SOUTHERN CROSS

AMERICAL DIVISION

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Americal, 101st, Fight Foe In Lamar Plain

"SCREAMING EAGLES" deplane from C-130s that carried them from their nesting place near Phu Bai to the Tam Ky Airport to engage in Operation Lamar Plain. The mid-afternoon arrival enabled the soldiers to begin activity the next morning under the operational control of the Americal. (Photo by PFC Dean Williams, Americal IO)

TAM KY—After almost a month of scattered fighting in the tangled mountains southeast of Tien Phuoc, "Screaming Eagles" of the 101st Abn. Div. and elements of the Americal Div. are continuing to bring Operation Lamar Plain to the enemy's doorstep.

The operation began May 15 as the 1st Bde, 101st Div., and its organic support units were airlifted into Tam Ky airport to relieve pressure from an enemy buildup in the Tam Ky-Tien Phuoc-LZ Professional triangle.

The Americal's 1st Bn., 46th Inf., was placed under the paratroopers' operational control, and Lamar Plain began its search for the probing enemy.

By the second week in June, the U.S. forces had accounted for more than 130 NVA and 40 VC killed throughout the area. Intelligence officials identified the enemy as elements of two regiments of the 2nd NVA Div.

The partnership with the Americal, and even the particular area of I Corps, are not new to the history of the 101st. The division's 1st Bde was an integral part of Task Force Oregon in 1967, and became part of the division when it was reactivated in September, 1967.

Action in the Lamar Plain operational area began the second week in May when a small South Vietnamese observation post on Nui Yon Hill, five miles south of here, was overpowered by a combined NVA-VC force. Almost simultaneously, sapper units attacked LZs Professional and Young to the west.

Overwhelmed Enemy

During the next few days, Cos. A and C, 1-46 Inf., began operating in the valley just north of LZ Professional, meeting heavy contact almost immediately and continuously for several days. The enemy was described as "fierce and well dug-in."

CPT David Bergeron (Hamilton, Ohio), commander of Co. A, said, "The troops fought hard against a larger and well fortified force. We had to go in and dig them out. The enemy was everywhere, but we overran their positions and knocked them out with close-in fire."

The size and strength of the enemy throughout the area indicated that a major build-up was in progress, and planners called for other troops that wouldn't pull Americal soldiers from their stations in other strategic areas. The 101st answered the call.

Tough Fighting

After their arrival here, the brigade began operations on May 16, and encountered only sporadic fire.

Action increased significantly on May 18 as Co. B, 1st Bn., 501st Inf., was engaged in an all-day firefight against a hidden enemy

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New COs Join Units

CHU LAI—The Americal Div. welcomed two new brigade commanders and a trio of new battalion COs to its ranks in recent weeks.

The reins of the 196th Inf. Bde. were taken by COL Thomas H. Takaberry (Fairfax, Va.), while COL Jere O. Whittington (Kilgore, Tex.) is the new leader of the 198th.

COL Takaberry, who succeeded COL Frederick Kroesen, came to Vietnam after serving as military assistant in the office of the Undersecretary of the Army in Washington. He previously served here from July 1966

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Ho's Birthday Party Dampened

'Legionnaires' Zap Sappers

LZ BALDY—The quick reaction of this fire support base was credited with aborting an estimated NVA company-sized attack and left 31 enemy dead inside the perimeter.

Sapper teams, with satchel charges, Chicom grenades, AK-47s, AK-50s, and RPG-7 rocket launchers, were apparently trying to give Ho Chi Minh a special birthday victory.

But defenders of the 196th Inf. Bde. and supporting elements quickly threw a wet blanket on the birthday party. The infiltrators inflicted light damage before being cut down inside the wall.

Capture Weapons

Fighting continued until after dawn, when patrols discovered 29 enemy bodies and gathered more than 125 Chicom grenades, 25 satchel charges, six AK-47s, three AK-50s, and six RPG launchers.

Three of the launchers, with night sights, were of the latest Russian-make.

"These were brand new launchers," said CPT Robert Netter (Kingston, N.Y.), 2nd Bn., 1st Inf. intelligence officer. "They apparently did not even get a chance to fire them," he added.

The early morning quiet was broken when Rangers reported the enemy slipping through the wire, and called for illumination.

Exact Quantities

1LT Donald Fanelle (Pennasuken, N.J.), 2/1 Hq. Co. commander and duty officer for the night, took the call at the battalion TOC.

"We've got sappers moving through the wire, sir," advised the Ranger trooper.

"How many?" queried 1LT Fanelle.

"A lot of them, sir."

"How many is a lot them?" shouted the lieutenant, already calling for illumination.

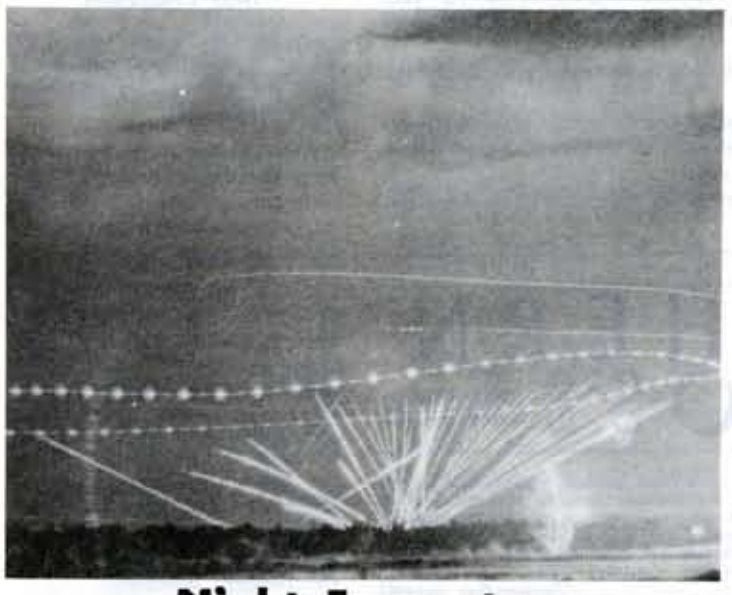
At a hootch overlooking the perimeter line, SSG Frederick J. Fekete (Newark, Ohio) had just awakened to the red alert when he spotted a sapper team climbing up below his bunker.

One-man Gang

An NVA hurled a satchel charge at the bunker, but it bounced from the window screen and exploded harmlessly. Seizing his M-16 SSG Fakete blasted the pair through the screen.

Leaving the bunker, he finished one with a blow from his rifle butt and shot the other hidden in the brush. They were armed with satchel charges, Chicom grenades and an AK-50 assault rifle.

Fekete recalled how he felt during the encounter. "I just reacted," he said. "I was out in the bush for 11 months. Out there you learn to react." (196th IO)



Night Encounter

"Shark" gunships from the 174th Aslt. Hel. Co. engage VC position beyond perimeter of LZ Bronco during recent enemy attacks. Time exposure was used to record the paths of the fiery tracers. (Photo by SP4 Steve Tipton, 11th Bde. IO)

Religion and You

Who Needs Security?

By CHAPLAIN (LTC) JACK C. RANDLES
Asst. Div. Chaplain

I recently stumbled across a brief editorial that stirred some thoughts in me, and is shared with you to the end that it might stir you. Margaret Mitchell wrote "Gone With the Wind." That was a significant fact back in the 40's. It was in 1940 that Miss Mitchell wrote something that is of special importance today.

A young college friend of hers had written her that in his opinion he and his college mates "had been cruelly cut away from the faith of our fathers by solid facts... We have found it hard to look ahead to any good world for ourselves. We have cried out for security, have yearned for it more than any other blessing. And we have been constantly warned that, of all things, security was the one we were least likely to find."

Miss Mitchell wrote this friend a letter in which she stated her philosophy, but she did not mail the letter. The letter was revealed in a biography of the late authoress written in 1955 by Finis Farr.

The letter begins as follows: "I arise to ask, in a loud, hoarse voice, 'Who the hell ever promised you and your generation security. And, most important of all, why should any youth want security? Yet the old and the tired; who have fought the good fight and run the race, think of security, not the young."

"...There is something very frightening about young people of a nation crying out to be secure," she goes on to say about their bitterness and disgruntlement if it is not handed to them on a silver platter.

"Ever since the New Deal came into being the young ones have been told that they are God's chosen creatures, that the world not only owes them a living but an awfully good time. Granted that your generation has been told this, why on earth have you believed it?

"Surely, your generation can't be so foolish as to swallow all this whole and then feel that you have the right to be bitter and frustrated when things don't work out as promised. Surely, common sense and the experience of your elders and the perspective of history and the knowledge of human nature should have made you realize that these things were untrue and unforceable," she said.

Her letter has something to say to us today—we may not like it but personal opinion never changes facts.

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AMERICAL DIVISION

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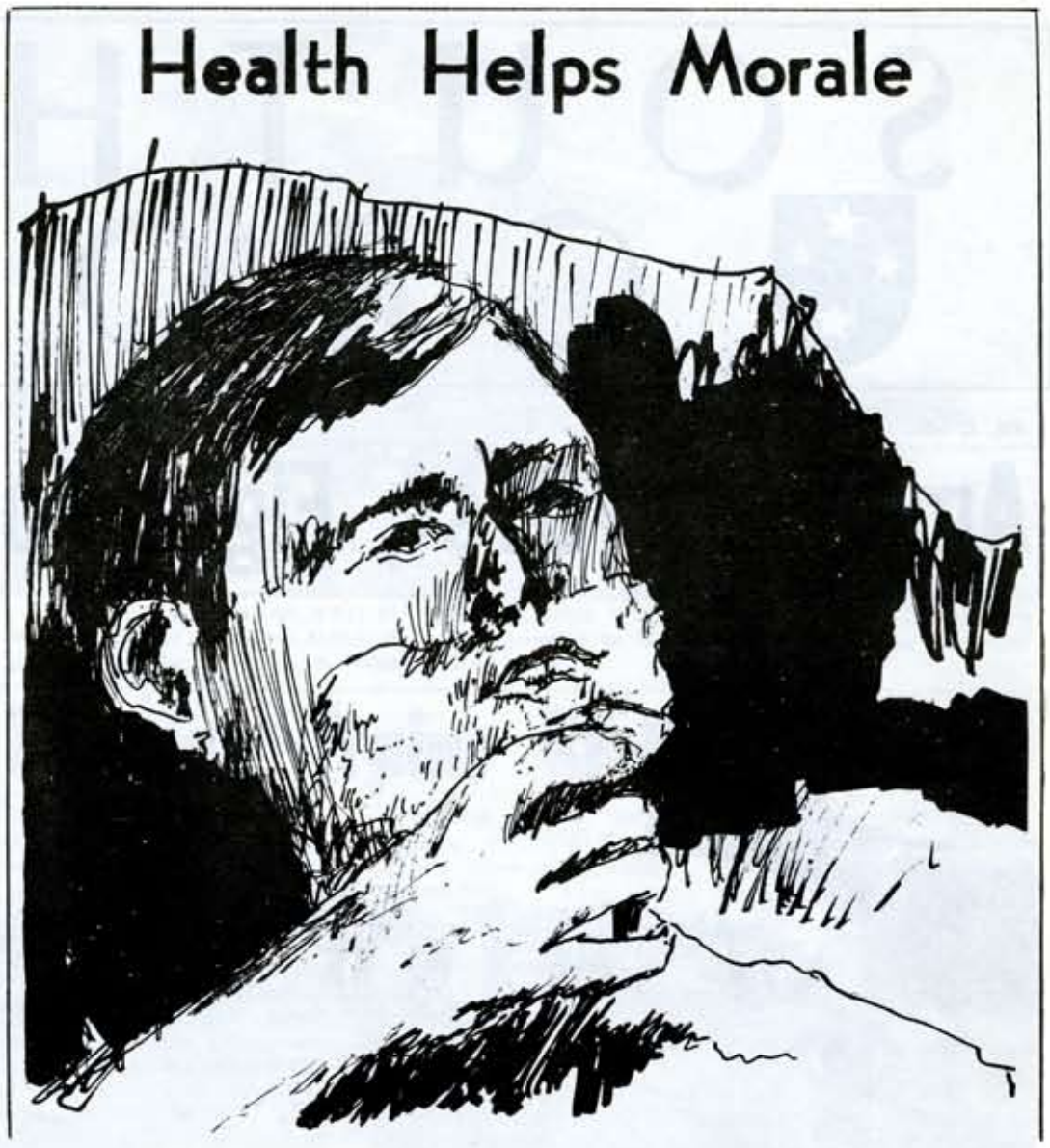
Health Helps Morale



By SP5 ED CONAWAY

The hot jungle bites into the soldier's body. It is summer in Vietnam, and bugs, heat, and dirt are the soldier's companions.

The mud in the rice paddies, the dusty roads, the sweaty fatigues—and the day ends in sleep for a tired, dirty soldier.

Bad conditions are no excuse for ignoring body health, especially in Vietnam. The healthy man is alert even though his present world is fraught with hazards.

Take inventory and ask yourself, "under present conditions, do I take every precaution to maintain good health?"

Review your health habits and check them against three handy hints.

Hair Conditions

A tangle of knotted hair under a steel pot can be a trap for all the dirt and heat of a jungle day.

It is cooler and cleaner to keep the hair cut short. Short hair means less trips to the barbers, and Vietnam has its share of dirty barbers.

Scalp infections are generally caused by dirty barbering tools, and the massage he gives you might damage a nerve in your neck.

Pimples are hard to avoid because dirt and grime cake on the face from secreted body oil. You may have developed a slight case of acne, but it can be cured quickly by frequent washings.

Your eyes and ears are life savers especially when Charlie is around, so keep your dirty fingers out of them.

Oral hygiene is a problem because a toothbrush is not always handy. If you can't brush, rinse your mouth out with water, it is better than nothing, and helps prevent decay.

Gums are kept healthy by massaging them. If you find your gums bleeding while you are brushing, you are not brushing regularly enough. So take the hint, and take the time to clean your teeth.

The weatherman has not planned any balmy days in the near future so expect to have a little heat rash.

Loose, baggy trousers is a good start, also try going without underwear for awhile, and wash the area with a mild soap, drying the area thoroughly.

The heat rash you have may be a fungus so here's a check list: Heat rash comes on sudden, a fungus takes longer; heat rash may itch without a rash, it may take a fungus a week before it itches; and heat rash covers a larger area quicker than a fungus.

A common location of fungus is the foot. To prevent trouble keep the feet dry, use powder, and clip the toenails frequently.

There are many types of venereal disease, and the best prevention is avoiding the source. If you think you have it, get a check-up by a doctor, don't be foolish and ignore the symptons.

Animal bites can have dire consequences if not attended to immediately. In the first instance, stay away from strange animals, and always assume that all snakes are poisonous.

For dog and monkey bites bring the animal in for observation when you come in for treatment. If you must destroy the animal do not shoot it in the head.

The medic will be able to determine if you need the rabies shots. If a rat bites you, plan on getting the shots.

Limber-up

All snakes that bite are not poisonous, but if the area is painful and begins to swell, the snake probably is.

Place a tourniquet above the bite, but not so tight that it cuts the circulation, and report immediately for medical treatment.

There are many ways to combat the insects, and it is wise to take advantage of them. Take your pills, sleep under a net, use spray and repellent, and at night expose the least amount to skin surface.

A little exercise in the morning and before bed will keep the muscles toned, and you will be less susceptible to strains and sprains.

Nothing elaborate, just some knee bends, sit-ups, and push-ups will suffice.

The lazy man is not going to be healthy in Vietnam. Take the time and DEROS healthy.

MEDCAP Milestone

"Brave and Bold" medic from 1st Bn., 6th Inf., SP4 Carl J. Aikens (Bay City, Mich.), removes a splinter from the foot of the 50,000 MEDCAP patient from the Ky Sanh Village area. (Photo by SP4 Art Noel, 523rd Sig. Bn.)

Hoi Chanh Number 1 For 3-1 Infantrymen

By SP4 TONY SWINDELL

LZ BRONCO—A soldier-medic with the 3rd NVA Div. surrendered himself to the 2nd ARVN Div. at Quang Ngai under the Chieu Hoi program.

Two days later, he proved his sincerity when he saved two wounded Americans during an ambush, and became a casualty himself in the attempt.

The former enemy soldier told his interrogators that his whole company wanted to Chieu Hoi, but were afraid. He agreed to cooperate with the "Jungle Warriors" in convincing his old unit to give up.

Airborne Message

From a helicopter, the Hoi Chanh guided the Americans to an area eight miles southwest of Duc Pho, where he said his company was dug in. Circling the area, he broadcast a message which said in part:

"Dear friends, all the cadre in the NVA have lied. They brought us to South Vietnam to die from attacks, lack of food, and medical supplies. Word of your death does not reach your families.

On Patrol

"Dear friends Nam, Lang, Huong, Chanh, Khoa, and Dung, I know you are unhappy, sick, hungry, thirsty, and want to leave the NVA. You will receive good treatment if you turn yourself in. Follow my example."

The next day, he volunteered to accompany B Co., 3-1 Inf. into the area he pointed out before.

Leading an "Always First" element down a well-worn trail, the former NVA pointed out several empty bunkers which were heavily fortified with dirt and stone.

Several hundred meters from the suspected enemy location, he halted the element and warned them of the enemy presence ahead.

The B Co. soldiers approached the location cautiously, but the NVA opened up on them, pinning them down.

Spotting two wounded American soldiers laying in the line of fire, the Hoi Chanh jumped from his cover and attempted to drag the soldier to safety, but he was cut down by the enemy fire.

Gusty Fellow

"We were a little suspicious of him at first," said 1LT Thomas E. Petty (Oklahoma City, Okla.), 3rd Plt. Ldr., "but he kept leading us to signs of recent enemy activity. When we had two men hurt, he went right in after them. The guy is a gusty little fellow."

"It really surprised me how cooperative he was," noted SP4 Edward A. Marchinkoski (Cromwell, Conn.), a squad leader. "He volunteered to walk point all day, and really went into action when we were hit."

Friendly Persuasion

Recovering in a Chu Lai hospital, the former NVA soldier said that he wants to return to the field and help convince his old comrades-in-arms to turn themselves in.

"We are tired and want to go home," he said. "Only when the war ends can we do this, and I want to help end it." (11th IO)

Launch Anti-Plague Drive

LZ BRONCO—Doctors of Hospital "B," 23rd Med. Bn. recently concluded a four-day campaign against the plague.

The campaign was inspired by CPT Louis D. Ellis (Philadelphia), who, realizing that the number of plague cases was on the increase in the area, contacted Vietnamese government officials and acquired the serum from them. The serum used was manufactured in Saigon.

"Approximately 12,000 people in the Duc Pho area were inoculated during the operation," explained Dr. Ellis. "We accomplished this with the help of Vietnamese doctros and nurses who inoculated villagers around the Duc Pho area."

The American doctors treated children at three locations in Duc Pho: the Catholic Orphanage, the Public Forces Dispensary, and the Duc Pho Provincial Hospital.

"Children are most susceptible to the plague," commented Dr. (CPT) Raymond Hurm, (Cincinatti), "and for this reason it is important to make certain they get the serum."

Dr. (CPT) Bruce Cutler (Wilmington, Del.) emphasized that the medical program is designed to teach the Vietnamese as well as provide them with much needed medical attention.

"We give medical treatment and train them to care for themselves," he said "and in a short time the Vietnamese doctors we trained will care for their people with little assistance from us." (11th IO)

K-C Counts To Three Causes NVA To Flee

TAM KY—A young Kit Carson Scout suddenly realized that one and one never equal three and took action to correct the addition and probably saved the lives of an Americal lieutenant and a fellow interpreter.

B Co., 2nd Bn., 1st Inf. was conducting a search and clear patrol on Hill 300, eight miles northwest of here, when 1st plt. ldr., 1LT David E. Yates (Chesapeake, Va.) called for a break.

Tactical Sniff

While footweary infantrymen formed a perimeter and sat down to relax, SGT Tran Kinh Thuong, the Kit Carson Scout, continued to cast about like a nervous bloodhound sniffing out clues. Near the perimeter, he discovered a new and freshly-used trail.

"Thuong ranges around a lot on his own and is pretty good at finding things, and we decided to check it out," said 1LT Yates. So he and Thuong moved down the trail as another Kit Carson Scout, SGT Nguyen Van Ngoc watched from above.

"Click." What sounded like a rifle "safety" snapped in the brush and the two dropped to the ground. Moving slowly off the trail to check they found nothing.

Two's Company

From his vantage point above, SGT Ngoc watched the three men approaching up the trail. "What was that?" He looked again. "Yes there were three!" 1LT Yates and SGT Thuong were being followed at a distance by a NVA with an AK-47.

A short burst barked from SGT Ngoc's M-16, and a very suprised NVA crashed into the brush leaving behind his pistol belt, a hammock and three AK-47 magazines.

"He could have gotten us both easily," said 1LT Yates. "I'm sure glad Ngoc was watching closely enough to notice the extra man." (196th IO)

Hang A Left, Then . . .

An ARVN soldier questions a villager during a cordon and search operation near Tam Ky. The Vietnamese woman led the ARVN unit to a VC arms cache. (Photo by SP5 Bill Guerrant, Americal IO)

One's Quiet Ma

oments

Poem and Art By SGT ALFRED ANTHONY
198th Inf. Bde.

We are strangers in this country . . .
During our hectic days
We may pass without noticing
Our rewards for coming here.

We can easily see the blisters of war
On the flesh of the land
But the people themselves
Carry our prize.

Those who are free to work their farms
To harvest every substance for their lives
The greatest of which may be
A substance of determination
To rebuild what has fallen

These are people who possess the attributes of their country
You see the strength of the mountains in their hands
The clarity of mountain waters in their eyes
The determination of the forests in their faces.

Our reward for coming here is to see these people at peace
We are helping to keep harmony in their lives.

Combat In Review

DUSTY ACAV from E Trp., 1st Cav. moves cautiously over the rough terrain south of the area where A Co. 1-20 trapped six VC in their cozy little hole hidden under a tree. E Trp. was operating with B Co. in squeezing the VC towards A Co. who were awaiting the rendezvous. (Photo by SP4 Steve Tipton, 11th Bde. IO)

NVA Abandons Hill, Resistance Smashed

LZ STINSON—Pop! Pop!

The men of C Co., 1st Bn., 52nd Inf. knew the sound and hit the dirt. Seconds later an enemy mortar barrage spewed dirt and rocks over their position in the thickets on this forward firebase.

C Co. was dispatched from their night laager to silence those same 82mm and 60mm tubes which for several hours had lobbed rounds on the LZ.

The infantrymen, with members of H Trp., 17th Cav. approached the hill, and the NVA mortarmen turned their tubes on the oncoming soldiers.

"We were moving out when we heard the pop of the tubes," said SP4 Gary P. Tamagni (Detroit), a machinegunner with H Trp.

"Three of my buddies just got through the rear door when two 82mm rounds slammed behind our track, one on the right, and two 57mm recoilless rounds hit on the left.

"They had us zeroed in," he exclaimed.

Mortar and artillery were called on the stormy hill, and the "Ready Rifles" were answering with a rain of small arms and automatic weapons fire.

The fight was over in twenty minutes when the NVA broke contact.

The troops assaulted the bastion with the ACAVs sweeping through the hedgerow where the communists had directed their recoilless rifle attack earlier.

"We then ran into a wall of machinegun fire," said 1LT Carl W. McDaniel (Mountain Park, Okla.), 3rd plt. ldr. of C Co. "We got right up against them when they started throwing grenades. It took three air strikes to soften them up."

After the air strikes the "Brave and Bold" continued their push still under fire, and silenced the enemy's mortar fire.

SGT Jerry W. Collins (Jenkins, Ky.), a squad leader, charged three separate spider holes and killed three enemy soldiers with his M-16 and grenades.

"He was wounded by one of the grenades thrown at him," said 1LT McDaniel, "but it was Collins' effort that got us to the enemy's mortar tube and their ammunition."

Along with the 82mm mortar, the soldiers captured a 60mm mortar, a Chinese machinegun, and an AK-47 rifle. (Americal IO)

'Chinook' Above, Pad Crews Irked By Sniper Below

LZ PROFESSIONAL—It seems as though your work is never done when you're on a landing zone, and more so when you're under fire.

One of the busiest men here is resupply NCO, SGT George Lind (Millerton, N.Y.) from Co. B, 1st Bn., 46th Inf.

"We get in six resupply helicopters a day," explained Lind, "and recently we've had quite a few problems with snipers. They pick mostly on Chinooks.

"We were working on the lower pad, but it got so bad we had to work resupply missions on the higher one, which does not give us too much room to move around.

"A Chinook was hit with a recoiless rifle round right after it dropped in some ammunition. The pilot set it down and everyone got out before it burst into flame.

"Another Chinook was bringing in a water trailer and started receiving sniper fire. Its windshield was shot out, and it dropped the trailer from thirty feet to get out.

"I have three supply men and an ammunition man working for me," commented Lind as he ducked because the command and control ship from the 1-46 Inf. was coming in and receiving sniper fire.

"That sniper is right below us, but he must have a hole out there.

"My men are ready when the Chinooks come in, but with that sniper down there we have our work cut out for us," concluded the tired, but tireless resupply sergeant. (Americal IO)

1-20 Bridge Toll Too Costly NVA Night Fighters Repelled

DUC PHO—The soldiers of the 11th Bde. responded to a call when A Co., 1st Bn., 20th Inf. came under heavy fire while guarding a bridge six miles north of here.

The squad bridge guard was hit by NVA soldiers who under the cover of heavy small arms fire, RPGs, and Chicom grenades cut the concertina wire and moved towards the bridge defense.

"I was in the TOC when we received a radio message from the men on the bridge saying that they were under attack and additional troops and supporting fire were needed immediately," said SGT Donald A. Troops (Novi, Mich.).

Gunships of the 174th Aslt. Hel. Co. rushed to LZ Liz where the "Sykes Regulars" were being given last minute instruction by their platoon leaders, 1LT Stephen T. Meyering (Rochester, N.Y.) and 1LT Edward J. Durana Jr. (Hyattsville, Md.).

While support preparations were underway on the LZ the men on the bridge had their hands full. The first heavy barrage of enemy fire pinned the men down and each shot was countered with RPGs and small arms fire.

PFC Charles P. Payne (Pittsburgh) a medic, who was pinned in the bunker at the south end of the bridge and was unable to cross to give aid to the wounded men on the other end, began calling in and adjusting mortar fire.

"We were dropped 200 meters north of the bridge and drew a heavy volume of small arms fire from the NVA who had manned the fighting positions at the north end of the bridge.

"We laid down a base of fire and maneuvered into position to block any retreating NVA, and got to the ones firing at us," explained 1LT Meyering.

When the firing had stopped six NVA had been killed and four AK-47 rifles were captured. The documents on one dead NVA identified him as an officer.

The combined efforts of the infantrymen and the pilots turned a sneak attack into defeat for the luckless NVA. (11th IO)

Tree a VC, More In a Hole

Sharp Ears, Quick Draw

LZ LIZ—It's spring time and the trees are blooming in southern Quang Ngai province. Two 11th Bde. soldiers of the recon plt., 1st Bn., 20th Inf. recently came across an unusual tree that yielded six VC kills.

Just before noon, the "Sykes Regulars" led by 1LT Jack Kurtzman (Hamburg, N.Y.) set up in a defensive perimeter for security and chow.

They were going to remain in this position in the heavily vegetated area for the remainder of the afternoon, and move to an ambush site at night.

Scout teams were employed outside of the small perimeter and one team was sent for water.

SP4 Jerald Smith (Traverse City, Md.) and SP4 Bobby Inman (Center, Tex.) walked toward the Tra Cau River in search of water.

"I was walking down a small trail and heard movement to my right and above me. I whirled around and fired," explained Smith.

A VC who had apparently been on guard, toppled from the tree—shot through the chest.

The two infantrymen made a thorough search of the tree base. Inman discovered that the tree was hollow with a tunnel entrance, and he detected several enemy moving below.

"I had my M-16 on automatic—pointed it in the tunnel and expended an entire magazine," Inman explained.

They called for demolitions and reinforcements from their squad. Claymore mines were detonated to open the entrance, and upon excavation, five VC bodies were found.

Other items captured included: uniforms, ponchos, canteens, freshly cooked rice, and propaganda leaflets from the Quang Ngai and Duc Pho Viet Cong information offices.

CPT Alfred N. Webb Jr. (La Jolle, Calif.) battalion S-2 pointed out, "This was a local force recon squad that was in this area to observe U.S. troop activities. The squad was trapped in a scissors maneuver with B Co. and E Trp., 1st Cav. to the south and A Co. to the west." (11th IO)

M-16 Magazine Saves Ranger, No Blood, No Hole, No Nothing

LZ BALDY — The NVA sapper squeezed off a round aimed for SP4 Robert J. Parker (Chicago) of the 196th Inf. Bde.

The weapon sang a lone report and Parker, from G. Co., 75th Inf. reeled under the impact of the bullet and crashed into the dirt.

Parker was crawling away like an olive-drab crab, scrambling for cover. Crouching behind a barrier, the "Charger" searched for his wound. No blood, no scratch.

There was, however, a gaping hole in his ammo pouch and embedded in the last magazine, just short of Parker's skin, was the lead slug. (196th IO)

Division's Deft Detectives Discover Long Gone Silver

When the Americal was sent to Japan for occupation duty in 1945, 2LT (now LTC) Bruce Jacobs of the Pacific Army News Bureau was sent to cover a strange news story concerning division soldiers.

Now a member of the Pa. National Guard, LTC Jacobs was on a 90-day tour in Vietnam and visited Chu Lai. It was then that he recalled the odd events he had reported 24 years before.

The story that follows is a condensed version of "The Great Americal Division Treasure Hunt" written by LTC Jacobs at the end of WWII.

Treasure hunts usually are associated with sea adventure, Captain Kidd type characters, treasure islands hanging off the edge of the world, and great ships with hundreds of pirates swinging from yardarms with silver swords.

But the Americal treasure hunt was a little different without such legendary fantasy. This unusual saga began shortly after the unit arrived in Japan following V-J Day in 1945.

On an October morning, LTC Howard N. Smalley, the 3rd Bn., 164th Inf. commander, called for Infantry CPT Richard L. Cohen (Philadelphia) to report to him.

Hidden Silver

LTC Smalley was engrossed in a detailed map of the Yamanishi Prefecture south of Tokyo and surrounding terrain. He recognized CPT Cohen's entrance with a fleeting smile.

The colonel jabbed a pencil at the map: "That's Odawara. Seems our people found 102 bars of silver stashed away in a warehouse. Intelligence section is certain there's a huge silver hoard somewhere—we've got to get our hands on it before it goes underground for keeps."

The pencil trailed away from Tokyo and circled a dot 50-miles to the north.

"You'll head for this town —Kusakabe. Start the search there," said LTC Smalley. "We have a slim lead—the Kasugai-Mura Warehouse Company."

CPT Cohen saluted and started toward the door. "Good Hunting!" shouted the colonel.

The treasure hunt operation began that same day with CPT Cohen, two lieutenants, and a platoon-size patrol from I Company. They stopped in the evening at Kofu, west of Tokyo, to bivouac for the night.

Thickening Plot

One hour after leaving Kofu, the patrol rumbled into Kasukabe and pulled in front of the police station. CPT Cohen spoke to the Chief of Police, Yoshishiko Oshiba, explaining that the purpose of the patrol was to survey all available warehouse space.

After hours of unsuccessful searching, a crest-fallen and dog-tired group returned to City Hall to set up quarters for the night.

While chatting with Chief of Police Oshiba the following morning, CPT Cohen casually mentioned that he had not seen the well-known Kasugai-Mura Warehouse. The Chief appeared puzzled by this remark.

The GI interpreter turned to Cohen and said, "He says there's no such place. But there's a town called Kasugai with several warehouses that farmers use for storing their crops."

None of the warehouses at Kasugai contained any suspicious materials.

Later the Americans got their first break when a search party uncovered 10 tons of tin in a freight shed near the railroad station.

Curious Tin

The railroad assistant manager, Oruyama, testily told the captain that he knew only that the tin was consigned to a farmer named Kashiro Haibara, a prominent man in the village.

Cohen had the tin shipment placed under lock and key.

The next morning Cohen dispatched LT Holland with 12 men to continue the probe of the Wusakabe town and the Higashi-Mura sector. In the command vehicle Cohen led his small group out to the Kashiro Haibara's vast and beautiful estate.

The wealthy estate-owner greeted the visitors courteously. He nodded politely when the Americans explained their wish to look around the grounds, agreeing to show the way.

Clueless Search

Cohen walked alongside the old man, noting that the large "hyakusho" consisted principally of the main house and two large barn-like structures.

The search did not produce a single clue—it seemed impossible that the silver could be in either of the barns. Nor had mine detectors provided any leads.

"What are your plans for that shipment of tin?"

"Tin?"

The shipment at the freight shed," Cohen continued.

"Oh, yes," Haibara explained. "The tin was sent to Kasugai by the Mitsubishi Warehouse Company in Tokyo, for safekeeping, and will eventually be used in the manufacture of kitchen utensils."

Silverless Town

On the following day Cohen decided to put his cards on the table in front of the Chief of Police. The Chief was deferential—but he was certain that the Americans were wrong about the town being a hiding place for an illegal hoard of silver.

It was the first time since their meeting almost two days earlier Cohen thought about Oruyama, the belligerent assistant freight manager. Cohen decided to pay him another visit. Oruyama parried and gave little information.

Several of the soldiers continued to check the goods stacked in the freight warehouse. One innocent-looking corner disclosed a flimsy partition. The soldiers had uncovered 43-tons of tin.

Jig Is Up

"I told you I wanted to see a freight receipt for every shipment of metals—where's the receipt for this shipment?"

The receipt showed a shipment for 43-tons of medical supplies for civilian use, which arrived in April.

Oruyama took it quietly while Cohen read the "Riot Act" to him. The American captain glanced at his watch.

Metallic Farmer

"You've an hour—one hour —to produce all the records I asked for. Deliver them to the Chief of Police, or you're in trouble. You're practically out of business now!"

The freight records showed that the 43-tons of tin—like the previously discovered ten tons—was charged to Kashiro Haibara. The four sheets which had been clipped together listed a shipment of silver also charged to the estate-owner.

"If you wanted to look again," the rich farmer faltered, "it will be quite impossible My foreman went on vacation and accidentally took all the keys with him."

"You better produce another set of keys. We know you've got the silver and we're going to find it if we have to tear this place apart!"

The farmer listened stonily and sighed. He then produced keys.

Once again the search party started scouring the vast estate. Every inch of the two barns was investigated—but to no avail.

Again Cohen's eyes roved over the great estate and then a wide grin creased his face. He beckoned his men to follow him toward a delapidated-looking gatehouse.

Haibara stumbled along behind him weakly protesting the waste of time.

They crashed open the door, and saw canvas and straw-covered mounds. The crude wrappings torn aside, the members of the treasure hunt patrol eagerly eyed the long sought after silver hoard.

Silvery Treasure

Now Haibara admitted to Cohen that he and other farmers in the neighborhood had been entrusted with varying amounts of precious and semi-precious metals.

He produced records that led to C.S. seizure of large stores of copper, tin, zinc, lead, and antimony.

When CPT Cohen completed his inventory for LTC Smalley he found himself in possesion of exaclty 2,660 ignots of silver—more than a hundred tons of the precious ore.

After the Occupation ended, the $1,343,000 hoard of silver was turned over to Japan's Finance Ministry to determine the rightful owners.

HOARDED SILVER BARS uncovered by infantrymen of the Americal Division on October 9, 1945, are prepared for shipment to the Japanese Finance Ministry by an Americal lieutenant and tech sergeant. (U.S. Army Photo)

Patty

This playful young miss, who appeared in the division area with the "Pussycat Au Go Go" entertainers enjoys frolicking on the Combat Center Beach. Her prop, a piece of driftwood that happened ashore, enabled the svelte Australian to make like a female Robinson Crusoe. (Photo by SP4 Dave Clark, Americal IO)

For General Who Has Everything

Give Hand-made Arty.

CHU LAI — SP4 Robert Baird (LaFollette, Tenn.), Co. D, 723d Maint. Bn., likes to build things.

A machinist both before and after entering the Army, SP4 Baird recently completed a miniature brass Civil War cannon as a farewell gift for the departing division commander, MG Charles M. Gettys.

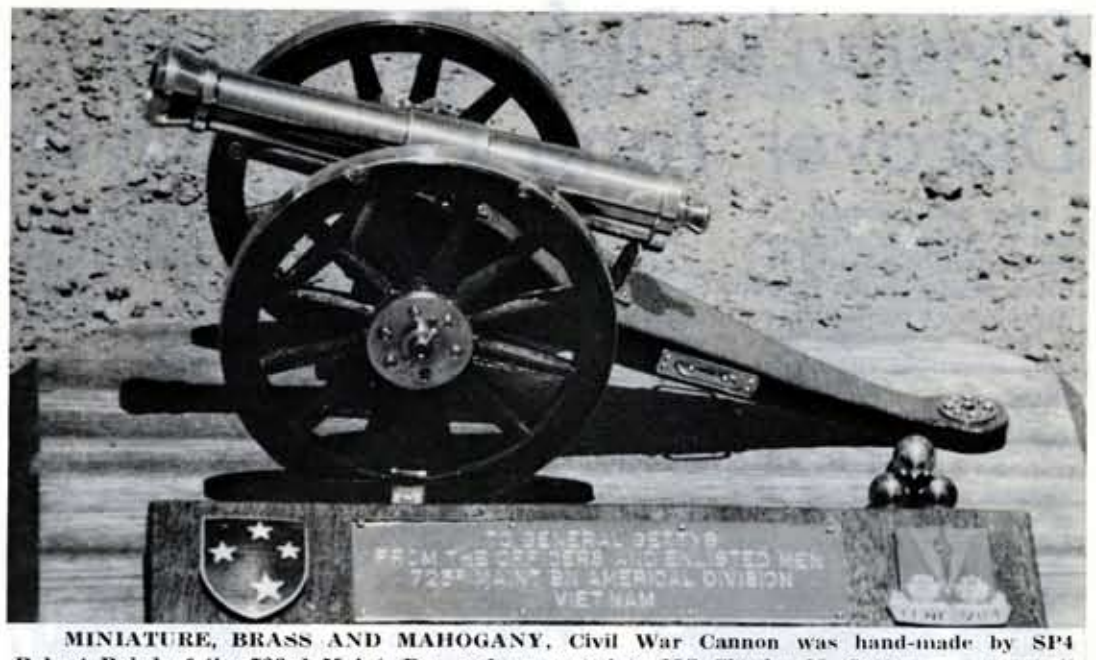
The cannon, fashioned from brass and mahogany, took Baird more than 100 hours of his own time to complete.

SP4 Baird attended the Knoxville (Tenn.) Vocational and Technological Training Center before induction into the Army.

While attending the school, Baird was one of 70 outstanding students selected by the Union Carbide Corp. (Oak Ridge, Tenn.) to attend an advanced on-the-job training program sponsored by the company.

SP4 Baird wondered what type of farewell momento would be fitting for the departing commander. "I was looking through a magazine when I spotted a picture of a cannon," Baird said.

"I thought, what would be more appropriate for a general than a miniature cannon?" (Americal IO)



MINIATURE, BRASS AND MAHOGANY, Civil War Cannon was hand-made by SP4 Robert Baird of the 723rd Maint. Bn., and presented to MG Charles M. Gettys as a farewell gift. (Photo by CPT Cary S. Sklaren, Americal IO)

Ancient Custom Real Bonanza For Graduates

CHU LAI—Back in the place fondly referred to as "the world," graduation gifts are a common occurance.

In the eyes of the graduates, however, the Vietnamese are one up on their American counterparts. Instead of receiving gifts only upon commencement, Vietnamese students receive gifts prior to each summer vacation.

According to ARVN MAJ Co Van Cao, the Ly Tin district chief, "the gift-giving ceremony doesn't have a specific name, but it is quite an old custom in Vietnam. The gifts are donated to the school by parents and families who do so to show their faith and interest in the schools."

In each school village, prominent persons are selected to attend the ceremony of "gift-giving," and generally include the province, district, and village chiefs and the elders of the area.

In the Chu Lai New Life hamlet, near here, several Americans were invited to participate in this year's annual ceremony.

Songs by the more than 300 children, followed by speeches made by the district chief and several citizens, and dances by the younger school girls preceeded the gift-giving.

The festivities ended with refreshments all around and many excited giggles as the children unwrapped presents. To prove that children are children even in this war-torn land, when asked what he was going to do during his summer vacation, one little lad replied in English, "go sw'mm'ng." (Americal IO)

Refugees Back To New Homes

LZ BALDY—It was a long road back to their valley homes, but the former residents of Hiep Duc are returning by the hundreds.

A trip from the Tam Ky refugee center, transported one thousand Vietnamese by truck 18 miles here, then 12 miles along dusty Provincial Highway 535, and a final nine miles by chinook from LZ Ross to their new homes.

The new living structures were built in advance by refugees already established in Hiep Duc.

The refugees were hot, dirty and exhausted, and were struggling to keep their families together among the hundreds of milling people.

Their family possessions were tied on their backs, and babies were protected from the hot sun by various hats ranging from frying skillets to Hershey chocolate bar boxes.

Presently, the new citizens are completing their homes amid the ruins of the former community that attacks destroyed four years ago. (196th IO)

Call Him Mister No More

DUC PHO—The next time you call that mister "mister", you had better look twice—he's liable to be a sir!

The most recent Americal soldier to take advantage of the USARV direct commission program is former Warrant Officer Geoffrey R. Smith of 14th Avn. Bn.'s 17th Assault Hel. Co.

A onetime "slick" aircraft commander and "Shark" gunship pilot, brand-new 2LT Smith is now assistant operations officer of the 14th.

"First I came to fly," said the erstwhile mister, "but I felt that by taking a commission I could make better use of my potential both in Army administration and the expanding Army Aviation program."

Upon DEROS in July, 2LT Smith will attend the Transportation Officer Basic Course at Ft. Eustis, Va. (16 CAG IO)

Division Trains RF-PF Officers

CHU LAI—It was an impressive ensemble of snappy salutes, clicking heels, and inspiring speeches welded into a motion that rose above the deep roar of the South China Sea.

On May 19 the Americal Div. Combat Center initiated a 14-day Combat Leadership and Orientation Course for junior officers of Regional and Popular Forces units throughout I Corps Tactical Zone.

The course was designed to perfect the military knowledge and the capable leadership preparation to command a company or perform staff functions in units ranging from company group to sector level.

"The main objective of the course is to supplement the Vietnamese officer training program," said 1LT Randall J. Hain (San Jose, Calif.), program OIC.

"Personnel attending the course are trained in the use of American equipment and conduct of Allied operations," he added.

Twenty junior officers from I Corps participated in the first class. These individuals are selected from the ranks of aspirant (a soldier training to become an officer), second and first lieutenants. While at the Combat Center, they are afforded the same privileges as Americal replacement officers.

The instructor staff is composed of both Combat Center and ARVN personnel. Four ARVN interpreters are provided for the classes presented by Americal instructors.

The ARVN instructors are from Rach Gia, the Vietnamese military academy located in Saigon. There are two OIC's, one Vietnamese, the other American.

The 50-hours of instruction presented by Combat Center instructors are directed toward three basic subjects: map reading, weapons familiarization, and the organization and operation of the Americal Div.

Vietnamese instructors present 40-hours of instruction on political warfare, tactics of the VC and NVA, and the organization and operation of Regional Forces and Popular Forces units.

CPT Thuan, the Vietnamese program of instruction coordinator stated, "This program is very good. The class helps the PF and RF officers to perfect their military knowledge for better commanding the field company and improves their knowledge of staff functions."

Twelve days of the program are devoted to actual classroom instruction, while the other two days are spent touring units in the Chu Lai area.

The class visits an infantry battalion and a direct support artillery battery which are engaged in tactical operations. Aviation, engineer, signal, medical, supply and maintenance units are also toured.

"You have been fighting this war longer than we have, and we both stand a chance of gaining from this course," said LTG Herman Nickerson, Third Amphibious Force Commander, at the opening ceremonies. "We know how to handle the NVA, but it will be the duty and responsibility of your RF and PF units to conquer the VC. That success rests upon your leadership as officers."

New COs

(Continued from Page 1)

to July 1967. He is married with four children.

COL Kroesen was reassigned to the Pentagon.

The new "Brave and Bold" commander, COL Whittington, took over from COL Robert B. Tully who was reassigned to Headquarters, Department of the Army.

COL Whittington served a previous tour here as a MACV advisor at Tuy Hoa, in 1964-65 and most recently served in the Pentagon with the office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Also married and the father of four children, the 198th CO resides in McLean, Va.

The three battalion changes of command consisted of two new infantry COs and one new armored squadron leader.

LTC Clarence T. Campbell (Rockville, Md.) took over the 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., 196th Bde. from LTC Sinclair L. Melner; LTC Albert J. Smith (Fairfax, Va.) replaced LTC Jack C. Davis with the 4th Bn., 3rd Inf., 11th Bde.; and LTC John H. Dure is the new leader of the "Dragoons" of the 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav., assuming command from LTC Philip Bolte.

Lamar Plain Begins

(Continued from Page 1)

employing small arms fire and mortars. Other units of the 1-501st Inf. soon found themselves in contact during the day, as did B Trp., 2nd Sqdn., 17th Cav. The final enemy tally for the day was eight NVA killed by the 101st, and six VC killed by the 3rd Bn., 16th Arty.'s B Btrys.

Moderate contact continued through May 27 in the familiar pattern of mortar and small arms fire coming from entrenched positions and bunkers reinforced with thick walls and roofs. More than 100 NVA/VC were killed in the 10-day period that saw extensive maneuvering throughout the ragged triangle.

Ready To Fight

COL Richard A. Bresnahan (Falls Church, Va.), commander of the 1st Bde., summed up the action: "The fighting has been sporadically heavy, with the NVA soldiers showing a willingness to fight. The enemy is well-trained, fighting from well-entrenched positions.

"However, we have pushed him back at every step and relieved the pressure on the Tam Ky-Tien Phuoc area, which is what we were brought here to do. Now, we will continue to seek out the enemy."