

How the Third Herd was able to foil the surprise night attack planned by the 33rd North Vietnamese Army Regiment, In Pleiku Province, Republic of South Vietnam on May 28-29th, 1966.

It is believed that the majority of NVA forces around LZ 10A, immediately upon the start of the artillery preparation at the wrong LZ, deployed in the direction to engage the American forces, who would land there, following the artillery. At any rate, the NVA defending 10 ALPHA were not prepared to receive B Company, and, with the aid of tactical air strikes, were quickly routed, although at the cost of one platoon leader killed and about ten men wounded immediately.

General Walker, realizing the significance of the captured anti-aircraft weapons, all of which were new, ordered the shift to 1stBN, 35th Inf. in to A.O. 10.

We came into 10 ALPHA on Huey's in the late afternoon, probably around 4:00pm on May 28th 1966. We came in low and fast. We could see soldiers from company B, 2ndBN 35th Inf. standing alone in their positions. At the time I didn't think too much about why these guys were in one-man positions. We didn't know they had been hit pretty hard.

We had heard it was hot, but we didn't know the situation yet. When our chopper landed, we deployed to the left side of the LZ....away from the 2nd/35th.

My platoon, the third platoon, was sitting in positions when Major Tyson came from my left and said a few words about small arms and mortar fire, then disappeared into the forest and the darkness. He was moving down the line to our right. It turned into the darkest night I ever experienced in Viet Nam, that old saying about not being able to see your hand in front of your face....well at 10 ALPHA it was true.

The big fight took place during the night of 28-29 May 1966 and during the day of 29 May. It was fought by Task Force Tyson.

I was in position with Wallace Edward Pilson. Pilson was my best friend in Viet Nam, we had met in Germany around 1963 and we both re-enlisted for the 11th Armored Cavalry which was due to go back to the states shortly, and seeking re-enlistments to gyro with them back to Ft. Mead, MD. we both went to Schofield Barracks in Hawaii, where we joined the 25th Inf. Div. in 1965 and later went to Viet Nam.

Pilson was killed at 10 ALPHA, shot right beside me. We were always together in Viet Nam, and Pilson and I noticed this Vietnamese soldier shooting at our men from a tree so we decided to get him in a cross fire. I was to move to the left where I could get a clear shot at him and Pilson was to move to the right, but as soon as we started to move a bullet hit Pilson in the left side of his chest. I believe it nicked his heart. I immediately tore his jungle fatigue shirt open and applied my first aid bandage to his bleeding chest, but I could see he was dying. We were able to get him medevaced, but we received word that he died later, before they reached Benmethout.

The Battle of 10 ALPHA Begins:

I, SSGT Retired Nobel Hyde, then SGT Nobel Hyde, was Sqd Ldr. 3rd Sqd, 3rd Platoon, Co. A., 1st BN., 35th Inf.—25th Inf. Division, Pleiku Providence, Republic of South Viet Nam.

The moon rose early on the 28th of May and stayed bright until about 2300 hours, when the clouds obscured it. The defense of LZ 10 ALPHA had begun. Why the NVA attacked that night and all through the next day is open to question.

Earlier during the day of the 28th

May 1966, I was informed by our Plt. RTO (Radio/Telephone Operator) that all Sqd. Leaders were to be at the Plt. CP. at approx 1530 hrs. for a briefing by our Plt. Ldr, then 1Lt Larry Connor. When I arrived at the Plt. CP. (Command Post), which was about the size of a small room, dug into the ground and constructed with sandbags, logs, ammo boxes, and anything else we could obtain to fortify the position. I was greeted by our Plt. Ldr, 1LT Larry Conner, the Plt. Sgt., SSG Jones, and several of the other squad leaders.

When the briefing began, 1Lt Connor said, Sgt Hyde, you are to select three men from your squad and occupy an LP (Listening Post), approx 100 meters from our perimeter. He went on to say "Brief your men well and make proper coordination with the Plt. that was occupying the area of exit and entrance." Needless to say, but any mission the Third Herd-(3rd Sqd.) was assigned we were able to complete successfully.

Because as Sqd. Ldr. of the 3rd Sqd. I took great pride in making sure my Sqd.

Members were trained properly in every aspect of infantry tactics, i.e.: night discipline, firing discipline, security, enemy vehicles, aircraft and personnel recognition, and all other procedures and knowledge that made a good infantryman. The three men I chose to accompany me on the LP were: 1. Robert McCauley, 2. SP/4 Huebner and 3. Richard R.

Round-Tree, and I was acting NCOIC (Non-Commissioned Officer In Charge).

I carried out my orders from my Plt. Ldr. to the letter. I then summoned the three men to accompany me on the L.P. I began their briefing by expounding on night discipline, telling them to carry nothing in their pockets, on their person that would make any noise, i.e.: keys, coins-change, etc. Also no shiny objects were to be taken. We were to carry a full basic load of ammo, grenades etc, and informed them of our move time. We would be using arm and hand signals from dusk to dark. I told them we would lock and load our weapons, placing the selector switch on safe and no one was to touch their selector switch or triggers until I gave them the order to do so.

I physically checked each man for ammo and proper equipment, coordinated with the Plt. Occupying the area of our exit, informed the Plt. CP of departure and moved out about 1730 hrs. It was just starting to get dark, so we used the darkness as camouflage for our movement into position.

We arrived at the location where we were to establish the LP. We proceeded to check the area well and occupied the LP. I immediately assigned each man a PDF (Principle Direction of Fire) and as soon as darkness-gloomed over us we set up a guard and then listened for the enemy.

Enemy Contact Made:

Four men on an LP under the supervision of Sgt. Nobel Hyde makes contact with the 33rd North Vietnamese Regiment, and thus starts the Battle of LZ 10 ALPHA.

At approx of the 29th of May. Richard Roundtree moved in close to me and said Sarge, I hear some movement to the front. I immediately alerted the other two men, then we all heard it. Movement by enemy personnel, *a lot* of movement. I called the Plt. CP and told 1Lt Connor that the enemy was moving into position for an attack to try to breach our lines and maybe hit us from the inside or maybe try to kill or capture our command personnel. He told me to make sure and then withdraw back to our perimeter. I was sure they were poised for an attack on our perimeter. So I decided to make one of the most difficult decisions of my military career.

Because I realized we were about to initiate action against a numerically superior and heavily armed North Vietnamese Army force, and all or some of us would be killed or captured. However, our mission as a LP was to disrupt enemy actions and to provide early warning to our forces and we all believed “mission first, personal safety second.”

And Then it Happened:

I told each man to move their selector switches on their M-16's to full automatic, gave them a PDF (Principal Direction of Fire) and I shouted “READY, FIRE!” and as soon as we opened fire on them they returned fire. Then I told my men to head for the perimeter and keep shouting as loud as we could “Third Herd coming in!” and then a strange thing happened. The men on the perimeter in seeing all the flashes from the enemy's weapons to their front, the entire perimeter opened fire, so me and the three men that occupied the LP were caught between two fires, the 33rd North Vietnamese Regiment to our rear and our perimeter to our front. I know it was only by the grace of God that McCauley, SP/4 Huebner and I made it into the perimeter. Richard R. Roundtree, the third man on the LP, was the first KIA at 10 ALPHA. He was wounded and lived until about 6:00am. Our medic Ehrenzweig was giving him mouth to mouth and trying to stop the bleeding. After I reached the perimeter, I told 1Lt Connor that Roundtree had been hit and was out there near an extremely large tree, he had been hit in the leg and lower back, so 1Lt Connor told me to come back with him. He and I crawled out and found Roundtree still alive and dragged him in.

The value of listening posts close to the perimeter in heavily vegetated terrain has been the subject of much discussion. Those opposed to this practice say that such close-in-listening posts do not give adequate warning, and, in the event of enemy attack, prevent the defenders from effectively firing until the members of the LP return to the perimeter.

They argue that LP's should be used, but at ranges greater than 300 meters. I, SSGT Retired Nobel Hyde, can say that this practice did not altogether hold true because I was the Sqd. Ldr.—NCOIC on the LP that detected the 33rd North Vietnamese Regiment and having only three men and myself making four total people manning the LP and were positioned approximately 100 meters from our perimeter. I know we carried

out our mission successfully because we were able to disrupt the enemy's intentions and able to alert our forces that the enemy was poised to carry out either: a sappers-night attack, breach our lines or try to kill or capture our command personnel. We lost one man, but there is a great possibility that we probably saved many lives. If the enemy had been successful in their attempts and, keeping in mind this was the 33rd North Vietnamese Regiment, not a small force by any sense of the word. They standard operating procedure (SOP) in A Co. and B Co. was that LPs would be positioned in front of each platoon at a distance from which they could be detected from the perimeter when moving about during daylight hours. This distance was usually out to between 30 and 50 meters, but you have to take under consideration the terrain, the terrain will usually dictate how far LPs should be in order to be effective.

After the LP consisting of myself—SGT Nobel Hyde—Robert McCauley and SP/4 Huebner had returned to our perimeter, the platoon returned fire as intensely as we were receiving it. Each squad had to send someone back to the CP to get more ammo. The attack continued in waves for hours. Mortars were breaking in the trees, overhead and all around us. Our mortars were giving it back to them. At one point, the NVA broke through the line and were between our positions. Muzzle flashes were all over the place. One of the machinegun positions manned by Specialists Tucker, Stevens, and Beninger, was overrun and had to withdraw to a new position. The attack intensified, 1Lt Larry Connor, Platoon Leader for the 3rd Platoon called in the mortars or artillery—I was never sure which—right down on top of us. Everyone was yelling to get down, because the H.E. (High Explosive) was going to come down on top of us, and it pretty much did. I could feel myself being lifted off the ground, being bounced just like I was on a bed with a double mattress every time a shell hit close by.

During the next 20 hours, the enemy attacked in multi-battalion strength, with uncommon determination and intensity of effort. With great professional skill, the officers and men of A Co.—our company—repelled each enemy onslaught. All out acts by all men and inspired leadership by our officers and NCOs was the order of the day.

When the roar of battle subsided, the enemy had withdrawn to reorganize his battered units, leaving 241 of his troops dead and numerous weapons as mute evidence of the intensity of the engagement and the valiant efforts of the defenders.

Through their heroic stand, another illustrious page was written in the United States military annals, honoring forever the men of Company A 1st Bn. 35th Inf. 25th Inf. Div. and providing a strong source of inspiration for all personnel within the United States Army.

The foregoing situation merited the following action by the President of the United States, then President Lyndon B. Johnson on 22 August 1968. (See Attached)

11 days later, we walked away from 10 ALPHA.

We arrived back at our base camp in Pleiku shortly after leaving 10 ALPHA. It's my understanding that the NVA unit was the 33rd NVA Regiment that the LP detected poised to attack our perimeter.

Four Days Back At Pleiku:

I was told by our Plt. Sgt., SSGT Jones, to report to the orderly room, the first thought that ran through my mind was what did I do wrong, but to my pleasant surprise it wasn't that at all. When I arrived at the Co. CP, 1SGT Alino Gaison told me to report to the CO (Commanding Officer), then Capt. Anthony Bisantz. I just knew I was in trouble then, but as I said, to my pleasant surprise it wasn't that at all. After reporting properly to the CO, Captain Bisantz told me (and these are his exact words) "SGT Hyde, you saved our butts out there on that LP that night." He went on to say "I'm going to recommend you for the Silver Star medal." But shortly thereafter, I was informed by the American Red Cross that my youngest brother had died at my home in Nashville, Tennessee, and I was approved for emergency leave right away. So I departed Vietnam on emergency leave to attend my youngest brother's interment. When I returned to Vietnam, I was never informed whether the CO had an opportunity to initiate the process and paperwork for the medal or not, because Vietnam was such a constant of the perils of war and our unit was in almost constant battle at all times. Capt. Bisantz may not have had the opportunity to complete the process but I honestly know the intent was prevalent.

So I write this synopsis to ask of whom it may concern, Could I be presented now with the medal for the action that took place on May 28-29th 1966?

I hope that whoever is responsible for approving or disapproving the presentation of military medals will take the time to read this synopsis in its entirety and not deposit it in file 13, but will do everything within their power to let this presentation be held. I know I will appreciate it just as much now, as I would have received it during the Vietnam War.

"Our Leadership in Vietnam"

I'm writing after statements about our leadership that we had in Vietnam because I truly believe that we had some of the most knowledgeable, professional, well trained officers in the whole republic of Vietnam. Our commanding officer, then Capt. Anthony Bisantz (Tony the Tiger), never once commanded our company from a desk or office. Capt. Bisantz was always out there in the heat of battle shoulder to shoulder with us. When we walked two or three days and nights, Capt. Bisantz walked. He never rode in a vehicle.

If anyone in the United States Army should receive the Congressional Medal of Honor, one Captain Anthony Bisantz is that person. I personally observed Capt. Bisantz going out and retrieving wounded soldiers numerous times, with total disregard for his life or wellbeing, I recall one specific battle when Capt. Bisantz showed no concern for

his well being. Our platoon, third platoon, had been caught in an L shaped ambush by the NVA. The fighting was so intense we had to call for reinforcements. Capt. Bisantz accompanied the reinforcements out to our location. I remember seeing Capt. Bisantz walking with an AK-47 in one hand and an M-16 in the other. He was moving and shooting, we yelled "Sir! You'd better get to cover!" but Capt. Bisantz had nerves of steel and total disregard for his own life. He killed several enemy soldiers that afternoon single-handedly. To this day I have never seen an officer quite like Capt. Anthony Bisantz.

1Lt Larry Connor was our Plt. Ldr. 3rd Plt., Co. A, 1st BN, 35th Inf., 25th Inf. Div. Lt. Connor had a superior concern for the wellbeing of his Plt. Reference the time he told me to follow him and he and I crawled forward of our perimeter in the heat of a large battle to retrieve Pvt. Roundtree. Lt. Connor was a highly trained officer in infantry tactics and fought in the same fighting positions with us at times. He always made sure we had rations, ammunition, and water, even in impossible situations.

I recall during the battle of 10 ALPHA, Lt. Connor was wounded and lying next to Plt Sgt. Williams who had been wounded also, Lt. Connor had suffered a wound to his head and abdomen, however he refused to be medevaced right away because he felt as an officer, the other men in the company that had been wounded should have priority when the dust off (medevac helicopter) arrived. I believe that spells going above and beyond the call of duty. Lt. Connor had total disregard for his life or well being, the men in our platoon always came first to our Plt. Ldr. Larry Connor and I strongly believe the Dept. of Defense, the US Army, our Govt. Officials, the Congress, or someone in a position of authority should see to it that Major (Ret). Larry Connor receive special recognition, a service medal of the highest merit or maybe a letter of commendation for service rendered in defense of our Country and our Freedom.

SSGT (Ret.) Nobel Hyde



13

Dear Friend,

I am requesting your signature as witness to the enclosed synopsis: will you please sign above your printed name and forward the sheet bearing your signature to me as soon as possible, it is very important as time is of the essence. My current address is:

Noble Hyde



Thank you in advance,
Noble Hyde

Following is a list of witnesses of the foregoing synopsis:

Anthony E. Bisantz
LTC (USA) Retired

Larry Connor
MAJ (USA) Retired

Richard E. Hunter

Russell Crawford

Talino Gaison



MILITARY DECORATIONS

The timeline for submitting decorations is two years from the date of the act or achievement. However, the Fiscal Year 1996 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), Section 526, provides an avenue for consideration of awards, or upgrading a decoration, not submitted in a timely manner. Requests not previously submitted in a timely manner will be considered under the provisions of this NDAA provision if the request is referred to the Secretary of the Air Force by a member of Congress (i.e., a recommendation letter by the member of Congress to the Secretary). Upon receiving and reviewing the recommendation, the Secretary will determine the merits of approval. Under this Act, the original or a reconstructed written award recommendation is required.

The signed recommendation may be prepared by anyone with firsthand knowledge of the member's achievements, preferably the commander or supervisor at that time. Members cannot recommend themselves.

The recommendation must include the name of the decoration; reason for recognition (heroism, achievement, or meritorious service); inclusive dates of the act; signed descriptive justification of the act; typed proposed citation; any statements from fellow comrades, eyewitness statements attesting to the act, sworn affidavits; and other documentation substantiating the recommendation. **NOTE: If an award was never processed on an individual, documentation must show that there was an intent to submit the individual. At least two personnel in the chain of command must endorse an award recommendation for that award to be processed. If a member files a request through their Congressman to the Secretary of the Air Force, they must show that they were recommended for a decoration by their chain of command.**

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can find
[Signature]*



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*Notice
here is all the info I
can find
Ben*

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TO

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