

# **BLACK MONDAY**

## **September 22, 1969**

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By Wally Honda

Documented report of the Combat Assault lead by the 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter), 14<sup>th</sup> Aviation Battalion (COMBAT), transporting troops of Bravo and Delta companies of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment, 196<sup>th</sup> Light Infantry Brigade on September 22, 1969.

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## SUMMARY

“The 196<sup>th</sup> [Light Infantry Brigade’s OPERATION] FREDRIC HILL was the scene of a major contact involving an [unknown] size NVA (North Vietnamese Army) unit [and] two rifle [companies] from 3-21 (3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment). Departing a field LZ (Landing Zone) at 0945H subsequent to the insertion of elements of 3/21, three [UH-1H troop carrying helicopters] from the 14<sup>th</sup> [Aviation Battalion], (COMBAT) was shot down. This action [and] the subsequent actions at the locations of the downed aircraft resulted in [fifteen] NVA KIA [with one] IWC. Total US casualties were [five] KIA, [fifteen] WIA (Evacuated) [and three] WIA (Minor). At 1515 (four and a half hours after the first combat lift of Bravo company) inbound to the same LZ [with]elements of [Delta Company]/3-21, 14<sup>th</sup> [Aviation Battalion] aircraft took ground fire resulting in an additional [four]US WIA [Minor].”<sup>1</sup>

The plan, as outlined in the “Day Activities for 22 September”, was to deploy Bravo Company from LZ Center to coordinates BT035218, (Top of hill Nui Lon). Delta Company would join Bravo Company from coordinates BT025266 (Hill 105, NE of LZ Center). Both companies would search coordinates BT0221, BT0321, BT0222, and BT0322 (1 km grid on west base of Nui Lon).<sup>2</sup>

“While conducting a [Combat Assault, one UH-1H helicopter received] SAF (small arms fire) and RPG’s (rocket propelled grenades) [and] was shot down in the [vicinity] of BT043225. A [second aircraft] attempted to extract the crew [from] the [first helicopter and] also [received] SAF [and] was [also] shot down [in the vicinity of] BT045231. Both [crews were safely] extracted.”

“While conducting [another] lift, [two helicopters received] SAF [and] one [of the helicopters was] shot down [in the vicinity] of BT033235. A total of [six helicopters] were hit by SAF. [Three helicopters were] shot down, and [two helicopters are] at [the] following LZ’s (Landing Zones): Baldy [and] Center and [one helicopter is] still on [the mission].”

“In process of moving [the] remainder of [two infantry units] for support, [they were] still [receiving] sniper, RPG’s, [and] M-60 fire. [Bravo and Delta companies cleared] sniper

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<sup>1</sup> Americal Division Sitrep for period 220001 – 222400 SEP 69 From CG, Americal Div, CHL, RVN, Confidential Report declassified 8/16/07 by Authority NND 873541, NARA, copy obtained at the National Archives). \* (page 2 of the report breaks down the reported casualties as: “2 killed, 8 WIA(E) & 3 WIA(M) from the 14<sup>th</sup> Avn. Bn (COMBAT) w/3 killed & 7 WIA(E) from B/3-21. At 1505H while inserting elements of D/3-21 on the same LZ, 14<sup>th</sup> Avn. A/C rec’d ground fire resulting in 4 US WIA (M) from the 14<sup>th</sup> Avn.”)

<sup>2</sup> (Daily Staff Journal 22 September 1969. 3-21 Inf. (Day Activities) declassified 8/16/07 by Authority NND 873541, NARA, copy obtained at the National Archives).

[and machine gun positions]. Total [casualties]: [Eight aviation WIA(Evacuated), five aviation WIA(Minor), and two aviation KIA].”

[Entry at 1320H]; “[The enemy] broke contact at 1310H. Unit sweeping area. [Two platoons] from B/3-21 [are still] on [the ground]. [One platoon is] at LZ Center. D/3-21 will be moved into support B/3-21 at 1430H. [Results]: Seven US WIA(E) and three US KIA (fr. B/3-21), [Fifteen] NVA KIA, [one] RPD mg CIA. Notify: C/S Sp Galvan; G3 LTC Davis; G2 LTC Nerone; III MAF SSG Phenis; III MAF CPT Berry.”<sup>3</sup>

### Daily Staff Journal OR DUTY OFFICERS LOG 3-21 Gimlets (Abbreviated)<sup>4</sup>

TIME	INCIDENTS, MESSAGES, ORDERS, ETC.
<b>0001H</b>	Log opened by LT Cox.
0010H	Bunkerline check completed by SSG Williams. HQ Co. All alert.
0043H	Bunkerline checked by Sgt Benict. HQ Co. All alert.
0045H	N/C in sit-reps.
0150H	N/C in sit-reps.
0200H	Bunkerline checked by Sgt Bencit.
0245H	N/C in sit-reps.
0345H	N/C in sit-reps.
0445H	N/C in sit-reps.
0545H	N/C in sit-reps.
0547H	Sit-rep for Nui Loc Son to Bde.
0600H	Lt Maness duty officer.
<b>0638H</b>	Rattler 21C&C [Command and Control Helicopter] on station[LZ Center].
0640H	Wire check completed on LZ Center by Cpt. Phillips. HQ Co.
0647H	Wire checked on LZ East by CIC.
0648H	4.2 wire checked by Sgt Amtone.
0650H	Wire checked B Co by J.D.
<b>0715H</b>	Helix 15 on station, [US Air Force forward observation aircraft]
<b>0745H</b>	Helix 15 processing A/S
<b>0805H</b>	Rattler 6 [Commanding Officer 71 <sup>st</sup> Aviation Company] on station.
<b>0820H</b>	Col. Tackaberry arrived [196 <sup>th</sup> Inf. Bde. Commander?] arrived.
<b>0920H</b>	Helix 15 off station.
<b>0955H</b>	Helix 19 on station.

<sup>3</sup> Americal Division TOC, CHU LAI, RVN, Daily Staff Journal, 0001 22 Sep 69 to 2400 22 Sep 69. Page 7 of 8 line item no. 53 Time 1000H from LT Svercauski, 3-21, 196<sup>th</sup> Bde. 0945H.

<sup>4</sup> Daily Staff Journal OR DUTY OFFICER'S LOG 0001 22Sep – 2400 22Sep Gimlets. 3/21  
CONFIDENTIAL document declassified 8/16/07 by Authority NND 873541, NARA, Copy obtained at the National Archives).

**0945H            B Company [first infantry troops on combat assault] in contact.**

## **FIRST HELICOPTER LIFT**

First Combat Assault formation of three UH-1H helicopters was lead by Major William Price (Commanding Officer of 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, Call Sign Rattler 6) as Chalk 1, with CW2 Barry Alexander commanding Chalk 2, and WO1 Michael Curtis commanding Chalk3. Captain Earl Ingram\* was flying high ship.<sup>5</sup>

As the lead aircraft, Chalk 1, commanded by Major Price went into “short final, it came under intense hostile ground fire and received several direct hits. The Door Gunner, SP4 Michael Deahl immediately began placing effective retaliatory fire on the enemy position. Despite being struck in the arm by an enemy round, he continued to man his weapon until he received additional wounds and was flown to a nearby medical facility.<sup>6</sup> The Crew Chief SP5 John May after taking the casualty to a nearby Fire Support Base returned to the point of contact....”<sup>7</sup>

Chalk 2, on final approach, a burst of automatic weapons fire killed the Aircraft Commander, CW2 Barry Alexander and the Door Gunner SP5 Johnnie Lee Williams and seriously wounded the pilot, 1LT Thomas Gates. “Despite his wounds, Lieutenant Gates succeeded in safely landing the helicopter...”<sup>8</sup> “Although he had been severely wounded, Specialist [Thomas] Brown unhesitatingly dismounted from the aircraft and attempted to rescue the Aircraft Commander. After determining that his comrade had been killed by the hostile fire, Specialist Brown then managed to free the critically wounded pilot of the craft. Despite the enemy fire directed against him, Specialist Brown was able to carry his fellow soldier to a rescue aircraft where he treated the wounded pilot’s injuries. When the

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<sup>5</sup> Carlock, C and Seabolt, R. “Rattler and Firebirds” p. 194/195/200 (Hitt, J) Smithfield Press ISBN 1-930566-42-5, 2004\*(Note: CPT Ingram is listed as assigned to the 174<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company in “Rattlers and Firebirds book”, but he was actually assigned to HHC 14<sup>th</sup> CAB with his pilot and crew from the 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company).

<sup>6</sup> General Orders Number 11546, Dated 7 Nov 69, Award of the Air Medal w/V (SP4 Deahl, Michael D), 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion APO 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>7</sup> General Orders Number 11547 Dated 7 Nov 69, Award of the Air Medal w/V Third Award (SP5 May, John L) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion APO 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>8</sup> General Orders Number 11235 Dated 1 Nov 69, Award of the Air Medal w/V Third Award (1LT Gates, Thomas H) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion APO 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

rescue craft was forced down, by enemy fire, Specialist Brown continued to ignore his own wounds and carried his comrade to a second evacuation craft.”<sup>9</sup>

The initial rescue aircraft was Commanded by CPT Earl Ingram<sup>10</sup> with WO1 Stephen Bernard as the pilot, Crew Chief SP4 Gene Koteki,<sup>11</sup> and Door Gunner PFC Bernard Hockensmith.<sup>12</sup> “As his aircraft approached a hostile landing zone to pick up the crew of [WO1 Alexander’s] aircraft which had been shot down, came under intense fire and received several direct hits. ... descended through the enemy barrage, extracted [Specialist Brown and Lieutenant Gates], and attempted to fly them to safety when an enemy round destroyed [the] aircraft’s transmission... and was forced to autorotate in a nearby rice paddy, where [another] recovery aircraft completed the successful mission.”<sup>13</sup>.

One of two UH-1C Firebird Gunships involved in the initial Combat Assault, commanded by WO1 William Lard with WO1 John Blakeley<sup>14</sup> as the pilot, SP5 Ernest Coffia<sup>15</sup> as the Crew Chief, and SP4 Gene Waldrip<sup>16</sup> as the Door Gunner, “expended [its] ordnance against the enemy emplacements, immediately [descended] and [attempted] to [extracted the downed crews]. Braving intense automatic weapons fire,... Remained in an exposed position while the downed crew members (from Warrant Officer Alexander’s and Captain Ingram’s helicopter) boarded [the aircraft]. [Warrant Officer

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<sup>9</sup> General Orders Number 11236 Dated 1 Nov 69, Award of the Silver Star (SP5 Brown, Thomas O) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>10</sup> General Orders Number 12033 Dated 20 Nov 69, Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross-Second Oak Leaf Cluster (CPT Ingram, Earl) Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>11</sup> General Orders Number 12032 Dated 20 Nov 69, Award of the Air Medal w/V- Second Award (SP4 Koteki, Gene J) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>12</sup> General Orders Number 12031 Dated 20 Nov 69, Award of the Air Medal w/V (PFC Hockensmith, Bernard J) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>13</sup> General Orders Number 12030 Dated 20 Nov 69, Award of the Air medal w/V-Fifth Award (WO1 Bernard, Stephen N) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>14</sup> General Orders Number 12047 Dated 20 Nov 69, Award of the Air Medal w/V-Second Award (WO1 Blakeley, John A Jr.) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>15</sup> General Orders Number 12048 Dated 20 Nov 69, Award of the Air Medal w/V-Fourth Award (SP5 Coffia, Ernest C) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>16</sup> General Orders Number 12049 Dated 20 Nov 69, Award of the Air Medal w/V-Second Award (SP4 Waldrip, Gene P) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

Lard] used his considerable flying skills to lift his overloaded aircraft away from the enemy fire and bring it down safely in a friendly landing zone.”<sup>17</sup>

Chalk 3, was commanded by WO1 Michael Curtis, Call Sign Rattler 13, with Pilot WO1 Thomas Eden.<sup>18</sup> The “aircraft came under intense hostile fire and was severely damaged. Realizing the urgency of the situation, Warrant Officer Curtis skillfully flew his crippled aircraft back to his home base (Chu Lai East), obtained a new helicopter, and returned to [LZ Center].”<sup>19</sup>\*During the [initial] Combat Assault, Crew Chief SP4 Terry Weese exposed himself to the hostile barrage and placed a heavy volume of suppressive fire on the enemy positions. As his aircraft began its descent to the landing zone, Specialist Weese was painfully wounded but remained at his station and provided protective fire for his aircraft and the ground troops aboard”<sup>20</sup>. “The Door Gunner PFC Ronald Wessels immediately administered first aid to his wounded comrade, then provided covering fire until his crew was evacuated.”<sup>21</sup>

### **BRAVO COMPANY – Initial Insertion (Ground Combat)**

“1LT Ronald Colman serving as a Platoon Leader with Bravo Company, “was being combat assaulted into a position on Nui Lam Mountain when [he] and his element came under intense hostile fire only moments before touch down. Due to the heavy volumes of enemy fire, two of the assault helicopters were forced down in an enemy infested area, separating Lieutenant Coleman and the remainder of his platoon from the main body of the company. ....Coleman jumped from his aircraft and raked the enemy positions with devastating fire, enabling his comrades to reach covered positions. He then skillfully

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<sup>17</sup> General Orders Number 12046 Dated 20 Nov 69, Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross (WO1 Lard, William R) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>18</sup> General Orders Number 12053 Dated 20 Nov 69, Award of the Air Medal w/V-Second Award (WO1 Eden, Thomas G) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>19</sup> General Orders Number 10346 Dated 9 Oct 69, Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross (WO1 Curtis, Michael D) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives. \* Curtis on return to the Combat Assault extracted troops and casualties under heavy enemy fire. The extraction information is not clear on whether it was Bravo or Delta Company of 3-21 Inf.

<sup>20</sup> General Order Number 12054 Dated 20 Nov 69, Award of the Air Medal w/V-Second Award (SP4 Weese, Terry C) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>21</sup> General Order Number 12055 Dated 20 Nov 69, Award of the Air medal w/V-Second Award (PFC Wessels, Ronald L) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

placed his men into a tight defensive perimeter and directed the recovery of friendly casualties”.<sup>22</sup>

“In the initial contact, three friendly soldiers were killed, four were wounded, and the remainder had difficulty in determining the positions of their comrades and the enemy soldiers. ... PFC Steven Hall [serving as a Rifleman] began placing down a heavy volume of fire which enabled his comrades to regroup and move to better fighting positions. Throughout the eight hour firefight which followed, Private Hall repeatedly attempted to rescue a wounded comrade who had fallen in a position exposed to the enemy fire. While leading a concerted effort to reach the wounded man, Private Hall was himself wounded.”<sup>23</sup>

“During the ensuing battle, [Riflemen] PFC Robert Chambers and [PFC James Merriaman] became separated from the main body of the platoon. ....With complete disregard for personal safety [they] then assaulted and silenced a key hostile automatic weapons bunker and carried a wounded comrade to safety.”<sup>24 25</sup>

“...the determined insurgents launched a fierce assault on the friendly defensive perimeter. ....Sergeant Slagle [serving as a Machinegunner] assumed an exposed position and engaged the advancing enemy with effective bursts of accurate machinegun fire, forcing them to withdraw. With complete disregard for personal safety he then moved forward to cover a recovery team that had been dispatched to rescue friendly casualties. Although wounded at his time, Sergeant Slagle continued to man his weapon until the evacuation was completed and then participated in an on-line assault which completely routed the enemy force from the area.”<sup>26</sup>

“Quickly assessing the tactical situation, [1LT James Decker serving as the Acting Company Commander of B Company], ordered the next flight diverted to a secondary site”<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> General Order Number 527 Dated 13 Jan 70, Award of the Silver Star (1LT Coleman, Ronald L) B, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 196<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade APO 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>23</sup> General Order Number 531 Dated 13 Jan 70, Award of the Silver Star (PFC Hall, Steven R) B, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 196<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade APO 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>24</sup> General Order Number 531 Dated 13 Jan 70, Award of the Silver Star (PFC Chambers, Robert E) B, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 196<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade APO 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>25</sup> General Order Number 528 Dated 13 Jan 70, Award of the Silver Star (PFC Merriman, James E) B, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 196<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade APO 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>26</sup> General Order Number 528 Dated 13 Jan 70, Award of the Silver Star (SGT Slagle, Tony L) B, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 196<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade APO 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>27</sup> General Order Number 600 Dated 16 Jan 70, Award of the Silver Star-First Oak Cluster. (1LT Decker, James G.) Company B, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 196<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade APO 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.



## Daily Staff Journal OR DUTY OFFICERS LOG 3-21 Gimlets (Abbreviated)<sup>28</sup>

<b>TIME</b>	<b>INCIDENTS, MESSAGES, ORDERS, ETC.</b>
<b>1000H</b>	2 birds downed.
<b>1010H</b>	Requested more gunships from Bde.
<b>1011H</b>	Requested urgent dust-off [medical evacuation helicopter] for 4 US WIA of B Co. Dust-off 608, ETA 15.
<b>1025H</b>	R/S [re-supply helicopter] bird completed dust-off for two of the WIA.
<b>1037H</b>	Dust-off 608 completed.
<b>1130H</b>	Urgent dust-off 608 requested req. for four B Co WIA. ETA 15 D Co. (Typo. Error? – should be B Co.)
<b>1200H</b>	Dust-off Completed.
<b>1330H</b>	Dust-off 608 called for 1 US WIA at B Co 3d Plt. ETA 10-15. Dust-off will scramble gunships.
<b>1415H</b>	Dust-off 608 complete.
<b>1417H</b>	Helix 14 on station to process A/S
<b>1445H</b>	Blue Ghost 28 on station. [F Troop 8 <sup>th</sup> Calv. Helicopter Aerial reconnaissance for Americal Division]
<b>1450H</b>	A/S completed.

### SECOND HELICOPTER LIFT

The second flight of three UH-1H helicopters was lead by WO Eric Kilmer as Chalk 1, Chalk 2 was commanded by WO1 Thomas Desert, and Chalk 3 was commanded by WO1 Frederick Morreall. All three aircraft were from the 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company.<sup>29\*</sup>

“Due to the intense enemy fire at the designated landing zone, WO1 Kilmer, was diverted to a secondary drop off point. Upon approaching the small clearing, his helicopter began receiving heavy volumes of enemy automatic weapons fire and took several direct hits. During this time, the cockpit windshield was shattered, throwing Plexiglas into [his] face. In addition, he suffered a painful fragmentation wound in his leg. Despite the extremely adverse conditions, Warrant Officer Kilmer, continued to brave the hostile barrage and

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<sup>28</sup> Daily Staff Journal OR DUTY OFFICER'S LOG 0001 22Sep – 2400 22Sep Gimlets.

3/21CONFIDENTIAL document declassified 8/16/07 by Authority NND 873541, NARA, Copy obtained at the National Archives).

<sup>29</sup> Carlock, C and Seabolt, R. “Rattler and Firebirds” p. 195 (Hitt, J) Smithfield Press ISBN 1-930566-42-5, 2004 \* WO1 Morreall's crew had the Pilot, WO1 Steven E. Hill and Crew Chief PFC Rolf R. Jones assigned from the 176<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion. WO1 Dessert's pilot was William W Biglow, also assigned to the 176<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion.

succeeded in landing the ship.”<sup>30</sup> His crew of pilot, CPT Johnnie Hitt<sup>31</sup>, Crew Chief, SP4 Richard Davenport<sup>32</sup>, and Door Gunner, SP4 David Harris<sup>33</sup> were all wounded in the descent to the Landing Zone.

“As a new landing zone was selected, Warrant Officer Desert, (Crew included: pilot WO1 William Biglow from the 176<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company<sup>34</sup>, and Crew Chief SP4 Steven Parkansky<sup>35</sup>, and Door Gunner, SP4 Bernard Smith, both from the 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company), led his ship in, braving enemy fire as he dropped off the passengers. While maneuvering out of the area, his aircraft sustained a direct hit and was forced to the ground. Realizing the urgency of the situation, [he] immediately regrouped his comrades and established a defensive position to protect them against possible enemy attacks until a recovery helicopter arrived.”<sup>36</sup> “As his aircraft approached the landing zone, Specialist Smith was wounded in both arms by the intense enemy fire, but he valiantly continued to engage the enemy. When his aircraft was forced down by enemy fire, Specialist Smith, disregarding his painful wounds, continued to provide protective fire until he could be assisted by a fellow crew member.”<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> General Order Number 11334 Dated 2 Nov 69, Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross (WO1 Kilmer, Eric S.) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>31</sup> General Order Number 11333 Dated 2 Nov 69, Award of the Air Medal w/V (CPT Hitt, Johnnie P.) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>32</sup> General Order Number 11335 Dated 2 Nov 69, Award of the Air Medal w/V-Second Award (SP4 Davenport, Richard D.) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>33</sup> General Order Number 11336 Dated 2 Nov 69, Award of the Air Medal w/V (SP4 Harris, David L.) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>34</sup> General Order Number 12050 Dated 20 Nov 69, Award of the Air Medal w/V (WO1 Biglow, William W.) 176<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>35</sup> General Order Number 12051 Dated 20 Nov 69, Award of the Air Medal w/V-Second Award (SP4 Parkansky, Steven) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>36</sup> General Order Number 10347 Dated 9 Oct 69, Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross (WO1 Desert, Thomas T.) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>37</sup> General Order Number 12052 Dated 20 Nov 69, Award of the Air Medal w/V-Eleventh Award (SP4 Smith, Bernard) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

Chalk 3, commanded by WO1 Morreall, with pilot WO1 Steven Hill from the 176<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company<sup>38</sup>, Crew Chief PFC Rhett Melson, and Door Gunner, SP4 Roger Hobbs<sup>39\*</sup>, “was making an approach to as landing zone to insert ground troops (Bravo Company 3-21).” “While descending into the hostile area, the craft once again came under heavy enemy fire. Despite the hostile fusillade directed at his aircraft, Warrant Officer Morreall succeeded in landing the ship. While on the ground, the craft was subjected to heavy fire by assaulting enemy soldiers.... As the aircraft was leaving the hostile area, it received several direct hits which caused it to go out of control. Calmly assessing the situation, Warrant Officer Morreall skillfully regained control of this helicopter and flew it to a nearby landing zone (Hill 29, Hawk Hill).<sup>40</sup> \*

Major Price and the remaining crew of the pilot and the Crew Chief SP5 John May, and Door Gunner SP4 Roger Hobbs from the disabled aircraft of WO1 Morreall returned to LZ Center to coordinate the ongoing Combat Assault.<sup>41</sup>

### **BRAVO COMPANY – Second Insertion (Ground Combat)**

[Bravo] Company “was being combat assaulted into an area west of Phu Lam when it came under intense enemy fire which resulted in several direct hits to the helicopter and four friendly casualties. In the confusion of the initial contact after the helicopter had landed in the battle area, [Rifleman] PFC John Jackson’s squad became separated from the rest of the element. With complete disregard for this personal safety, Private Jackson placed effective covering fire on the enemy positions while the evaluation of the casualties *was* being organized. He then braved the enemy barrage while maneuvering to within five meters of an enemy emplacement before he completely silenced it with a hand grenade.”<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> General Order Number 11782 Dated 15 Nov 69, Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross (WO1 Hill, Steven E.) 176<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>39</sup> General Order Number 11784 Dated 15 Nov 69, Award of the Air Medal w/V (SP4 Hobbs, Roger A.) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives. \*SP4 Hobbs replaced SP4 Michael Deahl who was severely wounded on the first fight to the LZ aboard Rattler 6 in the lead aircraft, returned to the Combat Assault from Hill 29. (Carlock, C and Seabolt, R. “Rattler and Firebirds” p. 213 (Hitt, J) Smithfield Press ISBN 1-930566-42-5, 2004).

<sup>40</sup> General Order Number 11782 Dated 9 Oct 69, Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross (WO1 Morreall, Fredrick T.) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>41</sup> (Department of the Army, Headquarters, Americal Division, General Orders Number 11546 and 11547 dated 7 November 1969 Awards of Air Medal w/V ) .\* (Carlock, C and Seabolt, R. “Rattler and Firebirds” p. 213 (Hitt, J) Smithfield Press ISBN 1-930566-42-5, 2004)

<sup>42</sup> General Order Number 12898 Dated 20 Dec 69, Award of the Bronze Star Medal w/V (PFC Jackson, John H) B, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 196<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade APO 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

PFC Dennis J Timone serving as a Radio Telephone Operator, also “silenced the enemy position with a hand grenade and then insured the safe passage of his fellow soldiers back to the main element by placing several bursts of automatic fire on the insurgents....”<sup>43</sup>

PFC Francis Touhy serving as a Medic, “with complete disregard for his personal safety, began treating his wounded comrades. Despite the danger involved, he continued to brave the enemy fire while providing medical treatment for the casualties, including one friendly soldier who required four hours of intensive medical attention. He then directed the evacuation of he wounded personnel.”<sup>44</sup>

“During the course of the mission, [a] helicopter was shot down by enemy fire and all personnel aboard were pinned down in an exposed area. (Chalk2 from 2<sup>nd</sup> flight, WO1 Desert, WO1 Biglow, SP4 Parkansky, and SP4 Smith – WO1 Desert later obtained another aircraft from Chu Lai and returned to LZ Center to resume the mission) Realizing the extreme urgency of the situation, Warrant Officer [Dennis] Whearly [from the 176<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company] unhesitatingly volunteered to attempt and extract the downed crewmen. Maneuvering through heavy volumes of hostile fire to a tight landing zone, Warrant Officer Whearly skillfully set his ship down, remaining on the ground until all of the crewmen and several wounded infantrymen had been loaded aboard. He then lifted out of the clearing and flew to safety.”<sup>45</sup>

WO1 David Jackson with his crew of Pilot, WO1 Leonard Ecker<sup>46</sup>, Crew Chief, PFC Rolf Jones<sup>47</sup>, and Door Gunner, SP4 Roger Moore of the 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company<sup>48</sup> “was flying aboard a UH1-H helicopter in support of ground forces engaged in a fierce battle with the enemy near Landing Zone Center. The ground troops sent out a call for an emergency resupply of ammunition, and Warrant Officer Jackson volunteered to fly the

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<sup>43</sup> General Order Number 12900 Dated 20 Dec 69, Award of the Bronze Star Medal w/V – 1<sup>st</sup> OLC (PFC Timone, Dennis J) B, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 196<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade APO 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>44</sup> General Order Number 12900 Dated 20 Dec 69, Award of the Bronze Star Medal (PFC Touhy, Francis C) B, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 196<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade APO 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>45</sup> General Order Number 10348 Dated 9 Oct 69, Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross (WO1 Whearly Dennis G.) 176<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>46</sup> General Order Number 638 Dated 17 Jan 70, Award of the Air Medal w/V (WO1 Ecker, Leonard R.) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>47</sup> General Order Number 640 Dated 17 Jan 70, Award of the Air Medal w/V (PFC Jones, Rolf R.) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>48</sup> General Order Number 639 Dated 17 Jan 70, Award of the Air Medal w/V-Second Award (SP4 Moore Roger L.) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

mission despite the great danger involved. Upon arrival at the site, his aircraft received heavy enemy fire and was unable to land. Warrant Officer Jackson gallantly remained on station until the ammunition could be unloaded while he hovered over the area. On that same date, Warrant Officer Jackson flew to the beleaguered unit to extract several seriously wounded infantrymen.”<sup>49</sup> \*

**Daily Staff Journal OR DUTY OFFICERS LOG 3-21 Gimlets (Abbreviated)<sup>50</sup>**

<b>TIME</b>	<b>INCIDENTS, MESSAGES, ORDERS, ETC.</b>
<b>1455H</b>	C/A [Combat Assault for Delta Company/3-21] begun. <sup>51</sup>
<b>1535H</b>	Helix 16 on station.
<b>1540H</b>	Dust-off called for 1 US WIA at B Co.
<b>1600H</b>	Cutoff completed.
<b>1615H</b>	Helix 16 on station to process A/S at 078238. [4 km east of Nui Lam]
<b>1640H</b>	A/S completed.
<b>1645H</b>	Helix 16 to process A/S on 097219. [5 km east of Nui Lam]
<b>1720H</b>	Dust-off 608 called for 5 US WIA, 1 at B Co, 4 at D Co. ETA 10-15.
<b>1800H</b>	Dust-off 608 completed.
<b>1810H</b>	Dust-off 608 called for 1 US with battle fatigue At Bn Aid Station, ETA 25-30.
<b>1830H</b>	Dust-off completed.
<b>2015H</b>	Requested Spooky from Bde. [US Air Force C-47 gunship]
<b>2100H</b>	Spooky 11 on station.
<b>2240H</b>	Spooky 11 off station.
<b>2255H</b>	Bunkerline checked by HQ Co. All secure.
<b>2315H</b>	D Co receiving incoming Chi com grenades.
<b>2316H</b>	Requested Spooky from Bde.
<b>2316H</b>	Requested Scout Dog team from Bde. for A Co. 231100 hrs.
<b>2358H</b>	Shadow 47 on station. [US Air Force C-130 gunship]
<b>2400H</b>	Log closed by Lt Cox.

<sup>49</sup> General Order Number 10369 Dated 10 Oct 69, Posthumous Award of the Silver Star (WO1 Jackson, David R.) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives. \* 1025H-R/S (*re-supply helicopter*) bird completed dust-off for two of the WIA. (*Time and Activity*, (Daily Staff Journal OR DUTY OFFICER’S LOG) 0001 22Sept-2400 22Sept Gimlets. 3/21 CONFIDENTIAL document declassified 8/16/07 by Authority NND 873541, NARA, copy obtained at the National Archives).

<sup>50</sup> Daily Staff Journal OR DUTY OFFICER’S LOG 0001 22Sep – 2400 22Sep Gimlets. 3/21 CONFIDENTIAL document declassified 8/16/07 by Authority NND 873541, NARA, Copy obtained at the National Archives).

<sup>51</sup> *Time and Activity*, (Daily Staff Journal OR DUTY OFFICER’S LOG) 0001 22Sept-2400 22Sept Gimlets. 3/21 CONFIDENTIAL document declassified 8/16/07 by Authority NND 873541, NARA, copy obtained at the National Archives).

## **SECOND COMBAT ASSAULT – (Bravo and Delta Company Insertions)**

CPT James Adams commanding a UH1-H, with his air crew of pilot, CPT James Mikesell<sup>52</sup>, Crew Chief SP4 Bruce Petrie<sup>53</sup>, and Door Gunner PFC Dean Johnson<sup>54</sup>, during the insertion of B Company into the secondary landing zone “descended to a small clearing. Despite coming under heavy volumes of hostile automatic weapons fire, Captain Adams succeeded in touching down and remained on the ground while the infantrymen unloaded. During this time, his helicopter was hit by a .51 caliber machinegun round, causing an instrument malfunction. Despite the extremely adverse conditions, Captain Adams skillfully lifted off and maneuvered out of the hot landing zone and to a secure area.”<sup>55</sup>

The Aircraft Commander, WO1 Charles Bartel, with the air crew of 1LT Theodore Lovrine, Crew Chief, SP5 Charles Chatham, and his Door Gunner,<sup>56</sup> “was flying aboard a UH-1H helicopter in support of infantry elements dispatched for insertion into enemy occupied territory near Landing Zone Center. Upon arrival on station, Warrant Officer Bartel came under heavy volumes of enemy fire, but skillfully maneuvered his ship into a hot landing zone and successfully dropped off the infantrymen. On the second lift into the area, Warrant Officer Barthel again received hostile fire and suffered multiple fragmentations wounds, but completed the insertion and flew his damaged aircraft to safety.”<sup>57</sup> Also, on the second lift Lieutenant Lovine, “suffered fragmentation wounds to his leg.”<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> General Order Number 11330 Dated 2 Nov 69, Award of the Air Medal w/V (CPT Mikesell, James G.) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>53</sup> General Order Number 11332 Dated 2 Nov 69, Award of the Air Medal w/V (SP4 Petrie, Bruce M.) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>54</sup> General Order Number 11331 Dated 2 Nov 69, Award of the Air Medal w/V (PFC Johnson, Dean L.) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>55</sup> General Order Number 11329 Dated 2 Nov 69, Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross (CPT Adams, James J.) 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>56</sup> General Order Number 2340 Dated 12 Mar70, Award of the Air Medal w/V (SP5 Chatham, Charles) 176<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>57</sup> General Order Number 2338 Dated 12 Mar70, Award of Distinguished Flying Cross-First Oak Leaf Cluster (WO1Barthel, Charles) 176<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>58</sup> General Order Number 2339 Dated 12 Mar70, Award of the Air Medal w/V-Second Award (1LT Lovrine, Theodore) 176<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

## **DELTA COMPANY - Insertion / Extraction (Ground Combat)**

Delta Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry, “was being combat assaulted into an area near Quan Tien Phuoc when it came under intense hostile fire from a well concealed North Vietnamese Army force. Immediately upon touch down, 2LT Daniel Grant regrouped his platoon and began moving to secure two sides of the landing zone. During this time friendly element began receiving heavy volumes of enemy automatic weapons fire from an emplacement approximately 10 meters to its front. Reacting instantly, Lieutenant Grant charged the bunker position and silenced it with several well placed hand grenades and accurate bursts of rifle fire.”<sup>59</sup>

“PFC John Cockrum remained in an open area and began placing effective grenade fire on the insurgents, enabling his trapped comrades to move to safety. Only after all friendly personnel had reached cover did Private Cockrum withdraw and join the main body of his unit.”<sup>60</sup>

“SSG Mark Sheets skillfully deployed his men to strategic fighting positions and directed effective suppressive fire on the insurgents. Unhesitatingly exposing themselves to the enemy fusillade, Sergeant Sheets and swiftly moving among his comrades and continued to direct the counter attack until 82 MM mortar rounds began impacting throughout the area. At this time, he regrouped the platoon and led them to a more secure location.”<sup>61</sup>

“SGT Anthony Alfieri and the remainder of his platoon began maneuvering to secure an elevated sector of the landing zone, it began receiving heavy volumes of enemy automatic weapons fire from an emplacement only a few meters away. Reacting immediately to the situation, Sergeant Alfieri skillfully deployed his men and began directing effective suppressive fire on the insurgents. Ignoring the hostile rounds impacting all around him, Sergeant Alfieri unhesitatingly moved among his fellow soldiers and continued to direct retaliatory fire as the platoon began to advance. ...”<sup>62</sup>

“With complete disregard for his personal safety, PFC Thomas Winburn gallantly continued to advance, directing the fire of his fellow soldiers and relaying orders to the respective platoons.”<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> General Order Number 12989 Dated 21 Dec 69, Award of the ARCOM w/V (2LT Grant, Daniel A) D, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 196<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade APO 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>60</sup> General Order Number 12988 Dated 21 Dec 69, Award of the ARCOM w/V (PFC Cockrum, John T) D, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 196<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade APO 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>61</sup> General Order Number 12985 Dated 21 Dec 69, Award of the ARCOM w/V (SSG Sheets Mark S) D, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 196<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade APO 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>62</sup> General Order Number 12990 Dated 21 Dec 69, Award of the ARCOM w/V (SGT Alfieri, Anthony J) D, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 196<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade APO 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>63</sup> General Order Number 12991 Dated 21 Dec 69, Award of the ARCOM w/V (PFC Winburn, Thomas W) D, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 196<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade APO 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

“CPL Christopher Martin organized his men and led a fierce assault against the enemy fortifications. After effectively deploying his comrades, Corporal Martin quickly succeeded in overrunning a key hostile bunker and then directed effective suppressive fire on the remaining enemy positions. Although seriously wounded during the ensuing battle, he continued to move about the area to distribute ammunition until he spotted a wounded fellow soldier fall in an exposed area. With complete disregard for his personal safety, Corporal Martin immediately maneuvered through the hostile fusillade to the side of the casualty and carried him from the battlefield. After skillfully administering first aid, he returned to the point of contact, rallied his squad members, and again began advancing against strategic enemy emplacements. Closing with the determined insurgents, Corporal Martin successfully routed them from the area, enabling subsequent air lifts to be completed with minimal delay.”<sup>64</sup>

“SP4 Chet Clendenin observed a friendly soldier suffer a critical wound and fall helpless in an exposed position. With complete disregard for personal safety, he unhesitatingly moved forward through the hostile fusillade to the aid of the casualty. Specialist Clendenin then skillfully administered first aid and carried the man back to a secure location to await extraction.”<sup>65</sup>

“PFC Roger Schroeder began treating other casualties and directed evacuation operations as MEDEVAC aircraft arrived at the site.”<sup>66</sup>

### **HELICOPTER EXTRACTION – Bravo and Delta Companies**

It was late in the afternoon when all of the remaining flyable aircraft were staged at Hawk Hill (also known as Hill 29), awaiting a decision on when to insert more infantry troops. At approximately 1700 a decision was made to start an extraction of Bravo and Delta companies from the field.

WO1 Michael D Curtis’ “Huey was unserviceable...the crew, without Terry [Weese who had been wounded earlier], caught a ride back to the Snake Pit (Chu Lai East, 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company Flight line) and picked up another aircraft. [They] got back to Hawk Hill two or three hours later . . .MAJ [William] Price, [71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company Commander], held a post action brief . . .at the refueling point at Hawk Hill and said that [the company] needed to go back for the troops . . .[Warrant Officer Curtis] held a crew

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<sup>64</sup> General Order Number 974 Dated 26 Jan 70, Award of the Silver Star (CPL Martin, Christopher T) D, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 196<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade APO 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>65</sup> General Order Number 12986 Dated 21 Dec 69, Award of the ARCOM w/V – 1<sup>st</sup> OLC (SP4 Clendenin, Chet V Jr.) D, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 196<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade APO 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.

<sup>66</sup> General Order Number 12987 Dated 21 Dec 69, Award of the ARCOM w/V (PFC Schroeder, Roger L) D, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 196<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade APO 96374. Copy obtained at the National Archives.



meeting and ....decided to go in as lead.....[Warrant Officer Curtis] led that trail formation into a second LZ in close proximity to the first. The formation went in hot and took fire, the flight made the pickup ....and returned the troops to [LZ] Center”.<sup>67</sup>

“It was almost mid day before [WO1 Wallace Honda and WO1 William Broome] got off the ground in Chu Lai because they had to wait on maintenance to [repair] the last [helicopter] left in the company [area]. ...The mission was to extract troops who were on a nearby hilltop and [to]recover the wounded and the dead. ... [The air crew] flew three extraction missions off the nearby hilltop that day...[On the third extraction],...As the [helicopter] approached the LZ, [it] came under heavy fire. [The area was] filled with the sounds of rockets, M60’s, M16’s and AK’s popping and exploding [all around the aircraft]. The aircraft was the last helicopter pulling the last [infantry troops] off the LZ before the hill was overrun. ...Once the last man was finally on board, the aircraft flew quickly down that hill at treetop level, ... onto [LZ] Center and [to] safety.”<sup>68 69 \*</sup>

### **Daily Staff Journal OR DUTY OFFICERS LOG 3-21 Gimlets <sup>70</sup>**

Summary: [Bravo] Company C/A to 035218 [Top of hill Nui Lon] received S/A fire. Rest of [Bravo Company] C/A to 033235 [1 km northwest of Nui Lam] when they too received S/A fire. [Delta Company] took incoming 82mm at 026266. [Delta Company] C/A to 033235 with [Bravo Company]—S/A fire. [Bravo Company] element at 035218 [top of hill Nui Lon] extracted back to [LZ]Center— One [platoon of Delta Company] extracted to [LZ] Center [Charlie Company] and [Alpha Company secured [LZ]Center. Recon. secured [LZ] East.

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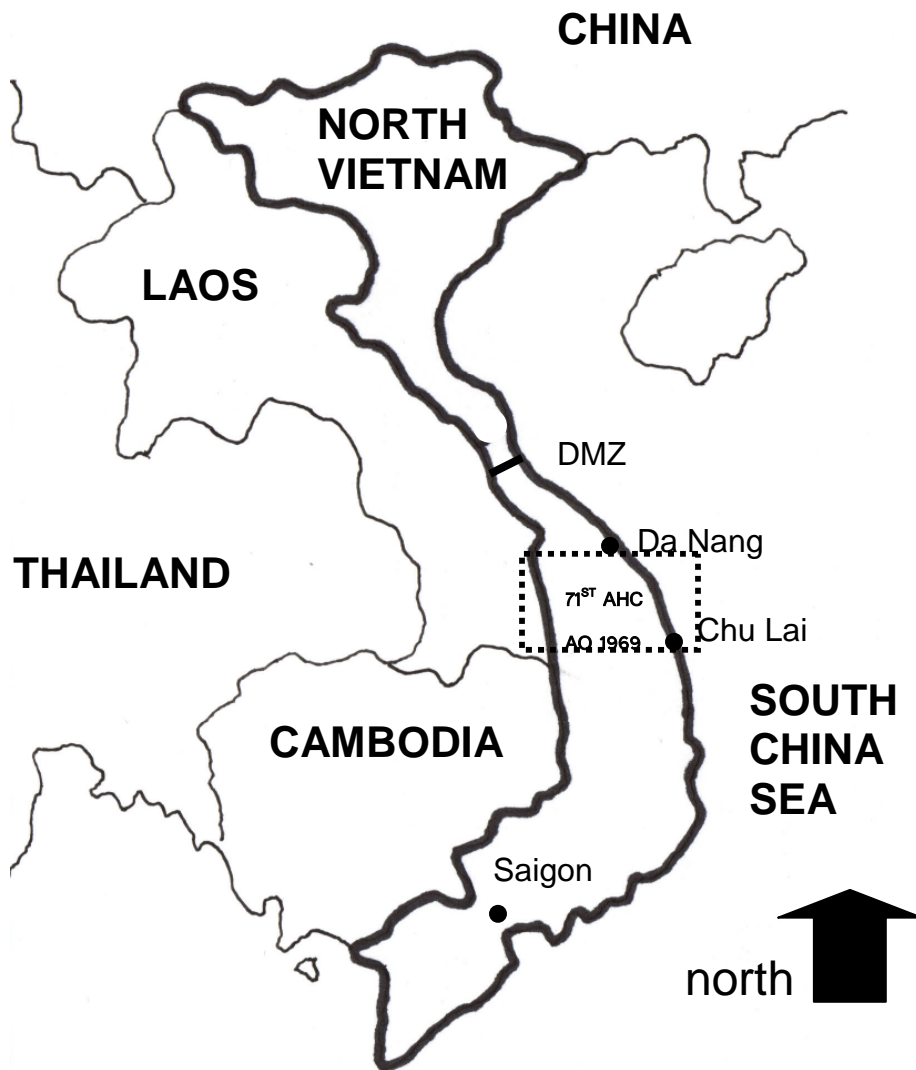
<sup>67</sup> Carlock, C and Seabolt, R. “Rattler and Firebirds” p. 214 (Hitt, J) Smithfield Press ISBN 1-930566-42-5, 2004.

<sup>68</sup> Carlock, C and Seabolt, R. “Rattler and Firebirds” p. 215-220 (Hitt, J) Smithfield Press ISBN 1-930566-42-5, 2004.

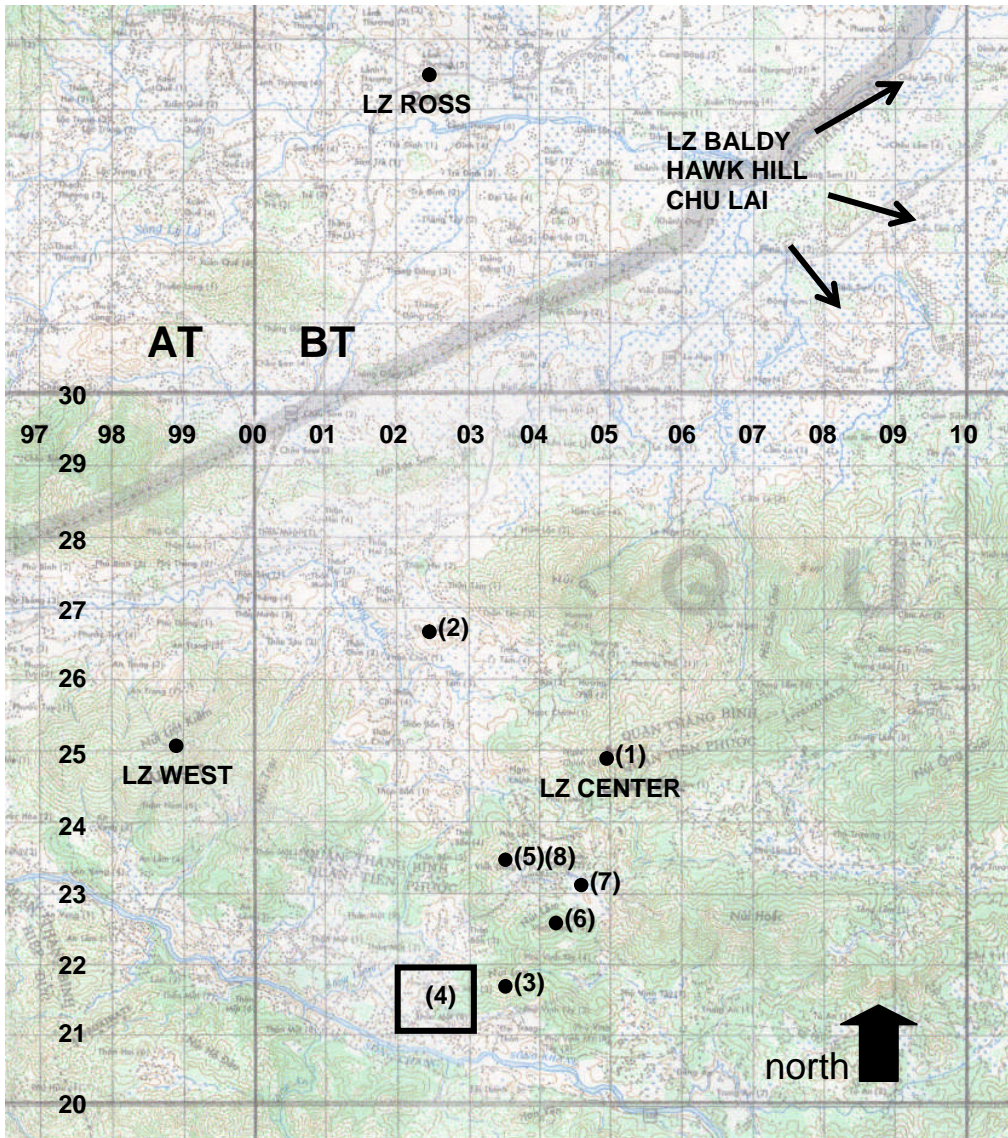
<sup>69</sup> Summary: (Daily Staff Journal OR DUTY OFFICER’S LOG) 0001 22Sept-2400 22Sept Gimlets. 3/21 CONFIDENTIAL document declassified 8/16/07 by Authority NND 873541, NARA, copy obtained at the National Archives \*(B Co element at 035218 extracted back to Center, One plt. D Co extracted to Center)

<sup>70</sup>*Time and Activity*, (Daily Staff Journal OR DUTY OFFICER’S LOG) 0001 22Sept-2400 22Sept Gimlets. 3/21 CONFIDENTIAL document declassified 8/16/07 by Authority NND 873541, NARA, copy obtained at the National Archiv

**MAP 1 Reference Map (71<sup>ST</sup> AHC AREA OF OPERATIONS 1969)**



**Map 2 OPERATIONS AREA OF COMBAT ASSAULT**  
(September 22, 1969)



- (1) LZ Center (2/21 HQ and Bravo Company PZ)
- (2) Delta Company PZ
- (3) Initial LZ for Combat Assault (Nui Lon)
- (4) Planned Bravo Company Reconnaissance Area
- (5) Secondary LZ
- (6) First Helicopter Shot Down (CW2 Alexander)
- (7) Second Helicopter Shot Down (CPT Ingram)
- (8) Third Helicopter Shot Down (WO1 Desert)

- BT 050250
- BT 025266
- BT 035218
- BT 0221
- BT 0321
- BT 0222
- BT 0322
- BT 033235
- BT 043225
- BT 045231
- BT 033235

## KNOWN AIRCRAFT CREW ASSIGNMENTS (COMBAT ASSAULT)

(page 1 of 3)

Call Sign	Name and Rank	Position	Gen Order	Award	Status	Unit
Rattler 21	WO1 Doyle, Kenneth W	AC				
	NA	P				
	NA	CE				
	NA	DG				
Rattler 6	MAJ Price, William	AC	NA			71st AHC
	MAJ-----14 <sup>th</sup> CAB XO	P	NA			
	SP5 May, John L	CE	11547	AMV 3rd Awd		71st AHC
	SP4 Deahl, Michael D	DG	11546	AMV	WIA	71st AHC
Rattler XX	CW2 Alexander, Barry	AC	NA		KIA	71st AHC
	1LT Gates, Thomas H	P	11235	AMV 3rd Awd	WIA	71st AHC
	SP4 Brown, Thomas O	CE	11236	Silver Star	WIA	71st AHC
	SP5 Williams, Johnnie Lee Jr.	DG	NA		KIA	71st AHC
Rattler 13	WO1 Curtis, Michael D	AC	10346	DFC		71st AHC
	WO1 Eden, Thomas G	P	12053	AMV 2nd Awd		71st AHC
	SP4 Weese, Terry C	CE	12054	AMV 2nd Awd	WIA	71st AHC
	PFC Wessels, Ronald L	DG	12055	AMV 2nd Awd		71st AHC
Rattler 14	WO1 Kilmer, Eric S	AC	11334	DFC	WIA	71st AHC
	CPT Hitt, Johnnie B	P	11333	AMV	WIA	71st AHC
	SP4 Davenport, Richard D	CE	11335	AMV 2nd Awd/PH	WIA	71st AHC
	SP4 Harris, David L	DG	11336	AMV	WIA	71st AHC
Rattler 20	WO1 Desert, Thomas T	AC	10347	DFC		71st AHC
	WO1 Biglow, William W	P	12050	AMV		176th AHC
	SP4 Parkansky, Steven	CE	12051	AMV 2nd Awd		71st AHC
	SP4 Smith, Bernard	DG	12052	AMV 11th Awd	WIA	71st AHC

## KNOWN AIRCRAFT CREW ASSIGNMENTS (COMBAT ASSAULT)

(page 2 of 3)

Call Sign	Name and Rank	Position	Gen Order	Award	Status	Unit
Rattler	WO1 Morreall, Fredrick T	AC	10349	DFC		71st AHC
	WO1 Hill, Steven E	P	11782	DFC		176th AHC
	PFC Melson, Rhett E	CE	11783	AMV 2nd Awd		71st AHC
	SP4 Hobbs, Roger A	DG	11784	AMV		71st AHC
NA	CPT Ingram, Earl II	AC	12033	DFC 2nd OLC/PH- 1OLC	WIA	HHC 14th CAB
	WO1 Bernard, Stephen N	P	12030	AMV 5th Awd		71st AHC
	SP4 Kotecki, Gene J	CE	12032	AMV 2nd Awd/PH	WIA	71st AHC
	PFC Hockensmith, Bernard J	DG	12031	AMV		71st AHC
Firebird 94	WO1 Lard, William R	AC	12046	DFC		71st AHC
	WO1 Blakeley, John A Jr.	P	12047	AMV 2nd Awd		71st AHC
	SP5 Coffia, Ernest C	CE	12048	AMV 4th Awd		71st AHC
	SP4 Waldrip, Gene P	DG	12049	AMV 2nd Awd		71st AHC
Firebird XX	NA	AC				71st AHC
	NA	P				NA
	NA	CE				NA
	NA	DG				NA
Rattler XX	WO1 Jackson, David R	AC	10369	Silver Star		71st AHC
	WO1 Ecker, Leonard R	P	638	AMV		71st AHC
	PFC Jones, Rolf R	CE	639	AMV		71st AHC
	SP4 Moore, Roger L	DG	640	AMV 2nd Awd		71st AHC
Rattler XX	CAP Adams, James J	AC	11329	DFC		71st AHC
	CAP Miskesell, James G	P	11330	AMV		71st AHC
	SP4 Petrie, Bruce M	CE	11332	AMV 3rd Awd		71st AHC
	PFC Johnson, Dean L	DG	11331	AMV		71st AHC
Minuteman 25	WO1 Wheary, Dennis G	AC	10348	DFC		176th AHC
	NA	P				NA
	NA	CE				NA
	NA	DG				NA

## KNOWN AIRCRAFT CREW ASSIGNMENTS (COMBAT ASSAULT)

(page 3 of 3)

Call Sign	Name and Rank	Position	Gen Order	Award	Status	Unit
Rattler 27	WO1 Honda, Wallace T	AC				71st AHC
	WO1 Broome, William	P				71st AHC
	NA	CE				71st AHC
	NA	DG				71st AHC
Minuteman 13	WO1 Barthel, Charles	AC	2338	DFC 1stOLC	WIA	176th AHC
	1LT Lovrine, Theodore	P	2339	AMV 2nd Awd	WIA	176th AHC
	SP5 Chatham, Charles	CE	2340	AMV 2nd		176th AHC
	NA	DG				UNK
Musket 30	WO1 Barrett, Daniel L???	AC		NA		176th AHC
	NA	P		NA		NA
	NA	CE		NA		NA
	NA	DG		NA		NA
NA	1LT Mattice, Thomas W	NA	9760	PH	WIA	176th AHC
Blue Ghost 28						
Snakedoctor	WO1 Jopes, Raymond L ?					71 <sup>st</sup> AHC

## Daily Staff Journal OR DUTY OFFICERS LOG 71<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company\*<sup>71</sup>

### TIME INCIDENTS, MESSAGES, ORDERS, ETC.

- 0001 Log Opened  
0625 Notified Bn. Opns. That AC 520, 100, 522, 227, 264, 607, 332, 298, 772, & 588 are off on missions.

*UH-1H AC 67-17520 WO1 Eric Kilmer and Crew*  
*UH-1H AC 68-16100 Unidentified Crew (WO1 David Jackson KIA 25Sep69)*  
*UH-1H AC 67-17522 Unidentified Crew*  
*UH-1H AC 68-15227 CPT Earl Ingram and Crew*  
*UH-1H AC 68-15264 WO1 Thomas Desert and Crew*  
*UH-1H AC \_\_-\_\_607 WO1 Fredrick Morrell and Crew*  
*UH-1H AC 66-16332 CW2 Barry Alexander and Crew*  
*UH-1H AC 68-15298 MAJ William Price and Crew*  
*UH-1C AC 65-12772 Unidentified Crew of UH-1C Firebird*  
*UH-1C AC 66-00588 Unidentified Crew of UH-1C Firebird*

*WO1 Michael Curtis and Crew?*  
*WO1 David Jackson and Crew?*  
*WO1 William Lard and Crew(AC 772, 588, or 713)?*  
*WO1 Kenneth Doyle and Crew on CC at LZ Center?*

- 0743 4/31 CA complete at 0742 and LZ's were COLD. (*4<sup>th</sup> Battalion 31<sup>st</sup> Inf. Combat Assault – not part of 3/21 Combat Assault*)  
0945 Aircraft 332 is down at BT 042226 with *Combat Damage. (CW2 Alexander and Crew)*  
0945 Aircraft 227 was shot down while trying to Rescue the Crew of Aircraft 332 at BT 046232\_ (*CPT Earl Ingram and Crew*)  
1030 Aircraft 264 is down at BT 036233 (*WO1 Thomas Desert and Crew*) – Aircraft could make it out of the LZ. Aircraft 520 was hit (*Unidentified Crew*) also but made it back to LZ Center. Crews were all recovered.  
1045 Aircraft 607 took Hits Resulting in a hydraulics failure – made running landing at LZ Baldy. (*WO1 Fredrick Morrell and Crew*)  
1435 Bn. Called to have the single gunship that is up in the Snake Pit to standby in the S.Pit. (*Chu Lai East, Rattler-Firebird Flight Line*)  
1500 AC 520 has been slung back to the Snake Pit at this time.  
1520 Aircraft 607 has been slung back to the Snake Pit.

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<sup>71</sup> Daily Staff Journal OR DUTY OFFICER'S LOG 0001 22Sep – 2400 22Sep 71<sup>ST</sup> Aviation Company  
Copy obtained from Rattler-Firebird Association, Ron Seabolt. 3-09-09). \*Note: Italics are author's notes.

- 1550 Aircraft 66-16453 (*CPT James Adams and Crew*) is down with 90 degree Gear Box leaking excessively at LZ Center. *Snake Doctor* is going to check aircraft out. (*Unidentified Snakedoctor* )
- 1630 Aircraft 64-13875 off on assigned mission – 196<sup>th</sup> *LIB Combat Assault*. (*WO1 Wallace Honda and Crew*)
- 1705 Alert Status effective 1800 is No – 4.
- 1730 NOTIFIED Bn. That AC 66-00713 had hydraulic failure System No. 2 (Unreadable) would remain *Snake Pit* while 713 was checked out by maintenance.
- 1740 CPT Longstreet 14<sup>th</sup> CAB called that WO Alexander & SP5 John Williams were KIA.
- 1820 NOTIFIED Bn. That AC 453 was on LZ Center and would have to be slung back.
- 2010 NOTIFIED Bn. *Operations* that all aircraft were in from assigned missions.
- 2200 Summary – Combat Assaults was the mission for the 71<sup>st</sup>. The 3/21 came under heavy contact along with 3 aircraft being shot down. The opening stages of the Second CA Mr. Alexander & SP Williams have both been confirmed as K.I.A.
- 2400 Log Closed.

Signed **JAMES R. LEECH, WO-1** (*Officer On Duty*)