



DANGER

forward

The Magazine Of The Big Red One, Vietnam



**Cantigny War
Memorial Museum**

**Vietnam Battles
Part Six**

**Nerve Center
The DTOC**

**Dual Role
Of Admin**

The completion of our task and the reaching of our goals in Vietnam still lie in the future. As the BIG RED ONE enters its third year in Vietnam, I join each member of the Division in reaffirming our commitment to the defense of liberty.

*KEITH L. WARE
Major General, USA
Commanding*



DANGER

Volume Two, Number Three—September 1968

forward

The Magazine Of The Big Red One, Vietnam

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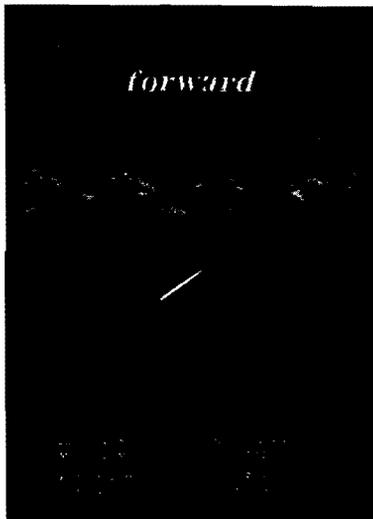
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This issue of *DANGER FORWARD* features the Cantigny War Memorial Museum in Wheaton, Ill., a million-dollar investment by the late Colonel Robert R. McCormick. Division members, both past and present, will find a visit to this museum of the BIG RED ONE a rewarding experience. Also featured in this issue are Vietnam Battles 31-36 and Operation QUYET THANG; a look at the Division's tactical operations center; and a story of the dual roles of the members of the largest company in the Division. This issue we must regretfully say farewell to Major William E. Daniel Jr., who is responsible for the historical authenticity of our battle stories. Major Daniel retires shortly.

Layton J. Baker
Editor

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◀ABOUT THE COVER▶

A Russian-made 122mm rocket blasts away from its launching pad during demonstration of the enemy weapon at Lai Khe. This is the same type of rocket that showered Lai Khe during TET and the May 5 offensive.
Photo by LTC Charles M. Rapp

DANGER FORWARD, an authorized publication of the US Army, provides timely, authoritative information of professional interest on combat operations, revolutionary development programs and combat support procedures of the First Infantry Division, Vietnam. It serves as a means of expression for views of the Commanding General and achieves command information objectives of the Department of the Army and the First Infantry Division. Material of interest to Division members and the Army in general is invited and should be mailed to: Editor, **DANGER FORWARD**, Information Office, First Infantry Division, APO 96345. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of Department of the Army. The magazine is printed at Dai Nippon Printing Co., Ltd., Tokyo. The title **DANGER FORWARD** is copyrighted by the Society of the First Division.



A REPLICA of the BIG RED ONE patch greets visitors as they enter the Cantigny War Memorial Museum in Wheaton, Ill.

BY SP5 LAYTON BAKER

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THERE EXISTS A PLACE where one can hear daily the sounds of deafening artillery, small arms and machinegun fire—not in the jungles of Vietnam but in a little community only 20 miles west of Chicago.

The Cantigny War Memorial Museum of the First Infantry Division in Wheaton, Ill., presents its visitors with a simulated "living" history of the BIG RED ONE from its early beginning through World War II.

Named for the Battle of Cantigny, France, in World War I, the memorial was established by a trust fund of the late Colonel Robert R. McCormick, a former commander in the Fighting First during World War I and editor and publisher of the Chicago Tribune.

The dramatically different museum is designed to inform, interest and thrill the many visitors by utilizing modern techniques of exhibit design and construction. Through the use of animated displays, dioramas and earphones, visitors are given the illusion of actually being present at historic battles of the first and second World Wars.

Central theme of the exhibit hall is established by a reproduction of the BIG RED ONE patch, which is inlaid on the floor opposite the main entrance. Surrounding the insignia is a revolving frieze of eight full-color transparencies of historic American battle paintings. Through the use of earphones, visitors can hear the story of the eight major campaigns as the pictures unfold before their eyes.

Looking beyond the flaming BIG RED ONE patch, the visitor's eyes meet an impressive array of illuminated photographs of all the generals who have commanded the Division from 1917 to the present. Earphones carry the stories of the Division's wartime commanders during both World Wars.

Overhead hang the historic guidons of the 5th Artillery, the oldest unit in the Army today, organized in 1776 by Alexander Hamilton. Colonel McCormick

served with the unit during World War I.

The history of the Division's exploits during World War I are concentrated in the north section of the exhibit hall. Outstanding features of this section include an animated diorama of the Battle of Cantigny, a full-scale model of a World War I dugout and trench, and an animated map which traces the Division's World War I movements.

The diorama shows the village of Cantigny, France, shortly before dawn on May 28, 1918. When a button is pushed, the diorama sky lights up, revealing troops of the First Division waiting to play their role in history. Strobe lights flash a realistic re-enactment of artillery, machinegun and small arms fire. The scenes change as troops attack and the village crumbles. Again, a narrative provides viewers with a running account of the battle.

The World War I dugout and trench are full-scale replicas, built according to actual military specifications and furnished with equipment in use at that time. As the visitor enters the trench, a photo-electric cell activates a synchronized sound-lighting system, creating a wartime atmosphere. An animated map traces the Division's movements through Europe during World War I, while a narrative of the battles can be heard in the background. A motion picture projector adjacent to the wall map carries the BIG RED ONE history from its post-armistice occupation of Germany through its triumphant parade down New York's Fifth Avenue.

The south section of the exhibit hall is dedicated to World War II activities of the Division. Beginning in a fiberglass tunnel, the visitor receives a capsule history of the Division's training and build-up in England, the invasion of North Africa and the Sicilian campaign. Also in the tunnel are displays of the three

most hazardous enemy weapons of that time—a butterfly bomb, a *Teller* mine and a "*Bouncing Betty*" anti-personnel mine.

A mock-up German bunker is also located in this section. Mounted in the "*pill box*" bunker is a German anti-tank gun, its muzzle projecting from a slit in the fortification. Captured enemy weapons, donated by members of the BIG RED ONE, are also on display in the bunker.

Adjacent to the bunker is a display of weapons used by Division men during World War II. Secured to floor mounts at convenient sighting height are the M-3 "*grease gun*," M-1 carbine, Browning automatic rifle and a 3.5-inch bazooka.

The World War II diorama depicts the Division's D-Day landing on Omaha Beach. While a recorded narration provides a running account of the day-long operation, the scenes change, accompanied by realistic gunfire and other battle sounds. An animated map of World War II traces the First Division through its eight major campaigns, while earphones provide an historic narrative synchronized with the map illumination.

Memorial Hall, adjoining the main exhibit area, is a marble and wood paneled room dominated by a half-sized model of the Omaha Beach shrine which was erected as a tribute to all servicemen who participated in the invasion. On the walls of this hall are the names, photographs and citations of all BIG RED ONE Medal of Honor winners. Also on display here is a collection of all Army medals dating from Civil War days to the present.

The archives section, located in a wing of the museum, contains a priceless library of military history, including official First Division records of both World





"THE SPIRIT OF AMERICAN YOUTH" statue at Cantigny is a half-size replica of the Omaha Beach Shrine, dedicated to those Americans who gave their lives in defense of freedom.

Wars; the contemporary reading list of the Army Chief of Staff; Army regulations, field manuals and technical material; study courses for artillery, infantry, missiles and ROTC personnel; files of combat and peacetime photographs and documents from 34 first and second World War units of the Division; and the names and units of the 10,000 Division dead in both wars. A film service is also maintained in the library.

Besides the military museum, other features of the 500-acre estate of Colonel McCormick include beautiful landscaped grounds and mall displays of tanks, artillery and other weapons, and the Robert R. McCormick Flower Gardens.

The museum plans to add Vietnam to its exhibits in the near future so, like their fathers before them, current members of the famous BIG RED ONE can one day relive their moments of glory and tragedy in the jungles of Vietnam.

(BELOW) LOOKING ACROSS the BIG RED ONE patch, the visitor views the entrance to the World War I exhibit. The Cantigny diorama, which gives the visitor a realistic re-enactment of the famous Battle of Cantigny, can be seen in the background.



A DUGOUT built to actual military specifications is within the World War I exhibit. The realistic dugout is complete with all of the equipment used at that time.



A PHOTOELECTRIC CELL activates a sound tape as the visitor enters the World War I trench, producing deafening artillery, machinegun and small arms fire noises.



A GERMAN ANTI-TANK GUN is mounted in a pillbox within the World War II exhibit. Also inside the pillbox are captured German weapons, donated by members of the Fighting First.



THE EAST WALL of the museum (above) contains the photographs and citations of the many BIG RED ONE soldiers who have won the Medal of Honor. (Below) The World War II tunnel contains a capsule history of the Division's buildup in England and the North Africa and Sicilian campaigns.



TRIBUTE IS PAID to Colonel McCormick in the northern corner of Memorial Hall, consisting of a bust of the colonel, a display of his decorations and a plaque containing the speech he gave in 1937 at Cantigny, France.



LOOKING THROUGH the World War II tunnel with the German anti-tank gun staring through its pillbox in the background.



BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPE almost inadequately describes the surrounding grounds of Cantigny. This scene is looking west toward the museum.

MILITARY MALL (above left) on the west side of the museum contains heavy Army equipment used during both World Wars. (Above right) Beautiful reflecting pool looking west toward the museum. A military library (below) is also included in the museum. The library contains all official First Division records, Army regulations, the Army Chief of Staff's reading list, photographs and a film service.



BATTLE OF

*ONE OF THE FIRST incoming mortar rounds
in the NDP at Bu Dop.*



Bu Dop photos
by SP4 Dale Howell

BU DOP



Vietnam Battles—31
Bu Dop

THE FIRST INFANTRY DIVISION'S overwhelming success in Operation SHENANDOAH II, especially the victory at Loc Ninh, seemingly forced the concentrated forces of the enemy further north into the area of the Cambodian border. This theory was confirmed at the BATTLE OF BU DOP, which took place 90 miles north Saigon on 29 and 30 November 1967.

The Civilian Irregular Defense Group's district headquarters at Quan Bo Duc, approximately three miles south of San Bay Bu Dop Special Forces Camp, was attacked and partially overrun in the early morning hours of 29 November by an estimated battalion of Viet Cong. Intelligence estimates of enemy strengths suggested that the Special Forces Camp at Bu Dop might be subject to attack by either the 271st or 273rd VC Regiments of the 9th VC Division, reported to be massing in the area.

In reaction to the attack, the "Black Lions" of the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry (-), commanded by Lieutenant Colonel James F. Cochran III, and A Battery, 2d Battalion, 33d Artillery, commanded by Captain Frederick N. Halley, were airlifted from Quan Loi, 30 miles south, to Bu Dop, closing by noon on 29 November. The battalion, consisting of three companies and the command group, immediately constructed a night defensive position (NDP) and fields of fire were cleared.

At 1930 hours elements of the CIDG reported contact with an unknown size VC force about 2,000

yards east of the "Black Lions" NDP and returned to the perimeter. At approximately 2200 hours a heavy rocket and mortar barrage rained down on the NDP, supported by small arms fire from the eastern and northern sides of the airstrip at Bu Dop.

Counter-mortar fire was returned from six tubes immediately after the initial phase of the incoming mortar rounds. The VC mortar position was spotted from the air and a light fire team was called in. The gunships quickly dispensed with the mortar position.

Airstrikes were called in and 105mm howitzers from A Btry, 2d Bn, 33d Arty, commenced firing into the rubber trees across the airstrip. A ground assault by the VC began at 2330 hours from the eastern side of the airstrip, only to be halted by fire from the artillery and airstrikes.

A petroleum-oil-lubricant (POL) depot near the airstrip was set afire and the burning fuel illuminated the area, making the attacking VC visible and contributing to the effectiveness of the BIG RED ONE ground fire as well as presenting a barrier to the ground attack.

During the fighting, .50-caliber or 12.7mm machine-guns fired on aircraft from positions at the northeast and southeast of the runway and also from a location east of the middle of the runway. The guns' tracers were spotted and fire was returned but it was uncertain whether they were knocked out.

Firing ceased at 0030 hours, but at 0150 hours, the battalion's perimeter began receiving heavy small arms fire from the east across the airstrip. Illumination of the area revealed several VC gathering bodies. A reconnaissance patrol from B Company was sent out at 0240 hours. The patrol made contact with an



◀ A RECONNAISSANCE TEAM from the "Black Lions" makes a sweep through the rubber surrounding Bu Dop the morning after the initial attack.



A CH-47 CHINOOK brings in a resupply at Bu Dop for the men of the 2d Bn, 33d Arty, who helped defend the NDP with the 1st Bn, 28th Inf.

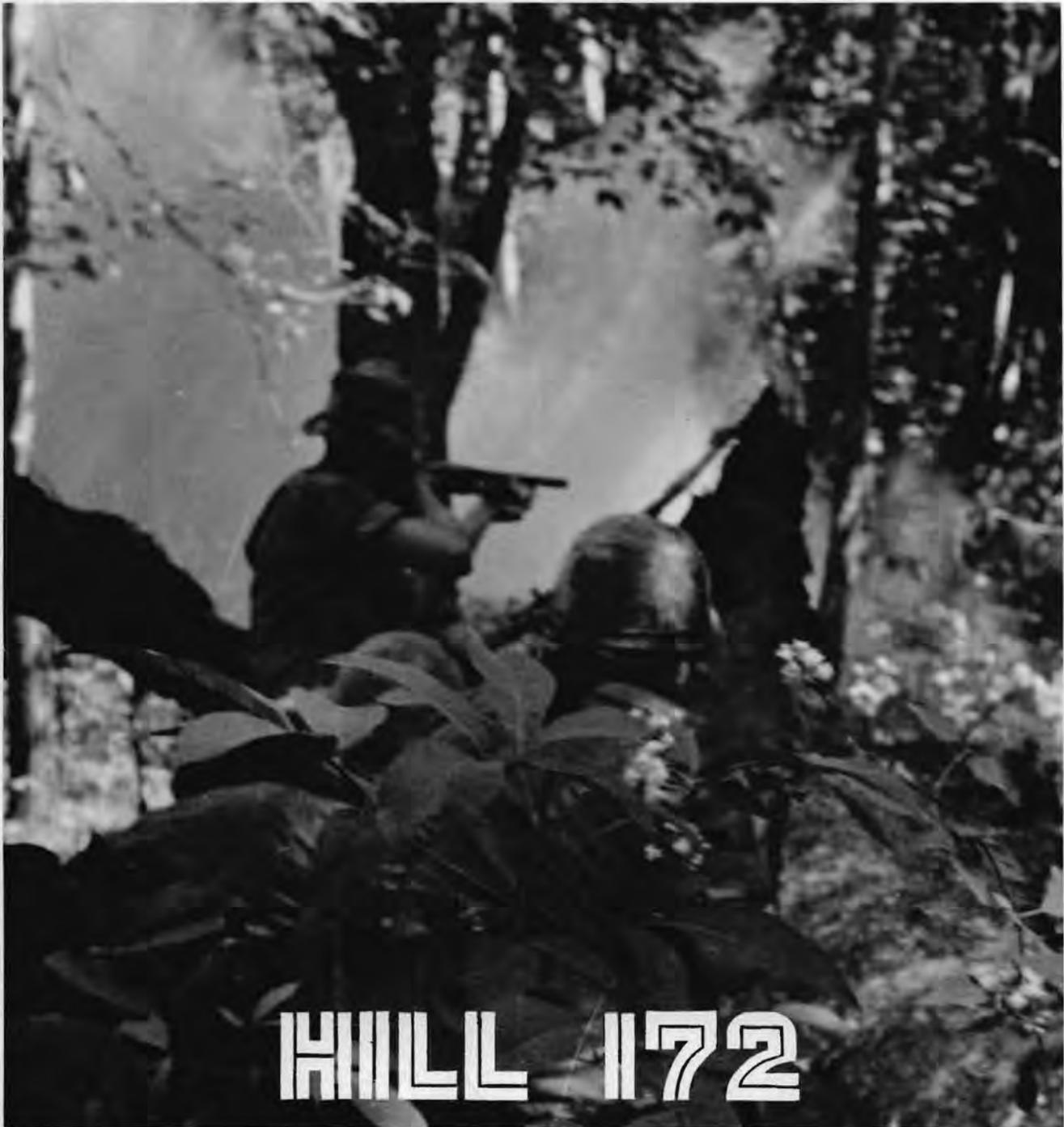
unknown number of VC and returned to the NDP under covering fire.

"Perhaps, the single most effective element of our firepower was the artillery," Colonel Cochran recalled. "The fire was devastating as the rounds hit the trees, causing air bursts." There was no more activity until daylight, when B Company made a sweep of the area east of the runway from south to north.

The B Company sweep turned up 31 enemy bodies, but the actual VC death toll could not be determined since it was known many were dragged away by their comrades. A conservative estimate would place the death toll nearer to 90. The sweep also produced three AK-47 rifles, two RPG-2 launchers and seven RPG-2 rounds. US casualties were 7 killed and 11 wounded.

A sweep of the area by the CIDG company turned up a radio, an AK-47, 24 grenades, a .50-caliber machinegun mount, a .50-caliber machinegun bolt, an 82mm mortar round, two 60mm mortar rounds, 15 RPG-2 rounds, six RPG-7 rounds, three stick grenades and a ladder.

Documents taken from various dead VC identified the attacking force as the 3d Battalion, 271st VC Regiment. This battalion was known to have been at Loc Ninh in reserve, but was never committed to the battle. The remainder of the 271st Regiment, which suffered many casualties at Loc Ninh, remained west of Loc Ninh near the Cambodian border.



Vietnam Battles—32
Hill 172

ALTHOUGH THE NDP at Bu Dop was again subjected to heavy mortar attacks during the evening of 2 December, only light contact with the enemy took place in and around Bu Dop.

On 6 December the 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Mortimer L. O'Conner, and B Battery, 1st Battalion, 5th Artillery, commanded by Captain Ernest Schmidt, conducted an air assault and established an NDP about two miles southeast of Bu Dop without incident. The NDP was carved out in a bamboo thicket, located on the south side of Hill 172 astride an east-west trail.

At 0100 hours on 8 December, a helicopter dustoff came into the NDP to lift off three men who had been accidentally wounded by a claymore mine. As the helicopter came in, an undetected VC force opened fire with small arms. This gave the "Black Scarves" about a two-minute warning of an impending attack, later to be called the BATTLE OF HILL 172.

The small arms attack was quickly followed by a mortar barrage of 50 to 60 rounds of 82mm and 20 to 30 rounds of 60mm, the majority of which fell to the northwest of the NDP. Counter-fire was called for immediately from supporting artillery.

Two ambush patrols were outside the NDP at the time of the attack. C Company's patrol was north of



ASSEMBLED are the assorted weapons captured by the 1st Bn, 2d Inf, at Hill 172.

the perimeter and B Company was stationed south of the NDP.

C Company's patrol engaged an unknown size enemy force and came under heavy fire. After killing four VC, the patrol was withdrawn into the perimeter. B Company also returned to the perimeter at this time. The C Company listening post (LP) also detected heavy movement, blew five claymores and returned to the NDP. Both D and B Company began to receive enemy probes all along the perimeter.

Within minutes after the return of the C Company ambush patrol, C Company's left flank and center platoons on the northwest perimeter came under a heavy volume of automatic weapons, .50-caliber machinegun and rocket powered grenade (RPG) rounds.

Colonel O'Conner requested direct artillery fire into the woodline. Three 105mm howitzers fired directly while a fourth fired illumination. Approximately 275 to 300 rounds of direct fire were expended into the woodline, greatly aiding in breaking up the VC attack.

At 0200 hours a second attack developed in the southeastern portion of the perimeter between D and B Company. The enemy reached the concertina wire erected around the NDP but was quickly driven away by supporting 105mm fire.

The BIG RED ONE forces continued to fire at the retreating VC until shortly after 0400 hours. A sweep of the perimeter at daylight by the 1/2 Inf revealed 49 VC bodies and numerous blood trails. Six wounded VC were detained. It was estimated that more than 140 enemy were killed in the pre-dawn encounter. Several enemy weapons were captured including 16

AK-47s, 2 RPG-2s, mortars, grenades and several rounds of small arms ammunition. US losses in the BATTLE OF HILL 172 were 4 killed and 14 wounded. The attacking force was identified as the 3d Bn, 273rd VC Regt.

Also supporting the 1/2 Inf and B Btry, 1/5 Arty were a 105mm battery in the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry's NDP at Bu Dop, a 4.2-inch mortar platoon in the 2d Battalion, 28th Infantry NDP and an Army of the Republic of Vietnam 155mm battery.

A RADIOMAN calls in his position to his company commander during an airstrike on the VC at Hill 172.

SP4 George Pawlaczuk



ONLY TWO DAYS AFTER the successful defense of Hill 172, the BIG RED ONE was involved in its last large-scale battle of 1967 in the defense of Fire Support Patrol Base CAISSON VI, later to be known as the BATTLE OF XA CAT.

Throughout 1967, the First Infantry Division's biggest task was the opening and controlling of Highway 13. Convoys began supply runs up the famous highway, known as Thunder Road, in early November all the way to Quan Loi, the Division's forward base camp. Highway security was provided by BIG RED ONE elements operating from NDPs and Fire Support Patrol Bases (FSPB) located along the highway.

FSPB CAISSON VI was located about four miles south of An Loc in the Xa Cat Rubber Plantation. Seedling rubber trees provided an unobstructed view for approximately one-half mile.

The FSPB was organized in a circle astride a north-south road (Route 245). Two bands of concertina wire encircled the perimeter and all fighting positions were dug-in with sand bag overhead cover. Within the FSPB were A Company, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry; 3d Platoon, C Troop, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry; A Battery, 6th Battalion, 15th

X A C A T

Artillery; and C Battery, 8th Battalion, 6th Artillery. The three tanks, six armored assault vehicles and a battery of 155mm self-propelled howitzers (SPs) were dug in. The 105mm battery positions were sandbagged above ground.

The mission of the FSPB was three-fold: the infantry company secures the FSPB; the cavalry platoon opens and posts Highway 13; and the artillery supports any operation in the sector.

It was known that the 165th North Vietnamese Regiment and elements of the 141st North Vietnamese Regiment were in the jungle west of Highway 13 ranging from Chon Thanh to An Loc.

At 0145 hours on 10 December, the A Company listening post (LP) heard movement and was about to report it when three NVA soldiers stood up about 20 feet in front of the LP. The NVA were engaged with small arms fire, wounding one of them. However, the wounded NVA succeeded in wounding two of the LPs before he was killed.

The 2d Platoon leader, Second Lieutenant Lee C. Pickett, assembled his radio operator, a medic and three other men and went to the LP. The third man in the LP was not wounded, but he was busy engaging enemy soldiers attempting to emplace claymore

TANKS from the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, were hull defilled during the BATTLE OF XA CAT at Fire Support Patrol Base CAISSON VI.



MAJ William E. Daniel Jr.



THIS JEEP was instrumental in keeping the perimeter illuminated at CAISSON VI.

mines. After putting the wounded on stretchers, the small party made its way back to the perimeter safely.

Meanwhile, Captain Karl Robinson, A Company commander, had a report of movement on the northeast from the 3d Platoon LP. He instructed them to blow their claymores and return to the perimeter because he felt an attack was about to be launched against the FSPB.

At 0200 hours, a heavy mortar barrage was directed against the FSPB, walking the rounds from north to south across the FSPB. The barrage consisted of 120mm, 82mm and 60mm mortars and 75mm recoilless rifle. The mortar attack was quickly followed with an assault on the perimeter from the north, east and west utilizing RPGs, small arms and grenades. The defensive wire was breached in the areas of the assault with bangalore torpedoes.

Captain Robinson gave clearance for the cavalry platoon to begin firing its .50 calibers. The 81mm mortar platoon and grenadiers firing M-79s had already gone into action. The 105mm battery was called on for illumination. The combination of the artillery illumination, hand thrown flares and trip flares activated by the enemy silhouetted the attackers as they crawled into the FSPB.

To the north, two NVA soldiers crawled to a bunker before they were killed as one attempted to stick a grenade in the firing aperture. The other jumped into the rear of the bunker and was strangled by Sergeant John A. Steele, squad leader, 3d Platoon. For his quick action and extreme bravery, Sergeant Steele was awarded the Silver Star.

To the east, the enemy tossed a grenade into a forward bunker wounding one man while the other escaped to a rear bunker. The heavy defensive fire caught many of the enemy in the wire, but several NVA occupied the bunker.

During this time other enemy coming into the perimeter in the same area fired on and hit an M48A3 tank with an RPG. The round penetrated the tank, hitting the ammunition rack. The tank burned, but the three crewmen escaped.

The enemy assault on the west was gaining momentum and Captain Robinson requested direct fire from the 105mm battery. The 90mm tank gun on the west was already firing cannister through the enemy's breach in the wire.

A .50-caliber machinegun on the western sector malfunctioned from overheating during this critical period. Six men from the mortar platoon and six men from the 105mm battery were organized to reinforce the sector. In addition the battery commander of the 155mm sps directed one sp to pull up on the road to the south and add the firepower of its .50 caliber machinegun to the southwest.

Meanwhile, the crew of the machinegun that malfunctioned managed to obtain a spare bolt and barrel from another ACAV in the face of enemy fire and put the weapon back in action.

The NVA who had occupied the bunker on the east made a break from the bunker and were cut down by small arms, M-79 and .50-caliber fire. Knowing a US infantryman was also in the bunker, a search was made and the man was found not seriously wounded.

Enemy firing ceased at approximately 0330 hours but movement continued periodically until daylight, presumably by body-carrying parties. A sweep was conducted inside the perimeter and all bunkers were checked as a security measure. The area outside the perimeter was swept at daylight and two wounded NVA soldiers were detained.

Captain Robinson praised the A Company cooks who fought as infantry from two positions on the northwest. Their area took two mortar rounds, one on the bunker and one in the sleeping quarters with no casualties in either. When there was no sign of further enemy action, the cooks left their positions and prepared a hot breakfast by 0630 hours.

This was the first battle for First Lieutenant Donald Everett's 3d Platoon of C Trp, 1/4 Cav. "We had been sniped at a few times, hit a few land mines, but that was it. When we received this fire, every man performed tremendously." Lieutenant Everett, Captain Robinson and Lieutenant Pickett were all awarded Silver Stars for their actions at CAISSON VI.

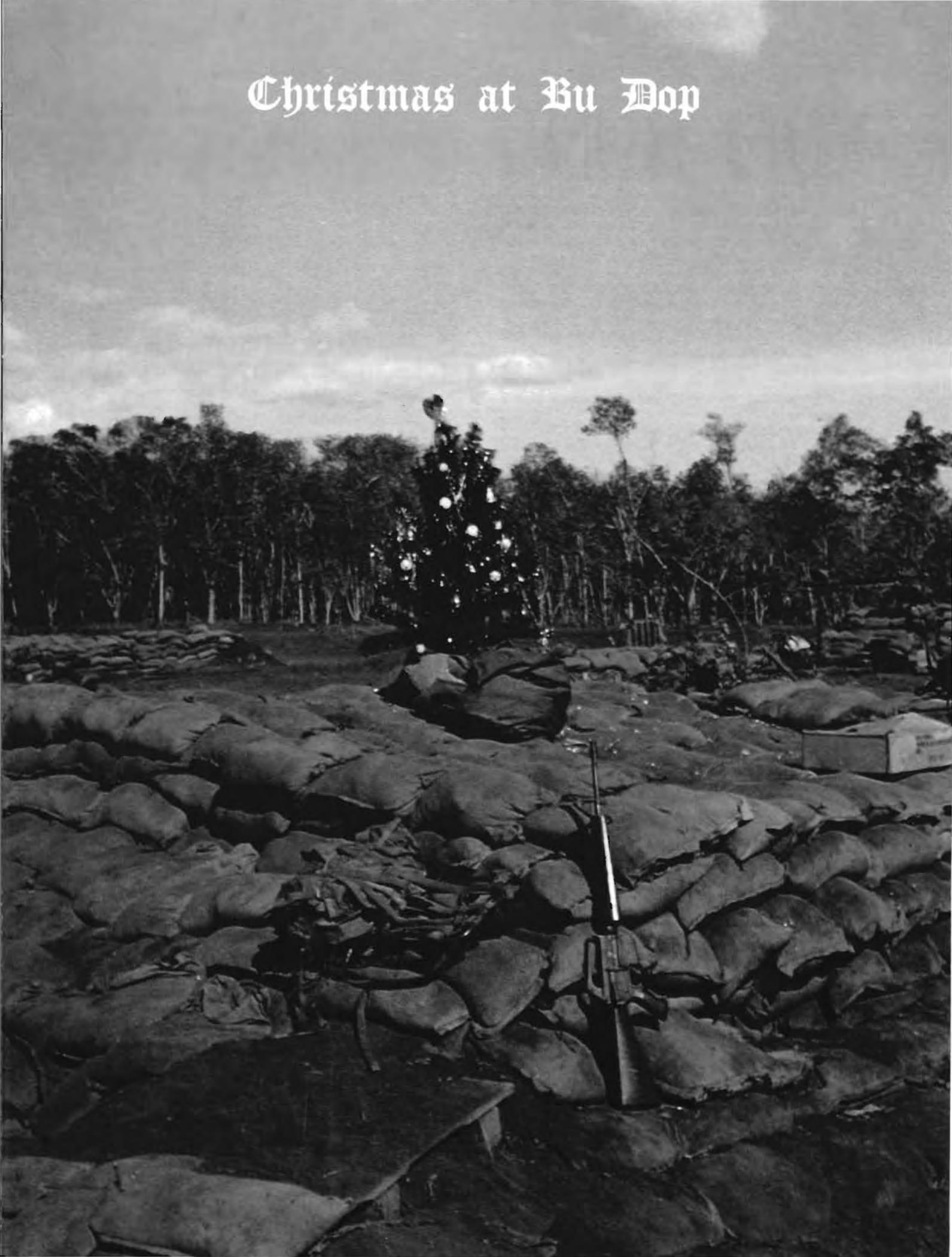
The BATTLE OF XA CAT cost the enemy, later identified as the 2d Bn, 165th NVA Regt, 143 killed by body count. Conservative estimates would place the dead around 205. Captured equipment included 35 AK-47s, 5 RPG-7s, 11 RPG-2s, 41 grenades and 35 bangalore torpedoes. BIG RED ONE casualties were only one killed and 17 wounded.

AN ATTEMPT to throw a grenade into a bunker at CAISSON VI proved fatal for this member of the 165th NVA Regiment. He was shot just prior to throwing the grenade into the bunker aperture.

MAJ William E. Daniel Jr.



Christmas at Bu Dop



XOM BUNG

FOLLOWING THE BATTLE OF XA CAT, there was very little contact with the enemy during the remaining days of December. Only small isolated incidents interrupted the cease-fire truce during the Christmas and New Year holidays.

Taking advantage of this lull in the war, some 8,000 BIG RED ONE troops were treated to the Bob Hope Christmas Show on 24 December in Lai Khe. Code-named Operation HOLLY 67, the show included Bob Hope, Barbara McNair, Raquel Welch, Miss World, Elaine Dunn, Phil Crosby, Earl Wilson and Les Brown and his Band of Renown. Chris Noel, the Division's official sweetheart, also paid a visit to the Fighting First during this period, traveling to several of the infantry NDPS and FSPBS.

During the early part of January, the Division continued its reconnaissance in force missions. The 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Max R. Pfanzer, was conducting its operations from FSPB NORMANDY I, about 4 miles east of Ben Cat and 30 miles north of Saigon, as part of Operation LAM SON 67.

At 0726 hours on 6 January, Company A, 2d Bn, 18th Inf, was air-assaulted into a landing zone (LZ) about four miles southwest of the FSPB. The unit began its search to the northwest of the LZ in a wooded area, crossing a stream and rice paddies before entering the woodline. Approximately 100 yards inside the woodline, the company encountered a cemetery. At 0930 hours as the lead platoon crossed the open



SP6 William H. McGibney

A "SWAMP RAT" from the 2d Bn, 18th Inf, reports his position during the fighting at XOM BUNG.

cemetery, several bursts of AK-47 rifle fire were received from about 20 yards further in the brush. Thus began the BATTLE OF XOM BUNG.

The order of march to the cemetery had been the 3d Platoon leading, followed by the command element and 1st Platoon, the Weapons Platoon and 2d Platoon. The Weapons Platoon was being utilized as a fourth rifle platoon, having left its mortars at the FSPB.

Captain Howard McAllister, company commander, ordered the 2d Platoon on line with the 3d Platoon. The 1st Platoon would cover the left side of the cemetery and the 4th Platoon would cover the right side.

Meanwhile, both the 2d and 3d platoons noted trenches and tunnel openings only a few yards into the underbrush and realized they had stumbled upon an enemy base camp. Captain McAllister requested artillery, helicopter light fire teams and tactical airstrikes.

The requested artillery was landing 600 yards in front of the company, and as soon as the dustoff was accomplished, it was brought in 300 yards closer. The company commander wanted the artillery to fall in the area of contact.

He ordered his men to withdraw 300 yards and establish a perimeter in the rice paddies. Airstrikes were brought in on the base camp and the light fire teams covered the company's withdrawal.

The communists ignored the gunships and followed the withdrawing platoons, keeping them engaged. The 4th Platoon was receiving fire from AK-47s, M-79 grenade launchers and RPGs and before reaching the rice paddies, stopped and established a base of fire to suppress the VC. As the platoon started moving again, four casualties were sustained and a company medic was killed. However, the platoon kept moving and tied in with the company in the paddy.

The VC had sent elements armed with RPGs down



SP6 William H. McGibney

AN INFANTRYMAN from the 2d Bn, 18th Inf, awaits the VC during the BATTLE OF XOM BUNG.

the left and right flanks of the company. The battalion intelligence officer, Captain Roger Harms, arrived overhead in a light observation helicopter and witnessed the VC running down the flanks of A Company. Sergeant Dempsey was wounded by RPG fragments during the withdrawal and Captain McAllister started in the direction of the wounded sergeant when he also received an abdominal wound. Captain McAllister was awarded the Silver Star for his actions.

By 1135 hours Colonel Pfanzelter arrived in the area by chopper and established a command post (CP) at a house 300 yards south of the woodline. He spoke briefly with the wounded company commander before he was evacuated.

Colonel Charles C. Thebauld, 2d Brigade commander, arrived overhead in a helicopter. Viewing the situation, he ordered the 2d Battalion (Mechanized), 2d Infantry to reinforce A Company.

Company B, 2d Bn (Mech), 2d Inf, was conducting operations about 3 miles north of the contact, and Company A, 2d Bn (Mech), 2d Inf, was about 5 miles south of the battle scene. Because of the rough terrain, both companies had to travel on Highway 13 to a point about 1½ miles west of the contact and follow a trail to the east.

Meanwhile, the Reconnaissance Platoon of the 2/18 Inf was lifted into the CP area at 1246 hours. A resupply of ammunition and water was brought in at 1255 hours and the A Company platoons were withdrawn into a perimeter around the CP to account for personnel. Four men could not be accounted for.

At 1350 hours, Colonel Pfanzelter placed the battalion's intelligence officer, Captain Harms, in command of A Company. Search parties were sent back to the last known sites of the missing individuals, and

received heavy sniper fire from the woodline, forcing the parties back.

The 2/2 (Mech) Inf was forced to move through the wooded area adjacent to the rice paddies since the armored personnel carriers (APCs) could not traverse the wet rice paddies. APCs from B Company located two of the missing men, both dead. Company B's lead platoon dismounted and began a search for the remaining missing. A third man was located, suffering from a state of shock. During this time, the platoon was fired on by the enemy.

A plan was then devised in which Company A, utilizing the Reconnaissance Platoon, 1st and 2d platoons, would move to the west flank and link up with the APCs of Company B and sweep through the area of contact to the east.

During this sweep, 58 VC bodies were located and one VC was detained. Captured were three AK-47s, one M-1 rifle, one CHICOM 7.62mm pistol and assorted documents. The forward air controller estimated an additional 15 VC killed.

The Reconnaissance Platoon secured the pickup zone (PZ) in the vicinity of the CP and elements of the 2/18 Inf were extracted at 1815 hours. Both 2/2 (Mech) Inf units returned in their vehicles to their respective NDPS without incident.

Artillery was called in on the base camp area throughout the night. The 2/18 Inf was air-assaulted into the area again the following morning at 0945 hours. The sweep turned up 27 more VC bodies and one detainee. At 1433 hours the 2/18 Inf returned to FSPB NORMANDY I.

Interrogation of the detainees revealed the enemy to be elements of the Phu Loi Battalion which had attacked Tan An on 28 December.



ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS from the 2d Battalion (Mechanized), 2d Infantry, aided the "Swamp Rats" at XOM BUNG.

THE TET

OFFENSIVE



DURING THE WANING DAYS of January, the enemy seemed to be avoiding contact with elements of the BIG RED ONE. However, because of massive supply movements by the VC, many high echelon commanders were fearful of some kind of all-out enemy offensive.

At 0300 hours on 31 January, the day that marked the beginning of the Lunar New Year for Orientals, the enemy attacked 35 major population centers and virtually all major allied basecamps throughout the Republic of Vietnam.

Saigon in the south and the ancient city of Hue in the north were the focal points of the attack. In Saigon the VC unleashed a suicide attack on the US Embassy and held the building for several hours before being routed by paratroopers and military police. Street fighting in both Saigon and Hue continued throughout the first five days of February.

The First Infantry Division's headquarters at Lai Khe came under a heavy rocket, mortar and recoilless rifle attack that lasted nearly an hour. When this attack ceased, the enemy struck at the Army of the

Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) outpost at Ben Cat, one mile south of Lai Khe. The ARVN's call for assistance was responded to immediately with helicopter gunships, artillery and cavalry support from the BIG RED ONE. Airstrikes from Bien Hoa Air Base were also called in on the attackers. Contact was broken at dawn and a sweep of the area turned up 48 enemy bodies.

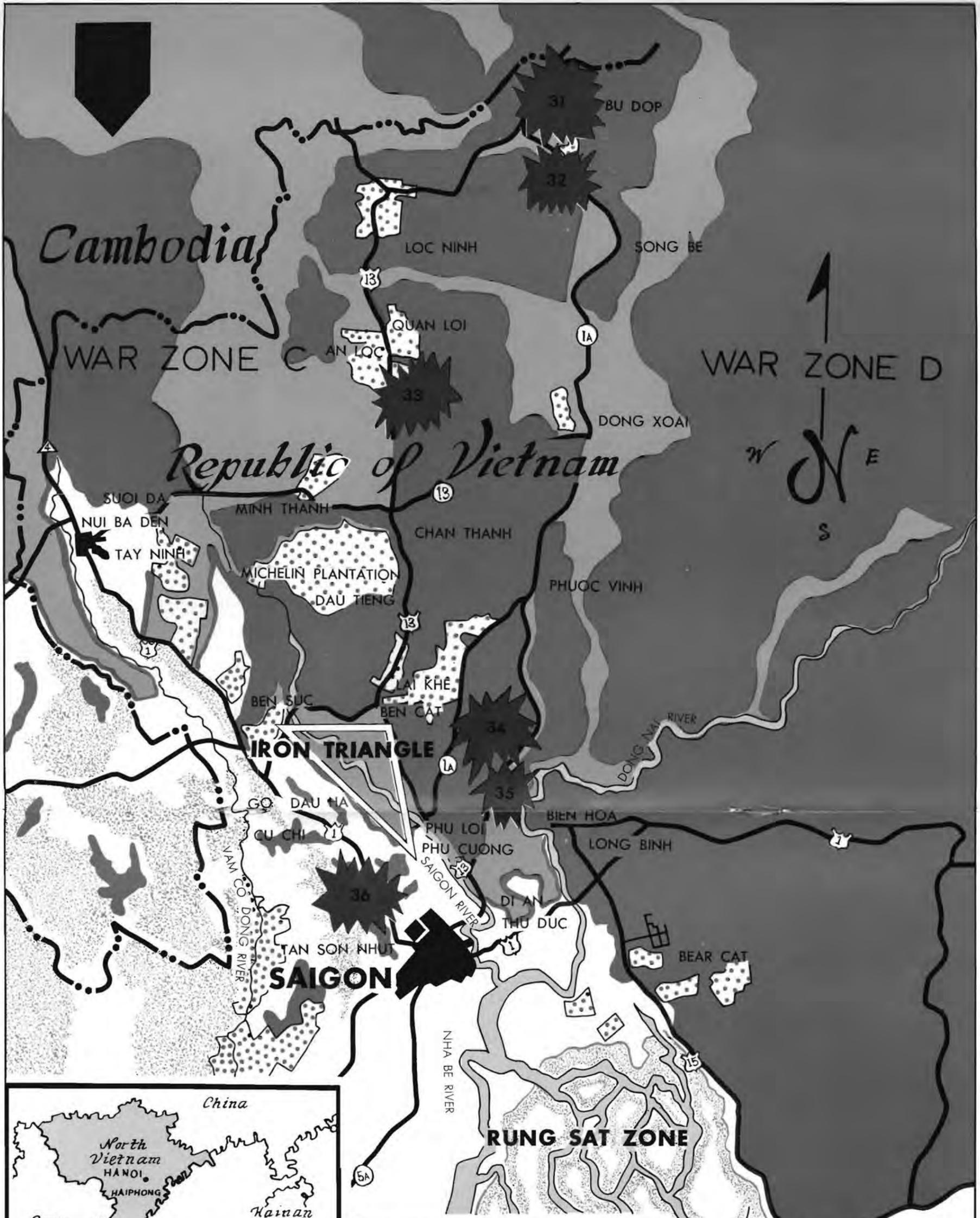
A few hours later the Division was called on to help secure the huge Tan Son Nhut Air base complex, home of the headquarters of the Military Assistance

Command, Vietnam. The 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry and A Troop, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, were immediately moved to the base, where they killed 16 enemy in their first contact.

In several scattered contacts during the first day of the TET OFFENSIVE, Division elements accounted for more than 80 enemy killed.

The first day of February was marked by scattered heavy contacts throughout the division area of operation, including a savage battle around the village of An My, 20 miles north of Saigon.

Photo by SP4 Dale Howell



DANGER
forward
Battle Map

	BU DOP 29-30 NOV 1967	P. 10
	HILL 172 8. DEC 1967	P. 13
	XA CAT 10 DEC 1967	P. 15
	XOM BUNG 6 JAN 1968	P. 18
	AN MY 1-2 FEB 1968	P. 25
	XOM MOI 2 FEB 1968	P. 29

	FORESTED
	GRASSLAND
	RUBBER
	MARSH

SP4 Dale Howell



TWO SOLDIERS from the BIG RED ONE inspect damage done to the US Embassy in Saigon during the TET attacks.

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SEARCHING the village of Thu Duc during TET are these soldiers from the 1st Bn, 18th Inf.



ARMORED CAVALRY assault vehicles roar down the streets of Saigon during the TET OFFENSIVE. The cavalry and the 1st Bn, 18th Inf, were sent to defend the capital.

SP4 Dale Howell



SOLDIERS of the 1st Bn, 18th Inf, survey the damage to the village of Thu Duc.

SP4 Dale Howell



AIDING the infantry in the cleanup of VC pockets of resistance at Thu Duc were tanks from the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry.

Photos by SGT Miroslav Vintoniv

BATTLE OF AN MY

AT 0920 HOURS ON 1 FEBRUARY, Company C, 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry, and a platoon of B Troop, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, departed the Phu Loi basecamp en route to a reconnaissance-in-force mission through the village of An My, less than a mile from the north gate.

As Company C entered the woodline on the east fringe of An My only 25 minutes later, Viet Cong security elements hit the reinforced company with a claymore, RPG and small arms fire. Light fire gunship teams from D Troop, 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav and Company A, 1st Aviation Battalion, were immediately scrambled from Phu Loi. Major Dannie E. George, acting battalion commander, viewed the situation from a light observation helicopter and directed Captain John P. Scotnichi, Company C commander, to deploy two platoons on line, bring the cavalry on line with the infantry and remain in contact. Major George then issued an order to Company D of the 1st Bn, 28th Inf to reinforce Company C. Company D at this time was conducting a similar mission through the hamlets of Binh Chaun, Tan Phuoc Khanh and Vinh Truong east of An My.

While the light fire team expended on the enemy, the infantry and cavalry made an attempt to overrun the VC, but heavy machinegun, RPG and small arms fire forced the US troops to remain in place.

Brigadier General Emil P. Eschenburg, acting divi-

sion commander, and Lieutenant Colonel John W. Seigle, 1/4 Cav commander, arrived on the scene. By this time, civilians were observed leaving the western edge of the village (pop. 1,768). Before artillery could be fired on the Viet Cong, who were using village dwellings for cover and concealment, clearance had to be obtained from the province and an announcement had to be made to civilians to clear the village.

The headquarters platoon, B Troop, 1/4 Cav, was ordered by the squadron commander to reinforce C Company, 1/28 Inf, and the attached cavalry platoon. The platoon moved up Highway 1A around to the northern end of the village and looped east to link up with C Company.

At 1105 hours, Colonel Seigle scrambled the Aerial Rifle Platoon (ARP) of D Troop and inserted it northwest of An My in a blocking position. This element also came under enemy fire. A light fire team on station killed three of the enemy.

An element of "dusters" (twin 40mm guns mounted on an M42A1) were ordered to proceed from Phu Loi to take up a blocking position southwest of An My, becoming OPCON to the 1/28 Inf. The "dusters" arrived at 1145 hours and shortly thereafter were given another mission to secure a landing zone (LZ) for the insertion of D Company, 1/28 Inf.

At 1200 hours, D Company received orders to move

SP4 EDWARD RUSSO, Everett, Mass., fires at an enemy position in the village of An My.





SMOKE BILLOWS high after an airstrike on enemy positions near the village of An My.

to the Phu Loi airstrip to prepare for insertion into the LZ on C Company's left flank. At the same time, A Company, 1/28 Inf, was alerted for movement from Di An into the battle area.

D Company's mission, upon insertion, was to link up with C Company's left flank, gain fire superiority and sweep to the west to Highway 1A with two platoons on line. After insertion, the 2d Platoon deployed to the left and came under intense small arms and machinegun fire. The LZ was considered too hot for further insertion; therefore, the remainder of D Company went into an alternate LZ to the rear of C Company. Captain Richard Carr, D Company commander, concentrated his efforts upon linking up his right flank with C Company, but it became apparent to him in the next few minutes that the Viet Cong force on the left was more formidable than first recognized. Two ACAVs and two *dusters* were moved to the left flank to assist the platoon in breaking contact.

One *duster* maneuvered broadside to the Viet Cong line of fire and was hit by two RPG rounds, blowing the crew from the vehicle. None were wounded seriously. One ACAV was also hit by an RPG round.

General Thuan granted province clearance for artillery to fire into An My and General Eschenburg gave the final US okay. A psychological operations mission then flew over the village from 1320 to 1410 hours warning civilians to evacuate the village. Artillery fire commenced immediately after the announcement.

At 1400 hours, the ARP was extracted from its blocking position and moved to a position west of the village to screen civilians leaving the village. A platoon size Regional Force element was also checking the evacuees.

At 1445 hours, A Company was heli-lifted from Di An to Phu Loi where General Eschenburg briefed the entire company on its mission. A Company was then lifted to the rear of C Company and moved on line to the right. The 1st Platoon, C Trp, 1/4 Cav, and two *dusters* were attached to A Company. The battalion mission at this point was to attack with three companies on line, isolate the enemy in the D Company area, with C and A Company driving westerly to Highway 1A. The cavalry platoon had not joined A Company as yet, but the decision was made at battalion level to begin the attack anyway as the main VC resistance seemed to be in the D Company area.

The attack began at 1600 hours. C Company had no problem in moving nor did the left flank of A Company. However, D Company could not overcome the resistance in its area. The right flank platoon of A Company encountered heavy resistance from the northern part of the village as it began to move forward. To protect both flanks of the battalion, the C Company advance had to be slowed and then stopped after advancing approximately 200 yards.

Within five minutes the cavalry platoon joined A Company. Captain Jeffrey L. Harvey, company commander, assigned one tank, two ACAVs and two *dusters* to his right flank platoon. This enabled the right flank to advance 25 to 30 yards against heavy resistance from small arms, RPG and machinegun fire.



TAKING AIM with his M-79 grenade launcher is this member of the 1st Bn, 28th Inf, at An My.

Specialist 4 Frank E. Ward, the left flank man, rolled into a ditch for cover and found himself with 14 dazed Viet Cong. Ward quickly killed all 14 with his M-16 and hand grenades. He was later awarded the Silver Star for his actions.

On the battalion left flank, D Company moved over the first berm at the woodline and into the woods when heavy small arms, RPG and machinegun fire from a second berm 60 to 75 yards in front stopped the advance. Artillery was called in on the enemy positions, supported by additional firepower from two tanks, two ACAVs and *dusters*. Two hours of continuous fire failed to suppress the enemy. Captain Carr was wounded by an RPG fragment during the bitter firefight.

Staff Sergeant Bernard Ryan of D Company distinguished himself during the advance on the first berm in the woodline. As the left flank was pinned down, Sergeant Ryan moved forward to the first berm and with grenades suppressed the Viet Cong fire coming from a tunnel complex. Then taking two men with him, he again moved forward and recovered a *duster* that had been abandoned when hit by RPG rounds. Because of his rapid action, the *duster* was put back in action by two crew members who had been slightly wounded. Ryan was awarded the Silver Star for his actions.

General Eschenburg ordered contact to be broken at 1800 hours with all units being withdrawn into the Phu Loi basecamp. Artillery and airstrikes were directed against An My throughout the night.

Aerial observers reported that artillery and airstrikes into the village caused 36 secondary explosions.

By 2400 hours, six tactical air sorties and 4,493 rounds of high explosive had been dealt to the Viet Cong.

Friendly casualties during the first day of the BATTLE OF AN MY were 5 killed and 43 wounded. Enemy losses were 197 killed by body count and 120 detained. Sixty-five of the total killed were reported by aerial observers and the large number of detainees came from the screening of individuals leaving the village earlier in the day.

During the night of 1 February, a battle plan was formulated for the following day. The 1/28 Inf, with three platoons of cavalry and four *dusters* attached, would conduct reconnaissance-in-force from south to north with three companies on line. A Company, 2d Bn, 16th Inf, moved to Phu Loi during the afternoon of 1 February, would establish a blocking position east of a stream about a half mile northwest of the village. The 1/28 Inf would advance with D Company on the east, C Company in the center and A Company on the west with Highway 1A acting as the west boundary.

The forces moved out the north gate of Phu Loi basecamp at 0845 hours and began their sweep at 0945 hours. One platoon of cavalry was attached to each infantry company.

D Company, with tanks and ACAVs interspersed on line, encountered the first resistance from snipers in spider holes and continued thereafter to fight house-to-house and spider hole-to-spider hole throughout the sweep north. A Company met only light resistance, but C Company encountered heavy resistance on the right flank.

D Company had two tanks and two ACAVs at-

MEMBERS of the "Black Lions" advance into the woodline during the BATTLE OF AN MY.





A MARKSMAN (above) fires at a sniper during the bitter fighting for the village of An My.

tached to the right flank, two ACAVS in the center platoon and two flamethrower-equipped ACAVS and one tank as rear security. The snipers were flushed and eliminated.

Meanwhile, A Company, 2/16 Inf, northwest of An My, reported its patrol in heavy contact. Colonel Seigle left Major George in command at An My and flew to the new area of contact. A Company had taken up its position east of the stream and a patrol consisting of a fire team supported by an M-60 machinegun crew was sent north to check the area east of the stream. At 1034 hours, the patrol received fire at the opening of a ravine. The company commander, Captain Robert D. Frazier, led a reaction force squad to the location and linked up with the patrol 20 minutes later. An artillery observer and light fire team had been requested and came on station.

Sixty to 80 Viet Cong were observed north of the ravine by the artillery observer and artillery was placed in that area and to the east. The gunships expended along the stream.

The enemy maneuvered to within 20 meters of the A Company element and, under covering fire of at least two machineguns, flanked the element from the south. Captain Frazier ordered the 3d Platoon, moving up from the south, but still 200 yards away, to take the enemy under fire and to drive them off. At 1128 hours, Colonel Seigle ordered the ARP of D Trp, 1/4 Cav into the area southeast of the contact to link up with the 3d Platoon.

The Reconnaissance Platoon, 1/28 Inf, was inserted

into the area of contact in a blocking position on the southeast. B Company, 2/16 Inf, was inserted on the north and swept south making contact with an unknown number of VC, killing five. Contact was broken at 1700 hours. The 3d Platoon and the ARP swept the area, finding 30 enemy bodies. A Company losses were 9 killed and 2 wounded.

Meanwhile, the 1/28 Inf continued to sweep north through An My. D Company encountered increasing numbers of enemy in spider holes, tunnels and houses. Artillery, which had been concentrated in the northern portion of the village, was shifted closer in support of the advancing units. Light fire teams supported by making passes from east to west. A 90mm tank gun was used against houses which the enemy was using as cover. The debris was set on fire and, in most instances, exploded as did haystacks that were ignited.

Often, the enemy was easy to locate as they dropped their packs near the place they sought cover. Both cannister and flamethrowers were used to oust the VC from their hiding places. Not all of the enemy were flushed as rear elements continued to receive sniper fire after the tanks and ACAVS had already swept the area. Sergeant Ryan, who received the Silver Star for action on the previous day, was killed by such a sniper.

A Company had little contact, encountering only two snipers throughout the day and detaining three wounded VC hiding in holes. Otherwise, it was a slow, tedious house-to-house search. C Company had the same experience as D Company, but to a lesser degree. The sweep of An My was completed at approximately 1900 hours.

Interrogation of detainees revealed the enemy force to be elements of the 273d VC Regiment. Total VC losses during the two-day BATTLE OF AN MY were 372 killed. US losses were 18 killed and 49 wounded.

Vietnam Battles—36
Xom Moi

ON 2 FEBRUARY A Troop, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry became OPCON to the 3d Squadron, 4th Cavalry of the 25th Infantry Division. The cavalrymen's mission was to screen the left flank of the 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry, 25th Division, on a reconnaissance-in-force sweep immediately north of Tan Son Nhut Air Base.

At 1100 hours, the infantry made contact with an enemy force and observation aircraft reported the VC fleeing north into a village complex. A Troop proceeded north to block the VC along a northeast-southwest road and pin down the enemy in the village complex.

At 1300 hours, after turning on the northeasterly road, the Viet Cong fired a claymore on the lead vehicle and heavy contact ensued. Automatic weapons and RPGs were utilized against the cavalrymen from the village complex. Enemy moving across an open area in an attempt to reach the complex were also engaged. Automatic weapons fire and RPGs from the south were halted by US gunships. Two armored cavalry assault vehicles (ACAVs) were knocked out during the first 40 minutes of the firefight.

Fighting was so intense at this time that the wounded could not be extracted safely. The 3d Platoon attempted to cross the road and move through the village but wet terrain and congestion prevented the maneuver.

The heaviest volume of fire was coming from the western end of the village. One tank and two ACAVs moved on the road to the western portion of the

village, supported by the 1st Platoon's fire from the south. By 1520 hours all resistance in the village was halted and contact broken. Air and artillery were brought in on the area.

VC losses to A Troop were 46 killed. US losses were only 14 wounded.

FOLLOWING THE BATTLE OF XOM MOI, action became lighter throughout the Division's area of operations, but the toll of communist dead continued to mount. BIG RED ONE units at Tan Son Nhut killed six enemy and found 79 bodies killed earlier. A total of 143 enemy dead were accounted for by Division units during the day.

Meanwhile, the Division basecamps at Lai Khe, Quan Loi and Phu Loi continued to receive rocket and mortar fire, sustaining only minor damage and very light casualties.

During the next two days, 4 and 5 February, the action became more and more scattered and sporadic as the VC offensive lost momentum. Some 142 enemy troops died during these two days under the onslaught of BIG RED ONE units, bringing the total enemy dead to more than 800 for the first six days of the offensive. A total of 41 First Infantry Division soldiers were killed during the same period.

Although the enemy gained the offensive for a short period of time, TET can be classified as a total failure. The sneak offensive, planned, according to intelligence sources, as far back as September 1967, cost the enemy 21,330 killed from 1800 hours on 29 January through 2400 hours 5 February. More than 60,000 communists participated in the offensive. Allied losses during the week were 1,729, including 546 Americans.

FORMING UP for a sweep during the BATTLE OF XOM MOI are these armored cavalry assault vehicles of the 1st Sqn, 4th Cav.



Change of Command

ON 8 MARCH 1968, Major General John H. Hay turned over command of the First Infantry Division to Major General Keith L. Ware in change of command ceremonies in Di An.

Thus General Ware, a Medal of Honor winner, became the 39th commanding general of the First Division. After 13 months at the helm of the BIG RED ONE, General Hay became the deputy commanding general of II Field Force Vietnam.

General William C. Westmoreland, then commander of US forces in Vietnam and currently the Army Chief of Staff, attended the ceremonies.

"As this command changes from one highly professional career officer to another," General Westmoreland said, "I...congratulate General Hay on a brilliant performance. Under General Hay's leadership the high reputation of the First Infantry Division has not only been perpetuated but it has been enhanced."

MG KEITH L. WARE, new commander, gives the colors to SGM Joseph Venable, division sergeant major.

"The Division has established a reputation for itself. Again in this war, as in other wars, the BIG RED ONE has established an enviable reputation. I congratulate you, General Ware, on your selection to command this Division. And I charge you to carry on in the great spirit of the BIG RED ONE."

General Hay spoke next. "For the past 13 months I have had the privilege and honor of commanding the first and finest division in the Army. I think it's no secret that I was very reluctant to give up this command. But this must be. I'm very pleased to turn it over to General Ware. He's an outstanding soldier and a proven leader. And I know he will give the Division the leadership it deserves."

General Ware answered, "I pledge to you, General Westmoreland, to my fellow soldiers in the BIG RED ONE, that I will, as General Hay has charged, consider no mission too difficult, and no sacrifice too great—the BIG RED ONE will always be first."

Photos by SP4 Bob Cooper



GEN WESTMORELAND addresses troops during change of command ceremonies in Di An.



MG JOHN H. HAY bids farewell to the BIG RED ONE.



ADDRESSING his troops for the first time is MG Keith L. Ware.

Quyét Thang

DURING THE EARLY PART OF MARCH contact with the enemy was light and scattered throughout the division's tactical area of responsibility (TAOR). Under its new commander, Major General Keith L. Ware, the BIG RED ONE launched Operation QUYET THANG (Resolve to Win) on 11 March in Binh Duong Province. Emphasis was placed on interdiction of enemy supply and exfiltration routes.

The 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry "Blue Spaders," commanded by Lieutenant Colonel F. G. Stephenson, were the first to engage the enemy in the new operation. On 13 March, the battalion was conducting a reconnaissance-in-force in the vicinity of Chanh Luu, a hamlet controlled by VC infrastructure about five miles east of Ben Cat. At 1205 hours, D Company, reinforced by elements of the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, came under intense RPG and small arms fire. The infantrymen, supported by cannister fire from tanks, routed the VC in a four-hour battle. Resulting losses for the enemy were 23 killed. Friendly casualties were one killed and three wounded.

The following day a reconnaissance-in-force into the same general area netted contact for the 1/26 Inf and B and C Troop, 1/4 Cav. The contact was supported by artillery, gunships and airstrikes. The battle lasted about three hours. Enemy deaths amounted to 34 while US losses were one killed and 14 wounded.

The Division continued to concentrate on Chanh Luu, searching for the enemy's suspected base camp in the area. On 15 March the 1/26th Inf (-) and the 2/28th Inf (-) located the base camp during an air assault about two miles southeast of Chanh Luu.

Fifty bunkers, tunnel complexes and an underground mess hall were discovered and destroyed. Twelve additional VC bodies were found during a sweep of the area.

Beginning on 22 March the BIG RED ONE turned its attention to the area of the *Iron Triangle* west of Ben Cat.

Although there was no individually significant contact, the accumulative statistics for the 16 days of fighting were significant. A total of 190 VC were killed and three detained. Equipment and supplies captured or destroyed included 16 individual weapons, 10 crew-served weapons, 61 mines, 113 grenades, 510 pounds of explosives, 6 radios, 8900 pounds of cement, 103 pounds of documents, 3 sampans, 31 bicycles, 508 bunkers, 57 RPG rounds, 13 recoilless rifle rounds, 15 mortar rounds and 38.3 tons of rice.

Following the success in the *Iron Triangle*, the Division again concentrated its efforts in the Chanh Luu area. On 3 April the Reconnaissance Platoon, 2d Battalion, 16th Infantry, established an ambush site, one mile east of Chanh Luu along a suspected enemy route into the hamlet. At 2145 hours the 22-man ambush was executed against a platoon-size force, killing 13.

Operation QUYET THANG ended on 7 April. During the successful operation, BIG RED ONE elements killed 602 enemy and detained 20. US losses were 29 killed and 332 wounded.

Operation TOAN THANG (Certain Victory) began on 8 April and was still continuing when *DANGER FORWARD* went to press. Through 20 July more than 1,500 enemy had been killed in the operation.

THREE MEMBERS of Company C, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry, and their scout dog, "Fritz", pose with their prize find—a 122mm rocket set up for firing. The discovery took place during Operation QUYET THANG.



PFC Anthony Rael



PFC Anthony Rael



SP4 E. E. Cousins



"BLUE SPADERS" (above left) of the 1st Bn, 26th Inf, demolish VC bunkers in a basecamp discovered during Operation QUYET THANG. (Top right) An enemy bunker is checked by a soldier of the 1st Bn, 26th Inf, during a sweep through the Iron Triangle. (Center right) A bunker complex near Song Be is checked by members of the 1st Bn, 28th Inf. (Below left) First Lieutenant Louis Scipioni of the 1st Bn, 28th Inf, calls for artillery support during Operation QUYET THANG. (Below right) A tank and crew of Company B, 2d Battalion, 34th Armor, moves into an NDP along Highway 13 during Operation QUYET THANG.

SP4 E. E. Cousins



SGT Ron Johns





Photos by
SP4 Bob Cooper

CPT JAMES KIRISITS (opposite page) takes intelligence information on radio phone for G-2 operations. (Above) Coordinating artillery for the Division are, from left, SGM John W. Maxwell, MAJ John S. Nettles Jr. and SFC John H. Wolford. (Below) The men of G-3 operations utilize the most radio phones in DTOC... and they need every one of them.

DTOC

BY SP5 JOHN W. MERRILL

THE VIETNAM WAR requires a more mobile and reactionary fighting force than ever before. To insure that the BIG RED ONE can meet these requirements, all operations are controlled from a centralized location—the Division Tactical Operations Center (DTOC).

Situated in a large, H-shaped, reinforced concrete bunker in Lai Khe, the DTOC is virtually the nerve center of the division, coordinating all of the BIG RED ONE's tactical operations.

Located in the DTOC are: tactical operations (G-3), intelligence (G-2), aircraft coordinating center (ACC), fire support element (FSE), division transportation office (DTO) and the Air Force liaison officer.





ONE OF THE BUSIEST sections in DTOC is the aircraft coordinating center. Men like, from left, MAJ Peter Warren, PFC Frank W. Gradl and MAJ Robert H. Oglesby are responsible for making the BIG RED ONE truly airmobile.

After elements of the division headquarters moved from Di An to Lai Khe, the DTOC operated in scattered tents and vans. According to Major William H. Wilcox, in charge of G-3 operations at the time, "We really had considerable confusion when we first set up here, mainly because everything was so scattered. We needed a more centralized location."

After working under these conditions for three months, Major Wilcox submitted a plan for construction of the DTOC.

"It was finished not a moment too soon, because only five days after moving into the new complex, the Viet Cong launched their TET OFFENSIVE, throwing numerous rockets and mortars into the base camp."

The DTOC enabled the division to carry out its operations smoothly and efficiently throughout the entire offensive.

Making up the heart of the DTOC are G-3 and G-2 operations, located in the center of the bunker. According to Major Ernest L. Myers, G-3 controls the resources of the division.

"We are responsible for the planning, execution and following up of an operation," he related.

G-3 operations controls all hot lines into and out of the DTOC. Whenever one of the units in the field makes contact with the enemy or discovers anything significant, the information is radioed into G-3 operations. It is then recorded so the center can keep a running account of what is happening within the tactical area of operation any time during the day or night.

Working closely with G-3 is G-2 operations, under the direction of Major R. W. Wilmot. The G-2 plays a vital role in division operations because it provides intelligence information such as keeping tabs on the movement, size and strength of enemy units.

Aiding G-2 operations is the G-2 air section which utilizes observation planes equipped with radar and

infrared components and helicopters to hunt intelligence data.

The BIG RED ONE is highly dependent on the use of aircraft for carrying out many of its maneuvers and resupply missions. The responsibility of making these aircraft available is the job of the aircraft coordinating center (ACC).

Under the supervision of Major Peter J. Warren, the ACC coordinates all rotor aircraft used by the division. "The BIG RED ONE is the only division with its own ACC," Major Warren commented, "and this allows the division to make maximum use of all aircraft."

The ACC works closely with the G-3 operations in order to keep aircraft missions running smoothly. For example, when the G-3 is required to airlift a company of troops, the transportation must be arranged with ACC. Working in two shifts twenty-four hours a day, the men of ACC are continuously busy.

"We are supposed to be given a twenty-four hour notice," related Major Warren, "but if something with a high priority arises, then we have to work it in. Last-minute changes can be nerve-racking after we have already arranged the schedule."

All aircraft controlled by ACC are provided by the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, and the 1st Aviation Battalion, both organic to the division. ACC also utilizes aircraft from the 11th Aviation Battalion of II Field Force, Vietnam. The 11th Aviation Battalion provides one company of CH-47s (Chinooks), three companies of UH1 (Huey) assault helicopters and five OIGs (observation planes). One of the most important functions of the ACC is to provide gunships to support troops in contact with the enemy. ACC also provides a courier chopper for administrative business and, as a courtesy, books passengers on a stand-by basis.

Never before in warfare have the ground forces had

the extensive air support that is afforded them in Vietnam today. To insure that the BIG RED ONE receives this vital air support is the responsibility of the Air Force liaison section in DTOC, which is directed by Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Francis P. Farrell.

"Any contact involving ground forces will receive priority for our air support," explained Colonel Farrell. "When an infantry unit makes contact and needs air support the request is given to us by G-3 operations. The Air Force in turn decides the requirements and type of aircraft to be used."

Representing the division artillery in the DTOC is the fire support element (FSE). Its mission is to advise the G-3 on methods for utilizing artillery. It also has to keep the artillery units informed on the requirements expected of them.

According to Major Ronald A. Pistone, "Our most important duty is to insure the men in contact the best fire support that is available."

Planning and coordinating all road and fixed-wing aircraft travel throughout the division is the job of the division transportation office (DTO). DTO has control of division convoys, insuring that the vehicles will arrive at their destination quickly and safely. Ninety per cent of the supply movement throughout the division is done by road convoys. Most of this is along Highway 13, known as "Thunder Road."

According to Major Gayle G. Ward, division transportation officer, many of the convoys are now becom-

ing routine, "but we still face the evident threat of the Viet Cong."

A light fire team at a key station between the traveling areas is provided by ACC. Even a routine job can become dangerous in minutes. "If a big contact should break out, we have to adjust to the situation and be ready to get critical supplies such as fuel, ammunition and water to the area."

To transport supplies from Saigon to the First Division, trucks are provided by the 48th Transportation Group. If the trucks cannot handle all of the supplies or cannot get into the area, it is necessary to carry the supplies by fixed-wing aircraft. The aircraft, usually C-130s, are obtained by II Field Force from the Air Force.

Major Ward said the best way to sum up the efforts of the BIG RED ONE transportation office was once said by the commander of the 48th Transportation Group, "The First Infantry Division runs the safest, most well-organized and best convoys of any outfit in the United States Army."

Also located in the DTOC is an air-conditioned briefing room, used for briefing the commanding general, chief of staff and other vital division personnel. Whenever a distinguished visitor is in the division area, he is usually briefed by the operations officers in the DTOC.

The Division Tactical Operations Center, the nerve center of the BIG RED ONE, makes the soldier in the field the most mobile and efficient infantryman ever.

A DAILY BRIEFING of the commanding general and his staff takes place in an air-conditioned room in the DTOC. From right, front row, are MG Keith L. Ware, division commander; BG Orwin C. Talbott, assistant division commander; COL Henry J. Schroeder, division artillery commander; and COL Buckner M. Creel, Support Command commander.



DUAL



ROLE



Photos by SP6 Jay Smith

ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALISTS are often mistakenly classified as second-rate soldiers, but the men of the 1st Administration Company, based in Di An, are doing a good job of changing this image.

These specialists by day are also very capable soldiers by night. The company provides administrative support for the Division as well as defending a large section of perimeter in Di An.

The largest company in the First Infantry Division, 1st Admin provides a multitude of services for members of the **BIG RED ONE**. Company personnel work in the finance office,



staff judge advocate's office, chaplain's office, information office, inspector general's office, education center and the adjutant general's office, which includes special services, personnel services division, administrative services division and the postal section.

Finance and personnel services are the two largest sections in the company. The nearly 100 finance and 200 personnel services clerks process 3,000 men in and out of the Division each month.

The company is responsible for the defense of 800 meters of perimeter at Di An basecamp. Visitors to

the company have called the 1st Admin Co perimeter the best in the First Division and one of the best in Vietnam.

"Our defense perimeter is one of the best," Captain W. A. Chubb of Ormond Beach, Fla., company commander, related. "The reason for this status is that the men seem to accept the duty of improving and defending our sector of the perimeter as a personal challenge."

The company mans 16 bunkers and a guard tower on the perimeter in Di An. Eight of the bunkers are equipped with M-60 machineguns. Each bunker maintains a large supply of ammunition, including machinegun, small arms, 40mm and grenades.

The outer sector of the perimeter is protected by land mines, claymores and fougasse bombs. The claymores and fougasse can be operated electronically from within each machinegun emplacement. Surrounding the perimeter is a high fence, and concertina wire, loaded with trip flares, is placed in strategic locations.

Even if the enemy breached the outer wire and land mine field, he would have difficulty in getting past the fougasse and claymores or the withering machinegun fire. One flip of a switch could turn the entire perimeter in front of the bunkers into an inferno.

Backing up the guards in the bunkers is a 200-man ready reaction force and a 50-man secondary line of defense team.

The most significant feature of the perimeter is that it was entirely built by administrative personnel. The responsibility of maintaining the perimeter's effectiveness is handled by First Lieutenant Ulf R. Heller of Oak Park, Mich.; Staff Sergeant Robert E. Beasley of Columbus, Ga.; and Staff Sergeant Thomas C. Reed of Harrodsburg, Ky.

The ability of these clerks to maintain a high efficien-



PAYING THE TROOPS is the biggest job faced by the finance section, of 1st Admin Co.



BOTH the personnel services division and the finance section process some 3,000 BIG RED ONE troops monthly.

cy in their dual role can be partly attributed to the week-long jungle training school for replacements.

"Each man in our company must go through this training program, which includes a real night ambush," First Sergeant Carl J. Cook, Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., remarked.

As the company's first sergeant, Cook faces a difficult job keeping track of all personnel. Many of the various special staff sections assigned to the company operate at locations other than Di An, such as Quan Loi, Phu Loi, Lai Khe and Tan Son Nhut Air Base, Saigon.

This wide distribution of company personnel also creates many challenges for Specialist 5 Bill Mathis, Alabaster, Ala. Mathis' job as morning report clerk requires him to keep abreast of the whereabouts of each member of the company, including assignments, promotions, temporary duty, etc.

The size of the company also creates a heavy burden for Staff Sergeant Larry Huddleston, Decatur, Ill., and Specialist 4 David A. Reams, Plainview, Tex. As supply sergeant and mail clerk respectively, they also play a major role in serving the company personnel.

"I think the men of Admin Co have proven that they can provide the best in administrative support while carrying out an equally important tactical mission," Captain Chubb asserted. "These two missions require many long hours, a lot of sweat, and a determination that our company will live up to the motto of the BIG RED ONE."

In a recent inspection conducted by the inspector general's office, the company received an outstanding rating. The company was recommended recently for the Meritorious Unit Citation.

The men of 1st Admin Co are truly specialists by day and soldiers by night—and efficient at both.



TODAY'S ARMY is more efficient than ever before as evidenced by the use of computers such as this one in the machine branch of personnel services division in Di An.



OPERATING UNIVAC computers is just one of many specialized skills performed by members of 1st Admin Co. (Below) CPT W. A. Chubb, company commander, checks a field telephone in the command bunker of 1st Admin Co.



KEEPING track of the many people assigned to 1st Admin Co is the job of company clerk SP5 Bill Mathis



SP4 JIM BORYO, Markham, Ill., prepares to start IBM card machine.



CHECKING the electric switchboard in one of the Admin bunkers is 1SG Carl J. Cook.



PREPARING to detonate a fougasse bomb is SP4 Carl Wettschrech, St. Paul, Minn.



A BALL OF FIRE leaps into the air as a fougasse bomb is detonated on the perimeter at Admin Co. This is what's in store for any enemy trying to breach the perimeter.



GUARD MOUNT is taken seriously by the men of 1st Admin Co.



CLOSELY INSPECTING a man's weapon is CW2 N. E. Horton, officer of the guard.



EFFICIENCY on guard duty is as paramount as efficiency in the office for the men of Admin Co.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY

BATTLES	UNITS INVOLVED	US COMMANDERS	ENEMY KIA*
Bu Dop (29-30 Nov 67) <i>Story on Page 10</i>	1/28 Inf A Btry, 2/33 Arty VC 3d Bn, 271st Regt	US 1/28 Inf—LTC James F. Cochran 2/33 Arty—CPT Frederick N. Halley	90
Hill 172 (8 Dec 67) <i>Story on Page 13</i>	1/2 Inf B Btry, 1/5 Arty A Btry, 2/33 Arty VC 3d Bn, 273d Regt	US 1/2 Inf—LTC Mortimer L. O'Conner B Btry, 1/5 Arty—CPT Ernest Schimdt A Btry, 2/33 Arty—CPT Walter Wills	140
Xa Cat (10 Dec 67) <i>Story on Page 15</i>	A Co, 1/18 Inf 3d Plt, C Trp, 1/4 Cav A Btry, 6/15 Arty C Btry, 8/6 Arty VC Elements of 165th NVA Regt	US A Co, 1/18 Inf—CPT Karl Robinson 3d Plt, C Trp, 1/4 Cav—1LT Donald Everett A Btry, 6/15 Arty—CPT Harry Downing	205
Xom Bung (6 Jan 68) <i>Story on Page 18</i>	2/18 Inf 2/2 (Mech) VC Elements of Phu Loi Bn	US 2/18 Inf—LTC Max R. Pfanzelter	100
An My (1-2 Feb 68) <i>Story on Page 25</i>	1/28 Inf D & B Trp, 1/4 Cav VC 273d Regt elements	US 1/28 Inf—MAJ Dannie George 1/4 Cav—LTC John W. Seigle	372
Xom Moi (2 Feb 68) <i>Story on Page 29</i>	A Trp, 1/4 Cav VC unknown	US A Trp, 1/4 Cav—CPT Frederick W. Shirley	47 *KIA—Killed In Action

 Small Arms	 Infantry Unit	 Listening Post	<h2>Map Symbols</h2>
 Machinegun	 Artillery Unit	 Squad	
 .50 cal Machinegun	 Armored Cavalry Unit	 More Than Squad Less Than Platoon	
 Recoilless Rifle	 Unit Command Post	 Platoon	
 Mortar	 Ground Assault Axis of Advance	 Co, Btry or Trp	
 Direction		 Bn or Squadron	
		 Brigade	
		 Air Assault Axis of Advance	
		 Helicopter Landing Zone	

Photographs for this issue were taken by Division Information specialists, 121st Signal Battalion photographers and by commercial news service correspondents who kindly consented to use of their material by the 1st Division. Grateful acknowledgement is made to 121st and 69th Signal Bn photo lab personnel who developed the photographs. The narrative and statistics appearing herein were authenticated by the 17th Military History Detachment.

SP6 William H. McGibney



"BLACK LIONS" of the 2d Battalion, 28th Infantry, move out from their helicopters in an assault at a new landing zone. The unit was conducting reconnaissance-in-force missions 15 miles east of Lai Khe as part of Operation TOAN THANG.

BACK COVER

ROUNDING a corner in Thu Duc is an armored cavalry assault vehicle of the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry. Photo by SP4 Dale Howell.

