

HISTORY OF
HEADQUARTERS TROOP
7th ARMORED SQUADRON, 17th AIR CAVALRY
17th COMBAT AVIATION GROUP
1st AVIATION BRIGADE

1 APRIL 1967 thru 31 DECEMBER 1968

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VHPA102

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS AND HEADQUARTERS TROOP
7TH ARMORED SQUADRON, 17TH AIR CAVALRY
APO San Francisco 96262

HISTORY OF HEADQUARTERS TROOP

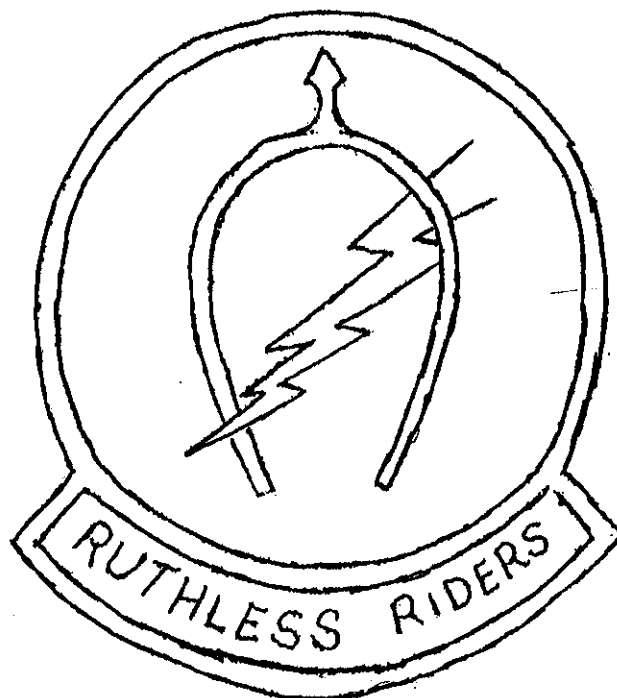
FORWARD

This document will serve as the initial history of Headquarters Troop from the period of activation until 31 December 1968. Currently the only morning reports on file date from April 1967. Efforts have been made to obtain access to the morning reports for the missing period from activation on 25 November 1966 until April 1967. This history is not meant to be an exhortation on the merits of the troop or the squadron; its purpose is to objectively portray important events which lead to the activation, deployment, and functional being of the air cavalry squadron. Some events have been omitted, not because they were unimportant, but due to the lack of factual data. However, the facts presented herein present certain aspects of the troop's background which otherwise might be forgotten.

CHAPTER 1

HERALDRY

7TH ARMORED SQUADRON, 17TH AIR CAVALRY UNIT PATCH



The squadron patch is only available on OD cloth with black characters. The horse shoe centered in the patch represents the horse cavalry of our heritage while the superimposed lightning bolt represents the speed, power, and strength that air and ground vehicles have given the modern cavalry. The flasher with the words RUTHLESS RIDERS appears beneath the circular patch. The avionics door on the nose of all 7th Squadron UH-1H and AH-1G helicopters bears a white horse shoe with yellow lightning bolt on a black background.

LINAGE AND HONORS

Constituted 1 July 1916 in the Regular Army as Troop C, 17th Cavalry and organized at Fort Bliss, Texas.

Inactivated 26 September 1921 at the Presidio of Monterey, California

Redesignated 1 July 1940 as Troop G, 17th Cavalry (Corps Reconnaissance)

Disbanded 9 March 1951

Reconstituted 4 May 1959 in the Regular Army as Troop G, 17th Cavalry

Activated 6 December 1962 at Fort Ord, California

Inactivated 31 August 1965 at Fort Ord, California

Redesignated 27 September 1966 as Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry (organic elements concurrently constituted)

Activated 25 November 1966 at Fort Knox, Kentucky

CAMPAIGN PARTICIPATION CREDIT

WORLD WAR II

Northern France
Rhineland
Ardennes-Alsace
Central Europe

DECORATIONS

Pending President Unit Citation
Pending Meritorious Unit Citation

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND

HEADQUARTERS AND HEADQUARTERS TROOP was activated 25 October 1966 by General Order 249, Headquarters, US Army Armor Center, Fort Knox, Kentucky 40121 dated 25 November 1966 under TOE 17-9 Oct. The center of activities for the troop and the squadron was Godman Army Air Field at Fort Knox. Based on the proven value of the 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry with the 1st Cavalry Division, two armored squadrons, the 3rd Squadron and the 7th Squadron from the 17th Cavalry Regiment were reactivated and designated as air cavalry squadrons. As with all newly activated units the squadron, for the next few months, received personnel and equipment almost daily. Those personnel assigned to the Squadron at that time immediately started planning and making preparations for the training program. Other training exercises were conducted at Camp Atterbury, Indiana, the Mountain Ranger Camp, Dahlonega, Georgia as well as the Fort Knox Reservation. The Rangers provided the air cavalry squadron with three days of training and practical application in Ranger techniques and repelling of infantry. Additionally, the scouts and gun ships began working in mountainous areas for the first time against aggressors.

The line troops of this squadron were all activated on 4 February 1967 officially, even though they physically existed prior to that. Thus Headquarters Troop carried everyone in the squadron on their morning reports and other administrative documents until February. By April 1967 the troop strength was 17 officers, 4 warrant officer, and 135 enlisted men. These morning reports reflect that individuals started taking PQA leaves near the end of July, and continued through August and September. Advanced squadron level training commenced 5 July 1967 with the squadron making road and air movement to Camp Dawson, West Virginia with the National Guard and Specific Forces Reserves. Therefore, during the period of April, May, and June one can assume that normal POM activities such as range firing, conex container packing, final aircraft and vehicular maintenance and the various inspections were all taking place. The squadron did conduct a lengthy field training exercise on the Fort Knox reservation and the Green River area which included aerial gunnery. Never before had so many helicopters assembled at Fort Knox and only Fort Benning, with the activation of the 1st Cavalry Division can compare with Fort Knox for air activity during those days. Over 174 aircraft were involved with both squadrons training and flying. The squadron ATT was administered by the US Army Aviation Group (PROV) from Fort Knox. The testing area selected was the Green River area near Campbellsville, Kentucky. The ATT, conducted 2-4 August covered all aspects of air cavalry operations. Personnel from the forming 7th Armored Squadron, 1st Air Cavalry served as aggressors. No records are available to determine the dates when equipment left Fort Knox to be loaded on the ship at Mobile, Alabama; however, on 18 August 1967 the squadron maintenance officer, Major Joseph Thiring, departed to Sharp Army Depot. During the next two weeks, starting 28 August, the 87 organic aircraft to the Squadron

departed Fort Knox for Sharp Army Depot, Lathrop, California. On 4 October 1967 the troop prepared to depart Fort Knox and submitted its first morning report with the USAFPAC APO SF 96558 heading. On 9 October 1967 the troop was airlifted from Stanford Field, Louisville, Kentucky to Oakland Army Terminal, Oakland, California. The troop, with the remainder of the squadron and the 3/17th cavalry, boarded the USNS General Nelson M. Walker and departed on 10 October 1967. On 27 October 1967 the troops arrived at Qui Nhon, RVN with a strength of 20 officers, 4 warrant officers and 163 enlisted men. By convoy they proceeded through the An Khe Pass to Camp Enari to become OPCON to the 4th Infantry Division. The advanced party of 75, mostly maintenance personnel, landed at Bien Hoa on 13 October 1967 and were then flown to Pleiku and Vung Tau respectively. The chain of command, however, for the squadron runs to 17th Combat Aviation Group in Nha Trang and next to 1st Aviation Brigade in Long Binh. The 1st Armored Squadron, 10th Cavalry provided the reception, housing, logistical support and assisted the squadron with an in-country orientation training program to become operational as soon as possible. For the next month the troop lived in GP tents while the outer perimeter of Camp Enari was enlarged to accommodate the heliport, revetment area, and base complex. The aircraft, with escort personnel, arrived in Vung Tau by sea on 23 October 1967 and 15 CH-6A's were delivered by air on 30 October 1967. Initial maintenance support came from in-country resources of the 34th General Support Group. About mid-November the perimeter had been re-established and the squadron moved into the open field--the area it presently occupies. Again the construction program began by pouring concrete, constructing buildings, laying PSP and erecting main tents, wiring buildings with electricity and building better and better showers and latrines daily. The rainy season ended just prior to the squadron arrival but an occasional rain would have been appreciated to settle the dust. On November 22, C Troop became OPCON to the Americal Division at Chu Lai and a number of staff officer changes resulted. The building program was to continue until September 1968 with large interruptions due to the tactical situation.

CHAPTER 3

COMMAND AND CONTROL

SQUADRON COMMANDER:

LTC Lawrence Johnson Deployment to 30 Mar 68 (10Jan68-26Jan68 on Energy Lv)
LTC Stephen F. Cameron 30 Mar 68 to 15 Sep 68
LTC Robert H. Reuter 15 Sep 68 to Present

SQUADRON DEPUTY COMMANDER:

LTC James D. Harrett 26 Apr 68 to 7 Oct 68

SQUADRON EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

MAJ Owen Haxton Deployment to 12 Dec 67
MAJ Alfred J. Iller 22 Dec 67 to 16 Aug 68
MAJ Scott T. Lyman 25 Sep 68 to Present

S-1

MAJ Ray Hill Deployment to 10 Mar 68
CPT Lawrence R. Konyon 10 Mar 68 to 3 Sep 68
MAJ William B. Wilder 3 Sep 68 to Present

S-1 NCO

SFC Percival R. Crisp Deployment to 9 Oct 68
SFC Russell L. Miller 9 Oct 68 to Present

S-2

MAJ Robert W. Cook Deployment to 20 Feb 68
MAJ Charles L. Brown 20 Feb 68 to 14 Apr 68
BREAK
MAJ Robert A. Lefford 9 Jun 68 to 11 Sep 68
CPT Michael W. Hodge 1 Oct 68 to Present

S-2 NCO

MSG Werner P. Harder Deployment to 25 Oct 68
SFC George E. Gray 25 Oct 68 to Present

S-3

MAJ Richard H. Marden Deployment to 27 Sep 68
MAJ Richard H. Marshall 27 Sep 68 to Present

ASST S-3

MAJ Robert Hefford Deployment to 22 Nov 67
CPT Joseph C. Gross III 22 Nov 67 to 21 Sep 68
CPT Jerry L. Causey 11 Sep 68 to 1 Oct 68
CPT Michael G. Law 1 Oct 68 to Present

S-3 NCO

MSG Jackie Conroe Deployment to 9 Oct 68
MSG William C. Ohi 9 Oct 68 to 8 Nov 68
SFC Halaway Radford Jr. 8 Nov 68 to Present

SQUADRON MAINTENANCE OFFICER

MAJ Florian A. Thiring Deployment to 7 Sep 68
CPT Joseph Laehu 7 Sep 68 to 10 Nov 68
CPT Ted Bidigare 10 Nov 68 to 17 Nov 68
MAJ Frank Meegan 17 Nov 68 to Present

HEADQUARTERS TROOP COMMANDER.

CPT Richard V. Doty Activation to 17 Apr 67
MAJ Charles L. Brown Jr 17 Apr 67 to 18 Feb 68
MAJ William B. Wilder 18 Feb 68 to 3 Sep 68
MAJ Willard D. Conklin 4 Sep 68 to Present

FIRST SERGEANT

MSG Robert L. Frazier Activation to 10 Nov 67
SFC Marvin C. Gibson 10 Nov 67 to 1 May 68
SFC James Touchstone 1 May 68 to 9 Oct 68
SFC Roman Roth 10 Oct 68 to 31 Oct 68
MSG Robert L. Greene 1 Nov 68 to Present

TRUCK OFFICER

CPT John P. Gose Deployment to 6 Nov 68
1LT Herbert C. Gates 6 Nov 68 to 10 Jan 69
1LT Carlin N. Craig 11 Jan 69 to Present

AVIATION SECTION LEADER

CPT Dallas W. Halcomb Deployment to 2 Jun 68
CPT James M. Basta 2 Jun 68 to 27 Sep 68
CW2 David P. Davis 28 Sep 68 to Present

TROOP SUPPLY OFFICER

CW2 David J. Peterson Deployment to 1 Oct 68
W1 Fredrick R. Bennett 1 Oct 68 to Present

MOTOR SERGEANT

SSG Daniel W. Feazelle 7 Oct 67 to 7 Oct 68
SFC Francis E. Baden 8 Oct 63 to Present

FLIGHT OPERATIONS SERGEANT

SFC Albert Aranao Jr. Deployment to 7 Oct 68
SSG Thomas L. Damm 7 Oct 68 to Present

TROOP MAINTENANCE OFFICER,

CW2 Joseph Sistarich 26 Feb 68 to 17 Dec 68
W1 Robert W. Glomb 13 Dec 65 to Present

CHAPTER 4

UNIT OPERATIONS

A. TACTICAL COMMITMENTS: During this period Headquarters Troop personnel manned forward command posts at Oasis, Kontum, and Dak To for short periods of time from November 1967 until June 1968. During 'TET' the entire Squadron's activities and energies were devoted to the Kontum area which was nearly all occupied by the NVA. However, from June through November 1968 a large troop commitment manned the forward CP at Ban Me Thout East in support of A and D Troop operations. This support naturally included mess personnel with large commitments of communications, medical, maintenance, S-2 and S-3 personnel. Another series of forward CPs were established at Kontum and west of Ploi Morong for the month long operations against the North Vietnamese Army road in the area.

B. SUPPLY COMMITMENTS: Independent of S-4 and Headquarters Troop supply, headquarters personnel operated the entire squadron technical supply until late November 1968. At that time the supply was divided and each separate air cavalry troop given a section plus all non-aviation parts such as motor pool parts were moved to their respective sections.

C. INSPECTIONS: The unit did not receive any formal inspections after arriving in country until 12 Sep 68, when the HQ Troop was given an unannounced CMII by 1st AVN Bde. Weak areas were in Ammunition, POL, and Maintenance and Maintenance Management; however, the Troop received an overall satisfactory rating.

The Squadron was scheduled to receive the AGI on 4-8 Nov 68. A pre-AGI was administered by the 17th CAG and the 4th Inf Div during Oct 68. Much improvement was shown in all areas and many favorable comments were received from members of the AGI Team.

CHAPTER 5

EQUIPMENT AND INSTALLATIONS

A. EQUIPMENT: Headquarters Troop has now undergone the large equipment changes that the line troops have. However, there has been a change in the maintenance structure. Initially the 40th TC Detachment provided all maintenance support of the line troops. Gradually LF and RL teams arrived in country and soon all the troops had these teams and the 40th TC was deactivated and returned to the states. During September 1968 the last remaining UH-1Cs in the troop were turned into supply channels and as of December 1968 the troop had on hand five UH-1Hs and one U-6A Beaver. The U-6A was turned in for reissue to another unit on 26 Jan 69.

B. INSTALLATION: Upon arrival the Troop was housed in tents. The 4th Inf Div Engineers office allocated and approved the construction of permanent buildings for the Troop. On 19 April 1968, the mess hall was destroyed by fire. The mess hall was rebuilt, enlarged and dedicated on 15 October 1968.

The first permanent aircraft hangar was completed by C Troop in November 1968, and construction is under way to complete a second hangar for A Troop.

From September 1968 until present, the motor vehicle maintenance was operated under a squadron consolidated concept. The area was extremely poor, in as much as no permanent maintenance buildings were built. Maintenance was hampered by monsoon rains and mud. A permanent vehicle maintenance shop will be completed in January 1969. Maintenance responsibilities will then be given back to the individual troops. Vehicle and Engineer PLL was moved from the flight line to the new office in the motor pool and a reorganized maintenance system was placed into effect.

CHAPTER 6
REFLECTIONS

AWARDS

SILVER STAR

LTC Johnson 8 Mar 68

LEGION OF MERIT

LTC Cameron 2 Sep 68

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

CPT Basta 2 Sep 68
CPT Young 20 Sep 68
MAJ Inglett 29 Aug 68
MAJ Iller 27 Jan 68
MAJ Wilder 16 May 68

BRONZE STAR

CPT Basta 17 Jun 68
CPT Causey 27 Jul 68
SFC Crisp 26 May 68
CW4 Garrett 22 Oct 68
MAJ Gross 2 Mar 69
MSG Harder 16 Oct 68
SSG Hollis 20 Sep 68
CPT Laehu 10 Aug 68
MAJ Marden 7 Sep 68
MSG Ohl 18 Dec 68
SP5 Stidham 12 Oct 68
PFC Wright 25 Mar 68
CPT Kenyon 7 Nov 68
CPT Boyd 21 Dec 68
MAJ Brown 28 Oct 68
MAJ Inglett 24 Aug 68
MAJ Wilder 26 Nov 68

ARMY COMMEMORATION MEDAL

CPT Basta 11 Jan 68
SP4 Carrillo 2 Mar 68
SP5 Dabrowski 8 Feb 68
SP4 Edwards 2 Mar 68
SP4 Ewing 6 Mar 68
SSG Hollis 2 Mar 68

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL (CONT)

LTC Johnson	13 Jan 68
SSG Padgett	16 Jul 68
1SG Touchstone	28 Aug 68
SP5 Morrison	18 Jun 68

HONOR ROLE OF MEMBERS KILLED IN ACTION

None