



STRIKE

Vietnam War Weekly History



December 1st – December 7th, 2019

Issue: 182

Brief History of the 501st, 502nd and 2nd Brigade (101st ABN DIV)

The 502nd, or "five-oh-deuce", was activated July 1, 1941 at Fort Benning, Georgia as the 502nd parachute infantry battalion, as an experimental unit formed to test the doctrine and tactics of parachute assaults. The 502nd entered combat in World War II on June 6, 1944, by jumping into NORMANDY, with allied forces landing on D-Day and the Battle of NORMANDY. Between 1945 and 1964. A major reorganization took place on 3 February 1964, when the 2nd Brigade of the 101st Airborne was activated at Fort Campbell, replacing the 1st Airborne Battle Group, 501st Infantry Regiment. The reorganization from the battle groups to brigades and battalions placed two battalions of the 502nd in different brigades of the 101st.



The 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry was in the 1st Brigade with 1-327th and 2-327th Infantry. Which deployed to Vietnam and arrived at Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam on 29 July 1965, they were commanded by the most notable commander LTC Hank "The Gunfighter" Emerson.



The new 2nd Brigade's original organic battalions were the 1st and 2d Battalions, 501st Infantry, and the 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry. December 1967 the 501st, 502nd and 2nd Brigade deployed by C-141 aircraft and arrived at BIEN HOA Airbase on 13 December 1967. Over the next five years, Soldiers of the "Ready to Go" Brigade participated in twelve campaigns, compiling of a distinguished combat record as well as an enviable reputation for success in the rehabilitation of a war-torn nation. The Brigade redeployed to Fort Campbell in April 1972.



During this week, in the span of 8 years since the 501st Infantry Regiment, 502nd Infantry Regiment and 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division deployed in support of the Vietnam War the following are from After Action Reports, Staff Duty Logs, and Personal Accounts. (* All items have been reproduced from the Unclassified / Declassified Holdings of the National Archives.)

December 1965

Personal Account of Stream Crossing by George R Basset (E-4) Fire Team Leader & Point Man-2nd Squad, 1st Platoon, Co B, 2/502 Abn. Inf., 101st Airborne Division. I will relate my participation in an event that took place at BEN CAT, Vietnam, December 1965:

BEN CAT was a heavily jungled area about 30 miles from SAIGON. Our Bravo Company, 2/502 IN was operating in platoon sized elements because of the large enemy concentrations in that area. We had been patrolling for the better part of the day with no contact being made. We were ordered to proceed to a stream and to camp there for the night. After arriving at the stream about 2 hrs before dark, we were notified that one of our sister platoons had also gained the stream and had stopped for the night, we were instructed to link up with them if possible, for the night for security in numbers. My Squad Leader, Sgt. Estevan "Chico" Alvarado was instructed by our Platoon Leader to send one of his fire teams up stream and the other one downstream as we did not know in which direction the other platoon was. My fire team, consisting of 3 men, was instructed to travel downstream 400-500 meters to see if we could locate the other platoon. We were told that the security for the other platoon had been advised to be on the lookout for us to make sure that they did not fire us up by mistake. I walked point for my fire team in the knee-deep stream, it was about 60 ft. wide with very fast flowing water with many large rocks protruding above the surface. We had no radio with us. If we encountered the other platoon, we were instructed to have them radio our platoon and tell them how far apart our two platoons were to determine if it was possible for the two platoons to link up before dark. We were to remain with the other platoon for the night either way. If we did not encounter them, we were to return to our platoon. After traveling about 350 meters we were still in the stream bed with me in the lead picking our way among the slippery rocks in knee deep water. I had my head down and was mainly concentrating on what was to my immediate front and picking our course among the rocks. Suddenly the trooper behind me grabbed me by the back of my shirt collar and yanked me backwards off my feet, we both fell back into the stream with me winding up sitting in the stream between his legs. At the same time his arm was extended over my shoulder and he was pointing to our immediate front. About 80 meters to our front was a column of black clad VC, four abreast crossing the stream. Part of the column was already across the stream, we counted over 80. There was a section that was carrying BARs and a section of women carrying black suitcases with red crosses on them and then regular riflemen. The three of us remained motionless and undetected pretty much in plain sight among the rocks in the stream. I remember lowering my head so that the camo on my helmet faced them and just having enough of my face up to keep my eyes on them with a minimum of the white of my face showing. My heartbeat so loud in my ears that I thought they would hear it. Needless to say, none of us fired. If they had flank security out, they must have just missed us. I do not believe that they were aware of any American forces being in the area as they all had their weapons shouldered. As soon as they were clear of the stream, we returned quickly to our platoon and reported what we had observed. Our company beat the bushes for the next couple days trying to encounter them but to no avail. Seeing those BARs scared the hell out of me, could recognize them even at 80 meters with the heavy receivers on them.

December 1965

Personal Account of Smoke at BEN CAT by George R Basset (E-4) Fire Team Leader & Point Man-2nd Squad, 1st Platoon, Co B, 2/502 Abn. Inf., 101st Airborne Division. I will relate my participation in an event that took place at BEN CAT, Vietnam, December 1965:

BEN CAT was an area of heavy jungle about 30 miles from SAIGON bordering on the Iron Triangle, an area where large concentrations of VC were known to be operating. My Bravo Company, 2-502 was tasked to provide security for a 1st Infantry Division forward artillery fire base located on the edge of the Iron Triangle. I was in the 2nd squad, 1st platoon, led by our Squad Leader Sgt. Estevan "Chico" Alvarado. We were tasked to run a 3-day patrol to detect any threats to the security of the fire base. This was during the Monsoon season, a three-month period of the year known for torrential down pours. Shortly after dark in a pouring rain, our squad, consisting of 8-9 men, carrying our own radio, exited the fire base through a random opening selected in the concertina wire surrounding the fire base. We left after dark to avoid being spotted by any enemy watching the fire base as we had to cross about 60-70 meters of open ground that had been cleared around the fire base to provide fields of fire for its defense. It was pitch black, pouring rain, I was the point man. Each trooper had to grasp the backpack of the trooper in front of him to keep from being separated in the dark. It was slow going feeling my way along through the vegetation in the dark rainy night with no light. After a couple hours, we began to smell the faint odor of smoke. (Smelling smoke was not unusual as the artillery often caused fires, although probably not too often during the Monsoon season) As we progressed on our patrol route for 4-5 hours, groping around in the dark and the rain, the smell of smoke continued to get stronger. After continuing on for a couple more hours the smell of smoke was becoming really strong, we had probably not gone much more than a mile from the fire base. Looking ahead through the vegetation I could see an area in front of me that was dimly illuminated, and I stopped the patrol. Chico came forward to see why we had stopped and upon him seeing the illumination he instructed the patrol to remain in place, while he and I crawled forward about 35-40 meters to determine the source of the illumination. Unknowingly, we had crawled forward along a little protrusion of the heavier vegetation we had been traveling in up to that point, to where it transitioned to very large trees with not much ground cover. We observed many small fires, with VC standing around them, some were walking around, some appeared to be cooking over the fires and their rifles were at Stack Arms. We also noted what appeared to be a guard about 25 meters to our right, our movements covered by the pouring rain. Chico and I crawled out of there very cautiously and returned to the rest of our patrol not far behind us. He had them reverse direction with the tail



man becoming the point. After we put a safe distance between the VC and ourselves, Chico called the fire base on the radio for a fire mission and gave them the coordinates. Being too close for artillery, they responded with heavy mortars, 4.2inch. Chico adjusted their fire by sound and when they were on target, he told them to walk it around. As we groped our way out of the area, we could still hear the sounds of the mortars getting fainter behind us as they continued the barrage. We never heard the results of that night and we were thankful that the powers that be did not send us back in there to check it out. I suspect that being a 1st Infantry Division fire base, that they sent their own troops to access the damage and take credit for any KIAs as it was their mortars that responded to our request for a fire mission.

01 December 1966

Operation GERONIMO: B/2-502 IN captured one NVA who stated that he was a member of the 18th (Signal) Company of the 95th Regiment. Since several documents and POW had indicated the presence of the two of the Regimental Spt. Companies, it was safe to assume that the Regimental CP was somewhere nearby. Throughout the remainder of the day, several sightings and small contacts were made with negative results. (HQ, 2-502 IN; After Action Report, Operation GERONIMO I; 10 December 1966)

01 December 1967 –
07 January 1968

Operation KLAMATH FALL: The 2-502 IN BN was given the mission to conduct airmobile assaults from BAO LOC into SW portion of assigned AO and prepare to conduct airmobile assaults and subsequent search and destroy operations to locate and destroy the 145th, 186th or 482nd VC BN's and the MR-6 HQ's. (HQ, 2-502 IN BN; After Action Report; Operation KLAMATH FALLS; 11 January 1968)

01 December 1967

Operation KLAMATH FALLS: Operation Began (2-502 IN BN); Locations: LAM DONG, BINH THUAN Provinces. Task Organization: A/2-502 IN, B/2-502 IN, C/2-502 IN, Recondos. Battalion Control: 3(-) A/326 Eng, C/2-320 ARTY (DS), Mortar Platoon (DS), IPW, 181 MI Detach. The following three changes were made in the task organization during Operation KLAMATH FALLS. (1) ARVN interpreters joined the Battalion and were assigned one to each company after the operation began. (2) 1-327 IN BN assumed OPCON A/2-502 IN effective 091400H Dec. and released OPCON of A/2-502 IN effective 111030H Dec. (3) 1-327 IN BN assumed OPCON A/2-502 IN effective 111153H Dec and released OPCON A/2-502 IN effective Dec. Mission: The 2-502 IN BN conducted airmobile assaults from BAO LOC into SW portion of assigned AO and prepared to conduct airmobile assaults and subsequent S&D operations to locate and destroy the 145th, 186th, or 482d VC BN's and the MR-6 Headquarters. (AAR 11JAN1968)

The Battalion personnel strength at the beginning of Operation was as follows:

Authorized:	778
Assigned:	798
Present for Duty:	737
Not present for duty:	61

01 December 1967

Operation KLAMATH FALLS: Phase I; Beginning 010830H Dec 67, 2-502 IN BN air assaulted into multiple LZ's and conducted operations to search for and destroy enemy installations and forces, initially in the SW portion of the assigned AO. Emphasis was placed on careful search of all likely sites, particularly draws. Initial air assaults were preceded only by Tac Air and gunship preps.

The Air Assault of the Battalion was executed, and the TAC CP location was changed after initial CP elements were on the ground because of unsuitability of terrain for Arty. The TAC CP area was closed at 011745H Dec. The entire insertion was unopposed. (HQ, 2-502 IN BN; After Action Report; Operation KLAMATH FALLS; 11 January 1968)

01 December 1968

Operation NEVADA EAGLE: C/2-502 IN engaged and killed 2 VC/NVA at 2000h vicinity YD977010; also, captured 2 AK-47's and misc. equipment. (HQ, 2-502 IN; After Action Report, Operation NEVADA EAGLE; 31 January 1969)

01 December 1968

A/1-502 IN conducted RIF to vicinity YD6220, they engaged 3 NVA resulting in 2 NVA KIA and 1 NVA captured, along with 2 AK47, and 1 French MG. A/1-502 IN was OPCON to 2-501 IN BN. B/1-502 IN conducted security of FSB T-BONE with B/1-502 IN, 26 elements, OPCON to 2-501 IN BN. C/1-502 IN moved by vehicle from LZ SALLY to secure AN LO Bridge. "First Strike", while flying over AO saw a VC. The VC turned out to be wounded and "First Strike" captured and evacuated via log to 326 med. (This POW furnished intelligence very useful in future mountain operations)

01 December 1968

Operation NEVADA EAGLE: As the 101st ABN DIV was ending its first year in Vietnam, Operation NEVADA EAGLE was still proving successful in severely limiting enemy activity in THUA THIEN Province, including Hue and its environs. From May 7, when NEVADA EAGLE started, to the beginning of December, 2,59 enemy had been killed and 803 prisoners captured, along with enormous quantities of arms, munitions, equipment and rice. During the first day of the new month, 24 enemy were killed, 12 weapons and one prisoner were captured. Three enemy soldiers on a rice collection and propaganda-distribution mission turned themselves in to paratroopers of A/2-506 IN northeast of FB JEANNE. D/1-327 IN discovered a small base camp and two weapons southwest of LOS BANOS. Nearby the soldiers found 15 fresh graves containing NVA believed to have been killed by artillery, tactical air strikes and small arms one or two days before. A/1-502 IN killed one enemy in one contact, later killed another and captured a third. Currahees of C/2-506 IN ambushed two sampans, killing three Viet Cong. The other enemy in the boats beached the sampans and moved out on foot before being engaged again by C/2-506 IN, who took one weapon. MG Melvin Zais, Division Commander began the month by pulling the lanyard of a 105mm howitzer at FSB Sandy to send the Screaming Eagles' one millionth round against the enemy. One year before to the day, a gun of the 2-319 FA had fired the Division's first round in III Corps action. And, in a report early in the month, it was learned the milestone of 10,000 enemy killed by the 101st was reached late in November. (Rendezvous with Destiny (Volume 2, Number 1); Spring 1968-69)

01 December 1969

Operation REPUBLIC SQUARE: All 1-502 IN BN Companies and Recon platoon pulled maintenance, re-outfitted and generally prepared for training which started on 02 December.



- 01 December 1969 **Operation NEVADA EAGLE:** C/2-502 IN engaged and killed 2 VC/NVA at 200H vicinity YD977010; also captured 2 AK-47's and mics. Equipment.
- 01 December 1970 **Operation JEFFERSON GLEN/MONSOON PLAN 70:** B/1-502 IN found a three-foot-wide trail vicinity northeast at grid YD789054. There were no signs of recent activity. B/2-502 IN, 2nd platoon found and eighth man sleeping position at grid YD772073.
- 01 – 31 December 1971 During this period the 1-501 IN BN conducted search and attack operations in its assigned area of operations, and occupied FB ARSENAL vicinity YD811080 with the responsibility for the ARSENAL AO from 1-31 December. The battalion conducted refresher training during the period for B/1-501 IN and C/1-501 IN at DONG DA Training Area. E/1-501 IN, mortars provided 81mm support for the battalion from FB ARSENAL 1-31 December. (1st Battalion (Airmobile), 501st Infantry; Annual Supplement to the History; 1 January 1971 – 31 December 1971)
- 01 - 26 December 1971 **Operation MONSOON DYNAMIC DEFENSE:** 2-502 IN BN Commander, LTC John C. Snodgrass received official notification that the 1BDE less the 2-327 IN was going to stand down. The battalion's stand-down period was to begin on 28 December and end on 17 January. The battalion was to be reduced to an equipment escort detachment of up to 20% of authorized strength to be deployed with equipment to Fort Campbell, for retention in the active army. The outstanding combat record of the "STRIKE Force" was to end with the passing of the year.
- Even with the stand-down of the battalion so close, STRIKE Force personnel continued their search for the elusive enemy in the battalions AO. On 5 December, A/2-502 IN, 2nd platoon observed and engaged with unknown results one NVA Soldier near Hill 500. Two days later on the night of the 7th, a mechanical ambush set up by A/2-502 IN, 2nd platoon, detonated, killing one NVA Soldier. Equipment found on or near the body was on AK-47 rifle in poor condition, two AK-47 magazines, one satchel/backpack, one hand made Bowie type knife with sheath, one Chicom compass and Chicom web gear.
- During the same period, a tragic CH-47 crash claimed 34 101st Airborne Division Troopers. D/2-502 IN was placed under Brigade control and was given the mission of securing the crash site located near FB ROY. The company also had the task of recovering the bodies of the dead troopers. Enroute to the crash site one STRIKE Force trooper detonated an old VC booby trap and was wounded. Upon arrival at the crash site, D/2-502 IN accomplished their mission with efficiency and great dignity.
- The last contact between STRIKE Force troopers and the enemy occurred on 17 December when A/2-520 IN, 1st Platoon, observed and engaged one NVA with unknown results in the Valley south of NUI KHE.
- The Battalion continued reconnaissance in force operations with all four lettered companies and the Recon Platoon up to the 26th, the last day of operation in the field for STRIKE Force. Thus, the day after Christmas, the STRIKE Force Battalion airlifted out of the OP APOLLO Area of Operations and began stand-down operation in preparation for its first trip to the United State since 8 July 1965.
- 02 December 1966 **Operation GERONIMO I:** A/2-502 IN ambushed an unknown number of NVA trying to cross the stream from West to East in the vicinity BQ864625 resulting in 15 NVA KIA, one NVAC, three AK-47, one RPG-2, two SKS, two RPD, one receiver for SG-43 HMG. The NVAC stated that he was a member of the 6th Battalion 95th Regiment. His party was made up of sick lame and lazy who were left behind when the Battalion had moved four days prior. Three men for the Battalion Recon section had returned and were taking them to the remainder of the Battalion. He did not know where it was. Several smaller contacts were made in the same area throughout the day resulting in four NVA KIA, one mortar sight, one light MG, and assorted equipment captured. (HQ, 2-502 IN; After Action Report, Operation GERONIMO I; 10 December 1966)
- 02 December 1966 **Operation GERONIMO I:** A/2-502 IN had contact with an NVA Recon platoon vicinity BQ864625. B/2-502 IN had light contact vicinity BQ850622. While C/2-502 IN and Recon platoon continued to "Recondo Checkerboard" in AO. At this time 2-502 IN BN had the enemy encircled when received order to move in next 24 hours. 2-502 IN BN decided to attack with B/2-502 IN and C/2-502 IN. This action dislodged enemy force and drove the enemy into A/2-502 IN. (HQ, 2-502, After Action Report, Operation GERONIMO I; 10 December 1966)
- 02 December 1967 **Operation KLAMATH FALLS:** A/2-502 IN vicinity AN752502 at 1540H engaged 8VC in black pajamas with weapons. The action resulted in 6 VC KIA (C), 2 VC's and 2 individual weapons captured with no friendly casualties. (HQ, 2-502 IN BN; After Action Report; Operation KLAMATH FALLS; 11 January 1968)
- 02 December 1968 A/1-502 IN engaged 2 VC, vicinity YD6220, resulting in 2 VC KIA, 2 AK47, 2 rucksacks and equipment and documents captured. B/1-502 IN conducted security of FSB T-BONE with local patrols and ambushes. A/1-502 IN, 26 elements and B/1-502 IN, 16 elements, was OPCODE to 2-501 IN BN. C/1-502 IN (-) conducted security of AN LO. D/1-502 IN and C/1-502 IN, 16 elements, Recon, 1 tank platoon and 2 PF platoons (OPCODE to "D") established a cordon, center of mass, vicinity YD595390. Several BBT's were encountered, resulting in C/1-502 IN, 16 platoon leader KIA and 2 PF WIA. 2 VC were KIA. 1 VC captured with 2 AK47. The cordon also found 1 60mm mortar, 1 RPG, a MG and approx. 700lbs. of rice.
- 02 – 08 December 1969 **Operation REPUBLIC SQUARE:** 1-502 IN BN conducted battalion refresher training at Camp SALLY. Lesson plans and training schedules were published by the battalion operations section to ensure conformity of instruction and material covered. Periods of instructions were constantly monitored for compliance with outlined procedures.



- 03 December 1966 **Operation GERONIMO I:** A/2-502 IN contact 5 NVA in the vicinity BQ865625 resulting in one NVAC, four NVA KIA, one US carbine, one SKS and five packs captured. POW stated that his element was moving from East to West and had not made any contact with American forces prior to his capture. He also stated that a party of approximately 30 NVA were following the lead element of 5 men. Those 30 NVA had moved back up the high ground to the East. Later that day, A/2-502 IN killed one more NVA in the same vicinity. At 1710hrs, RECONDO platoon made contact with an estimated NVA platoon resulting in four NVA KIA and one AK-47, and three SKS captured. (HQ, 2-502 IN; After Action Report, Operation GERONIMO I; 10 December 1966)
- 03 December 1966 **Operation GERONIMO I:** A/2-502 IN had contact with enemy forces at BQ865625 and BQ866627. B/2-502 IN and C/2-502 IN continued to "Recondo Checkerboard" in AO. C/2-327 IN was placed under OPCON 2-502 IN BN and located at PZ vicinity BQ855644. Flare ships was requested and used night of 03 December to aid Airborne Infantry in destroying the enemy. Recon platoon had contact at BQ870625 with estimated platoon resulting in 4 NVA KIA and assorted weapons and equipment captured. Recon platoon then moved to TAC CP to commence extraction. All units moved to PZ's. (HQ, 2-502, After Action Report, Operation GERONIMO I; 10 December 1966)
- 03 December 1968 Fifteen enemy were killed, three prisoners taken, and seven weapons captured in action throughout the AO. A/1-501 IN engaged six enemy, killing five and capturing another plus four weapons. (Rendezvous with Destiny (Volume 2, Number 1); Spring 1968-69)
- 03 December 1968 A/1-502 IN conducted RIF, vicinity YD6220. They received sniper fire from the northwest. The fire was returned with negative assessment. A/1-502 IN, 26 elements, OPCON to 2-501 IN BN. B/1-502 IN security of FSB T-BONE. C/1-502 IN conducted security of AN LO Bridge. D/1-502 IN with Recon, platoon of tanks and PF's continued cordon operations. They found 1 fresh VC grave (KIA by artillery) and 1 bouncing betty mine. PF's killed 2 VC and captured 1 weapon, vicinity YD6338.
- 03 December 1968 **Operation NEVADA EAGLE:** 2-502 IN BN, Recon engaged 8 VC/NVA at 2330h vicinity YD986013 and killed 2 and captured 2 AK-47's.
- 03 December 1969 President Richard Nixon awards three Medals of Honor to former Screaming Eagles. Receiving the award in person at the White House ceremonies is SFC Webster Anderson, a former member of A/2-320 AR. Two awards are made posthumously to relatives of SSG Chester Sims, D/2-501 IN and SP4 Dale Wayrynen, B/2-502 IN. (Rendezvous with Destiny (Volume 2, Number 4); Winter 1969)
-
- 03 - 09 December 1969 A/1-502 IN BN was at Camp SALLY for refit and training.
- 03 December 1970 **Operation JEFFERSON GLEN/MONSOON PLAN 70:** B/1-502 IN, 1st platoon found a 105mm round and blew it up in place.
- 03 - 16 December 1970 **Operation JEFFERSON GLEN:** There was very little contact as the enemy continued to avoid engagements. 2-502 IN BN continued reconnaissance in force operation in Company and Platoon size elements west of FSB BASTOGNE. The NDP of Recon platoon was hit by 82mm mortar fire with no casualties. Several sensors were activated during the 3-16 December along with a few enemy sightings. Artillery was fired on suspected enemy location with unknown results.
- 04 December 1966 **Operation GERONIMO:** 2-502 IN BN mission was to extract from the AO by helicopter. (HQ, 2-502 IN; After Action Report, Operation GERONIMO I; 10 December 1966)
- 04 December 1966 **Operation GERONIMO I:** 2-502 IN BN was extracted from the AO and no further contacts were made. (HQ, 2-502 IN; After Action Report, Operation GERONIMO I; 10 December 1966)
- 04 December 1968 A Division Artillery aerial recon craft spotted three enemy bodies during a day of light contact. FSB BRICK, on LEECH Island, was closed with the extraction of the D/2-501 IN "Delta Raiders". (Rendezvous with Destiny (Volume 2, Number 1); Spring 1968-69)
- 04 December 1968 D/1-502 IN found 2 RPG rounds and 2 AP mines. Shortly after noon the cordon was terminated. Recon conducted move via "hook" from vicinity YD5034 to OMAHA. From OMAHA, they conducted CA to vicinity YD6928.
- 04 December 1968 **Operation NEVADA EAGLE:** Recon, 2-502 IN BN engaged 8 VC/NVA at 2330H, vicinity YD986013 and killed 2 and captured 2 AK's. (HQ, 2-502 IN; After Action Report, Operation NEVADA EAGLE; 31 January 1969)
- 04 December 1970 **Operation JEFFERSON GLEN/MONSOON PLAN 70:** B/1-502 IN, 1st platoon found a NDP site at YD782062. In the site, they found a notebook with information concerning combat assaults, the unit commander's name, and names of others in the outfit. It's to believe the notebook belongs to an NCO of D/1-502 IN.
- 05 December 1967 **Operation KLAMATH FALLS:** Phase II: The battalion's orientation was directed to the south on as wide a front as possible effective 05 December. The TAC CP/2-502 IN was displaced to the south effective 09 December to support the



companies push south against the 1-327 IN BN elements in an attempt to squeeze the enemy in between. Phase III: The battalion was displaced to the NE in an air assault on multiple landing zones with the companies oriented mainly on terrain rather than on specific intelligence of enemy units. Emphasis was placed on thorough search with the companies broken into sub-elements.

Effective 1000H, B/2-502 IN and C/2-502 IN reoriented to the south to cut trails and streams on as wide a front as possible in reaction to intelligence indicating this area as a route of egress. (HQ, 2-502 IN BN; After Action Report; Operation KLAMATH FALLS; 11 January 1968)

- 05 December 1968 1-502 IN BN continued normal operations. D/1-502 IN was the only unit to make contact. They engaged 2 VC vicinity YD5934, resulting in 1 VC KIA and 1 AK-47 captured. Recon was lifted back to LZ SALLY from vicinity YD6829, by log bird.
- 05 December 1968 Six enemy were killed, and six weapons captured in the AO. Two-night ambushes, one near FB BOISE by the 1-502 Recon, and the other near JEANNE by D/1-502 IN, were successful, with three enemy killed. A/1-502 IN "Geronimo's" captured two enemy after engaging an unknown size force near Sandy. (Rendezvous with Destiny (Volume 2, Number 1); Spring 1968-69)
- 05 December 1970 **Operation JEFFERSON GLEN:** 1-502 IN BN continued in Operation JEFFERSON GLEN in sector GULF making maximum use of S/P's and N/A's with negative contact.
- 06 December 1969 **Operation RANDOLPH GLEN:** The 101st ABN DIV launched Operation RANDOLPH GLEN, a division-wide attempt to attain a variety of objectives. This operation was destined to last until 31 March 1970.
- 06 December 1968 A/1-502 IN (-) moved from vicinity YD6120 to FSB T-BONE. A/1-502 IN, 36 elements were lifted via "hook" from LZ SALLY to T-BONE. A/1-502 IN replaced B/1-502 IN as FSB T-BONE security. B/1-502 IN RIF from FSB T-BONE to vicinity YD6519. While moving into their NDP B/1-502 IN observed movement vicinity YD6417 and called in artillery. At first light assessment proved negative. C/1-502 IN conducted security of AN LO Bridge. C/1-502 IN 16 elements with 1 platoon of PF's, conducted RIF to vicinity YD6132 where they set up a blocking position for 2 platoons of PF's that conducted a CA to vicinity YD6134, then swept towards blocking positions. There was negative contact. D/1-502 IN conducted RIF operations, vicinity YD64537. Recon at LZ SALLY as RRF for the BDE.
- 06 December 1970 **Operation JEFFERSON GLEN:** B/1-502 IN found a tunnel and bunker complex at grid YD788064. The tunnel led to five bunkers. Three bunkers are old and two are new being about a month old. At the entrance to the tunnel there were bare footprints two or three days old. Also, in the area were found some carrying cases for rockets or shells. Cases are OD in color about 30 inches long and 5 inches' diameter. They are closed at one end and have a snap cover at the other.
- 07 December 1968 A/1-502 IN secured FSB T-BONE and conducted local patrols and ambushes. B/1-502 IN conducted day and night ambushes, vicinity YD6518. C/1-502 IN secured AN LO Bridge, security for mine sweep, and conducted local patrols and ambushes. D/1-502 IN conducted RIF to vicinity YD6040. They engaged 2 VC resulting in 1 VC WIA and 1 M-26 and rucksack captured. Recon remained at LZ SALLY.
- 07 December 1969 **Operation RANDOLPH GLEN:** began. FSB RIFLE (YD862988) served as the base of the operations for the "STRIKE Force Battalion" (2-502 IN) with the maneuver companies located in the canopy to the north and south of the firebase. Joint US/ARVN operations were to play a significant role throughout the following New Year.
- 07 December 1970 **Operation JEFFERSON GLEN:** A/1-502 IN, 3rd platoon, 2nd squad found five fighting positions two to three months old at Grid YD842048. They formed a V and could possibly have been used for an ambush, there was no recent activity in the area.
- 08 – 09 December 1967 **Operation KLAMATH FALLS:** A/2-502 IN was air assaulted into an AO in the SE portion of the BN AO. The TAC CP was relocated by air on A/2-502 IN LZ on 09 December. The southern boundary was extended in coordination with 1-327 IN BN. A/2-502 IN was detached and 1-327 IN BN assumed OPCON. All landings were unopposed, and no contact was made. (HQ, 2-502 IN BN; After Action Report, Operation KLAMATH FALLS; 11 January 1968)



During this week, in the span of 8 years since the 501st Infantry Regiment, 502nd Infantry Regiment and 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division deployed in support of the Vietnam War the following awards were awarded to the service members during combat operations.

4 x Silver Star Medal (1 x Posthumously)
2 x Bronze Star Medal with Valor
3 x Bronze Star Medal (3 x Posthumously)
2 x Purple Heart Medal (2 x Posthumously)
1 x Army Commendation (64 x Posthumously)
2 x Died of Non-Hostile Injuries or Illness

02 December 1968



SP4 Arthur Williams Jr. (D/2-501 IN) was awarded the Silver Star Medal, Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received while on combat operations when hit by fragments from hostile rocket propelled grenade in the THUA THIEN Province, Republic of Vietnam. SP4 Williams was admitted to a military hospital, placed on the SI list, later placed on the VSI list, and subsequently expired.

02 December 1968



1LT Victor B. Weissman (C/1-502 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received while on combat operation when hostile mine detonated in the THUA THIEN Province, Republic of Vietnam. 1LT Weissman was admitted to a military medical facility, placed on the VSI list and later expired.

04 December 1966



PFC Lawrence D. Mungin III (B/2-502 IN) was awarded the Army Commendation Medal (Posthumously). PFC Mungin died from Non-hostile causes as a ground casualty as a result of metal fragment wounds to the left hand and upper chest received while in Base Camp when hit by fragments from a mortar round which detonated in a trash can in the Province not reported, Republic of Vietnam.

06 December 1970



SGT George E. Bailey (A/1-501 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal and Army Commendation Medal (Posthumously). SGT Bailey died from Non-hostile casualty while a passenger on a military vehicle on a military mission when the vehicle collided with another military vehicle, causing him to be thrown from the vehicle in the THUA THIEN Province, Republic of Vietnam.

07 December 1967



PVT James A. McKenzie (B/2-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death as the result of gunshot wounds received when he was hit by hostile small arms fire while on combat operation in the BINH THUAN Province, Republic of Vietnam.



STRIKE HISTORY (Citation's and Awards):

02 December 1966

PFC Samuel Piscopo Jr. (A/2-502 IN) was awarded the Silver Star Medal for gallantry in action against a hostile force on 2 December 1966 near Tuy Hoa, Republic of Vietnam. Private First Class Piscopo distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous action and personal bravery as he and two companions were moving into an observation post when they unknowingly walked into an enemy position and were immediately assaulted with a tremendous volume of enemy fire. In that initial burst of fire, one man was wounded and lay in an exposed area. Private Piscopo, with complete disregard for his own safety, exposing himself to the brutal enemy fire, rushed to the aid of his wounded comrade and pulled him to a relatively safe area. The situation was worsened by the destruction of the wounded man's weapon and the ineffectiveness of the other's grenade launcher due to the close-in fighting involved. The enemy Soldiers, not receiving any return fire, started to move toward the three men in an attempt to possibly retrieve weapons and equipment. Private Piscopo, observing that the enemies were approaching his position, jumped to his feet, and with disregard for his own safety, fearlessly assaulted the advancing ranks of the enemy. Even through receiving intense automatic weapons fire from the startled enemy, Private Piscopo remained in his exposed position dauntlessly engaging the enemy. His determined effort killed two enemy Soldiers and wounded another. As the remaining two Viet Cong began to withdraw and flee from the battle area, he gave chase for a short distance, wounding one of them. As a result of Private Piscopo's courage and determination, the lives of two Americans were saved, two enemy Soldiers killed, two wounded, and three weapons captured. Private Piscopo's impeccable display of valor, his resolute determination and devotion to duty, and his unselfish concern for the life of a fellow Soldier while engaged in close combat against a numerically superior force are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, Task Force Oregon, and the United States Army. (HQ, TFO; General Orders Number 311; 22 August 1967)

02 December 1966

SSG George T. Royster (A/2-502 IN) was awarded the Silver Star Medal for gallantry in Action in the Republic of Vietnam. Staff Sergeant Royster, after having placed his men into an ambush position, observed approximately twenty-five enemy soldiers approaching from an unexpected direction. Immediately, Sergeant Royster moved his men from their initial position to a more advantageous position. Once Sergeant Royster's men were positioned, he maintained strict fire discipline until the enemy was within five meters of his position. When the ambush was triggered, Sergeant Royster moved from position to position giving his men encouragement and exposing himself to murderous enemy fire while pointing out enemy targets. Sergeant Royster moved through bullet swept area time and time again in order to improve his evaluation of the situation. After having determined that only nineteen of the twenty-five enemy soldiers were killed, Sergeant Royster, in a determined effort, charged from his covered area firing his rifle and throwing grenades in a one-man assault. Although the enemy was determined and placed murderous fire on Sergeant Royster, he relentlessly assaulted the enemy position, personally killing four enemy soldiers. Sergeant Royster's actions and leadership resulted in his ambush element killing twenty-three of the enemy. Sergeant Royster's outstanding display of leadership and gallantry in action are within the highest military tradition and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army. (HQ, IFFV; General Orders Number 154; 11 February 1967)

02 December 1966

SP4 John E. Maldon (A/2-502 IN) was awarded the Silver Star Medal for gallantry in Action in the Republic of Vietnam. Specialist Four Maldon and four of his comrades were given the mission of securing a river crossing site for the remainder of their company. As the small element approached the river crossing site, they encountered an estimated squad size element of enemy soldiers hiding among some large rocks in a riverbed. With complete disregard for his own personal safety, Specialist Maldon charged one of the enemy positions firing his weapon and killing two enemy soldiers. He continued to move forward through a murderous volume of enemy fire and charged another enemy position. As Specialist Maldon neared the enemy, he acquired a hand grenade and threw it into the position killing two more enemy soldiers and wounding another. Specialist Maldon continued to advance on the remaining enemy positions placing suppressive fire into them, thus enabling his four comrades to assault the enemy positions successfully. As a result of Specialist Maldon's actions, four enemy soldiers were killed, several were wounded, and four enemy weapons were captured, including a heavy machine gun. Specialist Maldon's outstanding display of gallantry in action and his avid devotion to duty are within the highest military tradition and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army. (HQ, IFFV; General Orders Number 568; 18 July 1967)

03 December 1968



SGT Jorge B Otero (E/1-501 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor for heroism on 03 December 1968. Platoon Sergeant Otero distinguished himself while serving as the Platoon Sergeant in the Reconnaissance Platoon of Company E, 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry, in Quang Diem, Republic of Vietnam. While on combat operations in the sand dunes along the coast, the platoon came under heavy small arms and machine gun fire from camouflaged enemy positions and was pinned down. Platoon Sergeant Otero located on source of enemy fire and began moving toward the bunker. With complete disregard for his personal safety, Platoon Sergeant Otero ran fifty meters through enemy fire until he was close enough to destroy the enemy bunker with hand grenades. Through his courage, he contributed to the success of the mission, which resulted in two enemy killed, one enemy captured, four weapons captured and no friendly casualties. Platoon Sergeant Otero's personal bravery and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflects great credit upon himself, the unit, and the United States Army. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV; General Orders Number 922; 28 January 1969)



03 December 1968



1LT John F. Hay (E/1-502 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor for heroism in ground combat against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam on 3 December 1968. Second Lieutenant Hay distinguished himself while serving as the Reconnaissance Platoon Leader of Company E, 1st Battalion, 502d Infantry, in the District of Quang Dien, Republic of Vietnam. While on a combat operation in the sand dunes along the coast, the platoon came under heavy small arms and machine gun fire and was pinned down in a crossfire. Lieutenant Hay, with complete disregard for his personal safety, attempted to locate the enemy positions. Having located these positions, he moved from position to position, coordinated the supporting fire of his men and maneuvered on the enemy bunkers. Through his courage, he contributed immeasurably to the success of the mission, which resulted in two enemy killed, one enemy captured, four weapons captured and no friendly casualties. First Lieutenant Hay's personal bravery and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV; General Orders Number 1039, 31 January 1969)



ACRONYMS

ACAV: Armored Cavalry
ACD: Air Cavalry Division
AD: Americal Division
AD: Airborne Division (Would be after numeric numbers)
AO: Area of Operations
ARA: Aerial Rocket Artillery
ARCOM: Army Commendation Medal
ARVN: Army of the Republic of Viet Nam (also known as the South Vietnamese Army (SVA))
BDE: Brigade
BN: Battalion
BSM: Bronze Star Medal
BBT: Booby Traps
CA: Combat Assault
CANOPY: Heavily Wooded Terrain
CAV: Cavalry
CO: Company
CP: Command Post
DIV: Division
DSC: Distinguished Service Cross
DZ: Drop Zone
ENG: Engineer
FSB: Fire Support Base
HQ: Headquarters
IED: Improvised Explosive Device
IFFV: I Field Force Vietnam
IN: Infantry
KBA: Killed by Air or Artillery
KHA: Killed by Hostile Action
KIA: Killed in Action
KNHA: Killed by Non-Hostile Action
LZ: Helicopter Landing Zone
MI: Military Intelligence
MOH: Medal of Honor
MP: Military Police
NDP: Night Defensive Position
NVA: North Vietnamese Army
OBJ: Objective
OP: Observation Post
PAVN: People Army of Vietnam
POW: Prisoner of War
PF: Popular Forces
PZ: Helicopter Pick-up Zone
Recon Platoon: Reconnaissance Platoon
RIF: Reconnaissance in Force
RF: Regional Force
ROK: Republic of Korea
RVN: Republic of Vietnam
SA: Situational Awareness
SIGINT: Signal Intelligence
SSM: Silver Star Medal
STRIKE FORCE: 2d Battalion, 502d Infantry
SVA: South Vietnamese Army
TF: Task Force
TOC: Tactical Operations Center
USARV: United States Army Vietnam
USARPAC: United States Army Pacific
WIA: Wounded in Action
WHA: Wounded by Hostile Action
WNHA: Wounded by Non-Hostile Action
"V": Valor
VC: Viet Cong

