

Dec 18-20, 1968

Douglas Young

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, September 28, 2000 6:25 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: The picture

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Due By: Saturday, September 30, 2000 5:00 PM
Flag Status: Flagged

Hi Doug,

Sorry I didn't get back to you sooner, but things have been pretty hectic here. I've been going over and over, in my mind, about the time frame of the picture, but I can't, for the life of me, remember exactly when we moved from Cu Chi. Tree might be better able to give you more accurate information on it from his records. He seems to be much better at coming up with accurate time frames than I am. I did receive something pretty amazing from Richard "Doc" Bovie in New York, however. He was the medic who was put in for the Medal of Honor for his actions at what we call "The Hill". Although he didn't get the medal, he sure as hell deserved it, as far as we regular grunts were concerned. I had asked him if he would like me to send him the chapters, in the book, centered around what I remembered about that horrible time and he said yes. I sent them to him at the same time that I sent you the picture and just got a reply from him that knocked my socks off. His remembrance of that event, from a medic's point of view is wonderful, although as horrible as what I remembered and I thought you might like to read it. I'll copy it in below, just as he sent it to me, so that you can see what I mean. He and I were with the company at almost the same time and it seems, from what he says, that he has just about as good a memory of it as I do. I think that's great and I'm going to ask him if he wants me to send him the rest of the book, so he can fill us in on his take of it. It's fascinating to me to hear another angle to it. Anyway, what he sent me about the hill is below. Let me know what you think.

Subj: The Hill
Date: 9/27/00 4:16:24 PM Eastern Daylight Time
From: [REDACTED] (richard bovie)
To: [REDACTED]

Hi--it's amazing how similar our thoughts and feelings both then and now are about that day. I've also been struck by how quickly someone can go from being alive to being a pile of inert chemicals and rather than receiving a phone call, you're right there to see it. In reading your manuscript I do realize that my memories of that day are actually very narrow-minded. I've always thought mostly of my own experiences and now have a little better idea of what everyone else went through. Due to the different nature of our jobs we did have different images of what was going on. Some things that you wrote about I wasn't aware of until now or was not involved in due to caring for the wounded. The sequence of events is essentially correct but for some minor changes that I am quite sure I am correct about. I am not sure that was me working on "Robinson". Also he was not the one I attempted to rescue or was screaming. On the first trip back up the hill after the bombing when Douglas Hahn was killed John Steinwart was wounded and he was the one who was screaming. Everyone I've talked to remembers that awful sound. To clarify matters my own initial experience was as follows. I was the senior medic but I was traveling with 3-6 to cover for the medic who was on R & R. While you were still in the swamp we hit the ambush. After the initial burst of gunfire they called for the medic. When I got up there James King had been hit in the throat. I thought he was bleeding from the mouth but it turned out later that the bullet had gone upwards and his brains were oozing out of his mouth. When I went to treat him and lifted my head a bullet

slammed into king about 6 inches from my head. I moved back a little bit and fired a clip into the area in front of me. (the only time during my year that I did so) A few seconds later another burst of gunfire erupted and Larry Fox was hit. His ammo bearer "fuzzy" yelled "Doc larry's hit" then a second later yelled "Doc I'm hit" a bullet had bounced right off his helmet, I think one of three that happened to on that day. I tried to drag Fox back down the hill. The screaming I remember on that initial contact was Fuzzy yelling that Larry was dead, let him go. I kept trying to pull him back but I couldn't get any leverage since I was lying so flat. As you described what happened to you I also had bullets going up one side and coming down the other. I have no idea why I didn't get hit. Finally in crawling backwards I got my foot tangled in some roots and couldn't move. I panicked, got myself free and was able to get back down to the cp. A few minutes later Dellinger got hit in the arm and Jerry Clark and I went back up to treat and rescue him. He was the one that was removed by jungle penetrator I think before the first bombing run. I wanted to give you this information so the sequence of events is as correct as we can remember it and someone doesn't give me credit for something I didn't do. Let me know if there's other information that you might want. Your Editor---"Doc"

Well, there it is. Pretty amazing, isn't it? As always, looking forward to hearing from you.

Your Buddy,
Six India

FORTY FOUR**A Walk Into Hell**

When the airstrike was over, a couple of squads were sent into that treeline to look for dead and wounded. They found the bodies of seven NVA Regulars, but no survivors. The rest of the force had left the area shortly after initial contact was made.

That was the usual procedure for an enemy ambush. They'd make their hit and then move out as soon as they could, knowing that it wouldn't be long before the Americans had the area saturated with air support and artillery.

One of their biggest fears, other than their own superstitions, were the Cobras. Many of these gunships had shark's teeth painted on the lower front end for psychological affect and, due to the narrow fuselage, looked every bit the monster they were meant to portray. It was easy enough to understand that fear. I'd seen Cobras approaching from head on and, though I knew they were on our side, never failed to feel a slight chill at the back of my neck.

Add that psychological edge to the firepower of its mini-gun, rocket pods, and automatic grenade launcher, and you definitely had a great deal to fear.

Fortunately only two of our men had received minor wounds from the engagement. As soon as they were medevaced out, the company continued along the same bearing we'd been following originally. Now, however, the going seemed more difficult than it had before. Every enemy engagement was physically and psychologically draining on the entire company, especially when someone was wounded,....or worse.

It might seem easy to understand the psychological aspect of that drain, with someone having been hit,...but it went deeper than that. Everyone knows how it feels when someone close to them dies, whether it's a friend in a car accident, a relative in a house fire, or a loved one who passes away of natural causes. It hurts inside for a long time.

We felt that heavy hurt with two important differences. First of all, whereas the average person goes through it only on occasion, thank God,...we had to live with it every single day. It was the norm.

And secondly, there were no natural causes here. Every casualty was a violent one, no exceptions. One minute you might be kidding around with a buddy, and the next he was lying face up on the ground, covered with blood from automatic weapons fire, or blown into a bloody pulp by a booby trap, the life gone from his eyes. The effect was made even worse because you were always right there when it happened,...a terrible burden to bear.

The physical drain was due to the extreme adrenaline flow that occurred during a firefight. Suddenly the heart beat faster, breathing increased dramatically, and the senses became extraordinarily sharp. Like a high performance race car running at top speed, for any length of time, this caused a rapid drain of energy along with a great deal of wear and tear on the body. Even though the entire episode we'd just gone through had taken place in less than half-an-hour, counting the time it took for the Cobra to get out here, I felt as bone weary as if I'd gone for twenty four hours without sleep.

The top of the hill we were crossing, when we were hit, turned out to be the easiest part of our walk. Shortly we reached the far end of it and made our way down the slope to the bottom about fifty feet below. It was unbearably hot and sticky down there because the lowland proved not to be land at all, but a full-blown, steamy swamp!

Unfortunately, we had no alternative but to go directly through that swamp. As we made our way slowly, one behind the other, in waist-deep water with a murky white color, almost like that of milk, I felt that this must have been how the primordial earth looked millions of years ago. The air was so hot, heavy and still that it was almost suffocating. Occasionally we'd see long water leaches break the surface, but we had our pants bloused inside our boots so that these hideous creatures couldn't get to our skin.

Not only were the leaches on the prowl down here, but the mosquitoes and horse flies were like kamikazes zeroing in on any exposed skin and a wary eye had to be kept for poisonous snakes hanging from the limbs and vines of the plants growing out of the murky water.

But leaches, flies, mosquitoes and snakes were the least of our problems right now. Each man was gingerly feeling his way along while holding onto hanging vines, leaves, or anything else he could grab for support. The reason for that was that there was absolutely no solid bottom beneath our feet. We were literally walking on the slippery roots of these swamp trees!

Using my feet, I could feel that the roots were approximately five or six inches in diameter and that there was nothing over or under them but water. If a man slipped off into one of the wide spaces between them, he'd disappear into the depths and probably never be found. That was especially true with the weight each of us was carrying.

I found this experience almost as nerve-racking as coming under enemy fire. The thought of disappearing into that murk seemed like something out of a nightmare!

Suddenly, when I was about halfway across to where the base of the next hill rose out of the swamp, what sounded like a hundred automatic weapons began firing up ahead, as if all hell had broken loose! I could see the line of men, to my front, stretching up the side of the hill and over

the top, but couldn't see what was going on beyond the crest where the shooting was taking place.

There were two designated radiomen in each platoon, so that they could take turns carrying the lieutenant's radio. One would carry it one day, and the other the next. That way one man wasn't constantly stuck with the extra weight. This particular day I happened to be off and there were approximately seventy or eighty men in front of me.

Whereas the line had been moving at a snail's pace before the shooting broke out, we guys still in the water now managed to slip and slide our way quickly to the shore at the base of the hill. When contact with the enemy was made, standing out in the open, in waist deep water, wasn't exactly what you wanted to be doing.

Since the continuous firing was up beyond the crest of the hill, we at the bottom weren't taking any incoming rounds at this point, but we heard a sound that literally sent chills up our spines and caused the roots of our teeth to ache.

From the amount of fire up there it was pretty clear that the front of the column had walked into another ambush, a major one. Moments after the initial outburst, piercing screams, like nothing I'd ever heard before, filled the air. As many times as the company had had men killed or wounded, this was the first time I actually heard someone screaming in pain, at the top of his lungs, and it was an incredibly horrible sound.

I looked over at Swede, who was squatting next to me on the shore where we'd stopped, and he stared back with a glazed look in his eyes. Those screams were having the same affect on all of us.

Word came back for everyone to move up. Much as the screaming made us want to cringe, we knew that the guys up there needed us. Without saying a word we scrambled up the side of

the hill, to the edge of the crest, where we could see what the situation looked like. From where we were now, the land leveled out somewhat, but still continued up with a very gentle incline. The men furthest up had pulled back from the area of contact and were lying, pretty much out in the open, on their stomachs. They were about twenty yards away from us, in a line across our front. A few yards behind them, the medics knelt, working feverishly on the wounded.

A couple of huge trees, off to each side, cast shade over the area, but there was basically very little cover. The ground had virtually no growth, other than some sparse, two-inch high scrub grass, and the sulfurous-smelling gray gunsmoke, from the massive initial outburst, hung heavy over the entire scene.

Since it was quiet for the moment, we got up and began making our way, rifles at the ready and squatting low, toward the men at the front of the makeshift perimeter.

The man who'd been screaming was a young black guy who had taken several rounds in both of his legs. He was lying on his back with the medics working feverishly over him, and a couple of others, when we moved past, on our way up. At the moment he was quiet because he'd been given a heavy dose of morphine, but I really felt for the poor guy. It was obvious from the tears running down his cheeks and the spasmodic shivering of his arms, crossed in front of his chest, that he was in a great deal of pain.

Since most of my platoon had been below the crest of the hill, and unaffected by the initial ambush, we were moved up to the front of the line about forty yards below the dense treeline where the enemy were located. As soon as the column pulled back, the firing had ceased so that now there was an eerie, uneasy quiet.

From the amount of fire that came out of that treeline, it was obvious that this was more than a small enemy squad in a hit-and-run ambush. As this engagement continued, it would become all

too clear that a company of one-hundred-and-ten American infantrymen was pitted against a battalion, and possibly two, of well seasoned North Vietnamese Regulars. They were the cream of the enemy's forces!

In fact, the ambush we ran into earlier was a small contingent of this same force which was sent out to try and divert us away from discovering their main base at the top of this hill. When they broke off that contact, they must have moved back up here to the main unit. Soon enough we'd discover that they were dug in at the top in what could only be described as an impenetrable fortress!

When we reached the front line, we laid on the ground, on our stomachs, with the men who were up there when the initial shooting broke out. We were immediately filled in on the situation.

The man lying two men over from me pointed a finger up the hill.

"You see that treeline up there on the other side of the clearing?"

He spoke in quick, heated bursts, the stress unmistakable in his voice.

"When we got to those trees a mass of rounds came out of there and cut down the guys at the front of the column. We had three killed outright and seven wounded. Robinson back there was one of them who took the opening barrage."

He was referring to the guy we'd heard screaming.

"Doc Bovie was able to pull him back behind us. It was a bitch with him screamin' like that all the way."

About fifteen yards away, looking up the hill, I could see several thin, young trees, no more than three or four inches in diameter and five feet apart, across our front. Another ten yards beyond those was a small clearing which went up another fifteen yards to a dense treeline where the enemy fire had come out of. That further treeline was so thick with foliage that it looked

almost like a solid wall, very much like a hedgerow back home. Stare as I might at it, though it was clearly within our view, there wasn't the least sign of movement. Still, I knew there were a lot of people concealed just inside it's shadows. This was another testimony to the skill of the enemy with camouflage.

"What's going on right now?", one of us asked.

"We managed to drag the wounded with us when we pulled back, but the three bodies are still up there in the clearing. The captain says we've got to get them out and I guess they're having a meeting to decide who's going up there to get them."

The captain had set up his CP just down from the front line of the perimeter, behind us, where we could see all the platoon lieutenants gathered for the meeting.

While this was going on, the sound of a helicopter's engine became noticeable approaching from the distance.

"Here comes a Cobra!", one of the men said as we all looked to the sky.

This was the first time, since we'd been hit, that we had any reason to feel relief and it was more than welcomed. The Cobra was given the coordinates of the enemy's location and then proceeded to empty it's entire load of rockets, mini-gun, and grenades into the top of the hill. When it was finished, a second ship arrived and did exactly the same thing. A short while later our platoon leader came up to the line and passed the word.

"First and second squads, get ready to move up the hill. You'll be traveling light. The other squads will cover the gap in this part of the perimeter."

Traveling light meant that we'd leave our heavy packs behind, taking only our weapons, grenades, and ammunition.

Rarely had the company run into an enemy force that chose to stay and fight, rather than hit-and-run, so there was really no reason, at this point, to suspect that this time would be any different. Still, moving very slowly, one behind the other, up toward that treeline, we couldn't help feeling a sense of heavy foreboding.

We made our way past the first thin line of trees out into the small clearing where we began to fan out to the left and right. The depth of the clearing, from the thin line of trees we'd just come through, to the dense treeline in front of us, didn't give us a lot of room to maneuver. There were two large trees about halfway into the clearing, but spaced fairly far apart, with roots that projected out like the fins of a rocket before they disappeared into the ground. There were also the bodies of the three men we'd come to retrieve lying close up against the enemy treeline.

Rick had moved out in front of me when we left the perimeter. Now the two of us took cover behind a root on each side of one of those trees, I facing right and he left. We and two others, who had done the same over at the other tree, would provide cover fire for the line of guys who attempted moving forward toward the dense trees.

For what seemed an eternity, there was no motion in that clearing as the row of men stood side by side, an arm's length apart, some ten feet back from the treeline. We all stared up at it like some kind of impenetrable wall. The growth inside there was so thick that no light could be seen coming through it. Rick and I were only about fifteen or twenty feet back from it ourselves, but, again, as hard as I looked, I couldn't see any movement in there.

No one said a word so that, with the exception of an occasional caw-cawing of a distant tropical bird, a gloomy silence hung over the clearing. The sun beat down mercilessly, without the slightest hint of a breeze, the hot air shimmering just above the ground and, because of our heightened senses, the smell of thick jungle vegetation almost overwhelming. Everyone of us had

beads of sweat sliding down his face, not just from the unbearable heat, but from the tension of the situation as well.

Finally, one of the men at the center of the row facing the trees took a slow, calculated step forward.

Then, as if the devil himself was in there, a hail of shots from thirty or forty automatic weapons blasted out of that wall and sprayed all over the clearing! The men standing out in front squatted where they were and emptied magazine after magazine of M-16 rounds back into the trees in all directions!

I, Rick, and the others behind the roots, fired higher up into the trees on semi-automatic, trying to hit individual targets, but, as close as we were to that treeline, we couldn't pinpoint a single one. It was as if the trees themselves were spitting out bullets!

The contrast, between the dead quiet only a moment ago and the intense firing of hundreds of rounds now, was a shock to the system. Immediately, the acrid smell of burnt gunpowder filled the hot, humid air and the dry dust of the ground, kicked up by scores of rounds burying themselves all over the clearing, mingled with the blue-gray smoke from all the weapons!

During a firefight time seemed to slow down to almost nothing. After what felt like forever, but could only have been a matter of seconds, the men in the front line began pulling back as best they could while trying to cover each other's backs. I was already on my fifth magazine with bullets ripping holes in the tree inches from my face and popping up little dust clouds in the ground near my legs. I could tell, without turning around, that they were just missing Rick too.

Because of the extreme and varied angles of the rounds coming out of the treeline, we were forced further behind our own tree until we were literally back to back. Each time a bullet zipped

into the trunk next to Rick, tearing out splinters of wood, I could feel his body jerk in reaction, and it was a sure bet he could feel the same from me.

Since he and I had some semblance of cover, little as it was, we continued to fire, trying to give the others, out in the open, a chance to pull back.

It was at this point that we witnessed an incredible sight. While everyone else was ducking low, trying not to get hit, our M-60 machine gunner, one of the men who was out front, stood up in the center of the clearing, with his weapon on his hip, and began spraying bullets back and forth. For an incredibly long time he stood there firing, rounds zipping all around him, as the rest of us scrambled to pull back down the hill.

When we were all safely away, he took off running and made it back down himself. It was nothing less than a miracle that he could have stood out there for so long without being shot to pieces!

By the sheerest stroke of luck no one had been hit,....this time.

No one had been hit, but, at the same time, we hadn't been able to get the bodies out either. Also, it was now clear that this was no small hit-and-run force, ready to back off in the usual manner. It looked as if we were going to be here for quite some time.

FORTY FIVE**The Hill**

Again, the Cobras were called out to pour everything they had into the top of the hill. Right after we got down from the firefight, and while the company was waiting for the Cobras to arrive, Rick, Whitey, and myself had a chance to sit down on the ground with Eddie, our machine-gunner. We were behind a low, soil-eroded bank jutting out from the side of the hill. Whitey began digging a small hole in the ground, between his upraised knees, with a twig he'd picked up.

"You know, you're a hero there guy," he said almost matter-a-factly, and then looked up at Eddie.

The other man, a quiet, unassuming person, smiled sheepishly when their eyes met and Whitey continued, "What the hell made you stand up in the middle of that clearing like that?"

Eddie stared down at the hole Whitey was working on. He thought for a moment before answering, "I...I don't know. I saw that you guys were in trouble and just did what I had to do,...that's all."

Then, out of nowhere, when the realization set in, his whole body began to tremble. He put both hands up to his face and rubbed it deliberately.

"I don't believe I did that!"

None of us could help noticing his open shivering and Rick put a hand on his shoulder.

"Hey, you all right?"

Eddie chuckled nervously, “Yeah,...Yeah, I’m okay. It’s just that this is the first time I’ve thought about it,...and right now it seems like it was a pretty dumb thing to do.”

Whitey tossed the twig away, rested his elbows on his knees and tilted his head to the side for emphasis.

“I’ll tell you something, Buddy. Us guys who were up there didn’t think it was so dumb. You kept a lot of our asses from getting blown away. In fact, the lieutenant is putting your name in for a silver star.”

Eddie looked amazed and I gave him an appreciative pat on his knee.

One of the other guys in our squad came over and sat down. He showed us his steel pot with a bullet hole through both the front and back, a seemingly impossible feat without its having gone straight through his head. I wasn’t completely taken aback by this strange sight since I’d seen it happen before. The bullet entered through the front, spun around the inside, in the space between the helmet and the headband that held it away from the scalp, and then exited out through the back. As strange as it might sound, we’d heard that this was the way the helmet was designed to function. In any case, it just went to show that the old steel pot really did provide lifesaving protection.

Unfortunately there were some who felt encumbered by its weight and chose not to wear it when they should. In fact, one of the men they were medevacing out had gone up the hill wearing only a soft bush hat. He was pulled back down with a bullet wound to the head serious enough to raise doubts as to whether he’d even make it back to the hospital.

When the Cobras finished their runs, the captain called for the third platoon to send squads up the hill. He was determined not to leave those bodies behind.

This attempt was almost identical to the last one in that, when the men approached that treeline, all hell broke loose and they had to retreat back down the best way they could. Their platoon lieutenant reported that the enemy had dragged the bodies in front of their machine-gun positions knowing that was what we were after. They were using the bodies as bait to draw us in front of those positions!

During the early afternoon a call came over the radio that it was supposed to be Charlie Company's turn to go in and see the Bob Hope USO show. But because we were engaged with the enemy, rear command decided that only two men would be allowed to go in. Before it was decided who that would be, it almost looked like a comedy routine with just about everyone in the company raising his hand and proclaiming, "I'll go! I'll go!"

The two, one from the first platoon and one from the fourth, were chosen fairly, by lots, and left on a supply bird that came out to drop off more cases of ammunition down at the edge of the swamp. The rest of the company had no ill feelings toward the men who'd been picked, because it might have been any one of us, but we did feel a strong disappointment at missing the only chance we'd probably get to see the show. Not only that, but it would have been such a relief to get away from here. We knew that while we were out here lying on the hot, dusty ground, contemplating our next assault up that God-forsaken hill, the higher-ups back there weren't going to be missing out on the fun. We'd bet a month's pay on that!

After the two attempts at trying to get up the hill, and being blasted back down, the captain called in the Air Force for a strike. At first, Snoopy, seeing our situation from the air, said that we were much too close to the enemy for his jets to drop their five-hundred and thousand-pound bombs with any degree of safety. In an unusual move, indicating the desperation of our situation,

the captain took the handset from his radioman and talked to the pilot directly. He told him that he would assume full responsibility for whatever happened.

Finally, Snoopy agreed, because the captain had convinced him we'd be okay since we were below the crest of the hill. Being on a lower level would give us some protection from the blasts.

Word went around the perimeter for everyone to lie as flat on the ground as they possibly could, in order to have some measure of protection. The drop would be less than a hundred yards from us, much closer than we'd ever been before to the massive explosions of such a strike.

While Snoopy passed overhead and fired a marking round into the center of the enemy stronghold, we moved around to get behind fallen logs, rises in the ground,...any small spot that would put something between us and the top of the hill. At the same time, several men, closest to the enemy stronghold, tossed smoke grenades out to their front, so that the jets would have an indication of where our most forward positions were.

Then an intense quiet settled over the area like a shroud.

We could hear the jets circling out in the distance, in preparation for their runs, though we couldn't see them through the trees. I felt that old knot, in the pit of my stomach, begin to tighten. We'd all seen the tremendously destructive power of an air strike, at one time or another, and knew that, with this one, we were well within the range of where one of those huge bombs, misplaced by only a few yards, could blow the entire company into oblivion.

Scanning the area, I saw that everyone felt the same tension by the way they were hugging the ground where they lay. No one spoke a word.

We didn't know it, but the pilots had decided that the best way to approach the top of the hill, so that they could give us the greatest possible safety factor, was to pass directly over our

heads and release their loads from there. That way, if any of the bombs should overshoot the target, they'd go down the opposite side of the hill from us.

Because they were coming directly toward us from our rear, there was a brief period when there was absolutely no sound at all.

That period, though it was only a matter of seconds, seemed like an eternity. We knew they were out there somewhere. Suddenly, a tremendous roar ripped over the top of us as the first jet passed just above the treetops. Then, an earsplitting crack shook the ground like an earthquake. We could actually see the leaves on the trees trembling violently from the shock waves and feel our bodies vibrate.

A few seconds later, a sound like the giant chain saw I'd heard when a Cobra fired its mini-gun, tore past directly overhead. Only, this time it was so loud and powerful that it was more like the roar of a huge tiger. These were the forty-millimeter cannons on the jets. They were similar to the mini-gun, in that they fired thousands of rounds a minute, but the rounds were so large that they'd go deep into the ground and explode like individual bombs!

After they made their last pass, Snoopy came on the radio to tell the captain that they'd expended their loads and were returning to base. He also said that two more fully-loaded jets were on their way out.

With such horrendous explosions, it seemed impossible that anything could be alive on top of the hill. Long after the jets left, the air was still full of choking dust drifting down from the mushroom clouds blown high into the atmosphere.

We spent most of the day with squads from the first, second and third platoons taking turns, in rotation, going up the hill and trying to penetrate that miserable treeline. And each time we were beaten back down. Then the Air Force would pound the top again.

Whenever squads were on their way up, we all hoped that the enemy had decided they'd had enough of the air strikes and pulled out. And each time they were still there.

Then it was our turn to go up the hill again.

Stubbornly, we clung to that small thread of hope when we moved slowly into the clearing and spread out, just as we'd done before. It was an awful feeling staring into that thick growth at close range. There wasn't a sign of movement that we could detect in there, but then again, there hadn't been all the other times either. If they were still there, we were no more than fifteen feet away from them.

We stood silently, the adrenaline pumping, until Ron, our squad leader, raised his hand for us to stay where we were and, ever-so-slowly, took that first critical step forward from our line. No sooner did his foot touch the ground than all hell broke loose, hundreds of rounds bursting out of that wall!

We ducked in place, firing our weapons, most on automatic, some on semi-, at all points, high and low, in the growth.

This was just too incredible! A hail of bullets was spraying at us from no further away than the length of a car. They were coming from down near the ground, just inside the bushes, to higher up in the trees, yet it was impossible to pinpoint any exact location!

A couple of our men were hit, the others near them grabbing hold and dragging them back down toward the perimeter as we continued to empty magazine after magazine into all parts of the treeline.

Finally, we all made it back down, firing as we ran. One of the men who was hit was already dead, a bullet to the head, and the other was seriously wounded. Every time we went up that hill we ended up calling in the medevacs, down near the edge of the swamp, to take the casualties

out. Also, each time we came running back down, the captain called in the jets for yet another one of those pounding air attacks, and still the bastards were in there!

I'd been in that clearing twice now, and it seemed a miracle that, not only me, but the other guys who'd made it back down, hadn't been hit. With so many hundreds of rounds whizzing through the air, at such close proximity, I couldn't imagine how we'd been missed!

By sunset we were all past the point of battle fatigue. A full day of the four platoons in rotation, sending squad after squad up that hill and being blasted back down, had taken its toll. Not only was it horrendous having fifteen of our friends dead, and at least as many wounded, but the wounds were particularly brutal and well placed, most to the head. We certainly weren't dealing with amateurs up there.

Sometime, late in the afternoon, someone in the third platoon came up with an idea for getting the bodies out. They'd try tossing a rope, with a noose at the end, from behind a tree. If they could get the noose around one of the feet, they might be able to drag the body out of the open. It sounded like something straight out of the movies, the odds against its working extremely long, but necessity,...and desperation, are the mothers of invention and the third platoon came down with the bodies!

I was lying on the ground, on the part of the perimeter nearest the top of the hill, when they came running down carrying one of the bodies on a poncho stretched between them. The dead man's feet passed right by my face.

There was that feeling of total waste again. Only yesterday that body was a young, vital human being. Now those feet dangled limply with no more life in them than a sack of potatoes.

To try and prevent the enemy from slipping away during the night, the captain instructed the second platoon to circle around to the other side of the hill. They'd spend the night there as a

blocking force, hopefully to keep the NVA from pulling out by the back door. The only problem was that the top of the hill, outside the enemy's perimeter was far too big around for one company to cover. There were large enough gaps where they could easily slip past us without our knowledge. And, if that should happen, rather than high-tailing it away from us, there was nothing preventing them from sneaking up behind us in the darkness,...if they chose to.

We each laid in the small depression we'd scooped out of the dry barren ground, our weapon by our side and ready. The tension had relaxed somewhat for the moment, but there was very little conversation. An eerie feeling hung in the air knowing that there were enemy soldiers sitting just a few feet away, in the darkness. They were, no doubt, trying to figure a way out of the situation before morning when the jets returned.

One of the other options the NVA might consider was a surprise rush straight down through the middle of our perimeter. If they should do that, and there was a battalion up there—something like five of them for every one of us—that would be no fun at all. For those reasons, even the men who weren't on watch around our perimeter remained awake all night, listening for the slightest sound.

Sometime in the early hours of the morning, while it was still dark, a couple of shots were heard from over on the second platoon's side of the hill. They radioed that they'd had some movement to their front, but that it wasn't anything substantial.

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PRIORITY

FROM: CO, 3D BDE, 1ST CAV DIV (AM), LZ ANDY (QUAN LOI), RVN

TO: CG, 1ST CAV DIV (AM), PHUOC VINH, RVN

INFO: CO, 1ST BDE, 1ST CAV DIV, TAY NINH	INTERNAL DIST
CO, 2D BDE, 1ST CAV DIV, QUAN LOI	CO
CO, 1-5 CAV, LZ ELEANOR	DCO
CO, 2-5 CAV, LZ ODESSA	S-1
CO, 2-7 CAV, LZ SUE	S-2
CO, 1-12 CAV, LZ BUTTONS	S-3
CO, 1-21 ARTY, LZ ANDY	S-4
CO, B TRP, 1-9 CAV, LZ BUTTONS	S-5
CO, CO C, 8TH ENG, LZ ANDY	EDE AVN
CO, CO B, 31ST ENG, LZ ANDY	3D FSE
CO, 371ST RRU, LZ ANDY	JACD LNO
CO, 545TH MP DET, LZ ANDY	11TH AVN LNO
CO 34TH INF PLAT, LZ ANDY	
SA, 5TH ARVN DIV, LAM SON	
SA, 9TH ARVN REGT, CHON THANH	
SA, BINH LONG PROVINCE, AN LOC/HON QUAN	
SA, PHUOC LONG PROVINCE, SONG BE	
SA, LOC NINH DIST, LOC NINH	
SF, B TEAM 33, HON QUAN	
SF, B TEAM 34, SONG BE	

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SITREP # 355 - 68 192000 - 202000 DECEMBER 1968

1. (C) GARRY OWEN CONTINUED OPERATION SHERIDAN-SABRE WITH LIGHT ENEMY CONTACT. C/2-5 AT 1105H MADE CONTACT WITH UNKNOWN SIZES IN TREES RESULTING IN 01 US WIA, 02 US MIA, AND NEGATIVE ENEMY ASSESSMENT. C & D/2-7 AT 1210H RECEIVED RPG AND SMALL ARMS FIRE FROM AN UNKNOWN SIZE ENEMY FORCE VIC XU 937036. RESULTS: 04 NVA KIA; NEGATIVE US CASUALTIES. C/2-5 AT 1420H RECEIVED FIRE FROM AN ESTIMATED COMPANY SIZE FORCE VIC XU 940060 RESULTING IN 06 US WIA, 01 US MIA, AND NEGATIVE ENEMY ASSESSMENT.

2. (C) ACTIVITIES REPORT

- A. 1-5 CAV:
 - (1) CO A - S & C TO VIC XT 986791 & EST JOINT FOB W/CO E.
 - (2) CO B - SCTY OPNS IN AO COBRA; OPCCN TO DIVARTY.
 - (3) CO C(-) - SCTY LZ ELEANOR; 01 PLAT RIVER WATCH VIC XT 924756.
 - (4) CO D - OPCCN TO 2-7.
 - (5) CO E - S & C TO VIC XT 986791 & EST JOINT FOB W/CO A.
- B. 2-5 CAV:
 - (1) CO A - SCTY OPNS IN AO COBRA; OPCCN TO DIVARTY.
 - (2) CO B - S & C TO VIC XU 942048.
 - (3) CO C - S & C TO VIC XU 944055.
 - (4) CO D - SCTY OPNS IN AO COBRA; OPCCN TO DIVARTY.
 - (5) CO E - SCTY LZ ODESSA & LOC PTLS.
- C. 2-7 CAV:
 - (1) CO A & E - S & C TO VIC XU 924051.
 - (2) CO B - SCTY LZ SUE & LOC PTLS.

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(3) CO C & D - S & C TO VIC XU 937038.

(4) CO D/1-5 - SCTY LZ SUE & LOC PTLS.

D. 1-12 CAV:

(1) CO A(-) - SCTY LZ ELLEN; 01 PLAT SEC TO SEC TO LZ BUTIONS AT 0300H & RTN TO LZ ELLEN AT 1530H.

(2) CO B - S & C TO VIC XU 929060 & EST BLOCKING PSN.

(3) CO C - S & C TO VIC XU 937061 & EST BLOCKING PSN.

(4) CO D - SCTY LZ ELLEN & LOC PTLS.

(5) CO E - SCTY LZ BUTIONS & LOC PTLS.

E. 2-12 CAV(-):

(1) CO A - 03 PLAT RIF TO VIC XT 810938; 01 PLAT QRF AT LZ ANDY.

(2) CO D - RIF TO VIC XT 855906.

F. 9TH ARVN REGT(-):

(1) 1-9 ARVN BN - S & C TO VIC YU 232154.

(2) 4-9 ARVN BN - SEC HAMLETS & VILLAGES IN ASG AO.

3. (C) PLANS SUMMARY

A. 1-5 CAV:

(1) CO A - S & D TO VIC XT 979786 & CDT DAYLIGHT AMBUSH.

(2) CO B - SCTY OPNS IN AO COBRA; OPCON TO DIVARTY.

(3) CO C - SEC LZ ELEANOR; 01 PLAT CDT RIVER WATCH VIC XT 924756 & EST ARTY OP VIC XT 922744.

(4) CO D - OPCON 2-7 LZ SUE.

(5) CO E - CDT DAYLIGHT AMBUSH & PTLS VIC XT 993795 & RTN TO LZ ODESSA.

B. 2-5 CAV(-):

(1) CO B - S & C TO VIC XU 941050 & EST BLOCKING PSN.

(2) CO C - S & C TO VIC XU 935045 & EST BLOCKING PSN.

(3) CO E - SEC LZ ODESSA & CDT LOC PTLS.

C. 2-7 CAV:

(1) CO A & E - FE TO CA VIC XT 912978 AT 1100H & RIF TO VIC XT 904982.

(2) CO B - SEC LZ SUE & CDT LOC PTLS.

(3) CO C & D - S & C TO VIC XU 935045 & EST BLOCKING PSN & SCREEN E & W.

(4) CO D/1-5 - SEC LZ SUE & CDT LOC PTLS.

D. 2-12 CAV(-):

(1) CO A - FOB VIC XT 811928 - 02 PLAT S & C TO VIC XT 808941; 01 PLAT S & C TO VIC XT 790930 THEN TO XT 790920 THEN TO XT 810920 & EST FOB VIC XT 811928; 01 PLAT QRF AT LZ ANDY.

(2) CO D - RIF TO VIC XT 865885.

E. 1-12 CAV:

(1) CO A & D - SEC LZ ELLEN & CDT LOC PTLS.

(2) CO B - S & C TO VIC XU 933054 THEN O/O TO VIC XU 941050.

(3) CO C - CDT LOC PTLS VIC XU 932061 THEN O/O S & C TO VIC XU 943057.

(4) CO E - SEC LZ BUTIONS & CDT LOC PTLS.

F. 9TH ARVN REGT(-):

(1) 1-9 ARVN BN - S & C TO VIC XU 249186.

(2) 4-9 ARVN BN - HAMLET & VILLAGE SCTY IN ASSIGNED AO.

4. (C) ENEMY CONTACTS

A. (1) 1-1-5 AT 0915H ENG 03 NVA W/SA VIC XT 998789. RESULTS: NEG US CAS; NEG EN ASSESSMENT.

(2) C & D/2-7 AT 1040H BCD SA FIRE VIC XU 937034. RESULTS: NEG US CAS; NEG EN ASSESSMENT.

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(3) C/2-5 AT 1150H MADE CONTACT W/UNK NR SNIPERS IN TREES
VIC XU 937036. RESULTS: 01 US WIA, 02 US MIA; NEG EN ASSESSMENT.

(4) C & D/2-7 AT 1210H RCD RPG & SA FIRE FM UNK SIZE EN
FORCE VIC XU 937036. RESULTS: 04 NVA KIA; NEG US CAS.

(5) C/2-5 AT 1420H MADE CONTACT W/EST CO SIZE FORCE VIC
XU 940060. RESULTS: 06 US WIA, 01 US MIA; NEG EN ASSESSMENT.

B. TODAY'S LOSSES

(1) US LOSSES

- (a) HOSTILE: 07 WIA; 03 MIA
- (b) NON-HOSTILE: 05 WNHA
- (c) WEAPONS: NONE

(2) ENEMY LOSSES

- (a) PERSONNEL: 04 NVA KIA
- (b) WEAPONS: NONE

C. CUMULATIVE LOSSES

75 KIA; 376 WIA; 03 MIA
05 KNHA; 78 WNHA
01 APC

501 VC/NVA KIA; 02 PW
104 IND; 31 C/S

5. (C) UNIT LOCATIONS: CP 3D BDE, 1ST CAV DIV (AM), LZ ANDY (QUAN LOI), RVN

CP 1-5 CAV	LZ ELEANOR	CP 2-5 CAV(-)	LZ ODESSA
CO A	XT 986791	CO B	XT 942048
CO B	PHUOC VINH	CO C	XT 944055
CO C	LZ ELEANOR	CO E	LZ ODESSA
CO D	LZ SUE		
CO E	XT 986791		

CP 2-7 CAV	LZ SUE	CP 1-12 CAV	LZ BUTTONS
CO A	XT 924051	CO A	LZ ELLEN
CO B	LZ SUE	CO B	XT 929060
CO C	XT 937038	CO C	XT 937061
CO D	XT 937038	CO D	LZ ELLEN
CO E	XT 924051	CO E	LZ BUTTONS

2-12 CAV(-) (OPCCE 2D BDE)		1-9 ARVN	YU 232154
A/2-12	XT 810938	4-9 ARVN	YU 153063
D/2-12	XT 855906		

CIDG XT 840783

6. (C) BUSHMASTER REPORT: 32 AMBUSH SITES; NEG CONTACT; NEG WPNS LOST.

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COL

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HQ, 3D BDE S2/3
1ST CAV DIV (AM)

LZ ARDY (QUAN LOI) RVN
XT 819909

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1 0001 JOURNAL OPENS

1A 0115 FM 1-5: Request B/1-9 check out area where LRRP's were extracted and give a grid where they think the best place for a CS drop and TOT would be

2 0340 FM FDC 1-21: 0230H, ARA, Grid 770870 spotted light. Requested Arty. Fired 01 rd W/P and 01 rd H/E. Results: light went out and 01 secondary explosion. (Arty was fired by B/6-15). INFO

3 0730 FM 2-12: D Co called in an said, Tricker Treat 36/ came back to FOB. INFO

4 0755 FM 3D BDE TO 2-7: Request SP time of attack. Contacted 2-7 S-3, not moving at this time. Waiting for A/S. SEL IT

5 0815 FM 2-7: C 61 departing at this time. INFO

6 0810 FM 2-7: 0810H, C Co, XU 937037. A/S went in at 0810H. At 0812 H there was a secondary explosion. At 0816H there was another secondary explosion. INFO

7 0735 FM DIV G-2 AIR: Last nights Lightning Bug was aborted. Crew chief was evacuated to 15th Med when fire ignited. INFO

8 0825 FM 1-12: A Co 16/lift info. Sec to Sec - PZ: ELLEN 0800H, BTCC NOT LZ: BUTTONS 0810H, Lift cor 0810H, 01 Sortee. 0957H

9 0900 FM 2-7: 2 A/S complete at this time. 2 Secondary explosions each for total of 4. Grid 937036 0810H, and 913023 0745H. INFO

10 0905 FM 2-7 (6): All units are now moving. Delay was due to A/S which were required to open up bunker complex that has been accomplished. Compliments to USAF; 04 Secondary explosions were observed after A/S. Some Arty problems w/Birth Control. INFO

11 0900 FM 2-7: Co A & E are moving out at this time. INFO

12 0910 FM 2-7: Co D & C are moving N EDA A/S. INFO

13 0925 FM 2-12: 0920H, D Co leaving FCB, D Co 36/ CP/ 853914 35/859911 26/ 865906 25/ 860900 moving to these locations. INFO

HQ, 3D EDE S2/3
1ST CAV DIV (AR)

LZ ANDY (JAN LDI) RVN
XT 019909

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LATE

14 2130 ENTRY FM B/1-9: XT 838733. Saw 25 indiv w/AK-47's & est there ~~SEE~~ ITEM was up to 40 NVA all total. at coord AT 838733, 06 bunkers 3'x10' w/overhead cover, 10 indiv by bunkers, 03 had wpns. Road not used by vehicles in a long time. Sabre 6 worked over the area. One NVA was knocked down, but had been dragged off, big blood trail. Two other poss NVA KIA's fm booby trap left by Tm 31.
EXTRACTED AT 1804H

15 0945 FM 2-12: A Co 26/ departed FCB to N. D Co 25, 36 & 35/ INFO in position.

16 0950 FM 2-7: Unit locations. B Co & D/1-5 LZ SUE, all others POSTED moving N.

17 1000 FM 2-12: A Co 36/ moving SE at this time. INFO

18 1000 FM 1-5: 0915H, E Co, XT 998789 spotted 03 poss NVA sitting INFO on trail. 01 stood up, E Co engaged w/small arms. 03 EM evaded to hole and returned fire w/AK-47. E Co used frags on hole, 03 poss KIA, EM were wearing Tiger fatigues. At 0953H spotted movement 15 meters from position. A 26&36/ moving to that location a reinforcement. Found empty AK-47 rds in hole.

19 1007 FM 2-5: Unit locations. C Co 952053, B Co 954049. POSTED

20 1010 FM 1-5: Unit Locations. A(-) 988794 16/981795 POSTED 26,36/993795, A 46/LZ ELEANOR. B Co OPCON DIV ARTY. C(-) LZ ELEANOR 31/924755 33/893735. D Co OPCON 2-7 Cav, 46/ LZ ELEANOR. E(-) 998788 46/ LZ ELEANOR

21 1047 FM 2-7: 1040H, C & D Co, 937034. Receiving S/A fire approx INFO 15 rds. Spotted 01 NVA believed to be more unknown at this time. Engaged w/Arty.

21A 1015 FM 2-7: 1014H, C Co, 937034. Found 01 bunker 2x5x5' neg overhead cover. C 16/ spotted 01 NVA to their front wearing green fatigues. Further readout follows.

22 1020 FM 1-12: A Co(-) LZ ELLEN 16/LZ BUTTONS. C Co(-) 937061 POSTED 16/937060 26/935061 36/931060. D Co LZ ELLEN. E Co LZ BUTTONS. 1-9 ARVN 178105, 4-9 ARVN 133062.

23 NEGATIVE ENTRY

24 1025 FM 1-12: B Co 926062. POSTED

25 1045 FM 2-7: A & E Co vicinity of 923043 and still moving. POSTED

HQ, 3D EDE S2/3
1ST CAV DIV (AM)

LZ ANDY (QUAN LOI) RVN
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26	1045	FM 1-5: CIDG at LZ ELEANOR	POSTED
27	1100	FM 2-7: C Co had 01 EM amp fm snake bit. Priority Medevac requested.	INFO
28	1105	FM 2-12: D(-) CP moving S/SE at this time.	INFO
29	1120	FM 2-12: A26 closed FOB at 810928 1115H.	POSTED
30	1130	FM 2-7: C Co moving into area of contact, found new commo wire, and unknown # of bunkers, fresh built, more information to follow.	S-2 INFO
31	1135	FM 2/7: C Co MEDEVAC REQUEST COMPLETED 1127H. 937033. 1 EM, Snake Bite. Log bird used.	DTCC 1246H SP HELD
32	1155	FM 1/5: LOCATIONS. BN CF. CO(-) 993795, A16 981795, A46 ELANOR. B Co OPCON DIV ARTY. C CO (-) ELANOR, C31 924755, C33 893735. D CO (-) OPCON 2/7 D46 ELANOR. E CO(-) 990788, E46 ELANOR.	POSTED
33	1155	FM 2/5: <u>937036</u> . Ref 201150H. Contact is high. Believed to be sniper in tree W, one NVA/ Air strike to be put in.	INFO
33A	1150	SEE 33	
		FM 2/5: C36. In contact at this time. One US KIA. Further readout to follow.	INFO
34	1200	FM 1/12: A LZ BETH. B XU 229060. C 937061, C16 935060, C26 935061, C36 935060. D ELLEN. E LZ BETH. 1/9 215130. 4/9 133062.	POSTED
35	1200	FM 2/12: D Co, 46 CP 855906. No change for others.	POSTED
36	1200	FM 2/5: B 945049. C 944054.	POSTED
37	1217	FM 2/7: 1210H, C & D Co. Pulling back to old NDP. Spot 6 bnkrs, 1 hut, more NVA moving into area, 3 possible NVA KIA.	INFO
38	1200	FM 2/7: 1140H, C&D Co. <u>937036</u> . Fired on by 2 RPG. Neg cas, no movement at this time.	INFO
39	1250	FM 2/7: D Co readout. Four NVA KIA, 2 more POSS, 2 RPG, from N, shot out by LAW, many frags were thrown at C & D Co, spotted 1 hut & many bnkrs.	INFO
40	1300	FM 2/5: C Co, rpts one KIA, 2 WIA, US from snipers, APA (ARTY) in area. Info to follow.	DTCC 1300H
41	1335	FM 2/7: C & D Co, 932034. 3d set of AS in this time.	INFO

HQ, 3D BDE
1ST JAV DIV (AM)

LZ ARDY (QUAN LOI) RVN
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42	1345	FM 2/7: RASH 22, Same as Air Strike. Spotted 25-50 bnkrs in area of 3d AS. Area well traveled. Suspect more activity in area later.	INFO
43	1400	FM 1/12: Locations remain the same.	POSTED
44	1330	FM B1/9: 1200H, XT 907781. B1/9 26/37 spotted a trail running N & S with movement of approx 20 indiv with- in last 2 - 4 days. Direction of movement unknown. Visual recon. Neg eng.	COLD STE NOT
45	1330	FM B1/9: 1100H, YT 288980. B1/9 26/37 spotted one struc- ture 3'x8' with an air compressor of beside it. The compressor was yellow in color and air cooled. Visual recon. Neg Eng.	COLD STE NCT
46	1410	FM 1/5: Locations. E 990790. All others remain same.	POSTED
47	1410	FM 2/5: Loc. B 942048. C 944045.	POSTED
48	1410	FM 2/5: C Co MEDEVAC Completed 1410H. 944054. Hostile action, gunshot forearm. one EM. Jungle penetrator, Med # 15. <i>Decker</i>	DTOC 141
49	1435	FM 1/5: 1425H, A Co, XT 993795. Observed movement 50 m North moving Se-NW. Called arty, neg assess at this time.	INFO
50	1430	FM 2/7: 3d AS completed 1420H, at 1427H, one 2nd explosion, one 2nd explosion 1435H.	INFO
51	1455	FM 2/7: 1450H, D & E, obj 2. D & E have reached obj 2 at this time, also had one more secondary explosion total 7.	INFO
52	1455	FM 2/12: A26 CP to W.	INFO
53	1445	FM 2/12: D36&35, 855906. Moving back to D(-) location 855906. Neg assess.	INFO
54	1445	FM 2/7: E & A Co 923049 move N. B SUE. C 937033. D 937033.	POSTED
55	1500	FM 2/5: 1420H, G26, 940060. Sniper fire res 1 KIA; 2 WIA, US, move back to FOB, med requested. This is new contact not the same as spot rpt # 40. <i>HANN</i>	INFO
56	1527	FM 3D BDE S-2: 3D BDE CO is landing at SUE. Will be there about 30 minutes.	INFO
57	1530	TO 2/5: B & C. Plan on cont to operate in AO RR til 1300H then FE to LZ ODESSA to begin opns to NE.	NOT 2/5 3A, 1500H

HQ, 3D EDE S2/3
1ST CAV DIV (AM)

LZ ANDY (QUAN LOI) RVN
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58 1530 FM 2/7: Four AS complete, 2 additional 2d explosion INFO
fm this AS make a total of eight.

58A 1545 FM 2/12: D Co, 26, 36, & 16 closing. INFO

59 1540 FM 1/5: 1525H, Agent, 822661. Agent Report/ Special INFO
Forces AgentSD detachment Tax Collector was collect-
ing taxes along Highway LTL 13A near CHON THONH.
Believed place is near 822661, agent stated he saw
a girl dressed in plack PJ's with an M-16. No more
info available. Agent is new so he is not reliable.

60 1559 FM 1/12: Locations. Same as 1400H locations. A: ELLEN INFO
B: 929060 C: 937061 D: ELLEN E: BUTTONS.

61 1605 FM 1/12: B Co, 01 EM from B Co is sick. Neg knowledge INFO
of what it is. 1/12 83 picked him up and is bring-
ing him to C MEDEVAC pad. More info to follow.

62 1617 FM 1/5: Locations. CP: ELEANOR A(-): 986791 46/ELEANOR POSTED
B: CFCGN DIVARTY C(-): ELEANOR 31/924755 33/893-
735 D(-): CFCGN 2/7 46/ELEANOR E: 986791 46/ELEANOR

63 1625 FM 2/7: 1505H, B Co, 923954. Found 01 Booby Trap of TNT INFO
with trip wire and frag fuse. Wire was around bamboo
stick. Was dismantled in place.

64 1630 FM ARTY LNO: NO 2 W/METRO SEC, XT 795905. Observed smoke INFO
rising from woodline. Rubber workers are reportedly
not in the area this day.

65 1640 FM 1/12: Intelligence from MAXY. VC CO or more at YU 241- DTCS AOT
095. PAC is checking area out.

66 1635 FM 2/7: Locations. A & E: Objective 5 B: SUE 04 OP's POSTED
out C: 937033 D1/5: SUE D: 937033.

67 1705 FM 2/5: Locations. B: 942048 C: 944054 REST ARE SAME POSTED

68 1700 FM B1 /9: 0940H, YU 100219. Sabre 23/18 spotted trampled GOLD STEEL
bamboo on trail running N/S. Trail was used by approx INFO
10 indiv in last 12 hrs. Unable to determine direction
of movement. Area appeared to be an overnight campsite.

69 1700 FM B1/9: 0810H, YU 176226. Sabre 23/18 spotted 10 bunkers GOLD STEEL
4x6 with possibly 1 camouflaged bunker. Also a trail INFO
running E/W beside bunkers. The trail is well traveled
& at YU 163218 the trail branches to the south. Spotted
4 additional bunkers 4x6 where trail branches. 18 indiv
went south and 7 indiv went to the west. Neg eng.

HQ, 3D EDE S2/3
1ST CAV DIV (AM)

LE AIDY (QUAN LOI) RVN
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0001 20 DEC 68 2400 200

- 70 1700 FM B1/9: YU 197179. Sabre 23/18 spotted a trail running NW/SE with movement of 3-4 indiv in last 24 Hrs. Unable to determine direction of movement. Vis recon, neg eng. COLD STEEL INFO
- 71 1700 FM B1/9: 0730H, YU 108188. Sabre 23/18 spotted one old raft, 8'x20'. Vis recon, neg eng. COLD STEEL INFO
- 72 1700 FM B1/9: 0730H, YU 116188. Sabre 23/18 spotted one sampan 15' long & a camouflaged raft 4'x12'. Also spotted 4-5 fish traps in river. Engaged with organics. Results: one sampan destroyed. Vis recon. COLD STEEL INFO
- 73 1700 FM B1/9: 0715H, YU 276100. Sabre 23/18 spotted one individual who evaded to the north on a trail running N/S. Also spotted 10 spider holes 2' in diameter and 3 bunkers 3x5. Vis recon, neg eng. COLD STEEL INFO
- 74 1700 FM B1/9: 0930H, YU 148214. Sabre 23/18/38 spotted numerous structures all approx 20'x30'. Area was engaged with concussion grenades. One structure damaged and Sabre 18 had 2 small secondary explosions. Vis recon. COLD STEEL INFO
- 75 1700 FM B1/9: 1040H, YU 205121. Sabre 23/18 spotted 7 piles of hay 4'x5'. The piles of hay were camouflaged. Vis recon, neg eng. COLD STEEL INFO
- 76 1730 FM 1/5: Closing locations. CP: ELEANOR A(-): 986791 16/986795 26/991790 36/981789 B: CPCCN DIVARTY C(-): ELEANOR 36/924753 31/924753 33/928730 16/892735. D: CPCCN 2/7 46/ELEANOR E: FCB with A Co: 986791, no ambushes 46/ELEANOR. POSTED IN
- 77 1535 FM 2/5: XU 944054. Change in plans for 21 DEC 68. Will remain in contact area vic XU 944054 & est blocking position, they will be prepared on order to move the CP and O1 Co FE to LE ODESSA. INFO
- 78 1750 FM B1/9: 1530H, YU 035244. Spotted a raft 4x8. Eng with WP and destroyed the raft. COLD STEEL
- 79 1750 FM B1/9: 1600H, YU 274209. Spotted a bridge 4x8 crossing a stream. Eng with WP and destroyed it. COLD STEEL
- 80 1500 LATE ENTRY FM B1/9: 0745H, YU 199170. Spotted a hay stack 8x10 with a structure or bunker underneath. The hay was piled at the end of a tree line about 50m away from a Mountagnard village. There was a Mountagnard man & woman & a 15 yr old girl beside the structure. There were several other structures 300 meters E of this area. No other indiv were COLD STEEL

HQ, 3D EDE S2/3
1ST CAV DIV (AM)

LZ ANDY (QUAR LCI) RVN
XT 819909

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- 80 0811T Observed. Spotted numerous bunkers near the bay stack could not determine the size or number due to heavy foliage. Neg eng due to personnel in area. GOLD STEEL
- 81 1500 FM B1/9: 1200H, YU 162213. Spotted 40 bunkers, 15 structures, unable to determine size due to foliage trail complex in the area and a camp site. Good Arc Light area. Box would be 158210 - 162209 - 162216 - 162213. Vis recon. GOLD STEEL
- 82 1500 FM B1/9: 1115H, YU 097182. Spotted a trail running SW from YU 088180. Trail showed movement of approx 200 individuals. Unable to determine direction of movement. GOLD STEEL
- 83 1445 FM B1/9: 1110H, YU 088180. Spotted a network of trails 10 bamboo structures unable to determine size due to foliage. 1 structure with a black tin roof under const had a large pit underneath. Pit was 30x50x4. Also a pit 30'x50'x4' about 30 meters from structure Spotted 30 bunkers in area 4x4. All structures & bunkers were built within last week. Appeared that 3 more structures were to be built. Fresh dirt around all bunkers & structures. Estimated 200 individuals were needed to build such a complex in such a short time. Recommended Arc Light area. Target would be bamboo huts, large pits & bunkers. Box would be 080190 - 100190 - 080190 - 100180. GOLD STEEL
- 84 1445 FM B1/9: 0815H, YU 245134. Spotted a trail 3' wide running N/S with movement of squad size element moving S in last 6 hrs. Also spotted bunkers 5'x5' every 30 meters along trail. Vis recon. GOLD STEEL
- 85 1805 FM DIV to EDE: AO DARKHORSE & CHARGER out as of 1800H. INFO Also boundary extension for DARKHORSE out at this time.
- 86 1730 FM MACV to EDE: Request for ^{boundary} ~~bombing~~ extension. Center of mass - 790895, 500m around this point. Time - 210400H until 210900H. APPROVED CS 23
- 87 1800 FM 3D EDE to MACV 3: Request boundary extension grid 8588 to 8988 to 8990 to 8590. Time - 211000H to 221000H. This boundary is for A/2-12. APPROVED MACV SECT 1805H
- 88 1820 FM 1/12: Locations are the same as 1600H locations. INFO
- 88a 1730 FM 2/7: Sabre 26, Location 921921 found 2 rafts and destroyed them. 928917 01 raft 4x10 used within last 18 hrs. In the raft were 01 AK-47 and a clip, black PJ's, NVA pack and a red bag. Rafts were dest. GOLD STEEL INFO DTCC NOT

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- 88A CON'T Also found 01 trail leading W from ~~XXXX~~ used by 03 people. AT 1809, grid 923895, found 03 trails which run from W to E used in last 24 hrs by squad size element.
- 89 1845 FM 02/7: NDP, MEDEVAC Requested for 01 EM with piece of wood in chest from a tree which C Co was blowing up. Log bird bringing him to LZ SUE, then MEDEVACED to LZ ANDY. EM needs oxygen. DTCC NOT
- 90 1904 FM 2/7: Locations. A & E: 924051 B: LZ SUE C & D: 937038 D1/5: LZ SUE. POSTED
- 91 ~~1904~~ FM 1/5: E Co, 999789, Reference Contact at 0920H. INFO
E(36) ~~going on~~ a trail, saw 01 ~~NVA~~ and up, take safety off his weapon ~~at the lead~~ man. (36) backup man saw ~~and~~ the NVA. Then the point man saw 2 more NVA ~~stand up~~. E Co observed and they went ~~and~~ wounded. E Co engaged with M-16 ~~and~~ wounded 01 NVA. 2 NVA returned ~~fire~~. 3 NVA altogether having green fatigues, no hats or packs. E Co thinks they tried to set up an ambush. (36) was at 15 to 20 meters to the west side of the trail. Enemy evaded to the SW. (26) heard movement, checked the area with neg results, but found 03 trails leading SW.
- 92 1910 FM 1/5: 1700H, E Co, 993788. Followed trail leading NE and after 20 meters, found old fighting positions. LP shaped 4x4 ft with 1 ft overhead cover of bamboo. Neg equip found. Did not destroy position. INFO
- 93 1900 FM SF to EDE: XT 925848. Found base camp with 50 men 3 houses, 1 bunker with another near stream vic XT 918854 with 3 houses, 3 bunkers, 20 VC XT 913-870 5 houses, 4 bunkers, XT 903883, base camp. Readout of 2 Chieu Hoi & VC prisoner to follow. DTCC NOT
- 94 1925 FM 2/7: C Co, MEDEVAC Completed by WATER BUFFALO #398 at 1835H. DTCC NOT
- 95 1930 FM 2M 3 to EDE: 150 CIDG OP in area XT 8384 - 8379 - 9084 - 9079. F 201200H - 281800. 34 CIDG at XT 8373 - 8369 - 8773 - 8769. 201200H - 241800H. INFO
- 96 2000 FM 2/5: Locations. A: vic of FV B(-): 942048 14/LP 100m to N 21/100m to SE 31/100m to SW C: 944054 D: vic of FV E: LZ ODESSA. POSTED

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97	1900	FM 1/12: MEDEVAC Request for O2 EM with unknown illness and high fever. Lift off time 1910H, Time completed 1927H. LZ BUTONS.	DTOC NOT
98	1945	FM B1/9: 1820H, XT 909855. Spotted a village that had 2 spider holes. Occupants of village acted strange. They all stood in one group, 50-100 military aged men in the group.	COLD STEEL INFO
99	1845	FM B1/9: 1715H, YU 215265. Spotted a fresh trail 2' wide running N/S with movement to the north in last 24 hrs. Vis recon.	COLD STEEL
100	1845	FM B1/9: 1710H, YU 260305. Spotted a road intersection between trail going N/S.	COLD STEEL
101	1845	FM B1/9: 1710H, YU 273317. Spotted road intersection between trail going E/W with fresh movement in the last 24 hrs.	COLD STEEL
102	1845	FM B1/9: 1705H, YU 299399. Spotted a trail running N/S with fresh movement to the north by neg number of individuals given.	COLD STEEL
103	1845	FM B1/9: 1720H, YU 204254. Spotted 3 huts 10'x20' engaged with WP and destroyed. Vis recon.	COLD STEEL
104	1845	FM B1/9: 1650H, YU 331350. Spotted a road running NE/SW heavily used in last 12 hrs. Neg direction of travel given.	COLD STEEL
105	1845	FM B1/9: 1640H, YU 360387. Spotted O6 bunkers 4x8.	COLD STEEL
106	1845	FM B1/9: 1645H, YU 348375. Engaged field with 2.75 and had large secondary explosion from unknown object. Also 2 bunkers, 1-5x8, & 1-4x8, well camouflaged. Eng with WP and received secondary explosion. Vis recon.	COLD STEEL
107	1845	FM B1/9: 1635H, YU 365390. Spotted 2 bunkers 4x8, well used within last 24 hrs. Vis recon.	COLD STEEL
108	1845	FM B1/9: 1600H, YU 367387. Spotted 2 small bridges 1 - 2'x4' & 1 - 1'x5' made of bamboo. Vis recon.	COLD STEEL
109	1845	FM B1/9: 1600H, YU 365387. Spotted fields that had been tended lately. 1 dam 4'x12' covered w/dried weeds. Eng w/WP and the dam is burning. Vis recon.	COLD STEEL

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110 1845 FM B1/9: 1535H, YU 388363. EDA - 1 hut 20'x30' COLD STEEL
dest, 2 bunkers 8'x10' dest, 01 KBA in black
PJ's, 1 tunnel complex dest, 1 picnic table
dest, 1-55 gal drum dest. EDA of A/S.

111 1845 FM B1/9: 1530H, YU 389360. Spotted logs 10"x15' COLD STEEL
across a river, a bridge 10' long, 1 bunker 10'x
15', 1 hut 10'x20', 1 picnic table, 5 or 6 - 50
gal drums, 1 individual evadàng. Eng w/7.62 & WP.
Neg assessment on individual. Vis recon.

112 1820 FM B1/9: 1420H, YU 343392. EDA of A/S showed 01 KBA, COLD STEEL
01 hut 15'x30' dest with rice inside the structure,
01 hut 15'x40' not damaged. Vis recon.

113 1820 FM B1/9: 1400H, YU 200260. Spotted a trail running COLD STEEL
NW/SE used by squad size element in last 24 hrs.

114 1820 FM B1/9: 1810H, XT 923895. Followed 3 trails from WHITE SCAL
river that merged at XT 923895 into 01 trail
going West. Used by platoon size element in last
12-24 hrs. Vis recon.

115 1820 FM B1/9: 1820H, XT 928917, Spotted a raft 4'x10' w/ WHITE SCAL
01 AK-47 with magazine, NVA back pack, & red bag.
Eng w/WP & 7.62 & destroyed the raft, AK-47, back
pack, & red bag. Vis recon

116 1820 FM B1/9: 1755H, XT 921921. Spotted 2 rafts 4'x10' WHITE SCAL
along river. Trail leading west away from river.
Raft and trail used in the last 12 hrs. Rafts
were destroyed with WP.

117 2050 FM 2/7: 1758H, C & D Co, 937036. Found 35 bunkers, INFO DTCC M
2x4x6 with 10" overhead cover. Also 01 BQ40 rkt,
will destroy. Many flashlight batteries made in
Cambodia, 1 flower sack, 250 rds AK-47 in sack,
5000 lbs rice spread on bunkers, 01 60mm round,
01 cooking pot used today, cooking crock & wash-
ing area, 01 NVA entrenching tool (new), Will
destroy ammo and equipment.

118 1930 FM 2/5: C Co, 1150H, 940060. Received sniper fire DTCC NCT SP
from unknown size enemy element force in trees BAUCH
& bunkers. Engaged with Arty, ARA, & A/S. Results:
US - 02 MIA & 01 WIA. The missing EM are believed
to be KIA but due to enemy fire power, bodies
could not be recovered. At 1420H, C Co again made

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118 CON'T

contact with estimated company size enemy element in bunkers. Engaged with AFA & A/S, Results (US) 01 MIA and 06 WIA. The MIA is believed to be KIA but again the fire was too great to extract the body. Contact broken at 1630H, No enemy assessment. DTCC SP E

119 2145

FM 1/12: 2025H, A Co, LZ ELLEN. 01 EM requested MEDEVAC at 2041H and MEDEVAC 15 on station. EM was sick with some virus or flu. 2048H MEDEVAC completed. DTCC NOT

120 2149

FM 1/12: 2100H, B Co, Gun Port. Requested MEDEVAC for 02 sick EM at B Co location. MEDEVAC completed at 2120H at XU 929060. DTCC NOT

121 2220

FM 2/5: B Co. Report movement 5m to SW. Believed to be a large enemy force. Engaging with Redleg. INFO

122 2203

FM 2/7: 2155H, D Co, 937038. Spotted movement going from S to N about 8-10 persons and were dragging something. Engaged with M-79. Called in Redleg and received 01 secondary explosion. INFO

123 2400

JOURNAL CLOSED

GARRY OWEN CONTINUED OPERATION SHERIDAN-SABRE WITH LIGHT ENEMY CONTACT. C/2-5 AT 2105H MADE CONTACT WITH UNKNOWN NUMBER OF SNIPPERS RESULTING IN 01 US WIA, 02 US MIA, AND ENEMY ASSESSMENT. C & D CO 2-7 AT 1210H MADE CONTACT WITH ENEMY AND SMALL ARMS FIRE FROM AN UNKNOWN SOURCE VIC XU 937036. RESULTS: 04 NVA KIA, 02 US WIA, 01 US MIA, AND ENEMY ASSESSMENT. ESTIMATED COMPANY SIZE FORCE ENGAGING IN 06 US WIA, 01 US MIA, AND ENEMY ASSESSMENT.

WARD M. LEHARDY, MAJ, INE

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