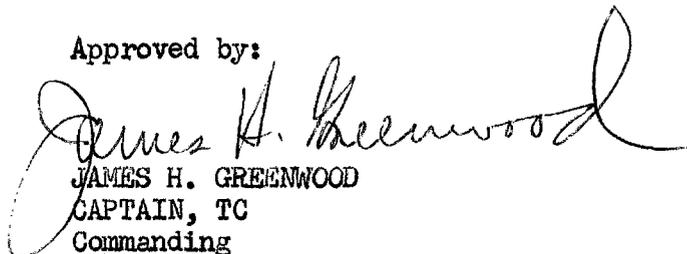


1966

Annual Supplement
to the
History of the
541ST TRANSPORTATION COMPANY (LIGHT TRUCK)
1 January 1966 - 31 December 1966

MICHAEL J. MULSHINE
2ND LT, TC
Author and Unit Historian

Approved by:


JAMES H. GREENWOOD
CAPTAIN, TC
Commanding

34th Supply and Service Battalion (Direct Support)
United States Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
1st Logistical Command
United States Army, Vietnam

The beginning of the year found the 541st Transportation Company on the Bong Son Plain supporting Operations Masher-White Wing of the First Air Cavalry Division. The operations lasted throughout January and February, and the magnificent performance of the 541st Transportation Company was recognized when the unit received the Meritorious Unit Award for its efforts. Copies of the General Order are enclosed.

For the next six months the First Cavalry Division hopped from the Cambodian Border to the South China Sea always pursuing the enemy. During this period, March through August 1966, the 541st worked day and night to keep the supply lines open and supported Operations Lincoln, Bee Bee, Davy Crockett, Crazy Horse, Hawthorne, Nathan Hale, Henry Clay, Paul Revere, and Paul Revere II.

On 1 May 1966 the 541st Transportation Company was fully committed in support of the First Cavalry Division on Operation Mosby in both the Bong Son and Kontum area. These trucks returned to base camp on 4 May. During the period from 10 May to 14 May thirty-five trucks were again committed to support the First Cavalry Division in Operation Mosby.

On 21 May, twenty-two trucks were sent to the Special Forces's Civilian Irregular Defense Group in Happy Valley for support of Operation Crazy Horse. These trucks returned to base camp on 5 June 1966.

From 25 July to 30 July the 541st Transportation Company was again sent to the field. During this period 10 trucks were sent to Pleiku to help the First Cavalry Division close out Operation Nathan Hale.

Paul Revere II started on 1 August and again the 541st Transportation Company found its vehicles returning to the Pleiku area. Thirty-three vehicles remained with the First Cavalry Division on this operation until its termination on 30 August.

Adverse operating conditions constantly hampered the 541st Transportation Company operations by causing excessive wear on its vehicles. By the end of August the number of vehicles with cracked frames had increased to thirty-three.

On 13 September 1966, the 541st Transportation Company returned to the Bong Son Plains, the site of its earlier success, as it supported the First Air Cavalry Division's Operation Thayer I, the initial phase of what came to be known as the Battle of Binh Dinh. The unit continued to support the Division's Operations Irving and Thayer II throughout the monsoon season. At times the unit became the only truck support possessed by the Division when the roads were washed out by the heavy and continuous rain. When elements of the Division moved to the Cambodian Border in November 1966, the 541st followed and thus found itself with elements operating 100 miles apart.

The 541st did not limit itself only to supporting the First Air Cavalry Division. In December 1966, it also supported the First Brigade, 101st Airborne Division's Operation Pickett in Kontum Province. Again the company functioned with elements separated by better than 100 miles.

The 541st Transportation Company was not limited to supporting tactical operations. It was also called upon to furnish light truck support for operations at the First Air Cavalry Division's sprawling base camp in An Khe which is also the home of the 541st.

During the year, the unit hauled 250,000 passengers and 60,000 tons and traveled 600,000 miles. This was accomplished in spite of hazards created by tropical climate, mountainous and often muddy terrain, and the ever-present threat of enemy action.

Realizing that the prospect of returning to a comfortable base camp was an important morale factor to men in the field, the unit's commanders expended maximum effort in improving the unit area. As a result, the 541st Transportation Company was one of the first units in An Khe to have all personnel sleeping on cement pads, have hot showers, and to begin building permanent billets for the troops.

At the year ended, the 541st Transportation Company was participating in the Battle of Binh Dinh. Its outstanding performance in this campaign was the basis for its being recommended for a second Meritorious Unit Award.

The unit commanders for the year included:

Captain Wallace A. Bryans, 1 January 1966 - 23 February 1966

Captain Franklin L. Matthews, 24 February 1966 - 12 July 1966

Captain Richard D. Johnson, 13 July 1966 - 31 December 1966