undefined undefined



# Colt .45 News Vol. III, No. 2

Phu Bai, VIETNAM - December 4, 1968

## D Co, 39th Returns To LZ Baldy

Delta Company, 39th Engineer Battalion, (Combat), commanded by Cpt. David R. Tanner, recently returned to the northern sector of the Americal Division's AO to support Operation Wheeler Wallowa. Initial support of the operation was provided by Alpha and Delta Companies of the 39th from November, 1967, to April, 1968, when Rte. 535 was opened as a supply route by the two units. The present mission of Delta Company is to upgrade Rte. 535 from a pioneer road to a one-lane class 50, all-weather type road with turn-outs every 500 meters. The road is a vital supply link to LZ Ross from QL-1. Based at LZ Baldy on the eastern end of the road, Delta Company makes daily minesweeps to their job sites to open the road to convoys. The initial task has been to repair the washed-out culverts and causeways left by the heavy moonsoon rains. Several culverts have also been destroyed by VC requiring additional effort. Present plans include application of a rock base course to provide the all-weather surface required. After spending several months in the Chu Lai base area, the men of Delta Company are glad to be back in the field, and are looking forward to their newest mission.

Chaplain's Column

By Chaplain (Captain) Lathrop P. Utley, 39th ENGR. BN.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." These words come from the Sermon on the Mount and speak on the subject of Chastity. Public morality today seems to be generally perverse in regard to matters of sex. There is a "no-holds-barred" attitude present in the 20th Century. Newspapers and magazines are full of it. Many GI's read little else.

Let us face the facts! That which we talk about reveals what we are thinking about. People who are talking in regard to sex are generally wallowing in it. It is a virtue that requires courage, perseverance, Godliness, faith, hope, charity, and spiritual guts.

Let's take a look at the meaning of the word Chastity. It simply means purity. To be chaste is to be pure. That which is pure has nothign in it that is foreign to itself. Chemists tell us that sugar is the purest substance in that it has a minimum of foreign elements in it. When we have no thoughts in our hearts but the ones that belong there and are poper to them, we shall be blessed with the vision of God.

What are the impurities that keep us from seeing God? I have no list. No problem! We all know common words for impurity dirt and filth, that which is unclean. Yes, we know what is clean though we seem to require lots of coaching and teaching to stay clean. Unchaste relations involve those relations that do not belong to you.

The challenge that the word of God is this - even those who are not married now belong to that other person they someday will marry. We are not free to get ourselves unchaste with strangers. All are strangers that do not belong to us as husband and wife. Chastity is the proper and manly state that will allow us to see God.

The highest form of Chastitity is that we devote our whole being exclusively to the ways of God as made known to us via Holy Scripture.

# 39th Honored By Vietnamese

The recent Vietnamese holidays brought unexpected honors to the men of Bravo Company, 39th Engineer Battalion. In the hamlet of Duyen Phuoc, a newly consturcted shrine was dedicated upon the ruins of an old Korean compound on 31 October, 1968. The dedication included a memorial service in honor of the American, Vietnamese, and Korean soldiers who lost their lives in enemy action. To represent the American soldier, the leader of the Popular Forces (PF) in that area requested the presence of three American soldiers of Bravo Company. The three men, Captain Torrence Wilson, 1LT James Romanowiz, and SSG John Yurch, have had considerable contact with the people of this area nad from this contact, a strong bond of friendship and loyalty has developed. The elders from eight hamlets attended this ceremony, in addition to many of the Vietnamese from the local PF unit.

The ceremony started with a formal prayer by the village priests, during which a select few villagers participated. This ceremony lasted for about thirty minutes, after which a luncheon was served, consisting of cookies, rice cake, rice, tea, and other Vietnamese specialities. During the luncheon the conversation focused upon Vietnamese-American relations and the common desire to achieve freedom from oppression for South Vietnam. The village chief spoke of his people's warm feelings toward the American Forces in this area. He stated that he and his people were happy to have such a friendly relationship with the American soldiers, and due to the common efforts of American, Korean, and Vietnamese forces, his people could now live in a semi-tranguil state. Cpt. Wilson stated that the Americans in this area were proud to serve with the Vietnamese people and

expressed the hope that this cooperation and friendly relationship would continue to develop even more in the future. The ceremony ended with a farewell to each and a sincere dedication to develop better understanding and cooperation with each other in the future.

# BUGLE BLOWS FOR 39th BN

Ta Dum Ta Da Dum, Ta Dum Ta Da Dum... The call of Reveille, Retreat, Taps, and other such sounds of former armies have almost become extinct in today's "new, modern Army." The romantic sound of the bugle has been replaced by the shrillness of a whistle or the harshness of a loudspeaker, in the Army's quest for expediency.

However, on the morning of 10 November, 1968, the stillness of the base camp of the 39th Engineer Battalion at Chu Lai was broken, not by the customary whistle, but by the notes of a bugle. Throughout days, the men were called to and from work by the bugle. The bugler, as it turned out, was none other than the battalion chaplain, Ctp. L.F. Utley.

Chaplain Utley got the idea from overhearing the battalion commander, LTC Tenho R. Hukkala recall the positive effect on morale as a result of having a bugler in his outfit in Korea some 15 years earlier. The chaplain wrote to some friends in the states, and in a short time... had a bugle. After a short practice session, he was in full swing just the day after receiving the instrument.

As he travels to the line companies the bugle will accompany him. giving other camps the opportunity to hear an almost fogotten sound. In his absence from the battalion headquarters base camp, the bugle will be replaced by a tape recorder.

Chaplain Utley plans to continue the project and expresses hope that it will remain a part of the 39th Battalion after he leaves. This new feature sets the 39th Engineer Battalion apart from teh ordinary unit in that it becomes one of the few organizations in today's streamlined Army to use the Bugle call for formations. This link with the old Army gives a firmer root in the traditions of the armed forces. In this age of revolution and change, the call of the bugle, lends a touch of the past, and causes one to reflect upon his duties while serving his country.

## AWARDS TO MEN OF 39th

Ceremonies were held recently at Headquarters, 39th Engineer Battalion to honor the men of Alpha Company, 39th Engineer Battalion. Alpha recently returned to the Chu Lai Headquarters from LZ Young where the company saw heavy action while working on Route 533 west of Tam Ky.

Brigadier General Galloway, Assistant Division Commander, Americal Division, presented awards for valor to several members of the company, including the Silver Start Medal which was presented to Staff Sergeant Julio Perez. Sergeant Perez was cited for his courageous actions during the ambush of his work party by a large enemy force. The citation accompanying the award gave this description of the action; Intense enemy fire from automatic weapons and mortars disabled several many casualties. SSG Perez immediately exposed himself to move through the bullet swept area to retrieve a wounded comrade from the killing zone. After assesing the situation, he effectively organized a defensive perimeter. Still under withering fire, he again exposed himself and directed retaliatory fire which silenced one enemy recoilless rifle and a number of automatic weapons. Throughout the night he continued to direct fire against likely enemy positions and rallied his badly outnumbered group to halt the enemy advance. Upon hearing noises around a disabled vehicle, he again exposed himself by moving to the vehicle where he found two enemy soldiers looting the dead in the vehicle. He immediately killed one and caused the other to withdraw."

Cpt. Richard S. Waldrop was awarded the Bronze Star with "V" Device for his actions while he was commander of Alpha Co. Throughout the period he exposed himself to hostile action while directing his company in its actions.

Platoon Sergeant Tom Singleton Jr. was awarded the Bronze Star with "V" Device for his actions during an ambush. Sergeant Singleton continually exposed himself while laying a base of fire and aiding the wounded.

Specialist Four Glen W. Stinson was awarded the Bronze Star with "V" Device for his actions during an enemy ambush. Specialist Stinson exposed himself continually to protect a wounded comrade and his laying down a base o ffire prevented the enemy from overrunning the friendly position.

These men were presented the awards for their personal bravery and devotion to duty. Their actions are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service.

# ATTACK IS THWARTED BY ALERT 39th

Two members of Charlie Company, 39th Engineer Bn. distinguished themselves recently in a heavy attack by fire and ground attack on their base camp at Nui Dep.

One of these was SP4 Nathaniel Williams. Specialist Williams was manning a perimeter guard bunker, along with PFC Walter Noble, right in the path of a squad of VC who had penetrated the perimeter wire. Noble was wounded by a grenade during the initial onslaught leaving only Williams to fend off the attackers. Williams alternated between an M-60 and M-14 for nearly a half

of an hour before assistance arrived. His action undoubtedly saved the lives of many men. Six VC KIA's were discovered within 20 meters of the bunker the following morning.

Also notable was the performance of Specialist Five Lannie R. Newman, a company medic. First Sergeant B.J. Thomas described the events:

"The attack started with incoming mortar rounds, RPG, and small arms rounds. I heard a cry from bunker 11. I ran for the commo bunker and sent a runner for Newman. I informed him a man was hit. Without regard for his own safety, Newman ran for bunker 11 as rounds were pouring in like rain."

"He administered medical aid to PFC Silva in a very cool and professional manner. I left bunker 13. I told Newman that he was needed at bunker 13. Again under heavy fire, Newman ran about 150 motors to bunker 13 and began to administer aid to SP Nobel. The wire in front of bunker 13 had been breached, and at least a squad of VC was in the immdiate area around bunker 13.

"Both wounded EM were removed from the bunkers and brought to the CP where Newman continued to work with them until dust off arrived."

Newman, who leaves Vietnam this week, described his reaction to Sunday with one word, "Scared!"

The final toll was 14 VC dead, four captured assault weapons and two VCS captured.

[-]

# PROMOTIONS TO GRADE INDICATED

#### 39th ENGR BN

#### HHC

SP5 Stephen L. Bilyeu
SP5 James B. Boyles Jr.
SP5 James A. Drake
SP5 Frank W. Giroux II
SP5 Gerlad V. Howell
SP5 Lannie R. Newman
SP5 Danny G. Sproat

#### CO A

SSG Charles H. Foster SGT Kenneth M. Duff SP5 Roger A. Montgomery SP5 James R. Russell SP5 Virgil K. Stormer SP5 Troy E. Wilburn

#### CO D

SGT Noal C. Christopher Jr. SP5 Gary L. Davidson SP5 Gerald H. Fitzgerald SP5 Cornell L. Nash

#### AWARDS

# SILVER STAR

SSG Julio Perez

#### BRONZE STAR w/ "V" DEVICE

SFC George P. Naquin

#### **BRONZE STAR**

CPT Richard S. Waldrop 1LT Wayne A. Passe SSG Jack L. Cogle SSG Theodore J. Lenegar SP4 Stephen J. Decker

# AIR MEDAL

LTC Tenho R. Hukkala MAJ Norman J. Coutant Jr.

#### ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL

SP4 Gregory N. Davis

# PURPLE HEART

CPT Torrence M. Wilson SFC Tom Singleton Jr. SSG Jack L. Cogle SP5 David L. Prichard SP5 Billy W. Thompson SP5 Douglas Watson SP4 James E. Bonner SP4 Thomas E. Hughes SP4 James R. Russell SP4 Virgel K. Stormer SP4 Philip D. Walker PFC John P. Murphy PVT Morris Pattillo



39thbattalion.com is maintained by: Joshua M. York

