

## The Helmet



One of the things about being in The Field, in Viet Nam was nobody really forced anyone to wear a specific uniform, or even a helmet, at all times. I tended to wear mine most of the time, because I didn't want to get hurt for some stupid reason. This proved to be a wise decision.

One day we were on patrol near Nui Lac Son, (If my memory serves me right). We encountered enemy fire, which was quite common. Standard procedure in such a case was to get down on the ground and lay down some firepower aimed at wherever the shooting was coming from. We got down, took whatever cover we could find and started to fire. Suddenly my head was ripped back as if a prizefighter had hit me in the head with the palm of his hand. After the skirmish was over, the Lieutenant came back asking if anybody was hurt. I said "I don't know" his response was, "What do you mean you don't know?" I said, "I'm afraid to look" because I didn't want to take my helmet off for fear I would find a bullet hole in my head. He came and took my helmet off and my head was perfectly OK, but my helmet had a nice dent in it where it had deflected the bullet. I never saw or knew where the bullet came from. All I knew is that one didn't get me. After that day, I never had to be coaxed or told to wear a helmet. In fact, I wore that thing proudly as some kind of graphic Combat Infantryman's Badge. I wore that helmet and the torn covering until I lost it when I was wounded in the battle at Tam Ky.

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