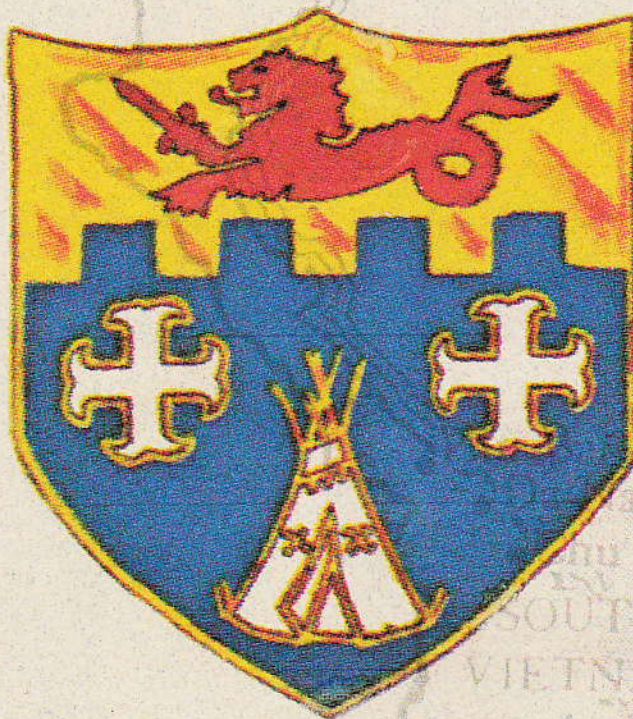


1st BATTALION
12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT



“RED WARRIORS”

BATTLE REPORT

8 - 14 July 1967

v.5 Compiled and edited
by Roger A. Hill
January 24, 2008

The Decimation of Bravo Company & Its POW Story

1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, 4th Infantry Division
"Red Warriors"

YA 603547, Pleiku Province, Republic of Vietnam
Operation Francis Marion

8-14 July 1967

v.6
Compiled and Edited
by
Roger A. Hill
August 13, 2008

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January 24, 2008

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Roger Hill
January 2025**

DEDICATION

This Battle Report is dedicated to those 31 men of Bravo Company and its attachments who made the ultimate sacrifice that fateful day of 12 July 1967, and to those seven men who were taken as Prisoners of War (POWs) by the North Vietnamese Army. Two of the seven would die in captivity. The other five would endure five years and eight months of pain, fear, hunger, degradation and despair during the time they were held as POWs by the North Vietnamese Government.

In one form or another, 36 of the 38 men were eventually recovered. It wasn't until after the war that it was learned that two of the seven POWs had died in captivity (James F. Schiele and James L. Van Bendegom). Their remains have never been recovered, and they are now listed as two of our battalion's three Missing in Action (MIA).

The five POWs who came home are Martin S. Frank, Nathan B. Henry, Cordine McMurray, Stanley A. Newell, and Richard R. Perricone. These men were invited to be the battalion's Guests of Honor at the Red Warrior Vietnam Reunion in St. Louis, Missouri in September 2008.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

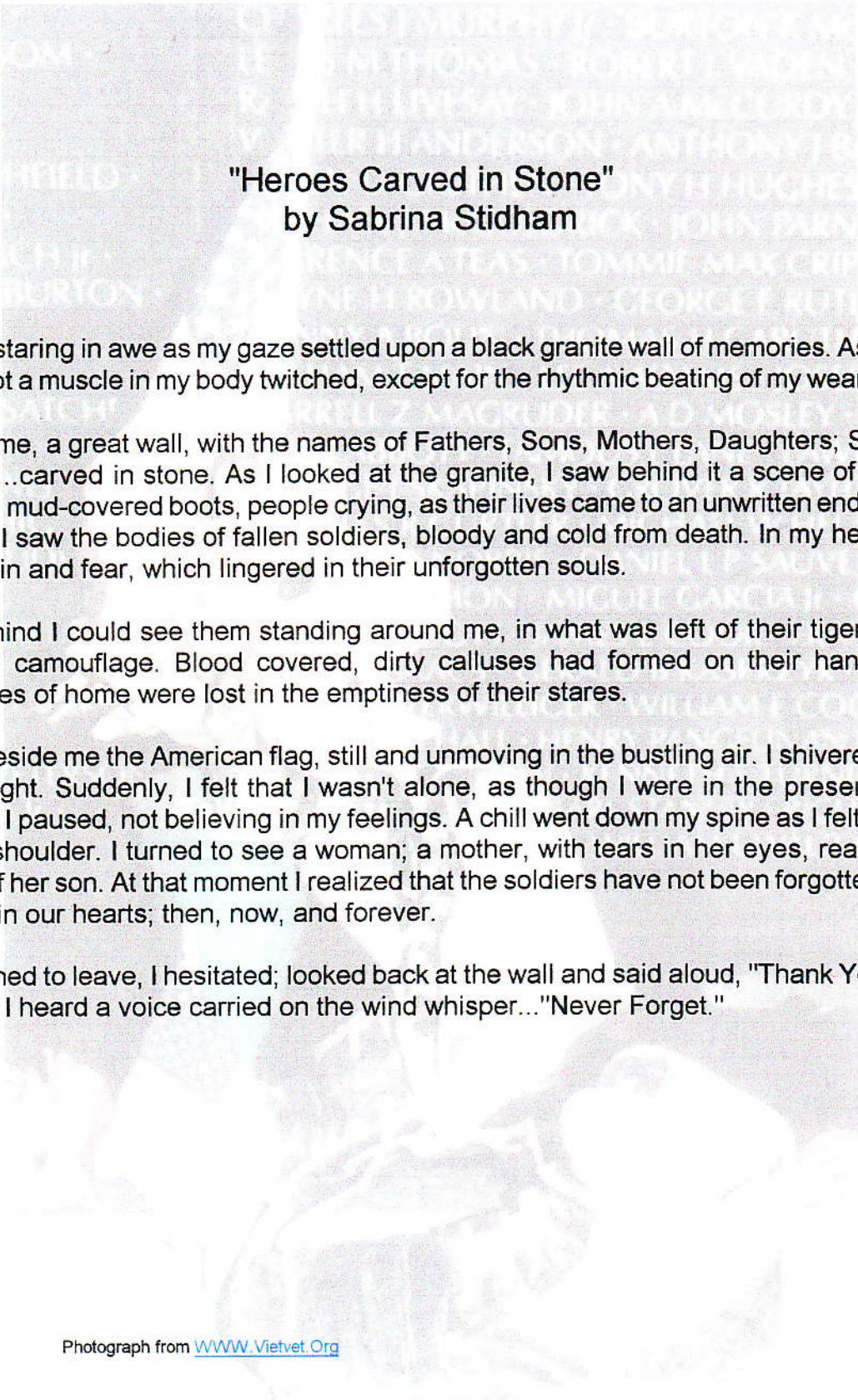
To the members of the battalion, please think of this document as a "draft" version of the report of the battle fought on 12th of July, 1967, involving primarily Bravo and Charlie Companies. The material contained in it represents the "tip of the iceberg." As you read through it, I'm sure you will see some things in a slightly different perspective than what I have presented from the sources I have been able to locate. Many events and details have yet to surface, thus they await discovery and recording.

The purpose of this document is to create a chronological sequence of events from the 8th through the 14th of July 1967, covering the period during which the battle took place. The need to have this type of document is the result of determining that many of the former members of the units involved have memories of this particular battle, but have no idea when, where, or with whom they occurred. It is hoped that with time and additional input, a clear, concise, moment-by-moment picture will be reconstructed, which will help readers fill these gaps and put their memories in order.

This document represents a compilation of information from many sources. It is a "best-effort" to reconstruct the sequence of events of the battle. Because of gaps in the available information, some incidents are not as thoroughly depicted or represented as others.

Contributors include: Hal Birch, battalion commander; Robert Boudreaux, Ivy Leaves reporter; Melvin Deutsch, battalion surgeon; Harry Dilkes, member of Alpha Company; Lewis Easterly, Charlie Company Executive Office; Roger Hill, platoon sergeant, Recon Platoon; Roger Howse, Bravo Company platoon leader; Paul Judge, brother of Charles Judge; Charles Laing, member of Charlie Company; Edward Moody, member of Bravo Company; Robert Parks, member of Bravo Company; Gary Rasser, Bravo Company platoon leader; Tom Seales, Charlie Company platoon leader; Glenn Stanley, member of Bravo Company; Alan Thiel, member of Bravo Company; Kevin Watson, member of Bravo Company; Edward Williams, 4th Med Surgeon; and Corey Wright, battalion commander. A special thanks needs to go to Jim Daniels (Red Warrior '68) for his excellent color maps.

I'm specifically looking for the names of the wounded and their stories. Your help in correcting, editing, and adding to this document would be greatly appreciated. Any and all contributions are welcome. Thank you.



"Heroes Carved in Stone"
by Sabrina Stidham

I stood staring in awe as my gaze settled upon a black granite wall of memories. As I stood there not a muscle in my body twitched, except for the rhythmic beating of my weary heart.

Before me, a great wall, with the names of Fathers, Sons, Mothers, Daughters; Soldiers; Heroes...carved in stone. As I looked at the granite, I saw behind it a scene of tangled jungles, mud-covered boots, people crying, as their lives came to an unwritten end. On the ground I saw the bodies of fallen soldiers, bloody and cold from death. In my heart I felt their pain and fear, which lingered in their unforgotten souls.

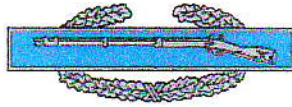
In my mind I could see them standing around me, in what was left of their tiger-striped tattered camouflage. Blood covered, dirty calluses had formed on their hands, and memories of home were lost in the emptiness of their stares.

I saw beside me the American flag, still and unmoving in the bustling air. I shivered at the eerie sight. Suddenly, I felt that I wasn't alone, as though I were in the presence of a soldier; I paused, not believing in my feelings. A chill went down my spine as I felt a touch on my shoulder. I turned to see a woman; a mother, with tears in her eyes, reading the name of her son. At that moment I realized that the soldiers have not been forgotten. They live on in our hearts; then, now, and forever.

As I turned to leave, I hesitated; looked back at the wall and said aloud, "Thank You," and I swear I heard a voice carried on the wind whisper..."Never Forget."

RED WARRIOR TASK FORCE

July 1966 through November 1970



1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment

Headquarters and Headquarters Company
Alpha Company
Bravo Company
Charlie Company
Delta Company (September 1967)
Echo Company (September 1967)



4th Battalion, 42nd Field Artillery

Bravo Battery



4th Engineer Battalion

1st Platoon, Bravo Company



1st BATTALION, 12th INFANTRY (Red Warriors)



Coat of Arms

Shield: Azure, in fess two crosses moline argent, in base a wigwam of the like garnished with five poles of the last; on a chief embattled or a sea lion of the third holding in dexter paw a sword of the field.

Crest: On a wreath of the colors an armored arm embowed proper, grasping in the naked hand a broken flag staff gules, to which is attached a pennant or.

Motto: *Ducti Amore Patriae* (Having Been Led by Love of Country).

Symbolism: The field is blue for infantry. This regiment took part in the Civil War; its great achievement was its first engagement at Gaines' Mill, Virginia, on 27 and 28 June 1862, where its losses were almost 50 percent. This is shown by the moline crosses which represent the iron fastenings of a millstone and recall the crushing losses sustained. The wigwam stands for the Indian campaigns in which the regiment took part. The chief is for the War with Spain and the Philippine Insurrection, yellow and red being the Spanish colors, red and blue the Katipunan colors; the embattled partition line is for the capture of the blockhouse at El Caney, Cuba, and the sea lion is from the arms of the Philippine Islands. The crest in the Spanish colors commemorates the capture of a Spanish flag at El Caney.

Lineage

Constituted 3 May 1861 in the Regular Army as Company A, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry. Organized 20 October 1861 at Fort Hamilton, New York. Reorganized and redesignated 7 December 1866 as Company A, 12th Infantry. (12th Infantry assigned 17 December 1917 to the 8th Division; relieved 15 August 1927 from assignment to the 8th Division and assigned to the 4th Division; relieved 1 October 1933 from assignment to the 4th Division and assigned to the 8th Division; relieved 10 October 1941 from assignment to the 8th Division and assigned to the 4th Division [later redesignated as the 4th Infantry Division].) Inactivated 15 July 1947 at Fort Ord, California. Reorganized and redesignated 1 April 1957 as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battle Group, 12th Infantry and remained assigned to the 4th Infantry Division (organic elements concurrently constituted and activated). Reorganized and redesignated 1 October 1963 as the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry.

Campaign Participation Credit

Civil War

- *Peninsula
- *Manassas
- *Antietam
- *Fredericksburg
- *Chancellorsville
- *Gettysburg
- *Wilderness
- *Spotsylvania
- *Cold Harbor
- *Petersburg
- Virginia 1862
- *Virginia 1863

Indian Wars

- Modocs
- Bannocks
- *Pine Ridge

War With Spain

- *Santiago

Philippine Insurrection

- *Malolos
- *Tarlac
- *Luzon 1899

World War II

- *Normandy (with arrowhead)
- *Northern France
- *Rhineland
- *Ardennes-Alsace
- *Central Europe

Vietnam

- *Counteroffensive, Phase II
- *Counteroffensive, Phase III
- *Tet Counteroffensive
- Counteroffensive IV
- Counteroffensive V
- Counteroffensive VI
- Summer-Fall 1969
- Winter-Spring 1970
- Sanctuary Counteroffensive
- Counteroffensive VII

Decorations

- *Presidential Unit Citation (Army), Streamer embroidered LUXEMBOURG (12 Infantry cited; WD GO 54, 1945)
 - *Valorous Unit Award, Streamer embroidered PLEIKU PROVINCE (1st Battalion, 12th Infantry cited; DA GO 17, 1968)
 - *Valorous Unit Award, Streamer embroidered CENTRAL HIGHLANDS (1st Battalion, 12th Infantry cited; DA GO 43, 1970)
 - *Belgian Fourragere 1940 (12th Infantry cited; DA GO 43, 1950)
 - *Cited in the Order of the Day of the Belgian Army for action in BELGIUM (12th Infantry cited; DA GO 43, 1950)
 - *Cited in the Order of the Day of the Belgian Army for action in the ARDENNES (12th Infantry cited; DA GO 43, 1950)
 - *Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm, Streamer embroidered VIETNAM 1966-1969 (1st Battalion, 12th Infantry cited; DA GO 3, 1970)
 - *Vietnamese Civil Action Honor Medal, First Class, Streamer embroidered VIETNAM 1966-1969 (1st Battalion, 12th Infantry cited; DA GO 53, 1970)
- Company B and Company C each additionally entitled to: Valorous Unit Award, Streamer embroidered KONTUM (Company B and Company C, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry cited; DA GO 43, 1970)

1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
"RED WARRIORS"
VIETNAM MISSION STATEMENT

"To close with the enemy
by means of fire and maneuver in order to destroy or capture him,
or to repel his assault by fire,
close combat and counterattack."

FOREWORD

This reconstructed report is a description of the battle between Bravo and Charlie Companies of the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, known as the "Red Warriors," and the 7th Battalion of the 66th NVA Regiment on the 12th of July, 1967, in the Ia Drang Valley of the Central Highlands, Pleiku Province, South Vietnam.

Operating at half-strength, the two Red Warrior companies and the Recon Platoon were jointly conducting their battalion's search-and-destroy mission 6,000 meters (3 ½ miles) east of the Cambodian border in what turned out to be the "front yard" of the 66th NVA Regiment. (Unbeknownst to the Red Warriors, the 7th Battalion of the 66th NVA Regiment was encamped just across the border from them.)

The commander of the 7/66 NVA Battalion couldn't resist such a tempting target as two under-strength American companies operating alone, and the battle was joined under conditions that were ideal for him.

The outcome of the battle was devastating to the Red Warriors. Not only was a company rendered combat-ineffective, but the shock of the battle field reports numbed the entire battalion when they learned that, after taking seven men prisoner, the enemy bound and then executed all of the remaining wounded they could find on the battlefield (during the confusion of the fighting, some soldiers managed to escape and evade the enemy).

The battalion had never experienced anything like this before. At the end of the battalion's first year in Vietnam, the ugliest aspects of war had been painfully inflicted upon the Red Warriors of Vietnam. The personal stories of the survivors and the POWs tell of heroism in its purest form.

PART I

INTRODUCTION

PART I: INTRODUCTION

Prior to relating the story of the engagement between elements of the 66th NVA Regiment and the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry (Red Warriors) on 12 July 1967, in the Ia Drang Valley along the Cambodian border, it is appropriate to provide a synopsis of the conditions of weather, terrain, and intelligence available to the battalion, and certain background data concerning the overall scheme of operation and maneuver of the Red Warriors that led up to the events of that fateful day.

TACTICAL TERRAIN

The corners of the battalion's general area of operations (AO) (30 square kilometers) were defined by coordinates YA 8217, 8211, 8717, and 8711. The ruggedness of the northern portion of this area was evidenced by its dense undergrowth, bamboo, thick trees with high canopy, and hills and steep ridges which made for difficult land navigation. There were no landing zones available other than occasional single ship strips in this area. The northernmost half of this area was slightly more open, in that ground navigation was not as difficult due to lesser undergrowth and rolling hills with a greater dispersion of trees. The western side of the AO was bordered by the La Cle and Ia Pron Rivers, the eastern side by the Ia Kreng, and the southern side by the Ia Drang. The streams between these rivers were of the intermittent type throughout the area and were trafficable by foot troops. Route 14B (which was nothing more than an overgrown trail) bisected the battalion's AO from north to south along its eastern flank.

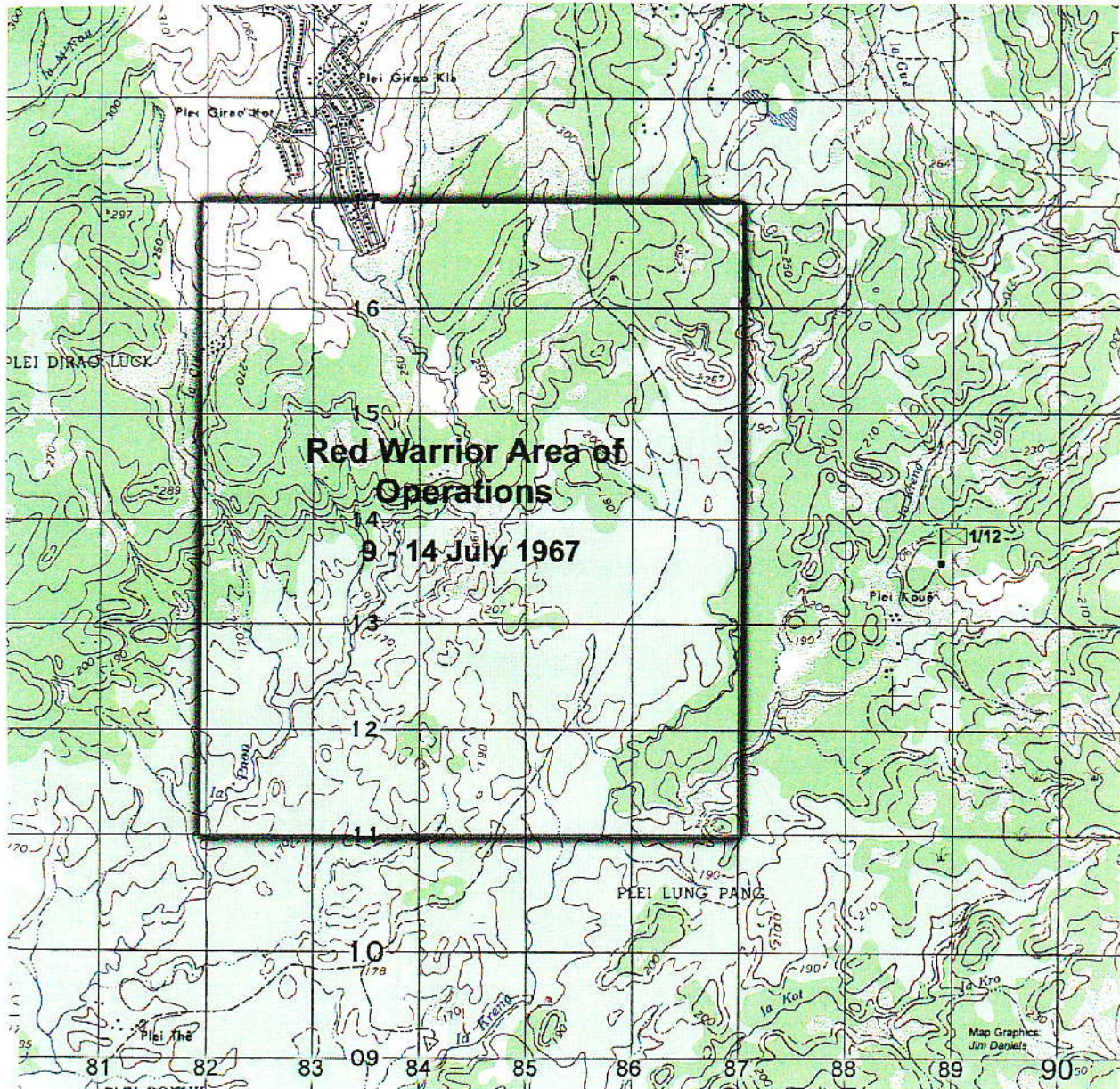
WEATHER

Typical for this region toward the end of its monsoon season, the weather was a combination of periodic scattered rain showers and early morning fog. Temperatures could drop to the mid-60s during the night and rise into the mid-to-high 80s during the day. This particular weather pattern impeded ground operations due to a lack of air cover and air operations throughout the morning hours of the 12th of July.

ENEMY SITUATION

Electronic intelligence monitoring of the B3 Front had revealed that two NVA regiments, the 66th (Hanoi) and the 88th, both elements of the 1st PAVN Division, were operating adjacent to the battalion's AO out of a Cambodian sanctuary known as Base Area 702. Enemy sightings and contact from the 8th through the 11th of July revealed the enemy's specific area of operation in the battalion's portion of the Ia Drang Valley. Additional verbal information was provided to the battalion from 2nd Brigade on the nights of 9 and 10 July that enemy forces apparently were on the flanks and possibly to the rear of Bravo and Charlie Companies, and that their likely intent was to mortar and/or to fix our forces. (A document found by Alpha Company on 13 July at grid YA 8312 confirmed the presence of elements of the 66th NVA Regiment.)

Operation Francis Marion
Pleiku Province
Republic of Vietnam



Map courtesy of Jim Daniels.
Map sheet 6536 III, Plei Ya Bo, 1965, 1:50,000

Tactical information taken from 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry FRAG Order 2-67, dtd 8 July 67.

FRIENDLY SITUATION

The 4th Infantry Division was based at and working out of Camp Enari. Its 2nd Brigade had established a forward headquarters and supply base at a location known as "The Oasis," and initiated Operation Francis Marion on the 6th of April. The 1st of the 12th Infantry, an element of the 2nd Brigade, which was operating at about half-strength, was tasked to participate in the conduct of a screening mission along the Cambodian border in an arc between the Special Forces Camps at Plei Me and Duc Co. To this end, the battalion was to establish a series of succeeding fire support bases (FSBs) from which it would send its companies on 7-to-10 day search-and-destroy missions. On the 7th of June, the battalion's third FSB since the inception of Operation Francis Marion was established at YA 889136 on a low ridge overlooking the small Montagnard village of Plei Koue. The battalion's AO was approximately five kilometers to the west. The FSB was manned by the battalion's command and operations personnel; one rifle company on perimeter security detail; B Battery 4/42 Artillery; 1st Platoon B Company, 4th Engineers; and a consolidated 81mm and 4.2 inch mortar platoon.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

In response to a directive received from 2nd Brigade, a battalion operation was developed to search out an area west of the Brigade's reconnaissance and surveillance line for the purpose of determining the enemy's activity and intent in this locale. Prior to the conduct of this operation, the posturing of two of the battalion's rifle companies into the northern part of the AO developed minor sightings and small contacts. On the 8th of July, the battalion S3 issued FRAG Order 2-67 (see Appendix B). The Order called for a three-phase operation of two mutually-supporting companies (Bravo and Charlie) to conduct a search-and-destroy mission along designated routes from 100700 through 140700 July in the battalion's AO, and for the Recon Platoon to establish a screen south on their southern flank. Both companies were to exploit any and all situations through the use of aerial and artillery strikes, and at the conclusion of the operation, reestablish a screen in zone.

LT Lewis Easterly, the Charlie Company Executive Officer, recalls some of the events leading up to the 12th of July: *"We spent the first week of July guarding the battalion FSB, which was about 9-to-10 kilometers east of the Cambodian border. One day the Assistant Division Commander, General Ryder, flew out to the FSB and gave us a briefing on an upcoming operation. I recall that he used his hand as a pointer and swept it around in a curve from northeast to the southwest covering an area about 10 kilometers wide on the situation map.*

"Our mission was going to be a search-and-destroy operation in the western-most portion of the battalion's AO. The Air Force had scheduled a B-52 strike in that area, and we were to sweep the area after the strike and mop up anything that we ran into. Because Bravo Company was operating in the same area, this was going to be, more or less, a joint operation involving both companies."

PART II

MOVEMENT TO
CONTACT

PART II: MOVEMENT TO CONTACT

8 July (Saturday)

At 0945, about an hour after departing their previous night's location, Bravo Company's 2nd Platoon (82-60) discovered a recently-used trail at YA 854176 running in a southwesterly direction, the same direction Bravo Company was heading. Shortly after noon, the battalion S3 issued FRAG Order 2-67 to the companies. At 1340 hours, after moving almost 1000 meters since their last sighting four hours previously, the 3rd Platoon of Bravo Company (82-61) engaged two NVA at YA 840163, killing both. At 1605 the same platoon began a running engagement with an estimated platoon-sized group of NVA at YA 842163. By 1830, through the use of air and artillery strikes and demolitions, they had accounted for five enemy KIAs, one of which was an officer, recovered several weapons, and destroyed a small tunnel complex. There were no friendly casualties.

LT Easterly: *"On the 8th, Bravo made contact with some NVA. From the FSB we couldn't see where the contact was taking place, but we could see the aircraft off to our northwest as they went in to drop their bombs. I listened to the radio traffic very carefully because this was the first time that I could really hear a fight.*

"The squad in Bravo Company that was in contact couldn't talk to the forward air controller (FAC), but could talk to their company commander. The company commander couldn't talk to the FAC either, but the radios at the tactical operations center (TOC) could. The squad in contact would watch where a bomb dropped and tell the company commander. He in turn would tell the TOC, and then the message would finally get to the FAC. The men on the ground were trying to make corrections the same way we were taught to correct artillery, and the FAC kept trying to get them to understand that he didn't know which way was left and right; he kept saying 'Tell me north, south, east, or west and how far you want it moved.' I paid attention because I hadn't realized that in the air they don't know which was left or right on the ground."

While Bravo Company (82) was busy in grid square YA 8416, the Recon Platoon was patrolling in grid YA 8316; Charlie Company (83) was in the FSB preparing for the next day's departure; and Alpha Company (81) was approximately four kilometers to the southeast in grid square YA 8512 conducting their patrols. Between 0917 and 1515 hours, Alpha Company covered over 4000 meters, discovered three different trails and some abandoned enemy equipment, and spotted two NVA. Compared to Bravo, Alpha had a relatively easy day. Shortly after their last sighting, Alpha Company established their night location in the vicinity of YA 8613 and awaited their 0600 start point (SP) the next morning.

9 July (Sunday)

At 0600 Alpha Company SP'd from their night location and began their return to the fire support base at YA 889136 to assume their security mission. The Recon Platoon also

continued its move to the southeastern flank of the maneuver area, while Charlie Company prepared to be relieved of its security detail in the FSB.

LT Easterly: *"We were scheduled to move out early in the morning. Tom Seales was in the base camp (Camp Enari) and I wound up leading 2nd Platoon that morning. We left the FSB rather late in the morning, as Alpha Company had some trouble getting out of their night location. Because they were replacing us at the FSB, we had to wait for them to arrive."*

By 1000 hours Charlie Company had SP'd from the FSB and was en route to position "Axe" for the start of their next search-and-destroy mission.

LT Easterly: *"Just after we left the FSB, we crossed a small river called the Ia Kreng. This was my first river crossing and I was really up-tight. The terrain was rough and the banks were heavily covered with vegetation. It looked like a good place for an ambush to me; most places did."*

"Because of the rough terrain, I was really very thankful that I had found a frameless rucksack. It was much easier to carry, but still a killer. We spent the final part of the day pulling ourselves up the side of a steep hill. We didn't get as far as we were scheduled to, but nevertheless we found a very good night location. There was one minor problem; there was a large hole in the side of the hill we were on that had an unexploded bomb at the bottom."

The recon platoon (74) discovered three NVA bodies at YA 833164, who had been killed by artillery during the previous day's action with Bravo Company.

SSG Roger Hill, recon platoon sergeant, recalls the discovery clearly. *"So many of our patrols were done in conjunction with the line companies conducting search-and-destroy missions, that after a time they sort of all ran together. We were about one day behind Bravo Company when we encountered their trail and a situation they had walked into the day before."*

"We were moving through an area that was covered with moderate ground cover and a scattering of banana trees when the point man noticed several small excavations on the ground around him. Motioning for all to stop and drop, the platoon went to the ground and on the alert. The platoon leader, LT Williams, moved forward and examined what the point man had found. At the same time, the rest of us also began to notice the same small excavations around us. We all realized without being told that someone had been here recently digging in the ground. For what we weren't sure, but all the safeties were clicked off as we got as close as we could to the ground."

"LT Williams then motioned for the platoon to continue forward. Getting up, we began to move forward slowly with great caution. Suddenly the point man dropped to the ground"

again and aimed his rifle at something the rest of us couldn't see. Again the platoon leader went forward to investigate. After a moment he motioned the rest of the platoon to follow him. As we quietly stepped into a small clearing, several things became apparent all at the same moment. The first was that we were in a grove of banana trees that exhibited numerous shredded stalks and leaves from gunfire. The second was that there was a small collapsed bunker in the middle of the clearing with two sets of legs sticking out of the rubble.

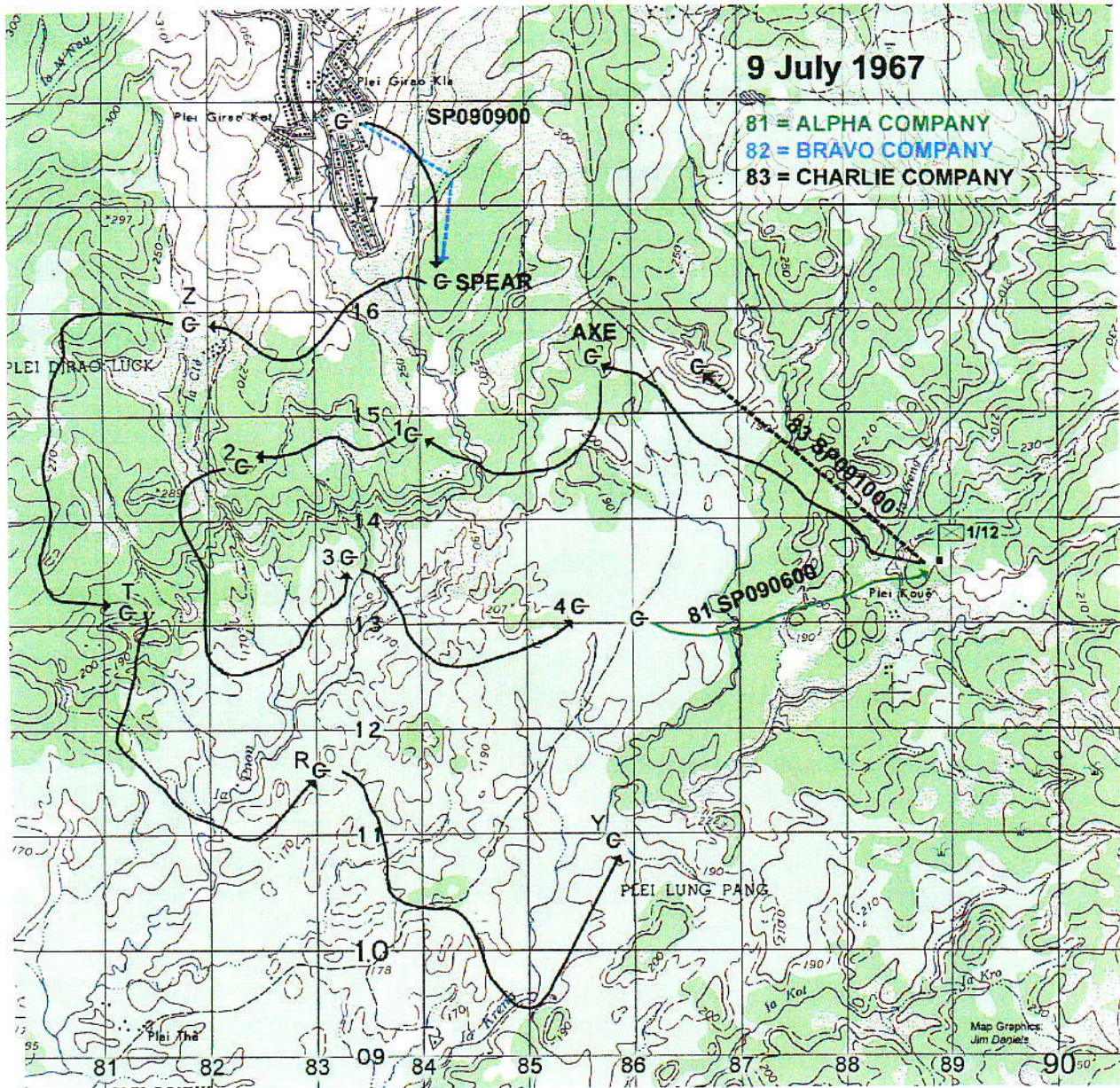
"Looking around we quickly figured out that a couple NVA must have been cut off or left behind and had been living off the land (all the small excavations) when they were found by Bravo Company as they passed through here the day before. It was evident by the amount of destruction that it was a one-sided firefight. We guessed that the NVA had been surprised and overwhelmed by the company. I will always remember seeing the trail of ants going up one of the legs and disappearing inside through a bullet hole in the ankle. Making sure there was nothing else of importance to report, the Lieutenant moved the platoon out."

By 1500 hours FRAG Order 2-67 had been implemented, and Bravo Company, by remaining in the area of the previous day's contact conducting sweeps, was already in position "Spear" at YA 8416. Because the company had set up a patrol base, they were able to request a resupply mission from battalion. In addition to rations and other items, the company received two replacements: SFC Leman Hunter and PFC Robert Parks. SFC Hunter became the Weapons Platoon platoon sergeant, and PFC Parks was assigned to the Weapons Platoon's one mortar crew.

PFC Robert Parks recalls his first day in the field with his new unit: *"On the last leg of our journey, SFC Hunter and I were flown out to Bravo Company with a load of re-supplies. Upon arrival, we were both assigned to the Weapons Platoon, which was nothing more than a reinforced gun section with one 81mm mortar. The other two mortars from the platoon were back in the fire support base along with their crews. Some of the men assigned to the part of the Weapons Platoon in the field were SGT Robert Chin (who was the squad leader), SP4 Jim McMillion, and SP4 Larry Halverson. There were others, but I've since forgotten their names."*

Charlie Company was in a position southeast of "Axe" on Hill 267 in grid square YA 8615. **LT Easterly** vividly remembers a B-52 Arc Light mission that night west of their position toward the Cambodian border: *"At about 0300, the ground began to shake, and I jumped out of my hooch to see what was happening. Several other members of the command group were standing around looking to the west. The entire horizon was filled with explosions, and as I looked on in amazement, someone turned to me and said that it was an Arc Light. Of all the things I saw in Vietnam, one of the most impressive was the first time I saw the sky lit up from horizon-to-horizon by exploding bombs. The ground continued to shake for about 20 minutes. I crawled back into my hooch thinking it was over, but 30 minutes later it started all over again. The planes had turned around and were*

Operation Francis Marion Pleiku Province Republic of Vietnam



Map courtesy of Jim Daniels.
Map sheet 6536 III, Plei Ya Bo, 1965, 1:50,000

Tactical information taken from 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry FRAG Order 2-67, dtd 8 July 67, with route overlay for all four days. Dotted lines represent actual routes covered on this date. The "C" symbol with the small mark denotes company defensive positions.

making a second run to drop the rest of their bombs. At no time could we see or hear the planes because they were so high during the raid. The first you knew of the raid was when the bombs hit." Charlie Company would be tasked the next morning to investigate the bomb damage.

Intelligence reports received by battalion from division and brigade indicated that enemy forces were operating near Bravo and Charlie Companies.

10 July (Monday)

Because of the Arc Light the night before, both companies were given a change of mission for the day. The morning saw Bravo and Charlie Companies complete their daily preparations to continue their sweeps to the southwest.

PFC Parks: *"Shortly after stand-to, a medic came around and handed out our malaria pills. I received my first "big" pill that day (this was when I learned that we took one big orange pill every Monday morning in addition to a little white pill every day)."*

Shortly after departing their night location, Bravo Company (82) discovered a recently-used trail and heard movement. Charlie Company (83) was ordered by battalion to change its plans and to move in a southwestern direction from its night position toward position "1" and investigate the Arc Light strike they observed; at 1005 they found eight-to-ten unoccupied bunkers at YA 854148.

LT Easterly: *"We began moving to the west to check out the Arc Light. Tom Seales had come in on the resupply helicopter the night before, so I was now the company executive officer again. Shortly after departing, we crossed Highway 14B that ran north-to-south, and even though it was unpaved, it was for Vietnam a major road. We were moving into the northern area of the la Drang Valley and walked all day through rather difficult terrain. As we moved into the la Drang Valley, we hit some swamps, and I remember wading in knee-deep water for most of the afternoon and thinking 'What will we do if we make contact?' There was no way to get down on the ground as it was under 12-to-18 inches of water. Since I had already had one encounter with a leech, I was also worried about them whenever we crossed a stream or had to wade through a swamp."*

At 1250 the recon platoon (74) encountered and fired on one NVA who was washing his clothing on the bank of the la Kreng at YA 858118. The clothing and three tubes of rice he had been carrying were captured; he escaped. At 1655 at YA 821146, Bravo Company received small arms fire from an unknown-sized enemy force and sustained one WIA.

SSG Hill on "the capture of the boxer shorts": *"The recon platoon was conducting a patrol through relatively open area adjacent to the eastern side of the la Kreng River. Because of the openness, movement was easy and quiet. The platoon was in a column formation with flank security out, and a squad on point. The left flank was using the river bank to*

guide us, while the point man was watching ahead. We had not seen any indication of enemy forces in the area all morning; consequently most of us were pretty relaxed as we had no hills to hump or jungle to break through.

"Suddenly the quiet was shattered by a single rifle shot up front. Instantly the platoon was on the ground looking for cover and waiting for all Hell to break loose. After a few moments of nothing happening, I crawled up toward the point man to find out what had happened. Arriving at his position I found him looking down over the river bank at the opposite side, where a small sandbar had been deposited along the outer edge of a curve in the river. Lying on the sand was a pair of boxer shorts and three rice tubes; whoever had been carrying them was gone. Quickly checking that everyone was OK, I asked the point man what had happened. It seems that he had not expected the river bank to curve abruptly back toward him, and that he had suddenly found himself standing on the bank looking down at an NVA squatted down on the opposite bank washing the shorts in the water. Instinctively he had swung his rifle downward at the NVA and pulled the trigger and held it. When it only fired one round, he thought his rifle had jammed, so he dropped to the ground. By the time he realized that his weapon was on single shot and not on full auto and that it had not jammed, the NVA was gone.

"The platoon leader, LT Williams, quickly deployed the platoon along the bank. As we were on the high side, we were in a pretty good position. Under the cover of the platoon, the point man went down over the bank, crossed the river (it was very shallow at this point), recovered the shorts and tubes of rice, and quickly returned to the safety of our position.

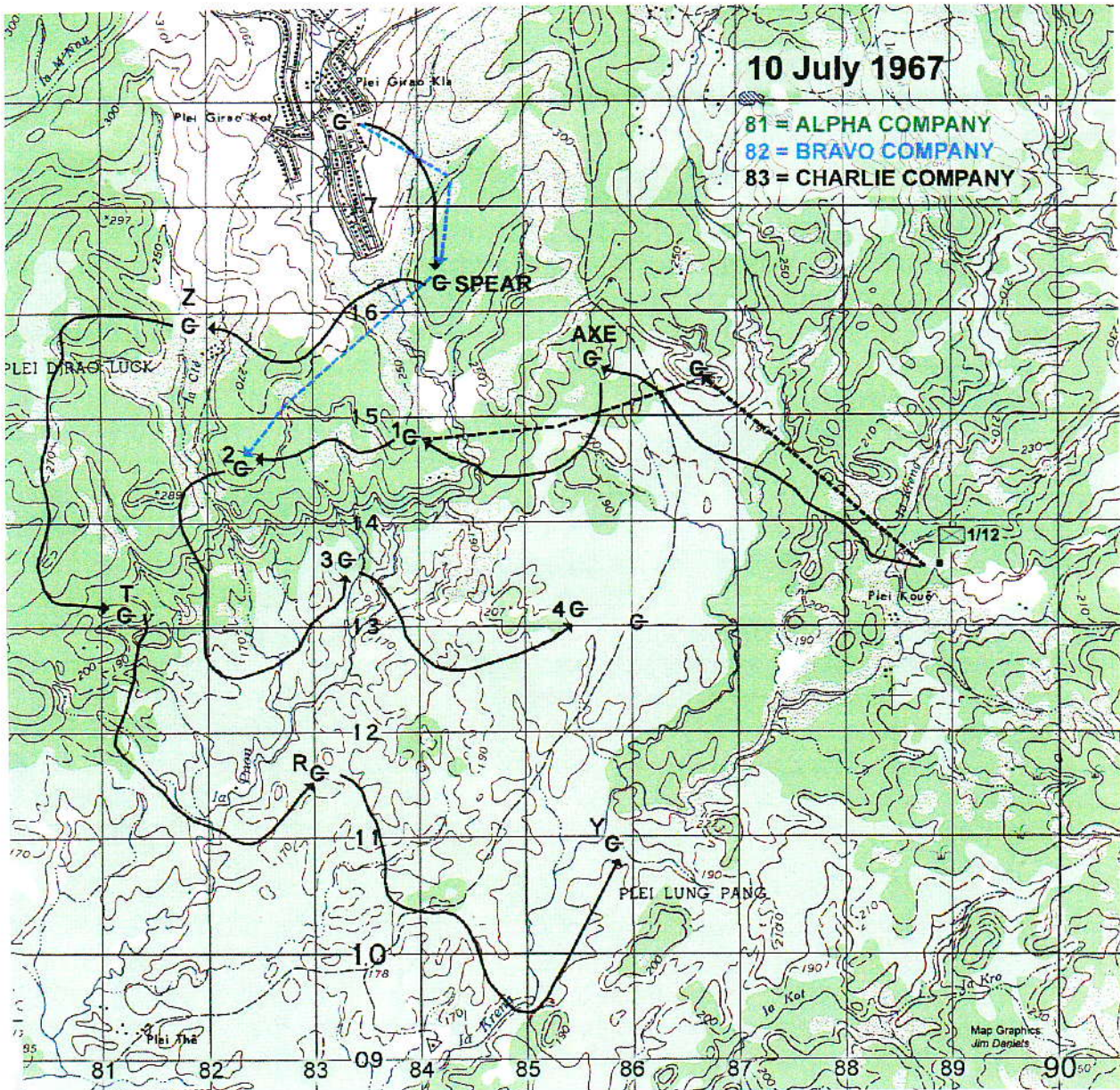
"Looking over the trophies, we were amazed by two things: the boxer shorts were American, and they were a size 44! None of us could imagine what a skinny little NVA was doing in the jungle washing a pair of size 44 boxer shorts; he could have fit in just one of the leg openings. I don't know who kept the shorts, but the rice was dumped into the river. As soon as LT Williams reported our contact to battalion, he had the platoon change its direction of movement and head off in a northeasterly direction away from the river."

LT Roger Howse, a platoon leader in Bravo Company, only has one memory of this day. "On the 10th of July, two days before the battle, my platoon was on point. We found a pygmy deer that had been wounded by our artillery. Calling the company commander, I got permission to stop long enough for one of my troops to dress-out the animal.

"We carried the carcass to where we set up our night location in a wooded area. That evening the company cooked and ate venison. I also remember the perimeter was probed a couple times that night (I wonder if they smelled the venison cooking). In retrospect I think it was a preamble of what was to come."

PFC Parks recalls the deer incident: "That evening in the company's night position we all shared roasted deer meat along with our C-rations. Someone in the 1st Platoon had killed

Operation Francis Marion Pleiku Province Republic of Vietnam



Map courtesy of Jim Daniels.
Map sheet 6536 III, Plei Ya Bo, 1965, 1:50,000

Tactical information taken from 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry FRAG Order 2-67, dtd 8 July 67, with route overlay for all four days. Dotted lines represent actual routes covered on this date. The "C" symbol with small mark denotes company defensive positions.

a deer earlier in the day that had been wounded by artillery. I remember thinking that this was the way to fight a war -- fresh roasted venison for dinner. I also remember seeing two C-123's flying nearby that day that looked like they were spraying something."

LT Easterly: *"We wound up in another swamp in the late afternoon and became so bogged down that the Battalion Commander, Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Wright, had to fly over us in the battalion's command and control (C&C) aircraft and lead us to a nearby abandoned FSB. In my opinion the old FSB was a very poor night location, as the area was swampy and very wet.*

"Whenever the company arrived at a night location, it was my job to coordinate the setting-up of the defensive positions for that location. Generally it worked in the following manner: I would take the direction of march as 12 o'clock and the lead platoon would be responsible from 10-to-2, another from 2-to-6 and the other from 6-to-10. While I was setting up the perimeter, the company commander would be conferring with the battalion commander, the FOs would be arranging the defensive artillery fires (DefCons), and the troops would be digging in. Everyone, including me, carried at least six and sometimes 10 sandbags, and every night enough bunkers were constructed to insure that everyone in the company could have overhead cover. The bunkers each had at least a double layer of sandbags over the layer of logs. On this night we found that some of the bunkers were still usable in the area where we were setting up the CP, so we decided to use them rather than digging new ones, and since they were so large, we decided to sleep in them as well.

"About 2200 it began to rain quite heavily and the bunker I was sleeping in began to leak. At the same time I noticed a sizeable colony of ants was roaming over my fatigues, presumably in search of food. Since no lights were allowed, I got up and crawled outside where I spent the remainder of the night huddled under my poncho against the side of the bunker trying to keep dry, since it was impossible to build a hooch at that time of night. But even being cold and wet, and not allowed to light a cigarette weren't enough to keep me from sleeping some during the night. I was able to stay somewhat dry by staying wrapped in my poncho."

Because of the change of mission and the difficult terrain, the position to which the battalion commander had led Charlie Company was near position "1" in grid square YA 8414. The same problems that affected Charlie Company caused Bravo Company to spend the night south of position "2" in the vicinity of grid square YA 8214 instead of at or near position "Zulu" in grid square YA 8216, as was planned in the original FRAG order. This would have placed the two companies about 1500 meters apart, Bravo on the western side and Charlie to the east.

11 July (Tuesday)

After a wet but uneventful night, battalion elements completed their normal stand-to procedures and were given orders to continue their sweeps. At 0900 the recon platoon

(74) discovered an east-to-west trail crossing the Ia Kreng River at YA 870130. A log bridge had been in-placed at the crossing point. Bravo and Charlie Companies were directed to continue southward and eventually swing their movement in an arc to the east. Soon after departing its previous night's location, Bravo Company came upon an abandoned NVA platoon-sized base camp that contained one body with its equipment, and four skeletons, one of which was booby-trapped. The skeletal remains were estimated to be four-to-five months old. Nearby was a 1½-foot-wide trail running on a 100 degree azimuth that exhibited recent use.

At noon Charlie Company found an abandoned battalion-sized NVA camp at YA 833137. The camp contained many one-man fighting positions, upright bamboo shelters, 22 two-man bunkers, beer cans, tent posts, and remnants of food. The camp was estimated to be five-to-six months old. A little over an hour later (at 1315 hours) Charlie Company discovered two trails at YA 831131, each a foot wide and about a day old, running east and west.

After reporting movement on their flanks, both companies swung east and established separate perimeters about 1000 meters apart amid the wooded and rocky hills; Bravo Company at YA 845119, and Charlie Company further north and east at YA 847132. Work continued throughout the late afternoon as both companies constructed covered bunkers and cleared helicopter landing sites by nightfall. Roger Howse only remembers that Bravo Company's night location was situated on a more prominent hill (Hill 190), among the other smaller hills around them.

PFC Parks' memories of Bravo's night location are very clear. *"When the company stopped for the day, we set up our night position on a lightly wooded hill. The area we were in was surprisingly clear of the thick jungle vegetation I had expected. In training we had been told about the triple canopy, but here the trees were small and spread out, and the sparse ground cover was only about knee-high. The commander set the perimeter up clock fashion using north as 12 o'clock. First Platoon took from 10 to two o'clock; 3rd Platoon had from two to six o'clock; and 2nd Platoon had from six to 10 o'clock. The command group set up in the north-center of the perimeter behind the 1st Platoon headquarters, while the Weapons Platoon set up south of the command group between 2nd and 3rd Platoons. The helicopter landing zone for re-supply was established just south of the 2nd Platoon area. I cut down several trees for our overhead cover in this area.*

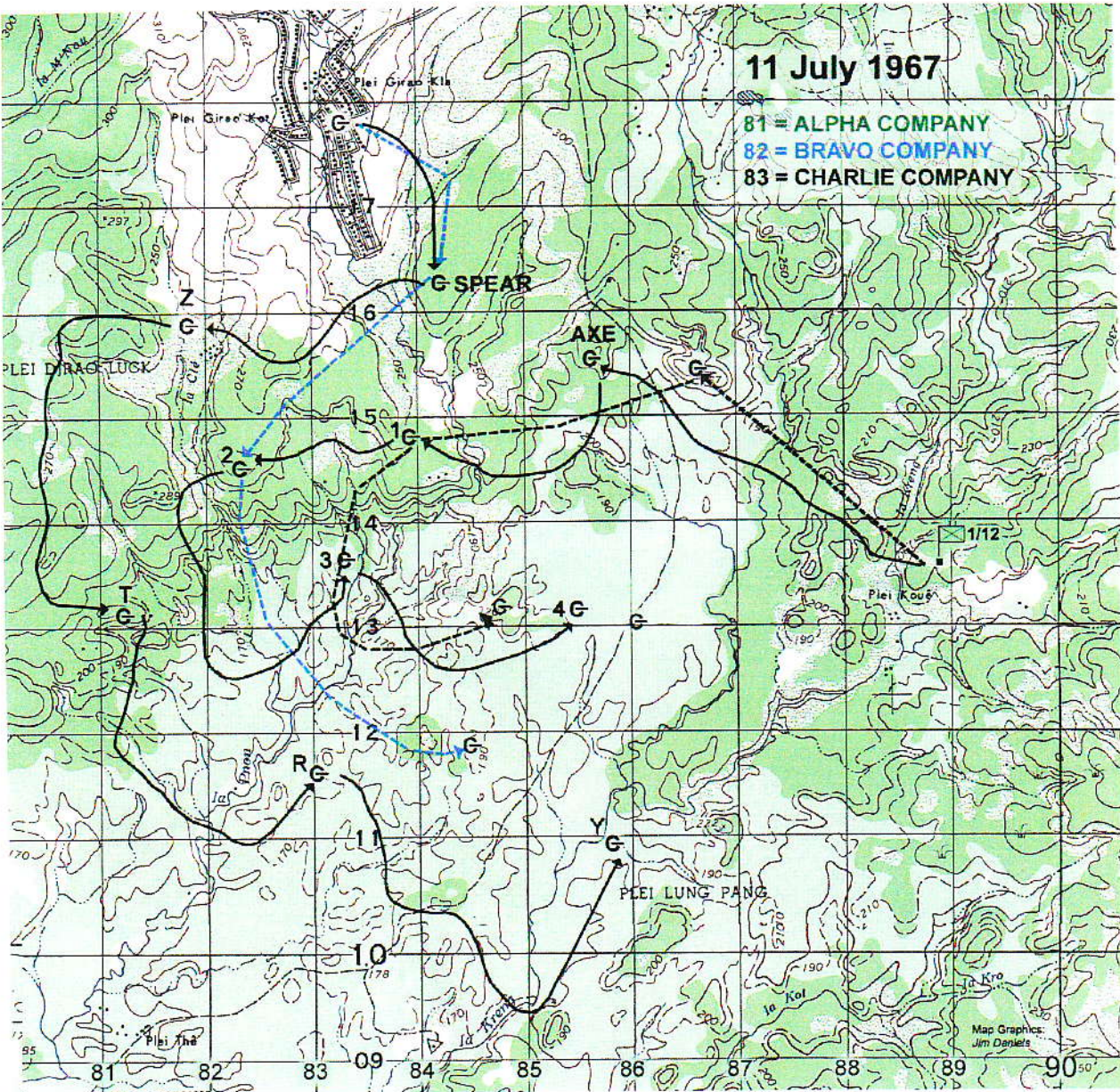
"That night I had my first bout of chills and fever with malaria. At the time I thought I was having a reaction to the halazone tablets I had used to purify my water. It was the first time I had used them and I wasn't sure if they were making me sick or not. This was also the first time I encountered termites. I awoke during the night to hear a strange sound coming from under my air mattress. Turning it over and shining my flashlight on the ground, I discovered the source of the noise -- termites. After squirting nearly two bottles of insect repellent on them, I lay back down figuring that had done the trick. The next time I woke up, my air mattress was flat; the termites had eaten the rubberized coating off the bottom."

Whether or not you believe in fate, luck, or destiny, **PFC John Beckman** of Bravo Company does: *"I joined Bravo Company around the beginning of June 1967. On the 11th of July, during the conduct of a company patrol, I fell backwards and caught my foot between two logs, severely twisting and spraining my ankle. Since it was so late in the day, my commander left me behind with two other men from my squad to help get me to our night location some distance ahead. It was slow moving and we kept thinking we heard movement behind us. After a period of time, we finally arrived at our company's night location, where I was medivaced a short time later. The rest is history. Why I was spared, I have no idea. I don't remember who the other two men were who helped me, nor do I know what happened to them. After my ankle healed, I was transferred to Delta Company."*

LT Easterly: *"During the day's march [Charlie Company] saw no sign of the Arc Light strike. The terrain through which we had been moving was hilly, lightly forested, and covered with ankle-high grass and a few shrubs; movement was relatively easy."*

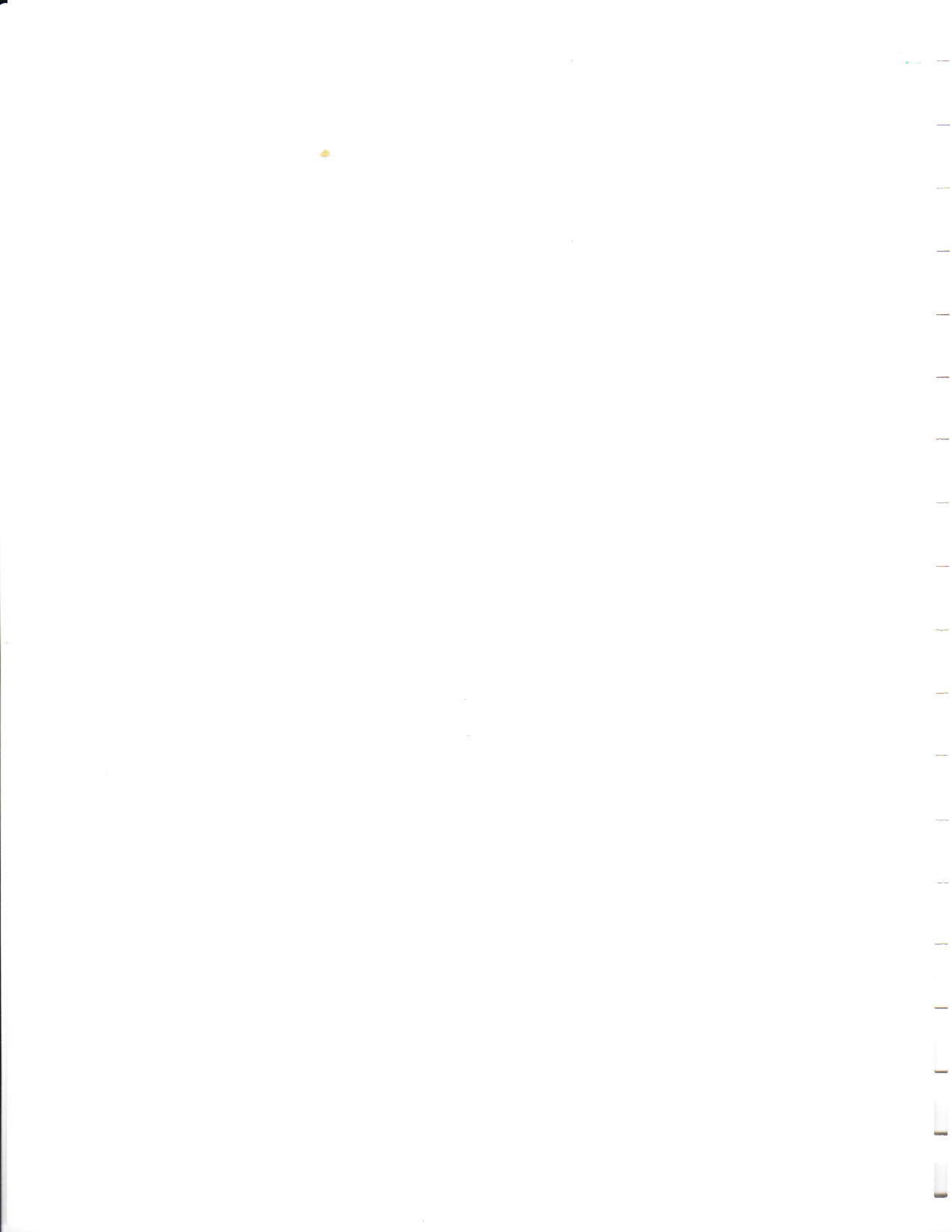
"After traveling southwest most of the day, we gradually turned eastward and then north. We approached our night location from the south for the last few hundred meters. The night location that CPT [Donald] Moore picked wasn't the best. There was a low ridge line to the east about 25-to-30 meters away that was higher than our location. The terrain to the south was also generally higher, as we had walked downhill to get to this location. The main feature that made this position so attractive was the fact that there was a natural helicopter pad on the northwest side of our perimeter. The night passed quietly."

Operation Francis Marion
 Pleiku Province
 Republic of Vietnam



Map courtesy of Jim Daniels.
 Map sheet 6536 III, Plei Ya Bo, 1965, 1:50,000

Tactical information taken from 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry FRAG Order 2-67, dtd 8 July 67, with route overlay for all four days. Dotted lines represent actual routes covered on this date. The "C" symbol with small mark denotes company defensive positions.



PART III
CONTACT

PART III: CONTACT

12 July 1967 (Wednesday)

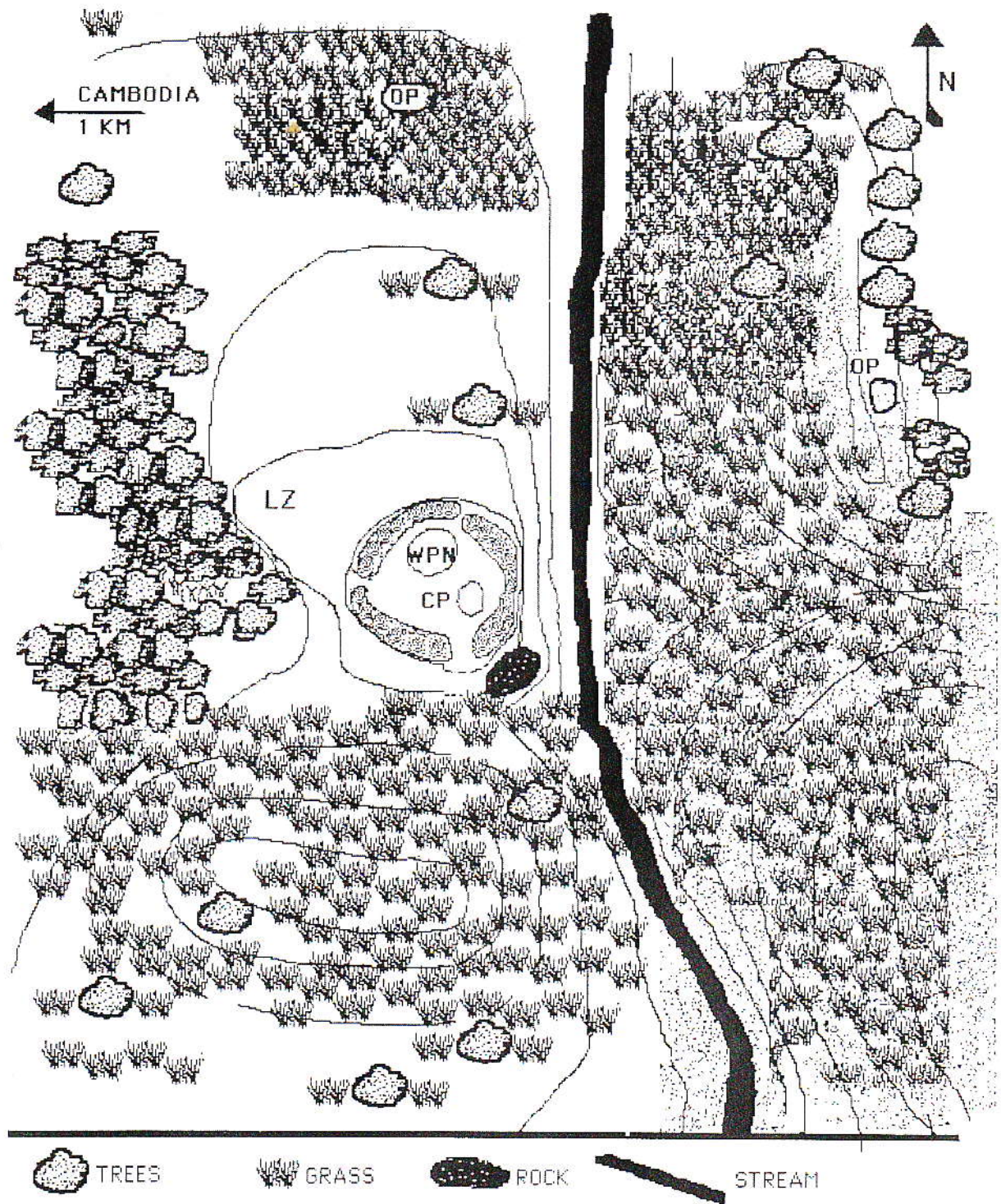
The day began with stand-to under gray, overcast skies, some ground fog, and intermittent drizzle, the taking of the daily malaria pills, rotation of the listening and observation posts, breakfast and cleanup, and the daily sitreps (Banjos) to battalion. **Bravo Company's Banjo** of 69 personnel included the FO from 4/42 Artillery and his two radio-telephone operators (RTOs), four engineers from 1st Platoon, Bravo Company, 4th Engineers, and the four medics attached from Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC).

PFC Parks: *"Bravo Company was up at first light and going through its normal morning routine. I had been issued a bunch of heat tablets when I drew rations before coming to the field, and was using a couple to heat my breakfast meal and make coffee. Watching Halverson prepare his breakfast, I was dumbfounded to see him use a piece of C-4 to heat water in a B-3 cookie can to make cocoa. It was the first time I had ever seen anyone do this. Then I understood what I had been told about not using C-4 back at the brigade trains.*

"The sky was overcast with low clouds, giving the appearance of a light ground fog. We were told that the company was going to stay in place for the day and that the line platoons would be conducting sweeps around the area. The 3rd Platoon was the first to go out on a sweep. As soon as they departed their platoon area, 1st and 2nd Platoons realigned their platoon sectors and filled in the gap in the perimeter defense. As the new guy in Weapons Platoon, I was sent to help man a bunker on the perimeter. Another guy from Weapons Platoon went out with 3rd Platoon to serve as their FO for our mortar section."

LT Easterly: *"We called in [Charlie Company's] strength report (Banjo) as six officers and 75 enlisted men in C Company, with one officer and two enlisted men attached from other units (FOs.) As we listened to the strength from B Company, it was less than ours by about six men."* Company strength had been greatly diminished throughout the battalion due to troop rotations, illness and injury, routine administrative reasons, and the battalion's decision to keep a significant portion of the company's Weapons Platoon in the fire support base. It is estimated that the company strength in the field that day was 69 out of the 130 desired, or about half-strength.

As the morning routines progressed throughout the different company and platoon locations, the battalion commander, LTC Corey Wright, and the S3, MAJ Lawrence Gardner, conferred and worked out the day's operational plan at the fire support base. Because of the ground fog and low clouds (no flight ceiling), orders were transmitted to both Bravo and Charlie Companies and the Recon Platoon to hold their 0700 SPs to the east and to remain in their respective patrol bases. While waiting for more favorable weather conditions, the two line companies were to conduct platoon-sized sweeps around



C. Co. position A.M. July 12, 1967

Map courtesy of Lewis Easterly

their perimeters, while the Recon Platoon was to maintain its screening position on the high ground approximately 2,500 meters to the east.

The first platoon to conduct a sweep that morning came from Charlie Company. At 0749 the 2nd Platoon, under the command of LT Tom Seales, was sent out to the south to sweep in an arc around to the west, then on to the northeast side of the company perimeter. At 0900, approximately an hour into their sweep, 2nd Platoon encountered and engaged 12 NVA at YA 838127, killing three and driving the remainder off to the south toward Bravo Company. At 0920 the 2nd Platoon of Charlie Company reported that they had been observed by an NVA force to the west of them that was moving north; mortar fire was brought against the moving force. At 0958 2nd Platoon reported that enemy forces were still around their position and that they had continued to place mortar and artillery fires forward, to the rear, and on both flanks of their position; 2nd Platoon was unable to move from their position.

LT Easterly: *"The morning of 12 July was foggy and wet. The battalion commander called CPT Donald Moore, our company commander, to give him the orders for the day, which were to 'Remain in place with your company and send out platoon-sized patrols to sweep the area'; Bravo Company orders were the same. CPT Moore decided to use the 'clover leaf' pattern, which was the standard method of sweeping at the time. At about 0745 2nd Platoon departed on their sweep, heading first to the southeast, then turning to the west, then back to the northeast. The entire sweep would probably take about three-to-four hours. Things were relatively normal; I was trying to get a parachute that had been attached to a flare down from a tree that was located in the middle of our position, 1st Platoon had been alerted to prepare for a 0930 departure; some people were washing up and bathing in a creek that ran just east of our location, 1SG Tompkins being one of them (he was setting an example for the men), when suddenly at about 0900 the radio crackled with a message from 2nd Platoon:*

"'6, this 2-6' (Tom Seales), 'This is 6-echo, go' (company RTO). '6-echo, get me 6 actual, over' (Tom Seales). '2-6, this is 6, go' (CPT Moore). 'This is 2-6, I have 10 November Victor Alphas crossing to my front at about 100 yards, I'm going to open fire.' 'This is 6, are you sure?' 'This is 2-6, affirmative.' 'This is 6, go ahead.'

"Within seconds we heard the sounds of small arms fire in the distance. CPT Moore then decided to hold up the 1st Platoon until the situation cleared up some."

At about 0830 Bravo Company sent out its 1st Platoon under the command of 2LT Roger Howse on a sweep similar to the one by Charlie Company. Departing from the company's southeast corner of the perimeter, it would also swing south and then west in an arc. At 0855 hours the 1st Platoon of Bravo Company reported enemy movement to the south of the company perimeter. Shortly thereafter they returned to the patrol base and 3rd Platoon departed on its sweep.

PFC Parks: *"The 1st Platoon hadn't been gone long when they reported suspected NVA movement south of their location. Shortly after that we could hear the sounds of Charlie Company's contact with the enemy. I looked over at our mortar and watched as the gun crew swung the tube around toward the direction of the battle.*

"The next thing we were told was that 3rd Platoon was going to attempt to link up with the Charlie Company element that was in contact. I don't remember exactly how much time went by, but suddenly it seemed like things were beginning to happen in rapid succession. Third Platoon reported that they had been engaged by a separate enemy force, and that they were in trouble and needed help."

Then at 0845 an observation post on the northeast side of Charlie Company observed approximately 30 NVA crossing its front. Security was heightened along the northeastern side of the Charlie Company perimeter, and mortar and artillery fire were called in.

LT Easterly: *"About 20 minutes later (0920), Tom Seales (2-6) was back on the radio saying that he had NVA to his right as well as his front. A few minutes later he called saying that he saw NVA to his left, but so far he had taken no casualties. He was directing artillery fire with what he felt was good effect and his platoon was giving a good account of itself. He estimated that he had hit some of the NVA, but he wasn't sure how many. About thirty minutes later (0958) his radio message was: 'This is 2-6, I'm surrounded.'"*

Regarding the fight in which 2nd Platoon was involved, the following narrative was provided to Lew Easterly by the 2nd Platoon leader, **LT Tom Seales:** *"We spotted the first group of soldiers (NVA) to our front, eight or 10, but they moved out of the area before we could engage them. I don't think that they spotted us. We took up a defensive posture in a natural bowl between two of the low rolling hills. My left flank squad spotted another group of six walking down a path that paralleled our route of march. The squad leader asked for and received permission to engage. The squad opened up, and the NVA dropped. They did not return fire effectively. When the engagement ceased, I sent the squad on a sweep to find bodies, weapons, or blood trails. They found nothing (buck fever, maybe?). By the time the squad returned from the sweep, we had spotted more NVA to our right flank and started receiving sporadic small arms fire. At this point I spotted an enemy soldier moving from one tree to another. When he was in the open, I fired my M-16 and saw him fall. It was the only confirmed hit that I personally made during the war. In the meantime, the NVA to our front had returned, as well as more on our left flank and rear. We were in a good defensive position; small arms fire was ineffective against us. Then we began receiving incoming mortar fire and started taking casualties."*

As soon as Charlie Company made contact, battalion notified Bravo Company to be alert for enemy forces to their north and to make radio contact with Charlie Company. A short time later 3rd Platoon of Bravo Company was instructed by battalion to establish radio communications with Charlie Company and to attempt to link up with Charlie Company's

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2nd Platoon. The Recon Platoon closely monitored its radios, trying to get a clear understanding of what was happening in the valley below them.

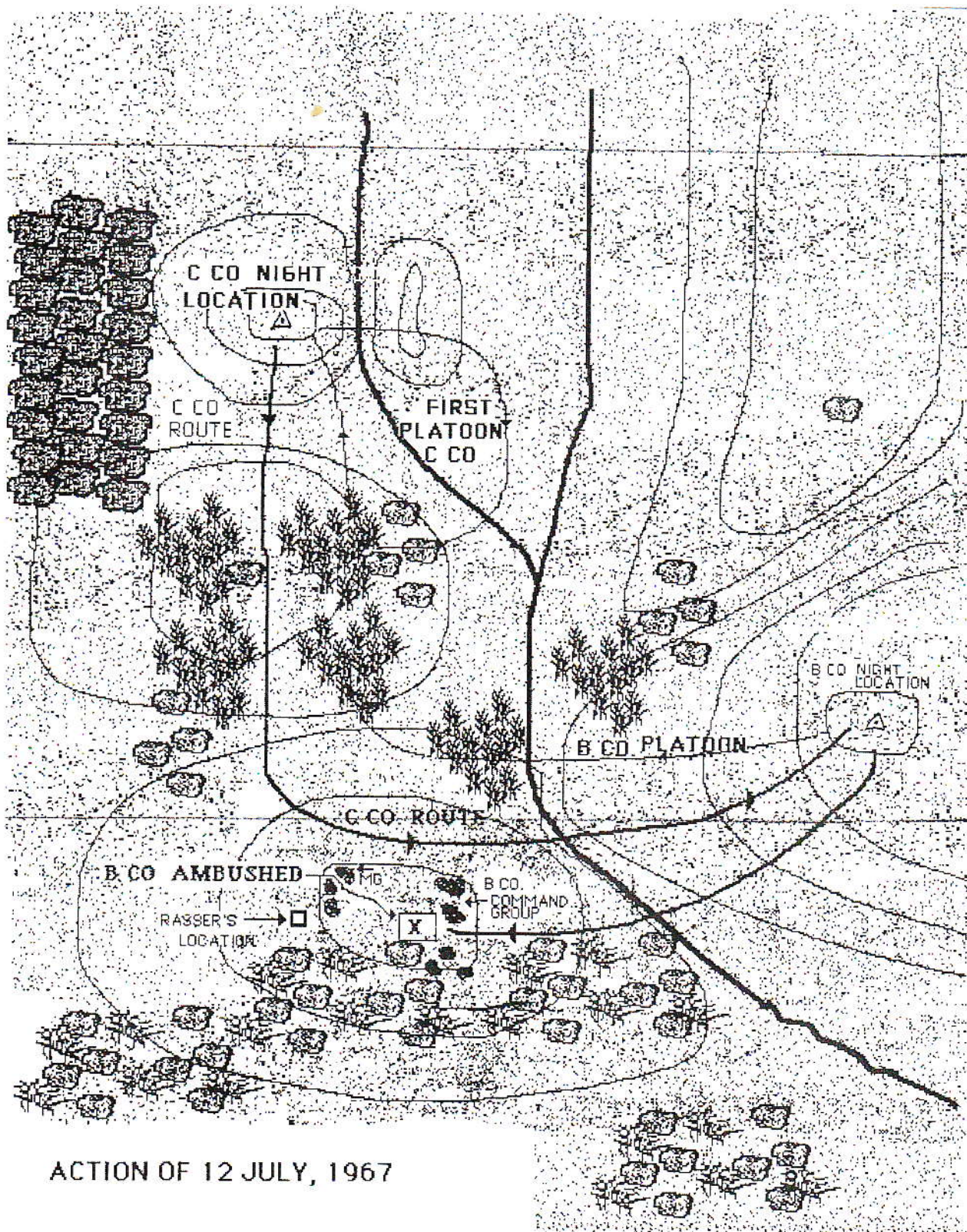
At approximately 1015, the decision was made to pull Alpha Company out of the fire support base and insert them into LZ Yankee west of Bravo Company's location, and to bring in additional ground forces to help man the fire support base perimeter. The S3 sent an urgent message to the base camp to round up every man in the battalion and get them out to the field on the first available aircraft, then contacted the Recon Platoon and ordered them back to the fire support base ASAP.

SSG Hill: *"I remember that morning clearly after all these years. First light and morning had come with a kind of quietness that we would sometimes experience after a night of light rain; just the sound of rain water still dripping off of the vegetation and an occasional animal making its early morning calls. Being up on the side of a hill looking down on the lowlands to our west, all the Recon Platoon could see was ground fog. It was so quiet that the men spoke in soft voices while they moved around, some eating their morning meal, others just having their morning cigarette and a cup of coffee. We were all pleased when the Lieutenant told us that we were under orders from battalion to hold in place until the weather lifted. All we had to do was swap our listening posts with observation posts and have a second cup of coffee. Not too much time had gone by, when suddenly out of the fog off to our west erupted the heart-stopping and head-snapping sound of gunfire.*

"We had not heard any radio traffic on the command channel about anyone preparing to fire their weapons, so the dreaded word 'ambush' flashed through our minds. I remember thinking, 'Somebody is in deep shit down there.' Everyone looked over at our platoon leader as he sat next to the radio listening for the word: Who is it and how bad is it? The platoon RTO relayed bits of information to us as he heard them. Without being told to do so, everyone immediately became more aware of the sounds around us, wondering what was going to happen next. Some guys began talking quietly amongst themselves, wondering what we were waiting for and why weren't we being told to saddle up and get down there and help. The firing seemed to taper off after a while, but then when the four-deuce mortars from battalion picked up where the small arms had left off, we knew this was serious.

"When the order from battalion came in at 1150 for us to break camp and return to the fire support base, we were completely mystified. The TOC hadn't told us why, only to get back to their location ASAP. We quickly saddled-up, organized point and flank security, and headed off in an easterly direction. We estimated that we were about two thousand meters out and had maybe an hour's walk ahead of us."

LT Easterly: *"While all this was going on, I was checking on the perimeter, making sure that we had observation posts out and generally trying to do my job, which was to let the company commander run the fight and not have to worry about the other details. The battalion commander had also been busy trying to figure out what the big picture was and*



ACTION OF 12 JULY, 1967

Map courtesy of Lewis Easterly.

to coordinate the activities of both Bravo and Charlie Companies. This was the contact with the enemy we had been looking for when we started the search-and-destroy mission, and everyone wanted it to pay off.

"The battalion commander was monitoring the radio traffic from both Bravo and Charlie Companies, and one of the platoons from Bravo Company said that they felt that they could link up with Tom Seales's platoon. The battalion commander then attached them to our company and told them to come up on our push. LT Nootz, the platoon leader of this platoon, immediately began talking to CPT Moore. He said that he could hear the firing from our 2nd Platoon close by and that he was moving toward them.

"As the 3rd Platoon from Bravo Company changed their direction of movement to the northeast in an effort to link up with our 2nd Platoon, they began to call in. Their radio messages were basically as follows: 'I'm making some progress.' 'I'm beginning to get some small arms fire.' 'I'm beginning to take some automatic weapons fire, but we are still pushing on toward your 2nd Platoon.' And then the last message we received from them was: 'I'm taking heavy automatic weapons fire and I'm beginning to take some indirect fire (mortar fire).' LT Nootz then went back on Bravo Company's push and we were out of contact with him. [At this time LT Nootz and his platoon were in the vicinity of YA 837126 on the western edge of a small rock-covered knoll.]

"By this time, LTC Wright had made some decisions based on what he could see from the air and was trying to get the two platoons that were in heavy contact extracted. He ordered Bravo Company to saddle-up and move out toward their platoon on a given azimuth. At the same time he ordered us to link up with our 2nd Platoon. As soon as we could get 'saddled-up,' the company lined up heading directly south. As they were the smallest platoon (14 men), Jimmy Johnson's 1st Platoon took the lead; and the 3rd Platoon was split in half, one half on the left flank under the control of their platoon sergeant, SGT England, and the other half on the right flank under their platoon leader, Chuck Harmon. The Weapons Platoon brought up the rear with the command group between 1st and Weapons Platoons. The command group consisted of the two company RTO's, CPT Donald Moore, myself, a 4.2 inch mortar FO, and Lud Sells, the artillery FO and his RTO.

"As we moved, CPT Moore was on the battalion net talking with LTC Wright, who was in the air trying to direct our movement and keep us on the correct line of march toward 2nd Platoon. The terrain was just small rolling hills. We would go up one hill, then down, then up another and down again. The grass was about shin-high with very little undergrowth. The visibility was fairly good; you could see maybe 35 or 40 meters unless there were bushes in the way.

"After having gone about 150 or 200 meters, we could hear firing to our front, but then it kind of slacked off a little bit. The artillery FO, Lud Sells, kept walking the 105mm right in front of us. I looked up and saw a smoke round, brilliant red smoke, hit right in the middle of 1st Platoon. Since I was running the company radio net, I told everybody to hold in place

until the FO could make another adjustment. As we halted, everyone began bunching up. Both of the flank security columns were only about 10 or 15 yards from the command group. When I saw this, I told them over the radio to move the flankers out a little bit. I had no sooner told them to spread it out when the right flank began receiving mortar fire rather close. As soon as the left flank column went over a little knoll about 25 yards out, they began receiving automatic weapons fire. I looked to the west toward the right flank and could see a lot of people moving back and forth about 100 meters away.

"About this time some mortars began falling in the front of the column. CPT Moore decided that we had come far enough and radioed battalion that he was returning to the company's night location. This decision saved most of our lives. As we headed back in, we were hoping that the North Vietnamese had not re-occupied it while we were gone. As soon as we arrived, we began receiving a little mortar fire and could hear small arms fire popping over our heads. That's all it took to get us back in our holes.

"It was about this time that Tom Seales radioed that he thought he saw a chance to bring the 2nd Platoon in. As soon as Tom finished his radio communications, he instructed his platoon sergeant to 'Take the point and get us the fuck out of here. The medic and I will follow with the wounded as fast as we can.' With that, the 2nd Platoon began its movement back toward the company. The platoon came in from our south, bringing both of their wounded. I recall that they came up into our position through a gully, and just at the head of the gully was a large rock, probably the size of a small truck. One of our machine gunners named Willie Jordan jumped up on top of this rock with about six hundred rounds of machine gun ammo draped over his shoulders and, holding his M-60 on his hip, covered the platoon as they came into our location.

"As soon as the last man closed, it seemed like the volume of fire, that is, the noise from the south, just became terrific. Artillery was falling all around and we had an Air Force forward air controller above us who was directing an air strike to our south. We got the word over the battalion radio net that Bravo Company had made contact, which means that they were now in a fight themselves. This was why the noise suddenly got so much louder."

As the 2nd Platoon was passing through the Charlie Company perimeter, **Tom Seales** remembers thinking it was about this time that Bravo Company entered the kill zone. "The volume of fire that had been fairly heavy became a roar. It was like the sound of a Vulcan mini gun. You couldn't hear the sound of individual rounds, just that horrible roar."

PFC Parks: "The commander then sent 1st Platoon out to attempt to link up with 3rd Platoon. The 1st Platoon departed the perimeter through the landing zone area and headed off in a southwesterly direction. They hadn't been gone long when they also reported they were under attack by a force separate from that with which 3rd Platoon was engaged. It was at about this time we began hearing our artillery firing in support of our two platoons and Charlie Company."

LT Roger Howse, the platoon leader of Bravo Company's 1st Platoon, recalls the company's initial response to 3rd Platoon's plight: *"When 3rd Platoon began radioing their situation - sightings here, sightings there, surrounded - my platoon, 1st Platoon, was sent out to relieve them. It wasn't very long before we started receiving incoming. At first, we thought it was our artillery, but I believe now it was enemy mortars."*

PFC Parks: *"In response to 1st Platoon coming in contact with the enemy, the company commander then took 2nd Platoon, the company's attached artillery FO section, and a Weapons Platoon FO, and departed the perimeter. They were headed for 1st Platoon and eventually 3rd Platoon. This left about eight or nine of us with our one 81mm mortar under the command of SFC Hunter in the perimeter."*

LT Howse: *About that time the CO, and I believe the 2nd Platoon, left the night location and headed in our direction. They advanced ahead of my platoon. The CO called for my platoon to break contact and move around to his right flank. I remember saying something to him about exposing his left flank, but he said to move. As we maneuvered around his right flank, we crested a hill, and that is where we started taking a beating from small arms fire and mortars.*

"I was wounded early on in the leg and stomach as my platoon crested the hill after we had moved from the CO's left flank to his right flank, but adrenaline has a way of keeping you going. The action was pretty fluid and intense and it was difficult at times to know all the players and where they were - both friendly and enemy. But at some point we were being overwhelmed, so we broke contact and headed back to the night location. My memory is vague from that point on; I did not know how many men I had lost, but I do remember several heading back with us. The enemy force was good-sized, but we did not encounter 'waves of them.'

"One memory has remained particularly clear - one of the troops said he had a big headache. I checked him out and found he had a large piece of shrapnel in his head - he made it back to the night location and was evacuated - I saw him later in Japan - PFC Roy James.

"I was not aware of LT Rasser and his platoon. I vaguely remember a fleeting glimpse of the commander sitting on a rock, wounded. I want to say I heard him audibly giving commands, but I do not know if that was reality or tricks with my memory. I have no recollection of the time frame of the action. We could have been at it for hours; I just don't remember. I walked out with what was left of my platoon to the night location, by what direction and when I don't remember. The next thing I recall was somebody checking me over, so I was not aware of the condition of my platoon members. I was eventually checked out and evacuated to the 4th Med and on to the 18th Surgical Hospital.

"One thing I have never forgotten is the path of the bullet - - before it entered my stomach, it passed through a full M-16 magazine and creased a grenade on my pistol belt. It was not my time!

"In rethinking the situation now - we were up against a superior force then; the command group was down; I, as the 1st Platoon leader, was walking but wounded; we were taking casualties - the obvious conclusion was to disengage and regroup to fight another day. I no longer question that course of action. Rationalizing or not, I believe it was the right decision to make. No matter how new I was or how 'green,' my job was to lead my platoon.

"It makes a person wonder - should we have stayed and fought to the death? Those days and months following 12 July 1967, I thought much about the withdrawal action. I'm not saying we turned tail and ran. I remember that in spite of the circumstances, we had an orderly, yet hasty, withdrawal back to the night location."

PFC Al Thiel, also a member of 1st Platoon, remembers: *"My memories of July 12th are in segments, and actual periods of time are not very clear. Many of the guys with whom I had served had already rotated, and there were a lot of new faces. I can't remember if we moved out and then came under fire, or if we moved out in response to fire; I really think it was the former. My squad was at the rear of the platoon column. The terrain was a series of small hills, which I thought was unusual compared to what I had seen previously.*

"As the small arms fire began, the initial roar was unbelievable. I was with two or three other guys (I can no longer remember who they were) who found cover in a pocket between these small hills or mounds. Rounds were hitting all around us and mortar rounds were also hitting very close, as if they had our location marked. At times I would look over the top of these small hills, but I couldn't tell where any of our men were. We were able to see NVA running across to our left; luckily they were not running at us, so we fired at them, but couldn't tell if we hit any or not. Shortly thereafter we moved to a new location and continued firing at the enemy.

"While we were on the ground, someone came running by and said we (1st Platoon) were moving back to our positions at the night location. I don't know how long we stayed in this position, but the next thing I remember is that I and another guy were carrying (actually dragging) a wounded but conscious guy back to the perimeter. As we were doing this, I called out to another guy to help us, but he kept running. I don't remember where we picked up the wounded guy, but I think he was probably one of my squad. Before I realized it, we were at the night location and in a foxhole (I really have no idea how long it took us to get there). It seemed like there were so few of us who managed to make it back. I don't remember when we were relieved, but we spent the night there with Alpha and Charlie Companies."

PFC Ed Moody, a member of the portion of Bravo's Weapons Platoon in the field, recalls, "The morning of the 12th began for me as I sat around talking with Nathan Henry. As members of the Weapons Platoon, when we weren't in a firebase, we were just another rifle platoon with the same duties. We had already eaten breakfast and had received our daily briefing. At one point I remember CPT Rushton asking me if I had any shaving cream he could use (he had run out), so I loaned him mine. We were having some 'stand-down' time while 3rd Platoon was making its sweep. We weren't doing anything special, just our ordinary routine. Nathan and I were talking and listening to the company radio (Nathan was the commander's RTO), when we heard LT Nootz call in that he had run into some NVA."

PFC Parks: "About five minutes later 2nd Platoon and the command group became engaged with the enemy. Someone must have called for fire because we fired all the ammo we had, about 40 mortar rounds. Once we were out of ammo, SFC Hunter told us we were going to go out and try to help the engaged platoons. We left everything except for our personal weapons and ammunition. We departed the perimeter like the other platoons ahead of us and went out through the landing zone. Once we were clear of the perimeter, SFC Hunter put us on line and moved us out to the west. We hadn't gone far when we began to draw enemy fire. Dropping to the ground, we tried to move forward using fire and movement. As the enemy fire increased, SFC Hunter realized that we were not making any headway and ordered us back to the company defensive position and patrol base. Using hand grenades as covering fire, we broke contact with the enemy and began withdrawing. For some unknown reason, the enemy forces allowed us to withdraw back to our prepared positions. As soon as we arrived at the patrol base, SFC Hunter organized us into a defensive posture and had us occupy the inner command bunkers in a smaller perimeter."

PFC Moody: "I remember that, as we moved out of the patrol base and in the direction of the company, we walked up and down several small hills, when suddenly we were climbing one that was bigger than the others. Someone began yelling at the Weapons Platoon to 'move up, move up!' I moved forward quickly and some of the Weapons Platoon was with me. As we got to the top of the hill, all Hell broke loose. From this point on, my memories are kind of mixed up. I remember a lot of guys were getting hit, some new guys I didn't even know. Mortar rounds were dropping in all over the place, bullets were flying, and people were yelling. I remember someone screaming, 'Don't let me die!' You could see the NVA running all around us.

"Time had no meaning. I have no idea how long it took for all of this to happen. One minute I was alone and wounded (I had been hit by mortar shrapnel), the next I was with four or five guys, one of whom had a radio. We were trying to make contact with a helicopter flying overhead. We wanted to have them call in some artillery fire around us to help. As soon as we began popping smoke to mark our location, enemy mortar rounds rained down on us. Then next thing I knew, there were only two of us (the rest were dead), then just me. I was all alone.

"I could still hear firing around me, but I couldn't see anyone. By this time I had been hit a second time; shot in the arm. I looked downhill off to my left and saw two or three guys running by, headed back the way we had come. I could still hear some guys screaming for help, begging anyone not to let them die. There wasn't anything I could do, so I began crawling off in the direction I thought would take me back to our patrol base.

"I don't know how long it took me, but eventually I made it back to where we had started. It was pure luck; I didn't have a compass or anything. I remember a medic coming out to help me into the perimeter. He wanted to give me a shot of morphine for my pain, but I told him no. I wanted to be able to fight if we had to. He patched me up, and that is about all I remember until I was in the 18th Evac Hospital.

"I recall, while I was in the hospital, talking with the Lieutenant who had tried to fly in during the battle to replace CPT Rushton after he had been killed. LT Case also came by to see me, and I think the battalion commander came by as well."

PFC Parks: *"Shortly after returning to the patrol base, an OH-13 helicopter flew over and dropped several cases of M-16 ammo to us. SFC Hunter then had a couple of guys go around to all the unoccupied bunkers and collect all the equipment they could find and bring it back to our positions. This included Claymore mines, which we re-set, and ammo which we re-distributed. Other than a few helicopters, one of the eerie things was the marked absence of Air Force aircraft from the battle. (It wasn't until several years later that I found out that the Air Force had grounded all their aircraft due to weather.)*

"I can remember treating a couple of the wounded, but cannot remember who they were. I do not remember being fired on by the enemy once we were back in the patrol base, or if we were fired on, it was so poorly aimed that we never noticed. I had lost my watch in the engagement earlier, thus I had no idea how long we waited for relief to arrive. I saw no one from any of the line platoons return to the company patrol base, nor do I remember Charlie Company showing up. I do remember Alpha Company arriving and filling our positions. The Alpha Company medics checked out our wounded. One of the medics redressed my wound by taping down the skin flap and splinting my left index finger, then he gave me some aspirin for my fever.

"Once the relief forces were in place, I was placed on an OP/LP team with Crawford and another man and positioned outside the western side of the perimeter. Late in the afternoon I suffered another bout of fever and chills. Just before sundown, I was brought back into the perimeter to the Alpha Company CP to see their medic. I was told that since the last helicopter had departed for the day, I would have to wait until the next morning to be sent back to the battalion aid station. I spent the rest of the night in the rain on the LP wrapped in my poncho. I shook so bad during night that I thought I was going to bite my tongue off if I wasn't careful. The next morning I was evacuated to the brigade trains where my wound was treated and sutured. Treatment for my malaria didn't begin until I

finally reached the 5th Convalescent Center in Cam Rahn Bay, after being passed through the 4th Medical Detachment at Camp Enari.”

Reports come from three other Bravo Company survivors: SP4 Alberto Lopez and PFC Charles W. Moors, riflemen from the 2nd Platoon, and PFC John Stroud, a company medic. An *Ivy Leaves* reporter, SP4 Robert Boudreaux, tracked the battalion down looking for story and published the following story in the 30 July 1967 edition.

SP4 Lopez started by telling the reporter how quiet the night of the 11th had been and how the morning of the 12th began bleak and overcast. The reporter called it an omen of events to come. Continuing, Lopez said: *“Our 3rd Platoon went on a sweep to link up with Charlie Company. They ran into heavy small arms fire and were pinned down.*

“Our company commander called for the 2nd Platoon to go out and help the 3rd Platoon break contact. They too came under heavy small arms and sniper fire, but were able to pull back far enough to be joined by the remainder of the company. We then moved on line and prepared to go after the 3rd Platoon, when suddenly ‘Charlie’s’ mortars began falling all around us.

“I have never seen anything like it in my life. Everywhere we turned there were mortars falling. Charlie seemed to be firing on us from all sides. Somehow Moors and I fought our way back to the patrol base.”

SP4 Lopez told the reporter that as they fought their way out of the hail of enemy mortars and bullets, the two men stopped to aid their wounded buddies and helped them back to their patrol base. **PFC Moors:** *“There were wounded everywhere, most of the guys were getting hit from the shrapnel. I don’t know how the two of us made it like we did. I guess somebody up there likes us.”*

The reporter related how the two men fired magazine after magazine of ammunition at the enemy as they moved from bush to bush. **SP4 Lopez:** *“Charlie was getting ready to assault and we were firing as fast as we could. When we got back to the patrol base, there were already a lot of the guys back. A lot of them were wounded and the medics were calling in ‘dust-offs.’ There was a medic [PFC Stroud] who must have been some kind of superman. He was everywhere pulling the wounded into the perimeter, treating them and working to keep them from going into shock.”*

The reporter then switched to Charlie Company and their efforts to reach Bravo. The reporter related how Charlie Company, discarding its gear in an effort to speed to the rescue of Bravo Company, arrived at Bravo’s patrol base a few hours later and relieved the battle-weary men. **PFC Moors:** *“Those guys don’t know how good they looked. When they came in I guess ‘Charlie’ figured we were too much for him, and never assaulted our position.”*

Boudreaux's interview of PFC Stroud [the medic SP4 Lopez talked about] began with some background information leading up to the battle on the 12th. **PFC Stroud** began his story by telling the reporter that when his platoon leader [Roger Howse] was hit in the leg by an enemy bullet during the initial phase of the contact, he rushed over to aid him. Off to his right another man had been hit by mortar shrapnel. *"It all happened so fast, I didn't have time to think,"* said PFC Stroud. Disregarding the intense enemy fire, the "Doc" ran from wounded soldier to wounded soldier, treating each man and moving the more severely injured ones back to the company's patrol base to be evacuated. PFC Stroud recalled: *"Charlie had us surrounded and he kept dropping mortars wherever we turned."*

Continuing, the reporter related that PFC Stroud and the remaining members of Bravo Company, while under continual enemy fire, struggled to return to their patrol base. Boudreaux wrote how, as the battle raged around PFC Stroud, he steadfastly tended Bravo's wounded soldiers. It wasn't until Charlie Company arrived that the dust-offs could safely begin to land and start evacuating the wounded and bring PFC Stroud the replacement medical supplies that he so desperately needed. The *Ivy Leaves* reporter concluded his interview by saying that it was only after the survivors of Bravo Company were finally evacuated back to the fire support base that PFC Stroud allowed himself to relax.

Colonel Birch: *"...At about 1145 Bravo Company came under heavy attack as it moved to try to relieve its trapped platoon. Around noon the Bravo Company commander, CPT Brian W. Rushton, was badly wounded, and the artillery FO, 1LT Fred Bragg, assumed temporary command, as he simultaneously tried to coordinate artillery fire and the efforts of an Air Force forward air controller who had arrived on the scene to direct air strikes. The situation in Bravo Company had disintegrated quickly.*

"The battalion commander, LTC Wright, who was attempting to control the battle from his C&C helicopter over the scene, sent the battalion's 4.2 Mortar Platoon leader, 1LT David Jennings, in an OH-13 observation helicopter into the battle to replace the wounded company commander. While attempting to land, the helicopter pilot was severely wounded. 1LT Jennings somehow managed to land the damaged helicopter at a nearby Special Forces camp.

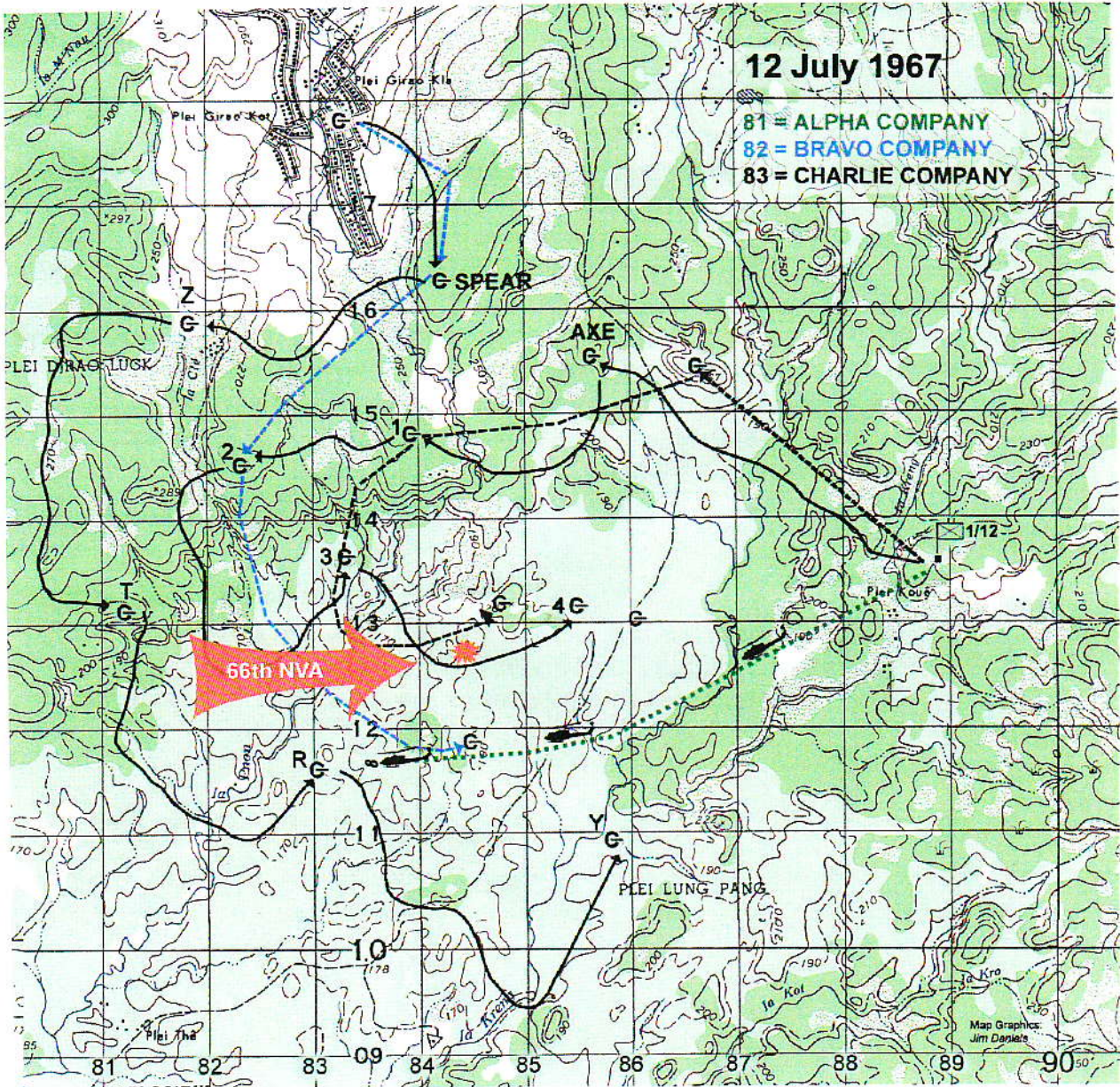
"Then to compound an already disastrous situation, it was learned that the FO, the acting company commander, had also been wounded; the battalion commander had to leave the battle site as his helicopter was almost ready to run out of fuel; and the forward air controller asked for a 'check fire' on the artillery in order to have his supporting aircraft deliver their ordinance without endangering the pilots. In a controversial move, Brigade totally stopped the artillery fire, but the FO was unable to fine tune the air strikes. Attempts to mark the Bravo Company perimeter with smoke grenades were met with a deluge of enemy mortar and rocket rounds. In an effort to further confuse the situation, the NVA soldiers also popped smoke grenades. The 2nd Brigade Commander, COL Charles Sniffin, flew into the battle area and lifted the check fire on the artillery."

LT Easterly: *"About this time, right at the edge of our perimeter where the helicopter landing pad had been cut, I saw a North Vietnamese stand up and look at us over the edge of the little drop-off that was there; it was probably 35 yards from where I was. One of the men on the perimeter also saw him, and grabbed his rifle and tried to shoot him, but couldn't. The rifle's safety was on, and he didn't have a round in the chamber because of safety regulations. (Those were the standing orders at that time, but it was also the **last** time we didn't keep a round in the chamber in Charlie Company.)*

"Once we saw the one NVA, we knew we had NVA very close to our perimeter, and in fact this man had probably been sent in as a decoy in an attempt to try and lure some of us into chasing him so that we could be ambushed on that side of the perimeter. Because the artillery fire was falling so heavily to our south, they diverted an A1E Sky Raider over to our location where he began dropping bombs to our west. We tried to control him as he brought his bombs in closer and closer; you could hear the shrapnel cutting the trees overhead. Maurice Belknap, one of the Weapons Platoon men, was standing behind a bunker when he suddenly looked like he had been hit by a truck. What happened was that a piece of shrapnel from a bomb had hit him in the shoulder and literally picked him up and flipped him over. We called in a dust-off to evacuate the wounded. In fact this dust-off had come in to pick up the two wounded men from 2nd Platoon, and in the excitement had left one of their crewmen behind. When they came back to get him, PFC Sweska, one of our medics, was able to load Belknap and get him out also.

"The firing to our south was by now so heavy and intense that it was a continual roar. As the aircraft would come in to make their bombing runs, they were so low you could hear the NVA fire their rifles at the aircraft coming over. The firing eventually died down at about 1400. We got an order to move out to the south to see what we could do to aid Bravo Company."

Operation Francis Marion
 Pleiku Province
 Republic of Vietnam



Map Courtesy of Jim Daniels.
 Map sheet 6536 III, Plei Ya Bo, 1965, 1:50,000

Tactical information taken from 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry FRAG Order 2-67, dtd 8 July 67, with route overlay for all four days, and the Francis Marion After Action Report.

PART IV

RESCUE

PART IV: RESCUE

12 July 1967 (Wednesday)

LT Easterly: *"As soon as we could 'saddle up,' we moved out. It was about 1415 before we actually moved; our direction of travel was generally to the south. We left our packs and traveled as lightly-loaded as we could. You can tell just how lightly-loaded we were; I normally smoked three packs a day, but on this trip I took only one pack. The one thing we didn't forget was plenty of ammunition; we figured we were walking straight into a fight.*

"We traveled directly south for maybe 300 or 400 meters. Again it was the same formation as before; Jimmy Johnson's 1st Platoon in the lead, 2nd Platoon on the right, 3rd Platoon on the left, Weapons Platoon bringing up the rear, and the command group in the middle. About 400 meters out, 1st Platoon opened fire on something. I high-tailed it up to the front of the column to see what it was and found one dead NVA."

Easterly related this same story as told to him in 1994 by SP4 Mel Perttunen, one of the survivors from Bravo Company. Talking about Bravo Company's attempt to rescue their cut-off 3rd Platoon, **SP4 Perttunen** said, *"We went out in three files following the same route the 3rd Platoon had taken. Stupid! We crossed a little creek and walked up a hill. When I got to the top, there was a rockpile there where I stopped. I could see a man standing off in front of me; he had a brush hat on. Gomez said to me, 'Mel, is that one of our guys?' I yelled out, 'Hey!' He turned sideways and I could see an AK on his back. I dropped an M-79 round on him and Gomez opened up with his M-16. Right then all Hell broke loose. There were green tracers all over the place, B-40s screaming in, and mortars were dropping everywhere.*

"I was pinned down right behind the rocks. There was a machine gun team pinned down with me. Their names were Willie Fullilove and Pernel Claud. They were the only black machine gun team in the company. There was another guy with us who was wounded in the shoulder and he was hurting bad. Bullets and shrapnel were hitting the rocks all the time. (I kept getting rock fragments out of my face for years afterward when I shaved.)

"LT Gary Rasser came running back past me and he came up on me so fast that I nearly shot him. I couldn't see anything to shoot with my M-79, so I had my .45 out. I almost shot him with it. He didn't say anything; he and some other guys just headed down to the bottom of the hill. I turned around to the machine gunners and said, 'Let's get out of here; those guys are pulling back!' They both just looked at me with big white eyes and didn't say anything. I think that if I had left, they would have shot me.

"I could see Rasser and the others down at the bottom of the hill, so I turned to the machine gunners and said, 'I'm going down there to see what's going on, I'll be right back.' I pulled on the other guy's arm and he screamed, so I let go. I headed down to the bottom of the hill. Lieutenant Rasser and the rest started back toward our night location, and I

went with them. I had the safety off my M-79 and it went off right by my foot, but the grenade didn't explode.

"I don't remember much about the trip back to the patrol base. When we got there, they put me out on the bunker line to watch. I kept asking, 'Where is Thompson?' but nobody knew. After awhile he came staggering in with just his pants and boots on and a bloody bayonet in his hand. Later another company started to come in, and when they saw me sitting on the bunker, they just stopped. I looked at them and got a beer out of my pack and drank it; that's when I started to relax. The next morning I found out that I was wounded. It was just a small wound where a rock fragment had been driven under the skin of my shoulder in the back."

LT Easterly: "At about this time we received an order from LTC Wright to change our direction of movement and swing toward the southeast and then to the east. We had only gone about 75 or 80 meters in the new direction when I heard someone yell, 'Hey LT Easterly, get over here!' What they had found to the right of the column were three black soldiers stretched out on the ground with no weapons around them. Their bodies were lying in amongst a small pile of rocks with a large quantity of expended machine gun brass around them; I would say between 200 and 300 rounds, maybe more. All three men had been shot at close range in the head. I told our men to get their 'dog tags' and move on.

"As we moved on, we came across an 81mm mortar tube that had apparently dropped by Bravo Company. There was also a dead NVA there, and I had one of the men standing there with me strip him of all his identification for intelligence purposes. By this time I was close to the 1st Platoon at the head of our column. I stayed where I was and let the company command group catch up to me. We didn't know it, but at this time we were about 30 meters to the north of where the main action with Bravo Company had taken place that day. We were going down a hill headed directly east. 1st Platoon had already reached the top of the next rise and was making a turn to the left on a new azimuth as I jumped across a small creek about two feet wide. Looking back at CPT Moore, I thought for a moment that he was getting ready to shoot me, as he was suddenly grabbing and swinging his rifle toward me. Quickly turning and looking where he was focused, I saw two NVA running down a gully away from us. It seemed like 1,000 to 2,000 rounds were 'popped off' at those two NVA in about 15 seconds. Nobody bothered to go after them because we were scared of heading down into that draw to check for KIAs or WIAs and getting ambushed.

"[At approximately 1445] we arrived at the Bravo Company night position, which was very flat and next to a large open area about 250 meters across. The Bravo Company survivors were sitting there in the rain, while one or two sniper rounds were being fired at them from a tree line about 250 meters away on the far side of the helicopter landing pad. The word was that Alpha Company was being airlifted into a location fairly close by [LZ Yankee, vicinity YA 835117] and should be coming in soon to meet us. We moved our command group into the center of the position where the company command group from Bravo

Company had been set up. I then went around the perimeter and made sure it was secure. Coming back to the command group, I found Gary Rasser, an LT from Bravo Company, sitting on a log with a submachine gun (CAR-15) across his legs. He looked up at me and said, 'Lew, I must have killed 15 of them myself.'

Easterly, quoting **LT Rasser**: "I was the point platoon when we moved out to find Nootz's platoon. We were heading down across a little creek and then up to the top of a hill. As soon as we topped the hill, we started getting fire from all around our position. We flopped down on the ground and I was in the front. I lost three machine gunners. As soon as one would take up the gun, he would be killed, and another one would take his place. I was firing an M-16 as fast as I could; I burnt out the barrels on three of them myself.

"The fire was coming in from all directions. We could see to our front about 50-to-75 meters where there was a little creek down there with some bushes. The NVA were crossing just like coveys of quail in little bunches of five or six. They would run across our front traveling from left to our right. So I saw a bunch of them coming in and they stopped down behind a little bush at this creek. I picked up a grenade and stood up just like on a grenade range, and threw it. It dropped right in the middle of them; I saw five of them blow up. I flopped down on the ground, and when I did I heard bullets just rip up the air over me and said to myself, 'Rass, if you try that again, you are going to get killed.' Well, about that time five more of them got in that same position, and like a damn fool, I stood up and got all five of them with another grenade.

"By this time, everything had gone to Hell. One of my men looked over at me and said, 'Lieutenant, I think it's about time we were leaving.' I looked around and there were about seven of us left out of 15 I started with. I said, 'I think you're right.' So we faded back to the right and headed back the way we came and were running pretty fast. As we were coming, one of the men with me tripped. I reached back with my hand to get him and when I did he was hit seven times in the chest with machine gun fire; I could see the rounds hitting him.

"As we continued to move, we could see that there were three lines of NVA ahead of us. We started shooting and blasted our way through what appeared to be all of them. I had my rifle right down in front of me just like they teach you in training for marching fire. This one guy stood up right in front of me. He was so close to me when he stood up out of the waist-high grass, that he couldn't bring down the weapon he was holding at high port. I shot him and went on.

"We temporarily lost Byron Thompson, another one of our men. The last time I saw Thompson, an NVA had stood up in front of him also with his rifle. Because they were so close to each other and both had their weapons at high port, Thompson couldn't get his rifle down to shoot him. Instead he just reached out and took this NVA's neck in both hands, crushed it, and dropped the NVA to the ground. Thompson finally showed up about 15 minutes after I had gotten back to the perimeter. He had a compass in one hand and

a knife in the other. All he was wearing was his boots and pants. He had no idea how he had made it back to our location.'

LT Easterly: "Rasser was evacuated that night. He was coughing up blood from the concussion of the grenades that had gone off around him and bruised his stomach. He was initially recommended for the Medal of Honor, but wound up getting the Distinguished Service Cross and served the remainder of his tour as a general's aide.

"We of course were very nervous and tried to make the position as secure as possible, but it was made rather difficult as this was the monsoon season. The bunkers were filled with water to within six inches of the tops as this was a very flat location. Most of the troops simply spread out and lay down behind the bunkers and took whatever cover they could find. Everything was relatively quiet for about 15-to-20 minutes as I was talking with Rasser and getting his story, until the battalion commander flew in on his helicopter. Alpha Company arrived at our position from the south at about the same time [approximately 1515]. They were to secure half the perimeter and we were to secure the other half. We were still getting fired at by an occasional sniper, but no one paid much attention.

"About 1530, CPT Moore came back from talking with the battalion commander and said, 'We are going out to get Bravo Company.' So we saddled up and moved back out the way we had come in; back to the west. Jimmy Johnson's 1st Platoon had point. Chuck Harmon's platoon was on the left and Tom Seales's 2nd was on the right. Bob Nuth's Weapons Platoon brought up the rear. We had been walking for about 10 or 15 minutes when suddenly somebody to my right in the 1st Platoon yelled something. Well, I was the company exec, so I ran over to see what was going on. As I came upon what was causing the excitement, I saw a poncho on the ground with two feet sticking out from under it. They were bare feet and I could see green pants around the ankles. Three of our troops were very cautiously edging up with their M-16s pointed at the poncho. About the time I got almost within 10 feet of the end with the feet sticking out, something moved under the poncho. My first thought was 'grenade!' Apparently that was exactly what was in the minds of the three troopers; they opened up with their M-16s on full automatic and each of them emptied a 20-round magazine into the poncho. My next thought was, 'My God, what if that was an American?' Somebody very cautiously reached down and pulled the poncho off. It turned out to be an NVA."

LT Tom Seales, the 2nd Platoon leader, also witnessed this event: "One of my guys on the right flank yelled out, 'I've got a Gook over here.' I thought that he meant that he could see one. So I yelled back, 'Shoot the son of a bitch!' Much to my surprise he aimed his M-16 at his feet and fired a burst. I ran over to his position, and when I arrived, I saw a foot, no boot and green fatigues sticking out from under an air mattress. My first thought was, 'Oh my God, we've shot a GI,' since we had found American soldiers with their boots off and hands tied with their boot laces. I was utterly relieved when we removed the air mattress and found an Oriental. Apparently this soldier was practicing what he was taught. If

wounded, and the NVA had few medics, the individual was instructed to lie down and cover up to prevent shock. If someone found him, he would be cared for."

LT Easterly: "We proceeded due west and moved on for maybe another 20 or 30 minutes [it was now approximately 1615]. We came down a long slope and crossed the same creek that I mentioned earlier, the one where we fired on the North Vietnamese soldiers, only this time we were about 50 yards further to the south. As we came down the slope and started up the next hill, I suddenly saw mostly American bodies laying all over; on rocks and wrapped around trees. There was a large rockpile just to the right of our line of march, and I saw some people in there. About that time Jimmy Johnson topped the far ridge; I told him to keep going and set up a perimeter. During all this time the company commander was on the radio to battalion trying to figure out how to get all the bodies out immediately. I went over to the rocks and found the company commander, his radio-telephone operator, and the company's forward artillery observer together in a pile, all dead, and in another pile about five feet away were two more dead GI's. Continuing up the hill just a little further I found a survivor by the name of Glenn Stanley lying against a tree. Quickly walking over to him, I squatted down and asked, 'What happened, son? Would you like a cigarette?' He looked at me and said 'Thanks, Lieutenant.'

"As I gave him one and lit it, he began telling me the following story: 'I was an M-79 gunner and when the fight started, me and my buddy were together. That's him over there,' he said as he pointed at another dead GI nearby. 'There were four waves of them and they kept coming. We sat down and started shooting our M-79's as long as we could see them coming in. See those rocks over there?' he said, pointing south. 'I got some as they came over those rocks over there; I popped some grenades on them there and killed a whole bunch, but pretty soon we were out of ammo. So we sat down back-to-back, him leaning against me, got out our .45's and started shooting. When they came over the top of the rocks there [he pointed at some rocks the size of automobiles about 15 to 20 feet in front of him], I shot them with my .45, and after awhile I felt my buddy behind me get hit, and about then they got me too.' I looked down where he was indicating and could see a hole in his left leg. He said, 'It hurt like hell and I grabbed my leg, and as I went down they got me here too' pointing at his neck. I looked at the left side of his neck and there was another hole. Then he said, 'I guess I passed out. When I came to, there was a North Vietnamese soldier standing over me and he had my .45 in his hands. I saw him starting to pull the trigger and heard something; that was the last thing I remember.'

"I looked at his head and right down the middle of his scalp was a crease from the bullet. The only thing I could figure out is that somebody had yelled just as the North Vietnamese pulled the trigger, or maybe he wasn't familiar with the .45; maybe it looked like to him that he had killed this guy.

"Stanley was just across the creek at the base of the hill. As I continued moving up the hill, more bodies were discovered. Apparently they had been captured alive after the battle,

as their hands were tied behind their backs with either communications wire or boot laces. All had been executed with a single shot to the forehead.

"I headed westward toward Jimmy Johnson's portion of the perimeter to see if he had it secured yet, and came across the 'old man,' who told me choppers were in-bound and that he had some people busy cutting down trees to get a landing pad cleared. As I topped the hill, there were two more dead GI's lying face down on the ground, and between them was an open Bible. I'll remember that for a long time too. Next to the Bible was a small silver-colored ball about the size of a ping-pong ball. It was an unexploded 40mm grenade that had hit a tree so close that it hadn't detonated.

"Eventually we got all the bodies gathered together and picked up. We loaded 32 dead Americans on helicopters that afternoon for transport back to the battalion's fire support base. We didn't have body bags, so we just carried the bodies in ponchos and laid them out in two rows on either side of the landing pad. I remember one of the men from the command group carrying a body and throwing up all the way to the pad, and then going back to help carry another body.

"Later a helicopter pilot told me that he was the pilot on the helicopter that came in to ferry the bodies back to the FSB. His copilot was on his first mission. The pilot said he looked around, and the new man was just sitting there looking at the two rows of bodies laid out on the ground slowly coming up at them through the cockpit canopy as they landed. It took six or seven trips to get all the bodies out."

The final tally of KIAs that day included 25 soldiers from Bravo Company, three from Headquarters Company (the medics), and the three from Bravo Battery, 4/42 Artillery (the FO team). Nothing this devastating had happened to a company since the battalion had arrived in-country 12 months earlier. (See Appendix D.)

Others who witnessed the return of Bravo Company's KIA's included the Recon Platoon, who had arrived back in the fire support base earlier in the day. As Alpha Company was pulled off of the perimeter and airlifted out, the Recon Platoon assumed responsibility for the fire support base's perimeter security. Utilizing the equipment left behind by Alpha Company, recon took its limited resources and spread them thinly around the perimeter.

Then with the arrival of every aircraft flying in from the base camp, a few more men were added to the perimeter defense. Unfortunately this included many who had never been to the field before and even a few who had been kicked out of the field. Between the cooks, KP's, clerks, "latrine orderlies," sick, walking wounded, guys coming and going on R&R, and anyone else who could be found, the bunkers slowly filled up.

SSG Hill: *"At this point I had been moved up to the position of platoon sergeant (SFC John Shaffer had already DEROS'd), and had positioned myself near the chopper pad so that nobody arriving could escape my attention. I had my squad leaders with me and as men*

would jump out of the arriving aircraft, I met them, made sure they had a weapon and ammunition and gave them to a squad leader. The squad leader in turn would then take them around the perimeter line to a bunker, brief them and then return to my location to await the next arrival. Our goal was to get at least two men in each position. Being next to the helipad, we also got to watch every aircraft that arrived with Bravo's KIA's.

"One particular helicopter landed and the crew chief began throwing the bodies out on the ground as if they were just bags of trash. Something snapped inside me when I saw that. I stood up with my rifle, walked up the side of the aircraft, jabbed the barrel of my rifle into the side of the crew chief and yelled in his face that if he threw one more of those men out, I would shoot him. I probably wouldn't have, but I wanted him to believe I would. I told him that I wanted him to very carefully lay each one of those men down on the ground with the dignity and respect they deserved. I guess the look on my face convinced him. He didn't say anything; he just did it. When he was done, I told him that I would be watching for him the next time he came in. About this time a couple of my squad leaders who had been watching me came up, grabbed me by the arms, and pulled me away. I think they were afraid I was really going to shoot him. They led me back to our bunker, where I just sat down and bawled."

There was a small group of Bravo Company men who were not directly involved in the fight that day. They were the members of the Weapons Platoon who had been left behind at the FSB to man the 81mm mortars that Bravo Company had not taken to the field.

One of these mortar crewmen was **PFC Kevin Watson**, who recalls his memories and feelings for that fateful day, "I was assigned to Bravo Company Weapons Platoon and had been in the field for a long time. We only carried one 81 in the field, so I was back with the battalion Mortar Platoon at the fire base. The battalion Mortar Platoon was made up of guys from all the companies. We could concentrate our fires better from the fire base.

"I could hear the fight on the radio. We never could get a grid for a fire mission. You could hear firing on the radio. We finally heard an NVA talking on the radio and then it went dead.

"They started bringing the bodies in on Hueys after awhile. We just stacked them up. A Chinook came in, and we started loading the bodies on the helicopter. These were my friends. I looked over at the bunker line and there was a replacement taking pictures of the bodies. I went over and told him, 'Put up the God-damned camera and come help me load the bodies.' He said, 'I'm on guard duty.' I guess I flipped out a little. I pulled out my .45 and told him, 'Those are my friends. Get down there and help me load the bodies.'

"We didn't have body bags, so we placed the bodies on the floor near the front bulkhead, two wide. Laying them on their backs, we interlocked their legs to block and brace them so they wouldn't roll around on the floor of the aircraft while it was in flight. The ball mat flooring was covered with human liquids, making it very slippery. I had seen hundreds of

enemy dead with little effect, but seeing that many Americans was a life-changing event I will never be able to forget. It felt like failure. I was never really the same after that."

Another person in the fire support base who was closely associated with the recovery of the wounded and dead that day was the battalion surgeon, CPT Melvin Deutsch.

CPT Deutsch: *"Four medics were with Bravo Company on July 12, 1967, and as you know, three of them were killed. Of the three, Tyrone Combs had been in Vietnam the longest. Just before July 12th, I had noticed a few bruises on his face, and when I questioned him, he told me that he had been in a fight with another soldier in Bravo Company. I offered to switch him to another company, but he said that he wanted to stay with Bravo. Floyd Noe was relatively new. He had joined the battalion only about three to four weeks prior. Unfortunately, I can't remember Ronald E. Crain, the third medic who was killed.*

"I remember John Stroud, the one medic who survived, quite well. He was black and about 6'6" tall. I was told that he acted admirably during the fighting. However, afterwards, he was concerned about staying in the company. I remember him saying that he was 'too tall' to be in a combat unit. I'm not sure, but I think he did stay with the company.

"I knew Brian Rushton quite well. He seemed like a 'rough' man who was quite gung-ho. I have no idea as to his competency as a leader. I suspect the situation in which he found himself would have ended the same way regardless of who the company commander might have been. I knew Fred Bragg also. I cared for the artillery men as well as the members of our battalion. Bragg was a Mormon, and it was quite interesting to talk to him about his religion. At the time he was killed, he had only two weeks left on his tour in Vietnam.

"On July 12th, I was at the battalion fire support base. It was in the late afternoon or early evening when all the dead were brought in, and I think there were some wounded, but I can't remember for sure. It was hard to recognize most of the men. I did see and remember quite vividly the bodies of LT Bragg and CPT Rushton. Rushton's eyes were open and he had a large serious wound on one of his legs. LT Bragg's hands were tied, indicating that he was probably captured and then killed. I don't remember seeing the medics' bodies, although I'm sure that I was looking for them.

"When Alpha Company departed the fire base, we were left with the Recon Platoon and everybody that they could scrape up from brigade and the base camp to man the perimeter. Sometime during the afternoon, several news people came out to visit the battalion. One of them said something to the effect that 'I know their commander. He is going to attack you here tonight.' And he said it with a smile! I guess we all thought that an attack was imminent.

"I jokingly told several soldiers from the Recon Platoon that the strategy was, if we get

attacked tonight, the enemy would overrun the Recon Platoon, stream into the center of the fire base, and then we would have them surrounded! I collected about 30 full rifle magazines, thinking that I would be able to hold off a regiment if necessary. As you know, the attack on the battalion fire base never materialized. Actually, I was a bit disappointed. Even with the cooks, clerks, stragglers, and shirkers, we were dug in and well-prepared.

"For several nights after the battle, long bursts of tracer bullets would be fired up into the night sky from the battalion camp in case any of the missing men were still nearby, but lost, the thought being that they might be able to guide themselves in on the bursts of tracers. Of course none were out there, but we didn't know that at the time."

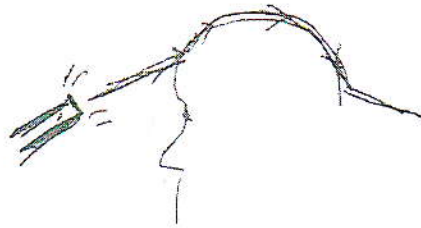
The next stop for some of the Bravo Company men, both living and dead, was the 2nd Brigade Forward, a combination headquarters and forward resupply point located at "The Oasis." Next to the landing strip, Graves Registration had set up a receiving point for the dead being flown in from battle sites in the 2nd Brigade area of operations.

A short distance away, the 4th Medical Battalion had established a clearing station for wounded who were being evacuated, sort of a triage point before they were moved on in the medical treatment process. On this particular day, one of the 4th Med surgeons, CPT Edward Williams, was on duty and treated many of Bravo Company's wounded as they passed through on their way to the rear. In an exchange of letters in 1995 with Lewis Easterly regarding the battle of 12 July, he shared the following:

CPT Williams: *"I saw Rasser when he first came in. We talked a lot about the action. Rasser described to me being surrounded four times, jamming four M-16s and using two machine guns. He described being terrified at the first contact, then emotionless as NVA would appear and disappear as he fired. I think I remember him saying his glasses were shot off (although the pictures I have of him did not have glasses) and a hand grenade rolled right by him and did not go off (maybe it did?). Also I remember he only had five men from his platoon who escaped with him. It was generally reported that he was a one-man firing machine; of course to me that was hearsay. The next time I saw him was maybe a week after the battle when he came back to see me with a stomach problem, but I think I was unaware of a possible concussion injury at the time."*

"I remember CPT Rushton on the radio as we listened to the battle. His voice was hoarse and I knew he was badly wounded. He seemed to still be in command. I remember thinking that the commander, whoever he was, was hit bad. He was one I found dead in Graves Registration along with the Williamses and Waguespack. I remember specifically looking for the commander and being aware of him when I found him because of the radio contact."

"I also remember the kid named [William Glenn] Stanley, I think from Tennessee, who survived being shot in the head as he lay wounded. What happened was the bullet rode his skull and did not penetrate it. He was conscious when he arrived at the Oasis also."



Photograph of PFC Glenn Stanley taken by Peter Arnett in a Pleiku hospital bed two days after the incident. Drawing of the path of bullet made by the CPT Williams, the 4th Med surgeon who treated PFC Stanley when he was brought into the battalion aid station in the Oasis on the 12th, approximately four hours after he had been shot in the head. (The drawing was done from memory in 1995.)

CPT Williams: *"I don't remember Charles Judge, and I don't know if all of the dead came to Graves Registration at the Oasis. I remember being in a relatively small area tent determining the cause of death the best I could. Gary Waguespack was shot in the head. That's why I remembered him. He had to be lying dead next to another soldier's leg because his arm was up.*

"In a letter to my wife I say that we cared for about half of the major casualties on July 12. Obviously the more serious casualties were over-flown to the 71st Evac or 18th Surgical. This certainly can mean that I did not see all of the dead either.

"A Chinook landed on the helipad at the Oasis. The bodies were not in body bags. I remember this because looking in the open back of the Chinook after the bodies were removed, I saw a residual piece of human brain on the floor. That picture has been in my mind ever since, not happy thoughts!

"My letter to my wife also says I was told one of Rasser's men strangled an NVA and stabbed another – that's all I can say – these stories came to me at the clearing station at the Oasis."

Meanwhile, as soon as the dead and wounded had been evacuated, Charlie Company had to move quickly and link up with Alpha Company. Darkness was rapidly approaching, and nobody wanted to be out on this battle field in the dark.

LT Easterly: *"We worked until dark. CPT Moore came up to me and said, 'Lew, Bob Nuth hasn't been here long. I want you to go up front with the point and take us back in to Alpha Company.'*

"Jerry Elphick, the XO of Alpha Company, said that when they got the word that we were coming back in, his company commander told him, 'Jerry, I need a good man to go out

there to make sure that 'C' Company gets in all right.' So Jerry went out to the edge of the 'A' Company perimeter to wait on us, while we were out there somewhere in the dark trying to find him.

"We both had these little blinking strobe lights that you could turn on for a couple of minutes. While I was trying to shrink to about a foot-and-a-half tall every time I held my light over my head and turned it on, Jerry told me that he had been trying to hide behind a tree about four inches in diameter every time he turned his light on. As we got closer to each other, we were talking on the radio constantly. Finally this voice comes out of the dark and says, 'Is that you Charlie? I mean Charlie Company?' It was Jerry talking to me.

"When we were finally all inside the Alpha Company perimeter, Charlie Company took over responsibility for half, while the FOs from both companies split the work they do between themselves. We had five batteries of artillery firing in direct support of us all night around the perimeter, as well as anything else that could reach us by firing indirect. I was told later that over 2,900 rounds were fired that night, while over 800 had been fired during the day.

"The accommodations that night were rather sparse, as all of us had left our packs behind at our previous night's location when we had started out to find Bravo Company; nobody had any equipment. Someone had found a poncho and rigged it up so that it extended off of the top of a bunker roof. The command group, which consisted of the company RTO Sebils, 1SG Tompkins, CPT Moore, the battalion RTO, and me, was all huddled together trying to stay warm under this poncho up against the wall of the bunker.

"The company RTO had fallen asleep and his head had dropped forward onto his chest. The 1SG, sitting next to the RTO, was leaning back on the bunker, when one of the artillery shells came in very close. A piece of shrapnel about as long as my little finger and very thin came whistling through the dark and hit the 1SG right in the side of the head; he squealed like a stuck pig. The only way I can describe the sound when the piece of shrapnel hit was that it sounded like a watermelon that had been dropped on the pavement. I guess that if he hadn't been sitting where he was, he wouldn't have been hit. We got the medics over there, and they bandaged him up. He stayed there with us all night instead of being medivaced.

"I looked around later for something to sleep on. Since I was the second-most senior man in the company (the commander being senior), I laid claim to a piece of cardboard about 18 inches wide and about 3-feet long that had come wrapped around a C-ration box. There was a log on the ground in front of the poncho, so I crawled out to it, laid down on my piece of cardboard with my rifle between my legs, propped my head on the log, tilted my helmet over my face, and slept all night in the rain. I have always said that I was probably better off that night than everybody else because I had that piece of cardboard; the rest of the guys didn't have anything."

Back in the fire support base things had quieted down for the night. The big fear was that

the enemy force that had hit Bravo and Charlie Companies in the morning was going to come back that night and try and take out the FSB. Everyone was on 100% alert.

SSG Hill: *"As a part of the Recon Platoon's command group, the platoon leader, his RTO, our medic, and I had taken up residence in Alpha Company's command bunker. They had left us an SB-22 switchboard that was supposedly wired into strategic bunkers around the perimeter, those bunkers having phones in them that would enable us to talk with our squad leaders. It was a good idea, but the switchboard didn't work. We didn't know if the batteries were dead or what.*

"Since well over half the troops on the perimeter were 'green,' I decided that I needed to walk the perimeter and check on everyone. Moving from bunker to bunker was slow going in the dark. I wasn't familiar with the location of all the bunkers, much less all the clutter lying about on the ground. At each bunker I got directions to the next.

"The fire support base had been laid out on the side of a hill, downhill sloping to the north. For the most part, the perimeter was a circle, all except for the northeast corner. Unbeknownst to me there was a shallow gully there that caused two bunkers to be set back further than those left and right of the gully, maybe 20 feet or so. As I walked away from the bunker to the right of the gully, I inadvertently stepped down into the gully and out in front of the next bunker. I had taken about two steps toward the next bunker when I heard the click-click of a bolt chambering a round. I knew instantly I had made a mistake, and that I needed to break that person's chain of thought, and quickly.

"Before taking another step, I began yelling as loud as I could, calling him every foul name I could think of, and telling him that if he pulled that trigger and shot me, I was going to come over there and kick his ass all the way around the perimeter. I kept yelling at him as I walked slowly up to the bunker. As soon as I got there, I stopped yelling, told him that it was OK, and talked with him for a few minutes. He told me that he was a cook and that he had been staring at stumps out in front of his position ever since it had gotten dark, when all of a sudden one of them began to move, coming right at him. At first he said he couldn't figure out who was yelling or why, but then it dawned on him. I told him no problem, just stay alert and he would be all right. I continued around the rest of the perimeter and had no more problems. Nobody ever said a word to me about all the yelling and cussing either."

PART V
RECOVERY

PART V. RECOVERY

13 July 1967 (Thursday)

LT Easterly: *"The next morning 1SG Tompkins was evacuated. Soon thereafter we departed our night location. The best way to describe our day is to say that we just wandered around all day in the woods. We walked from about 0900 till about 1700, and didn't see a single tree that hadn't been hit by artillery fire. That night we arrived at an old fire base on a road and joined back up with 'A' Company. Someone at brigade sent a platoon of four tanks down to join us. As we had gotten some of our equipment back that morning, we were able to make hooches that night. Between having our hooches and the tanks, we felt pretty good. The tanks spotted themselves on all four sides of the perimeter. Jerry Elphick and I were setting up the perimeter when a tank drove up and a hatch flipped open. A guy looked out, saw Jerry, and asked, 'Hey Lieutenant, where do you want me to park this tank?' Jerry looked back up at him and said, 'You see that hole right there (pointing at his)?' 'It's mine, park on top of it.' I felt pretty much the same way.*

14 July 1967 (Friday)

"On the morning of the 14th, we (A and C Companies) were sent back to the B Company battle site of the 12th of July to check out the area for NVA bodies and equipment. It took us about two hours to get there. When we arrived, A Company took the left half or western side of the area, while we took the right or eastern half. I was designated as the record keeper for our company, and Jerry Elphick was in charge of our people doing the actual counting.

"The scene of a battle, even a small one, is hard to describe on paper since the colors and the smells are what make the lasting impressions in your mind. I remember some things vividly. I was looking around and found CPT Brian Rushton's helmet (he was the Bravo Company commander who was killed on the 12th). Inside the helmet was his communications SOI (Standard Operating Instructions), which by some chance had not been found by the NVA.

"Around noon Tom Seales came over where I was standing and sat down to eat lunch. He had a can of cold chicken noodle soup from a C-ration meal which he opened and began to eat. Two of the men from his platoon were bending over an NVA body about six feet away and seemed reluctant to turn it over. So Tom handed me his soup, stood up and walked over, flipped the body over, went through the pockets, and then returned to me, took his soup back and continued to eat it. What impressed me the most was the fact that the body was covered with flies and maggots, and it didn't seem to bother Tom at all.



From left-to-right, Charlie Company officers;
1LT Lewis Easterly, 1LT Bob Nuth, and CPT Donald Moore.
Taken on the 14th of July while re-searching the battle site.

"Rasser had told me about the NVA that he had killed with grenades as they tried to cross the creek. I had noticed the spot on the 12th, but had not gone down to it. It was about 20 meters to the west of where we had found the bodies of some of the men of Rasser's platoon. There was a slight flat space at the top of the hill. This was where I had seen the two dead men with the open Bible between them. I walked down the hill and sure enough there was the bush, and as I walked up to it, I noticed that the bank of the creek had been caved in. I jumped down in the creek and there were four or five partially covered NVA lying there. Rasser had been right, he got at least four or five with grenades as they tried to cross the creek.

"I remember that one of the other bodies we saw that day was a good deal taller than the rest, and we always thought that it was a Chinese advisor. He had been shot up pretty bad during the fight. One of his legs was blown almost in half and his ankle was lying in his lap. He was located just east of the big rockpile where I had seen the first casualties on the 12th. The force of the explosion had wrapped his body around a small tree.

"The final body count that day was 56 NVA killed. I know, because I turned the count in myself. In a history of the 4th Division written about that battle, the body count is listed as 146."

The final search this day failed to produce any more American bodies; thus the realization that the battalion had seven MIAs, presumed captured, was numbing. It was almost impossible to believe that we had seven Red Warriors captured by the NVA. Combining this number with the 25 KIAs from Bravo Company, the total number of losses was staggering (see Appendix C). Based on the number of soldiers present for duty that morning, half the company was either dead or missing. Compounding this even further was the number of wounded; only seven soldiers involved in the battle were uninjured. For all practical purposes, Bravo Company was no longer a functional unit.

[Postscript: On the 17th of July, the battalion relocated the FSB to YA 929151. As Bravo Company was still continuing to rebuild and train, it provided FSB security. Alpha Company conducted a search-and-destroy mission in the vicinity of YA 905098, while Charlie Company did the same around the new FSB.]

The story of individual battles never ends on the battlefields for many combatants and their families, and this story is no exception. Approximately two months after this battle, the battalion executive officer was given a letter dated 1 September 1967, and was asked by the battalion commander to deal with it.

The letter was written by MAJ Kannady, an ROTC Instructor and Survivors Assistance Officer at the University of Arkansas, on behalf of the widow of SP4 Jerry D. Lanier, 2nd Platoon, Bravo Company. According to MAJ Kannady, Mrs. Lanier had been told by her husband, shortly before his death on the 12th of July, that he had saved \$500 for an R&R with her and had placed the money in the company safe in the battalion base camp while he was in the field. Mrs. Lanier was contacting the battalion and asking for someone's assistance in recovering her late husband's money.

On the 10th of September 1967, MAJ George Long, the battalion executive officer, accompanied by five witnesses, opened and searched the Bravo Company safe looking for SP4 Lanier's money, only to find that it was missing, along with money belonging to two other soldiers. Questioning of the company clerks revealed that they had no knowledge as to the status of the missing money.

The protocol was for the division Graves Registration personnel to contact the companies of soldiers they were processing for return to CONUS and to collect any and all personal belongings of the deceased. They would then inventory, box, and ship the personal effects to the next of kin listed in the individual's records. This was standard procedure throughout the division, and was, sadly, being done daily.

Thinking that this may have been done, MAJ Long instructed the battalion personnel officer (the S1) to contact the division Graves Registration office and determine if they had, in fact, received the \$500 in question back in July when they had processed Lanier's remains. A quick telephone call revealed that Graves Registration had no record of receiving \$500 for SP4 Lanier.

An ensuing investigation by MAJ Long revealed a completely different answer to the question of the missing money. Locating a DD Form 1076, the Record of Personal Effects, for SP4 Lanier, MAJ Long determined that in fact the company had turned over to Graves Registration two \$25 savings bonds and cash totaling \$620, but that someone had lined through and initialed the cash amount on the form, indicating he had not received the money. To corroborate this record, MAJ Long also took a statement from the Bravo Company supply clerk that he had witnessed the Bravo Company supply sergeant and the Graves Registration sergeant counting the money at the Graves Registration Unit at the time of turn-in. MAJ Long then contacted the commanding officer of the division Graves Registration Unit and asked him to begin an official inquiry into the status of the missing money.

In a return letter to MAJ Kannady dated 5 November 1967, MAJ Long apologized for the lengthy delay in answering, outlined his discoveries and courses of action taken, and based on advice from the 4th Division Staff Judge Advocate's office, suggested that if the money was not located and returned, that he, as Mrs. Lanier's Survivors Assistance Officer, should file a claim against the government on Mrs. Lanier's behalf for the missing money. MAJ Long went on to say that he would obtain any necessary forms and certify them as true copies to help substantiate any claim made by Mrs. Lanier. MAJ Long closed the letter by asking that he be given until 20 November either to locate the money or to forward the necessary forms to substantiate a claim.

As no other record of this situation can be found, it is assumed that through the combined efforts of MAJ Long and Mrs. Lanier's Survivors Assistance officer, she was eventually able to recover her late husband's missing money. What happened to the individual who stole the money is unknown.

PART VI

POST-BATTLE
REPORTS

PART VI. POST-BATTLE REPORTS

30 July 1967 (Sunday)

The following stories were taken from a 30 July 1967 edition of the *Ivy Leaves*. Writer SP4 Robert Boudreaux indicated that the battalion was working near the South Vietnamese village of Vung Dat Am. Evidently the reporter, in search of a story, tracked the battalion down, looking for one or more of the Bravo Company survivors. He found SP4 Alberto Lopez and PFC Charles W. Moors, riflemen from the 1st platoon, and PFC John Stroud, a company medic.

SP4 Lopez began his story by telling the reporter how quiet the night of the 11th had been and how the morning of the 12th began bleak and overcast. The reporter called it an omen of events to come. Continuing, Lopez said: *"Our third platoon went on a sweep to link up with Charlie Company. They ran into heavy small arms fire and were pinned down.*

"Our company commander called for the second platoon to go out and help the third platoon break contact. They too came under heavy small arms and sniper fire, but were able to pull back far enough to be joined by the remainder of the company. We then moved on line and prepared to go after the third platoon, when suddenly 'Charlie's' mortars began falling all around us.

"I have never seen anything like it in my life. Everywhere we turned there were mortars falling. Charlie seemed to be firing on us from all sides. Somehow Moors and [I] fought our way back to the patrol base."

Lopez told the reporter that as they fought their way out of the hail of enemy mortars and bullets, the two men stopped to aid their wounded buddies and helped them back to their patrol base. **PFC Moors:** *"There were wounded everywhere, most of the guys were getting hit from the shrapnel. I don't know how the two of us made it like we did. I guess somebody up there likes us."*

The reporter related how the two men fired magazine after magazine of ammunition at the enemy as they moved from bush to bush. **Lopez:** *"Charlie was getting ready to assault and we were firing as fast as we could. When we got back to the patrol base, there were already a lot of the guys back. A lot of them were wounded and the medics were calling in 'dust-offs.' There was a medic [PFC Stroud] who must have been some kind of superman. He was everywhere pulling the wounded into the perimeter, treating them and working to keep them from going into shock."*

The reporter then switched to Charlie Company and their efforts to reach Bravo. The reporter related how Charlie Company, discarding its gear in an effort to speed to the rescue of Bravo Company, arrived at Bravo's patrol base a few hours later and relieved the battle-weary men. **PFC Moors:** *"Those guys don't know how good they looked. When*

they came in I guess 'Charlie' figured we were too much for him, and never assaulted our position."

Boudreaux's interview of PFC Stroud [the medic SP4 Lopez talked about] began with some background information leading up to the battle on the 12th. **PFC Stroud** began his story by telling the reporter that when his platoon leader [Roger Howse] was hit in the leg by an enemy bullet during the initial phase of the contact, he rushed over to aid him. Off to his right another man had been hit by mortar shrapnel. *"It all happened so fast, I didn't have time to think."* Disregarding the intense enemy fire, the "Doc" ran from wounded soldier to wounded soldier treating each man and moving the more severely injured ones back to the company's patrol base to be evacuated. **PFC Stroud:** *"Charlie had us surrounded and he kept dropping mortars wherever we turned."*

Continuing, the reporter related how PFC Stroud and the remaining members of Bravo Company, while under continual enemy fire, struggled to return to their patrol base. Boudreaux wrote how, as the battle raged around PFC Stroud, he steadfastly tended Bravo's wounded soldiers. It wasn't until Charlie Company arrived that the dust-offs could safely begin to land and start evacuating the wounded and bring PFC Stroud the replacement medical supplies that he so desperately needed. The *Ivy Leaves* reporter concluded his interview by saying that it was only after the survivors of Bravo Company were finally evacuated back to the FSB that PFC Stroud allowed himself to relax.

PART VII

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

CHAIN OF COMMAND

1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY
CHAIN OF COMMAND

8-14 July 1967

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Battalion Commander | Lieutenant Colonel Corey Wright |
| Battalion Executive Officer | Major George Long |
| Battalion S-1 | Captain Louis Sylvester |
| Battalion S-2 (11 July) | Captain Michael Downs |
| Battalion S-2 (12 July) | Captain Joseph Witkowski |
| Battalion S-3 | Major Lawrence Gardner |
| Battalion Assistant S-3 | Not Available |
| Battalion S-3 Air | Not Available |
| Battalion S-4 | Captain Robert Sheldon |
| Battalion Surgeon | Captain Melvin Deutsch |
| Battalion Chaplain | Not Available |
| Battalion Sergeant Major | Not Available |
| HHC Commander | Captain Perry White |
| Recon Platoon Leader | Lieutenant Edwin Williams |
| 4.2 Mortar Platoon Leader | Lieutenant David Jennings |
| B Battery 4/42 Artillery | Not Available |
| Air Force Liaison Officer | Not Available |
| | |
| Alpha Company Commander | Captain Thomas Borlund |
| Executive Officer | Not Available |
| First Platoon Leader | Not Available |
| Second Platoon Leader | Not Available |
| Third Platoon Leader | Not Available |
| Weapons Platoon Leader | Not Available |
| | |
| Bravo Company Commander | Captain Brian Rushton |
| Executive Officer | Not Available |
| First Platoon Leader | Lieutenant Roger Howse |
| Second Platoon Leader | Lieutenant Gary Rasser |
| Third Platoon Leader | Lieutenant Gaylord Nootz |
| Weapons Platoon Leader | SFC Leman Hunter |
| | |
| Charlie Company Commander | Captain Donald Moore |
| Executive Officer | Lieutenant Lewis Easterly |
| First Platoon Leader | Lieutenant Jimmy Johnson |
| Second Platoon Leader | Lieutenant Thomas Seales |
| Third Platoon Leader | Lieutenant Charles Harmon |
| Weapons Platoon Leader | Lieutenant Robert Nuth |

APPENDIX B

FRAG ORDER

Copy No. ____ of ____ Copies
HQ, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry
YA 889136
081200 July 67
XBT

FRAG O 2-67

REF: Map 1:50,000 SHEET 6536 III

1. SITUATION:

- a. Enemy Forces: Current INTSUM.
- b. Friendly Forces: Current SITREP
- c. Attachments/Detachments: No Change.

2. MISSION: Bn conducts S&D 100700 through 140700 in the south PLEI DJRAO LUCK RIDGE, reestablishes screen in zone 140700 Jul.

3. EXECUTION:

a. Concept: Three-phase operation of two mutually supporting companies to S&D along designated routes and exploitation of aerial artillery strikes - reestablish screen in zone.

(1) Maneuver:

PHASE I: Co A returns by rts, assumes R/S at FSB. Co C moves, occupies psn AXE NLT 091500 Jul concurrent with Co B move to occupy psn SPEAR NLT 091500 July.

PHASE II: Co B & C conducts S&D 100700 through 140700 Jul occupying psn's Z-R and 1-4 respectively with Co B exploiting aerial artillery strike zone 110700 July and Co C spt's from psn 1 thru 3.

PHASE III: Co B moves to psn Y, establish screen in zone 140700 to 170700 Jul, Co C prepared for extraction in LZ 140900, conducts supported CA into LZ MIKE, occupies psn B, establishes screen in zone 141500 to 170700 July.

(2) Fires: Priority to SPEAR in PHASE I and II to include defensive targets in psn's Z-R, to Co C in PHASE III to include prep of LZ MIKE. Priority to unit in contact.

(3) Air: Tactical air priority to SPEAR, then to unit in contact. Aerial artillery-strike area target NLT 100500. Upon cancellation, Cmbt proof requested stride SPEAR and AXE vicinity psn's Z,X,T, and 2.

b. Co A

- (1) One 30 man platoon, 30 minute alert, aerial C/A.
- (2) Daily platoon patrols, emphasis to south, day/night.
- (3) Continue improvement of FSB defense.

- c. Co B
 - (1) Mutually supporting platoons S&D from Co.
 - (2) Detail search of aerial artillery strike area.
 - (3) S2 debriefs strike results in psn T.

- d. Co C
 - (1) Support Co B maneuver by fire, maneuver, blocks south flanks.
 - (2) Coordinate all fires with Co B.
 - (3) Responsible for, reports and prepared LZ while moving, and in psn 1 to 3.
 - (4) Prepares for aerial C/A - Details instructions 131500 in psn 4, Phase II.

- e. Recon Platoon
 - (1) Upon detachment, return to FSB, OCA Co A.
 - (2) Prepares for 30 minute alert Aerial C/A.
 - (3) Prepares to screen battalion in Phase III.

- f. Composite Mortar Platoon: No Change.

- g. B/4/42 Artillery: No Change.

- h. 3/B/4 Engineers: No Change.

- i. Coordinating Instructions.
 - (1) SOP Reporting
 - (2) EEI
 - a. Fresh NVA/VC psn, platoon or larger.
 - b. Sightings - Headgear
 - c. Tree sniper psn.
 - (3) Three kilometer aerial safety line, 100001 to 100600 July.
 - (4) Defcon must be coordinated between Co B & C to facilitate Co B, yet compliment Co C requirements.
 - (5) Frequent navigational checks, smoke streamers and air.
 - (6) Strike analysis:
 - a. Photos of crater damage to bunkers.
 - b. Tree blow-down.
 - c. Dispersion.
 - d. Indications of dead or wounded.
 - e. Secondary explosions.
 - f. Other significant destructions.
 - (7) LRRP insertions in North, 14-15 July.
 - (8) Co B to assume mission on 17 July, Co A to screen.
 - (9) POW evacuation immediately after friendly serious wounded.

4. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTIC

- a. General - Plan for immediate resupply, 10-13 July.
- b. Material Services.
 - (1) Co B requests LRRP Rations, 4 meals.
 - (2) ASR - No Change, No limit when in contact.
 - (3) Emergency Class V resupply available at FSB.
 - (4) Priority resupply:
 - a. Class V
 - b. Water
 - c. Rations
 - (5) 81mm mortar: 10 rounds illumination, minimum 30 rounds HE.
- c. Medical - SOP.

5. COMMAND AND SIGNAL

- a. Signal
 - 1. Current SOI, SSI in effect.
 - 2. Emergency signal, red/yellow smoke.
 - 3. Night mark psn, 81mm illumination, maximum elevation, chl, 1.25 second time.
- b. Command
 - 1. FSB
 - 2. Aerial C&C when in contact or aerial C/A.
 - 3. With reserve when committed or linked-up in objective area.

Acknowledge:

ANNEX:
A - Operational Overlay

Wright
LTC

Distribution
Special

OFFICIAL

Gardner S3

APPENDIX C

DAILY STAFF JOURNAL

TIME LINE FOR 12 JULY 1967
(Excerpts from the battalion daily staff journal)

| Time | Activity |
|----------------|--|
| 0749 | Charlie Company reports to battalion the departure of its 2 nd Platoon from the company patrol base on a perimeter sweep to the south. |
| 0818 | Charlie Company reports to battalion their 2 nd Platoon has made contact with 12 NVA, killing three of them. Bravo Company is then alerted by battalion to check out its immediate area due to the close proximity of the enemy force, and to establish radio contact with Charlie Company's 2 nd Platoon in order to secure this force. |
| 0845 | An OP from Charlie Company reports observing 30 NVA moving to the northwest. |
| 0855 | Bravo Company reports to battalion that its 1 st Platoon has been sent out on a sweep east and then south of its company patrol base. The platoon reports observing enemy movement south of the patrol base. |
| 0920 | 2 nd Platoon Charlie Company reports NVA to their north, then they are sighted by the enemy. 2 nd Platoon directs mortar and artillery fire against the enemy forces. |
| Approx 0940 | 3 rd Platoon Bravo Company, which is west of the company patrol base, is directed to establish communications with 2 nd Platoon C Company and swing north and attempt to link up with them. |
| 0958 | 2 nd Platoon Charlie Company reports enemy movement around their position. Artillery and mortar fires are placed continually around the platoon. A short time later they are surrounded and cannot move. |
| 1014 | 2 nd Platoon Charlie Company reports enemy forces between them and the 3 rd Platoon of Bravo Company. |
| Approx 1015 | Alpha Company is given a warning order to be prepared to be airlifted to LZ Yankee, vicinity YA 835117, upon arrival of aircraft at the FSB. Simultaneously, battalion requests support to man the FSB perimeter and orders the Recon Platoon to return to the FSB to provide C&C for FSB security. |
| 1052 | The C&C helicopter arrives at FSB and is immediately airborne over the battle site, carrying the battalion commander, artillery LNO, and the S3 Sergeant Major. |

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Approx 1056 | 3 rd Platoon Bravo Company reports that an enemy force is moving across their front to the northeast. They engage the force, killing two. |
| 1100 | Charlie Company reports that their 2 nd Platoon and the 3 rd Platoon of Bravo Company have an enemy force between them in a cross-fire. |
| 1108 | Bravo Company reports that enemy movement is observed to their south and southwest of the company patrol base, and that artillery and mortar fires are being utilized. |
| 1125 | Charlie Company reports one WIA from Bravo's 3 rd Platoon. This report is quickly followed by a second report that the 3 rd Platoon is being assaulted by a large enemy force from the west and southwest. |
| 1140 | 2 nd Platoon Charlie Company reports they are receiving enemy fire from three different directions, while 3 rd Platoon Bravo Company reports receiving mortar and small arms fire. |
| 1145 | Bravo Company comes under heavy attack as it moves to try to relieve its trapped 3 rd Platoon. Order of march is 1 st Platoon, 2 nd Platoon, command group, and the Weapons Platoon. Artillery fires that 3 rd Platoon had been calling to their south are lifted so that the company can move in. 1 st and 2 nd Platoons go on-line to assault the objective. |
| 1145- 1200 | The Recon Platoon arrives at the FSB. |
| 1150 | FAC (Cider 25) checks into the AO. |
| 1200 | The Bravo Company Commander is badly wounded, and the artillery FO takes temporary command of the company. |
| 1230 | Charlie Company links up with its 2 nd Platoon and pulls back into their patrol base. |
| 1330 | Charlie Company reports enemy fires on Bravo Company have ceased; no radio contact with Bravo Company. |
| 1400 | The firing dies down and Charlie Company is ordered out to find Bravo Company. |
| 1415 | Charlie Company departs their perimeter en route to Bravo Company's night location and patrol base. |
| Approx 1445 | Charlie Company arrives at Bravo Company's night location. |
| Approx 1515 | Alpha Company arrives at Charlie Company's location. |

| | |
|----------------|--|
| 1530 | Charlie Company departs Bravo's night location to search for more Bravo Company personnel, while Alpha Company remains behind to provide security. |
| Approx 1615 | Charlie Company discovers a number of Bravo Company KIA and SP4 Glenn Stanley, who is wounded. The recovery process has begun. |
| Dark | Charlie Company terminates its search and returns to Alpha's location. |

Note: As soon as medivac aircraft can get into Bravo Company's LZ, evacuation of the wounded is begun. Once Charlie Company discovers the majority of Bravo's KIAs, and can cut an LZ, those remains are picked up and also taken back to the FSB for processing.

APPENDIX D

BRAVO COMPANY PERSONNEL ROSTER

Present For Duty W/ Attachments
Bravo Company, 1ST Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment
12 July 1967

- KILLED IN ACTION (31)-

Bravo Company (25)

SP4 Pernell R. Claud - 2nd platoon
SP4 Gary T. Coleman
PFC Robert E. Echols - 3rd platoon
PFC Gerald L. Fox - 2nd platoon
PFC Willie K. Fullilove - 2nd platoon
PFC Eddie C. Gibson
SP4 Stephen J. Groth
PFC John A. Harlan - 3rd platoon RTO
PFC Wandle L. Hickman - 3rd platoon
PFC David M. Horn - Wpns platoon
SGT Jerry L. Hughes - 3rd platoon
SGT Rockwell G. Jamison
SP4 Charles M. Judge Jr. - 2nd platoon
SP4 Jerry D. Lanier - 2nd platoon
PFC Milford G. McKee
PFC Joseph L. Miller
SGT Owen R. Montgomery - 3rd platoon
2LT Gaylord E. Nootz - 3rd platoon
PFC Salvatore F. Polizzi
CPT Brian W. Rushton - HQ platoon
PFC Troy L. Sexton - Wpns platoon
PFC Robert A. Strange 3rd platoon
PFC Gary L. Waguespack
PFC Floyd C. Williams - Wpns platoon
SGT Moses Williams - 3rd platoon

Headquarters & Headquarters Company Medics (3)

SP5 Tyrone Combs
SP4 Ronald E. Crain
PFC Floyd R. Noe

Bravo Battery, 4/42 Artillery (105 towed) (3)

1LT Fred G. Bragg Jr.
CPL Leroy H. Charboneau
SGT James M. Haider

- SURVIVORS (38)-

Bravo Company

Headquarters Platoon (1)

PFC Nathan B. Henry - WIA (POW)

1st Platoon (5)

2LT Roger E. Howse - WIA (platoon leader)

SP4 Henoc Gomez - WIA

SP4 Melvin D. Perttunen - WIA (deceased)

SGT Alan Thiel

PFC Roy D. James - WIA

2nd Platoon (8)

1LT Gary Rasser (platoon leader)

SSG Harry C. Tingler - WIA

SGT Byron Thompson - WIA

PFC Charles W. Moors - WIA

PFC Thomas A. Garty - WIA

SP4 Alberto Lopez-Rodriguez - WIA

SP4 James F. Schiele - WIA (POW-MIA, deceased)

PFC Glenn Stanley - WIA

3rd Platoon (4)

SP4 Martin S. Frank - WIA (POW, deceased)

SGT Cordine McMurray - WIA (POW)

PFC Stanley A. Newell - WIA (POW)

PFC Richard R. Perricone - WIA (POW)

Weapons Platoon (9)

SFC Leman Hunter

SGT Robert Chin

SP4 Edward J. Hagerty III - WIA

PFC Lloyd Hahn

SP4 Frank Lackey - WIA

SP4 Robert L. Mackey - WIA

SP4 James L. McMillion - WIA

PFC Edward Moody - WIA

SP4 Robert L. Parks - WIA

Unknown Platoon (5)

PFC Curt L. Ahlden - WIA

SP4 Alvy J. Alexander - WIA

PFC Lynn D. Lotze - WIA
PFC John J. Moran - WIA
PFC James L. Van Bendegom - WIA, MIA, deceased

Headquarters & Headquarters Company Medics (2)

PFC Ronald C. Williams - WIA
PFC John Stroud

Bravo Company, 4th Engineers (4)

SSG Johnathan W. Davenport - WIA
PFC James E. Gatson - WIA
SP4 James E. Hovis - WIA
SP4 Donald G. Thomas - WIA

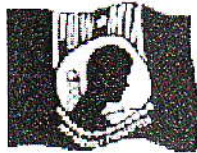
- TOTALS -

| | |
|--|----------|
| Bravo Company | 57 |
| Headquarters and Headquarters Company | 5 |
| Bravo Battery 4/42 Artillery | 3 |
| Bravo Company, 4 th Engineers | 4 |
| Total | <hr/> 69 |

Plus, there is a yet to be determined number of Bravo Company personnel who were either in the FSB (weapons platoon) or back in the base camp (headquarters), and not in the field.

APPENDIX E
POW REPORTS

1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division
"Red Warriors"
YA 837125, Pleiku Province, Republic of Vietnam
Operation Francis Marion
12 July 1967



Compiled and Edited
by
Roger A. Hill

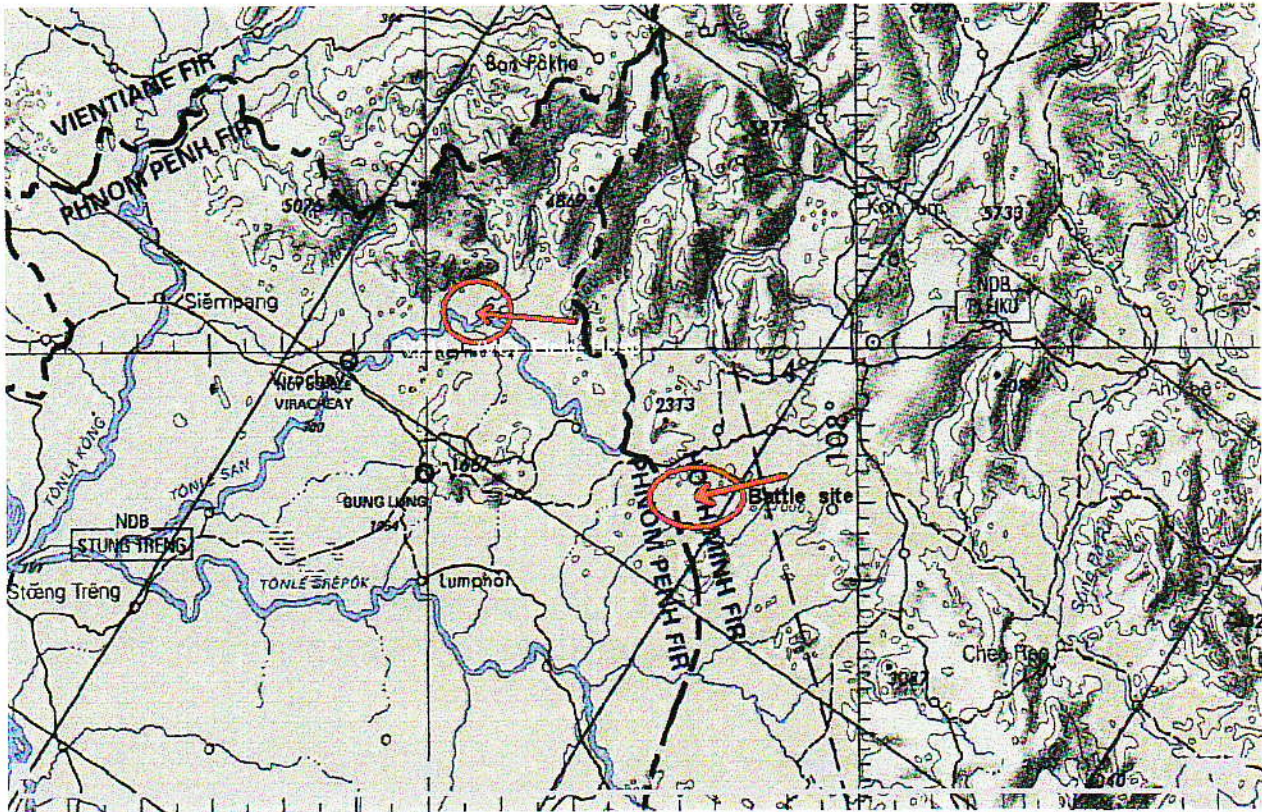
It was only after the final tally of those found on the battlefield was completed, that it was determined by battalion that seven soldiers from Bravo Company were missing and presumed captured. Those seven soldiers were: SP4 Martin S. Frank, PFC Nathan B. Henry, SGT Cordine McMurray, PFC Stanley A. Newell, PFC Richard R. Perricone, SP4 James F. Schiele, and PFC James L. Van Bendegom.

In the post-captivity debriefings it was determined that all seven Red Warrior POWs had been held in prison camps along the Vietnam/Cambodia border for several months after their capture. Each has his own survival story. Sadly, two men, SP4 Schiele and PFC Van Bendegom, did not survive, and their remains have never been recovered.

SP4 JAMES F. SCHIELE

SP4 James Schiele, a member of 2nd platoon, was last seen by his platoon leader as Bravo Company was forced to withdraw, leaving him behind. He had been hit a number of times by automatic weapons fire in the legs and chest, and was thought to be dead. PFC Perricone stated in his debriefing upon returning to the U.S. that the enemy camp commander of Camp 102 told him that Schiele had died of his wounds received in the 12 July fight. However, since there was no positive proof of death, the U.S. Army placed Schiele in the Missing in Action category. In December 1990, a U.S. field team reported the results of their recent trip into the Central Highlands of South Vietnam. During their visit, they interviewed a doctor who saw several American POWs during 1967. The doctor was aware that American soldiers had died at his hospital and were buried nearby. One of these reports was tentatively correlated to Schiele (Case # 1112). Other information concerning Schiele traced his movements from the area of his capture, to his turnover to the 66th Regiment, and later to B-3 Front Headquarters.

NVA FIELD HOSPITAL V211 IN CAMBODIA



The upper red circle denotes the probable location of the NVA field hospital V211 where several of the Bravo Company POWs were treated for their wounds, and purportedly where SP4 James Schiele and PFC James Van Bendegom died about two weeks after entering the hospital. The V211 hospital and the B-3 Front POW camp were a complex of buildings in several separate locations, all within close proximity of each other in Cambodia. The camp's graveyard, where Schiele and Van Bendegom were supposedly buried, was associated with the hospital. The hospital itself was located just inside the tree-line on the north side of the Tonle San River, while the Stoeng Ta Pok tributary bordered the east side of the hospital complex. In December 1990, a Joint Task Force for Full Accounting (JTFFA) interviewed several witnesses regarding the status of Schiele and Van Bendegom, and the location of the field hospital and its graveyard. In February 1995, a joint team reported that it was able to find the probable location of the V211 hospital, but as of the writing of this document, no further information regarding JTFFA search results of the V211 hospital area has been made public. Source: Task Force Omega Inc.

PFC JAMES L. VAN BENDEGOM

PFC James Van Bendegom was also wounded in the same engagement, treated by one of his own medics, left behind, and then captured by the North Vietnamese. He was last seen alive by other Americans captured in the same battle about one week after his capture at a communist field hospital in Cambodia, not far from his capture location. One of the released Americans was later told by the North Vietnamese commanding officer of his Cambodian prison camp that PFC Van Bendegom had died in their field hospital of the wounds he had received on the 12th of July. Van Bendegom was categorized as a Prisoner of War, and then assigned case # 0762 and declared "dead/body not recovered" in May 1973. His death was also tentatively correlated to the same doctor's report that correlated Schiele's case.

SSG NATHAN B. HENRY

The editor of *P.O.W. Publications* published a short interview given by SSG Nathan Henry in 1977. This interview was posted on <pownetwork.org> web site and is the source of the information used to create the narrative about SSG Henry. In 1997 Paul Judge (brother of Charles Judge) made contact with Henry, both by mail and telephone, and conducted a short interview in an attempt to find more information about his brother. For ease of reading, both interviews have been combined.

At the time of his capture Henry was a PFC, but because of Department of the Army policy, he was promoted while in captivity. In his first interview Henry indicated that he was a RTO (radio-telephone operator) at his time of capture. In his second interview Henry revealed that he had been an RTO in the headquarters platoon and was wounded in the back when the radio (PRC-25) he was carrying was hit by a rifle bullet.

Henry did not have any information about the 3rd platoon that was pinned down, but was able to recall some information after Bravo Company went to 3rd platoon's rescue and was caught in the same ambush. He stated that both the company commander and the FO were killed early in the fighting and from that time on, the situation degraded into confusion. Neither Henry or the other RTO were able to get anyone on their radios.

When Henry was captured, he only remembers seeing dead soldiers around him. He didn't see the other POWs from Bravo Company until after they were grouped together across the border. His captors spoke relatively good English. At the time of his capture, Henry was puzzled why he and the others were taken prisoners, as this was something the NVA had not done before. During his captivity, the only other POWs (besides his small group) that they saw were pilots. According to the 1977 interview, Henry considers himself to be lucky to have been taken prisoner.

The one survivor of whom Henry was aware was Stanley. It seems that after the war, Stanley contacted Henry's family and told them of how he had been shot by the NVA, left

for dead; and crawled off into the jungle where he was later found. Like the other POW families, Henry's family never knew he was alive until he was released on the 5th of March 1973. Henry currently resides in Tennessee.

SGT CORDINE McMURRAY

The story and interview about SGT Cordine McMurray was published in *The Detroit News* on the 30th of April 2000. McMurray was 60 years old at the time of his interview. At the time of his capture, he was the Platoon Sergeant of the 3rd platoon of Bravo Company. McMurray related to the reporter how he and his four fellow prisoners were tied together by a rope and literally hung on to one another for survival. McMurray said: *"During the trip north to North Vietnam, we were crossing a bamboo bridge and one of the guys slipped. We held him up."* Below them was a deep river filled with big rocks. *"You could see the depth of the river and also the rocks below. Either you would have fallen in the river and drowned, or hit the rocks and died. If he had fallen, we all would have fallen in and drowned."* When asked by the reporter about the others captured with him, McMurray replied: *"Two of them died within two days of our initial capture."* McMurray continued his story and remembered: *"I still think about the day some Air Force planes flew over us while we were being transported by the North Vietnamese soldiers and just hoping those planes didn't fire on us."* The reporter concluded the interview with comments about the end of the war and how McMurray had accepted it all. In a followup story on the 8th of May 2000, McMurray told another person that *"Sometimes you try to get away from it, but you know you can't - it's who you are. I got shot up and I still have shrapnel in my leg. It brings it back. I got shot in the shoulder and face and I got a hand grenade in my right leg."* After his release in the Spring of 1973, McMurray stayed in the Army and made it a career. He retired as a Sergeant Major.

PFC RICHARD R. PERRICONE

PFC Richard R. Perricone's story came from three sources; the book *We Came Home*, an interview in a local newspaper, *The Daily News*, and an interview with Paul Judge, the brother of one of the Bravo Company men killed on the 12th of July, 1967. Instead of trying to sort out the comments made by the two reporters, Judge, and Perricone, I have taken the text from all three sources and combined them into a single story, as all the facts came from Perricone anyway. The one thing that is important to know, but doesn't fit into Perricone's story, is that his family had not known that he had been captured until the day of his release. His family had believed all that time that he was dead and an MIA.

PFC Perricone was assigned to the 3rd platoon of Bravo Company. On the 12th of July 1967, his platoon, under the command of 2LT Gaylord Nootz, was ambushed and overrun. Prior to leaving their company patrol base that morning, Perricone remembered that some of the men in the 18-man platoon (out of the 30 authorized) had complained to the company commander about the shortage of people if they walked into trouble that day. It wasn't just this particular day that concerned the men of 3rd platoon, they had been

terrified during this whole mission about the shortage of personnel. They knew they didn't have enough people to put up much of a defense.

The ambush was very intense and short; maybe no more than 15 minutes. The NVA were so close that 3rd platoon could hear them talking to each other in the elephant grass around them. Perricone was assigned a radio (PRC-25) to carry. During the battle he got on the radio and called for help. He said that he could not get anyone to answer him. He was able to contact a group of jet fighters that were loaded with napalm, but the pilots told him they could not help because they had been told to "hold." Perricone begged for help, but couldn't get anyone to answer. He finally took the radio off and threw it away.

Cordine McMurray was Perricone's platoon sergeant. Perricone remembers that during the battle McMurray yelled at him to watch out for an NVA behind a tree stump that was between them. When Perricone tried to shoot the NVA, he missed and wounded McMurray in the face and ear. It was not a serious wound, but McMurray gave him a hard time about it while they were POWs. The NVA behind the stump threw a hand grenade at Perricone. When it exploded, it knocked him unconscious, but other than some minor cuts, it didn't do any serious damage.

Coming-to on the battlefield, Perricone awoke to find a North Vietnamese soldier going through his pockets. The NVA thought he was dead, so he lay still, pretending to be. After searching him, they cut off his boots. Thinking the NVA were not watching him, Perricone moved, but the NVA saw the movement, rushed back and jumped on him. He tried to grab a knife from one of the NVA, but they quickly tied him up with commo wire; his hands were tied so tight that the circulation was cut off. Perricone had to watch as the NVA searched the other American bodies around him. If they found someone alive, Perricone said that the NVA executed him with a shot to the head. Checking himself over, he found that he had sustained shrapnel wounds to one of his arms, and had been shot in one leg. His capture, along with seven other soldiers, began an ordeal that for him was to last 2,064 days.

After the battle was over, an Army helicopter flew into the battle area. The NVA stopped what they were doing and shoved Perricone to the ground. As the helicopter passed directly over Perricone, the NVA opened fire on it and drove it off.

Perricone was moved quickly across the Cambodian border by his captors, where he was turned over to the headquarters of the 66th NVA Regiment, who moved him to the B-3 Front headquarters. There he received some treatment for his wounds. His first stop was a jungle camp about 20 miles inside Cambodia, where he spent the next four months. He met two other American POWs from another unit there.

The huts in the camp were constructed of small trees cut and laid together, each about three inches apart. The roof coverings were made of large leaves. The beds were constructed of strips of bamboo tied together with small vines. There were stocks that ran

the whole length of the bed that were made from the trunks of two trees, each about five inches in diameter. At night the prisoners had to put their legs in the stocks.

The prisoner's daily routine generally consisted of getting up at 0530, and eating their first meal at 0700, which usually consisted two-to-three cups of rice and the tops of sweet potato plants. Then they would just lay around all day. At 1600 they were given their second and last meal of the day, and then between 1730 and 1800, locked up again for the night. Bathing was restricted to about once every seven to 10 days, depending which guard was on duty.

In the first days Perricone didn't know what they were going to do to him. He was worried about torture, that they'd pull his fingernails out or something worse. They didn't do that, they just beat him so badly, they broke his nose. He and the other prisoners were kept in a thatched hut, their feet in the stocks at night. They were forbidden to talk to each other, so they devised a method of communicating by singing, which for some reason the guards permitted. Because their prison camp was so close to the border, Perricone and the others in his hut made a decision that they should try to escape.

In their planning they decided that if they could escape and head south, they would probably be rescued. Because Perricone was the healthiest, it was decided he would be the one to jump the guard. Waiting until the dumbest guard was on duty (they called him "Elvis" because of his long sideburns), Perricone jumped him and took him out with a rock. The three prisoners then ran as fast as they could in the direction they thought was south. Because of their poor health, the group couldn't stay together. Shortly they heard some shots and then they were captured again, all except for one guy. As soon as they were back in their prison camp, they were beaten severely with sticks. A few days later a Viet Cong (VC) guerrilla came into the camp with a sack dripping blood. The other prisoners thought they were going to be shown the escapee's head. Instead, the VC took a bloody shirt out of the sack. The shirt had the missing prisoner's name on it and about 20 bullet holes in it. The VC told the prisoners that was all that was left of their friend.

The prisoners were held in their jungle camp until Thanksgiving Day 1969, when they began a three-week trek to North Vietnam. Along the way Perricone remembers passing truckloads of soldiers and supplies moving south to fight the Americans. At one point during their long walk to North Vietnam, they met two other captive American soldiers. At some point along the trail north, two captives (unclear which ones) became ill, were taken off into the jungle, executed, and their bodies were left behind. Upon arrival at their destination in Hanoi, they were interned in the Hoa Lo Prison, which eventually became known as the "Hanoi Hilton." Perricone was kept locked in a cement room with other prisoners, most of whom were pilots. Those prisoners who "misbehaved" were placed in solitary. The prisoners were told that they were never going home; that they would be tried as war criminals after the war. They were shown movies of anti-war protesters in the States, which hurt the prisoners to see. Even though Perricone was confined to a locked cement room in a North Vietnamese prison, it was still better than where he had come

from. The sanitary conditions were greatly improved, and he heard news of what was going on back in the States.

The more recent prisoners were able to tell the others about the short skirts girls were wearing, about "flower power," free love, and new cars. They were even allowed to listen to American music. The North Vietnamese would play Connie Francis records, but always called her Francis Connie. The prisoners ate pumpkins and cabbage, and were sometimes even given bread. The number one topic of prisoner discussion was food. They would talk about how great it would be to go out for pancakes, or to have a big steak.

Perricone remembers the December 1972 bombing of Hanoi very vividly. His room had no windows, but he did have a small ventilation opening in the ceiling. It was through this small opening he was able to see flashes of bright light and hear sirens. He could also hear surface-to-air missiles being launched next to the prison compound. The 1973 carpet bombings came very close to the prison. Individual bombing runs seemed to last three or four minutes; the prisoners were terrified of being killed in these raids after all the time of being sick and being held in captivity.

Some prisoners cracked under the pressure, strain, and hardship of being confined so long. Perricone does not condemn those who complied with the North Vietnamese; they were allowed to write home and were even given a few privileges. During captivity in the north, some POWs just gave up and died. The NVA were constantly asking the POWs "How many innocent people did you kill?" and telling them that they were going to be put on trial as "war criminals," or that "they were never going home," and "Nixon was spending all their money on the war." Perricone tells others that the North Vietnamese were a strange people. Trying to explain what a waffle iron was, or that the American population could have two eggs for breakfast every morning if they wanted to was beyond the comprehension of Perricone's captors.

He endured until that day in March 1973 when the North Vietnamese released him, sending him home with a plastic bag containing candy and toiletries, including a metal comb made from recycled, shot-down U.S. planes. Perricone still has the gray and maroon striped pajamas he wore as prisoner.

Upon his arrival at Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines, two of Perricone's long-held dreams came true: he had a steak dinner and he was given a bar of soap and a long, hot shower. His homecoming was very emotional. Family, friends, and thousands of well-wisher lined the streets to welcome him home. But like so many people who suffered tremendous hardships during the war, Perricone endured nightmares for at least the first three years home. Eventually his life regained some sense of normality. Today Richard Perricone is married, has a family, and lives in New York City.

SSG MARTIN S. FRANK

The source of the information about SSG Martin S. Frank came from the "pownetwork.org" on the internet, which cited the book *We Came Home*, published by P.O.W. Publications in 1977. In the short narrative SSG Frank provided a few details about his background prior to his capture. He began his personal story with his capture and said, "*My first two and half years were spent in the jungle prison camp in South Vietnam. We walked to North Vietnam. At one time I was down to 95 pounds, and at the time of my release I was back up to 130 pounds.*" Perricone said that Marty Frank was also wounded, and that they used to tease him about that while they were POWs; he had been shot in the buttock.

SSG STANLEY A. NEWELL

The first source of the information about SSG Stanley A. Newell came from the "pownetwork.org" on the internet, which cited the book *We Came Home*, published by P.O.W. Publications in 1977. The author stated that SSG Newell was first classified as missing in action (MIA). It wasn't until a Japanese photographer produced a picture of three POWs that his family was able to identify him. The author continued his description of SSG Newell's homecoming and described his reaction to seeing his family and friends again. The narrative closed with the facts that Newell retired from the Army as a Major, had become a teacher, and resides in Alabama. Like the other enlisted POWs, SP4 Newell was promoted during captivity. At the time of his release, he was a Staff Sergeant.

The second source of information is a U.S. Air Force Oral History Interview # K239.0512-1778 taken 16 December 1987. The following is an excerpt from that source:

"12 July 1967. I won't forget that one; that's for sure. We had been on Operation Paul Revere [actually Francis Marion], I think that was it. Our unit was on a search-and-destroy mission. That's just looking for bad guys. We had been up right near the Cambodian border at the base in the Chu Pong Mountains as you pass through the Ia Drang Valley. You might have heard the code name for that. They called it the Ball Park—just as flat as this table. While we had been up there, we had gotten some word that some of the bad guys—a big force, the 96th or 97th B Regiment [actually the 66th], something like this, now how much truth there is in all that, shit-house rumors there—were moving in on us. There might be some validity to that because they started pulling us back, moving us back towards the firebase. The second morning that we had been moving, one of the sister companies, I think it was Charlie Company, but I'm not sure, had some contact early in the morning. I think it was 10 or 12 enemy soldiers that had probed their line. You know, they come up early in the mornings or at night and fire. Charlie Company sent some people out to chase them, which really we shouldn't have done anyway. We shouldn't have done that. The two company commanders were on the phone together, on the horn, and they sent our platoon out, mine, to set up a blocking force. Charlie Company was moving them this way, and we were going to put up a blocking force.

"We'd been out 30 or 45 minutes, and we got a call that said the platoon that Charlie Company had sent out was in heavy contact and had casualties and for us to move over to help. We said okay. We took off, and I guess we walked a click or two maybe. It doesn't take long to walk a click or two in the Ia Drang Valley because it's just real flat. Well, we got within sight, and we could see the firing and stuff like this, so I guess we just kind of relaxed a little bit. We walked into an ambush, just big time, and we got pinned down. Now you've got one element of each company within 600 or 700 meters of each other, and we are talking to the company, telling them that this isn't so good out here. So they move out to help us. I found this out later because the company commander's RTO was also captured. Just as soon as they left the perimeter from where we had set up the night before, they walked into an ambush. Now you've got the classic example of just separate and divide or divide and conquer. All this didn't mean much to me then because I didn't think about it, just later. I guess three or four hours later I got captured. We just got overrun. It was kind of like General Custer, where in the Hell did all those guys come from?"

FOUR OF BRAVO COMPANY'S POWs



Photo courtesy of Nathan Henry. Photograph taken by an unidentified Japanese journalist traveling with the North Vietnamese sometime late July or early August 1967 while the POWs were "on the trail." Depicted from left-to-right are Martin Frank, Nathan Henry, Richard Perricone, and Stanley Newell. A point of interest in the photograph is the two guards to the left of the POWs. The front one of the two is holding several strands of rope or cord that are attached to the POWs, while the second guard is aiming an AK-47 at them. The POW on the right, Stanley Martin, has his left arm in a sling.

APPENDIX F

BATTLE CASUALTY RECORDS

HEADQUARTERS
AND
HEADQUARTERS
COMPANY

4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD

— Personal —

Last Name: Combs
First Name: Tyrone
Middle Name: None
Home of Record (official): Dayton
State (official): Ohio
Date of Birth: Tuesday, 30 October 1945
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Specialist Fifth Class
Serial Number: 52653709
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-5
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 91B40 (Medical NCO)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Headquarters & Headquarters Company (Attached to Bravo Company)

— Action —

Start of Tour: Thursday, 17 November 1966
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 21
Casualty Type: (A1) Hostile, Died
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 056

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD**

— Personal —

Last Name: Crain
First Name: Ronald
Middle Name: Edward
Home of Record (official): Jonesboro
State (official): Arkansas
Date of Birth: Saturday, 30 March 1946
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Specialist Fourth Class
Serial Number: 18710789
Component: Regular
Pay Grade: E-4
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 91B20 (Medical NCO)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Headquarters & Headquarters Company (Attached to Bravo Company)

— Action —

Start of Tour: Saturday, 10 June 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 21
Casualty Type: (A3) Hostile, Died While Missing
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 057

4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD

— Personal —

Last Name: Noe
First Name: Floyd
Middle Name: Russell
Home of Record (official): Huntington
State (official): Indiana
Date of Birth: Wednesday, 29 October 1947
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Private First Class
Serial Number: 16820966
Component: Regular
Pay Grade: E-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 91B20 (Medical NCO)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Headquarters & Headquarters Company (Attached to Bravo Company)

— Action —

Start of Tour: Wednesday, 14 June 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 19
Casualty Type: (A1) Hostile, Died
Reason: Multiple Fragmentation Wounds (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 062

BRAVO COMPANY

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD**

— Personal —

Last Name: Claud
First Name: Pernell
Middle Name: Russell
Home of Record (official): Newport News
State (official): Virginia
Date of Birth: Tuesday, 15 April 1947
Sex: Male
Race: Negro
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Specialist Fourth Class
Serial Number: 52685687
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-4
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B20 (Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company

— Action —

Start of Tour: Thursday, 10 November 1966
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 20
Casualty Type: (A3) Hostile, Died While Missing
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 056

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD**

– Personal –

Last Name: Coleman
First Name: Gary
Middle Name: Terrence
Home of Record (official): Alameda
State (official): California
Date of Birth: Monday, 23 October 1944
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Married

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Private First Class
Serial Number: 56826172
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B10 (Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company

— Action —

Start of Tour: Tuesday, 9 May 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 22
Casualty Type: (A3) Hostile, Died While Missing
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 056

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD**

— Personal —

Last Name: Echols
First Name: Robert
Middle Name: Edwin
Home of Record (official): Bowman
State (official): Georgia
Date of Birth: Thursday, 19 February 1948
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Private First Class
Serial Number: 53448882
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B10 (Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company

— Action —

Start of Tour: Friday, 24 February 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 19
Casualty Type: (A1) Hostile, Died
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 057

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD**

— Personal —

Last Name: Fox
First Name: Gerald
Middle Name: Lawrence
Home of Record (official): New York
State (official): New York
Date of Birth: Thursday, 20 February 1947
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Private First Class
Serial Number: 51612724
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B10 (Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company

— Action —

Start of Tour: Sunday, 26 February 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 20
Casualty Type: (A1) Hostile, Died
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 058

4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD

— Personal —

Last Name: Fullilove
First Name: Willie
Middle Name: Ketchery
Home of Record (official): Chicago
State (official): Illinois
Date of Birth: Thursday, 1 August 1940
Sex: Male
Race: Negro
Marital Status: Married

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Private First Class
Serial Number: 54808401
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B10 (Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company

— Action —

Start of Tour: Monday, 13 March 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 26
Casualty Type: (A3) Hostile, Died While Missing
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 058

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD**

– Personal –

Last Name: Gibson
First Name: Eddie
Middle Name: Carl
Home of Record (official): Cleves
State (official): Ohio
Date of Birth: Thursday, 1 April 1948
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Private First Class
Serial Number: 51942114
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B10 (Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company

— Action —

Start of Tour: Monday, 13 March 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 19
Casualty Type: (A1) Hostile, Died
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 058

4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD

— Personal —

Last Name: Groth
First Name: Stephen
Middle Name: James
Home of Record (official): Enderlin
State (official): North Dakota
Date of Birth: Friday, 12 January 1945
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Specialist Fourth Class
Serial Number: 27157601
Component: Regular
Pay Grade: E-4
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B20 (Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company

— Action —

Start of Tour: Tuesday, 10 January 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 22
Casualty Type: (A3) Hostile, Died While Missing
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 058

4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD

— Personal —

Last Name: Harlan
First Name: John
Middle Name: Alvin
Home of Record (official): Johnson City
State (official): Tennessee
Date of Birth: Thursday, 17 April 1947
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Married

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Private First Class
Serial Number: 53448286
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B10 (Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company

— Action —

Start of Tour: Sunday, 12 March 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 20
Casualty Type: (A3) Hostile, Died While Missing
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 061

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD**

— Personal —

Last Name: Hickman
First Name: Wandle
Middle Name: Lewis
Home of Record (official): Columbus
State (official): Ohio
Date of Birth: Tuesday, 10 June 1941
Sex: Male
Race: Negro
Marital Status: Married

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Private First Class
Serial Number: 51644036
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B10 (Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company

— Action —

Start of Tour: Monday, 13 March 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 26
Casualty Type: (A3) Hostile, Died While Missing
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 059

4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD

— Personal —

Last Name: Horn
First Name: David
Middle Name: Michael
Home of Record (official): Dayton
State (official): Ohio
Date of Birth: Sunday, 3 August 1947
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Private First Class
Serial Number: 51798261
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11C10 (Indirect Fire Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company, Weapons Platoon

— Action —

Start of Tour: Friday, 7 April 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 19
Casualty Type: (A3) Hostile, Died While Missing
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 059

4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD

— Personal —

Last Name: Hughes
First Name: Jerry
Middle Name: Lynn
Home of Record (official): Center
State (official): Texas
Date of Birth: Wednesday, 17 July 1946
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Sergeant
Serial Number: 54379803
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-5
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11D40 (Scout)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company

— Action —

Start of Tour: Sunday, 20 November 1966
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 20
Casualty Type: (A1) Hostile, Died
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 059

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD**

— Personal —

Last Name: Jamison
First Name: Rockwell
Middle Name: Grant
Home of Record (official): Los Angeles
State (official): California
Date of Birth: Wednesday, 9 May 1945
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Married

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Sergeant
Serial Number: 56400982
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-5
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B40 (Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company

— Action —

Start of Tour: Thursday, 16 February 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 22
Casualty Type: (A1) Hostile, Died
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 060

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY REPORT**

— Personal —

Last Name: Judge Jr.
First Name: Charles
Middle Name: Mark
Home of Record (official): Short Hills
State (official): New Jersey
Date of Birth: Monday, 30 September 1946
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single



— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Specialist Fourth Class
Serial Number: 12770448
Component: Regular
Pay Grade: E-4
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B20 (Infantryman)
Awards: Combat Infantry Badge, Bronze Star for Valor, and the Purple Heart
Unit: Bravo Company, 3rd Platoon, 1st Squad

— Action —

Start of Tour: Tuesday, 29 November 1966
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 20
Casualty Type: (A3) Hostile, Died While Missing
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 060



**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD**

— Personal —

Last Name: Lanier
First Name: Jerry
Middle Name: Don
Home of Record (official): Siloam Springs
State (official): Arkansas
Date of Birth: Tuesday, 9 April 1946
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Married

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Specialist Fourth Class
Serial Number: 54382959
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-4
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B20 (Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company

— Action —

Start of Tour: Monday, 12 December 1966
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 21
Casualty Type: (A3) Hostile, Died While Missing
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 060

4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD

— Personal —

Last Name: McKee
First Name: Milford
Middle Name: Gerald
Home of Record (official): Sloans Valley
State (official): Kentucky
Date of Birth: Tuesday, 16 June 1942
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Private First Class
Serial Number: 51942159
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B10 (Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company

— Action —

Start of Tour: Monday, 13 March 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 25
Casualty Type: (A1) Hostile, Died
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 062

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD**

— Personal —

Last Name: Miller
First Name: Joseph
Middle Name: Loran
Home of Record (official): Hopkinsville
State (official): Kentucky
Date of Birth: Friday, 25 April 1947
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Private First Class
Serial Number: 53906763
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B10 (Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company

— Action —

Start of Tour: Saturday, 25 February 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 20
Casualty Type: (A3) Hostile, Died While Missing
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 061

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD**

— Personal —

Last Name: McKee
First Name: Milford
Middle Name: Gerald
Home of Record (official): Sloans Valley
State (official): Kentucky
Date of Birth: Tuesday, 16 June 1942
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Private First Class
Serial Number: 51942159
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B10 (Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company

— Action —

Start of Tour: Monday, 13 March 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 25
Casualty Type: (A1) Hostile, Died
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 062

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD**

– Personal –

Last Name: Miller
First Name: Joseph
Middle Name: Loran
Home of Record (official): Hopkinsville
State (official): Kentucky
Date of Birth: Friday, 25 April 1947
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Private First Class
Serial Number: 53906763
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B10 (Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company

— Action —

Start of Tour: Saturday, 25 February 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 20
Casualty Type: (A3) Hostile, Died While Missing
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 061

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD**

— Personal —

Last Name: Montgomery
First Name: Owen
Middle Name: Raymond
Home of Record (official): Lost Creek
State (official): Kentucky
Date of Birth: Thursday, 20 May 1943
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Sergeant
Serial Number: 15639401
Component: Regular
Pay Grade: E-5
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B4H (Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company, 3rd Platoon

— Action —

Start of Tour: Thursday, 22 June 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 24
Casualty Type: (A3) Hostile, Died While Missing
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 059

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY REPORT**

– Personal –

Last Name: Nootz
First Name: Gaylord
Middle Name: Eugene
Home of Record (official): Rialto
State (official): California
Date of Birth: Tuesday, 14 November 1944
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Second Lieutenant
Serial Number: O5334700
Component: Reserve
Pay Grade: O-1
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 1542 (Infantry Officer)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company, 3rd Platoon

— Action —

Start of Tour: Friday, 2 June 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 22
Casualty type: (A3) Hostile, Died While Missing
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 8813
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 062

4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD

— Personal —

Last Name: Polizzi
First Name: Salvatore
Middle Name: Frank
Home of Record (official): Wantagh
State (official): New York
Date of Birth: Friday, 27 June 1947
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Private First Class
Serial Number: 52750577
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B10 (Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company

— Action —

Start of Tour: Thursday, 22 June 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 20
Casualty Type: (A3) Hostile, Died While Missing
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 062

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD**

— Personal —

Last Name: Rushton
First Name: Brian
Middle Name: Wayne
Home of Record (official): Memphis
State (official): Tennessee
Date of Birth: Wednesday, 2 April 1941
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Married



— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Captain
Serial Number: O5322448
Component: Reserve

Pay Grade: O-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 1542 (Infantry Officer)
Awards: Silver Star
Unit: Bravo Company, Headquarters Platoon

— Action —

Start of Tour: Thursday, 8 June 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 26
Casualty Type: (A3) Hostile, Died While Missing
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 063

4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD

— Personal —

Last Name: Sexton
First Name: Troy
Middle Name: Laverne
Home of Record (official): Seattle
State (official): Washington
Date of Birth: Tuesday, 4 February 1947
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Private First Class
Serial Number: 56957255
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11C10 (Indirect Fire Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company, Weapons Platoon

— Action —

Start of Tour: Friday, 14 April 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 20
Casualty Type: (A3) Hostile, Died While Missing
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 064

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD**

— Personal —

Last Name: Strange
First Name: Robert
Middle Name: Allen
Home of Record (official): Northville
State (official): Michigan
Date of Birth: Friday, 15 November 1946
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Private First Class
Serial Number: 54950595
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B10 (Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company

— Action —

Start of Tour: Monday, 28 November 1966
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 20
Casualty Type: (A3) Hostile, Died While Missing
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 064

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD**

— Personal —

Last Name: Sexton
First Name: Troy
Middle Name: Laverne
Home of Record (official): Seattle
State (official): Washington
Date of Birth: Tuesday, 4 February 1947
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Private First Class
Serial Number: 56957255
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11C10 (Indirect Fire Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company, Weapons Platoon

— Action —

Start of Tour: Friday, 14 April 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 20
Casualty Type: (A3) Hostile, Died While Missing
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 064

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD**

— Personal —

Last Name: Strange
First Name: Robert
Middle Name: Allen
Home of Record (official): Northville
State (official): Michigan
Date of Birth: Friday, 15 November 1946
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Private First Class
Serial Number: 54950595
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B10 (Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company

— Action —

Start of Tour: Monday, 28 November 1966
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 20
Casualty Type: (A3) Hostile, Died While Missing
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 064

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD**

— Personal —

Last Name: Waguespack
First Name: Gary
Middle Name: Louis
Home of Record (official): New Orleans
State (official): Louisiana
Date of Birth: Thursday, 13 February 1947
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Private First Class
Serial Number: 54606882
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B10 (Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company

— Action —

Start of Tour: Tuesday, 9 May 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 20
Casualty Type: (A1) Hostile, Died
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 065

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD**

— Personal —

Last Name: Williams
First Name: Floyd
Middle Name: Charles
Home of Record (official): Hornbeck
State (official): Louisiana
Date of Birth: Saturday, 29 July 1944
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Private First Class
Serial Number: 54379531
Component: Selective Service
Pay Grade: E-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11C10 (Indirect Fire Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company, Weapons Platoon

— Action —

Start of Tour: Tuesday, 13 December 1966
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 22
Casualty Type: (A1) Hostile, Died
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 066

4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD

— Personal —

Last Name: Williams
First Name: Moses
Middle Name: None
Home of Record (official): Columbus
State (official): Georgia
Date of Birth: Friday, 10 January 1941
Sex: Male
Race: Negro
Marital Status: Married

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Sergeant
Serial Number: 14718863
Component: Regular
Pay Grade: E-5
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 11B40 (Infantryman)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Company

— Action —

Start of Tour: Monday, 12 June 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 26
Casualty Type: (A1) Hostile, Died
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 066

BRAVO BATTERY

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
4TH BATTALION, 42ND ARTILLERY REGIMENT
CASUALTY REPORT**

— Personal —

Last Name: Bragg Jr.
First Name: Fred
Middle Name: Garland
Home of Record (official): Etna
State (official): Ohio
Date of Birth: Friday, 24 April 1942
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single
— Military —



Branch: Army
Rank: First Lieutenant
Serial Number: O5419338
Component: Reserve
Pay Grade: O-2
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 1193 (Field Artillery Unit Commander)
Awards: Distinguished Service Cross
Unit: Bravo Battery, 4/42 Artillery, Attached to Bravo Company, 1/12 Infantry

— Action —

Start of Tour: Saturday, 23 July 1966
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 25
Casualty Type: (A1) Hostile, Died
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 055

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
4TH BATTALION, 42ND ARTILLERY REGIMENT
CASUALTY RECORD**

— Personal —

Last Name: Charboneau
First Name: LeRoy
Middle Name: Harland
Home of Record (official): Cheboygan
State (official): Michigan
Date of Birth: Friday, 14 March 1947
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Corporal
Serial Number: 55895329
Component: Selective Service
Posthumous Promotion As Indicated
Pay Grade: E-3
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 13A10 (Artillery)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Battery, 4/42 Artillery, Attached to Bravo Company, 1/12 Infantry

— Action —

Start of Tour: Saturday, 22 April 1967
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 20
Casualty Type: (A1) Hostile, Died
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 056

4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
4TH BATTALION, 42ND ARTILLERY REGIMENT
CASUALTY REPORT

— Personal —

Last Name: Haider
First Name: James
Middle Name: Michael
Home of Record (official): St. Paul
State (official): Minnesota
Date of Birth: Thursday, 9 May 1946
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Married

— Military —

Branch: Army
Rank: Sergeant
Serial Number: 55848957
Component: Selective Service
Posthumous Promotion As Indicated
Pay Grade: E-4
Military Occupational Specialty Code: 13A20 (Artillery)
Awards: Unknown
Unit: Bravo Battery, 4/42 Artillery, Attached to Bravo Company, 1/12 Infantry

— Action —

Start of Tour: Tuesday, 20 December 1966
Date of Casualty: Wednesday, 12 July 1967
Age At Time of Loss: 21
Casualty Type: (A3) Hostile, Died While Missing
Reason: Gun, Small Arms Fire (Ground Casualty)
Country: South Vietnam
Province: Pleiku
Operation: Francis Marion
Location: YA 850131
The Wall: Panel 23E - Row 059

APPENDIX G

AWARDS

HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM
APO San Francisco 96262

GENERAL ORDERS
NUMBER 4664

14 September 1967

AWARD OF THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

1. TC 320. The following AWARD is announced posthumously:

BRAGG, FRED GARLAND, JR., FIRST LIEUTENANT, Artillery, United States Army
Battery B, 4th BN, 42nd Arty, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

Awarded: Distinguished Service Cross

Date action: 12 July 1967

Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason:

For extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam, while serving with Battery B, 4th Battalion, 42nd Artillery, 4th Infantry Division. First Lieutenant Bragg distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 12 July 1967 while serving as artillery forward observer with an infantry company on a search and destroy mission near the Cambodian border in the Central Highlands. When his company was surrounded and the company commander was killed, Lieutenant Bragg immediately took command and directed extremely deadly artillery fire on the insurgent forces. He bravely moved among his men giving encouragement and regrouping them into a more secure defense although he was fully exposed to intense mortar and automatic weapons fire. Seriously wounded, he continued to direct air strikes on the advancing enemy until a mortar round destroyed his only remaining radio. Staying in the open, he poured round after round of deadly fire into the advancing enemy force. He gave his life while bravely leading his men in the face of overwhelming odds. First Lieutenant Bragg's extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty, at the cost of his life, were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

Authority: by direction of the President under provisions of Executive Order 11046, 24 August 1962.

FOR THE COMMANDER

HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM
APO San Francisco 96262

GENERAL ORDERS
NUMBER 5534

31 October 1967

AWARD OF THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

1. TC 320. The following AWARD is announced:

RASSER, GARY V., SECOND LIEUTENANT, Infantry, United States Army
Co B, 1st BN, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

Awarded: Distinguished Service Cross

Date action: 12 July 1967

Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason:

For extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam, while serving with Company B, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, 4th Infantry Division. Second Lieutenant Rasser distinguished himself by exceptional valorous actions on 12 July 1967 while serving as a platoon leader of an infantry company on a reinforcing mission deep in hostile territory. While moving through dense jungle to relieve a beleaguered friendly unit, his company was savagely attacked by an estimated North Vietnamese regiment. Completely disregarding his own safety, Lieutenant Rasser exposed himself to withering hostile fire to deploy his platoon and provide security for the rest of the company. The enemy directed a hail of mortar, rocket and recoilless rifle fire against his position killing the company commander and inflicting numerous casualties on his men, but he immediately took command and moved into the open to direct air and artillery strikes on the furious hostile onslaught. Fighting fiercely, he directed deadly rifle fire on the advancing enemy until he ran out of ammunition. Grabbing the weapon of a fallen comrade, he dashed among his men to rally them against the determined Viet Cong. As the hostile soldiers moved closer, he secured a grenade launcher and fired deadly rounds into the enemy concentrations, heedless of the bullets and shrapnel flying all around him. The attackers concentrated their fire on him as he moved to a machine gun, but he inflicted numerous casualties with extremely accurate bursts. Unable to stop the overwhelming assault, he led his men in a fierce charge through the enemy lines to a safer position. Moving into a tight perimeter, his inspired men fought furiously to defeat the numerically superior force. His fearless leadership in the face of grave danger contributed greatly to the destruction of the enemy. Second lieutenant Rasser's extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

Authority: by direction of the President under provisions of Executive Order 11046,
24 August 1962.

FOR THE COMMANDER

G2

HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM
APO San Francisco 96262

GENERAL ORDERS
NUMBER 5594

1 November 1967

AWARD OF THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

1. TC 320. The following AWARD is announced:

THOMPSON, BYRON W., SPECIALIST FOUR E-4, United States Army
Co B, 1st BN, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

Awarded: Distinguished Service Cross

Date action: 12 July 1967

Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason:

For extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam, while serving with Company B, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, 4th Infantry Division. Specialist Four Thompson distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 12 July 1967 while serving as point man of the lead platoon of an infantry company on a reinforcing mission deep in hostile territory. While moving through dense jungle toward a beleaguered friendly unit, his company was savagely attacked by an estimated North Vietnamese regiment firing rockets, mortars and recoilless rifles. Completely ignoring his own safety, Specialist Thompson volunteered to provide rear security for a withdrawal despite bullets and shrapnel striking all around him. He was wounded while fighting through the first line of the enemy, but refused medical aid and inflicted heavy casualties on the attackers with deadly rifle fire. He was seriously wounded and thrown to the ground by an exploding hand grenade while piercing the last enemy positions, but he continued to expose himself to the hostile weapons to cover his comrades. Three enemy soldiers rushed him when he ran out of ammunition soon afterwards, but he unhesitatingly stood his ground in the face of the savage charge and killed two of the attackers with his knife and the third in a furious hand-to-hand battle. Before reaching safety, he killed thirty North Vietnamese soldiers with deadly rifle fire and close-in fighting. His fearless actions, though he was seriously wounded and under intense fire, contributed greatly to the successful withdrawal of his company in the heat of battle against the numerically superior enemy force. Specialist Four Thompson's extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

Authority: by direction of the President under provisions of Executive Order 11046, 24 August 1962.

FOR THE COMMANDER

HEADQUARTERS
4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
APO San Francisco 96262

GENERAL ORDERS
NUMBER 3839

10 November 1967

AWARD OF THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL FOR HEROISM

1. TC 320. The following AWARD is announced:

SEALES, THOMAS G. JR, SECOND LIEUTENANT, Infantry, United States Army
Co C, 1st Bn, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

Awarded: Bronze Star Medal with "V" Device

Date Action: 12 July 1967

Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason:

For heroism in connection with military operations against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. Second Lieutenant Seales distinguished himself while serving as a platoon leader with Company C, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry. On 12 July 1967, Company C was conducting a search and destroy operation near the Ia Pron River when contact was made with a large force of North Vietnamese regulars. Lieutenant Seales quickly deployed his men and directed their fires on the advancing enemy. Constantly exposing himself to the hostile fire, he moved from position to position redistributing ammunition and encouraging his men. As the intensity of the battle increased, Lieutenant Seales chose to withdraw his platoon to the more easily defended company perimeter. Leading his men through two hundred meters of mortar and automatic fire, he bravely waited outside the perimeter until he personally accounted for each individual. Lieutenant Seales' decisive actions and courageous leadership resulted in his platoon sustaining a minimum of casualties while accounting for a large number of enemy dead. His actions are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army.

Authority: By the direction of the President under the provisions of Executive Order 11046, 24 August 1962.

FOR THE COMMANDER

HEADQUARTERS
4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
APO San Francisco 96262

GENERAL ORDERS
NUMBER 4105

25 November 1967

AWARD OF THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL FOR HEROISM

1. TC 320. The following AWARD is announced:

PARKS, ROBERT L. SPECIALIST FIVE E-5, United States Army
Co B, 1st Bn, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

Awarded: Bronze Star Medal with "V" Device

Date Action: 12 July 1967

Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason:

For heroism in connection with military operations against an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. Specialist Parks distinguished himself while serving as a member of the Weapons Platoon with Company B, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry. On 12 July 1967, Company B was conducting a search and destroy mission just north of the Ia Drang River in Quan Le Thanh are of Pleiku province. As they proceeded from their patrol base to reinforce an adjacent company, they came under heavy attack by an estimated regimental-sized force of North Vietnamese regulars. During the initial contact numerous casualties were inflicted and needed immediate medical attention. With complete disregard for his own safety, Specialist Parks left the security of the base camp and made his way through the intense fire to the engaged company. Displaying courage and determination, he moved from position to position administering medical aid to his wounded comrades. Still subjecting himself to the enemy automatic weapons and mortar fire, he successfully executed the aerial evacuation of the casualties. Throughout the battle Specialist Parks' outstanding courage, professionalism, and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

FOR THE COMMANDER

HEADQUARTERS
4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
APO San Francisco 96262

GENERAL ORDERS
NUMBER 2709

26 August 1967

AWARD OF THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL FOR HEROISM

1. TC 320. The following AWARD is announced posthumously:

JUDGE, CHARLES G. JR, SPECIALIST FOUR E-4, United States Army
Co B, 1st Bn, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

Awarded: Bronze Star Medal with "V" Device

Date Action: 12 July 1967

Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason:

For heroism in connection with military operations against an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. On 12 July 1967 Specialist Four Judge distinguished himself while serving as a rifleman in Company B, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry. He joined the unit in December 1966 and soon proved to be a soldier who could be depended upon to do a superior job without supervision. He maintained his cheerful but resolute attitude in the face of constant hardship and danger, and participated willingly in every mission his unit undertook. His effective performance in battle was a source of pride to his whole squad. On 12 July 1967 Specialist Four Judge's platoon was sent to assist another unit in the area of Duc Co. It became engaged with a North Vietnamese Army force estimated at battalion size and was cut off from the company. With the odds against them, they repelled enemy assaults from all sides for hours. He fought courageously until he was mortally wounded. Specialist Four Judge's heroism and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit on himself, his unit and the United States Army.

Authority: By the direction of the President under the provisions of Executive Order 11046, 24 August 1962.

FOR THE COMMANDER

HEADQUARTERS
4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
APO San Francisco 96262

GENERAL ORDERS
NUMBER 2190

24 July 1967

AWARD OF THE PURPLE HEART

1. TC 320. The following AWARDS are announced:

Awarded: Purple Heart

Date Action: 12 July 1967

Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason: For wounds received in connection with military operations against a hostile force.

Authority: By direction of the President under the provisions of AR 672-5-1 and USARPAC Msg 16300 dtd 17 August 1965.

Davenport, Johnathan W., RA15496739, SSG E6, Co B, 4th Engr Bn, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

Thompson, Byron W., US56419800, SP4 E4, Co B, 1st Bn, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

Alexander, Alvy J., US52642470, SP4 E4, Co B, 1st Bn, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

Lopez-Rodriquez, Alberto, US 50183186, SP4 E4, Co B, 1st Bn, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

McMillion, James L., US 54802051, SP4 E4, Co B, 1st Bn, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

Hovis, James E., US53440719, SP4 E4, Co B, 4th Engr Bn, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

Mackey, Robert L., US54437077, SP4 E4, Co B, 1st Bn, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

Lackey, Frank, US53433796, SP4 E4, Co B, 1st Bn, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

Parks, Robert L., RA16856596, SP4 E4, Co B, 1st Bn, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

Gomez, Henoc, US54374150, SP4 E4, Co B, 1st Bn, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

Hagerty, Edward J. III, RA14918275, SP4 E4, Co B, 1st Bn, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

Shelton, Freddie L., US53445874, PFC E3, Co C, 1st Bn, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

Dube, Robert R., US54955997, PFC E3, Co C, 1st Bn, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

Moors, Charles W., US51967380, PFC E3, Co B, 1st Bn, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

Moran, John J., US56927951, PFC E3, Co B, 1st Bn, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

Perttunen, Melvin D., US54956046, PFC E3, Co B, 1st Bn, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

Garty, Thomas A., RA16929427, PFC E3, Co B, 1st Bn, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, APO 96262

FOR THE COMMANDER

APPENDIX H

GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1SG..... | First Sergeant (E-8) pay grade and rank |
| A CO..... | Alpha Company |
| AK-47..... | A 7.62mm assault rifle used by the NVA |
| AO..... | Area of Operation |
| Arc Light | B-52 Bombing Mission |
| ASAP..... | As Soon As Possible |
| B CO..... | Bravo Company |
| B3 Front..... | The NVA headquarters for central South Vietnam |
| Banjo..... | Code name for the daily status report |
| Base Area 702..... | An NVA staging area in Cambodia |
| BDE..... | Brigade |
| BN | Battalion |
| C CO..... | Charlie Company |
| C-Rations..... | Combat or field rations |
| C&C..... | Command and Control |
| Chinook..... | CH-41 troop/cargo transport helicopter |
| Claymore..... | M-18 anti-personnel mine |
| CO..... | Company or Commanding Officer |
| COL..... | Colonel (O-6) pay grade and rank (Full Bird) |
| CP..... | Command Post |
| CPT..... | Captain (O-3) pay grade and rank |
| Daily SitRep..... | Daily Situation Report (Banjo) |
| DefCon..... | DC, Delta Charlie or Defensive Concentrations of mortar and/or artillery fire |
| Distinguished Service Cross..... | Second highest award for heroism |
| Dust Off | Medical Evacuation by UH-1 Helicopter |
| FAC..... | Forward Air Controller |
| Fire Support Base..... | A location where indirect fire resources are consolidated for massed fire |
| FO..... | Indirect fire forward observer (mortar and artillery) |
| FRAG Order..... | An abbreviated operations order |
| FSB | Fire Support Base |
| H&I | Harassing and Interdiction (type of artillery fire) |
| Huey..... | UH-1 Helicopter |
| KIA | Killed In Action |
| Kilometer..... | 1000 meters or 5/8 of a mile |

| | |
|---|---|
| Listening Post..... | A three-man team placed outside the perimeter to listen during periods of darkness or limited visibility to provide early warning |
| LP | Listening Post |
| LT..... | Lieutenant, First (O-2) or Second (O-1) pay grade and rank |
| LTC..... | Lieutenant Colonel (O-5) pay grade and rank |
| LZ | Landing Zone |
| M-79..... | A 40mm grenade launcher |
| MAJ..... | Major (O-4) pay grade and rank |
| MEDIVAC..... | Medical Evacuation, usually an emergency |
| NVA..... | North Vietnamese Army |
| Observation Post..... | A three-man team placed outside the perimeter during daylight to observe to provide early warning |
| OH-13..... | Observation Helicopter (light) |
| Old Man..... | Slang title for the commander officer |
| OP | Observation Post |
| Operation Francis Marion..... | A 4 th Division field operation |
| OPORD..... | A specific operation order |
| PFC..... | Private First Class (E-3) pay grade and rank |
| Pills..... | Anti-malaria pills taken every morning |
| PLT | Platoon (approximately 30 men) |
| Recon Platoon..... | A platoon designed to conduct reconnaissance work |
| Reconnaissance and Surveillance Line..... | An arbitrary control line marked on a map |
| RPG..... | Rocket Propelled Grenade (B-40 and RPG-7) |
| RTO | Radio/Telephone Operator for the PRC-25 radio |
| S3..... | Plans and Operations |
| Saddle Up..... | To put one's personal field equipment on and prepare to move out or depart |
| Screening Mission..... | A field maneuver designed to be used by a small unit to cover a large area for the purpose of detecting enemy infiltration |
| Search-and-Destroy Mission..... | A field mission designed to trap an enemy force and destroy it |
| SGT | Sergeant (E-5) pay grade and rank |

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| SOL..... | Communications Standard Operating Instructions |
| Sortie..... | A word used to describe one or more aircraft who's mission it was to return one or more times for the same task |
| SP..... | Start Point and/or the act of departure |
| SP4 | Specialist Fourth Class (E-4) pay grade and rank |
| SQD | Squad (about 7 - 10 men) |
| SSG | Staff Sergeant (E-6) pay grade and rank |
| Stand-To..... | A specific time in the morning when all personnel are required to be awake and prepared for an attack |
| Strobe Light..... | A battery powered high-intensity flashing signal light for emergencies |
| Sweep..... | A type of patrol conducted to determine if a specified area is free of enemy forces |
| TOC | Tactical Operation Center (The Palace) |
| WIA | Wounded in Action |
| XO..... | Executive Officer (second in command) |

APPENDIX I

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APPENDIX J

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