

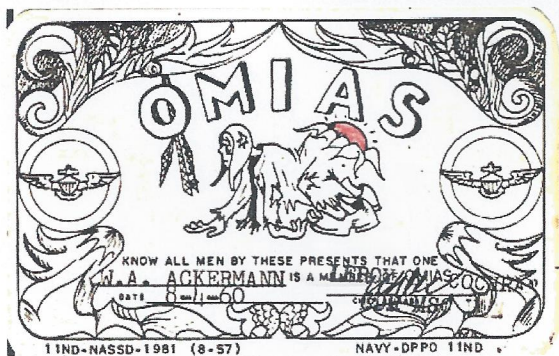
A Side Looking Airborne Radar being developed by Texas Instruments, was installed in this aircraft, re-designated the RL-23. The radar, APQ 86 was never accepted by the Army.



RL- 23D with APQ-86 radar installed

During the development I was sent to the Texas Instrument factory in Dallas Texas to fly radar test flights. On one of these flights an engine failure occurred. I returned to Addison airfield on a single engine. This event caused the powers to be to determine the aircraft had not passed airworthiness and was officially an R&D aircraft. I was immediately ordered home and the Army did not fly this aircraft again until it had passed airworthiness certification.

The Army procured a new airplane to carry, infra red and Side looking airborne radar units. It was the OV-1 Mohawk. Prior to transitioning into the OV-1 ejection seat training was required. completing the course I was awarded the OMIAS Card (Order of Military Instantaneous Ascension Society)



Aviation Physiology Training Unit
U.S.N.A.S. North Island
San Diego 35, Calif.

PRESSURE BREATHING RUN (A-13-A)
42,000 LPC INDOCTRINATION

EJECTION SEAT INDOCTRINATION

AUG 4 1960



OV-1A Mohawk

October 1960 I attended Mohawk transition training at the Grumman factory Class, number 2 in Beth Page Long Island. After ground school we moved to Riverhead Long Island and flew with Grumman test pilots. The airplane was the YAO-1 a preproduction model as the Army had not yet taken delivery of any Mohawks. It grossed out at 10,500 pounds take-off weight.

Waiting for the OV-1 B, operators were trained in an off the shelf aircraft, the Aero Commander. The APS-95 radar was developed and Army accepted before the Mohawk aircraft, it's intended platform. The Aero Commander with the APS 95 radar installed was designated the RL-27.

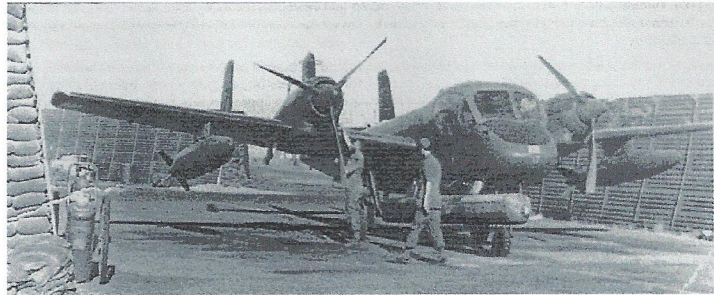


RL-27 with an APS 95 Radar installed

A delay in delivery of the B model, SLAR (side looking airborne radar) airplane, required a currency check at Ft. Rucker. There I flew the A model Mohawk which grossed out at 12,500 pounds take-off weight.

The B model was ready for delivery and in 1961 I picked up the second B model

delivered to the Army at Beth Page, Long Island. I computed the take-off weight of that airplane which turned out to be 17,500 pounds, almost double the weight of the first Mohawk I flew.



OV-1B SLAR Mohawk in Vietnam

The flight back to Ft. Huachuca was very eventful.

I was accompanied by a factory trained crew chief, PFC Doug Logan, this was to be his airplane. The preflight and shake down of the new airplane went without a hitch.

Regulations required ferry flights of new aircraft be conducted visually, that is, no weather instrument flights were allowed. Additionally, the OV1-B was a classified aircraft eliminating the use of civilian airfields.

There was a weather system along the East coast causing me to file for Beaufort Marine base in South Carolina to get south of the weather system. Refueling at Beaufort, I filed for Shreveport SAC (Strategic Air Command) base. General Curt LeMay SAC commander imposed strict security at these bases. Previously closed to only SAC aircraft, they had just opened operations to all military aircraft on a valid flight plan.

Midway between Beaufort and Shreveport all radios quit functioning. No communication what-so-ever!! Thankfully regulations had kept me out of the clouds. Arriving at Shreveport I made a standard no communication pass down the active runway at 1500 feet..... This is a brand new airplane not seen before and it had that big black thing, resembling a bomb, hanging under it. As I flew down the runway I noticed a great number of flashing red lights moving all over the ramp. Knowing full well that they were expecting me as I had filed a flight plan into that destination and was right on my ETA. I thought, they must be having an emergency in progress and decided to clear out until it was over. I pulled out of the pattern. Soon a C-47 landed and I figured the problem to be over. I descended entering the landing pattern on the downwind leg. On base leg I got a green light and acknowledged, rocking my wings. When I touched down I noticed on the roll out, in my rear view mirror, a jeep with mounted machine gun rolled out behind me. As I cleared the active runway I was confronted and stopped by another jeep with machine gun mounted, manned and pointing directly at me. I was given the shut

down signal. An Officer with a .45 caliber pistol pointed at me walked to the plane and motioned for me to open the hatch. He ordered us out of the airplane and took us into custody. I complained that I couldn't leave the classified aircraft but I was told the whole ramp was classified so no problem. We were escorted under guard to operations.

I was interrogated and asked why I had chosen to land at this base. I informed them that the aircraft I was classified confidential and I had filed a valid flight plan to this destination. I showed them my copy of the flight plan.

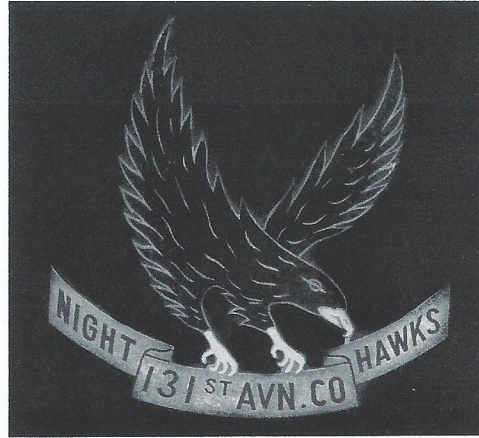
After being kept under guard for a couple of hours it was finally determined that the Marines had ignored my flight plan and filed me into Shreveport Municipal instead of Shreveport SAC base. Happy ending, all was forgiven and we were quartered overnight, refueled and they even found a loose connection on my radios. We were off the next morning to our Ft Huachuca destination. It was an exciting ride for my crew chief who rarely got to fly and never on a long cross country flight.

I was assigned to the U.S. Army Combat Developments Command Ft. Belvoir, Virginia. My duty assignment was the Organization and Equipment Office, Combat Service Support Branch, TOE Division, Organization Directorate. In short I was assigned to the office which developed the documents that authorized Army units. The TOE (Table of Organization and Equipment) authorized personnel and equipment for the units. I was charged with developing the first Mohawk Aviation company.

Vietnam

My assignment was short lived. In one short year, 1966 I received orders to Vietnam. I had just finalized the new TO&E for Mohawk companies and it had been approved. These units were forming and they were anxious for these documents in Vietnam, I hand carried draft copies to the 1st Aviation Brigade. Assigned to Headquarters 17th Aviation group at Nha Trang, I was sent to Hue Phu Bia to observe the operation of the newly activated 131st Aviation Company, Mohawk.

The 131st was a unique unit. Located in I Corp, the Northern most Corp in South Vietnam, and under the operational control of J2, Headquarters, Military Advisory Command Vietnam. It was extremely unusual for a theater level staff to have operational control of a single combat company. However, the nature of the mission dictated. The company supported the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Naval Forces with intelligence and target information. The 131st was the only Army Aviation Unit whose mission required flying into North Vietnam and Laos daily. The unit was known as the Night Hawks.



Night Hawks Patch

During my visit , the commanding officer requested relief of his Command. Being at the right place and at the right time I was assigned as Commanding Officer of the 131st Aviation Company, Mohawk on 17 August 1966. I now had two bosses, J2 for operations and the Battalion Commander, 223rd Aviation Battalion for logistic support.

Operational missions were flown entirely in North Vietnam and Laos. Airplanes were in the air around the clock with the exception of a few daylight hours. Nightly SLAR missions were flown along the North Vietnam coast from the border close to Hanoi. Nightly Infrared missions flown through the North Vietnamese interior. Visual daylight missions flew along the Ho Che Min trail in Laos again nearly reaching Hanoi.

Visual missions had to contend with ground fire. For defense the A model Mohawks were armed with a 2.75 inch rocket pod and a fifty caliber machine gun on each wing.



Mohawk shown with two 2.75 inch rocket pods. Normally the inboard hard point had a fifty caliber machine gun installed.

I'm on the very left leaning on the drop tank.

The unit was in a complete disarray. Officers were living in a tent with a concrete floor, ceiling fans and fluorescent lights, while the enlisted men were living in a tent with dirt floor, frequently muddied by rain. The tent had large holes allowing rain to make conditions pretty bad.

Determined to change this as fast as possible. I detailed officers with extra duty to correct this ridiculous situation immediately. Within a short time we had Seabees build huts to live in and a wonderful Mess Hall. My guys scrounged and stole but we had hot showers and dry huts down to the last private.



Here I accepted token keys to our new Mess Hall from the Seabee Commander.

No previous assignment had ever been as challenging or rewarding as this. There were many problems to occupy my time and attention. Sometimes immediate action was called for.

Just after I took command, a mission was received to photograph an installation in North Vietnam just above the border. The crew returned in a very shot up airplane. The developed film turned out to be useless, very cloudy with no useable detail. I discovered all of our film was stored in a metal conex container right out in the heat of Vietnam. Immediately two officers were detailed to destroy all of the film in the container. I would never send any man into harm's way on a useless mission again. Reported to my commander the Nighthawks were combat ineffective as every system required film. Within days fresh film, a freezer and proper storage facilities arrived.

Early on it was discovered that none of our aircraft had survival gear installed. The

aircraft still had filler material in the seats where the survival gear and rafts were intended to be installed. We were flying over the South China Sea daily, and receiving ground fire on land missions frequently without proper survival gear. A classified letter up the chain of command produced results rapidly. We were issued complete survival packs and every aircraft had the equipment installed. Additionally, we were issued survival vests that included ground maps, currency, a shroud cutter knife, a survival knife and a pack of cards identifying plants, both edible and poisonous, that may be encountered in the jungle if shot down.

An aircraft flying a visual surveillance mission over Laos along the Ho Chi Min trail was hit by ground fire. Experiencing an engine fire they discharged their fire bottle with no help. Attempting to fly to a safe area the controls locked up and the aircraft pitched nose over. The right seat pilot was an instructor pilot and had a great deal of experience. He directed the pilot to eject, but he wouldn't. He kept trying to get the pilot to eject when finally the aircraft was headed straight down, still the pilot would not eject so the right seat man punched out, literally horizontally, to the aircraft. The pilot rode the aircraft down and was lost in the crash. A totally unnecessary loss of life. The ejected pilot landed and was pursued by ground forces. He was directed to safety, using his emergency radio, waiting to be rescued by the Jolly Green Giant rescue helicopter.

Within a month I had an ejection seat trainer issued, installed and every pilot was required to undergo refresher ejection seat training.

Nightly SLAR (Side Looking Airborne Radar) missions were flown along the North Vietnam coast over the South China Sea. Missions were flown into highly defended anti aircraft missile areas. Additionally, SLAR's flight profile, required flying at 7000 feet off the coast, making a perfect missile target. We had nightly code words for missile radar activity and missile launch. When a missile launch codeword was received, you immediately reduced power to flight idle and headed for the deck in as tight a spiral as you could manage. The theory being the missile could not correct fast enough to keep up and in some cases G forces caused it to break up.

I managed to fly every type mission the unit was tasked with. However, routinely I flew a night SLAR mission along the North Vietnam coast. Flying a night schedule allowed me to attend to Company business during the day. On one typical mission, my SLAR operator identified heavy vehicle traffic along the coast. The traffic was piling up at a river crossing where the bridge had been destroyed. I called airborne mission control and passed the target information along. In short order they illuminated the target and had fighters attacking the piled up traffic.

During these missions target information was provided to the Navy and they in return

provided us with anti aircraft missile alerts. This required direct coordination with the Navy. Each time a change of carrier groups occurred I was required to fly to an aircraft carrier for an exchange briefing. I would be picked up at Hue Phu Bi by a carrier aircraft and transported to the carrier. Those were exciting trips landing on an aircraft carrier. I have landed on four different carriers, the Enterprise, Hancock, Bon Homme Richard and Kitty Hawk.



The aircraft the Navy sent to ferry me to those carriers

Night SLAR missions were normally flown along the North Vietnam coast over the South China Sea. However a mission request was received to fly a SLAR mission over the interior of North Vietnam. I was scheduled for this mission. It looked like it would be a piece of cake as anti aircraft missiles were not known to be protecting this area. I was pretty relaxed when I penetrated North Vietnam all lights off on a dark overcast night. On our prescribed track, suddenly big red golf balls started flying up past us. Probably 40mm ackack firing at the aircraft sound. Thankfully it was a dark overcast night so my aircraft could not be seen. We had never experienced this type of ground fire before. Shortly I flew out of range with a sigh of relief. The remainder of the mission was uneventful. This type ground fire was never again reported by any of our pilots. The sight was recorded on film by our radar. The film was interpreted and reported to higher headquarters. It is probable the Air Force neutralized the sight after receiving the mission debrief.

Our missions were very productive. Flying the Ho Che Min trail daily it was discovered the NVA (North Vietnamese Army) resorted to a clever ruse. The trail was rutted with vehicle tracks but over time tracks just ended in the middle of nowhere and the trail was unused for many miles. Determined missions found the NVA had constructed a hidden road under the jungle canopy. More searching discovered the hidden road led to a river. The NVA were off loading supplies and POL (petrol Oils and Lubricants) into the river. POL in barrels were simply floated down stream several miles to a cable that had been stretched across the river catching the barrels and moving them to shore. We had a hey-day destroying the POL dump with rockets and 50 caliber tracer ammunition.

Once on a Laos Mission I was flying wing for one of the pilots that regularly flew these missions. The mission was uneventful. We collected the normal daily intelligence. Heading back to Hue Phu Bi, lead lost his VHS radios and had no communications with Ground personnel back at base. He did still have his tactical FM radio which allowed communications between aircraft. Weather had socked in the field and we were required to make a GCA (Ground Controlled Approach). This approach was controlled by continuous communication with a radar operator directing you right or left of course and up or down on the glide path to place you visually over the end of the runway for landing. Since lead could not communicate with the GCA controller, I became lead and lead was now my wingman. He tucked in tight on my wing and flew with me on the GCA in the clouds until I broke out of the overcast with the runway in sight. I pulled off allowing him to land and I circled around for another approach.

Returning from a visual mission along the Ho Che Min trail in Laos I encountered a situation that got my full attention. Landing procedure was to fly down the active runway at 1500 feet and pitch, that is make a tight 180 degree turn putting the aircraft on the downwind leg. On the pitch we lowered the gear to help kill off airspeed. A rear view mirror located on each side of the aircraft allowed observation of the landing gear. The procedure was pitch, hit the gear switch and then each, pilot and copilot, would check the mirror and announce "I got a gear". The pilot would check the gear indicator on the instrument panel announcing "three in the green". This time it was a bit different, "three in the green, oh oh" the right gear indicator showed the gear in transit and indicated the gear was locked in landing configuration. Cycling the gear a couple of times, and rocking the plane trying to get the gear locked had no effect. I contacted the Tower and asked for a low pass to see if they could confirm the gear was locked, all to no avail. The gear could be seen but we couldn't determine if it was in the locked position. Dilemma, if I made a normal landing and the gear collapsed we would cartwheel down the runway. The alternative was to make a gear up landing. This would wipe out the airplane. I decided I to make an approach, landing on the left gear and gently ease the right gear down to the runway. If it started to fold, I was ready to go to 100 percent power, take it around and then make a gear up landing. As it turned out the gear held and I breathed a huge sigh of relief.

At the evening meal the crew chief casually approached my table, deposited a bullet on the table announcing here's your problem sir. I found this in the gear switch. Apparently I had unknowingly taken some ground fire during the mission. The crew chief was delighted to be able to show the "Ole Man" what the problem was and happy he still had an airplane.

A list of confirmed list of targets destroyed or damaged as a result of timely intelligence

furnished during the first seven months of the 131st Aviation Company's history:

- 295 secondary explosions
- 457 secondary fires
- 27 vehicles destroyed
- 39 vehicles damaged
- 18 boats destroyed
- 60 boats damaged
- 68 structures destroyed
- 3 structures damaged
- 3 enemy headquarters damaged
- 2 automatic weapons positions destroyed

Bomb damage assessments were made while Night Hawk aircraft were still in the target area. There is no record of targets that were passed to control aircraft and attacked after the 131st aircraft left the area.

The Night Hawks flew an impressive number of sorties since their activation in June 1966. Through 31 December the OV-1A's flying visual and photo reconnaissance missions flew 1,228 sorties. The OV-1B's flew 2,134 sorties using the side-looking airborne radar. The infrared equipped OV-1C's have flown 520 sorties. Flying some 5,638 hours of combat time. In 1967 they flew 11,946 hours of combat time.

The Night Hawks outstanding achievements were paid for dearly in both personnel and aircraft losses. Combat operations claimed 13 crew members killed or missing in action. In addition 10 crew members were wounded. Aircraft losses included 6 OV-1A's, 2 OV-1B's, and 2 OV-1C's. Additionally, aircraft received over sixty ground fire hits during that first year.

I was called to Saigon for a meeting with the J-2. A Chinese Nationalist C-46 happened to be at Hue Phu Bi just then. I could have taken one of our Mohawks but missions being so demanding on our maintenance people I asked the Chinese crew if I could catch a ride with them. They had room so I climbed aboard.

They were carrying refugees and the cargo area was full. These people apparently had all of their earthly possessions with them, including a couple of pigs. I was surprised to see there were no seats in the cargo area. They were just spread out on the floor without the first seat belt.

A jump seat was available in the cockpit that I occupied. The initial part of the flight left me with "Oh why did I ever decide to fly with these guys." There was the pilot, copilot and just behind in the middle of the cockpit was the flight engineer. He was a little guy and couldn't reach the overhead controls without squatting on the seat, which he did without a seat belt the entire flight. I could not understand their conversation but they freely talked back and forth without an intercom. We climbed out through the clouds with this seemingly worried conversation going non-stop. Soon we topped out into blue sky

and the three just laughed loudly. What have I gotten myself into. Reaching Saigon I was tensed for the landing expecting nothing short of a controlled crash. Surprise, I have never experienced a smoother landing in any aircraft. These guys handled a very difficult airplane exceeding well.

In December 1966 I was promoted from major to Lt. Col. The position I held, Commanding Officer was a major's slot, however, I was retained at the direction of J2 as the position was very critical.

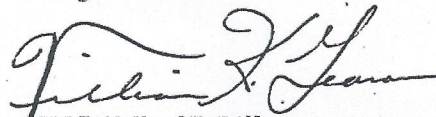
^{16. RATER} Lieutenant Colonel Ackermann accepted one of the most challenging command assignments in this combat area. He took over an aviation company charged with an important surveillance mission in support of HQ MACV. The mission required the commander to deal directly with the joint staff. At the time he assumed command, the company was experiencing serious difficulties. Unit strength had been allowed to fall to a critically low level. Certain specialties had all but been eliminated. This was particularly critical since the character of the unit is such that each component part is dependent upon the operation of at least one other. The technical aspects of the unit mission are vast, and a great amount of personal study was required. Unit morale understandably had reached a low point as a result of frustration and poor living conditions.

Major Ackermann literally pulled his unit out of the mud. He organized his personnel to optimize mission capability. In many cases he was forced to divert his officer assets to non-commissioned officer duties. Slowly the unit was put back on its feet. Replacements brought it back up to strength, and the mission results increased in quality. Improved billeting was provided and morale soared.

When Major Ackermann was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel it was decided that the critical nature of the mission justified leaving him in command though the TOE called only for a major. (Cont.)

1000 10.

LTC Ackermann scheduled himself for the most hazardous of the missions assigned to his company. He flew these missions routinely and reacted to enemy initiated stress as he did to the stresses of command, with a fierce determination to get the job done. He was, in my estimation, the most effective commander I have ever rated. His mind operates like a computer and his value as a DA action officer should be significant.



WILLIAM K. GEARAN
LTC, Armor
Commanding

Excerpt from my efficiency report when I was reassigned from the 131st Aviation Company.

You are not privileged to see these reports during active duty. I was able to get copies when I retired.

During this time the 131st Aviation Company received the Valorous Unit Award and the RVN Gallantry Cross w/Palm for its contributions to the war effort.

During my 131st Aviation Company assignment I was awarded the Air Medal and Five Oak Leaf Clusters.

Section V

AWARD OF THE AIR MEDAL (FIRST THRU FIFTH OAK LEAF CLUSTER)

ACKERMANN, WILLIAM A. 081365 LIEUTENANT COLONEL ARTILLERY USA
131st Avn Co, APO 96308, 5 October 1966 to 6 August 1967
HUDSON, COYLE W. RA16850813 PRIVATE FIRST CLASS E3 USA
114th Avn Co, APO 96357, 24 March 1967 to 29 May 1967



THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS, GREETING:

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
AUTHORIZED BY EXECUTIVE ORDER, MAY 11, 1942
HAS AWARDED

THE AIR MEDAL

TO

LIEUTENANT COLONEL WILLIAM A. ACKERMANN 081365 ARTILLERY UNITED STATES ARMY

FOR
MERITORIOUS ACHIEVEMENT
WHILE PARTICIPATING IN AERIAL FLIGHT

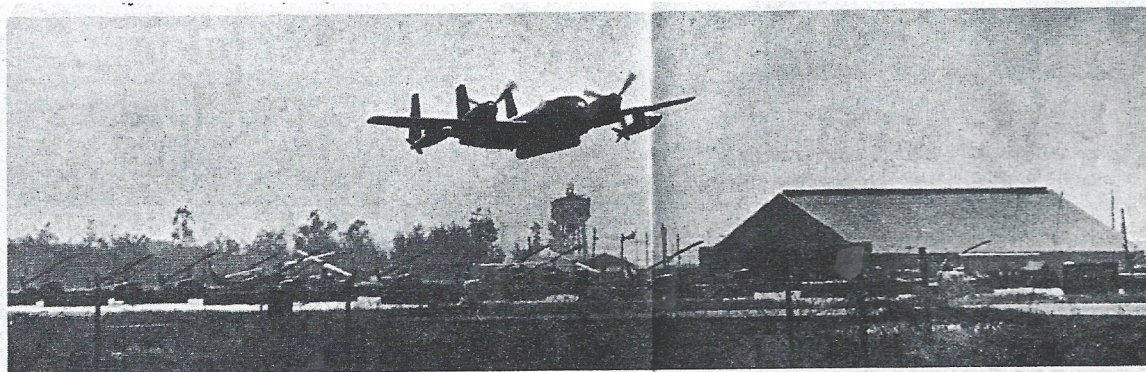
IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM DURING THE PERIOD 25 AUGUST 1966 TO 4 DECEMBER 1966
GIVEN UNDER MY HAND IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON
THIS TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY OF MARCH 19 67

W. C. Westmoreland



Stanley R. Rear
SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

The following appeared in the Stars and Stripes newspaper June 17, 1971. Prior to this the units mission was so classified that it could not be publicized.



AN OV1 MOHAWK TAKES OFF FROM ITS PHU BAI BASE FOR ANOTHER RECON MISSION.

Mohawk Pilots Brave SAMs and Anonymity

Story & Photos
By SPEC. 4 DAN EVANS
S&S Staff Correspondent

PHU BAI, Vietnam — The pilots and tactical observers of the Army's 131st Aviation Co. "hang it out" every day over territory where dodging anti-aircraft fire is taken for granted, and where there is always a possibility of meeting enemy MIGs or surface-to-air missiles.

Danger spells fame for many units but few people have even heard of the 131st.

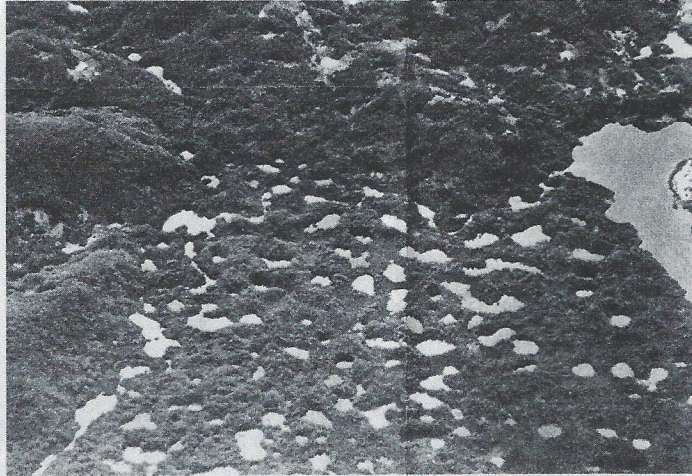
The plane they fly is an unarmed OV1 Mohawk with a top speed of something over 300 miles an hour in a dive. A MIG can do about twice the speed of sound and may be armed with 30mm cannon and air-to-air missiles.

If a MIG shows up, the Mohawk pilot must rely on evasive tactics or cloud cover and hope that F4s are scrambled in a hurry, said Capt. Nelson Modrall.

Capt. Lawrence Hower has seen three SAMs launched during two tours in Vietnam as a Mohawk pilot. Once a pilot gets "eyeball-to-eyeball contact" with a SAM the missile can be outmaneuvered, he said. Despite its lower speed, the Mohawk can turn twice as sharply as a SAM.

During operation Lam Son 719 Hower and another pilot had part of their tail shot away by an AA round. The plane began to go out of control but with both men straining at the controls they made it safely back to Da Nang.

Mohawks are equipped with infrared, radar or photo surveil-



THIS POCK-MARKED AREA OF THE A SHAU VALLEY IS FAMILIAR TO PILOTS.

lance systems but the 131st cannot divulge where its planes fly.

They work in conjunction with Air Force C119 and C130 gunships over the Ho Chi Minh Trail complex, helping to kill "movers" and disrupt the flow of supplies.

Some of the pilots feel that this is their most dangerous mission. They say the biggest threat is not AA fire, but other U.S. aircraft. Most of the men fly their

missions with their lights on.

"You can come back with AA holes in the aircraft but you can't make it back with an F4 stuck in your side," Modrall said.

Like all pilots who fly craft loaded with electronic surveillance gear, the men who fly the Mohawks get little recognition. While Army, Navy and Air Force pilots made news around the world during Lam Son 719

the 131st logged 800 hours over the same areas without getting a mention.

There is a certain amount of reassurance in flying over enemy territory with numbers of friendly planes nearby, despite the danger of collision. But it's eerie to fly repeated passes in a lone, unarmed aircraft over a patchwork of jungle, roads and cropland that you know is studded with enemy hardware.

Awards are hard to come by in the 131st.

"Stamp the word 'secure' on an award citation, and it's lost for sure," a pilot explains.

The unit has been in the presidential unit citation since 1967. The pilots said the award is now close to being up for consideration.

Until a few weeks ago, planes of the 131st were armed with rockets like those carried on forward air control pods and helicopter gunships. The pods were taken off because there was no authorization for armament, the pilots explain.

"As soon as we took them they started shooting at us the damn time," said Dave Krichbaum. Only a few days after the pods were dropped the unit lost a ship, two men, apparently to aircraft fire, pilots said.

The pilots said that though rockets were rarely used, pods deterred enemy gunners from firing at the planes. The armament would also help protect downed pilots, they said.

Despite all the hazards, long flying hours and the lack of recognition, none of the pilots are complaining unless it's the excitement which does not always materialize.

"You know," one pilot mentioned, "sometimes our work is boring."

6 Viet Papers Fined

SAIGON (UPI) — A Saigon court has levied fines against six newspapers for alleged violations of the newspaper code and suspended sentences against four other publications for lack of evidence.

HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES MILITARY ASSISTANCE COMMAND, VIETNAM
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96222

Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence

MACJ211

14 APR 1967

SUBJECT: Letter of Commendation

THRU: Commanding General
United States Army, Vietnam
APO 96307

TO: Commanding Officer
131st Aviation Company (AS)
APO 96291

Upon the termination of your assignment as Commanding Officer of the 131st Aviation Company, you are commended on your outstanding performance of duty and the leadership you displayed in executing your combat mission. Support provided USAF Tactical Air Elements and US Naval Forces in target acquisition and basic intelligence contributed immeasurably to the success of the air strike program. Intelligence information provided by your company on enemy infiltration and logistic movement was a valuable contribution in developing MACV's assessment of enemy capabilities.

The operational rate of the OV-1 aircraft assigned to your company reflects your personal efforts to resolve maintenance and supply difficulties. Adverse weather conditions and the extremely limited hangar and maintenance facilities presented additional problems in maintaining an acceptable operational status.


You are also commended for the outstanding safety record your company has achieved while operating at night and under instrument flight conditions. This achievement reflects the professionalism and vigilance of the personnel assigned to your company. These attitudes

MACJ211

14 APR 1967

SUBJECT: Letter of Commendation

can be developed only under a leader who constantly demonstrates superior leadership qualities. Your concern for your men and your unit has made the 131st Aviation Company an outstanding unit. You have brought great credit upon yourself and the United States Army.


J. A. McCHRISTIAN
Major General, USA
ACofS, J2

MACV Letter of Commendation

April 1, 1967 I was reassigned Aviation Officer I Corp. Back to a staff assignment from everyday combat duty. I moved to Da Nang with all the amenities of a big city. My duties included, overseeing the Corp aviation section and the daily allocations of available aircraft.

I was awarded the Legion of Merit for my service in Vietnam. A prestigious recognition for my accomplishments.



★

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS, GREETING:
THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
AUTHORIZED BY ACT OF CONGRESS JULY 20, 1942
HAS AWARDED

THE LEGION OF MERIT

TO

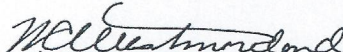
LIEUTENANT COLONEL WILLIAM A. ACKERMANN, 081365, ARTILLERY, UNITED STATES ARMY

FOR
EXCEPTIONALLY MERITORIOUS CONDUCT
IN THE PERFORMANCE OF OUTSTANDING SERVICES

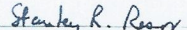
IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM DURING THE PERIOD AUGUST 1966 TO AUGUST 1967

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON
THIS THIRD DAY OF SEPTEMBER 1967

★


W. C. WESTMORELAND
General, United States Army
Commanding




STANLEY R. REAY
SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

★



C I T A T I O N

BY DIRECTION OF THE PRESIDENT
THE LEGION OF MERIT

is presented to

LIEUTENANT COLONEL WILLIAM A. ACKERMANN, 081365, ARTILLERY,
UNITED STATES ARMY

Lieutenant Colonel Ackermann distinguished himself by exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service during the period August 1966 to August 1967 while serving consecutively as Commanding Officer, 131st Aviation Company (Aerial Surveillance) and I Corps Army Aviation Officer in the Republic of Vietnam. As the Commander of the 131st Aviation Company, Colonel Ackermann controlled and conducted aerial surveillance operations in the most difficult and dangerous areas in I Corps. His patience, enthusiasm and expert abilities were amply displayed in the rapid training of diversely skilled replacements to mold his company into a truly professional unit. Through remarkable foresight and skillful guidance, he consistently obtained intelligence information of inestimable value in the counterinsurgency effort. Colonel Ackermann invariably demonstrated acute managerial ability, ensuring that the maximum number of aircraft were always available for surveillance operations. When an urgent requirement developed for a senior aviator advisor to the I Corps Tactical Zone, he accepted this challenging task with his customary zeal and aggressiveness. In this capacity, Colonel Ackermann directed the actions of the Army aviation element in the I Corps Tactical Operations Center and supervised the scheduling of all Army aviation assets in the I Corps Tactical Zone. His realistic analysis of the usage of Army aircraft resulted in an increased efficiency of allocated planes, thereby enhancing the overall aviation mission. Lieutenant Colonel Ackermann's professional competence and outstanding achievements were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

