

HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, D.C., 31 October 1966

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I. DISTINGUISHED UNIT CITATION. Award of the Distinguished Unit Citation by the President of the United States of America to the following units of the Armed Forces of the United States is confirmed in accordance with paragraph 194, AR 672-5-1. The text of the citation as announced by President Lyndon B. Johnson on 20 June 1966 reads as follows:

“By virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States and as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States I have today (20 June 1966) awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation (First Oak Leaf Cluster) for extraordinary heroism to:

THE 1ST BATTALION (AIRBORNE), 503D INFANTRY, 173D
AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE) UNITED STATES ARMY

and the

Attached Units----

HEADQUARTERS AND HEADQUARTERS COMPANY
COMPANY A, COMPANY B, AND COMPANY C

of the

1ST BATTALION (AIRBORNE), 503D INFANTRY, 173D
AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)

THE 1ST TEAM OF THE 3D RADIO RELAY UNIT

THE COMPOSITE SQUAD OF THE 173D ENGINEER COMPANY

The foregoing companies of and units attached to THE 1ST BATTALION (AIRBORNE), 503D INFANTRY, 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE) distinguished themselves by extraordinary heroism in action against hostile forces in the vicinity of Bien Hoa, Republic of Vietnam, on 8 November 1965. The morning after the Battalion had conducted a search operation and learned from patrols that a strong hostile element was in the general area, COMPANY C, the lead Company, encountered a well-entrenched and camouflaged Viet Cong force. When the insurgents opened fire with a volume of automatic weapons fire, the United States forces retaliated. As the battle grew in intensity and it became evident that COMPANY C had engaged a battalion-size Viet Cong element which attempted to surround the flanks of this American unit, COMPANY B was committed to secure the right flank of COMPANY C. Simultaneously, elements of COMPANY A attacked the left flank of the insurgent force. Although COMPANY B met strong resistance and fought at close range in a dense jungle area, it succeeded in penetrating the hostile circle around COMPANY C. Then, as COMPANY B's open flank was being enveloped, the brave men of this Company broke a hostile encirclement for the second time. Despite the constant Viet Cong assaults, their continual attacks in human waves, and the many casualties sustained by the American units, the gallant and determined troops of the 1ST BATTALION (AIRBORNE), 503D INFANTRY repulsed the Viet Cong and inflicted severe losses upon them. After a battle which raged throughout the afternoon, elements of THE 1ST BATTALION (AIRBORNE), 503D INFANTRY defeated a numerically superior hostile force and, on the following morning, counted four hundred and three Viet Cong dead in the immediate area. The devotion to duty, perseverance, and extraordinary heroism displayed by these members of THE 1ST BATTALION (AIRBORNE), 503D INFANTRY and the attached units are in the highest traditions of the United States Army and reflect great credit upon themselves and the armed forces of their country.”

II. PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION. Award of the Presidential Unit Citation by the President of the United States of America to the following unit of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces is confirmed in accordance with paragraph 194, AR 672-5-1. The text of the citation as announced by President Lyndon B. Johnson on 14 August 1966 reads as follows:

THE 2D BATTALION, 1ST INFANTRY REGIMENT. By virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States and as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States I have today awarded the Presidential Unit Citation to the 2d Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment, Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces, for extraordinary heroism in Vietnam. The 2d Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment, is cited for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against hostile forces in Quang Tri Province, Republic of Vietnam, from August 1964 to October 1965. Throughout this entire period, the members of the 2d Battalion displayed fortitude and determination in defending their homeland. On 18 September 1964, the 2d and 3d Rifle Companies of this Battalion engaged two Viet Cong companies which were dug in to defend Nhat Ap Village. Despite the advantageous position of the Viet Cong, the 2d and 3d Rifle Companies crossed open ground, closed in on the hostile element, and succeeded in annihilating one Viet Cong company and capturing all of its weapons. When, on 20 October 1965, the Viet Cong launched a predawn attack on the Ba Long Valley outpost and penetrated the inner perimeter, the 2d Battalion withstood the heavy gun fire and succeeded in inflicting numerous personnel and equipment losses on the insurgents until they withdrew. The courage, devotion to duty, and extraordinary heroism demonstrated by the members of the 2d Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment are in keeping with the finest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon themselves and the Republic of Vietnam. (This citation carries with it the right to wear the Distinguished Unit Emblem and Streamer by each individual and unit concerned who served in Vietnam during the stated period.)

III. VALOROUS UNIT AWARD. 1. By direction of the Secretary of the Army under the provisions of paragraph 202.1, AR 672-5-1, the Valorous Unit Award is awarded to the following named unit of the United States Army for extraordinary heroism while engaged in military operations during the period indicated:

The citation reads as follows:

The Valorous Unit Award is awarded by direction of the Secretary of the Army to:

**THE 2D BATTALION, 2D INFANTRY, 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION
COMPRISED OF
HEADQUARTERS AND HEADQUARTERS COMPANY
COMPANY A, COMPANY B, COMPANY C, and FORWARD
OBSERVER AND LIAISON PARTIES NUMBER 1, BATTERY A,
2D BATTALION, 33D ARTILLERY**

for extraordinary heroism:

The 2D BATTALION, 2D INFANTRY, 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION, distinguished itself by extraordinary heroism on 5 December 1965 in action against hostile forces in Binh Doung Province, Republic of Vietnam. After seven days of jungle fighting and sustaining many casualties by the Viet Cong, the 2D BATTALION encountered a well-entrenched, heavily armed hostile force estimated to be four battalions in size. Upon approaching this Viet Cong element that was defending a large base camp and training area, the men of the 2D BATTALION ignored the withering gun fire and showed indomitable courage as they attacked the numerically superior insurgent force. Although the size of hostile force was too large for the 2D BATTALION to encircle it, the brave men of this United States Army unit continued to assault the main portion of the insurgent entrenchments and succeeded in inflicting

severe casualties upon the fanatically resisting Viet Cong. When their ammunition was nearly exhausted after a battle that lasted 6 hours, the fighting men of the 2D BATTALION remained undaunted while continuing their attack against the Viet Cong, carrying their wounded with them, succeeding in breaking through hostile entrenchments, and securing a landing area to facilitate resupply. On the following morning, after defending the landing zone throughout the night and evacuating their wounded by helicopter, the men of the 2D BATTALION demonstrated incredible determination as they resumed their search of the battle area to find their dead comrades and to prevent the Viet Cong from recovering equipment from the battlefield. Their gallant actions resulted in three hundred Viet Cong dead, the wounding of an estimated two hundred, the capture of many enemy weapons, and the destruction of a base camp and training facility. The devotion to duty, and extraordinary heroism displayed by the members of the 2D BATTALION, 2D INFANTRY, 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION reflect distinct credit upon themselves and the Armed Forces of the United States.

2. By direction of the Secretary of the Army, under the provisions of paragraph 202.1, AR 672-5-1, the Valorous Unit Award is awarded the following named unit of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam for extraordinary heroism while engaged in military operations during the period indicated:

The citation reads as follows:

The Valorous Unit Award is awarded by direction of the Secretary of the Army to:

**THE 393D REGIONAL FORCE COMPANY
ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM**

for extraordinary heroism:

THE 393D REGIONAL FORCE COMPANY, ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM, distinguished itself by extraordinary heroism on 9 February 1965 while engaged in military operations against an opposing force in the Vinh Binh Province, Republic of Vietnam. The members of this Company demonstrated professional competence, decisiveness, and indomitable courage when a Viet Cong battalion attacked their defensive position. Although the Viet Cong outnumbered the friendly force five to one and penetrated the defensive position during a battle which lasted more than 2 hours, the members of the 393D REGIONAL FORCE COMPANY disregarded the onslaught of hostile gun fire and engaged in close hand-to-hand combat with the Viet Cong. Through the success of this brave Company in holding off the attackers until air support arrived and in repulsing the attackers with heavy casualties, the Viet Cong withdrew leaving behind seventy-four of their dead and carrying off an estimated one hundred and fifty more killed in action. The determination, devotion to duty, and extraordinary heroism displayed by the members of the 393D REGIONAL FORCE COMPANY reflect distinct credit upon themselves and the armed forces of his country.

IV--MERITORIOUS UNIT COMMENDATION. 1. By direction of the Secretary of the Army, under the provisions of paragraph 203, AR 672-5-1, the Meritorious Unit Commendation is awarded to the following unit of the United States Army for exceptionally meritorious achievement in the performance of outstanding service during the period indicated:

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The citation reads as follows:

THE 197TH AVIATION COMPANY (ARMED HELICOPTER), UNITED STATES ARMY, distinguished itself by exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service in support of military operations in the Republic of Vietnam from May 1965 to November 1965. The members of this unit demonstrated fortitude, determination, and professional skill while flying missions ranging from administrative support to the most dangerous of day and night operations, including the airlift of troops into hostile landing zones, combat rescue missions, and close fire support of ground forces in battle with the Viet Cong. This unit also pioneered and perfected the use of helicopter mounted searchlights to illuminate and destroy Viet Cong forces moving by waterway within the Republic of Vietnam. Despite the perilous flying conditions and hazardous tactical situations, the 197TH AVIATION COMPANY logged 10,537 flying hours, 10,170 sorties, and 12,561 combat support and combat assault operations. Carrying on the proud traditions of its history as the oldest armed helicopter company in the world, this unit was often the inspiring element which provided the ground forces with the confidence needed to pursue objectives essential to the success of the counter-insurgency effort. The courage, loyalty, and devotion to duty displayed by the members of this unit contributed to the progress of the United States effort in the Republic of Vietnam, reflecting distinct credit upon themselves, the United States Army, and the armed forces of their country.

2. By direction of the Secretary of the Army, under the provisions of paragraph 203, AR 672-5-1, the Meritorious Unit Commendation is awarded to the following unit of the United States Army for exceptionally meritorious achievement in the performance of outstanding service during the period indicated:

The citation reads as follows:

THE 765TH TRANSPORTATION BATTALION (AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORT) and attached units distinguished themselves by exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services in support of military operations in the Republic of Vietnam from October 1964 to December 1965. During this period, the members of the Battalion and assigned units demonstrated professional skill, perseverance, and exceptional effectiveness in performing many diverse missions in the areas of aircraft operations and maintenance, airfield defense and operations, base development, and community support. Although confronted with adverse environmental and combat conditions, the members serving with the Battalion provided timely, special, and voluntary assistance to the units and activities supported. Operating with a minimum of resources, the personnel of the Battalion surpassed supposedly insurmountable odds to achieve their mission accomplishment. The professional competence, determination, and esprit de corps displayed by all members of the 765TH TRANSPORTATION BATTALION (AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORT) during this critical period reflect distinct credit upon themselves and the military service.

By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

HAROLD K. JOHNSON,
*General, United States Army,
Chief of Staff.*

Official:

KENNETH G. WICKHAM,
*Major General, United States Army,
The Adjutant General.*

Distribution:

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