

# Airmobility 1961-1971.pdf/22



Exported from Wikisource on October 3, 2024

light-weight, simple, flexible turret gun to be provided for all Army transport helicopters. Tactical experiments had proven the obvious requirement for some type of suppressive gunfire to be delivered by transport helicopters during the critical approach phase of a combat assault. Unfortunately, the light turret gun was never developed as conceived, but the Ordnance Corps latched onto the requirement as the justification of expenditures in the initial development of helicopter armament.

### *The Armed Helicopter*

During this same time frame, a small group of pioneers, with the blessing and backing of Brigadier General Carl I. Hutton, Commandant of the Aviation School at Fort Rucker, Alabama, were making the first crude experiments with armed helicopters. Scrounging discarded hardware from the other services' junkyards, they improvised various combinations of machine guns and rockets in the face of ridicule and outright opposition. At the same time they began to develop tactics and techniques which they felt would prove useful when the technology of helicopter armament caught up to the theory.

The guiding genius for much of this development was a colorful officer, Colonel Jay D. Vanderpool. Colonel Vanderpool was Chief of the U.S. Army Aviation School's Combat Development Office, which was under the direct supervision of the Assistant Commandant. This arrangement was fortuitous since we could make all the assets of the School available to his project if required. In June 1956, with two officers, two enlisted men, and unbounded enthusiasm, Colonel Vanderpool went to work without a charter, without money and, by explicit direction, without publicity.

With borrowed personnel from the Department of Tactics, Colonel Vanderpool formed a "Sky-Cav" platoon which became notorious for its hair-raising demonstrations of aerial reconnaissance by fire. By mid-1957 this provisional unit, redesignated Aerial Combat Reconnaissance Platoon, had somehow acquired two H-21's, one H-25, and one H-19 armed with a wondrous variety of unlikely weapons. Colonel Vanderpool and his "hoods" were to see their efforts officially recognized when the Aerial Combat Reconnaissance Platoon became the nucleus of the 7292d Aerial Combat Reconnaissance Company (Provisional) with an approved Table of Distribution sanctioned by the Department of the Army on 25 March 1958. In subsequent work, Colonel Vanderpool and his group developed, on paper, organizations for an "Armair" troop,



# About this digital edition

This e-book comes from the online library [Wikisource](#). This multilingual digital library, built by volunteers, is committed to developing a free accessible collection of publications of every kind: novels, poems, magazines, letters...

We distribute our books for free, starting from works not copyrighted or published under a free license. You are free to use our e-books for any purpose (including commercial exploitation), under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 Unported](#) license or, at your choice, those of the [GNU FDL](#).

Wikisource is constantly looking for new members. During the transcription and proofreading of this book, it's possible that we made some errors. You can report them at [this page](#).

The following users contributed to this book:

- JoeSolo22