

IVY LEAF

16 Jul 67 Ivy Leaf

Lieutenants Plan To Wed After Tour In Combat Zone

DUC PHO—Life is not a honeymoon in Vietnam, but it may lead to one for First Lieutenant Carl F. Stout and First Lieutenant Mary P. Reis.

On completion of their tours in Vietnam, the two Army officers plan to be married.

Most soldiers in the combat zone are troubled because they are halfway around the world from their sweethearts, but you can even be troubled by being 40 miles apart, assures Lieutenant Stout.

Lieutenant Stout is an artillery forward observer in the 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division near Duc Pho while Lieutenant Reis is serving in the Army Nurse Corps at the 2nd Surgical hospital in Chu Lai.

Since arriving in Vietnam last December, the two have been able to see each other three times.

The artillery officer and his fiancée met in the officer's club at Ft. Ord, Calif. About the time their romance began to flourish he received orders for Vietnam. The nurse then volunteered for duty in Vietnam.

IVY LEAF

16 Jul 67 Ivy Leaf

Recon Platoon Finds Scarves

DUC PHO—While operating in the Duc Pho area, the 3rd Brigade Task Force of the 25th Infantry Division has made several unusual discoveries. The latest was 30 red scarves.

While on a search and destroy mission northwest of Duc Pho the reconnaissance platoon of the 1st Battalion 35th Infantry found the scarves hidden in a small village. First Lieutenant John McRae, platoon leader, called for an interpreter.

The interpreter explained to the infantrymen that the Viet Cong wear the scarves on their arms during mass attacks so that they can identify their men.

IVY LEAF

16 Jul 67

Mortarman's Foot Trouble Still Unsolved

DUC PHO — Private First Class Leslie Thomas has had a problem with his feet for years. The problem is that they will not quit growing.

The young soldier of Company B, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry has had trouble fitting his size 14 feet since he entered military service.

In civilian life he was able to get shoes by having them custom made, but in basic training this was not the case. The only shoes that they were able to fit him with in basic were low-quarter dress shoes. These had to suffice for the 6-foot, 5-inch soldier until he was into his second week of advanced infantry training.

When PFC Thomas reached the 3rd Brigade Task Force, 25th Division in Vietnam he was required to exchange his stateside combat boots for jungle boots.

The mortarman's feet once again gave his supply sergeant headaches. The best pair of boots that the sergeant was able to come up with was size 13.

This pair of boots has served PFC Thomas, after considerable breaking in, for the last seven and a half months.

As all good things must come to an end, so must PFC Thomas' boots. So once again he is faced with the problem of acquiring a new pair.

The big-footed 3rd Brigade trooper has not been surprised that they haven't arrived yet. "If they don't send me some size 14s soon, they had better send some 15s," he said.

IVY LEAF

16 Jul 67

Advisory Team Puts Village On Its Feet

DUC PHO—The sign over the door reads, "We have done so much with so little, we can now do anything with nothing."

In the short seven months that Captain Peter B. Bankson has served as subsector advisor in Duc Pho District, the community has undergone a considerable change.

Once firmly in the grip of the Viet Cong, Duc Pho has gained its freedom and is rapidly learning the ways of democracy.

Working hand-in-hand with the district chief, Captain Bankson's five man advisory team of the Military Assistance Command Vietnam has helped the village get on its feet. Schools, refugee camps and private homes are rapidly going up. As many as 30 to 40 homes are built a week.

Improving the small police force was a real feat. It was the first Vietnamese law in many parts of the district in years.

"Security was definitely our biggest problem," said Captain Bankson. "Before the 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division moved into the area it was next to impossible to reach the local villages and hamlets. Each time we ventured out of the compound we faced the possibility of attack by VC in the area."

Now with the security provided by the infantrymen, the team has been able to expand its operation in helping the Vietnamese.

Staying in the background, the team assists the district chief in his plans to improve the people's lives through the teaching of modern farming techniques and self-government.

The sign over the door of the MACV compound will soon be changed to "We've done it."

IVY LEAF

Published 13 Aug 67 - Regards 1 Aug 67 switch of Brigades

4th, 25th Divisions Switch Brigades

SAIGON—The 3rd brigades of the 4th Infantry Division and the 25th Infantry Division have officially switched shoulder patches and unit designations in accordance to a recent order issued by U.S. Army Pacific as announced by U.S. Army Vietnam.

The formal transfer of colors took place last Friday at Duc Pho as the 3rd Brigade, 25th Division ceremoniously became a brigade of the Ivy Division. At almost the same time the 4th Division's 3rd Brigade put on the "Tropic Lightning" patch of the 25th.

The dislocation of the two brigades from their parent divisions came about as a result of the phased deployment of Army forces to Vietnam and was influenced by the tactical situation at the time.

When the 25th Division was sent to Vietnam, its 3rd Brigade was assigned an area of responsibility around Pleiku — some 200 miles north of the division headquarters and the other two brigades.

Separated During Deployment

The Ivy Division deployed to Vietnam a few months later. Its tactical area of responsibility was also in the Pleiku area.

With the 25th's 3rd Brigade already there, the Ivy Division's 3rd Brigade was detached at sea and put under the operational control of the 25th Division, to bring the division back to three brigade strength.

Both brigades have fought in areas mainly separated from their original parent divisions most of the time. According to USARV the move is expected to establish geographical as well as unit integrity.

Transferred In Place

Maneuver battalions and brigade artillery battalions were transferred In place from one division to the other while retaining their battalion and regimental affiliations.

The Ivy Division's new 3rd Brigade, the "Bronco" brigade, will continue operations with Task Force Oregon in the vicinity of Duc Pho.

The change brings the following units to the 4th Division: 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry; 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry; 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry; 2nd Battalion, 9th Artillery; 1st Battalion, 69th Armor.

The Ivy Division lost the following units in the switch: 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry; 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry; 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry; 2nd Battalion, 77th Artillery.

Colonel George E Wear is the commander of the Ivy Division's new "Bronco" brigade.

The change, which has been anticipated since late last fall, alleviates certain administrative problems which existed when the units were geographically dislocated from their parent divisions.

ED - C Troop 3/4 Cav just ceased to exist in Quang Ngai. They were absorbed into the 4th Div's 1/10th Cav. While we in the 35th retained our Battalion designations, C Troop lost theirs.

LEAF

10 Sep 67 Ivy Leaf

3rd Bde To Form Expanded Units

By SP4 John F. Cole

(ED - And this is where I came in)

DUC PHO—Over 300 new soldiers, three new rifle companies, recently Joined the 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division in an effort to add even more to the strength and striking force of the "Broncos".



WELCOME TO RVN - New arrivals landed at Qui Nhon where they were met by representatives of the Ivy Division's 3rd Brigade. They were then flown to the "Bronco's" tactical command post at Duc Pho (USA Photo by Sp4 Robert M Metz)



FIRST PATROL - During their week of individual training the new "Broncos" got their first taste of combat patrolling (USA Photo by SGT Allan Hyman)

Docking at Qui Nhon the new troops were flown directly to Duc Pho where they began a five-day program of processing and training at the brigade's replacement training center at Landing Zone Montezuma.

Each of the present battalions, the 1st and 2nd Battalions, 35th Infantry and the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry, will be assigned a third of the new arrivals. They will be integrated into the existing companies of the rifle battalions, and some, along with experienced veterans selected from the other three companies will form a new Company D.



ED Note - None of these are great quality photos but I couldn't pass up the chance to show myself in an Ivy Leaf article. I am in the photo second from left.

Ivy Division finance and personnel teams were on hand to process in the new "Bronco Brigaders" which look a day and a half. Following that, the troops began a training program designed to familiarize them with Vietnam.

MAP READING - Refresher classes in map reading are taught to new "Bronco Brigaders" by the brigade's veterans. Helpful hints are usually passed on and readily absorbed. (USA Photo by 1LT Paul P Armstrong)

Under the direction of Captain Ronald G. Chrisman, commandant, and Sergeant First Class Robert Gore, noncommissioned officer-in-charge, the program includes instruction in marksmanship, map reading, the principles of patrolling, defensive and offensive tactics and anti-guerrilla warfare.



FIRE! - Weapons familiarization, including the zeroing of individual M-16's, is part of a block of instruction given to replacements in the "Bronco" Brigade's training center. Classes on demolition, booby traps and enemy weapons are part of the same instruction bloc. (USA Photo by 1LT Paul P Armstrong)

IVY LEAF

13 Aug 67 Ivy Leaf

Breather Hole Leads Platoon to Viet Cong

DUC PHO—A small breather hole in the side of a rice paddy dike was the first sign that Charlie was in the area.

First Lieutenant Homer Krout II, platoon leader of the reconnaissance platoon, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry, immediately established a perimeter and began searching the area.

Conducting an early morning combat assault, the recon platoon was following an agent who said he could lead them to a tunnel complex where several VC were hiding.

Arriving at the location it appeared that the agent was mistaken. "My men began searching the area," related 1LT Krout. "At first we couldn't find anything. Then one of my men saw the breather hole."

After the perimeter had been established, the recon men began to enlarge the hole. Suddenly, four grenades were hurled from the tunnel. Diving for cover, no one was injured as the tedious battle to dislodge the entrenched enemy began. The ensuing fight resulted in eight enemy killed and four weapons captured.

Next, the Vietnamese agent reported that he knew where another tunnel was located. Once again the Ivymen were off searching for the hidden enemy.

"We arrived in the area about 2:30 p.m. but were unable to find a tunnel," stated 1LT Krout. "We were ready to give up the hunt when the Vietnamese agent became suspicious of a basket with bamboo shoots growing from it. He moved the basket and revealed the entrance to a tunnel."

A search of the area, however, revealed the tunnel was empty.

Heading back to a landing zone, the platoon was ready to load on the lift ships and the day was about over — they thought.

As the choppers were coming in, two VC sprang from a spider hole next to the LZ. While throwing grenades at the infantrymen they attempted to escape across a rice paddy. Somewhat surprised, the riflemen whirled around and ended the escape attempt.

IVY LEAF

20 Aug 67 Ivy Leaf

Hanoi Hannah Sends VC Wrong Way

DUC PHO — Charlie's increasing interest in modern conveniences may be an attempt to make his meager existence a little more pleasant, but can also get him into trouble.

Moving out to a night ambush sight recently, Company C, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry stopped to take a break after hiking about three kilometers, Captain James W. Lanning, company commander, heard music playing.

Everyone began whispering "Hey, who's got that radio? Turn that thing off!" A nearby squad spotted two armed Viet Cong coming down a trail toward the company's position playing a radio.

The "Cacti Blue" team opened up and nailed the communists. Besides capturing the VC's weapons and web gear, a new transistor radio was produced.

One soldier suggested that Hanoi Hannah really led the VC down the wrong trail.

IVY LEAF

20 Aug 67 Ivy Leaf

Lost PFC Uses C-Ration Can To Signal Rescuers In The Air

DUC PHO — Lost, fatigued and after fighting off six Viet Cong, Private first Class Melvin Gilpin, Company C, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry, continued his trek down a lonely stretch of beach north of Duc Pho until he was able to signal his rescuers with the top of a C-Ration can.

The men from the 3rd platoon were searching and clearing a village. When they were done, the last four men of the platoon were to give one quick final check. Going out of his way to check a hut, PFC Gilpin became separated from his three companions.

The 3rd platoon moved 300 meters south into another village and was getting ready to search it. After a break for chow a head count was taken showing one missing. A squad was immediately dispatched to search the area in which PFC Gilpin was last seen. Unable to find him, the entire 3rd platoon was committed to the search.

An hour and a half had elapsed and the entire company was committed along with tanks and armored personnel carriers from Company C, 2nd Battalion, 34th Armor.

Choppers Searched Above

Choppers equipped with loud speakers were circling the area trying to locate the lost soldier as a complete sweep of the area was conducted.

When PFC Gilpin realized that he was separated, he fired two signal shots in hopes that they would be answered. After waiting in the area for five-minutes an acknowledgement was not received. PFC Gilpin then entered a trench and followed it for about two-kilometers to the beach along the coast of the South China Sea.

Once on the beach he began walking south to link up with another element or make it back to the brigade's forward base camp.

"I was walking along the water's edge and had moved about five clicks," recalled PFC Gilpin, "when I received fire from my right, I was able to spot six VC firing from behind small sand dunes."

Spotted Plane

With a full magazine and an M-79 round in his modified M16, he engaged the six enemy, killing two, later confirmed by aircraft, the other four fled to the treeline.

Spotting an observer plane in the area, PFC Gilpin cut the top off a C-Ration can and signaled the "Bird Dog." The attempt was successful and within minutes a gunship was in picking up the wayward soldier.

IVY LEAF

20 Aug 67 Ivy Leaf

'Cacti Green' Get 14-Year Old NVA Draftee

DUC PHO — Drafted at 13 and sent to South Vietnam at 14, a young private's career in the North Vietnamese Army came to a sudden and lucky end recently when he surrendered to Company C, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry in the hamlet of Chi Trung.

The tiny infiltrator was in a little, bare hut near the hamlet dressed in black pajamas when Staff Sergeant Meredic Dube's squad from the 2nd platoon moved in and surrounded the structure. He came out of the door, hands up, and yelled; "Chieu Hoi"

Staff Sergeant Phong, the battalion's Vietnamese interpreter, asked the youth a few preliminary questions for Captain John H Cavender, company commander, and suddenly shook his head and looked puzzled.

"He is North Vietnamese. He speaks with their accent," SSG Phong said.

Tells His Story

His story then came quickly and willingly. He was drafted at 13 years of age in June 1966. He took three months of infantry training at the North Vietnamese training center at Hoa Binh — with 100 other 13-year olds in his training unit.



"He said they were drafting youths his age a year ago and still are," related SSG Pang.

The North Vietnamese boy was put into an infiltration unit and sent on the long, arduous walk toward battle in the south, carrying only a rifle. He said he was the only 14-year old in his unit but villagers in the area—being won over by the "Cacti Green" battalion's pacification programs have reported many "very young" soldiers showing up in NVA units which had been in the area.

On May 19 his battalion was walking toward a rendezvous with death at the foot of a tunnel-laced mountain two kilometers south of Chi Trung. Eight-one of his comrades died when the "Cacti Green" caught the NVA unit and mauled it in a 30-hour battle.

Sick With Malaria

The boy was lucky he didn't go to that fight. Sick with malaria, he was left without his weapon, to the mercy of local Viet Cong. He was told that when he was well, he would be picked up by his unit. They never came.

Villagers fed him and cared for him "... because I was just 14," the boy related. "They did not worry about me, they felt sorry for me and said I was too young for fighting anyway." he added.

However, after recovering, the local Viet Cong made him pay for his keep by working at planting rice. The thin, half-starved boy showed hands with the palms cut and festered from this work. He said that his clothing was taken and that he had gotten a new set of pajamas to replace the ragged farm clothes.

He had to walk for two hours in another village and buy them with the few plasters he had been paid.

Unit Didn't Return

As the weeks went by his battalion failed to return. The U.S. troops had harried it out of the area with a pursuit, which hit it hard again after the fight on the mountain.

Patrols of the Ivy Division soldiers and aggressive sweeps in the region kept it cut and pressured the local VC day and night so that the boy could not rejoin his unit.

He was frightened when the big Americans approached the village, but tired of a meager subsistence, he willingly rallied.

The boy was quite scared on his first helicopter ride to the 3rd Brigade command post at LZ Montezuma for further questioning.

Makes A Friend

He got out tagging behind 1LT Jeffery C. Chandler, company C's executive officer, who towered more than two feet over the 85-pound boy soldier. Shrinking from the blast of the Huey's rotors as they walked toward the headquarters, the boy reached up and took the big lieutenant's hand. He had found a new friend.

Trying American chow, he ate up a storm, He tested ice cream and cold sodas. Volunteering to go back to Company C and show them trails used by the VC, he was given a pair of Jungle boots — far too large, but worn proudly — and clean clothes.

Attending a MEDCAP in the area where he rallied, he made a visible impression on the villagers who looked at the face of this new version of "the enemy" and puzzled over the men in the north who had sent a boy like this to fight.

Company C hopes he can go through the Kit Carson scout training program and come back to them as an adopted son. He had already decided that the American Army treated him better than the Communists by his second day with the Ivymen.

IVY LEAF

Published 10 Sep 67 Ivy Leaf - Description of 20 Aug 67 Battle – Ed

"Bronco' Units Tally 53 Enemy Bodies During Hot Battle

DUC PHO — Firing at a resupply helicopter proved to be a drastic mistake by one Viet Cong sniper. Ground units were called to locate him and a battle developed that led to the death of 53 VC soldiers on the coastal plain north of Duc Pho.

The Reconnaissance Platoon, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry and Company C, 2nd Battalion, 34th Armor took the brunt of the fighting in a well integrated tank and infantry assault.

The 2nd Platoon of the armor Company sped to the location of the sniper fire after receiving a call from the chopper. When they arrived they came under a heavy volume of enemy fire. The automatic weapons were answered with blasts from the 90mm main guns killing at least two VC. More enemy were spotted running for a hole which was immediately destroyed.

As the rest of the tank company arrived, a hasty perimeter was set up from which the armor and infantrymen launched the organized assault.

Pursuing the enemy was made increasingly difficult by the dense hedgerows and trenches that surrounded the rice paddies. The tankers and infantrymen could not observe the fleeing enemy, but to their aid came a Forward Air Controller. As Captain William E. Hocker, the tank company commander, explained, "The FAC radioed the enemy's direction of movement to me and we caught the VC on the run."

Disrupted enemy on the run were engaged and brought down by the tanks.

It was a "hot and heavy" battle, related one tanker. With the tracked monsters and recon troops routing out the enemy on the ground and M-60 equipped helicopters flying overhead the VC had no chance, The "Cacti Blues" Companies A and B were helilifted to the action when the fighting had died down enough to permit the choppers to land.

Company A was credited with five VC killed.

In addition to the 53 VC dead, 19 weapons were captured in the battle that was termed a great example of coordination between the tanks and the infantrymen of the Ivy Division's 3rd Brigade.

IVY LEAF

3 Sep 67 Ivy Leaf

'Cacti' Search Holes As VC Intensify Hideouts

DUC PHO—The men of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry were only 800 meters from their battalion firebase when the first of six concealed spider holes was discovered.

Located deep in a hedgerow, the entrance was well camouflaged by a dense bamboo thicket.

The 3rd Platoon, after discovering the hiding place, began a search and clear of the spider hole, an operation that the infantrymen of the 'Cacti Blue' have developed into an successful art.

Slowly and meticulously probing the thicket with sticks and bayonets the hole's covering was located. The cover was a woven metal screen covered with rocks and loose dirt.

Flipping up the screen, the Ivymen detected movement inside the hole. When their call to surrender brought no response, the hideout was riddled with M-16 fire. Two enemy guerrillas were killed as grenades and assorted equipment were captured.

However, the day was only beginning for Company B. Five more spider holes were discovered in a 10-meter square area.

Searching and clearing the holes, a practice that has been robbing Charlie of his most well concealed daylight sanctuaries, netted two more enemy killed and another captured during the day.

The intensive use of spider holes and tunnels in the Duc Pho area has become a practice since the 3rd Brigade began defeating and breaking up large enemy units.

IVY LEAF

10 Dec 67 Ivy Leaf

'Cacti's Kountry Kitchen Adds Tang To C-Rations

DUC PHO- Company A, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry was stationed on bleak, muddy Hill 481 northwest of Chu Lai for over two weeks, subsisting on C rations and not liking it at all.

"We thought that there must be a better way," said Second Lieutenant Richard Duncan (Oxnard, Calif.), Weapons Platoon leader. So, acting upon this resolve, he gathered about him the combined culinary talents of his platoon to form Four-Zero's Kountry Kitchen.

Staff Sergeant John A Boylan (Riverside, Calif.) was appointed chief chef, while Specialist 4 Clifford Callaway (Covina, Calif.) served as chief KP.

Private First Class Norman Sawyer is responsible for procuring the necessary spices and ingredients. Since the restaurant is located in his bunker, 2LT Duncan is the proprietor major domo.

What type of meals does the country Kitchen turn out?

"Well," said SSG Boylan, "the other evening we had soup de jour which was a bean soup, followed by breast of turkey under bullets with a pecan and peach cobbler, coffee and cigars for dessert. That's just one of our meals, though. We've also had the foxhole dinner for two, tin can casserole, cease fire casserole and, one morning, we had eggs benedict."

Lieutenant Duncan says that this luxurious cooking does present a few problems though, especially obtaining the necessary spices, onions and sauces.

"And, every once in a while," he added, "we have had meals burn up when we get called out for fire missions. It's well worth the trouble though."

IVY LEAF

10 Dec 67 Ivy Leaf

Cacti Escapes Enemy Trap

TAM KEY.— Specialist 4 Ronald Quinn machine gunner, Company C, 1st Battalion, 35th infantry, fully understood the meaning of preventive maintenance the other day, when an example of Charlie's lack of PM possibly saved his foot.

As SP4 Quinn walked through a peanut patch, he was suddenly snatched by what men of the Cacti Green call a G.I. trap. The traps are known stateside as bear traps and are being utilized by the North Vietnamese Army north of Chu Lai to supplement their other booby traps.

SP4 Quinn hadn't seen the trap, which was lying in the field and overgrown with plants. He said he realized at the last moment before it sprang shut that he had stepped on something unnatural but was still caught as he tried to pull his foot back.

The trap, luckily, was kept from closing completely by the sole of his boot and he was not seriously hurt. The very thing which had made the traps so effectively camouflaged, according to SP4 Quinn, also had left the trap in poor working condition.