

RG 472

11th ACR, 3rd Sqd

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ANNUAL HISTORICAL SUMMARY

1st Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment  
1 January 1967 - 31 December 1967

1 March 1968

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Commanding

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By 10 NARA Date 1/10/01

On 1 January 1967, the First of the Blackhorse was located at Blackhorse base camp (YS 4396). During January, the 1st Squadron conducted counter-insurgency operations in LONG KHANH and PHUOC TUY Provinces. The Squadron's primary mission during the month was base camp security while the 11th ACR (-) was engaged in Operation CEDAR FALLS.

From 5 to 7 January 1967, the 1st Squadron conducted search and destroy operations along Route 2 in PHUOC TUY Province south of Courtenay. On 7 January, the Squadron assumed the missions of base camp security, GIA RAY engineer site security, and convoy escort/road runner duty between LONG BINH, Blackhorse base camp, and GIA RAY; it retained these missions through January. Additionally, daily mounted patrols and nightly ambush patrols were conducted within the Regimental TACR and security was provided for the 27th Engineer elements while they repaired the bridges on the ON QUE bypass route.

On 27 January, Troop B conducted a dismounted march to cordon and search BAO BINH Hamlet (YT 505996) in conjunction with cordons of hamlets at YT 550047 and YT 488055 by Troops A and C respectively.

On the first day of February, the 1st Squadron initiated Operation WILLISTON under the operational control of the 1st Infantry Division. The operation was intended to keep open lines of communication between LAI KHE and QUAN LOI along National Highway 13 and to destroy VC forces and installations in the MINH TANH area (vic XT 6564). The operation terminated on 12 February.

Operation JUNCTION CITY was initiated on 22 February and became the most significant operation of the month. The 1st Squadron as part of the Regiment (-) (under operational control of the 25th Infantry Division) conducted night road marches on 18 and 19 February from base camp to TRUONG Mountain (vic XT 3840) to conduct deception operations prior to D-Day. On 23 February, the Squadron attacked into War Zone C. Enemy contact was light and sporadic.

1st Squadron continued Operation JUNCTION CITY during the first 16 days of March, conducting search and destroy operations in zone to locate and destroy COSVN facilities and VC/NVA forces. During 1 to 6 March these operations were conducted along the Cambodian border to the northeast of Route 22. Additionally, the Squadron secured the extraction of the infantry battalions of the 196th Light Infantry Brigade and located and secured routes into northwestern War Zone C. Mines, harassing fire from rocket launcher teams, and snipers were encountered on almost continuous basis. During the period 7 to 16 March, the Squadron occupied 4 blocking positions along the Cambodian border to the south of Route 22 and continued to conduct search and destroy operations in zone. Ambush of small columns became the favorite VC tactic. The most significant action of the operation occurred on 10 March when Troop B engaged a well-disciplined and tenacious enemy force fighting from spider holes and bunkers. The battle area was sealed with three Cav Troops, artillery, and TAC Air support. 31 VC were confirmed by body count as KIA from this action. On the night of 16 March, 1st Squadron returned to Blackhorse base camp.

Under the control of the 1st Australian Task Force, the 1st Squadron participated in Operation PORTSEA from 20 to 30 March. Initially, search and destroy operations were conducted in the area bounded by the SONG RAI River, Route 2 and Route 23. However, the Squadron was diverted into blocking positions along Route 23 in order to prevent the withdrawal of a battalion of the 275th VC Regiment. Subsequently, Troop B, under control of 6th Royal Australian Regiment began to search the area south of Route 23. The Squadron was then shifted to the east of the SONG RAI River in an effort to make contact with elements of the 275th VC Regiment. Search and destroy operations were conducted throughout the area from HO TRAM Point on the South China Sea to Route 327 on the north. The focal point of these operations was the jungle terrain between XUYEN MOC and the SONG RAI River. A number of assembly areas and base camp complexes were discovered in the process, including one which contained 120 knapsacks and numerous documents indicating the presence of an element of the 275th VC Regiment. During the operation, 7 VC were KIA (BC) and 4 PW's were taken. The Squadron returned to base camp on 30 March to assume the missions of base camp security, convoy escort, security of the GIA RAY rock quarry, and operations within the Regimental TAOR.

On 1 April, the First of the Blackhorse assumed the missions of Operation KITTY HAWK including security of Blackhorse base camp, providing convoy escort for convoys between LONG BINH, Blackhorse, and GIA RAY, conducting local search and destroy operations in the Regimental AO, and conducting MEDCAPs. Four incidents occurred during this period. The Regimental base camp received an estimated 220 60mm and 81mm mortar rounds in the late evening of 3 April. On the morning of 4 April, 1 VC was killed and his weapon captured near GIA RAY. On 8 April, two claymores mines were placed within the second strand of wire on the eastern side of the base camp. One was detonated while the other malfunctioned. The convoy staging area at LONG BINH was attacked early on 17 April with claymores, rifle grenades, and small arms from three sides.

The next mission on 23 April was Operation MANHATTAN. It came under the control of the 1st Infantry Division. 1st Squadron attacked north and west from BEN CAT with an assault river crossing vicinity XT 662400 and XT 654408 and conducted search and destroy operations within assigned areas. On 29 April, the Squadron secured an LZ (vic XT 532383) for the airlanding of the 1/2 Infantry. During this operation, information gained from interrogation of 3 VC PW's taken by 1st Squadron indicated that a large VC facility was located nearby. Two troops were committed on a search and destroy mission to locate the VC base camp. A number of VC were sighted and the base camp was entered. Numerous caches of rice, clothing and records, and small amounts of ammunition were captured. Seven small unit contacts were made netting 11 KIA and 3 POW. Friendly casualties were 1 KHA and 3 WHA.

Operation MANHATTAN continued the first ten days of May 1967. The 1st Squadron, now under Regimental control, continued search and destroy missions to neutralize the BINH DUONG Province Committee and Military Region IV personnel and installations. The Squadron conducted nine combined operations with infantry elements. Six of these were search and destroy missions and three were LZ security missions. The Squadron continued to provide security for engineer elements from the 1st Engineer Battalion, 1st Infantry Division, operating along Route 14, in sector, and to detect and destroy possible VC

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exfiltration from River Assault Teams operating along the Saigon River to the west of the Squadron AO.

The Squadron was initially alerted on 10 May for employment on route security missions along the northern portion of Route 13 and for search and destroy missions to the east of QUAN LOI while under operational control of the 3d Bde, 1st Infantry Division. However, a suspected enemy buildup in the PHUOC VINH area and continuous mortaring of the 1st Brigade Headquarters at that location changed those plans and the Squadron continued to remain at LAI KHE, securing a portion of the perimeter, providing three troops as a rapid reaction force, and preparing for future operations.

On 16 May, the 1st Squadron displaced to a forward assembly area vicinity PHU LOI (XT 841145) to prepare for an attack and search and destroy operations to the northeast of TAN UYEN under operational control of 1st Bde, 1st Infantry Division. This operation (code name DALLAS) began on 17 May when the Squadron attacked northeast in column to seize two landing zones and a Squadron base area. During the period 17 to 22 May, search and destroy operations were carried out in the 1st Brigade AO. The Squadron provided rapid reaction forces on two occasions to maneuver against suspected locations of major VC forces and mounted one coordinated attack to destroy elements of a known company size VC installation on 22 May. On 25 May, the 1st Squadron came under the operational control of the 2d Bde, 1st Infantry Division to continue Operation DALLAS. The Squadron's new mission was to clear a portion of the ONG DONG jungle secret area to the northwest of TAN UYEN which had long been considered a Viet Cong secure area, largely untouched by US operations. Operation DALLAS ended on 31 May with the 1st Squadron's return to Blackhorse base camp.

On 1 June, the 1st Squadron again assumed the missions of Operation KITTY HAWK and continued this operation through 26 June. The security of the base camp and the GIA RAY rock quarry was ensured while simultaneously performing convoy escort duty. Each convoy consisted of approximately fifty vehicles. During this period, troop size cordon and search missions were also performed, involving various villages in the surrounding area of the base camp. In conjunction with these missions, an aggressive MEDCAP program was also carried out which included fifteen missions treating a total of 2082 personnel.

Operation QUICKSILVER was initiated on 27 June when the First of the Blackhorse was committed by the Regiment to reinforce elements of the 18th ARVN Division. The division had launched an attack earlier in the day in order to disrupt the advance of two battalions of the 275th VC Regiment which had crossed the DONG NAI River from War Zone D. During the operation, the Squadron secured the airlanding and extraction of elements of the 2d Bn, 39th Infantry and conducted search and destroy operations. The Squadron also secured two fire support bases during the operation. The entire operation was performed in conjunction with the 18th ARVN Division. The close administrative coordination effected between the US and ARVN units resulted in extensive and profitable use of POW's and ralliers (CHIEU HOI Program) as guides into enemy positions.

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On 28 June, Troop C engaged an estimated platoon size enemy unit. Troop A quickly reinforced and both troops began receiving heavy automatic weapons fire and approximately 10 RPG-2 antitank rounds fired by the VC from well concealed entrenchments. Subsequent assault on the enemy position resulted in 3 VC KIA (BC). A further search revealed an enemy base camp where 29 VC bodies were found together with 12 ARVN bodies resulting from an action on the previous day. Viet Cong weapons captured included 3 US Carbines, 5 AK-47's, 2 SKS type 56 carbines, 70 RPG-2 rounds, and 1 B40 rocket launcher. Documents discovered identified the enemy as a part of the 3d Bn, 275th VC Regiment. On 2 July, the Squadron escorted the 43d Infantry Regiment and the 52d Ranger Bn (ARVN) to a rendezvous point where the ARVN joined their own transportation and returned to their base camp.

The Squadron returned to base camp and to Operation KITTY HAWK on 3 July 1967. It continued this operation until 8 July when Operation PADDINGTON began.

On the morning of 8 July, the Squadron was committed by Regiment to conduct a road march from Blackhorse base camp to NUI DAT, base camp of the 1st Australian Task Force. The Squadron attacked astride Route 329 on 9 July. On 11 July, 1st Squadron linked up with Vietnamese Marines then continued to support them while conducting clearing and securing operations along Highway 329. On 15 July, the Squadron returned to base camp and was released from operational control of the 1st ATF. It remained there for six days.

Operation EMPORIA I began on 211126H July 1967 when the 1st Squadron was committed by Regiment to reinforce 3d Squadron elements which had been ambushed earlier in the day by an estimated VC battalion. The Squadron moved to the ambush site and began probing the jungle in search of the withdrawing VC with negative contact. The Squadron then performed search and destroy operations in sector and provided escorts for logistical convoys. The operation ended on 1 August and the 1st Squadron returned to Blackhorse base camp to prepare for future operations.

From 4 to 9 August, the 1st Squadron continued Operation KITTY HAWK. An additional mission was performed when the Squadron established position ZULU in the BAO BINH Valley in the eastern sector of the Squadron AO.

Operation EMPORIA III began again on 20 August and consisted of the security mission for engineer work parties along Route 1 from YT 555060 to YT 631114, upgrading the RF/PF outposts in the Squadron area of operations, conducting search and destroy operations, and continuing to provide security for the engineer rock quarry at GIA RAY. The operation was concluded on 1 September.

The 1st Squadron had a one-day stand down on 1 September. On 2 September, it commenced Operation VALDOSTA, an operation designed to provide security for villages during the National Elections and to carry out search and destroy

operations west of Route 2. Operations, under code name EMPORIA IV, began on 4 September and included the repair of Route 20, search and destroy operations, securing engineer work parties, and securing GIA RAY rock quarry. Several MEDCAPs were conducted during this phase of VALDOSTA. The Squadron returned to base camp on the 8th, leaving Troop A and How Battery in position to support the operations of the 52d Ranger Battalion west of Route 20.

The Squadron was reunited on 9 September with the return of Troop A and How Battery and of Troop C (OPCON to 3d Squadron during Operation VALDOSTA). Operation KITTY HAWK was initiated on 9 September and was continued through 29 September. During this period, 1st Squadron once again assumed the missions of providing security for LONG BINH - Blackhorse convoys, perimeter security engineer convoys to GIA RAY, ambush patrols, and continued security of GIA RAY rock quarry. On 25 September, Task Force Buckskin (composed of Troops A and B, plus M/3/11 and C/3/5) moved south on Route 2 to relieve 3d Squadron on Operation ARKANSAS CITY. This 1st Squadron task force was given the mission of conducting search and destroy operations west of Route 2, screening Route 2 during the day, and blocking Route 2 during the night in order to contain elements of the 275th VC Regiment within the southern HAT DICH area. Road runners were conducted throughout the evening and early morning hours by all elements. On the 27th of September, the 52d ARVN Rangers were airlifted into the area of operations while Troop A secured their LZ. On 24 September, D Company was relieved of the GIA RAY security mission by 3d Squadron and joined Operation ARKANSAS CITY II. The entire Squadron was committed by 30 September when the Squadron Command Post and Troop C moved to join Troops A and B and D Company. The operation continued until 9 October 1967.

The effect of this operation on the VC was threefold. First, the route of supply and evacuation believed to extend from the HAT DICH area across Route 2 to the MAY TAO area was disrupted. Second, shortage of supplies seriously affected Viet Cong units within the HAT DICH area and numerous base camps and storage areas were destroyed. Finally, it was felt that the operation would aid in countering future Viet Cong operations and denying key routes because of the familiarity with the region gained by the participating US forces.

Operation BAINBRIDGE was initiated on 11 October and was principally concerned with the destruction of supply caches and base camps within the BAO BINH Valley southeast of Blackhorse base camp and elimination of small local force detachments and outposts known to be supporting Viet Cong supply activities, interdicting Routes 1 and 2, and taxing the local inhabitants.

The operation began with a cordon and search of BAO BINH #3 (coord YS 513981). Troops A and C cordoned the village through the night of 11-12 October and the 43d I&R Co (ARVN) searched the village on the morning of the 12th. Later that day the remainder of the Squadron moved from Blackhorse base camp to the BAO BINH Valley and conducted search and destroy operations through 19 October. Numerous bunker complexes were destroyed while significant quantities of food, medicine, and munitions were either captured or destroyed. Exposure of the Viet Cong supply routes, storage areas, and denial of the BAO

BINH Valley as a source of food from 11 to 20 October forced enemy local force units to remain inactive and unsupplied.

Operation VALDOSTA II moved the 1st Squadron with all combat units deployed in support of the 22 October elections. Search and destroy operations were conducted by Troops A, C, and D Company within small areas of operation near their reaction force positions. The principal objective of this operation, however, was to ensure that the local civilian populace could participate in the elections without enemy interference. The Squadron accomplished the mission by positioning elements throughout the area. The elections were completed without intervention.

In response to intelligence information indicating the presence of a Viet Cong local force company operating in the jungle west of Highway 20 and north of Highway 1, the 1st Squadron began Operation GREEN COVE, on 24 October 1967. Troops A, C, and D Company were deployed; Troop B was under the operational control of the 2/39th Infantry while C Company, 2/47th Infantry was attached to the Squadron for operations on 24 October 1967. No significant contact was made although the Squadron destroyed a base camp discovered by the 3d Squadron on 23 October.

From 1 to 4 November, the First of the Blackhorse conducted Operation FORRESTDALE to support and secure A/86th Engineers during Rome Flow clearing operation along Route 25. The route was also improved by installing culverts and grading the road surface. Landing zones and fire support base positions were established to assist in future search and destroy operations. Troops A, C, and How Battery participated in the operations. Troop B and D Company remained in base camp to conduct maintenance and prepare for future operations. No enemy contact occurred during Operation FORRESTDALE. Clearing operations slowed by the dense jungle and wet ground caused the operation to be extended one day.

On 5 November, 1st Squadron began Operation SANTA FE under Regimental control. The Squadron's missions, initially, were to secure Rome Flow clearing teams (Task Force Flow) along Highway 1, to block Highway 1 in the Squadron sector, and to conduct search and destroy operations in the Squadron area of operations. The blocking mission was maintained throughout the operation. The Squadron (-) began its participation with the arrival of Troop A and How Battery and two land clearing teams of Task Force Flow in the Squadron area of operations. Troop C, escorting the remaining land clearing teams of Task Force Flow, arrived on 5 November. The Squadron (-) executed its missions by employing four teams/troops as blocking forces along Highway 1. Search and destroy operations were conducted during daylight hours. One troop remained OPCON to Regiment until 21 November for CP security. Clearing operations within the Squadron area of operations were completed on 7 November. As the operation progressed, the Squadron assumed responsibility for additional portions of Highway 1 to permit the 3d Squadron to exploit intelligence information in the MAY TAO Mountain area. Troop B became OPCON to 3d Squadron on 20 November and conducted search and destroy operations on the western side of NUI MAY TAO. The operation (designated SANTA FE I and II) ended on 30

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November 1967. The Squadron encountered no significant enemy contact, but netted an impressive number of bunkers, foxholes, and base camps.

The First of the Blackhorse received the preliminary concept and guidance for Operation QUICKSILVER II on 2 December for execution on 7-8 December. At 1200 hours on 4 December, the Squadron received two hours notification to move to LAI KHE, and, upon arrival, to commence operations with 2d Bde, 1st Infantry Division, northeast of LAI KHE. The Squadron began movement on the 5th at 0700H and arrived to relieve 1st Bn, 2d Infantry, 1st Infantry Division by 1300H. At 1500H the Squadron was fully deployed along Route ZINC (Highways 7B - 2A - 1A) with the mission of securing and outposting this route within the Squadron area of operation for movement of logistical convoys (101st ABN Division) from BEN CAT to PHUOC VINH. Additional missions for the Squadron were: establishing a fire support base, securing two bridges over the SONG BE River, and the conduct of search and destroy missions in the assigned area of operation.

The Squadron accomplished its mission in the following manner. Each Troop shared in the outposting mission while Troop A secured the two bridges. Each morning the road within the Troop sector was cleared by minesweep teams. Upon completion of the minesweep, the road was outposted by positioning ACAVs and tanks 100 - 200 meters apart on both sides of the road within the troop sector. Search and destroy missions were conducted on an infrequent basis because of the time consuming minesweep and outposting missions. Outposts were maintained with all forces until the daily logistical convoy cleared the Squadron area of operation or closed PHUOC VINH. The Squadron terminated Operation QUICKSILVER on the 21st and began movement the same day to an operational area along Highway 13A north of AN LOC to commence Operation FARGO.

Plans called for the Squadron to attack on 22 December to establish two laager positions, a fire support position, and to support 2d Squadron's area of operation. Objectives for this phase of Operation FARGO were to secure Highway 13 and engineer clearing teams and to conduct search and destroy operations within the Squadron's area of operations. Operations continued without incident throughout the 24-hour cease fire 241800H - 251800H December 1967. On 26 December, the 1st Squadron moved north of LOC NINH along Highway 13 to conduct a reconnaissance in force to the Cambodian border. No enemy contact was made and the reconnaissance in force mission was terminated at 271400H December 1967 without incident.

The remainder of the year 1967 was spent securing Route 13. As the new year dawned, the First of the Blackhorse continued to perform its missions with a memory of combat lessons learned and with the eagerness of challenges to be met in the future. "ALLONS!"

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