

# Do You Recall?

P. C. Carter



Members of Company C, 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry, 199th Light Infantry Brigade, move in a skirmish line 21 November 1967 through rice paddies en route to their first objective, a Viet Cong controlled village. The patrol took place approximately two months before outbreak of the Tet Offensive, which lasted from 31 January 1968 to 28 March 1968. (Photo courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration)

Do you recall the rain?

Remember the pain? Do you recall when we were soldier men?

Can you still feel the scar, where the bullet carved its initials into your arm?

Was the heat so sweet as your brow it beat with the green as thick as a fen?

Can you think back to when you had to tote a pack and life may not exist around the next bend?

Shots flew and frags blew, pieces and whole lives askew and who knew in the end, which one would leave as before?

Do you reminisce while eating some superb dish, over the ham and lima beans we had for chow?

Can you summon the smell of the bodies from hell as we packed them in plastic for their return home?

Do you conjure up memories of those days and recall how you looked ... all skin and bones?

Do you remember the sweat in September, as it kept you from sleep for thirteen months in the zone?

Fifty odd years have come and gone and if fifty more were to pass I don't think I would recall any less vividly ... for I will never forget the past.

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**P. C. Carter** served as a U.S. Army infantryman during the Vietnam War, where he participated in the Tet Offensive.