

HEADQUARTERS  
1st BATTALION 9TH MARINES  
3D MARINE DIVISION (REIN), FMP  
APO SAN FRANCISCO, 96602

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3 RSR/pfa  
003480  
15 July 67  
Ser: 0027-67

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1st BN. 9th MAR  
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S & C 00341-67

From: Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines  
To: Commanding General, 3d Marine Division  
Via: Commanding Officer, 9th Marines

Subj: Combat Operations After Action Report

Ref: Viet Nam AMS Sheets: 6342 I, 6442 II, 6342 III, 6442 IV.  
Scale 1:50,000

Encl: None. See note page 9.

1. Code Name. CIMARRON
2. Dates of Operation. 010001H June 67 to 021000H July 67.
3. Location. Quang Tri Province, RVN
4. Task Organization.  
1st Battalion 9th Marines.

Major Fulham  
(1 June-20 June 67)  
Lt. Col. Schening  
(21 June-2 July 67)

H&S Company (Rein)

H&S Company  
In Tm "D" Btry, 2nd Bn., 12 Mar.

Lt. Thompson

Company "A" (Rein)

Company "A"  
Fo Tm "D" Btry 2nd Bn., 12 Mar.  
Det, H&S Co.  
FAC Tm.  
FO Tm. 81mm Plt.  
Det, Med. Flt.  
Det, Comm. Flt

Capt. Slater

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;  
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TAB 4

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A/ARPT (Opn CIMARRON)

1 JUNE-2 JULY 1967

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15 July 67Company "B" (Rein)

Company "B"  
FO Tm, "D" Btry, 2nd Bn., 12th Mar.  
Det, H&S Company  
FO Tm. 81mm Flt.  
Det, Med Flt.  
Det, Comm. Flt.

Capt. Gurd  
(1 June-20 June 67)  
Capt. Coates  
(21 June-2 July 67)

Company "C" (Rein)

Company "C"  
FO Tm. "D" Btry, 2nd Bn., 12th Mar.  
H&S Company Det.  
FO Tm. 81mm Flt.  
Det, Med Flt.  
Det, Comm. Flt.

Capt. Hutchinson

Company "D" (Rein)

Company "D"  
FO Tm. "D" Btry, 2nd Bn. 12th Mar.  
H&S Company Det.  
FO Tm. 81mm Flt.  
Det, Med Flt.  
Det, Comm. Flt.

Capt. Sasek

5. Supporting Forces.

a. Artillery. Operation Cimarron was marked by a great number of Artillery fire missions. There were 94 total fire missions fired during this operation. Among these were 8 prep fires, 6 marking round missions, and 10 concentration registrations. The remaining 70 missions were fired either on Viet Cong/ NVA forces or on NVA mortar and artillery positions. All but four of these 94 missions were observed. All of these missions were fired in support of the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines.

The breakdown of missions by type of weapon is as follows:  
155mm-one mission, 8 inch guns-2 missions, 4.2 inch mortar-  
2 missions, 175mm-guns- 2 missions, and 105mm Howitzers-87 missions.

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The total number of rounds by type of round is as follows: HE-2761, WP-223, VT-69, and 16 illumination rounds. This accounts for a total of 3069 rounds fired for the Operation. This total accounted for one confirmed kill, numerous bunkers destroyed, and secondary explosions as well as suppressing NVA incoming mortar and artillery fires.

b. Air.

During Operation Cimarron air support consisted mainly of daily resupply, medical evacuations and aerial observation.

Observation aircraft were used extensively during the daylight hours for spotting enemy mortars and artillery positions which had been noted. Occasionally these aircraft were used by the sweeping companies to observe enemy movement preceeding them.

Resupply by helo was required by at least one company during the operation. Empty water containers still present a problem to a moving unit due to the shortage of choppers for retrieving them.

Thirty-five medical evacuations took place including two NVA and thirty-three U.S.

Close air support was limited to two days of strikes due to the lack of suitable targets. These consisted of twenty two sorties, using bombs, napalm and guns.

The Battalion used ten TPQ-10 sorties per night for the entire operation to hit enemy artillery positions and supply routes. When suitable targets arose, daylight TPQ's were employed.

c. Armor

The 1st Battalion 9th Mar. was assigned a platoon of tanks throughout Operation Cimarron. These tanks were used mainly in a defensive position and were occasionally used to deliver H&I fires. While at Con Thien, five "twin" 40mm M-42's were available for defensive use and H&I fires. For a short period there was also a section of LVT's used for resupply and transportation.

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Within the ZOA 1st Bn. 9th Marines was reported the 90th Regiment of the 324th Division and the 341st Division of the North Vietnamese Regular Army. During the first few weeks of the operation NVA artillery units operating north of the Ben Hai River shelled the Battalion C.P. at Con Thien with sporadic fire during the day. At night the enemy on several occasions employed 82mm, and 60mm mortar fire against Con Thien. Most of the fire directed at Con Thien was of harassing type. During the last few weeks of the operation enemy artillery and mortar fire against Con Thien gradually increased.

Enemy activity was limited to fire team size units which employed ambushes and sniper activity against friendly units. The enemy also used DE-10 directional type mines command detonated against friendly units. Several Chi-Com grenade booby traps were found.

Very old enemy bunker systems were found at YD 164727. Enemy trench systems were found throughout the ZOA; trench lines and fighting positions were found surrounding all the farm villages.

Weather

The weather from 1 June 1967 to 2 July 67 was fair and warm. There were intermingled high clouds throughout the month; however these had no effect on air operations. The wind during this period blew from a generally north westerly direction. There were occasional thunder showers and electrical disturbances in the late afternoon and early evenings.

Cover and Concealment

Within the AO of the 1st Bn., 9th Mar. there was a generally heavy secondary growth with many by hedgerows and underbrush which tended to channelize movement along existing trails. This growth offered excellent cover and concealment.

Terrain.

This area is characterized by rolling terrain interlaced with small stream beds and rolling hills. Since the area was formerly populated, abandoned paddies and dry farming areas are found throughout. There are dense hedgerows hampering movement and limiting fields of fire while affording excellent ambush sites.

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15 July**7. Mission.**

The mission of the 1st Bn., 9th Marines during Operation Cimarron was manifold and included the following:

- (1) Coordinate and provide security for 11th Engr. Bn. personnel and equipment clearing a 600m strip between Con Thien and Gio Linh.
- (2) Be prepared on order to provide relief and reinforcement for Gio Linh artillery outpost, Qua Viet facilities and Con Thien CIDG camp in the event of an enemy attack.
- (3) Conduct ground surveillance and spoiling attacks throughout assigned OA with designated forces, to detect and destroy infiltration of NVA forces.
- (4) Maintain security on Route 561 in ZOA by aggressive patrolling along flanks.
- (5) Provide security for mine sweep team in ZOA.
- (6) Occupy and defend Con Thien complex with a command group and a Battalion. (-)

**8. Concept of Operation.**

The concept of operation for the 1st Bn. 9th Marine varied according to the particular mission assigned. One Company and a command group minus was used to provide security for the Engineer personnel and equipment. Two companies operated in the ZOA conducting extensive Sweep and Destroy operations, and 1 Company plus Battalion SOC group remained at Con Thien to maintain security.

**9. Execution:**

On 1 June the 1st Bn., 9th Marines were maintaining the positions they held at the end of Prairie IV, utilizing day and night patrols. Company "A" discovered National Liberation Front leaflets in the vicinity of YD 137712.

1650 on 2 June in the vicinity of YD 150713 a resupply helicopter to Company "D" received 6 to 7 rounds of small arms fire resulting in one USMC WIA, not evacuated. Also on 2 June in the vicinity of YD 150713 "B" Company discovered one German Mauser, 1 French rifle and parts to a Russian Carbine.

In the vicinity of YD 155741 at 1000 on 3 June 1967, Company "A" received 20 rounds of small arms fire, returned fire and swept

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the area discovering 1 M16 rifle, 1 3.5 rocket launcher serial 175214, 103 rounds of 5.56 mm ammo. This action resulted in 2 USMC WIA who were evacuated. At 1350, Company "B" found, in the vicinity of YD 106675, a bunker complex consisting of 15 bunkers and also found 111 rounds of 7.62mm ammo, 4 Chicago grenades, and 2 AK 47 Magazines. The positions for the Companies at this time were: Company "A" YD 160679, Company "B" YD 154718, Company "C" YD 113701, Company "D" YD 141711. At 1515 on 4 June in the vicinity of YD 154218 Company "B" found 32 Chicago grenades, 10 lbs. of TNT and numerous electric and non-electric blasting caps.

On 6 June, an airstrike was called at 1025 resulting in two secondary explosions. At 1350 Company "A" received 2 rounds of SAF resulting in one USMC WIA, medevaced. At 1430 Company "B" in the vicinity of YD 143720 found 4 NVA in graves 4 to 5 days old. They also found a range quadrant. At 2125 a squad size ambush from Company "D" in the vicinity of YD 146715 became disoriented and fired on a friendly listening post resulting in 4 USMC WIA.

On 7 June at 0845 Company "A" in the vicinity of YD 163710 opened fire on 2 VC in a rice paddy resulting in 2 KIA probable. At 1040 a platoon of Company "B" make contact with an estimated platoon of NVA. The results of this action were one USMC KIA, 2 USMC WIA, 4 enemy KIA confirmed, 4 enemy KIA probable, and one POW. Upon evacuation the POW fell from the helicopter resulting in one additional KIA confirmed.

On 8 June, only one incident was reported. At 1130 in the vicinity of YD 157713, Company "B" received and returned SAF resulting in one USMC WIA and two enemy KIA probables. No incidents were reported on 9 June.

On 10 June 1967, the companies were located as follows: Company "A" YD 163722, Company "B" YD 176713, Company "C" YD 142717. The 1/9 CP was at Con Thien CIDG camp. At 0940 a patrol from Company "A" located in the vicinity of 167725, found one dead NVA and one AK47. Company "B" in the vicinity of YD 185735 attacked an NVA ambush, killing one NVA and apprehending one NVA POW WIA, capturing two SKS rifles, an unknown quantity of grenades and claymore-type mines which were destroyed in place. At 1940 on 10 June the Bn. CP area received 62 rounds of 82mm, resulting in one USMC WIA non-evac. Counter battery fire had good coverage and secondary explosions were observed. No incidents were on 11 June 1967.

On 12 June 1967 at 0200 a PPB from Company "C" received one round of incoming, possibly artillery, resulting in five USMC WIA, non-evac. At 1005 Company "B" in the vicinity of 185736 found one Russian rifle and one bloody bandage--one KIA probable. Company "B" at 1640 in the vicinity of YD 118683 found 15 NVA in graves, plus miscellaneous gear.

During the period of 13 June to 20 June Company "D" was OPCON to 3rd Bn 9th Marines. On the thirteenth one incident was reported from Company "D" in the vicinity of YD 103709. A man tripped a booby trap resulting in one USMC WIA.

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On 14 June a Company "C" patrol in the vicinity of YD 109740 tripped two booby traps resulting in two USMC KIA and ten USMC WIA. Company "B" in the vicinity of YD 182724 at 1430 received 15 rounds of 82mm incoming resulting in five USMC WIA.

On 15 June 1967 Company "E" suffered one Non Battle Casualty when a .45 cal. pistol discharged killing a Marine. At 1320 Company "B" in the vicinity of YD 185728 had LVT's attacked and one of the LVT's detonated a mine resulting in one USMC WIA non-evac.

During the rest of the month of June the Battalion had only 6 incidents of enemy contact. On the 19th Company "D" in the vicinity of YD 131718 found 8 fresh NVA graves. On the twentieth, Company "B" in the vicinity of YD 226743 received 37 rounds of unknown caliber artillery resulting in two USMC KIA and eight USMC WIA.

On the 24th and 25th Co "A" and Co "D" plus a Bn Command Group(-) conducted a SEARCH AND DESTROY operation. During this time Co "C" provided a blocking force.

On the 25th, Company "C" in the vicinity of YD 164708 made contact resulting in one enemy KIA confirmed, 1 enemy KIA probable and captured 1 AK 47, and 15 - 82mm mortar rounds. On 27 June Company "C" in the vicinity of YD 153723 detonated a booby trap resulting in the 2 USMC WIA. On 28 June a patrol from Company "D" made contact in the vicinity of YD 124724 with an estimated enemy squad resulting in 2 USMC WIA, 3 enemy confirmed kills and two enemy KIA probable. The last major enemy contact on Operation Cimarron was made by Company "D" at 0600 on 29 June in the vicinity of YD 125716 when they engaged an estimated enemy platoon resulting in three USMC KIA, 16 USMC WIA, 10 enemy KIA confirmed and 15 enemy KIA probable.

On 1 July 67 two minor incidents were reported. The 1st Bn., 9th Mar. CP in the vicinity of YD 106791 received 8 rounds of enemy artillery with 3 USMC WIA non-evac. Company "B" detonated a booby trap with 2 USMC WIA.

#### 10. Results.

##### a. Casualties Sustained.

USMC KIA	0	
USMC WIA	74	
USN KIA	0	
USN WIA	0	
USMC NBC	1	(Died)

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b. Casualties Inflicted.

NVA/VC KIA CONFIRMED	49
NVA/VC KIA PROBABLE	28
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c. Captured Materials.

1 German Mauser  
 1 French Rifle  
 1 Russian Carbine  
 1 M-16E1 Rifle  
 1 3.5 inch Rocket Launcher  
 103 Rounds 5.56mm ammo  
 2 White Star Parachutes  
 1 M 49 & 2 trip flare  
 1 BA386 Battery  
 1 M-14 Bayonet  
 1 3.5 inch rocket round  
 100 rounds 7.62mm ammo  
 36 Chicom grenades  
 2 SKS rifles  
 6 claymore mines  
 1 Russian Rifle  
 15-82mm rds.

11. Administrative.

a. Supply. All units on operational assignments were issued one day Class I, basic allowance of Class V and combat essentials Class II. The battalion was resupplied by helicopter and motor transport convey.

b. Maintenance. Nothing significant to report.

c. Treatment of Casualties, Evacuation, and Hospitalization. Casualties were treated in the field by the Battalion Surgeon and corpsmen and evacuated by helicopter, if required, as quickly as possible.

d. Transportation. Motor transport and helicopters were used for non-tactical moves. All tactical moves were made on foot.

e. Communications. Nothing significant to report.

f. Medical Evaluation. Nothing new or unusual to report.

12. Special Equipment and Techniques. None.

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## 13. Commanders Analysis.

a. During Operation Cimarron all units of the 1st Bn., 9th Mar., and especially those located at Con Thien CIDG Camp, were subject to enemy indirect fire weapons. The enemy made extensive use of long range artillery fire, usually during daylight hours, to harass and inflict casualties on personnel at Con Thien. This artillery fire came from north of the Ben Hai River, and because most of the firing was done during daylight hours it was extremely difficult to get an accurate location on the guns.

b. No civic action was taken due to the fact that the Battalion ZOA was deserted.

c. Psyops through leaflets dropped by air.

*R.J. Schening*  
R.J. SCHENING

NOTE: All Operation overlays were destroyed when the 1st Battalion 9th Marines COG sustained a direct hit from enemy artillery.

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