

# Operation Goodwood, Phases I and II

11 December 1968 — 19 February 1969

Task force intelligence believed 274 VC Regiment would soon start moving through the northern Hat Dich area to Route 15 and up to the Long Binh-Bien Hoa complexes for the 1969 Tet offensive.

It was also believed the enemy would try to interdict Route 15.

Operation Goodwood was launched to prevent the enemy moving through the area and to prevent him interdicting the road. It lasted 56 days, excluding 14 days in Nui Dat which broke the operation into two phases.

The battalion, after 11 days rest following Operation Capital, deployed on December 11 to AO Kilcoy, situated to the east of Route 15 and north of the village of Thai Thien.

D Company moved in APCs and established a battalion defensive position known as Sandpiper, from which the battalion was warned for task force reaction duties.

The remaining two rifle companies available — the second W Company was training on the Horseshoe and V Company was task force reaction company — deployed by road to their respective AOs and defensive positions.

104 Field Battery flew a section into FSPB Diggers Rest with headquarters 1RAR and 102 Field Battery. All positions were developed with full overhead cover. Patrols and ambushes on suspected VC tracks all had their measure of success.

Company operations carried out in APCs to the west of Route 15 resulted in several small contacts.

On December 27, the battalion having remained in the field over Christmas, 104 Field Battery moved to FSPB Wattle for the second time and the battalion moved back into the area of Operation Hawkesbury, this time into AO Warragul.

D Company, with Assault Pioneer Platoon, flew into the fire support base to secure the area for the fly-in of battalion headquarters, C Company and 104 Field Battery. B Company assault landed on an unsecured landing zone some distance to the north.

C Company was to operate in the southern part of the AO, B Company as far north as the Blackstone Trail and D Company, initially, to the east and north-east of the fire support base. D Company was then to move to the west of the other two companies.

Using their familiarity with the ground to good advantage, companies rapidly found old trails and camps. The camps were quickly destroyed and the trails ambushed with good results.

W Company deployed in the area on December 31 and, in action with the battalion for the first time, operated to

the south of Wattle before being moved, with D Company, north of the Blackstone Trail.

Aerial reconnaissance revealed several occupied camps which were hit by air strikes before companies moved into them. However, time did not allow detailed searches and ambushes were unable to stay in position long enough to produce results, although it was obvious the tracks were being used regularly.

The battalion moved to five different pick-up zones for the airlift back to Nui Dat for a break before launching into Phase II.

When the battalion left AO Kilcoy it was assumed the enemy recommenced using the area as a route to the waterways west of Route 15, a well-known enemy route north and south. It was considered there was a sizable enemy force in the area of FSPB Dyke.

The plan was to destroy all enemy and enemy assets found in the area.

On January 27 B Company and battalion headquarters flew into Dyke to secure it for the rest of the battalion's fly-in. D Company was to operate to the north of Dyke. On the following day W Company deployed to the east of AO Riversdale in AO Sherman, following Special Air Service information of large enemy movement.

V Company moved into the W Company AO, which was south-west of Dyke, in APCs some days later after C Company had relieved it on the Horseshoe.

Strong enemy opposition was encountered. D Company suffered two killed when ambushed by the enemy. W Company, in AO Sherman, was attacked by a company-sized group during the night. It is thought the VC mistook it for a Special Air Service patrol. Spooky, 104 Field Battery and B Battery, 2/35th US Artillery were used to support W Company in repulsing the attack. The VC must have suffered heavy casualties. However, his ability to remove bodies from the battlefield made it hard to assess the extent of his casualties the next morning. The company was moved closer to the remainder of the battalion in AO Riversdale, where it linked up with armour.

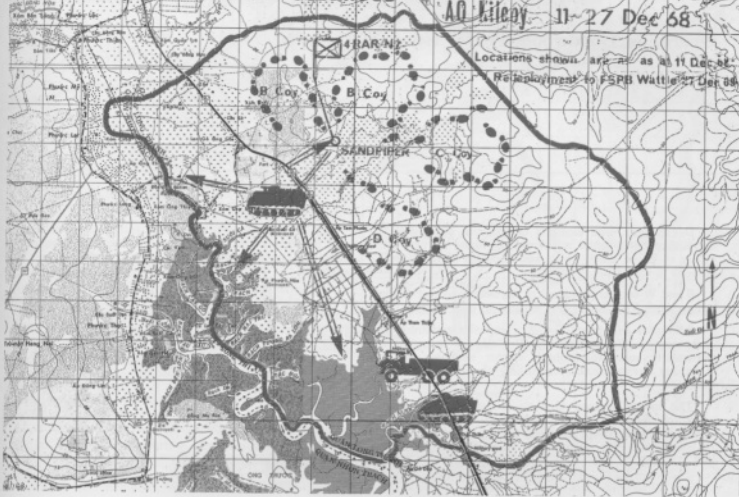
V Company was redeployed north, flying to an engineer trail and moving south through country adjacent to that encountered during Operation Merino.

V Company swept from the east. One more contact occurred when B Company, poaching in D Company territory, ambushed and killed two VC.

The battalion moved from AO Riversdale on February 7 to AO Tiki; once again alongside Route 15, but further north than AO Kilcoy.

# OPERATION GOODWOOD

AO Kileay 11-27 Dec 68



# OPERATION GOODWOOD

AO Warragu

27 Dec - 13 Jan 69

