

BLACKHORSE

— Find the Bastards — Then Pile On —

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BLACKHORSE

May 1970

Blackhorse rips through NVA

Troopers of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment killed 199 NVA and detained six others in actions during the month of April.

The fighting started on the first of the month when A and B Troops, operating within one mile of the Cambodian border, came under small arms and RPG fire.

The Blackhorse soldiers returned the fire. After three hours of fighting, the enemy broke contact, leaving behind the bodies of 12 NVA. One NVA was captured during the fight.

On April 13, a four-hour battle between NVA and elements of the 2nd Squadron left 31 NVA killed.

The contact started at noon when E Troop, while on a ground reconnaissance mission, received RPG fire from the north. The cavalymen returned fire and were supported by Cobra gunships, aerial rocket artillery, ground artillery and Air Force bomb strikes.

Twelve NVA were killed by ground forces, five by air strikes, three by aerial rocket artillery, and three by helicopter.

Eight of the NVA killed were credited to 2nd Squadron artillery.

E Troop also took one prisoner during the contact.

On the same day, the men of 1st Squadron's B Troop killed 14 enemy soldiers in three hours of fighting in thick jungle north of Tay Ninh.

They also detained one NVA during the three-hour contact that started when the enemy fired RPGs at the troop as they were reconning the area.

First Squadron's D Company was credited with 18 kills on the morning of April 15 when a mad minute caught enemy soldiers around the perimeter by surprise.

On April 27, F Troop of the Regiment's 2nd Squadron was conducting a reconnaissance mission through heavy jungle approximately 21 miles northeast of Tay Ninh.

In mid-afternoon it started receiving small arms and RPG fire.

The troop assaulted the enemy, killing 13 NVA soldiers during the two and one-half hour running battle.

New fire base names

When two squadrons of the Blackhorse Regiment moved their fire support bases to new locations in April, they chose to name them after two non-commissioned officers recently medevaced from the field.

FSB Burkett is the new home of the 2nd Squadron. Command Sergeant Major Paul Burkett

had been the squadron's top enlisted man for eight months before being wounded on April 9.

"The sergeant major was highly regarded by the troops. After he was evacuated, it seemed very appropriate that we should name the new fire support base after him," commented Lieutenant Colonel Grail L. Brookshire the 2nd Squadron commander.

First Squadron's Fire Support Base Kramer was named after Staff Sergeant Sylvester A. Kramer, the field first of the squadron's headquarters troop. Sgt. Kramer had extended, after a year's duty with another unit, for the chance to serve in the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment.

"The naming of the fire base is our tribute to a very respected and well liked man," said Lieutenant Colonel James B. Reed, the 1st Squadron commander. "What better recommendation can we give him as a soldier?"



A LOH checks up ahead as the ARPs move down a trail on a patrol. (Photo by Parker)

11th Cav lets school out early

Not long ago the NVA ran a replacement school in the Dog's Head area, 26 miles northwest of Tay Ninh City and just a few hundred meters from the Cambodian border.

But on March 31, classes were rudely interrupted by a phalanx of ACAVs, Sheridans, and M48 tanks from the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment.

It was a grim day for the NVA professors and their students: 28 were killed and 16 detained — the largest number taken in a single action in recent months.

For the troopers of 1st Squadron's B Troop and D Company, the day began with the crossing of the Suoi Da Ha River. Following a narrow trail north, the Blackhorse vehicles crashed through bamboo thicket and scrub jungle until they came to a Y-shaped intersection.

Scanning the area, Staff Sergeant Norman T. Bellomy noticed an unusual carving on a tree: a diamond with a dot in the center. Past experience told him it was the sign for an enemy assembly point.

B Troop armored vehicles moved cautiously into the area, with D Company tanks holding back about 200 meters. They passed abandoned enemy fighting positions and rolled on toward a group of hootches with thatched-leaf roofs. Suddenly, one of the hootches opened up.

The firefight didn't last long. D Company tanks from the rear deployed on line and combined fires with B Troop, their cannister rounds leveling the area.

When a light machine gun opened fire on a vehicle to his front, B Troop Commander Cpt Lynn Hunt made full use of his

armored cavalry assets. Hunt drove his ACAV over the enemy position, then back and forth until the bunker caved in. Later the Blackhorse troopers pulled five shaken enemy from the debris.

Checking out a hootch, Sergeant First Class Terry Dotson found another enemy soldier crouching out of sight with his eyes shut. One eye blinked open. Dotson pointed his .45 at it —

and persuaded him out of his hiding place. "He knew I had him dead to rights," the Blackhorse platoon sergeant said afterward. Ribbons and medals found in the hootch identified the soldier as an NVA lieutenant.

A sweep of the enemy complex found numerous training aids — including photos of an ACAV, a LOH, a Huey, and a Cobra, with vulnerable points annotated on each.



An ARVN soldier with an M60 machinegun dismounts from an I Troop ACAV near Lai Khe. (Photo by Parker)

An unusual rescue record

"I guess I should put a big red cross on the side of the ship," said CW2 John H. Mallette, who flies a LOH for 2nd Squadron.

Carrying wounded Americans out of the area of a contact is an old experience for Mr. Mallette. But in the three months that he has been flying in War Zone C, he has medevaced eight NVA soldiers.

"Most of them have been pretty cooperative," he said. "One of them did start grabbing the door gunner, but I think he was just afraid of the helicopter."

During one day in March, Mr. Mallette carried two wounded enemy soldiers out. It was following a B 52 strike and after evacuating one man, he spotted another wounded NVA running in a thicket.

"We told the people on the ground where the guy was, and when he saw them coming after him, he came out and chieu hoied: We medevaced him out to the Fire Support Base where the squadron surgeon could take care of him."

On The Inside

Commander's Column . . .	2
Quan Loi History	2
Kids at Zoo	2
Col. Bradley Promoted . . .	3
Awards for Valor	3
Mad Minute	3
Road March	4
USO Show	6
1st Sq. How	6
2nd Sq. Maint.	6
B Troop Contact	8

Commander's Column

And the Rains Came



The rainy season is just around the corner. We can expect an increased amount of rain starting in May as the winds shift around for the southwest monsoon. Rain means mud of course, and by the end of May we'll have trouble moving around in our present area of operations.

There are plans to move the Regiment to another area where the going is a little better and where we can make better use of our mobility. At the same time the going all over III CTZ

is rough during the southwest monsoon, so no matter where we go, there'll be increased trouble with demon mud. Also this is the time of year when DEROS comes with the rain for a lot of us. So there will be a lot of new faces looking at the rain, and a lot of new hands working cables and recovery gear.

Those of you who have had one rainy season won't have to look forward to another. But those of you who face your first rainy season are in for a real treat—ask the guys who've been through one! The point to all this is that we lose a lot of experienced hands just at the time when we'll need all the experience we can get. So be thinking about it. You short timers pass on all the good stuff you know about rainy season operations to those who have to sweat it out.

If you plan to tour Vietnam with the Blackhorse this summer, get your gear in order — tow cables, tow bars, extra towing hooks, clevises, and all the rest. Most of all get ready to be patient and work hard. We can operate in the mud, but it takes just a little more of the perseverance, sweat, swearing, and guts that make us so good at everything else we do. No way we can stop them, so let the rains come!

Colonel Donn A. Starry
41st Commander
The Blackhorse

Quan Loi—portrait of past

Quan Loi — a base camp laced with concertina wire and bunkered with sand bags. The rotor thud of choppers careening down an oil-soaked airstrip. Swirling red dust and decaying French colonial houses. The boom of artillery.

It wasn't always like this. Once the airstrip was grass. The yellow-stained houses were clean white plaster with bright orange tile roofs. Their gardens, now run wild, were manicured, and on their quiet lawns children played. The only thing booming was the production of rubber.

Rubber came to Binh Long Province before World War I when the Terres Rouges — or "Red Earth" — and Cexo Corporations set up several plantations in the An Loc-Loc Ninh area.

In those days the French-based corporations constituted a private fief with its own laws and police force.

In 1954 Vietnamese independence changed all that. But the

rubber business continued to thrive until 1965. That year 16,000 people depended on Terres Rouges for their livelihood.

Among these were 35 European administrators. Twenty-seven were married and there were about 50 children.

The children went to school during the week in Saigon, staying at a "family house" owned by the corporation. They flew back to Quan Loi for weekends and holidays.

The swimming pool on the northwest side of the airstrip was provided by the corporation for the enjoyment of its administrators — both European and Vietnamese — and their families.

Then, as now, the rubber season began and ended with Tet, the Vietnamese New Year.

Just after Tet, the trees are parched and the latex is hard. Production is relatively poor until the rains begin. In the early part of the rainy season production is optimum. But later the latex gets too spongy.



Hueys from Air Cav Troop flying in formation.

Chaplain's Corner

'There Is Only Now'

By Chaplain (LTC)
William P. Trobaugh

Time is one of those things that is never available in the right quantity. There is either too much or too little; never is there just exactly



enough. The tour in Vietnam is too long. When we were young children, Christmas seemed never to come, the days just dragging by. Now that we are older and don't really care that much about Christmas, it comes oftener. The three months of summer vacation are much shorter than three equal months of school. And the last two months of your tour here in Vietnam are much longer than the other ten. (If you don't believe me, wait and see.) And so forth.

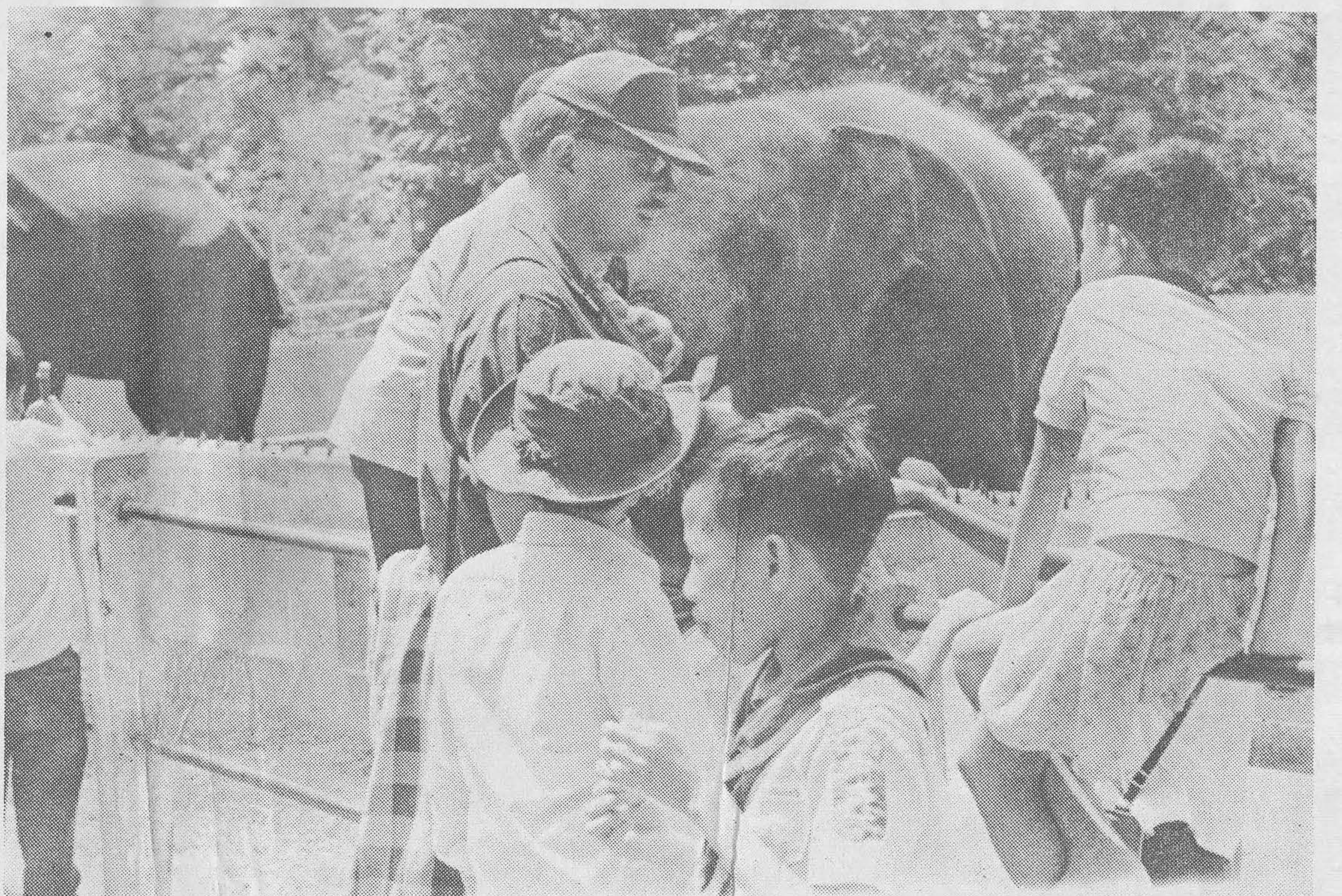
Yet, one minute is equal in length to every other minute, each day equals every other in its time length. The thing that makes them seem unequal is the point of attention. If you think a minute is short, watch the second hand of your watch and hold your breath to see how long it really is. Then, if that convinces you how long a minute really is, try with three of them in a telephone conversation to tell your girl friend or wife (hopefully the same for those with a wife) all you wish to say.

A few experiments with time will prove to you that time is neutral, neither good nor bad, friendly nor malicious. How quickly time goes for the happy person who enjoys practically

every minute of his life. And how very slowly it must pass for him who dreads or fears the events he faces each and every day of his life.

In moving through the Regiment I meet both kinds and many in between. Would you believe there are those in every job we have to do who are having the time of their lives. These live in anticipation of the new experiences which may come their way and find this a short, short year indeed. Others in the same places and in the same jobs live in constant dread of the calamities that may befall them. "One man's meat is another man's poison."

If time passes quickly for you, bless you. You already have our reward for a wholesome attitude. If time is your enemy and you find it a real drag, check your attitude before you become too critical of your environment. I'll bet you'll find that this isn't the first time you had these same feelings and that you brought this attitude with you to Vietnam. And this would be a good place to leave this attitude. Just drop it in the nearest bomb crater. With time, there is only now and we ought to get the most from it.



It isn't hard to find First Lieutenant Richard Ertel, of 3rd Squadron S-5, each Sunday. He and his gang of 60 Vietnamese children visit the Saigon Zoo. ARVN personnel provide food and transportation for the kids, and S-5 provides the financial assistance.

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E Troop mortar keeps popping

One night recently the man on radio watch for E Troop's mortar section heard the unmistakable pop of enemy mortar rounds leaving the tube. Before the rounds landed, the E Troop mortarmen were hanging rounds of their own. Their quick reflexes paid off: They received no more incoming that night.

"When you're taking incoming, you really get motivated," says section leader John S. Mebane. "It doesn't take us much more time to react than it takes for a guy with a machinegun."

But fast reaction time doesn't come without a lot of practice. All the men in the mortar section are qualified mortar gunners, and each man is trained so that he can do the other's job. And frequently he does. "That's what is so interesting about being in a mortar crew," Mebane says. "Each of us gets a chance to do everything."

The thirteen men in E Troop's mortar section are split up on three tracks. On a normal day, they fire off about 400 rounds — mostly during the hours of darkness.

At night the 81 mm section fires plenty of illumination. It

also puts out harassment and interdiction fire on suspected enemy positions and avenues of approach. But its high-explosive rounds are especially good for defensive concentrations, since they can be walked in ear-splittingly close to friendly perimeters.

Normally, the entire mortar section stays with its troop, but not always. "We think so much of them," Major Frederick M. Franks, the 2nd Squadron S-3 said recently, "that we took one of their tracks into our own Fire Support Base to help defend us."

1st Sqdn mad minute catches enemy short

On the morning of April 15, the berm of FSB Kramer opened up with a mad minute. It was much like any other mad minute but for one thing: it left 18 known enemy dead.

The NVA, who were apparently setting up a ground probe when they were cut down, also left behind a large number of weapons with ammunition.

Reports of enemy activity in the area had put the troopers on their toes on the night of the 14th, but prior organization of the base defense kept the casualties light and allowed maximum firepower to be placed quickly in areas of enemy concentration.

After the mad minute started, a few rounds did come in. The fire-damage control groups grabbed their equipment and began extinguishing the fires that had been started. The medics and the cooks, who serve as litter bearers during an attack, moved to the four collection points around the perimeter to tend the wounded and coordinate with the medevac choppers as they became available.

The first indication that a ground probe had been attempted was at daybreak when a Pink team spotted several bodies near the perimeter. During a sweep of the area by D Company, the bodies and abandoned weapons were found.



An ACAV from G Troop gives some infantrymen a lift in War Zone C.

Regimental XO promoted to Colonel

The Deputy Regimental Commander of the Blackhorse Regiment, Robert L. Bradley, was promoted to Colonel at a ceremony at Quan Loi April 28.

"I am happy with my promotion, but even more pleased to stay with the Regiment," Colonel Bradley commented. He came to the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment from an assignment at USARV in December.

A 1949 graduate of West Point, Colonel Bradley served on the faculty of his alma mater from 1956 to 1959 as a member of the English Department.

In 1961, following a tour in Korea, Colonel Bradley was assigned to Ft. Bragg, N.C., as the S-3 of the 4th Battalion, 68th Armor. A month after he arrived, the unit was deployed to Europe during the Berlin crisis.

He returned from Germany six months later and went to Ft. Carson, Colo., when the 5th Mechanized Division was created. As the S-3 of the 1st Battalion, 77th Armor, he helped organize and train that unit.

During that tour he worked with Lieutenant Colonel B.F. Griffin, now the 3rd Squadron commander, who was a company



Colonel Bradley is congratulated at his promotion ceremony by Colonel Donn A. Starry, Blackhorse Commander.

commander at the time.

In July 1966, Colonel Bradley returned to Germany, this time to command the 3rd Battalion of

the 70th Armor. He stayed in that assignment for 19 months.

Colonel Bradley came to Vietnam in August 1969.

Honored for Valor

SILVER STAR

- Captains Jerry L. Hensley, D Company, William A. Paris, Air Cav Troop, John B. Poindexter, A Troop, Douglas H. Starr, B Troop.
- First Lieutenants Vincent P. Baerman, C Troop, James J. Steele, L Troop, Steven W. Vince, B Troop.
- Warrant Officer Roger L. Scott, Air Cav Troop.
- Command Sergeant Major John A. Carlson, 3rd Squadron Headquarters Headquarters.
- First Sergeant Willie Johnson, F Troop.
- Platoon Sergeant William L. McGuire, C Troop.
- Staff Sergeants Bill Bathe, C Troop, Jesse T. Crowe, C Troop, Clarence Young, M Company.
- Sergeant Stanislavas V. Nerkeliunas, B Troop.
- Specialists 5 Leslie S. Lincoln, C Troop, Brent N. Tanner, C Troop.
- Corporal Thomas Farmer, B Troop.
- Specialists 4 William A. Faulkner, B Troop, Roy T. Hall, B Troop, Michael G. Henkel, E Troop, John Henry, L Troop.
- Privates First Class Robert Dickerson, B Troop, Dennis Jamison, G Troop.

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

- Majors Charles W. Abbey, Air Cav Troop, Frederick Franks, 2nd Squadron Headquarters.
- Captains Ronald G. Caldwell, 1st Squadron Headquarters, James B. Schaffer, Air Cav Troop.
- First Lieutenants Michael Huff, 1st Squadron Headquarters, Stephen Moushegian, Air Cav Troop, David L. Porter, Air Cav Troop.
- Chief Warrant Officers Vito Bubbell, Air Cav Troop, Clarence P. Burkett, Jr., Aviation Platoon.
- Warrant Officers John J. Amore, 1st Squadron Headquarters, Dennis A. Drake, 3rd Squadron Headquarters, Stephen Eldridge, Air Cav Troop, Alfred E. Santoro, Air Cav Troop.
- Specialists 4 Claude E. Horton, 1st Squadron Headquarters, Cecil E. James, Air Cav Troop.

SOLDIER'S MEDAL

- Specialist 6 Jackie L. Haley, 3rd Squadron Headquarters.
- Specialists 4 Merville F. Blakesley, 1st Squadron Headquarters, Roy G. Wooley, 2nd Squadron How Battery.

BRONZE STAR

- Captains William A. Bristol, E Troop, Ross A. Johnson, E Troop, Martin D. Lowery, 37th Med, Robert G. Myers, 3rd Squadron Headquarters, John B. Poindexter, A Troop.
- First Lieutenants Jackson M. Andrews, I Troop, Vincent P. Baerman, C Troop, John R. Barbeau, F Troop, Walter E. Chase, B Troop, Charles T. Dodge, I Troop, Richard S. Miller, 1st Squadron How Battery, William L. Nash, A Troop, William J. Peplinski, A Troop, Charles A. Robinson, 3rd Squadron How Battery, John Roche, F Troop, Daniel J. Kaufman, L Troop, Peter P. Wallace, C Troop, Robert M. Wiseman, C Troop, William L. Wynne, A Troop.
- First Sergeants William R. Chambers, G Troop, Jerry L. Halloman, A Troop.
- Sergeants First Class Durwood Owen, 3rd Squadron How Battery, Filberto Rodriguez, B Troop.
- Platoon Sergeants Ernest L. Finger, D Troop, Jerry B. Howerton, B Troop, Willie McNew, A Troop.
- Staff Sergeants James W. Blankenship, B Troop, Terry A. Dotson, B Troop, Richard T. Harvey, 3rd Squadron Headquarters, Danny D. Hopper, 1st Squadron How Battery, James B. Hughes, H Company, Mack M. Turner, F Troop, Gerald E. Youl, 919th Engineers.
- Sergeants Peter L. Bunce, C Troop, Dwight O. Humphrey, M Company, John F. Kellog, C Troop, Philip L. Palmer, B Troop, James J. Prattas, Air Cav Troop, John Rietwiesner, C Troop, Gonzales H. Rosario, F Troop, Earl O. Sizemore, C Troop, Melvin D. Smith, M Company, Thomas K. Ward, F Troop.
- Specialists 5 Allan L. Bradford, Aviation Platoon, Lawrence N. Driscoll, 37th Med, Kenneth M. Feely, B Troop, John Schoolfield, 3rd Squadron Headquarters, Jackie D. Sponaugle, L Troop.
- Specialists 4 James A. Alvarado, L Troop, Michael F. Bradley, M Company, Gary Brown, F Troop, Harry E. Bryan, G Troop, Samuel R. Burchill, I Troop, William E. Carr, F Troop, Max Cervera, 1st Squadron Headquarters, Richard R. Cooper, A Troop, Jim E. Danson, C Troop, Robert Dickerson, B Troop, James F. Dickinson, A Troop, John E. Dancses, Air Cav Troop, Thomas L. Eflaw, F Troop, Dennis M. Ganigan, F Troop, Mark C. Hallenbeck, L Troop, William B. Haraway, L Troop, Daniel H. Hobbs, Aviation Platoon, James L. Hollis, B Troop, Wayne D. McRay, C Troop, Garry W. Miracle, G Troop, Orlando Pabey, F Troop, Fred Parrington, B Troop, Larry W. Pennington, F Troop, Don R. Riley, L Troop, Larry P. Roberts, A Troop, Charles S. Shuffler, Aviation Platoon, James L. Terpak, B Troop, Blaz Z. Toups, A Troop, Bernard Turner, F Troop, Edward W. Turner, Aviation Platoon, Ronald Vaughan, A Troop, Bobby R. West, B Troop.
- Privates First Class Columbus Adderson, B Troop, Wayne M. Eckman, B Troop, Lonnie B. Gatewood, F Troop, James A. Gillooly, F Troop, Gary R. Ginzl, 2nd Squadron Headquarters, William S. Marion, C Troop, Larry W. Moreland, B Troop, Ronnie E. Smith, B Troop, Roy C. Swandol, M Company, Kenneth E. Wedlow, L Troop.
- Private George Scarborough, L Troop.

AIR MEDAL

- Captains Charles R. Gill, 1st Squadron Headquarters, Thomas D. Mott, Air Cav Troop.
- First Lieutenants Thomas P. Finegan, Jr., Air Cav Troop, Arthur E. Smith, Air Cav Troop.
- Chief Warrant Officers Douglas W. Farfel, 2nd Squadron Headquarters, Jeffrey C. Starrak, Aviation Platoon.
- Warrant Officers John J. Amore, 1st Squadron Headquarters, Otha D. Brooks, Air Cav Troop, Russell F. Habbas, Air Cav Troop, Roger A. Marsh, Air Cav Troop, Robert D. Strawbridge, Aviation Platoon, Peter A. Weigand, Aviation Platoon.
- Sergeant Charlie Hunt, Air Cav Troop.
- Specialist 5 Robert J. Wilkinson, 1st Squadron Headquarters, Specialists 4 Cecil E. James, Air Cav Troop, Terry L. Lupton, 3rd Squadron Headquarters, Terry B. Opp, Air Cav Troop, Donald T. White, Air Cav Troop.
- Private First Class Brando Augillard, B Troop.

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL

- Captains Charles R. Gill, 1st Squadron Headquarters, Jerry L. Hensley, Regimental Headquarters, James J. Steele, L Troop, Henry F. Thomas, 37th Med.
- First Lieutenants Vincent P. Baerman, A Troop, Thomas P. Finegan, Jr., Air Cav Troop.
- Chief Warrant Officer Michael Huff, 1st Squadron Headquarters, Warrant Officers Dean K. Klackner, 1st Squadron Headquarters, Douglas K. Mercer, 1st Squadron Headquarters, Edward W. Papin, 1st Squadron Headquarters, Frederick D. Shuman, Air Cav Troop.
- Platoon Sergeants Edgar Brooks, B Troop, Willie McNew, A Troop. Staff Sergeants Shorty Barfield, E Troop, Earl W. Fleming, A Troop, Scottie R. King, A Troop, Richard E. Richards, A Troop, James R. Walker, E Troop.
- Specialist 6 Richard E. Ross, 541st MID.
- Sergeants Craig R. Behlen, B Troop, Felipe Conde, B Troop, Robert D. Duncan, C Troop, Leonard M. McCarthy, M Company, John T. Musial, B Troop, Richard C. Williams, B Troop.
- Specialists 5 Peter J. Cavieaux, A Troop, Walter R. Gensemer, 1st Squadron Headquarters, Michael B. Gill, Air Cav Troop, William J. Hadfield, Jr., B Troop, Larry D. Moore, C Troop, Aaron F. Relford, A Troop.
- Specialists 4 Joe L. Anderson, C Troop, Stuart D. Armstead, A Troop, Daniel D. Bond, B Troop, James W. Boyd, F Troop, Shirley L. Bradshaw, C Troop, Max C. Cervera, 1st Squadron Headquarters, Larry E. Cole, B Troop, Ernest E. Coleman, 919th Engineers, Bryan R. Cupp, A Troop, William C. Davis, B Troop, Mack L. Farmer, 919th Engineers, Keith Felecia, C Troop, Gregory W. Franklin, B Troop, David M. Glaser, 1st Squadron Headquarters, James O. Hains, B Troop, Walter E. Lambott, B Troop, Lerou Landini, B Troop, Rodney R. Lorenz, A Troop, Mark E. Maynard, C Troop, Michael Pash, I Troop, Nicholas Posak, I Troop, Mark J. Prendergast, I Troop, Wayne A. Pycior, 1st Squadron How Battery, Scott A. Sieg, B Troop, Carl E. Smith, I Troop, Carroll Thacker, A Troop, Paul A. Thayer, C Troop.
- Privates First Class Austin L. Cofield, A Troop, Gary Felthager, A Troop, Quentin Gandarilla, I Troop, David M. Itami, B Troop, Patrick Richard, M Company, Robert D. Company, Steven K. Young, A Troop.

Road March — the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment moves

A fire support base might last a few days or few months, but eventually it is abandoned and moved to a new ring of dirt someplace else. Recently, 1st Squadron, operating near the Cambodian border, northwest of Tay Ninh City, moved its FSB a few clicks south from Hazard to Kramer.

At first light the troopers at Hazard began tearing down tents, caving in bunkers, and packing odds and ends into their armored vehicles for the road march. Nothing was left behind that might be used again—even sand bags were emptied and packed onto the tracks.

About three hours after daybreak tanks, ACAVs, Sheridans, command tracks, 155 Hogs, eight-inchers, AVLBs, dusters and mess vehicles queued up, then, keeping their interval, started to move out through the jungle.

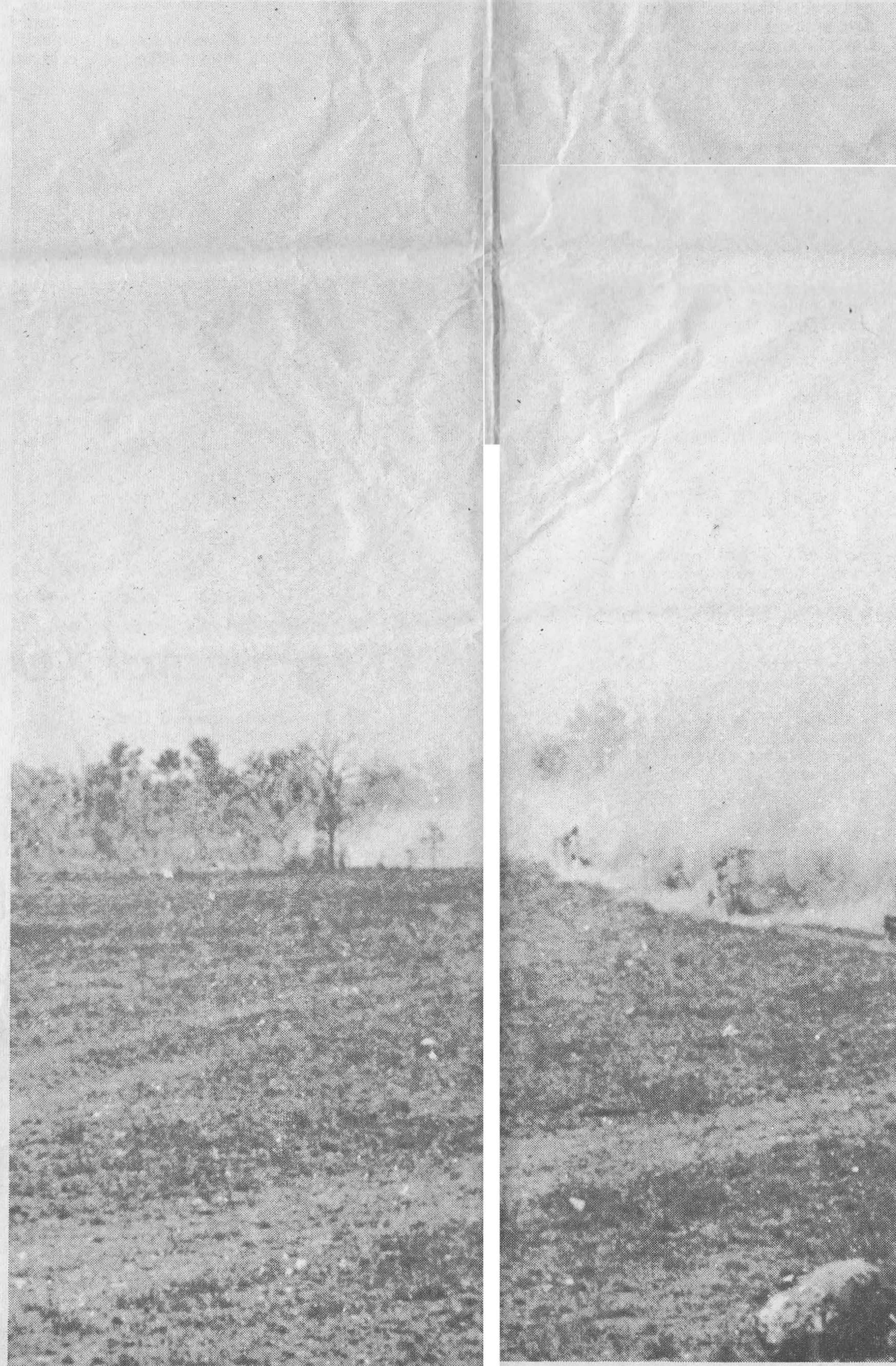
With lead Sheridans busting, the convoy cautiously twisted its way down the corrugated jungle thoroughfare. Everyone was looking out for signs of the enemy.

The jungle gave way to a clearing and suddenly the tracks were racing along, kicking up a long spur of dust. No matter how good the maintenance, not every track could take the strain. The ones that couldn't were quickly fixed, or towed the rest of the way.

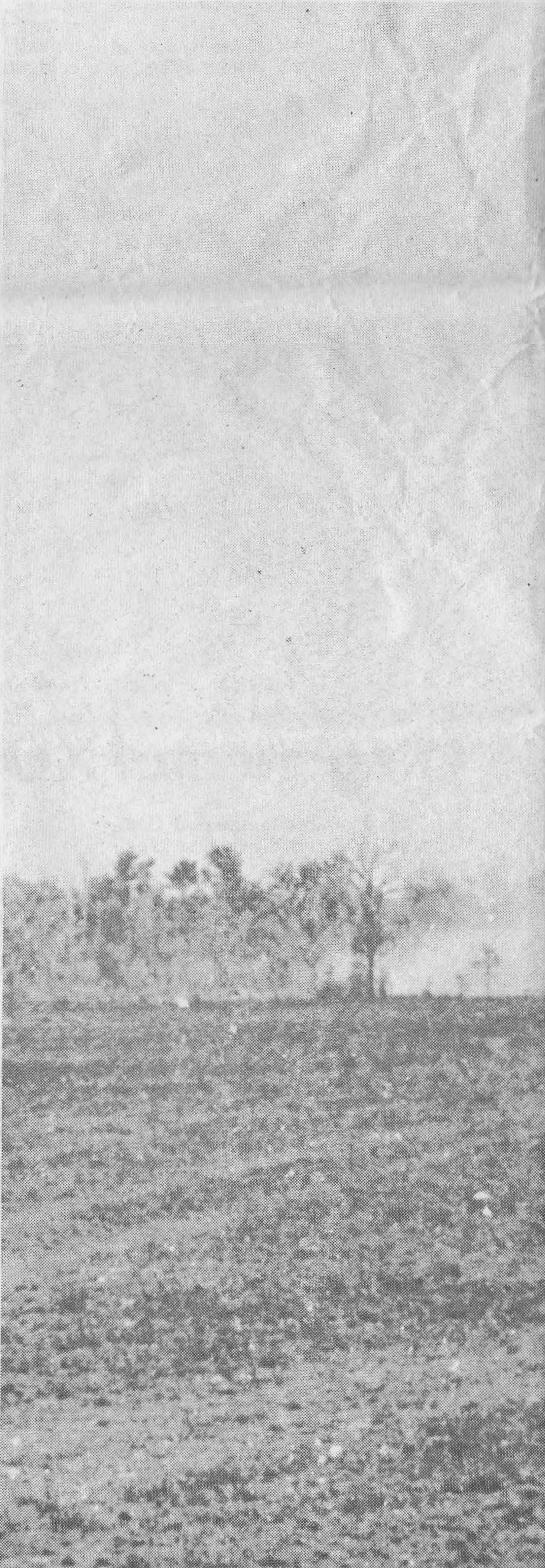
At first the new FSB looked like a busy parking lot, with dismounted troopers waving the tracks into their prospective spots on the perimeter. The 919th Engineers were everywhere. Tents started popping up—one of the first is the HHT mess tent. The area bristled with radio antennae.

Dust-swirling Chinooks came in from Tay Ninh with loads of ammo and fuel and, not least importantly, food for the men. A sky crane lifted in two mini-dozers to push up the berm.

As the minidozers began their work, men started through the chow line. In a few hours the FSB would be complete.



ry Regiment moves out



1st Squadron How Battery on target

Six bullies sitting there waiting for someone to push around. They are those loud, deadly 155's of the Howitzer Battery whose presence gives the fire support base its name.

One "hog" can throw its rounds off up to 14,600 meters, enough to cover the entire area of operations of the squadron. And during a contact it can fire within 150 meters of friendly troops, thus eliminating any free zone for the enemy between the artillery and the friendlies.

The men of 1st Squadron's How Battery are prepared all day and all night to fire their guns for a wide variety of missions — defensive concentrations, marking missions, reconnaissance by fire and, of course, fire in support of troops in contact. But the different names mean little to the unfortunate enemy soldier who finds himself in the wrong place at the wrong time.

One day which sees no contact, the battery may send out 150 rounds, but there is no limit to the number that can be fired during a contact. On one recent day they shot 366 rounds in a single-contact mission.

The 11th Cav's artillery is unique in that the guns come directly under the squadrons.



The Sounds of Silence, one of the 1st Squadron How Battery's guns, fires off a round.

(Photo by McAllister)

"We belong to the squadron commander," said Captain Charles R. Cassell, the commanding officer of 1st Squadron's How Battery. "We are one

of the resources he has to use when he needs to. And he does use us."

To keep up with the Regiment, the How Battery has learned to

be mobile. "You should see us when someone comes over to tell us we will be moving out in a few minutes," Capt. Cassell said. "It gets pretty hectic, but

when the road march starts we are out there, plowing right along with the ACAVs."

The big guns require a big maintenance job to keep the fire power up.

"We try to have one of our guns stand down one day a week so the crew can take it apart and work on it," said Capt. Cassell.

"The basic maintenance problem is that we have a massive projectile which gives a tremendous recoil," said Staff Sergeant Armando G. Corella, a section leader. "A lot of dust gets into the mechanism and we have to clean it out regularly."

"It all falls on good NCOs," said Capt. Cassell. "We are very fortunate to have men who really know their jobs and who take pride in their work."

"We've got the best crew in Vietnam," boasts Sergeant First Class Nathan G. Hillard, the motor sergeant. "They'll do anything they have to in order to get the mission done."

All this work means a great addition to the fire power of a fire support base in the 11th Cav. In Capt. Cassell's words: "A twig snaps and the world turns loose."

Maintenance keeps 2nd Squadron on the move

Rolling, heaving, sloshing, grinding, the 11th Cav's tracks have kept pushing through dust, mud, streams and thickly tangled jungle. But machines don't take care of themselves.

Much of the credit for the durability of the tracks goes to the men on the vehicles themselves, who take care of the daily maintenance. But they have been backed up by maintenance crews who have proven their skill and determination, and good deal of imagination too.

"It's our job to get the equipment going and to keep it going so the men can fight the war," explained Captain George T. Raach, 2nd Squadron's motor officer.

Captain Raach's squadron maintenance section is responsible for the repair, replacement and supply of all the squadron's vehicles and parts, plus the main gun systems and small arms and engineer equipment.

"There isn't anything we won't do to keep a tank, Sheridan or ACAV going," commented Master Sergeant Weldon C. Caldwell, the motor sergeant.

Because of the importance in having as many vehicles operational as quickly as possible, maintenance section tries to repair equipment as rapidly and as far forward as possible.

"If we have to tow a vehicle into Quan Loi," explained Capt.

Raach, "we are not only using up extra time, but a troop is also without the use of the second vehicle which did the towing."

Most of the work is done at the Fire Support Base. "This is our motor pool out here," said Sergeant Conrado De La Cruz. "We don't have any hoist or garage, but we get the job done."

"We do a lot of night work," De La Cruz said, "especially on the Sheridans. When they are in

contact they put out a lot of fire power, so we work hard to keep them going. We'll work all night to get a Sheridan up for the next day."

The motor pool at Quan Loi is the center for supply and welding.

PLL (Prescribed Load List Section) stocks 1,769 separate items that may be called for from the field. Large or expensive items such as engines

and transmissions are not stocked at Quan Loi, but must be obtained from the 185th Maintenance Battalion at Long Binh. An engine can be replaced within 48 hours of breakdown, provided the part is in stock at the 185th.

"In the 20 years that I've been in the Army, this is the best crew that I've ever seen," said Sgt. Caldwell. "They really go all out to get the work done."

Troop's nerve center keeps messages whirring

In the middle of the NDP stands an ACAV studded with antennae — the command post.

Its job is to coordinate with people inside and outside the troop, and 24 hours a day radios are whirring messages, information, and instructions in and out.

"Most of the time it's pretty manageable," said Sergeant Francis C. Lees. He turned for a moment from the wall of knobs and phones to speak about his job. "But it gets pretty rough at times, keeping track of one

thing, relaying a message for another person, coordinating with someone else. We wind up standing up, lowering the volume on one radio so we can hear another."

Sgt. Lees is one of three operators, along with Sgt. Charles Krauss and Specialist 5 Richard A. Crawford, for the CP of 2nd Squadron's G Troop.

At least one of them is on duty at all times. Their job includes handling the daily resupply and paperwork, noting the status of

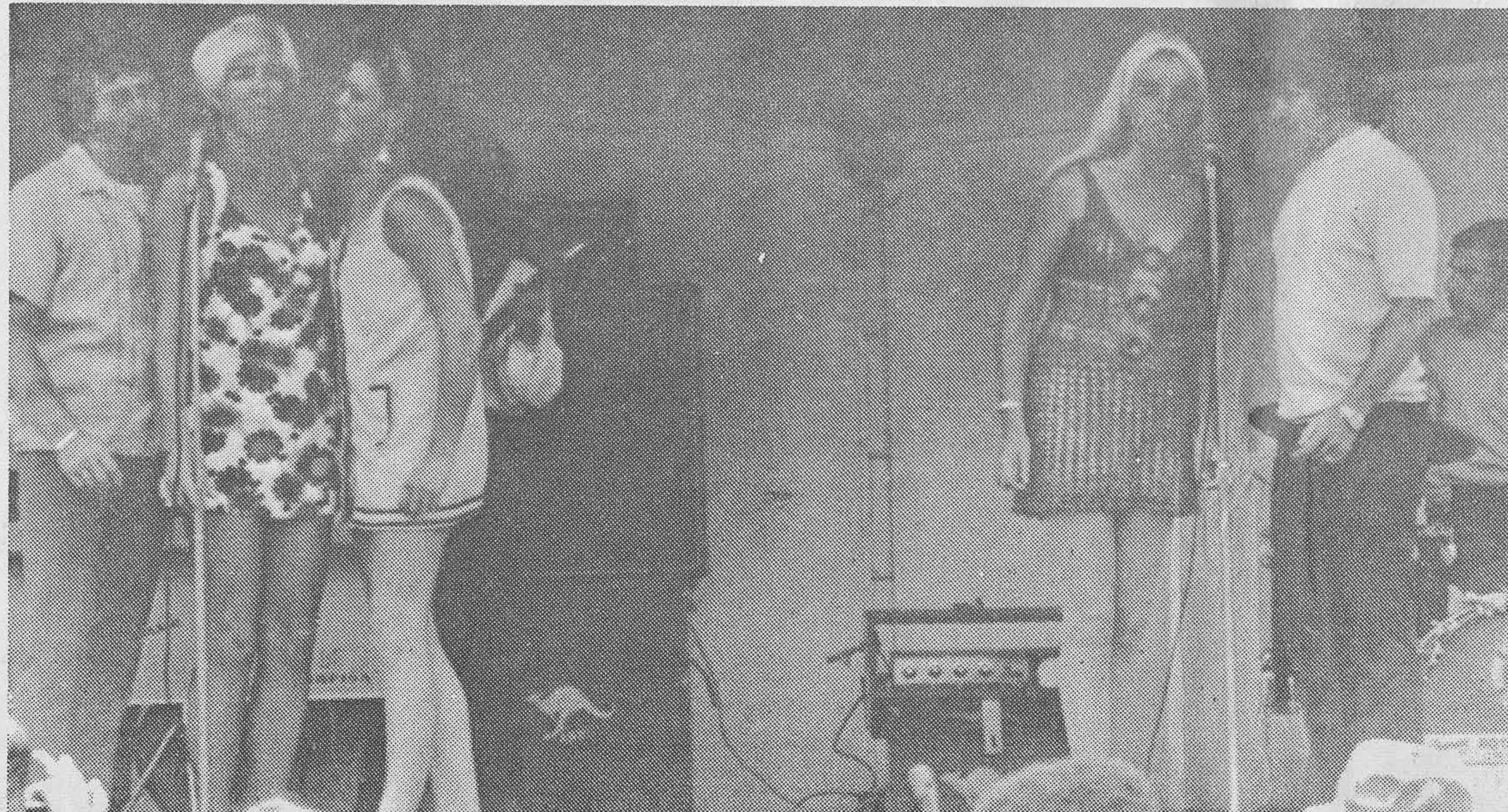
people in the field, and making sure all communication in and around the troop is flowing smoothly.

"The most excitement occurs during a contact," Sgt. Lees said. "We have at least three of the radios going, one to squadron command, one to the troop commander, one for the supply line, and a possible fourth one for medevacs or artillery."

As he was speaking, a platoon leader came over to ask him about his commo. "Sgt. Craw-

ford and I are radio repairmen," Lee explained. "It is our job to fix all the radios in the tracks. Sometimes we spend half the night fixing the commo."

The radio started whirring again. Two platoons were operating near each other and the operator was making sure one knew what the other was doing and where he was doing it. Sgt. Lee straightened it out and then called the rear area to read off a list of supplies that were needed the next day.



On April 4, a USO show came to Quan Loi and the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment.



(Photos by Parker)

Navigation device tested by Regiment

Lost in the jungle? The Army is testing a magnetic land navigation system that will tell you where you are within ten meters.

The device, produced by a Canadian corporation, is currently mounted on four ACAVs in the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment.

The key element in the system is a magnetic flux-gate compass, which is bolted on a stud to the rear of each test vehicle. Essentially, it is a metal cylinder containing three coils of wire in an oil reservoir. The coils are placed 120 degrees apart.

Current running through the coils sets up an electrical field. The earth's magnetic flux cuts across this field at a given angle. When the vehicle changes direction, this angle changes.

An electrical signal is then sent to an analogue computer inside the track. The computer measures the angle of change and comes up with a new compass heading.

The computer is also wired to the vehicle's odometer and

therefore "knows" the distance travelled.

Since the computer has been previously programmed with the coordinates of the point of origin, it is able to take the compass heading and the distance travelled and determine, as the vehicle moves, its new location in the form of eight-digit coordinates.

The coordinates appear on another device called the Readout Coordinates Heading Box, which also contains a compass.

From here, the new information is fed to the Map Plotter Board. A moving arrow on the map board visually charts the progress of the vehicle.

Complicated? When you see it in action it's simple enough.

So far the system has proved somewhat delicate for combat operations in War Zone C. But if it can be toughened up, it might some day prove a valuable asset.

As Specialist 5 John Ruffner, who tested it with the Regimental Scouts, said, "It could be useful out in the jungle where the only way you can see is up."



An ACAV from 3rd Squadron's Headquarters Troop recons the area near Lai Khe. (Photo by Carlton)

Field ambulance is 24-hour clinic

Grinding through the jungle, it looks like any other ACAV. But the difference is all inside. In addition to its normal load of ammo, it is packed with medical supplies — it is the Forward Field Ambulance.

The center of the troop's first-aid activities, its crew consists of two medics plus a track commander and a driver.

"We carry enough equipment and supplies to take care of 30 injured men for 24 hours if we had to," said the senior medic of G Troop, Specialist 4 Robert J. Taylor.

As their job is to be in reserve

and back up the platoon medics, Taylor and his partner, PFC Stephen Zaragoza spend most of their time in the NDP. There they operate what turns out to be a 24-hour clinic, diagnosing and treating the injuries, wounds and ailments of the men in the troop.

When he is needed, the squadron doctor can come right in from the Fire Support Base.

When contact with the enemy is expected, the ambulance gets into formation with the other tracks.

"If a track gets hit on the line," Taylor explained, "it stops and we go right up to it, get the wounded men off, and

drive back to a place where we can dust the wounded off. The rest of the troop can just keep pushing."

"I enjoy being a medic in Vietnam," commented Taylor, who spent three and one-half months with the 1st Infantry Division before coming to the Blackhorse Regiment. "When someone gets hit and you take care of them, you really have the feeling of accomplishing something."

"Our job is to save lives," added his partner. "It's a funny feeling, being a medic. You never know how much you know until you are called upon to use it. And then all of a sudden it comes to you."

PAYROLL SAVINGS MAKES DREAMS PAY OFF

GET WITH IT — STAY WITH IT!

He prepared way for 11th Cav

Getting short is something Specialist 5 Billie H. Davis doesn't know too much about. He arrived in Vietnam in January 1966 and he has spent very little time out of the country since.

Now a welder with the maintenance section of the 11th Armored Cavalry's 2nd Squadron, the Gary, Ind. native is no stranger to the Blackhorse Regiment, even though he only joined it in September.

His first assignment was with the 32nd Artillery. During the latter part of his tour, he helped prepare the way for the 11th Cav's entrance into Vietnam.

"We moved into the Xuan Loc area in June, 1966 to set up a permanent fire base," he recalls. "It was all jungle and three quarters mine field when we got there, but we cleared the place."

The area became Blackhorse Base Camp, the first home of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment in Vietnam.

After a six-month stateside tour, he was back in Vietnam in August 1967, this time with the 61st Heavy Equipment Maintenance Company in Long Binh.

As the evacuation section chief, he and his crew were responsible for moving replace-

ments and parts for the vehicles of all the Armored units within a 200 mile radius.

Again, he worked often with the 11th Cav, this time running supplies from Long Binh to Blackhorse Base Camp.

In September 1969 he asked to be assigned to the 11th Cav, "... because they go where the action is."

During the past two years, Davis has been taking correspondence courses in architecture. In addition to the long-term advantages, the training has helped him when he has been called upon to design and make a number of pieces of equipment, such as special gun-mounts for helicopters.

He has been in the Army for fourteen years and has spent most of them overseas — in Germany, the Philippines, Japan and Korea in addition to this country.

"I like foreign duty," he says. "There is no better education than learning about life itself through travelling."

Davis is not sure whether he will stay in Vietnam when this tour is up. If he does decide to go, he would like to be reassigned to Africa. "It's one place I haven't been to."



Second Lieutenant Raymond A. Edge, the ARPs platoon leader, dismounts from a LOH on an operation in War Zone C.

(Photo by Parker)

It's the loader's thing

"When something happens, I'm down there doing my thing."

Specialist 4 Dennis Johns' "thing" is pushing rounds into a 152 mm main gun and "down there" is inside the turret of an M551 Sheridan.

Johns is a Sheridan loader for the third platoon of 2nd Squadron's E Troop.

Inside the turret he is surrounded with dials and switches and colored lights. When contact is made, he flips a couple of switches, looks for the ready light, and tells the TC he is ready to fire. This all takes place almost instantaneously.

"The boom of the gun is loud, but I'm not thinking about it

down there. I'm reaching for the next round," he said. "You have to operate on instinct to get the gun reloaded and ready as fast as possible."

After nine months as a loader, Johns is a believer in the power of the Sheridan. "When it's firing like a champ, it couldn't be better," he said.

The main gun on the track is a 152 millimeter. "You know how much damage a 155 can do," Johns said. "Well, this gun is just three silly millimeters smaller."

Johns praised the teamwork of the entire crew. "Everyone knows what to do," he stated. "When things start happening, they all do their thing."

Make Saving Easy With Savings Bonds

Mobile unit supplies troops water

Until last November all 1st and 2nd Squadron drinking water was "hooked" out in giant blivets. But now at least half the water is produced in the field by a unique truck-mounted water purification unit.

The unit can treat up to 1500 gallons of water an hour.

Each day the vans leave the Fire Support Bases with an escort and go to a nearby stream or other source of water. ACAVs and Sheridans with tanks from

nearby troops meet them at the water point.

The process starts when the water is pumped into a giant tank. In the center of the tank is a chamber which mixes and discharges chemicals. These chemicals when released into the tank and agitated with the water, kill bacteria, rid the water of any bad odor or taste, and collect impurities.

All during the agitation period the operator of the unit tests the water to make sure it is being

cleansed properly with the correct amount of the chemicals.

When the agitation is completed, the water passes through chemically-treated pipes to a filter. It is then pumped to one of the water trailers.

Each van usually fills from four to eight tanks a day. One of the principal assets of the van is that they relieve the Chinooks of a large part of their water load and thus permit greater amounts of other supplies to reach the people on the line.



Contact... B Troop in action

On April 13, Blackhorse armored cavalymen from 1st Squadron's B Troop killed 14 enemy soldiers and detained one in three hours of fighting in-thick scrub jungle 20 miles north of Tay Ninh City.

The action began shortly after noon when the troop's lead Sheridan, stopping to check out the hulk of a burned-out ACAV, received rocket propelled grenade fire from a hidden enemy bunker.

The blast wounded Staff Sergeant Norman T. Bellomy and his crew who dismounted the flaming vehicle as the rest of B Troop hosed down the area with M60, .50 caliber and Sheridan main gun fire.

After 15 minutes of firing, the troop moved to a LZ 300 meters to the rear, where the wounded men were dusted off.

The troop then returned to the contact site and swept through the area on line. Again an RPG was fired at them, but this time the enemy round hit a tree and exploded harmlessly. The Blackhorse vehicles continued through the area. As the tracks passed enemy bunkers, troopers dismounted to check them out.

Three enemy soldiers were killed by M60 machinegun fire as they tried to escape the area.

Fragmentation grenades hurled in a bunker killed another four enemy. A wounded enemy soldier pulled from the bunker was treated and sent to the rear.

Recovered in the area were several AK47 rifles, an RPG launcher, eight RPG rounds and boosters, parts for a .51 caliber machinegun, and numerous medical supplies.

