

2-12 INFANTRY AND THE BATTLE FOR LOC NINH RECOUNTED BY THOSE WHO FOUGHT, SHARED IN THE FUN, WERE IN FEAR OF THEIR LIVES ...

PREFACE: Many more former members of 2-12 Infantry could contribute to this narrative. I have used bonafide references and the memories of a few former Soldiers who fought at Loc Ninh in an attempt to give the reader a sense of what happened and the heroism of the individual Soldier.

Alpha Company and the rest of the 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment fought an intense battle with the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) and the Viet Cong (VC) on 2 November 1967 (and subsequent smaller battles on 3, 4 November 1967). The battle occurred approximately five miles northeast of Loc Ninh, South Vietnam.



Jim Bisson, 1967

During the major battle on 2 November 1967, the 2-12 Infantry killed 94 NVA/VC soldiers and captured close to a dozen NVA/VC prisoners of war.(1) Three "White Warriors" were killed

in action and 55 "White Warriors" were

wounded in action. One Silver Star for valorous actions the night of 2 November 1967 was awarded to Charlie Page (a member of 4th Platoon, Alpha Company, 2-12 Infantry).



Charlie Page receives Silver Star for gallantry at Loc Ninh by President Lyndon Johnson

Many, many other American Soldiers performed heroic actions during this battle with the NVA/VC.

Information obtained over the Internet from the Library of Congress (Vietnam Studies:

Tactical and Material Innovations; by Lieutenant General John H. Hay, Jr; Chapter IV, hereafter referred to as The Study)



LG Hay

provides background for this battle and states that the battle for Loc Ninh actually began in early October, 1967. The 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment (commanded at

the time by LTC---now Retired General---Richard

Cavazos), 1st Infantry Division, while searching for elements of the 9th Viet Cong Division, had a pitched battle with the 271st Viet Cong Regiment at Da Yeu (55 kilometers south of Loc Ninh) on 11 October 1967. This battle, as well as other 1st Infantry Division contact, rendered the 271st Regiment ineffective for the follow-on battle for Loc Ninh. The intent of the NVA/VC was to take the town of Loc Ninh in late October, a district capital. The timing coincided with the inauguration of President Nguyen Van Thieu and the seizure of a district capital would have significant political impact. Again according to The Study, the enemy's scheme of maneuver directed the 272d VC Regiment to converge on Loc Ninh from the northeast and 273d VC Regiment to converge on Loc Ninh from the west. The attack began at 0100 hours on 29 October.

According to The Study, "six major firefights" comprised the actual battle of Loc Ninh---five involved units of the 1st Infantry Division and one fire fight (the fifth major battle) involved the 2-12 Infantry on 2 November 1967. (NOTE: During the Loc Ninh battle, 2-12 Infantry was "OPCON",

operational control, to the 1st Infantry Division.) Also according to The Study the 1st Infantry Division (CG), in reaction to the attack on Loc Ninh, alerted four 1st Infantry Division Infantry Battalions and the CGs plan was to deploy the Battalions in a rough square around Loc Ninh on the most probable enemy routes of approach and withdrawal. One of those Battalions (1-26 Infantry) was subsequently diverted on a mission to Loc Ninh and 2-12 Infantry got the call. (A review of the Daily Staff Journals for the 1st ID and the 25th ID, indicate that there may have been a contingency plan involving a unit of the 25th and that 2-12



Infantry was in the plan.) Alpha Company, 2-12 Infantry (and the rest of the Battalion) was pulled out of the Boi Loi Woods on the morning of the battle and trucked to Dau Tieng.”



Burnie Quick

Then 1LT Burnett R. (Burnie) Quick, Alpha Company Commander, recalls that the Company went to the company area to resupply primarily with ammunition. Alpha Company, along with the rest of the Battalion, later assembled at the Dau Tieng airstrip to await C-130 transport to the Loc Ninh airstrip. In fact, according to the 25th Infantry Division (25ID) Daily Staff Journal “...decision was made on 2 Nov 67 to send 2-12 Inf ‘to 1st Div to Loc Ninh by Fix

Wing then into combat area by helicopter.’ As of 021324 Nov 67 ‘all of 2-12 closed Dau Tieng.’” (2) The Battalion went by fixed wing aircraft (C-130) to the Loc Ninh airstrip. The first C-130 left Dau Tieng at 1508 hours on 2 November with 104 Soldiers. Subsequent lifts departed Dau Tieng at 1536 hours (with 107 Soldiers); 1555 hours (with 95 Soldiers); 1615 hours (with 90 Soldiers); and 1620 hours (with 100 Soldiers). (3) The entire Battalion, including the Battalion Command Group, deployed to Loc Ninh and to the battle site. Arrival times at the Loc Ninh airstrip and subsequent helicopter insertions in the battlefield LZ (landing zone) are not noted in any of the journals. The 25ID Daily Staff Journal does indicate that “...at 1702 2-12 conducts a combined assault in XU778138; are working in an AO bounded by XU7711; XU7717; XU8217; and XU8211. 2-12 has received resupply by CH47 with loads of ammo, water and rations. Have reported that 272 VC Regt is located 1 kilometer east of 2-12 location.”



Burnie recalls that 2-12 Infantry was met at the Loc Ninh airstrip by the Commander of the 1st ID, and advised that 2-12 Infantry was being placed in a blocking position northeast of Loc Ninh. This was to prevent a large enemy force from attacking Loc Ninh but that he (CG) did not think 2-12 Infantry would have any contact (was the CG ever wrong).

All the former Alpha, 2-12 Soldiers who participated in the Loc Ninh battle (and who contributed to this recounting of the battle) recall that a small number of helicopters were used for the insertion. I remember two per lift; Burnie Quick remembers “a few helicopters---less than six.” Suffice it to say

that there were few “birds” that choppered 2-12 Infantry to the battlefield. The November 20, 1967 Tropic Lightning News says “...the

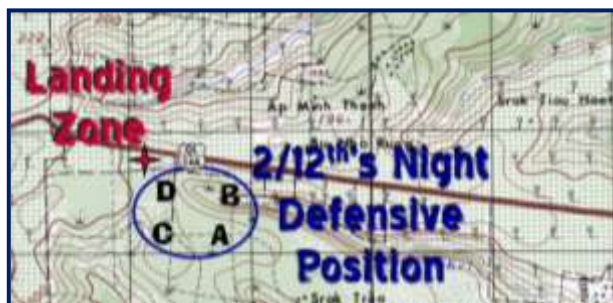


battalion was heli-lifted into a small egg-shaped landing zone big enough for only three choppers at a time.” The Battalion subsequently set up its defensive

positions on a hill, in dense jungle just south and adjoining the rubber plantation in the area.

I recall being on one of the earliest insertions into the landing zone with Charlie Page. While Bisson and Page were sitting in the jungle waiting for the rest of the unit to arrive, Bisson commented to Page that “there were no f’ing gooks in here.” Was he ever wrong in that assessment as the night would later tell.

The last lift came in right at dark and the Battalion continued setting up its perimeter and night defensive positions. Burnie Quick recalls, and the 1st Infantry Division Daily Staff Journal collaborate Burnie’s memory, that the 2-12 perimeter was set up with Delta Company on the northwest; Bravo Company on the northeast; Alpha Company on the southeast; and Charlie Company on the southwest.



Burnie states that when Alpha was assigned its section of the perimeter, he felt that he could adequately defend Alpha’s part with two platoons, so he deliberately held

back a platoon in case he needed it to reinforce part of the perimeter (this turned out to be a far-sighted decision). Burnie also states that the Battalion Reconnaissance (Recon) Platoon was assigned to secure the Battalion command post and to be the Battalion reserve force. The Battalion (and Alpha Company’s) mission was to occupy a blocking position and stop any enemy force advancing on Loc Ninh.

The Battalion really did not get “dug in” very well before the battle started for many reasons---arrival into the area near dark or later, extremely hard ground to dig, etc. Suffice it to say that 2-12 Infantry did not get dug in well before probing of the perimeter started.

The battle between 2-12 Infantry and the NVA/VC started shortly after several Viet Cong walked into the 2-12 perimeter. The 1st Infantry Division Daily Staff Journal entry for 022342 Nov 67 says “...2205h (10:05 PM) 2-12Inf XU783138 about 3-4 VC stumble in NDP, 1 was captured & are trying to run down the others at this time.” The November 20, 1967 Tropic Lightning News says “...almost before the men had a chance to dig in, the probing of the perimeter began. Eight Viet Cong moved stealthily through the perimeter until they were cut down by Delta Co.” The Study validates this information: “...at 2340 (11:40 PM) eight Viet Cong walked into the 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry position, half of them carrying flashlights. Four of the enemy were killed and four were captured. They were members of the 272d Viet Cong Regiment.” The battle grew to intense, very severe proportions from this point. Part of the fight was berm-to-berm while the other part was in dense scrub jungle with limited fields of fire. The terrain was dense thick jungle and rubber plantation and ran slightly downhill from east to west.

The following journal entries (from the 1st Infantry Division Daily Staff Journals) describe the ensuing battle between 2-12 Infantry and the NVA/VC:

(022342, Nov 67 = 2nd day of mo. 2342 hrs)

• 022342 Nov 67---“2226H 2-12Inf captured 1 more PW; heard movement outside of NDP. Fired claymore and heard moving; 2257 captured 1 more PW; 2 of which are wounded; 2-12 reports as of 2340H they have captured a total of 4 VC and 4 VC KIA (BC) inside perimeter. Having movement outside perimeter (a clanking noise). Believed they are trying to set up a mortar.”

• 030340 Nov 67---“0220H XU783138 2-12 Inf rec’d 40 rounds of mortar. Rounds came from North about 1000 meters outside of NDP. No casualties. 82mm mortars and arty being fired; 0235H receiving more mortar fire and SA; 0237 FAC lifted off, LFT C/S, 2-12 Inf still receiving sporadic SA fire; 0310H Bandit 32 LFT off from Bien Hoi; enroute to XU783136; 0300H 2-12 Inf estimated company size VC unit firing against 2-12 Inf; have some casualties. Firing coming from NE-E-NW. No mortar rounds at this time; 0329 2-12 Inf RPG and SA being rec’d; also 50 cal from XU791141. Second LFT coming to Loc. Firing seems to be losing momentum. 12 WHA. No dust off requested at this time. Sporadic mortar firing at 0340H from N, W, & SW.”

• 030442 Nov 67---“0410H 2-12 Inf firing slacked off at 0344H & stopped at 0400H. First A/S went in at 0400H; 0420H 2-12 Infantry casualty report: 2 KHA, 25 WHA. Dust off on standby; 0444H casualty report as of this time: 4 KHA, 25 WHA; 0515H casualty report as of this time: 6 KHA, 55 WHA.”

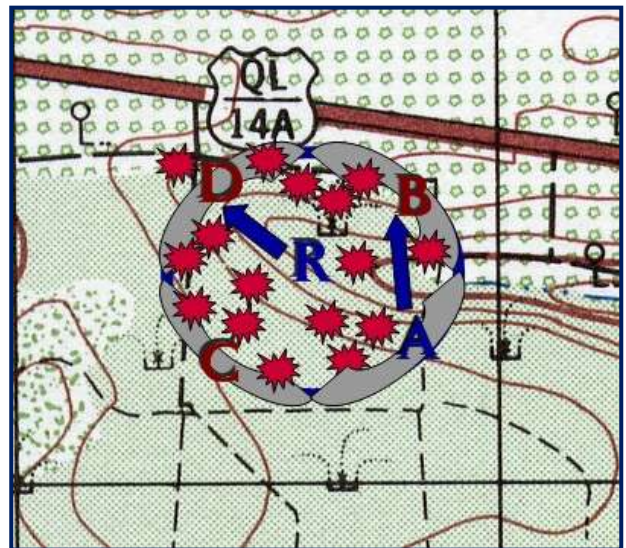
• 030641 Nov 67---“2-12 Inf mortar, RPG, heavy MG and RR inflicted most casualties; 0611H 2-12 casualty reports as of this time: 3 KHA, 55 WHA. Total of 34 WHA and 3 KHA dusted off.”

• 030650 Nov 67---“2-12 Inf PWs & VC (BC). PWs are now 3 and KIA 5.”

• 031018 Nov 67---“2-12 Inf/25th, VC are wearing North Vietnamese uniform. 1 PW reports 6000 VC along a river; area unknown.”

• 031045 Nov 67---“XU776090 2-12 Inf 0955H unknown number of VC are intermingled w/approx 150 detainees and firing at US troops.” (NOTE: The November 20, 1967 Tropic Lightning News says “Contact was broken early the next morning only to have the Viet Cong attempt a probe again while using villagers from the rubber plantation to screen their movement. Men of the battalion pulled the villagers into the perimeter to save their lives and returned fire.”)

• 031225 Nov 67---“Total VC 2-12 Inf: 33 VC KIA (BC); 5 PWs not wounded; 2 PWs wounded; 40 total”.



At one of the fiercer points of the battle, the Recon Platoon was committed to prevent a breach in the Delta Company perimeter. Bravo Company later called for assistance to prevent a breach in its perimeter. Burnie remembers Bravo calling for assistance shortly after the Recon Platoon was committed and the Battalion S3 initially indicating that there were no additional

forces to commit. Since Burnie was basically helping the S3 command and control the Battalion at that point, Burnie knew of his Alpha Company platoon and committed it to Bravo Company; thus, preventing a breach of that perimeter. (NOTE: Alpha Company grenadiers had already been sent to help with Bravo Company when it ran short of M79 Ammunition---see Jim Yates' account later in this narrative.)



Each Soldier has a little different perspective on what happened during 2-12's firefight in the battle for Loc Ninh. Bisson recalls that while the 4th Platoon was waiting for the C-130s at the Dau Tieng

Lt. Andy Farris airstrip, the Platoon Leader, LT Andy Farris, advised them that he could not divulge where the Platoon was headed but that they would make Time Magazine---of course, the Soldiers thought that they were headed to Saigon to march in a parade. *(A/2/12 had marched in the Nov 1st National Day Parade in Saigon in 1966. Although it was quite an honor, it was not without its danger. There was a rocket attack aimed at the reviewing stand, but missed by 2 blocks. BC)*



A/2/12 preparing to move out



Boarding C-130s for trip to Loc Ninh

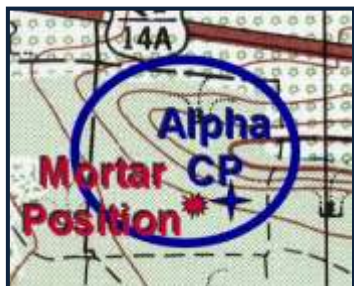
When we landed at Loc Ninh you knew something was up because of all the dead VC around the airstrip. Once the battle began, I recall that there was no artillery support for 2-12 (Burnie Quick recalled that the Battalion was out of range for 105 howitzers). The only fire support that I recall the Battalion received was "Puff" and only one airstrike about 4:00 a.m. I also remember that the plane came in right over the perimeter and so low that you could see the pilot in the cockpit. I recall thinking that I truly got my whole body under my "steel pot" and that I wished the aircraft would drop the ordinance even closer---the ground literally shook from the ordinance going off. I recollected that the 81mm mortar that I was crewing was the only mortar in the Battalion that was firing and that they fired mostly illumination rounds until "Puff" arrived on scene and started dropping flares. I remember that in the middle of the battle, a resupply helicopter (from the 1st Infantry Division) came to drop off ammunition and that the bird dropped the load almost on top of my position. The helicopter pilot asked that a strobe light be put out (which was accomplished) and then the helicopter pilot turned on his bright/white light to see exactly where to drop the resupply, which was pitched out of the helicopter by a crewmember. Of course, the NVA/VC did their dead level best to shoot the bird down. I thought to myself, "what a brave pilot, especially when the pilot responded to LT

¹ Both group photos were supplied by Fred Moffatt, Medic with Alpha Company during this period

Quick's thank-you by replying "bread or bullets, give us a call and we'll bring it".

At this point in the battle, LT Quick and the Battalion S3, Major Doug Farmer, were commanding and controlling the battle, (the Battalion Commander had been wounded).

I recall that me and Page thought that we saw an NVA/VC near their mortar position, but when they challenged that person, he went back toward the berm line. That person was later captured and commented that he was going to destroy the mortar position but he became afraid that he would be killed.



Peter Beale



Fred Moffatt

where Beale and Moffatt were and found them in their hole with the dead VC just outside the hole. Moffatt was particularly concerned about how dead the VC was and asked Burnie if the VC was in fact dead. Burnie assured Moffatt that the VC was dead and after calming down the two Soldiers, he started back to his CP (command position). As Burnie was leaving the two Soldiers, Moffatt asked him to make sure that the VC was in fact dead (both Beale and Moffatt had

emptied a magazine into the VC). I also remember that the fight was extremely intense; everyone feared for their lives, but all fought as a team and all performed extremely heroic actions during the fight.



David Thrailkill

Former Sergeant David Thrailkill recalls heading to a location that was described as a sure-fire hot LZ. "There was always talk of what the area we were going into would be like, but there was something different about this mission. It was very unusual for our

company to be leaving on a mission from our 'Base Camp Rainer', at Dau Tieng so late in the day. We were heading north to a place called Loc Ninh and by the time we arrived, the sun was going down. We hit the ground running, but contrary to the reports we got earlier in the day, this LZ was quiet, but it wouldn't remain quiet for long."

Thrailkill recalls setting up the perimeter without incident, settling in right at dark. "I was placed in the CP group for no other reason than I was a 'short-timer' with only a few weeks remaining on my tour. Even though I thought that the CP group was safer than a perimeter foxhole, I was unusually scared. We all took a deep breath and thought that G-2 intelligence has just miscalculated, as they did sometimes. Boy were we wrong! This night I found out that it was not safe anywhere."

Thrailkill continues, "less than an hour after dark, seven members of the 272d Viet Cong Regiment walked directly into our perimeter. One of them was smoking and a U.S. Sergeant shouted softly, if that is possible, to put the cigarette out. When they realized that they had walked into us, they scattered throughout the inside of the

perimeter, jumping into existing foxholes with our guys. While I was listening to the CP radio, I heard scattered shots in the distance from time to time. In the darkness you could not tell who your foxhole partner was, so the CP put over the radio to use the password of the day to identify people. The sporadic fire went on for less than an hour and we learned that they got a couple of our guys, and finally confirmed that we killed the VC."

Thrailkill further recalls "just when we thought it was all over, all hell broke loose! The VC attacked us in retaliation, and it was pure hell; pure hell. The incoming rockets, mortars, and the small arms fire started all at once and it was on for the night. Their first assault was so fast, so hard, and so intense, we were caught off-guard. Some of our mortars did not have rounds to fire because they were not picked up yet and still sitting on the LZ. Maybe some of our mortar tubes were not even completely assembled yet. We just weren't ready. We were fighting back with mostly small arms, and that was not enough to change the momentum. We were taking a big licking; soldiers being shot, mortars exploding all around, and rockets streaming through the perimeter and exploding into soldiers. Then it all changed. Alpha Company's mortar started firing and the intensity of the battle of Loc Ninh deflated allowing us to gain control over the period for the rest of the night. We also called in air strikes and the battle finally stopped before daylight. While I was on the daylight recon, I laid and counted 30 plus bodies side by side and evaluated the situation. I do not know how many GIs died but it had to be high."

Charlie Page, a member of the 4th Platoon, Alpha Company and who was awarded the Silver Star for actions on 2 November 1967, recounts being trucked to Dau Tieng; waiting for a C-130 and then "Alpha Company being packed in one plane sitting on the floor pecker to butt." He remembers taking "our mortar tube and

mortar equipment with us---this was a very important decision later as the other companies did not do so. We were ready to fight when we landed." Page recalls that the Company waited at Loc Ninh for several hours before being flown into the jungle by helicopter. "We landed three slicks at a time; landing east to west. There was a slight hill or higher area at the east edge of the LZ. Someone saw a Vietnamese in a blue plaid long sleeve shirt and tan shorts up on this hill running away as we landed. We tried to dig in but the ground was rock hard. The deepest hole that you could get was about 12 inches deep." Page later recalls seeing a dead NVA/VC soldier with a plaid shirt on and missing his legs.

Page further recalls "about 10 p.m., the enemy opened up. There were numerous assaults on the perimeter. We opened up with our mortar, eventually bringing in our rounds as close as 25 to 50 yards from our perimeter. We did this by just using the shotgun shell in the round without any powder charges. The CP would give us the direction of the assault and we would swing our tube (mortar) around and fire without using aiming stakes." (Author's NOTE: we fired High Explosive rounds at suspected enemy targets and illumination rounds at other times to light up the battlefield for the rest of the riflemen.)

"There was a gook machine gun at the top of the east hillside, firing at our mortar tube. It was a pitch black night, so it shot about three feet above our---Bisson and my ---head" Page remembers.

Around 2 a.m., Page recalls that the 1st Infantry Division sent out a "resupply slick with 50 crates (200 rounds) of mortar illumination and we had trouble opening the rounds so I told the guys to use their P-38s to open them---it worked!" "Puff came in and kicked out flares and fired mini-guns---what a show. The Air Force sent in two F-100 Supersabres and they made several passes and dropped bombs. They were probably 100 feet off the deck." (Years later in a

strange coincidence, Page met the pilot who flew that mission. The pilot told Page that he had a beer bet with the other pilot on who would fly the lowest. The pilot that Page met won the bet by flying in at 75 feet.)

Page further recalls, "The attack was over by 5 a.m. The enemy tried another attack around 6 a.m., using villagers as shields."

Page's final thoughts on this battle: "we were out of artillery range; had to use the Air Force; soldiers are often afraid during a battle but for some reason I was not afraid that night; I felt I could not be hit by anything...as if I was in a 'zone' for about six hours."

²(Author's NOTE: Page also was also awarded the Purple Heart for wounds he suffered on 2 November 1967.) Page's Silver Star citation states that his "Company was established in night defensive positions when they come under heavy enemy mortar fire. With complete disregard for his own safety, Specialist Page moved to his mortar while under intense enemy fire, and began placing devastating fire on the hostile positions. Ignoring the intense enemy small arms fire and exploding mortar rounds, he remained at his exposed position to return the hostile fire. Although receiving painful wounds from flying shrapnel, Specialist Page refused medical evacuation and continued his counter-mortar fire throughout the six hour battle."



Frank Castaneda

Frank Castaneda (another 4th Platoon member) remembers "we could sense something was wrong and that as soon as it got dark all hell broke loose." He further recalls "there was a lot of

gun fire all around the perimeter and we

could hear movement; that everyone was engaged in battle."

Castaneda remembers distributing ammunition throughout the company and pulling crates of mortar ammunition to the mortar pit. "Bullets were hitting all around me. I knew I was going to get hit, but luckily I wasn't." Castaneda spent most of the night distributing ammunition. He said, "I could not make out what was going on in the mortar pit. I heard someone fire an M-16 and there was a lot of confusion. As day broke, I could see a large NVA dead near the mortar pit. Turned out Pete Beale had spotted him. He was going to throw a grenade in the mortar pit."

Castaneda joined other soldiers from the Battalion the following day to recon and assess what might have happened to the enemy. "We saw dead NVA torn to pieces; we started to drag and stack the bodies which in some cases fell apart. A caterpillar was brought in and a trench was dug and we threw the bodies into the trench."



Roger Masten

Roger Masten who was an RTO in Alpha Company says "I had a foxhole to myself and I remember that the ground was very hard. I didn't get very deep before it became dark. I saw a flashlight moving up the trail inside the perimeter, and I thought that it was someone from another company. There was a Sergeant Major or Master Sergeant near me, so I went to tell him about the light. Just about that same time, he saw the light too and it was recognized as VC/NVA. I think there was a shot but we were told not to fire within the perimeter."

"I remember getting into my foxhole with the radio. It was quite dark and scary to be unaware of where the enemy was within the perimeter. Not long after that, things

² Masten photo from John Stone collection

began to happen. I had made the mistake of digging my hole in line with an M-60 on the perimeter and the VC were trying to take it out. I remember very well the tracers that lit up the dirt that surrounded the top of my hole. After I finally got out of the hole, I went to the tube to help Charlie Page and somebody else with the mortars. I was on the radio with, I think, B Company. They were telling me to bring rounds in closer to the perimeter. I recall handing mortars to Page along with somebody else. I don't remember who it was. RPGs were crossing low overhead and a lot of loud noise and flashing light going on around us."



Jim Yates

A final recollection of this battle comes from Jim Yates who carried the M-79 Grenade Launcher during this battle. Yates recalls "we flew on fixed wing aircraft to the Loc Ninh

airstrip. When we arrived at the airstrip it had been

blown up by mortars and rockets. We knew we were headed for some hard fighting but little did we realize that we were all alone; only our Battalion." In hindsight, Yates feels that our Battalion was sent to the jungle to "take pressure off the air strip...we were bait; however, we did give 'Charlie' a sting."

Yates recalls that Alpha Company was the only company in the Battalion that brought its mortars in to the LZ and Alpha's mortars were the only ones firing that night. Yates recalls that B Company "was high on a slope in some rubber trees and the rest of the Battalion was on a gentle downhill slope."

Yates goes on to say, "darkness fell and we were still digging in when some small arms fire started. We got word that some gooks were inside the perimeter. All of us were afraid and anxious. This meant we had to keep a 360-degree lookout for the enemy. There was also the concern that we might kill one of our own during the night. All of a sudden, 'hell' broke loose. All night long the battle would rage, then get quiet, then

start up again. At one point, we thought that someone was at our front and we did not want to fire and give away our position. I fired my M79 toward the noise and it stopped. I was subsequently ordered to go to B Company and fill in on the line. 'Holy crap', I thought. They need replacements on the line. That must mean people were killed or badly injured. I had to find my way to B Company in the dark and across the perimeter. I was afraid that they would think I was the enemy and shoot me. The other thought was what if I run into a gook on my way. I crawled on my hands and knees all the way to the B Company perimeter---moving only a few feet at a time and calling out 'B Company, I am from A Company'. It seemed to take forever. Finally, someone answered and asked who I was and if I was a grenadier. All they wanted from me was some of my ammo. I shared my ammo with them and was told to find a place on the line. I found a spot between two riflemen and casually asked about the status of their ammunition. I was told they only had about 18 or 20 rounds. I thought to myself this is not a good place to be." Yates indicates that the Battalion was finally resupplied by "some brave chopper pilots" and the "ground attacks finally ceased."

So ended the fifth major firefight in the battle for Loc Ninh. Subsequent firefights and actions ultimately brought the VC body count to 94 (overall body count for the battle of Loc Ninh---all six firefights---was conservatively close to a thousand---TIME Magazine for 17 November 1967 reports "...Loc Ninh body count of North Vietnamese dead had grown to 926; U.S. Intelligence estimated that perhaps half that many had been dragged away for burial by their comrades, and that another 2,000 to 3,000 had been wounded"). Hundreds of bunkers with overhead cover; thousands of rounds of ammunition and many assault rifles, machine guns and mortars were also found and destroyed by 2-12 Infantry.

The Battalion Commander (then LTC Tice) sums up well the actions of 2-12 Infantry in the November 20, 1967 Tropic Lightning News "They really wanted to overrun us last night, but the men fought very well. I'm proud of them."

The Study states "...the individual soldier...was the decisive factor. In the words of General Westmoreland at the conclusion of the battles around Loc Ninh "this operation is one of the most significant and important that has been conducted in Vietnam....".

From the 17 November 1967 TIME Magazine "the high casualty rate (roughly 50%) for the two ill-fated Red regiments, who were ordered to take the town at all costs, made Loc Ninh one of the war's most significant Allied victories".

Sources:

1. Tropic Lightning News: Vol 2, No 46 November 20, 1967: "12TH INF KILLS 94"
2. 25th Infantry Division Daily Staff Journal.
3. Tropic Lightning News: Vol 2, No 46 November 20 1967: "12TH INF KILLS 94"
4. Department of the Army, Headquarters, 25th Infantry Division; General Orders Number 5022; 19 December 1967; PAGE, CHARLES W., SP4 E-4

A/2/12 veterans of the Battle of Loc Ninh:

1LT Burnett R. (Burnie) Quick

2LT Andy Farris

SGT David Thrailkill

SPC Jim Bisson

SPC Charlie Page

SPC Frank Castaneda

SPC Roger Masten

SPC Jim Yates

Jim Bisson