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Authority 873541
 By [Signature] NARA Date 11/26/00

RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HEROISM <input type="checkbox"/> MERITORIOUS ACHIEVEMENT OR SERVICE <small>(AR 673-5-1)</small>		PREPARE TO REACH APPROVING AUTHORITY IN DUPLICATES.		DATE 9 March 1967
THRU: Commanding Officer 2d Bn, 5th Cav 1st Air Cav Div APO 96490		TO: Commanding General 1st Air Cav Div ATTN: AVDAAG-A&D APO 96490		FROM: (Unit) Commanding Officer Co C, 2d Bn, 5th Cav 1st Air Cav Div APO 96490
PART I - STATUS AT TIME OF RECOMMENDATION				
1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE NAME		2. SERVICE NO.	3. GRADE	4. BRANCH (Or MOS if WO)
LAUFFER, BILLY LANE		RA 19 748 034	PFC E-3	11B10
5. ORGANIZATION		6. LEGAL RESIDENCE (Number, Street, City, and State)		
Co C, 2d Bn, 5th Cav, 1st Air Cav Div		[Redacted]		
7. RECOMMENDED AWARD		8. POSTHUMOUS AWARD		9. NAME, RELATIONSHIP, AND ADDRESS OF NEXT OF KIN
Medal of Honor		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		Mr. Howard W. Lauffer (Father)
PART II - STATUS AT TIME OF ACT OR SERVICE				
10. SERVICE NUMBER	11. GRADE	12. BRANCH (Or MOS if WO)	13. ORGANIZATION	
RA 19 748 034	PFC E-3	11B10	Co C, 2d Bn, 5th Cav, 1st Air Cav	
14. HAS ALL SERVICE BEEN HONORABLE SUBSEQUENT TO THIS ACT OR SERVICE (If Not, summarize on reverse side.)				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				
15. IF PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS WERE SUBMITTED FOR THIS ACT OR SERVICE, INDICATE TYPE OF AWARD RECOMMENDED, BY WHOM, WHEN, ACTION TAKEN, AND HEADQUARTERS				
N/A				
16. OTHER U. S. DECORATIONS RECEIVED (Include date and authority) (Do not list service medals; list foreign decorations only when same period as this recommendation.)				
N/A				
17. DID YOU HAVE PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE ACT OR SERVICE <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO				
PART III - RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD FOR HEROISM				
18. WERE YOU AN EYE WITNESS TO THE ACT		19. IF CERTIFICATES OR AFFIDAVITS OR EYE WITNESSES OR PERSONS HAVING PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF FACTS ARE NOT INCLUDED, GIVE REASONS		
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO				
20. PERSONS IN IMMEDIATE PROXIMITY OR WHO ASSISTED IN ACT OR SHARED IN SAME HAZARD				
a. FULL NAME	b. SERVICE NO.	c. GRADE	d. UNIT	
Harry Stein	05326981	1LT	Co C, 2d Bn, 5th Cav	
George Kenniston	RA51042073	SSG	Co C, 2d Bn, 5th Cav	
21. IF ANY OF ABOVE PERSONS HAVE BEEN AWARDED OR RECOMMENDED FOR AN AWARD FOR HEROISM FOR PARTICIPATION IN THIS ACT, GIVE NAME AND TYPE OF AWARD				
N/A				
22. CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH ACT WAS PERFORMED				
a. LOCATION		b. INCLUSIVE DATES		c. TIME OF DAY
Coordinates BR867807		21 September 1966		1830 hrs
d. CHARACTER AND CONDITIONS OF TERRAIN AND WEATHER				
The terrain was rocky and mountainous with dense vegetation. The weather was clear with high temperatures.				
23. DESCRIBE ENEMY CONDITIONS (Morale, Proximity, Fire, Observation, Casualties, and Action; what the enemy was doing and what it did as the result of the act.)				
The enemy was firmly entrenched in bunkered positions with exceptionally good fire and observation. Their strength was estimated to be a rifle platoon reinforced by mortars. Morale was high due to commanding terrain. Four [unclear] were [unclear].				

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24. UNIT MORALE, CASUALTIES AND MISSION: INDICATE WHAT THE UNIT WAS DOING AT TIME OF ACT.
To provide a blocking force to prevent escape or infiltration of the enemy. Casualties of friendly forces included 7 KIA's and 8 WIA's. Unit morale was excellent.

25. WHAT WERE COMRADES WHO WERE IN IMMEDIATE PROXIMITY DOING - HOW DID THEY PARTICIPATE IN THE ACT.
Trying to maneuver against the enemy in order to suppress his fire and allow the wounded to be withdrawn.

PART IV - RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD FOR ACHIEVEMENT OR SERVICE

26. UNIT, HEADQUARTERS, OR SECTION IN WHICH DUTY WAS PERFORMED
N/A

27. INCLUSIVE DATES FOR WHICH RECOMMENDED
N/A

28. SERVICE COMPLETED YES NO
 TO BE COMPLETED ON OR ABOUT N/A

29. NOW IN SAME OR RELATED ASSIGNMENT
 NO TO BE REASSIGNED ON OR ABOUT
 TO BE RETIRED ON OR ABOUT
 TO BE RELIEVED FROM AD ON OR ABOUT

PART V - TO BE USED FOR ALL RECOMMENDATIONS

30. NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF DEED OR ACT ACHIEVEMENT PERFORMED OR SERVICE RENDERED

FOR AWARD FOR HEROISM: WAS ACT VOLUNTARY? DESCRIBE WHY ACT WAS OUTSTANDING AND IF IT WAS MORE THAN WAS NORMALLY EXPECTED, EXPLAIN HOW. IF IN AERIAL FLIGHT, DESCRIBE TYPE AND POSITION OF AIRPLANE, CREW POSITION OF INDIVIDUAL, AND ALL UNU

FOR AWARD FOR ACHIEVEMENT: PERIOD FOR WHICH RECOMMENDED (relief); WHAT DID THE INDIVIDUAL LIKE RANK AND EXPERIENCE

On 21 Septem in offensive comb Provience, Vietns Lane Lauffer, RA squad from a land air landing of Co and destroy opera axis of advance. required the unit the west while the east side of the received intense man was immediately wounded and the remainder of the platoon was fixed by fire and could not maneuver. Simultaneously, the 2nd Platoon received enemy mortar fire. This platoon was directed to maneuver to the right and, with the 3rd

According to Richard Bratton, this was at LZ Pelham

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pating n Dihn
is the ch gned
to g the on on point
Continued

31. DESCRIBE EFFECTS OR RESULTS *Enable the platoon to withdraw to commanding terrain and call in supporting troops on west side. Demoralized the enemy. Probably discouraged large scale attack.*

32. RELATED POSITION OF PERSON INITIATING RECOMMENDATION TO PERSON BEING RECOMMENDED
Company Commander

33. IF APPROVED, FORWARD AWARD FOR PRESENTATION TO

34. INCLOSURES (Include proposed citation, sketches and eye witness statements when required.)
1. Proposed Citation
2. Area sketch
3. Witness statement (Mannison)
4. Witness statement (Stein)

35. TYPED NAME, GRADE, BRANCH, AND TITLE OF PERSON INITIATING RECOMMENDATION
+ CHARLES E. FRY
CPT, Infantry, Company Officer

36. SIGNATURE
e/ Charles E. Fry

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Item 30 (Cont)

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Platoon, to flank the enemy position. After moving west over a small hill which was located approximately 100 meters south of the enemy ambush site, the 2nd Platoon began to receive heavy automatic weapons fire from positions to its front and left flank. This fire killed two men and wounded three. The 3rd Platoon continued to maneuver around the right flank of the 2nd Platoon attempting to outflank the enemy positions and assist the 1st Platoon. At this instant the 3rd Platoon was fired upon by well entrenched enemy and could maneuver no further. Private First Class Lauffer was located toward the rear of the 1st Platoon position and was partially screened from enemy fire by thick undergrowth. He and the men immediately around him attempted to gain positions from which they could return fire. As the platoon leader was directing an air strike on the enemy positions, Private First Class Lauffer shouted to the point man, whom he and his companions could see, to determine whether or not he was still alive. He did not respond, and they concluded that he was probably dead. The battle had now been in progress for several hours and darkness was rapidly approaching. By this time Private First Class Lauffer had knowledge that his platoon had suffered two men killed and another two who were seriously wounded. Realizing that the grievously wounded men would have to be evacuated immediately, the 1st Platoon began to withdraw with Private First Class Lauffer's third squad leading. The platoon was ordered to circumvent the enemy positions by moving west and to link up with elements of Company B which had been committed to the south. Private First Class Lauffer's squad was followed by the 2nd squad which was carrying the litter patients and extra equipment from the dead and wounded. Suddenly the platoon was caught in an overwhelming and accurate crossfire delivered by enemy assault rifles and machine guns which instantly wounded the point man and fixed the platoon by fire. Private First Class Lauffer sought cover as the enemy fire moved toward him. Seeing that his entire squad was unable to maneuver, he aggressively returned fire in an attempt to gain fire superiority to permit the others from his squad to withdraw. However, the enemy fire continued and increased in volume which thwarted the withdrawal. His concern became even greater when he realized that the wounded point man could not withdraw, nor could aid be rendered to him and the litter patients who had been dropped in a position whereby they were lying completely exposed in the direct line of enemy fire. When he observed that the other men in his squad were scattered in various positions which precluded them from delivering effective covering fire, he then instinctively arose and aggressively charged the enemy machine gun position. This courageous act momentarily stunned the enemy gunners and Private First Class Lauffer capitalized on this action by delivering a deadly volume of automatic rifle fire against the enemy at their machine gun position. While Private First Class Lauffer kept the enemy off balance with his gallant one man charge, the wounded point man was able to crawl to a covered position and his companions were provided with the critical time required to successfully move the wounded litter patients from the hottest zone of hostile fire and to gain more advantageous positions from which to return fire upon the enemy. Private First Class Lauffer was fatally injured from multiple gunshot wounds during this selfless act of courage and devotion toward his fellow soldiers. As a result of his exceptionally inspirational and heroic actions, the surviving members of his platoon executed a successful withdrawal from their tenuous position to a secondary position where they entered a more defensive character and prepared for the eventual evacuation of the wounded.

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Summary of Recommendation for award of the Medal of Honor:

Name: Billy Lane Lauffer

Status: Rifleman, Private First Class

Organization: Company C, 2d Battalion, 5th Cavalry,
1st Air Cavalry Division, An Khe, RVN

Next of Kin: Mr. Howard W. Lauffer (Father)



Persons who assisted: N/A

Conditions under which act performed:

Location: Bong Son, Binh Dinh Province, RVN

Date: 1000 hours, 21 September 1966

Terrain: Rocky and mountainous with dense vegetation

Weather: Clear with high temperatures

Enemy Condition: The enemy was firmly entrenched in burkered positions with exceptionally good fire and observation. Their strength was estimated to be a rifle platoon reinforced by mortars. Morale was high due to commanding terrain.

Defenders condition: To provide a blocking force to prevent escape or infiltration of the enemy. Unit morale was excellent.

Narrative Description of gallant conduct:

On 21 September 1966, Company C, 2d Battalion, 5th Cavalry was participating in offensive combat against an armed enemy in the vicinity of Bong Son, Binh Dinh Province, Vietnam. At approximately 1000 hours, Private First Class Billy Lane Lauffer, RA 19 748 336, a member of the 1st Platoon, was ordered with his squad from a landing zone which had been secured by his company to prevent the air landing of Company D. Company C had been ordered to remain in their search and destroy position and was moving from the landing zone along their assigned axis of advance. As the enemy's mortar fire increased, all units were ordered to take cover. Private Lauffer, who was positioned in the rear of the squad, saw a mortar round land on the other side of the hill. He immediately Private Lauffer ran into the enemy's mortar fire and destroyed the mortar. He then returned to his squad and continued to fight.

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and the remainder of the platoon was fixed by fire and could not maneuver. Simultaneously, the 2nd Platoon received enemy mortar fire. This platoon was directed to maneuver to the right and, with the 3rd Platoon, to flank the enemy position. After moving west over a small hill which was located approximately 100 meters south of the enemy ambush site, the 2nd Platoon began to receive heavy automatic weapons fire from positions to its front and left flank. This fire killed two men and wounded three. The 3rd Platoon continued to maneuver around the right flank of the 2nd Platoon attempting to outflank the enemy positions and assist the 1st Platoon. At this instant the 3rd Platoon was fired upon by well entrenched enemy and could maneuver no further. Private First Class Lauffer was located toward the rear of the 1st Platoon position and was partially screened from enemy fire by thick undergrowth. He and the men immediately around him attempted to gain positions from which they could return fire. As the platoon leader was directing an air strike on the enemy positions, Private First Class Lauffer shouted to the point man, whom he and his companions could see, to determine whether or not he was still alive. He did not respond, and they concluded that he was probably dead. The battle had now been in progress for several hours and darkness was rapidly approaching. By this time Private First Class Lauffer had knowledge that his platoon had suffered two men killed and another two who were seriously wounded. Realizing that the grievously wounded man would have to be evacuated immediately, the 1st Platoon began to withdraw with Private First Class Lauffer's third squad leading. The platoon was ordered to circumvent the enemy positions by moving west and to link up with elements of Company B which had been committed to the south. Private First Class Lauffer's squad was followed by the 2nd squad which was carrying the litter patients and extra equipment from the dead and wounded. Suddenly the platoon was caught in an overwhelming and accurate crossfire delivered by enemy assault rifles and machine guns which instantly wounded the point man and fixed the platoon fire. Private First Class Lauffer sought cover as the enemy fire moved toward him. Seeing that his entire squad was unable to maneuver, he aggressively returned fire in an attempt to gain fire superiority to permit the others from his squad to withdraw. However, the enemy fire continued and increased in volume which thwarted the withdrawal. His concern became even greater when he realized that the wounded point man could not withdraw, nor could aid be rendered to him and the litter patients who had been dropped in a position whereby they were lying completely exposed in the direct line of enemy fire. When he observed that the other men in his squad were scattered in various positions which precluded their firing back at the enemy, he covered fire on the instinctive ground and a few men were on the ground. The enemy fire was so intense that Lauffer was unable to do anything but return fire. He fired his rifle against the enemy at their machine gun position. While Private First Class Lauffer was engaged in combat with the enemy, the wounded point man was able to crawl to a covered position and his companions were unable to render aid to him. The enemy fire continued to pour in on the platoon and the wounded point man was unable to be evacuated.

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First Class Lauffer was fatally injured from multiple gunshot wounds during this selfless act of courage and devotion toward his fellow soldiers. As a result of his exceptionally inspirational and heroic actions, the surviving members of his platoon executed a successful withdrawal from their tenuous position to commanding terrain where they established an effective defensive perimeter and prepared for aerial evacuation of the wounded.

During the battle in the vicinity of Song Son, Binh Dinh Province, Private First Class Lauffer:

1. Killed four enemy soldiers and wounded an unknown amount.
2. Saved his comrades by charging a machine gun position which resulted in killing enemy soldiers who were about to kill them.

Private First Class Billy Lane Lauffer was KIA on 21 September 1965. The facts contained in the proposed citation and this narrative account have been substantiated by the statements of eyewitnesses.

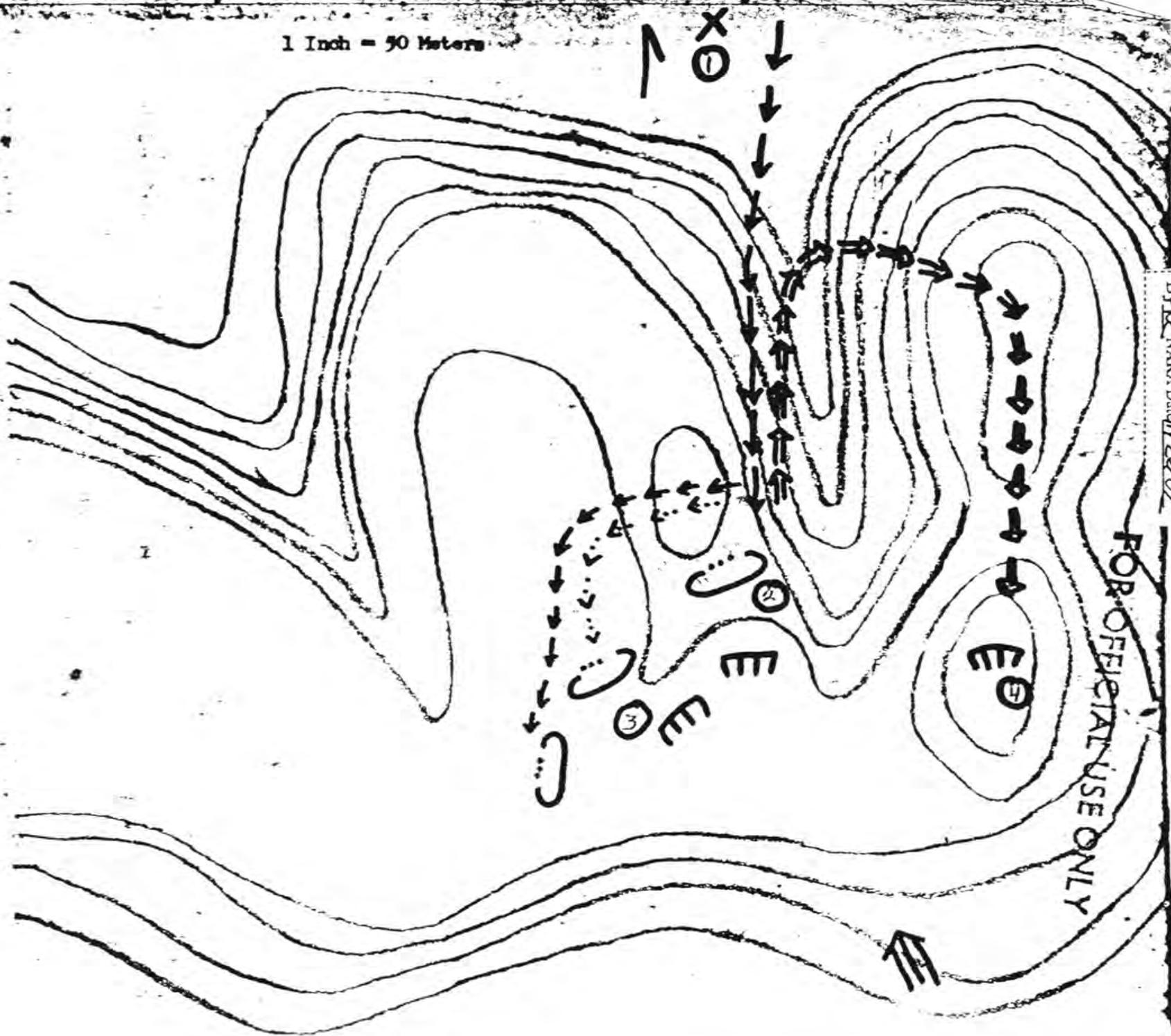
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1 Inch = 50 Meters

3 PLTS
2 PLT
1ST PLT-ADVANCE
1ST PLT-WITHDRAWAL
OF REINFORCEMENTS

Squad of 3d Plt
made by 1st Plt
2d Plt and 3d Plt
1st Plt during
LAUFFER mortally



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RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD		PREPARE TO BEACH APPROVING AUTHORITY IN DUPLICATE.		DATE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HEROISM	<input type="checkbox"/> MERITORIOUS ACHIEVEMENT OR SERVICE (AR 672-5-1)			9 March 1967
THRU: Commanding Officer 2d Bn, 5th Cav 1st Air Cav Div APO 96490	TO: Commanding General 1st Air Cav Div ATTN: AVDAAG-A&D APO 96490	FROM (Unit): Commanding Officer Co C, 2d Bn, 5th Cav 1st Air Cav Div APO 96490		
PART I - STATUS AT TIME OF RECOMMENDATION				
1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE NAME		2. SERVICE NO.	3. GRADE	4. BRANCH (OF MOS IF WO)
LAUFFER, BILLY LANE		RA 19 748 034	PFC E-3	11B10
5. ORGANIZATION		6. LEGAL RESIDENCE (Number, Street, City, and State)		
Co C, 2d Bn, 5th Cav, 1st Air Cav Div				
7. RECOMMENDED AWARD		8. POSTHUMOUS AWARD		
Medal of Honor		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		
PART II - STATUS AT TIME OF ACT OR SERVICE				
10. SERVICE NUMBER	11. GRADE	12. BRANCH (OF MOS IF WO)	13. ORGANIZATION	
RA 19 748 034	PFC E-3	11B10	Co C, 2d Bn, 5th Cav, 1st Air Cav	
14. HAS ALL SERVICE BEEN HONORABLE SUBSEQUENT TO THIS ACT OR SERVICE (If not, summarize on reverse side.)				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				
15. IF PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS WERE SUBMITTED FOR THIS ACT OR SERVICE, INDICATE TYPE OF AWARD RECOMMENDED, BY WHOM, WHEN, ACTION TAKEN, AND HEADQUARTERS				
N/A				
16. OTHER U. S. DECORATIONS RECEIVED (Include date and authority) (Do not list service medals; list foreign decorations only when same period as this recommendation.)				
N/A				
17. DID YOU HAVE PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE ACT OR SERVICE <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO				
PART III - RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD FOR HEROISM				
18. WERE YOU AN EYE WITNESS TO THE ACT		19. IF CERTIFICATES OR AFFIDAVITS OR EYE WITNESSES OR PERSONS HAVING PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF FACTS ARE NOT INCLUDED, GIVE REASONS		
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO				
20. PERSONS IN IMMEDIATE PROXIMITY OR WHO ASSISTED IN ACT OR SHARED IN SAME HAZARD				
a. FULL NAME	b. SERVICE NO.	c. GRADE	d. UNIT	
Harry Stein	05326981	1LT	Co C, 2d Bn, 5th Cav	
George Kenniston	RA51042073	SSG	Co C, 2d Bn, 5th Cav	
21. IF ANY OF ABOVE PERSONS HAVE BEEN AWARDED OR RECOMMENDED FOR AN AWARD FOR HEROISM FOR PARTICIPATION IN THIS ACT, GIVE NAME AND TYPE OF AWARD				
N/A				
22. CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH ACT WAS PERFORMED				
a. LOCATION		b. INCLUSIVE DATES	c. TIME OF DAY	
Dunklester BARRAGE		21 September 1966	1630 hrs	
d. CHARACTER AND CONDITIONS OF TERRAIN AND WEATHER				
The terrain was a low and continuous with dense vegetation. The weather was clear with high temperatures.				
23. DESCRIBE ENEMY CONDITIONS (Morale, Position, Armament, Casualties, and Action; what the enemy was doing and what it did as the result of the act.)				
The enemy was firmly entrenched in dugout positions with exceptionally good field of view. The position was estimated to be a rifle position. The forces were estimated to be 10-15 men. The enemy was firing at the command post. Four				

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24. UNIT MORALE, CASUALTIES AND MISSION: INDICATE WHAT THE UNIT WAS DOING AT TIME OF ACT
 To provide a blocking force to prevent escape or infiltration of the enemy. Casualties of friendly forces included 7 KIA's and 8 WIA's. Unit morale was excellent.

25. WHAT WERE COMRADES WHO WERE IN IMMEDIATE PROXIMITY DOING - HOW DID THEY PARTICIPATE IN THE ACT
 Trying to maneuver against the enemy in order to suppress his fire and allow the wounded to be withdrawn.

PART IV - RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD FOR ACHIEVEMENT OR SERVICE

26. UNIT, HEADQUARTERS, OR SECTION IN WHICH DUTY WAS PERFORMED
 N/A

27. INCLUSIVE DATES FOR WHICH RECOMMENDED
 N/A

28. SERVICE COMPLETED YES NO
 TO BE COMPLETED ON OR ABOUT N/A

29. HOW IN SAME OR RELATED ASSIGNMENT
 NO TO BE REASSIGNED ON OR ABOUT
 TO BE RETIRED ON OR ABOUT
 TO BE RELIEVED FROM AD ON OR ABOUT

PART V - TO BE USED FOR ALL RECOMMENDATIONS

30. NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF DEED OR ACT ACHIEVEMENT PERFORMED OR SERVICE RENDERED
 FOR AWARD FOR HEROISM: WAS ACT VOLUNTARY? DESCRIBE WHY ACT WAS OUTSTANDING AND IF IT WAS MORE THAN WAS NORMALLY EXPECTED, EXPLAIN HOW. IF IN AERIAL FLIGHT, DESCRIBE TYPE AND POSITION OF AIRPLANE, CREW POSITION OF INDIVIDUAL, AND ALL UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

FOR AWARD FOR ACHIEVEMENT OR SERVICE: TITLE AND DUTIES OF ASSIGNMENT, INCLUDING CHARACTER OF SERVICE DURING PERIOD FOR WHICH RECOMMENDED (Give complete description of technical or specialized positions, including dates of assignment and relief); WHAT DID THE INDIVIDUAL DO THAT MERITS THE AWARD? WHY WAS THIS OUTSTANDING WHEN COMPARED TO OTHERS OF LIKE RANK AND EXPERIENCE IN SIMILAR POSITIONS?

On 21 September 1966, Company C, 2d Battalion, 5th Cavalry was participating in offensive combat against an armed enemy in the vicinity of Bong Son, Binh Dinh Province, Vietnam. At approximately 1000 hours, Private First Class Billy Lane Lauffer, RA 19 748 031, a member of the 1st Platoon, was moving with his squad from a landing zone which had been secured by his company to protect the air landing of Company D. Company C had been directed to resume their search and destroy operation and was moving from the landing zone along their assigned axis of advance. A prominent hill mass lay astride the company axis which required the unit commander to split his force by deploying the 3rd Platoon to the west while the 1st and 2nd Platoons marched in column to the south along the east side of the hill. Without warning Private First Class Lauffer's Platoon received intense automatic weapons fire from enemy ambush positions. The point man was immediately wounded and the remainder of the platoon was fixed by fire and could not maneuver. Simultaneously, the 2nd Platoon received enemy mortar fire. This platoon was directed to maneuver to the right and, with the 3rd

Continued

31. DESCRIBE EFFECTS OR RESULTS Enable the platoon to withdraw to commanding terrain and call in supporting forces or enemy forces destroyed the enemy. Initially discouraged large scale attack.

32. RELATED POSITION OF PERSON INITIATING RECOMMENDATION TO PERSON BEING RECOMMENDED
 Company Commander

33. IF APPROVED, FORWARD AWARD FOR PRESENTATION TO

34. INCLOSURES (Include proposed citation, certificate and any witness statements when required.)
 1. Proposed Citation
 2. [unclear]
 3. [unclear] statement (Required)
 4. Witness statement (Stein)

35. TYPED NAME, GRADE, BRANCH, AND TITLE OF PERSON INITIATING RECOMMENDATION
 [unclear]
 [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]
 36. SIGNATURE
 E. [unclear] [unclear]

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Platoon, to flank the enemy position. After moving west over a small hill which was located approximately 100 meters south of the enemy ambush site, the 2nd Platoon began to receive heavy automatic weapons fire from positions to its front and left flank. This fire killed two men and wounded three. The 3rd Platoon continued to maneuver around the right flank of the 2nd Platoon attempting to outflank the enemy positions and assist the 1st Platoon. At this instant the 3rd Platoon was fired upon by well entrenched enemy and could maneuver no further. Private First Class Lauffer was located toward the rear of the 1st Platoon position and was partially screened from enemy fire by thick undergrowth. He and the men immediately around him attempted to gain positions from which they could return fire. As the platoon leader was directing an air strike on the enemy positions, Private First Class Lauffer shouted to the point man, whom he and his companions could see, to determine whether or not he was still alive. He did not respond, and they concluded that he was probably dead. The battle had now been in progress for several hours and darkness was rapidly approaching. By this time Private First Class Lauffer had knowledge that his platoon had suffered two men killed and another two who were seriously wounded. Realizing that the grievously wounded men would have to be evacuated immediately, the 1st Platoon began to withdraw with Private First Class Lauffer's third squad leading. The platoon was ordered to circumvent the enemy positions by moving west and to link up with elements of Company E which had been committed to the south. Private First Class Lauffer's squad was followed by the 2nd squad which was carrying the litter patients and extra equipment from the dead and wounded. Suddenly the platoon was caught in an overwhelming and accurate crossfire delivered by enemy assault rifles and machine guns which instantly wounded the point man and fixed the platoon by fire. Private First Class Lauffer sought cover as the enemy fire moved toward him. Seeing that his entire squad was unable to maneuver, he aggressively returned fire in an attempt to gain fire superiority to permit the others from his squad to withdraw. However, the enemy fire continued and increased in volume which thwarted the withdrawal. His concern became even greater when he realized that the wounded point man could not withdraw, nor could aid be rendered to him and the litter patients who had been dropped in a position whereby they were lying completely exposed in the direct line of enemy fire. When he observed that the other men in his squad were scattered in various positions which precluded them from delivering effective covering fire, he then instinctively arose and aggressively charged the enemy machine gun position. This courageous act momentarily stunned the enemy gunners and Private First Class Lauffer capitalized on this action by delivering a deadly volume of automatic rifle fire against the enemy at their machine gun position. While Private First Class Lauffer kept the enemy off balance with his gallant one man charge, the wounded point man was able to crawl to a covered position and his companions were provided with the critical time required to successfully move the wounded litter patients from the line of fire to a more advantageous position. Private First Class Lauffer was fatally injured from a wound during this selfless act of courage and sacrifice toward his fellow soldiers. As a result of his heroic and selfless actions, the remaining members of his platoon were able to successfully withdraw from the enemy position and return to their own lines.

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BEEN DROPPED IN A POSITION EXPOSED TO HOSTILE FIRE. RISING INSTINCTIVELY WITH
 UTTER DISREGARD FOR HIS OWN SAFETY, HE AGGRESSIVELY CHARGED AN ENEMY MACHINE GUN
 POSITION, MOMENTARILY CONFUSING THE ENEMY GUNNERS. WHILE PRIVATE FIRST CLASS
 [name] KEPT THE READY OFF BALANCE BY HIS GALLANT ONE MAN CHARGE, THE WOUNDED
 SOLDIERS WERE ABLE TO CRAWL TO A COVERED POSITION, AND THE SQUAD WAS PROVIDED
 WITH THE CRUCIAL MOMENTS REQUIRED TO SUCCESSFULLY MOVE THE WOUNDED MEN PATIENTS TO
 A SAFER AND MORE ADVANTAGEOUS POSITION. PRIVATE FIRST CLASS [name] WAS
 FATALLY WOUNDED DURING HIS SELFLESS ACT OF COURAGE AND DEVOTION TO HIS FELLOW
 SOLDIERS. AS A RESULT OF HIS HEROIC ACTION, THE ENEMY SOLDIERS OF HIS PLATOON
 WERE ABLE TO EXECUTE A SUCCESSFUL WITHDRAWAL FROM THEIR TERRIBLE POSITION AND
 ESTABLISH AN EFFECTIVE DEFENSIVE PERIMETER. PRIVATE FIRST CLASS [name] WAS
 CONSPICUOUS GALLANTRY AND INTREPIDITY, AT THE COST OF HIS LIFE SERVED AS AN IN-
 SPIRATION TO HIS FELLOW SOLDIERS AND SAVED THE LIVES OF AN UNTOLD NUMBER OF
 COMPANIONS. HIS ACTION STANDS IN KEEPING WITH THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE
 ARMY SERVICE, AND REFLECTS GREAT CREDIT UPON HIMSELF, HIS UNIT, AND THE
 UNITED STATES ARMY.

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NO 10
ORIGINAL LOCATION OF SQUAD PLATFORM, etc, 2/3

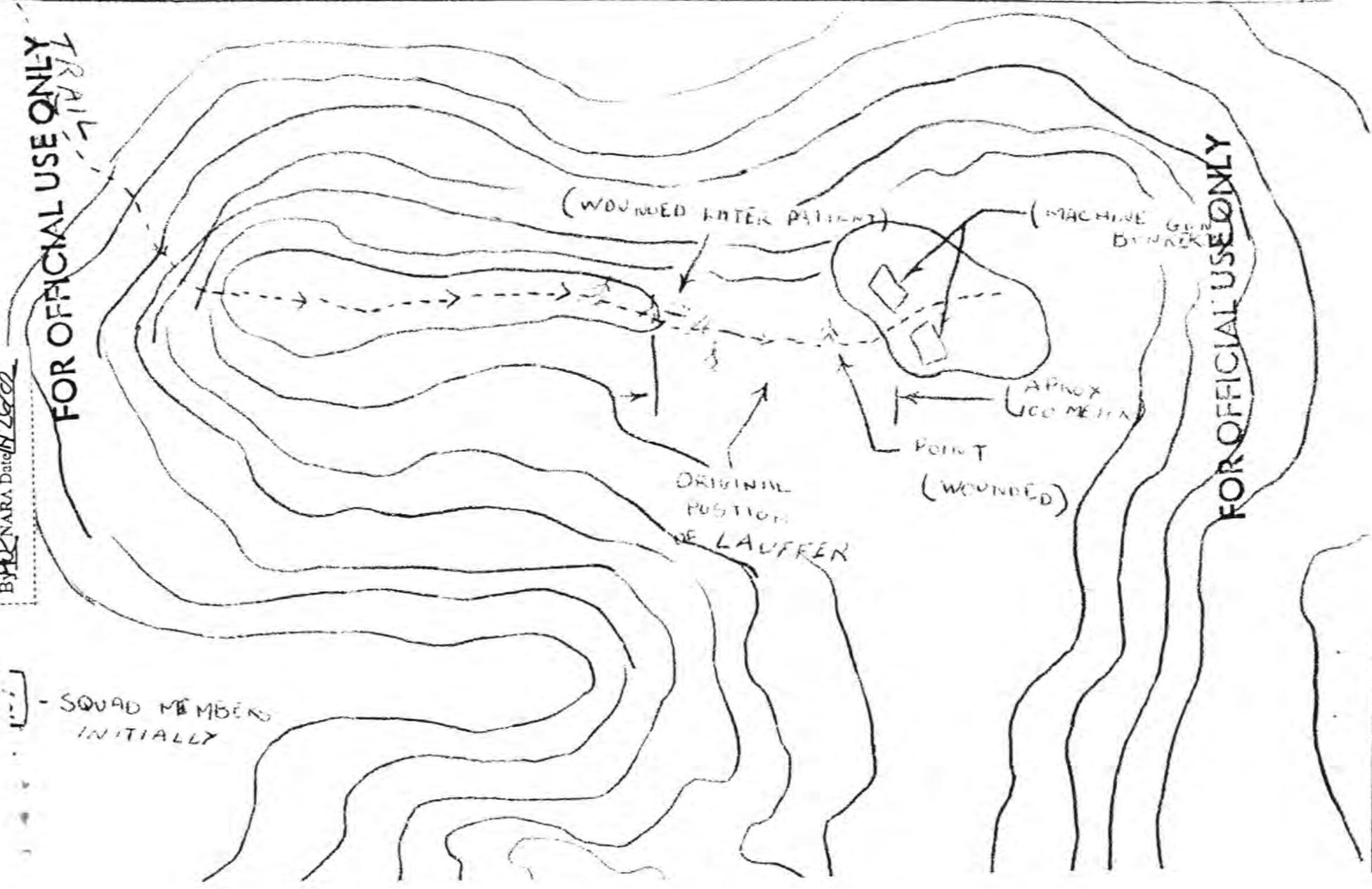
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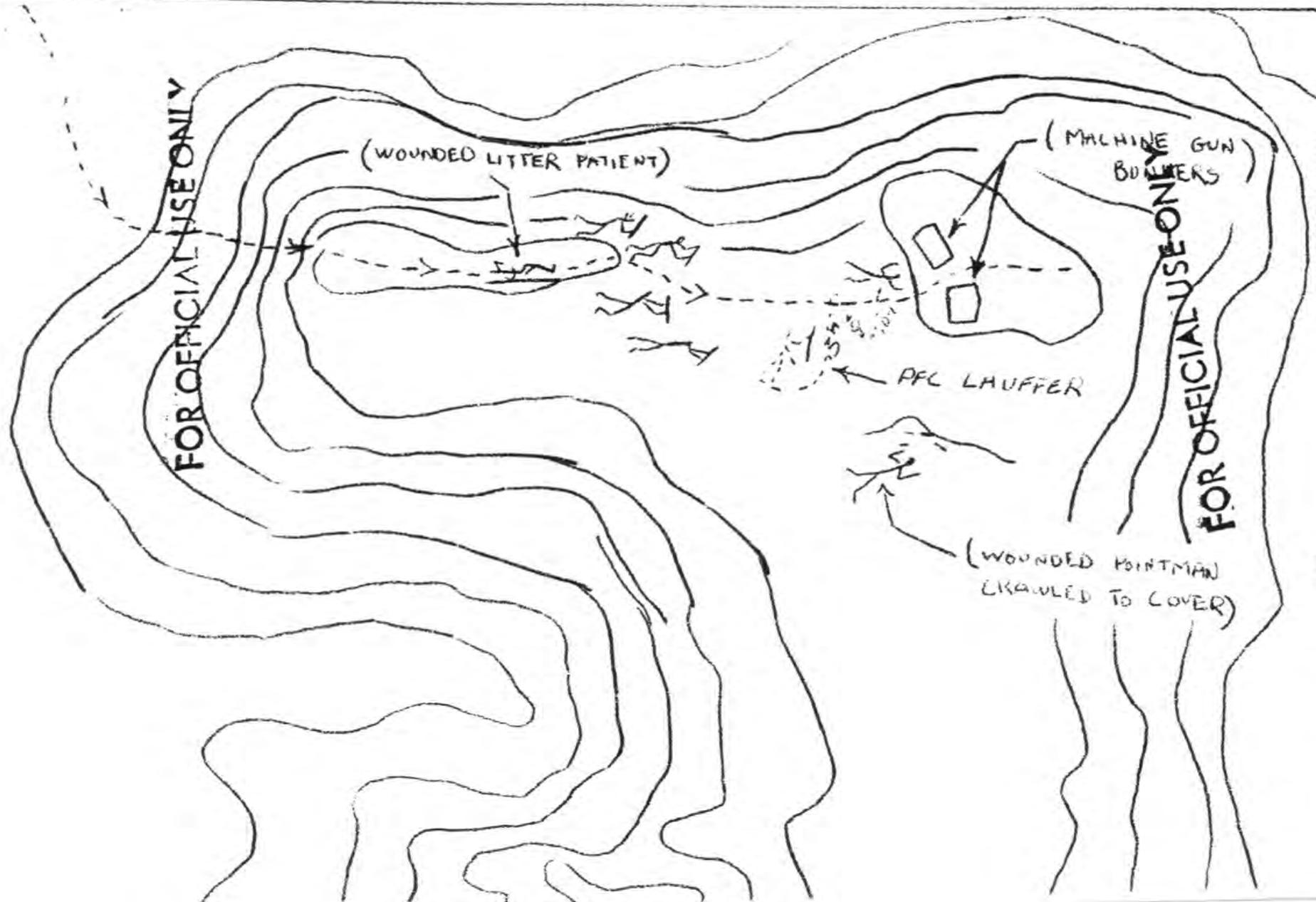
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SQUAD MEMBERS INITIALLY

MOVEMENTS OF PFC LAUFFER AND 3RD SQUAD



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By [signature] NARA Date 11/26/00

Witness Statement

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On 21 September 1966, I was moving with my squad as lead element for the first platoon at coordinates BR 866806. We had just reached the top of a hill and started heading south toward Company B, which was joined by other elements of our company. My squad was leading and carrying the wounded, equipment from the wounded and dead from an ambush earlier in the day. Suddenly my squad was caught in another ambush, this time from two machine guns spraying the trail we were walking on. Immediately my point man was hit falling in the line of enemy fire. I told the squad to withdraw to covered positions and lay down a base of fire. Pfc Lauffer was second in line and was now in position closest to the enemy. It became obvious that we were pinned down and could not move unless someone put down good fire support from the front. Pfc Lauffer looked back and saw that his squad was receiving heavy fire and could not move and realized that the wounded were lying in the direct line of enemy fire. Pfc Lauffer acted without orders and seemingly without regard for his own life as he moved himself into a position to fire at the enemy. This position put him in the direct line of enemy fire with relatively no cover. He rose to his feet and advanced forward laying down a base of fire that allowed my squad to move to safe positions and enabled the wounded point man to crawl to the rear for medical attention. During his advance Pfc Lauffer was wounded twice and fell to the ground. Minutes later Pfc Lauffer died from wounds suffered from this action. His unselfish giving of his life saved the lives of my squad and enabled us to remove the wounded to a safe location for evacuation. Pfc Lauffer was not ordered to act as he did, but did so obviously on his own out of concern for his fellow soldiers. His actions were far beyond that required of any soldier in my unit.

GEORGE D. WERNSTON
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2d Bn 5th Cavalry

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Authority 873541
By [signature] NARA Date 11/26/00

S-T-A-T-E-M-E-N-T

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I have previously made a statement concerning Pfc Billy Lane Lauffer, RA 19 74° 034, for his actions prior to being killed on 21 September 1966. This statement is designed to clarify the position reading, "... he rose to his feet directly in enemy fire standing on the trail in the most dangerous position, he fired and moved toward the enemy position." My choice of words was deliberate to convey that PFC Lauffer was not in a state of shock or frenzy but performed his actions with a cool head and fully aware of his movements and the location of the enemy. His last movements were definitely of an aggressive nature. There was no protective cover forward of his position, nor any other reason or motive for his movement. It is obvious from my previous statement that the point man had no cover, consequently being severely wounded, and obviously there was no cover or concealment offered to PFC Lauffer's front. PFC Lauffer's ultimate destination was the machine-gun position which was pinning down his squad. Taking quick action he rose to his feet moving onto the trail with his rifle firing in rapid succession. Quickly he jumped from side to side trying to avoid enemy bullets and make progress toward the bunker. As he continued to assault the position he received the fatal bullet in the chest. It matters little how one describe the action, the facts involved are simple and straight forward; he deliberately and with full knowledge of his actions attempted to singly destroy the bunker position.

HARRY A. STEIN
1LT, Infantry
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Witness Statement

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On 21 September 1966, my platoon was carrying litter patients and equipment, moving toward high ground after an intense battle with the enemy in dug in positions. My third squad was the lead element, followed by the litter patients and equipment. Suddenly my frontal squad was hit by a strong enemy machine gun cross fire, instantly wounding my point man. Pfc Lauffer was second in line hitting the ground as the fire hit the ground and trees around him. Pfc Lauffer immediately set down a base of fire for the squad behind him as the rest of the squad scattered and began firing. Pfc Lauffer realized their fire could not give effective cover for the withdrawal of the wounded in direct line of enemy fire. Being in a frontal position, only he could give effective fire. Without regard for his own life and out of a desire to save the men in the squad and wounded from further injury, he rose to his feet directly in enemy fire standing on the trail in the most dangerous position, he fired and moved toward the enemy position. Pfc Lauffer was mortally wounded and died moments later from the injuries. His unselfish giving of his life not only allowed the wounded to get to a safe position but allowed the squad to withdraw to high ground and reform themselves for the night.

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