

Operation Klamath Falls Reaches 103

PHAN RANG — Enemy losses for Operation Klamath Falls numbered 193 dead and 45 individual and crew-served weapons captured after three weeks of combat. Klamath Falls is the 24th major operation and 31st tactical move of the brigade.

Brigade officials also announced the total pushed the enemy losses since the 1st Brigade arrived in Vietnam on July 29, 1965 to more than 6,000 killed.

The largest contact of the search and destroy sweep 100 miles northeast of Saigon came when A Troop, 1st Sqdn., 9th

Cav., under the operational control of the brigade, engaged 30 Viet Cong in the second week of fighting. Twenty enemy were killed in the contact.

Later in the same day, paratroopers of C Co., 1st Bn. (Abn), 327th Inf., discovered a base camp of huts, bunkers, tunnels, mess facilities, various articles of clothing and documents.

The brigade's total number of kills in Vietnam was increased greatly by Operation Wheeler's 1.095. On the eve of the brigade's departure from I Corps, the Americal Division commander, Maj. Gen. S. W. Koster,

expressed his appreciation to the brigade for a job well done:

"When you joined the division on May 8, 1967, the southern portion of I Corps tactical zone was under grave threat from enemy forces occupying the mountainous regions west of Duc Pho. The enemy had begun the final stages of a drive to divide South Vietnam at that point.

"Your initiative and aggressive action on Malheur I and II decisively reduced the enemy threat and resulted in the destruction of significant portions of the enemy's combat

capability.

"You continued this fine record in subsequent operations, repeatedly meeting and defeating the enemy in some of the most difficult terrain and under some of the most adverse battle conditions to be found in Vietnam. You can take pride in your achievements for they are in keeping with the highest traditions of the American fighting men.

"As the maneuver brigade of the division you repeatedly took the battle to the enemy's base areas and have been instrumental in driving the main force

units both from the Chu Lai and Duc Pho areas of operation.

"You have achieved success beyond expectation in every endeavor. Your distinguished accomplishments reflect great credit on yourselves, and have added to the honors of your already famous unit.

"As you leave the Americal Division for other battle areas I wish to express my sincere appreciation to each of you for the gallant and valiant service you have rendered to the division and to the cause of freedom for the Vietnamese people."

Troops Rescue 'Mot'

PHAN RANG (2/327-10) — Eight-year old Mot a Vietnamese boy from a hamlet near Chu Lai, is recuperating in a hospital bed at the 1st Marine Hospital after he was caught in a firefight between paratroopers of the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne and Viet Cong.

No one really knows his name. The paratroopers dubbed him Mot because it means "Number One." He was just a youngster who found himself in the wrong place at the wrong time. His mother was killed by the Viet Cong earlier this year. His father is a member of the Army of Vietnam (ARVN) fighting the enemy.

Mot's jaw was shattered by a bullet as he hid in a hut when paratroopers of the 2nd Platoon, A Co., 2nd Bn. (Abn), 327th Inf., drove away the VC. Spec. 4 James C. Harris, Phoenix, Ariz., found him.

"He was a small, pathetic figure," said Harris. "Certainly not one of those I would like to see pay for this war."

Mot was evacuated to the battalion command post where Maj. James J. Waldeck, executive officer from Leavenworth, Kan., placed the boy in a helicopter to the 1st Marine Hospital. In the meantime, the 2nd Platoon was taking a collection for the boy's needs. More than \$50 was collected in less than an hour.

After the Screaming Eagles left the Chu Lai area and initiated Operation Klamath Falls in I Corps, Lt. Col. Robert Yerks, battalion commander from Cornwall-on-the-Hudson, N. Y., received the following letter from Lieutenant W.H. Petri, a Navy doctor at the 1st Marine Hospital:

"... As you know, Mot was a very shy, frightened little fellow, but as he grew used to us here and through the visits by your men he became very outgoing.

"I operated on him and fortunately it was successful. His post-operative period was tough as it would be for any child this age, but he recuperated quickly and within a week was a regular visitor to our Officer's Club.

"During the next two weeks his healing progressed and at that time arrangements were made for his discharge to the Catholic orphanage.

"On December 7, Mot was well and discharged from the hospital to live in the orphanage—a well, bright and happy child.

The Screaming Eagle



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Close Call

Pfc. Ventura Leak, New York City, holds an M-79 round which deflected an enemy bullet from his leg during a recent operation. Leak is a member of Tiger Force, 1st Bn. (Abn), 327th Inf. (Photo by Spec. 4 Ben Croxton)

Lucky 'Tiger'

M-79 Shell Deflects Bullet

PHAN RANG — Big game hunters know it takes skill and cunning to stop a tiger. The same is true of trying to stop a Tiger from 1st Bn. (Abn), 327th Inf., 101st Airborne Division.

During a recent operation north of here, an element of Tiger Force, a reconnaissance unit, moved cautiously through the lush jungle toward a cluster of huts nestled in a clearing. Smoke curled up from the huts into the misty morning air.

Squad Maneuvers
Sgt. James R. Barnett, Loretta, Tenn., maneuvered his forces to cover both entrances to the tranquil community. Pfc. Dennis Evans and Ventura Leak, both from New York City,

approached one entrance while Barnett's element covered the other.

Suddenly two VC dashed out of a hut, their weapons blazing. "I yelled for my men not to fire because the VC were running toward Evans and Leak," said Barnett. "I didn't want to risk wounding one of our own men."

Evans Opens Up
Evans, a machine gunner, saw the two VC running toward him. "When I opened up, it really surprised those two 'Charles,'" Evans said.

As Evans and Leak dropped the two insurgents, a third came out of another hut, weapon in hand.

"I could see him firing at me," said Leak. "Then I felt a hard slap against my leg and I went down."

No Blood
Spec. 4 David Cousey, San Antonio, a Tiger Force medic, ran to aid the fallen paratrooper. "I couldn't see any blood, so I asked him where he was hit," recalled Cousey. "Leak pointed to his leg."

Still unable to find the wound, Cousey searched through Leak's trouser pocket.

"I found an M-79 grenade round," said Cousey. "It had a deep dent in the side of the casing where the bullet hit and ricocheted."

The Tigers gathered around Leak to congratulate him on his luck. "It wasn't a bad morning," said Barnett. "Three confirmed VC and a bruised Tiger."

Squad Claims Two VC

PHAN RANG (1/327-10) — Two VC were killed and their weapons captured by paratroopers of the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division during Operation Klamath Falls southwest of here when the Americans ambushed the insurgents.

Throughout the morning, Spec. 4 Marco Vega, Queens, N.Y., guided his platoon from B Co. of the 1st Bn. (Abn), 327th Inf., through dense foliage. For six hours he hacked a trail through the bamboo thickets and tall elephant grass. When he approached a clearing, Vega halted the platoon and called for a reconnaissance element to investigate the area.

As the paratrooper force edged toward the perimeter of the clearing, intense enemy automatic weapons fire broke out. Uninjured by the initial burst, Vega sprayed the enemy position.

Suddenly he was slammed against a tree.

"I pulled off my rucksack to see where I was hit," Vega recalled. "I found the edge of my rucksack frame splintered by an enemy round."

Vega continued to fire on the concealed enemy as other paratroopers moved forward.

Pfc. Joseph Ladd, Knoxville, Tenn., grabbed a machine gun and laid down a withering barrage of fire as Lt. Jeffery Fletcher, Walla Walla, Wash., maneuvered his platoon around the clearing and called in artillery support.

As the artillery lifted, Fletcher's platoon swept and secured the vacated enemy area.

A short distance away, members of the 2nd Platoon, occupied blocking and ambush positions. Sgt. Onorio Romo, Loveland, Colo., had positioned his squad when he saw two VC approaching from the area where Fletcher's platoon had made contact.

Romo's squad felled the insurgents with a single burst and he moved forward to retrieve their weapons while the squad covered his advance. As Romo neared one body, the enemy raised his weapon to fire. The paratrooper squad silenced him before he could fire on their squad leader.

New Aide to CG

PHAN RANG—Lt. John McKnight, Toccoa, Ga., former leader of the Hawk reconnaissance platoon of the 2nd Bn. (Abn), 327th Inf., is now aide-de-camp to Brig. Gen. S.H. Matheson, commander of the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division.

Packages Brighten Christmas in Field

By SSG Al Wilson
PHAN RANG — Christmas came many times for paratroopers of the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division during Operation Klamath Falls southwest of here as the Screaming Eagles gave priority to distribution of mail and packages to front line troops.

Such a Christmas begins when a radio operator yells: "Pop smoke!" Eyes strain and search the sky for the dot that means mail and supplies are enroute. A message from the helicopter identifies the smoke. Security around the landing zone (LZ) tightens as the paratroopers await the descending aircraft and its cargo.

Dust, twigs and leaves churn as the chopper settles to the ground. A cheer rings the air when the men see the sacks of mail, hot food containers, bags of clean clothes and cold drinks.

A home-like warmth settles over the jungle as the parcels and envelopes are opened. Some men talk excitedly as they re-

move the paper from packages of various sizes. Others read aloud letters and cards. Humorous lines are emphasized and repeated after a "hey, listen to this one!"

In C Co. of the 2nd Bn. (Abn), 327th Inf., Pfc. Tony Luckie, Miami, Ariz., receives a package from his little sister which contains a pair of socks, a can opener, dried fruit and an assortment of candies and nuts.

"I got a coffee pot, a pound of coffee and three pounds of candy," shouts Pfc. Jeff Akbacauskas, Sunnyvale, Calif.

Sitting at one side of the jubilant group is Pfc. Robert A. Gallegos, Denver. He holds a birthday card and letter from his wife. "I live day to day to hear from home," he says.

He's typical. Many packages from next-of-kin of buddies lost in battle arrive too.

"There's a great feeling of pride when we receive letters from those families," said Platoon Sgt. Lewis B. Larry, Chicago.



River Lookout

Pfc. Eric W. Johnson, Jacksonville, Fla., maintains surveillance overlooking a river southwest of here during Operation Klamath Falls. Johnson is a member of B Co., 2nd Bn. (Abn), 327th Inf.

(Photo by Staff Sgt. Al Wilson)



Jungle Foliage

Three paratroopers (left to right) Pfc. Vincent Cheatham, Meberrin, Va., Pfc. Paul S. King, Grants Pass, Ore., and Pfc. Lonnie James Jr., Blakely, Ga., move down a jungle path during a recent operation. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Art Campbell)

Three States Enact Bonuses For Vietnam War Veterans

SAIGON — Three states, Connecticut, Louisiana and Illinois have voted bonuses in connection with the Vietnam war. The awards, covering active duty personnel, discharged veterans and surviving next-of-kin, range up to \$1000.

In 1965, Illinois authorized payment of \$100 to residents with active duty tours on or after January 1, 1961 and who earned the Vietnamese Service Medal. A serviceman must also prove that he resided in Illinois during the year preceding his entrance on active duty.

Next-of-kin (spouse, children, parents, brothers and sisters in that order) may collect \$1,000 if the deceased dies of Vietnam service-connected causes even if the serviceman had received the \$100 bonus prior to his death.

Claim forms are available from the Illinois Veterans Commission, 221 W. Jefferson St., Springfield, Ill. 62706. The deadline is July 1, 1970.

Louisiana passed a bill granting a \$250 bonus to state residents who served in the Vietnam combat area between July 1, 1968 and the end of the Vietnam campaign. However no payments will be made until the hostilities terminate.

The Louisiana bill contains a survivors' benefit payment of \$1,000 to unremarried widows, children under 18 and parents of servicemen (in order of eligibility) who are Vietnam casualties provided the deceased was a qualified resident of the state prior to his entry into the armed forces.

Claim forms may be acquired from the Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs, Vietnam Bonus Division, Old State Capitol, Baton Rouge, La., 70801.

Military service anywhere in the world since January 1, 1964 will earn Connecticut residents a \$10 bonus for each month of active duty, with a \$300 ceiling. To collect while on active duty, the serviceman must have at least 30 months of credited service while honorably discharged veterans may collect whatever bonus is due them since the established base data with a 30-

day minimum. The minimum residence requirement for eligibility is one year before entry into service.

Next-of-kin may receive the survivors' bonus if the deceased died as a direct result of the performance of military duty. Grandchildren and parents must have been living in the state one year prior to apply for the benefit. In the event the serviceman was unmarried, his

parents receive the bonus.

Survivors of honorably discharged veterans will be paid in accordance with the span of countable service. The maximum benefit to surviving next-of-kin is \$300.

Claim forms are available from the Office of the Treasurer, Vietnam Bonus Division, 15 Lewis St., Hartford, Conn. 06115. The deadline for filing is three years after the end of the war.



Robin Hood

Pfc. Bernard A. Roe, Durango, Colo., chats with a trio of Vietnamese boys, one of whom wears a hat—Robin Hood style. Roe is a member of C Co., 1st Bn. (Abn), 327th Inf.

(Photo by Spec. 4 Ben Croxson)



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'Tiger' Recalls 'Charlie'

PHAN RANG — Twenty-year-old paratrooper Spec. 4 Richard W. Ammons, High Point, N.C., held his bandaged arm up and pointed to his burned fingers: "The son-of-a-gun who shot me was four feet away."

Ammons leaned back on the 2nd Surgical Hospital bed at Chu Lai. Lit a cigarette and recalled the afternoon he scored an enemy kill in Operation Wheeler.

"It was a clear, warm afternoon and eight of us had been moving along without finding any sign of 'Charlie,'" he said.

"I was walking point for the patrol and stopped when I came to a Y. I looked around and didn't see anything when this VC leaped up from behind a bush and fired."

The enemy bullet crashed through the handguard of Ammons' M-16 rifle, entered his left wrist, cut across the top of the bone and went out above the elbow.

"It didn't knock my weapon out of my hand," said Ammons. "I jerked my rifle up and fired a full magazine into 'Charlie.'"

Ammons' slack man, Spec. 4 Dallas Rogers, Lansing, Mich., lunged forward, grabbed Ammons and dragged him back. Pfc. Harold Fischer, San Antonio, Tiger medic, helped Rogers get Ammons behind a dike and began bandaging the wound.

"Fischer kept talking to me," said Ammons, changing positions on the hospital bed. "I don't know what he said. He just kept talking, telling me I was going to have it made in the hospital, maybe even go back to the states. He just kept talking as he gave me a shot of morphine. Fischer is the greatest."

Ammons, who recently extended for another six months with the Tigers, looked at his arm and the powder burns on his fingers: "You know, depending on how long it takes this hand to heal up, I might extend for another six."

Ammons received his third Purple Heart for the wound. "Of course, I could go home and quit," he said. "I've done better than my dad in World War II. He was wounded only twice."

Troopers Get Cards

PHAN RANG — The brigade Christmas cards were distributed to paratroopers prior to the December 13 mailing deadline recommended by postal officials.

The distinctive card was designed by Spec. 4 James Lohr of the Information Office. Staff Sgt. Mike Mangiameli, a combat photographer, took the photograph of the paratrooper silhouetted against the evening sky. Both men have completed their tours in Vietnam. Lohr is a photographer at Ft. Bragg, N.C., and Mangiameli has been assigned to Germany.

A total of 49,000 cards were distributed to members of the brigade by the 8-1 section. Lt. Michael J. Maunsell, Waterbury, Conn., served as project officer.



Firing on Fleeing 'Charlies'

Paratroopers of the 1st Bn. (Abn), 327th Inf., engage NVA soldiers fleeing across a valley during a recent operation.

(Photo by Sgt. Bob Chambers)

Unexpected Danger

Some Booby Traps Require Two Checks

PHAN RANG — Two Minneapolis paratroopers in the 191st Airborne learned suspected booby-trapped objects require a double investigation.

During Operation Wheeler north of here, C Co. of the 1st Bn. (Abn), 327th Inf. approached a suspected Viet Cong village. They decided to give the area a careful search.

"In one of the huts I saw a rucksack tucked up in the

rafters," said Pfc. Arthur Kottke.

Aware of booby-traps, Kottke warned other paratroopers to stay away while he and Pfc. Maurice Northrup investigated the pack.

"We tied a rope to the rucksack, walked back a safe distance and yanked it down," Northrup said.

Nothing happened. Cautiously the two men ap-

proached the rucksack, carefully probed it and then opened it.

"We found two NVA uniforms, a poncho, underwear, a mess kit, a cigarette lighter and a USMC jacket," said Kottke. "A fountain pen in a uniform pocket had 'Haol' inscribed on the barrel."

The two paratroopers reached the rucksack to platoon leader, Lt. John Bergarding, Seattle.

"Did you check it for booby-traps?" asked the lieutenant.

"I sure did, sir," said Kottke

reaching into the rucksack to pull out the uniform.

Kottke yelled, yanked his hand out of the pack and dropped it. Northrup asked what was wrong.

"There's something in there," Kottke said.

Northrup emptied the pack and shook out a scorpion.

Viet Cong Ambushed

PHAN RANG (1/37-10)—Two Viet Cong collided on a trail southwest of here and triggered a night ambush by paratroopers of the 1st Brigade, 191st Airborne Division during Operation Klamath Falls.

Pfc. David C. Thompson, Baltimore, felt the cold sweat roll down his face as a VC pointman walked down the trail toward him and others from B Co. of the 1st Bn. (Abn), 327th Inf.

"My heart was in my throat when 'Charlie' stopped not three feet in front of my position and motioned others to follow," said Thompson as he recalled the incident. "I waited, hoping the enemy pointman would lead the rest of his force into the kill zone of our ambush."

As Thompson watched the motioning enemy, another VC collided with the pointman. Their bodies and equipment thudded in the night and alerted other members of the paratrooper force. Thompson opened fire, killing one of the insurgents. The others fled under the cover of darkness. Paratroopers recovered a pistol, compass and documents from the body.

"We never did learn how many more were coming down the trail," said Thompson. "The one thing I'll never forget—that sound when those two 'Charlies' bumped together."



Bosco and Friend

Bosco, a German shepherd dog with the 62nd Inf. Plat. (Scout Dog), leads his handler, Pfc. Stanley G. Roach, Des Moines, Iowa, over a training hurdle at the forward base camp. Roach and Bosco had a day off from walking point for a Screaming Eagle platoon. (Photo by Spec. 4 Ben Craxton)



Calling for 'Redleg'

Pfc. Charlie Jones, Chesapeake, Va., a radio-telephone operator (RTO) with A Co. of the 2nd Bn. (Abn), 502nd Inf., radios for artillery support during Operation Klamath Falls southwest of Phan Rang. (Photo by Pfc. Robert Mosey)

10,000 Strong

Division Lands at Bien Hoa

BIEN HOA—The 2nd and 3rd Brigades of the 101st Airborne Division arrived here recently, joining the 1st Brigade which has been fighting in Vietnam since July, 1965. The arrival of the two brigades of Screaming Eagles came as part of the most recent troop buildup in Vietnam.

Maj. Gen. C.M. Barsanti commands the division. He was greeted by General William C. Westmoreland. The Screaming Eagles were transported to Vietnam by Air Force C-141 aircraft—one of the largest airlifts in history. More than 10,000 troops and 14,000 tons of basic combat equipment accompanied the troops.

Surface transportation scheduled by the Military Sea Trans-

portation Service brought in some 20,000 tons of supplies and equipment aboard five ships.

The 101st Airborne Division was activated at Camp Claiborne, La., on Aug. 15, 1942. During World War II, the division participated in the Normandy invasion. Nearly 7,000 officers and men parachuted into occupied France to clear the way for the 4th Infantry Division's successful Utah Beach invasion.

Later the Screaming Eagles parachuted into Holland in the war's largest airborne operation. Their mission was to secure and hold the southern third of a corridor from Eindhoven to Arn-

heim.

Then the troopers held the town of Bastogne, stopping the German thrust toward Brussels. Surrounded by troops from eight German divisions, the Screaming Eagles held out. After a week of heavy fighting, supplies were low. Then drops from C-47 aircraft were made and the paratroopers counter-attacked, driving the enemy off. Later the division helped drive the enemy back into Germany.

After World War II, the division was deactivated. Later it was used as a training unit and in 1956 it was re-activated as a self-sustaining fighting airborne unit.

Troop Maintains Teletype System

PHAN RANG — Two paratroopers stood poised over the teletype machine. Their efforts to repair it had been in vain.

"Go get Rod," one trooper said. "He's the only one who can fix it."

"Rod" is Spec. 4 Donald V. Roderick, Boston, the only teletype expert assigned to the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division.

Roderick was trained at the Ft. Gordon, Ga., Signal School where he was graduated in the top 10 per cent of his class. He has been in the Army for nearly four years, serving one year in the Panama Canal Zone and now entering the ninth month of his Vietnam tour.

The paratrooper's primary responsibility is maintenance of teletype sets which serve the brigade's sensitive communications system. His unique job renders him on call 24 hours a day.

"The company has to know where I am at all times," said Roderick who is assigned to the Signal Co. (Provisional).

The delicate nature of the machines and the weather in Vietnam often cause the teletype systems to misprint.

"Sometimes I make five or six repairs a day," Roderick explained. "Often only minor adjustments are needed, but some problems can take hours to correct. In one instance I worked 16 consecutive hours to repair a machine."

Roderick often has been called while taking a shower and many times has been awakened for an emergency repair.

"I never know when one of those machines is going to malfunction and create a problem," he said.

Long hours accepted, Roderick enjoys his work—a combination of electronics and mechanics.

He also lauds the teletype operators who pull normal maintenance on their machines.

"My job is easier that way," he says.

VC Killed By LRRP

PHAN RANG—A 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne paratrooper of the Long Range Reconnaissance Platoon (LRRP) sniffed out and killed a Viet Cong southeast of here recently during Operation Rose.

A LRRP team had found blood trails while searching an area. The trail led paratroopers into a group of huts surrounded by rock shelves and indented with tunnels and caves. Clothes covered with dried blood lay scattered around the area.

Sgt. William D. Scanlan, Daytona Beach, Fla., and three other troopers provided security while two team members searched the area. As they moved into position, Scanlan detected the familiar odor of fish and sauce that filled the air.

"I turned to one of the guys and told him to be alert," he said. "The smell meant that someone was in the area."

Scanlan turned again to trail-watching and saw a Viet Cong fleeing.

"I could see the medical supplies he was trying to save," Scanlan said. "He didn't realize I saw him and ran."

Scanlan squeezed off two rounds. The enemy fell dead.

Elements of the 3rd Bn. (Abn), 508th Inf., later searched the entire area. Discovered was a hospital complex designed for 15 patients.



Swamp Eagle

Pfc. John S. Beamon, Virginia Beach, Va., searches a swamp southwest of Phan Rang during Operation Klamath Falls. Beamon is a member of B Co., 2nd Bn. (Abn), 327th Inf. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Al Wilson)

Bus Coup Jolts Two

PHAN RANG (3/306-10) — A small task force of paratroopers from the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne and Vietnamese National Police knocked out a Viet Cong tax collection point on Highway 1 south of here recently.

Included in the task force were members of A Troop, 2nd Sqdn. (Abn), 17th Cav., the 101st Military Police Plat., the 181st Military Intelligence Detachment and the Currahee Shock Force, reconnaissance element of the 3rd Bn. (Abn), 508th Inf.

The paratroopers borrowed a bus from local residents and proceeded down the highway toward the village of Ap Vinh Hao.

About 2,000 yards short of the suspected collection point, two Viet Cong stepped onto the road. The paratroopers leaped off the bus with weapons blazing. One VC was killed and his weapon captured. The other fled into the dense underbrush beside the road.