



STRIKE

Vietnam War Weekly History



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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.)

26 – 27 January 1966 **Operation VAN BUREN:** C/2-502 IN conducted a Recondo patrol and the initial phases of CHECKERBOARD operations vicinity coordinated CQ061542. Concurrently, the 2-502 IN BN prepared for a Search and Destroy operation to the North. (HQ, 2-502 IN BN; After Action Report 150600H January – 201200H February 1966; 25 February 1966)

26 – 31 January 1966 **Operation VAN BUREN:** C/2-502 IN conducted a Recondo patrol and the initial phase of Checkerboard operations vicinity CQ061542. Concurrently, the battalion prepared for a search and destroy operation to the north. B/2-502 IN (-), A/2-502 IN (-), 17th CAV (-) OPCON 2-502 IN BN, 2-502 IN BN, AT platoon and 3A/326 ENG conducted a search and destroy operation vicinity BQ154584 initiated 28 January at 0600H. The 17th CAV (-) and B/2-502 IN infiltrated into the operations area under the cover of darkness. A/2-502 IN an AT platoon conducted a heliborne assault to establish blocking positions to the East and North respectively. A/2-502 IN then joined B/2-502 IN and the combined force conducted search and destroy operations to the north. This operation terminated 31 January at 1515H. These two operations accounted for 8 VC KIA (BC), 5 VC KIA (EST), 63 VCS and numerous types of small arms ammunition captured. Friendly losses were 2 WIA. (HQ, 2-502 IN; Operation VAN BUREN, After Action Report 150600H January 1966 – 201200 February 1966)

26 January 1967 **Operation FARRAGUT:** Task Force DOHERY, composed of C/2-502 IN, one (1) platoon A/325 ENG, one (1) platoon, A/2-17 CAV, and C/2-320 ARTY at 0900H conducted a tactical road march to an area NW of Secret Base 35. This move was an attempt to deceive the enemy as to the Brigade's true objective, Secret Base 7, and serve to position forces for the Brigade assault on D+1. (HQ, 1BDE, 101st ABN DIV; After Action Report, Operation FARRAGUT)

26 January 1968 2BDE Task Force establishes new CP at HUE – PHU BAI, Republic of Vietnam.



26 January 1968 2-501 IN BN was airlifted to HUE in northern I CTZ, RVN. The Battalion CP was located in the vicinity of what was called CAMP EAGLE. The remainder of the month was unusually quiet.

26 January 1969 **Operation SHERMAN PEAK/Operation NEVADA EAGLE:** A/1-502 IN conducted a C/A from LZ SALLY to FSB ZON. The company found various amounts of US ammunition on FSB ZON and destroyed it. B/1-502 IN provided security on FSB VEGHEL. A man was spotted outside the perimeter and engaged with negative results. C/1-502 IN was lifted from LZ SALLY to FSB VEGHEL by CH-47. They then conducted RIF operations vicinity YD555126. D/1-502 IN conducted RIF operations from YD545030 to YD533038. D/1-502 IN vicinity YD534026 found three 4-man bunkers, 1 60mm mortar round, and 200 AK-47 rounds. At YD531035 they found approximately 5000 12.8mm rounds. D/1-502 IN vicinity YD533038 found a tunnel complex containing 3 cases of TNT, 800 rounds 12.7 ammunition and wheels for a 50-cal. gun carriage. Recon platoon was OPCON to A/1-502 IN. Recon platoon vicinity YD4655002 found 5 small security bunkers and destroyed them. Recon platoon vicinity YD470998 found 10 bunkers, and 6 spider holes with hootches over the holes. They appeared to be 2-4 weeks old. D/1-501 IN continued to provide security for FSB BASTOGNE and conducted local patrols around FSB BASTOGNE.

26 January 1969 2BDE operations continued with air assaults into LZ ZON. In the area, the CO of the 101st AHB spotted several NVA and a 37mm anti-aircraft gun. Delta Company gunships were called in, resulting in two NVA killed and the AA gun destroyed. In the 3BDE operation, C/2-502 IN discovered a cache of 24 SKS rifles, three RPDs, one RPG launcher, 30 60mm mortar rounds and 30 RPG rounds in an elaborate hut-bunker complex in the mountains west of CAMP EVANS. The 1BDE's operation continued near FB QUICK II with light contact. The 2-502d Recondos engaged an NVA platoon, killed two, and later found a cache of four weapons. (Rendezvous with Destiny (Volume 2, Number 1); Spring 1969-69)



26 January 1970

Operation RANDOLPH GLEN: 2-502 IN BN returned back to FSB RIFLE and established the tactical operations center. The firebase was a jointly occupied firebase with ARVN and Strike Force troopers. The area of operations was split with the US responsible for the section north of FSB RIFLE and the ARVN's responsible for the south. There was little evidence of recent enemy activity in the area surrounding FSB RIFLE throughout the end of January and early February. (2-502 Unit History, Vietnam 1970; Approved by LTC Lloyd N. Cosby, IN Commanding)



27 January 1967

Operation FARRAGUT: 2-502 IN BN conducted an overland move from PHANG RANG into the southern portion of the AO and commenced search and destroy operations to the NW. (HQ, 1BDE, 101st ABN DIV; After Action Report, Operation FARRAGUT)

27 January –
3 February 1968

From the 1st CAV DIV journal of 26 January 1967: 2BDE became opcon 1st ACD upon closure of 2BDE CP at LZ EL PASO at 1200H and assumed control of 1-501 IN BN. The 1-501 IN BN assisted in security of LZ EL PASO with three companies while its D/1-501 IN air assaulted to [an area outside the perimeter] and conducted operations in that vicinity. 2-501 IN BN closed LZ EL PASO at 1810H, OPCON to 2BDE, 101st ABN”

The 1-501 IN BN took over its sector of the perimeter that evening, and the 2-501 IN BN went into its position the afternoon of the 27th. That day, A/1-501 IN and B/1-501 IN conducted company-sized heliborne assaults and extractions in areas near LZ EL PASO – seeking enemy contact in operations of six or seven hours' duration. The 1-502 IN BN, OPCON to the CAV's 1BDE, was on "base security" at LZs SHARON and BETTY, near QUANG TRI to the north.

On 28 JAN, the 1st CAV decided to move the 1-501 IN BN and our brigade CP to LZ JANE, south of LZ JANE, relieving the 1/5 CAV BN there. On 29 JAN, we were ordered to make this move the next day, a day earlier than planned. (We were lucky, if we had moved as planned, TET 1968 would have caught us at LZ EL PASO.) The 2-501 IN BN would join us at LZ JANE but meanwhile it would move to the CAV's new base at CAMP EVANS, to perform perimeter security.

The 1-501 IN BN, A/1-321, and BDE HHC with our signal and MP platoons left LZ EL PASO by truck convoy in the early morning 30 January. They traveled through HUE and up Highway 1. SFC Timothy O'Connor of the 1-501 IN BN has written in his book, "Blood Brothers, "There were numerous villages along the way... (It was TET, the Chinese New Year) and the people... were having a good time. When we reached HAI LANG, we turned left... and came to a large sized hill... LZ JANE. Each company was assigned a sector of the perimeter. I called the platoon together and told them that 'Charlie is watching us so let's dig our bunkers deep.'”

The massive NVA/VC countrywide offensive known as TET 1968 began that night, attacking Saigon, 36 of the RVN's 43 province capitals, 64 of its 242 district towns, and field positions throughout the countryside, including LZ JANE. From the brigade journal: "LZ JANE began receiving mortar & RPG fire at approximately 0405H (31 JAN) ... At 0427H, units reported enemy activity to their front, enemy tried to penetrate the 1-501 IN BN perimeter. By 0455H, elements reported all quiet. 1-501 IN BN had 6 WIA. 14 NVA KIA and 3 NVA POW, 11 individual weapons and 1 RPG-2 launcher captured. Negative further activity." The 1-501 IN BN had been ready. There was more to come.

We were told that the 1-502 IN BN, securing LZs SHARON and BETTY, had not been attacked that night. It went immediately into action. On 1 February, A/1-502 IN, with a D/1-502 IN, platoon and the recon platoon, was sweeping the area between the two LZs, in a four-hour fire fight, supported by the CAV's gunships, it killed 35 and captured 2 NVA, captured an 82mm mortar, two .50-cal. and one light machine gun and many individual weapons. Four men had been killed, including A Co's commander, Captain Holland, and first sergeant. The 1-502 IN BN continued with sweeps and ambushes.

The TET Offensive caught the 2-501 IN BN with its move to CAMP EVANS only partially completed and with the rest of the battalion yet to move because of poor flying weather, intensive enemy anti-aircraft fire, and low C-47 availability. (By LTG (then COL) John H. Cushman)

27 January 1968

2-501 IN BN (2d BDE), went into its positions and that day A/1-501 IN and B/1-501 IN conducted company-sized heliborne assaults and extractions in areas near LZ EL PASO – seeking enemy contact in operations for six or seven-hour durations. The 1-502 IN BN OPCON to CAV's 1st BDE was on "Base Security" at LZ's Sharon and Betty, near Quang Tri to the North.

27 January 1968

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27 – 31 January 1968

HHC/1-502 IN moved to LZ EL PASO by road convoy. This greatly reduced many of our logistical problems. LZ EL PASO came under 60mm mortar fire the morning of the 31st. B/326th MED BN, reported 4 killed in the action and 4 wounded in the action. Counter mortar fire engaged the enemy position with unknown results.



27 January 1969 Screaming Eagle offensive continued, with 11 enemy killed and one prisoner captured. The 2-502 IN BN killed six enemy while 1-327 IN BN troopers killed two enemy near FSB ANZIO. (Rendezvous with Destiny (Volume 2, Number 1); Spring 1968-69)

27 January 1969 **Operation SHERMAN PEAK/Operation NEVADA EAGLE:** A/1-502 IN conducted RIF operations from YD465003 to YD455992. At vicinity YD465003, A/1-502 IN, 1st platoon found 1 8mm French Bolt action carbine. In the vicinity YD470998, A/1-502 IN found 43 bunkers, 3 kitchens (2 of which were underground), 1 latrine, 1 pick and 1 shovel. 5 of the bunkers were newly constructed with 4 old fire ashes in the kitchen. B/1-502 IN continued to provide security for FSB VEGHEL. C/1-502 IN conducted RIF operations. At YD559028, C/1-502 IN found fresh tracks of 3 persons. A search of the area produced negative results. D/1-502 IN conducted RIF operations from YD533038 to YD527037. At YD533038 the company found 1000 AK-47 rounds, 350lbs TNT, blasting caps, 100 Mauser rounds and a M60 MG in bad shape. At YD531038 they found 123 boxes of 12.7mm rounds. D/1-501 IN was located at FSB BASTOGNE. The company minus conducted RIF operations with an engineer party to YD800059 and returned to FSB BASTOGNE.

27 January 1969 At 1020H, elements of B/2-502 IN discovered 5 BC bodies buried in a small gravesite (YD858008) 14km south of PHU BAI. Three (3) of the dead appeared to have been killed within the week, 2 by artillery and the third by small arms fire. The causes of death of other 2 bodies could not be determined. Nearby, a cache of 144 rounds of 82mm was found. (III MAF Sig Event; TT 1201005028c.pdf, pg. 15)

27 January 1971 1-501 IN BN had a routine Medevac. One man had a cut on his face.

28 - 31 January 1966 **Operation VAN BUREN:** B/2-502 IN (-), A/2-502 IN (-), 17th CAV (-) OPCON 2-502 IN BN, AT platoon 2-502 IN, and 3A/326 ENG conducted a Search and Destroy operation vicinity coordinates BQ154584 initiated 280600 January 1966. The 17th CAV (-) and B/2-502 IN infiltrated into the operation area under the cover of darkness. A/2-502 IN and AT platoon conducted a heliborne assault to establish blocking positions to the East and North respectively. A/2-502 IN then joined B/2-502 IN and the combined force conducted Search and Destroy operations to the North. This operation terminated 211515H January 1966. These two operations accounted for 8 VC KIA (BC), 5 VC KIA (EST), 63 VCS and numerous types of small arms ammunition captured. Friendly losses were 2 WIA. (HQ, 2-502 IN BN; After Action Report 150600H January – 201200H February 1966; 25 February 1966)

28 January 1967 **Operation FARRAGUT:** In two brief contacts, the 2-502 IN BN produced 4 VC KIA (BC) and 3 individual weapons captured. Documents captured as a result of this encounter indicated that the NVA forces were being used as fillers in local VC units. (HQ, 1BDE, 101st ABN DIV; After Action Report, Operation FARRAGUT)

28 January 1968 1st CAV moved 1-501 IN BN and 2BDE CP to LZ JANE, relieving the 1-5 CAV BN there.

28 January 1968 At 1000H, D/2-501 IN, Forward Observer observed an unknown number of personnel carrying weapons vicinity 799143. A request to fire at that location was requested. At 1005H, D/2-501 IN sent a patrol to vicinity 799143 to determine activity at that location. At 1250H, D/2-501 IN reported a round landed to the left front and a couple of individuals were wounded.; 2BDE requested the amount of personnel evacuated and at 1321H it was reported to 2BDE that none of the personnel belonged to D/2-501 IN. At 2105H, B/2-501 IN spotted one individual to front, fired 2 M-79 rounds at 200 meters. At 2155H, B/2-501 IN, 2nd platoon observed 2 personnel, approximately 500 meters fired M-79, two personnel turned and marched in the other direction away from B/2-501 IN elements. (HQ, 2-501 IN; Daily Staff Journal or Duty Officer's Log; 28 January 1968)

28 January 1968 **Operation SAN ANGELO:** A/2-502 IN while OPCON to 2-17 CAV vicinity YU104076 exhumed two graves resulting in 2 VC KIA. At vicinity YU122065 A/2-502 IN engaged an unknown size enemy force resulting in 1 NVA KIA and capturing 2 AK-47 assault rifles. (HQ, 2-502 IN: Operation SAN ANGELO, Combat After Action Report; 17 February 1968)

28 January 1969 **Operation SHERMAN PEAK/Operation NEVADA EAGLE:** A/1-502 IN conducted a RIF from YD470990 to YD456991. B/1-502 IN security at FSB VEGHEL. 2nd platoon conducted a RIF with engineers along RF 547 and returned to FSB VEGHEL. At YD561045, B/1-502 IN, 2nd platoon found 9 85mm rounds, 200 12.7mm rounds and 100lbs TNT. At YD559004, 2nd platoon found 6 old bunkers, 7 destroyed enemy trucks (3/4-ton size) and the remains of a downed helicopter. C/1-502 IN conducted a RIF operation from YD555037 to YD530046. At YD550035 the company found footprints and followed them with negative results. D/1-502 IN conducted RIF operations from YD527037 to YD517045. At YD517045, the company found 4 hootches, 1 kitchen, 1 classroom with signs that read "Training Center" and "Attack Enemy", 3 small bunkers, 1 latrine and 1 lookout tower. D/1-501 IN provided security at FSB BASTOGNE. At 2230 hours, the company received automatic weapons fire from SW of FSB BASTOGNE from an estimated enemy force of 10. They also received RPG rounds. D/1-501 IN returned fire with small arms fire and artillery. There were no friendly casualties.

28 January 1969 Three contacts by 2-502 IN BN in the 1BDE operation were reported, with two enemy killed. The point man of C/2-502 IN engaged five VC, who fled leaving behind two weapons. Elsewhere in the AO, seven enemies were killed. (Rendezvous with Destiny (Volume 2, Number 1); Spring 1968-69)

28 January 1971 1-501 IN BN moved to FSB ARSENAL but due to bad weather only one half of the move was completed. A/1-501 IN OPCON to 1-502 IN BN.

29 January 1968 2BDE was ordered to make their move a day earlier than planned, if the 2BDE didn't move as planned they would've been at LZ EL PASO during the TET. The 2-501 IN BN would join the 2BDE at LZ JANE but meanwhile it would move to the CAV's new base at CAMP EVANS to perform perimeter security.



29 January 1968

At 0715H, Helicopter 712 reports to C/2-501 IN location. At 0842H, pickup time for C/2-501 IN at 1700H confirmed by 2BDE, S3 Air. At 1125H, reported from 2BDE that 1-501 IN BN operation cancelled and 2-501 IN BN will conduct an airmobile operation commencing at approximately 1200H. At 1140H reported from battalion Forward Observer in front of D/2-501 IN observing personnel in 81mm impact area. At 1200H, S3 Air issued patrol order to 2-501 IN BN, Recon platoon. At 1220H, reported by battalion commander that Aircraft now estimated lift off in 5 minutes. At 1221H, reported from Aircraft that its airborne now, gunships will be up in a few minutes. At 1223H, battalion S1 reported battalion strength of the following:

HHC: 129
A: 137
B: 137
C: 138
D: 135
E: 114

At 1232H, S3 Air reported that takeoff time is 1235H. At 1237H, Chinook reported to S3 that they were holding over in HUE and will come in after LZ is declared green. At 1235H, 1st touchdown at LZ GREEN. At 1342H, Chinook down on LZ CHARLIE. At 1347H, last lift reported. At 1300H, Juliet departed D/2-501 IN location on recon patrol. At 1452H, C/2-501 IN reports finding evidence of movement in vicinity of 799109. At 1730H, D/2-501 IN report that is OP received sniper fire from valley to his front approximate azimuth 215. D/2-501 IN reported that the firing cam from vicinity 803152. Firing Artillery and was given ground clearance.

At 1740H, it was reported that the TET cease fire will be from 29 January at 1800H to 31 January at 0600H; during this period 1-501 IN BN and 2-501 IN BN will conduct short range platoon size defensive patrols and establish night ambush patrol; no H&Is will be fired during this period. Firing will be restricted to illumination and defensive fire when fire upon.

At 1753H, D/2-501 IN reported having one more round hit its front bunker left of its position. At 1750H, A/2-501 IN vicinity YD802171 observed 4 personnel; 1 carrying a weapon, dressed in gray uniform moving north. At 1757H, B/2-501 IN observed 5 personnel vicinity YD801171. 2 were carrying large caskets, 2 sandbags, 1 carrying nothing. Now a total of 13, moving on azimuth of 5500. At 1820H, D/2-501 IN, OP reports 5 personnel left from where the firing took place from previous incident.

At 1905H from COL Cushman: Only difference in rules of engagement during TET is that there will not be an HI. We do not have to be fired on before expending. If we have definite indication of attempted infiltration, i.e., trip flare or identified movement, then may engage with M-79. (HQ, 2-501 IN; Daily Staff Journal or Duty Officer's Log; 29 January 1968)

29 January 1968

HQ, 1st ACD reported 2000H that the government of South Vietnam in a public announcement has modified the TET cease fire. In I Corps and DMZ no stand down for military operations will be observed in addition airstrikes will continue against logistical complexes and movements every precaution in planning and execution authorized in military operations will be taken to ensure that safety for civilian populace is complete. (HQ, 2-501 IN BN; Daily Staff Journal or Duty Officer's Log; 29 January 1968)

29 January 1969

Operation SHERMAN PEAK/Operation NEVADA EAGLE: A/1-502 IN conducted RIF operations in the vicinity YD4599. B/1-502 IN conducted RIF operations in the vicinity of FSB VEGHEL. In vicinity YD529036, 2nd platoon found an old bunker complex with commo wire running throughout it. At YD554046, 1st platoon found an abandoned ammunition cache containing 240 7.62mm rounds, one 75mm HE round, 500 rounds of 25mm AA-ammunition, 12 – 60mm mortar fuses, 3 – 75mm fuses, 400 empty Russian rocket boxes, 300 – 60mm cases, 300 – 82mm cases, 50 – 82mm fuse cans, 15 aiming points, 25 – 55 gal. fuel drums. Also, they found 50 heavy bunkers, 150 fighting bunkers, tracks from wheeled and tracked vehicles, a strip of corduroy road, and 10 ammo dumps. C/1-502 IN and D/1-502 IN conducted RIF operations. D/1-501 IN continued to provide security for FSB BASTOGNE.

29 January 1969

STRIKE FORCE (2-502 IN BN) troopers accounted for three enemy killed near FSB QUICK II. Near PHAN THIET, 3-506 IN BN paratroopers killed three VC. (Rendezvous with Destiny (Volume 2, Number 1); Spring 1969-69)

29 January 1971

1-501 IN BN move to FSB ARSENAL was completed. C/1-501 IN vicinity YD775035 discovered one spider hole. Negative recent enemy activity.

30 January 1967

Operation FARRAGUT: 1-327 IN BN and 2-502 IN BN extracted from the FARRAGUT AO to PHAN RANG and prepared to initiate Operation GATLING I in LAM DONG province, while the 2-327 IN BN continued Operation FARRAGUT. The movement of the 2-502 IN BN from field locations to PHAN RANG deserves comment in that a heliborne extraction of one infantry battalion was accomplished during the hours of darkness. Seven separate PZ's were utilized to extract 448 troops between 1847H and 2115H. (HQ, 1BDE, 101st ABN DIV; After Action Report, Operation FARRAGUT)

30 January 1968

TET Offensive of 1968: The outbreak of the TET Offensive, the 2BDE continued to move north and joined the heavy fighting in the battle for QUANG TRI with the 1CAV. After QUANG TRI was cleared, the 2BDE and the 1CAV moved south to set up blocking forces in the countryside around HUE, while US Marines and ARVN forces fought to retake the city from the NVA. The 2BDE cleaned out pockets of enemy resistance between HUE and QUANG TRI and intercepted NVA units attempting to reinforce the former Imperial City.



TET Offensive of 1968: The US Embassy was a particular target singled out by the VC. Elements from the C-10 Sapper Battalion – a unit whose members lived in Saigon itself – breached the wall with satchel charges and attacked the main building with RPG and automatic weapons fire. The Marine guards defended from inside the building and were reinforced by both MP's and a small Marine reaction force. Navy helicopter fire teams supported the US forces during the battle. One platoon from C/1-502 IN was dispatched from BIEN HOA by helicopter and successfully landed on the roof pad at 0810H after having been driven off by fire at 0500H. The Embassy grounds were secured by 0900H and 19 VC were KIA. (TET Offensive Annex A – 1968, MACV History Volume 2)



E. Allan Wendt, a Foreign Service Officer who was on duty at the Embassy that night wrote a report after the attack and then classified for years and was published by the Wall Street Journal. He stated that the building was shaken by a loud explosion just before 0300H and automatic weapons fire broke out. About 0530H more than an hour before the arrival of the ammunition chopper, COL Garrison called to announce a plan to land a rifle platoon of infantry on the roof. Shortly afterwards, COL Fuller called from Second Field Force Victor in LONG BINH to inform them of a plan to land a platoon from the 101st Airborne. LTG (R) John H. Cushman, Commanding Officer, 2nd Brigade, 110th Airborne, called and asked for a report, which we provided as best we could. Between 0630H and 0700H, MAJ Hudson called to say that there could be no landing before daylight because of poor visibility, despite the roof lights being on.



Well after daybreak, trips to the roof revealed several orbiting helicopters, though none with any discernible intention of landing. We waited, always wondering why there was still no landing. About 0815H, I headed back up to the roof. The OSA communicator had gone back to his code room, so the roof was unattended. As I stepped off the elevator on the sixth floor, I was greeted by a strange site. Standing before me were five paratroopers in full battle dress from the 101st Airborne Division. They carried M-16s, M-79 grenade launchers, hand grenades, and knives. I asked for the platoon commander. MAJ [Hillel] Schwartz stepped forward, and I told him I was the duty officer. He offered me a hand grenade, which I declined. He said 30 more men would land soon. I explained that we knew of no VC in the building. While the MAJOR took some notes, I described the building briefly, repeated MACV's deployment instructions, and informed him of COL Jacobson's situation in the rear of the compound. I also urged him to watch for the one Vietnamese employee on the ground floor. MAJ Schwartz, fearing there actually might be VC in the building, deployed his men so as to secure it floor by floor, beginning with the sixth.



I took Schwartz to the fourth floor so that he could call the Marine guard on the ground and obtain the very latest information. He then rejoined his men. I called Sheinbaum to say the troops had landed and were deploying through the building. Two or three calls then came through from Bien Hoa Army. In each case, a general officer of the Army wanted urgently to speak with Maj. Schwartz. I said he was engaged in securing the embassy and could not be reached but that I would have him call back as soon as I could. Carpenter called and said he needed to know exactly how many VC had been inside the compound.



I then made several more trips to the roof to receive incoming paratroopers. About 45 minutes after Maj. Schwartz had landed, I went down to the ground floor. There had been no shooting for a while.

I was told all the VC were dead and that there were 19 of them. I went upstairs and relayed this information to Carpenter. I then went back downstairs. (Extracted from the "Viet Cong Invade American Embassy" — The 1968 Tet Offensive; by E. Allan Wendt, published by The Wall Street Journal)



30 – 31 January 1968

1-501 IN BN, A/1-321, and HHC 2BDE, Signal, and MP platoons left LZ EL PASO by truck convoy in the early morning. They traveled through HUE and up HWY-1. SFC Timothy O'Connor of 1-501 IN BN wrote in his book, "Blood Brother, there were numerous villages along the way... (It was TET, the Chinese New Year) and the people...were having a good time. When we reached HAI LANG, we turned left...and came to a large sized hill...LZ JANE. Each company was assigned a sector of the perimeter. I called the platoon together and told them that 'Charlie is watching us so let's dig our bunkers deep.'"

The massive NVA/VC countrywide offensive known as TET 1968 began tonight.

Combined North Vietnamese Army and VC forces attack Saigon, 36 of 43 provincial capitals, and 64 district capitals to begin the Tet Offensive. From the brigade journal:

0405H: 1-501: A/1-501 IN receiving 3 incoming mortar rounds, C/1-501 IN receiving small arms fire.
0410H: 1-501: E/1-501 IN reports incoming mortar rounds.
0412H: 1-501: D/1-501 IN reports 4 incoming mortar rounds, 4 WIA, one machine gun position took a hit.
0415H: 1-501: C/1-501 IN reports 1 enemy KIA
0440H: 1-501: C/1-501 IN reports 11 enemy KIA, all carrying demolition kits.
0455H: 1-501: D/1-501 IN reports 2 enemy KIA, C/1-501 IN reports 12 enemy KIA total
0540H: 1-501: D/1-501 IN estimates having received 20 rounds of RPG-2 fire; A/1-501 IN estimates 4 rounds of PRG fire; C/1-501 IN spotted enemy in the wire, set of claymores and observed 3 secondary explosions presumably from satchel charges. As a result of these explosions and small arms fire, C/1-501 IN reports 12 VC KIA and 2 VC WIA POW and D/1- 501 IN reports 2 VC KIA.

Information was passed down that 1-502 IN BN, securing LZ SHARON and LZ BETTY had not been attacked this night.

30 January 1968

Proposed location at CAMP EVANS for 2-501 IN BN vicinity YD809162. At 0822H, 2-501 IN BN, Recon platoon commenced movement at this time, crossed SP. On 09 September at 0505H, 1-501 IN BN crossed SP, cleared 1st AIR CAV DIV SP at 0912H. At 0917H, 2-501 IN BN, Recon platoon at CP1. At 1037H, 2-501 IN BN, Recon 6 at CP2. At 1101H, 2-501 IN BN Recon 5 at CP2. At 1145H, Recon 5 & 6 at YD785152. At 1255H, 1-501 IN BN on coming convoy hit mine vicinity YD488367. At 1321H, 2-501 IN BN, Recon 5 at CP3. At 1412H, 2-501 IN BN, Recon 6 closed BN CP. At 1445H, 2-501 IN BN, Recon 5 closed BN CP. At 1505H, CPT Justice reported 1 2 ½ ton truck broke down at CP2, need wrecker, make coordination with MP's and wrecker, this was done at 1615H call from CPT Justice later, do not send wrecker, one is coming from CAMP EVANS. At 1925H, 1-501 IN BN was notified that they are to provide platoon size element to assist C/326 ENG platoon sweep the access road to HWY-1 from LZ JANE commencing 0730H, 31 January and strong point the road until 1800H, 31 January. At 2335H 1-501 IN BN reported firing 8-12 rounds of M-79 at a target. Negative results reported. Firing occurred at 2315-2325H.

2BDE (1), 101st ABN DIV began displacement of select units from LZ EL PASO to LZ JANE during this reporting period in support of FRAG ODER 2 to OPOD 5-68 published on 29 January. Elements of HHC and 1-501 IN BN comprised the initial convoy. No significant incidents occurred enroute except to note the road contained numerous convoys traveling both north and south causing many delays during movement. The BDE CP was operation in the new location at 1824H. 1-501 IN BN was assigned the primary mission of security for the FOB. 2-501 IN BN remained at LZ EL PASO with the responsibility for security of units remaining at the location; TF 1-502 IN BN remains under the OPCON of 1BDE, 1st ACD; the majority of TF support units are at HUE-PHU BAI airbase under the command of BDE XO – additional units are still arriving from CHU CHI. The BDE TF is deployed along a NW-SE line from vicinity QUANG TRI to HUE-PHU BAI a distance of approximately 70km.

(HQ, 2BDE, 101st ABN DIV; Daily Staff Journal or Duty Officer's Log; vicinity QUANG TRI (YD377430); 30JAN1968)

30 January 1969

Operation SHERMAN PEAK/Operation NEVADA EAGLE: A/1-502 IN conducted a RIF form YD457995 to YD460002. At YD460000, 3rd platoon found 9 old bunkers, at YD458002 they found 17 old bunkers and at YD458997 found 6 old bunkers. At vicinity YD458997, 1st platoon found 2 small bunkers and at YD450002, 3rd platoon found 2 bunkers with 101lbs TNT and 200 electric blasting caps. B/1-502 IN provided security for FSB VEGHEL and conducted RIF operations in the vicinity. At YD554047, 1st platoon found 2 75mm rounds in box and metal canister. At vicinity YD531041, 3rd platoon found 3 bunkers containing 10 sealed cases of 12.7mm ammunition. C/1-502 IN conducted RIF operations. At YD536061, C/1-502 IN found 3 60mm rounds. At YD542067, C/1-502 IN found old bunkers and 2 82mm rounds. D/1-502 IN conducted RIF operations in the vicinity of YD5006. Recon platoon was OPCON to A/1-502 IN. At YD462008, Recon found 18 small foxholes, 1 bunker, 1 pick and 2 NVA shovels. D/1-501 IN continued to provide security for FSB BASTOGNE and conducted squad size patrols around FSB BASTOGNE.



31 January 1966

Personal Account of VC Snatch on Mountain during TET Ceasefire TUY HOA, Vietnam; by George R. Basset (E-4) Fire Team Leader & Point Man; B/2-502 IN, 1st platoon, 2nd Squad, 101st ABN DIV. I will relate my participation in an event that took place at TUY HOA, Vietnam on January 31, 1966 (TET – Chinese New Year) 3 Day cease fire:

A 3-day cease fire was agreed to for the Chinese New Year, Jan. 1966. We were in TUY HOA, PHU YEN Province, VN, a combination of rice paddies and very tall mountains. There were six or seven of us in our squad led by our Squad Leader, Sgt. Estevan "Chico" Alvarado.

Our company had set up a temporary fire support base and squad sized patrols were dispatched to selected locations to observe any enemy activity during the cease fire. We were tasked to patrol 13,000 meters to a very prominent mountain and then go to the top of it and observe the vast paddy areas below us for the next three days. We covered the distance to the mountain; I was the point man as I usually was. We carried our own radio that day. After a very difficult and exhaustive climb we approached the summit of the thickly jungled mountain, the wind was howling, and the top was so steep that we had to climb it on all fours. When almost to the top, I stopped movement and listened as I thought that I could hear bits of the Vietnamese language being spoken thru the howling wind, heard it several times. Chico crawled up to my position on point to see why I had stopped the patrol and we both listened, but I heard nothing more and decided to continue, we were only about 30 meters from the top. When we gained the top, it was bald solid rock, and you could see 50 miles in some directions. It was an ideal observation post for us, and it proved to be so for the VC as well. I found a Viet cigarette that had been put out in a crease in the rock, it smelled very fresh with no morning dew stains. We realized that somebody had been up there as we had approached the top but did not feel that we had been compromised. We were placed by Chico in two-man positions. The mountain top was very small and had a vertical drop of about 30ft. where my partner and I were assigned to observe from. There was a ledge about 3 ft. wide and about 10 ft. from the top that we crept out onto and both sat down where it petered out with our backs to the rock face. We were below the crest, blended in with the rock even though we were sitting out in the open with no cover, our feet dangling over the edge. We had a fantastic view of open rice paddies for miles below us. We had not sat there on that dead-end ledge for long when we realized that we had screwed up really bad. We heard approaching voices below us not very far away and they were getting louder fast, we didn't have time to get off that dead end ledge where we were sitting in plain sight. A minute later, with our rifles at the ready, from immediately below us, close enough to throw a rock, we observed a VC carrying a satchel and behind him a woman with a large tray of food held above her head with one hand and a third VC who appeared to be also unarmed. We both fired and hit the first VC, throwing him back into the woman, knocking her and the tray into the rocks. The third man disappeared back from the direction they had come from, and then reappeared with a grenade in his hand cocked above his head. We shot him and dismounted from the ledge and went and grabbed the woman who was uninjured. I held up the first VC and my buddy took my picture with him blowing bubbles from the holes in the front of his black shirt. Just then we heard what sounded like military commands being shouted in Vietnamese from not far below us. Chico appeared and told us to grab the girl and haul ass. She had long black hair, I wrapped it around my hand, and we ran down the side of the mountain as fast as we could, me dragging the girl and none of us worrying about caution and noise discipline. The girl shed her shoes in an effort to slow us down, when she lost her footing, I dragged her along until she regained it. We could hear the VC shouting behind us. Chico radioed our fire base for a fire mission, and they walked artillery on our back trail, giving us the opportunity to gain some ground on them. Soon we heard no more shouting and stopped to catch our breath before our lungs burst. The girl indicated to me that she had to putty. I still had hold of her hair, knowing better than to release my grip. If she got away, we had no time to look for her, if they had gotten close enough to us that she became a liability and was slowing us too much, I would have had to shoot her. Wouldn't have felt good about it-but that really didn't matter. We made it back to the fire base with no further scares. She was turned over to ARVN. Word came back to us that she said that we grabbed her from her village, but she couldn't explain the satchel that we grabbed from the first VC which had some loose carbine ammo in it and some pay records, no money. The contents of the satchel were all in Viet and we had no clue what they were until the interpreter at the fire base translated them. We didn't even get an "Atta Boy" out of that. Those cease fires were all rear echelon crap. The arty didn't shoot and the planes didn't bomb, but out in Indian country, when you bumped into them, the small arms war went on. They used these cease fires to openly transport supplies. If it had not been for the cease fire we would not have been sent so far to patrol and observe from our fire base, 13,000 meters. If we had been engaged, I suspect that we would still be there. If we had suffered a WIA we would have had some very difficult decisions to make and not much time to make them. AS AN ASIDE: When it was safe, and we had stopped to catch our breath, the girl indicated to me that she had to go to the bathroom and motioned to a spot some feet away. I pointed to spot a couple feet in front of me, close enough that I could reach out and grab her if need be and I pointed my rifle at her and indicated to her that I would shoot her if she tried to get away. She took a crap there; I reached into my shirt pocket and passed her a small packet of c-ration toilet paper. She opened it and looked it all over and then put it in her pocket, then reached over and selected a moss-covered rock and wiped on that. I did turn my head but not to the point that she dared to try to get away. We summarized that the three VC were on the mountain top observing as we were going to do, and that their unit was encamped a short way down the mountain and as we approached the top they left the mountain top to get food and were returning to their post on the mountain top with it (the tray), not suspecting that we had occupied the top in their absence. Suspect they got a little complacent and left their weapons at their base camp. As a result of the intelligence gained from the VC female, a week later we over ran a VC hospital complex. The labels on most of the bottles of medicine indicated that they were made in the U.S. and W. Germany. There was also a supply of inflatable splints that were made in Flint, Michigan. Our medic told me that the inflatable splints were so new that the U.S. Military did not have any in country at that time.



31 January –
01 February 1968

At 0300H, the VC/NVA launched their TET offensive. During the early hours of the battle, a VC Sapper platoon breached the court-yard wall, placing a significant threat on the American Embassy, Saigon. A Ready Reaction Force from C/1-502 IN was directed to conduct an air mobile assault to the roof top of the Embassy building, and to clear and secure the Embassy and surrounding area. After two attempts, the assault force was able to land on the HOT LZ at 0834H on 1 February. In less than 1 hour, the Embassy and surrounding area had been secured. The action resulted in 9 VC KIA and 2 AK-47's credited to the 101st ABN Troopers. There was one US casualty, a door gunner on one of the assault helicopters was wounded by SA fire. (Operational Report – Lessons Learned, HQ, 101st Air Cavalry Division, Period Ending 30 April 1968)

31 January –
01 February 1968

A platoon from C/1-502 IN conducts a combat air assault onto the roof of the US Embassy in Saigon in order to retake the embassy if it fell to the VC Sappers. Upon landing, they reinforced the beleaguered MPs and Marines guards who had been battling the enemy attack.



31 January 1968

B/2-501 IN had elements sent out to check LP with negative contact. They must have passed the LP on the way out and on return the LP threw 2 hand grenades wounding a couple of Soldiers lightly. Soldiers sent back to be checked for shrapnel. Both individual's wounded have been evacuated to be checked and classified very lightly wounded by company aidman.

2-501 IN BN reported at 0355H approximately 10 incoming rounds, 4.2 platoon reports 2 casualties. Medic B/2-501 IN reported 2 killed, 3 wounded; wounded personnel situation unknown. 4.2 platoon reported 3 wounded, dust off not needed at this time. B/2-501 IN, Medic reported 4 KIA, 5 WIA extent not known. E/2-501 IN reported at 0410H 1 lightly WIA with AF 2 lightly WIA. B/326th Med reported at 0415H 5 WIA, 4 KIA. 326th Engineer reported at 0420H 2 lightly WIA. One AF being treated by medic will be evacuated to hospital. B/326th Medic confirmed at 0432H casualty count as 4 KIA, 4 WIA. C/2-501 IN reported at 0510H receiving 10 rounds of M-79.

Marines report that VC are in the village at 795195. Artillery was called in. Marines report enemy at coordinates 905116, 900122 and 912116. At 0940H, Marines reports 600 VC at coordinates 900122, 905119 and 912116; 100 VC at 805196, requesting gunship to standby. At 1015H, reports of 200 VC at coordinates 820178 heading toward main compound

B/2-501 IN reported at 1040H small arms firing approximately 1000 meter to their front in vicinity of 200 VC reported area. Stakeout reported 200 VC at 809186. C/2-501 IN reported two personnel at 814165 in grave area. At 1319H A/2-501 IN reported on man slightly wounded from an apparent spent 7.62 round. At 1332H, B/2-501 reported 2 personnel in black with weapons vicinity YD809179. Taken under fire continued to observe movement north. B/2-501 IN reported at 1340H receiving SA fire from 809179.

A/2-501 IN reported chopper being fired on coordinates 785185 at 1432H; Reported at 1506H location of hill from which chopper "clipper 566" was fire on vicinity YD785175 from A/2-501 IN, Commander. BDE S3 want undulator ready for hook lifts to JANE; Griffin 68G reported chopper on ground at 753209; India given ground clearance for vicinity 785175 – A/2-501 IN patrolling. D/2-501 IN patrol at 815150 (Tiger 1 and 779175 (Tiger 2). Maj N returned from search for Clipper 566 with negative results. BDE S3 reported No FAC available, all up directing strike now. S5 departed in H-23 to look for Clipper 566. A/2-501 IN returned to company position, D/2-501 IN reports group personnel at 767137.

At 1915H, reported from S5, checked in hospital - SSG Zeigler is KIA and CPT Lay is WIA. (HQ, 2-501 IN BN; Daily Staff Journal or Duty Officer's Log; 31 January 1968)

31 January 1969

Operation SHERMAN PEAK/Operation NEVADA EAGLE: A/1-502 IN continued with RIF operations. At YD456016, A/1-502 IN, 2nd platoon found bombed out AA gun position containing 4 12.7mm rounds. B/1-502 provided security at FSB VEGHEL. 2nd platoon and 3rd platoon conducted RIF operations vicinity YD545048, 2nd platoon found 600 rounds of M60 ammunition, 2 60mm rounds and 1 CS gas grenade. C/1-502 IN and D/1-502 IN conducted RIF operations with negative results. Recon platoon was OPCON to A/1-502 IN. Recon found 3 55gal drums of gasoline with Russian lettering. D/1-502 IN continued to provide security for FSB BASTOGNE and conducted a mine sweep to FSB BIRMINGHAM.



31 January 1970

FSB BIRMINGHAM was hit by 5 mortar rounds. A/1-502 IN, 1st platoon was on a night move in the piedmont area SE of FSB BIRMINGHAM and observed this plus a fire fight several KM west of FSB BIRMINGHAM and East of FSB BASTOGNE.



01 - 02 February 1966

Operation VAN BUREN: 2-502 IN BN conducted Recondo patrols and prepared for operations to the South to protect the rice harvest in the SONG DA RANG River Valley. The 2-502 IN BN, Recondo platoon returned from TUY AN to the battalion base. 2-502 IN BN conducted a heliborne assault on LZ RED CQ075535 and LZ BLUE CQ055332 on 02 February at 1055H. Later in the day a Wire Laying Party, secured by the Recondo platoon was ambushed by an estimated VC platoon vicinity CQ085355 at 1330H. B/2-502 IN (-) flanked the VC force from the East and a vicious fire fight ensued. Three (3) air strikes, artillery fire and 4.2" mortar fire supported the operation. The operation terminated at 1900H with friendly losses of 1 KIA and 19 WIA. Enemy losses were 16 VC KIA (BC), 17 VC KIA (EST), 1 VCS and 2 weapons captured. At 1900H the 2-502 IN BN conducted Recondo patrols vicinity CQ059303 and accounted for 2 VC KIA (BC), 9 VC KIA (EST), 1 VCS and 2 weapons captured. Friendly losses were 1 KIA and 3 WIA. (HQ, 2-502 IN; Operation VAN BUREN, After Action Report 150600H January 1966 – 201200 February 1966)

01 – 04 February 1967

Operation GATLING I: 1BDE minus 2-327 IN BN commenced Operation GATLING I in LAM DONG Province northwest of BAO LOC by conducting an airmobile raid following a B-52 strike on a suspected high level enemy conference near TAN DJIRAN, YT990865. 2-502 IN BN initiated airmobile assaults from PHAN THIET at 0919H with a task force consisting of A/2-502 IN, B/2-502 IN HHC/2-502 IN (-). C/2-502 IN and the remainder of HHC/2-502 IN arriving by C-130, conducted an airmobile assault from BAO LOC and by 1400H the 2-502 IN BN had completed the block and had begun moving west on multiple axes.

During the period of 01-03 February 1-327 IN BN, 2-502 IN BN and attached units conducted a thorough search of the objective area with negative results. No evidence was found that would substantiate the presence of enemy headquarters in the area. 2-502 IN BN extracted from the AO and closed on BAO LOC airstrip on 04 February at 1000H. (HQ, 1BDE, After Action Report; Operation GATLING I and II; March 1967)

01 – 15 February 1967

Operation GATLING: Location: BAO LOC, PHAN THIET, TAN RAI, TAN DJIRAN, LZ MARY, LZ JANE, LZ PEG, LZ LIZ, LZ SHIRLEY, LZ LUCKY STRIKE, LAM DONG, BINH TUY and BINH THUAN Provinces.

Type: search and destroy.

Controlling headquarters: 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div.

Task organization: 1-327 IN, 2-502 IN, 2-7 CAV (-) (5-15 Feb), Co B, 5th SFGA (1-4 Feb), 2-320 ARTY (-), B/1-30 ARTY, A/326 ENG (-).

Intelligence: Headquarters MR 6.

Execution: Operation GATLING was conceived as a raid against the suspected meeting place of the enemy's Military Region 6 Headquarters northwest of BAO LOC in LAM DONG Province. During phase I (1-4 Feb), the brigade minus was extracted from the FARRAGUT AO and moved secretly to BAO LOC and PHAN THIET. On 1 Feb, following a B-52 strike on a suspected high level enemy conference near TAN DJIRAN 12 km northwest of BAO LOC, 1-327 air-assaulted into LZ MARY, followed by 2-502 IN BN air assaulting into blocking positions near LZ JANE. MIKE Forces from TAN RAI were also inserted into LZs PEG, LIZ and SHIRLEY to complete the trap while a company from 2-7 CAV was moved to BAO LOC to serve as the brigade reaction force. During the following days, the units conducted a thorough search of the objective area but found no sign of the presence of an enemy headquarters and the battalions were extracted back to BAO LOC. Phase II (5-15 Feb) began on 5 Feb with the brigade air assaulting into the suspected location of the MR6 Headquarters northwest of PHAN THIET on the border between BINH TUY and BINH THUAN Provinces. 2-7 CAV (-) became opcon to the brigade and air-assaulted from the BYRD AO into LZ LUCKY STRIKE. Once again, contact was minimal and on 8 Feb all units terminated offensive operations in observance of the TET cease fire. On 12 Feb, aggressive search and destroy operations were resumed until 15 Feb when all elements were extracted from the AO to PHAN THIET.

Results: 19 enemy killed, 6 captured, 19 detained, 5 US KIA, 21 US WIA, 2 ARVN KIA, 11 ARVN WIA.

(Vietnam Combat Operations; A chronology of Allied combat operations in Vietnam 1967; Stephane Moutin-Luyat - 2011)

01 – 02 February 1968

1-501 IN BN had operated out of LZ JANE to relieve the ARVN district chief at his compound at HAI LANG. During the afternoon of 02 February, the CG, 1st CAV DIV, MG Tolson, had told COL Cushman that the next day that there BDE would move the BDE's command post to CAMP EVANS and take command of the 2-501 IN BN, which was still split between HUE-PHU BAI and CAMP EVANS, and that they would leave the 1-501 IN at LZ JANE to be OPCON to the CAV's 1st BDE. (By LTG (then COL) John H. Cushman)



01 February 1968 At 0014H, B/2-501 IN was engaged with 5-6 VC with M-79 vicinity YD802178 with negative results. At 0350H, Vodka 1 at PHU BAI Airstrip reported that a ground attack at 2400H from the north and north-east and a mortar attack at 0200H that lasted approximately 25 minutes. Vodka 1 reported no casualties among Vodka or Shark personnel in the area, and the airstrip is still serviceable. At 0405H, Vodka 1 called 2-501 IN BN, saying that PHU BAI Airstrip is again receiving very heavy Rocket and Mortar fire. Casualties and damage at this time unknown. At 0420H, Stake-Out reports radio station at 713198 under attack by VC company; no further details. CPT Madsen reported that there are no casualties in his area from all the 2BDE units there belonging to Shark and the shelling has ceased from PHU BAI. At 0542H, D/2-501 IN received automatic fire from their left flank, at a range of 400 meters, azimuth 200m, returned fire and enemy broke contact. At 1015H, 2BDE Commander informed 2-501 IN BN to prepare all airmobile elements to move on order to location and time to be announced; other elements to move to PHU BAI by road and placed under control of 2BDE XO. Mission to be announced later.

At 1715H, C/2-501 IN received approximately 3 round mortar; 3 US WIA: 1 from C/2-501 IN, 1 from D/2-501 IN and 1 from unknown unit, all medevaced. Reported at a delayed entry at 1805H 1 KIA from 1st CAV DIV (PFC Thomas M Martich). (2-501 IN BN; Daily Staff Journal Entry; 01 February 1968)

01 February 1968 A/1-502 IN and D/1-502 IN platoon and the recon platoon, was sweeping the area between LZ SHARON and LZ BETTY who were engaged in a four-hour fire fight, supported by the CAV's gunships, killing 35 and captured 2 NVA, captured an 82-mm mortar, two .50cal, and one light machine gun and many individual weapons. Four (4) US Soldiers were killed, including A/1-502 IN commander, CPT Holland, and there 1SG. 1-502 IN BN continued with the sweeps and ambushes. The TET Offense caught the 2-501 IN BN with its move to CAMP EVANS only partially completed and with the rest of the Battalion yet to move due to poor flying weather, intensive enemy anti-aircraft fire, and low C-47 availability.

01 February 1968 B/2-501 IN was engaged M-79 with 5-6 VC in vicinity YD802178 with unknown results. D/2-501 IN had a tripped flare, fired M-79 in area, unknown results. D/2-501 IN received automatic fire from their flank at a range of 400-meters, azimuth 200-mils; returned fire, enemy broke contact. D/2-501 IN received additional sniper fire on their left flank, returned fire; individual was found dead at 811147 and no weapon found.

2BDE informed 2-501 IN BN to prepare airmobile elements to move on order to location and at time to be announced. Other elements to move to PHU BAI by road and placed under control of 2BDE XO. Mission to be announced. Non-airmobile units (Arty; HHC, 2BDE, Bravo Medics, MPs and 326 Engineers) convoyed to PHU BAI and closed at 1622H.

At 1715H, C/2-501 IN received 3 rounds of mortar fire. Sustained casualties as follows: One (1) critical (326 Eng); 1 -C/2-501 and 1 D/2-501 IN medevaced. Updated reports at 1805H reported that C/2-501 IN wounded was KIA from 1st CAV. (HQ, 2-501 IN BN, 101st ABN DIV; Daily Staff Journal Entry; 01 February 1968)

01 February 1968 By noon on 1 February, QUANG TRI City had been cleared of the enemy and the 1BDE immediately initiated pursuit. A/1-502 IN made a heavy contact just south of QUANG TRI killing 76 of the enemy with the help of aerial rocket artillery. Other units of the 1BDE made numerous smaller contacts throughout the day as the brigade elements moved out in ever-increasing concentric circles around the city.

01 February 1968 At 0200H, PHU BAI was under mortar attack that lasted 20-25 minutes, they also were under ground attack from the North and North East, the airstrip was not damaged and is still operational. Sporadic rounds are still being received. (HQ, 2BDE, 101st ABN DIV; Daily Staff Journal or Duty Officers Log; 1FEB1968)

01 February 1968 **Operation SAN ANGELO:** A/2-502 IN conducted a recon in force in AO Mary west of SONG BE. At 1230H, vicinity YU120164 they engaged 3 VC on a trail resulting in 1 VC KA and capturing 1 AK-47 assault rifle. At 1427H, vicinity YU116055, A/2-502 IN engaged approximately 40 VC in fortified positions. The enemy employed B-40 rockets and automatic weapons fire. A/2-502 IN maneuvered to the flanks and swept the position with the following results: 16 VC KIA, 4 US WHA, 1 US KHA, 2 Medevac ships shot up, 2 AK-47 assault rifles captured, 24 82mm mortar rounds captured, 1 Chicom grenade and miscellaneous military equipment captured. (HQ, 2-502 IN: Operation SAN ANGELO, Combat After Action Report; 17 February 1968)

01 February 1969 **Operation SHERMAN PEAK/Operation NEVADA EAGLE:** A/1-502 IN conducted a saturation patrol. In vicinity YD483025, 2nd platoon found 1 complete truck engine, 2 engine blocks and 1 footlocker of uniforms with insignia (button had Chinese writing on them). B/1-502 IN continued to provide security for FSB VEGHEL. 2nd platoon and 3rd platoon conducted RIF operations in the vicinity of FSB VEGHEL. C/1-502 IN conducted RIF operations from YD532088 to YD524095. D/1-502 IN conducted RIF operations near YD502094, found four 2-man hooches and remains of fires. D/1-501 IN continued to provide security for FSB BASTOGNE.

01 February 1970 A/1-502 IN combat assaulted onto grid YD735035 to search for enemy who fired the mortars and found elephant and water buffalo tracks, Vietnamese novel and human footprints.



February 1971

Operation JEFFERSON GLEN: The STRIKE FORCE (2-502 IN BN) entered 1971 still engaged in Operation JEFFERSON GLEN with the 1BDE. The CP remained on OP Checkmate located on Hill 342 approximately 10 miles Southwest of HUE City. Checkmate was a show place and a source of pride to the STRIKE FORCE Battalion. It boasted such luxury features as plank sidewalks, hot showers, (for those ambitious enough to carry the water), hard surface chopper pads, a barber shop, neatly painted structures and even a television for evening viewing in the briefing room. The bunkers were manned by personnel who for various reasons could not perform in the canopy. These Soldiers included temporary and permanent physical profiles, excess cooks, commo personnel, and the like. Their performance was evidence of their pride in the battalion and these were the Soldiers who built and defended "The Hill".

Heavy and frequent rains characterized early 1971 as the monsoon dragged to an end. In the canopy, the "grunt" lived a wet, chilly and uneventful existence through January. Resupply was not regular as aircraft were frequently grounded by bad weather. Few combat assaults were conducted and movement on the ground was kept to a minimum. The area of operations through January and most of February remained the same as the last three months of 1970 – from Sang Bo River to 8 kilometers east and north from FSB VEGHEL about 12 kilometers. Constant patrolling produced extensive coverage of the area effectively denying the enemy a base of operations. One measure of success is the fact that TET, the Vietnamese Lunar New Year celebration, passed quietly without any attacks on HUE City – scene of bloody conflict during TET of 1968. The North Vietnamese were then heavily engaged in Cambodia which diverted their attention from traditional targets of previous years. Whatever the reasons might have been, it was both satisfying and a relief that TET 1971 passed without incident.

The number one concern of the STRIKE FORCE rear area at Camp Eagle was the "Get set for TET" program. The bunker line was improved as much as possible despite a shortage of materials and manpower. A Battalion reaction platoon staged several practice alerts for reinforcement of the bunker line. Bunker in the cantonment area were improved to provide greater protection in the event of an attack.

The men of A/2-502 IN took credit for the only contact of January. While moving towards an LZ, the element observed and engaged three NVA at close range. The action resulted in two enemy KIA without friendly casualties. One AK-47 rifle was captured. A/2-502 IN found 3 recent graves the next day and reported signs of activity and movement around their position but has no further contact with the enemy.

Early in February the "STRIKE FORCE" gradually worked into security operations. C/2-502 IN joined D/2-502 IN in securing the road from OP Checkmate to FSB VEGHEL. Recon Platoon secured the road east of FSB BASTOGNE and A/2-502 IN secured the road east of FSB BIRMINGHAM. B/2-502 IN was digging up a tunnel complex near the Song Bo.

Gradually the 2-502d Infantry's AO was extended to cover all the area East of the Song Bo, South from the 12-grid line approximately ten kilometers and East past FSB BIRMINGHAM for kilometers. The basic mission in this new AO was to secure Route 547 in support of operations to the West.

Also, at this time the companies were moved individually to Camp Eagle for 36 hours' stand-down. D/2-502 IN, because they were securing FSB VEGHEL was excluded from this abbreviated stand-down.

"Jump CP" was saying used quite often at the TOC at OP Checkmate. The Battalion was put on numerous contingency plans and each time a jump CP was readied to meet communications and command requirements. (2-502d IN Unit History)

01 – 28 February 1971

During this period the 1-501 IN BN conducted search and attack operations in its assigned area of operation. The battalion occupied FSB ARSENAL from 01 February to 04 February conducting operations in the area. B/1-501 IN provided security for the FSB and also conducted nightly ambushes. On 04 February, the battalion moved to FSB Tomahawk and FSB Los Banos and continued operations with the battalion CP located on FSB Tomahawk, and elements from A/1-501 IN securing both the Fire Bases. During this operation, the 1-501 IN BN joined forces with the 155th ARVN Company to search out and attack the enemy forces in the area. A/1-502 IN was OPCON to 1-501 IN BN from 04 February to 09 February. The 1-501 IN BN moved to a field location vicinity YD934078 just to the south of ANZIO on 14 February with A/1-501 IN providing security. On 14 February elements from C/1-501 IN were taken to PHU BAI Combat Base (PBCB) to conduct nightly ambushes to aid in the defense of the installation. The 1-501 IN BN moved to FSB Thunderbird on 15 February with C/1-501 IN manning the perimeter. On 18 February, the 1-501 IN BN terminated operations in the area and returned to PHU BAI Combat base by truck for refresher training. Training was orientated towards marksmanship, maintenance contact teams, and commanders time. The 1-501 IN BN was air lifted to DONG HA Combat Base on 24 February and received a warning order to move on 25 February to A-1, B-1 and A-2. The move was completed, and operations were resumed in that area. During the reporting period a light mortar platoon was organized in B/1-501 IN and C/1-501 IN respectively. These elements consisted of one 82mm mortar tube and fifteen to twenty men. The platoon remained in the company's area of operation and conducted daily patrols. Its purpose was to provide the Company Commanders with fire support under his direct control.

01 – 04 February 1971

1-501 IN BN occupied FSB ARSENAL and conducted operations in the area. B/1-501 IN provided security for the FSB and conducted nightly ambushes.



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.

3 x Silver Star Medal (1 x Posthumously)
 3 x Bronze Star Medal with Valor (1 x Posthumously)
 2 x Bronze Star Medal (2 x Posthumously)
 66 x Air Medal (1 x Posthumously)
 1 x Army Commendation Medal with Valor
 1 x Army Commendation Medal
 6 x Purple Heart Medal (5 x Posthumously)
 1 x Died from Non-Hostile Injuries or Illness

26 January 1969



SP4 Joseph J. Saitta (B/2-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal for wounds sustained in combat in the Republic of Vietnam. (Purple Heart Medal Citation)

28 January 1966



SP4 Thomas R. Devlin (C/2-502 IN) died from Non-hostile causes from multiple gunshot wounds to body. He was on night combat operation as point man when encountered friendly patrol. The point man of that patrol opened fire and hit him in the PHU YEN Province, Republic of Vietnam.

29 January 1969



PFC Dennis C. Eshleman (C/1-501 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from small arms gun fire wounds while on combat operation when engaged hostile force in firefight in the THUA THIEN Province, Republic of Vietnam.

29 January 1970



1LT Joe H. Ruffy (D/2-501 IN) was awarded the Silver Star Medal, Bronze Star Medal, Air Medal and Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from small arms gun fire wounds while on combat operation when engaged hostile force in firefight in the THUA THIEN Province, Republic of Vietnam.

29 January 1972

The following Soldiers from A/2-501 IN:

PFC Daniel R. Sellers	SGT Stephen M. Suto	SGT Rafael G. Sanchez	PFC Craig C. Russell
SGT Barry L. Rooks	SGT Ruben A. Quezata	SGT James R. Pooler	PFC Joseph M. Purchio
SP4 Richard R. Thompson	SGT Marvin L. Vander Ark	PFC Joe C. Louis	SP4 Robert H. Martin
SP4 Retty G. Wobride	SP4 David A. Menting	PFC Robert D. Smith	SP4 Keith D. Balliew
1LT Hugh R. Guill	SP4 David L. Dortch	1LT James C. Hunn	SP4 Jon A. Williamson
SP4 Kenneth M. Wohlberg	SP4 Johnnie D. Dyer	PFC Richard W. Lewis	PFC Curtis B. Loyd
PFC Douglas E. O'Tremba	SGT James E. Mc Aruther	SGT Gregg H. Todd	PFC Thomas D. Tripp
PFC Timothy E. Taylor	SP4 George L. Barthel	SGT Robert L. Johnson	PFC Kenneth A. Pratt
SGT Robert E. O'Bryan			

Was awarded the Air Medal for meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight in the Republic of Vietnam (DA, HQ, 101st Airborne Division (AM); G.O. Number 890, 29 January 1972)



30 January 1969



PFC Steven E. Frederick (C/2-502 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal (Posthumously). PFC Frederick died from Non-hostile causes as a ground casualty in the THUA THIEN Province, Republic of Vietnam.

01 February 1968



PFC John T. Brown (A/1-502 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor and Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from gunshot wound received while on a combat operation when encountered hostile force 6km west of HAI LANG in the QUANG TRI Province, Republic of Vietnam.

01 February 1968



SGT James E. Hamilton (A/1-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from gunshot wound received on a combat operation when hit by hostile small arms fire 6km west of HAI LANG In the QUANG TRI Province, Republic of Vietnam.

01 February 1968



PVT Larry E. Wittler (A/1-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death when he was engaged by hostile small arms fire while on combat operation in the QUANG TRI Province, Republic of Vietnam.

01 February 1968



CPT Joseph P. Holland (A/1-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from metal fragment wound received while on combat operation when engaged hostile force in firefight 6km west of HAI LANG in the QUANG TRI Province, Republic of Vietnam.

01 February 1968

The following Soldiers from A/1-502 IN BN:

SGT Vernon P. Sims	SGT Mark A. Tyndall Jr.	SGT Nestor Vargas-Guzman	SGT Richard S. Vilcek
SP4 Larry L. Aldridge	SP4 Charles E. Allen	SPF Jerry H. Anderson	SP4 Thomas J. Barrett
SP4 Calvin E. Bills	SP4 Thomas L. Canopy	SP4 Larry E. Crissman	SP4 Alan L. Darling
SP4 Clifford J. Engle	SP4 Daniel E. Ewashenko	SP4 Linsey P. Ewell	SP4 Mercado A. Febres
SP4 Gary L. Flowers	SP4 Fred L. Gorton	SP4 Michael A. Gritman	SP4 Daniel J. Grundy
SP4 Clyde E. Henderson	SP4 Willie J. Hill	SP4 Fred J. Horne	SP4 Claude C. Houser
SP4 Donald J. Kosnick	SP4 James W. Lee	SP4 Duane Little	SP4 Willima F. Lux
SP\$ Glen McClaine	SP4 Robert S. Di Girolamo	PFC Lawrence A. Andiorio	
SP4 Washington D. Alexander			

Was awarded the Air Medal for meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV; General Orders Number 10964; 20 December 1968)



STRIKE HISTORY (Citation's and Awards):

26 January 1969



SP4 Joseph J. Saitta (B/2-502 IN) was awarded the Army Commendation Medal with Valor for heroism in the Republic of Vietnam on 26 January 1969. Specialist Saitta distinguished himself while serving as a medical aidman in Company B, 2d Battalion, 502d Infantry, near the city of PHU BAI, Republic of Vietnam. During a search and clear mission, Specialist Saitta's platoon came under intense enemy automatic weapons fire. In the initial burst of fire, one man was seriously wounded. Specialist Saitta, with complete disregard for his own safety, moved forward with another soldier through the intense enemy automatic weapons fire to the location of the wounded man lying in the direct line of enemy fire. Crawling through the intense enemy automatic weapons fire, he reached the second wounded man, who was in an open area. On several occasions, Specialist Saitta used his body as a shield to protect the wounded Soldier from the enemy fire. After administering first aid to him, he carried the wounded Soldier to the rear of the area and was instrumental in completing his successful evacuation. Specialist Saitta'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 3991; 30 April 1969)

27 January 1966

1LT David C. Johnson (HHC/2-502 IN) was awarded the Silver Star Medal. 1LT Johnson distinguished himself on 27 January 1966 while acting as company commander in a search and destroy operation of a suspected Viet Cong base camp in the village of PHU QUI, Republic of Vietnam. Lieutenant Johnson was maneuvering his company to attack the Viet Cong village when they received intense small arms and automatic weapons fire from well-fortified hostile positions. Lieutenant Johnson from his position saw that half of his left flank platoon was pinned down by hostile fire on open terrain. Realizing their extreme danger, Lieutenant Johnson, with complete disregard for his personal safety, ran one hundred meters across the bullet swept rice paddies to the beleaguered platoon. While completely exposed to the intense hostile fire, he ran from man to man and personally directed them in a fire and movement assault. Lieutenant Johnson's aggressive fighting spirit inspired his men to increase their efforts and was most instrumental in overrunning the Viet Cong force. His unimpeachable valor in close combat against a hostile force was in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflects great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army. (HQ, USARV; General Orders Number 2083; 05 April 1966).

28 January 1970

SGT Jesse Gomez (C/2-502 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor for heroism in ground combat against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam on 28 January 1970. Sergeant Gomez distinguished himself while serving as a squad leader in Company C, 2d Battalion (Airmobile), 502d Infantry, near Fire Support Base Rifle, Republic of Vietnam. Sergeant Gomez's squad was serving as lead squad for the Third Platoon when it encountered a squad of enemy Soldiers. The two lead men placed effective fire upon the enemy position, causing them to flee rapidly. Sergeant Gomez immediately reorganized heavy automatic weapons fire; he quickly identified the enemy location and directed his men in placing effective suppressive fire upon it. His timely and effective action prevented many friendly casualties and resulted in the capture of one wounded insurgent, four AK-47 rifles and other enemy equipment. Sergeant Gomez'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 3050; 20 March 1970)

01 February 1967

1LT David A. Remanaric (B/2-502 IN) was awarded the Silver Star Medal. 1LT Remanaric's platoon was conducting a search and destroy operation near Phan Bang when it was suddenly brought under a murderous volume of enemy automatic weapons fire from an estimated reinforced enemy squad in a fortified position. With complete disregard for his own personal safety, Lieutenant Remanaric charged through the withering enemy fire to the most forward point of contact. Quickly making an estimate of the situation and reorganizing his platoon, Lieutenant Remanaric placed his platoon on line and assaulted the enemy position. Throughout the assault, Lieutenant Remanaric exposed himself to the enemy fire while moving from man to man giving them encouragement and pointing out enemy targets. After the platoon had overrun the enemy position, it was again brought under a murderous volume of enemy automatic weapons fire. Again, with complete disregard for his own personal safety, Lieutenant Remanaric charged the enemy position while firing his weapon and succeeded in routing the enemy. Realizing that his wounded comrades must have needed medical aid, Lieutenant Remanaric called for and adjusted artillery fire in order that the casualties could be evacuated. Lieutenant Remanaric's outstanding gallantry in action and his avid devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest military traditions and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army. (HQ, IFFV; General Orders Number 335; 11 April 1967)

01 February 1968



LTC Howard H. Danford (HHC/2-502 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor for heroism in ground against an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam on 1 February 1968. In response to the treacherous TET offensive, element of the 101st Airborne Division were ordered to react to the enemy attack. Lieutenant Colonel Danford unhesitatingly answered this call with his airborne battalion. At the height of the crisis, he quickly marshaled his forces and, with audacity and daring, led his men in an assault into the Bien Hoa area. Under unrelenting sniper fire and mortar and rocket attacks, Lieutenant Colonel Danford adeptly deployed his forces in coordinated attacks, counterattacks, and classic sweeps in Bien Hoa, at Ton Son Nhut Air Base and around General Westmoreland's MACV Headquarters. These maneuvers were violently executed and contributed immeasurably to turning the tide of the battle by routing the enemy and by affecting the end of the destruction of property and minimizing the casualties to civilians. Lieutenant Colonel Danford seemed to be everywhere, encouraging his men under fire. By his complete disregard for his personal safety and by seeming to ignore the enemy rocket and mortar fire, he was able to inspire the men in his battalion to victory over the numerically superior and well-armed hostile enemy force. Lieutenant Colonel Danford's sense of duty to his men and mission together with his valorous leadership were decisive in this action. His outstanding display of heroism and his devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.



01 February 1969



MAJ Jerome A. Bruschette (HHC/2-502 IN) was awarded the Army Commendation Medal (1-OLC) for distinguishing himself by meritorious achievement in ground operation in the Republic of Vietnam during the period of 1 February – 30 June 1969. His outstanding performance during the cited period contributed significantly to the war efforts in the Republic of Vietnam. He overcame the adverse conditions of a hostile environment and accomplished all his assigned duties in a superior manner. His meritorious achievements inspired his comrades and were in the finest tradition of the American Soldier. His initiative, sound judgement, and devotion to mission accomplishment reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV; General Orders Number 13464; 3 November 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

