

## Coming Home from Vietnam

"His" story, as told by the troopers themselves, in their own words. Augmented by after action reports and other official documents.

**from Wally**

Date: Thu, 29 Aug 2002 23:47:42 -0700 (PDT)

Hey all,

This is my coming home day, 32 years ago today I came home from the war. Came home on a beautiful summer day to one of the most memorable riots in L.A. history, and we have had some memorable ones.

The day I came home is still vivid in my recollection, all my friends were at the airport, some had made banners, it was a really cool homecoming.

I was glad, I was home. Uncertainty was in the horizon. I was not sure what my life was going to be like from then on, here were my old friends from the block, we now had little in common. I had just left behind my new friends from my new life, that was also though. I was suffering mixed emotions.

I remember Sgt. Barrows saying goodbye to me at the Seattle airport, he said, "Mendoza, you take care of yourself," and he was off, I have not seen him since.

On the flight home from Seattle I met a man who owned his own business. He told me to look him up in Burbank when I got out of College, I did, but he was too busy to see me then. I will never forget the look on my mother's face when she saw me, first thing she said was, "you are so skinny". She made sure I was not skinny for long.

I was feeling melancholic this evening so I went on a long drive just to feel the wind in my face. As the sun was going down behind the San Gabriel Mountains I could not help but notice how much it looked like when the sun was going down behind the mountains near the DMZ. So much has changed and yet so little has changed.

Many of us have not left the Nam behind. Some of us have left it and never recalled it. I, every August 29 recall that day vividly so I will never forget what it was like and how it was.....The Faces, The Sounds, The smells, The Silence, The mosquitoes, The good times, The lousy times, The parties out on night operations outside of Nancy, the stews in the steel pot, the football games out on the field, bunker guard, night ambush, incoming, the heat, the wet, the gook kids, the water buffaloes, the red clay, the dirt, c-rats, mail call, chopper blades, Napalm, Supert Sport laughing, Al Hall singing, Smokey Lane dancing, Capt. Spruill kicking ass, Capt. Nice bullshitting, 3-0 Yankee "repeat that", Kaufman "DON'T SAY REPEAT ON THE RADIO!!", R & R, burning shit, writting home, flicks from home, dear John letters, letters to penpals, being short, Peterson standing at attention, my dog, Jim Clark, Big Daddy.

I never want to forget, I would like to see all of you again someday.

Love ya all,

Wally

I know some or all got the same welcome I did. When we arrived in the states the MP'S met us at the plane and there were some people standing by the building we were taken to, of course we thought they were there to welcome us home. When we got close to them the names , baby killers, and a few others showed me how welcome we really were. After that we were stood against the wall inside and searched by the MP's. I will never forget how I felt that day. When they were done some one said there was a steak dinner waiting for us, I told them to stick their steak dinner up their ass, give me some clothes I was going home. I thought home would be better, but I was wrong again. My first vist to the VFW was a mess, when a World War 2 guy told me I didn't belong there. He said the club was for veterans of war, not baby killers & dope heads, I knocked him down and left. I worked and people didn't know I was in Viet Nam, it was something you didn't talk about. When the subject came up I found something to do to leave the area. My wife knew nothing about my time in Viet Nam until I joined the Army Reserves where once again I was with people who understood. I now am with people I know which is much better. Our time there will never be forgotten. Just a few things off my chest. John K. 2nd PLT 69/70

Hey John, all I know is my family was happy to see me come home alive and in one piece and that was good enough for me. My feelings were "screw everybody else". I know I and all the Troopers did our best over there and that was comfort enough for me. Who cares what anybody else thought? Turtle

Hi old buddy, You are right and that is how it all ended. Our familys were there for us. I am proud to be a Viet Nam Vet. and a 412 Trooper. Talk soon. John K.

I've often thought of how fortunate I was because of one civilian in 1970. I was racing from the ticket counter in Portland, OR. to catch my last connection home to Eugene and a guy close to my age with his daughter in his arms stopped me, asked me if I'd just returned from 'nam and when I said yes, he said "I'd just like to say thank you and welcome home" and with that he shook my hand. I think of that every time I hear how others of you were treated on your return and the incident has grown even more meaningful over the years. I hope I'll be able to thank him for that gesture in heaven someday 'cause I have no way of knowing who he was here on earth. I lived several hours from the airport but I wonder if any of our guys have gone to the airport just to say "thank you" and "welcome home" to returning vets. When I think of this incident or just the fact that I've had a few moods lifted and days pleasantly altered just because someone gave me a great smile, I realize the impact seemingly small gestures can make in ones day or life and I try doing my part. Know what? It IS more blessed to give than to receive !! Skee

Amazing to hear somebody said "thank you" right when you got back!

It was about 15 years before anybody ever said that to me - and the first guy I can recall actually saying that was my old brother Tom. When I came home he was an 18-year-old scraggly-looking sneering war-protesting drug-inhaling hippie, and the only reason he didn't right-out call me a baby-killer was because my folks would have yelled at him. 15 years later he called me up on Veteran's Day to say he'd figured out why I was proud to have volunteered to serve in Nam and he appreciated that service. Tom died 12 years ago, but I remember that phone call every Veteran's Day. LTeeF

Depends on what part of the country you were from, and probably what year you served in Viet Nam. I think attitudes got worse the later things went. When I processed through Cam Rahn Bay, and then SeaTac & Ft. Lewis in late 1970, all went relatively smoothly and efficiently. I do remember that on the "freedom bird" about half way over the Pacific, a flight attendant told a GI who had persisted in acting like an ass-hole that if he didn't straighten up, he would be met by MPs when we landed. The guy had it coming, though. He seemed to think that his year in Viet Nam had earned him the right to grope, and verbally abuse the first round eyed woman he saw, and she was just setting him straight. Once I got to my hometown, I was met with universal acceptance. The bartender at the local tavern gave me my first beer on the house for having served, and many people looked me up to say hello and to welcome me home. I can honestly say that I never got any of the "baby killer" crap that some people experienced. Over the years I've later heard many misconceptions of the Viet Nam War by people who didn't serve there, but I really feel that the majority of the people who I've associated with were OK about the whole thing. Of course, after taking 3 years off active duty to complete college, I went back into the Army, and initially the majority of the senior officers and NCOs were also Viet Nam veterans, and the junior people weren't critical of what we had done there. I feel sorry for the guys who got such undeserved crap for their service when they came home, but I also know that a lot of people never really got any of that treatment. The only somewhat negative thing that I recall from the time shortly after my return from Viet Nam was a really condescending letter inviting me to join the American Legion. The jerk who wrote the letter made it sound as if I had an obligation to join their almighty organization and pay dues to them out of gratitude for their supremely outstanding and marvelous work in obtaining benefits for veterans of all wars which Congress would never have thought of approving if it had not been for the supremely marvelous American Legion. I really think the guy who wrote the letter was just stupid, and didn't mean to convey the attitude that I took from reading it, but to this day I've never joined the American Legion.

Jim Good

John,

I can relate 100 %, besides kiss the ground when we landed in Ft. Lewis I purchased civilian clothes to fly home instead of facing the protesters' abuse. I felt lucky to be alive and with all body parts, but I'm glad I served. Except for the emotional scars that only time will heal, I'm a better man for and proud to be a member of the 4/12 Cav. I can't tell you how glad I am to be found and what a great honor it has been to meet fellow cav members at the reunions. To members who haven't attended please make it a priority, you won't regret it. To the Brotherhood of the Cav, Trap

My father and I had similar experiences when we finally came home from our respective wars. The only story he told me about his days in WWII was about 2 sentences long. He told me that when he arrived at Schofield Barracks in early 1947 from combat duty in the Philippines, they gave him 15¢ for bus fare and told him to go home. I asked him how come it took so long to get home since the war ended in August 1945, he said that he didn't have enough points. He joined the war in January of that year during the invasion of Luzon. He had been drafted right after he graduated high school in June 1944

I came home, not on a Freedom Bird, but on one of them round-the-world flights that the air force does once a day on I think it was called a C-141 Starlifter. The plane stopped in the Philippines and Guam before touching down in Honolulu. I was still dressed in my jungle fatigues. When I hopped off the plane, I was alone. No one else got off with me. I went straight for a taxi and told him, home, James. He said, "What, jes came back from Vietnam?" "Yeah, do I get a free ride?" "No." He answered, "But welcome home." He returned my tip at my house, and said, "No need." I didn't expect a parade, steak dinner or any thanks from anyone. And I sure didn't get any. Haw! Haw! I did have a Zippo engraved with "A 75th Support Finance, Babykillers" on one side and A 4/12th Cavalry 1st Platoon, Pineapple" on the other (the Vietnamese engraver at the QT PX misspelled it even after I wrote it out). I showed it to everyone I met. They must have thought I was crazy. GeorGersaba

Hi Wally, When I got home I had to find a job since I went into the Army out of school. On the appt. they asked did you serve in Nam? So you and everyone else knew what that meant. One job I went for asked if I was in Viet Nam, and if so I had to take a mental test. I told them yes, 2 times they replied you definitely need to be tested. Welcome home Viet Nam Vet. John K.

Hey John,

I guess we all had different home comings.

The only adverse reaction I ever received was when I went back to my old job. I was working with a bunch of guys my age, but they were going to college, I was the only war vet in the place. They were big jokesters and lots of fun, but the conversation came up soon enough about Viet Nam. The questions started coming:

Did you kill babies?

Did you rape the girls?

Did you guys kill the pow's?

How did you have to serve, you're a foreingner?.....with that I finally had to answer!!! I told them just this:

"We all are very fortunate to be Americans, there is one difference though..... You guys are just lucky to have been born here.....I EARNED IT". The conversation was never brought up again in a negative way and they eventually came to admire the fact I was the only combat veteran working in the whole place.

Take care

Wally

I had two eye opening experiences. First when I was on RR in Hawai Linda and I went into a resturant and ate dinner. When I asked for the check the waiter said that a gentleman at the bar had paid for my check because he wanted to thank me for serving my Country. He had already left so I never got a chance to thank him.

Then when I returned home I was travelling to Wash DC in my uniform and I stopped at an airpot bar to get a beer. This nice older guy walks up to me and says I can see by your uniform and the CIB you are wearing that you must be home from Vietnam. I said yes and he told the bartender to give me anything I wanted. He then told me that when he returned from WWII an old man from WWI bought him a drink and told him he was now obligated to buy a drink for another soldier returning home from another war. This man then told me that I was now obligated to buy a drink for a returning soldier of the next war. To this day if I am in a bar and I see a soldier in uniform, I thank him for serving and I buy him a drink.

Rag

Rag: when I returned to the world, after the first week at home I military hopped from airbase to airbase to DC.

I went to the Pentagon and had them change my orders from Ft. Carson to Ft Lewis, (closer to home).

When I returned I stopped in Kansas City, Mo to meet the girl who was later to become my wife. We were out to some lake in the vacinity of KC, MO. and went swimming. I wore cut off jeans after we swam we drank some beer and returned to Carolyn's Uncles house in KC.Kansas. I had lost my wallet, with everything, ID, Orders, and all my leave pay, I don't remember now maby \$4-500.bucks.

The next day my father called me from Portland he knew the phone number where we were and he was frantic!

It seems this guy had found my wallet floating in the lake and had called my home number in the wallet and talked to my dad.

Of course dad thought I was dead meat until he talked to me that day. Well dad told me the guys phone #. I called him up, he said come on over and claim your wallet.

We drove over, turns out the guy was an off duty police officer. He said I was a Viet Vet and he wouldn't take a dime I offered him. I looked in my wallet and all was returned in good order. I now regret not keeping his name and address, I would like to send him a card now and again. There were many other incidents that weren't so cool, but this one still warms my memories.  
Wild Bill Dodds

# Combat Operations Reports

## August 1968

Quang Tri base camp occupied

4/12 Cav assigned to guard road between Quang Tri and Dong Ha

The following is from Keith Short of C 1/11th Infantry:

On 6 Aug 1968, A/4-12 Cav replaced C/1-11 Infantry in a place called "Red." Red appears to be the area around FSB Pedro area to the north of the Thach Han River. It begins at 13:41 hours when A/4-12 Cav start calling in their locations at check points #1, #7, #23, #25, #50 and #70. I'm assuming these were places were east of FSB Pedro. At 15:59 hours the location of A/4-12 is at YD258526, some 4300 meters north of Pedro. At 12:59 hours, 7 Aug 68, an A/4-12 Cav location is at YD232477 just off Rte. 557 on a little knob about 1900 meters SWW of Pedro. At 13:45 hours there is an A/4-12 Platoon at YD231472. At 14:04 hours 1/A/4-12 at YD2314566 found a spider hole they threw CS in and then destroyed it with a track (no enemy found). At 14:28 1/A/4-12 was at YD227466. At 14:28 1/A/4-12 was at YD222474 and at 16:10 hours they're at YD231481. At 17:59 hours A/4-12 Cav reports LP's at YD285501, YD291503 and YD293500. At 22:01 hours the CO of A/4-12 was given orders to report to QTMB NLT at 11:00 hours for a meeting. On 8 Aug 1968 at 16:58 hours A/4-12 Cav sends in their ambush locations at YD278482, LP at YD286501, a patrol from YD287502 to YD272489 to YD274482 (an area 4500 meters NE of FSB Pedro). At 21:00 hours to 21:50 hours A/4-12 reported they were shooting illumination after hear noises from 2x persons running at them at YD284501 (this position is west of the ammo dumps at Red Devil). On 10 August 1968 at 11:40 hours the 1/11 Daily Journal entry reads: Change of Task Organization (Loss of A/4-12) will be effective 101600 11 Aug 68. [End of Short's insert]

Sept. 13, 1968 Combat Operations After Action Report  
submitted by Glenn Bowers, 2nd Platoon 68-69

### 1. NAME AND TYPE OF OPERATION:

- a. Name: Operation Sullivan (OPORD 14-68)
- b. Type: Search and Destroy

### 2. DATES OF OPERATION: 130700 September 1968 - 131940 September 1968.

3. LOCATION: Northern Quang Tri Province in the southern half of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). Map, Vietnam, 1:50,000 ams series L7014, Sheets 6342 I, Cam Lo, and 6442 IV, Quang Tri. Operational Area bounded by coordinates YD 1177, YD1170, YD 2077, YD 2070.

4. COMMAND HEADQUARTERS: 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 77<sup>th</sup> Armor, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Brigade, 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (Mech) APO 96477.

5. UNIT COMMANDER:

a. Task Force 1-77

1. 1. Commanding Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 77<sup>th</sup> Armor, Lieutenant Colonel John M. Pickarts
2. 2. Commanding Officer A Company 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 77<sup>th</sup> Armor, Captain James A. Herrington
3. 3. Commanding Officer C Company 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 77<sup>th</sup> Armor, Captain Darrel Blalock
4. 4. Commanding Officer D Company 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry, Captain Donald B. Smallwood
5. 5. Commanding Officer B Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion (M), 61<sup>st</sup>

b. Task Force 1-11

1. 1. Commanding Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry, Lieutenant Colonel Seiby F. Little Jr.
2. 2. Commanding Officer A Company 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry, Leonard A. Ragus
3. 3. Commanding Officer A Troop 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 12<sup>th</sup>

6. TASK ORGANIZATION: (See OPORD 14-68)

**TF 1-77**

1-77 Armor (-B Co., - 1 Plt/A Co.)  
B Co., 1-61 Mech  
D Co., 1-11 Inf

**TF 1-11**

Plat, A/7 Engr  
Co. A 1-11 Inf  
A/Trp 4-12 Cav

- a. The 1/77 Armor consists of A Headquarters Company, three Armor Companies (one company was detached in TF 1/11 at time of opn) and a service company. B Co 1/61 and D Co 1/11 were attached to make a dismounted sweep once the objective had been secured. D Co 1/11, a light Infantry Company, was mounted for this operation on tracks from the 1/77 Scout Platoon and three M113Os borrowed from 1/61.
- b. Task Force 1/11, consisting of A Co 1/11 and A/Trp 4-12 Cav, secured Objective Romeo 2000 meters to the southeast of the primary objective. They were prepared to move on on order to support operations on Objective Sierra.

## 7. SUPPORTING FORCES:

### a. Army Aviation:

The Brigade Aviation section provided one (1) LOH for Command and Control to 1/77 Armor. Four (4) medevac missions were flown in support of the operation.

### b. Tactical Air Support:

(1) During the conduct of Operation Sullivan a total of four (4) missions were flown in support of ground forces. See enclosure 2 (Tactical Air Support)

(2) The following type missions were flown: four (4) Immediate.

(3) The forward Air Controller proved to be an asset not only in directing strikes, but also in aiding the ground commanders in navigation and target detection.

### c. Naval Gun Fire:

Naval Gun Fire was utilized to provide preparation fires but did not fire in direct support of the ground forces.

## 8. INTELLIGENCE:

(a) Enemy strength and exact locations and dispositions within the area of operations were not known prior to the start of the operation. Order of Battle data indicated that the 138<sup>th</sup> Independent Regiment was operating in the area in strength amounting to a reinforced battalion.

(b) Although some equipment and clothing were found during the operation there was nothing of hard intelligence value turned up.

### (c) Terrain and Weather:

(1) Terrain within the area of operation was characterized by low rolling hills with occasional areas of bogs and paddy land.

(2) Except for existing trails, the terrain was covered with heavy secondary vegetation.

(3) Cover and Concealment in the terrain characterized by rolling hills was good due to natural terrain features, artillery craters, and the dense foliage.

(4) The weather on 13 Sep was overcast with intermittent showers. Weather conditions caused cancellation of several air strikes.

(5) Lighting conditions on 13 Sep were at 67% illumination.

## 9. MISSION

Task Force 1/77 attacks at 130700 Sep 68 to seize objective Sierra, to search and destroy Enemy forces, gain intelligence on enemy disposition and strength, and conduct assessment of ARC light #4.

## 10. CONCEPT OF OPERATION:

Operation Sullivan was a mounted penetration into the DMZ. The primary objective Sierra (YD 170770), was a suspected enemy concentration. This area was to be bombed by an ARC light mission and then a damage assessment made by 1/77 a few hours later. Objective Sierra had only one feasible route of approach and withdrawal. This necessitated securing intermediate objectives Alpha and Tango to ensure that the route of withdrawal was secure. Task Force 1/11 was to secure objective Romeo, to the southeast of Sierra, and prepare to move to Sierra on order.



11. EXECUTION:

a. By 130700 all units had moved to their respective LDÖs and crossed on time. Elements of Task Force 1/77 were initially in a column with A Company leading. Sniper fire was taken from vicinity of YD134715 but the tracks rolled on to objective Alpha. Alpha was completely vacant so they immediately moved on to objective Tango.

b. A Company hit objective Tango at about 0800. They drove into the middle of an estimated NVA Platoon in bunkers and had the enemy scattering before anyone was fully aware of the situation. The terrain prohibited pursuit so they had to pull back and attempt to find a better route. At this time their VTR threw a track. The first elements of C Company and the Battalion Command Group arrived at Tango about fifteen (15) minutes after A Company. They were able to relieve the pressure and allow A Company to break loose and continue to objective Sierra.

c. An M-113 of B Company 1/61 had hit a mine at Vicinity YD 137724 and sustained three (3) WIA requiring a medevac. Otherwise the column had moved well up to objective Tango. Here a bottleneck was developing. D Company 1/11 was right behind A Company and unable to move. B Company held on objective Alpha.

d. Task Force 1/11 had moved out and had objective Romeo secured by 0930. In moving to the objective an M-113 of A Trp 4-12 Cav, hit a mine which blew off three (3) road wheels. They sustained three (3) WIA and required a medevac. In taking the objective some resistance was met. The skirmish resulted in eight (8) NVA KIA and four (4) friendly WIA. A subsequent search of Romeo netted three (3) 82mm mortars, 168 rounds 82mm mortar ammunition, and one (1) RPG with two (2) rounds of ammunition all of which were destroyed in place. An additional 300 rounds of 82mm and 60mm mortar ammunition was captured.

e. At Tango the bottleneck was beginning to break up. C Company, 1/77 was maintaining contact with the enemy but not attempting to expand its perimeter. A Company had broken contact and proceeded toward Sierra. It was still maintaining a column hoping to achieve maximum speed and with it surprise. The trail was overgrown and the forward air controller helped to keep the column oriented on their objective. Two bogs were crossed enroute to the objective, the second of which, was crossed by only five (5) of the eleven (11) tanks. A Company held at this the southern edge of objective Sierra and fired in preplanned artillery concentrations around the objective while waiting to be joined by the infantry.

f. When the message was received that A Company had reached Sierra, LTC Pickarts ordered B Company to move from objective Alpha through the position C Company was holding on Tango and on to Sierra. D Company followed them arriving in position at approximately 1230 hours.

g. By this time activity had picked up on objective Tango. Again C Company was receiving small arms fire plus artillery or mortar rounds. It was ascertained that these rounds were coming from the northwest and 5/4 Artillery and 1/77 Armor Mortar Platoon responded with counter-battery fires. The Forward Air Controller brought in an air strike dropping (14)

500lb

napalm canisters to suppress the ground fire. This ordnance fell within 30 meters of friendly lines and was considered to be invaluable in helping to hold this vital piece of terrain. The Mortar Platoon provided continuous fire support throughout the afternoon, expending a total of 405 rounds. The forward trains were able to resupply the platoon with ammunition immediately upon request, thereby causing no unnecessary delay of fire support.

h. On objective Sierra the infantryman had dismounted their tracks and were making a sweep of the area. In this sweep they found 14 rounds of 82mm mortar, bags of rice and salt, cooking utensils, and protective masks. There was no evidence that the area had been used recently. At this time a tight sheaf of three (3) artillery rounds fell between the A Company Commander's tank and that of his First Sergeant. The Armor company pulled off two hundred meters to avoid further artillery shellings and the infantrymen returned to their tracks. The Bn CO did not send A Company back to search after the Artillery subsided in that it was time to start the withdrawal.

i. At 1350 hours the elements at Sierra began their withdrawal. A led out with the infantry companies following in close order. They passed through the door which C Company had held open since early that morning. A Company pulled in to the Market (YD 135728) at 1500 hours and established a holding position to cover the withdrawal of C Company from Tango. B Company and D Company passed through this position and returned to A-4.

j. C Company began to move off Tango at 1611 hours. Before they had cleared the position one of their APC's threw a track. The Bn XO had already been called forward to supervise the recovery of several disabled tanks. The platoon Leader of the rear guard element was attempting to recover the APC and the Executive Officer of B Company was also bringing a disabled vehicle through the position at this time. Enemy activity picked up with NVA forces moving south to cut off the withdrawal of these rear elements. This move was countered by a timely air strike in which ten (10) 500 lb. Bombs were dropped on enemy positions. This resulted in the destruction of ten (10) bunkers and an indeterminate number of enemy troops.

k. By 1730 these last elements had passed through the lines of A Company. As A Company turned to withdraw from the Market one of its tanks hit a mine. This again caused a delay which was covered by an Air Force sortie. This time the fighters dropped eight (8) 500 lb bombs destroying seven (7) bunkers, a possible automatic weapons position, and causing a large secondary explosion.

l. It was after 1800 when A Company finally got its entire column moving back to C-3 where it closed at 1940 hours.

## 12. RESULTS:

### a. Casualties:

- (1) (1) Enemy KIA Ð 35
- (2) (2) Enemy WIA Ð unk
- (3) (3) Enemy captured Ð none
- (4) (4) Friendly KIA Ð none
- (5) (5) Friendly WIA - 25
- (6) (6) Friendly MIA Ð none

### b. Captured or destroyed enemy equipment or positions (See Incl 4)

## 13. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

### a. Supply

(1) The movement of the battalion from C-3 to A-4 was led by the Battalion Support Group. This group included the Battalion Aid Station, Recovery Section, and supply trains and was Under the control of the Battalion Executive Officer. This enabled the m-548 cargo carriers

Fitted with Mogas and Deisel fuel tanks to top-off the entire Battalion. This task was accomplished in 42 minutes and gave the Battalion the capability of operating an hour longer in combat before refueling would become necessary.

(2) The Forward Battalion Aid Station proved to be invaluable. They treated many cases on scene and ground evacuated them where otherwise medevac would have been necessary.

(3) Battalion supply trucks were loaded with ammunition and ready to move on call from C-3. All the Battalion's resources were thus prepared and the Battalion could have sustained

itself

in combat for several days without outside support.

(4) Communications were generally good, however, late in the day when the last elements were attempting to recover downed vehicles and withdraw from objective Tango, other logistical net stations, unaware of the criticality of the recovery operation, were tying up the Battalion log net with administrative matters. This caused some operational traffic to be delayed. It was agreed to use the service company command net to handle forward logistical traffic on future operations.

#### 14. SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES:

LTC Pickarts chose to control his forces from the ground rather than the air. Although he could not observe all elements he would have a better feel for the intensity of the action. The jump CP (S3 Air and Arty LO) remained at objective Tango for the entire day. From this position and with the advice of the S-3 in the air the commander was able to execute effective and timely control over the Battalion.

#### 15. COMMANDERS ANALYSIS:

The operation on the 13<sup>th</sup> of September was a typical penetration with the single qualification That objective Sierra offered only one route of approach and withdrawal. Hill 56 (YD140730) was a strategic piece of terrain along the route of approach and would have to be held to ensure that the withdrawal would not be cut off. We recommended to Brigade that they include Hill 56 as an intermediate objective, which they did. As it turned out we had our heaviest contact on this position.

In tailoring our forces for the operation we mounted D Company, 1/11 Infantry on tracks From our recon platoon and a few borrowed from 1/61 Infantry. This was imperative due to the distance to the objective. A driver and track commander were provided with each vehicle. Our movements were all made in column formation. This was due in part to the restrictive nature of the terrain, but primarily to achieve speed of movement through increased control. To be effective we had to get into the DMZ and on the objective fast, before the NVA could react to our presence. Actually, on the 13<sup>th</sup> A Company got to be objective Sierra much faster than anyone had expected.

The operation itself went according to the plan and at no time was it necessary to deviate from it. Objective Tango was never secured. If a rifle Company had been available in reserve we could have fully exploited the contact which we had there.

JOHN M. PICKARTS  
LTC, Armor  
Commanding

# INCLOSURE 3 TO COMBAT AFTER ACTION REPORT

## CAPTURED OR DESTROYED ENEMY EQUIPMENT OR SUPPLIES

This list combines the equipment captured or destroyed by both Task Force 1-77 and Task Force 1-11, with that destroyed by airstrikes.

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>
Bunkers	47
82mm Mortars	6
82mm Rounds	482
RPG-2	1
RPG-2, B-40 Rounds	2
Claymore Mines, Chicom	4
Soviet Small Arms Ammunition	100

## ORDNANCE

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13 1210	YD 195 745	14-500 lb Napalm Cannisters	Negative DDA
13 1358	YD 205 730	8-750 lb Bombs	Destroyed 3 Bkrs, 1 SA Pos, 1 Mtr Pos
13 1710	YD 139 733	10-500 lb Bombs	Destroyed 15 Bkrs
13 1755	YD 140 730	8-500 lb Bombs	Destroyed 7 Bkrs, 1 secondary explosion, 1 possibly AW Pos Destroyed

# INCLOSURE 1 TO COMBAT AFTER ACTION REPORT

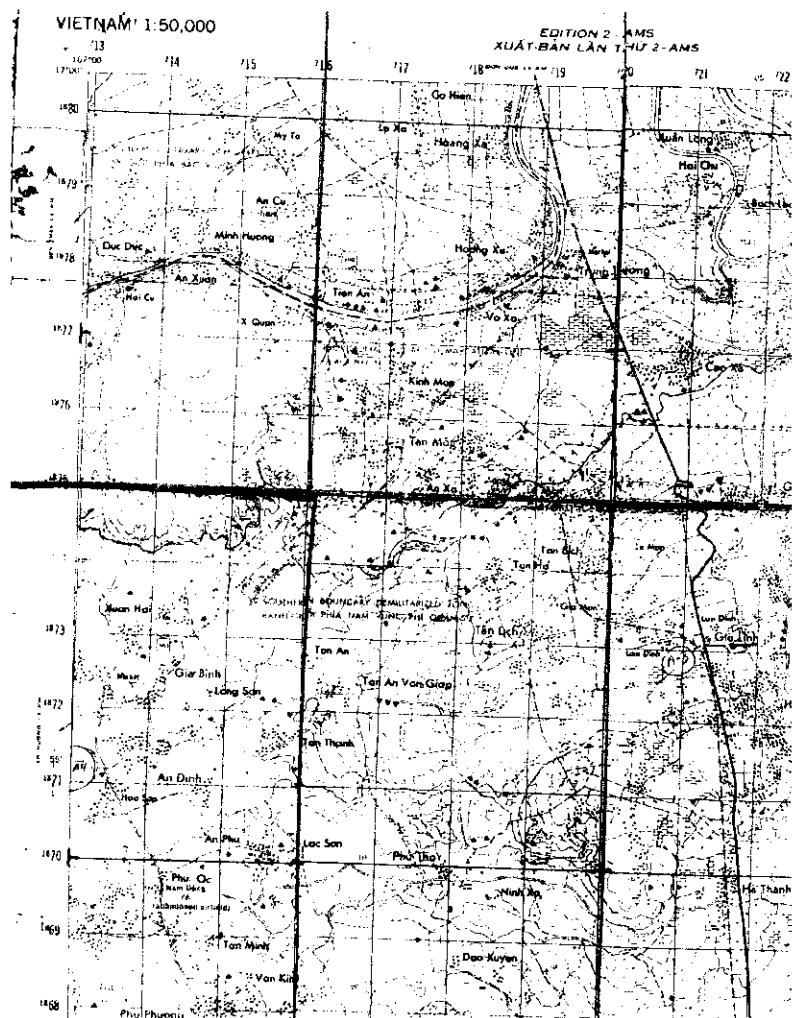
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## ARTILLERY MISSIONS FOR OPERATION SULLIVAN

<u>TYPE MISSION</u>	<u>NUMBER OF MISSIONS</u>	<u>NUMBER OF ROUNDS</u>
Pre-planned	16	196

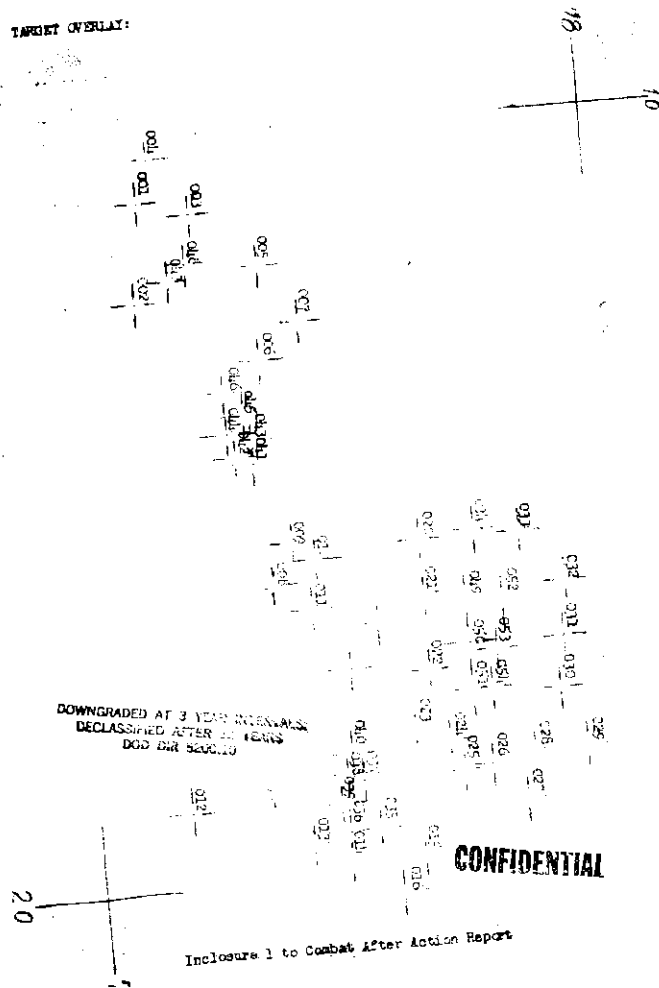


EDITION 2 - AMS  
XUẤT BẢN LẦN THỨ 2-AMS



Observed Fire

TARGET OVERLAY:



DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 10 YEARS  
DDO BR 520010

At 1540 hrs on 28 Feb 3/B/3-5 Cav was engaged by an estimated NVA company at YD098630. The remainder of B & C Troop 3-5 Cav reinforced by a platoon of M/3-3 marines moved to reinforce the platoon. The cavalry employing air & artillery closed with the enemy and swept the battle area finding 60 enemy KIA. At 1815 hrs contact was broken. Results of the days action were one (1) US KIA, nine (9) WIA and 60 NVA KIA. The enemy appeared to fresh, well trained, and well equipped with new uniforms and weapons. An assessment was that a forward element for a larger force (possibly a Battalion or Regiment). Based on the above estimate A/4-12 Cav was ordered to move to an assembly area at YD102596 to block. The troop moved at 0010 hrs on 1 Mar and arrived 0330 hrs and was put opcon to 3-5. At dawn A/4-12 crossed the Cam Lo river and moved north to regain contact. Contact was regained at 1050 hrs at YD078639. Shortly after contact B/1-61 moved from AO Black to C2 (YD136646) to act as reserve. At 1250 hrs C/1-11 was air assaulted in the battle area. Results of the days activities, two (2) US KIA, twenty-five (25) WIA and 17 NVA KIA. In addition five (5) PCs and four (4) tanks were damaged and placed out of action. Then a whole bunch of stuff. Enemy: During the battle of Cam Hung the enemy lost 118 NVA KIA and 13 individual and 8 crew served weapons captured. A bunch of ammo. Friendly: Personnel losses were three (3) US KIA, thirty-five (35) WIA. Seven (7) personnel carriers, and six (6) tanks. Documents captured during the battle indicate that two (2) Battalions of the 27th NVA Regiment were operating in the Cam Hung area during the battle. *Well we made it*  
**Glen Bowers**

### **23 April – 15 June 1969**

#### **excerpts from Massachusetts Bay COAR**

##### **6. TASK ORGANIZATION:**

TF 1-11 Inf: 1-11 Inf (-C Co) and B/1-77 Armor

TF 1-61 Inf (M): 1-61 Inf (M) and C/1-40 Arty

TF 1-77 Armor: 1-77 Armor (- B Co), A/4-12 Cav and C/1-11 Inf

##### **11. EXECUTION (Significant Events):**

28 April – 3 May 69 : At 0430 hours on 28 April 69, A/4-12 Cav and C/1-61 Inf (M) of TF 1-77 Armor conducted a cordon of the Bo Brang, Le Xuyen, and An Trach areas until 0800 hours 3 May 69.

13 May 69: A/4-12 Cav, on a mission of searching southwest along the Quang Tri – Thua Thien border, found three bunkers at YD419361.

14 May 69: At YD420322 a patrol from A/4-12 Cav found a fresh trail, an NVA pistol belt, miscellaneous gear and tracks of 10-20 individuals. At 1337 hours contact was made with an unknown size enemy element which resulted in two VC killed by small arms fire and the capture of one K-44 rifle. B/1-61 Inf (M) was moved from Wunder Beach, placed OPCON to TF 1-77 and committed to assist A/4-12 Cav in developing the situation.

16 May 69: (a) 1/A/1-11 Inf, while on ambush, had one of their booby traps detonated at 0530 hours. A search of the area revealed a bag of rice, pair of pants, and a blood trail.

(b) B/1-61 Inf (M) while continuing to search along the Quang Tri – Thua Thien border, killed an NVA who was carrying an 81mm mortar base plate. In order to conduct a thorough search of the area, C/1-11 Inf was committed to support A/4-12 Cav and B/1-61 Inf (M).

### **15 June – 25 September 1969**

#### **IROQUOIS GROVE Combat Operations After Action Report excerpts**

Task Organization to COAR, Brigade control:



HHC, 1 st Inf Bde, 5 th Inf Div (M)

A/4-12 Cav

5-4 Arty

P/75 th Ranger

A/7 th Engr

75 th Supt Bn

298 th Signal Co

407 RRD

517 MID

86 th Chem Det

43d Inf Plat (Scout Dog)

48 th PI Det

#### 11. (C) EXECUTION:

- The following is a chronological list of significant events which occurred during operation Iroquis Grove:

(2) 16 June 1969 3/A/4-12 Cav, while providing security for the Cua Viet Naval Base, sighted five frogmen emerging from the water at YD358658. The enemy were engaged with negative results. A naval mine sweeper later located and destroyed two mines in the mouth of the Cua Viet River .

(10) 30 June 1969 A tank from A/4-12 Cav detonated a mine at YD432398 while moving into an ambush location. There were no casualties.

(29) 3 August 1969 A/4-12 Cav made contact with an estimated ten NVA. One APC was hit by an RPG and was subsequently declared a combat loss. Five US were WIA (E) and three NVA were KIA.

(31) 11 August 1969 In two contacts by A/4-12 Cav at YD351418 two NVA were killed and one RPG with two rounds was captured.

(37) 24 August 1969 In the vicinity of YD066683, A/4-12 Cav found 15 NVA bodies approximately three days old.

(40) 30 August 1969 A/4-12 Cav received two 60mm mortar rounds. An aerial observer came on station and guided the ground elements to a point from which the area of operations had observed fire. Results of the contact were two NVA KIA, two PWs, five AK&s and a 60mm mortar baseplate captured

#### **SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES:**

a. Radar (PPS-5 and PPS25), night vision devices (XM-43), aquabuoy devices and sensors were used in defensive roles throughout the brigade AO. These devices have been proven of great value in giving early warning of enemy movement and have been instrumental in inflicting casualties on the enemy by artillery fire.

#### **12 July – 26 July 1969**

##### **WILLIAM'S GLADE**

Excerpts from COAAR

#### **( C ) TASK ORGANIZATION:**

Task Force 1-61: 1-61 Inf (M) (-1 Co), A/4-12 Cav, A/1-11 Inf, 2 teams P/75 th Inf, and 1 team 407 th RRD

1-4 Marines

10. ( C ) CONCEPT OF OPERATION: From 12 July to 24 July 1969 elements of the 1 st Brigade, 5 th Infantry Division (M) with 1 st Battalion, 4 th Marine Regiment, 3 rd Marine Division under its OPCON conducted a joint operation in the area east of Highway 558 and west of QTCB. From 24 July to 26 July elements of the 1 st Brigade in coordination with 3 rd Marine Division and ARVN forces conducted a search and clear operation and established a cordon to provide security for the departure ceremony of the 9 th Marine Regimental Landing Team, 3 rd Marine Division on 25 July 1969

#### **25 September – 22 October 1969**

##### **UNNAMED OPERATION excerpts from COAAR**

#### **6. (C) TASK ORGANIZATION:**

1-11 Inf

1-61 Inf (M)

1-77 Armor, A/4-12 Cav

3-5 Cav, C/2-34 Armor

10. (C) CONCEPT OF OPERATION: During the period covered by this report the brigade operational area was divided into five task force areas of operations.

c. TF 1-77 Armor operated in AO Gold. This battalion, based at LZ Nancy conducted search and clear, reconnaissance in force and rice denial operations throughout AO Gold.

11. (C) EXECUTION: list of significant events which occurred during the operation

(5) 30 Sep 1969 APC from 2/A/4-12 Cav detonated an AT mine at YD102668. Results were four US WIA (E) and moderate damage to the vehicle.

(7) 2 Oct 1969 Night defensive positions of B/1-77 Armor, A/4-12 Cav and 2&3/C/1-11 Inf were attacked by an estimated NVA company at YD72677. Results of the contact were one US KIA, 22 US WIA (E), 14 NVA KIA and one NVA PW. Nine RPG's, 11 AK47's, 60 Chicom grenades and 30 B40/B41 Rockets were captured.

(18) 18 Oct 1969 A/4-12 Cav found two NVA bodies at YD174679; two hours later the unit uncovered two more bodies at YD178682.

**22 October 1969 – 18 January 1970**

#### **EXCERPTS FROM FULTON SQUARE COAAR**

1. (U) NAME AND TYPE OF OPERATION:

b. Type. Search and Clear, reconnaissance in force, rocket suppression, rice denial and security.

3. (U) LOCATION: Trieu Phong, Hai Lang, Mai Linh, Cam Lo, Huong Hoa, Gio Linh Districts, Quang Tri Province , RVN.

4. (U) COMMAND HEADQUARTERS: Headquarters, 1 st Inf Bde, 5 th Inf Div (M)

6. (C) TASK ORGANIZATION:

a. The brigade normally operated with four task forces formed by the cross attachment of infantry, mechanized infantry, tank and armored cavalry units. The composition of these task forces was varied on a mission type basis.

A/4-12 Cav operational control to 1-77 Armor

7. (C) SUPPORTING FORCES:

f. Chemical. The following activities were conducted by the Brigade Chemical section and the 86 th Chemical Detachment during Operation Fulton Square .

(2) Herbicide operations: The perimeters of FSB C2 and FSB A4 were defoliated with Agent Orange.

11. (C) EXECUTION: The following is a chronological list of significant event, which occurred during Fulton Square :

(4) 29 Oct 69 – At 1440 hours A/4-12 Cav, reacting to an intelligence report, sweep the area in the vicinity of YD144706 and located 13 recently used bunkers. The bunkers were destroyed.

(18) 25 Nov 69 – While conducting reconnaissance on the north bank of the Cua Viet river, a tank from A/4-12 Cav detonated a mine at YD330711. The tank was a combat loss and one US was wounded.

(22) 15 Dec 69 – While supporting an infantry search and clear operation by fire west of FSB C2, A/4-12 Cav received 15 rounds of 60mm and 82mm mortar fire without casualties or damage. Later, an APC was hit by an RPG round resulting in one US KIA.

(32) 13 Jan 70 – While conducting a search and clear operation in the vicinity of YD124727, two tanks from A/4-12 Cav detonated mines. There were six US WIA and the tanks received minor damage.

### **19 January 1970 – 22 July 1970**

#### **EXCERPTS FROM GREENE RIVER COAAR**

#### **1. (U) NAME AND TYPE OF OPERATION:**

b. Type. Search and Clear, reconnaissance in force, rocket suppression and ambush.

3. (U) LOCATION: Trieu Phong, Hai Lang, Mai Linh, Cam Lo, Huong Hoa, Gio Linh Districts, Quang Tri Province , RVN.

4. (U) COMMAND HEADQUARTERS: Headquarters, 1 st Inf Bde, 5 th Inf Div (M)

#### **6. (C) TASK ORGANIZATION:**

a. The brigade normally operated with four task forces formed by the cross attachment of infantry, mechanized infantry, tank and armored cavalry units. The composition of these task forces was varied on a mission type basis.

A/4-12 Cav operational control to 1-77 Armor

11. (C) EXECUTION: Following is a chronological list of significant events which occurred during Operation Greene River :

(46) 2 May 70 – At 0905H vic YD278468 1/A/4-12 Cav with members of the A/7 Engr received SAF from the south of their location from an estimated NVA squad. 1/A/4-12 Cav returned fire with organic weapons and searched the area. Results: Three US WIA (M).

(55) 4 July 70 – At 0659H personnel of A/4-12 Cav while retrieving a mechanical ambush vic YD343448 discovered three claymore mines missing and a fourth booby trapped. The booby trapped detonated resulting in one US WIA(E).

The following information was provided by Short, Keith . (2000) C COMPANY, 1 st BATTALION, 11 th INFANTRY

**Two operations of the 5th Mech out of the AA's; with information in regards to A Troop 4/12 Cav activities.**

1/C/1-11, 1/5 Infantry Division (Mech)--Quang Tri Province  
3/A/2-506th Infantry (Ambl), 3/101st Airborne Division (Ambl)--Thua Thien Province

Lam Son 719 Significant Events entries in the Combat After Action Report of the 1/5 Mech. According to the AA, A/4-12 Cav had 25 WIA'S and no KIA'S during this operation.

**28 JAN 71**

**1/A/4-12, 282217H, YD107694 (4km SW S-4).**

The unit reported that a trip flare was detonated approximately 75 meters north of the NDP. They also received 3-4x rounds of AK-47 fire from the north. Organic weapons fire was placed on the area, and pink light and radar were employed, but with negative sightings. The area was swept at first light with negative results.

**29 JAN 71**

**2/A/4-12, 291200H, YD157687 (4km ESE A-4).**

An M551 Sheridan detonated a PM60 mine buried near a tank trail. There was 1x US WIA; the vehicle sustained moderate damage. The unit then received approximately 10x rounds of AK-47 fire from 100 meters west of their location. The area was engaged with organic weapons fire and was swept with negative results. There were negative further friendly casualties. The resulting crater was 5'x3'x7'.

**2/A/4-12, 291430H, YD163700 (5km east A-4)**

An M551 Sheridan detonated a PM60 mine buried in a tank trail. There was 1x US WIA; the vehicle sustained moderate damage. The crater was 7'x7'x5'.

**12 FEB 71**

**A/4-12, 121145, YD158698 (3km E A-4).**

A M551 hit a PM60 pressure activated mine which was buried in an open field resulting in a crater which was 4' by 4'. There were negative friendly casualties, the vehicle was a combat loss.

### **3 APR 71**

1-77, 032310H, XD820418 (2km N Khe Sanh).

Team received AK-47 fire and grenades from an estimated 6x NVA. Small arms fire and grenades were returned. A/4-12 reinforced team. Results: 1x US KIA, 1x US WIA, 2x NVA KIA. Sniper team at 040800H, made a sweep of area where there was contact resulting in the following items captured: 2x RPG rounds, 1x RPG cleaning kit, 1x estimated one pound type of explosive, 1x homemade bangalore torpedo, 1x hunting knife with scabbard, 1x first-aid packet, 1x NVA pistol belt with fish cakes. There were heavy blood trails and drag marks throughout the area.

Montana Mustang Significant Events entries in the Combat After Action Report of the 1/5 Mech.

According to the AA, A/4-12 Cav had 19 WIA's and 2 KIA's during this operation. They were attached to Task Force 1-77 Armor with the 1-77 Armor (-).

### **20 APR 1971**

201025H, YD238460. 2/A/4-12. Track detonated an unknown type boobytrap--negative casualties or damage. Area was checked with negative results. No recent area activity.

201230H, YD331445. 3/A/4-12. M551 detonated a 20 pound plastic pressure activated mine--negative casualties. No recent area activity. 2 vehicles had passed over mine previously.

### **1 MAY 1971**

011340H, YD290458. 2/A/4-12. M113 hit Arty shell having claymore type clacker detonator--negative casualties. One roadwheel was blown off.

### **5 May 1971**

051000H, YD249484. 2/A/4-12. M551 hit aluminum type rocket mine blowing off 2 roadwheels--1 US WIA.

051145H, YD258486. 2/A/4-12 discovered mine made up of 1 RPG and 1 82mm round. Mine was blown in place.

### **18 MAY 1971**

182040H, YD112719. 2/A/4-12 spotted 3 personnel 50 meters from their position while on an 8-man ambush and engaged with M16 and M79 fire, the

enemy were engaged with M16 and M79 fire to the South. 4.2" blocking fire was used to the West.

#### **19 MAY 1971**

192115H, YD131684. CP/A/4-12 took 3 unknown rounds of incoming--1 US WIA. No counterbattery fire.

#### **23 MAY 1971**

230900H, YD100642. A/4-12 took 4x 82mm rounds--negative casualties or damage. Counterbattery and 81mm fire employed. Scts/1-61 swept area with negative results.

#### **30 MAY**

301440H, YD263485. A/4-12. M113 set off a TM-41 mine with 4.2" round on top of it blowing off 2 roadwheels and damaging hull around sprocket. 4 US WIA.

#### **31 MAY**

031000H, YD355453. A/4-12. Individual set off anti-personnel mine--1 US WIA. No recent area activity. Area swept with negative results.

#### **4 JUN**

040835H, YD304409. With mine detector, 1/A/4-12 detected boobytrapped 155mm round which was blown in place.

041255H, YD361477. 2/A/4-12. Individual set off pressure activated mine (anti-personnel)--3 US WIA. No recent activity.

#### **7 JUN 1971**

070908H, YD232435. 3/A/4-12. M551 set off suspected 155mm/4.2" round blowing off 1 roadwheel arm and 2 pads--negative casualties. Area swept with negative results. No recent area activity.

#### **8 JUN 1971**

081400H, YD222456, 2/A/4-12. M113 set off anti-personnel mine wounding individual on next track--no vehicle damage.

081742H, YD262487. A/4-12. M551 hit unknown type mine which tipped vehicle on its side with one man trapped inside--2 US WIA.

## **2 JUL 1971**

021850H, YD137632. A/4-12 took AK-47 and 2 RPGs from unknown size enemy force and returned organic weapons fire. Negative casualties or damage. Area swept with negative results.

## **7 July 1971**

071200H, YD095683. A/4-12 found 1 mortar site which they destroyed.

## **08 April 71 – 11 July 71 EXCERPTS FROM MONTANA MUSTANG 1-5 COAAR**

Montana Mustang Significant Events entries in the Combat After Action Report of the 1/5 Mech.

According to the AA, A/4-12 Cav had 19 WIA's and 2 KIA's during this operation. They were attached to Task Force 1-77 Armor with the 1-77 Armor (-).

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