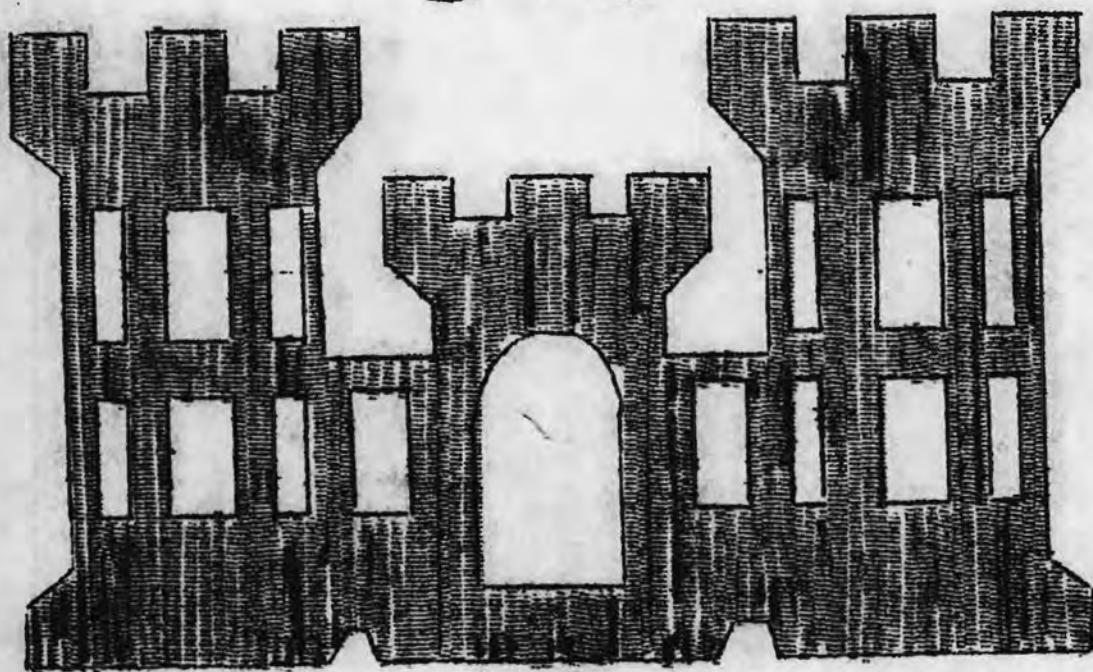




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RG 472
11th ACR, Org Hist
66-71 Box 3

UNIT HISTORY

919th Engineer Company (Armored)
1 January 1969-31 December 1969

7 January 1970
Approved



RICHARD A. CORRADINI
CPT, CE
Commanding

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INTRODUCTION

The year 1969 found the 919th Engineer Company (Armored) employed in many diversified missions which took the members of the company into every corner of the III CTZ. In supporting a unit as mobile as the 11th ACR the individual platoons usually found themselves working as separate units. To do justice to each platoon and their accomplishments the events of the year will be reported by platoon. A summary of the year will follow clearly indicating the impact that the 919th as a company has had during the past year.

The company was involved in the following operations during 1969: Montana Raider, Toan Thang, Atlas Wedge, Twinkle Toes, Omega, Kentucky Cougar, Texas Traveler, and Long Reach II. While involved in these operations the men of the 919th were called upon to perform a great variety of missions. These include: convey security, road security, sweep teams, perimeter defense of base camps, down vehicle security, ready reactionary forces, vehicle recovery operations, airmobile mine sweeps, civic action projects, and normal engineer missions.

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1ST PLATOON

The beginning of the year found the 1st platoon at FSB Holiday Inn. While at Holiday Inn, the platoon was responsible for clearing the road from Tan Uyen to Holiday Inn and from Holiday Inn to Claymore Corners. During this time they swept approximately 900 kilometers of road clearing the road of mines for convoys going to Phuoc Vinh. They found 8 AT mines and 2 AP mines during this period. The platoon constructed three observation towers at Binh Co and with the help of a dozer from company headquarters constructed a berm around the village for local defense. They also built a hooch for the village chief and a road around the perimeter of Holiday Inn and Binh Co. On 16 January the Platoon moved to Blackhorse basecamp and assumed the minesweep responsibility of the road from Blackhorse to Xuan Loc. During the month of February and the early days of March the Platoon was successful in discovering 21 mines along their route of responsibility.

On 6 March the Platoon moved to Holiday Inn in DS of the 1/11. They performed mine sweeping operations between Holiday Inn and Harpers Ferry, averaging 13,000 meters of road a day. The Platoon was called upon to prepare bridge launching sites for AVLBS at Tan Uyen ^{mine sweeping} ^{AVLB sites} and Harpers Ferry. The AVLBS at Tan Uyen was used to allow 1st How/1/11 to replace 3rd How at Lukes Castle, while the other three bridges were used as detours to allow for road repair and reinforcement of the existing bridges. On 18 Mar the Platoon closed out FSB Lukes Castle for members of the 2/23 1st Div and moved north to par-

(2)

ticipate in operations Atlas Wedge and Omega, providing direct support for 1/11 ACR. During these operations the Platoon was responsible for destroying 171 bunkers and 70 fighting positions in the Michelin Rubber Plantation and the Iron Triangle. On 27 March the Platoon was ambushed while destroying a bunker complex and was able to fight their way out without losing a man. During these operations, the Platoon accompanied units of the 1/11 rather than simply being on call. The engineer Platoon provided security for damaged vehicles, allowing members of the Cav to continue "piling on". The proximity of the engineers also allowed them to do their job faster and more efficiently. Having the engineers on hand made it possible to have roads swept for members of the Cav moving into position. Also bunkers encountered were destroyed immediately rather than leaving them behind intact.

At the conclusion of operations Omega and Atlas Wedge the Platoon moved back to Holiday Inn to resume their mine sweeping responsibilities.

From 28 March to 25 April, the Platoon swept an average of 17,000 meters of road a day. On 3 April the WEF team was established at Harpers Ferry. This unit supplied water to units of 1/11, 28th Inf, 48 ARVN and 18 ARVN Div, at the rate of 3600 gallons a day. On 7 Apr the Platoon was called upon by units of the 18th ARVN Div to breach an unmarked booby-trapped VC minefield. The following items were cleared: (7) 105mm rounds, (9) 60mm mortar rounds, (6) 82mm mortar rounds, (15) handgrenades, (9) AP mines and 21 pungi traps.

On 2 May the Platoon conducted a tactical mine sweep between FSB Jake and An Loc and then proceeded to Quan Loi for a maintenance

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stand down. On 8 May the Platoon left Quan Loi with an AVL and a dozer and proceeded to XT642707 and constructed FSB Greene. The Platoon returned to Blackhorse on 15 May and took responsibility for sweeping the road from Blackhorse to Xuan Loc.

On 19 June the Platoon moved with the 1st Squadron to Lai Khe and on 20 June the Platoon, using explosives and organic engineer tools, constructed an AVL launching site at XT847334. They were also ^{NVA} used as a security force for the 1st Engineer Bn sweep teams and as a reactionary force for the resupply convoy from Lai Khe to FSB Thunder II. On 22 June the Platoon moved back to the bridge site with a dozer from the 1st Engr Bn and repaired damage caused by heavy rains. They remained at the site as a security force until 25 June. From 25 June to 7 July the Platoon was stationed at FSB Thunder I, there they conducted daily mine sweep operations and acted as security for the resupply convoy to Quan Loi.

From 7 July to 31 July the Platoon was stationed at FSB Frieda XT585335 and conducted daily mine sweeps to the Ben Cat bridge. On 17 July the Platoon conducted a mounted ambush patrol at XT626328. The following day the Platoon made contact with the enemy while trying to return to FSB Frieda. Approximately 10-15 NVA were encountered, one POW was taken. On 19 July, while supporting A troop 1/11 ACR, the Platoon blew 10 bunkers at XT624356. Returning to FSB Frieda the Platoon made contact with 7-10 VC which resulted in 4 VC/KIA and 1 VC/WIA.

From 16 Aug to 22 Aug the Platoon under the direction of the 1st Cav began clearing land for LZ Ann. During this seven day period the

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men of the Platoon with demolitions and a dozer cleared over 100 trees. In addition to clearing land for the LZ, the Platoon constructed 21 bunkers and encircled the area with more than 1600 meters of triple standard concertina fence. On 23 August the Platoon was divided 1 squad worked on completion of FSB Kelly and another cleared fields of fire at NDP Allons II and the 3rd squad was used as convoy security from Loc Ninh to Quan Loi. On 1 September 1 ACAV and a five man crew from the Platoon working with C troop 1/11 went on a recon mission and found twenty bunkers. The next day on a similar mission six miles northwest of LZ Kelly, 200 fighting positions were discovered. On 5 September LZ Kelly received incoming RPG, mortar and recoilless rifle rounds. That morning a sweep of the area of contact was conducted resulting in contact with the enemy and the engineers were credited with 12 NVA/KIA. From 25 Sept to 11 Oct the Platoon was laagered at FSB Deb. The first 6 days were spent constructing 1500 meters of berm, 200 meters of triple standard concertina fence and reinforcing bunker positions to improve the perimeter defense. The engineers from 3 Oct to 11 Oct conducted daily mine sweeps between mine sweep FSB Jon to FSB Deb and along QL 13 from Loc Ninh to FSB Thunder IV. In addition to keeping the roads open, the Platoon also destroyed defective ammunition and an observation tower at FSB Jon. On 12 Nov the Platoon reinforced a Bailey Bridge on QL 13 at XU722973 using 6x6x4 timbers.

On 13 Nov the Platoon moved to the Special Forces camp in the vicinity of XU263878 and pulled security for the 501st Rome Plow Company. On 15 Nov while returning to Phoc Vinh, the Platoon was ambushed by an unknown sized enemy force in the vicinity of XU 287073 receiving

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negative casualties. The Platoon returned to Quan Loi on 19 Nov.

SECOND PLATOON

The first few weeks of the year found the 2nd Platoon at Blackhorse basecamp where they were responsible for sweeping the road from Blackhorse to Xuan Loc. They also constructed a chapel for 3/11 ACR and a FDC bunker for the 3rd How and a road to the top of Banana Hill and a bunker on the top. On 15 January the Platoon moved to Holiday Inn where they assumed the responsibility of clearing LTL 16 from Tan Uyen to Holiday Inn and to Claymore Corners. With the help of a D7E dozer and a grader from company HQ they constructed rice paddies at Bih Co by levelling and terracing the area around the local river for a civic action project. From January to May, the Platoon provided DS for units of 3/11 ACR working out of Bandit Hill. The Platoon swept roads connecting FSB 5th, FSB Oakland, and Bandit Hill daily. On 17 June the Platoon participated with I Troop in reconning a deserted village at coordinates 706926. During this recon, enemy troops were spotted by members of the Platoon and the resulting contact credited the Platoon with 7 NVA/KIA. Returning the next day to the same area with I Troop the Platoon again came under fire and the ensuing action resulted in 5 NVA/KIA. On 19 June while on a mine sweeping operation with I Troop, the 1st squad of the Platoon came under enemy fire. The combined efforts of the 1st squad and I Troop resulted in 35 NVA/KIA.

On 21 June the Platoon became attached to M Co and on 23 June moved out with M Co on a recon mission. The engineers were used as light and left security while on the move and it was their respon-

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sibility to search and destroy any bunker complexes encountered. On 29 June a Bn size bunker complex was discovered and destroyed by the *bunker complex* Platoon.

On 28 June the Platoon secured an AVLB site for M Co and K Troop. *NVA* After crossing was accomplished the engineers secured a disabled Recovery vehicle and 3 tanks. On 30 June the Platoon laagered at FSB Sidewinder and began sweeping the road from An Loc to Thunder III daily. On 7 July while with M Co the Platoon destroyed 17 bunkers. From 17-31 July the Platoon was located at Quan Loi for a maintenance standown. During August and the first week of Sept the Platoon was located at Blackhorse Basecamp where they assumed the responsibility for sweeping the road from Blackhorse to Xuan Loc and Cam My. On Sept the Platoon moved to FSB Aspen II. On 6 Sept while on a mine sweep with M Co the Platoon was ambushed. The resulting action credited the engineers and M Co with 98 NVA/KIA. On 12 Sept the Platoon was replaced by the 3rd Platoon and came into Quan Loi to support the *support HQ* company HQ section. From 14-21 Sept the Platoon provided security for the closing of FSB Allons II and FSB Eagle II. The Platoon during this time also participated in the clearing up of FSB Thunder IV.

On 21 Sep the Platoon returned to Quan Loi and began construction of a 30x45 ft command bunker for the 919th Engr Co. On 25 and 26 Sep eight men of the Platoon were OPCON to the ARPS for a demolition mission. The engineers were air lifted to a bunker complex northwest of Quan Loi and destroyed 50 enemy bunkers. From 5-11 Oct the Platoon widened and repaired a bridge at XT757833 and constructed and placed *culverts* *culverts* at the same location. From 17-25 Oct the Platoon enlarged a

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command bunker and conducted a recon for AVLB sites on Rt 304 E. On 26 Oct the Platoon road marched to FSB Gwyn.

During the months of Nov and Dec the Platoon conducted daily *mine sweep* mine sweeping operations in the An Loc .. Loc Ninh area.

THIRD PLATOON

During the month of January the 3rd Platoon was stationed at FSB Jim where they were responsible for sweeping the road from 1 kilometer south of Claymore Corners to 1 kilometer south of the Song Be bridge at Phouc Vinh. During the month of March and early April the Platoon moved to Bien Hoa Army Base where they constructed five billets for members of Air Cav Trp, 11 ACR. On 12 April the Platoon moved to Dan Tieng with 2/11 ACR to participate in operation Montana Raider. On 13 April the dozer attached to the Platoon pushed up 500 meters of berm and dug 1 powder sump and 1 drainage sump for How Battery. On 14 April the Platoon blew 26 bunkers and built 30 ft of corduroy road. The men also swept 6000 meters of road from XT344585 to 390629 locating six AT mines. On 17 April the Platoon destroyed 17 bunkers, 3 mess halls, and 800 lbs of rice. On 18 April the Platoon destroyed 48 bunkers, 1200 lbs of rice, 4 B40 rockets and 300 rounds of AK47 ammo. On the same day the 1st and 3rd squads and the CAV operating alone on a RIF uncovered a very large cache of NVA ammo. Included and destroyed in this find were: (126) 82mm rounds, (2) RPGs, (one) 26) 75mm recoilless rifle shells, (9) 57mm recoilless rifle rounds, (54) boxes of 82 and 60mm nose cones, (24) boxes of 82mm fuses, (27) cans of 82mm fuses, (160) rounds of 51mm ammo, (50) rounds of small arms ammo, (3) 32mm tubes, and (20) lbs of Ctrytols. Moved to *support 2/11* *bunkers* *Be under* *destroyed*

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On 1 May the Platoon was located at FSB Rita where they were preparing to move to Quan Loi. On 2 May the Platoon air assaulted mine sweep teams ahead along the route that was to be used for the road march to Quan Loi. The Platoon arrived at Quan Loi on the 2nd for a maintenance standdown which lasted until 7 May. On 7 May the Platoon left Quan Loi and traveled south along route 245. At coordinates 624705 the engineers put in an AVL to cross the 2nd Squadron. They proceeded south through the Minh Thanh Rubber Plantation and turned west mine sweeping IML 13 with negative results. On 8 May 1,000 meters south of the SE corner of the plantation the engineers using the units organic dozer prepared an NDP. On 9 May the Platoon moved to a new location at coordinates 608621 and again constructed an NDP for 2/11. On 10 May after detecting and thwarting enemy movement near the NDP the engineers swept the area and found 5 enemy rocket grenades. On 11 and 12 May the Platoon conducted mine sweeps from their NDP south to FSB Joe for resupply runs.

From 13 May to 24 May the Platoon was stationed at Blackhorse Basecamp where they assumed responsibility for sweeping the road from Blackhorse to Xuan Loc. On 26 May the Platoon road marched to Quan Loi with the 2/11. On 27 May the Platoon constructed an NDP with a 1st Ingr Bn dozer at XT738944. On 1 June the Platoon constructed an NDP at XT761820. On the night of 5 June the NDP came under ground attack. The next day the engineers swept the area and found 18 NVA/KIA, 9 AK 47s, 17 RPGs, 6 RPG launchers, 26 hand grenades, 19 rifle grenades, 3 Bangalore torpedoes, 16 60mm shells and 9 82mm shells. All were destroyed by the engineers. On 7 June while conducting a normal

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mine sweep with C Group 2/11, the sweep team was ambushed at coordinates XT711839. A sweep of the contact area revealed 78 NVA/KIA. On the same day the Platoon destroyed a VC village at coordinates XT700838 consisting of 14 hooches.

On 8 June the Platoon constructed an NDP at coordinates XT739820 which was named FSB Sidewinder. The Platoon remained at this location *Sidewinder* until 28 June. During this time the Platoon conducted daily mine sweep operations and culvert recon along QL 13. They were also a reactionary force for the resupply convoy to Quan Loi. From 29 June to 8 July the Platoon was stationed at Loc Ninh when the convoy was ambushed. The action resulted in 22 NVA/KIA, 1 POW, 4 engineers KIA and 11 engineers WIA. On 10 July the Platoon moved to Quan Loi for two cbt ACAVs. While at Quan Loi the Platoon served as a reactionary force for the resupply convoy from Lai Khe.

The first week of August the Platoon worked on various construction projects at Quan Loi improving the bunker line and command bunker of the red sector of Quan Loi perimeter defense. On 12 August the Platoon played a major role in plugging a hole in the perimeter defense of Quan Loi. The perimeter was attacked by NVA sappers, the wire was breeched, and the enemy was inside the basecamp. The Platoon aided in the evacuation of friendly casualties and held a 200 meter front until reinforcements arrived. The Platoon and two CEVs from the company's maintenance section were credited with 10 enemy KIA and the destruction of two RPG teams during this action. For the remaining weeks of August the Platoon worked at Quan Loi building bunkers. They also dispatched one vehicle crew and a mine sweep team

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to An Loc to secure a bridge site. On 14 Sept the Platoon, OPCON to M Co moved to FB Aspen II. The Platoon remained there for the rest of Sept providing security and daily mine sweeps in the Aspen II area. On 6 Oct the Platoon moved to a new NDP at coordinates XT705924 and performed demolition work in the area. Later in the month the Platoon moved to FSB Eagle I and cleared the area of enemy fortifications and obstacles. On 21 Oct 12 enemy bunkers were located and destroyed. On the following day another 19 bunkers were destroyed. On 23 Oct the Platoon moved from NDP Eagle I to coordinates XT697928. Before leaving Eagle I the Platoon destroyed all excess ammo and captured enemy ammo and destroyed all entrances to the NDP. For the remainder of the year the Platoon provided mine sweeping operations in the An Loc - Loc Ninh area.

FOURTH PLATOON

The 4th Platoon came into creation as a new Platoon under a newly authorized TO&E, MTO&E 5-127G. During January the Platoon constructed two 20'x60' troop billets for their own personal use. During the months of Feb, March and the first two weeks of April the Platoon was stationed at Blackhorse basecamp where they were responsible for the mine sweep from Blackhorse to Xuan Loc. During this period the Platoon pulled general maintenance on the perimeter, repaired the perimeter road, and burned vegetation in the area. The Platoon constructed seven 20'x70' maintenance pads for the regiment at Blackhorse. With the use of a grader the Platoon constructed a 600 meterx 50 meter sniper range outside the basecamp. On 17 April the Platoon moved to Quan Loi DS 11th ACR and constructed 10 underground bunkers.

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Combat

919th

a TOC area, showers and latrines.

During the month of May the Platoon remained at Quan Loi where they provided CS for Regt HQ and were used as a ready reactionary force for perimeter defense. On the night of 12 May the perimeter of Quan Loi was breached by sappers and the Platoon as a reactionary force was called upon to close the gap. The ensuing action resulted in one engineer KIA and 12 NVA KIA. During the months of June and July the Platoon remained at Quan Loi doing extensive work on the perimeter while one squad returned to Blackhorse to mine sweep to Xuan Loi. On 16 June members of the Platoon were air assaulted into Ap Phu Lo at coordinates XT686906 where they deposited persistent CS gas to prevent the VC from using the village. During the week of 15-21 June the Platoon provided security for the maintenance section of the 919th while they constructed an ARVN FSB at coordinates XT688746.

perimeter defense at Quan Loi

During the month of July the Platoon provided convoy security on QL 13 from Quan Loi to Thunder III and from Quan Loi to Loc Ninh. On 17 July the Platoon along with elements of the company's maintenance section reacted to an ambush on QL 13. The contact resulted in 13 NVA KIA. During this action the main guns of the company's CEVs were put to extensive use. To our knowledge this is the first time the main gun of a CEV was fired in combat in Viet Nam.

convoy security

combat engineers vehicle

During the last part of July and the beginning of August the Platoon was located at FSB Aspen. The Platoon during its stay there improved the perimeter defenses by setting up trip flares and building a 43 ft watch tower. In addition to improving the defenses the Platoon conducted daily mine sweeps and culvert recon between Duc Vinh

defenses at Aspen

mine sweep

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and Thunder III. On 6 Aug the Platoon traveled to Quan Loi. On that day the Platoon was given the mission to proceed to An Loc and recover a 50,000 gallon fuel tanker that had overturned on QL 13 at coordinates XT756880. The tanker, after $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours of work, was recovered with its load intact and it was escorted back to Quan Loi. On 7 Aug the Platoon departed Quan Loi and was given the mission of building a ^{ASB} new FSB, Eagle II, large enough for the 2/11, 2 ARVN artillery batteries and an ARVN Bn HQ. Sixty percent of the berm was completed after the first day of work. The following day the berm and gun positions were completed. The Platoon then returned to Quan Loi.

On 27 Aug the Platoon moved with H Co and conducted mine sweep operations from coordinates XT723775 to 737794 to 725779 and found 9 Chicom AT mines, 2 60mm rounds and 1 RPG-7 round. The Platoon then linked up with H Co and E Trp and on their return ~~trip~~ to FSB Aspen II they were ambushed by an estimated platoon size NVA force. No casualties were reported by the friendly forces and 6 NVA were KIA. On 29 Aug the Platoon with F Trp traveled south paralleling the Minh Than road to coordinates XT723775. From there they swept to XT707781, the location of a damaged tank and ACAV. Those vehicles were blown in place. On 30 Aug the Platoon left Aspen II and traveled to the village of Lang Nam. This ~~village~~ was searched revealing 3 cannisters used to fire rockets, and NVA first aid pouch and an RPG-2 booster.

On 1 Sep the Platoon moved to Di An. The Platoon stayed there until 10 Oct pulling maintenance on their vehicles, putting in concertina and trip flares to improve the perimeter defense. The Platoon also conducted mine sweeping classes and demolition classes for

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2/11 personnel and constructed quarters for the 2/11. The Platoon during this time also aided in the construction of tent frames for Regt HQ at Bien Hoa. The Platoon left Di An and laagered at FSB Marge on 10 Oct. The rest of the month found the Platoon engaged in daily mine sweep operations in the vicinity of Marge. From 22-28 the Platoon working out of Marge worked on Civi Action projects, ^{CA9} draining and cleaning a swimming pool and replacing culverts along OL 13.

From 2 Dec to 29 Dec, the 1st Platoon, 4th Platoon, HQ and Maintenance participated in operation Long Reach, providing mine sweeps and security for the Rome Plow Co. As a result of this operation, the road between Loc Ninh and Bo Duc was reopened and repaired. *Long Reach*