

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 1st ENGINEER BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96345

AVDB-CE-3

23 December 1966

SUBJECT: Combat Operation After Action Report

THRU: Commanding General
1st Infantry Division
ATTN: AVDB-T
APO 96345

TO: Commander
US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
ATTN: J321
APO 96307

1. NAME OF OPERATION: Operation Battle Creek
2. DATES OF OPERATION: 050001 Nov to 261700 Nov 1966

3. GENERAL: The command headquarters for the engineer portion of Operation Battle Creek was Headquarters, 1st Engineer Battalion acting in accordance with 1st Infantry Division OPORDs 24-66 and 25-66 dated 050110H Nov 66 and 100830H Nov 66 respectively. The 1st Engineer Battalion provided combat support to the 1st Infantry Division during its S&D operations in War Zone C against the 273rd VC Regiment, 101 NVA Regiment (-), and 9th VC Division Headquarters. The primary missions accomplished in the operation were the construction of Landing Zones for extraction of personnel, supplies, and captured equipment; and the reinforcing of the routes between Phu Loi and Suci Da and between Tay Ninh and Dau Tieng to class 50 capacity to include construction of one 210 ft. DS Bailey Bridge and several timber trestle bridges.

a. Reporting Officer: LTC J.M. Kiernan JR.
Commanding Officer
1st Engineer Battalion

b. Task Organization:

Hqs, 1st Engr Bn - LTC KIERNAN

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- (1) Company A - WAYNE L. LUCAS, Cpt, CE
- (2) 3rd Plt. B Co. - 2/Lt Williams
- (3) Company C (5-13 Nov) - LARRY A. BLAIR, Cpt CE
 - 1st Platoon, Company B - 2/Lt Leonard
 - 1st Platoon, Company C - 1/Lt Griffin
 - Company C (14-26 Nov) - LARRY A. BLAIR, Cpt CE
- (4) Company D - THOMAS E. VALENTE JR., Cpt, CE (7-13 Nov)
ROGER MILLAR, Cpt, CE (14-25 Nov)
 - 11 E Co. Bridge Trucks
 - 2 Hqs. Co. Graders

4. INTELLIGENCE:

a. Intelligence Prior to Operation:

(1) At the beginning of the operation, elements of the 196th Light Infantry Brigade and the 25th Infantry Division were in contact with elements of the 273rd VC Regiment in the vicinity of XT4154 and XT4552.

(2) Enemy Capabilities

(a) To continue contact

(b) Reinforce from the North with up to four battalions supported by artillery and/or reinforce from the South with up to three battalions supported by artillery.

(c) To attack the area of Dau Tieng from the South with five battalions supported by artillery.

(d) Retain capability of attacking Suci Da and Trai Bi.

b. Intelligence during Operation:

(1) At 2358 hours on 15 Nov 66 an A Company out-post opened fire on approximately 15 VC attempting to emplace claymore mines around the A Company perimeter. At 1800 hours on 16 Nov 66 one VC was apprehended in the same area where contact had been made the night before. It was learned through interrogation that the captured VC had been sent into the area to assess the damages done to the Americans, and that the subject VC was told that three VCs had been carried off after the previous night's action.

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As the VC also saw five VC bodies in the area prior to his apprehension, A Company was credited with eight VC probable kills.

(2) The following items were detected and either removed or blown in place:

- (a) 2 ea - booby trapped grenades
- (b) 1 ea - booby trapped 105 mm round
- (c) 1 ea - booby trapped 81 mm round
- (d) 6 ea - pressure detonated mines
- (e) 3 ea - command mines
- (f) 1 ea - booby trapped chicom mine

(3) During Operation Battle Creek there were several instances whereby 1st Engineer Battalion elements were fired on by snipers with negative results.

5. MISSION: 1st Engineer Battalion provides combat support to the 1st Infantry Division conducting S&D operations in War Zone C against the 273rd VC Regiment, 101 NVA Regiment (-), and the 9th VC Division Headquarters. The missions involved included general road repair and maintenance, landing zone construction, ford and culvert construction, timber trestle, panel, and dry span bridge construction, jungle clearing, and perimeter security and assistance in clearing fields of fire and constructing field fortifications.

6. CONCEPT OF OPERATION: A Company constructs a 210 ft. DS Bailey Bridge at Dau Tieng in addition to a two span timber trestle bridge. 3rd Platoon, B Company, OPCON, Headquarters, 1st Engineer Battalion, placed in direct support of 2d Brigade. C Company, with 1st Platoon, B Company attached, constructs landing zones as well as performs various other general engineering missions such as road repair and maintenance, jungle clearing, and ford, bridge, and culvert construction. D Company constructs a 70 ft. combination timber trestle and M4T6 dry span bridge and accomplishes opened road repair and maintenance.

7. EXECUTION:

4 Nov: The 1st Engineer Battalion was alerted for possible deployment of its elements as the 196th Light Infantry Brigade and elements of the 25th Infantry Division were currently in heavy contact with elements of the 273rd VC Regiment vicinity XT4154 and XT4552. C Company was alerted to be prepared to move one LZ team on 5 Nov to Suoi Da in support of 3rd Brigade.

5 Nov: At 050001 Nov 66 1st Platoon, B Company joined the convoy of 1/4 Cav. for motor march to Suoi Da.

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Company C reconnoitered the bivouac area at XT 341579 next to Suoi Da Special Forces Camp and was joined at 1330 by 1st Platoon, C Company, which was airlifted from Lai Khe by two OH-67 helicopters. At this time the 1st Platoon, B Company, which had repaired a culvert at XT 287519 and was performing general road repair and maintenance vicinity Suoi Da since its arrival that morning, was attached to C Company.

6 Nov: 3rd Platoon, A Company, and an LZ kit was airlifted from Phouc Vinh to Dau Tieng at 0730 hours and put on standby for an LZ mission. 1st Platoon, Company B, constructed a ford at XT 348585, using native cordwood and PSP. The ford was completed in 2½ hours and passed company A, 1/5 Mechanized Battalion (approximately 30 ATOs) to a forward artillery base. This platoon continued repair work of the ford so it would handle an additional two mechanized companies, plus two batteries of towed artillery and heavy ammunition trucks. This platoon also continued road maintenance between Tay Ninh and Suoi Da, and again repaired the culvert at XT 287519, while performing emergency extraction of stuck vehicles. The 1st Platoon, Company C, assisted in road work on the ford, prepared perimeter positions, and remained on standby for an LZ mission.

7 Nov: 1st Engineer Battalion Tactical CP and D Company, 1st Engineers, accompanied by Dragoon elements convoyed to Suoi Da arriving there late in the afternoon.

1st Platoon, B Company continued to crown and shape the Tay Ninh-Suoi Da road. The 1st squad, 1st Platoon, C Company assisted the 1/18 Infantry in cutting an LZ at XT 401643. C Company (-) and D Company each assumed a 400 meter portion of the Suoi Da perimeter that night. Two squads of B Company were airlifted to Dau Tieng and placed in direct support of the 2d Brigade. 3rd Platoon, A Company repacked their LZ kit and remained on standby for an LZ mission at Dau Tieng.

8 Nov: Headquarters of 3rd Platoon, B Company was airlifted to Dau Tieng. Two chain saw teams and two demo teams for B Company were attached to 2/16 and 1/16 Infantry. 1st Platoon, B Company continued to crown and shape the road between Tay Ninh and Suoi Da. The 1st squad, 1st Platoon, C Company assisted the 1/18 Infantry in cutting an LZ at XT 425663. The remainder of the platoon cut an LZ and fields of fire for 2/18 Infantry. The first squad, 2d Platoon, B Company was airlifted in the 1/28 area to unload ammunition, load scores of American wounded into medical helicopters, and remove and bring VC dead from around the perimeter. Much of this work was done under heavy sniper fire.

Company D began construction of a combination 18 ft. timber trestle and a 45 ft. M4T6 dry span bridge to span a 63 ft. gap at XT 348585. The 1st Platoon erected a 16 ft. high by 14 ft. wide double timber bent to support and join the timber trestle and the dry span sections of the bridge. The 2d and 3rd platoons prepared the two abutments. Upon completion of the double bent, the 2d Platoon constructed the 18 ft. timber trestle bridge.

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9 Nov: One officer, an NCO, medic, and RTO were airlifted at 0700 to 1/28 Infantry RON position at XT 423667 where they joined the infantry in its march through the jungle to seize and secure a large VC base camp found the day before. Upon arrival at the base camp this pathfinder party was guided by the command and control helicopter to a small clearing nearby at XT 420672 to begin preparation for receiving the C Company LZ team. Chain saws which had been carried in were used to cut the tall trees that would hinder the descent of the LZ team members from the CH47. Six additional chain saws were brought in by UH1D helicopter by dropping them into heavy brush near the clearing. At 1200 hours, the 1st Platoon, Company C was airlifted into the LZ by two sorties of CH47 helicopters. The first sortie carried the thirty man LZ platoon and command element which descended 70 ft. ladders to the jungle floor below, and lowered chain saws, pioneer tools, and satchel charges by rope.

The second sortie delivered 2500 pounds of explosives and the LZ kit on the end of a 100 ft. cable. The first UH1D landed in the LZ at 1430, and by 1510 the LZ was completed to begin shuttling out the tons of captured material recovered by the 1/28 Infantry. One squad of the LZ team also demolished four VC bunkers in the nearby VC base camp area using satchel charges. By 1900 hours, only one squad of engineers had been extracted. The remaining 17 engineers night-marched with the 1/28 Infantry to their RON position at XT 423667.

D Company erected the 45 ft. dry span and placed it upon the double bent and far shore abutment. This completed the bridge with an overall classification of 16, which would be increased the next day by construction of an intermediate bent for the dry span.

3rd Platoon, A Company remained on standby at Dau Tieng for an LZ mission. One of its demo teams removed a booby trapped grenade from a house at Dau Tieng being used as an aid station.

10 Nov: 3rd Platoon, A Company, remained on LZ standby at Dau Tieng, with one demo team removing a booby trapped 105 mm round and a booby trapped 81 mm mortar round from the upstairs of the hospital at Dau Tieng.

The C Company engineers which had spent the night at the 1/28 RON position were extracted by UH1D helicopters at 1030 hours, and returned to Suoi Da to reconstitute their LZ kit. 1st Platoon, B Company continued road repair and maintenance on the Tay Ninh-Suoi Da road.

The 2d Platoon, D Company, constructed and implaced an intermediate bent for the 45 ft. dry span at XT 348585 which brought the 63 ft. bridge up to an overall classification of 55. D Company demo team also destroyed captured VC positions, which included over 5000 fragmentation and rifle grenades.

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11 Nov: 3rd Platoon, A Company remained on LZ standby at Dau Tieng and also sent two demo teams to C Company, 1/26 Infantry.

At 1400 hours, the 1st and 2d Platoons of D Company were attached to C Company, comprising a four platoon company, and the entire unit was airlifted with a battalion command element to XT 404501 to secure A and D Batteries, 1/5 Artillery in Artillery position Lanyard I. Two 81 mm mortars were also attached to Company C at Lanyard I for defensive fires. The artillery base was secured without incident.

D Company elements continued work on the bridge abutments at XT 348585, provided mine detector teams for road sweeping, and recovered 98 captured VC gas grenades which had been buried the day before.

12 Nov: This day the 1st Engineer Battalion was assigned the mission of securing artillery base 21 in addition to its mission of continuing to secure Lanyard I. At 0730, the CO, Co. C, with a battalion command element and two platoons (C-1 and B-1), were extracted from Lanyard I by UH1D and assigned the mission of securing Artillery Base 21, which held A and B Batteries, 1/7 Artillery at XT 380544. 3rd Platoon, Company A, and two mortars from B Troop, 1/4 Cav, were attached at 1200. The perimeter was well dug in, and light patrols were run out to 500 meters during the day. No enemy contact or activity occurred.

A battalion command element and the 1st and 2d Platoons of D Company remained at Artillery Base Lanyard I and continued to secure that base. The slack in the perimeter caused by the departure of the two other platoons going to Artillery Base 21 was taken up by personnel from the artillery units at Lanyard I.

Light patrols were run out to 500 meters during the day. No contact was made; however, 100 pounds of rice, one hack saw, one machete, and two bunkers were discovered and subsequently destroyed. In the afternoon, two mortars from B Troop, 1/4 Cav were attached for defensive fires security. At approximately 1800 hours A Company, 2/28 Infantry, was brought into Lanyard I by slick as they were unable to get into their assigned RON position due to heavy sniper fire on that LZ. A Company, 2/28, Infantry took over the perimeter positions that were being secured by the Artillery personnel. That night the VC started walking mortars into the perimeter, but were silenced by the attached mortar section and 105 mm direct fire before any casualties were taken.

13 Nov: The remainder of A Company was airlifted from Phouc Vinh to Dau Tieng and joined the 3rd Platoon there.

The Artillery began extraction from Artillery Base 21 at 0900, but were not able to complete it by nightfall, therefore requiring the engineers to RON in the evacuated Artillery Base 21. 3rd Platoon, Company A was detached at 1700 hours, and a platoon ambush patrol from C Company, 1/2 Infantry was attached to the CO, Company C, 1st Engineer Battalion for the perimeter defense. Emergency supply was flown in after dark, and positions reestablished. There was no contact or incidents, even though the 1/2 Infantry had heavy contact only 800 meters away. The remainder of C Company departed Lai Khe by convoy for Di An and subsequent travel to Suoi Da.

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The Battalion command element and the 1st and 2d Platoons of D Company were relieved of the mission of securing Artillery Base Lanyard and were extracted at 0900 and flown back to Suoi Da where the platoons spent the rest of the day in maintenance.

Mine detector teams on the road from Suoi Da to Tay Ninh found and destroyed six mines. Two 105 mm rounds and one 155 mm round were set for pressure electrical detonation. Three 105 mm rounds were set as command mines staggered to left, right, and left of the road. All were blown in place. Battalion command helicopter in reconnaissance near Ben Cui was fired on by estimated VC reinforced squad. An airstrike was called resulting in 6 VC KIA.

14 Nov: A Company removed the old timber trestle bridge at XT 478468 and hauled new material to the bridge site in preparation for construction of a new bridge at that site.

1st Platoon, B Company assisted A Company in loading bridge materials and then at 1745 hours convoyed to Tay Ninh west where they RON for the night in preparation for convoying south to Di An.

Company C (-) was extracted by UHID from Artillery Base 21 at 1030 hours, with the commo jeep being lifted by CH47, and returned to Suoi Da. The remainder of Company C arrived by convoy from Di An, closing into Suoi Da at 2100 hours.

D Company continued to provide mine detector teams to sweep the road between Tay Ninh and Suoi Da, and performed road repair and maintenance along that route.

15 Nov: The Battalion command helicopter was again fired on by a VC squad near Ben Cui. Artillery was brought in resulting in 4 VC KIA.

1st Engineer Battalion Forward CP and Companies C and D departed Suoi Da at 0840 by convoy for their new forward location at Ben Cui III, XT 450458, near Dau Tieng. Two mines were detected west of Ben Cui and blown in place. The convoy closed Ben Cui III late in the afternoon and prepared perimeter defense positions for the night. The Battalion CP moved into an old French plantation house where upon inspection, a 10 pound mine, set to be detonated by vibration, was detected on a rafter on the second story. It was blown in place by a D Company demo team causing some damage to the ceiling, rafters, and roof of the building.

1st Platoon, C Company remained at Suoi Da for an LZ mission with 1/18 Infantry at XT 403729. Upon completion of the LZ, the 1st Platoon was airlifted to Ben Cui III at 1830 hours and joined the remainder of C Company at that location.

1st Platoon, B Company, convoyed from Tay Ninh west to Di An, closing late in the afternoon.

A Company constructed a new timber trestle bridge at XT 478468. The bridge had two spans with an intermediate double bent, and an overall length of 30 ft. At 2358 hours approximately 15 VC attempted to place claymore mines around the perimeter. The VC were fired on, with the company receiving credit for eight probable VC KIA. There were no U.S. casualties.

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16 Nov: Company C (-) was assigned the road sector from Ben Cui III to Dau Tieng for repair, maintenance, and minesweeping. One 105 mm dud was blown in place, and 80 cubic yards of laterite were hauled, while the roads were ditched to improve the drainage. 1st Platoon, C Company, was again air-lifted into the 1/18 Infantry RON position to cut fields of fire and construct overhead cover. The platoon remained overnight with the 1/18 Infantry.

D Company constructed a 30 ft. class 60 timber trestle bridge with an intermediate bent at XT 415443.

16-21 Nov: During this period A Company constructed a 200 ft. double single Bailey Bridge at grid coordinates XT 483469 with two intermediate pile bents. The old bridge across the Saigon River at that point was removed by cutting certain steel members of the bridge with a cutting torch and then dropping each of the three spans by using explosives. The abutments were rebuilt, and corbels and caps were lifted by CH47 into place on the two existing pile piers and welded into place. The bridge was launched as a continuous unit from the west shore abutment and then broken in two places and lowered onto the two pile piers. A crane assisted in the construction by lifting panels from the bridge trucks into place.

On 16 November A Company captured one VC near the company perimeter who upon questioning revealed that the night before eight VC had been killed in the fire fight that took place on A Company's perimeter.

17 Nov: Company C continued road maintenance in sector, and began clearing rubber trees along the Ben Cui-Dau Tieng road. Approximately one acre of rubber trees were cleared and about 80 cubic yards of laterite hauled. Two tank dozers and two APCs assisted in jungle clearing; however, the bulk of the work was done with chain saws, demolitions, and bulldozers. The 1st Platoon continued work for the 1/18 Infantry until 1230 hours, and was then helilifted to the 2/28 Infantry vicinity XT 4069, and at LZ approaches, again remaining overnight with the infantry.

17-21 Nov: During this period D Company was responsible for the repair and maintenance of eight kilometers of road from Ben Cui III at XT 450450 to XT 373422. Old buildings were bulldozed down and the rubble hauled and placed on the road to provide bulk and stability. This was in addition to the many loads of laterite which was also placed on the road and mixed with the rubble. Culverts were placed across the road to relieve the high waters in the rice paddies on one side of the road and allow the water to run over to the other side, thus dropping the water level on that side and allowing the road surface and sub-surface to dry. One 20" and one 10" box culvert were placed across the road as well as four culverts made out of 105 mm shell casings. While the second and third platoons were repairing the road, the first Platoon cleared rubber trees away from the road utilizing demolitions. Clearing the rubber trees away allowed the sun to dry out the road surface as well as hindering future ambush attempts by the VC!

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18 Nov: 1st Platoon, C Company was extracted from 2/28 RON position at 1230 hours, returned to Suoi Da, and convoyed to Ben Cui III to join the company. D Company and the remainder of C Company continued road maintenance and rubber tree clearing operations with approximately 150 loads of laterite being hauled and placed on the road.

19 Nov: 3rd Platoon, B Company constructed a small LZ for the 2d Brigade at coordinates XT485525. C and D Companies continued road maintenance and jungle clearing operations in their assigned sectors. C Company received a warning order to cut an artillery battery LZ out of the jungle on top of Nui Ong Mountain (XT522587). Extra large demolition pallets were packed and aerial recon missions were flown.

20 Nov: 3rd Platoon (-), B Company moved to XT495545 to begin construction of a resupply LZ for the 2d Brigade.

At 1030 hours the command element and 2d Platoon of C Company were airlifted by CH47 to Nui Ong after a one hour preparation by B57s and artillery using super quick fuses. The 3rd Platoon arrived by CH47 at 1100, followed by two slung loaded pallets of demolitions, pioneer tools, and chain saws. The 1st Platoon arrived at 1130, with all elements descending out the 70 ft. ladder of the Chinook without injury. A 50 man recon platoon from the 2/16 Infantry had preceded the engineers, and while they secured the area, the engineers began cutting an LZ big enough to bring in UHIDs containing B Company, 2/16 Infantry. This unit began arriving at 1330 hours, and had closed by 1500 hours. While the infantry provided security, C Company worked past dark with demolitions, chain saws, and hand tools clearing the thick bamboo underbrush and trees up to 30" in diameter. One VC bunker, observation post, and a work bench were discovered and destroyed.

D Company continued road maintenance and jungle clearing operation.

21 Nov: 3rd Platoon, B Company continued construction of the resupply LZ and also constructed an artillery pad for the 1/5 Artillery.

C Company continued to clear the top of Mt. Nui Ong, and by night-fall it was 80% complete. An accident occurred when one infantryman violated instructions and got out of his hole when a charge went off, injuring him moderately. This caused a three hour delay in demolition work.

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D Company continued its mission of road maintenance and jungle clearing.

A Company completed construction of the 210 ft. double single bailey bridge over the Saigon River at Dau Tieng.

22 Nov: A Company spent the day in maintenance of equipment and weapons.

3rd Platoon, B Company returned to Dau Tieng and performed maintenance on equipment in preparation for a road clearing operation.

Company C was extracted from the top of Nui Ong between 0700 and 1000 hours with the first load out being the remaining demolitions and LZ kit, and the remainder of the equipment and troops lifted out by UH1H helicopters. Approximately one platoon day of chain saw work remains to be done, and the top of Nui Ong will be capable of holding two full batteries of 105 Howitzers. The area cleared is crescent shaped about 50 meters. The entire area was cleared to a height of 6" and represented over 1500 man hours of effort. Approximately 2500 pounds of explosives were used, along with 18 chain saws and numerous hand tools. The company returned to Ben Cui.

D Company continued road repair and jungle clearing operations.

23 Nov: A Company was airlifted from Dau Tieng to Phuoc Vinh ending their participation in Operation Battle Creek.

3rd Platoon, B Company began road clearing operation vicinity Dau Tieng with eight mine detector teams.

C Company continued repair of the Ben Cui road; and constructed one wingwall of the new panel bridge near Dau Tieng. Rubber trees were hauled back into the plantation and the anti-American slogans on Vietnamese huts in Ben Cui III village were replaced with anti-VC slogans. The 1st Engineer Battalion Commander also attempted to convert the known VC village of Ben Cui III by means of air dropping propaganda leaflets and talking with them.

D Company continued road repair and jungle clearing operations.

Company C was extracted from the top of Nui Ong between 0700 and 1000 hours with the first load out being the remaining demolitions and LZ kit, and the remainder of the equipment and troops lifted out by UH1H helicopters. Approximately one platoon day of chain saw work remains to be done, and the top of Nui Ong will be capable of holding two full batteries of 105 Howitzers. The area cleared is crescent shaped about 50 meters. The entire area was cleared to a height of 6" and represented over 1500 man hours of effort. Approximately 2500 pounds of explosives were used, along with 18 chain saws and numerous hand tools. The company returned to Ben Cui.

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24 Nov: 3rd Platoon, B Company continued road clearing operations.

C and D Companies continued their jungle clearing and road repair operations in the morning, with C Company also constructing a playground for the children of Ben Cui village. In the afternoon Thanksgiving religious services were held and a Thanksgiving meal complete with turkey and most of the trimmings was enjoyed by all.

25 Nov: 1st Engineer Battalion forward CT, C and D Companies, and 3rd Platoon, B Company convoyed from Ben Cui to Di An, closing Di An at approximately 2100 hours.

26 Nov: C Company departed Di An at 0900 for road convoy to Lai Khe, closing at Lai Khe at 1130 hours, and ending the 1st Engineer Battalions participation in Operation Battle Creek.

9. Results:

a. Personnel: 1st Engineer Battalion personnel suffered no casualties as a result of hostile action; however, there were several small injuries resulting from the cutting of LZs.

b. Awards: 1st Engineer Battalion personnel received 1 Silver Star, 2 Bronze Stars with "V", 6 Bronze Stars, 2 Army Commendation Medals with "V", and 30 Army Commendation Medals for their actions in Operation Battle Creek. These awards were personally presented by the Commanding General of the 1st Infantry Division along with one of the Assistant Division Commanders at an awards ceremony held on the 210 ft. Panel Bridge constructed by A Company at Dau Tieng.

c. Equipment: There were no equipment losses.

d. Enemy Losses: The 1st Engineer Battalion was credited for 20 VC KIA's.

e. Construction:

(1) Roads and Bridges

(a) Repaired and maintained 44 Kilometers of road.

(b) Two each fords constructed.

(c) Two access roads repaired.

(d) Two 30 ft. culverts repaired.

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- (e) Six 30 ft. culverts placed.
 - (f) One 200 ft. double single bailey bridge constructed.
 - (g) Three each timber trestle bridges constructed (18', 30', and 30').
 - (h) One combination 18 ft. timber trestle and 45 ft. M4T6 dry span bridge constructed.
 - (i) Abutments and headwalls constructed for all bridges.
- (2) Field fortifications: Individual and command protective emplacements were constructed for several infantry units as well as those constructed for our own use.
- (3) Landing Zone: One company size LZ, (In two artillery batteries) five platoon size LZs, and five squad size LZs were constructed along with approaches.
- (4) Reduction of enemy obstacles:
- (a) Mine detector teams cleared an average of 30 Kilometers of road daily.
 - (b) The following mines were discovered and destroyed:
 - (1) 2 ea - booby trapped grenades.
 - (2) 1 ea - booby trapped 105mm round.
 - (3) 1 ea - booby trapped 81mm round.
 - (4) 6 ea - pressure detonated mines.
 - (5) 3 ea - command mines.
 - (6) 1 ea - booby trapped Chicom 10 pound mine.
 - (c) Numerous craters were repaired.

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(5) Denial activities.

(a) 20 acres of rubber trees were cleared.

(b) Eight acres of scrub jungle cleared.

(6) Engineer Reconnaissance.

(a) The S-2 recon section performed twelve ground recons and seven aerial reconnaissances in addition to numerous escort missions.

(b) Numerous other aerial and ground recons were performed by 1st Engineer Battalion elements daily.

(7) Water Supply:

(a) Dau Tieng: Approximately 17,000 gallons of water distributed daily for a total of 238,000 gallons.

(b) Suoi Da: Approximately 12,000 gallons of water distributed daily for a total of 132,000 gallons total. The shower point set up here showered approximately 1,000 men daily.

(c) Ben Cui: Approximately 4,000 gallons of water distributed daily for a total of 32,000 gallons. The shower point located here showered approximately 1,000 men daily.

(8) Administrative:

(a) Personnel: Average strength in the field during the operation - 425.

(b) Supply: Normal supply channels were used for resupply of units in the field with all units being resupplied by road convoys to and from Tay Ninh West. Emergency resupply was effected by air. An S-4 representative was at Battalion Forward at Suoi Da, and later at Ben Cui, during the entire operation.

(c) Maintenance: Company maintenance personnel maintained and repaired vehicles and equipment in the field. They were assisted by the Battalion Maintenance Section which stayed with the Battalion Forward during the entire operation and provided technical advice and assistance, and assistance in obtaining repair parts.

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(d) Transportation: Organic transportation was used except for some resupply and transportation by air.

(e) Communications: TOE FM radios were the principle means of communications.

(f) Medical: The Battalion Aid Station was operational in the field with the aid station set up at Battalion Forward at Suoi Da, and later at Ben Cui. The Battalion Surgeon and his medics conducted roving patrols of the work units daily, both by air and by ground, so as to be close to areas of possible trouble. The Battalion Surgeon and his medics also conducted six medcaps treating approximately 850 Vietnamese.

9. Special Equipment and Techniques:

(a) LZ Missions: Electric initiated devices were used in LZ demotion, increasing positive control, and reducing delays. M1 chain demolition blocks and bangalore torpedoes were used very effectively against bamboo thickets and thick underbrush. Gloves are also essential for LZ personnel because of the sharpness and density of bamboo. Painful cuts are inflicted which become easily infected. Also, absolute control and coordination must be constantly maintained with infantry security during use of demolitions to prevent injuries.

(b) Helicopter lift of I beams: I beams may be externally sling lifted by helicopters and placed onto bridge piers to speed the operation. This was successfully demonstrated by A Company in their construction of the 200 ft. double single bailey bridge at Dau Tieng.

(c) Road Repair: Native cordwood is a handy, readily available, expedient material for construction of fords and treadways, especially when covered with PSP.


(d) Infantry Missions: A basic load of Claymore mines, trip flares, and ammunition must be with the engineers at all times, because of the likelihood of infantry and security missions. When working as security for artillery batteries, positions must have a two sandbag thick revetment behind them to prevent injury to personnel if "Beehive" or cannister rounds must be fired.

10. Command Analysis:

During Operation Battle Creek the 1st Engineer Dattalion was called upon to perform most of the missions that may be assigned to a divisional engineer battalion. These missions included LZ construction, jungle clearing, road repair and maintenance, timber trestle and panel bridge construction, mine clearing and booby trap removal, and the performance of the combat engineer's secondary mission of reorganizing as infantry and securing two artillery base camps. All their missions were completed successfully and fully by the 1st Engineer Battalion. It illustrated once again the versatility and flexibility of the engineers for a variety of tasks, and contributed significantly to the success of Operation Battle Creek (Attleboro).

"Always First"

FOR THE COMMANDER:


RODGER M BIVENS
CPT, CE
Adjutant

DISTRIBUTION:
Special