

Nov 7, 2004

Gerald McDaniels

Virtual Wall

Dear Mr Holcombe

I was given your address by a man named Jim "Tree" machine. He thought you were the person to help me with my quest, so if you can indulge me for a few moments I'll tell you my story.

I was a Sergeant - squad leader on a 81mm mortar for E Co. 3/5 1st Cav Div from October 1969 to September 1970. During Christmas 1969, 3/5 was based on FSB IKE. While on "Christmas Truce", I discovered an old friend from home had been assigned to D co. as a combat medic. We grew up in a rural farming community and had been friends since the fifth grade. He, his wife and I graduated high school together in a class of 55 students. His name - Charles Thomas Moore. In Vietnam he was known simply as "Doc" Moore. I knew him as Doc.

On January 5, 1970, E Co. Recon Platoon ran into trouble and it took most of the Battalion to get Recon plt. out of contact. The fighting lasted through the 6th and 7th.

This battle according to the after action report was named operation "Flying Finn."

My friend was killed on Janauary 5th and was recommended for the medal of Honor.

Two or three years after his death, "Doc" Moore was posthumously presented the Distinguished Service Cross instead of the M.O.H.

Some 30 years later at Ft. Hood, Texas, the Army dedicated their newest and largest medical center in his name.

When Tom was killed I went to D Company and talked with several members to get the story on my friend. I was told how he died and that he had been put in for the M.O.H. But I didn't record those people's names. So I've been on a long search to locate some one who was out there and knew about my friend's death.

Awhile ago I received Company Rosters from the National Personal Records Center, St. Louis, Mo.

Dated May 31, 1970 these officers were listed as being in Dco 35

Cpt. Gordon R. Exley III

Lt. Larry D Inman

Lt. William A Joyce

Lt. Alfonza Ware

Lt. James M. Holcombe

Lt. Robert S. Martin

(3)

Are you that James M. Holcombe ? If so
Do you remember this battle and its events ?

In "Doc" Moore's citation, it states that
he helped to save several lives including his plt.
leader. Do you know who that officer is ?

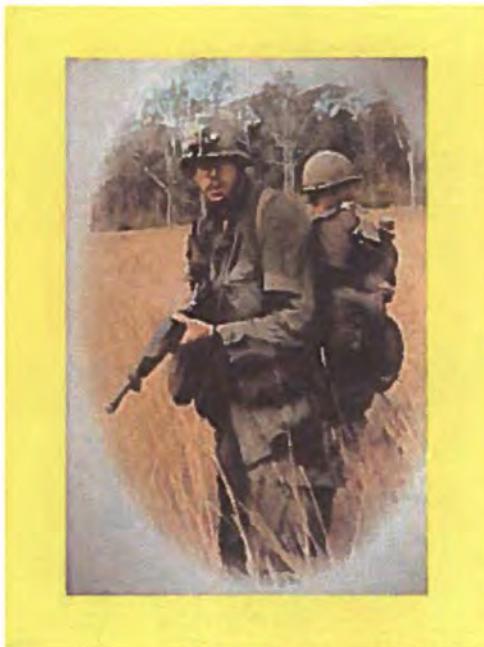
If you can help me in any way to obtain
more information on this battle, the events that
took place and the men who fought in it, Please
write or call I would really like to talk with
you.

I am truly yours

Gerald McDaniel
Gerald McDaniel

[REDACTED]
After 6:00 p.m.

Wanted



PFC Charles T. Moore, medic for the
1st. Platoon, D Company 2nd Bn. 5th Cav
1st Cav Div. KIA 5 Jan. 1970, West of
Fire Base IKE, Tay Ninh Province.

Recommended for Medal of Honor-Received DSC

I would like to locate anyone who was with this man, especially
the Company Commander and 1st Platoon Leader.

Contact; Gerald McDaniel

Phone

E Co 2/5 69-70

Nov 20, 2004

Gerald McDonald



Dear Mr. Holcombe

As you can see I'm sending you a copy of the After Action Report and some photos

My daughter is still working on downloading & printing the photos of the chopper.

She seems to have several problems or I misunderstood what you were going to send.

I thought there would be several pages of text and the photos of the tiger. She has only the two photos of the chopper and a small message from you.

We are going to attempt to email the photos to another computer that is more up to date and see if it will print out the pictures.

The material I'm sending is yours to keep and you can post it online if you like.

Should you run into anyone who has any more information on this battle I would love to hear from them.

Thanks so much for your time

Gerald McDonald

Info removed by VNCA

26 November 2004

Gerald,

Enclosed are some of the photos I have; only two taken that day were of the medivac that was shot down. Any information I have is written on the tab.

My memories are fuzzy, but differ slightly from the After Action Report.

The after action report mentions 2nd Platoon C Company, but I was Comanche 1-6; not second platoon.

About midday we were radioed that another company was in contact and had taken casualties. We were the closest friendlies and were told to hump it to help them. We had not gone far before we were out of radio range of my company commander. We were walking through the usual triple canopy stuff when we broke out into a more open area (not the large clearing later); a cobra spotted us and must not have been told of our presence and started to run on us. Everybody popped smoke and scattered. I was frantically trying to remember the choppers' guard frequencies and must have finally hit one because he pulled up after only firing a few rounds from his cannon. No one was hit and we continued on.

We linked up with the other platoon about 1750 (based on the action report). 1st Platoon was still merging in with 2-D when the medivac showed up. It didn't land as was indicated in the report. It hovered and dropped a line. I kind of remember one of the wounded was already hoisted up and they had dropped the line again when the chopper was hit. It came straight down; mowing down the vegetation like a weed-wacker as it fell. I had my back to it at the time.

The chopper hit, landing on top of one of the wounded and squishing him dead. I was probably 10-15 feet from where the chopper landed. My RTO was further away, but was hit by the blade and knocked about 15-20 feet.

It was dark shortly after that. During the early evening another unit linked up with us and another site was setup for another medivac. It was raining lightly. It took a couple of hours but the medivac was finally completed.

My memory was pretty fuzzy about that evening after the medivac crash. Everybody was pretty much scared shitless.

The bunker complex was immediately next to a very large clearing, that we could not, of course, cross. The next morning we withdrew around the clearing to the other side where we were able to observe airstrikes from phantoms. I mostly remember the napalm; I had never seen it that close-up; we were maybe 2-300 yards away across the clearing.

Later we swept through the bunker complex and it was full of 'crispy critters'. They looked like stick-men, or skeletons made of bacon.

I don't remember much else.

Jim Holcombe
Comanche 1-6



Fort Hood, Texas





The wording on the plaque comes from his DSC citation

Fort Hood, Texas



Tom Moore's mom + Dad on the right

Tom's widow, son, Daughter-in-Law + 3 grand children on the left



Taken at Fire Support Base Barbaac Late 1969
the smoke in the background is a B52 Air Strike



Taken at mini fire support base in 1968

Gerald McDaniel

Taken at mini fire support base Dragoon
Near Xuan Loc

We went there to protect an airfield during Tet
Worked with an element of the 11th ACK



LZ Ready - Cambodia 1970

Left to Right

Sgt. Larry Haghitt SP4 Raymond Van Gompel SP4 Roy Berg Sgt. Gerald McDaniel SP4 Dennis Beaver