

Operation Wayne Force

8 Sep to 1 Oct 1970

In Memory of These Fallen Comrades

**9/14/70 C Co. Pfc. Robert Freda Age 21 Miami, Florida Small Arms/AW
9/18/70 C Co. Sp4 Robert Naiper Age 21 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania Small Arms/AW
9/28/70 B Co. Pfc. Wesley Davis Age 20 Queen Creek, Arizona Small Arms/AW**

Our thanks to Richard Cazeault for providing this report

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

HEADQUARTERS, 2D BATTALION 35TH INFANTRY

APO San Francisco 96262

5 October 1970

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report

Commanding Officer

1st Brigade, 4th Inf Div

APO San Francisco

1. Name of Operation: WAYNE FORCE.

2. Dates of Operation: 8 Sep – 1 Oct

3. Location of Operation: The general location of the operation was 85 kilometers SSW of CAMP RADCLIFF; in the PHU YEN PHU BON Provincial border area.

4. Command Headquarters:

a. 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division located at CAMP RADCLIFF, RVN.

b. 2d Battalion 35th Infantry forward command post located at FSB WASHINGTON (BR 670706)

5 Key Personnel:

POSITION	NAME	PERIOD
BN CO	LTC EARL R PERRY	8 Sep – 1 Oct
BN XO	MAJ WILLIAM J HARDENBURGH	8 Sep – 1 Oct
BN S1	1LT KIT M H JOHNSTON III	8 Sep – 1 Oct
BN S2	1LT JAMES B ZIEGLER	8 Sep – 29 Sep

BN S2	CPT FRANK G BROWN	29 Sep – 1 Oct
BN S3	MAJ CHESTER GARRETT	8 Sep – 1 Oct
BN S4	1LT RALPH W JAMES	8 Sep – 1 Oct
BN S5	1LT PATRICH N CASSETY	8 Sep – 1 Oct
BN SPT PLT LDR	1LT EDWARD F MOSEY	8 Sep – 25 Sep
BN SPT PLT LDR	2LT THADDEUS C YOST	25 Sep – 1 Oct
A CO	CPT MELVIN BANKS	8 Sep – 1 Oct
B CO	CPT JEFFERSON D KIRBY	8 Sep – 1 Oct
C CO	CPT WARD K ODON	8 Sep – 1 Oct
D CO	1LT CLYDE R WHITE	8 Sep – 1 Oct
E CO	1LT THOMAS M WAJER	8 Sep – 1 Oct
RECON PLT LDR	1LT GEORGE W LANIER	8 Sep – 1 Oct
4.2 MORT PLT LDR	1LT WILLIAM M MUSKA	8 Sep – 1 Oct
A/4-42 ARTY CO	CPT PAUL STEWART	8 Sep – 1 Oct
A/4-42 ARTY LO	1LT MICHAEL J PITTIGLIO	8 Sep – 1 Oct

6. Task Organization: The Task Organization at the beginning of the operation was as follows:

A/2-35 Inf	BN CON	
B/2-35 Inf	RCN PLT	1/1/B/4 th Engr (DS)
C 2-35 Inf	4.2 MORT PLT	Plt/K/75 th Rangers (DS)
D/2-35 Inf	A/4-42 Arty (DS)	Sect/124 th Sig (GS)

From 20-23 Sep A/2-35 Inf became OPCON to IDCC. On 25 Sep Plt/K/75th Rangers were returned to the control of their parent unit. The Task Organization remained intact throughout the remainder of the operation.

7. Support Forces:

a. Supporting Artillery to include Troops in Contact, Night Fire, Quick Reaction Fire, and Defensive Targets were provided by A/4-42 Arty in direct support of 2-35 Inf.

b. Due to the distance of the area of operations from the command headquarters, gunship support was provided on a standby basis at the trains area in PHU XUAN, RVN.

c. Tactical Air Support was available on a preplanned and/or immediate request basis through an Air Force Detachment located at FSB WASHINGTON. Numerous immediate requests were submitted by and three were flown in support of this battalion.

d. SNOOPY/SCORPION missions were available on a preplanned basis through S2, 1st BDE, 4th Inf Div. There were three SNOOPY/SCORPION missions flown for this battalion, however, none led to any significant findings by ground troops.

8. Intelligence:

a. **Weather:** As predicted before the start of the operation, the weather turned out to hinder air operations. Showers and thunderstorms occurred almost every afternoon. Thus, resupply was hampered. Ground fog was prevalent in the valleys and low areas every morning. High winds accompanied the thunderstorms.

b. **Terrain:** The terrain in this area was very rugged with many high ridges which tended to hinder communications. A large portion of the area of operations was covered with jungle and thick vegetation, which made locating LZ's for resupply and "Dustoffs" difficult and in some cases impossible. The southern portion of the AO consisted of more rolling hills, with less vegetation. LZ's were much easier to locate in this area.

c. **Enemy:** As predicted, elements of the PHU YEN Provincial Unit were discovered in this area. This was shown by documents and personal letters taken from hootches and enemy KIA's. One detainee, captured by C Co, stated that a large number of the PHU YEN Provincial Unit was located not far from his place of capture.

Contacts during this period were numerous and were made with groups of 2-3 individuals. The enemy was more aggressive in this area of operations than the enemy contacted by this battalion previously. The enemy employed numerous tactics, which included, ground to air fire, sniper fire, and the ambush. One unsuccessful attempt to destroy portions of the battalion was made on the trains area in PHU XUAN, fortunately the mortar rounds fell short of their mark.

US forces combined with territorial forces, caused the enemy to depart the area. This was evidenced by many hootch complexes of recent use which were found throughout the area. One large complex, found by D Co, appeared to be a sapper and medical training area.

Friendly operations in the area yielded 19 enemy KIA's, 1 enemy detainee, and numerous hootch and bunker complexes, all of which were destroyed. Bunkers and some hootch complexes were destroyed by immediate and preplanned air strikes with ground elements and Cav troops assisting in BDA.

9. **Missions:** 2D Bn 35th Inf was given the mission to move on 090800H Sep 70 to PHU YEN – PHU BON border region; conduct a CA into assigned AO to locate and destroy PHU YEN Provincial Unit. To interdict corridor passing through assigned AO; establish liaison with GVN/ROK; and, plan and conduct combined operations with PHU TUC Territorial Forces.

10. Concept of Operations: This operation was conducted in four phases:

a. **Phase I: Deployment Phase:** On 060800 Sep 70, the advance party departed for PHU XUAN, and established combat trains and prepared trains for the arrival of Bn(-). On 080800 Sep 70, Bn(-) departed for PHU XUAN, and established an initial staging base and prepared to combat assault on order.

b. **Phase II:** On 090800 Sep 70, B Co(-) CA'd into assigned AO and established security for FSB WASHINGTON. A Co CA'd into AO Red and began search and clear operations. C Co

CA'd into AO Blue, established a patrol base and began interdiction, by ambushes, of the infiltration corridor and trails. D Co conducted a CA into AO White and began search and clear operations. Rcn Plt conducted a CA into their assigned AO and began RIF operations.

c. Phase III: Combined Operation Phase: All units conducted combined operations with PHU TUC territorial Forces.

d. Phase IV: Withdrawal Phase: All elements withdrew from the field on 1 Oct and conducted a convoy move to CAMP RADCLIFF on 2 Oct.

11. Execution:

a. A Company: On 091122H Sep 70, A Co completed a CA from PHU XUAN to LA vic BQ 737713 and departed the LZ to the west to begin search and clear operations in their assigned AO. Numerous hootch complexes were located, however, no enemy sightings were made during the first period of the operation. On 19 Sep, A Co extracted from the field and on 20 Sep moved by convoy to CAMP RADCLIFF to assume the mission of Golf Course security under the control of IDCC. On 23 Sep, A Co moved by convoy to PHU XUAN, and on 24 Sep, CA'd to LZ vic BQ 723652 and resumed search and clear operations in their new AO. On 25 Sep 70, 3/A located a hootch complex containing various maps dated 1967 plus documents and drawings of various types of booby traps. All were evacuated to S2, 1st BDE. On 28 Sep, vic BQ 721579, 3/A located a large hootch complex consisting of 35 hootches and 25 bunkers. The area contained materials which appeared to be used for raining of sappers. The area had been used within the last 7 days by an undetermined number of individuals. A Co made no further significant findings and had no enemy sightings for the remainder of the operation. On 1 Oct, A Co conducted a final extraction from the field to PHU XUAN.

b. B Company: On 090950H Sep 70, B Co(-) completed a CA to LZ vic BQ 670706 and assumed the mission of security and construction of FSB WASHINGTON. One platoon remained at PHU XUAN to provide security for the trains area. On 18 Sep B Co (-) conducted a CA to LZ vic BQ 743657 and began search and clear operations in their assigned AO. 2/B remained at the trains area as security. On 190700H Sep 70, vic BQ 746651, 3/B received 12 rounds of 82mm mortar fire from SEL BQ 745645. Artillery was employed. A sweep of the SEL was sent out at 0800H and at 0936H vic BQ 743647, the sweep made contact with an estimated 3-4 enemy. Fire was initiated by the sweeping element and the enemy fled to the south after returning AK-47 fire. A sweep of the contact area revealed 1 enemy KIA and 1 AK-47 rifle. B Co (-) had one further contact on 28 Sep, vic BQ 787757, when 2 enemy initiated fire on the point element of 1/B. The enemy were 15 meters away when the fire was initiated. Small arms fire was returned as the enemy fled to the east. The results of the contact were 1 friendly KIA and unknown enemy casualties. B Co (-) made no further significant findings and were extracted on 1 Oct.

c. C Company: on 091310H Sep 70, C Co (-) completed a CA from PHU XUAN to LZ vic BQ 734736, and began extensive search and clear operations in their assigned AO. 3/C remained at PHU XUAN to assist in searching the trains area. On 141356H Sep 70, vic BQ 735654, a sweep from 2/C ran into a linear ambush with a grenade booby trap to trigger it. When the booby trap failed to go off, the enemy initiated the ambush and fled to the east. Results of the ambush were 5 friendly WIA's and 1 friendly KIA. On 230945H Sep 70, vic BQ 727645, 1/C located a bunker complex and after pulling back to employ artillery moved into the complex to search it. Upon entering the complex enemy personnel emerged from the bunkers. 1/C initiated fire upon the enemy resulting in 5 enemy KIA's and 1 enemy WIA/detainee. Also found in the village were one M-1 carbine, one .32 cal pistol, and one US Springfield rifle. C

Co (-) continued search and clear operations with one platoon securing the trains area and one platoon securing the FSB. No further contacts or findings were made during this operation and C Co (-) was extracted from the field on 1 Oct.

d. D Company: On 091156H Sep 70, D Co completed a CA from PHU XUAN to LZ vic BQ 728665 and began extensive search and clear operations in their assigned AO. On 141330H Sep 70. Vic BQ 720763, 3/D was moving to the NE when 1 enemy engaged them with an estimated 3 rounds of AK-47 fire from 15 meters to the NE. Small arms fire was returned as the enemy fled to the north. A sweep of the area revealed a blood trail which 3/D followed for approximately 100 meters when it disappeared. D Co continued sweep operations finding numerous hootches and bunkers in the area. All appeared to have been vacated within the last week. An area, vic BQ 713752, appeared to be a sapper training area. Also found in this area were numerous medical supplies. D Co made no significant contacts for the remainder of the operation and, on 1 Oct, they were extracted from the field.

e. Recon Platoon: On 091425H Sep 70, Rcn Plt conducted a CA from PHU XUAN to LZ vic BQ 670773 and departed to the west to begin recon operations in their assigned AO. Rcn Plt had no contacts and had no significant findings while operation in the AO. On 20 Sep, Rcn Plt was given the mission of securing a hipshoot for two 81mm mortars and one platoon of 105mm howitzers at vic BQ 755817. On 1 Oct, Rcn Plt was extracted with the hipshoot and moved to PHU XUAN to prepare for a convoy move to CAMP RADCLIFF on 2 Oct.

f. Territorial Forces: Combined operations were conducted with the 402nd, 501st, 750th, and 770th Companies of the PHU TUC Territorial Forces. The battalion provided a 1LT to act as liaison at PHU TUC. Communications were maintained with the Territorial Forces operating in the field at all times. On 261425H Sep 70, vic BQ 650798, a patrol from the 750th Co initiated contact on an estimated 2 enemy. The contact lasted for 5 minutes with the patrol employing artillery blocking fire. The enemy fled to the NW with the patrol employing fire and maneuver. A sweep of the area revealed a heavy blood trail. The Territorial Forces made numerous contacts and destroyed many hootches and bunkers. They also conducted several BDA's.

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

18 x contacts	1 x US claymore
19 x enemy KIA's	6 x US hand grenades
1 x detainee	6 x NVA Protective Masks
2 x AK-47 rifles	133 x hootches
1 x M1 carbine	88 x bunkers
1 x .32 cal pistol	2 x caves
1 x Springfield rifle	1 x bridge
4 x AK-47 magazines	15 x fighting positions
1 x carbine magazine	50 x lbs corn
1 x M-16 magazine	40 x lbs rice
1 x 105mm rd	Numerous documents

1 x 82mm rd	Various medical supplies
43 x AK-47 rds	Numerous misc. supplies and equipment

13. Logistics:

a. Resupply: Battalion trains were located at PHU XUAN, RVN with a forward resupply point for Class I and V located at FSB WASHINGTON.

b. Medical Services: Battalion Aid Stations were located both at the rear area in CAMP RADCLIFF and the forward fire base. 4th Med provided an aid station at the trains area in PHU XUAN. A "dustoff" helicopter remained on station at PHU XUAN during the entire operation.

c. Transportation: Transportation to and from PHU XUAN was provided the 8th Group. The availability of aircraft for resupply and operations was not a problem, however, bad flying weather frequently caused delays in normal operations.

d. Communications: Numerous communications problems arose. Communications with the 1st Bde was affected mainly by the distance to the AO. At times it was impossible to maintain communications with Bde. Communications problems with elements in the field was mainly caused by terrain. It was necessary to establish one permanent relay site with other relay sites established as the need arose.

14. Special Equipment and Techniques: A radio-teletype was used extensively and with much success throughout the entire operation. Because of the lack of secure capabilities with the 1st Bde, this proved to be an invaluable asset during the operation.

15. Commanders Analysis: The mission of this battalion was to locate and destroy the PHU XUAN Provincial Unit. It cannot be conclusively determined how successful we accomplished this mission. We do know that we located elements of the provincial unit, and uncovered some of their training areas. Delta Company found and destroyed what was believed to be the Provincial hospital training complex. Man of the KIA's and captured documents identifies the PHU YEN Provincial Unit or elements of it.

For many in the Bn it was their first opportunity to work with Vietnamese forces. Their performance could not be judges on any scale. But base on the material captured and the structures destroyed I would qualify their performance on highly favorable terms.

The success of any mission depends on how well the mission is accomplished; therefore, we could conclude that we failed. This is not the case as we did kill many local VC, who are hard to replace, and we did find his safe areas. But from an operational viewpoint we learned a lot about the Bn, as many of the officers and men were newly assigned. From the experience gained on this operation the Bn is now ready and much better prepared to accomplish any task assigned to it.

**EARL R. PERRY
LTC, Infantry
Commanding**