

January 1968 -

January 1

Got up at 9:00am and ate some stolen C's. Read a little of my Time Magazine. Started ordering my tape recorder and speakers. Ate some lunch at 12:00. Started back on tape recorder order and finished at 2:30pm. Went to see Stub about some Pacex Order Forms but he was too short to worry with it. Caught up with this thing. Laid down and slept till 5:30pm. Ate supper. Wrote a letter. Went to bed at 9:30pm but we all talked till 10:00 or 10:30pm.

January 2

Ate breakfast and had police call. Filled sandbags with sand and cement till about 11:00am and then left for twin-60 culvert. Pulled security while 2nd squad finished headwall. Ate C's for lunch. About 2:30pm we moved up to next culvert, 48 inch, where 3rd squad put the extension. Pulled security again while 2nd squad built headwalls. 2nd platoon finished sweep to river about 5:00pm and found seven mines. Was back in the area by 4:30pm. Ate supper at 5:30pm and left for a shower. Was told we would be going on mine sweep tomorrow and we might get hit tonight. Went to bed at 9:00pm. At 2:45am we had an alert. Petty scared two years off everyone. Started 80% alert at 3:05am. Our hooch was awake for an hour then next hooch.

January 3

Started walk to twin-60 culvert about 7:00am. Was supposed to sweep to river so A Company could come through to pick up the culvert but they were hit so hard last night they had to work on their area. Just swept to last burrow pit and then had to walk back to twin-60 and start sweep to meet 2nd platoon. 2nd platoon found one mine. We walked over it. 105 I think. Finished at 11:15am. Came back to area and ate lunch. We were on 25% alert and LZ Colt and Ross were being mortared again. It was raining lightly so the road was too messy to do much work but one platoon did go out. Got a Pacex Order Form and filled it out [for new tape recorder]. Got mail, a tape from Gerald. Laid down at 3:00pm and slept till 5:30pm. Ate supper. Talked till 9:00pm and went to bed. The artillery is active tonight.

January 4

Mine swept from gate to twin-60. Had demo and got to blow a few things. Came in after sweep and waited for



lunch. Smity left for R&R. At 1:00pm we went to fill in behind headwall which was extended with culvert to widen road. Worked on 1st 36 inch and twin-60 inch. Added extension to culvert near last barrow pit. Came in at 5:00pm. Ate at 5:30pm and took a shower. Went on guard at 6:30pm. Was supposed to get hit again tonight but didn't.

January 5

Did mine sweep. At point position. Finished up about 11:00am. The 2-90s[?] dammed one culvert causing water to back up and run down to the twin-60s headwall and was about to wash it out. Fixed that with a little nifty shovel work. Came in for lunch at 11:40am. Turned in my money order card for the new tape recorder. At 1:00pm we went to put 12 inch culvert together. Quit at 5:00pm. Ate supper. Took a shower and wrote a homely letter. Had an alert at 10:30pm till 12:15am.

January 6

Went on mine sweep on road running around compound. Had detector. Finished at 9:30am and filled sandbags till 11:30am. We then went to load a 30 inch culvert to install above the twin-60. Ate lunch and left for site. We had a platoon of infantry with us because 13 VC had been spotted between here and the twin-60. Stayed to about 2:30pm and then came back in and unloaded culvert because it was too big. No sooner had we sat down we had go reload the culvert. They decided to put it in anyway. This time we didn't have the infantry with us because we dropped them off on the way back in with 2nd platoon. Finished up about 5:30pm and

came in. Ate supper and took a shower. Wrote Gerald a thank-you note for the tape. Had a 100% alert at 10:00pm. Was on 50% alert by 11:00pm so the other hooches stayed up till 12:00am, us till 1:00am and the other till 2:00am when we went back on 100% till 2:30am and then it was all called off.

January 7, Sunday

Went on mine sweep (point). Met the marines at 9:00am. Filled sandbags till lunch time and loaded them up. Ate lunch and left for culvert site we worked at yesterday. We had the infantry with us this time. Finished about 3:00pm and came back in. Gathered up tools and locked them up in the boxes. Slept from 4:00 to 5:30pm. Ate supper. Read a pamphlet on Vietnam. The lights went out around 9:00pm because the guard bunkers were on 100% alert. Went to bed.

January 8

Got ready to go on mine sweep (Demo). Sat in the 3/4 ton under a light drizzle waiting for the 5 ton truck to get back with a load of dirt so we could leave. Just as we were leaving it was called off. So we gathered up our tools from the squads and cleaned and inventoried them till about 2:30pm. Cleaned my weapons and wrote a letter. Stecklein[?] and that ^&#%^ Moody got to go to Chu Lai to pick up a new truck. It has been raining off and on all day. Ate supper at 5:30pm. Visited Gillembac's hooch for awhile and went to commo and talked to Bess. Came back at 8:00pm and washed up and shaved. Then went to bed.

January 9

Went on mine sweep (Detector). Swept from here to twin-48 inch culvert and the Cav's 8th Engineers took over. We reached the twin-48 at 12:30pm and ate lunch. The purpose of the sweep was to get some A.P.C.s and tanks through to Ross. 2nd platoon started on bridge on road 535. We were back in by 3:00pm. We had to wait for the tanks & APCs to pass. Filled cement-sandbags till 5:00pm. Ate supper and took a shower. Lights went off at 8:30pm so I went to bed. Lights came back on later and I turned it off.

January 10

Had KP all day. Handyman. Made a salad for lunch and something for supper. Turned in my money orders and

order blanks for tape recorder. Got off KP at 7:30pm. Washed up and went to bed. Didn't feel too good.

January 11

Had long mine sweep again to twin-48 (Demo). Finished at 12:45pm and loaded on trucks and headed for the river and 2nd platoon. Ate at the river and went to the other side to fill sand-cement bags to make a base for the bridge piers. About 2:30pm a jeep (with four men) from A Company hit a mine throwing dirt and rock all over us. The lieutenant was killed, one guy lost a leg and the other two were cut up pretty bad. Loaded what was left of the jeep on a 5 ton at 5:30pm and started back in at 6:00pm. Arrived at 6:40pm. I was not hungry so I headed on down to guard duty at 7:00pm. Have caught a cold.

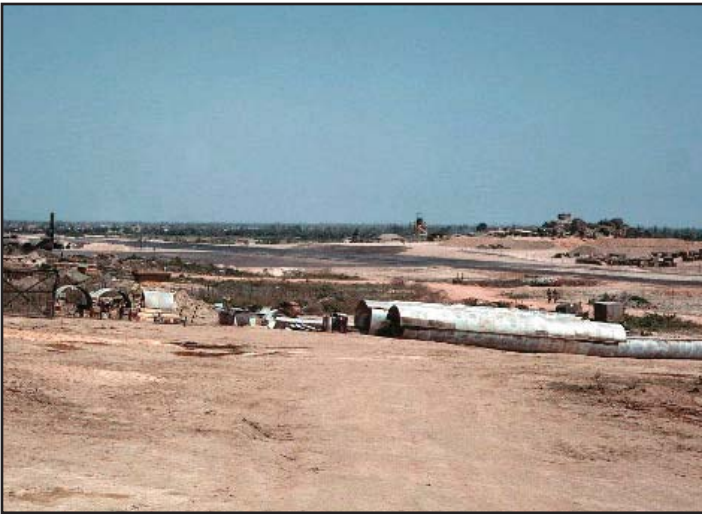
[John Ruttman was in A Company during this time and added the following comment to my Guest Book. "I enjoyed looking at your pics. The one's you took of the morning mine sweeps along 535 brought back memories. I was in A co. at LZ Ross, we met you guys every morning at the stream. I remember losing our Lt. & Sgt when their jeep hit a mine at the river."]

January 12

Had 1st shift of day guard from 6:00 to 9:00am. Got Sgt Mike's radio and wrote some letters till lunchtime. Washed some clothes. Found an 8 inch centipede in the hooch. I killed it and I cleaned up my area and sprayed the whole hooch. Gathered up some of my stuff I need to turn into battalion when I leave. Laid down and listened to radio till supper. Squad came in at 4:30pm. Ate and went to take a shower. Smity got back from R&R. Went to bed around 9:00pm and had an alert around 11:30pm. Alert was called off at 12:30am. The artillery on the hill was shooting rounds directly to their front.

January 13

Had a squad police call. Went to culvert yard and added a few nuts and bolts to one culvert. Came back to area to fill sand-cement bags. Smity & I worked on the hooch taking the plastic out at our front window and putting in swinging wooden shutters. Ate lunch. Started work on hooch but was called off to put a culvert in. On our way to the culvert yard we met the rest of the squad unloading beer and soda to the orderly room so we stopped to help. Finished at 3:00pm and came back to area. Rested till supper. Started a letter. A couple of Vietnamese walked up to the gate so an alert was called. One man was brought in and questioned. He



was doped up and said, "I'm walking to Saigon to get food." Didn't finish my letter. My tape recorder order was put in the mail.

January 14, Sunday

Loaded culvert and beer and took it to the chopper pad to be taken to A Company. Ate lunch. Loaded two 18-inch culverts to be taken to A.S.P. and installed in what will be new ammo bins. Came back and extended two more 18 inch culverts for the same area. Finished extension at 4:30pm and came back to area. Heard over the radio about 2nd platoon hitting a mine at the place where one was found the other day. Four critically injured and taken south, three are still under care here and one released. The truck was destroyed. 1st and 2nd platoons didn't get in till almost 7:00pm. I ran into the bed of one of our 5-ton trucks and cut my head just above my right eyebrow. It didn't hurt. Finished a letter after supper and brought this up to date. Went to bed about 9:00pm. Was told we would sweep past twin-48s tomorrow.

January 15

Left on mine sweep at 7:15am walking to twin-48 inch culvert. I had point. Things went slow. We just got a little past the furthestmost double burrow pits. Had an infantry unit with us. The sweep was given up as a lost cause about 3:30pm. Was back in at 4:30pm. Got us some C rations and waited for supper. Took a shower after supper. The shower broke down. I got my hair and face washed and rinsed and after getting 1/2 my chest soaped up the water quit. Rinsed myself off at hooch. Started a letter. Bunker #4 started shooting at some-

thing so we had a 30-minute alert. We might get hit within the next four days.

January 16

Went on mine sweep from camp to twin-48. On detector. Started slow and then the 'people' started rushing us. We finished about 1:30pm and ate lunch. Flank didn't get to eat. We moved on up to meet 2nd platoon and helped them sweep. Someone set off a white phosphorus round which no one was notified about and it almost got some of us. Not me though. Found another one and blew it in place. We found a 250lb bomb but couldn't blow it. Almost reached the river. Came or rather started to leave a little after 5:00pm. Got in at 6:00pm. Ate supper and took a shower.

January 17

Went on mine sweep. On point. Stopped at single 48 inch culvert and ate lunch. From there we loaded up and joined 1st platoon on sweep and leapfrogged to the river. Reached the river about 4:00pm and began rigging the mine-destroyed-truck to be pulled onto trailer. The truck was not booby-trapped. We didn't leave till 6:25. The going was slow and we didn't get in till 8:30pm. We had gun ships and a bubble chopper for security. Charlie could have wiped out 1/2 of Delta Company if he had tried. Luckily he didn't. Had a little chop-chop and went to bed.

January 18

Went on mine sweep. On detector ... again. Sixteen people capable of carrying a detector and Mayes, Moody, Musick and Campos get it every other day. Both detectors almost quit at first burrow pit but they found two more. Sgt Male and the lieutenant carried detectors for awhile. Found a mine at twin-60. Mike Male uncov-



ered it. I got some pictures of it and the hole it made. Sgt Mike Male removed the bamboo firing device and placed a 1/2 lb TNT charge on it.



Finished our sweep at about 3:45pm. Reached 1st platoon and turned around and came back in. Made two attempts at getting a mascot, a bull, but failed. 35 and 35 kilo along with 5 tried too but failed also. 2nd platoon built a pen for him. Took a shower after supper and went on guard. Moody, Thompson, Skuk on guard. Wow! What security.

January 19

Pulled my day guard from 6:30am to 10:30am and wrote a letter. Laid down and tried to sleep but was kept up by Mike (Male) and then Moody. Our new CO gave us the day off plus a big dinner at 1:00pm. At least two steaks for everyone with free beer and soda till it lasted in the ice chest. Tried to sleep but was irritated by Smity with Elvis Presley and Platters records. Gave up at 5:00pm and got up. Shaved and washed up. The new CO spent the day in Gilenback's, Philbee's and O'Brien's hooch drinking with the peons and platoon leaders. [?] started on pot which broke up the party and started a series of fights. Wrote a letter and went to bed about 9:30pm.

January 20

Went on mine sweep. Had flank on short sweep to burrow pit on eastern leg of access road. Pulled security at pit till lunch. Went to A.S.P. at 1:00pm to build a head-wall for culverts for the bin we built. Put a culvert in at A.S.P. 2nd platoon hit another mine after finding one. Totaled truck 24 and injured 2 men. One may lose a leg. Came in at 5:15pm, ate supper and took a shower.

January 21, **Sunday**

Went on long mine sweep to river. Was in charge of southern flank. Got to the village about 4:00pm so turned around and came back in. A little girl told 1st platoon that the blown truck from yesterday was now surrounded by mines and Charlie had an ambush waiting for us. She said the VC was after her also. She also said she knew who was planting the mines. Came in at 5:00pm, ate supper and took a shower. Moody, Bess and I ran around the company area reminding everyone we only had 39 days. Rumor going around we may start camping at the river.

January 22

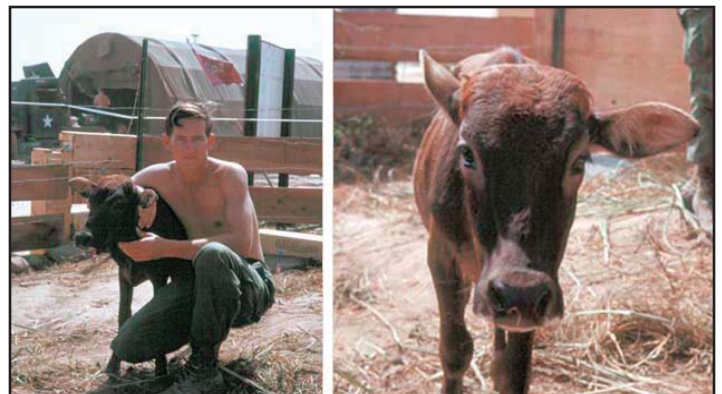
Had mine sweep from gate to 1st burrow pit. I had point and was souvenired a Coke by one of local little girls. Finished about 9:00am and sat around the rest of the day. Some went to fire their weapons. Ate supper. Moody, Bess and I fooled around for awhile. Rumor about our company camping at the river continues.

January 23

Had mine sweep this morning but only two from our squad went. Not I. Had police call around our squad area. Didn't do anything till after lunch at 1:00pm. Went to first burrow pit on road 535. Rest of the squad went on security. I stayed on 3/4-ton truck monitoring radio and counting loads for Sgt Male who is now our squad leader till Sgt Martinez gets back. Everyone came in about 3:00pm. I stayed till 5:00pm. Ate supper and took a shower. Drank a few ... sodas and started a letter. Finished that letter and went to bed around 9:30pm.

January 24

Had a platoon police call. Loaded some cement bags in a Chinook net for shipment to A Company about 10:00am. That's all we did all morning. Ate lunch and went to bull's home and built him a small shelter. Came





back to hooch, took my boot's off and laid down and then Sgt Dedmond came in and had us go help 1st & 2nd squad fill sandbags for CO's new hooch. Came back about 4:00pm, took off my boots and laid down. Here comes Sgt Dedmond again. He had us go stack some already filled sandbags on the lieutenant's hooch. Ate supper and started a letter. C123's flew in and out constantly tonight moving the 1st Cav out and bringing in a different unit.

January 25

Had a police call and filled cement-sand bags till about 10:00am. We then loaded up to go to the village on highway QL1 to pull security where we were dumping sand to be used in the building of a new village school. Came in at 12:00 for lunch. After lunch we went on recon patrol in front of our perimeter. Finished at 2:00pm with negative results. Was supposed to fill sandbags but the whole squad sneaked off for a haircut. By the time I got back, about 3:30pm, they had run out of cement again so I laid down and slept till supper. Too short to work now. Took a shower after supper and went on guard duty.

January 26

Laid down at 7:00am and slept till 9:20am. Shaved, combed my hair and went on guard. Stayed on till 12:30, past lunch. Washed some clothes. Sgt Male had a squad meeting telling us we would be moving to the river tomorrow, everyone, even short timers like me. We would be camping there for several days. 'After changing my underwear' I finished washing my clothes. Went down to the gate to mess with the girls and tell Moody the good news. Smity and Joe got drunk and someone stole Smity's knife, which sent him on a rampage. After an hour of wrestling Joe and Grey got Smity up to the hooch. The lieutenant saw Smity in front of the hooch

cussing the First Sergeant and came down and got into it with Smity. Smity bad mouthed 'lieu' so the lieutenant hit him and stirred-up Smity that much more. After more wrestling and some vomiting he passed out. I couldn't eat supper but had some coffee. Talked to the lieutenant and he agreed to let us short timers stay back tomorrow. Had a rare steak at commo and then wandered around to the platoon hooch. Went back to commo and stayed to about 10:00pm and then went to bed.

January 27

Got up and ate two eggs. Everyone but us short-times prepared for the temporary move to the river. They left about 7:15am. I went on day guard. Moody and Merrill made a garbage run and nailed up the hoochs. Merrill took over the bunker after lunch. Moody and I broke open the bar and got 6 sodas and a case of C-rations. Went down to the gate and messed with the girls till 4:00pm and went to the shower. Went back to gate. It was time for supper but I was held up by 3 little girls who were going to take me home and souvenir me beaucoup chop-chop. I was afraid of the VC but they assured me it was a safe area surrounded by ARVS. I still had to refuse. Some guy brought down a monkey and most of the girls were scared to death of it. Finally ate supper at 6:00pm and went to commo about 7:00pm for some barbecued hamburgers. Went back to hooch at 9:15pm. Listened to the remainder of "Gunsmoke" and went to sleep.

January 28, **Sunday**

Didn't get up till 9:00am. Shaved and washed and had some Chicken Noodle C's for breakfast. Peanut butter and crackers for desert. Sat around and put up with Merrill's country music till 11:30am. Lunch time. Went down to gate but nothing was going on so we came back to hooch and slept till 3:00pm. Woke up with a bad headache. First Sergeant told us to be ready to go on guard duty at 6:30pm. Went to see Patterson about our mail. Came back to hooch and waited for supper. Was on guard when four guys from 2nd platoon showed up so we went on E&E. Came back to hooch. A little later the First Shirt came by to remind us we were on guard tonight. Pulled guard all night. I got cold too.

January 29

Left guard bunker at 7:00am and wrote a letter. Destroyed C-ration case and put what was left in Smity's C-'s. I burned all the paper and put the cans in a hole next to the guard bunker. Had to police up guard bunker and open hooches to air out. Shaved and washed up. Had a Pepsi. The radio station quit but came back on later. Brought this thing up to date. Ain't you glad !! -- "SHORT" -- Ate lunch and sacked out till 1:00pm when everyone returned from the temporary camp at the river. Messed around till supper. Pulled guard so everyone could get a good night's sleep.

January 30



rested today. Ate lunch. Took a nap till about 3:00pm. Cleaned Joe's rifle and ate supper. Charlie was supposed to come tonight and did. We had two alerts. One from 8:30pm to 9:30pm and another from 10:00pm till midnight. One VC was captured and a few mortar and recoilless rifle rounds came in. Some sniper fire too.

January 31

Mayes, Moody, Musik and Spellman pulled day guard all day. The platoon opened the road so A Company could move some of their stuff here in preparation to move to Chu Lai. They got back at 4:00pm. Took a shower and later ate supper. Was supposed to get hit again tonight but didn't.