

Lyle Prochnow ("C" Battery 69-70) asked if I knew of "C" Battery being hit hard around January or February 1970.

Here are the replies I received in the order in which I received them.

---

Bill Labhart (68-69) "C" Battery FDO

I was in C Battery and left in March of '69. Several months afterwards the Battery was attacked by mortar fire resulting in several wounded and I thought that's when the "Doc" was killed. John Wanek was the XO and was wounded in the arm - he visited me in MO several months later. He said the BC was also severely wounded and sent stateside. As I understand and remember his recount, they were getting ready to move positions, so they weren't in the best position to deal with an attack - i.e., ammo was not with the guns and they were pinned down. All of this is from memory and I can't remember the exact date, but it was in that time frame of which Lyle is inquiring.

I haven't had time to confirm but I believe the attack is mentioned in the 1/83rd historical write-up, if I'm not mistaken. Wanek didn't lose his arm but it was pretty chewed up when I saw him after he came back. As I recall they were going to move closer toward the southern end of the A Chau Valley - they had broken everything down for the road march the following day. I never understood why they didn't have some sort of security just for the reason of what ultimately occurred. Sad to lose the Doc - a good guy.

---

Russ Gray (68-69) "C" Battery

I left C-Battery in Sept of 69. I can only say that the Battery got hit, while at Batstone, don't remember the month, but Kenny Knebler was there with me and might remember.

---

Malcolm Decker (69-70) "C" & HQ Battery

No, did not happen then. They got hit in May 69

---

Cliff Baldwin (Buggs) (69-70) "C" Battery

"C" Battery was not hit in January or February in 1970. The only time "C" Battery was hit hard was at Bastogne in May 1969.

---

John Zagami (69-70) "C" Battery

I left Nam Feb 70 & I don't remember any attacks then.

---

Ted Belajac (69-70) "C" Battery

Lyle was in my gun section,

I was in Hawaii in January 1970 on R&R so it must have been then, but I don't recall any talk about that when I returned to the Battery.

---

Tom Krebs (68-69) HQ Battery

On May 18, 1969. I was asleep at headquarters Battery 1/83 Arty. Our hooch was next to 101 dust-off at Camp Eagle. I remember waking up to sound of what seemed like every dust-off chopper starting its engine and thinking someone is getting hit. Little did I know it was our C Battery and Fred Paddleford, the medic was killed.

In the morning they asked me to go out to Bastogne to check the communication gear. The commo van was setting at angle, but the communication equipment was all working. Upon talking to men there were stories of bravery. One of the troops in C Battery managed to drive at least three guns out of the burning debris and save them to be moved up to Fire Base Blaze.

North Vietnam troops did not want the guns move up to rain hell on Hamburger Hill. When the attack happened, the guns were pulled and set outside of the containment of sand bagged area to move out soon. That is why they there such an easy target.

About 1/4 of unit was wounded and medevacked out. The mosquito netting was gone, the tents had holes. The tales of loading the wounded and men asking for one last joint before they died, most lived in the true tradition of the medical people saying get then on the chopper and we will save them. I was sent out to C Battery later to replace the commo sarge who was wounded and never returned. He drove a jeep that that said do you know the way to San Jose. Unknown to me Ho Chi Minh Birthday was May 19. The rumor was C Bat was his birthday present.

It was said later about the battle of Hamburger Hill that A and C Battery killed more NVA on that battle then the 101.

---

Don Aird (70-71) "C" Battery

We weren't bothered until February 1971 when we were at C 2, then we were rocketed fairly regularly.

---

---

John Zagami (69-70) "C" Battery

It seems we all have a different memory of what passed. What I remember was on Mother's Day May 10th was the attack in May 1969. I was with the advanced party in the A Shau Valley and the 1st Sgt told me to saddle up. I drove a 548 taking everyone back to Bastogne, the unit got hit the night before.

We didn't wait for any convoy guards, just high tailed it out of there. Once back at Bastogne the hill looked like it lost a couple of feet in height. A rocket hit the powder bunker and set off the joes (we were fully stocked). That was the 4th gun (my section). All the tents were gone, my duffle bag was found down the road.

I believe 17 guys got injured. Our Medic, Doc Paddleford was caring for the wounded during the attack and a powder canister flying through the air from the explosion smashed into his face he was medevac'd and passed away several days later.

---

Rich Cicalo (69-70) "C" Battery

On April 13th, 1970 Charlie Battery was hit and we lost Clifford Earnhardt and Larry Francis.

---