

HISTORY OF THE  
TROOP C  
7TH SQUADRON, 17TH AIR CAVALRY  
1ST AVIATION BRIGADE

5 October 1967 - 31 December 1968

Prepared by  
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APPROVED BY:

*Jerry G. Ledford*  
JERRY G. LEDFORD  
MAJ, AR  
COMMANDING

CAMP ENARI, DRAGON MOUNTAIN, REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96262

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
TROOP C, 7TH ARMORED SQUADRON, 17TH AIR CAVALRY  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96262

HISTORY OF C TROOP

FORWARD

This document is a summary of the activities of "C" Troop, 7th Armored Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry. It covers the period from activation until 31 December 1968. Some facts have been omitted, not because they were unimportant, but due to the lack of data. However, the facts presented herein present certain aspects of the troop's background which otherwise might be forgotten.

For the relatively short time that our "Charlie" Troop has existed, we have moved fast and have accomplished much. However, this is only the beginning. With the spirit and the zeal which is inherent to the unit, "C" Troop continues to build what will ultimately be a long, proud, and admirable history.

*Jerry G. Ledford*  
JERRY G. LEDFORD  
MAJ, ARMOR  
COMMANDING

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HISTORY OF C TROOP

1.  
1968-69

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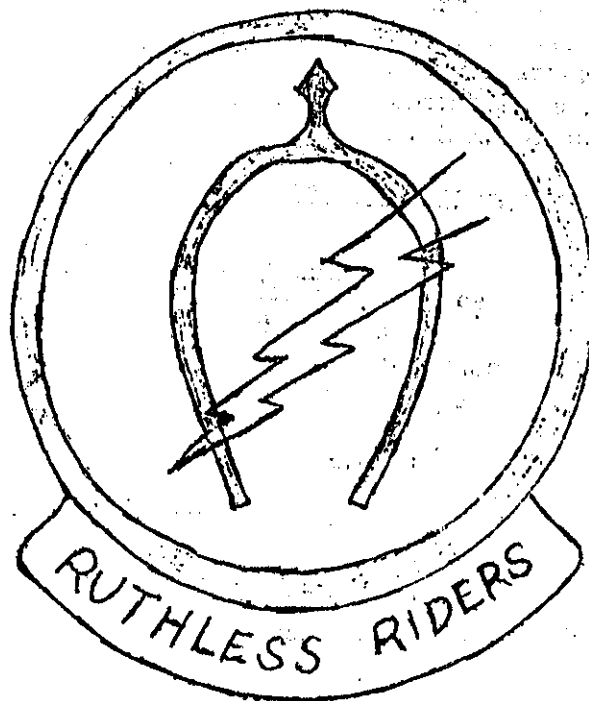
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MAJ, ARMOR  
COMMANDING

CHAPTER I

HERALDRY

5th Unit Patch of  
7th Armored Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry



The squadron patch is only available on OD cloth with black characters. The horse shoe centered in the patch represents the horse cavalry of our heritage while the superimposed lightning bolt represents the speed, power, and strength that air and ground vehicles have given the modern cavalry. The flasher with the words RUTHLESS RIDERS appears beneath the circular patch. The avionics door on the nose of all 7th Squadron UH-1H and AH-1G helicopters bears a white horse shoe with yellow lightning bolt on a black background.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

LINEAGE AND HONORS

7th SQUADRON, 17th CAVALRY

Constituted 1 July 1916 in the Regular Army as Troop G, 17th Cavalry  
and organized at Fort Bliss, Texas  
Inactivated 26 September 1921 at the Presidio of Monterey, California  
Redesignated 1 July 1940 as Troop G, 17th Cavalry (Corps Reconnaissance)  
Disbanded 9 March 1951  
Reconstituted 4 May 1959 in the Regular Army as Troop G, 17th Cavalry  
Activated 6 December 1962 at Fort Ord, California  
Inactivated 31 August 1965 at Fort Ord, California  
Redesignated 27 September 1966 as Headquarters and Headquarters Troop,  
7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry (organic elements concurrently constituted)  
Activated 25 November 1966 at Fort Knox, Kentucky

CAMPAIGN PARTICIPATION CREDIT

WORLD WAR II  
Northern France  
Rhineland  
Ardenness-Alsace  
Central Europe

DECORATIONS

NONE

The C Troop patch was designed by Warrent Officer Robert Allen James, a member of C Troop from October 1967 to December 1968.

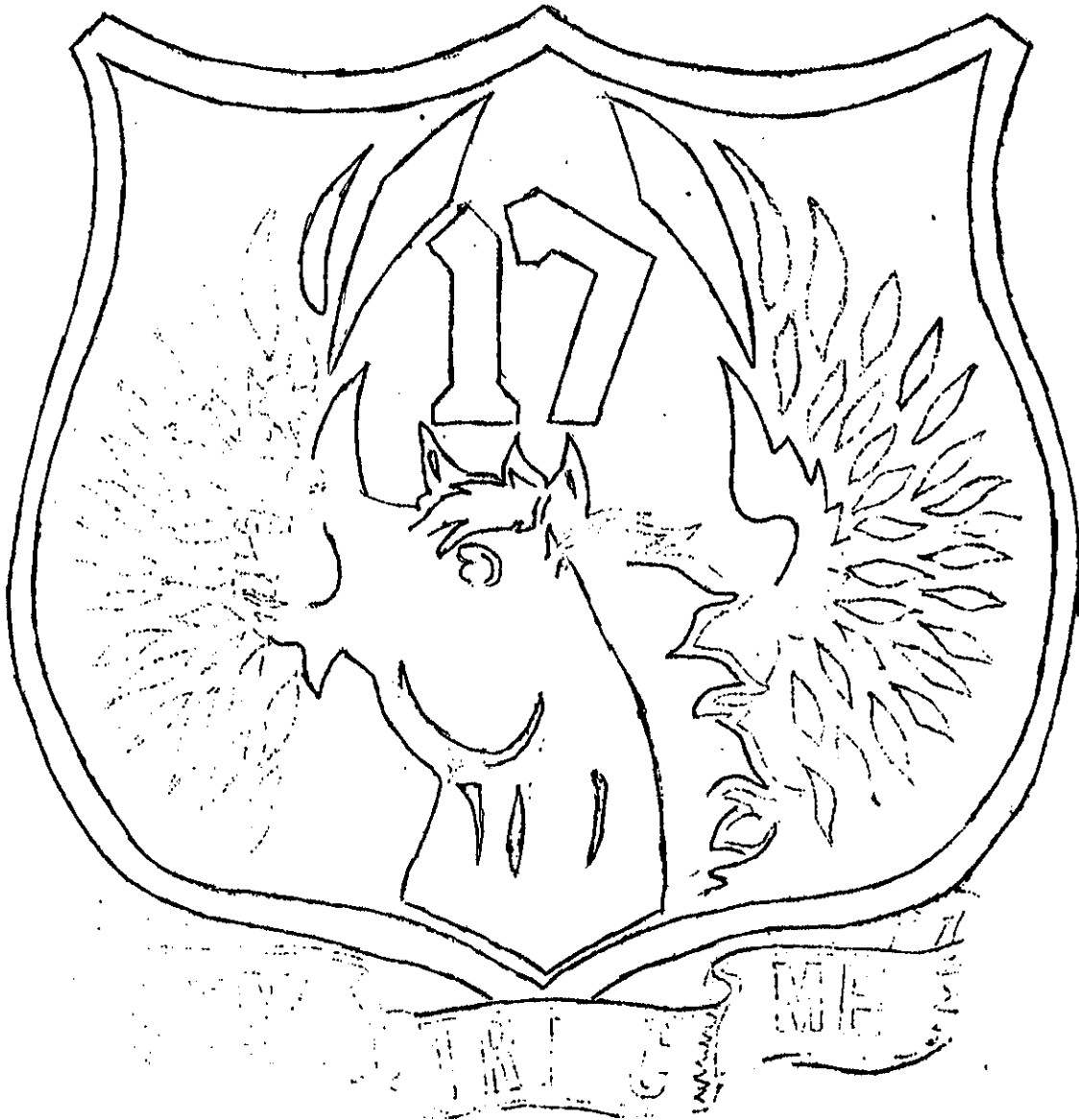
A black horse with wings of fire before a yellow background with a red boarder. The numerical notation of 17 in blue above the horse represents the 17th Squadron and the troops motto on the flag below the crest is blue on a white background with a red boarder.

The patch reflects the tradition and proud history of the horse cavalry of ages past and the air cavalry of today's army as Troop C issues its challenge:

WENT NEW

The patch is available in cloth with the above mentioned colors and as a pressure sensitive decal that appears on both sides of all of Troop C aircraft.

THE UNIT EMBLEM OF  
TROOP C



## CHAPTER II

### BACKGROUND

On 5 October 1967 Troop C, 2nd Squadron, 17th Cavalry was formed at Fort Campbell, Kentucky as part of the reconnaissance element of the 101st Airborne Division. Troop C was placed in the unusual position of having a full complement of officers and enlisted men, but only 5 OH-23G ravens for its aviation assets. Because of this C Troop did not deploy to the Republic of Viet Nam with the 101st and the ground troops of the 2nd Squadron, 17th Cavalry.

This period of time between 5 October and the end of December 1968 was an important time in the history of C Troop. C Troop commanded by Major Robert W. Frost was given the mission of moving the 101st Divisions Support Command to the Republic of Viet Nam. The movement of the 101st Division to the Republic of Viet Nam was a joint Army and Air Force operation called "Operation Eagle Thrust" which to date is the largest airlift, in the history of the Army, of a unit into a combat situation.

Major Frost was the movement officer for the 101st Divisions Support Command which included the men and equipment of the Divisions Headquarter and Headquarters Company, Military Intelligence Section, the Divisions Hospital and Medical Battalion, the 506 Signal Battalion, the 2nd Maint. Battalion, the 101st Aviation Battalion, and the 2nd Squadron, 17th Cavalry.

To handle this task Major Frost, turned the officers and men of C Troop into deployment teams to facilitate the movement of the Division Support Command.

Captain Michell Law, the gun platoon leader and his platoon were given the responsibility of running the Support Command Marshaling area. LTs Douglas P Hammond and Edward F Johnson and their Scout Section were assigned to the Squadron as movement officers. The Lift Platoon under the command of Captain Robert Davis were responsible for running the weighing stations and computations of all equipment in the Divisions Support Command.

As Operation Eagle Thrust went from the planning phase into the execution phase, C Troop's officers and enlisted men started to work in 12 hour shifts 24 hours a day. After the Squadron departed Fort Campbell LT's Hammond and Johnson became trouble shooters for the Support Command. Going to a unit prior to their movement and inspecting personnel and equipment so that faults could be corrected before their arrival in the marshalling area.

The marshalling area under the command of Captain Law, broke the units down into aircraft loads, which was a constant battle as equipment was deleted and added while still trying to maintain the units integrity.

It is with great pride and a feeling of accomplishment that C Troop looks back at the part it played in Operation Eagle Thrust and the movement of the 101st Airborne Division to the Republic of Viet Nam.

Troop C recieved its aircraft on or around the first of January 1968, and the troop began its training cycle for deployment to the Republic of Viet Nam scheduled for the first part of June 1968. The last two weeks in March were spent in the field conducting the troops FTX under the command of Major Frost. C Troop originally located itself at area 28 on the Fort Campbell reservation. As the troop developed its tactics and methods of employment, Major Frost moved the base of operations several times from area 28 to the various drop lanes on the reservation while still conducting its FTX. The troop learned many things during its two week FTX among them

arctic survival, as snow and freezing rain were the prevalent weather conditions.

The troop underwent two ATT's in the month of April. The first was conducted by the 6th Infantry Divisions Aviation Battalion at Fort Campbell. The second was conducted at Camp Atterbury, Indiana by the First of the Ninth Air Cavalry from Fort Knox, Kentucky. During these two ATT's C Troop finalized its tactics and benefited greatly from the assistance given to C Troop by the 1/9 Air Cavalry through its training week.

On 1 May 1968 Troop C, 2nd Squadron, 17th Cavalry was redesignated Troop C, 7th Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry by general orders 116 dated 27 April 1968. This change of unit designation involved a major upheaval in C Troop. C Troop changed from the Air Troop in a ground Cavalry Squadron to an Air Cavalry Troop in an Air Cavalry Squadron. This change involved a new TOE in which the major change was the elimination of our old maintenance platoon.

By the end of May 1968 C Troop had completed its training for deployment to the Republic of Viet Nam and had prepared its aircraft and vehicles for shipment. The aircraft were flown to Sharp Army Depot in Stockton California from Fort Campbell by the members of Troop C. Those who took part in the ferrying operation planned by Captain Robert Davis will long remember the flight and the various RON locations. The vehicle and connexes left Mobile, Alabama on the 10th of June 1968 on the American Corsair bound for Quin Nhon, Republic of Viet Nam. On 4 July our advanced party commanded by Major William T Glover left Fort Campbell and arrived on 6 July at Camp Enari, Pleiku, Republic of Viet Nam. On 15 July the main body of Troop C departed Fort Campbell on an Air Force C-141 and arrived at New Pleiku Air Base, Republic of Viet Nam on 16 July 1968. On 20 July the rear detachment arrived in Pleiku on a C-141. On 10 August our vehicles and connexes arrived by convoy from Quin Nhon. Our troops aircraft arrived aboard the aircraft carrier Kula Gulf from California and were flown to Camp Enari on 10 July 1968.

As the troop prepared its men and equipment and improved its living quarters in an effort to become operational a new TOE became effective and C Troop turned in its Charlie model gunships and replaced them with the newer AH-1G Cobra. This introduced a new problem because C Troop did not have any aviators qualified in the AH-1G. By infusion of aviators and enlisted personnel the troop became operational on 7 September 1968, and became to make its presence known in the Central Highlands.



## CHAPTER III

### UNIT OPERATIONS

From September 1, 1968 until December 31, 1968, Troop C provided support for the Fourth Infantry Division. During this time, the troop activity consisted mainly of visual reconnaissance in the Division AO in support of the First and Third Brigades.

Activity during this time was extremely light and contacts were few and far between, consisting mainly of assisting I/P's in contact and a few LRP extractions and medical missions.

Troop C had its first major contact and lost its first aircraft an OH-6A piloted by LT Edward F. Johnson and IT Patrick T. Murphy, on 27 October 1968. The Troop made contact with a platoon sized force and killed twelve enemy with their AH-1G's and Scout OH-6A's. A squad from the troop's Aero-rifle platoon was inserted to search the bodies for intelligence purpose, but they immediately came under intense automatic weapons fire. After several hours of heavy contact, during which the LOH was shot down: the rest of the Aero-Rifle platoon was inserted along with an infantry company from the Third Brigade. A mechanized Infantry platoon, also from the Third Brigade, later arrived on the scene and contact was broken by the enemy around 1800 hours. The Aero-Rifle platoon and the downed aircraft crew were extracted leaving the mechanized infantry platoon and the infantry company to secure the area. Troop C was credited with thirty-six confirmed kills and later intelligence maintained that Troop C had made contact with a Battalion sized force.

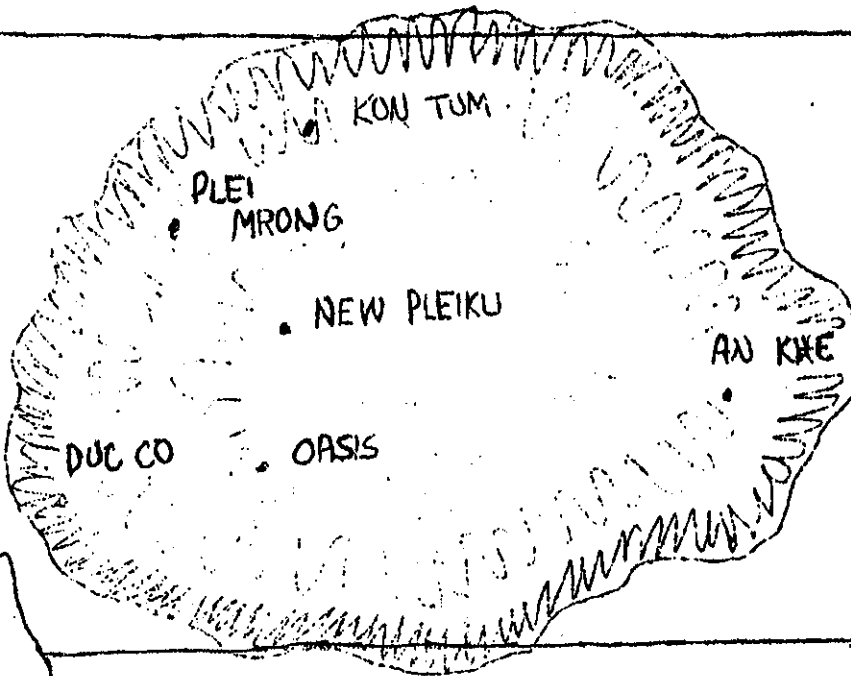
During the week of 10 to 17 November, Troop C encountered heavy enemy contact on an almost daily basis along the Cambodian border near Duc Co. During this week Major Robert Frost had one Command and Control Helicopter shot up causing him to crash land at LZ Vera: and a second Command and Control Helicopter received several hits from two fifty caliber positions. Although Troop C aircraft were receiving intense anti-aircraft fire and aircraft hits, they were able to maintain its mission ready status and halt the enemy advance, which turned into a retreat towards Cambodia.

On 24 November 1968, Major Robert Frost turned over his Command to Major Jerry Ledford. From this period until 31 December, Troop continued its reconnaissance in support of the First and Third Brigades, but enemy activity in the area was extremely light.

C TROOP'S AREA  
OF OPERATIONS



16° N



QUI  
NHON

14° N

CHAPTER IV  
COMMAND AND CONTROL

TROOP COMMANDERS

Maj Jackie M. Howard  
Cpt James F. Willoughdy  
Cpt William T. Glover  
Maj Robert W. Frost  
Maj Jerry G. Iedford

31 Jan 67 to 12 July 67  
14 Jul 67 to 20 Sept 67  
20 Sep 67 to 7 Oct 67  
7 Oct 67 to 24 Nov 68  
24 Nov 68 to Present

TROOP XO

Lt Michael L. Bogdue  
Vacant  
Cpt William T. Clover  
Lt Michael G. Law  
Maj William T. Glover  
Lt Wayne E. Overturf  
Cpt James H. Ray

6 May 67 to 23 Oct 67  
23 Oct 67 to 20 Dec 67  
20 Dec 67 to 1 Apr 68  
1 Apr 68 to 3 May 68  
3 May 68 to 10 Jun 68  
10 Jun 68 to 8 Nov 68  
8 Nov 68 to Present

OPERATIONS OFFICER

CW2 Frank L. Wendt  
Lt Michael L. Bogdue  
Cpt Robert B. Davis  
Maj William T. Glover  
Cpt James H Ray  
Cpt Edward F. Johnson

6 May 67 to 23 Oct 67  
23 Oct 67 to 13 Feb 68  
13 Feb 68 to 20 Jul 68  
20 Jul 68 to 4 Sep 68  
4 Sep 68 to 8 Nov 68  
8 Nov 68 to Present

AERO WEAPONS PLATOON

Vacant  
Cpt Michael G. Law  
Cpt James L. Phifer  
Lt Douglas P. Hammond

31 Jan 67 to 8 Oct 67  
8 Oct 67 to 10 Oct 68  
10 Oct 68 to 2 Nov 68  
2 Nov 68 to Present

SCOUT PLATOON

Cpt James H. Ray  
Lt Edward F. Johnson  
Lt David D. Register

4 Oct 67 to 4 Sep 68  
4 Sep 68 to 8 Nov 68  
8 Nov 68 to Present

LIFT PLATOON

Cpt Robert B. Davis  
Lt James L. Phifer  
Cpt Robert B. Davis  
Lt Robert A. Springthorpe

10 Oct 67 to 13 Feb 68  
13 Feb 68 to 20 Jul 68  
20 Jul 68 to 8 Oct 68  
8 Oct 68 to Present

MAINTENANCE OFFICER

CW2 Joseph P. Sustarich  
Cpt Joseph Laehu  
CW2 Robert L. Kinlaw

6 May 67 to 10 Oct 67  
10 Oct 67 to 1 Sep 68  
1 Sep 68 to Present

AERO RIFLE PLATOON LEADER

Lt Forest E. Kay  
Lt Charles L Campbell

2 Aug 68 to 10 Oct 68  
10 Oct 68 to Present

FIRST SERGEANT  
SFC Larry J. Baker 6 May 67 to 10 Sep 67  
1SGT Harry L. Turner 10 Sep 67 to Present

AERO WEAPONS PLATOON SERGEANT  
Sp5 Herman 6 May 67 to 15 Nov 67  
Sp6 Earl R. Dakin 15 Nov 67 to 20 Dec 67  
Sp5 Thomas Sweeney 20 Dec 67 to 15 Sep 68  
Sp6 Earl R. Dakin 15 Sep 68 to 20 Nov 68  
SFC Robert R. Noggle 20 Nov 68 to Present

SCOUT PLATOON SERGEANT  
Sp5 Gary R. Plassman 1 Nov 67 to 6 May 68  
SFC Ronald L. White 6 May 68 to Present

LIFT PLATOON SERGEANT  
Sp5 Russell P. Verdine 6 May 67 to 10 Sep 68  
SFC Robert O. Noggle 10 Sep 68 to Present

OPERATIONS SERGEANT  
SGT Marcus McLain 6 May 67 to 10 Aug 67  
SFC Joseph A. Garcia 10 Aug 67 to 5 Dec 67  
SFC Lester H. Turner 5 Dec 67 to Present

AERO RIFLE PLATOON SERGEANT  
Vacant 6 May 67 to 18 May 67  
SFC Clinton A. Eckley 18 May 67 to 18 Sep 68  
SFC Aquayo J. Alicea 18 Sep 68 to Present

CHAPTER 5  
REFLECTIONS

AWARDS

VIETNAMESE CROSS OF GALIANTRY WITH SILVER STAR

CPT Johnson  
1LT Cox

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

1LT Hammond  
MAJ Frost

BRONZE STAR WITH V

MAJ Frost

AIR MEDAL WITH V

CPT Ray

HONOR ROLL

SP4 Edward J. Maslyn      27 October 1968

CHAPTER 5

REFLECTIONS

AWARDS

VIETNAMESE CROSS OF GALIANTRY WITH SILVER STAR

CPT Johnson  
1LT Cox

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

1LT Hammond  
MAJ Frost

BRONZE STAR WITH V

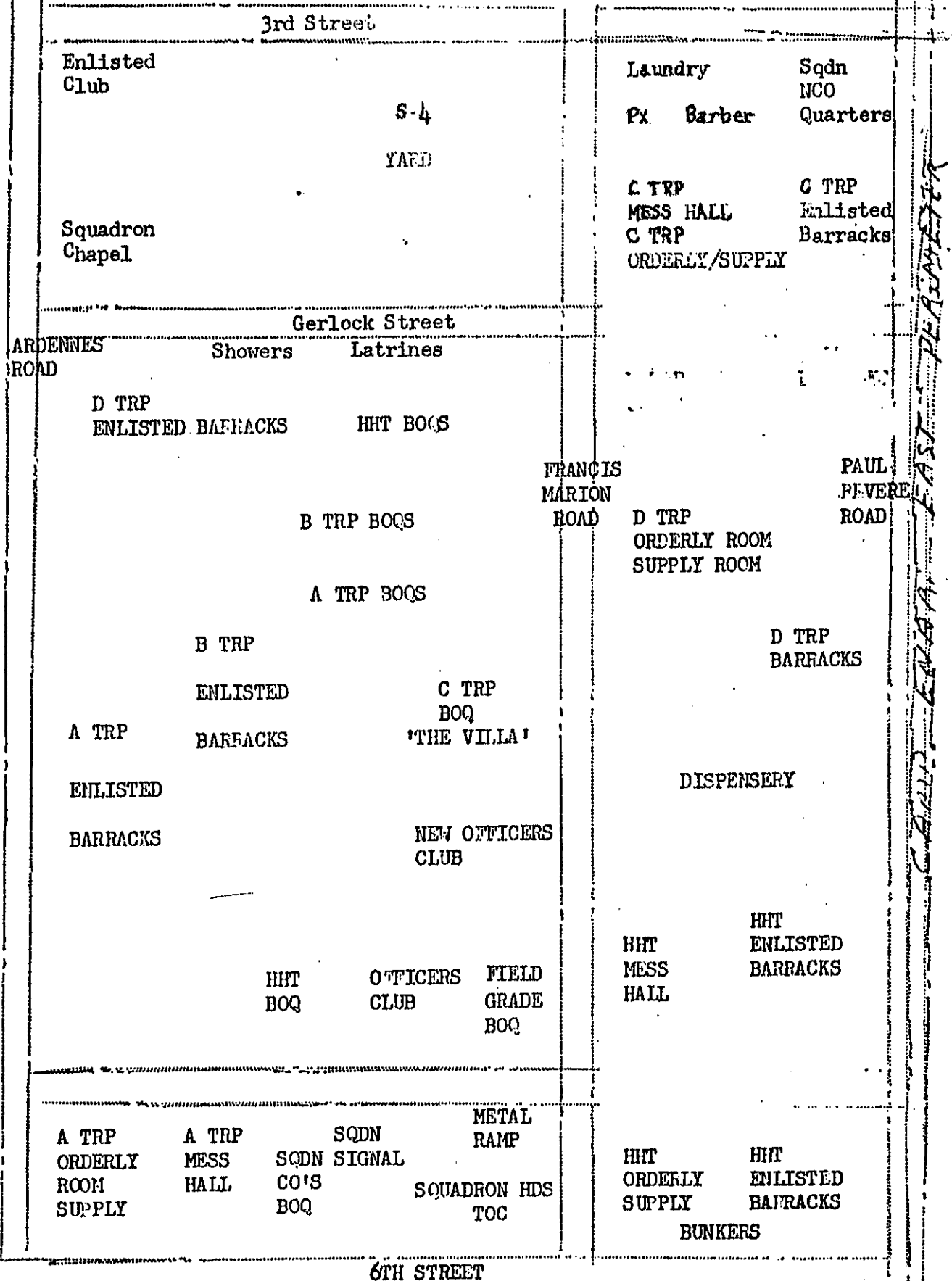
MAJ Frost

AIR MEDAL WITH V

CPT Ray

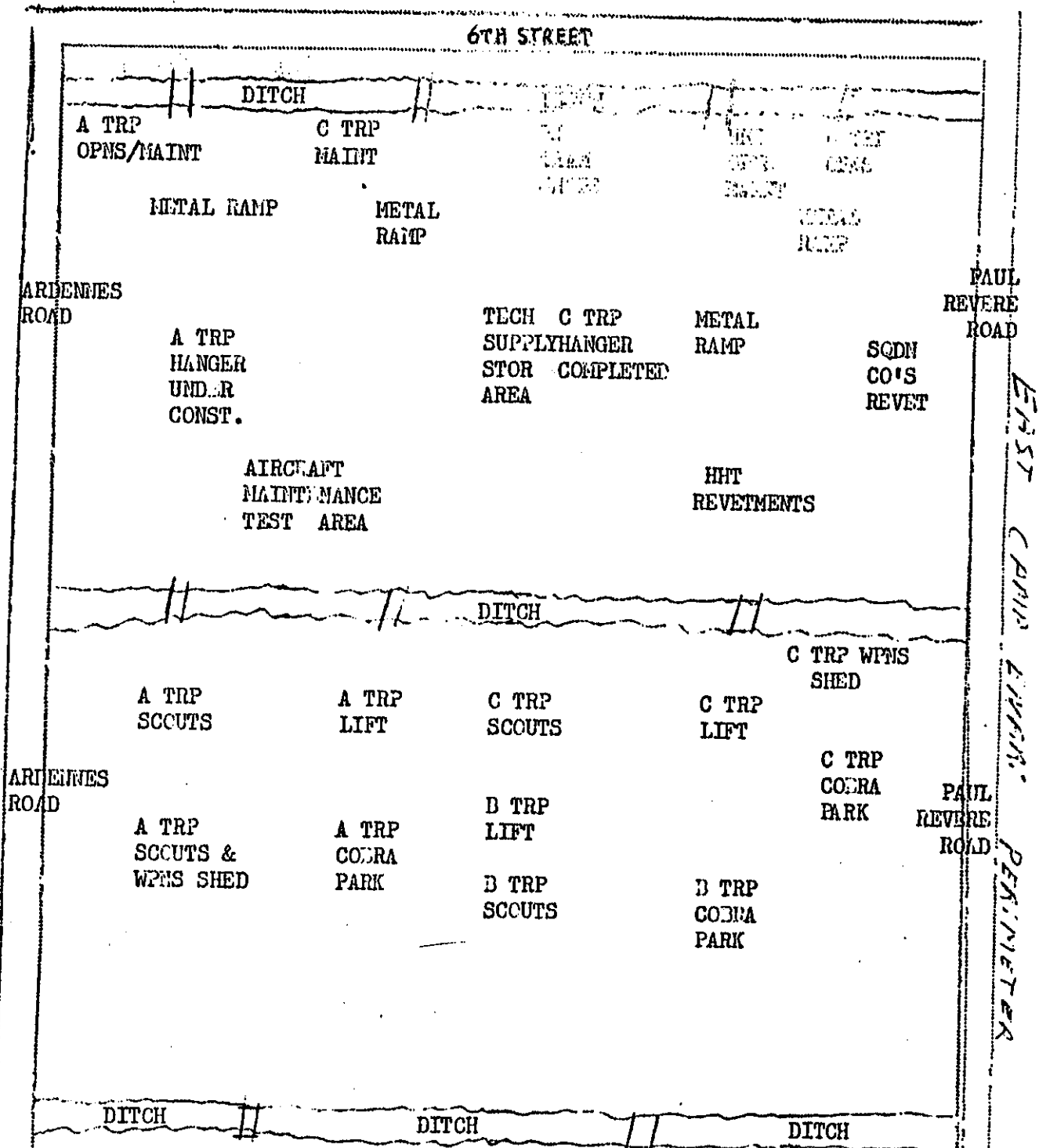
7TH SQUADRON BASE CAMP

Squadron Motor Pool



RUTHLESS HELIPORT

ATC FOR THE HELIPORT IS PROVIDED THROUGH HENSEL TOWER, HENSEL ARMY AIRFIELD, CAMP ENARI, DRAGON MOUNTAIN, RVN.



GENERAL: The entire heliport is 300M long and 150 M wide and is covered with pentaprime oil as a dust control agent.