

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

HEADQUARTERS
3D SQUADRON 5TH CAVALRY
9TH INFANTRY DIVISION
APO 963 70

AVIE-CY

7 November 1968

SUBJECT: After Action Report for Period of OPGON to 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), 17 May 1968 - 7 November 1968

THROUGH: Commanding Officer
2d Bde, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile)
ATTN: S-3
APO US FORCES 96490

TO: Commanding General
1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile)
ATTN: G-3
APO US FORCES 96490

Section 1 Significant Organization/Unit Activities

1. (C) Introduction: The 3d Squadron, 5th Cavalry came under operational control of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) on 17 May 1968. Under further OPGON of the 2d Bde, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), the Squadron became engaged in Operation Jab Stewart III which started on 21 May 1968 through the present. While participating in these operations, the Squadron was on continuous combat actions and was responsible for the perimeter security of the logistical base at Wunder Beach (YD492565) and of LZ Hard Core (YD48512), a fire support base. The Squadron's counter-insurgency operations included route security, reconnaissance in force, cordon and search, search and clear, airborne hunter killer operations and night ambush killer teams. In October, the Squadron also conducted preparations for a planned move to the Delta on or about 1 Nov 1968. On 27 Oct 1968, the move was postponed for an unknown period of time. On 31 Oct 1968, the Squadron moved from Wunder Beach to Camp Evans (YD541322) coming under the operational control of the 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) at LZOOH on 2 Nov 1968. On that same day, however, the Squadron, less Trp C but with C Company, 2-506 Inf (Abn), temporarily returned under the operational control of 2d Bde, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) for Operation Comanche Falls III. This OPGON lasted until 7 Nov 1968.

2. (U) Organization: a. The Squadron's Organization was changed for deployment to the ICFZ. Trp D, the Air Cavalry Trp, remained with the 9th Infantry Division, and C/2-34 Armor, 25th Infantry Division was attached. Two helicopter scout section's (4, OH-23's) later reduced to one section through attrition remained with the Squadron for reconnaissance and command and control purposes. The Squadron received units from 2d Bde, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) OPGON to assist in securing LZ Hard Core fire base and Wunder Beach logistical base for combat operations in the area of operations. The Squadron provided 2d Bde, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) with units up to troops size for operations, frequently on an instant notice, rapid reaction basis. In addition, D/1-9 Cav, from HQ, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), was OPGON to the Squadron from 1 Aug 1968 to 5 Oct 1968.

b. Organization structure and roster of key personnel are attached as inclosures.

- (1) Inclosure 1: Organization Structure
- (2) Inclosure 2: Roster of Key Personnel

3. (U) Personnel and Administration: a. This unit currently carries a G rating for personnel. This report also reflects that 90% of the Squadron's TDE positions are filled by MOS qualified personnel.

b. Moral in the Squadron is high as evidenced by consistently superior performance in both combat missions and administrative tasks.

DOWNGRADED AT 3YR INTERVALS
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12YRS
DOR DIR 5200.10

DECLASSIFIED PER EXECUTIVE ORDER 12356, SECTION 3.3, *AND 87354*
BY PLR/DAM NARA, DATE 2/11/80

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

4. (C) Intelligence: a. Enemy activities during the reporting period included NVA units up to battalion size, including reconnaissance elements, VC local units, infrastructure, small rice gathering parties and indoctrination squads. Harassing action from sniper fire and booby traps and mines were encountered in all operational areas. Mining incidents on SkyKing Elvd from Wanda Beach to GL 1 which were frequent initially were reduced to nil. The Squadron's continuous aggressive operations not only slowed and captured or killed the rice gathering parties, but deprived rice to the major NVA units in the mountain areas. Extensive systems of VC rice caches were uncovered by the Squadron in graves along Hwy 555 "The Street Without Joy". The Squadron's major contacts during the reporting period were at Gia Dang III (YD430110) on 29 May 1968, Binh An (YD400635 on 27-29 Jun 1968, and La Hue (YD410545) on 20-23 Aug 1968. The troops encountered NVA in battalion strength on all three occasions, the K8 Bn at Gia Dang III, the 814th Bn at Binh An and the K8 Bn at La Hue.

b. Enemy Losses:

(1) Personnel:

- (a) KHA - 365
- (b) NVA - unknown
- (c) POW - 145
- (d) Detainees - 419

(2) Material, Equipment and Facilities Captured:

- (a) Weapons: 174 individual, 18 crew served
- (b) Ammunition: Approximate 12,000 rounds of small arms, 44 RPG 2 rounds, 34 82mm and 24 60mm rounds, and 2 106 recoilless rounds.
- (c) Munitions: 45 booby trapped grenades, 17 booby trapped 105mm rounds, 11 mines and 66 lbs explosive (TNT or C-4)
- (d) 204,200 lbs of rice
- (e) Assorted clothing, field gear, documents and medicine

c. Weather and Terrain: During the reporting period weather affected operations only during the severe flooding from 6-11 Sep 1968 and from 18-24 Oct 1968. These floods submerged the southern portion of the AO, caused the rivers and canals to go out of their banks, and bridges, as well as portions of roads, to be washed out completely. Otherwise, the AO was well suited for armored/cavalry operations. The sand provided a firm footing for tracked vehicles and long range observation was possible in most areas. The rice paddies and canals in the southern portion of the AO restricted movement somewhat, but not to an extent which prohibited successful operations.

d. Enemy Capabilities and Vulnerabilities: (1) Capabilities: The existence of regimental size units in areas close to the Squadron's AO gave the enemy the capability to attack Wanda Beach or LZ Hard Core in strength and to seriously interdict SkyKing Elvd. However, the Squadron's mobility, its ability to react anywhere within the AO in a short time, and its tremendous firepower made any such activity virtually impossible. The enemy had the capability to conduct small ambushes, sniper fire, mining operations, and rocket and mortar attacks.

e. Order of Battle Summary: (1) The 7th Front, subordinate to the military region of Tri Thieu, commanded the units located in this area.

(2) The 812th NVA Regiment operated with 3 battalions and supporting elements with an approximate strength of 1470 men in Quang Tri Province.

(3) The 808th NVA Bn (independent) (K8 Bn) with an approximate strength of 220 men, operated in the coastal lowlands of Quang Tri Province.

(4) The 814th NVA Bn with an approximate strength of 20 men (unit had 233 KHA and 36 POW on 29 Jun 1968) operated in the coastal lowlands of Quang Tri Province.

(5) The 10th Sapper Bn HF with an approximate strength of 220 men operated in the coastal lowlands of Quang Tri Province.

(6) The 1st Bn, 84th Arty Regt (DMZ), operated from base area 101. (This unit has not been contacted by 3-5 Cav).

(7) Local Forces: (a) The H99 Co with an approximate strength of 100 men operated in the Hai Lang District.

(b) The Trieu Phong LF Co with an approximate strength of 100 men operated in the Trieu Phong District.

(c) The C3 (or C15) Co with an approximate strength of 60 men operated in Huong Dien District.

5. (C) Operations: a. While CPOCN to 2d Bde, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), the 3-5 Cav. in addition to road and base security, conducted aggressive cordon, search and clear operations independently and with US infantry, RF/FF, and NFFF. These operations were conducted both in the daylight and at night. It was not a typical to combine the rapid movement of armored cavalry with the air assault capabilities of the 2d Bde, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), to first form a cordon and then have the cordoned area searched out by infantry. An example operation which owed its success primarily to the rapid reaction capability of the 3-5 Cav, is the battle of Binh An. At 0855H, Trp C and D/1-9 Cav began to receive small arms fire. At 0923K, Trp A was ordered to reinforce Trp C to cordon against the sea the area from which the hostile fire was coming. By 1005H, the Trp A cordon was in position. By 1142 H, Trp B had joined Trp's A and C, completing the cordon. At 1158H, the first of two company size units from 2d Bde, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), was airlifted to an LZ close to the battle area. The area was brought under heavy fire by the Army, Air Force, and Navy, and was swept by infantry and armored cavalry. Results included 293 KHA and 44 POW against 3 Friendly WHA and 35 Friendly WHA.

b. Total Results while CPOCN to 2d Bde, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile):

- (1) Enemy: See Para 4b (1)
(2) Friendly:
- | | |
|----------------------|----|
| (a) KHA | 8 |
| (b) WHA | 79 |
| (c) Tanks destroyed | 1 |
| (d) ACAV's destroyed | 1 |

6. (C) Training: a. The most significant training activity of the reporting period was in combination with operations out of the assigned AO. Anticipating return to the 9th Infantry Division in the Mekong Delta, the Squadron requested and was given permission to operate near the confluence of the O Lau and O Giang Rivers, some 4 km NE of LZ Nancy, then HC of 2-12 Cav. As this is a paddy area interlaced with numerous small rivers and canals, in addition to the O Lau and O Giang, which at their confluence are some 200 meters wide, these operations provided excellent training to meet problems expected in the Delta.

b. Further training was conducted in conjunction with operations at night. The Squadron conducted night operations up to three troops strength. This provided opportunities to not only work with mortar and artillery illumination, but also to utilize the tank mounted Xenon searchlights.

c. In addition to search and clear or cordon and search operations conducted with infantry, RF/FF infantry, and NFFF, the Squadron conducted normal armored cavalry zone, route and area reconnaissance operations, all of which permitted the performance of normal QJT in both operations and maintenance.

7. (C) Logistics: a. During the reporting period, the Squadron remained at Wanda Beach and drew Class I, III and V from 625th S&S Company, 26th General Support Group. Approximately 95% of Class II items were drawn by S-4 Rear from the 9th Infantry Division and airlifted to Phu Bai, to be trucked to Wanda Beach.

b. With evacuation of Wanda Beach by 26th Group in September, several problems arose in resupply, especially when the only access road was flooded. For several days all Class I and III had to be airlifted to Wanda Beach from Quang Tri. When the access road was flooded in October. The Squadron Class III resupply trucks had to get the fuel from Cu Viet by driving along the surf on the beach.

c. Perhaps the most notable logistics achievements during the period was the exchange of 61 gasoline driven M13 for 61 diesel driven M13A1 vehicles.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Date	Location	Patients Treated
5 May	Hai An (Refugee Village) (YD512547)	180 (Average)
18 May	Hai An (Refugee Village) (YD512547)	180 (Average)
2 Jun	Hai An (Refugee Village) (YD512547)	180 (Average)
20 Jun	Hai An (Refugee Village) (YD512547)	180 (Average)
4 Jul	Hai An (Refugee Village) (YD512547)	180 (Average)
4 Aug	Hai An (Refugee Village) (YD512547)	339 (Average)
6 Oct	Hai An (Refugee Village) (YD512547)	219 (Average)
13 Oct	Hai An (Refugee Village) (YD512547)	312 (Average)

b. In addition to the projects shown above, the Squadron conducted a continuous MEDCAP type program at LZ Hard Core. Starting in the second week of July, the troop medics from the troops deployed at LZ Hard Core and several Squadron medics held sick call for the civilians. This was done on a daily basis until the first week of August. An old building, repaired and stocked with medical supplies, served as the aid station. About 700 patients were treated; common problems were various forms of dermatitis, diarrhea, colds, rickets and vitamin deficiency. Many civilian patients were also treated by coming to the berm around Wundor Beach. The Squadron surgeon examined them as they appeared at the guard bunkers and med-evacuated the critically ill. Sick or injured civilians found in hamlets during operations were also treated and evacuated if required.

c. The Squadron also provided medical assistance to civilians upon request.

d. For psychological warfare purposes, the Squadron used helicopter sound teams. Two examples of employment of these teams are (1) during the aforementioned Battle of Binh An, which resulted in surrender by 10 NVA soldiers and (2) one hour coverage on 19 Sep 1968 of Cu Huan (YD438498) just after 7 children and 1 adult had been killed by a VC road mine.

e. As the Squadron was preparing to leave Wundor Beach, Vietnamese civilians were hired through S-5, 2d Rde, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), to dismantle bunkers and do other police call type work. Work parties were from 400-500 Vietnamese. Workers were paid 150 piasters a day. This project lasted 8 days and provided an excellent source of funds for these people.

Section 2 Commander's Comments

1. (C) General: While OPCON to the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) and further OPCON to the 2d Rde, the Squadron was employed in an area of operations well suited for armored cavalry ~~and employed with the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) and further OPCON to the 2d Rde, the Squadron was employed in an area of operations well suited for armored cavalry~~, retaining maximum freedom of action within the allocated AO. This operational situation enabled the Squadron to accomplish all its missions and to concurrently develop new tactical concepts the more prominent of which are described below.

2. (C) Armor-Airmobile Operations: The flexibility of the helicopter combined with the shock action of the tank and ACAV was highlighted when the Squadron conducted several multi-company (up to seven companies - cavalry troops, US infantry companies and Regional Forces companies) operations during which an objective area was surrounded by simultaneous insertion of combat assaults on side and emplacement of an armored cordon on the other side of that area. Such armor-airmobile linkups were conducted not only with elements of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) but also with up to five companies of Regional Forces from the Trieu Phong and Hai Lang Districts. The linkup sequence and techniques were varied to insure surprise on the enemy, i.e., the airmobile forces were combat assaulted into the area in an attempt to fix the enemy while the Squadron's elements moved rapidly into the objective area to block and join forces to search and clear the objective area. This method was reversed with armor elements in position; or on the move, initially, followed by combat assaults to block and intercept fleeing VC or NVA.

3. (C) Combined Operations: Another highly successful method of operation resulted from the Squadron's frequent employment of Regional Forces, Regional Forces companies from the Hai Lang, Trieu Phong, and Huong Dien Districts...

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

supplemented the Squadron's cordon, search, and clear ability to route out local VC guerrillas and the VC infrastructure. These Regional Forces companies helped to identify and weed out the majority of the VC infrastructure within the Squadron's AO during the reporting period. Equally successful was the frequent use of the Vietnamese National Police Field Force platoons and the Police Reconnaissance Units to assist in searching, ferreting out and identifying local insurgents.

4. (C) Night Operations: To keep the enemy off balance at all times, the Squadron conducted a number of successful night attacks and night cordon-search and clear operations. Flares and Xenon searchlight illumination was used during the attack or search phases of these operations. However, the initial approach to the objective areas or the emplacement of the night cordon was accomplished under blackout conditions. The Squadron's night operations, undoubtedly, had a psychological effect on the enemy.

5. (C) Command and Control: The extensive and responsive communications equipment and air and ground mobility of the Squadron CP made it possible to conduct more than one operation simultaneously while controlling up to eight company size maneuver elements. This included conducting combat assaults and moving ground elements simultaneously.

6. Recommendations

6. (C) Closing Comments: The capabilities of an armored cavalry squadron is only limited by the imagination exercised by its commander. The Squadron considers itself fortunate to have had the opportunity to have worked with the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) and attributes much of its success to the operational freedom and cooperation afforded to it by the Division. The commander's final comment on the Squadron's mission in Job Stewart III is: "Mission Accomplished".

Angelo Grillo

ANGELO GRILLO
LTC Armor
Commanding

Inclusions:

- 1 - Organization Structure
- 2 - Roster of Key Personnel

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVDE-CT

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 Jan 68
(RCS/CSFOR-65) (IC-WDF2AA)(U)

ROSTER OF KEY PERSONNEL			
NAME	SN	GRADE	POSITION
<u>SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS</u>			
BARTLEY, Hugh J	050621	LCOL	Squadron CO
MAILER, Michael D	083346	MAJ	Squadron XO
QUINN, Roger A	087320	MAJ	S3
MCLAUGHLIN, Stewart	097424	CPT	S3-Air
DI NAPOLI, John Jr	05335783	LIT	COMMO O
VACANT.....	S1
MILLER, Richard G.	05708080	CPT	S2
JOHNSON, Charles F	05220752	CPT	S4
GRACE, Ronald J	02302684	CPT	Motor O
MEADE, John F	W3400441	WO	PBO
THOMPSON, Ronald G	05327930	CPT	S5
WHITELEY, Thaddeus G	02325495	LIT	Act Asst Adj
DOMINNEY, James E	RA34445100	SMAJ E9	Squadron SMAJ
ADAMS, Robert F	RA55334226	SFC E7	S1 PSNCO

HQ & HQ TROOP

REICHEL, John A	05314997	CPT	CO
HARRIS, John W.	05336496	2LT	XO
RISNER, Forrest	W3101567	WO1	Trp Mnt
WEBB, David L	05240739	LIT	Historian/LN Off
BLANCHARD, James	05233477	LIT	Trans Sec Idr
KITCHENS, Jessie E	W2142689	CWO4	Auto Mnt Tech
MAYES, Richard L	05225986	CPT	MED PLT Idr
STEPHENS, Richard L	05225986	CPT	CHAPLAIN
DEVOTO, August G	0523493	LIT	Spt Plt Idr
EMERICH, James	RA13337983	1ST SGT E8	First SGT

A TROOP

GAHNETSON, Ralph B	093706	CPT	CO
TORNABENE, William	05225868	LIT	XO
SMITH, Richard S	05421492	LIT	Plt Idr
TOLEDO, Richard B	0F108974	LIT	Plt Idr
FREEMAN, Elrie A	0F108585	LIT	Plt Idr
FANERY, Julius	RA15293369	SFC E7	1st SGT
WILLIAMS, Robert Jr	RA18445573	PSG E7	Plt Sgt
ROLLINGS, William	RA15212362	PSG E7	Plt Sgt
MAEDER, J.L.	RA16212319	SFC E6	Plt Sgt

Inclosure 2

8-12

ub
RAH

Inclosure 2: Roster of Key Personnel

Positions as of 7 Nov 1968:

CO	LTC Angelo Grills
XD	MAJ Raymond E Bell Jr
S-1	CPT Evert S Thomas
S-2	1LT John Murphy
S-3	MAJ Nicholas S H Krawciw
S-4	1LT Duane Hardesty
Motor Off	1LT Theodore Tate
Surgeon	CPT Jack W Pearson
Chaplin	CPT John Lawson
Signal Off	CPT John Clement
CO, HHT	CPT Jerry F Border
CO, Trp A	CPT David Meaders
B	CPT John Osgood
C	CPT James Pitts
D	MAJ Diane R Profer