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Authority NND 927648
By AB NARA Date 11/27/02

C/2/5 CPT MARKHAM, SSG SHOEMAKER, ETC.

LT KAIL: Well, my first question is exactly what sort of disposition were you in when this operation on the 11th started? Can you tell me where you moved out from into the AO, the contact that later developed?

CPT MARKHAM: We were blocking in the Phu Din Hamlet in Binh Dinh Province. We were blocking for an ARVN sweep to catch any enemy spillage out of their AO. They had a mechanized sweep of an area. We were on the flanks in a static blocking position.

Q. From which direction were they sweeping, sir?

A. They were sweeping from west moving east, moving in a horeshoe direction of movement, and we were on either leg, north and south leg of the horeshoe.

Q. When you moved down into this blocking position, sir, did you come down from Anchor or had you been in that area? or down that far south for a couple of days, or just how did you happen to wind up down there?

A. We came from Anchor. We had been in this area for some time. It was anticipated that it would be a very easy mission. The 4th platoon went without its mortars. We went light.

Q. What time did you move into those blocking positions, sir?

A. We were in the blocking positions by 0900 hours ready for the ARVN and the ARVN were moving by that time.

Q. Did any contact result in the ARVN's moving back through, or performing their sweep?

A. To my knowledge not a single shot was fired in anger.

Q. At what point did contact develop in the area, sir, and can you describe the big picture of that for me?

A. Well, after sitting there in a static position and having no contact, getting no enemy movement through our positions, I sent out local patrols to insure our security in the local hamlets and villages. And it started with the third platoon, LT Gerald's platoon, he sent out Sergeant Kreidler with three other men, total of four men just for a short local patrol in that area, south.

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Q. Who initially made contact, sir?

A. It was Sergeant Kreidler who saw an individual, a local VC, and he chased the individual, cornered him in a house. He tried to escape, he shot him and killed him. He was armed with grenades and dressed as a local VC. He pursued further down the trail and he saw another individual, still thinking he had just scattered local resistance, he saw another soldier and pursued him down the trail and at that time he got involved in a heavy contact.

Q. Was he by himself, sir?

A. He was still by himself with four other men; however, when he initially saw the first local VC, shot and killed him, LT Gerald, upon hearing that fire fight, he rallied, I believe it was about six other men, he himself and six other men and they pursued down the trail toward the sound to see if they could reinforce, or just to find out what was going on. And when Sergeant Kreidler then came into heavy contact, LT Gerald was only about 200 meters behind him. And upon hearing that, he followed to that action, and LT Gerald and those six men, they became in heavy contact.

Q. He had about ten men engaged in heavy contact there?

A. I believe so, I think it was about ten men. They were from the fourth platoon, from the third platoon. They were lightly armed. They had only their individual weapons.

Q. Can you give me just sort of a schematic of what happened? The way I understand it, and what I've heard so far, the way the companies, please correct me if I am wrong, the way I ~~XXX~~ got the picture was they got hit and pinned down and from there on they were trying to get wounded back and not too much maneuvering so far as the third platoon is concerned, is that pretty much the way it was?

A. Well, the third platoon found itself right in the enemy camouflaged and covered positions and they were pinned down by heavy weapons, automatic weapons and semi-automatic weapons fire and it was a question of really staying alive, not of maneuvering. And it was the second platoon and the, another, the first platoon and a portion of the third platoon that actually tried to maneuver, but as they maneuvered from the flanking positions, they

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ran into the main position. What LT Gerald and Sergeant Kreidler ran into was the out-post, the security for an estimated two enemy companies and a regimental headquarters.

Q. I understand your 16 and 26 elements were lifted down from the northern blocking position, is that right, sir?

A. That is affirmative. They were lifted down and they came in, maneuvering to the flank of what we thought was an enemy squad, the initial contact, but as we maneuvered to eliminate that squad, then the other platoon that I was with, we ran into heavy contact ourselves. Extremely well-camouflaged positions. You couldn't find him until you were right upon him and then it was point-blank range.

Q. The way I've got the picture, when contact developed that day, he was dug in right along the edge of this hill mass, right here, is that right, sir? Right in there?

A. Right, the main enemy positions was a trench that ran just like that and my contact developed right here and progressed right there and right there. Delta Company was caught out in the open ~~right~~ there as they moved in to reinforce me, they got caught above ground in these dry paddies, whereas the enemy was in a trench which varied from 10 to 15 feet deep, completely concealed and covered, and Delta Company had no idea he was in that position and they walked right into him.

Q. Well, let's get a feel for the movement of platoons now, as far as Charlie Company was concerned. Let me try to recap here to make sure that I have got it straight. The third platoon sent a patrol out and made initial contact right here?

A. That is correct.

Q. OK. The way I understand it, the third platoon, fourth platoon and your CP were in a southern blocking position, is that right?

A. This is correct.

Q. You had 16 and 26 up here?

A. That is correct.

Q. What was your first reaction? Who did you move first and can you give me an idea of how

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you maneuvered your platoons to develop this contact by platoons?

- A. The third platoon and the fourth platoon moved down initially to reinforce this contact here, but a portion of the third platoon attempted to come around and get a flanking position. When moving around, they themselves became pinned down by this position here. Then the first platoon, I believe, was lifted in at that time, in this high ground here, and then the second platoon was lifted in here. I moved forward to meet the second platoon and bring them down, since they did not know the area. And the first platoon, as soon as they landed began receiving fire and were, became embroiled in that fight and were given OPCON, or rather Delta Company assumed OPCON of them since they could not move up and reinforce Charlie Company. They had to stay with Delta Company.
- Q. Actually the enemy, then, was pretty well surrounded there initially between Delta Company and your three elements. In other words, you had people on all four sides of them it would appear to me, is that?
- A. Yess, we all four sides of them, just looking at the map, but the map doesn't show you the hedgerows.
- Q. Right. I understand that.
- A. We did not have a field for . . .
- Q. We are talking about a thousand meters too.
- A. Right.
- Q. Your first platoon slid over into Delta Company's area, the second platoon you brought up to join the third platoon, is that right, sir?
- A. That is correct.
- Q. Third and fourth?
- A. The second platoon then started moving down the trail. I was with that platoon, and they ran into, again, the second enemy disposition which we did not know existed. We were still trying to eliminate the first initial contact, and in that action lost one KIA and one or two wounded, I don't recall.

BSG SHOEMAKER . . . the balance of the third platoon there was only part of the third platoon

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in the initial contact, and then you moved forward with the balance of the third platoon.

CPT MARKHAM: Right. The third platoon didn't go down completely. They went down, third platoon minus, and then, well actually I had the third platoon minus, trying to bring them on that side.

Q. Well, how did your plan of action, what resulted from it, sir, and what time of day are we talking about by now?

A. It was about, it developed shortly before 1000 hours and it continued throughout the day with ARA getting in the battle. A Company coming up north, Delta Company on the east, and I was on the west, and partially on the south, and ARA became involved. 1/9 Cav had some elements in there. But basically it was an infantry battle. They was man against man. It was just too close, and they were too well-concealed to bring in effective indirect fire.

Q. Can you give me some idea now, can we put it in sort of a time frame as these platoons maneuvered so we can consume the, eventually account for the bulk of the day? Do you see what I mean?

A. Right. Well, I would say the initial contact started about 1000 hours. That's with Sergeant Kreidler and LT Gerald, and the elements of third platoon and fourth platoon, about ten men becoming pinned down by automatic and semi-automatic fire, and I moved down with the remainder of 36 to pick up 26, and they landed, oh I would say about, between, about 11:30, maybe 1200 hours. Then we started maneuvering down to . . .

Q. Let's back up if we may now, sir. We started out at 10:00, we brought 26 in at 10:30, can you give me a feel for what was going on, 11:30, can you give me a feel for what was going on in that hour and a half?

A. In that hour and a half, these people were trying to get themselves in a covered position. They were exposed, completely exposed as they came down this trail, and there were a lot of heroic actions by individuals crawling forward, trying to deliver superior, to gain superiority of fires as they could get out their casualties and also eliminate the enemy. We still had no idea what he was and this small group of men here was actually trying to

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eliminate a superior force.

Q. You were developing contact then pretty much in that hour and a half?

A. Right.

Q. OK, fine. Now we are at 11:30 and the second platoon is coming in, can we go on, keeping it in a time frame?

A. I married up with Sergeant Salazar, Sergeant First Class Salazar, and we started coming down, we were going to maneuver around to the rear of the contact. And as we moved down, and moved from east to west, going behind him, we ran into the, a portion of the enemy's main position in this trench, a very deep trench. It was actually just a head-on contact. We were going down the trench, he was in the trench, the first man got cut down, the two men behind him were wounded. And it took a lot of heroics on the part of the leaders there and the medics to even extract these men. They used their own weapons and grenades and managed to get all three of the men out. Then upon being, it was obvious that we could not continue down that trail, that is actually a trench with hedgerows on either side. We could not relieve the pinned down third platoon by going that way, so I pulled back and then started going north to maneuver to their flank with a shorter turn, without going out so far, and . . .

Q. What time do you estimate you started that move, sir?

A. Oh, it was about 1300.

Q. About 1300.

A. About 1300 we started going down in that direction, and again we came against, oh perhaps a platoon minus in that area dug in on the other side of the hedgerow. They cut down the first two men of the second platoon, and we were stopped in that position. So finally the third platoon, after being, we were stopped going west, we were stopped going north, they maneuvered east. They maneuvered east. We got out of this trench line, this hedgerow complex here. And it was actually a cross compartment of hedgerows.

Q. Right.

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A. You would have to go, you would expose yourself from one hedgerow to another, not knowing as you came to the next hedgerow who was there. So they maneuvered east, correction, they maneuvered west. This is 36 now, the remainder of 36 maneuvered west and finally was able to reinforce what was left of 36 by just about coming in the initial direction that they came in to develop the initial contact. That was the only way we were able to get to them.

Q. OK. Now this is who moving west?

A. That is, that was Sergeant Shelley moving . . .

Q. Which platoon, sir?

A. . . . the third platoon.

Q. OK. They moved back west and you were with 26?

A. Right, I was with 26 and we were developing this contact here and there.

Q. OK. Now, they moved back west and got consolidated with the rest of the third platoon, is that right, sir?

A. Yes, now at this point it might be better for Sergeant Shoemaker to tell what happened down in that area.

PAFF SERGEANT JIMMIE D. SHOEMAKER: At the time my platoon is back with the, in our FOB with the company minus, the Company Commander had moved out with the balance of the third platoon to try to reinforce the element that was pinned down. After being pinned down on his side, which, on the side that he was with, I volunteered to the First Sergeant the possible chance of moving around on the north, moving up through the rice paddy, moving east actually on the north side of the contact and with about three or four people to prevent anybody from, or Charlie from moving across the rice paddy. This was my initial mission, just go out and block in the rice paddy to prevent anybody from running away.

Q. What point in the action are you describing now?

A. This is about 11, around 11:00.

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Q. Long before this withdrawal back?

A. This was before the first and the second platoon had come in.

Q. OK. Go ahead.

A. So as we moved up through the rice paddy we picked up a good position to the north of the contact, to the north of the 36 element that was pinned down, and waiting for any overflow to come by. And I received a mission from the company commander to, or suggested to him that I was on the north side and I felt that I could get into them, so he told me to go ahead. And with the five people that I had, the balance of my platoon was still back in the FOB, with the exception of the five that was with me. So we started maneuvering south toward them.

Q. You are the fourth platoon, is that right?

A. Right. We started moving south toward the element that was pinned down. At the time we were only about 200 meters from them. So we started toward them there very slowly, not knowing exactly where the enemy was at, but trying to use the RTO that was pinned down and we was still able to communicate with as a guide to, for me to bring my people in on, so he kept in to where I could just about determine where he was at. I could not see anybody at this point because they were all laying down. I didn't know how many were killed or anything. All I knew is I could talk to him. So I tried to determine exactly where the enemy was at, so that I could more or less protect my people as we moved in, insure that I could get something between us. And so I lit a hutch. I, at the time, did not have any smoke or anything because we were, too, traveling light under the initial, with the initial idea that there was only a couple of two or three ~~XX~~ machine guns that had our people pinned down. So we were traveling merely with bandoleers and our individual weapons. So as we got in, as I said, there was no smoke, I had no smoke with me, so I lit this hutch to try to get the RTO that I was talking to, to observe the smoke from the hutch and give me a general direction as to what direction he was from the hutch and what direction the enemy was from the burning ~~hutch~~. So this worked out pretty well. He gave me some idea as to about where the enemy was at. So then I started moving my people

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along, scattered out and one at a time, trying to get in behind them, keeping the hutch between us. And finally we were able to get in within about 10 or 15 meters of the people that was pinned down. But after reaching this point we couldn't leave either because we were then pinned down. I tried to move forward behind the tree with a suggestion from the RTO requesting that I lay down a base of fire so that they could possibly run back to us, since they were sitting there behind the hutch and could not move. Charlie was on all three sides of the hutch. And so I moved with my RTO, as concealed as possible, and had another one of my ^{SP4} automatic riflemen to come forward and lay down behind the trunk of a tree to try to keep Charlie's head down, so that these people could withdraw, but he got off one blast and Charlie got him. After he was hit, then we, I slid over, crawled over the ground, and got him by his heels and started pulling him back. At this time one of my squad leaders that was with me, crawled over and tried to help me. So we managed to scoot him back, pulled him a little bit at a time, we got him back and, in a safe area back to the rear, keeping the hutch between the point of contact and us, and had the man medivacked. So again, failing once, I decided to try one more time because it, to me it sounded like a logical idea is to keep him pinned down so that these people could withdraw, that is the ones that were still alive. So I moved up and I called another one of my ^{SP4} automatic riflemen forward that was with me and . . .

- Q. Who was he, Sergeant? Use names as much as you possibly can.
- A. OK. The first one was Specialist Fourth Class Walters. He was hit and then we finally got him medivacked. Then I called Specialist Fourth Class Lacavia forward with his rifle, and the three of us, along with my RTO, SP4 Cuzman, were going to try to lay down a base of fire to keep Charlie pinned down so that they could run back. And just as we got into position to do this, evidently Charlie had out guessed us, and he shot my other man, Specialist Lacavia. So then we went through the same procedure of dragging him back to get him medivacked. We got him back and got him medivacked, and at the time I was rather

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dissappointed and disgusted too, so I decided not to try any more. And so I talked to the RTO and had him just lay where he was at and inform the other people that we would wait until the hours of darkness, since the time had run from about 11:00, possibly a little later than that, until now it is somewhere around 4, or 4:30, or 5:00 in the evening. And we finally got a hold of, well the Charger Red team, which is our Ar team, ARA team were hovering overhead, so after my first man had gotten shot, no, after the second man had gotten shot, we decided to try to get ARA in to see if they could dislodge the enemy. So I got ahold of Charger Red and brought him in. I had managed to get some smoke from one of the medivacs, so I popped smoke and gave him the direction that the enemy was at. He came in and made his first pass and was a little over, and to our advantage the enemy fired at him, so this gave him even a better idea as to where he was at. So he came in and unloaded every rocket he had on the team, and he and his, the other ARA ship too. And it seemed to do no good. So they went back and they recharged and they came back. And we directed them in again. I gave them the same position. They could see us very good from where we were at, and they knew basically where the enemy was at. So they came in again and unloaded their ordinance and it still did not do any good due to the position that Charlie was in, the way that he had his foxholes built at an angle, they could not get in to him. And at the same time he had to be very careful because he was firing within about 30 meters of myself and the couple of people that I had left, and the people from 36 that were still alive.

Q. What time did the two ARA runs come in approximately?

A. One of them, I believe, would be around 1400 . . .

Q. Right.

A. . . . around 1400, and then the other one was but a matter of 20 to 30 minutes later.

Q. How many ships did you have firing for you at one time?

A. I had two ships at one time and then the same two ships went back and reloaded and came back and delivered their arsenal again, working two ships.

Q. The enemy was south of you all this time?

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A. The enemy was east of me by this time because I had moved around behind the element that was pinned down. I moved with my five people from north to south and got behind them. The enemy was to their east.

Q. OK. Why don't we turn that off a minute and draw us a quick diagram here.

U SPKR: Here is one here.

Q. OK, fine. OK. You were initially set up where, Sergeant?

A. (UNINTELLIGIBLE) . . . forward operational base, forward operational base. We were here in this blocking position, and, I believe Captain Markham gave 36 the mission of moving down here, right?

JPT MARKHAM: I told LT Gerald to come down on a local patrolling to secure, to insure his security.

SSG SHOEMAKER: Right.

Q. OK. Which way did he come, sir? Why don't we draw it in with this pencil. . .

JPT MARKHAM: He started coming down like this exactly, and he saw a VC, a VC moved into that house, he cornered him and killed him. He was armed with grenades, he was a local VC.

SSG SHOEMAKER: I was setting here, waiting for him and when I walked in, when he walked up along with a Spec 4, he, they got them both. Neither one of them ever knew what happened.

Q. Sergeant Kreidler and this Specialist who were the first ones to get it?

J SPKR: . . . Garza. Garza.

Q. Garza? Specialist Garza.

SSG SHOEMAKER: Specialist Garza. They were up here and Charlie was just waiting for them in the bushes with automatic weapons and when they walked around there, he shot them at point-blank and they never knew what happened. LT Gerald and the balance of the people that were here, which he had about five or six people with him. They heard the action here after they had killed the individual here, they were still looking . . .

Q. Uh huh.

A. . . . for the individual that was, the VC ~~was~~ so they heard the action here and moved forward to see what it was, to try to determine what was going on. And when

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they got up here, LT Gerald from the left of the position that they were laying in, evidently moved forward, not knowing that the enemy was in here to see what had happened to Sergeant Kreidler and Specialist Fourth Class Garza. And all of a sudden AK47's E opened up on them. LT Gerald was hit; at the same time; he was not killed. Specialist . .

J SPKR: Marshal.

A. . . . Marshal was the RTO, member of the fourth platoon, but had volunteered to carry the radio for LT Gerald's element was hit, killed instantly, and two other people, three other people, in a matter of a couple of seconds were hit fatally. And they were all, from the looks of the area, were moving in to try to relieve the pressure on Sergeant Kreidler and Specialist Garza, not knowing that they were dead, I assume. So they moved in to try to get them, and they were all pinned down, the two company medics that were with them managed to maneuver behind this house, and just dove behind the hutch and was sitting with their back up against the hutch, and the enemy could not get them because they were on the north side of the hutch, but every time they would stick their head out he would shoot at them. So at this time the company commander called, I believe, the artillery FO here and wanted him to move forward to try to get in some artillery support. And he moved forward with his RTO and (^{Ribal}?) and one other man

Q. OK. Let me just backtrack here for just a second. Who were the two medics back here?

CPT MARKHAM: Ribal and Farmer.

Q. Ribal and Farmer?

U SPKR: Ribal and Farmer.

Q. OK, fine.

SSG SHOEMAKER: And when the squad leaders were, Staff Sergeant . . .

CPT MARKHAM: Kreidler and Morrison.

SSG SHOEMAKER: Morrison?

CPT MARKHAM: Morrison.

SSG SHOEMAKER: Sergeant Morrison, he was one of the few who didn't get killed too. He managed

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maneuver behind this hutch before the enemy got around to shooting him, along with the two medics. And a Specialist Fourth Class Morocco got, managed to get behind this hutch, so there was a total of four of them, initially, behind the hutch. And then the artillery people moved up along, to try to get in some artillery support.

Q. OK. Well, let me just ask you one more question now, as long as we are developing the progression of the platoons. Did the artillery support come before you made your move up in here to try and relieve them?

U SPKR: (UNINTELLIGIBLE - possibly the answer was NO)

Q. All right, fine. Full name please . . .

LT MILES GAFFNEY: I heard that 36, a patrol from 36 was pinned down, and that has been covered pretty thoroughly by CPT Markham and Sergeant Shoemaker. I did more or less the exact same thing LT Gerald did. When I got to this first hutch here on the road, on the trail, we could hear ARA coming in. So I and these other three men in this hutch, he made his first pass and we got out. I could see . . .

Q. Do you know who called that ARA in?

A. I didn't know at the time who was calling it in. All I know is that it sounded pretty close and we wanted some protection for ourselves. I looked out and there was this little open area between the hutch on the trail and where the lead element of the third platoon was pinned down. Charlie was in these positions indicated on the map. I didn't recognize I recognized they were American men. I didn't recognize their faces or know who they were. I could only see two alive. I could only see two people. That was (*Doornik?*) Bell and Sergeant Morrison. I, I couldn't see the dead that were around LT Gerald and Specialist Marshal. I couldn't see Sergeant Kreidler. My RTO and myself ran from this hutch on the trail to where they were to try and give these men support. We knew they, we did, however, know that this was the third platoon patrol, and this was the initial contact that brought the whole fight on. So I knew if I could bring some artillery in over here, anywhere over here, or anywhere, because Coffeepot, CPT Markham, was maneuvering here, and this was the lead element conducting that local search and destroy.

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Q. You knew your Company Commander was southeast of you and you knew the place that you could fire . . . ?

A. Right.

Q. Right?

A. I knew it was clear. 26 was not committed at the time?

CPT MARKHAM: No, it was not.

LT GAFFNEY: It was not committed. If they were committed I would, I felt coordination, or even cut it off, the artillery, but we had nobody committed, 26 or 16. Neither one of those platoons from the north were committed. It was just, we had two platoons out there. As we ran across this open area, Charlie opened up and hit my RTO, and he was hit about 10, twelve feet, correction, meters, from this hutch right here.

Q. Center hutch?

A. Center hutch, right.

Q. Why don't we number these hutches and I think it will be a little easier to talk about them. Number 1, 2, 3

A. OK. I turned around, I saw he was hit, I said go over, take off your radio, and his name was, my RTO's name was Private Jessie Glover, I said take off your radio, and just make a dive. Well, he was alive, he did it, the radio was about ten feet away where he left, ten meters away where he left it, and I had no radio, no artillery radio. The only radio we had there was the radio that belonged to LT Gerald. That radio was operated by Specialist Pageant, who coordinated with Sergeant Shoemaker and Captain Markham. The net was tied up. It would have been impossible to use that radio for artillery.

Q. That radio was on the company net then, is that right?

A. Company net, yes, the Charlie Company net.

Q. Your radio on the artillery push was the one that was hit?

A. Right. So I remained there at number 1 hutch.

SSG SHOEMAKER: Number three hutch.

Q. Number three hutch, the one in the center.

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A: Number three hutch, I am sorry, number three hutch, until the cover of darkness. I heard the RTO say we can't get to them. Sergeant Shoemaker lost two men trying to get to us. They were only, then we heard later on that under the cover of darkness, they were going to try and get to us, and that's what happened.

Q. From your point of view, the fight ended right there for you, your maneuvering ended right there until after dark when you could . . . ?

A. Negative. My maneuvering ended as soon as my RTO got hit. I stayed there with him for, I would say eight hours.

Q. Right here at hutch number three?

A. Hutch number three, I stayed there. I couldn't go any further.

Q. You never were able then to call in any . . . ?

A. I, myself, didn't call in any ARA, I found out later it was Sergeant Shoemaker who was doing it, and we got 26 committed, and well, we tried

Q. Right.

PT MARKHAM: I think it's interesting looking at this map, you can see perfectly what happened. 16 was committed right here. Again, we are all orienting on this contact. They were committed up there, and immediately started receiving sniper fire, and became embroiled with the main forces here. Then 26 was committed up in this area, and they were committed this far because these were the only good LZ's. So I moved up just about right here, I moved right

Q. Right here, sir?

A. Right. I moved up to that position to meet 26 and to bring them in because he didn't know where the contact was, or where he should move. I met him right here, 26, so instead of going directly toward the enemy, I directed that he move east and we would get a good blocking position, maybe even completely around to his rear. And instead of moving up on the high ground, we moved in the low ground in this trench, a covered trench, which at the time seemed to be a very good way to move; however, we proceeded up there about a hundred meters, and the enemy opened up with extremely effective point-blank fire. And that's

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when we were stymied in that area. We knew we couldn't move in that direction on the high ground ~~XXXXXX~~ with him in a covered position getting flanking fire on us. So then I started going down this direction with 26. We were moving down this direction, walking in this trench and that time the enemy opened up from that position and cut down the first two men. So we moved them back up here and evacuated them. We still knew we had to get down there. We kept going down this way, this time crawling. We got to this position, the enemy fired upon us. We drew back, we went down there again. This time they threw grenades. Miraculously no one was injured. We drew back again. And each time, this is crawling forward on your hands and knees, not knowing if the enemy is behind this hedgerow, that one, or which one. Just little by little, hoping that you are able to relieve the pressure down there. The last time I crawled down that trench, the enemy opened up and got PFC Bennet.

Q. Who was he, sir?

A. He was, he was a rifleman in the, in the third platoon. And he volunteered to go down there with me. I said come on, I need some help, and he volunteered. He moved right up, without any question, he moved right up. And as he and I were crawling down this trench here, on our hands and knees so we couldn't be seen above the level of the ground, I heard a shot and thought that my pistol had gone off because it was right in my face. And he cried out, and he had been shot from, at the most ten feet, One shot, and he was mortally wounded. And it is interesting, the enemy had tremendous fire discipline. He didn't open up wildly with a burst of sixty, he fired one shot, and then he moved out because I immediately hugged the ground and threw grenades from where the fire came, but he didn't fire back. He was in this trench and in these bunkers. These bunkers actually went under these hedgerows. He could jump in this bunker and come out there on the other side of the hedgerow. And it was only with the bravery of the men with me we were able to get PFC Bennet back and evacuate him immediately, but he was mortally wounded, and unfortunately he didn't live. So after being stopped this way, we couldn't move across the open terrain right against the enemy. Sergeant First Class Shelley crawled on his hands

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and knees, and he and a Specialist Fourth Class Flannigan moved over this way and led the remainder of 36 back toward the west, and came back, and he helped them in that area. And we ought to get, really Beale in here, and ought to get Flannigan in here to give their versions of what happened down there.

Q. OK. This is 36 now?

A. Right.

Q. 36 minus?

A. Right, 36 minus.

Q. OK. (You remained up here with 26?)

A. Right. I remained up here in the center. I had 16, 26 and it was apparent the enemy was all around, so I thought I could best control everything by remaining right here.

Q. You were here, CO was here. 16 didn't move up the trench with you?

A. Yes, they did. And so now 26 is, they left some people up here to prevent the enemy from coming in behind us.

Q. Blocking there?

A. Blocking there. And also Sergeant Michener was down there. He had his squad down there. And we were pinning them down, firing across there, pinning them down, and hoping to relieve a little pressure off that

Q. You pretty much occupied this portion of the trench there, with your second platoon sort of spread out to the front, is that right, sir?

A. Right.

Q. OK, fine.

A. I would like to say that it was tremendous the way the men would maneuver and run up against an enemy force, well-concealed, take casualties, they would pull back and evacuate their men, and then start in another direction.

Q. What LZ were you using for evacuation, sir? This one that 26 came in on?

A. It was 26, right here. And also in the rice paddy. We were fortunate. We were able to get our wounded out without receiving heavy fire, unfortunately Delta Company received a

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considerable amount of fire as their medivacs came in. We were quite fortunate in that respect.

Q. What time did Bennet get hit, sir? What time did he get hit?

A. About 1530. About 1530. This was, this was the final attempt. We had to get down there and get these men who were pinned down by fire out. And PFC Bennet got it about 1530.

Q. OK. Now what, were your instructions that the 36 minus element went over here and what was your thinking, sir?

A. I think it was Sergeant Shelley, I believe suggested, he said, "sir, goddamnit, we can't get through this way, we can't get that way, that way, why don't we crawl down, let me take some men, I'll crawl down that way." And this was the only way you could maneuver. The enemy's positions were just fantastic. It was by crawling on your hands and knees. So me and Specialist Flannigan, who is the mortar FO and who pushes the rear of the platoon, with the platoon leader up front, he's in the rear, they took what was left of 36 and maneuvered down there and were able to join up and rendered great assistance. . .

Q. To the pinned down element?

A. Right.

Q. OK. Why don't you fellows come on over here and tell us what happened. This is about 1530 this move starts, is that right, sir?

IP4 TRAIN

A. This is Specialist Fourth Class (? Train). When we maneuvered down the trench the first time, and were unable to knock out this one position that 26 maneuver element was trying to knock out.

Q. This is down here where Bennet is?

A. Right. This is, this is the guy that got Bennet. OK. Where these little trenches come down that trench, and as Captain Markham said, we got a grenade and heavy fire down that trench, so we came back, and Sergeant First Class Shelley knew that the only way we could move was to the west. And our plan was to come out this way to, the trench was about 150 to 200 meters to our west. And we low-crawled with Sergeant First Class Shelley and myself, and four other men, and maneuvered down the trench with the hopes of maneuvering on this man that had us pinned down. 18

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Q. Right here?

A. Right. So we could take him out and then continue moving north to help out our pinned down first element. Once reaching this ditch we continued north and then . . .

Q. Is there a ditch running up through here that's not (indicated)?

A. Let me see. Yes, right about in here. OK. Over here is a big field. This trench goes something like this, and it went this way. OK. We got in the trench which was running north south, we continued to the farthest point north, jumped out of the trench and run into kind of a heavy covered area.

Q. Palm trees?

A. Palm trees and burned hutches which ARA had burned down.

Q. Vegetated right in here then?

A. Right. And we got into the open area, I coordinated with Staff Sergeant Shoemaker, and I had him pop smoke to try and find exactly where he was because we were in a brand new area and we had no idea where anybody was, and he popped ~~XXXXX~~ his smoke and we couldn't recognize it. So we maneuvered a little farther to the, we went east, we went northeast to another little trench which was right about in here.

Q. This is also running north and south?

A. Mostly. Mostly running north and south. We got in this trench and set and was thinking what our next plan was going to be. Then I noticed, you popped a purple smoke wasn't it Sergeant? He popped a purple smoke and I noticed his location.

Q. From where?

A. This was northeast of us, which was up in here in that one hutch. We had his location pinpointed, so we continued to move down this one trench. We got into this one trench and we had, it was Specialist Fourth Class Sidbury and Specialist Fourth Class Melindez. They were the first two men up on point. And Specialist Fourth Class Sidbury perfectly saw this one VC with the machine gun. And what their plans were was to get down, he was in this darned trench, let me see which trench it was, yes, it was this trench right here.

Q. . . . VC right here?

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A. Right. OK. Now they were in a horeshoe. There was one machine gun here, one here, and one here. The one that we ran against was the westernmost part, was the westernmost machine gun, so Specialist Fourth Class Melindez jumped down in the trench, and upon him jumping down in that trench, apparently he saw him, and he cut loose with his automatic weapon, and he had us located then. So we maneuvered back and got ourselves some cover, we lodged some grenades and threw some small arms rounds. It didn't knock him out, so we gathered back up and we moved to a secure area and we phoned to Captain Markham to tell him our situation, unable to maneuver on this man, and we suggested that we maneuver around, get back on this trail, and see if we can hook up with the rest of the 46 element and give them some support. So we gathered up and maneuvered around through this big open area, crawling and maneuvering, one man at a time, and we reached this one house which is about a hundred and fifty meters to Sergeant Shoemaker's group, to the west of them.

Q. Back in here somewhere?

A. Right. (UNINTELLIGIBLE MULTIPLE CONVERSATION) . . . Yes, right about there.

Q. This hutch right here?

A. Hh huh. We came up there . . .

Q. Let's draw an arrow now from where you were. Go ahead and do it with the pencil.

A. OK. We started out right here. This was a pretty close area, we went down like this, came up in here, and started to move this way into the trench, and this is where we got pinned down right here. OK. Then we gathered back up, went back to some cover, and circled all the way back around this way, and got up into this main trail and into this hutch, which is the last bit of cover before we got to the 46 element.

Q. Right.

A. So we got up to this hutch. I coordinated with Sergeant Shoemaker and he threw a smoke to where this one machine gun position was pinning them down. We located their position and we had Specialist Fourth Class Nokes throw about five or six M-79 rounds into it. And we didn't receive any returning fire. And we knew we didn't knock him out, so we

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coordinated back and forth, and we decided that we were going to go and hook up with the 46 element. So we took our group and, one at a time with all we had, ran across this open area, and hooked up with the 46. And the rest of our 36 element was back here in this one position where we left them. Then we had a hand full of about 11 or 12 men, and we immediately, couldn't keep this area covered with our wounded and our dead, and the machine gun positions, so we phoned back and said that we will come back down this trench again, and guide up the rest of our 36 element. And that's what we did. We coordinated with them and Sergeant Shelley and myself, and the rest of the group that we started with maneuvered back the same route, and they maneuvered down the same way we did, on their hands and knees, crawling in this trench, and we hooked up with them, and brought them back in to the 46 element, and gathered here for the night.

Q. What time was this now?

J SPKR: About 7 - 8:00.

A. Yes, about 8:00.

Q. All right, we've got the third and fourth platoons consolidated right here blocking for the night?

A. Right.

LLT MILES GAFFNEY: It was about that time too, when this Flamigan and 46 hooked up. This was the time, at that time, we were able to get out of hutch number. . .

J SPKR: three.

A. three. Medivac was brought in, we had two wounded there, and medivac was brought in. Things were, well, under control at the time and every . . .

Q. . . pretty well gathered up?

A. We settled down for the night there, we got our wounded out of that.

Q. All right sir, now we have everybody squared away, got everybody gathered up now except for 26. We know 16 slipped over into Delta Company's area and became OPCON to them. Could we backtrack now? We left 26 in this trench, can we follow them? Where did they finally wind up?

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PT MARKHAM: Well, that was about 1530 when they were making the third and final attempt to move down this trench, and then took casualties, and it became quite obvious it wasn't profitable to continue maneuvering in that area, and also became obvious that the enemy force that was holding down 36 here on the main trail was just, only a portion of the main enemy forces, and that we had them all around us. So I decided to leave 26 here, commit the rest of 36 to relieve 36 and 46, and let 26 see if they could handle what they had run into. So they set up themselves in this trench, continued to deliver fire against the enemy here. Sergeant Michener set up a position right here in ambush. It was getting dark. And we hoped, knowing that at night time, Charlie, once he has been found almost always tried to leave the area. So Sergeant Michener set up an ambush right in that position. I took Sergeant Salazar, who is a platoon sergeant of the second platoon, and he and I went up to the cross trails, right there, and he set up several ambushes in that position. I took Sergeant Salazar, who is a platoon sergeant of the second platoon, and he and I went up to the cross trails, right there, and he set up several ambushes in that position. He set up one there and he had positions all around that . . .

Q. Sort of set up kind of a perimeter right there?

A. Exactly. He had a perimeter right there.

Q. Sergeant who?

A. Sergeant Salazar and the second platoon and myself. Now Colonel Casey, the Brigade Commander, set down there about 1900, just as it was getting dark, and came in to check on the situation, asked if we needed anything, supplies, and his presence helped us a lot. We were ready to catch anybody that tried to move out, but apparently, where the main enemy moved out initially to the, this is up into the high ground to the south. Instead of moving toward us, they moved away from us. And, however, Sergeant Michener down there did have some success. He put his claymores and trip-flares in, and a trip-flare went off during the night, and he opened up, and the next morning we found a pack, and there was blood, and I think we got somebody. Maybe he would like to describe that.

STAFF SERGEANT JAMES E. MICHIENER: I would like to cover the point where we first came into the

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contact, starting around 11:30. As the company commander explained, 26 was over here, we moved up to this crossing. Once we got up to this crossing, we was under the impression that this was the only position that we really had to worry about, and our mission was to flank here, as the company commander said, and try to support these people that was pinned down here. My squad was the point squad at that particular time. When we came up to this crossing, this trench was real dense and we thought that we wouldn't be able to crawl into it initially, so . . .

Q. A lot of vegetation in the trench?

A. A lot of vegetation in the trench, where the "X" is there, as you were, at the entrance right there at the crossing. So my squad came along about 25 meters on this side of the trench and we jumped into the trench, of course giving us a little more security, I mean we thought we was safer then because they didn't make no attempt to fire at us from this position that was open; however, 36 did have a small element that was firing on these people. So my point man, Specialist Grazier, we moved up about 75 meters up this trench, and the vegetation again got very very thick and we had to stop momentarily. At this time a machete was passed up so that the point man could start cutting his way in this trench. I guess he cut his way about 10 feet and then this was when this all broke loose, this automatic weapon. And it hit him, and the two men that was behind him; however, it was a slight crook in the ditch that more or less concealed those two men from that weapon. The rounds was going over this, but they actually couldn't get in to us on account of this little bend, but it did hit Grazier. He never knew what happened. As soon as he was, Grazier was hit, Specialist Stearns throw a grenade, and I saw the grenade go up in the air, and I thought maybe it might have been one of Charlie's grenades, but it happened so, he told me that he threw this grenade, and once he threw this grenade, the M-79 man started firing on this position. We had no more contact from this position. We don't know whether we killed this man or what. After this was over, the "doc" came up and started . . .

Q. Who was the doc?

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A. Specialist Hickman. He came up and started treating the two wounded, seeing that Specialist Grazier was already dead. We evacuated him back, and then myself and Sergeant Salazar was trying to move on up to get Grazier. Sergeant Salazar actually moved up to where Specialist Grazier was. I was setting about 25 meters behind him with my weapon just in case this man opened up again, I could immediately open fire on him, and better Sergeant Salazar's chance. OK. Once we got him back, as the company commander said, we all pulled back at this crossing here and set up our security around. And then we decided we would move up this trail, also again it was my squad that was going up here. 36 had a small amount of men up here. I guess they just more or less left them here just to keep fire on these people while this other, the larger body of 36 moved around.

Q. That's right.

A. OK. The plan was we would go up here, reinforce them and set up an ambush and try to catch these people that was coming out of this position. So once we got up there I coordinated with this, Sergeant, I can't even think of his name.

SPT MARKHAM: Hoagland.

SGT MICHNER: No sir. The colored, the colored one, short one.

SPT MARKHAM: Oh! Meincastle.

SGT MICHNER: Sergeant Meincastle. And we got together on how we were going to set up our ambush. So we set the ambush up at this crossing here where if anybody come, with the claymores and things we could easily get them. We had trip-flares there it would be tripped. We also, my squad, we laid up on this bank where we could observe this position, and we continued firing on this position until it was dark, until actually we couldn't see what we was shooting at. And about, I would say roughly, 2400 that night is when they hit this trip flare, and immediately the men in this position opened fire, and he "Di Di'd" back the other way. And, as we said, the pack was there next morning, and we saw the blood stains, as to whether we actually killed him, we don't know. And that was about all that took place that night.

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Q. OK. One thing sir. You initially moved out with the 36 element. They somehow got left up here, I have discovered now, when you were down here with 26. Were you using them as the point when you first moved up there? Is that how you happened to be up there?

A. NO. I left, I came at 36 to this position, then when 26 landed, I moved on up here. . .

Q. That's right.

A. . . . to meet 26.

Q. You moved up there.

U SPKR: Sergeant Shelley took over.

A. Right. Sergeant Shelley was down there. Also, Sergeant Shoemaker, he put his own ambush down here and he was, he had a very successful ambush. We wanted to get our licks in. These people, we had been hurt, and we wanted to hurt them even worse, really get some Charlie ass. And he set up an ambush down there that night, and the next morning we policed up a body and three weapons, two SKS's and one RPD machine gun. And also one Charlie right there. The next morning the men, despite the heavy contact that day, we were given an order to sweep the area, and we did, we swept it completely, and finally discovered the real significance of this trench in here, finding mortar rounds, 82mm mortar rounds, we found huge magazines of machine gun, 30 caliber machine gun ammunition. They had quite a few heavy weapons in here. They left a lot of personal clothing and equipment. We found two shallow graves. One of them had a body in it. We found four other, three other bodies, one down in this position and two over, three over here.

Q. Do you think that the ARA got these down in here?

A. I honestly don't know.

Q. They could have been drug back.

A. I don't believe ARA got them. Perhaps one of them, because of the nature of their wounds. They weren't torn up. They had, it looked like to me small arms wounds in them, but I know we got them, somebody US got them.

Q. The one point that looks kind of obvious to me here, and correct me if I am wrong, because I am going to consider myself drawing on it ~~XXXXXX~~ as I write this thing up. It looked

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like to me that nobody really had a chance to bring very much, neither the enemy or yourself, had much of a chance to bring more than one or two men's fire power to bear.

In other words, it looked like they were coming together head-on from what I see.

A. It was a (meeting) engagement, they didn't expect us and we certainly didn't expect the sizeable enemy force we ran into. We became embroiled at extremely close range, and it was a case of attacking a dug-in enemy, a defensive prepared position, well-camouflaged and well-concealed. And the only way to get him out was to root him out because you could not identify your targets sufficiently to call in artillery. You couldn't see him until you actually rooted him out.

Q. Your blocking position then was where? The mornings mission then was to the south of the whole contact later on then, is that right?

SPKR: That's right sir.

Q. OK. Now I would like to do, if, and don't be bashful about this if it was you personally, or anybody that, I want you to tell me anything that you saw anybody do, anything that you did, any interesting contacts that you personally had with the enemy. Who are you please?

SPECIALIST FOURTH CLASS LONNIE M. BEALE. I am in the third platoon. I am the M-60 machine gunner. I was in the lead element of 36 when it went to relieve part of the 36 that was pinned down. I was following Poccacelli. I was behind Poccacelli and two other point men, Specialist Fourth Class, correct that, Poccacelli, that is Sergeant Shelley, that is a nickname we give him. I was behind Sergeant Shelley, Fourth Class Sidbury, and PFC Watson. Shall I use this map?

Q. Yes, go ahead. Give me some idea of what time in the action now this thing being described is.

A. Well, when we first went in, sir, wasn't that about 11:00?

U SPKR: The fire fight down there started about 10:30.

SP4 BEALE: When did we get to this point? About 11:00?

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SPKR: About 10:30. About 10:30.

PT MARKHAM: About 10:30 or 11.

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P4 BEALE: OK. We reached this point about 10:30. We maneuvered our way around in to here, and we went down these hedgerows, and we came into this area right here, and Sergeant Shelley stopped us, and he seen some individuals over here. We fired, about, I would estimate three or four rounds, at him here. Whether he hit him or not, I don't know at this time, but there is a little finger trench that goes right into here. So we came out of this hedgerow and went into this finger trench, and this finger trench evidently led to this bunker right here, and made a little slight crook right here. Our point man that time was PFC Watson, Following him again, as I said, was Specialist Sidbury, Poccacelli, and myself, and my gun behind me. But this is PFC Watson coming into this little bitty crook, evidently he run point-blank into a Charlie, he fired at him a burst, we all hit the bottom of the trench and nobody was hit. And then for some reason, we went up to move again, as we come up he fired point-blank again, he hit, this time he hit PFC Watson. He hit him in the right hand and side and tore him up pretty bad. And this time, right here, you could see the enemy, the Charlie, myself, I could see where he was firing from, so I stood up behind Poccacelli, and turned the M-60, I started shooting in this area and pinned him down. At this time he started backing back into this hedgerow back in this, behind this hedgerow and trench, and I fired, oh, well over a hundred rounds while Poccacelli, Sidbury and them drug Watson back into this part here. And from this point I reloaded my gun with the help from my assistant gunner, Specialist Fourth Class Miller, and we fired, oh, approximately another 200 rounds, pinning these individuals down, while Sergeant Shelley and Fourth Class Sidbury threw grenades in this area. Still we couldn't, evidently didn't knock them out. At this time as I was coming up again, I got hit in the steel pot and knocked it off, and we fired, oh before it was all over, I fired half my basic load in there.

Q. You say you got hit?

A. In the back of my steel pot. I wasn't, I myself wasn't hit.

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Q. Slow down a little bit.

A. OK. And then this time the rest of, I think, Captain Markham, that is when you came and joined us. They came and joined us, and we tried to take the bunkers here as they dovered, and Specialist. . .

Q. . . . came up with the second platoon?

A. Yes, and then when he came up and when Specialist Fourth Class Hernandez was hit, and when they go on back through, I stayed in here for support. At that time the rest of the 36 element came up with their other gun. To set one gun here, I moved back here with another gun, and we give them fire support in here, and tried to give them cover while those guys moved up into here, and I set here and Specialist Fourth Class Flaminio and Sergeant Shelley went into this area, went through that all, and they came back to this burning hutch they was talking about. My gun and Sergeant - (Sergeant who was it?) - Hoagland went in here and joined them. We went back down in this area with Sergeant Shoemaker, and I set my gun up for the night in this area here, and I sent for my ammo bearer back into this, I took my ammo bearer back into this area with another, he was Fourth Class Melindez, and who was that, and Fourth Class Stalckenberg set in this area. They were the two individuals that shot the three Charlies trying to come down this trench - (what time was that?). . .

SPKR: ~~IX~~ 3:00.

4 BEALE: . . . about 3:00 in the morning. He was setting within about five meters of this ditch here with hedgerows on it, and my assistant gunner, and my other ammo bearer I had with me fired on him, but they couldn't hit him because he was in the trench. They crawled on past us. We could hear them during all this time, but we couldn't, our mission that night was to cover the dead people out in this area with my gun, and like I say, my ammo bearer and this other man shot them as they came out here. We found that one body the next morning and the two rifles. And that is about my part in the fire fight.

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Q. Are you other two individuals here that shot those three Charlies?

P4 NOKES: When we went to set up the ambush for the night, like we said, Spec 4 Milindez and Spec 4 Rosenberger set up guarding - (I believe they were on the main trail, weren't they?)- they were right on the main trail. About 3:00 that night we heard shots. So everybody got up and was looking around to see what we could see, see if we could hear any more movement. About 3:30, approximately 3:15 to 3:30, one, two men were on guard, one was watching the road, and one was watching our rear at our position. We worked, let's see ~~where~~ those two hutches are.

T MARKHAM: There are two hutches right there.

P4 NOKES: Right.

SPKR: There are some on the other side, too, ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

P4 NOKES: Right. It was across the trail, right, we were next to the rice paddies.

Q. OK, fine.

SPKR: This was a populated area here, too.

P4 NOKES: And one man started, started to come up behind. He came across, right after the shooting that Spec 4 Rosenberger and Spec 4 Milindez was in. They, Charlie tried to get in a position behind us. We didn't know if ~~he~~ had a weapon or not. The man on guard had seen him and he woke everybody up. There was three men at our position. I was, I got behind a palm tree and grabbed my M-79. The man that seen him opened up with a '16. He emptied the magazine back there, and we heard somebody running. After the three M-79 rounds dropped, there was a palm tree, there the running stopped right at the palm tree. And at this point, right in the middle of the palm tree, and then we waited for a while. We didn't hear any more movement out of them, all that night. And the next morning we went out there and we found their body with the pack, and the weapons. Then Sergeant Shelley, they went around the other hutches - (with two or three other men, wasn't it?) - went around the hutches where I was firing at, and right at the palm tree, there was a big pool of blood there, but there was no bodies. So we ~~grabbed~~ Di Di's body, the other guy took, grabbed him and Di Di'd.

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Q: Is there any thing else now, sir, that you can think of?

SPT MARKHAM: Well, just kind of a summation here, we were on, initially on a blocking mission, blocking for an ARVN mechanized sweep. The sweep didn't turn up anything, and I sent out local patrols. The patrols, we didn't have our mortars with us, we was just blocking and we expected to be lifted out that afternoon. The contact developed with this extremely heavy contact and then every time we moved in from another angle we discovered more Charlie, and it developed into a real fine contact throughout the day, involving several of our companies, and at least two enemy companies and a regimental headquarters. It was a, it was an individual soldier's fight, fought on the ground, and in a lot of cases, the leaders were wounded or killed, or pinned down by fire, radios were knocked out, and Specialist Fourth Class's were assuming command, and Sergeants were taking charge, and it was just magnificent. We locked hands with them. We held on to them, and waited for them that night to try to get out, scarfed up the ones that did try to get out, and the next day swept through their area. Charlie did not want to fight. We had not expected enemy troops, Free World troops in that area. We chanced on to him, and we got into this big ditch, and he was cornered, he fought really magnificently with what he had, we must admit that. He had tremendous fire control, fire discipline. He had unbelievable camouflage with these little wicker rings tied onto his back, and palm leaves stuck in them, so that he almost blended with the ground, you couldn't see him at all, if he did happen to get out of one of his holes. And then at night time he dragged his wounded and managed to get out of the area with what was left of his command, leaving behind a lot of mortar rounds. He left behind many weapons. He left behind dead, and he left behind many many pools of blood and shallow graves. He was hurt and hurt badly, but in all honesty, I will have to admit he fought magnificently with the weapons he had, and the wily critter that he is.

Q. How many of your key people did you lose besides LT Gerald?

A. I lost Sergeant Kreidler, a squad leader, and we lost ~~1st Sergeant~~ **CONFIDENTIAL**, who was an

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acting squad leader in the fourth platoon, or weapons platoon. By the way, when speaking of the fourth platoon, I think at that time it had 17 men. We are talking of 17 men. And I am extremely proud of the way the men fought and Charlie knew he was in a battle that day.

Q. OK. Why don't you just run down your platoon leaders' names on the tape there for me? Who was running the platoons at that time, who was your XO, First Sergeant?

A. Well, the First Sergeant was First Sergeant Miller, the third platoon leader was 1LT Dana Gerald, the second platoon leader was Sergeant First Class Salazar, the first platoon leader was 1LT Dealy, and the fourth platoon leader was a Staff Sergeant Shoemaker. He actually assumed control of the 36 and 46 elements down there. He was on the radio for a while when the 36 platoon leader was killed and he assumed control of them throughout the day, directing the ARA strikes, and evacuation of the casualties, setting up ~~ambushes~~ ambushes at night, and maintaining the integrity of the command and continuously putting fire on Charlie.

Q. OK. Thank you very much, sir.

END OF THE TAPE

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