

# ANNUAL HISTORICAL SUPPLEMENT

## 2<sup>D</sup> BN 35<sup>TH</sup> INF 1966

Our thanks to CHUCK LAWS who was the Battalion S-1 in 1967. He had the forethought to keep a copy of this report so that one day it could be shared with the "Cacti" of today. Also, a thank you to Ben Youmans and Don Johnson for passing this along.

### ORGANIZATION

#### UNITS

2d Bn 35th Inf

HHC, 2/35 Inf

Co A, 2/35 Inf

Co B, 2/35 Inf

Co C, 2/35 Inf

STAFF, 2d Bn 35th Inf

#### COMMANDER

LTC PHILIP R. FEIR

CPT CLIFFORD G. FOUTY

CPT CHARLES A. MURRAY

CPT RALPH B. WALKER

CPT RONALD B. RYKOWSKI

#### POSITION

#### NAME

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

MAJ FREDERICK J. SEIBERT

S1

1LT THOMAS K. NEWMAN

S2

CPT JAMES H. HARRIS

S3

MAJ PETER G. VOGANTANZ

S4

1LT JAMES T. HENNESSEY

AS OF 31 DECEMBER 1966

### PERSONNEL STRENGTH

#### UNIT

#### AUTHORIZED

#### ASSIGNED

HHC, 2/35 Inf

272

379

Co A, 2/35 Inf

173

191

Co B, 2/35 Inf

173

186

Co C, 2/35 Inf

173

169

AS OF 31 DECEMBER 1966

## OPERATION TAYLOR

5 Feb 66 - 8 Feb 66

Combined with other elements of the 3d Bde Task Forces 25th Inf Div, the 2/35 Inf conducted a motor march to the north of PLEI MRONG on 5 Feb 66. The battalion had the mission of providing convoy security for the operation and despite the size of the convoy (217 vehicles), encountered little difficulty.

Upon its arrival at the new base of operations (Coord: ZA 065735), the 2/35 Inf prepared for its operation against an estimated battalion size North Vietnamese Army (NVA) force located in the vicinity of the Chu Granuel Mountain.

At 0755 6 Feb 66, while securing the east side of the YA KRONG BOLAH River, the Reconnaissance Platoon, 2/35 Inf, came under small arms fire from an estimated squad size unit located on the west side of the river. After suffering one wounded, the recon platoon called in mortar fire causing the enemy to flee to the north.

One hour later, one enemy 60mm mortar round landed in the perimeter of the Battalion Command Post causing injury to three people. Later Company C was mortared with four rounds while the company was entering a clearing in the woods. The company commander, Capt. Woods, was killed and 10 other people injured. Capt. Robert Ord, the Battalion S-1, was designated the Company Commander. *(See Note Below)*

The 2/35 Inf continued to conduct search and destroy operations in their assigned area of operation (AO) until OPERATION TAYLOR ceased at 0700 8 Feb 66, at which time the 2/35 Inf conducted an airmobile extraction to Plei Mrong.

It was significant to note that although the 2/35 Inf did not make actual contact with the NVA, the enemy was able to inflict casualties on the 2/35 Inf by accurate indirect fire. The lessons learned from this operation proved invaluable in later engagements with the NVA.

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## OPERATION GARFIELD

25 February 1966 - 24 March 1966

During the period 0730 25 February 1966, through 2400 24 March 1966, the 3d Bde Task Force, 25th Inf Div, conducted OPERATION GARFIELD. The 2/35 Inf was the reserve reaction force for the operation.

The operation was conducted in DAR LAC Province against the 966th Bn, 32d NVA Regiment. The 3d Bde. Task Force moved by air from New Pleiku Airstrip to BAN ME THUOT East Airfield. The 1/14 Inf and 1/35 Inf, with 2/35 Inf in reserve, conducted search and destroy operations using "eagle" flights and saturation patrolling.

On 8 March 1966, the 2/35 Inf was given the mission (OPERATION LYSANDER) to conduct a search of Plei Klung, a village in DAR LAC Province, and to establish blocking positions in support of OPERATION GARFIELD. In addition, the 2/35 Inf had the responsibility for

providing security for the Brigade Rear Command Post. OPERATION LYSANDER was accomplished with very light contact and negative friendly losses.

On 15 March 1966, while still assigned the mission as the reserve element in OPERATION GARFIELD, the 2/35 Inf was given the additional mission (OPERATION QUINTUS) of securing that portion of Highway 19 bounded by coordinates BR 188518 on the west and BR 28453 to the east. This was accomplished by occupying platoon and squad size strong points and by conducting local patrolling. Furthermore the battalion provided convoy escort train BR 288453 east to Pleiku during the period 17-21 March 1966. On 21 March 1966, the 2/35 Inf departed their assigned sector and closed to the 3d Bde base camp, Pleiku, at 1905 21 March 1966, where the battalion continued to maintain its reserve posture for OPERATION GARFIELD in addition to local patrolling to provide security for the 3d Bde base camp.

Throughout the entire operation, the trend among both the Viet Cong (VC) and the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) forces was to avoid contact with U.S. Forces. Despite this trend, the 2/35 Inf was able to aid in destroying or capturing the following:

#### **ENEMY LOSSES**

<b>PERSONNEL</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>KIA (BC)</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>KIA (POSS)</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>KBA (BC)</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>KBA (POSS)</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>WIA (BC)</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>WIA (POSS)</b>	<b>122</b>
<b>CIA</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>CIA Suspects</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>360</b>

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#### **WEAPONS**

<b>AK-56 SMG, Chicom MFG</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>SKS-Carbine, Chicom and Russian MFG</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>RPD SMG, Chicom MFG</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>B-40 Rocket Launcher</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Swedish "K" SMG.</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>M-79 Grenade Launcher, U.S. MFG</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Springfield "03" U.S. MFG</b>	<b>13</b>

M-2 Carbine U.S. MFG	2
TOTAL	67

**AMMUNITION**

Hand Grenades ea.	102
82mm mortar, rds.	112
12.7mm HMG, rds.	1,200
7.62ca1, rds.	21,500
30 cal, rds.	5,080
B-40, Rockets, ea	38
75mm Rockets, ea.	1
C1aymore mine, ea	3

**MISCELLANEOUS**

Rice	61.5 tons
Drugs	100 lbs
Uniforms.	400 ea
Rucksacks	234 ea
Field Telephones	9 ea
Switch Board	1 ea
Documents	150 lbs

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**OPERATION LONGFELLOW**

15 April 1966 - 1 May 1966

During the period 15 April 1966 to 1 May 1966, the 2/35 Inf under the command of LTC George A. Scott, participated in OPERATION LONGFELLOW.

Attachments to the Battalion during the operation included:

Civil Affairs/Psychological Operations Team

Military Intelligence Interpreter

Radio Research Unit

Montagnard Guides (2)

## **A Battery 2d Battalion 9th Artillery, Direct Support**

The mission of the 2/35 Inf during OPERATION LONGFELLOW was to conduct search and destroy operations in northwest Kontum Province. The Area of Operations (AO) was bounded on the west by the National border and on the east by a line 1000 meters west of Highway 14.

Supported by the artillery fires of A Btry, 2d Bn, 9th Arty and planes from the 7th US Air Force, the 2/35 Inf conducted saturation patrolling during the day, utilized ambush positions and patrolling at night, and conducted eight combat assaults employing the "Eagle Flight" technique during the operation. There was no significant contact made during OPERATION LONGFELLOW, although there were numerous casualties suffered due to the numerous areas in the AO which were saturated with punji stakes and pits.

### **ENEMY LOSSES**

#### **PERSONNEL**

KIA BC 2

#### **AMMUNITION**

Grenades, Fragment action 2 cases

Grenades, Concussion 1 case

Trip Devices 1 box

Blasting caps 1 box

81mm Mortar rds 41 rds

.30 cal Ammunition 13 cases

.45 cal Ammunition 3 cases

#### **MISCELLANEOUS**

Bicycles 6 ea

Medical Supplies 10 lbs

Military clothing basket 5 baskets

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### **OPERATION PAUL REVERE I**

10 MAY 1966 – 31 JULY 1966

OPERATION PAUL REVERE I began the first of four phases of OPERATION PAUL REVERE which started 10 May 1966 and ended 25 December 1966.

The 2/35 Inf, as part of the 3d Brigade Task Force displaced from Pleiku by motor convoy on 10 May 1966, to OASIS (ZA 107276) to provide reserve/reaction force and security force for the Brigade forward base, and to conduct search and destroy operations initially in AO 21 and 22.

The decision was made to conduct the operation in three phases:

**Phase I: Conduct motor move 10 May 1966 from Pleiku to Brigade forward base.**

**Phase II: Conduct rapid search and destroy operations in AO 21 and 22 to determine whether there were heavy enemy concentrations in the AO.**

**Phase III: Conduct detailed reconnaissance and surveillance operations in AO 21 and 22 to detect enemy activity and to locate routes of movement. Establish blocking positions and ambushes on principal routes of movement to disrupt enemy efforts to reconnoiter, infiltrate, withdraw, or establish caches in AO.**

**Phase I and II were completed on 17 May 1966 without contact.**

**On 22 May 1966, the Reconnaissance Platoon, 2/35 Inf, conducted a heliborne assault into LZ 29A and began a longrange in the North and West portions of the AO. During its patrol, the platoon accounted for four NVA KIA and one NVA WIA. There were no friendly casualties.**

**On 27 May 1966, the 2/35 Inf conducted a heliborne assault into AO 11 and 12 with companies A and B landing at LZ 12A (YA 908385). The battalion (-) landed at LZ 11A (YA 873369). Companies A and B later closed to LZ 11A after conducting search and destroy operations to the northwest and southwest, respectively.**

**Based on a terrain analysis, the valley associated with LZ 10k (YA 769376) appeared to be a likely area for use by enemy forces, hence Company B was directed to prepare for a heliborne assault into LZ 10A on 28 May 1966.**

**On the morning of 28 May 1966, Company B, commanded by Captain James R. Maisano, conducted the heliborne assault into LZ 10A. Following the assault, the mission assigned was to conduct a search and destroy operation along an assigned axis to the east along the valley floor, establish a company ambush at dusk, and return to the battalion base, YA873369, on 29 May 1966.**

**At 1100, the first lift of nine HU-1D helicopters placed 63 men (1st platoon, company HQ, and part of the 2d platoon) into the LZ without incident. As the 1st platoon secured the NW portion of the LZ, suddenly they began to receive heavy enemy small arms fire from an estimated reinforced squad. After the initial contact, which resulted in four US casualties, the LZ appeared secure; however, as DUSTOFF medevac aircraft attempted to land extremely heavy ground fire was received from the NW. The DUSTOFF aircraft was driven off with several hits. The estimate of enemy strength was raised to a reinforced platoon. Following the DUSTOFF incident, the volume of fire declined, although occasional sniper and AW fire continued to be triggered by movement of friendly troops.**

**Following the initial DUSTOFF attempt, 52d Avn Bn gunships (BUCCANEER 6) made repeated passes firing both machineguns and rockets into the wood lines**

**running north and south. Particularly heavy fire was delivered against a machine gun which was firings across the flank of the 1st platoon from the SW and could not be reached by friendly small arms fire. The gunships, however, did not suppress enemy fire to the degree required. Friendly positions were marked with smoke and two A1E aircraft strafed and dropped napalm on the machinegun position. Still the machine gun continued in actin. Another flight (F4C jet aircraft) appeared on the scene and shortly thereafter neutralized the**

enemy position with 500 pound bombs. The AIE's meanwhile, were effectively suppressing enemy fire to the north.

Immediately following the air strike, the 1st platoon maneuvered a squad to the southwestern portion of the LZ and made contact with two NVA. On contact, both fled into the woods to the west. A large number of packs and equipment plus one 12.7mm anti-aircraft weapon were found. The latter was returned to the company CP. The squad continued a clockwise sweep of the entire LZ. A second anti-aircraft gun was found virtually destroyed by the airstrike. Discovery of guns #3, 4 and 5 followed in quick succession as the sweep was completed.

At approximately 1430, the remainder of Company B was lifted into the LZ. With the exception of some automatic weapons fire at the aircraft, this lift was carried out without major incident. On the ground, the 1st platoon put down a base of fire to the north. Enemy fire ceased as the aircraft departed. The perimeter was then reorganized and captured enemy equipment and gear were consolidated at the company CP.

Company B then began a sweep to the north to clear the area and obtain a body count. The initial count totaled ten. Sweep elements then moved out some 150 meters and returned; however, upon return, sniper fire again came from a bunker position at the north end of the LZ. Because the sweep elements of the 1st and 2d platoons were mixed, a consolidated squad attacked the bunker with grenades. Two NVA were KIA and two were captured. Both POW's were returned to the brigade CP. Because of this action, another sweep was generated. This sweep likewise received sniper fire from the NW. Snipers accounted for two friendly WIA. The 3d platoon maneuvered against the snipers, later determined to number two, and suffered one KIA and seven WIA, including the platoon leader who later in the day died of wounds. The snipers, both excellent marksman, were firing one semiautomatic and one automatic weapon from positions concealed behind trees. Both were killed by M-79 and M-60 MG fire.

At approximately 1630, the seriously wounded were lifted out by the brigade CO's helicopter. Prior to this, two DUSTOFF ships had been driven off by enemy fire. One of these had received several hits. Additional wounded subsequently were lifted out without incident by two 52d Avn Bn gunships. The enemy was believed to have withdrawn. Resupply was requested. Information was then received that Company A, 1st Bn, 35th Inf, would be lifted into the LZ as a reinforcing element and would be placed under OPCON of the 2/35 Inf. The 2/35 Inf Executive Officer (Major Wallace S. Tyson) was lifted into the LZ to command the two company task force and to accomplish the mission of holding the LZ on the night of 28 May 1966. Company A, 1/35 Inf, commanded by Captain Anthony Bisantz, was lifted in at 1700. To assist in the landing, B 2/35 Inf put down a base of fire. No enemy fire was observed. The perimeter promptly was reorganized with A 1/35 Inf taking the western sector and B 2/35th Inf the eastern sector. Positions were prepared.

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At approximately 1800, the Company A, 1/35 Inf, 81mm mortar section was lifted into the LZ along with one 4.2" mortar from the 2/35 Inf 107mm Cannon Platoon. Total mortars available thus consisted of two 81mm of B 2/35 Inf, two 81 mm of A 1/35 Inf, one 107mm of HQ 2/35 Inf and one 107mm of HQ 1/35 Inf. All were located on an "island" (the LZ was essentially a swamp) in the northeastern sector of the LZ. By 2000, all DEFCONS had been fired and ammunition and ration resupply had arrived. LP's were put out and all was quiet.

At 0110, 29 May 1966, the task force was attacked along a 400 meter front confined to the north side of the LZ. The main attack appeared to be in a NW to S direction with a secondary

attack driving NE to SW. The attack, which appeared to come in waves, lasted until 0300 and was followed thereafter by sporadic fire until 0430. During the attack, DEFCONS were fired by all available indirect fire weapons. Organic 81mm mortars fired almost all of their ammunition (200 rds), some as close as 25 meters to friendly positions. This mortar fire was extremely effective and is thought to have prevented a probable breakthrough. Friendly task force casualties were one 1 KIA and nine WIA.

At 0700, 29 May 1966, the task force conducted local sweeps fifty meters out, one platoon at a time in the immediate area, some 30-40 NVA bodies were found. Later A 1/35th conducted a more extensive sweep while B 2/35 Inf, how it reduced strength, secured the perimeter.

Upon return of the sweep (approximately 0830), sniper fire again became frequent, in fact, B 2/35 Inf suffered its greatest number of casualties from sniper attacks. Much of the sniper fire was directed at the mortar positions, although it felt that the primary reason for the enemy's return was to fire on incoming aircraft. These snipers also used automatic weapons. From 0830 to 1200, sniper fire was so intense that personnel on the northern and eastern portions of the LZ effectively were pinned down. Armed helicopters were called to suppress the fire (causing 81mm fire on sniper positions to cease). Again because of the close proximity of friendly positions plus the heavy foliage density, the gunships were ineffective. An airborne FAC was contacted. He spotted an automatic weapon position at the east end of the LZ. Friendly lines were marked with smoke and two AIE's made two successful runs. The third run consisted of an accidental napalm attack on the CP of B 2/35 Inf. Results of this unfortunate incident were six WIA, all of whom later had to be evacuated. Two successful napalm runs followed, after which the FAC aircraft again hosed down the periphery of the LZ with heavy bombing and cannonading.

At approximately 1400 29 May 1966, C 1/35 Inf arrived by helicopter. The companies on the ground assisted by moving the northern edge of the LZ and laying down a base of fire to the N and NE. B 2/35 Inf and A 1/35 Inf then secured the northern portion of the LZ and C 1/35 secured the southern portion. This reinforcement caused the snipers to withdraw. At 1800, 1/35 Inf (-) closed and command in the LZ passed to CO, 1/35 Inf.

In the interim, resupply was effected. At 1600, sweeps began again. The goal was to push the perimeter out 150 meters in order to provide more adequate LZ security. Again snipers were encountered, with B 2/35 Inf taking the remainder of its casualties. During the perimeter expansion and the resupply activity, enemy 82mm mortar fire was received in and around the LZ.

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Light casualties resulted (WIA only); however, one of the resupply ships was damaged. Organic mortars returned fire 360° around the LZ with constant shooting and traversing. This proved successful in quieting enemy mortar fire.

By 2000 29 May 1966, the new, perimeter was organized and dug in. Thereafter, all remained quiet with the exception of occasional probes.

Throughout the 2 days of the Battle of 10A, the rest of the 2/35 Inf (-) had light to heavy contact. The Battalion Command Post was attacked by mortars and an unknown size NVA force but after 25 minutes of fighting, contact was broken by the enemy. The Reconnaissance Platoon, 2/35 Inf, while moving into the village of Plei Bai (YA 822388) received sniper fire from the woods surrounding the village after a villager, recognizing a captured NVA, pointed to the



woods to indicate more NVA in the area. To avoid being encircled LT Brennen, the Recon platoon leader, led his men out of the village. He had previously left one squad about 400 meters from the village to provide security for the search element. This squad averted a possible disaster by routing an ambush which had been unleashed on the withdrawing search element. At this time, the search element started receiving incoming mortar fire from several positions to the north and northeast. A link up between the two elements was effected and artillery and mortar fire were called in to the ambush site. Gunships and fighter aircraft from the USAF were requested with the gunships on station first. The gunships raked the area until their ammunition was expended and then two of the ships came in to extract the POW one friendly WIA. By this time the FAC and USAF planes were on target and they were successful in destroying one mortar position and neutralizing four others. By 1830 additional aircraft were on station and destroyed sixteen huts and eight spider holes. The FAC reported sighting five NVA KIA. At 1836, the recon platoon broke contact, because of impending darkness, effected a link-up with elements of Company C and C Company 3/4 Cav who were on the way to reinforce.

During the period 17-19 June 1966, Company A, 2/351 Inf, conducting search and destroy, blocking, and ambush operations, had major contact on two different occasions; both involved friendly ambushes, and in both incidents, the NVA appeared to anticipate the ambush and approached cautiously.

At 1800 17 June 1966, the battalion reconnaissance platoon and elements of the 1st and 3d platoon of Company A, were set at various ambush sites within 400 meters of each other. At 1845, the flank man of the 1st squad, 1st platoon, observed 30-40 NVA approaching the squads position. The first man in the column was wearing a poncho and the three men following him were wearing ARVN type tiger suits. The squad initiated the ambush and immediately the NVA deployed to encircle the ambush. The remaining elements of the US Forces in the area quickly deployed to the aid of the 1st squad. The recon platoon moved into attack in two directions; one squad moved into a blocking position to the north and the other squad maneuvered westward to hit the rear of the NVA force. This action drove the NVA force into the blocking force which caused the NVA to split up into small groups which fled to the northeast and southeast, A sweep of the area resulted in the discovery of nine NVA KIA. Friendly casualties (one KIA and Five WIA) were evacuated.

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On 18 June 1966, a ten man ambush was established by 2d platoon, Company A, at YA 810142. The ambush was placed near a point at which a trail crossed at stream and which was the sight of previous light contact. A waterfall was located just south of the crossing site.

At 1615, two NVA approached the ambush from the south west and it was decided to let them pass. The two men went to the stream, drew water, and started to retrace their steps. Both NVA were KIA when it was decided to spring the ambush. Almost immediately after the firing started, heavy enemy fire was received from the southwest and the ambush became pinned down. The ambush element maneuvered into position and heavy fire was placed at the enemy. A call for reinforcements was received by the platoon leader and he collected 28 personnel to move to the point of contact. LT Ray, the platoon leader, upon arriving at the point of contact, split his force into two groups; one to the south and one to the northeast. The heavy volume of fire produced from this group accounted for 5 NVA KIA and caused the enemy to break contact. Returning to reorganize at the point of contact, LT Ray's platoon again came under intense fire. In the short fire fight that ensued, the platoon leader was wounded in both his legs. He directed that he and the other seriously wounded personnel be evacuated to the

nearest LZ. Enroute to the LZ, the patrol was plagued by intermittent sniper fire. After evacuating the wounded, the platoon under the leadership of the platoon sergeant, effected a link-up with the 3d platoon, Company A, closing into a night location at 2300. A search by the two platoons the following morning revealed nine NVA KIA with an indication that more KIA were removed despite the heavy H & I firing by the artillery.

On 20 June 1966, Company A, while conducting a search and destroy operation in the area of the previous day's contact, made contact with and killed two NVA. Later in the afternoon, an OP of Company A sighted seven NVA and took them under fire. Two NVA were KIA. The 2/3 Inf Recon Platoon in the area of the OP discovered another eleven NVA and engaged them, killing eight.

At 1435, Company A (-) again made contact at coordinates ZA 786126 with an estimated thirty to forty NVA in prepared positions. Company A's initial fire power plus the input of considerable artillery, while undoubtedly damaging to the NVA, was insufficient to cause them to vacate their positions. Thick vegetation and accurate enemy fire prevented a good flanking motion by the company. In addition, two friendly casualties, believed to be KIA, could not be extracted because of the accurate fire placed around the two bodies. At 1805, with darkness approaching, Company A was directed to break contact under cover of an airstrike and set up a defensive perimeter to the east at LZ 27E. The next morning the company moved back to the point of contact, recovered the two MIA, who had been buried by the NVA, and discovered fifteen NVA KIA.

On 30 July 1966, Companies B and C executed a heliborne assault, Company C into LZ 28A and Company B into ZA 046125. The battalion 107mm cannon platoon was moved from LZ 36I to the battalion CP at LZ 36J. Elements of the battalion reconnaissance platoon and Company A made contact with small NVA elements at YA 969056 and YA 959068. Two NVA were killed and an estimated three NVA wounded, There were no friendly casualties.

On 31 July 1966 Companies A and C continued to search for trails in zone and establish ambushes thereon. Company A (-) returned to the area . of the 29-30 Jul 66 contact, arriving at YA 968074 at approximately 1100. Noting a

a suspicious thicket ahead, Capt. McDonough halted his force (consisting of the 1st and 3d platoons) and directed Lt. Steltman, platoon leader of the lead (1st) platoon either to adjust indirect fire on the thicket or to dispatch a small reconnaissance party. Lt. Steltman chose the latter. A reinforced squad was sent out. The squad in turn put out a point man. In perhaps ten minutes, the point man detected three NVA and took them under fire. One M-79 round was fired. Following the M-79 round, a NVA MG began firing. Lt. Steltman began moving the remainder of the 1st platoon forward to assist the squad in contact. In the meantime, the forward squad detected another five NVA moving SW. A hot fire fight developed. Capt. McDonough moved forward to contact Lt. Steltman and to develop an estimate, of the situation. Since the heaviest fire at this time was coming from the west, Capt. McDonough maneuvered the 3d platoon, commanded by Lt. Tragakis, in that direction. The vegetation in the area near the trail was relatively open, however, west of the trail the vegetation featured tall bamboo and difficult thicket. This terrain condition prevailed all the way west to the IA DRANG River. The 3d platoon came under fire in this thicket. An artillery smoke adjustment round landed practically on top of an enemy MG position area. Veil quickly, the smoke diffused through the thicket and reduced visibility almost to zero. Under these visibility

conditions, the enemy in that area broke contact. In the meantime, Lt. Steltman continued to maneuver to the east of the 3d platoon.

Throughout the actions just described, artillery, 81mm and 4.2" mortar fire were brought into the area in quantity. This indirect fire initially was long to the NNE and thereafter was moved SSW into the scene of action. Zone type fire was employed. When at length the indirect fire was lifted, Capt. McDonough's force swept and searched the area. One NVA KIA was found, also four extremely heavy blood trails. Enemy holes were found in the banks of the stream. (Bn Commanders comment: Of interest is the fact that Company A was engaged across a frontage of at least 200 meters. Capt. McDonough personally identified the presence of three MG's. The men of the 1st platoon claim to have seen twenty enemy, an unusually high number physically to sight and thus leading one to the conclusion that two or three times that number quite possibly managed to escape detection; plus there remains that portion of the enemy force engaged by the 3d platoon).

Following the search, the 3d platoon was ordered to conduct a counterclockwise sweep of the scene of action. Meanwhile, the 1st platoon collected the friendly casualties (1 KIA, 6 WIA) and dispatched an element to reconnoiter for a medevac LZ. By the time the 3d platoon had completed its sweep, the 1st platoon LZ reconnaissance group also had returned. The 1st platoon then secured the area while the 3d platoon (-) repaired to the LZ and improved it as necessary. The 1st squad, 3d platoon, meanwhile was sent a short distance north along the trail as an additional security measure....time: 1240. Personnel of the 1st platoon and several members of the company command group carried the casualties to the LZ. DUSTOFF aircraft negotiated the improved LZ and completed the medevac.

The 3d platoon moved out to the NNE prior to the completion of the medevac. By 1430, the 1st platoon had caught up to the 3d platoon and Captain McDonough consolidated his forces at YA 97200775. Enemy sniper fire began. The 3d platoon replied with MGs and M-79s. Lt. Knutson, the artillery FO, called in artillery and 4.2" mortar fire. The adjustment and FFE consumed twenty to 25 minutes. Meanwhile, to the east at YA 977078, a FAC had spotted two hooches apparently made of cut lumber. Later he assisted in the adjustment of artillery fire on these hooches. Indirect fire was placed into a

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thicket north of YA 97200775 and associated with the intermittent stream there. As the artillery and 4.2" mortar fire was lifted from this thicket and shifted to the N and E, Capt. McDonough moved with the 3d platoon across the stream and thicket. The platoon emerged from the thicket into an open area north of the stream. A trail junction was noted in the open area. The 3d platoon was sent down the trail heading east toward the hooches. Lt. Steltman brought forward his 1st platoon. He was instructed to investigate the trail to the north. Just as Lt. Steltman was about to put his platoon in motion, the 3d platoon began receiving AW (2) and sniper fire from the north. For a moment, the 3d platoon and the company command group were pinned down. The snipers seemed to be in trees; however, none could be detected. The 3d platoon quickly generated a base of fire and began maneuvering in the face of accurate enemy sniper fire. This phase lasted perhaps fifteen minutes. Numerous shell holes provided convenient cover. An enemy strong point appeared to be associated with a large rock outcropping NE of the trail junction. Capt McDonough quickly began maneuvering the 1st platoon around to the east of the 3d platoon and into a thicket. The 1st platoon moved slowly and with caution. Gradually sniper fire from the NE diminished. Meanwhile, the artillery, which previously had been shifted to the N and E, was quickly brought back to the SW. Artillery fragments tore at the treetops over Captain McDonough's position thirty meters in rear of the

forward elements. Under cover of the artillery fire, the wounded were withdrawn. Although the sniper fire diminished in the face of friendly artillery fire, it did not completely cease. Two additional men were wounded in the process of extracting friendly casualties. First Sergeant Perez took charge of the wounded. Captain McDonough dispatched a reconnaissance party to search for a medevac LZ. The wounded were moved to a safe area and the 1st and 3d platoons followed to make room for an air strike on station. Capt McDonough, Lt Knutson, and a MG team from the 1st platoon remained at the scene of action to assist in the conduct of the air strike. Much ordnance was dropped, however, aircraft fuel level became critical before the 500 pounders could be released. Meanwhile, the wounded were moved to a LZ several hundred meters to the west. The LZ required improvement. A power saw was lowered in. The LZ quickly was made acceptable and friendly casualties (2 KIA and 9 WIA) were evacuated by helicopter around 1745.

Once the air strike was completed, Capt McDonough started action to get artillery fire back into the area; however, a psywar ship appeared over the scene of action and requested permission to get into the act. Permission was granted. Company A set out to return to its base at LZ 36J. Following the psywar spiel, another airstrike was brought into the area. This final air effort, which started at approximately 1815, completed the action. H&I fires were programmed into the scene of action in order to deny the enemy an easy battlefield police situation. (Bn Commanders comment: This second contact demonstrates again the deadly effectiveness of snipers. Captain McDonough performed precisely as instructed, i.e., used available support weaponry and maneuvered slowly and with great care. The late hour prevented a search of the scene of action to evaluate the effectiveness of the air and artillery efforts).

NVA Losses during OPERATION PAUL REVERE I were as follows:

PERSONNEL

KIA BC	216
KIA (poss)	276
WIA BC	57
WIA (poss)	337
CIA	23
CIA (suspects)	58

WEAPONS

12.7 AA Machine Guns	5
Heavy Machine Guns	2
Light Machine Guns	6
AK-47 Assault Rifles	31
SKS Rifles	5

Pistols	2
Anti-tank Weapon	1
<b><u>AMMUNITION</u></b>	
82mm Mortar	55 rds
Assorted Small Arms Ammunition	Quantity not recorded
<b><u>MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT</u></b>	
Radios	2 ea
Telephones	2 ea
Packs	100 ea
Documents and Medical Supplies	Quantity not recorded

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### **OPERATION PAUL REVERE II**

1 August 66 - 25 August 66

August 1, 1966 found the 2/35 Infantry entering phase II of OPERATION PAUL REVERE. On this date Company C conducted a heliborne. assault. in to LZ 29X without enemy contact. Company A, 2/35 INF was rested and reorganized after heavy contact on 31 July 1966. 2/35 INF(-) continued search and destroy, ambush, and blocking positions in AO.

On August 2, 1966, Company A was given the mission of returning to the 31 July 66 scene of action. Rather than approach from the southwest, Captain McDonough was directed to move due east of LZ 36J (YA973053) until he crossed a north-south trail that previously had been detected by airborne visual reconnaissance. Once astride this trail, Captain McDonough was to proceed north following and mapping the trail and its major offshoots, if any. In this fashion he was to proceed north of the 08 east-west grid line, turn west, and come into the 31 July 66 scene of action from the northwest. The area of contact would then be thoroughly searched. Inherent in the assigned task was a concurrent search and destroy mission.

At 0755 on 2 Aug 66, a composite. force consisting of the 3d Platoon, Company A, and the attached battalion reconnaissance platoon, departed LZ 36J (YA973053). The force was commanded by Captain James M. McDonough, CO, Company A. The reconnaissance platoon was given the mission of providing the point. Since there were no trails running east from LZ 36J, Lt. Brennan, the reconnaissance platoon leader, selected a route to the SSE. This. route was selected because it avoided a hill mass and some very thick vegetation.

At 0931 a north-south trail was discovered and the point element of the reconnaissance platoon sighted one NVA at YA988052. This NA soldier was engaged with results unknown. At 0934, three NVA were engaged at coordinates YA988053. One of the three was KIA. As a precautionary measure, Capt. McDonough instructed his arty FO, Lt. Knutson, to call fire on the area to the north of the previously mentioned coordinates. At 0945, the artillery fire

completed, Company A moved northward. The trail formed a junction. Many foot prints indicated that a platoon or more had recently used the branch heading to the northeast, therefore Capt. McDonough instructed Lt. Brennan to follow that branch but, to exercise extreme caution. After moving approximately 400 meters, the trail turned again to the north. Two NVA were spotted in a tree line. Artillery fire again was called in. When completed, Company A swept through the area without positive results. At 1035, two NVA were observed at YA991061 and were engaged with a M-79 grenade launcher. One NVA soldier was killed and the other pursued for a short distance to no avail.

Movement was continued to the north guiding on the trail. At 1125, two NVA were sighted and taken under fire at YA992067. Both were killed. Just north of this skirmish, an abandoned Montagnard village containing twenty huts was discovered. A detailed search indicated that the huts had been used for sleeping within the past few days. At the southern edge of the village, the trail turned west. Footprints still were visible. Signs showed movement in both directions and indicated very recent use.

Captain McDonough instructed his 3d platoon leader, Lt. Tragakis, to remain behind with his platoon and destroy the village. The company command group and reconnaissance platoon would continue to follow the trail. Lt. Tragakis was further instructed that he would rejoin Capt. McDonough upon the

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completion of the village destruction mission. After approximately 200 meters, the trail again turned north. Evidence of recent use by a large group persisted.

At 1200, the point squad observed two NVA at coordinates YA991071. Both were engaged by the point and both were killed. Concurrent with this action, fifty or more NVA were observed running on the flank. The enemy appeared to have been caught totally off guard. The reconnaissance platoon immediately engaged the NVA force. Both reconnaissance platoon flank security elements observed NVA to their flanks firing automatic weapons. Clearly the NVA were reacting rapidly and were moving to surround the friendly forces.

Capt. McDonough ordered the 3d platoon to the scene of action. Lt. Tragakis had heard the firing and already had started to move. The left flank element of the reconnaissance platoon was pinned down by automatic weapons fire. In an attempt to maneuver against the enemy machinegun position, Sgt Munoz, SP4 Gardner, and SP4 Trueluck were killed almost immediately. SP4 Ledebur, the fourth member of the maneuver group, was wounded in both legs.

Pvt Sanderson, the reconnaissance platoon medic quickly ran to the aid of SP4 Ledebur. In the process, Pvt Sanderson was wounded three times. SP4 Ledebur was killed as the result of an additional head wound. A base of fire was provided for Pvt Sanderson and he was able to return to the platoon position.

A three man enemy machinegun team was observed moving into position on the high ground to the north, SSG Dean, the acting reconnaissance platoon sergeant, took the team under fire and killed all three.

As the 3d platoon maneuvered to assist the reconnaissance platoon, they were engaged by a small force; however, they were able to break through and closed in with the reconnaissance

platoon at approximately 1300. By this time, the NVA had maneuvered two separate elements to each flank.

Captain McDonough reported his situation to battalion headquarters. His estimate was that he had entered p base area and that he was in contact with an enemy force of at least battalion size. As his brief report terminated, his estimate was confirmed as a mortar round was heard as it fired from the tube. This first mortar rounds hit to the left flank. Both flank elements were heavily engaged at this time. Three more mortar rounds were fired and traced a path across the area from west to east. The second of the three rounds hit on the trail between Lt. Brennan and Captain McDonough. Captain McDonough was wounded by fragments. Moments later a machinegun firing in his direction hit him in the chest. Capt. McDonough died within seconds.

1st Sgt Perez moved quickly and spontaneously to the aid of Captain McDonough only to be killed instantly by a third mortar round. This group of three mortar rounds caused more than twenty casualties, including Lt. Brennan and SSG Dean.

Lt. Brennan immediately took command, made a quick estimate of the situation, and determined that he had too many wounded to attempt to break contact. He then instructed Lt. Tragakis to strengthen the perimeter using all available personnel, including the wounded who could still function. At this time, the US Force was completely encircled. Because of the thick terrain, Lt. Brennan could not readily determine his exact location.

The artillery FO, Lt. Knutson, called for smoke rounds; however, during the adjustment a FAC appeared on the scene with two AIE's on station. By this time, the perimeter was firmly established and the dead and wounded had been

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gathered into a central location. Enemy fire still was so intense that digging of positions was hazardous (had to be done from the prone position) and clearing of a LZ to extract the wounded was impossible.

The perimeter was marked with smoke and the AIE's dropped "mini-bombs" all around the perimeter. Prior to this all signs indicated that the enemy had regrouped for a large scale coordinated attack against the perimeter. Yelling, screaming, and whistle blowing Was heard. Some of the NVA were heard to yell in English "1st Cav" and "Lt. Brennan." (It is believed that Lt. Brennan's name was picked up from wounded personnel who called for him on several occasions).

Before the AIEs made their bomb run, enemy troops were observed rising to the standing position, a clear indication of impending attack. At this instant, a second mortar attack of twelve rounds fell along the trail. An undetermined number of casualties were caused by these rounds.

The bomb run by the AIEs broke up the mortar attack and in all probability aborted a mass attack by the enemy at this time. On completion of the A1E ordnance, two gun ships arrived on the scene. Smoke was used to mark the friendly positions, after which the gun ships worked over the east and west flanks.

Upon completion of the gun ship activity, A1Es were again on station. They laced the area to the south. Until the second air strike, enemy fire was still being received; however, upon completion of the air strike to the south, enemy fire ceased. It was thought that the enemy had

broken contact. Preparation of a LZ was started at this time. As the LZ preparation neared completion, enemy automatic weapons again opened fire. Three more mortar rounds fell. Work was discontinued on the LZ and personnel were directed to return to their defensive positions.

A machine gun team from the reconnaissance platoon observed thirty NVA in the draw to the left flank. As the group came into range, it was taken under fire and ten NVA were KIA. The remaining twenty quickly dispersed. One Soviet LMG (7.62), one 1 LMG (7.62), six AK-47's, and three SKS's were captured in this action.

Work again was resumed on the LZ. During this period, sporadic firing continued. Upon completion of the LZ, a DUSTOFF aircraft attempted to come in to extract wounded. The DUSTOFF aircraft was fired upon, therefore Lt. Brennan instructed the pilot to leave the area.

Because of the large expenditure of ammunition and the need for materials to improve the small LZ, a resupply mission was attempted at 1700, As the re supply aircraft came into the area, Lt. Brennan popped smoke; however, the pilot identified the wrong color. It is presumed that the NVA were using smoke to lure the aircraft into their area. The resupply aircraft flew over the LZ and attempted to push the supply items out. This effort was a total failure in that all items landed outside the perimeter and either were broken open and scattered or were damaged as a result of hitting the ground. This attempt to resupply apparently caused a flurry of activity by the enemy. A fire fight which lasted for 45 minutes developed.

As soon as the fire fight slowed down, teams were sent out in an attempt to recover the supplies. The only items the recovery teams retrieved were a few blocks of C4, one broken chain saw, and one case of smoke grenades.

Because of the relative quiet that prevailed at this time, Lt. Brennan led a six man group outside the perimeter in an attempt to recover the reconnaissance platoon flank security group which had been killed earlier. The attempt failed because the NVA had the bodies covered with a MG; however, the NVA likewise were prevented access to the bodies and equipment as Lt. Brennan placed one

of his machine guns in position to foil any NVA attempts. In the meantime, work on the perimeter defensive positions, on protective holes for the wounded and on the LZ continued.

Shortly after it became apparent that Captain McDonough's force was in contact with a large enemy unit, Battalion headquarters began efforts to constitute a relief force. Companies B and C, both deployed well to the north in blocking positions, were directed to assemble and prepare to be lifted by helicopter to LZ 36J. Both units assembled in good order, commenced movement, and closed into LZ 36J, Company B at 1603 and Company C at 1602. Company C, commanded by Captain Robert L. Ord III, was directed to move overland to effect relief. Captain Charles A. Murray, newly designated commander of Company A, accompanied the relief force. Company C departed LZ 36J at 1615. At 1830, lead elements made link-up without major incident. On arrival at the scene of action, Captain Ord made a hasty estimate of the situation and decided to defend the perimeter with personnel of Company C only. Personnel of Company A and the reconnaissance platoon who still were functioning were given the mission of establishing an inner perimeter, protecting and preparing positions for the wounded. As personnel from Company C moved into the perimeter, automatic weapons fire



was received from the north. When fire was returned, enemy fire would cease, then pick up again when friendly fire stopped.

At 1900, Captain Ord learned of the fact that there were four casualties from the reconnaissance platoon outside the perimeter. Lt. Davis, Platoon Leader, 1st Platoon, Company C, was directed to send out a four man team, plus a guide from the reconnaissance platoon, to attempt recovery of the bodies before nightfall. Unknown to Captain Ord, Lt. Davis took out the group himself. Only ten meters out, sniper fire wounded the point man, Pfc Petit. Sniper fire was so intense that repeated attempts to rescue Pfc Petit were driven back. The recovery group returned to the perimeter under covering fire, which was later discovered to have killed the sniper. There were now five casualties outside the perimeter. Captain Ord decided it was not worth sacrificing more men in recovery attempts. Later, a medic, Pfc Doolin, crawled out and brought back Pfc Petit, who died later that night.

At 1945, because of the improved condition of the LZ (A seven man engineer squad had been attached to Company C. From arrival, this squad worked on the LZ and had improved it to the point that it easily could accept one aircraft) and the strengthened perimeter, Captain Ord attempted to get DUSTOFF into the area to extract the more seriously wounded. As the DUSTOFF aircraft came on short final and almost to a hover, an enemy light machinegun began firing. It was later learned that the pilot and door gunner had been wounded. The aircraft immediately withdrew as Company C troops put down a heavy base of fire to cover the departure. By this time, darkness as well as enemy activity precluded further attempts by DUSTOFF aircraft.

At 2000, four mortar rounds fell within the perimeter. It is believed the distribution was one round of 60mm and three of 82mm. This mortar attack caused the following casualties in Company C.....from the one 60mm round, two WIA; from the three 82mm rounds, two KIA (including Lt. Davis) and sixteen WIA. These rounds landed on the perimeter positions. Lt. Davis was killed in the process of checking his portion of the line. The battalion reconnaissance platoon and the 3d no casualties since they were occupying positions on an inner perimeter as previously mentioned. The relatively heavy number of casualties resulting from this mortar attack is explained by the fact that the men of Company C were establishing the new perimeter and had not yet had adequate time to finish their positions. Concurrently with the start of the mortar

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attack, enemy small arms were fired into the perimeter from the N and NE. Again enemy fire immediately ceased when a large volume of fire was returned. Artillery fire was adjusted into the area in which the enemy mortar was believed to be positioned. As the artillery rounds landed, a secondary explosion was heard. Work began again on improving positions. At 2130, an alarm was given that mortar rounds again were incoming. Personnel dived for their positions, however, the rounds landed outside the northeastern corner of the perimeter. There were no casualties from this mortar attack. Counter mortar artillery fire again was brought in, after which work resumed on the defensive positions.

At 2145, two NVA approached the perimeter from the north-northeast. It appeared. that they did not realize they were approaching the perimeter. The lead individual carried a light machinegun on his shoulder and an AK-47 in his hand. The second man did not have a weapon. SSG Pasowicz, a squad leader of the 1st Platoon Company C, permitted the two NVA to get within two meters of his position, then halted them in English. Regardless of whether they understood English, the NVA halted, answered in Vietnamese, and SSG Pasowicz

immediately replied with an automatic burst of fifteen rounds from his M-16. The remaining four rounds were expended on the second NVA who turned, took a step, and fell. The second body was not found at daylight.

At approximately 2220, the enemy began blowing whistles, bugles, and screaming in unintelligible fashion. Captain Ord, concluding that a major assault was imminent, called in repeated artillery FFE on the area from which the greatest volume of screaming seemed to be coming. These repeated artillery drubbings caused the "war dance" to cease. Apparently the artillery was on target. Captain Ord estimated that preparations for a major assault again had been disrupted. Thereafter, Captain Ord devoted attention to the task of bringing in continuous artillery and mortar fire plus the fire support ordnance provided by USAF. The artillery FO attached to Company C, Lt. Zschoche, adjusted DEFCONS around the perimeter. Extensive H&I fires were planned and placed throughout the area for the entire night. Lt. Knutson, the artillery FO who had been accompanying Captain McDonough's force, although wounded earlier in the action, assisted in the fire planning and adjusted the fires of another artillery battery.

At 2400, one USAF AC 47 (puff the Magic Dragon) fired its entire load around the perimeter, followed at 0200, by an airstrike of two AIEs dropping napalm, CBU's, and finally strafing with 20mm cannons. This latter airstrike was conducted under very adverse weather conditions. The ceiling was extremely low and the pilots were further hampered by frequent rain showers. A single flashlight was used initially to identify the friendly perimeter to the FAC. Air support strikes were extremely well executed. All pilots involved displayed magnificent skill, courage, and perseverance.

During the remainder of the night, the perimeter received sporadic automatic weapons fire and two relatively light probes. At daylight, sweeps were pushed out 25, 50 and finally 75 meters. The bodies of the four men from the reconnaissance platoon were found undisturbed. The NVA KIA body count in the immediate area was completed. During the sweeps, contact was made on two occasions, each with one NVA. The first contact was made from a distance of 75 meters. The NVA was not armed. He carried only a pack or case. It is assumed that he was a medic or else simply was policing the battlefield. He was not hit by friendly fire and he successfully evaded capture. The second contact was made in precisely the same manner, again without positive results.

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Early morning weather conditions on 3 Aug 66 precluded aerial medevac, however, at approximately 1200 DUSTOFF moved into the LZ, landed, and loaded two WIA. While loading the third WIA, firing broke out to the south. Two positions on the perimeter engaged a six man NVA force. The DUSTOFF ship immediately withdrew, receiving several hits on liftoff.

Meanwhile, Company C, 1st Bn, 7th Cav, 1st Air Cav Div, which had begun moving shortly after first light, was pushing toward the scene of action from the south. At 1230, link up was made with Captain Ord's elements. The remainder of the 1st Bn, 7th Cav, followed.

At 1335, detailed sweeps of the area were completed and the entire 1/7 Cav had closed. Company C, 1/7 Cav, killed two armed NVA during the sweep. The entire area was secured and DUSTOFF and resupply aircraft were able to get into the area without incident.

The first aircraft to arrive brought in a volunteer physician (Dr. Reber) from the brigade clearing company. He immediately administered needed aid to the seriously wounded. His

selfless and courageous act brought quality medical attention to several of the seriously wounded and undoubtedly was instrumental in saving the life of one if not several individuals.

Upon completion of the evacuation of the wounded, the remnants of Company A and the battalion reconnaissance platoon were lifted to LZ 36J. Company C then conducted a more expensive sweep to the northeast, discovered a battalion size base camp, and counted an additional fourteen dead NVA. Company C returned to LZ 36J at 1700, having had no contact along the return route.

Following an eighteen day period of little to light contact in the battalion AO, the 3d Platoon, Company C, moving west along a trace south of, but. parallel to Highway 19, made contact with an estimated NVA platoon at YA740227. The enemy force, located north of the highway, maneuvered an element south across the road east of the rear of the 3d platoon. This maneuver force in turn was taken under fire by Company C (-) which was following at some distance behind the 3d platoon. The enemy force quickly withdrew to the north of the road. After artillery and mortar fire had been called in, the company, which had consolidated on the south side of the highway, attempted to move, by fire and maneuver, across the road. However, heavy and accurate sniper fire thwarted attempts. Attempts to silence this fire by airstrikes of napalm, 500 pound bombs, and 20mm cannon, failed. It was decided to bring a tank/infantry team (B 1/69 Arm (-) plus the 1st Platoon, Company A) from the 2/35 INF. At 1715, the attack by this team began, with the infantry platoon dismounting about fifty meters north of Highway 19 and swept west while the tanks continued to move and fire into the enemy positions. After the initial assault by the tank/infantry team, an airstrike was again called in. Following this last air strike, the infantry conducted a thorough sweep of the area and found seven NVA KIA. Company C suffered one KIA and two WIA during the encounter.

Search and destroy missions were conducted by elements of 2/35 Inf during the final day's of OPERATION PAUL REVERE II. The only significant contact in these few days occurred on 21 August 66 when 1st Platoon, Company A, established an ambush at YA748226. A force of forty NVA approached the ambush from the west southwest and passed between the rear security and the ambush. 1LT. Steltman, the platoon leader, turned the ambush around and waited. When the major portion of the force, walking in double column along the front of the ambush, entered the killing zone, Lt. Steltman triggered the ambush. The resultant fire fight lasted five minutes and resulted in seven NVA KIA and nine NVA WIA. The platoon suffered one WIA. Because of poor communications, Lt. Steltman vacated

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the ambush site and returned to the company CP. Heavy H&I fires were placed in the area of contact to hinder enemy battlefield police. The next morning, Company A. conducted a first light search of the area and found that all bodies had been removed. Blood trails led to the south.

OPERATION PAUL REVERE II was as successful as PAUL REVERE I. 2/35 INF continued to inflict heavy casualties on the North Vietnamese Units in the AO.

Enemy loses for PAUL REVERE II were:

PERSONNEL

KIA (BC)

127

KIA (Est)	133
WIA	9
WIA (Est)	140
Total	409

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### OPERATION PAUL REVERE III

26 August 1966 - 17 October 1966

OPERATION PAUL REVERE III commenced with the 2/35 Inf (-) helicopter lift from LZ 27K to LZ 27Y after the new location had been secured by Task Force Lake, which consisted of 1st platoon, C/3/4 Cav, and 1st and 3d platoons, Company C, 2/35 Inf.

At 1020, 27 August 1966, the point man of the 1st platoon, Company B, saw an estimated twenty to twenty five NVA milling about on the south side of hill 289, YA 817143. The NVA, noticing the point man, fired at him, at the same time the point fired back. NO friendly casualties were taken, but the point: believed he had hit four NVA. Indirect fire was called in. At 1035, enemy fire ceased temporarily and Lt. Brauer, the 1st platoon leader, reported he thought that the enemy was either attempting to break contact or trying to flank to the south. The company commander decided to move the 3d platoon to YA 825135 to establish a blocking position across the trail and stream bed in that area. At 1055, the 1st platoon moved into the area to conduct a search only to be met by heavy and accurate enemy sniper fire. Pulling back, the 1st platoon called in an air strike and adjusted artillery fire into the area. A platoon of B 1/9 Armor was put OCA 2/35 Inf and moved to the point of contact from the north. After trying again to move through the area, the platoon was met by heavy enemy fire. A second air strike was initiated on the enemy position, followed by artillery and mortar fire. Simultaneously, the tanks arrived and began firing into the area. Contact was broken by the enemy at nightfall and a sweep of the area produced two NVA KIA and two weapons CIA. No further contact was reported.

During the period 28 August 1966 to 10 October 1966, the battalion had no significant contact. The 2/35 Inf as airlifted to LZ 30D after being relieved in place at LZ 27D, on 12 September 1966. On 3 October 1966, the battalion performed maintenance and training at the brigade rear CP area and served as I Field Force V reserve reaction force until 9 October 1966.

On 10 October 1966, the battalion, reinforced by 1/A/1/69 Armor and 3/C/3/4 Cav, moved by motor to assigned sectors of Highway 19 and prepared to assume responsibility for securing the highway in zone effective 0700 11 October 1966, and, in addition, provide convoy escorts in sector. The battalion performed this mission until relieved in place by 1/10 Cav, 4th Inf Div, 1200 15 October 1966. In order to assist the 1/10 Cav, which had been given little time to prepare for the mission, the 2/35 recon platoon and a movement control station provided by the 2/35 Inf TOC controlled and escorted convoys throughout the daylight hours of 15 October 1966. The following elements were given escort during the period 0100 11 October 1966 to 1200 15 October 1966.

Date	#Convoys	#Vehicles	#Convoys	#Vehicles	Total	Total
(Oct)	West	West	East	East	Convoys	Vehicles
11	6	252	4	303	10	555
12	4	553	4	255	8	808
13	5	293	3	174	8	467
14	5	170	4	119	9	289
15	<u>4</u>	<u>171</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>135</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>306</u>
	24	1439	18	986	42	2425

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Upon being relieved by the 1/10 Cav, the 2/35 Inf (-) moved by motor to ZA 160575 and prepared to conduct search and destroy operations northwest of PLEIKU in coordination with the 220th and 230th RF Companies. Company B moved by motor to the brigade forward CP, CATECKA, to act as a security force there.

On the 16th and 17th of October, the battalion successfully closed OPERATION PAUL REVERE III by conducting search and civic action programs in the village of PLEI KLUNE (ZA 195587), PLEI VEN I (ZA 160564), and PLEI YEN II (ZA 165578). The search of PLEI YEN II resulted in the capture of an eleven man VMC squad previously detected by the search force from the 220th RF Company.

#### Enemy Losses during PAUL REVERE III

##### PERSONNEL

KIA (BC)	5
KIA (EST)	5
WIA (EST)	6
CIA	13

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#### PAUL REVERE IV

18 October 1966 - 26 December 1966

Operation PAUL REVERE IV commenced with an airmobile assault into LZ 503A, YA 862598, by B/2/35. 2/35 Inf (-) then moved into LZ 503A with no enemy contact. As soon as the LZ was secure, three maneuver elements, Task Force McDonnell. (consisting of the battalion reconnaissance platoon and the 276th CIDG Company), A/2/35, and C/2/35, left the LZ to patrol to their respective locations: Task Force McDonnell, YA 871628; A/2/35, YA 843597; C/2/35, YA 859576.

On 21 October 1967, the 3d Platoon, Company A, made contact with an estimated 20-25 NVA in an enemy base camp, YA 825610. The 3d Platoon observed two NVA who appeared to be coming forward to surrender. Both had arms held upward and neither was carrying a weapon. The platoon, remaining cautious as the two NVA approached, was immediately taken under fire by at least four automatic weapons. The vicious firefight which lasted for an hour resulted in a friendly KIA and four enemy WIA. Lt. Lugo, the platoon leader, called in indirect fire support and directed in the fires of an AC-47 aircraft (spooky). A search of the area, after contact was broken by the enemy, revealed a base camp featuring 100 foxholes, a light anti-aircraft position with the weapon still intact, and numerous caches of small arms ammunition. Heavy rains during the night washed out any traces of the withdrawing enemy.

On the afternoon of 23 October 1966, TF McDonnell engaged a 15 man enemy force composed of VC, VMC, and NVA. After killing one VMC, the TF chased the enemy into a cave complex, and, by the use of tear gas and hand grenades, killed another of the enemy and captured one NVA.

Early in the morning of 27 October 1966, the 1st platoon of Company B, was moving north on a trail just north of the 2/35 Inf CP. The point saw two NVA enter the trail at YA 859597. Both parties opened fire. The two NVA went down firing. Having withdrawn south around a bend in the trail to reload, the point again moved north and found one NVA KIA. The point then detected movement and was pinned down by fire from an AK-47. A squad of 1/B was placed on line and moved north after first hurling grenades. Upon receiving fire, the squad was halted and mortar fire was called in on the enemy position as an additional squad came on line. At this time (0830), the company commander joined 1/B with 3/B. All squads of 1/B were placed on line. The platoon swept north across a field with head high brush to YA 860600 and established a base at that location. At the same time, 3/B found and searched a newly made trail leading to the 2/35 CP Perimeter. The search was conducted to the east and north (YA858595- YA862595 -YA862600) and was completed by 0930. At this point, the company commander and 3/B returned to the battalion CP leaving a four man ambush/security party from 3/B with the NVA CIA. 1/B was directed to sweep the area around its base for a radius of 500 meters, then patrol north to the hill labeled CU DAR (YA 860615).

1/B platoon leader (1LT Hornak) dispatched one patrol west to YA 857601 and another north to YA 859602. The former patrol received small arms fire from a draw at YA 859602. LT Hornak promptly issued orders to consolidate his force as a preliminary to placing artillery fire in the draw. In the

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meantime, the westernmost patrol began to receive heavy volume of fire from the northwest and the north from an enemy force estimated to be a reinforced squad or a platoon. Fire continued from Y 859602. Fire on the western patrol ceased, then began more heavily than before, then ceased once again.

The 1/B point man (Pfc Rushing) saw two to four NVA to his front (north) at YA 861601. He moved fifty meters north from the platoon base to investigate the sighting. At this time, LT Hornak decided to withdraw the platoon 100 meters to the south in order to place artillery saturation fire from YA 858602 to YA 861602. LT Hornak went forward to retrieve PFC Rushing. Having joined up, the pair was returning to the platoon base, covering one another and moving alternately by bounds, when a NVA at YA 605600 shot both of them with an AK-47. PFC Rushing was killed and LT Hornak was wounded in the groin. The latter crawled the remainder of the way to the platoon base. Enemy fire was then received from three NVA at YA

858602, four NVA at YA 860601, and four NVA at YA 861601. In addition, an enemy sniper was located at A 861599. Two other snipers, firing occasional shots into the CP area without results, were located southwest of the platoon CP. Platoon members observed two casualties inflicted on the enemy force at YA 861601. One NVA received a shotgun blast in the face and another NVA's arm was shot off by a LMG. CPT McQuillen prepared to reinforce.

Co B (-) departed the 2/35 CP at 1130. Perimeter security was maintained by 2/3/d65 Engr, 3/3/d65 Engr, and headquarters personnel all under the command of the battalion communications officer, CPT Grimes. Co B picked up the security party left with the NVA body at YA 950507 and linked up with 1/B at approximately 1125.

The company commander placed 3/B on line on the left (west) at YA859600, facing north. A Squad from 2/B was designated to evacuate the wounded platoon leader. At this juncture, an 81mm mortar round fired by the Company B 81mm Mortar Section burst in the trees and inflicted slight wounds on two men from 1/B and one man from 3/B. The same round also killed the NVA at YA 860560, The carrying party then evacuated all four wounded.

At this point in time, Company B was deployed with 1/B and 3/B on line facing north at YA 860600 and YA 859600, respectively. 2/B (-) was in reserve fifty meters to the rear, 3/B was on the edge of a steep slope which descended fifty feet into a thick brush covered draw. The company lay down a heavy base of fire and 1/B attempted to move forward. Heavy enemy automatic small arms fire pinned 1/B down and the company commander reinforced with a squad from 2/B. Company B again put up a heavy volume of fire, including extensive use of M-79 shot shell cartridges (M79 HE ammunition was ineffective as the rounds failed to explode because of the short range to the target). 3/B (Reinforced) then crawled forward fifty meters to a ledge on the edge of the draw (YA 861601). Enemy fire had ceased just prior to their arrival at the ledge. The platoon had proceeded approximately ten meters down the ledge when, at 1315, the company commander was informed that fighter aircraft would be available in ten minutes. 1/B withdrew to the ledge and the FAC (COMPOSE 05) placed the air strike with extreme accuracy on the two locations most likely to be used by the NVA forces as ambush

sites. Napalm was used at YA 861602 while bombs and 20mm strafing were placed between YA 858603 and YA 860803, A poncho and hammock were later found at the former location, and a canteen and other miscellaneous gear at the latter location. The canteen apparently had been blown off a NVA harness and hurled into the air. (The canteen had made and settled into a relatively deep self-inflicted indentation in the ground).

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Company B (-) searched the area vicinity YA 856605, then returned to the CP on an azimuth of 122 degrees. 1/B (-) remained at the scene of action, one squad returning to the CP with the body of PFC Rushing and the captured enemy equipment.

At 1845 on 28 October 1966 the perimeter of Company C (-), consisting of the headquarters and the 1st and 2d platoons, was attacked by two companies of North Vietnamese Army troops. The initial firing and assault was made against the northeastern section of the perimeter with two or three enemy firing automatic fire from positions almost due north (Tab A). Within five minutes, however, a significant number of the enemy were on line firing on the entire northeast and east portions of the friendly perimeter as well as a portion of the southeast side. Within ten minutes, the defensive perimeter was receiving fire of some kind from every direction except southwest. Five minutes later, fire was being received from all directions.

The disposition of friendly forces at the time of the initial firing placed the 2d platoon on the east and the 1st platoon on the west. One third of the men were in their positions digging, another third seated beside their foxholes eating the evening meal, and the final third were accomplishing miscellaneous tasks. The local security daylight outposts were entering the perimeter and the night LP's were in the process of moving out for their respective locations. A water party also was entering the perimeter and was about to warn the commander of the possibility on enemy in the area when the initial enemy burst was fired. The water party was returning from a nearby creek, having skirted the east of the open area north of the perimeter (Tab A), When approximately fifty meters from the perimeter, the last one or two, men noticed a fleeting, shadowy movement to their right rear on the southwest side of the open area. (When asked why they hadn't provided warning by firing their weapons, the individuals replied that they believed the movement might have been the friendly LP going into position. In any event, it is felt that their slightly hurried manner in which the water party continued to the perimeter caused one element of the NVA force to open fire prematurely before all elements could move into position for a coordinated attack).

Almost simultaneously with the initial burst of enemy automatic weapons fire, the left machinegun of the 2d platoon commenced firing. Within five seconds of the initial enemy burst, outgoing fire was three times as heavy as incoming fire. M-79 grenadiers were firing heavily using both HE and shot rounds. The heaviest outgoing fire was in the 2d platoon area where firing continued for approximately twenty minutes. Because of the ferocity of the enemy attack, the deafening roar of both friendly and enemy weapons, and the difficulty of movement because of the heavy incoming fire, it took that long to slow down the rate of fire. During this period, the 1st platoon was receiving and returning fire, however, no infantry assaults were made on their positions. Their fire, therefore, was slow and well controlled.

From approximately 1850 to 1915, the enemy made repeated heavy assaults against the 2d platoon sector (Tab B). Enemy fire consisted primarily of short automatic bursts. Spread over a distance of approximately fifty meters and with ten to fifteen men firing at a time, the enemy advanced, dropped back, and then advanced again. At times, the enemy moved to positions as close as five to ten meters from friendly positions. During approximately the last five minutes of intense enemy fire, the attacking elements seemed to form a line and, from the prone position or from behind trees or irregularities in the ground, simply poured heavy fire into the perimeter.

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As the charging attacks slowed down in the 2d platoon area, a number of small rushes were made against the 1st platoon sector (Tab C). The first assault was made astride the trail from the northwest against the MG position in that sector. The enemy came within ten or fifteen meters of the perimeter before being forced to fall back. About five minutes later, the other MG position of the 1st platoon was assaulted astride the trail from the southeast. Again the enemy was repelled by fire.

By this time (approximately twenty minutes after the initial enemy burst) artillery fire began to come in close enough to be effective. A contributing factor in the delay was that the artillery FO's radio failed to function initially and several minutes were wasted in the process of finding another radio and re-establishing contact with the firing battery. Once the artillery began to burst close to the enemy on the east, the ferocity of the enemy attacks in that area decreased considerably until after 1915 when enemy activity degenerated to a "lie on the ground, shoot, and throw grenades" effort.



The enemy had used fire and movement effectively. Also, he had use of stealth in some cases to crawl to positions very close to the friendly perimeter. In these instances, men armed with shotguns proved to be extremely effective.

At this juncture (approximately 1930) after the action in the 2d platoon area had diminished, a third assault was made from the southwest. The brunt of this attack fell on the 1st platoon. As in the case of the other two assaults on the 1st platoon positions, the NVA threw a large number of hand grenades followed by a rapid charge using assault type fire. The adeptness of the 1st platoon machine gunners broke up this attack as long bursts of fire were placed across the front of the friendly positions forcing the enemy again to withdraw. About fifteen minutes later, a final assault was made against the right flank of the 1st platoon. The attack which again featured a hand grenades prelude, was repulsed by machinegun and small arms fire.

From this time (1950) until contact was broken completely, the enemy fired at the perimeter from approximately thirty meters range, threw hand grenades, and fired M-79 grenade launchers. A few minor attacks consisting of only four to five men were made against the 2d platoon sector and were relatively easily repulsed. Action of this type continued until approximately 2045 when a red star cluster was fired to the northeast of the perimeter. Upon firing the cluster, one NVA officer, apparently mis-oriented, ran into the north corner of the perimeter, was pulled into a hole and killed in hand to hand combat. However, it was apparent that the enemy was withdrawing and by 2100 fire into the perimeter essentially had ceased.

During the entire action, the enemy used grenades to the maximum. The M-79 rounds he also used proved to be extremely effective, inflicting nine of the thirteen friendly casualties. Many of the enemy rounds burst on the edge of the friendly positions. There were also a number of tree bursts, planned possibly in an attempt to get increased fragmentation effects or in an attempt. to hit the command group in the center of the perimeter. In any event, the gunners seemed to be well trained.

At 2100, friendly casualties stood at two KIA and ten WIA. Two men had been hit in the first exchanges of fire, the others accumulated as the fighting progressed. Since contact was considered to be broken, aerial medevac was requested for the more seriously wounded. At 2213, a USAF "HUSKY" medevac helicopter arrived in the area to extract three seriously

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wounded men by winch through the heavy tree canopy. At approximately 2237, just as the three wounded had been loaded aboard the aircraft, a rocket was fired from southeast of the perimeter causing the helicopter to crash inside the perimeter. The ship was burning as it came down. The three wounded men were killed either by the rocket or the crash itself. The pilot and copilot were both injured, however, the men of Company C were able to chop into the aircraft and get them out before the fuel caught fire. The mechanic was pinned inside the wreckage. Although numerous attempts were made to get him out by cutting into the ship, finally the fuel ignited and the ship was engulfed in flames before he could be saved. This incident raised the Army KIA total to five.

During the time that the helicopter was hovering overhead, the men on the perimeter fired whenever they detected movement or noise. On the other hand, seeing and hearing was extremely difficult because of the noise of the helicopter and the light generated by its floodlights. Thus, the outgoing suppressive fires, while not continuous were considerable during the entire period of time taken by the extraction effort.

From the time the medevac helicopter crashed until 0630 the following morning when sweeps were sent out, there were movements of individuals detected around the perimeter, however, no further attacks were made. The individuals moving about were engaged to prevent them from policing the battlefield and artillery fire was brought in continuously for the same purpose.

The sweeps of the area in the morning found seven NVA KIA. One enemy WIA was captured. There were also one RPD, two SKS, three pistols, and six AK-47's found near the scene of action.: At 0815, a second USAF "HUSKY" medevac helicopter returned to the area and evacuated the pilot, copilot, and some of the Company C wounded. That afternoon, men with relatively minor wounds were evacuated by UH-1D helicopters after an LZ had been cut in the clearing to the northeast.

During the period 31 October 1966 to 17 December 1966, there was no significant contact with the enemy. It was apparent that the enemy forces were doing all possible to avoid large contact with elements of the 2/35 Inf.

During this period, the 2/35 Inf counted eleven NVA KIA, and 8 weapons CIA.

On 18 December 1966, 1st platoon, Company A, received orders to conduct a search and destroy operation through an area south of the company base (YA 914679).

A 1045, the 1st platoon was heading south when the point element heard talking to their front.. LT Chase, the platoon leader, halted his platoon and set up all-around security, after which he joined the point elements to conduct a personal reconnaissance.

1st platoon was located on high ground on one side of a stream. The suspected enemy location was on the high ground on the opposite side of the same stream. LT Chase and his reconnaissance element prepared to move down the hill toward the stream bed and the suspected enemy location, he gave orders for his platoon to wait for his signal to commence the attack.

Upon completion of his reconnaissance, LT Chase signaled the attack (prematurely) by falling down a thirty foot embankment into the stream bed. Without glasses or helmet, lost in the fall, LT Chase courageously fired his weapon at enemy snipers who also had spotted the platoon leaders attack signal.

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The platoon deployed on line and commenced firing against heavy small arms firing as they maneuvered down the embankment. LT Chase borrowed his RTO's glasses and continued the attack to the other side of the stream. In sweeping the enemy infested area, the platoon found three NVA bodies. Assorted weapons and small arms ammunition were also found. Blood saturated the area. No eye glasses were found.

Enemy losses during OPERATION PAUL REVERE IV were as follows:

### PERSONNEL

KIA	46
WIA	13
CIA	13

### WEAPONS

AK-47	3
SKS	5
MAS 36	1
RPG 2 (RL)	1

### AMMUNITION

B40 RKT	2 ea
Grenades	11 ea
SA	Assorted
AK-47	250 rds

### MISCELLANEOUS

Pigs	50 ea
Chickens	2 ea
Rice	1000 lbs
Packs	4 ea
Medical Equip	Assorted
Cotton	1 bushel
Barley	82 lbs
Wheat	200 lbs
Boats	3 ea

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### ROUTE SECURITY MISSIONS

During the periods in which the 2/35 Inf was not participating in major combat operations the battalion provided road security for Highway 19 East and Highway 19 West. The sector of responsibility of the 2/35 Inf varied from time to time but in most cases encompassed that portion of Highway 19 from Pleiku West to the Cambodian Border, and from Pleiku East to the Mang Giang Pass.

The security of Highway 19 is of the utmost tactical importance to the war effort in the Republic of Vietnam for it provides a means for quick redeployment of units to most areas in the Central Highlands. In addition Highway 19 is the main east-west supply route for the 3d

**Bde Task Force, the 4th Inf Div, the 1st Air Cav Div, RVN units, and other units of MACV, such as the Special Forces camp at Duc Co.**

**Furthermore, the indigenous people of the Republic of Vietnam depend upon Highway 19 as a transportation system for passengers and commodities. Lack of physical security would not only hamper the country's economic growth, but would also stem the war effort.**

**Thus, the 2/35 Inf not only accomplished their tactical mission of securing the road for military purposes, but also contributed materially to the economic growth of the Republic of Vietnam.**

### **3**

#### **SUPPORTING ELEMENTS**

**During the calendar year 1966, the 2/35 INF was supported in ground operations by 2d Battalion 9th Artillery, 7th US Air Force, 1/69th Armor, C/3/4 Cavalry, and 52d Aviation Battalion.**

**The 2d Bn 9th Arty during 1966 fired LZ preparations for Airmobile Assaults, fired nightly defensive concentrations around unit locations, attempted to channelize enemy into ambush sites by fire, assisted unit commanders in land navigation, integrated 105 HOW direct fire into 2/35 INF CP perimeter security, fired extensive H&I fire on suspected enemy locations and infiltration routes, provided accurate and effective fire support when units were in contact, worked closely with 2/35 INF Arty LO in providing coordinated fire support, and provided blocking fires to prevent enemy withdrawals.**

**The 7th US Air Force supported the 2/35 INF by providing Forward Air Control (FAC) coverage over 2/35 INF areas of operation, assisting unit commanders in land navigation, alerting unit commanders of possible enemy ambush locations, informing commanders of enemy activities and fortifications, conducting immediate air request strikes in support of ground units in contact (These strikes were most effective and very accurate.), conducting air request strikes on suspected or known enemy locations (Not only did these strikes destroy enemy fortifications and men, but also effectively blocked the enemy from routes of approach and withdrawal which prevented any resupply of men or equipment).**

**The 1st Battalion, 69th Armor provided valuable assistance on road security missions assigned to the 2/35 INF, assisted in ground surveillance and reconnaissance of 2/35 INF areas of operation (although traffic ability restrictions caused by lack of suitable stream crossings hampered tank operations in some areas), and assisted in securing perimeter positions during hours of darkness.**

**C Troop, 3d Squadron, 4th Cavalry provided troop transport on occasion and served as an extremely useful mobile reserve/reaction force, assisted in securing perimeter positions during hours of darkness, supplemented company defensive perimeters when it became necessary to move elements of a company to reinforce at another location, and provided an additional command and control headquarters which on several occasions executed search and destroy missions in 2/35 INF areas of operation.**

**52d Aviation Battalion provided troop lift and resupply for the 2/35 INF during the entire year, provided gunship support to elements of 2/35 INF, engaged with the enemy, assisted in the evacuation of wounded on occasion when DUSTOFF was not immediately available, provided aircraft for extraction of POW' s and provided the means for getting timely intelligence**

information to higher headquarters, and provided command and control ships for the Battalion Commander.

The elements which supported the Cacti Blue contributed immeasurable to the effective execution of the battalion mission. Their attitude and professionalism reflected great credit on the supporting branches of the U.S. Army.

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## E P I L O G U E

As in all wars, we must suffer losses. The men of the Cacti Blue who gave their lives in order that an oppressed and terrorized country might break the bonds of communism will be remembered always. Their gallant and courageous deeds on the fields of battle reflect great credit on themselves, their unit and their country. Because of them, what was a spark of hope is now a flame of freedom. The men of the Cacti Blue salute these intrepid men.

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**Note: Below is the remembrance of Cpt. Bob Ord regarding the incident in which Cpt. Woods was KIA.**

What I remember is that the 2d Bn was on a Search and Destroy op. It was the first battalion size operation against the NVA. In midafternoon, Co C commander Cpt Jim Woods halted the company when the lead element came to an old Montanyard clearing on the side of a hill. He moved into the clearing with his command group and told the FO to put one round of smoke from the 105 Bn (2/9 Arty I think) on a stream intersection he had identified on his map and in the valley below him. Some of the company was on the edge of the clearing and some still strung out on the trail leading to the clearing.

What followed was fratricide. Instead of one round of smoke the battery fired six rounds (battery one round) and instead of the rounds landing in vicinity of the stream intersection, they landed on the company. Jim Woods was killed immediately and other members of the command group and others were killed and wounded.

Please remember that I was not on the ground at the point of impact. I was in the Bn TOC doing my thing as the Bn Adjutant when LTC George Scott, the Bn Commander, called and told me he was sending his command bird in to pick me up and that I was to take command of Co C immediately. I arrived in the clearing as the last casualties were being evacuated.