

10th SFG

Mountain Recovery Operation

🔗 **Iran 1962** 🔗



by Charles H. Briscoe

On Saturday, 27 January 1962, a 64th Engineer Battalion Topographic Training Team (TTT) single-engine, high-wing, short takeoff/landing (STOL) U-1A *Otter* (SN 55-3317) airplane took off from Qualeh Morgeh Field, Tehran, Iran, at 0754 hours bound for Vahdati Air Force Base [Iranian Air Force Base (AFB)] near Dezful, some 300 miles to the southwest. Just before noon Captain (CPT) Daniel L. Knotts, the pilot, encountered a severe snowstorm over the Zagros Mountains. While descending, presumably headed towards the Dezful radio beacon, the *Otter* crashed into a heavily snowclad mountain ridge at 32°, 20 minutes North latitude and 50°, 04 minutes East longitude. The deep snow and gentle slope at 12,500 feet cushioned two impacts: in the first, the aircraft lost one wing; in the second, the aircraft nose-flipped onto its back with the cockpit breaking away from the fuselage. Amazingly, all five American soldiers aboard (pilot, co-pilot, crew chief, and two passengers) survived the crash.¹

Inside the overturned U-1A *Otter*, Specialist Five (SP5) John T. Porter, the crew chief, untangled the snow-covered passengers, Colonel (COL) Walter M. Vann and Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Walter R. Johnson, from the plywood cargo and twisted aircraft frame. While doing this the pilot, CPT Knotts, and the co-pilot, Major (MAJ) Donald A. Carder, climbed into the fuselage through the open cargo doorway. SP5 Porter got the first aid kit from the survival chest and began treating the injured. He put a tourniquet on the left arm of the pilot, CPT Knotts, securing it with a screw driver, and then applied bandages to MAJ Carder. LTC Johnson, blue all over, complained of the extreme cold. Hypoxic from extended flying without oxygen (more than an hour), the smell and leaking of fuel prompted an immediate evacuation “to reach a lower altitude to prevent freezing.”² Thinking impaired by hypoxia, the sub-zero cold, and suffering from various stages of shock, each man robotically went to the survival chest to grab a sleeping bag and some C-rations. The pilot took flares. Then, like a ‘stick’ of paratroopers with the pilot and co-pilot leading, they stumbled out the gaping cargo door opening,

abandoning their most viable shelter...for thigh-deep snow in a raging blizzard. Unable to move in the deep snow, the men quickly crawled into their sleeping bags to separately glissade away to safety. As they did, the five disappeared in the raging snowstorm.³ Shortly after noon, Vahdati AFB tower near Dezful reported the aircraft overdue, which triggered rescue alerts.⁴ It would be six months later that a team from the 10th Special Forces Group (SFG), Bad Toelz, Germany, found the bodies of three missing Americans, finally bringing closure to the accident.⁵

The primary purpose of this article is to document the first operational mission given to the 10th SFG by U.S. Army, Europe (USAREUR) since its arrival in late 1953. Its success paved the way for almost fifteen years of training in Iran and built professional relationships in the Middle East.⁶ The secondary reason is to reveal the herculean rescue efforts orchestrated by the U.S. Army Mission to the Imperial Iranian Army (ARMISH) in 1962 in one the harshest winters in the region in recent history. Using primary sources and period newspaper reports, this article debunks the mythology and folklore associated with this 10th SFG recovery mission, corrects misinformation about SF Captain (CPT) Larry A. Thorne, and as radio newsman Paul Harvey used to say, provides “the rest of the story.”⁷

The analytical historical commentary immediately preceding, “Marginalized before JFK: The Good ‘Ole’ Days of SF,” chronologically presents background (international, national, nuclear defense strategy, and the state of the U.S. Army, Psywar, and Special Warfare) to give vital context and improve understanding of conditions in 1962. The promulgation of dated WWII Office of Strategic Service (OSS) missions, tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) by SF leaders to ‘heavy’ warfighters of a grossly outnumbered Army in Europe was poorly received. Focused on improving ‘odds’ with nuclear weapons conventional Army generals marginalized Special Forces. This attitude did not change until President John F. Kennedy initiated a ‘Flexible Response’ defense strategy.

1 | U-1A *Otter* with Army Map Service (AMS) color scheme.

2 | AMS *Otter* (SN55-3317) upside down on Zagros Mountain ridge in Iran.





IRAN 1962*

*Area Handbook for Iran (1st edition research & writing completed 15 March 1963)

- **Southwest Asia:** 2nd largest country in Middle East.
- **Land area:** 636,000 square miles (slightly larger than Alaska).
- **Topography:** High desert plateau surrounded on three sides by rugged mountains (6,000 to 18,000 feet above sea level).
- **Mountain Climate:** Winters often exceed six months; temperatures down to -18° F.⁸
- **Population:** 22 million: 1/3 urban & 2/3 rural—almost all illiterate: Persians (63%); Azerbaijanis (24%); Kurds; Lurs, Bakhtiari (near crash site), Qashqais, Baluchis, and Arabs (13%).
- **Language:** Farsi is the official language; native tongue used by more than 50% of the population.
- **Wealth:** 4th biggest oil producer & 2nd largest exporter; revenues building industrial base.
- **Roads:** 17,000 miles: 1,300 mi asphalt; 10,000 mi surfaced; 11,000 mi improved dirt.
- **Airports, Weather & Navigation:** one international [Tehran (Mehrabad – opened 1956)]; 100 field landing strips (43 near roads); WWII-era forecasting and minimal navigation aids.⁹

By placing this humanitarian mission in historical context—the mission of the U.S. Army in Europe during the Cold War, the situation in America, and major world events—readers can see how these factors impacted Special Forces in Germany in 1962. The conclusion contains a summary of key points. Actions taken after the 27 January 1962 U-1A *Otter* crash have to be considered in light of the conditions in Iran and the state of U.S. Army aviation and military air rescue capabilities at the time (see sidebars).

An unusually bad winter in 1961-62 thwarted rescue efforts by the U.S. Army Mission to the Imperial Iranian Armed Forces (ARMISH). The crashed U-1A *Otter* was first spotted by an Imperial Iranian Air Force four-engine C-54 *Skymaster* at 0845 hours on Sunday, 28 January.

The *Skymaster* dropped parachute bundles containing supplies and blankets. MAJ Carder got to them and was reported to have started a fire. Army Map Service (AMS) planes circled the crash site in shifts all day searching for survivors. A platoon of Imperial Iranian Army mountain troops was flown to Isfahan. After being trucked to Shahrkurd, the Iranian soldiers donned skis to begin a torturous overland approach from the east side of the mountains. The U.S. Air Force 58th Air Rescue Squadron, Wheelus Airbase, Tunisia, flew two paramedics to Tehran.¹² That night, another storm blanketed the crash site with several more feet of snow.

Aircraft were 'socked in' by visibility on 29 January, but a second rescue team had left Tehran for Dezful on the

Army Aviation & Special Warfare - 1962



President John F. Kennedy challenged his military service chiefs to inculcate special warfare into their missions. The Army took the president most seriously. General (GEN) Earle G. Wheeler, Chief of Staff, Army, directed Continental Army Command (CONARC) to create a Special Warfare Board to evaluate courses of instruction, doctrine, organizational structure, and employment of Special Forces (SF), Psychological Operations (PSYOP) and Civil Assistance (CA) forces as well as individual and unit equipment from uniforms to aircraft, vehicles, and radios. Lieutenant General (LTG) Hamilton L. Howze, Commanding General, XVIII Airborne Corps, Fort Bragg, NC, chaired the board from 8-25 January 1962. This 'first' Howze Board recommended that all SF groups get organic flight detachments. Two Special Warfare Aviation Detachments [the 22nd (rotary and fixed wing) and 23rd SWADs (OV-1 *Mohawk*)] were to be organized in April 1962 to evaluate rotary wing and Short Take Off/Landing (STOL) aircraft for armed reconnaissance and light/medium lift capabilities. The helicopters tested were the OH-23 *Raven* and UH-1 *Iroquois* (*Huey*). The STOL airplanes evaluated were the U-6 *Beaver*, U-1 *Otter*, U-10 *Heliocourier*, CV-2 *Caribou*, and OV-1 armed *Mohawk*.¹⁰ The *Beaver* and *Otter* were already supporting the Corps of Engineers (COE) Army Map Service missions in remote areas of Liberia, Ethiopia, and Iran.¹¹

LTG Hamilton L. Howze, Commanding General, XVIII Airborne Corps, Fort Bragg, NC.

Examples of Helicopters and Fixed Wing Aircraft Evaluated



UH-1 *Iroquois*



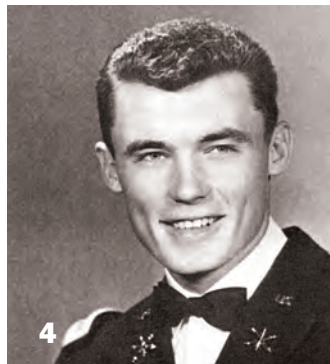
U-6 *Beaver*

1 | The Aerospatiale *Alouette* was a high-altitude helicopter that had performed numerous rescues in the European Alps.

2 | LTC Richard F. Barquist, director of the U.S. Army Hospital in Tehran, Iran, received the Soldier's Medal in conjunction with an L-23 *Seminole* crash in 1961.

4 | 1LT Zane K. 'Kyle' Rector was the Aide-de-Camp to MG John C. Hayden, the ARMISH/MAAG Chief.

5 | COL Walter M. Vann was the ARMISH Chief of Logistics.



western side of the Zagros Mountains. Fortunately, the Oil Consortium of Iran had a French *Aérospatiale Alouette* helicopter whose service ceiling had been 'pushed' well above 13,000 feet doing rescues in the European Alps. The *Alouette* could carry three passengers.¹³ But, before it could arrive the weather worsened.¹⁴

Late Monday afternoon, 30 January, it cleared sufficiently for the *Alouette* to drop off two ARMISH medics, Sergeants First Class (SFC) Eugene F. Peck and Harold C. Stagers, below COL Vann and above SP5 Porter, the crew chief. The two survivors were separated by almost 100 meters. The medics brought food, dry clothing, provided first aid, and would spend the night with the survivors. SP5 Porter was so bad that SFC Peck got into the crew chief's sleeping bag to keep him warm during the night.¹⁵ Unbeknownst to them, the two Air Force paramedics from Wheelus Airbase parachuted onto the mountain shortly before their arrival.

Staff Sergeant (SSgt) Anthony R. Gorgano and Airman Second Class (A2C) Howard E. Hadley had jumped high above the mountain ridge. High winds blew them far apart and the two missed their intended landing site. Both airmen spent nights perched precariously on windswept mountain ledges. Hadley was stuck for a night before being rope-lifted to safety by the *Alouette*. Gorgano endured two nights alone before the second Dezful ground party found him; the airman spent a third night on the mountain with his rescuers.¹⁶ Darkness cancelled helicopter flights on Monday, 30 January. Shortly after each of the four rescue parties started into the mountains radio communications became dependent on aircraft radio relays.¹⁷

When First Lieutenant (1LT) Zane K. Rector, a field artillery fixed-wing aviator serving as Aide-de-Camp to Major General (MG) John C. Hayden, the ARMISH chief, got to Dezful on Tuesday morning, 31 January, there were three ground rescue parties already moving on both sides of the mountain towards the crash site: 1. LTC Richard F. Barquist, director of the U.S. Army Hospital in Tehran, and Mr. Kazem Guilampour, noted Iranian skier and mountain climber working for U.S. Information Service (USIS), and their small party had left Dezful on Monday morning; 2. A platoon of Iranian mountain troops was slogging through deep snow on the eastern side; 3. A third group of Iranian USIS employees had gone to rescue SSgt Anthony Gorgano, the Air Force paramedic. LT Rector quickly discovered that the *Alouette* rescue effort was undirected and that there was only sporadic communications with rescue elements.¹⁸

Sent down by MG Hayden to find out what was happening, Rector decided to check on the two ARMISH medics and the two survivors near the crash site. The West Point '58 officer told the AMS U-6 *Beaver* pilot who had flown him to Dezful what he was going to do and asked him to be his overhead communications link. The field jacket clad non-skier then grabbed skis, poles, and a radio before boarding the helicopter.¹⁹

After snowplowing down to SP5 Porter and SFC Peck, the artillery lieutenant realized that the medic was also suffering from high altitude exposure. With his radio Rector explained the situation to the pilot of the AMS *Beaver* circling overhead. He and the two medics were too exhausted to move the survivors to the helipad. While

Route & Deviation

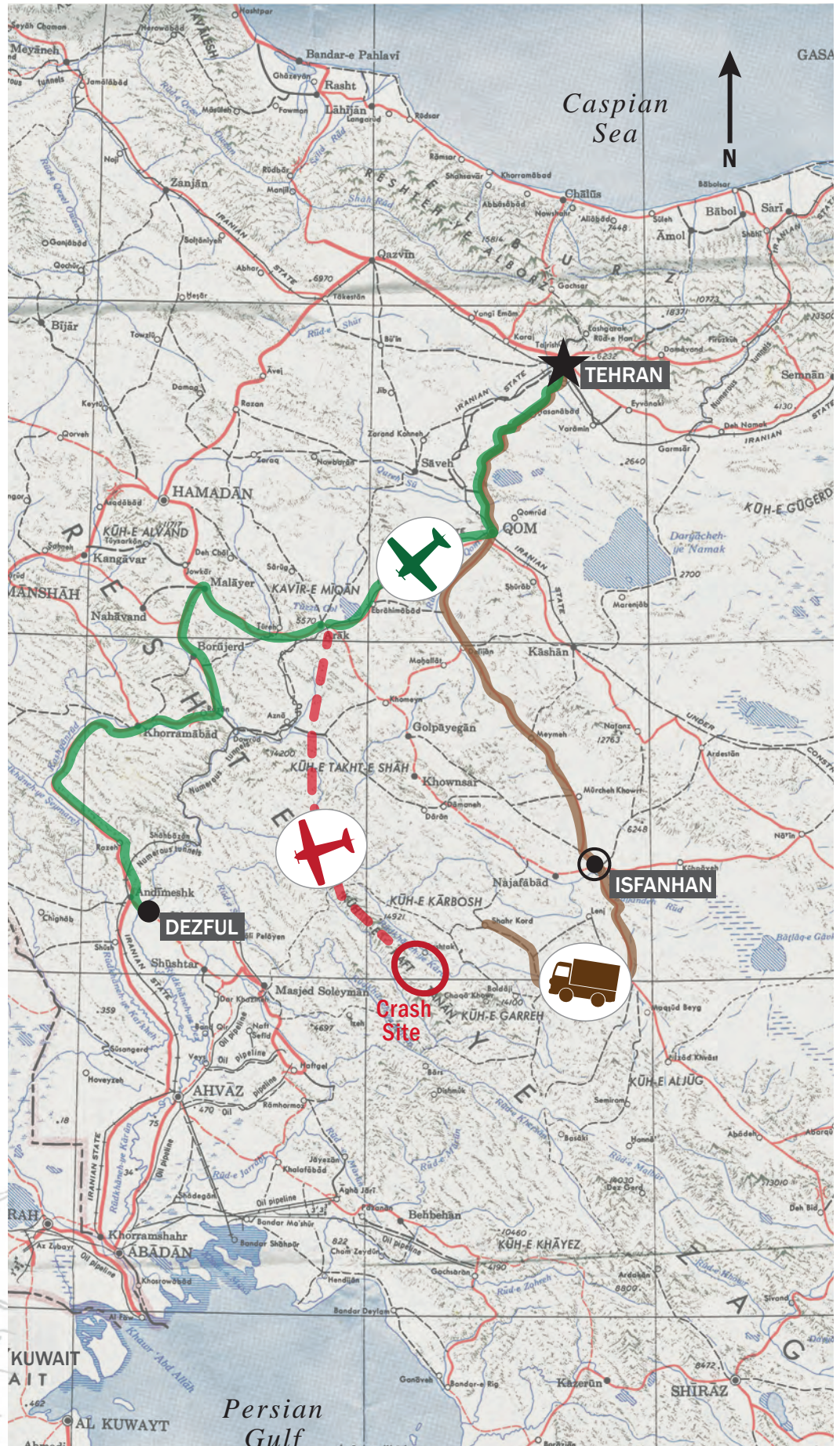
The ill-fated U-1A Otter took off from Qualeh Morgeh Field, Tehran, Iran, at 0754 hours bound for Dezful, some 300 miles to the southwest. Just before noon they encountered a severe snowstorm over the Zagros Mountains. While descending, presumably headed towards the Dezful radio beacon, the Otter crashed into a heavily snowclad mountain ridge at 12,500 feet.

The 1/150,000 map shown here is typical of the type used in 1962 and has overlays of the various mission routes.

● Shown in green is the most probable air route based on the USAREUR Preliminary Accident Investigation.

● The brown shows the land route used by the 10th SFG troops.

● And in red is the assumed route deviation caused by heavy cross winds and snow that preceded the crash in the Zagros Mountains.



waiting for the *Alouette* to return, Rector, having been told another victim was nearby, began probing around with his ski poles. He uncovered enough of MAJ Donald A. Carder (co-pilot and ARMISH Aviation Branch chief) to identify him before switching his attention to the crew chief.²⁰

“The two Iranian sergeants chanted, ‘Iran, America! Iran, America!’ as they carried the ski litter to the waiting helicopter. Those two were the true heroes.” — 1LT Zane K. Rector

Having been told that COL Vann was in better shape, Rector triaged the situation. The two men started dragging the semi-conscious SP5 Porter in his sleeping bag towards the rock outcropping where the helicopter landed. They had only gotten halfway when the *Alouette* returned with help. Two tough Iranian Army mountain school instructors jumped out, donned skis, and quickly moved down to them. The Iranians lashed Porter onto a makeshift ski litter and shouldered it to carry the crew chief to the waiting helicopter as the exhausted Rector and Peck trailed behind. “The two Iranian sergeants chanted, ‘Iran, America! Iran, America!’ as they carried the ski litter to the waiting helicopter. Those two were the true heroes,” said retired LTC Rector. “SFC Peck and I were too exhausted by the altitude to help. The Iranian sergeants realized this and pushed us into the helicopter to reduce their problems.”²¹

After the helicopter lifted off the two Iranians went to assist COL Vann and SFC Stagers to the landing site. When Vann and Stagers departed, the Iranian soldiers marked the site of MAJ Carder’s body with vertically-crossed skis. Then, they were helicoptered back to Dezful.²² All U.S. personnel, suffering from varying stages of frostbite and exposure, were shuttled to the clinic at Masjid-i-Sulaiman before being evacuated to the ARMISH hospital in Tehran.²³ More help was on the way to Iran before the first rescue effort concluded.

Though the winter of 1961-62 proved to be one of the harshest on record, the American community still demanded action. Incessant pressure from the distraught wives of the missing; negative press in the English newspapers, the *Kayhan International* and *Tehran Journal*; and a Congressional inquiry pushed Ambassador Julius C. Holmes and MG Hayden to seek help from U.S. European Command (EUCOM) in Stuttgart, Germany. The coast artillery general, a WWII and Korean War veteran, requested a team of high-

altitude mountaineers and a U.S. military helicopter to support the ARMISH Search & Recovery Plan.²⁴

Since the missing were U.S. military, help came quickly. An elite German Army rescue platoon [1st Mountain Division (*Gebirgstruppe*)] and a USAREUR medical evacuation UH-1B *Iroquois* (*Huey*) helicopter with aircrew and maintenance personnel from Landstuhl, Germany, loaded aboard an Air Force C-124 *Globemaster*. The group got to Tehran on 1 February with their dismantled *Huey*.²⁵ Five days had passed since the U-1A *Otter* crashed. ARMISH efforts had recovered two survivors and five rescuers. ‘All stops had been pulled out.’

While the helicopter was reassembled and flight tested, the German team leader made an aerial reconnaissance of the crash site to identify avenues of approach. There were more airstrips to the southeast (Isfahan) of the site. The accumulated snow surrounding the crashed U-1A *Otter* ranged from six to forty feet. Evidence of recent avalanches in the area was discernible as heavy wind shears buffeted the U-6 *Beaver* airplane circling the ridge line.²⁶

The helicopter was vital to getting the team close to the crash site, but the accumulated snow would make probing for bodies difficult and very tedious. The medevac *Huey* was heavier than the troop carrier model which reduced a service ceiling already tied to temperatures, winds at altitude, and aircraft load. Despite three more days of bad weather, the German *Gebirgstruppe*, supported by the medevac *Huey*, launched from Isfahan and got nine Alpine soldiers onto Zard Duh near the crash site.²⁷

Two more days of heavy snow precluded any recovery operations and the nine Germans fought to stay alive. When the *Gebirgstruppe* soldiers were evacuated from the crash site on 8 February, the mission was aborted. While it would become the ‘workhorse’ of the Vietnam War, the *Huey* lacked the power to safely fly in the thin air of high

1 | MG John C. Hayden, ARMISH/MAAG Iran.

2 | This was the shoulder sleeve insignia worn by U.S. military personnel assigned to the U.S. Army Mission to the Imperial Iranian Armed Forces (ARMISH).



CPT Herbert Y. Schandler,
USMA '52, commanded
ODA 33, 10th SFG in 1962.
(Shown here as LTC.)



altitudes and survive the severe gusts and abrupt wind shears. The *Huey* virtually floated while its single main rotor blade slowly oscillated. The risk associated with recovering bodies was too great. Two Air Force paramedics and two ARMISH medics and an officer were rescued along with the two survivors. The danger involved in continuing to search for three missing, presumed dead American soldiers (pilot CPT Knotts, co-pilot MAJ Carder, and passenger LTC Johnson) was too great. MG Hayden ended the search on 9 February 1962. Further efforts were put on hold.²⁸

A subsequent search effort in early spring, organized by another aviator 1LT Robert F. Molinelli, the aide-de-camp to the Army MAAG chief, Brigadier General (BG) William M. Rogers, was supported by the Oil Consortium *Alouette* from 11-23 April. The rescue party found only equipment lost by previous searchers before a severe snow storm forced them to make a dangerous ground descent.²⁹ That propitious ending was providential for Company C, 10th SFG in Germany.

As you will recall from the preceding article, the understrength 10th SFG had reorganized to form a third company after Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson visited Berlin in August 1961.³⁰ Company C would focus on North Africa and the Middle East. The Group S-3 operations officer, Major (MAJ) Charles M. Simpson III, had been a Middle East history professor at West Point and did graduate work at the American University in Beirut. Though he had already commanded an SF company, Simpson volunteered to organize the unit.³¹ CPT Herbert Y. Schandler, a friend and colleague at the U.S. Military Academy, had no reservations about shifting his Operational Detachment Alpha (ODA) 33 from Poland to Iran. Two sergeants were dispatched to schools to learn Farsi.³² Since the U.S. Army had yet to publish an *Area Handbook for Iran*, the soldiers of ODA 33 personnel relied heavily on Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) reports to prepare their country study.³³

Because there were three very large U.S. missions in Iran: the U.S. Military Mission to the Imperial Iranian Army (ARMISH); the Military Advisory and Assistance

Group (MAAG); and the U.S. Military Mission to the Imperial Iranian Gendarmerie (GENMISH); a much smaller fourth mission was probably overlooked by the ODA 33 soldiers. The Army Corps of Engineers had the Special Foreign Activities Division of AMS; the 329th Geodetic Detachment; the 64th Engineer Topographic Battalion [Topographic Training Team (TTT)]; and personnel from their Gulf District working in Iran.³⁴ The first three had been helping the Iranians map their country and create topographic maps.³⁵

The Shah of Iran (Mohammed Reza Pahlavi) and the Royal Iranian Army engineers had enjoyed topographic and survey training and the combined mapping work done with the AMS TTT (Triple T') since 1957. That effort was relatively non-intrusive and mutually beneficial. When the successful three-year collaborative geodetic survey, charting, and mapping of the vast Libyan deserts neared completion in late 1961, those elements moved to complement the 'Triple T' mission in Iran.³⁶ In the southwest, map work along the Persian Gulf included the Straits of Hormuz and the Gulf of Oman, the southern avenues to the Suez Canal.³⁷ An attempt to supply a remote AMS site at the base of the Zagros Mountains near Dezful ended in calamity in January 1962.

When the AMS U-1A *Otter* took off from Qualeh Morgeh Field (3,750 feet), Tehran, Saturday morning, 27 January 1962, the pilot and co-pilot were following visual flight rules (VFR) for convenience though an occluded front (cold front overtaking a warm one) was reported to be covering Vahdati AFB (Dezful), their destination. But, forecasts were typically unreliable in winter.³⁸ An embassy handbook described winters in Tehran as similar to those in Salt Lake City, Utah.³⁹

"We usually took off knowing only the weather at our destination and followed the roads... The environment in Iran made it a tough flying assignment." — 1LT Zane K. Rector

"We usually took off knowing only the weather at our destination and followed the roads, so we could make an emergency landing. Cross-country flights were forbidden. One hundred and ten knots was the typical airspeed for our STOL 'tail draggers.' Fierce headwinds and surprise dust storms required oxygen-aided escapes to higher altitudes. The environment in Iran made it a tough flying assignment," recalled LTC Rector.⁴⁰ The U-1A *Otter* was a

'one-ton version' of the U-6 *Beaver* 'pick-up truck.' Cargo for that weekend 'milk run' flight was fourteen sheets of plywood.⁴¹ After the crash and subsequent rescue and recovery missions one can only speculate on how 10th SFG got the recovery mission from USAREUR.

MAJ Robert A. Kingston, a Korean War conventional (7th Infantry Division) and CIA [Joint Activities Commission, Korea (JACK)] special operations veteran was assigned as the Special Warfare Plans Officer, G-3 Plans, USAREUR in 1962. While detailed to JACK in Korea, 1LT Kingston regularly coordinated with the SF-trained officers and sergeants who advised guerrilla units from 1953 to 1954.⁴² The ARMISH crash, rescue, and recovery efforts had to be reported to Washington and EUCOM; military casualties have always been treated seriously by the United States.

On 2 May 1962, USAREUR G-3 Operations Division alerted 10th SFG for a personnel recovery mission in Iran. None of the aforementioned details on ARMISH rescue and recovery attempts had been provided before CPT Schandler (Company C), CPT Thorne (Company A), and Master Sergeant (MSG) Charles F. Rhodes (Company B) boarded Pan American Flight 2 for Tehran on Saturday afternoon, 19 May. They were met at the Mehgareb Airport by LTC Richard A. Barquist, the recovery project officer. Over a late dinner, the ARMISH hospital commander, who had a role in all rescue and recovery attempts, updated the SF men.⁴³

The next morning CPT Blair, the chief of the ARMISH Aviation Section (who had replaced the missing, presumed dead MAJ Carder), flew the three SF soldiers and LTC Barquist down to Kurang to reconnoiter the valley and crash site on Zardeh-Kur. With the snow melting rapidly, it was felt that the best ground approach would be up an exposed rocky ridgeline. CPT Thorne and MSG Rhodes agreed that there was no difficult mountain climbing, only some very tough mountain walking.⁴⁴ Since MG Hayden, the ARMISH chief, was anxious to proceed, two days of non-stop coordination followed.

Early Wednesday morning, 23 May, after CPT Thorne and MSG Rhodes had left for Bad Toelz to select the Group's best mountaineers. CPT Schandler, LTC Barquist, and their USIS guide, Mr. Guilampour, "Iran's finest skier and mountain climber," were driven to Isfahan and then over to Kurang to do a thorough ground reconnaissance.⁴⁵ "The best maps available were 1/250,000 aerials. I concluded that military trucks could easily traverse the gravel roads and tracks in the Kurang Valley. But, the U-1A *Otter* crash site was another sixteen miles (straight line) beyond the village of Kurang where the base camp would be established. Mules and drivers would be hired to carry supplies and bodies," recounted Schandler.⁴⁶ The SF captain agreed to the ARMISH mission stipulations.

These requirements went beyond MG Hayden being very sensitive about controlling all U.S. military in Iran. The American command was embarrassed that the bodies of friends were still on the mountain five months after the U-1A *Otter* crashed, and that previous attempts had failed to account for three U.S. Army officers. Publicity was to

be avoided. The arrival and departure of the SF soldiers would be discreetly handled and precautions were to be taken to cover their presence in Iran.⁴⁷

Therefore, the U.S. Air Force C-130 *Hercules* with the SF team and their equipment would be unloaded on the Imperial Iranian Air Force side of Mehgareb Airport. The military term 'Special Forces' was not to be used; those involved would not be identified as SF troops; shoulder sleeve insignias (SSI) were to be removed from uniforms and the wear of Green Berets was prohibited.⁴⁸ Troops would only stay in Tehran overnight after arriving and before departure. Iranian weapons permits were required. U.S. military personnel were not to drive in Iran. 24-hour radio communications were mandatory. The U-1A *Otter* would be explosively destroyed after photographs of the instrument panel were taken and the radios were removed. MG Hayden expected a daily radio situation report (SITREP).⁴⁹

"They want us to come in as soon as possible with as few people as possible and do the job as quickly as possible with as little publicity as possible and without bothering them too much." — CPT Herbert Y. Schandler

CPT Schandler summed it up: "They want us to come in as soon as possible with as few people as possible and do the job as quickly as possible with as little publicity as possible and without bothering them too much."⁵⁰ A firm commitment from 10th SFG was deemed vital and Schandler was prepared. He submitted his already prepared Operations Plan, Task Organization, Administrative & Logistics Instructions, and a Signal Annex for MG Hayden's approval.⁵¹ With that accomplished, the SF mission commander returned to Germany to prepare his team to return 'as soon as possible.'⁵²

The 10th SFG recovery team consisted of ODA 33 reinforced with the best mountain climbers in the Group. CPT Schandler and his Team Sergeant, Master Sergeant (MSG) Donald L. Petersen, were in charge of A and B company augmentees. Schandler asked that his radiomen in the long-range Communications Exercise (COMMEX) FIERY CROSS in Iran remain behind to support his mission. Reducing the SF radiomen had pleased the ARMISH. But, getting back to Iran by military air (MILAIR) was not simple.⁵³

'Displaced Persons' On The Iran Mission

DPs (Displaced Persons)

DP was a post-WWII social category for persons displaced as a result of war. Original plans to repatriate the displaced peoples to their countries of origin became obsolete when the Soviets occupied the countries of Eastern Europe and imposed Communist governments. This prompted the United Nations (UN) to facilitate voluntary resettlement of DPs worldwide.

DP was the demeaning label that U.S.-born Army Special Forces soldiers 'applied' to both immigrant and alien (Lodge Act) enlisted soldiers who volunteered to join their ranks in the early 1950s. Eligibility criteria for naturalized citizenship was quite different for immigrants than for the 'stateless' aliens who joined U.S. Army under the Lodge Act to get American citizenship. Lodge Act soldiers could not apply for citizenship until they had served their five year obligation honorably. Getting a security clearance for an alien enlistee was much more difficult.

Staff Sergeant (SSG) Jan Novy, 10th SFG, an alien enlistee (29 January 1953) under the Lodge Act, did not get his U.S. citizenship until 1959, after honorably serving five years. Major (MAJ) Larry A. Thorne, made an immigrant by U.S. Public Law 168 (12 August 1953), enlisted for six years, but became a naturalized U.S. citizen on 26 July 1955 as a corporal (CPL) in 77th SFG at Fort Bragg, NC. The experience of these two like-aged SF soldiers emphasize differences in service benefits accorded alien and immigrant enlistees.⁵³



SSG Jan Novy

- DOB: 11 February 1919
- POB: Volyu, Czechoslovakia
- Occupation: Forester
- BPED: 29 January 1953 Lodge Act Enlistee, Bremen, Germany
- BCT & AIT, Fort Dix, NJ
- Graduate, Basic Abn Tng, 8 May 1954
- SP2, FB-5, 77th SFG, Ft Bragg, NC, 1954-55
- SSG & SFC, A & B Company, 10th SFG, Germany, 1955-64 (U.S. Citizen 1959)
- USASWCS & 7th SFG, Ft Bragg, NC, 1964-65
- SFC, 5th SFG, RVN, Jan 66-Jun 67
- SFC, 10th SFG, Germany, Aug 67-Oct 69
- SFC, 5th SFG, RVN, Nov 69-Nov 70
- SFC, HHC, 10th SFG, Ft Devens, MA, Jan 71-Feb 73
- Retired 28 Feb 73
- Deceased, 22 Feb 94
- 2 BSM, ARCOM, PH, CIB, Master Parachutist.⁵²



CPT Larry A. Thorne

- DOB; 28 May 1919
- POB: Vyborg, Finland
- Basic Infantry Training, PVT-SGT, 4th Jaeger Infantry Battalion, 1938-40
- Finish Reserve Officer Course, Provisional Ensign, Platoon Leader & Tng Officer, 1940-1941, Finnish Freedom Medals, 1st & 2nd Class
- *Waffen* SS Foreign Officers School, Stralsund, Germany, 1941
- Platoon leader, Light Unit 8, 1st Finnish Division, 1941-42, WIA, Freedom Cross 3rd & 4th Class for Valor
- Recon platoon leader, 56th Infantry Regt, 1st Finnish Division & independent Jaeger Company commander, 1942-1943, second WIA
- 1LT to CPT, Commander, volunteer long-range Jaeger Company (Törni Unit), 3rd WIA, Knight of the Mannerheim Cross (Finland's highest valor award), German Iron Cross Second Class, 1943-44
- Discharged 11 Nov 44
- *Waffen* SS Guerrilla Warfare & Sabotage Course, Neustrelitz, Germany
- Jan-Mar 45, *Wehrmacht* CPT surrenders German Marine force to U.S. 17th Abn Div, 11 May 45 to become 'Separated Enemy Personnel' (SEPs)
- Escape-Prison-Escape-Prison-Pardoned, 1945-49
- Merchant seaman to Venezuela & U.S., 1950-53
- Retired MG William J. Donovan, former OSS WWII director, gets a special private bill (HR 6312 - LEX TÖRNI granting Finnish immigrant status) through the 83rd Congress. It was signed into law by President Dwight D. Eisenhower on 12 August 1953 (Public Law 168)
- BPED: 1 February 1954, 35 year-old immigrant enlistee
- BCT, Ft Dix, NJ, Feb-May 1954
- Mountain & Cold Weather Training Course, Ft Carson, CO, May-Sep 1954
- Airborne School, Sep 1954
- PFC-SSG, Enlisted SF Course & 77th SFG, Ft Bragg, NC, 1954-1956 (U.S. Citizen 26 July 1955)
- Commissioned 1LT after graduating Signal Corps OCS, Signal Corps Officers Basic Course, Ft Gordon, GA, 1956-57
- 1LT, Platoon leader, 511th Signal Battalion, 11th Airborne Division, Ft Campbell, KY & Augsburg, Germany (Operation GYROSCOPE), 1955-58
- 1LT-CPT, ODA commander, A Company, 10th SFG, Germany, Italian Alpine Mountaineering School, 1958-Oct 1962
- CPT, Associated Infantry Officers Course 2, Oct 62-Mar 63
- CPT, USASWCS SF Course instructor & 7th SFG, ODA-743 Cdr for TDY RVN (6 months - Nov 63-Apr 64), 1962-64
- CPT, 5th SFG, RVN & MACV-SOG 'SHINING BRASS' (1964-65)
- MIA 18 Oct 65, posthumous promotion to Major, LOM, DFC, BSM, 3 PH, AM, ARCOM, CIB, Master Parachutist.
- On 26 June 2003, remains of MAJ Larry A. Thorne and his South Vietnamese Air Force comrades, located by Joint Task Force-Full Accounting (JTF-FA), were laid to rest with full honors in Arlington National Cemetery, Washington, DC.⁵¹

10th SFG

Search & Recovery Mission

IRAN 1962

CPT Herbert Y. Schandler, Co C		Commander ODA 33 & Mission Commander
CPT Larry A. Thorne, Co A		Second in Command
1LT Stephen McIntyre, Co C		Executive Officer ODA 33/ ARMISH LNO
MSG Donald E. Petersen, Co C*		ODA 33 Team Sergeant
MSG Charles F. Rhodes, Co B		
SFC J.P. Lisi, Co C		COMMEX FIERY CROSS
SFC Clemmie Brown, Co C*		
SFC James G. Strong, Co C*		
SFC Coy Melton, Co C		
SFC Henry T. Belton, Co B		
SSG David A. Smith, Co C		
SSG M. Kalisiak, Co C*		COMMEX FIERY CROSS
SSG Clarence W. Thomason, Co C*		
SSG James M. Johnston, Co C		
SSG Lawrence R. Sherman, Co B		
SSG Jan Novy, Co B		
SGT J.C. Bowan, Co C*		COMMEX FIERY CROSS
SGT Willis A. Blair, Co B		
SGT Sario J. Carvalho, Co B		

*Asterisk indicates different surname spellings on 10th SFG orders vice AAR, Recovery Mission to Iran, 5 July 1962 (Classified Files, USASOC History Office, Ft Bragg, NC)

departing for Tehran the next afternoon, but was stopping overnight in Athens, Greece. The Air Force duty sergeant found vacant offices in a storage hangar to accommodate the soldiers, equipment, and explosives overnight. Sleeping bags, air mattresses, and C-rations would suffice. Meals and transport were arranged for the next day. There was little to do but wait while Bad Toelz advised Tehran about the delay. Having endured the feverish ARMISH non-stop gamut of coordination in mid-May, CPT Schandler knew what had to be done if they were to be successful.⁵⁷

Despite LTC Barquist, the ARMISH hospital commander, being anxious to leave for the interior the day after they arrived (evening of 3 June), common sense prevailed. CPT Schandler insisted on acclimating and resting his men (2,159' AGL Bad Toelz compared to 3,900' AGL in Tehran). They had to organize equipment and supplies based on anticipated needs in the base camp and recovery camp. An SF liaison office (ODA 33 Executive Officer [XO], 1LT Stephen McIntyre) had to be set up in the ARMISH headquarters. Radios (PRC-10, AN/GRC 109, and ARMISH-AN/VRC 34) had to be checked. Funds had to be drawn to rent mules and pay the handlers and laborers in Kurang. And, coordination with the GENMISH for base camp security from the district headquarters at Shahr Kord had to be effected.⁵⁸ Schandler knew that it was important to get as much done before leaving Tehran; Kurang was a very 'long way from the flag pole.'⁵⁹

The village where the road ended in the Kurang Valley was in the foothills of the Zagros Mountains, 300 miles (straight line distance) from Tehran. The mountainous and desert terrain dictated where roads, railroads, and airfields were built and the WWII-era air navigation aids (NAVAIDs) were situated. Wednesday, 4 June, the combined recovery party (21 SF and 8 ARMISH personnel) left Tehran in a six-vehicle convoy of four ¾ ton Dodge M-37 4X4 trucks, a ¾ ton Dodge M-43 4X4 ambulance, and a single 2 ½ ton M-35 truck (gasoline). It took all day to reach Isfahan on an asphalt highway, 270 miles away. That was their last comfortable night until the mission ended.⁶⁰

About mid-afternoon Thursday, Wednesday, 6 June, the convoy reached Kurang village at the end of a dirt road. The local Gendarmerie had not been alerted so the Bakhtiari chieftain took charge. He happily guided them to a camp site next to a large mountain spring. By the time the snows had begun melting in the late spring, the Kurang Valley had been repopulated by goat and sheep herders and families planting crops. Contrary to CPT Schandler's original assessment, vehicles would stay at the base camp, which consisted of a dozen hexagonal Army tents.⁶¹

Transportation beyond Kurang would be on foot or by mule. Having erected a doublet antenna the ARMISH radio operator established communications with Tehran on the AN/VRC-34 radio. With the help of the Bakhtiari chief CPT Schandler and Mr. Guilampour negotiated for laborers, mules, and handlers to carry equipment and supplies to the advance camp early in the morning. With the meager ARMISH funds allocated they could afford five

Since the MILAIR departure request was 'inside' the normal Air Force scheduling cycle, the 10th SFG team was traveling 'Priority-Space Available.' Thus, a Sunday afternoon diversion of a C-130 *Hercules* (1 June) to carry the recovery team and its equipment to Evreux Airbase in France, meant a surprise weekend arrival. Transport to remove equipment and men, overnight billets, and meals had not been arranged. However, a C-130 *Hercules* was

mules; water carried was reduced based on LTC Barquist's assurances that there was ample snow.⁶²

The Special Forces soldiers, after spending hours carefully assembling and staging mule loads in the dark for an efficient pack-out the next morning, were quite chagrined when neither laborers, mules, nor herders arrived at 0500 hours. The exceedingly poor, illiterate, but deeply religious Moslem Bakhtiari, lived simple lives under primitive conditions, unlike the Americans and urban Iranians whose daily lives revolved around time. Basic subsistence dominated the lives of these indigenous people. Only twice-daily prayers interrupted critical things...forget a lack of watches and a town clock.⁶³ Adjustment to Bakhtiari rhythms was critical to getting the camps established and the search and recovery underway.

Stage One:

The move to establish the advance camp got off to a late start on Friday, 7 June 1962. The group consisted of the high camp element (CPT Thorne's mountaineers) of eight, and a carrying party of eleven (CPT Schandler's group), and the tribal chief as guide. Carrying 25 cases of C-rations, water purification equipment, explosives, oxygen, and radios, it took all day for the caravan of men and mules to reach the advance camp locations. Left behind to guard the base camp were two SF radio operators as well as the ARMISH radioman and some Iranian truck drivers. They were told to request more money from Tehran and current Signal Operating Instructions (SOI) from Bad Toelz. After the mules and handlers were released (no forage above the freeze line), the exhausted men slept fitfully that night at 10,000 feet.⁶⁴ The next day's climb would be even tougher without pack animals.

Stage Two:

Leaving their individual rucksacks guarded by MSG Petersen, the ODA 33 team sergeant, the carrying party

loaded up with six days of C-rations, water purification and mountaineering equipment, a radio, and explosives. The high camp party carried their individual rucksacks, tents, and specialized search gear. It took the group seven hours to climb the last 4,000 feet along the rocky ridge to the high camp site. After a short break, the very tired carrying party began the return to the advanced camp. They arrived just before dark on 8 June.⁶⁵

Stage Three:

The recovery began shortly after CPT Schandler had led the carrying party away. Several tribesmen were picking up equipment around the crash site on the far side of the bowl below the 14,500 foot ridgeline. The tribal chief and MSG Rhodes, accompanied by a few SF soldiers, went down to talk with them to prevent further looting. When CPT Thorne climbed down to them, he realized that everyone was standing around a rather wizened body. His papers and valuables were long gone but it appeared to be MAJ Carder. After putting the body inside a sleeping bag it was buried in the snow to prevent further deterioration. A quick sweep of the area led to the discovery of another body in a gully about 300 meters away. Despite being exposed for several days LTC Barquist believed it to be CPT Knotts. He was put in a sleeping bag and buried alongside the presumed MAJ Carder. The group then climbed up to the overturned aircraft in the snow. "It had been stripped by earlier rescue parties or by tribesmen. The glide slope control box had been removed and its wires cut. The front part of the aircraft was smashed almost completely and we wondered how the pilots ever got out of the cockpit," reported CPT Thorne.⁶⁶

On Saturday morning, 9 June, while CPT Schandler and the carrying party were returning to Kurang, Thorne radioed the base camp to report finding two bodies and to request that water be airdropped. "Clouds of millions of locusts (grasshoppers) had descended on the area and died,

1 | The Base Camp was guarded by two SF radio operators, the ARMISH radioman, and the Iranian truck drivers.



2 | High Camp set up by CPT Thorne's seven mountaineers.





After being stripped of radios and remaining flight instruments, the U-1A *Otter* was blown to smithereens. It had been rigged with TNT, factored at 'P for plenty.'

"It [the plane wreckage] had been stripped by earlier rescue parties or by tribesmen. ...The front part of the aircraft was smashed almost completely and we wondered how the pilots ever got out of the cockpit."

— Reported CPT Larry A. Thorne

contaminating the snow and water supply points. In some places, the dead locusts covered the ground so thickly it was like walking in deep mud," said CPT Thorne.⁶⁷ Shortly afterwards like magic an Iranian Air Force C-47 *Skytrain* circled the high camp and airdropped two bundles. It was too high when the parachutes opened and strong wind currents carried them far across the ridgeline. It took three men until noon to recover the bundles and drag their contents to the high camp. There was no water, only the heavy mountaineering equipment purposefully left behind in Tehran. They just had more equipment to haul back down the mountain.⁶⁸

The probing for a third body continued, but only several pairs of skis and some sleeping bags and C-rations were found. Two sleds were fashioned from the skis to carry the bodies. At 1745 hours LTC Barquist, Mr. Guilampour, the tribal chief, SSG Willis A. Blair, and SGT Sario J. Carvalho left for the base camp. Unfortunately, the handset to the PRC-10 had quit working, so CPT Schandler was 'left in the dark' concerning this decision.⁶⁹

Since the snow had frozen hard overnight, CPT Thorne and the remaining high camp team members put off probing until afternoon on 10 June. They spent the morning stripping the U-1A *Otter* of its radios and remaining flight instruments, carefully cataloging them. After their attempts to burn the aircraft with thermite grenades failed, the SF soldiers rigged the airplane for demolition with TNT. Factoring 'P for plenty,' all explosives were used and the *Otter* was blown to smithereens in a massive roar that echoed successively. SSG Blair and SGT Carvalho, on the return climb to the high camp, heard the explosion but missed the excitement. After reaching the snow line of the advance camp in the dark, the two bodies had been buried

again. In the morning LTC Barquist, Mr. Guilampour, and the tribal chief left for the base camp. SSG Blair and SGT Carvalho returned to the high camp.⁷⁰

Meanwhile, at the base camp in Kurang on Sunday, 10 June, CPT Schandler, having no communications with the high camp and Bad Toelz (wrong keypads delivered), was handling administrative issues. SFCs Coy Melton and Joseph P. Lisi (Farsi speaker) and SSG David A. Smith, the team medics, were alerted to prepare to conduct 'sick call' for the local Bakhtiari in the morning. The ARMISH ambulance would serve as the private 'examining room.' At 1500 hours when the local chieftain appeared with LTC Barquist and Mr. Guilampour, the mission commander was brought up to date through 9 June when they left Thorne's group. Schandler learned that the location of the two bodies had been marked but they had been left unguarded. However, Barquist, Guilampour, and the chief had used the ravine route. It was very passable and significantly faster. While the chief alerted his people about the SF-conducted 'sick call' arranged for the next day, CPT Schandler rented two mules and a driver for the return to the advance and high camps in the morning. CPT Thorne, concerned that the bodies had been left unguarded, sent SFC Henry T. Belton, SSGs Jan Novy and Blair, and SGT Carvalho to the advance camp with "all of the excess gear, radio equipment, and instruments from the plane."⁷¹ They were to stay overnight. Thorne and MSG Rhodes, alone at 14,500 feet, experienced the first signs of oncoming altitude sickness. Unable to get enough oxygen in the prone, the two soldiers spent the night sitting up, side by side, gasping to fill their lungs.⁷²

In the morning of 11 June, the two SF mountaineers were distracted from their breathing problems by the

appearance of an Imperial Iranian Air Force C-47 *Skytrain*. The parachute on the first airdropped bundle did not open and it smashed into the ground. While the parachute on the second bundle opened, its hard impact burst three 5-gallon cans; two with water and one full of gasoline. Two cans of water were salvaged. The appearance of Sergeants Blair, Novy, and Carvalho prompted Thorne to direct the assembly of all equipment and supplies for movement down to the lower altitude of the bowl below the remnants of the destroyed airplane. The men's spirits were lifted when after discovering some ski tips protruding from the snow, two meters of frantic shoveling uncovered a bloody field jacket, a case of C-rations, and climbing ropes. But, the third body was not there.⁷³

The late evening surprise arrival of CPT Schandler, LTC Barquist, Mr. Guilampour, and SFC Belton leading two mules raised morale. They had a PRC-10 handset, some D-handle shovels, more probes, and body bags. The mules were reloaded with all unnecessary equipment and SSG Novy took them down to the advance camp. That night oxygen distress affected everyone at the high camp. The rapid movements to high altitude and extending living in the rarified air without proper acclimatization had started causing problems.⁷⁴

Searching and probing around the high camp for the next two days (12-15 June) proved fruitless. Unfortunately, the ARMISH had not given CPT Schandler access to the preliminary accident investigation which contained information as to the disposition of the five survivors on the mountainside below the crash. Only personal equipment and climbing gear were found. Despite 8 to 10 inches of

snow melt each day, snow and ice was still more than 6 meters deep around the high camp. Concerned about altitude sickness, CPT Thorne decided to keep just three men at the high camp to observe "the area for possible objects appearing on the surface."⁷⁵ He would rotate them in three days. All other personnel and equipment would go down to the base camp. The bodies buried at the advanced camp would be evacuated. MSG Rhodes, SSG Blair, and SGT Carvalho were left behind when CPT Thorne and the remainder of his team departed Friday afternoon, 15 June, dragging ski sleds loaded with equipment. Radio communications with the base camp were good.⁷⁶

At the advanced camp a frustrated and discouraged CPT Thorne and group loaded the two bodies inside snow-filled metal containers, lashed them onto mules and continued the night march to the base camp in Kurang, arriving at 0100 hours, Saturday morning. The exhausted SF soldiers were jarred awake by the Bakhtiari eagerly awaiting treatment by the military 'doctors.' LTC Barquist had already left for Isfahan with the bodies of the two U.S. officers.⁷⁷

Then, about mid-morning, the high camp radioed that they had found a third body. SGT Carvalho, the lowest man on a parallel linear walking sweep of the area, had spotted clothing protruding from the snow. A closer examination revealed a human knee. He called MSG Rhodes and SSG Blair over to help clear the snow and ice away. Glum SF soldier faces in the base camp radiated smiles when the news was passed. The Tenth Group team had fulfilled its mission and brought closure to the three bereaved families. While SF medics continued 'sick call' in the base camp, CPT Schandler arranged for mules and

Mules from the Base Camp would be used to carry the recovered remains of MAJ Carder and CPT Knotts.





CPT Larry A. Thorne (R) with the Detachement A-2 'High Camp Mountaineers.'

handlers to carry the last body and remaining gear down from the high camp. All of Sunday, 17 June, was spent in that endeavor. Monday morning, 18 June 1962, the SF team loaded their equipment on trucks for Isfahan. Late Tuesday afternoon, 19 June, equipment was turned in to the ARMISH.⁷⁸

The next morning CPT Schandler and LTC Barquist briefed the Chief of Staff, COL Tarkenton, and MG Hayden, the ARMISH chief, got partial pays for his soldiers, and left with the SF team on the ALS flight to Athens at 1500 hours. "They didn't have much to say to me. I was thanked, but wasn't overwhelmed with the warmth or gratitude. The troops were somewhat disappointed that no representative from ARMISH ever expressed a word of thanks to them or came to see them off," wrote CPT Schandler.⁷⁹ But, having accomplished their mission in Iran without attracting any attention, the Special Forces would be welcomed back in the future.

The SF soldiers did get a reward from the 10th SFG command group. CPT Schandler was authorized to administratively delay their return to Bad Toelz. The 10th SFG was undergoing its annual USAREUR Inspector General (IG) inspection and a returning team with dirty equipment was unwelcome. CPT Schandler took his 'holiday' in Vienna, while the rest of the team chose to extend their stays in Athens.⁸⁰ "I suggested that the men in the High Camp receive the Soldier's Medal and the rest of the team get the Joint Service Commendation Medal.

But, nothing came of it," recounted retired COL Schandler. "The commander, COL S. H. Matheson, was told to keep the mission very quiet."⁸¹ The 10th SFG soldiers did receive a Letter of Commendation from GEN Paul L. Freeman, Jr., the Commander-in-Chief, USAREUR on 30 July 1962.⁸² So, what can be concluded and what resulted from the success achieved by 10th SFG in 1962?

Despite the 'ups and downs,' the 10th SFG soldiers adjusted well, stayed focused on the mission, and persevered to succeed. This recovery mission, executed very low key, opened the way for fifteen years of annual SF training in the Middle East and led to productive exchanges with the Imperial Iranian Army Special Forces and airborne troops. They were done by 10th SFG until the 5th SFG returned from South Vietnam. Exchanges and training teams (MTTs) satisfied President Kennedy's wish to properly train the Shah's military to insure that advanced U.S. arms and equipment would be truly beneficial. SF was not the first 'weapon of choice' for USAREUR or the ARMISH because they were still a relatively unknown quantity to Army commanders in Europe in 1962. It was the civic action medical capabilities (MEDCAP) part that were touted by the Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Lieutenant General (LTG) Harold K. Freeman, during his message to the Association of the U.S. Army in Washington in 1963.⁸³ And, it should not be overlooked that ARMISH took risks 'above and beyond' during an extremely hard winter to rescue and recover their five U.S. military personnel. ▲

Special thanks goes to retirees, LTC Zane K. 'Kyle' Rector, COL Sandy Vann-Olejasz, the granddaughter of MG Walter M. Vann, deceased, and MAJ Sario J. Carvalho, the archival staffs of the John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Libraries and Museums, and the longtime supportive staff of the National Personnel Records Center.

CHARLES H. BRISCOE, PhD

Charles H. Briscoe has been the USASOC Command Historian since 2000. A graduate of The Citadel, this retired Army special operations officer earned his PhD from the University of South Carolina. Current research interests include Army special operations Latin America, the Congo, and the Lodge Act.

Endnotes

- 1 U.S. Army Europe (USAREUR) Preliminary Aircraft Crash Investigation undated, 1, 2, Major General Walter M. Vann personal papers, copy in USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as USAREUR Preliminary Aircraft Crash Investigation; "German Ski Troops Join Zagros Search, *Kayhan International* (Tehran, Iran), Vol III: No. 802, Saturday, 3 February 1962, 1, 5.
- 2 USAREUR Preliminary Aircraft Crash Investigation, 3.
- 3 USAREUR Preliminary Aircraft Crash Investigation, 3, 4; United States Army Board for Aviation Accident Research, "Crash Sense: Wrong!" *U.S. Army Aviation Digest*, March 1962, 47-48, hereafter cited by short title *Aviation Digest*. "Colonel Walter M. Vann, the senior officer aboard the aircraft, became the senior ground commander, when the airplane touched ground. These were Army Aviation flight rules. However, everyone on board was so hypoxic that general consensus ruled," said retired LTC Zane K. Rector, a fixed-wing Army aviator who was the Aide-de-Camp to MG John C. Hayden, the ARMISH/MAAG chief. Retired LTC Zane K. 'Kyle' Rector, interviews by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 3 and 10 May and 21 June 2017, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date.
- 4 "German Ski Troops Join Zagros Search," 1, 5.
- 5 Retired COL Herbert Y. Schandler, interview by Briscoe, 6 October 2010, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date; Company C, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), 1st Special Forces, APO 106, U.S. Forces, SUBJECT: After Action Report, Recovery Mission to Iran, 5 July 1962, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as C Co 10th SFG AAR 5 July 1962.
- 6 Charles M. Simpson III, *Inside the Green Berets: The First Thirty Years* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1983), 74.
- 7 Simpson, *Inside the Green Berets*, 74. Retired Colonel Simpson stated that the crash killed 'four crew members and passengers' and Iranian mountain climbers attempted to scale the mountains to retrieve the bodies, but the deep snow was too much for them. Actually, there were three crewmen and two passengers aboard the U-1A *Otter* when it crashed on 27 January 1962. The enlisted crewchief, Specialist Five (SP5) John T. Porter and one passenger, Colonel (COL) Vann, were rescued by combined ARMISH and Iranian military efforts. Rector interviews, 3 and 10 May and 21 June 2017; Schandler interview, 6 October 2010; COL Herbert Y. Schandler Papers, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as COL Schandler Papers; Lieutenant General (LTG) Harold K. Johnson, Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, "Keeping the Bottle Corked," *Army* (December 1963), Vol. 14, No. 5, 36. In his address to the annual Association of the U.S. Army (AUSA) meeting, LTG Johnson reported that the *Otter* crashed killing all five personnel. Severe weather conditions, inaccessibility of the region, and the torturous nature of the terrain limited initial recovery to just two bodies. A 10th SFG team found the other three. Somewhere the rescue of two survivors got lost. Two were cited in "Crash Sense-Wrong!" *Aviation Digest* (May 1962), 46-48.
- 8 U.S. State Department, *Welcome to Tehran: A Handbook of Facts and Information Prepared by the Embassy of the United States of America* (Tehran, June 1977), 3.
- 9 U.S. Army, *Area Handbook for Iran* (Washington, DC: American University, Special Operations Research Office [SORO], May 1963), 66, 67; "100 Years of Flight – Keep Them Flying – Avionics" at <http://machinedesign.com/technologies/100-years-flight-keep-them-flying-avionics>, accessed on 12 April 2017.
- 10 Richard P. Weinert, Jr., *A History of Army Aviation – 1950-1962* (Fort Monroe, VA: U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, 1991), 149, 278, 279; Charles R. Schrader, *History of Operations Research in the U.S. Army* (Washington: Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of the Army for Operations Research, 2008), Vol. II, 255. The second LTG Hamilton L. Howze Board specifically addressed air mobility in support of the conventional Army conducting special warfare missions.
- 11 The History Team, *Cold War Mapping Mission: The 329th Geodetic Detachment and the 64th Engineer Topographic Battalion 1956-1970* (Bennington, VT: Merriam Press, 2014), 13, 54, 76, hereafter cited as *Cold War Mapping Mission*.
- 12 USAREUR Preliminary Aircraft Crash Investigation, 4; "German Ski Troops Join Zagros Search," 1, 5.
- 13 Rector interviews, 3 and 10 May and 21 June 2017; "SE 3130 Alouette II – History and Technical Description" at <http://www.heli-archive.ch/en/helicopters/in-depth-articles/se-3130-alouette-2>, accessed on 4 May 2017; "Aerospaziale Alouette II Light Utility Helicopter" at http://www.militaryfactory.com/aircraft/detail.asp?aircraft_id=699, accessed on 4 May 2017.
- 14 "German Ski Troops Join Zagros Search," 1, 5.
- 15 USAREUR Preliminary Aircraft Crash Investigation, 4; Headquarters, Department of the Army, General Orders No. 55, 25 September 1962, paragraph VII, "Soldier's Medal" awarded to SFC Eugene F. Peck, 1LT Zane K. Rector, and SFC Harold C. Stagers, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 16 "German Ski Troops Join Zagros Search," 1, 5.
- 17 Rector interviews, 3 May and 21 June 2017.
- 18 "German Ski Troops Join Zagros Search," 1, 5. Mr. Kazem Guilampour, the noted Iranian skier and mountain climber working in USIS, had been awarded the U.S. Department of Defense Distinguished Public Service Medal for his outstanding bravery during the recovery of two U.S. Army servicemen killed in an L-23 *Seminole* crash on 26 January 1961, just miles from the 1962 U-1A *Otter* crash site. LTC, then MAJ Richard F. Barquist, Commanding Officer, U.S. Army Hospital, Tehran, Iran, was awarded a Soldier's Medal for his courageous role in the 4-6 February 1961 recovery mission. "Valor Awards for Richard F. Barquist" at <http://valor.militarytimes.com/recipient.php?recipientid=140211>, accessed on 9 June 2017.
- 19 Rector interviews, 3 and 10 May 2017.
- 20 USAREUR Preliminary Aircraft Crash Investigation, 4; Rector interview, 3 May 2017; Headquarters, Department of the Army, General Orders No. 26, 14 June 1962, paragraph III, "Soldier's Medal" awarded to Imperial Iranian Army Sergeants Atoah Noorii and Amir Shahghadami, Mountain Training Center; "Crash Sense: Wrong!" *Aviation Digest*, March 1962, 47-48; Award of the Soldier's Medal to SFC Harold C. Stagers, MAAG, Iran. Hall of Valor. Military Times at <http://valor.militarytimes.com/recipient.php?recipient=140300>, accessed on 13 April 2017.
- 21 Rector interview, 3 May 2017; HQ, DA, GO No. 26, 14 June 1962, paragraph III, "Soldier's Medal" awarded to Imperial Iranian Army Sergeants Atoah Noorii and Amir Shahghadami, Mountain Training Center; "Crash Sense: Wrong!" *Aviation Digest*, March 1962, 47-48; Award of the Soldier's Medal to SFC Harold C. Stagers, MAAG, Iran. Hall of Valor. Military Times at <http://valor.militarytimes.com/recipient.php?recipient=140300>, accessed on 13 April 2017.
- 22 Rector interview, 3 May 2017; COL Schandler Papers.
- 23 Rector interview, 3 May 2017; HQ, DA, GO No. 26, 14 June 1962, paragraph III, "Soldier's Medal" awarded to Imperial Iranian Army Sergeants Atoah Noorii and Amir Shahghadami, Mountain Training Center; "Crash Sense: Wrong!" *Aviation Digest*, March 1962, 47-48; Award of the Soldier's Medal to SFC Harold C. Stagers, MAAG, Iran. Hall of Valor. Military Times at <http://valor.militarytimes.com/recipient.php?recipient=140300>, accessed on 13 April 2017; "German Ski Troops Join Zagros Search," 1, 5; Frostbite on the feet of SP5 John T. Porter was so severe, that parts of several toes were removed. He was medically evacuated to Landstuhl Army Hospital in Germany for surgery. USAREUR Preliminary Aircraft Investigation, 4, 9; Rector interview, 21 June 2017.
- 24 Schandler interview, 6 October 2010; U.S. ARMISH Search and Recovery Plan dated 20 February 1962, Annex 1to Inclosure A – Proposed Operational Plan, 10th SFG After-Action Report, Advance Party to Iran undated, COL Schandler Papers, hereafter cited as 10th SFG AAR-ADVON to Iran; "John C. Hayden 1930" at <http://apps.westpoint.org/Memorials/Article/8940/>, accessed on 7 December 2016.; "West German Mountain Rescue Team Arrived in Iran," *Syracuse (NY) Post-Standard*, 2 February 1962, 1.
- 25 Schandler interview, 6 October 2010; 10th SFG AAR-ADVON to Iran; "German Ski Troops Join Zagros Search," 1, 5.
- 26 Schandler interview, 6 October 2010; Schandler, unpublished "Special Forces in Iran," undated, 3, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as Schandler, "Special Forces in Iran."
- 27 USAREUR Preliminary Aircraft Crash Investigation, 5; Schandler interview; Schandler, "Special Forces in Iran," 3.
- 28 USAREUR Preliminary Aircraft Crash Investigation, 5; "Search for 3 Airmen in Iran is Abandoned," *Chicago Tribune*, 10 February 1962, 8 at <http://archives.chicagotribune.com/1962/02/10/page/8/article/search-for-3-airmen-in-iran-i-4/>, accessed on 13 April 2017; *The Alexandria Times* (Indiana), 2 February 1962, 2; .
- 29 Rector interviews, 10 May and 21 June 2017; 10th SFG AAR-ADVON to Iran. Armor 1LT Robert F. Molinelli later commanded the 114th Aviation Company and the 2nd Battalion, 17th Cavalry during his two tours in Vietnam. COL Molinelli commanded the 6th Cavalry Brigade (Air Combat) and was Chief of Staff, 2nd Armored Division, Fort Hood TX before becoming the Assistant Division Commander (Maneuver) as a Brigadier General (BG). He was a serving Major General (MG) at his death in 1985. MG Molinelli was posthumously inducted into the Army Aviation Hall of Fame in 1989. "Maj.Gen. Robert F. Molinelli, Decorated War Aviator, Dies" at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/187/05/08/maj-gen-robert-f-molinelli-dec/>, accessed on 22 June 2017; "MG Robert F. Molinelli" at <http://www.quad-a.org/index.php/soldier/37-recognition/awardees/148-major-general-robe>, accessed on 22 June 2017.
- 30 Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson was sent to Berlin on behest of President John F. Kennedy on 20 August 1961, a week after the East Germans began constructing a barbed wire fence to restrict access to Western zones. Johnson greeted the 1600-man 1st Battle Group, 18th Infantry, 8th Infantry Division that convoyed from Mannheim, Germany. Colonel Glover S. Johns, Jr. was the commander. The SF team would have been the Berlin Detachment, 10th SFG. This differs from Schandler *Memoirs*, 39, wherein he said that it was President Kennedy. It will be 26 May 1963 before Kennedy declares that "all free men...are citizens of Berlin

- Ich bin ein Berliner*,” Schandler *Memoirs*, 36; “Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson Delivers Remarks to the Press upon His Return from West Germany” at <https://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/Archives/JFKWHP-KN-C18601.aspx>, accessed on 30 January 2017; “The Berlin Wall, Fifty Years Ago” at <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB354/index.htm> accessed 1/30/2017; Donald A. Carter, “The U.S. Military Response to the 1960-1962 Berlin Crisis” at <https://www.archives.gov/files>, accessed on 30 January 2017.
- 31 Simpson, *Inside the Green Berets*, 70. The last time 10th SFG was a robust unit dated to its arrival in Germany in 1953. Post-Korean War officer reductions-in-force (RIFs) improved non-commissioned officer (NCO) strengths in U.S. Army Europe (USAREUR) while simultaneously severely depleting SF ranks at Bad Toelz.
- 32 Schandler interview, 6 October 2010; Schandler, *Memoirs*, 39. A medic was sent to Defense Language School in Monterey, CA, for Farsi while the team sergeant went to the Berlitz School in Munich for a month.
- 33 Schandler interview, 6 October 2010; Schandler *Memoirs*, 39; *Area Handbook for Iran*, 617; retired MG James A. Guest, 20 June 2017 interview by Briscoe, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date..
- 34 *Area Handbook for Iran*, 618.
- 35 *Cold War Mapping Mission*, 3.
- 36 *Cold War Mapping Mission*, 3. The U.S. Army Map Service began geodetic surveys and topographic mapping in Ethiopia in 1963 and Liberia in the mid-1960s.
- 37 *Cold War Mapping Mission*, 3.
- 38 USAREUR Preliminary Aircraft Crash Investigation, 2, 6; “Crash Sense: Wrong!” *Aviation Digest*, 48. Historical records for the Tehran, Iran weather station reflect one common theme: “This station did not reliably report...temperature, clouds, precipitation, snow, humidity, dew point, wind, visibility, or cloud ceiling” in 1962. “Historical Weather for 1962 in Tehran, Iran,” at <https://weatherspark.com/history/32810/1962/Tehran-Iran>, accessed on 15 December 2016; Rector interview, 10 May 2017.
- 39 *Welcome to Iran*, 41.
- 40 Rector interview, 10 May 2017.
- 41 USAREUR Preliminary Aircraft Crash Investigation , 6; Schandler interview, 6 October 2010; Schandler, “Special Forces in Iran,” 3.
- 42 Schandler interview, 6 October 2010; Schandler *Memoirs*, 44. Retired COL Aaron Bank, Official Military Records, National Personnel Records Center, St. Louis, MO, hereafter cited as NPRC.
- 43 10th SFG AAR-ADVON to Iran; Schandler interview, 6 October 2010; However, LTC Richard F. Barquist did not share the USAREUR Preliminary Aircraft Crash Investigation results with them. It had the U-1A aircraft exit order of the five personnel aboard, the fact that MAJ Donald A. Carder, the co-pilot, had moved down to the airdropped bundles, and that SP5 John T. Porter, the crew chief, had slid past CPT Daniel L. Knotts, the pilot, and was close to MAJ Carder’s body. This information would have helped the 10th SFG High Camp team better organize their search.
- 44-47 10th SFG AAR-ADVON to Iran; Schandler interview, 6 October 2010.
- 48 Retired MAJ Herbert Brucker, interview by Briscoe, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 49-52 10th SFG AAR-ADVON to Iran; Schandler interview, 6 October 2010.
- 53 C Co 10th SFG AAR 5 July 1962; Schandler interview, 6 October 2010.
- 54 H.A. Gill III, *Soldier Under Three Flags: The Exploits of Special Forces Captain Larry A. Thorne* (Ventura, CA: Pathfinder Publishing, 1998); J. Michael Cleverley, *Born a Soldier: The Time and Life of Larry Thorne* (booksurge.com, 2008); Kari Kallonen and Petri Sarjanen, *Lauri Törni-Legenda-Larry Thorne* (Tallinn, Finland: Grenader Grupp, 2004).
- 55 Retired SFC Jan Novy, Official Military Records, NPRC.
- 56 Former SGT Rudolf G. Horvath (Lodge Act enlistee) interview by Briscoe, 10 June 2008; retired Colonel George Maracek (immigrant enlistee) interview by Briscoe, 11 February 2009; both interviews in USASOC History Office Classified Files, Ft Bragg, NC.
- 57-60 C Co 10th SFG AAR 5 July 1962; Schandler interview, 6 October 2010.
- 61 10th SFG AAR-ADVON to Iran; Schandler interview, 6 October 2010.
- 62-65 C Co 10th SFG AAR 5 July 1962; Schandler interview, 6 October 2010.
- 66 C Co 10th SFG AAR 5 July 1962; Schandler interview, 6 October 2010. CPT Thorne does not mention that the cockpit was completely separated from the fuselage. USAREUR Preliminary Aircraft Crash Investigation, 3.
- 67-72 C Co 10th SFG AAR 5 July 1962; Schandler interview, 6 October 2010.
- 73 C Co 10th SFG AAR 5 July 1962; Schandler interview, 6 October 2010. The bloody field jacket belonged to the pilot, CPT Daniel L. Knotts, whose left arm arterial bleeding had been stopped with a tourniquet. USAREUR Preliminary Aircraft Crash Investigation, 3, 4.
- 74 C Co 10th SFG AAR 5 July 1962; Schandler interview, 6 October 2010.
- 75 USAREUR Preliminary Aircraft Crash Investigation ; C Co 10th SFG AAR 5 July 1962; Schandler interview, 6 October 2010.
- 76-79 C Co 10th SFG AAR 5 July 1962; Schandler interview, 6 October 2010.
- 80 Schandler *Memoirs*, 43; Schandler interview, 6 October 2010.
- 81 Schandler interview, 6 October 2010. The 10th SFG commander, COL Salve H. Matheson, jumped into Normandy, France, on D-Day, 6 June 1944, as 1st platoon leader, E Company, 2nd Battalion, 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment (Stephen E. Ambrose’s Easy Company in *Band of Brothers*). He served with the 506th PIR through the liberation of Holland, Battle of Bastogne, and seizure of Hitler’s ‘Eagle’s Nest’. He was the X Corps G-3 Plans Officer for the Inchon and Wonsan landings in the Korean War. As a Brigadier General (BG) Matheson was an Assistant Division Commander, 101st Airborne Division (ABD) and commanded 1st Brigade (Separate), 101st ABD in Vietnam. He later commanded the 2nd Infantry Division in Korea before retiring in 1975. “MG Salve H. Matheson, Deceased” at <https://army.togetherweserved.com/army/servvlet/tws.webapp.WebApp?cmd=ShadowBoxP>, accessed on 22 June 2017; “In Honor of Major General Salve Matheson,” *Congressional Record—Extension of Remarks*, January 25, 2005, E70.
- 82 HQ, USAREUR, Office of the Commander-in-Chief, APO 403, US Forces. Letter of Commendation dated 30 July 1962. C Co 10th SFG AAR 5 July 1962.
- 83 Freeman, “Keeping the Bottle Corked,” *Army*, December 1963, 36.

