

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

HEADQUARTERS
1ST SQUADRON 9TH CAVALRY
1ST CAVALRY DIVISION (AIRMOBILE)
APO 96490

AID-55-3

8 January 1969

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report

TO: Commanding General
1st Cavalry Division (Airmbl)
ATTN: AVDACT-DT
APO 96490

1. Name of Operation: Jeb Stuart III.
2. Dates of Operation: 17 May 1968 - 2 November 1968
3. Location: Northern I Corps Tactical Zone
4. Control Headquarters: 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile)
5. Reporting Officer:

Sodn CODate

LTC Richard W. Diller

17 May 68 - 5 June 68

MAJ Harold L. Rose

6 June 68 - 17 June 68

LTC Richard W. Diller

18 June 68 - 7 July 68

LTC William C. Rousse

8 July 68 - 1 Nov 68

Hq TroopDate

CPT Darrel A. Harral

17 May 68 - 11 Aug 68

1LT Earl D. Eikenberry

12 Aug 68 - 26 Aug 68

CPT Darrel A. Harral

27 Aug 68 - 4 Sept 68

CPT Alfred W. Heustis Jr.

5 Sept 68 - 27 Oct 68

CPT Frank L. Alverson Jr.

28 Oct 68 - 1 Nov 68

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS

DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS

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A TroopDate

LTC Clemon G. Courtney	17 May 68 - 29 May 68
CPT Frank L. Alverson	30 May 68 - 7 June 68
MAJ James W. Napier	8 June 68 - 19 Sept 68
CPT Harry E. McCloud	20 Sept 68 - 5 Oct 68
MAJ James W. Napier	6 Oct 68 - 10 Oct 68
MAJ Robert E. Poston	11 Oct 68 - 1 Nov 68

B TroopDate

MAJ Jimmy D. Weeks	17 May 68 - 8 June 68
MAJ Charles T. Gilmer	9 June 68 - 18 July 68
MAJ Frederick N. Olson	19 July 68 - 1 Nov 68

C TroopDate

MAJ Allen L. Matthews Jr.	17 May 68 - 14 July 68
MAJ Thomas H. Sherron	15 July 68 - 27 July 68
MAJ Allen L. Matthews	28 July 68 - 18 Aug 68
MAJ John M. Toolson	19 Aug 68 - 10 Oct 68
MAJ George H. Calvert	11 Oct 68 - 25 Oct 68
MAJ John M. Toolson	26 Oct 68 - 1 Nov 68

D TroopDate

CPT James R. Howe	17 May 68 - 18 May 68
CPT Carl H. Chaboudy	19 May 68 - 17 Aug 68
1LT Earnest L. Daniels	18 Aug 68 - 4 Sept 68
CPT Darrel A. Harral	5 Sept 68 - 1 Nov 68

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6. Task Organization:

a. Initial Organization - Hq, A, B, C, and D Troops.

b. Subsequent Organization - D Troop went under operational control of the 2D Brigade for the major portion of Jeb Stuart III. The Long Range Patrol (IRRP) came under operational control of 1/9 in the closing days of Jeb Stuart III; other task organization did not change.

7. Supporting Forces: None

8. Intelligence: See 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) Intsum

9. Mission: Conduct reconnaissance in general support of elements of 1st Cavalry Division in operation Jeb Stuart III.

10. Concept of Operation: The 1/9 Cav was in general support of the Division during the entire operation. The exception to this was the placing of D Troop under operational control of the 2D Brigade for the major portion of the operation. The Air Cavalry Troops supported each Brigade with general reconnaissance and conducted other reconnaissance on a mission type basis. D Troop conducted dismounted ground reconnaissance in conjunction with elements of 3/5 Armored Cavalry Squadron as well as mounted operations in support of 2D Brigade throughout Jeb Stuart III. Also during the operation, A Troop was tasked with general support of the Marines 1st Marine Division and the 3D Marine Division on several occasions and B Troop was in general support of the 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) during an operation in the A Shau Valley.

11. Execution:

a. The first significant action the 1/9 encountered during Jeb Stuart III occurred shortly after a rocket attack on Camp Evans destroyed the ASP. B Troop's aero rifle platoon and D Troop were inserted vicinity of LZ Long (YD 573217). As some of the elements were being inserted, they came under intense AW fire from an unknown sized enemy force. Results of the encounter were 6 friendly KIA, 6 friendly WIA, 1 UH-1H shot down with enemy casualties unknown. B Troop gunships, ARA, tube artillery and airstrikes were called into the area. The enemy broke contact and friendly troops were extracted with no further casualties. This action seemed to initiate extensive operations in this area by the 3D Brigade throughout Jeb Stuart III.

b. In the month of May, all Air Cavalry Troops concentrated on

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reconnaissance of Base Areas 101 and 114. The "Street Without Joy" also received heavy emphasis as D Troop was inserted into an area vicinity of YD 4851 and conducted operations there from 23 - 25 May. A D-4 bulldozer was also employed to destroy the bunker complexes uncovered. Results of this operation were 1 arms cache uncovered, 5 tons of rice captured, 2 NVA KIA and several detainees.

c. During the month of June, Jeb Stuart III continued and 1/9 elements continued with extensive air and ground reconnaissance. During the month, A Troop worked with 1st Brigade in conducting reconnaissance of the northern portion of the AO and Base Area 101. -On 8 June, "A" Troop Blues (Aero-rifle Platoon) were inserted at YD 289476 and found 11 75 MM recoilless rifle rounds and 5 " of documents; both were evacuated. B Troop conducted several very successful operations with RF's and FF's during the month of June. Several enemy KIA were accounted for in these operations which were mainly centered around combined operations with the RF/FF and B Troop Blues. On 18 June LZ Evans received a rocket attack from the mountain range just south of the LZ. B Troop responded immediately, pinpointed the enemy rocket launching positions and directed elements of the 3D Brigade into the area. C Troop conducted several night ambushes during the month. These ambushes were instrumental in helping the 1st Cavalry Division in denying the NVA the rice which was being harvested at this time.

d. D Troop conducted several search and clear operations during June while conducting ambushes during the hours of darkness. It was during June that D Troop initially came under operational control of the 3/5. On 27 June, D Troop while working with elements of 3/5 vicinity of YD 403633 engaged and killed 1 NVA. This engagement initiated what resulted in contact with elements of the 814th NVA Battalion. During the action, D Troop and several companies of the 1st team closed a cordon of the area of contact while Air Cavalry elements of B and C Troops screened the flanks of the contact area. Upon completion of the action, a body count revealed that D Troop had accounted for 61 NVA KIA, 57 " of documents captured, 31 individual and 8 crew served weapons captured.

e. July saw the continuance of extensive visual reconnaissance by the Air Cavalry Troops and continued ground reconnaissance by D Troop. During the month increased emphasis was placed upon the gathering of intelligence through the use of "sniffer". These missions increased markedly during the month as the enemy began evading contact with the 1st Team. Armed reconnaissance teams and TAG Air were employed with sniffer aircraft thus providing the capability to exploit immediately "max mode 1" readings obtained by the sniffer.

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Night hunter killer operations were conducted by A Troop in conjunction with the 1st Brigade; these actions resulted in successful interdiction of the main rivers leading into the 1st Brigade TACR and the destruction of several enemy sampans.

f. General reconnaissance in the Jeb Stuart III AO continued throughout the month of August. During the month both A and B Troops were put under operational control of other XXIV Corps elements. C Troop supported the entire division with reconnaissance during one period of time during the month. Special emphasis was placed on denying the enemy the use of previously occupied positions in Base Areas 101 and 114. Continued pressure was placed upon the enemy throughout the AO as elements of the 1/9 continued to find numerous bunker complexes and enemy staging areas. Upon insertion of the blues on 20 August near Quang Tri City, A Troop came in contact with what was later determined to be an enemy battalion. This contact was exploited by D Troop and other elements of the 1st Team and resulted in 144 NVA KIA as well as several enemy captured. The month was characterized by a general scaling down of offensive operations conducted by the enemy and an increase in sniffer and other intelligence gathering missions by 1/9.

g. September saw the 1/9 continue in general support of the 1st team with the period punctuated by several brief encounters with the enemy. Heavy emphasis was placed upon reconnaissance of the rocket belt surrounding the Camp Evans area and the Song Bo River. Extensive rice denial operations were conducted by all the Blue platoons and D Troop as well. C Troop captured a total of 18,000 pounds of rice and picked up 41 CD's. A total of over 10 tons of rice were captured by 1/9 during September. D Troop continued to operate with 3/5 elements on extensive search and clear operations during the month conducting a total of 17 of these missions as well as 30 ambush patrols, 2 blocking operations and 2 cordon operations. On 27 September at YD 465586 D Troop accounted for 1 NVA KIA and captured 2 NVA officers.

h. October was highlighted by the return of D Troop to 1/9 control and the immediate utilization of the Troop in several reconnaissance in force operations. The Air Cavalry Troops conducted extensive aerial reconnaissance with the Blues and D Troop. The Blues were inserted over 20 times during the month. D Troop was inserted at LZ Idaho on 5 October along with C Troop Blues. Operations were conducted in the area surrounding the LZ and at YD 166315 an extensive enemy base camp and hospital complex were uncovered. This find resulted in the capture of tremendous amounts of enemy weapons, ammunition, equipment and medical supplies by the 1st Team. D Troop was inserted on 3

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more occasions during the month resulting in the uncovering of several enemy base areas and the reconnaissance of several areas of suspected enemy activity.

1. The end of October saw the conclusion of Operation Jeb Stuart III with the enemy rendered essentially ineffective in the 1st Cav TAOR. Continued emphasis upon exploitation of the results of aerial reconnaissance reaped great dividends for the 1/9 as well as the 1st team. The enemy base areas were saturated by artillery, TAC Air, Troop insertions and various other offensive operations frequently initiated by findings of the aero-scout platoons. Large numbers of the enemy were killed and captured and his supplies were destroyed. He was denied the food he so urgently needed as sightings by 1/9 aero-scouts resulted in the capture of vast amounts of rice. Combined efforts of all 1/9 elements with the various units of the 1st team resulted in the successful interdiction of the enemy's routes of resupply, his base areas and in a general disruption of his entire scheme of maneuver to the extent that his forces were essentially ineffective in all parts of the AO.

12. Results: Through extensive reconnaissance efforts, both ground and air, several large enemy contacts were made resulting in significant losses of enemy personnel. Several large staging areas were uncovered as well as numerous bunker complexes. Significant amounts of rice were captured by elements of 1/9 as were several NVA and VC cadre. Successful interdiction of enemy resupply routes was accomplished and the enemy was denied the use of the previous sanctuaries of Base Area 101 and 114. In addition, a close and fruitful working relationship was established between the 1/9 and the various GVN District Forces in the AO. This proved very beneficial to all as the 1/9 provided mobility and firepower while the GVN Forces provided good intelligence and reaction forces. This relationship resulted in a very successful effort to eliminate the VCI, with most of the VCI being killed, captured or driven out of the area. A resume of enemy losses imposed by the 1/9 Cavalry Squadron during operation Jeb Stuart III is as follows:

NVA KIA	350
VC KIA	66
Detainees	585
Wpns Captured	202
Rice Captured	54 Tons
Documents Captured	92 1/2 Inches
Ammunition Captured	4029 Rounds

13. Administrative Matters: None

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14. Special Equipment and Techniques:

a. Extensive use of the "Sniffer" as an intelligence gathering source was made more effective through the use of a scout team. As the sniffer aircraft flew over an area in which a max reading was obtained, the area was marked and the scouts conducted visual reconnaissance of the area. This technique frequently resulted in the location of enemy bunker complexes which would have been very difficult to find otherwise.

b. Extensive use was made of the mac quire rig during operation Jeb Stuart III. Again it proved to be an invaluable aid in the extraction of personnel from otherwise inaccessible areas.

c. Placing the IRRP's under operational control of the 1/9 resulted in more rapid and complete exploitation of enemy sightings. Support of the IRRP teams has also been simplified by this relationship.

15. Commander's Analysis: The operational capabilities of the Squadron were fully exploited during Jeb Stuart III. Daily reconnaissance activities were influenced by existing weather conditions and availability of aircraft. The validity of the general support role for the Squadron was clearly evident throughout the operation as Squadron resources were employed virtually the entire length and breadth of the ICTZ. Squadron assets were used in support of all four divisions within the ICTZ.

a. The effectiveness of the reconnaissance conducted by an air cavalry squadron cannot be accurately measured solely in terms of enemy KIA. Effective aerial reconnaissance will provide a sound basis upon which tactical disposition of ground troops can be made. These dispositions will lead to enemy contact and the opportunity to inflict even heavier losses upon the enemy. Such has been the case not only in Jeb Stuart III but in those instances when squadron troops supported other divisions in ICTZ. Accurate reporting of no enemy activities within an area provides the commander a sound basis for economy of forces thus permitting greater concentration of combat powers in those showing evidence of enemy activity.

b. The short period of time which elapsed between gaining operational control of the IRP Company and the conclusion of Jeb Stuart III has not provided sufficient opportunity to accurately evaluate the impact. During future operations, this relationship and its resultant impact will be thoroughly examined.

c. Detaching any Troop from this squadron adversely affects its ability to perform its mission most effectively for the Division. During most

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of this period D Troop has been OPCON to other units. Lack of this ground reconnaissance capability restricts the squadron largely to aerial reconnaissance. Results obtained during October when this troop was under the control of the squadron are considered much more productive than periods when other headquarters controlled its combat employment. Whenever tactical conditions permit, the troops of the squadron should be employed under squadron control in support of the Division's reconnaissance plan.

16. Recommendations:

a. That sniffer aircraft continue to be employed with aerial scout teams and TAC air to enhance the effectiveness of utilizing sniffer as an intelligence gathering media.

b. That continued emphasis be placed upon the use of the Mac Quire rig for extraction of personnel from inaccessible areas.

1 Incl
After Action Report for
Operation Comanche Falls

James M. Peterson
JAMES M. PETERSON
LTC, ARMOR
Commanding

[REDACTED]

Inclosure 1 to After Action Report for Jeb Stuart III

SUBJECT: After Action Report for Operation Commanche Falls

1. Name of Operation: Commanche Falls I, II, III.
2. Dates of Operation: 11 September 1968 - 23 October 1968.

3. Location: Base Area 101

4. Control Headquarters: 1st Cavalry Division.

5. Reporting Officer:

C Troop

Date

MAJ John M. Toolson Jr.

11 Sept 68 - 10 Oct 68

MAJ George H. Calvert

11 Oct 68 - 23 Oct 68

6. Task Organization: C Troop in general support of 2D Brigade.

7. Supporting Forces: None

8. Intelligence: See 1st Cavalry Division Intsum


9. Mission: To provide general reconnaissance for elements of the 1st Cavalry Division in support of Operation Commanche Falls I, II, III.

10. Concept of Operation: C Troop 1/9 Cavalry provides general support for elements of the 1st Cavalry Division in Operation Commanche Falls. Conduct other reconnaissance on a mission type basis.

11. Execution: C Troop initiated reconnaissance in support of Commanche Falls on 11 Sept 1968. Throughout the initial stages of the operation, C Troop located several bunker complexes and enemy staging areas throughout the TAOR. Support was also provided the ARVN's as they operated throughout the AO. Toward the closing days of Commanche Falls, D Troop 1/9 was used in reconnaissance in force operations in western AO vicinity of LZ Idaho. Operations in this area resulted in the location of a large enemy storage area and base area. The ARVN elements in the area were brought into the complex for further exploration of the area and evacuation of the captured supplies.

12. Results: Base Area 101 was successfully interdicted by elements of the 1st Cavalry Division. Extensive aerial and ground reconnaissance by elements of 1/9 Cavalry resulted in the location of several enemy storage areas. Reconnaissance in force operations by D Troop resulted in the capture of vast amounts of enemy munitions, medical supplies and weapons.

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- 13. Administrative Matters: None
- 14. Special Equipment and Techniques: None
- 15. Commander's Analysis: None
- 16. Recommendations: None