

227 th Assault Helicopter Battalion

Information about the early history and formation of
the 227th as part of the 11th Air Assault as they
developed the Air Mobile Concept.

From the files of the Army Aviation Association of
America.

Provided by the Executive Director of the AAAA
Bill Harris.

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HEADQUARTERS
227TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER BATTALION
11th Air Assault Division
Fort Benning, Georgia 31905

PROPOSED NOMINATION FOR AWARD OF AAAA

The 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion was activated on 11 February 1963, in that the first unit of the battalion was formed on this date. This unit was previously known as the 31st Transportation Company (Light Helicopter), commanded by Major Paul O. Bailey. The 31st was redesignated and activated as "B" Company, 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion. The unit brought with it all of its aircraft authorized under the old TOE; twenty-two CH-34's (See TAB A).

On the 15th of February 1963 the second unit of the 227th was activated. This unit was designated "A" Company, commanded by Captain Frank L. Henry.

In the latter part of April 1963 "A" Company received its first UH-1B helicopters. Also in April, A Company received its first armament system: XM-6, 7.62MM machine guns (See TAB B).

In May 1963 the 11th Air Assault Division staged an Organization Day Demonstration, with the aerial weapons company, "A" Company, making the first showing of helicopter armament systems in this area (See TAB C). High ranking civilian and military personnel witnessed the 227th in action, and the success is evident from the highly complimentary letters of appreciation which have been received.

"A" and "B" Companies of the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion carried the helicopter support role for the 187th Infantry until July 1963, when two more companies of the 227th were formed. The units activated on 18 July 1963 were "C" Company, commander by Captain George C. Calhoun, and "D" Company, commanded by Lieutenant Dale E. Sherrod.

Lieutenant Colonel John B. Stockton assumed command of the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion on the 18th of July 1963. Lieutenant Colonel Stockton, a veteran of Vietnam, graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1943. A Senior Army Aviator, Colonel Stockton also served as aviation officer for the 1st Cavalry Division in Korea (See TAB D).

The battalion headquarters was formed soon after, but did not exercise operational control of the battalion until after Exercise "Sky Soldier I" during October 1963.

In August 1963 the 227th received its first UH-1D helicopters (See TAB E). These first UH-1D helicopters were assigned to "C" Company.

In September 1963 the battalion formed a composite company, consisting of elements from all newly activated units. The composite company was to be utilized to perform all infantry lift missions in "Sky Soldier I" (See TAB F).

The company was composed of twenty-five (25) UH-1B helicopters and five (5) UH-1D helicopters. This was to be the first time a UH-1D had been operationally field tested, other than at the Aviation Center, Fort Rucker. Basic techniques and tactical concepts for use of the UH-1's as troop carriers for platoon-sized units were developed during preparation and conduct of "Sky Soldier I". The company consisted of five (5) platoons: three (3) platoons of five (5) UH-1B's each, one platoon of five (5) UH-1D's and one platoon of five (5) armed UH-1B's.

During the weeks preceding "Sky Soldier I", the composite company began both day and night field exercises. After the first four days of intense training the composite company was asked to make a mass night tactical landing for General Waters. The demonstration went extremely well in spite of greatly reduced visibility and ceiling.

During the actual "Sky Soldier I" test period, the composite company kept better than 80% of its aircraft flyable for missions at anytime of the day or night. More than 2,500 hours were flown during this test period by the composite company without an accident. Marginal weather flying, both day and night, was considered standard operating procedure.

In September 1963, Captain Jim B. Aikman assumed command of "B" Company, 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion. Also during September the CH-34's, which were brought to the 227th originally, were gradually returned to service with the 11th General Support Company and the Test and Evaluation Group as they were replaced by the UH-1D. On 16 October Major Gerald S. Simons assumed command of Company "D" as it received its first UH-1D.

On 19 November 1963, twenty-three (23) UH-1 helicopters of the 227th flew forty-one sorties in support of the Association of the US Army air-mobility demonstration. Over 650 civil and military dignitaries were present. It included such performances as sling-loading, company sized assault, gun escort, pathfinder drop, and maintenance evacuation (See TAB G). Secretary of the Army Cyrus Vance stated at the completion of the demonstration that there is no more important work being done anywhere in the Army than the aviation pioneering demonstrated here.

The 227th often called practice alerts to test the quick reaction and combat readiness of its personnel and equipment. Normally, these alerts were initiated to test the time needed for assembly of personnel, but on Monday, 9 December 1963 it went a little further. Both wheeled vehicles and aircraft of the battalion were given a surprise order to move out with their final destination as Fort McClellan, Alabama. While at Fort McClellan the 227th conducted its normal training schedule of instrument flight and practice assault training. The battalion returned to Fort Benning during the afternoon of 10 December (See TAB H).

In early January 1964 the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion commenced field exercises at Camp Blanding, Florida, which were without precedent in Army Aviation. The fifty-helicopter armada flew 250 miles from Fort Benning to the Florida site, and made the first mass night helicopter landing on unreconnoitered ground in the history of the US Army. In addition, the flight was the largest controlled tactical movement of Army helicopters over an extended distance.

Two days later, another first was added to the 227th's growing list of achievements. Forty helicopters emerged from out of the haze and fog, and made a mass assault landing on the beaches of Saint Augustine, Florida, in a movement designed to cut off retreating guerrilla forces. The entire force simulated having taken off from offshore carriers, and proved once again the feasibility of another idea in the Army's tactical air mobility concept (See TAB I).

With the influx of aviators and aircraft, the units within the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion kicked off on one of the most demanding Army flying programs ever attempted.

As "A" Company received aircraft and armament systems, they commenced extensive gunnery training. In a short while, all "A" Company pilots were professional armed helicopter pilots (See TAB J). Due to the primary mission of the armed helicopter company (escort for troop carrying helicopters) it was felt that a multiple target weapon system was necessary. The combination machinegun/rocket weapons system, now being used in Vietnam, was fabricated locally and adopted. The system was further modified by mounting the rocket tubes under the M-6 machine gun system to increase accuracy and reduce the chance of aircraft damage from rocket debris. The need for still more accurate rocket fire brought about a new boresighting method developed by the escort company.

Realizing the need for twenty-four hour armed escort capability, the 227th launched an extensive night gunnery program. Utilizing flares dropped by OV-1 aircraft and other methods of battlefield illumination, it was found that effective fires could accurately be placed on the target. It is believed that this is the first time night gunnery has been tried, tested, and proven effective for rotary wing aircraft. These night gunnery techniques, pioneered by this Battalion and proven under the adverse conditions of being first, have now become routine to our armed helicopter pilots. Night gunnery techniques were developed for the combination system to give a twenty-four hour escort capability.

"B" Company, the first troop lift company, commenced training with the infantry battalions and associated artillery elements (See TAB K). Initial training was conducted on a graduated basis. The first weeks were spent on squad and platoon tactics, with progressive intensity to company level problems. This initial familiarization orientation of the ground elements was highly successful.

The individual companies of the battalion were also continuously conducting unit training to increase pilot proficiency. This training is paying off today. The pilots of the 227th contain a great many aviators who, although new to the flying business, have become some of the most proficient and professional aviators in the Army. This strenuous training program has developed air assault tactics and techniques never before tried on such a scale, including night formation flying, night gunnery, perfection of mass helicopter format on flying and day and night assault landings.

In all assault maneuvers, the units habitually fly in tactical formations (See TAB L). This procedure results in continuous formation flying and increased proficiency. This, together with the nap-of-the-earth technique, allows a battalion of aircraft (up to 72 UH-1's) to lift a reinforced infantry rifle company over any terrain, in a minimum of time, and with a maximum of surprise and shock action.

Mass formation flying at night had never been attempted before. To perfect this technique the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion worked for fifteen days strictly on a night schedule. This night schedule, and close and continuous training with attached pathfinder teams, brought about a quick boost in night flying proficiency and tactical night concepts. The night program graduated from platoon assaults to company assaults and finally, to a battalion tactical night assault. This extensive training revealed many problem areas. Among these were suitable tactical night formation lights on the helicopters, methods of utilizing flares for night assault, tactical marking of landing zones, perfection of night gunnery techniques, instrument training, to include envisioning formation flying under actual instrument conditions, refueling techniques in forward areas, and numerous and diverse pathfinder techniques to include rappelling into inaccessible areas.

The 227th has pioneered the night mass formation flying, and with much hard work and many off-duty hours a night lighting system was perfected for the UH-1 helicopter. This system allows safe formation flying at night with little chance of detection by the enemy on the ground. The 227th, in conjunction with other units, has also tested and perfected the use of aircraft flares to light LZ's for mass night assaults.

January 14, 1964 marked the beginning of the initial class in the unit instrument flight school operated by the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion. This school was organized because of the lack of sufficient quotas at the USA Aviation Center Instrument School to train instrument-rated pilots needed by the 227th. The school employs four flight instructors and a five-week ground school at Lawson Army Airfield in order to qualify students for a standard rotary-wing instrument ticket at the completion of eight weeks of instruction. This program has been a resounding success. Twenty-seven pilots have been training and future programs indicate graduation of at least eight instrument-rated aviators from each class, thereafter.

Forward area refueling techniques are being continuously tried, tested and refined. One technique is the airlifting of 500 gallon containers of JP-4 into forward areas of operation. A well-trained POL crew quickly connects lightweight pumps to the fuel containers and in a matter of minutes a refueling point to accommodate four aircraft per container is operational. Another method is the use of a "Chinook" (CH-47) with 1800 gallon internal tanks to fly into the area of operations. This flying tanker has pumps and dispensing hose aboard and is capable of almost instant refueling on landing. This method also accommodates four aircraft at a time (See TAB M).

Rappelling techniques, to gain the element of surprise by virtually putting the infantry on top of the enemy in areas not accessible for landing, have been developed and proved highly successful (See TAB N).

The 227th realized from the beginning the need to be completely air-mobile, thus the "lean and mean" concept was immediately enforced. With this concept came other problems. One being how to move by air with 19,700 pounds of tentage. This problem area was overcome with the design and construction of the "Stockton" shelter. This shelter weighs fifteen pounds, and attaches to the UH-1D helicopter. The shelter may be used as a crew shelter, command post, and a maintenance work area for crew chiefs. This invention alone reduces the weight of tentage to 1,500 pounds - a saving in weight of 18,250 pounds (See TAB O).

Another item pioneered in the 227th is the power-driven wheels (Kinnard Wheels) that are attached to the ground handling wheels of the UH-1 helicopter to enable one person to maneuver the helicopter back into the trees and brush for camouflage and concealment. These power wheels are so named for the Division Commander who first conceived this method of overcoming a serious obstacle. (See TAB P).

Other needs included the requirement for an air transportable maintenance shelter. An air-inflatable, dual wall, rubber maintenance tent was furnished to the 227th by the Quartermaster Research and Development Center, Natick, Mass. The 227th utilized this hanger while testing it in conjunction with assault techniques. Various test and statistical data was performed and recorded by the 227th and sent to the Aviation Board, Fort Rucker, Alabama, (See TAB Q). This is only one of many single items of equipment tested and evaluated by this Battalion.

Lieutenant Colonel Jack Cranford assumed command of the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion, 24 February 1964, replacing Lieutenant Colonel John B. Stockton. Colonel Cranford comes to the 227th from an assignment as Army liaison officer to the Aeronautical Systems Division, United States Air Force, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. In 1947 he attended the Army Aviation School at Camp Gary, Texas, and has since held various positions as an aviation officer in the US, Europe, and Korea. Colonel Cranford, a Master Aviator, has more than 6,000 hours of flying time to his credit (See TAB R).

Good relations between the 227th and the public have been stressed during the entire phase of organization. Whenever such action did not constitute a compromise of air assault security or military regulations, every effort has been made to provide the American public with a working knowledge of the air assault concept, its aspirations and limitations. Press coverage during our operations has been very favorable and comprehensive.

On 3 February 1964, the 227th sponsored an open house. This activity was extremely helpful in informing the general public of our mission and problems. Armed with an understanding of exactly what "Daddy" does, dependents were better able to inform others of this undertaking. A member of the ape family and mascot for the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion, "Bullwhip 7" was seen by the dependents of the battalion for the first time. "Bullwhip 7" came to the battalion from a zoo in Florida. During his stay here he was promoted to the rank of Corporal and moved into VIP quarters behind Battalion Headquarters. The information disseminated as a result of "open house" has proven very successful in promoting closer civilian-

military ties. (See TAB U).

The 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion, in perfecting and refining a completely new concept and entirely new mission, has worked diligently and rapidly to acquire maximum pilot proficiency. From the date of activation, 11 February 1963, to 31 March 1964, this battalion has flown a total of 21,194 hours, with a total of 33,706 sorties. The battalion has made over 70 battalion-size day landings, over 1,837 company-size day landings, and over 6,712 platoon-size day landings. Extensive night training has resulted in over 937 platoon-size night landings, with the company-size units setting several records on monthly flying time (See TAB S). The safety record has been outstanding considering the type of flying being tested and perfected within the battalion. This safety record is credited to the continuous training program and the professional proficiency maintained by the individual aviators and maintenance personnel.

In an attempt to attain perfection many problems are encountered, and the 227th has had many problems. These problems create a need and the need in the 227th has resulted in a successful invention of a successful technique to fulfill the need. The battalion depends a great deal upon the advice of the aviators and crews returning from Vietnam. These people, with their actual combat experience are invaluable in futhering our unit goals. These veterans from Vietnam have received many awards and decorations for their service there (See TAB W). In the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion we are striving for the ultimate and the ultimate is combat readiness and the ability to prove air assault concepts. Through hard work and determination we shall reach our goal symbolized by our motto "POUVOIR"(French: "To be able to do").

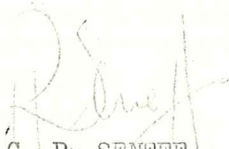
Unit History
7

AJVAV-A BAILEY, Paul O. 3d Ind
060515 (6 Mar 63)
SUBJECT: Letter of Appreciation

HEADQUARTERS, 11th Air Assault Aviation Group (T), Fort Benning, Georgia
16 March 1963.

TO: Major Paul O. Bailey, Company B 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion,
11th Air Assault Aviation Group (T), Fort Benning, Georgia

I wish to express my appreciation and commendation for the impressive manner in which you and the members of your unit discharged the mission referred to in the basic letter.



G. P. SEMEFF
Colonel, Armor
Commanding

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Thomas B...

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U S ARMY CHEMICAL CORPS SCHOOL



Office of the
COMMANDANT

Fort McClellan, Alabama

AJMCL-C

6 March 1963

SUBJECT: Letter of Appreciation

THRU: Commanding General
Third United States Army
Fort McPherson, Georgia

TO: Commanding General
11th Air Assault Division
Fort Benning, Georgia

1. I would like to extend my personal thanks for the assistance your command has given the U. S. Army Chemical Corps School in furnishing light cargo helicopters on 15, 16, 17, 22, 23 January, and 6, 12, 13 and 14 February 1963.

2. Major Paul O. Bailey, the Commanding Officer of Company B, 227th Helicopter Assault Battalion, was most cooperative in providing the U. S. Army Chemical Corps School with CH-34C aircraft. These aircraft were used to transport Chemical Corps School students during their training in the performance of aerial radiological surveys. Since the only fixed radioactive training field in the Free World is located at Fort McClellan, Alabama, the aerial survey is considered to be one of the most important highlights of training here at the Chemical Corps School. By providing us with CH-34C aircraft you have enabled us to continue aerial survey training at a time when it would have been interrupted due to lack of aircraft.

3. The fine spirit of helpfulness displayed by Major Bailey and the members of Company B is in the highest traditions of the Army.

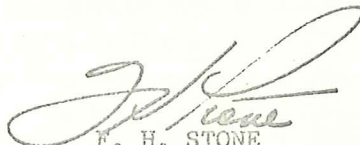
L. A. PARKS
Colonel, Cm1C
Commandant

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AJAAG-A (6 Mar 63) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Letter of Appreciation

HQ, Third US Army, Ft McPherson, Ga. 9 MAR 1963

TO: Commanding General, 11th Air Assault Division, Ft Benning, Ga.

The Army Commander has noted with pleasure and forwards the basic communication.


F. H. STONE
Colonel, AGC
Adjutant General

AJVAG Bailey, Paul O. 2d Ind
060 515 (6 Mar 63)
SUBJECT: Letter of Appreciation


HEADQUARTERS, 11TH AIR ASSAULT DIVISION Fort Benning, Georgia 11 Mar 63

THRU: Commanding Officer, 11th Air Assault Division Aviation Group,
Fort Benning, Georgia

TO: Major Paul O. Bailey, Company B 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion,
11th Air Assault Division Aviation Group, Fort Benning, Georgia

Noted with pleasure and forwarded with pride.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


MALCOLM R BAER
Lt Col, AGC
Adjutant General

*Unit Historian
1963*

HEADQUARTERS LAWSON ARMY AVIATION COMMAND
FORT BENNING, GEORGIA
"AVIATION CROSSROADS OF THE ARMY"

AJILF

19 February 1963

SUBJECT: Letter of Appreciation

TO: Commanding Officer
Company B (Assault Helicopter)
227th Assault Helicopter Battalion (Test)
Fort Benning, Georgia

1. On the occasion of the departure of your unit from this command to the 11th Air Assault Division, I wish to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation for the splendid performance of your unit while assigned to this command.

2. It is with deep regret that I bid you and the members of your command farewell. The 11th Air Assault Division is fortunate indeed to have your unit assigned. I know your participation in the forthcoming tests will result in continuous superior performances and the improvement of the Division and Army Aviation.

3. Please express my appreciation to each member of your unit for their past performances and my best wishes for their future endeavors. "LAAC" will miss you all!

Curtis L. Hankins
CURTIS L. HANKINS
Colonel, Infantry
Commanding





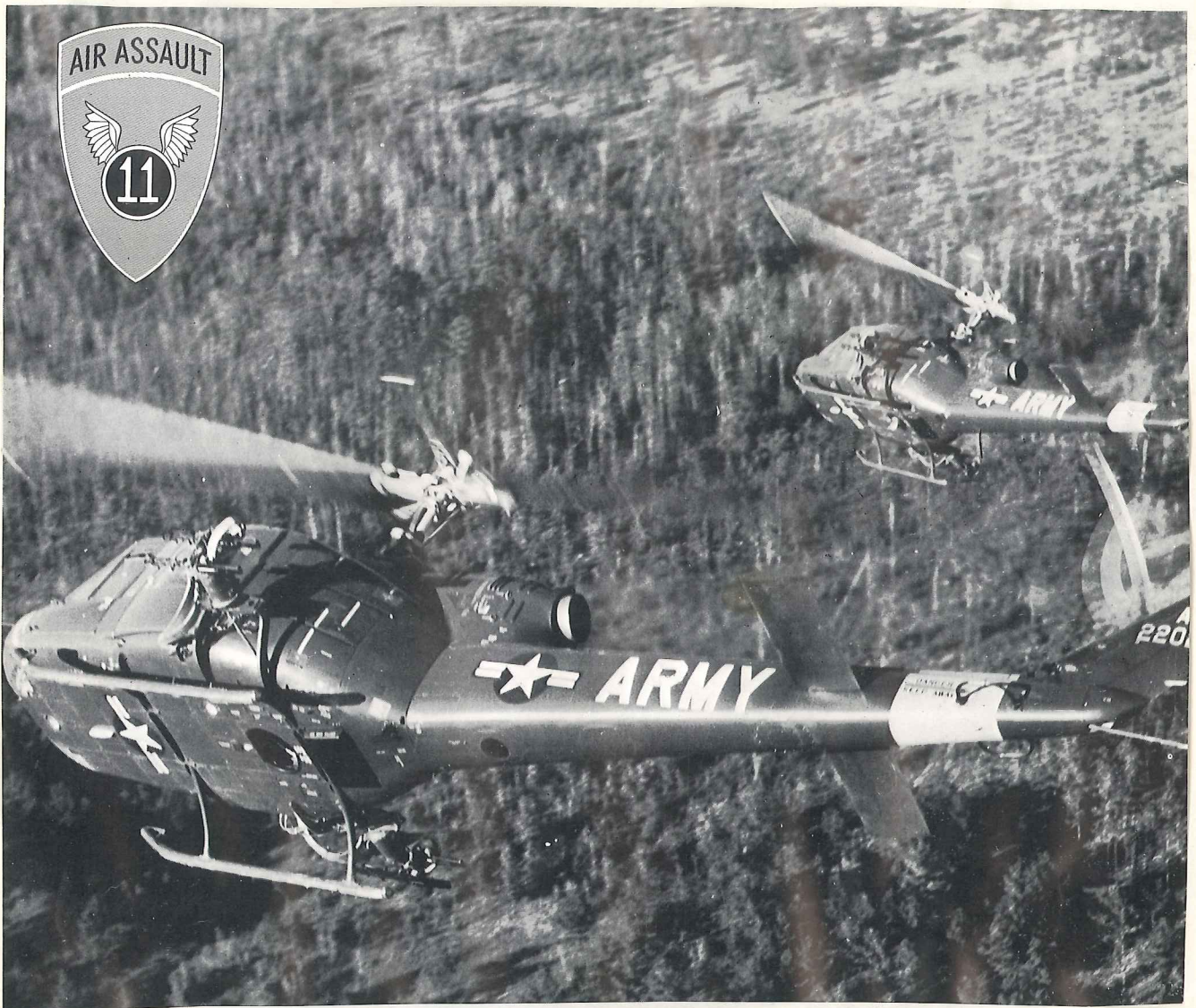
COMPANY "B" THE FIRST COMPANY ACTIVATED WITHIN THE 227th ASSAULT
HELICOPTER BATTALION



"B" COMPANY FLYING FORMATION ON ACTIVATION DAY



UH-1Bs LEAVE CLEARING after dropping weapons jeep and crew. Armed UH-1B mounts machine guns.



THE FIRST SHOWING OF THE ARMED HELICOPTER IN THE 11th AIR ASSAULT DIVISION



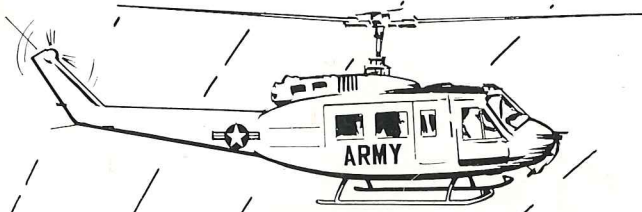
THE FIRST XM-3 ROCKET SYSTEM RECEIVED BY "A" COMPANY



ORGANIZATION DAY



**FT. BENNING, GA.
15 FEB. 1963**



2 MAY 1963

**CAMP MACKALL, N. C.
25 FEB. 1943**



The Honorable Cyrus Vance
SECRETARY OF THE ARMY



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON

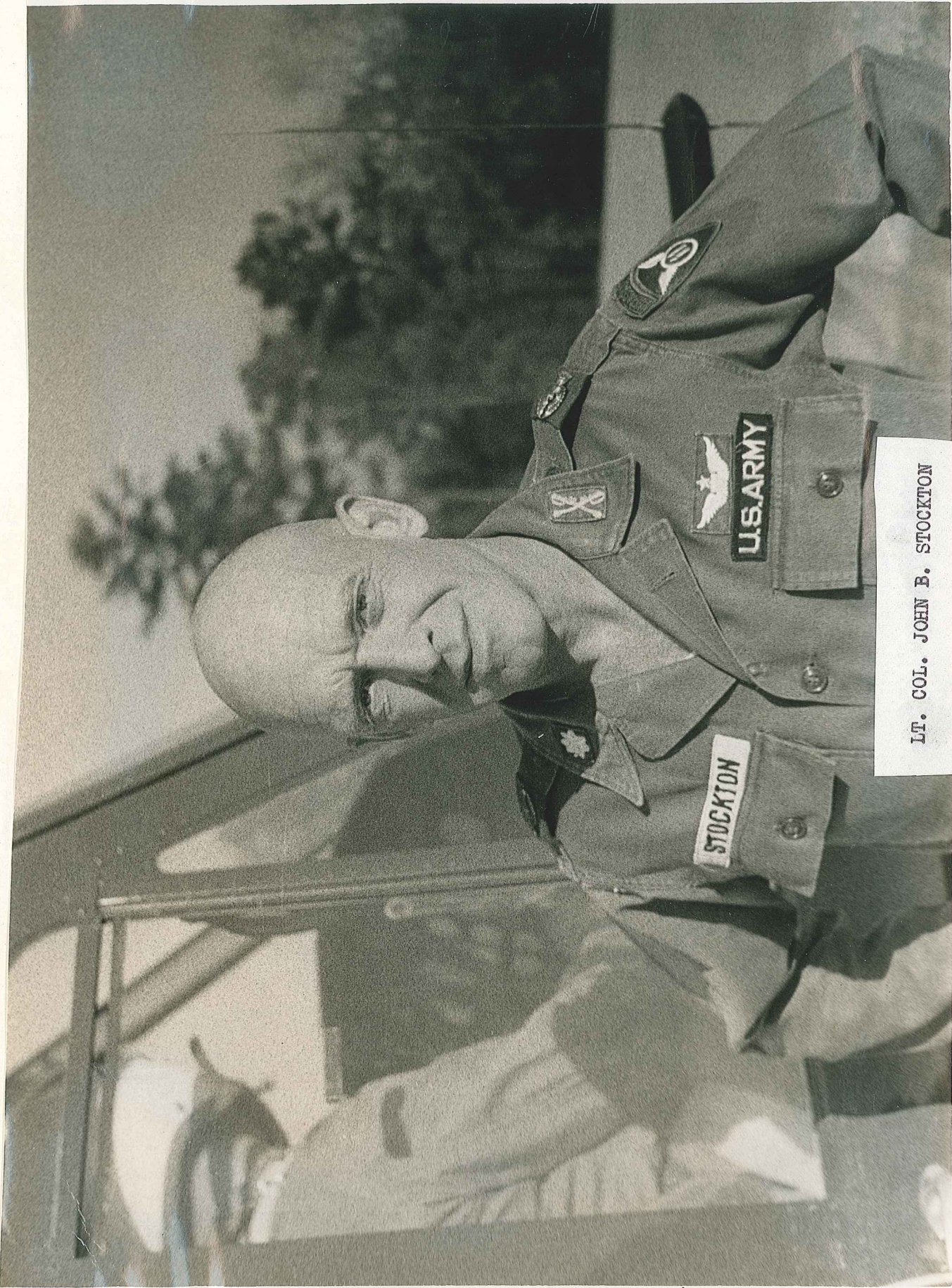
On behalf of the men and women of the United States Army, I extend congratulations to the personnel of the 11th Air Assault Division on its Organization Day.

Although the Division has been activated for a relatively short time, it has made remarkable strides in advanced individual and basic unit training in Air Mobile operations. I am aware of the many challenges which have faced the Division since 15 February 1963, and am deeply proud of the splendid progress you have made.

To all officers and men of the Division who are making such a vital contribution to the Army go my best wishes for continued success.

Cyrus Vance
Cyrus R. Vance

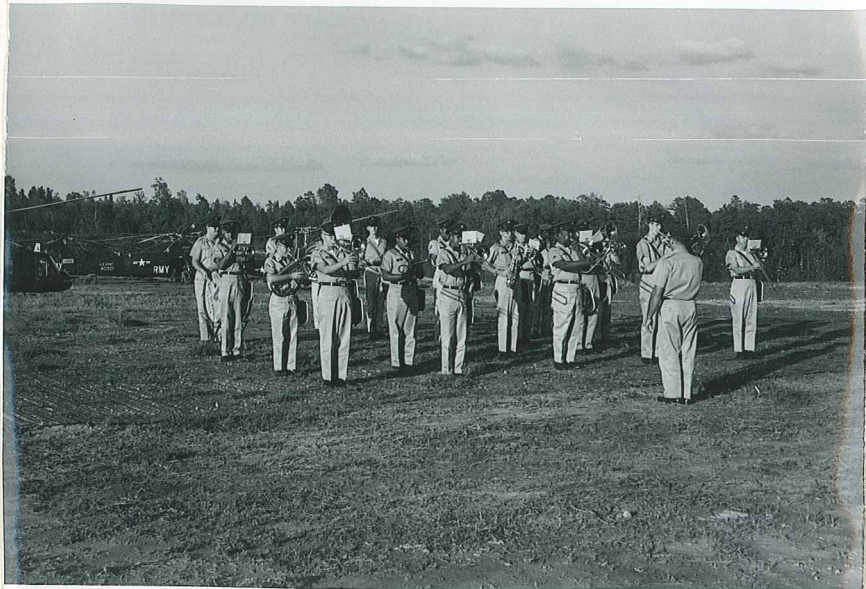
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LT. COL. JOHN B. STOCKTON



LT. COL. JOHN B. STOCKTON
ASSUMES COMMAND



11th AAD BAND PLAYS AT
ACTIVATION OF THE
227th ASSAULT HELICOPTER BATTALION



E



PILOTS FROM "C" COMPANY PICK UP THE FIRST UH-1D AT THE BELL HELICOPTER CORPORATION, FT. WORTH, TEXAS



BESIDE one of UH-1D's which went to 11th Air Assault Division are (from left) 1st Lt. Huckabee, CWO Wright, SP 5 Chomo, Capt. Calhoun, Contracts' Leonard Seitz.

11th Air Assault Gets First UH-1D's

A milestone in company history came Aug. 9 with delivery of two UH-1D's.

Significant is the fact that the helicopters — the second and third UH-1D's to roll off company assembly lines — are the first two ships of that model to be delivered to a U. S. Army field unit. (The first UH-1D built was assigned to the company for testing; the second ship went to an Army evaluation board.)

Making the delivery even more noteworthy is that they were delivered to the Army's new 11th Air Assault Division at Fort Benning, Ga.

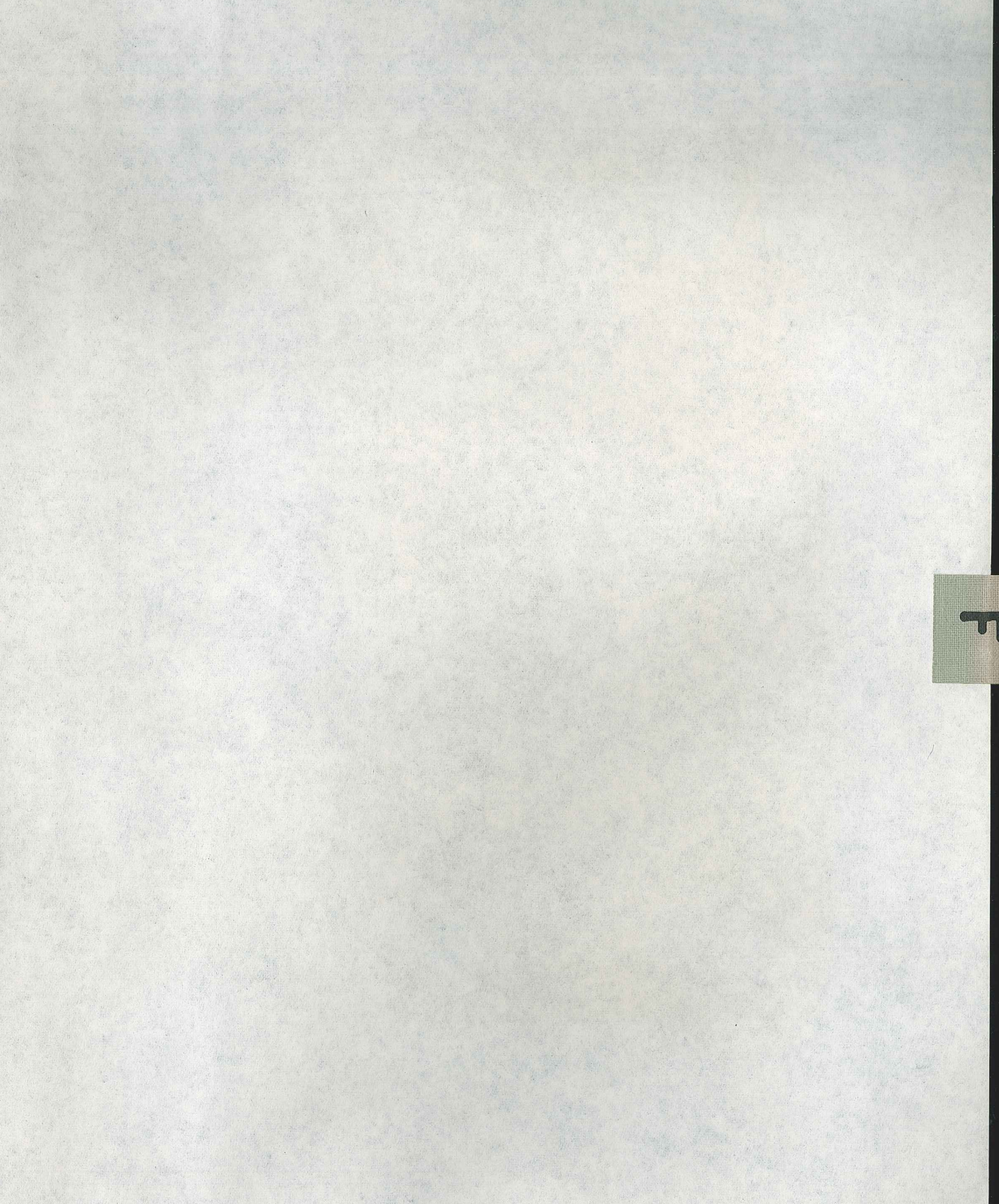
At Bell to accept delivery was the commanding officer of the unit getting the UH-1D's, Capt. George B. Calhoun. The helicopters — latest in the UH-1 Series the company builds for the U. S. Army — were flown away by 1st Lt. Rayburn D. Huckabee and Chief Warrant Officer Richard H. Wright, accompanied by Specialist 5th Class John J. Chomo.

Also here was Capt. Charles R. Mercier, 11th Air Assault Division special project officer, here for a briefing on the Army's OH-13S helicopter.

Captain Calhoun commands Com-

pany C of the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion, a unit activated first of this month. His unit will get more UH-1D's and when completely equipped, will be capable of carrying by helicopter the assault elements of an infantry company (about 180 men, their weapons and equipment).

The 11th Air Assault Division represents an experiment of tremendous import. The division was organized to prove the Army's air mobility concept in which helicopters would play a major role. It promises the biggest revolution in tactics since the Army switched from horses to motorized vehicles. Ideally, an Air Assault Division would consist of about 15,000 men — infantry, aviators and support units — who would be completely air mobile.



Second Division Guerrillas Beaten By Assault Unit

Special to The Enquirer

FORT STEWART, Ga. — Aggressors tried to recapture positions Wednesday night that infantrymen from Company C, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry, commanded by Capt. Harry N. Ball, gained in hard-fought battle Wednesday in Sky Soldier I being held by the 11th Air Assault Division.

At 7:30 p.m., the sky soldiers spotted about 15 aggressors trying to recross the Canoochee River on State Highway 67 about 15 miles north of Fort Stewart.

The fire fight lasted until 2 a.m. Thursday as the infantrymen battled the aggressors from the 2nd Infantry Division. When the smoke cleared, one guerrilla aggressor was captured. The aggressors sustained several simulated casualties, but none of the injured was left behind. The infantrymen did not have a single casualty.

Early Thursday morning, UH-1B Iroquois "Huey" helicopters from Company A, 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion, commanded by Capt. Frank L. Henry, flew contour low-level tree-top missions. The first Huey carried 2nd Lt. Robert Solomon, S-Sgt. Harold H. Mambrick, Sgt. Roy E. Murphy and Pfc. Luis Jimeno — all from Company C. Their mission, called Eagle Patrol, was to search for aggressors. Two Hueys were used in each formation. This way the aircraft can be used to block anyone trying to escape capture by blocking them from the front and rear.

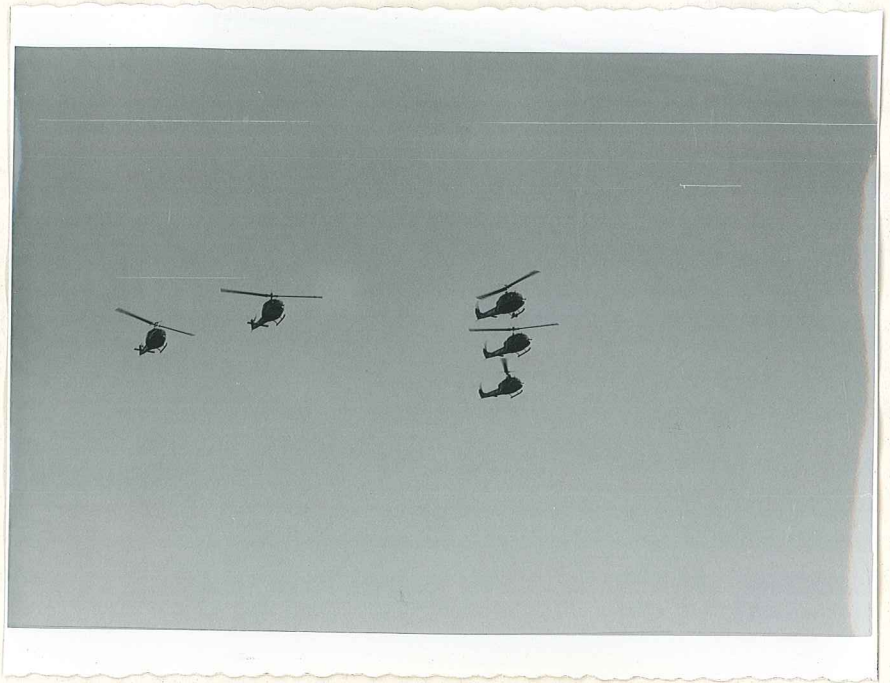
Foot patrols also were dispatched on this mission. Not a stone was left unturned as the infantrymen tramped through high weeds and swamplands in search for guerrillas. At least half of Company C is on guard duty night and day defending its positions from enemy forces.

The heroes in Thursday's action were the men from Company A, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry, commanded by Capt. Joseph Bellochi. At 7 a.m. Thursday, aircraft from the 3rd Squadron, 17th Cavalry, spotted aggressor forces about 12 miles southeast of Pembroke on the Fort Stewart reservation. Word was relayed immediately to the 1st Air Assault Brigade headquarters at Camp Oliver.

Within minutes, the men from Company A were winging their way in 20 Hueys toward aggressor territory. By 9 a.m. the sky soldiers had bagged nine aggressors and broken the back of the aggressor force.

One of the first Hueys to land in the guerrilla mop-up operation was from Company A, 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion, 11th Aviation Group, commanded by Col. George P. Seneff. The pilot was WO Murray V. Stookley and his co-pilot was WO Anthony Cosimano. The crew chief was Sp5 James H. Adams.

Test Evaluation and Control (TEC) Group personnel were very pleased with the guerrilla operations performed by men from Company A Thursday morning.



FORMATION FLYING
ON
SKY SOLDIER I

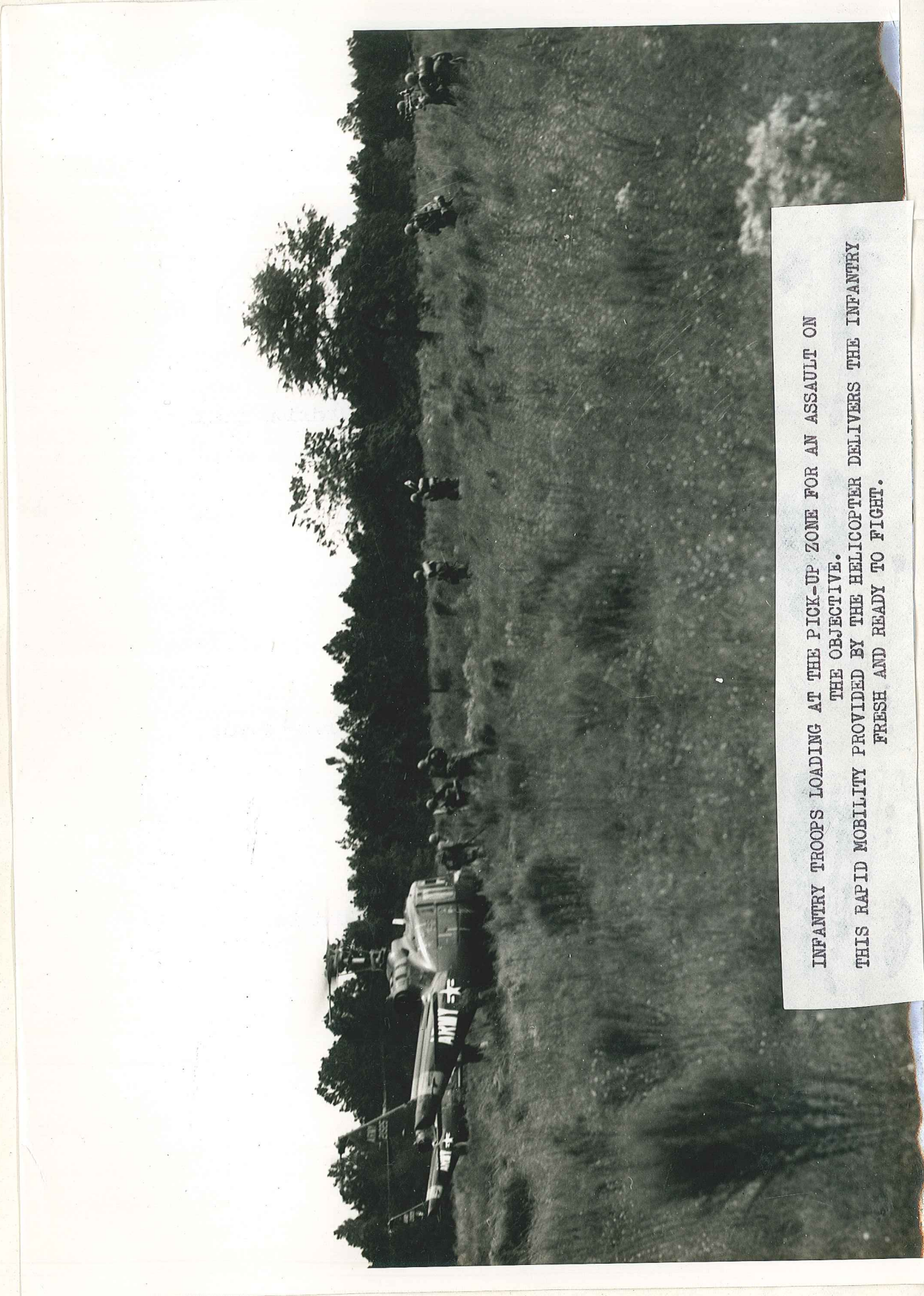




TACTICAL FORMATION FLYING USING THE NAP-OF-EARTH TECHNIQUE



TROOPS CHARGE TOWARD THE OBJECTIVE AFTER AN ASSAULT LANDING



INFANTRY TROOPS LOADING AT THE PICK-UP ZONE FOR AN ASSAULT ON
THE OBJECTIVE.
THIS RAPID MOBILITY PROVIDED BY THE HELICOPTER DELIVERS THE INFANTRY
FRESH AND READY TO FIGHT.

227TH'S HOME

AT TIGERVILLE

TIGERVILLE, USA...A little patch of land about 28 miles north of Ft Stewart has been nicknamed Tigerville by men of Co A, 227th Aslt Hel Bn who are participating in SKY SOLDIER I.

Capt Frank L. Henry, CO of the battalion decided on the nickname "TIGER" when the outfit was activated last Feb along with the 11th AAD.

Since then the nickname has been a good luck charm. So good in fact that their landing strip is called Tigerville Municipal Airport. If you call them you must use the word Tiger, and even the pilots use the word Tiger during their flights. Also the maintenance shop where the mechanics keep 80% of the unit's aircraft in the air at all times is named Tiger. A few days ago the men captured a Bob-cat but Capt Henry and his unit are still looking for a real live "TIGER".



6

Secretary of Army Hails Future of Assault Division

BY JOHN COOMBES
Staff Writer

No organization in the Army holds more promise of achievement than Fort Benning's 11th Air Assault Division. Army Secretary Cyrus R. Vance told some 650 of the nation's top defense scientists and engineers who met here for two days of secret briefings on tactical mobility this week.

Most of the scientists and engineers were back at their industrial plants and testing grounds today, digesting the briefings they received on subjects ranging from the future of the new Air Assault Division to mobility problems of the Soviet Army.

Tuesday night, shortly after they had witnessed an impressive combat demonstration by units of the Air Assault Division, the men who took part in the symposium sponsored by the Association of the United States Army heard an address by the Secretary of the Army.

Vance said he was heartened to see in person the vigor and imagination with which soldiers and their civilian associates are doing the Army's work and pursuing its goals.

'Truly Imaginative'

"Here, for example, there is the truly imaginative, pioneer effort under way in the 11th Air Assault Division. There is no more important work going on in the Army and nowhere do the achievements hold more promise," said Vance.

Speaking of the Army's needs in aviation equipment, Vance said: "Operationally, I am keenly interested in the acquisition of all-weather capability. The tactical potentials of night and poor weather — concealment, protection, surprise — must be realized; and it is a limited mobility indeed that ends when the sun goes down and the clouds descend."

He said: "All units and all operations require air mobility in varying degrees. The constant requirement is that this be 24-hour capability. Our objective must be the ability to move — within the combat zone — men and supplies by Army

air anytime, anywhere, with more freedom than we now move by land vehicles."

Vance also called for the exploration of more sophisticated ground vehicles to move men (Please see VANCE, Page 2)



RIFLE SQUAD ADVANCES in a skirmish line after being dropped by Bell UH-1D Iroquois troop carrier from assault helicopter battalion.



A MASS ASSAULT ON THE OBJECTIVE DURING THE AUSA DEMONSTRATION



AN ASSAULT LANDING DURING THE DEMONSTRATION FOR THE AUSA SYMPOSIUM

11



CONVOY LINKS UP WITH AIRCRAFT DURING AN ALERT MISSION TO FORT
McCLELLAN, ALABAMA TO TEST THE MATERIAL READINESS OF THE BATTALION

Helicopter Battalion Flies Over Valley Area

Residents of the Chattahoochee Valley and as far northeast as Anniston and Fort McClelland, Ala., all had a look Tuesday at an air assault helicopter battalion on the move in close formation, as 38 UH1B UH1D Iroquois helicopters passed over.

The 227th Assault Helicopter Bn. of the 11th Air Assault Di-

vision, commanded by Lt. Col. John B. Stockton, went on practice alert at 4 a.m. Monday and sent its choppers and 50 ground vehicles to Fort McClelland, public information office spokesmen said.

It was the first alert for the helicopter battalion, and Army spokesmen said the training mission "went off with a snap!"

When the helicopters, carrying pilots and crewmen but not assault troopers, arrived at Fort McClelland, they continued normal training routine of flying night formations, practice assault flights, instrument flights, etc.

At 9:30 a.m. Tuesday the wheeled convoy left the Alabama post, and returned to Fort Benning at 3:30 p.m. The helicopters took off at 12:30 p.m., gave a special flight demonstration over Fort McClelland, made a close formation fly-over of Anniston and paraded by Columbus along the course of the Chattahoochee.

The helicopters arrived here in near-perfect timing with the truck convoy at 3:30 p.m. Tuesday, Army spokesmen said.



A MILITARY COMMENTARY

MEN AT ARMS

BY JOHN COOMBS



SOME OF BATTALION'S STAFF OFFICERS
From Left, Capt. W. H. Osborne, Capt. F. A. Burney, Capt. R. Kammer, Capt. T. I. McMurray, Capt. R. W. Rogers

CAMP BLANDING, Fla. — Long before Hollywood made "Hell's Angels," aviators were hell - for - leather, devil - may care, stunt - happy men who took life as it came and lived it to the full.

Their young, unlined faces reflected fliers' special philosophy: "We just don't give a darn." But, when the chips were down, they played the game courageously and they usually won.

The Army's new breed of aviator is a chip off that old block. More often than not he flies a helicopter, a machine that even the old barnstormers — who called them autogyros — admitted "was a device that needed a heck of a lot of handling."

To prove an important point, namely that aircraft, and mainly helicopters, working with specially trained infantry can be used to smash an enemy who's here, there, instead of everywhere, the Army has carefully garnered these chips off the old block.

It has thrown these chips (along with a smattering of smaller, less - experienced ones) together, appointed a razor - sharp soldier - aviator named George P. Seneff to lead them, mixed in a half dozen or so crack airborne-infantry commanders to train and develop the other part of the team, and called the whole the 11th Air Assault Division.

The Army has charged this division with proving the theory that, properly used, the helicopter and the sky soldier make an unbeatable team.

In the workout the division's 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion — the 50-ship unit which can carry a battalion of sky soldiers right into the enemy's lap — experienced here in Florida last week, it soon became obvious the skill and spirit of the old aviator is still alive — at least among Army fliers.

Indeed, as of now, the chips appear to be surpassing the old blocks. Generally, they rate higher in education, flying skills and physical fitness. When the occasion demands they can be every bit as daring and, strangely enough, in a highly individualistic and unorthodox profession, they have more discipline.



STOCKTON

In a series of tricky training operations conducted at night and in most daylight weather conditions, the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion last week proved that, in the two - handed, two - footed flying business — which the Jet age has largely surpassed — the chips have it over the blocks.

Stockton, a veteran aviator who organized the Army's helicopter support system for the anti - guerrilla forces in Viet Nam, has set very high standards for the proficiency of his pilots. It would be a tough enough task to achieve these standards with fully-trained and experienced pilots. But with only a nucleus of officers and warrant officers who have flown a substantial number of hours in helicopters and gain-



SOUCEK

ed experience in places like Viet Nam and Korea, Stockton has first to improve the flying abilities of new pilots just out of flight school before he and his company commanders can begin training them in the special techniques the Air Assault Division will use.

Even so, as tough, old, taskmaster Stockton observed the last night landing from his command ship high above Keystone Air Park last Tuesday, he bubbled with praise and later shook the hand of every pilot he met on the ground.

In the air Stockton is Bullwhip Six, a call sign that some think fits him admirably. For despite his amiable temperament, and the good-natured joshing he exchanges with his "Guys", he can rap a mistake in the air with the severity of a whiplash, spelling it out in a brusque but correct tone that stings twice as much.



SIMONS

When his tremendously talented executive officer Maj. Leo Soucek wanted to warn a pilot leading the battalion on a wrong course, Stockton said: "Let him go, Leo. When he tells us we've arrived, we'll tell him how far off he is."

The frigid exchange that greeted that pilot's announcement almost formed icicles on the radio console, and the erring officer's ears were a deep red an hour or more after he'd landed.

A bare two hours after it had completed a near-brilliantly executed massed night landing at Keystone Tuesday, the elements took a hand and a realism the planners had not counted on tested pilots and commanders to the full.

Heading for Valdosta, Ga. and a refueling rendezvous, the battalion's four companies ran headlong out of extraordinarily beautiful night into a tremendous thunderstorm that might easily have destroyed all 43 ships.



AIKMAN

Behind the Cowboys came Capt. Jim B. Airman's Bravo Company known in the air as Space Patrol. And bringing up the rear was Capt. Charles (Chuck) W. Worley's Delta Company. Worley, whose call sign is Happy Tiger 6 and whose impressive physique and unruffled temperament fits the title, commands the gun ships. These are helicopters armed with machineguns and rockets, and which escort the troop - carrying ships of

In winds that shot helicopters up and down like elevators in the besmirched sky, the four company commanders had to wrestle their own ships against the fury of the storm, keep their respective platoons in formation, calm the less - experienced pilots, and make quick decisions as to what to do next. As the storm's severity increased, each leader headed his ship for a temporary refuge. Soon the air was full of exchanges between Bullwhip, Cowboy, Happy Tiger, Space Patrol, and Cobra.

Alpha Company, which in the air becomes Cowboy, turned tail and headed for its takeoff point at Keystone. Led by Maj. Gerald S. Simons, a tall, handsome flier whose informal, easygoing nature fits his call sign (Cowboy 6) it landed safely.



WORLEY

Weathered in again next morning, the battalion literally "broke out" from its refuges around noon Wednesday, got as far as Valdosta and Moody Air Force Base, only to be weathered in again. The trip from there home was a series of "ups and downs" with companies setting down in fields to await breaks in the torrential rain which forced them to fly blind (not all were instrument qualified) and streak for the next clear spot as and when the weather permitted.

(See MEN AT ARMS, Page D-8)

Men at Arms

(Continued from Page D-3) the remainder of the battalion to their objectives.

The gun ships must, by necessity, be flown by the best pilots in the battalion. Theirs is a relatively free mission. They have the prerogative to dive between formations to blast pockets of enemy shooting from the ground which may have escaped the devastating carpet of fire the gun ships lay across the landing area minutes before the troop carriers arrive with their precious loads of sky soldiers.

Only one formation was missing now, — Charlie Company headed by Capt. George B. Calhoun. Known in the air as Cobra 6, Calhoun is a very serious and dedicated soldier. A crack pilot, Calhoun laughs little, and rarely indulges in the inter-company joshing that goes on in the battalion.



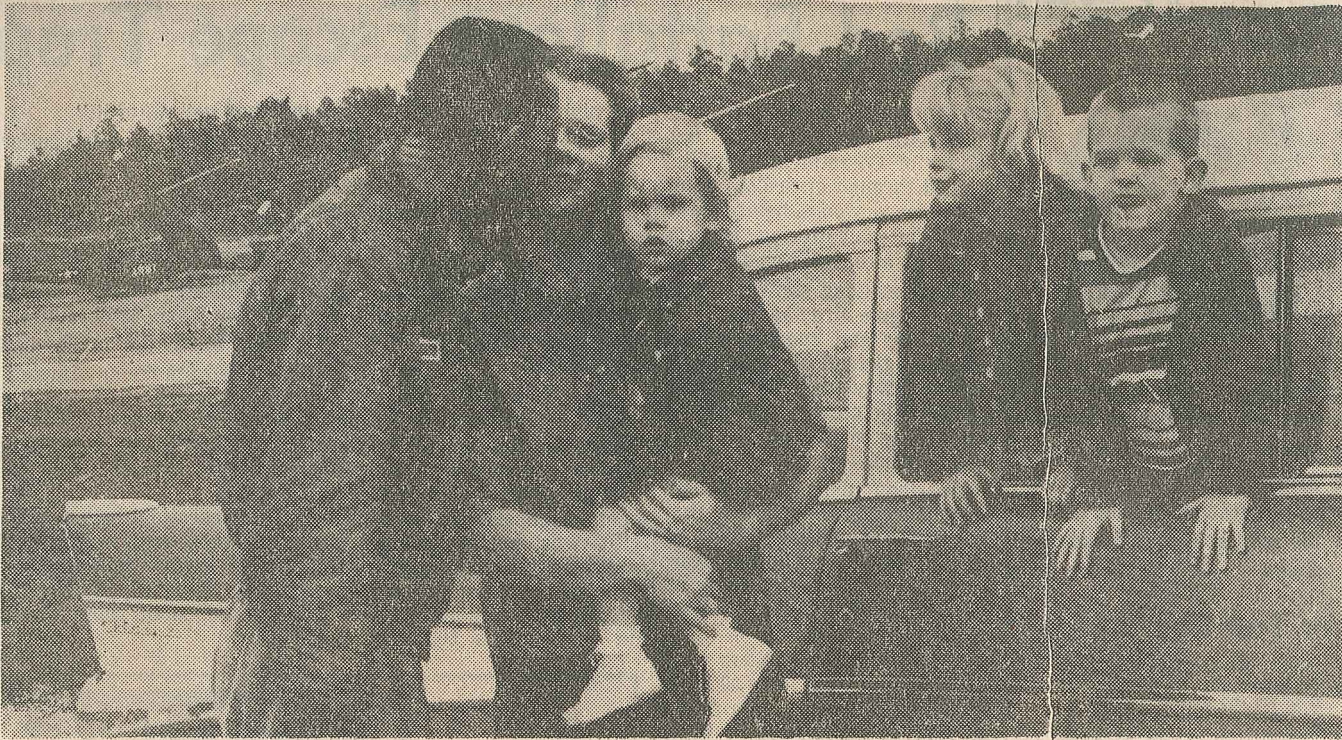
CALHOUN

A tallish spare veteran of Viet Nam, he has flown helicopters and fixed wing aircraft for the Army on a wide variety of missions and has won several awards for his skill and valor.

When the storm threatened to smash his ships, Calhoun headed his company for Cecil Naval Air Station near Jacksonville. He kept his company together with the exception of one ship whose pilot found himself in more severe weather and sensibly opted to land on a four-lane highway near Lake City.

Weathered in again next morning, the battalion literally "broke out" from its refuges around noon Wednesday, got as far as Valdosta and Moody Air Force Base, only to be weathered in again.

The trip from there home was a series of "ups and downs" with companies setting down in fields to await breaks in the torrential rain which forced them to fly blind (not all were instrument qualified) and streak for the next clear spot as and when the weather permitted.



KISSING FAMILY GOODBYE BEFORE FLORIDA FLIGHT IS WARRANT OFFICER CURTIS GOODMAN
L-R: Goodman, Wife Patricia, 2811 Ladd St.; Children Jackie, Sheree, Brian

DINNER LEFT ON TABLE AS ALERT CAME

BY JOHN COOMBES
Staff Writer

CAMP BLANDING, Fla. — There was fried chicken at the Doyle's home on East Linden Drive in Columbus yesterday, but Daddy's portion went uneaten.

Daddy is Sp-5 John E. Doyle. He's a crew chief of a helicopter in the 11th Air Assault Division's 227th Assault Helicopter Bn.

Doyle's pretty wife, Ruth, had just called "it's on the table" when the phone rang, and that ended the tough, stocky New Englander's plans to enjoy fried chicken for Sunday dinner.

The call was instructions for the crew chief to report to his unit immediately. Hundreds of other Air Assault Division aviators and crew chiefs were receiving the same calls.

In 15 Minutes

"I quickly changed into my uniform while my wife threw some lunch into a sack," said Doyle. "I ate it on the way to the post. I was at my ship 15 minutes from the time the call came."

At the Doyle home, 3973 E. Linden Dr., daughters Denise, 7, Susan, 6, and Becky, 5, wanted to know where Daddy was headed. Doyle himself didn't know.

To make the alert more realistic, the 227th Bn. commander Lt. Col. John B. Stockton, had allowed his men to go on weekend passes and other normal privileges

of telephone calls were made to company commanders who were to take part in the history-making 250-mile helicopter hop to Florida showed most ships were off-post and scattered as far away as Atlanta. manned even then — just one hour after the alert was put out.

But despite the short notice, the battalion briefing for com-

MONDAY, 6 JANUARY 1964

FORT BENNING, GA. 31905

227TH IN FLORIDA: TRAINING WITH NATIONAL GUARD THERE

FORT BENNING...All personnel and equipment of the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion, 11th Air Assault Division Aviation Group, departed Fort Benning yesterday for special duty at Camp Blanding, Fla.

The 500 men and 50 helicopters of the battalion will join selected elements of the Florida National Guard in a training exercise which marks the first such coordination of air assault forces with National Guard forces. It is also believed to be the largest controlled tactical movement of Army helicopters over an extended distance.

Enroute to the Florida location, the flight of UH-1 IROQUOIS helicopters made one refueling stop at Moody Air Force Base at Valdosta, Ga. The ground element will consist of 60 vehicles and will make the trip in two days, staying overnight at Moody Air Force Base.

According to Lt Col John B. Stockton, the battalion commander, the purpose of the alert and subsequent movement of the Sky Soldiers is to conduct tactical training in assault helicopter techniques.

COLUMBUS, Ga., Monday Morning, January 6, 1964

'Copter Battalion Stages Largest Training Exercise

By JOHN COOMBS
Ledger-Enquirer Staff Writer

CAMP BLANDING, Fla. — The 11th Air Assault Division's 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion Sunday staged the biggest helicopter assault ever made in action or training by the U. S. Army.

Forty-two helicopters left Fort Benning at 4 p.m. Sunday after their crews had been summoned by a special alert broadcast at 1:30 p.m. Thirty-nine of the helicopters landed at Camp Blanding near Gainesville some five hours later. One was forced to turn back shortly after take-off from Moody Air Force Base near Valdosta, Ga., where the battalion paused for refueling.

Another aircraft developed mechanical trouble about 30 miles north of Jacksonville and was diverted to Cecil Naval Air Station.

A third ship was ordered to escort it.

The battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. John B. Stockton, will maneuver in the Camp Blanding area until Wednesday.

The helicopters and some 500 men of the 227th will join members of the Florida National Guard in a training exercise which marks the first such coordination of Air Assault forces with National Guard forces.

It is believed to be the largest controlled tactical movement of Army helicopters over an extended distance.

A ground element, comprised of 60 vehicles, left Fort Benning shortly after the helicopters as remaining personnel reported for duty.

The purpose of the alert and subsequent movement of troops is to conduct tactical training in assault helicopter techniques in support of the Army's new air mobile concept, according to Col. Stockton.

Another Mark Chalked Up By Copter Unit

BY JOHN COOMBES
Staff Writer

ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla. — Forty combat-primed choppers of Fort Benning's 227th Assault Helicopter Bn., roared in from the Atlantic Ocean at first light here this morning on Anastasia Island and the area around this historic old Florida city.

Chopping their way through light rain and fog which covered the gray Atlantic waters in the bleary early-morning light, the 11th Air Assault Division unit added yet another first to its record with its assault from the sea.

The 40 ships were carrying crack Special Forces teams of the Florida National Guard who were to flush strong battalion-sized guerrilla forces, previously landed by a Caribbean nation, from around important U.S. defense installations in the Jacksonville-St. Augustine area.

The ships, assumed to be carrying Sky Soldiers of the 3rd Bn., 187th Infantry along with the Special Forces fighters, landed in a long line on the high-water mark on a tricky sloping sandy beach. The big Vec formation of whirlybirds came from the direction of the U. S. Navy Aircraft carriers Roosevelt and Saratoga, both lying offshore from Jacksonville. They were assumed to be making a joint assault with rocket-armed jets operating from the enormous flight decks of both warships.

The battalion, headed by Lt. Col. John B. Stockton, had turned out to sea after flying a triangle from its base at Camp Blanding, 43 miles south of Jacksonville and 47 miles from St. Augustine.

Another assault by the battalion scheduled to take place after dark tonight will be the last

(Please see RECORD, Page 2)

Record

operational flight for the unit. At first light tomorrow the battalion will begin the 250-mile flight back to Fort Benning. It is expected to make a refueling stop at Moody Air Force Base near Valdosta, Ga., as it did on its history-making night hop south on Sunday. A ground convoy of support vehicles left Camp Blanding for Fort Benning early this afternoon and was expected to meet the first flight of helicopters arriving at Manila Heliport, the headquarters of the battalion, around 11:30 a.m. tomorrow.

Meanwhile staff officers were exploring the possibility of a massed pass over the city of Columbus for the battalion as it wings its way into Manila Heliport at Fort Benning.

Cuban Invasion?

The staff of the division and the 227th Bn. have been concerned lest Georgians and Alabamians link their hurried departure Sunday with the integration of Auburn University and possible civil support duties there.

"Now, they've got us invading Cuba," said a Florida National Guard special forces group commander who had been in an adjacent town Monday and heard the rumors which had generated since Sunday.

But the pilots, crew chiefs and maintenance men of the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion haven't had time to pay attention to rumors since they landed here Sunday night.

By the time the battalion had slipped into its landing zones late Sunday night after a 250-mile flight from Fort Benning, mostly in pitch-black darkness, only a few hours were left to plan and mount the next day's anti-guerrilla operation. And, when a heavy dawn ground mist lifted Monday, the battalion was back in the air again.

Contrary to the rumors, the 227th is mounting an assault against guerrillas who are assumed to have invaded the U. S. from a certain Caribbean nation. Working in conjunction with the Florida National Guard crack Special Forces staff and group leaders, the battalion's job is to spear and net a small but skilled and elusive band of Caribbean guerrillas hiding and training in the swamps and backwoods of this area, which lies adjacent to many important U.S. defense installations.

In theory, the 227th is carrying sky soldiers of the Third Battalion, 187th Infantry, the Army's first air assault infantry battalion. But the troops are not here.

When a thick early morning

XERO COPY XERO COPY XERO COPY

FLIGHT OF 227TH TO FLORIDA MARKS MANY FIRSTS FOR 11TH

CAMP BLANDING, FLA. - In a historic night flight last Sunday, 50 UH-1 IROQUOIS helicopters of the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion, 11th Air Assault Division Aviation Group, flew from Fort Benning to Camp Blanding to conduct an exercise designed to train the Sky Soldiers in assault helicopter techniques.

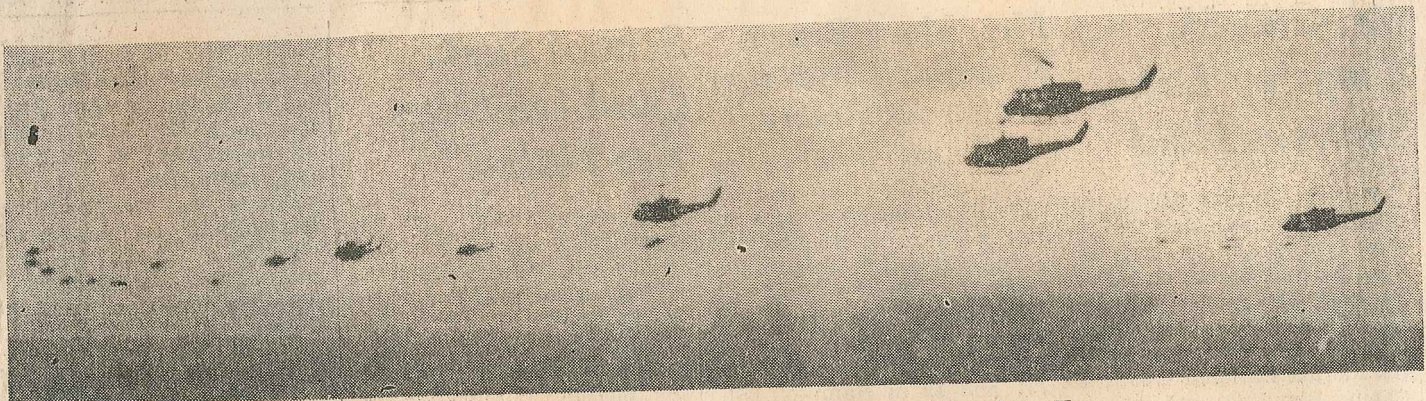
This flight is believed to be the largest controlled tactical movement of Army helicopters over an extended distance. It was also the first time a large-scale helicopter night operation was in flight before landing sites were reconnoitered.

The helicopters made one scheduled refueling stop at Moody Air Force Base at Valdosta, Ga., and proceeded on to their destination without incident. At Camp Blanding, the battalion joined with selected elements of the Florida National Guard for a training exercise which marks the first such coordination of air assault forces with National Guard forces.

The alert for the operation was sounded at 1:30 Sunday afternoon. One hour later, 26 pilots and their crews were ready to move; by 3:00 p.m., all 50 aircraft were ready to go. At 4:00 p.m. the aircraft departed Manila Helipad and flew in perfect formation to Moody Air Force Base. The first chopper touched down at Camp Blanding at 9:30 that night.

Lt Col John B. Stockton, CO of the 227th and Lt Col Edward T. Murdock, G-3 of the 55th Command Hqs, Florida National Guard accompanied the flight.

7 Jan 64
Sky Soldiers



“Choppers” Take Off From Blanding In Early Morning Fog

Fifty Helicopters 'Invade' Blanding

First Battalion-Size Night Flight In Air History

A 50-unit helicopter armada churned into Camp Blanding in total darkness Sunday night in the first battalion-strength night landing of “choppers” in the history of aviation.

The history-making night flight went off without mishap, although one helicopter landed at Cecil Field due to mechanical trouble. It was the first time that a large-scale night operation was made before the landing site had been reconnoitered.

In the first such attempt by the U. S. Army, 50 UH1 jet-propelled “choppers,” of the type being used in South Viet Nam, took off from Fort Benning’s Manila Heliport at 4 p. m. Sunday and landed at Blanding, a distance of 250 nautical miles, at 9:30 p. m. after a stop at Moody AFB for re-fueling. Leaving Moody at 5:30 p. m. the entire flight to Blanding was made in darkness.

Manning the helicopters were men and officers of the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion of the 11th Air Division Aviation Group, based at Benning and commanded by Col.

changed due to bad weather over the coast. The thundering armada, often flying at tree-top level, due to fog, then turned west, passing over Starke and landing at the Lake City airport for regrouping. It passed over Lake Butler on its return to Camp Blanding.

The helicopters used were of two types — the UH B-model, the smaller fighter type, equipped with machine guns and 2.75 inch rockets; and the larger troop-carrying UH D-model, capable of transporting an entire squad consisting of pilot, co-pilot and 11 troops.

Each helicopter, completely equipped, cost around \$324,000—a total of over \$16,000,000 represented in the 50 landing here.

Riding on the maneuver in one of the choppers was an exciting experience for a Telegraph reporter, skimming over pine tree tops at heights of (Continued on Page Four)

An alert for the unique operation was sounded at 1:30 p. m. Sunday without previous warning. One hour later, 26 pilots and their crews were ready to move out, and at 3 p. m., all 50 aircraft were ready to go. After an hour’s briefing, they took to the air.

The 187th Pathfinder Detachment — seven enlisted men and one officer aboard a chopper—had the mission of selecting the landing area at Blanding for the huge armada. Arriving late Sunday afternoon, they arranged to guide each aircraft in to a safe landing with red signal lights mounted in trees and on Blanding water tanks.

The purpose of the helicopter battalion, in time of invasion —particularly in guerrilla type warfare—would be to lift troops into an area with the advantage of surprise for general harassment of the enemy; also to put on a “show of force” designed to intimidate and disperse the invaders.

The assigned problem for the Blanding maneuver consisted of locating company-sized units of “enemy agents” that had theoretically infiltrated the wooded areas of Northeast Florida, conducting small-scale nuisance raids, murders, pillaging, and killing or kidnapping local citizens.

A mass flight was scheduled to start from Blanding at 8 a. m. Monday, but was delayed more than an hour by heavy fog. Originally planned to make a loop over Orange Park, St. Augustine, Flagler Beach, Keystone Airport, and back to Blanding, the course was

THE COLUMBUS, GA., LEDGER, MON., JAN. 6, 196

In Flight From Post to Florida

Copter Unit Makes History

BY JOHN COOMBS

Staff Writer
CAMP BLANDING, Fla. — Fort Benning's 227th Assault Helicopter Bn., made aviation history last night.

The 11th Air Assault Division unit flew some 250 miles from Fort Benning to this Florida National Guard base yesterday to make the first massed night helicopter landing on unrecognition ground in the history of the U. S. Army. And veteran aviators said it was the first landing of its kind in aviation history.

A total of 42 helicopters comprising most of the battalion's total strength — which had been alerted in a surprise move only two and one-half hours before — left Fort Benning at 4 p.m. yesterday. They flew in strict battle formation and carried out all combat drills as they headed south to Moody Air Force Base near Valdosta, Ga., where they paused to refuel.

The 42 aircraft were assumed to be carrying Sky Soldiers of the 11th Air Assault Division's 3rd Bn., 187th Infantry, to hunt

down strong parties of guerrilla "invaders" who had landed from a Caribbean nation and were training and holding out in the swamps and backwoods of this huge training area some 43 miles southwest of Jacksonville, Fla.

Concession to Safety

Had the helicopters actually been carrying troops, staff officers explained, they would have flown non-stop to Florida. The refueling pause at Moody was a concession to training safety.

But by the time the battalion had refueled and was ready to head south again, night had closed in and the remainder of the flight was completed in pitch-black darkness. Relying on navigation skills, radio links and their ability to pick out each other's pinhead-size lights in the black of night, the 42 ships took off in battle groups, changed formations in the air, and landed at various spots marked out by pathfinders with tiny lights in the heavily wooded and obstructed edge of Camp Bland-

Copter

aults against the guerrilla forces in conjunction with crack Special Forces groups of the Florida National Guard.

One aircraft developed a defect in its control system after taking off from Moody and returned to that field minutes later. Another ship reported it had lost all its hydraulic power when a mere 20 miles from its destination. It was diverted to Cecil Naval Air Station near Jacksonville and another helicopter was sent to escort it.

The defective aircraft landed safely and is expected to rejoin the battalion today.

"I know we had a lot of doubting Thomases, who didn't think

Stockton, a veteran aviator who set up the Army's aviation support system, for the ground forces fighting the guerrillas in Viet Nam, was in the air longer than any of his ships. Alternately flying and observing from his command ship with his co-pilot Capt. Dick Rogers, the operations and training officer of the battalion, Stockton criss-crossed the one-mile line of ships as they flew south in tight company formation protected by the "gun ships," heavily armed helicopters which flew below them at treetop height ready to reply to any ground fire that might be directed at the assault helicopters which, in an actual fight, would have been loaded with



HELICOPTERS OF 11TH AIR ASSAULT DIVISION AWAIT TAKEOFF FOR FLORIDA 227th Assault Helicopter Bn., 11th Air Assault Division, Launched Alert Exercise



LT. COL. STOCKTON BRIEFS MAJOR GENERAL HENRY W. McMILLAN, ADJUTANT GENERAL, MILITARY DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA, ON EXERCISE "BULLWHIP".

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THURSDAY, 9 JANUARY 1964

BAD WEATHER DELAYS 227TH

MOODY AIR FORCE BASE, GA.-- Inclement weather in the Columbus - Fort Benning area yesterday forced the returning helicopters of the 11th Air Assault Division's 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion to lay over here.

The battalion, which has just completed "Operation Bullwhip" is expected to return today. Weather permitting, they will arrive shortly before noon.

187TH PATHFINDERS PLAYED MAJOR ROLE IN "BULLWHIP"

CAMP BLANDING, FLA. - The initial success of last Sunday's historic night flight by members of the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion might have been marred by an accident had it not been for the efforts of the 187th Pathfinder Detachment.

The detachment, commanded by Capt Raymond Tomlinson, made possible the flawless completion of the long 250-mile flight from Fort Benning to the Florida training post.

Although the Pathfinders didn't get to work until after the more than two score UH-1 IROQUOIS helicopters had departed Fort Benning, by the time the ships arrived at Camp Blanding the group had selected landing sites for the aircraft.

The men of the detachment employ portable radio rappelling qualified.

beam transmitters and small lights to guide each chopper to a safe landing, all of which was done under cover of darkness. But the Pathfinders' work is not done when the aircraft have landed. They must then find and mark with signal lights any obstacle tall enough to interfere with a low flying helicopter. During "Operation Bullwhip" this included water towers, flagpoles and tall trees.

Every man in the detachment is both airborne and rappelling qualified.



ANOTHER "FIRST" MASS FORMATION ENROUTE TO ST. AUGUSTINE, FLA. FOR PRACTICE BEECH ASSAULTS.

Copters Halted By Thunderstorm

BY JOHN COOMBES
Staff Writer

KEYSTONE AIR PARK, Fla. — Weather-battered Fort Benning Sky Soldiers, leaving Florida in their helicopters after a three-day exercise, were expected to fly over Columbus about 4 p.m. today before landing at Manila Helipad on the post near U.S. Highway 27 at 4:30.

The homeward-bound 227th Assault Helicopter Bn., which left Florida bases about noon, was scattered and grounded last night when a severe thunder-

storm accompanied by torrential rains and high wind swept across its area.

Last night's storm was a sudden and severe one, and struck the battalion on the first of its two homeward flying legs. One ship from C Company was forced to land on the grassy median in the center of a four-lane highway near Lake City, Fla. No one was injured, and the ship wasn't damaged.

The battalion had planned a low-level pass over the City of Columbus shortly after 11 a.m. today as a homecoming gesture to climax its history - making massed night landings in Florida during the last few days. But at 9 a.m. today most of the aircraft were still grounded at Keystone and at Cecil Naval Air Station near Jacksonville where C Company sought refuge from the storm.

The battalion had completed its last massed night assault on this objective (Keystone Air Park) near Starke, Fla., about 63 miles southwest of Jacksonville and 50 miles from St. Augustine. It had refueled and was headed for Valdosta Municipal Airport by companies when it ran into the storm.

Very high winds buffeted the ships as they chopped into the black night sky and torrential rain drenched them, making visibility non-existent.

Conditions were soon so bad that the company commanders ordered their formations to turn

and head back for Keystone.

Three companies landed safely there and a fourth — Charlie Company — commanded by Capt. George Calhoun headed for

FLY-OVER OF PHENIX CITY, COLUMBUS**227TH WRAPS UP "BULLWHIP,"
WILL RETURN AT NOON TODAY**

CAMP BLANDING, FLA. - The 11th Air Assault Division's 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion completed its night anti-guerrilla operations here last night and began the 250-mile return trip to Fort Benning.

The battalion is expected to fly into Manila Helipad in the Harmony Church area at noon today.

The return trip will be highlighted by a precision fly-over of Phenix City and Columbus shortly before noon.

Tuesday's action in "Operation Bullwhip" saw the 227th, commanded by Lt Col John B. Stockton, take to the air to intercept and destroy a simulated enemy force attempting to escape by sea between St. Augustine and Jacksonville, Fla. Leading the flight of 47 UH-1 IROQUOIS helicopters was Maj Gerald B. Simons, commanding officer of Company A.

After reaching the coast the choppers headed out to sea and made simulated firing runs on enemy ships in the area, then turned and flew over St. Augustine on their way back to Camp Blanding.

In other action during the mock war, an appeal from the Latin American countries asking the United Nations and the United States for aid was received. Following the receipt of the plea, simulated U.S. Army Special Forces teams were dispatched to the beleaguered Latin nations.

XERO XERO XERO
Capt Osborne

HEADQUARTERS
227th Assault Helicopter Battalion
11th Air Assault Division
Fort Benning, Georgia 31905

AJVAV-AH-A

16 January 1964

Major General Henry W. McMillan
Adjutant General
Military Department of Florida
State Arsenal
St. Augustine, Florida

Dear General McMillan:

I would like to express the appreciation of the officers and men of the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion for the way in which you and the members of your staff assisted us during "Operation Bullwhip". Without your generous help, your excellent training facility, and your complete cooperation, the exercise could not have succeeded.

The manner in which all of this was done points out the real meaning of the "One Army Concept".

Please pass on to all of your personnel our thanks and appreciation. You have contributed immeasurably to the final proof of the air assault concept.

Sincerely,

JOHN B STOCKTON
Lt Colonel, Armor
Commanding

HEADQUARTERS
MILITARY DEPARTMENT
STATE OF FLORIDA
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

STATE ARSENAL, ST. AUGUSTINE

AEM

/mo'm
8 January 1964

Lt. Col. John B. Stockton
Commanding Officer
227th Assault Helicopter Battalion
Fort Benning, Georgia

Dear Colonel Stockton:

I want to express my appreciation to you and the members of your Battalion for the many kindnesses and courtesies extended to me during your Exercise LULLWHIP at Camp Blanding. It is hard to single out any individual, but I wish that you would express my appreciation to Capt. W. H. Osborn, your PIO, and Capt. Worley, of the Gun Company. Without their support and help, it would have been impossible to obtain the publicity desired during this operation.

I wish you and all the members of your Battalion much success in your future operations. I know that they will not be easy, as they never are in an organization of this type, particularly when it requires so much shake-down and reorganization in order to develop the specific units which will accomplish the missions assigned by the Army. It has been a long time since I have witnessed an esprit as high as that displayed by the members of your Battalion. I am sure that you can be proud of them, as can the Army, and that they will with perseverance develop a

Lt. Col. John B. Stockton

8 January 1964

unit which we can count on to successfully defend the Nation when call upon.

Sincerely,

JOHN J. BOOKS
Lt. Colonel, Arty, FlaARNG
Chief, Administration Division

Copter Unit Back at Post

BY JOHN COOMBES
Staff Writer

Fort Benning's 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion returned to its home base about noon after completing four days of training in Florida during which time they made the first massed night helicopter landing in aviation history.

Plagued by bad weather, the battalion which started for home Tuesday night, was grounded yesterday at various places.

This morning it encountered such severe storms between Valdosta and Fort Benning that several companies were forced to land in fields and along highways until they could pick their way through torrential rains and fog.

The first company home was Captain George Calhoun's "Charlie" Company. They were followed by battalion commander Lt. Col. John B. Stockton. The other companies were expected to land at Manilla Helipad later this afternoon.

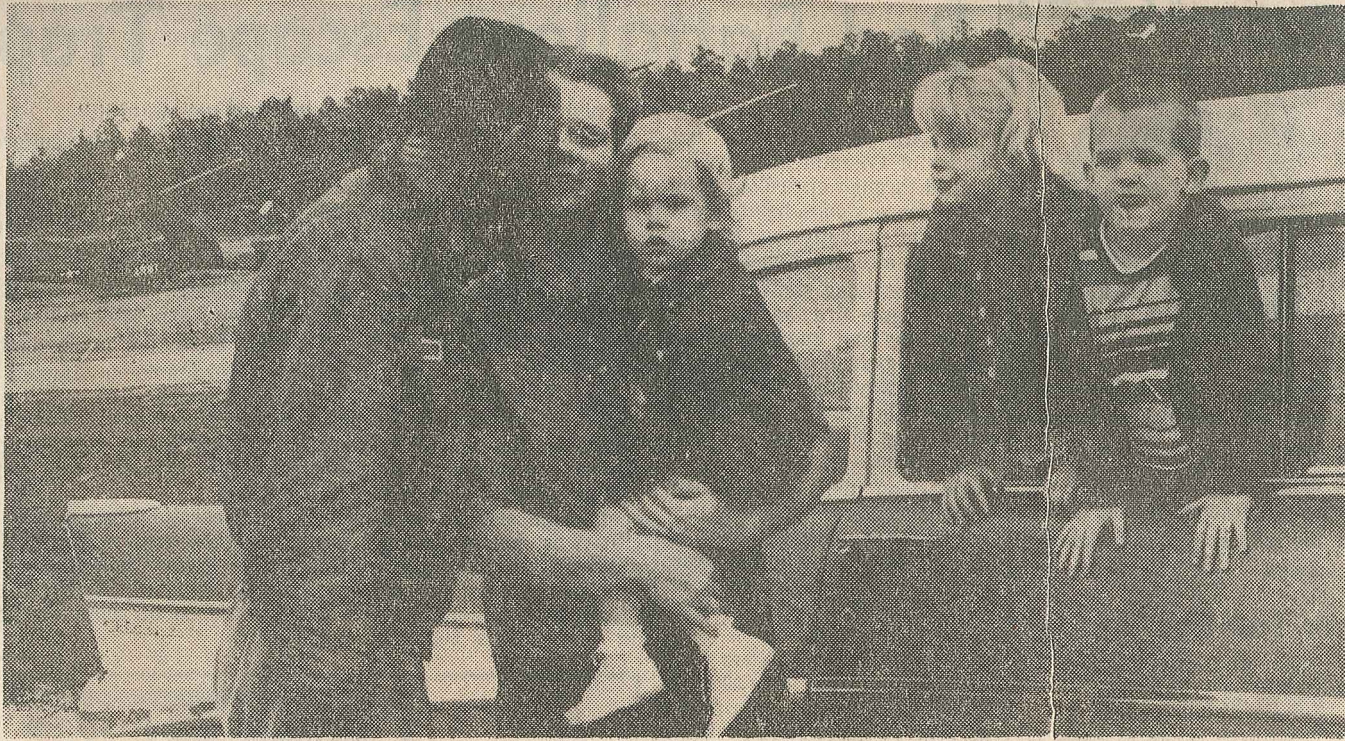
The battalion was originally scheduled to return to Fort Benning yesterday, but a severe thunderstorm in North Florida on Tuesday night scattered and grounded its 42 ships.

Then yesterday afternoon, after refueling at Valdosta Municipal Airport, the battalion was set for Fort Benning when the weather closed in again.

It was therefore decided to make the short hop to Moody Air Force Base where crews were accommodated for the night.

The battalion left Fort Benning last Sunday to stage the first massed night helicopter assault in aviation history on a landing zone at Camp Blanding,

Fla., 43 miles southwest of Jacksonville, and 47 miles from St. Augustine. It continued day and night operations at Moody until Tuesday night, since when continuous bad weather complicated its plans for return.



KISSING FAMILY GOODBYE BEFORE FLORIDA FLIGHT IS WARRANT OFFICER CURTIS GOODMAN
L-R: Goodman, Wife Patricia, 2811 Ladd St.; Children Jackie, Sheree, Brian

DINNER LEFT ON TABLE AS ALERT CAME

BY JOHN COOMBES
Staff Writer

CAMP BLANDING, Fla. — There was fried chicken at the Doyle's home on East Linden Drive in Columbus yesterday, but Daddy's portion went uneaten.

Daddy is Sp-5 John E. Doyle. He's a crew chief of a helicopter in the 11th Air Assault Division's 227th Assault Helicopter Bn.

Doyle's pretty wife, Ruth, had just called "it's on the table" when the phone rang, and that ended the tough, stocky New Englander's plans to enjoy fried chicken for Sunday dinner.

The call was instructions for the crew chief to report to his unit immediately. Hundreds of other Air Assault Division aviators and crew chiefs were receiving the same calls.

In 15 Minutes

"I quickly changed into my uniform while my wife threw some lunch into a sack," said Doyle. "I ate it on the way to the post. I was at my ship 15 minutes from the time the call came."

At the Doyle home, 3973 E. Linden Dr., daughters Denise, 7, Susan, 6, and Becky, 5, wanted to know where Daddy was headed. Doyle himself didn't know.

To make the alert more realistic, the 227th Bn. commander Lt. Col. John B. Stockton, had allowed his men to go on weekend passes and other normal privileges.

of telephone calls were made to many commanders who were to take part in the history-making da showed most ships were off-post and scattered as far as 250-mile helicopter hop to Florida — just one hour after the alert was put out.

But despite the short notice, the battalion briefing for com-



“Choppers” Take Off From Blanding In Early Morning Fog

Fifty Helicopters 'Invade' Blanding

First Battalion-Size Night Flight In Air History

A 50-unit helicopter armada churned into Camp Blanding in total darkness Sunday night in the first battalion-strength night landing of “choppers” in the history of aviation.

The history-making night flight went off without mishap, although one helicopter landed at Cecil Field due to mechanical trouble. It was the first time that a large-scale night operation was made before the landing site had been reconnoitered.

In the first such attempt by the U. S. Army, 50 UH-1 jet-propelled “choppers,” of the type being used in South Vietnam, took off from Fort Benning’s Manila Heliport at 4 p. m. Sunday and landed at Blanding, a distance of 250 nautical miles, at 9:30 p. m. after a stop at Moody AFB for re-fueling. Leaving Moody at 5:30 p. m. the entire flight to Blanding was made in darkness.

Manning the helicopters were men and officers of the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion of the 11th Air Division Aviation Group, based at Ben-

ning, changed due to bad weather over the coast. The thundering armada, often flying at tree-top level, due to fog, then turned west, passing over Starke and landing at the Lake City airport for regrouping. It passed over Lake Butler on its return to Camp Blanding.

The helicopters used were of two types — the UH-1B model, the smaller fighter type, equipped with machine guns and 2.75 inch rockets; and the larger troop-carrying UH-1D model, capable of transporting an entire squad consisting of pilot, co-pilot and 11 troops.

Each helicopter, completely equipped, cost around \$324,000—a total of over \$16,000,000 represented in the 50 landing here.

Riding on the maneuver in one of the choppers was an exciting experience for a Telegraph reporter, skimming over nine tree tops at heights of

An alert for the unique operation was sounded at 1:30 p. m. Sunday without previous warning. One hour later, 26 pilots and their crews were ready to move out, and at 3 p. m., all 50 aircraft were ready to go. After an hour’s briefing, they took to the air.

The 187th Pathfinder Detachment — seven enlisted men and one officer aboard a chopper—had the mission of selecting the landing area at Blanding for the huge armada. Arriving late Sunday afternoon, they arranged to guide each aircraft in to a safe landing with red signal lights mounted in trees and on Blanding water tanks.

The purpose of the helicopter battalion, in time of invasion — particularly in guerrilla type warfare—would be to lift troops into an area with the advantage of surprise for general harassment of the enemy; also to put on a “show of force” designed to intimidate and disperse the invaders.

The assigned problem for the Blanding maneuver consisted of locating company-sized units of “enemy agents” that had theoretically infiltrated the wooded areas of Northeast Florida, conducting small-scale nuisance raids, murders, pillaging, and killing or kidnapping local citizens.

A mass flight was scheduled to start from Blanding at 8 a. m. Monday, but was delayed more than an hour by heavy fog. Originally planned to make a loop over Orange Park, St. Augustine, Flagler Beach, Keystone Airport, and back to Blanding, the course was

-THE COLUMBUS, GA., LEDGER, MON., JAN. 6, 196

In Flight From Post to Florida

Copter Unit Makes History

BY JOHN COOMBS

Staff Writer
CAMP BLANDING, Fla. — Fort Benning's 227th Assault Helicopter Bn., made aviation history last night.

The 11th Air Assault Division unit flew some 250 miles from Fort Benning to this Florida National Guard base yesterday to make the first massed night helicopter landing on unrecognitized ground in the history of the U. S. Army. And veteran aviators said it was the first landing of its kind in aviation history.

A total of 42 helicopters comprising most of the battalion's total strength — which had been alerted in a surprise move only two and one-half hours before — left Fort Benning at 4 p.m. yesterday. They flew in strict battle formation and carried out all combat drills as they headed south to Moody Air Force Base near Valdosta, Ga., where they paused to refuel.

The 42 aircraft were assumed to be carrying Sky Soldiers of the 11th Air Assault Division's 3rd Bn., 18th Infantry, to hunt

down strong parties of guerrilla "invaders" who had landed from a Caribbean nation and were training and holding out in the swamps and backwoods of this huge training area some 43 miles southwest of Jacksonville, Fla.

Concession to Safety

Had the helicopters actually been carrying troops, staff officers explained, they would have flown non-stop to Florida. The refueling pause at Moody was a concession to training safety.

But by the time the battalion had refueled and was ready to head south again, night had closed in and the remainder of the flight was completed in pitch-black darkness. Relying on navigation skills, radio links and their ability to pick out each other's pinhead-size lights in the black of night, the 42 ships took off in battle groups, changed formations in the air, and landed at various spots marked out by pathfinders with tiny lights in the heavily wooded and obstruction-laced edge of Camp Bland-

Copter

aults against the guerrilla forces in conjunction with crack Special Forces groups of the Florida National Guard.

One aircraft developed a defect in its control system after taking off from Moody and returned to that field minutes later. Another ship reported it had lost all its hydraulic power when a mere 20 miles from its destination. It was diverted to Cecil Naval Air Station near Jacksonville and another helicopter was sent to escort it.

The defective aircraft landed safely and is expected to rejoin the battalion today.

"I know we had a lot of doubting Thomases, who didn't think would have been loaded with

it could be done," said Bn. Commander Lt. Col. John B. Stockton as he doffed his flying helmet here at 9:15 p.m. yesterday. "But we're here, and I'm proud of the way the 227th came in," he said.

Stockton, a veteran aviator who set up the Army's aviation support system, for the ground forces fighting the guerrillas in Viet Nam, was in the air longer than any of his ships. Alternately flying and observing from his command ship with his co-pilot Capt. Dick Rogers, the operations and training officer of the battalion, Stockton criss-crossed the one-mile line of ships as they flew south in tight company formation protected by the "gun ships," heavily armed helicopters which flew below them at treetop height ready to reply to any ground fire that might be directed at the assault helicopters which, in an actual fight, would have been loaded with



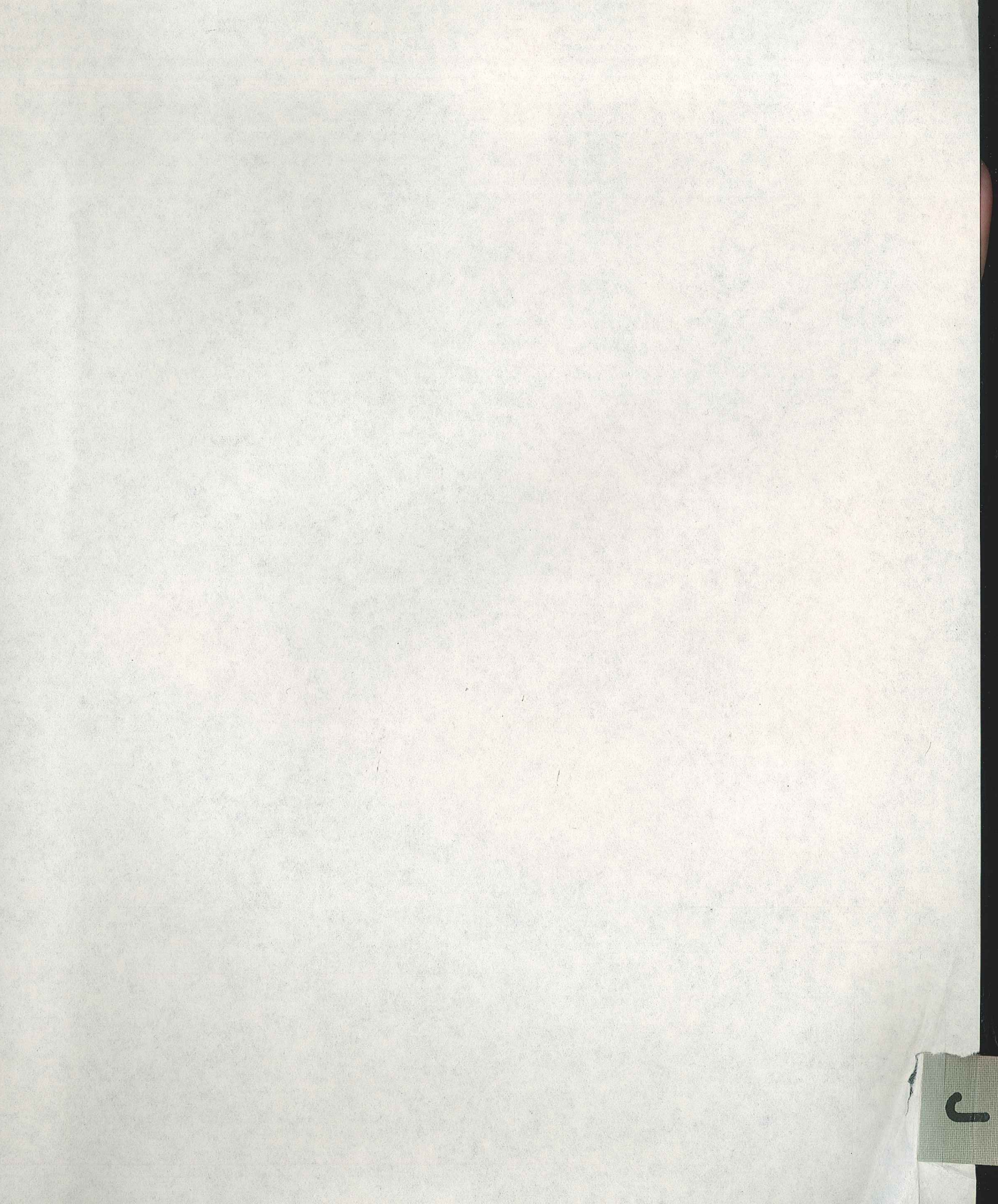
HELICOPTERS OF 11TH AIR ASSAULT DIVISION AWAIT TAKEOFF FOR FLORIDA 227th Assault Helicopter Bn., 11th Air Assault Division, Launched Alert Exercise

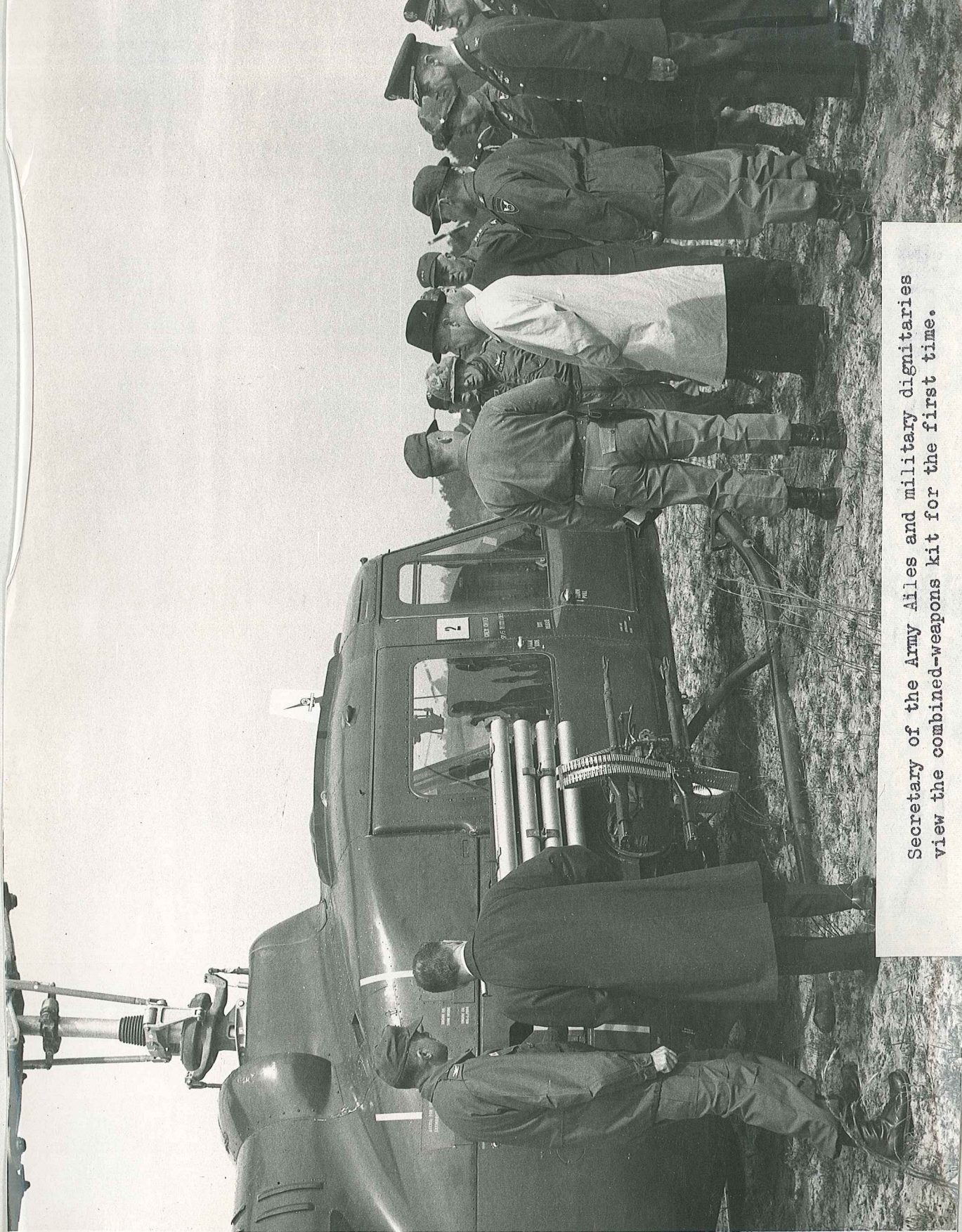


LT. COL. STOCKTON BRIEFS MAJOR GENERAL HENRY W. McMILLAN, ADJUTANT GENERAL, MILITARY DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA, ON EXERCISE "BULLWHIP".



ANOTHER "FIRST" MASS FORMATION ENROUTE TO ST. AUGUSTINE, FLA. FOR PRACTICE BEECH ASSAULTS.





Secretary of the Army Ailes and military dignitaries view the combined-weapons kit for the first time.



Two machine gun ships in action.

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NEW IDEA SAVES TIME ON ROCKET LAUNCHER

FORT BENNING.....An idea paid off for the 227th Aslt Hel Bn recently when SP5 Lawrence D. Salmon of Co A developed a method for boresighting the XM-3 ROCKET LAUNCHER systems.

Working from an idea, SP5 Salmon developed a technique that does away with the telescopic sight formerly used, and over three hours of time that used to be spent in precisely positioning the aircraft.

Salmon's method requires approximately 15 minutes to completely accomplish the boresighting and has been tested on two live fire exercises.

Previous methods of performing the bore sighting required about four hours most of which was spent in leveling the aircraft with the use of jacks.

This is another example of how the ideas and contributions of the men of the 11th help to improve the very concepts, being tested by the Division itself.

November 63
The Sky Soldier

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AJWAV-AH-1

PIO News Release

Information Officer
11th AAD
Ft Benning, GA

PIO
227th Aslt Hel Bn
Ft Benning, Ga

24 Mar 64

who

1. Following news release is from the 227th Aslt Hel Bn:

HAPPY TIGER GUN SHIP SCORES

Company D (The Happy Tigers), 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion, recently won an invitational aerial gunnery contest sponsored by the 226th Aerial Surveillance and Attack Battalion, which is composed of armed Mohawks. Company "D", commanded by Capt Francis P Barry, Jr., utilizing one lonely UH-1B Helicopter equipped with a combination of rockets and machine guns, outfired the best gunners of the 226th Battalion, who were using their "Hunter-Killer" Mohawks. The 226th Battalion had earlier claimed that they could easily outfired the 227th Battalion because all that the 227th had was their "little ole Hueys." However, the final score, which was computed by the average distance from the center of target, was 67 feet for the Happy Tigers and 113 feet for the Hunter-Killers.

2. Would appreciate it if you can run this in the Sky Soldier, and the Bayonet.

WFO
WALTON H OSBORNE, III
Captain Sig C
PIO



Escort platoon enroute to "link-up" with troop-carrying helicopters.

K

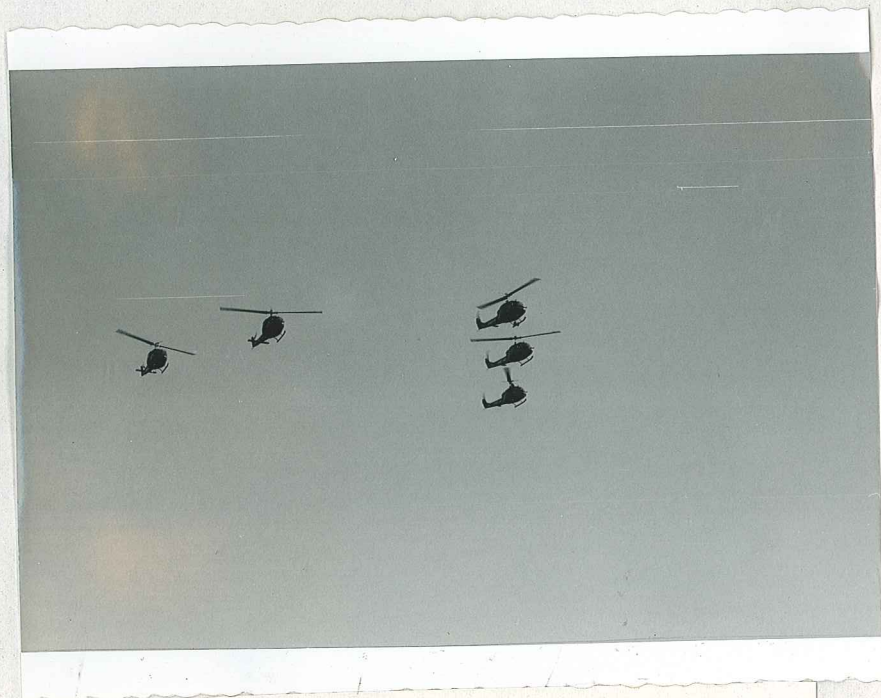


RIFLE SQUAD ADVANCES in a skirmish line after being dropped by Bell UH-1D Iroquois troop carrier from assault helicopter battalion.





An infantry company being deployed by assault helicopters.



Formation flying during unit
training exercise.

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PERFECT FORMATION

**227TH HUEY'S
SUPPORT 188TH**

FORT BENNING..In a perfect formation of 20 aircraft, Company D of the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion returned to Manila Heliport yesterday after several days at Fort Stewart, Ga.

The helicopter company was at the eastern Georgia installation to support members of the 1st Battalion, 188th Infantry, who were undergoing training there.

More than 650 Sky Soldiers from the 188th and supporting units have been at Fort Stewart since December 7.

While at Fort Stewart, the men of Company D, 227th, worked to perfect a maneuver known as the "hop skip and jump." In this type of operation, the infantrymen are landed in an enemy-infested area, and advance 6,000 to 8,000 meters ahead to flush out resistance. They are then picked up and airlifted to another location to repeat the maneuver.

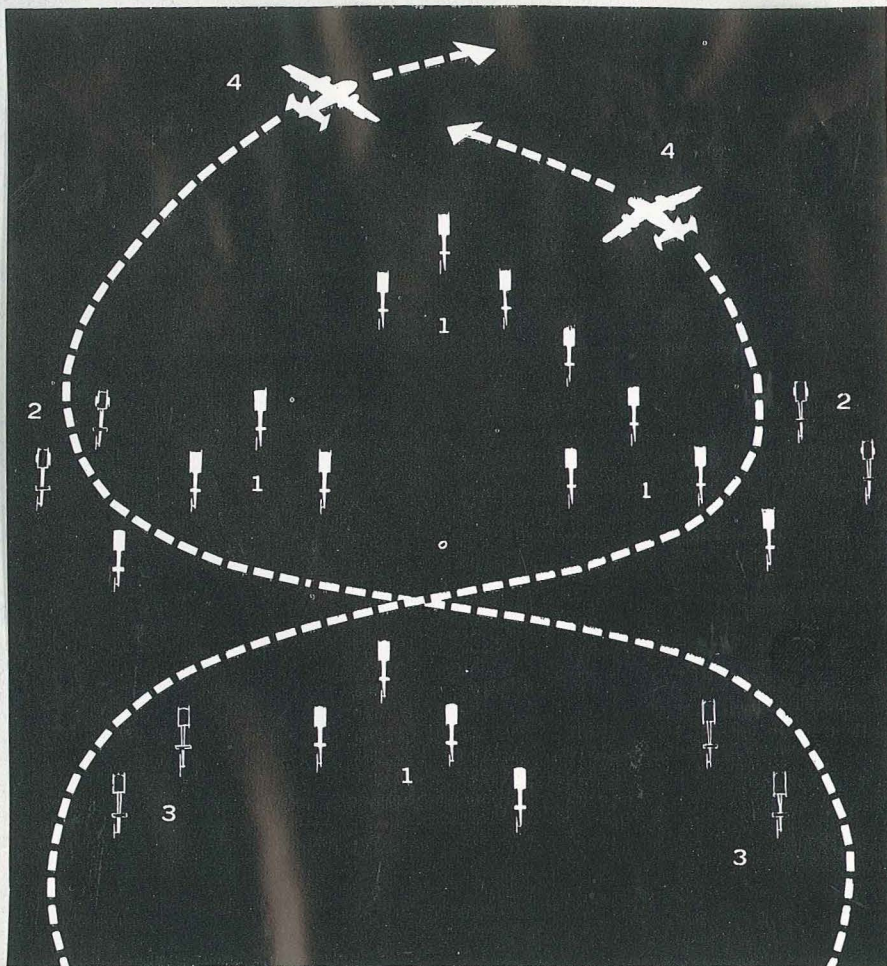
All troops in the exercise are due back today.

*Dec 64
The Sky Soldier*



Infantry troops deploying from UH-1, "Iroquois"





TYPICAL COMPANY-SIZE assault helicopter attack formation consists of: (1) four platoons of four UH-1Ds—each with a squad aboard; (2) four aerial rocket UH-1Bs; (3) four aerial weapons 7.62-mm. machine-gun UH-1Bs, and (4) two armed Grumman OV-1s.

M



A CH-47 CHINOOK helicopter carrying rubberized gasoline containers refuels two UH-1 Iroquois helicopters in a forward area rendezvous.

2



"Sky Soldiers" rappelling onto the objective - an otherwise inaccessible area.



MORE NEW IDEAS

227TH DESIGNS UNIQUE TENT FOR UH-1B, REDUCES WEIGHT

FORT BENNING...Sky Soldiers who attended the Division critique on SKY SOLDIER I in Theater #11 Tuesday were in for a surprise when they saw a "downed" Huey.

Naturally, the comments were "boy that Huey didn't have much room to land in; the pilot was lucky to bring it down in that small clearing in front of the theater."

Later, when the men came out of the building for their first break for a breather, they saw two small tents pitched next to the aircraft.

In the window they saw a sign, "Stockton's Shelter"

The men from the 227th had the audience fooled completely and had a novel way of putting their idea across to many men who gathered for the critique.

Yes, the men from the 227th were just trying out their new idea keeping in line with Brig Gen Harry W.O. Kinnard, 11th CG, who has encouraged all men to submit new ideas and move lighter with the 11th.

Lt Col John B. Stockton, CO of the 227th Aslt Hel Bn, found that the tentage in his outfit weighed 19,750 lbs. He called Capt Jim B. Aikman, CO of Co B and his men to come up with an idea to reduce pounds.

The men who attended the critique saw the results: a small tent weighing 15 lbs pitched on each side of the aircraft near the fuselage.

The tentage for the outfit now weighs 1500 lbs, a reduction of 17,250 lbs.

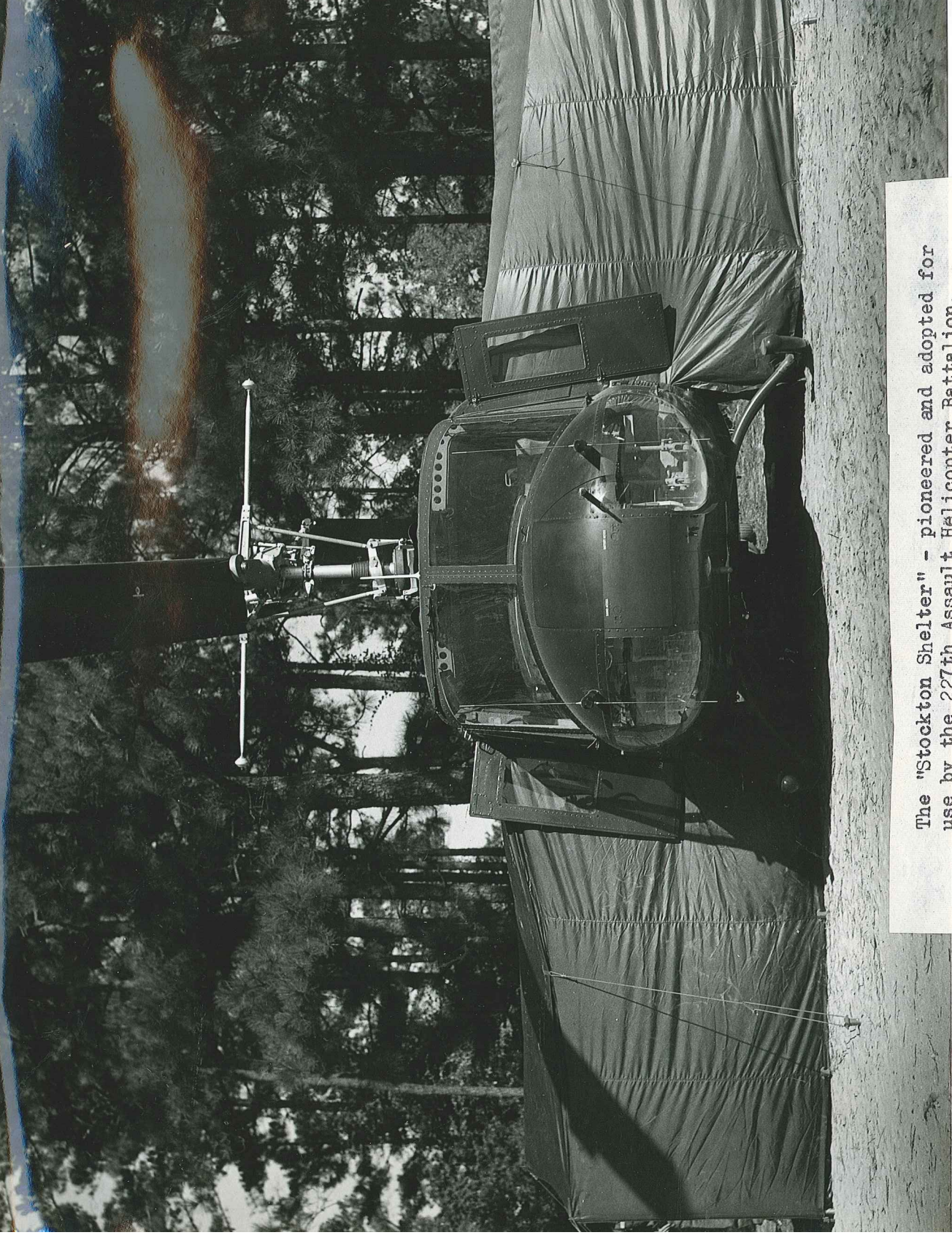
This tent can also be used as a living shelter and a command post where men can work on their aircraft in the field during worst field conditions.

The 227th's new idea has not been adopted yet. They are still looking for better and lighter ways to move.

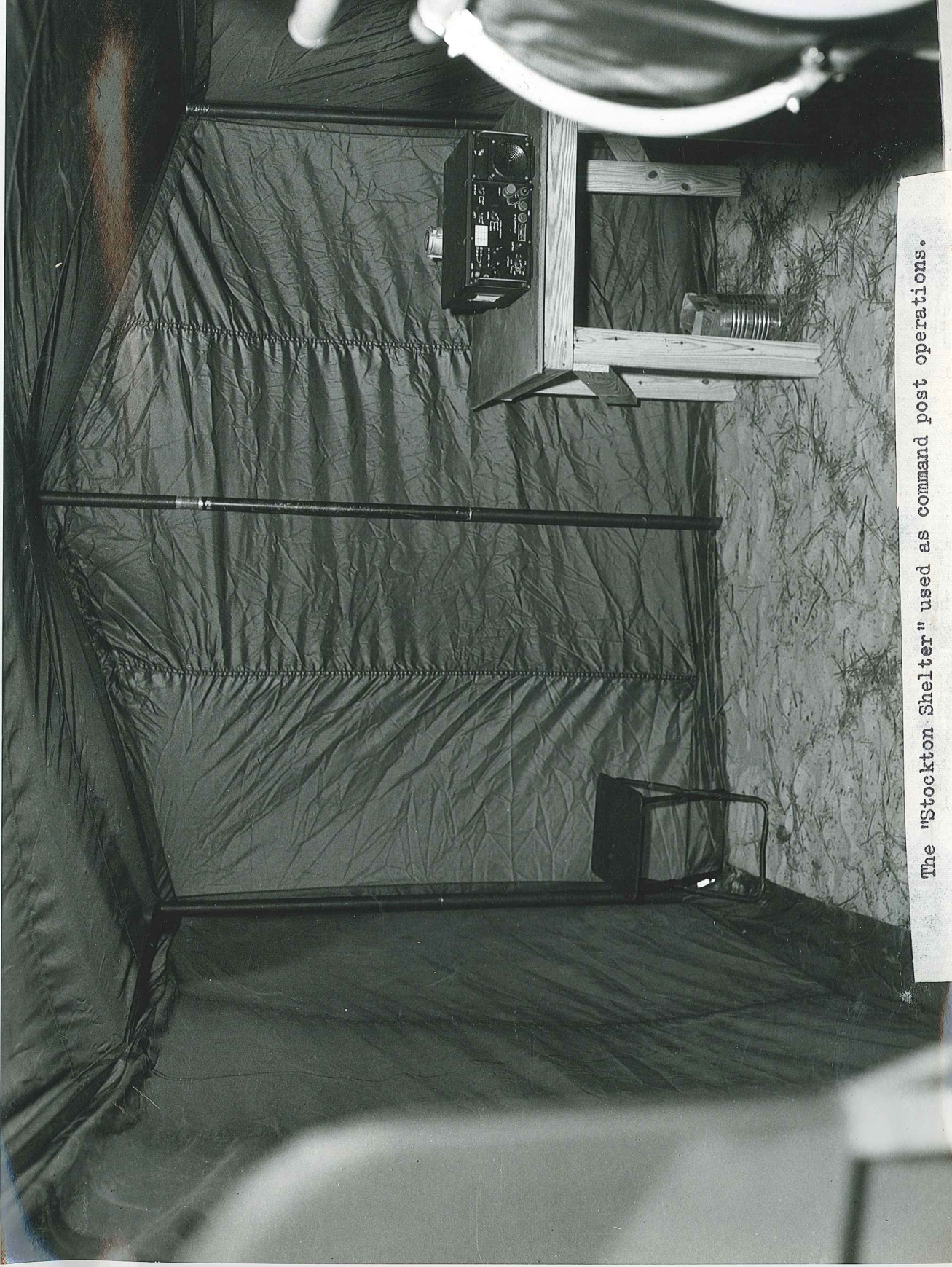
CORRECTION

The 227th Aslt Hel Bn story in yesterday's SKY SOLDIER, should read: A reduction of 18,250 instead of 17,250 -- oops!

*November 63
Sky Soldier*



The "Stockton Shelter" - pioneered and adopted for use by the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion.



The "Stockton Shelter" used as command post operations.



The "Stockton Shelter" used as crew shelter.



The "Stockton Shelter" used as a maintenance work area.

P

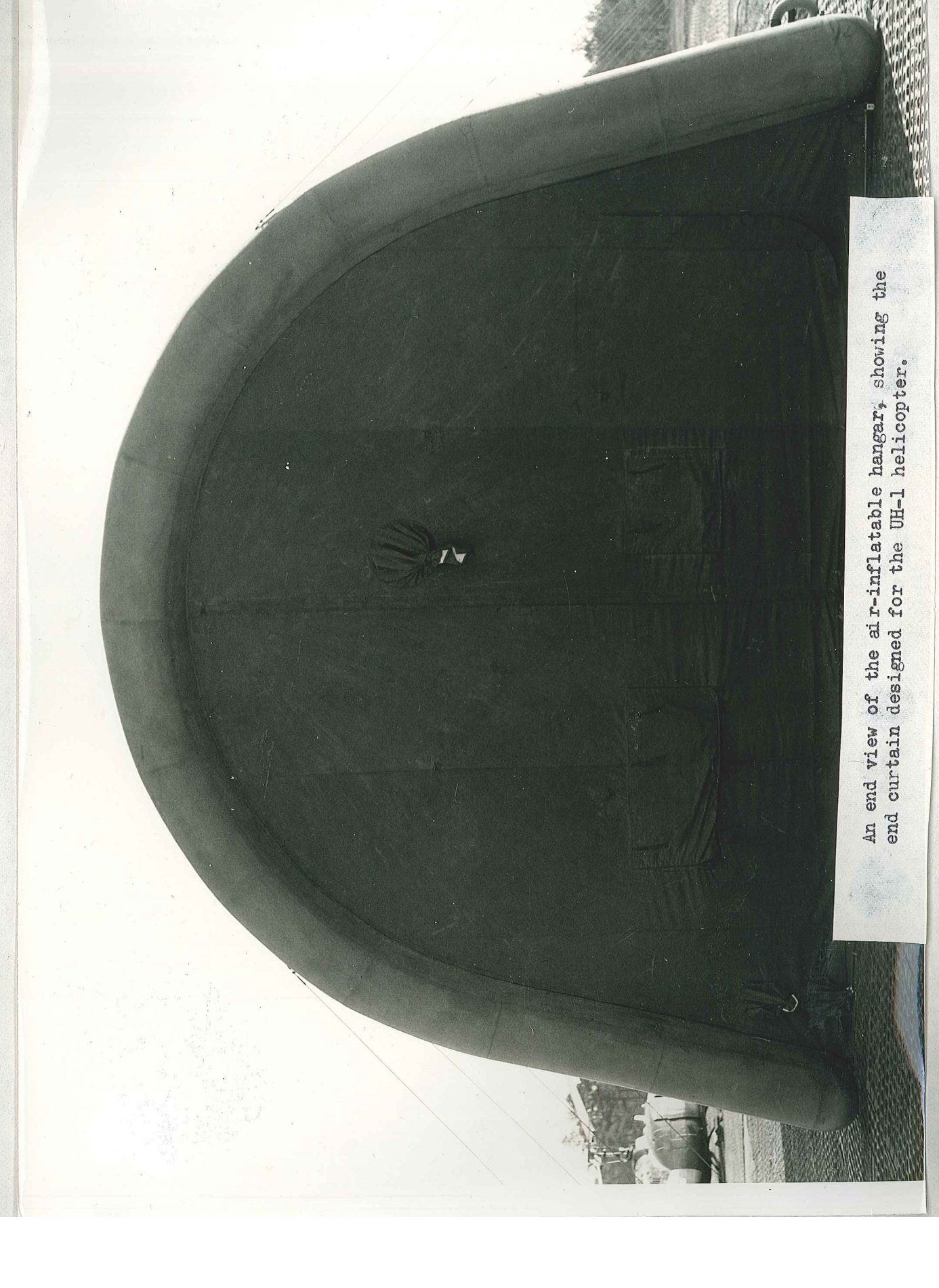


The "Kinard Wheels" being used to move aircraft into a better camouflaged area.





The air-inflatable hangar being evaluated by the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion.



An end view of the air-inflatable hangar, showing the end curtain designed for the UH-1 helicopter.



R

COL STOCKTON TO AVN GRP

Col Cranford

New 227th CO

FORT BENNING.....A veteran of the 101st Abn Div and a Master Army Aviator, Lt Col Jack Cranford has been assigned as commanding officer of the 227th Aslt Hel Bn, 11th Avn Grp.

Lt Col John B. Steckton, who has commanded the 227th since the 11th was activated a year ago, will become Deputy Commander of the 11th Avn Grp.

Col Cranford comes to the 11th from an assignment as Army Liaison Officer in the aeronautical section of Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

In 1947 he attended the Army Aviator School at Camp Gary, Tex., and has since held various positions as an aviation officer in the U.S., Europe, and Korea. Col Cranford has more than 6,000 hours of flying time to his credit.

Reporter Hitches 'Copter Ride

BY JOHN COMBES
Staff Writer

MANILA HELIPORT — Just in case someone in the dark recesses of the Pentagon is soliciting passenger testimonials, let me say I'd ride to that place and back with Col. George P. Seneff's copter and Mohawk pilots.

Seneff's 11th Aviation group, which is the air arm of the Army's new Air Assault Division, comprises a collection of rare birds. And to fly with them is an education and an honor.

They include men like Lt. Col. John Stockton, who established the helicopter program in Viet Nam. CWO Thomas Tolbert another veteran of the rice paddy war in Southeast Asia. Crew Chief Sp. 5 Christopher Holbrook who loves his ship almost as much as his wife Monica. Capt. Robert Wise who is Stockton's exec and loves flying more than anything else. Crew Chief Sp. 5 John Doyle who



STOCKTON

TOLBERT

hopes one day to be a pilot. And the Assault Battalion's newest pilot W. O. Murray Stookley, who flies as a co-pilot and spends every available minute studying the techniques his older, more experienced colleagues have perfected.



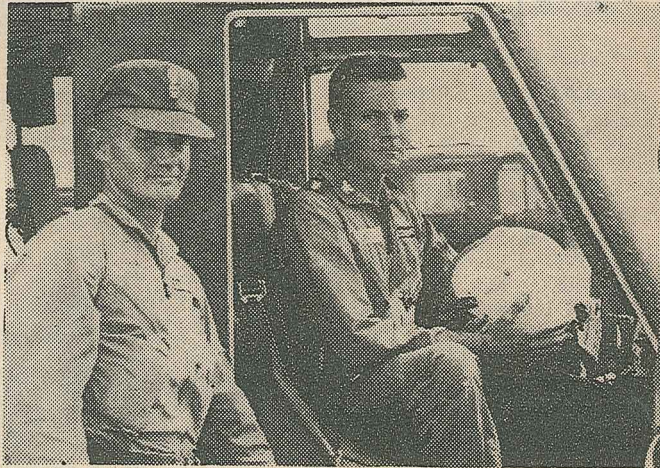
WISE

For 35 minutes yesterday we were privileged to ride in one of the lead Hueys of Lt. Col. John Stockton's 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion which provide a sort of battle field bus service for the sky soldiers of the Air Assault Division.

Our mission was to lift a company of sky soldiers from one position and take them around to the flank of a large guerrilla force. I was assigned to the lead ship of the 2nd Platoon flown by dark, handsome young Texan, Capt. Harold S. Byars.

About 15 minutes before takeoff we were summoned to the briefing room where Capt. Frank (Happy Tiger) Henry and operations officer Lt. Jack W. Crooks briefed pilots on the operation.

"We'll start engines at 1555," said Henry, "in 10 minutes from now. You'll fly in heavy left formation" (meaning there'd be one of the four ships which made



AVIATION GROUP COMMANDER, CREW CHIEF
Col. George P. Seneff (Right), Sp. 5 Holbrook

up our platoon to the right and rear of our lead ship and two ships in line to the left).

Henry had decided on this formation to enable us all to make tighter turns to the right and cut flying distance as we moved into formation.

The troops we were to pick up would be waiting in groups of 28. Each of our ships could carry seven men. We were to land where a green smoke grenade was burning. To our left and right would be other platoons landing on white, pink and violet markers.

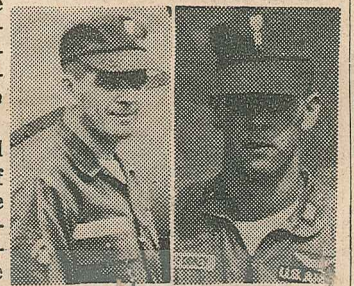
the South. Thus we were pinpointed for almost every minute of our flying time.

Now, as the briefing ended, group commander Col. Seneff rose and congratulated everyone for their performance. Since Sunday morning they had flown hundreds of troop lift and aerial artillery support missions. They had catnapped in the briefing room or in their cars outside. This was to be their last mission. Byars grinned and muttered: "Oh boy, home and sleep tonight." But Seneff reminded everyone that reporting would be 0630 Thursday morning for the next phase of operations.

Strapped into the Huey's co-pilot's seat we donned the big aviators helmet and pressed the little button (like a car dimmer) at our feet to be sure our radio link to the pilot and the other ships was working.

Over the radio came a stream

(Please see RIDE, Page 2)



BYARS

STOOKLEY

Four Heavy Guns

To our left two of the Attack Company's ships, each armed with four heavy machine guns that can fire a total of 2200 rounds a minute and cut a column of men to pieces, were watching over us.

Troops are the most precious load ever consigned to a helicopter pilot and the attack ships were there to protect us. Minutes before we hit the objective area they put their noses down and swept over the landing area raking it with deadly streams of fire.

Switched Again

We switched frequencies again and our radio picked the ground force nearby. The sergeant behind Byars watched the map intently and checked it against the ground he could see from the ship's side windows.

"Here we go," he muttered to his squad and down we went. "Doors," yelled Byars and the sergeant nodded and detailed the last out on either side to close the doors. Then we were down and the troops were out, racing for cover and firing into the bushes in case an ambush might have been set. The doors slid home and in a second we were rising over the pine forests and the sandy banks of Upatoi Creek.

We were headed home and the radio crackled with instructions from Happy Tiger. Then came the voice of Col. Seneff who had observed the operations from his own hip hovering high above us. "See that everyone gets a good night's sleep tonight," he cautioned.

of orders as each platoon took off. We were the fifth ship airborne and our sister ships followed us up over the Highway 27. The four

ship platoon ahead was turning to the right in perfect formation.

"I'm turning more sharply than they are," explained Byars as the sweet note of the Huey's rotor changed to a raucous Blata-Blata-Blata "We'll cut the flying distance."

Now began the time and direction checks. We were on time at the intersection. "Are our ships to the left with us?" asked Byars over the intercomm. They were coming up.

Soon it was time for a frequency change which brought us into radio contact with the sky soldiers on the ground. We were nearing the pickup area fast and "Happy Tiger" told the waiting troops to let the smoke go. Four delicate columns of white, green, pink and violet smoke waited their way skyward and seconds later we were coming down. The ground came up to meet us, and at the last moment the ship reared back like a spirited stallion and we touched down a few feet from the sputtering green smoke bomb.

The troops were crouched in the cover waiting. Now they sprang forward and piled into the cabin. They locked safety belts and the sergeant punched Byars' shoulder to signify doors were closed and the load secured. The lead platoon was already airborne. Our big rotor began to beat the air more rapidly and we rose.

The familiar landmarks now came back into view and we came into land. Byars took the ship in over the vacant copter stands to the last one on his right. He turned and it seemed we hung there for a minute before we came down gently on the runners. From takeoff to landing the operation had taken 35 minutes. In that time we had dealt the enemy a nasty blow, picking up the sky soldiers' spearhead and ramming it into his side.

Byars unstrapped the .45 automatic he had carried on his chest, and went off for some well earned sleep.

[Faint, illegible text]

[Faint, illegible text]

HEADQUARTERS
227TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER BATTALION
11TH AIR ASSAULT DIVISION
Fort Benning, Georgia

AJVAV-AH-C

16 July 1964

SUBJECT: Battalion Flying Time

1. As listed below are the flying times and landings as flown by this battalion for the period 18 February 1963 to 31 March 1964.
2. Total flying time - 21,194 hours.
3. Total sorties - 33,706.
4. Total day landings:
 - a. Battalion - 70
 - b. Company - 1,837
 - c. Platoon - 6,712
5. Total night landings:
 - a. Battalion - 38
 - b. Company - 226
 - c. Platoon - 937
6. A total of 27 pilots have been trained and rotary wing instrument tickets have been issued. Subject personnel are graduates of the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion's instrument program.

for Eugene H Grayson Capt, Army
GENE B. WELCH
Capt, CE
Asst S3

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TO SUPPORT 188TH INFANTRY

60 MEN, 20 CHOPPERS FROM 227TH GO TO FORT STEWART

FORT BENNING...More than 60 men and twenty helicopters from Company D, 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion, 11th AAD Aviation Group departed yesterday for Fort Stewart, Ga., where they will support the more than 650 men from the 1st Battalion, 188th Infantry, who are presently engaged in training near there.

The personnel of the 227th traveled in their own UH-1B and UH-1D IRO-QUOIS helicopters.

The helicopters from the assault helicopter battalion will be used by the infantrymen to drop into aggressor-held territory and flush the enemy out.

Using an action known as "hop, skip and jump," the men of the 188th will clear an area from 6,000 to 8,000 meters ahead of their aircraft, then board the choppers once more and fly to another area to continue the same operation.

The overall exercise, under the command of the 1st Air Assault Brigade commander, Col George S. Beatty, Jr., is the first for the 188th since being formed recently.

*Dec 64
The Sky Soldier*

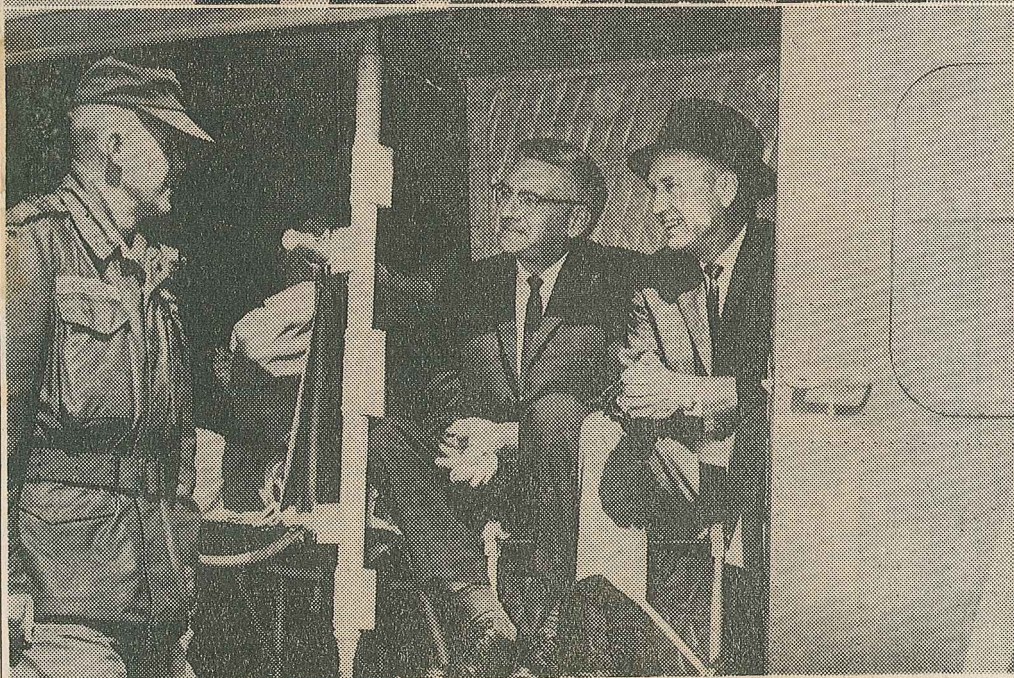
BELL TO GIVE TAILOR - MADE

Two representatives of the Bell Helicopter Company visited the 227th Aslt Hel Bn yesterday for the express purpose of looking over the battalion in its use of the UH-1D in an attempt to create a tailored Delta model for the Division.

The two Tech Reps, a Mr Calista and Mr Carroway, accompanied members of Co D on a formation training flight to get a better idea of the military use of the Delta model so as to make recommendations for modification...

One design change being tested is the 12-passenger version of the Delta model which will enable an extra passenger, such as a forward observer, to accompany the Infantry squad on its mission.

November 63
11 Sky Soldiers



ROTARIANS AIRLIFTED TO FORT BENNING — Members of the Columbus Rotary Club held their Wednesday meeting in the Main Officers Open Mess as guests of fellow club member Maj. Gen. C. W. G. Rich, commanding general at Fort Benning. The Rotarians were airlifted to the post by helicopter, leaving from King's Airport. A total of 160 members and guests attended the meeting. At top are, left to right, Rotarians A. A. Thompson, F. B. Mainor, L. G. Pease, George Mendenhall, before boarding a helicopter with host Sp5 Charles Calhoun. At bottom are, left to right, Capt. George B. Calhoun, commanding officer, Company C, 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion, and Rotarians J. J. Solomon and Thomas King seated in the helicopter. — Enquirer photos by Robie Ray.

FOURINER RANGE MINED

Minefield is
Laid by 227th

FORT BENNING. A hasty mine field was laid at Fouriner Range by B Co with Air support from A Co of the 227th Aslt Hel Bn. The unique methods used in laying this minefield are of notable interest.

An Air Aslt Plt is transported by helicopters to a prearranged area. Markers are distributed from the helicopters flying low over the prearranged course. The detail placing the markers depart the aircraft to wait for the mine laying detail to drop the mines from aircraft moving slowly approximately 8 feet from the ground. The mines are dropped from both sides of the aircraft of about six paces apart.

The mine fields are then photographed for future reference. The mine field now complete is expected to delay the enemy for at least two hours.

To lay 3 minefields of this type was less than 40 minutes for 3 separate platoons.

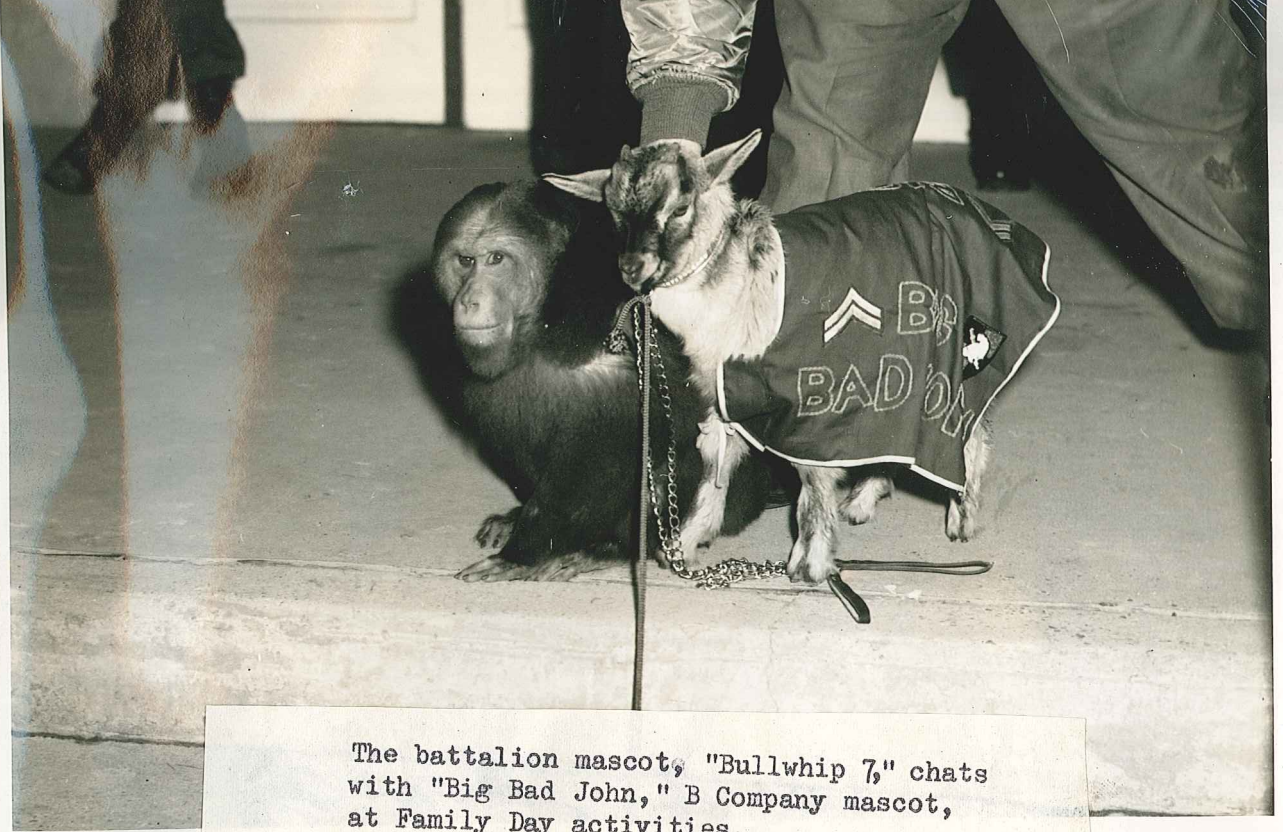


Lightweight maintenance shelter tested
by the 227th.

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"Bullwhip 7" receives orientation in
battalion aircraft.



The battalion mascot, "Bullwhip 7," chats with "Big Bad John," B Company mascot, at Family Day activities.



"THE THINKER"



"Bullwhip 7" being promoted to Private First Class
at retreat ceremonies.

Chimp Mad At Being Left at Post

CAMP BLANDING, Fla. — Bullwhip, a six-year-old chimpanzee and mascot of Fort Benning's 227th Assault Helicopter Bn., was as mad as a chimp can be.

He's been tearing up his cage at Fort Benning because a tardy handler cost him his first chance for a helicopter ride — and an operational one at that.

Bullwhip, like every other member of the battalion, was alerted for an extended flight to Florida yesterday. But even before the alert was broadcast, Bullwhip knew something was up. Call it a chimp's sixth sense, if you wish.

Anyway, he was fuming today. He watched the battalion staff dash into headquarters then dash out again and head for the helicopter pad, and he waited patiently for his keeper to come and get him.

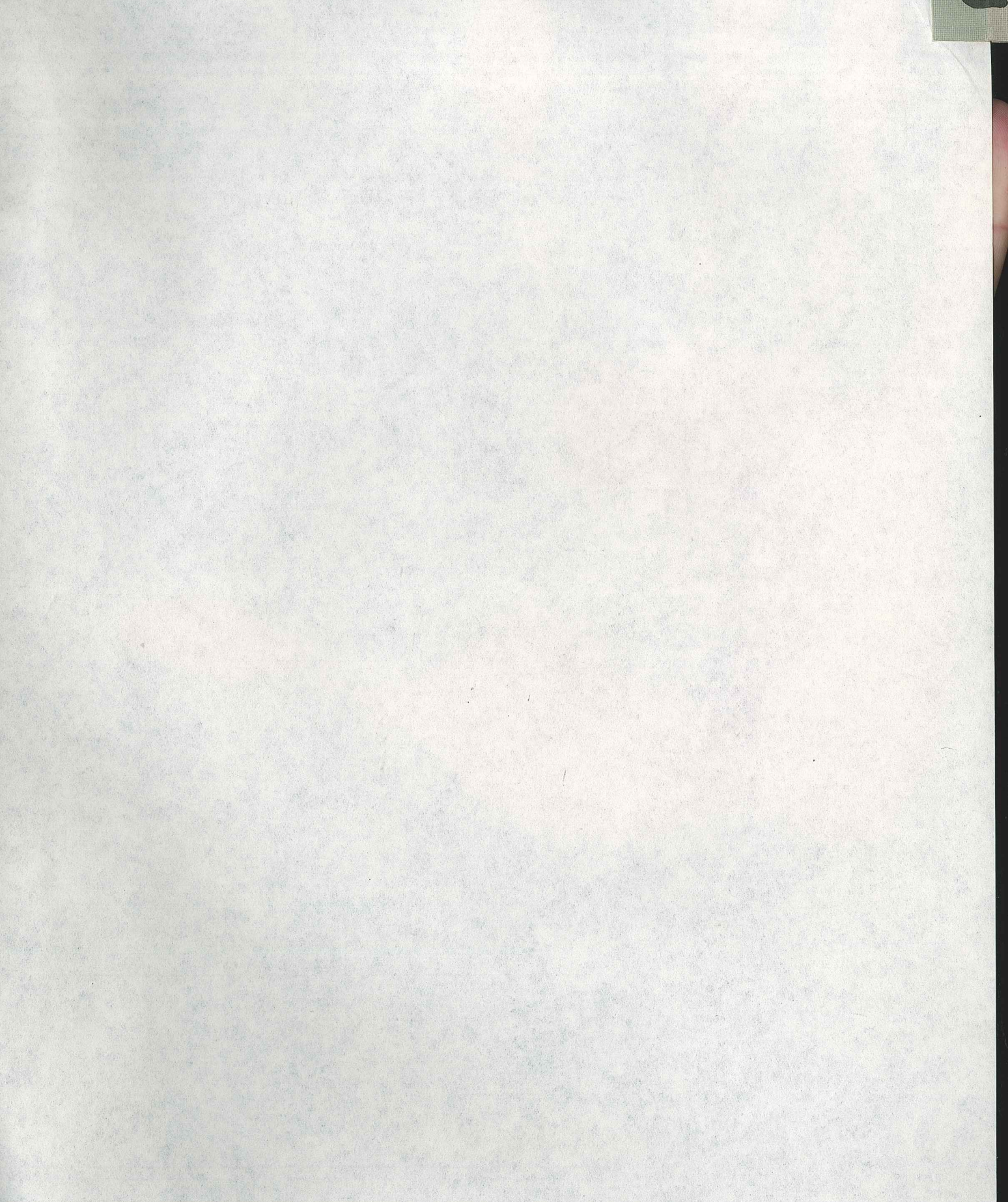
Down on Manila Helipad, television cameramen and press photographers were waiting for Bullwhip, too.

Slowly the minutes to take-off time ticked by, and still no sign of Bullwhip. Calls were sent out by telephone and radio, but that key man, the keeper, couldn't be found. Reluctantly, the cameramen clambered aboard their assigned aircraft and the big rotors began churning the dust.

"I know he'll be mad as hell," said Lt. Col. John B. Stockton, the commander of the battalion. "But it's too late now.

"Poor old Bullwhip. He'll have to come down to Florida with the road convoy now, if he comes at all.

"No wonder he's mad."



11th Air Assault Division Flyer Gets Distinguished Flying Cross

CWO Duane J. Bouza, a member of the 11th Air Assault Division's 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion, recently was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for bravery in Vietnam.

The presentation was made by Maj. Gen. Harry W. G. Kinnard, 11th Air Assault commanding general.

Bouza, a helicopter pilot, was cited for bravery under enemy fire while on a mission in Vietnam, April 6, 1963.

His aircraft was downed by hostile fire, the citation read, and although he was injured, Bouza was instrumental in aiding other members of the crew, evacuating them to a safe area and then returning to the aircraft to render it useless to the enemy.

Another member of the 227th, Capt. Francis P. Barry Jr., was presented an Army Commendation Medal for outstanding service as aviation officer of the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment in Germany from November, 1960, to October, 1963.

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Presentation of awards and decorations
to battalion members.





More awards for the pilots of the 227th.





The 11th AAD Commander, Maj Gen Kinnard,
Presents decorations.





The division commander and battalion staff members honor the flag at retreat formation.



"OPEN HOUSE ACTIVITIES"



"FAMILY DAY ACTIVITIES"



227th To Hold Family Meet

FORT BENNING.....The 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion, commanded by Lt Col John B. Stockton, has scheduled a special briefing and series of films depicting the battalion's activities for dependents at Theater #11 on 8th Division Road.

The special program will be held Saturday, February 1, at 9:45 a.m.

Featured on the program will be an explanation by battalion executive officer Maj Leo Soucek on the functions of the 227th. Special TV film clips will be shown, telling the story of the battalion on Operation Bullwhip in Florida earlier this month. Films of the 227th participation in the AUSA Mobility Symposium last November at Fort Benning will also be shown.

Refreshments will be served to the Sky Soldiers and their families.



LEARN ABOUT 'COPTERS . . . Members of the 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion staged an action-packed Family Activities Day celebration yesterday at Manila Heliport for throngs of spectators. (L-R) 1st Lt. Dale E. Sherrod, project officer, explains how the UH-1B Iroquois helicopter is used by the 11th Air Assault Division Aviation Group Sky soldiers to Mrs. William Shoults, 4938 Havin Court, Columbus, and her children Eric, 2, and Shawn, 1, (in Mrs. Shoults' arms) and Mrs. Albert Lujan and Mr. Lujan of 4701 Pollman St., Columbus.

November 63

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227th AHB
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I. SITUATION.

Circumstances have been such that there has been inadequate time to properly inform all members of the 227th Aslt Hel Bn and their families of the outstanding achievements of recent weeks.

II. MISSION.

The battalion will inform the Officers, Men, and Families of these recent events, and bring together the dependents of the "Pouvoir" battalion for the purpose of providing entertainment, and fellowship.

III. EXECUTION.

a. All members of the 227th Aslt Hel Bn will depart their respective company areas so as to arrive at Post Theater #11, NLT 0945 hours, 1 Feb 64.

b. Anyone whose dependents desire to attend will be released in sufficient time to accompany their families to the theater.

c. All persons will be seated by 0955 hours.

d. TV tapes, AUSA film, and etc. will be shown by the Battalion CommO.

IV. ADMISISTRATION AND LOGISTICS.

a. Each company will have the unit guidon placed in front of theater #11 by 0915 hours.

b. All mascots within the battalion will be on display in front of the theater by 0930 hours. (Bring the zoo)

c. The Battalion Mess Sgt will furnish refreshments after the show.

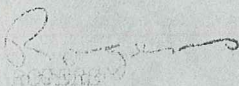
V. COMMAND AND SIGNAL.

a. Battalion Commander - Bullwhip-7.

b. CommO will sort out the details.

STOCKTON
Lt Col

OFFICIAL:


STOCKTON

PLANS SET FOR FAMILY DAY

FORT BENNING..Sky Soldiers of the 227th Aslt Hel Bn will stage a gala Family Activities Day tomorrow at 10 a.m. at Manila Heliport with an action-packed program for all dependent wives and children of the men of the 227th.

From jeep rides to helicopter rides, the day's program promises plenty of excitement for both young and old as dependents have a first opportunity to see "What Daddy does at work" in line with the new Air Assault Concept.

Many kiddie events will dominate the attention of youngsters while static displays of aircraft and equipment will be available for all to see.

Climaxing the events is a scheduled air-show, with aerial demonstrations of the type of flying done in the field on actual operations.

Among the many events is a parachute jump by pathfinders of the 187th, a rappelling exhibition from a helicopter, etc.

The Bell Helicopter Company will furnish a new OH-13 SIOUX, for the purpose of providing rides for the dependents.

*November 63
The Sky Soldier*



Air Assault Personnel Get Awards

Four Sky Soldiers of Company B, 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion, 11th Air Assault Division Aviation Group, were honored by Lt. Col. John B. Stockton, battalion commander, at a retreat ceremony held recently in the battalion area.

The awards included the Army Commendation Medal and Air Medals with oak leaf clusters representing participation in more than 600 aerial missions in Vietnam.

Capt. James E. Stone received the eighth oak leaf cluster to the Air Medal for participating in over 175 aerial missions. He also received the Army Commendation Medal at the ceremony.

Capt. Stone has previously received the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Purple Heart while serving in Vietnam from July, 1962 to August, 1963.

CWO Dewy Little was awarded the sixth oak leaf cluster to the Air Medal for participating in over 175 aerial missions.

Sp5 Melvin J. Stockdale, a crew-chief on a UH-1 Iroquois helicopter, received his sixth oak leaf cluster for participating in more than 175 aerial missions.

CITED FOR BRAVERY UNDER FIRE

Viet Nam Vet From 227th Is Awarded DFC By Gen Kinnard

FORT BENNING....A member of the 11th Air Assault Division's 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion received the Distinguished Flying Cross January 15 for heroism while serving in Viet Nam earlier this year.

CWO Duane J. Bouza was awarded the medal by 11th Air Assault Division commander Maj Gen Harry W. O. Kinnard during a retreat ceremony held at battalion headquarters. Gen Kinnard also cited the pilot for his bravery under fire.

While flying a mission in Viet Nam April 6 of this year, Mr Bouza's aircraft was struck by enemy fire and forced to land. Although wounded, Mr Bouza was instrumental in aiding other members of the crew to safety and then returning to the downed ship to render its weapons useless to the enemy.

The Army Commendation Medal was awarded to Capt Francis P. Barry, Jr. for his service with the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment in Germany during the period from November 1960 to October 1963. Gen Kinnard presented this award to Capt Barry.

Following the presentation of the two medals, the commanding general cited the battalion for its "outstanding performance" during Operation Bullwhip.

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W. H. Soldier