

U.S. Army Materiel Command



# A Devotion to Duty

Memoirs of General Jimmy D. Ross  
U.S. Army, Retired

Written with  
Dr. Mary Magee  
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and Others

Historical Office  
U.S. Army Materiel Command

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Memoirs of General Jimmy D. Ross  
U.S. Army, Retired

Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, U.S. Army  
1987 - 1992

Commanding General  
U.S. Army Materiel Command  
1992 - 1994

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This work is a memoir that reflects the author's present recollections of his Army experiences and also the history of his family for five decades. It documents changes in the logistics operations and programs of the Army.

*It is dedicated to  
my wonderful wife Pat,  
my family,  
all Army spouses,  
and  
The Men and Women of the Army Logistics Family*



## **General Jimmy D. Ross**

General Jimmy D. Ross was born in Hosston, Louisiana, on 23 May 1936. Upon completion of a Bachelor of Science degree in Education from Henderson State University in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, in 1958, he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Transportation Corps. He holds a Masters' degree in business administration from Central Michigan University. His military education includes the Basic Officer Course at the Infantry School, the Transportation Advanced Officer Course, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

His initial company grade assignments were with the Infantry and Transportation Corps units at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; Thailand; Fort Eustis, Virginia; Fort Campbell, Kentucky; and Fort Bragg, North Carolina. In 1964, General Ross served in Vietnam as an Infantry Battalion Advisor in the PBT (Phuoc Binh Thanh) Special Zone, III Corps.

From 1967 to 1969, he was assigned as a JTF-11 Staff Officer, United States Strike Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. In 1969, General Ross returned to Vietnam. During his second combat tour, he served as the S4 and later the S2/3 in the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division Support Command; and then commanded the 10<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion at Cam Ranh Bay.

Upon his return to the United States, he was assigned to the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics at HQDA (Headquarters, Department of the Army), in the Financial Resources and the Materiel Acquisition Directorates. He served as the Assistant Director of the Army Staff in the Office of the Chief of Staff, Army, from 1973 to 1974. His next assignment was as the Deputy Comptroller of Oakland Army Base, California, and later as the Commander of the Military Ocean Terminal, Bay Area.

In 1978, General Ross transferred to Germany, where he commanded the 4<sup>th</sup> Transportation Brigade and 2<sup>nd</sup> Support Command, VII Corps. He returned to the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, HQDA, as the Director for Transportation, Energy and

Troop Support from 1982 to 1984. He served as the Chief of Staff, U.S. Army Materiel Command, from 1984 to 1986 and the Commanding General of the U.S. Army Depot System Command, from 1986 to 1987. In June 1987, he was assigned as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, U.S. Army, where he served for four and a half years. General Ross returned to AMC as Commanding General from 1 February 1992 to 11 February 1994.

His awards and decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal (with Oak Leaf Cluster), the Legion of Merit (with Oak Leaf Cluster), the Bronze Star Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, two Air Medals, the Joint Service Commendation Medal and the Army Commendation Medal (with Oak Leaf Cluster). He has also been awarded the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Master Parachutist Badge, the Ranger Tab, and the Army Staff Identification Badge. General Ross retired from the Army in 1994.



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## *Preface*

In May of 1958, on the football field of a small Arkansas college, my wife, Patricia L. Cox Ross pinned a set of gold Second Lieutenant bars on my shoulders. It was graduation day for the ROTC cadet. Washed in the afternoon sun, we peered into a future neither of us could have imagined.

During thirty-six years in the Army, I went from Second Lieutenant to four-star General, from the jungles of Vietnam to sands of Desert Shield/Desert Storm, and from Hawaii's statehood celebration to the coming down of the Berlin Wall. At each turn in the journey, we encountered exceptional Soldiers and their families.

My Army career began with a vision of serving as an Airborne Ranger and returning to Henderson State Teachers College to coach football. Step by step, the Army diverted me onto the logistics and materiel path, leading me to become a "Soldier serving Soldiers." My career, which began in the Infantry, ended with two wonderful years as Commanding General of the United States Army Materiel Command.

In our Florida home, the walls of my office are filled with photographs and mementoes. They are daily reminders of how our lives were enriched by the fascinating people whom we met. The Airborne Ranger Infantry training with Colin Powell; South Vietnamese battalion commander, Captain An, and myself; Manfred Rommel in Stuttgart, Germany; Barbara Bush in Army camouflage visiting troops in Saudi Arabia; President George H.W. Bush with Pat and me at a Washington, D.C. function; President Bill Clinton; Elizabeth Dole with me at the American Red Cross; a piece of the Berlin Wall; crossing the finish line at the New York Marathon and another at the Boston Marathon; Pat and I in Saudi Arabia and Egypt; and Teresa Katherine "Katie" Cripps Kelley, our granddaughter, in her West Point uniform.

As I worked through the process of putting my life on paper, many people helped. I thank them for their support and hard work. This began with an oral history interview conducted by Colonel Thomas W. Sweeney at the Army War College. Dr. William T. Moye and Mr. Jeffrey Hosmer, historians at Headquarters, U.S. Army Materiel

Command, edited and revised the text more than once. Dr. Mary Magee, writer and psychologist, added family genealogy and history, as well as editing and revising the material many times. Dr. Diane R. Gordon, professional editor, revised the manuscript and offered many helpful suggestions. Ms. Wilma J. Fields, writer/editor, AMC History Office, produced the final layout. Without the support and guidance of Dr. Robert G. Darius, the Command Historian, U.S. Army Materiel Command, there would be no book. Last but not least, the contributions by my wife, Patricia L. Ross, were invaluable.

Others whose contributions have been invaluable include Ruthie Hiatt, Colonel Luther Verdon Kennedy (U.S. Army, Retired), Joyce Carlock, James Magee, Robert Ross, Ross Hiatt, and Lieutenant Colonel Harry Hiatt (U.S. Army, Retired).

I frequently spiced the narrative by relating conversations regarding activities and events. It should be noted that I provided these quotes and stories from the best of my memory and make no claim that each quotation is absolutely accurate as attributed. Furthermore, the opinions and views that I express are entirely my own.

Jimmy D. Ross  
September 2007

## *Chapter I*

### **The Early Years, 1936-1958**

I came into the world during tough times in the United States. My life began in the 1930's when money was scarce and the last phase of the Great Depression still had a strangle hold on the American economy. When I was very young, I remember my parents singing praises of gratitude for our president who, they said, cared about the average man. Franklin D. Roosevelt became president in 1933 and immediately began to find relief for the factories, farms, and the unemployed through his "New Deal."

While Roosevelt dealt with economic problems in the United States, unrest in Europe was stirring, and by 1935, Hitler announced that he was rearming Germany. This act was a blatant violation of the Treaty of Versailles. In 1936, he continued to violate the restrictions that followed the Great War by announcing the mobilization of German troops in the French-occupied Rhineland. With no opposition from the French or the British, Hitler concluded, and rightfully so, that his defiance of the Treaty of Versailles would be tolerated. Mussolini in Italy, having invaded Ethiopia and received only a feeble, ineffective slap on the wrist from the League of Nations, formed an alliance with Hitler.

As Hitler planned acts of aggression, he was developing symbols of progress to both distract and impress the German citizenry. In the small picturesque village of Oberursel, just north of Frankfurt, an educational farm was established under the auspices of Frankfurt University to teach gardening, bee keeping, animal husbandry and general farming techniques. In essence, the farming camp was a sign of German prosperity and redevelopment after the depression that followed World War I. Little did the citizens know that Hitler was planning to later convert that land to a military post. Decades later, on that same land, I would become the commander of a U.S. military post and the 4<sup>th</sup> Transportation Brigade.

To my parents in Hosston, Louisiana, the remote European unrest seemed to have little to do with their lives. I was born in the oil boomtown of Hosston on May 23, 1936 on a spring day that felt more

like summer. My father, Horace Eugene Ross, was glad to have a job as an oil field worker when so many were out of work and drifting from place to place without homes. My mother, Lucile Pontious Ross, was a homemaker who spent her days gardening, homemaking and raising their first-born son Bob, who was eight years old. My big brother Bob was already showing signs of growing larger than the typical Ross man grows. Most men in our family, being of Scottish and Irish descent, resembled Braveheart, built tough, but “low to the ground.”

My dad, Horace, was a roughneck in the oil fields, a pumper, a pipe-fitter, a roust-about. My mother hated the term “roughneck,” but the fact remained, that’s what he was. He followed oil production and my older brother Bob was born in Smackover, Arkansas, on June 10, 1928. Oil was discovered along the Ouachita River fault line in Smackover in 1921, and in July 1922, the Richardson Number 1 brought in another large discovery. This small village of less than 100 boomed to 25,000 in a matter of months. In 1925, for a period of five months, the forty-square mile Smackover field ranked first among the nation’s oil fields in production.

In spite of a disability, my mother Lucile managed as though it didn’t exist. She was hearing impaired, partially deaf, and had been since childhood. She could read lips and handled communication quite well, especially when my brother and I were misbehaving. It must have been difficult for her to establish a new home with each of our many moves, but I never remember her complaining.

My earliest memories are of living in Hosston, just outside Bossier City in a small, unpainted house on stilts with natural gas lamps for lighting and an open breezeway through the center. We called it a “shotgun” house because a gunshot through the front entry would go straight through the front door and out the back. The kitchen was fairly modern for that time, with an indoor hand pumped water system. However, we still had an outdoor privy. It didn’t matter whether you stood on the front porch or back porch, the scenery was the same, acres and acres of oil derricks. Dad made \$98.00 a month, about three dollars a day at a time when the annual average salary in the U.S. was \$114.00 a month, about \$1,368.00 per year. Unemployment stood at 25 percent.

I have great pictures of my dad standing on top of wooden oil derricks. He has a pistol strapped on his hip. All roughnecks wore pistols, and as a kid, I thought it was a cowboy thing. One day when I was a teen, I asked him about this. He said, "Oil field workers are targeted by muggers because it's the Depression, and we're making money. My work keeps me in the fields all hours of the day and night, and there is a constant risk of being knocked off. This pistol is for protection."

In the late 1930's, as I toddled around our shotgun house playing cowboy, the winds of war were blowing across Europe. On September 1, 1939, German troops swarmed across the Polish border and unleashed the first *Blitzkrieg* the world had seen.

On December 7, 1941, I was five years old, and my brother Bob was thirteen. That Sunday morning, the bombing of Pearl Harbor shook our country out of isolation and into the war. Everything in the United States was about to make radical shifts and changes.

Two days after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor; the President addressed the nation over a world-wide hookup. Through five-year-old eyes that night, I watched the faces of my parents move from nervous uncertainty to strong determination as President Roosevelt spoke of the atrocities Hirohito of Japan, Hitler of Germany, and Mussolini of Italy had committed in Europe and Africa.

My thirteen-year-old brother felt the stirring of a patriotic call to arms, and I was touched by the passion the speech evoked in my family. Almost overnight, our family's little world in Hosston, Louisiana, became dominated by war. Dad continued to work as a roughneck in the oil fields, but the oil he helped drill was targeted for a new customer base, the country's military operations.

I began school in Hosston about the time supporting the war effort permeated all aspects of life. Rationing affected the food people ate and the clothes they wore. Automobile production ceased in 1942, and scrap drives for steel, tin, paper and rubber were held to collect metal for war supplies. I remember Mother giving up some of her pots and pans, so the boys fighting for our freedom would have helmets and

bullets. Victory Gardens supplied about 40 percent of the vegetables consumed. Much of what we ate in winter came from Mother's spring and summer gardens. She had always canned and preserved fruits and vegetables. Now she did it with a new purpose. Lucile Pontious Ross was doing her part to support the war by being self-sustaining. She was feeding her family from her Victory Garden and helping to win the war. Meals from her garden were delicious, and the chili sauce she made from tomatoes, peppers and onions was outstanding.

Citizens did their part, and to support the war effort, my dad became a defense worker. He left the oil fields, and we moved from Louisiana to Curtis, a small town in Arkansas near his birthplace. He worked in construction, helping build Pine Bluff Chemical Arsenal. It's interesting to note that my dad helped construct the Pine Bluff Arsenal, and fifty years later, it was an Army Materiel Command (AMC) Arsenal under my command.

In 1942, Bob was fourteen and six-foot-two-inches tall. He was becoming more and more restless. Recruitment posters with a rather punitive-looking Uncle Sam proclaiming, "I want you for the United States Army" were everywhere. Bob looked like a twenty-year-old, and home life was becoming difficult. He and dad had huge verbal disagreements. To a seven-year-old kid, the arguments were loud, long, and serious.

As adults, my brother and I have talked about our dad being so distant. Neither one of us really knew him. Perhaps it was because his father, Jack Ross, died when Dad was nine. His mother, Alice, moved to California with her sisters and left Dad alone in Arkadelphia to fend for himself at about age twelve. Dad's maternal uncle, Dr. Sam Bourland, who was a noted physician and doctor in South Arkansas, lived in Arkadelphia and offered some support, but Dad lived alone at a very early age. I loved my dad, but there was not much of a relationship between him and his sons.

As disagreements continued between my teenage brother and my dad, Bob began going to recruiting offices trying to join the Army, the Navy – any branch of the service. Recruiters turned him down time after time. Checking his records, they would soon discover that he was only fourteen.



Bob found what he called a “fourth service,” the Merchant Marine. They were operating thousands of ships and needed personnel. There was no detailed search into a person’s past, and with Bob’s adult appearance, they didn’t question his age. He left home and joined the Merchant Marine at fourteen.

The *U.S.S. Omaha* carried military cargo to Australia. Bob’s assignment put him on that ship. The *Omaha* was the first American Merchant Marine ship to arrive in Newcastle, where it was met by the mayor and a band. As an impressionable teen, Bob witnessed Australia’s eagerness to participate in the war against tyranny. His crew was making preparations for General Douglas MacArthur’s campaign. As commander of our forces in the Pacific, he planned to start back through the Pacific Rim from the Allied bases in Australia.

At seven years of age, I thought my big brother had gone too far from home to get back. Australia might as well have been on another planet. In the meantime, we were on the move. From Curtis, Arkansas, we moved to Kingsport, Tennessee, where Dad worked on the Holston Ordnance Ammunition Works, and then to Greenville, Mississippi for construction of the Army Flying School. In the 1990’s, Holston became a part of my command at the U.S. Army Materiel Command (AMC). I finished first grade and started second grade in Port Arthur, Texas, where Dad was back in the oil fields. He was now working for Standard Oil of New Jersey. In one year, we had lived in five different homes in five different states, and I had attended five different schools.

It was a tough year for Mother. She was worried sick about Bob. I’m sure my mother longed for time to put down some roots, literally, to establish a Victory Garden, but 1942 and 1943 were far too mobile. I wanted to stay in one school for more than a month or two. Making new friends every 15 minutes was wearing on a little squirt. Our nomadic year came at a time when the whole country was worried about our troops scattered across the world. Was this in some way preparing me for the Army?

Toward the end of my second grade year, Dad, who was back working for Standard Oil, was transferred. We moved again, this time

to Richmond, California. Up to this point, the frequent moves had been a real pain, but I had not experienced any academic problems. When I got to California, the end of my second grade year was tough. Because of either the constant moving or greater expectations in the California school system, I had fallen behind.

Bob's 15th birthday arrived as his ship, the *U.S.S. Omaha*, pulled barges up and down the Australian coast, from Newcastle to Cairns. This big strong teen did the work of several men. He was a self-starter whose physical strength, strong work ethic, and intelligence caught the eye of the ship's skipper. The Merchant Marine wanted to move him to Army Transport Services and in the process of arranging for the move asked for his draft card. Bob, of course, had no draft card because those weren't issued until a person's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. That led to the discovery of his true age. It didn't take long before the Merchant Marine had no choice but to reluctantly release one of their best workers. He was released in Seattle.

A half century later in 1992, I read an article about men who had served in the Merchant Marine during World War II and had been awarded medals for outstanding service. The Department of Transportation published the article. I sent a copy to Bob; he produced the necessary documents and submitted his name for consideration. Soon he received several much deserved medals and awards. It was a sweet gift and validation of his time in the Merchant Marine. It didn't matter that it came 50 years after his service.

To the delight of my mother (and father although he had difficulty expressing it), Bob joined us in California when he was released from the Merchant Marine. I was eight and remember how much older and larger my 16-year-old brother looked. He had grown into a man, and his entrance into a room seemed to fill all the space.

I was in third grade in California in April 1945 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt died. Japan surrendered only after atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Finally, victory belonged to the Allied Forces on September 2, 1945. The United States emerged as a world superpower, challenged only by the U.S.S.R. (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics).

At the refinery where Dad was employed, work was being scaled back to peacetime production levels. Standard Oil Company was laying off people right and left at a time when GIs were coming home looking for work. Dad decided to leave California and return to Curtis, Arkansas, near his place of birth. Our family faced another move just when I was catching up with my class at school.

We were back in Curtis for the second time in my life. I was enrolled in the Arkadelphia Public Schools and rode the bus each day to finish third grade. My maternal grandfather, Grandfather Pontious, owned many acres around Curtis and gave my parents 48 acres. Dad built a store, tourist court and home on the land. Finally, we were putting down roots. Our family would make no more moves. My parents eventually built another, newer home on the land and remained there until their deaths.

South Arkansas was a beautiful place to grow up. The land was thick with pine forests dotted with oak, elm, cypress, sweet gum, redbud, and dogwood trees. The rolling hills were abundant with streams and wildlife. Children were freer then to roam on bikes or on foot because there was little crime. Everyone in town was a surrogate parent who looked after all the children. Everybody knew everybody.

Junior high brought football and girls into my life. I got down and dirty with football. The squad elected me co-captain, and learning the game totally consumed me. The girls I admired from afar. The very first time I remember seeing Patricia (Pat) Cox, my future wife, was in about eighth grade, and I was smitten. Here was this cute girl with long auburn hair who looked like an angel. At that point, I wasn't sure how to approach her, so I didn't. After all, she was an older woman, a ninth grader. I love to bring that up. The difference in our ages is a massive ten months.

Pat was born to Syble J. and Leon R. Cox on August 1, the hottest day of 1935. She lived with her maternal grandparents in a small house in Hartsville Community that is now 22<sup>nd</sup> Street in Arkadelphia. The Great Depression forced many families of that day to combine resources and share homes. Her grandfather, William Columbus Lively, was a gentleman farmer and a staunch Republican. Her grandmother, Mary (Mimi) Caroline (Collins) Lively was a

homemaker. Mimi walked slowly with the aid of crutches. She suffered from a broken hip, which she received in a fall. It didn't heal correctly.

Leon, Pat's father, was a carpenter trying to support his family on an income of about ten cents an hour or one dollar a day. The Depression took its toll on the construction business. Very little building of any kind, new or remodeling, occurred during the 1930's. Pat's mother was a homemaker, doing most of the housework and meal preparation because of Mimi's health. When Pat was in first grade in Arkadelphia Elementary School, her only sibling, Brenda Gail, was born. Patricia wanted a brother but got a sister and called her "the April Fool baby" because she was born on April 1, 1941.

One day during junior high, I was downtown with several of my friends and fellow football players. We saw a short, cocky, Army Buck (three stripes) Sergeant. We were awe-struck with how sharp he looked. His pant legs were bloused around the tops of his boots, his service cap was cocked to one side, and he had on an "Ike" jacket, a British model, hip-length jacket the Army adopted for semi-dress wear on garrison duty. General Dwight D. Eisenhower wore this jacket when he was the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe.

In our conversations with the Soldier, he mentioned, "Look at my parachute wings." Now that was impressive. We weren't sure exactly what airborne meant, but we knew what a parachute was. If he had been sloppy and unkempt, he would have left the opposite impression. Instead, his demeanor caused us all to want to be like him.

The young Sergeant may have planted a seed that day in my teenage vision of the future. I liked the confident way he carried himself, his personable, self-assured demeanor, and what his uniform stood for. I certainly admired my brother who served in the Merchant Marine. Those images left lasting impressions, and years later, I volunteered for the Infantry, Airborne and Ranger School.

While making the progression through junior and senior high school, athletics grew in importance in my life. Attending college was something I really wanted to do. My parents had meager resources, and an academic scholarship was not a viable prospect. I wasn't

setting the curve in my classes, although I maintained a B average. I decided to work toward the equivalent of what is now an athletic scholarship.

Arkadelphia was, and is, home to two universities, Ouachita Baptist University and Henderson State University. Many of our high school teachers were wives of the college professors. We were treated to an excellent public school education.

The coaches and teachers in our schools were exceptional. How fortunate we were to have dedicated, caring, and highly professional role models shaping our lives. When I learned that Arkansas ranked 48th out of 48 states in academic excellence, it came as a shock. The education I received from Arkadelphia Public Schools was top-notch and served me well through the years.

Coach Jack Bell was our high school coach. He was more of a mentor than a coach. He would look us straight in the eye, talk to us, talk to us some more, and tell us what we were doing wrong. Coach Michael "Mickey" O'Quinn (who to this day remains a close friend) followed Jack Bell our senior year. My first insights into leadership, discipline, and the importance of character and team play certainly began here. Mrs. Hazel Cooper, one of my high school teachers, remained a dear friend until her death in 1994 at age 94.

During those wonderful teen years, Pat and I formed life-long friendships. Jimmy Baker was our quarterback in junior and senior high school. We played football, basketball, and ran track together. Charles Orr and I have known each other since grade school and played many years of football together. We dabbled briefly in politics on a scale so small that it was a mere blip on the screen. He was the class president and I the vice-president our senior year. Jimmy and his wife, Lynda, and Charles and his wife, Laverne, are our good friends today.

Our high school was small, and the same 20 or so athletes played football, baseball, basketball and ran track. We moved around within the teams, playing different positions. Jimmy Baker and Roy Dale Meadow were our talented quarterbacks. Bobby Joe Francis was our running back. College coaches were recruiting Bobby Joe, but it

wasn't in his nature to go to college. He could have been a superstar with his exceptional speed and cutting ability. Instead, he chose to stay in Arkadelphia after high school, marry, and go to work. When we see each other today, we go out and run six or eight miles and talk about the "good old days."

The next thing that happened was elating, disturbing, exciting, and just plain nice. Patricia Cox, that magnificent redhead, asked if I would be her escort for the Thespian Banquet. Was I cool? Was I suave? Was I speechless? I have no idea. This senior, this older beautiful young lady I'd secretly admired for three years, asked me for a date. I don't have a clue how I responded or what I said. Somehow, I accepted, and we went to the Thespian Banquet; young, fresh, and sparking like new jewels. I in my in suit, cuff links, bowtie, and boutonniere, and with Pat in her evening gown, wrist corsage, and high heel shoes. It was an amazing evening, the inception of a friendship and love that would last a lifetime.

Pat graduated from high school in May, 1953, and immediately began summer classes at Henderson State Teachers' College. She paid \$65 tuition. That amount wasn't per hour; it was \$65 for the entire summer session. Pat and I were "going steady." As a symbol of our new relationship, she wore my football letter jacket and my high school ring on a chain around her neck.

During high school summers and my first college summer, I went to Oklahoma to work the wheat harvest. Several boys from Arkadelphia spent summers with the Colmers family from Hobart, Oklahoma. They had a wheat harvest business with five combines, six trucks, a big maintenance truck, and a house trailer. (I certainly hope I have spelled their names correctly; it's been 50 years.) They were a wonderful pioneer type family, the salt of the earth.

From Hobart, Oklahoma, we drove south to the Longview, Texas, area where the wheat was just beginning to ripen. We cut wheat through Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Colorado. By the time we reached South Dakota, it was the first of August, and I had to get back to football practice and school. The others continued through North Dakota and Canada, completing the harvest season sometime in September.

I made big bucks as a wheat harvester, and there was no place to spend it in the middle of a wheat field. Actually, Mr. Colmers paid us at the end of our work term. We slept either in the house trailer with a bunch of men or under a combine on a cot. Mr. Colmers maintained the equipment, and Mrs. Colmers prepared the meals. We cut wheat, oats and rye from sunup to sundown everyday. If it rained, we lost a day; if there was heavy dew, we started late. Twenty-one days straight was our record. The farms were 500 to 1,000 acres. Harvest work was profitable (\$1.25 an hour), and I also began learning something about organization, discipline, maintenance, and work ethics.

Because my class and Pat's class were so co-mingled in high school, it is difficult to remember who was in which class. In our school annual, under Pat's senior picture, it noted her membership in Thespians, Drama Club, Junior Classical Club, Pep Club, and Glee Club. She was also band majorette, assistant librarian, and Freshman Maid at Junior Carnival.

Our class missed her class when they graduated. Pat was among the few that remained in Arkadelphia, and she and I continued to date as she attended college.

That year an article appeared in our local newspaper, referring to me as the "Iron Man" of our football team. I also made the All District team as center, but played many different positions over the years. One year I even played at fullback. I was voted "Most Valuable Player" my senior year. Coach Mickey O'Quinn later said, "Jimmy Ross was one of the toughest players I've ever known. If I picked out one guy that was perfect to coach, to demonstrate a stance or position or a technique, was a hard worker plus an outstanding player, it would be Jimmy Ross." Coach O'Quinn occasionally gave me a ride home to Curtis after practice.

Duke Wells from Henderson and Rab Rogers at Ouachita were among the coaches who approached me about playing football for their college team. I received offers from nine colleges. They were not permitted by state law to give actual scholarships, so athletes were expected to have jobs around the college to earn money.

After much deliberation, I chose Henderson. The college had the distinction of being the only Arkansas college which had been controlled by both church and state, and the only public one named for a person. It opened as Arkadelphia Methodist College and changed its name to Henderson College in 1904 in honor of Charles Henderson, a prominent businessperson and trustee. It was a sister college to Hendrix (Methodist) College, but became a state college in 1929, taking the name Henderson State Teachers College. The historic buildings had a certain appeal, especially the Administration Building.

I graduated from high school in May of 1954, lettering in football, basketball, baseball and track. It had been fun being a top-dog kind of guy. I had been president of the "A" (Lettermen) Club, Senior Representative for the Student Council, FTA (Future Teachers of America), co-captain of the football team, Senior Homecoming escort, Senior Carnival King, Senior Class Vice-President, a member of the Drama Club and Thespian Club, and on the yearbook and newspaper staff. I was the first in my family to attend college.

Transitioning from home to college and from wheat harvest to football was immediate. A football player's scholarship was verbal, nothing written. It was based largely on the barter system. All players had jobs and duties to perform to earn our college keep. I cleaned up the gymnasium. Not only was I the "gym janitor," I was there at nine o'clock each night, except when football kept me away, to help close the gym, turn off lights, lock doors, and check everything.

The townspeople loved their college football and supported the players. Echols' Cleaners provided services. Orr Men's Clothing Shop supplied shirts and slacks. A gas station supplied us with fuel. A gallon of gas cost about 28 cents. At Gable's Café, each player had an account. We could order anything off the menu until the account was depleted. Sometimes I'd take Pat on a date there and use up my account dollars twice as fast. It was absolutely worth it.

Coach "Duke" Wells, my college football coach, was a legend in his time. In high school (1932-34), he played football, basketball, and baseball. He was "All-State" and "All-Time All-State Team" in football. At Henderson, he was head basketball coach (1941-1949) and head football coach (1941-1961). He coached teams in two



Arkansas Intercollegiate Conference (AIC) championships (1950 and 1959) and was the Arkansas Coach of the Year in 1950. He was the Athletic Director at Henderson State University (1962-1979) and was inducted into the (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics) Hall of Fame in 1971. He was inducted into the Arkansas Sports Hall of Fame in 1970.

My good friend, Jimmy Baker, also went to Henderson. A quarterback in junior and senior high school, he became a single wing tailback in college. After ROTC (Reserve Officers' Training Corps), Jimmy joined the Army as an MP (Military Police) and later was the football and golf coach at Lake Worth High School in Lake Worth, Florida. We still see Jimmy and Lynda several times a year.

The uniformed Army cadets around campus were impressive, and I was glad to be a part of ROTC as a freshman. It was 1954, and our detachment had a number of Korean War veterans who were also football players. I was fortunate to be one of two freshmen who "started" on the team. The mature, "married-with-kids," older veterans accepted me as a valuable member of the football team, and I loved it. These fellows wore their battle scars in the form of missing teeth and broken, crooked noses proudly. The camaraderie was motivating and rewarding.

College was a major crossroads, a platform on which I stood to view career paths. I've always been fascinated with history. ROTC was feeding us lots of military history. Why we saw so many World War II movies and had nothing on the recent Korean conflict, I'm not sure. Films on the Monte Casino battle and General Mark Clark's campaign in January 1944 from Anzio to Rome were intriguing. We watched poor quality black and white, amazing films and had discussions that made the end of class an intrusion. Years later, during the 1990's, I would work with General Clark's son, Bill Clark, in the Pentagon.

One day, the film we saw about the Japanese-American Nisei (second-generation Japanese-American) battalion, the "44 deuce" (442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team), the "Go for Broke" unit, was so powerful that it haunted me for weeks. The story of such brave men touched many of us and drew us toward a career in the Army.<sup>1</sup>

I narrowed my professional possibilities down to two: Army Lieutenant or football coach. Coach Wells advised, "Go ahead and do your Army tour. A young man should serve his country. After the Army, come back to Henderson as an assistant coach or find a job coaching in a local high school for a few years; then move from high school to Henderson later."

Pat's career choice had been determined long ago. She wanted to teach English and literature. An academic whiz, she was well on her way to finishing college in three years by going straight through, both summers and winters. Isn't it just like a girl to always finish first?

On a bright winter day just before Christmas, Pat and I were married. December 18, 1955 arrived with gentle breezes and sunshine. That afternoon, we said our vows in what all the girls referred to as "the most beautiful wedding." St. Andrew's United Methodist Church, built by Pat's father Leon, was filled with friends and family. The church was dressed in Christmas colors of reds and greens, poinsettias and white candles. Our friends serving as attendants looked gorgeous. The bridesmaids sparkled in holiday green velvet dresses. The best man was Charles Orr. Emily Cooper, a Fulbright Scholar, was the organist. The groomsmen looked scrubbed and spit-shined. As we stood before the minister, the sanctuary seemed especially warm in the cozy glow of candlelight. I had finally won the heart of the beautiful redhead and was filled with joy and aspirations for our future. Pat was 20, and I was 19, so young.

Coach Wells arranged for us to move into Garrett Hall, the married couples' dorm, where most of the football team lived. It was a fun time in our lives. Perhaps it was being around all those married folks, some of whom had children that influenced our fertility. Pat became pregnant.

In July, Pat graduated from Henderson with a Bachelor of Science in Education degree, had her 21st birthday on August 1, and gave birth to Russell Douglas Ross seven days later on August 8. Our precious little Russell was not doing well. He was premature and tiny. We brought him home. Parents and grandparents fussed over him. He got worse and worse. One day Pat noticed that the tips of his fingers were

turning blue. We rushed him back to the doctor. Through all the tests, we learned that his heart and lungs were under-developed. Then came the most dreadful news imaginable, "There's nothing we can do." Open-heart surgery wasn't done then.

We had thirteen days with our beautiful baby boy before he died on August 21, 1956. He was buried in Arkadelphia. Close friends and family were there to support us. Just recently, Russell Douglas Ross was moved from his burial site in Arkansas to Arlington Cemetery. The burial at Arlington was a simple ceremony with only Pat, an Army chaplain, and me present. Years later, our daughter Dede asked if we objected to her naming their first son Russell to honor our Russell. We were thrilled.

The following year we were back at Garrett Hall. I went to school, played football, and kept up my gym janitor duties. Pat, having graduated, taught English at Arkadelphia Junior High School. After she again became pregnant, she worked as a secretary at the Methodist Church, putting together the weekly bulletin, typing letters for the minister, and doing general office work. The Methodist minister for whom she worked, the Reverend Clint Burlison, who officiated at our wedding, later became the superintendent of all the Methodist Churches in the state of Arkansas.

Exactly one year from the date of Russell's death, God gave us a beautiful daughter. Sabra Gayle was born on August 21, 1957. She was a gift from heaven to ensure that August 21 would be a day of celebration and would no longer be unbearably sad.

Early in the summer before Sabra was born, I went to ROTC summer camp at Fort Hood, Texas. ROTC was an extension of things I learned in sports. There were lessons in dealing with stress, leadership, motivation, and competition strategies. Thirty-two graduating seniors from our small college attended the camp.

Summer camp exercises involved field activities, physical fitness, and academics. About half the time was spent in the field, with tactical strategies on maneuvering units. I began to feel like I was back on the football field, but this time I was coaching the players. It felt right, natural. Physical fitness training was my forte; I thrived on

it. I was fortunate to be one of the three summer camp Distinguished Military Graduates. Shortly after, I was selected to be a co-captain of my college football team. Life was good.

Many of the men from my ROTC unit remain friends today. Ralph Dunn, who was one of the veterans in college, entered the Army through ROTC a second time. Don Ruggles became a medical evacuation pilot during Vietnam and today owns a medical evacuation company in Texarkana that services Texas and Arkansas. With several aircraft, his company meets the needs of area hospitals and accident victims. Both Don Chunn and Billy Jones also entered the Army and became Army pilots.

Colonel Rucker was our ROTC Professor of Military Science, followed by Lieutenant Colonel R.B. Galbreath, and a young ordnance Captain, Captain C. V. Christian who served as his assistant. When we needed clarification on something, Sergeant First Class (SFC) Funk and SFC Lynch came to our aid. Colonel Rucker was a fatherly figure who had been through World War II and Korea. He always looked so sharp in his “pinks and greens,” a semi-dress winter uniform that surfaced between the World Wars. In 1954, the Army adopted a green uniform, and there went the “pinks and greens.” We were not exactly ecstatic with the change in uniform.

We were comfortable taking any academic problems, or other problems for that matter, to the ROTC staff or coaches. They offered helpful advice in an unhurried manner, which made us feel important. We were blessed with superb mentors.

At that time, ROTC had a battle groups organization. As Distinguished Military Graduates, Clyde Avery became our commander, and I served as the executive officer (XO). Clyde was an excellent math student and went on to be an engineer in the Army. Besides those I have mentioned, this ROTC Class had great future Army officers such as Havis Halloway, Jim Nelson, Donnie Whitmarsh, Sam Hutcheson, Don Avery, Tommy Westbrook, Berlon Brown, Virilis Wasson, Bill Sherron, J.C. Rothwell, and many others.

ROTC cadets were obligated for a three-year term of service. Our plan, Pat’s and mine, was to spend three years in the Army and return

to Arkadelphia where we would raise our family while I coached football and Pat taught school. The only decision to make was which branch. When we began to look at different branches of the Army, I was drawn to the infantry, "The Queen of the Battle." The attraction was probably because serving in the infantry involved an athletic challenge, dealing with people, leadership issues, and military history.

The ROTC cadre scheduled appointments for each of us to discuss branch assignments. Infantry was my first choice, and Transportation was somewhere far down the list. The assignment I received puzzled me. It was for two years in Infantry and the third year in Transportation. I also was not too excited about the plan. The unusual assignment was like drafting a football player to play pro ball, playing him for two years, and the third year putting him in charge of supplies and arranging transportation and equipment for the team. I was not sure about this. Many years later, I knew it was the right career path.

That September, as teachers greeted classes in Arkadelphia, Little Rock students awoke to an empty Central High School surrounded by state National Guard troops. Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus was protesting the 1954 Brown v. Topeka Board of Education integration law. He called out the Guard, not to protect the nine Black students scheduled to integrate the school, but to keep them out.

We had read and heard since 1954 that our state was one of the two southern states working diligently on integration plans to comply with the new law. The Arkansas University Law School had been integrated since 1949, and by 1957, the two Arkadelphia colleges, Henderson and Ouachita, were integrated. In fact, eight of the nine state colleges were integrated. Little Rock had desegregated its buses, parks, zoo, and libraries. The school board had voted unanimously for a plan that integrated the high schools in 1957, the junior highs the next year, and the elementary schools the following year. The state seemed to be peacefully moving toward integration.

The first Black students enrolled at Henderson during my college years. I tried to talk the former quarterback of the Arkadelphia Peake High School, John Taylor, into playing college ball with us. In John's high school senior year, (remember the high schools were segregated), the Peake High School went to the state finals in football, baseball, and

basketball in the Black high school division. John was an awesome quarterback and was enrolled at Henderson.

“Come join the team,” I urged one day. “The Reddies need you. Why don’t you come out for football?”

“You’ve got to be kidding,” John said. “Those guys would kill me. It’s one thing to go to school here. It’s another thing to try out for the football team. There has never been a Negro on a Henderson team. The fans would boo me off the field just before the opposing team killed me!”

The transformation from separate schools for Whites and Blacks found our generation taking integration strides one baby step at a time. As a result, John did not play football in college. He was an exceptionally talented athlete. If we’d had John as a quarterback, no telling what we could have done. The timing for him playing college ball was all wrong. He did join me in ROTC though and served his three years in the Army. When he came through Hawaii going to Korea he called just to say “hello.” He decided not to make a career of the Army, which was the Army’s loss.

John and I were in ROTC at Henderson on September 2, 1957 when Governor Faubus called out the National Guard to surround Central High School and prevent any Black students from entering school the next day. On September 25, 1957, the nine Black students entered Central High School under the protection of Soldiers of the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division of the United States Army.

Life slowly began to return to some semblance of normalcy. At Henderson, ROTC cadets breathed easier and returned their attention to studies and football. Our family refocused the majority of our attention on our new baby girl, Sabra. Pat trained her eagle education eye on her junior high students. They could finally concentrate on English instead of current events.

Graduation from college and receiving my commission both came on the same day, May 23, 1958, my 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday. The joint ceremony took place at Haygood Field, the Henderson football field. Pat and the other ROTC wives were in a special section of the bleachers. After

diploma presentations, the wives were asked to come onto the field and join their husbands. There were 32 of us. The beautiful redhead pinned on my new golden Second Lieutenant bars.

That was a proud day for us. At 22, I had fulfilled a dream of earning a college degree. The officer status as Second Lieutenant was like icing on my dream cake. My wife and adorable nine-month-old daughter beside me were the stabilizing loves of my life.

Of the 32 ROTC officers, 28 stayed in the Army, serving a 20-year career. Perhaps the reason for the high number making the Army their career was the limited opportunities in Arkansas at that time for college graduates. Whatever the reason, we were about to embark on an adventure that would take us all over the world and far beyond my wildest expectations, to the four-star level.

The first drop of rain to fall on the parade of budding young military careers came a few years later when Captain J. C. Rothwell, a Medical Corps “Dust Off” Pilot, lost his life. He was flying a HU1A (“Huey”) helicopter in Korea at night on an emergency medical mission under terrible weather conditions when the aircraft crashed with fatal results.





## *Chapter II*

### We're in the Army Now, 1958-1959

In the late 1950's the United States was riding a wave of success and prosperity. The average annual salary had doubled, rising to \$2,992.00. Unemployment was down, life expectancy was up (women 71.1 and men 65.6), and Americans were buying goods not available during the war. With an unprecedented energy, industry expanded to meet peacetime needs.

Our little family of three prepared to make the move from college life at Henderson to Army life at Fort Benning, Georgia. As Pat and I began packing, we heard on the radio that the first Black student, Earnest Green, was graduating from Little Rock Central High School. I backed a U-Haul trailer to our apartment door at Garret Hall as faint strains of Elvis Presley's *Love Me Tender* and The Diamonds' *Little Darlin'* rode waves of summer heat across the Henderson campus. During the day, while loading clothes, linens, dishes, baby crib, high chair and our few belongings into the trailer, we said goodbye to college friends who stopped by.

We were young, and a lack of funds seemed irrelevant. What a great time in our lives. We were among friends, another ROTC cadet and family, who were in the same boat. Don and Jo Chunn were also going to Fort Benning on their first assignment and had a baby, Donna Jo, who was Sabra's age. Among the four of us, we probably had \$200.

Unlike the new Soldiers of today who embark on their first assignment, we were not provided assistance with housing. The unmarried Soldiers lived in barracks. The few of us who were married were left to our own resources to secure housing. Thankfully, today, there are a multitude of services provided military families, everything from school information for the children to where to obtain goods and services. Housing information is abundant. Even copious listings of special activities and events are provided for a variety of interests and ages.

Pat and I have fond memories of times spent in our little apartment outside the front gate at Fort Benning. We were just off Victory Drive at Number 41 Matheson Road. Our funds were too limited to buy furniture, so we rented a few pieces. When I asked Pat about her favorite recollections from our early Army days, she talked about that apartment. "I'll never forget the place because all our friends lived up and down that street," Pat reminisced. Lieutenant Bob Rose and his wife lived next door, and Lieutenant Park Chrisenberry and family lived just down the street. Park and I went on to Ranger and Airborne schools together.

"We had such great fun there," Pat said. "I knew that the Army was going to take us out of the poor economic situation that had dominated our youth. We were raised in a poor part of Arkansas. The riches in our lives were our family and friends. Now friends were enriching our lives daily, and we were starting a life of adventure that held a far more secure economic future."

The minute I set foot on the grounds of Fort Benning, I felt at home. From the Infantry Center, you could see the parachute jump towers. Their imposing figures rose 250 feet above the ground. The memory of the Sergeant standing on the Arkadelphia street corner in his jump boots and his "Ike jacket" kept coming back to me. I would look at the towers and remember the impression the Airborne Ranger made on my teenage friends and me with his confident walk, wearing his hat cocked to one side.

For the next seven months, I trained at the U.S. Army Infantry School that had confirmed its place as the premier school of arms. My training led me through Airborne school, teaching me to engage in battle from the sky and Ranger school where I would learn the latest in squad and platoon tactics and the skill of living off the land. I was about to follow a training program that had developed the likes of such military leaders as five-star Generals Omar Bradley and Dwight D. Eisenhower. The grounds on which I trained were named for a Confederate Brigadier General who fought with General Robert E. Lee.

My training drove home the Soldier's Creed. It's something I have had framed and hanging on my office wall for decades. Many of the statements in the creed are also in the Ranger Creed.

**“The Soldier's Creed”**

**I am an American Soldier.**

**I am a Warrior and a member of a team. I serve the people of the United States and live the Army Values.**

**I will always place the mission first.**

**I will never accept defeat.**

**I will never quit**

**I will never leave a fallen comrade.**

**I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills. I always maintain my arms, my equipment, and myself.**

**I am an expert and I am a professional.**

**I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.**

**I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.**

**I am an American Soldier.**

I was anxious to get started. That first week of June, 1958, I stood in front of the Infantry School. Gazing at the famous bronze statue of the infantryman, *Follow Me*, holding his rifle high, and leading men into battle, filled me with desire to be the best Soldier I could be. Another young Soldier approached me.

“This is going to be tough,” he said. “You have to run two miles every morning.”

“You haven’t met the coach I had in college,” I said. “He followed Bud Wilkinson’s<sup>2</sup> training plan in the summer where you’d do three to five miles each day and then wind sprints. I could do two miles backwards.”

“Well, you know, there’s something called Ranger School, but they have to run five miles a day during the first week. They use that to eliminate the weak ones.”

“Not a problem,” I thought. Because of athletics, I had been in excellent physical condition for about four or five years, so this would be no big deal. I was accustomed to training all summer, whether for track or summer baseball. I signed up for both Ranger and Airborne School.

The arrangement for entering the Army at Fort Benning was a bit puzzling at first. I was told, along with several others, that I would be classified as a Reserve Officer for a few weeks. Eventually, it became clear that this was to my advantage. The classification allowed me to receive the officer’s clothing allowance of about \$300 to buy uniforms as a Reserve officer. The Regular Army officers did not have that privilege. Being a Reservist for a couple of weeks kept me from spending over a month’s salary to properly clothe myself.

A few were just beginning to show up for Infantry Officers Leadership Course (IOLC) training. In the interim period, I was given a temporary assignment to the Chemical, Biological, and Radiological (CBR) Committee, teaching in the instruction area of the Mine Warfare Committee. I was on the mine warfare staff, and my job was teaching new Officer Candidate School (OCS) candidates about mines and laying out minefields.

I was assigned an office so tiny there was barely space to walk around the two desks that occupied the room. It was a 12 by 12 foot office I would share with another in-coming ROTC Second Lieutenant.

My new office mate looked so sharp in his fatigues, I was sure they were tailored to be the same size as his legs and torso. He was a tall,

good-looking Black Soldier of Jamaican heritage from the Bronx. Unlike schools in the South, the Army had passed the desegregation stage and was fully integrated. He was not married and was living at the bachelor officers' quarters (BOQ) on base.

My first impression of this handsome Soldier was of a friendly outgoing person. But I kept thinking, I'm going to be in this teeny tiny office with a Black officer from New York City! I wondered if he was thinking, I'm going to be in this cramped space with a White hillbilly from, of all places, Arkansas!

"I'm Colin Powell," said the self-assured young man, introducing himself.

"I'm Jim Ross," I said. I could tell by his demeanor and handshake that we were going to get along just fine. His personality bridged all fears. There was something special about him, and he seemed calm and mature beyond his years. He talked about his experiences in the "Pershing Rifles," an ROTC drill team, at the City College of New York.

I told him about the small ROTC unit at Henderson, and we discussed the fact that I was already married with a child at the age of twenty-two. Colin said he must not have met his dream girl yet. During the next few days, I observed what a gifted speaker he was. He had amazing leadership skills. And he's funny. Colin has a great sense of humor.

"Ross, what do you think about our being 'saved' to go through the basic course with West Pointers?" Colin asked one day.

"Worries the heck out of me," I said.

The scuttlebutt was that we were to go through the eight weeks of Infantry Officers Basic Course with West Pointers. To say that we were a little worried was like saying a lobster about to be thrown into a pot of boiling water was "a little worried."

We were about to be thrown into the pot with folks we thought were going to outshine us in every category and be our undoing.

Distinguished Military Graduates are generally type “A” folks bent on being the best, and we were no exception. To our way of thinking, the West Pointers were royalty, and we were the serfs. I was sure we could match them on physical fitness, but I was not so sure about the military studies.

We were certain that the West Pointers were going to be smarter in the ways of the Army, look better in their uniforms, and generally do everything better than we did. We guessed that all their fathers, uncles, and grandfathers were Colonels and Generals!

We focused on lesson plans for our mine warfare courses. For six weeks, until the West Point class came in, we reported to our little office and worked on the same stuff.

“Look at me,” I said one morning. “Do I have my uniform on right?”

“Looks okay to me,” said Lieutenant Powell. “Do you think mine is according to regulations?”

“Aren’t we a pair?” I laughed. “We don’t even know if we’ve got our uniforms on right, and we’re teaching Sergeants! I’ll bet the West Pointers know precisely how to wear theirs.”

As it turned out, our fretting was for naught. When they finally arrived, the West Pointers were like fine racehorses after a race, ready to romp in the pasture with the rest of the herd. On June 10, 1958, we stood shoulder to shoulder with the West Point graduates and were sworn into the Regular Army by the oldest Colonel in the Army.

Although he never complained, life for a Black man in 1958 Columbus, Georgia, was complicated. As Colin stated in his book, *My American Journey*, “The Army was becoming more democratic, but I was plunged back into the Old South every time I left the post. I could go into Woolworth’s and buy anything I wanted, as long as I did not try to eat there. I could go into a department store, and they would take my money, as long as I did not try to use the men’s room. I could walk along the street, as long as I did not look at a White woman.” Lieutenant Powell’s manner of handling the racism, which was

relatively new to him, was admirable. He identified the problem, dealt with it on a daily basis, and didn't let it rule his life or divert him from his goal of being the best Soldier he could possibly be.

My life intersected with Colin Powell's many times over the years. Our military careers began at the same time in the same place in the same way. However, our careers took different paths, beginning when the West Pointers arrived at Fort Benning. After sharing an office and teaching together for six weeks, we were separated for Infantry Officers Basic Training. The West Point class was atypically large; there were so many infantry, it was necessary to divide them into two units. The ROTC officers were spread around in both units. Colin was assigned to one, and I was assigned to the other.

In 1992, our paths crossed again at Fort Myer, just outside of Washington, D.C. We were next-door neighbors in the General Officers' Quarters there; our homes were next to each other. He had been the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) since 1989 and was a four star General. I was the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics (DCSLOG), living in Quarters Number 5. In 1991, I had been nominated for my fourth star. We frequently saw each other, especially in the yard between our quarters. During one of those first visits, he leaned over, looked me directly in the eyes and said, "How come it took you so long to make your fourth star?" What a competitive BS'er! The two of us were among the youngest to reach four-star rank.

My nomination to four stars was approved and supported in 1991 by the Chief of Staff, Army (CSA) General Gordon Sullivan, Secretary of Army Michael P. Stone, and Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney. After that, the JCS Chairman, General Colin Powell, and President George H.W. Bush approved and sent it to the Senate for final approval.

We reminisced and wondered if any of the West Pointers out of the Class of 1958 were still on active duty. I learned that there were only a few. The last from that group were General Carl Stiner, who retired in 1993 as Commander of the U.S. Special Operations Command, and General William G. (Bill) Tuttle, who retired in 1992 as the AMC Commander. Major General William (Will) Roosma, who retired as

Deputy Commanding General of the XVIII Airborne, was another member of that great class and a life long friend. Norbert Grabowski was a Ranger buddy who retired as an Army Colonel. Norbert has wonderful stories about World War II and growing up in Germany.

Thirty-six years later, Colin Powell autographed a copy of his book to me noting, "To Jim and Pat, with best wishes, deep admiration, and fond memories of our service together, to include laying out mine fields at Fort Benning where it all began." I am honored to have served our country with such an outstanding Soldier and statesman.

At Fort Benning, when we finished IOLC Number Four, almost the entire class went on to Ranger School and then through Airborne School. Injuries claimed 20 to 30 percent, but thankfully, I made it all the way through without a problem. Traditionally, during the Ranger School, a few are selected as top graduates. It is customary for the company commander and all platoon leaders to be those top graduates. I was one of four platoon leaders, something I am still proud of today because it meant that I had the honor of being one of the five highest scoring Soldiers completing Ranger School.

How proud I felt to be an American Soldier that day we all stood, ready to receive the symbols of our endurance, our courage, and our fortitude in the face of danger. We had all weathered the tests of training and stood taller for it. The paratrooper wings and the black and gold Ranger tabs shone in the sun, knighting us authentic, certified, bona fide, specialized, expertly trained Airborne Rangers. In the emotion of the moment, I felt the presence of the young Airborne Ranger from my youth who had taken the time to visit with awestruck teens on a street corner in Arkadelphia. I was not an ordinary Soldier, not an ordinary infantryman; I was a member of the elite Airborne Rangers. The only thing missing was an overseas service cap at a cocky angle and an "Ike" jacket. An Airborne Ranger could really strut in that uniform!



## *Chapter III*

### Cruising to Hawaii, 1959

In 1958-1959, many changes occurred. Dr. Jonas Salk's vaccine was conquering polio; the beginning of an interstate highway system was emerging; Explorer I, the first U.S. satellite, had successfully orbited the earth; and the first domestic non-stop jet-airline passenger service was beginning between New York City and Miami, thanks to National Airlines.

In our cozy apartment near Fort Benning we were awaiting orders that would direct our move to the next phase of life in the Army. I answered our ringing phone, and it was the assignment officer with my orders. "Lieutenant Ross," he said, "congratulations, you'll be going to the 69<sup>th</sup> Armor Battalion at Fort Hood."

"As in Texas?" I asked, not amused. "Are we talking about the Fort Hood with the dust, heat, rattlesnakes and scorpions, where I spent six weeks at ROTC summer camp?"

"That would be the one," said the assignment officer. "We thought you would want be close to your home state of Arkansas. If you'd like to look at other options, there's Fort Riley in Kansas and Fort Carson in Colorado. I thought you'd want to go to Fort Hood."

"I'm going to be an infantry officer," I explained. "I'm not sure that sending me to an armor unit fits that plan."

"Well, then," he said, shuffling papers, "an infantry assignment is available in the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division."

"The 25<sup>th</sup>," I pondered. "Where is the 25<sup>th</sup>?"

"Hawaii," said the infantry officer.

"Hawaii," I replied, "as in the Hawaiian Islands; the United States Territory Hawaiian Islands; the islands we are considering making a state; those islands?"

“Those would be the ones,” said the assignment officer. “There’s a slight problem though,” he continued, “we don’t fly anyone to Hawaii anymore. The cost is prohibitive. All personnel assigned to Hawaii have to take a ship.”

“That could be a problem,” I said. “I’m married, with a young child. An Army ship wouldn’t be suitable transportation for them.”

“Oh, no, that’s not the case,” explained the assignment officer. “You’ll have to go on a cruise ship, one of the Matson Line Ships. It takes about four and a half days to get there, and you have to drive to California to catch the ship.”

I could hardly contain my excitement and amazement at the turn this phone conversation was taking. Wait until I explain this to Pat, I thought. As I explained the Hawaii assignment to her, she also began to grin. Because Mommy and Daddy were smiling and laughing, Sabra began to smile. Pat’s smile spread across that beautiful face, and she uttered the words I have never let my English teacher wife forget, “This Army ain’t bad!”

I wasted not one millimeter of a second in calling the officer back and confirming the assignment to the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. The more I read about the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, the more impressed I became.<sup>3</sup>

We began the process of saying good-bye to friends who were being scattered across the globe. Colin Powell had been assigned to Gelnhausen, just outside of Frankfurt, Germany. We were going off in all directions.

There is something about Army training that creates an unusually tight bond between humans. We jumped from planes together. We faced physical hardship and dangers together. We pushed ourselves to the limits together. I’d experienced the same kind of bond in sports when a group of men form a team or unit and give their all for a common goal. It was hard to say good-bye.

After the Christmas holidays and New Year’s Day, we again drove from Arkansas to California. Sabra made the trip like a little trooper. The interstate road system was not in existence in 1959, and the trip

was made on two lane roads with speed limits in most states of 60 through the day and 50 or 55 at night. Thank goodness, it was January. Our car had no air-conditioning, and desert driving in summer with a baby would have been a real endurance test.

Before the assignment officer's call, I am not sure that Pat or I ever imagined us on a cruise ship, sailing to Hawaii. That was something straight out of the movies. *An Affair to Remember*, starring Deborah Kerr and Cary Grant, was a popular 1957 movie that had been filmed aboard the United States ship, the *Constitution*. For five days, we were Deborah and Cary sailing the romantic seas, with one slight variation on the theme. We were married, poor, and had a baby. To 22 and 23-year-olds from Arkansas who had never seen the ocean, much less been cruising on it, it was an exciting adventure. We heard other people talk about the hassles, trials, and tribulations of their moves within the Army. Pat kept saying, "Why in the world do people complain about this?"

We arrived at the island of Oahu, Hawaii, at Aloha Tower Pier on February 2, 1959, found a place to stay for the night, and I reported for duty at the post. The good news was they were delighted we had arrived. The bad news was I was such a junior officer that Schofield Barracks had no space for us. My name was placed on a waiting list for quarters. We were again faced with the fact that most Army personnel were single. Married housing was practically non-existent for a Second Lieutenant. I was given directions to two or three little nearby towns where I was to "find my own quarters." It was a year before we had quarters on base.

We found a duplex on the river side of Riverside Drive in Wahiawa where the rent was \$112.00 a month. That was the cheapest I could find. In 1959, my monthly salary was \$222.30, which did not leave much of a balance. There was a housing allowance of \$49.00, and a basic living allowance for food, etc. of about \$50.00. We had no furniture except Sabra's baby things, so we had to buy the basics. Now we had furniture payments of \$60 a month. With the basic need of shelter taken care of, there was not a lot left for food, clothing, and other essentials.

The remedy for our financial situation came down to Pat going back to work. She found a job teaching in the Basic Secondary Education Program (BSEP) at Schofield Barracks. It was a program for military personnel designed to prepare them for taking the General Equivalency Degree (GED), the equivalent of a high school diploma. The classes were held in the afternoon and evening, after military exercises and duties were done for the day.

Pat and I would meet on the sidewalk in the late afternoon. She would hand over Sabra, giving me last minute instructions on feeding, bathing, and such. At the same time that we were in this mode of operation, a popular television cartoon depicted two dogs passing each other on the street, saying nothing but, "Hi, George" and "Hi, Fred." We began to feel like those two dogs, too tired to say much except, "Hi, Pat" and "Hi, Jim."

Our early years would have been far leaner and more problematic had Pat not been a teacher. After 20 years in the Army, Pat had state teaching certificates in nine states, Germany, and the Hawaiian Territory. She reminded me of my mother in that she was the parent who was always there, managing the house and being caregiver to the kids while I was off on field exercises. Home was always wherever Pat was located. I have the utmost respect and admiration for what Pat and other military wives do on a daily basis, year after year, to enable their husbands to serve our country.

Even though Pat was working, our monetary situation was tight. We would throw our spare change in a jar, and at the end of the week, go buy a carton of beer or some other treat. Those Saturday nights were a fantastic reprieve; we lived it up.

My first assignment in the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in February 1959 was in A Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Battle Group. My first company commander, Captain Hominy, was a Korean War veteran whose scarred arm bore witness to the numerous times he had been wounded in battle. He had a consummate understanding of company-level leadership and tactics.

Upon arrival, everyone had to pay his respects to the regimental commander. I reported to the regimental commander on that first day.

The cocky walk of the Airborne Ranger School deserted me as I looked around the commander's office. Approaching his desk with the huge chair and array of flags behind it was akin to approaching a king on a throne. The knocking in my knees knocked the last bit of Airborne Ranger strut from my stride.

Standing stiffly at attention I saluted and said, "Lieutenant Ross, reporting for duty."

The infantry full Colonel did not look up. He left me there, standing in the throne room at attention. The silence was deafening. He was looking at what appeared to be my military file, my record, my history. With less than a year in the Army, I didn't have a history. He finally put me at ease.

"I see that you played football in college," he said.

"Yes sir; four years there, four in high school and two years in junior high," I said in a voice that seemed several octaves above my usual speaking level.

"You were 'all-whatever this thing is', 'all-something' in college," he continued. "What is this thing you were 'all' of?" he asked.

"All AIC," I explained. "That stands for All-Arkansas Intercollegiate."

He said, "Well you were all-something, and I want you to play football on our regimental football team. All the officers in this regiment play football."

"Sir," I stammered, "with all due respect, I'd prefer not to play." I was beaten up pretty badly playing college ball. I had over forty stitches in my face alone. My nose was broken several times.

"Lieutenant Ross, we are the best in this division, and my officers play football," he said, completely ignoring what I had said. "ALL my officers contribute to our football team. We win the Commander's Cup in football every year, Lieutenant. This being February, our pre-

training is going on now. Go upstairs and draw your pads. You're excused."

And that was that. Not a word about all the honors and top awards I'd worked so hard to achieve in the past eight months. Football! Again? This was not what I had traveled half way around the globe to do. Tromping up the stairs, flashes raced through my brain of the night in 1957 when the doctor had put ten stitches in my face at halftime so I could play the last half of the game. When I asked him if I would be able to play in the next game, he said, "Sure you can. We'll take the stitches out in about a week. That should be long enough for the cut to heal." Two weeks later the same place was hit again, causing a split along the same cut line.

Here I was in the Army about to do it all over again. Upstairs I found the equipment room. Nine different colleges were represented among the eleven starters. There was an All Big East player, Lieutenant Flynn from Cornell. Lieutenant Jim Pitt from Texas Christian University played guard. Lieutenant Spangler from the University of South Dakota was our middle linebacker. All of them were "all big something."

They kidded me unmercifully about the All-AIC. "You were an All-*what* from *where*?" "What the devil is an Arkadelphia? Is that like an armadillo? Is that something you eat or what?" One of the players who had not gone to college was an NCO (Non-Commissioned Officer) who played end. He made the traveling squad with the Rams, but was eventually cut. He didn't like being drafted into the Army, but he loved playing football. The quarterback was a high school All-American from Oklahoma, about 6'3", a quality player.

Among the company officers were three seasoned veterans who had been through Korea as combat leaders, a Black, a Hawaiian, an ex-NCO who had been a drill instructor and had a court martial that was expunged, a West Pointer, and three of us who were ROTC or OCS. It was the most diversity I had been exposed to in any group. As platoon leaders, we often met for discussions on leadership and training. Each one of these men brought his own talent and area of expertise to the discussions. I was like a sponge, soaking up different points of view and learning from our multi-cultural group.

The company executive officer was Lieutenant “Pete” Peterson, a no-nonsense, by-the-book infantry officer. Lieutenant Cobb, a Black officer at a time when Black officers were rare, was an exceptional platoon leader. His appearance was striking. He was about 6’2” tall, neat, trim, and fit. His wife had been a model for *Jet Magazine*, and it was our opinion that Lieutenant Cobb could have been a model himself.

Lieutenant Charles Anderson, an ex-DI (drill instructor), had gone to Korea as a noncommissioned officer and come back with a direct commission. He was a tough, by the book, “standard-setting-with-no-deviation” trainer who had once been court-martialed for excessive disciplinary action. The system recognized their error, and he was exonerated. Lieutenant Anderson was a strong, no-nonsense platoon leader with valuable combat experience.

Lieutenant Fragas, a local Hawaiian who was very friendly and outgoing, was a graduate of the University of Hawaii. Lieutenant Follansbee, a West Pointer, came into the company about the same time I did. He was our thoughtful, academic-oriented platoon leader who really wanted to be a doctor. He later returned to school, earning a doctorate in psychiatry.

The acting First Sergeant, Master Sergeant Williams, had gone through Korea, advanced to Major, and was RIF’d (dropped in rank because of a reduction in force) after the Korean War back to an E-7 (Sergeant First Class). He didn’t seem bothered by the fact that he was no longer a Major. He taught all of us important, practical, compassionate lessons about caring for Soldiers. Sergeant Williams was always available to talk, help with problems and stressful situations, and offer advice.

There are times when a film, a fragrance, scenery, a novel, something triggers a flood of memories of a slice of our own lives. Reminders of my time with the 14<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry are captured in a classic film. That is the 1953 film, *From Here to Eternity*, based on a novel by James Jones. Jones had been a member of the 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment and had witnessed the attack on Pearl Harbor. The setting for the film was Schofield Barracks. It concerned a boxer who refused

to box in the weekly boxing “smokers,” an activity like a boxing tournament. Deborah Kerr played the company commander’s wife, and Burt Lancaster played the company First Sergeant. The film was nominated for many awards and won a Golden Globe for actor Frank Sinatra and an Oscar for director Fred Zinneman.

Certain moments and things in that film can take me back to my time at Schofield Barracks. Little things like the playing of reveille. We had reveille every morning, and all officers attended. A Soldier actually played reveille on a bugle. It was much better than the CD, tape, or record with scratches that Soldiers listen to today.

In 1959, tourists would wander into Quad E (a barracks quadrangle) and ask, “Is this where Frank Sinatra and Burt Lancaster were?” We would direct them over to Quad D where parts of the movie had been filmed. But we would add, “You can take a look around here if you like. All the quads are similar.”

It seemed our group could not lose. Everything we did, from sports to training exercises, was done with focus and drive. Whether baseball, basketball, football, or boxing smokers, we won. Our NCOs made it happen. We trained hard several months in advance to make sure we performed the best on training exercises. East Range, Kahuku, Summit Trail, Black Junction, and Hawaii, the “Big Island,” became familiar training locations.

We averaged about 12 days a month in the field, locations away from Schofield Barracks. Training back at Schofield, which was called “in the quads,” ended at lunchtime. We spent afternoons in A&R (athletics and recreation). Soldiers worked on their battle group’s sport. Ours, of course, was football. We also had boxing smokers every Wednesday night.

It was inspiring to be part of a unit such as the 14<sup>th</sup> Infantry that had so much history. The insignia of the 14<sup>th</sup> is a gold imperial Chinese dragon placed against a red Spanish castle with the motto, “The Right of the Line.” That phrase comes from a much prized remark made by General George G. Meade, commander of the Army of the Potomac during the Civil War. When asked where the 14<sup>th</sup> should be placed in the Grand Review celebrating the Union victory,



he said, "To the right of the line. The 14<sup>th</sup> has always been to the front in battle and deserves the place of honor."

The motto of the 14<sup>th</sup> is, "I'll try, sir." Private Calvin P. Titus uttered those words in 1900 in Peking, China, during the "Boxer Rebellion". The Boxers were dissident young Chinese who had formed a secret fighting group. They were opposed to Western influence in their country and began attacking foreign missions and embassies.

An international force that included the 14<sup>th</sup> responded and rescued diplomats trapped in Peking. Two companies of the 14<sup>th</sup> were pinned under heavy fire near the wall of the Chinese City. Volunteers were called to attempt the first perilous ascent of the wall.

A musician, Trumpeter Private Calvin P. Titus of E Company, immediately stepped forward, saying, "I'll try, sir!" Using jagged holes in the stone wall, he succeeded in reaching the top. He was followed by the rest of his company. In the face of continued heavy Chinese fire, the colors of the American flag broke out in the August breeze as a sign that U.S. Army troops had achieved a major step in the relief of the besieged legations. For his courageous and daring deed, Titus was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor and received an appointment to West Point.

The Chinese dubbed the Americans the "Golden Dragons" for their fierce fighting spirit. The Chinese Government, grateful to the American troops for helping defeat the Boxer Rebellion, presented several bars of silver bullion to the 14<sup>th</sup>. The silver was molded into cups, a ladle, and a regimental punch bowl, which was named the Calvin P. Titus Bowl. Once a quarter, we had what were called "Dining Ins." We put on our white dress uniforms, stood in a formation of a "V" with the commander at the point of the "V" while the history of the 14<sup>th</sup> was read.

Of course, as a Second Lieutenant, I was pretty far down one side of the "V," kind of the last guy in line. While we were there, every officer in that "V" had his name engraved on one of the cups. My

name is on one of the special silver cups and will remain there in memory of my time of service with the 14<sup>th</sup> Infantry.

Temporary Duty Assignments (TDY) trips began taking me away from home quite a bit. At one point, I was the “Officer in Charge” for the Jungle Warfare School for about six months. It was actually duty away from the 14<sup>th</sup> Infantry, but many of the staff members were from the 14<sup>th</sup>. The Jungle Warfare Center taught all kind of jungle tactics, from “how to survive in the jungle” to rappelling, to strategies for patrolling in a jungle environment.

While I was away, Pat was getting her first real taste of life as an Army wife. There were lots of military wives and small children in our neighborhood. When their husbands were away on TDY trips, they relied on each other. They were a cohesive support to each other, gathering for social visits, helping each other with childcare and daily chores, and assisting in shopping trips to the commissary and the PX (Post Exchange).

All wives were expected to join the “Wives Club,” later called the “Women’s Club,” and today called the “Spouses Club.” Pat was involved in the Officers’ Wives Club. While I was in the jungle, rappelling down a sheer cliff, she was playing bridge every third Wednesday and going to luncheons every fourth Thursday. While Pat was dressing in a suit, hat, and gloves, shaking hands with the commander’s wife, smiling, and pouring tea, I was smearing grime on my face, wearing the same uniform for days, and hacking my way through jungle foliage.

The *Army Officers Guide* became her protocol bible. There was a code of behavior for everything. She learned proper etiquette for how to word dinner and coffee invitations and how to address the envelopes.

Wives were expected to be available at all times for Officers’ Wives Club functions in the daytime. The wives who worked were primarily teachers, teaching at the base education centers or public schools. Pat was in the minority as a working wife. Although it meant juggling a heavy schedule of homemaking, raising Sabra, and teaching, Pat continued to don those stockings she thought were a

ridiculous fashion requirement in Hawaii heat and go to the Wives Club Meetings. The wives did a lot of good, charitable work, a service that continues today.

In those days of the Selective Service, the draft pulled men who had not finished high school into the Army. One rule in A Company went something like this: if you don't have a high school education when you arrive, you will before you leave. Pat was teaching the English-speaking recruits basic English, some French, history, math, and a little science; just enough to get them through the GED test.

Then there were the Hungarians. The 1956 Hungarian Revolution brought immigrants from that country to America. The Russians had overrun Budapest. Many of those who fled were young men. They were intelligent, well-educated people who could not speak English. I think they had been offered American citizenship if they would stay so many years in the Army. Eight years, I think.

I had several of the Hungarians in Company A, and they were exceptional Soldiers, the best. They were a few years older and knew how to work. One of my BAR (Browning Automatic Rifle) Soldiers was Hungarian. He had a high desire to excel, very dedicated. Just as Pat was doing in her teaching, we were using lots of hand motions and gestures to communicate because of the language barrier. They knew a few words like "Sergeant," "grenade," "rifle," but that was about it.

The Hungarians were with me during the day for military training and in class with Pat from six to ten at night learning English. Their English vocabularies were slowly increasing on a daily basis. One night during the rainy season, Pat walked into her classroom, dripping wet from a downpour.

"It's raining cats and dogs out there," Pat exclaimed, wiping water from her clothes and books.

The Hungarians started to laugh hysterically. They thought that was the funniest expression they had ever heard. She spent 20 minutes trying to explain some of the unusual analogies we Americans use. They were still chuckling as they left class that night.

On August 21, 1959, Sabra's second birthday, the territory of Hawaii became a state. In June of that year, a primary election was held to vote on several statehood propositions. Following the certification of election results, Hawaii was admitted as the 50th state by proclamation of Dwight D. Eisenhower, President of the United States. We stood with our diverse group of friends and many Hawaiians in front of the Ali'Iolani Hale Palace, the *House of Heavenly Chiefs*.<sup>4</sup>

That day, Pat and I were thrilled to see the raising of the American flag to a cheering crowd. Since statehood, on the third Friday each August, Hawaii celebrates "Admissions Day."

About five months after Hawaii became a state, Pat gave birth to our second child, DiAnna Lei, born January 27, 1960. Nicknamed Dede from the start, our Hawaiian baby was born at the Tripler Army Hospital in Honolulu. Mother and daughter surfaced from the birthing ordeal glowing and healthy. Two and one-half-year-old Sabra had a little sister, and Pat had her hands full.

Thank goodness we had helpful neighbors and friends. Jan and Duane Smith, whom we met in Hawaii, are still good friends today. They had two boys about our girls' ages. Jan grew up on a ranch in Texas where quarter horses were raised. Jan's sister was married to Dan Blocker who was "Hoss" on *Bonanza*. Duane played basketball for the University of Texas. He had also gotten one of those "recruiting" calls from the commander, "I see where you played basketball. Were you an all-something?"

Hawaii had an influx of young Soldiers from the Philippines, Guam, and Samoa. I served with these men as well as the Czechs and Hungarians. The 25<sup>th</sup> was a melting pot and multi-ethnic group from across the Pacific nations. It was an amazingly diverse group, and I learned so much from all of them. There was even a Samoan prince among the Soldiers. In spite of the "Private" classification, other Samoans treated him royally.

During that first assignment in A Company of the 14<sup>th</sup> Infantry, I was privileged to serve with and learn from Captain Hominy, Lieutenants Cobb, Anderson, Peterson, Fragas, and Follansbee. Later

I served in Germany with a 14<sup>th</sup> Infantry First Sergeant Murray of Company D or E, who was a well-decorated Korean War veteran. Still later, Major General Charles M. Murray and I also served at the Pentagon together and are still good friends.

As stipulated in my orders, after serving for two years with the 14<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battle Group, I was moved to the 33<sup>rd</sup> Transportation Battalion. This assignment was at Schofield also. The change meant I'd be relocated within the base. It was not a family move. I was not thrilled to be leaving infantry to go to a technical unit. Infantry fit like a glove. The things at which we excel are the things we love to do. A technical unit like transportation looked like a gross misfit to me.

After about two months with the 33<sup>rd</sup>, an unusual summons left me with no doubt that my guardian angel was on the job. I was at "Division Trains," the predecessor of today's DISCOM (Division Support Command) when I got the news that Colonel William McKean, 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry commander, had asked for me by name. I was being handpicked for something. I would not stay long with the 33<sup>rd</sup> after all. Good-bye, transportation; hello, infantry.<sup>5</sup>

The special detail was with the 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry. We were called into a gymnasium for a meeting. Officers and senior Sergeants made up the group. The doors were closed. Soldiers were posted at each door. This was certainly different. "You've been chosen for a special mission," the officer in charge said. "You're going to Southeast Asia, to Thailand," he continued.

Thailand was part of an area we called Indochina when I was in high school and college. I had been training in the Philippines near the Bataan peninsula of World War II distinction. I had trained on the big island of Hawaii, in Okinawa, and in Taiwan. Thailand would be a new adventure.

"Air Cobra is part of a SEATO (Southeast Asia Treaty Organization) exercise," the officer continued. "Because of the secrecy of our mission, you may not tell your wives and family where you are. Tell them you're going on an exercise in the Pacific. You'll be given special instructions regarding mail. Any letters that you write will have to be censored before they're mailed."

“How long will this mission last?” someone asked.

“We can’t be sure, probably weeks,” answered the officer.

At the conclusion of the meeting, I was instructed, along with several others, to report to USARPAC (U.S. Army, Pacific) to receive special briefings. Several other junior officers, Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels were in the meeting. In this briefing I learned why I had been handpicked. They needed a Transportation Corps officer with infantry experience. Basically, our task was to verify bridge, road, and airfield data in that area. We were to be the first in and build a compound in Korat that would later be called “Camp Friendship.”

I also learned the reason for this exercise. In response to increasing insurgency on its northern borders, the Royal Thai Government had requested assistance from the United States. The U.S. was concerned about the security of that area near Laos and the Mekong River delta area, due to the continued unrest in Laos and Vietnam. The Geneva Treaty of 1954 divided Vietnam at the 17<sup>th</sup> parallel into two political zones. People in the north lived under the Viet Minh government and in the south under the Ngo Dinh Diem government. Anyone living in one zone, who wished to relocate to another zone, had 300 days to make the transfer. Hanoi and Haiphong remained free until May of 1955.

At the First Lieutenant stage in my military career, I wasn’t given enough information to understand the big picture. Perhaps all the “Big War Coming” signs were there, and I just chose not to read them. Or perhaps I was too focused on my assigned task to want to envision our presence there as anything more than the routine building of another base.

As I understood my piece of the puzzle for the Air Cobra Thailand exercise, I was to verify bridge, road, and airfield data using ESSO maps. That’s right, ESSO Oil Company maps. They were the fold up kind of maps we used to plan a road trip before computers and “Mapquest” enhanced our lives. They were the only maps of Thailand available. In 1959, we had no military maps of that country.

“I’ve got to go away on a field exercise,” I announced to Pat that evening.

“How long will you be gone?” she asked, not asking where.

“I don’t know. They think a few weeks,” I said. When I uttered those words, I had no idea that I’d be involved with Air Cobra for nine months.

The wives had a great intelligence system. It didn’t take them long to know where we were going, but they knew they couldn’t talk about it. Later, Pat said she was amazed there was no publicity in the paper. Troops left daily, nearly 2000 men in all, and she combed the Honolulu newspaper for weeks. Never did she see one printed word about the exercise.

We were given a book called *How to Speak Thai* as we boarded the C-124 Globemaster plane. We stopped in Wake Island, Guam and the Philippines before landing in Bangkok, Thailand. I think by the time we reached Bangkok, I had learned the days of the week, the colors, and how to count to ten, but that was about all the language any of us knew. Thai with an Arkansas accent might prove a bit tricky.

The plane was met by Thai military who took us to Korat. Today Korat is a large metropolitan area in the center of Thailand. Our region was east and north of Korat, and it was a show of force. We literally took almost 2,000 troops up on the border, not all at one time, but in sufficient numbers so that anyone watching from Laos was aware that the Americans, British, Australians, and New Zealanders were there in strength.

My job in Thailand consisted solely of verifying maps. There were four or five teams of two people each. My team consisted of an engineer Sergeant and myself. We were issued a jeep and assigned a particular part of Thailand. Using our stack of ESSO maps as a starting point, we began to tour our assigned area. Every bridge we crossed, we calculated how much weight that bridge would hold. Would it hold only two-and-a-half or five-ton trucks? Measuring the beams, measuring the length, we would gather enough information to use a standard algorithm for the calculations. My engineer worked

magic with his slide rule and within 15 minutes could determine how many tons could travel across any given bridge.

When we found airfields, we measured the distance of the strip by jumping in the jeep, driving the length of the runway and checking the odometer. If there were any warehouses or buildings, we made a written description of them. We took soil samples and compared them to a “shade” chart of different types of soil, from clay to black dirt to sand. With the information we collected, we were able to determine how the runway soil would react to the pressure of landings of different aircraft. There were no paved runways in Thailand at that time besides Bangkok and Korat.

For the next several months, we drove throughout Thailand. My region was all the way east to Ubon Thani, south through Khon Kaen, and on down to Udorn. We would launch out for a week or so, living where we could along the way. With our C-rations, a shave kit, and at least one clean uniform for a change midway through the week, we surveyed the roads.

The local people were a great help. There would be days when we knew an airfield was somewhere near by, but the road ended before we found it. Returning to a village and asking the local people always brought results, and with their help, we would locate the airfield. One of our more interesting trips was to Sattahip, as far south in Thailand as we could go in our region. We surveyed a tiny little airfield. Years later, that little airfield turned out to be a B52 base. Fighter bases were built on fields we surveyed near Ubon and Udorn, and one near Khon Kaen became a “Jolly Green Giant” base, a base for the big helicopters that went on search and rescue missions when a pilot was down. That base was far north and east, so close; it was just a short shot across a very narrow part of Laos, and they were into Vietnam.

When we were taking soil samples and measuring runways, the grass runways averaged about 2,000 feet long. A short time later, the short runway was replaced with a concrete, 10,000 foot runway for jets. In Udorn, there was a corrugated tin roofed hut with a PSP (pierced steel planking) ramp and small runway. Later it was converted into a base with a long runway to accommodate fighters.



We submitted the notes, maps, all our findings to our boss after each excursion. He sent the information packet back to Hawaii to the U.S. Army Pacific Headquarters. A unit there was assembling data on roads, bridges, and airfields in Thailand for mapping and planning purposes. We didn't know at the time that President Kennedy had started a grand design to look at Thailand as a base to support everything in Vietnam.

The Thailand exercise lasted nine months, a bit more than "several weeks" as I had told Pat. Being Ranger qualified, I got to participate in training patrols with the Thai Ranger Battalion along the Mekong River, which winds its way along the border between Thailand and Laos. It was difficult to tear myself away from verifying maps, but I forced myself. This was a training program for all Lieutenants.

What a thrill to have the opportunity to participate in an infantry exercise. My two Thai patrols came when we were back at camp to collect supplies for the next map-surveying excursion. In those days, the infantry carried either M-1 or M-2 carbines. The M-2s were fully automatic versions. We each had a 45-caliber pistol as a sidearm.

The patrol was led by a Thai officer who had just completed his West Point assignment in the states. He was a very bright young man whose English was better than mine. We came across a campsite near the Mekong River.

"Vietnamese camped here," said the Thai officer.

You can look at an entire campsite as a footprint, making mental notes of how they slept and built their fire. Traces of what they cooked, scraps and bone that remain are so telling. The officer began discussing with the other Thai. I kept hearing them say, "Vietnamese, Vietnamese."

"What tells you the people here were Vietnamese?" I asked.

"The bones," said the officer. "These are the bones of monkey," he said pointing to bones lying beside the burned logs and ashes. "Those are dog," he said pointing to others. "Only the Vietnamese people eat monkey and dog. We do not."

Later, when I served in Vietnam, I would understand. The Vietnamese were so very poor. They ate whatever was available.

On one patrol, we were told that some of the loyalists called Laotian Royal Loyalists, sympathetic to the government, were coming across the Mekong River. They had been pushed into a “Pusan perimeter” situation and were escaping across the river. This was the first of many experiences to follow, seeing children involved in war. Many of the people escaping into Thailand looked like 12 and 13-year-old kids. One of them was carrying an M-1 rifle, and the rifle was almost as tall as he was. The butt of the rifle hung down past his knees.

We understood there were to be Army units coming across from Laos with the blessing of the Thai. It looked more like a disorganized group of young people made up of whomever they could pull into service. The entire scene was surreal for me. The unit’s Colonel was crossing in a boat, one of the long Asian type boats, and there was something big and strange looking in the boat. When we got a better look, we realized it was his bed. The boat contained the Colonel’s four-poster, brass bed. He was probably the only one in the regiment who had his bed with him.

To a 24-year-old rookie, it was a bizarre, eerie, sad sight. Children with guns, put in harm’s way, running and swimming from death, a phenomenon that would become far too familiar in the years ahead.

The Laotians appeared desperate, and the situation chaotic. They were pulling children into service. There were no standard uniforms or web gear. Most had some sort of pistol belt on, former U.S. web equipment with an occasional canteen. The Pathet Lao were better organized and were being far more aggressive during that period.

In 1961 and 1962, not yet touched by brewing turmoil, the innocence and beauty of Thailand was captivating. The country was peaceful and quiet with a majestic sense of harmony among its people and the land. The scenery from the mountains near Chiang Mai to the Mekong River in the east, to the south at Sattahip was breath taking. The people were beautiful, honest, and openly friendly.

On one of our map surveying excursions, we lost a duffel bag from the back of our jeep. A young Thai in his mid-thirties walked about ten kilometers to bring that duffel bag to us. The bag had not been opened. Nothing had been touched. Hearing that story, other Soldiers said they didn't think that would have happened in many places along the Pacific Rim. Someone remarked, "If that had been Korea, it would have been gone, and you would never have seen it again. The Black Market would have gobbled it up." Everyone agreed that Thailand was different. It was a step back in time to a slower, simpler, sweeter style of living.

I bought Pat jewelry at "Johnnie's Gems" in Bangkok where you could get beautiful, unusual jewelry for an inexpensive price. Chiang Mai was where most silk was produced. In downtown Korat and Bangkok, there were a few cars, mostly Lambrettas. The main means of transportation was the bicycle. Two short years later, when I was back in Thailand for R&R (rest and relaxation) from Vietnam, things were different. Prices were up, cars were everywhere, and Black Market vendors were on every street corner, trying to exchange your money for theirs. The country was in a building boom, much of the building being done by American contractors.

I had been in Thailand for about nine months when I found out I had been selected to go to the Advanced Course. It was customary for people with the rank of Captain to go to the Advanced Course, which was the second academic phase of the Army's continuing education program. I was still a First Lieutenant, not yet promoted to Captain. The course, about 90 percent academic and 10 percent field exercises, was designed to give the participants a view of the bigger picture, a higher level of organizational structure and function in the Army.

Watching while Soldier after Soldier in Thailand had their new orders delayed or killed, I began thinking I wasn't going anywhere. Soldiers were not returning to the states because of the priority of the mission. Our SEATO mission may have had the highest priority in the government at that time. The British, the Australians, and the New Zealanders were also giving the mission a very high priority. It was already June, and the course started at Fort Eustis in August. There were signs everywhere that suggested I would not be going.

Pat, however, had her assignment to move us, and that is what she was doing. With the help of a friend, she took the car to Honolulu Pier 40 port. Giving the person in charge the orders, she said, "I'm going to Fort Eustis. Ship this car back to the states. It needs to go to Fort Eustis, Virginia." Back at our quarters, she scheduled packers and began planning the move without knowing when or even if I would be coming back. In the midst of it all, Sabra graduated from kindergarten wearing a little cap and gown and looking so grown up. That was the first of many milestones I missed and had to relive through pictures and the re-telling by my family.

The approval for my new assignment surprisingly arrived at what seemed like the last minute. In 1962, our aircraft didn't have the range they have today. From Bangkok, we could make it to the Philippines. We would then fly to Guam, then to Wake and finally to Honolulu. I was concerned that one of the aircraft would break down somewhere along the way, and I wouldn't be home in time to travel with the family. One of Pat's letters gave me the date she was scheduled to leave, and I knew she and the girls would go whether I was there or not.

Every aircraft performed as it should on every leg of the trip, and I was home in Hawaii about a week before the move. After welcome hugs and kisses and preliminary chatter, I said, "I'm so glad to get home. Now I can help pack and get ready to move."

The thermostat on Pat's voice dropped a few degrees to chilly when she said, "Your timing is way off for that. I've already done it all." I wasn't sure whether to thank the Army or curse it. For her sake, I cursed it.

## *Chapter IV*

### **Fort Eustis, 1962**

A few days before we left our Hawaiian home in paradise, I did something I regret to this day. I asked for a branch transfer out of Transportation and back into Infantry. The transfer request, in and of itself, was not so bad. It was the things I said in the request that, years later, I expected to come back and bite me. I thought it could end my career.

Looking back at that moment, I see an athlete who was arrogantly fighting to remain in an athletic world. I was a 26-year-old, rock solid competitor in top physical condition whose claim to fame was being a leader of men. My self-image was wrapped tightly around leading men through feats of physical strength and stamina to reach a common goal. The act involved a mental toughness and cunning that kept men motivated and striving toward the goal while outwitting opposing forces, whether the opponent was another team, a dangerous enemy, or the environment.

At that moment in my short life, I was like a thoroughbred ready to spring from the starting gate and lead men through amazing physical trials in battle for our country. I had done it on the football field for years and now had a taste of using the same management and competitive strategies in Army training and field exercises. Such times were exhilarating, awakening every nerve in my body. They were challenging, with rapid-fire thoughts of options to outwit the enemy. They were exhausting; the kind of exhaustion that brings a sense of peace in having given your all. Most of all, such times felt natural.

Nowhere in my thinking did I fit into a category of a desk-bound, sedentary, scholarly type. I was a Soldier, not a “sitter.” My request letter was worded a bit more carefully than these thoughts, but not much. It is surprising that the letter, which remained in my file, did not hamper promotions or render them non-existent. I wrote in the letter that, as an Army Airborne Ranger who had served in an Infantry company, both in Hawaii and Thailand, I did not want to move to the

Transportation Corps. That poor choice of words has haunted me for years.

The Army's terse answer to the infamous transfer request was still in my file in 1994, 32 years later. It said, "The Transportation Corps is short of officers, and you cannot apply for a branch transfer until you finish your detail. After two years, contact us again."

By this time, my initial three-year ROTC obligation in the Army was complete, and I was in for another three years, this time, it seemed, in Transportation. The end of the first three-year obligation had come when we were in Hawaii, and I was selected for the Thailand special assignment. I could not turn that down. If I was going to Thailand, it meant staying in the Army. Pat and I agreed on another assignment for three more years. If my division assignment remained Transportation, then I'd leave the Army at the end of this period. The coaching job in Arkansas was beginning to look like a good alternative to the Army when the next two years were done.

Later, when I was involved with the 33<sup>rd</sup> Transportation Battalion and Colonel Richard W. Aronson, and still later Lieutenant Colonel Alton G. Post (who became a two-star General), I found they were just as productive, hard working, and served just an important a role as Infantry. It was simply a different culture to learn.

Lifelong friends grew from the officers with whom I served in the Transportation Corps. Lieutenants Duane Smith, Robert T. (Terry) Oliver and Floyd B. (Buddy) Mayes served across several companies in the 33<sup>rd</sup>. We migrated toward each other as Infantry and Armor officers who had not yet been to the basic course. I will always regret putting in for that branch transfer.

At the time of my personal great unrest, the whole world was going through a period of unrest. Turmoil was seeping into the surface of life in all directions. Cracks in the conservative lifestyle of the fifties were giving way to the revolutionary ways of the sixties. We had entered the age of youth, as 70 million children from the post-war baby boom became teenagers and young adults.

President John F. Kennedy was dealing with unrest in Vietnam, the Cold War with Russia, and Fidel Castro's communist regime in Cuba. At home, the Civil Rights movement, led peacefully by Martin Luther King, Jr., was growing and turning violent. Women, American Indians, and Hispanics asserted themselves in courts and protests. The Supreme Court decided that prayer in the public schools was unconstitutional. College students, led by respected professors, started to experiment with drugs, mystic eastern religions, and sexual freedom. And the ever present "rock and roll" was cranked out by the likes of Elvis Presley, who had returned from Army duty to the music scene, Jerry Lee Lewis, and talented Motown artists.

In the summer of 1962 we were on our way to Fort Eustis for nine months to attend the Transportation Advanced Course. The Bay of Pigs<sup>6</sup> ill-fated mission was a year old, and the Cold War grew more threatening daily. To my way of thinking, something was definitely wrong with this picture. My Soldier antennae were sending signals that did not fit with sitting in a classroom day in and day out.

Fort Eustis is in the Hampton Roads area of Virginia. It and its satellite installation, Fort Story, are home to the U.S. Army Transportation Corps, the Transportation Regiment, Army Transportation School, NCO Academy, Army Aviation Logistics School, 8<sup>th</sup> Transportation Brigade, and the 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group. Fort Eustis is a virtual city within itself with a shopping mall, bank, credit union, post office, hospital, chapel, United Service Organization (USO), Red Cross, and many other facilities.

In the historic triangle of Williamsburg, Yorktown, and Jamestown there are more than a dozen museums within a 20 mile radius. Hampton Roads was a resort and vacation destination of the East Coast, so abundant activities were available for our leisure time. Pat stayed very busy with Dede and Sabra, who were two and five.

I attended the Advanced Course for nine months. To my surprise, my contemporaries were much like me. They came from Infantry, Armor, or Artillery. In later years, I reminisced with General Carl E. Vuono, then the Army Chief of Staff, about the wise training strategy of putting young Lieutenants in combat arms before moving them to a

logistics branch. The perception of how to support troops comes from the experience of having walked in the Soldier's shoes.

That fall, while I was in class, the world hovered on the brink of nuclear war. In October, U.S. spy planes spotted Soviet missiles in Cuba. We now know that President Fidel Castro had requested 1,000 missiles and Moscow had only offered 40, with more aboard near-by submarines. A major threat to U.S. security was in our backyard.

Later, in a secret 1968 speech to his Communist Party's central committee, Castro commented on that time. "We were in the antechamber of the holocaust, and we were cracking jokes... Of course we knew that we would be made to play the part of the dead man, but we were determined to play the part."

In a televised address on October 22, 1962, Kennedy, backed by Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, confirmed the presence of Soviet missiles and announced a blockade of Cuba. Soviet ships carrying strategic missiles to the island turned back on October 27. It was a tense time. Kennedy was still considering bombing or invading Cuba as late as October 26, but the crisis ended on October 28 when the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev announced that he had ordered the removal of the missiles.

Meanwhile, I was trying to put the disappointment of being a desk jockey aside and do the best job possible with the Advanced Course. Still dissatisfied with my career path, I requested an airborne assignment. It seemed fitting since I had already gone through jump school and was an Airborne Ranger.

We were living in a brand new set of K-part housing. As the first occupants of the home, Pat was busy working out the "bugs" and decorating the new house. Back in those days, there weren't many ceremonies for promotions at the Captain level. Notification of a promotion simply arrived in your mailbox cubbyhole and said something like, "Today you are being promoted to Captain."

I couldn't believe it. The promotion notice was resting in my mailbox one day. After work, I rushed home to tell Pat the good news. I arrived to a chaotic scene of Pat and the girls trying to find the source



of a rather large water leak. It seems the plumbers who had worked on the new house had not secured the pipes upstairs. Whatever the cause, water flooded the upstairs and was pouring down the stairs to the first level. We had our own waterfall. I looked in the dining room. The light fixture was filing with water.

There is an old Army tradition called “wetting down the promotion.” Soldiers being promoted poured beer or whiskey over the new rank in a wetting down ceremony. As I went out to the street, found the main water valve and cut it off, I thought, my rise to Captain has been “wetted down” all right. Instead of whiskey, it was bathroom water.

Returning to the house, I made the mistake of announcing, “I was promoted to Captain today.” Bad timing. Really bad.

“Don’t tell me about being promoted,” Pat said. “We’ve been flooded! What are we going to do about all this water?”

We fixed the leaky pipes and mopped and sopped water until things were relatively dry. The new house delivered no more surprises and we went back to our typical routines. I was secure in the fact that every aspect of my “wetting down” ceremony for achieving Captain status was unique and original.

### **Fort Campbell, 1963**

Upon completion of the Advanced Course in June, I received orders to report to Fort Campbell with the understanding that I’d be on the post side a few months only. Within a year, I was supposed to be up for a jump slot with the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne. There were no slots open at that time.

Again, we made arrangements to move our belongings, which had grown considerably, and we moved to Fort Campbell, Kentucky.<sup>7</sup> Two thirds of the 105,000 acres of Fort Campbell are actually in Tennessee, but the post office is located in Kentucky. The post is located 60 miles northwest of Nashville, Tennessee, on the Kentucky-Tennessee border.

I was assigned to the 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion and reported to Lieutenant Colonel Walter B. Cochran, the battalion commander. “I see you were in the Infantry and you had a company, A company, 33<sup>rd</sup> Transportation Battalion,” he said. “I need a seasoned company commander to take over a medium truck company. You have the experience I’m looking for. You’ve been a company commander, and you have served in the infantry. You’re just the person we need down there.”

I began the command position as a new Captain. Although my job was to “turn the company around,” I found it was a good company. It was perceived to have many problems, but had good NCOs and some excellent Warrant Officers. I went to the 534<sup>th</sup> Medium Truck Company as a new “wetted down Captain” and the company commander.

The Battalion Sergeant Major William Jackson from Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and I became very good friends. He spent a lot of time with us because of the perceptions about the poor performance of the unit. Over time, he agreed that it was really a good company after all.

In July and August, we participated in a series of exercises designated “Swift Strike.” The exercises were held in the South Carolina/Georgia area. The 82<sup>nd</sup> opposed the 101<sup>st</sup> in war games. It was a valuable learning opportunity for a newly promoted Captain.

Pat was again teaching in the BSEP at Fort Campbell. Sabra was in first grade, and Dede was three years old. Our lives settled into a routine, and we explored the surrounding area on weekends.

At one point that fall, the 534<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company was assigned to an operation in Oxford, Mississippi, called “Operation Rapid Roads.” James H. Meredith was about to become the first Black student admitted to the University of Mississippi. President Kennedy mobilized federal marshals, as well as active-duty and National Guard troops, to secure the admission of Meredith and to ensure peace at Oxford.

In our briefings for the assignment, we were warned about putting Black Soldiers in positions of security guards or in visible infantry

units. Our Black Soldiers could go on the exercise, but were to keep a low profile for their safety. According to official reports, the Oxford riot preceded our arrival. It was a large unruly crowd turned violent. There were two deaths, and a number were injured, 166 marshals, 48 military, and 31 civilians.

We were a part of the military build up that followed, which consisted of approximately 30,600 troops. About 7,400 Soldiers of the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division participated. We were in Oxford for about three weeks. The force was reduced to 502 Soldiers in November, and the entire force was withdrawn in July 1963.

November 22, 1963 was a dark day in our country's history. President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas. President and Mrs. Kennedy, accompanied by Texas Governor and Mrs. Connally and Vice President Lyndon Johnson, were in a motorcade traveling through Dallas on their way to a sold-out campaign luncheon. Evidence at the scene pointed to a book depository order clerk, Lee Harvey Oswald, who had worked at the depository for only one month. Oswald was arrested for the assassination. Jack Ruby killed him in full view of television cameras before he could go to trial.

The bizarre events unfolding on our television screens painted scenes of a culture unraveling. Vice President Johnson was sworn in as President. Everything was moving at the labored pace of a bewildered country in shock. We were stunned, sad, appalled.

The next morning, we held a tribute to our President on the Fort Campbell "Screaming Eagles" parade field. It was touching and magnificent. Both the division and all the non-divisional units were on-line. There must have been 20,000 plus Soldiers in formation. We had rehearsed only once in the late afternoon of the 22<sup>nd</sup>. The 23<sup>rd</sup>, the day of the memorial, the temperature was in the low 30's, windy, and very, very cold. The division commander, the chaplain, and others made a few remarks. There was a moment of prayer and a solemn pass in review. All artillery and weapon systems were on display. The Screaming Eagles were honoring our fallen leader in the best way we knew. It was an awe-inspiring, magnificent display and a fitting tribute to our Commander-in-Chief.

As our time at Fort Campbell was ending, I was initially told I would be going to the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne, the assignment I had requested. Then the orders were changed to Korea with the 8<sup>th</sup> Army Headquarters in Seoul. Because Korea was considered a command sponsored tour for families, Pat and the girls could go with me.

This move was our third experience with household packers being around for a few days. This time we would not be allowed to take all our household goods and furniture. We had packed “hold baggage” which was five footlockers, the authorized allowance to Seoul, Korea. Our other belongings were to be stored until we returned from Korea. The Korean bound footlockers were shipped four weeks in advance. All this was becoming routine in our mobile way of life. The packers were there when I received a phone call from my assignment officer at OPO (Office of Personnel Operations).

“You’re not going to Korea,” the officer said. It was a no-notice change of direction. I would be going to Vietnam, and the family couldn’t go with me. We had so little time to re-adjust and make plans.

“Hold everything,” Pat said to the packers. “None of these household goods are going into storage. Everything will be shipped to one place.”

We just weren’t sure where that place would be. I had 15 days to get a flight to Vietnam, and during that short time, we had to decide where my family would be during my absence. The OPO said it would probably be a one-year assignment. I kept thinking about the three-to- six week mission to Thailand that turned into nine months.

My family was not allowed to stay at the base while I was gone. When orders said that a husband would be “overseas,” meaning hazardous duty, no provisions were made for the family. A family could not stay in quarters without the husband/father present, period. We were on our own.

Pat considered staying where there were other military wives with husbands away on overseas assignments. After looking at all the

options, it seemed best that she return to our hometown of Arkadelphia where she had a support system of family and friends.

We were able to find a house quickly, and Pat and the girls began getting settled in Arkadelphia. Saying goodbye was very sad. It was too rushed, and we had no time to acclimate to the sudden separation. What I felt that day for Pat and her role in our Army life went beyond gratitude, beyond appreciation, beyond our everyday mutual respect for each other. There were no words to express how glad I was that she was in my life.



## *Chapter V*

### **Vietnam, 1964-1965**

Family farewells were difficult as I left for Vietnam. I departed from Little Rock, Arkansas, in June 1964, almost six years to the day after I entered the Army. From there I reported to a contract flight at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). On the flight to L.A., I reviewed what I knew about my assignment. Since 1962-3, when I was in Thailand, men from North Vietnam had begun viciously infiltrating peaceful South Vietnam. Special Forces teams from the U.S. Army had a small presence in Vietnam at that time. America increased its aid to the South Vietnamese at the urging of President Ngo Dinh Diem in 1960. In 1962, military advisors had gone to Vietnam to assist the South Vietnamese in their struggle against communist guerrillas, the Viet Cong. In 1963, the Viet Cong (VC), who had infiltrated South Vietnam, defeated units of the ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam), and President Diem was overthrown and killed.

Divisive problems in Vietnam were the legacy of France's failure to suppress nationalist forces in Indochina after World War II. The post-war years found France struggling to restore colonial dominion. Lucrative rubber plantations were the main driving force for a French presence in Vietnam. Ho Chi Minh led a revolutionary movement against France. His Army, originally known as the Viet Minh, waged a political and military struggle for Vietnamese independence. Ultimately, the result was the ouster of France from the region.

In a final stand at Dien Bien Phu against the guerillas, France asked the United States to intervene. President Eisenhower, listening to the advice of General Matthew B. Ridgway, Army Chief of Staff, decided not to aid France in this endeavor. He concluded that such an effort would severely strain Army reserves and resources and possibly lead to a wider war in Asia, which could include China

The fall of Dien Bien Phu on May 7, 1954 led to France's disengagement from Indochina. This left Ho Chi Minh, once again, with little resistance to his persistent efforts to take over Vietnam.

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy sharply increased military and economic aid to South Vietnam to help Diem defeat the Communist forces. Facing trouble spots in Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia, Kennedy took a keen interest in the U.S. Army's Special Forces. He believed their skills in unconventional warfare were well suited to countering insurgencies in these areas. During his first year in office, he increased the strength of the Special Forces from about 1,500 to 9,000 and authorized them to wear a distinctive green beret.

That same year, he greatly enlarged their role in South Vietnam, first under the auspices of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and then under a military commander. In addition to Army Special Forces and wide use of helicopters, Kennedy expanded the entire American advisory effort. He placed advisors at the sector level for training purposes. U.S. military strength in South Vietnam was about 700 at the start of 1960. It rose to almost 24,000 by 1964 during my time there. Later, the number grew to over 500,000.

Political turmoil and a critical state of rural security erupted after President Diem's death. This prompted the United States to expand its military aid to Saigon. General Paul D. Harkins, Commander, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV), and his successor, General William C. Westmoreland, urgently strove to revitalize pacification and counterinsurgency. They retained the concept of fortified hamlets as the heart of a new national counterinsurgency program.

To help implement the new program, Army advisers were assigned to the sub-sector (district level) for the first time, becoming more intimately involved in local pacification efforts and in paramilitary operations. That was where I came in.

The OPO assignment officer had said they scanned files for officers who had completed an infantry assignment and were Airborne Rangers. They were looking for officers who had finished at the top of their classes in training. I was part of the first team of battalion advisors sent to Vietnam by President Lyndon Johnson. It was a time when few Americans even knew where Vietnam was.



Back in Arkansas, on the streets of Arkadelphia, Pat encountered friends she hadn't seen in several years. They asked if she was visiting. She explained about the house she had leased for her and the girls and my assignment to Vietnam. "Where is Vietnam?" they asked. Pat explained that it was a country in Southeast Asia. "Sounds exotic," some would say, "sort of like your time in Hawaii. When are you joining him?"

Pat again explained, "I'm not sure I'll be able to join him there. Army families aren't allowed to go to Vietnam at this time."

Then they said, "Well, I'm sure he's having a wonderful time. We're glad to have you back in Arkansas for a while."

Boarding the flight at LAX, I saw many familiar faces. Friends from Ranger and Airborne School were there. We were all given small books titled *Basic Vietnamese*. "I've been here before," I thought. Flashbacks of my flight to Thailand interrupted my thoughts as I took the book. It contained overview information about the culture and country, and some basic words and phrases in the language.

As the plane engine hummed through the night, the Vietnam map in the section of our little book made me think of our ESSO maps in Thailand. Had the map surveyors been as exacting and diligent as we tried to be? I would soon find out. The plane was taking me back into a part of our world I had grown to love in 1961 and 1962. My experiences would highlight the fact that 1964 Vietnam was not 1961 Thailand.

The confinement of the 36 hour flight gave us time to visit, catch up on each other's lives, and study. Stops in Hawaii, Guam, Wake, and Saigon were welcome escapes to stretch, walk around, get the blood flowing. We were by no means fluent in the language when our plane touched down on Vietnamese soil. The well of Vietnamese vocabulary we dug for ourselves in 36 hours included counting to ten, the days of the week, Sergeant, rifle, bayonet, halt, take cover, etc. Our knowledge of the Asian culture had grown from minuscule to mighty little.

Fast forward from that time in 1964 to 2004. Today our Soldiers are on direct flights into Kuwait. No stops. When Baghdad calms down, they will fly straight in there. There will be no little books designed to introduce the Soldiers to the culture and language. The aircraft are equipped with multiple laptops on which programs designed to familiarize the Soldiers with the country's terrain and potential battle areas are loaded. No foldout maps, ESSO or otherwise. The laptops have the latest satellite photos for the area of their mission. The maps they see on their computer screens are three-dimensional. Computerized training exercises lead the Soldiers through mock-ups of their assignments and missions. By the time they arrive, they not only know the area very well, but they are well-rehearsed.

We flew into Bien Hoa, South Vietnam's III Corps MACV headquarters, which was responsible for the approaches to and the defense of Saigon. The North Vietnamese Army used the Ho Chi Minh Trail to establish and supply base areas in War Zones C and D to the north of Saigon. Dating from before U.S. involvement, War Zones C and D were inexact terms used to describe major Viet Cong guerilla areas. War Zone D included an area north of Bien Hoa about 70 miles from Saigon up Highway One, parts of Binh Duong, Phuoc Thanh, Phuoc Long, and Long Khanh Provinces.

After our arrival in Bien Hoa, our reunited assemblage was again split and scattered across Vietnam. My group was assigned to III Corps, which was located in Saigon near Bien Hoa. On arrival there, we met with an old, crusty Colonel who looked ancient to my 28-year-old eyes. He welcomed us into his office.

"All of you will be battalion advisors," he began. "You will work with what we would call back home the National Guard/Reserve. Here they are the regional or popular forces. You will work in a district military advisory capacity. What we think of as counties in our states are called districts here. Most of you originally came from Infantry. We are detailing you back to Infantry, Armor, or Artillery."

I could not believe my ears. Had he said we were all going back to our original branches? I loved it. I had asked for a branch transfer back to Infantry. I'd been in a "give-up" state of mind, resigned to the

fact that I might never get back to my original desire of serving as an infantryman.

With the words of this wonderful old Colonel, “We’re detailing you back to Infantry,” a most sought-after gift dropped into my lap. By some strange quirk of fate, I was going back to Infantry. It was difficult not to jump around the room in a frenzied dance of joy. Before we left his office, we were shedding our current brass and replacing it with Infantry, Armor, or Artillery brass. What a hoot! I was once again Infantry! One goal accomplished without warning or fanfare.

My assignment took me 70 miles north of Saigon to the town of Phuoc Vinh. It was a multi-province (state) headquarters known as PBT (Phuoc Binh Thanh) Special Zone. Our Regional Force/Popular Force operation stretched as far north as the Hon Quan area and as far south as Tan Uyen and almost touched Zone C, Ben Cat to the west. The area was the combination of three provinces, Phuoc Long, Binh Long, and Phuoc Thanh, north of Saigon that included much of the old French Zone D, a much-feared area that South Vietnamese didn’t want to go near. Advisory Team 88 was located in the city/village of Phouc Vinh, the provincial capital of Phuoc Thanh. Song Be, also to the north, was one of our reinforcing mission areas, a back up arrangement to be used only if the Advisory Team was in trouble.

Captain Rex Searson was the first person I met at the PBT Headquarters, and he gave me my first operational and intelligence orientation on my arrival. Later Rex retired as a Major, Signal Corps, after having served in WWII, Korea, Vietnam, and the Cold War. He was truly a great Soldier.

My team for the Phouc Vinh Regional Force and Popular Forces consisted of five men. I was a Captain at that time and was team chief. My assistant was First Lieutenant John Wilcox. Specialist First Class Julio Guterrez was the NCOIC (Non-commissioned Officer in charge). The team also included a radio operator and an extremely talented Medical Specialist 5th Class. Time has erased their names, but not their efforts, dedication, and professionalism. I reported to Major Robert Chambers through Major Ed Levine. We all reported to the PBT Special Zone Commander, Colonel John Hill (later Major

General Hill). First Lieutenant, later Captain, Al Nauman was our intelligence officer. We were also provided with a Vietnamese Sergeant that could speak English who served as our interpreter. He also knew French. Because of the pervasive influence of the French over so many years, many of the locals spoke French.

Our ex-Special Forces Master Sergeant was a real Soldier's Soldier and a wonderful person. The young Specialist 5, our medic, was a very talented high school dropout, who had gone through medical training for small injury, gunshot wound surgery, that kind of training. We could walk into a village, and if there was a gunshot wound, he could treat it. If someone needed a tooth pulled, he could do it. Pulling teeth almost painlessly without Novocain was his dental specialty. He was worth his weight in gold, and I've wondered what became of him. As a Black, he didn't relish the thought of going back home to all the race riots tearing at our country in 1964. I encouraged him to stay in the Army, finish high school (GED), and get into the medical field as either a Warrant Officer or an officer.

We arrived as Advisory Team 88 in Phuoc Vinh. Introductions were made to the battalion commander that I would advise. I will never forget him. Dai Uy (the Vietnamese phrase for Captain) An was how he introduced himself. An is a very common name, like the Ross name in the United States. The first order of business for Dai Uy An was not military issues, but to introduce me to his wife and children. Although Captain An looked very young, he was over forty. He married late in life and had a very young wife and two small children.

Before our conversation turned to military matters, Captain An wanted to discuss politics, his politics, not mine. It was so important to him that he help me understand where he stood on Vietnamese issues. During the year we spent together, I would hear many times about the experiences that brought him to his convictions.

"I'm a Nationalist," he said as we drank tea, "not a Communist. Early in my youth, I fought with the Viet Minh. I love my country and want it to be free. I was fighting the French so that I could live in a country where the people rule themselves. Our struggles for freedom have been many. Now I spend everyday in combat against the very group I was once a part of. When Ho Chi Minh took over and started

preaching Communist doctrine, I left. He was moving the country toward becoming a Communist state, and I did not want Communism for our country. There were many others who sympathized with my Nationalist point of view. We left the Viet Minh and started what is now the South Vietnamese Army.”

“You’ve been a Soldier for a long time,” I said, validating his many years of military experience. “Your struggles to be free are much like my own country’s Revolutionary War with England.”

“Your ancestors fought Soldiers dressed in red who marched into battle in open fields,” said Captain An. “We fight elusive phantom sneaks that kill our people and burn our villages in the dead of night. Then they vanish without a trace. It’s not quite the same.”

I nodded, all the while thinking, “He knows more about my country’s history than I do of his. It’s going to take some doing to gain the trust and respect of this seasoned Soldier.” Aloud I said, “You must be very proud to be a battalion commander, a Captain in your Army, fighting for your country.”

He, in turn, gave an understanding, concurring nod. I wondered what he was thinking. It was probably something like, “Now I must fight my battles and drag this American along each step of the way.”

My role was an unusual one. I was part of President Johnson’s “Pacification Program.” We were to maintain a training and supportive presence with the commander to whom we were assigned. I was to guide him in military tactics and the training of his battalion. The plan was not to do his thinking for him, not to take over his command, but to lead him to effective ways of battling the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong aggressors.

Johnson’s advisors in Washington were determined to defend South Vietnam’s independence through air strikes ranging from immediate massive bombardment of military and industrial targets to gradually intensifying attacks spanning several months. The interest in using air power reflected lingering sentiment in the U.S. against again involving American ground forces in a land war on the Asian continent. The thinking was that a carefully calibrated air campaign

would be the most effective means of exerting pressure against Ho's guerillas and least likely to provoke China.

While air attacks were carried out in North Vietnam, aircraft were dropping leaflets in areas thought to be the territory in which the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese were operating. President Johnson's message in the leaflet campaign was "Come forward, and we will give you freedom. You will not be hurt."

The next morning Captain An introduced me to our Soldiers. Foremost in my mind was the fact that I was there to help, not to command. I was there to consult, not to take charge. There were about 700 total in our battalion, not all present that morning. Our Soldiers were a mixture of nomads from the mountains, village people, and Soldiers.

My introduction to Vietnam had come in 1962 on a quick trip from Thailand. On that trip two years before, the small stature of the Vietnamese people had been surprising and intriguing. On this June morning in 1964, I found myself surrounded by petite Soldiers with quick, fluid movements. For once in my life, I was by far the tallest person in the group. It was a welcome change of pace but for the fact that it made me the easiest target in battle. I might as well draw a bull's eye on my forehead with a sign reading, "I'm the American advisor."

In those days, our jungle uniforms came with nametags on the front shirt pocket. The tags were white with black lettering. Towering above the others with a white tag over my heart was stupid and asking for it. We all wore white t-shirts as well. Additional aid to the enemy was a metal belt buckle, which in boot camp and training we polished until it sparkled. The buckle reflected light in the faintest of moonlight. In sunlight, it was a beacon. At 100 meters, we were clear targets. We stopped wearing white t-shirts, marked out the white label with colored markers, and began wearing our shirts out to cover the buckles.

After talking with some of the Vietnamese, I was convinced there were large "Dragons" out in Zone D. You should never go out there I was warned; because they had watched their friends go into War Zone

D over the last 15 to 20 years and never return. They believed there were big VC units in there with large supply bases. I began to try to imagine what they saw. A huge “Dragon” that gobbled up units came to mind. Any time orders involved Zone D, my Vietnamese battalion commander got uptight, and his fear was well founded. The history of the area gave warning that this was a very dangerous place.

Our base compound for Advisory Team 88 was a small area dug out of the jungle. We had a runway that served air traffic for the three provinces. The South Vietnamese, at one time, tried to build a capital city for the three provinces, but it did not work. There were still remnants of their attempt, one being a capitol building of sorts. About four months before we arrived, the VC captured the leader; you might call him the governor of the three provinces. They cut off his head. When the Nationalist troops overtook the building, they found their leader’s head in a toilet. That was one of my “Welcome to Vietnam” stories. The atrocities of this war were going to get worse. We just didn’t know it then.

The battalion was an operating unit and was also used as a reinforcing unit for any action in the PBT Zone. As an advisor, I picked up three districts in local popular forces, the local militia. Training and outfitting the Soldiers was the first priority after our arrival. More often than not, the standard issue uniform brought the Soldier his first pair of shoes. The training was primarily in squad (9 to 11 men) tactics. We kept it very basic. There was a minimum of platoon training, which involves several squads. Our Popular Force District Soldiers were all neighbors, working in the fields during the day and going on missions at night.

With the aid of my ever-present interpreter, we cleared a place in the jungle. One of our projects was to build a training area. We constructed a berm with targets for firing range practice. The Soldiers knew only one way to fire a weapon, standing straight up. We went through practice in all the basic firing positions: lying down, kneeling on one knee, standing, and so forth. We trained on the proper sight picture for an M-1 or a carbine. We worked on known distance firing.

The most fundamental instruction consumed much of our initial training. BRASS. We needed to start with BRASS: Breathe, Relax,

Aim, Sight, Shoot. Basic mortar training was also necessary. They were using the 60-millimeter mortar, the smallest kind of mortar. Before we arrived, they just set their mortar up out in an open field and fired. We taught them to dig in a little bit, squat down and fire so they wouldn't be wiped out. Eventually they got doggone good.

As we distributed weapons to the troops, I had the nagging suspicion that these might be the same guys we were fighting at night. I wondered if they changed clothes and became the enemy after dark. It was impossible to know. The military arrangement was loose, with people going off to work in the fields or going home to be with their family at night.

I had to keep reminding myself that this was a "pacification program." I was only here to consult, train, assist, and help. I was there to save the South Vietnamese from Communism and deadly aggressors who were invading their land and destroying their homes. I was to do it not by commanding, but assisting Captain An and his men.

Night operations meant being away from the post. At the completion of the operation, Captain An directed us to the best house in the nearest village, and that's where we would reside for the night. That was the way Captain An worked, and the village people seemed to understand and respect that. Normally the Command Post was the closest village, but it was interesting to experience the hospitality of the Vietnamese village people. They appeared to be honored to have the battalion commander and his men in their home.

The arrangement gave us the opportunity to spend time in many Vietnamese homes. As advisor to the battalion commander, I lived with him and his family at his home and Command Post. We slept on mats rather than beds. At the base camp in Phuoc Vinh, I had my own room in the Advisory Compound. Rarely did we find ourselves without a decent place to sleep.

I learned much from Captain An. It was interesting to watch a battalion commander's strategies for command and control. As an advisor, I could step back and watch how he ran the battalion. He assigned his stronger, more aggressive Soldiers to the lead companies.



“The rest need a little more training,” he would explain. “They can observe the leaders and learn. I have them watch as we use the strong ones, and then train them more. They learn by example instead of me telling them. Then one day they are stronger and can lead.”

Initially, I did not have his confidence as an advisor. He was clearly a seasoned veteran, having fought as an officer for the Viet Minh for 10 years and for the South Vietnamese another 10. I was 28, and he was over 40. I was unfamiliar with the land. He knew every inch of it. My Ranger training was about to pay off.

Training in Hawaii, survival training, jungle warfare training paid off in many ways. The Vietnam jungle, however, was like none other I’d experienced. I’m not sure there’s a way to properly prepare for war in a triple-canopy jungle without growing up there. Towering trees, stretching 100 feet toward the sky, soared above smaller trees straining for sunlight. Beneath the canopy of trees, the jungle floor grew thick with bushes, tall grasses, vines, and smaller trees. Claustrophobic vegetation blocked out sunlight, restricted airflow, and generally seemed hell bent on choking everything.

There were places where you could not see more than 10 or 15 feet in front of you in the daytime. Night was impossible. With assistance from the North Vietnamese, our enemy, the Viet Cong, cut multiple trails and tunnels through the jungle. They built way stations for storing food and medical supplies. In the blink of an eye, they could disappear into a tunnel. If we didn’t know where the capstone for the tunnel was located, we would never find them. As time passed, we found tunnel areas, and because most of the supplies were stored above ground, we found those, too.

We were moving the battalion on a three-day field operation through the jungle. Our mission involved looking for VC units and their supply locations. These Viet Cong are not to be confused with the North Vietnamese Army Soldiers who would come later. The local VC seldom moved in units larger than a squad (9 to 11 men). If we spotted a platoon, that was a great concern.

Our three companies were moving, getting close to the objective area. As we deployed off multiple jungle trails into line formation,

somehow the headquarters company with the mortars moved out in front of the line companies. They must have been on an easier jungle trail to negotiate than the rest of us. I could tell they were moving out in front of us because our radio communication was becoming fainter and fainter. The mortar section was a headquarters weapons section in a support role to us and was to remain behind our unit. If they got too far out in front, we were in danger of losing them to the VC. On this particular night, my frustration level got a thorough test because I was not able to take command. I made suggestions to Captain An that fell on deaf ears.

Attempts to advise him that the headquarters mortar section had moved forward went beyond futile. He kept looking at me as though I was a royal pain in the backside who didn't know squat about jungle warfare.

Finally his response was, "They have not moved ahead! Absolutely not! That's not the case."

"Well, let's go check," I said through clenched teeth, towering over him. "Lives are at stake here, theirs and ours. Let's go together and check."

Reluctantly, moving as though he knew it was a waste of time, he agreed to investigate. As I knew he would, he found our mortars ahead of a nearby company. The look on his face was one of astonishment. "How could you know?" he whispered. The surprised expression dissolved into a smile. He nodded an appreciative nod. I hoped he was thinking, "The kid may know something after all."

From that day forward, I seemed to stand in a new light with the battalion staff and commander. He looked upon me as a different person and began to take my advice. Our personal relationship expanded and deepened with respect and admiration over the year we spent together.

The Battalion had one artillery section to support the entire unit. It was a two-gun section of 105s. The 105 has a 10,000 meter range. One cannon was positioned to provide artillery support out as far as 10,000 meters. We took the second cannon out about 9,000 meters,

but well inside the 10,000-meter fan. Using these positions, the first gun covered the second gun and gave us about 19,000 meters in which to operate.

I watched his judicious use of artillery. His two 105s were like crown jewels to him. He jealously guarded his ammunition. I think it must have gone back to Viet Minh days when he was fighting the French and there was a shortage of ammunition. In our case, we didn't have a shortage, but, like our generation that went through the Depression, he needed his storehouse of ammunition. He needed it to maintain his personal security level and, I suspect, for prestige purposes as well. We actually got all we asked for, and it was generally under our control.

Captain An never, ever, went outside the artillery fan. In Zone D, the infamous land of the "Dragons," we discussed at length exactly where our location was in the jungle. Should we find ourselves too close to the maximum limit, we stopped and turned around. The "Dragon" was beyond that, and the "Dragon" was going to get you. It was simply a given that we did not cross that imaginary line the two howitzers covered.

Not to say that Captain An wasn't a courageous man. I cannot imagine anyone who knew him describing him as weak or afraid. He was quite brave and understood how to move through jungle areas. Using his strategy, he accomplished much, and he brought his men back alive. Unfortunately, we had wounded, but they were alive. Other battalions operated a bit differently. Ours did not move outside the artillery fan. That was a hard and fast rule not to be broken.

We had a "commando platoon." This platoon carried out the functions of a reconnaissance element or a cavalry unit. The more I learned about the commando platoon, the more I worried about them. They were all captured ex-Viet Cong. In fact, they were ex-VC that our battalion had picked up. Through a little counseling by Captain An and money, they switched sides. I wondered how much their new monthly pay had to do with the decision to change allegiance from North to South.

Because of the dense jungle, one of the first things I did was find a way to get some high impact weapons. I managed to get a case of 12-gauge shotguns that used double-aught buckshot. Those weapons cut a big pattern. A shipment from Bien Hoa included M-3 submachine guns, which I thought were useless. Most of the weapons went to the commando platoon because they were our lead group. With the knowledge that all our men were behind them, they shot at anything that moved in the bush.

The commando platoon became expert marksmen and an effective squad. It was slightly unnerving at times to be led by a group of Soldiers who had once been prisoners of war. Nevertheless, Captain An was convinced of their loyalty to the Nationalists and the South. They remained our lead platoon.

It was also unusual to have a woman accompany us on operations. In 1964, women were seldom involved in combat situations. I first saw the woman the men called "Tiger Lady" late one afternoon when we returned to the base camp. Visually scanning the camp as we entered, I did a double take when I saw her. Were my eyes deceiving me? Was that a woman wearing a set of camouflaged fatigues with a "tiger stripe" design? Did I see a woman dressed as a Soldier carrying a weapon?

Captain An approached her, and they greeted one another. The men held back. The manner in which they looked at her suggested she was known and feared. "She's killed more VC than anyone else," said one of the Soldiers. "Everyone knows Tiger Lady." I later learned that indeed, everyone in our three provinces knew about Tiger Lady. She regularly made rounds at all the militia camps.

I was introduced to the famous "Tiger Lady," and using broken Vietnamese, French, and English, we attempted a conversation. She was trim, fit, and clearly a tough woman. I could see why the men called her "Tiger Lady." The image was enhanced by her uniform with a pattern that somewhat resembled the skin of a tiger.

The next day, we received word from Xuan Loc, a compound that had been overrun. As was our usual procedure with a problem anywhere in our three provinces, we jumped into action. For me, it

was an oddity having “Tiger Lady” along as we hurried from the post to respond to the attack. In fact, it was downright bizarre. However, there she was. She carried her own pack and weapon and did better than keep up. I would describe her as an unorthodox and amazing disciplinarian who was devoted to the Nationalist cause and a free Vietnam. She was serving her country and was deadly serious about it.

Some of the Soldiers weren’t moving fast enough to suit her, and she kicked the heck out of them. Responding to her as a mother figure, they moved a little bit quicker. All the Soldiers were scared to death of her. She was a big help when we arrived at Xuan Loc. The sight was grim and gut-wrenching. The compound had sustained intense fire, and the devastation was extensive. We were too late. A helicopter bringing in re-supply items had been shot down, the pilots wounded, and several Americans killed. Instead of fighting the VC as we anticipated, we were cleaning up the carnage left in their bloody wake.

We spent the better part of a day with the villagers who managed to escape death one more time. Our medic worked his magic with the wounded. The rest of us went to work along side the survivors restoring order and making repairs as best we could. “Tiger Lady” was everywhere consoling her people and ordering Soldiers to do this and do that. Late in the afternoon she said her good-byes and moved on to the next camp.

As part of our country’s pacification program in Vietnam, military advisors spent time in every village to help, to advise, and gather information. Monthly reports to III Corps that our PBT Special Zone submitted included map verification on gigantic foldout paper maps and a written report about each area. U.S. AID (Agency for International Development) was also involved. We would go into villages together, helping in various ways.

Large rubber plantations were scattered about in our three provinces. They were the plantations that had been controlled by the French for so many years. French influence permeated the lives of every living thing in the area. Most of the villages were Catholic, and before anyone did anything, the priest of the village had to give his

approval. It didn't matter if you were the mayor, a prominent village leader, or the commander of local militia, the priest's approval was necessary prior to taking action on just about anything.

Using the strategy "when in Rome, do as the Romans..." the first order of business in each village was to meet with the priest. We would request his approval for whatever project we wanted to undertake and then enlist his advice and consent in the process. Incorporating that method assured his okay with our actions and tended to endear us to the villagers.

Initially the villagers were suspicious. They wanted to know why we were there and what we were doing. After a few months, relationships with everyone in the village developed. Kids came running toward us as we entered a camp, wanting to hold our hands. Holding hands was so commonplace in their culture, a gesture of friendship and trust. Grown men wanted to hold hands. Even the priest wanted to hold hands. I was never comfortable with that, but, "when in Rome...or Vietnam."

I was struck by the respect for elders that prevailed in all of the Asian countries I had the privilege of visiting. The people of Vietnam were no different. They gave their elders positions of great influence. Advice from the elders was sought on everything, from the smallest to the most crucial of decisions. Elders were included in every problem-solving and decision-making discussion. They had the ultimate authority, except where the priest was consulted, in which case his word ruled.

Respect for parents and grandparents in Vietnam clashed with an emerging disrespect shown to elders in the U.S.A. Conservative conformism was cracking under the weight of the 70 million teens and young adults populating our country. News from the states came in the form of letters from Pat. I was unaware that the continuing racial protests she mentioned in her letters were only the tip of an iceberg of unrest, rising from an overwhelming sea of youth. Big changes, unlike any I had witnessed in my lifetime, were about to alter my country's culture forever.

I, on the other hand, was immersed in a different problem in a different country, walking a tightrope between military operations and teaching the villagers how to raise pigs. Yes, pigs. We quietly joked about pigs giving their lives to save the endangered dogs and monkeys. Part of the AID program involved agricultural instruction. The civilian AID advisor brought with him fast growing rice, vegetable seeds, materials to build homes and pigpens, and pigs. We always set aside a couple of hours each day to help the community.

As Soldiers, we worked with the AID advisor and the villagers, constructing pigpens, building homes, and sowing rice and vegetable seeds. We built concrete pads with low fences and a small hut at one end for the pigs. The animals would provide a source of meat. Fast growing rice was introduced in an attempt to double the harvest cycle. We taught them how to build an insulated house. Adobe type structures were framed with tree limbs and filled in with a mud mixture.

The villagers were deprived, destitute, and most appreciative of the cooking oil and canned products among the AID supplies. I turned the medic loose to provide medical care where needed. He was everywhere giving shots, pulling teeth, and distributing vitamins and soap.

One day I asked him, "Why do some of the villagers have black lips and teeth? Is it malnutrition?"

He explained that the people you see with black lips are chewing betel nuts, which are highly addictive, and the people must get a high similar to cocaine when they chew them.

"It's sad to see them smile," I commented. "It's such an empty, depressed smile."

The medic not only treated the Vietnamese, he also treated us. I had dysentery my entire first tour of duty in Vietnam, and so did all members of the five-man advisory team. We all lost weight. I lost 50 pounds that year. Our medic ordered cases of something like Maalox or something that treated the symptoms, and we drank gallons of it. We always had a bottle of the white stuff in our pockets. The

diagnosis was an intestinal infection, possibly caused by our cooks not washing their hands or pots and pans. To this day, I'm occasionally revisited by the problem.

We ate with the Vietnamese, which meant eating what they ate. Because I was the commander's advisor, I lived and ate with him. Captain An was concerned and quite diligent about the safety of his food. The cuisine safety net covered poison, not dirt and germs. The same trusted person prepared all the meals for him and his family. I wasted my breath encouraging our cook to wash his hands before preparing our meals. The same went for the pots and pans. Lengthy explanations about soap and hot water combating germs went to no avail. The cook simply went to a stream, sort of rinsed out the pans and let them dry in the sun. Each pot had rings inside and black rings on the outside from the open flames.

Our hosts were exempt from effects of the lack of cleanliness. They were decidedly immune to the disruptive bug that invaded our bodies. There were times when I offered C-Rations as my contribution to our dinner. C-Rations were the Army prepared meals, the nutritionally balanced combat rations, eaten when a Soldier could not get back to his base kitchen for a hot meal. Pork and beans, beef stew, and mystery spaghetti were among the dining choices. The pound cake with peaches was a favorite among American Soldiers.

Captain An and his family admitted that they considered my food weird. The heavy fat- and calorie-laden preparations in no way pleased their palates. With sincere expressive apologies, they chose their own food over C-Rations. Remembering the teachings of my Southern mother, I acquiesced and did the Southern gentleman thing. I ate the food offered by my host, secretly suffered with dysentery, and drank endless bottles of white stuff.

The mainstay of our diet was rice. The cook was adept at making rice balls that he wrapped in leaves. They stored nicely in my pack when we were on maneuvers and would keep for a couple of days. The balls nourished, satisfied, and fueled energy without leaving me feeling stuffed. Rice nurtured and nourished the Vietnamese. I was learning it could do the same for me.



Sometimes chicken was included and occasionally, when we had it, fresh fruit. The cook's method of preparing chicken may have been the gastric culprit. The chicken was de-feathered and the inside cleaned out, sort of. Then he ceremoniously stretched it out on his chopping block and, with his cleaver, whacked off its head, threw that away and proceeded to chop, chop, chop down the length of the body. This method cut the bones, meat, and whatever was left inside into small pieces. All this went into the pot with the rice. Bits of bone clung to every piece of chicken.

Several times, I offered the cook advice. When I was growing up, I learned how to cut up and cook a chicken. I met with Captain An's cook and my Master Sergeant who spoke Vietnamese. As diplomatically as I knew how, I suggested alternative ways to cut up a chicken. I pointed out the different parts (leg, breast, thigh, wishbone, and wing) and explained how to cut it into large pieces. Leaving the bones in larger pieces made them easier to discard later, I explained. I showed him how to de-bone the bird so that only the meat went into the pot. We spent hours with him talking about cutting up a chicken. He would smile and get out his cleaver.

Cook politely complied with my teaching while I stood beside him and his pots. As soon as I left the cooking area, he returned to his customary mode of operation. After my tutorial, I would see the cook smiling and nodding in my direction just before he stretched out a chicken, whacked off its head, threw it away, and chop, chop, chopped away. I had to laugh. I grew to love these people, chicken bones and all.

Small deer lived in Zone D. They were about three feet tall, much smaller than our American deer. Occasionally Captain An, Cook, and some of the Soldiers would smile and say "We have deer tonight." They had a lot of fun with us smiling and reporting, "We have deer again tonight."

I would go along with the joke, saying, "You damn guys are cooking dog again, aren't you?" Truth was never told, but I suspected the deer was actually dog and monkey more than I wanted to know. If there was a dog in a village, it usually wasn't around when we left. If

the entrée at dinner was long and bony with stringy meat, I was sure that monkey was on somebody's rice that night.

One late afternoon as the first day of a three-day operation was winding down, Captain An said to me in broken English, French and Vietnamese, "Want to go fishing? It's the end of the day. No Viet Cong are out. It's safe."

A nearby river made me think of the Arkansas streams I used to fish. We could probably find something to use as a pole, line, and hook. Nodding approval to An, I decided late evening fishing might just be the kind of tranquil activity we all needed. I thought of home as I watched the gently flowing water glide over river rocks. Along the banks, Soldiers were pulling off their gear, resting along the edge of the water, and squatting to go to the bathroom. Well, maybe it was not exactly like home.

Captain An pulled a grenade from his vest, walked to the edge of the water, pulled the pin, and threw it in the middle of the river. Then he pulled off another grenade and threw it in. Startled, I ran for cover. Both grenades exploded, and dead fish floated to the top. "Fishing. Got one," he grinned in my direction. He sent two Soldiers into the river to collect the fish. So much for some quiet, late afternoon fishing. Any VC within hearing distance knew where we were now.

Phoning home to Arkansas from Vietnam was a major happening during that year, and second-grader Sabra loved it. She enjoyed our phone conversations with all the "over" and "over and out" phrases involved. Letters to Pat were filled with stories of the poverty of the South Vietnamese with whom I now made my home. Pat, working at St. Andrew's United Methodist Church in Arkadelphia, organized a clothing drive at the church, asking for children's clothes of all sizes. For the most part, those contributing knew nothing about Vietnam. What they did know was they had a hometown boy in a third world country in Asia, and his hometown wife was collecting clothes for the needy children there.

During that year, Pat shipped box after box of clothing to me for welcome distribution. The villagers were grateful for every article Pat sent. I have pictures of Vietnamese children, three or four years old,

walking around in clothing that swallowed them. So petite were the kids that even our baby-sized clothes were too big for them. Watching them as the items were distributed softened my reserve and brought the ache of separation from my own family sneaking to the surface.

Christmas was near, and I could not go home. I would not be with Pat on Christmas for the second time since we married. Sabra's second grade class would have a Christmas program. Dede was four and would be very excited about Santa. I was going to miss it all, but this was no time to get sappy.

Showing their appreciation to Pat for the clothes, several sent her Christmas cards. Some who sent the cards were Buddhists. In spite of their beliefs, they were honoring Pat's religious celebration and her gifts to them. The people of my three provinces included Catholics and Buddhists. Hamlets and villages most influenced by the French were Catholic, the rest remained Buddhists. It was in the Catholic villages, of course, that we consulted with the priests before taking action. In the Buddhist areas, we worked with the local militia.

Smaller outlying villages surrounded the larger villages. They were about five or six kilometers apart, similar to a city with suburbs. The trails between the villages were better than most. It occurred to someone that traveling between the villages would be much easier on a bicycle. We started a "Bicycle Brigade," and with help from various sources, we managed to buy bicycles. Once the villagers learned to ride and saw the benefit of the bikes, they loved it.

The local police and Popular Forces in each village wore black clothing that looked like pajamas and were similar to National Guardsmen in a city. It was not uncommon to see a local policeman flying along on his bicycle, warning the outlying villages of coming danger or peddling happily along making routine rounds. The bicycle was a quicker means of transportation than running and didn't leave them as breathless and tired. The occasional bike races we organized were a hoot and a break from the worries of VC attacks.

Each month, I continued to send through PBT Headquarters corrected maps and reports to headquarters. Headquarters compiled the information they received from advisors spread across the country.

We, in turn, received reports and maps from them about the progress of our “pacification” program. The maps resembled a Rorschach test. What looked like ink blots or splotches on the maps indicated areas that had been “pacified.” Pacification was considered successful after two goals were reached: (1) when an area was victoriously defended by local popular forces and (2) no VC contact had occurred in a specified length of time. The pacified area became an inkblot on our maps.

The Phuoc Binh Thanh Special Zone was led by Colonel Hill, who later went to III Corps at Fort Hood to be the chief of staff. (He made Brigadier and Major General). Major Robert Chambers was operations chief and was my rating official. He gave operational guidance to all the unit people, whether it was a battalion advisor or the district regional/popular force. He was at Leavenworth as an instructor some time in the late seventies or early eighties. Major Edward Levine, deputy to Major Chambers, was also there and was a friend and mentor.

Colonel Hill and Major Chambers personally worked on pacification plans for each province. I don’t remember a lot of guidance coming from III Corps. Perhaps it was because we were blazing new trails in the world of “pacification.” We were making it up as we went along. There were discussions about how to deal with the local villages and priests and about training the regional forces, popular forces, and local militia. But there was little about “lessons learned” or techniques for actually doing any of it. I was blessed with a great Special Forces Master Sergeant who came up with many creative and effective ideas.

My best guess is that, in late 1964 and early 1965, about 25 percent of the provinces were considered pacified. Our efforts were slowly beginning to pay off when, in August of 1964, the probability of a conflict between the United States and North Vietnam increased. North Vietnamese patrol boats attacked U.S. naval vessels conducting surveillance of North Vietnam’s coastal defenses. The U.S. military promptly launched retaliatory air strikes. At President Johnson’s request, Congress passed the Southeast Asia Resolution – also called the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution – authorizing necessary actions to protect American forces and to provide for defense of the allies in

Southeast Asia. By late 1964, both sides were poised to increase their stake in the war.

It was about this time we began a process of relocating some of the villages. In the years since my time there, I have tried to reconcile the conflicted reasoning behind this particular assignment. The villages were being relocated due to their proximity to VC re-supply routes. Well-meaning personnel from headquarters were attempting to save people by moving the entire village (people, homes, everything) out of harm's way. The people of the village had lived there for decades. Generations of their ancestors made their homes in that spot on that ground.

The graves of their ancestors and loved ones rested in that earth. Fruit trees, planted long ago and lovingly cared for down through the years, had to be abandoned. Favorite banana trees, which loyally fed the villagers, were left behind. It was a heart-tugging, heart-wrenching thing we did, but we were trying to do the right thing. We were saving their lives by moving them away from the deadly bullets and destructive torches of the North Vietnamese Army's killing machine. I'm not sure we understood the historical implications of uprooting an entire village and replanting it at a place of our choosing.

The line of reasoning went something like this. "If we can't rip up the enemy, push him back into his own territory, and close off his invasive supply routes, then we'll evacuate the people we're defending away from the invading enemy." The villagers never took that idea kindly, nor did they understand, when we approached saying, "It's not safe here. We're going to move you over there where it's safe." Our announcement was always accompanied with gifts. As an enticement to the local militia to encourage the villagers to move, we gave them uniforms, weapons, ammunition, and training. The AID representative followed that with bags of corn and flour and cans of cooking oil, all bearing the red, white, and blue U.S.A. signs.

I watched as people began migrating back to their original location. They were sneaking back home. Our strategies to make them safe were not working. Ingrained traditions in their culture did not mesh with the "head 'em up and move 'em out" kind of mobile, cowboy culture of ours. The gifts of flour, corn, and oil began to leave

a bad taste in their mouths for the U.S. They were fighting a civil war with the help of protective advisors who didn't appear to understand much about their culture. As protective consultants, we, the advisory team, were growing frustrated with the trial and error approach to "pacification".

On the one hand, the South Vietnamese were making their own military decisions and fighting their own battles, with our help and advice. We by no means had the last say in that area. On the other hand, we took total control of where they lived. In this, they had no say. Not losing face was an integral part of their behavior and daily lives, and all interactions were influenced by fundamental, unspoken principles of saving face. Moving villages meant the militia wasn't doing its job; they weren't protecting their people. It meant losing face. Relocation of villages made about as much sense as anything else during that year. It fit nicely into a world where priests had the authority to make military decisions, ex-prisoners of war were our lead Soldiers, and a woman called "Tiger Lady" dropped by to kick men into action.

Along with the advisory team, I was using every inch of the right side of my brain finding imaginative solutions for what seemed unsolvable problems. Creative strategies were the order of the day with bicycle brigades, black uniforms for the local militia, and Pat's clothing drive for the kids. Shotguns for our commando unit and boots for the Soldiers were procured in very imaginative ways. The regulation M-3 submachine guns we were sent scared the hell out of a lot of birds and monkeys, but they were ineffective with the enemy. At least we never found anyone injured or killed by an M-3. My thoughts about procuring and using shotguns paid off. Shotguns were much more effective than M-3s.

The most intense action I saw that year occurred when the battalion was asked to go to Hon Quan. As Hon Quan was under attack, an airborne battalion shipped in first, then a Ranger battalion. As a reinforcing unit, we arrived last, and the action was totally over. It was a near miss that had us all concerned. The Hon Quan U.S. Army advisory compound had been overrun. In the middle of the night, infiltrators the VC called "sappers" got inside the high wire fence surrounding the compound. They threw explosive charges all

over the place. Across a ravine on the far side, they set up a 57-mm recoilless rifle lined up to fire straight through the plywood billet area where the advisors were staying. These were plywood huts all neatly lined up.

The attack began as many people were inside having late evening coffee. Countless individuals were injured, and several were killed. When we arrived, the 57 rounds had transited 200 feet of billet area where officers, NCOs and advisors lived. I took note of how vulnerable the compounds were. Even with berms, high wire fences, and guard towers, it was a false security. Avoiding the watchful eye of the guard in the tower, the sappers simply cut the wire, crawled over the berm, and were inside.

There were certain villages that somehow endured attack after attack. We started putting spikes, branches with one end whittled into a sharp spike, around each village. Even the gate area had spikes sticking out of it. Then we put barbed wire behind the spikes, so intruders could not crawl under. This arrangement made the villagers feel a little safer, a little more secure.

Our advisory team received operational guidance from Majors Chambers and Levine, and the AID civilian advisor shared ideas about giving help and support to the local villages. Through an innate concern and caring for people, we discovered ways to help the most poverty-stricken souls we had ever encountered. The Vietnamese people with whom we worked and lived evoked a natural sympathy and compassion from all of us.

In the PBT Special Zone, we received minimal intelligence reports on VC activities. Oddly, the reports seemed aimed at the platoon-size activities and larger. In our operations, we encountered only small size VC groups. Timely and accurate intelligence was rare.

Months later, assigned to PBT Special Zone headquarters for a few weeks, I noticed a rather unusual looking civilian who had meetings there every now and then. He wore a khaki uniform, trousers bloused at the boots, and a pistol, John Wayne style, hanging down the side from one hip. His crew cut was crisp and clean, and he always carried a briefcase. We guessed Secret Intelligence Service and later learned

we were right; he was CIA. After his initial visits, he spoke only with our Colonel and the Colonel's Vietnamese counterpart. At his request, U.S. officers would vacate the premises when he questioned Vietnamese civilians. We suspected the witnesses were paid for information. He was an interesting character to watch.

The spring of 1965 found the VC continuing their bombardment of South Vietnamese rural areas, trying to disrupt pacification and oust the government. They made deep inroads in the central coastal provinces, the Delta, and critical provinces around Saigon. Committed to a static defense, American government forces were unable or unwilling to respond to attacks against rural communities.

By the summer of 1965, I felt a shift in the status quo, a subtle undercurrent laced with foreboding signposts of danger and death. South Vietnam became a more treacherous place with larger VC units and the appearance of the first North Vietnamese cadre. The U.S. build up was just beginning with the 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne, the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division (1<sup>st</sup> ID, "Big Red One") and the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division. I had friends in both divisions, from Ranger, Airborne, and Infantry Basic Officers Course.

The era of pacification and advisor teams was about to end. It was being consumed by the monster of war. President Johnson, frustrated with the situation in what he called "that damned little piss ant country," was at last giving General William C. Westmoreland what he had requested for months. The American commander in Vietnam was getting American combat troops who would do more than defensive duties. They were authorized to begin attacking and killing Viet Cong.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 1<sup>st</sup> ID deployed to Vietnam in July 1965, and the rest of the division deployed in October, after I went back to the States. Colonel Lloyd L. "Scooter" Burke, a brigade commander, was in the first group. It was a small world after all. Scooter was from Tichnor, Arkansas, and graduated several years ahead of me from Henderson State Teachers College. I didn't know him, but I certainly knew of him.



Colonel Burke served in Italy in World War II, in Korea, and in Vietnam. As a First Lieutenant in Korea, he received the Medal of Honor for his assault on three Korean bunkers near Imjin River in October 1951, and was later severely wounded in Vietnam.<sup>8</sup>

Years later, when I was the Department of the Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics (DA DCSLOG), Colonel Burke was in the Office of the Chief of Legislative Liaison. I remember reading a statement from Congress when he retired. It said something like, “We don’t understand why such an outstanding Colonel never received the promotion to Brigadier General. If the House had the authority, we would honor him in that way. An outstanding Soldier who is highly respected in both the Army and Congress is retiring.”

The last 45 days I was in Vietnam, I moved up to division to be an Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3 Operations and Plans advisor, 10<sup>th</sup> Division. Ironically, the Vietnamese are suspicious of the number ten. To them, ten is bad. It’s the worst. I was hoping the VC would not choose to attack us simply on the basis that we were Division 10.

During those last days I was in several liaison meetings with Colonel Burke for the purpose of discussing terrain features and strategies for operating together, Vietnamese and U.S., in the jungle environment. We had an upcoming operation where we could work side by side. I was looking forward to working with and getting to know this legend from my college.

From our initial meeting, relationships between the incoming infantry officers and the outgoing advisory teams were strained. In another time, another place, things would have been different. 1965 was a pivotal year in the course of our country and a strange year that affected us all. We were weary and literally worn thin by life in the jungle, ready to share what we had learned. The incoming officers with whom we were to work seemed reserved, unresponsive, and suspicious of our readiness to collaborate.

At home, the chaotic pot of race riots was boiling over in the South and spilling onto our college campuses and our city streets. For the first time in the history of our country, youth outnumbered their elders, and they were snubbing all traces of authority. No longer did, “Do it

because I told you to, or do it because I'm your mother, teacher, preacher" bring about obedience. Everything was questioned. Drugs, debate, and free love were the latest trends.

Politically, the country was recovering from the assassination of President Kennedy. President Johnson had promised that "American boys would not be sent to do what Asian boys ought to be doing for themselves." His resolve weakened, and he began giving Westmoreland more and more combat troops while continuing his Great Society programs at home.

In that climate, Congress authorized military action in Vietnam by passing the Gulf of Tonkin resolution. The question of how best to use large numbers of American ground forces was still unresolved on the eve of deployment. The concept that was eventually agreed upon was largely defensive in nature. Johnson was advised to leave troops in the rest of the world in place and rely on Reserve forces to take a more aggressive, direct route to stop enemy infiltrations.

Against the advice of his military chiefs, Johnson chose American escalation in South Vietnam, which consumed our best in military personnel and equipment. Instead of mobilizing Reserve and National Guard units, as had been advised, and decisively dealing with the problem, he pulled our finest from their posts across Europe and the Americas. Along with thousands of draftees, they were sent to Vietnam. With our wisest and most experienced officers went the highest quality materiel. A trend by the White House of choosing not to heed military advice continued throughout the war and proved unfortunate. A minute glimpse of military strategies and planning gone awry presented itself during the initial meeting with the 1<sup>st</sup> ID officers the summer of 1965.

Sitting across the table from Scooter Burke and the other incoming officers that first morning, we were ready to share the wealth of knowledge we'd amassed while living with the South Vietnamese Army for almost a year. We were eager to help coordinate operations for the combined U.S. and South Vietnamese forces. My Master Sergeant was concluding his second Vietnam tour. He had a wealth of information that could save time, money, and most importantly, lives. We were elated for now we could attack the enemy instead of advising

with tied hands, watching men killed in the process. The illumination and elation soon faded.

Information shared with us by the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade officers was minimal. They explained that much of their operation was classified. “How are we to coordinate an offensive if we don’t know your plan of action?” was a question that repeatedly surfaced in our meetings. It soon became clear that we were not coordinating anything, or at least much of anything.

We attempted to work on a fire support plan, but they would not share supporting fires. “It might be useful if we knew your plans and you knew ours in order to provide fire support,” I suggested one day. There was to be no sharing because we were back to “classified.” We wondered if they thought we were too close to our Vietnamese counterparts and would tell them things we shouldn’t. Did they think we advisors had been there too long and were too sympathetic to the Vietnamese to be effective?

Whatever the reasoning, it was frustrating to be on a parallel operation with no mutual support, no fire support, no planned exchanges, no call signs, and no radio frequency exchanges. Everything was kept separate. For all practical purposes, we were separately fighting the same enemy, in the same place, at the same time with no communication or cooperation.

There were things we didn’t do well during that time in Vietnam. We didn’t know it, but it was the beginning of a trend, the start of a series of things not done well. I learned valuable lessons early about coalition warfare and the importance of exchanging information and using liaison teams for coordination purposes. Back then, we were just learning how to deal with those kinds of issues. Years later in Desert Storm, coordination within the Coalition was a major factor in that operation’s success. Fire support plans and backup logistics support were integral factors in strategy. We exchanged language teams with the allies who literally could converse in the other Army’s language. In Desert Storm, the attacks were unified, coordinated down to the last detail, and precise. Quick in, strike, and get out.

Those last weeks at PBT Headquarters and then to 10<sup>th</sup> Division Headquarters, I filed requested reports on my jungle time. The reports discussed the differences in Catholic and Buddhist villages, explaining the leadership position of the priests in the Catholic villages to the point that the local militia wouldn't move without the priest's blessing. I wrote of the Buddhist villages where we dealt with the local military.

The reports included information on our aviation support. While advising Captain An, we had American helicopters, light and heavy Hueys, that we relied on. The Vietnamese could not call for helicopter support. Our copters were always on alert and were nearby at Bien Hoa. If we got into a firefight or even suspected enemy sightings, we called our Hueys. I grew to love those guys flying our helicopters, and we never knew who they were. The light Hueys had rocket pods with 12 rounds of 2.75-inch rockets on each side. Heavy Hueys had 24 rocket pods on each side.

Not long after our first few requests for air support, I realized the VC were listening in on our radio networks. If our radio message gave a plume of green smoke as a marker on which to base the grid coordinates, there would be two plumes of green smoke, a fake one our enemy created and ours. We stopped giving tree lines or a specified feature as a coordinate over the radio. I even stopped including Captain An in our radio coordination plans, for fear one of our Soldiers might be tipping off the VC. With our pilots, we pre-coordinated a natural land marker from which to calculate targets, and we pre-determined smoke color. After that, our radio messages sounded something like, "From our pre-designated, pre-agreed marker, 300 meters on an azimuth of..." The pilots could see our smoke, calculate the target area, and soon we'd hear them come whipping right over the top of us. Often they were firing right above our heads. We'd hear the rockets zinging into the target area out in front of our patrol. The power of that sound never fails to grab your attention.

We also had an A1-Sky Raider, an American-made fighter aircraft that was a twin-seat plane. The United States Air Force was training Vietnamese Air Force pilots, and in the back seat of every A1-Sky Raider was an American pilot. If we went into Zone D and had a serious area, I always requested an A1-Sky Raider, usually without the

Vietnamese knowing. Only the advisors could request the fighter. The plane had amazing capabilities and could loiter in an area for four hours. I would see them make lazy circles, then take off and be replaced by another one. We could call them back if the pre-coordinated time had expired. We never had to engage them as firepower during 1965 because we weren't encountering large enemy forces at that time.

However, we did use the Hueys a lot, and I had the greatest respect for those pilots. A college friend of mine, Don Chunn, who was a Huey gunship pilot, was there about the same time. Dick Stephenson, another friend who retired as a two-star General, was also there. I knew friends who were flying Cobras. We never received Cobra support because we never had the priority, but we used the heck out of the heavy Huey team with the 48 missiles.

After I returned to the States, I learned that Scooter Burke had been seriously wounded. As a brigade commander, he had his own Huey, in which he carried an M-79 grenade launcher. During a flyover, he saw what appeared to be a VC ducking into one of the tunnels. He turned out the door and fired his M-79. The grenade clipped the skid of the Huey, and part of the back blast perforated his lungs and injured the pilot. Burke was medically evacuated and spent his recuperative time in a Veterans Hospital in Little Rock, Arkansas. He returned to duty after his convalescence concluded and continued to serve his country.

By the fall of 1965, Vietnam continued to grow more volatile. It was a difficult struggle in a confusing time. The U.S. buildup was beginning. After I returned to the States, I heard about the Battle of Ia Drang. Ia is the Vietnamese word for river. It was the first battle in the Vietnam War in which the U.S. Army engaged large-scale North Vietnamese units. Lieutenant Colonel Harold G. Moore, Battalion Commander of the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Battalion of the newly constituted U.S. 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division (Airmobile) fought the 32<sup>nd</sup>, 33<sup>rd</sup>, and 66<sup>th</sup> North Vietnamese regiments in the Ia Drang valley of the rugged Central Highlands. In the 34-day bloody campaign, 305 young American Soldiers lost their lives.”<sup>9</sup>

I later met General Moore when he attended the promotion of his son, Steve Moore, to Lieutenant Colonel. As we visited, he explained that the equalizers in the battle of Ia Drang were the M-16s, the Huey helicopters, the new battalion radios, and most importantly, the amazing cavalry Soldiers. The battalion received the M-16s as they were shipping out on World War II era troopships for Vietnam. To familiarize themselves with the guns, they fired them off the fantails of the ships. The M-16s proved to be better weapons than the AK-47s and were a real asset on the battlefield. General Moore also talked about how the Hueys saved their lives over and over again. The Hueys re-supplied the battalion with food and ammunition, as well as evacuated the wounded continually, night and day.

In late June of 1966, when Moore's tour was up as commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, he hoped his next assignment would be to the Infantry School at Fort Benning. He had learned so much to pass along to the young officers headed for combat in Vietnam. As it turned out, only one of the hundreds of officers who had gone through Airmobile training and had field time was assigned to Infantry School. Instead, Moore was sent to Washington, D.C. and a desk job. The frustration he felt reminded me of the frustration we, as advisors, experienced when the 1<sup>st</sup> ID officers didn't care to listen to what we had learned after a year of living with South Vietnamese commanders and fighting the Viet Cong.

We did so many things poorly during that time. One mistake was not using valuable experience and the lessons we learned for teaching and for making decisions that affected thousands of lives. President Johnson was trying to pacify the American public by representing Vietnam as some little police action that our powerful nation had no trouble handling. In so doing, his administration decreed that the tour of duty for Soldiers would be one year, only 12 months. Battalion and brigade commanders were limited to six months. About the time a Soldier, if he survived, learned how to fight in the treacherous environment, he went home and was replaced by a new draftee. Just as a commander learned the terrain, and his troops, and found strategies that worked in this unusual war, he was sent home. All our experience and expertise left in a vicious cycle of replacements.

There is a quote in Moore and Galloway's book that seems to sum up the "catch 22" mind set of the Vietnam War. The quote came from someone working near Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense, and John McNaughton, Assistant Secretary of Defense, both brilliant men, as they struggled without success to get a handle on the war and pacification process in Vietnam. The witty and sad summation regarding what was happening in Vietnam was, "Although we have redoubled our efforts, we have lost sight of our objective."<sup>10</sup>

As I departed Vietnam in 1965, I was presented with the Bronze Star medal, the Air Medal, the Vietnamese "Medal of Honor," and the Combat Infantryman's Badge.

Following photos are from GEN Ross's personal collection.





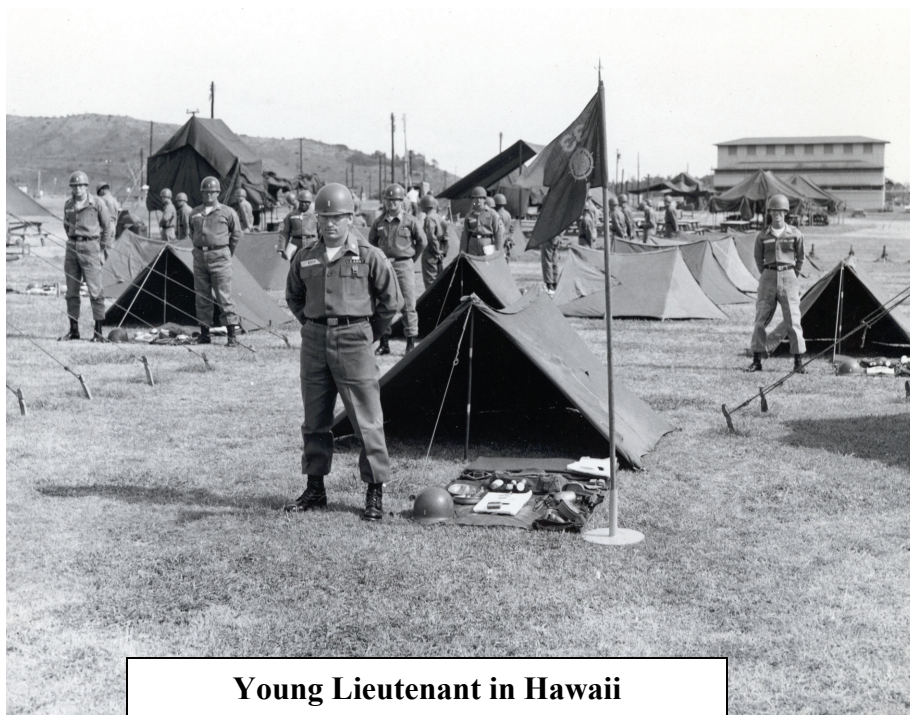
**Cadet and Mrs. Ross at Military Ball,  
Henderson State University, 1958**



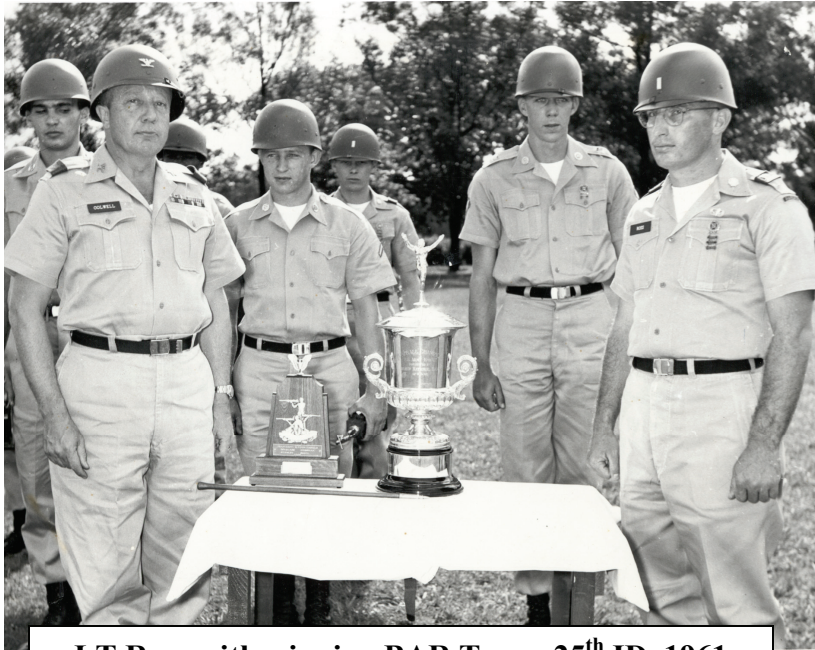
**Right guard on 14<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment  
football team**



**Young Lieutenant in Hawaii**



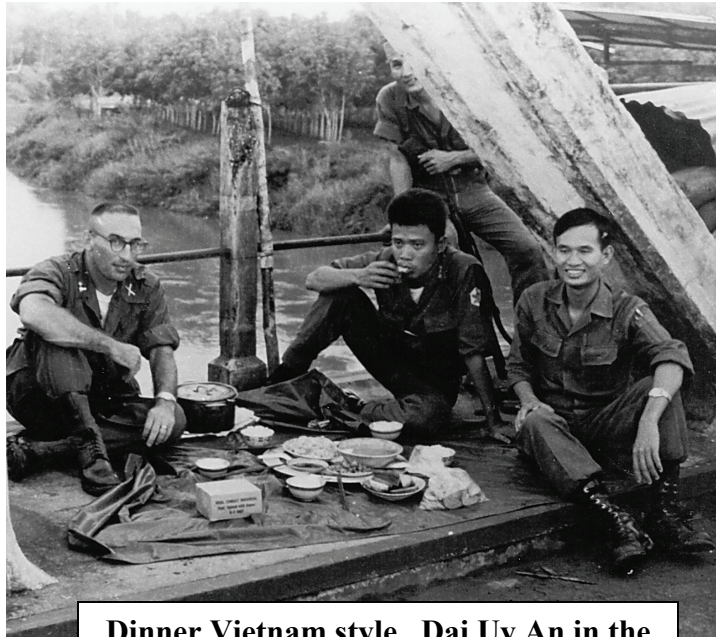
**Young Lieutenant in Hawaii**



**LT Ross with winning BAR Team, 25<sup>th</sup> ID, 1961**



**CPT Ross receives Bronze Star, 1965**



**Dinner Vietnam style. Dai Uy An in the middle**



**Weapons training with local popular forces.**



**Advisor with “Tiger Lady”**



**Screaming Eagles DISCOM staff in Vietnam (MAJ Ross on left)**



## *Chapter VI*

### CONUS, 1965-1969

#### Fort Bragg, 1965

The contract flight that was to take me away from Vietnam sat on the tarmac. Because most airlines were not flying into Saigon, contract airlines such as Tower, Evergreen, and others were cheaper for the Army to use. As I boarded the plane, contradictory thoughts crowded my mind and tugged at my weary spirit. I was sad to leave Dai Uy An and the many friends I'd made. Yet, going home to Pat and the girls was a precious gift I could not wait to open. I still felt frustration with an absence of venue in which to share all I had learned during my year in Vietnam. That frustration was topped only by the irritation of trying in vain to coordinate operations with Scooter Burke and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade. In the same instance I reflected on these frustrations, I felt relief to be moving away from the endless stream of errors we were making in our Vietnam efforts. Underneath it all, nagging at my very soul, was a poignant desire to help all of the Captain Ans of his country free themselves and their citizenry from tyrannical, deadly oppressors.

Sinking into the airplane seat, I was completely spent, suddenly extremely exhausted. I think I relaxed for the first time in months. As the airplane gained altitude, I said a silent farewell to the beautiful landscapes rushing past below and experienced a sudden and unexpected tightness in my chest. Pulling my latest Civil War history book from a flight bag, I prepared to distract my thoughts by reading. The soothing hum of engines soon lulled me to sleep. Instead of fitful dreams of war atrocities or Civil War battles, I dreamed of the beautiful city of Saigon. I was back at the Cercle Sportif savoring a perfectly prepared steak and a nice bottle of red wine.

During the previous year, every two or three months, most advisors in the south went to Saigon for a combination business and R&R break. We stayed at the Columbia Hotel, which was near the Saigon River, not too far from the port and Tu Do Street. Saigon at that time was an innocent, quaint, and beautiful city. French influence could be seen everywhere in wrought iron telephone posts and streetlights and

many well-planned parks. Tall trees and French designed buildings lined the charming streets. Graceful, unhurried, petite women in silk dresses and men in suits and silk shirts strolled along the thoroughfares.

There were very few automobiles, even fewer than in Thailand. At each intersection, a uniformed man with white gloves directed traffic, much like a maestro conducting an elegant symphony. Cars, Lambrettas, bicycles, and bicycle taxis flowed with a quiet, easy cadence at the maestro's direction. The rhythm of the city was spellbinding. It was almost as though some bend in the time continuum, had allowed me to spend a day in the Asian version of turn-of-the-century Paris. It was like taking a trip back in time.

When I first arrived in Saigon, I was given a tour of "Cercle Sportif," a well-designed and finely manicured French Country Club. There were tennis courts and an architectural masterpiece of a clubhouse that served fine international meals with white table cloths, candles, china, and linens. During R&R trips, the first thing we did after checking into the Columbia Hotel was take a long, hot shower. Then we'd go to sleep on a real bed with real sheets and wake just in time for dinner at Cercle Sportif. It nurtured the weary spirit and at the same time was a little unnerving. After all, we'd just come from the jungle where we spent our days washing down salt tablets and rice balls with the white stuff for "Ho Chi Minh's revenge," trying not to get shot, and wearing the same sweaty clothes for days. On the rare nights I was fortunate enough to dine at Cercle Sportif, this Arkansas boy was in tall cotton indeed. The only thing missing from the experience was having the love of my life by my side. In my dream on that flight away from Vietnam, the fanciful dream images of dining at Cercle Sportif included Pat. As fate would have it, in real life I was never able to show Pat Saigon as it was on those unforgettable visits.

Sadly, when I returned to Vietnam in 1969, the city had changed drastically. It had gone from grace to greed in a matter of years. Tu Do Street became famous for all types of illegal activities. Open Black Market activity, prostitution, and drugs were everywhere. In 1964, a person might cautiously approach in an attempt to engage in a money exchange. By 1969, hawkers brazenly walked down the street



with you, shouting in your ear, five inches from your face, wanting greenbacks, U.S. dollars.

Even sadder was the involvement of Vietnamese and most likely, U.S. Soldiers in the Black Market trade. If an item could not be found at the PX, you could get it on any street corner. American products were for sale everywhere. We assumed the merchandise was taken off the hundreds of ships that arrived daily and then sold on the Black Market. Beautiful parks were sacrificed for weapons systems, foxholes, trenches, and bunkers. The flowing unhurried rhythm of a quaint city had become a loud, frenzied beast of a sin city. The beauty of Saigon was lost in the alterations of war.

During that long flight back to the States from Vietnam, I alternated between fitful sleep and reading, anxious to see my family. My flight ended in Dallas. The Army contract flights typically couldn't provide service to the Soldier's door. Instead of flying into Little Rock, I was routed to Dallas. Pat and the girls drove down from Arkadelphia to meet my plane and were shocked when they saw me, especially Pat.

"He looked terrible," I have heard Pat tell people so many times. "I hardly recognized him because he lost 50 pounds and looked so sick. All he did for two weeks when he got home was sleep, play with the girls a little, talk to me a little, eat, and fall asleep again."

Even though I was tired and had residual dysentery, it never occurred to me that I might look scary to my family. I had 30 days leave, during which I tried to rest, get my health back to normal, and gain a little weight. One afternoon I was resting in a chaise lounge and reading in our backyard. Pat dropped the mail on my book. A letter from the Department of the Army (DA) lay on top.

It was, in fact, an assignment to the XVIII Airborne at Fort Bragg. This news lifted my spirits for two reasons; it was an airborne assignment, and General Bruce Palmer<sup>11</sup> was the corps commander. As I continued to read, I thought my eyes were playing tricks on me. I re-read the last paragraph and stared at the letter in shock. I had been selected for an early promotion to Major.

Looking back on that moment in my life, I believe in my heart that because I went early to Vietnam and Thailand, it made a monumental difference in my Army career. At the time, I was young, eager, and enthusiastic. I had no idea how these assignments would play out over time. I call the fast track promotions I enjoyed the “Vietnam Effect.” Remember, military personnel were staying for only one year in Vietnam with Johnson’s “one year and out” policy. The two Vietnam years (1964 and 1969) set me up for “below the zone promotions” to Major, Lieutenant Colonel, and Colonel.

The service to my country (almost three years in the Indochina area), serving in that area when others were requesting assignments elsewhere, and the honors, medals, and badges I was awarded made a huge difference in my career development. My hope is that this explanation doesn’t appear egotistical or arrogant, because it is in no way intended to be. During those years and still now, I strongly believe in fighting for one’s country and for freedom.

When President Kennedy said in his inaugural speech, “We shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and success of liberty,” I took his words to heart. Much later, in 1979, I made the Brigadier Generals’ list after being in the Army barely 20 years. I had no idea of the eventual long-term influence the “Vietnam Effect” would have. Was I lucky? Was I in the right place at the right time? Was someone watching over me? Yes, yes, and they must have been.

With the news of our new assignment, we were on the move once more. Pat made all the arrangements, and our family of four left Arkadelphia for Fort Bragg in Fayetteville, North Carolina. Sabra entered third grade, and Dede, age five, began kindergarten. With the coming promotion to Major and an Airborne slot too, it meant a raise in pay. The officer’s jump pay alone was \$105 per month. Pat decided to leave the school teaching and church work to others. She enjoyed a year of volunteering and spending more time with Dede and Sabra. Fort Bragg was not too far from the Atlantic Ocean and warm, sandy beaches, which pleased my girls.<sup>12</sup>

The XVIII Airborne Corps has its headquarters at Fort Bragg.<sup>13</sup> Reporting for duty, I found myself among men whom I had met in

Airborne School at Fort Benning or with whom I had served in Vietnam. I quickly got the word that the division and corps headquarters were going into the Dominican Republic. The Corps served as the headquarters for U.S. forces personnel sent to restore law and order, prevent a communist takeover of the country, and protect American lives. The mission was known as Operation Power Pack. Everyone was going. I broke the news to Pat that I'd be leaving soon. "So what's new?" was her reply. "Here you go again just when you were starting to gain a little weight and look like yourself."

Arriving in the Dominican Republic, we were met by Colonel Myron "Iron Mike" Murley, the G-4 (Assistant Chief of Staff) for the XVIII Airborne Corps. He seemed a little surprised to see us. Because we had recently returned from Vietnam, he arranged the award of the Armed Forces Expeditionary Badge<sup>14</sup> for us and sent us back to Fort Bragg. Of all my tours of duty, the Dominican Republic was the shortest, about one day. Pat and my girls were pretty pleased.

Back at Fort Bragg, General Palmer was centralizing a new office to do all contingency planning for the XVIII Airborne Corps. He was organizing planning positions from the G-1 (Assistant Chief of Staff, Personnel), G-2 (Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence), G-3 (Assistant Chief of Staff, Operations and Plans), and G-4 (Assistant Chief of Staff, Logistics). I was one of the three G-4 planners and was responsible for Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Cuba plans.

At the same time, I was assigned to a parachute position. The 12 months at Fort Bragg were thoroughly enjoyable. My enthusiasm for jumping carried over into our home with Sabra and Dede. They loved playing "jump" in the evenings. We'd line up the dining room chairs, and I put them through the drill. Pat usually played along too. They were the parachutists, and I was the person who stood in the door and helped them out of the plane. "Stand up," I'd command. They'd stand at attention. "Hook up," I shouted causing them to hook on their imaginary lines. One by one, they'd make the pretend jump and roll on the floor. We'd all end up rolling around on the floor giggling and laughing. They loved it. Years later, at Strike Command at MacDill Air Force Base, they would walk out on the drop zone and help me recover my parachute.

I became the briefing officer for G-4 and all logistics plans, giving briefings to the Corps staff and to General Palmer. A major briefing, for me, was accompanying General Palmer to the United States Strike Command (USSTRICOM, later the U.S. Readiness Command) to brief the commander, General Paul D. Adams. It was hard to ignore all the stories about General Adams' reputation as a "real bear." Word had it he would throw two or three briefing officers per day off the stage. I think that even General Palmer gave a sigh of relief when we skated through that briefing. We briefed plans for the Dominican Republic and Haiti. They were small and generally straightforward. Cuba was the big plan in 1966, and General Adams had very few questions, ending with "good job." Whew!

Others would then ask me, "How do you brief General Adams and stay alive?"

I'd generally reply with, "I used the KISS principle: 'Keep it simple, stupid.'"

It was interesting to me to note that, during every exercise I was on at XVIII Corps, someone from Strike Command was there. A representative from Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marine Corps was there to monitor the staff. There was usually also someone from the logistics area. For example, we might parachute into Peterson Field across from Fort Carson, use the hangers at Peterson Field, and for the purpose of the exercise, pretend it was a foreign country. There was a Strike Command officer there. Even General Adams, as the commander, came to Fort Bragg at least twice during that year to visit our field operations.

Parachuting into Peterson was more than just another jump. We were told that the Peterson field runway was about 4,000 feet in altitude. Our jumpmaster said, "You will notice that you are dropping at a faster rate than jumping at Fort Bragg and at sea level." Was he ever right! It seemed that the ground was just flying up at you. The jumpmaster forgot to mention the multiple bounces your body made on impact.

We were at Fort Campbell once when General Adams visited and had the entire division on-line so he could talk to all "troopers." He

was very “hands on” with division tactical operations. A dominant personality, he was certainly involved in almost every aspect of his command. Many times I would hear, “General Adams would not approve that. That’s not the way he does business.” Even with many layers of officers between General Adams and us, the strength of his leadership reached from Strike Command to every Soldier.

During that year, I was able to watch General Palmer as the corps commander and see how he dealt with the 82<sup>nd</sup> and 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Divisions. When there were 82<sup>nd</sup> and 101<sup>st</sup> exercises, we went along, parachuting in with them. We jumped all over the United States in many exercises. One month before leaving Fort Bragg, the official promotion to Major came through. I received my Senior Parachute Badge with Star with over 40 parachute jumps as I departed Fort Bragg. Eventually, I completed 117 jumps in my career. My daughters received homemade Junior Parachute Badges for the thousands of jumps they made from the dining room chairs to the floor.

### **Fort Leavenworth, 1966**

After only a year at Fort Bragg, we were relocating again, this time to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. I received orders to attend Command and General Staff College (CGSC) there. We said farewell to the close proximity of the Atlantic Ocean and nearby beaches, and moved to the middle of the country. As we arrived at Fort Leavenworth, it was being designated a Registered National Historic Landmark. A portion of the fort was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>15</sup>

Even though I had not previously attended the Officers’ Course, I had been using the CGSC Reference Books for some time. Back at Fort Bragg in my logistics support plan duties for Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti, I was expected to know what the tonnage per class of supply per Soldier was per day. I needed to know what the density of the equipment was; how much ammunition per weapon system per division, brigade and battalion, we were planning; and the requirements of three types of fuel. The set of Leavenworth Reference Books were dog-eared and had many marginal notes by the time I left Fort Bragg.

Lieutenant Colonel Max Thurman<sup>16</sup> was in my section for one of the class rotations. He seemed older and far more mature than the rest of us. It was clear he was marked for leadership. It was such an honor to be selected to attend Leavenworth. All my classmates felt it was a special privilege to be there.

I was, once again, one of the youngest officers in the class. I was so junior that we didn't have "on post" quarters and lived the entire year in the city of Leavenworth. The following April, just two months before graduation, I had worked my way up to number one on the post housing list, but we loved where we were. We didn't move. We lived in a townhouse in a new area, Stone Leigh Court, with a swimming pool and tennis courts. It was a very nice neighborhood. All those who didn't want to stay on post for some reason or were too junior to move on post ended up at Stone Leigh Court. We studied together and partied together. It was a great group with terrific camaraderie. We called our little community "Leavenworth South."

Leavenworth had its share of tornadoes. Living on the third floor, Pat thought it prudent to join our neighbors in the basement laundry room for tornado watches. We began going there to wait out tornado watches and warnings. All would bring toys for the kids, wine and beer for the adults, and even the family dogs and cats. At the first notice of a tornado watch, Pat would bag our Persian cat, Princess, and the parade of kids, moms, dads, dogs, and cats would head for the basement. I never remember a tornado alert that we didn't enjoy! We were fortunate they were only alerts.

Pat shared my interest in history and attempts to learn about the surrounding area. She was introduced to the many stories of Fort Leavenworth hauntings. There are several old officers' houses on the historic fort grounds that are said to be haunted; faces seen in the back of fireplaces, the sound of tea brewing in an empty parlor, knocks on doors when no one is there. It is said that the spirit of a young priest burned in a church in 1875 can be seen walking up and down stairs in a house built from salvageable building material of that church. Even General George Custer's spirit is reported to roam the first floor of the General's Residence because the fort is

the site of his 1867 court-martial for leaving his command and mistreating his troops.

The old Disciplinary Barracks had 12 towers, not all of them manned, and the number eight tower was closed off, rendering access extremely difficult. Guards reported something moving inside the tower, and a patrol car reported seeing someone standing in the tower pointing a rifle at them. No one was in the tower. Long ago, a Soldier committed suicide in the tower by shooting himself in the head. In building 65, which was once the prison hospital, an unused elevator was said to be haunted. According to legend, German POWs were executed in the elevator shaft by hanging. Screaming, coming from the old elevator, was reported by guards, while on the third floor, sightings of a ghostly man in a wheelchair being pushed by another ghostly figure were reported.

The houses in Sumner Place are said to be haunted by the benevolent spirit of a woman in a black woolen dress and shawl, who was reportedly the housekeeper and nanny and lived in the attic of one of the houses. One child told his parents that this nice lady read him stories before he went to sleep. A book was found in the child's room that didn't belong to the owners. The ghost of Catherine Sutter is said to walk among the tombstones of the National Cemetery, located just beyond the prison walls of the Disciplinary Barracks. In 1880, Catherine, her husband, and two children stopped at the fort on their way to the Oregon territory. One day her husband sent the children out to collect firewood, but they never returned. Catherine became a familiar figure at the fort, spending many hours walking in the snow, calling out to her children. Catherine died that winter and was buried in the cemetery at Fort Leavenworth.

Halloween that year at Fort Leavenworth scared the starch right out of our shirts. What a ghostly night, with our goblins roaming the streets past "haunted" houses and buildings. We continue to laugh about our friendly ghosts from Fort Leavenworth, but mention of the hauntings still manages to make the hair on the back of our necks stand at attention. The main thing nine-year-old Sabra remembers about Fort Leavenworth was the snow, especially the night our family

went to the theater to see “The Music Man” and walked out to what seemed like a foot of new fallen snow covering everything.

Classes in the Command and General Staff Officers’ Course were interesting but tough, and pressure to perform was high. I never set any records, but remained a consistent, solid, middle of the class student. I felt at home at Fort Leavenworth and believe my past Army experiences were a major asset. I got a kick out of the “blue goose” which was an exercise planning task document, and having to be the G-4 logistics officer a dozen times. It was hard work, but most of us were comfortable with it and had fun.

Twenty-four years later, when I was the DCSLOG, I met the Army Chief of Staff from Tunisia. He was inducted into the “Honor Roll” at Leavenworth. The “Honor Roll” was for those foreign students who rose to important positions in their countries. Spending time with him was similar to my Thailand experience with the Thai Lieutenants who had been to West Point. Clearly, this four-star General from Tunisia had assimilated, after only a few years in the United States, many of the values, ethics, and sensitivities of our society. In 1991, he returned to the states as the Tunisian Chief of Staff, and I had the opportunity to meet him with General Carl Vuono when he had his Honor Roll Ceremony at Fort Leavenworth. He commented that since 1966, he considered the time he spent in the U.S. very precious.

The time at Leavenworth was special for our group as well. Our class of 1967 was fervent about serving our country in a time when that attitude wasn’t popular. They were a group of very enjoyable guys. I remained in touch with many from that class throughout my career. About 15 of them became general officers. In March of 1967, we received our June orders, our assignments after graduation in May. More than half of the class went to Vietnam that June. Most of the Army pilots returned to Vietnam for their second tour. Twenty were killed in Vietnam and are greatly missed.

### **Strike Command, 1967-1969**

I thought I might be assigned back to Vietnam, but instead went to MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida. The base was activated in 1941, and its first task was training pilots on B-17 and B-26 aircraft for



World War II. It was named for Colonel Leslie MacDill who died in a plane crash near Washington, D.C. in 1938.

Pat and I bought our first house on Mornay Circle in the “Town and Country” subdivision in Tampa. It was a spacious four bedroom home that set us back a whopping \$27,000. My sun worshipping beach girls loved being back near the beaches on the Gulf of Mexico. Sabra, now eleven, and Dede, age eight, both became involved in competitive swimming and were on swim teams. Pat did substitute teaching at Hillsborough High School in Tampa. Life was so good. Florida living was like a dream come true for the family.

I was assigned to the U.S. Strike Command in J-4 (Logistics Directorate), and worked in the transportation division. It was quite bizarre to find planning documents I had sent to Strike Command when I’d been at XVIII Airborne. The documents were now in staffing. I was there as they started planning for the transition from the Strike Command to the U.S. Readiness Command.

General Adams retired in November 1966, and when I arrived, General Theodore J. Conway was in command. He was a brand new four-star, an airborne Soldier, a skydiver, and he loved to jump. His reputation of being a very good troop leader preceded him and was soon verified. Lieutenant General Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. was the deputy to General Conway. General Davis was the son of WWII Brigadier General Benjamin O. Davis<sup>17</sup>, the first African American general officer in the U.S. Army. Our Brigadier General was Fred C. Allen. I have continued to know and respect General Allen over the last 30 years.

I was in the J-4’s transportation division where an Air Force Colonel, Colonel Pisarek, was the Division Chief. Also in the division was Colonel Bob Virlakas, a Greek-American who was shot down during World War II. He was only 18 years old when he joined the service and flew twin-tail P-38’s. Colonel Virlakas loved showing his favorite wartime artifact, the Plexiglas windshield from one of the P-38’s in which was engraved, “The Hat in the Ring.” He had been in the “Hat in the Ring” squadron, and when he was shot down, he removed the Plexiglas from his demolished plane and had his squadron’s emblem and name engraved on it.

Colonel Jim Ray was a sports parachute enthusiast and assisted General Conway many times during his parachute jumps. The General had over 300 jumps and would go out on weekends and make four or five jumps for entertainment. For his military jumps, he needed a jump master-qualified person and in that milieu, I prepared and assisted his jumps.

This experience was my first “joint” assignment. It required understanding service culture, service concepts, and terms from other branches of the Armed Forces with which I was not familiar. I learned the joint language over time and began to understand the different cultures of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps. It was imperative that I understand the other services thoroughly in order to support their programs.

Strike Command was organized into two joint task forces (JTF) and had about 300 people on jump status. One task force was designated JTF 7 and covered an area north of the Sahara. Our division line was an imaginary geographical line through the Sahara, and my group, JTF 11, covered an area south of that line. Not only was I working in the J-4, but also, for exercise purposes, we launched out with XVIII Airborne Corps. We went almost monthly on exercises all over the United States, Africa, and Korea. Anytime XVIII Airborne Corps deployed, we went. If Military Airlift Command (MAC) was doing something, we deployed with them. It was the same with the Navy.

On one exercise, we launched from MacDill to Liberia by C-141, a military cargo plane, and landed at Roberts Field about 50 miles from Monrovia. We had with us a “jackpot” (later dubbed an “I-Beam package”), a joint communications package that was housed in three communications vans aboard another C-141. The purpose of the “jackpot” was to facilitate communications between Strike Command, the Commander in Chief, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). The “jackpot” was configured to fit precisely into a C-141 with everything in vans, on wheels. An early goal for the “jackpot” was to link into the C-141 communications system, so that even from the air it was possible to communicate to air, land, and sea. It took mere minutes,

once the aircraft landed, to roll out from the plane and be up and running.

There was one problem. The load was so heavy that when we landed at Roberts Field, it felt as if there was damage to the aircraft. After landing, we walked back to take a look, and the C-141 had torn up the landing field. Huge ruts were left for about 40 to 50 feet where the rear tires on the C-141 dug in. A Russian IL-28, a Russian cargo/passenger airplane, had to circle the airstrip until runway repairs could be made. What high adventure! I loved it. We were in Liberia, and there was a Russian aircraft circling overhead. In 1968, we were still in the Cold War stage with the Soviet Union, and I had never seen a Russian aircraft up close and personal.

During this same period, President Johnson had promised to withdraw a substantial number of Soldiers from Korea. In return, the U.S. would reinforce Korea within 24 hours with our rapid deployment Airborne Divisions (82<sup>nd</sup> and 101<sup>st</sup>). Our first deployment with over 70 C-141 aircraft from Pope AFB near Fort Bragg launched with an airborne brigade. The air traffic route took us from Fort Bragg to Elmendorf AFB, Alaska, then to Kadena AFB, Okinawa, and finally we parachuted into a drop zone south of Seoul along the Hahn River. I'm not sure that President Johnson knew we didn't make it in 24 hours, but we were close; a little over 30.

With a total flight and refuel time of 30 hours, plus ground time in Alaska and Okinawa, we had been up for almost two straight days. We all felt terrible. Most Soldiers were sick or just plain exhausted. Finally on the ground, the intense jet lag left us with thoughts of breakfast while the Korean Soldiers were having dinner. The jet lag was 13 hours. In spite of the conditions, it was amazing to be there. Our 70-plus C-141s were joined by over 30 C-130s from the Korean Airborne and Special Forces. Imagine watching over 100 aircraft drop troops and equipment. Tired or not, we hit the ground with no injuries and ready for a three-day exercise. The Koreans had cut the top of a small hill near the drop zone and installed grandstands. As we jumped, we heard applause from the crowd of Koreans. That will cure any jet-lag and get your adrenalin pumping. I was more than ready for my C-ration breakfast.

After the parachute drop, we finished our three-day field training exercise with the Korean Army and spent a day cleaning our equipment. It was January 12, 1969, the date of the third Super Bowl back in the States, and we were in Korea. As I sat in the Mess Hall at Camp Humphries at 6:30 in the morning having breakfast, loud speakers in the hall began to broadcast the game. With the 13-hour difference, we were listening to a late evening Super Bowl broadcast over radio loud speakers. What a great diversion for us and a gift from our Korean counterparts who seemed to enjoy it as much as we did.

Domestically, these years marked a very difficult time of racial violence and civil unrest. The draft was accelerated, and anti-war sentiment grew. College students organized anti-war protests, draft dodgers fled to Canada, and the hippie movement of drugs, rock music, mystic religions, and sexual freedom soared. The Civil Rights movement, which began peacefully with Martin Luther King, Jr. leading sit-ins and peaceful protests, turned violent with Malcolm X preaching Black power, and grew more violent under the anti-Semitism of the Black Panthers.

Martin Luther King was assassinated in 1968 in Memphis, Tennessee. On April 4, 1968, the night of King's assassination, Robert Kennedy spoke to a group in Indianapolis, Indiana. He began by saying, "I have some very sad news for all of you, and I think sad news for all of our fellow citizens, and people who love peace all over the world, and that is that Martin Luther King was shot and was killed tonight in Memphis, Tennessee." Kennedy went on to say, "For those of you who are Black and are tempted to be filled with hatred and mistrust of the injustice of such an act, against all White people, I would only say that I can also feel in my own heart the same kind of feeling. I had a member of my family killed. . . we have to make an effort to understand, to get beyond these rather difficult times."<sup>18</sup>

Lyndon Johnson was blamed by many for the war and racial unrest and announced that he would not run for re-election in 1968. Robert Kennedy campaigned for the nomination for President, and he, too, was assassinated en route to a press conference in Los Angeles after winning the California Democratic primary. Robert Kennedy's words, "Let us dedicate ourselves to what the Greeks wrote so many years ago: to tame the savageness of man and make gentle the life of this

world,”<sup>19</sup> lingered in the stunned minds of our countrymen as we mourned yet another Kennedy death.

The urban riots of 1967-1968 reached a climax during this period of social and class conflict. More than 160 civil disturbances occurred in some 128 American cities in the first nine months of 1967. Massive rioting broke out in Black ghettos in 19 cities after the assassination of Martin Luther King in April 1968. It was during this time (1967-1969) that “Garden Plot,” a National Civil Disturbance Plan, emerged at the Pentagon. Members from police, military, and intelligence units created the joint task force that initially dealt with the race riots. The task force was prepared to move in massively, if needed, to squash urban rioting. Operation “Garden Plot” has evolved into a plan to assist civil authorities in matters of civil unrest with airlift and logistical support. The support is intended to restore law and order through appropriate military channels in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and U.S. possessions and territories.

My first “Garden Plot” assignment was with the 82<sup>nd</sup> to Washington D.C. in April of 1968, following Martin Luther King’s assassination. The corps commander, Lieutenant General John L. Throckmorton, was at the 14<sup>th</sup> Street police station, which was used as headquarters for the XVIII Airborne Corps. The key units included the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne and the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. We were placed in a tent city at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland. With more than 50 Greyhound buses at Andrews, we were in “ready reaction force” mode, poised to move into the District on command.

Rioters had already pillaged and burned the 14<sup>th</sup> Street corridor and Soldiers from the 82nd were being rotated into that area. President Johnson called directly into corps headquarters with orders, “Do this. Do that.” Just as he had done in so many instances with the war in Vietnam, he was giving direct orders to our General about our military operations. We had our direction straight from the President.

Our orders were, “Do not take aggressive action. This is only a show of force. No ammunition will be issued.” Many Soldiers had served in Vietnam and wore patches on both shoulders of their uniforms that announced to everyone who noticed that they had served

in Vietnam. Our Soldiers were sent into action to face an angry mob of rioters with no ammunition and with orders to take no action. At the same time, we wore an extremely unpopular badge across our chests. The entire scenario posed a serious dilemma. Our Soldiers, however, followed the direction of the White House and stood by, watching rioters loot and steal. The looters would break glass and take whatever they wanted from a store.

A priority was to protect Soldiers through any means we could find. We began ordering chicken wire and wire cutters for all our jeeps. The wire cutters were placed on the front of the M151 jeeps. We learned from years past, since the operation "Rapid Roads" in Oxford, Mississippi, that chicken wire over the top of a jeep protected the Soldiers from objects being thrown by demonstrators. The wire cutters mounted on the front of each jeep provided protection from low-hanging wires and ropes.

Finally, the orders changed. The directive to XVIII Airborne Corps was, "Stop the looting." As commanded, the Soldiers of the XVIII stopped the looting. Ammunition was also issued, but not used except in rare occasions. With permission to do their job, the Soldiers quelled the riot activities. 14<sup>th</sup> Street looked worse than anything I'd seen in Vietnam. The rioters destroyed all the businesses in an area around U and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets that once housed "Black Broadway," clubs that showcased the amazing talents of such musicians as Duke Ellington, "Jelly Roll" Morton, and Pearl Bailey. During the three days of terror, fire and smoke filled the sky, thirteen people died, and thousands were injured.

Our planes barely touched down at MacDill Air Force Base when we turned around and went to Chicago, which also suffered rioting that April. We were housed in huge aircraft hangers at O'Hare Airport. The weather was very cold and the wind was terrible. Not one Soldier was used. I, again, turned around in less than three days and went back to Strike Command.

Riots were breaking out in several cities across the nation. The next alert was in Baltimore. It seemed like rioters were burning down our cities, and the ever-present television cameras were capturing it all and broadcasting our chaotic lawlessness across the world. As

Soldiers, we were caught in the snarling trap of a tragedy. Filled with patriotism and pride in our country, we had answered the call to defend freedom, justice, and the democratic way of life. In Vietnam we were fighting for the Captain Ans who simply wanted their homes to be safe and free from tyranny. At home, our duty was to protect our citizenry and insure domestic tranquility.

Most of us had served in Vietnam and other disturbances around the globe. We had experienced first hand the struggles of the oppressed and tasted the impoverished life in various other countries. Such experiences magnified the gift we were given at birth of living in the United States. We were men proud of our nation and our flag. To see some misguided, confused, drugged, and defiant hippie burn the American flag or carry it upside down made our blood boil. And yet, we were sworn to defend that citizen's right to be free and express himself. I'm surprised and grateful that joint force Soldiers, with extremely few exceptions, didn't "lose it" and become violent during the "Garden Plot" operations.

The integrity of that group was amazing. In the face of folks who could not or would not separate their hatred of the war from the Soldiers who were sent there to fight it, we managed to remain steadfast and dedicated to our mission. In the face of jeers, taunts, and physical attacks, we stood our ground without unnecessary violence and rebuttal. We were damned if we did and damned if we didn't. We found ourselves caught in a quagmire of political perplexity and civil instability. Dedicated to our cause, we stood tall and bore the abuse and hatred in silence. The ties that bind the band of brothers grew strong and tight, for we could speak only to each other. It was a tragic time that left deep scars on our Soldiers and our nation.

Ironically, many of our daughters' favorite childhood memories come from this turbulent time in history. School, friends, and swim meets diminished the chaos around them. Looking back on those years, Dede remembered that she and Sabra spent most of their free time at the Town and Country Community pool with swim team practice and meets that seemed to last all day long. "Mom would pack boxes of sugared Jell-O that we ate straight out of the box for energy between heats," Dede said. "Back then, we never even cared about what effect all that sugar had on our health! Going to Brownie and

Girl Scout meetings at the church behind the house, and riding my bike to Town and Country Elementary School was such fun. I still have that old Indian arrowhead I found in the sand one day parking my bicycle at school.”

Sabra remembered Tampa as a great place to live and the swim team being “the best.” “The ex-Marine coach, with his pot-belly, doing the back stroke; now that was a sight!”

Dede reminisced, “The summer of 1968 brought a pleasant surprise for all of us when Mom found out she was pregnant with Tony. Sabra and I ran down the street yelling, ‘Our Mom is going to have a baby!’ to all the neighbors. If they didn’t know before then, the entire community found out that day. Here I am an adult and back in Tampa. When Danny (Dede’s husband) retired from the Army (his last duty station was MacDill AFB), there was no doubt in my mind we would stay here in Tampa forever. I drive by that old house on Mornay Circle sometimes, and all those memories of 35 years ago come flooding back.”

For Sabra and Dede, the dark, chaotic, and worrisome events taking place in our country in the late sixties were unimportant in the fresh, glowing light of their happy, young lives, and the prospect of a new baby in the family.



## *Chapter VII*

### **Return to Vietnam, 1969-1970**

On April 19, 1969, Pat and I were blessed with the birth of our son, Tony, at MacDill Air Force Base Hospital. I stared into that new young face and wondered what this little “tow head” would become. Sabra and Dede quickly became substitute moms, forever fussing over their new brother. His mother and sisters noticed an early trait, a great personality. Our lives seemed so perfect at that moment. What more could we want? We had two beautiful daughters and now a bouncing baby boy to carry on the Ross name. We were homeowners (along with the bank that held the mortgage) in the gorgeous state of Florida. We were a very happy family.

On the heels of Tony’s birth, however, sad news arrived in the form of orders from the Department of the Army for my immediate return to Vietnam. We knew it meant I would be away for at least a year. That letter put a damper on our happy spirits, and let the grim reaper get a toehold in the back door of our thoughts.

Trying to make light of an unhappy situation, Pat began to tease me about arranging the orders. “It’s pretty bad when you’d rather go off to Vietnam than stay home and change diapers,” she teased. “You’ll be over there playing Tarzan of the jungle while I’m up all hours feeding a hungry baby.”

We did our best to joke and make light of the assignment, but we were both scared. Now that we had our own home in Tampa, the decision was made for Pat and the children to remain there while I was away. Pat was substitute teaching at Hillsborough High School, and caring for our new addition was demanding. The girls were happy with their schools, friends, and swim teams.

Sabra and Dede were well on their way to becoming excellent swimmers for the Town and Country swim teams. We all loved our neighborhood, our friendly neighbors, and the proximity to the beach. The best part of the entire scenario was not uprooting the family AGAIN.

The day arrived for my departure, and Pat and the kids took me to the Tampa airport. We all said our goodbyes. Pat told me later that they stood and waved at the plane through take-off and until it was completely out of sight. As she turned away from the spot in the sky where the plane disappeared from view, she told herself, "Life must go on." Throughout my time in Vietnam, they watched news of the war on television every night, looking to see a familiar face and never did.

Tony was six weeks old when I left our home in Tampa for my second tour of duty in Vietnam. I had enlisted assistance with arranging an assignment to the 101<sup>st</sup> by making the request through letters. My time in the 101<sup>st</sup> back in 1964 had been cut short, and it was my desire to join them in Vietnam. Colonel Bill Bradley, whom I had met and jumped with at the Strike Command, was a brigade-level commander with the 101<sup>st</sup> Division Support Command (DISCOM). I thank Colonel Bradley, who assisted by pulling me through the personnel system.

I arrived in June of 1969 at Long Binh. Following the advice of Colonel "Iron Mike" Murley, I went immediately to the 101<sup>st</sup> desk. The 101<sup>st</sup> NCO looked up my records and said, "Yeah, we've been expecting you." The NCO, wearing a brand new flight jacket, took time away from his wheeler/dealer activities of swapping and selling all kinds of things to give me directions.

During the multitude of "swap-meet" interruptions in our conversation, I had time to reflect on the division I was joining. The 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division was formed in August 1942. The first commander, Major General William C. Lee, promised his new recruits, "The 101<sup>st</sup> has no history, but it has a rendezvous with destiny." "Rendezvous with Destiny" became the motto of the 101<sup>st</sup> and as a division; it never failed that prophecy.

"Here's your aircraft connection," the NCO said. "You'll be up at the 'Rendezvous with Destiny' within 24 hours." He was right. In just one day, I arrived at Camp Eagle, near Hue and the Phu Bia airfield.

The division and DISCOM headquarters were housed at Camp Eagle, which was a huge firebase within itself. It was located in

central Vietnam near Hue, an old historic, walled city that rests near the Huong River about nine miles west of the China Sea. The old historic relic of a city had once been the capital of the Nguyen dynasty (1802 to 1945).

On January 31, 1968, seventeen months before I arrived in 1969, a four-day cease-fire halted the fighting in the Vietnam War. The truce, which was agreed upon by both sides, was called so that Vietnamese citizens could celebrate Tet. Tet commemorates the Vietnamese Lunar New Year. I first encountered a Tet celebration when I was in Thailand in 1962-1963. I would again encounter such a celebration when a Korean Army Division near Cam Ranh Bay celebrated Tet in 1969-1970. It was an important holiday tradition in many Asian countries, including Thailand and Vietnam. Tet falls in February and relates to the start of the new lunar cycle.<sup>20</sup>

In the darkness on the 1968 Eve of Tet, some 84,000 North Vietnamese Communists broke the truce and attacked 36 provincial capitals, five autonomous cities, 34 district capitals and 50 hamlets. They penetrated deep into ten cities, including Saigon and Hue.

The attack followed a familiar pattern of military strategy used by the North Vietnamese Army (NVA). In years past, the North honored Tet Eve truces by not fighting. They observed times of cease-fire just enough to ease the Southern forces into a complacent, false sense of safety about times of truce. The massive attack was unexpected, and the South Vietnamese were caught off guard.

In spite of the surprise, the South Vietnamese Army reacted quickly, clearing most cities, but fighting in Saigon and Hue was protracted and the Communists controlled Hue for almost a month. Hue streets were suddenly, frighteningly filled with Soldiers from the North in baggy olive uniforms and pith hats. The controlling Soldiers set up provisional authority sites. To these sites, they called in South Vietnamese Soldiers, civil servants of all services, political party members, and college students. The terrified citizens' names were registered in "control books." They were then allowed to return home unharmed, having been promised safety. The same people were made to report several times during their captivity and were unaware that they were being lulled into a misleading sense of security.

In late February, the South Vietnamese infantry, the U.S. Marines, and the 101<sup>st</sup> conducted bloody counterattacks and recaptured the whole city after many days of fierce fighting that forced the enemy to withdraw. Shortly after their withdrawal, several mass graves were found in which hundreds of bodies of those who repeatedly reported to authorities were buried. Most were tied to each other by ropes, electric wires, or telephone wires and shot, beaten, or stabbed to death. The death toll was more than 2,000. Several thousand more remain missing. A U.S. Navy warship carries the name "Hue City" in honor of those who suffered and died there.

The Tet offensive shed new light on the unscrupulous, unprincipled minds of the North Vietnamese leaders. The 1968 massacre in Hue brought a sharp turn in the common attitude toward the war. After South Vietnam fell to the Communists in 1975, the unofficial number of boat people of Hue origin made up a greater proportion among the refugees than those from other areas.

As I flew over the beautiful, historic, and fascinating city of Hue that day in 1969, I was reminded of all who lost their lives there. From the air, I had a clear view of the geographic area around Hue, Phu Bai, and Camp Eagle. It was a coastal plain with much rice cultivation. The flat land of the plains quickly erupted into a mountainous region that extended to the Laotian border. While most units didn't have 500 plus helicopters, the 101<sup>st</sup> did. Probably one-third of them were at Camp Eagle. Later, after the war concluded, the airfield which accommodated the aircraft would become the Phu Bai airport, serving the city of Hue.

Camp Eagle was surrounded by a wide barbed wire barrier fence. Behind the fence line there was a large berm, an earthen wall that reached heights of 30 feet along several areas. Firing positions from molded bunkers rested on top of the berm. They were manned every night. Unlike my experiences in 1964, new technology was providing additional security. The fence contained a sensor system designed to detect any motion, sound, or seismic vibration.

It was on the berm that I would first encounter the "Starlight Scope," an infra-red night vision device. Towers were erected on the

berm to provide a better view of the area, and each tower had a Starlight Scope. Heretofore, at night a Soldier was at the mercy of nature, moonlight, and starlight. Cloudy nights were pitch black. Sometimes you could not see your hand in front of your face. This new technology was like something out of a science fiction movie to me, but was real and saving lives.

The Starlight Scope literally took the star's light and magnified it many times. On the perimeter where we were, I could look out between 100 and 200 meters and see any heat-producing thing, whether it was equipment, animal, or man. Heat would illuminate whatever was there to the point that I could see something as small as a dog. When the seismic sensor equipment picked up something, it sent an alarm back with sector position information, and I could look through the night vision device and see what it was. It's all commonplace now, but it was like a miracle tool back then. Decades later, we started producing uniforms that would diffuse heat from a human body so that we couldn't be seen with night vision gear.

The division artillery still fired nightly harassment and interdiction (H&I) fire. These were pre-selected targets, fired at random throughout the night at suspected enemy locations. If anything was sighted, Cobra helicopters were immediately in the air to defend and protect. We didn't need night vision equipment to see the Cobra fire its mini-gun. It looked like a stream of fire of tracer bullets piercing the night sky.

I arrived at Camp Eagle in June of 1969, one month after the battle of "Hill 937." Some of the Soldiers who fought there dubbed it the battle of "Hamburger Hill." The battle took place on Dong Ap Bia (Mountain) in the rugged, jungle-shrouded mountains along the Laotian border of South Vietnam. Rising from the floor of the western A Shau Valley, the Ap Bia Mountain dominates the northern valley, towering some 937 meters above sea level. Snaking down from its highest peak is a series of ridges. The entire mountain area was a rugged, uninviting wilderness, blanketed in double and triple canopy jungle, dense thickets of bamboo, and waist-high elephant grass at ground level.

Leading the attack were five infantry battalions under Major General (later General) Melvin Zais, commander of the legendary 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division. Intelligence provided little evidence as to the enemy's actual strength and dispositions. Masters of camouflage, the NVA completely concealed their bases from aerial surveillance, moved at night under the cover of the triple-canopy jungle, and conducted their command by runner and wire, leaving no electronic signature for the Americans to monitor or trace.

Experience, again, reflected a consistent pattern of behavior for the NVA. They would resist violently for a short time and then withdraw as the Americans brought overwhelming firepower to bear against them. That did not prove the case in this battle. The entire 29<sup>th</sup> NVA Regiment, nicknamed the "Pride of Ho Chi Minh," was in the A Shau Valley looking for a big fight. Treacherous terrain and an enemy that knew how to exploit it continually threw off the tempo of American tactical operations. Airborne infantry battalions were "ground-bound" in the jungle, maneuvering at the pace of their foot Soldiers. Not even the ever faithful Huey helicopter, the transcendent theme of American technological superiority in this war, offered much hope of speeding up maneuvers. Steep gradients and dense vegetation provided few natural landing zones near the mountain.

The rugged terrain also masked the NVA positions, making it nearly impossible to suppress enemy air defense fire. Throughout the battle, unseen NVA Soldiers maneuvered in the jungle around the American landing zones and shot down or damaged numerous helicopters with small arms fire and even rocket-propelled grenades. The dense terrain covered the movement of enemy forces so completely that it created the effect of a nonlinear battlefield. The NVA continually slipped behind the American lines, hitting logistical support landing zones and command posts.

The effectiveness of U.S. forces was further constrained by the very steep, narrow trails, dense jungle, and wild, irregular contours of Ap Bia. Movement was slowed to a crawl. Command of fire support suffered. The close range fighting taking place on the mountain was confusing to supporting aircraft. Difficulty distinguishing friend from enemy in the intense and chaotic battles produced no less than five incidents of air-to-ground fratricide over a ten-day period. In at least

one incident, the pilots themselves became lost and were attacked more than a kilometer off their intended target.

At the height of the battle, the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division commander experienced a new and uncomfortable aspect of battle command, one with which modern commanders have become increasingly familiar. The Associated Press (AP) discovered the battle at Dong Ap Bia and sent correspondent Jay Sharbutt to investigate. Sharbutt met with General Zais and in the course of the interview, challenged the General's decision to pursue and continue the battle. Zais answered politely and honestly, but the journalist was not satisfied. His subsequent newspaper accounts of "Hamburger Hill" stirred up a storm of controversy that swept the nation and resounded in the halls of Congress. For the next four days more and more journalists poured into the Camp Eagle firebases, headquarters, and landing zones. Commanders found they had a new and largely unwelcome duty: conducting public relations while also fighting a battle.

Samuel Zaffiri in his book, *Hamburger Hill, May 11-20, 1969*, states, "On May 10, 1969, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade of the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division, the 9<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> ARVN Regiment moved to the northern end of the A Shau to kick off Operation Apache Snow. The next day men from B Company of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 187<sup>th</sup> Infantry made initial contact on the lower reaches of Hill 937. ...Finally, on May 20<sup>th</sup>, at the end of a four-battalion assault, Americans stood atop Dong Ap Bia."

During those ten days, 70 Americans lost their lives, and 372 were wounded. Over 630 dead NVA were discovered on and around the battlefield. Many more undoubtedly covered the trails leading back into Laos. American Soldiers and the South Vietnamese troops that fought beside them had been to Hell and back and won an impossible battle against impossible odds. Lieutenant Colonel (later Brigadier General) Weldon F. Honeycutt, commander of the 3/187<sup>th</sup> Infantry, was a key ingredient in the success of the mission. His drive and determination kept his battalion fighting despite crippling losses, sagging morale, bad press, and crushing pressure from his chain of command. His strength of will (with support from Colonel Joseph B. Conmy, commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade of the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne and General Zais) overcame every adversity the terrain, weather, enemy,

and fate could heap on him and helped him see the battle through to a successful conclusion.

Questions raised by the press concerning the necessity of the battle stirred controversy for weeks after the fighting stopped. The issues flared up again when the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne, under orders from the White House, quietly abandoned the hill to the enemy in June. "The Faces of Death in Vietnam: One Week's Toll" (*Life Magazine*, June 27, 1969) called attention to the loss of life involved in the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division's taking of Hill 937. Until the media exploded with negative press about the battle at Hill 937, I think the division felt they had won a very impressive battle.

The publicity that highlighted Major General Melvin Zais lambasted the 101<sup>st</sup> and Zais' judgment in squandering men in the middle of nowhere for no reason. This was not exactly true or accurate, but talk among young officers was that the incident would end his career. General Zais was relieved of his command of the 101<sup>st</sup> in August 1969 and became the commanding General, XXIV Corps, Vietnam until February 1970. Most from the 101<sup>st</sup> in Vietnam felt it was the *Life Magazine* article that ended his command. Two other Generals there at the time were Major General (later Lieutenant General) Edward Flanagan<sup>21</sup> and General John Hennessey.<sup>22</sup>

My first impression that early June as I arrived at Camp Eagle was that the entire division had been mauled during the now infamous battle of "Hamburger Hill." The number of injured people (bandages, crutches, slings) was alarming. In amazingly good spirits, they just kept saying, "If you think this is bad, you should see the other guy."<sup>23</sup>

Settling in at Camp Eagle felt good for several reasons. I was impressed that all the newly arrived officers attended the Division Commander's General Officers Mess. Even a lowly Major, such as me, was invited to attend. It was a nice gesture that created great camaraderie. Mess with white tablecloths and silver seemed a bit out of character for our circumstances but was an infrequent, enjoyable treat. It provided an opportunity to restore old friendships and make new ones in a comfortable, traditional setting. It was a piece of home in a very untraditional, uncomfortable wartime venue.



Those of us with more than 100 parachute jumps wore master parachute “Gold Century Wings” and were considered “special people.” I was in that “special treatment” category and, this may seem foolish, but it felt great! Past friends and members of the 101<sup>st</sup> welcomed me like a long lost brother. The warm reception helped ease the pang of sadness and ease of nerves over leaving Pat with our new son and two daughters. Any old “master-blasters” that showed up was still special even though jump slots were being eliminated. A “master-blasters” was an airborne Soldier that had a wreath around the star on his Master Jump Wings, usually indicating over 100 jumps. Not only were jump slots being cut, the unit was trimming to one airborne brigade, moving to an “Air Assault” division structure for future brigades. In 1969, there were one airborne and two air assault brigades. We were reducing from fifteen down to six firebases as I re-entered the 101<sup>st</sup> and the Vietnam War.

In 1969, Soldiers in the 101<sup>st</sup> were called “troopers.” Actually, they were “SERTS” until they had gone through the Screaming Eagle Replacement Training System (SERTS). Once they graduated from the in-country school and orientation process, they became “troopers.”

As I had known would happen, Colonel Myron Murley, a mentor and friend from Fort Bragg, was leaving, and Colonel Bill Bradley, with whom I’d previously worked when he was the senior J-3 operations officer at Strike Command, was arriving. He was the new DISCOM commander in Vietnam. I was to serve as the S-4, the person who did all the logistics in the day to day operations. Our mission was to provide the supply distribution and maintenance support. I had previous logistics planning experience with Class I (subsistence), Class III (petroleum, oil, and lubricants, POL) and Class V (ammunition). This was the first time I’d dealt with Class II (clothing and individual equipment), IV (construction materiel), VII (major end items), and VIII (medical items).

At first look, it might appear that the distribution of fuel and ammunition was our most difficult task. That was hardly the case. One of my major challenges was the distribution of food. The division commander wanted every Soldier in his division to have a hot meal everyday that included ice cream for dessert; that’s a HOT meal and a FROZEN dessert. There was a dairy plant nearby for making ice

cream, not very good ice cream, but nevertheless, ice cream. We spent long days and nights (especially during the rainy season) trying to determine just how we were going to meet the commander's mealtime orders.

Using Styrofoam from the shipping boxes for artillery, our Warrant Officers, who could do anything, stuck the Styrofoam inside shipping containers used for exporting (CONEX). We were building iceboxes. With the help of our homemade iceboxes and dry ice, the ice cream arrived at its destination still cold, not exactly frozen and maybe a little mushy, but still cold. The hot meals were transported in mermite cans, insulated food-carrying cans the Army used to transport hot meals to the Soldiers in the jungle.

By CH-47 helicopter, the entire CONEX and mermite containers were airlifted to firebases where it wasn't safe to cook meals. In areas where cooking was safe, some of the firebases had their own kitchens. Some kitchens were even in bunkers, but when possible, they preferred to cook their own meals. Using the makeshift iceboxes, we managed to airlift fresh meat, vegetables, and cooking supplies to the firebase kitchens. Was this a major challenge? Absolutely. Was it worth it? Absolutely. The hot meals and ice cream were a primary and much needed boost to the Soldiers' morale.

Letters to Pat were filled, along with questions about Dede, Sabra, and our new son Tony, with stories about my friends and logistics work. They were also my release, my way of coping with the initial frustration of not being one of the officers in the field. Instead of confronting the enemy, I was providing for those who were confronting the enemy. I was the supply guy, not the frontline Soldier. It was through our letters that I finally gained an appreciation for my job. The interwoven, individual threads that created the tapestry of war were all important pieces of the whole. My section of threads, supplying needed goods, determined how strong, or weak, each Soldier's performance was.

The importance of teamwork began to influence the way I looked at the overall task of logistics work. Not only was the timely delivery of supplies an integral and significant component in combating the enemy and saving lives, the task was accomplished through the

coordinated efforts of a team. The paradigm through which I viewed my work was shifting, and a newfound enthusiasm was leaking into the day-to-day coordination of our efforts. It was Friday night all over again, and our team had to get the job done, sometimes in the face of seemingly impossible odds.

Our division commander was absolutely right in thinking that every trooper in that division deserved a hot meal everyday, and it was the DISCOM's mission to make that happen. That may seem like a small task, but with problematic weather and terrain conditions, monsoon rains, and enemy interference, it was very difficult. I don't remember anyone ever complaining about the directive. Whether it was the 426<sup>th</sup> Supply and Transportation (S&T), the 326<sup>th</sup> Medical Battalion, the 5<sup>th</sup> Transportation Aviation Intermediate Maintenance (AVIM), or the 801<sup>st</sup> Maintenance units, everybody wanted to do their part to make it happen. A special kudo goes to Lieutenant Colonel Bill Foley, Commander of the 426 S&T Battalion and his supply Soldiers.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Jim Hesson (who later retired as a Brigadier General), ran the AVIM. I think Colonel Hesson and his group worked endlessly, 24 hours a day, keeping the 500 plus helicopters up and in good running order. We were worried about our long-range reconnaissance patrols (LRRP) because they were going out for seven to ten days, and we had to get food and rations to them so they wouldn't have to carry so much around on their backs.

In a long letter to Pat, I tried to bring her into my world by describing my work and my frustrations. I began by explaining how previous job experience was helping me.

“The experiences I had at XVIII Airborne Corps and the Strike Command are paying off. The division position for Aerial Delivery Officer (ADO) is vacant, and I'm doubling in that spot while doing S-4, day-to-day logistics work. Because of being one of the few jump master-qualified officers who has completed aerial delivery training, I didn't hesitate to call on the Air Force and the 837<sup>th</sup> Wing for assistance. I found two friends there, Colonel Pisarek, my boss at Strike Command, and Lieutenant Colonel Bob Virlakas, the friend from 'The Hat and the Ring' organization in WWII.”

“I asked Bob Virlakas to design some drops in the A Shau Valley when weather won’t permit our helicopters to fly. Even more critical than that, I asked if he had a way to supply the long range reconnaissance patrols who had been out for an extended time and were out of food and water. With the help of Virlakas and Pisarek, we set up two airdrop programs. One program for C-130s with the 837<sup>th</sup> Air Force Wing involved each C-130 carrying 16 loaded containers (A-22), each filled with food and water and weighing a ton (2,000 pounds). This program made all drops into the A Shau Valley to firebases.”

The second program used a directional system called ‘Arc Light’ in our CH-47 Chinook helicopters to make precision drops to our long-range patrol Soldiers. ‘Arc Light’ is the same triangulation system that allows the B-52s to triangulate and provide precision bombing. We installed the ‘Arc Light’ system into our Chinooks that can fly at high altitudes *above* the weather, 5,000 to 8,000 feet. We’ve even had one drop in weather that took a CH-47 up to almost 9,000 feet. The A-22 containers have netting up both sides and honeycomb underneath. We put strobe lights that last about 24 hours completely around the perimeter and attach a strobe chute. The chute, which is about ten feet across, slows down the drop to something like fifteen feet per second.

The purpose of the strobe lights was to aid the troopers in finding the container if our drop is off target. Our guys and the system were so good, that seldom happened.

I continued to explain to Pat in my letter. “So far, we’ve not hit anybody. The major complaint has been that the drop pulverizes the C-rations, especially crackers. There’s no way we can drop hot meals to long-range patrols, so our containers are packed with C-rations, water, and other supplies. The heavy drop mixes the C-rations food and fruit cans far too well. But the water makes it. We’re having great success using plastic expandable containers for water that survive the shock. The Soldiers come in telling us how grateful they are for those drops. I may not be directly slaying the enemy, but I’m making sure the troopers who are out there get what they need.”

“Everyday we start the re-supply cycle all over again. Everyone in DISCOM logistics takes their job very seriously, knowing that Soldiers are out there, walking around in mud in lousy weather doing a thankless, life-threatening job that has most folks at home hating them. It’s a miserable situation, and we view our business of re-supplying their needs as a critical one, especially the long-range patrol guys. The small postal detachment sorts tons and tons of mail for the 101<sup>st</sup>, and that is airlifted along with the food.”

The Vietnam experience emphasized the strategic importance of firebases. I tried to explain this to Pat from several thousand miles away. “We have one very large firebase along the A Shau Valley, ‘Rendezvous’ that Lieutenant Colonel (later Lieutenant General) Charles W. (Bill) Dyke runs. This firebase has a significant geographic feature that allows the unit and Soldiers to look across the valley, across the Laotian border, and see the Ho Chi Minh Trail. We lifted enough timber by Chinook in there to build a small city. It’s within mortar range of the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and there are exchanges of fire back and forth on a regular basis. When we can’t fly into Rendezvous, either because of weather or enemy action, we take a C-130 military cargo plane, use the A-22 cargo containers, and make the drops. Many times, we’ve dropped as many as 16 containers at one time and never have more than three of the 16 outside the firebase perimeter.”

“We also provide support for firebase ‘Charlie’ just south of the demilitarized zone (DMZ). It has 175-mm guns and fires deep into North Vietnam. There’s an effort to make sure they have all the support they need.”

I put my pen down, raised the glass of beer to my lips, and took a sip. The warm beer had grown even warmer. We didn’t have the luxury of cold beer in Vietnam. As I stared into space, lost in thought, I pondered our aviation maintenance problem. We’d asked for help and gotten it in the form of a “contractor,” a non-military aircraft maintenance company willing to put up shop in Vietnam. Trying to re-supply so many places was easing me into my first experience with contract logistics. The Army contracted with an outside agency to help the then 5<sup>th</sup> Transportation, now an aviation intermediate maintenance battalion (AVIM), keep the aircraft going. The contractor’s assistance was proving a godsend in our over-stressed and

over-stretched maintenance situation. At the same time, I learned something about contractor logistics support (CLS) from an exceptionally qualified outside entity.

The hot beer didn't taste so good, but I absently mindedly continued to drink it anyway. Leaning back in my chair, arms bent, head resting in my hands I considered an aspect of our supply system that still bothered me. It was our policy to send major repairs on aircraft engines and transmissions back to the States. The minor repairs we were handling with great success through 5<sup>th</sup> Transportation. There were rare exceptions when the major repairs were managed in our maintenance and 801<sup>st</sup> maintenance. Typically, however, the disabled aircraft or vehicle in need of major repairs was grounded and rendered useless far too long. It was a waste of our equipment. We tracked some of the repairs to the depot and found they would not have returned during our twelve-month tour. This was in not only aviation and vehicles, but also most overhauls and depot maintenance of all equipment was done stateside in this time-consuming manner. Eventually, some aviation maintenance essentials came in the form of a floating depot aircraft maintenance ship called the *Corpus Christi Bay* off the coast of Vietnam.

Leaning forward over the desk again, I surfaced from day dreaming about aviation maintenance, picked up the pen, and finished my letter to Pat.

“This operation has proved to me all over again how important joint training and joint operations are. I see it pay off everyday for the 101<sup>st</sup>. We get airdrops that I suspect others don't. It's a great lesson in re-supply, points of re-supply, and requirements development. It's all so critical to combat operations. The division is spread out over 4,000 square miles, and the Chinook, CH-47, has become our workhorse. It's doing a hell of a job. Our maintenance team, the 5<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion that works along side the contractor, is performing a mammoth task supporting 500 helicopters.”

“It helps that we are in direct communication with the firebases in the A Shau Valley. We have a radio network in the Logistics Operations Center (LOC) and we talk to every firebase. I'm beginning to recognize the worth of what we do. It's a major undertaking to

supply fighting men with everything they need. It's a constant organizational puzzle, and everyday brings new challenges. The DISCOM team is getting fairly good at finding creative solutions for tough problems. The best part about the job is the men I work with. They're becoming a cohesive, hard working team. I'd put their performance against any group of men."

My thoughts drifted from work to my first time in Vietnam. "Just wish I could get some news, anything, about Captain An," I wrote. "Nothing. It's as if he and his family disappeared. The task of locating South Vietnamese Soldiers here, especially with hundreds out there named 'An,' is practically impossible. But I can't give up. I want to introduce you to him and his family someday when things are different."

"Glad to hear that our son is rolling over on his own. He'll be kicking a football before we know it. I'm so proud of our swim stars, winning medals and ribbons at their swim meets. Of course, they're making good grades in school. They're your kids. I contributed the athleticism and striking good looks to our gene pool. The straight A's are your fault entirely. Give hugs all around," I wrote in closing. "Don't forget to hug yourself. I miss you more than you'll ever know. Your loving husband, Jim."

At DISCOM headquarters, we had two daily briefings, one early in the morning and one late at night. The purpose was to give the DISCOM Commander and his staff a current status report and update. There were also evening meetings with first, General Zais, then General Wright, and then General Hennessey at the Division Tactical Operations Center (TOC).

Much later in my life and career when we entered Desert Shield/Desert Storm, Generals Thomas B. (Tom) Arwood, James W. (Jim) Ball, Jere (H.) Akin, and I sat around a table and averred, "We aren't going through again, what happened with our equipment in Vietnam. If we have anything to do with it, we aren't going to let that happen."

We pressed hard to move contractors onto the battlefield in Saudi Arabia. Instead of an eight or nine month turnaround on an engine or

transmission that moved back to the States, we wanted an eight or nine day turnaround in the desert. That's what we did with 76 contractors on the ground. We literally lined them up by weapons systems. AMC deserves great credit there. I know Tom Arwood gave it special emphasis. Given our Vietnam experiences, Jere Akin, Jim Ball, and I were determined to be more responsive this time. In Desert Shield/Desert Storm we not only saved valuable time, we cut the transportation cost of sending the major assembly back, having it repaired stateside, and turning around and shipping it back. It was a win/win situation.

That particular evening the questions were about our forward area supply and support systems. This was before the Army had a Table of Organization and Equipment (TOE) for forward area support coordinating officers and Forward Area Support (FAS) teams. Our solution to this particular organizational problem was to take the Executive Officer (XO) out of every battalion and put him in charge of running the forward support systems. He'd run the support systems for several firebases in his area. That included our refuel and rearm sites for helicopters. We'd scattered these refuel/rearm sites all over the division area. There was even one near, and later in, the A Shau Valley, so the Cobras heading up and down the Ho Chi Minh Trail could fly in, refuel, rearm, and be on their way.

We didn't realize it then, but we were developing the forerunner of the Forward Support Battalions (FSB) concepts. We took a small team from medical (326<sup>th</sup> Battalion), a small team from supply and transportation (426<sup>th</sup> Battalion), and another from maintenance (801<sup>st</sup> Battalion), and they became our FAS team. Our ad hoc system worked very well in Vietnam. After pushing and promoting this idea for ten years, the Army started using this type of forward support unit sometime in the 1980's.

During the seven months I was at DISCOM, we had three commanders, about one every two months. It seemed we couldn't keep a commander. DISCOM, I soon learned, was an interim position for a commander while he waited for the next brigade to open up. Every six months they changed, so our unit became a resource pool. I was convinced that the frequent command change wasn't a good policy. In fact, the Majors and one Lieutenant Colonel ran DISCOM



because the commanders weren't there long enough to learn the details of the business. Knowing they would only be there for a couple of months didn't provide much incentive to educate themselves about what we did. Their entire focus was their upcoming brigade command. But most learned quite a bit about an area that they'd had no need to explore in the past, logistics.

They served as mostly a buffer between the DISCOM and Division Headquarters, and we ran our LOC. The morning and night meetings were an attempt to keep the current boss up-to-date. Having said all that, the new brigade commanders went out to their new command ten times better off having had a little logistics training. Our team managed to handle all the responsibilities, and we kept things running smoothly. The burly iron Majors, our Warrant Officers and Sergeants in food service, maintenance, supply, medical, and ammunition were wonderful. They made things work.

Colonel Bradley and I had a great relationship because he took the stance that we knew what we were doing. He'd say, "Handle it," and we'd handle it. Colonel John Sigrist replaced Bradley, and his call sign was "Charging Bear." He was about 6'3", weighed about 270 pounds, and couldn't possibly have passed anyone's fitness standards. Colonel David E. Grange (later Lieutenant General) arrived as I was departing.

At this time, our S-3 officer left, and I became the S-3 and S-4 officer. Later, I even became an XO for about 30 days. I was a Major. Quite soon, my name appeared on the promotion list for Lieutenant Colonel. I was moving up the chain of command, seemed to be assuming new jobs hourly, and was working 12 to 15 hour days.

In February, the Army granted me a week of R&R, with the choice of going to Australia, Thailand, Hong Kong, or Hawaii. Most of us who were married chose Hawaii because it was halfway between the States and Vietnam, making the travel time much easier on both parties. Pat arranged for her mother, Syble, to travel to Tampa from Arkadelphia to be with the children while Pat met me on Oahu. Pat was gone from home about two days when Syble became overwhelmed with the solitary task of caring for Sabra, Dede, and ten-

month old Tony. Syble called Pat's father, Leon, saying, "Pop, get down here. I need some help."

Pat arrived in Hawaii a day before I did. Our travel packages were arranged by the Army and included bus transportation to a luxury hotel along Waikiki Beach. Those were the days before the Army owned a military hotel in Hawaii, and R&R participants were lodged in extremely nice hotels. An orientation meeting was held the following morning for our wives during which they were forewarned of changes that might have occurred in each of us due to wear and tear on our bodies and the tremendous mental and psychological strain of war. That afternoon, I arrived from Vietnam in better shape, both mentally and physically, than after my first 'Nam tour. Pat had been prepared for the worst, remembering 1965 when I had come home sick, 50 pounds lighter, and completely exhausted. When I arrived home then, she had not seen me for over a year. This time only ten to fifteen pounds were missing and I wasn't sick. I was very tired, but not sick. The military bus took us straight to the hotel, and I don't think that Pat and I emerged for at least a day!

We were euphoric at being together again. In our endless talks, Pat told me about the first steps Tony had taken, walking a short distance between Dede and Sabra. "It's something the girls will never forget," Pat explained. "They worked with him forever and were ecstatic when he finally took off on his own. Actually, it's amazing that he walked at all because Dede carried him around everywhere all day, everyday." Our days in Hawaii were wonderful; the only complaint was that it didn't last long enough. Before we knew it, we were on flights going in opposite directions back to opposite sides of the world.

In late 1969 and early 1970, Nixon began pulling back U.S. ground troops from Vietnam. Our overwhelming nightmare of a task came when the Marines began pulling out just south of the DMZ between North and South Vietnam. As the Marines left their firebases, it was my job to go up and take over that property. We were taking over bases with such names as "Rock Pile" and "Vandergrift." I know I'm prejudiced, but I'm not sure whether any other division could have pulled that off and covered all that turf. It gave the 101<sup>st</sup> 4,000 square miles, an area 40 miles by 100 miles. To this day, I'm filled with pride

at the capability and flexibility of the hard, tireless workers in our DISCOM organization.

Watching the magic we performed for large companies returning from field operations was nothing short of amazing. The bedraggled troopers lumbered wearily into our support area at DISCOM in filthy, torn clothes they'd been in for a week to ten days. Their weapons were dirty and rusty, and some had lost their hats, their dog tags, and pieces of equipment.

We literally put them through a "Super Trooper" assembly line. They turned in their weapons, including small arms, to a repair team, and hit the hot shower of a bath unit. Out of the shower, each trooper was issued a complete set of everything, fresh and clean. The uniforms weren't new but had been run through a reusable system where they were laundered. There was a place to shave, and barbers were on hand for haircuts. Lost dog tags were replaced, and each person got a new or clean pair of boots.

Communications troopers turned in their radio equipment. Their equipment was being cleaned while each Soldier went through his own personal cleansing. At the same time, batteries in the radio equipment were replaced. Cleaned, polished, and shined, with equipment to match, the trooper was ready for his "sit-down in a chair at a real table" hot meal. There were always steaks. If we were really lucky, which meant someone had been to a port area and sold or traded something for them, we served lobster. The lobsters normally went to Saigon, but occasionally found their way to us for the troopers.

It was a treat to see the weary troopers rejuvenated, spit-shined, and relaxed a bit prior to returning to the field on their next assignments. Before this second tour in Vietnam, I had been steeped in high personal appearance standards. General Paul D. Adams wouldn't have accepted anything less at Strike Command. During the late 1960's and early 1970's I saw the deterioration of those standards. Troopers were wearing "boony hats" in a special style that was not regulation, headbands, and beads. They wore peace signs, trinkets, and things tied around their foreheads that represented the same cultural icons seen in the hippie culture in the states.

At the same time, the division seemed to be experiencing a greater influx of Hispanics and Blacks. There was an undercurrent of struggle and frustration with attempts to better understand and appreciate the different cultures. A trooper could wear a headband and his beads during off duty hours, but while on duty, it was forbidden. Yet, I saw Soldiers doing shift work wearing inappropriate clothing. Officers were trying not to be so hard-line in certain areas, but they were still death on the use of drugs. If anybody in the 101<sup>st</sup> was caught using drugs, he was in deep trouble.

During those seven months, I remember sitting in operations center meetings listening to two-stars, Brigadier Generals, and Colonels discussing President Johnson and the White House literally selecting targets and personally having to approve B-52 targets in Vietnam. It was all vastly intriguing to a Major whose main problem was trying to keep the 101<sup>st</sup> in supplies. Those discussions would typically come around to the subject of “only trying to keep parity with the enemy.” “We’re not trying to overwhelm him and win decisively. It’s a political war.”

It sounded to me as though the Army had one hand tied behind its back because there was so much control from Washington and the Pentagon. The “Pacification Program” was almost gone at that point, but we weren’t going all out for the win either.

I met and made new friends during that time, one of whom was Lieutenant Colonel Bill Dyke, who was Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1 (Personnel). He was offered a battalion, the “No Slack” 327<sup>th</sup> Battalion. It distinguished itself for its fighting spirit and held the record for the longest continuous combat service in Vietnam of any infantry battalion in the U.S. Army. He then returned to Division Headquarters as Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3 (Operations and Plans).

We had an Assistant Division Commander (ADC) named Jim Smith. At that time, he was a Colonel and serving his seventh year in Vietnam. He didn’t go home for seven straight years except for the War College and short R&R leaves. Jim had, I think, six children. He was one of the Fort Rucker commanders in the seventies and retired as a two-star. He was a great Soldier, and I still run into him occasionally.

As the new acting Executive Officer of the DISCOM, I took most phone calls. In January, 1970, I received a call from Lieutenant General Walter J. Woolwine's office and staff at 1<sup>st</sup> Logistical Command.

"We're got an opening for Battalion Commander at the Cam Ranh Bay Support Command working for the 1<sup>st</sup> Logistics Command," said the voice through the wire. "We need you here in 24 hours and absolutely no later than 48 hours."

"You may have the wrong man," I said. "I'm a Major, and battalion commanders are Lieutenant Colonels."

"You are Major Jim Ross, the DISCOM XO, aren't you?" the voice asked.

"Yes," I replied, puzzled.

"Then you're who they want," the voice said, sounding weary.

The wheels were turning, and I was silent for a moment, wondering if the previous battalion commander had been wounded or even killed.

"If you want this battalion, you need to get there in 48 hours at the latest, and you'll have to be the one to get your release from the 101<sup>st</sup> and arrange arriving at the Cam Ranh Bay Support Command," he said, sounding ever more exasperated.

In that split second of indecision, the words "He who hesitates, loses," came to mind. "I'll take it," I blurted. With these words, I was on the move again. It was customary for a Lieutenant Colonel to receive an offer for a battalion command after nine months to a year, and the command period was for six months. This practice ensured an extension of a one-year contract of Vietnam service to 18 months. I'd only been in Vietnam for seven months and was a Major, but hey, who's counting and checking rank? It certainly wasn't going to be me. Underlying the enthusiasm, however, a little red flag of concern was vaguely waving in the deep shadows of my mind. Is it possible the

reason they are offering this job to a Major who has only been here seven months is that it is a monster job with hideous problems? Nah. I shoved that worry down and buried it deep.

I was off to become the commander of the 10<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion in Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam.<sup>24</sup>

With the help of friends on the division staff and the assistant chief of staff for personnel, I began the process to rush my transfer. General Woolwine's office was also instrumental in the early release. I made it in 48 hours, which was nothing short of amazing. In the blink of an eye, I was about to take my first command. It was exciting, challenging, and completely overwhelming.

Flying into Cam Ranh Bay was intriguing because it had a Miami-like appearance with white sand beaches and swaying palm trees lining the coastline. It was the largest deep-water port in Vietnam, 200 to 300 feet deep in some areas, so that dredging was not required. An inland harbor, it was protected by a peninsula against the sea. The harbor area itself curled back around the peninsula creating a safe haven from open, turbulent seas.

Cam Ranh Bay was a huge U.S. military installation. Personnel strength involved about 9,000 Army, 7,000 Air Force, 400 Navy, and 13,000 Vietnamese. In addition to its two 10,000-foot runways, it was a vast storage site for large munitions and POL. The peninsula was almost entirely sand which, I would soon learn, caused the roads to deteriorate more quickly. Road maintenance was constant during my days there.

There was a village of Vietnamese people, who had lived for decades on the peninsula. The Army put up concertina and large barbed wire fences, eventually even a pierced steel planking wall, around the village. It was an attempt to keep them safe and separate them from military operations. At night, the area took on an eerie yellow half-light because of lights from the village and night operations of the 10<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion.

I reported to newly frocked and pinned Brigadier General Henry Richard Del Mar. He was Commanding General (CG), U.S. Army

Support Command at Cam Ranh Bay. (General Del Mar later commanded the Military Traffic Management Command (MTMC).) In what was my shortest interview, five minutes or less, I think I only uttered “Yes, Sir” two or three times. Very unusual.

“Your predecessor is no damn good,” said General Del Mar by way of introduction. “He has done the worst job of any battalion commander I have ever seen. He’s leaving. I don’t want you to spend any time with him. I don’t want you to pick up any of his bad habits. You have a couple of hours to get your change of command straight. I want you out there in command today.” And that was that. He stood for the entire short meeting. Welcome to Cam Ranh Bay and your first command position, I thought. I made my exit a few short minutes after entering.

“Okay,” I said to myself as I left his office. “So much for polite conversation to break the ice. No easing into the command to get my feet wet and learn my way around. I was about to dive in headfirst. What kind of unit was this I would inherit in two hours? Had I made a huge mistake? The tiny red flag surged from the shadows in my brain flapping wildly to the forefront. Oh, boy!

Like a rope to a sinking man, a good friend of mine, Lieutenant Colonel (later Lieutenant General) Edward (Ed) Honor, appeared in my path. The sight of him was a welcome relief. “Hey, I heard you might be coming over to command one of the battalions,” he said. “When did you get here?”

“About ten minutes ago,” I laughed. “I’ve already met General Del Mar and have two hours to get my change of command squared away.”

“That sounds about right,” Ed said. “I’ve got the truck battalion. Yours is the mixed battalion of military police, infantry, stevedore, and boat units. Am I right?”

“That’s what I hear,” I said. Having Ed there made me think I’d not made too grave an error by accepting the command. I wasn’t feeling the effects of jet-lag, but I certainly felt the full brunt of trauma from General Del Mar’s terse comments and the sadness of leaving a

great division like the 101<sup>st</sup>. The entire surreal situation was causing me to be a bit emotional.

Somehow, I got through the rest of that day, took over command of the mixed unit in the 10<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion, and started to learn about my new job. The 10<sup>th</sup> had a total of around 1,300 Soldiers and 300 local Vietnamese stevedores, laborers who load and unload cargo on vessels at port. All our civilian stevedores had a basic security clearance, but we still had to search them each night as they left the port because they would steal whatever they could carry with them.

There was such a shortage and need for basic food items in the Vietnamese community, but we couldn't have them stealing cargo. Once a woman managed to conceal, sort of, thirty oranges under her clothes, and she was a very petite woman. I had no doubt that she had many children at home to feed. I let her keep a couple of the oranges, but insisted she return the rest. Any type of fruit, pizza, canned goods, and cereals were the items of choice for theft.

Cargo documentation was 100 percent paper in 1970. There were no computers or electronic devices to assist in keeping up with cargo. This made it even more difficult to determine how much theft and pilferage was taking place. A team of cargo documentation NCOs checked and double checked everything that came off the ship against a shipping cargo manifest. Shortages were reported, but little recourse was available. Most of Cam Ranh's cargo came from Oakland, Concord, San Francisco, Sharpe Army Depot, and Long Beach California; the Pacific Northwest near Seattle; and from the East Coast through the Panama Canal and up to Vietnam.

My new responsibilities included 24 hour, 7 day a week command of the five Cam Ranh Bay piers. Because we were round the clock, everyone in the battalion worked either a day or night shift. Each pier had two sides, and at peak times, two ships were simultaneously loading and unloading from the same pier. There were three stevedore companies for off-loading, and a heavy boat company to re-supply north and south into Phan Thiet, Phan Rang, Da Nang, and other places.



The fifth pier was for ammunition and was separated by several miles from the others. The separation distance and safety radius depended on the explosive capacity of the ship and its ammunition cargo. We needed to insure the safety of Soldiers and village people in the area. There was also a POL tank facility. During my time there, Viet Cong and North Vietnamese fired mortars and rockets into the ammunition and POL areas. The POL point was hit only once with a mortar, and we lost a majority of POL stored there. The ammunition storage sites were so well secured with berms, we never lost any ammunition.

Port security also fell under my responsibilities. Our security force consisted of a standard light infantry company and a military police company. Together they controlled all entrances and exits day and night and had defensive points around the Cam Ranh Bay area. These men were unsung heroes in every sense of the term.

I was just beginning to meet some of our battalion that first day. Sergeant Major James (Jim) Smith said after we introduced ourselves to each other, "Where are you from? There's no mistaking that accent. I know you're from the South."

"I'm from a small town in Arkansas that you've probably never heard of," I said.

"I may have," Sergeant Major Smith replied smiling. "Try me."

"It's a college town in the South not too far from Hot Springs with the unusual name of Arkadelphia," I said.

"I grew up there," he laughed. "My wife is still in Arkadelphia."

In a military office, half way around the globe, two boys from Arkadelphia shared a few minutes of sweet reminiscing. We knew many of the same people. What a gift from home it was for each of us. He had joined the Army about the time I went to Henderson and now here we were, eleven years later. He proved to be one of my closest friends and confidants. What a great Soldier.

I was blessed to have Captain and later Colonel William (Bill) Crowder, a good friend and great officer, to work with me in six assignments over 20 years. I first met Bill in Cam Ranh Bay where he was the 97<sup>th</sup> Heavy Boat Company Commander. He became my battalion S-3, probably the single most critical position in the battalion. In the 1970's, he was at Oakland Army Base, as was I, and when I joined the 4<sup>th</sup> Transportation Brigade in Germany, there was Bill. In assignments in DA DSCLOG, Bill first worked in Strategic Mobility and later became the Division Chief. He is one of the most astute, savvy, and effective officers I know. The XO was Kent Modine, who later retired from the Army as a Colonel.

Included among the 15,000 hardworking Soldiers and Vietnamese of our battalion were a large number of people from "Project 100,000." About 60 percent of our total personnel came from the project's "alternative Army personnel." Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara launched "Project 100,000" under Johnson's Great Society Program. Under his direction, an alternative Army was systematically recruited from among those who had previously been rejected for failing to meet the armed service mental and medical requirements. Starting in 1966, the plan was to accept 40,000 men under the new alternative Army relaxed standards and 100,000 each year thereafter.

Recruitment screenings were based on the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) composed of verbal and mathematical questions. Based on these scores, recruits were divided into the following five categories:

- Category I – 93<sup>rd</sup> percentile to 100<sup>th</sup> percentile (Superior)
- Category II – 65<sup>th</sup> percentile to 92<sup>nd</sup> percentile (High Average)
- Category III – 31<sup>st</sup> percentile to 64<sup>th</sup> percentile (Average)
- Category IV – 10<sup>th</sup> percentile to 30<sup>th</sup> percentile (Below Average)
- Category V – 1<sup>st</sup> percentile to 9<sup>th</sup> percentile (Significantly Below Average)

In the Army, Categories I and II are considered to represent above average trainability, Category III is considered average trainability, and Categories IV and V below average. The Army, prior to "Project 100,000," didn't accept recruits who tested in Categories IV and V

because it had discovered the men didn't train and perform well enough to be autonomous and helpful to the military.

The "alternative Army personnel," which McNamara was calling the "New Standards Men," in our unit were primarily from Category IV. The test placed them in a category of being less "trainable" than 70 to 90 percent of the United States population. In other words, between 70 to 90 percent of the people in our country learned, thought, and worked more quickly and efficiently. Unfortunately, the number of Black men from urban ghettos and southern rural communities made up a disproportionate number of the "New Standards Men." These men were not lazy and definitely not inherently mentally deficient. They simply had not had the opportunity to acquire the skills and education to pursue an Army career.

Struggling with inherent problems in the program, Department of Defense (DoD) submitted a proposal to Congress for a smaller, more direct, six-month remediation program and extended combat training. Upon successful completion of the Special Training Enlistment Program (STEP), the "New Standards Men" could then join operational units. Congress decided not to fund the program, but "Project 100,000" forged ahead anyway. The extra time and remediation in STEP would have allowed the men to enter the Army on a more even performance level with other personnel.

The battalion's senior NCO, Sergeant Major Smith was a compassionate and creative Soldier, leader, and trainer. He decided our "New Standards Men," only working 12 hours a day, would start battalion school to work on GEDs. He found officers and NCOs with teaching experience, and we started our own school with the help of Cam Ranh Bay Education Center. Initially, we thought classes at the sixth grade level would fit our needs. We were far off base.

Almost immediately, we discovered that reading and writing skills were at a first to third grade level, with some being able to read and write only their names. Discussions about checkbooks and controlling personal money were a waste of time without basic math skills. The Education Center advisor said, "You're trying to teach at too high a level. Start with the basics in reading, writing, and math and build from there." The Soldiers complained and griped about having to

attend class after putting in a 12 hour workday. The few I've seen since then, however, have expressed gratitude for the experience, especially those who went on to earn their GED.

“Project 100,000” became very unpopular. To some, it appeared as though President Johnson was fearful that calling up Reserves and abolishing student deferments would further inflame war protesters and signal that we were having an all-out war with Vietnam. It was after McNamara began privately declaring that the war was unwinnable that he devised “Project 100,000.” It made it look to some as though instead of calling up our reserves, we were putting our less fortunate, less capable in harm's way for a very unpopular cause. The project became yet one more step toward Johnson moving out of the White House.

In our battalion, dealing with the results of the project was a struggle, both for the Regular Army and for the New Standards recruits. Nevertheless, we worked together to find solutions, and learned and grew from the experience. We found that some of the men had never been given a real chance to learn. It seemed no one in their lives had *expected* them to be able to read more than their name. We started with the assumption that they could all learn enough to pass the GED test. It might take them a little longer, because the older we are, the more difficult learning new skills becomes. But we knew they could do it.

The “Project 100,000” experience prejudiced my thinking on the draft. I hope we never institute the draft again. Today's Army is comprised of almost 100 percent high school graduates and is a smart, educated Army. I used to worry that we wouldn't have a good cross section of the nation without the draft. I thought we wouldn't have a good mix of high, middle, and low socio-economic levels. But, we have that now without the draft. The people in today's Army are volunteers, and they want to be there. That's extremely important. Today's Army has to be the best our nation has ever had. If I were asked to rank on an Order of Merit List (OML) the world's Best Armies, I would rank the U.S. Army Number One. That was my opinion in 1994 when I retired and remains so today.

Over the course of my first month in command, I learned what a vast difference the characteristics of the 10<sup>th</sup> Transportation were from any unit I had ever been with, certainly the most recent one, the 101<sup>st</sup>. Pride in the unit, in missions accomplished, in doing a good job, and most important, pride in self were evident in most aspects of the 101<sup>st</sup>. They were missing in the 10<sup>th</sup> and perhaps it had something to do with being on the rear end of a combat zone. Even working 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, the Soldiers still had too much time to find trouble.

I viewed the 10<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion as a very large, blue collar, racially diverse, very complex unit. The Soldiers appeared to look listlessly down a long tunnel of days filled with hours of hard manual labor, and no end in sight. I had been accustomed to a low-level hum about drugs over at the 101<sup>st</sup>. At the 10<sup>th</sup>, drug use was rampant, and addiction problems grew to astronomical proportions. For a time, our battalion held the record for the most Soldiers in the Long Binh Military jail. I wasn't sure whether the drug culture in the States mirrored the drug culture in Vietnam, or it was the other way around. The drugged Soldiers were constantly setting fire to something, creating disturbances, and in one case trying to overrun the depot staff. And these were our Soldiers! Our Soldiers wanted to destroy their own base and officers.

All too soon, I also learned what caused the quick departure of my predecessor. There was an Enlisted Club on base with no controls of alcohol consumption or hours of operation because of shift work. Soldiers would go to the club after work and get drunk (often in combination with drug use) because there was no limit on beer. Prior to my arrival, a metal chain beating of a young Soldier by another Soldier nearly resulted in his death, and a knifing nearly killed another Soldier. The events occurred at the club and did not set well with Brigadier General Del Mar. Nor did he take kindly to a large group of Warrant Officers getting into a huge brawl and wrecking their club. About half of those men were punished.

My predecessor became so worried about being "fragged" that he sequestered himself in his "hootch" at sunset and didn't come out until sun up. The term "frag," most common in Vietnam, meant to assassinate an unpopular member of one's own unit by dropping a fragmentation grenade into the victim's tent at night. The story of

fragging usually involved the killing of an unpopular or inept NCO or officer. A “hootch” is a Vietnamese dwelling in which rural farmers or peasants live. The battalion commander had Soldiers sandbag a barrier higher than his head around his hootch, making it a small fighting castle. He was leaving little possibility of being fragged while he slept. I’m not clear on whether he was relieved or sent packing. He just left. Del Mar did not want him in his area.

General Del Mar was very visible across his Cam Ranh Bay Support Command. He was all over the area, making rounds day and night. He’d appear at two o’clock in the morning and then again be out and about at ten. In my opinion, he was doing the right thing. Soldiers would see the General, feel his presence, and I admired him so much for that. We became lifelong friends. He and his wife died within a few days of each other in February of 1994.

We tried a variety of programs to discourage so much drinking and drug use. They were simple, little things, but some seemed to help. In the hottest part of the year, we started taking cold drinks and Kool-Aid to the Soldiers several times a day. We shifted from hot meals to sandwiches, serving lighter things, experimenting with different foods to find the most popular. We were trying to make the place a little more like home. Because the Soldiers worked round the clock, we had the cooks on shifts round the clock. Soups and beverages would go out to the different pier locations throughout the night. We also served the infantry Soldiers and MPs that were pulling perimeter security duty. I’d seen what a morale boost the hot meals and ice cream had been to the 101<sup>st</sup> Soldiers. I hoped that implementing the same kind of thing would somehow impact the Soldiers in that environment.

We even attempted to bring in outside entertainment. We were unable to get big names to Cam Ranh Bay, but we did orchestrate special entertainment in the form of trips to Qui Nhon and Da Nang to see some local entertainment. Our deep-water harbor and beautiful beaches were probably the best in all of Vietnam, so we started a scuba diving program. Securing scuba gear and locating a certified instructor in our diving detachment, we started to teach Soldiers how to scuba dive. In the process, we discovered lobsters and other seafood in the deep cool waters of Cam Ranh Bay. We saw little signs of progress in everything we tried. For whatever reason, after several

months, I lost the infamous distinction of being the commander with the most Soldiers in the stockade!

When I first arrived, there were two truck battalions, one of which was run by my friend Ed Honor. He organized and operated the distribution system within the central region area. Our large depot complex allowed the supplies that we didn't move forward to be stored in depot stocks.

The problem-solving aspects of my job were endless, and I found myself thinking more and more about the containerization of ammunition, of all things. Brigadier General (later Major General) Peter G. Olenchuk and the AMC staff were conducting a mega-test at our port in "containerization of ammunition." The whole intent of the project was to streamline the process of off-loading ammunition from ships at port and direct shipment straight to the Army division. The current practice involved manual double and triple handling of the ammunition, which was too time-consuming. There were times when the ship contained 10,000 tons of ammunition, and the off-loading took eight to ten days. Our goal was to find more efficient ways to package or "contain" the ammunition for shipment and manage the off-loading by handling the ammunition only once.

As we put our procedures, which had been used since WWII, under a microscope of scrutiny, we discovered some very interesting facts. One thing that came to light was the fact that we were shipping as much lumber as we were ammunition with each load. The lumber in each ammunition container was arranged so that it stabilized the ammunition during the ocean-going voyage. By the time I had been in Cam Ranh Bay a month or two, we had a mountain-size stack of lumber that had been broken down and stacked in a field. Typically, the wood was burned, but I just could not bring myself to do that. It was brand new lumber!

I was reminded of the story about Henry Ford who originally ordered some car parts from Europe to put in his Model T. He sent specific orders to the manufacturer regarding the type wood and size of boards to be used in building the shipping box. Henry's agreement to buy the machine part depended on the shipping container being built precisely to his specifications. When the parts arrived, Ford and his

assembly line workers carefully disassembled the containers and reused the wood to make the running boards for his cars. The boards were the perfect size, shape, and type of wood Henry Ford needed for his running boards.

As hard as I tried to think like Henry and find a use for our lumber somewhere in our battalion or find a place to sell it, my success was limited. It was too costly to ship back for re-use. We had more shipping containers than we'd ever need for our shipping purposes. The Vietnamese didn't want to buy it and couldn't have afforded it if they did. I even tried selling it to a Korean division nearby, but they had no use for it. We used what we needed for our building projects, but that barely made a dent. The rapid movement of ammunition was huge, and my mountain of lumber quickly grew into a monster. Finally, I was forced to begin burning some of it to make way for more that arrived on a daily basis.

Another thing we did during the "ammunition containerization test" was study how other ports handled their cargo procedures. From Concord Ammo Port in California and others along the West Coast, we observed the practice of shipping in large forty-foot containers. For example, Concord might hold a container for Cam Ranh Bay for a week until it was completely filled with ammunition for that precise unit or destination. At that point, it shipped. When it arrived, we didn't have to unload it onto pallets, move the pallets, and then load it into a truck. The whole container could be placed on a "container trailer" and trucked straight to the division. The efficiency and productivity of this was obvious.

The shipment of ammunition remains somewhat an issue even today. Some twenty years later, as we entered Desert Shield/Desert Storm, we were still talking moving ammunition by container and still looking at containerization tests. During Shield/Storm, I brought in the previous Deputy Chiefs of Staff of Logistics (Lieutenant Generals Joseph M. Heiser, Jr., Fred Kornet, Jr., Arthur J. Gregg, and Eivind H. Johansen, and General Richard Thompson), especially those who'd served during the Vietnam and post-Vietnam era, for an update on what we were doing. One of the areas I thought we absolutely failed in during the Shield/Storm operation was the effective use of



containers. We improved a small measure since Vietnam, but not enough.

As I mentioned, I admired General Del Mar for getting out of his office at Cam Ranh Bay on a regular basis. I'm big on officers getting to know their people. Each night and/or early morning, Sergeant Major Smith and I visited each work area to see the Soldiers and so they could see us. Executive Officer Kent Modine took my place when I couldn't go. That way we could cover work sites the entire night and entire day.

One night as I walked past a ship, I noticed smoke coming from the lower decks. Calling to the senior NCO, I said, "What do you suppose is causing that haze? Do you think the ship might be on fire?"

The NCO jumped up, said, "Holy cow!" (Actually, he didn't say, "cow.") He ran to check the source of the smoke. I followed. It was a "chill and freeze" ship loaded with food and was in the process of being off-loaded. We scared the "cow" out of some Vietnamese workers who had a little fire going to cook pizzas. They had stolen pizza from the ship, removed the pizza from its cardboard containers, and started a fire on deck with the containers. They had a make-shift bake rack with a pizza on it over the fire. Several uncooked pizzas were nearby.

We thought the ship was on fire, and it was just a pizza party! The NCO broke up the party on the spot. The fire was put out, and the mess cleared. As we walked back to the dock, I said, "That pizza smelled so good."

"I was thinking the very same thing," the NCO said. "That's exactly what I want for breakfast when my shift is done."

From the many good people in our outfit at Cam Ranh Bay, I learned so much. By the time I'd been there six months, I felt good about the direction in which the battalion was growing. My first command wasn't leading brave fighting men into battle against the enemy, but our group was certainly doing its part to support those who were.

During those 13 months in Vietnam, letters from home sustained me. That Christmas was lonely for us all. Pat and the kids stayed in Florida with no family making the trip to visit them. Pat wrote of that morning, "We got up on Christmas morning, opened our gifts, and thought of Dad-O. As much as I tried to keep everything upbeat, we missed you too much, and it was lonely. Our constant vigil of the Vietnam news reports has yet to give us a glimpse of you or any of our friends there."

## *Chapter VIII*

### **Pentagon 1970-1974 and Oakland 1975-1978**

#### **Army Staff**

Departing Vietnam in June of 1970 bore little resemblance to my departure five years earlier. In 1965, I was physically drained and ill. Back then the nagging concern for Captain An, his family and his troops invaded every thought for months. As their advisor, I'd had been responsible for them, and felt as though I was leaving fledgling children behind. Mentally drained from a year in the jungle, my spirit was in desperate need of seeing, touching, holding, and being with my own flesh and blood family.

Great differences accompanied this departure with one exception, longing for family. In the quiet of my Cam Ranh Bay office, I packed the last of my possessions into a briefcase. Among the papers resided a document promoting me from Major to Lieutenant Colonel. It had arrived only a few weeks earlier. The Army finally made "an honest man" out of me with advancement to a rank that fit the job. Taking command of the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion had been a frustrating, challenging, growing time, and I would miss the good people with whom I'd shared my days.

I would not, however, miss the job. The programs we'd begun would continue to benefit the hard working Soldiers in the 10<sup>th</sup>. Break-bulk ships, container ships, ROROs (Roll-on/Roll-off ships), *The LTC John U.D. Page* (a beach discharge lighter Army vessel) carrying vital military supplies would get loaded and unloaded with or without me. The 73<sup>rd</sup> Transportation Company would continue their tug and heavy lift support by towing, berthing and unberthing ships and operating heavy waterborne lifts with floating cranes. The 97<sup>th</sup> would continue to work their magic moving cargo from port and ships at sea onto the shore. The 155<sup>th</sup> would continue to use their ship and shore platoons to offload and upload ships. The 149<sup>th</sup>, the Heavy Crane Detachment, would continue to lift heavy cargo. The 556<sup>th</sup> would continue to truck supplies from Cam Ranh Bay to any military site within a two-day drive. All the hard working people of the 10<sup>th</sup> would carry on, supporting our Soldiers in the field. Immersing

myself in family time invaded my daydreams, and I couldn't wait to hold Pat, Sabra, and Dede, and become better acquainted with my new son, Tony.

I was leaving war-torn, weary Vietnam at a time when the home papers and magazines were urging us to get out of the war. Not only were our boys being wounded and killed in a fragmented Pacific Rim country, militant, war-protesting students at colleges like Kent State in Ohio were losing their lives in heated protests. Hatred for the American military was exploding from a boiling cauldron of national rage and rebellion against a war that made little sense to them. Did I wear my uniform for the flight home? In 1965, I proudly wore my uniform and ribbons home. But now, times were different. Was I a hypocrite to my principles, my standards, my job, my country if I did not? Should I wear it and brave the verbal and possible physical abuse through long hours on planes and walks through a maze of terminals? My homecoming would be the opposite of the WWII Airborne Ranger that had influenced me as a teen. Young boys wouldn't be gazing at me in admiration. Seething contempt was the emotion my uniform was likely to evoke.

News articles reaching Vietnam about Los Angeles and San Francisco's anti-war protestors and hippies were unnerving. In the beginning, those of us traveling back to the states were uncertain as to what to wear because Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle were all entry ports for Soldiers returning from Vietnam. When I arrived outside Saigon at Tan Son Nhut Airfield, we were told not to wear our uniforms for the flight back to the States, and with that, the decision was taken out of my hands. We went to the PX and selected a civilian shirt, aloha or golf shirt, for the trip home. The irony was that I still had a crew cut and wore military glasses. I don't think my golf shirt fooled anyone, but I felt more comfortable, and there were no major incidents.

Homecoming with the family in Florida was like healing salve to an open wound. As always, Pat had the home front well in hand, putting our beloved house in the Town and Country neighborhood on the market and selling it before I arrived for about \$28,000. Much later in life, I would spend more than that for a car. My family hated to leave Tampa, our great neighbors and friends, and schools the girls

loved. This was Tony's birthplace; he'd been six weeks old when I left and was now sixteen months old and walking. I noticed he seemed to prefer a baseball to the other balls I was constantly rolling toward him. Both girls thought of their little brother as their own personal doll and were great babysitters for Tony. Both were very active on the Town and Country Swim Team, swimming year round and winning many ribbons and awards, each amassing over 50 awards and competitive enough to go to the Florida Junior Olympic trials and scoring well. Dede was ten, would be in sixth grade, and was best at the backstroke and freestyle. Sabra's thirteenth birthday was just weeks away. She would be in eighth grade and had mastered the butterfly and freestyle. Their swim team friends made no bones about how much the girls would be missed, which was equaled by Sabra and Dede's reluctance to leave.

Many sad good-byes preceded our departure to Washington, D.C. where we stayed in hotels for a few days while making a final decision about a new home. Dale City, about 25 miles south of Washington, was a planned community (schools, shopping center, churches, etc.) and was affordable to military families. We bought a small house, and Pat began to work her magic, making the new address our home. The decision to build a pool in our back yard was a big one, but with the "fish" we were raising, seemed a necessary expenditure. One of Tony's earliest childhood memories is looking out the back window of the house while the workers dug the hole for the pool.

Soon after my return to the States, I was in a waiting room at a dentist's office and caught sight of a June 12, 1970 *Life Magazine*. It had become my practice to avoid reading current news pumped full of negative press about the war. Criticism of the war spilled over on the Army, and reading discouraging articles about one's work did not bring joy to my heart and a song to my lips. The cover of this particular issue however caught my eye, and I picked up the magazine.

Young, angry appearing faces of shouting boys, dressed in combat fatigues, holding automatic weapons stared back at me in full color from the cover. Eight to twelve-year-old bodies standing in platoon formation were frozen in time by the click of a photographer's camera. Memories of armed Vietnamese children pierced my thinking, but these weren't children of Vietnam. The caption read, "Palestinian

Arabs: new pride and unity” and “The ‘Tiger Cats train at a camp in Jordan.” Staring at the cover, I thought, war is horrible enough without throwing children into the mix. While a large portion of our youth are primed for peace, love, free sex, and drugs, the Arab youth are being primed for war. Little did I realize the photographer had captured a little window into the future.

On June 1, 1970, I began the Logistics Executive Development Course at Fort Lee<sup>25</sup>. It was a 19 week course that proved to be informative, pertinent, interesting, and perhaps my finest Army training. The classroom lessons applied straight to my job. I was very impressed with the transferability of class material to the workplace. Having completed the course, my next assignment took me into Washington, D.C. Family life in Dale City was worth the trouble of the fifty-mile round trip commute to and from the Pentagon each day.

I was assigned to the office of the Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff of Logistics for Supply and Maintenance (ADCSLOG-S&M), headed by General Darrie H. Richards at the Pentagon, the world’s largest office building.<sup>26</sup> Initially, the daunting task of learning my way around my office area, security practices, and parking procedures consumed a large part of the mornings.

My job, specifically, was working in the Financial Resources Directorate for Supply and Maintenance, a small organization under Colonel Carl Krueger. Colonel Krueger’s strong suit was field operations and the importance of the department’s support for troops. As an action officer, I spent lots of time with Brigadier General (later Major General) Homer D. Smith, Deputy to General Richards. Smith later became famous as the last General in Vietnam. As the Embassy was closed in Saigon, he was one of the last to catch a helicopter flight from the top of the building to a waiting ship in the South China Sea.

During 1970 through 1972, one of my many tasks was “book” man for budget account programs in No. 7 supply (7S) and maintenance (7M). Our group put together the “books” used by General Richards during question and answer sessions with Congress. We were responsible for anticipating every conceivable question that a board of Congressional Representatives might ask about Army supply and maintenance logistics and then collecting up-to-date and accurate

information needed to answer the questions. Our research formed the “books” used during what we called the “murder board sessions.” In session, when a question was asked, we were expected to provide the page in the “book” with the related information “post haste.”

Vietnam was constantly in the media and on everyone’s mind. From 1970 to 1974, I watched the slow agonizing demise of Vietnam. Logistics support was being reduced as we slowly began to pull out of the war. Although support was decreasing, there were still emergency arrangements to be made and a battle staff that operated in the LOC. A full-time duty officer and battle staff were on duty round the clock, seven days a week. As the Lieutenant Colonel staff duty officer, it wasn’t unusual to spend nights sleeping on a cot in the office of the DCSLOG that I would later occupy as a three-star Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics.

I remember one weekend when DCSLOG staff received an emergency request for an ammunition shipment to Vietnam. It was Sunday. We quickly briefed General Heiser and were sent to also brief General Creighton W. Abrams.<sup>27</sup> Because we had a staff on duty, the special request for 105-mm ammunition was approved, filled, and shipped immediately to Vietnam. Back then, the DCSLOG staff had more than 1,100 in personnel. Seventeen years later, that number had dropped to 500.

Many fine, top-notch DCSLOG Colonels with whom I worked became Army Generals. Among them were Eivind “Ivy Joe” H. Johansen and Duane H. Stubbs (later Major General), Supply Management; Major General Chester M. (Chet) McKeen, Maintenance Management; and Arthur J. Gregg, Troop Support Division.

When Brigadier General Peter Olenchuk came in as Director of Materiel Acquisition (DMA) in DCSLOG, I was selected to be the Executive Officer. Watching Major General George M. Bush (no relation to the presidents) and, later, General Olenchuk prepare for Congressional hearings in which they would be defending all five appropriations: missiles, aviation, wheel and combat vehicles, other procurement, and ammunition, was a lesson in and of itself.

Aviation was one of the five appropriations that had been moved from the command of an Army Lieutenant Colonel to a civilian position. The Aviation Division had about 50 people working there because of the large number of aircraft we had in Vietnam. Lieutenant Colonel Joseph P. Cribbins (later a civilian, GS-16 and SES) became the Division Chief and was one of the few that exceeded 50 years of total service (military and civilian). To his credit, he was a very effective leader and was indispensable in his position there.

Fixed-wing aircraft and helicopter use was greatly expanding in the military during this time, and aviation was big business for the Army. About 20 general officers came out of that one office in the Pentagon. Donald R. (Don) Williamson, the Aviation System Commander, retired as a Major General. James M. (Jim) Hesson also retired as a Brigadier General and Aaron L. Lilley, Jr. retired as a Major General. Charles F. (Chuck) Drenz, who was the project manager for the Apache and the Blackhawk and later the Test and Evaluation Commander (TECOM), retired as a two-star (Major General). Down the hall from me were Major Leon Salomon, who later was AMC Commander, and William N. (Bill) Farnen (later a Major General) and the XO for Brigadier General Garland A. Ludy, Director of Army Transportation.

As a junior Lieutenant Colonel among all the “top dogs”, I was thoroughly impressed with all the action officers. There were Majors and Lieutenant Colonels working in the “trenches,” in areas C, D, and E-rings on the first floor off Corridor Five in the Pentagon. The DCSLOG is still there today, and they still call it the “trenches.”

Across every directorate at the Pentagon, there were high quality people, all dedicated to doing the best job they could. To say the Vietnam era was a difficult one is an understatement and, as I’ve said before, we made mistakes. It was during this time that high-ranking officers sat around a table and determined who commanders of brigades and battalions in Vietnam would be. There was no “order of merit” roster from which to work at that time, because the commanders on the ground (in the field) made the selections for the new commanders. They chose the best candidate for the job from the information they had. The fallacy was that they didn’t know the best candidate from across the entire Army. Today, the selection process is



much improved, and the choices for advancement are made by a centralized Command Board at the Army level from all eligible officers from the entire Army. It's a far more equitable procedure.

Forty-eight months was my tenure on the Army Staff, which was lengthy but not uncommon. Those four years were another wonderful span of time in my life and that of my family. Our home and pool in Dale City were perfect for our growing family. Sabra became a teenager, Dede a pre-teen and early teen, and Tony grew into a toddling pre-schooler. They all swam like fish at every opportunity until we were forced to close the pool for a few months each winter. Tony would run off the diving board while playing "cops and robbers," hit the water, and swim as fast as he could to the other side of the pool, where he was "safe" from the imaginary bad guys. We were raising another "fish."

One evening at dinner, after listening to what the kids had done that day, I said, "Ask me what I did today."

"What did you do today, Dad-O?" asked Dede. (The girls loved their nickname for me, "Dad-O.")

"Thank you for asking. I was among three action officers selected by General Heiser as nominees for a position in a special part of the Army with a code name of 'Snow White and Seven Dwarfs'." It's in the Director of the Army Staff's office, previously known as the Secretary to the General Staff (SGS)," I said proudly. "They were looking for officers who had tenure of at least three years on the Army Staff, that's me; had been a division or office chief, that's me; and an XO, that's me again," I said. "The three of us were interviewed, and I got the position. No applause needed. I'm now the logistics representative in the Army Chief's office, and I'll be working for General Creighton W. Abrams, Jr. Each of the three star deputies picked an officer from their Deputy Chief's office to work in General Abrams' office, and I'm the one from logistics."

"PLEASE," I teased, pleading loudly, "hold the applause until I'm done. This is such an unbelievable honor. General Abrams is a legend in his own time, He's the pinnacle of professionalism, a role model we all aspire to be. I'm going to learn so much working in his office."

The family was appropriately and politely responsive, giving me a round of dinner table applause and congratulations. Tony, in his very literal, four-year-old way, said enthusiastically, “Yea! Dad-O’s going to work with the seven dwarfs. Can I go too?”

The following morning I moved down the hall at the Pentagon into an office where there were seven action officers, six others and me. A smile escaped as I recalled the ineffective, yet lengthy, bedtime explanation to Tony about becoming one of the dwarfs. He hoped I would be “Happy” because that was his favorite, and he definitely didn’t want me to go to work everyday as “Grumpy.”

In the hierarchy of command, each of us represented one of the seven three-star deputies directly under General Abrams. Major (later Lieutenant General) Michael F. Spigelmire, represented Lieutenant General Donald H. Cowles, who was Deputy Chief of Staff of Operations (DCSOPS). Major Bobby Maddox (later a Major General) was the representative of Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development (ACSFOR). Later ACSFOR became part of the Deputy Chief of Staff of Operations, but then we had a separate deputy for force management. Major Hank Hagwood (later Major General Henry Melvin Hagwood, Jr.), represented the Comptroller of the Army. Dale Griggs represented the Office of the Chief of Research and Development (OCRD). Chuck Williams represented the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (DCSPER). I regret I cannot recall the second DCSPER representative at that time. Lieutenant Colonel Bill Dyke, with whom I served in the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division and who was about to become a Colonel, was our Office Chief. I was the dwarf who represented DCSLOG.

The entire Chief of Staff of the Army’s office was blessed with superb and first-rate officers. Among these were Lieutenant General Charles W. (Chuck) Bagnal, General Crosbie E. Saint, General Robert M. (Bob) Sennewald, Lieutenant General Dave R. Palmer, and General William J. (Bill) Livsey, who was General Abrams’ XO. All were hand-picked for their specific positions. General Abrams surrounded himself with the best and brightest. Most were Lieutenant Colonels or Colonels in 1973-1974 and went on to the three and four-star level.

As the Logistics Staff action officer to General Abrams from General Heiser, my responsibility was to review and summarize every logistics paper that went upward to the Army Chief of Staff (CSA) or Army Vice Chief of Staff (VCSA). The “white tail,” a 6”x 9” note-sized paper that contained a summary and my recommendation on the issue, was designed to save time. I learned to condense volumes down to a few information-laden, concise sentences on the “white tail.” General Abrams did not have the time to look at the whole decision paper or document on the issue, just the heart of the matter.

After reading the “white tail” and listening to my two-minute verbal briefing, the CSA or VCSA would make his decision by initialing the paper. My task included sharing options in the matter and making recommendations. Typically, General Abrams or General Frederick C. (Fred) Weyand, who followed Abrams as chief, trusted my synopsis on the action. They knew that what I said represented General Heiser and the DCSLOG Staff, as well as my own take on the issue after having thoroughly researched the matter. It was a unique and serious responsibility, which all seven action officers worked long diligent hours to fulfill.

AMC’s involvement with the “white tails” followed two procedures. If the issue was funding or resources, support of the DCSLOG, General Heiser, was gained before the matter went to General Abrams’ office. The conceptual issues, suggestions for new and improved methods of conducting business, went directly to General Abrams with a copy to General Heiser in Logistics.

Occasionally, General Abrams visited the office where the seven of us dwarfs could be found buried under a mound of paperwork. At the time, the Army was in the process of changing the uniform from brown poplin shirts, which were worn under greens, to a light green shirt. He was usually wearing one of the new prototype shirts, jacket open and unbuttoned, and had his constant companion, a cigar, in the side of his mouth. Hearing war stories directly from the source of this larger than life military hero was thrilling and awe inspiring.

An Army uniform had graced the General's bull of a frame for 42 years, four years as a cadet at West Point and 38 years as an Army officer. A veteran of three wars (WWII, Korea, and Vietnam), his favorite stories were of playing football at West Point, his early cavalry days, and World War II. He was with the 4<sup>th</sup> Armored Division almost from its inception in 1941, participated in every campaign the division fought as battalion commander and then combat command commander. Abrams became widely known as one of the Army's most aggressive and successful Armor commanders. Lieutenant Colonel Abrams, in a conference on the banks of the Moselle, pointed east and remarked, "That is the shortest way home." A tank unit called Task Force "Abe" led the thrust across the Moselle, and a tank unit commanded by Abrams broke the German encirclement at Bastogne. Abrams' unit tore from Bitburg to the Rhine, including an attack of over 40 miles in less than two days. Time and time again, Abrams led the thrust across the German homeland and into Czechoslovakia, often at the head of the column. His World War II commander, General George S. Patton, Jr., once said, "I'm supposed to be the best tank commander in the Army, but I have one peer, Abe Abrams. He is the world champion."

One day, as he shared WWII experiences with us, he talked about the maintenance problems with the M4 tank. His battalion was turning north to Bastogne with little time to prepare due to the highly intensive march east through France. They had lost tanks, many to maintenance difficulties, and arrived at the 101<sup>st</sup> with only a couple of tanks still operating. They formed an armored column by interspersing trucks with the tanks. The ploy tricked the Germans who misguidedly thought the column consisted entirely of tanks. He loved relating that story. When we pointed to the December 1944 historical poster of him, half visible from the turret of a tank that was traveling down a snow covered trail toward Bastogne, he would modestly reply, "It was my job."

For the four years General Abrams commanded in Vietnam, it was his task to reduce direct U.S. military involvement and to transfer increasing responsibilities to Vietnamese forces, as they became capable of assuming them. By the time he left Vietnam in 1972, that job had been virtually completed. He became Chief of Staff in 1972 with the principal challenge of knitting together an Army that had

suffered the double trauma of rapid reduction in size and massive repositioning of forces. Adding to the challenge was the death of the draft as the Army shifted to an all-volunteer footing.

Spellbound by his incredible stories, we watched the direct, plain spoken, highly respected general work, and saw the actions that flowed from his guidance increase the readiness and effectiveness of the Army. At the same time, the Army saw morale improve and disciplinary problems subside, as people responded to a firm hand at the top. His major objectives at this time in his life revolved around a “readiness” mission, rethinking the Army’s role, and taking care of the Soldier. When he was struck with lung cancer, he was setting in motion a program to increase markedly the Army’s combat capability without increasing its total strength. It was done the Abrams way, by cutting out entire headquarters, by making other headquarters – including his own – much smaller, and by making every element in the Army count toward the overall mission.

General Abrams, in the fall of 1973, directed the formation of the first battalion-size Ranger units since WWII. He recognized the need for a highly trained and highly mobile reaction force, declaring, “The Ranger Battalion is to be the most elite, light, and proficient Ranger battalion in the world, a battalion that can do things with its hands and weapons better than anyone. The battalion will contain no ‘hoodlums or brigands,’ and if the battalion is formed from such persons, it will be disbanded. Wherever the battalion goes, it must be apparent that it is the best.”

The farsightedness of General Abrams’ decision, as well as the combat effectiveness of the Ranger battalions, was proven during the United States’ deployment on October 25, 1983, to the island of Grenada to protect American citizens and to restore democracy. During this operation, code named “Urgent Fury,” the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Ranger Battalions conducted a daring low-level parachute assault (500 feet), seized the airfield at Point Salines, rescued American citizens isolated at True Blue campus, and conducted air assault operations to eliminate pockets of resistance. The operation demonstrated the effectiveness of the Ranger battalions, prompting the Army to increase the size of the active duty Ranger force to its highest level since WWII.

On September 4, 1974, General Abrams died of lung cancer in Washington, D.C, the first Army Chief of Staff to die in office. He was buried with full military honors in a special plot in Section 21 of Arlington National Cemetery. I've heard him described as honest, frank, sincere, completely dedicated to the Army and the highest ideals of service, tactful but firm, "without peer," and "the best." The privilege and honor of learning from a man who helped reshape and build a better Army with determined, intelligent grace remains a high point in my career.

As I worked in the CSA and VCSA's offices during the late winter and early spring of 1973 and 1974, I remember several occasions when he was absent from his office because he was at Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC) for surgery or treatment related to lung cancer. At that point, General Frederick C. Weyand was the VCSA (1973-1974) and later became the CSA from October 1974 to September 1976. He and Lieutenant General Donald H. Cowles, DCSOPS, assumed more and more responsibility as General Abrams' health issues took him away from his office. The XO, Colonel Bill Livsey, often made twice daily runs to Walter Reed to take paperwork to General Abrams. All "dwarfs" were asked to select only the priority issues for his review and to be prepared to make a trip to Walter Reed to brief the General if necessary.

During a brief time following surgery to remove a portion of lung, General Abrams was released from the hospital, but wasn't doing very well. Because of his continual cigar smoking, we suspected that his cancer was directly related to smoking. Slowly, General Weyand began taking over Abrams' duties and moved in as the next CSA when Abrams died in September of 1974. It was a truly sad day for the Army and clearly a day of mourning a fallen hero and piece of the Army's great history.

During the year I was privileged to spend in General Abrams' office as his logistics staff officer, there was never a meeting that he didn't talk about taking care of the Soldier, the welfare of the Soldier always being his utmost goal. At the conclusion of the most grandiose and impressive presentations purporting a change or addition in resources or concepts, Abrams would ask, "What is this going to do

for the Soldier? The bottom line is this; explain to me how this is going to improve a Soldier's life."

The General constantly reminded everyone who entered his office and especially his staff officers that "the Army is people." He made it clear that everyone's job was to work for the benefit of the Soldiers, because that is what the institution of the Army was, our Soldiers. It is that concept I tried to keep uppermost in my thinking throughout my Army career.

It was customary for each "dwarf," upon his departure, to receive an autographed photograph of General Abrams. With his illness and more frequent stays in Walter Reed, I assumed this would not happen as I left. I was so honored and amazed when the framed photo was presented to me with the inscription: "To Jimmy Ross, with appreciation and best wishes. Creighton W. Abrams, Jr." The photo remains a treasured memento of an exceptional leader and hero.

### **Early Views of AMC**

Several years earlier, April of 1961 to be exact, the DoD conducted a study to examine how the Army's organizational structure responded to changes in the threat environment. The resulting Hoelscher Report (October 1961) recommended the creation of a "materiel development and logistics command." The new command, U.S. Army Materiel Command (AMC), replaced a system of individual supply and technical services that had been in use for almost 200 years. Lieutenant General Frank S. Besson, Jr., later promoted to General, was the first Commander of AMC, serving from August 1962 until March 1969.

Many major organizational changes have taken place since AMC's inception. In 1973, as I worked as an executive officer to the Director of Material Acquisition, the acquisition function moved down the hall and consolidated with OCRD, and at that point in time, became the Office of the Chief of Research, Development, and Acquisition (OCSRDA). I had previously worked with General George Sammet, Jr., who was then in charge of OCRD. He later was the CG of AMC from February 1977 until May 1977.

Each organizational change involved a period of adjustment, and this proved true when research and development acquired the additional task of acquisition. They learned about acquisition from those of us familiar with AMC, and we learned about research and development from them. This type sharing and learning continued throughout my career. It facilitated the networking and allowed all those involved to be up-to-date on current and pertinent issues.

My impression of AMC began as a DISCOM staff officer in operations and logistics (S-3/S-4) for the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division. I concluded that the majority of all support, whether it was ammunition, supply and maintenance support, or depot support was from AMC. Field maintenance technicians were around in the seventies, but I don't recall Logistics Assistance Representatives (LARs) back in the 1970's. Now we have them in every division, and that link is a vital and necessary asset.

When I was in Vietnam, it seemed that there was this huge, mega-organization out there somewhere in the United States, called AMC, providing all our resources. We worked with them on everything from retrograde of repairable items to the disposal of materials returning to AMC. When I went to the 10<sup>th</sup> Transportation as commander, everything except the fresh fruits, vegetables, and food stocks, such as pizza and steaks, came from AMC. The execution of 90 percent of Army dollars for supply items and materiel happened in AMC.

In Vietnam, we knew how to contact the maintenance contractors who represented AMC and strongly suggest they quickly repair our engines and transmissions. If the contractor in 5<sup>th</sup> Transportation could not make the repairs in the field, we knew that part was headed for the aviation repair ship off the coast of Vietnam or the depot in Corpus Christi, Texas, or some other depot to be overhauled. Those repairs proved time-consuming and costly because of the months it took for the part to make the round trip back to us. The long repair delays left equipment sitting idle and useless for far too long. That experience is precisely the reason Generals Arwood, Ball, Akin, Elam, and I vowed to put maintenance contractors on the battlefield behind every weapon system during Desert Shield. We had learned our lesson in Vietnam.



When I went to the Army Staff and worked in S&M, I started seeing AMC from a different side. I had become a part of the supply rather than being one of the supplied, a sender rather than a receiver. In the CSA's office, I relied on the valuable operational experience the two Vietnam field tours had provided. Having budget level experience in Supply and Maintenance was also an asset. We programmed, and AMC executed. All product/program managers were in AMC. Again, being in Materiel Acquisition, I viewed the system from a different perspective, the research and development acquisition angle.

Then in 1973, when I moved to the Chief's office, I brought to the position a great deal of operation, procurement, and budget experience, as well as a strong resource management background. Again, my guardian angel had placed me in the right place at the right time with the right credentials to be chosen by Joe Heiser and the Chief's office as the logistics "dwarf." The honor came with challenges and difficult responsibilities. Resources for Vietnam were being reduced, and cuts in services and materials came across my desk daily from Major General John E. Murray, Director of Logistics, MACV. It was obvious that he was emotionally involved and thought support to Vietnam programs was being severed too quickly and severely. I think history will indicate that this was an accurate assessment of the situation. It was extremely difficult to receive and issue "fall on the sword" kind of messages.

My last year in the Chief's office, Brigadier General Homer Smith brought a different tenor and personality to the situation. I watched as he received his second star and left for Vietnam with the task of literally closing out the U.S. presence there. Making the journey with him were two very sharp officers: Major (later Major General) Jim Ball and Lieutenant Colonel (later Lieutenant General) Benjamin F. Register, Jr., whom I would exchange jobs with on two future occasions.

On April 28, 1975, after numerous valiant attempts by the South Vietnamese Army to hold back the invading North Vietnamese Army, the new president of the South, General Duong Van "Big" Minh appealed for a cease-fire. The appeal was ignored. The NVA shelled Tan Son Nhut Air Base near Saigon, killing two U.S. marines at the compound gate. Conditions deteriorated rapidly as South Vietnamese

began to loot the air base. President Gerald Ford ordered Operation Frequent Wind, the evacuation of 7,000 Americans and South Vietnamese by helicopter from Saigon. The pre-arranged code signal for the start of the operation was the radio broadcast of the song, "White Christmas."

Years later, Jim Ball and Homer Smith would recount their last hours in Vietnam. At Tan Son Nhut, frenzied civilians began swarming the helicopters, and the evacuation relocated to the walled-in American Embassy, secured by U.S. Marines in full combat gear. In spite of precautions, the scene deteriorated, as thousands of civilians attempted to get over the walls into the compound. Off the coast of Vietnam, three U.S. aircraft carriers waited, ready to transport the incoming Americans and South Vietnamese. In frantic confusion, Vietnamese pilots began landing on the carriers, flying American-made helicopters. At 8:35 AM, on April 30, 1975, the last Americans, ten Marines from the embassy, left Vietnam, and our presence there ended. By 11:00 AM, the red and blue colors of the Viet Cong flag could be seen flying from the presidential palace. In a radio message of unconditional surrender, President Minh officially ended the war.

Jim Ball's account of those last frantic days in Vietnam will elevate your blood pressure and raise the hair on the back of your neck. He relates how they were charged with destroying everything, phones, maps, documents, and calculators. Thermite grenades went into the computers, and they hurriedly shredded millions of dollars of paistres, the Vietnamese currency. Jim didn't have time to collect personal things from his quarters, but he deserves our thanks for taking the American flag out of the command conference room and later sending it to the Chief of Military History (CMH). He recalls seeing a framed photograph of an ineffective U.S. admiral thrown to the floor and crushed under the boots of the scurrying officers. The admiral had created problems, had been difficult to get along with, and had never earned the respect of his men. In those last frantic, terrifying hours, the act of continually tromping over the face of the surly admiral gave them a target for displaced anger rising from their desperate situation.

Ben Register and Jim Ball also left a “parting gift” for the North Vietnamese on the embassy conference table. Much earlier Ben had worked on a new Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS) for the Army that evolved into a three-inch, complex document that had large fold out and pull out displays woven into sections of its pages. The pages contained complicated milestone charts on reaching the ultimate objective, an Officer Personnel Management System. Ben’s personal working notes were attached to various parts of the document. In the officers’ maddening rush to shred all documents, they came across this one and decided the North Vietnamese needed it. By leaving it in the middle of the conference table, they hoped the invading Soldiers would consider it important and try to implement it in their Army. Jim and Ben were of the opinion it could screw them up for years to come.

Jim Ball described getting on one of the last Hueys (HU1A) from the top of the Embassy amidst continuous ground fire. He thought if they could make it to the Saigon River and hover over the river before the damaged Huey lost altitude, they could swim for their freedom. They were fortunate, made it to the ship, disembarked, and had to push the helicopter over the side into the sea to make room for other incoming aircraft. The act of shoving a \$250,000.00 helicopter over the side of the ship was another indicator of the desperation involved in that evacuation.

Homer Smith, the last American General out of Saigon, later made a two-hour video, in which he talked about how they worked on the last minute details of evacuation for months. It’s a wonderful tape in which he spoke of his actual departure by the last Hueys out while watching the North Vietnamese tanks and infantry approach the compound.

America’s longest war was finally over. The 15-year military involvement saw more than 2,000,000 Americans serve in Vietnam with 500,000 seeing actual combat. There were more than 57,000 killed in action, including 8,000 aviators and 10,400 non-combat deaths. Another 150,000 were seriously wounded, and that included amputees. 2,400 American POWs and MIAs were unaccounted for in 1973. In the early 1990’s, the total Vietnam related documented deaths exceeded 58,000.

With each reminder of the Vietnam War, I think of Captain An and the thousands of determined, brave South Vietnamese Soldiers who spent their lives fighting for freedom. I think of the brave American Soldiers who fought valiantly in a half-hearted, unpopular, quagmire endeavor that our country had the misfortune of sliding into sideways. We never seemed to face Vietnam head-on. So many costly, deadly mistakes resulted from misguided efforts to give lip service, to posture, to pacify, to placate, to pretend to carry on a war, when the truth revealed young Soldiers meeting the enemy with one hand tied behind their collective backs. There was never a clear objective with maps and guides for winning.

When a battle was actually won by the sheer determination, grit, and bravery of our Soldiers, we kowtowed to the pressure of the press and public opinion and gave the territory we'd won in the blood bath back to the enemy. The absurd events that followed the battle of Hamburger Hill 937 are surely unprecedented and must set some sort of "fickle finger of fate" award for total disregard of established military procedures. The one positive that came from this war was a series of lessons on how NOT to conduct military business.

With every fiber of my being, I'm proud to have served with the exceptional men who fought in Vietnam and hope that the light of gratitude for what they endured will brighten with each passing year. They deserve an apology for mingling a willingness to serve their country by risking their lives in a maddening jungle half-way around the world with the hatred for the war itself. The Soldiers were doing their duty, serving their country, and fulfilling their obligations, while their own citizens cursed their actions and burned their flags. To each one who served, I repeatedly extend a heartfelt thank you, for our Veterans of Vietnam are truly a deserving band of brothers.

### **Industrial College of the Armed Forces, 1974-1975**

The Army has "lists" for everything. Seeing your name on a "list" could be a good thing or, with the military downsizing in 1974, it could be a bad thing. After we were officially out of Vietnam, NCOs and officers were being asked to leave the military in droves. I hoped to avoid making an appearance on that particular list.

Life was good at the Ross household, but doubts about being cut and having to make a forced career change nibbled around the edges of my days. I was 38 years old with a mortgage and family, and enjoyed my work immensely. Pat was quite involved with teaching “homebound” students while Tony was in kindergarten. My girls had blossomed into gorgeous teenagers, Sabra a senior and Dede a freshman. We were a very busy, happy family, and a career change did not fit into our schedule.

During a moment of doubt, a list crossed my desk. Great joy and celebrating commenced immediately, upon learning that my name appeared on the “ICAF list,” the list of officers chosen for Senior Service College and, in my case, the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. My name on that little white piece of paper meant that I was not only staying in the Army, but being sent to college for more training. It also meant that we would be staying in the Washington D.C. area for another year. Sabra could finish high school with her friends of the past four years. Dede and Tony could continue in their schools, and Pat’s homebound students would have their teacher a while longer. Best of all, we weren’t moving out of our pretty, comfortable Dale City home with its inviting backyard pool.

ICAF offered a ten-month master’s program in multiple disciplines. The course of study was designed to prepare military officers and civilians for senior leadership and staff positions. The postgraduate, executive-level courses and associated research dealt with the resource component of national power, with an emphasis on materiel acquisition and joint logistics. We were to learn to think strategically and understand the interdependence of economics, acquisition, logistics, technology, and mobilization in various industrial sectors that support the nation in both peace and conflict.

I had worked for seven years, going to night school to pick up hours toward a master’s degree, but with frequent interruptions, I feared losing some of the hours due to time lapses between classes. The Industrial College, a college under the DoD’s National Defense University (NDU), awards graduates a Master of Science degree in National Resource Strategy. With extra courses during the ten months, I could also complete the master’s degree I’d been working toward.

The first step in the process was to take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) at American University.

George Washington University (GWU) was my college of choice, but based on GRE test results, only 32 were accepted into their program. My name did not appear on that list. I was accepted into the graduate program at Central Michigan University (CMU) and following my daily ICAF classes and a two-hour break, I returned to the same classroom and began Central Michigan evening classes. There were 30 in our program, with representatives from Army, Navy, and Air Force.

After meeting with a course counselor, discussing the pros and cons of the Master of Business Administration (MBA) and the Master of Arts (MA) and reviewing the list of graduate courses I'd completed, I chose to enter the program in business management. The counselor called the MBA the "green eyeshade" degree and suggested that business management offered a broader skill and discipline plan of study for a Colonel-to-be in the future. "You have all the math courses for that already," the counselor explained. "All you lack are a few organizational, behavioral, and personnel management classes and you've got yourself a master's degree."

Those words were music to my tired ears. "Put my name on that list," I said. It was soon apparent that the day studies, the ICAF curriculum, shared much in common with my evening classes. Lieutenant General Woolwine was the College Commandant that year. After his visit to Newport, Rhode Island and the Naval War College, he implemented many aspects of the Navy program, including frequent institute examinations, written requirements, and a thesis requirement. The college experience, the number of analytical management classes and math related classes included techniques that would be very useful at the Lieutenant Colonel level. As we were graduating, General Woolwine left, and General Theodore Antonelli became the new commandant.

Antonelli was a Major General, who had been an Assistant DCSLOG in the Army. It was like having one of the family take over the Industrial College. One section of my study was with a Coast Guardsman, Hank Bell, who later became a two-star in the Coast

Guard where there were very few flag officers. Rear Admiral Daniel W. (Chuck) McKinnon, Jr. was one of my tablemates. Approximately 20-plus of our Vietnam-era class went on the General and flag officer level.

Some of the first POWs released from North Vietnam came back as we started ICAF. Three joined our class, one of whom was an Air Force Lieutenant Colonel who talked of his experience in the “Hanoi Hilton.” Of the three, only one seemed to be dealing with psychological problems. It was an honor to have them in our class and listen as they shared their experiences with us.

The list of lecturers who came through the college that year was an impressive one. Senior Diplomat W. Averell Harriman, whose service included U.S. Ambassador to Russia during the Truman administration, and later Ambassador to Great Britain, Secretary of Commerce, special assistant to the President in 1950-51, an American representative on the NATO Committee, and director of the Mutual Security Agency, provided personal insight into many historical events. General Alexander M. Haig, Jr., military assistant to Henry Kissinger, assistant to the President for National Security, and later Vice Chief of Staff of the Army and Secretary of State, was one of our better speakers. The Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman and all the service chiefs came.

### **Military Traffic Management Command, 1975-1978**

The year at ICAF, 1975 will forever remain the year of the “lists.” My name was published on the most significant list for that period in my life. The first list was, of course, being chosen for ICAF. The second list to bear my name was a list of those being promoted to Colonel. The third was a Colonel command list. In spite of my desire to serve as a DISCOM commander, I was happy to serve as deputy acting comptroller for Military Traffic Management Command (MTMC) on the West Coast. The personnel officer said “You’ll be a Colonel commander within a year, and can serve two needs there. Along with deputy acting comptroller for MTMC, you’ll also serve as the Commander of the Military Ocean Terminal for the Bay Area in Oakland (MOTBA).”

That was the good news. The bad news involved uprooting our family after five consistent, non-mobile years in our Dale City home in Woodbridge, Virginia. Our only move during the last five-year span had involved moving to a larger home in the same area while the kids continued in their same schools. My new assignment took us to the Oakland Army Terminal, and we would be living at Fort Mason in San Francisco.<sup>28</sup> I started talking up the San Francisco area to Pat and the kids who were understandably reluctant to relocate.

Sabra had been accepted by the University of Arkansas and didn't think it mattered whether we were in Washington, D.C. or San Francisco. "The two places are equally far away from Arkansas," she said. However, she thought that San Francisco sounded like fun, and she had seen so much of Washington over the last five years, it would be a nice change to have a new place to explore during visits home.

Only Dede was having trouble catching the enthusiastic wave of emotion. She would be in tenth grade when school started and was leaving her friends of the past five years. Pat and I talked up the fact that her blonde hair and perpetual tan from swimming and sports made her look like a California girl already. But the fake smile didn't fool anyone. The move was not good timing for Dede.

At the time of our move, Lower Fort Mason was a large complex of warehouses and piers with white stucco facades and red-tiled roofs reminiscent of Spanish Colonial architecture on a grand scale. In 1985, ten years after we lived there, that portion of the fort was designated a National Historic Landmark. A group of seven sets of officers' quarters was added to the southern portion of Fort Mason around 1941 and we made our home there in Quarters Number 41. My office was at Oakland Army Terminal across the Oakland Bridge on the Oakland side.

Major General Henry R. Del Mar was the commander of MTMC, and I would serve as the Deputy Comptroller, then acting comptroller for MTMC on the West Coast. I had worked for General Del Mar in Vietnam and was there when he received his first star. We had already established a good working relationship, and he remained a great friend until his death in February of 1994.



Brigadier General Orvil C. “Bud” Metheny, who had served as the Logistics Director (J-LOG), United States Pacific Command, became the MTMC commander for the West Coast ports. Those ports included MOTBA in the Oakland area, the Pacific Northwest out-port near Seattle for all shipments going out of the northwest, including Alaska, and the Southern California out-port near Long Beach.

The comptroller position introduced me to many new components of resource management, including revolving funds and the Army Industrial Fund (AIF). Each workday found me up to my elbows in debits, credits, and accounts receivable/payable. A collection of capable and talented young people worked in resource management in the Western Area, and we learned a great deal from each other.

In 1976, Metheny retired and General Orlando E. Gonzales came in as the new brigadier commander. He had been the 7<sup>th</sup> Group Commander at Fort Eustis. Years later, I linked up with General Gonzales when he was the Research, Development, and Engineering Chief at AMC Headquarters, followed by becoming the Aviation Systems Command commander. On schedule, I became the Colonel commander for MOTBA. General Gonzales, General Metheny, and I formed a great relationship as I became the Colonel commander for the Oakland Terminal. General Gonzales, who lived near Mount Vernon, Virginia, and I remain in contact and are good friends to this day.

During those years, 70 to 80 percent of all cargo moving off the West Coast went through the MOTBA. My work in the terminal port area was, again, very similar to commanding the 10<sup>th</sup> Transportation in Vietnam. The same methods of management and processes for moving cargo were in operation. Through the manual process, civilians would plan the arrangement and placement of cargo for the entire ship, and a shipwright carpenter contractor did all the blocking and bracing. The same carpenter had been working in that capacity in Oakland for over 20 years and knew that job well.

As I arrived in Oakland on the first day to take over my new position, I noticed a large number of civilians demonstrating in front of the headquarters. One carried a “dummy” dressed in an Army green uniform with a piece of tape across the uniform that read, “Del Mar.”

As I continued to watch the bizarre ritual, they hung Del Mar in effigy, placed the dummy in a cardboard coffin, and carried it away. Witnessing that display wasn't the welcome I'd expected. I thought, "Good Lord, what type of outfit have I gotten myself into this time?"

I soon learned that the Western Area was being "downsized," and an announcement had been made a few days prior to my arrival stating that all civilian stevedores would be released, and the positions would go to civilian contractors. The DA civilians had a very strong union with shop stewards in every division and an organization on the Oakland Army Base. The Del Mar ritual had been a demonstration that was planned and carried out by union members. I understood that they were upset about losing their jobs, but it was unfair to target General Del Mar. He was doing what the Army asked him to do, downsize. MTMC expected the shift from DA civilians to contractors to produce a net savings. Over time, I watched the cost of each contract rise and the initial savings evaporate.

Within a year, I moved to commander and was directly responsible for seven contractors working for the terminal, stuffing 40-foot containers, and performing all port work off Pier 7. My responsibilities were the day-to-day management of the contractors while the procurement responsibilities rested with MTMC Headquarters back in Washington. The situation was almost identical to the one I'd had at the 10<sup>th</sup> in Vietnam, and I was very comfortable in that environment.

During our three years in San Francisco, we remained in the same quarters, which was great; we loved our home. We had come to San Francisco with a first grader, Tony, and a college freshman, Sabra, away at the University of Arkansas, and our very reluctant tenth grader, Dede. Our house was situated in a circle at Fort Mason with a medium sized grassy open area in the center of the houses. Tony had a lot of fun running and playing in that grassy area. A recreational center was located just a few hundred yards away from our house. That's where Tony learned to play billiards and actually grew into quite a "pool shark."

Pat's suspicions had proved accurate about the public school situation in our particular area of San Francisco. The kids in the

schools were tough, and gangs were prevalent. In spite of Pat's loyalty to our country's public school system, she had to give in for the first time and put the kids in private schools. Dede, totally miserable because she had to move away from all her friends in Dale City, went to school scared for her safety each day. Pat enrolled her in Sacred Heart Cathedral High School that, at the time, was for girls only.

Tony's leg was broken at school in what was loosely called an "accident," and Pat enrolled him in St. Brigid Elementary School. Tony remembered, "I guess the downfall of San Francisco was when I broke my leg. During recess, I remember hearing the bell to get in line to go inside. I ran up next to a schoolmate who got aggravated for some reason, as kids do most of the time. He kicked me in the leg with his steel reinforced boots, and the next thing I knew, I was in pain and being carried up to the nurse's office. I stayed in the hospital for a couple of weeks with DiAnna (Dede) and Sabra bringing me comic books and candy bars to help ease my pain. Having to keep my leg elevated above my waist for long periods was tough on a seven-year-old.

"I attended a fairly strict Catholic school after that and had a very special teacher named Sister Bonaventure. The school was situated on top of one of the many steep streets in San Francisco. On weekends and holidays, it was fun to fish along the waters of San Francisco Bay with my friends. One sunny day, a gentleman approached us and indicated that he was from the San Francisco *Chronicle* newspaper and wanted to take our picture and write down our names. I ran home telling you and Mom what happened, and the next day our picture was in the paper."

In August of 1977, Sabra was married in Arkadelphia, in the same church (St. Anthony Methodist) that Pat and I were married in 22 years before, with the same minister officiating (the Reverend Clint Burleson). The wedding was planned long distance from California with much help from Pat's parents in Arkansas. When Pat wasn't planning weddings and helping the children find a good fit in schools, exploring the California area provided family fun. However, my sunbirds in no way got used to the weather that never seemed to rise above 65 degrees in the summer. Pat was fond of quoting Mark

Twain, who said, “One of the coldest winters I ever spent was one summer in San Francisco!”

## *Chapter IX*

### Germany, 1978 – 1982

My third year at Oakland was approaching when I received a call from Lieutenant Colonel Duane Smith from the Military Personnel Command, a friend with whom I had served in 33<sup>rd</sup> Transportation in Hawaii in the 1960's. He was a family friend and was currently working in the Colonels' Branch of personnel in Washington.

"You're being alerted to go to Germany," Duane told me.

When I recovered from the news, I said, "Wonderful. I think that's tremendous."

"It's not definite, but looks likely," he shared. "Yours is one of nine names nominated for a second Colonel-level command. I saw (Major) General Alton G. Post today and outlined the contenders who have previous experience commanding at the Colonel level. There'll be a meeting soon to choose the top contender to go to the 4<sup>th</sup> Transportation Brigade in Germany. It's an 'unsupported' Brigadier General position, meaning it will be filled by a high potential Colonel. They usually promote a Colonel commander there as part of the second Colonel level command. With the current move toward overall downsizing, the Army most likely won't support a Brigadier General for that position," Duane concluded.

It was such exciting news because of the work experience and prospect for advancement in the Army. For the family, it was a unique opportunity to live abroad for several years, travel, and see Europe. I could not have been happier and very much wanted the position. Pat shared my excitement. With both parents thrilled at the prospect of going to Germany, Tony, who was nine at the time, caught our enthusiasm. Dede was eighteen and had graduated from Cathedral High School in San Francisco. She planned to go to Henderson College in Arkadelphia, our alma mater, where she would have her maternal grandparents as a family support structure. Our independent Sabra was now married and living in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

General Post, with whom Duane had spoken that day, and I had worked together in 1962 when I was with the 25<sup>th</sup> Division in Hawaii, and he became the commander of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Transportation. Some links like this one last a lifetime. As the selection procedure progressed, Duane provided updates of the latest development by phone. At each step in the process, my phone would ring, and Duane would report, "General Post has done this today, and you look good for the command. General (Lieutenant General Oren Edwin 'Buzz') DeHaven has done that, and you're still the man. General (George Samuel) Blanchard has done this, and you're practically a shoe-in."

The final call was, "You've been selected to be the 4<sup>th</sup> Transportation Brigade Commander." I was elated! It was a great command, more than 5,000 Soldiers scattered across more than 40 locations in Germany. Many thanks go to Duane Smith for his friendship, advice, and counsel.

I went to Oberursel, Germany, outside of Frankfurt, in April 1978 to change command of the 4<sup>th</sup> Transportation Brigade with my good friend, Colonel (later Lieutenant General) Vincent M. Russo, the departing commander. We had been together in the DCSLOG office. He had worked his way up to XO of DCSLOG and was returning to the States to be promoted to Brigadier General. As I took command, it was a bit odd to be a Colonel, and share exactly the same rank as chief of staff, movement manager, and theater movements control center manager. There were a bevy of Colonels, some of them senior to me, but rank among the Colonels really didn't mean much, and everyone was supportive and helpful. Colonel Jim Dunn, Colonel Walter F. Musial, and Colonel Donald H. Conner were great friends who did a superb job and were truly professional transportation officers. Many had previous tours of Germany and thoroughly understood the movements' management programs within U.S. Army, Europe (USAREUR).

Pat moved us into the brigade commander's quarters at Camp King and enrolled Tony, who was in fourth grade, in the American School in Frankfurt, a 45-minute bus ride away. She even had our piano shipped to Germany, hoping that Tony would keep up the piano lessons he'd started in San Francisco. He complied and continued taking lessons, but hated it. Now, as an adult, he wishes he had kept at

it. Tony did, however, embrace the baseball, soccer, bowling, and basketball programs, becoming quite an athlete.

Pat was very busy, exceptionally busy, and incredibly busy in a new role as the brigade commander's wife. Thrust into a manic whirlwind of German-American dinner parties, organizing volunteers to run a thrift shop, Women's Club, Army Community Service, and Red Cross, my pretty redhead barely had time to unpack. In addition to the "commander's wife" nonstop responsibilities, Pat was also teaching military personnel at the BSEP in Frankfurt. Family responsibilities were a priority, as always, and took top billing on her busy daily schedule.

Winters were colder than we were accustomed to, but we braved the freezing weather to go skiing and snow sledding. The hill behind our house was great for sledding, and Tony and his friends loved it. Tony started Boy Scouts in San Francisco and continued with them in Germany, enjoying many camps and activities. The love of scouting continued when we returned to Virginia where he earned his Eagle Scout Honor. The helicopter landing field was just down the hill from our house. I took frequent day trips to other Army facilities. Tony would hear the helicopter coming, bringing me back to the office from a trip, and say to Pat, "Here comes Dad!" He'd run down the hill, a great welcome home sight, and walk me back to my office.

The opportunity of living and working at Camp King nourished my love of history.<sup>29</sup> In 1961, the U.S. intelligence group was redesignated the 513<sup>th</sup> Military Intelligence Group, motto "the Vigilant Knights," and remained at Camp King until 1968 when it relocated to Munich. In 1968, the 107<sup>th</sup> Transportation Brigade and the U.S. Army Traffic Management Agency moved to the post to form the U.S. Transportation Command that later became the 4<sup>th</sup> Transportation Brigade. That is the command I assumed in 1978.

During my command, we had several interesting troop train trips through East Germany to Berlin. Documents of agreement drawn at the end of WWII divided Germany into four occupation zones, leaving the city of Berlin divided. The city became the archetype of the Cold War as four different commanders-in-chief from the United States, Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union shared control. With the

Allies controlling West Berlin and the Russians controlling East Berlin, tensions escalated. Refugees began flocking out of East Berlin, destabilizing the regime. The atypical Berlin situation became difficult, and relations between the countries deteriorated. Ultimately, on August 12, 1961, the Russians officially closed the border between east and west. To secure the border, the infamous Berlin Wall went up on August 13, 1961.

By the time I went to Germany in 1978, the Cold War was in full swing, and the Russians had made vast improvements in the security of the Berlin Wall and in border control. The Russian guards' authoritative power made even a sanctioned crossing of the border a hair-raising experience. Once on an overnight trip into East Germany with the family, we boarded the troop train late in the afternoon, had dinner, and retired to our very nice compartment with pull down berths. We were told that early in the morning we would pass through Potsdam and stop to change to an East German engine. A stern warning not to raise the window shade in our compartment during the slow-down was issued.

Our son Tony, being very awake and quite curious, raised his shade a bit as the train slowed, and his father, also curious, peered out with him. As a guard walked back and forth beside the slow moving train, Tony looked up at him and waved. The guard waved back about the time the train picked up speed, and we moved away from the Potsdam area. Our peek out the window revealed strands of barbed wire behind the guard. Chained dogs ran along the wire for maybe 30 to 40 yards, barking. Beyond that tier of wire was another and yet another tier, all with chained barking dogs. The rows of wire appeared to be staggered with the dogs running in gaps between them. They were all German police dogs, and we wondered if they were to keep us from leaving the train and exploring the area.

Later we learned that the purpose of the wire and dog arrangement was not to keep us on the train, but to keep the East Germans off the train. As the train paused near Potsdam, the American engine that pulled the train was exchanged for an East German engine. It seemed the East German authorities did not want an American engine pulling the troop train with its Soldiers and families through East Germany. As the engines were exchanged, the dogs kept East Germans from



sneaking onto the train and escaping. It was an unforgettable experience for my impressionable young son and me.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Transportation Brigade served military locations that stretched as far north as Bremerhaven and as far south as Stuttgart and Nuremberg. The brigade was comprised of 37<sup>th</sup> Group, three movement control regions, as well as a Chinook Company for moving nuclear weapons in theater to their locations. During that time, we were fielding the Lance missile warhead. As I arrived, Colonel Philip Smiley, commander of the 37<sup>th</sup> Group, was changing command with Colonel James B. Barron. Colonel Ed Honor, a buddy from Cam Ranh Bay back in 1970, was the European commander of MTMC. The commander of Rotterdam commanded not only Rotterdam, but also Bremerhaven, and had the over-watch for Nordenheim, an ammunition port. He also supervised Mediterranean ports such as Turkey, the Piraeus in Greece, Fleixstowe in England, and Camp Darby (Leghorn) in Italy and others.

Europe was a very active area during the Cold War in the late seventies. Colonel Honor and I reestablished a relationship, and working together, the 4<sup>th</sup> Transportation trucks and movement region controlled the transfer of cargo out of the Bremerhaven//Rotterdam area. He was a great Soldier and made the valuable act of working hand and glove easy.

USAREUR was having a Return of Forces to Germany (called REFORGER) during that time. It was a major effort to implement and execute movement of a number of ships transporting 20 to 30,000 Soldiers, pull needed equipment, and move that over German highways to objective exercise areas. The Army's overall downsizing movement was not readily apparent in Germany. Personnel in the 4<sup>th</sup> worked diligently to make the massive organizational task flow smoothly.

I reported directly to the Deputy Commander in Chief for Europe, Lieutenant General Charles J. Simmons. Shortly after my arrival, Lieutenant General Patrick W. Crizer, who had been the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division Commander, replaced Simmons. General Crizer and I worked well together on many special projects. We analyzed the Heavy Equipment Transporter (HET) situation because the U.S. Army

in Europe had only 48 HETs in all of Europe. Using the Warsaw Pact intelligence files as part of our research was intriguing to a history buff. The information contained in the files gave us valuable information about various strength levels that resulted in a directive for increasing our HETs truck fleet.

Again in 1990, during Desert Shield, I encountered a similar situation, but this time the Army had a budget line item for HET, with Colonel John Stoddard as acting HET project manager and program executive officer (PEO). By 1990, the Army was using a German Army truck model for the HET trailers we were producing. The trailer had five articulated wheels in the rear, enabling it to weave through very tight places in the forests or through tight, narrow small village streets such as those in southern Germany. We copied the clever West German engineering to produce a more effective and maneuverable trailer.

During the Cold War period in the late seventies and early eighties, our 48 HETs were each capable of transporting a 60 ton load. We began receiving M1 tanks for transporting to various locations throughout Europe. Fully uploaded with fuel and ammo, the M1 weighed close to 70 tons. With care and at slow, turtle paced speed, the tanks were hauled to their destinations using innovative techniques. The combination of HET and tanks weighed about 90 tons and proved too heavy for crossing most European bridges. With no other route available, our Soldiers would approach a bridge, stop, back the tanks off the HET, drive the HET across, drive the tanks across separately, reload the tanks onto the HET, and proceed. It was a novel method, and effective for our situation.

The Warsaw Pact research indicated that we needed a HET for every two M1 tanks. The East German strategy had involved a HET behind every two tanks, allowing the battalions to merge into HET regiments. The method involved driving the HETs to the point of small arms fire and backing the tanks off the trailers to engage the enemy. It saved fuel and maintenance repairs to the tanks, and the tank drivers and crews weren't worn out from driving and riding in the tank to the defense position.

We discovered that German Panzer units approved a ratio of nine Panzers to one HET. In 1978 across Europe, our ratio was twelve to one. This information raised the awareness for Generals Blanchard and Kroesen about our need for more HETs. It took about 14 years before the production and acquisition of a sufficient number of tractors and trailers was accomplished, but by 1994, we were moving towards “First Unit Equipped” with the needed amount of HETs per tanks.

In November 1979, Pat and General Frederick James Kroesen, Jr. pinned on my first star, and I became a Brigadier General. General Julius W. Becton, Jr., who had been on my brigadier board, selected me to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Support Command at Oberursel at the 4<sup>th</sup> Transportation Headquarters. When I moved to VII Corps to work with General Becton, I replaced an old friend, Brigadier General Benjamin Register, who had been the Mainz Army Depot commander at the same time that I was commanding the 4<sup>th</sup>. In 1978, Ben and I would lunch together and discuss the distribution of our workload because we were receiving the depot maintenance work from Mainz for transportation purposes. It was our trucks moving tanks and equipment out of the depot. Ben Register received his second star a year later.

Holidays and joint festivals with Oberursel, our host German city, frequently began with the uncorking of a beer keg. As commander of Camp King, I sometimes had the honor of making a “kick-off” speech for the occasion and, with a mallet the size of a streetlight, whacking the stopper from an Olympic-sized wooden beer keg. The stopper was quickly replaced with a spout, and, as custom dictated, beer steins were filled, initiating a series of toasts. The Germans loved their beer—didn’t we all?—and why not, they make excellent brew.

Each winter, November 11<sup>th</sup>, at the eleventh hour and eleventh minute (the anniversary of the Armistice that ended World War I), the Fasching Festival opened its festive arms with a parade of citizens dressed in wacky costumes. Fasching is to Germany as Mardi Gras is to New Orleans and is an immensely popular carnival time there. Fasching, derived from the word Fastnacht, the eve of forty days of fasting for Lent, dates back to early Roman times. It has evolved to officially opening on November 11 for a one-day event and then postponed until January 6<sup>th</sup>, unofficially giving the Fasching societies time to prepare for the coming “Crazy Period.” It was a November

11<sup>th</sup> tradition in Oberursel for the mayor to capture the commander of the camp and briefly imprison him for a transformation from a uniformed commander to a costumed figure. The commander then joined the parade by riding on the lead float through the streets of cheering, celebrating citizens. I was told by the Oberursel mayor that the more bizarre my costume, the better. I wrote home and asked my mother to mail my Arkansas Razorback hog hat for the occasion. But, at the last moment, the mayor asked that I wear my Army uniform after all, because he wanted everyone to know that he had captured the commander!

About that time we returned to the States for Dede's wedding. During her second year at Henderson, she fell in love with Danny Henson, and they were married in December 1979. Following the family tradition, they were married at St. Andrew's Methodist Church in Arkadelphia with the Reverend Clint Burleson officiating. We met Danny briefly in May of that year when we returned to Arkadelphia to visit family. On their way to a military ball, Dede and Danny came to Pat's mother's home so we could all meet him.

Later that year, Danny called us in Germany in September, asking for Dede's hand in marriage. They honored our request to have the wedding in December when we could return to the States. Pat planned the wedding from Germany, saying, "How will we know which one is Danny?" Danny answered, "I'll be the one standing down front." Dede always said she would never marry a Soldier, but on their wedding day, she had to eat those words. Danny served in the Army for 20 years and retired as a Lieutenant Colonel.

In January of 1980, I was assigned to 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps Support Command (Corps), Nellingen Barracks, near Stuttgart in Southern Germany. We lived at Robinson Barracks in Stuttgart, and again Pat wore many "hats" as the commander's wife, attending numerous board meetings for Women's Club and various Stuttgart community activities.

The move from 4<sup>th</sup> Transportation to VII Corps 2<sup>nd</sup> Support Command commander was a rapid one. I was on the Brigadier General list in November, went to the school for new BGs which we called "charm school" in December, and had my change of command around the 10<sup>th</sup> of January. My chief of staff, the senior of all the

Colonels at 4<sup>th</sup> Transportation, Colonel Jim Dunn, took over command for a short period until Colonel Eugene Lanzillo arrived.

On a rainy day in Nellingen that was as cold as the dickens, with the wind blowing off the Neckar River, General Becton passed the command flag of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Support Command from Command SGM Head to me. General Ben Register departed to head Armament, Munitions, and Chemical Command (AMCCOM). I will be eternally grateful to General Becton for his friendship and leadership for over 20 years.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps Support Command (Corps), where I would serve from January 1980 until June 1982, was initially activated on June 24, 1965. The brigade was one of three support Brigades assigned to the Seventh Army Support Command. VII Corps was organized on August 19, 1918 at Remiremont, France and served in World War I and five campaigns in World War II. VII Army Corps was one of the two principal corps of the Army in Europe during the Cold War. Much later, it participated in Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Many of my friends served with VII Corps over the years.<sup>30</sup>

The new command at Nellingen came with obligations to become involved with the locals in an effort to create good will among our Soldiers and the German citizens. This was never a burden nor done out of a sense of duty, but rather one of the perks of my job. I enjoyed getting to know our neighbors and loved hearing the locals, who soon became my friends, tell old war stories.

One such story centered around a small 1930 vintage grass runway on the edge of Nellingen, which had been the location of one of General (Air Marshal) Hermann Goering's night fighter squadrons during World War II. Goering picked the best of his pilots in the Luftwaffe and put them in two "Night Fighter" squadrons. One was located in Nellingen, 12 kilometers from Stuttgart along the Neckar River.

I attended many receptions in Esslingen, a beautiful city, some thousand years old. At an evening party at Esslingen, I met one of the famed "night fighters." He talked about going up against the British at night, and how the lack of instruments in the

Messerschmitt was a real problem. They would come back to the grass airfield at Nellingen, flying at about 1,000 feet, guided by the reflection of the Neckar River. The ground crew built huge bonfires along a ridge of this plateau. The crew knew when the planes would return, always about two hours after they'd taken off, and would light the bonfires at the appropriate time. Along the grass runway, the crew placed small cans with sand and gasoline that would illuminate the outline of the airfield. The fires guided the German pilots back to their base.

I was visiting with the Esslingen burgermeister (mayor) one evening at a reception and brought up the fact that Stuttgart, after 16 days of bombing during World War II, had been bombed to the ground leaving very little of the beautiful city buildings standing, while Esslingen, just a few kilometers away, had sustained no damage from bombs.

The burgermeister delighted in explaining this phenomenon to me. "Well, the Stuttgarters were nothing but horse farmers in a village when Esslingen was a major city. Esslingen is the equivalent of the senior city in this area. There has always been a rivalry between the horse farmers of Stuttgart and the Esslingeners. We were not stupid. We volunteered to take prisoners of war, French, British, and Americans. We generally put them across the city in homes and different places and secured them." Leaning slightly forward to make his point he said, "Do you think they would dare bomb Esslingen?"

"Great idea, Burgermeister," was all I said. I also later learned that Nellingen was the site of the first transportation cargo American helicopter unit to be located in USAREUR in 1954. The same grass runway and World War II hangars were used.

A tour in Germany was sometimes tough for Soldiers during that time. In the early eighties, there was a great influx of women into the Army. Our battalions had many excellent women Soldiers. The difficulty came when both the husband and wife were in the Army. A Sergeant-approved plan for care of the children in case of an alert had to be in place. In the event of an alert, each Soldier went immediately to a unit to pick up their weapons and moved to an area for

deployment by truck. It was imperative that dual-Army-career families have a well-rehearsed plan for immediate and sustained childcare. This was not always easy.

There were also the very young Soldiers, who were already married, sometimes with a young wife and a baby. A Private was not authorized to bring his family with him on tour in Germany. Nevertheless, the couple's families often pooled resources or borrowed money to fund the wife and child's flight and pay for their apartment. We referred to these situations as "Non-Command Sponsored." This resulted in the Soldier living downtown with his wife and children, unable to speak German, and not authorized to use the commissary. It made for a very difficult situation, financially and emotionally, for these Soldiers.

Pat, now busy with commander's wife duties, had opportunities to visit families living in all sorts of situations. Those off base lived in four-and-five-level apartment buildings called "stairwells." There was no elevator, and the stairwell was the only means for reaching the upper apartments. These families were "Command Sponsored" but didn't qualify for base housing privileges. She often compared their apartments to low income housing in the city of Washington, D.C.

One evening after having paid a visit to a few families, Pat said, "I don't think we should ever ask our Soldiers and families to live in these kinds of conditions, especially this far from home in an overseas assignment. We're asking them to leave most of their furniture, bring the bare necessities, and live in drab, low-income-type housing which they aren't allowed to improve. Most of these families just want the opportunity to add some paint, wallpaper, or shelving to make the place more livable. I don't think it's asking too much to allow them to spruce up their homes. If we keep a family together in a place they can make attractive, comfortable, and livable, it becomes more like their own home and adds to their daily lives. I really feel strongly about this. Good self-help programs would help, too."

Through our years of service, until I retired from the Army, Pat worked toward improving the life of the married Soldier and his/her family. Circumstances for families have slowly gotten better. There were times in the past when she was worried about the college age

children in Army families, who were authorized only two trips a year to visit family in overseas assignments. It wasn't enough, and she felt something should be done about it. In Turkey, she visited an elementary school that was guaranteed to be open only one more year. At that time, the tour in Turkey was two years, and those people just coming into Turkey were assured an education for their children for only one year. After that, it was home teaching or it was boarding the little children out. Those were tough issues to face for a family who has chosen to serve their country by being on alert to put themselves in harm's way for the sake of their nation.

That evening in Germany, I could empathize with Pat's frustrations. When we began our Army career, it was extremely rare for a Soldier to be married, and times were sometimes tough. Now it seemed that the overwhelming majority of our Soldiers were not only married, but had started their families. The Army was having trouble catching up with the influx of families and the diminishing single Soldier. It so happened that I was experiencing some frustrations of my own in the new position at 2<sup>nd</sup> Support Command. I was uncovering problems with each working day.

As commander of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Support Command (Corps), I found myself in command of the largest corps support command in the Army at that time with over 10,000 Soldiers. The command was in 72 different locations, had 52 companies, and nine battalions in two groups. One of the groups was one of three Civilian Labor Groups (CLG) in Germany comprised of civilians from Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, and other countries. They had moved to Germany in the forties and fifties as part of the new civilian labor organization. Our corps support command had the responsibility of supporting VII Corps as well as a Panzer (Armor) Division that was part of VII Corps.

More than two million gallons of fuel and up to 17,000 tons of ammunition per day were being used during wartime-simulated exercises. Deep into contingency planning, we started laying out over 30 different areas that we thought were the critical wartime support requirements for VII Corps. The question was, in the initial wartime start position, with 72 units scattered about in different locations with a wartime sector close to 200 miles deep, how would we command and control our units? Our old VRC-46 and -47 radio-teletypewriter



(RATT) rigs were not reliable. We had trouble communicating from one side of Stuttgart to the other, and long range communications were practically impossible. At the extreme, there was a nuclear mission about 300 miles away that fell under our support services.

As our staff made analyses of the situation, as well as ammunition, POL, food, and repair part requirements, it became apparent that in order to support VII Corps with the two million gallons of fuel per day, we had a major storage problem. Not only was there a need for sufficient communications equipment, there was also a need for adequate storage to do the task we had been assigned. All supplies would be coming in by rail, and our materiel handling system was inadequate. There were not enough trucks, very little supply moving equipment, and the pipeline system for moving fuel (jet, turbine, diesel, etc.) wouldn't get the job done. From the 15 ammo pre-stock points throughout the 2<sup>nd</sup> Support Command area, ammunition was to be supplied to the corps units. There were too few Soldiers to do this job. With a shortfall of both Soldiers and equipment, our current status could not provide wartime ammunition and medical support.

We had to think outside the box and use a multitude of sources to solve our dilemma. Through AMC we acquired 10,000 gallon rubber storage bags for fuel. General John R. Guthrie, the AMC commander, was the one who advised us that contractors were beginning to produce assault-line hose, flexible tactical pipeline, which helped with transporting our various types of fuel. The local Mercedes dealers helped us obtain trucks, and local German businesses helped with the acquisition of HETs. We bought a couple of single-sideband radios and began communicating for the first time over 200 miles. We couldn't communicate as far as Prague, but we could certainly listen to them, as well as other locations across the Warsaw Pact border.

Our plan included using additional forklifts from every U.S. Army facility and commissary in the area on the first few days in the event of war. Local German firms informally agreed to furnish "x" amount of trucks with PLS (palletized loading systems) should war break out. These were by no means optimum solutions, but would suffice during the first few days of combat. General Guthrie was impressed with our 2<sup>nd</sup> Support Command logistics initiatives and suggested that we talk with AMC and DA about our needs. Lieutenant General Richard H.

Thompson, now DCSLOG, agreed. I was invited to Leavenworth and ICAF for briefings regarding our wartime situation and status.

With all my slides and analysis data, I flew back to the States for briefings at the Pentagon and several other places. It helped fix some things. I had taken Ben Register's plan and quantified it a step further. Even he became aware that he couldn't meet his mission requirements. Our plan evolved to the point of pulling 700 to 1,000 personnel spaces from other units into VII Corps for the first day of war. What General Ben Register started in this area, the command staff fleshed out in more detail. Lieutenant General Julius W. Becton, Jr., VII Corps commander, was surprised by the inadequacy in Soldiers and equipment, and he was on his third year. General Kroesen, who showed high approval for what we had done, replaced General Blanchard as the USAREUR Commander. Many Majors and Lieutenant Colonels who did the detail work on this project deserve the tribute and credit.

During that period, I had two different deputies, Colonel John E. Long, first deputy, and Colonel Jim Ball, second deputy. Both achieved Major General status. One of the battalion commanders who arrived when I was leaving was Colonel Henry T. (Tom) Glisson. Tom ran the 87<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Battalion, was a quartermaster officer, and later commanded the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA). Later still, Tom was my XO and made Brigadier General. Colonel (later Brigadier General) Frank Cunningham, Jr. was there when I arrived, and Colonel (later Major General) James W. Monroe came in to the 71<sup>st</sup> as I left. The number of general officers to come out of that group suggests that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Support Command included a highly successful group of officers.

During a social event at Stuttgart, Pat and I had the privilege of meeting Lord Mayor Manfred Rommel. He is the son of Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, the "Desert Fox" of World War II fame, a brilliantly gifted military leader whose outspoken criticism of Hitler was deadly.<sup>31</sup>

Mayor Rommel accepted my invitation to speak to our five hundred officers at Nellingen. The first time he talked to our officer group, he discussed day-to-day happenings in Stuttgart. Following his

talk, during a question and answer session, one of the officers asked him about growing up during World War II. He volunteered that as a teenager, he was part of the Luftwaffe Auxiliary, similar to our Air National Guard. Mayor Rommel discussed loading aircraft with ammunition and bombs and being captured as a POW when he was only 16-years-old. He declined requests to talk about his father.

Later, when I again invited him to speak to our group, I asked, “Would you please talk to us about your dad? He is someone we’ve admired as a Soldier. I’ve read everything ever written about him. To many of our armor officers, he is a role model and certainly a hero to many Americans.”<sup>32</sup>

Mayor Rommel spoke to our officers many times, and each time, the hall was filled with respectful and attentive Soldiers. He sent me a few notes that I still have among my treasured mementos. Even though they are simply thank you notes or a note answering a question, they remind me of a remarkable, strong man for whom I have the utmost respect.

My tour with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Support Command (Corps) lasted about 30 months, and I loved it. The officers with whom I worked were the cream of the crop. The German people were a joy with whom to work and socialize, and I made many dear friends such as Siegfried Kugies, Vice President of the German Rail System. Among the dearest of friends was my civilian secretary, Anne Black (later Laaber). Anne has visited us every year or so since that time. The location gave our family a rare and privileged opportunity to tour Europe. We took advantage of our chance to travel, taking two big trips per year, visiting 16 different countries in all, and learning as much as we could absorb from each culture.

Tony recalls learning to ski during the winter months when we went south to Garmisch-Partenkirchen. We toured many castles, including the Neueschwanstein Castle in Bavaria and many points of interest up and down the Rhine River. We went to the Netherlands, Paris, Rome, Italy, Berlin, and Czechoslovakia. We crossed the English Channel to visit England and Ireland. Tony loves to tell about “kissing the Blarney Stone.” He says, “To kiss the Blarney Stone, we were told to have someone sit on our legs or tightly hold onto our feet

while the ‘kisser’ sits with his or her back towards the stone. Next, the person doing the kissing must lean far back and downward to kiss the stone. What a feat for those who actually manage to kiss the famous stone for good luck!”

The most emotional trip we took was a battlefield tour during which we visited the Normandy beaches and coastline in France. The Normandy Invasion, code-named “Operation Overlord,” involved the Allied forces based in Britain and was commanded by American General Dwight D. Eisenhower. On June 6, 1944, the Allies landed at five beaches in the Normandy area with the code names of Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno, and Sword Beaches. 156,000 American, British, and Canadian troops were able to punch inland in spite of the heavy resistance from the German forces defending the area. German failure to defend the Normandy area successfully doomed Hitler’s dream of a Nazi controlled “Fortress Europe” and marked the beginning of the end of the war. We visited Pointe Du Hoc where the Rangers climbed a sheer cliff and the American cemetery near Utah Beach that was featured in the film *Saving Private Ryan*. If this area of Normandy doesn’t bring a tear to your eye, something is wrong.

The chance to explore historical sites in Europe helped make the Germany tour one of the best jobs I had in the Army. It also gave me the first opportunity (since 101<sup>st</sup> DISCOM) to work in every class of supply and every major logistics function. I’m convinced that we had a “hotshot” outfit, and if the Cold War had escalated into a full alert operation, we would have accomplished our mission. The credit starts with the John Longs and Jim Balls and goes down through great battalion commanders, some with well over 1,000 people in them, through super NCOs to our Soldiers.

However, after 30 months, I had an option. Both corps commanders and General Kroesen suggested that I stay in Germany for a fifth year. On the other hand, Personnel Support Command (PERSCOM) was tugging at me to return to the Pentagon. Although it was extremely tempting to stay, we decided to return to the United States. We had brought a seven-year-old son to Germany. He was now 12. I didn’t want him to forget about his roots. During our stay in Germany, we had become grandparents. Sabra’s daughter, Katie,

was born on May 1, 1980, and Dede's daughter, Sherry, was born on August 12, 1981. It was time to go home.



## *Chapter X*

### **Return to the Pentagon, 1982-1984**

We shared reluctant farewells with a multitude of exceptional friends, both German and American, in Nellingen, Esslingen, Stuttgart, Oberursel, Frankfurt, 2<sup>nd</sup> Support Command, and Camp King. Four fun-filled, thought provoking, mind-challenging European years were ending, and we were going home. How quickly the time had passed, and how much we'd learned while sharing our lives with our German neighbors. Living in Germany and traveling through Europe left us with cherished souvenirs that would enrich our lives forever.

Admitting that we were homesick crept into our conversations those last days in Nellingen. By the time we actually boarded the plane to return to the States, Pat, Tony, and I were ready to come home. The first thing on our to-do list once we were home was to spend time with Dede, Sabra, our two new granddaughters, and their families. We needed a Ross family fix with all our Ross children present. Next, during, or possibly even before the family fix, we were heading for McDonalds for one of our favorite burgers, and diving into a pizza, two American foods we'd desperately missed. Driving with the guidance of real, honest-to-goodness interstate signs was sheer joy!

As always, mother facilitator Pat was getting us settled into our Lake Braddock home in Burke, Virginia, and Tony enrolled in the eighth grade. The passage of just a few short weeks saw us slip comfortably back into American lives as though we'd never left. Pat began substitute teaching in nearby high schools, and our family eased into a familiar routine as naturally as one puts on a favorite sweater that has been missing for a few seasons.

At the Pentagon, I joined DA DCSLOG for a second tour, this time as the Director of Transportation, Energy, and Troop Support (TRETTS). Lieutenant General Richard Thompson was the DCSLOG at that time. I replaced Brigadier General Francis J. Toner who was retiring because of health problems.

Colonel Chester "Chet" A. Kowalczyk, with whom I'd served in Germany, was my deputy. He had been a troop support division chief

on one tour and was an experienced and excellent deputy. Because he had retired from the Army, we arranged a Senior Executive Service (SES) position for him. General Thompson worked very hard to make that happen.

The Army's strategic mobility job was growing by leaps and bounds and I requested another SES position, for the purpose of splitting the deputy duties into two sections, a troop support section and another for transportation. Among 30 candidates for that job, there was one truly outstanding applicant, Arthur R. "Bob" Keltz, General Service-13 (GS-13). I received criticism for promoting a GS-13 to a SES position, but within a year, those same people were taking credit for his selection as though it was their idea. Bob did a wonderful job and is the same redheaded administrator who had worked in the 4<sup>th</sup> Transportation automation area. He married Mary Lou McHugh, a DA civilian, and later retired. Eventually he became my principal deputy at AMC headquarters.

The combat feeding system came under my purview of TRETs and included the MREs, (meals ready to eat). C-rations (canned food) were developed just before World War II. K-rations were first given to paratroopers, then to everyone in all the services. After WWII, improved C-rations were introduced, and were used all through the Vietnam years. It was apparent to me that the Army wasn't using the more modern techniques in food processing and packaging that were available. Our ultimate goal was to abide by the Surgeon General's standards set for the Army regarding fat, protein, salt, carbohydrates, and calories per day; provide efficient packaging, shipping, and preparation methods; and, last but not least, provide meals that tasted good.

In 1980, the Army began looking at a new way to pre-process food, while at the same time, it wanted a streamlined procedure as part of moving toward what was being called an "Army of Excellence." This new Army of Excellence movement suggested that the Army eliminate about 10,000 cooks and go to a new field feeding system as they moved away from C-rations toward pre-processed food. The result was a combination of MREs (an individually packaged meal-ready-to eat), tray-packs (a fully prepared and packaged casserole that fed from six to eight people and was heated by cooks in the units while



in the field), and the use of B-rations (boxed and canned rations not dehydrated or freeze-dried).

Mr. Kowalczyk and I went to work in 1982 on providing research that proved the need to “replace” the 10,000 cooks that had been eliminated just two years before. With limited cooks, providing meals during field operations could only be accomplished with contractor support, often resulting in a greater expenditure than using Army personnel cooks. Our efforts saved 6,600 cook positions, but even that many often left some companies with only one cook. It took a decade, and action by General Vuono on two occasions of putting cooks back into units, to return to the original number of 10,000 cooks for the Army, which is a workable situation. Our hard work eventually paid off, and our position on the matter was vindicated. The number of cooks needed to provide a decent meal for our Soldiers was finally back in the system.

At about this same time, I contacted General Robert W. (Bob) Sennewald, who was the past Commander in Chief of U.S. forces in Korea, asking if he could run a combat field feeding study for the Army. I explained that the study needed to address a variety of areas: one, the number of cooks required to provide adequate meal service; two, the type of food products that would best serve our needs; three, the equipment necessary to transport and prepare the food; and four, a training plan for all meal provision areas. It was my opinion that a study done by a person from logistics might be received with bias, but research by a combat arms General of Sennewald’s stature would be bias-free and command the Army Staff’s respect and attention the study deserved.

General Sennewald accepted the task, interviewed commanders from battalion level through the Forces Command (FORSCOM) level. The result was an excellent, comprehensive plan that put the Army on the right track to recovery in the meals department. The General recommended that more cooks be added. His directive included suggestions such as, “The tray-pack is a good product, but a system is needed for a high mobility, multi-purpose wheeled vehicle to carry the equipment to heat the rations. The MRE has all the protein, carbohydrates, calories, and amounts of salt and fat required, but a

change in menu is needed.” The MRE program started in 1981 when the first MREs were sent to Europe.

The Surgeon General wanted every active Soldier to have 3,600 calories per day, so we made sure each meal had a minimum of 1,200 calories. Most of us would become pretty chubby on that many calories, but we were required to provide that amount. Many Soldiers didn’t like the taste of the MREs, and others objected to some of the ingredients.

Because of the dissatisfaction with the meals, we started a product improvement program. Mr. Kowalczyk, with Natick Laboratory, set about changing the MRE menus with a strong emphasis on Soldier testing. If the Soldiers in the test group didn’t like a meal, we threw it out. Soon we had completely changed the MRE, and tray-pack programs with all new menus that had been Soldier-tested.

The MREs were acceptable and were packaged in heavy rubberized bags, a brown bag full of several items, some dehydrated. The dehydrated items needed water and a means of heating them, and the water and heating method were sometimes a problem. The insect and rodent issue was a serious problem for storing MREs, and we went to work designing methods to address those concerns.

Our study and Soldier testing also led to the creation of a Humanitarian Ration and Multi-Faith Ration, both in the form of an MRE. In these rations, a pork item was eliminated, and because chicken was the only meat acceptable across this span, chicken became the meat of choice. Secretary of Defense Leslie Aspin<sup>33</sup> provided the Army with funds to develop the Humanitarian Ration.

Perhaps one of the Army’s greatest accomplishments was finding a way for each individual Soldier to heat a meal when and where he wanted. It almost took an act of Congress to get the Air Force to agree to let us put small heating pads in with the food rations, but we finally succeeded. My plan was to have the Soldier receive his ration and the heating pad at the same time, which necessitated their being packaged together. I didn’t want the heating pads to end up in some warehouse while the rations were being distributed miles away. That much imagined dilemma actually happened later during Desert Storm.

When the new MREs made their debut, they were accompanied with heating pads so that the Soldiers could, if they had two ounces of water, prepare a hot meal anywhere, anytime.

My experience with trying to make changes was a typical one. Even when things aren't satisfactory, changes are tough. Before we eliminated the C-rations, we were hard pressed to find anyone who had a kind word to say about them. However, once they were gone, we were told repeatedly how wonderful they were and how our Soldiers were missing them. No one liked the new MREs, nicknaming them various things, including "Meals rejected by the Ethiopians." We were damned if we did, and damned if we didn't. People get emotional about their food. I chalked it up to changes of any kind being difficult to make, and the fact that most folks complained about most meals, unless their mother made it, and then sometimes that sacred territory wasn't off limits.

We stuck with the Soldier testing of menus and continued to test everything with experimental groups. If they didn't like it, we'd pitch it. The meals Soldiers wanted in their MREs during the early eighties were pizza, hot dogs with cheese, and steak. Natick Laboratory, the food research and development group, developed an irradiated item using radiation to cure and cook meat so it was shelf stable and could be stored for a long period of time. They also developed a pizza that our Soldiers liked. Again, the key ingredient in the development of menus was Soldier testing.

Natick did a wonderful job with the Army's research and new designs. Much of the technology we used came from Natick, which has a mission to support the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). The dehydration processes and small items with a high caloric content were developed for the astronauts, and we used them in our MREs. The tray-pact technology had commonly been used across the commercial food system, but with smaller containers.

Typically, most commanders want to eat as many A-rations (meals cooked by a cook in a mess hall) as possible, leaving the MREs for use during field exercises. A-rations were meals prepared from scratch as you would prepare them at home, starting with peeling the potatoes

and so forth. Of course, meals mass produced provide fodder for a wide range of comedic complaints. Much later, during Desert Storm, we didn't have the production base we needed. We had only four producers, and one went into bankruptcy. This continued to be an area of concern. In fact, there was still a production base problem when I retired in 1994.

As usual, we were a busy family, and time was flying past. In 1984, Tony was in his tenth grade year, very active in sports including basketball, indoor and outdoor track, Boy Scouts, bowling every Saturday morning in a league, and playing in a Youth Club Basketball League. Dede and Sabra were both married with families of their own. Tony, Pat and I were thoroughly enjoying Virginia life.

"We're in a good place right now," Pat agreed. "I'm enjoying everything I do. The only thing missing is seeing our daughters more and finding a way to sub in one of Tony's classes before he graduates or the Army moves us someplace that doesn't need substitute teachers," Pat laughed. Tony lived in fear of Pat filling in for one of his teachers.

At DCSLOG, the last major thing that consumed my workdays was the battle dress uniform (BDU). Again, change is so difficult for all of us. About a year before I left VII Corps in Germany, we were asked our uniform size for the purpose of supplying us with prototype uniforms of an experimental new design. The thought was to use us, the Generals and senior people, who were in the forefront making speeches, conducting briefings, and such, as models so that the Soldiers grew accustomed to seeing them.

Feedback at that time suggested that the rest of the Army was not accepting the new look. The new uniform was worn with the shirt out, not tucked. It looked "sloppy" and "baggy" were the comments. General John Adams Wickham, Jr., CSA, (July 1983-June 1987), saw the uniform and declared, "It's the baggiest looking thing I've ever seen." To correct the baggy appearance problem, the Army put some tabs on the sides, so that it could be cinched up a couple of inches, giving it a slimmer look. The tabs were named "Wickham tabs" after the General who inspired them. The uniform was also hot, because the fabric held in heat. It had dual patches on the knees, elbow, and seat,

and was even creased in the knees which made pressing the pants a nightmare. It was very easy for Pat, though. She never touched them. My pants went to the cleaners, and it was their problem! Again, change of any kind is hard, and this was no exception.

When I inherited the uniform, we had a production problem. The industrial base used to produce the uniforms was inadequate. Small businesses had been awarded the uniform contracts, with one contractor literally making them out of his garage. The sample jackets we were receiving had one sleeve two inches shorter than the other, and some pockets sewn on upside down. Quality control was a problem.

DLA and the Defense Personnel Supply Center (DPSC) in Philadelphia shared control over the quality of the finished product. DPSC had also gotten in the procurement business by assuming the responsibility of buying millions of yards of material and then providing it to whatever local bidder had the job of transforming massive bolts of fabric into uniforms.

The result was a very inferior product. The uniforms shrank; the crotches were too short, which made it tough to sit for any length of time; and the color faded with each washing. Through working closely with DLA and briefing General Thompson, the DCSLOG, we finally agreed to give the contract to a contractor who had total responsibility for all aspects of production. DLA also agreed to send their quality inspectors into the plants to check the process of each of the productions. It took about two years to, at last, start seeing quality battlefield dress uniforms. That happened around 1984.

My task was to introduce the new, rather unpopular, uniform in a morning news conference broadcast on a major network. At that point in my career I had become a behind-the-scenes administrator. My current military role seldom led me in front of cameras for televised news conferences. The unusual morning stint in front of major media led to a few friendly, teasing phone calls to our home. One of our friends, Janet Lynn, wife of Brigadier (later Major General) Robert G. Lynn, called.

“Do you know who’s in my bedroom?” Janet asked Pat when she answered the phone.

“No, I have no idea,” said Pat.

“Jim, your husband,” said Janet.

“Okay,” laughed Pat. “Dede just called. She said that Sherry, her toddler daughter, was sitting on the floor watching *Good Morning America* and calmly turned to her mother and said, ‘Mommy, G.G. (The grandkids call me G.G., short for General Grandpa.) is on TV’. So I think my husband is in lots of bedrooms this morning!”

In the *Time Magazine* issue of January 9, 1984, an article appeared that didn’t help endear the new uniform to anyone. “Combat Couture under Fire” by Kurt Andersen stated:

“American servicemen do not expect to make the cover of *Gentlemen’s Quarterly*, but they do want their combat wear to be both practical and neat. The half-nylon, half-cotton outfit, with its amoebic pattern of green, brown, tan, and black is unacceptably hot, even in temperate climates. It was designed to be an “all-service, all purpose” uniform, but clerks, mechanics, and drill Sergeants alike bemoan its uncomfortable cut and slovenly look.”

The article went on from there to quote every gripe made by servicemen about their new uniform. It added fuel to an already building group of brush fires. We were working to correct the problems. Having learned our research lessons from the “meals ready to eat” experience, we began field-testing variations on the current BDU with Soldiers in tactical units. Both the 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions were in temperate climates and did some field testing with a medium-weight BDU. Someone suggested we pull from the Vietnam years and use the old “rip-stop” lightweight uniforms. We sent the lightweight BDUs to units in Hawaii and Panama.

Natick, again helping with the research, received good response from the testing. After considering all input from our various sources, the lightweight, camouflaged BDU, almost the same BDU we had during Vietnam, was chosen. The seat and knee patches were

eliminated because they were too heavy; and the jacket was taken in on each side, eliminating the “Wickham tabs.” This final result is probably the most popular uniform in today’s Army. Most Soldiers wear them, even in winter, because they comfortably transition from mild to cold temperatures. In cooler climates, some Soldiers wear the Army green field sweater under the jacket.

During the early eighties, the Gore family of Delaware offered the Army a laminated fabric with three layers that allowed the body to perspire and the heat to escape, and yet didn’t allow the penetration of rain and wind. It was truly a state-of-the-art, high-tech material. This amazing cold-weather fabric was being patented with the name Gore-Tex. We began producing the Army’s first Gore-Tex jacket and trousers and tested them in Special Forces units. The cost of one Gore-Tex uniform was running around \$600 and did not last through a single field exercise. The knees, seats, and elbows were tearing out. As we worked with the Gore family to produce a more durable fabric, Senator James Sasser, Democrat from Tennessee (1977-1995; later Ambassador to China under the Clinton Administration), was very helpful. As the fabric’s durability improved, we started fielding the Gore-Tex uniforms across the Army.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Infantry gave the Gore-Tex uniform its toughest test. During a March winter field exercise in Alaska called “Exercise Brim Frost,” 3,500 Soldiers were wearing the Gore-Tex uniform when the temperature dipped below 70 degrees below zero. During the exercise, a C-130 crashed, and many Soldiers were injured. The 6<sup>th</sup> Infantry division commander, Major General Harold Tom Fields, Jr., called me to report that out of all of his Soldiers in the field, there were only two incidents where the new Gore-Tex jacket failed. In both cases, petroleum had been spilled on them, causing them to freeze quickly, and the fabric to split. With those two exceptions, all other Soldiers were adequately protected from the frigid climate during the exercise. I was extremely pleased with the General’s report on the performance of our uniform and walked, more like jogged with joy, down the hall to tell General Vuono and the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army the good news. A scarcity of good news about our uniform came our way, and we needed to celebrate every accolade, no matter how small.

During that time, the Army also discovered polypropylene, a lightweight material that would whisk away the perspiration from the body and keep it dry during the most strenuous workout. Runners, mountain climbers, and backpackers had used polypropylene for years. We used this new fabric to replace the old World War II era “long johns” and made the Army some new underwear. With the Gore-Tex jacket and pants, the polypropylene underwear, and a pile liner for the jacket, Soldiers were able to exist frostbite-free for several days in 70 degree below zero weather.

A companion to the cold weather outfit was our new Gore-Tex sleeping bag. The current arctic sleeping bag was filled with down-feathers. I remembered my mother saying, “If you get a down pillow wet, the feathers will hold that moisture for a long time.” She was right. When the current sleeping bags got wet, they retained moisture for weeks. Many a field Soldier, myself included, wondered why we were always so cold in our arctic bags, and down feathers were the reason. When a bag with a Gore-Tex outer layer was filled with synthetic material that repelled water, we had a winner. Natick Laboratory came to our rescue again and developed the new arctic bag. For display purposes only, we cut a bag open to show Soldiers how they were lined and filled. We began the sleeping bag work in 1982, and it finally fielded about 1989. It was a major improvement!

When I was in Germany in VII Corps, we were buying insulated boots from the shops in Germany to keep our feet warm and dry. It always chagrined me that we had to buy German boots because the Army issue included a pair of un-insulated boots and a pair of galoshes to put over the boots. The galoshes were cumbersome to stow and carry, and clumsy to pull on over boots. And the fact was that galoshes were only good to about zero degrees. Below that, they were trouble and ineffective. General Vuono agreed that we needed something, but that it wasn't the right time to implement a new winter boot program. However, we began to investigate the boot problem as early as 1982. I must give a pat on the back to Congressman John P. Murtha, Democrat from Pennsylvania who, through the Soldier Modernization Program (SMP), gave us funding to develop insulated boots.



We again did our research with several of the best USA-made insulated boots on the market. After Soldier-testing them, the best features from each were incorporated into a Natick developed insulated boot. In fact, the first contract went to the top two contractors because we couldn't produce the required product quickly enough. Finally, in the early 1990's we had two different models, and 50,000 sets were sent for use in cold weather areas. They worked well, but today, we now issue an Army standard insulated boot. The Soldiers who went into Macedonia in 1992, a very cold European area, all received one pair of insulated boots. In January 1994, on a trip through that region, General David M. Maddox asked me to help get a second pair for each Soldier, because even insulated boots get damp and must have time to dry out before being worn again. Around that same time, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 325<sup>th</sup> Infantry was in Vicenza, Italy, on a cold weather mission, and we provided insulated boots for them as well.

One day in the late eighties, I was sitting in my DCSLOG office when I received a call from an irate four-star General. He'd been in Brussels, Belgium at a NATO function in which military from four nations were on parade. It was a rainy, damp day, and the Soldiers wore raincoats. "The British, Belgians, and Dutch looked great, so sharp and military," the General shouted. "The United States looked terrible in that little gray tent they wear for a raincoat," he continued. "It was embarrassing! Do something about that sloppy tent!"

Personally, I had always thought our military raincoat looked unprofessional and slovenly. The garment started out some shade of black and faded to a gray. The irate General had seen our guys in their "gray tents" while the other nations wore more fitted military raincoats, with double breasted buttons and a belt.

"Sir, let me visit with General Vuono about this and we'll work on the raincoat problem," I said. And I did just that. "Chief, we should take a look at going back to the raincoat the Army was wearing in 1958, but changing the color to black. I think black would better complement our current uniform by matching the black stripe on the trousers and the black shoes." It was the raincoat I wore when I first entered the Army. It was fitted with double breasted buttons, a belt, and had that sharp military look.

The Military History Office was asked to assist by supplying us with pictures, specifications, and patterns of the old uniforms. In centuries past, a shooter's pad, a circular patch, had been sewn on the right shoulder of jackets and coats. You see the patch on some London Fog jackets. We wanted this coat to be built on history and tradition. After coming up with three designs, we modeled the prototype coats for the Army chief, using Soldiers from the Old Guard. He selected the military raincoat that we have today. The amazing thing about this coat is that it took less than two years from the irate General's phone call through the research phase to the finished, mass-produced product. It typically took six to eight-plus years to get a uniform related item from drawing board into the field and worn by our Soldiers en masse. The production of that raincoat surely set some kind of performance record for turn-around time on an Army project.

We also designed and implemented a green shirt with a heavier weight that would hold its appearance, so now personnel can chose from two weights in shirts. General Vuono returned from a visit to Guatemala saying, "The U.S. officers looked like crap! It was hot and humid, and everybody was drenched in perspiration. It came through the uniforms and their shirts wilted."

He was comparing the U.S. officers to the Central Americans who had adopted our heavyweight brown shirts and pants that we had gotten rid of in the seventies. The old heavier weight held its appearance and military creases. "Damn, they looked good and they were wearing our old uniforms. Fix that shirt!" Vuono ordered. So we fixed the shirt. The second thing we did in the shirt department was to fix the green short-sleeve shirt. The old one was designed to wear open without a tie. It had what the clothing industry called a "pajama collar" because it lay flat against the shirt. We designed a new shirt with a regular stand-up collar, so it could be worn either open or buttoned with a tie.

There was also a DA policy that we couldn't wear ribbons on that green shirt. This was yet another concern of General Vuono's. We had Soldiers coming back from overseas who were proud of their units. You would see an Air Force airman in the airport, and he would have on all his ribbons. You would see a Marine, and he would have all of his ribbons. Then you would see an Army Soldier, and he'd

have on nothing but his green shirt. While we were fixing everything else, we fixed that too. Now our Soldiers can wear their ribbons like all the other branches of the service.

As long as we were making uniform changes and trying to steep our uniforms in history and tradition, I mentioned my favorite uniform, the “pinks and greens,” to General Vuono. He agreed that we should investigate. That uniform had been worn in World War II and Korea, and in 1954 when I first joined ROTC. The green jacket was belted, and the pants were a grayish, mauve looking color. I suggested that we find the specifications on the “pinks and greens” and design something a little jazzier than our green uniform that looked more like a bus driver’s uniform than a military one. In an archive at an Air Force Base in Ogden, Utah, we found the specifications. They were loaned to us under threat of death if we did not return them in good order, and in a timely fashion.

From the specs, DPSC produced eight authentic uniforms with one exception; we couldn’t afford the elastic material the “pinks and greens” were originally made from. The uniforms were made from our currently used, affordable fabric. They looked great with a belt. Each of the three-stars on the Army staff, the Army Chief, the Sergeant Major of the Army, Julius William (Bill) Gates, were among those who wore the prototypes as test models. Many times Sergeant Major Gates and I went places wearing our belted uniforms, and I also wore mine for all speeches. On one occasion, when I briefed all the Major Command (MACOM) Sergeants Major, Eighth Army, Europe, we were overwhelmed with requests for uniforms like ours. The field research suggested that going to this type of uniform would be favorably received. The retired community and the overweight personnel got the project vetoed. Normally, chubby people don’t want to have to wear a belt, and that’s understandable. The specs were returned to the Utah archives, and we moved on to our other concerns.

A discussion of whether or not to wear a beret seems appropriate here. I was at DCSLOG, and General Vuono was in his second year as Army Chief (1989). One day he announced, “We’re eliminating 200,000 to 300,000 Soldiers from the Army.” We actually suspected it would be even more. “During this time of downsizing, I want to bring

back the beret as standard issue. I want you to look into that,” he ordered.

My thinking was that in our present state of losing personnel, this might give the Soldiers something positive. When I served in Germany, the Panzer division had berets, the French had berets, the British had berets, and we had field hats that weren't very attractive on anyone. The beret looks good with most military uniforms. Mr. Chet Kowalczyk, still a deputy in TRETTS, was working with me, as well as Colonel (later Lieutenant General) Henry T. (Tom) Glisson, who had returned and was my XO, as a quartermaster Colonel. Colonel Jesse Tolleson was the troop support division chief. Colonel Bill Meadows had left, so Lieutenant Vallie Rosner was the food and clothing person and our textile expert.

In our investigative scheme, we first looked at color. There were many requests for branch colors, but in a parade field division line-up, the rainbow of color would be confusing and not look uniform. The final recommendation was to go with a black beret. The black color did not tread on the Special Forces green berets or the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne's maroon ones, but the Rangers were wearing black. General Vuono said, “Call Buck.” When I contacted Colonel (later General) William F. (Buck) Kernan, Ranger Regimental Commander and a good friend, to alert him to the “beret” project, I offered him a change of color if he wanted. Buck decided to go with a sand-brown color because it was the Special Air Service (SAS) color, and an international color during World War II. He thought that it was most closely aligned with the Ranger mission and special operations. With this change, all Special Forces, Airborne, or Rangers who were currently wearing berets, would be distinguished from the rest of the Army in their black berets.

General Vuono was wearing a maroon beret with his uniform during our investigative period. While visiting the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division, he had a snapshot of himself wearing the beret. Upon his return to the Pentagon, he began showing the snapshot around saying, “Look at this. By God, I look good, don't I?”

I said, “Chief, you look great, and I think the Army is going to look good. We can keep the BDU cap for patrol operations and long-range patrol units, and issue each Soldier two berets, one for work and

one for dress. We can get rid of that flying saucer hat, which we force young officers to buy and they never use.” Our study showed a cost analysis trade-off of almost completely funding the beret from resources we saved by getting rid of three caps. I thought the project was a shoe-in at that point.

Even the week before General Vuono retired, he had us back in his office to discuss fielding a MACOM (USAREUR) or FORSCOM with berets. We had an industrial base problem, worked that out, secured the funding, and arranged to have the specified number of berets produced in six months. But in the end, he said “I can’t authorize the beret production.” I think it may have been pressure from the retired community that killed it, and it must have been hard because it was his idea in the first place. There were rumors that the opposition thought an all-beret Army would change the culture and tradition of our field Soldiers. Other rumors spoke of jealousy of the beret by the Special Forces who were currently wearing them. Yet others said that there was opposition to spreading the Airborne and Special Forces image across the entire Army. I don’t know what caused two years worth of research, sample production, finding funds, and planning to go down the tubes.

Much later during the 1990’s, the topic resurfaced. At that point, we had a friend who, as surprising as it may seem, probably lost a star over the beret issue. A little company in Arkansas called Bancroft could produce the beret we wanted. The only other company we knew about was in Canada. You have to use a certain type of sheep wool that will retain the beret’s color and shape. We could not afford the berets for the 800,000 Soldiers we had then. So later, the Army Chief asked Tom Glisson, who had been my XO as a Colonel and was now a three-star General and DLA commander, to revisit the files we had on using a beret. “I want the beret brought in by the Army’s birthday on 14 June,” the Chief said. That was six months from then. “We’ll all change on the Army’s birthday from our present hat to the beret.”

Financially, the only way it could be done that quickly was to go to Romania, China, or Indonesia for production. The Chief of Staff of the Army and Tom went together to Congress to the House committee for approval of the project. When asked why the Army wasn’t having this done in the U.S.A., the chief didn’t stand up for Tom by

explaining the urgency of a six month deadline and the expense factor. In fact, he implied that Tom was the culprit.

Tom was attacked verbally. The hearing was broadcast on CNN, so there were tapes of the hearing shown everywhere. Tom retired shortly after that, at a time when he was up for his fourth star. It was such a waste and a stupid political move. We trained Tom to be a General, and he was a good one. He was just doing his job, arranging to acquire all those berets by a certain time, a requirement he didn't initiate. The Army Chief was the one who decided when all the berets had to be in the hands of troops. We lost a great Army General over berets. It all worked out fine for Tom, however, as he has done quite well in the private sector and is our neighbor, living just down the road from us in Orlando. It was the business world's gain and the Army's loss.

Around 1982, the Army began to look at the potential requirement of having to deploy into a Southwest Asian country. Our relationship with Iran was at an all-time low, and we knew that water support equipment would be terribly important. Luckily, during the 1980's, we were able to test a lot of this equipment, concepts, and doctrine during annual exercises, known as the "Bright Star" exercises, which paid off handsomely during Desert Shield/Desert Storm. The study began before I arrived as the TRETTS Director in 1982. I want to credit the military and civilians in the Water Support Teams office, specifically Chet Kowalczyk, who was a division chief and ran the Water Support Task Force. His tenure and continuity through several DCSLOG commanders made the water equipment support programs a reality.

The Army built water support units and detachments to use the equipment. The procedure involved starting in the Pentagon by first building a Program Development Increment Package, and then a Support of Management Decision Package to carry the resource programs forward. All that was necessary to produce the equipment we needed on schedule. As we worked with policy and procedure types of issues with the Logistics Center, now Combined Arms Support Command (CASCOM), we had two main questions to answer. What kinds of equipment and training were needed to make each division self-sustaining in Southwest Asia (SWA), a totally arid and

desert climate? What kinds of resources and dollars would be required to bring such a mission into full operation?

Our evaluation led us into researching military operations in the desert. We even went back to World War II records and looked at the U.S. Army's operations in North Africa and Field Marshal Rommel's experience in Egypt. We conducted interviews with Egyptian and Israeli officers about equipment and procedures. We worked with the Quartermaster School, scrubbing usage levels very carefully, coming up with 21 gallons of water per Soldier per day. We learned that it is difficult to get a Soldier to drink sufficient water in that climate. We even resorted to fruit flavored water I called "kool-aids." A brigade commander told us that if a Soldier became a heat casualty while in training or on a mission, it was an automatic 30-day, Article 15, a unit level disciplinary action against that Soldier. It was vitally important to the Soldier's health to drink the daily ration of water.

The Army was working toward a Tactical Water Distribution System (TWDS) in ten-mile increments, with flexible pipe and a small generating or pumping station to transport water over variable distances. Our goal was to be able to use any kind of commercial, indigenous truck or our own Army truck. We designed a 3,000 gallon bag that was lovingly called the SMFT (Semi-trailer Mounted Fabric Tank) and, with the use of belts, could be tied to a stake and platform trailer. It quickly became apparent that some driver training would be required to maneuver one of these little jewels. After 2,000 of the 3,000 gallons of water had been dispensed, the water would shift in the tank during travel, causing the trailer to flip over. This was a dangerous scenario.

Water storage systems grew from our 20,000 gallon bags to 50,000 gallon bags, which are very large containers. That gave us a storage farm of systems that could be linked with a tactical water distribution system. This would be supplemented by our cute little SMFTs, which would move and distribute the water. We were studying various environments, both chemically and biologically contaminated water, from the extreme of salt water down to the water one finds in a puddle or small pond that has stagnated, brackish water. We first developed what we thought would be an appropriate requirement for a division: a

600-gallon per hour system, which we first skid-mounted and then later placed on wheels for movement.

Already in 1982 and 1983, we had pre-positioned ships out at Diego Garcia. At that time, we placed the water equipment on board the ships, and we wanted it all stored together, the Reverse Osmosis Water Purification Units (ROWPU), the chemicals, and the over-pack, which contained all the repair parts. Much later, as the ships pulled into Desert Storm, the water purification equipment was already an integral part of the supplies. At that point, we went to the other services asking if they wanted to “tag” on. The Marine Corps immediately bought in, and we found the Air Force to be supportive as well.

Then we approached the situation as though no water was available, none, period. That led us to look in the area of water-drilling rigs. We knew that, in the west Texas environment, they had what they called “wildcatters,” rigs on trucks that could pull into an area, put up their drilling rig, and within a matter of hours begin drilling. Their rigs were used for drilling oil, of course, but water drilling used much of the same technology and principles. We began looking at the requirement to bring in 10 to 15 of the rigs capable of drilling 1,000 feet down, as part of war reserve or operational project stock. As I recall, we centralized somewhere around 600 feet, but with a 1,500 foot extension kit. The Navy already had a course being taught in well drilling. We tagged onto their training system and trained some of our detachments.

It’s hard to believe and rather mind blowing that at one point, the *Mormack Star*, one of the ships at Diego Garcia, did nothing but store water. We were paying 10 million dollars a year to store a ship’s worth of water. And you think it’s silly to pay a dollar for a bottle of water! Before I retired from the Army, the cost was more like 16 million a year due to a rise in contractor fees. We were so concerned about the contingency requirements during that period that the ship was kept at Diego Garcia for years until we had the water support equipment, a distribution and well-drilling systems, with which to take care of our own needs. The fact that we were storing water on a large ship speaks to the concern that the Army, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and other services had about our deploying to that part of the world.



During that same period, there was a need for several small barges. We took one and put two commercial 150,000 gallon water purification units on it, moved it to the Mediterranean area, and eventually to Diego Garcia. In a matter of minutes, a tug could pull in a water barge. During Desert Storm, that barge was pulled into the Ad-Dammam area, but it was moved up to Al Jubayl to support the Marine Corps and produced water there where it was needed. When Saddam Hussein released oil into the Persian Gulf to damage the desalinization plants, the water barge went up and provided water for the Marine Corps.

On the petroleum issue, we felt that many Army units did not have the capability to deploy and support themselves in that area. At the last minute, about two or three months before crossing the border into Kuwait, we determined we could not meet the petroleum needs of a division on the move, so we started lifting Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck (HEMTT) tankers out of the Oshkosh plant in Wisconsin straight into Desert Storm.

In 1982 - 1984, we started a concerted effort to build a petroleum equipment package. We wanted to pull storage capability together that would permit a division, or echelons above division, to store large quantities of fuel. We had 5,000 and 10,000 gallon bags for fuel storage, as well as a 5,000 gallon barrel bag, and we began looking for even larger bags. We found it. It is a 210,000 gallon bag that is the size of a basketball court and about seven to ten feet tall. We found a mega bag!

In World War II and Korea, our procedure was to build huge steel and, later, aluminum tank farms. We can't operate that way any more because we have to be far more mobile and flexible. In Desert Storm, we went into the area and laid the huge petroleum bags out. The tactical petroleum terminals, as they were called, were shipped into the 22<sup>nd</sup> Theater Area Army Command (TAAC) for their use to support the divisions and corps.

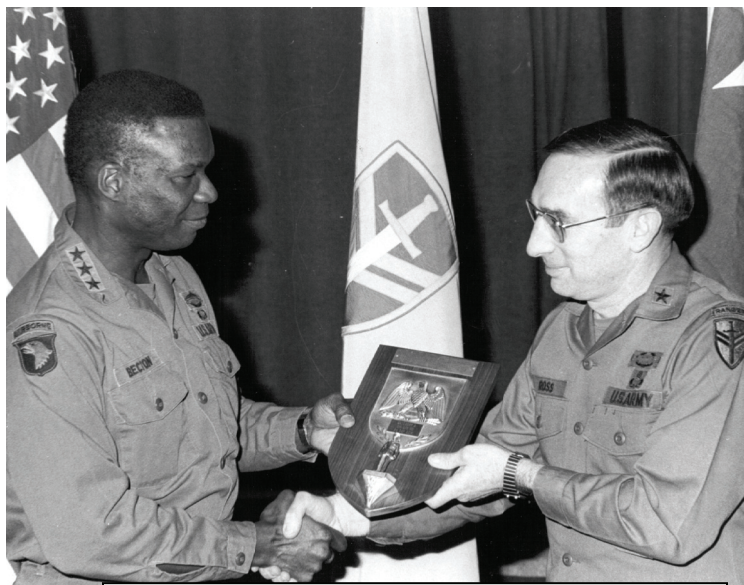
The Army also started looking at pipes. For years, we had used steel pipe, six-inch or eight-inch pipe to transport petroleum over long distances. It was a slow and tedious process to lay steel pipe, so we

looked at aluminum. Aluminum is very light and corrosion resistant. We had some early problems with it snapping at its joints. In a test at Yuma and later at Yakima, east of Fort Lewis, we actually laid a contingency-level of pipe across the system. We got away from having to screw down each of the joints, where Soldiers would spend so much time just putting two pieces of pipe together with a very complex joint that had to be screwed in. We went to something called a quick-lock coupling. The “victaulic coupling” literally would fit over the two ends of the aluminum pipe. It snapped down, and the connection was complete in a matter of seconds. We came up with some very innovative things: from steel to aluminum pipe; from very slow, screw-it-together to “victaulic quick-lock couplings.”

The pipeline system the Army developed was capable of pumping about a million gallons per day. That’s enough to support two heavy divisions. It’s also quite noteworthy that almost all of the whole force structure providing the water and petroleum in Desert Shield/Desert Storm was either Reserve or National Guard. There was very little active Army component.

Making improvements through our ever-advancing technology was my mission at DCSLOG. From victaulic quick-lock coupling to Gore-Tex uniforms and sleeping bags to polypropylene underwear, we chased dollars and turned the scientists loose to explore new and better ways to assist and help our Soldiers create the best Army possible. The staffs at Natick Laboratories, the Quartermaster (QM), Ordnance and Transportation Centers, and the LOGCENTER (later CASCOM) deserve huge thanks for their great ideas, innovative concepts, and pursuit of excellence.

Following photos are from GEN Ross's personal collection.



BG Ross in Germany with GEN Becton



BG Ross in Germany with GEN Kroesen



BG Ross in Germany with GEN Guthrie



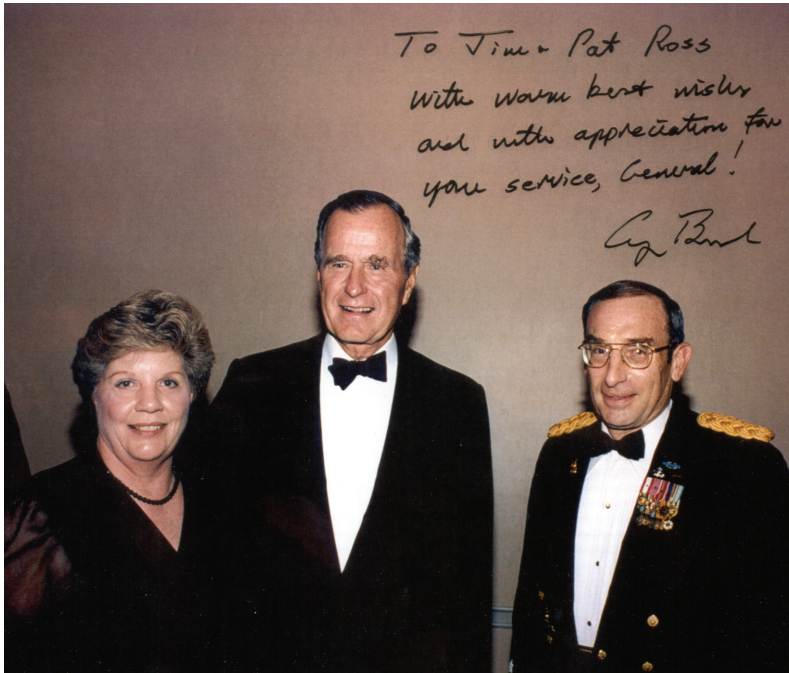
BG Ross in Germany with Manfred Rommel



GEN Ross and Mrs. Ross with GEN Thompson,  
CG, AMC



GEN Ross with GEN Tuttle, out-going CG, AMC



GEN Ross and Mrs. Ross with President George Bush



GEN Ross meets President Clinton, MG Raffiani and  
MAJ Hatch observe



Jim and Pat



Jim and Pat



## *Chapter XI*

### U.S Army Materiel Command, 1984 to 1987

#### HQ AMC, 1984-1986

Our family was growing. Sabra, now 26, married and living in Little Rock, had a daughter Teresa Catherine, whom we nicknamed Katie, and a new son Charles Michael, born September 13, 1984. Dede, 24 and married to Danny Henson, had a daughter Sherry. Though scattered, our family managed to remain in touch by telephone. Tony was a blur of activity, running track and playing baseball at Lake Braddock High School. He made great friends through school, sports, and Boy Scouts, earning the coveted Eagle Scout rank in 1986.

During this time, I had the honor of being inducted into the Henderson State University Distinguished Alumni. Making the presentation was my good friend Dr. Charles Dunn, President of HSU. Much later, in 2004, Dr. Dunn and his wife, Jane, would again be with Pat and me when I was inducted into the Sports Hall of Fame at HSU. They cited my lettering in two sports, both football and baseball, as well as making first team "All Arkansas Intercollegiate Conference" (AIC) back in 1957. Dr. Dunn's leadership and strong, visionary intellectual guidance have played a major role in the success and sustained growth of my alma mater, HSU.

About a month before General Donald Keith retired as the commander of AMC, I left DCSLOG and joined AMC. My move in departments in the summer of 1984 saw our family untouched by the change. I still went to work at the Pentagon; we were not making a residential move; and Pat and Tony's lives continued undisturbed by my shift in assignments. I moved to AMC with General Keith to set the stage for General Richard H. Thompson to come in as commander, replacing General Keith. At that point, AMC's total strength was about 127,000 people.

I first met General Thompson in 1982 when I was in VII Corps running the Corps Support Command. He was the DCSLOG then, and had the reputation of being a tough, taskmaster. He came through VII

Corps and spent a half day with me. At the end of the day, he said, "I want you to come back and join me in the Department of the Army when you finish your tour in Germany." Colonel John Long had been my deputy in Germany and was now General Thompson's XO, and the idea probably started with him.

A master manager of detail, General Thompson expected those serving with him to perform their duties to the best of their abilities and in a timely fashion. Those who did not perform, he could eat alive in an abrasive, unforgettable manner. Some people had a hard time with him because he was blunt and made people produce. Having been raised by a Ross who didn't mince words, I could work well with General Thompson.

About six months after meeting him, I received orders to return from Germany to the Pentagon where I worked for him for 18 months before he was promoted to General and was moved to AMC. It was then he told me he wanted me to go with him to AMC as his Chief of Staff. That position was typically filled by a two-star General, and I think he knew I was up for that promotion long before I did. In 1986, I was awarded the second star, becoming a Major General. Pat and General Thompson pinned on my new Major General's star.

AMC was not entirely new to me. I became familiar with them when I was in 2<sup>nd</sup> Support Command and in 4<sup>th</sup> Transportation. Working with various AMC commands had been a frequent occurrence during the past several years. When I was in VII Corps, Major General Donald M. Babers was the Communications-Electronics Commander. If we had a problem with communications, General Babers had personnel on their way to lend a hand almost instantly. One of the most responsive AMC commanders that I dealt with was Major General Robert L. Moore, of Missile Command, and later the AMC Deputy Commanding General (DCG). When we had a missile problem, I know of at least four times when General Moore had people on aircraft within three hours of our call, in-bound into Germany to solve our missile problem in VII Corps. General John R. Guthrie was the commander of AMC then, and he used to visit me in Germany about every six months. My Pentagon assignments made me very familiar with AMC, as did the Cam Ranh Bay and 101<sup>st</sup> experiences. I mentioned that I was in the Material Acquisition

Directorate in DCSLOG, which provided exposure to procurement and acquisition. My area of least exposure was research and development.

General Thompson had served several times in AMC and going back as commander, his intent was to make an impact from the very first day. “Let’s review each part of AMC and decide in which areas we have questions,” he said to me before going to AMC. Knowing him as I did made it relatively uncomplicated to review the vast organization of departments and decide where he would have questions.

Four weeks before General Thompson took command he began writing notes to those soon to be in his charge. He chose blue notepad stationery on which to address individual questions and tasks, dating them the day he was to take command. We developed over 600 “blue notes” from questions evolving from our study and review of AMC. General Thompson personally hand wrote every single one of the over 600 “blue notes” which were delivered to the AMC HQ staff on his first day as commander. There was a person who did nothing but manage the blue notes by keeping an up-to-date log on the status of each one. Some on the staff called them “Blue Bullets” or “Blue Bombs.”

The notes were General Thompson’s way of reminding people to do their job. If he discovered someone was not performing, that someone got a wake-up call in the form of a blue note; and that note more often than not created a scrambling, “find-a-way-to-get-your-act-together” situation. The recipient of the note was expected to respond, either in writing or through an oral briefing within a given period. Those who were slow to learn, or resistant to change, found themselves constantly writing papers or briefing the General, which can not be described as a pleasant experience. The fortunate folks who quickly found remedies for the blue note queries would, on infrequent occasions, be graced with a note of blue just to make sure they knew that he knew they still must perform.

Thompson’s expectations of others were exceeded only by his standards for himself. He was a taskmaster who worked harder and longer than those under his command. We worked every Saturday. He set an example for those from whom he asked so much. It was his

way and the notes were his tentacles. If you took his blue notes from only one day, attached a ribbon to each, the streamers would touch almost every floor and office of the AMC Headquarters and most directorates.

The commanders, all ten two-star Generals, did not receive blue notes. The General picked up the phone and placed a personal call if he had something to discuss with one of his ten commanders. If he was unable to make the call personally, the calls fell to one of his two deputies. Should both deputies be out on travel, I placed the calls. It was his approach to keeping the accountability chain tight.

General Keith, with whom I worked those few months prior to the command change, employed a very different command technique. He had been DCSRDA for the Army, and I watched as he spent most of his time with those directorates and far less with sustainment and readiness. He conducted most of his business through staff meetings and talking with people in person, face to face. I do not recall ever hearing General Keith say a bad word. To the contrary, I am convinced that in many of General Thompson's staff meetings, people were concerned to speak, offer suggestions, or ask questions for fear of incurring the General's attention in so public a forum, should they say something he considered stupid.

During General Keith's command, everyone on the staff worked for one of the two three-star deputies. One of the major changes that General Thompson made involved following, to the letter, the Leavenworth Model that resulted in all staff personnel working directly for the Chief of Staff. At that time, there were about 2,400 people at AMC Headquarters. The several deputies on the Material Readiness side included Lieutenant General Lawrence F. Skibbie, and later, General Peter G. Burbules. I worked with General Robert (Bob) Moore, a three-star deputy, and his deputy, Mr. Robert Black, a super civilian. Each time I found myself entangled in a task or procedure with which I had no experience or engaged in a difficult period, I would walk down to General Moore's office; he would invite me to sit and discuss the situation with him; and he'd share his thoughts on the issue. His help and guidance were invaluable.

Downstairs from our office was the Industrial Base and Procurement areas in which Darold L. Griffin and Jack Jury worked. Talk about a work ethic, Jack Jury had one, a very strong one. In fact, we became concerned about his health because he worked such long hours and too many days. We merged the Procurement and Industrial base because of the linkage between the two and created a new General officer position for the Deputy Chief of Staff of Procurement. Brigadier General Michael J. Pepe was one of the first men to fill that position. General John B. Oblinger, Jr. supervised the Research, Development, and Engineering (RD&E), followed by Orlando Gonzales, and later Lieutenant General Robert D. Hammond. Bob and I were old friends from years past. During those days, all project managers, over 100 of them, worked for AMC. That was in the days before the “Program Executive Officer” (PEO) period.

Sundays became precious given a six-day work week, On an especially glorious Sunday evening in the spring of 1986, Pat and I were dining at our favorite Virginia restaurant, Rafiani’s.

Pat fairly glowed in the candlelight. I was still in love with this gorgeous redhead after 30 very mobile years of marriage, three children, and three grandchildren. I know it sounds corny, but her eyes were actually twinkling as she chatted about our children, grandchildren, and the children’s letters to the president she had read that day. Among my wife’s varied activities, she was now volunteering at the White House to help read the thousands of kids’ letters sent to President Reagan each day.

“We get letters from children of all ages,” Pat was saying. “Some are from teenagers working on a project for school and have questions they need answered. Younger children write such wonderful letters. They ask questions, such as, how many rooms are in the White House or how many dogs do you have?” Often the letters are from entire classes. A teacher will suggest as a class project the students write to the President. We get stacks of those. Every letter is answered. A booklet about the White House with a cover letter goes out in response to each letter.”

“A letter came in this week that we just couldn’t file without sending it on to President Reagan to read,” Pat continued. “A

second grade teacher asked her class to illustrate 'America the Beautiful' and she made a booklet from their pictures which she sent to the President. There were pictures of glorious blue skies, grain waving in the breeze, majestic purple mountains, and a priceless picture of an airplane with fruit painted on the wings. It was the fruited plain," she laughed. "A little boy wrote to Reagan saying that he had the same birthday as the President, was having a party, and if the President happened to be in the neighborhood, would he please come to his party. The letter contained a postscript asking President Reagan to please call first because his mother would want to clean the house."

"There was one from a 12-year-old boy," Pat continued. "He had solutions for everything, poverty, war, environmental issues, everything. At the end of the letter, he said, 'If you need anymore help with anything, just call. I'm in school during the day, so call there. Don't worry; if you call they'll get me out of class.' He probably waited for months for President Reagan to call," Pat said smiling.

"So many of the letters make me laugh," she was saying. "And some of them make me want to cry. When I read a letter in a child's handwriting that describes desperate, depressing circumstances and asks for help, it breaks my heart. A 12-year-old girl from the West Virginia hills wrote saying she had hardly any clothes, no shoes, lived with her grandparents, and couldn't go to school because she was too embarrassed.. She asked if the president could help her. We had welfare personnel there within 24 hours. My gut reaction was to go find her myself."

"I know. I wanted to bring half the Vietnamese population home with me," I said. "Some kids are raised in difficult and dangerous conditions. And look at how many manage to grow into decent, responsible adults. Amazing."

"Well anyway, I love volunteering at the White House," Pat said as our entrées arrived. "Back in 1983 when I volunteered to tally contributions to the Reagan/Bush campaign, that was also fun. Even though it meant doing math and filing all day, I enjoyed it. Never have I seen so much money on one table in my life.

Someone is responsible for keeping track of every dime that comes in, responding, and adding that person or group's name to a database of contributors. I never realized the huge work load donations create and I'll never forget the woman who sent a letter with two pennies taped to it, saying that she wanted to add her two cents.

We talked on through the main course and dessert, and when our coffee came, I decided I could not put off my news any longer. What I had to say was going to spoil the mood. I had no idea how Pat was going to receive my telling her I'd been named the new commander of Depot System Command (DESCOM), which meant moving to Letterkenny Army Depot near Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. She was pretty darn happy with her life right now. The move would not take us far; we would be 100 miles from D.C. instead of 20; but adjustments in our daily lives were unavoidable. I was particularly concerned about Tony, who was about to embark on his senior year of high school in the fall.

"Is early retirement out of the question?" she finally asked after what seemed a season of silence. "You could be a marathon runner for hire and coach football, and I'll teach. How does that sound?"

"It won't be forever," I said as soothingly as I could. "It will, more than likely, be for just one year."

"Tony's senior year," Pat said. "Let's get this over with," she said, pointing to the check and placing her napkin on the table. "Let's go home, and tell Tony."

### **Army Depot Command, 1986-1987**

Tony took the news the way Pat had. We kept our Lake Braddock home, as we had done with the home in Dale City, and leased it with the thought of moving back there. We moved from our practically new Virginia home to a 220-year-old stone house, complete with ghost, reserved for the Army Depot System Commander and family. Pat and Tony waded through the all too familiar task of relocating as if they were Soldiers caught in a slow motion time warp. Their hearts

were not in it. They were both reluctantly leaving behind too much they held dear.

Trying to convince herself and Tony there were positive things about the move, Pat began to study the history of Chambersburg.<sup>34</sup> As we worked on getting the 220-year-old house on the National Historic Register, we found whiskey receipts documenting that the original owner of the home had produced whiskey on the premises for about 30 years.

During a reception at our home which involved my senior leaders and the town's leaders, I was approached by a gentleman who asked if I had seen Fred. "No," I replied. "Does Fred work at the depot?"

"No, he's in this house," he replied.

"I don't think so," I said.

"Every family who has lived in this house during the past century has seen Fred," he explained.

"You mean the ghost," I said. "I think we've felt Fred. There are spots in the house that are cold winter and summer. The house is so old that over the years some of the doors and windows have shifted. They open and close during the middle of the night, and it is maddening and very eerie. There are places such as the attic and basement that neither Pat nor I can be for very long without feeling as though someone is watching us. In fact, Pat's explanation is that there are a couple of bodies buried in the basement!"

One evening, I was sitting in the den reading. The staircase ascending from the entry hall was in full view. Halfway up, the staircase made a ninety degree turn. At that turn was a large painting that, when pulled forward, revealed a room that had once been a part of the Underground Railroad for escaping slaves. It was so well concealed; no one would suspect that the painting hid an entire room. It was twilight, the television provided the only light, and I glanced up from my work to see a lady floating up the staircase. She had on a long skirt down to her ankles, puffy



sleeves with a high collar; much like a turn of the century dress. Then she was gone. That really bothered me! As I scurried around the house turning on lights, I made the decision never to tell anyone.

Years later, long after my duty at Letterkenny had concluded, I had occasion to visit with one of my successors. “Did you ever see anything out of the ordinary in the commander’s home?” he asked.

I said very cautiously, “Why?” I wasn’t about to admit anything first.

“A ghost-like woman that seemed to float up the stairs,” he admitted.

We both agreed that her dress was a kind of tan, cream color with puffy sleeves, a long skirt, and a high collar. Because we only briefly saw her profile, we didn’t really know what she looked like.

“That scared the crap out of me,” he said.

I concurred and was glad to have a partner in silence to the eerie goings-on at the Letterkenny commander’s home.

Through the summer, both Pat and I tried to convince Tony to stay with us, and friendly Fred, in Pennsylvania, but he could not fathom missing his Lake Braddock senior year. Our good friends, Bob and Anne Lund, their son John who was Tony’s best friend, and his younger sister, graciously offered to let Tony live with them for the school year. Bob was an Army Colonel working in JCS and was Tony’s Scoutmaster. The Lunds were lifesavers, taking Tony into their family and sharing their home. The experience taught Tony a valuable lesson about sharing and living with siblings, and it couldn’t have happened in the arms of a more loving and caring family. His own sisters were much older and married. His life had been that of an only child for several years. We knew he was in the best of hands, but it was difficult, especially for Pat. Tony had declared his independence, and we were empty nesters before we expected.

Settling into the new assignment, I learned a bit about the history of our depot. The Army made plans around 1941 to build 12 new Ordnance Depots because of the need to control a surge of emerging war materiel. Letterkenny was chosen as an ordnance depot site because of its proximity, and yet safe distance, from the Eastern seaboard and our nation's capital. The topography of the land lent itself to ammunition storage; it was close to railroad access, water, power, and energy. The greatest asset was the people who had historically shown great courage and perseverance. Opposition to having a munitions depot on their land diminished after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, but the nickname the locals gave the area, "the dump," stuck long after the depot was in full operation. The citizens of the area objected to using the agricultural land as a military storage site, thus the unflattering name. Originally, construction included 798 underground igloos, 12 above ground magazines, and 17 warehouses, many made from remodeled farmhouses, barns, and chicken houses. In 1976, the U.S. Army Depot Command was established and headquartered at Letterkenny. The two-star command remained there until 1995.

In 2002, Letterkenny celebrated 60 years of supporting Soldiers and the Army. The depot has unique tactical missile repair capabilities, repairing a variety of defense missile systems, including the PATRIOT ground support and radar equipment. Comprising over 17,500 acres, a large land portion of the depot is used to conduct maintenance, modification, storage, and demilitarization operations on tactical missiles and ammunition. The depot remains one of the top three employers in Franklin County, Pennsylvania, fueling an economic engine that pumps over one-fourth of a billion dollars annually into the regional payroll, contracts, and retiree annuities. Letterkenny has proudly served the American Soldier from WWII through Desert Storm/Desert Shield and Just Cause in Panama, wherever the mission was located.

In 1986, our Army industrial base area included 21 ammunition plants, three arsenals, and DESCOM had 21 depots. This number was down from 45 at the end of World War II. As I arrived at DESCOM, the 21 depots had been trimmed to 19, but still had 41,000 people scattered over 30 states working for the command. If a light division is considered 10,000 Soldiers, you can see that this was a large

organization. In addition, Mainz Army Depot and the Oberamstadt work force in Germany fell under this command. There was pressure to downsize trickling from AMC to DESCOM. We started designing a soft downward trend. Our goal was to eliminate any areas currently deemed unnecessary and stick to only vital and obligatory missions. When I left DESCOM, we still had 19 depots and were down to 38,000 people, but were on a downward slide to 10 depots.

A major mission was to build theater-oriented distribution centers. During the information gathering stage, I visited Corsicana, Texas to learn how K-Mart's distribution center worked. I studied J.C. Penney's operation in Dallas. Teams were sent to almost every large distribution center in the United States to study the automation systems, and the techniques they employed. The strategies were observed, studied, revised to fit our needs, and utilized to become more productive while downsizing.

I was among the local congressional representatives, mayors, and others at New Cumberland, Pennsylvania, who, in 1986, turned the first shovels of dirt to start a new 200 million dollar facility. It was to be the most modern and largest distribution center in the United States. The New Cumberland site started as the Marsh Run Storage Depot in 1918, storing and distributing supplies to and from Europe during World War I. Over the years, it served in numerous capacities, including an aircraft hanger and maintenance shop. The Army's goal was to create a state-of-the-art facility on the 800 acre site. Land for the site lay along the Susquehanna River in New Cumberland about five miles south of Harrisburg.

Distribution requirements were doubling due to Air Line of Communication (ALOC) in Europe, Korea, and Panama. The ALOC program involved high priority parts being flown to a unit, so that the weapon system could be brought back to operational standards on site. Utilizing this process saved shipping the entire weapon system to a maintenance facility in the States. At the same time, the Army's distribution demands doubled, we were attempting to, through automation, meet those demands without increasing personnel. I was deeply involved in shaping the new distribution system at New Cumberland. As our creation evolved, the efficiencies gained through automation of warehouse functions paid off.

The Army's strategy for meeting distribution needs involved strategically located depots within the states. A new distribution center at Sharpe Army Depot in California served the West Coast and Pacific area, while New Cumberland served the East Coast and Europe. The Red River Army Depot in Texarkana, Texas, served the Central states, Panama, and Central and South America, which was a huge slice of the Army's dispersal requirements.

In most depots, our storage arrangements were straight out of the forties and fifties. Few changes had been made since that time and we attempted to bring them into the present with ten new Automatic Storage and Retrieval Systems (ASARS). The automation capabilities were awesome, computer-driven with the latest inventory control features. Through the electronic networking of machinery, the computer and the material handling equipment talked to each other about where an item was stored, and how many of those items remained on the shelf. Workers who lived through the transition from our antiquated, handwritten arrangement to the technological system were awestruck.

The physical appearance of the new system reminded me of a gigantic replica of my old erector set. Some of the storage racks were seven stories high. It was damned exciting to ride in one of the equipment handling machines to the top. We speculated as to how you'd get a person down from there if all the equipment failed. It wasn't quite high enough to issue parachutes. The backup system was a maze of ropes and pulleys that looked rather archaic and would take a repelling expert to manage. To my knowledge, we never had a major problem and left someone stranded indefinitely in the penthouse section of our vertical labyrinth.

In a quest to standardize the automation system across AMC, our study led us to the realization that growing computer technology would soon replace hands-on paperwork. The goal was to relieve the task of producing handwritten Depot Maintenance Work Requirements (DMWRs) manuals by moving to computer-generated manuals. People spent hours writing and drawing in manuals, explaining specifications for a weapon system, a component, a part for a weapon, a major assembly, and so forth. We were just beginning to understand

how this task could be automated through the computer. Electronic data interchange would allow us to pass the current handwritten, mailed information through our system in an automated form, saving many worker hours.

Several of the depots are testing flexible computer-integrated manufacturing (FCIM), the capabilities of which would save hundreds of worker hours, facilitating an amazing turn-around-time from order to product. For example, suppose a tank part was required at Anniston, Alabama. The specifications for that part were at Rock Island, Illinois. The specs were passed electronically to Anniston. Using the specs, Anniston produced the part according to quality control standards within a matter of hours, all done without paper or a single stroke of a pen. The programs started in the mid-eighties, automated storage and retrieval systems, software, electronic data exchange, and new distribution centers were paying off handsomely. The Army's supply system was becoming a well-oiled machine.

In the years after my time as Army Depot System Commander, I watched the gradual expansion of the DLA take over the supply functions of that command. Since the Revolutionary War, the mission of supply of weapons systems had been the responsibility of the Army; the Army had always taken care of its own weapon supply. I had observed other nations consolidate their logistics services and forces and learned it was not an optimal arrangement. From eight to ten years following consolidation, they would return to the original format of having each branch of the service, once again, resume responsibility for functions that had been merged.

The idea of a centralized supply system for defense sounds great in theory, and it has been around for decades. Former President Herbert Hoover, after WWII, recommended centralizing management of common military logistics support and as a result, a joint Army-Navy-Air Force Support Center was formed. For the first time in history, 1952 witnessed all military defense supplies being bought, stored, and issued using a common organization, the DoD. It was also in the mid-fifties when the management of commodities, consumable items, was parceled out among the different branches. The Army managed food and clothing; the Navy managed medical supplies, petroleum, and industrial parts; and the Air Force managed electronic items.

The single manager concept did not provide the uniformity envisioned by Hoover, and in 1961 Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara ordered the single manager agencies consolidated into one agency, the Defense Supply Agency (DSA). The agency's responsibilities grew as they assumed the tasks of defense overseas property disposal operations and worldwide procurement, management and distribution of coal and bulk petroleum products. In 1977, the organization's name, Defense Supply Agency, was changed to Defense Logistics Agency. The Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 identified DLA as a combat support agency, and in 1988 it began assuming management of the nation's stockpile of strategic materials.

Preparations began for DLA to assume our systems. Among the systems being transferred to them was ALOC, which was an essential part of our operation and deadly critical during wartime. Time efficiency and top quality control were essential factors in our well run ALOC system. Major General Thomas B. Arwood spent countless hundreds of hours encouraging DLA to continue the ALOC operation as it was. Explanations from a variety of perspectives were offered, urging them to accept what they were calling a "unique Army system."

The original plan of reassignment called for the transfer of over 200,000 lines of common items to DLA. For a variety of reasons, we did not do that, and the final total was somewhere around 150,000. After Desert Storm, we retrieved some items that we had previously transferred to DLA and brought them back to the Army. From the Desert Storm experience, the redeemed items were considered weapon-system-critical, and under DLA's management, supply had been lacking. It was crucial that the Army manage them. Time will tell us whether that was the right decision.

Perhaps I'm one of those people I mentioned earlier who is resistant to change to the point of clinging to things that are obsolete or inefficient. Maybe I was too close to the situation, but my mode of operation has always been, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it." Why do folks have the inclination to tinker and change things that don't need changing? Of course, one goal of consolidation and often the bottom line is to save money. If you can do that and not cut quantity and quality of service and supply, then it has my vote and my avid support.

However, when that cannot be accomplished, for the life of me, I cannot see the logic.

The transfer of items to DLA broke a Title X<sup>35</sup> responsibility that belonged strictly to the Secretary of the Army and the Army Chief, and to our way of thinking, endangered our wartime readiness. We thought we were breaking something that worked. As DLA continues to assume supply responsibility from our depots, Army control continues to dwindle. DLA has about 60 percent of the Apache helicopter and 90 percent of the Heavy Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWV). In the not too distant future, our weapons systems will be totally supported by the DLA. To an old Soldier who wants to take care of the new Soldiers, it feels as if we don't control our own destiny.

My problem with the consolidation set-up involves the fact that it is not a military chain of command. Their DoD over-watch rises to John M. Deutch's<sup>36</sup> level, who was Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisitions. We are constantly worried about lack of control. A number of problems arose during Desert Shield/Desert Storm that were traced back to DLA. A significant problem was poor documentation of shipped supplies. So many times, we had no idea what the containers held that came straight from DLA depot and contractor/vendor locations. DLA, I know, worked hard to straighten out their problems. It is my hope that the problems do not repeat themselves.





## *Chapter XII*

### **Department of the Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, 1987-1992**

Our year at Letterkenny came to a close the summer of 1987, and what a summer it was. Tony graduated from high school, I was reassigned to the Pentagon as the DA DCSLOG, and Pat moved us to Executive Officers Quarters 27A at Fort Myer, Virginia.<sup>37</sup> Fort Myer sits on a high bluff overlooking the Potomac River and the nation's capital. Our home was around the corner from the 26 Victorian-style homes lining the street of what is referred to as "Generals' Row." The homes were reserved for the Armed Services' high-ranking officers.

The Army's oldest infantry unit, the 3<sup>rd</sup> U.S. Infantry (The Old Guard), is assigned to Forts Myer and McNair as the Army's official ceremonial unit and security force in the Washington metropolitan area. Fort Myer is also home to some of the Army's last cavalry horses, the 3<sup>rd</sup> U.S. Infantry's Caisson Platoon, which are housed in the post's century-old stables and cared for by Old Guard grooms and blacksmiths. The U.S. Army Band, "Pershing's Own," and the U.S. Army School of Music moved to the post in 1942 and were later joined by the U.S. Army Chorus. Attending a ceremony in which these units participate is the ultimate thrill for a patriotic citizen.

When the move to Fort Myer, Quarters 27A, was complete, Pat drove to Orlando, Florida, with Tony and two of his friends to enroll at the University of Central Florida. Pat left them on their own the next day and said many prayers for the Orlando townhouse she had rented for the boys. They were good kids, but on their own for the first time and free of parental constraints. She prayed all the way home the townhouse would survive undamaged, and the boys would set the curve in all their classes.

Meanwhile, I was settling into the DCSLOG office. I had slept in this same office as a Lieutenant Colonel in the seventies when the U.S. was pulling out of Vietnam. In those days, on occasion, I was the "book" man for budget account programs in supply and maintenance, did my share of battle staff duty, and when required, was on duty round the clock. The situation called for long hours, working seven

days a week, and crashing on a cot to catch some sleep when I was the DCSLOG Staff Duty Officer. That cot happened to be in the first floor office off Corridor Five in the Pentagon.

I served four years and seven months as Deputy Chief in DCSLOG. Time raced past like a blur of countryside flying past the window of a speeding train. Desert Shield/Desert Storm, the Panama invasion, and the tearing down of the Berlin Wall, each in its time, captured my thinking and pulled me into my work with thought of little else.

To my knowledge there was only one other Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics who served longer than I did. Colonel Tom Glisson brought that fact to my attention. He discovered that Lieutenant General Robert W. Colglazier (July 1959 - July 1964) spent four more months than I did as the Deputy Chief in that office. A few more months, and I would have broken a record.

Desert Shield/Desert Storm was the most critical, most significant event, and the high point of those years at DCSLOG. In reflection, it was as though all my training from company grade through field grade through General officer was specifically designed to prepare me for Desert Shield/Desert Storm. Within a week of my arrival, Operation Prime Chance (1987-1989) was initiated to protect military and civilian ships passing through the Persian Gulf. Near the end of the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988) Iran started using naval mines and Silkworm missiles to endanger oil tankers passing through the Strait of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf. In July 1987, Operation Earnest Will was initiated to provide a naval escort to tankers passing through the dangerous waters. Soon it became apparent that the mere presence of U.S. Navy ships would not be enough of a safeguard, and MH/AH-6 helicopters, patrol craft, and SEAL platoons became involved. The Special Operations helicopters in Operation Prime Chance were DCSLOG's responsibility, and it was important to keep the repair parts flowing to those platforms in the Persian Gulf. That was my first challenge as Deputy Chief.

In 1988, the planning and execution of another operation raised the intensity of our job and played a part in preparing us for Desert Storm. XVIII Airborne Corps launched Operation Golden Pheasant to counter

a Nicaraguan incursion that threatened the borders of Honduras. Elements of two divisions were dispatched on a no-notice deployment exercise and show of force to ensure that the sovereignty of Honduras would be respected. An 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division Brigade task force of two battalions conducted a parachute insertion and air-land operation, which was billed as a joint training exercise. However, the paratroopers deployed ready to fight, causing the Sandinistas to withdraw back across their border.

In 1989, Hurricane Hugo, a Category Four storm, slammed ashore at Charleston, South Carolina. Damage from the storm extended from the Caribbean through South Carolina. The DCSLOG staff activated our LOC, and XVIII Corps was airlifted into the Caribbean to serve in many capacities. The Corps Support Command commander, Colonel John Zierat, based in the Cayman Islands, and I were in touch daily to assure an effective logistics structure to support the effort.

The Berlin Wall also came down in 1989. By a strange fluke, I was there to witness that historic event. Pat and I were there that day because of a business trip. Work related travel was unavoidable as Deputy Chief, and one of the rewards of the office was the opportunity for Pat to accompany me on several of my tours. She had joined me for a quick-paced, almost round-the-world trip during which it seemed every minute was strictly scheduled. I flew to a destination; went directly to an appointment; either gave a speech, had a meeting to address a problem, or toured a facility; and returned to the plane to fly to the next destination. The agenda was so tight that we had to start scheduling time for me to go to the bathroom. Pat often had the same kind of schedule, meeting with wives of dignitaries, touring schools, family quarters, hospitals, and historic sights of the region.

An overnight stop in our journey found us in Heidelberg, Germany on November 9, 1989. We were in the guest quarters at Patrick Henry Village, which is just outside of Heidelberg, next to the Officers' Club. We were exhausted and had gone to bed early. A knock on our hotel room door awakened us at 10:00 PM. It was one of the Soldiers from V Corps Headquarters.

“The Wall’s coming down,” he said softly, but he was obviously excited. “The East Germans are helping,” he said with a huge smile. “I’ll be back at 0500 to pick you up.”

At five the next morning, I was aboard a Black Hawk helicopter flying to the East German border. There were military towers along the West side of the wall and with the technology we had there,<sup>38</sup> it was possible to look deep into the area on the East side of the wall, 25 to 30 kilometers. What a sight! Looking out at this little road, there were people lined up as far as we could see, Yugos, bicycles, people on foot. A wrecker from the village had been chipping away at a spot on the wall, digging at the mortar, preparing it for removal of the first piece. We watched spellbound, knowing we were witnessing an incredible event in history. The first piece came out to cheers, then more and more pieces. The first people walked across to freedom, and an Army Sergeant was standing there.

Perhaps it was because he was the first American or free person they encountered. Perhaps it was because they felt so liberated and full of joy. Perhaps it was because they were thankful to the Americans. Whatever the reason, they hugged him. They reached up and hugged this big Soldier and said something to him in German. He stood there for two hours, shaking hands and hugging people. Eventually, we had to move him because people were squeezing him and wearing him down in spite of everyone’s jubilation in the moment. The scene was indescribably amazing, and the sight that brought tears to both our eyes was the vision of East Germans and American Soldiers shaking hands.

Philipstahl was a little town near Fulda, and the burgermeister was quite pleased that the wall had come down in his county. He was watching television, seeing East Germans at a farmers’ market, marveling at fruit they had never seen before, such as grapefruit. Later we saw kids in the back seats of cars, wearing McDonald’s hats, probably having just experienced their first taste of a McDonald’s Kid’s Meal. Another big deal was coffee. For the first time they could buy coffee. Many of the things we take for granted, they were experiencing for the first time. It was such an honor to be there as witnesses to an event that neither Pat nor I will ever forget. It certainly made us proud to be Americans and decidedly thankful that we live in

a country that values freedom. Everyone involved understood why our tightly woven itinerary was set back that morning. The world was watching through the eyes of television.

In December 1989, U.S. troops were deployed into Panama for a number of reasons. They went to protect U.S. civilians, secure key facilities, neutralize the Panamanian Defense Forces, and restore the elected government by ousting General Manuel Noriega. Our ground forces consisted of combat elements of the XVIII Airborne Corps, the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division, the 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment, a Joint Special Operations Task Force and the U. S. Marines. The action was quickly brought to a close with a combination of airborne, helicopter, and ground assaults on multiple objectives. Corps elements began returning on January 12, 1990, while units of the 16<sup>th</sup> Military Police (MP) Brigade remained to help restore and maintain law and order in support of the Panamanian people and their elected government. Manuel Noriega is still our nation's guest in a Miami jail.

### **Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm, 1990-1991**

Operation Desert Shield<sup>39</sup> began in 1990 when the Arab Gulf states refused to endorse Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's plan to cut production and raise the price of oil. This left Hussein frustrated. He had incurred a mountain of debt during the war with Iran that lasted almost ten years. Hussein thought that his Arab brothers were conspiring against him by refusing to raise oil prices. He began positioning troops along the Iraq-Kuwait border and accusing Kuwait of various crimes. In the early hours of August 2, 1990, Hussein sent seven divisions of the Iraqi Army into Kuwait. An invasion force of 120,000 troops and 2,000 tanks overwhelmed Kuwait, causing it to become Iraq's 19th province. The United Nations responded quickly, passing a series of resolutions that condemned the invasion, called for an immediate withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait, imposed a financial and trade embargo on Iraq, and declared the annexation void.

President George H.W. Bush ordered warplanes and ground forces to Saudi Arabia, after obtaining King Fahd's approval. This was in response to Iraqi troops that had begun to mass along the Saudi border, at some points crossing the border, and fostering the impression that

Hussein's forces would proceed into Saudi Arabia's oil fields. Iraqi actions were viewed a threat to the U.S. interests in oil production capability of the Persian Gulf region.

Operation Desert Shield, the U.S. military deployment to defend Saudi Arabia, grew rapidly and became the largest American deployment since the Southeast Asia Conflict. The Gulf region was within U.S. Central Command's (USCENTCOM) area of responsibility. Eventually, 30 nations joined the military coalition, with a further eighteen countries supplying economic, humanitarian, and other assistance.

During a six-month period, the United States and its allies amassed a powerful force in the Arabian Peninsula. Carriers patrolled the Gulf of Oman and the Red Sea. U.S. Air Force interceptors deployed from bases in the United States. Airlift transports carried U.S. Army airborne troopers to Saudi. The Navy began maritime intercept operations in support of a U.S.-led blockade and United Nations (U.N.) sanctions against Iraq. Equipment and supplies for all military operations were shipped to the area.

On January 17, 1991, when it became clear that Saddam would not withdraw, Desert Shield became Desert Storm.

When Desert Shield began in 1990, the Army's senior leaders had developed good cooperation and continuity. It was as though everything leading up to that point caused everyone to "notch-up" his or her level of expertise so that we were prepared. I must give kudos to the many people who worked so hard during that period. They include Major General Jere Akin, Director of Plans and Operations and the officers and civilians in Plans. Major General Charles Murray and Major General Jackson E. Rozier, both from Director of Supply and Maintenance (S&M) were so helpful. Later, Major General Jim Ball was part of Desert Shield/Desert Storm.

Brigadier General Paul C. Hurley was there originally as the Director of TRETTS, followed by Brigadier (later Lieutenant) General William G. Pagonis. As a prelude to Desert Storm, Brigadier General Pagonis deployed to Saudi Arabia to lead the logistics effort. Brigadier General Stephen M. Bliss was with us for a while on a

temporary basis. Major General James R. Klugh was my first deputy, and Fred Elam spent the Desert Shield/Desert Storm time with me. SES civilians Bob Keltz, Chet Kowalczyk, Joe Cribbins, Bill Jackson, Bill Neal, David Mills, Billie Tremaine, and Frank Besson were always there when I needed them.

What sticks in my memory about that time is a team that worked well together and got along well. We were all good friends, whose relationships went beyond the Pentagon, as well as teammates whose work styles complemented each other on the job.

Mr. Cribbins, Mr. Jackson, and I first worked together in 1970 and had a friendship that spanned 20 years. Major General Tom Arwood from AMC was there everyday, seven days a week, for seven straight months, each time we needed him. It was difficult to tell that he didn't work directly for me. Neither Lieutenant General Frederick Hissong, Jr., DCG for AMC or Lieutenant General Marvin Brailsford (who followed him), could have been closer better friends and supporters during those trying times, through the exercises leading up to and including Desert Shield/Desert Storm.

One of our programs involved bringing in all retired four-star Generals for special Desert Shield/Desert Storm updates. During the seven month period, we had two briefings, which were attended by about 40 Generals, some in their 70s, 80s, and 90s. During the same period, we held update meetings for active four-stars. From these meetings, I got the idea to invite my predecessors to several updates. Due to their locations and schedules, it was not possible to have them all in at a certain time on a particular day. We eventually evolved to a, "When you have time, drop by, and we'll stop what we're doing and fill you in," type arrangement. The briefings were mutually beneficial, in that it kept our retirees informed. They offered suggestions for solving problems which came from a vast well of experience.

Three-star Generals began dropping by as well. A lot of time was spent on management schemes for each of the classes of supply. We talked about relationships between DCSLOG and AMC; 22<sup>nd</sup> Theater Area Army Command (TAACOM), General Pagonis and DCSLOG; Lieutenant General John J. Yeosock, commander of U.S. Army Central Command (ARCENT) and DCSLOG; and to some extent how

DCSLOG interfaced with Lieutenant General James D. Starling, the Central Command Logistics Director.

As we continued to update the different groups, I thought it beneficial to lay out the problem areas we were having to the active and retired four-stars. For my DSCLOG predecessors, the language changed from “problem” to “failure,” and I gave them more detail. We were dealing with 11 areas in which things were not running well, and a continual common thread wove its way through each area, a lack of “total asset visibility (TAV).” The term, TAV, was one we used to describe the proper labeling and tracking of all equipment and materials acquired, stored, and shipped. Our goal was to track all nine classes: food, water, clothing and individual equipment, POL, lumber, barrier material, ammunition, end items (trucks), medical, and repair parts.

On a very small scale, imagine moving your family to a new home, which involves packing existing items at the old home and possibly acquiring new items from furniture stores, appliance stores, and cabinet shops. You stay at the old house, and your family, the movers, and all your new and old items arrive at the new house. The movers are placing containers in rooms according to the outside labels. What happens to the boxes that aren’t labeled properly? More than likely, they go into the garage to be dealt with later. Your wife calls and says, “The movers need your tools to assemble the new furniture and reassemble the old. Where are they?” You’re still back at the old house and have no clue, because you didn’t see the movers label the boxes and aren’t there to look for them. You say they must be in a box on the truck, because you don’t see them here at the old house. Because you have no method of tracking each item, the tools are missing, maybe in the garage buried under stacks of boxes. In Desert Shield, I didn’t want any of our shipments going to the garage, but if they did, I wanted to know it immediately. Every repair part, piece of equipment, and container of supplies was a vital component in preparedness for war.

During the Desert Shield phase, we received some 10,000 requisitions every 24 hours for four straight months. It was our task to see that all requested supplies, equipment, etc. were located, ordered, shipped, and received as close to required delivery dates as possible.



Everything needed to be done yesterday. The repair parts alone, Class IX, were costing over 20 million dollars a day during those months. At one point, when we were preparing to cross the border, major assembly and repair part requisitions greatly increased.

During the month prior to the border crossing, we exceeded 40 million dollars a day in repair parts alone, and 12,000 requisitions per day. AMC was the most responsive organization in the Army, filling 90 to 92 percent of its requisitions in the average day and providing tremendous support. DLA's numbers always ran a few percentage points behind, around 88 to 90 percent. Our team knew how to push the execution of orders and make arrangements with contractors. Whether we were shipping from contractor locations, DLA, General Services Administration (GSA), or AMC depots, AMC was efficient and effective.

On the distribution end, we were a tiger team, but a problem arose with tracking the items once they were shipped. In a conversation one day, General Pagonis pointed to an area in the desert of Saudi Arabia and related seeing many 40-foot containers stacked there. "I suspect there are at least 5,000 containers there with poor or no documentation," he said. "They weren't marked when we received them and we didn't have time to unload them. In an effort to stay on schedule with our mission, we shoved them aside. We couldn't spare the manpower to unload something that wasn't labeled," he concluded.

5,000 containers! It was the boxes-in-the-garage debacle. Who knows how many hundreds of millions of dollars were sitting in those containers; how much AMC and DLA time and effort had gone into kicking those things out quickly; how many Soldiers were in need of those parts and equipment. 5,000 containers arrived and were moved to a staging area because they weren't properly labeled. In spite of the sickening awareness of waste that clouded my mind and gnawed at my gut, I made myself look at the situation from General Pagonis's point of view. This was preparation for war on a huge scale, and he and his men were stressed too. They looked at the containers that were not properly marked, and if they couldn't guess what was inside, they were shoved aside to a staging area. It's easy to understand why my number one priority became TAV. During that time, TAV was my mantra, my focus, and my mission.

General Heiser, with whom I had worked in DCSLOG in S&M during Vietnam (1970-1974), stopped by to visit one day. He looked at the charts spread around the office with the priority objective of TAV on every single one. He said, "Those are the same ones I had in Vietnam. Looks like you haven't fixed them yet."

I really felt great about that! However, my years of experience with General Heiser may have helped illuminate the need to better organize and manage certain operations. Our problems stemmed from a need for improved automation and communication in regards to TAV. Being unable to track an item and communicate its whereabouts to the intended receiver was frustrating and of growing concern. A component of TAV we called "item-in-transit visibility" involved tracking items such as a repair part from AMC, DLA, or a contractor through its journey to a destination such as a forward supply point or SSA.

Of the 2,200 Prescribed Load List (PLL) clerks in Desert Storm, 700 had no automation. I observed young Soldiers filling out requisitions the same way we did 30 years ago when I first entered the Army. The cause of the problem lay with all of us in senior leadership. Thanks to General Jere Akin, the PLL clerks without computers each received a laptop and the software necessary to do their jobs. At last, they were off and running. I cannot stress enough to those who follow that we must have the assured communications and automation tools to efficiently and effectively address the problems of distribution of supplies. It is critical in wartime.

Then we faced the problem of parts clerks who were unable to find a way to send requisitions due to their Brigade Support Area (BSA) because the area was 60 kilometers away. We had no Internet hook up at that point, forcing the clerk to hitch a ride either by land or Black Hawk to submit a requisition for supplies. If the clerk was without a computer and still produced paper requisitions, he often tried to radio his supply request. We found units with radio communication systems that were 1960 vintage, VRC-46 and -47 models. They were not long range and were often not reliable. Here again, the clerk had to scramble to find a way to deliver his requests to the support area. We termed this problem "Sneaker Net" because it was delivery of

requisitions by “sneakers” or by foot, and we hope to never to hear that term again.

In the area of transportation (methods of transporting in theater materiel), we were back to the need for HETS, HEMTTs, High Mobility, Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWV), and Palletized Load Systems (PLS). Logisticians had been talking about the need to modernize Army transportation equipment for years. In 1978 and 1979, Generals Blanchard and Kroesen supported a major effort to go back to the DA and raise awareness for these very items. In 1990 and 1991, we were still in the same situation. This time when we asked for the items, we got them.

The situation that may have caused the final breakthrough came when seven divisions lined up to look across the Saudi/Iraq border and realized there was no sufficient method in place for transporting the fuel and ammunition needed to do their jobs. This awareness finally sank in two months before we were to cross the border. Our 20-year-old request was about to be granted. We teased about this being “forced modernization.” We literally pushed new M939A3 trucks with central tire inflation straight off the production line. We asked for all the HETs we could find, including East German and Czech HETs. PLS production was not far enough along. But by 1994, our first unit was fully equipped with both HETs and PLSs, so thank God we’re there.

During Desert Storm, we activated Reserve Units, and 72 percent of all the logistics units were manned with Reserves. Most Materiel Management Centers (MMC) at a rank higher than the corps were Reserve Components. Back to the TAV problem, we needed someone on the receiving end of our supply chain to see what was coming in, how it was received, if a problem existed, and report back to us. It was November before the 22<sup>nd</sup> TAACOM’s Material Management Centers gained theater-level visibility. The major reason for delay was our Reserve Components. At that point, we had one corps on the ground. VII Corps had begun to move in. We never gained materiel management visibility of supplies and equipment during Desert Storm. The requested Theater Army MMC arrived too late in November, 1990. We had no oversight of materiel coming in until November when the first theater level MMC arrived. Way too late!

It was difficult to get the people in charge to understand the importance of having our people on the receiving end of our materiel supply mission. We've now made progress in this area with a concept called "Split Base Operations" which involves sending an eleven-man team with state-of-the-art laptops and software over on the first aircraft of a mission, so that from day one we have total TAV.

At one point during Desert Storm, we trained a TAAC unit, the 377<sup>th</sup> Theater Army Area Command in New Orleans, for a SWA mission. They went to five straight Operation Bright Stars, which are joint multinational exercises that bring together military forces from several nations. They had head-start Arabic classes to learn basic language and culture and studied the SWA contingency plans. Nevertheless, when it came time to implement the mission, they were not sent. It is quite possible that the most emotional message I sent during the seven months of Desert Storm to CENTCOM involved a very strong recommendation that the 377<sup>th</sup> be allowed to execute this mission. They did not go. In my opinion, we broke faith with a lot of Reserve Component units with whom we had built good relationships.

Then we had the problem of "containerization," for a single unit, which refers to grouping supplies and re-supply items for a specific unit together. This area of concern had made only marginal improvements since Vietnam. We needed to do better than that. Our minimum goal in any deployment should be 70 percent. That involves packing in one container 100 percent of the materiel needed by a particular unit. Using this method, when a unit hits the port, that container can be offloaded and moved all the way forward to the BSA. A side issue here involves the tactical environment accommodating the use of a Roll On-Roll Off (RORO), side-loading vessel. The contents of the container never have to be unloaded from the trailer to a pallet, which creates a situation where pallets of repair parts are pushed out to a division. Moving pallets of repair parts around in a tactical area demands more man-hours, creates more opportunities for errors, and is less easily managed in a tactical arena. It simplifies the process if everything, Authorized Stockage List (ASL) and PLL, can be loaded in the container and go straight to the division area in the same container. That eliminates wasted man-hours and saves money. We've made progress in this area, but not enough.

Our TAT (turn-around-time, a measure of time starting when a repair part is ordered and ending when it arrives in the unit) was another problem. That has now been audited, and on an average day it took us 12 to 50 days from the time we received a request to get a requisitioned repair part to Saudi Arabia. The Army was using a system called the Object Supply System (OSS). Our slow order-ship time was costing us. If the estimate of 20 million dollars a day is accurate, it's easy to understand how important a quick order-ship time becomes. If we could eliminate 12 to 15 days, the savings in dollars would quickly add up. Now AMC has a system called Objective Supply Capability (OSC) that involves sending in a laptop, a modem, a Satellite Interface Device, and a satellite dish. A parts clerk punches in requisitions that are received in National Inventory Control Points and acknowledged within two minutes and 55 seconds, straight from the desert. Colonel Terry Chase was a part of the team we sent into Saudi Arabia. The new system saved, no matter how you look at it, 11 to 14 days times 20 million a day. I walked around thinking, "I told you so." But all I said was, "See, it can be done, and we try."

During Desert Storm, AMC successfully sent 28 portable satellite systems linked with the International Maritime Satellite (INMARSAT) system into the desert. Early in Somalia, the Army used a MARSAT system and of the first 500 requisitions, only 16 got through. It was a cumbersome arrangement, a jerry-rig system that simply did not work. The Army needed a system that permitted the normal use of satellite technology for requisitions. Later with OSC, we had a standard system that allowed order ship-time to be kept at a minimum by using automation, communication, and satellite technology.

Another problem was the shipping expense the Army incurred. During Desert Storm, the Army was using on average 200 ships or more a day, with 80 to 100 coming from outside the U.S. and our military organization. The undue expense of leasing ships or shipping companies from the foreign flag market to support our country seemed unnecessary and was a major concern of mine. In 1991 and 1992, the Army approved the Army Strategic Mobility Plan (ASMP), which ordered the needed ships. The two Navy contracts were let in September 1993, the keels were laid, and the ships were built. General

Gordon E. Sullivan, VCSA and later CSA, personally went to Norfolk to be there as the work started on the first new ship.

These are the major Desert Storm concerns I encountered in my part of the operation. There were times when the retired DCSLOGs, such as Generals Heiser, Fuson, Thompson, Johansen, and I met in the DCSLOG area. It was usually an emotional time, during which we felt terrible because we were still dealing with the same set of problems after 20 years. With the exception of the use of Reserve Components, we had active plans to make improvements in most of the problem areas previously mentioned. I continue to worry about my number one concern, TAV. Funding has been dramatically cut by 30 to 40 percent in this area, and my apprehension arises from seeing myself in the same kind of meeting 20 years from now, still trying to help the Soldier through automation and communication improvements.

When General Vuono gave a presentation to the War College class in November 1990, he mentioned and complimented the DCSLOG staff. Referring to Desert Storm, he said, "This was a logistics operation. All the logistics people on the back benches stepped up to the table, keeping us in the game, keeping us informed." It was refreshing to hear, especially coming from the Army Chief. We educated so many senior leaders in matters of logistics. After a few months, many people joined our camp, coming to see our perspective and understanding its vital importance, as it dawned on them that the deployment, employment, the pre-mobilization deployment, and post deployment was a logistics exercise. All divisions of the operation were interdependent with logistics being the connecting link, and this held true for both civilians and military involved in the mission. General Vuono, the Vice Chief, and certainly the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations (DCSOPS) knew that. It was through our briefings, meetings, calls, and conversations that we educated others.

As Americans, we look at Desert Shield/Desert Storm from the perspective that it was a quick and decisive victory. As a part of the military machinery working round the clock to achieve the most time efficient and cost efficient (in terms of injuries, lives, and cost) victory possible, we could have done better. I am so very proud of the men and women with whom I served and the miracle jobs they performed in a stressful environment of the highest magnitude. Under the

constraints and difficulties with which we worked, we did an amazing job. I hope that our concerns will be addressed in the future, leading to operations that are more efficient.

During the four-plus years as DCSLOG, and especially during the period of Desert Shield/Desert Storm, I was submerged in work. Most of my days and many nights were spent at the Pentagon. My buddy and life partner took the absences in stride and generally ignored it when work related stress turned me into a grump. Pat kept busy, as usual, with her many projects, including serving as program chairman for the Women's Club at Fort Myer. It also seemed we were constantly entertaining, both with job related functions and with visits from family and friends. Being home during those functions, and attending dinners and events elsewhere, added to my overtaxed schedule. I love a good party and immensely enjoy socializing, but work had to come first. During high alert or emergency periods, Pat carried the social ball for both of us, and I stayed at the Pentagon.

She also moved us again. In 1990, we moved around the corner to Quarters 5 on Generals' Row, a larger home traditionally assigned to the DSCLOG. It was an amazing home that overlooked the Lincoln Memorial, the Washington Monument, and the Capitol. Pat and I would sit on our large front veranda some evenings and gaze at the city's illuminated monuments. Our next-door neighbors were General Colin and Mrs. Alma Powell. We enjoyed all our neighbors, the view of our beautiful nation's capital, and living in our grand home on such a historic site.

For the first two years at Fort Myer, 1988-1990, we lived at Quarters 27A. There was an alley behind our quarters with detached garages. One snowy afternoon the doorbell rang and I opened the door to the Commander of the Post. He said, "Don't want to alarm you, but we are closing the alley for security purposes." Later a van drove into the driveway, and tumbling out of the van amid falling snowflakes were President George and Barbara Bush's grandchildren. Accompanied by several adults, the snow bunnies romped and played all afternoon in the alley and on the hill behind our house, dressed in their brightly colored snowsuits. A photograph of the scene would have resulted in a Norman Rockwell painting, capturing a playful piece of Americana.

### **Logistics Issues**

During the eighties, I was awarded two promotions. In 1986, I became a Major General, receiving my second star while commander of the Depot System Command. And in 1987, as Department of the Army DCSLOG, I became a Lieutenant General, receiving the third star. Arriving in DCSLOG, my priorities were:

- (1) Support the Soldier.
- (2) Improve supply and maintenance.
- (3) Improve strategic mobility and distribution.
- (4) Modernize the use of logistics automation.
- (5) Replace aging watercraft.

In August of 1990, we learned that the logistics planning in which we were heavily involved would quickly become more serious.

At 1600 hours on August 6, 1990, President George Bush announced the deployment of U.S. combat and logistics forces to Saudi Arabia. He gave the DoD and the JCS three distinct missions. Mission number one was to deter further Iraqi aggression. The second was to defend Saudi Arabia, and the third was to improve the defense capabilities of the Arabian Peninsula.

The Desert Shield phase (August through mid-January, 1991) went off without a hitch. As I discussed before, new records were being made almost daily in moving units, logistics tonnage, and closing units into Saudi Arabia. Desert Shield deployments were a magnificent achievement, when you consider these were the farthest air and sea projections and the most rapid buildup of military forces in the history of our nation. Then as we crossed the border into Kuwait and Iraq, the logistics support permitted our combat forces to quickly achieve an overwhelming victory. We all cheered the 100-hour victory!

I believe several factors contributed directly to the Army's logistics successes. First, we had about 200 days, or slightly more



than six months, to deploy and build up logistics forces and “60 Days of Supply” on the ground before we crossed the border. Second, the air and sea lines were absolutely safe during deployment. Third, we had almost unlimited modern air bases and seaports in Saudi Arabia. Fourth, the Saudi government and other coalition partners provided extensive host nation support. Fifth, the “Big Five” programs of the 1960’s and 1970’s, as well as Army modernization programs, provided the Army with some of the world’s best equipment and weapon systems. And sixth, last but not least, we had some of the most well trained and led logistics Soldiers, Sergeants, and commanders I had experienced in my Army career to date.

Early on, as the first units arrived in Saudi Arabia, the 100-degree heat of the summer created problems. Initial euphoria and optimism began to wane as basic logistics systems were just not working. About this time, the “Seven Executive Agent” responsibilities for the Army arrived from Defense and the JCS to support CENTCOM and all deployed forces. Clearing airfield ramps and seaport docks put a premium on the need for forklifts. Providing food, water, clothing, building materials, bulk petroleum products, conventional ammunition, and second destination transportation out to all service locations illuminated the fact that we were lacking a sufficient logistics infrastructure.

Host nation support became an immediate high priority. Reliance on Army Reserve and National Guard components became essential. In the 1990’s, 70 percent of all Army logistics capability rested with our Reserve Components. It became clear that Desert Storm could not have enjoyed the success it did without very heavy reliance on our Reserve and Guard logistics Soldiers and units. The sum total, as I recall, was mobilization of over 1,000 Reserve Component units and activation of more than 150,000 personnel. This was a major achievement! Our stated goal was to support seven and two-thirds divisions, and two Army Corps (VII Corps and XVIII Airborne Corps).

At first, there was a lot of discussion about what unit to use as the TAACOM—typically a three-star General logistics command. Should the Army use the 21<sup>st</sup> TAACOM (Theater Area Army Command) from Germany, the 377th from New Orleans, or the 310<sup>th</sup> from Fort

Belvoir? The decision was none of these. The Army established a new TAACOM, designated the 22<sup>nd</sup> TAACOM, commanded by Major General (later Lieutenant General) Gus Pagonis. Gus had worked in DCSLOG as the Chief of Plans and Operations and later as Director for TRETTS. We launched Major General Pagonis on short notice in the summer of 1990 with eight of our super Lieutenant Colonels to FORSCOM to begin early planning for Desert Shield. Shortly after that, Gus and his team were in Saudi Arabia beginning their early TAACOM mission.

The Army CSA, General Carl Vuono, decided we should take an early trip to Saudi Arabia in the fall (September – October) to see how things were going. General Gordon Sullivan, Lieutenant General Dennis Reimer, and a few others were included in General Vuono's party. When we arrived, we dispersed to different units to make assessments and gather information. During that time, I visited and reviewed as many logistics units as time allowed.

Early systemic problems were already developing in an infant theater that would grow to number of over 500,000 troops. Many positive things were occurring, but there were also nagging, early signs of difficulties surfacing in a variety of areas.

- (1) Standard Army information systems, such as SAILS-ABX, along with others, had difficulty operating over large areas and in the heat and silicon based sand.
- (2) Shortage of Materials Handling Equipment (MHE) and forklifts at air and seaports was painfully obvious.
- (3) The first 500 repair parts (Class IX) requisitions took weeks to get out of the country.
- (4) A shortage of all types of trucks began to occur.
- (5) Aviation Maintenance Units, whether AVIM (Intermediate) or AVUM (Unit), seemed to have a variety of problems, ranging from an overload of maintenance work to an insufficient capability to move themselves.

- (6) Difficulty with distribution of supplies in theater was already becoming an issue. Every class of supply was arriving in-country, but moving them on to the right destination in a timely manner was a problem. Every unit was concerned with whether their very necessary supplies, ASL or PLL, were properly stocked, and if their requisitions would be filled on time. The huge theater magnified our shortage of trucks.
- (7) Water was perceived as a major problem, and units were shipping massive amounts of water in with their equipment. To our surprise, Saudi Arabia had nine de-salting plants that were able to meet our needs, plus local Bedouin tribes had used many deep wells across the desert for centuries. Water was available.
- (8) Effective management of commercial 40-foot containers from their arrival and on to their final destination was an issue. Without clear, concise documentation precisely listing the container's contents on the outside of the container as well as a duplicate copy on the inside of the container, distribution of the container's items was hampered. An effective organizational system for identifying and dispersing the railroad-car-size containers contents was needed. Containers with re-supply for multiple units became difficult to break down and forward to the right units. Time and resources were a real problem.
- (9) Clothing and individual equipment became another area of difficulty. Production of uniforms and boots couldn't keep up with the demand to meet the needs of Soldiers. Whether the Soldiers came from Germany or Stateside, or were Reserve, Guard, or Active, our supplies were insufficient. The variety of uniforms on the battlefield looked strange, and we knew the need for cold weather gear, once December and January came, would surpass our production capabilities.
- (10) Even in the fall of 1990, we began to experience major repair part shortages. Direct Supply System and ALOC were being used. These had their origins with Lieutenant General Joe

Heiser in the 1970's and were being used in Desert Shield. However, once the supplies and materials arrived in-country, the process slowed to a halt.

Many units needed additional equipment such as trucks, tankers, and MHE, as well as Soldiers to meet the overwhelming challenge of a mammoth supply system pushing high tonnage into theater each day. Containers were flowing in by foreign and military sealift ships at seaports as Air Force aircraft delivered pallets (DSS ALOC 4631) to the airfield ramp. High priority receiving and dispersing requirements (RDD "999") increased daily. In spite of the determined Soldiers and Sergeants who did their best, the intra-theater distribution slowed to a crawl. Then I knew that the distribution process had to be fixed and would take infrastructure, resources, and dedication by the Army leadership to make it happen.

These ten issues were the top areas that the Army DCSLOG staff, CENTCOM J-4, ARCENT, and the 22<sup>nd</sup> TAACOM began to address seriously. In spite of massive efforts by so many, the size of the force, the difficulties with the battlefield, and harsh conditions hampered and slowed improvements. Even with a massive infusion of host nation support by our coalition partners, all problems were not solved.

Areas like Class V (Ammo), food service, Class III (fuel), multifunctional logistics units and water support seemed to work very well. It was hard work, ingenuity, initiative, and just plain desire by Soldiers, cooks, drivers, mechanics, supply personnel, and Army civilians that managed to make things work under the worst imaginable conditions.

Despite everyone's best efforts, many of the problems persisted throughout Desert Storm. I finally asked each commander of a DISCOM (Corps Support Group, Corps Support Command and Area Support Commands), and the 22<sup>nd</sup> TAACOM to send me their "lessons learned." Major General Jere Akin, Director of Plans and Operations, collected these, added our DA view, and published the findings in a book titled *Operation Desert Storm Sustainment*, Spring, 1991.

The publication led to a DA level Task Force to review and prioritize all logistics problem areas. The VCSA, General Dennis

Reimer, chaired the Task Force review, and Lieutenant General Samuel Wakefield, Combined Arms Support Commander, led the study effort. All the problem areas above, plus many more, were reviewed and prioritized for funding purposes. GAO chimed in with a December 1991 report entitled, "Operation Desert Storm — Transportation and Distribution of Equipment and Supplies in Southwest Asia." The GAO noted the shortage of forklifts, lack of knowledge of incoming air and sea shipment manifests, material arriving before the units had arrived, limited capability to store and retrieve equipment and supplies, in country logistics forces being overwhelmed by the volume of pushed supplies, shortage of surface transportation capability, and the shortfall of theater transportation of material. It was clear that the distribution system and TAV was a serious problem.

General Reimer's approval and Lieutenant General Wakefield's hard work paid off, and about 60 to 70 percent of the problem areas were addressed and funded. As Desert Storm dimmed in our memories, in five years the funds to remedy these problems slowly diminished. Logistics did not rank high enough in many of the tough DA level of modernization programs to stay funded. Many of the issues uncovered in Desert Storm persist today, and logisticians are hard at work trying to solve the same old problems.

### **Watercraft**

During the years from 1987 to 1992, I became immersed in Army programs involving watercraft. The Army had more boats than the Navy. The Navy took Soldiers near the shoreline, but it was the Army that got them to shore. In the opening scenes of the World War II movie, *Saving Private Ryan*, the ships seen taking Soldiers ashore were Navy. However, the Navy did not want the mission. Years later, this intra-coastal and over-the-shore mission was given to the Army, and then to the Transportation Corps.

Sometime in the early eighties, I received the charge to help modernize the Army's watercraft fleet. We had a lot of old watercraft from the World War II era in the way of tugs and support equipment. By 1987, we had large modern ships we called Logistic Support Vessels (LSVs) to support the Army. We also had Landing Craft

Utility (LCU) boats, which we replaced with a new modern version, LCU 2000. It was much larger and more capable.

We even brought in a Navy causeway system to help with our concern in the Persian Gulf area. In many places along the Persian Gulf, the water from land out to sea for two to three miles was only about three feet deep. Our watercraft could not operate in such shallow conditions. We borrowed from the Navy and Marines and introduced a causeway system that was built by literally dumping sections overboard, connecting them, and creating a low cost, strong, and effective causeway. Some had a power unit that allowed the causeway to become a barge or tug for transporting equipment.

We began looking at developing something larger than the lighter 30-ton Air Cushioned Vehicle, the LACV-30. The LACV-30 was the most versatile hovercraft we had and would maneuver on snow, desert, ice, water, riverbeds, and swamps. It operated in extreme weather conditions and extreme temperatures, was easy to transport by ship, truck, air, or rail and required no docks, ports, berthing, or cargo mover systems. Its drawback in many situations was that it only carried 30 tons. We needed something that would carry the new M1 tank, a 70-ton load. We managed to get funding for the research and prototype development, but not funding to produce and field it. It wasn't supported by the Army, so the LACV-30 had to do.

After years of repeated requests, old, worn out, high maintenance watercraft were being transferred to the Reserve Components, and approval for new watercraft was granted. Our plan was to develop a vessel that was as versatile as the LACV-30 and would carry a tank. If I had been able to see into the future to know that ten years later the Army would be involved in the development of a watercraft superior to any I could have imagined, I might not have been so cheerless. The craft was called the Theater Support Vessel (TSV). An Australian developed the hull catamaran design. The vessel I would be working on would travel across the ocean at 40 to 50 miles per hour, lift above the waves, and have great cargo capacity. Inside would be an office complex with satellite link capabilities enabling troops to rehearse their mission while in route. Laptop computers linked to the satellite would provide pictures of the target area giving them a last minute, up-to-date mission rehearsal. The huge advantage of knowing where

things are and what to expect because of the latest satellite pictures avoids surprises and saves time and lives. The training would work through a laptop software program and provide the highest form of mission rehearsal training, mimicking onboard, aircraft training programs.

Years later, we learned valuable lessons regarding ocean-going ships in Desert Storm. When we peaked at using over 200 ships, more than 50 percent of those came from foreign flag owners. It would have saved time and money if we'd had our own maritime fleet. Military Sealift Command and the Ready Reserve Fleet provided sealift. The limited resources of the Military Sealift Command made it a major issue and the Army set up a project office with the goal of modifying the first Sea-Land SL-7's, the fast sealift ships coming into the fleet. In the mid-eighties, Lieutenant Colonel Dave Whaley, later a two-star General and commander of Fort Eustis, was the project manager. The SL-7s had been previously owned by the Sea-Land Corporation. The goal was to modify the eight we had acquired by giving them wider doors, heavier ramps, and stronger floors. We needed a side-loading ramp so that equipment could be driven on and off the ship and a helicopter landing deck on top. The joint project was co-managed between the Army and the Navy, with the Navy doing all the procurement.

### **Aircraft**

While that was going on, the Army was vigorously supporting the Air Force in an endeavor to acquire an aircraft that would later be known as the C-17. It was to be an airplane capable of rapid strategic delivery of troops and all types of cargo directly to forward bases and capable of performing airlift missions when required. It would take off and land on a runway as short as 3,000 feet and as narrow as ninety feet. In the 1980's when I was in Germany, the Air Staff came through and surveyed the number of airfields in VII Corps in southern Germany that were C-141 and C-5 capable. They showed us the potential design specs for the new C-17 at that time, saying that the aircraft would triple the number of airfields that could be used in VII Corps.

We provided our airlift requirements to the Army Staff, who in turn provided the information to the Air Staff that helped build the early requirements package for the C-17. Through numerous meetings in the early eighties of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and the DCSLOG staff, we projected a united front with the Air Force in strong support for acquisition of the C-17. The original requirement was for 200 aircraft. With cutbacks and downsizing, the number was eventually reduced to 120. One of the last things Secretary Aspin did was to trim that order to 40. The Army and Air Force were very disappointed. The further reduction in number was an unwritten message from Secretary Aspin to McDonnell-Douglas, which was producing the planes, to straighten up their management and get the aircraft costs within budget.

I hoped that the first 40 were only an installment toward the 120 we required. If we were going to try to implement our power projection plan, which involved locating 82 percent of our Army within the United States by 1996, we needed those planes. The C-17 was operated by a crew of three (pilot, copilot, and loadmaster), loaded through a large aft door that accommodated military vehicles and palletized cargo, and could carry all the Army's air-transportable, outsized combat equipment. It could also airdrop paratroopers and cargo, manage a payload of 130,000 pounds, cruise at an altitude of 28,000 feet at 450 knots, and had a fuel range of 5,200 nautical miles. To me, one of its most amazing features was the ability to practically turn on a dime. On short narrow runways, the C-17 could turn around using its backing capability while performing a three-point star turn. The C-17 made its maiden flight on September 15, 1991, some ten years after I had seen the early requirements in Germany.

In 1992, the Army Strategic Mobility Plan (ASMP) and power projection plan developed by General Fred Elam and the DCSLOG staff needed that kind of aircraft capability. The plan called for a light infantry brigade to be on the ground and closed by the fourth day of a mission. Twelve days after the campaign start, we wanted the rest of the division closed. At the same time, the loading of two heavy divisions, armor or mechanized, would begin, with the goal of being able to close those divisions (light, heavy, and air assault) within C+30, thirty days after the start of the campaign. By C+75, we would have added two more along with the rest of the non-divisional units,



and have the entire corps on the ground. That would include the Corps Support Command and a five-division force. In the year 2000, CSA General Eric Shinseki would accelerate these goals.

Major General William A. (Bill) Stofft and later Brigadier General Harold (Hal) Nelson, Chiefs of Military History (CMH) for the Army, reviewed the Army's force closure during Desert Storm. They confirmed that the Army broke records with the deployment to Saudi Arabia. The end of the first month, the Army had equaled the first five months during the buildup year for the Korean War, and by the end of the second month, we had equaled the first buildup year during the Vietnam War. The Army broke every record but did not move as fast as the ASMP indicated. To meet the requirements of the plan, we needed 120 C-17s. We also needed new ships to work in concert with our SL-7 fast sealift ships. The plan called for an additional 12 ships.

Military Sealift Command had to go outside the Navy for over 50 percent of the fleet used in Desert Shield and Desert Storm. The Civil Reserve Air Fleet (CRAF) was activated for the first time in its 38 year history. In fact, DoD and TRANSCOM activated CRAF at Stage I, for minor regional crises and moved on to Stage II, which is reserved for major theater war. Finally, DoD approved and moved into Stage III, utilizing their total U.S. commercial airlift capability. This was done because we did not have the airlift capability to move our troops into Saudi Arabia without using the commercial air fleets. Desert Storm and Desert Shield illuminated the situation of a shortfall in air and sealift potential to the Department of Defense. During that time, Major General Fred E. Elam, Bob Keltz, Colonel Bill Crowder, Lieutenant Colonel Dave Lyon, and others deserve kudos for the hours they spent briefing General Powell, his staff and Mr. Atwood, the Deputy Secretary of Defense. The bottom line rested with the tremendous value of a strategically mobile defense system.

### **Strategic Mobility**

After serving in Hawaii, Germany, Thailand, Vietnam, and Airborne exercises in Korea, I realized the importance of strategic mobility. It took on more importance after my experience in Germany with REFORGER exercises. The exercises were designed to prove U.S. commitment and ability to move conventional military forces

rapidly from the continental United States to Europe. REFORGER was born in 1968 when the U.S. agreed, to demonstrate a continued commitment to NATO, through a large-scale force deployment of not less than three brigades of a single division to Europe in an annual exercise each year.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division became the first unit to train as a division size element in Northern Europe. All the training, modernization, planning, and operations culminated in REFORGER '83 when the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division deployed nearly 9,000 Soldiers to Holland, drew pre-positioned equipment, moved to a staging area, and conducted exercise "Certain Strike" on the plains of Holland. The success of the exercise proved that the division was fully capable of performing its wartime mission. That was the first U.S. deployment to Holland and Northern Germany since World War II.

During 1982 to 1984 when I was the Director of TRETTS, strategic mobility was a major program within the Army. Colonel (later Major General) Richard (Dick) Larson was the division chief during that time, Mr. Bob Keltz was the SES, and we had a number of great action officers in Colonels Bill Crowder, Dave Whaley, Roger Thompson, Frank Tricomi, and others.

During Desert Shield and Desert Storm, we met seven days a week at 0600 with the DCSLOG staff and at about seven each morning with the Army Chief. On many weekends, we invited Mr. Atwood or the Chief of Staff of the Air Force or Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) to attend our updates on the air and sealift positions. This helped educate the senior leadership, not only Army but also the DoD staff, as well as other services, and gain their support.

General Colin Powell personally supported the ASMP, which was also supported by the Air Force and Navy. At a time when budgets were coming down more than 30 percent, Congress also supported our plan and appropriated the funds, which by the end mounted to three billion dollars. Everyone was aware that America's maritime fleet was in decline, and we needed to upgrade. By 1994, we had contracts to produce new ships and aircraft. The Army also began to conduct Emergency Deployment Readiness Exercises (EDRE) for sealift.

Quarterly exercises for airlifts had been conducted for some time, and now the need for sealift EDREs was recognized.

I was at Fort Hood with Major General Wesley K. Clark, Commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division in the fall of 1993, when he prepared the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry for rail transport to Beaumont, Texas to be loaded aboard a fast sealift ship. We could not have had a discussion of such an operation in the early eighties, and here we were in the early nineties with the operation a reality and becoming a common practice. I hope that in the next ten years, the Army and Air Force will have acquired the additional C-17s and ships it needs. If plans continue for returning to an Army that is based primarily in the United States, the additional air and sea craft are needed to support our allies, our coalition partners, and ourselves.

A thorough study in sealift capabilities includes a look at the principal port of Saudi Arabia, the King Abdul Aziz Port, Dammam. Cargo from all over the world enters the Eastern and Central Provinces of the Kingdom through that port, which is the main gateway. Ad Dammam is fully self-sufficient with its own administration offices, mechanical marine workshops, electrical, telephone, and marine communications networks, and water refinery. It has its own clinic, fire department, and a large housing complex for port employees, with mosques and a supermarket.

As I stood there one day, looking at the modern Ad Dammam port, it reminded me how antiquated we were at Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam. Ad Dammam was probably a mile long, with a huge warehouse that had open sides down the pier area and a large wharf for material handling equipment and staging areas with huge gantry cranes to handle all the containers. At Cam Ranh Bay, we had the harbor, our piers that were DeLong piers, portable metal port facilities. Much of the material we used had been stored in the Japan area and towed into place during the sixties. Large cylinders were jacked into the surface under the water and the pier itself was jacked up into position. The DeLong piers were of great benefit for building a pier complex in Vietnam, but they were quite antiquated even for that period.

In the beginning of Desert Storm, the DoD had only eight Fast Sealift Ships that the Navy purchased for direct Army support. We

knew we could not continue to deal with our Victory Ships of World War II and all the old 1940 vintage break-bulk ships for deployment purposes. They were used in the re-supply effort when time allowed. Our eight ships were SL-7s, a 1976 vintage, that were used for deployment of our first early deploying divisions. Each division required from 12 to 14 ships, and because they had more speed, we would rotate them from the Persian Gulf area for the divisions to use. The SL-7s could be tracked by satellite, and we watched as they moved across the Atlantic or Mediterranean at 20-plus knots. They're fast, but have old technology with very high fuel consumption. The new ships have a different engine that is far more fuel-efficient and is designed to travel in the 25 knot range.

When two of the SL-7's docked in the Port of Savannah to load the 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division from Fort Stewart, it closed down the port because of the size of the ships. The 1990's began the shift to use RORO cargo ships. The Military Sealift Command had to put a number of ROROs in the Ready Reserve Fleet. The ROROs and our eight SL-7s gave us a much greater sealift capability. The problem arose in activating the ships. We spent millions of dollars a day to bring back ROROs and break bulk ships of World War II vintage to operating standard for the Merchant Marines to operate. It was our best alternative versus going outside our nation to fulfill our needs. Today, the goal is to eliminate all those old ships and bring in close to 50 new or converted ships for the Ready Reserve Fleet. In 1994, the SL-7s remained on a 72-hour string for contingency purposes. They had 72 hours from the first alert of an emergency or incident to prepare for action.

SL-7s are strategically berthed around the United States. A small on-board staff is required to steam to a designated port within 48 hours. In port, the rest of the crew arrives and helps load within their maximum, outside time-period of 96 hours. Some of the SL-7s that sailed to Savannah were berthed in the river north of New Orleans. They started steaming almost immediately at the beginning of Desert Shield and found themselves arriving early, to the advantage of the Army and to Savannah. We're looking at future locations near Savannah on the river rather than New Orleans. Part of the ASMP designates strategic Army ports and the future locations for SL-7s and other sealift assets.

In 1992, funding at DoD had been set aside to improve not only the Army division out-loading installations, but also to upgrade the wharf, pier areas, rail facilities, staging areas, and lighting at strategic ports. Much later, I was in Savannah and Fort Stewart and witnessed the upgrading in lighting, the ramp area, the rail-loading area, and the out-loading staging areas. The improvements were also made at Fort Hood, Beaumont, Fort Campbell, and Jacksonville. Early deploying divisions each have a strategic port. These were funded with the strategic mobility plan for airlift, sealift, and port modernization packages.

### **Uniforms**

Uniforms were also in need of revisions, and from 1987 to 1992, the Army made many life saving improvements in uniforms. An event during Panama brought to light a need to revise the flak jacket.<sup>40</sup> The Army had parachuted the Rangers and 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division into Panama on Rio Hata, a drop zone I used to jump. During the invasion, a Sergeant that later worked for me ended up in the center of the Panamanian Compound because they overshot their landing site. It was three in the morning and the Panamanians were all wearing the night vision gear. They were shooting at him as he came down, and he was shot in the shoulder. It had been raining, and he hit the ground and lay in a muddy mess going in and out of consciousness. The last thing he remembered was a Panamanian walking over to him, aiming an AK-47 at his head, and firing. His Kevlar helmet saved him. The round went right around his head, missing him. It set a crease across his scalp but never penetrated, and he lived to tell about the narrow escape from death. I began to invite him to join me for speeches that addressed the new body armor for the head.

We selected the Kevlar German-looking helmet because of a three-inch wide band across the back of the head from ear to ear. When wearing the old style WWII (steel pot) helmet, the Soldier's head was exposed in the area in which 33 percent of the Soldiers' head wounds occurred. There was criticism for producing a helmet that looked like the German helmets, but the design, no doubt, saved lives.

Three days after the Panama invasion, everyone was extremely tired. The new Army works 24 hours a day. They don't sleep. They were dead on their feet. I walked into a medical unit tent where there were seven thoracic surgeons. The surgeons were on the ground or operating tables sound asleep except for one who got up, staggered over to me, and began to apologize. "I'm sorry," he said. "We've been operating straight through for days and just finished a few hours ago. The parachutists left North Carolina where it was winter and very cold and flew to Panama where it was 80 degrees. To cool themselves off, they opened their flak jackets. The area that was left unprotected was the thorax. The first Airborne trooper wounded came in 30 minutes after the Soldiers began parachuting in."

After that, Natick Laboratory looked at a new flak jacket design with a solid front with side openings. The flak jacket now has a protective plate in the front with side openings that Velcro and allow for circulation. Kevlar is a magic material and stops most small caliber bullets up to AK-47 bullets. That is why we started putting an aluminum oxide plate in front about the size of the chest. The plate can be removed for light duty, but goes in for something more serious. Then there was the problem of the weighty plate when in water, which could lead to drowning. Natick changed the plate insert to a bottom opening instead of a side insert. That allowed the Soldier who found himself in water to rip the plate pocket open from the bottom allowing gravity to cause the plate to drop out of the jacket.

The Kevlar jackets were lighter than the old flak jackets. The Kevlar jacket and our new helmet saved countless lives in Desert Storm. In Somalia, one Soldier was standing in a doorway. An RPG (rocket propelled grenade) hit him right in the chest and blew him through the door. His Sergeant thought he was dead and was telling other Soldiers to carry him, when the downed Soldier got to his feet. The plate in his jacket was shattered and his chest was badly bruised, but he got up. Pat and I both heard this story when we had an opportunity to talk to the pilot of Black Hawk Down, CWO Michael Durant.

The 10<sup>th</sup> Division Infantry commander told me of ten Soldiers who were hit in the chest in Afghanistan in a terrible battle in Operation Anaconda. The Americans were surrounded by Al Qaeda (Arabic for

“the base”), who badly outnumbered them. They fought bravely and killed many of the enemy, escaping with only ten wounded. All ten were shot in the chest and saved by a new version of their Kevlar vests. The vests from that Afghanistan skirmish were sent to the Army museum for everyone to see. The uniform improvements continued to save life after life, and it seemed appropriate to share the good news.

The Army had come so far with improvements since 1958 when my Army career began. Back then, we were still using World War II arms, rifles, equipment, clothing; all the old materials carried us through Korea and beyond. No one spoke of a “modernization program” in the fifties and sixties. We had antiquated old stuff with which to train, and yet the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division was the nation’s Strategic Pacific Reserve.





## *Chapter XIII*

### **Commanding General, AMC, 1992-1994**

On January 31, 1992, I became the commander of Army Materiel Command. 1992 was a most notable year in the Ross family. Tony graduated from the University of Central Florida in Orlando in the spring, and during that year, I received my fourth star. In January, General Bill Tuttle and I changed command at AMC, and the family moved from the historic home in Fort Myer to a grand and beautiful home in Fort Belvoir, Virginia, overlooking the Potomac River.<sup>41</sup>

For many years, the post served as the Army's Engineer School, training more than 700,000 officers and enlisted Soldiers. Fort Belvoir is now a strategic, power-projection support installation. It provides essential administrative, logistical, and contingency support to the nation's capital and the Military District of Washington (MDW).

Before assuming command of AMC, I met with the Army Chief to clarify objectives for the command. To my advantage, I was already familiar with AMC and its inherent requirements, having served two previous tours in AMC, plus having just served as the Army DCSLOG. The result was a five page, single-spaced letter from the CSA, outlining goals for my command at AMC. Colonel Larry Taylor, who was working with me at the time, moved to AMC at my request. He and I worked together to draft much of the document, filling the letter with my thoughts and ideas, as well as the wishes of the Army Chief. Other members of the Army staff also provided input into the letter. The Chief, as he saw the future, predicted dramatic changes in the size and composition of the Army. We were approaching an unsettling time unlike the rather consistent "Vuono years."

Shortly before the change of command, the Secretary of the Army, the Honorable Michael P. Stone, cornered me and said that he felt there was no "business orientation" in AMC. He implied that AMC was not a well-managed organization. I took what he said to heart, and because our current focus was downsizing, I began meeting with several industry CEOs and presidents to discuss their reduction strategies. I learned that the bottom line for all downsizing methods

was to find the organization's essence. We had to determine the factors in the organization that made it strong, identify the pillars, and leave those sections intact

We invited the Pennsylvania State University and Sloan School of Business to come to the Pentagon and scheduled regular sessions with the faculty. General Sullivan, the CSA, and General Dennis J. Reimer, VCSA, attended some of the sessions. The Penn State philosophy seemed a fit for our organization and we adopted it in theme and form. My task was to build our reduction vision, making sure our core competencies—Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology (Research and Development) that made us unique in the complex setting of the Army—were secure, and sell that vision to those involved. As I worked through this process, a personal philosophy of command evolved, along with the areas of concern I wished to address. Thus, before the change of command, a clear vision for our future focus was established and contained not only my objectives, but also those of Secretary Stone and General Sullivan.

The change of command ceremony at Fort Myer took place on a Friday. The following morning I asked my two-star commanders to meet with me at Fort Belvoir. During the meeting, I covered the cultural shift in our organization that would be required of AMC and our goals of looking toward the future and discerning what was important, what made us critical, and what value AMC added to the total Army picture. The major goal was to reshape our organization, making it run as a business and as efficient and productive as possible. I asked for a commitment from each to become a team player toward that objective.

General Tuttle was supportive. We had been friends for many years, from our Colonel days. Our wives and families were friends, and it was enjoyable and comfortable to have a transition with a good friend who had done a superb job. AMC excelled during Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Thirty days after the change of command, he came back to answer questions, offer suggestions, and make sure the continuity factor was still high.

The Army issued Program Budget Guidance (PBG) in September 1991, asking the Army to reduce by 25 percent. I took command in

January 1992 with the realization that a minimum of 6,000 people must be cut from the structure of AMC. Experience taught me to tread gingerly with personnel cuts. Reduction-in-Force (RIF) tears at the fiber of an organization, morale slides down hill, and everyone begins to feel demoralized. Major General Johnnie E. Wilson, AMC Chief of Staff, Lt. General Leo J. Pigaty, AMC Deputy Commanding General, and I were committed to meeting our reduction requirements without RIF, or with as few personnel cuts as possible. We survived 1992 with minimal cuts; small pockets of six people here and eight people there had to go, but there was no major RIF that year.

The Program Budget Guidance (PBG) for 1993, however, specifically recommended the removal of 13,000 jobs. Originally, the cut called for 7,000, and for that 7,000, there was no funding to pay for associated costs. For that reason, we took 5,000 personnel out of the next year and brought that savings forward, raising it to about 13,000, so it could be self-financing. We knew our work force was aging, and if our timing was right, we could eventually reduce our work force through early retirement without a major RIF.

Presentations to plead for incentive packages for early retirees were made to Congress in 1992, and if necessary, we were ready to approach Congress again in 1993 asking for incentives to induce people who were retirement eligible to leave. As an argument for our position, AMC offered statistics from Major General Joe Raffiani and a Tank Automotive Command (TACOM) survey that involved 500 people. It concluded that a comparison of savings between RIF and early retirement incentives represents a three to one ratio in favor of early retirement packages. Congress deserves the final kudos for approving an incentive package of \$25,000.00 per person. Granted this left a civilian with about \$18,000.00 after taxes, but it was a far better arrangement, for both worker and employer, than being fired to accommodate downsizing.

One day, when some 20 people were departing, a farewell get-together was in progress, and people were saying their good-byes over cakes, cookies, and punch. Some were even AMC employees who had come with General Frank S. Besson, Jr. in the early sixties from T-7, the early home of AMC in a World War II building near Ronald Reagan National Airport. Because most people viewed me as the

reason for the downsizing and reshaping, I had mixed emotions about joining them, even though I had friends in the room. When I walked in, the greetings were cordial; I detected no sarcasm or darts. I'd known most of them since the mid-eighties, counted them as my friends, and it was a good meeting. Of those retiring, 90 percent received the early retirement incentive package. None felt that the \$25,000.00 was enough to transition to a new job or career.

More than half of the people leaving wanted me to know how proud they were of their service with the Army; proud of what they'd accomplished during Vietnam, Desert Shield/Desert Storm, Panama, and Somalia. AMC was a tight community with a family atmosphere, and their focus on the job and working as a team was high. I entered the room that day apprehensive and left feeling so good about our group and proud of our people.

AMC headquarters is a terrific group of survivors. When I was Chief of Staff there in the mid 1980's, we had about 2,400 people. By 1994, it dropped below 1,000. Sixty percent of the headquarters staff was gone. It was quite emotional to let go over 20,000 people. One of our great civilians, Mike Edwards, verified that reduction touched 32 states. From 1992 to 1994, as I explained to the Army Chief and Vice Chief, we took the equivalent of two light infantry divisions out of AMC. Through all this, the people were courageous and wonderful. Reshaping is difficult and I hope that AMC is now over the hump. My goal was to achieve our objective and at the same time take care of our people, our most important and precious resource.

During 1992 to 1994, AMC established two new commands, STRICOM (Simulation, Training, and Instrumentation Command) and CBDCOM (Chemical and Biological Defense Command). Both evolved from needs inherent in operating with a smaller Army. In the spring of 1992 in Orlando, Florida, we raised the newly approved STRICOM flag and activated the Army's Simulation Center of Excellence. Lieutenant General Billy Thomas, the outgoing AMC Deputy Commander, deserves a lot of credit for working all the details and building the new command. STRICOM involved combining several Program Managers (PMs) and Training Aids and Devices to provide simulation-training experiences. This organization is the focal point of all simulation in the Army. They interact with contractors to

develop individual trainers such as the platoon gunnery system, arms tactical trainer, or the close combat tactical trainer.

Simulation training has been used in the aircraft industry for years, training pilots through a mock up of an actual plane, giving them critical experience in the cockpit that duplicates the act of flying without the consequences of errors. Our children replicate driving a car when they play video games with a driver's seat, steering wheel, accelerator, brake pedal and gear shift. The video screen provides feedback as to their driving performance. Our Army training simulators, although more complex, operate in the same manner. The learning curve is much higher and competency is achieved much faster through simulation training because of the immediate and precise feedback to the trainee. A Soldier fires at a tank during a simulation exercise, immediately sees whether or not his target was hit, sees the tank's reaction such as rearing back from the impact, and observes the damage the hit caused.

Another area in which simulation is beneficial involves design and production of equipment such as tanks. Computer programs that facilitate research, development, test, and evaluation save hundreds of man-hours and material. In spite of the obvious benefits of simulation, persuading "Hill staffers" to fund a change from the current methods was a hard sell. They kept referring to a public law allowing live fire testing, indicating, "There will be live fire testing." They wouldn't accept the simulation initially. I was again up against the basic human principal of "change is always difficult and resistance to change is a given." Major General (later Lieutenant General) Ronald Hite deserves major credit for the highly successful Test and Evaluation Program at TECOM.

Trying a bit of humor, I related the story about a live fire testing situation that involved an M1A1 tank. The objective was to observe and examine the damage done to our tank by the ammunition strikes. Unfortunately, the tank in this particular exercise was the first M1A1 tank to roll off the assembly line. A formal christening ceremony was held for the tank, in which Mrs. Abrams, the widow of former Army Chief of Staff General Creighton Abrams, christened the tank with champagne. Somehow, that tank ended up in the live fire testing exercise, and

we shot the crap out of it. Later, when we discovered that General Dynamics had taken that tank, and it was the first one to go to “live fire testing,” we were mortified. We scrambled about saying, “Get that tank out of there and repair it!”

The Association of the U.S. Army (AUSA) sponsored a large winter symposium in Orlando with over 2,000 attendees and some 40 defense contractors, military, and civilians in attendance. In an attempt to gain support for simulation, AMC set up one of the big symposium centerpieces for General Gordon Sullivan, our new Army Chief. The theme of the presentation was shortening the acquisition cycle, reducing the amount of time from drawing board to finished product. We demonstrated, using a simulation process, how production time could be cut from twelve to about eight years. Because we were downsizing the CSA, General Sullivan had suggested we look at going to a smaller version of the M1 tank with a three-Soldier capacity rather than the usual four-man crew. In only two weeks, Major General Joe Raffiani at TACOM and I returned with a simulation of a three-person, 35 ton tank, half the size of the M1A1.

In 1992, the area of Chemical and Biological Defense had not changed since 1984. There were chemical-biological missions scattered all over AMC, and no one was in charge. These fragments of units covered work from chemical-biological projects to engineering, research, and development. As early as 1984, Brigadier General Bobby Robinson, before his death, spoke out about the lack of synergy and organization in the Army’s chemical-biological area. I wanted to complete that mission AMC had started back in 1984.

Brigadier General Jan Van Prooyen started the action. He pulled together the first package used in briefing Mrs. Susan Livingston (Assistant Secretary of the Army, Installations, Logistics, and the Environment) and Mr. John Shannon (Under Secretary of the Army). Brigadier General George E. Friel, who had previously worked for General Robinson when I was the AMC headquarters Chief of Staff, joined me at this time. He and his staff did 99 percent of the work, creating a vision for the future with a well-organized Chemical and Biological Defense Command, with all of AMC scattered functions centralized into one headquarters. General Friel did dual duty during those years, as my senior chemical and biological staff officer and

commander of the new CBDCOM. In October 1993 at Edgewood, we provisionally activated the new command, complete with new flag and crest, with the raising of the flag and the presentation of a command flag to General Friel.

By the time I became commander of AMC, I had been involved in foreign military sales and security assistance for ten to twelve years. A major organization within AMC was the U.S. Army Security Assistance Command. Major General Bill Fitzgerald was the USASAC commander and traveled with me on every foreign trip. He had run the Office for Military Cooperation (OMC) in Egypt and thoroughly understood the foreign military sales and security assistance process. Bill was a great friend and avid runner. We used to say that we held the record for running in more foreign countries than anyone.

The Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management (DISAM) provided professional education, research, and support to advance U.S. foreign policy through security assistance and cooperation. DISAM covers projects from education and training, to support programs for equipment operation and maintenance, to foreign policy for providing security assistance to other countries. In 1994, I learned that the Office of Secretary of Defense cut DISAM's International Military Education and Training program by 50 percent. From my prospective, the cut was extreme and could potentially harm us in foreign relations. How many future chiefs of staff from which countries did we eliminate through that cut? Which friendly foreign countries would have helped us through diplomatic channels in the future? The cut diminished many important foreign connections.

At the same time, the security assistance program had grown to be the largest foreign military sales in U. S. Army history. In October 1992, the Army Chief asked that I represent the United States Army in Sweden as they looked at procuring a new Army tank. We were competing with France and Germany to sell military tanks to Sweden, and he was unable to attend the meeting. I agreed and, accompanied by a small Army team, traveled to Sweden to sell tanks. The German Chancellor personally represented Germany and the Leopard tank. The Premier from France represented his country and the LeClerc

tank. The Army AMC staff and I represented the M1 tank and thought we had a good chance of making the sale.

My Swedish counterpart in the negotiations was Major General Green, a senior acquisition, research and development, and engineering staff General. During our three days of discussions, General Green asked if I could get his deputy into the American Army War College.

My imagination raced to an image of him signing on the bottom line to buy our tanks. Should the sale go through, Sweden would buy 400 M1 tanks. The three billion dollar program package would touch over 30 U.S. states. I knew exactly the desk that arranged foreign military education and called that office directly. The request was approved within 24 hours.

Alas, in spite of our best endeavors, the Germans won the Swedish tank contest. I had argued that the German tank had not been proven in battle like the American M1 had proved in Desert Storm. Our presentation included battle statistics, color photos, and examples of how our M1 rolled over the Iraqi Republican Guard units and blew the turrets off half their tanks. We had not disabled the tank; we'd blown the turret away. I think what defeated us was history and tradition. Sweden traditionally aligns with the European market, and buying from the U.S., especially in a transaction with a billion dollar potential, was unpopular politically. In the end, they were afraid not to do business with the Common Market.

During my command at AMC, our lives decidedly moved up a notch on the amenities ladder. Our home in Belvoir was expansive and beautiful to accommodate the status and entertaining that came with the job. Pat took it all in stride, gracefully decorating our new home, managing a small staff, and creating elegant, yet comfortable, dinner parties and other entertainment occasions. Sergeant First Class (SFC) Willie Harmon and MSG Don Inman provided invaluable help to Pat with all household responsibilities and became fast friends almost immediately. An Army aircraft, a Gulf Stream IV, and staff were at my disposal, due to the extensive travel demands of the job. SFC Mark Balazs, whom I met in Germany, was my security guard and driver and traveled with me everywhere. Mark was a Military



Police Sergeant and had been trained for his position. He was even with me for morning exercise during my daily runs. Major Rick Hatch, my aide, who later was promoted to Colonel, and had been with me since the early 1990's, also ran with us. Our staff was more like family, all hard workers, dedicated to their jobs, and genuinely nice people.

Each day of every trip was tightly scheduled and involved various meetings, speech-making, and touring facilities. Pat accompanied me, at times, with her own eight-hour plus agenda of visiting schools in the area and making diplomatic calls on hospitals and housing areas, primarily those populated with American families. Pat became my humor control officer (HCO). When I was overly obsessed, stressed, and concerned about an issue, Pat managed to find some way to relieve the situation.

The key to making this team of Sergeants and officers into a cohesive unit was my Executive Officer, Colonel Robert Shadley. Bob was one of the Army's great Colonels and had served as the DISCOM Commander for the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division, "The Big Red One." Bob accompanied me on every visit to an Army division around the world.

We were on an almost around-the-world trip once, with days of meetings in different locations scattered about the globe. Many of the stops involved stressful meetings, and our stop in Saudi Arabia was no exception. The Saudi government was in arrears on payments to the U.S., and I was the glorified messenger and bill collector.

The debt occurred from the purchases they'd made just after the U.S. Army's successful campaign in Desert Storm. On purchases such as this one, the weapons we sell are about 80 percent of what we actually have in weaponry.

That day in 1993, as our plane touched down in Riyadh, the temperature had to be well over 120 degrees. The Generals rushed up to greet me as we deplaned, ignoring Pat. I was whisked away with pomp and handshaking to a beautiful area that looked like a palace and was graciously offered several different types of hot tea. Not exactly my "cup of tea" in such heat. Lynn Rhame, wife of Major General

Thomas G. Rhame, met Pat. Lynn was wearing an abayah, the customary dress of Saudi women, and carrying a paper bag. Pat and Lynn moved to an out-of-the-way place about 200 feet from where the men were meeting. No one greeted them, they had no chairs in which to sit, and were offered no tea.

The women were not allowed to ride in the same car with the men. I was in one of a series of military armored cars while Lynn and Pat followed in what Pat described as a "tuna can." Finally, that evening, we were together again, alone at last in the plush VIP suite of the Saudi Officers Club/Hotel. Pat told me how her little car was caught in a mob of people, a monstrous traffic jam caused by what seemed like thousands of pedestrians dressed in white. The guide explained that the crowd was made up of Muslims returning from their pilgrimage to Mecca. They were dressed in simple white robes, each and every one of them. The guide explained that the robes strip away distinctions of class and culture so that all stand equal before Allah.

"All two million of them had our little tuna can of a car surrounded today!" she concluded.

We wandered around the suite, marveling at the expensive, plush furniture, and marble bathroom with its gold fittings and fixtures. I had been assured that there was no need for a key to our suite. "Everything will be safe," the Saudi had explained. "There will be no need to lock away your possessions. No one will intrude or bother your belongings." The reason may have been that we had a Soldier with a machine gun standing guard outside our front door at all times.

On such trips as this one, the entire staff routinely met around 6:30 AM. We walked through every issue and answered every possible question about the issues of the day. All critical issues were thoroughly discussed. The staff was multi-disciplined with each person representing a different area of expertise. Typically, a senior foreign military sales person, Bill Fitzgerald, a two-star, was always with me. In Saudi, a senior Army Colonel, Geoff Prosch, a part of the Saudi Arabia National Guard (SANG), joined us. Geoff later became an assistant secretary of the Army.

The next morning in Saudi, we secured our morning meeting site that was on the suite's large veranda, discussed the business of the day, had a lavish breakfast and were on our way to the first meeting by 7:45. Pat was on the opposite side of the suite and after we were gone, went to the outer room to retrieve her breakfast. There was nothing there. She called downstairs.

"This is Mrs. Ross, and I would like to order breakfast," Pat said to the man on the other end of the line.

"General Ross has already eaten," the voice said.

"Well, Mrs. Ross would like to have something to eat," Pat insisted.

"General Ross has already eaten," the voice repeated.

"Mrs. Ross has not eaten," she replied.

"General Ross has already eaten," again came the slightly irritated response.

"Well, General Ross would like something more to eat," Pat said, changing her tactics. When in a man's world, give the man credit for everything, she reasoned.

"Yes, yes, it will be right up," the voice said, changing from irritated to accommodating.

On this trip I met the Crown Prince Abdullah, heir apparent to King Fahd, who at that time was the senior prince among about 500 Saudi princes. He was very articulate, very smart, probably in his late fifties, early sixties. Most Saudis with whom we dealt were quite sophisticated, some had their doctorates, and had been educated in the United States or England. In Saudi Arabia, no one paid for education, not even college, and medical treatment was free.

Rare informal gatherings that included our wives were most interesting. In public, the Saudi women we encountered wore their abayahs. At home, they took off the black robe and had the most

sophisticated clothing on underneath, the latest in Paris fashions with expensive, exquisite jewelry. It was an eye-opener and a contrast to lifestyles of the majority of women there.

We quickly learned to be very careful about compliments. If you said you liked something, they would give it to you. A friend of mine, Lieutenant General Gus Pagonis and his wife were there. Gus was the Army's senior logistician during Desert Shield and Storm and did a great job leading and integrating the logistics missions for ARCENT, CENTCOM, and the Army. It was an amazing feat in which we all took pride. They were admiring one of the Saudi's cars, and he tried to give it to them. Gus misunderstood and thought the Saudi wanted to let him drive the car, which was a Mercedes 450SEL.

When Gus finally understood that the man wanted to give him the car, he said he could not accept. "Well, give it to your son," the man said. "I have many more at home just like it."

The overwhelming generosity of the Saudis was difficult to miss and no doubt an extension of the enormous wealth they enjoyed. The opulence was apparent in most aspects of the lives of Saudi men and stood in stark contrast to the cloak of suppression under which the abayah-clad women of their country went about their public lives. The women have no rights and the majority live under complete control of their fathers and husbands.

The next day, we concluded our business in Saudi Arabia and flew to Egypt. The task of our staff at this stop was to discuss why we were not selling the Egyptians a particular classified tank ammunition round, which at that time was probably the best in the world. Even though we would not sell them the round, they insisted someone from the U.S. military come to Egypt to discuss it with them. Since Egypt was allowing us to form a base of operations in their country, it was important for us to meet with them. This also came at a time when we were building an M1 tank plant outside of Cairo that would produce 500 tanks. We were in the process of getting that started and were shipping huge boxes of parts to that area: engines, turrets, tracks. Once the operation was up and running, the process would be like putting tinker toys together, except that the final product would be a tank.

Our plane touched down at the Cairo International Airport, and a group from the American Embassy literally grabbed me as we deplaned, explaining that they needed a meeting prior to my speaking to anyone in Egypt. In their haste and urgency, I was rushed away to the Embassy, leaving Pat, whose feet had barely touched Egyptian soil, behind. My Embassy meeting was a long one in which my staff and the Embassy staff discussed all aspects of all issues to be covered during my visit. The primary concern was Egypt's request for the ammunition round. We covered what we, the Army, had said, and what they, the Embassy, had said, making certain we were on the same sheet of music at every turn. A brain storming session followed, covering possible questions and our answers. It wasn't until we had exhausted thinking through all possible scenarios and planning a strategy to address each one that we felt comfortable about our unified position.

Meanwhile, Pat was met at the airport by a limousine from the hotel. Our accommodation was in what had once been a grand palace and was now a Marriott Hotel, with all the royal grandeur preserved. The hotel was expecting Pat and me both to be arriving in the limousine, and they actually rolled out a red carpet from the door to the limousine with great pomp and circumstance. Pat said later, she'd never been so embarrassed in her life. Amid all the royal treatment and hoop-la, one small Arkansas woman emerged from the limo. She was escorted to the top floor, ushered through large double doors into a cavernous suite, which was probably bigger than any house we've ever owned. The living room was huge with spacious sitting areas. Fresh flowers were everywhere, seven gigantic arrangements in the living room alone. Pat was led through a dining room where the long table was laden with trays of petite fours, hors d'oeuvres, tea sandwiches, and chocolates.

When the tour was complete, and the attendant was gone, Pat was left alone. With no meetings or tours until the next morning, Pat found herself in a rare moment of solitude with no scheduled agenda. She fairly danced around the beautiful suite, amazed to be in such a place, and happy for a few moments totally to herself. She examined and smelled every flower arrangement. Through the course of the afternoon, Pat sat in every chair, tasted every type of goodie from tea

sandwiches to chocolate, and chatted continually to imaginary people as she reveled in her few free hours of total solitude.

Meanwhile, at the conclusion of my meeting, the Embassy staff told me that I would be staying in the Presidential Suite at the old palace which had been converted to a Marriott. Those are extravagant accommodations, and you will very much enjoy being there, they explained, but be careful about what you do and say. The suite, they believed, had been equipped with sophisticated surveillance paraphernalia, not only audio, but also video.

I asked about my morning staff meetings that I held for coordination. The embassy advisor suggested using the balcony as it overlooked the Nile River, and there was a street below. "At 6:30 every morning, there will be all kinds of street noise," he said. "Conduct your meetings there."

The first thing I did when I arrived at the hotel was usher Pat to the balcony and explain the surveillance system. She was mortified. "I've acted a fool," she explained, "and it's all on tape."

The Egyptians knew that I was one of four touchstones through which they could receive anything. AMC literally bought 92 percent of everything the Army bought. They would go to Defense, then State, and even to the President in the form of a letter requesting the goods they wanted. The Egyptians wanted a tank round of depleted uranium. It's probably the hardest metal, comparable to titanium. Our tank round has a rod in it, and we can get the speeds up to near hyper-speed. When the rod hits an Iraqi tank two or three miles away, it will blow the turret completely off. Fins help stabilize it as it is propelled at hyper-speed.

Egypt's situation was complex, and both State and Defense felt that we could not let them buy the tank rounds. The potential for technology transfer to other non-friendly countries was a serious governmental concern. Before the Egyptian request came to the Army, the matter was processed through highly detailed inspections. The CIA and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) were all involved in such matters. By the time the request reached me, enough information had been gathered to make a decision based on our

national security needs. I was the one who told them that the U.S. could not sell Egypt the special rounds.

Domestic issues, as well as the foreign ones, consumed my time. The hurricane season of 1992 brought the massive tropical storm of Hurricane Andrew on land just south of Miami Beach, packing winds up to 155 miles per hour. It left a path of destruction in its wake from Florida to Louisiana, with Florida being the hardest hit. Andrew was a Category Four storm that virtually flattened the communities of Homestead, Culver City, and Florida City. More than 60 people were killed and scores more injured. 117,000 homes were destroyed or suffered major damage and close to two million residents had to be temporarily evacuated. Flooding and high winds destroyed thousands of acres of crops, and the storm's total cost was estimated at 20 billion dollars.

Hurricane Andrew was a great example of how the Army and AMC work in peacetime. The mission started on a Sunday afternoon when General Sullivan called saying, "The governor of Florida has asked for federal assistance. Let's get our people out there." "Our people" was a small team that went with Major General Tom Arwood. AMC's mission was a federal one, and we were there to support all Armed Services, all federal agencies, and all national relief organizations in Florida. The federal agencies included the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Forestry Department, the Department of Interior, and the Department of Transportation. The national relief organizations were the Red Cross, Salvation Army, Helping Hand, and Second Harvest. We also coordinated with the state and local officials as required. We used a new group we referred to as the Logistics Support Group (LSG).

The LSG evolved from the need during Desert Storm to develop a single organization for various projects and missions AMC was doing piecemeal. During Desert Storm, we began sending over Anniston and Red River Depot civilian workers. Artillery civilians were going from Letterkenny. Communications repairpersons were sent from Tobyhanna and aircraft maintenance went from Corpus Christi. The efforts were not coordinated. General Vuono commented that our efforts in these areas needed to be coordinated and organized under one umbrella. He also stated that he no longer wanted to send a

variety of organizations and civilians into Saudi Arabia, and from his comments, the LSG organization was born. General Vuono wanted the 30 separate organizations, all from AMC in Saudi, under one command. He wanted one person, a single commander, in charge of them all, and the LSG became that organization.

Another area of reorganization that was accomplished during my command at AMC was in the Research and Development area. The roots of the effort began back in the early eighties when AMC had over 20 laboratories under the name of Laboratory Command (LABCOM). The laboratories were scattered and working independently of each other. General Bob Moore, as the DCG of Research and Development, was given the task of pulling together the various laboratories and related laboratory elements, which also involved corporate-level laboratories.

Later, we took the next level of labs and aligned them to each of the two-star commands. They are aligned by commodity command, giving each commodity a Research, Development, and Engineering Center (RDEC). There were RDECs for aviation, missiles, tank automotive, communication and electronics, and armaments. The centers were in their commodity commands, but all linked to the Army Research Laboratory (ARL), the old LABCOM. The culmination of our efforts came in February 1994 when the Defense Performance Review Office designated ARL a National Reinvention Laboratory. In March 1994, ARL's Draft Performance Plan under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) was forwarded to the Office of Management and Budget. Our model and pilot program was one that would meet the standards of Vice President Gore's program in the productivity and streamlining area.

I'm proud of ARL. It became the Army's "flagship" in DoD, a state-of-the-art organization. Should the Army be successful in another Desert Storm in the future, the high technology that would see us through would emanate from ARL and RDECs. We advertised Army-wide, Department of Defense-wide, government-wide, and industry-wide for a new director of ARL. We had over 90 applications that cut across industry, government, Army, and other services, and the clear candidate was Dr. John Lyons, who took ARL to a new level of excellence. Reorganization from LABCOM to ARL required no



additional funding and was streamlined, more efficient, and had a higher level of productivity. The key goal in this project was to effect synergism. Research in isolation tends to be less effective than in an atmosphere that lends itself to collaboration and shared ideas. In this case, we envisioned that the sum of the parts would be greater than the whole.

Credit for building the LABCOM organization goes to General Thompson, General Moore, Richard Vitali, and Bob Black who worked on it in the mid-eighties. George Singley, Major Generals Malcolm O'Neill and Jerry Harrison, Senior SES Darold Griffin and many others who were involved in building ARL in the nineties also deserve credit. In the early nineties, we built two ARL facilities, one at Adelphi, Maryland, and another at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, each costing around 100 million dollars. With the new facilities, we had state-of-the-art laboratory facilities. It was an exciting area in the development of new technology.

We also incorporated a refined budget system into our accounting practices during that time. Several months before I arrived at AMC, Secretary of the Army Stone asked that we meet in his office to discuss his concerns regarding the lack of good business practices in the AMC organization. From his concerns grew our procedure of tracking every dollar from the highest AMC level down through the organization to the activity cost center, such as a depot, arsenal, or laboratory. Through the efforts of many, and especially Lieutenant General Leo Pigaty, AMC established a process that is consistent with Best Business Practices. Later, in 1994, when Mr. Stone was working in the private industry sector, I continued to keep him updated through notes and brochures of our progress that began with his concerns that afternoon.

Darold Griffin was the intellectual leader and was highly instrumental in developing the Army's acquisition-streamlining program. In the early 1990's, Army acquisitions worked through a major maze of bureaucracy before anything was acquired. We had more guidance from Congress than anyone deserved on how to buy equipment. My first experience with this was in the early seventies when I was in the Director of Materiel Acquisition of DCSLOG. This office handled the procurement budget for the Army. We tracked all

major weapon systems. The “Big Five” systems (the M1 Tank, the Bradley Fighting Vehicle, the Apache Helicopter, the Multiple Launch Rocket System, and the Patriot Missile) averaged 12 to 15 years to produce, with one example of an 18 year production time. We simply could not function effectively in this mode. We could not stand for the bureaucratic practices and delays that we had in the producing and acquiring equipment.

We set about to rectify this problem, and in 1992, AMC was leading DoD in the acquisition area. Through dealing with the Air Force and the Navy, I recognized that of the branches of the service, our system was far ahead. We presented our Acquisition Challenge Strategy papers at an Atlanta conference to the cheers and best wishes from CEOs from industry. We addressed dealing with the new environment, achieving efficiency in productivity, and dropping unnecessary and cumbersome bureaucratic barriers between the Army and industry.

A plan on paper is all well and good, but can be worthless if not successfully utilized. We set about educating and training our work force in the new procedures. General Billy Thomas, AMC DCG, and Lieutenant General August M. Cianciolo, Military Deputy in SARDA (the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Research, Development, and Acquisition) led an AMC-SARDA team, to put our plan into practice. They called the four to six hour discussions to large audiences in post auditoriums their “Road Show.” The presentations to educate were followed with the necessary training and our new plan became a working reality.

In 1992 the last of our children married. Tony, having graduated from the University of Central Florida, was working for Lockheed Martin Corporation and had fallen in love with a young lady, also a UCF graduate, who worked just down the hall. He and Cyndee were married in Orlando.

The year of 1993 ushered in a new administration. President William J. (Bill) Clinton’s team brought with it Colleen A. Preston, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition Reform), Anita Jones, John Deutch, and Bill Perry. They were quite interested in our acquisition plan and designed a new DoD Acquisition Streamlining

Process that mimicked AMC's procedures by about 80 percent. We thought that spoke rather highly of what AMC had accomplished in the acquisition/procurement area after all the years we spent defining and redefining our procedures.

AMC was also given a major mission order by the Army Chief to change the direction of AMC in order to make it a power projection resource for the Army. Under the revised plan, all war reserves belonged to AMC. AMC picked up all strategic war materiel and stocks. All pre-positioned materiel that had been configured to unit sets (POMCUS) belonged to AMC. Desert Shield/Desert Storm brought to the forefront a need to empower logistics procedures during wartime. Folks now understood that the most vital component to organizing and projecting a major combat force was projecting major logistics support. A Soldier's effectiveness is highly dependent on his weapons and equipment. Ingenuity and determination can carry a Soldier far, but a well performing weapon and high tech equipment saves valuable time and countless, priceless lives in a war.

Many, including Mr. Bob Keltz, Major General Tom Arwood, and now Major General Frank F. Henderson, accomplished a major change in the way AMC operated in wartime and all deserve great praise. The work of so many SES employees, such as David Mills, Michael Sandusky, and James Emahiser, helped secure the change.

During Desert Shield/Desert Storm, the Army was given the requirement of supporting all services. That included a total of over 500,000 Air Force, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard. General Norman Schwarzkopf, Jr., Commander of Operation Desert Storm, made the request, and General Colin Powell, JCS Chairman, gave the Army the responsibility for seven executive agent areas: food (Class I), clothing, tents, barrier materials (limited Classes II and IV), bulk fuel (Class III bulk, packaged products were being handled separately), conventional ammunition (Class V), clearing the Air Force airfield ramps of cargo, and second destination transportation movements of service supplies to the Army, USAF, Navy, or Marine locations (Class VII), and limited (Class IX) repair parts.

The Desert Storm directive and the one involving Hurricane Andrew primarily facilitated the creation of LSG. Those are the two

landmark decisions that, to my thinking, changed the direction of AMC logistics support. With the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) and the DA staff, we worked on Field Manual, Operations 100-5 (June, 1993), which is the umbrella field manual from which all other regulations emanate, incorporating lessons learned in AMC's massive endeavors. The 20-plus new areas we addressed were a joint staff effort between the TRADOC commander, General Fred Franks, and me as AMC commander.

Within the logistics side of the Army, we took pride in the accomplishments made during that era. There were external factors, however, that bothered me. The massive centralization philosophy coming from the Department of Defense at the time was disturbing. Centralization has its merits in many cases, and I am an advocate of consolidation when it results in more efficient and effective productivity. Removing the supply functions and all the commissaries from the Army, however, didn't result in savings or improved productivity. The supply function targeted over 200,000 common items of consumables. Then the maintenance depots were merged into AMC's commodity command. I was concerned, not only about the reduced efficiency of day-to-day operations, but about the demise of Title X and public law.

The reduction in military and civilian forces that we were experiencing was very difficult. In the fiscal year of 1990, the total budget for the Army exceeded 90 billion dollars. The Defense Department had over 90 billion to use for Army programs. By 1994, the budget dropped to 61 billion. While I was at AMC, the Army, which was pushed by DoD, targeted the procurement and research and development areas. AMC's budget dropped from 15 billion to 6 billion dollars. The results were devastating.

If asked if we were continuing to modernize, I'd have to answer "no." We aren't buying any more weapons systems. There were only two left on the board, the Comanche Helicopter (RAH-66) and the Advanced Field Artillery System (AFAS-Crusader). These two programs were being sub-optimized and reduced each year. To the surprise of no one, both were eventually killed. New high tech packages like the Inter-Vehicular Information System (IVIS) for the M1 tank are being inserted into the old platform. Our plans include

upgrading the Apache to the D model, the Longbow version. The Kiowa Helicopter (OH-58) will go to the D Model, which arms it with Hellfire, Hydra 70s, and Stingers. The Army modernization program was reduced to technology insertion into old platforms.

In retrospect, the AMC command was a time of positive change, in spite of major cutbacks and reductions. I'm proud of the men and women with whom I worked to effect the changes. Each one served his or her country in a unique manner, contributing from a personal well of talent and expertise. AMC's combined efforts effected the changes and produced results in all major logistics areas: supply, maintenance, transportation and distribution, ammunition, and foreign military sales.

After 35 years and nine months, I retired from the Army in March 1994. Pat and I moved from the spacious, historic, beautiful home on the Potomac River to a small 14<sup>th</sup> floor apartment in Arlington, Virginia, overlooking Washington, D.C. My Army career had not evolved as I had imagined in my youth. Instead of an infantryman on the frontlines, battling an enemy that dared threaten the security and freedom of our county, I became a behind-the-scenes logistician who nurtured the Soldier with food, fuel, clothing, lodging, ammunition, maintenance, equipment, supplies, transportation, and improved technology. Just as the tapestry of puzzle pieces make little sense until the picture is complete, the purpose for each piece of my career became clearer with time. Every phase taught me what I needed to know for the next level. In March 1994, the Army picture complete, I was filled with a sense of awe at where the forks in the road took me. I could never have designed our Army life as well on my own.



## *Chapter XIV*

### **Reflections**

It was official. I was no longer the Commander of AMC; not even in the Army anymore. After almost 36 years, I was again a civilian. Sitting alone in my home office, I could not bring myself to get up and take off my uniform. The quiet stillness of the house echoed my resistance to move. Listening to the uncommon silence around me, I actually felt my heart beating. Pat had been exhausted and gone to bed. Rick, my aide, and Mark, my driver and security Sergeant, my two constant companions, left an hour earlier. Family and friends had gone home hours ago after the Change of Command Ceremony and my retirement reception. The uniform had grown to represent who I was, and taking it off this time meant shedding the Army skin forever. I was not ready yet.

Leaning back in the chair, I closed my eyes and let my thoughts wander with no sense of purpose or direction. Visions of all the ports of call from Hawaii to Saudi Arabia floated past. A noise outside my office window brought me abruptly out of my daydreams of deployment and improvement packages. I walked to the window and peered into the darkness at what looked like the white tail of a deer scurrying out of the yard. The gentle rolling hills of our Fort Belvoir home were beautifully landscaped with lots of azaleas. They were budding early this spring. “Looks like the deer are coming up for a late dinner,” I thought. I remembered the time I’d called Pat from the Pentagon and she’d answered breathless after many rings.

“Are you okay?” I asked.

“No. I’ve been out in the yard with the broom chasing the stupid deer away from my azaleas,” she’d said. “I haven’t scared them into sneaking around after dark yet. They come to snack on my blooms and bushes in broad daylight all hours of the day.”

I smiled to myself at the memory. I needed to go to bed, but I couldn’t face taking off my uniform. My eyes rested on the picture of Barbara Bush with the troops on Thanksgiving Day during Desert Shield. It was signed, “Whoopee. General Ross, everyone loves my

designer jacket. Most warm. Barbara Bush.” The day that the White House called me, requesting a uniform for Mrs. Bush to wear when she visited the troops, the spokesman said, “We’ve got to get Mrs. President the right attire.”

“Check on sizes. We’ve got to get the absolute right size because we could royally screw this up if we don’t,” I said. We sent two sets, and she wore them. The Soldiers loved it. What a trooper. Her husband wore only the desert hat.

So many memories flooded my tired brain as I glanced around my office at the framed documents and pictures. One was a certificate declaring “Major General Jimmy D. Ross” day because of the work I had done with Congress. Congressman Hanson of Utah signed it, and a good friend of mine, Michael Stone, at that time the Secretary of the Army, made the presentation. Michael was an avid bird watcher, his favorite hobby, and sadly he died on a trip to the Amazon.

Neatly framed and hanging near the Ross Day certificate was one I had never considered achieving back when I was a young junior officer fresh from Arkadelphia. It was the document stating that I was a four-star General. The General (4-Star) Certificate included a formal endorsement by Secretary of Army Stone, General Colin Powell, JCS, Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, and President George H. W. Bush.

And there was the picture of Pat and me with President Clinton. It made me think of the day General Barry McCaffrey was walking down the hallway at the White House to meet the President. He passed one of the President’s aides, who appeared to be in her early twenties. Barry spoke to the aide saying, “Good morning.” She replied, “I don’t speak to military.”

The comment was overheard by other people, and later the President apologized to General McCaffrey. The incident somehow made its way into the *Washington Post*, and the news spread all over the city of Washington and the Pentagon. About a week later, Major General Joe Raffiani, my Tank-Automotive Commander, Major Rick Hatch, my aide, and I were in the Rose Garden with some 500 people for a signing ceremony. I was representing the Army. The President looked in our direction, saw some green uniforms, and, like Moses



parting the Red Sea, walked over to speak to us. It appeared rather obvious that he was trying to demonstrate, especially to the media present, that he was a friend of the military.

“I lived near your boyhood home of Hope, Arkansas,” I said, making polite conversation. “I grew up in Arkadelphia and went to college at Henderson. We played Hope every year in football, basketball, and baseball. Mr. President, most of the time, we won,” I joked. (Later, I realized that he spent his teenage years and attended high school in Hot Springs, Arkansas, not Hope.)

“Well, you probably did,” he said laughing. “Why don’t you and your wife join me some Saturday morning for the radio broadcast to the nation at the White House?” he offered. “I’d like you to be my guest in the Oval Office.”

“That would be nice,” I said, accepting the offer.

The Saturday morning of our White House visit came, and we were instructed to dress appropriately. I was to wear a Class A uniform, and civilian guests were to be in business attire, which meant suits. SFC (later MSG) Mark Balazs drove us to the White House. Our limousine was greeted by a young, pretty escort who walked us to the Oval Office. We chatted as we walked, enjoying the northeastern accent of our guide. She said she had worked on the President’s campaign in her home state of Connecticut, and this was a follow-up assignment. Reaching our destination was most impressive, our first and only time in the Oval Office.

We sat with the other seven couples, all spit-shined and dressed up, excited about being in the Oval Office on a Saturday morning. President Clinton arrived late, unshaven, looking very tired, appearing to have been up all night, and wearing a rumpled red plaid hunting shirt and slacks. George Stephanopolis and Dee Dee Myers were with him, both in faded jeans, complete with wrinkles, ragged edges, and holes. Pat and I were wishing we had known the dress was casual.

I stared at the photo of our rumpled, seemingly rather tired and worn president, Pat, and I in our dress clothes, a capsule of contradictions caught in a frame. I stared at the two Arkansas boys

who were raised not 30 miles from each other, who traveled different paths to that moment in the Oval Office of the White House that evoked in us such different perceptions of the world.

When I joined the Army, I had no intention of staying 36 years. There had been good offers to go back to Arkansas and coach high school football, and what a struggle it had been deciding what to do. One of my major role models and mentors was Coach Duke Wells. He encouraged me to serve my time for three years, and come back home. Had I taken the coaching fork in the road, our lives would have been enormously different.

Our first assignment was instrumental in selling us on the great institution of the U.S. Army. It opened new vistas and horizons we'd never dreamed of. Living in the territory of Hawaii before it became a state was like moving to paradise. The 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry was the Army's Strategic Pacific Reserve and responsible for the entire Pacific area. For everyone in the division, this led to temporary duty trips all over the Pacific, from the different Hawaiian Islands to the Philippines, Okinawa, Thailand, and Taiwan. I loved the great history that came with the 25<sup>th</sup>. I was in the 14<sup>th</sup> Infantry, which was steeped in tradition. Private Titus posters are still made today quoting his famous saying, "I'll try, sir," as he climbed the wall in Peking (now Beijing) to help relieve the American Embassy. I wouldn't give anything for the two years with the Golden Dragons of the 14<sup>th</sup> Infantry, who were the last units in China. The movie "55 Days to Peking," starring Charlton Heston, portrayed their exploits to protect the embassy compound. I spent almost a year, nine map-drafting months in Thailand, with the Wolfhounds of the 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry, who were the last units in Siberia (Russia).

The divisions had a way of involving each Soldier in its history, sometimes all the way back to the Civil War days, like the 14<sup>th</sup> Infantry motto, "Right of the Line." During the Civil War, the 14<sup>th</sup> Infantry was always the anchor and on the "Right of the Line." Everyday we got a dose of history that gave us a glimpse of the Soldiers who had come before us and worn the insignias and patches that now resided on our uniforms. We liked organizations that respected their roots and reflected on their history, so it made it very easy for us to assimilate into the Army family.

When I look back across the entire scope of my career, I'm struck by the range of my assignments. Personal reflection always makes me wonder if the path I took was an accident or by design. The road I took in the early years may have been by chance. Those years brought excellent training. But from the battalion and Colonel command assignments to Army staff in the Pentagon in the seventies through the nineties, it had to be by design. Each assignment built upon the next in perfect preparation for the ultimate test of Desert Storm and commanding AMC.

As a junior Lieutenant Colonel, moving from the Army staff and DCSLOG to being a "dwarf" in General Abrams' office may have been a blend of being in the right place, at the right time, with the right set of skills and experience. All the command opportunities certainly contributed to my professional development. The experience I gained with each job provided a new area of expertise and perspective. Each step along the way added to my repertoire as I gained knowledge of the full spectrum of logistics support for an Army division. In 2<sup>nd</sup> Support Command, my command was supporting the 100,000-man VII Corps, consisting of 52 companies, 9 battalions, and two groups. That experience provided something you can't teach in a textbook. It involved being in the trenches and getting my hands and boots dirty.

The AMC assignments trained me to look at the third and fourth tier levels of detail. My DCSLOG Army tours submerged me in policy areas, resource programs, and the planning of program funds for the field. As Chief of Staff of AMC, I had the good fortune to watch Generals Keith and Thompson, and later General Louis C. Wagner. They each led and managed one of the Army's largest organizations. Little did I realize when I was executive officer in Materiel Acquisition for Generals Bush and Olenchuk back in 1973 that I would ever need the acquisition and procurement experience I gained there again, but the experience benefited my work at AMC. As a field advisor in Vietnam, I was at the very end of the supply pipeline. There wasn't anyone further out there than I was, and the meager support we received certainly made an impression. That was always on my mind at DCSLOG and AMC, taking care of the Soldier.

I have been fortunate to have great mentors in my life. Coach Wells was probably the most influential, beginning in college. The last time I saw him, I was a Brigadier General. We sat and talked at length. Maybe the term isn't a common one, but since I was a teen, I thought of him as my friend, mentor, and in Army terms, my "footlocker counselor." I could talk with Duke Wells about anything and did, from problems and issues of football to growing up as a teenager in south Arkansas. Duke Wells was always there and had a way of being a good listener. So many people have a way of talking so much that they never hear what anyone else has to say. The influences of good people last a lifetime. Duke Wells' advice and memory remain a part of me.

Maybe the first company assignment is dominant in the minds of everyone in the Army. Although they contributed, it wasn't Fort Benning, Ranger, or Airborne School where I learned the basics of Soldiering. They gave me some valuable tools, but it was my first company, A Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Infantry, that taught me how to take care of Soldiers and how to integrate a variety of actions to bring a training focus on what was important. There was no company more competitive. No one wanted to excel more, and no one wanted to be number one more than that entire company. It was like being part of a winning football team. Everybody in that company wanted to be number one. It didn't matter if it was the boxing matches or the Army Training Tests (ATTs), being number one as a company or number one as a platoon was always the goal. I don't remember many times when the company finished below second. Captain Hominy, Lieutenants Anderson, Cobb, and Fragas, and Master Sergeant Williams were great friends with whom I had the honor of spending time.

As a company commander, I started trying to emulate what I saw my first company commander doing. The experiences at XVIII Airborne Corps and Strike Command (USSTRICOM) were certainly important. There were no slow learners at USSTRICOM while Paul Adams was there. I arrived as he was leaving, but his legacy was there, and General Theodore Conway continued that. General Conway said to me, "If you are an Airborne Soldier, you are among the best in the Army." Being one of the few jumpmaster-qualified Majors in USSTRICOM was even better. Jumpmaster school was tough, but it

had its rewards. I was fortunate enough to know General Ted Conway and had the privilege of being his jumpmaster a few times.

I learned a lot from my STRICOM teammates. Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps officers were top-notch. Bob Vrillakas, who became a life-long friend, was an Army Air Corps Lieutenant flying P-38's in World War II as an 18-year-old pilot. Colonel Pisarek, also an Air Force Colonel, was our division chief. Brigadier General Fred C. Allen, U.S. Army, was the senior logistics officer of USSTRICOM in the 1960's. Each one influenced my life. I still see General Allen occasionally some 20 years later. Bob Vrillakas, now retired in Oregon, and I still correspond. General Julius W. Becton was another one from whom I learned. General Becton did an exceptional job commanding VII Corps and later running FEMA after retirement.

It was my honor and privilege to have great deputies, I thought, looking around at their pictures on my wall. In 2<sup>nd</sup> Support Command, I had Colonel Jim Ball and Colonel John Long, both of whom went to the two-star level. In DCSLOG, there was Jim Klugh, who brought special expertise in the personnel area, chemical area, and the manpower area. Major General Fred Elam was a jack-of-all-trades and could do anything. The one deputy I had at AMC, Lieutenant General Leo Pigaty, was a superb friend and logistician. Most took the hint from their boss and took up jogging, running, and the "Army 10 Miler."

Great civilians crossed my work path like Bob Keltz, Darold Griffin, and Dick Chait. I've known Bob since 1978. He and I have worked side by side on three or four assignments. I have known Darold Griffin for about fifteen years. What an influence he had on me, teaching me things about the industrial base and production base. Do people always worry when an organization is about to lose someone with Darold's expertise, I wondered. Very soon, Darold would retire after 30 years of service. Would the entire AMC organization self-destruct when he left? No, but he was sorely missed.

Then there was General Frank S. Besson, Jr. His son, Frank Besson III, and I met in my Lieutenant Colonel days. I had been the AMC Chief of Staff when we started inviting past AMC commanders to meet with us to discuss their command periods. I called and asked

him to come in and let us record the history of his AMC command. He was reluctant saying, "I ran the Besson Board, I ran the study that created AMC, and I was the commander from 1962 to 1969, but do you know how long ago that was? We're talking about fifteen to twenty years. I'm afraid my memory will not be good enough."

I said, "Sir, any of your thoughts about the AMC early days, the process you went through to bring the tech services and so many separate procurement organizations into one command would be extremely helpful to us."

He was hesitant but finally agreed. We had a preliminary interview and a second short session when we heard he'd gone into Walter Reed Army Hospital. He was 75 and had cancer. "I'm not having surgery. No one is cutting on me. I'm going to die with my boots on," he said. He died three weeks later.<sup>42</sup>

General Besson's accomplishments are many, and his name is synonymous with AMC. The day he came into AMC for his first interview he was sharp, astute, and quick, remembering names of programs that had gone on 20 or more years before. He challenged everyone that listened to take a good look at our logistics programs. His father had been a West Point graduate and an officer in the Corps of Engineers. His son is carrying on the family tradition. It was an honor to be part of the selection process, naming Frank Besson III as Senior Executive Service director for Security Assistance in DSCLOG at DA.

Ben Register and I served side by side as brigade commanders when I had 4<sup>th</sup> Transportation Brigade, and he commanded Mainz Army Depot and had started the huge buildup at Mainz. We got to know each other at work, and our families became social friends. Our paths crossed again when he and I changed commands in 1980 at 2<sup>nd</sup> Support Command and in 1987 as the DCSLOG of the Army when he retired. He was a great logistician and one of those broad-gauged, multi-functional people who knew logistics from top to bottom. I had superb executive officers at DA and AMC from Ray McCoy, Dick Larson, Tom Glisson, Larry Taylor, Dick Beale, Bob Shadley, and David Whaley. They were clearly the best Colonels in the Army.

I couldn't think about logistics without thinking of General Joe Heiser who became one of my role models. I was often the "chart flipper" for his presentations. Working for him taught me a great deal about the logistics business. He was an expert in every branch. Many of his innovative programs live today, 20 years later, such as the Direct Supply System (DSS), the ALOC, and Logistics Offensives. It was an honor that he thought enough of me to send several chapters of the book he was writing (*A Soldier Supporting Soldiers*, Center of Military History, U.S. Army, 1991) for my review and critique.

I was so honored when my hero, Lieutenant General Heiser, gave me a copy of his book with a note on the inside cover that reads:

*To General Jimmy D. Ross,*

*Sir,*

*Anything of value resulting from this Soldier's Support of Soldiers is due to the dedicated effort of yourself and many others. I will always be most grateful for your great contributions to the Soldiers we served together and the privilege of your friendship in doing it.*

*God speed to you and yours,  
Edie and Joe*

Chuckling to myself, I remembered the night I'd found General Heiser standing in a closet in my home. We were having a New Year's Day reception at which he was a guest in our Fort Myer home where he had once lived. During the evening, I realized that I had not seen the General in some time and began looking for him. As I wandered upstairs, I noticed one of the bedroom doors ajar. Walking in, I looked around the room, and was greeted by the General's fanny just visible inside the open closet door. He was bent over leaning on the closet windowsill, peering out the window.

"General Heiser," I said. "What are you doing?"

Without turning to face me, he said, “I wanted to look out this window again. Do you care? It’s got the very best view of Washington.”

“No, I don’t care,” I said, laughing.

I excused myself and left him to enjoy that amazing bird’s eye view of Washington from that closet window. That view aligned the Lincoln Memorial, Washington Monument, and the Capitol to form a linear nucleus that appeared to majestically balance the rest of the city.

Lieutenant General Ed Honor was another contemporary who was an ultimate distribution and Transportation Corps expert. He understood the mechanisms of traffic management, movements’ management, port operations, overland transportation, and bureaucratic processes like tariffs, tenders, national agreements, and Standardizations Agreements within which we had to operate.

AMC’s Commander in 1984 was General Richard Thompson. He set the example in work ethic, knowledge of logistics, and endless energy. He was an American success story. He rose in rank from a Sergeant in WWII to a four-star General in 1984.

It was a pleasure to watch AMC’s DCG Bob Moore operate. When he retired, I think he had 15 years inside AMC as a project/program manager, Chief of Staff of AMC, MICOM Commander, and then back as a Deputy Commanding General in 1984. His expertise was in the area of research, development and technological application.

AMC used to refer to Generals Besson and Bunker (fourth DCG for AMC) as the “B&B Club”. They seemed bigger than their branch. They could discuss any facet of a variety of logistics functions, just as General Heiser could. They had multi-functional orientations, and that’s what it took. Ben Register, Fred Hissong, Lee Salomon, John Coburn, Dane Starling, Ken Wykle, and Merle Freitag understood all the mechanisms that made the Army run. They all grew above and beyond their branches. When I was at Bill Tuttle’s DISCOM change of command in 3<sup>rd</sup> Armored Division, I marveled at how his job



seemed much broader than his branch of the service. They all had assignments that cut across the full spectrum of logistics.

Throughout my Army career, there seemed to be a constant in every unit in which I had success. The success always found a “great Sergeant” in the background doing all the hard work that makes the Army run smoothly. Clearly, they are the U.S. Army’s backbone that ensure military adherence to standards and discipline. I realized that everywhere I was successful, there was a First Sergeant or Command Sergeants Major standing right beside me, spending long hours and doing the tough work taking care of Soldiers. The U.S. Army is the best in the world because of great Sergeants like Command Sergeant Major Jim Smith of the 10<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion, CSMs Head and Tucker in 2<sup>nd</sup> Support Command, and CSM Michael Pierce in AMC.

This night was so hard for me, and I knew it had been extremely hard for Pat also. We were leaving a way of life we had known for such a long time and were leaving treasured friends who seemed like family. Rick Hatch, my aide, was an integral part of our lives. Little did I know that night that Rick would later serve as a Senior Logistics Officer in Afghanistan, along with his three sons and a son-in-law. All the male members of his family served our country. Far in the future, in 2005, Rick would call me from the eastern border of Afghanistan looking across the border to Pakistan, worried about us in Florida because of the hurricanes. And he was calling from a war zone! The people the Army brought our way enriched our lives. We would miss Rick and his wife Vickie, a special lady who speaks four languages (English, German, French, and Japanese), as we would miss my other aide, Larry Robertson. Larry now runs the Quality Control area for BMW automobiles in South Carolina.

I wandered around my office that night reminiscing, daydreaming, and staring at photos, overcome with admiration for the amazing people the Army introduced me to. There were my Sergeant Majors, starting with Jim Smith in Vietnam, Head and Tucker in Germany, and Michael Pierce, whom I took with me from Chambersburg to AMC. How fortunate to have had the opportunity to serve my country with these particular people. And I was more fortunate still to have made the journey with the beautiful redhead by my side. Perhaps the era in

which I grew up had something to do with the respect I had for a military career.

In the forties, Arkadelphia, Arkansas, was very patriotic. It was a place where people went away and joined the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Army Air Corps, or Merchant Marine and came home proud of their service to our nations. We held our veterans in high esteem. Our flag was a proud symbol of our country that, as a school patrol, we learned to handle and treat in an appreciative, traditional, and respectful manner. I had an uncle who had burns on one side of his face from being gassed in World War I, and part of the munitions had discolored his face. He was quick to say how proud he was of the Army and his service during World War I. I wasn't the only one who admired and respected what he'd done for us.

My own brother, Bob, who was desperate to join the service at the age of 14, found himself a Merchant Marine and took pride in his service to his country. My dad remembered large tent encampments of troops that stayed around Arkadelphia for weeks in the late thirties. It must have been part of the Louisiana Maneuvers, which was a multi-state training exercise in preparation for World War II. The encampment brought a sense of high adventure to our little town.

I'm a history buff deluxe, I thought to myself. I tell everyone more than they ever want to know, but I think they need to know, about the history of everything. Now I'm part of the history of the Army. Here I sit in the middle of the night, 57 years old, avoiding taking off my uniform and going to bed because it may be the last time I'll ever have it on.

Forcing myself to stand, my eyes rested on the framed quote by John Stuart Mill that hung in every office I'd occupied since first seeing it in Colonel Sheriff's office in the Pentagon in 1973. Colonel Sheriff gave it to me when he retired, and I reluctantly accepted it, thinking it should remain with his family. But he insisted I keep it. A friend of mine in the Library of Congress helped me research and find its origin. John Stuart Mill, philosopher, economist, and an Englishman who supported the Union Army during the Civil War, wrote an essay on war that contained the quotation:

“War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things. The decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks that nothing is worth war is much worse. A man who has nothing for which he is willing to fight, nothing which is more important than his own personal safety is a miserable creature and has no chance of being free unless made and kept so by the exertions of better men than himself.”<sup>43</sup>

John Stuart Mill seemed to capture my feelings about war with his potent words. As a man who never looked for a fight and tried to avoid altercations that had no cause, I could never sit by idle and watch a person’s freedom threatened or put in jeopardy.

A small voice inside my head said, “You can take the boy out of the Army, but you can’t take the Army out of the mind, spirit, and heart of the boy.” With that quiet reminder, I knew that removing my uniform didn’t really strip from me the amazing friends, memories of all the adventures, and the valuable skills and knowledge I’d acquired. They were in my heart and in my head. It was time for me to move on and let another of my brothers manage the care and safety of our Soldiers and our country.

It would be strange, I thought, facing the day without the Army wrapped around me in countless ways other than green cloth, but I would get used to a business suit and a different form of service after a while. However, selecting different colored shirts and socks could be a problem. And I made a mental note to ask Pat to help me shop for more suits and civilian clothes. Suddenly I was very tired and ready to go to bed. En route to the bedroom, I braved a reluctant imaginary peek at the trappings that would be no more once the uniform landed in the clothesbasket. No more Gulf Stream 4. This boy would be flying commercial. No more Mark. This boy would no longer need guarding and would be driving himself. No more Rick to take care of all the details. I’d be on my own there. By the time I reached the bedroom, I decided, like Scarlett in *Gone with the Wind*, to think about all that tomorrow, and my focus shifted to the next job, the next adventure, the next challenge. As heavy exhaustion pulled me into a peaceful sleep, twilight dreams held remnants of the past, with fleeting

glimpses of an Army of brave and dedicated Soldiers taking care of Soldiers.

## *Epilogue*

When he retired from the U.S. Army, Four-Star General Jimmy D. Ross had served 36 years as a military officer. During his service he received the Distinguished Service Medal (with Oak Leaf Cluster), the Legion of Merit (with Oak Leaf Cluster), the Bronze Star medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, two Air Medals, the Joint Service Commendations Medal, the Army Commendation Medal (with Oak Leaf Cluster), the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Master Parachutist Badge, the Ranger Tab, and the Army Staff Identification Badge. His last active duty assignment was as Commander of the United States Army Materiel Command in Alexandria, Virginia, a worldwide command of 95,000 military and civilian personnel and 126 different organizations, and 34 Project Manager Offices, represented in 40 states and six foreign countries at 355 locations around the world. AMC is the driving force in service to the Soldier through research, development, testing, acquisition, and sustainment, a “One-Stop-Shop” for logistics and weapon systems support.

Following his military retirement, General Ross was appointed Senior Vice President of Biomedical Services of the American Red Cross by Mrs. Elizabeth Dole, President. The position involved the overall responsibility for modernization of more than encompassed Information Systems Management, a new nationwide Human Resources Department, Finance and Accounting, Quality Assurance, and Regulatory/Compliance Systems.

In the summer of 1999, Dr. Bernadine H. Healy, then President and Chief Executive Officer, promoted General Ross to the position of Chief Operating Officer of the American Red Cross, responsible for the overall business operations and a 2.5 billion dollar budget, a staff of 33,000, and 1.3 million volunteers in 2,000 locations across the nation and six United States territories.

General Ross became a Henderson State University Distinguished Alumnus during the mid 1980's. In 2004, he was inducted into the Sports Hall of Fame at Henderson State University, cited for making first team “All Arkansas Intercollegiate Conference” (AIC) in 1957 and lettering in two sports, both football and baseball. In the summer of 2005, he was inducted into the Phi Sigma Epsilon Hall of Fame.

General Ross is currently the past president and Chief Operating Officer of Cypress International in Alexandria, Virginia. He serves as a consultant with Cypress, and is a member of several corporate boards. He and his wife, Pat, have a home in Lake Forest, Florida. He divides his time between his Florida home and his work in the Washington, D.C. area. General and Mrs. Ross have three children, six grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. During non-work hours, General Ross and Pat, both avid readers, enjoy traveling, visits with family, and exploring historic sights.

Sabra, now a single mom, lives in Little Rock, Arkansas, and has two children, Teresa Catherine “Katie” Cripps Kelley and Charles Michael Cripps. Katie, a 2002 West Point graduate, is a Captain stationed at Fort Bliss, Texas. She and her husband, Jason, have two children, Colin Ross and Bailey Christine Kelley.

DiAnna, “Dede” and her husband Lieutenant Colonel Danny Henson (U.S. Army, Ret.), live in Tampa, Florida, and have two children, Sherry Michelle and Russell Dale.

Tony and his wife Cyndee live in Orlando, Florida, and have two children, Savannah Lee and Sarah Veronica.

## *Appendix A*

### **General Ross' Command Philosophy**

During 36 years in the Army, I was truly blessed to serve under so many great leaders and field Soldiers. As in most organizations, there were also leaders who abused their positions and responsibilities. I learned from both, from the negative leaders as well as the positive ones. Both kinds of experiences were committed to memory with a promise to myself never to repeat the bad examples. Influence from positive leaders far outweighed the negative.

Imagine observing and serving, as I had the honor of doing, great men such as General Creighton Abrams, General John Wickham, Lieutenant General Joe Heiser, General Don Keith, General Richard Thompson, General Carl Vuono, General Gordon Sullivan, Lieutenant General Julius Becton and General Bill Livsey. All were great leaders, coaches, and mentors. Many were visionaries with their frontiers clearly established. All were concerned about their missions and taking care of people.

The first time I was asked about a philosophy of command was in 1970. I was a new battalion commander, a Major with 12 years of service. Since that time, I've been privileged to speak to battalions, brigades, pre-command course classes, Command and General Staff College and War Colleges (Army, Navy, and Air) on the subject. The philosophy evolved over time from observation, experience, reflection, and a desire to be the best I could be and motivate others to do the same.

A good philosophy isn't fixed, immutable and static. Within a basic moral framework, it remains flexible, growing with changing needs. From early experiences as the captain of football teams through Vietnam to Desert Storm, the following thirteen points immersed.

### **Jim's Gems**

- (1) Become a student of your job. When sharing advice with young officers, I always began with, "know more about your job than anyone else knows." Become the expert with study

and added effort. Endeavor to make your job an experience that will hone future skills.

- (2) Develop a work ethic. The Army provides rules of conduct. To some extent, it is up to each Soldier to develop a set of personal values regarding work behavior. A valuable lesson in this area presented itself in the form of a South Vietnamese, Dai Uy (Captain) An, with whom I spent a year. I was 27, a junior Army Captain, and became an advisor to Dai Uy An, a forty-something leader of a South Vietnamese Infantry Battalion. It was a time prior to the onset of full United States involvement in Vietnam. My task was to provide military training, counsel and leadership to a seasoned veteran. Dai Uy An fought with the Viet Minh against the French occupation of his country for 13 years. Following that, he battled against the North Vietnamese and Communism for ten years. The Vietnamese-speaking veteran and the English-speaking youth learned from each other in spite of the language barrier. Working to gain his confidence during the early days strengthened my resolve and personal work ethics. Through the adversities of two tours in Vietnam, my work ethic grew stronger.
- (3) Permit mistakes. This principle seems obvious to me, but I have watched leaders take a “zero defects” approach, i.e. no mistakes are permitted. It’s difficult to agree with that. Perfection comes from those who’ve learned from their mistakes. Those who are terrified to make mistakes usually end up doing nothing. Of course, repeatedly making the same mistake can’t be allowed because it reinforces inaccurate behavior and bad habits. The purpose of training is to find trouble spots, evaluate reasons for mistakes, and learn from them.
- (4) Seek responsibility. This point and the next were developed and added to the list while I was serving as a Lieutenant Colonel and Colonel. I advised young officers not to wait for responsibility to come knocking on their door, but to show initiative and professionalism by seeking responsibility.



- (5) Take responsibility for your actions. It has been my experience that great leaders never step away when things go wrong. They are responsible and accountable for their actions whether the result is good, bad, or neutral. Turning away seldom results in solutions and usually creates more problems.
- (6) Give recognition to subordinates. Everyone who tries, makes an honest effort, deserves recognition. Ribbons and medals have their place, but sometimes a pat on the back or a simple “job well done” is just as important. In 2<sup>nd</sup> Support Command, VII Corps, the command had over 50 companies across Germany. During “Commander’s Call,” I asked company commanders to look for reasons to reward their subordinates. I never understood the tendency of holding a little bit of ribbon so tightly to the chest. Well-earned praise promotes pride in job performance and motivation to succeed.
- (7) Be a good communicator. Developing good skills in both written and oral communication is important for a leader. Early assignments to the Pentagon (1970-74) taught me this. Emphasis was placed on clear, professional, and concise communications. Writing, designing charts, selling topics on paper and in person were daily activities. There were papers from fact sheets, information papers, decision papers, and joint papers. With joint papers, when disagreements occurred, preparing clearly articulated “non-concurrences” was an art unto itself. Action officers lived and died by their writing skills. Preparation for being a commander includes sharpening communication skills. Effective leaders are good communicators.
- (8) Always keep your focus forward. While learning from the past is important, we can spend too much time reviewing past successes and failures. Find a way to learn from experiences and move on. Focus on the next milestone, the next step. Always try to stay one step ahead.

- (9) Take care of your people. A principle taught in every military school from basic infantry courses to the War College is “look after the welfare of your people” or “take care of your people.” It is so important and speaks for itself.
- (10) Take care of yourself. A leader’s effectiveness is enriched by a solid foundation of good mental and physical health. It’s difficult to take care of others if you haven’t taken care of yourself. A sound physical fitness program will keep the body able to work long hours and survive the stress of the battlefield as well as the stress of serving at the Pentagon. It was this concept that led to the origin of the Pentagon Officers Athletic Club.
- (11) Keep yourself spiritually sound. Drifting late into my leadership philosophy was a principle regarding spirituality. It evolved from experiences with officers who had moral and ethical problems. Officers need to have their houses in order, for their sake and those looking to them for guidance and leadership. All officers, even Lieutenants and Captains, live in glass houses. Strive to keep yourself spiritually sound.
- (12) Take care of your family. At one point in my career, I had young Soldiers and officers scattered all across Germany. That experience taught me the importance of “taking care of family.” I’m sure there is a direct link between wartime readiness (certainly to peacetime readiness) and the quality of life of one’s family. When the spouse and children are well cared for, the Soldier does a better job. In 1958 when I came into the Army, only three or four members of my platoon were married. Approximately 15 to 20 percent in 1959 in my first company were married. In 1990, over 50 percent of the Army personnel were married. Family has become an important issue for today’s Army.
- (13) Have fun. The Army is a lot of fun. Laughter is not only good for the soul, it’s good for morale, and it improves physical health. Humor is an invaluable communication tool and an effective disarmer in difficult situations. Believe it or not, professionalism and being true to your personal values

helps make the Army fun. A professional and responsible Soldier is more confident and comfortable with himself. Find joy in your work, your friends, your family, your life.

This command philosophy was built from having wonderful role models, especially the principles involving work ethic, taking and seeking responsibility. Lieutenant General Joseph M. Heiser, Jr. was a terrific role model, particularly when it came to work ethics. Heiser was the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics (DCSLOG) during the Vietnam War from 1969 to 1973. Twenty years in the future, I would hold the DCSLOG position. I was a new Lieutenant Colonel just returning from Vietnam, and he was the senior Army logistician, a Lieutenant General. He seemed to take me under his wing. On several occasions, I was what he called his “chart flipper.” This was in the days of “Vu-graphs.”

One day as we departed for Fort McNair and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF), he said to grab all the vu-graphs. That was over 80 vu-graphs. Typical of his style of presentations, he would judge his audience and decide on the spot what to present to the ICAF students. I was in the projection booth and he would say from the stage, “Jimmy, let’s talk about ALOC.” That meant find the vu-graph on Air Lines of Communications and display it. Being a person who tried to always be prepared, this off the cuff manner of operating was unnerving. I would scramble through 80 vu-graphs and find the ALOC chart. In some interesting ways, the experience was almost as stressful as Vietnam. A breath-robbing state of panic would set in until I found it.

Lieutenant General Heiser never knew what pandemonium this caused, and I hope the students didn’t either. Organizing the vu-graphs with a labeling system of yellow “stick-on” notes finally relieved the pain. Because of his ad hoc style, the students loved his presentations.

Major General Henry R. Del Mar also taught strong work ethics by example. In 1970, I was in Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam. I was puzzled as to when this new Brigadier General Del Mar slept. It seemed that seven days a week he could be found down on one of the piers or port facilities at 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning. One day, he

selected the Soldier that was my driver to drive him. So my driver became his driver. After that happened, my new driver would get a call from my old driver with the report, "We're on our way to a certain place." General Del Mar then wondered when *I* slept because no matter the time, I was always there when he arrived. During those times, the old driver was jokingly referred to as my "CIA/KGB agent".

Family Action Meetings, created in 1980-1981 for VII Corps by General Becton and his wife Louise, gave birth to the Family Action Program. It was a program designed to help improve Army life for families. Mrs. Becton was asked to return to Washington to help organize one of the first Army Family Action Plan meetings. It came at a time when the Army had yet to crack the code on better services, PX (Post Exchange) facilities, commissaries, and quality of life programs. Through the hard work of General Frederic J. Kroesen and Mrs. Kroesen, General George S. Blanchard and Mrs. Blanchard, Lieutenant General Julius W. Becton, Jr. and Mrs. Becton and General William J. Livsey and Mrs. Livsey, family services, facilities and programs grew and were enriched. Programs such as these underscored the importance of "taking care of your family".

A multitude of good communicators crossed my path, far too many to name. The Action Officers at the old U.S. Strike Command and the Pentagon were among the most articulate and best at briefing I've ever experienced. When I became the logistics (contingency plans) briefing officer in XVIII Airborne Corps, it was important to deliver concise, articulate reports. I was constantly looking for techniques and ways to become a better communicator.

Part of the training program for new Brigadier Generals involved a class on participation for press conferences. It was part of a Public Affairs Program and was a valuable learning experience. A mock press conference using civilians as media and audience was taped. We practiced answering questions and giving briefings. Reviewing the video allowed us the opportunity to critique ourselves. It was an eye-opener and gave me lots of significant feedback. It was important experience and practice for students of communication techniques. Much later, it served me well when I found myself in front of over 20 news media from the major networks reporting on the Army's new battle dress uniform. The uniform wasn't a smashing success and the

news conference was difficult. It was then I gained a higher level of appreciation for the Public Affairs Program. Becoming a “good communicator” can’t be emphasized enough.

Lastly, as advice for young officers, visit your men as often as possible and never underestimate the importance of the Sergeant Major. The Sergeant Major is the barometer in any headquarters or staff. Sergeant Major Michael B. Pierce was with me at Depot Systems Command and Army Materiel Command. Sergeant Majors Head and Tucker were with me during 2<sup>nd</sup> Support Command in VII Corps. What valuable Soldiers these men were. They managed the authority and responsibilities handed them with professionalism and courage.

There is no substitute for visiting with young Soldiers. A strong leader stays in touch, emphasizes Soldier-related programs, and gets out to see his Soldiers. I tried to do this. At one point, I was the senior staff officer for logistics in the Army Staff in the Pentagon and endeavored to visit all 18 divisions as often as possible. President Abraham Lincoln called it “management by walking around.” During the Civil War, he spent almost half his time out of the office, in field locations visiting with Union forces. So much can be learned from visiting with Soldiers in the field. They’re the foundation of our Army. If you want to know what’s going on, ask a Soldier.



## *Appendix B*

### **Pat's Pearls**

As I look back on my life in the Army, many changes have occurred for Army spouses and families. During the early years, I was an exception to the norm among the Army wives. I was a working wife and mother. Few women had military careers in the fifties, sixties, and seventies, and most Army wives didn't work. A career was difficult with the multiple moves, but with my particular career, I always seemed to find work no matter where we were. Being a teacher was an important part of my life's purpose, happiness, and fulfillment, and my paycheck was a necessary component to the family budget during our first few Army years. While my family always came first, my work was a special and important secondary role.

Somehow I managed it all, largely with valuable assistance from friends, family, and Jim when he was home. It wasn't easy to keep all those obligatory balls in the air, but I even managed to make most of the "Wives Club" meetings and participate in volunteer projects. For the sake of history, the Army Wives Seal bears mentioning.

In 1976, Ida True Terry designed a seal honoring Army wives. Here is her description of that seal.<sup>44</sup>

The eagle at the top of the circle represents the Army Wife, who in protecting her nest, also protects the flag and the future it represents. Alert and poised, she is ready to defend either when the need arises.

As the ultimate goal of her husband's profession is peace, so is it hers. The olive branch held by the eagle represents this peace; her hope for an end to wars for her husband and her children.

The lyre, symbol of harmony, gentility and romance, surrounds the four phases of her life that she holds dear.

The cradle represents her children, her Mother – her own Motherhood.

The sheaf of wheat represents the staples and stability she provides for her family – her duty.

The grapes represent the social life, the wine, fun, sense of humor – her lighter side.

The open book represents her individuality and personal self-fulfillment thru knowledge and wisdom. The person she is and becomes—her personal self.

The double circle enclosing all is her wedding band, symbol of eternity and never ending love. This circle is broken only by the eagle, here a symbol of her duty to country. For the Army Wife, the break in the circle represents the many separations and the possible ultimate sacrifice.

Recently, I received an essay on the lives of “Military Spouses”<sup>45</sup> that beautifully articulates the day-to-day existence of our special lives. The author points to the fact that most military spouses and their families don’t consider themselves different from other families. Yet, while most spouses get married and look forward to building equity in a home and putting down family roots, the military spouse knows they’ll be living in base housing or renting, and their roots must be short so they can be transplanted easily and frequently.

Other spouses say good-bye to their loved ones for a business trip, knowing they won’t see them for a week. Military spouses say good-bye to their deploying spouses and know they won’t see them for months or for a year. We admit it’s lonely, but we survive, become very self-sufficient, and form helping friendships and lasting bonds with fellow military spouses. Other spouses can count on participation in special events, birthdays, anniversaries, concerts, football games, graduation, and even the birth of a child. Military spouses count on each other with the foremost thought that service to their country has to come first if freedom is to survive.<sup>46</sup>

I was asked to offer my thoughts and suggestions for spouses new to the military. It goes without saying that spouses of military personnel lead a different life from the usual family fare. We aren’t



the Cleavers or the Huckstables, living in the same house year after year with our children going to the same schools from kindergarten through graduation. While other spouses are concerned about their child becoming class president or playing first string football, military spouses worry whether their child will be accepted in yet another school, and whether that school will be the least effective in the new city's school system.

Be prepared for a mobile life of constant transplants. However, the sacrifices are for the ultimate prize, our country's right to live freely under a democracy that gives us a voice in how we govern ourselves. The good friends gathered along the way, and the knowledge that as military spouses and children we too are serving our country, make the sacrifices worthwhile. Opportunities for enrichment abound in the exposure to different cultures and different parts of our own country. We have the choice to enhance our lives each day through the activities we pursue. There have been days when my military spouse's life handed me a pile of chicken poop, and I had to stare long and hard at our country's flag, remind myself what we were all doing in this situation, and get busy making some chicken salad out of the mess. Looking back, the rewards far outweigh the messes.

When we first entered the Army in 1958, expectations and services for spouses were very different. The 1957 edition of *The Officer's Guide* was our rulebook and reference for everything military. I'm not sure it had changed much since it was written in 1930. With the exception of advice on the Wives' and Women's Clubs, how to dress, and how to conduct ourselves in social situations, it addressed every facet of the military person's mode of operation. Times have changed, and the military has changed with the times, now offering a wide array of services and assistance for military families. Instead of rules about always wearing gloves, hose, and hats to social affairs, families are provided services that offer assistance with housing, schooling, enrichment activities, and childcare.

The following are my ten suggestions for finding balance and a sense of peace and belonging as a military spouse.

- (1) The family comes FIRST.

- (2) Be your own person; pursue your own desires, career, etc. I taught for over 20 years around the world and had eight different state teaching certificates. I then became a real estate agent in Virginia. Developing your own hobbies and pursuits keeps you interested, interesting, and wards off loneliness.
- (3) Within two days of arriving at your new quarters/home, have some semblance of “order” in at least one room. This was important during our 25 moves in 36 years in the Army.
- (4) After arrival at your new post, take a walking tour of the new neighborhood with your children. We always met someone from our Army family that we had known before.
- (5) Be a volunteer in your Army Post community programs and projects. Junior enlisted Soldiers and their families will always need your assistance.
- (6) Let the children be involved in decorating your new home, especially their own rooms. Be sure that they have all their familiar toys in the same place as their last room.
- (7) Keep in contact with your old friends. Many life long friends are made in Army life. You may not see them for years, but they are just like family.
- (8) Seek advice from wives and family members at the new post as to what services are available. It’s important to learn what is expected of new wives.
- (9) Invite your new neighbors over within a couple of weeks. A potluck or backyard cook-out is an easy way to say hello to everyone.
- (10) Relax and have fun. Don’t be afraid to make mistakes.

In conclusion, I’d like to share a story about a dish that became known as “Pat Ross Soup.”

When we were in college at Henderson and living in Garrett Hall, I began making a beef and vegetable soup almost every week. Our resources were meager, and this was one of many ways to stretch our few dollars. It consisted of ground beef (the cheaper the better) and whatever left over vegetables were in the refrigerator: tomatoes, tomato sauce, tomato paste, one can of corn, one can of mixed veggies, onion, spices etc. And “voila,” Pat Ross Soup. This makes a huge pot of soup that can be reheated for days. In fact, it just keeps getting better. During Jim’s college football years, the soup seemed to give him that boost he needed. It was cheap and certainly kept us from starvation.

When we were in Hawaii, Duane and Jan Smith and their boys were our best friends. In 1961, she asked me to share the recipe with her. About 30 years later, we attended Duane’s retirement ceremony at Corpus Christi Army Depot. When he introduced Jim and me as long time friends, he held up a frayed 3x5-index card on which I’d written the soup recipe. Duane’s comment was, “It just keeps getting better.” Most cookbooks from places we have lived include a recipe for “Pat Ross Soup.”



## *Appendix C*

### **Family**

My ancestral roots rest in a south central Arkansas area that is designated by a State Historical Marker declaring, “This was the Ross settlement.” Wandering through the trees near Okalona, evidence of the 1800’s settlement of homes can be seen in the many house foundations that remain and the remnants of a relatively large cemetery with a majority of the names being Ross.

It is customary for the Army to ask retiring Generals to write their memoirs. The request came with an outline to assist in organizing thoughts. The first section of my life story was to address the early years, the formative years, the years that shaped my character and led me to a career in the military. I’ve taken advantage of that request to include a bit about my family tree.

The journey into the family’s past began years ago. Perhaps I became interested in our family genealogy because it seemed we moved every year during my early childhood; too quickly to establish roots. By third grade, when we settled near Curtis, Arkansas, I’d attended five different schools.

History is a passion of mine and the quest for our family’s personal history became a fascinating hobby. The root system of our particular Ross family tree is extensive and reaches across the Atlantic to northern Scotland and southern Ireland. My brother Bob and I made an effort to trace our lineage back as far as possible and in so doing learned of our earliest traceable ancestor, David Ross, the treasurer of Inverchasley, Scotland, around 1708. In the early 1700,’s the family migrated to America, along with seven other Scotch-Irish families, and settled in Fluvanna County, just south of Charlottesville, Virginia.

One of David’s descendants, David Ross (9/18/1777) was our first ancestor with a documented military life. In the 1700’s, it was customary for the “first” son to be named for his father. David Ross of Virginia served as a Private in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War in 1777. He was a quartermaster Soldier who provided support for the Army. David later became a member of the

House of Delegates from Fluvanna County from 1781 to 1783. He owned land and stores in several counties. David's wife, Susan Sutherland, was a remarkable trooper in her own right, having thirteen children and living to the age of 100. Susan experienced both the Revolutionary and Civil Wars.

The family migrated by covered wagon from Virginia to the Black Horse Creek area of South Carolina, to Logan County Kentucky, to Dallas County Alabama, and finally to what became known as "Ross Settlement" in southern Arkansas. Peter Ross (9/18/1770) and his son Andrew Jackson Ross (9/25/1814) owned land and were farmers and cattlemen.

A Civil War hero was also among the Ross clan. Jesse Arendale Ross (11/26/1838) was one of five Rosses in several Arkansas regiments. He was promoted from Private to Major with the 4<sup>th</sup> Arkansas Regiment, fought in the battles at Fannington, Missouri; Oak Hills, Missouri; Bragg's Raid in Tennessee and Kentucky; Richmond, Kentucky; Murfreesboro, Tennessee; and the Battle of Chickamauga in Georgia. Wounded twice, seriously at the Battle of Peach Tree Creek in July 1864, Jesse was awarded a large grant of land in southern Arkansas at the conclusion of the Civil War.

Jesse Ross and I shared a great-great-great grandfather. My dad always linked the success and prosperity of that branch of the family with the land grant Jesse had been given some 80 years before. He'd comment on their occupations as doctors, lawyers, and community leaders, and attribute that to the land Jesse passed on to them. As a small child, I bought that line of reasoning for a time because our family doctor was Dr. Wallace Ross, a descendant of Jesse.

Every family, it seems, has a black sheep or two, and ours is no exception. My great grandfather, Robert Carroll Ross (8/8/1847) who was also known as "Bob Jack," must have had a nasty temper or been pushed beyond his otherwise even-tempered limit. A cattleman, farmer and landowner, Bob Jack got into a dispute with a neighbor that resulted in a shootout. Bob Jack won the shootout, killed his neighbor, and served five years in a Texas penitentiary for the deed. The Arkansas Territory had no federal judge in south Arkansas. Julia Crawley (7/7/1853), his wife of 34 years, bore nine children and spent

the time her husband was in prison teaching their offspring to read and write. Bob Jack's life came to a tragic end. He drowned in the flooded Ouachita River herding cattle in Clark County, Arkansas, on February 26, 1903.

William Jackson Ross (6/22/1873), my paternal grandfather, who was also known as "Jack," married Alice Bourland (4/1/1874) in Clark County on March 4, 1901. Jack was a railroad depot agent and owned a two-story hotel in Curtis, Arkansas. Jack and Alice had four children; two died in infancy. Horace Eugene and Robert Dale were the two surviving children. Alice and Jack were married 11 years. Jack died of Black Fever (malaria) and an ensuing surgery at 39 years of age.

My father, Horace Eugene Ross (12/2/1903) was born in Felsenthal (Union County), Arkansas. He was eight years old when his father died. Two of his mother Alice's sisters and one brother helped raise Horace and his younger brother, Robert. Horace married my mother Lucile (9/17/1904) of Delight, Arkansas, on February 1, 1926. He followed the oil "Boom Town" industry in Arkansas, Texas, and Louisiana as a roustabout, pumper, pipe fitter, and steamfitter, later moving to Curtis, Arkansas. Horace was very proud of the days he worked for Reynolds Aluminum Plant at Gum Springs, Arkansas. He worked there 20 years and owned a grocery store near Curtis. A homemaker and "jack of all trades," Lucile ran the family grocery while Horace was at work.

It was my good fortune to live near my grandparents. My paternal grandmother, Alice Bourland Ross, having lost her husband quite early in their marriage, lived with her two sisters, in Arkadelphia. As a child, I remember my great aunt, Lizzie Eugenia Bourland McAllister, whom we called Aunt Jean, talking about how the Bourland family came to Arkansas from Alabama. She was in her eighties when I was a kid, and she'd gather the kids around and tell us stories. She told us that, when they made the long trip in wagons from Alabama, Arkansas was a frontier, and Oklahoma was a territory. Their mother's maiden name was Bates. One of Aunt Jean's stories spoke of a close family friend during the civil war period named Samuel Mudd. I later learned that Dr. Samuel Mudd was the doctor who treated John Wilkes Booth

after he shot President Abraham Lincoln at Ford's Theater in Washington, D.C.

The lineage of Soldiering flows through the Bourland family as it does the Ross family. Dr. J.P. Bourland's grandfather, Dewbart Bourland, who was probably born in Ireland and one of the early settlers of Franklin County Arkansas, was a Soldier in the War of 1812 and, for a time, a judge of Franklin County. J.P. Bourland, who was studying pharmacy when the Civil War began, joined Company B, First Arkansas Infantry, and served one year in the Army of Virginia, participating in the battle at Manassas. He was afterward transferred to the Army of Tennessee, and was wounded at the bloody combat at Shiloh. After spending some time in the quartermaster's department, he was transferred to the ordnance department, in which he served until the close of hostilities. Other important engagements in which he participated were Corinth, Mississippi; Perryville, Kentucky; Murfreesboro, Tennessee; Chickamauga, and the engagements of the Atlanta campaign. He then returned with Hood into Tennessee, and took part in the engagements at Franklin and Nashville. He surrendered in South Carolina in the month of April 1865, and at once went to Mississippi, where he married Melverta Bates.

Aunt Jean's brother, also an offspring of Dr. J. P. Bourland, was Samuel Bourland, who followed in his father's footsteps and became a doctor. The children of J.P. and Melverta Bourland lived on a farm in Clark County, Arkansas, and had a planing mill. Dr. Sam Bourland was one of the few doctors in south Arkansas in the late 1800's and early 1900's. He practiced medicine seven days a week, traveling from patient to patient in a horse drawn buggy. He delivered babies, pulled teeth, performed surgery, and prepared the dead for burial.

I also learned from Aunt Jean's stories and my own research about Arkansas's role in the Civil War. I had an old 1862 photo of a Confederate company standing in the downtown area of Arkadelphia. It was part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Arkansas Infantry Regiment that fought at Chancellorsville, Antietam, and Gettysburg. The 3<sup>rd</sup> normally fought in Hood's division. In several books, General Hood or "Stonewall" Jackson talks about the Arkansas regiment always leading the foot marches because they were so fast on foot and accurate sharpshooters. Some of the sharpshooters in Devils Den were no doubt from the



Arkansas regiment. I've stood where the 3<sup>rd</sup> Arkansas was at Gettysburg, where they were at Antietam, and also at Chancellorsville.

One of my distant cousins, Jane Ross of Arkadelphia, is a historian and can be credited for the strong historical file on the Arkansas Ross family. I've done genealogical research on our family since about 1981, and Jane has been a significant help.

The study of tracing my ancestry is a passion because of the great sense of family it provides. But nothing can compare with the importance of my immediate family. Pat is my best friend and buddy. During our life together, she has been my most severe critic and my biggest cheerleader. Army marriages aren't easy. The frequent separations are challenging, to say the least, and certainly, the Vietnam and Thailand years were extremely difficult. Our relationship extends back to junior high and forward through forty-plus years of a marriage that survived a roller coaster ride of a career. She was a Soldier right along with me enabling me to serve the country while she took care of the family and contributed thousands of hours to Army Community Service. In Germany, when I was 2<sup>nd</sup> Support Commander, she was a member of 13 different activities, boards, and advisory groups. It's been hectic, elating, sad, exciting, gut wrenching, humorous, educational, traumatizing, and rewarding. Through it all, she's been the constant companion by my side. What a great lady!

My choice of career was exceptionally hard on Sabra, our first-born. She experienced all the moves and the trials of the early years. In spite of a nomadic childhood, she loved our time in Florida, the Junior Olympics swimming period, and many features of being in an Army family. But once she attended the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, married, and moved to Little Rock, she stayed put. Sabra likes staying in one place.

Some of Sabra's favorite childhood memories include graduating from kindergarten in Hawaii. "Wearing that cap and gown! Wow, I thought I was all grown up. I also remember the sea and surf almost taking away my baby sister. When I was in second grade, my hero, Dad, was sent to Vietnam. Getting to talk to you on the telephone was the biggest treat, like a walkie-talkie, 'over and out.' I'll never forget going to meet you and Mom at the hotel to pick you up after you'd

been gone a year. You looked so great to me, and I'd missed you so much. Those times we would get in the floor with our pillows, blankets, and big bowl of popcorn to watch *The Wizard of Oz* or a scary movie two inches from the TV. The family 'together' times were the best."

Dede, like Sabra, loved our time in Tampa. She adjusted easily with every move except one. Dede had so much trouble with our move to San Francisco in her sophomore year of high school that she cried for six weeks. Once we found the right school for her, she was once again our happy Army kid. She married Danny Henson, now a retired (2002) Lieutenant Colonel, who was working in the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command and later with the Special Operations Command. He is currently with USAA Insurance in Tampa, Florida. Dede is a physical therapist assistant in Tampa and stays very busy raising her children.

Dede remembers, "On April 19, 1969, Tony was born, and you shipped out for Vietnam a few weeks later. I know that must have been really hard on you, knowing you would be missing so much of that first year of Tony's life. I remember clearly that fall or winter when Mom left to meet you in Hawaii for your R&R. She was so excited to be reunited with you! Sabra and I very much wanted to go, and just couldn't understand why the Army wouldn't send us too. But Mom came home and told us all about how you were and that you would be back home soon. She was a much braver Army wife than I think I could have been in the same situation. You did come home, much thinner than when you left, but we were all so proud of you and glad to have you with us. I truly feel blessed growing up with so many experiences during my childhood years of moving to different states, seeing so much of the country. Guess I enjoyed it so much, I married a wonderful man that took me through another 20 years of military life."

Tony was the only one of our children at home when we went to Germany. He thrived on touring Europe, playing baseball, basketball, and soccer, and learning the German language. Involvement in sports advanced his fluency in German, especially some four-letter words. I got a call from Tony one day when he was in ROTC in college. He said, "Dad, I've been in the Army for 20 years. I think that's enough.

I'd rather do something else." And he dropped out of ROTC, decided against an Army career, and has never looked back. After graduating from college, Tony worked for Lockheed Martin where he met Cyndee, his wife. They have two children Savannah, born June 6, 1993, and Sarah, born October 22, 1995. He is now with KPMG as a senior defense consultant. As fate would have it, his job often takes him to the Pentagon.

Looking back on his childhood in the Army, Tony said, "When we moved to San Francisco, I remember having a view of the Golden Gate Bridge from my bedroom window in our home at Fort Mason. Being a small child, I didn't realize how special that was until I grew older. I loved meeting your helicopter and walking you back to your office at Camp King. Germany gave me the opportunity to learn the German language. Many of the teachers at my school provided me the basics of the language. As our family returned from Germany to the States, I continued to take German during my high school years. All the places we visited in Europe provided a glimpse of a variety of life styles and each county's history. I didn't realize it then, but each trip was an unusual and exceptional education."

Like most Army "brats," my children can walk into any room and have no problem mixing with people. They can start a conversation with anyone and knowledgably carry on a discussion on almost any topic. Exposure to diverse cultures and a myriad of different life styles evoked an early maturity in all three.

After Tony's graduation from college, he and I were involved in a conversation with a group, and someone asked him, "Tony, where are you from?"

Tony looked at me and said, "Dad, where are we from?"

Hard question. After 25 Army moves, I guess I'd have to say we're from the United States of America. I'm fortunate to have the family with which I was blessed and will be eternally grateful they granted me the honor of choosing a career that let me serve this country for which I have the utmost respect and am grateful to call home.



## *Endnotes*

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<sup>1</sup> The 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion with personnel of Japanese ancestry from the Hawaiian National Guard was activated in June of 1942, just seven months after Japan, their mother country, bombed the naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. In the fall of 1943, they fought in southern Italy with the 34<sup>th</sup> and later in the Anzio and Casino campaigns. Later they joined another Japanese American unit, becoming the 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT. The combined unit participated in the drive from Rome to the Arno River and supported the 36<sup>th</sup> during heavy fighting in the Vosges Mountains in France, before returning to Italy for the drive against the Gothic Line.

The honors bestowed upon these men speak to their bravery and courageous loyalty to their adopted country, the USA. The 100<sup>th</sup> received three Presidential Unit Citations, one separately, two with the 442<sup>nd</sup>. Four more citations were earned by other components of the 442<sup>nd</sup>, making a total of seven shared. One Asian-American from the group received the Medal of Honor during the war. In June of 2000, 20 veterans of that group received the Medal of Honor. In all, the Soldiers of the 100<sup>th</sup>/442<sup>nd</sup> were given 9,486 Purple Hearts. Amazing service to their country!

<sup>2</sup>Wilkinson, Charles Burnham (Bud) Wilkinson, was born in Minneapolis, Minn. in 1916. He was an all-around athlete at the Univ. of Minnesota and later was assistant football coach at Syracuse University and the University of Minnesota before entering the U.S. Navy in 1943. He became assistant coach at the University of Oklahoma in 1945 and head coach in 1947. His teams won 31 consecutive games in 1948-51, and in 1953-57, they won 47 consecutive games, the longest winning streak in modern football history. Wilkinson was College Coach of the Year in 1949, and his speedy Oklahoma teams were national champions in 1950, 1955, and 1956. From 1961 to 1964, he was head of President Kennedy's youth fitness program. He coached the professional St. Louis Cardinals (1978-1979) but left after winning just 11 of 32 games. Wilkinson died in 1994. (infoplease.com, Encyclopedia)

<sup>3</sup> The 25<sup>th</sup> was activated on October 1, 1941, just before the attack on Pearl Harbor, at Schofield Barracks, Territory of Hawaii. The majority of its assigned components had served for decades with the Hawaiian Division, which had been activated in 1921. They were credited for participation in four campaigns of the Asian-Pacific Theaters during World War II. In 1950, they rushed to defend South Korea, following the surprise invasion by the North Koreans. The 25<sup>th</sup> greatly distinguished itself in 37 months of combat in Korea, after which it returned to Schofield Barracks to its original mission of jungle warfare and stressed counter-guerilla operations.

<sup>4</sup> It is the oldest government building in Hawaii, completed in 1874 as a palace for the reigning king, Kamehameha. A statue of Kamehameha graces the entrance of the building, which today is the home of the Supreme Court of Hawaii. Kamehameha, the Hawaiian king who is credited with uniting the Hawaiian Islands in the late 1800's and promoting peace and harmony among the islands, is a favorite of the Hawaiian people.

<sup>5</sup> It was again exciting to be entering a battle group with such a marvelous past. Their distinctive insignia is a black oblong background with a raised wolf's head in gold above the motto, *Nec Aspera Terrent*, "Frightened by No Difficulties." The wolf's head commemorates the regiment's outstanding service in Siberia. The "Wolfhounds," who were based in the Philippines, fought in Russia in the Siberian American Expeditionary Force of 1918-1919. They were literally the last American unit to fight in Russia.

<sup>6</sup> The Bay of Pigs Invasion was an unsuccessful attempt in 1961 to overthrow the government of the Cuban premier Fidel Castro by United States-backed Cuban exiles. Eisenhower had broken off diplomatic relations with Cuba in January of 1961. On April 17, armed with U.S. weapons, about 1300 exiles landed at Bahia de Cochinos (Bay of Pigs) intending to cross the island of Havana and reclaim their country. Castro's army stopped them in two days. When the fighting ended 90 men had been killed and the rest were prisoners. The failure was a serious embarrassment to the Kennedy administration.

<sup>7</sup> The fort, opened in 1941, is named after William Bowen Campbell, a statesman and Brigadier General in the United States Volunteers during the Civil War. The 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne "Screaming Eagles," stationed at Fort Campbell, have the distinction of being the only Air Assault Division in the world. They have a rich history and the shoulder patch is based on a Civil War tradition of Wisconsin. The eagle alludes to "old Abe," an eagle carried into combat by one of the regiments of the old "Iron Brigade" from the state of Wisconsin.

<sup>8</sup> In the famed Korean incident, Lieutenant Burke's company was pinned under intense enemy fire. He made lone charges on two bunkers, killing the crews. He threw grenades at the third bunker while catching several enemy grenades in midair and hurling them back at the opposition. Then his men overran the position, but were again pinned down by fire. Lieutenant Burke secured and set-up a light machine gun, pouring crippling fire into the ranks of the enemy, killing approximately 75. Although wounded, he ordered more ammunition and continued firing. Cradling the weapon, he led his men forward killing 25 of the retreating Soldiers. None of his small band of 35 Soldiers were killed. When the firing stopped, and the objective was secure, Burke had killed 100 of the enemy.

Like Alvin York in World War I and Audie Murphy in World War II, Scooter Burke was a rare breed of hero whose name was known only to the band of brothers. In the late eighties, his wartime exploits were featured on an episode of *Heroes* on A&E. His military decorations included the Distinguished Service Medal, the Distinguished Service Cross, the Silver Star, three Bronze Stars, four Army Commendation medals, the Joint Service Commendation, and five Purple Hearts. In 1978, he retired as chief Army liaison to the House of Representatives.

<sup>9</sup> Long after the war, General Moore went to North Vietnam and talked with his opposing regimental counterparts from the battle. Senior General Vo Nguyen Giap, Lt. Gen. Nguyen Huu An, and others, spent hours in cordial, professional meetings,

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generously sharing diaries, maps, and information about the battle. General Moore learned much about combat strategies from their point of view. Just as the Ia Drang Alumni in the U.S. have dinner before Veterans' day in Washington and a lunch where the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division Association holds its reunion each summer, old Vietnamese Soldiers gather at coffeehouses to talk among themselves and talk about their days in the Ia Drang. Comrades find pleasure, comfort, and healing in each other's company.

<sup>10</sup> Lieutenant General Harold G. Moore (Ret.) and Joseph L. Galloway, *We Were Soldiers Once . . . And Young* (New York: Random House, 1992), p. 406.

<sup>11</sup> General Bruce Palmer, Jr., commanded U.S. troops deployed to the Dominican Republic in 1965. Palmer commanded the XVIII Airborne Corps (1965-1967), prior to becoming the Deputy Commanding General, United States Army, Vietnam, in 1967. He served as Vice Chief of Staff (1968-1972) and as Acting Chief of Staff (July-October 1972). He has written two books: *The 25 Year War: America's Military Role in Vietnam* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1990), and *Intervention in the Caribbean: The Dominican Crisis of 1965* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1989)

<sup>12</sup> Fort Bragg came into existence in 1918 and was named for Confederate General Braxton Bragg, an artillery officer and North Carolinian. All five airborne divisions of World War II were trained at Fort Bragg. Upon its return from Europe, the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division was assigned there, and in 1951, the XVIII Airborne Corps was reactivated there, causing Fort Bragg to become known as the "Home of the Airborne." Today Fort Bragg and nearby Pope Air Force Base form one of the largest military complexes in the world. Fort Bragg is a rapid deployment post with a mission of being ready to fight anywhere in the world within 18 hours.

<sup>13</sup> The XVIII Airborne Corps was originally activated as the II Armored Corps at Camp Polk, Louisiana, January 17, 1942. It was re-designated XVIII Corps October 9, 1943 at the Presidio of Monterey, California. On August 25, 1944, the Corps celebrated its birthday, added the blue airborne tab at Orbourne, St. George, England, and assumed command of the 82<sup>nd</sup> and 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Divisions. Within a month, Major General Matthew B. Ridgway, the first Corps Commander, sent his men into action in Operation Market Garden, the Allied invasion of the Netherlands during World War II.

Today, the XVIII Airborne is the Army's largest war-fighting organization, the only airborne corps in the defense establishment of the U.S., and exercises control over approximately 88,000 Soldiers. The Corps operational tempo remains the highest in the Army, and its role as a quick reaction force has been the key to success in numerous crises.

<sup>14</sup> The Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal is given for non-combat operations such as the Dominican Republic Operation from April 18, 1965 to September 21, 1966.

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<sup>15</sup> Since 1966, a series of wayside pedestals at 17 historic sites have been erected on the fort. Each stone pedestal displays beautiful artwork and a narrative, as well as a recording, explaining the historical significance of the site.

It was from Fort Leavenworth that traders and wagon trains began their long journeys west in the mid 1800's. The army camp that Henry Leavenworth began in May of 1827 was the first settlement in Kansas territory and the oldest active Army post west of the Mississippi River. Huge corrals and supply camps were located nearby; a branch of the Oregon Trail led up steep trails away from the Missouri River; and a branch of the Santa Fe Trail led away from the post. Early Soldiers protected wagon trains hauling supplies over the trails as far west as the Pacific Ocean.

During the Civil War, the regular forces from Camp Lincoln at Leavenworth formed the foundation on which volunteer forces were built. The "Buffalo Soldiers," the first Black regiments which were formed and trained at Fort Leavenworth, earned praise and repeated honors for battles such as the one fought in Cuba along side Theodore Roosevelt and his Rough Riders in 1898. In 1874, the fort housed a U.S. Disciplinary Barracks, a military prison, and in 1882, the Army established the "School of Application for Cavalry and Infantry" at the post. This school was the forerunner of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff Officers' Course, which I would be attending for the coming year.

<sup>16</sup> Maxwell Reid Thurman was promoted to Brigadier General in 1975. General Thurman served as Vice Chief of Staff (1983-1987), Commanding General, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (1987-1989), and Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Southern Command (1989-1990) during "Operation Just Cause."

<sup>17</sup> Lieutenant General Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., graduated from West Point in 1936, joining his father as only the second African American officer in the Regular Army. With his promotion to Brigadier General, Davis became the first Black to earn a star in the U.S. Air Force. He retired as a Lieutenant General in 1970. His father, Benjamin Oliver Davis, Sr., was the first African American general officer in the Regular Army and in the U.S. Armed Forces. He joined the military as a volunteer in 1898 during the War with Spain, was mustered out, and enlisted as a Private in the Regular Army in 1899. He was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant of Cavalry in the Regular Army in 1901. He was promoted to Brigadier General in 1940.

<sup>18</sup> The History Place, Great Speeches Collection, "Robert F. Kennedy on the Death of Martin Luther King," <http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/rfk.htm>.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Local villages celebrate for an entire week, and the excitement begins many weeks prior to that. They view the lunar, celestial event as a new opportunity to start again, to renew and celebrate their lives. (In the United States, this festival is usually called "Chinese New Year.") It seemed very similar to our New Year's celebration in the United States, which involves setting goals for the New Year. It was a time for families to gather with gift giving, folk dances in traditional costumes, traditional



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food (one was a sticky rice with beans and pork dish), musical performances, and fireworks. The fireworks always made the U.S. Army nervous. Was this a Viet Cong or North Vietnamese Army attack, or just part of the celebration? A beauty pageant was held in Saigon during Tet to select the Vietnamese beauty of the year, Miss Saigon. Even those of us visiting from outside the country would be brought into the festivities and given gifts.

<sup>21</sup> General Edward Flanagan was Assistant Division Commander, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, Vietnam, from January 1967 until February 1967 when he became Director, Training Directorate and Special Assistant to the Commander, U.S. Military Command, Vietnam (MACV), until February 1968 when he became Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, III Marine Amphibious Force, U.S. MACV until July 1968. His next stop was Fort Bragg.

<sup>22</sup> General John Hennessey was the Assistant Division Commander, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division, Vietnam, from September 1969 until May 1970 when he became Commanding General, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division, until February 1970.

<sup>23</sup> *The 13<sup>th</sup> Valley*, by John M. Del Vecchio, is a great book that chronicles fighting in the A Shau Valley. Del Vecchio was drafted and sent to Vietnam in 1970 and served as a military combat correspondent for the 101<sup>st</sup>. In 1971, he was awarded a Bronze Star for heroism in ground combat. He is also the author of *Darkness Falls*, *Carry Me Home*, and *For the Sake of All Living Things*.

<sup>24</sup> Since its inception on July 6, 1942, the 10<sup>th</sup> had a proud history of serving as a departure port for men and equipment, first from a military port in San Francisco, and then from Italy to the Southern Campaign against the Axis powers. A special group of 10<sup>th</sup> support port Soldiers was organized to support Operation Dragoon, the invasion of Southern France where they were “uncomfortably close to the front.” The 10<sup>th</sup> continued to operate the port at Leghorn through the end of the war, and was inactivated on January 31, 1947. On August 23, 1954, the 10<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion was reactivated and allotted to the Regular Army. On September 19, 1965, the 10<sup>th</sup> began operating the outposts of Phang Rang and Phan Thiet that supported the Cam Ranh Bay Terminal.

<sup>25</sup> The site that is now Fort Lee, Virginia has a long military history that began during the revolutionary war when a battle between the Tories and the British took place on the land where Fort Lee now stands. Four historical markers indicate where General Grant’s railroad crossed the post during the Civil War. The first Camp Lee, named after General Robert E. Lee, was constructed shortly after the United States declared war on Germany and entered WWI. It became a state mobilization camp and soon after a division training camp. After WWI, it became a game preserve and later portions were incorporated into the National Military Park of Petersburg. The second Camp Lee was constructed in 1941, serving as the center for both advanced and basic training of Quartermaster personnel throughout WWII. After the war, the camp was retained and re-designated as Fort Lee. It is now under the control of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command.

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<sup>26</sup> Physically entering the vast defense building of our nation is overwhelming. The Pentagon consists of five concentric rings connected by ten corridors that run like spokes from the inner to the outer ring. The rings are separated by interior courtyards that provide light. The corridors are 17 and one-half miles long with a building gross square footage of 6,500,000 square feet. There are 3, 800,000 square feet of offices, storage, and concessions. The five-sided center courtyard covers five acres. Now you know why people that work in the Pentagon complain of headaches!

Ground was broken in Arlington, Virginia for the Pentagon on September 11, 1941, exactly 60 years before the September 2001 attack. Since five roads surrounded the site, it was decided that the building should be five sided, thus giving it the name, Pentagon. An architectural continuation of this theme resulted in a building that has five sides, five layers, and five floors above ground. It was completed on January 13, 1942; just 16 months after construction began. Including the outside structures, the building cost 83 million dollars

The complex contains a shopping concourse, numerous snack bars, cafeterias, banks, and a bus platform making it a “city within a city.” The Pentagon is synonymous with our nation’s Department of Defense, and the Defense Post Office there handles 1,200,000 pieces of mail each month.

<sup>27</sup> Creighton Williams Abrams, Jr. was promoted to General in September 1964. He was Acting Vice Chief of Staff and Vice Chief of Staff from August 1964 until April 1967. From Deputy Commander, he became Commander of U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, 1967-1972. He was the Chief of Staff of the Army from October 1972 until his death in September 1974.

<sup>28</sup> Looking into my new assignment, I learned that Fort Mason was established in 1860 as a coastal fortification but is best known as headquarters of the San Francisco Port of Embarkation between 1910 and 1963. During World War II, 1.6 million troops and 23 million tons of cargo passed through the port administered facilities and were ferried to the Pacific Theater through the immense pier and dock system at Lower Fort Mason. During that war, the *New York Times Magazine* commented, “This port has one main commodity to send abroad. It is exporting war.”

Fort Mason played a large role providing relief aid after the great earthquake and fire in 1906. The controversy that surrounded the relief effort had to do with following a chain of command. The massive quake hit San Francisco at 5:13 AM on April 18, 1906, and at 6:30 that morning a messenger arrived at Fort Mason with orders from General Frederick Funston<sup>28</sup>, the Commander of California stationed with his command troops at the Presidio, to send all available troops to report to Mayor Eugene Schmitz at the Hall of Justice. Funston’s direct superior, Major General W. Greely, Division Commander, was in Chicago at the time attending his daughter’s wedding. Both the mayor and Funston were criticized for their actions during the relief effort. By 3:00 PM that day, uncontrolled crowds rushed along the waterfront and into the city, drinking, looting, and refusing to help with fighting fires. This prompted Mayor Schmitz to say to his appointed Committee of Fifty, which was quickly formed to manage relief efforts:

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“Let it be given out that three men have already been shot down without mercy for looting. Let it also be understood that the order has been given to all Soldiers and policemen to do likewise without hesitation in the cases of any and all miscreants who may seek to take advantage of the city’s awful misfortune.”

Neither Funston nor Schmitz had the authority to take many of the actions they took during that time. Funston took command of both local relief and law enforcement and, in the process, directed the dynamiting of buildings to create firebreaks. In spite of their lack of state and national authority, both men were instrumental in the establishment of communications, sanitation, medical facilities, housing, and reestablishing general order in a destroyed and chaotic city. They were both chastised for their actions and, at the same time, given credit for saving San Francisco. General Funston’s wire to the War Department at 8:30 PM on April 20 advised that Fort Mason had been saved, some looters had been shot, and that most casualties were in the poorer district south of Market Street. He stated that not many had been killed in the better portion of the city. Again, Funston’s choice of words left something to be desired.

<sup>29</sup> The camp has a long and fascinating past, beginning about 1936, the year of my birth. Prior to World War II, Camp King had been an educational farm under the auspices of the University of Frankfurt, as mentioned previously. The model farm was especially important as it played a role in the German Army Retirement System. Soldiers could retire after 12 years if they agreed to cadre for new troops. The retired Soldiers were paid a small stipend and given a small plot of land to farm, usually on the eastern border of Germany. For three months out of each year, the Soldiers reported to a Kasern near the farm to train the new troops and, in turn, the school educated them in agricultural skills.

During World War II, the German Air Force needed a place to interrogate downed Allied pilots, and part of the farm was converted to military use. Most Americans and Allied prisoners call the interrogation camp, known as Auswertestelle West to the Germans, “Dulag Luft.” Three barracks were soon added to the farm, and in 1942, an interrogation building and the “cooler” were built. The “cooler” was a building with a series of one-man cells, four by eight feet, in which the temperature would sometimes reach 119 degrees Fahrenheit or be freezing in the German winters. Heat or frigid temperatures and isolation were reportedly the interrogation methods, and most prisoners have stated they were well treated.

During my tour at Camp King, former U.S., British, and French pilots that were held captive at “Dulag Luft” came back to see the cell they had lived in as a POW. One was an Air Force full Colonel, Hess, which I served with in San Francisco.

The area was rumored to have been concealed as a goat farm, but a World War II aerial photo shows two of the camp buildings clearly marked as “POW” buildings. The goat rumor had a morsel of truth. The report appears to have come from a feisty goat that occupied one of the fields and tenaciously guarded his territory. During the course of the war, an estimated 29,000 Allied prisoners were processed through Camp King.

As the war ended, the Americans accidentally found and occupied the camp. Now under U.S. military rule, it was called Camp Sibert after General Edwin Sibert, senior intelligence officer for the U.S. Zone. Mobile field interrogation units moved

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in to serve at the Army and group levels. On September 19, 1946, the intelligence camp was officially named Camp King, after Colonel Charles B. King, Infantry. Colonel King, an intelligence officer, was killed in Normandy on June 22, 1944 as he accompanied a patrol bringing back prisoners.

Camp King became an important intelligence post and the “Gehlen Organization,” as well as the European Command Intelligence Center, was based there. The Gehlen Organization was a fledgling German intelligence organization that later became the German equivalent of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Thanks to the organization’s leader, General Reinhard Gehlen, the group was allowed to continue operating in spite of being captured and denazified in exchange for German intelligence information. The arrangement proved advantageous to both parties, and the Gehlen Organization, which had a presence at Camp King until 1952, became a valuable asset to the CIA, assisting with covert operations in the Soviet Union. General Gehlen, who authored a book about the POW camp, is now a U.S. citizen, and lives in Los Angeles.

<sup>30</sup> Friends also serving in VII Corps include Commander, Lieutenant General Fred Franks; CO Corps Support Command, Brigadier General Bob McFarlin; VII Corps Artillery Officer, Brigadier General Creighton Abrams, Jr.; CO Major General Ronald Griffith and ADC Brigadier General Jay Hendrix, both 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division; Colonel Montgomery Meigs, 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division; CO Major General Thomas Rhame and ADC Brigadier General Bill Carter of 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division, Mechanized; and 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division Support Command, Colonel Bob Shadley.

<sup>31</sup> The name “Desert Fox” came from Rommel’s highly successful exploits in World War II battles in North Africa. Later he was put in charge of all German Armies from the Netherlands to the Loire. He was unable to prevent the Normandy Invasion, however, and after being wounded, returned to Germany to convalesce. He became increasingly outspoken in his criticism of Hitler’s leadership and, on October 14, 1944, was ordered by Hitler to take poison or face trial for complicity in the July 20, 1944 plot against Hitler’s life. He chose the former course.

<sup>32</sup> Mayor Rommel was hesitant to discuss his father, but in the end, he did anyway. When he talked that day with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Support Command officers, with between 300-400 in attendance, you could have heard a pin drop. He shared what life was like with the “Desert Fox” in the Rommel family home near Ulm, not far from Augsburg. When he began discussing the last time he saw his father, it was very emotional. I think it was still difficult to discuss, even after 40 years. On that morning in 1944, young Rommel knew there was something unusual occurring. His father got up and began looking for his “Afrika” gear: his pants, boots, Africa hat, and leather jacket. When he began looking for his field marshal’s baton, his son knew there was something incredibly abnormal happening. He saw that his mother and father were being very emotional in the kitchen and then he heard his father say that he would not be coming back. He wanted to say goodbye. I don’t think there was much of a farewell between father and son.

At the appointed time, a sedan showed up, and two officers with knee length leather coats arrived, SS officers in civilian clothes, to pick up his father. He

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watched as his father got into the car with the men. That was the last time young Rommel ever saw his father. Mayor Rommel then said, "My father committed suicide. He could have gone to Berlin and been court-martialed by the civilian tribunal, but committing suicide ensured that the family would be fully taken care of. It also ensured that he would have a state funeral and be treated as a German hero. Choosing the latter guaranteed the family financial stability and saved them from living with the disgrace of his court martial. Of the two choices that Hitler gave him, my father chose to commit suicide."

<sup>33</sup> Leslie Aspin served as the first Secretary of Defense under President Clinton, resigning in December 1993. Previously he was a Congressman from Wisconsin for more than twenty years. He died in 1995 after suffering a stroke.

<sup>34</sup> The founder of Chambersburg, Benjamin Chambers, emigrated from Antrim County, Ireland. "A town founded by a fellow Irishman has got to be a special place," she said.

Benjamin Chambers joined other Irish, Scottish, and German settlers in the Conococheague Settlement and found the Falling Spring area suitable for his gristmill and home. In 1755-1756, an Indian uprising, incited by French influence, caused Chambers to build a fort around his gristmill and home with which he outfitted with cannons, protecting Chamber's business, dwellings, and neighboring settlers. The Conococheague Creek powered the mill, provided water, and helped protect the structures from fire attacks by the Indians. The settlement survived, grew strong, and in 1764 the town of Chambersburg was founded.

The raid on Harper's Ferry was planned in Chambersburg by John Brown, using the alias Isaac Smith. He was staying in a rented room somewhere on King Street. Later during the war, Generals Robert E. Lee and A. P. Hill met in the center of town and made the decision to go on to Gettysburg. The biggest hullabaloo for Chambersburg happened in 1864 when General John McCausland demanded that the residents of Chambersburg come up with a ransom of \$500,000.00 in paper money or \$100,000.00 worth of gold. He threatened to burn the town if they didn't hand over the payola. They refused to pay, and McCausland set fire to the town, destroying over 500 buildings. The people in Chambersburg were strong folks, sticking to their convictions in the face of that kind of danger and of losing their homes.

<sup>35</sup> Title X is legislation, U.S. Code, which states the Army will recruit, train, organize, and supply forces of the Army. The base line document is the authority for the Army.

<sup>36</sup> John M. Deutch later went on to become the Director of the CIA.

<sup>37</sup> Fort Myer and Arlington National Cemetery rest on land once owned by the family of Confederate General Robert E. Lee's wife, Mary Anna Randolph Custis Lee, granddaughter of George Washington Parke Custis. The Custis-Lee mansion and the land known as Arlington Heights in the 1800's were confiscated in the Civil War for burial of Union war dead. Custis was Martha Washington's grandson and the

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adopted son of George Washington, to whom he made his mansion a memorial shrine. When Robert E. Lee was a young Army Lieutenant, he married Mary Custis and in 1858 helped rescue the estate from financial disaster. When Lee became a military advisor to Confederate President Jefferson Davis in 1861, the Lees left their Arlington home. Lee later commanded the Army of Northern Virginia and never returned to Arlington.

The first military test flight of an aircraft was made from the Fort Myer parade ground in 1908, when Orville Wright kept one of his planes in the air for one minute and eleven seconds. Alexander Graham Bell filmed the flight for posterity, and visitors touring the post can see the film that includes pre-flight footage. The second test flight ended tragically in a crash after four minutes aloft. Wright was injured, and his passenger, Lieutenant Thomas Selfridge, was killed, becoming the first powered aviation fatality. Selfridge's name is on a gate at Arlington Cemetery near the site of the crash.

<sup>38</sup> The Army had "look deep" systems, new technology similar to powerful, invasive binoculars, which in 1989 only the CIA and border posts had.

<sup>39</sup> Operation Desert Shield is the period from August 1990, when the first American troops were deployed to defend the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, until February 1991, when Coalition Forces launched Operation Desert Storm, the 100-hour offensive to drive Iraqi forces out of Kuwait.

<sup>40</sup> "Flak" is a German word from World War II. "Flying through anti-aircraft flak" was the term given flying through heavy fire. The pilots flight jackets became "flak" jackets, and the term stuck.

<sup>41</sup> Fort Belvoir's history is a rich one, the land once being part of a grant from a 17th century English king. The land was handed down through the Culpeper family to Thomas, the sixth Lord Fairfax, who persuaded his cousin, Colonel William Fairfax, to come from England to oversee the family's holdings.

Colonel Fairfax's home was on 2,000 acres that is now part of Fort Belvoir. His mansion sat on a high bluff overlooking the Potomac, and Colonel Fairfax named the estate Belvoir, which is French for "beautiful to see." The Fairfax family made Belvoir a center of culture and aristocratic elegance in the Virginia wilderness. One of Fairfax's sons, George William, befriended a 16-year-old George Washington, who had moved to Mount Vernon to live with an older half-brother. Eventually, George William Fairfax and his wife returned to England, and the land was leased. In 1783, the mansion was partially burned and, in 1814, was destroyed by British cannons from ships engaged in a battle with U.S. naval forces after the burning of Washington.

Some 30 years later, the Otterback family converted the site to one of the largest fisheries on the Potomac River. In the early nineteenth hundreds, the District of Columbia purchased 1,500 acres for a proposed prison. Due to the objection of local citizens, the prison never materialized, and the War Department inherited the site, establishing a rifle range and training camp.

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<sup>42</sup> The Corps of Engineers put General Besson's oral history together from speeches, a 1973 Military History Institute (MHI) interview, and a 1980-81 series of interviews. He was Director of the Third Military Railway Service in Iran during 1944 and 1945, ensuring the flow of war materials to the Russian forces through the Persian Corridor. Promoted to Brigadier General at 34, he became the youngest general officer in the Army Ground Forces. General Besson directed the rehabilitation of the Japanese rail system during Japans first year of occupation, moving more than 200,000 troops and 150,000 tons of supplies in the first two months.

<sup>43</sup> "The Contest in America," *Fraser's Magazine* (February 1862); later published in *Dissertations and Discussions* (1868), vol.1, p. 26, from [http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/John\\_Stuart\\_Mill](http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/John_Stuart_Mill).

<sup>44</sup> From [http://www.armywives.com/index.php/component?option=com\\_content/task/view/id/1757/Itemid,409/](http://www.armywives.com/index.php/component?option=com_content/task/view/id/1757/Itemid,409/).

<sup>45</sup> Colonel Steven A. Arrington, "The Difference," in Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, Charles Preston, and Cindy Pedersen, *Chicken Soup for the Military Wife's Soul* (Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications, Inc, 2005).

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*





## *Glossary*

A-1 Sky Raider	U.S. fighter aircraft
A&R	Athletics and Recreation
ACALS	Army Computer-aided Acquisition and Logistics Support
ACSFOR	Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development
AD	Aerial Delivery
ADC	Assistant Division Commander
ADCSLOG	Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics
ADCSOPS	Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations
AFAS	Advanced Field Artillery System
AFB	Air Force Base
AFQT	Armed Forces Qualification Test
AIC	Arkansas Intercollegiate Conference
AID	Agency for International Development
AIF	Army Industrial Fund
AK-47	Assault rifle, developed for the Soviet Army
ALOC	Air Line of Communication
AMC	Army Materiel Command
AMCCOM	Armament, Munitions, and Chemical Command
ANGLICO	Air and Naval Gunfire Liaison Company
AOC	Army Operations Center
AOE	Army of Excellence
AP	Associated Press
ARCENT	United States Army Central Command
ARDEC	Armament Research, Development, and Engineering Center
ARL	Army Research Laboratory
ARTEPS	Army Training and Evaluation Programs
ARVN	Army of the Republic of Vietnam
ASA (FM)	Assistant Secretary of the Army for Financial Management
ASARS	Automatic Storage and Retrieval System
ASL	Authorized Stockage List

ASMP	Army Strategic Mobility Plan
ATCOM	Aviation and Troop Command
ATT	Army Training Tests
AVCOM	Aviation Command
AVIM	Aviation Intermediate Maintenance Unit
AVSCOM	Aviation Systems Command
B-52 Stratofortress	Long-range bomber
B-rations	Boxed and canned rations
BAR	Browning automatic rifle
BASOPS	Base Operations
BDREC	Belvoir Research, Development, and Engineering Center
BDU	Battle Dress Uniform
BG	Brigadier General
BOQ	Bachelor Officers Quarters
BRASS	Breathe, Relax, Aim, Sight, Shoot
BSA	Brigade Support Area
BSEP	Basic Secondary Education Program
C-rations	Dehydrated, freeze-dried meals
C-130 Hercules	Tactical aircraft
C-17 Globemaster	Cargo aircraft
C-141 Starlifter	Airlift and transport aircraft
C-5A Galaxy	Airlift aircraft (Air Mobility Command)
CALS	Computer-Aided Acquisition and Logistics Support
CASCOM	Combined Arms Support Command
CBDCOM	Chemical and Biological Defense Command
CCT	Close Combat Tactical Trainer
CBR	Chemical, Biological and Radiological
CECOM	Communications-Electronics Command
CENTCOM	United States Central Command
CG	Commanding General
CGSC	Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth
CH-47	Chinook helicopter
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CINC	Commander in Chief

CLASS I	Food
CLASS II	Clothing and individual equipment
CLASS III	Bulk fuel. <i>See also</i> POL.
CLASS IV	Construction material
CLASS V	Ammunition
CLASS VII	Major end items
CLASS VIII	Medical items
CLASS IX	Repair parts
CLG	Civilian Labor Group
CMH	Center of Military History/Chief of Military History
CMU	Central Michigan University
CNO	Chief of Naval Operations
COCARC	Continental Army Command
CONEX	Container for Export
COSCOM	Corps Support Command
CP	Command Post
CRAF	Civil Reserve Air Fleet
CSA	Chief of Staff of the Army
CWO	Chief Warrant Officer
DA	Department of the Army
DA-DOMS	Department of the Army, Director of Military Support Support
DAR	Daughters of the American Revolution
DAS	Department of the Army Staff
DATS	Director of Army Transportation
DCG	Deputy Commanding General
DCSLOG	Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics
DCSOPS	Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations
DCSPERS	Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel
DCSRDA	Deputy Chief of Staff for Research, Development and Acquisition
DESCOM	Depot Systems Command
DI	Drill Instructor
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency

DISAM	Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management
DISCOM	Division Support Command
DLA	Defense Logistics Agency
DMA	Director of Materiel Acquisition
DMG	Distinguished Military Graduate
DMWR	Depot Maintenance Work Requirements
DMZ	Demilitarized Zone
DoD	Department of Defense
DPSC	Defense Personnel Supply Center
DRB	Division Ready Brigade
DROPS	Demountable Rack Off-Load and Pickup System
DSA	Defense Supply Agency <i>See</i> DLA.
E-7	Sergeant First Class, E-7
E-8	Master Sergeant
EDI	Electronic Data Interchange
EDRE	Emergency Deployment Readiness Exercises
ESC	Executive Steering Committee
FAS	Forward Area Support
FASCO	Forward Area Support Coordinating Officer
FAST	Forward Area Support Team
FCIM	Flexible Computer-Integrated Manufacturing
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FIREBASE	Fortified base center of operations (Vietnam)
FM 100-5	Field Manual, Operations
FMT	Field Maintenance Technicians
FORSCOM	U.S. Army Forces Command
FSB	Forward Support Battalion
FSC	U.S. Army Field Support Command
FSS	Fast Sealift Ship
FUE	First Unit Equipped
G-1	Assistant Chief of Staff, Personnel
G-2	Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence

G-3	Assistant Chief of Staff, Operations and Plans
G-4	Assistant Chief of Staff, Logistics
GAO	General Accounting Office, Government Accountability Office
GED	General Equivalency Diploma
GPRA	Government Performance and Results Act of 1993
GRE	Graduate Record Examination
GS	General Schedule (civilian grade)
GSA	General Services Administration
GWU	George Washington University
H&I	Harassment and Interdiction
HEMTT	Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck
HET	Heavy Equipment Transporter
HMMWV	High Mobility, Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicle
HQDA	Headquarters, Department of the Army
Huey	Light-lift utility helicopter, UH-1; search and rescue
ICAF	Industrial College of the Armed Forces
ID	Identification
ID	Infantry Division
IL&E	Installations, Logistics, and the Environment
IMET	International Military Education and Training
INMARSAT	International Maritime Satellite
IOC	Industrial Operations Command
IOLC	Infantry Officers Leadership Course
ISM	Integrated Sustainment Maintenance
IVIS	Inter-Vehicular Information System
J-3	Joint Operations Directorate/Director of Operations
J-4	Joint Logistics Directorate/Director of Logistics
J-LOG	Joint Logistics Director

JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JCS Pub. 4.0	Doctrinal Logistics Publication
JTF	Joint Task Force
K-rations	Dehydrated meals served during World War II
KD	Known Distance
LABCOM	Laboratory Command
LACV-30	Lighter, Air Cushioned Vehicle
LAR	Logistics Assistance Representatives
LCAC	Landing Craft, Air Cushion
LCU	Landing Craft Utility
LEDC	Logistics Executive Development Course
LOC	Logistics Operations Center
LOG	Logistics
LOGCENTER	Logistics Center
LRRP	Long-range Reconnaissance Patrol
LSE	Logistics Support Element
LSG	Logistics Support Group
LSV	Logistics Support Vessel
M-1 Garand	Rifle
M-1	Tank
M-2	Carbine automatic rifle
M-16	Assault rifle (U.S.A.)
MA	Master of Arts
MAC	Military Airlift Command
MACOM	Major Command
MACV	Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
MARSAT	Maritime Satellite System
MBA	Master of Business Administration
MCC	Movements Control Center
MDEP	Management Decision Package
MDW	Military District of Washington
MEDEVAC	Medical Evacuation
MH/AH-6	Helicopter
MHE	Materials Handling Equipment
MHI	Military History Institute
MIA	Missing in Action

MICOM	Missile Command
MKT	Mobile Kitchen Trailer
MMC	Materiel Management Center
MOTBA	Military Ocean Terminal for the Bay Area
MP	Military Police
MRC	Major Regional Contingency
MRE	Meals, Ready-to-Eat
MSC	Military Sealift Command
MTMC	Military Traffic Management Command
MUCOM	U.S. Army Munitions Command
NAIA	National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NCO	Non-commissioned Officer
NCOIC	Non-commissioned Officer in charge
NDU	National Defense University
NICP	National Inventory Control Point
NPR	National Performance Review
NVA	North Vietnamese Army
OCLL	Office of the Chief of Legislative Liaison
OCRDA	Office of the Chief of Research, Development, and Acquisition
OCRD	Office of the Chief of Research and Development
OCS	Officer Candidate School
ODS	Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm
ODCSLOG	Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics
OH-58	Kiowa helicopter
OIC	Officer in Charge
OMA	Operations and Maintenance, Army
OML	Order of Merit List
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
OPMS	Officer Personnel Management System
OPO	Office of Personnel Operations
OPS	Operations
ORB	Officer's Records Briefs

OSC	Objective Supply Capability
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
OSS	Objective Supply System
PACOM J-4	United States Pacific Command Logistics Director
PBG	Program Budget Guidance
PBT	Phuoc Binh Thanh (Vietnam)
PEO	Program Executive Officer
PERSCOM	Personnel Support Command
PF	Popular Forces (Vietnam)
PFC	Private First Class
PLL	Prescribed Load List
PLS	Palletized Load System
PM	Project Manager
PM, TRADE	Project Manager, Training Devices
POL	Petroleum, Oils, and Lubricants
POMCUS	Prepositioning of Materiel Configured to Unit Sets
POW	Prisoner of War
PSP	Pre-Stocked Points
PSP	Pierced steel planking
PT	Physical Training
PX	Post Exchange
QM	Quartermaster
QUAD	Quadrangle
R&D	Research and Development
R&R	Rest and Relaxation
RA	Regular Army
RAH-66	Comanche helicopter
RATT	Radio-Teletypewriter
RDE	Research, Development, and Engineering
RDEC	Research, Development, and Engineering Center
RDT&E	Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation
REFORGER	Return of Forces to Germany
RF/PF	Regional Force/Popular Force (Vietnam)



RIF	Reduction in Force
RORO	Roll-on/Roll-off
ROTC	Reserve Officers Training Corps
ROWPU	Reverse Osmosis Water Purification Unit
RPG	Rocket Propelled Grenade
RRF	Ready Reserve Fleet
S&M	Supply and Maintenance
S&P	Stake and Platform
S&T	Supply and Transportation
S-2	Intelligence Officer
S-3	Operations and Training Officer
S-4	Logistics Officer
SANG	Saudi Arabia National Guard
SARDA	Assistant Secretary of the Army (Research, Development, and Acquisition)
SAS	Special Air Service
SeaLand SL-7	Sealift ship
SFC	Sergeant First Class
SGS	Secretary to the General Staff
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
SELCOM	Select Committees
SERT	Screaming Eagle Replacement Training System
SES	Senior Executive Service
SM	Supply & Maintenance
SMFT	Semi-trailer Mounted Fabric Tank
SMP	Soldier Modernization Program
SOCOM	United States Army Southern Command
SSA	Supply Support Activity
SSF	Single Stock Fund
STANAG	Standardization Agreement
STEP	Special Training Enlistment Program
STRICOM	Simulation, Training, and Instrumentation Command
SWA	Southwest Asia
T-pack	Tray pack
TAACOM	Theater Area Army Command
TAC	Tactical Operations Center

TACOM	Tank-Automotive Command
TAMMC	Theater Army Materiel Management Center
TAQ	Total Army Quality
TAT	Turn-around Time
TAV	Total Asset Visibility
TDY	Temporary Duty
TECOM	Test and Evaluation Command
TITLE X	U.S. Code, Armed Forces
TOC	Tactical Operations Center
TOE	Table of Organization and Equipment
TPT	Tactical Petroleum Terminal
TQM	Total Quality Management
TRADOC	U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command
TRETS	Transportation, Energy, and Troop Support
TSARCOM	Troop Support and Aviation Materiel Readiness Command
TSV	Theater Support Vehicle
TWDS	Tactical Water Distribution System
UH-1	Huey helicopter
UN	United Nations
USAF	United States Air Force
USARPAC	United States Army, Pacific
USAREUR	United States Army, Europe
USCENTCOM	United States Central Command
USO	United Services Organization
USSTRICOM	United States Strike Command
VC	Viet Cong
VCSA	Vice Chief of Staff of the Army
WAC	Women's Army Corps
WRAMC	Walter Reed Army Medical Center
XO	Executive Officer

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