

187th AVIATION

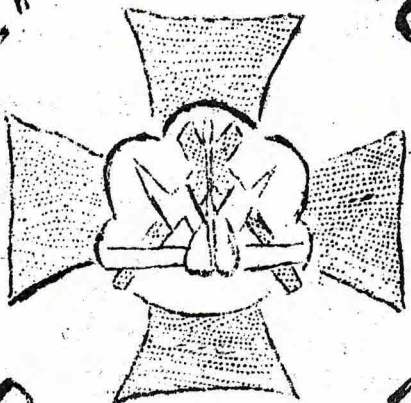
spot awards given

for action on 7 aug

Major General George P. Seneff, Commanding General of the 1st Aviation Brigade, presented a total 117 spot awards to the members of the 187th Assault Helicopter Company, 269th Combat Aviation Battalion, and to personnel from other units involved in the August 7th action.

The Awards Ceremony took place at the 187th "Black Hawk" (Cont on pg2)

BLACK BARON



RELEASE

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Black Market Fraud

Recent developments indicate that a significant number of articles and products appearing in Black Market channels are counterfeit because of reuse of US labels, trademarks, and containers. Such materials represent an outright fraud, constitute a serious health hazard, and reflect adversely on the US image in Vietnam. One of the goals of (Cont page 5)

3d TOUR LTC IS NEW XO

The 269th Combat Aviation Battalion has gained the beneficial experience of a career officer presently serving his third tour in the Republic of Vietnam.

Lieutenant Colonel Irwin K. Cockett Jr recently assumed the position of Executive Officer of the "Black Barons".

Originally from Koloa, on the island of Kauai Hawaii, LTC Cockett entered the service as an enlisted man in 1949. He served with the 5th Regimental Combat Team at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii and deployed with the unit to Korea in 1950.

He attended Armor OCS at Ft Knox, Kentucky, and was commissioned a (Continued on page no. 4)

7 CHOPPRS DOWN 12 OTHERS HIT

What started as a routine combat assault mission for the 187th Assault Helicopter Company, 269th Combat Aviation Battalion, suddenly erupted into a violent air-ground battle six miles north of Saigon, and scrambled several other aviation units into action. A total of seven craft were downed at the Landing Zone area, six more made a one time flight to safe areas, and six others continued the mission despite multiple hits.

On the approach to the oblong landing zone, near the Saigon River eight slick troop carrying Huey Helicopters from the 187th Black Hawks began taking intense small arms and automatic weapons fire. The lead ship went down from multiple hits. A second ship, the tail rotor shot off spun and crashed next to it. Two other heavily damaged craft dropped their 199th Light Infantry Brigade troops, but went down just outside of the LZ from damage sustained in the initial approach. The remaining ships took several hits, but flew out of the area bringing wounded and rescued crews with them.

Fire teams consisting of two gunships each, from the 120th, 116th, 187th, and 162d Assault Helicopter Companies, scrambled to the area, blasting it with rocket and machine gun fire.

A slick from the 68th "Top Tigers" attempted a resupply of the infantry soldiers on the ground. The craft took a direct hit from a heavy weapon and crashed to the right of the Landing Zone.

A smoke ship from (Cont page 4)

VIETNAMESE TO ELECT SOON

The government of Vietnam will conduct an election on Sunday 3 September 1967. Prior to that date, an election campaign now in progress, will run until September 3rd.

This is a free Vietnamese election, and the United States or other (Continued on page no. 3)

Choppers downed in air-ground battle

(Continued from page 1) the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion Headquarters made the first rescue attempt for the downed "Top Tiger". Intense ground fire from all directions wounded two of the crew members, aborting the mission. The crippled "Black Baron" ship flew to Cu Chi for repairs. A "Razor Back" Gunship, from the 120th Assault Helicopter Company was also unable to rescue the downed "Top Tiger" crew because of heavy automatic weapons fire. Damage received by the gunship during the rescue attempt caused the craft to force land near a Vietnamese Army compound some 3000 meters from the L.Z.

Despite the continuing hail of enemy fire, a "Black Hawk" ship made the third try to pick up the wounded crew of the 68th Assault Helicopter Company chopper. Picking up one of the crew, the "Black Hawk" ship began receiving severe damage from automatic weapons and flew out of the area. It force landed next to

to the ARVN compound.

With four slicks from the 191st Assault Helicopter Company, and four of their own, the "Black Hawks" inserted a second lift of infantry into another area to begin a sweeping action against the estimated reinforced company of Viet Cong.

A Command and Control ship from the 199th Light Infantry Brigade, with the Brigade Commander Brigadier General John F. Fruend on board, moved in at low level to attempt to rescue a downed chopper crew. Enemy fire drove the ship off, wounding the general and his aid.

Ground troops later secured the area and found two more of the "Top Tiger" crew; evacuating them to medical facilities for treatment.

Artillery, airstrikes, and a rain of fire from the gunships of several units broke the entrenched enemy positions. Viet Cong casualties were estimated as high, the exact figures were not known.

3d tour in VN for new Lt XO

(Continued from page 1) Lt in 1952. Jump School was next for the Black Baron Officer, and a subsequent assignment to the 82d Airborne Division followed.

Highlighting his early career was an assignment with the 10th Special Forces Group at FT Bragg, North Carolina. LTC Cockett moved with the famous unit to Bad Tolz, West Germany, a mountainous area near the Austrian border. He was an FA Team Commander until March 1957. He returned to the States a 1LT and attended Flight School at Camp Gary, Texas. Promotion to CPT came while completing the Advance Infantry Course at FT Benning in 1958. He followed up by attending the 3d Army Instrument Flight School in Augusta, Georgia. Subsequent assignments to his native Hawaii and to Okinawa followed.

In 1962 the Black Baron Executive Officer came to Vietnam for the first time. He was assigned to MACV as the personal pilot for General Paul D. Harkins, predecessor to General William C. Westmoreland, COMUSMACV. Returning to the States, the then Captain Cockett was assigned to Ft Riley, Kansas, and became the Commanding Officer of the Combat Support Company, 2d Battle Group of the 26th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division. He participated in Operation Long Thrust, which brought the 1st Infantry into Berlin, Germany in 1963. The Operation was a test of speed and efficiency in which a large tactical unit can be moved-

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long distances under simulated combat conditions.

LTC Cockett later attended the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth Kansas. While attending the course, he was promoted to the rank of Major. He returned to the 1st Infantry Division, and took over the slot of Assistant Division Aviation Officer. LTC Cockett began his second tour in Vietnam with the 7th Airlift Platoon and was stationed at Da Nang under operational control of the Marine expeditionary forces. The unit expanded into the I Corp Aviation Company Provisional and LTC Cockett became the Executive Officer and later the Company Commander of the unit.

March of 67 brought the Black Baron Officer back to Vietnam for the third time. He was assigned as the Plans Officer for the 17th Combat Aviation Group at Na Trang, and later as Armaments Officer at USARV Headquarters. He was promoted to his present rank and specifically requested to be transferred to the Black Baron Battalion.

Queried as to his feelings about the Military after nearly 18 years of service, LTC Cockett answered, "I personally love military life the Army has been very Good to me."