

Douglas Young

From: Jay Phillips [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, August 09, 2001 7:25 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: The day Charles Foulks died

I think my memories of February 19, 1969 and those of Mike are pretty much in line. Here's what I recall:

The 1st platoon moved off a small clearing through the jungle. The undergrowth in this area was passable, so we were moving parallel to and perhaps twenty meters from a trail that ran from the clearing where the rest of the company remained. We had moved not more than 100 meters when we received one of those "hold in place" orders, apparently due to the point having discovered something (according to Mike's narrative).

I had been back with the Company for about a month and was serving as fire team leader in the 1st squad, while waiting for the squad leader to rotate home so I could assume that position. My team was second in line, with the other team in 1-1 on point. Charles Foulks was a member of that team.

When the column held up, most of us just dropped in place and waited. Charles, who was about two spots in front of me (but not on point), wandered over to an anthill about 3-4 feet high on the edge of the trail, and sat down on the front of the hill. In just a short time, there was a long burst or two of AK or RPD fire, and when we dug our noses out of the ground, I saw Charles slumped over ahead of me and to my left. While the lead fire team provided cover (I don't actually recall any firing after the initial burst and saw no enemy), I and one of the medics moved forward to Charles. He had taken six or seven rounds in the head and upper torso, with one round cleanly through the neck. He did not speak. Although 1SG Solloway's journal for 2/19/69 says we took "heavy automatic weapons fire", that is not what I recall and no one was hit except for Charles by the ambusher's fire.

After the medic had a quick look, he and I carried Charles back down the trail for a short distance, where two or three additional troops aided us in carrying him to the clearing, secured by the rest of the company. Once at the clearing, I held Charles' head while the medics continued to work, although probably fruitlessly. I remember that I became angry that it seemed to be taking so long to get a DustOff bird in, and either the 1st Sergeant or one of the Platoon Sergeants told me to calm down. I think Charles was dead before the chopper arrived.

Later, when we moved back through the area of the ambush, I remember that we identified a vacant "blind" in a tree near the trail as the likely spot from which the fire had come. The narrative on the site indicates that gunships and an airstrike were called in and that we later found one dead NVA with weapon. I don't recall any of that, but I think second platoon actually had point when the move re-commenced, so perhaps they found the NVA.

I did not know Charles well, as I had only been with the Platoon a short time, but I remember him as something of a "country" boy, with a very laid-back friendly demeanor. I'm sure he didn't realize he was placing himself in mortal danger by resting near the trail we were trying to avoid walking down.

Doug:

Please feel free to use or adapt any of this information for the History file that you may find useful. I'll get the materials I've assembled in the mail to you tomorrow. I'll be out all next week attending the national convention of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, in Oconomoc, WI, so will be out of touch for a bit.

Included in the materials I'm sending you is the after-action report on the Battle of the Angel's Wing, Bravo Company's fight of March 8-9, 1969, alluded to by Mike in his message.

I'll be sending along later another personal commentary, including a Charlie Company epilogue to that terrible fight by the First Platoon of Bravo, as well as some comments on the conclusions that were drawn about that battle by higher headquarters.

Thanks again for your great website and thanks to Mike for being there.

jay

But here it is-

thanks.

And I don't know how many times in your life you've heard that or from how many people, but I can assure you it has never carried more emotion than it does for me this morning.

I'm glad you made it back too. My memories of that day are pretty good, I think up to the point where I got hit. I seem to recall at least one guy from my squad also helping to pull me back, although I've lost all recollection of any of the names. Oddly, I've photos and memories of almost all of the guys I knew during my first tour with Tall Comanche (May 1967 - April 1968), but cannot remember the names of the guys in 1-1 from 1969. Do you recall anyone else who was involved that day?

Obviously, I owe you at least a steak dinner. Do you ever get to the Washington, DC area? Will you be attending future Comanche reunions?

Hope life is treating you the best.

What an incredible morning.

Jay Phillips

Comanche 1-1 a long time ago

... "A. Michael Patacca" [REDACTED] 08/05/01 11:20AM >>>

Jay,

I saw your guest book entry. You were in the 1st Platoon and you were the 1st Squad Ldr. I remember because I pulled you off that bunker on April 6. I'm glad you made it. I have never lost the memory of us crawling forward, seeing you hit, and pulling you those long yards back across that field and small road. I had little hope you would survive. It was good to find out you did.

I'm glad we were all a lot lighter back then.

Mike Patacca

1st Lt Angelo M. Patacca

Comanche 1-6

And that takes us back to April 6. Quite an Easter Sunday! The Battalion Log for the day was a treat to discover on the website. It is very interesting to read for someone like me who has held the event as a personal moment in time. There must be as many perspectives and versions on the occurrences in Vietnam as there are soldiers who served and witnesses who reported. However, the "snippets" of the log don't do justice to the detailed richness of the experience. If I tried to bring you up to speed on the events following your departure, they would sound like facts. It is better to let our imagination fill in the details.

Take care.

Mike Patacca

"1st Lt Angelo M. Patacca - Comanche 1-6"

Douglas Young

From: Jay Phillips [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 05, 2004 6:44 AM
To: Douglas Young
Subject: RE: C 2/5 Cav

Doug

I do remember, although vaguely, the night Trevino was killed. In my recollection, we were indeed making a night movement in an area of hedgerows and fields (may have been overgrown rice paddies, as the 506 valley contained many abandoned/inactive farm lands). Trevino, the company point man this night (I believe he was in third platoon), was moving on a trail and, in the dark, hit a trip wire while moving through a gap in a hedgerow. It was a large explosion (may have been 81mm or 105mm round) and I think he was killed instantly. I remember we brought in a night medevac, using a strobe light I think (although I could just be recalling the strobe on the Huey) and basically abandoned whatever night mission we had been moving on.

As the movement was in the dark, I don't see how anyone could have avoided hitting the booby trap. That's all I recall of this incident.

Jay

Jay H. Phillips
Military Order of the Purple Heart of the USA, Inc.

[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: Douglas Young [mailto:webmaster@talkcomanche.org]
Sent: Thursday, March 04, 2004 9:46 PM
To: Tom Rutten; Donald G. Jensen; Lowell Stammer; Ken Burington; Paul C. Garber; Jay Phillips; [REDACTED] Monte R. Zierke; Larry E Wood; [REDACTED] Tom "Gator" Dodson
Subject: C 2/5 Cav

Hello, gents - -

Yesterday we had the niece of SP4 Rodolfo Trevino post a question to the Guest Book on the C 2/5 Cav web site. Trevino was KIA on December 15, 1967. The only way we know that is through Tom Rutten's incredible memory. Trevino's in would like to know more about her uncle's death - and so would I.

I don't have any documentation at all about that incident. There are no S3 Journals available prior to January 1, 1968, and I do not have the Morning Reports for that date either. The Annual History mentions nothing about the incident. It would have happened ten days before Dean Learish turned over command of the company to Jim Estep at Bong Son on Christmas Day.

If anybody remembers anything about the incident (and you might want to read Tom's information on the December 1967 page), let me know. We can forward that to the relative, and I can add more information to the web site.

Thanx, guys.

3/7/2004

Info removed by VNCA

Doug

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