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**AIR CAVALRY TROOP
11TH ARMORED CAVALRY REGIMENT
APO San Francisco 96297**

AVIC-AC

6 January 1970

SUBJECT: Air Cavalry Troop Annual Historical Summary

Historian
20th Military History Detachment
11th Armored Cavalry Regiment
APO San Francisco 96297

INTRODUCTION: During 1969, the men of Air Cavalry Troop once again proved their worthiness of the designation, "Thunderhorses". Finding and destroying the enemy throughout the III Corps tactical zone, "Thunderhorses" contributed immeasurably to the success of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment's many operations. Allocating its resources numerous times during the year to meet the operational needs of the Regiment, Air Cavalry Troop never faltered in its combat readiness or tactical effectiveness.

JANUARY

During the month of January the Troop conducted preplanned and immediate support missions on a daily basis, engaging the enemy on seven different occasions. By using the Regimental Commander's outstanding tactic, the "Pile On", the Air Cavalry Troop was credited with 41 enemy KIA and 15 POW's. Friendly casualties were 1 KIA from the Aero Rifle Platoon and 11 MIA. Seven of the 11 MIA were incurred in one action where the lead squad detained a Chinese body troop. Three aircraft received battle damage from ground fire during the month.

FEBRUARY

The first part of February found the Air Cavalry Troop in two different contacts which resulted in 17 enemy KIA and 3 POW's. Friendly casualties were 3 MIA. The remainder of the month consisted of extensive aerial reconnaissance along suspected infiltration routes to the III Corps population centers. There were no enemy contacts between 8 Feb and 23 Feb. There were three contacts after 23 Feb when the enemy launched their TET offensive. These contacts resulted in 14 enemy KIA and 2 friendly MIA. Air Cavalry Troop contributed greatly to the III Corps pre-TET intelligence during the month.

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MARCH

During the month of March, the Air Cavalry Troop participated in two named operations. The first, Operation Tumble Toss, was an 11th Armored Cavalry operation which took place southeast of Phnom Vinh. Again employing pink teams for aerial detection and inserting the Aero Rifle Platoon for ground confirmation of intelligence, the Air Cavalry Troop was credited with 23 enemy KIA and numerous POW's during the four day operation. The second operation, named "Alas Wedge", was a joint operation involving the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, the 1st Infantry Division, the First Air Cavalry Division, and the 25th Infantry Division. The area involved was the infamous Michelin Rubber Plantation where large NVA forces were known to be massing. The day before the operation was to begin, the Air Cavalry Troop was called upon to make a thorough reconnaissance of the Plantation. Immediately upon entering the area the Aero Scouts began spotting groups of NVA troops literally lounging around in the rubber. Clearance was requested to engage and half an hour later received. The ensuing battle resulted in Air Cavalry Troop's LCH's and Cobras accounting for 77 enemy KIA body count and another 40 possible KIA. This day was a classic in Air Cavalry history. The following five days of the operation saw our pink teams working hand in hand with the other units involved in the operation. At the end of the six day operation, Air Cavalry Troop was credited with 131 NVA KIA with friendly losses of 2 KIA and 4 MIA. One of the KIA was an aviator which was our first loss of the year.

APRIL

During the early part of April, there were few sightings of enemy activity by our air and ground reconnaissance. On 12 April, Air Cavalry Troop along with other elements of the Regiment and elements of the 1st Air Cavalry Division began Operation Montana Raider which would carry on into May. The Air Cavalry providing aerial reconnaissance, found the enemy and initiated many of the contacts. While enemy casualties were not as great as in the previous operation Operation Montana Raider strongly demonstrated the effectiveness of the Air Cavalry Troop in finding well concealed enemy positions and digging the enemy out, forcing him into a contact situation. The Air Cavalry Troop accounted for 23 enemy KIA, while sustaining 6 KIA and 3 MIA from within the Troop. Two aviators, two scout observers, and two ABF's accounted for our friendly KIA's. Three LCH's were shot down and destroyed while a fourth was shot down and recovered. During the month of April the Air Cavalry Troop received a new CO, Major James W. Bradin. Major Bradin replaced Major John C. Bohman who left Air Cavalry Troop to assume command of the Regiment's First Squadron.

MAY

May saw the termination of Operation Montana Raider. On 14 May Air Cavalry Troop returned to Bien Hoa from Quan Loi. On 15 May the Air Cavalry Troop moved to Blackhorse base camp to support the 18th AVN Division. During the remainder of the month Air Cavalry Troop was credited with 20 enemy KIA and 3 POW's. There were no friendly casualties despite the loss of one UH-1H which crashed due to engine failure.

JUNE

During the first week in June, the Air Cavalry Troop returned to Quan Loi. On the 7th, working with G Troop, 2d Squadron, the Air Cavalry Troop and Tet Air killed a total of 95 NVA. On 17 June, the Aero Rifle Platoon reinforced E Troop in a three and a half hour contact resulting in 31 NVA killed. The next day, the Scouts discovered a large number of NVA located in the rubber plantation west of An Lao. The Air Cavalry Troop Commander was later shot down in the NVA headquarters area. The Aero Rifle Platoon was inserted, reinforced by E Troop, to extract the downed Commander. In this contact, 31 NVA were killed and 1 POW captured.

JULY

During the first week of the month the 919th Engineers were ambushed on CL 13. Air Cavalry Troop Cobras were called in to support. A total of 23 NVA were killed by the Cobras and ground elements. Later, on 17 July, another convoy was ambushed on Highway 13. Air Cavalry Troop Cobras supported the ground elements. The Troop also lost a Cobra and its crew in a crash attributed to inclement weather. The remainder of the month was spent conducting Visual Reconnaissance with little activity found.

AUGUST

On 6 August, northwest of Lon Nhin, Air Cavalry Troop engaged 15-25 NVA, killing 13. On 8 August, the Troop engaged 30 NVA killing 41 and capturing 6. On 10 August, 12 kilometers northwest of An Lao, a Pink Team discovered a company sized NVA unit. Cobras and LCH's assaulted the area killing 32 NVA. On 12 August, Air Cavalry Troop Cobras supporting H Troop and the 18th AVN Cavalry killed 88 NVA. Total body count was well over 150 NVA killed during the month. This was the most fruitful month for the Air Cavalry Troop since our arrival in Binh Long Province.

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SEPTEMBER

The first part of September found the Air Cavalry Troop encountering numerous .50 cal. positions in the Lee Nish area. We had 5 aircraft; 2 ICH's and 3 Cobras damaged between the 3rd of September and the 6th of September. One Cobra was shot down killing both crewmembers. After the first week there was a lull in our AO. Air Cavalry Troop was credited with 12 enemy KIA and friendly casualties of 2 KIA (Cobra pilots) and 3 MIA.

OCTOBER

October saw a continued lull in the fighting with little or no sightings of enemy activity. On 13 October, Major Charles W. Abbey, a former Blackhorse aviator in 1966 and 1967 took command from Major James M. Bradin who left the Troop to assume the duties of Regimental Aviation Staff Officer. There was little enemy contact during the remaining days of the month. The month of October was the first month of 1969 that saw the Air Cavalry Troop up to strength in number of aviators.

NOVEMBER

November continued the lull in action. Air Cavalry Troop augmented the 2d Squadron's show of force along the Bu Dop Road and the 3rd Squadron's foray into Eastern War Zone C in Tame Traveler. The majority of the Troop's activities centered around Visual Reconnaissance and ground reconnaissance by the Aero Rifle Platoon. The Night Hawk was employed by Air Cavalry Troop for the first time during November.

DECEMBER

December began with the 2d Squadron's Bu Dop road opening. Air Cavalry Troop assisted in numerous contacts as the cutting progressed. The Troop also engaged the enemy east of Bu Dop killing 5 NVA on 13 December. Prior to the Christmas truce, Scouts of the Troop discovered an enemy base camp near the Cambodian border and with the help of the Cobras killed 20 NVA. Again on the 27th, the Scouts discovered another recently occupied base camp which yielded over 70 NVA KIA: 39 killed by Cobras and Scouts of the Troop and the remainder by air and artillery. The area was finished off by an A-1H on 30 December. Without question, Air Cavalry Troop has proved its value in extending the eyes and might of the best Regiment of the United States Army.

Charles W. Abbey
 CHARLES W. ABBEY
 Major, Armor
 Commanding

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