

Authority NND P132411 F THE ARMY
By MN NARA Date 12/16/04 ON, 82d FIELD ARTILLERY
DIVISION
APO San Francisco 96374

AVDF-LTPO

30 April 1971

SUBJECT: Operational Report of 1st Battalion, 82d Field Artillery for the Period of Detachment from 23d Infantry Division for the Purpose of Participation in Lam Son 719.

Commanding Officer
23d Infantry Division Artillery
ATTN: S-3
APO San Francisco 96374

SECTION 1, OPERATIONS:
SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES

A. Command:

1. Background. The 1st Battalion, 82d Field Artillery minus Battery D was detached from the 23d Infantry Division on or about 0300 hours, 30 January 1971 and attached to the 1st Brigade, 5th Mechanized Division for Operational Control during the initial phase of Operation Lam Son 719. As the operation expanded in scope the battalion was to perform a variety of missions; become Op-Con to several other elements and in general, play the role of "Jack of All Trades". The Battalion FDC, acting in the role of FSCC, had, on occasion, as many as six additional artillery units under its control. In addition to controlling clearances for aircraft and obtaining ground clearance, the FDC also had the responsibility of calling for Air Rocket Artillery and medical evacuation aircraft. The logistics planning left much to be desired in the initial stages of the operation, however, gradual improvement was realized as the operation gained momentum. Aircraft for resupply and reconnaissance and command purposes was at an extremely low availability rate and remained so throughout the entire operation. This, in fact, became a critical issue on several occasions in resupply of Class V, Class I and water to Battery B whose location was accessible only by air. Normal inherent problems associated with personnel and administration were greatly increased due to distance involved and communications gap. In and out processing, leaves, R&R and other personnel matters were still being processed through 23d Infantry Division in Chu Lai without a direct line of communications to the battalion field location. Consequently, personnel were barely meeting deadlines for DEROs and/or ETS, replacement personnel were arriving in the battalion (forward) as late as 10 days after assignment to the battalion, and awards and decorations information and notification was greatly delayed. The battalion's performance in the field was outstanding in every aspect and both its Officers and men as well as the 23d Infantry Division can be proud of the accomplishments attained during the 69 days of participation in Operation Lam Son 719. This report in its entirety reflects in detail the historical achievements of the 1/82d Artillery from 30 January 1971 to 8 April 1971.

a. Major: Major Howard S. DeWitt assumed duties of Battalion S-3, vice Major James D. McGowan on 14 February 1971. Major McGowan was med-evacuated from Fire Support base Vendergrift due to illness.

b. Captains:

1. CPT LeRoy B. Outlaw assumed duties of CO, Battery A, on 17 February 1971, for a period of 2 weeks, replacing CPT John F. Davis who went on scheduled 14 day comus leave.

2. CPT Michael L. Simonich assumed duties as CO, Battery B on 26 March 71, vice CPT Billy H. Cross. CPT Cross was med-evacuated for illness from his field position.

3. CPT Willie H. Jackson assumed duties as CO, HHS Battery on 26 March 71, vice CPT Simonich.

3. Distinguished Visitors: The following distinguished personnel honored the battalion with their presence during Operation Lam Son 719.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>POSITION</u>
MG James L. Baldwin	CG, 23d Infantry Division
BG John G. Hill, Jr.	CG, 1st Brigade, 5th Mechanized Division
BG Bertram K. Borwitz	ADC Support, 23d Infantry Division
BG Stewart C. Meyer	CG, XXIV Corps Artillery
Col Jack R. Sadler	CO, 23d Infantry Division Artillery

B. Personnel and Administration

1. Personnel and Administration problems during the reporting period were numerous. Initially the S-1 section and all battery clerks were designated to remain in the rear area (Chu Lai), thus leaving the battalion in the field without trained personnel to handle personnel and administrative matters. Poor communications and distance involved between the battalion's field position and rear area caused excessive delay in morning report entries, submission of recommendations for awards and decorations, and created problems in the area of processing of personnel actions. Scores of personnel who received DEROs adjustments were rushed to meet time requirements for processing and reporting to out-of-country processing centers. Administrative messages from one location to another were often outdated upon receipt, which caused many suspense dates to be missed. The problems were alleviated somewhat in the latter few weeks of the operation when a portion of the S-1 moved to the field location; however due to the distance factor coupled with transportation delays, not all problems were eliminated. Other specific areas of concern and interest are outlined as follows:

a. Mail: A major factor directly related to troop morale is the timely receipt of mail. For a period of two weeks from the onset of the operation there was no mail delivered to the field position. When mail finally did arrive and some semblance of regularity seemed apparent, it was not long before personnel became aware that mail postmark indicated no less than 7 days and as much as 19 days difference from the time the mail was posted until it was received. Most frequently the normal chronological order of written correspondence was out of sequence.

b. News Media
By MN KARA Date 12/16/68 along with other military connected and
military news publ. d by the time they got to the troops that
the news content was irrelevant.

2. The battalion suffered three personnel killed in action, twenty wounded in action and one missing in action during the reporting period. Average assigned strength for the battalion during the reporting period was 465 personnel.

KIA

ROBISON, Gary H. PFC

WUNDER, Robert L. PFC

MILLS, Carroll R. PFC

MIA

STANSBARGER, Richard L. PFC

3. The following personnel were recommended for awards during the reporting period as indicated:

SILVER STAR

DAVIS, John F. CPT

ROBISON, Gary H. PFC

WUNDER, Robert L. PFC

BRONZE STAR WITH "V"

SIMONICH, Michael L.
NOWIK, William J.
SHELLY, Jerry D.
WAUGH, William L.
CREW, Ronald W.
BROWN, Harold L.
GREGORY, Hugh

CPT	LIVELY, Billy J.	SGT
CPT	BOLDT, Wayne E.	SGT
SFC	KINSMAN, Bruce K.	SP5
SFC	CROSBY, Robert L.	SP5
SSG	JONES, Arthur R.	PFC
SSG	LEE, Dennis E.	PFC
SGT	TOMMISELLI, Arthur J.	PFC

A C M WITH "V"

SHELLBARGER, Harold L.
ANDZIK, Albert L. Jr.

MAJ	SAGER, Tony P.	SP4
CPT	EGGLESTON, Jeffrey	PFC
FASANO, Louis V.	PFC	

PURPLE HEART

WOOLWORTH, Wayne R.
CREW, Ronald W.
HOLTON, Michael E.
LIVELY, Billy J.
KINSMAN, Bruce K.
GARCIA, Elisandro
COULTER, Carl W.
SHIRLEY, Frankie
PHILLIPS, Clint Jr.
BLAKE, Arvon D.
GLEASON, Timothy H.
IRWIN, Curtis D.

SSG	BEASLEY, Thomas F.	PFC
SSG	BARKER, Errol R.	PFC
SGT	ROBISON, Gary H.	PFC
SGT	MILLS, Carroll R.	PFC
SP5	WOODS, Harold W.	PFC
SP4	WUNDER, Robert L.	PFC
SP4	STRANG, Thomas A.	PFC
SP4	FLORES, Marcello	PFC
SP4	BOZEK, Gary S.	PFC
PFC	TURNER, Clifton R.	PFC
PFC	GREY, Lynn A	PFC
PFC		

C. Intelligence

1. The battalion contributed to the overall intelligence efforts through timely reporting of intelligence data as it was received from personnel throughout the unit. Personnel on bunker line duty, survey personnel, field wiremen, couriers

Authority NNI PIR
and interior guards. By MN MAPA Date 12/10/70 the responsibility of seeking and reporting intelligence information. Shell reports/crater analysis was specifically the responsibility of two designated teams; however, many personnel in the unit having knowledge of the procedures consistently volunteered to perform the function of shell reporting and did so within seconds after the cessation of incoming fires or while incoming fires were still in progress. This enabled the battalion to place more effective fires on suspected enemy fires locations.

2. The posting of intelligence data as obtained through intelligence briefings, summaries, and other sources to include sensor activation was a continuous process. Again the timely and accurate posting of suspected enemy positions and sites enabled the battalion to fire rocket and mortar suppressive fires with confidence.

3. Intelligence information and summaries were of a timely nature when disseminated; however, there was a sporadic lack of dissemination from higher to lower units. Though not unique to the 1/82 Artillery, there was a lack of information regarding the location of mine fields.

4. The battalion was to some degree pinched by the lack of aircraft for observers, target acquisition, surveillance and target damage assessment; the latter being very much related to troop morale through recognition of effectiveness of fires as well as recording the end results of firing for historical purposes.

D. OPERATION AND TRAINING:

1. Mission: 1/82 Field Artillery (-): DS TF 1/11 and 4/3 Infantry; answer calls from TS 3/5; on order, DS TF 1/77; 3/187 Infantry; answered calls from 4/3 Infantry

2. Concept of Operation: Provide artillery fires as required to the Brigade on a mission basis. Conduct artillery raids on a mission basis as required. Reinforce the fires of direct support elements assigned and/or attached to the Brigade as required.

3. Execution (brief)

a. On 30 January 1971, the 1st Battalion, 82d Field Artillery moved by road from Dong Ha to Fire Support Base Vendergrift, vicinity of Ca Lu (XD 999484). The battalion was operational by 1200 hours, with the Headquarters Battery in position at (XD 999483) and Battery A in position at (XD 996482). Battery B having been airlifted from vicinity Mai Loc (XD 08945111) to Fire Support Base Sheppard, (XD 93424104) and Battery C moving to vicinity C-2 (XD 13476430) completed the battalion's configuration on the ground. Battery C at this point became attached to 1st Battalion, 61st Infantry. Initial coordination with adjacent, supported and parent units was completed by 1400 hours and within minutes thereafter the battalion was firing its first mission.

4. Synopsis

a. The battalion occupied positions at Fire Support Base Vendergrift, Fire Support Base Sheppard and C-2, and was operational on D + 1.

b. D+1. A team of three personnel from the 5/4th Arty was attached to the battalion to provide air and ground clearance data with further instruction to

Authority NND (972)
train 1/82d personnel By MN MARA Date 12 Feb upon their departure. No other significant events occurred.

2. D+2: Several attempts were made to obtain an aircraft for use by the Battalion Commander to visit FSB Sheppard and C-2 with no success. (Support was lacking in this area throughout the operation). Difficulty was also encountered when aircraft for resupply to Sheppard was requested. Initially the major problem was in trying to raise the unit directly responsible for scheduling resupply missions. It was later learned that the battalion was on low priority for air missions.

3. D+3: The battalion continued to improve its defense posture. Additional fighting bunkers were constructed along the perimeter line and fixed fields of fire established. Very little, if any, barrier material was available in the area. Troops diligently worked to salvage barrier material left behind as other units began to leave FSB Vandergrift in support of activities further west. The S-4 submitted an emergency request for barrier material through appropriate supply channels and was informed that the unit would not be in receipt of the requested items for several days. Normal operations continued on the fire base.

4. D+4: The battalion was given the mission of controlling clearances and fire planning in the 1/77 Armor and 3/187 Inf areas of operation. Battery A was alerted to prepare for movement on 4 February to FSB Elliott to provide artillery support for an infantry sweep of AO Leopard. The CO and S-3 of 5/4 Artillery visited the Battalion CO and S-3 to coordinate plans for fire support for 4/3 Infantry Combat assault into AO Leopard on 5 February. The visit also served to coordinate with liaison personnel for the 4/3 Inf combat assault.

5. D+5: Battery B was informed that 3 howitzers with crews would be air transported to FSB Vandergrift to fill the void left by Battery A. The 3 howitzers were moved, laid and ready to fire at 1330 hours on 4 February. Battery A moved to Elliott by road and was laid and ready to fire at 1415 hours, 4 February. The battalion received a message from CO, 5/4 Arty indicating that the combat assault scheduled for 5 February was rescheduled for 6 February. Battery A remained in position at Elliott.

6. D+6: A 5 ton vehicle belonging to Battery A hit a mine 100 meters from their position at Elliott resulting in destruction of the vehicle and no personnel casualties.

7. D+7: At 1430 hours Battery A received a volley of twelve 122mm rockets on their position. This was followed by a volley of ten rockets at 1515 hours resulting in 1 KIA and 4 WIA. All casualties were dusted-off. Extensive damage to a 5 ton truck and minor damage to a RC - 292 antenna was the extent of the equipment losses. The operation scheduled for AO Leopard was canceled due to inclement weather. The CO, 1/82 Arty requested Battery A be moved back to Vandergrift. Permission was granted and Battery A moved back to Vandergrift, was laid and ready to fire at 1900 hours.

8. D+8: The battalion assumed sole responsibility for all air and ground clearances control in the AO. Battery B, Platoon remains at FSB Vandergrift leaving the ground positions as follows: HHC, A, and B platoon located at Vandergrift; B Battery (-), located at FSB Sheppard, Battery C located at C-2. At approximately 1800 hours Vandergrift came under a rocket attack receiving 16 rounds 122mm rockets. The unit had negative personnel or equipment losses. Counter rocket grids were fired throughout the attack.

9. D+9: The Authority NND PM 35-1 difficulty in obtaining M564 and M565 time fuzes. A spec. By MN ARPA Date 12/1/70 through S-4 channels for the procurement of these fuzes. The Battalion was alerted to prepare to support infantry elements in southern AO Leopard on 9 February.

10. D+10: Operation CA for 4/3 Infantry was postponed for 24 hours due to inclement weather.

11. D+11: Vandegrift received 27 rockets at 1745 hours resulting in negative personnel and equipment losses. Two dust-offs were required in A Battery for minor wounds; 1 hostile, 1 non-hostile but during action. Prep and support fires for 4/3 Infantry CA were fired.

11 Feb 12. D+12: Vandegrift received 8 rockets at 1900 hours resulting in minor equipment damage and negative personnel losses. The battalion continued to provide supporting fires for the 4/3 Infantry.

12. D+13: Increased activity in the vicinity of the Rockpile necessitated additional fire support. As a result B-5/4 Artillery was attached to the 1/82 Artillery. Additionally, CO, 5/4 Artillery recommended two sections of ARA be placed GSR to him with the 1/82 Arty coordinating.

13. D+14: A follow up message was sent out requesting sorties for resupply of Sheppard as Btry B (-) had reached a critical point in Class V and potable water. Class V and water was available on the resupply pad for 3 consecutive days awaiting availability of air craft. The message obtained results; however, air resupply continued to be a problem area.

14. D+15: The battalion received 1 rocket at 1030 hours and 8 rockets at approximately 1900 hours. Continued artillery support for 4/3 Infantry was provided by the battalion howitzers plus B 5/4 Artillery located at FSB Vandegrift.

15 Feb 16. D+16: The Battalion S-3 flew to 4/3 Infantry CP to discuss methods of responsiveness in artillery fires and possible streamlining of fire direction procedures. The increased responsiveness of the Artillery Battalion brought praise from the infantry being supported. At approximately 0800 hours the battalion received confirmation of 46 KIA on 13 February.

17. D+17: The Artillery Liaison Officer from 3/187 made personal contact with the Battalion S-3 and FDC to discuss fire planning for a combat assault commencing 17 February in AO Leopard where the 3/187 was to relieve the 4/3 Infantry. The battalion continued to provide supporting fires for the 4/3 Infantry in addition to periodically firing rocket and mortar suppressive fires.

18. D+18: Resupply for Sheppard still continued to be a critical problem area, with Btry B minus having to ration out the last of its meals and Class V, which were well below the minimum requirements. Repeated request through Brigade Movement Control Officer for aircraft were still being cancelled. A message dealing combat emergency obtained some results in the way of sorties. The battalion shot scheduled fires on known enemy routes in AO Leopard.

19. D+19: 3/187th Infantry CA was postponed.

20. D+20: Effective 19 February 1971 Operation Dewey Canyon II was redesignated Operation Lam Son 719 to be henceforth referred to as such.

21. D+21: By MN ARRA Date 12/14 82d Arty conducted artillery raids from Elliot for a secondary explosions were observed during the conduct of the mission. Word was received that one hot meal (moon) would be available on the continuing basis. This greatly raised troop morale.

22. D+22: As a result of a mission fired by B 1/82 the observer reported three bunkers destroyed and 7 secondary explosions. A request to retain B 5/4 in the Vandergrift area was submitted because of the high daily expenditure rate. 15 tubes were expending rounds at the rate of 1500 rounds daily.

23. D+23: Confirmed results of missions fired by A and B 1/82 and B 5/4 from 2100, 21 Feb to 0730, 22 Feb were 6 NVA, KBA; 6 small arms captured. Results of mission fired from 221120 Feb to 221145 Feb by A and B 1/82 destroyed 2 bunkers 1 hut, numerous bunkers damaged.

24. D+24: Mission fired by A 1/82 Arty caused total destruction of one 62mm mortar with direct hit. Mission fired by A and B 1/82 resulted in 5 KBA, all confirmed. B 5/4 conducted an artillery raid, vicinity FSB Elliott.

25. D+25: B 5/4 conducted an artillery raid. One secondary explosion observed.

26. D+26: B 5/4 conducted an artillery raid, vicinity FSB Elliott.

27. D+27: B 5/4 conducted an artillery raid, vicinity FSB Elliott.

28. D+28: B 5/4 conducted an artillery raid, vicinity FSB Elliott.

29. D+29 FSB Vandergrift took two rockets at 1755 hours. Negative personnel and equipment loss. B 5/4 released from attachment to 1/82 effective 1100 hours.

30. D+30: The Battalion Signal Officer reported a voice with a very slight oriental accent calling any Villa station, using call signs out of the January and February SOI but using the March frequency. Later the voice was more polished and could readily pass for an American talking. The call was ignored by all stations concerned as the imitative deception was detected immediately. It was learned when reporting this to higher headquarters that the voice heard was that of a Japanese short wave operator.

31. D+31: No unusual events.

32. D+32: Effective 031300 March 71, 1/5 Mechanized Division and all units attached are under op-con of the 101st Airborne Division (Abn). The battalion was assigned the mission of DS of maneuver elements of 1/5 Mech Div.

33. D+33: No unusual events other than coordination of reports required by 101 Abn Div. At this point there was a major change in artillery organization. Div Arty directed that 1/82 Arty (-) be GS/R 2/319th Arty. Long range plans included covering the Ca Lu - Couger areas with artillery vicinity FSB Sarge, or FSB Carroll, thus releasing Btry B(-) at Sheppard and leaving Btry C 1/82 at C-2. The following messages is felt worthy of publishing in its entirety. The message was from CO, 5/4 Arty to CO, 1/82 Arty and was as follows:

"Rod Devil (CG, 1/5 Mech Div) spoke highly of your support to TF 1/77, 4/3 Inf and 3/187. He said you enjoyed being a direct support unit and would rather stay DS than go back to the easy life of GS artillery. I fully agree and recommend

44 Authority NND 9935
Div Arty CO consider By MM NAPA Date 12/14/71 g too good for a friend - is there
anything else I can

5 34. D+34: No unusual events.

6 35. D+35: No unusual events.

3/7 36. D+36: Btry C 1/82 Arty moved, as directed, from C-2 to vicinity
of Khe Sahn by road and upon arrival at new location became op-con to 5/4 Arty.

7 37. D+37: Through D+47 HHB, A, and B 1/82 performed normal unit operations.
A and B 1/82 continued to provide fires in general support of various infantry
incursions and assaults, however, none of major significance. Vandergrift received
31 rockets on 101300 Mar 71 taking the life of one HHB enlisted man who was as-
sisting in obtaining a shell report. No other personnel or equipment loss occurred
during this attack.

38. D+48: Intel reports indicated high threat of enemy rocket attack
on Vandergrift. CO, 1/82 Arty requested of CO, 5/4 Arty all possible assistance
in firing counter rocket program from 192200 Mar to 202000 March. All suspect
grids were placed on permanent sheets and cleared for firing. An air observer
was to be on station throughout the days during this period.

39. D+49: A would be sapper attempting to infiltrate the perimeter was
instantly killed when a claymore mine was detonated a few feet from him.

40. D+50: An enemy sapper attack was unsuccessful. Men of the battalion
killed two and wounded a third attacker attempting to breach the perimeter wire.
Self-illumination fired by A and B Btry was excellent, as light was provided around
the entire perimeter precisely where it was needed.

41. D+51: A mission fired by A Btry on a cave entrance credits the battery
with 2 KBAs and a large secondary explosion accompanied by a great amount of yellow
smoke coming from the area of the cave.

42. D+52: The battalion was alerted of plans to consolidate Btry B in
position vicinity Khe Sahn. Air movement (Sheppard platoon) to new position
and remaining element and equipment via convoy 24 March 71. Vandergrift took 9
rockets at 1740 hours. Negative personnel and equipment loss.

43. D+53: B 1/82 moved to vicinity Khe Sahn and was op-con 5/4 Arty.

44. D+54: No unusual events.

45. D+55: Vandergrift received 12 rockets at approximately 1630 hours.
Negative personnel and equipment losses.

46. D+56: No unusual events.

47. D+57: Vandergrift received 18 rockets at 0730 hours. One rocket landed
in an ACP powder bunker. The explosion caused a pallet of 8 inch projectiles, in
an adjacent bunker, to be thrown into the surrounding area. The shock wave, created
by the explosion, was of such force that several personnel in the battalion were
knocked off their feet. Several tents and rigged showers received minor damage.

48. D+58: Btry B rejoined the battalion at Vandergrift moving from vicinity Khe Sanh by road. The unit was ambushed enroute and suffered 1 MIA and 7 WIA with extensive equipment damage in one howitzer section.

49. D+59: No unusual events.

50. D+60: No unusual events.

51. D+61: No unusual events.

52. D+62: Btry C rejoined the battalion at Vandergrift moving from the vicinity Khe Sanh by road.

53. D+63: No unusual events

54. D+64: No unusual events.

55. D+65: No unusual events.

56. D+66: No unusual events with the exception of a tremendous morale climb as the personnel of the battalion anticipated movement back to their home base and 23d Infantry Division.

57. D+67: The battalion departed FSB Vandergrift at 1330 hours and moved to Dong Hawhere they awaited final orders to move out for Chu Lai.

58. D+68: At 0800 hours the battalion once again took its place in the ranks of the 23d Infantry Division as it proceeded by road for Chu Lai and vicinity.

5. Recapitulation

ARRIVED FSB VANDERGRIFT 0700 30 Jan

69 Total Days

DEPARTED FSB VANDERGRIFT 1400 8 Apr

Battalion Total Expenditures

76,124 Total Rounds

2,486 Total Missions

34.6 Avg Mission Per day

Battalion Expenditures by Projectiles

HE	WP	ILL	ICM
68,661	3,898	2,786	579

Avg 13 guns firing each day

Avg 1119 rounds expended each day

Authority NNDP 354
By MN ASRA Date 12/64

ROCKET ATTACKS - 122MM

DATE	TIME	ROCKETS
Feb 6	1400	24
Feb 10	1745	27
Feb 11	1900	8
Feb 14	1030	1
Feb 14	1900	8
Feb 28	1755	2
Mar 10	1300	31
Mar 23	1740	9
Mar 26	1620	12
Mar 28	0745	18