TOMMY C. STINER

COUNTY EXECUTIVE

CAMPBELL COUNTY

JACKSBORO, TENNESSEE 37757 (615) 562-2526

January 28, 1997

Subject:

Oath of Authenticity

To Whom It May Concern:

I Swear that the attached, unsigned, statement is authentic and was authored by me. The Statement starts with ——"At approximately 1815 hours on 24 March 1971, —"; and it concludes with the half line, —"effort that undoubtedly averted two disasters." The statement contains 39 total lines. I further swear that the statement is accurate and describes a series of activity worthy of the highest recognition.

Tommy C. Stiner

Colonel US Army

Retired

County of Campbell, State of Tennessee

I, J. H. Willoughby a Notary Public At Large did have come before me Tommy C. Stiner, with whom I am personally acquainted, and who in my presence did affix his signature to this document on the <u>28th Day of January</u>, 1997. My Commission expires <u>December 15</u>, 1998.

J. H. Willoughby

Notary Public At Large

STATEMENT

At approximately 1815 hours on 24 March 1971, a heavy scout team from C Troop, 2d of the 17th Cav contacted a large enemy force in the vicinity of ecordinates MD 5748. One secut aircraft was shot down. The second accut aircraft maneuvered to determine the fate of the first aircraft and was also shot down. A UH-1H attempted to land elements of the serial rifle plateen in the vicinity and was also shot down. An AH-1G, attempting to supress the area, was virtually distroyed by fire from two .51 caliber gun positions. A rifle company was elerted to move and the 71st Assault Helicopter Company, which was supporting the brigade, were out on 10 separate support missions. I issued an alert call on the company UHF for all siroraft to assemble for an emergency combat assault. Within 29 minutes, the entire flight was assembled and leaded with troops. These troops were inserted in the vicinity of the downed sircraft in the face of extremely heavy enemy fire. Three of the lift ships sustained disabling hits during the insertion but completed the mission and limped back to B Med at Khe Sahn to drop off their wounded. Some of these crows eventually obtained replacement aircraft and rejoined the action. At about the same time that the first insertion was taking place, a plateon from the 4th of the 3d encountered extremely heavy contact in an area approximately 40 kilometers away. It was readily apparent that reinforcements were necessary to prevent annilation of this small unit. The flight was contacted and diverted in the air to the Pick-up Zone where they airlifted a plateon sized element into the second contact area. This was accomplished under heavy fire. The troops in the first contact area were again so heavily engaged that it was necessary to redirect the flight to reinforce the ground troops which were inserted earlier. This was accomplished expeditiously and the flight refueled, rearmed, and then returned to the second contact area to finish the insertion there. By this time the ground force had reached the downed alreraft in the first contact area, so the flight was called in to extract the dead and wounded. After this was completed, they extracted the company. The hostile fire was so heavy that 6 gunships were used continously to cover the aircraft going into am coming out of the Landing Zone. Even though sustaining hits each time, the crews continued repeatly until all personnel were extracted. One helicopter, Rattler 11 and crew, was particularly noteworthy. His helicopter sustained so many hits that it was litterally shot down in flames. The pilot, skillfully, guided the burning aircraft to a stream bed and sat it down in such a manner, that no one was injured. The entire flight, throughout the day, demonstrated courage and a sence of urgency that credits the United States Army's airmobility concept. It is difficult to single out individual acts of heroism since the entire flight was one continuous heroic enleavor from morning till night. I recommend that every crewmember, involved in this action, be awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his contribution to an effort that unloubtly averted two disasters.

TOMMY C. STINER
MAJ IN
Brigade Avn Officer