

Following is the After-Action Report (AAR) attributed to LTC Guy Tutwiler that he wrote after the battle of 19 June. I changed nothing of substance in his report – I did make changes to abbreviate the text, such as changing Bravo 4-47 Inf to B/4-47, and Commanding Officer Bravo 4-47 Inf to simply Commander B/4-47.

In my research, limited to material available on the Internet and a few books, LTC Tutwiler's AAR is the informative detailed description of the plan of operation and the battle. I spent 2-3 hours near LTC Tutwiler's command post on 19 June and my memory is that he was totally in control, but stressed and very blunt in his orders.

My Recon Platoon, 3-47 was placed under the Operational Control of 4-47 early in the afternoon. We were moved by an Armored Troop Carrier (ATC) and landed at the 4-47 ground command post that was established in a Navy Command and Control Boat (CCB) on a bank of the Rach Xom Cau stream. As I recall, and memories fail after 50 years, LTC Tutwiler came to the command post (CP) 2 or 3 times during the afternoon while his command and control helicopter was refueling. I was given the early mission to secure the immediate area of the CP.

LTC Tutwiler's AAR follows:

On the morning of 19 June 1967, the 4-47 Inf was engaged in a Search and Destroy Operation in Eastern Long An Province.

The Initial plan was to land **B/4-47** at **BEACH GREEN** and **C/4-47** at **BEACH YELLOW** by Armored Troop Carriers (ATCs). As soon as this was completed **A/4-47** moved south by ATC on the Rach Xon Cau and landed at **BEACH WHITE** with the mission of moving to the west and securing the southern portion of **Objective 14**. All of this was proceeding on schedule when I received a call from the Brigade Commander (COL Fulton) to meet him at the Fire Support Base.

Upon arrival he (COL Fulton) informed me that intelligence indicated that there were three VC (Viet Cong) companies located in the area generally bordered by **Objectives 17, 19, 20 and 21**.

He (COL Fulton) placed **C/3-47** (*on standby as brigade reserve at the French Fort*) under my operational control and directed that they make a helicopter assault in the vicinity of **Objective 21**, then move East to the Noch Ben Vua and then sweep through the nipa palm north to the vicinity of **Objective 20**. They were to move east along the south bank of that stream toward **Objective 17** and provide the block to the north as **C/3-47** moved north. The 2-46 ARVN (Army of Vietnam) was blocking to the west in the vicinity of **Objectives 22, 23 and 25**. I would also move **A/4-47** south from **Objective 14** to the vicinity of **Objective 18**.

B/4-47 was to continue their move from **Objective 11 to 13 and 15**. The above plan was executed in a very short period of time. When **3-47** made their airmobile assault they moved toward the area between **Objective 19 and 20** rather than to river to the east. Also the **2-46 ARVN Bn** had crossed their right boundary (Hwy 230) and was in the vicinity of **Objective 21**. The Brigade Commander landed and got them back across their boundary.

I observed **C/3-47** moving to the far west of the nipa palm bordering the Roch Ben Vua and instructed the Commander to move to the west so that he should sweep the area along the river.

About this time, I observed **C/4-47** execute its landing at **Objective 20**. There were troops from **C/3-47** already in the area so I again instructed the Commander of **C/3-47** to move back south, then east to the nipa palm and then move north toward **C/4-47** who would maintain the block to the north between **Objectives 17 and 20**.

They had started this move when I received a call from the Commander of **A/4-47** saying that he was receiving heavy fire from the vicinity of **Objective 18** and that he had received a number of casualties from the initial fire. He indicated that he had lost contact with his platoons as the RTOs had been hit.

Almost simultaneously **C/4-47** received heavy fire from the north bank of the stream between **Objectives 17 and 20**.

They both immediately requested artillery fire and air strikes. Somewhat later, the Commander of **A/4-47** indicated that he estimated his casualties at 75% to 80%. He could not move because of the volume of fire being received from the bunker line to his front. **C/4-47** was pinned down and could not maneuver because of the heavy volume of fire being received from bunkers on the north side of the stream between **Objective 17 and 20**. At that time **C/3-47** was ordered to move to the west in the vicinity of **Objective 17**, cross the stream and then move east to sweep across **Objective 18**, and attempt to knock out the bunkers in the area between **A/4-47** and **C/4-47**. The Brigade Commander also directed the **Commander 3-47** to move **A/3-47** and **B/3-47** to the east to seal off the area where the fight had developed.

The **Commander 3-47** regained the operational control of **C/3-47** at this time. I also directed **B/4-47** to move to **Objective 16** and down toward **Objective 18** to attempt to relieve **A/4-47** so that they could reorganize and attempt to get their wounded and dead out.

During this period, I also directed to ATCs to move south on the Roch Xon Cau toward **Objective 20** to on the east and provide fire support into the battle area for both **A/4-47** and **C/4-47**. The movement of **A/3-47**, **B/3-47**, and **C/3-47** was very slow due to the type of terrain with numerous streams that had to be crossed. It also took a considerable time the get the ATCs to

move south as direct. When they did get down to that area they assisted **C/4-47** immeasurable in silencing the bunkers along the north bank of the stream between **Objectives 17 and 20**.

During the afternoon, **A/4-47** called in one Dust-Off helicopter that succeeded in evacuating two personnel under intense fire. The Commander **A/4-47** requested that they not come in anymore after that as he realized that it would not be able to make it until the bunkers to his front had been knocked out. **C/4-47** also got one Dust-Off in but the helicopter was hit and could not take off. The other Dust-Off that came in and was subsequently shot down was not requested. In fact, he was advised and the heaved fire and indicate he was going down anyway

After the bunkers on the north side of the stream between **Objective 17 and 20** were silenced by the Monitor I directed the Commander **C/4-47** to leave one platoon on the south bank as security for the downed helicopters and move the remainder of his unit to the north side of the stream and attack toward **Objective 18** to try and relieve the pressure on **A/4-47**. The attack was initiated under heavy enemy fire and was moving very well until the unit ran out of ammunition. It was almost dark by that time so I directed they move back to the bank of the Roch Xon Cau for resupply and to establish defensive positions for the night.

By late afternoon the 1st Platoon of **B/4-47** had linked up with **A/4-47**. The remainder of **B/4-47** was about 300-400 meters to the north and was also under heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire.

C/3-47 had moved to a location southwest of **Objective 18** with Alpha and **B/3-47** to their north. After dark **B/4-47** completed with link-up with **A/4-47** and began to assist them in the location and evacuation of their dead and wounded. This was initially hampered by illumination as each time the battlefield was illuminated both Alpha and **B/4-47** received additional fire from the enemy. During the night, the battalion command post was located on a CCB behind **C/4-47** on the Roch Xon Cau. These ATCs and Monitors provided a block to the east of the battle area. Air strikes were requested for first light on 20 June 1967 to be followed by a coordinated attack by and **C/4-47** and **C/3-47A** sweep of the area was made against sporadic VC fire. The remainder of the day was spent policing the battlefield.

Guy I Tutwiler
LTC, angry
Commanding