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**The War in Vietnam : the view from a Southern community : Brownsville,
Haywood county, Tennessee**

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NOTES

1. Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History*, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1991, p.viii.
2. Donald A. Ritchie, *Doing Oral History*, New York, 1995, p.xi.
3. *Ibid.*, p.24.
4. *Ibid.*, p.7.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Courses on the Vietnam War are on the curriculum of colleges and universities all over the world today. In 1995, for example, the special course “Vietnam: ‘The Forever War’” was taught at Leiden University. Lecturers included Neil Sheehan and Robert Olen Butler.
7. Stanley I. Kutler, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War*, New York, 1996.
8. Charles Reagan Wilson & William Ferris, eds., *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1989, p.321. From here on: Wilson.
9. J. Wayne Flynt, *Dixie’s Forgotten People: The South’s Poor Whites*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1979, pp.3-4.
10. Wilson, p.1109.
11. V.S. Naipaul, *A Turn in the South*, New York, 1989, p.3.
12. Mary Hood, “A Stubborn Sense of Place,” in *Harper’s Magazine*, vol.273, No.1635, August 1986, p.36.
13. C. Vann Woodward, *The Burden of Southern History*, 1960. Reprinted, Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, 1993, p.xiv.
14. *Ibid.*, pp.xii-xiii.
15. Owen W. Gilman, Jr., *Vietnam and the Southern Imagination*, The University Press of Mississippi, Jackson, 1992, p.52.
16. *Ibid.*
17. *Ibid.*
18. Allen Tate, “Ode to the Confederate Dead” in *Poems*, Denver, Colorado, 1961.
19. *Ibid.*, p.16.
20. *Ibid.*
21. Woodward, p.190.
22. *Ibid.*, p.236.
23. Gilman, op. cit., argues that “writers for decades will concern themselves with the moral and social consequences of America’s lost [Vietnam] War, just as innumerable Southern writers looked beyond the horizons of the great world wars to see the dust swirling around Confederate soldiers’ statues.” (p.7.
24. *Birmingham Post-Herald*, March 5, 1996.
25. *The Birmingham News*, July 7, 1996. Gary M. Pomerantz, *Where Peachtree Meets Sweet Auburn: The Saga of Two Families and the Making of Atlanta*, New York, 1996.
26. It has been my experience that the North-South contrasts are engrained in the Southern character. The emotions emanating from the Civil War contrast come to the surface quite easily. In everyday situations this occurs almost invariably in a jocular way. When I attended the in-service training at Haywood High School in the summer of 1986, a visiting speaker, whose accent indicated he was from the North, said, “By the way I hear they still shoot Yankees here.”

- Similarly, when a party of farmers from the Midwest visited area dairy farms in Haywood County, the headline in the local newspaper referred to “a peaceful Yankee invasion”.
27. Winston Groom, *As Summers Die*, New York, 1980, pp.30-31. The statue of the Confederate soldier in Brownsville, Tennessee, however, faces east, because the Union Army was expected to come from Jackson.
 28. Tobias Wolff, *In Pharaoh's Army*, London, 1994, p.183.
 29. W.W. Friedman, in “A Holiday In Blue And Gray?”, July 3, 1996, p.3.
 30. Words spoken by Shelby Foote on videotape, *The Divided Union: The Story of the American Civil War*.
 31. Kutler, p.93.
 32. November 28, 1995.
 33. September 7, 1995.
 34. Robert S. McNamara with Brian VanDeMark, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam*, New York, 1995.
 35. *The New Yorker*, vol.71, May 8, 1995, p.67.
 36. *Vietnam*, vol.8, Number 6, April 1996, p.6.
 37. Summer 1995, vol.CIII, Number 3, pp.453-459.
 38. Kutler, p.444.
 39. “Vietnam War: Washington Was Right,” November 7, 1995.
 40. Eric T. Dean, Jr., *Shook over Hell: Post Traumatic Stress, Vietnam, and the Civil War*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1997.
 41. Chester L. Cooper, *The Lost Crusade: America in Vietnam*, New York, 1970, p.454.
 42. Col. Harry G. Summers, Jr., *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War*, Novato, California, 1982, p.182.
 43. Dean, pp.5-6.
 44. *Ibid.*, p.8.
 45. *Ibid.*, p.181.
 46. *Ibid.*, p.45.
 47. June 26, 1996.
 48. In *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, vol. 66, Number 1, 1990, pp.17-35.
 49. Kutler, p.30.
 50. *Ibid.*
 51. *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, p.24.
 52. *Ibid.*
 53. *Ibid.*
 54. *Ibid.*, p.26.
 55. *Ibid.*
 56. *Ibid.*
 57. Col. James A. Donovan, U.S. Marine Corps (ret.), “Assessing the War’s Costs”, *Vietnam*, vol.8, Number 6, p.44.
 58. 1992, in Ruth D. Weston, “Debunking the Unitary Self and Story in the War Stories of Barry Hannah,” in: *The Southern Literary Journal*, vol. XXVII, No.2, Spring, 1995, p.97.

59. *Ibid.*, pp.97-98.
60. *Ibid.*
61. Gilman, in Ruth D. Weston, p.99.
62. John Griffin Jones, "Barry Hannah." In *Mississippi Writers Talking*, John Griffin Jones, ed., Jackson, Mississippi, 1982. In *The Southern Literary Journal*, vol.XXVII, No.2, Spring, 1995, p.99.
63. Barry Hannah, "Midnight and I'm Not Famous Yet" in *Airships*, New York, 1978. Page references in the text are to this edition.
64. Ruth D. Weston has pointed out in *Barry Hannah, Postmodern Romantic* (Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, 1998), that the majority of Hannah's stories are informed by war. "Indeed, his characters seem haunted by war, especially the Civil War and Vietnam, which often merge in their minds." (p.3).
65. *Ibid.*, p.70.
66. Gilman, p.8.
67. *Ibid.*
68. *Ibid.*, pp.15-16.
69. *Ibid.*, p.36.
70. *Ibid.*, pp.36-37.
71. *Ibid.*, p.47.
72. *Ibid.*
73. *Ibid.*, pp.49-50.
74. *Ibid.*, p.111.
75. Larry Brown, *Dirty Work*, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1989, p.101.
76. *Ibid.*, p.225.
77. *Tennessee Blue Book 1995-1996*, Bicentennial Edition (1795-1996), Nashville, Tennessee, January 1996, p.323.
78. Neal R. Peirce and Jerry Hagstrom, *The Book of America: Inside 50 States Today*, New York, 1984, p.365.
79. *Brownsville-Haywood County Chamber of Commerce Directory*, 1995, p.11. Although the area is mainly agricultural, Brownsville has a number of manufacturers in industrial parks. It has remained a quiet community with small town values, however.
80. *History of Haywood County, Tennessee, 1989*, published by the Brownsville-Haywood County Historical Society, 1989, pp. 234-237.
81. *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.
82. *Heart of the Tennessee Delta: A Historical Guidebook to Haywood County*, Brownsville, Tennessee, 1996, p.1.
83. *Ibid.*, p.1.
84. *History of Haywood County*, pp. 237-238.
85. *Heart of the Tennessee Delta*, p.2.
- 86.. *Ibid.*
87. *Ibid.*
88. Wilson, p.658.
89. It is interesting to note that even in the fairly recent past of the 1870s, before modern medicine was available, there was hardly any difference between the way people responded to contagious diseases in medieval Italy (Boccaccio, *Decamerone.*, in Elizabethan England (during the 1590s when London was hit by the plague several times, the wealthy inhabitants fled to their country seats.,

- or in nineteenth-century West Tennessee.
90. *Heart of the Tennessee Delta*, p.7.
 91. Even today the politically correct “African-American” is avoided in Haywood County. “Blacks” is preferred by all the different groups in the area. “Negro” is a dated word. It was used in Haywood County well into the sixties.
 92. Wilson, p.642.
 93. *Ibid.*
 94. *Ibid.*, p.639.
 95. *Ibid.*, p.609.
 96. *Ibid.*, p.641.
 97. *Ibid.*
 98. *Ibid.*
 99. *Ibid.*
 100. *Ibid.*, p.936.
 101. *The [Memphis] Commercial Appeal* and *The Jackson Sun*.
 102. An interesting mistake that I have noticed elsewhere in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* and one that can be easily explained in the Bible Belt where people were and still are as familiar with the word “cavalry” as with “calvary”.
 103. The announcement was printed on an inside page. Information of this type had lost its urgency and was becoming routine.
 104. E-mail message from Ray Dixon to the author, October 31, 1998.
 105. This explains why many Americans love *Rambo, First Blood, Part II*, which features a heroic American soldier doing what the U.S. government according to them had failed to do.
 106. Cf. Robert D. Schulzinger, *A Time for War: The United States and Vietnam, 1941-1975*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1997, pp.280-81.
 107. Kutler, p.442.
 108. Oliver L. North and David Roth, *One More Mission: Oliver North Returns to Vietnam*, New York, 1993, p.107.
 109. Philip Caputo, *A Rumor of War*, New York, 1978, p.26.
 110. Speech of November 3, 1969, *Public Papers of the Presidents: Richard M. Nixon*, 1969, vol. 1, pp.901- 909.
 111. Tennessee Blue Book, 1995-1996, p.411.
 112. Brownsville is situated in the South, where the legacy of the recent past is still visible today. I refer to the definitions of the Ku Klux Klan in *The American Heritage Dictionary* (Boston, 1976, Reprinted 1985.: 1. A secret society organized in the South after the Civil War to reassert white supremacy with terroristic methods. 2. A secret fraternal organization founded in Georgia in 1915 and dedicated to maintaining legal and de facto segregation of blacks.
 113. Cf. The Black Republican Party in the South during Reconstruction.
 114. There never was a declaration of war, which is why the North Vietnamese felt the Geneva convention did not apply. Hence captured U.S. pilots were considered criminals.
 115. Wilson, p.640.

116. *Ibid.*, p.642.
117. *Ibid.*
118. The film industry in Hollywood is a case in point. The weather has been regarded as the determining factor to account for the difference between the North and the South by various scholars.
119. Wilson, p.641.
120. *Ibid.*
121. George C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*, New York, 1986, p.274.
122. Kutler, p.548.
123. *Ibid.*, p.549.
124. The efforts made by the family of Richard K. Johnston of Brownsville is a case in point. I became familiar with the specific details through a letter I received from his sister, Susan K. Pettigrew, also of Brownsville, Tennessee:

I saw your letter in this week's *States-Graphic* concerning information about associations with persons involved in the Vietnam War. My older brother, Rick, was a helicopter gunner in 1970 when his helicopter went down near the Cambodian border. According to the U.S. Army, all on board were killed. They said that the group was on some sort of earlt morning mission and they struck "something" in the fog, which caused the crash.

It has been twenty-five years since Rick was killed and besides the void in all of our lives because of his absence, the Army has yet to provide my parents with the Purple Heart. They say there is a backlog of about 10,000 requests and the last time I spoke with them they could not even find the paperwork regarding our request. I am working on other routes to get the Army to take some action on this. I would like my parents to have Rick's Purple Heart before they die.

So far (November, 2003) the Army has been unable to resolve the matter of the Johnston family's request for a posthumous Purple Heart.

125. Richard Reeves, *President Kennedy: Profile of Power*, New York, 1993, pp. 68-69.
126. Wilson, p.936.
127. The editorials in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* from 1960 through June 1962 were generally written by Paul Miller Sims, whose death was reported on July 6, 1962. He was born in Crockett Mills, the son of Dr. John and Effie Amos Sims, but had lived in Brownsville since 1917. He was married to Miss Susie Lee Grable in 1914. He was a member of the Church of Christ, and had been an elder of the church for 36 years.
128. In the editorials of the Vietnam War era in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* there is frequent evidence of an atmosphere that may be regarded as the aftermath of the Civil War. Here as in other instances it is a case of the South versus the rest of the United States.

129. It is worth noting that, although in early 1964 U.S. troop presence in Vietnam amounted to 16,300, the War in Vietnam had not yet been referred to in the editorials of the local newspaper by July 1964.
130. The slogan advertized on the water tower in Brownsville.
131. Woodward has found the central theme of Southern history to be Southern history itself.
132. I take the Vietnam War to start in 1960, when president Kennedy was elected; the end of the war for the United States came in 1973, when all U.S. troops were withdrawn.
133. A total of forty-seven people were interviewed: twenty-four were W/M; fifteen W/F; nine B/M; 1 B/F. My original plan of achieving a certain balance in the group to be interviewed, worked out from the point of view of professions, and Vietnam veterans and their families, but did not quite if we look at the black and white ratio. Approximately 20% of the interviewees was black. An explanation for the imbalance is that for reasons that could not be explained, a number of blacks declined to be interviewed. On one occasion a black man had originally agreed to be interviewed, but he called back later, saying he had better not. I discussed the problem with Martha Jane Williams, who said, "They just don't trust you." When I asked her how it could hurt them, she replied, "How could any contact with white people hurt you?"
134. Lane College in Jackson, Tennessee, is a one-hundred percent black college.
135. Blacks who had been evicted lived in tents near Summerville for many months.
136. *A Time for War*, pp. 216,238-239,318,335.
137. For a discussion of the basic unfairness of the draft system, cf. Schulzinger, p.238-239.
138. *One More Mission*, p.107.
139. Arnold R. Isaacs, *Vietnam Shadows: The War, Its Ghosts, and Its Legacy*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland, 1997, pp. 46-47.
140. Ray Dixon, who was a member of the Draft Board, said that there were an equal number of blacks and whites on the Draft Board, but that the secretary was a white woman.
141. As this fragment in the interview with Jeff Hooper demonstrates the memory of events going back thirty odd years, works like ice melting when the temperature goes up. A leisurely pace or atmosphere is important; sipping coffee or iced tea during a discussion and looking away at the surroundings and the pauses that all this implies, are all inductive to stimulating the memory. For a detailed discussion of the function and use of memory in oral history, cf. *The Oral History Reader*, Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, eds., London, 1998, especially chapter 25, "Anzac Memories."
142. It has struck me since that many white people that I interviewed invariably came up with lieutenant Norman Lane, when asked for names of local servicemen killed in Vietnam.
143. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War (Vom Kriege)*, 1832, Anatol Rapoport, ed. Reprinted. London, 1982, p.367.
144. Novato, California, 1982, p. 103
145. *America's Longest War*, p. ix.
146. p.334.

147. p.xi.
148. Wilson, p.1134.
- 148a . James McPherson, *Drawn with the Sword: Reflections on the American Civil War*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1996, p. 240.
149. Isabel Colegate, *The Shooting Party*, London, 1980.
150. For the biographical information on Laymon Johnson I have depended on an article by C.T. Smith, originally published in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* in 1995.
151. This was also true of the Netherlands during World War II up to a point. But it was the strict Protestants rather than the Roman-Catholics, who were very patriotic. It was especially Protestants and communists. who played an active part in the resistance movement. (Cf. Albert Oosthoek, *De Knokploeg Rotterdam-Zuid, 1944-1945*, Rotterdam 1990; -----, *Uit Trouw Geboren: Illegaliteit in Oud-Beijerland*, Oud-Beijerland, 1995). Geert Mak, in *De Eeuw van mijn Vader* (Amsterdam, 1999) points to the same phenomenon in greater detail: "... degenen die het meeste durfden, die de meeste onderduikers hielpen en het meeste presteerden, waren de communisten en de gereformeerden, uiterst links en uiterst rechts, vaak in broederlijke samenwerking. De Gestapo chef van Delfzijl betitelde de gereformeerde kerken ooit als de grootste illegale organisatie van Nederland (7% van de bevolking zorgde voor 25% van de joodse onderduikers.)" ["...it was the communists and the members of the Christian Reformed church, representing the far left and the extreme right in the political spectrum, who, working in unison, were the most courageous. The Gestapo commandant of Delfzijl labelled the Christian Reformed church the largest illegal organization in the Netherlands (7 percent of the population looked after 25 percent of all Jewish persons in hiding."- author's translation](p. 280).
152. For the biographical information I am indebted to C.T. Smith's article on Leon King written for the *Brownsville States-Graphic*.
153. Biographical information from *History of Haywood County*, p.190.
154. We had just been talking about World War I from the British point of view, remembering that the British government had had an ample supply of volunteers in the initial stage of the war, and how when that changed all the young men were drafted indiscriminately. And that the result had been that many talented intellectuals from the universities had been killed in Flanders and northern France.
155. *Dirty Work*, p.23.
156. A take-off from the North Vietnamese Hanoi Hanna, who tried to persuade American soldiers to lay down arms and go home. Her famous predecessor in the Far East during World War II was Shanghai Rose.
157. Tabernacle Camp, like Joyner Camp, is an annual family reunion and spiritual revival rolled into one.
158. Bob Moses joined the Air Force. He was sent to Texas, then to England, where he worked five days a week and was off on the weekends.
159. Peter, Paul, and Mary also was the group mentioned as an example of protest music against the war in Vietnam by J. Wayne Flynt, in a meeting with the author.

160. Richard A. Couto, *Lifting the Veil: A Political History of Struggles for Emancipation*, Nashville, Tennessee, 1993. Interestingly, the local Elma Ross library did not have it on its shelves during the period I carried out research (August 1995-August 1996).
161. In both Peter Taylor's *A Summons to Memphis* (New York, 1987) and in V.S. Naipaul's *A Turn in the South*, the narrative starts from the perspective of an "ex-patriate" Southerner, living in New York City, for whom it becomes necessary to return to the South.
162. Peter Taylor, p.22.
163. *Ibid.*, p.26.
164. *Ibid.*, p.36.
165. *Ibid.*, p.42.
166. Biographical information from the *Brownsville States-Graphic*.
167. Biographical information from *History of Haywood County*, pp. 98-99.
168. Biographical information from *History of Haywood County, Tennessee, 1989*, p.62.
169. Ray Dixon probably meant Larry Land, whose name is on the War Monument in Brownsville.
170. *History of Haywood County*, p.260.
171. *Heart of the Tennessee Delta*, p.69.
172. Tom Silvia's view of the South reflected Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!*
173. Apart from the optimism implied in this statement, it is perhaps more than coincidental that Christmas is used as a point of reference. In the late summer of 1914, when the Great War had just started, it was assumed that the war would be over by Christmas. The underlying thought, perhaps, is that in western culture, which is deeply infused with christian culture, the idea of war clashes with the age-old words of "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men."
174. Colonel Taliaferro's description of the U.S. Air Force bombing the Vietnamese jungle, bears a close resemblance to the scene in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, where a French naval vessel is observed futilely firing its guns into the dense foliage of the forest on the coast of Africa.
175. The basic rule for victory in war, as formulated by Von Clausewitz.
177. Dr. Henry Kissinger and North Vietnam's chief negotiator, Le Duc Tho, initialled an agreement in Paris to end the war. All American POWs would be released and the 23,700 American servicemen still in South Vietnam would be withdrawn within sixty days. The signing of the Paris Peace Accords on January 27, 1973, ended America's direct military involvement in South Vietnam, although the U.S. continued to bomb Laos until a peace agreement was signed on February 21, 1973, while the U.S. continued to bomb Cambodia until Congress on July 1, 1973, determined that the bombing of Cambodia would end on August 15, 1973.
178. Cf. chapter 3, interview with Danny Presley.
179. *A Time for War*, p. 12.
180. Maurice Isserman, *Witness to War: Vietnam*, New York, 1995, p.4.

NOTES

181. *Ibid.*, p.10. The metaphor goes back to general George Armstrong Custer. On June 27, 1876, he said that he "could see light at the end of the tunnel".
182. *Major Problems in the History of the Vietnam War*, Robert J. McMahon, ed., Lexington, Massachusetts, 1990, pp.133-34.
183. *America's Longest War*, p. 76.
184. *Witness to War*, p 28.
185. "Southeast Asia: The Anti-Guerrillas,"in *Newsweek*, January 1, 1962, in *Witness to War*, p.31.
186. "Guerrilla Warfare,"in *Newsweek*, February 12, 1962, in *Witness to War*, pp.33-34.
187. *Ibid.*, p.44.
188. *Profile of Power*, caption photo #7.
189. *A Time for War*, p.122.
190. Lyndon Baines Johnson, *The Vantage point: Perspectives on the Presidency, 1963-1969*, New York, 1971, in *Witness to War*, p 48.
191. *Ibid.*, p.51.
192. *Ibid.*, p.67.
193. *A Time for War*, p.227.
194. *Ibid.*, p.228.
195. *Major Problems in the History of the Vietnam War*, pp.475-76.
196. *Witness to War*, p.76.
197. *A Time for War*, p.220.
198. *Executive Sessions of the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations*, Vol.12, 1966, p.233, in *A Time for War*, p.222.
199. *Witness to War*, p.108.
200. *A Time for War*, pp.240-41.
201. *Ibid.*, p.256.
202. *In Retrospect*, p.311.
203. *Ibid.*, 306.
204. *Ibid.*
205. *Ibid.*
206. *Ibid.*, pp.306-07.
207. *Ibid.*, p.311.
208. *Witness to War*, p.130. On March 16, 1968, hundreds of South Vietnamese civilians were murdered by an American unit commanded by lieutenant William Calley.
209. *Ibid.*, p.119.
210. *Ibid.*, p.125.
211. *A Time for War*, p.268.
212. *Ibid.*, p.269.
213. *Ibid.*, pp.269-70.
214. *Ibid.*, pp.270-71.
215. *Ibid.*, pp.271-72.
216. *Ibid.*, p.272.
217. *Ibid.*
218. *America's Longest War*, p.225

219. George McTurnan Kahin and John W. Lewis, *The United States in Vietnam*, Revised edn., New York, 1969, p.402.
220. *A Time for War*, p.280.
221. *Ibid.*, p.282.
222. *Ibid.*
223. *Ibid.*, p.262.
224. *Ibid.*, p.284.
225. *Ibid.*
226. *Ibid.*, p.287,
227. *Witness to War*, p.168.
228. *A Time for War*, pp.287-88.
229. *Ibid.*, p.288.
230. *Ibid.*
231. *Ibid.*
232. *Ibid.*, p.290.
233. *Ibid.*
234. "Week of Protests of War to Start," *The New York Times*, April 19, 1971, in *Witness to War*, pp.176-77.
235. *Ibid.*, p.176.
236. *Ibid.*
237. John Kerry, former lieutenant (j.g.) U.S. Navy, testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, April 22, 1971, in *Witness to War*, pp.177-78.
238. Max Frenkel, "Mitchell Seeks to Halt Series on Vietnam But Times Refuses," *The New York Times*, June 15, 1971, in *Witness to War*, p.180.
239. *America's Longest War*, p.249.
240. *A Time for War*, p.292.
241. Liz Trotta, *Fighting for Air: In the Trenches with Television News*, University of Missouri Press, Columbia, 1994, p.229.
242. *America's Longest War*, p.249.
243. *Witness to War*, p.195.
244. *Ibid.*, p.196.
245. *Ibid.*, pp.197-98.
246. Harvard University Press, Boston, Massachusetts, 1997.
247. *Ibid.*, p.5.
248. *Ibid.*, p.180.
249. *Ibid.*, p.181.
250. The number of troops remaining in Vietnam on Decemter 31, 1973, was down to 50. A total of 57,011 American soldiers were killed in the Vietnam War., During the final collapse of South Vietnam, however, on April 29, 1975, two American servicement were killed by a North Vietnamese rocket in Saigon. They were the last of 47,244 Americans killed in action in the Vietnam War. The fall of Saigon came on April 30, 1975. The total number of Americans killed in Vietnam between 1959 nd 1975 was 58,169.
251. *Vietnam Shadows*, p.65.
252. *Ibid.*, p.86