

LZ Bird



Bird's Eye View of Bird – Arrows Indicate Thrust of Attack – Circle in Upper Right Shows Where Enemy Mortars and Rockets Were Placed



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Sông

Sông Kim Sơn

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Google Earth





8/2021

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Biré, LZ

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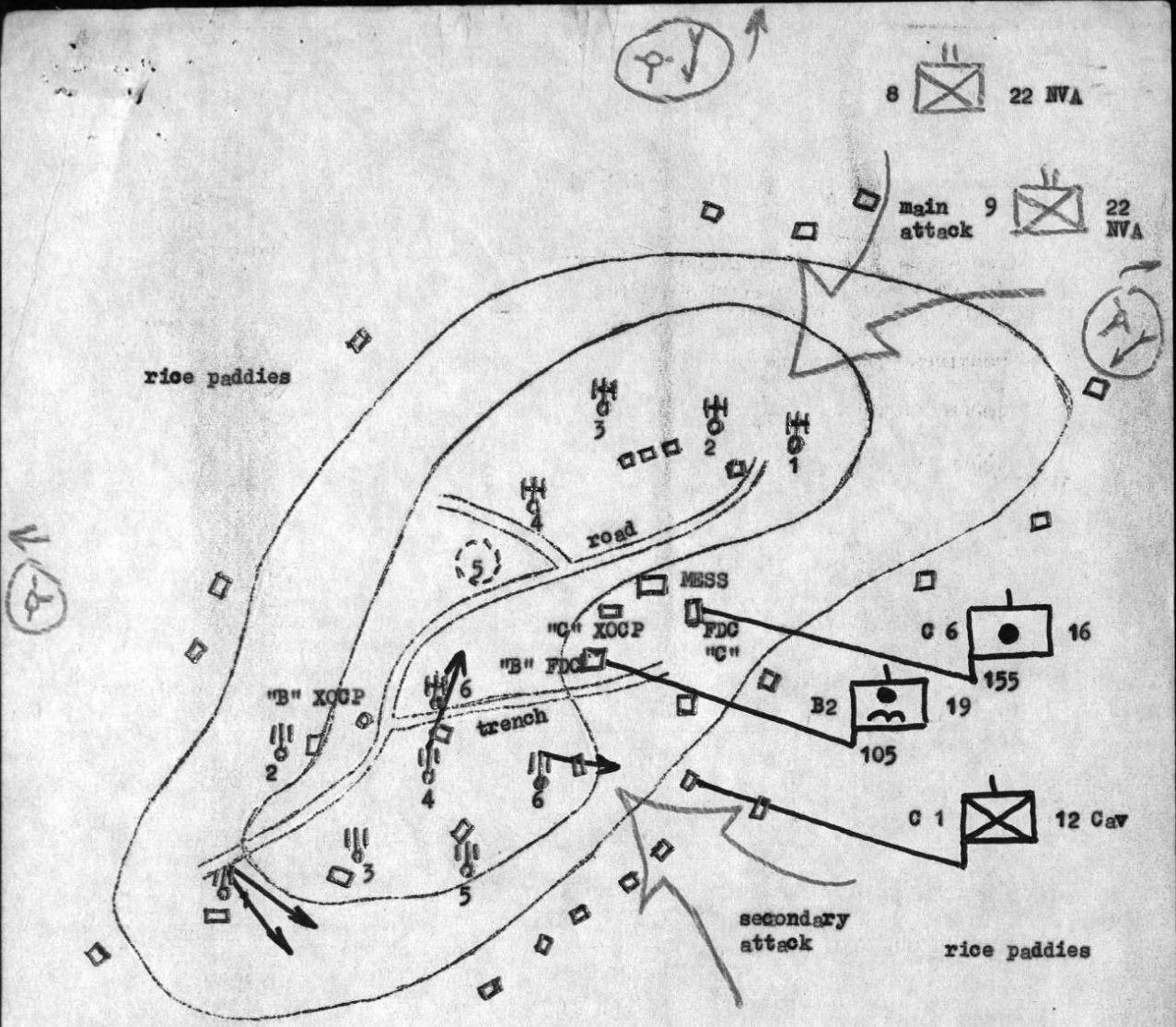
Sông Kim Sơn

Bird, LZ

Sông Kim Sơn


Image © 2021 Maxar Technologies


Google Earth





SITUATION: 0105 to about 0116 hours

LEGEND

 155mm Howitzer

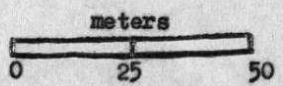
 105mm Howitzer

 Howitzer Direct Fire

 Enemy Weapons Positions
(arrow indicates position sited on hills in that direction)

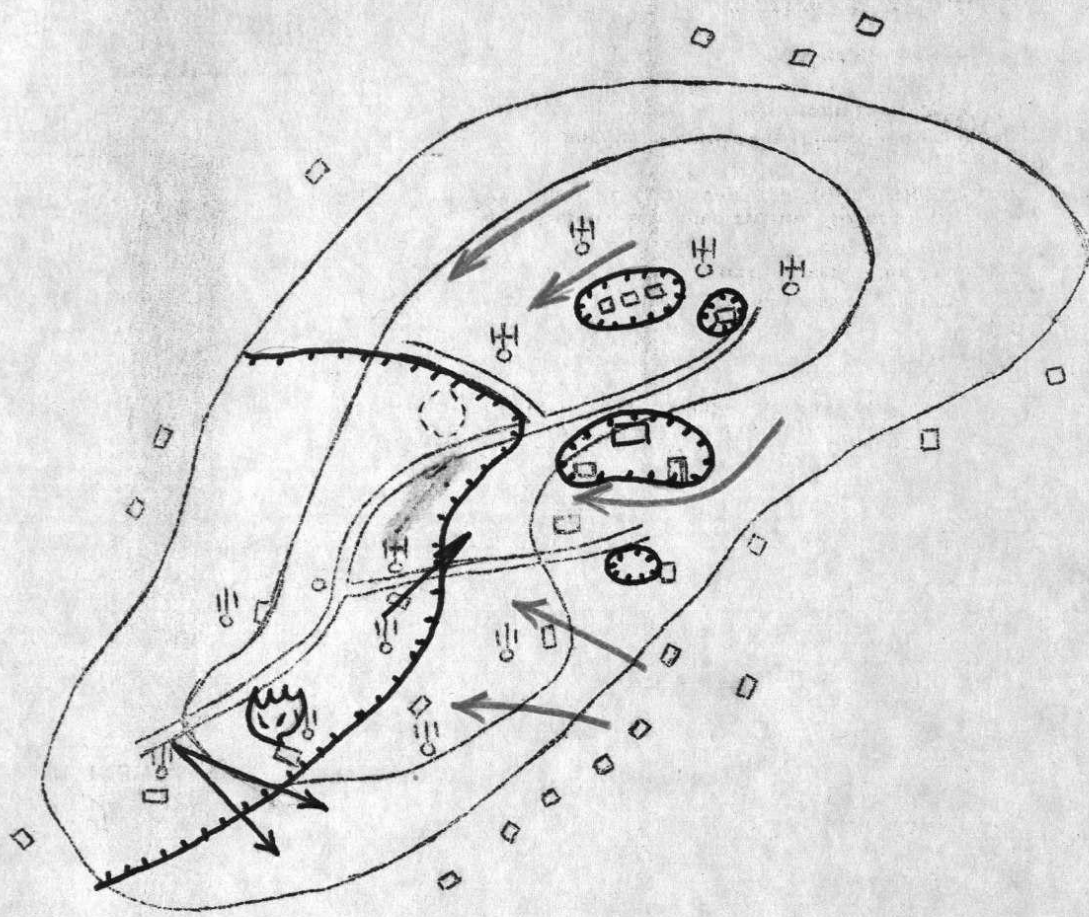
F. D. Westfall, Jr.
F. D. WESTFALL, JR.
Captain, Artillery
Adjutant

NORTH



Incl 1

MAP #1



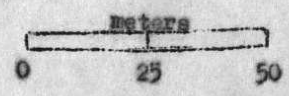
SITUATION: about 0116 to about 0126 hours

LEGEND

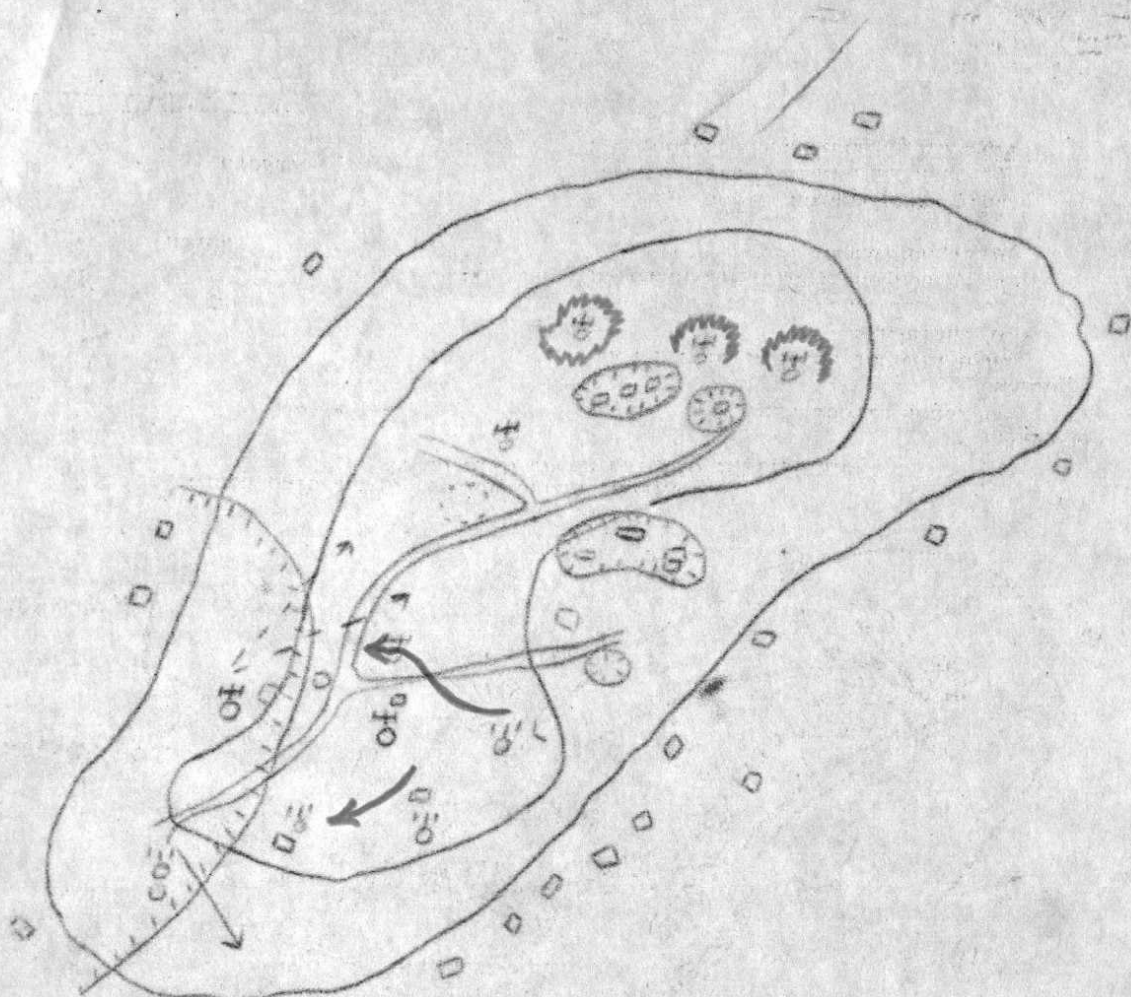
- Howitzer Direct Fire
- ☞ Main Line of Resistance and Pockets of Resistance
- ☹ Enemy Weapons Position Destroyed By #4 Howitzer
- Enemy Penetration
- ☞ Fire at #3 Howitzer

F. D. Westfall
 F. D. WESTFALL, JR.
 Captain, Artillery
 Adjutant

NORTH



Incl 2



SITUATION: about 0126 to 0140 hours

LEGEND

- Howitzer Direct Fire
- - - - -> Direction of fire - BEEHIVE Anti-Personnel Round
- Main Line of Resistance and Pockets of Resistance
- Enemy Penetration
- ☼ Destroyed 155mm Howitzer
- ☼ Damaged 155mm Howitzer

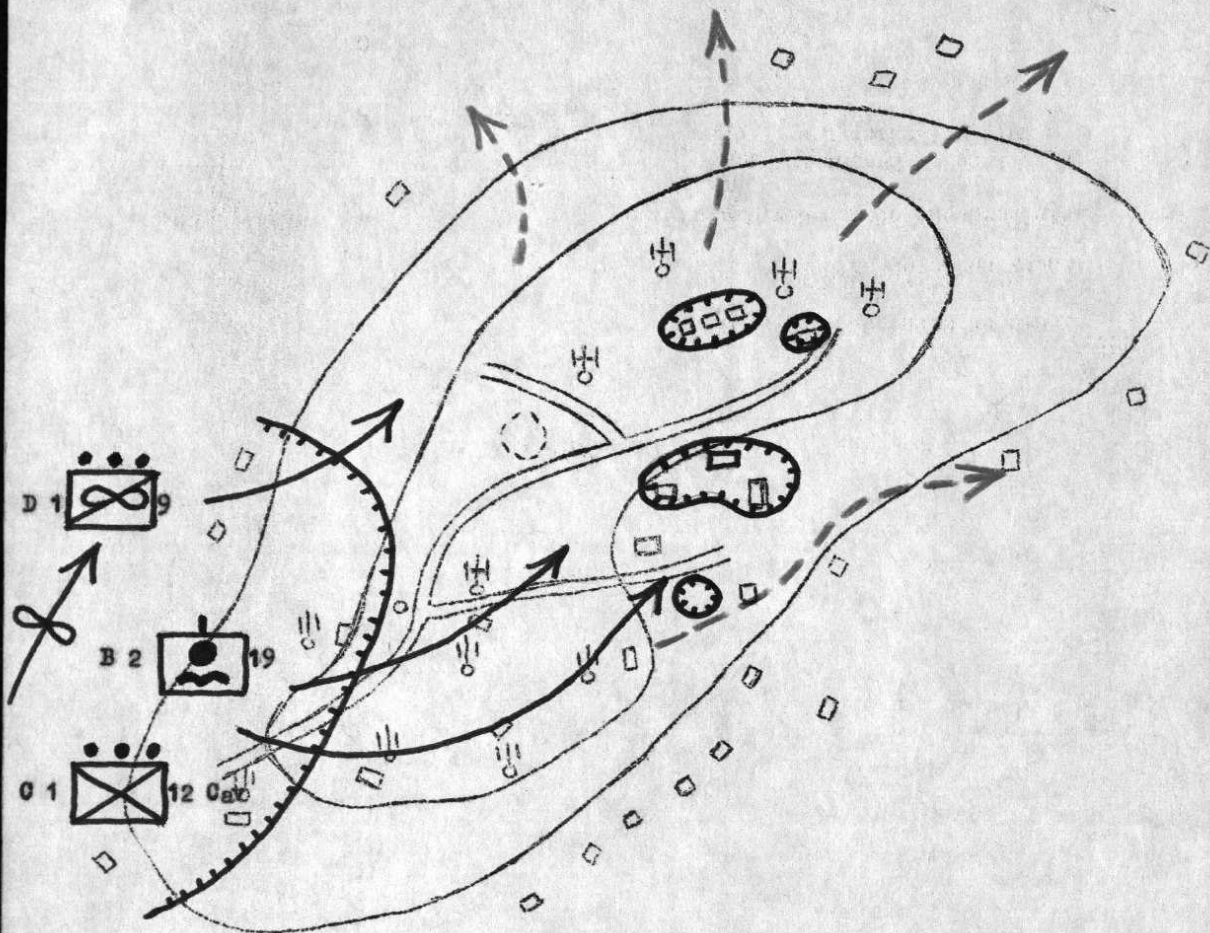
F. D. Westfall Jr.
 F. D. WESTFALL JR.
 Captain, Artillery
 Adjutant

NORTH

0 — 25 — 50
 meters





MAP # 3

Incl. 3



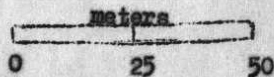
SITUATION: about 0140 to 0220 hours

LEGEND

-  Route of Counterattack
-  Enemy Route of Withdrawal
-  Air Movement of Air Cavalry Platoon
-  Main Line of Resistance and Pockets of Resistance

F. D. Westfall
 F. D. WESTFALL, JR.
 Captain, Artillery
 Adjutant

NORTH



Incl. 4

MAP #4

A Note on the Bilingual Documents

Thang thinks the translations were done by Nam, a young man 25-28 years old from Phu My district, Bien Hoa, Binh Dinh province. When Nam found the [grave site location] study too complicated, he stopped participating. The notes in the purple boxes of the sketch are by NVA veteran Dang Ha Thuy.

Additionally, Bob March states a number of LZ Bird maps translated by the Vietnamese are in circulation. He does not think Thuy translated them but that Nam, Thang's acquaintance, might have. The multi-page document was taken from the book "Boy Sergeant: A Young Soldier's Story of Vietnam," by Doug Warden, who translated some of the annotations into English. The map was done by an artillery officer. The sketches are not to scale.

Landing Zone Bird

Khả năng đây là cửa mở con đường vào bãi cát, hay còn gọi là "điểm tiếp tế"



Bãi đáp trực thăng thứ cấp

Nơi 2 người lính ngủ cạnh giữ thùng xăng

2 Companies, 7th BN, 22nd NVA - In Reserve - 150 men

Waiting to ambush anyone who ran from the fight and anyone attempting to send reinforcements via helicopter

Farthest NVA Attack Line

2, B2mm Mortars

1 Company, 8th BN, 22nd NVA led by a Sgt 1+

2, 61mm Mortars, 2, M-79's, 2, Machine Guns, 1 Recoilless Rifle Major Phuong

3 Companies, 8th BN, 22nd NVA - 200 men and 1 Company, 7th BN with 40 women

MAIN THRUST

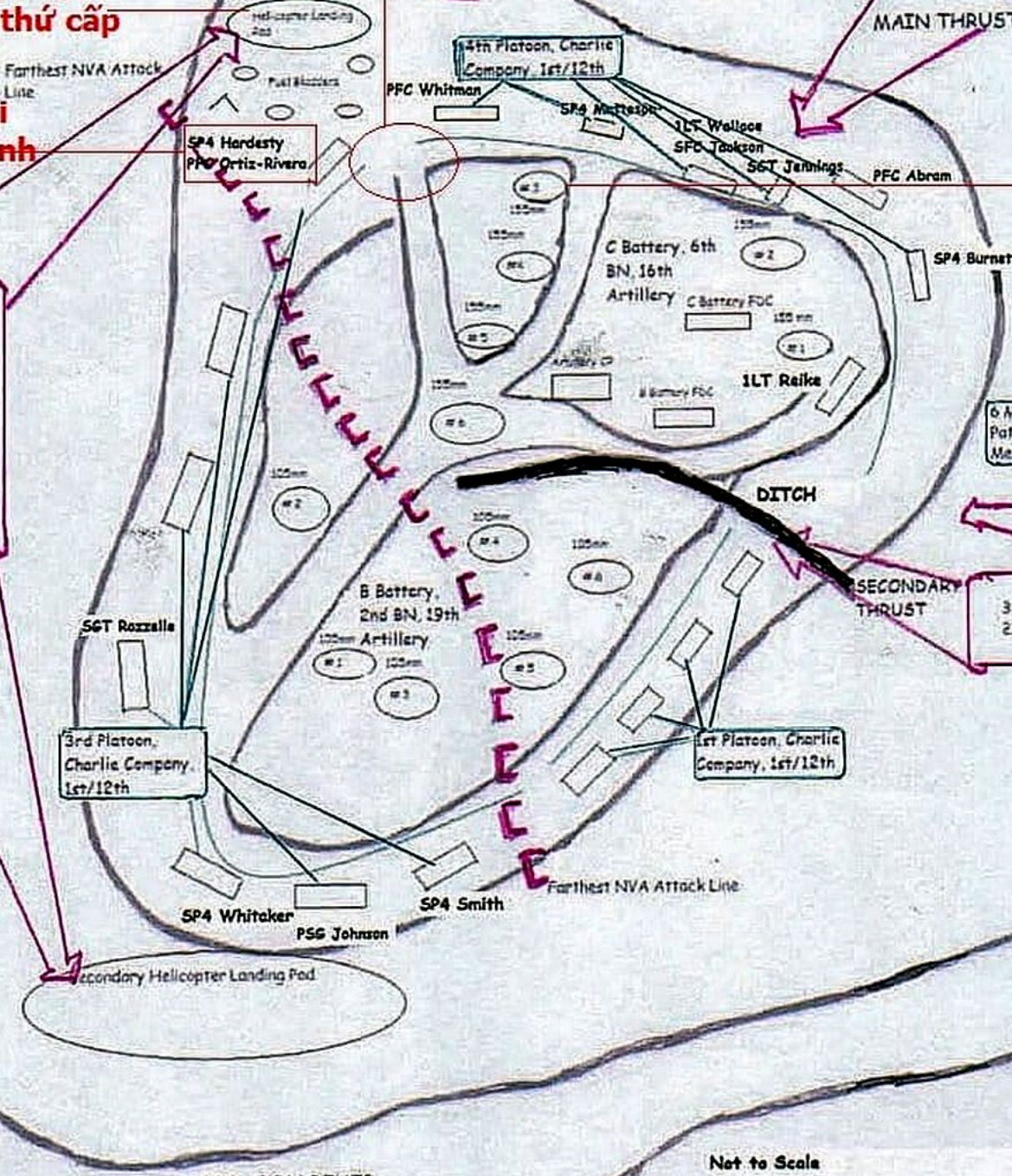
Nơi khẩu pháo 155 bị phá hủy đánh dấu số 1

6 Man Recon. Patrol, 500 - 600 Meters East

1 Machine Gun, 2 Recoilless Rifles

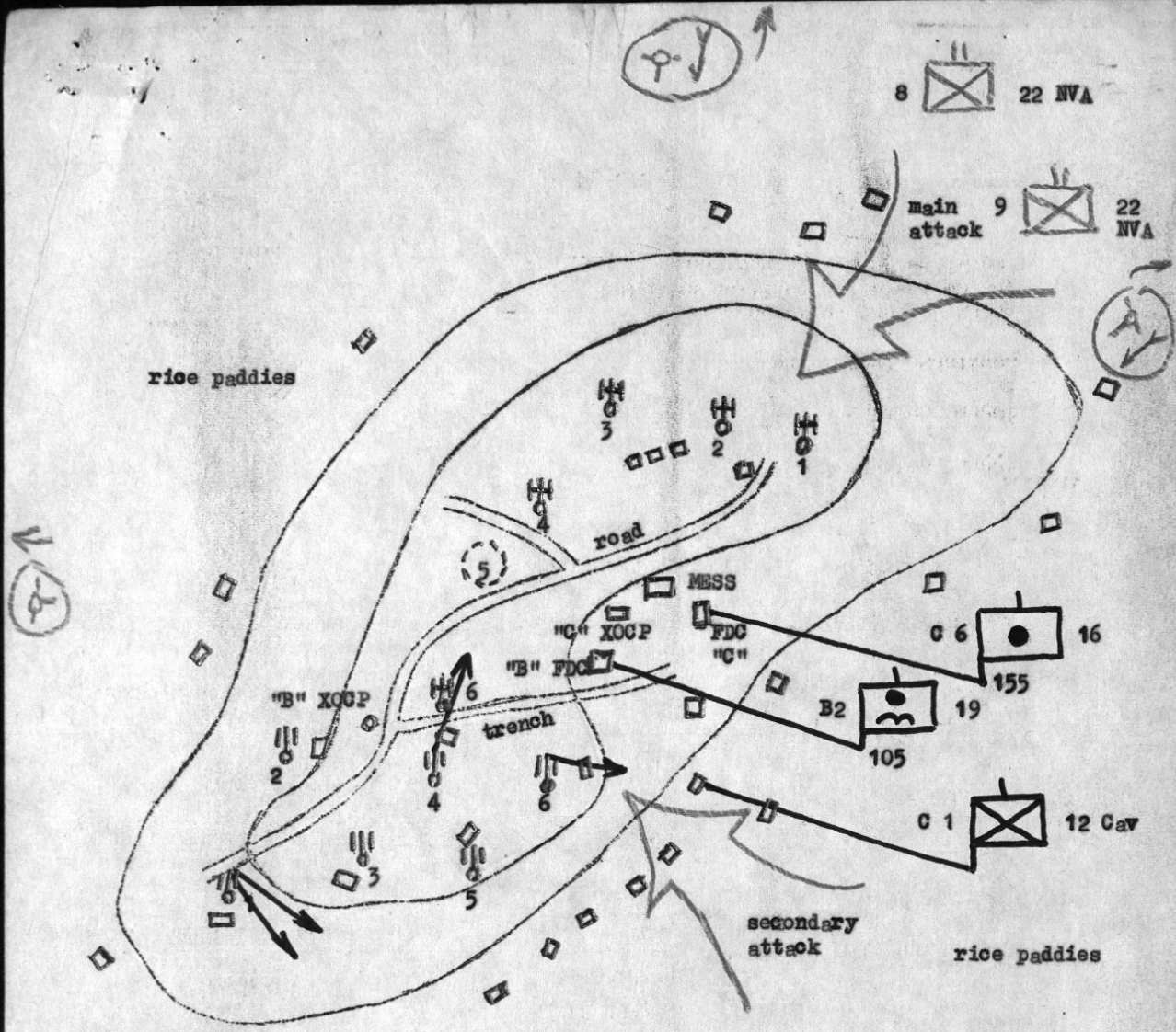
3 Companies, 9th BN, 22nd NVA - 200 men

SECONDARY THRUST



KIM SON RIVER

Net to Scale



SITUATION: 0105 to about 0116 hours

LEGEND



155mm Howitzer



105mm Howitzer



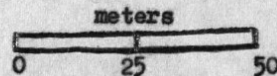
Howitzer Direct Fire



Enemy Weapons Positions
(arrow indicates position sited
on hills in that direction)

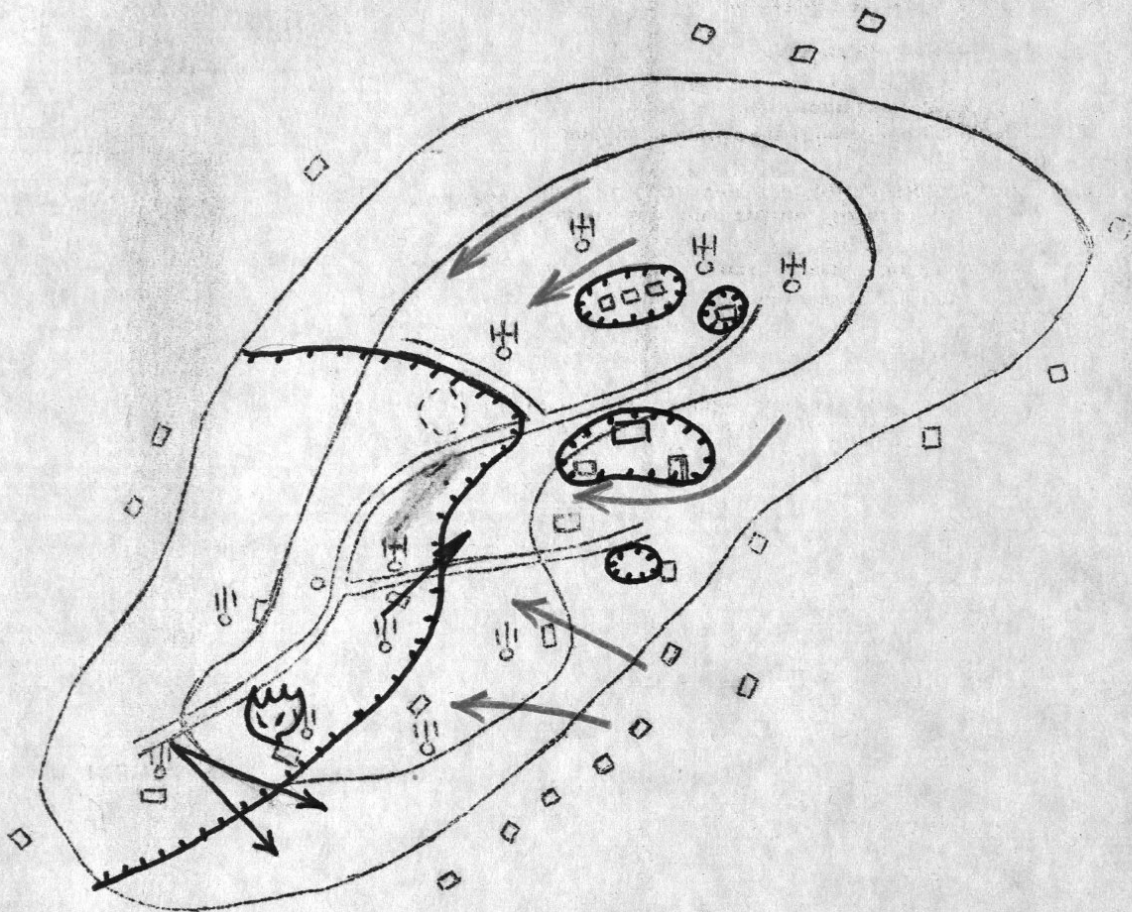
F. D. Westfall, Jr.
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NORTH



Incl 1

MAP #1



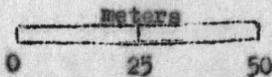
SITUATION: about 0116 to about 0126 hours

LEGEND

- Howitzer Direct Fire
- ☹ Main Line of Resistance and Pockets of Resistance
- ☉ Enemy Weapons Position Destroyed By #4 Howitzer
- Enemy Penetration
- ☉ Fire at #3 Howitzer

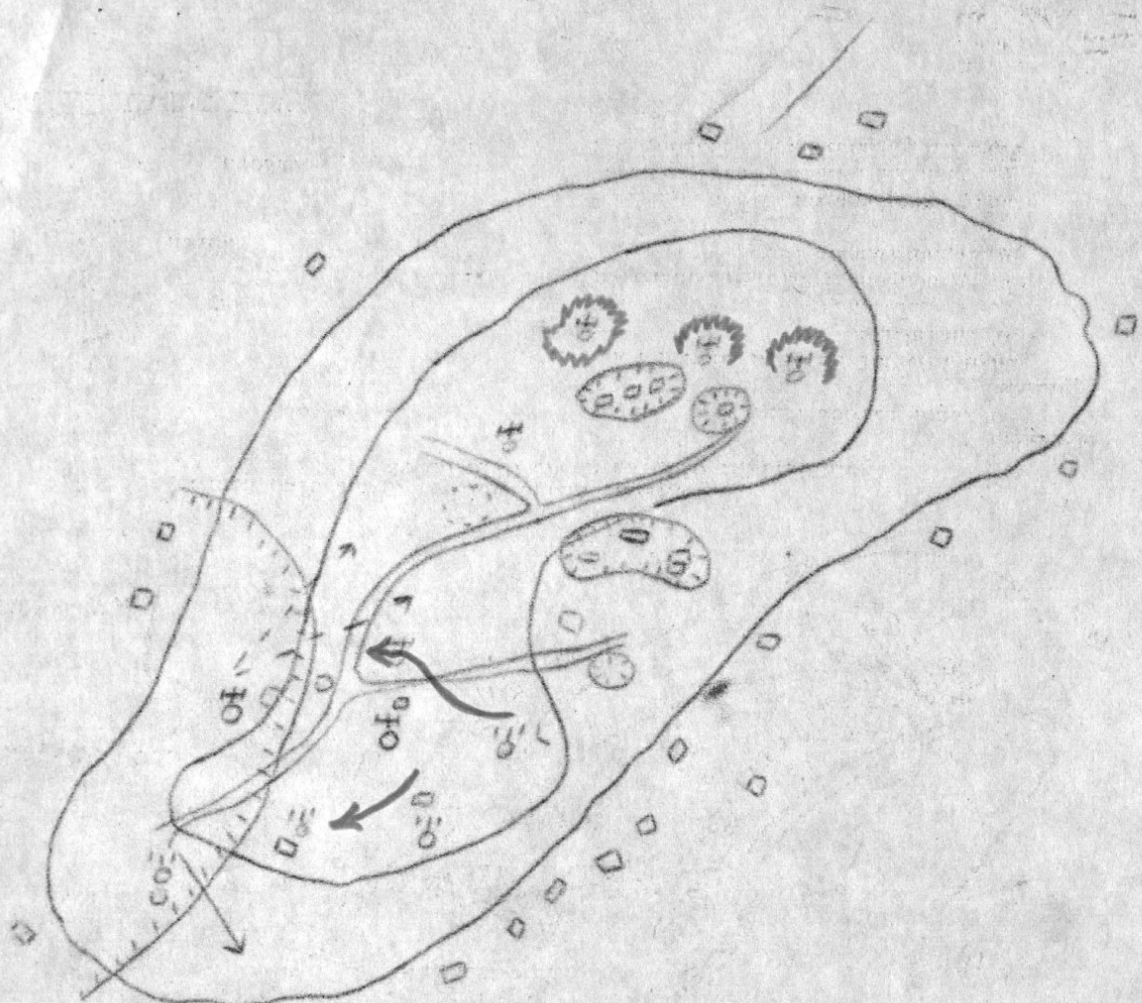
F. D. Westfall
 F. D. WESTFALL, JR.
 Captain, Artillery
 Adjutant

NORTH



Incl 2

MAP #2



SITUATION: about 0126 to 0140 hours

LEGEND

- Howitzer Direct Fire
- - - - -> Direction of fire - BEEHIVE Anti-Personnel Round
- Main Line of Resistance and Pockets of Resistance
- Enemy Penetration
- ☠ Destroyed 155mm Howitzer
- ☹ Damaged 155mm Howitzer

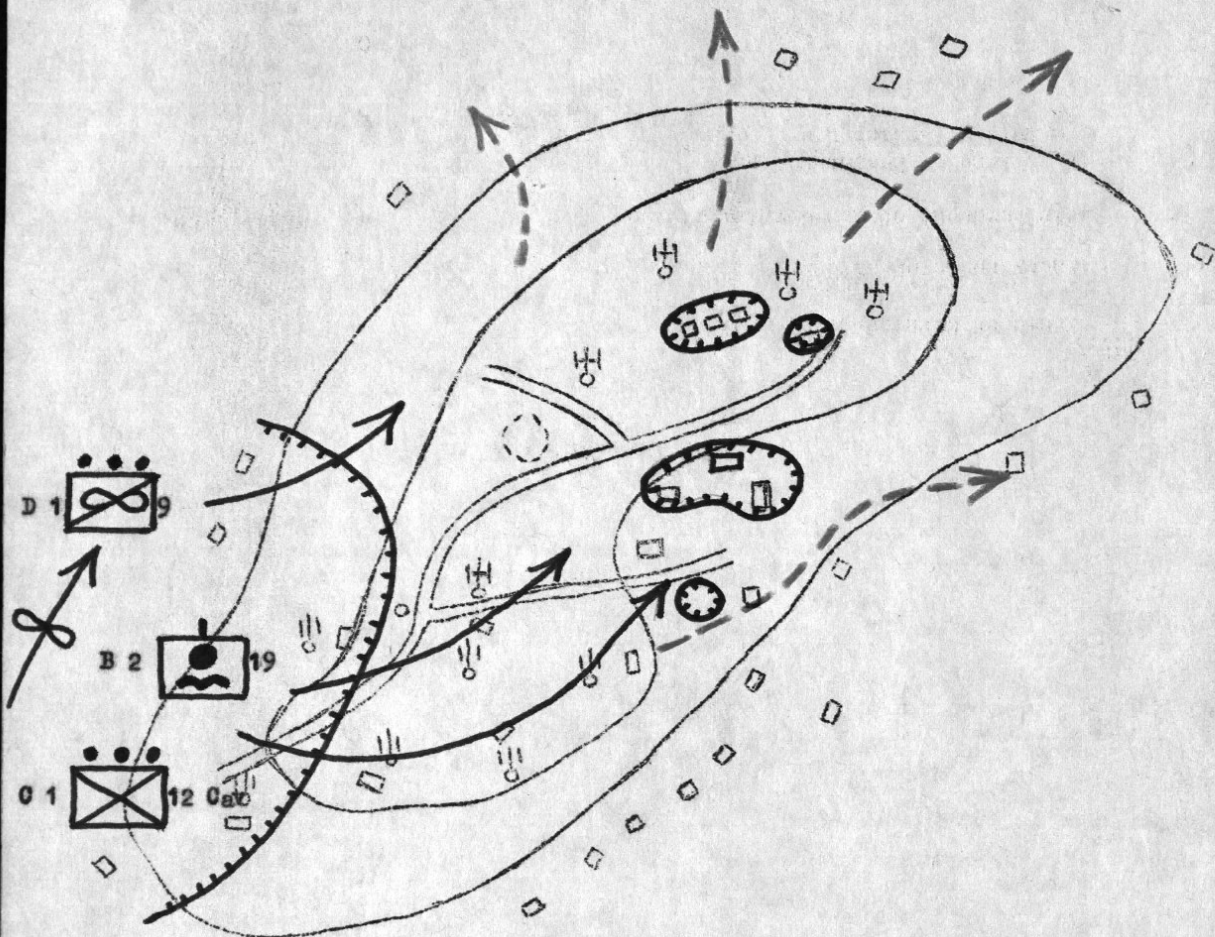
F. D. Westfall Jr.
 F. D. WESTFALL JR.
 Captain, Artillery
 Adjutant

NORTH

0 — 25 — 50
 meters

MAP # 3

Incl. 3



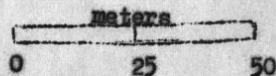
SITUATION: about 0140 to 0220 hours

LEGEND

- Route of Counterattack
- Enemy Route of Withdrawal
- Air Movement of Air Cavalry Platoon
- Main Line of Resistance and Pockets of Resistance

F. D. Westfall, Jr.
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NORTH

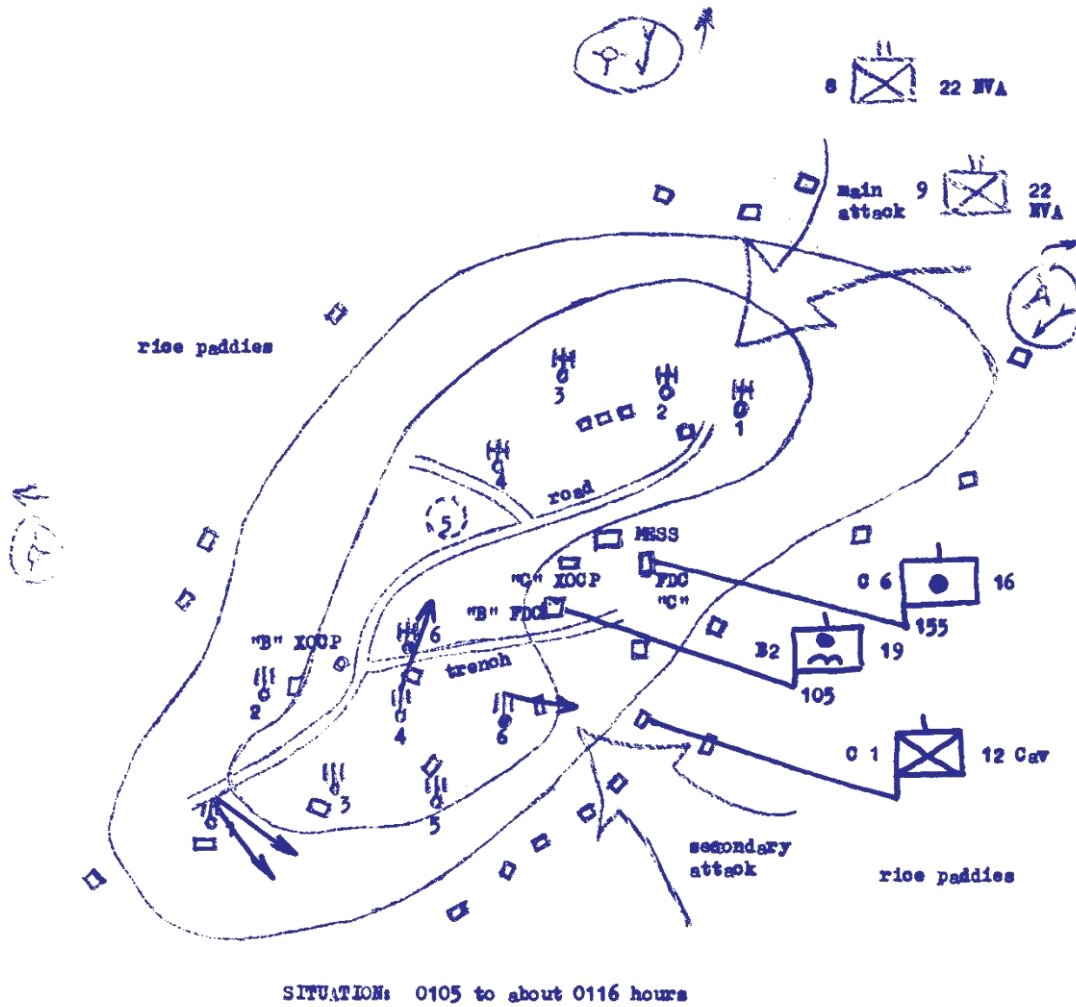


Incl. 4

MAP #4

Dựa vào hai bản đồ này:

Based on these two maps:



SITUATION: 0105 to about 0116 hours

LEGEND

155mm Howitzer

105mm Howitzer

Howitzer Direct Fire

Enemy Weapons Positions
(arrow indicates position sited on hills in that direction)

F. D. Westfall, Jr.
F. D. WESTFALL, JR.
Captain, Artillery
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NORTH

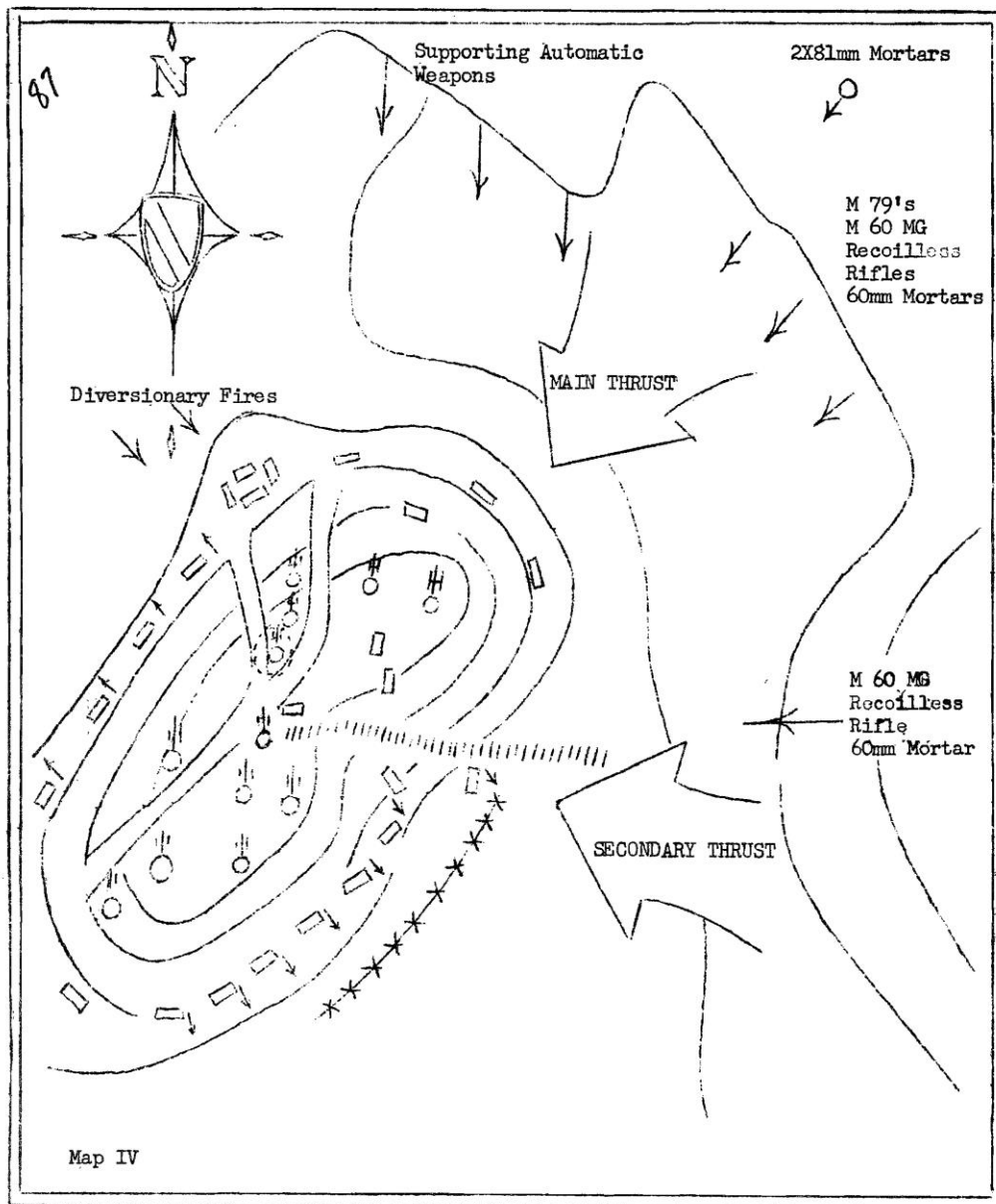


Incl 1

MAP #1

Hình 1. Bản đồ này có tỷ lệ xích (50 mét)

Figure 1. This map has scale (50 meters)

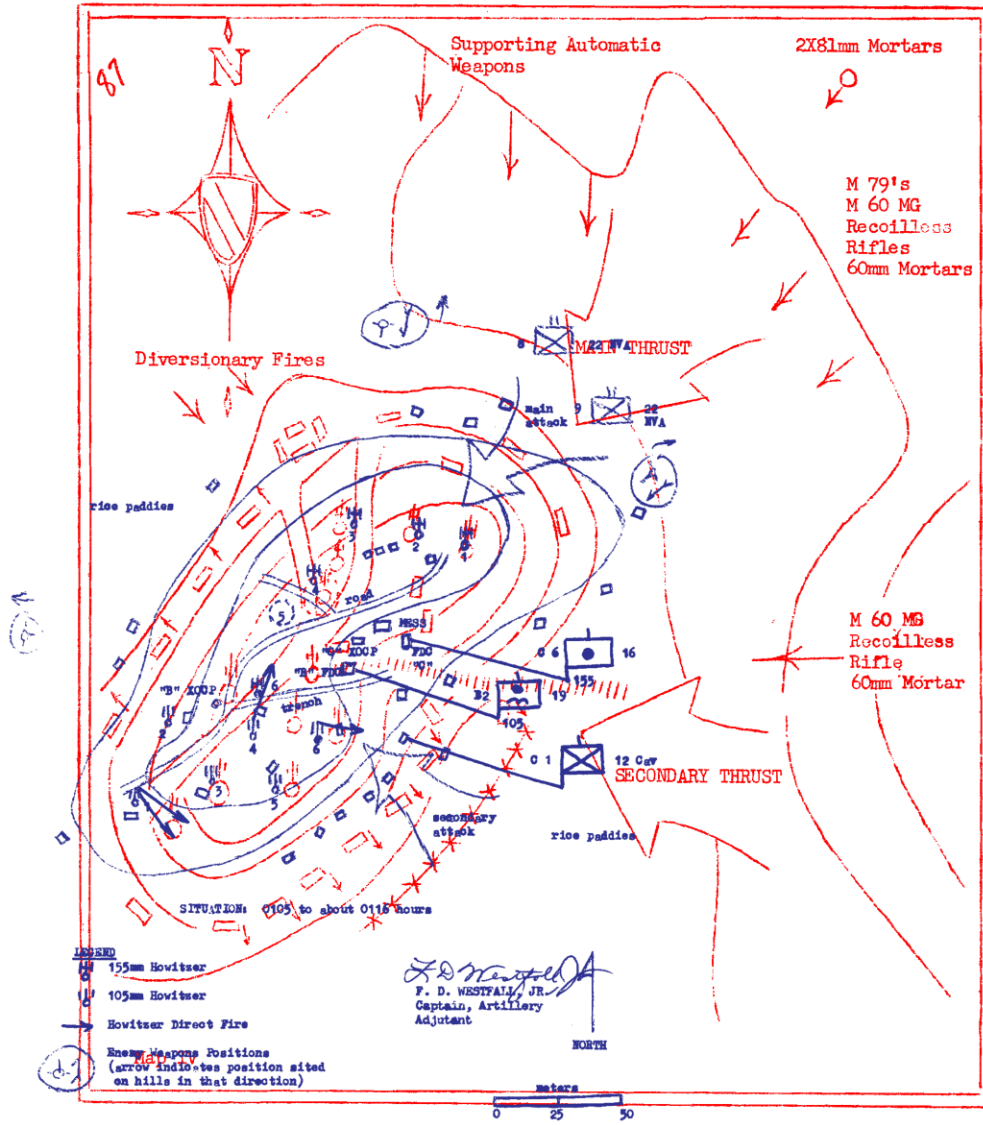


8

Hình 2. Bản đồ này có nét vẽ mô tả dấu vết địa hình của dòng sông cổ phía đông.
 Figure 2. This map has lines depicting the topographical traces of the ancient river to the east.

Bước 1: Tôi chồng hai bản đồ trên lên nhau và chỉnh kích thước cho chúng có cùng tỉ lệ. Sau đó khóa chúng lại.

Step 1: I overlapped the two maps above and resized them to the same scale. Then lock them up.



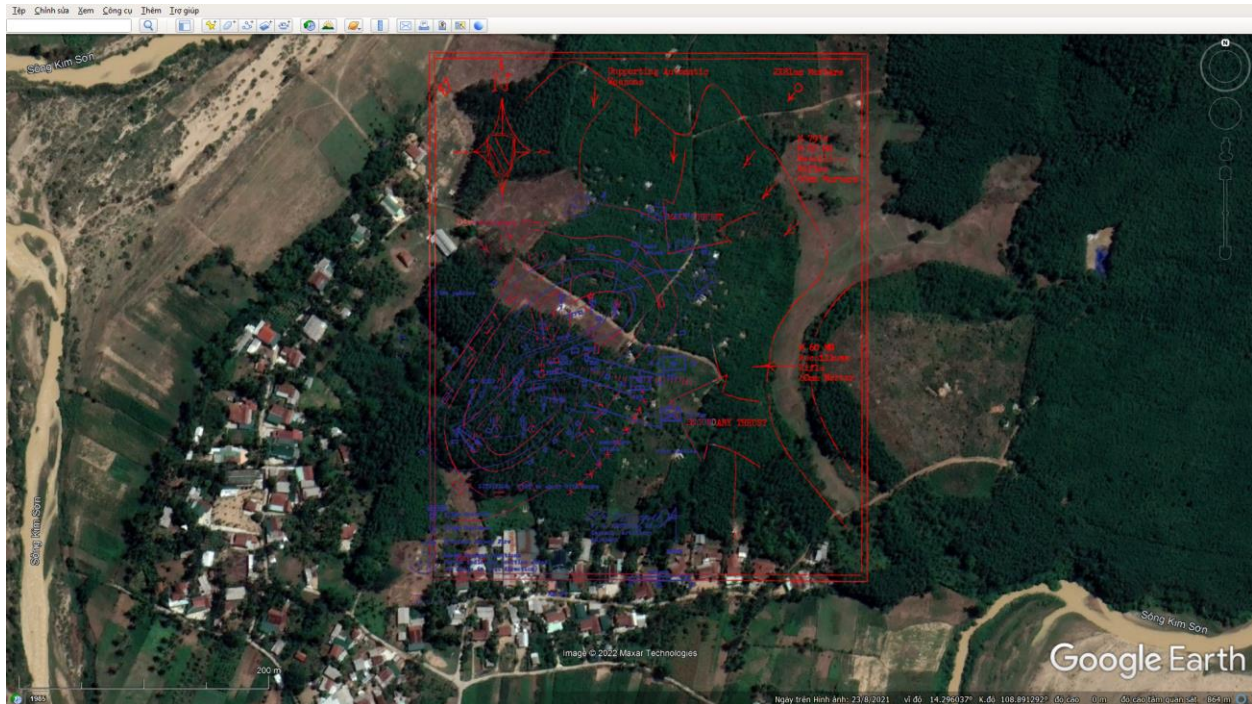
Hình 3. Hai bản đồ đã được chồng nên nhau và có cùng tỷ lệ.
Figure 3. Two maps are superimposed and have the same scale.

Bước 2: Tôi dán chồng nó lên ảnh vệ tinh của Google Earth, như một lớp ảnh. Thỏa mãn các điều kiện sau:

1. Tỷ lệ xích 50 mét - OK.
2. Nét vẽ địa hình khúc cong của dấu vết dòng sông cổ phía đông phù hợp – OK.

Step 2: I superimposed it on the Google Earth satellite image, as an image layer. Satisfy the following conditions:

1. 50 meter chain ratio - OK.
2. The curvilinear topography of the eastern ancient river trace is suitable – OK.



Hình 4. Kết quả sau khi đặt Hình số 3 lên ảnh vệ tinh Google Earth.
Figure 4. Result after placing Figure 3 on Google Earth satellite image.

Tuy vẫn còn các sai số chưa thể triệt tiêu được, nhưng đây là kết quả tốt nhất mà chúng ta có được cho tới lúc này.

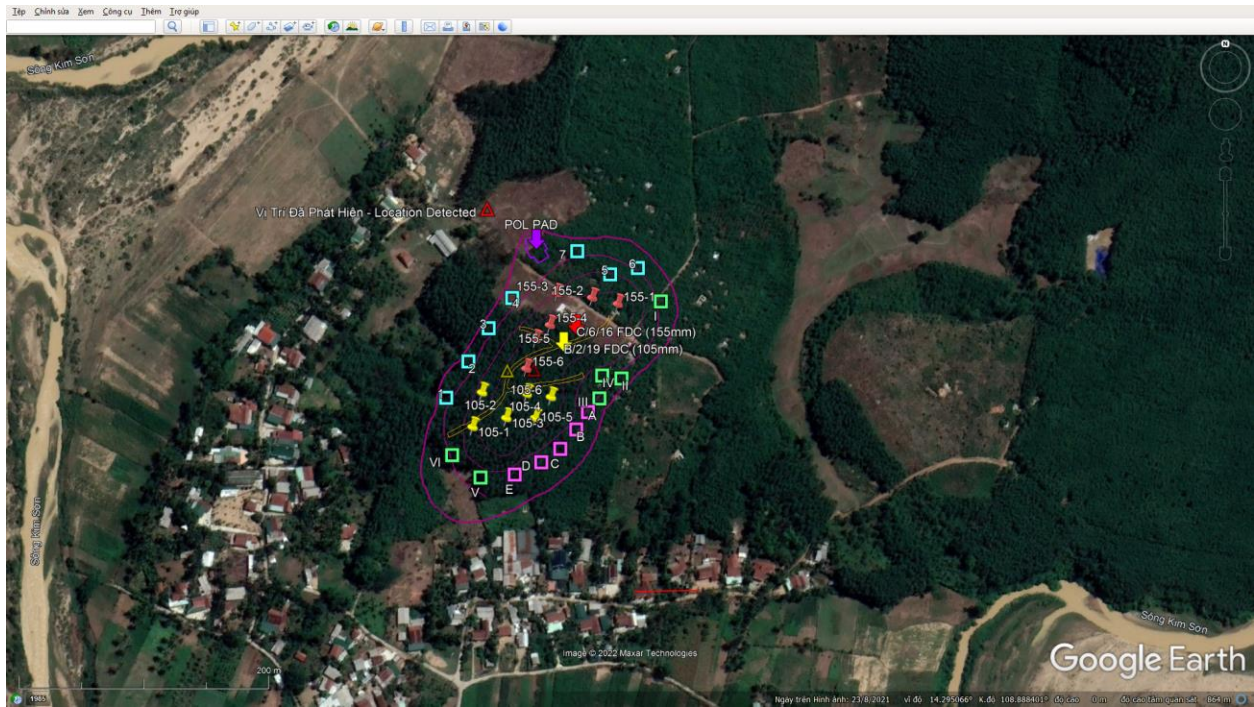
Although there are still errors that cannot be eliminated, this is the best result we have so far.

Có thể thấy kích thước của LZ Bird nhỏ hơn các giả thuyết của chúng ta trước đây.

It can be seen that the size of LZ Bird is smaller than our previous hypotheses.

Bước 3. Dựa vào kết quả ở trên, tôi vẽ lại chu vi của LZ Bird, vị trí các lựu pháo 155mm và 105mm, vị trí các ụ phòng ngự, vị trí bãi đáp trực thăng, rãnh và các điểm mốc khác.

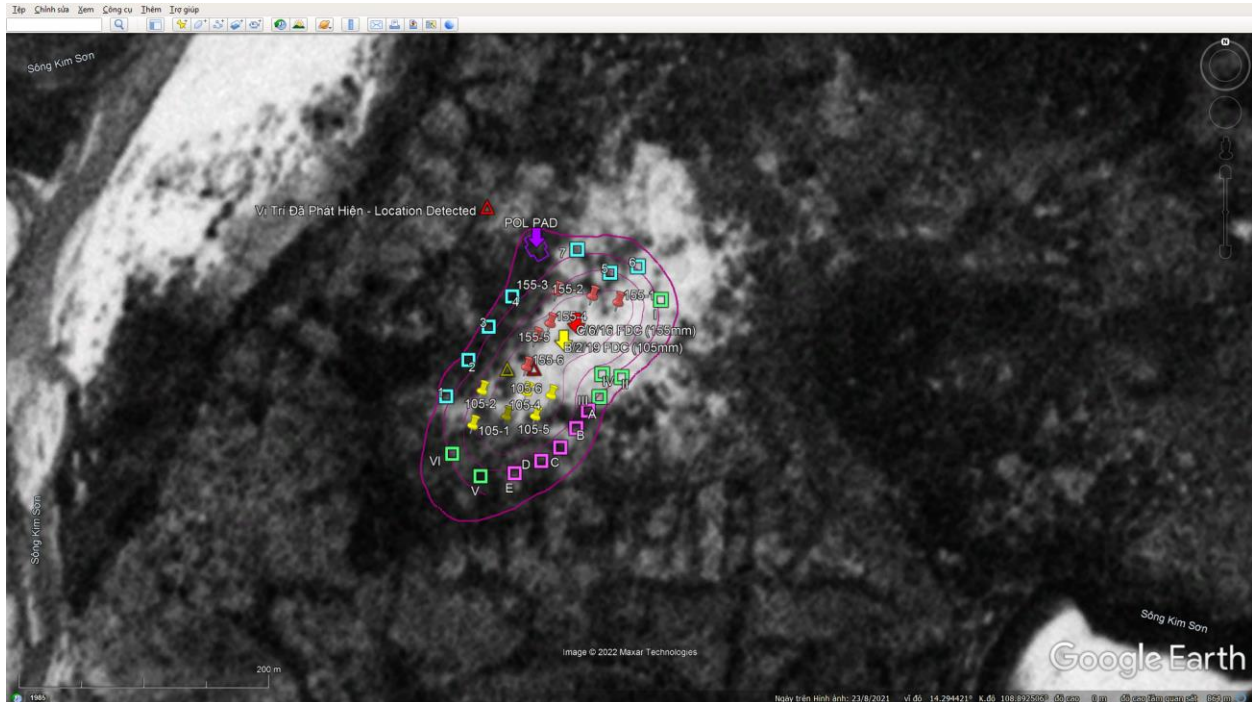
Step 3. Based on the above results, I redraw the perimeter of LZ Bird, positions of 150mm and 105mm howitzers, positions of defensive emplacements, positions of Pol Pad, Ditch and other landmarks.



Hình 5. Sau khi định vị các đối tượng từ các bản đồ lên Google Earth.
Figure 5. After locating objects from maps to Google Earth.

Bước 4. Đối chiếu và so sánh sơ đồ này với các dấu vết trên ảnh vệ tinh chụp ngày 7 tháng 4 năm 1967, trên nền tảng Google Earth. Kiểm tra xem chúng có phù hợp với nhau hay không?

Step 4. Compare and compare this diagram with the traces on the satellite image taken on April 7, 1967, on the Google Earth platform. Check if they match or not?



Hình 6. Sơ đồ đã được so sánh với ảnh vệ tinh chụp ngày 7 tháng 4 năm 1967.

Figure 6. The diagram has been compared with satellite images taken on April 7, 1967.

Có thể thấy chúng phù hợp với nhau. Các dấu vết thay đổi bề mặt ở hướng đông bắc và hướng đông của LZ Bird có thể giải thích là do các vụ nổ của đạn pháo binh bắn vào các hướng tấn công chính của đối phương. Thao tài liệu báo cáo sau trận đánh có hơn 1.000 quả đạn pháo đã được sử dụng.

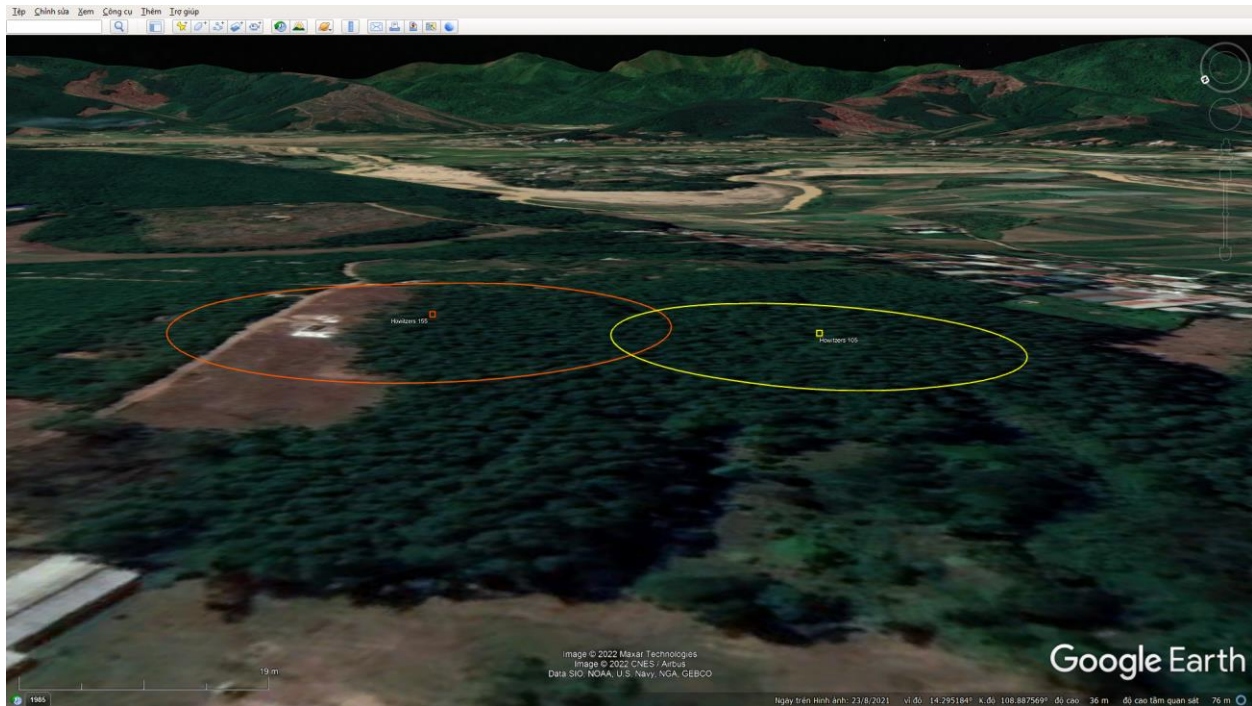
It can be seen that they are compatible with each other. The surface changes in the northeast and east of the LZ Bird can be explained by the explosions of artillery shells fired at the main enemy attack directions. Post-battle documents reported that more than 1,000 shells were used.

Các đối tượng nhỏ bên trong LZ Bird có những sai lệch nhất định vì dữ liệu đầu vào của chúng ta là các sơ đồ được vẽ tay, chỉ mang tính ước lệ. Nhưng chúng ta vẫn có thể thấy cụm lựu pháo 155mm (màu cam) ở phía bắc - đông bắc và cụm lựu pháo 105 mm (màu vàng) ở phía nam - tây nam cách biệt nhau như hai bậc thềm.

The small objects inside the LZ Bird have certain deviations because our input data are hand drawn diagrams, which are approximate only. But we can still see the cluster of 155mm howitzers (orange) in the north - northeast and 105 mm howitzers (yellow) in the south - southwest separated like two steps.

Giới hạn phía đông bắc có lẽ chính xác, vì bên ngoài là triền dốc tự nhiên.

The northeastern limit is probably correct, since the outside is a natural slope.



Hình 7. Vị trí cụm pháo 155mm và cụm pháo 105mm trên giả lập địa hình của Google Earth.
Figure 7. Location of 155mm cannon cluster and 105mm cannon cluster on Google Earth's terrain simulator.



Hình 8. Đánh dấu vị trí cụm pháo 155mm, cụm pháo 105mm và bãi trực thăng (POL PAD) trên ảnh panorama chụp từ hướng tây về hướng đông thực địa chụp từ flycam.
Figure 8. Mark the position of the 155mm cannon cluster, 105mm cannon cluster and POL PAD on the panorama image taken from the west to the east in the field taken from the drone.

Dựa vào kết quả qua sơ đồ này, chúng ta có thể sơ bộ có các kết luận như sau:

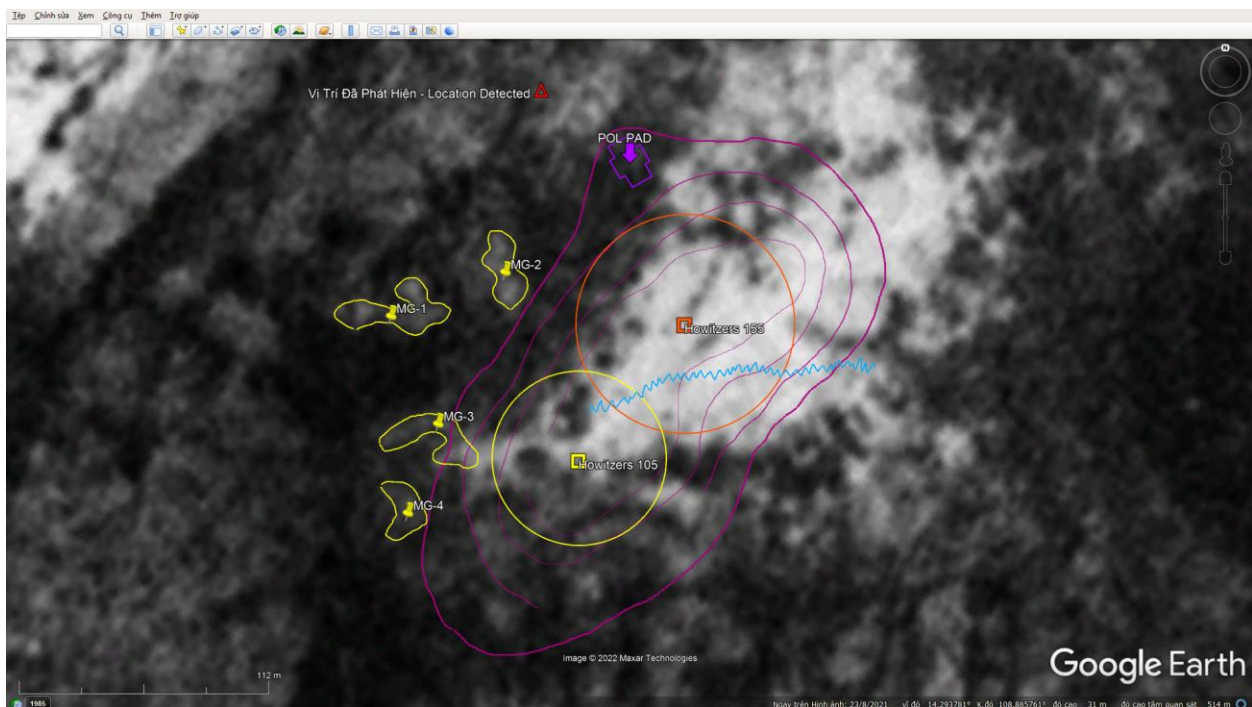
1. Chúng ta có thể thấy vị trí đã phát hiện hài cốt các liệt sĩ ở rất gần phía tây của bãi đáp trực thăng. Như vậy, đây là ngôi mộ nhỏ, được chôn thủ công như các nhân chứng đã mô tả.
2. Còn ngôi mộ lớn vẫn chưa được phát hiện.

Based on the results through this diagram, we can roughly draw the following conclusions:

1. We can see the location where the remains of the martyrs were discovered very near the west side of the helipad (POL PAD). As such, this is a small mass grave, hand-buried as described by eyewitnesses.
- 2 The large mass grave remains undiscovered.

Bước 5. Tiếp theo, chúng tôi tìm kiếm bất kỳ dấu vết nào bất thường trên bề mặt của bức ảnh vệ tinh chụp ngày 7 tháng 4 năm 1967 khu vực phía tây của sơ đồ LZ Bird, đánh dấu định vị nó và đặt tên cho chúng.

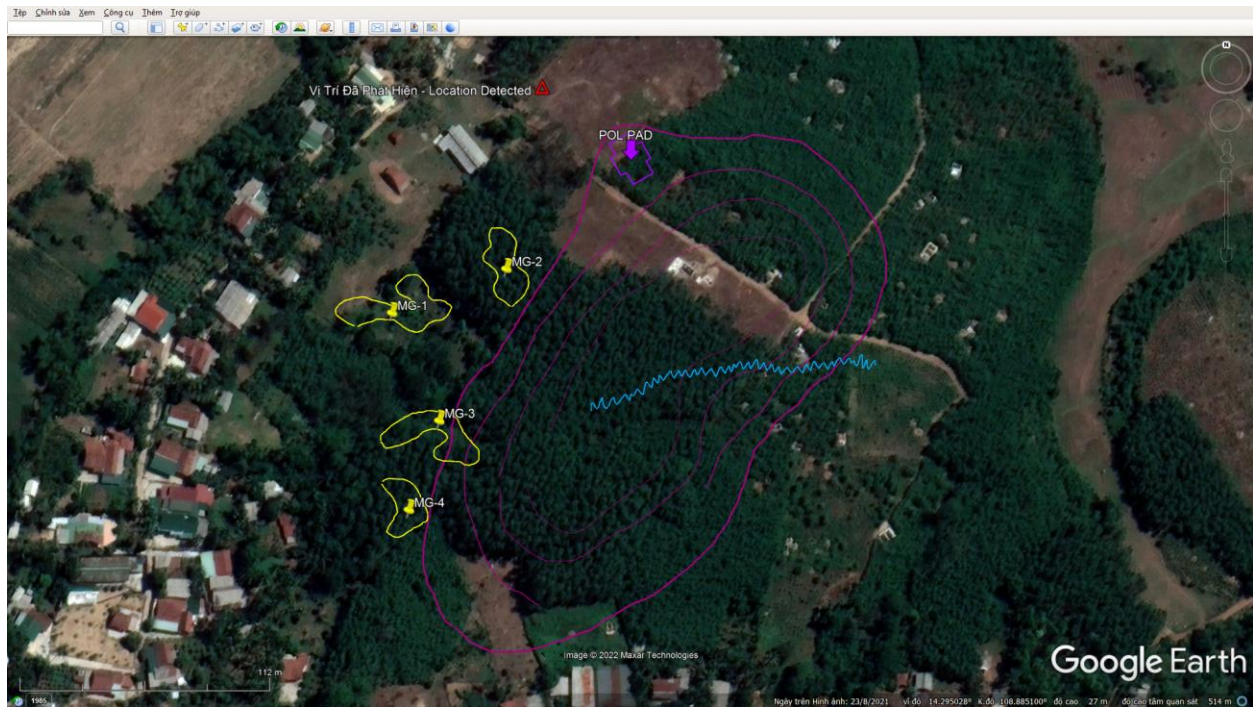
Step 5. Next, we looked for any surface anomalies in the April 7, 1967 satellite image west of the LZ Bird diagram, localized it, and named them.



Hình 9. Đánh dấu, khoảng vùng các dấu vết bất thường trên bề mặt của bức ảnh vệ tinh chụp ngày 7 tháng 4 năm 1967 khu vực phía tây của sơ đồ LZ Bird, Đặt tên cho chúng là MG-1, MG-2, MG-3, MG-4.
Figure 9. Marking, area of irregularities on the surface of satellite image taken on April 7, 1967, area west of LZ Bird diagram, Name them MG-1, MG-2, MG-3, MG-4.

Bước 6. Tiếp theo, chúng ta chuyển các vị trí đã được đánh dấu này lên ảnh vệ tinh Google Earth hiện đại. Sau đó sẽ chuyển cho đội tìm kiếm để họ thăm dò và khai quật.

Step 6. Next we transfer these marked locations onto modern Google Earth satellite images. It will then be transferred to the search team for exploration and excavation.



Hình 10. Các vị trí nghi ngờ ngôi mộ lớn được định vị trên ảnh vệ tinh hiện đại của Google Earth.

Figure 10. The suspected mass grave sites are located on modern satellite images of Google Earth.

Vui lòng hãy theo dõi kĩ các bước lập luận và đưa ra ý kiến phản biện.

Please see the reasoning steps. And please give feedback if any.

Cảm ơn rất nhiều!

Thankyou very much!

Phụ lục – Appendix

Ở tọa độ 14.296053° - 108.887137° (cách tâm của LZ Bird khoảng 125m về hướng Tây Bắc), chúng tôi đã dùng flycam chụp ảnh panorama 360° toàn bộ khu vực. Dựa vào hình dáng núi đồi xung quanh, chúng tôi đã xác định được hướng của các hình ảnh tư liệu đã được chụp.

At coordinates 14.296053° - 108.887137° (about 125m from the center of LZ Bird to the northwest), we used a drone to take 360° panorama photos of the entire area. Based on the shape of the surrounding mountains and hills, we were able to determine the orientation of the documentary images that were taken.



Photo 1 NE – Photo 2 E-NE



Photo 3 SW



Photo 4 – NW



Photo 5 – E-NE

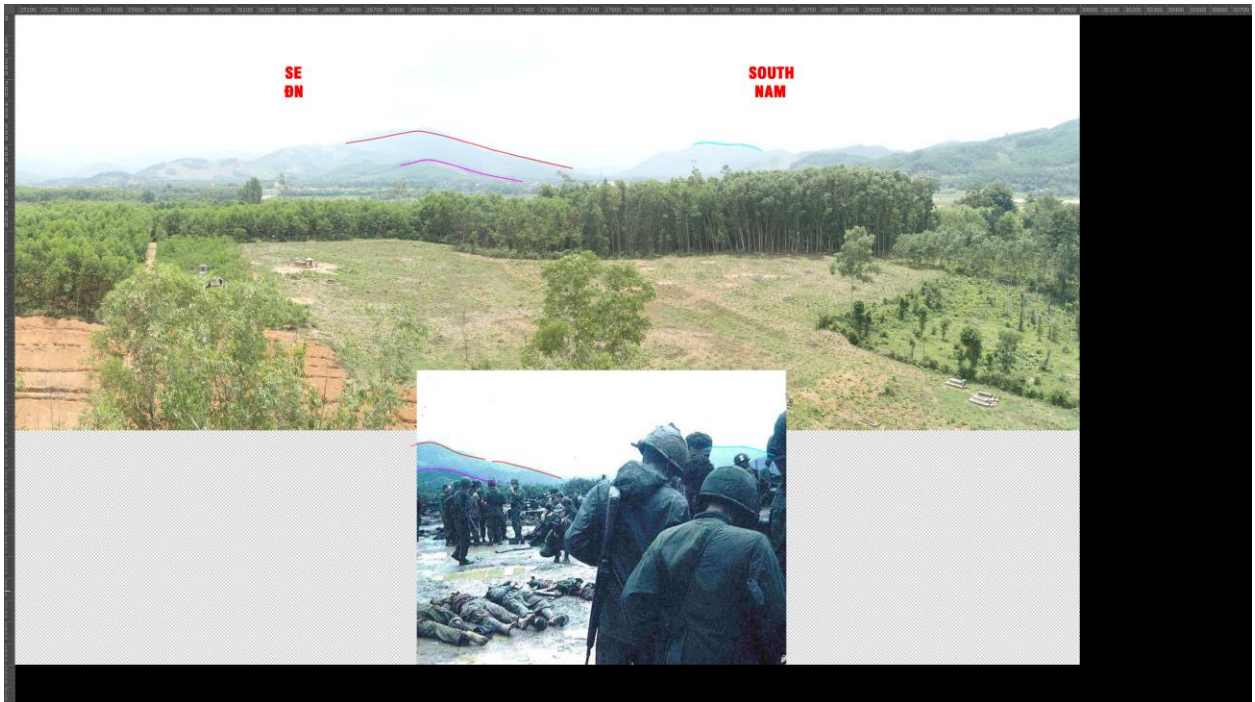


Photo 6 – S-SE

12th CAV News



Thomas Lon Crabtree
195 Buzz Street # 18
Branson, MO 65616
432-853-4851
MMCTLC3@aol.com
www.12thCav.US



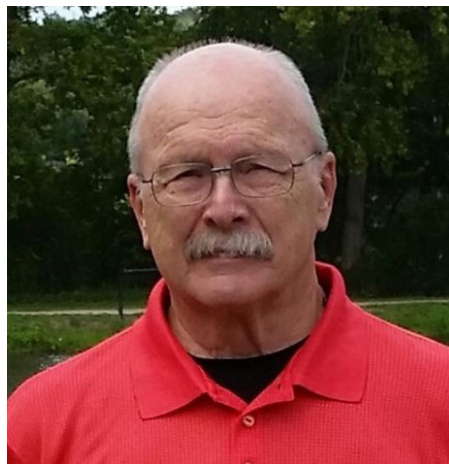
Salute-Semper Paratus!

SITUATION REPORT: Maggie and I are still landed in Branson. We thought we would be Florida homesteaders by now. Due to a difference in contract price on a newly built house in the Villages and appraiser's valuation of 39,000 less than asking price, we backed out. Went to plan B on an optional property, the inspection revealed too many hidden defects. We are now on plan C, hovering in the Ozarks until the market stabilizes and cools down from hyperinflation in the Florida Shangri-La, while we ask the chief chopper pilot if there is a different AO to insert us in. With Veterans activities busy season May-November coming on, we will be here until end of September. As it is, we are 'Always Ready' to carry on.

12 Cavalry Reunion 7-11 September 2022 Branson, MO. Hotel reservation information and reunion registration forms are on the web site. You can download the form to register, fill out and mail to Thomas "Bullitt" Paoli, D Co, 2-12, 1970-71. At the 'Saturday Night Live' Banquet, the baton for the 12 Cavalry Reunion will be officially handed from Thomas Crabtree to Fred Wilson, D Co, 2-12, 1969-70 and "Bullitt" D Company, 2-12 1970-71 - "Boot to Boot" Brothers!

DEPARTED TROOPER:

Kenneth G. Howser, Jr. headed to Fiddlers' Green 20 March 2022 after a long battle with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS-Lou Gehrig's Disease). Ken served with A Company, 2-12 Cavalry 1969-70. Ken was a member of Chapter 304 Vietnam Veterans of America, 7th Cavalry and 12th Cavalry Associations. He served as Secretary for 12th Cavalry Association 2006-2017. He graduated Damascus High School, Damascus, MD where he excelled in Track and Field and attended Montgomery Junior College and Frostburg State University. On discharge from the Army, he went to work for the U.S. Postal Service, retiring after 34 years. Ken was a devoted servant as an Honor Guard and represented the 12th Cavalry at numerous services for 1st Cavalry Division Troopers. He leaves behind his wife Karen, three daughters and nine grandchildren. As an ever-ready presence at the reunions, Ken was a purveyor of camaraderie and 'esprit de corps.' He will be missed by all who knew him-Slow Hand Salute Brother Ken-condolences to the family.



CORRECTIONS TO MARCH/APRIL COLUMN: Photo of Saint Maurice Award Ceremony, wrongly identified Trooper to left of Thomas Crabtree stated as Eddie Moon-is Dave Corcoran -my apologies to Dave for this error. COL John Gergulis was awarded the Doughboy Medallion in 2019-not 2020. LTC Chuck Rose was designated a Centurion Aug 2021. These discrepancies were brought to my attention by Tom Kjos standing to my right in the photo-Thanks Tom for the heads up.

RECENT AWARD MARCH 2022: MAJ (R) Raymond Welch, Jr, C Company, 2-12 Cavalry 1965-66, was presented the Lifetime Achievement Award by KY 13th Region Sports Association of Broadcasters, Newspaper Journalists and Photographers for his commitment to high school sports

photography and support of student athletes, since 1991, in the 13th region which encompasses Whitley, Clay, Bell, Knox, Harlem, and Laurel counties in the state of Kentucky. Congratulations to MAJ Ray! He also enjoys taking great snapshots of the Division and 1st Cavalry activities at the reunions. Check out his top-notch work!



12 CAV VETERANS ASSIST NVA VETERANS, LZ BIRD: September 2017 we initiated audio-video recordings for a 12 Cavalry Vietnam Documentary. From some of the interviews, Bob March of D Co, 1-12, 1965-66, pieced together a film clip of Delta Troopers in the 1965-66 time period. He posted the film to YouTube; it caught the attention of Vietnamese veterans and a historian named Alexia from Binh Dinh Province. Alexia had coordinated Veterans in the area who had shared their stories and contacted Bob March with interest in the shared stories of both sides of the Vietnam War.

On 10 January 2022, Bob received an email from, Dang Ha Thuy, MAJ (R), Gold Star Sao Vang Division.

"My name is Dang Ha Thuy, I am a former soldier in Binh Dinh Province. I am looking for information about the mass grave of my comrades buried by U.S. Military. When our unit ambushed the Xuan Son-LZ artillery base at dawn on December 26, 1966, many comrades were sacrificed. I am older and have been looking for this job for many years. All information is valuable.



MAJ Thuy

This has spiritual significance for Vietnamese people, 1-12 battalion defended this base and directly participated in the battle. I apologize if this bothers you. Our veterans look forward to helping American Veterans. Regards!"



Linh at Dig

Imagine the adrenaline rush when Bob contacted me about these communications. Alexia and MAJ Thuy had planned with Linh Hoang Le (Linku), reporter/producer with VTV4 (Vietnam TV) in Hanoi to film the search process. Comar Johnson, Ivory Whitaker, Spencer Matteson, Thomas Crabtree, Doug Warden were all contacted by Bob to schedule a Zoom link up with Linh. On March 9, 12, 21, and 22 we connected with Linh and the search detail on LZ Bird. The search detail was comprised of local villagers, active-duty Vietnamese soldiers, and Linh's production crew. On each of these days we communicated with the people three and one-half hours each day. Jiggling our

memories, we offered our views of where the burial site was, interacting with the detail supervisor, active-duty MAJ Phan Than Tan.

Some remains were gathered along with shoes, packs, and assorted other materials. A memorial to the fallen NVA troops was constructed and a ceremony planned. We were invited to attend the ceremony but unable to due to time constraints. During the link up sessions, Linh did brief interviews with those of us linked in to use in a future documentary. His vision-to produce a documentary about LZ Bird from both the 22d NVA soldiers' perspectives and C Co, 1-12 Troopers, who were in this battle. Steve Hassert of C Co, 1-5 joined us briefly on March 22. After the major thrust of the fight, Troops from C 1-5 and 1-9 came onto the LZ as support and to help gather the bodies for burial as well as evacuating our own casualties. A dozer was brought in by crane chopper and the decision as to where to dig for burial was made by Comar Johnson, C Co, 1-12, 3d Platoon Sergeant.



Dig at Bird

This project has been the buzz throughout Vietnam since January. When we first got together my immediate thought was, I should be there, knowing that we could be of greater help in person. It is not yet complete, and another ceremony is planned for the whole Province of Binh Dinh, which we have been invited to attend if possible.

Much has been written about LZ Bird by many who were not even close and some written by those of us who were there. LZ Bird will be a controversial story among military historians a hundred years from now, just as it has been amongst those of us who were there, for the past 55 years. Should Linh's documentary come about, it will be a resolution to one of the most misunderstood battles of the Vietnam War. It behooves those of us who remain (which are few) from that battle, to do everything possible to contribute our stories along with the enemy we faced. For 55 years, I have always thought it would be an interesting and enlightening experience to sit down with those we faced in battle with a few 'Bau Moi Baus' and compare our views from then and now. I think we would discover we have more in common with our former, tough, and capable enemy soldiers, than we do with most of our 'baby boomer' acquaintances and former school mates.

For those who are not familiar with the Battle of LZ Bird, it was a short lived but significant fight with a well-trained and competent enemy-9th, 8th, and 7th Battalions of the 22D NVA Regiment. At 0105 hrs, 27 December 1966, they overran LZ Bird. Charlie Co, 1-12 had been dispatched to perimeter duty at Bird after the Battle at 506 Valley, 16-17 December 1966. In 506 Valley major casualties accrued to Charlie and Delta Company. Delta Company remnants had been placed on Pony after 506. With 112, B Co, 2-19th Artillerymen at Bird and 84 C Co, 1-12 Troopers, we outnumbered by 750 PAVN Soldiers. After the battle, with dispatched patrols brought in, C Co had only 24 men remaining. 29 KIAs and WIA ratio of 5 to 1 was the toll for this 'Stand at Bird.' Numerous medals for Valor were awarded to American Troops for their stand. The first Medal of Honor to a 1-12 Cavalry Trooper was awarded to SSG Delbert O. Jennings.

Earlier, I mentioned the adrenaline rush that came when Bob March first contacted me, and it has been surging during this write up. I think of the possibilities in Linh's proposed documentary and how it plays into our own project we started in September 2017. I encourage ALL to view the news clips Linh has produced for this link up. They can be accessed on Delta Company 1-12 web site at <www.cattrack6india.com>. You can read Bob March's outstanding article about LZ Bird and our link up with Linh and crew in Boot to Boot, Delta Company Newsletter on the site.

Look for more about the progress of this project and the LZ Bird story in July/August, September/October, and November/December issues. See you all in Dayton, OH in July and Branson, MO in September.

Until then- "Soar with the Chief Chopper Pilot, Walk Lightly with the Head Point Man, Roll with the Lead Tanker!"

CRABTREE OUT