

Americal Marks Anniversary

SOUTHERN CROSS AMERICAL DIVISION

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CHU LAI, VIETNAM

May 25, 1969

Salute To Men Of The Americal Who Made The Supreme Sacrifice



SGM With Division When Formed

He Fights From New Caledonia To Duc Pho

By SGT DAVID DEVERICK
DUC PHO—In 1939, PVT Anthony Manfredi (Salinas, Kan.) entered the Army. On the morning of Dec. 7, 1941, CPL Manfredi was about to be discharged from the Army.

His orders were quickly changed and he was ordered to Australia. From there, he was sent to New Caledonia where the newest U.S. Army division was being formed—the Americal Division.

Twenty-seven years later, SGM Manfredi returned to the Americal. He is now sergeant major of 1st Bn., 20th Inf., 11th Inf. Bde.

Manfredi served as a squad leader with a pioneer and ammunition unit with the 164th Inf. Regt. during his first tour with the division.

On Guadalcanal

He spent nine months on New Caledonia training in jungle warfare tactics and saw his first action at Guadalcanal as the 164th was among the first American troops to stage an offensive operation in World War II.

Manfredi followed the division's moves through the Pacific until he returned to the United States in 1945. During his tour the young corporal was promoted to sergeant.

"World War II was completely different from the war here in Vietnam," he stated. "We had lines set up and pretty well knew where the enemy was."

Earns LOM

A smile crossed his face as he talked of a patrol that earned him the Legion of Merit award.

"We went out in a sampan and rendezvoused with a Catholic priest, who had a great deal of information for us," recalled Manfredi.

"The information was transmitted in the clear by two American Indians using their tribal language."

"The operation was a success. We killed nine Japanese and captured another. We also uncovered seven enemy bivouac areas."

He also observed that the

Americal soldier today may possibly be a better soldier than his counter-part of World War II because of better training.

SGM Manfredi is a fairly

good soldier himself. He recently was awarded the Silver Star for his actions last December when he bravely held heavy hostile fire in overrunning an NVA position.

Gunner Ignores Explosions To Save Track Commander

LZ BAYONET—A 21-year-old machine-gunner for the 98th Inf. Bde's H Trp., 17th Cav. ignored the danger of an exploding armored assault vehicle and rushed inside to free his vehicle commander moments before the track burst into flames.

PFC Raymond A. Brinkman (Debois, Ind.) was blown clear of the track when the vehicle hit an estimated 200-pound mine.

Saves Commander

"Brinkman jumped back into the track to help the track commander out," explained CPT Jim Watts (Jonesboro, La.), H Trp. commander. "Minutes after that, the thing blew up."

Track commander SP4 Gilbert A. Norton (St. Paul, N.C.) was the only seriously-injured man among five riding the vehicle. He suffered two broken legs.

"I know one thing," said CPT Watts. "If

it weren't for Brinkman, that track commander would have been burned alive."

The personnel carrier had completed 10 days in the field in support of the 4th Bn., 3d Inf., when it hit the mine.

Three Thrown Clear

When the mine exploded, three crewmen atop the track—Brinkman; machinegunner SP4 Richard H. Goolsby (Apopka, Fla.); and grenadier PFC Jerry W. Martin (Los Angeles)—were thrown clear.

The driver, SP4 James E. Baker (McHenry, N.D.), immediately crawled to safety as the heavily-armed vehicle began to burn. Meanwhile Norton, also riding on top, fell into the track's belly.

Moments before a series of secondary explosions began, Brinkman pushed Norton out of the track and, with the help of a medic, carried him to safety.

The Americal, a 27-year-old combat veteran, will pause, if only for a moment, to pay tribute to fallen comrades in arms on Memorial Day May 30.

Memorial Day for Americal troops is more than paying tribute to soldiers who gave their life in defense of America. It is a day to recognize buddies who endured hardships along with us. We who must continue as they did can appreciate what they gave.

Their tombs are many places. We symbolically give them Arlington, and the soldiers of the Old Guard closely watch over three graves: the graves of history, bravery, and loneliness.

Civil War Origin

Memorial Day honors for our comrades date back to the Civil War. Commander in Chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, John A. Logan, issued a general order, "For the purpose of strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion."

General Logan's hope that the memorial be kept from year to year slowly became a reality. At the beginning the states commemorated their fallen soldiers according to local custom and the date fluctuated. Today all states recognize May 30 as Memorial Day.

Organize In 1942

We of the Americal, soldiers of a certain distinction, can be proud of our heritage. Our roots go back to January 1942, when the task force that was soon to become the Americal was en route from New York to Australia.

Thirty-four days on the water, a short stay in the vicinity of Melbourne, Australia, and then our first duty.

General Patch informed the troops that New Caledonia, north of Australia, must be protected, and it was

(Continued on Page 2)

Army Chief Of Staff...

Division Marks Anniversary

UNITED STATES ARMY
THE CHIEF OF STAFF

TO THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF
THE AMERICAL DIVISION

It is a distinct pleasure on the twenty-seventh anniversary of the activation of the Americal Division to extend to all its members hearty congratulations from the men and women of the United States Army.

During World War II the Americal Division was the first division to be activated in a foreign country and was also the first Army unit to go into combat against the Japanese forces in Guadalcanal. The organization took part in four major operations in the Pacific.

The division, now in its second year of fighting in Vietnam, again has a "first" -- the first such unit to be activated in Vietnam. In combat and in program to assist the South Vietnamese people, the division continues to add to its proud record of merited success. Operations such as Wheeler-Kallena, Burlington Trail, Champion Creek, and POCORING FOREST during the last year have shown the enemy that he will not be allowed to succeed in his aggression and that we are determined to help assure South Vietnam the opportunity to determine its own destiny.

For its achievements, I salute the Americal Division. I am confident that each of you will continue to uphold its fine traditions through your courage, dedication, and skill.

W. L. Westmoreland
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff



Commander, MACV..

HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES MILITARY ASSISTANCE COMMAND
VIETNAM

TO THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF
THE AMERICAL DIVISION

On behalf of the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, I extend my congratulations to the Americal Division on the 27th Anniversary of its activation.

During the past year, you have added a long list of achievements to your already commendable record and contributed significantly to the progress made against the enemy. With operations such as Wheeler/Wallowa and Burlington Trail, the two longest running Americal operations, you accounted for more than 12,000 enemy killed and 2,150 weapons captured. During Operation 'Vernon Lake II', 11th Brigade 'Jungle Warriors' uncovered 21 NVA base camps, three surgical hospitals and accounted for 455 enemy killed.

You are also to be commended for your outstanding efforts in pacification. In 'Golden Fleece', you helped the Vietnamese harvest one million tons of rice. During 'Hardin Falls' and 'Russell Beach', you assisted the GVN in the pacification of former enemy strongholds.

I salute you as worthy members of the United States Team in the Republic of Vietnam and wish you continued success in your future operations.

Creighton W. Abrams
Creighton W. ABRAMS
General, United States Army
Commanding

(Continued from Page 1) here that PFC Fonseca suggested the name Americal.

The division under the Southern Cross rounded out its units, trained for war in the bush, and on October 13, 1942, the 140th Inf., Americal Division, reinforcing the 1st Marine Division, was the first Army unit to conduct an offensive operation in any theater during World War II.

On Guadalcanal
Guadalcanal and names like "Coffin Corner", "Bloody Ridge", and "Matanikau" became Americal history.

The division worked with the Marines, jumping from island to island (Fiji, Bougainville, Leyte, Cebu), finally achieving victory and spending a short time as occupation troops in Japan.

The division returned to Seattle, Washington and was deactivated December 12, 1945.

In February 1967 a need arose to have more troops in southern I Corps of the Republic of Vietnam. An Army task force under Marine control became operational in April, and in September 1967 Task Force Oregon was reconstituted as the Americal Division.

An official change of colors ceremony was held on October 26, and the Americal became the seventh Army division fighting in Vietnam.

Work with Marines
The division was once again operating in the tropics, working in sweat, penetrating the thick jungle, and helping the Marines secure an area.

In the late days of 1967, Operation Wheeler/Wallowa was effectively securing the

area west of Tam Ky and the Hiep Duc-Que Son Valley.

A year later, Operation Burlington Trail made the possibility of a road between Tam Ky and Tien Phuoc a reality, and the rich rice crop of the Que Son valley was harvested during Operation Golden Fleece.

The end of 1968 concluded these operations, and the division began pacification programs.



Operation Hardin Falls was a three-phased program to assist the Government of Vietnam and pacify six hamlets under Viet Cong control for four years.

The first phase was to establish a fire base, second, cordon and entry of the hamlet, and third, withdraw and leave the Government of Vietnam in control.

Russell Beach
The times had changed but the climate was similar and soldiers of the Americal once again were shoulder to shoulder with Marines in Operation Russell Beach. While the Marines employed amphibious tactics, the Americal troops pushed through the jungle tightening a cordon around the enemy on the Batangan.

Four days of PSYOP saturation resulted in 2,449 refugees moving through the cordon to processing centers. Even with pacification gaining momentum an operation like Vernon Lake II was necessary. Ending in February 1969 it discovered and eliminated a large number of enemy base camps from the area southwest of Quang Ngai.

Southern I Corps is not won yet, but Americal troops are bringing victory to the steamy jungle home of the communists. It is a slow battle, and each day a comrade is taken away.

A soldier is gone from the battlefield and the living continue the mission.

The division is 27 years old. Each man who has served knows the hardships, and to our comrades who lost their lives on the battlefield, we salute you.

SOUTHERN CROSS AMERICAL DIVISION

THE SOUTHERN CROSS is an authorized periodic publication of the Americal Division Information Office for division units in the Republic of Vietnam. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. Contributions are encouraged and may be sent to the information office, Americal Division, APO 96374, Tel: Chu Lai 2414. The editors reserve the right to edit all contributions.

Major Paul B. Farham Commanding General
 Captain Cary S. Sklarov Information Officer
 Specialist Four John W. Heath Officer-in-Charge
 Private First Class Terry Mack Editor
 Sergeant Alfred Anthony Jr. Staff Artist

GIs Exiled To Siberia Watch Over Refugees

LZ WEST—Not many GIs can say they came to Vietnam and wound up in Siberia, but that's what has happened to a 196th Inf. Bde. company.

Siberia is a strategic new American fire support base built by D. Co., 4th Bn., 31st Inf. and the 26th Engr. Bn. on Hill 165, 38 miles northwest of Tam Ky.

Patients Enjoy Cool Recovery

CHU LAI—"I'll get by with a little help from my friends," is as true a statement for the 23rd Med. Bn. as for the Beatles.

The friends consisted of Army, Navy, and Marine Corps units as well as a large international corporation.

It all began when CPT Donald B. Rhodes (Santa Barbara, Calif.) walked into the American Support Command area with a large, not-quite-new air-conditioner.

He believed it would provide welcome relief during the hot summer months for the patients in A Co.'s medical-malaria ward.

Unable to fix it himself, CPT Rhodes called upon the 723rd Maint. Bn. to put the unit in working order.

This was shortly accomplished. Then the Naval Support Activity Detachment (NSAD) installed necessary electrical wiring, the 335th Maint. Bn. and Lear-Seigler, Inc. constructed the duct work and men from Marine Air Group 12 provided building insulation.

Instead of the stifling 100 degree temperatures on the outside, the patients now can recover in the balmy 73 degree atmosphere inside the newly air-conditioned building. (Spt. Cmd.)

LZ Siberia's primary function is to provide security for the newly re-established Hiep Duc District government. Hundreds of refugees are returning to Hiep Duc after four years' absence due to devastating terrorist attacks.

"To provide adequate security during this re-establishment, Siberia is located on ground overlooking the entire area," said LTC Robert B. Longino, 4-31 CO.

History

"In addition, the unit occupying Siberia provides U.S. forces the opportunity to conduct joint operations daily with Regional and Popular Force troops from Hiep Duc District."

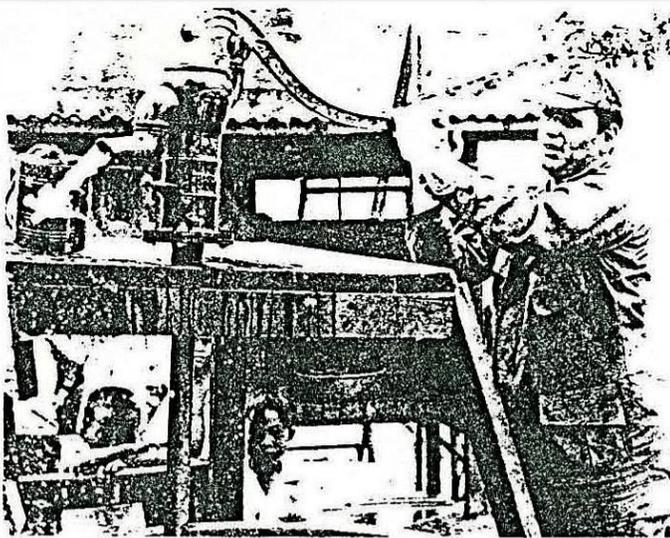
The name Siberia was chosen by LTC Longino because of its significance in early 4-31 history.

On Aug. 21, 1918, the 31st Inf. Regt. landed in Vladivostok in southeastern Russia to defend the Trans-Siberian Railroad against attack by military factions competing for power in Russia.

Adopted

The 31st Inf. distinguished itself during the Siberian Campaign and in April, 1920, American Expeditionary Forces were withdrawn.

For its Siberian service, the 31st was named the "Polar Bear" regiment. With in the following 10 years, that emblem was adopted as the official regimental crest. (196th IO)



Well-Handled

Curious young eyes watch as a man from the 14th CAG installs a new water pump in an orphanage in the small village of An Ton, near Chu Lai. CPT Jeffery P. Knowlton (San Antonio), the battalion's civil affairs officer, tests the pump. (Photo by WO1 J.C. Pennington, 14th CAG)

Jungle Warriors Garner Awards

Six Silver Stars Given

By SP4

JAMES WM. BROWN
CHU LAI—The Silver Star was awarded to five 11th Inf. Bde. officers and one EM for gallant action against hostile forces.

Honored were MAJ Alfred J. Danner (Rockledge, Fla.), 1st Bn. S-3, 20th Inf.; CPT James R. Smith, then CO of C Co., 4th Bn., 21st Inf.; and CPT James A. Walker (Wakefield, R.I.) then CO of D Co., 3rd Bn., 1st Inf.

MAJ Danner was decorated for action Dec. 22 against a force of NVA at an LZ near Duc Pho.

Locate Basecamp

MAJ Danner directed door-gunnery fire which killed three of four NVA, then landed a command group and overran the enemy OP.

CPT Smith was cited for action last Aug. 11 when leading an ambushed squad to safety.

During fierce fighting,

CPT Smith left safety of his company's perimeter to mark a position near the trapped squad, enabling gunships to free the squad.

Rescues Platoon

CPT Walker won the Silver Star for action Dec. 20 while leading his company against a battalion-size NVA base camp to rescue a besieged platoon in mountains west of Mo Duc village.

The Silver Star also was awarded to CPT Alfred N. Webb Jr. (Baltimore, Md.) while serving as CO of C Co., 1st Bn., 20th Inf.; 1LT Steven R. Kosach Jr. (Lafayette, Calif.), while serving as platoon leader of E Co., 1st Bn., 20th Inf.; and SP4 Thomas M. Steel (Chelsea, Mich.), a Ranger with G Co., 75th Inf.

CPT Webb received the award for action on Dec. 5 when his company came under intense enemy mortar and grenade fire near Toi Lac.

Patrol Ambushed

1LT Kosach distinguished himself while on a patrol mission when he and his pointman began crossing a bridge spanning a large stream, then came under intense hostile automatic fire, resulting in the pointman being wounded.

1LT Kosach rushed to the aid of the soldier amidst hostile fire and carried him to safety.

SP4 Steel distinguished himself on a recon mission near the village of Chop Vum.

Although wounded during initial action, he then moved to a supply cache and placed demolition charges without regard to his painful injuries. (AMERICAN IO)

Maiden MEDCAP For Montagnards



IN THE FIRST MEDICAL VISIT to the Montagnard village of Ba To, CPT Lawrence Wasser (Boston), battalion surgeon for the 4th Bn., 3rd Inf., checks the heart beat of a coughing little boy. The American MEDCAP team treated over 40 patients during their four-hour visit. (Photo by SP4 Tony Swindell, 11th Inf. Bde.)

DUC PHO—Montagnard villagers of Ba To, 16 miles southwest of Duc Pho, received medical treatment for the first time when a team from the 4th Bn., 3rd Inf. recently conducted a MEDCAP there.

Led by the 4-3 battalion doctor, CPT Lawrence Wasser (Boston), the five-man team treated the ill of well over 40 patients during the four-hour mission.

The 11th Bde. team performed physical exams, gave penicillin injections, and passed out soap and medicine to the people gathered in a small village courtyard.

"This area has been virtually untouched by American troops," CPT Walt A. Shannon (Plattsburg AFB, N.Y.) explained. "We intend to keep providing desperately needed medical attention for these people, and also to teach them hygiene."

Security for the MEDCAP was provided by members of Special Forces Team A-106, as the villagers of Ba To were treated. (11th IO)

175th Vet. Det. Inspect

Story and Photos by
SP5 ROBERT BUZOGANY

CHI LAI—The big job of inspecting close to 100,000 gallons of dairy products, 5 to 7 million pounds of refrigerated food, and 5 to 7 million pounds of canned and packaged food every month is handled by seven men: the 175th Veterinary Detachment, part of the 322nd Med. Det., 44th Med. Bde.

The 175th, which supports the Americal, inspects for purity all the dairy products, refrigerated meat and produce, and packaged foods received for consumption by the division and other military units in southern I Corps.

Led by CPTs Paul Elwell (Harwinton, Conn.) and John Prucha (Auburn, Calif.), the unit of three local inspectors, a clerk, and an inspector in Duc Pho handles the area's veterinary duties as well as all food inspection. All are special school trained.

Added to the sheer bulk of the job is the big problem faced in Vietnam with maintaining sanitation standards and proper temperature in the food storage areas to prevent spoilage.

SP5 Edward J. Kelly (Walpole, Mass.) works directly with the civilian-managed Foremost Dairy in Chu Lai, inspecting all dairy products. It is his job to see that the milk, ice cream, and cottage cheese leaving the plant has been quality controlled for freshness and purity.

Employing 52 Vietnamese and three civilians, the well-equipped Foremost plant pumps out 2,500 pounds of cottage cheese every other day, 1,200 gallons of ice cream every day, and 65 to 55,000 pints and 650 to 900 scholle (8 gal. containers) packs of white and chocolate milk each day.

SP5 Kermit Johnsrud (Columbia Falls, Mont.) is the food inspector who checks all perishables arriving at the Naval Support Activity Detachment (NSAD) docks.

It is Johnsrud's job to advise on the length of time the meat and produce can be satisfactorily refrigerated, how to store it, and how

much of it is useable after receiving the shipment.

"There hasn't been more than 2 or 3 percent produce spoilage in the time I have been inspecting," the specialist said.

Before Johnsrud inspects the refrigerated food, it has already been inspected once before leaving the States and again when off-loaded in DaNang.

The meat and produce arrives at NSAD from DaNang by refrigerated (reefer) barges, each with a 250 measurement-ton capacity. The food is either put on pallets and transported in one of the reefer barges' three huge holds or sent as a unit from the U.S. in a SeaLand reefer trailer, three to a barge.

It takes 48 to 72 hours to unload a landing craft barge, and from barge to the mess hall tables requires only two to three days.

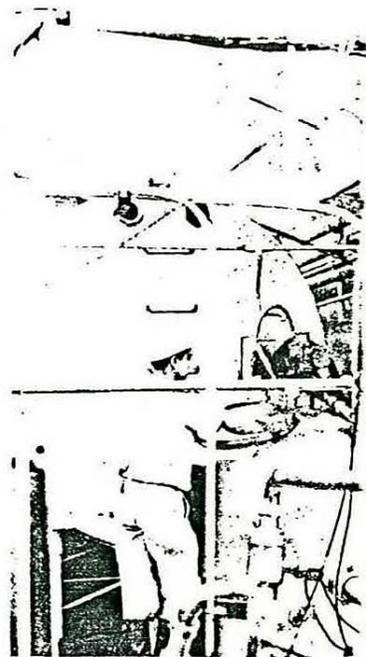
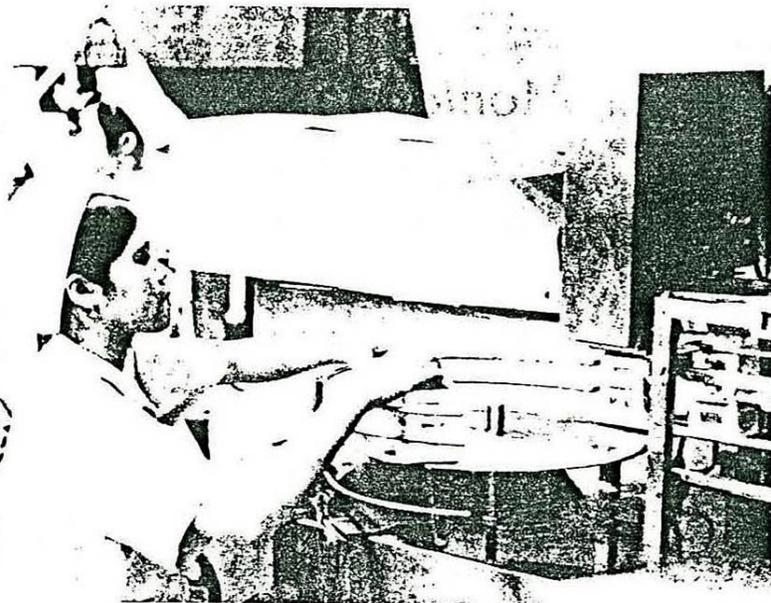
From the 93,000-cubic-foot freeze and chill storage space at NSAD, which is roughly three-fourths full at any given time, some 8,000 trucks a month draw unit rations.

SP5 Mike Fernandes (Kapaa, Kauai, Hawaii), the dry storage food inspector, has the job of checking the canned and packaged food, which is stored in three huge warehouses near NSAD.

Each day 65 to 70 pallets of food, with roughly 40 cases per pallet, are issued out from the facility. In addition to the 5 to 7 million pounds of canned goods shipped out each month, as many as 200,000 cases of C-rations are kept on hand.

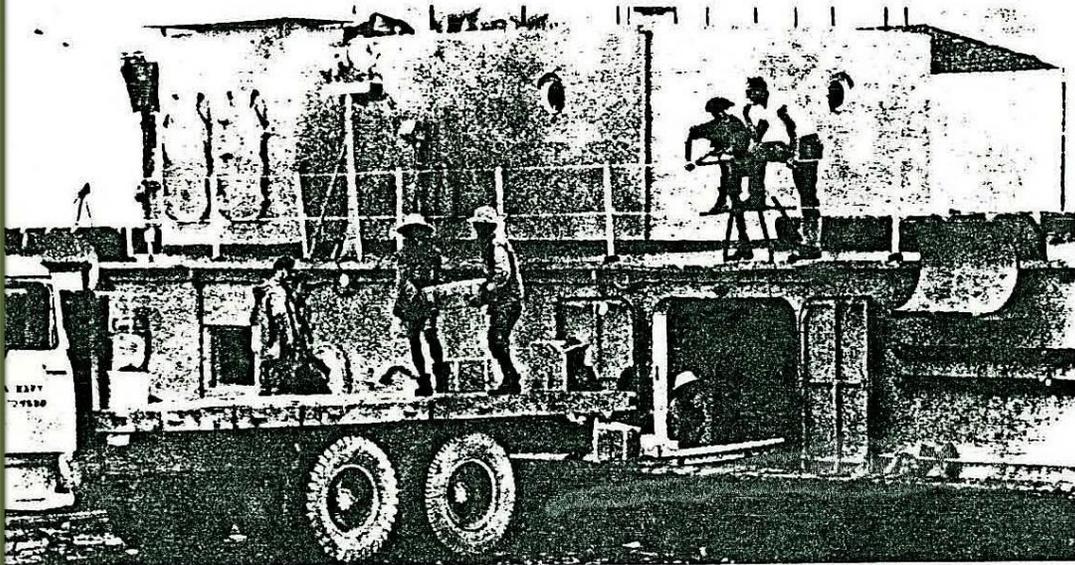
When a shipment arrives, it is repalletized, inspected, dated, and stored. "Everything is 100 percent inspected," stated Fernandes, "and anything here more than 90 days is inspected again."

The food you eat may not bear the stamp "untouched by human hands," however it is comforting to know that the men of the 175th have inspected it and given it their stamp of approval so that it reaches you fresh.

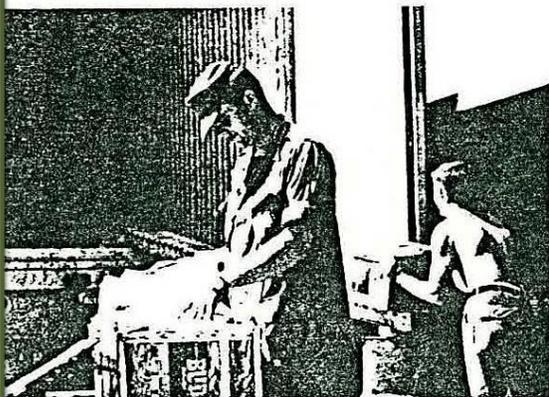


SP5 Kelly and Foremost Dairy Production Manager Hap Pierce (top) check the pasteurizer control board at the Ch plant. Milk bottling machines (left), storage tanks (right), and all plant equipment must be kept spotless.

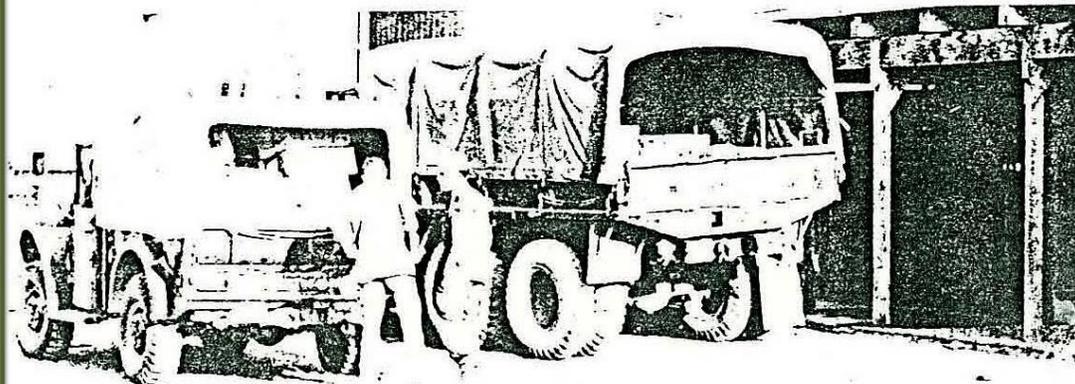
Division Food Daily



Refrigerated food is brought from DaNang by 'reefer' barges and off-loaded at NSAD dock



SP5 Johnsrud inspects newly-arrived vegetables, while SP5 Fernandes checks damaged cereal



SeaLand vans bring meat and produce to 'reefer' storage where units pick up rations

Sappers Assault Bridge, Repulsed by 11th, APCs

DUC PHO—An NVA sapper squad, under cover of darkness, and protected by an NVA squad of snipers, attacked bridge 95, one mile north of Sa Huynh.

The squad, armed with homemade grenades from discarded beer and C-ration cans, satchel charges and RPGs, assaulted the bridge guarded by two squads from the second platoon of C Co., 1st Bn., 20th Inf., 11th Inf. Bde.

Enemy Blasts Bunker
"I was sleeping on top of the bunker when all hell broke loose" said SP4 Roger Vcyles (Plainview, Texas). "About twenty homemade grenades were thrown on top of our bunker."

After getting inside the bunker the "Sykes Regulars" then were hit by RPGs.

"The rockets and grenades started both inside and out-

side of the bunker on fire, so we left and ran under the bridge where I was harder for the snipers to see us," said SP4 Rosoling Pizzillo (North Arlington, N.J.), a squad leader.

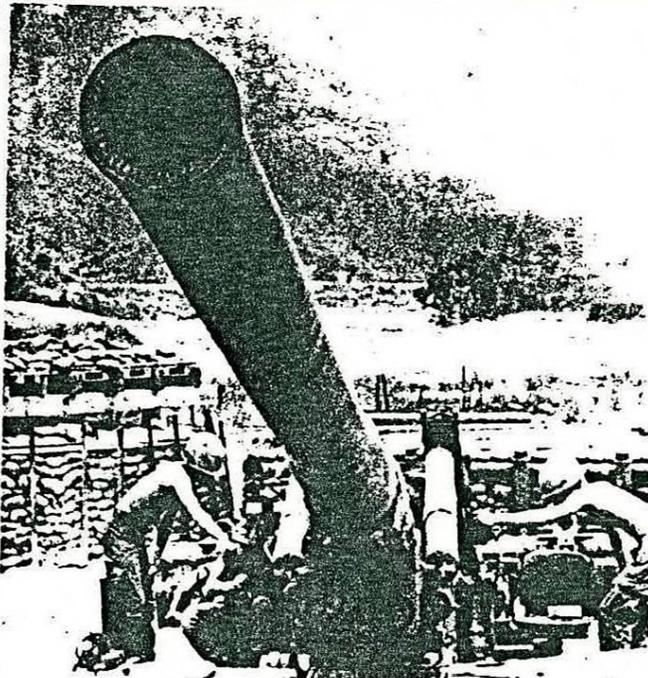
Cav. To Rescue

Fighting continued until the 2nd pl. of C Co. arrived on the APCs of E Trp., 1st Cav. The wounded were evacuated and the remaining men were resupplied with ammo.

For the rest of the night, gun and flare ships of the 174th Aslt. Hel. Co. provided the men on the bridge with illumination and protection.

"All the men kept calm throughout the fight and they all helped turn away a well planned NVA attack," said SGT John Wrigley (Decatur, Ill.) the weapons squad leader of the platoon. (11th IO)

Combat In Review



Big Mouth

The lowering mouth of a 175mm self-propelled gun gets ready to speak as "Gun Bunnies" check their sightings. The big gun of A Btry., 3rd Bn., 18th Arty., supports division and South Vietnamese Forces in the mountains southwest of Chu Lal. (Photo by SP5 A.C. Barnett, DIVARTY)

198th Braves Barrage, Drives VC From Hiding

LZ GATOR—Elements of the 198th Inf. Bde.'s 5th Bn., 46th Inf. cordoned off a tiny hamlet west of the Batangan Peninsula recently and killed 15 VC using the hamlet as a firebase and hideout.

After learning of enemy presence B Co., 5-46 conducted a combat assault of the area, meeting heavy automatic weapons fire as they closed on the hamlet.

Discover Enemy Basecamp With Big Arms Cache

LZ PROFESSIONAL—An estimated NVA battalion basecamp, containing a huge munitions cache, was found by a company of the 1st Bn., 16th Inf. three miles from LZ Professional.

A Co. discovered the basecamp just hours after the enemy had fled, leaving behind the cache of more than 20 rounds of 82 and 60 mm mortars, two mortar tubes, two claymore mines, three rifles, and over 15,000 rounds of small arms ammunition.

"They departed in such a hurry they left behind three unexploded rockets," said 1LT Ron Piggee (Gary, Ind.), whose 1st platoon was the first unit into the basecamp. Some of the campfires were still warm."

The basecamp was uncovered only hours after the start of a combined U.S.-South Vietnamese sweep 20 miles southwest of Tam Ky aimed at clearing the enemy from ruzed terrain around Z Professional.

The camp included three rice huts and huge cave containing the munitions. It was embedded in a large rock complex covered with triple canopy jungle, hiding the camp from the sky.

Although no enemy casualties were sustained, the 8th Bde. soldiers have taken a home away from battle. (198th IO)

As darkness began to fall four combat assault vehicles of H Trp., 17th Cav. were dispatched from LZ Minuteman on the nearby Batangan Peninsula along with third platoon of A Co. to assist in the cordon.

Sporadic fire from the village continued through the night. As dawn broke, the brigade's PSYOP team dropped leaflets urging the enemy to surrender.

Soon after the infantrymen swept through the hamlet destroying the fortified bunkers and a tunnel complex 700 meters long.

The VC killed were believed to be part of a local force battalion which has long eluded allied soldiers in the area west of the Peninsula. (198th IO)

AWOL Enemy Doc Tries Own Medicine

LZ ROSS—The NVA doctor prescribed a Chicom grenade as a death device for a persistent 196th Inf. Bde. soldier recently. Instead, the GI gave the doc lethal medicine.

Action started when a patrol of C Co., 2d Bn., 1st Inf. moved on a search and clear mission up a mountain slope in an NVA-infested area 25 miles northwest of Tam Ky.

Intelligence reports indicated a heavy concentration of NVA on the mountain top. **Surprise NVA**

The patrol had run out of trail and pointman SP4 Douglas Chappell (Wampom, Pa.) was looking for a new route when he spotted an NVA at the crest of a ridge. Chappell wounded the man who disappeared into the tangle of brush and rocks.

Blast Enemy With Grenades

196th Silences Loud NVA

LZ CENTER—An early-morning patrol designed to catch the enemy off guard found three NVA alert but unable to cope with grenade-throwing "Chargers" of the 196th Inf. Bde.

After several days of intense enemy contact in the NVA-infested Tien Phuoc area, the 3d Bn., 21st Inf. began search and clear opera-

tions at dawn throughout Vietnamese villages in the vicinity.

Noisy Enemy

Moving before sunrise, the first platoon of C Co. was on patrol 7 1/2 miles northwest of Tam Ky when the point squad heard loud talking in a hootch area to the front.

Platoon leader 1LT James Gordon (Columbia, S.C.) moved his men forward in an

attempt to seal all escape routes. Within 15 meters of the building, he maneuvered his men to strategic locations. "In second, we were well positioned when bullets suddenly tore through thick grass all around us," said 1LT Gordon.

After returning fire, the "Chargers" began throwing grenades. Several landed close to the doorway and, when all exploded, enemy fire ceased.

Close For Kill

The platoon closed in carefully. "I was several feet away when I spotted an enemy soldier staggering to the front of the hootch," said SGT Chester Shephard (Lufkin, Texas).

The dazed NVA had no weapon and was seized immediately. Other men searched the hootch and found two NVA dead of grenade wounds.

Three automatic weapons and web gear were captured, and the NVA was evacuated for interrogation, making the "Gimlets" early morning efforts pay off. (196th IO)

