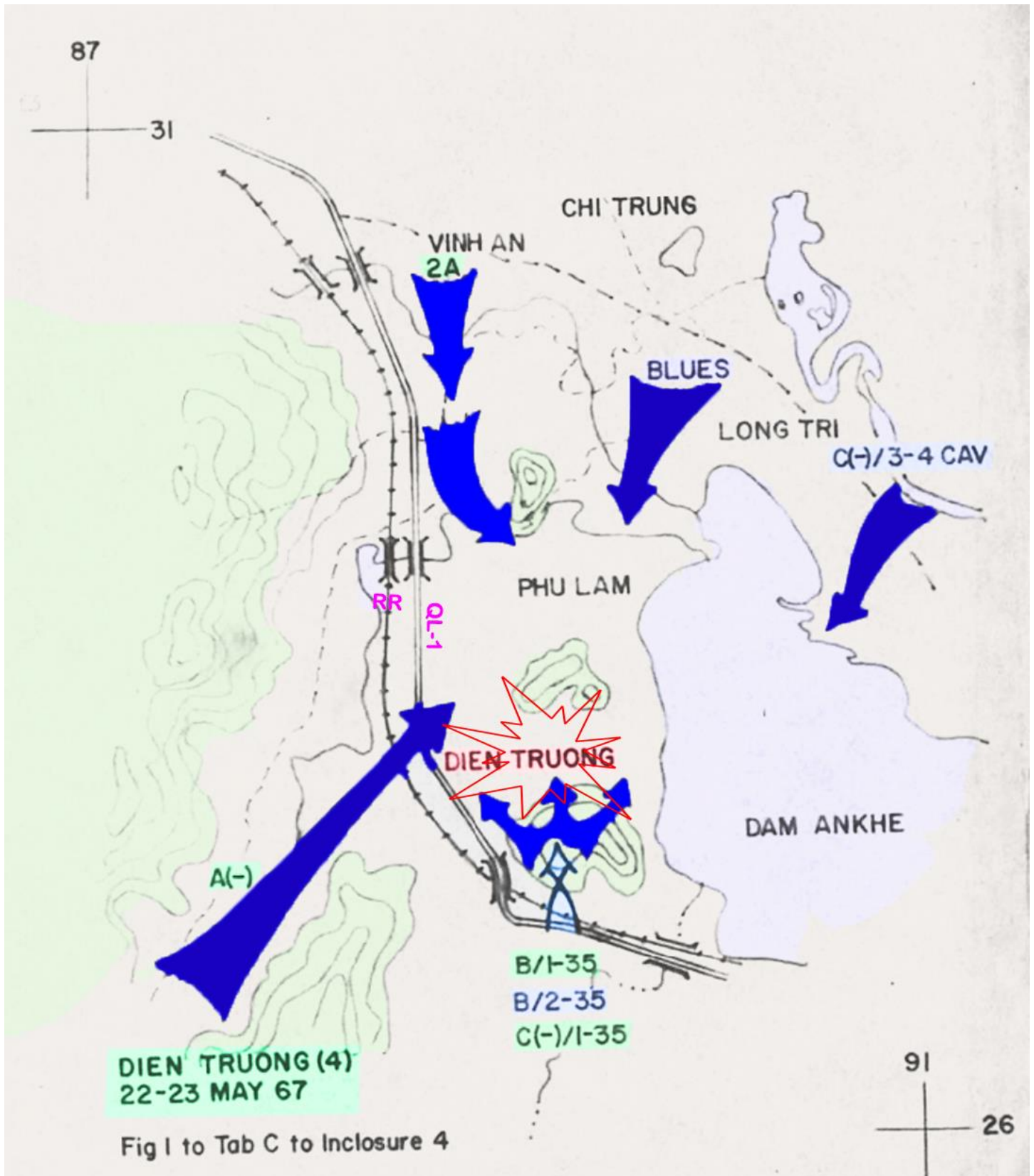




WELCOME TO "A WALK WITH THE 35TH"



[Back to History Index](#) | [35th Infantry Regiment ASSN Home](#) | [Contact](#)



Battle of Dien Truong (4)

1. Dressed in a khaki uniform and hands above his head with a Chieu Hoi pass firmly gripped in one hand, the NVA soldier willingly surrendered rather than face certain death. The soldier was possibly one of only a few members of his unit of the 7th Battalion, 22d NVA Regiment who lived through a day and a half of fierce fighting which was climaxed by a final assault by 2 US companies on the 23d of May in the hamlet of Dien Truong (4) vic BS890280.

2. The day and a half battle, which began on the 22d of May, was the end of a chase of a NVA force from the contact on the 19th of May by the 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry. The prisoner stated that many US forces had discovered his unit on the 19th, but many of his unit were able to escape during the night. He further stated that many dead were carried from the battle and buried while the wounded were moved to a cave someplace in the mountains. His unit stayed in the mountains for a day and a half and then moved to the fortified hamlet Dien Truong on the night of the 21st.

3. The 1-35th Infantry had pursued the NVA force to the south and southwest based upon subsequent intelligence reports. On the morning of 22 May, A Company was conducting a sweep to the northwest when they made contact vic BS888280.

4. A Company had just moved across Highway #1 to the east and into a rice paddy when automatic weapons fire ripped into the area. (See Fig 1). The command group was pinned down behind a small mound in the rice paddy and every attempt to maneuver brought bursts from automatic weapons. The company commander was wounded by the initial burst of enemy fire, but refused to be medevaced and remained in command of his company.

5. Gunships and artillery were immediately called to relieve the pressure while A Company maneuvered from the exposed rice paddies. The fortified hamlet was typical of most of the hamlets in Duc Pho and Mo Duc Districts. The perimeter was easily defendable with excellent mutually supporting firing positions and a network of interconnecting trenches throughout the hamlet. The hamlet was nestled between two hill masses with tunnels and caves which extended deep into the hills.

6. The size of the enemy force was estimated to be a battalion, and plans were made for combat assaulting reinforcements into the area of contact. While the reinforcing elements were preparing to be lifted in, supporting fires began to pound the area. Air strikes, artillery, and a destroyer off the coast kept the enemy deep in their positions.

7. B Company touched down at 1000 hours to the south of the enemy's location and deployed to the northwest to relieve some of the pressure on A Company (See Fig 1). B Company became heavily engaged as it moved from the LZ to the perimeter around the hamlet. Artillery began to pound the area and the enemy forces attempted to mount an assault against B Company. B Company immediately repelled the assault with a murderous volume of fire. Many of the enemy attempted to withdraw but were quickly cut down as they attempted to cross

a rice paddy. Although suffering heavy casualties, the enemy continued to man their bunkers and firing positions without losing their combat integrity.

8. Artillery and air strikes again pounded the area while Company C (-) and Company B of 2-35th Infantry were lifted into the area, (See Fig 1). The FAC directing the air strikes reported that he was able to observe more than 40 enemy killed. The air strikes and artillery continued unrelentingly dropping thousands of pounds of ordnance on the fortified positions. The air strikes were so accurate that a machinegun was seen flying through the air from a bunker which took a direct hit.

9. By 2100 hours, all lifts were completed and the units were moving into night positions in an attempt to block enemy withdrawal. "Spooky" reported on station at 1845 hours and remained on station throughout the night. Flares turned the night into day while the soldiers maintained vigilance for enemy movement.

10. Throughout the night and into the morning hours, the units reported receiving small arms fire. Additional air strikes were placed in the contact area while the battalion commander picked up the company commanders for an aerial recon. Final coordination was made for a two company assault with the other two companies providing a blocking force. Since the two companies had to cross open rice paddies to knock out the remaining strongholds of resistance, a helicopter was rigged for laying down a smoke screen.

11. At 1100 hours the 23d of May, A Company and B Company of the 2-35th Infantry began a final assault through a dense smoke screen and in 103° heat. The infantrymen quickly swept across the scarred battlefield eliminating the last resistance. Over 80 NVA bodies were counted on the battlefield and many more were believed killed. Many fortified bunkers, trenches, and caves had been completely destroyed by direct hits from bombs and artillery. Cpl Chu Van Vinh, the NVA prisoner, was a member of the 74th Heavy Weapons Company, 7th Battalion, 22d NVA Regiment. He stated that his company had met with almost complete annihilation and were not able to set up their mortars. Intelligence revealed that other elements of the 7th Battalion participated in the battle.

12. In July the 1-35th Infantry obtained intelligence which further corroborated the tremendous losses suffered by the 7th Battalion. A small 13 year old NVA Chieu Hoied to A Company of the 1-35th Infantry. The young soldier stated that he was a member of the battalion but did not participate in the battle on the 22d of May because he was sick. He did not rejoin his unit because they did not return. During the day and a half battle 18 air strikes dropped over 100,000 pounds of ordnance and artillery, gunships and "Spooky" pounded the area between air strikes. The quick response and fierce fighting of the 3d Brigade TF inflicted permanent damage to the 22d NVA Regiment.

TRUE COPY

EXTRACT: INTSUM NO 12 (3D BDE TF) 23 MAY 67

3. SUMMARY OF EN ACTIVITY

A. GROUND ACTIVITY

(1) DUC PHO

(I) 220710H, BS888283, A 1-35 ENG AN UNK SIZE EN FORCE LATER EST TO BE AN NVA BN. THE EN WAS FIGHTING FROM WELL PREPARED PSNS IN A HEAVILY FORTIFIED VILLAGE. ELEMENTS OF THE 2-35 AND B 1-9 HAD BEEN COMBAT ASSAULTED INTO THE CONTACT AREA BY MID DAY. C 1-35 COMBAT ASSAULTED DURING THE AFTERNOON. NINE AIRSTRIKES WERE FLOWN IN THE AFTERNOON AND AT THE END OF THE REPORTING PERIOD THE UNIT WAS STILL IN CONTACT. RSLTS: 43 EN KIA AND 16 WPNS CIA.

EXTRACT: INTSUM NO 13 (3D BDE TF) 24 MAY 67

3. SUMMARY OF EN ACTIVITY

A. GROUND ACTIVITY

(1) DUC PHO

(F) 230455H, BS893285, 1-35 REMAINED IN LIGHT CONTACT THROUGHOUT THE NIGHT INCREASING FROM MODERATE TO HEAVY IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS. B 1-35 RECD FIRE FROM 1 INDIV W/WPN ATTEMPTING TO ESCAPE THE CONTACT AREA. RSLTS: 1 EN KIA.

(I) 230945H, BS888282, B 1-35 RECD FIRE FROM 4 INDIV W/WPNS FLEEING THE CONTACT AREA TO THE EAST. RSLTS: 4 EN KIA.

(J) 230945H, BS888282, C 1-35 OBS 2 INDIV FLEEING EAST FROM THE CONTACT AREA UNDER COVER OF EN FIRE. RSLTS: 2 EN KIA.

(K) 231110H, BS882282, 1-35 BEGAN SWEEP OF THE CONTACT AREA. 6 AIRSTRIKES AND THE EXTENSIVE USE OF ARTY AND GUNSHIPS ALONG W/TANK MAIN GUNS ON THE EN PSNS HAD REDUCED THE ENEMY'S RESISTANCE TO SPORADIC SA FIRE. DURING THE SWEEP, A TOTAL OF 70 EN KIA WERE LOC ALONG W/21 INDIV WPNS AND 2 CREW SERVED WPNS. OTHER ITEMS OF EQUIPMENT CAPTURED INCLUDED: 350 X 7.62MM LONG AMMO, 1,000 RDS 30 CAL LINK AMMO, 80 RDS OF M-1 CARBINE AMMO, 32 CHICOM HAND GRENADES, 1 PISTOL BELT, 1 NVA CANTEEN, 24 PACKS, 2 PROTECTIVE MASKS, AND MISC DOCS. A THROUGH SEARCH OF THE BATTLEFIELD HAD NOT BEEN COMPLETED. DOCS INDICATED THE 7TH BN, 22 NVA REGT WAS IN THE CONTACT AREA.

EXTRACT: INTSUM NO 14 (3D BDE TF) 25 MAY 67

3. SUMMARY OF EN ACTIVITY

A. GROUND ACTIVITY

(1) DUC PHO

(H) 240815H, BS895295, 2-35 CONTINUED SWEEP OF THE AREA OF CONTACT ON 22 MAY. AT THE END OF THE REPORTING PERIOD A TOTAL OF 9 ADDITIONAL NVA BODIES LOC AND 107 X 82MM MORTAR RDS COMPLETE W/FUSE AND IGNITION CARTRIDGE, 2,000 RDS OF 30 C.L LINKED AMMO, 350 RDS OF 7.62 LONG LINKED AMMO, 28 NVA PACKS, 30 SETS OF MIXED CLOTHING, 28 CHICOM HAND GRENADES (PERCUSSION), 9 CHICOM HAND GRENADES (FRAG), 34 PROTECTIVE MASKS, 8 MEDICAL LITTERS, 8 LBS MEDICAL SUPPLIES, 7 MILES COMMO WIRE, MISC MESS GEAR, 5 LBS MISC DOCS, 1 HOME MADE WPN, AND 1 X M-60 MACHINE GUN IN A DEST CONDITION. DOCS CAPTURED INDICATED THAT THE AREA WAS PROBABLY A RECORDS DEPOSITORY FOR NVA AND VC UNITS INCLUDING BOTH THE 2D AND 3D NVA DIV.

EXTRACT: INTSUM NO 15 (3D BDE TF) 26 MAY 67

3. SUMMARY OF EN ACTIVITY

A. GROUND ACTIVITY

(1) DUC PHO

(L) 251205H, BS895286, C 1-35 LOC 1 EN KIA BURIED IN A COLLAPSED PROTECTIVE SHELTER AND OBVIOUSLY KILLED DURING THE 22-23 MAY CONTACT. ALSO LOC 1 AK-47.

"A TRUE COPY"

Bobby L. Moore

BOBBY L. MOORE
Captain, CH-1C