

## ***Bloody Fight in Boi Loi Woods***

I always hated to be attached to another Brigade for operations. Lots of the procedures between my Battalion and my 2d Brigade and its key personnel which had been built up get shattered, and we have to start all over again. The theory of the Army is that the Battalion is the key - always intact - fighting unit. But it, and other battalions, can be attached and detached at will to other Brigades. Simple plug-and-play. Right? Not in my experience.

So in late October my 1/27th was attached to the 3d Brigade, which was given the mission to try and destroy the Viet Cong force that had hit the 1st Division and had holed up in the black Boi Loi woods.

My mission became one of first, finding that unit, then attacking it in conjunction with the battalions of the 3d Brigade.

I did that. In fact we made contact three times, including NVA regular forces while nobody else did three times in four days. And we had a pitched battle in their trenches each time.

I lost four company commanders in one company - five officers in total. Each time I called in 750 pound air strikes and fired over 1,000 rounds of 8 inch, 155mm, and 105 fuze delay artillery on them. My command helicopter got shot up and so did the gun ships.

When we cornered one VC Battalion, I hollard for the brigade commander to surround the force, but he wouldn't send in another battalion, but wanted to wait until morning' by which the Viet Cong battalion had escaped across the border into Cambodia.

We blew up three enormous camps. It was violent, bloody, and exhausting.

But we lost 16 men killed, and 63 wounded in the four days of running battles. Three D Company Commanders.

## Vietnam War (8)

Category: Vietnam 1967-1968

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Written by dave

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One of my Chinook resupply helicopters was shot down (my personal gear in it was crushed including my camera) There were no accompanying Army photographers along during this bloody campaign.

I was so intense one night, while one man was missing after a shoot out in the black woods, and after two attacks I sent in failed to find him, I personally led my great small Recon Platoon in past his outguard bunkers at 11PM crawling on our bellies until we found him and got him out, but losing another man killed in the process.

I spent the rest of that night bringing precision artillery on him, and then had one company fire 100 LAW's into one small defended key patch of the woods to defeat him, which we did.

We killed over 100 Viet Cong and wounded over 250.

But I couldn't get a sense of urgency out of any other US Unit. I am surprised I didn't get nailed during that four days while I lost my S-2 and S-3 officer and my Headquarters Company commander wounded.

General Gleszer's son, whom I made 'A' Company Commander, did well with his company

When I got back home to my own Brigade and Cu Chi to recuperate, I forcefully told my own Brigade Commander that the only way to clear out Viet Cong and NVA coming across the Cambodia Boarder was to surround and annihilate them.

I don't think he appreciated my opinions. Since I was being nominated to become the G-3 of the Americal Division when I completed my command tour I don't think he was eager to keep me on.

I had in my personal effects in my field pack the bayonet off an AK-50 carried by a NVA who tried to shoot me, but I killed, and told my wife in a hand scrawled note at the bottom of a typed letter in November to her that if anything happened to me, to give that bayonet to young David.

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I still have it.