



## **ANNUAL HISTORICAL SUPPLEMENT**

**CALENDAR YEAR 1967**

**2ND BATTALION 35TH INFANTRY**

Our thanks to Charles (Chuck) Laws. Prior to joining A Co 2/35, Charles was the Battalion S-1 and was responsible for the preparation of this report. Through his generosity we are able to share this with the Cacti.

### **FOREWORD**

The purpose of this supplement is to provide a historical summary of the combat operations of the 2nd Battalion 35th Infantry during the calendar year 1967. This has been prepared with a justifiable amount of pride and enthusiasm because it reflects the esprit de corps and dedication of the men of the "Cacti Blue".

It has been the mission, both past and present of this battalion to close with and destroy the enemy by every means available. I believe that the 2nd Battalion 35th Infantry has done very well in this respect; the battalion has compiled one of the most favorable friendly to enemy kill ratios in Vietnam. Company A 2nd Battalion was awarded the Valorous Unit Award for gallantry in the La Drang Valley during Operation Paul Revere II.

While operating in the Duc Pho area of operation the 2nd Battalion 35th Infantry initiated and developed the technique of "Hole Hunting". This technique involved the systematic searching of every suspected underground tunnel complex by first looking for air holes, dead foliage, irregular patterned bamboo clumps and trap doors. Once these were located, the tunnel was investigated by our own tunnel rats and if VC were found, they were encouraged to come out and surrender. Often, however, the hard core VC would fire from these holes and tunnels; consequently they as well as their tunnels were destroyed. This "Hole Hunting" technique met with such unqualified success that LTC Norman L. Tiller, Battalion Commander, was requested to brief General Westmoreland, General Abrams, Ambassador Komer and General Rosson at the MACV Commanders Conference held at Nha Trang 27 August 1967. The success of our battalion in the past year has been a composite of many and varied concepts and techniques, however it was always the individual soldier in the field to whom the credit must go. Consequently, I hope this historical summary serves as a tribute to these gallant men.

**LTC WILLIAM J. LIVSEY**

### **ABBREVIATIONS**

**ALOHA - LOH of 3d Brigade Aviation Section**

**AO - Area of Operation**

**APC - Armored Personnel Carrier**

**AW - Automatic Weapons**

**CP - Command Post**

**FAC - Forward Air Controller**  
**FSB - Fire Support Base**  
**KIA - Killed in Action**  
**LOH - Light Observation Helicopter**  
**LPListening Post**  
**LRRP - Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol**  
**LZ - Landing Zone**  
**NVA - North Vietnamese Army**  
**OPCON - Operational Control**  
**WIA - Wounded in Action**

**CHAPTER 1**

**ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION**

**SECTION 1**

**MISSION**

The mission of 2nd Battalion 35th Infantry is to close with the enemy by means of fire and maneuver in order to destroy or capture him or to repel his assault by fire, close combat and counterattack.

**CHAPTER I**

**ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION**

**SECTION II**

**ORGANIZATION**

The 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry was organized under TOE 7-1SE and is organic to the Infantry Division. The battalion personnel authorized and assigned strength is shown as of the beginning of the year. The battalion was reorganized in August a decision of which is given in Chapter 2, Section I.

<b>UNIT</b>	<b>AUTHORIZED</b>	<b>ASSIGNED</b>
<b>HHC</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>379</b>
<b>Co A</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>191</b>
<b>Co B</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>186</b>
<b>Co C</b>	<b><u>173</u></b>	<b><u>169</u></b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>791</b>	<b>925</b>

**As of 1 January 1967**

<b>UNIT</b>	<b>AUTHORIZED</b>	<b>ASSIGNED</b>
<b>HHC</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>182</b>

Co A	170	155
Co B	170	150
Co C	170	142
Co D	170	151
Co E	<u>100</u>	<u>92</u>
TOTAL	971	872

As of 31 December 1967

## CHAPTER 1

### ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

#### SECTION III

#### PERSONNEL

The following is a list of past and present Battalion Commanders of the 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry, and the inclusive dates of their respective commands.

LTC CLINTON E. GRANGER	1 Jan 67 - 14 Jun 67
LTC NORMAN L. TILLER, SR	14 Jun 67 - 11 Dec 67
LTC WILLIAM J. LIVSEY	11 Dec 67 - Present

Staff positions were held by the following officers during the period.

EXECUTIVE OFFICER	MAJ FREDERICK J. SEIBERT
	MAJ ROBERT F. CARR
	MAJ IRA W. BLACK, JR.
S-1	CPT THOMAS K. NEWMAN
	1LT JAMES T. HENNESSEY
	1LT PAUL C. SCHIERHOLZ
	1LT FRANCIS W. CREEL
S-2	CPT JAMES A. HARRIS
	1LT CURTIS CHASE
	1LT RICHARD J. WHITE, JR.
	CPT MICHAEL FLICK

S-3 CPT ROBERT F.X. MC KENNEY  
MAJ BEN G. CROSBY  
MAJ LINCOLN JONES III  
S-4 CPT JAMES A. HARRIS  
CPT ROBERT S. HENDERSON  
CPT CHARLES J. ROTH LISBERGER

## CHAPTER 1

### ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

#### SECTION IV

#### BIOGRAPHY

##### LTC CLINTON B. GRANGER

LTC Granger commanded 2-35th Infantry from 1 January 1967 to 14 June 1967 during which time the battalion participated in Operation Sam Houston in Pleiku Province. During this period he conducted the tactical deployment of the battalion to Quang Ngai Province to participate in Operation Baker.

##### LTC NORMAN L. TILLER SR.

LTC Tiller commanded 2-35th Infantry from 15 June 1967 to 11 December 1967 during Operation Baker in Quang Ngai Province. It was under his command and leadership that the technique of "Hole Hunting" was developed and employed extensively with excellent results.

LTC Granger and LTC Tiller provided the battalion with outstanding leadership during the greatest part of 1967 and contributed materially to the successful combat operations during that period. Complete biographical sketches were not available to include in this publication.

##### LTC WILLIAM J. LIVSEY

LTC Livsey was commissioned from ROTC at North Georgia College on 1 June 1952. He served as a platoon leader with Co I, 7th Infantry Regiment during the Korean War. Upon returning to the United States, he was assigned to the 30th Infantry Regiment, Fort Benning, Georgia, where he commanded Company B. His tour continued with the USAIS as an instructor in the Weapons Department. Assignment to USAREUR with 2nd ARB, 36th Infantry provided experience as assistant S3, S3 Air and S2 as well as the opportunity to command Company D. From November 1959 to February 1960, he served as the Battalion Adjutant. As a Captain, he was selected as Aide-de-Camp to MG Creighton W. Abrams, CG, 3d Armored Division. Returning once again to the United States, he attended the Command and General Staff College where he graduated at the head of his class. Selected for advanced civilian schooling, he attended Vanderbilt University where he obtained an MA in psychology. From there he was assigned to the United States Military Academy with the Department of Psychology and Leadership. He successfully completed the Armed Forces Staff College.. LTC Livsey was sent to the Republic of Vietnam for assignment to the 4th Infantry Division. He was

initially assigned as the AC of S, G-3 until he assumed command of the 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry in December 1967.

LTC Livsey's personal decorations include:

CIB, Silver Star, Korean PUC, Parachute Badge, ACM, ACM (1 OLC), CIB (2nd Award), Air Medal

## CHAPTER 2

### MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

#### SECTION I

##### REORGANIZATION

The concept of reorganization was to add one rifle company, one combat support company headquarters, eliminate the anti-tank platoon from Headquarters Company; eliminate the anti-tank section from the rifle company, weapons platoons and add two company mess teams.

The reorganization was implemented in the following manner. The augmentation arrived 13 August 1967 in one packet of 142 filler personnel and were processed by a 4th Infantry Division personnel team. Prior to that the 2/35 Inf was reorganized on paper with certain individuals in the existing companies being earmarked for reassignment within the battalion to more equitably distribute resources by grade and DEROS date. Upon arrival of the battalion augmentation packet some personnel were immediately airlifted to the existing companies and the personnel earmarked for reassignment were then airlifted to their new units of assignment. The reorganization was successfully implemented with no adverse effect on the tactical efficiency of the battalion.

## CHAPTER 2

### MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

#### SECTION II

##### COMMAND POLICIES

1. Battalion Commander will personally interview each newly assigned officer, senior NCO, and as many as possible of all other personnel.
2. All deserving personnel are recommended for an award for Meritorious Service 60 days prior to DEROS to allow ample time for approval and presentation.
3. A Battalion SOP for Tactical Operations was completed during the year which covers all operational activities.
4. To minimize the number of non-battle injuries, a Firearms SOP was developed which established responsibility, procedures and policies concerning handling of firearms

5. A detailed Malaria and Hepatitis Preventive Medicine SOP was established to assist in the reduction of malaria cases and hepatitis cases.
6. If at all possible, all combat elements in the field will be resupplied with combat items as well as hot meals, mail, beer and soda.
7. Each member of the Battalion will receive an out of country R&R.
8. The battalion clothing exchange program is designed to insure all personnel receive clean clothing as often as possible.
9. Entry and departure interviews are presented to all personnel and include a thorough briefing of the unit's history, current operations, policies and procedures.
10. Emphasis is placed upon the care and maintenance of all equipment especially the M-16 rifle. Each man carries all items required for proper cleaning and is required to reconfirm the zero of his weapon at least twice monthly.

## CHAPTER 2

### MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

#### SECTION III

#### OPERATIONS

#### OPERATION SAM HOUSTON

1 Jan 67 – 5 Apr 67

With the beginning of 1967, the 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry had just concluded OPERATION PAUL REVERE IV, along the Cambodian Border in southwest Kontum Province, and was preparing for participation in OPERATION SAM HOUSTON. This was another operation in which the battalion aggressively sought the NVA forces in the Central Highlands west of Plei Djereng. The operation was characterized initially by search and destroy missions conducted with very little contact throughout January.

On 17 February 1967 the battalion conducted a combat assault (CA) to the east of the Nam Sathay River. During the period 17 February to 11 March extensive search and destroy operations and Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols (LRRP) were conducted resulting in the discovery of numerous enemy bunker complexes, base camps, hidden trails, and weapons caches. On the morning of 11 March a B-52 airstrike was requested in the battalion area of operation (AO). Company A, 2-35th Inf was given the mission of exploiting the airstrike and to make contact with the enemy. Early on 12 March Co A established contact with an estimated battalion size force, later identified as the 8th Battalion, 66th NVA Regiment. Fighting continued throughout the day until contact was broken after dark with the NVA leaving fifty-five (55) KIA's on the battlefield.

On 13-14 March the battalion fire support base (FSB) came under three (3) separate mortar attacks receiving an estimated 160 incoming mortar rounds. Sweeping north of the previous days contact, Co C made contact with an estimated battalion size force. During the

engagement forty-seven (47) NVA were killed. Captured documents found after the battle identified the force as the 8th Battalion, 66th NVA Regiment who had been maneuvering in a northeasterly direction since the 12 March engagement. From 22-27 March, 2-35th Inf consolidated its forces and on 28 March the battalion returned to base camp in Pleiku to prepare for a move to Binh Dinh Province on the South China Seacoast.

On 5 April 1967 the battalion was committed to search and destroy operations Binh Dinh Province. The battalion remained in the area of operations until 15 April but did not make any significant contact with the enemy and was then airlifted to Duc Pho District, Quang Ngai Province to become part of TASK FORCE OREGON.

## CHAPTER 2

### SECTION IV

#### OPERATION BAKER

15 Apr 67 — 18 Dec 67

Immediately upon arrival in Duc Pho the 2/35 Infantry was committed to combat operations. The day following its arrival, the battalion was engaged by the Viet Cong 219th LF Company, which resulted in 43 enemy KIA. The remainder of April was characterized by small but frequent contacts. Initially the 2/35 Infantry was placed under the OPCON of 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile which was just concluding OPERATION LeJEUNE.

In the first part of May and up until the 19th of the month the battalion had no significant enemy contact. During this time however the 2/35th displaced the Battalion CP from LZ Montezuma to LZ Liz, coordinates BS754431. At 1450 hours, while Co C was searching a cave and bunker complex vic. BS766539 and made contact with a Viet Cong platoon. Co C with one platoon of Co A 1/14th was instructed by the Battalion Commander to attack the enemy from the southeast while Co C attacked from the northwest. The enemy was then pursued into an open rice paddy where he was completely destroyed with a total of 13 killed. The first large significant contact occurred on 20 May when Co A began receiving automatic and small arms fire from four separate enemy positions south of the company perimeter. Captain Barcena the CO of Co A decided, with the concurrence of the Battalion Commander, to attack these enemy positions and to develop the situation. The initial enemy fire wounded one soldier seriously; however Co A continued the attack and overran the enemy positions. By 1610 hours, the enemy broke contact and fled to the southwest. A subsequent sweep of the contact area produced a tactical radio, medical supplies and several NVA uniforms. Company A continued the search until the Company Commander received information of enemy movement to the southwest. Realizing that his company might be led into an ambush Captain Barcena requested an observation team from B 1/9 (Airmobile) to screen his flanks and front. Continuing to move to the south, Co A was fired on at 1830 hours from the south. The observation team located the enemy and directed the company along a concealed route to the enemy position, from which they assaulted the enemy position, killing two VC and capturing a Thompson sub-machinegun. Later that evening at 0025 hours the LP's of Co A engaged a total of eight (8) VC to the northwest and southwest of its night location. The LP's threw grenades, detonated claymores and fired their weapons, killing two enemy, and causing six others to flee. The LP's shifted their positions, while a sweep was being conducted by one of the platoons. The platoon discovered only three blood trails and two enemy bodies. At 0147 hours, CPT Barcena reported his perimeter under attack by an estimated company size element. Using existing trench lines that encircled the area, the enemy was able to move

undetected to within a few meters of where the LP's had been. The enemy, thinking the LP's were there, threw hand grenades and attacked the empty positions. This mistake gave the LP's enough warning to ambush the attackers and move back within the perimeter. Artillery defensive concentrations (DEFCON) were being fired, however the enemy pressed forward in a determined ground attack. Using "hugging" tactics to avoid the heavy artillery concentrations, the enemy threw large numbers of hand grenades into the perimeter, which inflicted most of the friendly casualties. By 0222 hours the enemy had cleared the coordinated ground attack and was engaging the company on only the northern flank. By 0230 hours A 2/35 was running low on all types of ammunition. LTC Granger realizing that a resupply helicopter would probably be shot down he decided to commit Troop C 3/4 Cav which was departing LZ Liz enroute to Co A's location. At 0355 hours an armed AC-47 "Dragonship" arrived on station and delivered accurate fire on the enemy while guiding the APC's along the best route of advance toward the besieged company. At 0418 hours, Co A reported ten WIA and requested medevac and by 0427 hours Dustoff was overhead and going into the LZ where it received heavy enemy automatic weapons fire, preventing the extraction of the wounded.

Troop C 3/4 Cav closed into Co A's perimeter without incident at 0451 hours. However just prior to the closing, the enemy tired rifle grenades and small arms throughout the perimeter, but it was quickly suppressed by the Troop C 3/4 Cav. With the consolidation of the perimeter the resupply was completed and the wounded evacuated.

Co A 2/35th Inf and Co C 3/4th Cav conducted an extensive search of the previous nights area of contact, locating ten (10) enemy KIA and three (3) individual weapons. In addition, a local guerilla was captured who disclosed that he had been wounded during the initial assault at 0025 hours 20 May while two (2) others in his group were killed. At 0900 hours Co A located a bunker complex 100 meters west of their night perimeter. A squad from Co D 65th Engineer Battalion was airlifted with explosives to the LZ and were carried by an APC to the location of the enemy bunkers.

Elements from both C 3/4 Cav and Co A 2/35th Inf provided security while the engineers prepared the explosives to be used in the destruction of the VC camp and its bunkers. At 1221 hours this work party came under attack by the enemy whose initial fire of RPG-21 rockets hit and destroyed one of the APC's. The Battalion Commander directed his maneuver elements to encircle the enemy position. Co C was alerted to move to a pick-up zone where they would be extracted for a combat assault southwest of the contact area while the battalion reconnaissance platoon was to move from LZ Liz to coordinates BS768463. While the elements were being moved into position, a Forward Air Controller (FAC) spotted twenty (20) armed enemy moving toward the destroyed APC. While the Battalion Commander adjusted the direct fire of the 106 RR fire from LZ Liz, CPT Barcena sent a ground element towards the enemy position and APC where they killed two (2) more enemy, one of them inside the track. Co C 2/35th moved from the landing zone to the east linking up with Co A 2/35th Inf and simultaneously coming into contact with a well entrenched enemy. During a stiff village fight that lasted more than an hour Co C killed twenty-six (26) enemy while Co A and C Troop 3/4 Cav turned to the east and drove through the southern edge of Vinh Hien Hamlet toward Highway #1. After Co C had evacuated their wounded and dead, they moved into the southern part of Vinh Hien, paralleling Co A's route of movement. Just inside the hamlet Co C encountered another entrenched enemy element, however by utilizing helicopters, rockets, and small unit tactics they were able to overrun the remaining VC force, and Co C reached the eastern edge of the hamlet at 1950 hours. Shortly after this Co A and Co C established a joint perimeter in the rice paddy area east of the hamlet.



**C Troop 3/4 Cav began a sweep back toward the blocking position of the Reconnaissance Platoon and at 0620 hours, Companies A and C, began a systematic search of the hamlet and other areas of contact. In addition, before the village was destroyed each and every bunker, spider hole and hut, was methodically searched for signs of the enemy. All enemy material was evacuated or destroyed utilizing more than one ton of explosives.**

**On 24 May Co B 2/35th Inf was released from OPCON of B 1/9 Cav and returned to the 2/35th Inf. At approximately 1400 hours, the Blue Team (B 1/9 Cav) secured an LZ at coordinates BS747472 for the lift ships carrying IB 2/35th. By 1415 hours the Blue Team was completely engaged and suffering from battle casualties and heat injuries which provided a request for an emergency resupply of ammunition and water. At 1430 hours, a 174th Aviation Company UH-1D loaded with resupply was over the LZ secured by the Blue Team. As the helicopter was making its short final approach it was hit by a burst of heavy enemy automatic weapons fire. Immediately a squad from the Blue Team successfully extracted the wounded crew from the burning aircraft before it exploded.**

**Company B was then airlifted to the vicinity of the downed aircraft where it linked up with the remaining element of Recon and C 3/4 Cav. The force then deployed southwest to the hamlet where the Blue Team was heavily engaged and surrounded. Team Penn (C 3/4 Cav) arrived from the north and came under heavy fire from the enemy causing them to immediately dismount the battalion reconnaissance platoon. Troop C 3/4 Cav moved about one thousand meters west and attacked the enemy from the northwest. The Recon platoon assaulted from the northwest consequently the enemy was engaged on three sides, and was surrounded. The VC persisted in their violent attack on the Blue Team and despite accurate guns hip fire they were able to inflict a few more casualties. As the pressure grew more intense, the enemy slackened their rate of fire and attempted to evade the Recon Platoon which had broken through the enemy lines and linked up with the Blue Team. Almost simultaneously, the APC's inflicted heavy enemy losses, as they broke through to the northwest. CPT Penn, CO, C 3/4 Cav, decided to withdraw the wounded personnel from the contact area to a secure LZ where the wounded could be evacuated, however while his element with WIA's moved to the perimeter, Captain Penn's tracks became surrounded. The VC attacked the armor with small arms but paid a high price in lives before the error could be corrected.**

**At 1631 hours, B 2/35th (-) linked up with the friendly elements in the contact area around Tan Phong Hamlet. After reorganization Co B deployed to the north for a thorough search for the enemy. Finding the enemy was not difficult as he continued to resist with heavy volumes of small arms and automatic weapons fire. The VC tried to establish fire superiority as a diversion to enter their spider holes and caves which infested Tan Phong Hamlet. As the units approached the northern end of the hamlet, an airstrike was called in by LTC Granger on a fortified hamlet 500 meters north of Tan Phong. C 3/4 Cav continued moving to the northwest in an attempt to move around the enemy and block his withdrawal. In the meantime, Recon began receiving moderate fire from the south, indicating the enemy had left a force behind. The Reconnaissance Platoon turned back through Tan Phong while B 2/35th continued to the hamlet's northern fringe. By this time the large enemy force (estimated Company +) had scattered and the Blue Team was receiving little resistance. By 1900 hours, all elements closed together in a perimeter vic. BS730437 to be re-supplied and effect the extraction of the Blue Team while 2B 2/35th Inf attempted a touchdown but again only one helicopter was able to land in the face of enemy AW fire. LTC Granger decided that it was too risky to try the exchange therefore gunships, flareships and an armed AC-47 arrived on station to lend their suppressive fires to neutralize the enemy positions. In closing for the evening, A 2/35th was airlifted from the beach to LZ Liz where they assumed responsibility for FSB security. That night at 0315 hours the elements in Tan Phong came under a light enemy mortar attack in**

which Captain Penn, CO, C 3/4 Cav, was mortally wounded. Counter-mortar fires from LZ Liz and artillery fires by 2/9th Artillery were placed effectively throughout the area stopping any further contact that night. In view of the enemy strength it was decided to commit further troops into the area in the morning. On the morning of 25 May 1967 C 1/35th (-) which at the time was under the Operational Control of the maneuver elements of the 2/35th Inf conducted a combat assault in vic. BS727477. Their assigned mission was to sweep south along the base of the hill mass on the western border of the coastal plain, which was recognized as a likely avenue of enemy withdrawal. At 1055 hours Recon 2/35th conducted a combat assault west of C 1/35 in vic. BS715465 and was assigned the mission of sweeping the ridge lines and draws in the hill masses to the northwest of Tan Phong. A 2/35 departed LZ Liz on a sweep to the west, not only to aid B 2/35th in the search of the battlefield, but also to re-establish contact if possible. C 3/4 Cav was assigned blocking positions southeast of the Recon platoon. The simultaneous sweeps of the Tan Phong area on 28 May produced several small contacts however, fire support by the gunships of the 174th Aviation Company and B 1/9 Cav accounted for the vast majority of the enemy dead. A prisoner and a Hoi Chanh identified the enemy unit as the 60th Bn, 1st VC Regiment. He further stated that the majority of the battalion was in the area and capable of fighting a prolonged engagement. As the 2/35th Inf elements pursued the enemy, they forced him to break into the clearing and rice paddies where the deadly armed "Hueys" killed or wounded all observed enemy with rockets and 40mm Cannon fire. The units on the ground forced the enemy into hiding to avoid the increasing onslaught. All efforts failed to capture prisoners as the enemy repeatedly fought to their death. By the end of the day, 87 enemy lay dead on the battlefield, killed for the most part by the gunships. A 2/35th and C 3/4 Cav swept back to LZ Liz where they provided FSB security. B 2/35th, C 1/35th and Recon 2/35th were resupplied and assigned the mission of saturation ambush patrols for the night. By 2215 hours, all elements were in position. B 2/35th with OPCON of Recon occupied ambush sites at the mouth of the Song Tra Cau Valley. C 1/35 had three ambushes north of highway 515 positioned along the road. At 0240 hours 29 May 1967, the ambush of Company B (-) (BS713433) came under an intense enemy ground and mortar attack. Using camouflage and stealth, at least one enemy company surrounded the ambush position completely undetected and initiated a furious attack on the platoon's perimeter. Efforts to counter the mortar fire with their own 60mm mortar and the 4.2 mortar platoon from LZ Liz proved useless because the enemy was using at least two mortars which could not be located. Under the cover of a rolling barrage of mortars the enemy began a concentrated ground attack which threatened to overrun the perimeter. Captain Ralph Walker, CO, Company B, rallied his men into a perimeter and requested artillery fire support until he was mortally wounded during the mortar attack. His courage and determination provided the catalyst for the initial defense of the positions and undoubtedly prevented the unit from being overrun. When the unit moved from its linear ambush into a perimeter it inadvertently closed around an enemy position which they quickly destroyed, The enemy continued to fire his mortars, although the volume was not as heavy, however any efforts to locate these mortars proved fruitless. It was later discovered that the enemy used a mud hut as a firing pits with a hole two feet in diameter cut in the roof through which he fired his rounds. This tactic prevented observation of the muzzle flash and because of the muffled noise, made it virtually impossible to determine with accuracy how far away the mortars were. As the enemy attack intensified, the men from Co B threw white phosphorous grenades to mark the proximity of every automatic weapons position, thus enabling the armed helicopter from both the 174th Aviation Company and B 1/9 Cav to engage the enemy accurately. At 0325 hours it was decided to move the rest of Co B and the Recon Platoon to reinforce the besieged platoon. At 0346 hours, LTC Granger flew over the contact area in his command and control helicopter, and decides to commit Co C 2/35 in a reinforcing action from the east. By 0405 hours a medevac helicopter carrying the company executive officer successfully made it into the perimeter and evacuated three wounded On his arrival 1LT Russel Chapman assumed command and immediately set

about strengthening the company perimeter and consolidating positions to utilize his personnel's maximum fire power. At 0410 hours LT Chapman was wounded. in the head, but courageously continued to command. Recon and 1B 2/35 Inf were attempting to break through the attack from the southwest and they came under intense automatic weapons fire, maneuvering against the position, the Recon platoon overran it and captured the M191A6 MG. This was the last strong effort made by the enemy to block the relief force, however at 0434 hours, the enemy tried for the last time to break through the unit's staunch perimeter. They assaulted in mass from the east under a murderous barrage of enemy mortar fire. Some of the enemy broke through the lines and into the perimeter but that was where they died. Orders were issued that no one would leave their foxholes so that if anyone was seen moving in the perimeter he would be the enemy. The tactic worked and at 0446 hours, the contact had lightened considerably so that medevac was again requested and the helicopter landed in the LZ amidst suppressive fire from the perimeter. By 0550 hours all contact had been broken by the enemy, and the casualties had been evacuated. Co B had been in contact for almost 36 hours without substantial relief and with the help of her sister units the men of the combined force were able to hand the numerically superior enemy a devastating defeat.

## OPERATION BAKER

### Battle of An Ba

On 8 Aug the VC were reported to be equipped with three (3) Cal. 30 MG, fifty (50) AK-47 rifles, two (2) 81 mm mortars, several M-1 carbines, an a few M-2 carbines. It was anticipated that when U.S. troops entered this area they would encounter the enemy hiding in holes and tunnels and that it would be necessary for friendly forces to conduct a thorough and methodical search to find the enemy. When Co A, Co C and the Reconnaissance Platoon 2/35th made a combat assault into this suspected enemy location, they were unopposed. Co C 2/35th did discover several entrances to spider holes and tunnels as well as signs of fresh digging in the area. The enemy was sighted running north and northwest toward the Song Ve River by pilots flying observation helicopters and gunships. The maneuver elements of 2/35th were committed to move north in pursuit of the fleeing enemy. Contact was made with the VC and the Battle of An Ba ensued against an estimated reinforced company. The conflict began about 100 meters north of the initial insertion. The contact was staged in and around small hamlets encircled by trenches and hedge rows which provided the enemy with good fields of fire along with cover from small arms ground fire and concealment from aerial observation. It was believed that the Headquarters of the 38th UCLF Battalion and elements of the 3d Company of this battalion were the main antagonists in the contact. This was based on the fact that several captured documents contained these unit designations. After the initial contact with our maneuver elements it appeared that elements of the enemy force might escape to the west. The battalion commander alerted Company A 1/14th Inf to prepare for deployment to the west of the contact area. An AO extension was requested westward to the 64 north-south grid line. Ships were sent to A 1/14th Inf pickup zone (BS776430) and at 1205 hours, the first lift of A 1/14th Inf arrived in the battle area (BS648573). A total of four maneuver elements had been committed and they were strategically placed to prevent the enemy from escaping. The enemy. was trapped against the southern bank of the Song Ve River, over which the armed gunships maintained constant vigil. As the ground forces closed in on the trapped VC, a series of short contacts were made: at 1237 hours A 2/35th reported that they had killed three (3) enemy and captured one (1) weapon at BS663576; C 2/35th killed seven (7) VC and captured five (5) weapons in the vicinity of BS673577 at 1244 hours; A 1/14th Inf reported seven (7) enemy KIA and three (3) weapons captured at 1330 hours, and the "Aloha" helicopter submitted a total count of sixteen (16) VC killed at 1333 hours. Two immediate airstrikes were requested to destroy the densely vegetated village strip along the

northern edge of the Song Ve River (BS665586). The battalion S-3 requested a Psyops team from brigade and at 1500 hours the team was inserted with A 2/35th to exploit the growing success against the entrapped enemy. The VC had only two alternatives, either surrender or be destroyed, they chose the latter and their combat effectiveness ended.

### Battle of An Thach

On 20 August the Battle of An Thach began, this engagement was significant due to the fact that the VC Company involved was attempting to link up with the parent unit, the 97th VC Battalion, in Binh Dinh Province. The battle began as Team Hocker (C2/34th Armor and Recon 2/35th) conducted a detailed search of the hamlet of An Tho, (BS812454). Once contact with the enemy was made by a heavy tank section investigating a "ground to air" fire report at BS800469, Captain Hocker altered the mission to close with the enemy. The mission of Company B and Company A, 2/35th Inf, were to block from the north and south respectively and to assist Team Hocker in the "mopping-up" phase of the battle. By 1210 hours all of Team Hocker had deployed on line moving to the northwest and had killed two (2) VC.

At 1222 hours two men from C 2/34th Armor were wounded when their tank was hit by an explosive round of unknown type. The tank was not disabled and while they awaited Aeromedical evacuation the team continued to pursue and engage the enemy. At 1240 hours, the battalion requested gunships to support the battle. They were on station in five minutes, contributing their consistent outstanding fire support and observation. At this time Captain Hocker estimated the enemy force to be at least a platoon and reported that they were moving west. Major Smith and the 174th Aviation Co pilots kept watch over the entire area of contact keeping the maneuver elements informed of the enemy's locations. By 1315 hours, eleven (11) enemy had been killed and two (2) friendly personnel wounded, the enemy was not attempting a rapid withdrawal but were being moved out by firepower and the close combat of the tank/Infantry team. Enemy fire was still moderate to heavy and at 1318 hours LTC Tiller, the Battalion Commander, ordered Co B to move from their location north of the battle area southwest toward the scene of contact. As Co B moved to the southwest LTC Tiller directed them from the air toward the hamlet of An Thach. Approximately 150 meters from the hamlet, Co B deployed on line and began searching to the south in order to link up with Co A which at the time was being combat assaulted into a blocking position. Between 1400 and 1417 hours, Team Hocker pushed through the last heavy enemy resistance, killing fourteen (14) enemy, many at pointblank range. As soon as Team Hocker reached the western edge of An Thach, Captain Hocker requested permission to reverse his course and move slowly back through the contact area. LTC Tiller granted permission and instructed the team to search the contact area for hidden VC and for weapons and equipment. When Team Hocker began the mopping-up phase of the battle at 1420 hours, a total of twenty-six (26) enemy had been killed and nine (9) weapons, including a 60mm mortar had been captured.. Co B swept on line to the southwest and Team Hocker searched on line back through the battlefield to the southwest. Co A began a systematic search to the north. Team Hocker reported enemy kills at five to ten minute intervals throughout the following hour, bringing their total kills to thirty-nine (39) by 1505 hours. The combined elements of A, B and Team Hocker completed mopping-up in and around the area adjacent to An Thach. The victory can be attributed directly to the cooperation and teamwork of all units and individuals.

On 24 August 1967, Company A and C with the Reconnaissance platoon conducted a joint operation partially within the popular forces area of operation. At 1058 hours Company A pursuing three enemy moving to the east began a detailed search of an area near Thach Tru (1) and unearthed a series of spider holes. By the end of the afternoon they had dug up twenty-five (25) and captured nineteen (19) weapons to include one 60mm mortar and one

RPG-2 (B040) rocket launcher. It was later determined that they had found the Headquarters of the 406th VC Battalion.

On 7 September 1967 Company A conducted a new type combat assault "Operation Aloha" just north of Red Hill (BS760540). This technique included assaulting one element and then utilizing the 3d Brigade Aviation's H-23's to screen the surrounding areas, placing the other elements where the most movement was discovered. Utilizing this method near Tam Thuong, Co A killed three VC and captured an M-1 carbine. This was significant because of the considerable distance between the original LZ and the location where the other element was inserted and engaged the enemy.

A POW taken during a night ambush on 31 October indicated he was a member of the point squad of the 97th VC Battalion which was moving into the Song Ve River Valley. On the morning of 1 November the battalion worked in a joint operation conducting combat assaults in the Song Ve River Valley. Throughout the day they engaged the enemy killing twenty-seven (27) and capturing five (5) weapons. Of that, the 3d platoon of Company C killed twenty, sixteen of whom were hiding in holes in the village of Phu Chi (BS6858). During the 3d platoons "hole hunting" operation they had five (5) hand grenades thrown at them from the concealed holes, however no one was injured. On 2 November continued effort in detailed search missions and "hole hunting" resulted in one enemy killed and ten (10) weapons captured, eight of which were found at BS654496 in what appeared to be a rice cache made of bamboo and straw partially hidden under rocks and trees.

From 3-13 November the 2/35th Inf conducted a battalion operation herein referred to as OPERATION SHORT TIME. The mission was to close with the 97th VC Battalion and stop their infiltration into the Song Ve River Valley. Initially airstrikes conducted at coordinates BS618533 where enemy ground to air fire had been received, however the airstrikes produced negative results. Additional airstrikes were called in on the same coordinates however a detailed search of the area revealed no trace of the enemy. A total of three (3) helicopters were lost during this phase of the operation, one gunship had an internal rocket explode, one helicopter had a defective oil pump and the other helicopter was shot down by hostile ground fire. All aircraft were recovered and evacuated and the crew numbers aboard the gunship were immediately evacuated to medical facilities. OPERATION SHORT TIME continued without significant contact, as the maneuver elements continued detailed search and destroy operations. On 12 November the battalion engaged the enemy with artillery and gunships killing eight (8) VC and capturing one (1) weapon. On 13 November OPERATION SHORT TIME was terminated without prolific results. Of particular significance during this period was the discovery of an entrance to a cave located in a natural rock formation at coordinates BS659538. After the entrance was blocked and the cave surrounded, Company C began its detailed search of the tunnel apprehending fourteen (14) prisoners.

From 14 to 17 November there was a lull in enemy contact throughout the Cacti AO. On 18 November at 1530 hours the Battalion Recon Platoon moving on foot over a ridge (BS693596) found six (6) five man camouflaged huts and bomb shelters which had been recently constructed and occupied. A thorough search revealed cooking equipment and a new roll of concertina wire. During this period the battalion concentrated on ambushes achieving good results. Through the period 19 November to 15 December, the battalion elements continued search and destroy operations conducting a total of forty-five (45) air- mobile combat assaults, one hundred six (106) stay behind ambushes and thirty-four (34) all night ambushes resulting in one hundred sixty-six enemy killed and twenty-five (25) weapons captured. During this same period Company B conducted search operations with a Popular Force platoon from

Duc Pho District, Quang Ngai Province, these operations achieved only a marginal amount of success due to the Popular Forces inadequate training and organization.

On 16 December, acting on intelligence information that the village chief of Thach An (BS785438) was anxious to identify VC living in his village., Companies A, B, and Recon platoon conducted a Cordon and Search Operation blocking all avenues of escape. At day break the Village Chief, Hamlet Chief, National Police elements and search elements from Companies A, B, and the Recon Platoon searched the village and found four (4) VC KIA, six (6) VC POW's, one of which was a squad leader of the 145th VC Battalion. The operation continued until 19 December but without further contact with the enemy.

## CHAPTER 2

### SECTION V

#### OPERATION MUSCATINE

19 Dec 67 - 31 Dec 67

On 19 December, the battalion minus (-) displaced from LZ Liz by air and convoy to Quang Ngai airstrip and became OPCON to 198th Inf Bde (LT). The battalion prepared for a combat assault into the new area of operations in the vicinity of Chu Lai, relieving elements of the 3d Bn 2d ROK Marine Bde.

On 19 December 1967, the Battalion minus companies A and B commenced displacement closing Quang Ngai airstrip at 1730 hours with negative enemy contact in 10 air sorties carrying troops and the operations equipment and one 22 vehicle convoy carrying C 2/9 Arty and logistical equipment.

On 20 December 1967, Company D and the Reconnaissance Platoon conducted airmobile combat assaults on what was to be the new battalion fire base, LZ Sue BS567877, following a forty-five minute air and artillery preparation commencing 0730 hours. Once on the ground, Company D searched and cleared the new fire base while the Reconnaissance Platoon conducted search operations about its perimeter. Company C initially remained at Quang Ngai airstrip as a ready reaction force in support of Company D and the Reconnaissance Platoon. Negative enemy contact was encountered and the Battalion CP and C 2/9 Arty were airlifted from Quang Ngai airstrip to LZ Sue, secured by Company D. At 1400 hours Company C conducted an airmobile combat assault into the new AO (BS560847), established a night fire base and conducted offensive operations.

During OPERATION MUSCATINE the battalion continued to operate in detailed search missions killing an average of five enemy per day and capturing an average of two weapons per day. One contact was of particular significance involving the 1st Battalion 4th Regiment ARVN who were operating in coordination with the 2d Bn 35th Infantry on a search and destroy operation came in contact with an estimated VC Company (BS580798) and received a heavy volume of automatic weapons and M-79 fire from both flanks. Gunships were immediately requested and on station by 1540 hours. The CO of 2/35 Inf, controlling the gunships and coordinating the air and ground action directed companies B and C 2/35 Inf to move to a blocking position to the west while the ARVN swept into the enemies location. Gunships from the 176th, 71st and 123rd Aviation companies provided continuous blocking and suppressive fires throughout the contact which ended at 1830 hours. The results of this

battle were eighty-four enemy killed and forty-one weapons captured. Friendly casualties were six ARVN KIA and twenty-four ARVN WIA.

## CHAPTER 2

### MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

#### SECTION VI

#### HOLE HUNTING TECHNIQUES

The technique of hole hunting was initiated more by accident than by a formulated process. Many times in sweeps throughout the battalion area of operations in and around Duc Pho and Mo Duc the individual companies would engage the enemy at long range only to have them fade away after trying to close with them. After a few of these sweeps it was realized that the enemy must be hiding in some undiscovered location in the area. This problem was solved with the capture of a NVA soldier by A 2/35, he was slightly wounded and more than willing to cooperate with his captors. The WIA soldier pointed out the first camouflaged spider hole to A Company, which after calling in the battalion staff, made a thorough detailed study of the hole and its structural characteristics. This study was combined into a SOP and distributed to each company. Armed with this new information went with unqualified success in finding the hereto-fore concealed Viet Cong and destroying them. As Evidence of this in a one month period from 10 July -10 August the 2d Bn 35th Inf killed 386 enemy, captured 77 POW's and seized 158 weapons while suffering only 12 U.S. soldiers killed in action.

## CHAPTER 3

### MAJOR PROBLEMS

#### SECTION I

#### LOGISTICS

Several problem areas exist within our current logistical organization, which tend to have an adverse effect on the logistical support for the battalion.

The current TO&E under which this battalion operates provides for a Support Platoon consisting of a platoon leader, platoon sergeant, ammunition specialist, and drivers and assistant drivers. This organization does not take into account the personnel required for resupply by air. The Support Platoon has had to be augmented from other elements to provide personnel adequate to function as RTO's and Landing Zone Control.

A study is being made of the current TO&E under which the Support Platoon is organized with a view towards the requirements which arise under the aerial resupply concept.

The battalion has also faced a continual shortage of Class V items which are imperative to proper offensive and defensive operations. In particular, this shortage has been noted in trip flares, 40mm ammunition for M-79 grenade launchers, and claymore mines. The shortage has been of an extent to seriously impair the proper functioning of the units.

Command emphasis has been placed on this area to insure critical items of Class V are provided Infantry Battalions as required.

The Battalion Surgeon is usually located on a Fire Support Base (FSB), and it is frequently difficult for air evacuation to be effected, because the base is under heavy fire, or weather conditions are adverse, therefore wounded may be held at the FSB for several hours or even over night. Under these circumstances fresh whole blood must be available to the Battalion Surgeon.

A recommendation has been made that fresh whole blood be placed on the TO&E of the Battalion Aid Station for use in situations when air evacuation is greatly delayed.

#### APPENDIX 1 (A)

#### CHRONOLOGY OF OPERATIONS

OPERATION SAM HOUSTON	1 Jan - 5 Apr
OPERATION BAKER	15 Apr - 18 Dec
Operation Short Time	3 Nov

#### APPENDIX II

#### STATISTICAL SUMMARY

#### ENEMY LOSSES

KIA	1920
POW	320
CD	94
VCS	3726
WPNS CIA (SA)	399
WPNS CIA (AW)	107
WPNS CIA (CS)	64

#### FRIENDLY LOSSES

KIA	70
WIA	459
DOW	9
MIA	3
NBI	129
NBD	1



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