

Return to the Graveyard
Dace "DR" Smith, 1st Anti-Tank Bn

We were facing approximately to the south which looks similar to the overall view picture. When we came back into the fight we were heading toward the 90 degree turn, toward the west I think. We went about one or two trucks back (into the ambush) and then turned into that southerly position. We took out a stone looking building, about 200 yards out, where heavy fire and mortars were coming from it. The building appeared to have quite a few NVA firing from around it, and that's where some of the Marines in the ditch indicated, also I remember a large tree on that side of the road too, where we had originally taken heavy fire from, which got a very good taste of my 30 Cal. machine gun, on our way back into the fight.



There were a lot of hooches on the other side of the road, but I was afraid of hitting some of our guys, who might be using them for cover. It was after we knocked out that building that were blown up....You know, I remember to this day the explosion coming into our track...It came in next to Larry's head, and killed him instantly. The explosion was like it was in slow motion as it engulfed the whole inside....To this day I don't remember a sound.....My thoughts were, this is it, thinking I was about to die. My eyes were wide open, which were burned severely, and had shrapnel in them, as did my whole body and which I still carry some today. I managed to throw open my hatch, after I checked Larry, and climbed over the guns, and crawled to the ditch. When I got into the ditch, I could barely see, but the guys who were still alive, were firing whatever they could get their hands on, and we held them off for about three more hours, until those Marines, from Phu Bai, fought their way to us, and took us back down there. I don't know why we made it, and so many didn't.

Like I said in my sign in, we all died a little that day, 2-7-68, didn't we?

Semper Fi Dace "DR" Smith