



Dramatic photograph of a blindfolded VC suspect being led away for interrogation in October 1963. UH-1B, s/n 62-1912, has just landed to off-load the prisoner. Aircraft carries the early style unit insignia on the crew door and standard high visibility markings.

Below: Superb air-to-air view of a 3rd Armed Helicopter Platoon, "Cobras," 114th Aviation Company (AML) gunship UH-1B, s/n 62-1961, taken in December 1963. Aircraft is painted in overall gloss olive drab with high visibility markings and is equipped with the XM-6E3/MA-2 combination weapons system. The 3rd Platoon, through the end of 1963, carried the standard 114th unit markings, in this case the early version 114th shield with "Knights of the Air" script. SP5 Wyley Wright's cobra motif had not yet been added to the nose in December 1963. The unusual yellow primer patch hides combat damage. This aircraft later crashed with loss of life.

composed of two airlift platoons and an armed helicopter platoon. For simplicity and control the platoons were first assigned code names based upon the colors of the unit patch red, blue and yellow. Yellow was not considered appropriate for the 3rd Armed Helicopter Platoon so the color white was substituted. The First Airlift Platoon was "Red;" Second Airlift Platoon was "Blue" and the Third Armed Platoon "White." The 3rd Platoon Leader, Captain Dave Johnson, asked for a nickname for the platoon from its members. SP5 Wyley Wright, a talented artist, designed the unit's snake motif. Upon approval of both drawing and name, the 3rd Armed Platoon was renamed the "Cobras."<sup>3</sup> The Second Airlift Platoon then became "White" and "Blue" was to be later reactivated by the maintenance section. Eventually the CO adopted the call sign "Gold Knight," and, with the addition of "Knight" after the airlift platoon's color, these remained the unit's unclassified call signs during its service in Vietnam.<sup>4</sup>

The 114th Aviation Company (Air Mobile Light) was awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation for exceptionally meritorious achievement from July 1963 to June 1964.



Right: On 9 March 1964 UH-1B, s/n 62-1961, was flying escort for Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara who was touring the Mekong Delta. While over the Bassac River the helicopter suddenly lost power and crashed, exploding on impact with the water, and quickly sinking. This incredible photograph records the moment after the crash as a 114th slick, piloted by Captain Emilio Zamora, hovers towards the dark spot in the water marking the sunken gunship, to rescue A/C Captain I.E. Greeley and co-pilot CWO C. Daniel. Crew Chief SP5 Wyley Wright, Jr. and Gunner PFC John Francis Shea both perished in the crash. Vietnamese boats can be seen rushing to the crash site.



Lower Right: With the assistance of a local Hoa-Hoa diver named Tran Van Tham, the U.S. Navy was able to raise the wreckage of 62-1961. The helicopter and the bodies of the two crewmen were located in 60 feet of water.

