

Dewey Becht

VIET NAM TIME LINE

JUNE 10, 1969 - To Bin Hoa air base to get assigned to a company. Dave Zimmer came 2 days earlier (I reported 2 days late) and got assigned to Co. A 2/35th. I asked for the same company. No openings, so I got assigned to Co. B 2/35th. It took 4-6 days to get assigned and flown to Plieku (Camp E nari)

Helped with a village security a night or two before going out to the company. Got to the company around July 1.

Two basic "groups" of people - the montenyards and the regular Vietnamese (Oriental).

EARLY JULY - the first of the monsoon season.

Early July - sweeping near L.S. Ruth

JULY 15 - list of supplies to carry include: 4 frag grenades (4#); 2 smoke grenades (3#); 5 trip flairs (3#); 3 hand flairs (3#); 1 claymore mine (3#); 20 - 18 round magazines of M-16 ammo (10#); 6 C-ration meals (6-9#); pop - beer, two ponchos, and one poncho liner (thin comforter type blanket) (3-4#); gas mask (3#+); entrenching tool (2-3#); 5 quart of water (10#); M-16 (5-6#); and personal items (tooth brush, and paste, razor, soup, paper, pen, camera, film, etc.) Later on, the radio was added (25#) and up to four batteries (3# each).

JULY 18 - Moved from LZ Ruth to Oasis by truck.

JULY 23 - RTO now on July 22. (Old RTO went to NCO School).

Went up large hill (round, like a mole hill) covered with elephant grass - about 700' high.

JULY 26 - Waterfalls SE of Oasis - about 100' drop. The waterfall was on the I Drang River.

August 2 - Stay at F. B. to heal jungle rot.

August 23 - Start to set up new Fire Base close to Cambodia - west of Oasis. Securing two 105mm Howitzers - out of range of any other artillery.

August 18 - Recon found bunker complex that we went to check out the area of.
I got the extra M-60 - were there until early September.

September 8 - Just outside L.Z. Merideth. Went out with tanks for a short sweep along a small river. Only took food for one meal - no bed roll or tents, etc. Tanks got stuck (came to close to river in a swampy area). Three tanks, then the tank retriever stuck for the night. D-7 Cat pulled tank retriever out, then the two got the tanks out.

September 22 - On Fire Base Bison II

September 28 - 2 killed, 6 wounded. Chuppas.

September 29 - 1 killed, 1 wounded; 3rd platoon from security for artillery to join the rest of the company.

October 3 - Picked up from Chuppas and taken to Meredith (3rd platoon - other two platoons on two other Fire Bases).

October 5 - Oasis - Stand down.

October 7 - Convoy to Bahnme Thuit

Playing a lot of cards - Bridge, Spades, Hearts, Poker, Pinochle, etc.

November 25 - Back in field (how long?) On a firebase on a hill with another across on next hill. Had 6-7 recoilless rifle rounds hit between two hills. Hit area where flashes seen with mortars.

Made move from 3rd platoon to C.P.

3rd Platoon down to seven of original from when I arrived.

About 25 in 3rd Platoon now - 7 college graduates, and 7 (more or less) with some college.

When near population, kids come running out to get any food, cigarettes, or anything else they can get (all ages of children), but much of the time, we are not close to any population.

Promoted to Spec. 4 this month - pay raise (\$60 per month more)

November 28 - On Firebase with company - 3rd on patrol until yesterday (3 day sweep). 3rd had new Platoon leader and Sergeant along with a lot of new troops. 2nd to leave today for sweep. We have had C-rations all year. They come 12/case, 4 breakfast, 4 lunch, 4 dinner.

4 had a cake - pound cake (very popular), date pudding (not too popular).

4 fruits - pears, peaches, plums, apricots, apple sauce. Peaches being the popular one.

All packets had a packet with coffee, creamer, sugar, cigarettes, and T.P.

Breakfast had a cocoa packet.

Main "dish" - boned chicken, ham (Spam), some kind of beef, all smaller cans, beans and franks, beef and potatoes.

Occasionally, we get LRP (Long Range Patrol) rations - freeze dried meals - chicken and rice, chili, corned beef hash.

December 1 - On L.Z. Lynn - now on L.Z. Deane

December 4 - 10-15 miles North of Bahnme Thuit setting up a hipshoot with 4 - 105's to support troops the battalion can't reach with regular firebase artillery.

December 10, 11 - found large bunker complex - 45 bunkers, 2 mess halls, etc.
Back through complex - found explosives, 2 B-40 rounds, 4 Chicom grenades, 3200 new AK-47 rounds, and a few other things. Next morning eating a getting ready to move, about 5 NVA snuck up and hit us with B-40 RPG's and AK-47 fire. One hit on our side - RPG (B-40) hit steel helmet he was sitting on. Ivan Chalk to Battalion (rear).
We called in artillery and found a blood trail and a piece of bone. Alan Olsen was sure he shot one and blew a piece of rib bone out that we found.

December 19 - Working out of LZ Blue just South of Deane. Afternoon set up perimeter and sent out an O.P. (2 man Observation Post) on the trail we were near. Five minutes later 3 V Cong or NVA came down trail at sling arms. Shot one - other 2 got away. C. Wong (Kit Carson Scout) was with us. No return fire from them.

December 20 - 3rd Platoon ambushed 3 and got 2. At night, sprang an ambush, but were uncoordinated and blew wrong claymore mine and didn't shoot right away - no casualties.

December 25 - Alan Olsen spotted an enemy who ran into bamboo thicket. C. Wong talked into surrender.

December 26 - 2nd Platoon stayed to guard ammo, etc. found when capture was made. The rest of us joined Charlie Co.

December 27 - Lt. Thode volunteered 3rd platoon to go on a sweep. They went further than told, ran into an enemy set up down a trail that shot Tom Pakula and ran.

December 29 - January 4 - Transferred to 1st Platoon around first of the year.

January 4 - Bahnme Thuit to Camp Radcliff at An Khe

January 10 - Fire Base Armagedon

January 29 - Chinook dropped a 105 in the mountains, and we got dropped in to find it.

January 30 - Found 105. Was in a steep terrain. Was at the bottom of the hill that was almost straight down. It was a wreck, so engineers finished it off. It was stuck in barrel first to the breach.

January 31 - Into Camp Radcliff. Pulled guard on perimeter that night.

February 3 - Pulling interior guard at Camp Radcliff

February 7 - Bunker line (perimeter) guard with Herbie Sapp.

February 12 - to Enari for R&R.

February 14 - To Cam Rahn Bay

February 16 - Hawaii - 3:00

February 23 - Back to Cam Rahn Bay (8:00 p.m.)

February 24 - To Pleiku - Airforce Base

February 25 - p.m. back to Radcliff

February 27 - Company heading out to FireBase Cooper

March 8 - 2nd platoon Lt. Penman shot. Alpha Co. found a village we were trying to get to.

March 11 - March 14 - 4-5 Battallions making a circle and pushing to center. Tough terrain - Alpha Company had a guy fall down a steep side and get hurt. Our Company gets out on March 15 and let rest push closer.

March 17 - All the way to the rear to go on R&R to Hong Kong.

March 18 - Saw movie "Anzio" - also, guard duty.

March 20 - To Cam Rahn Bay and on to Hong Kong

Rumors since December-January going home early (mid April-mid May) - now are for 1st of May.

Manley, our 6 clerk, got me a stand-by R&R instead of leave, so it doesn't count against leave time. R&R 3/21-3/27.

HongKong - Ferry from mainland (Kowloon) to Hong Kong island cost 4 cents and takes about 10 minutes. Climate - cloudy. 65 degree high. 40 degree low. \$ 8.00 US = \$50.00 Hong Kong.

March 27 - Back to Cam Rahn Bay at 9:00 p.m.

March 28 - Back to An Khe

March 30 - Back to Fire Base Challenger

March 31 - Movie "Stillete"

April 2 - Back to field with Company

April 8 - Recon hit hard, and we went out to help. All over by the time we got there. Recon lost 2 KIA.

April 10 - Lt. Thode and another. Several light wounds. Found 4 dead enemy.

April 10 - back to F.B. - Rumor now - home 5-20.

April 15-17 - Building new firebase.

April 19 - Rumor - home 5/8 - 5/10

April 21 - 3rd Platoon shot at by 2 enemy. 3 wounded, but not back. One was Ron Roepke.

April 24 - 2 enemy tried to sneak up on 1st Platoon. O.P. saw them and exchanged fire - none hurt.

April 28 - All drops suspended.

May 2 - Back at F.B. (me) for E-5 board. Supposed to be on May 2, but now set for May 5.

May 7 - to Cambodia from Fire Base Merideth (convoyed from Radcliff on May 6.) Rumors of early drop are over.

May 12 - Had bad water and got dysentery in Cambodia.

Back to Fire Base Meredith. Chopper accident lost Paul Ramos and another. Landed just north of accident.

May 13 - Back to Radcliffe. Plan to either go out to Armagedon (north) or Hard Times (NE) near the coast.

May 17 - I made E-5 (still at Radcliffe)

May 21 - Out to FireBase.

May 24 - Company going out today, except 1st Platoon to go back to Radcliffe on May 25 to secure.

May 26 - Bought Cannon 8+ binoculars for \$27.50.

E-5 orders as 5/6.

Going out of Radcliffe to guard dozers (D-8's). Just ride out, sit, ride

back. Our dozer ran over a LARGE lizzard that we found. It was 5 ½' long.
Over half of that was tail.

Was to have a 3 day in country pass - not to happen now.

Gave up radio end of April.

May 31 - Headed back to LZ.

June 3 - Back to Radcliffe to process out. Received Army Commendation Medal
(everyone - almost - got one) and Air Medal - for going into unsecured LZ's
30 times or more. I go to Cam Rahn Bay on the 7th; home on the 10th.