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Cpt House, 3MHD

H Trp, 17th Cav

*FILE WITH UNIT HISTORY FILE***HISTORY OF THE 198TH INFANTRY BRIGADE, AMERICAN DIVISION****Prepared by the 3d Military History Detachment**

On 10 May 1967 the Department of Defense announced: "A new infantry brigade, numbering 5,600 men, will be sent to Vietnam." The new unit, the 198th Light Infantry Brigade, was formed from personnel of the 1st and 2d Armored Divisions at Fort Hood, Texas. Although it was referred to as a "new" brigade, the 198th Infantry had a rich history dating back to the early 1920's.

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 198th Infantry Brigade was formed in the Organized Reserves in Erie County, Pennsylvania, on 24 June 1921. The unit became an organic element of the 99th Infantry Division.

The unit was reorganized and redesignated as the 3d Platoon of the 99th Cavalry Recon Troop, and on 15 November 1942 was ordered to active military service at Camp Van Dorn, Mississippi. During World War II, the troop fought with the 99th Infantry Division and received campaign credit for operations in the Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace and Central Europe. The troop was also cited by the Belgian Army for action at Elsenborn and in the Ardennes, and was awarded the Belgian Fourragere. The 99th Cavalry Recon Troop was inactivated on 29 September 1945 at Camp Niles Standish, Massachusetts, and assigned as a reserve component of the 99th Infantry Division.

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On 1 August 1962, the 99th Cavalry Recon Troop was relieved from its assignment to the 99th Infantry Division and withdrawn from the Army Reserve. At the same time, the 3d Platoon of the Troop was converted and redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 198th Infantry Brigade, and allotted to the Regular Army. This, then, was the unit which began training at Fort Hood under the command of Colonel James R. Walde in May 1967. During this training, jungle fighting techniques and air mobility were emphasized. Plans called for the reconstructed 198th to be somewhat stronger than the two light infantry brigades already serving in Vietnam, the 196th and the 197th. The 198th was to have 1800 additional men, more armored cavalry and artillery, and increased logistical support.

In October 1967, the Military Sea Transport Ships USS Gordon and USS Uphur brought the brigade from Oakland, California, to Da Nang. After arriving in Da Nang, the "Brave and Bold" soldiers boarded LST boats for transportation to Chu Lai, where they arrived on 22 October 1967. Four days later they became a part of the reactivated Americal Division. At the time of its initial deployment, the 198th Light Infantry Brigade consisted of the following units: 1st Bn, 46th Inf; 1st Bn, 6th Inf; 1st Bn, 52d Inf; 1st Bn, 14th Arty; H Troop, 17th Cav; and the 555th Engineer Bn (now Company B, 26th Engineer Bn).

At first, the green troops were given classes and combat training to prepare them for assignment. About half of the troops were trained by the 196th Brigade in Chu Lai, while the remainder went to Duc Pho for training by the 3d Brigade of the 4th Infantry Division. These troops at Duc Pho remained there until the arrival of the 11th Light Infantry

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Brigade in December 1967 at which time they withdrew to Chu Lai. The 196th Light Infantry Brigade redeployed from the Chu Lai area to relieve the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division; the 198th relieved the 196th Brigade in place.

Operation Muscatine, a multi-battalion operation in the northern districts of Quang Ngai Province, was launched in early December 1967 by the 198th Brigade, 2d ARVN Division and units of the 3d Brigade, 4th Infantry Division. During this operation, which ended on 10 June 1968, the 198th Brigade relieved the 2d NOK Marine Brigade and assumed responsibility for their TAOB.

On 31 March 1968, the 3d Bn, 46th Inf joined the 198th and the Brigade continued its operations with four infantry battalions until 1 July 1969, when the 1st Bn, 46th Inf officially became a part of the 196th Brigade.

Operation Burlington Trail was begun by elements of the 198th Brigade on 8 April 1968. With the assistance of the 1st Sqdn, 1st Cav, the road was opened from Tam Ky to Phan Phuoc, a Special Forces outpost, and district headquarters in Quang Tin Province. The road was constructed by the 39th and 26th Engineer Battalions. When the operation ended on 11 November 1968, 545 weapons had been captured and 1,948 enemy had been killed.

On 2 December 1968, a major pacification effort was begun by the 1st Bn, 46th Inf of the 198th Brigade, the 1st Sqdn, 1st Cav and the 26th Engr Bn. Operation Hardin Falls had the mission of providing assistance to GVN forces, enabling them to pacify six hamlets in Thang Binh District.

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The operation successfully ended on 25 February 1969. Elements of the 1st Bn, 46th Inf also operated in conjunction with the 196th Brigade during Operation Fayette Canyon. This operation was started during December 1968 in the mountains northwest of San Jo, and it ended on 25 February 1969 after 327 enemy had been killed.

Operation Russell Beach was initiated on 13 January 1969 on the Batangan Peninsula, eight miles northwest of Quang Ngai City. This operation was a massive pacification effort designed to remove and isolate all civilians from the peninsula and eliminate VC units, base areas and materials and members of the VC infrastructure. The 2nd Bn, 46th Inf of the 196th Brigade was combined with the 4th Bn, 3d Inf of the 11th Brigade to form Task Force Cockney (named after Assistant Medalion Commander, BG Howard W. Cockney, who commanded the Task Force). The peninsula was isolated from the mainland by a cordon set up by Task Force Cockney and 12,000 innocent civilians were relocated. The combat phase of the operation ended on 9 February accounting for 20 VC killed, and 15.5 tons of salt, two tons of corn, 13 tons of rice, 77 individual weapons and six crew served weapons captured. Pacification, resettlement and civic action projects continued on the Batangan Peninsula.

During February 1969 the Americal Division was reorganized under the ROAD concept, and the designation of Light Infantry Brigade was dropped. However, the 196th Infantry Brigade retained many of the additional assets it had acquired as a Light Infantry Brigade.

On 18 March 1969, the "Brewer and the Bold" of the 196th Brigade and the 6th Airmobile Regiment embarked upon Operation Gamma Park. The mission was to eliminate the enemy forces within the TAO while stressing pacification

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and combined US/ARVN operations. This operation is still in progress.

As of 1 March 1970, the 198th Infantry Brigade was composed of the following units: HHC, 198th Inf Bde; 1st Bn, 6th Inf; 5th Bn, 46th Inf; 1st Bn, 52d Inf; H Trp, 17th Cav; 57th Inf Plat (Scout Dog); and the 87th Chem Det.

The patch of the 198th Infantry Brigade consists of a blue shield, arched at the top and bottom, two inches in width and enclosed by a 1/8 inch white border. A stylized yellow and scarlet tongue of flame covers the patch in a reverse "S" fashion. A portion of a rifle barrel with fixed bayonet, all in white, is superimposed on the flame diagonally from lower right to upper left.

The blue color of the patch denotes infantry. The tongue of the flame alludes to the brigade's firepower. The bayonet, a basic infantry weapon, is symbolic of carrying the fight to the enemy. Together, the flame and bayonet refer to the unit's spirit and readiness to engage the enemy in a firefight, or if necessary, in hand-to-hand combat.