

Sgt. Joe:

Just call me slow, it may be that I am getting older??

As I remember these men were killed on March 11, 1969:

1. William H Baksdale, ES, from Fyffe Arkansas. B co. 3/12/4<sup>th</sup> division.
2. Wayne Allen Bratz, E4 from Alders, Wisconsin. C co. 3/12/4
3. Milford H. Dingman, ES was KIA
4. Terrell Han, RTO was KIA
5. Sam Holder was KIA
6. Vincent G Lewis from Sacramento California, was KIA
7. Joe Lewis was KIA, his friend Aaron Collins was with Joe when he died
8. Sgt. Jean Martin was KIA
9. John Morris was KIA
10. Kenneth Robinson was KIA
11. Howard Webster was KIA
12. John Weir was KIA

March 11, 1969: at dawn, our CO, Captain Reeves called me to the CP, he had orders from HQ to recon a hill about 2 km south-east from our position. We both knew the danger of this one, as the 4<sup>th</sup> platoon prepared and were leaving the perimeter; Terrell Han the RTO for captain Reeves came running, he said to wait, the CP group had been ordered by HQ to go with us. This included: Cpt. Reeves, Lt. Gilligan, E-7 Dingman, Terrell Han-RTO, a medic, and one other, (6 total). This CP group and the 4<sup>th</sup> platoon, C Company, 3bn, 12 info 4<sup>th</sup> division left the perimeter 21 strong at approximately 0800 hours the morning of 03-11-1969.

We moved out in a south-easterly direction, from our perimeter the terrain slowly dropped as a long narrow ridge with steep, jungle covered, upward slopes on either side. A low morning mist hung, no jungles

sounds: the birds, monkeys and other animals of the jungle, covered mountains were quiet that morning. Approximately 1 km out we bottomed out, we were at the lowest point in a saddle between two vast valleys, behind us a long narrow trail about 1 km back to our perimeter, to our left a sharp drop off into a valley, to our right a drop off; nearly vertical in places, and straight ahead the start of a path that was narrow where we stood, no more than 60 yards wide but widening quickly as the path lead up the hill, our goal, perhaps less than 1/2 km to the military crest.

Our order of movement since we had left the perimeter was: Wayne Bratz on point, Herb Parks, second in line; myself (Max Worthington); Dave Vole, RTO ?; Chris Duer with his M-60; the other 16 men were 15-20 yards back. At this time, about 10:00 hours, Wayne signaled to stop, moving up he said he had just seen two gooks that moved off to his left. Shortly the CO was informed, his orders: we will try to take them prisoners. As the CO was bring up men and trying to position them Wayne said in a low voice, it's an ambush, look, as he turned back to where he saw the two gooks all Hell broke loose. Wayne was in a half standing position, the first shoots form the NVA were small arms and a machinegun; Wayne caught 4-6 rounds in his chest and was down, Herb Parks and Chris were hit. Herb and I moved forward, checked Wayne. He was gone.

Chris took cover behind a large tree to the left and slightly above where Wayne was laying. Chris was pouring M60 rounds into the NVA that were as close as 20-30 yards. Herb Parks and I took cover just right of Wayne behind a log, we had a visual on several NVA moving down into a better fighting position for them. Herb and I returned fire, magazine after magazine, grenade after grenade. It was during this time a received a flesh wound for an AK 47. I looked over to my left, Chris had been hit again and was almost out of M60 ammo, from somewhere 2 newbies came up from our rear, they had ammo, they took cover with Herb and I. The other 15 men that were with the CP group were out of our sight" about 30-50 yards back and down at the bottom of the saddle. They were engaged in a fierce fire fight ... the NVA had set up the ambush on the left side of the saddle, they had waited for those of us on point to pass then

caught Captain Reeves and the other 14 men in a cross fire. I never saw any part of this fire fight, the five of us up the hill had more than we could handle. Shortly, an hour? Our boys in the helicopters arrived, they poured fire in all directions. Really close at time, but needed. Another hour, we slowly took control of the ambush, we pushed the NVA back up the hill, but not without the help of the choppers. Soon the choppers were landing in the saddle, the wounded and dead were being evacuated. As the last helicopter lifted off with Herb and Chris, the NVA were dropping mortars on our position. By this time part of B Company and sec. platoon of Charlie were arriving on our north-west flank. They ran into some NVA and took heavy fire ... I know of 1 KIA and some wounded that we had to take back to the perimeter for evacuation the next morning.

The 12 men listed at the start were all KIA, when the fight was over. Some of these men were from B Company.

As I recall, of the 21 of us that left the perimeter that morning 12 were KIA, 6 were WIA and 3 not hit.

Very sad memories, I can still live that day minute by minute. That day All gave some and Some gave all. I still pray for their families.

It was our job, and we all did it well, we can stand proud and at the same time be sadden by the brother in arms that did not make it that day ..

Take care and may God bless you ..... your friend Max

PS

You're doing a great thing with your bible study

Your friend  
Max W.

God Bless  
Z