

10 Nov 71

Over and over during my tour in Vietnam I have tried to paint a true picture of Vietnam for you. With my letters and my slides I hope that you have a fairly good understanding of I Corps. All of my letters have been as frank and descriptive as I can make them.

Here is one interesting observation. You can not believe the large amount of artillery fire in Vietnam at night. Flares come in a close second. At night the enemy is on the move and most of our helicopters are on the ground therefore the artillery has a free fire zone.

Tonight is just a normal warm, nice November night in Vietnam. The time is 10:40 P.M.. For one minute I am going to record all flares that I can see and all artillery rounds I can hear.

Seconds	1	Flare	11	21	31	41	51
	2	Two Flares	12	22	32	42	52
	3		13	23	33	43	53
	4		14	24	34	44	54
	5		15	25	35	45 ^{One} Artillery Round	55
	6		16	26	36	46	56
	7		17	27	37	47	57
	8		18	28	38	48	58
	9		19	29 TWO	39	49	59
	10		20	30 Artillery Round	40	50	60
				OVER			

The A's equal one artillery round heard and the F's equal flares seen.

Well it was not as heavy as I was expecting. I did not need to write down the numbers from 1 to 60 seconds. We had two flares, one close and the other ten miles away, and then sounds of artillery all a long ways off.

That was just one minute out of the night. Now add up the minutes till you have a full night and you will have an I Corps night. That is a lot of firing.

I guess all of this is very interesting if you are a military historian.

Late this afternoon the ARVN's found three more dead NVA soldiers. They were killed three days ago in the big artillery contest. We knew the enemy was in a small area so we massed all the artillery pieces in the area onto that one spot. Over 600 rounds were fired into a small area. That brings the total of enemy killed to 28 with no friendly casualties. I saw the artillery fire into the area and I knew nothing could come out of it alive. It just rained artillery shells for about five minutes.

Well I guess that enough war stories.

I am enjoying Vietnam. I am safe, well fed, making money, lots of sleep, good job etc. The only thing I worry about is a rat getting in bed with me. I ~~will~~ sleep under a mosquito (rat) net each night. Some day I will make a 60 second record of rat movements. It is worse than the artillery at night.

I can go outside right now & count three rats in about one minute. When I sleep I can hear them under my bed making a high pitched noise. They are doing it right now. It sounds like a monkey or something. We joke about ~~our~~ our rats a lot. It is never boring when a rat pays you a visit. I have a trap near my bed but the rats have seen more combat than I will ever see. They know all the tricks. They know how far they can go with an American and how far they can go with an Vietnamese. I am would go wild here even at his old age. I may take a picture some night with my flash cubes. One rat even came out into the sun yesterday. His eyes looked very cute. Long whiskers and fine looking fur. He ran when I moved. Well at least the rats keep the roaches down. Camp Eagle has twenty thousand roaches per hooch. We have none. I prefer rats over roaches any day or night // Break

A rat this big just walked into our radio room >

Vietnamese thought
this was a cat. Known as
"a'con meo" in Vietnam



The drawing is poor but the size is right. He ran out when I moved. We keep a trap in our radio room also. Not the little traps for mice but RAT traps that are tried down with a wire. We also use poison and rifles ~~traps~~ filled with soap. As Capt. Griffin said, "Build a better mouse trap and someone will build a better rat."

Don't worry I have already had my Black Plague shot. I can see what Europe must have looked like back in 1600's. If I get hit (no one has) I will go to the doctor of course.

If I did not sleep under a net at night I would be worried. I tuck the ends of the net under my ~~under~~ bed for more privacy.

In 1968 the army had VC and NVA to worry about. Today we have rats and drugs to worry about.

Bob

The rats are just like the VC.
This reminds me of the story of Dick Whitney and his cat.

Send Tom airmail. I saw one rat on Eagle Beach that was half Tom's size back in September. When I come home I will check my gear to make sure I don't import one of them. HA-NA

Bob

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10 Not free

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2^d Letter