

RED WARRIORS VIETNAM ASSOCIATION Leaf - Stars & Stripes

Ivy Leaf and Stars & Stripes Offered a “Polished” Side to Red Warrior Conflicts - Casualties Rarely Mentioned

With its mission to provide the troops positive and upbeat news, reporters from both the publications of Ivy Leaf and the Stars and Stripes left out a lot of details in their stories. Reporters didn't have a choice though, with the result that articles were often lacking the basic journalistic rules of who, what, why when and how. Never-the-less they provided a need at the time for the grunt in the field who was hungry for anything resembling a news publication.

If you have a clip to donate, please scan and forward to [Jim Daniels](#), and we'll add it to our growing collection of Stars and Stripes articles.



Area Puzzles Division Troops

An Loe Valley — Real Or A Lost Civilization?

By SP4 Chuck Colgan
LZ ENGLISH — Vietnam is a country filled with many mysteries and one of the most baffling ever encountered by 4th Division soldiers is that of the An Loe Valley.

The massive valley, located northwest of Landing Zone English, puzzled units from the division's 2nd Brigade as they searched for enemy troops in the area.

The floor of this huge valley is an extremely fertile area where fruit trees, vegetable plants, and rice grow wild in abundance. Symetrically running through the region is the monsoon swelled An Loe River, which is lined

on both sides by steep mountains.

Old maps of the area show it once to be one of the most heavily populated areas in the Central Highlands with several hamlets and villages throughout the region. Now it appears to be a “no-mans land” almost completely abandoned by people and wildlife.

A once elaborate bridge system is seen along the entire An Loe River. “I've seen four of the bridges myself,” said Private First Class John Elliot, of Indianapolis. “They range from up to 200 feet long, 20 feet wide, and 30 feet high, and are made of iron beams and concrete.”

Presently each of the bridges has reached a stage of advance deterioration.

Before a major highway linked the bridge system, but now the road is almost completely covered with vegetation. In most spots it is nearly impossible to tell that the highway once existed.

“We've found and seen some strange things here, but the most unusual was a wall located high in the mountains miles from any signs of life,” said Specialist Wayne Zach, of Brookfield, Mass. The wall was four feet in height and stretched over two mountains in the midst of dense jungle.

During their sweeps of the region, 4th Division soldiers have uncovered numerous cemeteries, an old French tank, and several caves dug into the mountainsides.

On one mission, one company of infantrymen found a decorated French monument. “It was approximately 15 feet high and made of marble and concrete,” explained Private First Class Michael Cates, of Richmond, Ky. “It was covered by the thick vegetation in the the area and was difficult to spot from any distance at all.”

The lack of wildlife is the most fascinating aspect of the entire valley. In other areas, the night

is filled with noises of birds and animals, but in the jungles of the An Loe Valley an uneasy stillness pervades throughout all hours of the day.

“It seems like we've stumbled upon a lost civilization,” remarked Specialist 4 Mark Riggs, of Cincinnati.

No matter how long they patrol this valley these 4th Division soldiers all agree that they will never understand the mystery of this region. A strange beautiful valley, where fields lie unattended, where bridges lead to nowhere, where walls guard nothing and monuments honor none.

STARS & STRIPES OFFERED GRUNTS A SEMBLANCE OF CIVILITY



The above article is donated by Rick Dahlka, C Company, 3rd platoon.

Rick served most of his time in the field in the An Lao Valley, before being transferred to the 2nd Brigade as a driver. Note the spelling of the valley, An Loe, as compared to the preferred “An Lao “ valley.

It was indeed a spooky area of operation, and far from the usual AO near the Cambodian border.

LZ Tape was the main FSB in the area. (See map 6738-II for the An Lao Valley area.

PAGE

AN LAO VALLEY



Sgt Jerry Rayala,
C Company
1969/70



Baffling valley once thrived

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The lack of wildlife is the most fascinating aspect of the entire valley. In other areas, the night is filled with noises of birds and animals, but in the jungles of the An Loe Valley an uneasy stillness pervades throughout all hours of the day and night.

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Jerry Rayala, C Company 1st Platoon 1969/70 provided the Stars and Stripes article you see above. Again it deals with the An Lao Valley that the Red Warriors occupied from October 1969 into early 1970. Void of villages, it still showed evidence of a once vibrant populated area. This article was published late 1969.

LONG WINDING RIVER DOMINATED THE AN LAO VALLEY



Left, SP 4 Rick Dahlka of Charlie Company poses on his patrol base over looking a portion of the An Lao Valley. It provides a good view of the valley.

Red Warriors patrolled both sides of the river with the east side often accessible only by chopper.

Mewal Plantation north of Ban Me Thuot

Carson Scouts Flush Out VC

By SP4 Hans J. Lange

BAN ME THUOT—Four suspected Viet Cong, flushed out of hiding in thick Central Highlands underbrush by Kit Carson scouts from the 2nd Brigade's

1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Joseph T. Palastra Jr. of Salina, Ka., during a cordon and search mission, are probably still wondering how they were detected so easily.

A fifth VC doesn't have to wonder anymore. He was killed in a flurry of M16 bullets by the Red Warriors after he leveled his SKS carbine at them and began firing.

Captain William A. McDonough of Scranton, Pa., the battalion intelligence officer, said: "There is no doubt we never would have found these four VC suspects if we did not utilize the Kit Carson scouts. They are a great asset on one of these operations."

Kit Carson scouts are former

VC who have rallied to the side of the Republic of Vietnam in the battle against their former compatriots.

This particular operation was a coordinated cordon and search of a village in the Mewal plantation north of Ban Me Thuot, conducted by the Red Warriors of Alpha Company, commanded by Captain Richard B. Walker Bloomington, Ind., and Delta Company, commanded by Captain Bruce A. Harris of New York City.

They were working in conjunction with Vietnamese National Police, a Vietnamese Armed Propaganda team and a 2nd Brigade military intelligence team.

Information had been flowing to Captain McDonough about VC meetings in the village at night. Reportedly, they were slipping out of the village through two escape tunnels — one leading to a nearby ravine and the other leading to a swamp near the village cemetery.

As the two company's tightened the noose on the village, a burst of rifle fire broke the stillness of the early morning hours.

The fire was directed mostly at Ivymen closing in from the north. Their return fire killed one of the VC and, according to Captain McDonough, wounded five more. "These men were apparently dragged off and we could not find them," the captain said.

They had been stalking through heavy undergrowth, working side by side with the Kit Carson scouts, when the scouts stiffened and pointed to the hiding place of the four VC suspects. Their weapons, three SKS carbines, one M-1 carbine and one M-2 carbine, were confiscated and the detainees were evacuated for questioning.

During March of 1969 there was a conflict that became known at the battle at Ben Het. Red Warrior Frank Evans describes the fight in his Book, "Stand To...A Joinery to Manhood"

Thanks to Frank for submitting this March Stars and Stripes story.



Frank Evans, 1969

Beret camp catches enemy's wrath

BEN HET — "Incoming!" shouts a Green Beret as he dives for cover.

There's a whine growing to a shriek which suddenly dies in a gigantic thunder-clap and the observer is torn between a desire to dig a deep hole on the spot and an equally strong impulse to run to a better place. Another shriek, another explosion, and people in the nearest bunker have a guest for the rest of the attack.

Cambodia, Laos, and the Republic of Vietnam meet on the map in what is known as the "tri-border" area. Seven miles east, poised on three adjacent hills on Highway 512, is the Ben Het Civilian Irregular Defense Group camp where Vietnamese troops and U.S. Army Special Forces advisors accept incoming artillery rounds as part of their daily routine.

Ben Het's advisors have an early warning system. A dog named "War" hears the enemy guns firing from miles away in the hills and is always inside the Tactical Operations Center bunker "before anybody can yell 'Incoming!'" operations sergeant Sfc. Ralph Phillippi explained.

This time the enemy lob artillery shells on the camp while B-52's are dropping bombs on nearby hills. "Maybe somebody can get a fix on them (the enemy gunners) this time," speculated Staff Sgt. Rudolph Machata, weapons adviser, who had been champing at the bit to let the CIDG crew

on the 4.2 inch mortar show their stuff, "and we can drop some rounds down their tube."

But this time the NVA gunners took only a few minutes to ship in their usual thirty-odd rounds, and team members go back to work.

This area has been used for infiltration of enemy troops and supplies, and establishment of the camp was to put pressure where it hurts Charlie the most. Ben Het was the target of the second armored NVA attack of the war. That attack was stopped 800 yards from the camp's west hill, and one of the tanks still sits on the road in sight of the camp.

One day thirty-one rounds landed near or within the camp seconds after the guns were heard firing in the distance. The next day was a repeat, but did not prevent Air Force C-7A's from airdropping ammunition for the camp's mortars. A similar number of rounds came in again on the third day, with sharper accuracy.

Each time a "Caribou" (C-7A) landed, it was greeted by enemy fire on the already well-patched airstrip. But the Caribous kept coming, as did the UH-1 ("Huey") helicopters.

Sunday was a special occasion. Radio operator Staff Sgt. Carol Monday reported sixty-two rounds of incoming fire. On the heli-pad, the word was "dustoff only" and

camp strike force units had to be trucked several miles out to be picked up for deployment in the field by helicopter. Artillery rounds continued to fall on the camp throughout the afternoon, but casualties remained light.

It was an otherwise nice day, and the country in the highlands is beautiful if the bared patches of red earth could be ignored and if time to contemplate between barrages of enemy fire could be found. But the violation of a Sunday afternoon is a small complaint compared to not having soft drinks in the teamhouse icebox.

Late in the afternoon all complaints are minimized as word comes in that this was the day when Charlie is going to do what ever he'd been burning all that ammo to prepare the camp for. "It may be ground probes on the perimeter, or close-in mortar fire, anything," said the intelligence sergeant, Sfc. Floyd Spence.

Gas masks were checked while all around the camp the sounds of machinegun and mortars being tested assured that if the enemy came calling tonight he'd be well met.

But the big enemy push didn't come and Monday morning rolled around right on time with its share of incoming rounds another day in which to prepare even better for holding onto Ben Het — and, as the sign in the teamhouse proclaims, "Lovin' It."

Thanks to Frank Evans for submitting this Stars and Stripes story.



BATTLE OF MAY 27, 1969

By SP4 Roger Seip

HIGHLANDER HEIGHTS — Company C, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry engaged an estimated company of NVA in a fierce firefight and successfully routed them from their extensive bunker complex.

The fighting began shortly before noon after the Red Warriors had moved into a flat grassy area south of Landing Zone (LZ) Nicole on a search and clear mission.

A temporary perimeter was established as three squads moved separately into the surrounding woodline to search for enemy movement.

Stalking cautiously through the bushes and small trees, a 1st Platoon squad spotted three NVA soldiers washing clothes in a stream.

The Red Warriors fired at the enemy water point and with-

drew to an OP (observation position). Moments later B40 rockets, followed by AK47 fire, began exploding near the squad which then called for reinforcements.

The 1st Platoon, aware of their squad's situation, quickly departed the company perimeter and pushed toward the contact area.

The afternoon was passing quickly as the platoon continued their push and began to receive enemy rocket and rifle fire.

"There were snipers out there," said Sergeant Richard Makruski of Amherst, Ohio. "Some of them were up in the trees and I could see muzzle flashes on the ground."

There was a brief, fierce contact that eliminated the snipers. The platoon closed with their squad and again received enemy rocket and rifle fire.

Suddenly gunships were on station and began to pound rockets and machine gun fire into the enemy positions.

"Immediately after the gunships left," said Specialist 4 Raymond Santana of Brooklyn, N.Y., "artillery began to pound the enemy. We had batteries firing from LZ Nicole, LZ Penny and LZ Joyce and eight inches coming from Highlander Heights."

The 2nd Platoon moved again toward the battle area and ran into another group of snipers.

Another heavy firefight ensued and the enemy was again beaten back.

As the evening light faded, elements of the 3rd Platoon joined with the 2nd Platoon and together they performed a fire and movement assault that scattered the NVA ranks. The Red Warriors then returned to their perimeter for the night.

"The assault was extremely effective," said Sergeant Makruski, "because the enemy fire was drawn from the 1st Platoon which enabled us to make it back to the perimeter."

The following morning Red Warriors from Company D were lifted into the contact area on a combat assault to relieve Company C and sweep the battle zone.

Amid the rubble of shrapnel-scarred trees Delta Company discovered a widely dispersed, freshly constructed bunker complex.

"The complex was approximately 200 meters wide and 500 meters long," described First Lieutenant Charles Orndoff of Waynesburg, Pa. "The first line of entrenchment consisted of spider holes followed by a long series of staggered bunkers with one and a half feet of overhead cover."

Many of the bunkers had been demolished by artillery during the battle and the Red Warriors destroyed the remaining ones.



LTC Robert Carter
Battalion Commander
KIA May 27, 1969

The complete battle report is available on the Red Warrior Website.

The battle involving Charlie Company on May 27, 1969 stands noteworthy in battalion history because of the death of Battalion Commander LTC Robert Carter. He was the highest ranking Red Warrior to die in Vietnam. It was a nasty intense, all-day battle, that claimed the lives of eight men and wounded 40.

The Stars and Stripes story that followed mentioned none of this. This Battle Report is available to read on our Red Warrior website.

Article courtesy of Sgt Jerry Rayala

Enemy Repelled By Heroic Ivy Platoon

HIGHLANDER HEIGHTS—The weariness of battle, mingled with justifiable pride, showed on the faces of the men of Company E, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry's recon platoon as the Fourth Infantry Division Deputy Commander, Brigadier General Albin F. Irzyk awarded the entire platoon the Bronze Star for heroism.

The drama began four days earlier in the rugged mountain terrain west of Kontum when the platoon, led by First Lieutenant Michael Ranger of Farmington, Maine, was assigned the mission of screening the battalion from an expected NVA battalion-sized offensive.

The eerie light of dawn cracked the darkness on Landing Zone (LZ) Roberts when four NVA soldiers set off two trip flares as they approached the platoon's perimeter. Privates First Class Ronald Taylor of Weston, W. Va., James Savoy of Brandywine, Md., and Terry McCandless of Evansville, Ind., saw the NVA, opened fire and threw grenades at the surprised enemy.

Later that morning, a ten man patrol checked the woodline around the perimeter. PFC Reginald Cole of Frankfort, Maine, the point man, detected an awaiting ambush. "I knew something was wrong, so I started to move off to the right. An NVA soldier stuck his head out from behind a tree and I shot and killed him."

IMMEDIATELY THE PATROL received a heavy volume of small arms fire. The patrol maneuvered and engaged the NVA in a close gun battle, killing several enemy.

More enemy arrived on the scene with B40 rockets, machine guns, and grenades as the remainder of the platoon tried to come to the aid of the besieged patrol.

Mortar rounds rained in, B40 rockets screamed into the bunkers, and enemy machine gun fire stitched zig-zag patterns across the perimeter, pinning the platoon down.

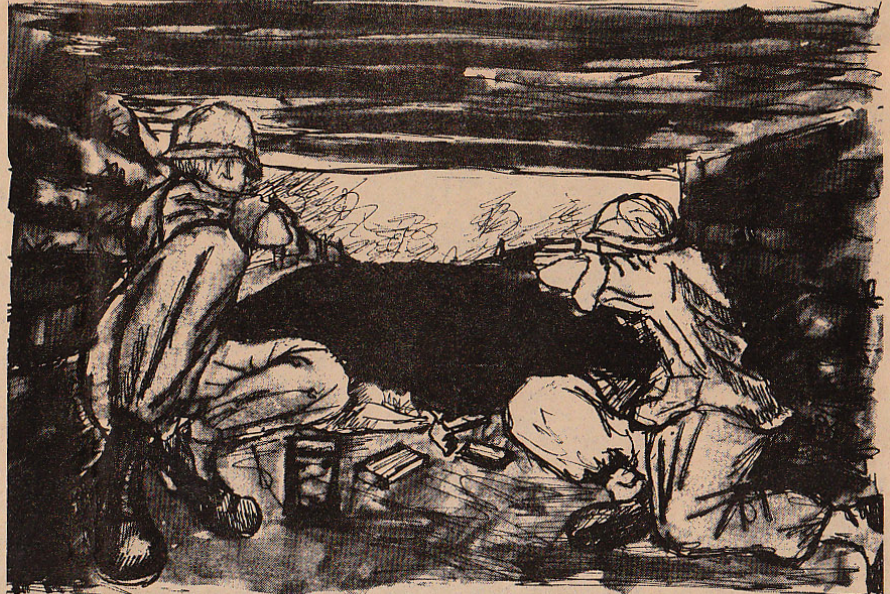
As friendly artillery fire came in, the patrol scrambled back to their bunkers.

Following the artillery and airstrikes, Lieutenant Ranger led eight men back to check the contact area, which they found strewn with the grim evidence of battle. Lieutenant Ranger and his men were then attacked by a group of six NVA. The fire was returned and three of the NVA were killed as the remainder scattered for cover.

Artillery and airstrikes showered destruction on the NVA and enabled the patrol to break contact. On top of the hill, direct hits from B40 rockets and 82mm mortars were taken by Lieutenant Ranger's substantial bunkers without injury to his men.

The NVA closed in on the small perimeter from all sides. Lieutenant Ranger called for artillery, airstrikes and gunships on his position. After two and a half hours, the attackers were driven away.

A sweep of the area was made in the morning which turned up 248 CHICOM grenades, 43 B40 rockets, one dead NVA soldier, and two AK47 rifles.



B40 Rockets Screamed Into The Bunkers... (Artistry By SP4 Larry A. Reid)

INCOMING MORTAR and rocket fire continued intermittently that day. Scout ships detected enemy bunkers on the ridgeline surrounding LZ Roberts. Artillery and airstrikes were continuously placed on these positions.

"We were receiving a set of fighter bombers every 15 minutes. They and the artillery set off secondary explosions which continued all day and night. We stopped counting them when we reached 200," recalled Lieutenant Ranger.

That night snipers sneaked inside the perimeter and kept the platoon pinned down until the 20mm cannons of the airstriking jets eliminated the enemy.

Extensive use of artillery, airstrikes and gunships prepped the area for the extraction of the platoon. Just before the extraction, the NVA added 122mm rockets to their arsenal and bombarded the entrenched Red Warriors.

Three "Ghost rider" helicopters of the 189th Assault Helicopter Company, extracted the platoon, each receiving heavy enemy fire. As the last "bird" lifted off, the NVA stormed the top of the hill.

Later, Specialist 4 Timothy Redman smiled as he sipped a soda. "Lieutenant Ranger was just great. One time he was blown off his feet by a mortar round and he just kept calling in the artillery, airstrikes and gunships."

"The support we received was fantastic and without it we wouldn't be alive now," said Lieutenant Ranger.

Lieutenant Ranger was awarded the Silver Star Medal.

It was estimated that the Red Warriors knocked out two companies of NVA.



Article provided by Herb Taylor



JUNE 5, 1969 DELTA BATTLE

HIGHLANDER HEIGHTS

(USA) — A Red Warrior rendezvous and day-long firefight led to the discovery and methodical, day-by-day destruction of more than 300 North Vietnamese Army bunkers scattered along a series of low ridgelines and dried creek beds 15 miles south of Kontum City recently.

The operation was initiated by men of Delta Company, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, 4th Infantry Division as they traveled through the jungle to join forces with Company C.

Shortly before noon the point element from Company D spotted a small NVA patrol moving through a ravine toward a bunker. Immediately, First Lieutenant Larry Boyd, company commander, instructed his 2nd platoon to investigate the enemy position.

Drawing AK-47 and B-40 fire, the Red Warriors returned a heavy volume of firepower while setting up a company perimeter.

"From the perimeter we saw a group of NVA running across our field of fire near the ravine," said Boyd. "We opened up on them.

"There was rifle and rocket fire coming into our front and then, suddenly, it changed and began hitting us on our right flank. We had artillery, gunships and air strikes cover the area around us but we continued to receive small arms fire. An hour later, 82mm mortar rounds began to strike near our perimeter," the lieutenant continued.

"An NVA soldier tried to vine," said Boyd. "We opened up on them.

"There was rifle and rocket fire coming into our front and then, suddenly, it changed and began hitting us on our right flank. We had artillery, gunships and air strikes cover the area around us but we continued to receive small arms fire. An hour later, 82mm mortar rounds began to strike near our perimeter," the lieutenant continued.

"An NVA soldier tried to

proximately 25 of us made it across when a B-40 exploded above our heads. It came from the trees above the bank and was followed by AK-47 fire. We hit the ground and began firing back."

Leaves fluttered to the ground and branches splintered as the Red Warriors administered a lethal dose of lead to the NVA who were now being hit from two sides.

"We surprised them while they were in contact with Delta

Company," said C Company platoon sergeant David Haines.

Night began to close over the battle and Charlie Company swept around the enemy location to join with Delta.

For the rest of the night artillery pounded the battleground. The following morning, Company C swept through the contact area.

For the next 10 days, Company C, assisted by elements of the 4th Engineers and commanded by Captain Darrel Skubinna, tore a road through the forest, locating and demolishing an endless stream of enemy bunkers.

The first complex consisted of 15 fighter-sleeper combinations forming a single triangle of five bunkers per side. Projecting from the set-up was a ridgeline topped by 18 bunkers arranged in three tiny perimeters.

Treading east and followed by two powerful bulldozers from the 4th Engineers and a tank, the Red Warriors added another 40 bunkers to their toll. These were arranged with fighting positions located on a ridgeline and tiny sleepers scooped out of the bank at the edge of a dried blue line, making them nearly invulnerable to artillery. The engineers quickly destroyed them.

Two kitchens and a living quarters equipped with crude bamboo desks and chairs were also destroyed.

Four hundred meters east, another 85 fighter-sleeper combinations were found forming two perimeters joined by a ridgeline. In one of these the bodies of two NVA soldiers dressed in green uniforms were found.

Close by, another complex of 60 bunkers was uncovered. Nearly all were freshly built with two to four feet of overhead cover. Interlacing them were

Stars and Stripe wrote a rather neutral story about the world of hurt that Delta Company actually endured on June 5, 1969. The battle would cost the Lives of 11 men, but no mention appears in the article.

Later in the day Charlie Company flies to the aid of Delta from LZ Nicole. They lose a medic.

Most of Charlie Company were FNG's replacing men killed or wounded from the Company's May 27th battle. LT Richard Ordndoff, acting commander of Charlie, was fearful of his inexperienced men entering battle for the first time.

The remainder of the article goes into the units "engineering" mode with ROME Plows clearing enemy bunker complexes.

The Battle report, written by Delta CO Larry Boyd, is viewable from the website.

Article courtesy of Sgt Jerry Rayala



LT Larry Boyd
Delta Commander

AUGUST 14, 1969

Red Warriors Retard Infiltration

30 MIN LATER

By SP4 Roger Seip

HIGHLANDER HEIGHTS—The 4th Division's 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry troops have been effectively deterring North Vietnamese Army (NVA) infiltrating tactics in the flatlands west of Landing Zone (LZ) Penny.

In a recent five minute night assault on Company C the enemy was heard but not seen. For two months Company C has been following on the heels of the Communists, systematically destroying them and their bunker systems. *NOT TRUE*

At 1:45 in the morning four miles south of LZ Penny a Red Warrior listening post (LP) heard rustling near their position. Two hundred meters away they saw the brief flicker of a muzzle flash and shortly afterwards an 82mm mortar crashed into the vicinity of the patrol base.

As a succession of rounds quickly followed the

first and suddenly ceased, the LP radioed his company command post and called for artillery. Enemy voices echoed briefly through the trees and were gone. *IT WAS AN OPEN FIELD*

Early the following morning elements of Company C moved out from their perimeter into the bush in the direction of the enemy mortar position.

Two hundred meters north of the patrol base the Red Warriors discovered the deserted enemy location.

"We found firing positions for 82s and 60s," said Sergeant First Class James Hunt of Albuquerque, N.M. "There were 82mm shipping plugs and B40 charge cannisters lying on the ground along with some footprints."

Sergeant Hunt noted the haste with which the enemy soldiers avoided the shattering effects of Red Warrior firepower when he said, "They set up quickly, dropped their rounds and fled." *HAAA*

*3 DIED
7 WOUNDED*



Sgt Jim Daniels,
Charlie Company

Red Warrior Jim Daniels, 2nd Platoon of Charlie Company, added his own editorializing to an article that he saved about the August 14, 1969 night time hit. "Morale dropped to an all-time low the day after" Daniels said. "A general landed the next day and brought in a new West Point CO. It gave the appearance that our old CO was being relieved due to the nighttime attack. The company was really pissed."

The new CO grew on the company after a few days, but it was a real low morale point according to Daniels. "Timing for bringing in a new CO couldn't have been worse." He said.



TYPICAL DAY ? 1969

A Day With Charlie Company

By SP4 Chuck Colgan

LZ ENGLISH — A brisk breeze swept across Charlie Company's night location as the first rays of sunlight broke through the triple canopy jungle.

For the last month, C Company, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, 4th Infantry Division, has been pushing through the Monsoon-drenched slopes of the An Lao Valley, keeping the enemy off balance.

Platoon Leader Russ Irvin, of Mexico City, Mex., sat on his steel pot, heating a can of beans and franks. "Let's go boys," he yelled to his squad. "You'll miss the bus and be late for school."

"But, Mom, it's Saturday," came a reply from one of the many company comedians.

After everyone packed his gear, the troops moved out.

"You know I quit the Boy Scouts because I didn't like camping out in the woods," said Private First Class Andy Sotirak, of Pittsburgh, Pa., a new man with the unit.

"Hey, repo, how long ago did you leave home?" asked one of the old timers.

"Three weeks ago," rejoined the PFC.

"You mean you saw girls, drove a car, ate off real plates and took a shower in a real tub three weeks ago?"

"Yeah."

"Hey, Sarge, repo took a shower in a real tub three weeks ago."

"What's a tub?" the sergeant laughed.

After climbing two steep mountains and wading across a

swollen stream, the company point element made contact with an estimated North Vietnamese Army (NVA) company, dug in on top of a hill.

The M60 machinegunner worked his way up the front of the company and put down a base of fire while the rest of the company took up defensive positions. The medics advanced to make sure no one was hurt. The M79 men blasted the enemy position, and a young forward observer (FO), 1st Lieutenant Mike Dittiglio, of Detroit, called for artillery.

"Fire mission," he yelled into the radio. "Point element pinned down by small arms from the bad guys, north and east." The FO selected the battery and type of round he wanted and began calling it in.

"Smoke one round H.E. (high explosive)," the lieutenant demanded.

The smoke round was right on target, and the FO repeated the process as the ear-shattering explosion slammed into the hilltop.

"I'd hate to be under that," said Private First Class Richard Stanton, of Virginia Beach, Va. "Usually when we make contact, we just bring the world down on them. That's the only way to fight them right."

When the barrage of artillery was lifted, the men cautiously checked out the area and found the bodies of three NVA soldiers.

By then it was late in the afternoon and time to find a suitable night position. A nearby finger proved to be the safest spot.

The squad leaders walked around assigning nightly guard

duties. Medics passed out malaria pills and tended a variety of cuts, bruises and blisters.

A light drizzle fell as darkness set in, and another day drew to a close for the men of Charlie Company.

Published Late 1969 or early 1970, this Ivy Leaf story was written while the battalion was working in the An Lao Valley area.

It's a nice little story that does provide some insight into a typical day in the bush.

We gotta give some credit to writer SP4 Chuck Golan for this one.

Article courtesy of SP4 Rick Dahlka

