

2 Sept 1969, Yeah finally, after 10 days wait in Ft. Lewis, Washington we got ~~our~~ ^{my} orders to fly to Camron Bay, Viet Nam. All my buddies had just about left, their was only about 3 or 4 ~~left~~ ^{of} left that had gone through Basic and ATT together and now Nam. How many of us will make it? God only knows.

We're flying Airlift International Boeing 707 to Japan which will take about 10 hours. The whole flight will probably take 18 hours if everything goes right. As we fly over the Pacific Ocean I think of home, my parents, ~~my~~ ^{my} sisters, ~~my~~ ^{my} whole family and my girl. I don't understand why kids back home protest, and march, burn draft cards. Man if they only knew how we feel, most of us are proud to go to Nam, in a way. Just like President Kennedy once said "Ask not what your country can do for you ask what you can do for your Country!" and I think Nam is one of them.

We arrived at Yokoto Airport, Japan at 5:45 P.M. We stopped over for about 1½ hrs. to refuel and get another crew. Then we headed for Camron Bay, the stewardess said that the flight would take about 4:49 min., arriving about 11:30 P.M.

We arrived at Cam Ron Bay about 11:40 P.M. They gave us an orientation and gave us our field gear and finally went to bed about 2 A.M., now take into consideration this is the same day, we lost a day somewhere over the Pacific.

3 Sept 69, that morning ~~we~~ ^{the} were late for formation some Cpt came in and woke us up and put us on detail for that morning. Would you believe burning shit, yep, then we dug holes for piss, yeah you might say we got the tail end of the detail. ^{more the rest of the guys}

4 Sept 69, not much happen got out of detail, somehow, still awaiting orders.

5 Sept 69, we got our orders, they were for Chu Lai with the Americal Division. Of course they got us up about 4a.m. to give us our wonderful news. After breakfast about 6:30 we left for the Airport, our flight was suppose to leave 11:30 a.m. but for some reason it was canceled till a later time. We finally got a flight about 1:30 P.M. but still for some reason or another we didn't leave until 3p.m. But on the way up the plane developed engine trouble, so down we went 15 min. later and now hear we are back to Cam Rahn Bay, we'll probably have to take another plane.

Finally we got another plane. We arrived at Chu Lai about 8:00 PM, after a short briefing, we were taken to some temporary barracks for the night.

6 Sept 69, we signed in. Some Sgt gave us our orientation about how it is and how its going to be. He said that we would be hear for 10-15 days, processing, getting orders, and taking extra training. Mostly a review of ATT, and basically how to survive.

7 Sept 69, Sunday but hear in Viet Nam its just like another work day get up same time, same old routine. Details, they got me burning shit again, oh well thats life.

8 Sept 69, just another regular day, hot and sticky and mucky. I was suppose to get my orders to my next unit in the Division. But somewhere along the line Uncle Sam's boys screwed up. They got me burning shit again. By now you thing I was an expert at this. No one gets used to it, but there is a certain nack to it, if you put the cut off barrel (55 gal drum) that is used to collect the human waste down wind you got it made, but if the wind changes on you, hang it up you'll get all the smell on you and your clothes will smell like, well you know.

9 Sept 69, order, finally came. Co B 4/3 11th Inf Bde, one of the best they say. All we did today was get our finance records fixed or checked so we could get paid.

10 Sept 69, another regular day of details and classes and we got paid also. Not very much about \$100.00. I bought some money orders and sent most of it home.

11 Sept 69, another regular day of classes and we experienced that good old gas, C2, man thats a tear dropper. This morning we had a class on mines and booby traps and the Sgt that taught it was cool and in his closing speech he kinda made us chock up a little, he talked about home and Mama and how would we wana go home broken up, dead or alive.

12 Sept 69, today we went out to LZ Bayanet for a little practice on the M-16 rifle and M60, M79 granade lancer, and a few American type handgrandes.

13 Sept 69, todays classes were on ambushes and patrolling and of course it was Saturday. Nothing like Sat back in the world, oh well another day another day shorter.

14 Sept 69, Sunday todays class consisted of land navagation, bringing in fire support with arty. Also rah a navagation course.

15 Sept 69, Monday, today we had a good class on communication.

16 Sept 69, our last class, I missed my first class I went on sickcall but made my second class on first aid and dust off procidures. We also had a class on cordon search. Then we went in to pratical excercise, we search a mock VC villiage. Then at the end of all this we had a chaplin talk to us, a real nice talk. That night we had a floor show, grovey girls two from Austrilia and one from America, real nice, of course the band was good too.

17 Sept 69, today we were suppose to ship out in the morning, but as of yet nothing and its 1630. We didn't ship out afterall. The Sarge in charge said tomorrow.

18 Sept 69, we're on our way. We arrived at Duc Pho about 09:30 and are waiting transport to our unit. We got transport and went down to a shack called S-1 and as of yet I think we got into a good Bn. I say we, meaning Jesus Deleon from San Antonio, Tex. tomorrow we're suppose to go up San Juan Hill, to start our 350 days.

19 Sept 69, just another day we didn't get to go up to San Juan Hill, we waited all day at the chopper pad. The night before last we got hit by motor fire from the VC hear at Duc Pho.

20 Sept 69, this morning for formation we got incoming rockets, boy its getting bad now, we're still in Duc Pho. We're suppose to take off sometime this morning and we did. We spent most of the day seeing our new Major and Cpt. and we got assigned to a platoon. That night I pulled bunker guard.

21 Sept 69, today was spent fixing our bunker, filled booko sand bags for it. That night out to our left A Co. got hit pretty bad 12 killed 10 wounded, it lasted all night long. After most of the fighting was over, we watched as arty, motors and gun ships cleared that area, or gave it a good try.

22 Sept 69, regular day at S.J., counting days and filling sand bags.

23 Sept 69, my first mission, we took of for the hills up where Delta was. We left SJ on chanocks it wasn't a hot LZ, (what ever that meant) we landed OK. That night was quiet nothing happen. I was glad, first time in the field, I was scared.

(Landing zone)

24 Sept 69, nothing happen moved about 3 clicks. Does't seem like much, but add about 30-40 lbs. on your back, the heat, and the scardness, its alot. After we got to where we were going we dug in. Made foxholes about chest deep and two arms length.

25 Sept 69, we stayed in the same position. Don't ask me why I guess it seemed right at the time. I was kinda glad got a chance to rest that first day kinda got to me and my feet.

26 Sept 69, we moved about 2 clicks. Set up by the flat lands by the river. Today we took a bath out of site. I think it was about a week since I had seen a bath. No one really cares everybody smelled the same. Nothing happen that night part of our Plt went out on patrol so they left Joe Battles, Tom Hobbs, and me behind. While John Burns Andy Anderson, and Terry Hood, Tom (Slip) Mahoney went out of our squad. They came back OK.

27 Sept 69, we headed for a new NDP we walked about 12 clicks, man what a hump, up hills, through rivers and about 110°. We arrived at our NDP a clearing between two hills a small valley, good clearing. Very tired long day, we were kind glad nothing happen that night, need the rest.

28 Sept 69, stayed in the same position, NDP, our platoon was chosen to go out on an ambush. Sleaped all day, real nice. See what we do is two or three guys stay awake while the others sleep and then after awhile we change.

29 Sept 69, today we got chamooked out for stand down. Stand down? Yeah, what is it, I asked dumbfoundly, well as some of the old timers would say, wait and find out.

30 Sept 69, I found out what stand down meant. Stand down because you can't stand up, its a three day R&R in country. Drink, smoke, joke and what ever comes up. I personally will get drunk, yeah. I don't know why, I guess I wanted to unwind, even though I hadn't been in the field that long, I felt I owed it to my self.

CHAPTER 2 MONTH MOUNTH 2

1 Oct 69, well one month gone by, thank God I'm still alive. We're still on stand down. Guys are going crazy, fighting, yealing, drinking and what ever. Somebody got a whole of some stag flicks, that did it, the big one happen, fight that is, everybody got into the act. I myself got out of the act, a couple of us smart ones grabed the beer that was still their an went outside an enjoyed it.

2 Oct 69, left standdown area, which by the way was in Chu Lai, next the South China Sea, the beach was beautiful, that was the injoyable part about the whole thing got to relax for even if it was just a couple of days. Boy is it raining today.

3 Oct 69, still raining, nothing to do but dry out, and write letters. Boy what hang overs. Everybody looked have dead.

4 Oct 69, it finally stopped raining. I was put on detail, I din't mind it it killed the time away. It gets very borring on SJ, we are awaiting orders to go back to the field. Hopefully today.

5 Oct 69, got orders yesterday afternoon to move this morning to the rice patties to guard some Dinks that were working their. We got flown out on Hueys, its a beautiful ride you can see everything from the choppers. We were dropped on top of this big hill. We started down it walking first, then we just slid down it was realy wet, it was funny their was nothing you could but slid.

6 Oct 69, we walked further~~er~~ down the hill and crossed through a shallow river and NDPed their.

7 Oct 69, walked across the river and NDPed their for the day and it hasn't stoped raining.

8 Oct 69, moved to the edge of a hill its still raining. About 3 am we had a Trip Flair go off. We didn't find anything in the morning. It could have been some big rat or something.

9 Oct 69, CAed (Combat ^{Assault}) out to a rice patty and moved about 600 meters across a very fast moving stream. It was hell but we made it. Nothing happened ~~last~~ night, we got a good night sleep.

10 Oct 69, like dummys we are we moved back across the same river that we had crossed the day before, we had a couple of guys fall in the water but luckaly no one was hurt.

11 Oct 69, we stayed in the same position from last night nothing happening it is still raining.

12 Oct 69, we finally moved from that position we had been for two days. Again we just moved a couple of hundred meters and set up camp for the night.

13 Oct 69, we awoke to a sunny day, ~~was~~ no rain but a couple of hours later hear it comes more rain. We had a ~~peacefull~~ night the moon ~~was~~ was out it was clear and ~~peacefull~~ its hard to believe that any moment we, I could be dead.

14 Oct 69, we left this ~~morning~~ on another hike, yeah it sounds good, about 3 clicks (3000 meters) straight line distance. But when your going up a hill it seems like 10 clicks, and I mean straight up ~~by~~ was I beat.

15 Oct 69, you know how it goes, were on the move again this time down the hill not so bad. It also rained, but what else is new.

16 Oct 69, just like the Army, wait it is the Army, can't make up their minds up the same stupid hill, man I tell you another hill like this and I'll never "Re-up". The third platoon ~~K30~~ (3-0 as they were called) set up an ambush. We had found out through Army interligents ~~xx~~(?) that after we leave a camp site the Dinks would come by ~~th~~ to see if we had left anything ~~behind~~ behind, like food, ammo and what ever. Well would you believe it, the Dink~~s~~ did show up 3-0 let them have it. 1 dead 2 wounded and 3 got away. ~~W~~They captured 1 SK44 Simi-Auto wapon (Russian made). None of our guys were hurt.

17 Oct 69, walked down same hill up another. Our squad set an ambush. We got 2 Denks, again we did what the other platoon did set up after every one had left. We haded back toward the Company after the ambush, and hear we go crossing that same river but this time we crossed at a different point it was a lot eaiser and it was nice and cool ~~sine~~ since it didnt rain it was very hot.

just watching, they could strike at any time. We headed for the NDP, the one by the heavy flowing stream. This time we crossed at a different point not bad it was different. No rain today, red hot, another 110's.

18 Oct 69, we moved again this time to the same NDP that we had about four days ago. Our platoon went on ambush near a river and being a very hot day we decided to take a well deserved bath. After 12 days we definitely needed one, really nice. We stayed there about four hours and I wrote a couple of letters.

19 Oct 69, last night we had a trip flare go off, after the excitement wore down someone said that they saw a bird fly off. Can you imagine that all that fire power we put out and could not even hit a bird. Ha! Ha! We moved back across the river, now it has gone down a little, it hasn't rained in about four days, real nice and hot. We NDPed about 11am in the same spot we had about three days back. Actually all we're doing is moving back and forth to NDP to NDP. The denks don't know that though, brilliant, really brilliant.

20 Oct 69, can you believe this we went back across the river and NDPed in the same area that we had two days before.

21 Oct 69, last night another trip flare went off, we kid Terry Hood cause every time he's on guard a trip flare goes off, but as of yet nothing happens. We got shooched out to SJ Hill for four days. Today is the first day, we didn't do anything but find our bunkers and places to sleep.

22 Oct 69, I got put on a detail in the afternoon digging a trench and a fighting position. There were about ten other guys on the detail, we all switched off everybody did there share.

23 Oct 69, I got put on the same detail that morning, boy did that make us mad every day we've been hear its all hassle, just like being back in the states. What a bummer. Now I'm on bunker guard and they have just issued a mad minute (shot off as many rounds of ammo as you want) its about 1230 am. I got to shot off about 12 rds of H.E.

24 Oct 69, nothing happening today but clean weapons and goff off, almost except for one more detail in which I lunched out, Andy Anderson got it he drew a due(2) and I drew a trace(3), one number.

25 Oct 69, today we left the Hill on shanocks we got dropped about five miles from SJ Hill, then we humped about 6 clicks, through flats and then up a big mountain. On our way to our NDP, our point element saw about four denks at our old NDP, the first one to see them was Paul Yristi and John Cornell, they opened up on them but they didn't move out of the place. Then I was called to assist, walking first in the squad and carrying the M79, which they needed. My first chance to shot at a denk, of course I didn't see them but I was firing, thinking maybe the shrapnell might hit them. Of course I didn't hit them but would you believe I had three duds, boy did that make me mad but I still got five shots off. That night was pretty quiet.

26 Oct 69, we moved down the mountain to another one and we NDPed on the side of the Hill we had to cut, with machates, big trees, a line of fire and then dig foxholes.