

February 26, 1992

Since the last newsletter on September 9, 1991, much has happened in the form of additional people from D 2/8 being added to the roster, 44 to be exact. In October, I gathered together all of my orders, rosters, and notes, and put together a list of 200 people. I submitted the list to the VA and asked them if they would forward letters for me. Out of the list of 200, they had addresses on 124. Of the 200, 9 are deceased with no further information given. They are: James D. Bagley, Troy L. Banks, Douglas Craig, Charlie E. Dixon, Peter Matthei, Paul E. Stone, Paul C. Waters, David D. Webb, and Jerry E. Wilson. Of the 124, there were 19 responses, with a few subsequent finds from some of the 19. All of these people are listed under the additional name section, with a few whose addresses are confidential, and all mail to them should be forwarded through me. Also, there were a few who checked off the box: "I do not wish to participate. Do not contact me again." Finally, the VA Records Section in St. Louis sent me a list of names whose letters were returned as undeliverable. The names are: Raymond Clooney, Lloyd Jackson, John Lee, Dennis Apprill, A.Q. Campbell, Dwayne Logan, Eugene Cole, Barton Davidson, James Barron, Michael Jones, Clyde Bonnelycke, Roger Smarr, Lloyd Patton, Gene Willis, Thomas Rivers, Edgar Mateo, Charles Franco, Andrew Pruitt, David Abraham, Robert York, James Bradford, and Donald Faulkner. Of the rest that got through, all I can do is wait and hope.

I recently received an updated copy of the membership roster of the First Cavalry Division Association, went through the list, and identified 54 names as having served with D 2/8. I sent out 54 letters and have received 23 responses. Those responses are also listed under the additional name section. One of the responders, MG Edison Scholes, sent me copies of Platoon photographs taken upon the return of the Company from Dak To. On the back of each photograph are the names and addresses of most of the four Platoons, 107 names. My next project will be to try to find as many of them as possible. Wish me luck.

Veterans Day, 1991 had a good turnout. Those attending included: Wayne Tubaugh, Steve Faucher, Tim Kanan, Larry Hackett, Bob Condella, Larry Leonhardt, Ron Nesland, Dave Nichols, Don Fuller, Jim Nix, Nick Donvito, Ed Waterman, and myself. I spent too much time at ceremonies with the Connecticut Chapter and missed out on a lot of quality time with the people that really matter, fellow grunts from D 2/8. I won't make that mistake again.

A reunion will occur this coming Memorial Day weekend (May 22-25, 1992) in Houston, TX. Ken Pierce found great rates of \$49.00 for upper rooms and \$59.00 for lower rooms at the Ramada Inn, Hobby Airport. If interested, cut out or copy the card on the last page and mail it in to the motel, attn: Reservations Department. Besides the usual good time at the motel and at poolside, the highlight of the weekend will be on Saturday the 23rd. There will be a parade which we will march in, a rock concert (in years past, such groups as Rare Earth, Steppenwolf, and the Beach Boys have performed), and a Veterans' gathering involving military equipment and a "Moving Wall." The exact itinerary is not available at this time, but it will be known by the time we arrive. If marching, wear any uniform you wish: just make sure that you have a Cav patch! Ken says that this event is a "family affair," so bring who you want. If your guests get bored standing around watching us tell "war lies," there are many things to do and see in the greater Houston area, such as the NASA complex, the Galveston beaches, the San Jacinto Battlefield, and many more things. So far, Art Soper, Frank "Paco" Higgins, Ken Pierce, and myself from Range One are looking forward to being reunited for the first time in 24 years! I know that these are tough economic times, especially here in the Northeast, but I hope to see as many of you as possible. Hope you can make it.

The 8TH Cavalry Regiment is meeting on May 14-17, 1992 at the Pierre Radisson Inn in North Olmsted, Ohio. Rates are \$59.00 plus 13% tax. The group is mainly WWII and Korean War Vets, but I felt real welcome in Fayetteville, NC last year. The phone number for the Inn is: 216-734-5060 or 1-800-333-3333. I wish I could do both, but I can only choose Houston.

In August, our Northeast group will meet in Poughkeepsie, NY (Date to be determined). Also, from August 4-8, 1992, National will be meeting in Billings, MT. Consult the Saber Newspaper or contact Action Travel, 416 N. Cody Ave., Hardin, MT 59034 (1-800-331-1580).

Since Veterans Day this year is on a Wednesday, the annual reunion will occur on the weekend preceding the actual day or November 6-8, 1992 (Arrangements to be determined).

Angry Skipper (Whiteskull, Riflerange, Wildcat, Lethal Weapon)

D 2/8 HONOR ROLL

RANK	NAME & HOMETOWN	DOB	DOD	LOCATION ON WALL	
SGT	Richard Arthur Coffey, Los Angeles, CA	21Oct41	04Nov65	3E	17
CPL	Eddie Lee Hill, Jr., Mobile, AL	07Jul40	04Nov65	3E	18
SP4	Terry Allen Rippy, Hammond, OR	30Sep42	22Apr66	6E	128
PFC	Fermin Saldana, Jr., San Antonio, TX	10Feb46	23May66	7E	106
2LT	Michael Douglas Derosier, Fort Walton Beach, FL	16Apr43	19Sep66	10E	117
SSG	Paul Edward Floyd, Jr., Clinton, MA	08May34	14Oct66	11E	73
PFC	Robert Lester Van Gieson, Van Nuys, CA	21May47	12Mar67	16E	71
PFC	Charles William Krueger, Menasha, WI	13Jul47	31May67	21E	23
2LT	Michael E. Bennett, Brentwood, NH	14Apr46	01Nov67	28E	107
SP4	Allan Eugene Follett, Independence, MO	13Nov44	11Dec67	31E	79
SP4	John Paul Paulson, Jr., Neenah, WI	15Aug47	11Dec67	31E	82
SGT	Wyatt Cecil Gordon, Lawrence, IN	03Apr48	31Jan68	36E	4
CPL	Richard Allan Carlson, San Francisco, CA	30Mar48	24May68	67E	5
SP4	Larry Dean Novak, Platte Center, NE	17Mar48	24May68	68E	5
SGT	Jacob Robinson Weldin, Wilmington, DE	18Aug46	06Jun68	59W	17
PFC	Brian Carl Winner, Detroit, MI	08Sep47	07Jun68	58W	1
			(MIA 04Jun68)		
SGT	Robert James Ross, Charlotte, NC	01Jul47	01Jul68	54W	32
1LT	Harrison E. Woehner, Jr., Minneapolis, MN	07Jul43	18Jul68	51W	9
			(WIA 24May68)		
PFC	Roger Theodore Fast, Butterfield, MN	14Jan48	19Aug68	48W	54
SP4	Ronald Duane Golden, Superior, WI	22Jul44	20Aug68	47W	7
PFC	Michael John Cromie, Harperwoods, MI	06Apr48	18Nov68	38W	6
SP4	Raymond Joseph Ahern, Jr., Philadelphia, PA	14Jan48	26Nov68	38W	63
SP4	Willie Gerald Jones, Fort Lauderdale, FL	15Nov47	04Dec68	37W	40
SP4	Donald Robert Stoltz, Milwaukee, WI	17Jan48	04Dec68	37W	42
SSG	William Charles Williams, Horton, MS	15Oct46	04Dec68	37W	44
SP4	Elliot Velez-Rodriguez, Vega Baja, PR	29May47	21Jan69	34W	54
CPL	Warren Reed Eskridge, Tangier, VA	09Sep47	28Jan69	33W	7
SP4	Carl Dale Pipher, Canton, OH	31Mar49	28Jan69	33W	11
CPL	James Edmonds, Burlington, NC	12Jul48	05Feb69	33W	62
SP4	Chester Jon Kmit, Williamsburg, MA	11Apr45	05Feb69	33W	65
PFC	Neil Shipp Brown, Salt Lake City, UT	07Aug44	02May69	26W	97
CPL	George Arthur Brown, Whaleyville, VA	19Jan48	12May69	25W	62
1LT	James Allen Carr, Dublin, OH	23Aug46	27Jul69	20W	55
SP4	Hugh Henry Sarah, Plymouth, MI	05Aug45	23Sep69	17W	1
SP4	Anthony Jack Carlucci, New York, NY	22May49	20Nov69	16W	98
PFC	Tony Rava, Mt. Angel, OR	30Aug49	18Feb70	13W	31
CPL	Kenneth Michael Flashner, New Orleans, LA	21Nov46	28Feb70	13W	68
CPL	Francis Louis Ware III, Youngstown, OH	10Sep49	06Mar70	13W	89
CPL	Craig Thomas Waterman, Rockwell City, IA	30Sep49	03Sep70	7W	37

CHAPTER 1

After landing at the Dong Ha Airport after a flight from An Khe , I took a ride in a deuce and a half along a dusty road, over a river on a bridge that still had railroad tracks on it, into a village on the other side of the bridge, to a cross-road intersection where we turned right, along another dusty road past a fortified encampment on my right, which turned out to be LZ Betty, thence along the dusty road some more until we took a sharp right and went up a hill and beared left through a break in a barbed wire perimeter. I had arrived at LZ Sharon. There must have been about a dozen of us in the truck, and as we drove through the camp, the truck would stop every so often and drop off a few men at their respective Company areas. The last stop was Delta Company otherwise known as "Angry Skipper," Second Battalion otherwise known as the "Cavaliers," Eighth Cavalry Regiment (Honor and Courage), First Air Cavalry Division (First Team). We were designated "Air" Cavalry at the time, but later in the summer, the 101st Airborne Division raised a stink about the designation, and we were changed to the First Cavalry Division (Airmobile). (CONJECTURE: perhaps the 101st was still jealous of the fact that the First Brigade (1/8, 2/8, 1/12) of an otherwise normal ground-pounding division was airborne qualified when the Cav arrived in 1965).

Those that arrived at D Company with me included: Jim Nix, John Malpass, Willie Jones, Bob McLennan, Pete Nielsen, Gary Leonard, Tom Spampinato, and others I am sure, but I can't remember. The Company was still in the A Shau, and we had to wait until they returned before we could join up. LT. Kingston, the XO, gave us a short talk as we handed over our papers and told us to relax or something like that. When we asked him what it was like out there, he responded by saying that most of the time we would be bored stiff just walking up and down mountains, but added that there was always a possibility of instantaneous sheer terror as a fire-fight began. As I recall, he gave the odds of 95% boredom and 5% terror. LT. Kingstons's office was just off the road as I recall. It consisted of a tent on the ground and steps leading to a bunker just in front of the tent. He led us down a path toward the day room tent. As one faced it, it was just a tent with no frame yet; that would come later. To the right of the tent was a bunker, and in between the tent and the bunker was a lonely tree that gave off a little shade, but not much. To the left of the tent, across an interior road, was another tent. This one had a frame and a wooden foundation. There was space between the floor of the tent and the ground, and in that space was stored the rucksacks of the troops that were in the A Shau. Across from the first tent was another tent, this one a pyramid style tent whose center pole kept breaking. Next to the pyramid tent and across from the first bunker was another bunker, this one smaller than the first. I can remember during the monsoon rains when SSG Issac Clifton was cursing because the small bunker that he was in leaked like a sieve. I remember him completely dismantling the bunker and building it over again. I don't recall hearing if it worked.

As I looked around the base, I could see a landing zone to the southwest that contained many chinooks. As I looked due west, there was a little valley and on the other side were more permanent structures than the tents in our area. These structures were manned by the C.B.'s of the Navy. I can remember that they had an E.M. club over there and sold cold beer and soda for about a quarter a can. It was nice and cold, too. We would stop there on our way to guard duty on the northwest side of the perimeter. We spent several nights on guard duty waiting to join up with the Company. I can remember starting to get bored with garrison life. Little did I know that in a few short weeks, I would be envious of those who had rear jobs. In the far distance to the west were tall mountains. One of the mountains appeared to be barren on top. It was barren. It was being bulldozed by the engineers to become LZ Anne. It was a nice sight from a distance, but again, little did I know that in a few short weeks, that 5% factor that LT. Kingston had spoken about would come on like a bad dream a short distance to the southwest of LZ Anne.

Behind the day room tent and the first bunker was an enclosure made up of sandbags on three sides and open in the front. It was that enclosure that I was directed to my first night on Sharon when it came time to sleep. I seem to recall a chuckle from somebody as I walked there. I was given a poncho and liner and laid down. After a few minutes, I noticed an awful smell that seemed to saturate the entire area that I was in. Upon waking in the morning, I got up and looked around. There, just on the other side of one of the sandbagged walls was a piss tube that was definitely due for replacement. The next night, I think I slept in the pyramid tent.

Finally came the day when we were told to saddle up and get on a chopper for a ride to the field. I half expected to be dropped into some jungle scenario with fighting all around me, but we had prior word that the Company was along the river in a calm state of deployment. As I left Sharon's airspace, I could see the river. It was just a short hop to reach the Company, and we set down shortly. We were assigned to Platoons, Malpass, Nielson, and I to Rifle Range, and the others to Wildcat and Whiteskull. Upon arriving, we were subjected to the usual questions like: "Where you from, man?" I replied: "Ringoos, New Jersey." "Where's that near?" somebody asked. "It's about 18 miles north of Trenton," I replied. "Hey, I'm from Trenton," stated one man. As he extended his hand in friendship, I met my first field grunt. His name was Bob Sykes of Cat Platoon.

The Company was dispersed among the hedgerows between the road and the river. I can still visualize walking from the road toward the river with a treeline on my right. Range Platoon was closer to the river than the road. I remember meeting a SSG who looked like he had just gotten a basic training haircut and said that we would be smart to keep our hair as short as his. We just looked at him and smiled. I was assigned to first squad of Range and met the guys. Frank "Paco" Higgins had the radio, Ken Pierce had the duper, and the others included Soper, Rivera, Fuller, Jackson, "Marty" Martinez as squad leader, and others that I cannot recall. When I asked who Marty was, I was told that he wasn't around but would show up soon. In a little while, somebody pointed in the direction across an open field toward another tree row. Walking across the clearing was Marty, carrying an M-14. He was laughing as he came into view, and I can still remember his white teeth. We new guys or "Cherries" were introduced to Marty, and we soon were told to saddle up and start moving out toward a night location. I can't remember who our Lieutenant was at the time, but it may have been LT. Showalter. I also do not remember the Captain at this time, although I'm sure that we must have reported to him as we arrived. In any event, we moved out from the treeline, walked across the open field toward the road, and took the road until we turned left and walked along the edges of some rice paddies on our way to our night location. It may have been this first night or a subsequent night, but I remember a Vietnamese man walking with us. He wasn't a soldier, and I can't remember how he ended up with us, but I do remember that he was with Range 1 as we set up for the night behind a berm of some kind. I can remember being taught how to set up trip flares and claymores, and as we were setting up the trip flares, one went off and I panicked. I ran away from the light and was told to get down, which I did. We were setting up an ambush. Nothing happened that night, and in the morning, we walked back to the river. The Vietnamese man was gone, as I recall. I don't think that we ever knew what happened to him.

Back at the river, we were told that some of us would be selected for a short patrol. I was not chosen, but I remember that Pete Nielsen was, and when he returned, he said that it was long and hot. I spent the day along the river, and I think that I even went swimming. Not bad duty when you're not picked. (CONJECTURE: I think Pete was pissed.) I was finally chosen, probably the next day, and I remember it being very hot and tiring. I was drinking a lot of water but was starting to feel weak. Skipper told us to disperse among the hedgerows and stay out of sight from the air. I didn't quite understand why, but found some shade anyway. I started feeling sick, and when we were told to move out, I stood up and got dizzy and nearly fell over. Somebody called for a medic and "Doc" Carlson showed up. I remember him giving me some water and helping me walk by putting my arm over his shoulder. The rest of the platoon moved out, and

we were slowly walking behind. We were on our way to an LZ for pickup. We were going to combat assault somewhere, but I was wondering what was going to happen to me as I started to vomit. I can remember Doc stating to the Skipper that I should be evacuated, and somebody saying something about drinking river water, but I hadn't drank any river water. I was just plain sick. I remember then being led to a field of elephant grass with water up to my knees and waited for a chopper. One arrived, and I crawled on. It took me back to Sharon. I got off and was asked why I was there. I told them I was sick and was vomiting. They took my temperature and led me to the aid station. I was given some more water, but I threw up. I was then given a white tablet and was told to put it under my tongue. It was a salt tablet, and after it had dissolved, I suddenly felt a lot better. That was the first and last time that I had heat exhaustion in Vietnam. From then on, I always knew when to ask for salt tablets from the doc. Taking care of the routine things became important to me, like taking the little white malaria pill every day and the big brown one on Mondays, or always taking care of my feet by always having enough foot powder and socks so I wouldn't get immersion foot like half the Company during the monsoon. After stabilizing my mineral balance in my body, I hopped on a chopper bound for LZ Anne and then hopped on a log bird heading for D Company. I think the date was 23May68.

NEXT--GRANNEMANN'S HILL

RAMADA INN HOBBY
 9005 Airport Blvd.
 Houston, Texas 77061
 (713) 943-3300

Name _____ Group Affiliation: D 2/8 - 1st AIR CAV DIV

Address _____

Arrival Date: _____ Time: _____ Check In Time is 2:00 p.m.

Departure Date: _____ Time: _____ Check Out Time is 12:00 noon

Room Rate: \$ _____ per night plus 14% tax _____ Single Room _____ Double Room

To guarantee your reservation, fill in the following credit card information:

_____ American Express _____ VISA _____ Discover _____ Mastercard _____ Carte Blanche _____ Diners Club
 Credit Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____ Signature _____

- Enclosed is a check or money order for \$ _____
- Reservations not guaranteed will be cancelled by 6:00 p.m.
- Reservations must be cancelled by 6:00 p.m. on the arrival date to avoid no show billing.