

SPC Thomas Moffitt Memorial Ceremony – 30 Oct 2010

Ladies and Gentlemen, the ceremony will begin in 5 minutes, we would ask that you begin to please find your seats.

The ceremony will begin in 2 minutes, we would ask that you please turn off your cell phones as well as refraining from taking pictures during the ceremony. If you desire to photograph the Memorial Stand do so after the ceremony has concluded. Thank you.

Please Stand for the Invocation.

Invocation:

Let us pray...Dear Heavenly Father, we gather today to honor the life and remember the sacrifice of one of our comrades, SPC Thomas Moffitt. Lord, we ask that as we do this that Your hand would be upon his family, his friends, and our unit as we continue to grieve this heavy loss. We ask for grace and mercy in their lives and our lives as well. We also ask that this ceremony might bring comfort to those of us who remain and to assist us in moving forward to complete the mission that ultimately You have placed on our lives. May our efforts here today honor You, our unit, and the memory of our friend. It is in Your Holy name that we pray, Amen.

You may be seated.

Speakers – LTC Hill, CPT Hess, LT Beach, PV2 Butterman, PFC Roe

LTC Donn Hill:

MG Campbell, CSM Schroeder, COL Jenkins, SGM Santos, distinguished guests and fellow Currahees.

Today we pay tribute to our fallen comrade, SPC Thomas Moffitt. Unfortunately I didn't get to know Moffitt, he'd been in the unit since July but I never got the privilege of getting to meet him. As I've talked to his commander and the Soldiers who served with him, I realize I lost out on an opportunity to meet one of those people who we all would like to know. Thomas Moffitt was a good man, a goof friend, and a fine Soldier. He looked after those around him and always put them ahead of himself. He was what we all aspire to be, devoted, loyal, and selfless. SPC Moffitt died doing what he did best, serving those around him and taking the fight to the enemy so that others back home wouldn't have to. He will be missed but not forgotten.

CPT Mike Hess:

Ladies and Gentlemen thank you all for coming. SPC Moffitt was the kind of Soldier that every Commander wants. Whenever I felt the sudden desire to roam around the battlefield by myself, SPC Moffitt would always volunteer to go with me to, as he would say, "keep me out of trouble." SPC Moffitt was persistent. He carried the Mk48 over hundreds of miles of rough terrain without a single complaint. It was only two weeks ago that 1SG and I were driving to chow when we passed SPC Moffitt and offered him a ride. He declined, saying that he would rather walk. After we passed him, 1SG and I discussed how much SPC Moffitt had improved physically in the mountains and how he set the example for all the young soldiers to emulate. On one mission I heard him make corrections like, "Carry your weapon right," "Pick your feet up," "Pull security over there." He was a future Sergeant.

Spartan mentality can be summed up in one phrase which is "Stay your ground." I can tell you that SPC Moffitt always fought like a Spartan. He stood his ground and never ceded an inch to a numerically superior enemy force. And when that force made it their intention to harm his friends, SPC Moffitt told them that he would rather die.

I ask that all of you pray for SPC Moffitt and his family. He now joins the most elite of the military; those that gave everything so that the rest of us could live in peace. He will be sorely missed but I am proud of the time I spent with him, and will remember his bravery and honor for the rest of my life.

Whiskey Company will continue to work tirelessly to make sure those that are responsible for this pay the highest cost.

Rest now my friend. You're Platoon, and your Company will meet you again on the other side.

1LT Kip Beach:

SPC Timothy Moffitt was an outstanding Soldier who lived the Army Values. He had a calm approach to everything, and even in the most intense situations maintained his composure. His willingness to help his friends and Platoon set him apart from others. The day SPC Moffitt walked into the company I gave him the nick name of Vultran, and when anyone asked him why we called him that his reply would be, "I don't know...guess its super badass". I will always remember Vultran for his great sense of humor and ability to laugh in any situation.

SPC Moffitt was always ready to accept additional responsibilities and did so without ever complaining. His usual response in any situation was "Roger Sir", no matter what I was asking him to do. Whenever I gave SPC Moffitt an order he executed without hesitation and he never asked why. This was also the case during the firefight in which he was killed. At the time he was manning a MK-48 and upon receiving fire he immediately looked at me for guidance on where to go. I pointed him to a corner of a Qalat, and he replied with "Roger Sir". SPC Moffitt's actions saved the lives of the men next to him. You will always be a part of Third Platoon Whiskey Company and continue to fight alongside us. Rest in Peace.

PV2 Butterman:

I want to start off by thanking all of you for coming to remember our fallen brother, Thomas A. Moffitt. I only knew Moffitt for a few short months, but came to know him as a brother, and someone who I considered one of my best friends. He had that effect on people, his goofy smile and open personality were enough to disarm the most hardened among us. Knowing Moffitt as I did I know he would not have wanted this to be a somber event. He was always prepared with a wise ass comment or joke of his expense. His light hearted air will be missed by all of us who knew and worked with him.

I want to share with you all the Thomas Moffitt that I knew and loved. First off, as all of his leaders and coworkers can attest, he was the perfect Soldier. He would take any order without hesitation and carry it out, no matter how much it sucked. He was constantly seeking to better himself and those around him, both physically and mentally. If he didn't know something, we would pester everyone who might possibly know about it until he learned it. Beyond that he was the lanky, goofy looking dude that everyone loved, but man never had an enemy in the unit.

Shortly after he arrived in our platoon he earned the nickname Vultron, because as he would say, "Its super bad-ass." The first PT session I did with him was a smoker, a two mile run in full kit followed by an obstacle course. No one expected the tall awkward looking new guy to finish first, but he did, minutes

ahead of the next man. His never-quit light hearted mentality always motivated the rest of us to do better. He was also one of the most selfless people I ever had the opportunity to know. After I got hurt out on patrol and was on my ass for a while, Moffitt never ceased to offer me help, whether it was bringing me a to go plate, or carrying my weapon when we had to walk somewhere, he would do it all. It may be cliché to say that he would give you the shirt off his back, but in his case, he really would have.

Moffitt did not leave us empty handed though. He left us with an example of what a man should be, of what a Soldier should be. His death taught us the fragility of life in our beloved profession, and that we cannot take any of each other for granted, because any minute may be our last. He taught us of humility in the face of mistakes, and selfless action in the face of danger. He died so that all of us might live. Because of this ultimate sacrifice no one here will ever forget him, our brother in arms and dear friend, you will be missed.

PFC Roe:

On behalf of 3rd PLT and myself I would like to thank all of you for gathering here today to Honor SPC Thomas Moffitt, a Son, dear friend, and fine Soldier.

Moffitt was a goofy, clumsy, kind hearted man with no humility. He would often make jokes at his own expense for everyone to enjoy, or fall down the mountain just to get up laughing at himself. I remember the two of us sitting back at Campbell watching Kill Bill 2, drinking Rum, we both moved at the same time tipping over the bottle and breaking it. The two of us argued for a few minutes about who did it, he thought that he did and I thought I had. Moffitt suggested that we were both to blame, so I said alright we both did it. Not two minutes later Moffitt stated he was pretty sure he did it sparking the argument up all over again. You see Moffitt wasn't the type to blame others or put them down, in fact he would give you the shirt off his back in the cold even if you wearing a sweater.

Moffitt enjoyed hunting, fishing, and playing guitar. He would often ask me to teach him a chord or a song and then tease me saying he would be famous one day playing all my songs...and he would say on stage, "I stole this number from my battle buddy Rowe in Afghanistan" for every song. He enjoyed country music such as Johnny Cash or Whalen Jennings, and some Rap. He would often crack me up mocking one of lil wayne Songs turning the lyrics into a story about lil wayne drinking cough meds or pretending to play guitar.

Moffitt and I were best friends and we never even tried to be, it just happened, one second we could be cussing and screaming and then next it would be, "you wanna go to the gym" or "what movie you wanna watch." I'm not afraid to say we were lifelong friends, we often discussed going hunting and fishing or even drinking when we got home. I'll say it makes me sad to think that will never happen, he was the best Battle Buddy someone could have in the mountains. Being my AG we constantly had each other's backs, and when we took contact he was always right there, 320 rounds and oil in hand ready to engage the enemy.

I'll miss him saying things like "hey you smoke in your own room or what" and "isn't that song from Juno when did you learn that?" But he will always be in our hearts. SPC Thomas Moffitt, Loved Soldier, Son, and friend...you will be missed.

Scripture Reading (CH Vineyard):

Our Scripture reading today will come from the 23rd chapter of the book of Psalms (on the back of the bulletin), which reads "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness

for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Memorial Meditation (CH Vineyard):

Many of us have heard this passage read before, some may even know it by heart. One of the things that I find interesting in this 3,000 year old text, is the man who wrote it. This man was a warrior, a king, a warrior/king by the name of David. He was a man who was very well acquainted with the life of a soldier and the fears of the battlefield. He was a man who had been to the valley of the shadow of death, who had seen death dealt to his enemies and had experienced it as it was parceled to his friends. He knew what it was to feel joy, safety, and security and he knew what it was like to feel loss, sadness, and pain.

We are in one of those storms/valleys right now. Death/loss is never an easy pill to swallow and although we are in the midst combat and death may be expected here, it is never really quite expected so close, it is never really expected with us (our unit), it is always expected with someone else, with the infamous them (whoever that might be).

But 6 days ago, it did hit close to home, to close, when our brother in arms, SPC Thomas Moffitt who by all accounts was a "great guy, good dude, easy going, great soldier, good friend," lost his life serving – serving his country, serving his unit, serving his friends – doing his job, a job in which he had volunteered to do. And although many of us have seen death before, it never seems to get easier, it never seems quite real, and the pain never seems to get less dull.

Ok, so what then do we do? It feels easy sometimes to just throw in the towel and say 'that's all' or 'I'm done,' or to bottle it in and not talk and not think about it and to then to allow it to change us (usually for the worse). But we know we can't do that, we have the eyes of the nation, the eyes of the world that look to us to help create stability in an unstable region, to bring peace where there has been such great devastation, and to ultimately bring victory in a place with a history of so many defeats. But even more than that, we have the eyes of our buddies to our right and left who need us and we need. So what do we do? Well I have three brief suggestions...

First we should do what the psalmist, David, did when he was in his valley. He looked up. David looked up to God to give him internal peace. You see, David's outward circumstances didn't necessarily change (he was still walking in the valley of the shadow of death) but his internal focus did. His internal gaze was harnessed on the One who could change him, from the inside out. And it was only after that, that David could truly say – that he had no fear, that God's hand was on him, that he could eat right in front of his enemies – which represented his peace and confidence, and that his cup or more accurately stated, his life could actually be described as overflowing. In these times, we need to first and foremost look up – up to God through faith to help us walk through this valley.

Next, we need to look to look right and left. We need to look to our friends/our buddies who can help to give us external peace and comfort. You see, we as people are not meant to walk through these valleys alone, just like we are not meant to go on patrols or missions alone. The only way that we will successfully navigate this course that is war, this course that is life, is if we walk through it together. This means that we need to share together, to laugh when appropriate together, to cry when appropriate together, we need to be there together for each other and when we do this we will make it through the valley, together. **John 15:13** "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." SPC Moffitt now fits into that category, he has laid down his life for his country, for his friends. And now

we who remain must strive also to be a people, to be a 'band of brothers and sisters' who constantly are laying our lives for each other whether it is sharing or caring or just being silent together. We must look left and right.

And finally we need to look forward. Now that doesn't mean we are to forget about SPC Moffitt, on the contrary we are to remember his legacy, his sacrifice, and remember the mission that he died for. We who are left are called to live better for knowing him and as we live better, we must remember that we have a fight ahead of us and we must stick to it. We must continue, we must persevere, and we must win this fight. And we can absolutely do it if we continue on by looking up, by looking to our left and right, and by looking forward to the mission at hand.

As I close my portion, I leave you with the words of Sir Winston Churchill, the Prime Minister of the UK, during the darkest days of World War 2. He once said, "never in the field of human conflict, has so much, been owed by so many, to so few!" (he was speaking of the Royal Air Force) Well Mister Churchill, I think that I might have to tweek that a bit – I believe this generation of men and women who have fought and bled and some died (SPC Thomas Moffitt), I think that they/we have earned their place at the hero's table as well.

At this time would you please stand for the roll call and the rendering of honors and remain standing for the benediction afterwards.

Roll Call

Honor Guard

Taps

Benediction:

Let us pray...Dear Gracious God, as we close our time together we once again pray for the family and friends of SPC Thomas Moffitt. We ask that his memory would never pass from our hearts and that we would live better for having known him. We pray that You would continue to walk with us, through this valley and ask for peace and focus for the upcoming task/mission ahead. It is in Your name we pray, Amen.

Final Directions:

Please be seated, this concludes the ceremony, we would ask that you would please wait to exit until our speakers followed by our Distinguished Guests, and CMD GRP have paid their respects by rendering honors. Afterwards, for those who desire to pay their last respects to SPC Moffitt, we ask that you would wait for the ushers to release your row and then file through the middle aisle and exit to my right (your left). Thank you.