

Home Is Where Yer Helmet Lands: Coordinates for Dusty

Home sweet home when we first met up in rural Vietnam, Dusty, home of the Vietcong. This is a pic of the unknown Firebase our company helped defend prior to our moving to Wood 1 in the Boi Loi Woods. This is our little piece of heaven, soon to be left to the ARVN to probably run it into the ground. It is also the birthplace of Dusty Snail, sort of.

Once the rain stopped it got rather dusty here— hence Scooter came up with your name de guer, Dusty Snail. Our B Company had been moving north from the Saigon area, and had recently bivouacked at a different FSB not too far away. I don't know the name of it but it was also a mud hole. That is where I joined the platoon and began ambushes and patrolling with a rifle that didn't work. We had to enter through a big mud puddle that the tracks would sink into almost to the top where we rode.

This place was a seedy sort of living spot. We put out some razor wire and easily exited to the roads from the left north corner. The cook got canned due to his failing to provide palatable meals and getting many complaints for a week. He probably got a promotion and sent to a major base camp, which might have been his goal. I know he was not busted down to the infantry. That is how the war mostly worked.

Two events I recall from here were how a guy standing at the pisser near the mess tent got blown up by a booby trapped trash or burn barrel. Maybe it was a device planted by a visiting whore? It happened right close to our bunkers and I was the first on scene with him screaming, his right leg barely attached by a thread of skin. Timothy Hollins was next behind and while the guy held my hand in a death grip Hollins held his head and talked to him to calm him. With my free hand I tried to keep his 2 leg halves together. Not much we could do but the medics came quickly with their stretcher. I think he was an engineer or in artillery.

The next vivid memory was an early morning mount up to go to our first (maybe only mine) firefight. I had to leave a plate of food but took 2 or 3 hardboiled eggs in a pocket. I always thought it happened in the Boi Loi not too far down the road but since I was new and really had no idea where I was, it could have been much further in any direction. Grenades got put in that same pocket and the eggs got really beat up over the course of the day, hence never eaten.



XT 440 348

I'll list a bunch of place coordinates and battle dates later but next I will put the photos I took the day you got blown off the 3-4 track on Hwy 14. That happened on Dec 13 almost all the way to the Wolfhound FSB Mahone2. The Op Report gives the coordinates as XT 512 423 and only states that a truck hit a mine. We know the rest of the story!





I am pretty sure the road curves to the right and goes north to Dau Tieng from here. That is Nui Ba Den, which would be to the west of 14. We are almost ready to load up, the wrecker taking the track and truck back to DT and 3rd platoon, on two tracks, then following up the road to our next unexpected event. Our command track will get blown near the first little village near Dau Tieng. I am not sure how many got evacuated but the Lt, Sletvic, broke his poor ankle and was one of them. Never saw him again. His picture follows. Timor was our next platoon leader and I think we were at Wood 1 when he came out.



This next picture is of Timor and his RTO, Water buffalo Florio, taken at the Ben Cui Hard Spot after a morning sweep. I have no idea when but it must have been at least a couple of weeks before March because Timor went missing before the March convoy battle. Maybe he didn't pay his soda bill! I have the RTO's name and know that he started a successful swimming pool business in New England and then moved half the year to the tip of Florida. He was shot in the leg on March 11.



Here is a list of battle events taken from the ORs that I have. Then I will follow with a list of notable places and their coordinates. I am sure more can be found in the official record but there is a lot missing. Also, there are errors in the record.

Reading the coordinates, the first 3 digits find the square left to right, the second set of 3 up or down. The last number of each set of three is strictly guess work based on 10 divisions of the designated square found with the first two digits. The number scales are at the edge of the pdf map.

1 Nov '68 = B222 contact at XT 459 252 with 1 dead & 3 wd (I don't remember it there nor the casualties if this is my first fight) This is within days of my first fight.

8 Nov '68 = A222 hello landing (eagle flight) into Boi Loi at XT 486 367 with 4 dead & 4 wd

18 Nov '68 =B222 at XT511425 boobyTrp on 14 had 3 wd (almost to Mahone)

20 Nov '68 =222 finds By-Tp155mm XT 453 292 then B detains 5 at XT 465 450 sweep Ben Cui

21 Nov '68 =B222 mine on 14 (Kiker killed)XT 510 426 with 1 dead 1 wd (I think this was the CO's driver who was about to rotate) 3-1 was nearby on security, left a big crater and burned most of the track. 222 in FFight at 26 detain 5 XT 426 366

22 Nov '68 =B222 find mine XT 437 450 then element on 14 find mine XT 517 420

25 Nov '68 =B222(mistake1/27) XT 515 421 mine 1 dead (Kutchy of 2nd plt. stepped on mine at the French fort first culvert) this coordinate closer to Mahone 2 but is wrong

26 Nov '68 =B222 hits mine Cau Khoi

27 Nov '68 =A222 & 4/9 in Cau Khoi XT 302 408 F-Fight 7body ct 18 dead 36 wd 4 tracks 1 chopr lost B222 mine 2wd track dest on 14 (no coord)

28 Nov '68 = 222 sweep, Rome plow sec. XT 526 404 finds rockets

1 Dec '68 = 222 Rome plows XT 530 402

8 Dec '68 =B222 2 mines on 14 XT 500 445 then night ambush on 14 XT 509 436 1 body cnt

9 Dec '68 =B222 mine XT 510 426 3 wd

12 Dec '68 = A222 finds cache near Thanh An XT 560 363

13 Dec '68 =B222 mine XT 512 423 truck & track destroyed on 14 (this is Dusty's Friday mine) 4 wd

14 Dec '68 =B222 hit mine on 26 (Cau Khoi) XT 343 450 then A222 hits claymore on 14 at XT 515 419

16 Dec '68 =B & A222 in contact XT 445 456 (convoy ambush attempt from Ben Cui near the Hard Spot) 3rd platoon came on line flank of the rubber started brush fires with our 50s. Went back to Wood 1



17 Dec '68 = convoy ambush at XT? (B nor 222 is mentioned but this is our first try of the mini gun and it jammed) down 239 from the Ben Cui 8 trucks 1jeep destroyed 7 dead with 75 body count. I was bunker guard at Wood 1 took this pic at dark when all returned. Here is a new pic of 3-1 track Arthur Harp behind the mini at a later date. Zero Flicks, Cheap Thrills, what kind of demented soldier writes such unknown stuff upon their military vehicle? I think it was Teach (Williams) 3-1s representative from the educational community. No idea what happened to Teach. He came after me but left the field way before. I don't think he was ever a casualty but

maybe just lost interest in what he was doing. That, at least, is an honest criticism of the Vietnam experience!



26 Dec '68 =C222 mine Sweep Ben Cui at XT 437 447 then B222 finds boobyT 105mm in Michelin at XT514 482 We were in the Michelin then were called out to attend the Bob Hope show at Cu Chi No mention is made of our Xmas time adventures, mortar fire and such. I will follow with a few pictures.





8 Jan '69 =A222 sweeps Boi Loi XT 417 449 3 dead 5 wd

11 Jan '69 = A222 on a sweep found a cache at XT 410 472

13 Jan '69 =222 loses a track to a mine at XT 473 434 1 wd (maybe Jimmy Laffoon's track & Plt Sgt Shannonhouse goes to base camp?)

14 Jan '69 =B222 in Cau Khoi rubber at XT 343 452 6 dead 9 wd 122 body count, CACrip222 respond to this convoy ambush (Warren of C gets MOH, our CO O'Farrell gets a SS, we went Wood 1 after) Timor was unhinged and ordered us to shoot 2 lil girls crossing our check point. We didn't because they came back when called.

15 Jan '69 =B222 search the area of contact

16 Jan '69 =Crip222 fights at XT 350 450 Cau Khoi 4 body count

19 Jan '69 =B222 sweeps Cau Khoi at XT 357 453 finds destroyed mortar 1 body then C222 hits mine 239 at XT 403 438



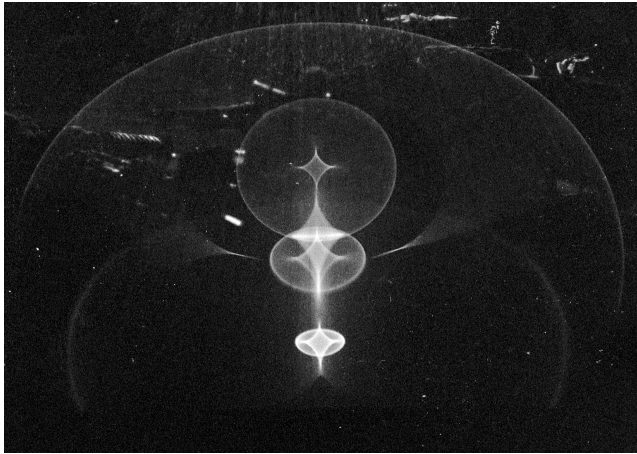
24 Jan '69 =B222 finds 2 mines at XT 374 194 then XT 348 452 1 wd track destroyed

25 Jan '69 =A222 hits mine XT 512 425 1 wd

28 Jan '69 = AC222 fFight west Bao Don (no coord) many weapons dest cap 2dead 2wd

22 Feb '69 = B222 at XT 448 452 Ben Cui Hard Spot atk by 95C yields 28 body count (same info entered for 21 Feb a probe as well as 3 dif mortar atks not recorded leading up to this atk)

February is Tet month and while there is not much entered in the chronologies, especially about us. I assure you we were not doing nothing, just no record of it. Here are some Feb pictures.



The casualties for Feb & Jan show Sgt John Fitzwater on 10 Jan at XT410 468 and Curtis Stocklin, then Merle James Martin died on 28Jan though wounded on 14 Jan. Roger Tyner died on the 23 Feb. the day or night that DT got over run.

23 Feb '69 = Dau Tieng got over run. 73 body count and 14 pw. There is a lot written about this battle and B222 appears in several places. B was split up, our platoon fought all night as part of the reaction force to the penetrations. The rest of B had been at the Hard Spot and fought their

way to the bridge, then into the base camp. Sorry, no pictures because I was too busy to grab a camera. I think we went maybe as convoy support a following day to FSB Mahone2 on 14. They had also been hit and over run. Lots of dead bodies laid out to count. Take note that a scout dog handler named Hartsog was awarded the MOH at Dau Tieng, posthumously. I'll paste another scout dog picture that I took beside the net pic of him.



After the Dau Tieng attack Cu Chi base got over run by a small force of sappers and a bunch of choppers and planes were destroyed. Large bunkers spaced far apart and staffed by few guys was no way to stop our enemy (as we did at the Hard Spot) I never read these lessons learned in any of the OR/LLs.

25 Feb '69 =B222 & 1/5th contact yields 97 body count (no idea where) I recall we were in the Crescent with some snub-nosed tanks once that fired beehives at night. Snub-nosed Sheridans were new and 1/5 had them.

6 Mar '69 =C222 at XT 459 503 got a 51 body count. B222 sent out a stay behind ambush that got attkd with the rescue platoon we lost 7 dead and more wounded. No coordinates or record of this.

8 Mar '69 =A222 gets 154 body count 3 pw (no idea where)

11 Mar '69 =BAC222 convoy ambush (but no coords) B applies direct pressure from the east! And the convoy arrived on schedule. 77 body count, only three u.s. wounded. (we know the

truth, about 3 dead in C and 1 in B and a bunch wounded. We were surrounded until A and C showed up)

10 Apr '69 = B222 at XT 572 527 ambush (lots of new guys Michelin ambush not far from the battalion laager. Hendrickson, Baker were new. Made a tape recording of the radio traffic, the mortar fire and Baker's report that his machine gun wouldn't shoot)

11 Apr '69 = C222 gets 9 body count (entry says it's the same area as B company's Apr 10.)

9-10 May '69 =C222 with 1/27 at XT 571 453 had 2 dead 9wd and got 115 body count 3 pw

Now we move to the Crescent. I remember the companies operating together most of the time but often the record is unclear.

12 May '69 = AC222 at XT 460 470 get 29 body count (B CO Johnston wrote a report about actions 12May to 14May so B came from the Michelin, thru DT to take the right end of the assault line for this day long action a convoy ambush from the Ben Cui) Fairly new bunch guiding us through all this. The plt sgt, the CO, our Plt Leader and several platoon members were brand new to this game. We won and the enemy got to retreat into the Crescent. We took 105mm friendly fire and a Wolfhound got blown in two by an RPG. All in a day's work.

13 May '69 =222 sweep XT 456 514 We went in twice. Picture is dense jungle2d attk with trees shot down. The fight started all over again.



14 May '69 =222 sweep same area from a different direction (after B52 strikes) got in a big fight A & C on line, B & Crip on flanks (box formation) More B52 at night. We laager near Ben Cui.

15 May '69 = 222 sweep same take one pw but nothing happened so nothing recorded.

6 June '69 =A222 XT 340 457 20 body count

6 June '69 =B222 night ambush attkd at XT 391 441 by large force 3 dead 3 wd 8 body count (only 2 dead on B cas. List)

9 June '69 =222 at XT 382 503 51 body count of 95C rgt (found in the Intel section not chronology) I believe this is the night Scuder's mini gun saved our bacon and killed 40 plus in front of B) I left the next day for RR. No pw mentioned but we took two. Casualties too but maybe no dead.

11 -12 June '69 =1/27 & 222 Crescent fight at XT 425 485 got 62 body count 3pw from 95C

16 June '69 = Nui Ba Den attkd XT 281 582 gets 1 body count for 4 dead

28 July '69 =C222 finds cache XT 455 507

6 Aug '69 = A222 with ARVN find Boi Loi cache XT503 372

6 Aug '69 =C222 with ARVN &B 4/9 at XT 522 361 FF 10 body count 1 dead 1 wd 1 APC dest

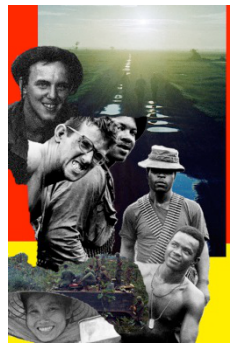
7 Aug '69 = B replace A at joint patrol base ARVN XT 502 362 takes sniper fire 4 body count

8 Aug '69 = B same area Boi Loi fire fight but not recorded

9 Aug '69 =B with ARVN at XT502 362 got 25 body count 1 dead 4 wd (no mention of ARVN cas but they assaulted and bled) McMains killed, four separate actions .

There are a few more entries In the last OR but nothing voluminous. I left the platoon about a week after McMains died and started shaming in TayNinh base camp where I learned I would get a drop on my date to leave so only had a few days to prep, see docs and turn in equipment etc.

Now I'll begin a list of fire, patrol bases and other places with map coordinates. Some last pictures, Sparks and Squirt.



Fire Support Bases had artillery on site, other sites probably only mortars

FSB Bragg XT333578 (Nui Ba Den)
XT595270

Patrol Base Hunsley (2/14)

FSB Sage 2 XT 579331 (Ben Suc)
XT448452 (222)

Ben Cui Hd Spot

FSB Pershing XT518256

PB Devin XT551177

FSB Rowins XT298495 (near 26)
(551224)

PB Dees XT554227

FSB Mahone 2 XT521419 (1/27 DT)
XT337187 (2/27)

PB Diamond 1

FSB Stuart XT499195 (Trang Bang)

LZ Jamie XT4872

FSB Patton XT502195 (1/5th)
XT275786 (n S Barb)

LZ Carolyn

FSB Washington XT146568 XT3322 (5Apr)	PB Diamond 2
FSB Wood 1 XT470380 (Boi Loi Woods) 19 XT327215 (15Apr)	PB Diamond 3
FSB Wood 2 XT384430 (239)	PB Hunter
FSB Wood 3 XT363425 (26) (222) (n Bragg)	LZ Ike XT338719
FSB Wood 3alt X441346 (Spt 69) (Rz Bks)	PB Dolly XT522588
FSB Stoneman XT303710	PB Bragg XT343580
FSB Rawlings XT317497 XT357147 (was Rittgers)	PB Kotre
FSB Sedgwick XT248302 XT132668	PB Buckner
FSB Jackson XT425168 XT357147 (2/27)	PB Rittgers
FSB Unk XT440348 (Wood1 222 ARVN) XT551218 (2/12)	PB Lorence
FSB Chamberlain XS554984 XT375810	LZ Becky
FSB Mitchell XT XT440068	PB Houston
FSB Santa Barbara XT272683 XT270554	PB Rock Crusher
FSB Kenne2 XT604017 XT203293	PB Frontier City
FSB Buel 2 XT225535 (217535) 2/34Ar	
FSB Emory XT702147 2/34Ar	
FSB Reed XT477125 south Trang Bang	
FSB Crocket	
FSB Hampton	

Places & approx. coordinates

Tay Ninh town XT2250; Tay Ninh base camp XT1651; Ho Bo Woods XT6230;

Ben Cui rubber plantation XT4645 ; Michelin rubber plantation XT5550; Dau Tieng base camp XT4947 ; Crescent XT4252; Nui Ba Den XT2858 ; Boi Loi Woods XT5234 ; Michelin hospital XT520496 ; Cu Chi base camp XT6315 ; Trapezoid XT5742 ; Cau Khoi rubber plantation XT3649 ; Citadel XT5025 ; Filhol rubber plantation XT6720 ; Sugar Mill XT455060 ; Plain of Reeds XS3790 ; Duc Hoa city XS5997 ; Boa Trai XS389998 ; Trung Lap XT560265 ; Pineapple XS604882 ; Hau Nghia XT4722 – 5826 ; Ben Keo training center XT2343 ;