

Scorched Panorama Tells of Grim Fight On Dak To Hillside

By SP4 Ralph Springer

DAK TO — Perhaps it was the brilliant blue sky contrasted against a wide swath of blackened earth. Or the shrunken and shattered trees. Or the empty and wondering gaze of the men who trudged past the rubble.

Whatever it was, the men of companies A and C, 1st Bat-

alion, 8th Infantry knew, as they labored up the steep, vine-covered slope, that one of the vicious battles that raged around Dak To in November had centered on this hill.

Moving up through almost impassable terrain and vegetation, one notices blackened pieces of a Claymore mine littering the trail side. Still further, an ammunition can, twisted and rusting. More expended claymores and then, as one nears the top, the stench of death turns the stomach.

Moving from the vines and trees and jungle growth, one blinks at the sun that has been hidden all morning above an impenetrable green canopy.

The Scorched Earth

The desolation and quiet hit between the eyes. Here, on the slope and crest of a seemingly insignificant hill, is where only months before, elements of the 173rd Airborne Brigade and the People's Army of North Vietnam fought and died.

The earth is a scorched, gray panorama. Pock-marked and burnt from tons of artillery and bombs, the hillside is a black, ash-strewn sore on the side of a green and alive, jungled hill.

Trees—or what is left of them—lie dead in the ash. Shattered and ripped by jagged pieces of steel, the stumps still standing look like pieces of soot-colored charcoal. Long strands of once-yellow bamboo lean at crazy angles, blown back by the terrible concussion of exploded munitions.

Evidence of a hasty evacuation litters the area. Used first-aid bandages, tinged with red are scattered next to burnt ponchos and poncho liners. An air mattress, melted and punctured by shrapnel, hangs from a deep

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Foe Sheds Little Light On Escape

DAK TO — Company B, 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry continues to exploit enemy blunders.

When the 1st Brigade command camp at Dak To was being mortared, the Dragoons scanned the area from their night location on Hill 1124.

An enemy mortar team had apparently lost its way while retreating and decided to shed some light on the matter.

"We saw their flashlight go on," explained Captain Ronald S. Collins (Smithtown, N.Y.), Company B commander, "and within minutes had an aircraft's mini-gun beam shining down on them."

The following morning Company B was ordered to move out in a company-sized search and destroy patrol when movement was reported from the Dragoons' observation post. Suspecting it was the mortaring party from the previous night making a hasty withdrawal, the Ivymen tried to get a visual sighting as to type of uniform, weapons, and size of the element.

The four men manning the observation post continued to hear movement and watched as a trail of bushes "moved" about 75 meters. Receiving permission, they fired an M79 round at the lead element just as the leader made the mistake of popping his head up.

The enemy mortar team took off while the Dragoons called in air strikes and artillery on the route of withdrawal to bottle it up. Company B then engaged in an extensive search for weapons that the enemy presumably left behind.

Braves Make 'Chalets' With Sandbags At Base

By SP4 Andy Pipon

DAK TO (3/12) — "Grizzly's Lodge" is located on a 6,000-foot high mountain peak just north from Dak To. Cold blowing winds and a breathtaking view make the scenic summit

seem almost like a resort in the Swiss Alps.

However, this lodge is not a vacation haven. Its chalets are made of sandbags for protection from the cold winds — and more important from enemy mortars and rockets. Fashion is not important because everyone is attired alike in old jungle fatigues.

The men don't tote skis either. They carry ammunition and other supplies, essentials to carrying out a successful operation.

Snow is nature's only element needed to complete the scene. Low clouds cover the mountain with a continuous white blanket and a vivid picture may be painted with just a little imagination.

Although the ski lodge is a battalion firebase, lived in by the men of the 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry, its name lends a feeling of unusual dignity to the Braves. As one young soldier related, "the name almost makes you forget about the horrors of war because a ski lodge usually means fun."

Quipped still another, "I wonder what my folks will think when they read about our ski lodge in my letter."



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CAMP ENARI, VIETNAM

January 28, 1968



NIGHTMARES FOR THE ENEMY—These helicopters from the 4th Aviation Battalion buzz closely in formation en route to another combat assault in the Central Highlands. The Black Jacks provide effective combat support for Ivy infantrymen.

(USA Photo by 1LT Charles E. Hawkins III)

Battalion Firebase Feasts

Bullets Get Taste of Polynesia

DAK TO — Thanks to Platoon Sergeant Pesamino Pele (American Samoa), the men of Company A, 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry recently had an almost genuine Polynesian luau.

"The only things missing were the palm trees and grass-skirts," said Staff Sergeant Ber-

nard Lloyd (West Palm Beach, Fla.), a company squad leader.

PSG Pele, a native Samoan, bought a 75-pound pig from a Montagnard village near the 1st Brigade's command camp at Dak To. "Although it cost \$85, it was worth the money and trouble transporting it out to our firebase," the sergeant added.

When the porker arrived at the Bullets' firebase, Staff Sergeant William Montgomery (Bristol, Tenn.) and Staff Sergeant Vicente Garrido (Agana, Guam) set to work cleaning and gutting the animal while PSG Pele prepared the elaborate cooking oven.

A three-foot by 4½-foot "imu" (Hawaiian for oven), was dug and lined with rocks, and then a fire was started in the bottom of the pit. More rocks were then piled on the glowing coals and after several hours, the wood was black charcoal and the rocks almost red hot.

Then PSG Pele, after wrapping the prepared pig in foil and chicken wire, lowered the main course into the hole.

"After the pig was resting on the coals and rocks," said the Polynesian platoon sergeant, "it was covered with a layer of rocks and also some banana leaves for flavor. A canvas tarp was thrown over the top of the hole and then dirt was piled on the canvas."

The company then impatiently sat down to await the outcome.

Five hours later, at 4 p.m., the pig's overhead cover was removed and PSG Pele gingerly lifted the succulent pork out. "The meat is always so tender I have to wrap it in chicken wire to keep it from falling apart," he said.

With some vegetables and condiments provided by the

unit's firebase mess and the company supplying the hot sauce and fresh bananas, almost 120 Bullets, including Lieutenant Colonel John Madison (Colorado Springs, Colo.), the battalion commander, settled down to a feast, unrivaled in the Central Highlands as far as taste and novelty go.

"I guess I haven't lost my touch," added PSG Pele who learned the art of Polynesian cooking at an early age. "Everyone was really satisfied with the whole meal."

Officer Steps Within Inches Of Deathtrap

CAMP ENARI — "Lieutenant Hennessy! Don't take another step. There's a mine right in front of us!" cried Staff Sergeant Billy Ball (Riverside, Calif.) to his platoon leader, First Lieutenant David M. Hennessy (Phoenix, Ariz.).

The two men were moving along a trail while on a recent patrol in the Plei Bon Valley, north of Highway 19E near Pleiku.

The cavalry platoon from Troop C, 2nd Squadron, 1st Cavalry was conducting a reconnaissance and blocking mission in the valley when they came to a large stream shortly before noon.

The Blackhawks halted at the stream's edge and SSG Ball sent out his second scout section to survey the stream to find a fording site for the patrol's vehicles and tanks. The lieutenant joined his platoon sergeant to further scan the bank. They pushed

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SERGEANT'S SIDEKICK—1SG Alexander Hidel (Wartburg, Tenn.), an operations sergeant with the 2nd Brigade, poses with his pet, Rip, the Raccoon. Rip is only one of many pets which have found the command camp to be home.

(USA Photo by 1LT Jerry Yahiro)



Chaplain's Corner

By Chaplain (MAJ) Melvin Brown

The men who wrote the many documents that make up the Old and New Testaments were just men and not semi-gods. Their individual writings, now called documents, were assembled one by one and preserved in the Jewish and Christian Testaments. At no time do the authors attempt to hide the evil of their ages, nor do they estimate their own struggle to serve God. They questioned God, rebelled against Him, as do most, if not all men, and they left their honest records for all mankind to study and even to judge. Many of these ancient and God-fearing men were finally forced against a seemingly impossible wall before their resistance against God was broken.

Every man through the ages has to face God in his own time and place, and no few have first turned to God during the terror of battle. Foxhole conversions may not always be lasting, but they are dramatic experiences in the lives of combat men.

During the Dak To battle I found the combat men more than ready to discuss God. There is nothing more lonesome than seeing and facing death and all foolish arguments are put aside as we reach for the ever-extended hand of God. High above Dak To on a battlefield a combat-weary engineer sergeant handed me the following article which says so well those experiences that finally led me to change my MOS from the combat infantryman of two wars to that of a chaplain. Perhaps it will say something to you:

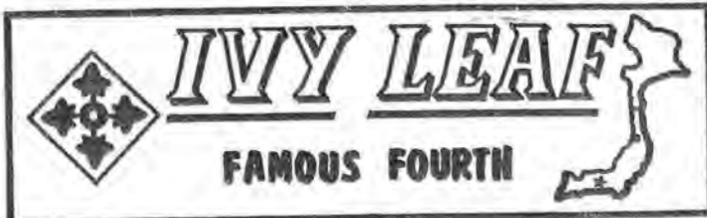
HELLO GOD

Look God, I have never spoken to you.
But now—I want to say: "How do you do!"
You see God, they told me, you didn't exist. . . .
And like a fool—I believed all of this.
Last night from a shell-hole I saw your sky—
I figured from right then, they had told me a lie.
Had I taken time to see the things you made,

I'd know they weren't calling a spade a spade.
I wonder God if you'd shake my hand
Somehow I feel that you will understand.
Funny, I had to come to this hellish place,
Before I had time to see your face.
Well, I guess there isn't much more to say
But I am sure glad God, that I met you today.
I guess the zero-hour will soon be here,
But I am not afraid since I know You are near.
The signal—well God—I'll have to go,
I like you lots—this I want You to know.
Look now—this will be a horrible fight,
Who knows—I may come to Your house tonight.
Though I wasn't friendly with You before,
I wonder God—if You'd wait at Your door—
Look—I am crying — me shedding tears!
I wish I'd known You these many years.
Well, I'll have to go now, God—goodbye
Strange—since I met You—I am not afraid to die.

Mrs. Lorena Davenport, chaplain for the Auxiliary to Hellettsville, Calif., Post 6382, submitted this poem for publication and the sergeant cut the article from a newspaper and gave it to Chaplain Brown. The poem is said to have been found on a 19-year-old soldier killed in Vietnam, but there is a possibility that the poem goes back as far as the Korean War.

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STEADFAST and LOYAL

Silver Star
PFC Norman A. Morgan—Co C, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf
SSG James M. McBee—Co B, 1st Bn, 14th Inf
PSG Ronald A. Garrett—Trp C, 2nd Sqdn, 1st Cav
SSG Homero Perez—Btry B, 5th Bn, 16th Arty
COL Charles R. Sniffin—HHC, 2nd Bde, 4th Div
SSG Joe Towner Jr.—Co D, 2nd Bn, 35th Inf

Distinguished Flying Cross
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SP4 Paul D. Sweckard—HHC, 3rd Bde, 25th Div

Soldiers Medal
PFC Michael O. Barnette—HHC, 1st Bn, 12th Inf
SP4 Margarito F. Mendez—Co D, 2nd Bn, 35th Inf

Bronze Star For Heroism
2LT John E. Kennedy—Co B, 1st Bn, 14th Inf
CPT Kenneth E. Wall Jr.—Btry D, 5th Bn, 16th Arty
1SG Robert A. Richardson—Btry D, 5th Bn, 16th Arty
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SP4 Carl R. Alexander—Co C, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf
1LT David F. Barth—Co E, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf
SP4 Patrick J. Higgins—Btry D, 5th Bn, 16th Arty
SSG Dieter Schuster—Trp C, 2nd Sqdn, 1st Cav
SSG Donald K. Cantrell—Trp C, 2nd Sqdn, 1st Cav
SP4 Sherwood S. Schumann—Trp C, 2nd Sqdn, 1st Cav

CPT Clarence B. Hartman—Trp C, 2nd Sqdn, 1st Cav
SP4 Curtis O. Gill—Co B, 1st Bn, 14th Inf
PFC Damon L. Purdy—Co D, 1st Bn, 12th Inf
1LT Robert E. Bagwell—HHC, 4th Div Arty
SSG James O. Branning—Trp C, 3rd Sqdn, 4th Cav, 3rd Bde TF

SFC Robert L. Smith—Co B, 1st Bn, 14th Inf
SGT Terry A. Ernest—Co B, 1st Bn, 8th Inf
SSG Gary P. Pastine—Trp C, 3rd Sqdn, 4th Cav
SSG William D. Swartz—Trp C, 3rd Sqdn, 4th Cav, 3rd Bde TF

1LT Arthur H. Trujillo—Co B, 1st Bn, 8th Inf
SGT Robert P. Sawlsky—Co C, 1st Bn, 14th Inf
1LT Michael B. Teeters—Co A, 1st Bn, 14th Inf
SP4 Alfonso H. Joubert—Co C, 1st Bn, 22nd Inf
2LT Knobby J. Thomas—Co C, 1st Bn, 2nd Inf
PFC Ronald A. Brunty—Co C, 1st Bn, 22nd Inf
2LT Ronald S. Ekasala—Co C, 1st Bn, 22nd Inf
SP4 Rivera D. Rivera—Co C, 1st Bn, 22nd Inf
SSG Robert L. Eirling—Co C, 1st Bn, 22nd Inf
SSG Lee E. Knight—Co C, 1st Bn, 22nd Inf

SP4 Charles L. Mathews—HHC, 2nd Bde, 4th Div
SP4 Raymond W. Watner—Co C, 1st Bn, 22nd Inf
MAJ George P. Long—HHC, 1st Bn, 12th Inf
SP4 Eugene Robinson—HHC, 3rd Bde TF, 25th Div
LTC Harold B. Birch—HHC, 1st Bn, 12th Inf
SP5 Dwane L. Larson—HHC, 1st Bn, 8th Inf
SFC Kelly T. Gibson Jr.—Co A, 1st Bn, 14th Inf
1LT Jock M. Miller—Co A, 1st Bn, 14th Inf
SGT James T. Underhill—Co C, 1st Bn, 14th Inf
SP4 Richard A. Sanders—HHC, 2nd Bn, 35th Inf
PFC Mark A. Woolf—Co B, 1st Bn, 8th Inf

2LT Robert T. Peters—Co A, 1st Bn, 35th Inf
SP4 Michael R. Anshutz—Co C, 1st Bn, 14th Inf
PFC Marcus J. Gannon—HHC, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf
PFC Steven C. Moore—Co E, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf
SGT Jean-Guy Sejourne—HHT, 1st Sqdn, 10th Cav
LTC John P. Berres—HQ, 2nd Bn (Mech.), 8th Inf
PFC Brian E. Bell—Co C, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf
SP4 Oscar Martinez—Co C, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf
PFC John A. Nordeen—Co C, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf
SGT Richard L. Crooks—Co C, 3rd Bn, 8th Inf
SP5 Porfirio Martinez Jr.—Co C, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf

SGT Nathaniel Hardy—Co C, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf
PFC Raymond W. Poor—Co C, 3rd Bn, 8th Inf
1LT Jack D. Crabtree—Co B, 1st Bn, 14th Inf
PFC Paul J. Veronesi—Co B, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf
2LT Charles N. Franges—Co C, 3rd Bn, 8th Inf
1LT Thomas E. Blake—HHC, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf
PFC John R. Trahan—Co C, 3rd Bn, 8th Inf
CPT Gary A. Boyd—Btry B, 5th Bn, 16th Arty
2LT Gerald T. Chesser—Co B, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf
1LT William W. Wade—Co B, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf
SSG Dannie R. Shaffer—Co C, 4th Engr Bn
SSG Clarence Chisolm—Co C, 3rd Bn, 8th Inf
SP4 Stephen N. Edmunds—Co C, 3rd Bn, 8th Inf
PFC Michael A. Ganger—Co A, 1st Bn, 35th Inf
SP4 Robert L. Hinton—Co C, 2nd Bn, 35th Inf
1LT Hershel R. Souder—Btry B, 6th Bn, 29th Arty

Air Medal For Heroism
COL Charles R. Sniffin—HHC, 2nd Bde, 4th Div
SGT Paul D. Sweckard—HHC, 3rd Bde TF, 25th Div

CPT James W. Becker—Trp D, 1st Sqdn, 10th Cav
SP4 Sterling V. Kirk—HHC, 3rd Bde TF, 25th Div
MAJ George R. Fourson—Co A, 4th Avn Bn
SP4 James W. Kincaid—Trp D, 1st Sqdn, 10th Cav
SP4 James F. Weiss—HHC, 3rd Bde TF, 25th Div
LTC William P. Junk Jr.—HHC, 1st Bn, 22nd Inf
SP5 Friedheim Kerl—Co A, 4th Avn Bn

PFC Gaylord P. Mekelburg—HHC, 2nd Bn, 9th Arty

SP5 Albert W. Ekstrom—Co A, 4th Avn Bn
SP5 George A. Jacques—Co A, 4th Avn Bn

Army Commendation For Heroism

PFC Darrell L. Warn—Co C, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf
SFC Robert L. Smith—Co B, 1st Bn, 14th Inf
SFC Paul L. Counts—Btry B, 5th Bn, 16th Arty
1LT Eric H. Peterson III—HHC, 1st Bn, 12th Inf
SP4 David A. Sheets—Co C, 3rd Bn, 8th Inf
SGT Philip E. Campbell—Co C, 4th Engr Bn
SGT Donald R. Adams—Co C, 3rd Bn, 8th Inf
SP4 Gary R. Kamats—Trp A, 1st Sqdn, 10th Cav
SP4 Danny W. Lopez—Trp C, 2nd Sqdn, 1st Cav

SP4 Woodrow Green—Co B, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf
SGT Charles Crawford—Btry B, 2nd Bn, 9th Arty
SP4 Jerry H. Stephens—HHC, 1st Bn, 14th Inf
2LT John R. Landfield—Co D, 1st Bn, 8th Inf
PFC Rodney G. Johnston—Co B, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf
PFC Dominick R. De Vito—Trp A, 1st Sqdn, 10th Cav

SP4 James R. Hodges—Trp C, 2nd Sqdn, 1st Cav
SP4 Larry V. Bradley—Co C, 3rd Bn, 8th Inf
SP4 William Whittaker—Co E, 1st Bn, 12th Inf
SP4 Dwight L. Wilson—Co C, 3rd Bn, 8th Inf
SGT Minton F. Robinson—HHC, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf
CPL John W. Heard—Btry B, 4th Bn, 42nd Arty
SFC Gordon Houghton—HHC, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf
SSG Frank L. Mitchell—Trp A, 1st Sqdn, 10th Cav
SSG Donald E. Dixon—HHC, 1st Bde, 4th Div
SGT Larry D. Nolan—Co C, 1st Bn, 22nd Inf
SP4 Terry L. Sanders—Co C, 1st Bn, 22nd Inf
PFC Kenneth J. Asturias—HHC, 4th Engr Bn
SP4 Frederick G. Campbell—HHC, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf

SP4 Rufus F. Rhea—HHC, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf
SP4 Thomas R. Bell—Co C, 3rd Bn, 8th Inf
PFC Daniel P. Hillier—HHC, 1st Bn, 14th Inf
SP4 Ellis L. Sopson—Co C, 3rd Bn, 8th Inf
PFC William Bridges—Co C, 3rd Bn, 8th Inf
SP4 Dennis M. Anfinson—Co C, 3rd Bn, 8th Inf
SP4 Richard B. Kaniper—Co B, 1st Bn, 14th Inf
PFC Bennie L. Thomas—Co C, 1st Bn, 22nd Inf
SP4 Paul E. Bowman—Btry B, 6th Bn, 29th Arty
SP4 Dennis A. Heape—Co E, 1st Bn, 12th Inf
SP4 Darrel W. Truelock—Trp C, 2nd Sqdn, 1st Cav
SGT George A. Truner—Co A, 1st Bn, 22nd Inf
SP5 Kenneth W. Hoagland—Co C, 4th Engr Bn
SP4 Richard B. Feely—Trp C, 2nd Sqdn, 1st Cav
SSG Melvin E. Smiley—Btry B, 5th Bn, 16th Arty
CPT David E. Bishop—HHC, 1st Bn, 14th Inf
SP4 Jay M. Frye III—Co A, 1st Bn, 12th Inf

SP4 Rufus F. Rhea—HHC, 3rd Bn, 12th Inf
SP4 Thomas R. Bell—Co C, 3rd Bn, 8th Inf
PFC Daniel P. Hillier—HHC, 1st Bn, 14th Inf
SP4 Ellis L. Sopson—Co C, 3rd Bn, 8th Inf
PFC William Bridges—Co C, 3rd Bn, 8th Inf
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PFC William Bridges—Co C, 3rd Bn, 8th Inf
SP4 Dennis M. Anfinson—Co C, 3rd Bn, 8th Inf
SP4 Richard B. Kaniper—Co B, 1st Bn, 14th Inf
PFC Bennie L. Thomas—Co C, 1st Bn, 22nd Inf
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SSG Melvin E. Smiley—Btry B, 5th Bn, 16th Arty
CPT David E. Bishop—HHC, 1st Bn, 14th Inf
SP4 Jay M. Frye III—Co A, 1st Bn, 12th Inf

87,534 Die High Price Paid

SAIGON (MACV) — North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces fighting in Vietnam paid heavily in both men and material during the year 1967, according to figures released by a MACV spokesman.

Quoting statistics covering the period January 1-December 30, 1967, the spokesman said 87,534 of the enemy were killed and 28,614 individual and 2,933 crew served weapons were captured. The total of enemy dead is the equivalent of more than 144 North Vietnamese Army battalions.

In addition, the foe lost 2,327,341 rounds of small arms ammunition, 22,418 mortar rounds, 56,980 grenades and 12,776 mines. During the same period, 13,779 tons of rice and 162 tons of salt were taken from the enemy.

For the entire year, 27,178 persons defected from the enemy ranks to join the Government of Vietnam under the Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) program. Of these, 17,671 returnees (more than 29 NVA battalions) were fighting men, members of the military units opposing the Free World Forces.

Figures released for Free World Forces showed that the total U.S. Armed Forces strength increased from 389,000 on Dec. 31, 1966, to 486,000 on Dec. 30, 1967. Other Free World military strength rose from 53,000 to 60,000 fighting men.

During the year, the U.S. lost 9,353 men killed in action while other Free World casualties (excluding the Republic of Vietnam) totaled 1,102 dead. In all, 15,997 Americans have died in Vietnam between Jan. 1, 1961, and Dec. 30, 1967. The Vietnamese Armed Forces reported approximately 10,750 of their men were killed in action during the year.

Enemy terrorists and acts of terrorism claimed the lives of 4,080 Vietnamese civilians during 1967. An additional 8,072 civilians were wounded and 5,454 civilians abducted in these incidents during the year.

The year-end figures showed that U.S. military forces included 320,000 Army, 78,000 Marines, 56,000 Air Force, 31,000 Navy and 1,200 Coast Guard.

Several Big Caches Found

Ivymen Discover Tons Of Enemy Rice



RECOVERED RICE—This 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry soldier inspects sandbags, filled with rice, after a recent discovery of the grain by the Red Warriors near Plei Mrong. The battalion has uncovered more than 39,000 pounds of rice since early December.

(USA Photo by SP4 Steve Frye)

By Richard Tuttle

VUNG DAT AM—Some North Vietnamese soldiers are going to go hungry thanks to the efforts of the 2nd Brigade's 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry.

Since early December the Red Warriors have captured more than 39,000 pounds of enemy rice.

In one day the men of Company A uncovered two rice stores totaling close to 12 tons at a location about 10 miles northwest of Pleiku. Specialist 4 Joseph T. Langley (Sacramento, Calif.), a team leader with the 3rd Platoon's 2nd Squad, helped to discover both of these caches.

"We left our patrol base on a reconnaissance mission and had just crossed a stream and were started up a mountain when we came to a ravine spanned by a small bridge," related the specialist.

"Near the bridge I saw some type of hut so I went over to investigate," SP4 Langley continued. "I crawled on top and removed some bamboo from the roof and spotted the rice."

A closer look disclosed about three tons of rice in the hut.

The patrol moved on and en route back to the patrol base was moving along the stream it had crossed earlier in the day when one of the soldiers noticed some large rocks and a deep crevice between them.

SP4 Langley and Sergeant Marvin D. Doss (Bel Air, Md.), his squad leader, ran over for a better look. There, lodged between the rocks, was another rice cache considerably larger than the one they had found earlier.

SGT Doss estimated this find to be several tons-worth and exclaimed later, "I couldn't imagine finding any more rice. We just happened to stumble on it by luck."

"It's difficult to be certain exactly how much rice there was because the collapsing crevice walls covered quite a bit of it," the sergeant added.

A battalion reconnaissance team working with a Camp Strike Force (CSF), formerly termed Civilian Irregular Defense Group, also made a big find, turning up more than 6,000 pounds of rice. Most of the grain was filled in sandbags, and later redistributed to local villages while the rest was stored.



RISKY RIDE—With help close by, SSG Donald Dixon (Wahiawa, Hawaii), a member of a Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol, manages to hang on after he had become tangled in a rope ladder while on a mission near Dak To.

(USA Photo by Andy Pipon)

Patroller Balances In Mid-Air

DAK TO (3/12)—A hovering helicopter didn't much interest the men at the 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry firebase until a voice exclaimed, "There's a man hanging from the ladder under that bird over there!"

A UH-1D helicopter hovered over the trees on a hillside opposite the Braves firebase. A ladder slung below blew back and forth with Staff Sergeant Donald Dixon (Wahiawa, Hawaii), a member of a Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP), working with the 1st Brigade, tangled in its rungs. SSG Dixon had caught his web gear on the ladder preventing his climb to the helicopter above.

Shouts of encouragement echoed throughout the firebase and from the patroller's teammates in the helicopter. Eyes focused on the soldier as he clung to the ladder almost 100 feet above the ground.

The chopper flew the "swinging" sergeant to the Braves firebase where soldiers scrambled to his aid and assisted him to the ground. Spectators gave sighs of relief when SSG Dixon assured them he was not hurt.

One bystander gasped, "I sure hope I never have an experience like that. I'd probably die of fright."

Out of breath, but unshaken, SSG Dixon gave this account of his ride:

"It was a darn cold ride and the only thing I thought of was getting safely to the ground." He explained that the strong wind blew the ladder, causing it to swing about, preventing his climb up to the chopper. "The helicopter had a rough time hovering because of the violent winds so we moved quickly before the enemy could get a chance to snipe at us," he added. "I shudder to think of the outcome if we'd been shot at."

Indigestion

DAK TO — Two North Vietnamese Army soldiers, searching for their hidden rice cache, ran into a pair of 1st Brigade Ivymen recently and escaped with severe cases of indigestion.

Privates First Class Eugene Bennet (Portland, Ore.) and Larry Blanchard (Westland, Mich.) of Company A, 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry were manning an observation post late one morning when they saw two NVA soldiers in ragged clothes making their way up a hill toward them.

"They were really casual about it," said PFC Bennet. "We had found a huge rice cache in the area the day before and I guess the two NVA were coming up to get some food, unaware that we had found it."

The two Bullets waited until the enemy soldiers were fairly close and then fired on the unwary pair. The startled NVA beat a hasty retreat into the thick jungle.

If NVA 'Food Advisor' Exists, He's In A Stew

DAK TO — The North Vietnamese Army's equivalent to our food service advisor is probably cursing himself after discovering that a 1st Brigade reconnaissance patrol seized his rice cache southwest of Dak To.

Specialist 4 Frank Wood (Happy Camp, Calif.) and Staff Sergeant Jesse G. Bettencourt (San Antonio) were part of a reconnaissance patrol from Company A, 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry moving ahead of the 3rd platoon checking out a hill mass.

"Our small element was moving toward the top of this ridge," said SP4 Wood, "when we moved up on a small clearing. It was a good location for an ambush so we approached the small bamboo shelter in the clearing with caution."

Receiving no fire in the cleared area, the patrol moved up to the hut-like structure. "I

poked some of the gunnysacks that were in the shelter with my bayonet and rice came streaming out," recalled SP4 Wood.

Moving the find outside, the Ivymen counted 32 sacks of rice, each one weighing about 250 pounds. "All total, I would guess that there was about 33,500 pounds of rice there," said SSG Bettencourt.

"That rice probably could have fed a couple of battalions for about a month," added SSG Bettencourt. "We know now that Charlie must be hurtin' for chow."



LOTS OF RICE—2nd Brigade Ivymen load a huge rice store found recently on a 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry sweep of the jungled plain, south of the brigade command camp at Vung Dat Am. On one day alone, the Red Warriors discovered two rice stores totaling close to 12 tons of grain.

(USA Photo by SP4 Steve Frye)

Foe's Talking Cuts Meal Short

VUNG DAT AM—Voices overheard by an Ivy unit near Plei Mrong recently caused the enemy to cut short his dinner and leave behind one dead Viet Cong Montagnard.

A squad-sized element was sent out from the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry firebase to sweep the area sprawling from the base perimeter. Returning from the search, the patrol heard voices within the dense brush. Private First Class Robert Tanaka (Honolulu), pointman, was dispatched to investigate.

Only a few meters away from where his buddies lay hidden, PFC Tanaka spotted a small fire and quickly turning to his left watched a North Vietnamese Army soldier toting an AK47 run by. Pausing momentarily to catch his breath, the young Ivyman took off to alert the rest

of his squad.

Advised of the situation, Specialist 4 Gary Watts (Oxward, Calif.), team leader, sent out two men as a blocking force and motioned the remainder to wait for the enemy to make the next move. Moments later, a VC Montagnard armed with a rifle popped his head through the bush and PFC Tanaka burped a quick shot from his M79 grenade launcher. The enemy eluded the missile but fell later to the glancing fire of Private First Class Mark A. Whitehouse (Princeton, N.J.), the squad's machine gunner.

After the skirmish, the squad rejoined the rest of the platoon for a search of the area. Combing the jungle closely, it soon turned up three simmering rice pots, enough rice to feed a small company, and two packs.



IT'S TIME FOR A BATH AND—THANKS TO A 1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY MEDCAP VISIT—THESE MONTAGNARD YOUNGSTERS HAVE SOAP TO TAKE IT



IT'S COLD WATER, BUT MEDCAP SOAP HELPS YOUNGSTER COME CLEAN A LITTLE EASIER.

Both Ivymen A Benefit From

STORY BY SP4

VUNG DAT AM—A Medical Civic Action Program (MEDCAP) visit to a Montagnard hamlet is something that both villagers and Ivymen benefit from.

The Red Warriors of the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry recently held a MEDCAP at the Montagnard village of Plei Mrong 20 miles east of the 2nd Brigade command camp, which graphically pointed out that the other war being fought in Vietnam—the war to win the hearts and confidence of the people—is as valuable and personally rewarding as winning military victories.



NORMALLY A MORTARMAN, SP4 CHARLES E.



SEE IT WITH.

SP6 JAMES A. WELLS OFFERS VILLAGERS SMALL TOKENS OF FRIENDSHIP.

And Montagnards MEDCAP Visit

BY AND PHOTOS

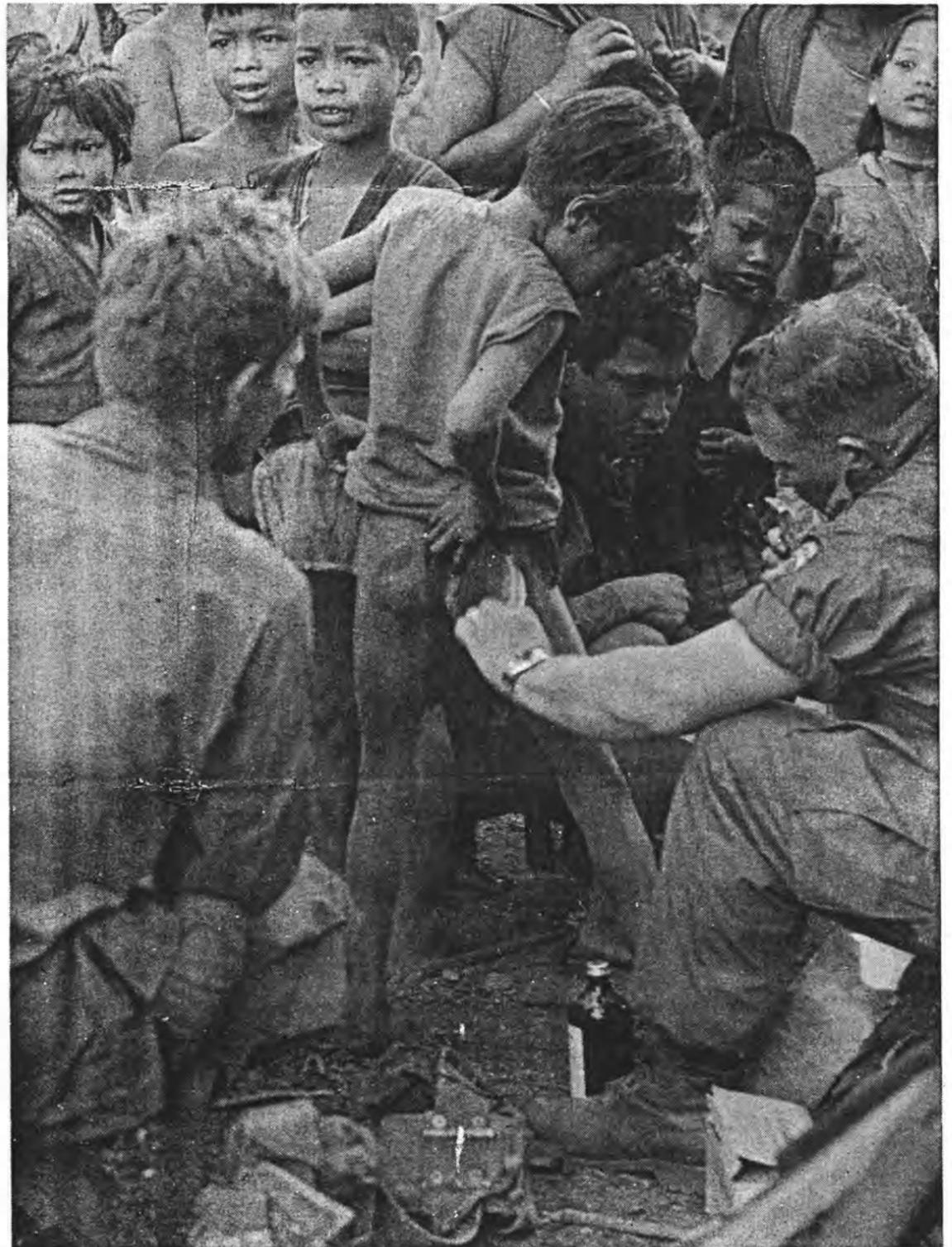
SP4 STEVE FRYE

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The 2nd Brigade Ivymen brought medical aid to the villagers, treated their children to candy and gum, and one enterprising Red Warrior even furnished the Montagnards with much-needed haircuts. Toward the end of the MEDCAP, the villagers assembled at a nearby stream for a bath with fragrant-smelling soap the Ivymen had brought along.

Packing up for the trip back to their firebase, the Red Warriors felt a renewed sense of accomplishment as they looked at the wide smiles on the faces of the villagers of Plei Mrong.



TENDING TO CUTS AND BRUISES IS ONLY ONE OF MANY SERVICES OF IVY SOLDIERS.



SP4 STEVE FRYE CHANGES TO A BARBER FOR MEDCAP VISITS.



A GAMBLER GUN CUTS HARD TO THE LEFT TO ROLL BACK IN FOR ANOTHER PASS OVER AN ENEMY POSITION.

Copters Add Confidence

Ivy Gunships Make Big Difference

CAMP ENARI — "Scramble" comes the terse command. Within minutes UH-1C helicopter gunships from the 4th Aviation Battalion are churning their way towards the scene of enemy contact.

The Gambler Guns, a gunship unit of the battalion, is on standby alert throughout the day should an Ivy unit clash with an enemy force anywhere in the division's area of operations.

Airborne in minutes, the deadly helicopters are armed with 14, 2.75-inch aerial rockets and 7.62mm machine guns that are capable of spitting out 2,200 rounds per minute.

"Sure we get shot at," said First Lieutenant Robert Skinner, (Fort Pierce, Fla.), commander of a section of the Gambler Guns, "but when you can throw back what we can, it doesn't really bother us."

Gunships can provide close combat support to ground troops for a lengthy period of time. Recently, in a series of combat assaults near Ban Me Thuot, two sections of Gambler Guns provided continuous cover for nearly nine hours.

As slicks (the term applied to UH-1D helicopters that carry the infantry) from a sister company of the battalion moved infantry troops into the area, the gunships, making passes at tree-top level, raked the surrounding jungle with their flexible guns and rockets,

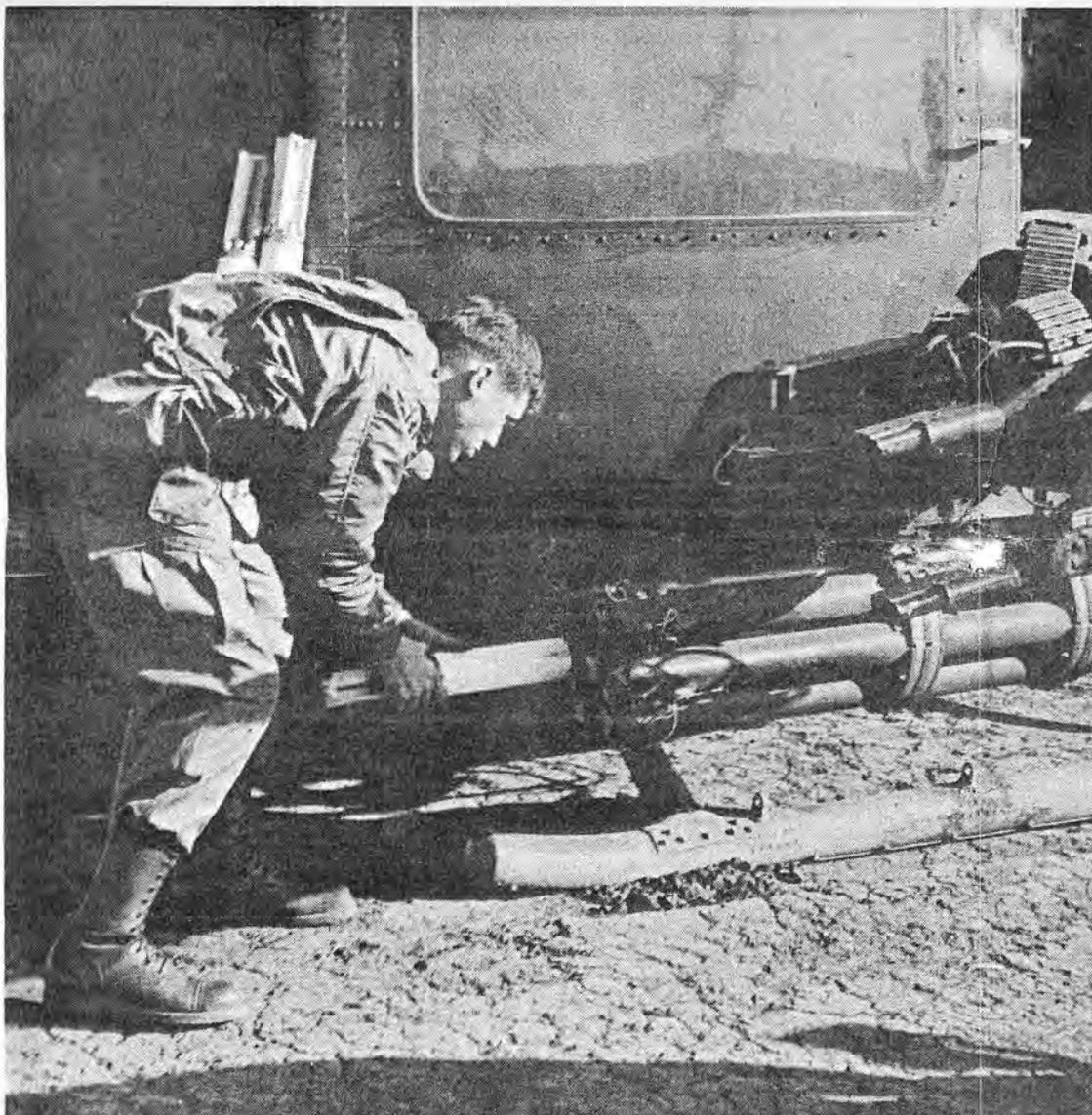
quelling possible ground fire and adding a feeling of confidence to Ivymen hitting the ground.

A part of the 4th Aviation Battalion since the unit arrived in Vietnam more than a year ago, the dark-green gunships have been in the thick of all the major enemy encounters and have lent invaluable support to innumerable smaller contacts.

The Gambler Guns proved its devastating fire power most recently in the bitter fighting around Dak To. The gun crews heard the word "scramble" day and night as the fighting moved from one battle front to another during the bloody 22-day clash.

Many have said that helicopters have made the difference in the Vietnam war. The combat infantryman will bear that out. Where there is a need for protection and close support, the heavily armed gunships will fill the bill.

Story And Photos
By
1LT Charles E. Hawkins III



SP4 ROBERT JETTER LOADS DEADLY 2.75-INCH ROCKET.



1LT ROBERT SKINNER POINTS OUT TARGET.



PRETTY PILOT—Diane Beatty (Detroit), a "Dolly" with the Ivy Division Red Cross Clubmobile unit poses with her brother, WO Charles Beatty, before taking off on a brief tour of Camp Enari. WO Beatty is a pilot with the 4th Aviation Battalion, and his sister just dropped in to say hello. (USA Photo by SP4 James Doyle)

Pilot's Sister Pays Him Viet Visit

CAMP ENARI — A pleasant surprise greeted Warrant Officer Charles Beatty (Detroit), 4th Aviation Battalion, when he checked into the Black Jacks orderly room. The surprise was a smiling blonde, who greeted him with a cheery hug. "I was here for a few days on TDY," remarked Diane Beatty (Detroit), a blue-eyed blonde Red Cross girl, "and thought I would surprise my brother." "You might say," quipped Beatty, "you never know who you'll meet over here. I almost had to fight off the entire platoon just to take her out." After a brief tour of Camp Enari and a whirlwind flight over the area in her brother's Huey, Miss Beatty remarked, "I think I'll leave the flying to Chuck. Coffee, tea and doughnuts seem to be more my style."

Week's VIP Takes 'R&R'

DAK TO — "It's almost like getting an in-battalion R&R," quipped Chico. Chosen as the 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry "Ranger of the Week," Private First Class James (Chico) Adams (Fresno, Calif.) of Company C is going first class for seven days. "Little Ranger" is exempt from all details, first in the chow line and gets a shower and clean fatigues every day," smiled PFC Adams. He also accompanies the battalion commander all week, attends briefings, and gets an overall idea of how the battalion operates. "You get an up-town view of what's going on," added Chico, "and learn things you'd never know anything about otherwise." The program, in operation for almost a year now, has proved successful.

Clubmobile Unit Active

CAMP ENARI — The Ivy's Red Cross Clubmobile unit spent more than 287 hours visiting division soldiers during December. In discussing the unit's activities for the month, Linda Hall (Little Rock, Ark.), the director, said that "more than 8,700 soldiers were seen during the visits, both in the field and at the base camp. The unit traveled by jeep in and around the base camp visiting the men, and by helicopter to the outlying units, logging more than 4,537 miles."

The unit made a total of 204 mobile visits during the month, and during many visits to infantrymen, cavalrymen, and supporting units, the girls often served in mess halls during the evening meal. Members of the unit, in addition to the director are, Lois Hartvigson (San Francisco), program director, Janet Olson (Minneapolis), Laura Coates (Carson, Wash.), Gay Nall (New Orleans) and Vicki Kohlman (Green Bay, Wisc.), recreation aides.

MPs Quiz Thousands Each Day

By SP5 Conrad Clark
CAMP ENARI — A routine daily assignment for the 4th Military Police Company at base camp is checking in and out more than 2,000 Vietnamese and Montagnards who work in and around Camp Enari.

The arduous task begins at 7 and takes until 9:30 each morning. Beginning at 3:30 and lasting until dark, a check is made again in the afternoon when the area workers have completed their daily jobs and leave the camp for home. The check-in of workers begins at a staging area 300 yards outside the main gate where usually about 120 division trucks arrive each morning with workers from Pleiku and the neighboring Montagnard villages. The Montagnards are employed mostly on a daily basis while the Vietnamese workers are offered permanent employment.

The trucks proceed from the staging area, two at a time, to the main gate where the workers jump off to turn in their identification cards and pick up the passes permitting them to enter the camp. Before climbing back aboard the trucks that take them to their respective work areas, the women are checked and searched by three Vietnamese policewomen who work with the MP staff. The men are likewise searched by the MPs.

To be doubly sure no one slips by, Sergeant James Redin (Orlando, Fla.) takes a head count before the trucks pass, and another spot check is carried out by his Vietnamese counterpart, Quan Canh (MP) Staff Sergeant Nguyen Dac Son.

Charred . . .

(Continued from Page 1)
pit where rucksacks lie charred, twisted and useless.

The Wasteland

Helmets and liners squat like bare rocks in the dust. Camouflage covers are frayed and burned. All but a very few have neat, round bullet holes in them and several are ripped apart by what was probably an artillery shell fragment or hand grenade. A soldier stands to look and hopes that someone wasn't wearing one when the steel pot was hit.

Passing through the wasteland, more death and destruction.

Shredded fatigues, pistol belts and pouches. Isolated parts from an M16 litter the ground and everywhere there are spent cartridges and empty ammunition cans.

Personal effects are not forgotten in the savagery. Letters, envelopes, pens and pictures of loved ones are buried in the rubble. Canisters, their unexposed film melted and black, lie next to useless cameras.

The Jungle Is Green

Finally cresting the hill, the smell grows worse. A small breeze whips the ashes and blows the death smell into one's face.

Later, 18 North Vietnamese bodies are discovered in the area. Strange, because the North Vietnamese are meticulous about carrying away and burying their dead.

A short rest and the two companies move again into jungle that is verdant, animate, and leave behind the gray pallor that hung over the battlefield.



GENERALLY SPEAKING—Major General Charles P. Stone (New York City), Ivy Division commander, chats briefly with Senator Edward F. Kennedy during the Massachusetts senator's recent visit to Camp Enari. (USA Photo by Ronald Iszak)

Vietnamese Group Puts On Show For Soldiers

VUNG DAT AM — Men of the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry were treated recently to what may have been a Vietnamese version of a "hootenanny."

As a reward for the work done recently by the Plei Mrong Special Forces camp, the outpost's Vietnamese soldiers were treated to a show by the LLDB, a Vietnamese drama club. The two days of festivities included the singing of Montagnard, Vietnamese and American songs and performances by Montagnard and Vietnamese dancers.

With thanks for assistance during recent operations near Plei Mrong, the Special Forces camp commander invited Lieutenant Colonel Harold B. Birch (Leavenworth, Kan.) and the rest of his Red Warriors to the show. During the first performance, LTC Birch was presented with a new Communist machine gun, captured by Special Forces soldiers during an encounter with the enemy.

Throughout the show, watchful Vietnamese and American soldiers joined in with singing.

The Special Forces commander suggested that LTC Birch bring along some American entertainers to participate in the second night's show, and the commander had little trouble coming up with a long list of volunteers.

Ivy entertainers included the

song and dance routines of Specialist 5 James L. Isom (Galax, Va.), Specialist 4 Andrew E. Stephens (Ellijay, Ga.) and Specialist 4 Don Corey (Barbourville, Calif.). The mixed audience roared with laughter and resounded with delight when SP4 Stephens danced his version of the "Georgia Stomp."

"Although the Vietnamese probably didn't understand our entertainment any more than we did theirs, they all seemed to have fun," said SP5 Isom.

Mine . . .

(Continued from Page 1)
through the swift current to have a better look at the other side.

Three logs placed across the water in a foot bridge fashion caught their eye and they moved in for a closer check. Mindful of the "surprises" the enemy usually leaves behind, SSG Ball came upon a thin trip wire stretched tightly across the trail only feet from the bridge.

Stopping suddenly to warn 1Lt Hennessy, he searched further to find that the wire was attached to the firing mechanism of a small anti-personnel mine well hidden by the side of the trail.

Taking no chances, they blew the mine in place, exploding it with a quick burst of M16 fire.

Ivy Division History

There is still time to order the 4th Division's 50th Anniversary History, written by award winning military historian, Edward Hymoff. Checks or money orders should be made out to the publishing firm, M. W. Lads and mailed to the firm's address: Suite 5319, Pan Am Building, 200 Park Avenue, New York City, N.Y. 10017.

Please send _____ copies of the 4th Infantry Division's 50th Anniversary History to the address(es) below at the prepublication price of \$7.50 per copy, postpaid. I enclose check or money order for \$ _____.

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