

35th Infantry Regiment

"Cacti Vietnam KIAs Stratification"

by Dick Arnold

FOREWORD

The Cacti were in Vietnam from late December 1965, until November of 1970. The 1/35 battalion left in April of 1970, with the 2/35 staying until November. The Cacti were originally part of the 25th Division, but on August 1, 1967 were transferred to the 4th Division.

The author considers the information to be in the public domain and all, or parts, may be used as appropriate.

"Long live their names, long live their glory, and long may their stories be told."

Cacti Forever,

Dick Arnold

Rank at Time of Death

| LTC | MAJ | CPT | CWO | 1LT | 2LT | E8 | E7 | E6 | E5 | E4 | E3 |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|
| 1 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 22 | 14 | 2 | 7 | 30 | 55 | 162 | 313 |

There were 26 medics killed. There were a very few soldiers that, either through clerical mistakes or disciplinary actions, were shown as E1s or E2s at time of death. However, in honor of their supreme sacrifice I chose to list them as E3s.

Year of Death

| 1964 | 1965 | 1966 | 1967 | 1968 | 1969 | 1970 | 25 TH | 4 TH |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1* | 1* | 141 | 215 | 156 | 71 | 31 | 293 | 323 |

*TDY AS DOOR GUNNER

(August 1, 1967 representing the official switch from 25th to 4th Division)

Month of Death

| | JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1966 | 0 | 8 | 15 | 2 | 20 | 23 | 27 | 17 | 3 | 13 | 13 | 0 |
| 1967 | 17 | 5 | 43 | 13 | 36 | 22 | 12 | 11 | 8 | 20 | 24 | 4 |
| 1968 | 9 | 42 | 13 | 25 | 1 | 8 | 0 | 2 | 37 | 4 | 13 | 2 |
| 1969 | 16 | 3 | 15 | 1 | 10 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 7 | 3 |
| 1970 | 8 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

It is easy to see that after mid-1969, the intensity of fighting dropped-off dramatically. March of 1967 with 43 deaths is a bit skewed as 21 were from one company. The 42 in February 1968

represent of course Tet. Also of interest is September 1968; of the 37 deaths only one was in the 1/35—the rest were from the 2/35 in operations around Duc Lap (Quang Duc Province) The biggest surprise to me is May of '67 with 36. This was doing the Cacti's initial operations in the Duc Pho area when the Viet Cong were trying to wrest the initiative. Many are not aware of the intensity of the fighting in this time frame. Further, the 36 deaths were distributed among eight different companies.

Province of Death

| | |
|------------|---------------------|
| Pleiku | 179 (29.1%) |
| Quang Ngai | 109 |
| Kontum | 100 |
| Binh Dinh | 59 |
| Quang Nam | 53 |
| Quang Duc | 45 |
| Quang Tin | 36 |
| Darlac | 23 |
| Phu Yen | 04 |
| Cambodia | 01 |
| Unknown | 02 |
| N/A | 05 (medical deaths) |

The biggest surprise for many may be that Quang Ngai has more Cacti deaths than Kontum. Whereas many of our well known fights occurred in Kontum—the Operation Sam Houston fights in March of 1967, Mile High and Hill 1062 in April '68—neither battalion spent long periods of time in the province. However, Quang Ngai saw the 1/35 there continuously from mid-April '67 to October '67, and the 2/35 there from mid-April '67 to the end of the year. The 2/35 also spent a few weeks there in 1970. The deceptive thing about Quang Ngai was the nature of the fighting; the most men lost in a single engagement were four. Big, memorable fights were not the norm but attrition through snipers and booby traps certainly was. It was a very dangerous place.

The three I Corp provinces of Quang Ngai, Quang Tin and Quang Nam accounted for 32% of Cacti deaths. Both Quang Duc and Quang Nam are also notable for the high number of deaths compared to the time spent there.