Here elements of the 198th Infantry Brigade's, 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry cross an open field southwest of Chu Lai. The "Ready Rifles" accounted for 20 of the Brigade's 33 KIA in last week's action. In addition they captured 1100 pounds of rice. (Photo by SP4 Herbert Brady, 523rd Sig. Bn.)

SOUTHERN CROSS

AMERICAL DIVISION

Vol. 3 No. 27 | Chu Lai, Vietnam | July 24, 1970

Enemy arms found in 1st-46th sweep

By SP4 Larry Granfield

LZ PROFESSIONAL (196th INF BDE IO) – A combination of luck and keen eyesight recently resulted in the capturing of five enemy machineguns, six AK-47 rifles, five pistols, 65 magazines and three CHICOM grenades for 196th Infantry Brigade soldiers operating in the rugged highlands wight miles southwest of Tam Ky.

B Company, 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry, had been sweeping the jungled hills and soggy rice paddies in search of enemy activity.

"The company had split into three elements," said Staff Sergeant Larry McMullen, Perry,

continued on page 6

112 KIA

Div Recap: Action increases in AO

Operation Geneva Park was highlighted by Vietnamese turning over 127 mortar rounds to H Troop, 17th Cavalry. The "Brave and Bold" also accounted for 33 enemy killed as action increased in the 198th Infantry Brigade's area of operation. Elsewhere in Operation Frederick Hill action decreased as the "Chargers" killed 56 enemy soldiers and captured 6800 pounds of rice.

Geneva Park

Early in the week H Troop, 17th Cavalry, received one rocket and 127 mortar rounds when Vietnamese near Binh Son brought the munitions to a vehicle used to relay messages among the troop's components. "We had established a good relationship with the people in the area," Sergeant Walter Clifton, Dallas, Texas, a radio operator said. "And they kept bringing the rounds in to us."

While in their night defensive position southeast of Chu Lai a day later H Troop killed one Viet Cong as the enemy approached their location. Later that morning, H Troop killed another Viet Cong in the same area and captured one rifle, one pistol, three magazines and one pith helmet. Several hours later the troop killed another Viet Cong as the enemy moved toward their location. Captured in this action was one field pack.

Elsewhere, Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry searched a hooch northwest of Quang Ngai to find eight artillery rounds, one anti-tank weapon, 200 pounds of unpolished rice, and 300 pounds of potatoes. The munitions were destroyed and the rice was evacuated to a nearby landing zone.

In a late evening contact, Bravo Company observed three NVA dressed in blue uniforms approaching their location. The infantrymen engaged the enemy with automatic weapons to kill

continued on page 6

LOH proves too tough

SP4 Peter R. Sorensen

FSB BRONCO (11th INF BDE IO) – One would think that the lead weight of 15 rounds would be enough to bring down a "Primo" helicopter, a Light Observation Helicopter (LOH) of the 11th Infantry Brigade Aviation Section. But the flying "Jungle Warrior" showed its fiber when heavy enemy ground fire failed to sway the LOH from its mission.

Chief Warrant Officer Glenn Aurelius, Maimi, Fla., was flying a screening mission for a combat assault by soldiers of the 4th ARVN Regiment five miles northwest of Duc Pho when the incident occurred.

"The combat assault was putting down south of our location as we were checking out a wooded area," recounted CWO Aurelius.

Added Specialist 5 Harold A. Woolsey, Rockport, Ind., doorgunner on the chopper, "I spotted a bunker and an armed NVA in a blue uniform hiding in the shadow."

Specialist Woolsey engaged and killed the shadowed figure with his M-60. The enemy returned with a heavy barrage of small arms fire. Fifteen rounds raked the LOH; two rounds knocked out the radio.

With no radio communications, the undaunted LOH continued its mission for an hour and a half.

"A LOH can take a lot of hits and still be able to fly. They're built small but tough," reported Staff Sergeant Richard N. Yackell, Dearborn, Mich., Primo maintenance supervisor. "It was fortunate that the radio stopped those two rounds because it kept the pilot from getting hit."

Gen Mataxis is new ADC

By PFC Guy Winkler

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO) – In ceremonies here, Brigadier General Theodore C. Mataxis assumed the position of assistant division commander, maneuver. General Mataxis is replacing Brigadier General Edwin L. Powell who has been assigned to Headquarters, United States Army, The Electronics Command (TECOM), Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Maryland as the ADC of TECOM.

"We are very fortunate and privileged to have assigned to us today Brigadier General Ted Mataxis," said Major General A. E. Milloy. "General Mataxis comes to us after having served a tour in Iran as the chief of the Army section for MAAG." General Milloy continued, "He is a highly decorated veteran of three wars having served in various command capacities to include battalion commander in World War II, regimental commander during the Korean War and this is his second tour in Vietnam having served as the advisor to II Corp and also with the 101st Airborne Division for almost two years in 1965 and 1966. In addition to a lot of command experience, and troop duty, General Mataxis has also held a number of responsible jobs from high level staffs such as being the military assistant to General Lemnitzer and also the military assistant to General Maxwell D. Taylor in India. General Mataxis, it is with a great deal of pleasure that I extend to you a very hearty welcome on behalf of all of us here at the Americal Division. We are very happy to have you and we look forward to a very pleasant association in working with you."

General Mataxis stepped to the microphone and said that he was very pleased to be with the Division and that he looked forward to working closely with

continued on page 3

BG Theodore C. Mataxis

Part 3 of Doughnut Dollies

Miss Martin likes it better in Amcal

By SP4 William Hayes

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO) – During the summer between her junior and senior years at Western Kentucky University, Marcia Martin first heard of the American Red Cross Doughnut Dollies.

"My first reaction was, 'forget it–there's no way you're going to get me over there,'" she claimed.

During the next year, she talked with a friend who had been in Vietnam as a Doughnut Dolly, and she reconsidered. Shortly after she left school with her degree, she decided to apply for the job.

Though it's quite a large step from the campus to Vietnam, Marcia adapted to her new environment, and she's enjoying it.

"It's a worthwhile job, it's interesting, and is a chance to meet new people," she says.

While at school, Marcia found a lot of people talking about Vietnam. "I used to get into arguments, but to me it was senseless to sit and talk of something I knew nothing about," she admitted.

She pointed out that her attitudes were not affected by campus mood and opinion. She said her campus at that time was not the scene of overt demonstrations of student opinion.

"I wasn't really subjected to it. We didn't have that stuff," she said.

Marcia was in other areas of Vietnam before coming to the Americal, but, "I like it better here."

One of her biggest hurdles to overcome was the idea of being in Vietnam during Christmas.

"I thought I might be homesick on Christmas, but I was too busy to let it bother me. In two days six of us visited 11 fire bases, singing six or seven carols at each stop," she said.

Marcia enjoys traveling to forward areas any time of the year, although travel in a combat zone can have its frustrations, and one is particularly annoying.

"Waiting around–it's enough to drive me batty," she says as she clenches her teeth in mock frustration.

Once in a while, somebody says "thank you" to Marcia and makes her day.

"It sure makes you feel better," she says. "It's nice to hear, but if we don't hear it we can't just go home and cry."

When she does have a little time after hours, she likes to read.

"They've got a fantastic library here," she says.

But when the time comes to go out to the men, she drops what she's doing and moves out.

One source of her motivation is easy to find.

"I like what I'm doing." That's how Marcia explains it–straight forward and simple.

Judging from the smiles of the men on the firebases, they like what Marcia's doing too.

This radio-telephone operator from Bravo Company, 1st Battalion 20th Infantry holds his rifle high and dry while crossing a stream. His company was operating approximately 3 miles southeast of LZ Liz. (U.S. Army Photo)

Give your loved ones a MARS call

By PFC Guy Winkler

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO) – Have you got something to say to your wife or parents and haven't got time to wait for a reply through the mail? Give 'em a ring this evening through one of the 70 MARS (Military Affiliate Radio System) stations throughout South Vietnam.

The Army MARS station in Chu Lai puts through an average of 70 calls a day to friends and relatives of soldiers serving in Vietnam. The transmission from Vietnam to the U.S. is free. The only expense involved is the regular collect stateside telephone rate. The time limit is three minutes.

The station cost in the neighborhood of $25,000 and was purchased by Americal and MACV MARS. It has two Log Periodic antennas which operate on three to 30 megacycles, two Quad antennas which operate on 20 and 13 magacycles and a homemade beam which operates on 20 megacycles. The maximum wattage output is 2,500 watts.

Sergeant First Class Alfred D. McClure, one of six operators, says that MARS is "definitely a morale booster."

When calls are placed through MARS, the caller is briefed before hand not to mention where he is or anything related to troop movements or activities. This precaution is stressed to ensure against informing the enemy of military activities in the event of frequency tapping.

Other than sun spot disturbances, which so frequently disrupt transmission throughout the world, most connections through MARS are as audible as talking on the phone with your next door neighbor.

The Army MARS station in Chu Lai operates on a 24-hour basis on two frequencies which are transmitted over the North Pole to the United States.

The conversation half-way around the world works like a regular phone call except for the fact that both parties can't talk at once. Each party speaks for a while then says "over" in order for the other party to say something.

A word from home is a most reqarding experience, even if you might have to wait on a list for several hours to get your call through.

Sergeant First Class Alfred D. McClure, MARS operator, listens intently for the call signal as he transmits one of the 70 calls placed each day to the States by Americal soldiers. (Photo by SSG Tim Palmer)

Religion and you

Our relationship with God

By Chaplain (CPT) James E. Sheil

CHU LAI (DIVARTY IO) – What is religion? There is a difference between "religion" and "a religion."

"Religion" is our relationship with God which exists whether or not we recognize it. It is a relationaship of dependency, since it was God who called us into existance, and of gratitude, because he has done so much for us.

"A religion" is the means we use to acknowledge this relationship with God. We accept a certain format of prayers and practices by which we express our feelings to God in a more or less formal manner.

Sometimes a person says, "I am not a religous man, I am ashamed to pray, because I don't go to Church and I do a lot of things that aren't good. I just don't deserve to pray." Anyone who feels like this certainly does not have a good understanding of who God is. Suppose we check the New Testament. A quick reading shows us that Our Lord spent a great deal of his time with the tax-collectores, sinners, and those who were looked down upon by others. He is quoted as saying "the healthy have no need of a physician," which is the same as sinners have more need of Him than the saints.

There is not one of us that God is not interested in. He will not force us to come to Him, because to do so would be an abuse of our free will. He does keep giving us "hints" and calling us to Him, as many of us will admit to ourselves. We can all point to things that have happened to us which show "somebody up there likes us."

Whether or not we practice a particular religion, each of us should make some effort at personal or privats prayer. It need not be anything elaborate, just an expression of our own feelings to God.

SOUTHERN CROSS AMERICAL DIVISION

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A 178th Aviation Company, "Boxcars", flies out with a load of mortar rounds. The chopper is a CH-47 Chinook that is the main workhorse in Vietnam.
(Photo by SP4 Gerard Paulin, 523rd SIG BN)

Tough Allied combination surprises Viet Cong unit

By SP4 Toby Prodgers

FSB LIZ (11th INF BDE IO) – In some of the heaviest fighting seen recently in southern Quang Ngai Province, a combined element of Division soldiers, National Police Field Force (NPFF), and ARVN Reconnaissance soldiers, supported by "Shark" gunships of the 174th Aviation Company, killed 15 VC and confiscated six enemy rifles near the village of Mo Duc, ten miles north of Duc Pho.

The Recon Platoon, 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry, 11th Infantry Brigade was trucked to Mo Duc's MACV compound from this forward firebase, in response to an intelligence report that a well armed VC unit was working out of a small hamlet near Mo Duc.

At 1:30 a.m., the platoon moved out from the compound over open rice paddies with a squad of NPFF soldiers and took up a position east of the hamlet. Meanwhile, a squad of ARVN Recon soldiers, stripped down in sapper fashion, moved to the west side.

Three hours later, after tightening their blocking position to the east, the Americans fired their small arms over the hamlet to flush the VC into the ARVN position.

The ploy worked perfectly as the enemy rushed out of the hamlet square into the Allies' claymores, producing the night's first enemy casualties.

The VC then reversed their direction, moving toward the Americans and NPFF and both sides exchanged heavy fire.

The enemy barraged the friendly position with AK-47 fire, rocket propelled grenades, and CHICOM hand grenades, but were unsuccessful in their attempt to inflict casualties.

Said NPFF advisor Staff Sergeant Thomas R. Martin, "We did not expect as much resistance as we received. We later learned that they were a hard core unit attempting to organize and train local force VC units."

"They simply couldn't stand up to our fire," Sergeant Martin continued. "They tried to escape through a mangrove swamp but our claymores cut them down. When they went the other way the M-60 machineguns and gunships were waiting. My interpreter, Master Sergeant Giai, did such a fine job of directing gunship fire on the enemy, the pilots thought he was an American soldier."

As "Shark" gunships moved in and placed fire east of the hamlet, the VC withdrew with their wounded and what weapons they could carry.

After the firefight, 15 VC lay dead, four were detained, and six suspected accomplices in the hamlet were held for interrogation. The Allies also policed up four AK-47s and two SKS assault rifles.

Choppers brave clouds to resupply mortarmen

By SP4 William Hayes

LZ WEST (AMERICAL IO) – Just above LZ West, home of the 196th Infantry Brigade's 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry, flat bottomed clouds that formed the foundation of a 1500-foot ceiling scudded southweard through the Division area of operation.

The small group of men working on the resupply pad watched the dense cover as it slid by a few yards above their heads, sealing out the rest of the world from them. Just below the

The surrounding clouds had rolled in fast–so fast that a few Huey choppers in the area had to set down wherever they could on West, rather than to slide between treacherous peaks while flying blind.

Right above the hilltop, a small hole opened in the gray ceiling, hesitated, blinked, and then grew to the size of a football field. The hilltop brightened–not from direct sunlight, but from that eye-squinting brightness reflected from the cotton cumulus clouds that hovered 500 feet above the area.

Through the gaping hole in the ceiling, a CH-47 helicopter swooped toward the LZ on visual approach, a load of mortar ammunition swinging beneath it.

The battalion's mortars had fired almost continously the day before in support of the infantry companies in heavy contact with an enemy main force element right at the foot of the hill.

As the first pallet of mortar ammunition settled to the ground, the hook clutching it to the bird was released. As the Chinook rose to a point just below the dark ceiling and started flying back out of the mountains, the mortarmen were already scrambling over the load, breaking it down for storage and arming.

Through the afternoon, the could cover began to break up, letting more supply helicopters into the hilltop.

The breakdown and stacking of rounds and fuzes continued until dark, when the mortar pits were loaded and the storage bunkers were stretching from the stacks of rounds crammed into them. The mortar platoon was fat–they were again ready for the long sustained contact that would need massive mortar fire.

By sundown, the night's watches had been set, and the men pulling first guard took their places in the pits, waiting for the word that might come at anytime. And the word came soon.

When the section chief cried, "Fire mission!" he wasn't disappointed, the rounds went out.

Hold baggage, how to get it home

By SP4 Thomas Neville

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO) – If you are concerned about shipping goods back home or to your next duty station, then your worries are over.

All Division personnel may ship unaccompanied baggage from the Republic of Vietnam at not cost. The service is offered through the Household Effects Office, which is part of the 226th Supply and Service Company.

According to Staff Sergeant Roger Hagerud, Long Beach, Calif., NCOIC of the facility, "a man may ship home baggage as soon as he receives his PCS orders." He noted that certain weight limitations apply. Authorized weights of shipments vary with rank as follows: grade E-4 may ship 200 pounds; grades E-5 through E-9 may ship 400 pounds; officers in the rank of 01 through 0-5 may ship 600 pounds; 0-6 and 0-7 800 pounds; and Major General and above may ship 1,000 pounds of baggage.

The Household Effects Office is located in Warehouse No. 8 on Rosemary Point (near the AFVN tower). Unaccompanied baggage is accepted Monday through Saturday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Sunday from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Sergeant Hagerud emphasized, "To initiate shipment, personnel must have nine copies of original orders." He added that the individual should provide his own crates for his baggage. "Cardboard or wooden boxes or foot lockers, providing the lockers were not made in Vietnam, are acceptable," he said.

All personal effects, except privately owned vehicles, are considered household goods. However there are requirements on the size of containers. Containers may not exceed 15 cubic feet, 88 inches in length, height or width, or 250 pounds.

"Once the containers are packed, we recommend that the individual place one copy of his orders inside each container," Sergeant Hagerud said.

Certain items are not acceptable for shipment. These include weapons (war trophies), ammunition, tobacco products, medicines, agricultural products, alcoholic beverages and bamboo items which were purchased in Vietnam.

Generally, all CONUS issue items and all goods purchased are acceptable. However, no item which was made in a Communist country will be allowed. A Customs officer will inspect all containers before clearance is given.

"Once the goods process through the Household Effects Office delivery to CONUS takes from 25 to 35 days," Sergeant Hagerud added. Shipments are sent to Da Nang and then flown to the United States. They are then delivered directly to the individual's home or new military address by local commercial carriers.

Gen. Mataxis

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the staff and commanders.

General Mataxis makes his home in Seattle, Washington, with his wife Helma and three children.

While in Vietnam he was awarded two Oak Leaf Clusters to the Legion of Merit, the 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster with V to the Bronze Star Medal, the Air Medal with V and 17 Oak Leaf Clusters, the 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster with V to the Commendation Medal, and the 3rd award of the Combat Infantry Badge. He also received six Vietnamese decorations. The National Order 5th Class, four awards of the Gallantry Cross (two with palms, two with gold star) and the Honor Medal 1st Class.

General Mataxis was promoted to brigadier general March 1, 1967.

Darling new Division CSM

By PFC Guy Winkler

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO) – Command Sergeant Major Fred E. Darling, Arlington, Va., has been selected as command sergeant major of the Division by Major General A.E. Milloy, Commanding General.

Sergeant Major Darling replaces former Sergeant Major Sam S. Borrelli who has been assigned as Sergeant Major to the 1st Battalion, 3rd Brigade, United States Army Training Center, Ft. Dix, N.J.

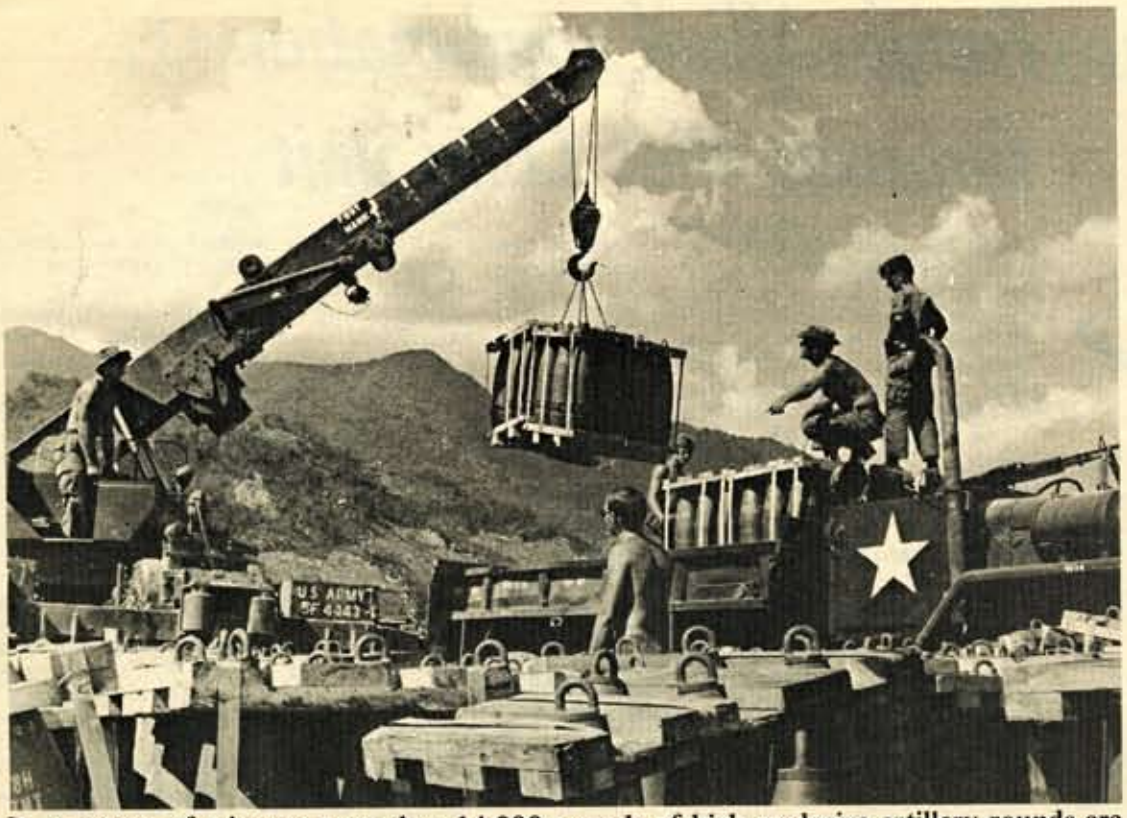
After having served as brigade sergeant major of the 196th Infantry Brigade since January of this year, Sergeant Major Darling is in Vietnam for the first time. Before arriving in Vietnam, he served as brigade sergeant major of the 3rd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division in Germany from January, 1967 to November, 1969.

Upon being assigned to his new job, Sergeant Major Darling says, "I'm sincerely proud to have been selected command sergeant major of the Americal Division by General Milloy. I assure that I will never give reason to destroy his trust in me and I intend to set the example for every NCO in this division by my actions."

On this tour of Vietnam with the Division, Sergeant Major Darling says, "My responsibility will be to guide the NCO in the execution of his work and to correct the mistakes he will make as he learns. Our leadership can be no less than the best here in the Americal where performance is counted in lives saved."

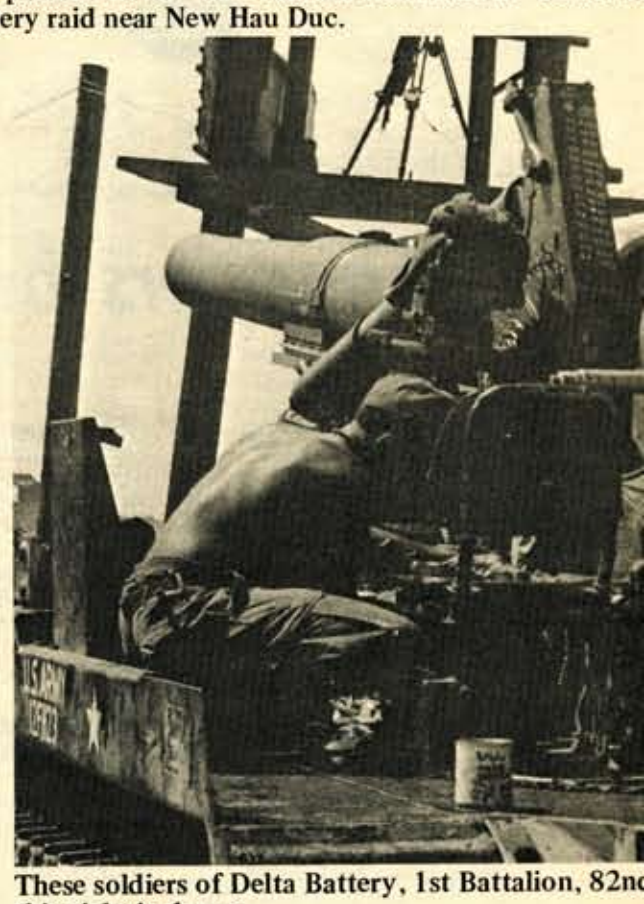
Sergeant Major Darling's military awards and citations include the Combat Infantry Badge, the Bronze Star, and numerous other awards.

CSM Fred E. Darling



In a matter of minutes more than 14,000 pounds of high explosive artillery rounds are off-loaded from a single truck. This isolated fire base is the home of Alpha Battery, 3rd Battalion, 18th Artillery. (Photo by Divarty IO)

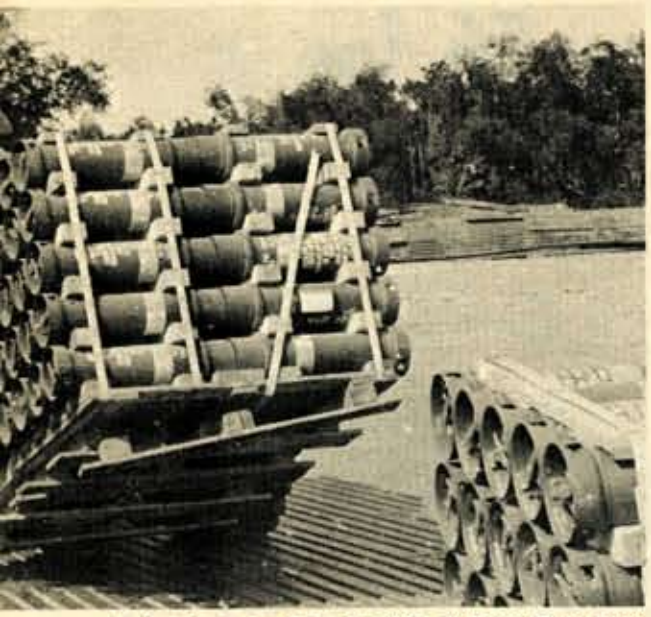
This fork-lift operator gently places 100 sets of powder The powder is for the 155mm howitzers at Bravo Ba artillery raid near New Hau Duc.



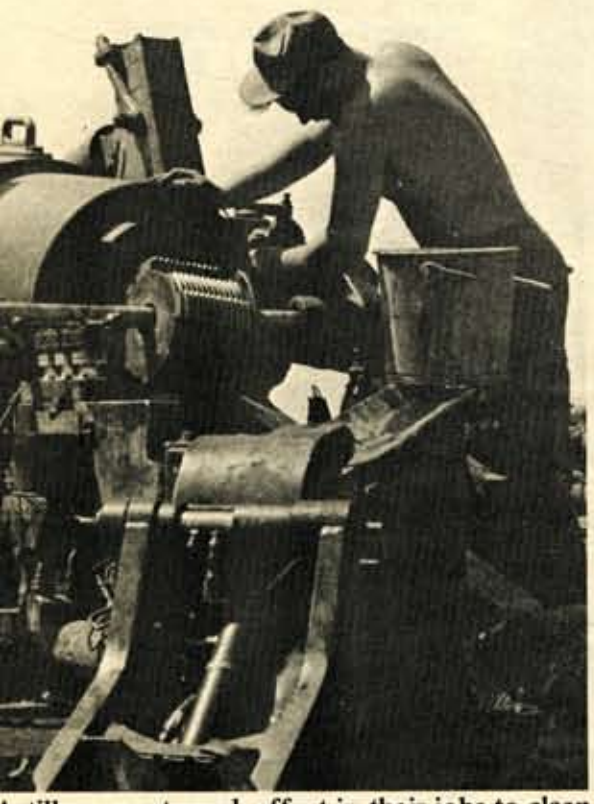
These soldiers of Delta Battery, 1st Battalion, 82nd this eight-inch gun.

Corporal Lamar Newton, New Orleans, La., of Delta Battery, 1st Battalion, 14th Artillery, tightens the fuse on another 'projo' as he refills the ammo pit after a long fire mission. (Photo by SP5 Barnett)

A cannoneer stoops to lift the last round of a 17 Battalion, 11th Artillery fire support for the 11th Int



ncrements in place on the air strip at New Hau Duc.
tery, 3rd Battalion, 16th Artillery during a recent
(Photo by SP4 William Hayes)



Artillery exert much effort in their jobs to clean
(Photo by SP4 Gerald Paulin)

This 105 crew from the 3rd Battalion, 82nd Artillery loads up in preparation for a fire mission. The men were supporting ground troops of the 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry in operations north and west of LZ West.
(Photo by SSG Tim Palmer)

und fire mission. The 'on time' artillery men of Bravo Battery, 6th
ntry Brigade.
(Photo by SP5 A.C. Barnett)

Divarty is on the go come rain or shine

By SP4 G.E. Jensen

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO) -- The artilleryman is one of the unsung heros of war. Next to the infantryman he probably has the most tedious job in Vietnam.

His home for 365 days is the hill. The hill, that in in the dry season seems to stand out as the very focal point of the sun's searing rays. The hill, that in the monsoon reaches up to rupture the heavens which pour out their deluge in revenge.

There are no stand-downs or days off in the rear, there is no rear for him. His only break in "tour-365" comes in the form of R&R.

His only link with the rear is the daily re-supply choppers or an occasional convoy where possible. It brings his letters from home, his water to drink and to bath in, and his ammo and "joes". If the choppers don't come, he goes without till the next one can get in.

Many may think that all he does is load a round in the breech of his howitzer and pull the lanyard, but there is a lot more. That is probably the easiest job he has.

However the rounds come in, by convoy or chopper, he must unload them and stack them in the storage area one by one. He not only unloads projectiles but there is his food, water, and other supplies that have to be hustled around the hill.

He also is a mechanic. He has to keep his guns in firing condition by daily cleaning and adjusting.

As if these things are not enough, he must be alert for the enemy at all times, if not incoming rounds then the ever present sapper waiting for a slack moment.

His is a job which is truely not envied. There is the daily sand blastings from re-supply choppers and if not that there is the mud that adds a pound at every step. A job of long hours, hard work and few rewards.

Hard hitting 'Chargers' account for 56 foe

continued from page 1

all three. Captured in the action was one hammock and two ponchos.

The next day Echo Recon, saw one Viet Cong sitting near a tree in an area south of Chu Lai cleaning his weapon. The infantrymen fired on the enemy to kill him.

Later the same evening, Alpha Company, 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry, saw six NVA maneuvering in mountainous terrain west of Chu Lai. The company fired on the enemy and called on artillery support. A sweep of the area turned up one NVA killed and one CHICOM grenade.

While on a routine patrol the next day, Alpha Company, observed a platoon sized enemy force maneuvering in the heavily vegetated mountainous terrain west of Chu Lai. The company unleashed a heavy barrage of automatic weapons fire to kill five and capture one AK-47.

While in their night laager southwest of Chu Lai the same evening Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry killed two Viet Cong as the enemy approached their location. Captured in the action were two AK-47s, two magazines, one grenade launcher and one field pack containing miscellaneous documents.

Elsewhere, in an area northwest of Quang Ngai, Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry, the next day killed two Viet Cong as the enemy approached their laager. Captured were two AK-47 rifles.

In an action northeast of Quang Ngai, H Troop, 17th Cavalry found 1000 pounds of polished rice hidden in various containers. The rice was bagged and evacuated to a nearby landing zone for distribution to orphanages and refugee centers.

In an area south of Chu Lai, Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry found 900 pounds of unpolished rice hidden in three 55 gallon drums concealed in a hooch. The infantrymen bagged the rice and loaded it on a helicopter for evacuation.

Late in the week H Troop, 17th Cavalry received three artillery rounds, 18 mortar rounds, 16 booby traps, five grenades and two anti-personnel mines from Vietnamese in the area.

In scattered light contacts throughout the week the 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry, accounted for nine enemy killed in as many actions. The 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry tallied four more enemy killed and the 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry were credited with two more killed in the same number of contacts.

Frederick Hill

Early in the week Company B, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry, killed one evading VC as they moved toward their night defensive position. Company C while conducting search and clear missions in the same area discovered 1600 pounds of rice hidden in a large box in an old French built house.

Later in the week Company A and Company C discovered large rice caches while continuing to search for the elusive NVA.

Elements of the 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry netted a weekly total of 15 NVA killed in action while conduting operations west of Tam Ky.

Echo Recon killed three NVA during a small firefight southwest of Tam Ky. The "Assassins" reported engaging the enemy after siting six NVA wearing uniforms and one VC guide in black pajamas moving along a main trail. Three NVA packs were recovered following the incident.

Company C, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry, observed four VC later in the week in an area northwest of Tam Ky. They engaged the enemy with small arms fire and with the help of gunships killed three.

This Cobra gunship from F Troop, 8th Cavalry is homeward bound after providing support for the infantry. The Troop, "Blue Ghost", was inserted in an area suspected to have a VC basecamp. (Photo by SSG L.E. Perkins)

Soldier's life saved by a little ditch

By SGT Chuck Merdzinski

FSB LIZ (11th INF BDE 10) – If you're not in a Sherman tank, chances of surviving the blast of a VC grenade eight inches away from your head are extremely slim. But it happened to a Division soldier, and he walked away with only an earache.

Sergeant Gene Derrickson, Gotham, Wis., from Company A, 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry, of the 11th Infantry Brigade was sleeping near a mortar tube in a night defensive position one mile north of Duc Pho when VC terrorists lobbed three grenades into the perimeter. Hours before, while preparing a place to sleep he had covered his dug-in position with a poncho for shelter. Because it was raining, he added a shallow drainage ditch around the hole to catch water running off the poncho and keep it out of the depression. The two-inch ditch saved his life later that night by stopping the momentum of a rolling grenade that would have dropped into the hole and onto his head.

"For five minutes I didn't know what happened," said Sergeant Derrickson. "I didn't even know it was a grenade." His poncho was shredded by shrapnel from the blast, but he wasn't wounded because the fragments from the grenade passed over his one foot deep sleeping position. He only had a slight earache and was ready for duty the next day.

Staff Sergeant Vincent Burk, Bellefourche, S.D., checked the area in the morning and found the spot where the VC had thrown the grenades. "It looked like they were trying to damage the mortar tube because they threw the grenades from about 35 yards away," said Sergeant Burk. "They probably watched us as we moved into the position and knew where the tube was set up," he said.

Doctor removes grenade

By SP4 Peter Sorensen

CHU LAI (11th INF BDE 10) – An armed 40mm grenade round was surgically removed from the right arm of a 2nd ARVN Division soldier in a recent emergency operation performed at the 91st Evacuation Hospital. The successful 15 minute operation was executed by Doctor (MAJ) Paul C. Vose, Denver, Colo., and Captain Elizabeth G. Gorman, Jr., Army Nurse Corps.

"A medical evacuation helicopter from Quang Ngai City radioed ahead that it was bringing in a patient with a M-79 round lodged in his arm. Immediately, a square of sandbag blast walls was built on the hospital helipad, and an EOD (explosive ordnance disposal) team was called in from the 133rd Ordnance Detachment," recalled Captain Gorman.

When the patient, Pham Van Hoa, arrived he was carefully carried by stretcher to the make shift, open-air surgery. The heat of the afternoon was compounded by the hyper-tense situation and the medical personnels' apparel–flak jackets and steel helmets.

Doctor Vose made a two inch incision above the right elbow and carefully lifted the projectile out of the wound. Once freed, the round was gingerly passed to the EOD team of Captain William Pedley, Chicago, and Staff Sergeant Edmond Kent, Paris, Tenn., who hand carried it in a cradle of gauze across the helipad to an adjoining cliff where it was blown in place.

Commented Doctor Vose, "The biggest problem, other than detonation of the round which I tried not to think about, was the repair of the brachial artery which had been severed. After the round was removed with the use of a local anesthetic, the patient was wheeled into the operating room where the artery was tied off."

Concluded Captain Gorman, "The patient was kind of shaken. We were all strangers to him, and I imagine he didn't quit know what was going on. When we heard the explosion, he looked up and you could tell by his face that he was mighty thankful."

1st-46th uncovers cache

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Fla., third platoon sergeant.

As the day wore on the third platoon came closer and closer to its objective.

"There was a hill to climb," commented pointman Specialist Four Terry Burgess, Eugene, Ore., "so we decided to take a quick breather at the creek that was just ahead before tackling the steep slope."

After a smoke and a sip of water, the "Professionals" of the 46th Infantry started up from the creek toward the dense ridge lines. Specialist Burgess and squad leader Sergeant Roger Grigg, Clover, S.C., noticed a large old box lying in a vegetated draw.

"We went down to get a closer look at the box and saw a couple of rifles sticking over the top," stated Sergeant Grigg. "We scrambled down the trench line to investigate further and spotted a 50-gallon drum filled with weapons.

The company rejoined and established tight security around the unlikely hiding place.

Commenting on the happy surprise, radio operator Specialist Four George Hardmyer, Mott, N.D., "It was a lucky find, but in this game, we take it any way it comes."

Humpin' it. With a wary eye and a heavy load this "Jungle Warrior" from the 11th Infantry Brigade looks about. His unit, Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry was working 15 miles south of Chu Lai. (Photo by SP4 Herbert Brady, 523rd SIG BN)

Are you going on R&R? Remember there are three items you must have with you when you leave. They are an up-to-date shot record, identification card and a minimum of $250. There is no limit on the amount of money you can take except that anything over $500 requires a commanders certificate.

'Re-charger' means release and relief

By SGT Bob Nordyke

LZ HAWK HILL (196th INF BDE 10) -- Company D, 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry, spent almost three months in the bush, going with the fighting from Hau Duc to Hiep Duc with no break, except 12 days of bunker guard duty on LZ Professional.

The war is forgotten now for a few days, or at least pushed to the rear of each man's mind and kept submerged there by live entertainment, cold beer, and plenty of sleep.

Delta Company is in Chu Lai on re-charger--the field soldier's reward for doing the real fighting of the war, and the 196th Infantry Brigade company is lucky. Because of the break in scheduling, it gets four days of rest before retuning to the field--most companies get three.

And though brief, the days of re-charger are important to the men. Delta's company commander, First Lieutenant Thomas Crane, Bayville, N.Y., explained: "Really, re-charger is about all an infantryman has to look forward to, except R&R and of course DEROS."

For most of the men, re-charger means release. "That's the best part," said Specialist Four Ralph Allen, Nevada, Mo. "You're free--there's no hassle. And there's no worry about getting shot at."

Private First Class Larry Stratton, Brand Blanc, Mich., considered re-charger from another perspective: "It's the closest you (an infantryman) can be to living in the rear."

"It's just a change from the bush," added Sergeant Ronnie Eaton, Vincent, Ohio. "It must be good the way everybody looks forward to it."

What there is to look forward to cannot really be understood by a casual on-looker. It requires a man from the field to appreciate the small things that re-charger offers.

Like a clean set of fatigues, or a shower every day, sometimes even with hot water, or a bed with a mattress, or spending the whole night without pulling guard, or three (count 'em) hot meals a day.

Re-charger begins with an airlift of the company to Chu Lai by giant CH-47 Chinook helicopters, then on to the 196th Infantry Brigade re-charger area located next to the beach.

Priority one is locking up all weapons and ammo--they are not needed. The men are given a place to sleep and a quick briefing before being set loose.

Captain Eugene Shurtz, Davenport, Iowa, officer in charge of the area, has the unenviable job of keeping the restless soldiers in the theater bleachers for a twenty-minute talk.

The session consists of Captain Shurtz explaining where all facilities are located, beach safety, uniform requirements ("...it's up to your CO what you can wear in the area."), no hard liquor allowed, what floor shows have been contracted, and ends with a quiet plea of let yourself go, but within reason.

Then for a few days, the men are free to simply enjoy themselves as much as they can.

Nothing about re-charger is opulent or luxurious, but there is much to enjoy.

There is the beach by day and floor shows and movies at night, the nearest thing to a real female the men will see in a long time.

The food is some of the best in Vietnam, especially after weeks of C-rations. Two afternoons are devoted to steak bar-b-ques, and there is always plenty to drink.

Other diversions for the men include MARS and Red Cross telephones to call home, a tape library and tape dubbing facilities, chapel services, and the beach.

Asked what more re-charger could offer, Private First Class Jack Ketner replied," "...Just longer and more often." From most soldiers, the question quickly prompted a different reply--female companionship.

A rest for 4th-31st

By SP4 William Hayes

LZ WEST (AMERICAL 10) -- High above the floor of Que Son Valley, Company C, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry of the 196th Infantry Brigade walked into the perimeter of this fire support base after nearly a week of fighting their way through an enemy battalion headquarters.

Company C, along with Company A of the same battalion, had walked into the enemy position as they headed toward the valley floor from this 445 yard high home of the "Polar Bear" battalion.

Meeting stiff resistance from the surprised enemy, the companies moved in under fire, with forward observers directing mortar and artillery fire on the NVA strong points. Tactical air strikes slammed into the camouflaged enemy bunkers ringing the area.

Throughout the contact, Firebird gunships of the 71st Aviation Company provided massive close support for the ground units.

With enemy-contact still substantial, C Company was relieved by Company D and climbed the hill to rest on the bunker line.

Sporadic enemy fire near the perimeter had awakened the men who slept while others stood guard, but during the day men began to get their rest and treat their sores they'd picked up on the operations they'd been on in recent weeks.

During the day, the mail helicopter brought newspapers and magazines along with letters from home. One or two of the men received color slides they'd sent to the States for processing, and showed them around as each one was taken from the box.

"Here's one of you, Doc," one said as he offered a slide to the medic sitting across the ammo box from him.

One of the other riflemen cast a critical eye over the medic's shoulder. "Jesse Doc," he winced, "I didn't think you were that ugly."

"I wasn't ugly, I was funky and tired," Doc countered.

"Ugly and funky and tired are all the same thing," Shorty pointed out.

During the course of the day, some of the men of Charlie Company could be seen shaving, using water sparingly to be sure there would always be enough to drink on "the hill."

They couldn't look forward to a long time on West, but each day they spend on "the hill" they become a little less funky, a little less ugly.

Tells it like it is—

What can a parent to do help a child who is abusing dangerous drugs or narcotics?

Talk about it and try to understand why this behavior is taking place. Ideally, a relevant alternative to drug misuse can be figured out. Increased family interest and involvment in the child's daily activities will help. Professional advice may be desirable. Some communities have programs run by ex-users.

When the youngster is intent upon continuing his drug taking, the problem is much more difficult. Solutions must be individualized. In some instances, it may be desirable to point out that the family cannot be expected to support the drug-talking activity. Psychotherapy may be necessary, but it usually is not successful if the patient is resistant to change. Arbitrary restriction of the youngster may or may not work. If he runs away or is apprehended in some illegal act, he should know that the family will support and help him as soon as he decides to alter his destructive pattern of drug taking and antisocial behavior. What more can be done to curb the

174th bowls over 34 foe

By SP4 Peter R. Sorensen

FSB BRONCO (11th INF BDE IO) – In two days of three related contacts with enemy soldiers, the 174th Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter) flying in support of the 4th ARVN Regiment was credited with 34 enemy dead.

The action, which occurred four miles southwest of Quang Ngai City, was an ARVN initiated offensive against enemy sanctuaries and staging areas in the Song Ve River Valley from which recent enemy thrusts at Nghia Hanh Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) Camp and Quang Ngai were launched.

The 1st Battalion, 4th Regiment was combat assaulted into lowlands south of Nghia Hanh by "Dolphin" utility ships of the 174th. Successive lifts received enemy fire.

On the third day of the operation, the battalion was jumped to a new location by Lieutenant Colonel Le Ba Khieu, commanding officer of the 4th ARVN Regiment.

Colonel Khieu taking advantage of the military situation committed his men employing one elemenet as a blocking force and engaging another element on a strategic hilltop. The hilltop proved rugged, not only in its terrain. It was discovered to be a fortified enemy position. Commented "Shark" pilot Second Lieutenant John I. O'Sullivan, Brooklyn, N.Y., "The NVA were well dispersed and heavily dug-in. We saturated the hilltop with rockets and mini-and machinegun fire."

Lieutenant O'Sullivan, First Lieutenant Joseph R. Brandt, Newton, Iowa, Chief Warrant Officer James E. Rich, Wilminton, N.C., and Chief Warrant Officer Ronald D. Robertson, Dallas, Tex., poured 144 rockets into the enemy stronghold during the day-long battle. "Coming back from a quick rearming and fueling run, we were told that the NVA had withdrawn. A visual recon of the hilltop took fire. They were still there and not leaving, so we continued to pour it on," said Lieutenant O'Sullivan.

An ARVN sweep of the once hostile hilltop uncovered 15 "Shark" victims, bringing the gunship toll for the three-day operation to 34. Also located were two destroyed .51 caliber heavy machineguns.

Americal units deprive the enemy of his rice

By SP5 Richard Merritt

LZ HAWK HILL (196th INF BDE IO) – Several lowland villages in northern Quang Tin Province have sold rice to the VC for two decades. Infantrymen on sweep from the 196th Infantry Brigade have dug up record books dating from 1958 and earlier. The illegal sales peak comes during the spring harvest in April and May. For one and one-half months villagers harvest the grain while VC infiltrators negotiate with those who will help them. They plead, they bully, they threaten. But it doesn't always work.

"We know the enemy is hungry," says Major Lee Tessmer, Colorado Springs, Colo., Civil Affairs head at the 196th.

What Major Tessmer alludes to is a combination infantry-civil affairs rice denial plan that closes in on the enemy's food, or more exactly the people he deals with to obtain it.

"Our people handle the psychological end," adds First Lieutenant William Lyle, Merritt Island, Fla., Major Tessmer's assistant. "We write, duplicate and direct the aerial distribution of leaflets aimed at sympathetic villagers--people we suspect are selling their rice."

Rice denial has become a curse to the VC. Indications are that the NVA exerted desperate pressure on the VC to obtain food for them this spring. But some of the old renegade villages just didn't come through. Disastrous floods late last year blotted out numerous crops and left shortages, plenty for storage but none to sell. Since a show of force would accomplish nothing, the VC had to bargain quietly. They came out badly.

Ground units sliced into the hidden storage areas at the same time. Alpha Company, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry, directed its platoons into recalcitrant towns in northern Tam Ky District, about 15 miles north of the city of Tam Ky. Sergeant Bob Nordyke, Ottawa, Kans., a former squad leader details the cordon and search of a village known to conceal large deposits of enemy rice.

"We split two men out from each squad to search while the rest deployed around the hamlet. Small amounts of rice were found in tin buckets, but not as much as we expected," recalled Sergeant Nordyke.

The Vietnamese interpreters then questioned an old woman. She took them to a patch of shrubs surrounding several loose stacks of hay. "The rice was held in huge woven baskets hidden in pits beneath each haystack. We loaded 15 sacks out of one pit."

Civil Affairs takes pride in its role. Interpreters attached to the team help make up rice denial messages that they can present most appealingly to the enemy. They talk to ralliers to pick up pointers.

The best measure of their success says Major Tessmer, cannot be calculated by a row of figures. "We've got 8,000 pounds of rice on Hawk Hill," Major Tessmer emphasized, "kept here for emergency use. Only one battalion has asked for any heavy amount of rice recently, and that was due to refugees drifting in to escape a major battle to the west. We used to supply a lot of rice but now it's piling up. I think we've reached a new plateau of accomplishment."

An ingenius method of "thumping" is used by these 11th Infantry Brigade soldiers to find buried rice. These men are from Alpha Company, 4th Battalion, 21st Infantry. The men tap the ground and listen for a hollow sound and when they hear, they dig.
(Photo by SP4 Ron Adams)

Sergeant Marty Kristo, De Pue, Ill., uncovers a buried enemy rice cache. Numerous caches were discovered by the 4th Battalion, 21st Infantry while on a sweep of the "rice bowl" five miles south of Duc Pho.
(Photo by Sp4 Ron Adams)

Team work gets results

By PFC Richard Campbell

LZ HAWK HILL (196th INF BDE IO) – Rapid coordination between a Division liaison team and a 155mm howitzer battery several miles away brought a crippling barrage of fire upon an NVA company, killing 17 enemy and wounding numerous others.

The liaison tean, sent from the 196th Infantry Brigade's 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry, is permanently stationed at a Vietnamese Popular Force (PF) outpost 10 miles north of Tam Ky. The team's purpose is to give military advice and to call for indirect fire support. On this evening the four-man team performed with devastating results.

"It was about dusk when suddenly the PF leader ran over to me shouting NVA - NVA," recalled Sergeant Ken Abbey, Walbridge, Ohio, liaison team leader. "A PF patrol had spotted more than 100 NVA with AK-47s and packs moving toward the south."

Several rounds from an 81mm mortar at the PF camp fell short of the target so Sergeant Abbey quickly called for artillery support.

"When we received the call for fire, we weren't sure whether we could shoot that far," recalled First Lieutenant Roderick Dexter, Birmingham, Ala., fire direction center officer for Alpha Battery, 3rd Battalion, 16th Artillery. "The grid was right on our maximum range, but we got two guns ready and continued to process the data."

In several minutes, the mighty 155s had rounds on the way and the liaison team was inposition to observe and adjust them on the moving enemy.

"Before we knew it the artillery rounds were landing," reported Sergeant Abbey, and after only one adjustment they were right on the money. We didn't know right then exactly what the resutls were, but we were certain the NVA had suffered heavy casualties."

A PF patrol the following morning confirmed the 17 kills.