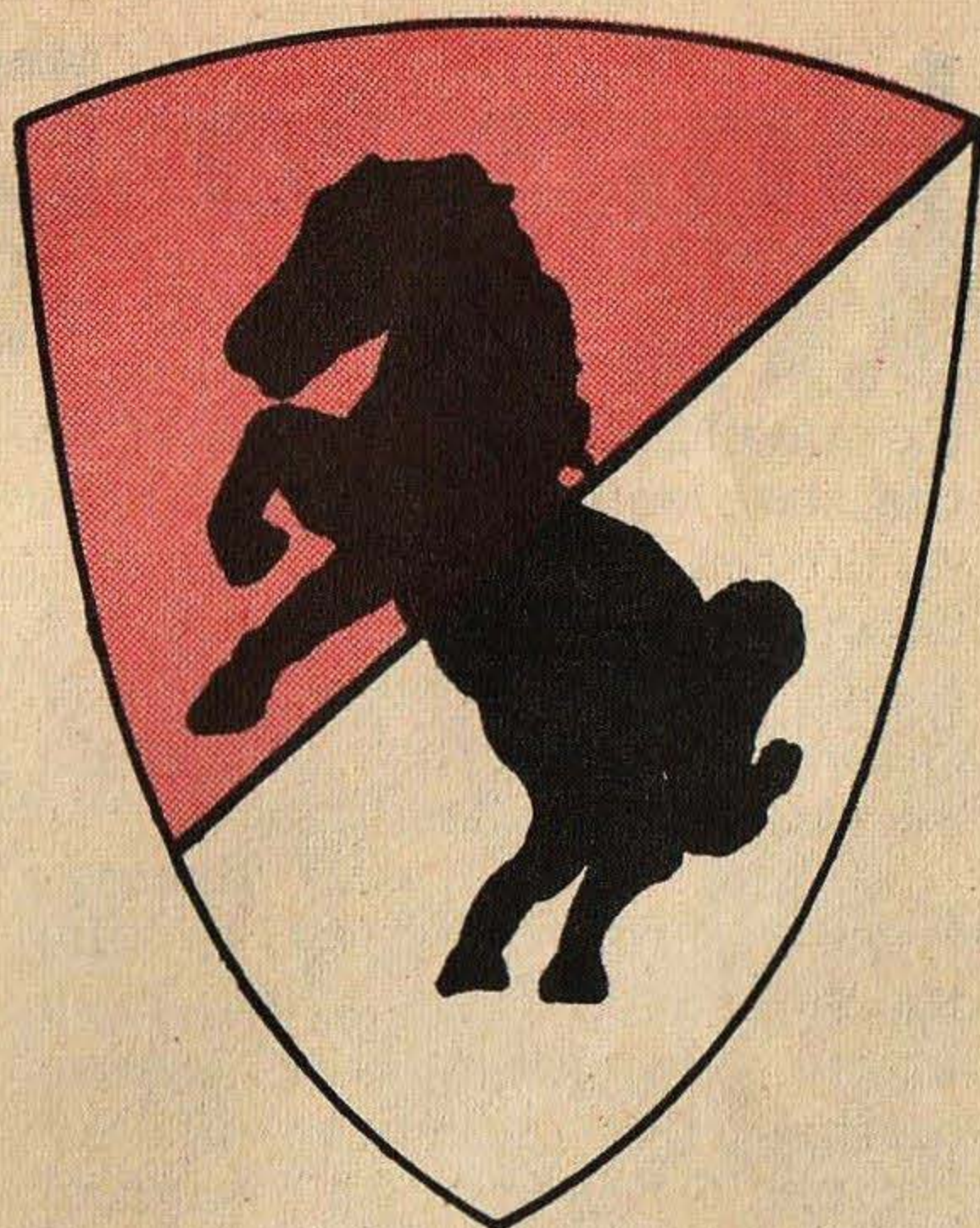


# BLACK



# HORSE

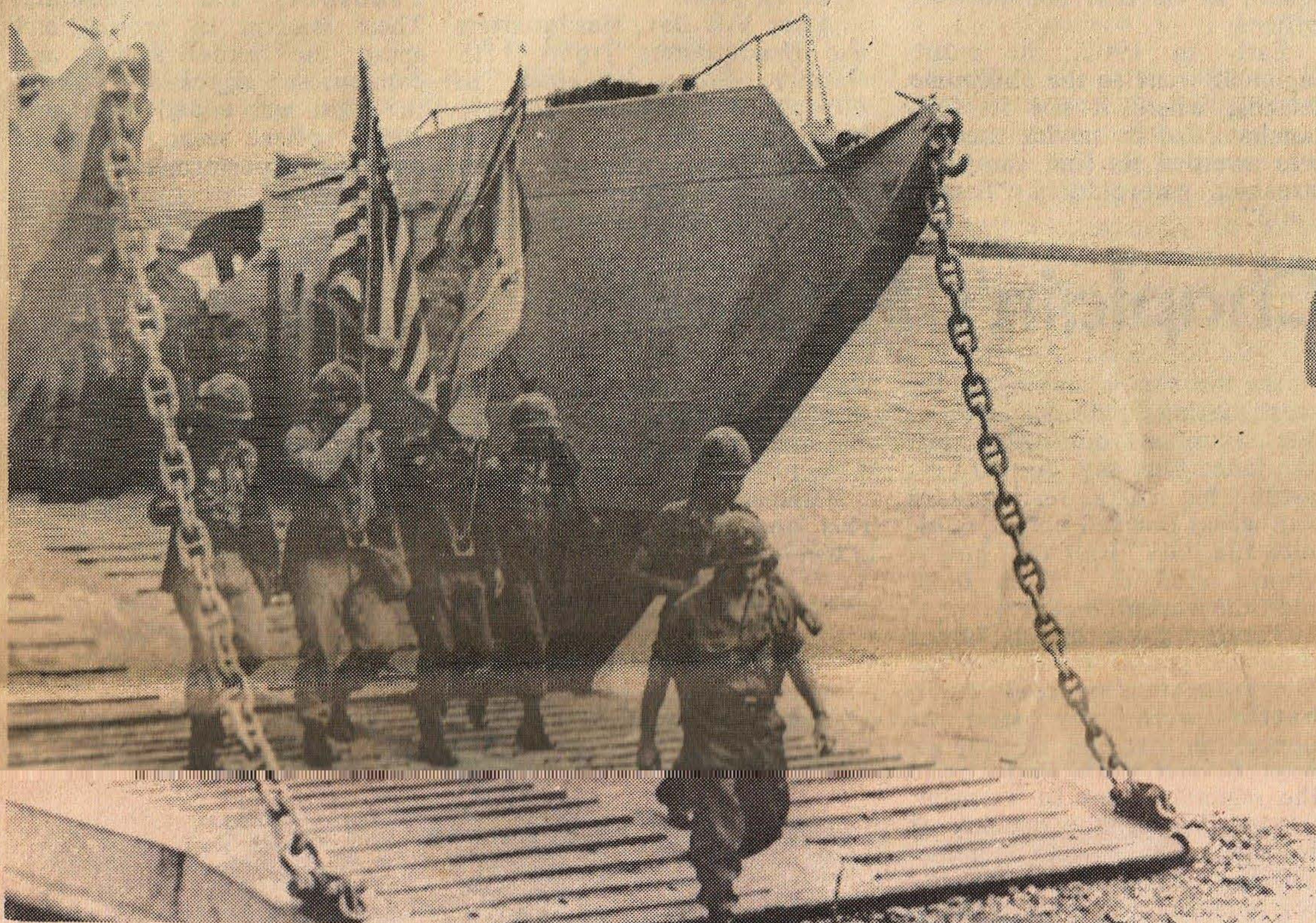
— Find the Bastards — Then Pile On —

Vol. 4, No. 2

BLACKHORSE

February 1971

## 11th ACR Goes Home



The 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment touches the soil of Vietnam for the first time as Colonel Cobb leads the unit colors and a landing party of Blackhorse troopers onto the beach at Vung Tau, RVN on September 7, 1966.

### 919th paved the way

Being there when they are needed with the versatility and know-how to do the job is the trademark of the 919th Engineer Company, "Red Devils". The 919th arrived in Vietnam in early August 1966 as a part of the advance party for the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment. In October of that year the "Red Devils", operating with 3d Squadron, were the first part of the Blackhorse team to make contact with, and inflict casualties upon, the enemy.

Operating as the only armored engineer company in Vietnam, the 919th has contributed its services and fire power to the Cav's effort in Vietnam. The "Red Devils" bulldozers and Rome plows have carved many fire support bases out of the jungles of Vietnam and

Cambodia. Graders, bucket loaders and other heavy equipment operated by the engineers have helped build roads and bridges. The water purification section's "Erdlators" have steadily performed the task of keeping the line troops supplied with fresh water, often a very precious commodity.

The 919th's four combat engineer platoons have worked daily with the squadrons to which they are assigned. Mine sweeping the roads, performing all types of demolition, stringing barbed wire, and building fortifications are all in a day's work for the engineers. These engineer platoons have distinguished themselves in combat many times. Twice in 1969 a line platoon of the 919th

was called upon to close the gap when sappers breached the perimeter at Quan Loi. First the 4th and later the 3d Platoon successfully filled the gap.

The versatility and performance of the 919th "Red Devils" through the past four and one half years have helped to bring honor to the Blackhorse team.

Two squadrons of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, which has used its massive mobile firepower to carry out reconnaissance-in-force (RIF) operations against North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces and to provide security for the Vietnamese people in the provinces around Saigon, will be deactivated after four and a half years of operations in all parts of Military Region 3 and the Cambodian Fishhook.

Popularly known as the Blackhorse, the Regiment is commanded by Colonel Wallace H. Nutting, with Command Sergeant Major Hiram T. Harrison as the top enlisted man.

Founded in 1901 at Fort Meyer, Va., as a horse cavalry regiment, the Blackhorse won for itself a colorful reputation. Tested against Phillipine insurgents soon after its founding, the Blackhorse quickly earned the first of its many battle streamers, "Samar, 1902" and its motto, "Allons" (Let's Go). Subsequent highlights of the Regiment's history tell of Blackhorse troopers charging into Mexico with General Pershing's expeditionary force against Pancho Villa, and of hard fought armored battles across France and into central Europe in World War II.

Arriving in Vietnam in September, 1966, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment immediately began a series of operations designed to break down the Viet Cong infra-structure in the provinces around Saigon and at the same time concentrate efforts to secure and pacify Long Khanh Province. Later operations extended the Regiment's work into Tay Ninh and Binh Long Provinces, bordering Cambodia.

The redeployment concludes the role of the Blackhorse in the Vietnam conflict. With its combination of air cavalry, tanks, armored cavalry assault vehicles (ACAVs), and Sheridan armored reconnaissance vehicles, the Regiment was able to exert a massive and mobile concentration of fire-power against Viet Cong and NVA forces. It was this combination of speed and power which enabled the Regiment to clear away the enemy threat to the Long Binh and Saigon areas in Tet of 1968 and which later marked the 11th Cav to spearhead the attack against the enemy sanctuaries in the Cambodian Fishhook.

Since the Cambodian operations, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment has continued its reconnaissance-in-force operations north and east of Saigon, and has placed an increased emphasis on combined efforts with the Vietnamese Popular and Regional Forces who will be increasingly responsible for maintaining local security as the policy of Vietnamization advances.

In recognition of their success, subordinate units of the Blackhorse have been awarded three Presidential Unit Citations, three Valorous Unit Awards, and three Vietnamese Crosses of Gallantry with Palm since they have been in Vietnam.

Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) announced that the 1st and 3d Squadrons and support elements of the Blackhorse will redeploy on February 21 and 28, 1971.



A Blackhorse Sheridan of the 1st Squadron conducts a reconnaissance-in-force operation in late January, shortly before the standdown of their unit was announced.

### Inside Blackhorse

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# THE FINAL "ALLONS"

The Blackhorse Regiment today is undoubtedly the proudest and highest spirited unit in our Army, and with good cause! It is 4,500 people day-in-and-day-out driving 1000 vehicles, flying 48 helicopters, firing 1,500 automatic weapons and communicating through 800 radios. It takes blood, sweat and tears, yes even love, to put it all together and develop the full material and human potential of this tremendous organization. This you have done, not towards the end of destruction and devastation, but in pursuit of the goal of permitting the people of South Vietnam to manage their own affairs, a principle our country has upheld for 200 years.



In four and one-half years of service in Vietnam, the regiment has performed this mission brilliantly. In 1,607 days of combat, 24,421 men have passed through the ranks of the Blackhorse; they have driven almost 23 million miles and flown their aircraft on 250,000 sorties; they have exploded 43,500 tons of ammunition and killed 7,010 of the enemy. But this is not all. They have operated with the 1st Cavalry Division (AM); the 1st, 4th, 9th, 23d and 25th Infantry Divisions and 101st Airborne Division; the 173d Airborne Brigade; the 18th and 25th ARVN Divisions; and with countless Regional Force, Popular Force and Popular Self Defense Force units in pursuit of a common goal. Nor is this all. Blackhorse Troopers have conducted wide-ranging operations throughout Military Region III and into Cambodia, and even north to Chu Lai in Military Region I. With great forbearance and determination they have provided security to election sites, as in December and October of 1967, when the Vietnamese people expressed their opinions at the ballot box. With humility and compassion they have performed 900 medcaps and treated 50,500 patients. This is a part of the Blackhorse record of accomplishment.

It is an experience none will forget. The effort in Vietnam has been highly controversial and may not be seen in proper perspective for many decades, when the younger generation of today is the older generation. It has been an effort to preserve, not destroy and has faced squarely the reality of man in the international environment. Each in his own heart knows the depth of his contribution, the extent of his service. To those who have fallen, we owe an unpayable debt. Those who depart the Blackhorse have much to remember. Those who remain have much to defend. We have all been privileged to ride together in the Blackhorse, in the cause of freedom. There is much on which we can look with pride. Stand tall in the saddle, Blackhorse Trooper!

"Allons"

WALLACE H. NUTTING  
Colonel, Armor  
Commanding

# Units to Deactivate

It was announced recently by U.S. Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) that two squadrons of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, together with some of its attached units, would redeploy from the Republic of South Vietnam and be deactivated.

During its 70 year history, from 1901 to 1971, the Blackhorse Regiment has been highly decorated for action against the enemies of the United States in several conflicts. Its history is a proud one.

An act of Congress to increase the efficiency of the permanent military establishment, approved February 2, 1901, included an addition of five cavalry regiments, the first of which was the 11th. This regiment was activated at Fort Myer, Virginia on March 11, 1901 with Colonel Francis Moore, a veteran of both the Civil War and the War with Spain, as its first commanding officer.

Early in 1902, the entire regiment went to the Philippine Islands, where it saw its first combat. For its service there it was awarded its first campaign streamer embroddred "Samar, 1902".

The 11th Cavalry did not leave the United States during World War I but, as did other cavalry regiments, but it furnished a number of experienced officers and men for other arms of the service. During that time the regiment was stationed at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.

Upon the activation of the 10th Armored Division at Fort Benning, Georgia, in July 1942, the 11th Cavalry Regiment was inactivated and its personnel and equipment used to activated the newly constituted 11th Armored Regiment. In 1943 the 11th Armored Regiment was broken up and became the 11th Tank Battalion. As an element of the 10th Armored Division, the 11th Tank Battalion entered combat in France near Metz in October 1944, and continued pushing eastward into Germany and southward into the Austrian Alps where it was relieved on April 30, 1945.

After V-E Day, Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 11th Cavalry Group remained in Europe on occupation duty becoming Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 11th Constabulary Regiment. In late 1948 it was redesignated

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment and inactivated.

To commemorate its service in World War II, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment was entitled to campaign streamers embroidered: Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes-Alsace, Rhineland, and Central Europe.

Between 1948 and 1951 the elements of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment were disbanded but were again activated to train armor tactics during the Korean Conflict.

In 1957, the "Blackhorse Regiment" was assigned to Germany as a part of the NATO forces. Given the strategically important job of border patrol between Germany and Czechoslovakia, the 11th ACR set up operations in the "Iron Triangle" formed by the Bavarian towns of Straubling, Landsbut, and Regensburg. Their mission to protect and guard the border against any communist aggression toward the West was ended in August 1964, after seven years of outstanding performance.

# Chaplain's Farewell

As the sun is sinking in the west, casting a red-orange hue on the mountains outlined against the faded blue sky, our hero sits astride his trusty, rearing steed and waves farewell before riding into the dusk. Isn't that how it always used to end in those old-time western flicks?

Tonight, I was thinking of our shoulder patch. It depicts the Blackhorse standing, ready to do battle with any kind of opposition that may stand in his way. Several years back, when the regiment came to Vietnam, it carried with it a backlog of courage, strength and stamina. Those elements were the combination working within the Blackhorse that made it one of the finest combat units in the Republic. That patch commanded the respect of friend and foe alike. No mission was too tedious or dangerous enough to veer the regiment from its projected goal. Cambodia was, perhaps, its crowning glory.

Many a corner of life was turned by the men who have served in the regiment. Boys came here, and left men. Some came indecisive and left decision makers. Some found death, God rest them; others found life, God bless them. Worth and sense of values have been proven time and again in the lives of young soldiers. The will to adjust to adverse conditions was manifested many times over.

Now, with the same courage, strength and stamina, and with a greater sense of pride, a large portion of the Blackhorse goes home. It takes with it the wishes of well being and Godspeed from those left behind. It also takes a part of the dedication which has characterized its ranks these many months, right through to the end.

There are several things I don't want to forget after we've all gone. Certain phrases like, "Roger that", or "Not even", or "There it is", will always recall days spent with you. A certain familiar smell of burning "Something-or-other" will fill my nostrils. I don't even want to forget the enjoyable hours of rapping, of finding out the real you. I hope that someday, when

we see each other again, the words, "Blackhorse, sir", will be just as much a tie that binds, as it has been until now.

Farewell is usually difficult. This one won't be. It means farewell to arms, welcome to

peace. It means the end of an era, the beginning of new pages in the history of a great outfit.

Farewell, Bengals; Farewell Bandits of the Blackhorse.

F. Walter Montondon



# They led 11th ACR

- William W. Cobb . . . . . 7 Sep 66- 8 May 67
- Roy W. Farley . . . . . 8 May 67- 5 Dec 67
- Jack MacFarlane . . . . . 5 Dec 67- 12 Mar 68
- Leonard D. Holder . . . . . 12 Mar 68- 21 Mar 68\*
- Charles R. Gorder . . . . . 22 Mar 68- 15 Jul 68
- George S. Patton . . . . . 15 Jul 68- 6 Apr 69
- James H. Leach . . . . . 6 Apr 69- 6 Dec 69
- Donn A. Starry . . . . . 6 Dec 69- 22 Jun 70
- John L. Gerrity . . . . . 22 Jun 70- 21 Dec 70
- Wallace H. Nutting . . . . . 21 Dec 70- PRESENT

\*Killed In Vietnam

# BLACKHORSE

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# The beginning

## the cav adapts

Throughout 1967 the Blackhorse Regiment continued operations against the Viet Cong in the First and Third Corps Tactical Zones.

From January to May three major reconnaissance-in-force operations were conducted. The first was Operation Cedar Falls, which began on January 8 and continued until January 24. During this operation the 1st and 2d Squadrons conducted highly successful operations against the enemy in the Iron Triangle Region near Ben Cat.

Following Operation Cedar Falls the 1st and 3d Squadrons participated in Operation Junction City I and II, the largest U.S. effort of the Vietnamese conflict up to that date, in War Zone C. The mission of this operation was to destroy bases and headquarters installations of the Central Office South Vietnam (COSVN). During the operation, lines of communication and fire support bases were secured and extensive search and destroy missions were conducted in conjunction with the 1st Australian Task Force.

The third operation, Manhattan (April 23-May 11, 1967), was a thrust by the 1st and 2d Squadrons into the Long Nguyen Secret Zone, the long suspected regional headquarters of the Viet Cong north of the Michelin Plantation in Binh Duong Province. Sixty tunnel complexes were discovered, 1884 fortifications were destroyed and 621 tons of rice were evacuated during the operation.

During this period there was a noticeable lack of large scale operations.

A large majority of the enemy's activities were in the form of light harassment of security forces and defense of his supply areas. The VC also employed a much



Troops of 1st Squadron in a herringbone formation in a village in 1967 during Operation Emporia.

increased number of mines against the 11th Cav. Friendly casualties were light during these operations as the relentless pressure of Blackhorse armored thrusts continued to smash the enemy.

In addition to the search and destroy operations, the regiment worked continuously to secure and pacify Long Khanh Province. Operation Kittyhawk (April 67-March 68) provided security for main roads, treated large numbers of Vietnamese during MEDCAP and DENTCAP operations, and kept the enemy forces off balance and unable to conduct significant offensives during this period. From July to December 1967 the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment participated in several diversified operations which once again demonstrated the regiment's high degree of flexibility. Operation Emporia I and II was a road clearing and limited search and destroy mission conducted by the 1st and 3d Squadrons in Long Khanh Province. The clearing operations denied the Viet Cong cover for ambushes and taxation sites and cut down the time required for reaction forces to move to the aid of regional and popular forces outposts.

The protection of Vietnamese general election sites became the responsibility of the 11th ACR in September and October of 1967.

Operation Valdosta I and II were initiated to insure free participation of the local civilian population in these elections. The significance of the operation is evidenced by the fact that 84.7% of the eligible voters cast ballots in Long Khanh Province.

Operation Sante Fe (3 November -3 December 1967) was a search and destroy operation conducted by the regiment in the May Too Mountain area. As a result, a region once thought secure enough for a Viet Cong headquarters with two hospitals and an entire rear service group were denied the enemy. In addition to this, a large number of documents were captured which outlined the VC organization in Long Khanh and Bien Hoa Provinces.

As the final major operation of 1967, Operation Quicksilver provided security for movement of logistical personnel convoys of the 101st Airborne Division between Binh Long and Tay Ninh Provinces.



Members of C Troop move alertly through a village on a search and destroy mission during Operation Atlanta.

## The Arrival

On March 11, 1966 the Blackhorse Regiment, located at Fort George G. Meade, Maryland, was alerted for overseas movement to Southeast Asia and immediately began training for combat in a counter-insurgency environment. Modification of the organization and equipment of the unit also began at this time.

In late August the three main increments of the 11th Cav. arrived at Oakland Army Base and were loaded aboard the USNS Sultan, Upshur and Barrett for shipping to the Republic of South Vietnam.

On September 7, 1966 the Regiment arrived at Vung Tau, RVN under the command of Colonel William W. Cobb.

The first contact with the enemy was made one month later by elements of the 3d Squadron and the 919th Engineer Company during Operation Hickory (October 7-October 15, 1966) in the vicinity of Phu Hoa. Numerous tunnel and bunker complexes were discovered and destroyed in the operation and 215 tons of rice were captured and evacuated to government warehouses. In addition, heavy casualties were inflicted on the enemy. Terrain ranging from dense jungle near Hat Dich to the rice paddies near Vo Dat was encountered in the Cav's search for the Viet Cong.

The regiment's first basecamp, Blackhorse, was completed as a portion of Operation Atlanta in the early part of November at Long Giao, 10 miles south of Xuan Loc on Route 2.

During this operation lines of communication were opened up for U.S. troops and security was provided in order that civilians could return to previously VC-dominated areas to work in their rice fields.

During the last months of 1966 the Cav directed most of its attention to securing major highways and convoys in their area of operations. On December 2, a resupply convoy escorted by three ACAV's from B Troop was ambushed by the 275th Viet Cong Regiment. Artillery and air strikes were called in and within 90 minutes 99 Viet Cong were confirmed killed and many others were wounded. Only four Blackhorse troopers were wounded in the ambush. B Troop later received a Presidential Unit Citation for its part in the skirmish.

During this period, in addition to combat operations, a civic action program was begun to combat the enemy on a "second front". Blackhorse units provided materials, technical assistance and foodstuffs for the people of Long Khanh Province.

## a time to remember

After almost five years of "finding the bastards and piling on" in the Republic of Vietnam, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment is going home.

In remembering those years many GIs think of the cav's redeployment as much more than just part of the sixth increment of troop withdrawals in Vietnam. To thousands of young Americans who have served as Blackhorse troopers since 1966 it means one year, 365 days in their lives that they spent a long way from home.

That one year with the 11th ACR stands for a lot of hard work and sweat. It stands for a period when time was counted in months instead of days and the months passed slowly. It stands for hundreds of meals eaten out of C-ration cans and many nights during the rainy season when the inside of an ACAV became a bed. Hundreds of miles of busting jungle, the instant a track hits a mine and the fire fight are among the most vivid memories.

Some Blackhorse troopers remember September of 1966 and a month-long sea voyage that ended at Vung Tau when they stepped off of landing craft as the Cav's first arrivals in Vietnam.

Others recall Operation Junction City in early '67 when they saw every inch of War Zone C, where it seemed like, under every one of those inches of ground, there was a mine.

A Blackhorse trooper during Tet of 1968 remembers that a trip to Bien Hoa meant they were going to see some action, not visit a PX.

A trooper with the Cav. in '69 remembers when

a Blackhorse basecamp was just a fancy fire support base.

Others remember 1970 and the operation that is the source of some of the best war stories to come out of Vietnam, Cambodia and the 11th ACR's famous march on Snuol.

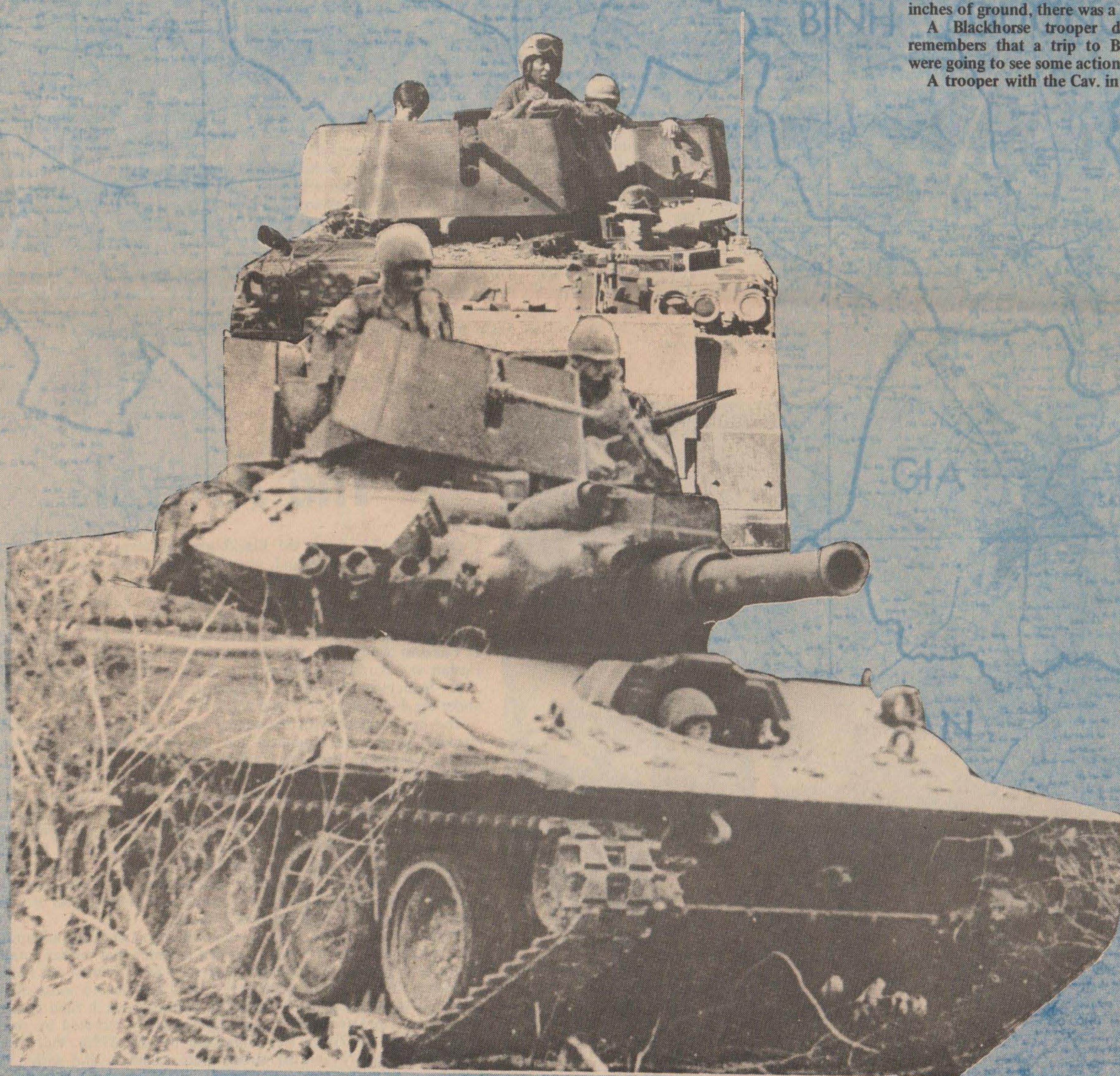
The biggest memory for a trooper in 1971 will probably be the regiment's redeployment and with a little luck, the drop he had hoped for.

But, whenever his tour comes to an end and he climbs aboard that big freedom bird he remembers that year, together with some of the worst and some of the most rewarding experiences he'll ever have.

Then begins a long, complicated mental process. For some the process will take years, for others just a few months, but the minute that plane is off the runway he knows he's going home, and he begins to forget.

Some things however, he will never forget. He will never forget the guys who didn't make it to the freedom bird, the Blackhorse troopers who gave their lives in Vietnam, the guys who asked for no elaborate reasons and sought no material reward.

He will always remember and be proud of the fact that he wore a black horse on his left shoulder, a patch that meant a lot more than the typical unit designation. A patch that stood for a unit that never let up, a unit that Charlie feared and avoided, a unit that said, "Let's Go", and meant it.



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# Blackhorse in War Zone C

In early 1969 the 11th ACR participated mainly in cordon and search operations, reconnaissance-in-force missions and night ambush patrols which uncovered large basecamps, numerous supply caches of ammunition and weapons, and resulted in a large number

of enemy casualties. The enemy again avoided major contacts during this period and was unable to carry out major offensives.

In late April and early May the Blackhorse Regiment, in combined operations with the 1st Air Cavalry

Division, conducted Operation Montana Raider in eastern War Zone C near Dau Tieng and Quan Loi. During the month long operation, 247 of the enemy were killed and many others were captured. Tons of weapons and other materials were also taken in addition to destroying hundreds of bunker complexes.

Blackhorse troopers traveled and fought over 800 miles during the operation, of which more than 600 were in virgin jungle areas.

The purpose of this mission was to interdict main force units and rear service elements operating in the supply infiltration routes from Cambodia to South Vietnam.

In one of many enemy offensives during this period, members of the 271st Viet Cong Regiment attacked ARVN Fire Support Base Sidewinder, four miles south of An Loc on August 12th. E and F Troops made a forced march to the area and with the help of artillery and air strikes pushed back the VC. During the attack 75 enemy were killed and 7 were detained, while American casualties were one wounded.

During the month of September, 344 enemy were killed in the same region as the 11th Cav continued its massive counter offensives.

In ceremonies presided over by ARVN Lieutenant General Minh and Lieutenant General Mildren of USARV on October 24, 1969, Blackhorse Basecamp was turned over to the 18th ARVN Infantry Division. This ceremony marked the first

time a major U.S. basecamp was handed over to the ARVN as a portion of the newborn Vietnamization Program. The main elements of the regiment moved to facilities at Bien Hoa Army Base.

It was during the last months of '69 that the regiment incorporated the M551 Sheridan into the armored cavalry concept. Since that time, the Sheridan has proved to be an effective means of improving the fire power and thus the effectiveness of the armored cavalry troop.

In the month of November the 11th ACR participated in Operation Long Reach I and Operation Texas Traveler in War Zone C. Both operations were long range reconnaissance missions designed to screen enemy units attempting to infiltrate from Cambodia as well as to block enemy routes of withdrawal. On November 26th the 3d Squadron made heavy contact with the infiltrating enemy forces with successful results.

Operation Long Reach II began on December 5, 1969, in the Bo Duc area. This unusual and unique operation marked the first time that Rome plows were used in extensive land clearing operations. As a result, Blackhorse troopers opened up the treacherous Highway QL14A, providing a land access route to Bu Dop. Enemy infiltration and supply routes were cut off and heavy pressure on the Bu Dop-Bo Duc area was alleviated. The operation ended on December 26th as a complete success.



A Blackhorse M48A3 tank of M Company advances on an enemy position during the Tet Offensive of 1968 near Long Binh.

## '68 Fighting Heavy

During 1968 the 11th ACR continued to stop the enemy's offensives and inflict heavy casualties on the enemy through the use of efficient and powerful counter-offensives.

From December 21, 1967, to January 21, 1968, a regiment size force executed Operation Fargo. This mission was comprised mainly of reconnaissance-in-force (RIF) operations in the Binh Long and Tay Ninh Provinces. As a result of this operation Route 13 in War Zone C was opened to all military traffic for the first time in the Vietnam conflict.

Suddenly, on January 31st, Regimental Headquarters received a call from II Field Force Headquarters with orders

to move into the Long Binh-Bien Hoa-Saigon area to relieve installations threatened by the massive 1968 Tet offensive. Operation Adairville was the first of three large scale operations designed to defend these strategic locations. During the first operation the regiment's high degree of speed and mobility was evidenced by the fact that the entire Blackhorse Regiment, after a road march of over 80 miles, was in position to provide support 14 hours after its alert.

Counter-offensive operations were conducted in conjunction with the 1st, 9th and 25th Infantry Divisions, the 101st Airborne Division, the 199th Light Infantry Brigade and the

18th and 25th ARVN Infantry Divisions.

Operation Alcorn Cove (March 22-April 9, 1968) was a continuation of counter-offensives in the III Corps Tactical Zone. The Blackhorse mission during this period took them on reconnaissance-in-force operations in the Hau Nghia Province as did the following operation, Operation Tean Thang (April 8-30). During these operations the regiment was credited with more than 250 enemy killed and many others wounded and captured.

Following the 1968 Tet offensive, and a May offensive directed at the same area, the

Blackhorse Regiment directed its attention toward the Dong Nai Regiment in the VC Sub Region 5 area during the summer months. It was this Viet Cong regiment that apparently had infiltrated the south for the early offensives. The Cav. succeeded in pushing the unit back into the Catcher's Mitt after defeating many of its major units and quelling the threat in the critical Bien Hoa area.

Operations in the last months of 1968 brought the 11th ACR near the Cambodian border, around Lam Son, The Catchers Mitt and the Iron Triangle, where the regiment was successful in destroying massive enemy staging areas.



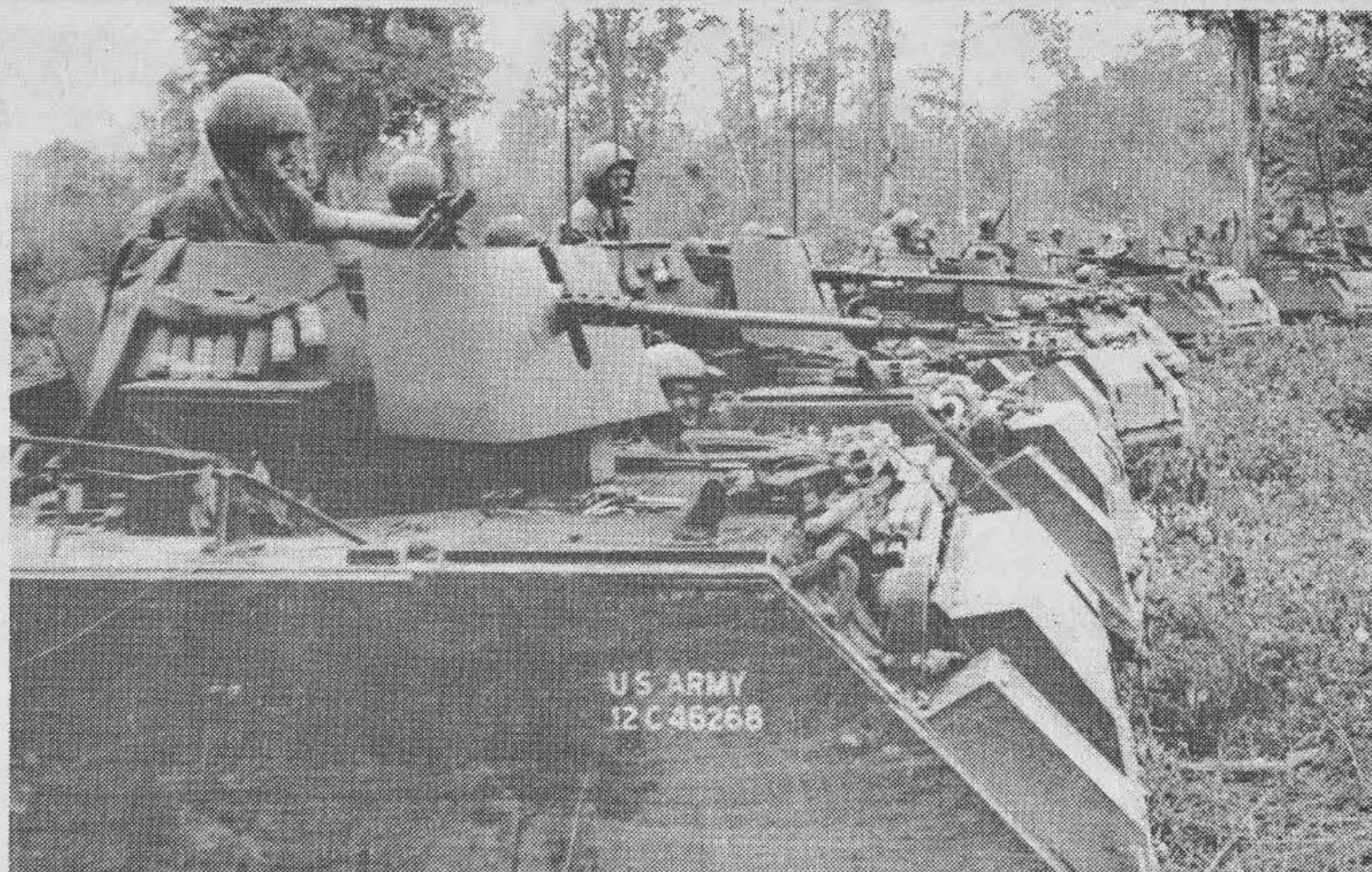
A C Troop ACAV thunders through An Loc on a daily convoy security run from Lai Khe to Quan Loi.



The engine of an ACAV is suspended as troopers from K Troop perform maintenance during a short standdown at Quan Loi.



On May 6, 1970, tanks from H Company and 2nd Squadron ACAVs patrol the streets of Snoul following a heated battle started in the temporarily unpopulated city by a large enemy force. The battle resulted in a complete U.S. victory.



Second Squadron ACAVs form on-line as they prepare to engage in reconnaissance-by-fire before advancing into a suspected enemy area on May 1, 1970....The first day in Cambodia.

## Enemy threat ended

For many months, the enemy had used the edges of Cambodia, especially the salients called the Parrot's Beak and the Fishhook, as a staging area for supplies and personnel to be fed into the eleven provinces of Military Region 3.

Thrusting towards Saigon, these salients had become the enemy's privileged sanctuaries where he could store supplies, organize, and redeploy without fear of reprisal from the allied forces in Vietnam. Meanwhile, the allies worked to cut off the infiltration routes which spread from the Cambodian border through the provinces of Vietnam.

By April of 1970 while the United States was phasing out its combat role in Vietnam, the enemy began to mass forces and supplies in his Cambodian sanctuaries for an imminent attack. To save the lives of U.S. soldiers and to prevent the abrupt reversal of progress already made toward a just peace, the decision was made to pre-empt the enemy offensive.

On May 1st massive bomb strikes by B-52s had already prepared the area of attack while the 2nd and 3rd Squadrons made final preparations for the assault, after being alerted only three days before.

With the 2nd Squadron of the Blackhorse spearheading the attack, American troops, in Task Force Shoemaker, crossed over the marsh separating Cambodia from South

Vietnam at 10:30 a.m.

After proceeding about a kilometer inside Cambodia, the column was engaged by an enemy force, estimated to be a reinforced rifle company. After a brief engagement, the enemy's defense collapsed and the armored column pressed forward.

In late afternoon, the Blackhorse met the enemy once more. This time he was well entrenched in a bunker complex and estimated to be at battalion strength. The fire fight raged for a full hour, and the regiment lost two men, the first Americans to die in Cambodia. But the enemy paid, too, for his stand. Fifty-two NVA dead were left after the battle. As the first day in the Fishhook drew to a close, the 2nd and 3d Squadrons formed adjacent defensive perimeters near the contact area.

The operation's original plans only called for the regiment to continue search operations from this point on. But the immense scope of the allies' discoveries made it necessary to consolidate their position before an adequate search could be carried out safely. On the afternoon of May 2nd, the Blackhorse suddenly received orders to advance forty kilometers further north and to capture the city of Snoul which sat astride the tactically crucial junction of routes 7 and 13. Once again, time was critical, and the

regiment was given only 48 hours to reach the city and drive out the communist forces occupying it.

The importance of the city had not been lost on the NVA. Following the March coup which had overthrown Prince Sihanouk, the NVA had seized the town and turned it into a garrison. Enemy ambushes along the road as it approached the city seemed likely. To avoid them, the armored column swung off Route 7 four kilometers south of the town and moved to enter it from the west.

Late in the afternoon, a 2nd Squadron reconnaissance troop entered the city. As it approached the marketplace, it was engaged by heavy enemy fire. The troop returned fire, and then withdrew while a TAC airstrike was called in. When the troop returned, it was accompanied by a tank company. Once again the armored vehicles were engaged, and for a full half hour they poured fire back on the enemy. By dark the resistance was broken. The NVA lost 138 killed and two captured.

Having secured Snoul from the NVA, the 2nd and 3d Squadrons meanwhile began search operations in the area around the city. Initially, 3d Squadron searched the border areas south of Snoul then shifted its cache-hunting to an area northwest of the city. Second Squadron, after conducting search operations to the east of Snoul, interdicted Route 131.

With this accomplished, the squadron was assigned to provide security for the overland convoys which were now needed to supply the regiment and neighboring elements of the First Air Cavalry Division.

During the latter part of May and into June, the Blackhorse provided security for the Rome plows of two land clearing companies. In latter series of cuts enemy activity increased in the form of RPG assaults, attacks by fire and mining incidents, but casualties to the Blackhorse Regiment were light and enemy losses were heavy.

By June 28th, all elements of the 11th Cav. had been withdrawn from Cambodia, leaving 379 NVA killed and uncovering 140 tons of rice and foodstuffs, 25,000 rounds of ammunition, 700 vehicles, 10 tons of medical supplies and 100 weapons.

In summing up the results of the Cambodian Campaign, Lieutenant General Michael S. Davison, Commanding General of II Field Force Vietnam, said, "I think logically you can only conclude that if we hadn't gone into Cambodia, there just would have been one hell of a lot of bullets and mortar shells that could have been shot at our troops and consequently would have made the course of Vietnamization more difficult than should now be the case."

## 1970-Vietnamization Matures

In the early months of 1970 the 11th Cav. experienced a slight slow-down in the war as they moved near the Cambodian border.

In January over 100 NVA soldiers were reported killed in light and scattered fighting throughout the Blackhorse area of operations. Several mortar and sapper attacks were directed at fire support bases by the NVA without success as the armored thrust of the regiment pushed the enemy back.

During February attempts by the enemy to strike at the Blackhorse in the Loc Ninh area by means of ambushes also proved fruitless. On February 15th Operation Fresh Start began in War Zone C. The object of this operation was to interdict the enemy's north-south line of communications in the area known as the Michelin Corridor. The mission proved successful as evidenced by the extremely light amount of action at the end of the month.

In late March a series of tactical cuts in the vicinity of large enemy basecamps were made in the areas immediately north of Route 246. On March 31st these tactics paid off as a NVA replacement school was discovered a few hundred meters from the Cambodian border in

the Dog's Head region, 26 miles northwest of Tay Ninh City.

Following an armored assault that lasted only a few minutes, 28 NVA were found killed and

16 were detained. Members of B Troop and D Company who took part in the raid reported finding enemy soldiers hiding in the corners of their hootches

with eyes closed in the wake of the Blackhorse assault.

During April the 11th Cav. made enemy contact several times, again in the immediate

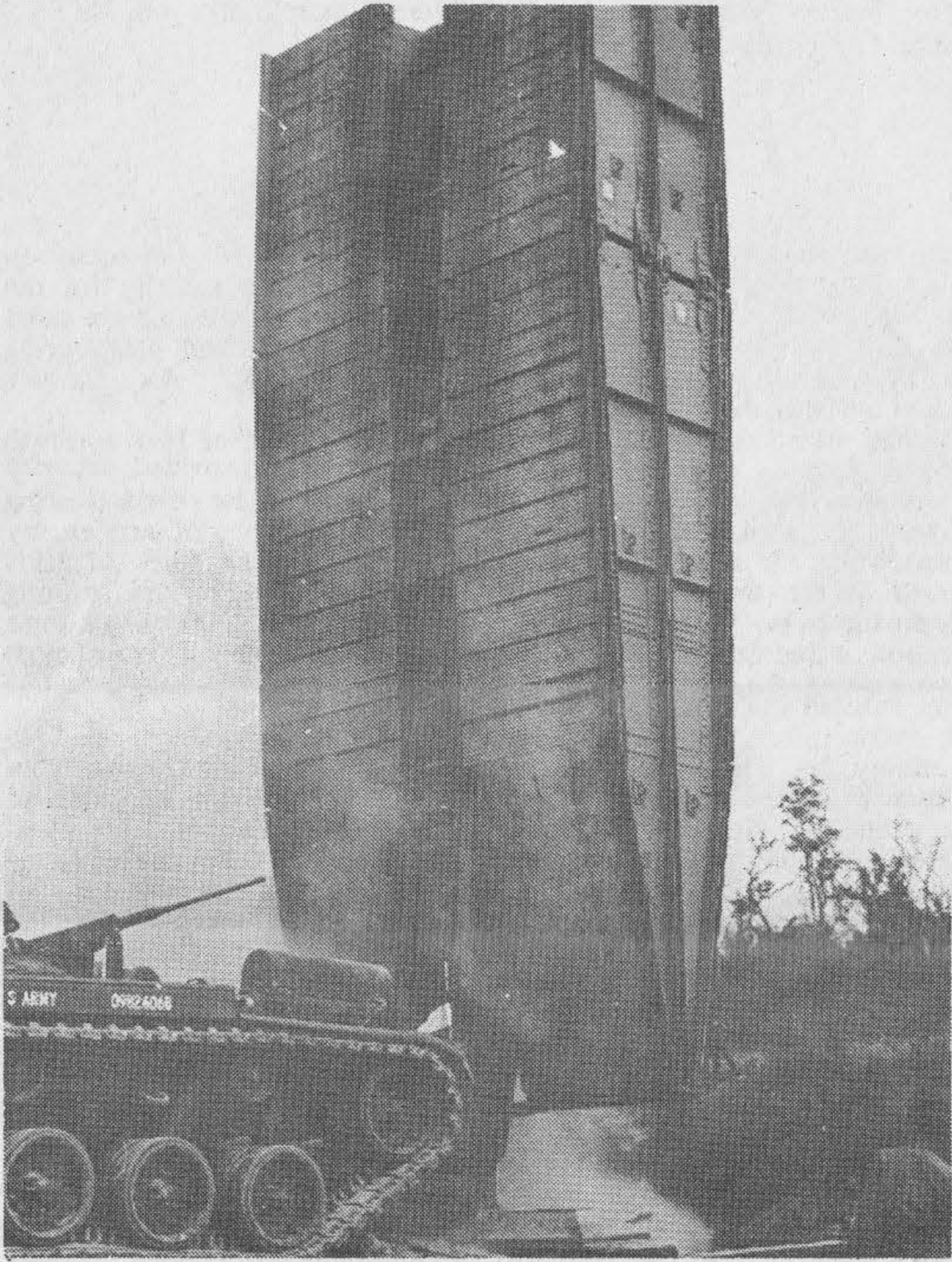
vicinity of the Cambodian border, with devastating effects. Enemy dead during the 30 day period totaled 199 in addition to taking six prisoners.



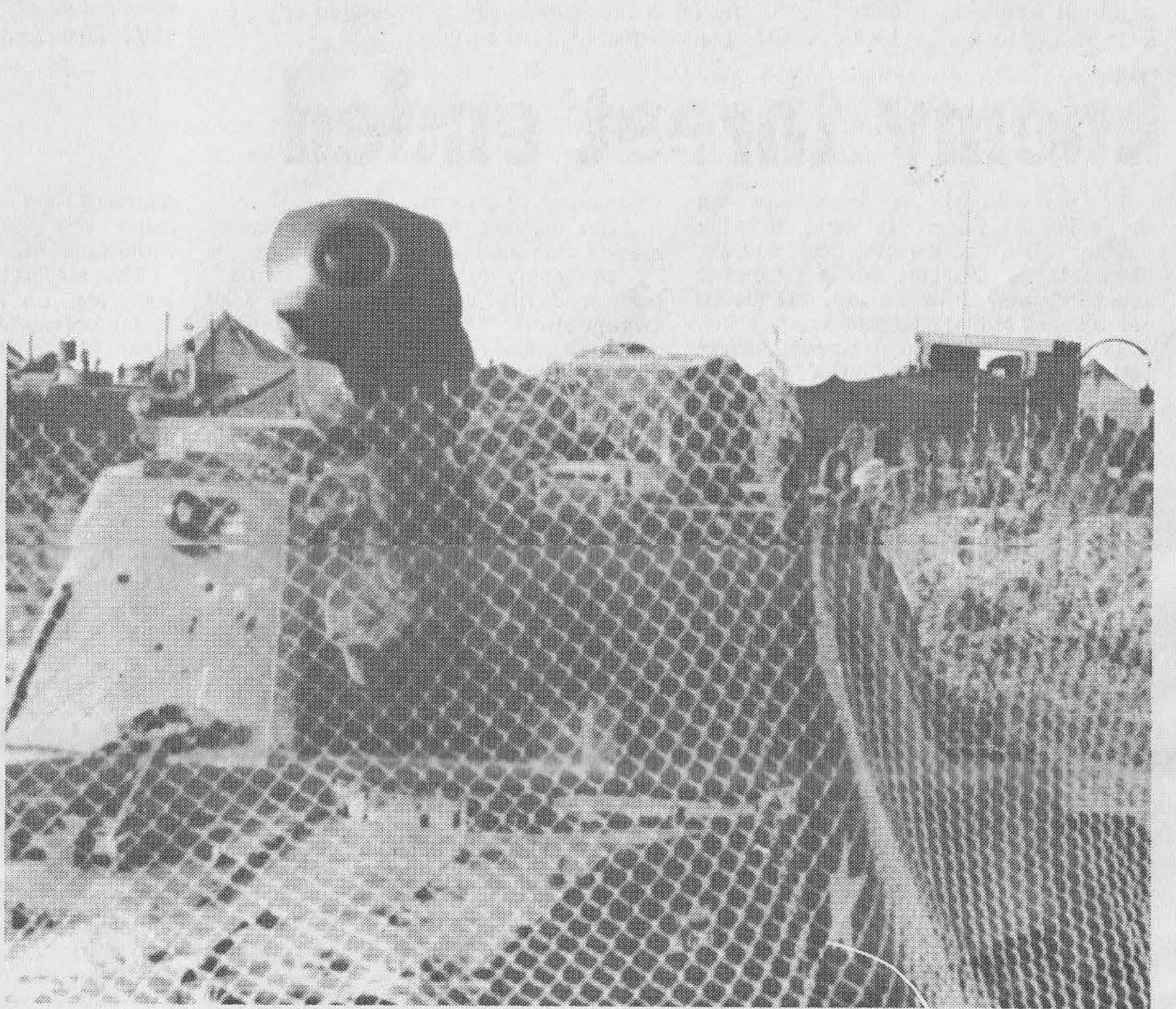
Members of the 11th Cav's Aero Rifle Platoon make a fast exit from a helicopter during Operation Montana Raider in War Zone C.



A medic of the 37th Med Company prepares a patient for a shot on a MEDCAP operation as an interpreter explains what's happening. Medcaps and dentcaps were performed throughout the Cav's stay in Vietnam.



Members of the 919th Engineers prepare to drop an AVLB bridge in place over a ravine during operations in late 1970.



Over the years, Blackhorse 155mm Howitzers continually provided support for line troopers in contact with the enemy, making the trails ahead a little bumpier but a lot less congested.



In December 1970 several operations were performed in conjunction with various Vietnamese Regional and Popular Forces.