

REVEILLE

by Hubert Shirley

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Marble Mountain, Vietnam

One look outside revealed low ceilings and heavy overcast after a nights rain, not very common here the the "DaNang Hole" - so named because of whatever weather phenomena that allowed this area to have consistently better flying weather than most locations up and down the coast.

No flying today, so as soon as chow is over I'll be the first to tell Plt. Sgt. James Sullivan that I just have to go to the P.X. this morning. I'm out of something crucial to my maintaining his expectation of me being an example to all military men in this entire world. If I spread the B.S. right and get there first with an emphasis on getting there first, I just might pull this off and get out of filling more d_____ sandbags. The next one will be 37,313. Hey you don't forget things like that. You should hear the total for my career!

I am then Spec. 4 Hubert Shirley. One member of the 245th Surveillance Airplane Company stationed at Marble Mountain. I'm not elated at being here but it could be worse. I could be with those "animals" across the strip. the U.S. Marines! Thank you God for having mercy on me! This is my 574th day in the U.S. Army and thus far this hasn't been the most democratic part of my life. For over a year and a half I haven't been able to vote, choose, select, elect or even voice my wants to anyone about anything. To you folks in China, I know just how you feel. I've been called bad names, had to learn survival skills, graphic grammar (the only foreign language that I ever passed) escape and evasion (escaping with whatever you stole that would make life more pleasant, and evading as many work details and inspection as possible).

I'm a T.O. in the visual section so I fly day missions and sleep some nights and so does my Plt. Sgt. Unlike my fellow T.O.'s in the Slar and IR section who fly nights and sleep every day and always have excuses for why they can't fill sandbags. I have to evade anyway I can. All those sandbags and barrels at Marble, guess who filled them? Guess how long it took? Having been the first of the 245th, we had to build or help build the structures there.

We lived in G.P. medium tents stretched over a 2X4 frame to begin with and the first E.M. Club was a tent with shipping pallet floors and a cooler who Dennis Hanon bribed a Seabee into stealing for us. 10 cent beers and 25 cent chips! We raised several thousand dollars as I recall, to build and stock the big E.M. club. That's a lot of beer and chips! When we moved to the new club, beer went to 15 cents and hard stuff happy hour was every evening with 10 cents drinks. No wonder the world has such a drinking problem _____, enough!

After morning chow at "Bennies Beanery", we fell out for formation and work details. Remember the one where you burned the outhouse waste? I still get indigestion just thinking about it. Sgt. Sullivan starts to assign work details when someone comes