

71st Transportation Battalion



*71st Transportation Battalion crest
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*71st Transportation Battalion coat of arms
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Battalion History

Contents

Preface	pg. 3
I. A Truck Battalion	pgs. 4-8
II. A Helicopter Battalion	pgs. 8-19
III. A Terminal Battalion	pgs. 19-24
IV. A Training Battalion	pgs. 25-29
V. List of Battalion Commanders	pgs. 29-34

Preface

This booklet provides an overview of the history and achievements of the 71st Transportation Battalion from its constitution in 1936 to the present. It recounts the 71st Battalion's performance during World War II and the Vietnam War and the training missions during combat and non-combat periods. As a Transportation Corps battalion, the 71st followed a diverse history through many activations and inactivations as needed by this nation. It began as a truck battalion during war then became a helicopter training battalion during the early development of Army aviation. It reactivated as a terminal battalion to meet the demands of a new war. Finally it became a training battalion.

71st TRANSPORTATION BATTALION HISTORY

A Truck Battalion

The 71st Transportation Battalion originally evolved from the 2nd Battalion of the 48th Quartermaster Regiment. At that time all truck units belonged to the Quartermaster Corps. Even after the Transportation Corps came into existence on 31 July 1942, the Quartermaster Corps retained possession of the truck units. On 1 May 1936, the 48th Quartermaster Regiment (Truck) was constituted and allotted to the Fifth Corps. On 29 September 1939, the 48th Quartermaster Regiment (Truck) was withdrawn from the Fifth Corps and assigned to the Fourth Corps. Throughout this period of transition, the 48th Quartermaster Regiment was organized on paper only and had no assigned personnel or equipment. A Quartermaster Truck Regiment consisted of three battalions with four lettered companies each. The 2nd Battalion had Companies E through H.

During the buildup of forces in anticipation of war, the 48th Quartermaster Regiment (Truck) was activated on 10 February 1941 at Fort Benning, Georgia. It was an African-American regiment since the US Army was still segregated. A short time later, the Regiment deployed to Lake Charles, Louisiana, where it played a significant role in the Louisiana Maneuvers. After conducting exercises from 11 July 1941 to 16 August 1941, the unit redeployed to Fort Benning, Georgia. On 7 December 1941, the Japanese Navy launched a surprise attack on the US Asiatic Fleet stationed at Pearl Harbor. The next day, the United States declared war on Japan. Germany then declared war on the United States, which answered with a similar declaration of war. America would fight a war on two fronts. The 48th Regiment would serve in the Pacific Theater very early in the war.

On 23 December 1941, the 48th Quartermaster Regiment moved from Fort Benning to Camp Stoneman, California. The Regiment trained at Camp Stoneman until 2 March 1942. At that time, the unit moved to Fort Berkely, California, where all personnel and equipment boarded the *Queen Elizabeth* for an undisclosed destination. Eighteen days later, the Regiment landed in Sydney, Australia. After the fall of the Philippines, Australia became the staging area for military operations in the Southwest Pacific Area. From Sydney, the 2nd Battalion, 48th Quartermaster Regiment moved to Camp Redbank, Queensland. This camp had previously been a training facility for Australian Imperial Forces. The 2nd Battalion remained at Camp Redbank until 8 November 1942. While at Camp Redbank, the battalion received the rest of its equipment, serviced and checked motor equipment, and made preparations for its next movement.

On 25 June 1942, the battalion moved from Camp Redbank to Mount Isa, Queensland, and arrived on 3 July 1942. Their new mission became to run convoys from the railhead at Mount Isa to Birdum, Northern Territory. This was the first long haul trucking operation in theater. Since the Japanese were within striking distance of Darwin, the sea lanes were not secure. Motor Transport Command No. 1, established on 26 May 1942, assumed responsibility for operating the 687-mile convoy system from the railhead at Mount Isa to Birdum, via Tennant Creek. On 28 June, the 29th and 48th Quartermaster Truck Regiments began driving on some of the hottest and hardest country roads on earth. The red dust rose up like a fine talc obscuring vision. Temperatures rose to as high as 130 degrees. The unimproved roads took a hard toll on the vehicles even though the drivers serviced them every day. The dust and heat also took a toll on the drivers. One out of every three drivers had kidney complaints from the constant jolting of the vehicles. The mission ended on 30 October 1942, after sea lanes of

communication were secured to Darwin. The two truck regiments had driven a total of 9,504,948 miles carrying 30,329 tons of cargo. The ever-growing nature of the war increased advancement among the officers resulting in rapid turn-over in the battalion. Major E. H. Hauschults assumed command of the battalion on 14 July 1942 and relinquished command on 5 December 1942 to Major E. M. Teeter.

On 19 April 1943, the 48th Quartermaster Truck Regiment moved from Mount Isa to Townsville, Queensland. The Regiment had the new mission to work on and control the docks. The Regiment remained in Townsville until 8 November 1943 when it moved again. On 11 November 1943, the 48th Quartermaster Regiment passed through the China Strait and landed at Milne Bay, New Guinea. It remained there until 13 October 1944, in support of the drive to take back the Philippines. During this time, Quartermaster truck units underwent a significant change that would affect the way combat service support units did business from then on.

On 5 December 1943, the regiment was redesignated as the 48th Quartermaster Truck Regiment. The same general order redesignated Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 2nd Battalion as Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 71st Quartermaster Battalion (Mobile). The four lettered companies were also redesignated 3525 through 3528th Quartermaster Truck Companies. Each company, battalion headquarters, and regimental headquarters would follow separate lineages. In other words, any truck company could serve under any truck battalion and group. However, for the time being, the 71st Quartermaster Battalion (Mobile) and its companies remained attached to the 48th Quartermaster Group. In time, other companies would serve with the 71st Battalion. Meanwhile, the battalion went through more personnel changes. Major Elmer J. Hill assumed command of the 71st Quartermaster Battalion after its redesignation. On 8 May 1944, Major Don B. Mohler assumed command of the 71st Battalion. That year the war progressed closer to the Philippines and Japan.

The 71st Quartermaster Battalion Mobile was relieved from its assignment and moved from Milne Bay to Hollandia in September 1944. During the first part of October, the 71st Quartermaster Battalion (Mobile) stayed at Hollandia preparing for supporting offensive operations. The battalion served under the Sixth Army with the following attached units:

4186th Quartermaster Service Company
389th Quartermaster Truck Company
3476th Quartermaster Truck Company

On 13 October 1944, the 71st Battalion boarded the *USS Crescent City*. Two days later, it headed for Leyte, Philippines. On 20 October, XXIV Corps, under LTG John R. Hodge, began landing at Leyte. The Americans had returned to the Philippine Islands as General Douglas MacArthur had promised. On 22 October, the battalion disembarked at Red Beach and immediately set up a bivouac area and the battalion headquarters. The battalion predominately unloaded barges on Red Beach and supported the drive inland. On 1 November, the unit was attached to Area Support Command (ASCOM) and Base "K" then moved into a Quartermaster Troop Area located two miles South of Tocloban. Heavy rainfall caused many problems for the troops. The area was a mass of mud, the roads were impassable, rations and water had to be hand carried from the main road to the headquarters area.

During operations in November 1944, the 389th and 3476th Quartermaster Truck Companies were relieved from the 71st Battalion. Other units attached to the battalion for a short period of time included:

- 84th Quartermaster Depot Supply Company
- 262nd Quartermaster Bakery Company
- Headquarters and 2nd Platoon, 234th Quartermaster Salvage Collection Company
- 4th Platoon, 123rd Quartermaster Bakery Company
- 420th Quartermaster Bakery Company
- 1st Platoon, 3818th Quartermaster Gas Supply

Due to the road conditions and bad transportation facilities, the battalion had difficulty getting supplies into the main area. Though the supplies were limited and the weather conditions poor, the health and morale of the unit remained excellent. During the remainder of 1944 and the beginning of 1945 the battalion encountered difficulties in transportation shortages, under-strength of service/railhead companies, and impassible roads resulting from heavy rains. Several battle casualties resulted from falling flak or antiaircraft bullets. The battalion installed a dispensary to provide treatment for both routine and emergency cases. The Americans took the island of Leyte by the end of December 1944.

In January 1945, the unit made preparations for the M-7 Operation to land on the main island of Luzon. General Krueger's Sixth Army landed at Linguyen almost without opposition on 9 January 1945. The Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 71st Quartermaster Battalion boarded the *USS Monitor* (LST 5) on 24 January 1945 and departed on 26 January. It disembarked at Red Beach, Zambales Province, on 29 January 1945 and encountered no casualties during landing or subsequent operations in the drive to Manila.

On 2 February 1945, the battalion departed from San Narcisco, Zambales Province, by motor transportation and later arrived at the coastal town of Ologapo. The battalion conducted normal administrative operations at Ologapo until 15 April 1945. Manila fell into American hands on 4 March and the Manila Bay was cleared of Japanese resistance by 17 April. Sixth Army, however, would continue to fight Japanese resistance in the mountains until their high command ordered them to lay down their arms on 15 August.

At this time, the 71st Battalion was relieved from Sixth Army and attached to Philippine Base Section (PHIBSEC). The battalion headquarters departed by motor convoy to Paranaque, Rizal. Units attached included:

- 3118th Quartermaster Service Company
- 3874 Quartermaster Gas Supply Company
- 4418th Quartermaster Service Company
- 2nd Platoon, 3716th Quartermaster Truck Company
- 4419th Quartermaster Service Company
- 623rd Quartermaster Railhead Company.

More personnel changes took place. LTC Elmo R. Sheridan commanded the battalion from March until May. On 28 May 1945, LTC Sheridan moved up to 48th Quartermaster Group and Major Oscar M. Jonas assumed command of the battalion.

Stability finally allowed for improved living conditions. Throughout the summer of 1945 electrical systems were installed, floors were built for tents, theaters and post exchanges were established. The unit was reassigned to Sixth Army in July 1945. Units attached to 71st Battalion were attached to the 282nd and 327th Quartermaster Battalions by 15 July 1945 in order for Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 71st Battalion could prepare for other operations.

Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 71st Battalion departed Paranaque by motor convoy on 26 July 1945 and arrived at Cuyapo, Nuevo Ecija, the same day. Soldiers and civilians then cleared and constructed the new campsite to prepare for the reception of new quartermaster units. They erected a headquarters and living quarters equipped with electric lights. An access road was constructed and a water point developed.

The Japanese government surrendered to Allied Powers aboard the *USS Missouri* on 9 September 1945. That day, the battalion headquarters moved again, this time to a staging area on Highway 3, five miles north of Ago, La Union. The 71st Battalion would next participate in the occupation of Japan. The 71st Battalion received the Philippine Presidential Unit Citation for its participation in the liberation of the Philippine Islands from 17 October 1944 to 4 July 1945.

A new campsite was completed while the battalion continued activities in staging quartermaster troops. On 10 November, the unit moved to San Fabian Beach, Pangasinan. It boarded LST 913 for movement to Japan. The unit sailed 1,425 nautical miles and arrived at Sasebo Harbor on the southern island of Kyushu, Japan, on 18 November then proceeded by motor convoy to their new home, Camp Kashii, located north of Fukuoka. Over the next year, the battalion conducted routine trucking operations.

On 10 February 1946, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 71st Quartermaster Battalion (Mobile) departed by motor convoy from Camp Kashii and occupied the old Kyushu Base Headquarters on Saitozaki Peninsula. The morale of the unit rose with the improvements in living quarters, office buildings, and facilities located at their new site. Because of the rotation of personnel back to the United States on the point system, Captain Dosch commanded the company during this time with Lieutenant Kermit C. Morrissey as his Executive Officer.

After years of ceaseless activities, the smoke clouds of inactivation at last began to hover over the unit in March of 1946. Many of the unit's administrative functions ceased. Attached units were reassigned and attached to the 11th Major Port Command. Then after many years of outstanding accomplishments, the inactivation order came on 15 April 1946. Lieutenant Edwin D. Nelson, Detachment Commander, gave a party for the unit on the eve of 27 March 1946 to celebrate a job well done. The battalion was inactivated on 31 March 1946 and personnel and equipment were attached to the 217th Quartermaster Battalion.

Effective 1 August 1946, the Quartermaster Corps finally transferred the functions and responsibilities of truck units to the Transportation Corps. Consequently on 31 August 1946, the battalion was converted and redesignated as the 71st Transportation Corps Truck Battalion while on inactive status.

A Helicopter Battalion

After the US Air Force split from the US Army with the National Defense Act of 1947, it left the Army with some helicopters. Unfortunately, Army aviation fell under the Ordnance Corps which was more concerned with the development of weapons systems such as tanks that had proved themselves in the last war. General Frank S. Besson saw the utility of Army aviation as a means of transportation and had the Transportation Corps assume responsibility for its further development. In 1950, the Transportation Corps organized its first helicopter companies and deployed the first ones to Korea in 1953. On 28 June 1954, the battalion was redesignated as the 71st Transportation Battalion (Helicopter). As helicopters became available, the battalion would again return to active duty.



71st Helicopter Transportation BN activation ceremony Ft. Riley, KS. 1954

The 71st Transportation Battalion (Helicopter) was reactivated at Fort Riley, Kansas, on 19 July 1954. The battalion was organized with an authorized strength of 7 officers and 29 enlisted men. This unit was the first unit of its kind to be activated at Fort Riley, Kansas, and LTC Gerald H. Shea commanded it upon its activation.



LTC Gerald H. Shea

The 71st Transportation Battalion received the primary mission to activate, supply, and supervise the training of helicopter companies. It had the secondary mission to prepare them as combat-ready units for assignment overseas or within the Continental United States.

The battalion conducted routine administrative functions for the next four months because the unit did not have any aircraft at the time of its activation. On 9 November 1954, one officer and five warrant officers departed Morton, Pennsylvania, en route to Fort Riley with the battalion's first three H-21 helicopters. The 71st finally had some aircraft to undertake its mission, however, it was under-strength in personnel as well as equipment.



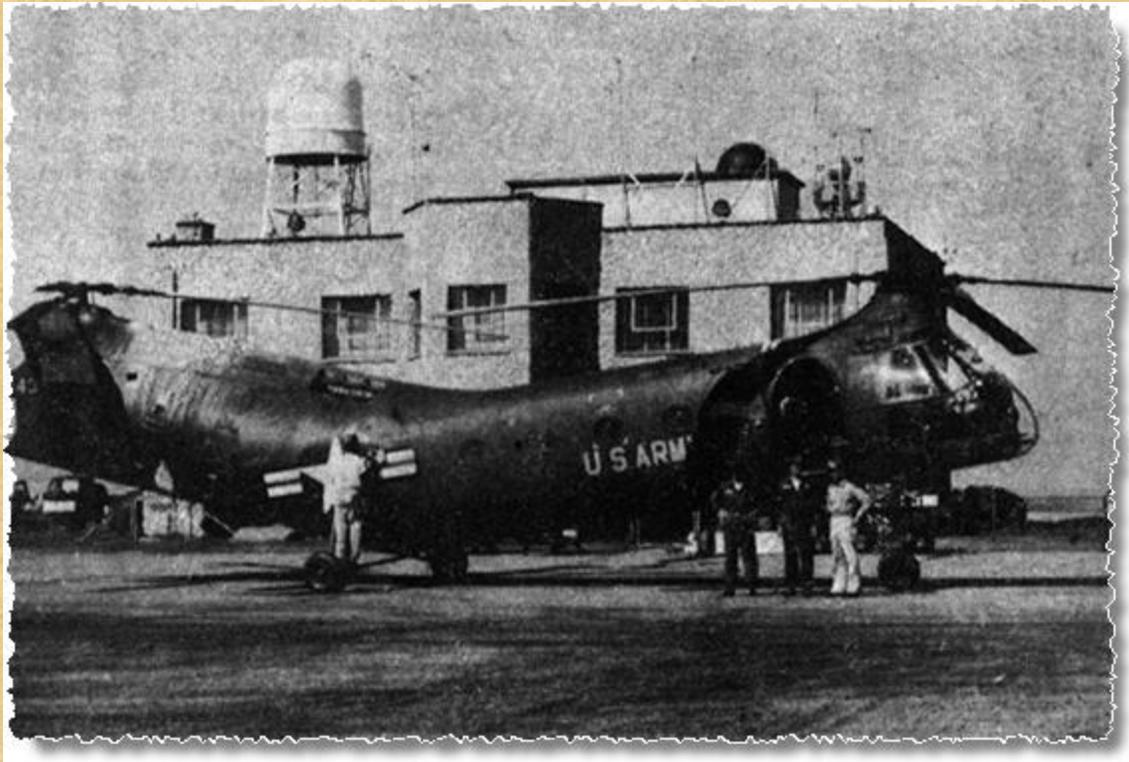
Flight Training at Fort Riley, Kansas



Training at H-21 Pilot Transition Course

With the aircraft on hand, the battalion immediately established a training program for the assigned pilots and anxiously awaited an assignment. Several days before Christmas of 1954, the Department of the Army notified the 71st Battalion that it would handle the H-21 Pilot Transition Course. The battalion welcomed this assignment for which it proved well qualified. MAJ Byron Shepard organized and supervised the transition course with CWO James D. Breshears appointed as Flight Commander for the course. At the close of 1954, the transition school had, nonetheless, trained thirteen students with a total of 325 flying hours.

In 1955, the battalion was ready to undertake its mission in full-scale operation. The twelve helicopter pilots from the 580th and 509th Helicopter Companies at Fort Bragg, North Carolina arrived at Fort Riley on New Year's Day 1955 and immediately got underway in the three-week transition training. The first class was designated Class 55-A. The course included approximately 80 hours of classroom instruction and approximately 25 hours of flying instruction. Instruction and progress went off like clockwork. Even the weather played favorably into the hands of the battalion and Class 55-A completing the entire course of instruction on schedule.



H-21 Helicopter at Fort Riley

On 24 January 1955, the battalion dispatched one H-25 and one H-21 helicopter to Lambert-Saint Louis Field, Missouri, for a static display. Hugh H. Milton II and approximately 20 high-ranking officers from the Army and Navy inspected the aircraft. Upon completion of the display, the helicopters flew back to Fort Riley.

However, the transition training was only one of the many tasks assigned to the 71st. The battalion also took pride in its rescue work. Civilian, as well as military representatives, became extremely interested in the capabilities of the flying "Work Horse." This interest resulted in so many flight demonstrations that they became an every-day occurrence for the 71st. During the month of January, the H-21s at Fort Riley chalked up a record flight time averaging 60 hours per aircraft. The battalion would get to test its capability.

On 10 February, an ill-fated L-19 Army aircraft crashed on a sandbar in the Kansas River, approximately one mile south of Manhattan, Kansas. The 71st dispatched an H-21 Helicopter with an external sling to pickup and return the plane to Marshall Army Airfield for repair. Due to the prompt action of the 71st and the superior flying technique of its pilots, the aircraft was rescued and placed back on flying status in a little more than 24 hours. There were other reasons to celebrate.

On 1 April, approximately 300 enlisted men, warrant officers, and officers celebrated the first birthday of the 93rd Transportation Company (Helicopter) and 80th Field Maintenance Detachment (Helicopter). The celebration included a 75 pound birthday cake topped with one candle and an H-21 Helicopter. On 18 April, approximately 75 Kansas newsmen and their families visited Fort Riley to witness a Division Review of an aircraft demonstration. Each editor was given a ride in an H-21 Helicopter from the 71st Transportation Battalion.



Aircraft Demonstration at Fort Riley

The 71st Battalion celebrated its first anniversary on 19 July 1955. The unit took much pride in the graduation of eleven classes with a combined total of 91 students and 3,117 hours of flight time. This accomplishment indicated the ability of a hard working unit with superior supervisory personnel in command. LTC Shea summarized, “We have had our ups and downs, but the ups overshadowed the downs.” He received another challenge.

On 1 August 1955, the US Army activated the Army Aviation Unit Training Command. Personnel from the 71st Transportation Battalion filled the new unit while 12 officers and similar enlisted men also augmented the unit. LTC Shea assumed command of both the Army Aviation Unit Training Command and the 71st.

The Army Aviation Unit Training Command at Marshall Field maintained a dual mission. First, it operated as a transition training program in the Army’s H-21 Helicopter. When the fixed wing aircraft, U-1A “Otter,” became available, the command ran the pilots transition course in that aircraft. Second, the command supervised the training of entire units from their activation to the completion of the final phase of testing after which they would become operational units.

The Formal Advanced Training Course consisted of 70 hours of flight instruction, 95 hours of maintenance instruction, and 81 hours of classroom instruction pre-training on flight subjects such as navigation, aerodynamics, meteorology, regulations governing flight; in addition to 29 allied subjects. The final phase of actual flight periods was designed to incorporate practical utilization of knowledge gained in ground school and included extended cross-country flights of an entire day’s duration and often into the night. During those long flights, a tactical situation was brought into play where the student had to solve the problem while still in the air. Then they had to terminate the flight with the successful completion of his assigned mission. At the close of 1955, the battalion had graduated 18 classes consisting of 116 students with a total of 4,549 flying hours. The next year began with more exciting flying exhibitions.



Graduates of the Formal Advanced Training Course

On 14 January 1956, the largest group of helicopters ever to be airborne at Fort Riley climbed into the "Wild Blue Yonder" when 21 H-21 "Army Work Horses" participated in a ceremonial review held by Non-Divisional troops on the post. The 93rd Helicopter Company conducted the fly-over exercise of H-21s. Major Walter S. Makuch flew in the lead ship, barking commands to the following 20 helicopters. After massing in the air over Marshall Field, the big helicopters left the strip and circled around the junction of Highways 13/40 south of nearby Manhattan. Later they were called to make the fly-over past the reviewing stand where Major General John M. Lentz, Commanding General, took the review.

In March 1956, a streamlined infantry battalion traveled first class in seven giant Army H-21 helicopters and captured an enemy guided missile site during a mock battle at Fort Riley. The 2nd Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment took off from a parade field at dawn and was shuttled to a predetermined forward airhead site. From there it began an attack against preliminary objectives manned by aggressors. By late in the afternoon, the regiment had secured its final objective. After enjoying the evening meal on position, the troops returned to their billets by helicopter. This exercise tested out the growing emphasis on mobility in combat.



Field Training at Fort Riley

Although, not a unit of the 71st Transportation Battalion, the 52nd Transportation Battalion was activated at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, in July 1955. It comprised aviation units, truck companies, and other small units. The 52nd was assigned to Fort Riley on 21 March 1956, under the command of Major Pitts B. Dickens, and further assigned to Army Aviation Unit Training Command.

On 4 April 1956, a trio of H-21 Helicopters manned by pilots from Fort Riley established a new Army helicopter altitude record when they landed atop Pike's Peak in Colorado. The helicopters of Fort Riley's 93rd Helicopter Company touched the 14,110-foot level as they continued work in the Army's Exercise Lodestar Baker. Major Walter S. Makuch and Warrant Officer Howard L. Proctor were pilots of the first helicopter that landed on the peak.



Major Walter S. Makuch makes the first landing in his H-21 on Pikes Peak. (U.S. Army photo)

The three Work Horses "pose" atop the 14,110 foot Pikes Peak, after early morning landing. (U.S. Army photo)

71st Transportation Battalion (Helicopter)

In June 1956, Kansas skies shed a few last minute tears as three of Fort Riley's finest aviation units left Marshall Army Air Field for Fort Huachuca, Arizona. There was a light shower of rain as the aircraft of the 71st Transportation Battalion left Fort Riley. Departing units included the 93rd Helicopter Company, the 80th Field Maintenance Detachment and the 14th Army Aviation Fixed Wing Tactical Transportation Company. A total of 17 H-21 Helicopters took off from Marshall Field in flights of five or six machines each. Twenty U-1A Otters followed the big "whirly-birds" off to start the trip to Arizona. After completing approximately 100 days of duty in Arizona, the two helicopter units moved to their new home at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, and the 14th Army Aviation Fixed Wing Company left for Fort Benning, Georgia.



Loading an U-1A Otter

In July 1956, LTC Shea passed the command to LTC Albert Newton; then departed for his new assignment to the Army Aviation Division, Office of the Deputy of Staff for Operations, Washington, DC. July 1956 also marked the second anniversary for the 71st Transportation Battalion since its reactivation. Approximately 100 officers and enlisted men of the 71st celebrated the occasion with a buffet lunch, ballgame and other entertainment. Brigadier General John S. Guthrie, acting Commanding General at Fort Riley, started the festivities by cutting the cake.



LTC Albert Newton

In September 1956, six H-21 Helicopters, five U-1A Otters, 22 pilots, and 16 enlisted mechanics attended the National Air Show at Will Rogers Field, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The air show lasted for three days over the Labor Day Weekend. Major Walter S. Makuch, Commanding Officer of the 52nd Transportation Battalion and Fifth Army Project Officer for the show, indicated that operations involving the aircraft went off smoothly and that the public, as well as military officials, directed considerable favorable remarks toward the Fort Riley operation. While at the air show, the Fort Riley pilots from the 93rd Transportation Company and the 14th Army Fixed Wing Tactical Transportation Company played a vital role in the operations. Eight officers and warrant officers from the two units were made honorary colonels on the staff of Governor Raymond Gary of Oklahoma.

January 1957 started out with a three-day air problem, Operation "Call and Hall." Helicopters, fixed wing U-1A "Otters" and Navy F-9F "Cougars" winged through the skies as the 2nd Army Fixed Wing Tactical Transportation Company and the 33rd Helicopter Company opened a three-day field problem. The Cougars, manned by Marine Reserve pilots from Olathe, Kansas, flew protection cover as Otters from the 2nd Aviation Company moved approximately 300 Infantry troops of the 16th Infantry from Herrington to the ranges of Fort Riley. When the Infantry soldiers jumped from the Otter, they immediately boarded waiting H21 Helicopters of the 33rd Transportation Company for a move deeper on the range. After the Infantrymen made initial landings, fixed wing aircraft and helicopters conducted resupply missions and moved troops to new locations as necessary.

In March 1957, the battalion was called upon to fly relief operations in western Kansas when communities there became literally buried beneath 20-foot snowdrifts. Units of the battalion conducted day and night rescue missions for several days. One incident included flying a mission to Denver, Colorado. Twin boys, born with RH factor in their blood, were flown from Goodland, Kansas, to Denver by Army helicopter for blood transfusions.

The spring of 1957 became a busy time for the battalion. It performed many missions and demonstrations, in addition to the strenuous relief operations in storm-stricken Western Kansas. In

addition to all of these missions, the battalion still carried out its unit training without delay. The Transition School also kept up its end of the operation by steadily turning out H-21 qualified pilots to support the units within the battalion.



3rd Anniversary of 71st Transportation Battalion at Fort Riley

19 July 1957 marked the third anniversary of the 71st Transportation Battalion. Brigadier General Van H. Bond, Assistant 1st Infantry Division Commander, honored the members of the 71st with his presence. He cut the birthday cake starting the celebration of the unit's third birthday. During those past three years, the unit had supervised the training of two helicopter companies while their supporting field maintenance detachment was still in unit training. In addition to the units, the 71st operated the Pilot Transition School, which taught helicopter pilots to fly the Army's large tandem rotor H-21 Helicopter. Fixed wing pilots learned the techniques of operating the large single-engine transport plane, the U-1A Otter.

On 6 August 1957, one H-21 Helicopter, the first of the group of twelve received at Fort Riley late in 1954, completed 1,000 hours of flying time at Fort Riley. Racking up 1,000 hours made the machine the first of its type in the world to log this much time, according to the Vertol Aircraft Corporation, builders of the aircraft. LTC Newton and CWO James D. Breshears, Senior Instructor Pilot, were at the controls of the helicopter when it completed its 1,000 hours of operation. Major General David H. Buchanon, Commanding General of Fort Riley, rode in the passenger compartment for a brief flight over the reservation and portions of the local community. Upon alighting from the helicopter, Hunter Rees, Technical Representative of the Vertol Helicopter Corporation presented General Buchanon with a model of the machine honoring the Army for having the first H-21 to fly 1,000 hours. The model was placed in Fort Riley's Museum as a permanent remembrance of the event. The remainder of 1957 was devoted to unit training, increasing the proficiency of the pilots and other personnel within the unit, and conducting the Transition School to qualify more pilots in the H-21 Helicopter. Since activation, the Transition School had graduated 37 classes, 3334 students, and total of 15,532 flying hours; a record indicating hard work and long hours of operation by the instructor personnel of the Transition School.

On 3 January 1958, LTC Walter Makuch assumed command of the 71st and Army Aviation Unit Training Command. On 20 Feb 1958, LTC Kenneth Langland assumed command of the 71st Transportation Battalion (Transport Aircraft).



LTC Walter Makuch prior to going to Germany

In 1959, the battalion was redesignated the 71 Transportation Battalion (Transport Aircraft). On 15 June 1959, 19th Transportation Company (Medium Helicopter), was activated at Fort Benning, Georgia, to become the third company to join the 71st. In early 1960, LTC Jack Smith assumed command of the 71st and LTC John Adie commanded the battalion from 1961 until 1962. On 23 October 1961, the 71st moved to Korea. The 71st was inactivated on 24 September 1963.

A Terminal Battalion

The US Army had assumed a major role in the ground war in the Republic of Vietnam. Vietnam had been divided after the defeat of the French in 1954 with the communists in the North and US-backed Diem regime in the South. After the Soviet Union tested their first nuclear bomb in 1949 and the Communist Chinese under Mao Tse Tung drove the Nationalist Chinese government out of the country that same year, the United States had taken a stance against Communist aggression around the globe. For this reason the United States entered into the Korean War and likewise defended the Diem Regime.

In 1965, the US Army's participation in South Vietnam escalated from an advisory capacity to a greater role in the ground war. Since the main port of Saigon was critical for the economic prosperity of South Vietnam, it could not handle the volume of military traffic and supplies needed to sustain the increasing number of American units arriving in Vietnam. US Army Vietnam would have to establish several sub ports throughout the country, at Da Nang, Qui Nhon, Cam Ranh Bay and also in the Saigon area. They would also need terminal battalions to operate each of those ports.

On 24 June 1965, the 71st Battalion was reactivated at Fort Story, Virginia, under the command of LTC Thomas Hoy. The 71st Battalion was attached to the 48th Transportation Group. Its normal growing pains of acquiring people and training them was aggravated by individual levies to fill other units going to Vietnam. It did receive the infusion of 225 enlisted personnel with the inactivation of the 2nd Engineer Amphibious Support Command on 15 August 1965. During its time at Fort Story, the battalion assumed responsibility for the training of the following companies with the handling of dummy containers:

- 82nd Transportation Company (Amphibious General Support)
- 458th Transportation Company (LARC)
- 461st Transportation Company (LARC)
- 558th Transportation Company (General Support)
- 870th Transportation Company (Terminal Service)
- 522nd Transportation Platoon (BARC)
- 554th Transportation Platoon (BARC)
- 170th Transportation Detachment (Direct Support)
- 148th Transportation Detachment (Direct Support)

In January 1966, the 71st Battalion and its attached units were detached from the 48th Group since the 48th Group was deploying to Long Binh, Vietnam, that May. The 71st became an autonomous battalion at Fort Story and answered directly to the US Army Transportation Center, Fort Eustis. The 82nd and 870th Transportation Companies and the 552nd BARC Platoon were also released from attachment for deployment to Vietnam. In July 1966, the Institute of Heraldry finally approved the design for the 71st Battalion's insignia with the motto, "Full Speed Ahead."

The broad arrow and sun from the Philippine flag represents the battalion's participation in the landings at Luzon during World War II. The green disc represents land, the roundel with wavy gold and blue bands symbolizes water; the new role of the battalion. The winged ends of the scroll present the air capability of transportation and the battalion's former function as an aviation battalion. Together they refer to the battalion's capability to support tactical operations by land, sea and air modes of transportation which it had done throughout its history. The colors red and gold represent the Transportation Corps while the blue represents the unit's initial assignment with the Quartermaster Corps. The battalion called itself the "Expeditors."



LTC Mosgrove and LTC Adams at Fort Eustis

In August 1966, the 71st Battalion, then commanded by LTC George G. Mosgrove, was finally alerted for its own deployment to Vietnam. On 7 September 1966, the advance party arrived in Vietnam. The main body of the Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment followed and landed at Tan Son Nhut in October 1966. While waiting at the replacement camp, enemy guerrillas probed it their first night in country. After they finished processing in country, they were driven out to a patch of jungle near Long Binh and told to build a camp. At that time there were only three other units there.



Early Headquarters 71st Bn sign at 'Camp Camelot', Long Binh, RVN.

The 71st Battalion fell under the 4th Transportation Command, commanded by Brigadier General Jack Fuson, and the US Army Support Command, Saigon. To carry out its mission, the battalion received

the attachment of five recently activated terminal service companies. The 567th “Pier Masters” arrived from Fort Eustis on 7 September 1966; the 368th “Deck Devils” arrived from Fort Meade, Maryland, on 21 October 1966; the 561st arrived from Fort Eustis on 23 October 1966, and the 154th “Anchor Team” arrived from Okinawa on 1 January 1967. After their arrival, the men cleared the area of booby traps and vegetation with borrowed bulldozers from the engineers.



Stevedores lived in tents (GP Medium) until permanent structures were available.

They then erected tents, built their latrines, mess and recreation facilities, dug trenches and strung barbed wire. Since there was no infantry support, the stevedores pulled their own perimeter security. They named their new home “Camp Camelot.”

It had previously become obvious to the 1st Logistical Command that it needed an additional port facility to augment the Saigon area. The massive buildup of American troops and the required cargo to sustain them overtaxed the capabilities of Saigon Port. This created a huge congestion of ships waiting in Vietnamese waters. General William Westmoreland, Commander of US Military Assistance Command, directed his staff to develop plans for the construction of a port facility up river near Long Binh. Navy CBs began construction on the \$50,000,000 port facility.



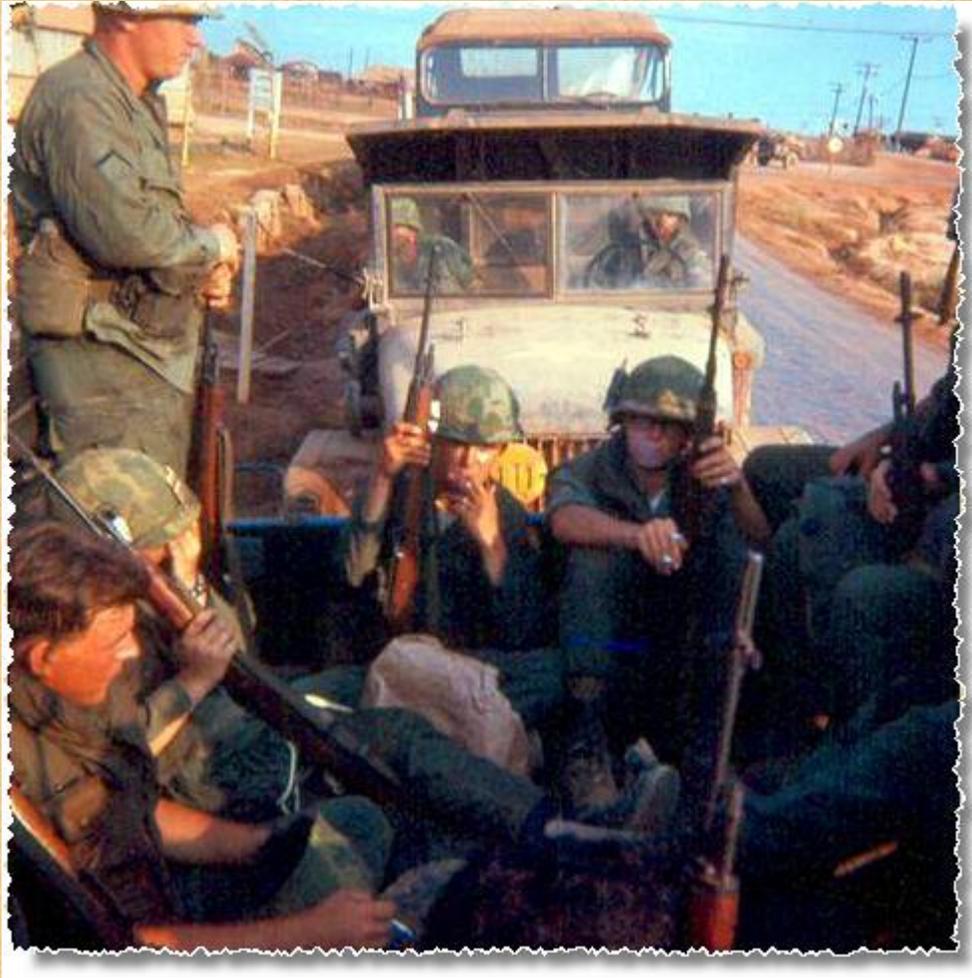
Newport warehouses under construction

Initially the Navy CBs constructed two Navy LST ramps, an LCU ramp and a wharf capable of handling seven barges. In October 1966, the stevedores of the 71st Battalion went to work offloading cargo at the ramps and wharf. The 117th Terminal Service Company from Saigon came in August on temporary duty discharge barges at the barge site. The battalion worked in 12-hour shifts. The engineers then constructed four berths for deep draft, ocean-going vessels, one which could handle roll-on/roll-off ships. Additional facilities included both warehouses and open storage space behind each pier, plus a large parking area for the sea-land containers. As the engineers completed the port of Newport, the 71st Battalion offloaded its first deep draft vessel in April 1967. The port officially opened on 11 July 1967. The new water terminal facility north of Saigon was appropriately named Newport. It received its first container ship in October.



Completed terminal 1967

The newest docks in the Saigon area served rerouted ships, which formerly tied up much of Saigon Port's traffic. They were also refined for expedient handling of USAID/CIP cargo. From then on Newport discharged military cargo and personnel for delivery by 48th Transportation Group trucks to units throughout Military Region III. It was a rewarding experience for the stevedores to actually move real cargo.



Stevedores going to work in convoy from Camp Camelot to Newport



Stevedores waited on this bridge over Saigon River NE of Saigon on QL1 towards Long Binh due to traffic delays (probably MP traffic checks looking for burned out tail lights and operator permits)



Cargo Supervisors at ship and barge sites



Forklift in hold loading lumber for construction



Rigging projos for crane movement



Rough Terrain Cargo handler (forklift) loading LCU



Crane loading small arms ammo on barge



Crane loading 5 ton and semi-trailer



368th Transportation Company and mascot

The 368th “Deck Devils” had the primary mission of discharging and backloading operations of the two deep-draft piers at Newport. It consistently discharged or backloaded in excess of 30,000 short tons of cargo monthly. This company established the 4th Transportation Command record by discharging 6,006 short tons of cargo in a 24-hour period, from 8-9 December 1969. It also set a record in a 24-hour period of discharging 789 short tons of refrigerated cargo during the period 23-24 November 1969. The 567th “Pier Masters” received the mission of port and beach clearance.

The 551st “The Pace Setters” Terminal Service Company arrived at Cam Ranh Bay on 11 September 1966 then transferred to Newport under the 71st Battalion in March 1967. It received responsibility for discharging cargo at two berths and operating four in-transit storage sheds. The 71st also provided materiel handlers for other areas in Military Region III.

The 368th had an additional assignment to operate the air cargo terminal at Tan Son Nhut Air Base. The 71st Battalion also sent stevedore detachments down to Vung Tau in 1967 for a temporary mission to conduct in-stream discharge of landing craft at a bare beach. At Vung Tau, the stevedores offloaded ammunition onto LCUs or barges towed by LCMs for transport up the Mekong Delta. Any excess was stored at the Ammunition Supply Point there. This temporary mission became more permanent. Vung Tau even became a Rest and Recreation (R&R) Center in Military Region III, so the 71st Battalion rotated the detachments for duty there.

In December 1966, a detachment of the 567th “Pier Masters” moved up the Mekong Delta to support the 9th Infantry Division Base Camp at Dong Tam. This detachment was the first American unit at Dong Tam and had the supplies waiting on the beach for the 9th Infantry Division when they arrived.

In the first year, guerrillas attacked on the camp with snipers and mortar fire at least ten times. As more units arrived and the camp grew, the enemy activity decreased. For the most part, Newport became relatively quiet for a while.

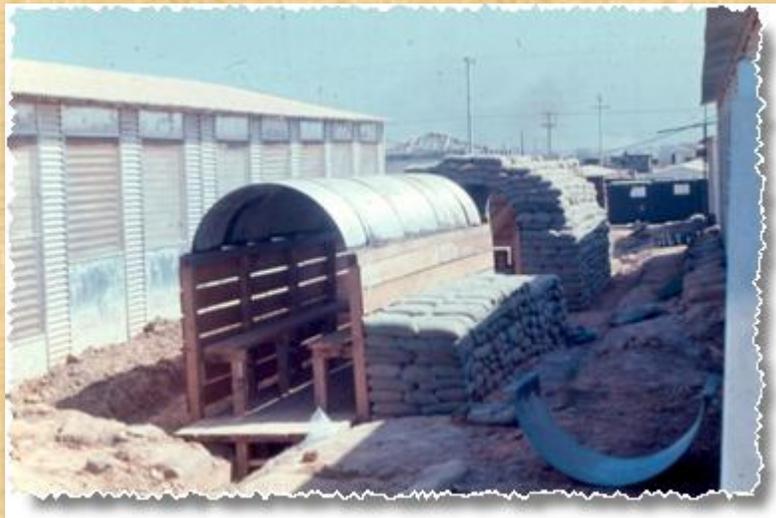
Soon after the companies had erected their tents at Camp Camelot in 1966, they began laying the foundations for their metal structures. By the summer of 1967, corrugated tin structures had replaced almost all the tents at Camelot.



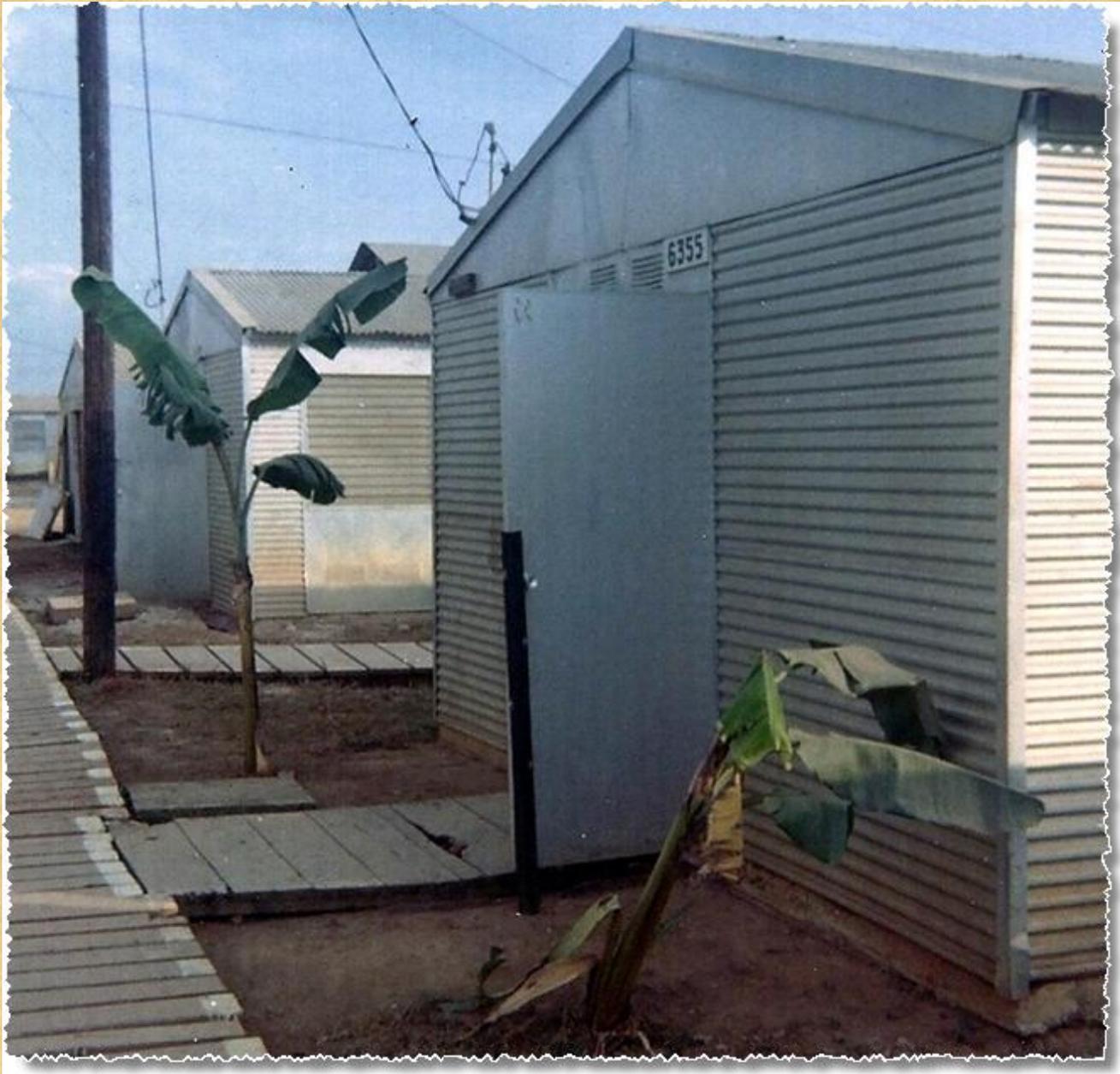
Transition from canvas tents to metal buildings



Construction for metal huts (and the mud)



Construction of bunkers between barracks huts



Front of metal hut (hootch) with banana trees



Human solid waste (excrement) disposal – mixed with diesel to burn



Local Vietnamese women cleaning mud from boots and polishing them



Hanging out with the barracks cleaning lady



Typical locker setting



Normal time off in the hootch



View of the crowd at a Bob Hope USO show



Bob Hope and friends – USO show 1967

On 31 January 1968, the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army launched a major offensive under the secrecy of a truce during the celebration of the Vietnamese lunar New Year called Tet. The enemy, which had up to then waged a guerrilla war, launched major attacks against military installations and key cities. One of their objectives was to close the American lines of communication to the combat units. They attacked the sub-ports of Hue, Dong Ha, Da Nang, Qui Nhon and Newport.



L-R -- SP4 Morawa, SP4 Schaub, SGT Krabbenhoeft aboard APC (armored personnel carrier) at Newport



Guard tower 8 at Newport



Morning after battle --2 Feb 68 -- expressing attitude of a long night fighting 'Charlie'

For several weeks prior to the Tet Offensive, the men at Long Binh and Newport heard that the enemy planned a big enemy offensive. Alerted to a possible enemy attack, COL C. E. McCandless, the commander of Newport, had no other troops to augment his meager MP force than stevedores. He ordered the stevedores to bring all their combat gear, which consisted of M14 rifles, flak jackets and steel pots, to the port.

The guards received their first two .50 caliber machineguns right after New Years Day. A week later the guards received six armored personnel carriers (APC). This required the battalion to add more men to the guard platoon. They quickly trained up on the APCs.¹

On the night of 31 January, McCandless augmented the security force from the 720th MP Battalion with his stevedores. The only access was the Newport Bridge, where they expected the attack to come from. He told his men to take up positions behind CONEXs facing the south end of the bridge and others to watch in case the enemy tried to cross the river. He also stationed an APC with a .50 caliber machinegun parked at the south (main) gate. There was another APC between the old mess hall and the maintenance building. The night of 1 February, the eight to ten men working in the maintenance building were told to take up defensive positions outside their building. They and the APC were the closest to the Newport Bridge that loomed over them to the south.²

Just after midnight, the stevedores heard small arms fire from the north side of the bridge where a bunker manned by ARVN soldiers guarded its entrance. Around 0200 hours, SP4 Alfred Krabbenhoeft and his APC crew of five at the main gate received small arms fire from across the highway. He had three men down in front of the APC. PFC Hoffman fired a few hundred rounds of his .50 until things went quiet. They then saw Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) soldiers walking toward them from over the bridge. The Newport Bridge was a large four-lane bridge that arched high in the middle. Newport was located below and adjacent to where the bridge reached land. The more than usual numbers and types of weapons made the guards suspicious. At 0200 hours, they opened fire.³

As the initial fighting died down, the stevedores saw movement across the middle of the bridge. The 3rd Battalion, 273rd Viet Cong Regiment dressed as ARVN took up position along the concrete railing. This position gave them a commanding view of Newport and they fired their machineguns down on the stevedores below. Al Furtado, who was standing on the cab of a crane to get a better view of the bridge, jumped off the crane and joined his friends, Frank Carletta and Bill Siller, on the ground. One of them told him, "I told you not to go up there." The battle was on.⁴

A lieutenant came over and told the stevedores near the maintenance building to take up a position right up to the chain link fence. He said that more men were coming up and the VC might cross the river which was 25 feet on the other side. There was no cover along the fence. By that time the VC were firing mortars down on the defenders. Rounds landed in every direction of the first line of stevedores.⁵

Those working the docks came up and took position about 50 to 75 feet behind the first line of stevedores, without their knowledge. When they opened fire, it scared the first line of defenders, as they thought the VC had infiltrated behind them. They soon realized that those behind them were Americans. The noise of the battle was deafening. For men trained at loading and unloading cargo,

¹ SGT Alfred "Al" E. Krabbenhoeft, "The Guarding of Newport Terminal," <http://www.allanfurtado.com/andrewansenberger.html>.

² Al Furtado, "The Battle At The Newport Bridge/Terminal Tet 1968," <http://www.allanfurtado.com/newportbattle.html>

³ Krabbenhoeft.

⁴ Furtado, "The Battle At The Newport Bridge."

⁵ Furtado, "The Battle At The Newport Bridge."

the battle resembled total chaos. There were LCMs down near the port which fired their .50s but their angle could hit VC.⁶

The enemy directed their mortar and rocket fire at the APC while the crew held their position under intense fire. When the .50 ran out of ammunition, Al Krabbenhoeft ran back to the ammunition point and returned with the needed ammunition.⁷

The battle continued for two to three hours then calmed down. A Viet Cong in perfect English yelled down, "Kill GI, send home in body bag!" Suddenly, an ARVN M41 tank came up from the south and slowly lumbered its way up the bridge firing machineguns and occasionally stopping to fire its cannon. The enemy retreated back up the bridge until the tank broke down. Another tank followed behind it and held the VC at bay. About that time, several helicopter gun ships flew in firing their machineguns and rockets at the enemy on the bridge. After 45 minutes the fight ended. When the time came for their shift to change, the new crew asked in astonishment what had happened that night. The night shift climbed into the trucks for the ride back to Camp Camelot across the bridge they had defended. They saw the bridge littered with the black pajama clad bodies of their enemy. For the defenders, it had been a long night; the only night that Newport shut down terminal operations.⁸

⁶ Allan Furtado and Tom Le Moine, interview questionnaires, 2002, and Furtado, "The Battle At The Newport Bridge."

⁷ Headquarters, US Army Support Command, Saigon, General Orders Number 279, Award of the Army Commendation Medal, 18 March 1968.

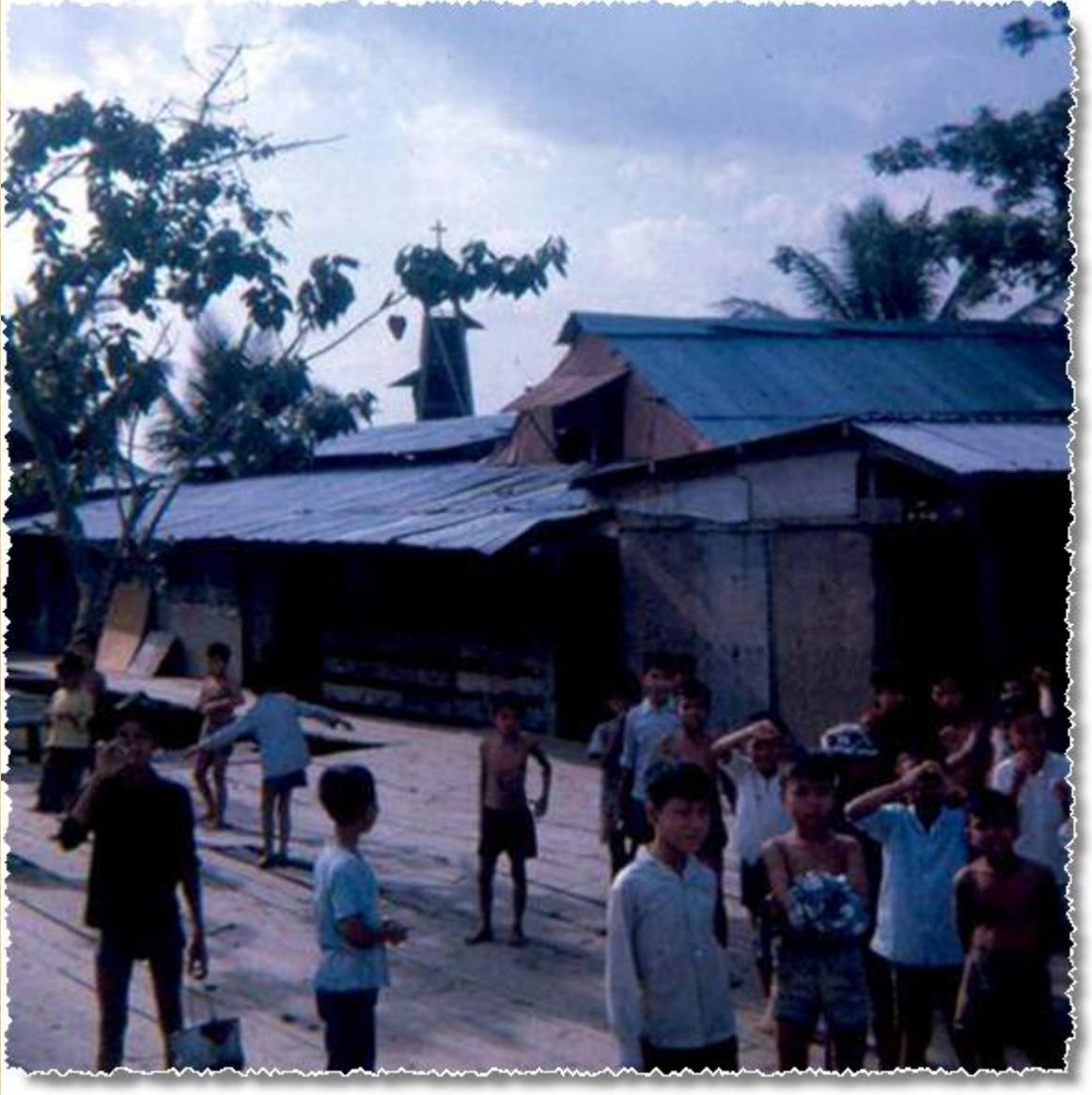
⁸ Krabbenhoeft, Furtado, "The Battle At The Newport Bridge."



missing section of bridge at QLI over Saigon River at Newport

In May 1968, Viet Cong activity increased so an artillery battery moved in just across the entrance from Newport. They fired their 105mm cannons every night. The stevedores came under mortar attacks several times that month. Once they completed their sand bagged bunkers, they were relatively safe from danger if they reached them in time. A rocket attack on the night of 12 May 1968 blew out a large section of the Newport Bridge. Traffic could continue down the other lane. The 71st received more augmentation and then planned its withdrawal.

The 372nd Terminal Transfer “Tonnage Tigers” Company was activated in December 1968 and immediately sent to Vietnam. They received the task of operating one-deep draft berth at Newport and operating the Ho Nai Railhead.



Catholic orphanage next to Newport, school and living area shown here.



this mini-MP (orphan) has everything under control

The Delores Orphanage was located near the Newport docks. The Battalion chaplains, Bob Wills and later Jack Park, helped out there as one of their civic projects. The stevedores became very fond of the kids and regularly donated money and gifts to them. The 71st Battalion spent a year constructing a new orphanage several miles north of Long Binh and move there in February 1969.⁹

Since Richard M. Nixon had run for the presidency with the promise to get Americans out of the war, he initiated a drawdown of forces in 1969. The first units began to retrograde through Newport.

On 25 May 1969, the US Army Transportation Battalion, Saigon (Provisional) was organized to replace the 125th Transportation Command. The 154th Terminal Service Company was reassigned to the Provisional Saigon Battalion to operate three deep-draft berths in the commercial Port of Saigon. The 567th "Pier Masters" relocated to Camp Davies, near Saigon, to discharge and backload cargo and conduct port clearance of one military deep draft berth and berths of opportunity in the commercial port. They also supervised two contract stevedore companies. During August, as part of turning the war over to the Vietnamese, the company began training crews of the ARVN Saigon Transportation Terminal Command and assisted in discharging ARVN cargo with them. During May, the 71st Battalion changed the mission of the 372nd to operating the seven barge sites, two LST sites and two LCU sites as a transshipment yard, dunnage yard and the roll-on/roll-off facility at Newport. They received the additional mission to operate the Army air cargo terminal at Bien Hoa Air Base. In

⁹ CPT Chaplain Jack Parks, <http://www.allanfurtado.com/jackpark.html>.

December 1969, the US Army operations in the Port of Saigon ended and the 154th returned to the 71st Battalion and ran the retrograde yard and vehicle wash facilities at Newport and the river barge site at Tay Ninh in support of the 25th Infantry Division. The 567th returned to Long Binh for duty with the 79th Maintenance Battalion.

LTC Frederick H. Hagreen, III, LTC John P. Santry, and LTC Harold G. Lloyd followed Musgrove in command of the 71st. In 1969, the American policy shifted to turning responsibility of the war over to the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN). With Vietnamization, the 71st began training ARVN soldiers to run the port. By 1970, 4th Transportation Command had turned over all the ports in the Saigon area except Newport. Finally the 71st turned the port over to the Vietnamese and left Vietnam on 20 August 1972. The 71st Battalion received two Meritorious Unit Commendations for its service in Vietnam, 1968-69 and 1972. On 22 August 1972, the 71st Transportation Battalion arrived at Fort Eustis from Vietnam and was attached to the 7th Transportation Group. It was then inactivated on 19 December 1976.



Casing of the 71st Trans Bn colors during informal ceremonies conducted in Bn CO office 14 Aug 72 in Newport, RVN



Fort Eustis Port

A Training Battalion

The buildup of troops in the Vietnam War that created the need for the 71st Terminal Battalion likewise placed a greater demand on the US Army Transportation School to train soldiers. The Transportation School would have to create new units to manage that increased responsibility for soldier support and training. A later event would cause the 71st Terminal Battalion and the 2nd Staff and Faculty Battalion to cross paths.

On 23 October 1967, the organization of 2nd Staff and Faculty Battalion was activated along with the 1st and 2nd Staff and Faculty Companies. Headquarters and Headquarters Company, US Army Transportation Corps, Fort Eustis (USATCFE) was also attached to the battalion. The battalion's mission was to provide command, administration and logistical support to military staff and faculty for the Transportation School. LTC Robert E. Adams commanded the battalion upon its activation. The battalion was attached to the Transportation School Brigade. The brigade had the mission to provide leadership, soldierization and socialization training for soldiers. LTC Daniel A. Lenz assumed command from Adams on 16 November 1968. LTC J. F. Tucker, Jr., assumed command from Lenz on 20 October 1969.

In 1970, the Transportation School underwent its first organizational changes. The 2nd Staff and Faculty Battalion became just the Staff and Faculty Battalion. It picked up the attachment of the Student Officers Company and the Woman's Army Corps (WAC) Company. At that time women served only in administrative and medical roles in their own branch of the Army. LTC Philip Tinsley, Jr., assumed command of the battalion on 21 January 1971. LTC John P. Stokes, III, next assumed command from Tinsley on 20 January 1972.

On May 1, 1973, the Staff and Faculty Battalion was redesignated the Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, Staff and Faculty Battalion. LTC W. R. Benoit assumed command from Stokes on 19 January 1974. LTC Richard D. Kallestad then assumed command from him on 29 May 1975. The battalion remained very much unchanged until 1976.

A major reorganization took place Army-wide in 1976. US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) directed the implementation of the School Model 76, as a result of the Institutional Technology Symposium conducted on 19 May 1975. The new School Model predicted a streamlined, efficient educational environment maximizing the state-of-the art technology, such as self-paced instruction and educational television. The US Army Transportation School completely reorganized. The Assistant Commandant ordered the initial phase of the new School Model implemented effective 1 March. The first phase realigned the directorates. The next phase affected the Transportation School Brigade.

The Student Officer Company, E and F Companies were assigned to the 2nd Staff and Faculty Battalion on 1 May. Both E and F Companies supervised Advanced Individual Training (AIT) students. On 12 May 1976, the battalion was redesignated 2nd Battalion. The 2nd Staff and Faculty Company was relieved from 2nd Battalion and attached to 1st Battalion on 12 May. By the end of the reorganization of the Transportation School, 2nd Battalion had the following companies:

- 1st Staff and Faculty Company
- Student Officers Company
- Company E (AIT) (Assigned)
- Company F (AIT) (Assigned)
- Headquarters Company, USATCFE (Attached)
- 504th MP Company (Attached)
- 1st Rail Detachment (Attached)

On 29 November 1976, LTC Peter J. Bistany assumed command of the battalion. LTC William R. Rigabar later assumed command from him on 7 June 1979. LTC (P) John Avery replaced him on 9 January 1980. LTC Thomas C. Wakefield followed him in command on 9 July 1982. The US Army Transportation Corps MP Company was attached to the battalion on 1 January 1983. LTC Charles D. Guilliams assumed command of the battalion on 10 July 1984. In September 1984, 57H Detachment was organized at Fort Story and attached to the 2nd Battalion. It provided billeting, discipline and soldierization training for 88H10 (cargo handler specialist) soldiers undergoing training at Fort Story.

By 1 October 1985, G and H Companies were also attached to the 2nd Battalion. G Company had responsibility for administrative and logistical support and discipline for assigned and attached student officers and warrant officers. E, F and H Companies supervised the enlisted soldiers attending the Advanced Individual Training.

2nd Battalion grew to seven companies with over 2100 soldiers. They had the mission to command, provide administrative and logistical support, and conduct unit soldierization training for all personnel assigned or attached. Additionally, the battalion actively supported post and community activities receiving numerous awards and laudatory comments.

The event that combined the history of this and the 71st Battalion occurred in 1986. When the Transportation Corps Regiment was activated in July 1986, several training battalions prepared to trade in their colors for Transportation Battalions with long distinguished histories. The Regimental System was created to foster a spirit of pride, unity, camaraderie, cohesion and cooperation among

Transportation Corps soldiers. On 23 October 1986, the 2nd Battalion was reflagged the 71st Transportation Battalion. While the 2nd Battalion ceased to exist with the casing of its colors, its tradition lived on as the same men served under a new flag, one with its own rich legacy. The 71st Battalion, under the command of LTC James W. Burns, assumed the same mission of training support to the US Transportation and Aviation Logistics Schools. The 71st Battalion had the following attached units:

- 2nd Staff and Faculty Company
- Company E (AIT)
- Company F (AIT)
- Company G (Student Officers)
- Company H (AIT)
- Headquarters Post
- Military Police Company

Similarly, the Transportation School Brigade was reflagged as the 8th Transportation Brigade on 14 July.

In April 1987, the instruction program of the 88H10s changed to include instruction on loading and offloading Fast Sealift Ships moored at Lamberts Point in Norfolk with the Haglund crane. The course increased from six to nine weeks in length. This increased the number of soldiers stationed at Fort Story and required more drill sergeants. On 15 December 1987, the 57H Detachment was reorganized and redesignated as Company I, 71st Battalion. LTC Burns presented the guidon to the new commander, CPT James S. Belk, who in turn presented it to 1SG Harvey B. Anderson as customary. I Company also took over the administrative control of students attending the LACV-30 and Rough Terrain Container Handler training.

On 12 May 1988, Major Donald G. Tucker assumed command of 71st Battalion remaining in charge for one month, until 1 July 1988 when LTC Donald J. Bruns assumed command. On July 30 1988, 71st Transportation Battalion was reorganized to include a headquarters and headquarters detachment and five training companies, E through I. I Company was at Fort Story. The MP Company and 2nd Staff and Faculty Company went to the newly activated 765th Transportation Battalion.

On 26 July 1990, LTC Robert Kubiszewski assumed command of the 71st Battalion during an interesting period. He had the significant challenge to maintain the same quality in the face of budget cuts. One month later, in August 1990, the 71st Battalion changed its mission drastically due to the advent of Operation Desert Shield. US led coalition forces deployed to Saudi Arabia in response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The coalition force sought to prevent further aggression. Additional deployments to Saudi Arabia built up enough forces to go on the offensive and drive the Iraqi army out of Kuwait. 7th Group deployed to theater to open up the lines of communication. In addition to its training mission, the 71st Battalion also assumed command and control of activated Reserve and National Guard units mobilized. They also assumed command of the following non-deployed 7th Group (Forces Command) units:

- HHC, 7th Transportation Group

HHD, 6th Transportation Battalion
HHC, 10th Transportation Battalion
HHC, 24th Transportation Battalion
264th Transportation Company
119th Transportation Company
155th Transportation Company
424th Transportation Company
551st Transportation Company
870th Transportation Company
74th Transportation Detachment
157th Transportation Detachment
358th Transportation Detachment
491st Transportation Detachment
511th Diving Detachment
26th Quartermaster Detachment

The 71st Battalion also picked up the Provost Marshal Augmentation Force's (PMAF) role from the 7th Group after they deployed. On 4 May 1991, the 71st Battalion established a demobilization cell to provide logistical, administrative and transportation support for Army Reserve and National Guard units and individuals redeploying from Saudi Arabia. To accomplish this, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 71st Battalion was also augmented with the 90th, 126th and 546th Detachments. F Company was inactivated on 10 May. After 7th Group returned, the 71st Battalion released the attached non-deployed units in August 1991.

On 8 July 1992, LTC Susan S. Halter assumed command of 71st Battalion and remained there until 7 July 1994 when she handed LTC Phillip Gick the colors. In 1994, civil strife in Haiti caused an increase in refugees fleeing the island. The President sent the refugees to the US Marine Corps base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. US Forces Command ordered soldiers from Forts Hood, Texas, and Polk, Louisiana, to intercept Cuban and Haitian boat refugees heading for the US mainland. They were to take them to Guantanamo Bay, Panama or Suriname. These soldiers processed through Fort Eustis, and administrative specialists from the 71st Battalion received the task of greeting the deploying soldiers and escorting them through their processing.



Class 4-94 Begins 10K Road March

The next commanders of 71st Transportation Battalion were LTC Donna Simkins, from 27 July 1996 to 27 June 1998; LTC Donald Horner, Jr. from 28 Jun 1998 to 1 June 2000; and LTC Stephen D. Fraunfelter from 2 June 2000 to 6 June 2002. The 71st Battalion finished out the millennium with little change to its mission and organization.

The new millennium brought about new organizational change. On 29 May 2001, Company I was redesignated as Company H and transferred from Fort Story to Fort Eustis.

In 2002, 8th Brigade realigned companies among the battalions. F Company moved from the 765th Transportation Battalion to the 71st Transportation Battalion on 2 January. The International Military Students Office was responsible for the foreign students who attended the Transportation School and US Army Aviation Logistics School. The lettered Companies A through D would be in the 1/222nd Aviation and E through H in the 71st Transportation Battalion. HHC, 71st Transportation Battalion was redesignated 2nd Staff and Faculty on 9 January. On 6 June 2002, LTC Douglas J. Knight assumed command of the 71st Transportation Battalion.

71st Battalion consisted of the following units:

- Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment
- 2nd Staff and Faculty
- Company E (AIT)
- Company F (International Military Students Office)
- Company G (Student Officers)
- Company H (AIT) (reclassification)

The 71st Transportation Battalion's mission was to prepare enlisted soldiers and officers for war, including combat lessons and experiences learned as part of the school realistic battle-focused training. The pride and accomplishments of previous soldiers of the 71st Battalion, who drove trucks in the Pacific Theater of World War II, trained helicopter crews in Kansas, and delivered cargo to soldiers in

Vietnam, had been passed down to the trainers and cadre of the 71st Battalion today. It was through this identity that soldiers build esprit. The legacy of the soldiers who served before built pride in the quality of soldiers they produced.

Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)

On 13 May 2005, the Secretary of Defense published his Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) recommendations, which required the consolidation of similar branch centers and schools to single posts for better efficiency in training. The Ordnance and Transportation Centers and Schools would move to Fort Lee, Virginia and consolidate with the Quartermaster Center and School to become a part of the Sustainment Center of Excellence (SCOE). This would have a significant effect on the future of the 71st Transportation Battalion.

TRADOC established the staffing standard, which stated there must be an average daily school load of 300 students for a company, and there must be between three and seven companies in a school battalion, with five the optimum number. TRADOC also took the staff and faculty companies out of the SCOE structure and placed the personnel into the Brigade HHCs.¹⁰ This decision would have not only a catastrophic effect on the future of 8th Transportation Brigade, but the 71st Transportation Battalion. The intent of the consolidation of like minded schools onto one post, Fort Lee for sustainment schools, was to increase efficiency. In the case of the Transportation School, it divided the school even further. The truck driver schools were at Fort Bliss, Texas and Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. Somehow the BRAC Committee overlooked the fact that Fort Lee did not have a port and the Transportation School ran a maritime school and stevedore training. This meant that only part of the Transportation School could move to Fort Lee, not enough to justify a even Transportation battalion command by the TRADOC staffing standard. The future of the 71st Transportation Battalion was in doubt.

COL Jimmie D. Davis, the CASCOM BRAC Planner, had three contractors, Mary Ann Dancer, Karen Farren, and Carolyn Whip, called the “Ya Yas,” a local name they acquired from hanging around together. Davis became the CASCOM hatchet man for BRAC, The “Cobra” study (Cost of Base Realignment) had recommended back in 2003 that CASCOM give up 683 additional spaces (RIF). Davis office even recommended that his headquarters give up 220.¹¹ With the loss of the staff and faculty, the Transportation School had something less than 300 personnel, not even enough to fill the company requirement, so COL Davis recommended inactivating the 8th Transportation Brigade, 71st Transportation Battalion and realigning the 1/222nd Aviation Regiment under US Army Aviation Logistics School (USAALS). The 765th Transportation Battalion was already scheduled for inactivation in 2006.¹²

MG Brian Geehan, Chief of Transportation, had made the decision in 2005 to inactivate the 765th Transportation Battalion based on the changing environment in the 8th Transportation Brigade. Initial Entry Training (IET) student population in the 8th Brigade had declined over the past five years. This decline in student population reduced span of control requirements and thus reduced justification for a third battalion headquarters. Simultaneously, authorizations for critical positions in the Brigade were

¹⁰ COL Jimmie Davis telephone interview by Richard Killblane, November 26, 2007.

¹¹ Keir Sterling email to Richard Killblane, Monday, November 26, 2007.

¹² Keir Sterling email to Richard Killblane, Monday, November 26, 2007.

significantly reduced. Reductions in critical support positions were made at significantly higher rates than the reduction in student population. At that time the 8th Brigade provided direct support to training for the US Army Transportation Center and School. Current and projected TDAs did not document sufficient authorizations in key staff and Direct Support to Training Event (DSTE) positions.¹³

While the inactivation of the 765th Transportation Battalion was not an ideal solution, it offered some benefits. The companies of the 765th would be attached to both the 71st Battalion and 1/222nd Aviation Regiment. Span of control of the two remaining battalion headquarters would increase to eight companies per battalion – supportable because of the co-location with the brigade headquarters. The 18 authorizations recovered from HHD, 765th Transportation Battalion would also remain in the 8th Transportation Brigade and be programmed against valid, critical requirements particularly against DSTE positions in the 508th Transportation Company at a loss of ten military requirements. Similarly, the office spaces within the building then occupied by 765th Battalion would be redistributed within 8th Brigade as well as the equipment and furnishings.¹⁴

After the 765th Transportation Battalion was inactivated on 11 June 2006, the 71st Battalion picked up the 508th Transportation Company, the 202nd MP Company and the 221st MP Detachment. F Company was inactivated and H Company moved to the 1/222nd Aviation Regiment. The 71st Battalion then consisted of the following:

- 2nd Staff and Faculty Company
- Company E (AIT)
- Company G (Student Officers)
- 508th Transportation Company
- 202nd MP Company
- 221st MP Detachment

While the 221st MP Detachment provided local law enforcement on Fort Eustis, the 202nd Military Police Company was a unique organization. The 202nd MP Company had been activated at Fort Eustis on 16 March 2004. The MP Company was the first of ten new Regular Army MP companies designated with an enemy prisoner of war (EPW) mission and had three platoons and a headquarters. All the others were in the Reserve and Guard component. CPT William Neal had arrived in January 2003 to organize the company. The first sergeant was 1SG Michael Hawkins. The first increment of personnel arrived in November 2003 and was temporarily assigned to the 221st MP Detachment for law enforcement. The lieutenants did not arrive until the summer of 2004. The NCOs began arriving throughout the year. SSG Terry Dunlap and about four other MPs had actual experience in EPW and SSG Dunlap had served at Guantanamo Bay. He provided the subject matter expertise for training and organization of the company.¹⁵

The company was attached to the 765th Transportation Battalion and trained at Fort A. P. Hill culminating with an ARTEP. From then on the company began preparing for mobilization for overseas deployment. The company completed its 72-hour Detainee Operation Validation in

¹³ “Stationing Summary for the Inactivation of the 765th Transportation Battalion” n.d.

¹⁴ “Stationing Summary for the Inactivation of the 765th Transportation Battalion” n.d.

¹⁵ Interview with CPT William Neal, 1SG Brent Bacon and SSG Terry Dunlap by Richard Killblane, 4 March 2004.

November. The 6632nd Military Police Company (USAR), from California, played the role of the detainees and the 716th MP Battalion from Fort Campbell, Kentucky, provided the evaluation. Upon completion of the validation, the 202nd MP Company was ready to deploy.¹⁶

On 29 December 2004, the 202nd MP Company deployed out of Langley Air Force Base for a six-month tour of duty in Afghanistan. The 202nd MP Company became the only deployable unit under the 71st Transportation Battalion.

Meanwhile, the Transportation Center and School BRAC team led by COL Brent Hamm, brought to the attention of CASCOM that while the Quartermaster and Ordnance Schools would still have brigades and battalions at Fort Lee, the Transportation School would have no battalion or brigade representation. In fairness, CASCOM agreed to redesignate the Student Officer Battalion as the 71st, but with complications.

Around August 2006, COL Davis briefed MG Mitch Stevenson, CASCOM Commander, on the multiple BRAC and SCOE issues that needed his decision. COL Davis recommended that the brigades become sustainment brigades or logistics brigades, but Stevenson did not approve it. The “gray beards” did not want to give up their branch designations. Davis wanted the commands to be generic logistical units. They then briefed Wallace on the decision for concurrence in January 2007.¹⁷

Keeping in line with his desire to make all units generic logistics, Davis’ original idea was to name the 71st a Student Officer Battalion, without reference to its Transportation designation, after it moved to at Army Logistics Management College (ALMC) (soon to become the Army Logistics University). On 7 November 2007, Richard Killblane, Transportation Corps Historian contacted Jennifer Nichols at the Center of Military History (CMH) and learned that CMH would not approve carrying the lineage and honors of any unit over to a named unit. Killblane passed this information over to COL Hamm who forwarded it to COL Davis. COL Davis wanted documentation of that information. The next day, Killblane had Nichols explain the CMH policy to Hamm in an email which he forwarded to Davis. Nichols admitted that CASCOM could keep the lineage and honors of the 71st Transportation Battalion and designate it a support battalion, but the complaint in the Transportation Corps was that only the Transportation units were being eliminated. While Davis was trying to be fair in making all TDA units generic, the fact that the Ordnance and Quartermaster Corps still had their branch designation gave the impression that Davis had an eraser and was erasing any mention of the Transportation Corps.¹⁸

After Killblane sent the recommendation from CMH concerning the 71st Transportation Battalion, MG Mitch Stevenson contacted several people, most notably BG (P) James Chambers, Chief of Transportation at Ft Eustis, and asked for his recommendation. When Chambers in essence concurred with Killblane, Stevenson within two weeks approved the new designation as 71st Transportation Battalion (Student Officer), which allowed the new organization to retain its proud TC lineage and honors.¹⁹

¹⁶ Pvt Steven Cooke, “202 MP Co. confident, ready to deploy,” *The Wheel*, November 24, 2004.

¹⁷ Keir Sterling email to Richard Killblane, Monday, November 26, 2007.

¹⁸ COL Brent Hamm to COL Jimmie Davis, November 7 and 8, 2007; to Richard Killblane, November 8, 2007; COL Jimmie Davis email to COL Brent Hamm, November 8, 2007; and Jennifer Nichols email to COL Brent Hamm, November 8, 2007.

¹⁹ Sterling email.

The BRAC planners then had to decide what to do with the remaining units and billets after the 8th Transportation Brigade would inactivate and 71st Transportation Battalion colors transfer to Fort Lee. The 221st MP Company would transfer to Garrison while the 202nd MP Company was scheduled to deploy overseas. Upon its return, the 202nd MP Company would be reassigned to another post. E Company (AIT) would remain at Fort Eustis and fall under the 266th QM Battalion. G Company (Student Officer) would move to Fort Lee and fall under the Student Officer Battalion. The Marine Training Division at Third Port would obviously remain at Fort Eustis, but the remaining military billets of the 508th Transportation Company would become the Transportation Training Support Office (TTSO). In November 2007, the initial recommendation was that the residual command and control billets left over from the 8th Transportation Brigade, after it was inactivated, would be assigned to the E Company, 266th QM Battalion; but by 21 November, the decision was made to assign them to administrative and logistical support to USAALS, while still remain under the operational control of the Transportation School, which would move to Fort Lee.²⁰

During a BRAC meeting on 20 November 2007, BG Chambers told COL Hamm he wanted the Transportation Training Support Office (TTSO) structured as a TDA company and redesignated the 508th Transportation Company as the forward support element. A detachment will remain at Fort Eustis. Currently there was only one Transportation designated unit in the entire SCOE. COL Davis wanted to focus on the SCOE structure but was open to exceptions which would allow consideration of carrying over the designation of the 508th TC. So on 23 November, COL Hamm asked Killblane to carry over the designation of the 508th to Fort Lee.

The 508th Transportation Company had an unusual history. Back on 17 October 2001, the Training and Augmentation Detachment (TAD) was redesignated the 508th Transportation Company and was attached to 765th Transportation Battalion. According to COL John Race, then the Chief of Staff and former commander of the 508th, the TAD had originally been the 508th before so he directed that the detachment would be reflagged as the 508th. The Center of Military History, however, did not like to designate TDA companies with former TOE unit designation but preferred to designate the TDA companies by letters. CMH never officially approved the reactivation of the 508th TC so it did not officially carry over its lineage and honors. Killblane called Jennifer Nichols at CMH who informed him that while CMH did not like to give TDA companies TOE unit designations, there were grounds for a precedent since the 508th was a TRADOC unit when inactivated. She said that the request for activation should be sent through TRADOC to CMH and they would consider it. COL Hamm sent the request for an exception of policy for the designation of the TTSO to the 508th to CASCOM on 30 November.

On 24 April 2008, Mr. Matthew R. Scully, Jr., Deputy Chief of Staff TRADOC, signed the request for exception to policy that CMH to permanently designate the TTSO as the 508th Transportation Company. On 27 May, Jennifer Nichols called Richard Killblane to inform him that CMH disapproved the designation of the TTSO as the 508th. They wanted to keep the 508th designation for a TOE unit that might be activated but Killblane knew there were a large number of truck company designations from Vietnam waiting for activation that the 508th would not likely be on the short list. Killblane informed COL Hamm who asked if there was a way to rebut the decision since the

²⁰ BRAC Coordination Meeting Agenda, 1000 Hours, 14 Nov 07 and 21 Nov 07.

Transportation School wanted to keep the 508th. CMH Lineage and Honors Office turned down the request.²¹

Meanwhile, the 1st Battalion, 222nd Aviation Regiment was attached to US Army Aviation Logistics School (USAALS) on 20 May 2008 leaving only the 71st Transportation Battalion under the 8th Transportation Brigade.²²

On 1 October 2009, the Sustainment Center of Excellence was activated and the Transportation School personnel removed their diamond-shaped school patch and replaced it with the shield-shaped SCOE patch. That day also activated the Student Officer Battalion at Fort Lee under the Army Logistics University. The Transportation School was not scheduled to move to Fort Lee in July 2010, so the 71st continued to perform its traditional Transportation School mission, but personnel allocations were given to ALU to manage the Student Officer Battalion until the colors and headquarters of the 71st Transportation Battalion arrived.

As the time for the move approached, the companies of the 71st Transportation Battalion were transferred or inactivated. The 202nd MP Company, which was deployed to Iraq, had transferred to Fort Hood, Texas on 16 July 2009 and was attached to the 89th MP Brigade as a FORSCOM unit. On 19 May 2010, E Company (AIT) was attached to the 288th QM Battalion, which was headquartered at Fort Lee. G Company (Student Officer) inactivated on 14 June 2010 and the officers of all three branches would fall under another company under the Army Logistics University (ALU) at Fort Lee. All officer and warrant officer training would fall under the ALU. On 30 June, the 508th Transportation Company (Provisional) cased its colors and relocated to Fort Lee where it held an uncasing ceremony and fell under the 262nd Quartermaster Battalion. Since Fort Eustis installation recently fell under the control of the US Air Force at Langley AFB, the 221st MP Detachment was attached to the Air Force, 733rd Security Forces Squadron on 13 July 2010.

²¹ Memorandum Thru Commander CASCOM, Subject: Request for Exception to Policy, April 24, 2008.

²² Permanent Orders 140-1, USATRADO, 19 May 2008.



casing the unit guidon at Ft Eustis for 71st Trans Bn



casing the unit guidon at Ft Eustis for 71st Trans Bn



LTC Timothy M. Gilhool, outgoing 71st Transportation Battalion commander, uncases the battalion guidon during a ceremony Friday with the assistance of ISG Teon M. Wright, acting command sergeant major for the unit. The uncasing of the unit's guidon was the duo's last act while in charge of the unit.



LTC Stephanie E. Gradford, incoming 71st Transportation Battalion commander, pauses for a moment after taking the battalion guidon from BG Brian R. Layer, Chief of Transportation, (left) after her assumption of command during a ceremony July 16, 2010 at the Army Logistics University. Her first act as commander was to pass the unit guidon to Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey D. Crawford, the incoming command sergeant major, for safekeeping.

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2LT Daniel Austin
2LT Agustin Quinones Vargas

List of Commanders



LTC Timberlake, 1941

No Pictures from 1942-53



LTC Gerald Shea, 1954-1956



LTC Albert Newton, 1956-1958



Major Walter Makuch, 1958-59



LTC Kenneth Langland, 1959-1960



LTC Jack Smith, 1960-1962



LTC Thomas Hoy, 1965



LTC George Musgrove, 1965-1967



LTC Robert Adams, 1967-1968



LTC Daniel Lenz, 1968-1969



LTC J.F. Tucker, Jr., 1969-1971



LTC Phillip Tinsley, 1971-1972



LTC John Stokes, III, 1972-1974



LTC W. R. Benoit, 1974-1975



LTC Richard Kallestad, 1975-1976



LTC Peter Bistany, 1976-1978



LTC William Rigabar, 1978-1980



LTC John Avery, 1980-1982



LTC Thomas Wakefield, 1980-1984



LTC Charles Williams, 1984-1986



LTC James Burns, 1986-1988



Major Donald Tucker, 1988



LTC Donald Bruns, 1988-1990



LTC Robert Kubiszewski, 1990-1992



LTC Susan Halter, 1992-1994



LTC Phillip Gick, 1994-1996



LTC Donna Simkins, 1996-1998



LTC Donald Horner, Jr., 1998-2000



LTC Stephen D. Fraunfelder, 2000-2002



LTC Douglas Knight, 2002-2004



LTC Mark Hicks, 2004-2006



LTC Charlene Smith McCoy, 2006-2008



LTC Nancy Jo Hubbard, 2008-2010