



STRIKE

Vietnam War Weekly History



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Brief History of the 501st, 502nd and 2nd Brigade (101st ABN DIV)

The 502nd, or “five-oh-deuce”, was activated July 1, 1941 at Fort Benning, Georgia as the 502nd parachute infantry battalion, as an experimental unit formed to test the doctrine and tactics of parachute assaults. The 502nd entered combat in World War II on June 6, 1944, by jumping into Normandy, with allied forces landing on D-Day and the Battle of Normandy. Between 1945 and 1964. A major reorganization took place on 3 February 1964, when the 2nd Brigade of the 101st Airborne was activated at Fort Campbell, replacing the 1st Airborne Battle Group, 501st Infantry Regiment. The reorganization from the battle groups to brigades and battalions placed two battalions of the 502nd in different brigades of the 101st.



The 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry was in the 1st Brigade with 1-327th and 2-327th Infantry. Which deployed to Vietnam and arrived at Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam on 29 July 1965, they were commanded by the most notable commander LTC Hank “The Gunfighter” Emerson.



The new 2nd Brigade's original organic battalions were the 1st and 2d Battalions, 501st Infantry, and the 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry. December 1967 the 501st, 502nd and 2nd Brigade deployed by C-141 aircraft and arrived at Bien Hoa Airbase on 13 December 1967. Over the next five years, Soldiers of the “Ready to Go” Brigade participated in twelve campaigns, compiling of a distinguished combat record as well as an enviable reputation for success in the rehabilitation of a war-torn nation. The Brigade redeployed to Fort Campbell in April 1972.



During this week, in the span of 8 years since the 501st Infantry Regiment, 502nd Infantry Regiment and 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division deployed in support of the Vietnam War the following are from After Action Reports, Staff Duty Logs, and Personal Accounts. (* All items have been reproduced from the Unclassified / Declassified Holdings of the National Archives.)

11 – 14 February 1966

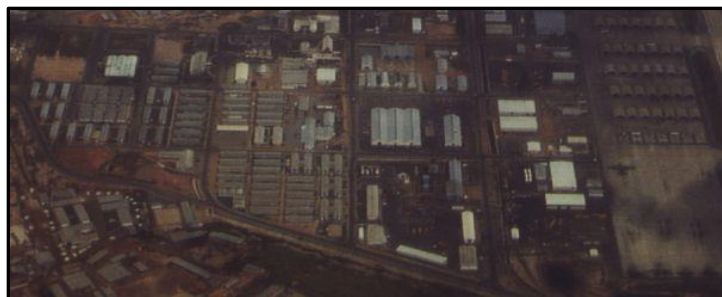
Operation VAN BUREN: The 2-502 IN BN conducted nine (9) squad size RECONDO patrols vicinity BQ995285 at 141545H. A/2-502 IN infiltrated into the area vicinity coordinates BQ950278 the day before Operations CHECKERBOARD. C/2-502 IN discovered a cache of medical supplies, ammunition and explosives vicinity coordinates BQ995285. Results for period 101815HFebruary1966 to 141800February1966 were the following: 2 VC KIA (BC), 2 BC WIA (EST), 1 weapons, 40,000 rounds small arms ammunition, 7 Bangalore torpedoes, 12 grenades and 50 pounds of TNT. (HQ, 2-502 IN; After Action Report, Operation Van Buren; 25 February 1966)

11 - 16 February 1968

Operation TACOMA/HOUSTON: The 2-502 IN BN moved to DA NANG from BIEN HOA. This was conducted in two phases.

11 – 16 February 1968

Operation Unnamed: Operation Began (2-502 IN BN); **Locations:** Bien Hoa Province, RVN; Saigon, RVN; South China Sea; DaNang, RVN; **Task Organization:** (TF Danford): 2-502 IN BN, 1/A/326 ENG, C/2-320 ARTY, IPW, 181 MI Detachment. **Mission:** The 2-502 IN BN moved by motor march from BIEN HOA to Newport, Saigon, and LST to DA NANG, RVN. (AAR 17FEB1968)



The Battalion personnel strength at the beginning of Operation was as follows:

Authorized:	778
Assigned:	681
Present for Duty:	588
Not present for duty:	93

Execution:

Phase I – This phase included the repositioning of cargo and personnel at the Newport docks for further deployment by ship. At 1345H on 11 February the cargo was carried by motor convoy for boarding at Newport. At 0815H on 12 February, the 1st of 2 March units departed BIEN HOA for Newport. The second march unit departed BIEN HOA at 0830H on 12 February.

Phase II – At 1210 hours on 12 February, the 1st LST departed Newport for DA NANG with A/2-502 IN, C/2-320 ARTY, and the command element abroad. At 1130H 12 February, the second LST departed Newport with remainder of the TF.



Results: At 161600H Feb, the last elements of TF Danford closed DA NANG, RVN.

11 February 1968

At 1408H, A/2-501 IN found a freshly dug bunker approximately 1 week old with spider holes; possible mortar position vicinity 545311. Left intake due to no C4. At 1603H. D/2-501 IN received sniper fire from vicinity 541298, checked out area with negative results. At 2017H, reported from higher that A/2-501 IN and B/2-501 IN became OPCON to 1-7 CAV on 120700FEB1968. (HQ, 2-501 IN BN; Daily Staff Journal or Duty Officer's Log; 11 February 1968)


11 February 1969

Operation SHERMAN PEAK/Operation NEVADA EAGLE: A/1-502 IN conducted a C/A from LZ Sally to YD589155 and then conducted RIF operation. B/1-502 IN conducted saturation patrols and established ambush positions. At YD631167, 1st platoon found 6 new bunkers, 70lbs fresh rice, 700 AK-47 rounds, 2 hooches and some tools. C/1-502 IN conducted saturation patrols in the vicinity YD6929. D/1-502 IN continued to provide security for FSB T-Bone. Recon platoon conducted a C/A from LZ Sally to YD589155 and conducted a RIF operation.

11 February 1970

A/1-502 IN, 1st platoon at vicinity 713061 found shot gun shells, not a US manufactured type. A/1-502 IN later found 11 82mm mortar rounds, 3 cans shotgun rounds and a bamboo carrier. Recon found two launching sites for 122mm rockets location 737018.



- 11 February 1970 FSB Rifle was attacked at 0113H with mortar, RPGs and using sappers, the enemy penetrated the perimeter of the two battalions of the 502d ABN IN and the 5th ARVN. Before being driven off by US artillery, aerial rocket artillery, and flareships, the enemy destroyed an aid station and one other building. The nine KIA (eight US, one ARVN) and 15 WIA (12 US, three ARVN) cost the enemy 12 KIA. (HQ, USMACV; Command History 1970, Volume III; 19 April 1971)
- 11 February 1970 **Operation RANDLOPH GLEN:** 2-502 (STRIKE Force) Battalion receives approximately fifty 60mm mortar rounds at Fire Base Rifle. The ground mortar attack is followed by an attack by an unknown number of enemy sappers. The attack lasted for approximately 45 min. The Strike Force troopers successfully repel the attack but not until nine Strike Force Soldiers gave their lives in defense of the firebase, killing 12 NVA. (2-502 Unit History, Vietnam 1970; Approved by LTC Lloyd N. Cosby, IN Commanding) (Rendezvous with Destiny (Volume 3, Number 1); Spring 1970)
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- 12 February 1968 At 1612H, B/2-501 IN found fresh ammo can with apparent Chinese marking at vicinity 564311. One female detainee apprehended at same location. At 1630H, B/2-501 IN enroute to LZ Evans. (HQ, 2-501 IN BN; Daily Staff Journal or Duty Officer's Log; 12 February 1968)
- 12 February 1968 1-502 IN BN continues search and destroy operations east of QUANG TRI and security of LZ Jane. Contact light with 1 WIA by booby-trap.
- 12 February 1969 The Screaming Eagle Division's "orphan" battalion in II Corps, the 3-506 Currahees, was in heavy contact. Charlie Company combat assaulted into a hot LZ in support of RFs and was immediately engaged by the NVA. In a seven-hour firefight, the paratroopers killed 20 enemy while D/2-320 ARTY killed five. Other elements of I Field Force's Task Force South accounted for another 28-enemy killed. Back in I Corps, the 1BDE opened a new offensive operation with a combat assault by 2-502 IN BN north and east of FB Brick. The 2BDE's 1-501 IN BN established a new cordon southwest of FB Sandy. Elsewhere, Screaming Eagles deployed to complement the disposition of ARVN troops for the TET holidays. (Rendezvous with Destiny (Volume 2, Number 1); Spring 1968-69)
- 12 February 1969 **Operation SHERMAN PEAK/Operation NEVADA EAGLE:** The 1-502 IN BN continued with patrols and ambushes. At 1635H at YD582154, Recon platoon-initiated contact on an estimated 10 NVA moving on a trail. The action resulted in 1 US WIA, 1 NVA KIA, 1 AK-47, 4 rucksacks, 1 radio and 1 surgical kit captured.
- 12 February 1970 1-502 IN BN, Recon team 1 found 3 hootches with signs of recent use. Also found a note containing several names.
- 13 February 1968 At 0621H, 2-501 IN, Recon received 2 incoming rounds which landed within 50 meters of their location; no casualties reported. At 0705H, 2-501 IN BN relayed message for B/2-501 IN to have one platoon report to A/2-501 IN to be sued to occupy 2 OP's and to report NLT 0800H. A/2-501 IN informed that B/2-501 IN would supply one platoon to assume responsibility of their section; A/2-501 IN was to move out NLT 0830H. If A/2-501 IN needed a dog team during the day to report it to battalion headquarters and they will have a slick bring one out to their location. C/2-501 IN was to move to a location of their choice and recommended by battalion S3 for movement to grid 538293 to set up a base resupply camp. C/2-501 IN was informed to get max rest during the day and wait for further orders. C/2-501 IN, Commander stated that this was a completed change of mission, of what was discussed before. Battalion informed Recon platoon of same mission with grid coordinate of 49300. B/2-501 IN will be working in grids 5630 & 5631. B/2-501 IN was informed that 2 dog teams will be ready with pickup NLT 0830H. 1-7 CAV informed battalion S3 negative on Bird dog aircraft support today. Possibly if battalion called Division, they might come up with something. C/2-501 IN reported where is to set up camp for the day vicinity. At 0915H, B/2-501 IN reported clearing Camp Evans and proceeding on assigned mission. At 1016H, B/2-501 IN reported that they needed medevac due to Soldiers stepping on booby trap; medevac completed at 1029H with one Soldiers. At 1100H, B/2-501 IN reported injured Soldier apparently was trying to pick up grenade type device – 1SG is checking to make determination. B/2-501 IN apprehended one detainee male, 50yrs old at YD561311 at will returned to Camp Evans. At 1135H, LT Bischoff delivered AO overlay to MAJ Brown 1-30 ARTY – ground clearance for unobserved fires in the AO will be required from 2-501 IN BN. (HQ, 2-501 IN BN; Daily Staff Journal or Duty Officer's Log; 13 February 1968)
- 13 February 1968 1-502 IN BN continues search and destroy operations southeast of QUANG TRI and security of LZ Jane. Negative contact made.
- 13 – 19 February 1968 2-502 IN BN departed by sea on 13 February and on 19 February landed at DA NANG. (Operational Report – Lessons Learned, HQ, 101st Air Cavalry Division, Period Ending 30 April 1968)
- 13 February 1969 **Operation SHERMAN PEAK/Operation NEVADA EAGLE:** 1-502 IN BN continued with patrols and ambushes. At 1100H at YD628166, B/1-502 IN, 1st platoon made contact with an enemy force. The results were 5 US WIA and 1 US KIA. There was negative assessment of enemy casualties. At 0930H at YD578154, Recon platoon made contact resulting in 1 US WIA.



- 13 February 1969 The new Leech Island operation continued as 2-502 IN BN searched for an enemy sapper battalion. 2-501 IN BN continued too recon in the NUI KE area, killing three enemy. 2-17 CAV gunships, while supporting the 9th Marines' Operation Dewey Canyon north of the A SHAU, killed five enemy. 3-506 Currahees discovered 22-1/2 tons of rice. (Rendezvous with Destiny (Volume 2, Number 1); Spring 1968-69)
- 13 February 1970 D/1-502 IN, 3rd platoon is training PF personnel on map reading and the use of a compass. They also are teaching M-16 inspection and cleaning to other PF personnel.
- 14 February 1968 At 0810H, D/2-501 IN reported that they had 2 lightly wounded, still needed to be picked up and needed medical supplies. Medevac request was requested. At 0907H, A/2-501 IN reported about 30 personnel moving over the hill side at vicinity 523297 or they belong to C/2-501 IN. At 1700H, BN XO reported to CO that the move to BEIN HOA will begin on 16 February 1968. The order of movement will be 1-501 IN, 2-501 IN, BDE element 2-502 IN. We do not know how long the movement will take. At present time we do not know the availability of transportation. At 1700H, 3BDE reported that they were moving back at this time about 500 meters from the bridge, we had only 1 casualty. He was KIA. At 1925H, D/2-501 IN reported during search and destroy operation vicinity 631310 found 3 – M-1 rifles, 5 – Carbines, 12 rounds 60mm mortar, 4 magazines, .30 cal. Ammo and miscellaneous web gear. At 1947H, B/2-501 IN reported that they had HI M-79 round impacting 300-400 meters from vicinity 551307. (HQ, 2-501 IN BN; Daily Staff Journal or Duty Officer's Log; 13 February 1968)
- 14 February 1968 During the reporting period the 1-502 IN BN continued S&D (Search and Destroy) operations to the southeast of QUANG TRI and continued to furnish security along QL #10 northwest to HAI LANG.
- 14 February 1969 **Operation SHERMAN PEAK/Operation NEVADA EAGLE:** A/1-502 IN received fire from an unknown element resulting in 1 US WIA. C/1-502 IN move to FSB T-Bone and assumed the security at T-Bone. D/1-502 IN moved off of FSB T-Bone and conducted patrols and established ambushes.
- 14 February 1969 3BDE initiated a new phase of its operation against the 6th NVA Regiment with 1-506 IN BN completing an air assault and beginning a RIF toward FB Sword. Screaming Eagles conducted extensive patrol and RIF operations aimed at thwarting enemy attempts to position for a repetition of 1968's TET Offensive. Four enemy were killed, and 16 weapons captured during the day. The largest haul, of 12 weapons, was found in a hut near Leech Island by Strike Force troopers. Included in the find were nine M-2 carbines, two Chicom SMGs and a Russian SMG. Near NUI KE, paratroopers of 2-501 IN BN killed two VC and captured an RPG launcher and an AK-47. (Rendezvous with Destiny (Volume 2, Number 1); Spring 1968-69)
- 14 February 1969 Near NUI KE, paratroopers of the 2-501 IN BN killed two VC and captured an RPG launcher and an AK-47.
- 14 February 1970 1-502 IN BN, Recon (-) cut LZ at 735020. 1-502 IN BN, Recon team 1 at 738016 engaged 1 NVA/VC with S/A fire. They then made a sweep of the area with negative findings.
- 14 February 1971 1-501 IN BN moved to field location YD934078 just to the south of Anzio, with A/1-501 IN providing security. The elements of C/1-501 IN were taken to PHU BAI Combat Base to conduct nightly ambushes to aid in the defense of the installation.
- 15 – 17 February 1966 **Operation VAN BUREN:** The 2-502 IN BN continued aggressive RECONDO patrolling in the Western Sector of TAOR GOLD during this period discovering many caches with large amounts of equipment and many weapons. The following enemy equipment and weapons were captured: 43 weapons, eight 60mm mortar rounds, 30 uniforms, and 60,000 rounds of various types of small arms ammunition. Enemy results were VC KIA (BC) and 18 VCS. B/2-502 IN moved overland to secure artillery position vicinity CQ091358 on 17 February at 1400H. No contact was made enroute. (HQ, 2-502 IN; Operation Van Buren, After Action Report 150600H January 1966 – 201200 February 1966)
- 15 February 1967 **Operation GATTLING I & II:** No significant contact was made, and the 2-502 IN BN were extracted by helicopter to PHAN THIET. Final results of the operation were 7 VC KHA, 50 detainees, and 3 weapons captured. US losses amounted to 7 US WHA, mostly due to booby traps.
- Although the results of the operation seem negligible, the mere presence of Allied Troops in this area (known as Military Region Six) served to let the VC know that they could not consider any area secure from invasion. MR 6 had unchallenged VC control for several years. During Gattling II, other elements of the 1BDE captured a large amount of signal equipment, indicating that a headquarters of some importance had been operating there prior to Allied penetration of the area.



15 February 1968 D/2-501 IN (Delta Raiders), 2nd platoon and 3rd platoon was conducting a search and destroy mission while proceeding toward Hue. The platoon encountered an unknown number of NVA receiving heavy fire (machine guns, automatic weapons and motors). (A six-hour fire fight ensued. Results: 2nd and 3rd platoon suffered a total of 6 KIAs (2LT Robert Brulte, SGT David Cash, PFC Ernest P Holmes, CPL Wade E. Thackrey, CPL Emanuel F. Burroughs and PFC Henry Tabet). 17 MIAs (Michael Kopay, Billy Barnett, Bernard Hacker, William Heinz, Julio Medina, Robert Rainwater, Eugene Robertson, Kurtland Waker, Joe Dunlap, Ronald Hendrix, David McKieghan, Alex "Doc" Spivey, John Wheat, Dennis Simmons, Barry Rainey, Glen Pechacek, and Robert Gould) with NVA KIAs 56. (From D/2-501 IN incident reports)

15 February 1969 **Operation SHERMAN PEAK/Operation NEVADA EAGLE:** A/1-502 IN, 2nd platoon engaged 2 VC at YD578148 resulting in 1 US WIA, 1 VC KIA and 1 AK-47 captured. B/1-502 IN, 2nd platoon at YD628165 engaged 2 NVA resulting in 1 NVA KIA, 1 NVA WIA, 1 AK-47 and 1 RPG launcher captured. There were negative US casualties. The rest of the 1-502 IN BN continued conducting patrols and establishing ambushes, with C/1-502 IN providing security on FSB T-Bone.

15 February 1969 Scattered contact with squad-size or smaller enemy forces resulted in 11 enemy killed, two prisoners and 16 weapons captured. 2-502 IN BN found seven enemies' dead, later discovered five weapons in a tunnel during patrols north and east of FB Brick. In two brief contacts in the rocket belt, 1-502 IN BN killed one enemy, captured another and took an AK and an RPG launcher. Rakkasans of Company A engaged a squad, killing one enemy, taking a prisoner and four AK-47s, two machine guns and two RPG launchers northwest of FB Katy. (Rendezvous with Destiny (Volume 2, Number 1); Spring 1968-69)

15 February 1970 **Operation RANDOLPH GLEN:** 2-502 IN BN (STRIKE Force) Battalion Command Post was moved from FSB Rifle to Camp Eagle and FSB Rifle was closed. Operations continued in the area north of FSB Rifle with E/2-502 IN occupying FSB Arsenal (YD812082). There was no enemy contact for the next three weeks. (2-502 Unit History, Vietnam 1970; Approved by LTC Lloyd N. Cosby, IN Commanding)

15 February 1971 1-502 IN BN moved to FB Thunderbird with C/1-502 IN manning the perimeter.

15 February 1971 1-501 IN BN moved to FB Thunderbird where it stayed until 18 February when the battalion returned to PBCB for refresher training.

16 February 1968 1-502 IN BN search and destroy operations with 2 Combat assaults by A/1-502 IN and C/1-502 IN. Heavy contact results in 1 KIA, 13 WIA, 1 MIA; Enemy 18 KIA (BC).

16 February 1969 **Operation SHERMAN PEAK/Operation NEVADA EAGLE:** The 1-502 IN BN continued to conduct patrols and ambushes. At YD624166 B/1-502 IN, 2nd platoon engaged 1 NVA with small arms resulting in 1 NVA KIA and 1 SKS captured. Later in the day the 2nd platoon engaged another NVA at the same location resulting in 1 NVA KIA and 1 AK-47 captured. At YD694306, D/1-502 IN, 2nd platoon engaged 3 sampans and sunk one of them.

16 February 1969 Screaming Eagles moved into defensive positions in the evening for a 24-hour TET holiday ceasefire. Earlier encounters with small enemy groups resulted in six killed and nine weapons captured. B/2-502 IN found seven hooches with bunkers and five weapons. First Strike troopers killed two enemy and captured their weapons. (Rendezvous with Destiny (Volume 2, Number 1); Spring 1968-69)

16 February 1969 B/2-502 IN found seven hooches with bunkers and five weapons. The "First STRIKE" troopers killed two enemies and captured their weapons.

16 February 1970 A/1-502 IN BN combat assaulted onto a closed FB Normandy YD690017 in order to reopen it in support of FB Spear and an operation in the AO. 2nd and 3rd platoons were tasked to stay on the hill as security for the 105's and 1st platoon was tasked to patrol and set up nightly ambushes at the base of the mountain.

16 February 1970 B/1-502 IN received transmission on radio from an unknown location. They identified themselves as lawyer 71,72,74 and 76.

17 – 19 February 1966 **Operation VAN BUREN:** The 2-502 IN BN (-) in Southern sector of TAOR GOLD continued aggressive RECONDO patrolling during the period of 17-19 February. Results of actions for this period were: 1 VC KBA, 2 VCS, 1 KIA (BC) and 1 AA gun mount captured. The 2-502 IN BN closed TUY HOA South Airfield on 20 February at 0835H terminating Operation VAN BUREN. (HQ, 2-502 IN; Operation Van Buren, After Action Report 150600H January 1966 – 201200 February 1966)

17 – 22 February 1967 **Operation FARRAGUT:** The Brigade initiated search and destroy operations in the western portion of the LE HONG PHONG Forest. Airmobile assaults were conducted by all the battalions at first light from PHAN THIET and SONG MAO to selected LZ's in the AO and following a B-52 strike at 1000H, all elements-initiated search and destroy operations and extensive patrolling to deny enemy egress out of the area. 2-502 IN BN along with 2 DS CIDG platoons conducted search and destroy operations to SE.

The airmobile assault phase of the operation was conducted prior to an in conjunction with the B-52 strike. All elements of the blocking force and assault elements from 1-327 IN BN, 2-502 IN BN were in position prior to the B-52 strike and the airmobile assault continued during the B-52 strike. The operation during the period of 17-22 February was characterized by numerous, but light contact and frequent encounter with mines, booby traps, snipers and harassing fire. The 2-502 IN BN during this period discovered numerous base camps and fortified positions ranging in size from 17-100 bunkers. (HQ, 1BDE, 101st ABN DIV; After Action Report, Operation FARRAGUT)



17 – 27 February 1967

Operation FARRAGUT II: Location: Phan Thiet, Song Mao, Di Linh, Le Hong Phong Forest, Binh Thuan and Lam Dong Provinces. **Type:** search and destroy. **Controlling headquarters:** 1st BDE, 101st ABN DIV **Task organization:** 1-327 IN, 2-327 IN, 2-502 IN, 2-320 ARTY, B/1-30 ARTY, A/2-17 CAV, A/326 ENG, 2-7 CAV (17-22 Feb), A-237 Luong Son (two cos), 4th Troop 8th ARVN ACS. **Execution:** The second phase of Operation FARRAGUT began two days after the termination of GATLING II by the brigade minus and one day after Task Force THUNDERBALL moved to SONG MAO. On 17 Feb the brigade-initiated search and destroy operations in the western portion of the LE HONG PHONG Forest, conducting combat-assaults with all battalions at first light from PHAN THIET and SONG MAO to selected LZs following a B-52 strike. 2-7 CAV from Operation BYRD screened the brigade's southwestern flank while a troop from the 8th ARVN ACS reopened Route 1 between PHAN THIET and SONG MAO. Contact was light. On 22 Feb, 2-7 CAV returned to PHAN THIET and 2-502 IN was extracted back to SONG MAO. On 23 Feb, the brigade began operations in the eastern portion of the LE HONG PHONG Forest, again encountering only light resistance. On 24 Feb, in response to a request for assistance from LAM DONG Province, 2-502 IN and C/2-320 ARTY conducted airmobile assaults from SONG MAO to selected LZ west of DI LINH and began search and destroy operations to locate an estimated VC battalion which had ambushed local ARVN forces. On 25 Feb, a company from 2-502 IN made contact with an estimated two-company force southwest of DI LINH, killing 9 while losing 1 KIA and 8 WIA. On 27 Feb, the brigade terminated operations in both areas and extracted to SONG MAO to conduct maintenance and prepare for future operations in the FARRAGUT AO. (Vietnam Combat Operations – A chronology of Allied combat operations in Vietnam; Stephane Moutin-Luyat; 2011)

17 – 22 February 1967

Operation FARRAGUT IV: After spending 2 days on maintenance and training at the PHAN THIET Base Camp the STRIKE FORCE initiated Operation FARRAGUT IV with an air assault into 3 LZ's to the northeast of PHAN THIET in BINH THUAN Province. The area under attack permitted the enemy to dominate Highway 1 from PHAN THIET to SONG MAO and allowed them free access to a long portion of coast line. Platoons of CIDG from LONG SON were attached to both A/2-502 IN and B/2-502 IN. The artillery moved overland behind a major road opening operation to the new TAC CP, located at LONG SON.

As the maneuver elements began search and destroy operations to the south, rice and water caches were discovered in the vicinity of small VC campsites. C/2-502 IN conducted a successful night ambush on a carrying party of 12 VC on 19 February, killing 4 and capturing 1 AK-47. During the period of 17-22 February, several other small contacts were made, generally involving carrying parties. These parties consisted of 2 to 4-armed VC escorting male and female bearers; they moved at night along major and secondary trails.

This AO as a low, rolling sandy, brush covered area characterized by extreme dryness, and for the first-time units had to be resupplied with water every other day. Since LZ's had to be cut with machetes, (this requiring several hours) movement was seriously curtailed. The CIDG were under a very severe handicap, as they carried only 2 canteens, instead of 4 as the GI's did. To make matters worse, Soldiers began to suffer from vomiting and stomach cramps. This was attributed to impure water being used to resupply the troops.

17 February 1968

2-501 IN BN was assigned to mission of providing security for the AN LO Bridge located northwest of HUE. While enroute to the AN LO Bridge, the Battalion received a change in mission and proceeded to LZ Sally where it marshaled with the 3d Brigade, 1st ACD in preparation for Operation Jeb Stuart.

17 February 1968

1-502 IN BN continues search and destroy operations southeast of QUANG TRI and conducted one combat assault with A/1-502 IN into the same area as contact on 16 February. Heavy contact resulted in 1 KIA and 11 WIA with negative enemy assessment.

17 February 1968

The Death of Lieutenant Pershing by Charles E Allen: Forty-three years ago, I was a PFC, Light Weapons Infantryman (11B2P) in A Company, 1/502 Infantry Battalion, 101st Airborne Division then Commanded by Captain Terrance Spiegelberg who had replaced the late Captain Joseph Holland (KIA, 2/1/68). I had joined the division in October 1967 and had deployed with the 2nd Brigade to the Republic of South Vietnam in December of that year. I started out in the 2nd platoon but over the course of the ten months, with the division in country, I eventually ended up in all four platoons to include the mortar platoon. Anyone who has ever been a foster child can tell you that getting bounced around from home to home is not a particularly good feeling, but it does and can provide dividends. For example, you get to know and serve with a lot more people; Perhaps more like a minor military dependent than an unwanted, foster child. I guess you could say, I was expendable but hey, it's a tough life. When I think back to those adrenalin fused days in the field under Spiegelberg, I can still see him and his Radio Operator (RTO), the ungodly, brash, SP4 Jesse George battling for control of the company to the point of almost coming to blows. I once heard George respond to a Spiegelberg threat by telling him, "IF you thought you could kick my "expletive," you'd have done it a long time ago so let's try to reason this out like grown men (SMILE)." Although you're talking about an officer and a subordinate in a relationship brimming with insubordinate overtones, these guys were extremely devoted to each other. Military humor being what it is, George was often teased about being Spiegelberg's illegitimate son, I know with a certainty that there's nothing one wouldn't have done for the other in life.

In February of 1968 I was reassigned from the 2nd platoon to the 1st platoon, commanded by Lt. Richard Pershing who was most ably supported by legendary SSGT Jorge Otero-Barreto, often called and recognized as the most decorated soldier of the Vietnam War (see Wikipedia). Attention is further directed to the documentary "Brave Lords" concerning the same. If my memory has not failed me, I believe we were operating from a hardscrabble, firebase called Landing Zone (LZ) Jane. This was during the height of the Tet Offensive and the monsoons; we were scared, cold and wet all of the time (not necessarily in that order). Hunger was another whole issue unto itself. There was another treatment done on this story which I considered woefully inaccurate, it is my desire to the best of my ability to set the record straight.

In the early morning hours of February 16, 1968, A Company boarded Huey helicopters for an Air Assault on an NVA held village in Thua Thien Province. This was the largest Air Assault I had participated in up to that time and I remembered thinking as we flew along, this is not going to end well. My feelings of foreboding were born out when we jumped/fell out of



the choppers onto what was called in the vernacular, a Hot LZ! We formed up on line and proceeded to advance rapidly toward our objective under rifle fire that went from intense to withering with the 2nd platoon absorbing the brunt of the fire. As I looked to my left, I watched in dismay as many of my former 2nd platoon buddies were cut down. I remember thinking selfishly, that would have been me. On the other hand, I saw my former platoon sergeant amongst them with his right forearm shattered and I knew with a certainty that he would not be putting me on "Point" anymore, which he was very fond of doing. You think of a lot of things in these very compressed situations that the uninitiated could never imagine. We proceeded to cross a little canal in front of the village and breached the hedgerow that many Vietnamese villages have surrounding them. There was a 45-degree incline in this portion of the village - if you saw Hamburger Hill, it looked very much like that. As we proceeded up the hill, we started taking sporadic gunfire, not particularly troubling but enough to kill you, when all of a sudden there was this loud, ominous swoosh and a contrail coming down the hill. For those of you who have never experienced a Rocket Propelled Grenade (RPG) coming at you, by the time you realize what happened, it's too late. I heard Lt. Pershing say with a sigh of relief, "That damn thing almost hit me in the head!" He ordered us out of the village at this point and we were soon airlifted out of the area and taken back to either LZ Jane or An Lo Bridge; I can't remember which at this point. I do remember that on the ride back, I had the very exhausted but satisfied feeling of a survivor. I was saddened to learn later that we had lost Sp4 Randall Saunders and Sp4 Valentine Vollmer who was the assistant gunner to M60 machine gunner, PFC Matt DuRousseau. I remembered Vollmer well from Ft. Campbell because he was a very amiable, good hearted kid out of Wisconsin who once told me during a pre-deployment soul searching moment that he became a paratrooper because he wanted his father to be proud of him. Vollmer's death was compounded by the fact that because of the intense fire, repeated attempts to remove his body from the village had proven futile. Of the 3 people who had been with him when he died, two of them, Otero and Sp4 Ronald Nye were wounded- Nye three times. In the end, it was literally all they could do to save themselves. I cannot speak for other units but in the 101st leaving a man behind was something that just wasn't done. That night I overheard some of the officers say, "We're going back tomorrow to get Vollmer!"

In the cold, early morning hours of February 17, 1968, we stood in line as we had the day before waiting for the Huey's to come pick us up for our second assault on the aforementioned village. I do not know with certainty, but I believe that our primary objective was the retrieval of our fallen brother. Waiting with us was the intrepid Otero with his leg bandaged from the day before, ready and more than willing to face the enemy again. What a marvel he was, the average Troop would have milked that wound for at least a month. I had an advantage that I did not have the day before. This time I knew what to expect, it was terrifying and comforting all at the same time. Picture if you will the helicopter assault in "Apocalypse Now" minus the goofy Hollywood BS. Our pilot came in low over the village and did a very, tight, bank turn. As I looked directly down from my seat in the chopper doorway, I could see combatants with AK-47s running from house to house which up to this time I had never seen before. I got the distinct impression that they were positioning themselves to their best advantage in order to meet out as much mayhem upon us as possible; there wasn't going to be any running today! By my best estimate, we landed about 100+ yards from the hedgerow of the village which was also separated from us by a rice paddy. Disembarking was a little more orderly than the day before but the paddy in this area was kind of deep; the water was at least waist high. Imagine walking in this with a foot of mud under that. It was arduous and time consuming but safe because it lowered your profile to an enemy watching you advance; there was less of you to shoot at. I don't know when it happened, but somebody got up on the rice paddy dike, followed by the rest of us in rapid succession. This was a Cardinal Sin in Southeast Asia because you had negated the advantages you had by walking in the paddy. We walked down the dike to the point where it connected with another dike which ran horizontal to the village hedgerow; we turned left and proceeded on. I looked at the hedgerow (which was somewhere I guess between 50 and 100 yards away by conservative estimate) and saw in the distant an image which will be frozen in my memory for the rest of my days. From under the water in the canal rose a small, brown, wet figure with black pajama pants clinging to his small frame. He raised what looked like a broom stick to shoulder level and fired! I saw a black bead and gas escape from the stick. My brain recognized all too late the terrible swoosh sound from the day before. I don't know whether it was the grenade or it's vapor trail, but something passed so close to my head that I was flipped over backward. In my bodies rotation, I observed Lt. Pershing seemingly cart wheeling in the air in slow motion, his final sound in life audibly escaping his lungs. There were other men clustered around Pershing that had also been wounded by the explosion that killed him. They were at this point floundering in the rice paddy water trying to reconnect to real world time! As my brain made adjustments, I also observed that the Field First Sergeant's hand was badly mangled. You can do a lot of things when you're terrified out of your wits and one of them is the ability to run very rapidly over water. With the exception of the medic Dave Kraus who stayed behind to tend the wounded, this is exactly what we did with great dispatch to a distance about thirty to forty yards back from the position we were fired upon. This was by no means an orderly retreat and we again found ourselves faced with yesterday's dilemma, we had left Lt. Pershing's body behind. As we kneeled/sat, gasping for breath, SSG Thomas Hall stated, "We (?) gotta go back and get Lt. Pershing." He instructed me, PFC Joe Sanchez and two other individuals whose names are loss to history to retrieve Pershing. After a few moments to catch our breath, we proceeded to do this under very intense, hostile fire that was sending up ominous geysers of water around us as we moved to our task with great haste. If you're looking for an image, think of the bullet strikes in the opening sequences of "Saving Private Ryan." Now that I've thought more about it, it seems like the distance back to Pershing was more than 40 yards but under the prevailing conditions it might as well have been 40 miles! The impact of the RPG had completely crushed Pershing's head; I don't remember whether we put him in a poncho or not, but we managed to get him back roughly to our starting point where a medevac had landed. As we placed Pershing's body onto the chopper, I observed a Rolex Oyster on his wrist that I knew it would never make it back home to his family. If this was a football game which it obviously wasn't, this would be the point when the halftime comes because we were too tired, decimated and beat up to continue. I've have talked to other participants in this battle who say there were three RPGs fired at us that day. I know these people, I know them to be credible and I believed them, but Helene Allen's baby boy can only remember the one that almost got him.

Captain Spiegelberg radioed LZ Sally for some reinforcements and B Company which had been positioned at LZ Sally as a reactionary force, sent some guys out to help us, as I remember five men. On this day SSGT Hall was undoubtedly acting as my Guardian Angel. He told me to go down to Spiegelberg's position because he wanted to talk to me (?). When I arrived at his position I observed some 90-millimeter recoilless rifles (90) on the ground with ammo. With the Bravo



Company replacements and the chosen Alpha Company personnel, Spiegelberg began to tell us what he wanted done. He instructed us to go down to the edge of the village, close to the hedgerow and fire the 90 rounds into it because he felt that snipers in the village were using it as a vantage point. I stood there trying to collect my thoughts and muster my courage when CPL Billy Myers (KIA, 5/7/68) who was the leader of the detail said, "What's the matter with you, you want to live forever?" I responded in the affirmative but reached down to pick up the 90 anyway. As my hand touched the 90, it was knocked away by the hand of PFC Henry Gregory from B Company who stated, "I'll take this, I fired expert on it in Advanced Infantry training (AIT)." I looked at Gregory for a moment who I didn't know. He was the embodiment of the cockiness of youth and its innocence all wrapped into one. I told him it didn't make any difference to me and that I would carry the rounds and be the loader. We ran under sporadic fire down to the edge of the hedgerow followed by the others, PFC Frank Hoge also from B Company was immediately behind us carrying the M60 Machine gun. When we got into position, I loaded a round into the back of the recoilless rifle and laid down beside Gregory who quickly fired off a round. We repeated the procedure but this time as I laid down next to him, watching him adjust the sights, I saw his head slump over the 90 and he exhaled; he did not inhale again. I didn't get excited or scared, I didn't try to shake or revive him because I knew in that instant, he was gone, the thought screamed through my Tired brain, "Sweet Jesus, that was supposed to be me!" As I turned to my right rear I saw Hoge being shot off of the M60 from about 10 yards' distance. I never heard the round that killed Gregory or Hoge. At this point, I don't believe I was afraid of dying anymore, there was nothing left for the rest of us to do but end this murderous folly; the snipers simply got us before we could get them. We collected our dead comrades and returned to Spiegelberg's command post where one of the kids from B Company was in an understandable, very, foul mood. He stated, "If we hadn't come out here to help you, our people would still be alive." I felt like I was coming apart at the seams but there wasn't any point in coming unglued or crying because I knew there would be other days like this and worst.

From December 26, 1967 to February 17, 1968 the 1/502nd Infantry Battalion had lost 100 men. With the aid of National Archives records, I've come up with the figure of 22 wounded and 5 killed for the action described above. A Company retired to LZ Jane to Stand Down because it was no longer able to function as such, we were in desperate need of the replacements. On February 19, 1968, which also just happened to be my birthday, I ran into new replacement, SGT. James Holmes in the company tent, I made it my business to try and scare him with some war stories which I had become pretty good at. I always liked to think that I scared him the right way because he went on to win a Silver Star at the historic battle of Phouc Yen a couple of months later. Also, in this new group was Charles "Country" Cole who went on to become a 1/502nd writer of some renown, Wallace Chavis who was also the recipient of a Silver Star at Phouc Yen, Ben Jones who was tragically lost on March 22, 1968 while on ambush and Michael "Music Man" Shramko who died heroically on March 8th at the Battle of Ap Dong Lam. On this eventful morning, I was assigned to go on a mine sweeping, road detail and I had made all preparations to do. Just prior to reporting for duty I went to the slit trench to relieve myself when I noticed some blood in my stool. Thoughts about my own mortality started to run through my head; well at least I'd be going home. I was back in the 2nd platoon at this point so I reported my condition to SSGT. Gelasio Gomez, Jr. (KIA, 5/1/68, Phouc Yen) who informed me that he was going to put me on sick call and send me to the infirmary. He further informed me not to concern myself about the detail because my place would be taken by one of the new replacements. Somewhat to my dismay the doctor very quickly corrected my C-ration- induced, hemorrhoid condition and I was deemed fit to return to the field. I consoled myself and celebrated my birthday by eating a case of tootsie rolls that I had borrowed from a special provisions box that I found. Later on, that day, I was informed that the kid that took my place on the detail was blown up when he stepped on a vehicular mine that a truck had run over prior to his stepping on it. His name was Ronnie Harrell; he had been in Alpha Company all of two hours. This was the point in my life when I started to think in earnest that maybe the Great Master had something else in mind for me.

I saw SSGT Hall shortly afterward at An Lo Bridge. He informed me that they (?) were putting the members of the 1st platoon who had participated in the retrieval of Lt. Pershing's body, in for the Bronze Star w/V device. We didn't get it, and Hall died in 1991. It's a little late for that now but life gave many of us other rewards that we could have never imagined at that time. Just the opportunity to have had a full life and grow old is reward enough in and of itself. I remember when I could jump out of airplanes, now I can't even jump out of bed.... but that's alright! As for our fallen comrade, Valentine Vollmer, his remains were ultimately recovered on March 19, 1976 and returned to his family. It has been many years since he was physically with us, but he has never been absent from our heart.

17 February 1969

Operation SHERMAN PEAK/Operation NEVADA EAGLE: 1-502 IN BN assumed a primarily defensive posture as today was the start of TET ceasefire. The only activity was the sending out of security patrols.

17 – 18 February 1970

C/2-502 IN found five booby traps made from 60mm mortar rounds scattered along a well-used trail. The next day, C/2-502 IN, 1st platoon found another booby trap on an LZ. During this time, the O-Deuce was selected as the 101st Division's IRF (immediate reaction force). C/2-502 IN was appointed the Battalion IRF with 1st platoon designated to be the first to respond to a situation. (Mighty Men of Valor: With Charley Company on Hill 714-Vietnam 1970, by John G. Roberts)

17 February 1971

A/1-501 IN vicinity YD930986 discovered one 60mm mortar round booby trap. Recon Team 1 detonated three booby traps vicinity YD99490. Results 3 US WIA. B/1-501 IN vicinity YC922989 found an enemy sleeping position for 9-10 men. There were no signs of any recent enemy activity. A/1-501 IN vicinity YC923987 found one bunker and four 82mm mortar rounds. C/1-501 IN engaged 5-6 enemy 200 to 200 meters to the northwest of their position vicinity YD888028. ARA and Pink Team were employed with negative findings. Bunker 14 on OP Thunderbird sited 4-5 enemy crossing road into bushes vicinity YD902023. Mortar fire and automatic weapons fire was employed with negative results. Medivac requested for one US wounded from the back blast from a claymore mine.



During this week, in the span of 8 years since the 501st Infantry Regiment, 502nd Infantry Regiment and 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division deployed in support of the Vietnam War the following awards were awarded to the service members during combat operations.

1 x Distinguished Service Cross (1 x Posthumously)
4 x Silver Star Medal (1 x Posthumously)
2 x Bronze Star Medal with Valor
10 x Bronze Star Medal (10 x Posthumously)
48 x Purple Heart Medal (35 x Posthumously)
40 x Air Medal
1 x Died from Non-hostile injuries or illness

11 February 1970



PFC Timothy C. Farrell (B/2-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and from wounds received which resulted in his death from small arms fire wounds when attacked on FSB Rifle while on combat operation when a hostile force was encountered 16k W-SW of Phu Bai in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam.

11 February 1970



SP4 Vincent M. La Rocca (B/2-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and from wounds received which resulted in his death from small arms fire wounds when attacked on FSB Rifle while on combat operation when a hostile force was encountered 16k W-SW of Phu Bai in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam.

11 February 1970



SP4 Raymond R. Moon (HHC/2-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and from wounds received which resulted in his death from artillery, rocket or mortar wounds while at an artillery firing position when attacked on FSB Rifle while on combat operation when a hostile force was encountered 16k W-SW of Phu Bai in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam

11 February 1970



PFC Morgan L. Cahoon (E/2-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and from wounds received which resulted in his death from artillery, rocket or mortar wounds while at an artillery firing position when attacked on FSB Rifle while on combat operation when a hostile force was encountered 16k W-SW of Phu Bai in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam

11 February 1970



SP4 John J. Burns Jr. (HHC/2-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and from wounds received which resulted in his death from artillery, rocket or mortar wounds while at an artillery firing position when mortar attacked on FSB Rifle while on combat operation when a hostile force was encountered 16k W-SW of Phu Bai in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam

11 February 1970



PFC Harold W. Shuler (E/2-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and from wounds received which resulted in his death from artillery, rocket or mortar wounds while at an artillery firing position when attacked on FSB Rifle while on combat operation when a hostile force was encountered 16k W-SW of Phu Bai in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam



11 February 1970



SGT Robert R. Davis (E/2-502 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart (Posthumously) for military merit and from wounds received which resulted in his death from multiple fragment wounds while at an artillery firing position when attacked on FSB Rifle while on combat operation when a hostile force was encountered 16k W-SW of Phu Bai in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam

11 February 1970



PFC Marlin T. Peterson (E/2-502 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart (Posthumously) for military merit and from wounds received which resulted in his death from multiple fragment wounds while at an artillery firing position when attacked on FSB Rifle while on combat operation when a hostile force was encountered 16k W-SW of Phu Bai in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam

11 February 1970

SGT Danny E. Chavez (HHC 2-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal for military merit and for wounds received in the Republic of Vietnam. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV, General Order Number 6936; 19 June 1970)

12 February 1969



SP4 Antonino Ruggeri (A/2-502 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from small arms gun fire wounds while on combat operations when engaged hostile force in a firefight in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam. SP4 Ruggeri was admitted to a military hospital, placed on the VSI list and later expired.

13 February 1968



CPT Felix Sosa-Camejo (C/1-501 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from small arms gun fire wound received when he engaged hostile force in firefight while on combat operation during USMC retaking Hue City, in the Quang Tri Province, Republic of Vietnam.

13 February 1968



SGT Franklin Delano R. Hatton (B/2-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from gunshot wounds when he was hit by hostile automatic weapons fire while on combat operations on January 25th in the Phuoc Long Province, Republic of Vietnam.

13 February 1969

1LT Robert C. Wilkins (A/2-501 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal for military merit and for wound received during action against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV; General Orders Number 2072; 9 March 1969)

13 February 1969

SGT Darryl F. Dilger (A/2-501 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal for military merit and for wound received during action against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV; General Orders Number 2072; 9 March 1969)

13 February 1969

PFC Salvadore O. Ricardo Jr. (A/2-501 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal for military merit and for wound received during action against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV; General Orders Number 2072; 9 March 1969)

13 February 1969

1LT Donald C. Murnock (B/1-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal for military merit and for wound received during action against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV; General Orders Number 2072; 9 March 1969)

13 February 1969

SP4 George H. Keathley (B/1-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal for military merit and for wound received during action against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV; General Orders Number 2072; 9 March 1969)

13 February 1969

PFC Santiago Nunez (B/1-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal for military merit and for wound received during action against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV; General Orders Number 2072; 9 March 1969)



13 February 1969

SP4 Floyd J. White Jr. (E/1-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal for military merit and for wound received during action against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV; General Orders Number 2072; 9 March 1969)

13 February 1969

PFC Winston L. Bower (E/1-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal for military merit and for wound received during action against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV; General Orders Number 2072; 9 March 1969)

13 February 1969

PFC David B. Newell (E/1-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal for military merit and for wound received during action against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV; General Orders Number 2072; 9 March 1969)

13 February 1969



SP4 Joe A. Ysais (A/2-501 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal for military merit and for wounds received during action in combat against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV; General Orders Number 2072; 9 March 1969)

13 February 1969



CPL Philip R. Frankiewicz (A/2-501 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from small arms gunfire wounds while on combat operation when engaged hostile force in firefight in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam. CPL Frankiewicz was admitted to a military medical facility, placed on the VSI list, and later expired.

13 February 1969



CPL Dennis E. Dawson (A/2-501 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from small arms gunfire wounds while on combat operation when engaged hostile force in firefight in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam.

13 February 1969



SGT John W. Mendez (B/1-502 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from small arms gunfire wounds while on combat operation when engaged hostile force in firefight 14km W-SW of Hue Citadel in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam.

13 February 1969



SP4 Bedford M Morris Jr. (B/1-502 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from small arms gunfire wounds while on combat operation when engaged hostile force in firefight 14km W-SW of Hue Citadel in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam.

13 February 1970



PFC Richard J. Gorges (B/1-501 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his deaths from small arms gun fire wounds while on combat operation when a hostile force was encountered in the Quang Tri Province, Republic of Vietnam. PFC Gorges was admitted to a military medical facility and later expired.

13 February 1970



SSG Ronald L. Haug (E/2-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his deaths from small arms gun fire wounds while at an artillery firing position when the area came under attack by a hostile force at FSB Rifle, 16km south of Phu Bai Airfield in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam. SSG Haug was admitted to a military medical facility on 11 February and alter expired on 13 February.



14 February 1968



SP4 Harold L. Begody (D/2-501 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from gunshot wound received when he engaged hostile force while on a combat operation in support of USMC retaking Hue City during TET 1968, in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam.

14 February 1968



PFC William Blakely (D/1-501 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from multiple explosive device wounds while on a combat operation in support of USMC retaking Hue City during TET 1968, in the Quang Tri Province, Republic of Vietnam.

14 February 1968

PFC Rodolfo DeLeon (C/1-501 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from multiple fragmentation wounds while his unit engaged hostile force while on a combat operation in support of USMC retaking Hue City during TET 1968, in the Quang Tri Province, Republic of Vietnam.

14 February 1969

CPL Salvador O. Ricardo (A/2-501 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from small arms gunfire wounds while on combat operation when engaged by hostile force in a firefight in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam. CPL Ricardo was admitted to a military facility, placed on the VSI list and later expired.

15 February 1968



SP4 Ronald Ymbras (B/1-502 IN) was awarded the Air Medal for distinguishing himself by meritorious achievement while participating in an aerial combat assault into hostile territory in the Republic of Vietnam on 15 February 1968. During this operation, he displayed the highest order of air discipline and acted in accordance with the best traditions of the service. By his determination to accomplish his mission in spite of the hazards inherent in a heliborne combat assault into hostile territory and by his outstanding degree of professionalism and devotion to duty, he has brought credit upon himself, his organization, and the military service. (HQ; 101st ABN DIV; General Order No: 1094; 31 January 1969)

15 February 1968

The following Soldiers from B/1-502 IN:

SGT William R. Bellow	Amos F. Christian	Raymond Crawford	Scotty C. Davidson
Albert L. Edwards	David L. Ferguson	Harold D. Gearhardt	David W. Goodman
Diego M. Hammett	SP4 John C. Hayden Jr.	Larry G. Hock	SGT Robby J. Hughes
Patrick L. Hurley	1SG Lee F. Jones	SGT Peter C. King	Darrell D. Magneson
SGT Robert N. Malanders	LT Terry A. Mills	Napolean R. Nochez	Eliseo A. Ortiz
Molina D. Ramos	Dennis P. Rose	David R. Sablan	John R. Schmitt Jr.
Thomas J. Schwarzman	Steven L. Scott	Ellis J. Sherrick	SSG Dennis G. Williams

Was awarded the Air Medal for meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight in the Republic of Vietnam (General Order Number 10527)

15 February 1968

PFC Melvin H. Sanders (D/1-501 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from gunshot wound received while on a combat operation when engaged hostile force in firefight in support of USMC retaking Hue City during TET 1968, in the Quang Tri Province, Republic of Vietnam.

15 February 1968

The following Soldiers from B/1-502 IN:

CPT Paul M. Pritchard	1LT David B. Land	1LT David B. Reider	SP4 Rodney Hall
SP4 Paul W. Nolan	SP4 Gary L. Stouffer	PFC Davis E. Derricho	PFC Harris D. Lee
PFC Larry S. Lloyd	PFC Robert A. Gibbs	PFC Donald E. Copeland	

Was awarded the Air Medal for meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight. (HQ; 101st ABN DIV; General Order No: 1094; 31 January 1969)

15 February 1968



2LT Robert F. Brulte Jr. (D/2-501 IN) was awarded the Silver Star and Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from a metal fragment wound received while on a combat operation when engaged a hostile force in a firefight in the vicinity of Thon Thuong, 11km W-NW of Hue Citadel during TET 1968 in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam.

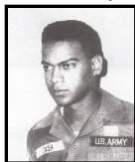


15 February 1968



CPL Emanuel F. Burroughs (D/2-501 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from gunshot wound received while on a combat operation when engaged a hostile force in a firefight in the vicinity of Thon Thuong, 11km W-NW of Hue Citadel during TET 1968 in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam.

15 February 1968



SGT David M. Cash (D/2-501 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from gunshot wound received while on a combat operation when engaged a hostile force in a firefight in the vicinity of Thon Thuong, 11km W-NW of Hue Citadel during TET 1968 in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam.

15 February 1968



PFC Earnest P. Holmes Jr. (D/2-501 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from gunshot wound received while on a combat operation when engaged a hostile force in a firefight in the vicinity of Thon Thuong, 11km W-NW of Hue Citadel during TET 1968 in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam.

15 February 1968



PFC Henry M. Tabet (D/2-501 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from gunshot wound received while on a combat operation when engaged a hostile force in a firefight in the vicinity of Thon Thuong, 11km W-NW of Hue Citadel during TET 1968 in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam.

15 February 1968



CPL Wade E. Thackrey Jr. (D/2-501 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from gunshot wound received while on a combat operation when engaged a hostile force in a firefight in the vicinity of Thon Thuong, 11km W-NW of Hue Citadel during TET 1968 in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam.

16 February 1966

SGT William F. Collier (C/2-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal for military merit and for wounds received from a gunshot wound to his right lung received in a hostile ground action in the Phu Yen Province, Republic of Vietnam.

16 February 1968



SSG Jorge Otero-Barreto (A/1-502 IN) (3-OLC) actions in combat earned him the Purple Heart Medal. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV, Para. 1 General Order Number 235, 31 Mar 69; Amended General Order Number 3276, 12 April 69)

16 February 1968



SP4 Randal L. Saunders (A/1-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death as a result of a gunshot wound received when he was hit by hostile small arms fire while on combat operations when inserted along railroad-highway QL-1, 6km southeast of Quang Tri City in the Quang Tri Province, Republic of Vietnam.



16 February 1968



SP4 Valentine B. Vollmer (A/1-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from multiple fragment wounds received when he was hit by hostile small arms fire while on combat operations when inserted along railroad - highway QL-1, 6km southeast of Quang Tri City in the Quang Tri Province, Republic of Vietnam. The change in his status from missing to deceased was based upon the determination of a Board of Officers convened by the Commanding General, US Army, Vietnam which carefully investigated the circumstances concerning his missing status. His remains have not been recovered. (SP4 Body was not originally recovered and was later found and body returned to US Soil on 09 August 1974 and identified on 23 March 1976)

16 February 1970



SSG Pastor F. Ruiz (E/2-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from small arms gun fire wounds while on combat operation when a hostile force was encountered in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam.

16 February 1971



SFC Evelyn F. Lankford (A/2-502 IN) died of Non-hostile causes as a ground casualty while on a mission crossing a river when he was swept away by the current while crossing the Huu Trach River 19km S-SW of Hue in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam.

17 February 1968



SGT David W. Fravel (E/1-501 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from gunshot wound received while on a combat operation when engaged a hostile force in a firefight during TET 1968 in the Quang Tri Province, Republic of Vietnam.

17 February 1968



2LT Richard W. Pershing (A/1-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from small arms gunfire wounds was on a combat mission when his unit came under hostile small-arms and rocket attack while searching for remains of a missing member of his unit 5km SE of Hai Lang in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam. 2LT Pershing He is the grandson of General of the Armies John J. Pershing.



17 February 1968



PFC Henry Gregory (B/1-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from gunshot wounds was on a combat mission when his unit came under hostile small-arms and rocket attack while searching for remains of a missing member of his unit 5km SE of Hai Lang in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam.

17 February 1968



PFC Frank L. Hoge (B/1-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from gunshot wounds was on a combat mission when his unit came under hostile small-arms and rocket attack while searching for remains of a missing member of his unit 5km SE of Hai Lang in the Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam.



STRIKE HISTORY (Citation's and Awards):

13 February 1968



CPT Felix Sosa-Camejo (C/1-501 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal (Posthumously) for outstanding meritorious service in connection with ground operations against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam during the period of 14 November 1967 – 13 February 1968. Through his untiring efforts and professional ability, he consistently obtained outstanding results. He was quick to grasp the implications of new problems with which he was faced as a result of the ever-changing situations inherent in a counterinsurgency operation and to find ways and means to solve those problems. The energetic application of his extensive knowledge has materially contributed to the efforts of the United States Mission to the Republic of Vietnam to assist that country in ridding itself of the Communist threat to its freedom. His initiative, zeal, sound judgment and devotion to duty have been in the highest tradition of the United States of Army and reflect great credit on him and on the military service. (Bronze Star Citation)

13 February 1969



1LT Donald C. Murnock (B/1-502 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor for heroism in ground combat against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam on 13 February 1969. Lieutenant Murnock distinguished himself while serving as a platoon leader in Company B, 1st Battalion, 502d Infantry, on a combat operation about twelve miles north of Hue, Republic of Vietnam. Lieutenant Murnock was leading two squads of the First Platoon during a reconnaissance of a trail in the thick jungle terrain when the First Platoon was engaged by heavy fire from well-concealed ambush positions. In the course of the firefight, the lead man was struck by an enemy mine fragment and mortally wounded. Three other members of the platoon were seriously wounded, including Lieutenant Murnock, and one of the more seriously wounded was pinned down by the intense volume of fire. Although Lieutenant Murnock suffered ruptured ear drums from the initial contact, he reorganized the platoon and took the appropriate counter measures. Realizing that the seriously wounded individual was rapidly losing blood, Lieutenant Murnock, with the aid of his wounded platoon sergeant, directed the assault against the enemy in an attempt to retrieve his wounded and dead. He encouraged the wounded individuals to crawl to safety while he instructed the members of the platoon to provide a base of fire and again assault the enemy position. He remained in his unprotected position, directing the assault, until the enemy was repelled. Although his condition was serious, he thought of his men's welfare before his own safety and insisted that his men be evacuated first. Lieutenant Murnock's personal bravery and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV; General Orders Number 3782; 25 April 1969)

13 February 1969



SGT Roger J. Barski (A/2-501 IN) was awarded the Silver Star Medal for gallantry in action in the Republic of Vietnam on 13 February 1969. Sergeant Barski distinguished himself while serving as a squad leader in Company A, 2nd Battalion, 501st Infantry, in the mountains southwest of Hue, Republic of Vietnam. On the cited date, Company A made contact with a large North Vietnamese force. During the ensuing firefight, the platoon leader of the second platoon was wounded by enemy fire and was unable to continue at his post. Sergeant Barski quickly assumed command and began to direct his men in suppressing the enemy fire. He moved from position to position, often completely unprotected from the intense enemy fire. After directing his men in providing an effective base of fire, he crawled forward to assist his wounded platoon leader and another wounded man. While under direct enemy fire, he administered emergency first aid to both men and then dragged them back to the company perimeter. After assuring their safety, Sergeant Barski led the platoon in an assault on the enemy positions, and succeeded in silencing them in close quarter fighting. Sergeant Barski's personal bravery and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army. (SGT Barski middle individual in picture) (HQ, 101st ABN DIV; General Orders Number 2866; 30 March 1969)

13 February 1969



SP4 Ethen D. Smith (B/1-502 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor for heroism in ground combat against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam on 13 February 1969. Specialist Smith distinguished himself while serving with Company B, 1st Battalion, 502d Infantry, as a radio operator on a combat operation about twelve miles southwest of Hue, Republic of Vietnam. Company B, headquarters, and two squads of the first platoon were conducting a reconnaissance of a trail in thick jungle terrain. The lead squad suddenly received intense fire from the front. The lead man was immediately killed by a mine, and three other personnel were seriously wounded by the initial contact. One of the more seriously wounded individuals was pinned down by the intense volume of fire, and was unable to crawl to safety. Specialist Smith, with complete disregard for his own life, crawled through the heavy volume of fire. On the third attempt he successfully reached his wounded comrade. Due to his display of courage, the wounded man was able to receive immediate medical care. Specialist Smith's personal bravery and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV; General Orders Number 3587; 20 April 1969)



14 February 1968



PFC William Blakely (D/1-501 IN) was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross (Posthumously) for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam, while serving with Company D, 1st Battalion, 501st Infantry, 2d Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile). Private First Class Blakely distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 14 February 1968 during a search and clear operation in the Hai Lang Area of Quang Tri Province. He was acting as point man for his platoon as it swept through a village. He discovered a line of bunkers manned by North Vietnamese Army Regulars, and the platoon was immediately hit with hostile automatic weapons fire and command detonated mines. Although wounded by the initial barrage, Private Blakely began hurling hand grenades onto the enemy positions, killing two North Vietnamese soldiers. He then sought cover behind a haystack to his platoon's front, and from there he saw his squad leader lying wounded and unconscious fifteen meters from the enemy bunkers. With complete disregard for his safety, Private Blakely crawled forward under intense fire to rescue the man and brought him back to the shelter of the haystack. Ignoring the pain of his injuries, he then continued to engage the enemy with rifle fire and hand grenades. While in an act of throwing a grenade, he was seriously wounded by an exploding enemy rocket round. He clutched the activated grenade and fell forward on it, saving the lives of his squad leader and a medic, and preventing injuries to other members of his squad who were close by. Private First Class Blakely's extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army. (General Orders Number 4316; 11 November 1968)

15 February 1968



1LT William F. Aronow (D/2-501 IN) was awarded the Silver Star Medal for gallantry in action in the Republic of Vietnam on 15 February 1968. First Lieutenant Aronow distinguished himself while serving as Executive Officer of Company D, 2d Battalion (Airborne) 501st Infantry. Company D was on a combat patrol eight kilometers northwest of Hue, Republic of Vietnam, in search of enemy mortar positions when the lead element came under a withering hail of automatic weapons and small arms fire. Many men in the lead platoon were killed or wounded in the initial blast, and the forward elements were pinned down by a murderous fire. The company was operating with only two platoons and these were under strength. Thus there was only one platoon in reserve to relieve the pressure on the point platoon, and the enemy fire, coming from an estimated North Vietnamese company well entrenched and dug in, was seriously retarding the efforts to extricate these men from their exposed position. Attempts were also being made to evacuate the wounded, but a number of injured men were so close to the enemy lines that this seemed virtually impossible. At this time First Lieutenant Aronow arrived with a handful of reinforcements and, fully exposing himself to the deadly enemy fire, skillfully deployed these men in an effort to stabilize the situation. The platoon leader of the lead platoon had been killed, and First lieutenant Aronow quickly seized control of the action in front, bringing up what reserves was left and distributing ammunition resupply. Still the heavy enemy fire was unabated, and men continued to fall, many of these in efforts to evacuate the dead and wounded. One man had been shot down almost directly beneath the enemy guns, and his body had lain there for a number of hours as any would be attempt to reach him appeared suicidal. However, the platoon sergeant was about to make the effort when First Lieutenant Aronow ordered him to remain in position so as not to expose the senior man in the platoon to such excessive danger. Instead First Lieutenant Aronow went out himself, leading three volunteers, to reach the man. Immediately much enemy fire was concentrated on First Lieutenant Aronow as he moved across the open field in complete disregard for his own personal safety. On reaching the man he was found to be dead, and First Lieutenant Aronow ordered the men to put his body on a stretcher which had been brought out while he covered them. First Lieutenant Aronow then proceeded to shield the men with his own body and took a corner of the stretcher with one hand and, firing his rifle with the other, returned to the company lines. First Lieutenant Aronow then remained exposed while directing the evacuation of the remaining casualties, and once every wounded man had been moved to the rear the company began its withdrawal. First Lieutenant Aronow remained with the rear guard, firing as he moved and covering the withdrawal. Groups of enemy soldiers tried to turn the flank of the rear detachment and isolate it, but First Lieutenant fired on them and drove them back. The enemy repeated this action a number of times, but First Lieutenant Aronow, skillfully directed the security element, inflicted heavy casualties on the North Vietnamese in their vain efforts, and thus affected a safe withdrawal. In doing so he was not hesitant in exposing himself to the enemy fire in order to control his men. Without the calm, courageous leadership of First Lieutenant Aronow at a critical moment, the company very well might have suffered devastating results. His dedication to duty in the face of galling enemy fire was a lasting inspiration to every man in the company as well as a telling factor in the successful withdrawal of the company from a totally untenable position. First Lieutenant Aronow's exceptional and constant gallantry are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV; General Orders Number 3229; 7 July 1968)

17 February 1968



SSG Jorge Otero-Barreto (A/1-502 IN) was awarded the Silver Star Medal for gallantry in action in the Republic of Vietnam on 17 February 1968. Staff Sergeant Otero distinguished himself while serving as a platoon sergeant on a combat operation near Quang Tri, Republic of Vietnam. Staff Sergeant Otero's platoon was moving through rice paddies and wood lines on an overcast and partially rainy day when the point made contact with enemy positions concealed in a hedgerow. The enemy was firing rocket propelled grenades and machine guns and the point element had taken several casualties when staff Sergeant Otero took over the machine gun. With no assistance, as the machine gunner had been wounded and his assistance killed, Staff Sergeant Otero began returning the enemy fire so that the point could break contact with the numerically superior and well-concealed enemy force. With completed disregard for his own personal safety, Staff Sergeant Otero remained exposed to the intense enemy fire while the point began to withdraw. Because of the heavy volume of fire, he was placing on them, the enemy ceased firing on the rest of the point element and concentrated on Staff Sergeant Otero. Although he was wounded by a rocket propelled grenade, Staff Sergeant Otero remained exposed to the enemy fire until the rest of his element had moved to a defilade position. Having expended all the ammunition for the machine gun, Staff Sergeant Otero began firing his rifle and crawled back to rejoin the rest of the point. He then led them in an orderly withdrawal to safety. Staff Sergeant Otero's extraordinary heroism in close combat against a numerically superior Viet Cong force was in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflects great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army. (Citation)



ACRONYMS

ACAV: Armored Cavalry
AD: Americal Division
AD: Airborne Division (Would be after numeric numbers)
AO: Area of Operations
ARA: Aerial Rocket Artillery
ARCOM: Army Commendation Medal
ARVN: Army of the Republic of Viet Nam (also known as the South Vietnamese Army (SVA))
BDE: Brigade
BN: Battalion
BSM: Bronze Star Medal
BBT: Booby Traps
CA: Combat Assault
CANOPY: Heavily Wooded Terrain
CO: Company
CP: Command Post
DSC: Distinguished Service Cross
DZ: Drop Zone
FSB: Fire Support Base
HQ: Headquarters
IED: Improvised Explosive Device
IFFV: I Field Force Vietnam
IN: Infantry
KBA: Killed by Air or Artillery
KHA: Killed by Hostile Action
KIA: Killed in Action
KNHA: Killed by Non-Hostile Action
LZ: Helicopter Landing Zone
MI: Military Intelligence
MOH: Medal of Honor
MP: Military Police
NDP: Night Defensive Position
NVA: North Vietnamese Army
OBJ: Objective
OP: Observation Post
PAVN: People Army of Vietnam
POW: Prisoner of War
PF: Popular Forces
PZ: Helicopter Pick-up Zone
Recon Platoon: Reconnaissance Platoon
RIF: Reconnaissance in Force
RF: Regional Force
ROK: Republic of Korea
SA: Situational Awareness
SIGINT: Signal Intelligence
SSM: Silver Star Medal
STRIKE Force: 2d Battalion, 502d Infantry
SVA: South Vietnamese Army
TF: Task Force
TOC: Tactical Operations Center
USARV: United States Army Vietnam
USARPAC: United States Army Pacific
WIA: Wounded in Action
WHA: Wounded by Hostile Action
WNHA: Wounded by Non-Hostile Action
"V": Valor
VC: Viet Cong

