

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
O'Fallon, Illinois 62269
8 March 1996

Dick,

I get your letter yesterday and I sure was glad to hear from you. THANK
YOU for the application form for the Vietnam Helicopter Crew Members Association. I want to join it, but I'm going to talk to you about it before I do.

I really should write you a much longer letter than this, but -as of now- I am really pressed for time. I am going down to the coast the day after tomorrow (least I ~~HOPE~~ I will) -the Gulf coast that is- and I have got, ~~to~~ after I get back, to study for midterm exams. I'm going to school, and as I'm sure you know, the middle of the semester is when all hell breaks loose.

As of two weeks from today, it will be exactly 30 years from the day when I joined the Army. My first years in it wasn't a good one, and I wish now I would have been much more wise and aware of what I would have wanted and what I would have liked. In other words, I wish I would have skipped that infantry bit and gone right on into aviation right from the very beginning. Had I done that, I might even have lucky enough to have gone over to Vietnam with the 188th when the company deployed from Fort Campbell. If given it to do over, it would definitely be different.

All that you told me has been on my mind a lot lately. For many years I had been trying to find someone from the 188th back at Dau Tieng and I had wondered what had become of that unit. It was a unit like no other -I'll vouch for that! It was a unit that had it's problems (as all units did), but the men in it stuck together and were loyal to the unit; it was an "all for one and one for all" type of unit. Definitely and without a doubt, it

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was a tightly knit and cohesive type of unit. I cannot say the same thing about the Little Bears. Not that it was a bad unit (for a while it was, but usually it wasn't), but the flight crews just simply had less in common than they did in your unit. In your unit it was very much the same type of mission work for everybody (especially in the Gun Platoon). In the Little Bears it was more a matter of different people going different directions. Your unit had a mission that was more specialized; my unit had a mission that was more generalized. But in any outlook, aviation was aviation and in Vietnam it was the place to be. I did it then; I'd do it again.

There's something I would like for you to research and something I want to ask you about: On page 5 of your writing you make reference to when the 188th left Dau Tieng to move north and you left behind one maintenance aircraft and two UH-1Cs that were not flyable at the time. My questions are: Wasn't the maintenance aircraft a UH-1D? Was it a SP4 Barber who was crew-chief on it? The reason I ask is because I think we (in the Little Bears) got it. I remember right around that time frame we did get a D model Huey from the 269th Battalion. It had the target on the tailboom. I painted over the target -with OD paint- myself. I think the bullseye in the middle was red (which if so would have been 188th). It could possibly have been a 187th aircraft (I don't remember what color their bullseye was), but I knew for sure it was either 187th or 188th that it had come from. As for the UH-1Cs you left behind, I think that the 242nd (Muleskinners) got one of them or maybe both of them. So please think and see if you can remember, will you? If SP4 Barber was the crewchief on that UH-1D you left behind,

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then now you knew what happened to it -we got it! Really, it would be interesting to know for sure and I would like to know if I am right in what I have guessed.

Well, I'd better draw up this letter. The mail carrier will be here soon and I've got some things I need to get on with. I'll write again soon. Take care now.

As Ever,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Frank".