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ANNUAL HISTORICAL SUMMARY
Air Cavalry Troop 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment
1 January 1967 - 31 December 1967

Charles E. Humphries
CHARLES E. HUMPHRIES
Major, Armor
Commanding

20 March 1968

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AN UAL HISTORICAL SUMMARY

AIR CAVALRY TROOP

11th ARMORED CAV LRY REGIMENT

1 JANUARY 1967 - 31 DECEMBER 1967

1. Summary of Years Activities.

During 1967 the "Thunder" of Blackhorse Regiment spread their fire power and brought death and fear to the Viet Cong throughout the III Corps tactical zone. The fire support of the Thunderhorse was felt from Tay Ninh to Nui Dat. Continually the Air Cavalry Troop showed the true spirit of mobility for the entire Blackhorse Regiment from May Tao to the Cambodian border. Although their support was required over an extended area of operation, the required combat helicopters were always available throughout the year.

2. Breakdown of Monthly Activities.

The last aviation element (Air Cavalry Troop) organic to the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment arrived in the Republic of Vietnam in December 1966. In January all of its equipment arrived by ship and was off loaded at Vung Tau. During the month of January preplanned and immediate missions were preformed on a daily basis. Preplanned missions included convoy escort and reconnaissance of suspected enemy locations. Immediate type missions included escort of Dust Off aircraft and on-call supporting fire provided to combat units. The basic fighting force was the Light Fire Team, consisting of two UH-1C armed helicopters. During January the UH-1D's of Air Cavalry Troop were used extensively in the dropping of leaflets and letters during the 1967 Tet season.

b. During the month of February the Air Cavalry Troop participated in Operation Junction City I. While being its first major operation, the Air Cavalry Troop made it known it was here to stay.

c. The first part of March found Air Troop still engaged in intensive support of the Regiment in Operation Junction City. During this operation, the Troop provided close air support, reconnaissance, convoy cover, immediate reaction force, tactical resupply, medical evacuation, command and control, and chemical warfare missions. In one action a counter ambush, the Troop gunships fired on enemy locations with a resulting 3 VC KIA. The Troop returned from Operation Junction City on 16 March. On 21st of March the 2nd and 3rd Platoons were placed in direct support of the 2nd and 1st Squadrons respectively, while the 1st Platoon remained in support of Blackhorse Base Camp. In March the Troop deactivated the Aero Rifle Platoon and activated the Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol Platoon. During the first month the

LRRP activities consisted of intensive training and outfitting. The LRRP's were activated to provide a ready source of intelligence in selected target areas.

d. The beginning of April 1967 saw the movement of the 1st and 3rd Platoons to Lia Khe in support of the Regimental effort on Operation Junction City II. The Troop (-) was used in an immediate reaction force and convoy cover role. On 22 April the Troop (-) with 2nd Platoon forward and the 1st Platoon serving the Base Camp, began support of Regimental operations in Operation Manhattan. Shortly after the beginning of the operation the base camp security mission was transferred to D Troop 3/5 Cavalry. For the first time in combat the entire Air Cavalry Troop was in the battlefield with the Regiment. April also brought the first large mortar attack on Blackhorse Base Camp. On the night of 3 April some 158 rounds of 60mm and 82mm mortars fell on and around the airfield parking ramp. One aircraft was damaged beyond in-country repair and two others sustained minor damage. Operation Junction City II and Manhattan saw the first employment of the Air Cavalry Troop's Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol. The Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol was inserted into the target areas on each operation. Excellent and timely intelligence of enemy positions was obtained on both missions. On 15 April Major Frank M. Bloom, Infantry, the Air Cavalry Troop Operations Officer, departed for CONUS and was replaced by Major William T. McElrath, Infantry.

e. During the first weeks of May the Troop (-) continued Operation Manhattan. On 13 May 1967 the Troop (-) returned to Blackhorse base camp. The First Platoon displaced to Phu Loi to aid in search and clear operations north of Tan Uyen. This operation terminated on 27 May and the First Platoon returned to Blackhorse Base Camp. May saw the introduction of Eagle Flights mission employed by the Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol. These proved very successful in gathering valuable intelligence information. Base camp locations were found, weapons and supplies captured and one patrol resulted in one VC captured and 5 VC KIA..

f. In the month of June the Troop provided general Aviation support from Blackhorse Base Camp. The two major operations supported were Akron and Kitty Hawk. The most significant action in which the troop participated was the June 19th attack on the 3rd Squadrons Command Post. The attack message reached Thunderhorse Operations at 0115 hours and at 0120 hours a Light Fire Team was airborne enroute to the battle area. It reached the scene at 0125 hours and through excellent coordination was able to locate the enemy force and started expending directly on the enemy positions. The fire team played an important role in causing the enemy to break contact. The next morning a sweep through the area revealed 56 VC KIA. The battle was known as the Battle of "Slope 30". The Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol personnel were utilized in seven separate operations during the month. There were three different types: downed aircraft recovery; Eagle Flights; and reconnaissance. All missions were extremely successful.

g. July found the Troop included in two operations, Kitty Hawk and

Emporia. Aviation support was also provided to assist the 18th Infantry Division (AIVN) during operations in the vicinity of Ap Phu Cat. The Troop was involved in two major contacts during the month. On 20 July at 0213 hours a report was received that a RF outpost was under attack by a sizeable VC force. The five minute alert team was dispatched and arrived over the outpost at 0230. The team through contact with the advisor on the ground and the artillery aerial observer was able to locate and attack the enemy force. Two additional fire teams were dispatched and they also expended on the target area. The accurate and timely fires of the gunships contributed significantly in forcing the Viet Cong to cease their attack and withdraw. On July 21st a Light Fire Team was providing convoy cover for the 3/11 Cavalry when it was ambushed by a reinforce VC Battalion at 0920 hours. This fire team and seven other teams were used during operations to counter the enemy ambush. These teams expended 72,000 rounds of 7.62 ammunition, 262, 2.75inch rockets and 600 rounds of 40mm on the enemy positions. Five gunships were hit by enemy fire with one being forced down and later recovered. The Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol Platoon participated in 10 operations in July. These operations included five bomb damage assessment patrols and two Eagle Flights. All missions were extremely profitable in gathering intelligence information.

h. The month of August found Air Cavalry Troop involved in an intensive training program. Nine pilots left the Troop in August and replacements were recent Aviation School Graduates, with little experience in tactical operations. By the end of the month the Air Troop was once again a tightly grouped tactical fighting unit. During the month the troop was in general support of the Regiment, to include convoy cover and seven Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol operations. All missions were extremely effective in gathering intelligence information and assisting in base camp security.

i. During September the Air Cavalry Troop provided general aviation support for the Regiment and Blackhorse Base Camp. The 2nd Platoon was assigned to support the 3rd Squadron on Operation Richmond. Upon completion of Emporia IV, a road clearing operation along route 20, Operation Arkansas City began. In this operation air support was given to logistical convoys, base camp reconnaissance and immediate reaction fire support. The Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol conducted two combat missions this month, to confirm intelligence reports received.

j. During the month of October the Air Troop was involved in a general support role for operations Arkansas City II, Kitty Hawk, and Valdosta II. Operation Valdosta II was to provide security during the national elections. The Air Cavalry Troop provided a constant alert Light Fire Team to react to any disorder or harassment to civilians. The results of the election showed the effectiveness of the Air Cavalry in performing its mission. The Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol had a total of seven successful missions this month. Two of the patrols resulted in 4 VC KIA with negative friendly casualties.

k. In November the Air Cavalry Troop participated in Operation Santa Fe. This operation commenced on 2 November 1967. During this operation the Viet Cong avoided any major contact with the Blackhorse

Regiment. The Air Cavalry Troop Continued the mission of night convoy cover from Long Binh to Blackhorse Base Camp. The counter mortar Light Fire Teams continued night alert at Xuan Loc. The Long Range Reconnaissance Platoon conducted several missions with few significant findings. On the 10th of November Major Harold B. Synder Jr., Infantry, the Service Platoon Commander, departed for CONUS and was replaced by Major Michael J. Pepe, Transportation Corps., who arrived 9 November. Major Francis B. Martin, Infantry, the Commanding Officer, departed for CONUS on 26 November and was replaced by Major Charles E. Humphries, Armor.

1. During the final month of 1967 the Air Cavalry Troop supported the Regiment during Operation Fargo. The 1st and 2nd Platoons plus the Long Range Reconnaissance Platoon supported the Regiment from Lai Khe A.F., Loc Ninh, and Quan Loi. The 3rd Platoon remained at Blackhorse Base Camp in support of Operation Kitty Hawk, and night convoy cover from Long Binh to Blackhorse Base Camp. The Lift Platoon supported the Long Range Reconnaissance Platoon on five operations; these operations resulted in 10 weapons, radio equipment and documents captured. Also 4 VC KIA and 1 VC POW. During December the Service Platoon of Air Cavalry Troop moved to Lai Khe to better support the Troop and further contribute to its combat effectiveness. On the 1st of December the final change of staff officers for the year took place within Air Troop, when Major William T. McElrath departed for CONUS, and was replaced by Major A. Wagg Jr., Armor.

INCLOSURE 1: Commanders and Key Officers

Air Troop Commanders

Major Francis B. Martin 28 November 66 - 25 November 67
Major Charles E. Humphries 26 November 67 - 31 December 67

Operations Officers

Major Frank M. Bloom 9 November 66 - 15 April 67
Major William T. McElrath 11 December 66 - 1 December 67
Major Robert A. Wagg Jr. 1 December 67 - 31 December 67

Maintenance Officers

Major Harold B. Synder Jr. 11 December 66 - 9 November 67
Major Michael J. Pepe 10 November 67 - 31 December 67

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