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Corrections made by Major
Brookshire on 6 October 67

Interview of MAJOR GRAIL L. BROOKSHIRE, ARMOR, 070133, Conducted on 2 October 1967 concerning intelligence information available to the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment prior to the 2 December 1966 and 21 November 1966 ambushes.

21 November

By mid-November, it appeared that the 5th VC Division, and its two maneuver elements, the 274th and 275th Regiments, had assumed an offensive posture. A great increase in agent reports and reports from classified intelligence sources indicated this. In addition, the 5th VC Division HQs had recently moved from its normal location toward the west, and a move such as this was thought to indicate that some kind of offensive action was about to be initiated. The intelligence sources indicated that the most probable action of the 5th VC Division would be an attack on the Regimental Base Camp, although the ambush of a supply convoy was not discounted as the division's possible offensive action. Because at this time the newly established Regimental Base Camp at YS 4496 was both a lucrative target (containing newly stockpiled supplies) and poorly fortified, the 11th Armored Cavalry requested the immediate release from the 1st Infantry Division of the First Squadron, then attached to the 1st Infantry Division in OPERATION ATTLEBORO. This request was granted, and the First Squadron moved

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to the Regimental Staging Area at LONG BINH where they were placed on a special alert status. They closed late in the afternoon of 20 November, and sent Troop A and Howitzer Battery ahead to the Regimental Base Camp to reenforce the defending forces there. The Third Squadron was at this time at LONG BINH in the execution of OPERATION UNIONTOWN. The Second Squadron was conducting search operations in the vicinity of the Regimental Base Camp in an attempt to spoil any possible enemy action against the Base Camp. By the 20th of November the 274th VC Regiment was still unlocated, and the Regimental intelligence staff was alerted to make every effort to ascertain the location of this hard-core and powerful VC unit.

2 December

Agent reports and reports from Infra-Red devices indicated a large enemy build-up at the classic ambush site between SUOI CAT and GIA RAY along National Highway 1 known as "Ambush Alley." Based upon this information, the First Squadron was ordered to conduct a reconnaissance in force to discover and then engage the enemy force in the area. It was presumed that the enemy force was elements of or the entire 275th VC Regiment, and that it was preparing to ambush convoys to or from the GIA RAY Rock Quarry site.

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The First Squadron was sent to find the enemy forces and searched for two days but did not make contact with the enemy. On 30 November, a FAC conducting visual reconnaissance along Inter-Provincial Highway 2 observed an enemy battalion in the open at AP HEAN (YS 4582) and the Second Squadron was sent after it. The First Squadron was ordered to break off the reconnaissance and to return to base camp. The Second Squadron made only light contact with the VC force. It was not believed at the time (and this was later determined to be correct) that the force near "Ambush Alley" and the battalion sized force were parts of a joint maneuver on the part of the 5th VC Division. By 2 November indications were that the enemy force was still near SUOI CAT, and the maneuver elements of the Blackhorse Regiment were made aware of this.

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ADDENDUM--Furnished by Major Grial L. Brookshire on 6 October 1967 to be used in conjunction with his interview notes of 2 October 1967 concerning the 2 December 1966 and 21 November 1966, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment ambushes on National Highway One in Vietnam.

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1. The VC Battalion spotted on 30 November at AP HEAN (YS 4582) was initially located by an 18th ARVN Division FAC conducting a visual reconnaissance of the Regimental TAOR.
 2. The recall of the First Squadron was made necessary because the Second Squadron was sent to find the VC unit located by the FAC at AP HEAN. Had the Second Squadron not been sent after the VC Battalion, the First Squadron would have remained in the SUOI CAT area.
 3. On both ambushes, the VC attempted to use a classic VC ambush pattern, to wit: block the front and rear of the unit attacked, initiate the ambush with a heavy volume of fire, cut off and destroy all elements in the killing zone. "As they learned the speed of our response, they would try to break contact before the reaction began."
 4. Both ambushes contained engineers (sappers), infantry, anti-tank units and anti-aircraft weapons in their makeup. The anti-aircraft weapons were 50 caliber and 12.7 MM machine guns.

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5. Both ambushes were most probably initiated to show that they could continue to control the roads in their area. In addition, they wanted to inflict casualties on the unit attacked.

John Albright
OCM 17
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