

# Lieutenant With 1908th Comm Helps Rehabilitate Youngster

By Lt. George A. Burk

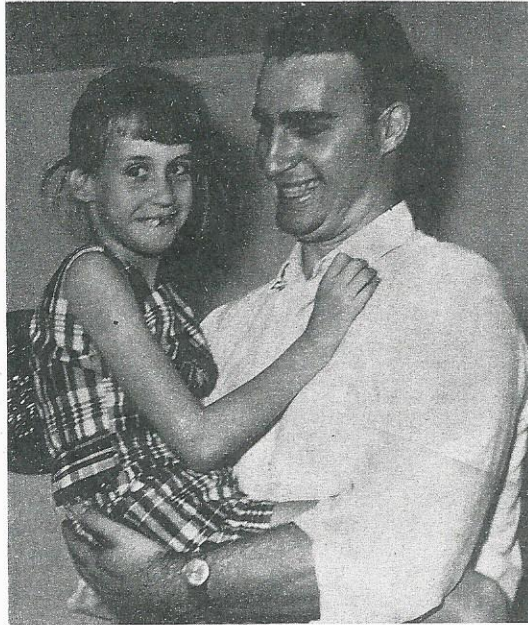
ENGLAND AFB, La. — In a March issue of the AFCS INTERCOM there appeared a feature story recognizing the 1908th Comm Sq. at England AFB. Of the stories covered, ranging from the "Ham" radio operators in the Squadron to the various functions each section performs, there appeared an article describing therapy undertaken to help a little girl find a road back to a normal life.

The child, 7-year-old Becky Mcgaugh, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Neil McGaugh of nearby Alexandria, La., has undergone a rigorous therapy program for the past year and a half. The exercises are an attempt to help her crawl all over again as she would a few months after birth.

Therapy sessions are held twice daily, seven days a week, with four members making up a team. Exercises are conducted for a five-minute period. Becky then rests for one-half hour, followed by five more minutes of exercise.

In addition, Becky has many visual aids which help her become more alert. These consist of flashing lights, toys that speak, and other exercises conducted in conjunction with the primary crawling exercise.

The main purpose this therapy tries to accomplish is to stimulate the remaining un-injured brain cells into taking over the function of the read cells. This is done by imposing on the brain the patterns of activity which help develop the



Becky and Lieutenant Burk

brain of a normal, unhurt child. This procedure, called patterning, is achieved by the learning to crawl exercise. Initial evaluation and child programming costs parents \$150. Subsequent visits are \$50. A brain-injured child, untreated or treated by conventional means, develops at about one third the rate of a normal child on the average.

When Mr. and Mrs. McGaugh were first aware of Becky's brain damage, she was less than seven months old. After many visitations and consultations with specialists in the Alexandria area, they were referred to a branch of the Doman clinic in San Antonio, Tex. The clinic's trade name is the Achievement for Human Potential with main offices in Philadelphia, Pa. In Philadelphia, as in each one of its clinics, there is a section called the Institute for Neurological Organization. Here, children with injured brains are being treated with astonishing success. It is the largest treatment center of its kind in the world.

Many exciting and surprising answers to questions, unanswered for years, are beginning to emerge from the research conducted in Philadelphia and San Antonio. Becky, along with her parents, travels to the clinic in San Antonio every two months for study and re-evaluation by the specialists directing her training.

Dr. Glenn Doman, director of the Institute, recalls that 20 years ago, many of those who were treating brain-injured children were unsatisfied with the results obtained. They hoped that by concentrating their efforts and working together one one group of children for a given period of time, they could accomplish more.

The progress Becky has made in the past 14 and a half months is truly amazing. Where she had made little progress in gaining balance, she is now standing; where she could not speak, she is now making an attempt. Becky can now shake hands, smile, and "roughhouse" with her brothers, in general. Becky has a better appreciation of those that surround her with love, care and devotion.

Although she is only one of thousands of children crippled by this defect, today there is hope for recovery. A new sense of awareness has come over this courageous little girl and her family. The therapy performed on Becky will continue for many more months, with each visitation to the clinic in San Antonio bringing more optimism for a near normal recovery.

As scientific research continues, additional programs will be started to help the brain-injured child. A few months ago, Mr. and Mrs. McGaugh had lost all hope of Becky recovering. Today, after a great deal of patience, prayers, and hard work, they are optimistic as to Becky's chances for total rehabilitation. All of us who have worked with Becky have come to know and love her as our own. We all hope that, due a small part to our assistance, she will develop into a girl capable of love, compassion, and desires which all normal children possess.

"I, as Flight Facilities Officer for the 1908th Comm Sq., have been working with Becky McGaugh ever since the program began. It has been a very rewarding experience and gives me a greater appreciation of my own children."

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