

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

Headquarters, 198th Infantry Brigade, Americal Division

APO San Francisco 96219

AVDF-BCC

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report (U)

9 September 1968

Commanding General

Americal Division

ATTN: AVDF-GC (DOT)

APO San Francisco 96374

JAN 07

040 July

1968 196m

1. (U) Name of Operation: WHEELER/WALLOWA.
2. (U) Dates of Operation: 041200-281020 July 1968.
3. (C) Location: LZ East (BT131202) area bounded by coordinates BT0918, BT0926, BT1626, BT1622.
4. (C) Command and Control Headquarters: 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry.
5. (U) Reporting Officers:
 - a. COL Charles B. Thomas, CO, 198th Inf Bde (Lt).
 - b. LTC Fredrick E. Garman, CO, 1st Bn, 46th Inf.
 - c. CPT Chris Martin, CO, Co. C, 1st Bn, 46th Inf.
 - d. CPT John Sprague, CO, Co. D, 1st Bn, 46th Inf.
6. (U) Task Organization:
 - a. Co. C, 1-46 Inf with one Battalion Interpreter.
 - b. Co. D, 1-46 Inf:
 - (1) One Battalion Interpreter.
 - (2) One Company CIDG (Tien Phuoc).
7. (C) Supporting Forces:

GP4 DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR
INTERVALS; DECLASSIFIED
AFTER 12 YEARS

File
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SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report (U)

a. Gunships from the 174th Aviation Company were on station to provide on-call suppressing fires during the conduct of the combat assault. The company provided on-call fire support throughout the operation.

b. Artillery support was provided by D Battery, 1/14th Artillery, a 105 Howitzer Battery from LZ Young. Total number of rounds fired in support of the operation were 248, including 49 Smoke, and 6 Cofram.

c. Airborne Forward Air Controllers from the 198th Light Infantry Brigade maintained close surveillance during the combat assault and throughout the entire operation.

8. (C) Intelligence:

a. Terrain: Prominent mountains dominate the area of operation. Nui Da Den is the highest peak with an elevation of 479 meters. The mountain sides are heavily vegetated with single and double canopy jungle which lends itself to good cover and concealment. Numerous valleys exist between the mountains, one of which is a high speed route of approach from Song Khong River into the Tam Ky area. Offering generally good fields of fire, the valley floors consist mostly of rice paddies and are dotted with palm trees.

b. Weather conditions during the period of operation were generally fair during the morning hours with late evening rain showers and thunderstorms. Temperatures averaged 95 in the daytime cooling to an average of 87 at night. Humidity ranged generally between 50% to 85%. Visibility was good except during periods of evening rain showers.

c. Enemy: Intelligence indicated that the 3rd MF Regt, 2nd NVA Division was operating immediately west of the AO boundry, V. 16 LF Company was reported in the AO and GK 31 AA Bn, 2nd NVA Division, just to the east of the AO. No indication of LF/MF or NVA units was found from enemy KIA's or VC's.

9. (C) Mission:

a. Company C, 1st Bn, 46th Inf secured LZ East (BT131202), 4 July 1968 to 28 July 1968.

b. Company D, 1st Bn, 46th Inf, screened and blocked east - west routes through area of operation north of LZ East and made detailed search of Hill 479 BT134246, 22 July 1968 to 28 July 1968.

10. (C) Concepts of Operation:

a. Company C(-), 1st Bn, 46th Inf was charged with the responsibility of securing LZ East from 041200 July until the termination of Operation Pocahontas Forest. The remainder of Company was to move to LZ East in conjunction with a Heliborne assault, VIC Hill 479, conducted by Company D, 1st Bn, 46th Inf and one company of CIDG. The mission of Company D was to secure a defensive position on Hill 479, and to work in two platoons ~~along two main routes in~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

9 September 1968

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report (U)

two platoon size elements along two main routes into Tam Ky. These patrols were to be of a mobile type, conducting day and night ambushes and patrols.

11. (C) Executions:

a. 4 July 68: At 1200 hours 1st Platoon, Company C, 1st Bn, 46th Inf was inserted on LZ East to relieve one company of the 196th Inf Bde.

b. There were negative sightings and no significant incidents for the period 4 July to 22 July 68.

c. 22 July 68: At 1600 hours Company D(-), 1st Bn, 46th Inf CA'd from LZ Bowman (BT239142) to Hill 479 (BT134246), 1st Plt at BT128228, 3rd Plt at BT098232. All LZ's were cold, and elements had negative contact. At 1830 hrs Musket gunships engaged 2 VC's near Hill 479, with results of 1 VC KIA. The remainder of Company C was inserted on LZ East. One company of CIDG with US advisors was inserted at Company D's location on Hill 479 by 1912 hours.

d. 23 July 68: One patrol from Company D captured 1 VC, vicinity BT113252.

e. 24 July 68: At approximately 0845 hours Delta's 3rd platoon tripped a booby-trap resulting in 1 US KHA and 3 US WHA evacuated. The booby-trap was a Chicom grenade with trip wire.

f. 25 July 68: At 0404 hours Company D received approximately four (4) 60mm mortar rounds within the perimeter. Negative casualties. At 1130 hours Company D's 2nd platoon found 2 VC in a hootch at BT115254. One VC was killed when he attempted to escape, and the other was captured and evacuated. The CIDG Company was extracted to Tien Phuoc.

g. 26 July 68: There were negative significant incidents.

h. 27 July 68: Company D, 3rd platoon engaged 3 VC on a trail at BT113232, resulting in 1 VC WIA evacuated. At 0800 hours Company D was airlifted from LZ East and combat assaulted into the Burlington Trail AO.

11. (C) Results:

a. US personnel losses: 1 KHA and 3 WHA.

b. Enemy personnel losses: 4 VC KIA and 1 VC evacuated.

c. Enemy equipment captured: 1 SKS Rifle and 2 Packs.

12 (C) Commanders Analysis:

a. The operations was successful in closing and denying the approach routes into the populated farm area on the eastern side of the mountain range. Although no large contact was made with VC units in the AO, the 1/1st Cav made heavy contact with a VC force just to the north which is believed to have been flushed from the AO by Company D, 1st Bn, 46th Inf.

AVDF-BOC

9 September 1968

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report (U)

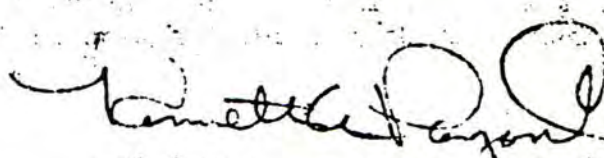
b. The trails that are shown on the map that are visible from the air are not used. There are heavily used hidden trails which run parallel with these unused trails. These trails are well camouflaged and have small cleared areas on each side for personnel to sleep, yet remain undetected.

c. The area is large enough to accommodate a company size unit. There are 15 local force VC which operate in the valley between Hill 488 and Hill 479. These VC have the responsibility to tax the people and provide rations and quarters to the passing NVA units.

d. The people resent the local VC because of the heavy taxation. They desire to leave the area, but are forcibly retained by the local VC.

e. Hill 479 appears to be a Forward Staging Area, as evidenced by the base camp found at grid BT1525.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



KENNETH A. PAYANT

CPT, AGC

Asst Adjutant

Dist.

1 - *Amcl Den G-3 Dot*

1 - *Co/VO*

1 - *SI*

1 - *S2*

1 - *S3*

1 - *S3DIR*

1 - *S3 Plans*

1 - *PVN 77*

1 - *Asst S-3*

1 - *TOC Duty Officer*

1 - *S4*

1 - *S5*

1 - *Sig*

2 - *HNO*

2 - *H/17*

4 - *1-1*

4 - *1-46*

4 - *1-52*

4 - *5-46*

4 - *1-14*

4 - *B/26*

4 - *9SPT*

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