

[REDACTED]

12 April 2003  
Interview with Lt [REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] I'm interviewing Lt [REDACTED] Go ahead Lieutenant. State your name, rank, social security number and billet, please.

LT [REDACTED] XXX-XX-XXXX. Charlie Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon, Rifle Platoon  
Commander.

COL [REDACTED] OK, [REDACTED] my name is Colonel [REDACTED] and under the direction of board president, Brigadier General William F. Hodgkins, we're investigating a friendly fire incident that occurred on 23 March 03 near An Nasiriyah, Iraq. This investigation, conducted under DOD Instruction 6055.7 is separate and apart from any other investigation which may have been conducted concerning this incident. The purpose of this investigation is to produce a publicly releasable report on the facts and circumstances surrounding this incident and gather and preserve evidence for use in claims, litigation, disciplinary actions, adverse administrative proceedings and for all other purposes. Your sworn testimony to me may be used for any proper purpose and may be released to the public. Additionally, the chain of command will review the final report. Do you understand what I have just read to you?

LT [REDACTED]: Yes, Sir.

COL [REDACTED] Finally, do you also understand that you're being interviewed as a witness in this friendly fire investigation and acknowledge that no promise of confidentiality has been extended to you?

[REDACTED]

LT [REDACTED]: Yes, Sir.

COL [REDACTED]: Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give in the matter now under investigation shall be the truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

LT [REDACTED]: Yes, Sir.

COL [REDACTED]: OK, [REDACTED] if you would review for me, please, as we mentioned earlier, the actions that occurred after you crossed the northern bridge, where you were relative to Charlie Company that was there and when you first became aware that there was a friendly aircraft running on you, any damage, WIA, KIAs that you were aware of due to that incident or damage to vehicles and any information about the A-10 as far as ordinance that you witnessed or thought you witnessed, running headings of the aircraft, and any actions you or anybody else took to stop the air or get it off you including radios or anything else that was used.

LT [REDACTED]: Yes, Sir. To describe where it was, I have to back up to Ambush Alley. We had done a bump plan south of the south bridge, so we had doubled up into two tracks. We were moving through Ambush Alley receiving small arms and RPGs at the time. I was in the lead track of our platoon and we were the second platoon back moving through. We received an RPG hit to our Amtrack, right rear. The track was then on fire. Just by looking I saw people [REDACTED] everywhere that we had several casualties in the back. Lost comm immediately, continued to hit the driver on the head and we pushed over the north bridge into a safer area, what I thought was a safer area, pulled down, track was then engulfed in flames. Pulled down probably 500 meters

[REDACTED]

north of the north bridge, at the time, maybe a little bit further, maybe 800. Proceeded to get everyone off the track, including the wounded, off to the east side of the road. Told the machine gun team to go to the west side, took the remainder and put them on the berm on the east side. Probably used seven Marines to load the casualties into First Sergeant's track, who had then pulled up. Turned the names over of the four Marines who were injured from the RPG attack to the First Sergeant. Then I took all the Marines that had helped load the casualties across to the west side of the road now, to assist that machine gun team. By the time I got over there, there was a platoon just to the south of us and several squads to the north of us, possibly a whole platoon. They started assault to the west, to that marshy area out there. We were receiving indirect and direct fire at the time, and we began our assault west through that area. I had no comm at the time. It was destroyed in the RPG attack. My RTO was also hit at the time. He was already gone with the First Sergeant. As we assaulted forward we kept inbound with the Marines who were left and right of us assuming that they were platoons. We assaulted forward probably a good 300 meters, maybe 200-300 meters. I then realized that they were pulling back towards the tracks. Kind of confused at the time, cause I didn't have comm. Just started looking back and started seeing people waving us back towards the tracks. The Marines to my left and right were already loading onto the tracks. We started making our way back toward the track. These tracks were now, possibly four of them, off the road to the west side. They were also providing overhead fire for us and all that. We started making our way toward the track. We were just getting to the back of one of the tracks or getting to one of the tracks and was trying to talk to someone up there in one of the hatches up there to find out what was going on, why we were reloading. And that's when the first strafe hit. I don't know if that was the first overall strafe, but that was the first strafe that affected us. All the Marines that I was with, we were

[REDACTED]

scattered about...a little bit scattered about. First strafe hit, it was coming from the west, the southwest direction.

COL [REDACTED] From the west to the east?

LT [REDACTED]: Yes, Sir. Took out several of my Marines right then. LCpl [REDACTED] was killed instantly. Cpl [REDACTED] was hit, LCpl [REDACTED], LCpl [REDACTED] myself, and a couple of others may have been hit. At that time I thought the entire track had also taken some damages, and then loaded all of the casualties onto the track with the assistance of some of the other Marines. Also the deceased loaded them on the track. I ran up to the TC again, to another track that was sitting there...

COL [REDACTED] TC?

LT [REDACTED] The commander, the driver's hatch of the track. Started screaming up to them to put [REDACTED]. Almost immediately after [REDACTED] I then ran back, helped continued loading some casualties and the strafing continued. I don't know how many there was at that time. I'd say at least three or four. We just kept hitting the deck and... A track just to the south of us was hit then. Killed Cpl [REDACTED] who was in the back of the track.

COL [REDACTED] Do you know what it was hit by?

[REDACTED]

LT [REDACTED] A-10, Sir. I'd been strafed eight times during Operation Desert Storm by an A-10. I know exactly what they sound like. Of course you hear the rounds first and then you hear the chain...the gatling gun, whatever the hell it is on there. I remember looking up for it possibly once, twice to find it in the air. I knew exactly what it was though. I couldn't believe it was happening again. I then saw a second platoon which was just to the north and started hauling ass over to them cause I saw an antenna in the air. Snatched up their RTO, got on the radio put it on the battalion freq, which is battalion, I can't remember if it was TAC 1 or 2. But I put it on the tank freq, called straight for TIMBERWOLF 6, and started calling check-fire, check-fire.

COL [REDACTED] Who is TIMBERWOLF 6?

LT [REDACTED] CO. Started screaming check-fire, check-fire, check-fire. I don't know how many times I said it. The response...

COL [REDACTED] From who?

LT [REDACTED] TIMBERWOLF 6. They kept asking, where are you at? What's going on? We're receiving friendly air north of the north bridge, I gave a buffer in there. I said our location is 1,500 meters north of the north bridge. The strafings continued in the same time we were receiving arty in, and direct fire still so, there was a difference. You knew when that strafing was hitting and they were a hell of a lot more accurate. I believe the strafing then began to move more south of us toward the tracs that were toward the bridge at the time, affecting those tracs down there.

[REDACTED]  
COL [REDACTED] When you talked to TIMBERWOLF, were you talking to the actual...?

You were talking to the actual.

LT [REDACTED]: Yes, Sir. Soon after that, within a couple minutes, I'm sure, seemed like forever, the friendly air fire did cease. I'd say, I don't even know about the time after that, a bit after that though, the indirect ceased also. Still receiving small arms, that was pretty much it for the air portion of it. I then called up PANZER 5.

COL [REDACTED] Who's PANZER 5?

LT [REDACTED]: Tank XO. He had HAWK, in fact, which is there FAC and talked to PANZER 5, didn't talk to HAWK at all, and proceeded to call them up and tell them where friendlies were located and they drove awhile, and crept over the bridge and I signaled to them two or three times and they finally made it up to my pos and they sat there and blocked the road to the north, then the rest of the battalion pretty much moved up there after that. That's pretty much it, Sir.

COL [REDACTED] In closing, I want to remind you that this is an official interview and direct that you not discuss your testimony with anyone without the board's permission or until the report has been officially released to the public. Do you understand?

LT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

[REDACTED]

Interview with 1Lt [REDACTED]  
12 Apr 03

COL [REDACTED] Please state your name, rank, social security number and your billet, please.

1LT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir. [REDACTED] First Lieutenant, AAA Platoon Comander,  
1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marines.

COL [REDACTED] OK, [REDACTED] My name is Colonel [REDACTED] and under the direction of the board president, Brigadier General William F. Hodgkins, we're investigating a friendly fire incident that occurred on 23 March 03 near An Nasiriyah, Iraq. This investigation, conducted under DOD Instruction 6055.7 is separate and apart from any other investigation that may have been conducted concerning this incident. The purpose of this investigation is to produce a publicly releasable report on the facts and circumstances surrounding this incident and gather and preserve evidence for use in claims, litigation, disciplinary actions, adverse administrative proceedings and for all other purposes. Your sworn testimony to me may be used for any proper purpose and may be released to the public. Additionally, the chain of command will review the final report. Do you understand what I have just read to you?

1LT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

COL [REDACTED] Finally, do you also understand that you are being interviewed as a witness in this friendly fire investigation and acknowledge that no promise of confidentiality has been extended to you?

[REDACTED]

1LT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

COL [REDACTED] Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give in the matter now under investigation shall be the truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

1LT [REDACTED]: Yes, Sir.

COL [REDACTED] if you would for me, relate in your own words the events that transpired with Charlie Company after you crossed the northern bridge in An Nasiriyah on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March.

1LT [REDACTED] Charlie Company made it to the bridge before everybody else. Alpha Company was involved in a fight in the city oriented to the west, and Bravo Company had gone to the right, so we went between the two. Passed behind Alpha Company and pushed across the bridge. As the AAV commander, I had visibility on all my tractors that we got across the bridge.

COL [REDACTED] How many tractors did you have?

1LT [REDACTED] We had twelve. Eleven crossing the bridge. Charlie 209 broke prior to the southern bridge. As we crossed the northern bridge, Charlie 211 was on fire, the aft starboard corner was on fire. Originally, looked to me like it'd been shot by tracers or something that caught the packs on fire. In reality, and PRG had hit the track, causing some casualties on the inside. We pretty much herringboned off the road. To the right of the road, as you're facing

[REDACTED]

north, to the right of the road was a nice big berm which gave perfect turret defilade. So we pushed all the tractors against the berm there. On the left side came down off the road...

COL [REDACTED] And the left was the left side?

1LT [REDACTED] Yes, the west side. There was a creek with a slight berm.

COL [REDACTED] How many vehicles did you have on each side, do you know?

1LT [REDACTED] I know that there was three oriented west, I'm sorry north. I can't say exactly...how many were on each side. I was down on the right oriented to the east with my mortars tractor was the closest one to me. 211 was on top of the road to my left burning. And that's actually why we had to stop the defense there. We had to stop and circle the wagons, so to say, cause we were getting casualties out. We started to call the medevac.

COL [REDACTED] Which one was 211?

1LT [REDACTED] The one that got hit as it crossed the northern bridge. So as it crossed the northern bridge came flying, stopped in the middle of the road, started to bail people out.

COL [REDACTED] Do you know what it got hit with?

[REDACTED]

1LT [REDACTED]: It got hit with an RPG. So we had to pretty much circle the wagons. We were oriented, everyone on the right side of the road, the east side outboard, same on the west side outboard then first section was in front oriented to the north.

COL [REDACTED]: Where were you?

1LT [REDACTED]: I was about halfway up the berm on the right side. Two tractors behind it, and another couple behind me. We were taking fire from small arms from the...

COL [REDACTED]: Before you begin, there were how many tractors oriented toward the north?

1LT [REDACTED]: I know that there were three, but after getting the picture of what was going on we started taking small arms so I got down in the turret. So I kind of lost track of...so like I said, we were taking small arms from the sides, well that was the only place I was sure we were taking them in the beginning. I dropped down in the turret started to engage building off to the right, spanning all the way from...

COL [REDACTED]: To the east.

1LT [REDACTED]: Yes, Sir.

COL [REDACTED]: From?

[REDACTED]

1LT [REDACTED]: From my...the tractor was oriented directly east, so from about my eleven to my five northeast to southeast, I was engaging buildings and things along there. Couldn't really see where the fire was coming from, but we could see people jumping out of the buildings and taking some pot shots. 211 kept burning. We got all the Marines off it. And First Sergeant was triaging them, figuring what was going on, and trying to call in a bird.

COL [REDACTED] Who is First Sergeant?

1LT [REDACTED]: First Sergeant [REDACTED] He called the medevac. We set the mortars and the Captain got off to talk to his FiST team leader on the mortars and get them started. The squad from 211 came shuffling down in a little trench between my vehicle and Charlie 211 which is the one burning on the road, and all piled into my vehicle. I dropped down out of the turret and asked them what the heck they were doing in the vehicle. They were supposed to be out there on the berm. 211's going to go up here in a minute, and just about that time, ammo started to cook off. The fuel cell exploded. I told them that that was a good point, they were right, but as soon as that thing stopped cooking off they were going to get their asses back on the berm, and set up a defense and at that time the mortars started coming in. I can't really say how long this was. If you'd asked me at 1400, I would have told you we were there for 20 minutes.

COL [REDACTED] And about what time was this?

1LT [REDACTED]: To the best of my knowledge, Sir, we crossed the bridge 1100, 1130.

COL [REDACTED] I know you were taking fire before you crossed so it's difficult.

[REDACTED]

1LT [REDACTED]: When the mortars started to hit, that's when command and control all went to hell. Vehicles started to move on their own to get out of the mortar fire. In hindsight, we were in a great spot if we were the enemy. The big road, easy target, big berm on the right, easy target, big creek on the left, easy target. So the infantry, for the most part, was on the ground. I had a tractor full of Marines from 211, and we still had to maneuver. We pushed north about 300 meters to try to be moving targets. Eventually crossed the road back over to the east side, where first section was on line, first section on line was doing a real good job popping guns and section leaders were doing a really great job of ADVAC, and things like that. When we got up there they were still doing that. But like I said, mortars were starting to land and panic was starting to set in across the board, the infantry and everyone else. At that point, I decided that I needed to find someone who wouldn't be mad at me for making the decision. So I got off the track to go find a Captain to assist me. We needed to get our heads together to figure out what was going to happen. I ran down the side of the road, between the road and the creek, trying to look for the Captain. Which left first section up north, oriented to the north, left my mortars track back in their original position on the southeast corner and some others interdispersed, I don't remember who maneuvered to where to get away from the mortars which is what I was doing. Got down to the creek and I found the fifth team in the creek with the First Sergeant.

COL [REDACTED] Which side were you on relative to the bridge at this point?

1LT [REDACTED]: I'm on the west side, moving back south towards the bridge to find the CO. They've now loaded, they've loaded the wounded...the bird couldn't come in it was too hot. So they loaded the wounded into my platoon sergeant's tractor. My platoon sergeant and the First

[REDACTED]

Sergeant ride in the same vehicle. That's our medevac tractor. So they loaded the original casualties from Charlie 211, which I don't think were much more than burns and smoke inhalation and things like that, into that tractor and we were trying to figure out how we were going to get these guys out of there.

COL [REDACTED] Do you know how many people, total, were in that tractor?

1LT [REDACTED]: From Charlie 211, again I don't know for sure, I would say five. In the interim while I was screwing around up north crossing the road and coming back down south, the mortars were taking their toll on a bunch of guys and our casualties skyrocketed from the mortars, or artillery whatever was landing, cause I couldn't really tell. So we had two or three tractors worth of wounded guys and I found Gunney [REDACTED] walking north as I was running south and his tractor which was full of casualties had been hit by a couple of mortars and RPG. The RPG went through the transmission, through the front of the transmission and knocked out all the solenoids and gears, so it couldn't move. So now we had a tractor full of wounded that couldn't move. As we were talking by the creek, by the FSC team and a mortar landed right next to us and I don't know how it happened, it blew my pocket off my trousers. He ended up on top of me, rolled off and ran away. I figured out I was still around and did the same. It was about that time that I saw a couple of the other tractors on the road heading south. I got up on the road and tried to wave them back, didn't know what was going on. They ended up being full of casualties. They were trying to get those guys back to the south, but I figured we needed to stop those. It was in the interim, I was running south, I was in the creek, that the plane started to make some runs. I was on the west side...

[REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] So you had vehicles moving south when you heard the plane make it's first run?

1LT [REDACTED] The first time I heard it...I can't say for sure. I can say where, in relation to the road, I was...but I don't think they started to move south yet. I think I, I think we were still trying to corral the FiST team. Gunney [REDACTED], my platoon sergeant, and I were...

COL [REDACTED] How were they oriented?

1LT [REDACTED] The tractors?

COL [REDACTED] Yes.

1LT [REDACTED] A cluster up north. We probably only spread out about 500 meters, I would say 500 meters from the road. I'm sorry, from the bridge.

COL [REDACTED] Were they headed toward the bridge, or were they oriented toward the bridge?.

1LT [REDACTED] We had, I know we had at least three that were oriented outboard on the side, and we had two oriented outboard on the top.

COL [REDACTED] Outboard relative to the bridge?

[REDACTED]

1LT [REDACTED]. To the main MSR, and the bridge. East, west and north. My biggest concern was there was going to be this brigade attack coming down from the T intersection, that's what we were briefed the day prior. So they were pointed north, that was our biggest threat, in my mind.

COL [REDACTED] You were talking about the first time you heard the A-10.

1LT [REDACTED] I knew it was an airplane. And coming east to west. I saw it high...I'm sorry, the first time I heard it, all I heard was the gun. You don't hear that till after thing till after things are hitting the ground, so the first time I heard that I looked up and it was coming east to west.

COL [REDACTED] Were there any tractors taken out shortly before you heard the gun?

1LT [REDACTED] Other than 211, Charlie 203 was the next one to go down.

COL [REDACTED] What was hitting your position, before the aircraft gun went off?

1LT [REDACTED] I know that there was mortars, I don't know if anything bigger than mortars were hitting..it was loud. I couldn't tell you what a 60 sounded like hitting next to me or a 105. There was definitely incoming. There was also RPGs. I would take a step back. When I was oriented east, I had Cpl [REDACTED], my comm...guy, standing up in the back, looking at the houses and sighting targets and Cpl [REDACTED] my driver, my crewchief, he was doing the same. What was that? \_\_\_ don't know, but something just came skipping over the ground. I said oh Christ. As I turned you could see RPGs coming from southwest from the other side of the river now. They're

[REDACTED]

shooting across the river at us. So there was RPGs, there was mortar fire, small arms that I know of. I'd say there were bigger things than mortars, cause it was pretty loud but...

COL [REDACTED] Let's go back to the aircraft. First time you heard the aircraft and the gun.

1LT [REDACTED] First time I heard it, it came east to west and at that time, it was a new ammunition that started to go off. I didn't know what it was at the time. It looked like little sparklers going off about 20 feet in the air. I don't know if that was time fuse, arty, I don't know what it was. I actually said to myself, man, that's kind of cool, it looks like a bunch of little sparklers. And then you see them bounce off the road. So the next time you saw sparklers, you dove, but I didn't know what it was. So those were the four munitions that I know were hitting the ground. Do you want me to say what I saw from the plane, or do you want me to go on and tell the story?

COL [REDACTED] Just tell the story. And your actions and what you did subsequent to that.

1LT [REDACTED] As I ran down the road north to south on the west side, trying to find the CO, there were Marines coming back from the swamp, back from the line and getting on the tractors. I didn't know what the hell that was about. Now I'm on the ground. One of the instruction I gave (his driver) as I laid my hands like this...come pick me up, and he told me he thought it was a pretty stupid idea. He just gunned it, when the mortars starting getting real close again, he just gunned it all the way south and ended up right by the bridge, that's where the track ended up standing the whole time, actually. I was in the creek with Gunney, I was running down, running

[REDACTED]

back and forth, got some water and gave it to some guys. Got my two quart off my tractor, ran back, gave it to Gunney and he and I sat there drinking it for a minute or so.

COL [REDACTED] Are there more aircraft passes at this time?

1LT [REDACTED] I know of three. The first one, and the two that hit 203. Cause Charlie 203 was parked on the east side, I'm sorry, parked on the west side, the north west side. Oriented inboard, so it was oriented right on the road, like he was using...cause the road was elevated...like he was using the road as a berm, shooting back to the east. I don't know if that's what he was doing. I don't know if when the mortars hit he started to run and that's where he ended up.

COL [REDACTED] Did you do anything to try to stop the air?

1LT [REDACTED] I didn't personally, no.

COL [REDACTED]

1LT [REDACTED] No. But ((((((((((...little tap, so I'm not going to say that people told me, they say they did it))))))))) When I heard the burp of the gun, my face was in the dirt, so...I did not see [REDACTED] up and I didn't shoot any. I didn't get issued any. When I jumped off the track, I didn't even have a helmet on. I didn't shoot any.

[REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] In closing, I want to remind you that this is an official interview and direct that you not discuss your testimony with anyone without the board's permission or until the report has been officially released to the public. Do you understand?

1LT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

COL [REDACTED] We're back with Lt [REDACTED] You understand all the statements I made initially are still in effect. Tell me about what you heard, the conversation you just relayed to me.

1LT [REDACTED] I couldn't find the CO. I knew the FO was killed, and the FiST was damned near, so I decided to get back on the radio. I jumped up in my tractor. Got in my turret, and I was just southwest of the bridge. I could have thrown a rock and hit the bridge from where I was sitting. I put my helmet on...the 3 Alpha...

COL [REDACTED] Who was the 3 Alpha?

1LT [REDACTED] The Alpha 3 is [REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] Is he still here?

1LT [REDACTED] Yes. He was reporting...he was telling someone, and I don't know who he was talking to...but he said, air reports triple A threat north of the bridge. So I got on and I said, [REDACTED] this is [REDACTED]...he's a frocked Captain, took a liberty or two... when I said...

[REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] Now where was he when he said this?

1LT [REDACTED] I don't know. I don't know who was controlling the fight...

COL [REDACTED] And what's his job again?

1LT [REDACTED] He's the 3 Alpha ...so from what I gathered later the C-7 and the P-7 got themselves in a fight, and got themselves stuck. I think that's where the 3...

COL [REDACTED] And this is after the A-10s had already been there?

1LT [REDACTED] Right. That's correct. My five tractors had already gone south and one got blown up on the bridge.

COL [REDACTED] Did you say to...

1LT [REDACTED]: I said [REDACTED] this is [REDACTED] I'm north of the bridge. I said I'm north of the north bridge. There is no Triple A threat for Amtracks. His response was surprised, as I remember. That might be me making that up. But as I remember it, he hadn't know that. I don't know if he said, excuse me for swearing, I think, as I remember it, he said, holy shit. But I don't want to put words in his mouth. So that was my first actual panic.

COL [REDACTED] Was air still running at that time? Do you know?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

1LT [REDACTED]: No, because my tractors had gone south. Things were still falling. I don't know where they were coming from, but it wasn't as mad a panic as it had been, a couple of minutes in the past.

COL [REDACTED] Thank you, Lt [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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COL [REDACTED] Go ahead and state your name, rank, social security number and your billet.

1LT [REDACTED] 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant, Charlie Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marines. My Social Security number is XXX-XX-XXXX.

COL [REDACTED] And your billet?

1LT [REDACTED] Charlie Company XO.

COL [REDACTED] My name is Colonel [REDACTED] and under the direction of the board president, Brigadier General William F. Hodgkins, we're investigating a friendly fire incident that occurred on 23 March 03 near An Nasiriyah, Iraq. This investigation, conducted under DOD Instruction 6055.7 is separate and apart from any other investigation that may have been conducted concerning this incident. The purpose of this investigation is to produce a publicly releasable report on the facts and circumstances surrounding this incident and gather and preserve evidence for use in claims, litigation, disciplinary actions, adverse administrative proceedings and for all other purposes. Your sworn testimony to me may be used for any proper purpose and may be released to the public. Additionally, the chain of command will review the final report. Do you understand what I have just read to you?

1LT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

COL [REDACTED] Finally, do you also understand that you are being interviewed as a witness in this friendly fire investigation and acknowledge that no promise of confidentiality has been extended to you?

1LT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

COL [REDACTED] Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give in the matter now under investigation shall be the truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

1LT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir, I do.

COL [REDACTED] Lt [REDACTED] would you please review for me where you were in the Company and as you started crossing or proceeded to cross the northern bridge at Al Nasiriyah, when you came under fire, when you began taking casualties, and walk me through what happened as you crossed the bridge, and the events that transpired after that push?

1LT [REDACTED] Alright, Sir. The best that I can recall, we started pushing through the city. We were pushing past Bravo and Alpha Company's position. I believe it was somewhere around 12:30...12:15 to 12:30 local, is the best time I can remember. As soon as we passed through Bravo Company and Alpha Company's lines where they were stopped that's when we started taking direct fire.

COL [REDACTED] Where were you located then?

[REDACTED]

1LT [REDACTED]: I was in the, I believe I was in the 7<sup>th</sup> vehicle. I was...

COL [REDACTED]<sup>th</sup> back?

1LT [REDACTED] The 7<sup>th</sup> back in Charlie Company's column. I was with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon. We started taking direct fire. About halfway through the stretch of the city, the vehicle just in front of me took an RPG hit, and the side of it that was on fire. The packs and what-not were on fire and it was smoking. All the way through the city we were still taking direct fire and lots of RPG fire. The Marines in the track were actually shooting out of the top of the track back at the direct fire and RPG fire.

COL [REDACTED] How fast were you traveling?

1LT [REDACTED] Initially, when we came through, we were kind of slow, I'd say probably 15 KPH, and we started taking fire. We knew we had to push on through. We stepped it up to probably...I don't know... [REDACTED] We started going pretty fast once we started pressing on. Like I said, right about in the center of the city is where that vehicle took an RPG hit. It started on fire. That was the only RPG hit that we took at that time. The whole company kept pushing. We approached the north bridge, and as soon as we came over the top of the north bridge and got on the northern side of the river, we started taking direct fire from behind us and from both of our flanks...I'm sorry, let me come back...from both sides of the bridge behind us, from my direct right and front, which would be the east side. And then, on our direct flank on the west side. That's where we were taking direct fire from.

COL [REDACTED] What kind of direct fire?

1LT [REDACTED] It was RPG fire and small arms fire. We pressed on. We pressed on through. And like I said, we'd just topped the northern bridge, and we pushed the company out on either side of the road. Like I said, I was with 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon. 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon and 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon was in front of me, and they went off to the...I can't remember the numbers of vehicles that were on each side of the road. A good deal of the company was on the western side of the road, and on the eastern side of the road was,...I know the mortar section and their vehicle, the CO and his vehicle, and I think there were one or two other vehicles. The trac that got hit with the RPG was in the center of the road at that time. It was burning. Lt [REDACTED] who was the 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon commander had been on that trac, and they were busy getting casualties out of that trac. As soon as we got the company off the road, I heard the CO call over the battalion TAC telling...just calling TIMBERWOLF, and that's what we do. We call TIMBERWOLF. There's no specific person. We just call TIMBERWOLF and the forward element of the battalion. Whoever is controlling the fire is supposed to answer out. So, the CO called TIMBERWOLF. We are on the northern side of the bridge. A little bit of time passed. Probably 15...no, not that long, probably 5 minutes or so, and then lots of indirect fire would begin. We were taking mortar fire from the north, and we were taking artillery fire from the west and southwest, lots of artillery fire. Most of it was variable time. It was landing or exploding above the deck. Some of it was point detonating or exploding on the road. When I got on the radio at that point, I was trying to find, trying to talk to everybody. The battalion TAC was pretty jammed up with radio traffic. Again, I got on the battalion TAC and said that we were taking heavy indirect fire on the north bridge, and that we needed some help from the battalion at that point.

[REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] Did anybody answer you?

1LT [REDACTED] Somebody. I don't know who. I don't remember the voice or whatever, but I heard a roger over the net. That's what I heard.

COL [REDACTED] What net was it?

1LT [REDACTED] I was on the battalion TAC.

COL [REDACTED] Battalion TAC?

1LT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir. We had a few casualties. I'm not certain of the numbers of casualties at this point. But we had some casualties that came of it. We had some casualties off of that vehicle that initially got hit with that RPG. There was radio traffic among the company about hey, we've got to get our casualties out of here. We've got a...we need a helo or we need to get a whatever. So, I talked to the First Sergeant, who handles our casualties, and he already knew we had casualties. He started to begin to orchestrate the casualty plan. But that's when I believe it was too hot to get a helo in there. The Marines were scurrying getting Marines out of the track that was burning, and there was a couple of other casualties. Most of the casualties at this point were on the east side of the road, which was the opposite side of the road from me. The CO, I knew was on that side. I could not cross the road. I tried to get to the other side, and I couldn't get across there. Somewhere in this time is when I saw...I didn't see a plane initially. I saw a

[REDACTED]

burst come across the road. It was mostly on the west side of the road, just north of the bridge.

I believe that's where the first burst went across.

COL [REDACTED]: Now, between the time you said there was indirect artillery fire, but it was like DCIPM?

1LT [REDACTED]: I believe it was VT.

COL [REDACTED]: VT?

1LT [REDACTED]: I don't know if it was DTICM. I know there was lots of VT.  
\_\_\_\_\_ bombs exploding...

COL [REDACTED]: How long between that and the first gun run by the A-10?

1LT [REDACTED]: It was probably...I don't know...If I had to...I would say probably about 30 minutes. Probably about 30 minutes.

COL [REDACTED]: OK.

1LT [REDACTED]: I'm not sure on that. I know the whole thing lasted about 3 hours, although it seemed like it was about 15 minutes. But the best I can recall, it was about 30 minutes.

Nonetheless, the rounds went across the road and mostly on the western side initially. At that point, I didn't realize that it was a plane. I thought it was still more indirect fire. A few minutes

[REDACTED]

later, there was another burst, and that's when I saw on the second time, that same burst came across, that I realized that it was a plane above us.

COL [REDACTED] Were they still firing the air-burst artillery?

1LT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir. There was still indirect fire.

COL [REDACTED] Indirect fire, OK.

1LT [REDACTED] I did not realize that it was an A-10. I knew that it was a plane, and I knew that it was...I realized it was a plane on probably it's second run, but I did not identify the type of aircraft it was. At this point, we had the Marines pushed off. The Amtracks were probably about 15 meters off the road. The road was up high, and then on both sides of the road, it dipped down into a ditch and then a berm on both sides of the road. So the Marines were pushed out in front of the Amtracks. There were probably...they were probably about 100 to 150 meters off the road and they were firing on both sides of the road. Somewhere, and this is the whole company level, we're trying to figure out where this came from. But, somewhere...let me back up. The Marines were pushed off...off the vehicles. I got off my vehicle, ran up and down the line, checked who I had on my side. I never saw 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon. They were north of me. I was about in the middle on the west side with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon. The 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon was kind of inter-mixed in there with...with 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon. So, I ran up and down the line to find out what was going on, and I went back inside the track because that was the only radio I had. I went back inside the track and got on the radio and started calling again and saying we needed some help back here. I again gave our location.

[REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] Did you tell them to abort the air?

1LT [REDACTED]: I don't think I...I didn't say anything about the air at that time.

COL [REDACTED] OK. But you knew it was air after the second run.

1LT [REDACTED] Yes. I knew it was an aircraft. I didn't know what type. I knew it was an aircraft, but at that point I did not call out over the radio. Somehow over that period in the conflict there, somebody, somewhere along the company or with the AAVs initiated and said that we need to get on the tracks and push. From listening, it didn't come over our company TAC. It didn't come over the Battalion TAC. It came over the AV net, which on the Amtracks, we had...each AAV has the Amtrack net that they monitor, and we also have Company TAC or Battalion....or, we have several different nets.

COL [REDACTED] So, when the A-10s first...you saw the first laydown, it looked like...whatever it was...When you knew it was an aircraft laying down fire, the Amtrack at that time was stationary on the road?

1LT [REDACTED] No. They were off the road. Initially, as soon as we came over the bridge, we pushed off the road, along the east side of the road.

COL [REDACTED] Right. But were they stationary?

[REDACTED]

1LT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

COL [REDACTED] OK.

1LT [REDACTED] They were stationary on either side of the road.

COL [REDACTED] OK.

1LT [REDACTED] Somewhere, like I said, we don't know where it came from. Somebody, a small unit leader said, hey we've got to push. I don't know where the call came from, but somewhere it came that we need to move.

COL [REDACTED] How the Amtracks were faced...the direction they were faced?

1LT [REDACTED] They were facing outward. So, they were facing...the ones on the east side of the road were facing east and the ones on the west side of the road were facing west. At that point, Marines started loading up on the Amtracks. And, unbeknown to me, I was down inside the Amtrack, I didn't have intercom with the driver or the crew chief. I was inside the track talking on the radio, and at this time I could hear the aircraft coming over and I could hear the runs. Some of the vehicles loaded up. I believe there was 5 of them that loaded up Marines on the Amtracks. I seriously thought that we were going to push north, because that's where the enemy was, so I thought we were pushing north. And as I popped my head out of the vehicle, of the TC hatch, we were facing south right on the edge of the bridge. And, that's when I could see the bird again come across our frontage, at that point.

[REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] Which direction was it flying?

1LT [REDACTED]: At that time, it was flying from...as we were facing south, it was above us flying either east to west or west to east. I was flying perpendicular to the road. I can't remember which direction it came from.

COL [REDACTED] What time?

1LT [REDACTED] This was probably...after we had been up there...this was probably about 2 hours and a half maybe into our time on the northern side of the bridge.

COL [REDACTED] Did you see anybody...Did anybody [REDACTED]

1LT [REDACTED] That's when some of the vehicles were staged up to go south, and after I realized we were about to go south, back through the city. I saw one [REDACTED] from the company area, and it was a...I think it was [REDACTED] I think it was a [REDACTED] that went. Somewhere in there, I can't remember what can't remember exactly what time it was, but I did see a [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Nobody on my side of the road [REDACTED] but I know a [REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] Did you see any [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

1LT [REDACTED] I didn't see any [REDACTED] No, I didn't, Sir. This was...there was a lot of confusion that happened in the area. I realized at that point we had medevacs, and that's why the Marines were going south, because we had medevacs. They were going to take the medevacs back because they couldn't get the helo in. We started south, and that point, that's as much as I can speak of the bird itself, because we started pushing south. As we started going south, just after we got over the bridge, heading south at this time, about in the center of town again, the track behind me...it just exploded. And that was the track that had the medevacs on it. The medevacs were spread over two tracks and they were...on second thought, it was five tracks that were going south, and two of them had medevacs on them. In that one track that had medevacs on it was a track with mortars. It had all the mortar ammo on that track. That was about the center of town that that track exploded. It was the track immediately behind me. I mean...it exploded. I don't know. Because the flash went up and the explosion, there was a lot of sympathetic explosion from the mortars.

COL [REDACTED] Are you inside the one in front?

1LT [REDACTED] I'm inside the one in front, but I had the hatch open, so I'm just sitting in the troop commander's hatch. I was probably up head high, so I could see.

COL [REDACTED] So, you saw it.

1LT [REDACTED] So, I was...the hatch was open, so I was sitting up where I could see out. And that was the track immediately behind me. And, this is probably...I don't have the location, but it was a few hundred meters, maybe even 1000 meters south of the bridge into town. And that

[REDACTED]

track behind me exploded. By the way, the explosion came up and the sympathetic explosions, I don't know if it was something from the air or something from an RPG. An RPG could've ignited the mortars. I don't know. It just burst. The track did. Then there was another track that was with it when it got hit by an RPG. It pulled off the side of the road.

COL [REDACTED]: Are you sure it was an RPG?

1LT [REDACTED]: No,...no, I don't have...I don't have a factual basis on that. I don't know that. I misspoke that, because I don't know that that was an RPG. That track did continue rolling. It was inoperable, but it continued rolling. So, as soon as the track behind me exploded, we pulled out, and then track behind me exploded, we pulled off, and then the track behind me, the one that exploded, which was two behind me, rolled past me off the side of the road. We stopped at that point. We loaded as many Marines as we could onto the vehicles we had. We only had two vehicles left at that point. We loaded as many as we could and this was just a matter of a couple of minutes. We loaded as many as we could, and we had some of the Marines run inside the building. I yelled to those Marines. It was a tough decision right there. I yelled at those Marines, and I said,...in my mind, the only thing that I could do was to...I could see Alpha company in front of me. They were probably 800 meters in front of me. I could see them in front of me. So, I told them to set up their position right there. I'm going to get Alpha Company and come back. So, with those two vehicles loaded up with as many people as we could, those Marines stayed there. We pushed on to Alpha Company's position. When we got to Alpha Company's position, Sgt [REDACTED] he's one of the air trackers, he and I got together. I said, you go to tanks. I'm going to Alpha Company. So he ran over to tanks and said, hey, we need some help on the north side of the bridge. I ran to Alpha Company and linked up with Capt [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Capt [REDACTED] asked what was going on, because again, periodically through this, I was trying to get comm and trying to talk to people on Battalion TAC, and there was so much traffic on the net that we couldn't. We couldn't get anything. So, like I said, Sgt [REDACTED] went to the tanks. I went to Capt [REDACTED] in Alpha Company and told him what was going on. I said, hey, the company is getting schwacked on the northern side of the bridge and I've got one squad in the center of town. I said, we gotta go. He was waiting on 2/8. 2/8 was supposed to come and relieve him. He was at the northern end of the south bridge. 2/8 was supposed to come and relieve him and then he was going to push. And he told me at that point, he said you know, we're just going to.... He said I don't know when they're coming. We gotta go. He told me, you go to the other side, grab all the vehicles, all the AAVs on the other side. I'll grab the AAVs on this side, and we'll leave in 15 minutes. We looked at our watches. Local time was either...I keep trying to remember this...It was either a quarter til 3, so that would have been 1445 or 1345. I know when I looked at my watch, the minute hand was on the, so I knew it was a quarter til something, and I don't remember if it was a quarter til 3 or a quarter til 2. I don't remember. So, at that point, we loaded up. We loaded up in Alpha Company's tracks. All the Marines I had with me, simultaneously, while I was talking to Capt [REDACTED] our medevacs saved the ones that were on the mortar side. They called a helo for them, and they were able to get them out with a helo. We loaded up everybody on Alpha company's tracs, and the one other trac that we still had left from Charlie Company that had gone down. And then we pushed back to the north. A tank and one of the AAVs and some of the CAT sections stopped to get the Marines out that were in the center of town. So, the rest of us pushed north. When we got back up there, almost immediately when we rolled over the north bridge with our...the fire lifted from up there. Like I said, I'd been separated from it for probably 45 minutes. From the time I left the north end, went and talked to Capt [REDACTED] and came back, was probably about a 45 minutes span there.

[REDACTED]

Nonetheless, when we rolled back over the north bridge at that time, the tire had stopped or was lifting at that point. And that's pretty much it from my side.

COL [REDACTED] I've got a closing statement I'll read. In closing, I want to remind you that this is an official interview and direct that you not discuss your testimony with anyone without the board's permission or until the report has been officially released to the public. Do you understand?

1LT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

[REDACTED]

12 April 2003, 21:46 L

Interview with 2Lt [REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] State your name, rank, social security number and your billet.

LT [REDACTED]<sup>2nd</sup> Lieutenant [REDACTED] XXX-XX-XXXX. First Lt Commander, Charlie Company, CO "C" Company.

COL [REDACTED] OK. [REDACTED] my name is Colonel [REDACTED] and under the direction of board president, Brigadier General William F. Hodgkins, we're investigating a friendly fire incident that occurred on 23 March 03 near An Nasiriyah, Iraq. This investigation, conducted under DOD Instruction 6055.7 is separate and apart from any other investigation which may have been conducted concerning this incident. The purpose of this investigation is to produce a publicly releasable report on the facts and circumstances surrounding this incident and gather and preserve evidence for use in claims, litigation, disciplinary actions, adverse administrative proceedings and for all other purposes. Your sworn testimony to me may be used for any proper purpose and may be released to the public. Additionally, the chain of command will review the final report. Do you understand what I have just read to you?

LT [REDACTED] I do.

COL [REDACTED] Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give in the matter now under investigation shall be the truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

[REDACTED]

LT [REDACTED] I do.

COL [REDACTED] OK, [REDACTED] would you please relay to me what occurred relative to the friendly fire incident when you crossed the northern bridge in An Nasiriyah, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March?

LT [REDACTED] As I crossed the northern bridge, I was in track 201, which was the very first track to cross the bridge, the lead element. I called out lead trace twice before that, going through the city...

COL [REDACTED] To whom?

LT [REDACTED] ...to my company commander over the company TAC. I don't remember the specific northings but...that's what you call the traces.

COL [REDACTED] Right.

LT [REDACTED]: ...36 northing, 37 northing...I called that out. As we went over Lt [REDACTED] in 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon, his tractor got hit going through the city. He actually pulled up almost on line to us, north of the bridge. He had taken a casualty. One of the Marines got hit. He had also taken a couple of RPG rounds in his track. He said, we need a medevac, we need a medevac. At that point my tractor pulled about, I want to say 4 to 500 meters past the bridge and went off on the left-hand side, but we're oriented back towards the road. So we were actually oriented toward the east. At that point all the tractors in the company from what I saw from my angle, had made

[REDACTED]

it over the bridge, as well as the Humvees, and had gone into a defensive position, trying to maintain disbursement. We started taking small arms fires and I believe indirect fire. The first time that I became aware of any type of aircraft was the first strafing run that hit right directly, like I said, my track was facing east looking over the road. The strafing run hit directly on the left-hand side of my track and came from west to east. Right before that strafing run I heard in the air, a sound that was like \*\*\*\*\* like that. Real quick, like that. Soon after that, just kicked up right along side. That first run, I didn't see anyone hurt at all. I was up in the TC hatch, about right here. I was trying to see where my guys were aligned in the back. There were guys getting in and out of the tracks and no one was sure. They were loading them up to get the medevacs out of there and we were all loading up, but that's initially where I was stationed. At that point, this whole time I was trying to get the guys aligned as well as trying to get the medevac for Lt [REDACTED] At that point, and I don't know who passed through on the air but someone said fire [REDACTED] Now, [REDACTED] it was briefed to us before the whole campaign started, that's the 1<sup>st</sup> MEF signal for friendly fire. You have friendly forces out here. At that point, [REDACTED] About two minutes later, three minutes later I hear the same thing. The \*\*\*\*\* in the air, but this time Lt [REDACTED] had come around to the left-hand side of my track with a bunch of Marines, either in his platoon or my platoon, they were mixed. Also a couple of casualties and they were loading them onto our track and the track to the very left of me. If I'm not mistaken, it was SSgt [REDACTED] track, which is my platoon commander. He was in 203. At that time, when the next strafing run came down, the strafing run actually hit the track. It went right across the track, still coming from west to east and it started kicking up on the track. I ducked my head down like that and it just kicked right over us. To this day, I still don't know how I didn't get hit. At that point, I looked up, looked to my left I thought I saw Lt [REDACTED] I thought he might have gotten hit, but he [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

got up. Then I looked a little bit closer down in my track and there was a Marine looking up at me and he had sustained major injuries to his lower back and to his legs too. He was trying to mouth to me, I can't walk. So I took the helmet off, jumped down, picked him up, walked him up. I went around to the back of my track which was, if I'm facing west, was on the east side, so away from the road. At that point it was pretty much the worst thing I'd ever seen in my life.

COL [REDACTED] Do you know who this Marine was?

LT [REDACTED] See, that's the thing...I don't know. I'd never seen him before. My background, I'd just checked into the company at the end of November from IOC so, even on ship and coming over here to Camp Shoop, I was still trying to learn everyone's names. I did pretty well, but this Marine, looking at him, I didn't know who he was. He had some blood on his face too, so that could have hindered it. But I went around in the back of my track there, I want to say three to four injured Marines, two of them really injured, and a couple of other Marines just trying to load, just [REDACTED] into the track. At this point, we were loading the Marines in the track. I loaded that Marine I had helped over. I picked another Marine up, I thought he might have been [REDACTED] but I realize now that he was probably [REDACTED]. He was just [REDACTED]. I picked him up and put him in there. There were other Marines loading them into the tracks. Once I, once we loaded all the Marines in, I got back in the TC hatch and the guy in the back told me that we were up. I had heard my other two tracks were up. I got from my platoon sergeant we were up in his track, and at that time we pushed back into the city. The only other thing of friendly fire I can say after that is back going through the city, we were strafed again. I'll tell you right now, I don't know if it was the A-10 or if it was some other sort of indirect fire we may have taken but I know that we were strafed from above. So it had to have been indirect

[REDACTED]

fire or some kind of air asset. After that our tractor got hit with an RPG round. It got taken out. After that I didn't hear anything else about the A-10 until...when my tractor got taken out, a bunch of us jumped off that tractor and there was another one hauling back right next to us and they stopped and we tried to load as many on that tractor as possible. Once we got on that tractor we went back in, further south to the city and the tractor we were on at this point was just completely packed with casualties, and Marines from all platoons of the company. And the driver was stopping and starting cause we were being bracketed by mortars at the time. At that point we stopped off in the middle of the city. We got out. Myself and I think SSgt [REDACTED] was in that track, and Sgt [REDACTED] was with my section, my AAV section, he was in my track too, the one that got hit with RPG. We got out, we went over to another track to see if it was open so we could put some casualties on that so we could get them to the rear. We opened it up. There were a couple of trackers in one of the other tracks. There was also a number of tracks from Alpha Company and some tanks right in this part of the city where we had congregated. We got in there. As soon as we got into that track, I heard one of the tracks, one of the AV guys talking on the radio to PALE HORSE 3, which was Lt [REDACTED] call sign and he was saying trying to give him the call sign for the air. This guy didn't know it, I had a CEOI in my left breast pocket and so I told him, hey I know it. At that point, I tried to get it across to...I said PALE HORSE 3, this is PALE HORSE 1, I'm trying to get with CEOI.

TAPE RUNS OUT.

COL [REDACTED] OK, state your name again.

[REDACTED]

LT [REDACTED] 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt [REDACTED] At that point just hearing from him listening to Lt [REDACTED] on the radio, he was trying to talk to anyone to shut the air off at this point. A lot of other people were trying to get through, but his comm., it seemed to be the best. He was the one who eventually got through. I don't know how much else you want to hear, in terms of my involvement with the friendly air, but that's all I have on that. There's nothing else with the friendly air, but I can tell you at least my part, for the rest of the day.

COL [REDACTED] I've got most of that stuff. I've been out here for three or four days. In closing, I want to remind you that this is an official interview and direct that you not discuss your testimony with anyone without the board's permission or until the report has been officially released to the public. Do you understand?

LT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

[REDACTED]

12 April 2003, 20:30 L  
Interview with First Sergeant [REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] Would you please state your name, rank, social security number and your billet.

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED], my rank is... I'm a First Sergeant [REDACTED] I'm the company First Sergeant for Charlie Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marines, my social security number is XXX-XX-XXXX.

COL [REDACTED] My name is Colonel [REDACTED] and under the direction of board president, Brigadier General William F. Hodgkins, we're investigating a friendly fire incident that occurred on 23 March 03 near An Nasiriyah, Iraq. This investigation, conducted under DOD Instruction 6055.7 is separate and apart from any other investigation which may have been conducted concerning this incident. The purpose of this investigation is to produce a publicly releasable report on the facts and circumstances surrounding this incident and gather and preserve evidence for use in claims, litigation, disciplinary actions, adverse administrative proceedings and for all other purposes. Your sworn testimony to me may be used for any proper purpose and may be released to the public. Additionally, the chain of command will review the final report. Do you understand what I have just read to you?

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

COL [REDACTED] Finally, do you also understand that you are being interviewed as a witness in this friendly fire investigation and acknowledge that no promise of confidentiality has been extended to you?

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir, I do.

COL [REDACTED] Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give in the matter now under investigation shall be the truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED] I do.

COL [REDACTED] OK, First Sergeant would you please walk me through what transpired on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March as your company began to cross the northern bridge in An Nasiriyah?

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED] OK, me, Sir, as First Sergeant for the company, I'm located in the last track, which is the end of the column for the company which is the track designated for medevac. I was the last track that crossed the bridge. Once we got on the other side of the bridge, north bridge that it...let me back up a little bit. Right before we crossed the bridge, two tracks in front of me that track got hit by RPG twice. The Marines managed to go ahead and keep pushing it the track all the way across the bridge to the north side of the ...and about 100 meters after that he stopped, they dropped their ramp and Marines they start to get out of there and the Marine that was driving the track, his name was Sgt [REDACTED] He [REDACTED] right then and there. He got out of the track, [REDACTED] Right off the bat, we start getting hit by mortar rounds, which, I'm sorry 81 millimeter mortar rounds and the reason I

[REDACTED]

know that is my background is a mortar man and my first 12 and a half years in the Marine Corps, I was a mortar man. So we start receiving mortar rounds 60s 81s and also seems to be artillery rounds, and two days later, I find out that actually there were artillery rounds landing in our pos. Also from the east side and west side, past the bridge we're receiving small arms fire and also RPGs. Once we cross the bridge, give or take, it was about 1230 and probably lasted about three hours give or take, maybe three and a half hours.

COL [REDACTED] 12:30 local?

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir. 12:30 local. What I remember is the Marines got out of the tracks and start getting hit with small arms and mortar rounds and the first thing I heard was Corpsman and First Sergeant and I just started running everywhere. Went to the east side of the bridge, which I, we had a Marine that was injured. Basically wound shots to the legs and one to the shoulder, and then right away I grab him and put him in the medevac trac and I hear my name called again, and I had to run across the street to the west side of the bridge where I got this other Marine, which was Lt [REDACTED] and Cpl [REDACTED]. I grabbed those two Marines and took them across the street again to the east side of the bridge and put them in the medevac track. I then got inside the track, called back to the battalion and talked to TIMBERWOLF.

COL [REDACTED] And TIMBERWOLF is?

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED] TIMBERWOLF is the battalion commander, but when I made that call, it was Capt [REDACTED] which is the S3Alpha right now. I asked for a medevac request and I told him that it was urgent and I needed a helo. I also let him know about the LZ was hot so to be aware of

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

that. He asked me for the grid coordinates, which at that time, I didn't have with me and I told him I would call him right back. I got off the track to look to my map and right away, we got hit, my medevac track got hit with an RPG. I don't know if you had a chance to look at that or not, but the track been repaired, but it has a hole where it got hit, and I also got hit by about two or three 60 mortar rounds. The track was disabled. A lot of Marines were, well one of the lieutenants... a lot of Marines were saying First Sergeant, get these Marines out of here and get them back across the bridge going south. I think at that time I know it was, it seemed kind of far, everyone was kind of nervous, I think I was a little nervous but I know I showed I was in control, so deep inside my mind I say I'm not doing that, that's suicidal cause you know what happened when we came through that and everyone shooting at the tracks so I said we're not doing that. What I did, was I got the Marines out of there cause we're receiving fire and you can see and you can hear when they fire the RPGs. The sound, the whistle and sound and you see them coming. I'm glad for I guess they can't shoot anyways but a lot of the RPGs they weren't detonating. They were just landing, and they were going by us. I saw one coming right straight to our track. It hit the back bounced off and landed about 40 yards away and never exploded. So I decided to get the Marines out, out of the track with one of my sergeants, who's a training NCO, so he's located in the same track with me, so he's like my right hand man for the medevacs. His name is Sgt [REDACTED] So me and Sgt [REDACTED] took the five casualties out of there and took them across the street to the west side of the bridge. Actually was to the east side of the bridge and set them down. At that time I grabbed SSgt [REDACTED] SSgt [REDACTED] is the platoon sergeant for the mortar section. I grab him. Actually he was section leader at that time, he's platoon sergeant now. But I grabbed him so he could help me with the casualties cause everyone was calling my name, because there were more casualties everywhere. Also when I got those Marines out of their tracks and

[REDACTED]

bringing them across the street that's when Lt [REDACTED] got hit one more time and also Sgt [REDACTED] got hit one more time. Second time they got hit.

COL [REDACTED] What did they get hit with?

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED]: They got hit with RPGs, Sir. Put him right there on the west side of the bridge, right by the ditch there. I put them all there with a corpsman and SSgt [REDACTED] I looked to my right and started walking to my right where the, it was about 50 to 70 yards away going north on the west side of the bridge. One of the mortar pos, SSgt [REDACTED] Cpl [REDACTED] and LCpl [REDACTED] And when I got there they were just pumping rounds out. I took a knee and this is exactly the words that came out of the SSgt's mouth, hey First Sergeant we're in a shit sandwich. I said, yes SSgt we are. And at that time I only spoke to him only about 30 seconds. I was kneeling down beside him and at that time SSgt [REDACTED] who I left with the five casualties called me, First Sergeant, First Sergeant you need to get back over here, I don't think Sgt [REDACTED] is going to make it. So I got up and start walking back towards the bridge, which was about 50 to 75 yards away. I walk probably half way there, about 40 yards already, I hear the A-10. The reason I know it's an A-10 is because I know the sound that he makes once he fires the gun and also I can see it.

COL [REDACTED] You say you can see it. Where do you see it? Where was it moving from?

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED] It was moving from southwest past the bridge to northeast. So I have already walked about 40 yards towards Sgt [REDACTED] with the five casualties, with SSgt [REDACTED] cause they had called me. They were thinking he wasn't going to make it so, I start walking down there.

[REDACTED]

That's when I hear the A-10 and I heard the sound of the guns and I look up. The first time I didn't see it, that's when SSgt [REDACTED] had got hit. That's when I knew it was the plane cause you can hear it flying low, I don't know how low. I heard when the guns fired. All I did was put my head down with my head and hands facing away from SSgt [REDACTED]. You can hear the rounds hit the ground, exploding and give or take maybe 30 seconds after that. I'm not sure 30 seconds to a minute, probably 30 seconds. The second run which I believe probably his wingman. I'm not sure if they work in pairs or not. I'm not too familiar how they work, but maybe it was his wingman. At that time the second one, the second run went and the rounds exploded. Then I looked to my right again and I was just talking to him, and I looked over there and saw they were laying down on the ground.

COL [REDACTED] How many? Who was laying down?

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED] There was three of them, but I think five of them got hit. The three Marines for sure, that I just talked to them a minute or so before, SSgt [REDACTED], Cpl [REDACTED] and LCpl [REDACTED]. I look over there and I see them laying down so I walk there and one of the things that amazed me was that [REDACTED] SSgt [REDACTED] I look at him and [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I look at Cpl [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] And I know exactly who they were because I was just talking to them. I think I know every Marine in my company. I've been in the battalion 3 years 3 months now.

[REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] You say there were two other Marines?

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir. What I did, I [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] and I said somebody give me a poncho. My sergeant, was  
with me, Sgt [REDACTED] he brought me three ponchos and I put them on top of the [REDACTED] I turn  
around and about 15 yards away there was another Marine, his name was Cpl [REDACTED] Cpl  
[REDACTED] was also [REDACTED] at the side of the road. I've never... a few minutes before that when I  
was talking to him I never saw Cpl [REDACTED] He's also in that platoon but he's a machine  
gunner. He's not a mortar man so, I don't know where he was coming from because it was  
chaos. People running everywhere. We had tracks just pulling to the side of the road, Marines  
just got out and started running. So [REDACTED] was the other one right beside the road. I put a  
poncho on him too. I'm not exactly sure if he got hit by the plane or not. What I know for sure,  
and there's no doubt in my mind at all, that those other three Marines were Sir, I know they got  
hit by the plane. Cause those were the only rounds that hit at that time. Everything happened so  
fast, and I just happened to be right there. When I looked, it was right there, it was them. The  
other Marine was, the fifth Marine, he was Lt [REDACTED]. Lt [REDACTED] was, say this is the bridge  
right here going this way, and this is the center of the road...this is east and this is west. Lt  
[REDACTED] was [REDACTED] centered in the road. A lot of people...cause I found the body and I tell how  
I find the body people saying yeah he got hit by an A-10. But I can't really say because I'm not  
an expert in ammunitions. The only thing I can say is how I find his body. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The other thing that I can say about where I found his body is a lot of black round spots like powder, like something burned there but there was no damage to the floor, to the concrete. Just a big black spot, like powder. And that's the only thing I can say. Once again I can honestly say, I don't know if he got hit by the A-10 or not, but those [REDACTED] [REDACTED] about 15 yards, about 10 more yards to the center of the road was Lt [REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] Go back for one second. You mentioned that there were originally five Marines over by the tree that were killed.

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED] No, I was talking about five casualties.

COL [REDACTED] So there were only three mortar men over there.

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir. It was just three mortar men over there, which was SSgt [REDACTED] Cpl [REDACTED] and LCpl [REDACTED]. That was the only three. The other damage that happened right there was the mortar itself. I don't know if you got a chance to see it yet, but we got it in a box...if you want to look at it later on. It's from the rounds that got hit, all kind of damage to the...

COL [REDACTED] You were still taking small arms, mortar, artillery, and RPG fire?

[REDACTED]

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED]: Yes, Sir. Yes, I was, but not right there and then. Right there the only attack we were taking is the A-10, Sir. But as we...were walking from left to right at the side of the road, we kept receiving mortar rounds and artillery and all that. What else I was going to say? The other thing that, I don't know...with the three bodies that got hit...there were a bunch of rounds that I believe, once again, I don't know if they were shot by the A-10 but, when we show them to the other Marines, the CO, and the company Gunney and all that, they assure me that it was from a...it was the type of rounds that an A-10 fires. I still got a few that I kept with me in case you want one.

COL [REDACTED]: I have one. Let me grab it.

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED]: That's the one. Yes.

COL [REDACTED]: I've got round that somebody's given me. Is this the type of round that you found at the scene?

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED]: Yes, Sir. There were lots all over where the bodies were laying down there.

COL [REDACTED]: This is the same type of round?

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED]: The same type of round. Yes, Sir. What else, Sir? Later on, well it seems liked everything happened in minutes, but now I realize about 3 - 3 1/2 hours. To be honest with you, I thought everything last about 15 minutes, but that's not the case. Later on we had more casualties, Cpl [REDACTED] and Cpl [REDACTED], which I brought in with the casualties, but somehow they

[REDACTED]

end up...they got put up in a track, I believe by Lt [REDACTED] which is his platoon commander, and those two Marines belonged to him. I remember saying, he was one of our Marines who came up to me and said First Sergeant, we need to put this Marine in a track and send him down south cross the bridge, and I said, I'm not doing that, Sir. I already called for a medevac. It's coming. Somebody's coming to get us. They're not going nowhere. So that was said and then later on I find out that he had grabbed his two Marines and put them in a track and went back. They made it. Three of the tracks happened to go back. I don't know who took the initiative to send those troops back, right now nobody knows how they got back. Maybe it was on the crewchief or whatever, initiative to go back and those tracks crossed the bridge heading down south and that's when they got hit. A lot of Marines ended up getting killed because two of those tracks belonged to the mortar men and was there a lot of mortar rounds, HE rounds, HP rounds and once the stuff caught on fire they were getting burned inside the tracks.

COL [REDACTED] How many total? Eight, ten runs occurred, total?

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED] To my knowledge, Sir, that I remember, four. Four runs plus with the wingman, eight times. That's what I can recall.

COL [REDACTED] Do you know of any other injuries or deaths, other than those you just spoke of, from the A-10s?

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED] No. That's probably the only ones that were caused by the A-10. And like I said, I mentioned the dead Marines before, but for sure of those I can say three of them were caused by one of the runs.

[REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] Did you see any [REDACTED] Anything that was [REDACTED] in the zone to try to cease the fire from the A-10s?

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir. At one time, my gunney sergeant, 1st Sgt [REDACTED] he [REDACTED] [REDACTED] which is supposed to mean friendlies, or cease fire. Also the police sergeant [REDACTED] There were two other ones that I seen [REDACTED] but I don't know who did that.

COL [REDACTED] What were the winds like? Do you recall what the winds were like?

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED] Not really, Sir.

COL [REDACTED]

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED] They went up, not straight up, but kind of angled up towards the...I know for a fact the one that my company gunney fired, fired towards the plane, when the plane was coming.

COL [REDACTED] And how high will those [REDACTED]

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED] They go pretty high, Sir. Give or take, [REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] Easily discernable by you on the ground?

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED] I say, spread for about 30 or 50 yards maybe. Probably about that much. I don't know what else...

COL [REDACTED] In closing, I want to remind you that this is an official interview and direct that you not discuss your testimony with anyone without the board's permission or until the report has been officially released to the public. Do you understand?

1<sup>st</sup> SGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir. I understand.

[REDACTED]

12 April 2003

Interview with GYSGT [REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] Please state your name, rank, social security number and your organization.

GYSGT [REDACTED] My name is [REDACTED] I'm a Gunnery Sergeant in Charlie Company 1/2. I'm the Company Gunnery Sergeant for Charlie Company. My social security number is XXX-XX-XXXX.

COL [REDACTED] My name is Colonel [REDACTED] and under the direction of board president, Brigadier General William F. Hodgkins, we're investigating a friendly fire incident that occurred on 23 March 03 near An Nasiriyah, Iraq. This investigation, conducted under DOD Instruction 6055.7 is separate from any other investigation which may have been conducted concerning this incident. The purpose of this investigation is to produce a publicly releasable report on the facts and circumstances surrounding this incident and gather and preserve evidence for use in claims, litigation, disciplinary actions, administrative proceedings and for all other purposes. Your testimony to me may be used for any proper purpose and may be released to the public. Additionally, the chain of command will review the report. Do you understand what I have just read to you?

GYSGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir. I do.

[REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] Finally, do you understand that you're being interviewed as a witness in this friendly fire incident and acknowledge that no promise of confidentiality has been extended to you?

GYSGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir. I do.

COL [REDACTED] Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give in the matter under investigation shall be the truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

GYSGT [REDACTED] I do.

COL [REDACTED] OK, Gunney. We'll pick it up when Charlie Company crossed over the north bridge. If you would relate to me, in your own words, what transpired once you began crossing the north bridge.

GYSGT [REDACTED] OK. Coming up to the north bridge, we were receiving small arms fire the entire way through the town. Once we'd crossed over the bridge, I was in a Humvee following my company. There were 12 Amtracks in front of me. I had 3 Humvees. My Humvee was behind the rear Amtrack. I had a LAD attachment, stinger guys right behind me. I had my second company vehicle with my police sergeant. They were taking up the rear. As we roll across the bridge, things are starting to get pretty ugly down there. There's mortars going off, arty going off, and there's RPGs flying all over the place. There's still a heavy amount of small arms and machine gun fire. Once we cross over the bridge, as soon as I can get, I guess,

[REDACTED]

200-300 meters from the bridge, our Amtracks start to peel off, into a herringbone. Some of them head off on the right side of the road, on the east side and some pull off on the west side of the road.

COL [REDACTED] Do you know how many were on either side?

GYSGT [REDACTED] I couldn't tell you. It happened so quick. I was assuming it was pretty much close to half and half. I couldn't tell you an actual number. As the last track peeled off, it peeled off to the right and I looked at the banks. The road was on both sides pretty steep and I decided it was too steep to try to pull the Humvees off the road, so I told my driver. We stopped our Humvees on the road. All three Humvees stopped and we jumped out of the vehicles and we slid down the berm.

COL [REDACTED] And which side were you on?

GYSGT [REDACTED] We were on the east side of the road.

COL [REDACTED] And you were still taking fire at this time?

GYSGT [REDACTED] We're still taking fire, still taking fire. We're on the east side of the road. There was a track up here on the road...I think it was a mortars track...I'm not sure which track it was. Later I found out it was a mortars track, cause it had a lot of HE mortars in it that would continue to go off while it was burning.

[REDACTED]

couldn't tell you how long it was. But the aircraft came from east to west and it was rolling pretty much perpendicular to the road, a little bit to the south. We could hear it let it's ordinance go, it's chain gun is what I call it. It went off, and the first thing we thought was, well there goes the bad guys. But that's not what happened. It rained down on top of us. I think they hit this track, and might have hit this track up here, I'm not sure. We were down here close when we got out of the hummers and the track was burning. So I moved all the Marines as far down as we could go, to the south from the vehicles, thinking that if I moved them away from the vehicles then of course the plane wouldn't hit us. After the plane comes by I don't know how long it was before it returns. I don't know if it was two, if it was one, whatever the case might be. But it wasn't too long after that when the plane returned. And the next time he came back he was down here towards the south, where we were at. So we had to turn and run back toward the burning vehicles to dodge him. I guess he made about four or five runs when I got my hands on a [REDACTED] We briefed all the Marines CENTCOM signals [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I guess about on his fifth run, I was up by the vehicles and he's coming in.

COL [REDACTED] Were these all gun runs do you know?

GYSGT [REDACTED] These were...I wasn't sure exactly what kind of ordinance he was firing till talking to people later. Based on the sound and the way that it would hit, it was a rockeye, explodes above the ground. What he would do is he would come in, and I guess, flares would come out the side of it, and I think that's his anti-aircraft system, defense mechanism.

[REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] At about what altitude do you think he was at?

GYSGT [REDACTED] Gosh...

COL [REDACTED] I know, that's hard. How well could you see him?

GYSGT [REDACTED] I could see him pretty good. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I don't know, hard to say...

COL [REDACTED] Three or four thousand or so?

GYSGT [REDACTED] Or so...I can't be sure.

COL [REDACTED] Understand, understand.

GYSGT [REDACTED] But he made several runs by this time. [REDACTED]

and we're sitting there watching him and we're by the burning vehicles and we're just watching to see if he's going to peel off of that and not hit us again. And we're waiting, and we're waiting, and we know he's getting ready to drop his load, so we take off again down back toward the bridge and he hits again. I don't know what came first, whether it was the chain gun or rocket, but we hear a loud sound that would hit and go "whumpf" and it'd just throw dirt and everything else up in the air. We'd hear machine gun rounds hitting the deck and we'd hear the chain gun itself. And then he'd go on over. I kept running back up to the vehicle, cause it was

[REDACTED]

still on the road and it was still taking rounds, and I grabbed my radio out of there. I get on the radio and I'm screaming, "Cease the air strikes, cease the air strikes."

COL [REDACTED] Do you know what channel, what frequency you were using?

GYSGT [REDACTED] I was on Battalion TAC 1, and I'm calling for everyone on there. I can hear people talking on there but nobody answers me, nobody answers me. I'm screaming on there, "Cease the air strikes, cease the air strikes." I guess screamed on there for about a minute, a minute and a half and then I heard one voice come over, which was Lieutenant [REDACTED] he's the track commander. He heard me on the radio. I guess he was on the west side of the road. His track was still going and he was still alive. At this time, I had no idea who was dead, who was alive, or what was going on. He tells me he also made that call, cease air strike.

COL [REDACTED] Did he get any response?

GYSGT [REDACTED] He couldn't tell me then, cause I had to throw the radio down because the A-10 was back again. I had to leave the radio and we had to run back here and duck again to avoid that.

COL [REDACTED] And what happened to Lt [REDACTED]

GYSGT [REDACTED] [REDACTED] is still here. I'm not sure if his track got hit by the A-10. But after the A-10 went by, I ran back and got on the radio again. I call for him and I finally get him

[REDACTED]

on the mic and he says it's been ceased, the air strike has been ceased. During all of this the mortars, the artillery and the small arms and the machine guns and everything is still on us. I don't know. I guess seven, eight, nine runs he probably made over the top of us. Myself and all of my police sergeants and I think our photographer, he ended up getting there with me somehow, we were all pretty much trapped and about 100 yards to run back and forth. Crossing the road was pretty much out of the question. We'd have got chopped down as soon as we went up the road. \_\_\_\_\_ finding out where his nose was, and running away from it, trying to avoid the mortars and the small arms and everything going on. In between there, somewhere in between there...I don't know which run he had made, I looked down past this last track and I guess about 75 yards I could see one of my mortar tubes set up. I didn't even know the mortars were set up and that they were even shooting. But I could see one mortar set up, and as I looked down on it, I just glanced at it and then there was a big explosion. The mortar position and the [REDACTED] I don't know [REDACTED] I just know it was a big explosion.

COL [REDACTED] Were there people around the mortar when it got hit?

GYSGT [REDACTED] There were people around the mortar when it got hit. Shortly after that there was smoke and everything, it was when Lt [REDACTED] came walking out of the dust. He was just in a daze and he's walking...

COL [REDACTED] Who is Lt [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
GYSGT [REDACTED] Lt [REDACTED] is the weapons platoon commander.

COL [REDACTED] And where was he located?

GYSGT [REDACTED] He was with the FiST track. And at this time I think he was trying to work fires with his mortars.

COL [REDACTED] So he was on the east side?

GYSGT [REDACTED] So he probably would have been, well, I don't know. He ended up on the east side with me. I don't know where he was at during the ordeal, but he ended up on the east side. He walks past the track and he's walking ... I see him walking. The right side of his [REDACTED] and he's just black from smoke and stuff. He's just in a daze. I grab him and throw him on the berm and then we try to get a bandage out. So one of the Marines opens up a first aid kit and throws me a bandage. By the time I get it out to patch up his [REDACTED] and try to stop some of the bleeding the A-10 comes in right on top of us again. Gotta grab him and run to avoid that. Somewhere throughout this we ended up getting him on one of the medevac tracks to get him out of there.

COL [REDACTED] Where was the medevac track?

GYSGT [REDACTED] I mean, there was a couple running. I think the first sergeant was on the other side trying to get people in medevac tracks and get them to move and stuff, and then

[REDACTED]

one ended up on my side at one point. In between there there was two tracks I saw up on the road. They slowed down as they were going past us, they were medevacs...

COL [REDACTED] Going south?

GYSGT [REDACTED] Going south. Trying to get the Marines back to the battalion so we could get them out of there. I just looked up over and saw a track got hit somewhere near the bridge, and this was right after the A-10 went over. I heard a Marine screaming at me, gunney, we gotta get on a track...we gotta get out of here. I seen that track got hit, and I said no we ain't getting on a track. We're just going to have to maneuver, but we're not going to get on a track. I guess we were there 3 1/2-4 hours or so, before the first tank rolled across.

COL [REDACTED] How many wounded did you have with you there? And how many dead, do you know?

GYSGT [REDACTED] At this time, I was not sure because all the dead were on the other side of the burning track. First Sergeant was trying to gather those up and he was placing them in a line right beside the road, so we could gather them up. I had no idea how many people were dead, how many people were wounded. This was like our own little world, piece of area that we had. The other side of the track, we didn't have a clue what was going on. The only thing I knew that went on on the other side of the track was that one mortar position was set up and I seen it go away. Shortly after I saw Lt [REDACTED] so I'm assuming that's where he got hit. I'm assuming that's where some of my mortar men got hit as well, including the weapons platoon

[REDACTED]

sergeant, SSgt [REDACTED]. He was killed right there too. But all in all we shot my police sergeants got a 203. [REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] And they were still making runs?

GYSGT [REDACTED] They were still making runs...still making runs. We just couldn't get them to shut it off. When the first tank rolled across, the firing was starting to die down now, the tank comes across. I don't even know if he shot when he came across the bridge or not. He may have. I really couldn't tell you. When he shows up on the road, I'm right down at the berm and I can see him when he pulls up. He's got three of my casualties on the back of the tank right there and I think a corpsman was working and he hollers at me he has three other casualties.

COL [REDACTED] Was the A-10 still making runs at this point?

GYSGT [REDACTED] Negative. Negative. After Lt [REDACTED], the track commander had got back up with him on the radio he said the A-10, the air strike had been ceased. I didn't see them no more after that. So once that tank came by, he kept rolling on down and then the next company with tracks, I think it was Bravo Company, but I'm not sure. I just remember seeing the company gunney in his vehicle come by last. There's no fires going on at this time. It was pretty much quiet. We started trying to gather people up. Get head counts and stuff. That's when I walked down here with the First Sergeant and we started counting the bodies and loading

[REDACTED]

them up in the back of the hummer. The platoon sergeants and platoon commanders are trying to pull all their Marines in and figure out who they're missing.

COL [REDACTED] How long between the first time you crossed the northern bridge and when it became quiet and all the fire stopped? Do you know about how long that was?

GYSGT [REDACTED] Somewhere between three and four hours. Which, I mean, I didn't know that at the time. Because it all went so quick. I didn't know we had been there that long. I was figuring it was twenty minutes. I think we started crossing the bridge 10:30, 10:40, somewhere along in there. It was 15-16:00, somewhere towards the evening when everybody got across there. I never looked down at my watch. I wasn't thinking about it...

COL [REDACTED] No, no...understand, I understand. How many KIA did you see?

GYSGT [REDACTED] From that point when we went down there to check on our dead, I think me and the First Sergeant, the CO and a couple of other Marines loaded, I think it was five that we loaded to the back of my hummer. Cleared the back of my hummer, had some gear in it and put it in the other hummer. Put five in the back of here, and drove them on down. The company was moving us, or the battalion was moving us north a little bit. We were consolidating. So we put them in the back of the hummer and we drove on down. Battalion Aid Station had set up a casualty point there and they were tending to the wounded.

COL [REDACTED] Want to take a break?

[REDACTED]

GYSGT [REDACTED] No. Shortly after I get up there with my vehicle, Lt [REDACTED] who is XO in one of the other companies, tells me that medevac birds are coming, and that we're going to put our KIAs in one of the birds. The birds land and we start putting the wounded in one bird and I drive the hummer around to the other bird where we're not putting any of the wounded in and get some Marines over there and we start unloading the dead and putting them into the helo. At the casualty collection point they had one that was KIA right there, not including the five that were in my hummer. There was one that was laid there, they hadn't covered up. We went ahead and grabbed him and carried him up to the bird. At about that time, when we were getting him up to the bird there was another berm back over here. We found another one of our Marines. Back to the east, there's another berm that we didn't see. I guess a Marine went over there to make a head call and seen LCpl [REDACTED] over there. So, since a Marine's over there we grabbed him and put him on one of the birds. So, that day I saw seven of them.

COL [REDACTED] In closing, I want to remind you that this is an official interview and not to discuss your testimony with anyone without the board's permission or until the report has been officially released to the public. Do you understand?

GYSGT [REDACTED] Yes, I do.

COL [REDACTED] Thank you.

[REDACTED]

12 April 2003

Interview with Gunney Sergeant [REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] Please state your full name, rank, social security number and billet, please.

GYSGT [REDACTED]: [REDACTED] XXX-XX-XXXX. Platoon Sergeant, Alpha Company,  
First Platoon.

COL [REDACTED] OK, my name is Colonel [REDACTED] and under the direction of board president, Brigadier General William F. Hodgkins, we're investigating a friendly fire incident that occurred on 23 March 03 near An Nasiriyah, Iraq. This investigation, conducted under DOD Instruction 6055.7 is separate and apart from any other investigation which may have been conducted concerning this incident. The purpose of this investigation is to produce a publicly releasable report on the facts and circumstances surrounding this incident and gather and preserve evidence for use in claims, litigation, disciplinary actions, adverse administrative proceedings and for all other purposes. Your sworn testimony to me may be used for any proper purpose and may be released to the public. Additionally, the chain of command will review the final report. Do you understand what I have read to you?

GYSGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

COL [REDACTED] Finally, do you also understand that you're being interviewed as a witness in this friendly fire investigation and acknowledge that no promise of confidentiality has been extended to you?

[REDACTED]

GYSGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

COL [REDACTED] Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give in the matter now under investigation shall be the truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

GYSGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

COL [REDACTED] OK, Gunney, I pretty much know what happened when your folks crossed the bridge. What I'd like you to relate to me is your first knowledge that an aircraft was running on you and the ordinance that you think they expended on you, the KIA and wounded that happened because of that ordinance, the actions that you or anyone else took that you witnessed to abort or stop the air and get it off you and times and number of passes the aircraft made and run headings, and that would be about it, OK?

GYSGT [REDACTED] My whole world is through a doggone periscope. The only time that I saw one is when I was on the ground. As soon as we crossed the bridge, 211 got hit by an RPG. I jumped out of my tractor, ran over there, started evacuating the crew, and grabbing weapons and throwing them off that vehicle that was on fire. I ran over with them behind a berm along the road and you could hear the sound of the Vulcan. A young Marine asked me what that was, and about that time we started taking mortar fire also. It was off in the distance, I was assuming it was probably going after mortar positions in the treeline. It had a very distinct sound. I said it was the sound of an A-10, from a Vulcan. It was reassuring that they were there. Then I ran

[REDACTED]

around for awhile, got back in my vehicle, started trying to figure out where the hell fire was coming from. Mortars were coming in and then. I don't know how in the hell I ended up back on the ground again. After my vehicle got shot by an RPG, I was back on the ground again. That's when I realized that there was....that the A-10 was now shooting at us. I looked up at the sky, I wasn't in my vehicle anymore and I saw little...looked like stars. Then as soon as I saw stars, I started running across...trying to get to my vehicles.

COL [REDACTED] What direction was the A-10 coming in from?

GYSGT [REDACTED] At the time, I was on the west side of the road in my vehicle that's shot and disabled. They were taking out all the casualties that I had in the back of my vehicle. I went running down the west side of the road to get...and Sgt [REDACTED] and his vehicle. His vehicle wasn't...he was on the ground. He came walking up and asked what the hell to do. I said we had to get the patients, all the casualties off my vehicle, to get them the \*\*\*\* out of there. I don't remember how many vehicles came up, they got the patients onto the vehicles, took off across the bridge, and as soon as they got...he had an American flag...he stuck in his smoke grenade launcher. Taking off across the road trying to get to the bridge. As soon as he got to the bridge, you saw the sparkles and one of the Amtracks got blown up. Then LIEUTENANT and I were, what the hell...we were...I still had an Amtrack when the mortars...I don't know, they...I remember seeing the little star clusters...two or three times...and running back and forth...

COL [REDACTED] You said somebody had an American flag?

[REDACTED]

GYSGT [REDACTED] Right. That was Sgt [REDACTED]. He had it propped up in his smoke grenade launcher, and he's trying to cross the bridge. It got blown up...the tractor got cut in half.

COL [REDACTED] Could you see it? Was it hanging off the smoke launcher?

GYSGT [REDACTED] It wasn't a little flag. It was a regular post flag, American flag.

COL [REDACTED] And it was out...

GYSGT [REDACTED] As a matter of fact, [REDACTED] took a picture of it and sold it and it was on the cover of Newsweek, or some damned magazine. He was the lead vehicle out of the three or four that went back and his vehicle was destroyed on the bridge by that damned bird. I just remember seeing that thing. I don't actually remember seeing the aircraft itself. I remember seeing the little star things and all the impacts and the distinct sound of the chain gun going off.

COL [REDACTED] Do you know how many passes the A-10 made?

GYSGT [REDACTED] I don't even remember seeing the...as I said, my whole world is through a periscope. It's a very small world. The only time I ever really have any vertical sight at all was when I was on the ground. There was probably three maybe four times.

COL [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] In closing, I want to remind you that this is an official interview and direct that you not discuss your testimony with anyone without the board's permission or until the report has been officially released to the public. Do you understand?

GYSGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

[REDACTED]  
GYSBT [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

29 MAR 03

ON 23 MAR 03 MY PLATOON PUSHED ACROSS THE NORTHERN BRIDGE OF AN NASARIH. IMMEDIATELY WE CAME UNDER INDIRECT + RPG FIRE. ONE VEHICLE WAS HIT WITH AN RPG. CREW WAS EVAC. AND WEAPONS REMOVED. MORTARS AND ARTY BEGAN FALLING. WE ENGAGED THE BUILDINGS WE BELIEVED MORTARS WERE BEING FIRED FROM. ONCE THEY WERE NEUTRALIZED THE DISTINCT SOUND OF THE CHAIN GUN OF AN A-10 WAS HEARD. SUDDENLY ONE OF MY VEHICLES EXPLODED. WE BEGAN EVACUATING WHEN ~~WE~~ HE MADE ANOTHER PASS. THE MORTAR PLATOON WAS DESTROYED. ~~WE~~ MY VEHICLE GOT HIT BY 3 MORTARS WHILE ATTEMPTING TO MANEUVER TO A HIDE POSS. BEFORE IT WAS HIT BY AN RPG AND DISABLED. WE LOADED THE BODIES ONTO ANOTHER VEHICLE AND TOLD IT TO TAKE IT BACK SOUTH W/ THE CASUALTIES. THE A-10 HIT IT HARD ON THE BRIDGE.

[REDACTED]  
multiple times during the destruction of my platoon and disregarded by the A-10.

GYSBT [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Interview with [REDACTED]

12 April 03, 21:46 L

COL [REDACTED] Go ahead and please state your name, rank and your social security number for the record and billet for the record.

SSGT [REDACTED], Staff Sergeant, XXX-XX-XXXX, Mortar Section Leader, C Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marines.

COL [REDACTED] My name is Colonel [REDACTED]. Under the direction of the board president, Brigadier General William F. Hodgkins, we are investigating a friendly fire incident that occurred on 23 March 03 near An Nasiriyah, Iraq. This investigation conducted under DOD Instruction 6055.7 is separate and apart from any other investigation that may have been conducted concerning this incident. The purpose of this investigation is to produce a publicly releasable report on the facts and circumstances surrounding this incident, and gather and preserve evidence for use in claims, litigation, disciplinary actions, adverse administrative proceedings, and for all other purposes. Your sworn testimony to me may be used for any proper purpose and may be released to the public. Additionally the chain of command will review the final report. Do you understand what I have just read to you?

SSGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

[REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] Finally, do you also understand that you are being interviewed as a witness in this friendly fire investigation and acknowledge that no promise of confidentiality has been extended to you?

SSGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir, I do.

COL [REDACTED] Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give in the matter now under investigation shall be the truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

SSGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

COL [REDACTED] OK, Sergeant, if you would please relay to me where you were in the column of Amtracks as you crossed over the north bridge and what you saw relative to the friendly fire incident.

SSGT [REDACTED] I was in track 208. It was the third track, which is the CO's track then our track. We came over the north bridge, one of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon's tracks got hit. Automatically we

[REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] What do you mean "herringboned?"

SSGT [REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] Which was the east side?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

SSGT [REDACTED] Yes, the east side. As soon as that happened the doors came down on the track. I had one gun crew, from mortars with me, the other two were on the CO's track. We both came out, we got together. For the most part, we were firing mortars at the enemy for about anywhere from 30 to 45 minutes. We were in a fight with them. We got a volley fire of RPGs, about seven of them in on our position. We disbursed. As soon as that happened we looked up and A-10s were overhead.

COL [REDACTED] You saw the A-10?

SSGT [REDACTED] I saw the A-10.

COL [REDACTED] What altitude do you think the A-10 was at?

SSGT [REDACTED] I don't know. That's hard. About [REDACTED] feet, something like that.

COL [REDACTED] It was up there a ways.

SSGT [REDACTED] Yes, it was up there a ways.

COL [REDACTED] Where was it in the sky relative to where you were?

SSGT [REDACTED] It was coming in from the east.

[REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] East to west?

SSGT [REDACTED] East to west. It came in east to west. We picked up, me, Capt [REDACTED] and some of the mortar men and the FiST, we all picked up and moved to the other side of the road. Some of the other guys, they got split up. SSgt [REDACTED] who was my platoon sergeant at the time, Lt [REDACTED] who was my platoon commander, Lt [REDACTED] in charge of the track, went the other way with a couple of other mortar men. I was running, basically, I hesitated for a second, and I took off behind the other mortar men. As I was running that way, I saw flares, I heard a sound like \*\*\*\*\* , and I looked back to my left and I saw SSgt [REDACTED] and PFC [REDACTED] and they were all laying there. Pretty much, I knew what happened to them. So I continued to run across the road. As I was running across the road, I looked down to my left and saw Lt [REDACTED] going across the road. Next thing I saw was [REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] Now, did you hear anything before that? Do you know what hit him?

SSGT [REDACTED] It looked like a, I know the nomenclature, a wart...

COL [REDACTED] A warthog? An A-10?

SSGT [REDACTED] An A-10.

COL [REDACTED] Do you know what type of ordinance hit him? Did you hear anything before it hit him?

[REDACTED]  
SSGT [REDACTED] I saw some flares...and...

COL [REDACTED] From the aircraft?

SSGT [REDACTED] ...and it looked like a missile came out. Some kind of missile. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] At first I thought it might have been a mortar round. A mortar round ain't going to

[REDACTED] As soon as I saw that, I kept going across the road. We ended up getting into a ditch. I was looking up into the sky the whole time at the A-10 and it changed it's

direction. Changed which way it was coming from. Now it was coming from north to south right over the top fo us. I saw flares, heard the \*\*\*\*\* and CO, Capt [REDACTED] said let's

move, so we started going back to the other side. As soon as that happened I looked around and

I say RTO's antenna sticking up in the air, and I yelled at them get the antennas down. As soon

as I yelled that I looked to my right and another rocket came in right beside us. I think that's

when Cpl [REDACTED] caught shrapnel from that rocket. I couldn't really get what kind of

rocket it was, I just know it came from the direction of the A-10. As soon as that happened we

got back across the road to the east side. We were running back toward the south on the east side

and we stopped by SSgt [REDACTED] Cpl [REDACTED] and PFC [REDACTED] had been shot, and it looked

like [REDACTED] It looked like something came down the road on all three of them. I stayed there

for a second. The rest of them kept running down south. Stayed there for a second, I looked

back up and I saw flares, I heard the \*\*\*\*\* and I kept moving. This was about the fourth

pass. I moved to one side, and then he changes direction again. He comes from east to west

again. I looked up. I saw the flares, heard the \*\*\*\*\* and I moved again. I just hoped I was

moving in the right direction. I finally end up making it down to where Gunney [REDACTED] and

[REDACTED] were. Gunney [REDACTED] was trying to get anyone on the radio. Also had someone

[REDACTED]

from the.....Staff Sergeant from the Stinger, they fire Stingers, he was there. He was also trying to get someone on the radio to call the air off. It made another pass. In all, I think it made eight passes. Finally we got hold of them...someone got hold of the air and they called the A-10 off.

COL [REDACTED] Got a hold of who?

SSGT [REDACTED]: The FOC.

COL [REDACTED] The FAC?

SSGT [REDACTED]: Yeah, the FAC. Finally the A-10 bugged out. Pretty much you could see the damage, and what was done. I lost one mortar system to it, shot all to crap. Altogether, I can't say how many Marines I lost to it, but that day I lost 14 Marines. So...

COL [REDACTED]

SSGT [REDACTED]

and someone on top of his Amtrack with an American flag, waving it and the guy still shot. We were trying everything we could to call the air off of us. Until the A-10 showed up, basically on their own. As soon as he showed up, everything just went....downhill.

COL [REDACTED] Is that all you have?

SSGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

[REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] a closing, I want to remind you that this is an official interview and not to discuss your testimony with anyone without the board's permission or until the report has been officially released to the public. Do you understand?

SSGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.



[REDACTED]

Interview with SSgt [REDACTED]

12 April 2003, 22:34 L

COL [REDACTED] Please state your name, rank and your social security number and your billet.

SSGT [REDACTED] Staff Sergeant [REDACTED], XXX-XX-XXXX, 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon Sergeant, Charlie Company, 1/2.

COL [REDACTED] My name is Colonel [REDACTED]. Under the direction of the board president, Brigadier General William F. Hodgkins, we are investigating a friendly fire incident that occurred on 23 March 03 near An Nasiriyah, Iraq. This investigation conducted under DOD Instruction 6055.7 is separate and apart from any other investigation that may have been conducted concerning this incident. The purpose of this investigation is to produce a publicly releasable report on the facts and circumstances surrounding this incident, and gather and preserve evidence for use in claims, litigation, disciplinary actions, adverse administrative proceedings, and for all other purposes. Your sworn testimony to me may be used for any proper purpose and may be released to the public. Additionally the chain of command will review the final report. Do you understand what I have just read to you?

SSGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

[REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] Finally, do you also understand that you are being interviewed as a witness in this friendly fire investigation and acknowledge that no promise of confidentiality has been extended to you?

SSGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

COL [REDACTED] Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give in the matter now under investigation shall be the truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

SSGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

COL [REDACTED] OK, Staff Sergeant, would you please relay to me where you were as you crossed over the northern bridge and what you witnessed relative to the friendly fire incident?

SSGT [REDACTED] I was in the third Amtrack to cross the bridge. As we came across, crested over the bridge we pulled off to the side and we came to a halt. There was an Amtrack. We noticed the packs were on fire, so I tried to pull up behind him and we were getting afire extenuisher but we started to get enemy small arms fire at that point. Everybody was getting out of the Amtrack and we heard here was more than packs on fire, there was actually fire inside. So we pulled off to provide security at the side of the road. At that time there was a lot of mortar fire starting to fall, and we noticed a building to the north probably 8 to 900 meters. We could see plumes of smoke, which we believed that's where the mortar fire was coming from. The crewchief on my track, we fired his 50 cal and I pretty much guided his rounds across. The plumes stopped. There was a lot of radio traffic but nobody could seem to get a hold of anybody

[REDACTED]

else. We then, basically, that's when the whole incident started. As far as the rounds, we could hear them hit the tank before we heard the gun fire. I heard the machine gun bursts and I knew right away what it was. The chain gun, I hate that. I grew up next to a National Guard base. As soon as the rounds were hitting the tank, I turned around to tell everyone they needed to get up. Before they could grab the hatches, that's when all the bomblets pretty much hit. At that point, I didn't know. I didn't actually see the ordinance fall. We didn't know. It could have been some type of anti-personnel cartridge from artillery. Basically the bomblets hit right on top of our track. One Marine was [REDACTED] Hit him just below his flak jacket.

COL [REDACTED] Who was that?

SSGT [REDACTED] Corporal [REDACTED] Another Marine next to him...I didn't actually get to see him, but I was told that it [REDACTED] He had a pretty [REDACTED] at that point. That was LCpl [REDACTED] Right after that happened, I tried calming everybody down. There was a lot of panic in the track. I got some Marines to pull the hatches closed. I was on the radio telling the other tracks that we needed to move, just because we were all in line...

COL [REDACTED] You said these were bomblets. What do you mean by bomblets?

SSGT [REDACTED] Basically, I could see all the balls hitting. They hit the ground and went back up in the air and then exploded. The only thing going through my mind was it was some type artillery cartridge or I know that's what rocket does. It's a lot of bomblets that are dropped. He made about three more passes after that. Well actually before that happened, where I was

[REDACTED]

before, we got the stuff closed, I was yelling at all the other tractors that we needed to move out of there, cause we were all in line, he pretty much mad a run right through all the tracks. One of the tracks pulled up on the road. I was also calling him saying we needed a corpsman. Pulled up onto the road, when we got to the top of the road, we found out that the shots had taken our steering out. We didn't have any hydraulics. So I immediately told him we needed to back off the road and we pulled back there. There was another track there. I had a fire team that went out to try to get the corpsman, cause no one was answering the radio. I handed back my medic kit but everyone was looking at me saying this isn't going to do anything for him. At that point they said Cpl [REDACTED] was dead. LCpl [REDACTED] he was [REDACTED]. So the Marines went out there, they got LCpl [REDACTED] out of the track cause he was still able to walk and I know the put him on another tractor. I can't confirm which one it was. Immediately after that run, it seemed like only seconds later we were hit again. The rounds again, and then the same thing.

COL [REDACTED] The same thing?

SSGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir. I could hear the gun firing. It raised the hair on the back of your neck. The bomblets, this time, were more forward. They were hitting...I could hear them bouncing off the TC hatch, and I could see them exploding in the site galss that's around the TC. At that point I told them that they needed to drop the ramp, that we needed to get out of the track, that there was no way we took another run...I'm sure none of us would have been there. The ramp didn't go down. The crewchief went and opened the back hatch up and then I went down from the inside. Every Marine was out of the track except for Cpl [REDACTED]. There was no way we could get him out of there. It would have taken half of them to do. He was pretty bad at that point. We went across the track. I was the last one out. I was yelling at the Marines to cross the [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

field cause I saw...It looked like there was built up ditches over there. We were in a wide open area. Marines started moving across. We started moving across. This time I heard the gun again and then the rocket hit. I was one of the last ones there and I got hit by one of the explosions and it threw me, but I didn't end up taking any shrapnel from it or anything. We moved into the ditches from there. I never really counted, but when I thought back on it that day I would say there were approximately seven runs.

COL [REDACTED]: Was there one aircraft or two?

SSGT [REDACTED]: Honestly, Sir. There's no way to tell that.

COL [REDACTED]: Did you see the aircraft at any time?

SSGT [REDACTED]: I could see it up in the air, but it was so high, when I actually heard the gunfire and everytime he fired the gun, the rocket was soon to follow, so it's not like I wanted to sit there and watch him. I was in almost knee deep water. When I heard the gun open up I just told the Marines to get down, down in the water. I saw a couple of runs where the bomblets hit the road so I said I could see them bouncing up and all the flashes there. He'd hit one of the tracks...it was actually the one that was burning before it got hit and it just blew up. It just split the track in half almost.

COL [REDACTED]: At this same time you were taking the fire from the friendly aircraft, you were also taking RPG?

[REDACTED]

SSGT [REDACTED] I never saw any RPGs, by any means, Sir. Everybody was talking about it and I just couldn't believe those RPGs were flying...I never saw one. I never saw an RPG the whole time.

COL [REDACTED] What about artillery and mortars?

SSGT [REDACTED] They were walking artillery in before the aircraft hit, and I was stressing that over the radio that artillery was getting close. It was some sort of HE or HEDP. Just throwing up dirt in the air you could see that they were bracketing us. They seemed more \_\_\_ to want to hit the track on the road. It just kept getting hit over and over even though it was burning.

COL [REDACTED] Was there a lot of small arms fire going on too?

SSGT [REDACTED] I could hear it, Sir. But we were on the opposite side of the road. I guess one of the other platoons. They were taking small arms fire from I guess it would be the east side. After we fired that 50 cal at the building up there, we were kind of keeping an eye on that cause we thought there might be enemy to the north and never saw any more plumes or anything so either the enemy left or somebody got hit. Off to the west I thought, we thought we could hear rounds cracking over our heads. We couldn't really tell what direction they were coming, but we had a couple of marines setting in security just to make sure that there wasn't any positions

\_\_\_\_\_ . After, I want to say the...probably about the fourth or fifth pass, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

SSGT [REDACTED] No, I didn't, Sir. I never...besides just seeing him up there one time before when I heard the gun, when I heard the stuff hitting and the gun, I just happened to glance up real quick. Like I said everytime he passed the bombs would drop too, so, when I heard the gun, it was like, get down, especially after being hit when getting out of tractor. Didn't want to get \_\_\_\_\_ . We continued to push. We probably pushed...the ditches just continued inland so, I pushed the Marines a couple more and we got accountability of what Marines were there. It was kind of chaotic...some tracks out there were approximately three tracks in all that were there, different platoons and what-not...some of the Marines that were in my track, I know they got on other tracks. Some Marines that were on those tracks were there so it was kind of hectic seeing who we had. We had no communication. Had a little ISR radio, 100 meters if you're lucky...at that point we really didn't know what was going on...we knew the other tracks had left but from where we were we couldn't see how far away they were. I want to say the aircraft eventually stopped firing, it was approximately seven passes. It got pretty quiet. You could hear a lot of fighting going on around where the bridge was...mortar fire, but it wasn't anywhere near where we were so I'm not sure if that was friendly fire. The eastern positions were taking fire. I'm not sure. But it wasn't close to us...We were trying to reorganize. Probably, I'm guessing 30 - 35 minutes later a tank rolled up...it was a pretty good sight. As soon as he got there he said I'm low on fuel and he wanted us to walk him back to the bridge.

COL [REDACTED] About how long after you crossed the bridge did you realize the A-10 was running on you?

[REDACTED]  
SSGT [REDACTED] It was probably, I would guess about 9 minutes.

COL [REDACTED] It was very shortly after you crossed over the bridge?

SSGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir. At least it seemed short at the time. Once we come across, track was on fire, pulled off to the road, maybe got a few hundred rounds out of the 50 cal downrange, we reloaded and as soon as we reloaded that's when the A-10 had hit us. I wouldn't think it had been more than 10 minutes. It may have only been 5 minutes, but...it was pretty quick.

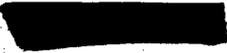
COL [REDACTED] Do you have anything else?

SSGT [REDACTED] The only other thing we were talking about...I'm monitoring the radio by the TC hatch and I know that as we progressed along, Lieutenant he calls in the northings...that's pretty much his job...you hear the numbers what-not. I know there was something that was discussed earlier but they thought we were way south...4 or 5 clicks from where we were. So I know that the numbers were being passed off. You could always hear them. I wouldn't even want to tell you a number, because, I couldn't tell you without a shadow of a doubt what the numbers were but he calls it in and then he says 36 northing...roger 36...pretty much he says it and they answer back up. I wasn't really paying attention cause we were taking small arms fire at the same time so, I know the lead trace was done at least to the end of the bridge...I'd say radio traffic was pretty chaotic so from the bridge...couldn't have been more than 200 meters from the bridge at that point. There was no...I don't think there was really anything...just this is what we see kind of thing. It wasn't this is where we're at. The only other thing was the [REDACTED] the Major asked me about.

[REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] I've got that information, thank you. In closing, I want to remind you that this is an official interview and not to discuss your testimony with anyone without the board's permission or until the report has been officially released to the public. Do you understand?

SSGT [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.



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Interview with Cpl [REDACTED]  
12 April 03, 21:12 L

COL [REDACTED] Go ahead and please state your name, rank and your social security number and billet.

CPL [REDACTED] Corporal [REDACTED] XXX-XX-XXXX, Squad Leader.

COL [REDACTED] Cpl [REDACTED] my name is Colonel [REDACTED]. Under the direction of the board president, Brigadier General William F. Hodgkins, we are investigating a friendly fire incident that occurred on 23 March 03 near An Nasiriyah, Iraq. This investigation conducted under DOD Instruction 6055.7 is separate and apart from any other investigation that may have been conducted concerning this incident. The purpose of this investigation is to produce a publicly releasable report on the facts and circumstances surrounding this incident, and gather and preserve evidence for use in claims, litigation, disciplinary actions, adverse administrative proceedings, and for all other purposes. Your sworn testimony to me may be used for any proper purpose and may be released to the public. Additionally the chain of command will review the final report. Do you understand what I have just read to you?

CPL [REDACTED] Yes.

COL [REDACTED] Finally, do you also understand that you are being interviewed as a witness in this friendly fire investigation and acknowledge that no promise of confidentiality has been extended to you?

[REDACTED]

CPL [REDACTED] Yes.

COL [REDACTED] Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give in the matter now under investigation shall be the truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

CPL [REDACTED] Yes.

COL [REDACTED] Would you please review for me what transpired and where you were in Charlie Company as you crossed the northern bridge? What transpired, to the best of your knowledge in regard to the friendly fire incident once you crossed the bridge?

CPL [REDACTED] I was in the lead track, track 201 when we crossed the northern bridge. The first thing that I saw was actually artillery. Once we set out a short security \_\_\_\_\_, the first thing that came was artillery so we punched out the whole squad. I didn't actually see the A-10s till I looked up. They hadn't fired yet when I first saw them, I just saw them flying overhead from south to north. The first time I became aware of them firing was when, actually on my way back to the track. I told my squad when we were egressing back to the track, and right before I got to the door, I heard the buzzing of the cannon and right in front of my hatchway on my track it lit up the tractor. It didn't hit anybody at that time. I proceeded to jump on the track and I laid on my back so other people could jump in on top. I had a clear view of the...cause the small door was still open, I had a clear view of the outside. I saw them make another pass, heard it, and I saw it hit the ground. I saw it hit LCpl [REDACTED] in the back, dropped him and somebody lifted him up and put him on the track. I did see, before I got on the tractor, a

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] From what I was later told, that was a cease air mission. After that I was enclosed in the track and had no view of the outside.

COL [REDACTED] Is that the extent of what you know? How many passes?

CPL [REDACTED] I heard at least five to six buzzes of the cannon. I didn't see it. But after the first one that I did see, I heard about four or five more after that.

COL [REDACTED] In closing, I want to remind you that this is an official interview and not to discuss your testimony with anyone without the board's permission or until the report has been officially released to the public. Do you understand?

CPL [REDACTED]: Yes.

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Interview with Cpl [REDACTED]  
12 April 2003, 22:08 L

COL [REDACTED] Please state your name, rank and your social security number and your billet.

CPL [REDACTED] Corporal [REDACTED] XXX-XX-XXXX, Machine Gun Squad Leader, Charlie Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marines.

COL [REDACTED] Cpl [REDACTED] my name is Colonel [REDACTED]. Under the direction of the board president, Brigadier General William F. Hodgkins, we are investigating a friendly fire incident that occurred on 23 March 03 near An Nasiriyah, Iraq. This investigation conducted under DOD Instruction 6055.7 is separate and apart from any other investigation that may have been conducted concerning this incident. The purpose of this investigation is to produce a publicly releasable report on the facts and circumstances surrounding this incident, and gather and preserve evidence for use in claims, litigation, disciplinary actions, adverse administrative proceedings, and for all other purposes. Your sworn testimony to me may be used for any proper purpose and may be released to the public. Additionally the chain of command will review the final report. Do you understand what I have just read to you?

CPL [REDACTED] Yes.

COL [REDACTED] Finally, do you also understand that you are being interviewed as a witness in this friendly fire investigation and acknowledge that no promise of confidentiality has been extended to you?

[REDACTED]

CPL [REDACTED] Yes, I do.

COL [REDACTED] Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give in the matter now under investigation shall be the truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

CPL [REDACTED] Yes.

COL [REDACTED] Cpl [REDACTED] if you would you please relay to me where you were as you crossed over the north bridge and what you saw relative to the friendly fire incident?

CPL [REDACTED] When my track came over the north bridge, and we got out...

COL [REDACTED] What track were you in?

CPL [REDACTED] I was in track 211, which was hit by an RPG...

COL [REDACTED] Which track of the formation was this?

CPL [REDACTED] I can't even remember how far back we were. We weren't too far back...I would say 3 to 5 tracks back. After we got out, I went to the berm to the left. When I looked to the right and left I saw LCpl [REDACTED], a sawgunner to the left and one of my gunners and ammo men to the right. During the chaos, with what was going on I heard airburst going on...and I looked up in the air to see what...try to catch a glimpse of what was going on. I see the A-10

[REDACTED]

flying around. Looked like he was dropping flares. I didn't say anything to anybody, but I was thinking what is it doing? Well later on, after our Lieutenant comes over and gets us we get word to get back in the track. So as we were all running to get back in the tracks, we, I hear this sound, which I had heard three times beforehand. Somebody tells me it's an A-10.

COL [REDACTED] Three times before this incident?

CPL [REDACTED] Yes, three times before. First time I got to the berm, we heard the sound...I don't really know how to describe it.

COL [REDACTED] Like a buzzsaw?

CPL [REDACTED] Kinda like a buzzsaw, yes. I heard that like three times. I didn't know if it was arty or a plane or what. I just knew that everytime I heard it the Lieutenant said put your face in the dirt, get down. So I got my face in the dirt. Somebody gave the word to get back to the tracks. As we're running across the road, I hear that sound again, and I look to my left and all I see is dirt popping up from rounds hitting the deck. My only thought was oh shit. As I dived underneath the track, and by the time I came to my senses and got back up, I see Cpl [REDACTED] laying there [REDACTED]. He got shot in the leg. I look over and I see LCpl [REDACTED] and he said help me. I looked down at his lower back and it's just \_\_\_\_\_ from where he got shot. After that we got back in the tracks and went back to the city and as we were going through the city that track got hit, which I find out later on...I didn't find out it was actually friendly fire until everything cooled down which was probably that night or that evening. I talked to the tracker and I talked to some other friends who said it was friendly fire, it was the A-

[REDACTED]

10. Said the A-10 had also caught that second track and stopped it from moving in the city. Stopped it dead in the city. That was the last thing anybody said about it.

COL [REDACTED] In closing, I want to remind you that this is an official interview and not to discuss your testimony with anyone without the board's permission or until the report has been officially released to the public. Do you understand?

COL [REDACTED] I'm back with Cpl [REDACTED] and there's some more information he's brought to my attention. My previous statements and your oath are still under effect, so will you please relay to me what you just said?

CPL [REDACTED] I talked to some of the tractors beforehand. We went through the city.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] One tractor said he got hit but another track said he was never touched by the A-10.

COL [REDACTED]

CPL [REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED]

CPL [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

[REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED]

CPL [REDACTED] There was [REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED]

CPL [REDACTED] yes, Sir.

[REDACTED]



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Interview with Lance Corporal [REDACTED]  
12 April 2003, 21:12 L

COL [REDACTED] Go ahead and state your name, rank, social security number and your billet.

LCPL [REDACTED] Lance Corporal [REDACTED] XXX-XX-XXXX, rifleman, C Company,  
1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marines.

COL [REDACTED] My name is Colonel [REDACTED] and under the direction of the board president, Brigadier General William F. Hodgkins, we're investigating a friendly fire incident that occurred on 23 March 03 near An Nasiriyah, Iraq. This investigation, conducted under DOD Instruction 6055.7 is separate and apart from any other investigation that may have been conducted concerning this incident. The purpose of this investigation is to produce a publicly releasable report on the facts and circumstances surrounding this incident and gather and preserve evidence for use in claims, litigation, disciplinary actions, adverse administrative proceedings and for all other purposes. Your sworn testimony to me may be used for any proper purpose and may be released to the public. Additionally, the chain of command will review the final report. Do you understand what I have just read to you?

LCPL [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

COL [REDACTED] Finally, do you also understand that you are being interviewed as a witness in this friendly fire investigation and acknowledge that no promise of confidentiality has been extended to you?

[REDACTED]

LCPL [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

COL [REDACTED] Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give in the matter now under investigation shall be the truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

LCPL [REDACTED] Yes, Sir.

COL [REDACTED] OK, Lance Corporal would you please relate to me where you were when your company crossed the northern bridge, in An Nasiriyah on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March and your knowledge relative to the friendly fire incident.

LCPL [REDACTED] I don't know exactly when we crossed the bridge, because I was as far in the track as possible, Sir. I was right next to the radios underneath the TC hatch.

COL [REDACTED] Which track?

LCPL [REDACTED] I believe it was 211. I'm not sure of the number, Sir..if that's the right number. But my troop commander was Lt [REDACTED]

COL [REDACTED] First track, second track, third track?

LCPL [REDACTED] I don't know, I couldn't tell you, Sir. When we crossed the bridge, like I said, I don't know where we were, cause I couldn't see. But when we got hit...our track got hit