

(Copy from C 4/31st Inf. Bn. veteran James B. Simms with the assistance of

Mike Crutcher a veteran of E & HHC, 1/5 Cav, 1969-70 1st Cav Div. May 2014.)

The "GIMLET NEWS" Upper left Americal Division patch.

Upper right 196th Inf. Bde. patch.

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COMBINED OPERATION FRUSTRATES ENEMY'S SEARCH FOR FOOD

With the monsoon season having set in, the enemy of late has sought to steal from the abundant rice crop which the local civilian population has been harvesting. This past week, however, their efforts were greatly disturbed by the presence of Charlie Company out in "the flats." In an operation which lasted for five days, C Company was successful in interrupting the enemy's food gathering activities, causing them to flee the area and continue their search elsewhere.

The operation began on 2 Nov. as C Company was combat assaulted out to the flatlands. With darkness coming on, one element was sent to secure the nearest laager site. As they approached the area they received AK-47 fire from an estimated force of 10-15 VC. "It was really tough," recalls 2Lt Ross (Ocala, Fla.), because they were really dug-in. You couldn't see them until you were right on top of them." That was how the Charlie Tigers learned that the enemy was in the immediate area.

Early next morning a Tiger patrol crossed the rice paddy separating their night laager site from the enemy's, and swept through the area only to discover that the VC had left. PFC Greg Milowski (Sutton's Bay, Mich.) of the lead platoon later said, "we found beaucoup bunkers all around the hill, but no VC." On sweeping through the area a substantial amount of enemy gear was found, including hammocks and lots of AK-47 rounds.

On the morning of the fourth, according to PFC Marvin Timperley (Norfolk, Neb) "We (1st and 2d platoons) were sent to check out the area of yesterday's air strikes. On our way back to the day laager we made contact." The Tigers had been ambushed by an estimated 10-15 VC in well-camouflaged positions. they responded by directing artillery and Fire Bird missions against the enemy's position.

The morning of the fifth saw C Company send out another patrol, this time lead by an element of the Vietnamese Popular Forces. The Allied patrol maneuvered on the enemy's position, but as they neared the suspected location, the VC began to fire. "The enemy," says PFC Tony Catalini (Gloucester, Mass.) "was well dug-in in a 'V' shaped ambush. Just as we were entering the woodline, they opened up on us." The patrol returned fire and coordinated artillery and air strikes, and thoroughly pounded the area.

On the morning of what was to be the final day of the operation, the Charlie Tigers planned to cross the rice paddy separating them from the enemy and sweep through the area. "We did everything strictly by the book as we crossed that rice paddy," recalls the point squad leader Sgt. Leo Solice (Grulla, Tex.). "We were expecting the enemy to initiate contact at any moment, but we met no resistance as we moved through the area."

The VC had moved out earlier than they had wanted to, apparently taking with them the food supplies they could hastily gather together. They had come to the conclusion that they had better vacate the area while they were still alive.

Meanwhile some 1500 meters to the south-east, Delta Company also was engaged in search and clear missions. "We were on a two platoon size patrol when we entered a hooch area containing three small houches and found about 400 pounds of rice" recalls Sgt. Chris Martin (Worcester, Mass.). The two elements of Black Death continued their search of the area and found one dead VC the result of B Battery, 3rd/82d artillery's accuracy-and 500 more pounds of rice. They then bagged the rice and arranged for its extraction.

When asked if there was any possibility that the VC who had abandoned the rice and livestock were the same ones who had fled from C Company's location, Sgt. Martin replied, "There is no question but that they are the same ones. The civilians we questioned in the hooch area confirmed it."

WELL SPOKEN—"Instant morale is seeing a 'gunny' overhead providing security back to our perimeter." Sgt. Fred Salerno (Syracuse, NY) of Charlie Co.

LTC ROBERT C. BACON - CO
SGT DAVID R. MCKEON- Editor
SP4 RICHARD WASHINGTON - Artist

This edition of THE GIMLET NEWS is proud to honor these men in our battalion who received awards for meritorious service in ceremonies held by their respective companies during the recent stand-down.

* * *
The example of Hue—adapted from TIME MAGAZINE, 31 Oct 69 and PACIFIC STARS AND STRIPES, 9 Nov 69. In his November 4th speech to the nation concerning American policy in Viet Nam, President Nixon cited the city of Hue as one important reason why he does not favor an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all US ground forces. What are the facts about Hue?

During the enemy's TET offensive in 1968 a major battle developed over control of the city with the Communists taking large numbers of prisoners. It was anticipated that these civilian prisoners, many of whom were employed by the South Vietnamese Government or the Americans, would nevertheless willingly give their support to the Communists. However, as the tide of battle turned against the Communists and the civilian populace did not rally to their side, the enemy apparently panicked and simply murdered them. After the battle for the city had ended on 24 February, hundreds of these civilians—men, women and children—were found buried in shallow mass graves. They had either been shot, bludgeoned or simply buried alive. Late in September of this year, the remains of 250 persons were found in a gorge south of Hue, while only last week (Friday the 7th) 300 more bodies were found hidden in caves 6 miles east of the city. Thus the total number of murdered civilians found in and around Hue has risen in excess of 2,700.

In the controlled fire zone of Nui Loc Son—which is only one of thousands located throughout Viet Nam—there are 10,000 people. What would happen to them if the US were to pull out? Would search teams still be digging up the remains of slaughtered men, women and children in and around the village of Nui Loc Son a year later?

* * *
As the new editor of THE GIMLET NEWS I wish to emphasize that it is your paper. If you were not out in the field beating the bush in search of Chuck, there would be no need for it to exist.

Therefore if you have any contributions or suggestions for its improvement simply address them to **THE GIMLET NEWS**, LZ Center. All correspondence will be given my full attention.

GRATIFYING RESULTS

All too often fire missions are called in to our artillery section, B Battery, 3d/82d, by companies out in the field where terrain or proximity to the target makes it impossible to obtain accurate knowledge of the results.

On Monday, Nov. 10, however, it was a different story. As Delta Company was operating in the flatlands, they spotted 5 VC in the open approximately 800 meters from their location. They called in a fire mission for the arty section on Center. B Battery quickly responded and as D company later confirmed, succeeded in killing all 5 of the enemy. A job well done.

SPOOKY AND SHADOW "DO THEIR THING"

There is no doubt that American infantrymen in the field are really thankful for the superior artillery, mortar and air support available to them both night and day. Particularly at night when one might not think it possible is this support most welcome.

"On Nov. 10 around 5:30 in the afternoon," recalls PFC Frank Zydzik (Milwaukee, Wisc.) "We began receiving incoming small arms fire from 300 meters outside our night laager site." Black Death then called in an arty mission. They continued receiving incoming fire from several locations around their perimeter so they called for Spooky and Shadow. Arriving on the scene shortly thereafter, Spooky and Shadow "did their thing."

Finally about 2 am the enemy guns were silenced but not before they had fired 51 calibre machineguns, 30 calibre machineguns and AK-47s at the aircraft overhead.

At approximately 4:30 a.m. Spooky and Shadow left having accomplished their mission of protecting friendly forces from enemy attack at night.

GIMLET SCOREBOARD

From Nov 1 through Nov 10:

Enemy killed12
Chieu Hois.....3
Food caches.....1000 lbs rice

AWARDS

Alpha Company

SOLDIER'S MEDAL:

SP4 Herbert Moses,

BRONZE STAR MEDAL FOR VALOR:

SP4 Evan M. Harris; SP4 Robert A. McDonald.

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL FOR VALOR:

SP4 Evan M. Harris; SP4 James M. Wagner.

PURPLE HEART:

PFC Richard D. Duval (PH and PH with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster); PFC William C. Meili (1st OLC); 1Lt David Teeple; 1Lt Robert B. Tynan; SGT John W. Curtis; SGT Gerald L. Sheffield; SP4 David S. McLean; SP4 David M. Vaughters; SP4 Richard T. Washington; SP4 Robert L. McDonald; PFC Lyndon K. Johnson; PFC Freddie B. Sanders; PFC Wayne J. Van Roosenbeek; PFC Alton R. Brown; PFC David M. Murry; PFC Roy W. Veal; PFC Raymond E. Gonzales; PFC Bohdan Dmytrewycz; PFC William G. Kubiak; PFC Daniel J. Batitsas; PFC Wayne King; PV1 Douglas W. Buford, Jr.

Bravo Company

BRONZE STAR FOR VALOR

SSG Donald P. Fleshman (1st OLC); PFC Robert E. Green; PFC Steven C. Wine-Brenner; PFC John H. Jackson; PFC George Beason; PFC Gary L. Klemm; PFC Dennis J. Timone.

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL FOR VALOR:

SSG Donald P. Fleshman (1st OLC); SP4 Harold L. Bartley; PFC Gary W. Kauffman.

PURPLE HEART:

1LT James G. Decker; SGT Henry R. Connor; SGT Tony L. Slagle; SP4 Miguel V. Castello; PFC Lynn Parker; PFC Francis G. Touhy.

Charlie Company

BRONZE STAR FOR VALOR:

SP4 Gene Richardson; PFC Richard Classick.

BRONZE STAR FOR SERVICE:

SGT Douglas Hatten; SGT Joel Paster-nack; SP4 James Johnson.

ARMY COMMENDATION AWARD FOR VALOR:

SP4 John Guccione; SP4 James Johnson.

ARMY COMMENDATION FOR SERVICE:

PFC Richard Classick; PFC Roger Panneton; PFC Juan Ortiz; PFC William Ivory.

PURPLE HEART:

PFC Michael Martino (1st OLC); SSG Fred Salerno; SGT Patrick Egan; PFC George Trovao; PFC Lowell Worster; PFC David Moore; PFC Gary Stavac; PFC Larry Irwin; PFC Robert Stivers; PFC Stephen Revella; PFC Robert Sinclair.

Delta Company

SILVER STAR FOR VALOR:

1LT Stephen R. Maness.

BRONZE STAR MEDAL FOR VALOR:

CPT Stephen F. Sendobry, Jr.; SFC Juan C. Pasion.

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL FOR VALOR:

SGT Clyde L. Beckham; SP4 Bruce M. Applegate.

PURPLE HEART:

SFC Juan C. Pasion; SGT Christopher T. Martin; PFC Jackie J. Clark; PFC John A. Raymore; PFC David L. Smith; PFC Neil S. Vincent; PFC David L. Ney.

Echo Company

BRONZE STAR FOR VALOR:

1LT Stephen Benseman; SGT Larry Hunt; SGT Larry Gabriel.

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL FOR VALOR:

SSG Charles F. Swaggert.

PURPLE HEART:

1LT Stephen Benseman; SGT Larry Hunt
SSG Charles F. Swaggert.

Headquarter's Company

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL FOR VALOR:

PFC Steven Burkett.

PURPLE HEART:

PFC George Darby; PFC Robert Stivers.

P R O M O T I O N S

Charlie Company

To First Lieutenant:

2LT Charles F. W. Rencsok; 2LT Kenneth L. Kemmish.

To Staff Sergeant;

SGT Raymond W. Selcer; SGT Donald E. Robinson.

To Sergeant:

SP4 Orestas Trush; SP4 Robert Leverez; SP4 Walter Echevarria.

Headquarter's Company

To Specialist Six:

SP5 Dennis C. Alleson.

To Sergeant:

SP4 Tony W. Weeks; SP4 Kenneth F. Morris; SP4 Joseph Pearce; SP4 Robert E. Rasmuson.

To Specialist Four:

PFC James W. Kembls, Jr.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT—The Charlie Tigers are happy to congratulate SSG Robert McCullough (3rd platoon sergeant) of Hampton, Va. on the birth of a 4 lb, 2 oz baby boy named Ronald, Jr. on 28 Oct.

BDE HAS NEW CO

Hawk Hill, 10 Nov.—Following the change of command ceremony in which Colonel Thomas H. Tackaberry was succeeded by Colonel James M. Lee, the new brigade commander paid his first visit to center. Colonel Lee was impressed as he reviewed the combat record of 3d/21st. In turn, the Gimlets bid you welcome, Sir.

BN HAS NEW COs

Within the span of two weeks, four companies in our battalion have new commanding officers. We of THE GIMLET NEWS are confident that the outstanding record the Gimlets have achieved in the past will continue in the future as the battalion progresses under new leadership.

1LT James G. Decker is the new CO of the Bushmasters replacing CPT Ronald V. Cooper who is now working in S-4.

1LT Dennis D. O'Neill has taken over as the Charlie Tiger's new top honcho, as 1LT James V. Gordon leaves for the US later this month.

Black Death's new CO is CPT Eliu Camacho-Vasquez. CPT Camacho replaces CPT Loren H. Hohman who has gone to brigade as assistant S-3.

Echo four-deuce on Center also has a new CO, CPT Gary L. Gauthier, as 1LT James Shoosmith is their new XO.

COMIC: Two field worn soldiers are talking, "Once... Just once, I'd like a chance at one of them fancy medals." (As he speaks an enemy grenade is being tossed at them..)

CHOICE NOT CHANCE

Thinking about reenlisting and still want to spend Christmas at home? Reenlist now during November and you will be home for the holidays. The minimum requirement of time in the service is 8 months. You choose the MOS you wish to have on-the-job training in country, and if found qualified, the job is yours. (You are told before you reenlist whether or not you are qualified.) And most cases your choice of location in Viet Nam can be okay'd as well.

"Short-timers" - If you are interested in selecting the location in the US for your next duty station or in attending an Army school of your choice, see your reenlistment NCO now. Your choice of school will be guaranteed.

During the three month period ending September of this year, the 196 Brigade had the highest number of reenlistments in the AMERICAL DIVISION and 3d/21st was high in the brigade with 56. More recently in October, Alpha Company took top honors with 10.

Reenlistment NCO: MSG Juan Pasion

GOIN HOME!

The month of November will see a substantial number of Gimlets leave us to fly the "freedom bird" home. To them we wish a hearty bon voyage!

Bravo Company is losing the following personnel: SGT Michael Fenner; SGT Ossio Jones; SGT Gary Kauffman; SGT Charles Moody; SGT Tony Slagle; SP4 Terry Lovins; SP4 Maurice Matto; SP4 Jack Casterline.

The following EMs are leaving the Black Death family: SGT Henry E. Powers; SGT Clyde L. Beckham, Jr.; SGT John A. Mason; SGT Lee G. Burns; SGT Ronnie R. Cook; SP4 SP4 Frederick K. Diller; S5 Bruce M. Applegate; SP4 Leroy A. Verne; SP5 Thomas J. Jordan; SP5 William H. Smith; SP4 Wayne B. Lindloff; SP4 John F. Urbka; SP4 Ronald T. Kaneshiro; SP4 David B. Anderson.

NEW FACES

THE GIMLET NEW is happy to welcome the following men who have joined us in recent weeks.

Coming to us from the 82d Airborne Division and going to B Company are PFC Frank Schuyler; PFC Dave Connors; PFC Michael Mann; PFC Terry Kanine.

PFC Chall D. Cook and PFC Thomas W. Nevy are also from the 82d Airborne and joining C Company.

Delta Company welcomes 2LT Ronald S. Epplin; PFC Donald Bickford; and PFC Paul Malchany.

Belated greetings to SSG William Altheide and SSG Eddy Lett who joined the 82mm family on Center several weeks ago.

The BTOC Gophers are happy to welcome SP4 Richard T. Washington to their number. Richard comes from Harrisburg, Pa. and was formerly in Alpha Company. He is now serving as Colonel Bacon's romeo tango oscar.

TIGER MAIL

A little short on mail these days? If so do what Charlie Company did. Simply request that your CO (or someone in a comparable position) write to a syndicated columnist such as "Dear Abby," "Helen Help Us," or "Ann Landers" and ask to have the name and address of your company printed in their column so that people back home can write. You might be surprised at the results.

In the case of Charlie Company, everything started in June 69 when Mrs. Ann Wagner of Union City, NJ, who had been writing the company for years, took the initiative to send the Tiger's address to "Helen Help Us" in Calif. and "Mail Call: Viet Nam" in Columbus, Ga. "In no time at all," recalls 1st SGT Robert W. Smallcomb (Wilkes-Barre, Pa.) "letters and packages came pouring in from all over the US. In fact so many letters came that we were unable to answer them all."

Today, nearly six months later, Tiger letters are still coming. The following statements are representative of how all the Charlie Tigers I spoke to feel about the response of people back home.

PFC Nels Bolstad (Plains, Mont.) is writing to six Tiger girls at once. He had this to say: "They are always interesting to read and you can get to know people you might want to look up someday when you get back to the world. Besides, with Tiger letters to answer, you always have someone to write to other than your parents."

"I like them" says SGT Dave Nagel (Midland, Mich.). "It's nice to know that if I don't happen to receive mail from my family, there is usually always a Tiger letter I can answer. And sometimes Tiger girls will send a 'care package' which as every infantryman knows means an awful lot to a man in the field."

Lastly, perhaps PFC William Sheppard (Buffalo, NY) said it all when he described his feelings this way: "They are certainly a morale booster. At least we know that some people back in the world besides our families and friends know that we are over here, and care enough to write."

ON THE HILL- THE BANDAID SHOP; BY SP5 C. L. MARLOW

Not too long ago, much of the routine medical care for the villagers in Nui Loc Son was performed by voluntary Medcap teams from the Battalion Aid Station who visited the village once or twice a week and by two former company medics permanently stationed at the PF and RF locations there.

Now there work is being supplemented by two Vietnamese nurses and SP4 Bob Loftus, formerly of B Company. The nurses work out of a dispensary in the village while Bob works from his location on the PF's hill. Together they hold morning office hours at the dispensary, using both Vietnamese and American medical supplies. In the afternoons they each make house calls.

They are busy at this time of year both with the multitude of skin problems that seem to affect civilians almost as much as they do us, and with upper-respiratory problems ranging from common colds to pneumonia. Recently they had the opportunity to diagnose a case of hepatitis in a PF soldier, and to assist CPT Timothy Baker, Battalion Surgeon, and a group of medics from the aid station in the inoculation of some 60 people, including members of his family and others who had contact with him.

Nui Loc Son may not have "better health to all from Rexall," but they do have something even better in their nurses and SP4 Loftus.

81mm Mortars: By PFC R. Ventriglia

We the men of the 8k gun crews are proud of our nickname "Speedy Fireballs" for we have lived up to it many times in the past. Our gun crews have been noted for their speed and accuracy, and for their alertness for firing on enemy locations. All this gives Charlie second thoughts about setting up mortar tubes to fire at Center.

In order to be both fast and accurate in responding the fire missions all our equipment must be kept in tip-top shape. What this is indeed the case was demonstrated during the recent (2 Oct) Command Maintenance Management Inspection (CMMI) as we surpassed the 90% mark. Congratulations Fireballs!

Echo 4.2

This month work on the new CP bunker neared completion. The CP will be used for mail, supply and orderly room purposes.

On the fire mission side of the ledger, support of the line companies has been our prime interest. In the past 3 weeks alone we have carried out over 20 such fire missions.

SSG Larry Dyeus (Atlanta) 106 gun squad did a fine job in helping out Charlie Company last week under the guidance of SP4 Ron Gagne (Springfield, Mass).

Meanwhile our "silent eye" keeps a constant vigil, waiting for Charlie to try and hit Center. On several occasions enemy movement has been detected and appropriate action taken ("shot out!"). The men responsible for operating the "silent eye" are SP5 William Fagan, PFC John Wolfe, and PFC John Whelan.

(FOLD)

FREE

Co _____ 3/21 196th Brigade
APO S.F. 96374
