

Wisconsin Veterans Museum
Research Center

Transcript of an
Oral History Interview with
STEVE SCOTT
AmTrac driver, Marine Corps, Vietnam War
2004

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Scott, Steve, (1948-). Oral History Interview, 2004.

User copy, 2 sound cassettes (ca. 74 min.), analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Master copy, 2 sound cassettes (ca. 74 min.), analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Transcript: 0.1 linear ft. (1 folder).

Abstract:

Steve Scott, a Madison, Wisconsin native, describes his Vietnam War service as an AmTrac driver in the Marine Corps. Scott discusses volunteering after high school graduation in 1966, tough basic training in San Diego (California), advanced infantry training at Camp Pendleton (California), and specialized training as an AmTrac (Landing Vehicle Tracked or amphibious tractor) driver. He explains the duties and capabilities of an AmTrac crew. Scott recalls assignment to the 5th AmTrac Battalion, Headquarters and Service (H and S) Company. Tired of inspections, he tells of volunteering to go overseas, additional training, taking a commercial flight to Okinawa (Japan) with a staging battalion, and being assigned at DaNang (Vietnam) to 3rd Marine Division, 1st AmTrac Battalion. He describes his duties supporting the Grunt (Ground Troops) companies, doing blocking-force patrols, and providing security for Navy ships on the Cua Viet River. Scott talks about doing work detail on the McNamara Line and discusses living conditions, weather, and daily duties like tractor maintenance and patrol. He mentions going to Quang Tri (Vietnam) for demolition school and learning more about C-4 explosives. During the Tet Offensive, he speaks of the North Vietnamese Army trying to retake the river with small arms fire and mines, and his duties guarding “Mike” Boats that carried supplies. Scott talks about the NVA trying to shut down the Cua Viet River again during the Battle of Dong Ha. He describes the first time he took an AmTrac into combat to shoot out line charges and not knowing how effective it was. A week later, he reports being sent out in the tractor again to level a village, hitting a mine, and that being the last time he took an AmTrac into combat. Scott reflects on his distrust of the Vietnamese villagers and getting along with South Vietnamese “Kit Carson Scouts”. He details an incident when a mortar attack blew up the docks and caused a huge explosion. He portrays his rest and recreation (R&R) in Manila (Philippines) and his trip back to the States in 1968. Scott discusses his homecoming, says he didn’t have any bad experiences, and comments on how he felt he couldn’t discuss his wartime experiences with anybody.

Interviewed by Jim Kurtz, Wisconsin Veterans Museum Archivist, 2004.

Transcribed by Michael L. Weber, Wisconsin Veterans Museum Volunteer, 2006.

Abstract by Susan Krueger, 2009.

Interview Transcript:

Jim: 8-04. My name is Jim Kurtz. I'm going to be interviewing Steve Scott on his experiences in Vietnam. Steve, when were you born?

Steve: I was born February 4, 1948.

Jim: Where did you grow up?

Steve: I grew up in the city of Madison on the eastside, actually in the Sherman Park area.

Jim: Where did you go to high school?

Steve: I went to Madison East.

Jim: What year did you graduate?

Steve: 1966.

Jim: And that was when the Vietnam War was happening. Is that right?

Steve: Yes it was.

Jim: Were you planning on going on to college?

Steve: No, I wasn't.

Jim: Were you concerned about the draft, or –

Steve: I felt that I would, at that time, because it wasn't a lottery then, or anything, I felt that I would be drafted reasonably quickly because I was 1-A.

Jim: OK. So, what did you do? Were you drafted?

Steve: No. I enlisted in the Marine Corps. I decided I would do that to avoid the draft.

Jim: Is there any particular reason how you thought you would be avoiding the draft by going into the Marine Corps?

Steve: Actually it started with some friends of mine in high school who also weren't planning on college at the time and they enlisted in the Marine Corps and it just kind of – After they did it, it just spread to some more of us. We decided that we would do the same thing.

Jim: And when did you have to go in the Marines?

Steve: I reported for duty in October of 1966.

Jim: And where to?

Steve: San Diego. Boot Camp.

Jim: How did you get to San Diego? Did you take a train or a bus?

Steve: I took a bus from Madison to Milwaukee and flew to San Diego.

Jim: A military –

Steve: No, a regular passenger jet.

Jim: OK. And how long was the boot camp in San Diego?

Steve: Eight weeks.

Jim: And did you get to go through boot camp with any of your friends?

Steve: Actually three of my friends. There were five of us who enlisted and one guy had a little problem with something on his record and he couldn't go until a month later. So yes, there were four of us who went through boot camp together.

Jim: Do you have any particular experiences in boot camp that stick with you?

Steve: I think, yeah, how scared I was when I first got there. I remember that. I also remember the friends of mine who went two months ahead of us were still – They were just ready to get out when we reported. And I can still remember marching across the field and we were really scared and we were kind of afraid to look around, but we did. And we saw them and they were kind of laughing at us. I remember that. And, I guess the training. It was rough. It was –

Jim: Was it very physical or mental?

Steve: Very physical, a lot of mental stuff, too. I mean they were in your face. Especially the first two or three weeks, they were in your face a lot. If you did anything wrong at all, if you even looked wrong they, you know, you were getting yelled at and screamed at.

Jim: Were the drill instructors Vietnam veterans at that point or –

Steve: I believe two of mine were. I don't know about the third one.

Jim: OK. But, did they use the likelihood of your going to Vietnam as a motivator?

Steve: At times, sure.

Jim: Yeah. And when you said you were scared, was it just because it was a new experience or –

Steve: I think because it was a new experience because when I first got off the plane in San Diego, we were, naturally I smoked at the time. We lit a cigarette and we were walking down the hall there after we got off the plane and, all of a sudden, a sergeant came up. He was dress blues, I remember, and he just started yelling at us, 'Put that cigarette out and get outside.' And, from that point on, somebody was just in your face the whole time. We got on a bus, reported to boot camp and, it was, you know, the drill instructor got onto the bus and just was yelling at us, 'Get off the bus and get on the yellow footprints.' Plus, it was real, real early in the morning, like 3 a.m. or something like that. And that didn't make it any better.

Jim: OK. Did you get uniforms that fit when they issued the uniforms?

Steve: Actually, they fit pretty good. I was surprised at that. They fit pretty good.

Jim: Do you remember your rifle serial number from basic training?

Steve: No I don't.

Jim: OK. The reason I asked, I was a basic training company commander (laughs). That's another story. So, anything else stand out? Were there any people from other parts of the country that you remember from boot camp, or –

Steve: No, not really, not off hand. I mean, there were guys and they talked, but you were only there eight weeks and then you kind of went your own ways and –

Jim: OK. What happened after you completed boot camp?

Steve: Well, we completed boot camp just before Christmas. Now normally what you would do is go on to another four weeks of infantry training. But, since it was so close to Christmas, they let us go home on leave. And, then when we came back, we went to the four weeks of infantry training.

Jim: What was the reaction of your friends and neighbors in Madison with the short haircut and everything when you came back for Christmas?

Steve: Well, you know, you took a lot of kidding about it but, at that time, there were a lot of guys who had been coming, you know, home and with the short haircuts and stuff.

Jim: So then you went to advanced infantry training. And was that at San Diego also?

Steve: No, it was at Camp Pendleton.

Jim: OK. And where's Camp Pendleton?

Steve: In California.

Jim: OK. And what was that like?

Steve: That was a little bit more of the same, except it was more advanced as far as of survival tactics, working together like in, you know, a rifle platoon. It was more infantry training than specialized training. That came later.

Jim: OK. And ah, were you trained on the M-14 [rifle] or the M-16 [rifle]?

Steve: At that time, the M-14.

Jim: OK. So, did you get to fire the M-79 [grenade launcher] and any mortars, or anything like that?

Steve: No, and ah, the M-60 [machine gun] in infantry training, the M-60 –

Jim: Which was a machine gun?

Steve: Right. It was a machine gun. Ah, we shot a little bit just to get familiar with it; a 45-cal. [handgun], mostly the M-14 though. That was basically it.

Jim: Ah, were the high school friends of yours in this advanced infantry training class also?

Steve: No they weren't. We got put in different places after boot camp.

Jim: OK. So, when you completed your advanced infantry training, what happened next?

Steve: I went on to specialized training, well specialized. My MOS was 1833, which was an AmTrac [LVTP5 Landing Vehicle Tracked] crewman.

Jim: So, what was your job? What is an AmTrac?

Steve: It's kind of like an Armored Personnel Carrier. It's an amphibious tractor that they used to carry troops and supplies and whatever. And they can operate in water, or on land.

Jim: OK, So what was your job – what were you trained to do as a crewman? As a driver, or -- ?

Steve: Trained as a driver. How to drive them, how to maintain them.

Jim: So, how many people are there in a crew on an AmTrac?

Steve: Ah, on a regular AmTrac, there are four crewmen.

Jim: And what jobs do they have?

Steve: Well, you have a crew chief, you have a driver, ah don't know what the other two were called –

Jim: Well, what were their jobs?

Steve: One was basically a radioman and ah, I can't remember if the other guy operated mainly the ramp, or what?

Jim: OK.

Steve: Because the ramp would go up and down the lift and slides. And the other troops –

Jim: How many troops would an AmTrac carry?

Steve: I believe it was around twenty-five or thirty combat –

Jim: So it was a pretty big vehicle?

Steve: Pretty good size, yeah.

Jim: So, how long was that training?

Steve: I believe that was four to six weeks. I don't remember exactly how long, but, four to six weeks.

Jim: And, where did that training take place?

Steve: That was also at Camp Pendleton.

Jim: And after you completed that training, what did you do?

Steve: I was assigned to H and S Company. I believe at that time, it was the 5th Marine Division, or the 5th AmTrac Battalion, I'm sorry. And that was stationed at Camp Pendleton at a place we called 'Del Mar' which was down by the ocean.

Jim: OK.

Steve: And I stayed there until October of '67.

Jim: How many people were in this AmTrac battalion?

Steve: Well, there were four companies, so 600 and some?

Jim: Six hundred, so it was fairly big unit. What did you do while you were assigned to this battalion; just do training exercises, or --?

Steve: Actually, when I got assigned to that battalion, I got put on an, what they call an E-1 AmTrac, which was basically a mine clearing vehicle. I was an engineer-type vehicle, they called it; which was kind of new at the time. It had been around awhile, but not that long. And ah, I was assigned to that tractor and that was a whole other process of learning that tractor because it was different from the regular AmTracs. It was used for specialized mine-clearing things.

Jim: So you served in that battalion until October of '67; is that correct?

Steve: Uh-huh.

Jim: Now did the battalion go to Vietnam, or did you go just as a replacement?

Steve: Actually I went as a replacement. Actually, I volunteered for, what they called at that time, WESTPAC [Western Pacific] orders and mainly because I was a little tired of what was going there in the States. There were a lot of inspections going on, a lot of different things. We kept getting new commanders and everything. And so I volunteered.

Jim: Might you have not gone to Vietnam if you hadn't volunteered?

Steve: Actually, I probably wouldn't have because, after I volunteered and like not more than a week afterwards, we got a new staff sergeant, which was my platoon sergeant for E-1s [privates]. And he recognized that there was no formal training for E-1s. Nobody saw them until they were assigned to a unit and he wanted to start a school. And he came and told me, after I got my orders, he says, 'Well,' he says, 'you probably wouldn't have had to gone,' because he was going to start this school and the guys at the time operating the tractors would have been the instructors.

Jim: Did you get leave before you went to Vietnam?

Steve: Yes, I did.

Jim: And how long was that?

Steve: I believe twenty days is what I had left.

Jim: Did you come back to Madison?

Steve: Yes, I did.

Jim: OK. And were there any experiences there that stick in your mind?

Steve: No, not really. I came back and mainly hung out with my friends, partied, checked up, you know, tried to stop in and see the parents of the guys who I had gone in with originally to try to find out what they were doing. And that's about it.

Jim: OK. So, then when you went to WESTPAC, which means you ended up in Okinawa, as I understand. Is that correct?

Steve: Well, first I went to, what they call the staging battalion, which was another three-to-four weeks of training for Vietnam. That's when I first fired a grenade launcher and I first fired the M-16.

Jim: Where was the staging battalion?

Steve: That was also at Camp Pendleton.

Jim: And when was that? Was that in October of '67.

Steve: Actually, I probably started that in September.

Jim: OK. So, did that – was that a unit that was at this staging battalion that got shipped over together, or was it --?

Steve: Yeah. And I can't remember how big the unit was. It was quite a few of us though.

Jim: Then how did you get to Vietnam after that?

Steve: We flew out of what, I think was, Edwards Air Force Base on Tiger Airlines, I believe it was called. We went to Okinawa.

Jim: So you went commercially rather than – which is a better deal than going in a military transport?

Steve: Yeah.

Jim: So what happened at Okinawa?

Steve: Actually, we got to Okinawa, and I don't know; I guess we were being processed. I really don't know why we spent, I think it was, three days in Okinawa.

Jim: OK.

Steve: And then, we were put on a plane; another commercial plane, and flew into Vietnam; flew into DaNang.

Jim: OK. And at DaNang, is that where you got your unit assignment?

Steve: Yes.

Jim: And you were assigned to the –

Steve: First AmTrac Battalion, 3rd Marine Division.

Jim: What was the job of the AmTrac Battalion in Vietnam?

Steve: Actually, our job was to support the 3rd Marine Division, the Grunt (Ground Troops) division, or the Grunt companies. We also provided security for the Navy there. They had a port facility because we were right on the Cua Viet River.

Jim: Which river?

Steve: Cua Viet.

Jim: Do you know how to spell that?

Steve: C-U-A-V-I-E-T.

Jim: OK. Was the AmTrac, I forgot to ask this, were they armed?

Steve: Yeah. They – well they really armed them over there.

Jim: Machine guns, or --?

Steve: Machine guns, most – some carried 30s some carried – if they could find another one they would put another one on top. I was in the E-1 platoon again there and we carried one 30-cal. machine gun. That was in a turret.

Jim: OK. And, that was crafted over there or did the E-1s always have it?

Steve: They always had a turret for the 30.

Jim: So was your job then mine clearing? You said that those are mine clearing, engineering type vehicles?

Steve: Right. But, the AmTrac battalion over there – actually we were – they gave us the name of ‘AM Grunts’ because we did a lot more grunting than we did tractor. We did tractor when it was needed. Actually, A Company was assigned to be in Grunts almost all of the time. Ah, we did a lot of patrols. We used to do a lot of blocking-force patrols.

Jim: Did you take the vehicles when you did these blocking-force patrols?

Steve: No.

Jim: So, you were just out there –

Steve: We did do some operations with the vehicles, but we did more Grunting than we did –

Jim: OK.

Steve: I remember when I first arrived, we – I spent like the first three or four weeks I was there – I spent on work details. Mostly, we went to a place north of where we were, called ‘C-4’ and I believe it was part of the – at that time, it was part of the building of the ‘McNamara Line,’ if you remember that.

Jim: Sure. And could you just describe what that was?

Steve: The McNamara Line?

Jim: Yes.

Steve: Well, it was a series of posts throughout North Vietnam that was supposed to, I guess, stop the insurgency, or –

Jim: It wasn’t in North Vietnam, it was –

Steve: Well, --

Jim: It was on the border, right?

Steve: It was on the DMZ, near the DMZ. And ah, I guess to, like I say, stop the insurgency and stuff. I doubt if it did any good, but anyway, we were there and we strung a lot of barbed wire for them. We helped build their bunkers and things like that. I did that for the first four weeks I was there.

Jim: OK. And, did you have any contact with the VC when you were doing this?

Steve: No. The only hostile contact I had, I remember, I think about the third or fourth day I was there; because they told me that they had a lot of in-coming at Cua Viet, which we did. But, I think it was the third or fourth day I was there. Ah, I was sitting with the guys and, all of a sudden, they all got up, and started running for the door; because when we got in-coming, at that time, we were supposed to get to this one bunker, which was like a second line of defense. And I was wondering what they were doing. And, all of a sudden, I heard the explosions. So, I got up and I ran with them. I learned that, the longer you were there, you could actually tune yourself in to the 'pop.' And, if you heard this 'pop,' you knew it was in-coming. And, that's what these guys had heard and they got up and took off. But, that was my first.

Jim: OK. And this was from artillery from the North Vietnamese, probably from the –

Steve: From the DMZ zone.

Jim: OK. So what were your living conditions. Did you have a place where the vehicles were parked and that's where you lived, or did you live out in the woods, or --?

Steve: No. Actually we had, I guess what you would call, a hut. They were built out of plywood, had tin roofs, ah probably fifteen guys per hut, ten or fifteen guys per hut.

Jim: And where was this hut, this place where you were?

Steve: Actually we were right at the mouth of the Cua Viet River on the South China Sea.

Jim: OK.

Steve: So, we were pretty, you know, right next to the ocean; a lot of pine trees and sand.

Jim: OK. So you had the first month working on the McNamara Line. Did you go to and from this living situation living in these huts by the Cua Viet River, or did you go out and get a, you know, set up night positions and all that?

Steve: The first month?

Jim: Yes.

Steve: I spent most of my time working up at C-4. And we'd leave; we'd take AmTracs from Cua Viet to C-4 and I can't remember. It was up north, up the ocean a ways. I can't remember exactly how far.

Jim: C-4 now. What was that, just a base?

Steve: Yeah.

Jim: OK. So, after the first month, what did you do? Now, that puts us into, like November of '67?

Steve: Yeah, I think so. I think after that there was a time when I, and I can't remember. I think it was before Christmas. Well, maybe it was after Christmas. I think I spent most of my time doing patrols for another month or so.

Jim: OK. And that's in that –

Steve: And working on the tractors. We didn't take our tractors out to do much really but, naturally, we had to maintain them every day. We did a lot of patrols –

Jim: How many people went on a patrol and who was leading and all that?

Steve: Usually there was around twenty of us and we normally had a sergeant. Sometimes we had a lieutenant. Ah, --

Jim: And what were your missions –

Steve: Well, each company would send out a patrol every night.

Jim: And so, you would set up a position out –

Steve: Yeah. We'd leave, we'd probably – it was predetermined where we would go. It was usually near one of the vills [villages] south of us. I was in H and S Company and we had more of the southern part of the area.

Jim: Yeah.

Steve: And yeah, it was set up – It was more of a 'set-up and watch.'

Jim: Did you ever have any contact when you were on any of these night patrols?

Steve: No. We never had any contact in that first month or two.

Jim: OK, so –

Steve: And then I think it was after that, sometime after that, I was sent to Quang Tri for some demolition school because, I had never had that in the States when I was in E-1s, because E-1s carry the C-4 (plastic explosives) and what have you. So, they sent me there to learn a little bit more about C-4 explosives; how to explode it, how you insert blasting caps and ah, how to blow up different things if you needed to. But mainly our tractors, they carried line charges, which were shot out

with missiles. So, we didn't use C-4 a lot. Every once in awhile there might be something on a patrol, or something and we were the guys usually who would take a little C-4 over if they thought something wasn't right and we'd load up if they thought it was a booby trap or –

Jim: So, you were functioning as engineers then actually?

Steve: More than anything, sure.

Jim: And how long was this training, this demolition training?

Steve: I think I was in Quang Tri about three weeks.

Jim: Three weeks. So that takes us up to [unintelligible] to the first of the year of '68?

Steve: Yeah, around there. Maybe a little after because, I can't remember how long it was from the time I got done doing the C-4 stuff; I can't remember how much time it was exactly there between that and when I got to Quang Tri.

Jim: OK. It was pretty early on, though, OK.

Steve: That's about right.

Jim: OK. And, then what happened?

Steve: Then it was back to more of the same: patrols, ah, up until, I guess it was February when –

Jim: Something happened in February of '68, didn't it?

Steve: Yeah. Tet.

Jim: Yes. So, what happened?

Steve: What happened with us was a lot of incoming. And, they also, the NVA (North Vietnamese Army) were trying to close the river down, the Cua Viet River between us and Dung Ha, because a lot of the supplies for Dung Ha and Camp Carroll and Cam Lo and all those other places up there, came through us. It was brought in on LSTs (Landing Ship Tank) and then taken down by 'Mike' Boats (LCM-8, Landing Craft Medium) down to Dung Ha.

Jim: What's a Mike Boat?

Steve: A Mike Boat is ah, well you've probably seen them in war movies. They used to use them a lot in World War II to take in troops to the beach.

Jim: The landing craft – the Higgins Boat is the, yeah –

Steve: And ah, so they would – and I did spend a lot of time, well ah, all of us did, actually; pulled different duties. But, we spent some time, they decided that the boats should have guards out. So, they would put two or three Marines on each Mike Boat and they'd try to send them down in supply routes, a bunch of them together.

Jim: Did they have any Navy Swift Boats or boats like that to defend these Mike Boats?

Steve: Yeah. They had Swift Boats. They also had, they also – I never got into that training, but they trained some Marines in the use of LAWs [Light Anti-Tank Weapon].

Jim: Uh huh. And what's a LAW?

Steve: Well it's like a – I can't remember the exact name for it, but it's a rocket like a bazooka –

Jim: A bazooka, it's a [unintelligible] –

Steve: Breakdown – a disposable one, yeah. And ah, I know they trained a bunch of those guys to go on boats too because they were getting hit pretty regular, they'd ah, either by mines that were placed in the river, or by mines that were being remotely detonated from shore. And sometimes, they were being fired on.

Jim: Did you go on any of these boat patrols, ah, in defense of these Mike Boats?

Steve: Yes.

Jim: And how far upriver did you go?

Steve: To Dong Ha, which was a few miles. I can't remember exactly how far that trip was, but –

Jim: Say, how long is that type of duty?

Steve: Well, that and patrols and regular work days, as far as tractor maintenance and stuff, we did this altogether.

Jim: OK. So that was –

Steve: We did that continually.

Jim: OK. So that was through the whole Tet – So you spent Tet on the river, basically doing security for the supplies and – ?

Steve: Yeah.

Jim: When did you use the vehicles during this time?

Steve: We didn't.

Jim: Didn't?

Steve: Not during Tet, not the E-1s. The AmTrac guys were out on different operations and stuff, but we never went on any.

Jim: OK. The other ones, they used them to carry troops, almost like helicopters, to a certain location and drop them off. Is that what they were doing?

Steve: Right.

Jim: So ah, did Tet leave any particular memories with you, or is there anything that stood out?

Steve: It was probably the first time I had gotten shot at, as far as – A couple of times on the river we got small arms fire. There was one time when ah, a mine was blown and we figured it was a remote control. And, it blew up right next to the boat, but luckily, we weren't right on top of it. Ah, and I was on one side of the boat and the guy on the other side of the boat I remember he did a lot of shooting and stuff. And he saw somebody running but, by the time I got over there, it was all over with. But, like I say, luckily the mine went off next to the boat instead of under it.

Jim: OK. I'm going to turn the tape over now. You were describing your Tet experiences and the first time you were shot at. Did that leave any specific impression on you, getting shot at?

Steve: Actually ah, you know, you would think it would scare you but it really didn't scare me. It just ah, I just thought, 'Well, they shot at me and they didn't hit me,' (laughs).

Jim: That's good (laughs).

Steve: At that time, it didn't – I don't know, I guess it didn't register at all. I just –

Jim: OK. So, after Tet, what were your jobs, or what did you do?

Steve: More of the same—patrols. Doing the ah, maintenance on the tractors, ah –

Jim: What constituted the maintenance on the tractors? What was involved in that?

Steve: Oh, you'd ah, because of it being sandy and stuff; if you didn't, if they were started and stuff and ran for whatever reason, you had ah, fuel filters and things like that, which had to be taken out and cleaned. And ah, grease, especially grease; grease the wheels and stuff because of the sand and then you had –

Jim: OK.

Steve: Ah, we didn't really change the oil. We had a maintenance crew that did that. Ah, just make sure that everything was in order.

Jim: OK. How many times a week did you personally go on a patrol?

Steve: I would say I went on patrol – I usually got assigned – ah, two or three times a month.

Jim: Two or three times a month, OK. And were they always night patrols, or did you—

Steve: Always.

Jim: So, what happened during – was there patrolling during the day at all or –

Steve: Yeah, there were day patrols and stuff. But, usually, we'd go out early afternoon, early evening, I guess. We'd be out all night. We'd come back sometime around, well, before noontime normally. And then, shortly afterwards, another patrol would go out. It was pretty –

Jim: So there were patrols out almost 24 hours per day, so it was like a 24-hour –

Steve: Right.

Jim: So then, did you get a chance to sleep after you came back from the patrol?

Steve: Yes. We pretty much had the whole day off until the next day.

Jim: OK. And, this whole time you were still operating out of this camp at the mouth of the river? Is that correct?

Steve: Yup.

Jim: Was this camp ever mortared?

Steve: We got mortars, but more incoming; more like, I suppose, 130s, every now and then. They claimed that some of them were 155-mm rounds.

Jim: So, you were that close to the DMZ that the artillery from the bad guys could get there?

Steve: Right.

Jim: OK. What was the weather like?

Steve: The weather was either real hot and kind of muggy, although not too bad being on the ocean, because we had a, pretty much, a steady breeze. Or, it was raining. I remember I was over there, I can't remember what month it was, but we went through the tail end of a typhoon. I guess it hit a little harder down at DaNang. But, that pretty much shut down everything. It was just wind and rain for two days. You couldn't even hardly go outside.

Jim: Did it rain straight up and side –

Steve: It felt like it (laughs). It felt like it came sideways, yeah (laughs).

Jim: You said, you know, so you were – you know, after Tet, you were doing more of the same: patrols and maintenance. Did your camp have a perimeter that you had to guard too? Did you have assignments for that periodically?

Steve: Right, yeah. We'd be assigned to the – When I first got there, the first few months I was there, we actually had a guard post that was [unintelligible] the AmTrac, all sandbagged and stuff. But that was out near the wire. And sure, you had to do that once or twice a month, probably.

Jim: OK.

Steve: And they also had another set of bunkers set inside that. That's where I explained we always had to go to when – the first few months I was there, whenever we had incoming. Well, they quit that because they started – they kind of figured out that maybe too many guys were getting hit going to the bunkers. So ah, but on four of those, throughout, well one for H and S Company and then there was one for B Company and one for C. Ah, they'd have somebody there on day watch every day, just to listen and look and report anything they heard or saw. They also had that.

Jim: OK. So, we're now into '68 after Tet. There was a second Tet-type offensive in May and was anything happening -- ?

Steve: Yes. It started in early April. Ah, at the time, I don't know what they called it. It wasn't until a few years ago I realized they called it the "Battle of Dong Ha." And it was another thing where they tried to shut the river down. I believe it was the 320th NVA (North Vietnamese Army) Division that the Marines ended up going

up against. And it was in a lot of little vills there. I remember one was called Dai Do, I think it was D-A-I-D-O, An Loc, some ah, a bunch of vills. And they got pretty entrenched in there and they didn't want to leave. They fought hard and I think their object, their plan was, to eventually ah, take over Dong Ha and take over the river.

Jim: So you were then going back to doing security in Mike Boats –

Steve: Started on the Mike boats again and that was, we went ah, me and a guy, and actually he had only been with us three to four months, and it makes me mad because I don't remember his name. Ah, we got assigned to a boat and, I think, there were eight or nine boats. We headed down river and, I don't know that we got three or four hundred yards away and we got hit with small arms, recoilless rifle, and boy, I don't know what all. Anyway, the guy with me, he got hit pretty bad. He got, lost an arm. I think that's when I got scared of being shot at and ah, so then after that, that was before it all started. It really started at the end of April and in May. And ah, that's the first time we used the tractors. It was explained to us that in this – and I can't remember what vill it was, if it was Dai Do, or Am Loc, or what vill. But, they explained to us that the fighting was so close that they couldn't call in air strikes. So, they thought they could send us down because, like I said, our tractors shot out a line charge. And, we carried two of them in each tractor.

Jim: Could you describe a line charge, please?

Steve: It's a charge of C-4. It's got like 2,000-lbs. of C-4 in it. And it's a long charge, it's like, almost like balls tied together in this line charge. It's like 300-feet long and it was shot out by a, actually a modified Sidewinder Missile. There was a thing on top of our tractor that came up and shot the missile. Our doors opened up and it would take this line charge out and then we would detonate the line charge. So they sent us down and they thought, 'well, we can blow up, we could get up close enough to –

Jim: Blow up the ambush sites?

Steve: Well that's what we thought. But, when we got there, we found out that, what we were doing was – they were moving us right in. Actually, it was the first time I saw an NVA soldier, which was a little scary, but they were there (laughs). They were right in front of us. And they were shooting at us. What they were doing with us was they were moving us in to try to blow up their fighting positions. So we shot our line charge. I remember mortars were coming in and going off and we got hit with two RPG [Rocket Propelled Grenade] rounds. I remember that, which was scary. But the scariest thing was, we shot the first line charge pretty quickly and detonated it. Well then, which in – I was assigned to this job for this patrol and we actually trained for it for awhile. Inside of our – to get to one palletted line charge and empty one out, we had like a forklift thing, which had to be operated

manually. Well, it was real slow and we were getting mortars in. And, we had to leave our doors open. So, we got it out and it would slide out then and tip off to the side and fall over. Well then you had another pallet there with 2,000-lbs. of C-4 and your doors open and these mortars coming in and I just (laughs) – That was another time that it wasn't a whole lot of fun.

Jim: Were the doors armored at all? I mean, did they provide any protection?

Steve: Yeah, but when they were open –

Jim: Yes, absolutely.

Steve: But, and so anyway, two tractors went up there. We shot our two and the other tractor went out and shot their two and we were told that night, because we stayed there that night then with the Grunts, I remember the Grunts coming, because we also had, what I guess, they used to call 'satchel charges.' And ah, the Grunts would come and ask for the C-4 because they cooked their C-Rations with it. So, we would always give it to them. And a couple of them said, 'Yeah, you did a good job,' that evidently, there was a bunch of bodies and craters and stuff. But, we never got confirmation on that. We don't know if that was true, or not. We don't – we never did find out how good we did, or didn't do.

Jim: That was pretty typical, wasn't it?

Steve: I think so, yeah.

Jim: So, you were in a night position. Did they set up a perimeter and dig in or what—

Steve: Well, we put our tractors -- we weren't in the front perimeter. We got our tractors as far away as we could and we stayed in our tractors, because we did get incoming during the night. The Marines were dug in all around us, the Grunts were.

Jim: OK. Did they put out listening posts or patrols, do you know?

Steve: I'm sure they did.

Jim: So, were you working with another company, or what? What size unit are we talking about?

Steve: We were working with 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines.

Jim: So, it was a whole battalion?

Steve: Yes.

Jim: OK.

Steve: They were, I think their nickname was, 'The Magnificent Bastards,' they were called.

Jim: OK, what happened after that, then?

Steve: I went back, I think we spent two days there. Yeah, two days. Then we took our tractors and went back to Cua Viet, stayed there another two or three days and again, like you said, it was typical, we didn't hear what was going on, or what was happening. And ah, next thing they came up, I think it was less than a week later. They said, 'Well, we're sending you back up there. It's been cleared out.' But they wanted the rest of the vill leveled because we also, which I probably should mention, had V-shaped plows on the front. Actually, they weren't plows. They had teeth on them. So they could dig into the soil. That was another thing for –

Jim: Mines?

Steve: Mines. And ah, so they wanted us to go back up there and take and level a lot of the area so it couldn't be used again for fighting positions, or whatever. And, so they decided they'd send one tractor up so we went up. And, it was suppose to have been a secured area and nothing – everything was fine. Well, just before we got to where we had to start blading, we hit a mine and blew the tractor up. Nobody got hurt seriously. I think I had a cut ear and I hurt my back falling off the tractor. So we were – most of us were med-evaced back and then went back to – I think I was off two days with my bad back, and I went back to the same routine I always did do. We never did go back out in the field after that with our tractors. As a matter of fact, I don't think they ever fixed the one that hit the mine.

Jim: So, that was like in May and June of '68 time frame. So, what did you do the balance of your time in Vietnam?

Steve: Patrols.

Jim: Sounds pretty routine, patrols and maintenance.

Steve: Patrols and maintenance. We didn't do a lot of maintenance after that because, if I remember right, they – [phone rings].

Jim: I'll stop. We were talking about the fact that you didn't use the tracks anymore. So, is there anything else that happened while you were in Vietnam other than more patrolling?

Steve: No. Patrolling and, like I say, once in awhile we'd ah, which was like a patrol, but it's a little bigger, they called it a 'blocking force.' If there was a Marine company, or something, making a push somewhere, they'd use us as a blocking force to, hopefully, push the NVA, or whoever, into us. It never happened but –

Jim: Were you reinforced [phone rings]. Were you reinforced with any special weapons when you were in the blocking force, or -- ?

Steve: Ah,

Jim: Like tanks or recoilless rifles or dusters or -- ?

Steve: No.

Jim: OK.

Steve: You know, we took a little more armor with us on those patrols, like 30-cal. machineguns and M-60 Machineguns and –

Jim: OK. When you did this blocking-force stuff, was this just a day deal, or did you go out and camp at night and were there, you know, longer than a day, or – ?

Steve: Usually, at least overnight; sometimes, a day or two.

Jim: OK. Would you dig fighting positions then and did you do patrolling when you were in these positions?

Steve: No. Normally, when we were in the blocking position, we'd ah, we'd stay right in the blocking position. And to get back to your other question, we did have some support from howitzers back in Cua Viet because we were always within, you know, and they could ah – we'd usually call in some phosphorous rounds, or whatever. So, if we did get attacked, we had them to support us.

Jim: Did you have any experience with air support when you were in Vietnam?

Steve: Not me, personally. I saw it a couple of times and that went back to the river. Actually, both times, I think, that I got hit on the river ah, shortly afterwards, air support was called in, or whatever. That's the first time I saw napalm. That was the second time we got hit on the river, a jet came in and dropped napalm. That was the first time I saw that and I was a long ways from it and you could still feel the heat and stuff from it.

Jim: Yeah. That's what I was going to ask. It's impressive.

Steve: And I was a long ways from it and you could still feel it.

Jim: Did you have any Naval gunfire support like from --?

Steve: It was there. I don't recall that we ever used it. But yes, it was there. We could – especially at night. You could see the ships out on the South China Sea. You could see the flashes and stuff.

Jim: Could you describe a typical day in Vietnam? What time did you get up, what did you eat and that kind of thing?

Steve: I guess we got up, I suppose, five or six in the morning. Usually we'd go to breakfast down by, we had a mess hall that was down by ah, pretty close to where they brought in – by the docks where they brought in – which reminds me of a story. But anyway, where they brought in all the supplies and stuff that went on to Dong Ha and wherever. And we'd go down there and have breakfast and we'd come back.

Jim: What did you have for breakfast typically?

Steve: Usually pretty good. There were eggs, you know, because I had heard all the stories about powdered eggs and stuff. We normally had – and I think mainly because we were there and the supplies were all coming in. And we normally had fresh milk, ah, and like I say, fresh eggs.

Jim: OK.

Steve: Bacon, sausage –

Jim: Pretty good.

Steve: Yeah. The meals were good.

Jim: OK. So then, during the day, if you were back at the place you were doing maintenance, or just duty for a military post.

Steve: Right.

Jim: Did you have an EM [Enlisted Man's] Club, or something on the site that you had access to?

Steve: Yes, we did. Actually, it was pretty close to where our hooch was and they'd always say, 'Well, you can only get two beers,' but usually you got around that rule, if you had to.

Jim: So, what time in the evening did you go to bed, or -- ?

Steve: If I remember, there were a lot of late nights. That would be hard to say.

Jim: OK. Did you have any exposure to Vietnamese people?

Steve: Yeah. Actually I went out on a – actually we had a village right next to us and there was a girl, a young girl; she was probably fourteen or fifteen. She'd always come to the wire where we could get stuff to her. She did all of our laundry and stuff like that. Also, when I was ah, and I've forgotten – maybe you might recall, there was a, I don't know if it was all Marines or not, a group of people who lived in the vills and did –

Jim: OK.

Steve: I went with them a few times when a couple of – when they were going to other vills to talk with people and stuff; more as a security move than anything. But, so yeah, I got to sit in the vills and talk with people and stuff.

Jim: What was your impression of them?

Steve: Well, I don't know. I felt that I never really trusted any of them. So, I never really got close to them. We used to have fun with the kids, now and then. The kids were always wanting to sell you stuff, naturally. But, I don't know. I guess I never really trusted the people that much.

Jim: Did you have any contact with the South Vietnamese military?

Steve: Very little, no. We had two or three, what they called, 'Kit Carson Scouts' at that time and I had contact with them. We actually had one, who one day, was gone and we never did find out where he went.

Jim: Probably back.

Steve: Probably. But, they were nice. They were good guys and I got along with them pretty good.

Jim: Good. You said you had a story you were reminded about when you hit the mess hall.

Steve: Yeah. It reminded me because of the docks. We actually had, and I don't remember the time frame on this – It was sometime after the Battle of Dong Ha, I believe. But ah, they got lucky. They lobbed in one mortar and it hit the dock. And, the story always was that it hit the fuel tanks, but that wasn't so. It hit the dock and it caused a secondary explosion of some kind and then it caused a huge fire and other explosions it got into. And it happened that – there were a lot of 155-mm (artillery) rounds, pallets of them and stuff that were there. And they started going off. I remember three of us were sent out on Listening Posts and the three of us thought, 'this is stupid,' you know. Whole docks were blown up at a time and ah, they thought – they told us that there was a division, or a company of NVA, or whatever, and we thought, you know, 'Well, the three of us sitting here

in the middle of nowhere, aren't going to do much good,' you know. But they sent us out anyway, and I remember we were – we went out like five or six hundred yards out from the wire. And we dug in and set up in a tree line that was out there. I remember looking back and watching the explosion and it was the biggest explosion I've ever seen in my life. I mean, some of these went off and you could just see the concussion go out. And you knew it was going to hit you and it did. It was almost like getting hit with something. And on one of them, a big hunk of shrapnel, it must have been that big; we could actually see it twirling like this and coming at us and we just kind of watched it. It went over us and probably landed about 50-feet from us. But I remember that because it was the biggest explosion I've ever seen in my life.

Jim: That's scary. And they just had a lot of cook-off, did they?

Steve: They did, well yeah. I mean, there were stories about it afterwards about how it actually sucked in a tractor. I never found out if those were true, or not. I don't remember how many people got killed but there were quite a few, because [unintelligible] and all of a sudden, it just started exploding. And ah, but yeah, I remember that (laughs).

Jim: So, fortunately there was no ground attack following –

Steve: There was no ground attack. Nope. I think they found out that one guy just got lucky. They lobbed a mortar in and it caused all that.

Jim: Did you ever see any generals when you were there? I mean, were there any other high-ranking officials?

Steve: No. We had a general, they said, came in one day. I never saw him. A colonel was the highest person I had ever seen.

Jim: What was your impression of the Officer Corps?

Steve: Pretty good, actually, over there. I got along with all of them. We had some guys, naturally, who didn't like them for whatever reason. But no, I got along with all the officers.

Jim: Were there any racial difficulties when you were there?

Steve: Not in Vietnam. I experienced a little bit of that before Vietnam, but not in Vietnam. Everybody seemed to get along pretty well.

Jim: What about drug use?

Steve: I saw a lot of marijuana use.

Jim: Was that sold at the wire and stuff like that?

Steve: Yeah.

Jim: There's a story I'll tell you in a minute. OK, so have we covered everything on your Vietnam tour that we should cover?

Steve: I think so. I don't know if you want to hear about the R and R (Rest and Recreation) went on –

Jim: Absolutely, thank you. When and where did you go on R and R?

Steve: I think it was probably July of '68, maybe August of '68.

Jim: So, very close to the end of your tour?

Steve: Yeah. It was like seven months into my tour, something like that. I went to the Philippines. Actually, they came – because I had been on and I should have went after six months, actually. I should have gone. And so, they had a list of what was open and, I don't know why, but I picked the Philippines. So, I went there and spent five days there.

Jim: Where in the Philippines, Manila?

Steve: Manila, yup. It was nice because you left where you were and you flew there – actually flew on military planes. I remember it was an Air Force plane and I remember ah – I don't know if he was the co-pilot or what he was? But he came back and he actually had some little boxed lunches for us. I remember that. And ah, they took us to the Philippines. I actually checked into a hotel, which was great and all I had with me was my clothes, basically, on my back. And I remember a guy knocking on the door, coming in and measuring me and stuff and asking me how many pants I wanted; what it would cost me. He left and, it couldn't have been more than 20-minutes later, he came back and had three pairs of pants and three shirts, shoes and socks and the whole works. So, you know, it was really different. It was really –

Jim: They weren't Harley Davidson at that time (laughs)?

Steve: No, they weren't Harley Davidson (laughs).

Jim: So then, you came back by military transport, too?

Steve: Yeah, same way, in and out of DaNang.

Jim: To DaNang. Ok, I'm going to change the tape here because I've got – We were talking about coming back to Vietnam from R and R and I think we concluded

that you had talked pretty much about your Vietnam experiences, but you haven't talked about coming home. Did you keep a short timer's calendar?

Steve: No, I didn't really. I just remember when I did get short though, as was the custom, at least where I was at, they kind of stopped putting you on patrols. And, kind of not – didn't send you out in the field anymore. I think I had like thirty days left when that started and ah, my main duty then was to work in the guard shack, which was – I was like – All the bunkers and stuff at night would report to the guard shack and the guard shack would pass on anything that needed to be passed on. But, they would report any sightings and stuff to the guard shack. And that was my main duty for the last thirty days I was there.

Jim: So, how many days before you – Well, your situation was that you were getting out of the Army, too. So, you were in Vietnam for what, ten months?

Steve: About ten months.

Jim: So, how many days before your tour was up or, you know, your enlistment was up, did you start leaving the country?

Steve: My enlistment was due to be up, I think, on the 23rd of October. And I believe I left Vietnam the first week of October.

Jim: So, what did you do? Did you get helicoptered down to DaNang?

Steve: Actually, I went by boat to Dong Ha.

Jim: OK.

Steve: Dong Ha had an airstrip and I caught a C-130 down to DaNang.

Jim: You didn't have any bad experiences on the boat trip? I mean, that's the river where you had trouble –

Steve: No. I was a little worried about that, but no. At that time, it was pretty quiet on the river.

Jim: Speaking of the river, did you ever see any of the natives fishing there, or were there any fish in the river?

Steve: You know, I saw fishing boats, but I don't recall ever seeing them fish. I guess they did, but I don't recall ever seeing them.

Jim: I remember seeing – My experience fishing and them fishing was concussion grenades, you know, which is not legal in Wisconsin, (laughs).

Steve: Yeah, (laughs).

Jim: So, you got down to DaNang. How long were you in DaNang before you left country?

Steve: I think, two or three days.

Jim: Did they bother you down there at all, I mean, or did you just have to sit around and –

Steve: Just had to sit around and wait for your orders, wait to get processed and then it was on another commercial jet and we flew to Okinawa.

Jim: Flew to Okinawa. What happened at Okinawa?

Steve: More of the same, more, I guess, processing. I don't remember having to report anymore or do anything other than, I guess, we were just waiting for everybody to be moved. And then, we were put on another plane and I remember getting on the plane and taxiing out. There was, you know, a plane full in another commercial plane and ah, it sat on the runway forever. And we thought, 'Well, what's going on,' because, you know, it was going to bring us back to the States and that was a big deal. And, all of a sudden, the pilot came on and he said, 'Well we've got to go back to the terminal because the auto (laughs) the auto-pilot is out. And I remember there was somebody in the back of the plane yelling out, 'Can't you fly the damn thing?'

Jim: (laughs)

Steve: That's what the pilot did. He laughed and he said, 'Well I could, but we'd better not,' (laughs). So it was another two hours and we were all getting pretty anxious, but then we finally took off and that was a pretty big thing. Everybody just kind of cheered and yelled and screamed and –

Jim: Did they cheer when you left Vietnam, too?

Steve: A little bit, but not as much as when we left Okinawa, because we were heading back to the States then.

Jim: OK. Where did you come back to the States at?

Steve: I think it was El Toro (Naval) Air Station, which is south of Camp Pendleton, I believe.

Jim: And then you were separated from the Marine Corps at Camp Pendleton?

Steve: Yup.

Jim: Anything stick out in your mind there?

Steve: The thing that sticks out is yeah, I guess the physicals and stuff. They told us they wanted to make sure we were in as good a shape leaving as we were coming in. So we had all this physical stuff, but the main thing, I think, was when we got back, this little bunch of guys from Vietnam, you know, they were all going to be mustered out; the ones I was with. And, they put us on work details, which struck me as kind of funny, because nobody wanted to do anything, (laughs). We were only going to be there three days or so. And I remember they put me and another guy on, and they put us with two PFCs [Privates First Class] who – they had their fire watch ribbon was all they had, you know. And they wanted us to load and unload dirty laundry. So, I remember getting in the back of this big van they were driving and when they got to the first stop, we just sat there and looked at them. And, they ended up doing all the work, (laughs). We decided we weren't going to do that. But yeah, that's – but then, you know, the physicals and –

Jim: Did they tell you anything about going into civilian life, about ah, you know, that you might have concerns about your experiences, or anything like that?

Steve: Nope. We never got anything like that.

Jim: Did they warn you about protesters, or anything like that?

Steve: Nope. They didn't warn us about that either.

Jim: So, you separated at Camp Pendleton then how did you get – I assume you came back to Madison. Is that correct?

Steve: Yeah.

Jim: How did you get back to Madison?

Steve: By plane. As a matter of fact, I think I took a bus up to the airport. And I remember getting to the Los Angeles Airport anyway, and I checked in, and I remember the flight was leaving. And they said, 'If you hurry, we can get you on this flight.' I was pretty excited and I said, ya, ya, ya.' So I ran and I ran and, of course, back then, you didn't have to be checked. So I ran to the gate that it was leaving from and I remember the stewardess standing out there and she was waving at me to hurry up and stuff. So I got there and got on the plane and flew into Chicago.

Jim: Were you in uniform?

Steve: Yup.

Jim: Did anybody have any particular reaction to you, one way or another?

Steve: Not that I remember there, because I was in such a hurry. I was just running. Actually, I think I got reactions before that when I was home on leave and stuff. But, when I got to Chicago, then I remember it, because I was in such a hurry to catch a plane, I didn't have a chance to call home, or anything. So, when I got to Chicago, I called my dad and he said, 'We'll just come down and get you.' And yeah, I can remember sitting in the terminal and people would kind of go by and look at you. Nobody ever talked to you. The only people who ever talked to you were other service people. Yeah, I do remember that. But, I didn't have any bad experiences. I've heard of people getting yelled at, or getting lectured, or getting spit on even. But, I never had any problems like that.

Jim: So, when you got back to Madison, did your friends have any reaction to you as –

Steve: I think, at first, they were just glad to see me. 'Let's go out and party,' you know. 'Let's go out and have a few beers,' and that kind of stuff. I don't remember anybody asking me about my experiences there, or anybody asking me, 'What was it like over there,' other than other service guys. Some of the friends of mine who weren't in the service – actually, one real good friend of mine who grew up next to me, I remember going out and having a couple of beers with him and he, I don't know, Vietnam got mentioned somehow. So, I started to talk to him about it. And I remember the look on his face. It was just like, surprise and, I don't know, kind of like disbelief like, 'What are you talking about?' And I think, I never talked to anybody after that about it, because his reaction kind of surprised me, I guess because he hadn't gone in the service and he had –

Jim: Was he the same age as you –

Steve: And in Madison, you know, all the protesting and stuff going on. Actually, he was a year older than me. He actually had two bad knees.

Jim: But clearly on his own where he would have been eligible to go if he had been physically able?

Steve: Right.

Jim: What was your reaction to the demonstrations in Madison and the Sterling Hall bombing?

Steve: I guess I never got too close to the demonstrations. I just let them do what they wanted to do. I never paid much attention to them. I more or less clammed up and ah --

Jim: I assume you were working then at that time and you were going on with your life?

Steve: Right. I got a job with the city at the time and ah –

Jim: Did any of your coworkers know you were a veteran?

Steve: Yeah.

Jim: Any reaction there, or was it the same as the other people?

Steve: Yeah, mostly the same.

Jim: OK. Did you join any veterans groups, I mean, when you got out of --?

Steve: No I didn't.

Jim: So, how long was it before you joined a veterans group?

Steve: Actually I didn't join a veterans group until the time I joined the post that we belong to three years ago.

Jim: OK. And, was there any reason for not joining a group?

Steve: No real reason. I ah, I don't know, not a one. I just --

Jim: OK. Do you find that it's useful associating with other veterans?

Steve: Yeah sure. It's, you know, at least you can, you know, they know where you're coming from. They know what you're talking about anyway and you can talk about it, so –

Jim: Did it bother you that nobody wanted to talk with you about your Vietnam experiences until you –

Steve: Like I said, I think I did at first, especially from that guy, because he was a pretty close friend. And, it's not so much that he wouldn't have sat there and listened to me. I just, the look on his face told me that, you know, 'What the hell is he telling me this for? What is this all about?' It was the look on his face. I can't quite describe it, but I think, from that point on, I never said much about it.

Jim: One last question. Do you have any reaction personally to your experience in Vietnam? Was it good, bad, indifferent, or -- ?

Steve: I wouldn't say it was bad. I mean, there were bad times, but there were good times and ah, I think my whole military experience, I'm better off for it.

Jim: I lied to you. I've got one more question. In light of your experience in Vietnam, do you have any reaction to what's going on in Iraq right now?

Steve: I think Iraq is different. At least, over there, they have a goal; I think, I hope they do, anyway. It seems that they do and in Vietnam, we just never seemed to, well you know that; we just never seemed to have a goal at all. It was, go out on patrol and if you kill some NVA great, if you don't, well –

Jim: And that's the way it goes.

Steve: Yeah. And then, you go back to where you were.

Jim: Yup. Is there anything else you'd like to tell this tape recorder?

Steve: No, not that I can recall.

Jim: OK. Well, we will terminate the interview then.

[End of Interview]