SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION
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Penn soldier recalls action for silver star

By SP4 Larry Rich

CAMP PERDUE, (196th Inf. Bde. IO) – Company C, 2d Battalion, 1st Infantry, stood at attention in a company formation.

One man, Specialist Four Jay L. Hagerich (Conehaugh, Pa.) stood in front of the formation.

He was not thinking of the formation, or even of being in the area around Da Nang. He was remembering when the 3d Platoon had been in a day defensive position northwest of Quang Tri and how a reinforced NVA rifle squad, supported by rockets and mortars, had suddenly attacked them.

Preparing to move to the night defensive postion, Hagerich, then a private first class, was packing his equipment side a bomb crater when the first mortar round exploded. The force of the explosion knocked him into the crater. By the time he scrambled to the rim of the crater, the fighting was already well underway.

Though pinned down by small arms fire, he managed to reach out and grab his rifle and radio. Drawing his equipment back into the crater, Hagerich started to return fire. Noticing an NVA soldier crawling towards a machine gun emplacement, Hagerich engaged the enemy with hand grenades.

The perimeter slowly started to tighten, as the men of Company C moved back to give more overlapping fire power. Open areas that were easily protected during the day were becoming hazardous gaps with dusk starting to set in on the area.

Moving back with his equipment, Hagerich continued to give return fire. Crawling over to a machine gun nest, he helped them move back and get relocated.

"I looked down and noticed blood on my leg," Hagerich said. "It was the first time I realized that I'd been hit. One of my shirtsleeves had holes through it from the mortar shrapnel, but the only place I was hit was one spot on the leg."

Hagerich saw that a group of men had not yet moved back into the new perimeter. The NVA soldiers were visible, moving through the brush. There was a danger that the enemy might manage to sneak between the Americans and the rest of the perimeter.

Giving himself cover fire, Hagerich exposed himself to enemy fire as he crawled to the American's position. He soon connected with the group and moved with them back to the perimeter.

The battle continued intermittently through the night. Early in the morning the enemy force withdrew, taking their dead and wounded with them.

It had happened weeks ago; since then there had been a promotion, innumerable day and night defensive positions and other firefights. Yet, the feelings and the memories made it as clear as yesterday.

For his actions during the battle, Hagerich was presented with the Silver Star.

Battery C, 44th Artillery stands all in-a-row for standdown ceremonies. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY 523d SIGNAL BATTALION)

The earth rumbles as artillerymen at Fire Support Base Vandergrift fire a 155 Howitzer. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 WENDELL P. HAUTANIGHI)

Call 69 Mhz for MP aid

By MSG Bill Pickett

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. IO) -- Military Police (MP) monitoring stations have been established at seven Military Region 1 locations to give persons outside the MP organization immediate access by radio to the nearest MP station.

According to the XXIV Corps Provost Marshal Office, personnel with radios who observe or become aware of a crime in progress may now contact the nearest MP station through a common administrative radio frequency. Suspected transactions in narcotics or dangerous drugs, off limits violations, traffic accidents or any other energency may be reported.

The corps provost marshal noted that this capability will be particularly useful to helicopter pilots, should they observe a reportable incident from the air.

The common frequency assigned is 69.00 Mhz, and will be used for Military Police related transmissions only. Monitoring stations, operating around the clock, are manned by Americal Division personnel at Chu Lai, Hoi An, Tam Ky and Quang Ngai.

The 504th MP Battalion will monitor the same frequency in the areas of Quang Tri, Phu Bai and Da Nang.

Should an individual desire to notify MPs of his observations by radio, he simply switches to the common frequency and makes his report. He gives his own identification, type of incident, location, and an indication of special considerations involved, such as serious injury or an armed assailant in a crime.

A message will go out from the control station to the MP patrol nearest the scene, and in a matter of minutes the area can be covered.

Anyone with a radio, from a back pack to one mounted in a helicopter, can assist in crime control and prevention, and the Military Police can respond rapidly for the protection of potential victims and the apprehension of law breakers.

All persons are encouraged to cooperate in the program; the common frequency, monitored 24 hours daily, is 69 Mhz.

'Polar Bears' have new library, TV, tape rooms

By SP4 Larry Rich

CAMP CRESCENZ, (196th Inf. Bde. IO) – Mickey Spillane and Mikhail Sholokhov have something in common. Their works can both be found on the bookshelves of the 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry's new library.

The varied facilities of Vietnam's newest literary lair are for the "Polar Bears" and the other units of the 196th Infantry Brigade.

Located behind the S-1 (Personnel Office) in the "Polar Bears'" rear area, the library offers the infantryman a TV room and tape recording and letter writing facilities, in addition to a vast collection of books. Air conditioning, refreshments and ample lighting have been provided to insure a pleasant, relaxing atmosphere.

"We've got around 6000 paperback books now," the librarian, Specialist Four Gary L. Paulter (Hartington, Neb.) said. "More are coming in all the time."

A chaplain's assistant, Paulter was on hand when the chaplains decided to make a convenient library for the infantrymen. After helping built it, he stayed on as a librarian.

"We are still trying to get everything straightened out," he said. "If we have several copies of a book, we may let the fellows keep them. On the other hand, we have some reference works that won't be allowed out of the library."

The books are obtained from such sources as Chu Lai and LZ West. The tapes, which the library offers for the infantryman's listening pleasure, were obtained through donations and from Headquarters Company, 196th Inf. Bde. chapel library.

"Two tape rooms and the TV room are separated from the main part of the library," Paulter pointed out. "We try to keep the book are quiet for those who with to read here."

Games, card tables and writing materials are conveniently placed throughout the library. A variety of magazines are also available for the weary infantryman.

The library offers the field soldier a unique opportunity to read and unwind in air-conditioned comfort when he is back in the rear.

The coolest library in the Republic of Vietnam belongs to the "Polar Bears."

Three Americal court reporters chose to volunteer for jobs

By SP4 Sam Rousso

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. IO) – The reasons vary, but the three court reporters of the 23d Infantry Division (Americal) all volunteered for their jobs.

Specialist Six Jack Calhoune (Haverstraw, N.Y.) chose to be a court reporter because he "thought it would be more interesting than being a regular clerk." Specialist Four Tom Ryan (St. Louis, No.) volunteered because, "It sounded like a good job–and I'd never been to Newport, R.I., where court reporters are trained."

Interest in a post-Army career provided Specialist Four John Newport (Davenport, Iowa) with the motivation to volunteer. "It will be valuable experience," he said.

Court reporters are in short supply throughout the Armed Forces. "A lot of people don't want to be court reporters because it is a highly technical job which entails a lot of responsibility," said Calhoune.

It is the job of the court reporter to assemble all the allied documents, including testimony, depositions, interrogations and all other oral statements which require a verbatim transcript. When all this is done, the whole thing is transmitted to Washington for review.

How long does it take to do all this? "It all depends on low long the trial runs...most take a week to prepare, although some have taken as long as three weeks," says Calhoune.

"There are difficulties," Clahoune continued. "Sometimes our recording machines break down, sometimes we can't get at duplicating equipment and sometimes, try as we might, we do make typographical errors and have to retype some things."

The job does have its lighter moments. One witness was asked, after five months in the bush, if he had seen combat. He answered, "Yes sir, every Tuesday night when we were at a firebase. It's a good show–I never miss it."

In spite of the lighter moments, the job of court reporter is hard and tedious, though vital. Contending with frail machinery, and the lack of machinery, as well as the calendar is sometimes frustrating.

Through all this, the three Americal court reporters, Calhoune, Ryan and Newport continue to do their jobs in the spirit of the Americal Division.

Specialist Six Jack Calhoune (Haverstraw, N.Y.) demonstrates the use of the stenomask, an aid in recording testimony. During trials, a court reporter repeats both questions and answers into the device without interrupting the proceedings. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 SAM ROUSSO)

How should you leave Vietnam?

By Maj Wendell E. Danielson

CAMP REASONER, (196th Inf. Bde. IO) – What is the proper way to depart Vietnam? No, not thinking in terms of "quickly" of "happily". When a man has served his tour, what, really, is the best way to leave?

One has seen many approaches. One way is to get smashed and attempt to forget it ever happened. When zero hour arrives have sober friends deliver you to the airfield. "Quite a guy, ole Ralph; we carried him to the plane; had to."

Another approach is to ease away with no fanfares, no goodbyes. "Whatever happened to what's-his-face, haven't seen him for days."

Or you can go around busily shaking hands for the final few days and see as many men as is humanly possible. "Hi, I'm Joe Jones. I see you're a newbie. I'm going to the "world" on Thursday. Eat your heart out, baby."

What is right? Is it somewhere between these extremes? Is it one of them?

While the manner of one's leaving is of some consequence, one may suspect that the much more important question concerns his attitude. Does one expect a grateful society to treat him respectfully for the time he was put here? Does one expect family and friends to treat one as a conquering warrior? The disappointment could be traumatic.

The sanest approach would be something to this effect: 'I'm going home. There were days when I thought I wouldn't, so I'm happy the time has come.

"In many ways this year has been far more difficult for my family than me. I hope I can remember this."

"Humanly speaking, a year isn't very long. I have a long time to go."

Some people will say one is stupid to go to Vietnam. Others will be indifferent. Some will seem to care and they may even offer a "thank you".

One has to live with oneself and other people do not. The victories, friendships, hardships, loneliness and satisfaction of doing–all these and more–are yours. While people may never understand, they can never take these feelings away.

"I'm going home, Thank God. I'm going home."

Conference to help NCOs with services

By SP4 Randy Bombard

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. IO) – Last month's Personal Services Non-Commissioned Officers conference was held at the 23d Infantry Division (Americal) Library.

The conference began with an opening address given by Brigadier General Joseph C. McDonough, assistant division commander for manuever. In his address he emphasized that our primary mission is to do everything within our ability to see that the soldier is provided with the best service we can give him.

He suggested that we each place ourselves in the position of the one we are trying to help, then work for him as if it were ourselves.

During the course of the conference, a wide range of topics were covered. Representatives of each department gave a short rundown on what they were involved in and what problems, if any, they were experiencing.

After each presentation a question and answer period was held with the objective of helping section leaders solve any problems they were experiencing in their units.

The conference was brought to a close by Lieutenant Colonel Donald J. Delandro, division adjutant general.

Case 1

Specialist Four Lloyd H. Davis, Headquarters and Service Battery, 1st Battalion, 14th Artillery, was tried by a general court-martial on Aug. 2, for possession and transfer of heroin. He entered a plea of guilty to both specifications. He was found guilty of both and sentenced to a bad conduct discharge, confinement at hard labor for two years, forfeiture of all pay and allowances and reduction to Private (E-1).

Case 2

Specialist Five Daniel M. Shaefer, Headquarters Company and Band, Support Command, was tried by a general court-martial on Aug. 2, for possession and sale of heroin. He entered a plea of guilty to both specifications. He was found guilty of both and sentenced to a dishonorable discharge, confinement at hard labor for two years and six months, total forfeitures and reduction to Private (E-1).

Library can fight boredom

By SP5 Gregory Wright

FSB STINSON, (11th Brigade IO) – "What is there to do in this place anyway?" This question seems to pop up sooner or later wherever troops are stationed for prolonged periods of time.

It has become as common place on small firebases in Vietnam as constentina wire and claymore mines.

Recently, however, troops of the 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry at Fire Support Base Stinson received an answer...go to the library! Stinson is one of the first firebases in the 23d Infantry Division (Americal) to boast a separate library building. Judging from the amount of use the facility sees every day, the question, "What is there to do?" will no longer be heard quite so often.

Staff Sergeant William B. Puckett (Winchester, Kan.) was in charge of construction during the two and one-half months it took to erect the building.

"Having to scrounge materials and personnel when and where we could find them, slowed the construction somewhat," explained Puckett. "But we finished up with a structure solid enough to be used as a bunker, should the need arise."

Puckett went on to explain that the library is constructed almost entirely from 105mm ammo boxes with bookshelves to accommodate approximately 8000 volumes. A heavily sandbagged roof provides overhead cover.

According to First Sergeant Willie Pollin (Columbia, S.C.), the facility is greatly appreciated by the men on Stinson, especially those in for standdown.

In addition to the wide variety of books available, another attraction is the quiet atmosphere which provides an excellent opportunity for a man to read his own books or write letters. A strict ban on alcoholic beverages, radios and tape recorders ensures against noisy distubances.

The library was officially opened on July 11 and named the "Getz Library" in honor of Major Charles D. Getz, former 1st Battalion, 52d Infantry commanding officer, who initiated the project and displayed a great deal of interest in the construction and final completion of the facility.

While the ammo box building on FSB Stinson might not measure up in looks to the dignified libraries "back in the world," it does provide an opportunity for the soldiers of 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry to relax in quiet surroundings, open a good book, and get away from it all for a few chapters.

SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

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Project Buddy trains Viets in maintenance

TOP LEFT: A Vietnamese soldier operates the controls of a five-ton wrecker as part of his training in the 723d Maintenance Battalion's Project Buddy. Specialist Five Robert A. Sutcliffe (Dearfield, Ohio) is his instructor for the three-week course.
CENTER LEFT: Lieutenant Colonel Sidney J. Crabtree, commanding officer of the 723d Maintenance Battalion, presents a soldier of the Republic of Vietnam with his diploma upon completion of the three-week training program. Major Tran-Ding-Trong, I Area Logistics Commander and Captain Philip Schlachter, the project director, look on.
TOP RIGHT: For a student soldier in Project Buddy's small weapons section, the "Over and Under" is a familiar sight. Here Specialist Four Richard Hijecki (Rochester, N.Y.) points out the different parts to one of his students.

Photos by SP4 William Hutchison

BOTTOM LEFT: Specialist Five W. T. Wood (Olivebranch, Miss.) of the 723d Maintenance Battalion looks on while a Vietnamese student in the battalion's Project Buddy makes some repairs on an engine.
BOTTOM RIGHT: "You have to be careful not to get this too tight," explains Specialist Five Mike A. Ellis (Crosby, Minn.) to his two Vietnamese understudies as he repairs a radio. Language is a problem and most of the teaching is done by example.

CW3 Gentry handles Rosemary's Point do

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. I0) -- Not all pilots in the Chu Lai area guide their craft through the air. For one pilot's domain is the sea, the South China Sea and the small harbor at Rosemary's Point.

Harbor Master and Pilot (CW3) Thomas Gentry (Glenburn, Calif.) has been bringing in Landing Ship-Tanks (LST's), barges, small freighters and hospital ships into Chu Lai's small harbor for the past eight months. During this time, whether it be in the black of night or the heavy seas of the monsoons or the swift current at ebb tide, Chief Gentry has successfully landed 62 LSTs.

In a landing ramp the width of a ship's bow, the pilot brings these cumbersome crafts. With the help of a tug or a pusher boat, he nurses the ship into its berth as if she were made of glass. He must always keep the ship weight, the tide, the wind and the type of crew in mind.

The landing of LSTs is the most important aspect of the pilot's job. These ships, loaded with vital war materials, are manned by Korean or Japanese crews. Chief Gentry boards the craft just beyond the last buoy, marking the entrance to the harbor.

Once he comes aboard, the ship is entirely his responsibility. Both the Army and the Coast Guard could take action against the pilot; he is licensed by both.

While on board, Gentry is meticulous about his job--no detail can be overlooked. His concentration is complete as he barks out commands to the ship's coxwain. He must watch his phraseology, for nautical terms are different for Korean and Japanese crews.

"I like my job. Each ship is a

TOP LEFT: Chu Lai Harbor Master and Pilot (CW3) Thomas Gentry (Glenburn, Calif.) stands to the right of the LST's (Landing Ship-Tank) skipper on the rear of the bridge as he monitors the dropping of the kedge anchor, the last step in the docking.

TOP RIGHT: Looking like a yawning mouth, the cargo entrance of this LST is opened to allow the removal of cargo and war materials which are too bulky to be transported by other means.

BOTTOM LEFT: Coxwain, Sergeant William Dillahunt, (Jacksonville, N.C.) maneuvers his pusher boat back to the stern of a LST as crew members stand ready to lash the kedge anchor.

BOTTOM CENTER: U.S. Navy Tug 370 lies motionless in its berth at Rosemary's Point. She is usually out in the harbor assisting Pilot Gentry in landing the LSTs.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Coxwain Dillahunt's boat churns water as it pushes against the side of the LST to compensate for the drift of the current.

main

challenge," stated Gentry, who has captained his own ship before. "Each ship is different; you have to be gently but firm--coax her to do what you want. That's why they refer to ships as ladies."

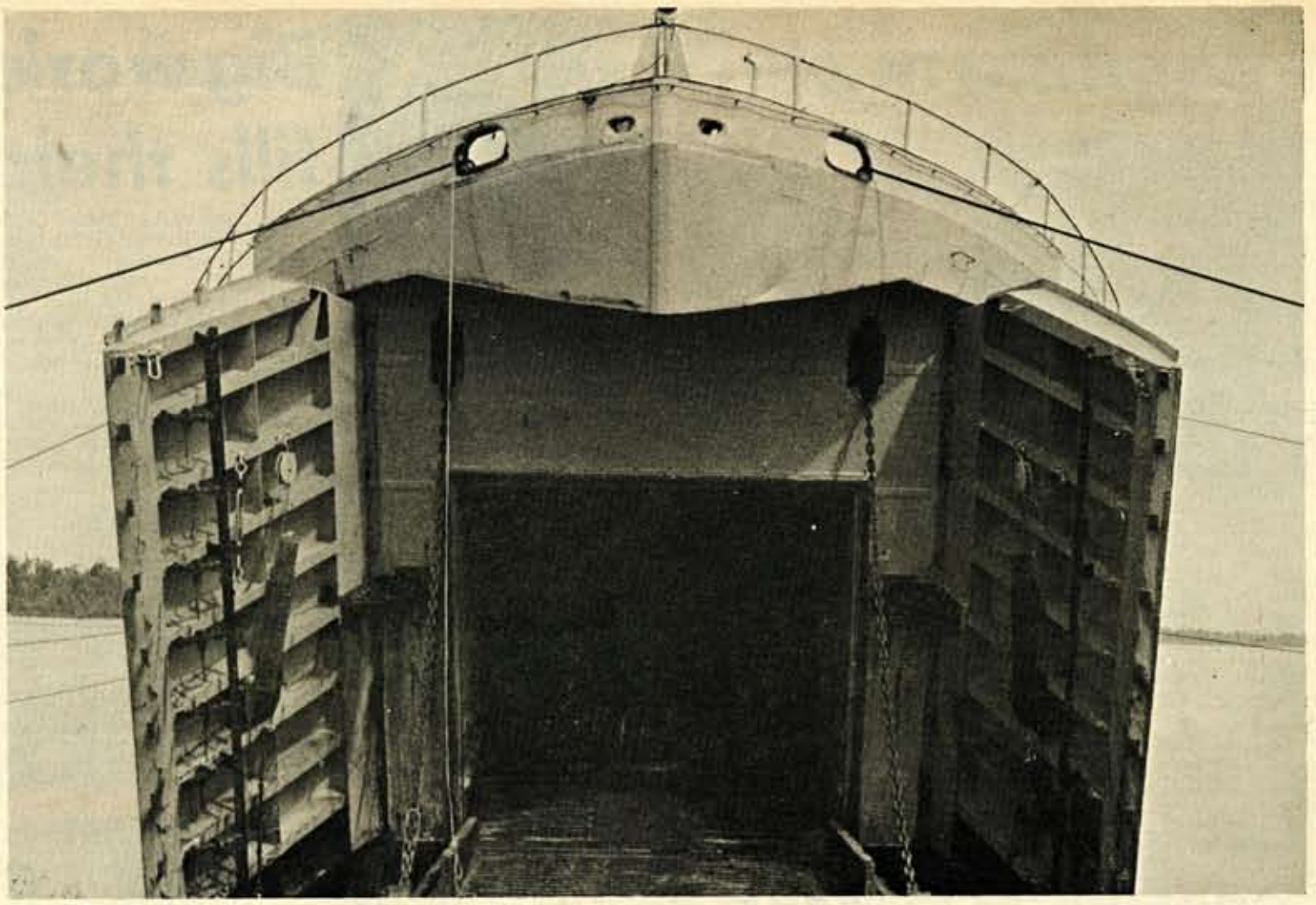
Indispensible to Gentry's job is the small pusher boat which usually takes him out to the LST. It doesn't matter if the ship is incoming or outgoing, the pusher boat's job is to counteract the current by pushing against the side of the LST to keep it straight while it enters the berth.

On board the pusher boat, Sergeant William Dillahunt (Jacksonville, N.C.) skillfully guides his boat up to the side of the big ship then on Gentry's command, revs the engine, pushing against the LST.

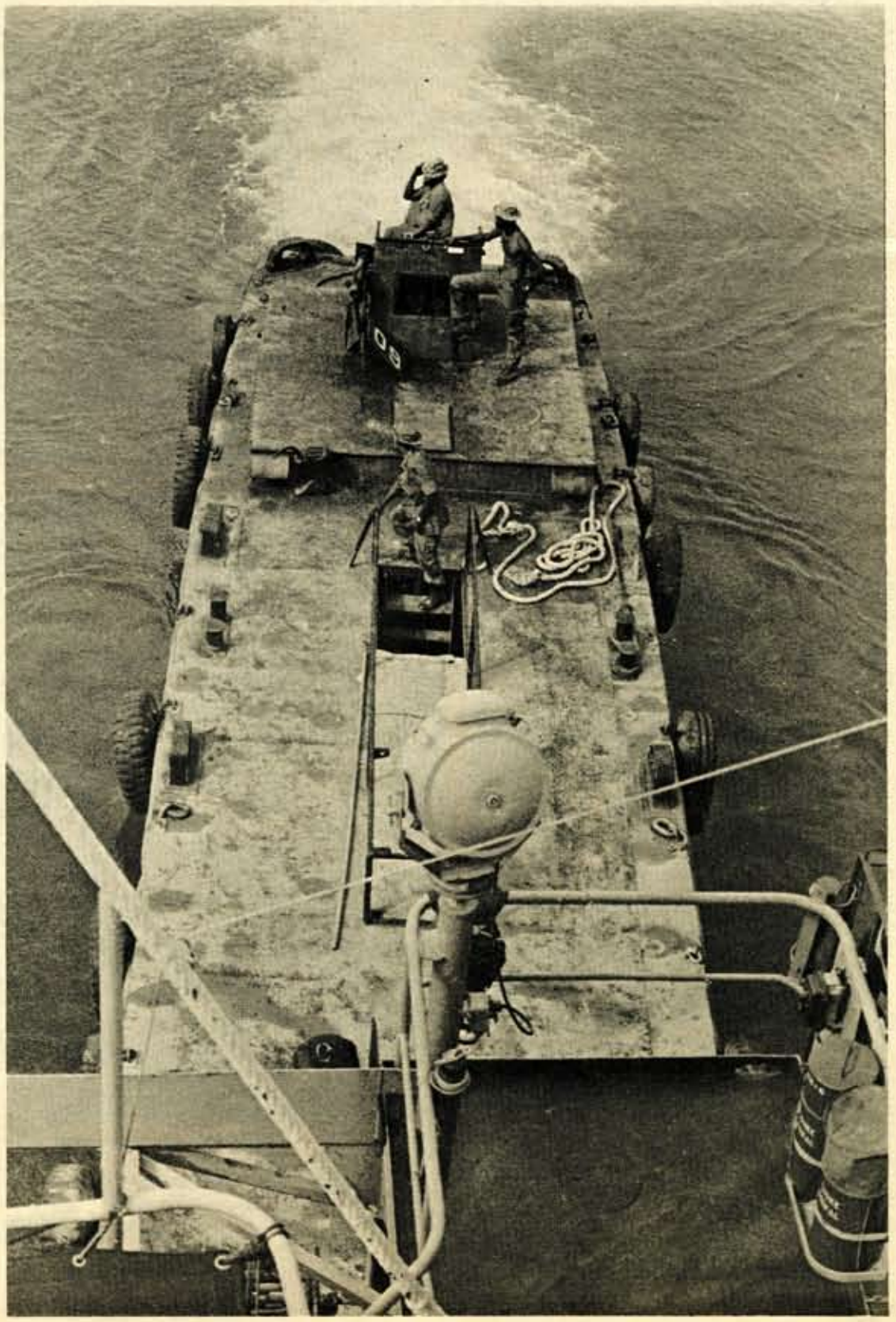
A tug is also available to lend its powerful engines to keep the LST in position. Whether it is to hold the LST straight against the current as the lines are dropped or to use its engines to help guide the ship when the ebb tide is running at five or six knots, the tug is Chief Gentry's strong right arm.

Once the lines are secured in the docking process, the pusher boat treaks off and goes to the rear of the boat. It ties the LST's kedge anchor to its stern and carries it about 200 meters from the ship where it is dropped.

With the completion of the task, Chief Gentry leaves the ship. His job is finished until the ship has been unloaded and then reloaded, and is ready for sea and Chief Gentry's gentle hands to guide it out of the harbor.



Story and Photos by SP4 William Hutchison



Sergeant Guilford Moreland, Company B, 523d Signal Battalion, relaxes in the communications bunker at Fire Support Base Charlie 2. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY 1LT WARREN C. MABIE)

Big work schedule fills their world

By SGT Tom Mano

LZ YONKERS, (196th Inf. Bde. IO) – Imagine your world is confined to an area you can walk around in less than 20 minutes. Then imagine there is no electricity in your living quarters — bunker — for a fan.

Add to this a day's work and four hours of guard a night and you're living the life of a man at 3d Battalion, 21st Infantry's forward firebase.

"It's hard to think about anything back in the world here," mused Sergeant Larry R. Sandman (Cheyenne, Wyo.), section leader of the radar squad on the hill. "You're so far away, you forget the luxuries you had."

"We goof around a lot to keep sane," continued Sandman. "We have boxing matches on the chopper pad, sometimes throw a baseball, and if you have batteries, listen to some sounds."

Walking on the firebase, one sees men filling sandbags and digging trenches. For some, this work tends to make the time go faster.

"You forget time and space sometimes," said one of the diggers. "When you keep busy, the time goes faster. When it rains and you stay inside, then it really gets boring."

But apathy isn't the only feeling the rain brings. The boredom is also accompanied by depression due to the lack of mail.

"That's our only real contact with home," commented one mortarman. "I don't want the chopper pilots to risk their lives for a letter, but you still feel bad when there's no mail for three or four days."

An occasional visit by Doughnut Dollies provides the only female companionship the men have. The Red Cross workers try to get to the firebase for two to three hours a week to talk with the soldiers.

"It's nice of them to come out," said Sandman, "but you never really get to talk to them individually, because there are so many guys around."

Most of the men, many former infantrymen, realize that they have to be here to support the men in the field. Still, the reality of what they're missing crops up in their minds from time to time.

As one mortarman put it, "while working you might think when you get through, all you have to look forward to is four hours of guard."

Two 'grunts' live, fight together for 12 months

By SGT Tom Mano

CAMP REASONER, (196th Inf. Bde. IO) – For 12 of the past 13 months they have lived, slept and sometimes even fought side by side. They call each other "brother", but the only blood bond they share is that spilled by their enemies.

Ronald D. Hicks (Hollywood, Fla.) and Steve L. Hicks (Rossville, Ga.), both specialsit four, fought together with the cavalry near Bien Hoa for three months and then separated for a month. They were coincidentally reunited when both applied for ranger training in the 196th Infantry Brigade.

"I couldn't believe it when I first say him," remembers Ron. "He had gone home on an emergency leave and I thought our partnerhsip had ended."

While with the cavalry, Steve had talked of going ranger, but Ron didn't want to, so Steve dropped it. It was a complete surprise when they met in Company G, 75th Rangers here.

"I thought he'd be the last person to become a ranger," stated Steve. "Before, Ron was pretty adament about not going in the program."

When team Paris, the six man squad they worked in, split into two flanks, the two "brothers" almost always accompany each other. Their concern for one another, combined with a sixth sense on their partner's reactions, makes them an impressive fighting team.

"There's something between us; I really can't put my finger on it," explained Ron. "We always go together; we're like one."

"If we hit contact, the first thing I look for is to see if he's hurt," added Steve. "I try to keep close enough, so I can watch him all the time."

"Also, when we hit something, I know exactly what he's going to do," continued Steve. "In a time of reaction instead of thought, it can make the difference between whether we come back together or one of us comes back alone."

Hide-and-seek game nets 1/6 Inf two NVA kills

By SGT Tom Boehler

CHU LAI, (198th Inf. Bde. IO) – After what seemed like a game of hide-and-seek and a couple of 150-yard dashes, 198th Brigade infantrymen killed two NVA soldiers and captured two enemy weapons and supplies on a recent mission west of Chu Lai.

The element from Company C, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry, was preparing to leave its night defensive position. The position was alongside a trail and one member of the element moved down the trail to retrieve the defenses he had set there.

He was in the process of dismantling the devices when he saw one enemy soldier approaching along the trail. He engaged the enemy with small arms fire. The "Regulars" swept the area and found that the enemy had evaded, but three rucksacks had been left behind. The rucks each contained 80 pounds of rice.

As most of the element completed checking the area, they heard firing on the other side of the NDP (night defensive position) where a small observation post had been left. The infantrymen raced to the scene of the firing to find that the OP had spotted and engaged two more enemy. These enemy had also evaded into thick vegetation.

"After we searched that area and found nothing, I went down to where we had left another OP, just past where we had found the rucksacks," said Specialist Four David Stupski (Ware, Mass.), the assistant machine gunner. "I had been there only about 15 minutes when I saw an NVA soldier emerge from the elephant grass. He spotted us and was about to fire when I dropped him with my M-16."

Upon hearing the firing, the "Regulars" ran back the 150 years they had just covered. They arrived to find one dead NVA soldier along with an AK-50 rifle and a rucksack containing two Chicom hand grenades, ten pounds of rice, tobacco, candy and assorted food stuffs.

"While they were searching the body I moved farther down the trail to a security position," said Specilaist Four Lee Gutierrez (Pueblo, Colo.), the machine gunner. "I was there only a short while when I saw another enemy walking right down the middle of the trail. I fired on him with my machine gun and killed him."

The second enemy was carrying an AK-47 and a rucksack containing two Chicom hand grenades, 12 cans of condensed milk and other supplies. The weapons and all supplies were extracted to a nearby landing zone.

Soldiers think highly of new 4/3 Inf CO

By SP4 Paul Keber

FSB PROFESSIONAL, (198th Inf. Bde. IO) – "He'll listen to any problem you have. If you need something in the bush, he'll get it for you immediately." "His concern for the men is fantastic. We have a lot of confidence in him and a new morale."

So spoke two men of their new field commander, Captain Joseph J. Grano Jr., Company A, 4th Battalion, 3d Infantry. Grano (Weathersfield, Conn.), recently took command and in one short month has made his company the most respected one in the 23d Infantry Division (Americal).

Under the new command of Grano, Company A has added to their fine record, 20 enemy killed and 35 Viet Cong suspects detained.

Lieutenant Colonel John W. Shannon, battalion commander, recently presented the Honor Company Award to Company A in a ceremony held on Fire Support Base Professional, located northwest of Chu Lai. This award is given to the company with the most outstanding field and rear accomplishments in the battalion. There now exists a new confidence and cohesiveness in Alpha Company--a feeling to do a job well.

Grano seems to have borrowed a quote form an old, nostalgia war movie when he stated, "You take good care of your men and they'll take good care of you. They'll follow you to Hell and back."

However, combat in South Vietnam and the everyday frustrations of war turn from the innocence of a movie to a reality for the men of Company A. This reality can only be faced successfully by a strong, disciplined unit and intelligent, well-trained leadership.

Once in a while there is a free moment to relax and think. Specialist Four Steve Henson takes the opportunity to write a letter at Fire Support Base Vandergrift. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 WENDELL P. HAUTANIGNI)

Choo Choo Collins, who recently starred in Myra Breckinridge, says "I am a dedicated artist--and giving is my business. I want to play every kind of female character. I want to make people laugh, make them understand how beautiful life is when you give love." (Photo Courtesy)

Property Disposal recycles 'junk'

By SP4 William Hutchison

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. IO) – This place over here is getting more like the world all the time. Everyone back in the world is talking about disposal of junk–recycling and so forth.

For the 23d Infantry Division (Americal) the job is up to five GIs and their Vietnamese helpers of the Property Disposal Office (PDO).

Their job is no easy one, for they must handle almost every type of junk imaginable—everything that is of no further use to the Americal. From flack jackets to truck bodies—they are all brought into the PDO's yard.

Once in the yard, after being cleared at the gate to ensure the proper paper work had been done, aload of scrap is catagorized into one of 18 different sections. Depending upon its size, shape and make-up, the scrap is unloaded in one of the yard's many sections, from heavy scrap nearest the gate to the burning pit in back.

The PDO takes over here. They check the property to make sure the item can no longer be on any value to the Army. They also make sure that the equipment is striped of anything of value. Those items that will burn are put to the flame.

What is left must sit for a prescribed time and them recieve a final evaluation by an Army representative from Da Nang. The material, if found to be junk, is put up for auction to Vietnamese civilians as scrap metal.

The rusty hulks are then removed by freighter to be recycled into the Vietnamese economy.

It's not too difficult a job if the guys bringing the stuff in have the right paper work and they put the stuff in the right spot.

When they drop something in the wrong place, we just sit back and wait for their next load and they'll go out and move the stuff where it belongs. Expecially when we politely ask them," stated Specialist Four Jimmy Autry (Clarkston, N.C.).

The Americal's PDO yard must be the envy of every junk yard in America. Though the present yard has only been operational a short while they have moved over 6200 tons of scrap.

The rusting hulk of a truck lies amid tons of scrap metal in the 23rd Infantry Division's (Americal) Property Disposal yard. This truck was laid to rest in the PDO yard, but its job is not done yet. Still valuable for its scrap metal, it may yet prove worthwhile in another form in the Vietnamese economy. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 WILLIAM HUTCHISON)

Cpt Campbell selected CO of the Week

By SP4 Sam Rousso

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. I0) – Captain Eugene Campbell (Jacksonville, Fla.), commanding officer of Company C, 723d Maintenance Battalion, has been named the 23d Infantry Division's (Americal) Commander of the Week.

His company supports the 196th Infantry Brigade, which is responsible for the defense of Da Nang, by repairing equipment--trucks, weapons, vehicles and signal gear.

As Commander of the Week, Campbell spent a day in Chu Lai. He attended a morning briefing, flew to a unit in the field with the Assistant Division Commander for Maneuver, Brigadier General James C. McDonough, and was a guest at the commanding general's mess for dinner.

What was his reaction to being named Commander of the Week? "It was a great opportunity for me to see what problems the general staff has... and to see how the 196th, which we support, operates within the division. This way I can inform my people of the importance of their job."

Campbell attended the Maintenance and Supply Ordnance Branch Officer's Advanced Course at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, from April 1970 to March 1971.

He arrived in the Republic of Vietnam in April 16.

He has a degree in Industrial Education from Florida A & M University in Tallahassee, His wife, Jeanette, resides in Columbus, Ga.

Soldier experiences first 'field' day

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is a story of one man's impressions of the field. He concentrated on the experience--sights, sounds, words, feelings and emotions–rather than the actual mission itself. The mission was to bring two dusters from Nghai Hanh to Minh Long.

By SP4 Sam Rousso

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. I0) – The day started early. Up before dawn, put on you ruck, get your weapon and wait. One of the engineers says, "It's a waste."

Finally, the bird arrives, and you get ready to board. "No room for you this trip," the lieutenant says. "We'll be back for you."

When we finally arrive at the jump-off point for the operation, there are two tracks–everyone else is up ahead. As soon as we get on, the driver revs up the engine and the track lurches forward.

Looking around–nervously–you eye the terrain. You're on a narrow road at one side of a valley. A little farther on, the guy next to you nudges you and says, "VC country," The grasp on your weapon tightens.

Soon, the column stops–there's a suspected booby trap ahead. It's time for interval to move up to a Sheridan at the front of the column.

After climbing on, you introduce yourself to the tank commander. He says, "We had correspondents with us a couple of weeks ago. What paper are you with?"

"The Southen Cross."
"The what?"
"The division newspaper."
"Oh."

After he got over his disappointment, he was very communicative. "For the last couple of months, all we've been doing is small, unimportant stuff like this. What a waste."

Soon, we left the road and started making one of our own. We were sailing along smoothly until we heard some AK fire.

Within seconds, it seemed, the sky was full of Cobras, slicks and LOHs–all armed and itching to see something.

In the meantime, I went for the M-60–as far as I was concerned any less firepower wasn't going to make it.

Lush vegetation--the jungle–loomed ahead. I was sweating profusely. "Just nerves," I though. "I'd better not drink any more water–I'll just make it worse."

We got into the jungle–and stopped. The sweat was really pouring now. All of a sudden, I started feeling woozy. Just nerves. The wooziness increased.

I calmly asked the tank commander if he had any salt tablets. He didn't, but he obtained some rather quickly.

After a three hour delay–during which four holes were blown in a river bottom, it was decided that the Sheridan couldn't cross the river. So, it was on to an APC to cross the river.

Annihilating any tree that stood in our way, we proceeded on across the river about 1000 meters. We then met the element coming the other way.

So, after backing up, turning around and crushing more trees under our treads, we regrouped and preceeded back to our jump-off point–ending my first day in the field.

Brigadier General Bertram K. Gorwitz, assistant division commander, presents the colors of the 178th Assault Helicopter Company to Major Peter F. Taylor during a recent change of command ceremony. Major William P. Horton (rear) is former commander. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 MIKE CASSIDY)

Major Taylor receives command of 'Box Cars'

By SP4 Mike Cassidy

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. I0) – Major Peter F. Taylor (DeLand, Fla.) has taken command of the 178th Assault Support Helicopter Company ("Box Cars").

The recent change of command ceremony was presided over by Brigadier General Bertram K. Gorwitz, assistant division commander for support.

Former "Box Cars" commander, Major William P. Horton (Dallas), has been appointed exectuive officer of the 123d Aviation Battalion (Combat). While in command, his company attained the second highest score in the division on the exacting Command Maintenance and Material Inspection.

Taylor, on his second tour in Vietnam, has recently completed the Artillery Career Course.

HELLO... PROJECT HELP?

QUESTION: When does the program start which allows one to take a combined seven-day leave and R&R?

ANSWER: October 1.

If you have any question to be submitted to Project Help, dial HELP any time of the day or night. Any question on Army policies or personal problem will be answered, except drug related problems. Dial DRUG for answers about drugs.

Deadline set on competition

WASHINGTON – "What Is An American?" is the theme for the 1971 Armed Forces Letter Awards competition sponsored by the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge.

Entries should be sent to Freedoms Foundation, Valley Forge, Pa. 19481, and must not exceed 500 words.

The author's name, rank, social security number, branch of service, complete unit and home address must be included on each entry.