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ANNUAL HISTORICAL SUPPLEMENT

CALENDAR YEAR 1968

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HEADQUARTERS

212TH FIELD ARTILLERY GROUP

FORT LEWIS, WASHINGTON 98433

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25 FEBRUARY 1969

Floyd W. Crouse Jr.

FLOYD W. CROUSE JR.

1LT, FA

UNIT HISTORIAN

John V. McLain

JOHN V. McLAIN

COL, FA

COMMANDING

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

FOREWORD 3

CHAPTER 1 - ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

SECTION I - Mission 4

SECTION II - Organization 4

SECTION III - Personnel 4

CHAPTER 2 - MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

SECTION I - General 6

SECTION II - Training and Exercise 8

SECTION III - Logistics 9

SECTION IV - Community Relations and Public Information 9

CHAPTER 3 - MAJOR PROBLEMS

SECTION I - Manpower 9

SECTION II - Equipment 9

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FOREWORD

This history supplement was compiled from official records located at Headquarters, 212th Field Artillery Group for the express purpose of updating the records of unit activities.

This supplement contains a summary of the mission, organization, and major accomplishments of the unit.

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I. MISSION. The mission of the Headquarters, 212th Field Artillery Group is the administrative supervision and tactical control of its attached battalions and chemical company.

II. ORGANIZATION. While stationed in Europe, Headquarters, 212th Field Artillery Group was organized under USAREUR MTOE 6-401E, dated 31 December 1966. Since 9 April 1968, Headquarters, 212th Field Artillery Group has been located in CONUS and organized under MTOE 6-401E, dated 30 August 1968. The total authorized strength of the headquarters is 18 officers, 98 enlisted men, and 1 warrant officer.

III. PERSONNEL.

1. Personnel strength for this headquarters averaged 85% of TOE. The present for duty strength was considerably lower than this. Many key personnel have been lost on levies to Vietnam, Seventh Army area, and Eighth Army area.

2. Colonel John V. McLain is the ninth commanding officer of the 212th Field Artillery Group. His credentials are more than adequate.

A. Colonel John V. McLain was born in Centralia, Illinois on 19 July 1920. He is a graduate of the University of Maryland, and has a B.S. degree in Political Science. In February 1950, he married Miss Evelyn Anne Craig from Charlotte, North Carolina. Colonel and Mrs. McLain have four children.

B. Colonel McLain enlisted in the Illinois National Guard 19 November 1940, was called to active duty on 5 March 1941, and was commissioned in the Field Artillery on 8 July 1943. He is a

graduate of the Battery Executive Course, Fort Sill, Oklahoma; Artillery Officer's Advanced Course, Fort Sill, Oklahoma; Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas; Armed Forces Staff College, Norfolk, Virginia; and the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

C. Colonel McLain has commanded two artillery batteries, the 1st Target Acquisition Battalion, and the 212th Artillery Group. With respect to staff assignments, he has served as a Battalion S-3; Battalion Executive Officer; Division Artillery Assistant S-3; Regular Army Instructor for the North Carolina National Guard; on the staff and faculty at the Artillery School as a gunnery instructor and later as a tactical officer in the Officer Candidate School; in the Directorate of Doctrine of the Combat Developments Command as the officer responsible for establishing doctrine for the employment of tube, rocket, and missile artillery through the time frame of 1990; on the Department of the Army General Staff; and in the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

D. Colonel McLain's awards and decorations include the American Defense Service Medal, American Campaign Medal, Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal with one bronze star, Philippine Liberation Ribbon with one bronze star, World War II Victory Medal, Army of Occupation Medal, National Defense Service Medal with one cluster, Army Commendation Medal with two clusters, Legion of Merit, Department of the Army General Staff Identification Badge, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff Identification Badge. Colonel McLain has commanded the 212th Artillery Group since 18 July 1967.

I. GENERAL.

1. In December 1967, Colonel John V. McLain assembled his staff and other key personnel to inform them that the 212th Field Artillery Group would be one of the major units to be moved from Europe to the United States. The headquarters would move on 9 April 1968 and the battalions would follow at a later date.

2. The 212th Field Artillery Group, while stationed in Europe, consisted of the following units:

4th How Bn, 18th Arty

1st Rkt Bn, 32nd Arty

2nd How Bn, 75th Arty

2nd How Bn, 83rd Arty

B Btry, 1st TAB, 26th Arty

Of these units, only the 4th How Bn, 18th Arty returned to CONUS.

3. The advanced party left for Fort Lewis, Washington, its new home on 9 February 1968. The advance party consisted of two officers and nine enlisted men. By keeping the commanding officer informed of all its activities, the advanced party later proved to be a great asset to the unit's smooth transition from Europe to the United States.

4. One of the many responsibilities facing the unit before it left Europe was the pre-positioning of all equipment. Each item of equipment that was to be pre-positioned had to be combat ready. As an aid to the unit in this mission, the 2nd Support Brigade, Hanau, Germany gave the unit three inspections of all equipment at various intervals (D-90, D-60,

and D-30). On 18 March 1968, the unit left Hanau by convoy to Karlsruhe, Germany to pre-position equipment. The pre-positioning period was 18-22 March 1968. However, the unit did such an efficient job of pre-positioning its equipment that it took only two days; hence, all personnel returned to Hanau on 20 March 1968.

5. On 9 April 1968, Headquarters, 212th Field Artillery Group was airlifted from Rhein Main Air Base, Frankfurt, Germany and arrived at McChord Air Base, Tacoma, Washington. The plane was greeted by Major General William W. Beverley, Commanding General, Fort Lewis, Washington. The nucleus of the 212th Field Artillery Group had arrived in the States and would assume control over two units already located at Fort Lewis. These were as follows:

1st Bn (HJ), 20th Arty

1st How Bn (Comp), 82nd Arty

Other units from Europe would soon follow the headquarters and assume their places within the Group. These units arrived as follows:

2nd How Bn, 37th Arty arrived from Bad Kissingen, Germany on 23 April 1968.

4th How Bn, 18th Arty arrived from Hanau, Germany on 2 June 1968.

2nd How Bn, 18th Arty arrived from Kassel, Germany on 4 July 1968.

2nd How Bn, 34th Arty arrived from Nurnberg, Germany on 2 August 1968.

II. TRAINING AND EXERCISES.

1. The 212th Field Artillery Group participated in USAREUR FTX "Long Cartridge" from 5 to 8 February 1968. It was the last training exercise the Group participated in while located in Europe.

2. The Group did not have much time to adjust to duty in the States before it was called upon to administer an ATT to the 1st BN (HJ), 20th Arty, during the period 13 to 24 May 1968. The 212th Field Artillery Group moved to the Yakima Firing Center and gave practice and actual tests to the 1st Bn (HJ), 20th Arty. The actual test was conducted on 21 - 22 May 1968 and the 1st Bn (HJ), 20th Arty passed with a rating of "combat ready".

3. The 1st Bn, 82nd Arty, which the Group assumed control of upon arriving at Fort Lewis, was undergoing training forVietnam. Battery ATT's and the final battalion ATT were administered by the Group as follows:

A Btry tested 7 May 1968

B Btry tested 9 May 1968

C Btry tested 10 May 1968

D Btry tested 6 May 1968

Battalion tested 18 - 19 June 1968.

The results of all tests were "combat ready" and on 30 July 1968 the 1st How Bn, (comp), 82nd Artillery departed for Vietnam.

4. The 45th Chemical Company (Smoke Generator) was attached to the 212th Field Artillery Group on 27 September 1968. On 21 and 22 November 1968, it was given its ATT by Headquarters, 212th Artillery Group. The

results of the test were "combat ready".

III. LOGISTICS. The Group was forced to borrow equipment and use field expedients while administering all ATT's because of a lack of equipment, especially communications equipment. The Group was fortunate in being able to borrow enough equipment to accomplish its mission; however, this lack of equipment was one of the greatest problems that faced the Group in 1968.

IV. COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION. The 212th Field Artillery Group has participated in several parades for the surrounding communities, had 100% participation for the United Good Neighbors Fund Drive, and has had several equipment displays that were open to the general public.

MAJOR PROBLEMS

I. MANPOWER. The Group has been drained of considerable manpower. Key personnel and personnel with critical MOS's have been levied for various locations while at the same time these personnel were not replaced. There has been such a shortage that the commanding officer of the Group was forced to consolidate certain types of training at Group level.

II. EQUIPMENT. Communications equipment was not made available to the Group until very late in 1968 and then only in small amounts. This has caused units to borrow equipment in order to complete necessary field training. By the end of 1968, it appeared that the Group would get some equipment early in 1969.