rounds per minute. All of this combined with the rockets and mobility of the gunships make them one of the most effective weapons in the U.S. arsenal.

The gunships fly three general categories of flights: dust off, escort for medevacs; contact missions, direct support of allied ground forces; and general escort missions for aircraft such as the Flying Crane, CH-54.

The general feeling of most groups served by the gunships is comparable to the reply of the infantrymen of Company C when the[y] said, "Thanks a lot guys. You don't know how we appreciate it." this is the usual final radio message for the gunships as they leave the scene.

The reply from the gunship fire team is usually the same also. "We are returning to refuel and re-arm. If you need us again, just give us a call."

The gunship crews have a certain way in which they like to refer to themselves, "Death on Call!" Any infantryman will agree with that.

Division recap

Kill 130, find huge rice cache

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO) - The tempo of fighting in the southern part of the First Military Region remained moderate as division soldiers accounted for 130 enemy killed. The 198th Brigade topped the action by killing 38 enemy, 17 in one skirmish, and by discovering a cache of more than 30,000 pounds of rice. The "Chargers" of the 196th Brigade surprised and killed 28 enemy in Operation Frederick Hill. Gunships from F Troop, 8th Cavalry in the 11th Brigade accounted for four NVA kills in action south?est of Quang Ngai City.

Geneva Park

The "Ready Rifles" of the 1-52nd Infantry, teamed up with gunships from the **176**th Aviation Company to kill 17 Viet Cong and capture an enemy arms cache. Charlie Company, working south of Chu Lai, observed and engaged a large group of enemy soldiers. In the ensuing contact, Cobra gunships from the **176**th were called on station and engaged the enemy, who evaded east into a cave complex in a heavily vegetated area.

The infantrymen, moved toward the complex after the gunships had expended, engaging the enemy as close as one meter. Alpha Company, reacting as a reaction force, was combat assaulted into the area and set up a blocking force. The next morning, Charlie Company swept the area and found 17 Viet Cong killed.

Found in the cave complex were an RPG launcher, 16 RPG rounds, a radio, an SKS rifle, a mine, a mortar tube and two mortar baseplates, seven mortar rounds, a machinegun, 11 Chicom hand grenades, two AK-47 magazine, and 25 pounds of rice. All items were extracted to a nearby firebase.

Alpha Company was responsible for finding the unusually large rice cache. Working south of Chu Lai, Alpha discovered more than 30,000 pounds of polished rice hidden in bins and metal containers and buried underground. An unusual rise on the surface of the ground brought the unit's attention to the area.

Because of the possibility of booby traps in the area, a mine sweeping team was called in. The soldiers made good use of the devices and used them to help locate the presence of the hidden barrels of rice.

In the same general area, an aero rifle platoon from F Troop, (Continued on Page 6)

Troopers see moderate action (Continued from page 1) 8th Cavalry, was inserted and found an additional 2,000 pounds of rice. Alpha Company prepared the rice for extraction to Son Tinh District for further redistribution to refugee centers and orphanages.

Engrs, Cav team up to kill 4

By SP4 Terry Williamson

LZ BAYONET (198th INF BDE IO) - H Troop 17th Cavalry quickly answered a call for support from Bravo Company, 26th Engineer Battalion, and with the help of gunships, killed four VC and repelled heavy sniper fire in the division's 198th Infantry Brigade area of operations south of Chu Lai.

The engineers were conducting a road sweep operation when they came under heavy small arms fire from approximately 12 VC from a nearby woodline. H Troop was a short distance away waiting for a convoy for which they were to provide security.

The engineers immediately called for support from the nearby tracks. One Sheridan assault vehicle and three armored personnel carriers quickly answered the call and took a position on a small hill overlooking the woodline that contained the enemy element.

"We opened fire with our .50 caliber and M-60 machineguns," said Sergeant Lucion J. Broadstreet, Gary, Ind. "That stopped a lot of the enemy fire right then, but we were still getting sporadic fire from the woodline."

The Sheridan then moved into position on the small hill and began to unleash a flurry of canister and heat rounds at the point of hostile contact.

"I fired three canister rounds and one heat round into the woodline, and the VC started withdrawing from the area," said Sergeant Donald K. Tate, Norphlet, Ark., a member of the Sheridan assault vehicle crew.

At this point it appeared that the enemy soldiers had evaded to the other side of a river that lay in back of the woodline. Sergeant Tate then made a request for gunship support in an effort to cut off the enemy escape route. Within minutes, gunships from the **176**th Aviation Company were raking the area with mini-gun and rocket fire.

"I only saw two of the enemy when we got on top of the hill, and after we had fired on the area, I didn't see any more. But we were still getting a small amount of fire," Sergeant Tate said, "That's when I realized that I might need gunship support if they made it to the other side of the river."

When all enemy resistance had been quelled by H Troop and gunships, the tracks made their way back to complete their former mission of securing the convoy.

A Popular Force team swept the area of contact and found four VC that had been killed in the action. Two of the enemy had been killed in the initial contact by H Troop, and two had been killed by gunships. Also found was on[e] AK-47 rifle.

Vol. 4, No. 2 Chu Lai, Vietnam January 15, 1971 Page 3

Skillful flying

Three pilots from the 16th Combat Aviation Group recently received the "I saved one" award from the Group commander Colonel Benjamin S. Silver for their efforts in bringing down damaged aircraft safely.

Warrant Officer 1 Theodore Beasley of Company A, 123 Aviation Battalion; Warrant Officer 1 William E. Bush of the **176**th Aviation Company and Warrant Officer 1 James Powell II of Company B, 123 Aviation Battalion brought Americal aircraft to the ground with minor damage after having had major engine failures in the air.

Colonel Silver praised their acts as showing "the difference between a real professional and somebody who didn't have as good a professional touch as you."

"Each of your actions came under different circumstances but each one is equally deserving of recognition."

Vol. 4, No. 32 Chu Lai, Vietnam August 13, 1971 Page 1

C R I M E
DOESN'T PAY

Case 1

Private First Class Michael P. Dumas, **176**th Aviation Company, 14th Aviation Battalion, was tried by General court-martial on July 13 for possessing and wrongfully selling heroin. He was convicted and sentenced to a dishonorable discharge, confinement at hard labor for four years, forfeiture of all pay and allowances and reduction to Private (E-1).

M-Man Off After 22

CHU LAI - The last original "minuteman" is turning in his musket and three-cornered hat and returning to the world.

After spending 22 months with the **176**th Assault Helicopter Company, SSG Alfred T. Nowak (Rochester, NY.) is returning to the states to be reassigned at Ft. Eustis, Va.

Nowak was first assigned to the **176**th Minuteman Co. on March 23, 1966, at Ft. Benning, Ga., when the company was organized, "Senior ARVN Staff", as he is known to his friends, was also a member of the advance party which landed at Tuy Hoa Air Base when the unit was deployed to the Republic of Vietnam in February 1967.

Later in the month of March, Nowak was stricken with a tropical virus and was medevaced to the states. Although he held a permanent profile against all tropical climates he volunteered, eleven months later, to return to his original unit, the **176**th.

The sergeant is highly respected by officers and enlisted men alike. He has received the Air Medal, 10th Award, for in country missions and two Bronze stars for achievement. His time spent in Vietnam and the experience he has gained working with aircraft make him one of the most knowledgeable and well-rounded of the "**Minutemen**". (16th CAG IO)

Teamwork nets 11
for 198th, 176th

CHU LAI, (198th Inf. Bde. IO) - Action was light recently as infantrymen from the 198th Infantry Brigade and gunships from the **176**th Aviation killed 11 enemy soldiers and captured one enemy suspect and one pistol.

Most of the action occurred in the 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry's area of operation (A)) southwest of Chu Lai. The "Regulars" killed five enemy soldiers and captured one unknown type pistol.

While on operations southwest of Chu Lai, a recon element from the 1st Bn., 6th Inf., engaged a group of VC soldiers. A search of the area revealed four VC soldiers killed.

While operating in the same area, Company A, 1st Bn., 6th Inf., engaged a small group of VC soldiers, killing one and capturing a pistol which was extracted to a nearby LZ (Landing Zone).

Patrolling in an area southwest of Chu Lai, Company A, 1st Bn., 6th Inf., found and destroyed a base camp area consisting of 25 military structures protected by rocks and trees.

Other action occurred in the 4th Battalion, 3d Infantry's AO northwest of Chu Lai. The "Old Guard" killed two enemy soldiers and captured one enemy suspect.

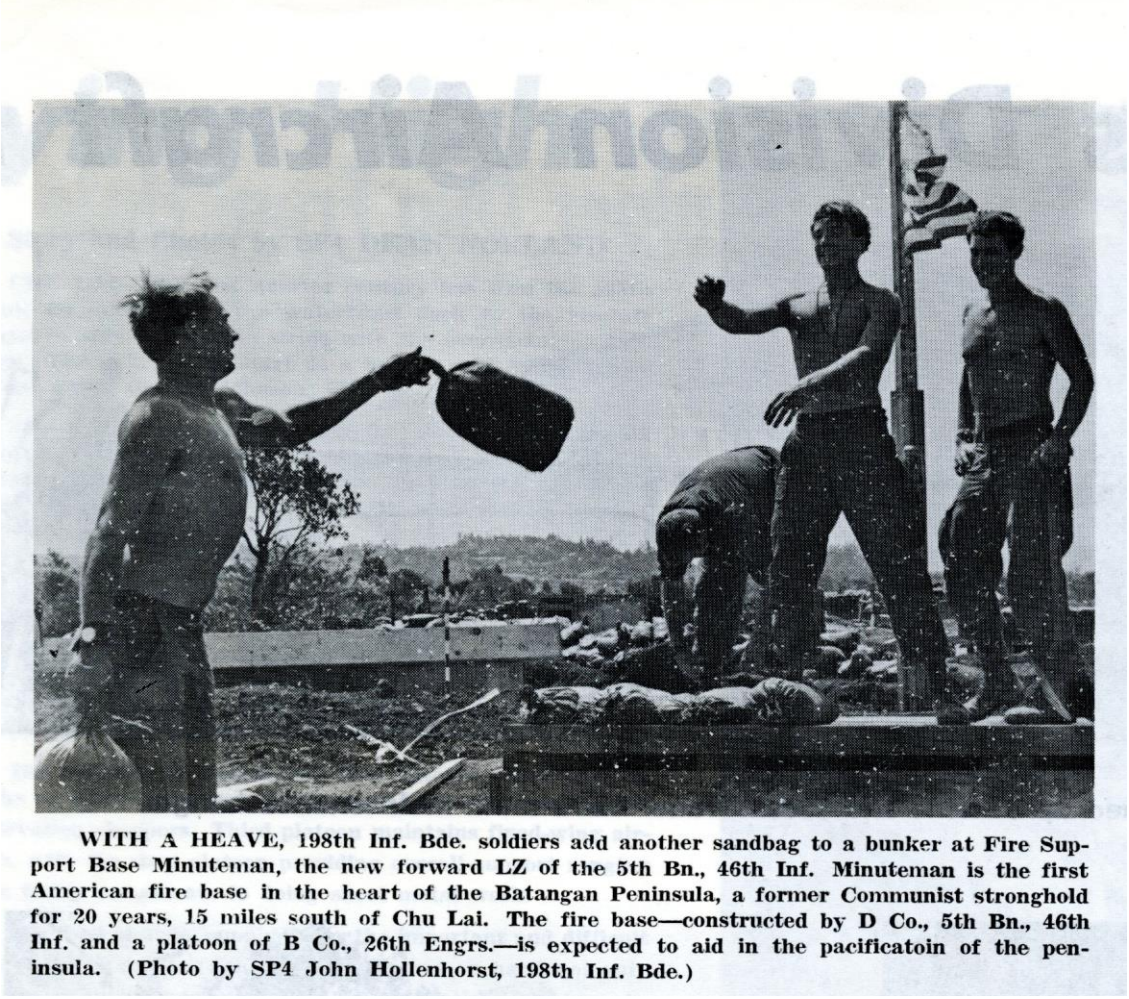
Company C, 4th Bn., 3d Inf., on an operation northwest of Chu Lai, had a mechanical ambush detonate. A search of the area revealed two dead NVA soldiers and two NVA pistol belts. The pistol belts were extracted to an LZ.

While on a patrol northwest of Chu Lai, Company B, 4th Bn., 3d Inf., found and destroyed a base camp area consisting of 18 fighting positions of various sizes, six outdoor latrines with frames made of railroad ties. The perimeter measured 100 by 75 meters and was estimated to be about nine months old.

Company D, 4th Bn., 3d Inf., operating northwest of Chu Lai captured one enemy suspect. He was extracted to Chu Lai for questioning.

While flying over an area southwest of Chu Lai, the **176**th Aviation engaged a small group of VC soldiers, killing one. The next day in the same general area gunships from the **176**th Aviation observed and engaged an unknown number of VC soldiers, resulting in three enemy killed.

198th Mans Minuteman First LZ Built On Batangan



WITH A HEAVE, 198th Inf. Bde. soldiers add another sandbag to a bunker at Fire Support Base Minuteman, the new forward LZ of the 5th Bn., 46th Inf. Minuteman is the first American fire base in the heart of the Batangan Peninsula, a former Communist stronghold for 20 years, 15 miles south of Chu Lai. The fire base—constructed by D Co., 5th Bn., 46th Inf. and a platoon of B Co., 26th Engrs.—is expected to aid in the pacificatoin of the peninsula. (Photo by SP4 John Hollenhorst, 198th Inf. Bde.)

Photo Caption: WITH A HEAVE, 198th Inf. Bde. soldiers add another sandbag to a bunker at Fire Support Base Minuteman, the new forward LZ of the 5th Bn., 46th Inf. Minuteman is the first American fire base in the heart of the Batangan Peninsula, a former Communist stronghold for 20 years, 15 miles south of Chu Lai. The fire base-constructed by D Co., 5th Bn., 46th Inf. and a platoon of B Co., 26th Engrs.--is expected to aid in the pacification of the peninsula. (Photo by John Hollenhorst, 198th Inf. Bde.)

LZ BAYONET -- The pounding of hammer against nail still could be heard. Shovels cut into the peninsula turf with a dull thud.

Amidst it all, CPT Michael Smith (New Lebanon, Ohio) dug the guidon of D Co. 5th Bn., 46th Inf. into a grassy hill overlooking the Batangan Peninsula.

First Fire Base

The fire support base Minuteman, a new forward LZ for the 198th Inf. Bde., had been dedicated, establishing the first permanent American fire base on the peninsula 15 miles south of Chu Lai.

The peninsula had been a Communist stronghold for more than 20 years despite the brief tenure of a Korean base camp there two years ago.

So entrenched were the VC that search and clear operations continue to uncover massive tunnel complexes despite the recent cordon sweep over the area.

(Continued)

(Continued)

Aid In Pacification

"This base definitely will help in our operations here and allow us to move about more widely and extensively in the area," explained CPT Smith, CO at Minuteman.

The new fire base also is expected to aid in the peninsula's pacification program once civilians return from their temporary refugee center near Quang Ngai City.

All Companies Participate

CPT Smith's company is expected to occupy LZ Minuteman for at least the initial few weeks, conducting search and clear operations throughout the area and improving the fire base itself.

Different companies of the battalion will man the fire base on a rotating basis.

"We named the fire base Minuteman after the **176**th Avn. Co. because we couldn't operate without their help, and we're proud of them," said LTC Ronald R. Richardson, commander of the 5th Bn., 46th Inf.

"Minuteman" is the aviation company's nickname.

Luck O' Irish Again Prevails
For O' Sullivan: Shamrock, DFC

CHU LAI--Weaving his helicopter through dense fog and heavy fire, a Brooklyn pilot demonstrated the luck of the Irish once again.

WO1 John O'Sullivan was serving as a pilot of the command and control helicopter of the 4th Bn., 21st Inf., 11th Inf. Bde. when the unit came under attack.

As the battle progressed, one soldier was felled by an extreme case of battle fatigue, and a dustoff was called.

Because of the inclement weather and hostile fire the three attempts to evacuate the casualty by chopper were unsuccessful. Disregarding all danger, O'Sullivan volunteered to attempt the evacuation.

With a thorough knowledge of the area and skillful maneuvering of his craft he dropped onto a hastily prepared landing zone and picked up the man.

For his action O'Sullivan, assigned to the **176th Avn. Co**., 14th CAB, received the Distinguished Flying Cross. (AMERICAL IO)

Week's action nets
98 enemy soldiers
(continued)

Geneva Park

While on patrol, Company C, 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry, engaged one enemy soldier while sweeping an area of contact. Later the "Ready Rifles" received heavy small arms fire from a group of enemy soldiers in nearby hootches. Gunships from the **176th Assault** Aviation Company came on station, and expended their munitions in the area of contact. Results of the entire action were two enemy killed by Company C and one detained. Four enemy were killed by the gunships.

Later Company C, 1st Bn., 52nd Inf., found two 500 pound bombs while on a routine patrol. The "Ready Rifles" also found a booby-trapped 81mm mortar round in the same general area. They blew the booby-trap in place. the next day a rallier turned himself in to Company C, He was evacuated to a nearby LZ.

Bravo Company, 1st Bn., 52nd Inf., found three hootches ten feet long, twenty feet wide, and eight feet high. Inside the bunkers the "Ready Rifles" found 15 bushels of dried corn and 1,000 pounds of unpolished rice.

Two NVA soldiers were killed as they approached the night defensive perimeter of Delta Company, 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry, southwest of Chu Lai. The "Professionals" found two AK-47 rifles, a two pound bag of polished rice and two green uniforms.

An aero rifle platoon from F Troop, 8th Cavalry, observed one VC evading into a bunker. The "Blues" pursued and captured the enemy soldier, who was later taken to a nearby LZ. The aero platoon then continued toward the bunker and received small arms fire. They returned fire killing two VC. A sweep of the area revealed one hootch, and one booby-trap. The booby-trap was blown in place.

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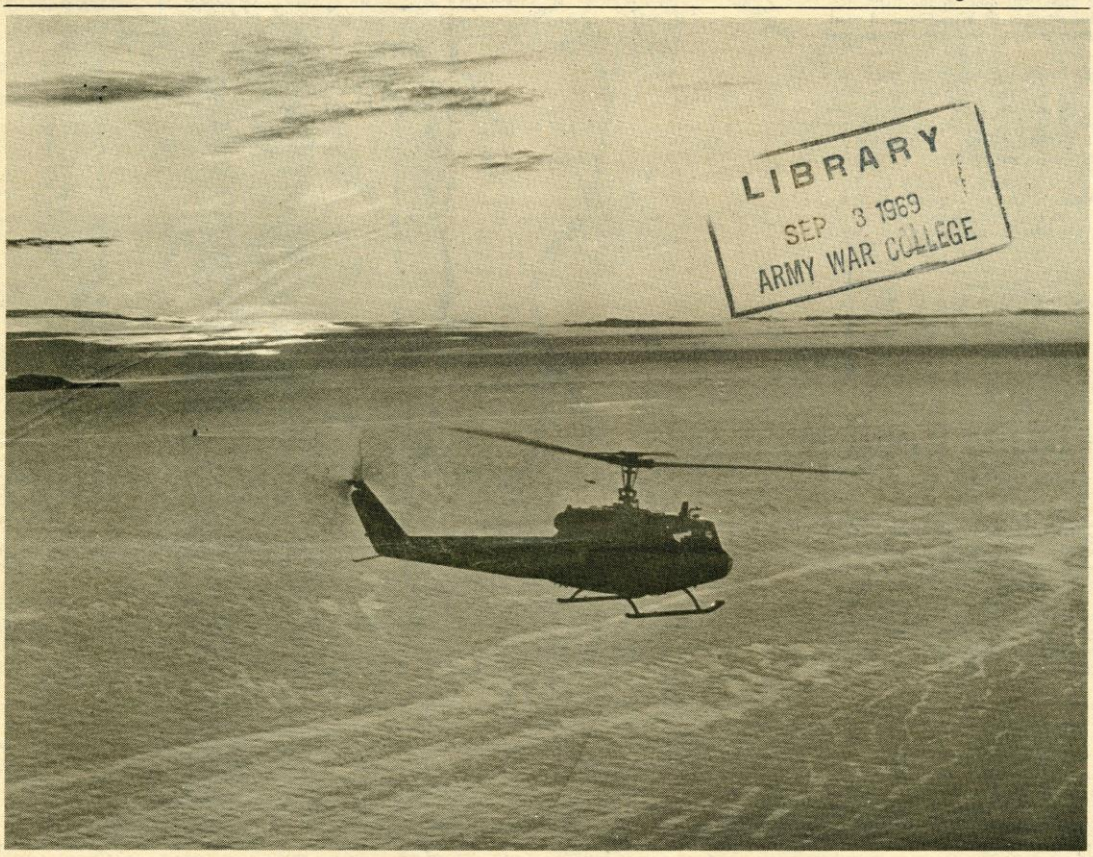
Photo Caption: Dawn Patrol

First signs of morning find this Huey helicopter of the **176**th Aslt. Hel. Co. flying members of A Co., 5-46 Inf. 198th Bde. to a location 10 miles south of Chu Lai. (Photo by SP5 Thomas Maus, Americal IO)

SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION
Vol. 2, No. 21 CHU LAI, VIETNAM August 20, 1969



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Dawn Patrol

First signs of morning find this Huey helicopter of the 176th Aslt. Hel. Co. flying members of A Co., 5-46 Inf., 198th Bde. to a location 10 miles south of Chu Lai. (Photo by SP5 Thomas Maus, Americal IO)

Combat In Review

CHOPPER CRASHES IN JUNGLE CREW HACKS RESCUE PATH

CHU LAI - The pounding of an enemy .50 cal. machinegun turned a routine helicopter flight into a 45 minute gunfighting and trailblazing race for four division crewmen recently.

The helicopter from the **176**th AHC was on LZ Gator, about 6 miles south of Chu Lai, when a call for a medical evacuation was received from a nearby infantry unit at 4 pm.

CPT David L. Grieger (Fremont, Ohio) was aircraft commander and WO1 Dee Hyden (Amarillo, Tex.) was the pilot that afternoon as the helicopter sped toward the Tra Bong Civilian Irregular Defense Group camp 12 miles away.

Deadly Sound

Flying over the double and triple canopy jungles that surround the Song (river) Giong area at 2200 feet the ship abruptly lurched, and a sound all fliers dread echoed in their ears - the thumping of an enemy .50 cal. machinegun.

Immediately the crew chief, SP4 Daniel R. Neal (Aurora, Colo.), and the gunner, PFC James E. Skeen (Live Oak, FLa.), opened-up with M-60 machineguns in the direction of the enemy gunfire, managing to suppress it for a few valuable seconds.

Engine Fails

"The caution panel lit up like a Christmas tree," said CPT Grieger. "Then the engine quit. I flared out, reducing our speed to about 40 knots, and the tail boom hit the trees.

"The tail rotor section broke loose and the main rotor blade flew off. We then fell through the trees crashing to the ground on our left side."

The chopper crew maintained radio contact with a U.S. Air Force observation plane operating near the area. The last radio message was "engine quit, going down."

Grabbing all the necessary equipment, while enemy movement erupted in the bushes and grew closer, the crew proceeded down a hillside, moving through dense undergrowth toward the Song Giong riverbed.

Cut Jungle

The point was taken by Hyden with his M-16 rifle and bush knife, hacking a path through thick vines.

CPT Grieger took the job as coverman with an M-16 and one box of ammo, while Neal and Skeen followed in the rear with an M-60 and all the ammo they could manage.

Nearly 250 yards and 40 minutes later they reached the river bank and spotted the rescue aircraft which was backed up by two **176**th assault gunships.

MAJ Ronald C. Metcalf (Hickory, N.C.), commanding officer of the **176**th AHC, set his aircraft down while enemy small arms crackled from the treeline. The crew was extracted safely just 45 minutes and a long run after the last radio message was transmitted. (14Th CAB IO)

RE-UPS FOR $8,000

LZ BRONCO-- Two hours after he reenlisted, SP4 Iam K. Mcleish (Ludlow, Mass.), formerly with The 3rd Bn., 1st Inf., walked out of the division finance office with a smile and $8,155 richer.

In addition to the-tax-free Variable Reenlistment Bonus (VRB) and a 30 day leave, Mcleish received immediate reassignment of his choice and is now a helicopter repairman with the **176**th AHC.

Previously, Mcliesh, who plans to make The Army a career, he worked as a cook, but he had a primary MOS of a helicopter repairman. The senior 11Th Bde. career counselor, SFC Ed Crawley (Waycross, Ga.), carefully outlined the benefits to Mcliesh before he enlisted for the highest VRB ever paid a "Jungle Warrior."

To be eligible For the VRB, a man must have 21 months active service time behind him. IF his MOS falls under one of four categories, he is paid his base pay times the number of years he reenlists times his VRB designator, determined by his MOS, plus one. (11th IO)

Combat In Review

Copter Crew Rescues Hotly-Pursued Patrol

CHU LAI--What started out as an ordinary mission for WO1 Kenneth G. Wood (Idaho Falls, Idaho) soon turned into a daring rescue reminiscent of an adventure-packed Hollywood thriller.

WO1 Wood was the aircraft commander of a UH-1H "Huey" troop-carrying helicopter of the **176**th Aslt. hel. Co. "**Minutemen**" recently involved in the insertion of a long range patrol (LRP) northwest of Chu Lai.

Call For Help

The drop off was made without difficulty, and WO1 Wood and his co-pilot, WO1 William T. Koehler (Greer, S.C.) proceeded to other duties.

In a few hours, however, they were recalled fo an emergency extraction of the LRPs, who were fleeing a large enemy force.

Despite bad visibility due to rain and cloud layers, WO1 Wood co-ordinated with the LRPs, getting them to mark their position with smoke while he directed gunships to lay suppressive fire as close to the patrol as possible.

Chops Down For Rescue

Since the patrol had expended all its smoke, the "Minuteman" had to hover alongside a mountain until the chopper pilot spied a hole in the thick foliage leading to a suitable pickup point near the patrol's last marked position.

Chopping through the dense jungle with his rotor blades, the warrant officer made his way down a cliff to the landing zone and waited until the LRPs could make their way to the chopper.

Ten-foot elephant grass prevented the chopper pilot from landing so he hovered while the members of the patrol scurried aboard.

Zooms Away

With door guns blazing at the enemy's position, he took off, carefully hovered over the trees until clear of the cliff, and dove down into a valley to gain airspeed.

WO1 Wood deposited the patrol members safely back at their base, then continued with his "normal" duties.

AMERICAL ------- DIVISION

SOUTHERN CROSS

Vol. 2, No. 09 CHU LAI, VIETNAM April 27, 1969

21 Impact Awards for 176th Chopper Rescue

CHU LAI - - Twenty-one medals for valor, more awards than the Americal Division has ever made for a single action, were presented in ceremonies recently at the **176**th Aslt. Hel. Co. ramp here.

BG Wallace L. Clement, deputy division commander, made the impact awards to crew members of six helicopters involved in a daring rescue mission near Tien Phuoc.

1LT William D. Bristow (Alhambra, Calif.). commander of a 14th Cbt. Avn. Bn. UH-1 slick, was finishing a resupply and Medevac- mission at 5:55 p.m. Mar. 19 when the drama unfolded.

As the slick emerged from the remote landing zone, heavy automatic weapons fire was directed at the craft. PFC Robert Wilhelm (Tolley, N.C.) and SP4 Boyd Kettle (Durango, Colo.), crew chief and doorgunner respectively fired back.

Escape

Pressing for altitude, the slick lurched, and flames spread quickly through tbe chopper after several hits.

"We continued firing and tried to land as quickly as possible," said 1LT Bristow. Co-pilot WO1 Paul E. Lent (Richmond Springs, N.Y.) radioed two distress calls.

When the ship touched ground, flames were lapping at the cockpit. The Medevac patient, passengers, and crew evacuated as the ship's fuel cells exploded and the slick became an inferno.

"Darkness was approaching, so we checked weapons and ammo." said 1LT Bristow. "We had an M-16 with 35 rounds and a .38-cal pistol with 20 rounds.'"

(Continued)

Bad Outlook

WO1 Lent's mayday call had been monitored by another aircraft, and two **176**th "**Musket**" gunships and two "Minuteman" slicks were diverted to the crash area.

Meanwhile, MAJ Ronald C. Metcalf (Hickory, N.C.), **176**th CO, left company headquarters in a recovery ship with maintenance and medical personnel aboard.

By 6:30, two gunships and three slicks were orbiting the downed aircraft while enemy gunfire increased. Fire became more intense as the rescue choppers inched toward the scene.

"I didn't think anyone could have survived tbe crash and fire," said MAJ Metcalf who told pilot WO1 Jerry W. Herman (Wooster, Ohio) to lead his gunship fire team to look for survivors.

Several passes over the crash site revealed nothing, and the gunships temporarily left to provide cover for a ground patrol ambushed while attempting to secure the downed ship.

Strobe

Hope dwindled when a second gunship search also failed, but one commander, WO1 Richard K. McLean (Miami), suddenly saw a flash of light.

"I thought it was just a muzzle flash, "said WO1 McLean. “Then I realized it was actually a strobe light." Far below on his back in the middle of a rice paddy lay WO1 Lent who had crawled from a hedgerow where the downed fliers were hidden 75 meters from the crash site. WO1 Lent flashed 1LT Bristow's strobe at the gunships.

Fast Work

Hearing the conversation about the strobe, WO1 Bruce W. Shaffer (Washington), and WO1 John M. Blair (Spokane), pilot and co-pilot
of a slick, volunteered to extract the crash victims.

"We quickly organized the three slicks and gunship team," said MAJ Metcalf, "and WO1 Shaffer began a high overhead approach." As he descended through increasing enemy fire, MAJ Metcalf flew his slick like a gunship and followed WO1 Shaffer to lend cover. WO1 Gary L. Williams (Phoenix, Ariz.) swooped in as MAJ Metcalf's wingman.

As WO1 Shaffer landed, WO1 Lent and SP4 Kattle hustled the other five survivors into the rescue ship. Lent then darted for the chopper amid a hail of bullets and SP4 Kettle followed.

"Rounds were hitting all around me," WO1 Lent said. I thought I was a goner."

WO1 Shaffer lifted safely as gunships hovered nearby.

Two Silver Stars, 11 Distinguished Flying Crosses, and eight Air Medals with "V" devices were presented a week later.

WO1's Shaffer and Blair received the Silver Stars; MAJ. Metcalf, WO1 Williams. WO1 McClean, WO1 Herman, and 1LT Bristow received the DFC.

Winners

Other DFC winners were SP4 Robert 0. Allison (St. Helens, Ore.); SP4 Antonio K. Taylor (New York City); 1LT James D. Horton (Troy, Pa.); WO1 Glen E. Goff (Knightstown, Ind.); WO1 Thomas G. Melin (Clyde Park, Mont.); and WO1 Philip S. Lee (Norfolk).

The Air Medal with "V" went to SP4 Steven R. Cundry (Springfield, Mo.); SP4 Phillip R. Varnum (La Crosse, Wis.); SP5 Lawrence J. Silva (San Leandro, Calif.); and SP4 Billy L. Parsons (Trona, Calif.).

Also, SP4 Richard C. Sear (Akron); SP4 Richard R. Conover (Lesvittown, N.Y.); and SP4 John C. Gruidl (Minneapolis); and SP4 Jerry L. Mitchell
(Reading Pa.). (16th IO)

15Oct70-Pacific Stars & Stripes
Thursday page 6

Fierce Fire Fight

Americal Troops Slay 52 Reds

S&S Vietnam Bureau

CHU LAI, Vietnam – Troops of the Americal Div., encountering their heaviest fighting in four months, killed 52 enemy soldiers in a series of sharp actions Monday, division officers reported.

In the largest contact, eight miles south of Quang Ngai, a division soldiers killed 27 communists during a fierce exchange of fire. No U.S. casualties were reported by the U.S. Command. ***(Historian Note: The 174th AHC gunships claimed 27 probable kills in actions that resulted in seven 174th AHC helicopters receiving hits. 2 aircraft were to be extracted at first light. D/1/20 & B/1/20th Inf Bn were being medevaced and securing downed helicopters. C/6/11th Arty provided artillery fires).***

A half-mile to the north, three Americans were killed and seven wounded in a ground action in which enemy losses were not known.

Division ground troops, supported by helicopter gunships, killed 11 Communists in an area 10 miles northwest of Quang Ngai, the officers said.

(Historian Note: This action involved A/1/52d & C/1/52d Inf Bn. and 176th AHC helicopters. C/1/52nd was securing a downed 176th AHC in this action).

Fourteen other enemy soldiers were killed and seven wounded in a ground action in which enemy losses were not known.

Division ground troops, supported by helicopter gunships, killed 11 Communists in an area 10 miles northwest of Quang Ngai, the officers said.

The First Brigade "**DIPLOMAT** AND **WARRIOR**"
(Text superimposed on the Army emblem of an eagle) Published Weekly for the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division
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Photo Caption - GUNNER'S VIEW - A door gunner with a UH1D helicopter of **176**th Aviation Company surveys the Song Ve river valley during the 101st Airborne's Operation Malheur II. The **Minutemen** of the **176**th have supported the Screaming Eagles since both units arrived in I Corps May 8. (US Army Photo by PFC Michael A. Willey).