

Operation Wayne Span

17 July to 27 July 1970

IN MEMORY OF THIS FINE YOUNG MAN FROM RECON PLATOON

7/19/70 E Co. Sgt Michael Thibodeaux Age 19 Crowley, Louisiana Small Arms/AW

Our thanks to Richard Cazeault, Delta 2/35 1970 for sharing this report.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

HEADQUARTERS, 2D BATTALION 35Th INFANTRY

APO San Francisco 96262

1 August 1970

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report

Commanding Officer

1st Brigade,. 4th Inf Div

ATTN: S3

APO San Francisco 96262

1. Name of Operation: WAYNE SPAN

2. Dates of Operation: 17 Jul - 27 Jul

3. Location of Operation: The operation was located 40 kilometers NE of CAMP RADCLIFF, RVN, in the SONG KIM SON River Valley.

4. Command Headquarters:

a. 1st Brigade, 4th Inf Div located at LZ UPLIFT.

b. 2d Battalion 35th Infantry forward command post located at LZ ABBEY.

5. Key Personnel:

| POSITION | NAME | PERIOD |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| BN CO | LTC WILLIAMS L. HARRISON:, JR | 17 Jul – 27 Jul |
| BN XO | MAJ WILLIAM J. HARDENBURGH | 17 Jul – 27 Jul |
| BN S1 | 1LT CLYDE R. WHITE | 17 Jul – 22 Jul |
| BN S1 | 1LT KIT M. H. JOHNSTON, III | 22 Jul – 27 Jul |

| | | |
|------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| BN S2 | CPT GILBERT L. JACOBS | 17 Jul – 27 Jul |
| BN S3 | CPT JERRY S. CLARK | 17 Jul – 27 Jul |
| BN S3 AIR | CPT PHILIP REARDEN | 17 Jul – 27 Jul |
| BN S4 | CPT BURL D MAGEE | 17 Jul – 27 Jul |
| BN S5 | 1LT PATRICH E CASSETY | 19 Jul – 27 Jul |
| BN SPT PLT LDR | 1LT RICHARD A WETHERELL | 17 Jul – 27 Jul |
| A CO | CPT MELVIN BANKS | 17 Jul – 27 Jul |
| B CO | CPT JACK R VANDERPOOL | 17 Jul – 27 Jul |
| C CO | 1LT RALPH W JAMES | 17 Jul – 27 Jul |
| D CO | 1LT MARSHAL W ERICKSON | 17 Jul – 22 Jul |
| D CO | 1LT CLYDE R WHITE | 22 Jul – 27 Jul |
| E CO | CPT KIRK W LARSEN | 17 Jul – 27 Jul |
| RECON PLT LDR | 1LT GEORGE W LANIER | 17 Jul – 27 Jul |
| 4.2 MORT PLT LDR | 1LT WILLIS M MUSKA | 17 Jul – 27 Jul |
| A/4-42 ARTY CO | CPT PAUL STEWART | 17 Jul – 27 Jul |
| A/4-42 ARTY LO | 1LT MICHAEL J PITTIGLIO | 17 Jul – 27 Jul |

6. Task Organization:

| | |
|------------|-----------------------|
| A/2-35 Inf | BN CON |
| B/2-35 Inf | RCN/PLT/2-35 Inf |
| C/2-35 Inf | 4.2 MORT PLT/2-35 Inf |
| D/2-35 Inf | A/4-42 ARTY (DS) |

7. Supporting Forces:

a. Supporting artillery fires to include TIC, and Defensive Targets were provided by A/4-42 Arty in direct support of 2-35 Inf.

b. Gunship support was provided on a mission request basis by 1st BDE, 4th Inf Div.

c. Tactical Air support was provided on a pre-planned and/or immediate mission request basis through 1st BDE, 4th Inf Div.

d. SNOOPY/SCORPION missions were provided on a pre-planned basis through S2, 1st BDE, 4th Inf Div. Numerous SNOOPY/SCORPION missions were flow in support of this battalion, however, none led to any significant findings by ground troops.

8. Intelligence:

a. **Terrain:** Steep hills ranging in height from 100 to 200 meters. These hills are covered with dense vegetation consisting of triple canopy. In the valley are flat open areas covered with high grass and patches of small trees and underbrush. Only a few LZ's exist in the hilly areas and the dense vegetation make cutting LZ's difficult. A jungle penetrator for medivac's is required most of the time. There are few trails in the area and none showed signs of recent use.

b. **Weather:** The weather was hot and sunny. Most of the time the visibility was unlimited and presented no problems for resupply, CA's and extracting. Temperatures remained between 105 and 80 (degrees) the majority of the time precipitation was infrequent and generally light.

c. **Enemy Situation:** Prior to the initiation of the mission, intelligence indicated the presence of the 93rd Inf Bn, 2d VC Regt, and the 300th Arty Bn in the area. However, except for 1 incidence of enemy sniper fire negative contact was made with the enemy. The area showed negative signs of recent use and few hootches and bunkers were found.

9. **Mission:** 2-35 Inf commences operation WAYNE SPAN in assigned AO to locate and destroy enemy forces, supplies and installations in NE BA226.

10. **Concept of Operations:** Operation WAYNE SPAN was initiated on 17 Jul when A(-), B, C, D Co's and Rcn Plt conducted CA's into multiple LZ's; 1/A secured and began construction of FSB ABBEY.

11. **Execution:**

a. **A Company:** On 171204H Jul 70, 1/A completed a CA from LZ TWO BITS to LZ ABBEY and began the mission of security and construction of the fire base. A Co(-) CA'ed in LZ's in their assigned AO and began on-line sweep operations.. On 261554H Jul 70, a 4-man ambush team was airlifted to LZ CHALLENGE to set up a stay-behind ambush at that location.. On 271803H Jul 70, vic BR 635815, the 4-man ambush observed 3 individuals 700 meters to the SE walking towards them. The sniper on the team engaged the enemy with two rounds of M-14 fire. No fire was returned.. When next observed, the individuals were 25 meters away A claymore mine was blown and artillery employed, however, a sweep of the area revealed negative findings.

b. **B Company:** On 17 Jul, B Co conducted CA's into multiple LZ's and began on-line sweep operations in their assigned AO. On 231045H Jul 70, vic BR 750778, 3/B found 40 bunkers and 2 caves, all over 1 year old with negative recent use. B Co had no contacts and no further findings during this operation.

c. **C Company:** On 17 Jul, C Co conducted CA's into multiple LZ's and began on-line sweep operations in their assigned AO. C Co had no contacts with the enemy and made no significant findings throughout the operation.

d. **D Company:** On 17 Jul, D Co conducted CA's into multiple LZ's and began on-line sweep operations in their assigned AO. D Co had no contacts with the enemy and made no significant findings during the operation.

e. **Recon Platoon:** On 17 Jul, Rcn Plt CA'd into their AO and began the mission of rear blocking force for the sweeping companies. On 191727H Jul 70, vic BR 757747, Rcn Plt was in their night location when one enemy initiated small arms fire from 30 meters to the SW. Rcn

returned small arms fire and artillery was employed, however, a sweep revealed negative findings. Results of the contact were 1 friendly KIA.

12. Results: Operation WAYNE SPAN yielded 2-35 Inf the following results:

2 x contacts

43 x bunkers

4 x caves

13. Administration and Logistics:

a. Resupply: Battalion trains were located at LZ UPLIFT with a forward resupply point for emergency Class I and V located at FSB ABBEY.

b. Medical Services; Aid stations were located both at the forward fire base and at the rear area at CAMP RADCLIFF. Casualties were evacuated to 17th Field Hospital at CAMP RADCLIFF.

c. Maintenance: Maintenance areas were established at the forward trains area and equipment requiring repairs beyond BN capability were evacuated to C Co 704th Maint.

d. Communications: No communications problems were experienced during this operation.

14. Special Equipment AND Techniques: None

15. Commanders Analysis: In this type of operation,. it is sometimes difficult to keep the flanks of each unit tied in with adjoining units. This is caused by terrain ant speed of movement. During Operation WAYNE SPAN the speed was held such that the elements had no problem staying on line and keeping their flanks tied-in.

**WILLIAMS L. HARRISON
LTC, Infantry
Commanding**