

June 20, 1969

Douglas Young

To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Summary of 2/20/69

Hi Doug - Attached are my answers to you questions. I'm going to use all CAPS.

Mike - what an incredible memory!!! Did you keep a journal? How in the world do you remember these kind of details. But - you've stirred some thoughts.

By the way - I assume you're talking of June 20th here - not February 20th.

YOU ARE RIGHT IT WAS JUNE 20, 1969.

More below

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

From: [REDACTED]mailto:[REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, October 03, 2000 6:55 AM
To: webmaster@tallcomanche.org
Subject: Summary of 2/20/69

Hi Doug:

Attached is my recollection of the events of 2/20/69:

I will assume that the action took place on the evening of February 20, 1969.

Late in the day on 2/19/69, C2/5 (Tall Comanche) learned that B2/5 (Ridge Runner) received approximately 50 casualties in an NVA ambush. The next morning and throughout the day we were informed that B2/5 was still in contact with the NVA.

On the afternoon of 2/20/69, C2/5 moved to the B2/5 location and established a combined defensive perimeter with them.

I don't remember us being married up with Ridge Runner - not saying it didn't happen - I just don't remember it. Did we CA to them, or overland?

I REMEMBER THAT C2/5 WALKED TO THE LOCATION WHERE B2/5 WAS ALREADY SET UP. WE GOT THERE LATE IN THE AFTERNOON. THE REASON THAT I SO SURE ABOUT THE JOINT PERIMETER WITH B2/5 WAS BECAUSE OF DAN HOOKS BEING WITH THEM AND GOING OVER TO THE B2/5 AREA THE NEXT MORNING AND TALKING WITH HIM.

After dark, the NVA probed the perimeter in several spots in their attempt to mark it for the subsequent mortar attack. Several firefights occurred around the perimeter. I remember that this was the first time we heard Top Allen fire his AK-47 from within the perimeter and shout at and taunt the NVA in Vietnamese.

Okay - I remember Top Allen taunting NVA in a fight, but not on this occasion. He did it on another occasion when we were hit on the third night of three nights in a row.

I REMEMBER THE TIME THAT YOU ARE THINKING ABOUT - IT WAS A FEW WEEKS LATER AND HE DID A LOT OF SHOUTING AT THE NVA. ON 6/20/69, HE DID A LOT OF SHOOTING AND ONLY A LITTLE YELLING. THE CRACK OF HIS AK47 FROM WITHIN THE PERIMETER WAS WHAT I REMEMBER MOST.

The mortar attack was very heavy and it demolished the 3rd Platoon CP. The Platoon leader (Lt. Paul) and Platoon Sergeant (SSG Fugimara) were severely wounded. Lt Kenneth Susmarski (on OJT with C2/5), Sgt Dennis Resinger (a squad leader in 3/6) and Pvt. Allyn Stevens (Medic) were killed.

Thanx - for years I've tried to remember the name of the 3rd Platoon leader. Paul, eh? Help me on this. I remember him being from Minnesota and was a school teacher. (Have no idea what he was doing in the Army if he was a teacher.) His wife used to send him little "care packages" which often contained a canned alcoholic drink, such as Bacardi and coke, or Jack Daniels and Seven-Up. He was rather quiet and bookish, but (I thought) a damned good officer. The men liked and trusted him. I remember him taking a lot of shrapnel in the lungs, and he could barely breath. The medic (I don't remember which one) had him over near the CP, and had him sitting up. (Was that Hooks? Might I email him and ask him what he remembers?) He wanted a cigarette, though we wouldn't let him of course. He was in such bad shape we called in a Medevac and had to blow an LZ with C4 at night. The bird came into an LZ so tight we could hear the blades tip smack the trees. They got him out anyway, even with some intermittent sniper fire. Do you remember any of that? What was happening with Ridge Runner? We were in the same perimeter?

I recall the mortar round landed right in the 3/6 CP foxhole, killing the RTO. I thought the Platoon Sergeant was KIA as well.

I THINK THAT YOU REMEMBER DENNIS RESINGER BEING KILLED THAT NIGHT, HE WAS ONE OF THE 3/6 SQUAD LEADERS. SSG FUGIMARA WAS THE PLATOON SGT AND HE WAS ONLY WOUNDED. ALL FIVE OF THE CASUALTIES OCCURRED IN THE SAME AREA, POSSIBLE FROM THE SAME ROUND.

I DON'T THINK THAT IT WAS HOOKS WHO TOOK CARE OF LT. PAUL BECAUSE HE WAS ACROSS THE PERIMETER WITH B2/5. IT PROBABLY WAS A MEDIC FROM THE OTHER PLATOONS OR THE CO HQ. YOUR IDEA ABOUT EMAILING HOOKS IS GOOD, HE MAY HAVE MORE INFO ON WHAT HAPPENED IN B2/5.

I do not remember having an OJT Lieutenant with us. What in the hell for? Where was he from?

THEY OFTEN SEND NEW LT'S TO THE FIELD WITH OTHER COMPANYS PRIOR TO THEIR ASSIGNMENT TO THEIR OFFICIAL UNIT. BRIAN PHIPPS WAS ASSIGNED TO A2/5 AND WAS WITH C2/5 FOR HIS OJT WHEN WE WERE HIT ON OCT 6, 1969. HE STAYED WITH THE COMPANY AFTER THE PLATOON LEADER (HOLDEN) WAS WOUNDED.

THE OJT LT SUSMARSKI WAS FROM ERIE, PA.

The story of Pvt. Allyn Stevens has a strange twist. Stevens was assigned to B2/5 and He was on Ike when B2/5 went to the field. He was assigned to go to the field with C2/5 because Dan Hooks, (the 3/6 medic), was also in the rear

getting new glasses. When B 2/5 took the 50 casualties on 2/19/69, Hooks was on LZ Ike waiting to go to the field, and was sent to B2/5 as their

temporary medic. On 2/20/69 when C2/5 and B2/5 linked up, Stevens went back to B2/5.

He met Hooks who had already dug his foxhole and built his "poncho hooch".

They decided that they would wait until the next morning to switch. Unfortunately for Stevens, the decision cost him his life. I remember talking to Hooks the next day, he was shaken by the incident.

Ouch!!! Any idea why he was a private? Medics weren't usually the kind of guys to get busted. UNFORTUNATELY SINCE STEVENS HAD BEEN IN NAM SINCE DECEMBER 1968 AND HIS MOS WAS MEDICAL BUT NOT AN ACTUAL MEDIC, MY GUESS IS THAT HE PROBABLY DID GET BUSTED AND "SENT TO THE FIELD"

During the next day (2/21/69), C2/5 attempted to find a suitable PZ to return to Ike. We finally had to blast trees with C-4 to clear an area.

What did B 2/5 do?

I'M NOT EXACTLY SURE WHAT THEY DID WITH B2/5. I KNOW THAT WE LEFT SEPARATELY ON 6/21/69 AND WE WENT TO IKE. I'LL CHECK WITH DAN HOOKS TO SEE IF HE REMEMBERS.

Take care.

Mike

One other question, outside of the context of June 20th, what was your assignment? You must have come in after I did because the March 1969 roster doesn't list you.

I CAME TO THE COMPANY IN APRIL 1969 AND LEFT NAM IN MAY 1970. I WAS ASSIGNED TO C2/5 THE ENTER TIME. I EXTENDED 19 DAYS TO GET AN EARLY OUT WHEN I RETURNED TO THE STATES.

Thanx for sending me this - I want to enter this in for June 20th. This is the sort of thing I want our site to reflect.

There is one fight I've always wondered about. It was in October - I think the 6th - after I had left the company. A guy named Kuykendall was the CO. I didn't think much of him at the time, and at the reunion I heard other guys say he wasn't well liked at all. In that action, Top Allen was badly wounded, and we had some KIA. Do you remember anything about that? I know Kuykendall was relieved right afterwards.

I HAVE VIVID MEMORIES OF OCTOBER 6, 1969. IT WAS MY LAST DAY IN THE FIELD.

I REMEMBER KUYKENDALL VERY WELL. HE WAS A VERY SENIOR CAPTAIN WHO WAS LOOKING FOR HIS MAJOR'S LEAF. WE WERE WORKING IN AN AREA THAT YOU WOULD NEVER HAVE TAKEN US AND HIS JUDGEMENT WAS SERIOUSLY FLAWED AND HE GOT US IN A LOT OF TROUBLE. ANOTHER POINT ABOUT KUKENDALL, WAS THAT HE TRIED TO ERADICATE THE USE OF THE TERM "'TALL COMANCHE" IN C2/5 AND MANY OF THE TERMS THAT YOU USED E.G. "SADDLE UP & MOTIVATE", "COMANCHE NINER NINER, BREAK FOR ONE ZERO", "LIGHT TO FIGHT" ETC. WERE FORBIDDEN.

I WAS WOUNDED ON OCTOBER 6TH AND TOP ALLEN AND I WERE ON THE SAME MEDIVAC. THREE GUYS AT THE REUNION WERE HEAVILY INVOLVED WITH OCTOBER 6. DAN HOOKS TOOK CARE OF A LOT OF WOUNDED MEN, IT WAS BRIAN PHIPP'S FIRST ACTION AND LARRY BRADSHAW RECEIVED A "SUCKING CHEST" WOUND THAT ALMOST KILLED HIM. A GOOD FRIEND OF MINE " GENE FUSSEY" WAS KILLED ON THAT DAY.

Anyway - thanx again Mike - what a memory you have.

Doug

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