

1ST BATTALION 9TH MARINES

COMMAND DIARY/CHRONOLOGY

JANUARY 1968

PAGES 13 OF 61

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AAR OPERATION NEOSHO

114868

HEADQUARTERS
1st Battalion, 9th Marines
3d Marine Division (Rein), FMF
FPO San Francisco 96602

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1st BN. 9th MAR
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8 Feb 1968
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From: Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code AO 3D)

Via: (1) Commanding General, 3d Marine Division (Rein), FMF
(2) Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force
(3) Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force Pacific

Subj: Command Chronology for period 1-31 January 1968

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.2A
(b) FMFPacO 5750.8
(c) DivO 5750.1A

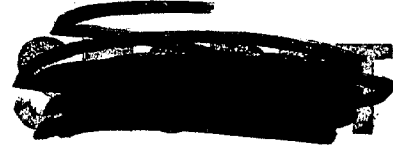
Encl: (1) 1st Battalion, 9th Marines Command Chronology

1. In accordance with the provisions of reference (a) and (b) enclosure (1) is submitted.

J. F. Mitchell
J. F. MITCHELL

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1st BN 9th MAR

NOV 1968

2 JAN 1968

COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

1 January - 31 January 1968

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ENCLOSURE (1)

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PART IORGANIZATIONAL DATA1. DESIGNATIONCOMMANDERS

1st Battalion, 9th Marines

J. F. MITCHELL
1 January-31 January 1968

"H&S" Company

Capt. J. W. CARGILE
1 January-8 January 1968
1st Lt. M. J. WALKER
9 January-31 January 1968

Company "A"

Capt. H. J. M. RADCLIFFE
1 January-31 January 1968

Company "B"

Capt. R. T. BRUNER
1 January-26 January 1968
1st Lt. A. N. MANGHAM JR.
27 January-31 January 1968

Company "C"

1st Lt. K. L. HARMON
1 January-8 January 1968
Capt. J. W. CARGILE
9 January-31 January 1968

Company "D"

Capt. F. L. SCHAFER
1 January-31 January 1968

ENCLOSURE (1)

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2. During the period 1-22 January 1968, the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines was located at Camp Evans, RVN and for the rest of this reporting period the Battalion was located at a strongpoint northwest of the Khe Sanh Combat Base.

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3. STAFF OFFICERS

Executive Officer	Major J. A. DONNELLY 1 January - 31 January 1968
S-1	1st Lt. P. A. WOOG 1 January - 31 January 1968
S-2	1st Lt. R. J. ARBOLEDA 1 January - 31 January 1968
S-3	Major E. M. RINGLEY 1 January - 31 January 1968
S-4	1st Lt. J. M. GEORGI 1 January - 31 January 1968
S-5	1st Lt. R. J. ARBOLEDA 1 January - 31 January 1968

4. Average Monthly Strength

<u>USMC</u>		<u>USN</u>	
<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>
42	1154	2	60

ENCLOSURE (1)

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PART IINARRATIVE SUMMARY

During the period 1-22 January 1968, the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines was located at Camp Evans, RVN as the Resident Infantry Battalion. The mission of the Battalion was to provide for the security of Camp Evans and its ancillary facilities at PK-17 (YD652-280), an ARVN Artillery Position; Hill #51 (YD549281), a Rifle Platoon (Rein) strongpoint; and Hill #674 (YD516219), a Rifle Platoon (Rein) Strongpoint/Radio Relay Station. The Battalion was further required to provide available personnel for saturation patrolling and ambushing in known avenues of approach within 5000 meters of the Camp Evans Perimeter.

On 22 January 1968, the Battalion was moved from the Camp Evans area to the Khe Sanh Combat Base, its mission was to establish, occupy and defend a defensive strongpoint northwest of the Khe Sanh Combat Base Perimeter. (XD831417).

On 1 January 1968, Company "D" was returned to Camp Evans and came under operational control of the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines. The Company had previously been located at Nam Hoa (YD744133), the site of a "Rock Crusher" operated by the Seabees. On 2 January 1968 there were no significant occurrences within the 4th Marines AO. Routine daylight and night activities, to include patrols, ambushes, LP's and OP's were conducted in the vicinity of Camp Evans.

On 3 January 1968, personnel from the 3d Platoon, Company "B", located at Hill #51 (YD549281) observed two Marines approaching the hill from the south. The two Marines turned out to be the only survivors from Division Reconnaissance Team Tarzan, which made contact with the enemy the previous day. Six of the eight man team had been killed by the enemy. The two survivors of the Reconnaissance Team were picked up by helicopters at Hill #51 and returned to their parent unit.

On 4 January 1968, Company "D" while operating in the vicinity of YD488275 was assigned the mission of retrieving the bodies of the members of Division Reconnaissance Team Tarzan, killed in action on 2 January 1968. At 1140H on 4 January 1968, the 2d and 3d Platoon of Company "D" reinforced with an Engineer Team and a Forward Air Control Team, loaded on four CH-46 Helicopters and began Operation Tarzan. The two platoons were flown to the vicinity of Reconnaissance Team last known position and one landed in a landing zone at YD556230 while the other remained in reserve. The platoon moved approximately 150 meters to the south, finding the objective area, the six bodies and various equipment. The bodies and equipment and 3d Platoon of Company "D" were then helilifted from the objective area with the 3d Platoon being returned via helicopter to its company operating base at YD488275 while the other helicopters with the bodies and equipment returned to higher headquarters.

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Following the completion of Operation Tarzan Company "D" (Rein) continued on its assigned mission in the vicinity of YD488275. At 1325H on 4 January, a platoon size patrol from Company "C" (Rein), received one WIA from a surprise explosive device. The incident occurred in the vicinity of YD497323, the man was medevaced. On 5 January 1968, there were no significant occurrences in the 4th Marines AO. The Battalion conducted routine daylight and night activities in the Camp Evans vicinity.

At 1200H on 6 January 1968, a composite platoon from "H&S" Company was used to detain a group of Vietnamese personnel lingering near the Camp Evans perimeter. Two of the squads were helilifted behind the Vietnamese personnel and swept east driving the Vietnamese into a 3d squad serving as a blocking force. Twenty Vietnamese were detained and later released as innocent civilians.

At 1130H on 7 January 1968, a platoon size patrol from Company "B" received sniper fire from the vicinity of YD575269. A Scout Sniper Team attached to the platoon brought the sniper under fire resulting in one VC KIA (Conf). At 1140H on 7 January 1968, the same platoon from Company "B" received one WIA as a result of a surprise explosive device. The Marine was medevaced.

At 1620H on 7 January 1968, Company "D" returned to Camp Evans following the completion of its search and destroy mission in the vicinity of YD488275. A platoon size ambush from Company "B" was triggered at 2145H on 7 January 1968. The contact resulted in one NVA KIA (Conf). A French submachinegun and other assorted gear was captured and forwarded to the Battalion S-2.

During the early morning hours of 8 January 1968, a platoon size ambush from Company "B" called an artillery mission on suspected enemy movement at YD584294. The area was checked at first light with negative results.

At 1140H 8 January 1968, Company "A" (Rein) departed Camp Evans to conduct a Search and Destroy Operation in the vicinity of YD595270. Later the same afternoon, Company "A" (Rein) observed five VC in the vicinity of YD583274. A Scout/Sniper Team attached to Company "A" brought the VC under fire resulting in one VC KIA (Conf). One U.S. M-1 Carbine was captured and forwarded to the Battalion S-2.

At 2145H on 8 January 1968, a squad size ambush from Company "A" accounted for five VC KIA (Conf) when they triggered their ambush at YD593294. A search of the area found six ID Cards, documents and two, two hundred and fifty pound bombs. The VC were transporting the bombs for use as surprise explosive devices on Route #1 in the vicinity of Camp Evans.

On 9 January 1968, Company "A" (Rein) received two WIA's from a surprise explosive device at YD594266. Both injuries were minor.

At 0515H 10 January 1968, a Platoon (Rein) size ambush from Company "C" opened fire on one VC in a sampan on the O LAH River in the vicinity of YD512339. The sampan was sunk and one VC KIA (Conf) was recorded. At 1200H Company "A" (Rein) received three rounds of 60mm mortar fire from the vicinity of YD593263. An artillery mission was fired and the enemy fire ceased. At 1500H the 2d Platoon of Company "A" engaged four to five VC at YD604268.

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The enemy were on the south side of the O HO River prohibiting the platoon from closing with them. Six hundred pounds of rice was discovered and destroyed by Company "A" at YD598267.

At 2120H a squad size ambush from Company "B" opened fire on suspected enemy movement at YD493321. A search of the area at first light revealed negative results. In the vicinity of YD515337, a squad size ambush from Company "C" fired on suspected enemy troops, the ambush site was checked immediately with negative results.

On 11 January 1968, a platoon from Company "C" received three rounds of 60mm mortar within their platoon patrol base at YD527336. No fix was obtained on the enemy position. At 1406H Company "A" completed its Search and Destroy Operation and returned to Camp Evans. The remainder of the 4th Marines AO was quiet on 11 January.

On 12 January 1968, Company "B" departed Camp Evans on a Search and Destroy mission in the vicinity of YD490320. Once again, the 4th Marines AO was quiet with no significant occurrences. The Battalion employed its routine daylight and night activities.

On 13 January 1968, Company "B" sighted four VC at YD487325. A Scout/Sniper Team took the VC under fire and observed one VC fall. Area was checked out resulting in one VC KIA (Conf). At 1045H 13 January Company "B" reported one WIA from a surprise explosive device placed on a trail. While waiting for the medevac helicopter to evacuate the casualty, the company received sporadic sniper fire. During the sniper fire, another Marine was wounded when he broke his shoulder while seeking cover. Both casualties were then medevaced. The remainder of the 4th Marines AO was quiet for the day.

Activity in the 4th Marines AO on 14 January 1968, was very light. A platoon size patrol from Company "D" observed three VC in the vicinity of YD577307. The platoon opened fire and observed one VC fall. The contact resulted in the capture of one U.S. M-1 Carbine and one VC KIA (Conf).

At 1045H on 15 January, one Marine from Company "D" (-) stepped on a surprise explosive device at YD556303 causing one WIA. The casualty was medevaced. A platoon from Company "D" apprehended 2 VC suspects while sweeping a small hamlet. The VC suspects were forwarded to Phong Dien District Headquarters where they were found to be on the local list of VC in the area. The two suspects were turned over to ITT Personnel. The same platoon from Company "B" later apprehended another Viet Cong suspect in the vicinity of YD566310. The suspect was forwarded to Regimental S-2 for questioning. At 1805H a squad size ambush from Company "B" received one Marine WIA from a surprise explosive device. The squad was enroute to its ambush site when the incident occurred. The casualty was medevaced.

A squad size patrol from Company "C" observed and took under fire three VC at YD532290, the incident occurred on 16 January. The area was later checked with negative results. A platoon size patrol from Company "D" apprehended one VC suspect at YD558252. The suspect was forwarded to the Regimental S-2 for questioning. A group of VC were spotted by a platoon size patrol from Company "D" at YD556257, the distance between the Marines and the VC was too great for small arms so an artillery mission was fired on the enemy.

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ENCLOSURE (1)

A check of the area revealed blood on the ground, Partially built bunkers were also found in the area. At 1330H on 16 January 1968, Company "B" while on a Search and Destroy Operation, received one Marine KIA and one Kit Carson Scout WIA. The casualties were caused by a surprise explosive device. The Kit Carson Scout and the Marine KIA were medevaced later.

There were no significant occurrences in the 4th Marines AO on 17 January 1968. The Battalion employed its routine daylight and night activities in the Camp Evans area.

On 18 January 1968, a platoon size ambush from Company "C" located at YD556250 spotted eleven VC in the vicinity of YD551250. The platoon began moving towards the enemy but was taken under fire by another enemy unit in the area. The platoon assumed a defensive position and called artillery on the enemy position. The enemy then broke contact and moved out of the area. A sweep of the area revealed fresh blood tracks and two straw hats. The remainder of the 4th Marines AO was quiet on 18 January 1968.

On 19 January 1968, Company "D" received one USMC WIA as a result of sniper fire. The company was moving west in the vicinity of YD600288 when a sniper took them under fire. The company returned fire with small arms but failed to get the sniper. The wounded Marine was medevaced from the area.

At 1400H on 19 January 1968, a squad size patrol from Company "C" observed enemy movement on a road in the vicinity of YD556240. The squad contacted the Company Commander at Hill #51 (YD549281) and two more squads were sent out to the area of the sighting. When the two squads reached the area they deployed on line and made contact with the enemy. A fire fight developed during which a AO Spotter Plane arrived in the area. The AO controlled an artillery mission on the enemy position. Following the artillery mission the two squads swept the area and another fire fight developed. Finally, the enemy broke contact and moved south into the mountains. The fire fight resulted in six NVA KIA (Conf) and the capture of assorted enemy equipment including one AK-47 rifle. The captured equipment was forwarded to the Regimental S-2.

At 0755H on 20 January 1968, a platoon size ambush from Company "D" received approximately twenty rounds of automatic weapons fire at YD598286. The ambush observed three VC running and pursued them. The ambush fired on the VC resulting in one VC KIA (Conf). A female Vietnamese was also captured and detained as a VCS. The VCS was forwarded to the Phong Dien District Headquarters for interrogation.

At 0800H on 20 January 1968, the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines chopped operational control of the 4th Marines and picked up by the 1st Marines.

At 1145H on 20 January 1968, Company "D" captured one North Vietnamese Regular Army Sergeant and two VC POW at YD610271. The POW's had various equipment which was forwarded to Regimental S-2. The POW's were forwarded to 1st ITT at Camp Evans. At 1810H on 20 January Company "D" received approximately 100 rounds of sniper fire and four RPG rounds into their positions in the vicinity of YD605265. The Company returned fire with small arms, grenade launchers and 60 millimeter mortars. Action resulted in one USMC WIA, and one VC KIA (Conf). The USMC WIA was medevaced.

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ENCLOSURE (1)

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PART III

SEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

I. FMF Organizations committed to combat and the SLF.

A. Combat Missions Assigned. The Battalion was employed in Operation Neosho from 0001 1 January 1968 to 1900H 22 January 1968. At 1900H 22 January 1968, the Battalion came under operational control of the 26th Marines.

(1) Operation Neosho. 1st Battalion, 9th Marines directs and coordinates at Camp Evans all missions to be accomplished for security of the Camp Evans perimeter and its ancillary facilities by establishing ambush sites in known avenues of approach and aggressive daylight patrolling and saturation out to 5000 meters with maximum forces available.

(2) Operation Scotland. To establish, occupy and defend a defensive strongpoint northwest of the Khe Sanh Combat Base (XD831 417).

B. Significant Operations Conducted. The Battalion continued to carry out its primary mission of defending Camp Evans and its ancillary facilities as a part of Operation Neosho.

C. Casualties Inflicted on the Enemy.

KIA (Confirmed)	POW
17	8

D. Casualties Sustained

USMC KIA: 4	USM KIA: 0
USMC WIA: 30	USN WIA: 0

E. New Techniques Employed. By moving during the hours of darkness to establish daylight ambush sites along known rice routes. The Battalion was able to use smaller units, denying the enemy freedom of movement, and get more kills.

F. Command Relations. During the period 0001 1 January through 0910H 20 January 1968 the Battalion was under operational control of the 4th Marines. At 0910H on 20 January 1968 through 1900H 20 January the Battalion was under operational of the 1st Marine Regiment. From 1900H on 22 January through 2100H 31 January 1968 the Battalion was under the operational control of the 26th Marine Regiment.

ENCLOSURE (1)
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 G. Equipment. During this reporting period organic motor transport has been engaged in household, administration and supply runs for the Battalion.

The motor transport situation has improved slightly in the case of the M422A1. The lack of M422A1's is still serious (eight out of a T/E of twenty) but the 3d and 4th echelon service organizations are showing complete cooperation in the rapid repair/replacement of these vehicles.

H. Logistics. During the majority of this reporting period we continued to support the Battalions activities in the Camp Evans area, also their outposts on Hill #51 and Hill #674 were maintained with a twenty day supply on hand. During the last week of this month, movement of the Battalion's Rear from Camp Evans to Dong Ha was accomplished.

I. Civic Action. The only Civic Action Project during this reporting period was a self help project in which Vietnamese refugees filled sandbags for the Marine Position at Camp Evans. The Vietnamese were paid in commodities which amounted to 350 Piastras for every four hundred sandbags filled and loaded on trucks. 44,000 sandbags were filled and the following commodities were expended:

- (a) 8 bags of Oats
- (b) 181 gallons of cooking oil
- (c) 102 boxes of dry milk.

J. Administration. Nothing significant to report.

K. Personnel. The following personnel were transferred from this Command.

<u>USMC</u>		<u>USN</u>	
<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>
4	65	0	4

Personnel who were joined to this Command.

<u>USMC</u>		<u>USN</u>	
<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>
3	75	0	4

ENCLOSURE (1)

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L. Intelligence. During this reporting period, the known enemy units operating around the Camp Evans area were the 800th Main Force Battalion at YD5421. The 806th Battalion Headquarters, C-4, C-5 and C-11 through C-17 Companies and the Headquarters of the 810th Local Force Battalion were located in Base Area 114. The C-114 and C-115 Local Force Companies were located in the An Lo area. The C-11 Intelligence Company was located in the My Chanh area and the 800th and 806th Battalions were located in the "Street Without Joy" area.

The first three weeks of the month, the Battalion continued saturation patrolling up to 5000 meters outside the Camp Evans perimeter by platoon size patrols. The saturation patrolling uncovered twenty-five surprise explosive devices, mainly M-26 fragmentation grenades rigged with a tripwire. There was also a few 105mm rounds and 81mm mortar rounds, which were discovered rigged as surprise explosive devices. Practically all the surprise explosive devices were positioned alongside trails or avenues of approach.

After analyzing compiled intelligence information of enemy mining activities, previous contacts and areas of sightings; definite enemy access routes through the OA were determined. Subsequent platoon and company size operations were planned to block these access routes.

Utilizing the known information, Company "A" established an ambush at YD593294 and thwarted a very significant enemy attempt to mine National Route #1 with a "daisy chain" of three two hundred and fifty pound bombs and two five hundred pound bombs. Company "A" killed five Viet Cong, captured two, two hundred and fifty pound bombs, one five hundred pound bomb and valuable Viet Cong documents.

Company "B", which had the mission of interdicting the suspected enemy supply routes along the Song O Lau River, discovered an enemy base camp at YD493332 and a 1,6000 pound rice cache. Company "B" activities in this area enabled a more precise determination of enemy movement from Base Area 114 along the Song O Lau River.

Company "D", which relieved Company "A", continued to make contact with small enemy units along the railroad grade access route. On 15 January Company "D" captured two Viet Cong suspects. One was confirmed Viet Cong and the other was associated with a Viet Cong collaborating group.

On the 19th of January, Company "C" had a squad size ambush at YD556240, which made contact with thirty-six North Vietnamese Army Regulars, killing six, capturing one AK-47 and documents, which further confirmed enemy routes and plans in the Co Bi Thanh Tan area.

Company "D", on 20 January made a very significant intelligence catch by capturing an NVA Sergeant and two Viet Cong collaborators. Information obtained from the prisoners pinpointed Viet Cong and NVA supply routes, methods and times of resupply, enemy movement and other important tactical information of Viet Cong and NVA activity in the Co Bi Thanh Tan Valley.

ENCLOSURE (1)

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On 22 January, the Battalion had to make an immediate move to the area of the Khe Sanh Combat Base to counteract a large enemy build-up. The known enemy units operating in the Khe Sanh area, were the 325C Division and the 304th Division. The 320th Division, which was positioned in the vicinity of grid square XD0166 was also within striking distance of Khe Sanh. Elements of the 101st Regiment of the 324B Division had not been confirmed but was believed to be operating in the area to the direct west of Khe Sanh Combat Base.

The 324C Division and the 304th Divisions were supported by long range artillery from Co Roc and in the vicinity of grid square XD6848 of Laos. The 325C Division was also supported by 122mm rockets, which were generally located eight to ten thousand meters to the north and northwest of Khe Sanh Combat Base. The 304th Division was supported by rocket positions which were generally located eight to nine thousand meters to the southwest of Khe Sanh Combat Base.

The S-2 Rewards Fund was one of the most active in the 3d Marine Division and expended eighty thousand Vietnamese dollars for the month of January. Ordnance turned in by civilians at Phong Dien included everything from bombs and 120mm mortar rounds to grenades and small arms rounds.

N. Weather. During the first week of January the Camp Evans area received light showers. The temperatures for this period ranged from the low 50's to the mid 70's. Visibility for this period was severely limited.

During the second and third weeks of January the weather made an abrupt change over that experienced during the first week of the month. Almost no rainfall was received for this period and the skies remained clear. Temperatures ranged from the mid 50's to the low 80's.

While in the vicinity of Khe Sanh during the last part of the month the Battalion experienced unreasonably warm weather and scattered cloud cover.

O. Artillery. During January nine hundred and one artillery rounds were fired in support of the Battalion. Artillery targets during Operation Neosho included prep fires, troops in open, snipers and suppressing fires. A total of one hundred and eighty two rounds were fired in support of the Battalion in Operation Scotland at active artillery, rocket and mortar sites, troop in open and supply trains.

ENCLOSURE (1)

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P. Air Support. During January helicopters were used for resupply, medical evacuation, and visual reconnaissance. On 6 January two platoons were helilifted in conjunction with the extraction of the Division Reconnaissance Team "Tarzan". On 22 January, the Battalion was transferred by helicopter from Camp Evans to the Khe Sanh Combat Base. The Battalion received no close air support during this reporting period.

Q. Activation/Deactivation/Redesignation. None

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