

## William Daniels

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I remember the night of March the 25<sup>th</sup>. The night the mortar track blew up. We were sleeping. I can remember the explosion waking us up & I can remember hearing somebody screaming it was Joe Wakefield. I can remember Joe was really a nice guy. I can remember that when that mortar track was blowing up you could hear stuff flying around every where. The oil cans stopped on the back track blew up. The heat was very intense. Just thinking about that man being on that track gave me a sick feeling in my stomach that night. I remember asking somebody what about Chips. They said he ran back on the track to try & save Joe & caught "scrapnel" in the stomach & he was dead. I can remember saying oh no man. The whole thing was just terrible.

For some reason we thought Sargeant Smolick had got killed. We found out later he didn't although my heart was hurting from the other guys dying. I was happy to find out that Sargeant

Smolich was still alive.

The next day we had such a sick feeling in our stomachs from the mortar track blowing up. But we knew the job at hand. We had to go help that infantry unit. When you knew you were going into a fire fight it kind of put a sick feeling in your stomach, but you had a way of putting that behind you because you knew what you had to do. I was the gunner on Sheridan Tank 37. S.F.C. Robert Foreman was our track Commander.

Rod Lorenz was our driver & I can't remember our loader's name. He was a thin guy about 6' tall, dark hair & a mustache. I can remember telling him when the crap hits the fan to load that main gun, & just keep loading it. He hadn't been there as long as Rod & I, had. It was not only your obligation but you wanted to try to teach the newer guys things you knew to help them survive in that place. In my opinion Rod Lorenz was one of the best tank drivers. He had a knack of knowing where to go & what

to do. I felt very comfortable with him driving. I remember S.F.C Robert Foreman. If I'm not mistaken he transferred to us from some infantry unit, but he knew the Sheridan tank.

Sergeant Foreman was a wonderful man. Everybody liked him. I remember the morning of March the 26<sup>th</sup> Sergeant Foreman had kind of a seriousness about him. I guess he knew what we were heading for. He had a solemnness about him. It was kind of different. I can remember telling him Sarg we were going to be alright. Little did we know what was in store for us. I can remember breaking through the jungle, & think we were the first tank kind at the point. We kind of always went in if I remember right in a kind of upside down V shape, with a tank at the point, then with so many ACAVs on each side, then tanks ACAV's so on & so forth.

I can remember when we came upon that bunker complex & they opened up on us, those little suckers always ambushed you. Then Sergeant Foreman opening up with the 50 caliber & that familiar

sounds I heard so many times before. Sargeant Foreman was laying a pattern of fire with 50 & empty. Coaxing falling down in the turret of the tank at the same time he was directing me over the intercom which way to turn. The turret of the tank & I was laying out a pattern of fire with main gun. Shooting round after round of conister round. It was obvious he was seeing them. We were shooting & shooting what seemed like forever. Him & I & my loader were working together like a fine oiled machine. All of a sudden I didn't hear the 50 any more. I called to Sargeant Foreman over the intercom & he didn't answer. Just before that I heard a weird sound. I looked up at Sargeant Foreman & he was just standing there with his arms down. I yelled at him I said shoot Sarg shoot. He didn't respond. I turned back around to look out of my periscope, to fire the main gun. Just then Sargeant Foreman fell down in on top of me & pinned me down & at the same time a can of 50 Caliber ammo fell down in side on fire.