

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 1ST BATTALION 12TH INFANTRY
4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
APO San Francisco 96262

AVDDB-121

23 September 1970

SUBJECT: After Action Report of Casualties Resulting from Friendly Mortar
Fire

TO: Whom It May Concern

1. The 2d Bde, 4th Infantry Division initiated combat operations in the Eastern portion of BASE AREA 226, on 19 August 1970. The 1st Bn, 12th Infantry a part of this force was positioned in the northern portion of the 2d Bde AO and conducted search and destroy operations, with emphasis on interdicting enemy movement in the Suoi Ca Valley.
2. On 22 Sept 1970, FRAG ORDER 14-70, HQ's 1-12 Inf, caused the Battalion to reposition its forces in the Eastern portion of B A 226, astride the Suoi CA River, with the mission of interdicting enemy movement in the Suoi Ca Valley. On 23 Sept 70, Co A was ordered to move a platoon sized element to VIC COORD BR819697, with the mission of performing saturation patrolling in that area.
3. a. At approximately 1755 hours 23 Sept 70, in the vicinity of Coord BR819697, the 1st Platoon of Company A, 1-12th Inf, received fifteen(15) rounds of mortar fire on their position. LT Williams, platoon leader of the 1st platoon of Co A, reported that the mortar fire was coming from the northeast on an azimuth of 50 degrees. The incoming mortar rounds started at 1755 hours and ended at approximately 1805 hours.

b. As a result of this incident, 1st platoon, Co A, 1st Bn, 12th Inf, sustained seven(7) casualties. Two KIA's and five(5) WIA's. A dustoff for the casualties was initiated and dustoff 21 evacuated five WIA's at 1828 hours.

c. At 1837 hours, 1-12 Inf received gunships, (GLADIATOR 17), and the gunships expended vicinity BR825705. A request for locations of friendly troops to the east of the Battalion Area of Operations, was made at 1815 hours, to 2d Bde S3, and received the location of Patrol Base Washington at BR841696.

d. The S3 of 2d Brigade informed the Battalion S3 at 1815 hours, that all friendlies in the Area of Operations had checked fire and requested that we do the same. The 1st Bn, 12th Inf checked fire at 1818 hours. The 2d Brigade Commander(Col Culim) and the Bn Cmdr of the 1-12th Inf(LTC Harris) moved to the area of the incident and landed. Col Culim dispatched his HU-ID(Blackjack 18) to LZ UPLIFT with two KIA's(1905 hours).

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e. At 1920 hours HQ's 2d Bde, requested that we attempt to locate a tail fin from the incoming mortar rounds. LTC Harris and LT Parish(FSCCOORD), Co B, 42d arty, performed a crater analysis, at the site of the incident, and determined that the mortar rounds were US type, 81mm, and that the mortar rounds came from the direction of Patrol Base Washington.

f. The Platoon Leader of the 1st Platoon of Co A, 1-12th Inf(LT Williams) performed a resection, and determined his position to be at COORD BR819697. LT Parish received information from his chain of command that the unit occupying Patrol Base Washington was Co E, 3d Bn, 503d Inf, 173d Airborne Division, and that 4.2" mortars and 81mm mortars are located at the Patrol Base.

g. LTC Arthur M. Harris, Commanding Officer of the 1st Bn, 12th Infantry requested that an investigating officer be appointed, who is not a member of the 4th Inf Div, or the 173d Abn Bde, to ascertain responsibility for the incident.

3 Incl

1. Casualty list
2. Route of 1st Plat, Co A, 1-12 Inf
3. Extracts from Official Journal HQ's 1-12 Inf, 23-24 Sept 70

ARTHUR M. HARRIS
LTC INFANTRY
Commanding

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CASUALTY LIST

<u>NAME</u>	<u>KIA</u> <u>GRADE</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>DISPOSITION</u>
Riveira, Robert	SGT	Co A	
Edenton, Hiram	PFC	Co A	
	<u>WIA</u>		
Meriwether, James	SGT	Co A	Frag wd left leg
Gayor, Steve	PFC	Co A	Frag wd right leg
Jungblut, Robert	PFC	Co A	Frag wd left leg & back
Wall, Ronald D	PFC	HHC (MEDIC)	Penetration wd - left leg
Carver, David	SP4	Co A	Injured in groin

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DATE: 231755 Sept 70
MSG NO: 7
TO: 2d Bde S3
FROM: 1/A Co, 1/12 S3
TEXT: _____

HOW SENT: RADIO

35/31(1/A) at VEC 819697, received 15 rounds of ordnance on their position at approximately 1755H, 23 Sept 70. Leader on the ground stated that the firing was coming from the NORTHEAST on about a 50 degrees AZ. Rounds started landing at 1755H and ended at 1805H(approximately).

Seven casualties were received in the 35/31(1/A). Five were dusted off by Dustoff 21.

At 1800H, we requested gunships and received them at 1837H(GLADIATOR 17). GLADIATOR 17 expended 1 kilometer to the northeast of location of 35/31(1/A) on a 50 degrees AZ.

At 1815H, 2d Bde told us that all friendlies checked fire and told us to check fire also. 1/12 checked fire at 1818H(1-12 initiated fire at 1812H). Also at 1815H, we requested MISSION 0 locations of friendlies to the east. At 1826H, we received the location of PB WASHINGTON at VEC 841696.

At 1820H, we requested LOH for LTC Harris at 1825H. Negative LOH available. Dustoff 21 was on station at 1810H and completed dustoff at 1828H.

At 1835H, requested flareship(GLADIATOR 27 on station at 1923H).

MISSION 88, Col Culim, evacuated two(2) KIA's(with BLACKJACK 18) when Mission 88 landed at 35/31(1/A) location. He landed at 1905H.

At 1920H, 2d Bde requested for our 35/31(1/A) to look for the tail fin of the incoming ordnance - MSG passed to 35/31(1/A).

DESIGNATION OF SENDER: _____

~~21~~ CO 1-12 Inf JB

SIGNATURE AND GRADE OF WRITER: _____

PFC Carl Wilson

DATE: 231755 Sept 70
MSG NO: 7 (cont)
TO: 2d Bde S3
FROM: 1/A Co, 1/12 S3
TEXT: _____

HOW SENT: RADIO

LTC Harris and FS COORD performed a crater analysis(at the site of the incident) of incoming ordnance and determined that the rounds were 81mm mortar rounds and came from PB WASHINGTON.

DESIGNATION OF SENDER: ~~2d Bde S3~~ C.O. 1-12 Inf 913

SIGNATURE AND GRADE OF WRITER: PFC Carl Wilson

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DATE: 232055 Sept 70
MSG NO: 8
TO: 2d Bde
FROM: 1/12 S3
TEXT: _____

HOW SENT: RADIO

Request that an investigating officer be appointed, who is not a member of our Division or the 173d. This request is made toward ascertaining who is responsible for the incident.

DESIGNATION OF SENDER: _____

~~2d Bde S3~~ C.O. 1-12 Inf 9/3

SIGNATURE AND GRADE OF WRITER: _____

SP4 Gary Shannon

DATE: 232200 Sept 70

HOW SENT: RADIO

MSG NO: 9

TO: 2d Bde S3

FROM: CO 1-12 Inf

TEXT: _____

A. Request that an investigating officer be appointed, who is not a member of our Division or the 173d. This request is made toward ascertaining who is responsible for the incident.

B. The Platoon Leader on the ground has performed a resection exercise and has determined his position to be BR819697.

C. It is my opinion that some gunners just layed in on the target, based on the rapidity and accuracy of the fire.

D. Our FS COCRD received through his channel the information that the unit occupying PB WASHINGTON was E Co, 3/503, 173 ABN, who has 4.2" mortars and 81mm mortars.

Written profile confirms that the line of sight is FB WASHINGTON - the mortar location.

DESIGNATION OF SENDER: CO 1-12 Inf, 4th Inf Division

SIGNATURE AND GRADE OF WRITER: _____

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DATE: 240930 Sept 70
MSG NO: 3
TO: S3, 2d Bde
FROM: LTC HARRIS, CO 1-12 Inf
TEXT: _____

HOW SENT: RADIO

LTC Harris has confirmed the location of the incident involving 1st Plat, Co A, 1-12 Inf, by AERIAL and VISUAL RECONNAISSANCE, to be BR817694. Also he has based this on his knowledge of the terrain, and will follow this confirmation, when the AIMING CIRCLE TRIANGULATION is completed. Also at 0955H LTC Harris completed the AIMING CIRCLE TRIANGULATION and confirms that the grid BR817694, is correct. Also at 1010H LTC Harris personally observed, on line of site, the tents and antenna's, at PB WASHINGTON from vicinity 1st Plat, Co A location.

Incl 3

DESIGNATION OF SENDER: LTC Harris, CO 1-12 Inf

SIGNATURE AND GRADE OF WRITER: _____

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DATE: 24 1600 Sept 70

HOW SENT:

MSG NO: 19

TO:

FROM:

TEXT:

AN INVESTIGATING TEAM FROM THE 173d ABN Bde, CONSISTING OF MAJOR JAMES ACKLIN, XO OF 3/319 ARTY, 173d ABN, AND LT MACKLER, A RECON. PLAT LDR ARRIVED AT FSB AUGUSTA. LT CLEMONS, CoC 1-12th Inf ACCOMPANIED THE INVESTIGATING TEAM TO THE SITE OF THE FRIENDLY MORTAR INCIDENT. THE PLATOON LEADER OF THE 1ST PLAT OF CoA WAS ASKED IF ANY OF THE INCOMING ROUNDS WERE SMOKE, OR WP. THE PLATOON LDR (U/A) SAID SMOKE CAME IN FIRST, AND THEN HE. THE SMOKE WAS SHORT OF HIS POSITION. NO SIGNIFICANT STATEMENTS WERE MADE, HOWEVER, LT MACKLER STATED HE HAD CLEARANCE FROM HIS "HIGHER" TWICE, AND SAID WE WERE 400 METERS INSIDE THE 173d BOUNDARY.

DESIGNATION OF SENDER: OPNS SGT 1-12 Inf

SIGNATURE AND GRADE OF WRITER: OPNS SGT 1-12 Inf

Msg No 1

CONFIDENTIAL

Msg DATE - 240930 Sept 70
FROM: LTC HARRIS, CO 1-12 Inf.
TO: S-3, 2d Bde

How Sent: Radio

MSG # 3

TEXT: LTC HARRIS HAS CONFIRMED THE LOCATION OF THE INCIDENT INVOLVING 1ST PLAT, CO A, 1-12 INF, BY AERIAL AND VISUAL RECONNAISSANCE, TO BE BR 817694. ALSO HE HAS BASED THIS ON HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THE TERRAIN, AND WILL FOLLOW THIS CONFIRMATION, WHEN THE AIMING CIRCLE TRIANGULATION IS COMPLETED. ALSO AT 0955 LTC HARRIS COMPLETED THE AIMING CIRCLE TRIANGULATION AND CONFIRMS THAT THE GRID BR 817694, IS CORRECT. ALSO AT 1010 HRS LTC HARRIS PERSONALLY OBSERVED, ON LINE OF SITE, THE TENTS AND ANTENNA'S, AT P.B WASHINGTON FROM VICINITY 1ST PLAT, CO A, LOCATION.

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Incl 3

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 1ST BATTALION 12TH INFANTRY
APO San Francisco 96262

UNIT ORDERS
NUMBER 127

24 September 1970

1. TC 453. Fol indiv APPOINTED

CESARE, FRANCIS P [REDACTED] 1LT HHC 1st Bn 12th Inf

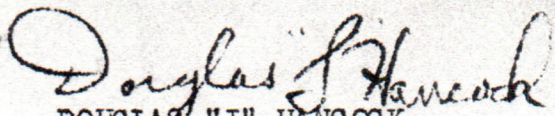
Apt to: Investigating Officer

Purpose: To investigate circumstances surrounding, and determine responsibility of incident/accident involving element of Co A, 1st Bn 12th Inf, at approximately 1755 hours on 23 September 1970.

Auth: Voco

Sp instr: NA

FOR THE COMMANDER:


DOUGLAS "J" HANCOCK
1LT, Infantry
Adjutant

DISTRIBUTION:

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1-CO, 1st Bn 12th Inf

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