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During the first half of February units of the brigade fought to regain (Tan Hou, Tan Bhu Trung, and Ap Cho.) Then on 20 February the brigade moved to the Hoc Mon district where it assumed the defense of the northwest approach to Saigon. The forward FDC of the Eighth Artillery preceded the brigade by three days and commenced operations from Fire Support Base Harrison. When Operation Saratoga ended on 10 March the battalion found that it directed its own units and reinforcing artillery in the expenditure of 109,909 rounds, a measure of the intensity of the action.

before the Ted offensive operation Saratoga increased pressure on the enemy

and then foiled his plan to isolate inter\_\_\_\_\_ Saigon. One of the largest range in lightning operations should undertaking Saratoga saw tropic soldiers engaged from the Bin Cambodian border to Saigon. In Tainin and Duan provinces did the 1st brigade.

A participation lasted from <sup>68</sup> Feb. 25th to March 24th in spite of alert and aggressive combat sweeps the brigade made little contact. CHARLIES battle plans had drawn him to the south where Saigon loomed as the glittering prize.

By March 24th the body count was 58, 3 enemy soldiers had been captured. Posted in the <sup>Hox Man</sup> Hakmine area to dispute Vietcong passage and to keep the way open to civilians and "free world forces" the 3rd brigade found far more enemy to deal with

2nd 1 we/ans/1/17 attached to 3rd opion

than had the 1st brigade. Action flared up early during the afternoon of Feb. 9th the 2nd battalion 27th wolfhounds were attacked by an estimated battalion of Vietcong. The fire fight claimed a 102 enemy lives. About the same time the next day a task force composed of two companies of the 1st of the 27th and a company of the third and fourth calvary came under fire from the Vietcong forces of underdetermined size. The forces large enough to leave a 105 bodies in front of the task force guns. They complemented their effort from the previous morning when the task force killed a 176 Vietcong. After third brigade dominance of the area had been proved again action tapered off to rac.?. fire and skirmishing. Even before Tec? began the 2nd brigade seemed to be in the eye of the storm for operation Saratoga.

## UNIT HISTORY

1 January 1968 - 31 December 1968

*Document - Jackson - Combined Arms Battalion*

The year 1968 began amidst the fire and steel of Operation Saratoga which had commenced in December 1967. The operation gathered momentum in January with the 2d Brigade of the 25th Infantry Division and its direct support artillery, the 1st Battalion 8th Field Artillery, finding action along the Saigon River and in the Ho Bo Woods.

The first fierce fighting of the year in the brigade area directly involved the Automatic Eighth. Fire Support Base Forrest, located seven kilometers east of Trang Bang, occupied elements of (1st Battalion, 27th Infantry and Battery A, 1/8th Artillery,) came under heavy mortar and ground attack in the early hours of 10 January. The battery fought back, making effective use of Killer Junior, a technique utilizing close-in, low air bursts of HE rounds with time fuzes. The technique had only recently been developed by the battalion and would find much use in defensive direct-fire missions. After the battle of Xom Rang, as it was called, the bodies of 108 enemy littered the perimeter wire. Most of these had been killed by artillery fragments.

That the fighting continued heavy during the month of January is attested by the fact that the battalion made 45 battery moves during those 31 days. No one had time to notice things like anniversaries. January 19 was the second anniversary of the battalion's arrival in the Republic of Viet Nam and January 23 was the second anniversary of the first round fired in anger by the battalion. Since that first round was fired in support of ARVN, the battalion had expended 423,345.

But much more was to come. In the midst of Operation Saratoga, on 31 January, the enemy initiated his Tet Offensive throughout the brigade area of operations. Most installations came under rocket and mortar attack and Highway 1 was interdicted.

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5 (1. February to 31 May 68) could see a continuation of operations with the emphasis placed on transferring responsibility for TACT pacification to the ARVN and other GVN forces.

The execution of SARATOGA underwent significant changes in the last half of January with the gradual buildup of NVA/VC forces in the three province area preparatory to the TET Offensive. The operation took on an entirely different aspect with the launching of the enemy's TET Offensive on 30-31 January 1968. ~~Divisional assets committed to YELLOWSTONE were redeployed to support SARATOGA. The 3rd Brigade commenced activities in SARATOGA. On 16 February, the 3rd Brigade terminated its involvement in YELLOWSTONE to devote all its attention to SARATOGA. On 17 February, the 1st Brigade joined SARATOGA and on 24 February, with the termination of YELLOWSTONE, was committed in its entirety to SARATOGA.~~ With the exception of divisional elements detached to the Capital Military District (CMD) all divisional elements participated in SARATOGA until its termination 10 March.

The emphasis in Operation SARATOGA between 1 February and 10 March was placed on ~~combating and blocking NVA/VC forces which had moved in force into built-up and populated centers in BINH DUONG, BINH DUONG, ICNG and GIA DINH Provinces~~ to defending allied base camps which had come under heavy attack and on mounting a counter offensive to destroy NVA/VC forces and installations in the northern portion of the TACT. Concurrently with this phase of SARATOGA, divisional elements were sent into the Capital Military District to assist with the defense of Saigon, Tan Son Nhut Air Base, etc., and to clear enemy forces out of the CMD.

Details of the significant organizational operations of SARATOGA are included in Combat Operations After Action Reports attached to this report as TAB C.

The final results of Operation SARATOGA were: US losses: 374 KIA, 1855 WIA (1184 evacuated); 2 MIA, 20-1's, 50 helicopters, 5 dozers, 18 Rome Flows, 1 FADAC, 15 tanks, 27 trucks, 31 APC's and 1 radio damaged: 1 asphalt distributor, 1 tractor, 2 tanks, 1 90mm AR, 46 APC's, 5 trucks and 1 helicopter destroyed. Enemy losses: 3836 KIA, 581 detainees, 406 individual weapons, 180 crew-served weapons, 361 pounds of documents, 18 radios, 8.8 tons of rice, 40850 small arms rounds, 271 RPG-2 rounds, 600 pounds of medical supplies and 5 telephones captured: 3 radios; 2533 grenades, 1715 rockets, artillery and mortar rounds, 98 mines, 66147 small arms rounds, 87 cluster bomb units, 24 individual weapons, 113 crew-served weapons and 17 bombs destroyed. 1432 tactical air sorties were flown in support of SARATOGA.

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in the area and completing several engineering projects of rebuilding or constructing road networks, US Special Forces (USSF)/Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) camps and KATUM (XT3389) airfield.

As of 1 February, the 1st and 3rd Brigades were committed in force with supporting engineer and cavalry units to YELLOWSTONE. However, the initiation of the enemy buildup in the southern portion of the TAOI in mid January forced the gradual redeployment of the 1st and 3rd Brigade assets to the south. The commencement of the TET Offensive on 30-31 January 1968 accelerated the redeployment as assets were moved to support Operation SARATOGA and/or detached to the Capital Military District (CMD) for the defense of Saigon, Tan Son Nhut, etc.

The 1st Brigade was committed to YELLOWSTONE from 1 February until its termination on 24 February. However, whereas the 1st Brigade operated on 1 February with four maneuver battalions, on 24 February it terminated operations with one maneuver battalion. The 1st Brigade also commenced participation in Operation SARATOGA on 17 February and was committed to both operations concurrently until 24 February.

The 3rd Brigade terminated its activities in YELLOWSTONE on 16 February after being committed to YELLOWSTONE and SARATOGA concurrently on 6 February. The 3rd Squadron, 17th Cavalry which had supported the two brigades throughout the earlier phases of YELLOWSTONE was withdrawn from the Operation on 2 February, but provided limited aerial reconnaissance on 4, 8 and 15 February.

Details of significant activities within YELLOWSTONE for the period of this report are contained in the Combat Operations After Action Reports attached to this report as TAB B.

The final results of Operation YELLOWSTONE were: US losses: 137 KIA, 1085 WIA (586 evacuated); 14 APC's, 20-1A's, 61 helicopters; 22 trucks, 4 tanks, 1 M55 Quad 50, 3 howitzers, 2 AVLB's, 1 Rome-Flow, 1 crane, 1 earth mover and 3 trailers damaged; 5 trucks, 2 tanks, 12 APC's, 1 M42 duster, 1 trailer, 1 search light 1/4 ton and 7 helicopters destroyed. Enemy losses: 1170 KIA, 182 detainees, 144 individual weapons, 69 crew-served weapons, 36 pounds of documents, 42765 rounds of small arms ammunition, 14 120mm mortar rounds, 4 flare pistols, 179.8 tons of rice, 7 radios, 200 pounds of medical supplies, 2 hand grenades and 12 telephones captured; 15686 grenades, 293 mines, 43 cluster bomb units, 42 bombs, 562 artillery and mortar rounds, 16515 small arms rounds, 384.3 tons of rice, 1 truck and 3 telephones destroyed.

A total of 1201 tactical Air Force sorties were flown in support of YELLOWSTONE.

(3) Operation SARATOGA (8 December 1967 to 10 March 1968). This operation, as previously discussed in the 25th Infantry Division Operational Report for the period 1 November 1967 to 31 January 1968, was directed at the southern portion of the division TAOI and was executed concurrently with YELLOWSTONE in its earlier phases. The mission of SARATOGA as specified by 25th Infantry Division OPLAN 19-67 was to conduct operations in conjunction with RVN forces to pacify portions of LONG AN, BINH DUONG and HAU NGHIA Provinces within the TAOI, to secure allied base areas, to control resources, particularly food and to prevent enemy rice taxation.

The initial concept of execution for SARATOGA envisioned the 2nd Brigade maneuvering with three battalions and supporting forces in conducting combined operations with the 5th and 25th ARVN Divisions and other GVN forces in the three province area. The concept of execution was to take place in two phases. Phase I (1 December - 31 January 68) corresponded with the last two months of the rice harvest and with Operation YELLOWSTONE in War Zone "C". Phase II

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The emphasis in Operation SARATOGA between 1 February and 10 March was placed on counter attacking against NVA/VC forces which had moved in force into built up and populated centers in HUU NGHIA, BINH DUONG, LONG and GIA DINH Provinces, to defending allied base camps which had come under heavy attack and on mounting a counter offensive to destroy NVA/VC forces and installations in the northern portion of the TACI. Concurrently with this phase of SARATOGA, divisional elements were sent into the Capital Military District to assist with the defense of Saigon, Tan Son Nhut Air Base, etc., and to clear enemy forces out of the CMD.

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